Borderland Complexes and Translocations: How a Japanese Tendai Monk Discovered Chan/Zen Buddhism in an Indian Buddhist Homeland in the Hangzhou Region

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Abstract: Caught between the aims of modern Rinzai ideology and the hybrid Buddhism of a late Heian/early Kamakura era Zen reformer, the meaning of Myōan Eisai's (Yōsai) 明菴栄西 (1141–1215) search for authentic Buddhism has been poorly understood. In this article, I look at the complexities of Eisai's reform Buddhism, which advocates a return to monastic rigor with an abiding interest in Tendai esotericism and meditation, made authentic through the mind to mind transmission 以心傳心 of the new Buddhism of the Song dynasty, Chan/Zen. I particularly note the significance of the greater Hangzhou region to Eisai's quest, reimagined as a new Buddhist homeland that inspired Eisai's transformation. This suggests that when looking for the influences of Tiantai/Tendai Buddhism, one must look beyond sectarian and scholastic divides to see the meaning of Chan/Zen Buddhism not in terms of its modern definitions, but as an inclusive repository for a wide range of Mahāyāna traditions including Tiantai/Tendai, a repository particularly apropos of the Hangzhou region, home to Mt. Tiantai 天台山.

Keywords: borderland complex, translocation, Hangzhou region, Eisai, Tendai, Aśoka *stūpa*, Budai Mile

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Introduction

Caught between the aims of modern Rinzai ideology and the hybrid Buddhism of a late Heian/early Kamakura era Zen reformer, the meaning of Myōan Eisai's (Yōsai) 明菴栄西 (1141–1215) search for authentic Buddhism has been poorly understood. Building on my previous research, I look at the complexities of Eisai's reform Buddhism, which advocates a return to monastic rigor with an abiding interest in Tendai esotericism and meditation, made authentic through the mind to mind transmission 以心傳心 of the new Buddhism of the Song dynasty. I particularly note the significance of the greater Hangzhou region to Eisai's quest, reimagined as a new Buddhist homeland that inspired Eisai's transformation. This suggests that when looking for the influences of Tiantai/Tendai Buddhism, one must look beyond sectarian and scholastic divides, to see the meaning of Chan/Zen Buddhism not in terms of its modern definitions, but as an inclusive repository for a wide range of Mahāyāna traditions including Tiantai/Tendai, a repository particularly apropos of the Hangzhou region, home to Mt. Tiantai 天台山.

Eisai is a seminal figure in the Japanese Buddhist tradition, known as the first to bring an authentic transmission of Zen to Japan. The narrow image of Eisai as Zen master fits uncomfortably with his actual experience and his aim to recover an authentic form of Buddhism suitable to an age of Buddhist decline (*mappō* 末法) in Japan. Eisai was trained as a Tendai monk on Mt. Hiei 比叡山, and became expert in Tendai esoteric lore known as 'Taimitsu' 台密. In this capacity, Eisai made two trips to Japan: in 1168 he set out for Mt. Tiantai, ostensibly to become reinvigorated with Tiantai teaching; in 1187, he returned to China again with an aim to travelling further, to make a pilgrimage to Buddhist sacred sites in India. In neither case was the acquisition of Zen teaching at the forefront of

his mind. Thwarted by the lack of access to India on the second trip, he diverted his plan and studied under Chan master Xu'an Huaichang 虛庵懷敞 (c. 1125–1195) at Wannian Monastery 萬年寺 on Mt. Tiantai 天台 and followed him to Jingde Monastery 景德禪寺 on Mt. Tiantong 天童 when he was transferred there. He returned to Japan with a certificate of authentic Zen transmission in 1191.

In this study, I explore the Chinese context experienced by Eisai. How did a Tendai monk in search of Buddha Dharma in an age of *mappō*, a determined pilgrim intent on treading the sacred ground as Śākyamuni Buddha, find the truth he was seeking in the Chan teaching of the Hangzhou region? My analysis relies on two conceptual frames: borderland complex and translocation. The former is a well-known trope in East Asian Buddhism, where practitioners were filled with a combination of anxiety over being displaced from the center of Buddhism, India, and admiration for the authentic Buddhist traditions located there. While the borderland complex is useful in explaining the anxieties and aspirations of Buddhists located on the periphery, translocation explains an effective way these anxieties and aspirations were dealt with by reimagining and recreating a Buddhist homeland in their midst.

Eisai's story represents a dual case of borderland complex and translocation: between India and China, on the one hand, and between China and Japan, on the other. Both of these are important for understanding how the development of East Asian Buddhism unfolds, and Eisai can be seen as a linchpin in these developments. My presentation here focuses primarily on the case of borderland complex and translocation between India and China, and the transformative impact that this had, with Eisai as emblematic of this transformation. Eisai also played a prominent role in the borderland complex and translocation between China and Japan, and its subsequent impact, but this is not the focus of the current study.

In Search Of Eisai

The career of the Japanese monk Eisai (or Yōsai) is indicative of the transition in East Asian Buddhism from Indo-centrism to the hub

of Buddhist activity in the Hangzhou region (a.k.a. Jiangnan 江南). Eisai played an important role in initiating a transformation of Japanese Buddhist culture and aligning it with the new Buddhism of the Song Dynasty. Eisai was ordained on Mt. Hiei as a Tendai monk, and was expert in the combined Tendai/Mikyō practice known as *taimitsu* 台密,[1] and a representative of what the Japanese scholar Kuroda Toshio has labelled *kenmitsu* 顕密, the exoteric-esoteric Buddhist orthodoxy that prevailed throughout Japanese Buddhism during the medieval period.[2] Although Eisai is credited with the first authorized transmission of Zen to Japan, he was actually an advocate of 'combined practice' (*kenshū* 兼修),[3] which was very much in keeping with a style of Chan and Zen that predated the 'pure Zen' (*junsui zen* 純粋禅) nomenclature of Tokugawa 徳川 era Rinzai orthodoxy that was resurrected in the modern period as 'normative'. Eisai's designation as an advocate of *kenshū* also resonates with the Taimitsu orientation received in his Tendai training, and with syncretic influences received while studying at Chan monasteries in Song dynasty China.

Eisai's Zen pedigree proved a quandary for Rinzai proponents in modern Japan, who had staked their identity to notions of 'pure Zen'. Eisai's reputation suffered, especially when compared with his counterpart, Dōgen 道元 (1200–1253). Eisai and Dōgen are well-known for transmitting Zen to Japanese soil, initiating the Rinzai and Sōtō lineages, respectively. It is useful to review the reversal of fortunes that both masters experienced in modern reconstructions of Zen. Dōgen, a figure of relative obscurity, was resurrected as the Japanese philosopher *par excellence* when Watsuji Tetsurō 和辻哲郎 (1889–1960) and a small group of philosophers (the Kyoto School) brought Japanese philosophy to the attention of the world. His investigations of Dōgen 'single-handedly brought Dōgen's work out of nearly total obscurity',[4] and elevated Dōgen to the stature of a world philosopher with a

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1 Mano, 'Yōsai and Esoteric Buddhism'.

2 Kuroda & Dobbins, 'The Development of the Kenmitsu System as Japan's Medieval Orthodoxy'.

3 McRae, 'Reconstituting Yosai (1141–1215)'.

4 Carter & McCarthy, 'Watsuji Tetsurō'.

message of the unique character of Japanese Zen thought.

Contrast Dōgen's rise with the denigration of Eisai. As founder of Japan's Rinzai tradition, Eisai carried a heavy weight of expectations associated with Japanese Zen's uniqueness and its distance from 'religion' as demarcated in Meiji polemics. Meiji demarcations determined that engagement in conventional religious activities excluded one from Japan's unique spiritual identity.[5] Although Eisai was Rinzai Zen's founder, his background in Tendai Buddhist esotericism, coupled with influences absorbed from the syncretic world of Song Dynasty Chan, left those looking to Eisai as a paradigmatic Zen figure wanting. Unlike Dōgen, who left a large body of work, the *Shōbō genzō* 正法眼藏 [Treasury of the True Dharma Eye], dedicated to deep investigations of profound Buddhist and Zen principles, Eisai left politically motivated tracts, the *Kōzen gokokuron* 興禪護國論 [Protecting the Country by Promoting Zen], and esoteric Buddhist based tributes to the benefits of tea drinking, the *Kissa yōjōki* 喫茶養生記 [Nourishing Life by Drinking Tea], that were deemed spiritually uninspiring given the new criteria. Typical of this attitude was the assessment of Yanagida Seizan:

> It seems that the work entitled *Kōzen gokokuron* has hardly ever been read in earnest. To a remarkably great extent, it has been treated as nothing more than nationalistic propaganda. Such bias is deeply rooted even at present. Frankly speaking, it is hard to find any appeal in this work when it is compared with Dōgen's *Shōbō genzō* or Shinran's *Kyōgyō shinshō*.... [And] this exceedingly low opinion that people have is not restricted to the *Kōzen gokokuron* but is directed at Eisai as well. Aside from the bias that the *Kōzen gokokuron* advocates a national Buddhist ideology (Kokka Bukkyō 國家佛教),

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[5] Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan*, has provided a full, book-length treatment of how the term *shūkyō* ('religion') functioned to provide the new Meiji government an opportunity to invent the category of religion in modern Japan as a boundary-drawing exercise. A primary consequence of their efforts was to exclude Shinto from the category and to enshrine it as national ideology of the new 'secular' state.

> the fact that Eisai sought [government sponsored] robes and titles of recognition for himself, degenerated in his later years to a clerical functionary for the Kamakura *bakufu* 幕府, and was nothing more than a construction entrepreneur who envisioned the re-building of Tōdai-ji and Hōshō-ji, and so on, completely undermines his image as the founder of a school.[6]

The crystallization of modern Zen ideology in the twentieth century, at least in international circles outside Japan, came through the writings of Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙 (D. T. Suzuki), the well-known proselytizer of Zen Buddhism. Far better known in the West than in Japan, Suzuki brought an interpretation of Zen aimed at transcending the Protestant presuppositions that the discipline of Buddhist Studies had assumed, characterized by the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist scholar David Snellgrove as 'in the mold of European nineteenth-century liberal and rational thought'.[7]

Given the parameters into which Eisai has been thrust, my attempt here is to engage a new understanding of Eisai, one that acknowledges but looks beneath his Zen pedigree and takes into account his Tendai *taimitsu* training and his incorporation of cultural patterns absorbed through his experience with Song Dynasty Chan. Eisai's search for an authentic Buddhism was less inspired by Zen claims to exclusivity than to the new culture of Song China that Chan embraced and epitomized. This coincides with the recent discovery of documents associated with Eisai, and with reassessments of his legacy in Japan.[8] While Japanese scholars have been most concerned with the impact of Eisai's ideas in the Japanese context, my examination focuses on Eisai's experience in the Song context. Eisai travelled to China as a Tendai pilgrim from Mt. Hiei in search

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6 Yanagida, 'Eisai to *Kōzen gokokuron* no kadai', 439.

7 Snellgrove, 'Śākyamuni's Final "nirvāṇa"', 399.

8 For a synopsis of newly discovered documents attributed to Eisai from Shinpuku-ji, see Sueki, 'Mumyō shu, Ingoshū kaidai'. In English, there is the Ph.D. dissertation by Shinya Mano, who summarizes recent scholarship on Eisai on *Yōsai*, 12–20.

of inspiration from Tiantai Buddhism in its Chinese homeland. Eisai's personal transformation from Tendai pilgrim to Zen advocate was monumental for the course of East Asian Buddhism and set in motion a cultural exchange with tremendous impact on the centuries that followed. Yet, in many ways Eisai was an accidental Zen master. His life, teachings, and practices rest uneasily with the so-called 'Zen style' propagated by later Rinzai, and I will argue here that Eisai's association with Zen is more cultural and incidental than deliberate, and that this was not unusual for his time. Elsewhere I have argued that Eisai's Zen program was aimed at supplanting Tendai as the officially designated 'teaching for protecting the country', on the one hand, and that his efforts were directed toward material construction of the Song Chan institution in China and Japan, on the other.[9] While an increasing body of research has suggested that the narrow parameters into which Zen (and by extension Chan) has been cast is untenable, Eisai's Zen not only typifies this but forces us to move the needle even further. Eisai, in other words, is not the exception, but the rule—Zen is not so much a revolution as a cultural adaptation of new Buddhist patterns, cast in the idiom of Chan, that prevailed in Song China, and the Hangzhou region that Eisai visited.

Eisai as Tendai Pilgrim

Like many Tendai monks before him, including the Tendai founder Saichō 最澄 (767–822) and his successors Ennin 圓仁 (794–864) and Enchin 円珍 (814–891), [10] and those closer in time to Eisai, Chōnen 奝然 (938–1016), Genshin 源信 (942–1017), Jōjin 成尋 (1011–1081), Kaikaku 戒覚 (d.u.; mission to China in 1082), and Chōgen 重源 (1121–1206; mission to China in 1167), Eisai embarked on a journey to China to seek answers to the dilemma of Buddhist decline

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[9] See Welter, 'Zen as the Ideology of the Japanese State', and 'Zen Master as Construction Entrepreneur and Preserver of Dharma'.

[10] On Saichō, see Groner, *Saichō*. On Ennin, see Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary,* and *Ennin's Travels in T'ang China*.

in Japan, a preoccupation shared by many of his age. His desire to partake in the continental culture of Buddhism that had nurtured and sustained Japanese Buddhists since the inception of Buddhism in Japan was part of a well-established pattern of China-Japan Buddhist cultural exchange. On his first visit, a short trip spanning several months in 1168, he was part of the first official mission from Japan to China in one-hundred and fifty years. He visited Mt. Tiantai, staying at Wannian si, and according the *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書 [Genkō Era Buddhist History] and Eisai's brief autobiography in the *Kaihen kyōshu ketsu* 改変教主決 [Revised Resolutions on the Preacher of Esoteric Buddhism], Eisai imported over thirty works in sixty fascicles of commentaries by Song Tiantai masters.[11] Unfortunately, no record or catalogue exists of the texts Eisai brought back. Contrary to his own claims (below), Eisai was actively engaged in propagating esoteric Buddhist teachings in northern Kyushu after his return, in keeping with his Tendai *taimitsu* heritage.[12] There is no suggestion that Zen figured in his motivations during the nineteen years between his two trips to China.

In retrospect, however, Eisai recounts in the *Kōzen gokokuron* how his aim to revive the lost tradition of Zen in Japan inspired his first trip.

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[11] *Genkō shakusho*, *D* vol. 101: 2.155a15–16. Eisai's autobiography in the preface to the *Kaihen kyōshu ketsu* 改変教主決 speaks of obtaining new Tendai writings in Song China, but the text is corrupt where the number might have been indicated (379a13; photographic reproduction page 8, line 2). Mano, *Yōsai*, speaks of the context in which the *Genkō shakusho* was written, and how Eisai's biography was constructed to bolster Zen claims in the political environment of fourteenth century Japan.

[12] See Mano, *Yōsai*, 43–55, and his conclusion: 'To sum up the major characteristics of Yōsai's activities in northern Kyūshū, it is said that his nineteen-year stay was not only to wait for the opportunity of going to China, but also to propagate his esoteric teachings. While he based at Seigan temple for writing down his ideas on esotericism, he travelled around all over northern Kyūshū, visiting historical Buddhist sites where his predecessors had spent time'. See also, Sueki, 'Eisai Zenji to Mikkyō'.

> In the spring of the third year of the Nin'an era (1168), I arrived in Hakata, in Chinzei,[13] with the hope of crossing the sea [to China]. In the second month [of that year], I met the Chinese Japanese language bi lingual interpreter Li Dezhao,[14] who informed me of the existence of the Zen school [in China], and of its popularity in the Song Dynasty, and so on. In the fourth month, I crossed the sea and arrived at Mingzhou, [a port] of the Great Song Dynasty. My first meeting was with the Chan master in charge of receiving guests at Guanghui Monastery.[15] I asked him: 'A patriarch from my country previously brought Zen teaching from China to Japan. The school no longer exists. The reason I have come is because I hope to revive what has been abandoned'. 予日本仁安三年戊子春, 有渡海之志. 到鎭西博多津. 二月遇兩朝通事李德昭, 聞傳言, 有禪宗弘宋朝云云. 四月渡海到大宋明州, 初見廣慧寺知客禪師問曰, '我國祖師傳禪歸朝, 其宗今遺缺, 予懷興廢故到此'.[16]

Writing some thirty years later in a treatise arguing for Zen's merits against entrenched political and religious forces in the Japanese context, Eisai's alleged devotion to Zen on his first trip to China should not be regarded as an accurate depiction of his motives. His activities upon his return to Japan after the first trip, mentioned above, suggest his continued devotion to *taimitsu*. There is no hint of Zen in his teaching or activities in the intervening (almost twenty) years between his two trips.

Even on his second journey to China in 1187, Eisai's expressed purpose was not focused on Zen. His aim was to continue on to India to make a pilgrimage to sacred Buddhist sites, a plan reminiscent of the earlier Indo-centric model of Chinese pilgrims Faxian 法顯 (337–422), Yijing 義淨 (635–713) and Xuanzang 玄奘 (602?–664).

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[13] An old name for Kyūshū 九州.

[14] Li Dezhao is otherwise unknown.

[15] Guanghui Monastery is located on Mt. Qingliang 清涼山 (Mingzhou), founded by the eminent Chan master of the region, Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益.

[16] My translations are based on Yanagida, ed., *Kōzen gokoku ron*, 111a; corresponding to *T* no. 2534, 80.10a14–18.

> My concerns mounted unabated for twenty years, until the time when I longed to make a pilgrimage to the eight sacred sites of the Buddha in India.[17] In the third month, the Spring of the third year of *bunji* (1187), I bade farewell to my homeland, and carrying lineage records of the various Buddhist schools and works containing gazetteers [with geographical information] on the western regions,[18] arrived in Song China. At first, I went to Lin'an (the Southern Song capital Hangzhou) and visited the Military Commissioner,[19] officially requesting permission to travel to India. The official petition stated. 畜念不罷, 經二十年. 方今予懷禮西天八塔. 日本文治三年丁未歲春三月辭鄉, 帶諸宗血脈, 並西域方誌, 至宋朝. 初到行在臨安府, 謁安撫侍郎. 覆西乾經遊之情. 即下狀云:
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> Pulling my half-finished visage across suspended walkways spanning treacherous mountains, I am fully dedicated to becoming a complete person in the flat 'golden land' [of the Buddha]. ...曳半影於崎嶇棧道, 終全身於中平金場云云.[20]

Alluding to phraseology used to describe Xuanzhao 玄照 (active 620–640s) in the *Da Tang Xiyu qiufa gaoseng zhuan* 大唐西域求法高僧傳 [Great Tang Biographies of Eminent Monks in Search of the

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[17] The sites associated with events in Śākyamuni's life: Lumbini (birth), Bodhi tree (enlightenment; Bodh Gaya), first sermon (Sarnath), death (Kuśinagara), and other significant places, Sravasti, Rajgir, Sankassa, and Vaiśali. According to Yanagida (page 396a–b), interest in making pilgrimage to sites associated with the life of the Buddha rose with the Faxian's 法賢 translation of the *Scripture on the Eight Famous Spiritual Monuments* (*Bada lingta minghao jing* 八大靈塔名號經; *T* no. 1685) in the early Song dynasty.

[18] Such works as Xuanzang's *Da Tang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 [Great Tang Records of the Western Regions], *T* no. 2087, vol. 51.

[19] Military Commissioners (*anfu shilang* 安撫侍郎) were officials charged with administering government and military affairs in their respective circuits, sometimes referred to as Pacification Commissioners (Hucker, *Dictionary*, no. 17).

[20] Yanagida, ed., *Kōzen gokoku ron*, 111b; *T* no. 2534, 80:10b4–9.

Dharma in the Regions of the West],[21] Eisai highlights the contrast between the pilgrims treacherous journey and the flat unobstructed 'golden land' where the Buddha's enlightenment was attained. From this account by Eisai's own hand, his expressed intention is not to acquire Chan/Zen transmission, but to follow the borderland complex re-enactment of Chinese pilgrims to the land of the historical Buddha. The implicit meaning behind this intention is to acquire the authentic teaching of Buddhism, which Eisai assumes is still viable there. He does not realize that Buddhism has become but a faded memory in India, that *mappō* has descended on Buddhism's Indian homeland. In spite of his efforts and intentions, Eisai's plan was thwarted.

> However, the Commissioner did not grant me a travel permit [for India], but only provided me with a travel permit to remain [in China]. I had labored exclusively in my desire to reach India, but it was not to be—perhaps my virtue was insufficient [for realizing such an ambition].[22] This occurred in the fourteenth year of *chunxi* (1187) in the Song Dynasty. 然而不敢與執照, 只與案照, 廼留獨勞想竺天. 時未有耶, 得不投一耶? 于時炎宋淳熙十四年丁未歲也.[23]

Although Eisai makes no mention of it, the circumstances that prevailed in Song China at this time inhibited the feasibility of travel between China and India. The Jurchen Jin 金 invaded China in 1127, forming a dynasty that lasted until 1234, forcing the Chinese government to cede control of the north and establish the Southern Song capital at Hangzhou. The Xixia 西夏 (Tanguts; 1038–1227), moreover, had control over the northwest frontier region, making the overland route to India impassable. When pilgrimages were made by Buddhist monks previously, China controlled these regions and was

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[21] A work by Yijing; *T* no. 2066, 51.2a6–7. This follows the suggestion of Yanagida.

[22] Following Yanagida's suggestion (pp. 54–55) for the reading of this difficult passage.

[23] Yanagida, ed., *Kōzen gokoku ron*, 111b; *T* no. 2534, 80:10b9–12.

able to help insure passage through them. It is unclear why Eisai did not consider taking the southern, sea route to avoid this impasse.

With his ambitions for pilgrimage to the 'western regions', the golden land of the Buddha and the arena of 'true' Buddhism blocked, Eisai was forced to retreat to the land of the 'new' Buddhism that had developed in the Hangzhou region simultaneous to the decline of Buddhism in India. One account, admittedly quite late, suggests that Eisai's decision was driven by happenstance, by unfavorable winds that literally blew his Japan bound ship back to China, rather than any determined motive on his part.[24] By his own account, Eisai claims when he encountered the obstruction to his plan for passage to India, he turned his intent to Chinese Chan practice, returning to the monastery on Mt. Tiantai he had visited on his first trip.

> [With the hope of visiting India gone], I ascended Mt. Tiantai and took relief at Wannian Chan Monastery. I became a student of the abbot of the monastery, Chan master Xu'an Huaichang, practiced meditation (*chan*) and investigated the Way. He transmitted the teaching style of the Linji (Rinzai) lineage exclusively. I recited both

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[24] 'Luoyang Dongshan Jianren chansi Kaishan shizu Ming'an Xigong chanshi taming' [Jp. 'Rakuyō Higashiyama Kennin zenji Kaizan shiso Myōan Saikō zenshi tōmei'] 洛陽東山建仁禅寺開山始祖明庵西公禪師塔銘 [Epitaph for the pagoda dedicated to Venerable Myōan [Ei]sai, the Founding Patriarch of the Kennin zenji at Higashiyama of Rakuyō (i.e., Kyoto)] by Rulan 如蘭, former abbot of Upper Tiangzhu Monastery 上天竺寺 in Qiantang 錢塘 (i.e. Hangzhou 杭州) in the second year of Yongle era (1404):

> > The ship master announced the return [to Japan]. They set off into the ocean and on the third day a headwind suddenly arose, pushing them back to Ruian prefecture in Wenzhou. Eisai said to himself, 'Because the wind and waves have thwarted me, I haven't finished my investigations [here] after all'. He then took leave of the chief merchant and went directly to Wannian Monastery on Tiantai to visit Xu'an. 舶主告回. 放洋三日, 逆風俄起, 反至溫州瑞安縣. 自謂, '未究參訪. 故風濤阻我'. 乃別商主, 直往天台萬年寺, 謁虛庵. (Fujita [ed.], *Eisai zenji shū*, 783)

> the moral precepts for the four divisions [of the monastic assembly] and the moral precepts for Bodhisattvas, devoting myself thoroughly to them. 即登天台山, 憩萬年禪寺. 投堂頭和尙敞禪師爲師, 參禪問道. 頗傳臨濟宗風, 誦四分戒, 誦菩薩戒已畢.[25]

In this account, Eisai acknowledges his attention to the monastic precepts of the four divisions of the monastic assembly (*Sifen jie* 四分戒) and the bodhisattva precepts (*pusa jie* 菩薩戒) in addition to his participation in chan practice (*canchan* 參禪) and Linji faction affiliation. The association of Zen (chan) with strict precept practice defined his teaching. Strict adherence to the 'four part', or Dharmagupta vinaya was mandated at Chan and other Buddhist monasteries in China.[26] Eisai's adoption of the monastic precepts of the four divisions in Zen practice distinguished it from the Japanese Tendai tradition which, since the time of Saichō, had dropped these detailed prohibitions in favour of the more liberal bodhisattva precepts.[27] As such, Eisai's Zen reform movement was cast as a conservative return to rigorous practice, not a breaking free from staid conventions.

All in all, Eisai's 'conversion' to Zen was a momentous turn of events with lasting consequences for the history of Buddhism in East Asia. Eisai's own account, written years later in retrospect after his 'conversion', asserts that he was intent on acquiring Zen teaching and transmission from the outset. This account does not square with Eisai's actions. Let me propose an alternate scenario. Eisai's first trip to China was a brief six-month journey to Mt. Tiantai with the intention to restore the credibility of Tendai teaching, the officially designated 'teaching for protecting the country' (護國佛教) in Heian Japan. It ended abruptly with Eisai's discovery that most Mt. Tiantai monasteries had been converted into institutions dedicated to the

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[25] Yanagida, ed., *Kōzen gokoku ron*, 111b (*T* no. 2534, 80:10b12–14).

[26] Based on the *Sifen lü* 四分律 (*T* no. 1428, 22); translation attributed to Buddhayaśas (Fotuoyeshe 佛陀耶舍) between 403–413.

[27] As codified in the *Fanwang jing* 梵網經 (*Brahmajāla-sūtra*; *T* no. 1484, 24). On Saichō's adoption of the bodhisattva precepts, see Groner, *Saichō*, 17–37.

spread of Chan teachings. Eisai was not inspired by this transformation at the time, and upon returning to Japan retreated to northern Kyūshū where he continued proselytizing efforts in the tradition of Tendai esotericism, or Taimitsu. In the interim, the political situation in Japan worsened. In 1185, two year before Eisai embarked on his second trip to China, Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝 seized power after the defeat of the Taira clan 平氏 in the Genpei War 源平合戦, and with the backing of the Hōjō clan 北条氏 became the first *shōgun* 将軍 ruler of Japan. The emperor was largely reduced to a position of figurehead. How this influenced Eisai's decision to go to China is uncertain, but an atmosphere of political unease heightened, coupled with potential opportunity and the necessity for reform.

Eisai's second trip partook of another, more daring precedent. The worsening situation in Japan prompted Eisai to make a bold move to go directly to India, the 'golden land' that Śākyamuni himself had trod, the homeland of authentic Buddhism. Studying Chan was an afterthought. Only when his hopes for visiting India were dashed did Eisai retreat to Mt. Tiantai to take relief at Wannian Chan Monastery and became a student of the abbot, Chan master Xu'an Huaichang. This turn of events set in motion a series of consequences with lasting impact for Buddhism in Japan. Eisai's 'double failure' at procuring access to authentic Buddhism (first on Mt. Tiantai and then for pilgrimage to India) resulted in a retreat to Wannian Monastery on Mt. Tiantai. Up to this point, his actions reflect more a sense of defeat than anticipation of the success he eventually achieved. In the following, I explore how Eisai turned his defeat into success by acknowledging and accepting how the greater Hangzhou region (Jiangnan 江南) had been transformed into a 'stand in' for India, a virtual replica of the Buddha's homeland that both played on the past Buddhist tradition and effectively precipitated its future.

Borderland Complex and Translocations: The Transformation of the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region into an Indian Buddhist Homeland

The rationale behind Eisai's transformation from Tendai pilgrim to Zen advocate has often been explained in doctrinal terms associated with the advent of 'mind to mind transmission' 以心傳心 and Chan as a 'separate transmission outside the teachings' 教外別傳. This was indeed an important pretext for legitimizing Chan as an (*the*?) authentic transmission of Buddhist teaching. As Jinhua Chen has indicated, lineage is one of the strategies marginalized Buddhist communities employed in overcoming their borderland complex.[28] It was extremely important in validating an allegedly authentic transmission in the Chan/Zen tradition, and was instrumental in Eisai's claims over rival factions (i.e., the Daruma School of Dainichi Nōnin 大日能忍) to establish his credibility. It was, I argue here, but one factor among many, and not the major factor in Eisai's transformation and attraction to Zen. While the mind-to-mind transmission motif is heralded by Eisai in fascicle five of the *Kōzen gogkoku ron* to legitimize his claim as a Zen master,[29] acknowledged with complimentary assertion of Zen as a separate transmission outside the teachings in fascicle six,[30] it was the spatial relocation and physical transformation of the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region into an 'Indian' Buddhist homeland, replete with a manifestation of the future Buddha, Maitreya, and a retinue of arhats, that made Eisai's acceptance of this motif and assertion of Chan transmission possible. Without this relocation and transformation, Eisai's discovery of authentic Buddhism in the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region would not have occurred.

In my analysis, I invoke two theoretical models: 'borderland complex' and 'translocality'.[31] I use translocation to supplement and fur-

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[28] Chen, 'Borderland Complex'.

[29] *T* no. 2543, 80:9c09–10a13.

[30] *T* no. 2543, 80:10c10–13.

[31] What follows coincides with sections of my chapter, Welter, 'Making and Marking Buddhist Sacred Space'.

ther refine 'borderland complex' and 'center versus periphery' models that have been used in the study of Asian history.[32] Jinhua Chen has written how a 'borderland complex' obsessed Chinese, Japanese and Korean monks when they related to India, and how India, the birthplace of the Buddha, was recognized as the center of the 'dharma world', and all the places located outside the Indian sub-continent were taken to on the periphery.[33] As Chen notes, the perception of inhabiting a peripheral borderland removed from the center posed a gap that was not merely geographical, but also cultural, and caused an acute sense of marginality, instilling in Buddhist followers outside India a potential anxiety bordering on despair. At the same time, the sense of distance inspired admiration toward India as the center and cultural homeland of Buddhism, an admiration that fostered a desire to follow the patterns established in Indian Buddhism, a confidence to emulate these, and eventually presumptions that the periphery is not different from the center and is even the center itself. The patterns and presumptions fostered by the borderland complex led to the formation of unique characteristics of Buddhism in China that spread throughout East Asia. These include how sacred sites were constructed and reimagined in East Asia from Indian Buddhist inspirations and how sacred lineages were envisaged and developed as an effective way to combat this borderland complex.

If 'borderland complex' supplies the answer as to why the unique Chinese and East Asian *imaginaire*, the creative impulse borne of a combination of anxiety and admiration, developed, 'translocality' suggests an answer to the question of how it was actualized and put into effect. Translocation, the movement of something from one

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[32] See, for example, Moloughney, 'Overcoming the Borderland Complex', discussing Thapar's *Early India*, Sen's *Buddhism*, *Diplomacy*, *and Trade*, and Adshead's *T'ang China*.

[33] Chen, 'Borderland Complex'. The notion of the borderland complex in the study of East Asian Buddhism was first raised by Forte, 'Hui-chih'. My characterization also follows Chen's abstract for a talk delivered at Stanford University Ho Center for Buddhist Studies, 'When and how the marginal became central: Borderland complex in East Asian Buddhism' (May 16, 2012).

place to another, is a more recent concept in the social sciences, and is currently used with wide application from a number of scholars concerned with the dynamics of mobility, migration, and socio-spatial interconnectedness.[34] Recently, Reinhold Glei and Nikolas Jaspert applied the concept of translocality to the study of religions, noting that the subject of religious translocality is set within a wider semantic framework heavily indebted to the spatial turn within the Humanities, where the term has been applied mostly to phenomena related to migration.[35] In cultural studies, the spatial dimension has been applied beyond notions of physical space to incorporate 'a wide array of spaces—imagined, ascribed, mental, textual, corporeal, literary spaces, and many more'.[36] As Glei and Jaspert explain, translocality also draws attention to hubs of religious contact, nodes of interaction integral to the transmission and transformation processes in the spread of religious phenomena. The concept of nodes and hubs are useful in examining the concrete dynamics of religious transfer, not only in determining where such processes occurred, but also the way the processes were brought about and who and what (the individuals, groups, texts, or ideas) were instrumental in bringing them about. Observations across religious traditions reveal how beliefs dis- or trans-locate a cultic epicenter when moving beyond geographic borders. Processes of religious diffusion are closely tied to the translocation of sacred spaces, enabling the creation of new sites or transference of sites into new regions. Religious diffusion is not necessarily predicated on the effacement of former (or original) centers but may in fact be multi- or polylocal in character. Multi- or polylocality occurs when space, whether physical or mental, is transgressed and an original site and its associations are made to serve the assertions of new locations. In this way translocality may give way to multilocality. When the foci of religious devotion associated with a concrete physical place are distanced from believers, new places rep-

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[34] Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 'Translocality'.

[35] Glei & Jaspert, 'Terms, Turns and Traps'. My analysis here is indebted to their remarks.

[36] Glei & Jaspert, eds., *Locating Religions*, 2.

licating the original physical place are conceived and constructed to serve as replicas of the original. Owing to diffusion and expansion, a religious tradition was capable of developing multiple centers, creating differing and competing imageries.[37] The Hangzhou region has a rich Buddhist cultural heritage from which to examine the 'how' this process was imagined and enacted in concrete terms.

What happens when the replica takes over the spiritual power associated with the original and supersedes it, thus taking on the persona of the original itself? When the periphery overtakes the center? This is a narrative in the history of East Asian Buddhism that Eisai's experience speaks to, one that I highlight in the following pages. Eisai's 'conversion' to Zen is not so much a story involving the discovery of new Chan teachings, as the realization of the transformation of the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region into an Indian Buddhist homeland evidenced by the development of the Chan imaginary and its associated institutions, practices, and beliefs. This transformation was centuries in the making, and by the time Eisai arrived the transformation was in full effect. To expose this transformation, I explore the alleged Indian context of Eisai's experience translocated to the Hangzhou region, focusing on four components, three relocations culminating in one miraculous appearance, that form the background to his experience. These examples reflect how *stūpa*s, sacred sites, and the imagined relocation of disciples of the Buddha and ultimately the appearance of the Buddha himself figure in the transformation of the region from Buddhist borderland to Buddhist center.

(1) Relocating the Aśoka *stūpa* in Mingzhou and its influence.
(2) Relocation of landscapes associated with sacred sites in India to Hangzhou.
(3) Relocating arhat disciples of the Buddha to the Hangzhou region.
(4) Maitreya in Hangzhou: The appearance of Budai Mile in Fenghua.

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[37] Ibid, 4–6.

These components, I argue, combined to create a sense of an Indian Buddhist homeland in the Hangzhou region and fostered Eisai's dreams of recovering an authentic Buddhism.

(1) Relocating the Aśoka *Stūpa* in Mingzhou and Its Influence

The conception of the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region as a Buddha land was greatly enhanced by the alleged relocation of Aśoka *stūpa*s to the region from India. The Aśoka *stūpa* 阿育王塔 located at the Aśoka Monastery 阿育王寺 in Mingzhou 明州 (contemporary Ningbo 寧波) exerted great influence over the notion of Wuyue 吳越 as a *Foguo* 佛國, or 'Buddha-land'. The foundations for Wuyue and the greater Hangzhou region as a Buddhist homeland were initiated in the Aśokan *stūpa* cult inaugurated by the Wuyue ruler Qian Chu 錢俶 (a.k.a. King Zhongyi 忠懿王, r. 947–978 CE), who sought to emulate Aśoka as *cakravartin* (*zhuanglunwang* 轉法王), a wheel-turning Dharma King, and erect Buddhist *stūpa*s throughout the region. The success of this enterprise had far-reaching effects, not only throughout Wuyue, but in the subsequent Song dynasty and throughout the East Asian region.[38]

In the *Aśokāvadāna* (*Ayuwang zhuan* 阿育王傳; The Legend of King Aśoka),[39] Aśoka gathers the remains that had been dispersed among the eight monarchs following the Buddha's cremation, constructs eighty-four thousand urns for dispersing the remains, and miraculously transports them throughout the Jambudvīpa world in a single instant, constructing *stūpa*s over each of them. Just as the *Aśokāvadāna* stipulates that the eighty-four thousand *stūpa*s are to be distributed evenly throughout the world, it is also important that all the reliquaries be enshrined at the same moment. The dedication of a *stūpa* constitutes the moment it 'comes alive', and in order for the body of the Buddha to be 'resurrected' through the eighty-four thousand urns bearing his remains, the dedication must take place simultaneously. At the request of Aśoka, the elder Yaśas agrees to

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[38] These sections overlap with Welter, 'Making and Marking Buddhist Sacred Space'.

[39] *T* no. 2042, 50.

miraculously cover the sun with his hand to signal the moment of completion of all eighty-four thousand *stūpa*s throughout the world.

The number eighty-four thousand is important; according to Buddhism it represents the traditional number of atoms in the body.[40] Aśoka is thus symbolically reconstituting the sacred body of the Buddha, resurrecting it throughout the inhabited world of Jambudvīpa, so that the Buddha's remains transform the substratum of our world into the sacred realm of the Buddha or a 'Buddha-land', demarcated quite literally as the body of the Buddha. For Paul Mus, the *stūpa* was the paradigmatic 'mesocosm', a focal point of religious reality in tune with the cosmos, forming a 'magical structural milieu' for a cultic operation that 'can evoke or make real the absent Buddha in Nirvāna'.[41] As John Strong elaborates, 'the king and his kingdom, for Mus, are essentially a kind of 'living *stūpa*'. The *stūpa* is thus 'also readily comparable to other Buddhist mesocosms such as the Buddha image, the Dharma, the Bodhi tree', not to mention the king himself.[42] This model adequately summarizes King Qian Chu's intentions for invoking the Aśoka cult in Wuyue.

Chinese Buddhist accounts took solace in the illusion that Aśokan *stūpa*s in China existed in the Zhou dynasty, when Aśoka dispersed his *stūpa*s throughout the world, but were destroyed during the mass destruction carried out by Qin Shihuangdi 秦始皇帝 in his campaign to purge China of rival teachings (aimed primarily at Confucian writings). Regardless, Aśokan *stūpa*s began appearing throughout China in subsequent years, following the actual arrival of Buddhism in China during the Han dynasty.

Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), the noted compiler of the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 [Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks][43] lists over twenty King Aśoka pagodas in China in the *Ji Shenzhou Sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄 [Collection of Inspired Responses of

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[40] Legge, trans., *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*, 69.

[41] Mus, *Barbudur*, 94 and 100; cited in Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka,* 104.

[42] Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka*, 104.

[43] *T* no. 2060, 51.

the Three Treasures in Shenzhou (i.e., China)], often abbreviated as *Gantong lu* 感通錄 [Record of Inspired Responses].[44] First on Daoxuan's list is the Kuaiji Maota 會稽鄮塔 in Ningbo, which became an important center for the Aśoka cult in Wuyue. King Qian Chu identified with and took inspiration from King Aśoka and vowed to create 84,000 *stūpa*s throughout his land. He also printed copies of the *dhāraṇī sūtra*, *Yiqie rulai xin mimi quanshen sheli baoqie yin tuoluoni jing* 一切如来心秘密全身舍利寶篋印陀羅尼經 [Skt. *Sarvatathāgatā dhiṣṭhāna hṛdayaguhya dhātukaraṇḍa mudra-nāma-dhāraṇī-sūtra*; The Precious Chest Seal *Dhāraṇī Sūtra* of the Whole Body Relics Concealed in All Buddhas' Minds] to serve as Dharma-body *śarīra* to place inside the *stūpa*s.[45] According to the inscriptions found on unearthed pagodas, King Qian Chu made three separate large-scale productions in a span of twenty years. The first one was eighty-four thousand bronze Aśoka Pagodas created during the year *yimao* 乙卯 (the second year of the Xiande era [955] of the Later Zhou Dynasty), the same year, ironically, Emperor Shizong mounted a major persecution of Buddhism in the north (counted as one of four major persecutions of Buddhism in Chinese history). The second major effort

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[44] *T* no. 2106, 52: 404a28–b11. Compiled in 664, the *Gantong lu* is also referred to as the *Ji Shenzhou tasi sanbao gantong lu* 集神州塔寺三寶感通錄 [Collection of Inspired Responses of the Three Treasures in the Pagodas and Temples of Shenzhou (i.e., China)]. It records the temples, *stūpa*s, images, and miraculous experiences of monks and nuns from the Latter Han to the beginning of the Tang (on this, see Murata, 'Chūgoku no Aiku-ō tō' (1) through (6). In legends, Daoxuan is attributed with the transmission of a Buddha tooth relic, one of the four tooth relics enshrined in the capital of Chang'an during the Tang dynasty, allegedly received during a visit at night from a divinity associated with Indra (Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, 187).

[45] The distribution of the Buddha's remains is divisible into two types: *rūpa-kāya* (*seshen* 色身) and *dharma-kāya* (*fashen* 法身). *Rūpa-kāya* represent the physical body of the Buddha, the relics obtained through cremation after his death. *Dharma-kāya* represent the doctrinal body of the Buddha as captured in his recorded teachings (not to be confused with the eternal and transcendent *Dharma-kāya* of later Mahāyāna).

was when eighty-four thousand iron Aśoka Pagodas were created in the year *yichou* 乙丑 (the third year of the Qiande era [965] during the reign of Emperor Taizu of the Song Dynasty).[46] A third was carried out in 975, when King Qian Chu created Aśoka Pagodas made of silver.[47] In each case, the printing of the *The Precious Chest Seal Dhāraṇī Sūtra* and casting of miniature *stūpa*s was said to number eighty-four thousand, in imitation of Aśoka, to 'resurrect' the Buddha throughout the territory under Wuyue protection and literally construct a Buddha-land.

In sum, King Qian Chu evoked the Aśoka model to create a Buddha-land in Wuyue. Through the dissemination of miniature *stūpa*s with the 'relics' of Buddhist teaching, *The Precious Chest Seal Dhāraṇī Sūtra*, housed inside, the King was able to animate his kingdom as a paradigmatic mesocosm and form a magical structural milieu to evoke the presence of the Buddha in *nirvāna*. The kingdom becomes essentially a kind of living *stūpa*. This was part of a growing association of the region with India and the homeland of Buddhist culture. With this thriving association as a base, Buddhists in the region began to confidently equate the Buddhist culture of the region with its Indian homeland.

(2) The Relocation of Landscapes Associated with Sacred Sites in India to Hangzhou

The Wuyue kingdom (893–978) was the longest quasi-independent region during the so-called Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period. While cultural patterns were disrupted throughout most of the rest of China during this period, especially in the north, Wuyue was busy reimagining itself as a Buddhist kingdom and homeland, drawing on

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[46] Zhipan verifies that Qian Chu esteemed Aśoka by erecting 84,000 *stūpa*s with copies of *Precious Chest Seal Dhāraṇī Sūtra* inside; see *Fozu tongji*, *T* no. 2035, 49: 206b–c.

[47] This is based on the contents of actual Aśoka style *stūpa*s produced by King Qian Chu recovered through excavations in recent years; see Baba, '*Hōkyōinkyō* no denpa to tenkai'.

Tang traditions while adapting them in novel ways. On the northern slope of Feilaifeng 飛來峰 (The Peak that came Flying), in niche fifty-eight of the Yixian Tian wall, there is the Foguo 佛國 (Buddha Land) inscription that adequately summarizes the regions propensity to define itself.[48]

Legends of the origins of Feilaifeng draw upon its direct connection to India. *The yixian tian* 一線天 inscription itself, which literally means 'direct line to Heaven' could be read as an abbreviation of *yixian tianzh*u 一線天竺, 'direct connection to India'. The origins of the area as a Buddhist site suggest this. The alleged 'founder', an Indian monk known only by his Chinese name, Huili 慧理, visited Hangzhou in 326 CE (during the Jin dynasty, 225–420 CE) and became convinced that Feilaifeng was actually the famed Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa (Vulture's Peak, Chinese: Lingjiu feng 靈鷲峰). Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa is the site of many of the Buddha's most famous *sūtra*s including the *Lotus Sūtra* 法華經, and the 'Flower Sermon' 世尊拈花, where Śākyamuni held up a flower to the congregation in lieu of his usual oral presentation and resulted in granting the 'True Dharma-eye and Marvelous Mind of Nirvāna' 正法眼藏涅槃妙心 to Mahākāśyapa. The resemblance of Feilaifeng to Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa was allegedly affirmed by the monkeys who accompanied Huili and also recognized the spot from their homeland. This is how the name Feilaifeng 飛來峰, 'The Peak that came Flying [from India]', came to be associated with the mountain area. Although this legend persists and is often repeated, there are no records linking Huili and Feilaifeng in Buddhist historical texts prior to the Five Dynasties period.[49] This points to it as an attribution conceived in the context of the Wuyue promotion of Buddhism. For example, Qing Chang points to the 'Lingyin si beiji' 靈隱寺碑記 [Stele Inscription of Ling-

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[48] López, 'Cursed sculptures, forgotten rocks', 48 and 49, figure 6.

[49] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 42: 'Although no one (including modern scholars) has questioned whether or not Huili was a real monk who came to Hangzhou during the Eastern Jin period, no record linking Huili and Feilaifeng can be found in Buddhist historical texts by Chinese monks from before the Five Dynasties period'.

yin Monastery] written around 986 by Luo Chuyue 羅處約 (960–992) as an early record asserting that Huili identified the mountain area in Hangzhou with Vulture Peak, '[this mountain is] a peak from Vulture Peak. In what period [did it] come flying here 靈鷲之峰耳, 何代飛来乎?'[50] From around this time on, the name Feilaifeng was increasingly associated with the area.

This was but one of many associations made to India in Hangzhou. The area also includes a series of monasteries in the hills surrounding Feilaifeng, most prominently the Lingyin Monastery 靈隱寺, but also the three Tianzhu 三天竺 monasteries, Shang (Upper) Tianzhu 上天竺 or Faxi si 法喜寺 (Joy of the Dharma Monastery), Zhong (Middle) Tianzhu 中天竺 or Fajing si 法靜寺 (Purity of the Dharma Monastery), and Xia (Lower) Tianzhu or Fajing si 法鏡寺 (Mirror of the Dharma Monastery). As an old name in Chinese for India, Tianzhu affirms the intimate association of the area as a replica (and substitute) of the Indian original. Even the name for the central monastery, *lingyin*, usually translated literally as 'the Soul's Retreat', may be taken as an abbreviation for *lingjiushan yin* 靈鷲山隱, 'the Concealed Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa', the secret Indian homeland of the Buddha. Evidence for the association can be found in a former name for Lower Tianzhu Monastery as Lingshan 靈山, Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa Monastery.[51]

(3) Relocating *Arhat* Disciples of the Buddha to the Hangzhou Region

One of the distinctive features of Chan Buddhism in the Hangzhou region was an admiration of the exemplary practices of arhat disciples of the Buddha Śākyamuni. On the surface, this admiration flies in the face of Mahāyāna denigration of arhats as practitioners of a

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[50] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 40; translation slightly altered.

[51] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 46. Another monastery in the Feilaifeng area erected by King Qian Zuo 錢佐 (928–947) of Wuyue (r. 941–947), named Lingjiu Xingsheng si 靈鷲興聖寺, also reflects the connection with Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa/Vulture's Peak. It had ceased to exist by the Ming period (see Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 50).

'lesser vehicle', indicative of their inferior wisdom and mistaking it as full attainment. As human practitioners, however, Chan monks in their daily practice identified readily with the imagined trials and tribulations that arhats experienced. Bodhisattvas, in comparison, were remote beings whose accomplishments allowed them to wander freely throughout Buddhist worlds freed from human toil, to perform miraculous interventions in response to human needs. In addition, one can add depictions of the story of Sudhana (Shancai 善財) from the thirty-ninth chapter of the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 (*Avataṃsaka sūtra*), 'Entering the Dharma Realm' (*Ru fajie* 入法界), which became prominent in the Song dynasty.[52] The story of Sudhana is the classic Mahāyāna Buddhist tale of the pilgrim Sudhana's quest for ultimate truth, involving visits to fifty-two *kalyāṇamitratā* (*shanzhishi* 善知識; spiritual friends/advisors) before finally encountering Maitreya who reveals the ultimate vision of the infinite.[53] On top of this was a tradition that four great *arhats*—Mahākāśyapa, Kundopdhānīya, Pindola, and Rāhula—postponed their *nirvāna* to stay in the world at the request of Śākyamuni, to protect the law until the appearance of the future Buddha Maitreya.[54] This made them 'arhats with bodhisattva characteristics' and positioned them as attractive models in the Chinese Chan context. The task of protecting the Dharma until the arrival of Maitreya was assumed by all arhats as the cult developed further to extend to sixteen, eighteen, and ultimately five-hundred practitioners.

The arhat cult was a prominent feature of Buddhism in the

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[52] See, for example, Fontein, *The pilgrimage of Sudhana*, 23–77.

[53] As described in the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 (*Avataṃsaka sūtra*):

> In the middle of the great tower... he saw the billion-world universe... and everywhere there was Sudhana at his feet... Thus Sudhana saw Maitreya's practices of... transcendence over countless eons (*kalpa*), from each of the squares of the check board wall... In the same way Sudhana... saw the whole supernal manifestation, was perfectly aware of it, understood it, contemplated it, used it as a means, beheld it, and saw himself there (Cleary [trans.], *The Flower Ornament Scripture* 3, 369.)

[54] Fong, *The Lohans and a Bridge to Heaven*, 24–40.

Hangzhou region. Guanxiu 貫休 (831–912), the celebrated Buddhist monk, painter, and calligrapher, achieved fame for his depiction of sixteen arhats. Guanxiu hailed from Lanxi 蘭谿 (contemporary Zhejiang province, a municipality near Jinhua 金華), roughly 175 kilometers southwest of Hangzhou, but relocated to Chengdu 成都 where the arhat paintings were completed. The paintings were donated by Guanxiu to Shengyin Monastery 聖音寺 near Gushan 孤山 (one of four major monasteries in Hangzhou, along with Lingyin si 靈隱寺, Jingci si 淨慈寺, and Zhaoqing si 昭慶寺), where they were preserved for many centuries. The Qianlong emperor admired the paintings during his visit in 1757, and commissioned that copies be reproduced and engraved in stone for preservation, along with eulogies he penned for each arhat depiction. The originals were destroyed in the Taiping rebellion, but copies of ink rubbings of the steles have been preserved.[55] The depictions of the arhats (*luohan* 羅漢) exhibit 'eccentric' features that accentuate their foreignness—bushy eyebrows, bulging eyes, large noses, protruding cheeks and foreheads. These odd, misshapen figures also display a spectrum of emotions, the idiosyncratic personalities of exotic, superhuman beings who have escaped the shackles and encumbrances of normal existence, to wander free from ordinary constraints.

The expansion to five-hundred arhats 五百羅漢 may be viewed as a further extrapolation of this model. After Nan Tianzhu Monastery 南天竺寺 (the original name for what is now known as Lower Tianzhu 下天竺 or San Tianzhu Monastery 三天竺寺), was damaged at the end of the Tang dynasty, the first king of Wuyue, Qian Liu 錢鏐 (852–932; r. 893–931), built a Five-Hundred Arhat Cloister 五百羅漢院 on the site.[56] According to Qing Zhang, the tradition of carving Five-Hundred Arhats was established in Hangzhou region during the Wuyue period. Qian Liu commissioned Five-Hundred Arhats for

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[55] Sets exist, for example, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Harvard Fine Arts Library, Boston; and the Imperial Household Agency, Tokyo.

[56] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 45–46. During the Dazhong xiangfu period (1008–1016) of the Northern Song, it was named Lingshan si 靈山寺, and in 1020 changed back to Tianzhu Monastery 天竺寺.

the Stone Chamber Cave (Shiwu dong 石屋洞) on Mt. Shiwu 石屋山, and images of Five-Hundred Arhats became popular in the region from the Tenth century.[57]

The Stone Bridge 石橋 on Mt. Tiantai was believed to be the actual residence of the Five-Hundred Arhats during the Song period, where they had miraculously decamped from India. According to Wen Fong, by the early ninth century it was assumed that the five-hundred arhats lived above the rock bridge on Mt. Tiantai. Fong offers the following records where the five-hundred arhats are mentioned.[58] Xuanzang, in the *Da Tang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (Record on the Western Countries of the Great Tang), described an Indian tradition of five-hundred arhats residing in the mountain Buddhavanagiri near Rajagrha. Prior to Xuanzang, the compiler of *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 [Biographies of Eminent Monks], Huijiao 慧皎 (ca. 530), related how the monk Tanyou 曇猷 (d. 390–396) visited Mt. Tiantai and crossed the stone bridge to meet holy monks (as *shen seng* 神僧, 'sacred monks', not explicitly arhats). By the early ninth century, the identities of the monks took shape as arhats, when Xu Lingfu 徐靈府 (active first half of ninth century) wrote in the *Tiantaishan ji* 天臺山記 [Record on Mt. Tiantai] about the arhats above the rock bridge on Mt. Tiantai. Since that time, Fong claims, people of the region came to believe that five-hundred arhats lived on Mt. Tiantai above the Stone Bridge. In the *Song Gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 [Song Dynasty Biographical Collection of Eminent Monks] record of the Tiantai monk Pu'an 普安 (770–843), Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001) mentions the existence of a cave on Mt. Tiantai beyond the Stone Bridge where arhats secretly dwell. After Pu'an passed away, his remains were interred in a *stūpa* on the mountain and a Five-Hundred Arhat Hall was erected. The king of Wuyue, Qian Liu, frequently made offerings to it. A monastery was restored there in the early Song dynasty.[59] By the tenth century, the identity of the sacred monks as five-hundred arhats was well-established. In the Southern Song dynasty, Cao

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[57] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 161–162.

[58] Fong, *The Lohans and a Bridge to Heaven*.

[59] *T* no. 2061, 50: 880b–c.

Xun 曹勳 (1098–1174) wrote the *Jingci chuangsu wubai luohan ji* 淨慈創塑五百羅漢記 [Record on Sculpting Five-hundred Luohans in Jingci (Monastery)] regarding the erection of a Five-Hundred Arhat Hall between 1153–1158 at Jingci Monastery (formerly Yongming Monastery 永明寺), a central Buddhist institution on Hangzhou's West Lake through the patronage of both elites and commoners.[60] Cao Xun also wrote the *Jingshan luohan ji* 徑山羅漢記 [Record on the Arhats of Jingshan (Monastery)] in the first year of the Longxing era (1163), regarding the creation of portraits for five-hundred Chan heroes (i.e., arhats) for Jingshan 徑山, a leading Chan monastery in the Hangzhou region.[61] By the time of Eisai's arrival, the five-hundred arhats at the Stone Bridge had become a common trope. When later Japanese Buddhist pilgrims visited Mt. Tiantai and reached the famous natural Stone Bridge, they made the customary offering of hot tea to the arhats thought to dwell there (as Eisai had done).[62]

The Feilaifeng grottoes also provide evidence for the ascension of the arhat cult in the Hangzhou region. Because both Arhats and Chan patriarchs are essentially monks striving for attainment based on their own human efforts, there are many commonalities between them. This is reflected in depictions of them in artistic representations, and accounts for their popularity among Chan practitioners. According to Qing Cheng, arhats and patriarchs were common themes for sculptures at Feilaifeng during the Song period.[63] Feilaifeng is the site of an early extant example of an intact group of Eighteen Arhats, a grouping that began to appear around the tenth century. The earliest known images of the Eighteen Arhats were in a set of paintings created by Zhang Shi 張氏 in the Early Shu king-

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[60] In *Songyin ji*; discussed in Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 163–168.

[61] *Songyin ji*.

[62] Protass, 'Poetic (mis)interpretations between Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen'.

[63] Chang, *Feilaifeng*. According to information posted at the Feilaifeng site, there were twenty-seven niches carved during the Song dynasty (mostly in the Northern Song). Qing mentions seven of these as dedicated to arhat/Chan sculptures.

dom (907–925), received by the Northern Song official Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), for which he wrote poems for.[64] In the Northern Song, Eighteen Arhat groupings became increasingly popular in Buddhist art. Qing Cheng points to the Eighteen Arhat figures sculpted in clay dated to 1079 in the Sandashi dian 三大士殿 (Three Great Beings Hall) at Chongqing si 崇慶寺 in Changzi county, Shanxi province, as an example.[65] In total, Feilaifeng contains three separate groupings of Eighteen Arhats (#9, #17, and #24), all dated to the Northern Song. In addition, three niches (#25, #26, and #28) from the Northern Song are dedicated to Chan patriarchs/arhats.

(4) Maitreya in Hangzhou: The Appearance of Budai Mile in Fenghua

As mentioned above, great arhat disciples of the Buddha postponed their nirvāna to stay in the world at the request of Śākyamuni, to protect the law until the appearance of the future Buddha Maitreya. Maitreya also figured prominently in providing the ultimate revelatory vision to Sudhana. The only niche believed to be carved during the Southern Song (niche # 68) at Feilaifeng is the famous Budai (Cloth Sack) Maitreya 布袋彌勒 sculpture. It depicts Maitreya as an incarnation of a tenth century figure from the Fenghua 奉化 district of the Mingzhou (Ningbo) region from the Wuyue kingdom, an affable, plump, and eccentric Buddhist wanderer, surrounded by eighteen arhats. Budai is the epitaph for the Chan monk Qici 契此, mentioned in the *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 [Records of the Source-Mirror], with biographical records in the *Song Gaoseng chuan and Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 [Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp].[66] Budai Maitreya also figured prominently in initiatives

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[64] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 168; referring to Deng, ed., *Su Dongpo quanji*, vol. 2, chap. 3, 73–6.

[65] Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 169; referring to Zhongguo meishu quanji bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Zhongguo meishu quanji-Diaosubian 5-Wudai Song diaosu*, figs. 55–7.

[66] *T* no. 2016: 48.523a; *T* no. 2061, 50:848b–c; and *T* no. 2076, 51:434a.

by leading Southern Song Chan figures, Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163) and Hongzhi Zhenghue 宏智正覺 (1091–1157), who sought to merge local legends with the Buddhist tradition in the hopes of attracting people to Chan through wider appeal to more popular characters.[67] Bernard Faure points to Budai as an example of 'one strategy in Chan for domesticating the occult [by] transforming thaumaturges into tricksters by playing down their occult powers and stressing their this-worldly aspect'.[68] My interest here, however, is drawn to the retinue of eighteen arhats. Depicting the arrival of the future Buddha accompanied by Chan arhat practitioners suggests that the transformation of Feilaifeng and by extension the greater Hangzhou region (Jiangnan 江南) into the Buddha-land of Maitreya has been realized. The Chan tradition, with its vast network of monasteries and sacred sites, its great numbers of monks and followers, its influential network of supporters, including the government, etc., is the manifestation of this realization.

Concluding Remarks

The linchpin of the Chan matrix in Song dynasty China, what made the identification between Arhats and Chan monks so evocative and potent, was the ideological assertion of Chan as a 'mind to mind

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Daoyuan 道原 (d. after 1004) claims that after he finished a poem suggesting his connection to Maitreya, Budai transformed himself (*hua* 化), and was later seen by people of the region walking along carrying a cloth bag. As a result, Buddhist clergy from the four congregations competed to depict his image, with a full body representation in the Eastern Hall of the Great Shrine Pavilion 大殿 of Yuelin Monastery 嶽林寺 (located in the Fenghua district of Mingzhou). See The *Jingde chuandeng lu*, *T* no. 2076, 51:434b26–27. Zanning also claims that people from the Jiang and Zhe regions often painted his image following his death (*T* no. 2061, 50: 848c). See also Chapin, 'The Chan Master Budai'; Edwards, 'Pu-tai-Maitreya'; and Chang, *Feilaifeng*, 206–213.

67 Levine, *Awakenings*.

68 Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 115.

transmission' (*yixin chuanxin* 以心為心) and a 'separate transmission outside Buddhist teachings' (*jiaowai biechuan* 教外別傳). While this doctrinal linchpin is well-known, the matrix it grew from is not. Once the components of the matrix are exposed—things like the relocation of the Aśoka *stūpa* in Mingzhou and its influence, the relocation of landscapes associated with sacred sites in India to Hangzhou, the relocation of arhat disciples of the Buddha to the Hangzhou region, and the appearance of Budai Mile 布袋彌勒 (Cloth-sack Maitreya) in Fenghua—the delivery of Śākyamuni's dharma to Maitreya as foretold in the scriptures is realizable, as is the retinue of arhat disciples instructed by Śākyamuni to protect the dharma until Maitreya's arrival. These became conspicuous aspects of Hangzhou regional Buddhist culture; the spatial relocation and physical transformation of the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region into an 'Indian' Buddhist homeland made Eisai's acceptance of the mind-to-mind transmission trope plausible.

In my analysis, I used two theoretical models: 'borderland complex' and 'translocality'. If 'borderland complex' supplies the answer as to why the unique Chinese and East Asian imaginaire developed, a creative impulse borne of a combination of anxiety and admiration, 'translocality' suggests an answer to the question of how it was actualized and put into effect, the ways in which the transformation of the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region into a Buddhist homeland became a reality. The borderland complex produced complex feelings of admiration for India, on the one hand, and anxiety about being displaced from it, on the other. It inspired Buddhists in China to reimagine their own lands as Indian Buddhist homelands, to translocate Indian Buddhist homelands to China. Eisai, who set out for India in search of the Dharma, to 'become a complete person in the golden land of the Buddha', eventually realized that the Hangzhou/Jiangnan region was no longer a periphery, was no different from the center, even the center itself, and a place where his own aspirations of recovering an authentic Dharma could be realized.

As impressed as Eisai must have been to seek Tendai reform through an allegedly authentic Zen transmission, his 'conversion' is only the first part of a momentous chain of events that occurred in its wake. Eisai was, of course, a product of his own borderland complex

that situated Japan on a marginalized periphery in relation to the imagined great Buddhist centers of India and China. His anxiety, coupled with admiration, created his own impulse to translocate the Song Chan model to Japan in the hopes that it could join the company of 'great Buddhist countries' 大佛國. Eisai's impulse was soon joined by followers like Eihei Dōgen 永平道元, abbot of Eihei ji 永平寺, and Enni Ben'en 圓爾辯圓, founding abbot of Tōfuku ji 東福寺, who replicated Eisai's pilgrimage to the Hangzhou region, brought back their own versions of a Song Chan experience, and applied it in the Japanese context. It was complemented by Chinese Chan abbots of important Hangzhou/Jiangnan region monasteries, who sent their disciples, like Wuxue Ziyuan (Jp. Mugaku Sogen) 無學祖元, abbot of Engaku ji 円覚寺, and Wu'an Puning (Jp. Gottan Funei) 兀庵普寧, abbot of Kenchō ji 建長寺 to Japan to assist the translocation process. This further story of border complex and translocation that propelled Eisai and those who followed in his footsteps to the Hangzhou region or were encouraged to emigrate to Japan from the Hangzhou region, to reimagine Japan as a great Buddhist country, is an important issue. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of the current study.

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Abbreviation

D *Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho* 大日本仏教全書 [Compendium of Buddhist Texts of Great Japan]. See Bibliography, Secondary Sources, Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan, comp.

T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 [Buddhist Canon Compiled during the Taishō Era (1912–1926)]. See Bibliography, Secondary Sources, Takakusu & Watanabe et al., eds.

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