

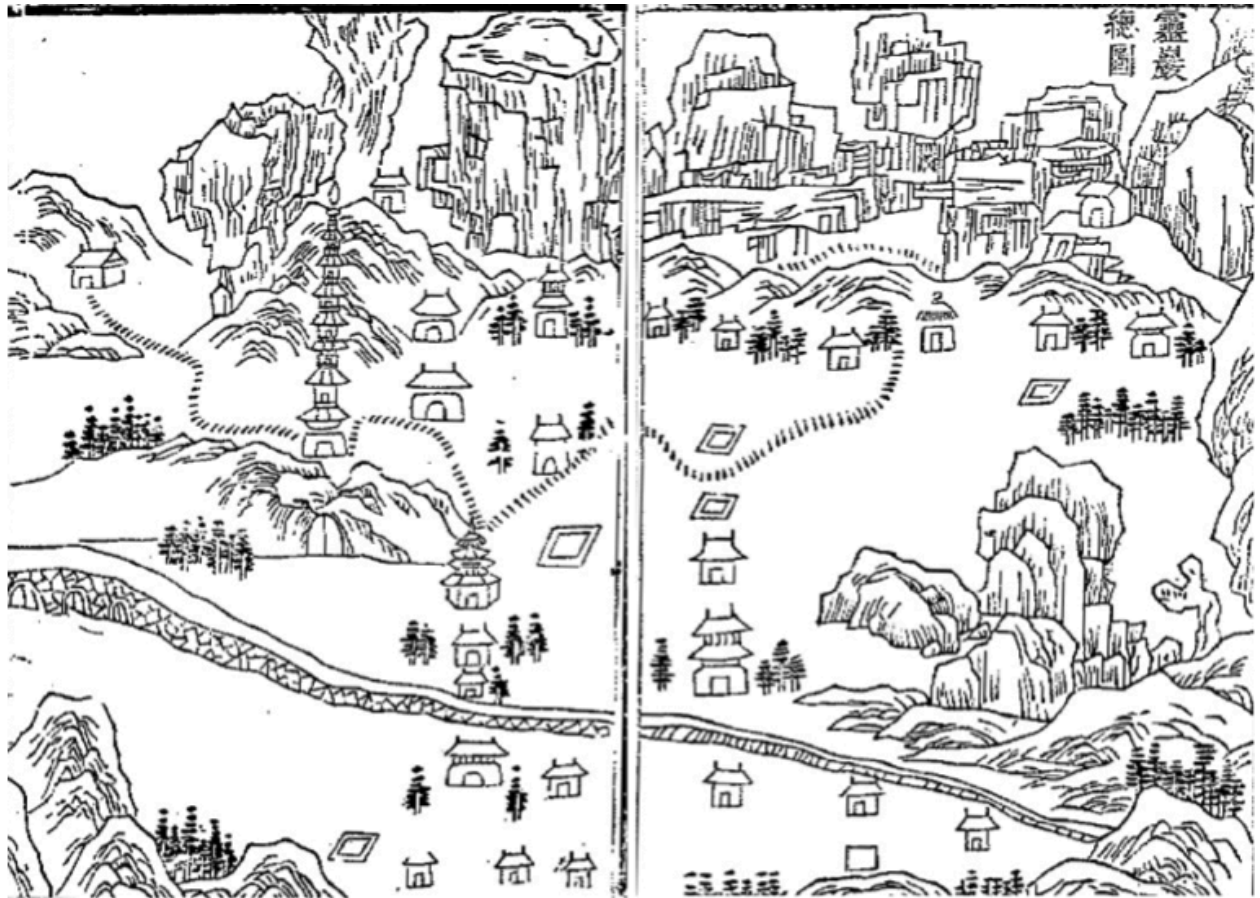
“Seeing” the “Ordinary” at Lingyan Temple in Eleventh-Century China

by

Rebecca M. Bieberly

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Doctoral Committee:
Associate Professor Kevin G. Carr, Co-Chair
Professor Martin J. Powers, Co-Chair
Associate Professor Christian de Pee
Professor James Robson, Harvard University



Lingyan Temple. c. 1699. Woodblock print. Reprinted from *Lingyan Temple Records* 靈巖志, ed. Wang Xin 王昕 et al., in *A Collection of Chinese Buddhist Temple Records* 中國佛寺誌叢刊, ed. Zhang Zhi 張智 et al. (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyin she, 1996), 20-21.

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To Pops and Ma

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ABBREVIATIONS

- LYZ: *Lingyan zhi* 靈巖志 (The Lingyan Temple Records). Edited by Wang Xin 王昕 and Ma Daxiang 馬大相. In *A Collection of Chinese Buddhist Temple Records* 中國佛寺誌叢刊, edited by Zhang Zhi 張智, Bai Huawen 白化文, and Liu Yongming 劉永明, 1-404. Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyin she, 1996.
- SKQS: *Wenyuangge Sikuquanshu dianziban* 文淵閣四庫全書電子版, Hong Kong: Zhongwen Daxue Chubanshe Dizhi, 1998.
- T: *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經. Edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 et al., 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1932.
- XZJ: *Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō* 卍新纂續藏經 [Revised edition of the *Xuzangjing*]. Edited by Kawamura Kōshō henshu shunin 河村孝照編主任, 90 vols. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1975-1989.
- ZGHLLB: *Zhongguo hualun leibian* 中國畫論類編 (Chinese Painting Theory by Category). Edited by Yu Jianhua (1895-1979) 俞劍華, 2 vols. Beijing: Zhongguo gidian yishu chubanshe, 1957.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the little studied grouping of twenty-seven eleventh-century *luohan* (Skt: *arhats*) figures in Thousand Buddha Hall 千佛殿 at Lingyan temple 靈巖寺 in Shandong province to recover their place within the artistic, religious, and intellectual trends of the Song dynasty (960-1279). Dated to 1066, these life-size clay sculptures depict *luohan*—historio-mythical enlightened monks tasked with protecting Buddhism on earth—with a naturalism that blurs the visual distinction between *luohan* and monks. Not presented as sacred and supernatural divinities, these are instead rendered as “ordinary” clerics.

Focused on the artistic and discursive practices around pictorial naturalism and the viewing strategies involved with “seeing” religious imagery during the Song period, this study offers three primary points. First, correlating the gestures, poses, and naturalism of the figures with contemporary monastic imagery and practice reveals the temple’s engagement with contemporary Chan Buddhist practices and politics. During the years the sculptures were produced, the visual demonstration of the monastic community’s competency in these matters would have been important, as Lingyan temple was being incorporated into the legal structure of the state and a larger network of Chan Buddhist institutions with its registration in 1070 as a Chan public monastery.

Second, the naturalistic style of the sculptures raised concerns around the “truth” of imagery for a range of Song educated people—from Chan monks to civil officials, poets, and others. For these diverse viewers, the sculptures would have acted as sites for negotiation around

the function of similitude, the objectivity of representation, and the authenticity of a represented subject. Appeal to these potential viewers and donors would have helped raise the temple's public visibility, securing its financial and institutional viability.

Third, the viewing strategies of that potential public were diverse; "seeing" was not a singular experience during this period. Encounters with the Lingyan temple sculptures would have been shaped by a multiplicity of factors, including social and religious protocols, expectations of responses from divinities, and skepticism around viewing. Not simply objects of Buddhist devotion, these sculptures could be viewed as religious objects, as works of artwork, or both.

Chapter One

The Northern Song *Luohan* Sculptures of Lingyan Temple: Problems and Possibilities

Walking into Thousand Buddha Hall 千佛殿 at Lingyan temple 靈巖寺 in Shandong province for the first time, I was overcome with a sense of bewilderment in seeing the forty *luohan* 羅漢 (Skt: *arhats*) sculptures that line the hall's walls (figs. 1.1 and 1.2). Each life-size clay figure radiates a sense of aliveness and immediacy with individualized expressive faces, distinctive seated poses, and diverse gestures. Looking at each figure's face is as if staring into the face of a man, a monk—a complex individual, tangible and real. No two figures from the grouping of forty are wholly alike and yet, all are dynamic naturalistic representations of monastic figures in the midst of action. Some have their fingers raised or pointed as if gesturing in the midst of debate or conversation (figs. 1.3 and 1.4). Others sit contentedly listening or are engaged in recognizable everyday activities like sewing (figs. 1.5 and 1.6). A few have their hands raised up to their faces or chests in abstract, almost mysterious gestures (figs. 1.7 and 1.8). Two more are meditating, as if detached from surrounding activities (figs. 1.9 and 1.10). Many depict men in the middle years of their lives, yet the gnarled visage of one figure loudly announces his advanced age (fig. 1.11). With smooth skin and rounded cheeks, several others appear to young for the elaborate monastic robes they wear (figs. 1.12 and 1.13). The compelling lifelikeness and diversity of the figures forms a scene of a lively gathering of monks.

Few historical records document this sculptural set, even as Lingyan temple itself, located in the foothills of Mt. Tai 泰山 south of the provincial capital of Ji'nan 濟南, has a history stemming back to the fourth century. The figures have been identified, at least since the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), as *luohan*—historio-mythical enlightened monks charged by the historical Buddha Śākyamuni with the task of protecting and maintaining Buddhism here on earth.¹ Until the last thirty years, little else has been known about them. In the 1980s, conservation work on the sculptures solidified the dating of the individual sculptures. Twenty-seven of the forty were created in the Northern Song period (960-1279), most likely having been installed in 1066, while the remaining thirteen are products of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644).

Few pre-modern sets of sculpted *luohan* figures survive into the present day in their original religious setting. Some sets, such as the ceramic Liao dynasty Yizhou 易州 *luohan*, have been dislocated to museums where they are displayed as single sculptures devoid of the religious context or activity that once marked their importance (figs. 1.14 and 1.15).² More commonly all that remains are heads, gruesomely displayed without their bodies, their history, and their religious setting (figs. 1.16 and 1.17). There are few remaining groupings of Song-era sculptures

¹ This definition is based on Mahāyāna concepts of these figures as found in the *Record of Abiding Dharma as Spoken by the Great Luohan Nandimitra* 大啊羅漢難提密多羅所說法住記, T. 49, no. 2030: 12-14. Translated into Chinese in 654 by Xuanzang (602-664 C.E.), this text was one of the most widespread and popular works to address *luohan* during the late Tang and Song dynasties. According to this scripture, sixteen named *luohan* were asked by the Buddha to remain in this world to protect the *dharma* (Buddha's Law) until the arrival of the future buddha, Maitreya. This differs significantly from the conception of these figures in Theravādic practices, in which they represent an ideal state that an individual can work toward through the path to arhatship. For a brief overview of the Theravādic concepts of these figures, see George Bond, "Arhat," *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. Vol. 1. (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 28-30 and Bong Seok Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China from the Seventh through Thirteenth Centuries: Narrative, Art, Space and Ritual" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2007), 14-26.

² These sculptures, of which ten are located throughout the world, are thought to have originally come from Yizhou or as it is now known, Yi county 易縣 in Hebei province. Two important studies on this life-size ceramic set or works within it are Richard Smithies, "The Search for the Lohans of I-chou (Yixian)," *Oriental Art* vol 30, no 3 (1984): 260-274 and Smithies, "A *Luohan* from Yizhou in the University of Pennsylvania Museum," *Oriental Art* 32 (February 2001): 51-56.

and none that are better preserved than the twenty-seven Northern Song works housed at Lingyan temple.

This present study centers on these twenty-seven Northern Song sculptures; on the sculptures that set the artistic standard for the later Ming dynasty works in the current grouping. Little studied by modern scholars and with no Song-era sources attesting to their existence, these artworks raise many compelling questions. Did the original audience for the sculptures find these figures compelling in their naturalistic presentation as monks? Who was the audience for these sculptures in the Song dynasty? What did that audience expect of these life-size and lifelike religious images? Further, why would a mid-sized regional temple commission a large set of sculptures that depict *luohan*, sacred Buddhist personages, as average-looking monks?

To investigate these questions, this study approaches these sculptures as art historical objects of inquiry, key evidence of contemporary Song Buddhist politics and practices, and as a lens through which to examine the visualities of this period. “Visualities” here refers to a matrix of artistic practices, assumptions about the role/s of images, and expectations regarding the representation of the visual world. Endeavoring to recover the place of the sculptures within the artistic, religious, and institutional trends of the Song dynasty, this project centers on three primary areas of inquiry: the artistic qualities that render the sculptures “ordinary” looking monks, Song-era discursive practices around pictorial naturalism and representation, and the viewing practices of educated Song people.

The “ordinary” qualities of the figural works, which present them not as the sacred and supernatural personages of *luohan*, but as earthly clerics engaged in actual contemporary monastic practice reflected important concerns for the temple community. During the very years the sculptures were produced, the temple was preparing to register with the government as a

Chan Buddhist public monastery, thereby becoming integrated into a larger network of Chan institutions. Demonstration of monastic competency with contemporary practices and ideas would have been an important for the temple. At the same time, pictorial naturalism was the subject of hot debate by a diverse Song educated public—from Chan monks to scholar-officials. The “truth” of naturalistic imagery raised concerns around the function of similitude, the objectivity of representation, and the authenticity of a represented subject. Engaging with issues important to multiple communities of potential viewers, who constituted potential donors, would have helped raise the temple’s public visibility, securing its financial and institutional viability.

Examining the viewing practices of that wide-ranging audience allows us to not only reconstruct the range of factors involved with “seeing” the Lingyan sculptures, but also places them at the center of the visual culture of the Song dynasty. As suggested by study, the viewing strategies of Song educated people were diverse; “seeing” was not a singular experience during this period. As larger societal as well as religious imperatives are reflected through the ways in which people organize, discuss, and prioritize representations of the visual world, encounters with the Lingyan temple sculptures would have been shaped by a multiplicity of factors. Social and religious protocols, expectations of responses from divinities, and skepticism around viewing more generally, all played a role in defining an individual’s viewing experience. In this way, Buddhist images, like the Lingyan temple sculptures, were not static, but shifted from viewer to viewer. Understood by some as religious objects, other viewers might consider them foremost as works of art. Yet, neither viewing position was fixed allowing the Lingyan temple sculptures to hold meaning for the full range of its potential viewership.

What is revealed time and time again throughout this investigation into these sculptural works is the ways they engaged with issues or practices important to multiple communities of

people. Although identified through context and content as Buddhist images, these sculptures attest to the integration of monastic institutions into the larger social and cultural politics of the Song dynasty and to the central role religious artwork played in negotiating those politics.

Current Research

Lingyan Temple and Its Northern Song Sculptures

Although visually compelling, the Northern Song sculptures from the set, as well as the later Ming dynasty ones, have been overlooked in modern art historical studies. Photographs of the Song-era sculptures are regularly included in survey books on *luohan* imagery or Buddhist sculpture published in China, where they are cited as exemplary examples of the “realism” of Song dynasty sculpture. However, they are rarely afforded more than a cursory description. The two earliest works on the sculptures are themselves heavily oriented toward photographic documentation: the 1921 book, *Der Tempelbau Die Lochan von Ling-yan-si*, by Bernd Melcher and Liao Hua’s 廖华 *The Song Dynasty Sculptures of Chongqing’s Lingyan*, published in 1959.³ In the United States, they are virtually absent from art historical discussions.⁴

What limited scholarly attention has been given to the sculptural works began in the 1950s and focused on two primary issues: the dating of the sculptures and the unusual number of forty figures. In 1957, Luo Zhewen 罗哲文 turned to Song-era stele inscriptions from the

³ Bernd Melchers, *Der Tempelbau: Die Lochan Von Ling-Yan-Si, Ein Hauptwerk Buddhistischer Plastik*, ed. E. Fuhrmann. Vol. II, China (Hagen: Folkwang-Verlag 1921) and Liao Hua 廖华, *The Song Dynasty Sculpture of Changqing’s Lingyan* 長清靈岩宋塑 (Beijing: People's Fine Art Press 人民美術出版社, 1959).

⁴ As far as I am aware only one English language book discusses the set, the 2006 publication, *Chinese Sculpture*, edited by Angela Howard and others. See Howard et al. ed. *Chinese Sculpture* (New Haven, London, and Beijing: Yale University Press and Foreign Languages Press, 2006), 389-93.

temple's vast stele collection as textual evidence to argue all forty of the sculptures were created during the Song dynasty.⁵ The inscriptions attest to a set of five hundred figural works at the temple during these years. There is no precedence in either the sutras or the image traditions of *luohan* figures for groups of forty, but instead sets of sixteen, eighteen, or five hundred were the normative numbers during the Song period. Luo argued the current sculptures must be all that remained from that original set of five hundred. His research highlights what is still a thorny problem in the study of the extant Song-era figures—there are no textual sources prior to the Ming dynasty that can be definitively correlated with them.

Taking a comparative approach to the issue of dating, Zhang Heyun 張鶴云 analyzed the naturalistic style of the works in relation to other sculptural sets dated to the Song and Ming dynasties.⁶ Although he too argued the set was produced in the Song dynasty, his comparative approach brought the sculptures out of art historical isolation and into the wider context of pre-modern Buddhist sculptural production.

Having suffered considerable damage in the mid-twentieth century, the sculptures were the focus of conservation projects between 1981-1982, efforts that revealed considerable information about the set's murky history.⁷ Radiocarbon dating combined with variations found in the organic materials used to create the clay works dated twenty-seven of the figures to the Song dynasty with the remaining thirteen dated to the Ming dynasty.⁸ The discovery of two

⁵ Luo Zhewen 罗哲文, "Musings on the Search for Ancient Relics at Lingyan Temple" 灵岩寺访古随笔, *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物参考资料, no. 5 (1957): 71-75.

⁶ Zhang Heyun 張鶴云, "Research on the Ancient Sculptures of Changqing's Lingyan Temple" 长清灵岩寺古塑像考 *Wenwu* 文物, no. 12 (1959): 1-16.

⁷ Although the damage to the set has not been addressed in the scholarship on the sculptures, comparisons of photographs taken by Bernd Melcher in the early twentieth century and those taken in the late 1950s by Zhang Heyun reveal that many of sculptures' hands were badly damaged in the intervening years.

⁸ A key member of the conservation team, Hu Jigao 胡继高, revealed the science behind the restoration efforts, including a detailed description of the techniques used to produce the sculptures of both eras. These are discussed in Chapter Two. He headed the projects, which were undertaken in May of 1981 and between June and September of

inscriptions and numerous objects inside thirteen of the sculptures, including coins, mirrors, a set of silk and cotton viscera, and an iron sculpture of a *luohan*, led Zhou Fusen 周福森 to suggest the Song-era sculptures were installed, and thus created, no later than 1066.⁹ Based on references found in Yuan dynasty regional gazetteers to thirty-two Buddhist sculptures located in another building at the complex, Banzhou Hall 般舟殿 (Skt: *pratyutpanna*), he further theorized the extant Song sculptures were all that remained from what was originally two sets of sixteen *luohan* figures.¹⁰ As noted above, *luohan* images were often depicted in groups of sixteen during the Song dynasty. Banzhou Hall itself collapsed in the late sixteenth century, which according to Zhou, destroyed five of the original sculptures. To explain the current number of extant figures in the group and their location in Thousand Buddha Hall, he suggested the twenty-seven that survived the collapse were moved to their current location when it was renovated in 1587. To fill the larger space of their new home, the destroyed works were replaced and an additional thirteen sculptures were commissioned. Due to the archeological discovery of the ruins of Banzhou Hall in the 1990s, Zhou's theories on dating and the original location of the Song dynasty sculptures from the current group are now widely accepted.

In the years since Zhou's publication, study of the sculptures has declined, even as tourism has increased at the temple and the sculptures have gained a wider national and

1982. See Hu Jigao, "Restoration of the Painted *Luohan* Sculptures of Lingyan Temple in Changqing County, Shandong Province" 山东长清县灵岩寺彩塑罗汉像的修复, *Kaogu* 考古 no. 11 (1983): 1025-38, 64.

⁹ For a detailed discussion of Zhou's theories, specifically on the evidence for the date of production to 1066, see Chapter Two of this present study. Zhou Fusen 周福森, "Relevant Questions on the Dating of the *Luohan* Sculptures of Lingyan Temple in Shandong's Changqing County" 山东长清灵岩寺罗汉像的盟制年代及有关问题, *Wenwu* 文物 3 (1984): 76-84. Zhou was the lead writer of this article, but it was a cooperative effort by several organizations, including the Ji'nan Committee for the Management of Cultural and Historical Relics 济南市文管会, Ji'nan Municipal Cultural Relics Administrative Institute 济南市文管会, Ji'nan Municipal Museum 济南市博物馆, and the Changqing Lingyan Temple Cultural Administrative Office 舍長清縣靈岩寺文官所.

¹⁰ Both of these records have been addressed by Zhou Fusen and Zhang Heyun. See Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 81 and Zhang Heyun, "Research," 4. This hall was located directly north of Thousand Buddha hall.

international audience.¹¹ Two short articles published in 2003 both aimed to situate the sculptures within a larger context, but through different approaches. Tao Siyan 陶思炎 investigated the patterns and motifs of the figures' monastic robes in relation to Song dynasty popular culture, while Wang Chang 王暢 used the Lingyan temple sculptures as key examples of sculpted works that depict sacred personages as human and approachable.¹² Wang examined the vast art historical traditions of Chinese religious artwork in broad strokes to suggest this aesthetic approach vacillated with sacred figures presented as regal and idealized. Both authors touched on deeper issues at stake with the sculptures, but the abbreviated nature of the studies left aside more complex analysis of the religious or social context of their production.

In the most in-depth study of the artworks in the post-archeological period, Zhao Ying 趙穎 followed in the footsteps of Zhang Heyun in his use of a comparative approach. Arguing for a stylistic correspondence between the Northern Song sculptures from the set and contemporary stone *luohan* sculptures as well as bodhisattva images, Zhao further contextualized the works

¹¹ For information on tourism at the site, see <http://sd.infobase.gov.cn/bin/mse.exe?searchword=%u95F%u6E0&K=c16&A=2&rec=500&run=13> Accessed on March 3

2010. As tourism has increased so too have the number of publications aimed at tourists. Generally, the information provided in these small glossy books is based on scholarly research on the temple and its artwork. However, many of these short image laden books selectively highlight the periods of the temple's history when it garnered more acclaim on a national level, and thus these texts participate in the creation of a new narrative on the complex and its artwork. For examples of these types of publications, see *Lingyan Temple: A Thousand Years of Ancient Sculpture* 靈巖寺: 千年古刻, ed. Fu Tian 福田 (Haifeng Press 海風出版社, 2000) and *The No. 1 Statues Throughout China* 海內第一名塑, ed. Ji'nan Foreign Cultural Exchange Association 濟南市對外文文化交流協會編 (Ji'nan: Ji'nan Press, 1991).

¹² Tao Siyan 陶思炎, "Investigation into the Auspicious Dress of the Clay *Luohan* Sculptures of Lingyan Temple 靈巖寺泥塑羅漢吉祥衣飾探究, *Dongnan wenwu* 東南文化 5 (2003): 78-80. Wang Chang 王暢, "Return from God-Based to Man-Based: The Aesthetic Features of the Buddhist Sculptures of Lingyan Temple" 從神本向人本的回歸——兼論靈巖寺佛教雕塑藝術的審美特色, *Dongfang luntan* 東方論壇 no. 1 (2003): 58-65.

within the artistic trends of Song-era Buddhist sculptural production. His Master's Thesis published in 2005 has been the last major study on the Northern Song sculptures.¹³

Attendant to research on the sculptures, the temple's history has been the subject of several studies in the last twenty years. Currently the most comprehensive work in this area is the 1999 book, *Lingyan Temple* 靈巖寺, a collaborative effort headed by Wang Rongyu 王榮玉.¹⁴ Outlining the temple's long history from its first founding by Zhu Langong 竺朗公 in the Eastern Jin period (317-420) through the present day, Wang focuses most closely on the Tang and Song dynasties, periods of significant expansion and public visibility for the temple. His research revealed the temple had contact with early proponents of Chan Buddhist practices from the end of the eighth century onward.¹⁵ Although visited by at least one monk associated with the so-called "Southern" school of Chan, Wang has suggested that up through 1070 Lingyan temple was an important site for those associated with the Northern school.¹⁶

¹³ Zhao Ying 趙穎, "A Comparative Study of the Song Dynasty *Luohan* Sculptures of the Lingyan Temple and the Characteristics of Song Era Plastic Arts 靈巖寺宋塑羅漢像與宋代人物造型藝術的比較研究 (Master of Arts thesis, Shandong University, 2005).

¹⁴ Wang Rongyu 王榮玉 et al. ed., *Lingyan Temple* 靈巖寺 (Beijing: Wenwu Press, 1999). Another more recent study, Guan Ping's 管萍 *History of Lingyan Temple* 靈岩寺史話 published in 2011, approaches the temple's history thematically. However, his study only briefly acknowledges the *luohan* sculptural set currently in Thousand Buddha Hall and does not discuss the Song dynasty context of the original twenty-seven works. See, Guan, *History of Lingyan Temple* 靈岩寺史話 (Ji'nan: Ji'nan Press, 2011).

¹⁵ According to Wang, toward the end of the eighth century, the monk Huaihui 懷暉, a student of the third patriarch of the Southern school, Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一, visited the temple. See Wang *Lingyan Temple*, 11. Much of Wang's research is based on the "Lingyan Records," 靈巖志 a seventeenth-century gazetteer, which is the primary source of information on the temple's history. Compiled by Wang Xin 王昕 and Ma Daxiang 馬大相, it was originally published in 1699. This document contains the largest extant corpus of material on the complex, including transcriptions of numerous poems, stele inscriptions, imperial edicts, and several woodblock print illustrations of the temple complex. A 1996 reprinting has made it more accessible to researchers. See Wang Xin 王昕 and Ma Daxiang 馬大相, "Lingyan Temple Records" 靈巖志 in *A Collection of Chinese Buddhist Temple Records* 中國佛寺誌叢刊, ed. Zhang Zhi 張智 et al. (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyin she, 1996), 1-404. This is hereafter abbreviated as LYZ. A digital facsimile of this gazetteer is included in Dharma Drum Buddhist College's 法鼓佛教學院 "Digital Archive of Chinese Buddhist Temple Gazetteers," as part of their Temple Gazetteer Project. See, <http://buddhisticinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/fosizhi/>

¹⁶ One of the modern controversies surrounding the early history of Chan is the development of the idea of "gradual" enlightenment and its association with what later developed into the Northern school of Chan versus the idea of "sudden" enlightenment and its association with the Southern school of Chan. For the political context encoded in

Lingyan temple underwent two significant changes in status during the Northern Song period. In the Jingde era 景德 (1004-1007) of the reign of Emperor Zhenzong 真宗 (968-1022; r. 968-1022), the temple was registered with government for the first time as a Chan temple. Reflecting its change in status, it was designated the Jingde Lingyan Chan Temple 景德靈巖禪寺. In 1070, only four short years after the sculptures were created, the temple was again registered with the government to become Lingyan Temple of the Ten Directions 十方靈巖禪寺.¹⁷ With this registration it became a Chan public monastery. Fan Xuehui 范学辉 has argued that with this registration the temple gained access to clerics associated with the Southern school of Chan and thus the temple was regionally important for helping introduce concepts important to this school, such as “sudden enlightenment,” to Shandong province.¹⁸

Although modern scholarship on the Northern Song sculptures at the temple and the temple itself acknowledge this institutional history, there has been little study of the impact of these changes on the temple or its relationship to the Northern Song figural works. However, recent scholarship in the area of Buddhist studies has addressed some concerns relevant to the temple and its sculptures. Studies by T. Griffith Foulk, Morten Schlütter, and others have re-evaluated the long held view that the Chan school was distinct from others of the Song dynasty, to ask what exactly distinguished a temple, a practice, or a monk as “Chan?” These studies have shed light on how few distinctions there were between temples in terms of architecture and monastic practices.¹⁹ Most public monasteries had clerics who specialized in various practices

this supposed split, see Albert Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 28-37.

¹⁷ This occurred during the reign of Emperor Shenzong 宋神宗 (r. 1068-1086)

¹⁸ Fan Xuehui 范学辉, "Theories on Buddhism in Shandong Province During the Northern Song Period" 论北宋时期的山东佛教, *Qilu Cultural Research* 齐鲁文化研究 2 (2003): 132.

¹⁹ Theodore Griffith Foulk, "The 'Ch'an School' and Its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1987), 91 and Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in

and sutra study. In clarifying his own approach to this issue, Foulk suggested “Chan” noted a “shared set of beliefs rather than a set of distinctive practices.”²⁰

Modern scholars have, however, observed that the Song government did make distinctions between monasteries, the main one being distinguishing between “hereditary” 甲乙 and “public” abbacies 十方.²¹ Public abbacies recognized that the head office, the abbacy, could not be handed down from a master to his student. Instead, the local Buddhist registry of temples in cooperation with local civil authorities would choose a candidate for the position. Further, temples could register as Chan, Vinaya 律, or Tiantai 天台 institutions.²² With a limited tenure for an abbot at any one monastery, institutions, such as Lingyan temple, had access to highly educated clerical leaders well versed in contemporary religious issues and politics. Through registration, the temple also gained a wider network of secular associations through its interactions with civil authorities. By the late twelfth century this system of “public” temples was institutionalized as “Five Mountains Ten Monasteries” 五山十刹, a network of prominent registered temples that was probably already in practice in the earlier years of the Song dynasty.²³

Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 167-191.

²⁰ Foulk, “Myth, Ritual,” 163.

²¹ For discussion on Song monasteries and government regulations, see Morten Schlütter, “Vinaya Monasteries, Public Abbacies, and State Control of Buddhism under the Song (960-1279),” in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya, Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Stanley Weinstein*, ed. William M. Bodiford (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 136-160; 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), 34-39; Foulk, “The 'Ch'an School,’” 62-71.

²² The vast majority of temples registered in the Song did so as “Chan” monasteries. A smaller number were registered as Vinaya or Tiantai.

²³ Foulk, “Myth, Ritual,” 148, 163-167. In the most extensive examination of the “Five Mountain” system, Martin Collcutt has focused on the adaptation and implementation of this system in Japan. See Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1981).

Currently, scholars, temple administrators, and the viewing public identify the Northern Song sculptures in Thousand Buddha hall as *luohan*. With no period documents attesting to the clay figures, there is room for speculation on this issue. This present study, however, leaves that speculation aside and tentatively accepts their status as *luohan* in favor of a more compelling issue: why do the figures lack a clear cut visual identification? In varying configurations, the figures display features associated with both *luohan*, namely long earlobes, and images of monks, such as monastic robes. Although *luohan* are accorded supernatural abilities in scripture, it is the human qualities of the Lingyan figures that are emphasized, as Wang Chang has noted, not the markers of their status as divine personages.²⁴

Scholars working with the imagery and devotional practices around *luohan* have long recognized the tremendous overlap in the visual and textual descriptions of these two groups of personages. Early twentieth century scholars, such as Sylvain Lévi, Édouard Chavannes, and M.W. de Visser, identified the primary canonical sources for these figures, many of which highlight the unassuming nature of these sacred figures.²⁵ Much more recently, Jen Lang Shih has provided further critical analysis of one of the most important medieval texts describing

²⁴ Wang, "Return from God-Based," 58. Descriptions of the divine characteristics of the *luohan* are alluded to in several texts, including the most popular text on *luohan* in the Song period, *A Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma, Narrated by the Great Arhat Nandimitra*. Some of the supramundane powers available to *luohan* include: eight kinds of Liberation 八解脱, three kinds of insight known as the Three Wisdoms 三明 (Skt: *Vidyas*) and six kinds of transcendent knowledge known as the Six *Abhijñās* 六通. The Three Wisdoms refers to the ability of *luohan* to have knowledge of past lives—their own and others, knowledge of the future, and of the current state of the suffering of others. The Six *Abhijñās* include the Three Wisdoms and the ability to see anything at any time, to know the inner thoughts of others, and to hear all sounds. See Richard K. Kent, "The Sixteen Lohans in the Pai-Miao Style: From Sung to Early Ching" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1995), 15-16 and Jen Lang Shih, "The Perpetuity of the Dharma: A Study and Translation of *Da Aluohan* Nantimiduoluo Suoshuo Fazhu Ji 《大啊羅漢難提密多羅 所說法住記》 ("A Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma, Narrated by the Great *Arhat* Nandimitra", Nandimitrāvādāna)" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 2002), 206, fn. 311 and 312.

²⁵ Sylvain Lévi and Édouard Chavannes, "Les Seize Arhat Protecteurs De La Loi," *Journal Asiatique*, no. 8 (1916). M. W. de Visser, *The Arhats in China and Japan* (Berlin: Oesterheld & Co., 1923). de Visser's expanded the scope of inquiry around *luohan* to include poems and prose works by literati as well as visual representation of them.

luohan with her translation of *A Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma, Narrated by the Great Arhat Nandimitra*.²⁶

Wen Fong, who initiated the art historical study of *luohan* in the United States with his 1956 dissertation on the Daitokuji scrolls, has suggested that positioned as average monks, *luohan* were more approachable to the laity than the regal figures of the bodhisattvas.²⁷ Further, using both visual and textual materials, Fong located the early artistic sources of *luohan* imagery in pre-Song representations of monks and argued for a multi-stage development of the iconography of these figures.²⁸ In examining *baimiao* 白描 style *luohan* images produced between the Song and Qing dynasties, Richard K. Kent has argued an iconographical shift occurred in the late Northern Song period, which transformed these sacred figures into “dignified Chan abbots” engaged in “activities more likely associated with the world of the scholar’s studio and garden than with a monastery or the kind of distant, sanctified realm associated with *luohan*.”²⁹ Although the majority of the Northern Song Lingyan temple figures are depicted in robes associated with abbots, the highest ranking monks in temples, few of them display the comportment or markers of status associated with “dignified” clerics, such as those found in the handscroll at the center of Kent’s Song dynasty investigations, Fanlong’s 梵隆 (d. 1187) *Sixteen Luohan* (fig. 1.18).³⁰

²⁶ See footnote 24 above.

²⁷ Wen Fong, "The Five Hundred Lohans at the Daitokuji" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1956), 7-8.

²⁸ Fong argued *luohan* imagery developed in three “stages”: an early static iconic type, an intermediary stage that included landscape elements and attendant figures, and a third stage in which the attendant figures became the “symbolic attributes” of *luohan*. See Fong, "The Five Hundred Lohans," 82-97.

²⁹ Kent, "Sixteen Lohans," 5, 30-35, 76.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

While Fong and Kent focused on painted representations of *luohan*, Chen Qingxiang 陳清香 considered these figures more broadly in a study published in 1995.³¹ Ranging in its geographical (China, Japan, and Taiwan) and temporal scope (pre-Song through the Yuan dynasty), Chen's discussion is also inclusive of sculpture. Although her examination of sculpted figures includes in-depth stylistic and historiographical analysis of the Northern Song *luohan* sculptural set at Baosheng temple, the Lingyan temple works are conspicuously absent.

The last major study on *luohan*, Bong Seok Joo's 2007 dissertation, exemplifies the cross-disciplinary nature of this field of inquiry considering a broad range of visual and textual sources in his examination of *luohan* worship in medieval China.³² However, his approach to the "ordinariness" of *luohan* is centered on doctrinal directives, which encouraged laity to treat every monk as if he were a *luohan*.³³

Naturalism in Song dynasty visual arts and art theory

Even as the Lingyan temple sculptures have been forgotten in discussions on the Song-era arts, all of the above studies have noted the increasingly naturalistic depictions of *luohan* throughout this period. The stylistic shift toward naturalism, however, was not limited to *luohan* imagery, but was part of trends found within the wider context of the visual arts and theories of the Song dynasty. As Susan Bush, Hsio-yen Shih, James Cahill, and Wen Fong among others, have observed, pictorial naturalism 天然 and similitude 形似 were both fundamental goals for

³¹ Chen Qingxiang 陳清香, *Research on Luohan Images* 羅漢圖像研究 (Taipei: Wenjin Chubanshe 文津出版社, 1995).

³² Bong Seok Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China from the Seventh through Thirteenth Centuries: Narrative, Art, Space and Ritual" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2007).

³³ Joo, "Arhat Cult in China," 300.

artists up through the latter years of the eleventh century as exemplified by landscape painting.³⁴ Around this significant genre, artists, critics, and connoisseurs developed highly sophisticated pictorial and textual lexicons for reproducing the natural world and discussing and assessing those works. Paintings, such as Guo Xi's 郭熙 (c.1020-c. 1090) *Early Spring* 早春圖 and Fan Kuan's 范寬 (fl. 990-1020) *Travelers Among Mountains and Streams* 谿山行旅 attest to the high level of skill some artists attained during this period (fig. 1.19 and 1.20).

In the late eleventh century, literati such as Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105) and others began to probe into the expressive qualities of the pictorial arts as seen through both the artist and subject. No longer was naturalism the primary means through which artists and viewers approached images, instead the focus shifted to naturalness 天然 (*tianran*). By the end of the Southern Song period (1127-1260), as Wen Fong has noted, self-expression was replacing mimetic representation as an artistic goal in painting.³⁵

In one of the most in-depth studies on this shift, Martin J. Powers has suggested “alternative discourses” developed in the late eleventh century around pictorial representation as the result of cultural competition between scholar-officials (*literati*) and those of the imperial court.³⁶ Many of the participants in these discussions were political, intellectual and cultural leaders, who had attained their socio-economic status not through their family's name or their

³⁴ Many researchers have written about this aspect of Chinese painting, including Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shi (1037-1101) to T'ung Ch'i-Ch'ang (1555-1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985); James Cahill “Some Rocks in Early Chinese Painting,” *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, XVI (1962): 77-87; Wen C. Fong, “Monumental Landscape Painting,” in *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum, Taipei*, ed. Wen C. Fong et al. (New York and Taipei: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and National Palace Museum), 122-137; Martin J. Powers, “Discourses of Representation in Tenth and Eleventh Century China,” in *The Art of Interpreting*, ed. Susan Scott (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1995), 88-125 and Alfreda Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China: The Subtle Art of Dissent* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2000), 121-25.

³⁵ Wen C. Fong, “Song Mimesis and Beyond,” in *Tradition and Transformation: Studies in Chinese Art in Honor of Chu-Tsing Li*, ed. Judith G. Smith (Lawrence, Kansas: Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas), 85-109.

³⁶ Powers, “Discourses of Representation,” 94-95.

connections to officials in government, but through merit-based civil service examinations. These examinations, which were expanded in the early years of the Song dynasty, opened the door for people of all backgrounds to participate in the government based on their demonstration of skill and knowledge. Powers' study opens the door to considering the ways pictorial naturalism raised issues for multiple communities of individuals in the Song dynasty.

Much like Powers, Peter Sturman highlights the complex politics of this highly educated group of social and political leaders in examining literati conceptions of portraits through the lens of changing notions of self and identity during the Song.³⁷ Portraiture as a genre, however, was not limited to literati, but included the socio-economically privileged within civil, imperial, and religious communities. As noted in studies of portraiture by Richard Vinograd, Jan Stuart, Mette Siggstedt, and Patricia Ebrey, painting conventions for portraits of this period emphasized detailed pictorial descriptions of sitters' faces—a feature shared with the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple.³⁸

While interest in portraiture with the arts public generally declined in popularity during the Song period, monastic portraiture (*dingxiang* 頂相 or *zhenxiang* 真相; Jpn: *chinzo*) gained new importance. The status of abbots, the people most likely to be the subject of a portrait, shifted in the Northern Song dynasty and with it came an increase in the production of these

³⁷ Peter C. Sturman, "In the Realm of Naturalness: Problems of Self-Imaging by the Northern Sung Literati," in *Arts of the Sung and Yuan*, ed. Maxwell K. Hearn et. al (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 165-185.

³⁸ There are several significant studies on portraiture in China. For discussions focused on "realism" of these images and the social and/or political issues at stake during the different historical periods, see Mette Siggstedt, "Forms of Fate: An Investigation of the Relationship between Formal Portraiture, Especially Ancestral Portraits, and Physiognomy (Xiangshou) on China," in *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Chinese Art History* vol. 2 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1991), 713-748 and Jan Stuart, "The Face in Life and Death: Mimesis and Chinese Ancestor Portraits," in *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture*, ed. Wu Hung et. al (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 197-228; 398-403. Audrey Spiro has addressed the social construction of portraits in the pre-Tang periods in *Contemplating the Ancients: Aesthetic and Social Issues in Early Chinese Portraiture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). Nuanced studies on portraiture and its relationship to the imperial courts include Patricia Ebrey, "Portrait Sculptures in the Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China," *T'oung Pao* 83 (1997): 42-92 and Julia Murray, "The Hangzhou Portraits of Confucius and His 72 Disciples (Shengxian Tu): Art in the Service of Politics," *Art Bulletin* 74, no. 1 (1992): 7-18. Currently, the most important study on Ming portraiture is Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992).

images. The naturalism seen with the few remaining portraits from this period has been subject to re-evaluation in the last thirty years. Previously, these portraits were considered to be one of many objects used as “certificates of enlightenment” 傳法; (Jpn: *denbō*); objects given by a teacher to his student as “proof” of the student’s enlightenment and his status as the teacher’s Dharma heir 法嗣.³⁹ The naturalism of the painted figures was understood as a visual vehicle for remembrance of the teacher and his work.⁴⁰

T. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf challenged this understanding of these objects in 1993/1994.⁴¹ Arguing the portraits were not used as proof of the transmission of the *dharma*, they suggested these images were primarily memorial in function. In examining the inscriptions commonly found on these painted works, portrait-eulogies 真讚 (*zhenzan*), and those which survive in the collected writings of individual clerics from the Song period, Foulk and Sharf also discovered these portraits were given to a wide range of recipients—from students and interested lay people to those outside of the monastic institution. In other words, these objects and their naturalistic style functioned across communities. Yukio Lippit has termed the wide audience of these portraits the “extramonastic constituencies” of the objects.⁴²

For Song clerics, portrait-eulogies that accompanied paintings were an important vehicle of self-expression. While individual portrait-eulogies are often referenced in contemporary

³⁹ Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, ed., *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts/ New York Graphic Society, 1970), xxx. The idea that these images were certificates has been long standing and did not originate with Fontein and Hickman. Also see, Helmut Brinker and Kanazawa Hiroshi, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writing*, trans. Andreas Leisinger (Zurich: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1996), 117-118. For a general discussion on inheritance certificates, see Foulk, "The 'Ch'an School'," 72-73.

⁴⁰ Fontein and Hickman, *Zen Painting*, xxxi.

⁴¹ T. Griffith Foulk and Robert H. Sharf, "On the Ritual Use of Ch'an Portraiture in Medieval China," *Cahiers d'Extrême Asie* 7 (1993-94): 149-220. Foulk and Sharf, "Ritual Use," 162. T. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf have noted that the term *dingxiang* was not limited to painting in period texts, but referred to a diversity of objects. Attempts by modern scholars to define these works, they have argued, often fail to take this into account with the resultant definitions acting in a “normative and stipulative way,” rather than being merely descriptive. See Foulk and Sharf, "On the Ritual Use," 157.

⁴² Yukio Lippit, "Negative Versimilitude: The Zen Portrait in Medieval Japan," in *Asian Art History in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai (Williamstown, Mass: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007),

scholarly discussions on Song dynasty portraiture, there has been little concerted study of this important genre of writing. T. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf were the first to study this corpus of material in-depth with Wendi Adamek more recently (2007) addressing the conflicting soteriological ideas surrounding representation in these writings.⁴³ With hundreds of these eulogies surviving in the collected works of individual monks, this is a resource rich with possibilities that this present study explores further.

Chan Imagery

As noted previously, *luohan* images are often associated with Chan Buddhism. Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman have suggested the first Chan artist was, in fact, the famous Tang dynasty monk-painter of *luohan*, Guanxiu (832-912).⁴⁴ Modern scholarship on Chan imagery has focused primarily on painting, leaving sculpted works of these figures in an awkward position. Seminal texts, such as Helmut Brinker and Hiroshi Kanazawa's *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, include discussions on *luohan* imagery, but sculpture is limited to monastic portraits.⁴⁵ Other major catalogues or studies on Chan art are limited even further to just painting and primarily those of the Southern Song period (1126-1279): from

⁴³ Foulk and Sharf, "On the Ritual Use," 149-220 and Wendi Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Contexts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 254-267.

⁴⁴ Fontein, *Zen Painting*, xix.

⁴⁵ Brinker, *Zen: Masters*. The most prominent examples of this are found with major catalogues published in conjunction with two exhibitions of Chan/Zen art: a 1970 exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and a 2007 exhibition at the Japan Society Gallery in New York. See, Fontein, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* and Naomi Noble Richard and Melanie B.D. Klein, eds., *Awakenings: Zen Figure Paintings in Medieval Japan* (New York: Japan Society, 2007). Helmut Brinker addresses Buddhist sculpture in-depth in his 2011 book, *Secrets of the Sacred: Empowering Buddhist Images in Clear, in Code, and in Cache*. However, he does not discuss *luohan* sculpture and his focus is on issues around relics and Esoteric (Vajrayāna) Buddhist practices in China and Japan. See, Brinker, *Secrets of the Sacred: Empowering Buddhist Images in Clear, in Code, and in Cache* (Lawrence, Kansas and Seattle, Washington: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas in association with University of Washington Press, 2011).

abstract expressive works like Mu Qi's 牧谿 (act. 1220s-1280s) famous *Six Persimmons* painting 柿圖/柿图 and monochromatic paintings of *luohan* and eccentric Chan personages to highly naturalistic monk portraiture 頂相 (Jpn: *chinzo*) (fig. 1.20).

Charles Lachman has argued the rubric of Chan art is a modern construction as there is neither term nor category for Chan art during either the earlier Tang dynasty (618-907) or the Song.⁴⁶ Further, there are no records of *luohan* worship as the particular purview of this school nor are any of the sutras that mention *luohan* specifically related to the Chan school. For medieval/early modern communities, this type of distinction may not have had any relevance. This leaves open the question of whether or not this distinction holds any value for modern scholars.

This study suggests there is heuristic value to the categorization of “Chan” art. The institutional status of Lingyan temple, as a Chan monastery in 1070, allows us to consider the naturalism of the Northern Song sculptures through contemporary Chan monastic writings. As is suggested in Chapter Three, pictorial naturalism for Chan clerics raised many concerns over the notion of “truth,” a concern shared with writers outside of the monastic institution. While *luohan* imagery may not have been used exclusively by Chan temples or monks associated with Chan ideas and practices, these sculptural works offer one example of the ways this type of imagery raised, reflected and participated in contemporary issues important to a monastic community governmentally recognized as Chan. In other words, viewed as “Chan” art, the Lingyan temple sculptures highlight the socio-religious politics surrounding naturalistic imagery in the Song dynasty.

⁴⁶ Charles Lachman, “Art,” in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez Jr. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 41.

Visuality and Visual Culture

Regardless of the modern problems with rubrics, such as “Chan art,” the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures are at the most fundamental level Buddhist objects. This raises a significant issue for the present study. Created by a monastic community for devotional practices and housed in the sacred space of a temple, these sculptures also have compelling aesthetic qualities. Do we approach the sculptures through religious practice and doctrine or through their artistic form? Charles Lachman has posed the question of whether there is a conflict between aesthetic motivation and religious function with imagery.⁴⁷

Overlooking the devotional context of the sculptures poses the risk of obscuring the diverse practices and audiences of these objects, rendering them as de-contextualized as those isolated *luohan* found in museums. However, Gregory Levine has argued, “if by emphasizing ritual and ontology we overlook the peculiarities of visual form in an image’s devotional reception, we may give short shrift to the processes of vision and affective power of images.”⁴⁸ Further, focusing solely on religious practices around the Lingyan temple works, we are, in essence, suggesting the temple and its monastic community was isolated from broader Chinese society of the eleventh century, which this study demonstrates was far from the case.

To approach this quandary, this present study lets Song-era viewers guide us. Did they make distinctions between aesthetics and function? Underlying this question is the issue of how eleventh-century audiences “saw” religious images. Since the 1950s scholars working with the arts of the Renaissance have been probing into the dialectics of “seeing.” Ernst Gombrich, as one of the earliest to address questions of this nature, turned to the idea of decorum as understood by

⁴⁷ Charles Lachman, “Art,” 39.

⁴⁸ Gregory P. A. Levine, *Daitokuji: Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 71.

period writers.⁴⁹ As the behaviors and protocols considered appropriate with images, decorum can be a consideration with Song-era audiences as well, even if they did not use similar terminology. In the 1970s, Michael Baxandall coined the term “period eye” to highlight the social construction of the experience of seeing.⁵⁰ Baxandall’s approach focused on the various categories viewers use to organize the visual world, the skills and knowledge they bring to the experience of seeing, and the particular stances they adopt toward images based on assumptions and expectations of them. In the last twenty-five years, scholarly discussions on the social construction of vision or “visuality” have expanded even further beyond the arts to include viewers’ experiences with any part of the visual world.⁵¹

Scholars working with the arts of China have not been silent in these discussions into “seeing.” Craig Clunas’ 1997 study of Ming dynasty viewing practices and visual culture has become not only a seminal work on this period, but also a model for approaching this issue regardless of the era.⁵² Studies by Lisa Claypool, Patricia Ebrey, and Richard Vinograd among others, have tackled the viewing practices of audiences in eras as distinct as the Northern Song dynasty and the early twentieth century.⁵³

The investigative tools developed by all of these scholars provide a starting point for examining Song-era viewers’ experiences with looking at objects like the Lingyan temple sculptures. Were there religious or social protocols that shaped viewers’ behavior or attitudes

⁴⁹ E.H. Gombrich, *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, Vol. 2: Symbolic Images (London, Phaidon Press Limited, 1985), 7-11.

⁵⁰ Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 29-108.

⁵¹ One of the pioneering books in the area of visuality and visual culture was the 1988 book, *Vision and Visuality*, edited by Hal Foster. See Hal Foster, ed. *Vision and Visuality* (Seattle, WA, Bay Press, 1988).

⁵² Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997).

⁵³ See Lisa Claypool “Ways of Seeing the Nation: Chinese Painting in the National Essence Journal (1905-1911) and Exhibition Culture,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 55-82; Patricia Ebrey, “Taking Out the Grand Carriage: Imperial Spectacle and the Visual Culture of Northern Song Kaifeng,” *Asia Major*, Third Series, vol. 12, no. 1 (1999): 33-65; Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

toward religious images? What expectations did audiences have of objects endowed with religious power and significance? Did viewers make assumptions about these types of images or of the process of viewing? These kinds of questions shift the focus away from the constructed binary of form versus function and onto the audiences and their considerations with religious images. Through this approach, we not only develop a deeper understanding of the Lingyan temple sculptures themselves, but also the visualities of their potential viewers, the very people who gave meaning to these sculptures.

Chapter Overview

This present study not only builds upon the foundational research conducted on the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures, but also aims to situate them within the broader context of the Song dynasty. Religious texts, canonical and otherwise, are considered alongside writings on art and art theory. The viewing practices of clerics and laity are examined in concert with those of people not associated with religious institutions. Each of the following chapters investigates the sculptures through different approaches, creating chapter-by-chapter a multi-dimensional picture of the artworks and the artistic, religious, and cultural politics at stake with them.

In Chapter Two, the visual identity of the Northern Song sculptures as *luohan* is examined through iconographic analysis and stylistic comparisons with contemporary monastic portraiture and other sets of sculpted figures. Close examination of the artistic choices involved in presenting the figures as “ordinary” monks caught, as it were, in the midst of the routines and practices of contemporary clerics reveals the blurred line between *luohan* and monk. As

suggested in this chapter, this was not accidental nor were the artists and temple commissioners simply following conventions for depicting *luohan*. During the very years the sculptures were created, the temple was attempting to gain wider public visibility in preparation for registration with the government as a Chan public monastery. The *luohan* sculptures acted as visual demonstrations of monastic skill with contemporary practice and ideas—an important issue for the temple as it was appealing to both a broader lay community and the government officials responsible for its registration.

Luohan imagery, as many art historians have noted, developed out of monastic images in the pre-Song periods. The Northern Song Lingyan sculptures are situated within this art historical tradition by tracing the naturalism of early images of disciples of the historical Buddha, Chan patriarchs, and historical monks. Following these naturalistic monastic imagery traditions through to the Song dynasty, the sculptures are placed in dialogue with contemporary portraits of eminent Buddhist monks. Unlike those images, which highlight the public status of the sitters, the Northern Song Lingyan sculptures do not emphasize the ceremonial or more public aspects of elite clerics' lives. The figures instead highlight the actions and practices that demonstrate a cleric's skill and knowledge—actions such as debate, meditation, and sewing. As suggested in this chapter, the shifts in iconography that Richard K. Kent identified with painting were well underway with sculpture as well by the mid-Northern Song dynasty.

Turning to contemporary sculpture, comparisons with Song-era sets of sculpted figures, *luohan* and otherwise, illustrate the range of choices available to the Lingyan temple artists. While the naturalistic style of the sculptures finds a resonance with sculptural sets at Baosheng temple 保聖寺 in Jiangsu province, Qinglian temple 青蓮寺 in Shanxi province, and attendant figures in Shengmu Hall 聖母殿 at the Jinci Shrine complex 晉祠 in Taiyuan 太原, Shanxi

province, they are unique for their thematic emphasis on the practices and routines of actual communities of people.

Chapter Three turns to the discursive practices around pictorial naturalism during the Song dynasty and period writers' responses to three claims produced by this mode of representation: likeness, objectivity, and authenticity. Those most invested in these discussions were the intellectuals: some were clerics, others were civil officials; some were known for their poetry, and others for their painting. What we find is that naturalism was not a neutral topic. Across a range of literary genres, spanning portrait-inscriptions written by monks 真贊 (*zhengan*) to the poems and painting colophons of scholars and officials, pictorial naturalism was being challenged, debated, critiqued, and sometimes championed during the Song dynasty. As suggested in this chapter, at stake in these discussions was the “truth” 真 (*zhen*) of naturalistic images.

While up through this period, writers and viewers expected naturalistic figural imagery, such as portraits, to describe both an exterior resemblance and the personal qualities of the depicted subject, Northern Song writers began to question this constructed “truth.” Some made use of the ostensible objectivity implied in highly naturalistic images to promote a political or social “truth,” while others, such as Chan monks, wholly rejected any possible “truth” in images. For many educated people, regardless of whether they were associated with the monastic institution, the government, or were simply private scholars, “truth” was tied into “authenticity”—those things, such as one’s skills and knowledge that are unique to an individual. As suggested in this chapter, this view is found not only in discussions of art theory, but also in the writings of monks as found in the Chan “recorded sayings” 語錄 (*yulu*) genre of literature. In art theory, the issue emerges in the priority given to the naturalness of the artistic process and its

product, as opposed to raw naturalism. In Chan literature, the issue arises through an emphasis on gesture and mannerisms that were understood as unmediated by social or religious protocols.

Within this discursive context, the naturalism of the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple demonstrate the monastic community's engagement with contemporary cultural politics important to a diversity of educated people. For the temple, the stakes were high—at the institutional level, it was being incorporated into the legal structure of the state with its registration in 1070, which necessitated a greater interaction with outside clerics, literati, and civil officials. Engaging with issues important to these potential viewers and donors would have helped raise the visibility of the temple, thus helping secure its financial and institutional viability.

The fourth chapter takes a different approach to investigating the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures by deconstructing Song audience's experiences of "seeing" religious imagery. With no records from the Song period by people who actually witnessed the Lingyan sculptures, this chapter draws upon a variety of other types of writings, such as canonical texts on image production and function, eyewitness accounts of *luohan* ceremonies, and travel writings among others.⁵⁴ In examining viewers' expectations and the socially and religiously constructed protocols for looking, as found in these period documents, this chapter finds that the viewing public had a multiplicity of strategies when encountering religious images. The diversity of factors involved in shaping encounters with objects, such as the Lingyan sculptures, encompassed the concerns of a broad and diverse audience.

⁵⁴ The primary source for the temple's history, the 1699 gazetteer "The Lingyan Records," contains transcriptions of numerous poems, stele inscriptions, and imperial edicts on the complex, but no writings from those who saw the sculptures in the era of their production. See LYZ, 1-404. In part, this may have been due to the political conflicts that escalated between China and the Jurchen in 1126. For most of the Southern Song period, Lingyan temple was under the jurisdiction of the Jurchen, which limited access to the sculptures to those who were still in the area when the political conflicts flared.

Examining the experiences of viewers who approached religious imagery and *luohan* images in particular with the expectation of a response from the represented divinity, we find that the location of an object within a larger visual program, its consecrated status, and the religious protocols for “looking” all played a role in shaping the encounter. For laity, viewing might be highly personal as some individuals approached very specific objects in the hope of an equally specific response. With clerics, however, period documents suggest it could either be personal or formed around the monastic body.

Addressing the viewing practices of those who approached these same types of images as works of art, the second half of this chapter finds there was a diversity of opinions on viewing religious objects outside of a devotional context as well as a diversity of factors that shaped the non-devotional viewing experience. With religious art visually available in a wide range of places during the Song dynasty, such as temples, public markets, restaurants, and in private homes, viewing, in some instances, was shaped as a shared experience in which respect for the skills of the artist and the materiality of the object defined a different kind of reverence. In other instances, the authentication of a viewer’s “looking” experience was a significant concern. Approached through the lens of skepticism, viewing practices of those individuals included personally verifying critical information about an artwork and situating him/her self and his/her opinions within a larger intellectual community through publication. In this respect, sharing the experience with others included those of the past and present who had encountered the object.

This chapter suggests there were not fixed viewing strategies for educated Song people; “seeing” was not a singular experience during this period. With a multiplicity of factors involved in shaping these encounters, objects like the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures were not

static images—neither solely religious objects nor works of art. “Seeing” these sculptures encompassed a range of experiences, reflecting a multi-faceted and diverse viewing public.

Chapter Two Visualizing “Ordinary” *Luohan*

The forty life-size clay sculptures in Thousand Buddha Hall at Lingyan temple, a blend of Song and Ming dynasty works, form an intriguing picture: lively monkish figures of all ages and dispositions converse, debate, and teach, while seated atop a platform that encircles the central space (fig. 2.1 and 2.2). The Song sculptures, crafted with special attention to diversity of detail, appear to possess both an exterior animation and an interior complexity that seems at odds with their clay materiality. The naturalistic modeling of the bodies of these twenty-seven figures and the diversity of facial details beg viewers to see each figure as a unique, if ordinary-looking monk. No other extant grouping of Song *luohan* sculptures offers the same compelling combination of life-like qualities.

This chapter begins with an examination of the current theories on the dating, location, and construction of the Northern Song sculptures from the modern grouping. Conservators working with the set in the early 1980s, who conclusively dated the twenty-seven of the sculptures to the Northern Song dynasty, developed multiple theories on their history, including their original configuration as two sets of sixteen *luohan* and a possible relocation during the Ming dynasty. Building upon these ideas, analysis of the sculptures’ arrangement in relation to the theorized original location, Banzhou Hall, suggests that the sense of movement encapsulated in their poses and sculptural qualities would have been highlighted in that original location. Within the framework established by the current theories on the production of the Northern Song

sculptures, this present study further suggests these works can be understood as one step in the temple's attempt to gain wider public visibility in the 1060s.

In the following section, iconographic and stylistic analysis of the Northern Song sculptures uncovers their close connection to contemporary monastic politics and images. From the perspective of artistic practice during this period, the figures do not fit neatly either into the *luohan* genre or standard renderings of monks; instead they blur the distinctions between both genres of Buddhist image. While some of the figures feature iconographic attributes commonly seen with Song-era *luohan* imagery, many of them have gestures and poses that correlate with images of monks and textual sources describing monastic activity. The sculptural group's thematic emphasis on the earthly activities of monks rather than the supernatural qualities of *luohan* presupposes an audience both knowledgeable about contemporary monastic practices and interested in them.

The overlap between these two types of figures—*luohan* and monk— can be traced to the pre-Song periods, as noted by many art historians. The second section places the Northern Song sculptures within that history through stylistic comparisons with images of disciples of the historical Buddha, Chan patriarchs, and eminent monks produced in the Song and pre-Song periods. Locating the sculptures within these image traditions highlights the artistic choices made in presenting the figures not as supernatural *luohan* or as stately monk-like figures, but instead as average-looking clerics.

In the final section, the eleventh-century Lingyan temple sculptures are examined in relation to several other sculpted figural groups produced in the Song dynasty, including the *luohan* sculptures at Baosheng temple 保聖寺 in Jiangsu province, those of Qinglian temple 青蓮寺 in Shanxi province, and attendant figures in Shengmu Hall 聖母殿 at Jin Shrine complex

晉祠 in Taiyuan 太原, Shanxi province. Although Zhang Heyun has argued the naturalistic style of the Lingyan temple sculptures finds a correspondence with those at Baosheng temple and the Jin Shrine complex, this present study suggests they are unique in their emphasis on movement and gesture.⁵⁵ Through these features, the Lingyan sculptures offer a visual demonstration of clerical skill, and by extension, knowledge. This need was a real one as the temple acquired status as a public temple only a few short years after the sculptures were created.

The Northern Song Sculptures in Time and Space

Dating

The earliest record of a group of *luohan* sculptures at the temple is dated to the Yuan dynasty, but it is unclear if it references any of the sculptures currently located in Thousand Buddha Hall. Questions on the current sculptures' dates of production, installation, original location, and even the identification of the figures, as *luohan* was speculative up through the 1980s.⁵⁶ The results of a cooperative two-year project of conservation and restoration undertaken by a number of cultural preservation organizations at the state, local, and temple level beginning in May of 1981 contributed to current theories that address all but the last issue.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Zhang Heyun 張鶴云, "Research on the Ancient Sculptures of Changqing's Lingyan Temple" 长清灵岩寺古塑像考, *Wenwu* 文物 no. 12 (1959): 1.

⁵⁶ For an example of this speculation, see Zhang, "Research on the Ancient Sculptures," 1-16.

⁵⁷ These departments included the Shandong Province Department of Cultural Relics 山东省文物局, Ji'nan Museum 济南市博物馆, and the Cultural and Historical Relics Department of Changqing County's Lingyan Temple 长清县灵岩寺文管所.

Conservators used a combination of investigative methods to determine the dating of the sculptures. Carbon dating of the interior wood frames and the exterior layers of organic materials established twenty-seven of the forty sculptures as works of the Song dynasty. These figures include #1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 along the west side of the hall and #21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40 along the east side (fig. 2.3). Comparing the material compositions and sculpting methods used with these sculptures against information found in the most widely known artisan manual of the Song dynasty (960-1279), Li Jie's 李诫 (1035-1110) *Building Standards* 营造法式, further solidified these sculptures as produced in this period.⁵⁸ Conservators dated the remaining thirteen sculptures from the contemporary set to the Ming dynasty.

Tests conducted to identify the sculptures' age could only posit a rough timeframe for their production. Radiocarbon dating itself provides only a window of time (plus or minus seventy-years) from which the organic material originated.⁵⁹ However, in an article published in 1984, Zhou Fusen argued three additional factors pinpointed the year of production to 1066.⁶⁰ First, conservators discovered objects sequestered inside eight of the Song-era sculptures and also within four from the Ming era.⁶¹ The objects included seventy-two coins, eleven mirrors,

⁵⁸ Li Jie 李诫 (1035-1110), *Building Standards* 营造法式, published in 1103.

⁵⁹ For the primary research reports from the conservation projects see Hu Jigao 胡继高, "Restoration of the Painted Luohan Sculptures of the Lingyan Temple in Changqing County, Shandong Province" 山东长清县灵岩寺彩塑罗汉像的修复, *Kaogu* 考古 11 (1983): 1025-38, 1064 and Zhou Fusen 周福森, "Relevant Questions on the Dating of the Luohan Sculptures of the Lingyan Temple in Shandong's Changqing County" 山东长清灵岩寺罗汉像的盟制年代及有关问题. *Wenwu* 文物 3 (1984): 76-84. Hu Jigao also addresses the concerns that prompted the conservation work of which the primary issues were the effects of humidity, dust, and tourism.

⁶⁰ Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 76-84.

⁶¹ The Song-era works include #2W, #8W, #10W, #14W, #15W, #19W, #22E, and #28E. The Ming-era ones include #24E, #29E, and #31E. Several systems have been used to number the statues. The system I use is a modified version of the earliest one, which emphasizes that the set was most likely produced as two groups. The method was proposed by Zhang Heyun 张鹤云 who numbered them sequentially 1-20 beginning with the first sculpture to the west of the main doors and continuing clockwise around the room until the northern set of doors. Moving back to the south wall, the numbering continues with #21, which is the first sculpture to the east of the main doors, and then continues counterclockwise until reaching the northern doors. I have added the directional

and one complete set of silk and cotton viscera 五臟六腑 (Figs. 2.4 and 2.5).⁶² As the latest date on any of the coins is to the Jiayou era 嘉祐元宝 (1056–1063) of Emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1022-1063), Zhou argued the sculptures could not have been produced earlier than this period.⁶³

Secondly, the discovery of an iron sculpture of a *luohan*, which functioned as the weight-bearing skeleton of Ming-era sculpture #11W, included finding a dedicatory inscription etched into its base (fig. 2.6). This hollow cast figure mirrors the form of #11W. Its partially legible inscription reads:

In the Song dynasty, the three villages of Tianhua, Nanguan, and Houqiu in Heping township in Changqing county of the Xingde commandary initiated the [production] of an iron cast *luohan*. The head of the [association] was Li Zongping. The 3rd year of the Xining era [1068-1077], gengshu year [1070].

大宋兴德军长清县和平乡；天花，南管寺庄，侯丘三村口，首创铁铸口羅漢。都維那頭李宗平。时熙宁三年岁次庚戌口口月口日...⁶⁴

The villages named in the inscription were all located in close proximity to the temple complex in the Northern Song dynasty.⁶⁵ Whether this was a collective of local lay believers that came together specifically for the purpose of funding the production of the sculpture is not

component (east/west) used by Zhou Fusen, which allows one to more easily recognize the location of the sculpture in the hall. See Zhang, "Research," 1 and Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 76-77.

⁶² The silk and cotton viscera were found in #8W, a Song sculpture. The interment of artificial viscera or the "Five Organs" is not unique to the Lingyan sculptures. Other Chinese sculptures, which have included these types of objects are the Seiryōji Udayana Śākyamuni, located in Japan and produced by Chinese sculptors in 985, a seated Northern Song period Guanyin figure located at the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Cultural History in Yokohama, and a portrait statue of the Chinese master Shandao (613-681) dated to the Kamakura era (1185-1333) located at the Chion'in in Kyoto. For a discussion on this topic, see Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 185, footnote 23; Helmut Brinker, "Facing the Unseen: On the Interior Adornment of Eizon's Iconic Body," *Archives of Asian Art* 52 (1997-1998): 42-61; Gregory Henderson et al. "The Buddha of Seiryōji: New Finds and New Theory," *Artibus Asiae* 19, no. 1 (1956): 22-25.

⁶³ Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 76-78.

⁶⁴ This inscription is transcribed in Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 77.

⁶⁵ These villages have been identified as having been located within a short distance from the current town of Wande 万德, which is just slightly south of the temple complex. In the Northern Song dynasty there was a town named Wande that was located in relatively the same area as the current one. See Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 77.

known, but it was not unusual in this period to have images of *luohan* financially sponsored by either lay associations or individuals.⁶⁶ Based on the date given in the inscription, Zhou suggested the sculpture was produced around the same time as the clay figures, thus narrowing the date of production to the years between 1056-1070.⁶⁷

Lastly, a second inscription found on the wooden interior niche of #17W gives a date that corresponds to 1066 (fig. 2.7). Written by Gai Zhongli 盖忠立, who is presumed to have been one of the artists responsible for the sculptures, the inscription lists his name, his home as in the Qizhou area 齐州 of Lin prefecture 临邑, and includes a date of the sixth month of the third year of the Zhiping era 治平 (1066).⁶⁸ He is the only artist known associated with these works.

Construction

Although the current group of sculptures in Thousand Buddha Hall is a blend of Song and Ming dynasty works, all forty depict life-size seated figures of comparable heights and sizes. Each measures around 155 centimeters from the tops of the heads to the surface of the raised platform beneath them and forms a discrete unit that encompasses the entire body of the figure, including the legs. The sculptures are independent of the brick structure beneath them. The platform itself is 78 centimeters tall. In front of the sculptures is a smaller platform that acts as a

⁶⁶ Wen Fong, "The Five Hundred Lohans at the Daitokuji" (Ph.D diss., Princeton University, 1956), 59.

⁶⁷ Zhou further speculated the sculpture was cast as an image of one of the temple's two founders, Fading 法定. Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 77.

⁶⁸ The Qizhou area was slightly north of present day Ji'nan 济南, the capital of Shandong province. Gai's inscription reads: 盖忠立. 齐州临邑, 治平三〇六月. For further details on this inscription, see Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 76.

footstand, measuring 35 centimeters in height.⁶⁹ Fifteen of the Northern Song sculpted figures have either one or both legs pendant with the shoes of the figures touching the footstand.⁷⁰ For structural integrity, the legs were sculpted with a flat backing, which rests on the front of the larger platform.

With the exception of the aforementioned #11W, all of the sculptures have wooden frames with an interior wooden niche. The extremities of the figures—arms, legs, and feet—were also molded around wooden interiors, except for areas that required a greater degree of precision, such as parts of the face and fingers. In these areas, the artists used iron wire.

Each sculpture contains an interior skeleton, around which are multiple alternating layers of organic materials, a process discussed fully by Hu Jigao 胡继高 and summarized here.⁷¹ While both the Song and Ming sculptures have similar layers of organic materials, which create the forms themselves, the exact recipe of those materials is different. A mixture that contains more wheat bran mud and less hemp distinguishes the Song-era sculptures.⁷² Coarse mud forms the first layer of material around the frames. On top of this is a layer of hemp (麻皮), which is followed by a wheat bran mud mixture (麦糠). The artists then added a layer of fine sand, which was polished smooth. The final layer is cotton fiber. This process was repeated layer after layer with the artists kneading or molding the materials into the general shape of the desired finished

⁶⁹ These measurements are found in Zhang Heyun 張鶴云, *Lingyan Temple of Shandong Province* 山東靈巖寺 (Ji'nan: Shandong People's Press, 1983), 12. These measurements differ slightly from those he provided in his 1959 article. See Zhang, "Research on the Ancient Sculptures," 2.

⁷⁰ Seven of the figures have both legs pendant: #2W, #6W, #16W, #17W, #39E, #36E, and #28E. Eight others have only one leg pendant: #3W, #8W, #13W, #18W, #19W, #37E, #34E, and #22E. The remaining twelve have both legs crossed: #1W, #5W, #10W, #12W, #14W, #15W, #40E, #35E, #33E, #27E, #25E, #21E.

⁷¹ Hu Jigao's discussion of the production of the sculptures is quite in-depth and includes the technical details of the process, the differences between the Song and Ming-era sculptures, and the modern-day scientific testing that was done on the sculptures. See Hu, "Restoration," 1026-1029.

⁷² Conservators found that the particular "recipe" used for the sculptures, the various organic materials and ratios, were similar to those in the Song dynasty craft manual, *Building Standards* 营造法式, published in 1103 by Li Jie 李诫 (1035-1110). See Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 82.

figure. Cutting into the sculptures to remove material allowed the artists to distinguish parts of the bodies, such as defining curves of the arms and drapery folds. Finer details, including mouths, nostrils, wrinkles, etc., were carved into the form with more precise instruments.⁷³ Zhang Heyun has suggested some of the figures' hands may have been replaced or repaired over time, as there are noticeable differences in craftsmanship between some bodies and hands.⁷⁴

One of the final stages of the artistic process was painting the sculptures. Faces, clothing, and areas denoting skin were painted first followed by details such as eyebrows, facial hair, outlines around the eyes, and the patterns on clothing. The set as a whole was last painted in 1874.⁷⁵ A final enhancement was added: the insertion of glass orbs to represent eyes. Found with many Buddhist sculptures in China and Japan, this feature heightens the sense of a figure's lifelikeness by reflecting light.⁷⁶ Similarly, the areas on the sculptures representing skin, such as faces, necks, and in some cases, chests, were treated with a layer of egg white to produce a slight sheen reminiscent of human skin.

The presence of interred objects in both the Song and Ming sculptures suggests there were two ceremonies to religiously consecrate the works: one when the original sculptures were installed in the Song dynasty and another when the group was expanded and reinstalled in Thousand Buddha Hall in the Ming dynasty. As the pupils of the inset eyes are also painted, this may have been a part of these ceremonies. Religious consecration allowed the sculptures to become more than the materials of their construction—they were transformed into sacred icons, making them worthy of worship.⁷⁷

⁷³ Hu, "Restoration," 1026-1029.

⁷⁴ Zhang, "Research," 2.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷⁶ For an illustration and short discussion of this process with Japanese sculptures, see Helmut Brinker et al., *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writing*, trans. Andreas Leisinger (Zürich: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1996), 87.

⁷⁷ This is discussed more fully in Chapter Four.

With the exception of the artist who inscribed his/her name on the interior box of #17W, the creators of the set are unknown. The sheer number of sculptures in the group, as well as the dimensions of the individual sculptures, suggests they were produced by a workshop of artists. The quality of the craftsmanship indicates the artists were highly skilled and therefore, probably part of a well-established workshop. Outside of some well known sculptors, such as the fourth century father and son sculptors, Dai Kui 戴逵 (d. 395) and Dai Yong 戴顛 (377-441), and the Tang dynasty artist Yang Huizhi 楊惠之 (c. 713-741), most artists working in this medium were regarded as craftspeople or artisans 塑匠.⁷⁸ Unlike calligraphy and painting around which a sophisticated body of theoretical writings had developed by the Song dynasty, sculpture was not the focus of extended discussions on artistic theories and practices in the pre-modern period. The earliest text to focus on this medium is the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) book, *Record of Painting and Sculpture in the Yuan dynasty* 元代畫塑記 (c. 1295-1330). Rather than a theoretical treatise, it is oriented toward the codification of religious iconography.

Congress of Many: Architectural Spaces and Visual Programs

Conservators in the 1980s determined all of the sculptures were original to the Shandong area, as the wood used for the interior frames is native to this province.⁷⁹ However, as noted in

⁷⁸ Dai Kui 戴逵 and his son Dai Yong 戴顛 were known for their Buddhist sculptures in many mediums, but most especially for their lacquer works. Dai Kui himself was also known for his painting skills. The Tang dynasty sculptor Yang Huizhi 楊惠之 is known mostly through Song sources in which he is lauded for his skill. His fame has been so longlasting that even into the modern day many sculptural works, such as the *luohan* figures at Baosheng temple 保聖寺, continue to be considered products of his hand even as evidence suggests otherwise. Chen Qingxiang has written in-depth on the historiography of the attribution of the Baosheng temple sculptures to Yang Huizhi. Her arguments against this attribution are now widely accepted. See Chen Qingxiang 陳清香, *Research on Luohan Images* 羅漢圖像研究 (Taipei: Press 文津出版社, 1995), 155-186.

⁷⁹ Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 77.

Chapter One, Zhou Fusen has argued the Northern Song sculptures from the modern set were not originally located in Thousand Buddha hall, but instead in Banzhou Hall 般舟殿.⁸⁰ This latter hall is no longer extant as it had collapsed by 1587 due to deterioration. Zhou theorized five sculptures were destroyed when it collapsed and the remaining twenty-seven were moved to Thousand Buddha Hall when it was restored in 1587.⁸¹ To fully fill the new space, the five ruined sculptures were replaced and another eight were produced, thus creating a blended grouping of forty figures.

In 1995, archeological work directly north of Thousand Buddha Hall unearthed the ruins of Banzhou Hall (fig. 2.8). Constructed under the direction of abbot Liren 厲任 (mid-to-late seventh century), this Tang-era building measured five bays wide by three bays deep. This was slightly smaller than the current hall, which is seven bays by four bays. Excavation revealed features similar to those of Thousand Buddha hall: remains of raised platforms along the west, east, and north walls, three central platforms for larger figures, and south-facing main doors.⁸² The similarity in the structures and the smaller size of the earlier building lends credence to Zhou's proposal that the sculptures originally resided in this space.

Little is known about the visual program of Banzhou Hall. However, as the layouts of both halls are similar, we can deduce a number of factors about it and the implications of it for the viewing experience of Song dynasty visitors. Viewers would have entered Banzhou Hall through the main doors located on its south side. Like Thousand Buddha Hall, the earlier

⁸⁰ Presently, Thousand Buddha Hall is the oldest wooden structure at the complex having been built in the Tang dynasty (618-907) during the Zhenguan era 貞觀 (627-649) under the direction of abbot Huichong 惠崇. There are some variations found with the characters of this abbot's name. The "Lingyan Records" (hereafter abbreviated as LYZ) lists the first character as 惠, whereas modern researchers primarily use 慧. For the history of this monk, see "Lingyan Temple Records" 靈巖志, ed. Wang Xin 王昕 and Ma Daxiang 馬大相, in *A Collection of Chinese Buddhist Temple Records* 中國佛寺誌叢刊, ed. Zhang Zhi 張智 et al. (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyin she, 1996), j. 2, 62, 78. Also see, Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 77.

⁸¹ Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 77, 81.

⁸² Wang Rongyu 王榮玉 et al., *Lingyan Temple* 靈巖寺 (Beijing: Wenwu Press 文物出版社 1999), 26.

structure contained three principal sculptural figures, as evidenced by its three central platforms. No records identify these sculptures, but as the bases of the central platforms are quite large, the sculptures would have been much larger than life-size. Presently in Thousand Buddha Hall there is a central clay figure of Vairocana Buddha 毗盧遮那佛, dated to 1065, a bronze Losana Buddha 盧舍那佛 (also known as Vairocana Buddha),⁸³ dated to 1477 on the east side, and on the west side is a bronze Śākyamuni 釋迦尼 sculpture dated to 1543 (figs. 2.9-2.11).⁸⁴

Just as with these current buddha figures, the previous ones would have bisected the hall along the east-west axis (fig. 1.12). As the *luohan* sculptures were placed on raised platforms along the walls, only those that were installed in the southern half of the east and west walls could have been seen from the entrance. To visually access the others, one would have had to walk around the main buddhas. We do not know which sculptures were given visual priority by being placed in the southern sector of the hall.

Although there is no way to conclusively determine the original arrangement of the sculptures on the platform in Banzhou Hall, there are a few general observations that can be made about the possibilities.⁸⁵ In Thousand Buddha Hall, two sculptures flank each side of the main south-facing double doors: #1W and #2W on the west side and #21E and #22E on the east

⁸³ Zhang, "Research," 2. Vairocana Buddha is identified by several different names, which Chang Qing has argued can be found in different translations of the Huayan "Flower Garland" sūtra 大方廣佛華嚴經 (Skt: Avatamsaka sūtra): These variations include Vairocana Buddha 毗盧遮那 and Losana Buddha 盧舍那. Both of these names are used in the late seventh-century translation of it by Śikṣānanda 實叉難陀 (652-710) and in the late eighth-century version by monk Prajñā 般若. See Chang Qing, "Feilafeng and the Flowering of Chinese Buddhist Sculpture from the Tenth to Fourteenth Centuries" (Ph.D diss., University of Kansas, 2005), 142, fn. 169 and 144, fn. 172.

⁸⁴ Each of these large sculptures has a large mandorla behind it, beyond which is a three-quarters wall with rows of small gold-painted wooden buddhas. Similar figures are found in evenly spaced rows on the north side of this wall as well as behind and above the *luohan* sculptures. In addition to these, the north side of this central wall features a sculpted wall composition (影壁, lit. "shadow wall") of the bodhisattva Guanyin 觀音菩薩 in a fantastical rocky landscape with figures of guardian kings, male and female worshippers, and other figures of all sizes.

⁸⁵ As far as I am aware, the sculptures have not been moved or rearranged since their internment in the Thousand Buddha Hall in the Ming dynasty.

side.⁸⁶ All four of these figures were produced in the Song period. Behind them is a row of latticed windows, which acts as a principal source of light for this space. As the main doors for Banzhou Hall were also on the south side, it most likely also had south-facing windows. Sculptures placed in the southern half of the hall would have been more consistently visible to viewers given the unobscured sunlight from the windows.

The west and east sides of Thousand Buddha Hall each have ten sculptures, with an eleventh that straddles the corner between the northern and the longitudinal walls. The two sculptures currently placed in those corners, #13W and #33E, are both Song-era works (figs. 2.13 and 2.14). The bodies of the figures are sculpted to fit tightly along the intersection of two platforms, thus it is reasonable to assume they were placed in the corners of Banzhou Hall as well. In Thousand Buddha Hall, the corners of the southern and the longitudinal walls are empty. Along the north wall, a set of doors divides fourteen sculptures placed into two groups of seven. Flanking the doors are #20W and #40E.

Another consideration in regard to Banzhou Hall's visual program is the possible sources of light for the hall and its implications on viewing the Northern Song sculptures. Light would have been available either from natural light via the doors and latticed windows along the south wall or by lamps lit during ceremonies. There may also have been a set of smaller secondary doors along the north side of the building as there is with Thousand Buddha Hall. However, as both halls were constructed on uneven terrain that slopes upward toward the north, sunlight along the northern sides of the buildings would have been limited (fig. 2.15). In addition, tall forests and mountains surround the temple complex on the north side further restricting light into the buildings.⁸⁷ Even on the sunniest of days, natural light would not have clearly illuminated the

⁸⁶ The doors are placed in the central bay with three bays on either side.

⁸⁷ Hu, "Restoration," 1025.

luohan sculptures located in the northern sector of the hall. As for the others, their visibility would have fluctuated depending on the time of day, the weather, and the activities taking place in the hall. During the brightest time of the day or during celebrations, the *luohan* near the south doors would have been well lit. The rest of the time, the sculptures would have been half hidden in the shadowy perimeter of the hall's walls.

The sculptural qualities of the *luohan* would have been enhanced under these lighting conditions. Candlelight would have illuminated protruding areas of the sculptures, highlighting the planes and modeling of the figures, while leaving other areas in shadow. As the flames flickered or the weather outside changed, other parts of the sculptures would be revealed or hidden. Each sculpture would appear to change, to move, almost as if alive. These thirty-two sculptures in the space of the hall, each seeming to change with the light, would have created a dramatic scene for a Song dynasty viewer.

That dramatic scene might have reminded some visitors of the opening passages of the popular *Lotus Sūtra* 妙法蓮花經 (Skt: *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra*; Jpn: *Hokkekyō* 法華經). Setting the context for one of the Buddha's sermons, the scripture begins with details of the various persons gathered to hear the Buddha preach.⁸⁸ Included in the motley crew were twelve hundred *luohan*, some identified by name. Walking into Banzhou Hall, a viewer would have first encountered three central buddha sculptures, but turning in any direction the *luohan* figures seated against the walls would have appeared to encircle the entire room and the central sculptures. Even today the dynamic poses of the figures—bodies leaning in all directions, arms gesturing outward, heads turned to one side or another—lends an animated effect to the scene

⁸⁸ *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 et al. (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1932), 9, n.262: c1-62b. Hereafter abbreviated as T. There were several translations of this text into Chinese, but the most popular version in the Song dynasty was rendered by Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (circa 350-410) in 406 C.E. For an English translation, see Leon Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

(figs. 1.1 and 1.2). With varied poses, the figures appear to be conversing or debating with one another and with unseen others. Alternately, some are turned toward the viewers, as if inviting them to participate in the festivities. We may not know where individual sculptures were placed in Banzhou Hall or whether that arrangement was intended to suggest relationships between figures, but the basic layout of the hall and the poses of the figures would have created a scene of a lively monastic gathering.

As there are no Song-era sources that mention the eleventh-century sculptures, we are left to speculate on their placement, viewership, the devotional practices around them, and the motivation for their creation. The number of sculptures originally produced, at minimum twenty-seven, and the size of the works suggest they were a significant monetary investment for the temple. Extensive fundraising would have been necessary for an artistic commission of this magnitude. The years surrounding the production of the figures suggest at least one motivation for the project—as a step in a broader plan to increase the temple’s public visibility as it prepared to register with the government in 1070.

In the years just prior to the creation of the Northern Song sculptures, between 1036-1063, the temple was under the direction of abbot Qionghuan 瓊環, who initiated ambitious renovation and building projects at the complex. Thousand Buddha Hall, where the sculptures are currently located, was repaired, as was the Pizhi Pagoda 辟支塔 just northwest of it (fig. 2.16). South of Thousand Buddha Hall, the Five Flower Pavilion 五花閣 was constructed (fig. 2.17).⁸⁹ Many structures at the complex had deteriorated not only through age, but had also not been repaired following a short period of abandonment of the temple in the mid-eighth century. In 845, during the Huichang era 會昌 (840-846) of the Tang dynasty, Emperor Wuzong 武宗

⁸⁹ For information on abbot Qionghuan, see LYZ, j. 2, p. 78.

(814-846; r. 840-846) issued edicts calling for the destruction of many Buddhist institutions and the reduction in size of the clerical community. Lingyan temple, not immune to this imperial order, was closed for three years.

The temple experienced an important transition in its institutional status a mere four years after the creation of the *luohan* sculptures. In 1070, the third year of the Xining 熙寧 era of the reign of Emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1048-1085; r. 1067-1085), Lingyan was registered with the government as a Chan public temple and had its name changed to Lingyan Chan Temple of the Ten Directions 十方靈岩神寺. Although registration as a Chan institution came with a host of regulatory obligations, many temples during this period were eager to be thusly identified. To be governmentally recognized not only added to the prestige associated with a temple, it also increased its public visibility. Both of these would have been significant considerations for mid-sized temples looking to expand their donor base.

Lingyan temple's identification as a Chan institution did not imply that it was solely affiliated with practices of this school. Scholars in the last twenty years have undermined the traditionally held view that there were distinctive differences with temples designated "Chan." As discussed in Chapter Three, this identification referenced the types of regulations a temple needed to follow, specifically in regard to filling the position of abbot, rather than the theological orientation of individual monks of a temple.⁹⁰

The temple's extensive building projects in the years just prior to 1070 indicate its clerical community was actively preparing for that registration. It is reasonable to assume the visual programs of the various buildings would have been considered during the renovation process. Dated to only four years before the temple registered with the government, the Northern

⁹⁰ See Chapter One of this present study for further discussion on this issue.

Song sculptures from the current group were most likely one step in the process of increasing the public appeal of the temple.

Luohan, Monk, or Patriarch: Overlapping Identities

Presently, all of the Lingyan sculptures are identified as *luohan* with individual names. However, changes in these names prevent us from using them as evidence of their original identification. The names, which are listed on wooden plaques attached to the wall behind each figure's right shoulder, are the result of a re-labeling project by a monk living at the temple in the early 1930s.⁹¹ It is not known which names, if any, were original to the sculptures. Only two of the names correlate with those found in Buddhist scriptures: #2W Rahula 密行羅睺羅尊者 and #10W Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja 賓頭盧婆羅多.⁹² A diversity of other names were given to the sculptures, including nine of the Ten Great Disciples of Śākyamuni⁹³ and monks associated with the temple itself, including its founders Langgong 朗公⁹⁴ and Fading 法定,⁹⁵ as well as the

⁹¹ Zhang, "Research," 3.

⁹² Rahula is the eleventh of sixteen *luohan* enumerated in the *Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma*, which is discussed below. He resides in Priyaṅgudvīpa 囉怛羅. Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja is the first named *luohan* in that text. His residence is Aparagodanī 賓度羅跋囉惰闍.

⁹³ The Ten Great Disciples of Śākyamuni as identified with the sculptures: Rahula as #2W. Rahula is both a *luohan* and one of the historical Buddha's elite disciples. Subhuti 解空須菩提 as #4W; Sariputra 鶖露舍利弗尊者 as #5W; Mahā-Maudgalyāyana 摩訶大目犍連尊者 as #39E; Mahākāśyapa 摩訶迦葉尊者 as #22; Upāli 優波離尊者 as #20M; Ānanda 多聞阿難陀尊者 as #38E; Aniruddha 阿泥樓陀尊者 as #31E; Mahākātyāyana 摩訶迦旃延尊者 as #24E.

⁹⁴ Sculpture #13W. The monk Zhu Langgong 竺朗公 is credited as the first founder of the temple having established the first halls at the site in the Eastern Jin period (317-420). He was memorialized as an accomplished lecturer, who climbed Square Peak, a cliff directly to the north of the temple complex, to preach. As the story goes, his words were so profound that the mountain rocks nodded in agreement with his sermon. This story gave rise to the name of the temple as Lingyan or "Animated Cliff" temple. See Langgong's biography in *Biographies of Eminent Monks* 高僧傳, T. 50, n. 2059: 0354 b01. This early history is also discussed in Guan Ping 管萍, *The History of Lingyan Temple* 灵岩寺史话, (Ji'nan: Ji'nan Press, 2011), 25-28.

twelfth-century abbot Renqin 仁欽.⁹⁶ In addition, a number of the figures are named for historical monks associated with various sectarian traditions, such as #21E identified as Bodhidharma, the first patriarch of the Chan 禪 school, and #19W as Zhiyi 智顓 (538-597 CE), the founder or fourth patriarch of the Tiantai 天臺 school. All of these names appear to reflect the historical knowledge of the monk responsible for the re-labeling project.

Based on the previously mentioned Yuan dynasty records, Zhou Fusen has suggested the twenty-seven Northern Song sculptures were originally part of two groups of sixteen *luohan*. While currently the accepted theory on the sculptures, his ideas raise the question of why a mid-sized temple would have commissioned two large sets of life-size figures for one hall. With no Song-era documents attesting to the sculptures and no other temple with two sets of these figures, Zhou's theory rests on the identification of the works as *luohan*. Stylistically, all twenty-seven are similar with few variations that would suggest they were produced as two separate groups. Although there are some parallels in the poses and gestures of the figures, such as both #1W and #21E in seated meditational poses, there are not enough parallels to allow the figures to be easily divided into two groups. As such, this present study leaves aside this question for further research and focuses on a more compelling question: why do the figures lack a clear cut visual identification as *luohan*?

Luohan as Monks: Textual Sources

⁹⁵ Sculpture #12W. After having been established by Langgong (see above note), the temple was destroyed under the anti-Buddhist policies of Emperor Taiwu 太武 (408-452) of the Northern Wei dynasty (386-534). The monk Fading is considered the second founder as he re-established a monastic community at the complex during the Zhengguang era 正光 (520-525) of the Northern Wei dynasty. See LYZ, j. 2, p. 77-78.

⁹⁶ Sculpture #16W. Monk Renqin was the temple's abbot circa 1102-1110. He is noted for several construction/repair projects including building the Xian Hall 獻殿 and repairing Yushu Pavillion 御書閣. See LYZ, j. 2, p. 79.

Although the history of *luohan* (Skt: *arhats*) stems back to the pre-Buddhist Brahmanic traditions in India, the “Sixteen *Luohan*,” as a body of sacred Buddhist personages, were first introduced to Chinese religious communities in the first part of the fifth century with the translation of *Discourse on Entry into Mahāyāna* 入大乘論 (Skt: *Mahāyānāvātāraka sāstra*) by Dao Tai 道泰 (act. first half of fifth century).⁹⁷ The identification and codification of these sixteen came in 654 with the translation of *A Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma, Narrated by the Great Arhat Nandimitra* 大啊羅漢難提密多羅所說法住記 by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664), which names each *luohan* and provides the location of their residences.⁹⁸ Framed as a speech given by the *luohan* Nandimitra as he is near death, *A Record of the Perpetuity* is the recounting of a sutra revealed by the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni, just prior to his own death some eight hundred years earlier. According to Nandimitra, the *luohan* were asked by the Buddha to forgo parinirvāṇa to remain in the world of *samsāra* (cycle of birth, death, rebirth) to protect the Dharma (Buddha’s Law) until the arrival of the future Buddha, Maitreya.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ T. 32, n.1634: 36a19-49c06. This text mentions the sixteen disciples of the Buddha who are asked to protect the *dharma* in this world, but only two of them are named: Piṇḍola and Rahula. One of the most enduring text dealing with these figures, *Lotus Sūtra* 妙法蓮花經 (Skt: *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra*), names more than twenty *luohan*. Several Chinese translations of this sutra were made, but the most popular version was produced by the previously mentioned Kumārajīva in 406 C.E. (T. 9, n.262). Although this scripture familiarized a general audience with these sacred personages, the text did not instigate a surge of devotional activity around them. For a full translation of Kumārajīva’s version, see Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*.

⁹⁸ T. 49, n.2030. Earlier in 402, the great monk-translator Kumārajīva rendered into Chinese another work, *Sutra Spoken by the Buddha [About] Amitabha* 佛說阿彌陀經 (Skt. *Sukhāvatīyūha sūtra*), which names the sixteen greatest of the twelve-hundred and fifty *luohan* (T.12, n.336). As M.W. de Visser noted, only four of these names correlate with those found in the text translated by Xuanzang, a text that eventually codified the names of the sixteen. See M. W. de Visser, *The Arhats in China and Japan* (Berlin: Oesterheld & Co., 1923), 92.

⁹⁹ T. 49, n.2030. According to the text, each of the sixteen *luohan* has a retinue of other *luohan*, which number anywhere from six hundred to sixteen hundred. The earliest translation of this text into a Western language is found in Sylvain Lévi and Édouard Chavannes’ article, “Les Seize Arhat Protecteurs De La Loi,” *Journal Asiatique*, no. 8 (1916). More recently, Jen Lang Shih translated it into English and examined it in-depth in “The Perpetuity of the Dharma: A Study and Translation of *Da Aluohan Nantimiduoluo Suoshuo Fazhu Ji* 《大啊羅漢難提密多羅所說法住記》 (“A Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma, Narrated by the Great *Arhat* Nandimitra”, Nandimitrāvādāna)” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 2002). On the scriptural development of the sixteen *luohan*, see de Visser, *The Arhats in China and Japan*, 62-63, Wen Fong, “The Five Hundred Lohans,” 14-24, Richard K. Kent, “The Sixteen Lohans in the Pai-Miao Style: From Sung to Early Ching,” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1995), 9-12; Chen, *Research on Luohan Images*, 6-37; Bong Seok Joo, “The Arhat Cult in China from the Seventh through Thirteenth

Although one of the sixteen, Piṇḍola, had been the object of devotional activity as early as the fourth century, lay and clerical interest in the other fifteen developed only slowly after the translation of this text.¹⁰⁰ By the Five Dynasties period (907-960 C.E.) worship of the Sixteen *Luohan* was widespread. With the increase in devotional activity around this collective came an increase in the production of images of them. The earliest record of sculpted sets of these figures comes through the eleventh-century text, *Song Dynasty Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳. According to the entry for the cleric Zhijiang 智江 of Guangshou monastery 廣壽院, he had a set of two Buddha images and the Sixteen *Luohan* created out of clay in 923.¹⁰¹ Earlier texts, such as the seventh-century *Collections of Various Sutras* 諸經要集 attest to images of individual *luohan* being produced as early as the fifth century.¹⁰²

By the late tenth century, groupings of *luohan* expanded to eighteen and five hundred. While both the numbers sixteen and five hundred are found in the Indian scriptures, the number of *luohan* as a collective of eighteen was wholly the product of medieval Chinese Buddhist communities.¹⁰³ The popularity of images of *luohan* in sets is suggested by observations of the

Centuries: Narrative, Art, Space and Ritual," (Ph.D diss., Princeton University, 2007), 47-56.

¹⁰⁰ John S. Strong, "The Legend of the Lion-Roarer: A Study of the Buddhist Arhat Pindola Bhāradvāja" *Numen* 26, no. Fasc. 1 (June 1979): 56.

¹⁰¹ *Song Dynasty Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳. T. 50, n.2061: 0885b26. M. W. de Visser also discusses this biography in *The Arhats in China and Japan*, 103. Chang Qing suggests there might be an even earlier reference in the mid-ninth-century text, *Records on Monasteries and Pagodas* 寺塔記, which records that figures of sixteen eminent monks stood in a hall at Linghua temple 靈華寺 in Chang'an. While it is certainly possible the reference was to sculptures of the Sixteen *Luohan*, it cannot be fully determined that it was *luohan* that were depicted. See Qing, "Feilaifeng," 175.

¹⁰² *Collections of Various Sutras* 諸經要集, compiled by Dao Shi 道世 (d. 683). T. 54, n.2123. This record contains a story of two monks who painted *luohan* images during the reign of Emperor Ming Di 明帝 (r. 465-472) of the Song dynasty (宋) (420-479).

¹⁰³ For a discussion of the canonical and non-canonical sources of the Eighteen and Five Hundred *Luohan*, see Qing, "Feilaifeng," 161-168; 176-178. Richard K. Kent has noted that during the same years groupings of *luohan* expanded from sixteen to eighteen, two Daoist figures, the Green Dragon and White Tiger, began being paired with two *luohan*. Although the names of the two *luohan* associated with these figures varied, they were most popularly recognized as Xianglong 降龍 ("Subdues the Dragon") and Fuhu 伏虎 ("Vanquishes the Tiger"). See Kent, "The Sixteen Lohans," 25-6. From the Lingyan sculptural set, #8W is named through the modern plaque behind it as the Enduring, Unannoyed, and Tiger-Subduing monk 忍辱無嗔伏虎禪師. Qing Chang has noted that in various

Japanese monk Jōjin 成尋 (1011–1081) while traveling in China on a pilgrimage in the early 1070s. He noted seeing sets of these figures in both groups of sixteen and five hundred at many of the temples he visited in China.¹⁰⁴

The “ordinariness” of *luohan*—the textual features that blur the distinctions between these sacred personages and average clerics—is found most prominently in two canonical works: *Method of Inviting Piṇḍola* 清賓頭盧法 and the aforementioned *Record of Perpetuity*. The former text, translated into Chinese by the monk Huijian 慧簡 (fl. 457) in the fifth century, describes *luohan* as often appearing in the guise of monks, yet also specifies the distinct role they have as conduits for the production of religious merit for devotees.¹⁰⁵ In the *Record of the Perpetuity*, the reader is told the *luohan* “will manifest themselves in various forms to conceal their saintly appearance and [make themselves] look like ordinary monks to receive offerings.”¹⁰⁶ In the *Method of Inviting Piṇḍola*, a scripture dedicated to the *luohan* Piṇḍola, a story is told of his being denied entry to a ceremony specifically for him due to his appearance as an elderly disheveled monk. According to the text, a *luohan* “might be sitting on a high seat, a middle seat, or a low seat. Depending on the seat, he will accordingly assume the look of the monk.”¹⁰⁷ In other words, these personages may be in the guise of any cleric in the monastic

Chinese and Indian scriptures, some monks, including the Buddha and his disciples, had the ability to control tigers and dragons. Qing, “Feilai Feng,” 180-182. A similar theme appears in the story of the second founding of Lingyan temple. The monk Fading 法定, while climbing the cliff directly north of the complex, Square Peak 方山, had his sutra scrolls carried by a pair of tigers and was accompanied by blue dragons. See LYZ, j. 1. p. 75-78.

¹⁰⁴ Jōjin’s journey to China took place between 1072-1073. He documented his travels in *The Record of a Pilgrimage to the Tiantai and Wutai Mountains* 參天台五臺山記 (Jpn: San Tendai Godai san ki). Alexander C. Soper noted the monk recorded seeing at least eleven different sets of these figures in the larger temples in southern China and those of the capital, Kaifeng. See Soper, “Hsiang-Kuo-Ssü: An Imperial Temple of Northern Sung,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 68, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar., 1948): 37, fn. 72.

¹⁰⁵ T. 32, n.1689: 784b02-784c17.

¹⁰⁶ 現種種形蔽隱聖儀。同常凡眾密受供具。T. 49, n.2030: 13b.23-24. I follow Jen Lang Shih’s translation of 凡眾 as “ordinary monks” rather than the more literal translation of “ordinary people,” because, as Shih has argued, it is monks, not ordinary people, who receive offerings. Shih, *Perpetuity of the Dharma*, 215 fn. 332.

¹⁰⁷ 受大會請時。或在上坐。或在中坐。或在下坐。現作隨處僧形, T.32, n.1689: 784c13-784c14.

institutional structure from a high-ranked abbot 長老 to a newly ordained novice monk 沙彌. To further emphasize the routine nature of these figures, the text states, “if one seeks out unusual phenomena, one will not get it.”¹⁰⁸ Any monk can be a *luohan* and there is no way to visually distinguish between the two, as neither will display any miraculous or extraordinary characteristics. The *Method of Inviting Piṇḍola* and the *Record of Perpetuity* both position *luohan* as ordinary clerics just as the Lingyan figures are presented.

We have no records that associate either of these scriptures directly with the production of the Lingyan temple sculptures. T. Griffith Foulk has argued against presuming that these or any other texts had a direct impact on particular *luohan* images, especially as these works were written for a lay audience and some of the ceremonies around *luohan* were clerical.¹⁰⁹ Yet, as both of these scriptures were widely known in the Song dynasty, it is reasonable to assume that Lingyan temple’s monastic and lay communities had at least a passing familiarity with them even if they were not an artistic source for the sculptures.

The popularity and importance given to the Sixteen *Luohan* in the Song dynasty in combination with canonical descriptions of these figures as “ordinary” does lend itself to identifying the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple as *luohan*. However, iconographic analysis of the sculptures reveals few markers associated with Song-era *luohan* images. It is instead monk-like qualities and contemporary monastic practice that are overwhelmingly highlighted with the sculptures.

Facial Characteristics

¹⁰⁸ 人求其異終不可得, T. 32, n.1689: 784c15.

¹⁰⁹ T. Griffith Foulk, "Religious Functions of Buddhist Art in China," in *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*, ed. Marsha Weidner (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 28.

The one feature commonly seen with Song-era *luohan* images, which most of the sculptures do display, is long earlobes. This iconography has its origins in both India and China. From the earliest iconic depictions of the historical Buddha in India, long earlobes were a marker of his transition from a prince who wore heavy jewelry to a sage who had cast off his attachments to the world. In China, this same physical trait was associated with depictions of sages, who had long earlobes in which to better hear.¹¹⁰ All but two from the Lingyan set, #16W and #36E, have this attribute (fig. 2.18). Among those that have it, some are abnormally long, such as #6W, #18W, #19W, #21E, and #27E. However, with others, this feature is only slightly enlarged and well within the range seen with humans.¹¹¹ While the earlobes are a prominent feature of the Northern Song sculptures as a group, it is not a notable characteristic with each sculpture.

The current lack of identifiable *luohan* attributes with the eleventh-century figures enhances the sculptural forms themselves and highlights their apt resemblance to average-looking clerics. In a photo taken in 1922 of the then-current abbot of the temple posed in front of sculptures #26E and #25E, Bernd Melcher captured the verisimilitude of the figures (fig. 2.19).¹¹² Like the abbot himself, the modeled figures are marked with signifiers of temple life: shaved heads, monastic robes 衲衣, and surplice 袈裟 (Skt: *kāṣāya*). The monastic status of all of the other figures, Song and Ming dynasty, is equally on display. The Northern Song figures are depicted wearing both inner robes with sleeves and outer robes, as was the standard dress for

¹¹⁰ Kent, "Sixteen Lohans," 25.

¹¹¹ These include #1W, #3W, #5W, #22E, #28E, #33E, #35E, #39E, #40E. A sculptural comparison is found with the stone portrait statue of Wang Jian 王建 (r. 907-918), a founding emperor of the Shu Kingdom 大蜀 (907-925) (modern day area of Sichuan province). The sculpture depicts the political leader with larger earlobes, which in addition to the facial features are consistent with contemporary descriptions of the actual man himself. See, Yang Hong, "From the Han to the Qing," in Angela Howard et al. ed., *Chinese Sculpture* (New Haven and London; Beijing: Yale University Press and Foreign Language Press, 2006), 145.

¹¹² Bernd Melchers, *Der Tempelbau: Die Lochan Von Ling-Yan-Si, Ein Hauptwerk Buddhistischer Plastik*, ed. E. Fuhrmann, Vol. II, China (Hagen: Folkwang-Verlag 1921), Pls. 22.

clerics from the Tang period onward.¹¹³ The exception is #6W, who is dressed casually in a simple sleeved robe (fig 2.20).¹¹⁴ Nine of the Northern Song figures have their surplice secured with a metal ring 璧乾 and/or ribbon, a common feature in portraits of esteemed abbots of the Song period. The rest have it draped over their shoulders without a fastener.

Beyond these basic commonalities, the emphasis with the Song sculptures as a group is on diversity of age and physiognomy. A range of ages is seen with #5W as one of the youngest looking monks with rounded cheeks and smooth wrinkle-free skin (fig. 2.21). Figures #10W, #16W, #40E, and #39E are also presented as young clerics. On the other end of the age spectrum, twelve of the sculptures depict figures in their senior years.¹¹⁵ As an example, #36E presents a man with skin stretched taut over high cheekbones (fig. 2.22). His forehead is lined with wrinkles and deep creases are etched along the corners of both eyes. While #5W appears as a full-cheeked young man in the blossom of life, #36E has the gnarled visage of a man whose life is reaching its conclusion. The other figures fall somewhere between these two in terms of the represented age.¹¹⁶ None of the sculptures feature the exact same age markers, rendering the sculptural group a most likely accurate representation of the diversity found in the clerical communities of working monasteries in the Song dynasty.

The facial features of the majority of the monkish figures are associated with Han Chinese ethnicity.¹¹⁷ The faces of #18W, #34E, and #37E are long with prominent squared foreheads and straight thin noses. The bottom half of the heads taper gently toward the chin and

¹¹³ John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 86-107.

¹¹⁴ Although #36E has both hands buried in his robes, there is an excess of fabric near the sleeves suggesting a sleeved inner robe.

¹¹⁵ Those representing senior or older men include #1W, #2W, #6W, #17W, #18W, #37E, #36E, #35E, #34E, #27E, #25E, and #21E. Those representing young adults include #5W, #10W, #16W, #40E, and #39E.

¹¹⁶ Those representing middle-aged or adult men include #3W, #8W, #12W, #13W, #14W, #15W, #19W, #33E, #28E, and #22E.

¹¹⁷ Zhang Heyun has noted that many of the figures have a “robust” quality seen with people from Shandong province. Zhang, *Lingyan Temple*, 13.

jaw areas. The facial characteristics of the other figures vary. Some have round or ovoid-shaped faces. There are small and large eyes as well as thin and wide noses. Although most of the figures depict Chinese clerics, figures #21E and #27E have distinctively different features (fig. 2.23). The mouths and noses of both are wider than the others suggesting they were intended to be understood as foreign monks. Further, both sculptures are painted dark brown to indicate a racial difference between them and the majority of the other figures, which are painted a lighter hue. Three other sculptures, #8W, #16W, and #19W, are also painted dark brown, but their faces are modeled as Han Chinese men (fig. 2.24).

Gestures and Poses

In the following examination of the Northern Song sculptures in Thousand Buddha Hall, the figures are loosely grouped together based on their gestures and poses. Although all of the figures, from both the Song and Ming dynasty, are depicted seated, none of the eleventh-century figures have exactly the same pose. While many are engaged in similar activities, no two figures are depicted in the same moment of action.

A first grouping can be seen with those figures whose hands are raised up and held apart to form a circular area between them. This group includes #2W, #3W, #10W, and #40E (fig. 2.25). Their gestures appear abstract—are the sacred personages engaged in particular meditational practices or mystical activities? Although many of the sculptures sustained damage throughout the twentieth century, photographs taken in 1921 of #3W, #10W, and #40E show that these figures' hands have not been altered (fig. 2.26). Comparing the gestures of these figures with one found in the late twelfth-century painting, *Pilgrims Offering Treasure to Luohan* by Lin

Tinggui 林庭珪 (act. late 12th c.) and Zhou Jichang 周季常 (act. late 12th c.), the hand positions become less abstract in meaning (fig. 2.27). The painting depicts five *luohan* of regal comportment being given lavish gifts (coral, animal tusks, etc) by non-Han Chinese pilgrims. One of the sacred figures holds a sutra scroll between his hands. The placement of his hands around the edges of the scroll mirrors the hand positions of the Lingyan figures. It is likely the four Lingyan figures originally held objects, possibly sutra scrolls, vases, *vajras* (bells), or other items, which have been lost over time. All of these objects were common attributes of *luohan* images in the Song dynasty.¹¹⁸

Seven of the sculptures, #8W, #13W, #18W, #22E, #27E, #33E, and #34E, have raised arms and are either pointing or gesturing off to the side, lending the appearance of being in the midst of debate or conversation. Sitting casually in a modified royal ease pose (*līlāsana*), #18W has his left hand resting on his raised left knee, much like a Song-era wooden Guanyin sculpture in the British Museum collection (figs. 2.28 and 2.29). With an ever-so-slight frown on his face, the *luohan* figure points toward something or someone. His pose, gesture, and expression combine together to suggest he is making an important point during an informal and relaxed debate. Another figure, #27E, also has his finger raised, but it is pointed up in the *vitarka* mudra (fig. 2.30). This gesture, even to modern eyes, suggests someone in the midst of teaching; someone patiently correcting a student or explaining an idea.¹¹⁹

Teaching and debate were important responsibilities for senior monks in the Song dynasty. The eleventh-century text, *Pure Rules for Chan Monasteries* 禪苑清規, one of the

¹¹⁸ For discussion on the various objects commonly depicted with *luohan* figures, see Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 59.

¹¹⁹ The right hand of #27E was repaired during the 1980s conservation work as, at that time, it was completely missing. However, photographs taken in 1921 show the hand fully intact and with its finger raised. The replacement hand mirrors the hand as it was in the 1920s. For images of the figure prior to restoration, see Zhang, *Lingyan Temple*, pl. 27. For a photograph of the hand circa 1921, see Melchers, *Die Lochan Von Ling-Yan-Si*, pl. 11.

earliest Chan monastic manuals, lays out in great detail the routines and responsibilities for both abbots and their students.¹²⁰ Abbots were expected to give weekly “public” lectures to the monastic community, called “ascending the hall” 上堂, and to hold private meetings with advanced students, termed “entering the [abbot’s] room” 入室.¹²¹ Although the text stresses the etiquette involved in these master/disciple meetings, students were expected to “speak their minds frankly” 吐露消息 during them.¹²² In other words, these individual teaching sessions were intended for open dialogue and debate as a way to train students in the skills and ideas they would need to advance in the monastic institution. Many of these exchanges, both public and private, are recorded in the “recorded sayings” 語錄 (*yulü*) collections of individual monks, which are discussed further in Chapter Three.¹²³

Although no images depict these meetings, Chan encounter pictures 禪會圖 (Jpn: *zen'e zu*) visualize similar exchanges between monks and lay people. A famous exchange between the monk Weiyan 惟儼 (751-834) of Yaoshan 藥山 (Hunan province) and Li Ao 李翱 (act. ca. 820), an official from Langzhou 朗州 (Hunan province), is captured in the mid-thirteenth-century painting, *Meeting Between Yaoshan and Li Ao* (fig. 2.31). In the painting, Li Ao is depicted as greeting the monk with a bow. According to the monk’s biography in the early eleventh-century

¹²⁰ Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗曠 (?-1107?) compiled, *Rules of Purity for the Chan Monastery* 禪苑清規. Dated to 1103. See *Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō* 卍新纂續藏經 [Revised edition of the *Xuzangjing*], ed. Kawamura Kōshō henshu shunin 河村孝照編主任, (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1975-1989), 63: n. 1245. Hereafter abbreviated as XZJ.

¹²¹ XZJ63 n. 1245: 527a19-527b20 and XZJ63 n. 1245: 0526c11-527a09 respectively.

¹²² XZJ63 n. 1245: 526c22. I use a translation of this phrase by Robert H. Sharf, which maintains the “spirit” of these meetings. The text does not limit the subjects or range of questions students could address, but only cautions that students should not ramble on during these meetings. See Robert H. Sharf, “How to Think with Chan *Gong’an*,” in *Hsiung Ping-Chen*, ed. Charlotte Furth et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007), 233.

¹²³ In analyzing the types of questions asked by the students of the Caodong monk Hongzhi, as found in his various lectures/meetings, Mortern Schlütter argued that at least with this particular cleric, these meetings allowed him to refine his teaching skills. See Schlütter, “The Record of Hongzhi and the Recorded Sayings Literature of Song-Dynasty Chan,” in *Zen Canon: Understanding the Classic Texts*, ed. Steven Heine et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 193.

Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp 景德傳燈錄, compiled by Daoyuan 道原, Weiyān did not respond with a similarly polite greeting. In response, Li Ao sharply remarked that meeting the monk was less exciting than hearing stories about him.¹²⁴

The monk, seen in profile sitting on a rock in the painting, points at a vase placed on a rock beside him. The gesture references his response to the official's primary question, "what is the way?"¹²⁵ The monk answered with "The clouds are in the sky, the water is in the vase."¹²⁶ This gesture, similar to those found with #27E and #18W from the Lingyan set, indicates the figures are in the midst of teaching, even as we do not know exactly what those figures were pointing at or what question was being answered.¹²⁷

Two other figures from this group, #8W and #22E, have an additional gesture that references the pragmatic aspects of living as a monk. These figures, in addition to #5W, hold back the sleeve of their raised arms, an action that is also mentioned in the *Rules of Purity for the Chan Monastery* (figs. 2.32-2.34). In the section entitled, "Attendance at Meals" 赴粥飯, monks are instructed on the appropriate way to handle their robes as they climb the platform for meals. They are told to use their "right hand[s] to gather the material of [the] left sleeve...then use[s] the left hand to gather the right sleeve and slightly lift[s] it up."¹²⁸ The text continues to describe the ways a monk should handle his body as he steps up to the platform and slides his body onto

¹²⁴ 見面不如聞名. T.51, n.2076: 312b11.

¹²⁵ 如何是道. T.51, n.2076: 312b13.

¹²⁶ 雲在天水在瓶. T.51, n.2076: 312b14. The full story as found in Weiyān's biography records that after Li Ao asked his question, the monk's first response was only gestural—he pointed to the sky with one finger and to the ground with another, and then asked Li Ao if he understood. When the official replied in the negative, Weiyān replied with the two phrase response on the sky and the vase. T. 51, n.2076: 312b09-312b17. This story is translated in Yoshiaki Shimitzu, "Six Narrative Paintings by Yin T'o-Lo: Their Symbolic Content," *Archives of Asian Art* 33 (1980): 13.

¹²⁷ This painting is discussed in two exhibition catalogues: *Awakenings: Zen Figure Painting in Medieval Japan*, ed. Naomi Noble Richard and Melanie B.D. Klein (New York: Japan Society, 2007), 132 and *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism, 850-1850*, ed. Marsha Weidner (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, 1994), 417-420.

¹²⁸ 先以右手斂左邊衣袖腋下壓定. 復以左手斂右邊衣袖略提提. XZJ63 n.1245: 525a13-a14. Translation adapted from Yifa, *The Origins of Buddhist Monastic Codes in China: An Annotated Translation and Study of the Chanyuan Qinggui*, Kuroda Institute Classics in East Asian Buddhism (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 123.

it. For meals, as with many other activities, monks sat on raised platforms as the Lingyan temple figures are posed. While these instructions are protocols for behavior, they are also pragmatic “tips” for dealing with the hazards caused by wearing loose monastic robes. One can imagine this swift action of holding back one’s sleeves was used anytime, including during debates or conversation, when the sleeves might interfere or create a distraction.

Another four, #6W, #17W, #19W, and #28E are not gesturing, but have their heads and/or torsos turned to the side as if listening to something (figs. 2.35 and 2.36). Figure #17W sits with both legs pendant and shoes firmly on the footstand in front of him. His head is turned to the left and tilted slightly. He appears as a man attentively listening to someone, but his hands suggest otherwise. They lay in his lap in the *dhyāna* mudra, but are not held parallel with one another as seen with figures #1W and #21E (fig. 2.37). In comparison, they appear more casual and in contradiction to his straight back and attentive gaze. The impression is of self-awareness, as if the figure is listening to someone and yet wants to be elsewhere. Wen Fong has suggested one of the *luohan*’s roles, as seen in Song paintings of the Sixteen *Luohan*, was contemplation, which he defined as figures “who sit quietly and observe the activities of some subsidiary figures or animals.”¹²⁹ In this respect, contemplation was an “extended form of meditation.”¹³⁰

In a very different type of pose, figure #6W from this group has his head turned to the right and has his arms held up to his left shoulder with his fingers curled as if clutching something (fig. 2.38). The hand and arm positions suggest the figure once held a walking stick, which is confirmed by another photograph taken in 1921 (fig. 2.39). The photograph shows the figure with a staff of unknown origin resting in its arms. Not unique to the Lingyan sculpture, this attribute is also found with a Song-era *luohan* figure from a set of sixteen at Qinglian temple

¹²⁹ Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 118.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 119.

青蓮寺 in Shanxi province (fig. 2.40). In a poem written by the Song writer Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), the author notes having seen the *luohan* Piṇḍola painted in a similar pose in a work by the ninth-century artist Guanxiu 貫休 (832-912).¹³¹ While some distinguishing markers of *luohan* only identified their status as Protectors of the Law, other attributes were specific to certain named figures. Notable is that this particular *luohan* was more often identified as having long white eyebrows. That Su Shi understood the painted *luohan* holding a walking stick as Piṇḍola indicates that even with those more-well known figures, such as Piṇḍola, attributes could vary. However, walking sticks were not exclusive to *luohan*, but were also associated with images of actual monks, such as seen in a twelfth-century painted portrait of the Vinaya (Lü) monk Dazhi (1048-1116) (fig. 2.41).

Another common attribute with *luohan*, rosaries, offers one possible explanation for the form of #14W from the Lingyan grouping (fig. 2.42). With his hands raised close to his face, the figure appears to be concentrating on them. After viewing a painting of the Eighteen *Luohan* by the Shu (Sichuan) artist Zhang Xuan 張玄 (fl. 890-930) Su Shi wrote: “The ninth one just finished eating and has turned his bowl upside down. He sits counting the beads of his rosary and murmurs a spell” 第九尊者食已襍鉢持數珠誦咒.¹³² #14W may have originally held a rosary in his hands with the look of concentration on his face the result of being deeply engaged in counting his prayer beads.

¹³¹ In Su Shi’s poem, he dedicates a stanza to each of the eighteen *luohan*. He identified the eighteenth of these figures as Piṇḍola and wrote: The right hand holds a stick; the left hand rests on the right; are the hands holding the stick? Or is the stick holding up the hands? Sitting peacefully on the rock, how can the stick be useful? The usefulness of the uselessness is not known by the world’s people 右手持杖, 左手拊石, 為手持杖, 為杖持手. 宴坐石上, 安以杖為, 無用之用, 世人莫知. Translation by Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 48. The original poem is found in *Collected Works of Dongpo* [Su Shi] 東坡全集, Wenyuange Sikuquanshu dianziban (Hong Kong: Zhongwen Daxue Chubanshe Dizhi, 1998), j. 98, 9a-12b. Wenyuange Sikuquanshu hereafter abbreviated as SKQS.

¹³² Su Shi, *Collected Works of Dongpo*, SKQS, j. 98, pp.9b-15b. Translation by Wen Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 101.

Another possible analysis of this figure comes from an examination of #37E (fig. 2.43). The latter figure is depicted holding a cloth in his left hand, while the fingertips of his right hand are pinched together above the fabric. The gesture is recognizable as someone in the midst of sewing. It is possible #14W once held a sewing needle rather than a rosary. Wen Fong has suggested painted depictions of *luohan*, which feature them engaged in mundane daily activities, such as sewing, began to appear in the mid-eleventh century in conjunction with the increased popularity of the Five Hundred *Luohan*.¹³³ Challenged to find new ways to visually organize vast numbers of figures into compositions, artists added new themes to the repertoire of *luohan* imagery, including depicting these sacred personages performing ordinary acts like mending clothing.¹³⁴ By the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279), these types of images had become more common. A painting from the famous Daitokuji set of one hundred hanging scrolls by the artist Lin Tinggui 林庭珪 (act. late 12th c.) entitled *Luohan Laundering* and dated to 1186, features five *luohan* performing a common and miserable task: laundry (fig. 2.44). Within this context, the Lingyan temple sculptures #14W and #37E suggest the shift toward “ordinariness” with *luohan* images was not limited to paintings, but included sculpture as well.

The motif of sewing one’s robes was, however, more closely associated with clerics. As an important visual marker, monastic robes distinguished clerics from secular life. Robes were pieced together from individual strips of fabric in a highly codified process. The number of fabric pieces, the quality of the fabric, and even the type of stitching that was appropriate for different robes was all regulated. In his study of monastic dress in China, John Kieschnick

¹³³ Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 82-97. Fong also noted that in an essay about a painting by the monk painter Faneng 法能, dated to 1080, Su Shi’s brother-in-law Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049-1110) describes an image of a monk sewing. See Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 153-155. Qin Guan’s essay is reprinted on p. 258.

¹³⁴ Another new theme was *luohan* traveling. Fong argued these new themes were in addition to older ones, such as *luohan* reading or lecturing, contemplating animals, and receiving offerings. See Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 163.

observed that monks striving for the highest ascetic ideal would create their robes from discarded cloth, as a measure of their renouncement of the material world.¹³⁵

This was rarely put into practice in China, but it was a theme with Chan Buddhist paintings. The Yuan dynasty (1279-1368) hanging scroll, *Monk Mending Clothes in the Morning Sun*, attributed to the artist Muqi Fachang 牧溪法常 (act. mid- to late 13th c.), depicts a monk seated outdoors holding a piece of clothing with one hand while the other pulls the stitching tight (fig. 2.45). The artist's bold sketchy brushstrokes combined with the monk's relaxed seated position render the composition as a scene from everyday life.¹³⁶ Even more so, it suggests the dedication of a monk to a life oriented toward more noble goals, such as detachment from the world of human passions and the realization of enlightenment. An anecdote in the twenty-ninth chapter of the *Zengyi Ahan Jing* 增壹阿含經 (Skt: *Ekôttarâgama Sūtra*), relates that one of Śākyamuni's own disciples, Śāriputra, became so engrossed in mending his robes that he missed a lecture given by the Buddha himself.¹³⁷

Figures #1W and #21E, which currently flank the main doors of Thousand Buddha Hall, are seated in a meditational pose with legs crossed and hands in *dhyāna* mudra (fig. 2.46 and 2.47). While #1W has its eyes open and its head held high, #21E has closed eyes and a robe covering its head. With the current layout of Thousand Buddha Hall a viewer walking clockwise around the space encounters #1W first and #21E last. We do not know the original arrangement of the sculptures in Banzhou Hall, thus it is difficult to speculate on the relationship between the placement and the poses of these two figures.

¹³⁵ John Kieschnick, *Chinese Material Culture*, 86-96.

¹³⁶ Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman have suggested the image of monks sewing was often paired with an image of monks reading, which they trace to a poem of uncertain origin. See Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, eds. *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts/ New York Graphic Society, 1970), 137.

¹³⁷ In the story, the Buddha himself notices Śāriputra's absence and sends Maudgalyāyana to the monastery to find him, which results in a test of supernatural powers between the two disciples. T. 02, n.0125: 708.c28-710a27.

Sculpture #21E displays characteristics associated Bodhidharma 菩提達磨 (act. first half of 6th cent.), the first patriarch of the Chan lineage. Both the meditational pose and the hood are found in images identified as Bodhidharma from the Southern Song dynasty onward, such as the thirteenth-century hanging scroll, *Bodhidharma Meditating Facing the Wall* (fig. 2.48) Here, the Chan patriarch is shown seated cross-legged on a rock with his body and head swathed in robes. Painted in profile, he faces the entrance to a cave. Behind him stands the figure of the second patriarch, Huike 慧可. The painting references a legendary episode in Bodhidharma's life as recorded in several Northern Song-era monastic biographies. According to the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, the monk spent nine years at Shaolin temple 少林寺 on Mt. Song 嵩山 staring at a rock wall in meditation. The bibliography refers to him as the “wall gazing śramaṇa” 壁觀婆羅門.¹³⁸ Whether fact or fiction, the association of the Indian monk with “wall-gazing” meditation was well known throughout the Song dynasty.¹³⁹ Depictions of the patriarch facing forward with his legs crossed in meditation are, according to Susan Bush and Victor Mair, an allusion to his years spent in this manner.¹⁴⁰ Wen Fong has suggested images of

¹³⁸ T. 51, n.2076: 219b.04-5. According to this text and others, during Bodhidharma's time spent “wall gazing” he was visited several times by a monk. This monk, Huike, was so determined to study with the master that he cut off his left arm to prove his dedication. An even earlier text, *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* 續高僧, written by Dao Xuan 道宣 (596–667) in 645 mentions Bodhidharma's practice of wall-gazing 壁觀. T. 50, n.2060: 551c06.

¹³⁹ The legends surrounding Bodhidharma were mythic by the Song period, a fact that modern scholars readily recognize. In 1986, Bernard Faure argued for a re-examination of the monk's biographical records to consider them as literary works rather than as pure fact. His analysis, though brief, highlights the manufactured nature of this monk as the primary “founder” of Chan Buddhism and yet, does not negate the impact these records had on the contemporary readers. See Bernard Faure, “Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm,” *History of Religions* 25, no. 3 (Feb., 1986): 187-98.

¹⁴⁰ Susan Bush and Victor Mair, “Some Buddhist Portraits and Images of the Lu and Chan Sects,” *Archives of Asian Art* 31 (1977-78), 45. Helmut Brinker has suggested the earliest known painted representation of Bodhidharma without the other patriarchs is the hanging scroll, *Red-robed Bodhidharma*, located at Kōgakuji in Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan and dated to the 1260s. See Helmut Brinker, “Ch'an Portraits in a Landscape,” *Archives of Asian Art* 27 (1973-74), 11.

luohan meditating, specifically those in caves, do not depict named *luohan*, but instead represent the “mystic nature” of these personages.¹⁴¹

Although the Lingyan sculpture does not reference either caves or Huike, the figure is depicted in a meditational pose and with a hood similar to Bodhidharma, as found in the thirteenth-century painting. While it cannot be definitively considered an image of the Chan patriarch, it was produced in a period when information about the historical monk was plentiful. Further, as Bodhidharma was a crucial figure in the Chan patriarchal scheme, it would not be surprising to find an image of him at the temple.

The remaining sculpted figures from the set show a variety of poses, some of which are recognizable. #25E has both hands clasped around raised knees and looks off into the distance (fig. 2.49). #15W with fleshy cheeks is seated in a casual cross-legged position and has both hands raised in *āñjali* mudra (fig. 2.50). Although this is a gesture associated with alms giving, the figure has his head turned slightly appearing to look at something located in front and left of him.

As forms of communication, the gestures and poses of the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple may have been interpreted in various ways. We may be able to correlate some of the figures’ gestures with contemporary images and texts, but the local monastic community may have “read” them in other ways, just as lay viewers may have approached them differently.¹⁴² However, the artistic choice to sculpt the figures with these particular gestures presupposes the

¹⁴¹ Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 60.

¹⁴² For example, Christian Wittern has examined the gesture of a Chan teacher spreading out his hands before him, such as described in an exchange between the monk Fushou 福壽 (n.d.) and one of his students. Wittern has suggested that within the Caodong 曹洞宗 (Jpn: Sōtō) lineage this gesture was associated with its founder, Dongshan Liangjie 洞山良价 (840-901), and was understood as “welcoming the student to incite him to receive instruction.” Christian Wittern, “Some Preliminary Remarks to a Study of Rhetorical Devices in Chán Yǔlù 禪語錄 Encounter Dialogues,” in *Zen Buddhist Rhetoric in China, Korea, and Japan*, ed. Christoph Anderl (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2012), 269.

viewing audience would understand them as reflections of the life and responsibilities of senior clerics.

Early Beginnings: pre-Song and Song Artistic Sources

While the twenty-seven Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple have some attributes, displayed or suggested, associated with Song-era *luohan* representations, the analysis in the previous section of their facial characteristics, gestures, and poses indicates a clear relationship to visual and textual descriptions of monks and monastic activities.

Scholars have long recognized the iconographical overlap between images of *luohan* and monks. Yet, this has posed a challenge in attempts to trace the development of *luohan* imagery in the pre-Song periods. The earliest extant image that can be concretely identified as a *luohan*, a painted image of a seated monk-like figure found at Mogao grotto, only dates to the first half of the ninth century (fig. 2.51).¹⁴³ The figure is named through an inscription on the painting as the *luohan* Kālika. Pictorially, there are few—if any—clear-cut distinctions between images of these figures and other monastic personages, such as historical clerics, Buddhist patriarchs, or disciples of the Buddha. This is a sticky issue itself as some historical personages, such as the Ten Disciples of the historical Buddha are described in scriptures as *luohan*, yet their primary roles and identification were as disciples. Most likely there were differences in the devotional practices performed around these various types of figures, but early producers and visual consumers of these images did not feel compelled to distinguish them visually.¹⁴⁴ However, with

¹⁴³ This painting on paper contains an inscription in Tibetan that identifies the figure as Kālika, a *luohan* and one of the early disciples of the Buddha. See Kent, “Sixteen Lohans,” 30-31 and Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 27-8.

¹⁴⁴ Richard Kent has noted categorizing different types of figures can be helpful to modern art historians, but this may not reflect actual priorities for medieval Buddhist communities. See Kent, “Sixteen Lohans,” 31, fn. 32.

these early monastic images, as with the Lingyan sculptures, there was a concerted effort to visually suggest the depicted subject was distinct and individual.

Ānanda and Mahākāśyapa-type Figures

The early artistic sources in this process are found in pre-Song images of clerics, including representations of the historical Buddha's primary disciples, Ānanda 阿難 and Mahākāśyapa 摩訶迦葉.¹⁴⁵ Ānanda, known in early Indian scriptures for his exacting memory, was the second of the twenty-eight patriarchs in the Chinese Chan traditions.¹⁴⁶ Mahākāśyapa was the first patriarch in this lineage and was one of the Ten Disciples 十弟子 of the historical Buddha.¹⁴⁷ Two early sculptures of these personages, located on the north side of the central Binyang cave 宾阳中洞 at Longmen 龍門石窟 in Henan province, illustrate part of the artistic heritage of the Lingyan figures.

Dated between 505-516, these two sculptures form part of a pentad group that includes figures of Sākyamuni and two bodhisattvas (fig. 2.52).¹⁴⁸ Standing just behind the Buddha,

¹⁴⁵ Wen Fong, Richard K. Kent, and Chen Qingxiang have all identified early Ānanda and Mahākāśyapa images as important artistic sources for *luohan* images. Chen Qingxiang has suggested the earliest extant sculptures that can be considered precursors of *luohan* images are found at cave temple sites in Gansu province dating to the Northern Liang period (397-440 AD). These sculptures variously depict monks in seated and standing positions with beatific or meditative expressions. See Chen, *Research on Luohan Images*, 6; Fong, "Five Hundred Lohans," 25-6; Kent, "The Sixteen Lohans," 37-47.

¹⁴⁶ As noted by M. W. de Visser, Ānanda was also known as an expert on teaching the sutras, most likely because of his exceptional memory. See de Visser, *The Arhats in China and Japan*, 29.

¹⁴⁷ For a list of the Ten Disciples, see footnote 93 above.

¹⁴⁸ The central Binyang cave was the only one of a set of three (north and south Binyang) to have been completed in the Northern Wei period. Alexander Soper was the first to suggest that the central cave was sponsored by Emperor Xuanwu 宣武(500-516). Started early in his reign, the project was dedicated to his deceased father, Emperor Xiaowen 孝文 (r. 471-499). The cave was completed under Emperor Xiaoming 孝明 (r. 516-28). See Alexander Soper, "South Chinese Influence on the Buddhist Arts of the Six Dynasties period," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, Stockholm, 32 (1960): 64-72.

Ānanda is to his right and Mahākāśyapa to his left.¹⁴⁹ Both forms have a sense of solidity to them with the surfaces molded to emulate thick robes, which display few notations of the bodies underneath the robes. The drapery falls naturalistically with an emphasis on the folds in the fabric.¹⁵⁰ This sculptural style reflects changes in Buddhist sculpture that occurred in the late fifth-century.

Although the Lingyan sculptures are rendered more naturalistically, the two sets do share a few significant qualities. Binyang's Ānanda is depicted as a young man with a rounded face and long earlobes (fig. 2.53). Three of the Northern Song sculptures from Lingyan temple, #5W, #16W, and #39E, display these same qualities (fig. 2.54). The figures show a fresh-faced youthfulness with unlined skin and softly molded cheeks and chins. While Binyang's Ānanda is more generalized with its blissful smile and the Lingyan sculptures are more distinctively individualized, these differences reflect sculptural trends of the respective periods of production. However, the similarities in their presentation as young monks allow us to consider the Lingyan sculptures as Ānanda-type figures.

The figure of Mahākāśyapa from central Binyang also finds a comparison with the Song-era Lingyan sculptures through #36E (figs. 2.55 and 2.56). The earlier sculpture depicts an older monk with an open mouth and robes that drape low across the torso exposing his chest. His chest is carved with horizontal lines to represent muscles and bone giving the impression of a thin, aged body. The robes of figure #36E drape even more casually, leaving visible most of the chest

¹⁴⁹ In examining the “five-figured” arrangement of a buddha, two bodhisattvas, and two disciples that developed around the sixth-century, Wen Fong identifies the two disciple figures as Ānanda and Mahākāśyapa and as *luohan*. Other scholars, such as Richard K. Kent, see these early images as predecessors to later *luohan* imagery. As the emphasis in these arrangements is on the figures' relationship to the historical Buddha as his primary disciples and not on their status as *luohan*, I tend to agree with Kent. See Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 25-26 and Kent, “Sixteen Lohans,” 38-40.

¹⁵⁰ Katherine Tsiang has discussed the various “models” that have been put forth by scholars to explain the change in style that occurred at this time, specifically the differences and problems with “evolution” and “influence” type models. See Katherine K. Tsiang, “Changing Patterns of Divinity and Reform in the Late Northern Wei,” *The Art Bulletin* 84, no. 2 (June 2002): 222-45.

area, which highlights the boniness of the monk's frame. Notations of age are also seen with deep wrinkles that line the forehead, hollow cheeks, and gnarled muscles of the neck. The sculptors of the Binyang Mahākāśyapa specifically referenced age in the chest area, while the Lingyan sculptors emphasized the effects of age across the body and face, giving the figure a more realistic presentation as an elderly person.

Another Mahākāśyapa-type comparison to #36E is found with a stucco sculpture located in cave 419 at Mogao Grotto 莫高窟, Dunhuang 敦煌, dated to the Sui dynasty (581-618) (fig. 2.57).¹⁵¹ Like the Binyang sculpture, this standing figure is part of a pentad grouping and is placed to the Buddha's left side. The figure's robes drape casually and are open revealing a chest that has been molded with bulging muscles and defined ribs. This, as well as the prominent knob at the throat and deep undercutting highlighting the neck muscles, presents the figure's exposed body as exaggerated. The facial features are equally overstated with deep precise lines for wrinkles along the forehead and around the mouth and decidedly long earlobes.

Although the Dunhuang figure is rendered with a greater degree of exaggeration, the artists of both sculptures highlighted markers of age. As with the Binyang figures, markers of age encourage viewers to see each of the figures as distinct from one another. All of the sculptures—the Lingyan figures, the Binyang disciples, and the Mahākāśyapa figure from cave 419—present a generalized type, the old or young monk, whose distinctiveness is found through contrast.

Richard K. Kent has argued early representations of Mahākāśyapa were the inspiration for the late ninth-century trend of depicting *luohan* with exaggerated, and often times, non-Han

¹⁵¹ For a listing of Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda-type sculptures at Mogao grotto, see Ji Xianlin 季羨林, ed. *Encyclopedia of Dunhuang Studies* 敦煌學大辭典 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1998), 74-75.

Chinese features.¹⁵² This trend is closely associated with the *luohan* paintings of the Tang dynasty artist Guanxiu 貫休 (832-912).¹⁵³ As none of the artist's work is extant, modern knowledge of the style and content of his paintings is dependant upon Song dynasty sources. In both *A Record of the Famous Painters of Yizhou* 益州名畫錄 (1006) and the *Catalogue of Paintings in the Xuanhe Collection* 宣和畫譜 (1120) Guanxiu's *luohan* are described as being of non-Han Chinese ethnicity and with caricatured facial features, including bushy eyebrows and beards, bulging eyes, and huge jaws.¹⁵⁴ Although the hyperbole found in these descriptions speaks as much to contemporary political concerns over real and perceived threats to China from neighboring non-Han Chinese peoples as it did to the actualities Guanxiu's *luohan*, they do suggest the trend of depicting *luohan* as "grotesque."¹⁵⁵

As this trend was established by the time the Northern Song-era sculptures at Lingyan temple were created, it is reasonable assume the artists had choices in representing the figures. Figure #36E from the set has distinctive facial features, but not those of a non-Han Chinese man. #21E and #27E are depicted as foreign monks, but neither can be considered caricatures or "grotesque." The faces of the Lingyan figures are rendered naturalistically with a sophistication that lends itself to subtlety, not exaggeration. The artists chose to depict all of the *luohan*, regardless of ethnicity, as earth-bound clerics devoid of outlandish features.

¹⁵² While Kent does not discuss the sculpture from Cave 419 at Mogao Grotto, he does address the Binyang figure. His primary example of an early source for Guanxiu-style *luohan* is a low-relief carving of Mahākāśyapa originally from Lianhua cave 蓮花洞 at Longmen, dated to circa 521. He suggests that by the sixth-century "there was a precedent for depicting Indian disciples...as having exaggeratedly foreign facial features that bordered on the grotesque." See Kent, "Sixteen Lohans," 46-7.

¹⁵³ Many scholars have written about Guanxiu and his *luohan* paintings, including Wen Fong, Richard K. Kent, Masako Watanabe, and Bong Seok Joo. See Fong, "Five Hundred Lohans," 30-76, Kent, "Sixteen Lohans," 44-52, Watanabe, "Guanxiu and Exotic Imagery in *Rakan* Painting," *Orientalism* 31, no. 4 (2000): 260-74, and Joo, "The Arhat Cult," 85-92.

¹⁵⁴ Huang Xiufu 黃休復 (fl. 1004), *A Record of the Famous Painters of Yizhou* 益州名畫錄, SKQS, j. 下, p. 4a-6. *Catalogue of Paintings in the Xuanhe Collection* 宣和畫譜, SKQS, j. 3, p. 12a.

¹⁵⁵ This is a term that is often used to reference Guanxiu style *luohan*. See footnote 153 above for scholarship on Guanxiu and examples of the use of this term.

Buddhist Patriarch Images

With the Song-era sculptures of Lingyan temple, artists prioritized individuating each figure. There is an overlap with certain facial features, such as the small pursed lips of #14W and #15W or the high cheekbones and thin faces of #2W, #6W, and #18W, but each face is composed of a different combination of characteristics (figs. 2.58 and 2.59).¹⁵⁶ A similar physiognomic diversity is found with Tang and pre-Tang sculpted portraits of Buddhist patriarchs, such as those at Longmen Grotto's 龍門石窟 cave-temple, Kanjing temple 看經寺 .

Located on the opposite side of the Yi River 伊河 from Binyang Cave, Kanjing temple's walls are lined with twenty-nine life-size carvings of monks (figs. 2.60 and 2.61).¹⁵⁷ Dated to 732, these low-relief works line the lower portion of the three back walls of the central space. Twenty-eight of the figures are currently extant. Each carving depicts a standing monk in three-quarter profile, who is unique in terms of facial features, posture, and iconographical attributes. As an example, the second figure from the group is a round-faced monk with a double chin, slightly sagging cheeks, and a rosebud mouth (fig. 2.62). He holds a lotus flower on an upright stem in front of him. Depicted behind him is a monk whose slightly stooped body belies his advanced age (fig. 2.63).¹⁵⁸ His long thin lips and the wrinkled brow that hangs over his eyes further reveal his age. Like the figures of Mahākāśyapa and #37E from Lingyan temple, his open robes show his breastbone and ribs. In his hands are a staff and rosary. As discussed earlier, these

¹⁵⁶ The overlap suggests that either multiple artists worked on each sculpture or the artists were working with sets of models for facial features. Zhang Heyun organized the set into nine groups based on facial differences and variations in craftsmanship in order to argue for a Song dating of the set. See Zhang, "Research," 2-3.

¹⁵⁷ Central Binyang cave is on the western side of the Yi River, while Kanjing temple is on its eastern banks.

¹⁵⁸ Both of these figures are on the south wall of the cave-temple.

attributes are found with later *luohan* images. This set not only shows vast differences between the figures, but also displays a naturalism not found in the Binyang sculptures.

Sculpted in close proximity to one another, the Kanjing figures appear to walk around the perimeter of the temple, which a number of scholars have noted gives the appearance the monks are in the midst of the *pradaksina* ceremony, circumambulating around the central Buddha sculpture.¹⁵⁹ These “circumambulating monks” 行僧 were also depicted in painted form. In the *Record of Famous Painters Through the Dynasties* 歷代名畫記, Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (815-ca. 877) commented that he had seen many of these types of figures and “their eyes seemed to turn according to the movement of the spectators.”¹⁶⁰ Although the Lingyan figures are seated rather than standing, the placement and poses of the sculptures creates a similar sense of movement and engagement with the viewer. With both Banzhou Hall and Thousand Buddha Hall, excluding the space directly in front of the main buddha sculptures, wherever one would have stood a *luohan* sculpture would be nearby. The figures seem to accompany a viewer as she/he circulates around the room or circumambulates the buddha images. As one moves across the hall, the figural forms themselves appear to change. Alex Potts has noted with sculptural works there is a “dynamic process of its appearing to one [the viewer] in its multiple aspects, and...the more stable sense one has of it as a clearly defined shape.”¹⁶¹ As three-dimensional forms, the Lingyan sculptures reveal different angles, contours, and planes as viewers walk past them. The expressions and poses shift with each step, creating a sense that the figures are animated and alive.

¹⁵⁹ Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 26 and Karil Kucera, “Recontextualizing Kanjingsi: Finding Meaning in the Emptiness at Longmen,” *Archives of Asian Art* 56 (2006): 72-3.

¹⁶⁰ Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (815-ca. 877), *Record of Famous Painters Through the Dynasties* 歷代名畫記, j.3. SKQS.

¹⁶¹ Alex Potts, “Modern Perceptions of Sculpture: The Contingencies of Viewing, the Fixity of Form,” in *Perception and the Senses/Sinnerwahrnehmung*, ed. Therese Fischer-Seide et al. (Tübingen and Basel: Narr Francke, 2004), 144.

Although the exact identification of the Kanjing figures is controversial, many scholars consider them to be the twenty-nine patriarchs of Buddhism, specifically those associated with early Chan as described in the late-eighth century text, *Record of the Dharma-Jewel Through the Generations* 歷代法寶記.¹⁶² Controversies notwithstanding, the physiognomic heterogeneity of the figural forms indicates this was not a group of nameless monks. By rendering each with its own naturalistic details and iconography, the artists called attention to the figures as different from one another. While it is unclear if the artists intended the figures to be understood as specific historical or legendary monks, the emphasis on the differences suggests they were to be read as distinct personages. The artists of the Lingyan temple sculptures employed the same method to encourage viewers to “see” the *luohan* figures as distinct.

The Lingyan temple sculptures and the Kanjing temple carvings share stylistic and compositional qualities, but the represented figures are conceptually different in one important respect: *luohan* are enlightened personages who are not connected to one moment in history. They are essentially “outside of history.”¹⁶³ Patriarchs are also enlightened, but represent sectarian lineages stemming back to the historical Buddha. As Kucera has succinctly stated, “all patriarchs are *luohan*, but not all *luohan* are patriarchs.”¹⁶⁴ In the Tang dynasty, artists did not feel the need to visually distinguish between these two types of personages, thus the controversies with the identification of the Kanjing figures. This might have been due to the limited devotional audience for *luohan*. Although the *Record of the Perpetuity* and other texts had been translated by the time the Kanjing figures were carved, the worship of *luohan* did not

¹⁶² Wendi Adamek has argued that evidence for the different patriarch schemes, specifically that of the twenty-nine patriarchs, is found first in the pictorial arts and only later in texts. Chen Qingxiang resists this identification precisely because the images pre-date the earliest textual references to them. She instead refers to them as *luohan*. See Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Contexts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 104 and Chen, *Research on Luohan Imagery*, 123-153.

¹⁶³ Kent, “Sixteen Lohans,” 32, fn. 32.

¹⁶⁴ Kucera, “Recontextualizing Kanjingsi,” 63.

gain widespread popularity until the ninth century. However, by the Song period *luohan* as individual named personages and in groups of sixteen, eighteen, and five hundred, were well-known and popular figures of devotion.

Yet, in some cases, the visual distinctions between these supernatural monks and other important monastic figures continued to be blurred during the Song dynasty. In Yuru Cave 玉乳洞 at Feilaifeng 飛來峰 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province are two niches, no. 24 and no. 28, containing groups of carved life-size monk images of eighteen and six respectively, dated to 1026 (figs. 2.64 and 2.65). Donor inscriptions in no. 28 identify those sculptures as *luohan*.¹⁶⁵ Scholars have alternately identified those in no. 24 as either the Six Chan patriarchs 祖師 or two Chan patriarchs and four abbots.¹⁶⁶

Unlike the patriarchal figures at Kanjing temple, which reference the legendary and historical personages associated with early Buddhism in India, the Six Chan patriarchs were considered the first six teachers associated with the Chan school in China. The first and primary patriarch, Bodhidharma, was an Indian monk who traveled to China during the Northern Wei dynasty (424-535). His student Huike 慧可 (486-593) followed as the second “ancestor” with Sengcan (d. 606), Daoxin 道信 (580-651), Hongren 弘忍 (602-675), and Huineng 慧能 (638-713) rounding out the group of six.¹⁶⁷ During the Song dynasty, this spiritual lineage was an especially critical issue for Chan clerics. Although there were five different “houses” 家 or

¹⁶⁵ A donor inscription in no. 28 provides the date of production as 1026. Based on stylistic similarities, Chang Qing argues the sculptures in no. 24 were also produced in 1026. See Chang, “Feilaifeng,” 173-174.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 171-190.

¹⁶⁷ These lineages were codified in hagiographical compilations during the Song dynasty, the oldest of which is the 1004 hagiographical compilation, *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* 景德傳燈錄. The transmission of the Buddha’s Laws or Dharma was conceptualized as the transmission of a lamp’s flame, which is reflected in the names of the various genealogies. The compilers of these histories referenced these lineages through various names, including Buddha Mind lineage 佛心宗, the lineage of Bodhidharma 達摩宗 or the Chan lineage 禪宗. See Foulk, “The ‘Ch’an School,’” 43.

branches of Chan at this time and each had its own specific genealogy, all of the branches traced their lineage through these six early teachers. This “family tree” both united all of the branches and was one element in the development of a Chan rhetoric that distinguished the school from the others of the period.

All fourteen of the figures from the two niches at Yuru Cave, *luohan* and patriarch, display stylistic and iconographic similarities, which blur the distinction between the two types of figures. All have long oval faces, simple drapery folds, and a lack of individualized features. Equally, all are depicted seated on ledges with their legs crossed. This landscape setting, albeit abbreviated, began to be a feature with depictions of seated *luohan* during the tenth century, according to Wen Fong.¹⁶⁸ He correlates this iconographical expansion to the *Record of the Perpetuity*, which lists the names of the mountainous homes of the *luohan*. However, with the sculptures in the Yuru Cave niches, we see it with both the *luohan* and patriarch figures. With uniform placement, postures, setting, and style the only thing that distinguishes these two groups of personages are iconographic attributes, such as animal companions, added to the figures in niche no. 28. Unlike the Lingyan sculptures, which also display an overlap between features of the sacred personages of *luohan* and monks, there is no emphasis with the Yuru sculptures on individuating the figures to appear distinct from one another.

In the twelfth-century handscroll, *A Long Roll of Buddhist Images* 大理國梵像卷, attributed to the artist Zhang Shangwen 張勝溫 and dated between 1173-1176, images of the Sixteen *Luohan* and Chan patriarchs also display an overlap in iconography and style (figs 2.66 and 2.67).¹⁶⁹ However, here all of the figures are individualized with distinctive facial features,

¹⁶⁸ Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 27-28.

¹⁶⁹ This painting was most likely commissioned by fourth emperor of the Houli Kingdom 後理 (1096-1253; present-day Yunnan Province), Duan Zhixing 段智興 (r. 1172-1200). Li Zhen 利真, often given as the name of the

expressions, poses, and robes. The only distinguishing iconography is the chairs of varying styles and degrees of opulence upon which seven of the Chan patriarchs are seated. All of the *luohan* are depicted seated on rocks or rocky platforms, as are the remaining nine patriarchs. Although visually there are few markers of difference between the figures, accompanying inscriptions provide the names of each, leaving no doubt as to their identities.

With the Lingyan sculptures, we do not know if a sculpted or painted landscape was included in the original setting in Banzhou Hall. The earliest remaining marks on the walls behind the sculptures date to 1799.¹⁷⁰ While the current platforms in Thousand Buddha Hall have exposed brick, the original ones may have had sculpted façades (fig. 2.68). However, there is nothing about the individual sculptures to suggest placement in a landscape setting. The areas directly behind the legs of the figures, which offer structural support, are smooth and flat, as are the footrests in front of them. If the figures were originally placed within a landscape as if sitting on rocks, this area would have been conspicuously different.¹⁷¹

Even as there are unknown factors regarding the Lingyan temple Northern Song sculptural group, they share one important quality with the figures from the *Long Roll* and those of the earlier Kanjing temple: the emphasis on naturalistic detail, which distinguishes the various figures and argues that each is to be read as a distinct personage. A more contemporary

commissioner of this painting, is one of the five reign names of Duan Zhixing. As seen today, the handscroll is not in its original form. An inscription on the scroll by Emperor Qianlong, dated to 1763, tells that the scroll was cut into pieces and mounted as an album only to be later remounted as a scroll. Several sections and figures are missing from it. The quintessential early study of this work, which includes discussion of its provenance, material condition, and iconography is Helen B. Chapin and Alexander Coburn Soper, "A Long Roll of Buddhist Images," *Artibus Asiae* 32, no. 2/3 (1970): 157-199.

¹⁷⁰ Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 81.

¹⁷¹ None of the Song-era figures are seated on chairs, as are some patriarch figures in the *Long Roll*. The Ming dynasty sculpture, #23E, does depict a figure in a chair, but this speaks to the artistic conventions associated with *luohan* in that later period. Another sculpture, #28E of Song dynasty production, shows the figure with its left arm resting on a rectangular solid form, but this form is not comparable to the arms of chairs depicted in the *Long Roll* or other contemporary images of chairs. It could suggest a *luohan* leaning against a rock, in keeping with the motif of rocky landscapes, but this is not reflected in the surface of this form. It is both flat and painted indicating that as of the late nineteenth century it did not have a sculpted rocky façade on it.

sculptural comparison is found with a tenth-century life-size cast-bronze statue of the sixth patriarch Huineng 慧能 (638-713) from Liurong monastery 六榕寺 in Guangdong province (fig. 2.69).¹⁷² The patriarch is depicted seated in a high-backed chair with his legs crossed and his hands in *dhyāna* mudra, much like #1W from Lingyan temple. Like many of the Lingyan temple figures, his surplice is secured over the left breast with a ceremonial ring and ribbon, a marker of his status as a senior cleric in the monastic hierarchy. His robes fall naturalistically down his body and over his crossed legs. The exposed chest is modeled with horizontal crests to indicate muscle and bone. Although the figure's face shows some characteristics seen with elderly people, such as the wrinkles along either side of the mouth and large nearly sunken eyes, his forehead is smooth and untouched by wrinkles. The realism of the sculpture argues that it was produced with a living sitter. As Huineng died in 714, some two hundred and fifty years prior to this statue having been cast, this was not the case.

The artists responsible for the bronze work may have had a model of a different sort, as this sculpture bears some visual similarity to the lacquered body of the actual monk himself (fig. 2.70). Housed for most of its history in Nanhua Monastery 南華寺 in Guangdong province, the supposed body of Huineng gained fame in the latter half of the eighth-century as the “true image” 真像 of the monk. Its popularity continued into the Song dynasty.¹⁷³ Given the notoriety of this object and its proximity to Liurong Monastery, which is also in Guangdong province, the artists of the bronze sculpture were most likely aware of the lacquered form of Huineng.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² This sculpture is dated to 989.

¹⁷³ Many scholars have written about this unusual object, including Helmut Brinker and Hiroshi Kanazawa, Robert H. Sharf, and more recently Michele Matteini. See Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation*, 89-91; Sharf, "The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Ch'an Masters in Medieval China," *History of Religions* 32, no. 1 (August, 1992): 10-11, and Matteini, "On the 'True Body' of Huineng: Encountering the Sacred in 8th Century China," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 55/56 (November 2008): 42-60.

¹⁷⁴ The history of this object is fraught-full of intrigue and drama. It had been moved several times to different temples, was the focus of at least one attempted theft, and was “lost” during the Cultural Revolution. While the

As discussed previously, the Northern Song sculpture #21E from the Lingyan temple grouping depicts a figure, whose iconography bears similarities to later images of Bodhidharma. The highly naturalistic style of this sculpture, much like that of the bronze figure of Huineng, emphasizes individual features to visually suggest it had an actual monk as a referent (fig. 2.47). The face is subtly modeled as a middle-aged Indian monk with closed eyes, a slightly wide nose, and full lips. The figure's forehead is molded with shallow horizontal crests to indicate tensed concentration.

In Baosheng Temple 保聖寺 in Jiangsu province is a similar sculpture of a meditating *luohan* (fig. 2.71). Produced between 1008-1016, sculpture #3 dates to only a few years after Daoyuan's monastic biographies.¹⁷⁵ The figure is similar to the Lingyan temple work in both its sculpted form and iconography. The face is naturalistically modeled as an older Indian monk, who is seated in meditation with his robes drawn up over his head. With both sculptures, the hood was carefully molded around the face to leave it fully exposed. The Lingyan sculpture is the less naturalistic of the two, as the hood curves sharply outward from the figure's temples to hang unrealistically beyond the head itself. Given this variance, both works present enough naturalistic detail to persuasively suggest that each was modeled on a living sitter. Although neither may depict Bodhidharma, they may represent an early type of seated and hooded monk that informed later images of the first patriarch.¹⁷⁶

lacquered object does contain a human body, it is still open to speculation as to whether or not it is the historical monk Huineng.

¹⁷⁵ The sculpture is one from an original set of eighteen housed in the temple's Great Hall 大殿. Only nine of the original sculptures are extant. This set is discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁷⁶ A sculpture of Bodhidharma with a hood is also found at Erfo Temple 二佛寺 at Laitan 涑灘 in Sichuan province. Dated to 1181, the sculpture is significantly different from the works discussed in terms of pose, size, style, and context. Given these differences, it does suggest the sculpted image of a hooded Bodhidharma was not regionally limited to the eastern seaboard in the Song dynasty.

Portraits of Eminent Monks

The first sculpture that one encounters walking into Thousand Buddha Hall is the previously mentioned #1W. The Northern Song sculpture depicts a middle-aged monk seated with his legs crossed and his hands in *dhyāna* mudra. His body faces forward and with his head held high, his small eyes stare straight ahead. His posture is neither rigid nor relaxed. As the natural light from the windows behind him changes throughout the day, the planes of his high cheekbones and gentle curves of his browline around the temples are highlighted giving the figure a look of seriousness and deep concentration. Small, pursed lips add to this impression. Although his eyes are open, they do not look out at the viewer, but instead appear focused elsewhere, further reflecting deep engagement in his own thoughts. This is the image of a monk in the process of meditation.

While individual elements of the figure's body and face are shared by other sculptures in the set—eleven other figures are cross-legged and #2W, #6W, and #18W have similar eyes and browlines—no other sculpture has this exact combination of features.¹⁷⁷ Its distinctiveness is further enhanced by less prominent details: the area underneath the eyes is modeled to resemble the puffiness caused by a lack of sleep and small creases at the corners of the mouth indicate that the lips are taut. All of these details blend together to form a figure that is both unique within the sculptural grouping and highly realistic. This is not a generic or idealized representation of a meditating monk.

The naturalistic style of #1W and the other Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures argue they are portraits. The realism of the figures and the artistic techniques used to produce

¹⁷⁷ The other figures that are cross-legged are #5W, #10W, #12W, #14W, #15W, #40E, #35E, #33E, #27E, #25E, and #21E.

that lifelikeness is also found with Song and pre-Song images of historical monks, portraits that did have a “claim to historicity, from the existence of a historical person.”¹⁷⁸ Portraits of monks in sculpted and painted form were produced by at least the fourth-century and possibly earlier. The sixth-century *Biographies of Eminent Monks* 高僧傳 notes that a third-century monk, Kang Senghui 康僧會, composed a eulogy 真讚 that was written on a portrait.¹⁷⁹ By the latter half of the eighth century, the commemoration of Buddhist masters through portraits was an important institutional practice.¹⁸⁰

An example of a sculpted monastic portrait that displays a pose and a highly naturalistic style comparable to #1W from Lingyan temple is found with a mid-to-late ninth-century image of the monk Hongbian 洪辯 (d. ca. 861) from Cave 17, the so-called “sutra cave” at Dunhuang’s 燉煌 Mogao Grotto 莫高窟 (fig. 2.72). Hongbian, a monk regionally well known, was appointed monk superintendant of the Hexi 河西 area upon the return of this territory to China from the Tibetans in 848.¹⁸¹ Although the sculpture was found in cave 362, it was most likely originally placed in cave 17, as wall paintings and an inscription in this cave correspond with the portrait. It was created in the years following the monk’s death in 861.

Much like #1W from the Northern Song Lingyan temple grouping, the life-size figure of Hongbian is seated in a pose of meditation with his legs crossed, his back straight, and his head held high. Even as the paint on his face has deteriorated, the indentations marking the pupils of his half-open eyes indicate the figure was looking straight ahead. The surplice of the monk is

¹⁷⁸ Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 10.

¹⁷⁹ Kang Senghui 康僧會 (d. 280), *Biographies of Eminent Monks* 高僧傳, T. 50, n.2059: 326b4-5.

¹⁸⁰ The earliest extant painted example is a set of portraits of the five patriarchs of the Esoteric 真言 school of Buddhism painted by Li Zhen 李真, an artist working in the late eighth century. The paintings, now at the the Toji temple in Kyoto, Japan, were taken from China to Japan by the monk Kukai 空海 (774-835).

¹⁸¹ Ma Shichang 马世长, "Concerning Several Questions Raised by the 'Sutra Storage' Cave at Dunhuang" 关于敦煌藏经洞的几个问题, *Wenwu* 文物, no. 12 (1978): 27.

draped across his torso and legs, encasing his body and hiding his hands. With a smattering of wrinkles and slightly fleshy lips that form neither a smile or a frown, the visage is that of a contented man just entering the later years of his life.¹⁸²

Richard K. Kent has suggested portraits like the Hongbian sculpture were an artistic source for the earliest painted examples of “sinofied” *luohan*, such as the previously mentioned painting of the *luohan* Kālika (fig. 2.51).¹⁸³ As the earliest known image of a *luohan* styled as a Chinese monk, this painting dates to the first half of the ninth century. The figure is identified as this particular *luohan* through an inscription written in Tibetan along the bottom of the page. Much like both the Hongbian sculptural figure and sculpture #1W from Lingyan temple, Kālika is depicted seated in a cross-legged position. However, this image also includes the figure sitting on a mat with a begging bowl in his hand and a monk’s staff 錫杖 (Skt: *khakkhara*) to his side. His pouch or wallet hangs on the staff. The figure has the longer earlobes associated with later images of *luohan*. As Kent has noted, outside of the halo and canopy above him, there is little to suggest this is anything other than an idealized portrait of a monk.¹⁸⁴

The sculpture of Hongbian, like many of the Lingyan temple works, was found to have an interior cavity with objects sequestered in it. In the case of the Hongbian sculpture, a small

¹⁸² Another early example of this type of portraiture is a dry lacquer sculpture of the Chinese monk Jianzhen 鑑真 (Jpn: Ganjin, 689-763) produced in Japan around the time of his death. The monk traveled to Japan in 753 and lost his eyesight during the arduous journey. Much like the Hongbian sculpture, it is rendered in a highly naturalistic style. Most scholars consider the portrait to have been produced after the monk’s death, but Hisashi Mōri has argued it was produced while he was still alive. The medium and sculptural style most likely reflect artistic practices in both Japan and China in the eighth century. Interestingly, Jianzhen visited the mummy of Huineng in 750 before leaving for Japan. See Hisashi Mōri, *Japanese Portrait Sculpture*, trans. W. Chie Ishibashi (Tokyo: Kōdan-sha/Shibundō, 1977), 22. For a discussion on Jianzhen’s viewing of Huineng’s mummy and his own attempt at mummification, see Sharf, “The Idolization of Enlightenment,” 24.

¹⁸³ Kent, “The Sixteen Lohans,” 30-35. Wen Fong has argued textual references to images of seated *luohan*, such as the type seen with the monk Hongbian’s sculpture, can be found as early as the late fifth century. Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 26-7. Fong’s research pre-dates most of the available information on the sculpture of Hongbian, most notably Ma Shichang’s seminal article published in 1978, thus this important sculpture is absent from his examination of *luohan* imagery.

¹⁸⁴ Kent, “Sixteen Lohans,” 30-32.

niche in the back contained a silk bag with what is presumed to be his ashes.¹⁸⁵ The Lingyan temple niches contained a variety of objects, none of which were bodily relics. The internment of these items indicates all of these sculptures were consecrated to act as the “seat” 座 for the “spirit” 靈 of the depicted personage.¹⁸⁶ The objects and ceremonies associated with consecration enlivened the sculptures, bringing the represented figure into the material object itself.

A key doctrinal difference between the two types of figures—*luohan* and historical monk—is that *luohan*, like bodhisattvas and buddhas, exist outside of historical time. Consecration then is not configured around funereal practices. A memorial function for the Hongbian portrait is indicated as Cave 17 served as a commemorative chapel (影堂 or 塑堂) and a memorial stele was found in a niche on the west wall. Further, the north wall is painted with two trees invoking stories of the historical Buddha’s moment of realized enlightenment underneath a pipal (*bodhi*) tree, a theme associated with memorialization of a deceased cleric.¹⁸⁷

Another significant difference in devotional practice comes through the issue of lineage. Portraits of eminent monks were often placed in “ancestor” or “patriarch” halls 祖堂. These specific devotional spaces had developed by the eighth century, most likely in conjunction with ideological conflicts between various Chan practitioners. Adopted from Confucian memorial practices to honor deceased members of one’s family, the Buddhist practices were used both to honor a high-ranked monk, i.e. an abbot, and to lend visual solidification to a particular lineage

¹⁸⁵ This niche was discovered in 1965 when the sculpture was moved from Cave 362 to its original location in Cave 17. Beyond the silk pouch, an inscribed piece of paper was also found in the niche. See Ma, “Concerning Several Questions,” 21-33.

¹⁸⁶ Foulk, “Religious Functions,” 25. For a more in-depth discussion of the consecration of the Lingyan temple sculptures, see Chapter Four of this present study.

¹⁸⁷ The composition and placement of the painting on the north wall of Cave 17 indicates the sculpture was originally placed in front of it on a raised platform. With the sculpture in place, the trees appear to act as a canopy for the seated monk. It was the wall painting, in part, that helped researchers identify Cave 17 as the original location of the sculpture. See Ma, “Concerning Several Questions,” 23.

of Buddhist masters, most often related to one temple.¹⁸⁸ The “ancestor” halls included not only portraits of abbots, but also images of the patriarchs associated with different schools of Buddhism, such as the Six Chan patriarchs.¹⁸⁹

If the Song-era sculptures at Lingyan temple were produced and consecrated as *luohan*, the devotional context, as mentioned, would not have been memorial. The sculptures would have been the central focus of ceremonies officiated by the temple’s monks to produce religious merit for the benefit of the *samgha* (monastic community) or lay donors. The sculptures would have also been available to laity for worship. According to the *Record of the Perpetuity* as well as earlier texts, lay people were encouraged to view any monk as a potential *luohan* thereby ensuring a close relationship between these two groups.¹⁹⁰

The naturalism seen with the sculpted figure of Hongbian, which makes the monk seem alive and present even twelve hundred years after his death, continued to be a priority in Buddhist portrait-making in the Song dynasty. Few of these works survive and most that do are located in Japan. One of the earliest is a painting of Lanqi Daolong 蘭溪道隆 (Jpn: Rankei Doryu, 1213-1278), a monk of the Linji 臨濟 (Jpn: Rinzai) branch of the Chan school (fig. 2.73).¹⁹¹ The hanging scroll is inscribed by the sitter and dated to 1271.¹⁹² Although it was

¹⁸⁸ Alan Cole, "Upside Down/Right Side Up: A Revisionist History of Buddhist Funerals in China," *History of Religions* 35, no. 4 (May, 1996): 329.

¹⁸⁹ Several scholars have discussed patriarch halls and monastic portraiture at length. See Cole, "Upside Down/Right Side Up," 307-38, T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 173-4 and T. Griffith Foulk and Robert H. Sharf, "On the Ritual Use of Ch'an Portraiture in Medieval China," *Cahiers d'Extrême Asie* 7 (1993-94): 149-220.

¹⁹⁰ These issues are discussed more fully in Chapter Four.

¹⁹¹ See Chapter Three for a discussion on an earlier portrait, that of the monk Wuzhun Shifan 無準師範 (1127-1249) and its relationship to the Song dynasty discourses around the claims of “truth” produced by naturalistic representations.

¹⁹² It is also speculated that a Chinese artist living in Japan painted the portrait. See Donohashi Akio, "Portraits of Eminent Priests," in *The History of Painting in East Asia: Essays on Scholarly Method, Papers Presented for an International Conference at National Taiwan University October 4-7, 2002*, ed. Naomi Noble Richard et al. (Taipei: Rock Publishing International, 2008), 248. For a discussion on Lanqi Daolong’s personal history, including

produced in Japan, the painting is closely linked by style and iconography to the few other extant Buddhist portraits more definitively of Chinese origin, such as the portrait of the monk Wuzhun Shifan 無準師範 (1127-1249) discussed in the following chapter.

The painting of Lanqi Daolong depicts the aged monk in three-quarter profile seated cross-legged on a high-backed chair draped in fabric. Like many of the Lingyan figures, his surplice is fastened with a ceremonial ring. In his right hand, he holds a monk's staff 拄杖, while his left hand rests casually on his knee. In front of him is a footstool holding his shoes. With slender almost gaunt cheeks, heavy hanging eyelids, and thin lips, his face shows his advanced years. He stares out toward the viewer's right. With no background and only the inscription along the top portion of the painting, the viewer's attention is fully focused solely on the monk.

While Tang dynasty portraits were produced posthumously, portraits in the Song period were also created while a cleric was still alive as noted by Lanqi Daolong's inscription.¹⁹³ Known as "longevity images" 壽像, these portraits, as well as those produced after a subject's death, were referred to more broadly as *dingxiang* 頂相 (Jpn: *chinsō*).¹⁹⁴ A translation of the Sanskrit term, *uṣṇīṣa*, *dingxiang* references the protuberance on the top of the Buddha's head. These images reflected a cleric's elite position in the monastic community, usually as a highly educated abbot of a large temple complex.¹⁹⁵ Lanqi Daolong himself was the founding abbot of Kenchōji 建長寺 in Japan, built in 1253. The monk's pose, the fabric draped chair, the

the years he spent in Japan, see Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzaï Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1981), 65-68.

¹⁹³ In the *Jingde era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* (1004-1007), is a reference to an artist by the name of Fang Bian, who sculpted a portrait of the sixth patriarch Huineng. Although the portrait was not solicited by the patriarch, he did pay Fang Bian with a robe. T.51, n. 2076:236b. Translated in Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 85.

¹⁹⁴ See Chapter Three for further discussion of this term and these types of images.

¹⁹⁵ Foulk and Sharf, "Ritual Use," 186-195.

ceremonial robes, his staff, the footstool with shoes, and the naturalism of his face are all markers of this status and are artistic conventions of Song period Chan portraiture.

The pictorial conventions seen with images of Chan masters were not exclusive to this particular school of Buddhism or even to Buddhist portraiture itself. Susan Bush and Victor Mair in examining Jin dynasty (1115-1234) painted and engraved images of eminent clerics of the Lü 律 (Vinaya) school have noted many of these same conventions. Yukio Lippit also identified these same markers of status in a more rare double portrait of Lü masters.¹⁹⁶

Although the particular conventions for portraits may vary across time and cultures, those markers, however defined by society, note the sitter's public identity and the role or roles she/he occupies in society.¹⁹⁷ With no actual referent, the Lingyan sculpted *luohan* do not function in this manner and, with the exception of #23E, which was created in the Ming dynasty, none of the Song-era sculptures wholly follow the template for Chan portraits (fig. 2.74). However, as Richard Brilliant has suggested "the portrait makes visual recognition by the viewer more or less likely and thereby asserts the existence of the person portrayed and the viewer in the same psychological space."¹⁹⁸ Through depicting the *luohan* in seated positions with clerics' robes and ceremonial rings, and most importantly by stressing distinctive facial characteristics, the artists of the Northern Song sculptures were both pulling upon these other trends and blurring the lines

¹⁹⁶ Susan Bush and Victor Mair, "Some Buddhist Portraits and Images of the Lu and Chan Sects," *Archives of Asian Art* 31 (1977-78): 33-35; Yukio Lippit, "Negative Versimilitude: The Zen Portrait in Medieval Japan," in *Asian Art History in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai (Williamstown, Mass: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007), 69.

¹⁹⁷ Art historians working in various cultural areas have addressed this issue. See Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 7; Lorne Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits: European Portrait-Painting in the 14th, 15th, and 16th Centuries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 9.

¹⁹⁸ Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 15.

between visual representations of *luohan* and historical monks.¹⁹⁹ In other words, the artists were making the figures “real.”

The Naturalistic Figure: Song dynasty Sculptural Sets

The examination of the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures has thus far focused on those features, which blur the visual boundaries between *luohan* and monk, and on the early monastic sources of *luohan* imagery. Even as a body of iconography and artistic conventions developed to visually identify *luohan* images in the Song, artists were not always compelled to draw from it. As the worship of *luohan* became more popular from the Five Dynasties period forward, greater numbers of these types of images were produced, including sculptural sets of them, such as those from Baosheng temple 保聖寺 in Jiangsu province and Qinglian temple 青蓮寺 in Shanxi province. Comparisons with these works allow us to further examine the choices made by the artists of the Lingyan temple sculptures. As sculptors often worked with a variety of imagery, not always exclusive to Buddhist visual needs, comparisons with works, such as the attendant figures in Shengmu Hall 聖母殿 at the Jinci shrine complex 晉祠 in Shanxi province, provide further information on Song dynasty sculptural practices.

Baosheng Temple

¹⁹⁹ Kent has made a similar argument in relation to the abbot-like images of *luohan* found in Fanlong’s Sixteen Lohans scroll. See Chapter One for a discussion on this scroll and Kent’s arguments on iconographic changes in *luohan* imagery in the late Northern Song period.

In the Great Hall 大殿 at Baosheng temple 保聖寺, located near the town of Luzhi 甬直 in Jiangsu province is a grouping of *luohan* sculptures, which like the twenty-seven Lingyan temple works, were produced in the Northern Song period (fig. 2.75 and 2.76). Although currently numbering at eighteen, only nine of the sculptures pre-date the twentieth-century. In 1927, a fire destroyed half of an original set of eighteen, which was replaced in the following years with new sculptures based on the originals. Early scholarship on the set attributed them to the famous Tang sculptor, Yang Huizhi 楊惠之 (713-741), but recent research has dated their production to the years between 1008-1016, just fifty years prior to the creation of the Northern Song sculptures of Lingyan temple.²⁰⁰

Of the nine remaining eleventh-century sculptures from the set, their sizes range from less than life-size to the equivalent height of an average person.²⁰¹ Seven of the figures depict the *luohan* with naturalistic details rendering them, like those at Lingyan temple, as ordinary-looking clerics. The face of #3, previously discussed as a Bodhidharma-type figure, exemplifies the sophisticated techniques of the sculptors (fig. 2.77). With its head draped with a robe, its closed eyes are sunken underneath an overhanging browline. Deep semi-circular curves are cut into the surface between the eyes suggesting wrinkles caused by a lifetime of squinting to read scriptures. The mouth is a simple line curved down at the edges to form a frown. The lips are thin, not rounded as seen on the Lingyan temple figure. The chin and jawline are molded in soft undulating curves representing the slackened skin of an elderly person. The handling of the material itself through molding, carving, and smoothing indicates the sculptor/s were highly

²⁰⁰ Chen Qingxiang has written extensively about the modern historiography of the set, providing a very thorough evaluation of its attribution to Yang Huizhi. See Chan, *Research on Luohan Images*, 155-186. The earliest extant example of a sculpted set of the Eighteen *Luohan* is found in Yanxia cave and dated to the Wuyue period. See Qing, "Feilai Feng," 168-170, fn. 213.

²⁰¹ The smallest sculpture is about 90 cm tall, while the largest is around 140 cm.

skilled. The subtle combination of facial features speaks to an artist or artists who was well versed in the way time and repetitive actions manifest on the physical body.

As with the Song-era Lingyan temple sculptures, the naturalism of the faces extends to the handling of the drapery as well. The artists of both groups were particularly attentive to the folds of the robes of the *luohan*, emulating the ways fabrics of different weights drape across and down a body. As an example, #8W from the Lingyan temple grouping has his surplice secured along the left shoulder with a ring and a ribbon (fig. 2.78). The fabric attached to the ribbon cascades down the body and over the figure's left arm. The artist carved deep gently curving lines into the surface to mirror the natural folds of fabric as it hangs off the body. Even further, the heavy weight of the fabric is noted by the deep undercutting, which distinguishes this outer robe from the robe underneath it. The result is the appearance of a thicker textile flowing down from the ribbon with a weight that causes it to gently cascade over the arm.

There is a similar notation of weight with sculpture #6 in the Baosheng temple set (fig. 2.79). This figure too has a ribbon that holds together his surplice, but as the ribbon is placed low on the chest, the fabric rests on his left arm with a gentle fold to the fabric. On either side of the fold are shallow concave areas suggesting the robe is light and soft enough to buckle under its own weight. This fold, as well as those on the wide sleeves of an inner robe, has rounded edges also noting a soft pliable fabric.

Even as the drapery and many of the faces of the Baosheng temple figures were carefully rendered to resemble average-looking monks, two of the sculptures, #4 and #9, display something quite different; a variance that helps to illuminate the choices made by the Lingyan temple sculptors. The facial features of these figures are prominent and almost exaggerated to the point of being caricatures (figs. 2.80 and 2.81). While they are not "grotesque," they do have the

features associated with the legendary painted *luohan* of Guanyu: overemphasized bushy eyebrows, beards, and large eyes. None of the Song-era Lingyan temple figures are caricatured as seen with #4 and #9 from the Baosheng temple group. While the latter sculptures provide evidence to the continued trend of Guanyu-style *luohan* into the Song dynasty, the Lingyan temple figures demonstrate the choice the artists and temple commissioners made with depicting the *luohan* as average-looking Chinese and Indian clerics.

A second significant difference between the two groups of figures is seen with the settings. The backdrop for the Baosheng temple group is a mythical landscape scene of rocky cliffs and crags. The odd jutting shape of the rocks, as well as their pitted and pock-marked surfaces, calls to mind the extravagant shapes of scholars' stones as seen in Song paintings. Within this three-dimensional landscape, the seated figures are placed either half-hidden in niches or atop cliffs. Currently, two of the figures face one another as if in conversation, another two are seated in the lotus position meditating with their hands in their laps, and the remaining five are in various positions, but lack any attributes that might distinguish their activities.

As previously noted, while the Lingyan temple figures may have originally been placed in a sculpted landscape setting in Banzhou Hall, there is no evidence of that with the sculptures themselves. Placed along the walls on a platform, rather than in a multi-tiered sculptural wall composition, they appear to replicate the poses actual monks might have taken while seated on similar platforms for meals or sutra study. Zhou Fusen has suggested the platform in Banzhou Hall was slightly taller than the one found currently in Thousand Buddha Hall.²⁰² Thus, in their original setting, the Northern Song sculptures were raised up to viewer eye-level. Placed at eye-level, as physical equals with viewers, the sculptures would have provoked further comparisons between the *luohan* and actual individuals. While the figures from both groupings are rendered

²⁰² Zhou, "Relevant," 81.

naturalistically and exhibit a variety of poses, the size, placement, and thematic emphasis with the Northern Song Lingyan temple figures presents than as ordinary monks. Wholly engaged in the here-and-now, these figures are not the magical *luohan* of the Baosheng set, existing in a supernatural out-of-time reality of mythical mountains.

Qinglian Temple

At Qinglian temple 青蓮寺 in Shanxi province is a set of Song-era *luohan* sculptures that, while displaying some of the same features of the Lingyan and Baosheng sets, also has a number of significant differences. In the upper portion of the temple, sometimes referred to by its Northern Song dynasty name, Fuyan Chan monastery 福嚴禪院, are sixteen seated figures of the sacred monks housed in the main hall of the East Tower 東樓 (figs. 2.82 and 2.83). All of the sculptures are placed on top of a raised platform that runs along three walls of the hall, much like the arrangement and setting of sculptures in the Thousand Buddha Hall.²⁰³ Averaging a little over four and a half feet tall, the figures are almost life-sized. The seated figures encircle the hall's main sculpture, the bodhisattva Guanyin 觀音菩薩, with three on either side of it and another five sculptures along both the north and south walls.²⁰⁴ Although many of the works sustained damage during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), most still retain enough of their sculpted form that scholars date the works by style to the Song dynasty.

As with the other sets, the naturalistic detail of the sculpting and the emphasis on diversity renders no two figures alike in terms of age, physiognomy, and hand gestures. Older,

²⁰³ Gao Shoutian 高寿田, "The Sculptures of the Qinglian Temple in Jicheng, Shanxi Province" 山西晋城青莲寺塑像, *Wenwu* 文物, no. 10 (1963): 9.

²⁰⁴ The association between Guanyin and the Sixteen *Luohan* was not unusual in the Song period. See Kent, "Sixteen Lohans," 68-9, fn. 17; 127-8.

younger, and middle-aged *luohan* are represented, as are those of non-Chinese ethnicity. Four even wear Indian-style robes that leave one shoulder bare, a feature not seen with the Lingyan figures.²⁰⁵ Yet given these variances, the figures, as a group, do not display the sense of movement that is a defining feature of the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures. All of the Qinglian figures have straight torsos and are faced forward, with the exception of #4, #13, and #11, whose heads are turned to the side. The only ones that gesture with fully articulated arms are #4 and #13 (figs. 2.84 and 2.85). The others from the set have their hands held close to the body in various mudras.

The iconography of the Qinglian set, like the Lingyan temple sculptures and those at Baosheng temple, also draws upon conventions found with *luohan* imagery and monk portraits, but with different results. The unearthly status of the figures is immediately recognizable by two features: long earlobes and raised *ūrṇā*, which several have on their foreheads.²⁰⁶ The *ūrṇā*, as the circle or tuft of hair between the eyes is one of the thirty-two marks of the Buddha (*lakṣhaṇa*) and is more often seen with Buddha images as either a concave circle or a jewel. Sculpture #11 holds a lion in its hands, an attribute often associated with *luohan*. Two Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279) *luohan* sculptures housed at Zijin nunnery 紫金庵 in Jiangsu province feature similar creatures. Sculpture #2 from Zijin has a small green dragon crawling up its arm, while at the feet of #6 lurks a little yellow tiger (figs. 2.86 and 2.87). Animal companions, such as these, are not found with the Lingyan temple works.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Qinglian sculptures #4, #9, #13, and #16.

²⁰⁶ While the long earlobes are seen on all of the figures, only #1, #8, #12, #13, #14, and #16 have *ūrṇā*.

²⁰⁷ One of the most vivid Song texts to describe *luohan* images is a poem by Su Shi. The poem, written circa 1095, chronicles the figures in a now lost image of the Eighteen *Luohan* painted by the Shu Kingdom (Sichuan) artist Zhang Xuan 張玄 (fl. 890-930). The poem describes the surroundings and activities of the eighteen *luohan* in the painting. From Su Shi's description, many of the *luohan* figures had mythical and earthly animals as well as attendants nearby, and were engaged in a range of actions, from meditation to watching cranes. See Su Shi, *Ode to the Painting of Eighteen Luohan by Master Zhang of Jin* 金水張氏畫十八羅漢頌 in *Collected Works of Dongpo*

Like the Lingyan sculptures, many of the Qinglian figures display markers associated with highly-ranked clerics, such as the abbots' robes with the ceremonial ring and cloud shoes 雲校鞋. Yet, with the Lingyan figures, these features are undermined not only by their animated poses, but also the seemingly ordinariness of their activities—sewing, conversing, debating, etc. With the Qinglian set, the dress of the figures in combination with their stiff forward facing poses gives the impression of posed portraits. The elevated status of these personages is highlighted, just as the conventions of contemporary monk portraits clearly marked the elite standing of the sitters.

While the faces of the Qinglian temple figures have been individualized through naturalistic details, such as particular expressions or markers of age, several of them stand out for their verisimilitude. As an example, sculpture #15 depicts an older monk with open eyes, a scowl, and hands, now badly damaged, raised (fig. 2.88). The figure's face was deftly molded with prominent creases and undulating curves to produce the visage of a man whose every wrinkle and bit of sagging skin has been captured in this clay avatar. Deep recesses cradle heavy-lidded eyes, while the down turned mouth is surrounded by waves of muscles that become soft and fleshy along the chin. The sheer amount of facial detail suggests playfulness on the part of the artist, who took great pleasure in its modeling, imagining every possible wrinkle, crag, and slackened muscle on the face of an elderly person.

This same conscientiousness with detail is found with Japanese portrait sculpture of the Kamakura 鎌倉 period (1185-1333). The most demonstrative work of portrait verisimilitude is an early thirteenth-century sculpture of Shunjōbō Chōgen 俊乗坊重源 (1121-1206) (fig.

[Su Shi] 東坡全集, SKQS, j. 98, p9b-15b. For a discussion and translation of this text, see Fong, "Five Hundred Lohans," 99-103.

2.89).²⁰⁸ Having started his religious life associated with Shingon school 真言 of Buddhism, Shunjōbō Chōgen was most well known as a monk of the Pure Land school 浄土宗 and for his efforts in restoring Tōdaiji in Nara after the Genpei Civil War (1180-1185). The sculpture depicts the man as nearing the end of his life with eyes sunken into clearly articulated eye sockets and gaunt cheeks. Devotedly, he holds a rosary in his hands. Even as there is less exuberance with the modeling, this artist's apt use of detail renders the portrait a realistic, if not uncomfortable, representation of a frail man preparing for death. Produced just after his death, it is quite possible the artist was familiar with the man and had first-hand knowledge of what he looked like in his final years.

As descriptive as the face of Qinglian sculpture #15 is, others have an idealization that renders them less distinctive as individual personages.²⁰⁹ Sculpture #12 sits in the *lilasana* pose with his right elbow resting on his knee (fig. 2.90).²¹⁰ With closed eyes and his head rested in his right hand, the *luohan* appears to be asleep. The slight corpulence of the body extends to the face, which has the smooth fleshiness of a younger person. Both of the eyes are perfectly round orbs, which have a symmetry not found on any of the Song-era sculptures at Lingyan temple. Outside of the raised *ūrṇā*, the forehead is smooth and expansive, which is mirrored in the soft planes of the cheeks. The mouth does not have the slackened appearance of someone asleep nor is it tensed as found on the meditating figures at Lingyan temple. The face is a perfect balance of features rarely, if ever, found in real life. It bears a closer similarity to images found in other temples in Shanxi province, such as the Jin dynasty (1128-1143) sculptures of attendant *devas* in Shanhua

²⁰⁸ This was not a new development with the arts of Japan. Naturalistic figural representations in wood, lacquer, and other materials stemmed back to the Heian period. See Hisashi Mōri, *Japanese Portrait Sculpture*, trans. W. Chie Ishibashi, ed. John Rosenfield (Tokyo: Kōdan-sha/Shibundō, 1977).

²⁰⁹ These include: #5, #7, #12, and #14.

²¹⁰ The others from the set, which are in this same pose, include #6, #10, and #12.

temple 善化寺 and the lacquered clay bodhisattva sculptures in the Lower Huayan Temple 下華嚴寺, dated to 1038 (figs. 2.91 and 2.92).²¹¹

The perfection of the face of #12 is also seen with many of the figures' robes, including #15, whose face is so unique. The robes are molded with crisp edges along the hemlines and sleeves, while the creases and folds are rendered with precision. Although the drapery fall across and down the bodies as would actual fabric, the clarity of the modeling emphasizes the manufactured nature of the works.

Through distinct drapery, static poses, and the markers of elevated status, as well as the idealized faces of several figures, the Qinglian temple figural works create a very different picture of *luohan* when compared with the Lingyan temple sculptures. They find a resonance with Richard K. Kent's description of late Northern Song *luohan* presented "as dignified Ch'an abbots."²¹² One would be hard pressed to describe the majority of the Lingyan temple figures in similar terms. Thematically, the Lingyan temple sculptural group is focused on the activities associated with those esteemed members of the Buddhist institution, but not on overt displays of status. Meditation, sewing, debating, teaching—all of these actions suggest the figures have knowledge and acumen with Buddhist ideas and practices. In this way, the sculptures are linked more closely with the concerns of the monastic community.

Jinci Complex

One of the compelling aspects of the Northern Song sculptures from Lingyan temple group is the combination of the naturalistic modeling of the face and the poses of the figures,

²¹¹ The bodhisattva figures are located in the Bhagavad Library Hall in Lower Huayan temple.

²¹² Kent, "Sixteen Lohans," 5.

which for some of them, evokes the sense of an inner life or inner animation of the *luohan*. This same quality is found outside of Song Buddhist art with a sculptural set of attendant figures at Jinci Complex 晉祠 in Taiyuan 太原, Shanxi province.²¹³ Located in Shengmu Hall 聖母殿, which by the Northern Song period was the central hall at the site, forty-two attendant figures surround a main statue of the Sage Mother, a female spirit of the Jin Springs associated with the temple (fig. 2. 93).²¹⁴ Forty of the sculptures date to the Northern Song period and two to the Ming dynasty.

Tracy Miller has observed the nearly life-size figures, which include ladies-in-waiting and female officials dressed in men's clothing, "recreate a celestial court" around the central sculpture of the Sage Mother.²¹⁵ As a tableau of heavenly protocols, the Sage Mother is depicted seated cross-legged on a phoenix chair in a raised niche, while the various figures stand along the walls and in rows beside her. Although the female attendants are posed standing, holding objects as opposed to seated and gesturing, the faces have an emotional complexity that surpasses all but the best of the Lingyan sculptures. As an example, figure #28 looks distinctly toward something on her left, yet her head is only barely perceptibly turned in that same direction (fig. 2.94).²¹⁶ In combination with her pursed lips, the impression presented is of someone concerned with the activities occurring on her left. A similar subtlety is displayed with sculpture #30, but with different results (fig. 2.95). This figure with her head turned to her left, also appears to be

²¹³ Writing in the late 1950s on Lingyan temple, Zhang Heyun also noted a comparison with the Jinci Complex sculptures. See Zhang, "Research on the Ancient Sculptures," 1.

²¹⁴ There is some debate over the identification of this main sculpture. Amy McNair has been one scholar to argue it is an image of the Zhou dynasty queen Yi Jiang. Tracy Miller has more recently posited it is a depiction of the Sage Mother as a local water goddess, the spirit of the Jin Springs. Various dates for the sculptures have been proposed, but scholars do agree that they were produced in the Northern Song period and most likely between 1030-1087. See Amy McNair, "On the Date of the Shengmudian Sculptures at Jinci," *Artibus Asiae* 49, no. 3-4 (1988-1989): 238-53; Tracy Miller, *The Divine Nature of Power: Chinese Ritual Architecture at the Sacred Site of Jinci* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2007).

²¹⁵ Miller, *Divine Nature*, 129.

²¹⁶ This figure is the twenty-eighth from the set and is the fifth on the east side of the north wall.

watching something. However, with her head held high, her neck elongated, her shoulders pulled back, and her eyes fully opened, she expresses intense awareness of something rather than concern. In both cases, the emotional complexity of the figures is the result of the combination of subtle factors, attesting to the sophisticated skills of the artists.²¹⁷

Although this hint at the inner emotional life of the Jinci attendant figures is similar to a number of the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures, such as the previously discussed forms of #17W and #21E, the attendant figures do not evoke the sense of movement found with most of the Lingyan temple works. The court women may be engaged in activities corresponding with their status, such as holding scrolls or other objects, but the *luohan* figures are depicted as active and energetic. While the subtle emotional complexity of both groups of figural works may provoke viewers to ponder the inner life of the figures, the Lingyan temple sculptures prompt viewers to note their actions and thus, encourage viewers to engage with them. This dynamism also highlights the very activities that contemporary viewers may have seen with monks living at Lingyan temple—debate, teaching, meditation, and mundane actions, such as sewing.

Conclusion

At first glance the Northern Song-era *luohan* sculptures in Thousand Buddha Hall at Lingyan temple seem unusual for their presentation of sacred personages as such lively and ordinary monks. Analysis of the sculptural forms themselves uncovered missing iconographic elements that correlate with Song-era *luohan* imagery, but equally as many aspects that connect closely with contemporary monastic images and issues. However, the naturalism of the figures is part of an artistic heritage that stems back to pre-Song images of legendary monks and Chan

²¹⁷ McNair, “On the Dating,” 251.

Buddhist patriarchs. The various trends established in the pre-Song period for *luohan* and monk images revealed the range of options available to the Lingyan artists.

The naturalism of the figures, which is especially evident in the faces, situates the sculptures within Song-era portraiture. Yet, unlike portraits of eminent monks, the Northern Song figures feature few markers associated with an elevated or esteemed status. These figures are not depictions of elite clerics. Within the range of sculptural practices around *luohan* imagery during the Song dynasty, we do find *luohan* portrayed as refined abbots, such as are found with the sculptures of Qinglian temple. The *luohan* figures from Baosheng temple, however, demonstrate another point on the possible range: *luohan* as supernatural personages within mythical landscapes.

The Lingyan temple sculptures stand apart from both depictions of historical and eminent monks and unearthly *luohan*. They are instead a grouping of average-looking monks most of whom are vivaciously engaged in activities of their chosen calling: debating, teaching, and meditating among other activities. Within the context of the temple's changing institutional status during the years the sculptures were created, highlighting routine clerical practices may have been important to the temple community as a way of visually emphasizing the competency of the monastic body.

Chapter Three

“Truth”: the Politics of Pictorial Naturalism during the Tenth through Thirteenth Centuries

As suggested in the previous chapter, the Northern Song dynasty figural works at Lingyan temple depict *luohan*, the Protectors of the Law, as unassuming, yet highly ranked clerics performing activities associated with contemporary monastic practices. The naturalism of these figures blurs the distinctions between images of *luohan*, Chan patriarchs, and Chan monks. This chapter turns to Song-era writers to further investigate pictorial naturalism. Were people discussing this mode of representation? If so, what issues were raised with naturalistic imagery and for whom?

What we find with these questions is that naturalism was not a neutral topic. Across a range of literary genres, spanning from portrait-inscriptions written by monks to the poems and painting colophons of scholars and officials, pictorial naturalism was being challenged, debated, critiqued, and sometimes championed during the Song dynasty (960-1279). As suggested in the following pages, at stake in these discussions was the “truth” of these types of images, such as the function of similitude, the objectivity of representation, and the authenticity of the represented subject. Within this discursive context, the naturalism of the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple demonstrates the temple’s engagement with contemporary cultural politics important to a diverse potential audience for the sculptures—an audience that would have been important to keeping the temple economically viable.

The response of Song dynasty writers to the rhetorical claim of likeness produced by naturalistic imagery is examined in the first section of this chapter. Whether rendered in clay,

ink, or any other medium, pictorial naturalism inherently produces this claim. However, it was a claim that was not accepted blindly by educated individuals of the period. Within the Chan school politics of identity, Chan writers questioned the “truth”真 (*zhen*) of images through inscriptions on portraits 真贊 (*zhenzan*). In the same years, artists were prioritizing similitude 形似 in the visual arts and had developed highly sophisticated pictorial techniques for representing the natural world. While up through this period, viewers expected this type of imagery to describe both an exterior resemblance and the personal qualities of the depicted subject, writers in the Northern Song began to ask new questions of this relationship.

For Chan clerics, as with other members of the interested arts public, central to these questions was the term “truth”真 (*zhen*). Some writers made use of the ostensible objectivity implied in highly naturalistic representations to promote a political or social “truth,” while others, especially Chan clerics, wholly rejected any possible “truth” in imagery. This evidence suggests the naturalistic style of the Lingyan temple sculptures was not a random choice by the artists and temple commissioners, but that it instead recognized and addressed the temple’s network of associations, which from the early eleventh century onward included those very people engaged in the national dialogue on the arts.

“Objectivity,” as another rhetorical claim of naturalistic imagery, is investigated in the second section of this chapter. Although many writers were debating pictorial naturalism, others were taking advantage of the rhetorical power of highly illusionistic images. In some cases, this was to document social ills in order to produce political change. In other instances, it was to obscure social issues. Within this framework, which emphasizes the uses of naturalism, the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures demonstrate a religious use of this claim of

objectivity—the presentation of an authoritative view of sacred and supernatural *luohan* as everyday “ordinary” monks just as is described in canonical writings.

The final section traces parallels found in a variety of texts in the usage of *zhen* to denote “authenticity.” Regardless of whether they were associated with the monastic institution, the government, or were simply private scholars, the educated public held that one’s skills and knowledge were related to what was unique or “authentic” in an individual. This view is found not only in discussions of art theory, but also in the literature of the Chan “recorded sayings” genre 語錄 (*yulü*). In art theory, the issue emerges in the priority given to the naturalness of the artistic process and its product, as opposed to raw naturalism. In Chan literature, the issue arises through an emphasis on gesture and mannerisms that were understood as unmediated by social or religious protocols.

As Norman Bryson has observed, “some parts of the image are more discursively charged than other parts; there is a hierarchy of semantic relevance.”²¹⁸ With the Lingyan temple sculptures, it is the naturalistic presentation of the *luohan* that finds a correspondence to issues important to writers of the period. Formed to be unique, animated, and individualized, the sculptures’ engagement with those larger issues would have been a critical tool for Lingyan temple’s economic sustainability in an age of decreased government support of temples and increased dependence on lay donations.

A Claim of Likeness

²¹⁸ Norman Bryson, *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 10.

With each of the eleventh-century sculptures at Lingyan temple there was a concerted effort to present the figures as vivid and immediate, regardless of the technical proficiency of the sculptor. Each is different in terms of age, body posture, and gesture. The faces were molded with details to suggest the figures' dispositions, life styles, and an inner emotional complexity. The rich information provided by these seemingly unique combinations of details holds a persuasive function—to encourage us, as viewers, to see each sculpture as the depiction of an actual person. Norman Bryson has observed that it is in the depth of the provided detail “that we inscribe ‘real’ existence.”²¹⁹

As an example, the figure of #25E at Lingyan temple, a middle-aged monk gazing off into the distance, is sufficiently life-like that the viewer could easily imagine the artist/s worked from a living model (fig. 3.1). This perceived resemblance was accomplished by sculpting a range of apparently random, but realistic details, such as the parallel crests running along the figure's forehead, the deep “laugh lines” on both sides of the nose and mouth, and the rounded brow that hangs over the eyelids almost to the point of obscuring them (fig. 3.2). All of these details persuade us to view this as the visage of an individual person.²²⁰ At the same time they communicate to us specifics about that imagined person and his life. He is a middle-aged man (wrinkles along the forehead) who takes pleasure in life (“laugh lines”), but who also is given to deep contemplation (browline). We are tempted to view this sculpture as the portrait of a complex and unique individual whose trajectory through life has been etched upon his face.

²¹⁹ Bryson, *Word and Image*, 11. W.J. T. Mitchell has also written of the persuasive powers of pictorial illusionism in *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 326.

²²⁰ E. H. Gombrich noted that although greater specificity offers more information, no artist in any medium is ever able to fully capture the visual world as we see it. Humans, as animate beings, are able to move through space rendering our view as one of constant motion, which can never be fully duplicated. See Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1960), 90.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the emphasis on naturalistic facial detail with the Northern Song-era sculptures at Lingyan temple finds a correspondence with contemporary monastic painted portraits. One of the earliest examples of these is a painting of the Linji 臨濟 (Jpn: Rinzai) monk Wuzhun Shifan 無準師範 (1177-1249) (fig. 3.3).²²¹ Produced in China, the painting was taken to Japan in 1241 by Wuzhun's student Enni Ben'en 圓爾辯圓 (1202-1280). An inscription by the sitter dates the image to 1238.²²² Portraits such as this one were often referred to as *xiang* 像 or *xiezhen* 寫真, which translates literally as “sketching a portrait.” As indicated by this second word, writers also used *zhen* 真 to note “portrait.” Endowed with a range of meanings at that time, this word can also be glossed as “true,” “genuine,” and “authentic.”²²³ Its earliest usage is found in the philosophical works of Laozi 老子 (fl. 6th c B.C.E.) and in the fourth-century B.C.E. text *Zhuangzi* 莊子.²²⁴

All of the above-described terms were used interchangeably with Buddhist, civil, and imperial portraits during the Song dynasty. However, another word, *dingxiang* 頂相 (Jpn:

²²¹ The painting is currently preserved at Tofukuji 東福寺 in Kyoto, Japan. A portrait of another Linji monk, Lanqi Daolong 蘭溪道隆 (Jpn: Rankei Doryu, 1213-1278), is discussed in Chapter Two and later in this present chapter.

²²² Akio Donohashi, "Portraits of Eminent Priests," *The History of Painting in East Asia: Essays on Scholarly Method, Papers Presented for an International Conference at National Taiwan University October 4-7, 2002*, ed. Naomi Noble Richard and Donald E. Brix (Taipei: Rock Publishing International, 2008), 247-8.

²²³ For the multivalent meanings of this term, see *Chinese Dictionary: Second Edition in Nine Volumes* 漢語大字典: 第二版, 九卷本, s.v. “真.” For the various meanings of these words in English and the ways in which they overlap, see J.A. Simpson, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. “true,” “authentic,” and “genuine.”

²²⁴ Roger T. Ames, "The Common Ground of Self-Cultivation in Classical Taoism and Confucianism," *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies* n. s. 17, no. 1-2 (December 1985): 87. For an in-depth discussion of this term's use *Zhuangzi* and more generally in the pre-Han period, see David Coyle, "On the *Zhenren*," in *Wandering at Ease in the Zhuangzi*, ed. Roger T. Ames (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 197-2110. For a discussion on *zhen* as “authentic,” especially in relation to its opposite “fake” 偽, see Robert E. Jr. Harrist, "Replication and Deception in Calligraphy of the Six Dynasties Period," in *Chinese Aesthetics: The Ordering of Literature, the Arts, and the Universe of the Six Dynasties*, ed. Zongqi Cai (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 35-36.

chinsô), came into usage specifically for religious portraits at the beginning of the Northern Song. The term's original meaning referenced one of the thirty-two marks of the historical Buddha, the *uṣṇīṣa*: the cranial protuberance on top of the historical Buddha's head seen as a mark of his enlightenment, but often considered invisible.²²⁵ The majority of images associated with this term are portraits of monks who were, in most cases, abbots of large monasteries at one point in their career.

The image of Wuzhun Shifan bears all of the hallmarks associated with not only *dingxiang*, but also extant imperial portraits from the Song period. The sitter is depicted in three-quarters view seated on a linen draped chair. His head is turned slightly to the side and his eyes look out beyond the viewer.²²⁶ His status in the monastic institution is marked in several ways: his full ceremonial robes 架梁 (Skt: *kāṣāya*), the monk's staff 拄杖, sometimes referred to as "an admonishing staff," he holds in his right hand, his cross-legged seated position (lotus position), and the placement of his shoes before him on a footstool.²²⁷

With this portrait, as with the others that are extant, the naturalism of the monk's face is a central feature of the composition. The artist has taken great care to render Wuzhun Shifan's face as distinctive and individual (fig. 3.4). Single recognizable brushstrokes form a thin mustache above his mouth as well as a light beard on his chin. The monk's eyes are half orbs with strokes of black outlining the upper portion, creating the illusion of overhanging eyelids. Extending

²²⁵ T. Griffith Foulk and Robert H. Sharf, "On the Ritual Use of Ch'an Portraiture in Medieval China" *Cahiers d'Extrême Asie* 7 (1993-94): 85.

²²⁶ Not all portraits were in three-quarter profile. The eleventh-century art critic, Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 in *Experiences in Painting* (1074) lists Mou Gu 牟谷 as a portrait painter, who created an image of the Song emperor Taizong 太宗 in full frontal format rather than in three-quarter profile. See Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛, *Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞誌, j. 3, p. 20.

²²⁷ Helmut Brinker and Kanazawa Hiroshi, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writing*, trans. Andreas Leisinger (Zurich: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1996), 157-61 and Foulk and Sharf, "Ritual Use," 156-157. For discussion of these conventions with imperial portraits, see Patricia Ebrey, "Portrait Sculptures in the Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China," *T'oung Pao* 83 (1997): 78-83 and Jan Stuart and Evelyn S. Rawski, *Worshipping the Ancestors: Chinese Commemorative Portraits* (Washington, D.C. and Stanford: Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in association with Stanford University Press, 2001), 80.

beyond the corners of the eyes, the black brushstrokes delineate deep creases suggesting not just the wrinkles of a middle-aged man, but also the collapse of the upper-lid sometimes seen with the elderly. Though partially obscured through the vicissitudes of age, Wuzhun's eyes are fully open and his head is held high.

The function of these abbot portraits has been the subject of much controversy in modern scholarship, especially in regard to their naturalistic style. Prior to the 1990s, most scholars held that the naturalism of these images was closely associated with their use as “certificates of enlightenment” 傳法; (Jpn: *denbō*) i.e. objects such as a master's robe or begging bowl, which were transferred from a teacher to his disciple as proof of the student's enlightenment, the transmission of the Buddha's Law (Dharma), and the status of the student as a teacher's Dharma heir 法嗣.²²⁸ In this context, the style of the images reflected the “intimate personal relationship between the sitter and recipient” and was necessary in providing the student with a visual vehicle for remembrance of the teacher and his works.²²⁹

Challenging these long standing views in a now famous article published in 1993/4, T. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf argued the portraits were not used as proof of the transmission of the *dharma*, but were primarily memorial or funereal images. Created after a cleric's death, these were the center of highly codified funeral ceremonies. However, as indicated by the inscription on Wuzhun Shifan's portrait, not all of these were painted after a cleric died. Referred to as “longevity images” 壽像, these portraits testify to Song dynasty governmental regulations on public temples, which required abbots to be rotated through various monasteries throughout their

²²⁸ Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, ed., *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts/ New York Graphic Society, 1970), xxx. The idea that these images were certificates has been long standing and did not originate with Fontein and Hickman. Also see, Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation*, 117-118. For a general discussion on inheritance certificates, see Theodore Griffith Foulk, "The 'Ch'an School' and Its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1987), 72-73.

²²⁹ Fontein and Hickman, *Zen Painting*, xxxi.

careers, much like civil officials of the period.²³⁰ It was not unusual for an abbot to have his portrait painted and hung in a temple's "ancestor" or "patriarch hall" 祖堂 prior to reassignment to another temple. Through the portrait, he was memorialized with a temple's previous abbots, the founders of the institution, and sometimes the six Chan patriarchs.²³¹

Wuzhun's portrait is often considered representative of Song-era *dingxiang*, but a more precise assessment may be that the naturalistic style of his face and the formulaic composition are consistent with the few other surviving abbots' portraits. Although the numbers of extant images are scant, the inscriptions from them do survive in large numbers. From this we can surmise that having one's portrait painted or, as was more often the case, having the portrait of your teacher painted was a popular practice during the Song dynasty.

These inscriptions, portrait-eulogies or self-eulogies 真贊/讚;自贊 (*zhenzan*; *zizan*), were often written by a cleric on his own portrait or that of a fellow monk.²³² Although this genre of writing pre-dates the Song dynasty and was not exclusively adopted by religious writers, portrait-eulogies were an important vehicle of expression for many Chan clerics in this period. Collected by a teacher's students, these writings were grouped together with lectures, verbal exchanges with students, and other works to form a senior monk's "record of sayings" 語錄 (*yülü*). These were appended to the latter portion of his biography for inclusion in the various "flame histories" 傳燈錄. As genealogical charts, the "flame histories" trace monastic lineages of different schools of Buddhism through to the founding of the school in China or to the

²³⁰ Foulk and Sharf, "Ritual Use," 162.

²³¹ The six Chan patriarchs are Bodhidharma (424-535), Huike 慧可(486-593), Sengcan (d. 606) Daoxin 道信 (580-651), Hongren 弘忍 (602-675), and Huineng 慧能 (638-713).

²³² Monastic portrait-eulogies are a body of writing that, while often referenced in contemporary scholarly discussions on Song dynasty portraiture or the supposed iconoclasm of the Chan school, has not been studied in-depth. T. Griffith Foulk, Robert Sharf, and Wendi Adamek have been at the forefront of exploring this genre. See Foulk and Sharf, "On the Ritual Use," 149-220 and Wendi Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Contexts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007): 254-267.

historical Buddha himself in India.²³³ The monks included in these biographical collections were the most elite members of the monastic community. Individual collections of a monk's "recorded sayings" also began to be published during the Northern Song period as well, further attesting to the status and popularity of these monks.²³⁴ Portrait-eulogies and the paintings they reference cannot be divorced from the issues and concerns of this exclusive group of clerics.²³⁵

One portrait-eulogy by a monk of the Linji 臨濟 branch of Chan, Wuzu Fayan, 五祖法演 (1024?-1104), reveals not only what viewers expected of naturalistic portraiture, but also a central concern for the monastic writer himself: the "truth" of the image.²³⁶

To seek a person's character and fortune from their appearance is pure fantasy. If you seek the truth (*zhen*) about a person from a portrait (*zhen*), what you see will be wide of the mark.

以相取相都成幻妄。以真求真轉見不親。²³⁷

²³³ Various schools had successional histories, but these texts are most commonly associated with the Chan school. The term, "*chuandeng li*" itself was coined by a civil official named Yang Yi 楊億 (974-1020), who was instrumental in promoting the Linji 臨濟 branch of Chan Buddhism and was one of the editors of the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* 景德傳燈錄 (1004). See Albert Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 172-76.

²³⁴ The biographical collection, *Tiansheng-era Supplementary Transmission Record* 天聖廣燈錄, compiled in 1029 by Li Zunxu 李遵勗, was one of the first to include chapters that were specifically focused on the recorded sayings of various masters. See Albert Welter, *The Linju Lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy: The Development of Chan's Records of Sayings Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.

²³⁵ Portraits were not the only images that monks inscribed. A monk's "recorded sayings" might also include inscriptions he placed on images of buddhas, bodhisattvas, patriarchs, or other figures. See Welter, *The Linju Lu*, 45-47.

²³⁶ Wuzu Fayan's lineage, Linji, was one of five "houses" 五家 or lineages of Chan that had developed by no later than 1188. The five monastic geneologies are: the Linji lineage 臨濟宗 founded by Linji Yixuan 臨濟義玄 (?-866), the Guiyang lineage 潯仰宗 traced to Guishan Lingyu (771-853) and his disciple Yangshan Huiji (807-883), the Caodong lineage 曹洞宗 traced to Dongshan Liangjie 洞山良价 (840-901), the Yunmen lineage 雲門宗 founded by Yunmen Wenyan 雲門文偃 (864-949), and the Fayan lineage 法眼宗 founded by Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益 (885-958). The Linji branch further split into two beginning with Yangji Fanghui 楊岐方會 (992-1049) and Huanglong Huinan 黃龍慧南 (1002-1069). For a discussion on the various "houses," see Foulk, "The 'Ch'an School,'" 42-49.

²³⁷ *The Discourse Records of Chan Master Fayen* 法演禪師語錄. T.48, n.1995: 0666b24-b25.

In the first line of his inscription, Wuzu indicates contemporary viewers commonly associated physical appearance with personal qualities. To refer to these traits, he used the term *xiang* 相, which can be read as both “character” and as shorthand for physiognomy *xiangshu* 相術, the specialized skill of reading a person’s moral character as well as her/his future success through her/his facial characteristics. This was a popular practice in the Song and pre-Song periods.²³⁸ In other words, viewers expected portraits to describe not only an exterior likeness to the sitter, but also the personal qualities of that individual.

In the second line, the monk employs the term *zhen* 真 in its semantic capacities as “truth” and as “portrait.” In juxtaposing these two readings, the writer establishes a binary comparison in which portraits are the opposite of truth, as he recognizes in the latter half of the sentence. His assumption that viewers will want to “read” the portrait through the practices of physiognomy tells us two things. First, the image itself was rendered in a naturalistic style. Second, the majority of the viewers of the painting would see this as capable of capturing internal and external similarities to the depicted subject. Wuzu positioned himself against this idea, arguing that naturalistically rendered portraits were not demonstrative of “truth.” He was calling pictorial naturalism into question, which raises a critical query: why were Chan writers casting aspersions on the very object they were inscribing?

One key to understanding the rejection of unreflective similitude is the Chan phrase, “separate transmission outside of the teachings, not dependent on texts, directly pointing at the human mind, seeing one’s own nature, Buddhahood is achieved” 教外別傳, 不立文字, 直指人

²³⁸ Mette Siggstedt, "Forms of Fate: An Investigation of the Relationship between Formal Portraiture, Especially Ancestral Portraits, and Physiognomy (Xiangshou) on China," in *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Chinese Art History* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1991): 715-743.

心, 見性成佛.²³⁹ As a claim of non-reliance on texts and images, this phrase developed during the late Northern Song period. The denial of the sacrosanct authority of images, as with texts, was a fundamental premise in the development of an identity for the Chan school during the Song dynasty; a rhetorical mark of distinction between Chan clerics and those associated with Pure Land 淨土宗, Tiantai 天台宗, or Vinaya 律宗. Shi Zhiru has suggested this rhetoric of negation allowed clerics to reconfigure the authority of sacred texts by “de-authorizing” older works or those of other schools in order to shift that authority onto their own writings.²⁴⁰

This rhetorical stance against reliance on imagery is captured in a fourteenth-century ink painting entitled, *Chan Master Tianran Burning a Wooden Image of the Buddha*, by the artist Yintuoluo (因陀羅; act. late thirteenth to early fourteenth century) (fig. 3.5). In bold sketchy brushstrokes, the artist described a provocative exchange between a Chan monk from Danxia 丹霞, Tianran 天然 (738-824), and another monk.²⁴¹ According to the story as found in the monk’s biography in the late tenth-century *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳, one cold wintery night Tianran burned a wooden buddha statue in order to stay warm.²⁴² When another monk criticized him for this, he responded that he did it in order to get the relics 舍利 (Skt: śarīra)

²³⁹ XZJ. 64, 1261: 379a03-04. Morten Schüttler has suggested that the earliest example of these four sentences together as a set phrase is found in the 1108 text, *Anecdotes from the Patriarchs Halls* 祖庭事苑, by Muan Shanqing 陸庵善卿 (act. 1088-1108). See Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song Dynasty China* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008), 186, fns. 10, 14-15. These phrases were variously attributed to Bodhidharma, the first Chan patriarch in China, or Śākyamuni Buddha. See T. Griffith Foulk, "Sung Controversies Concerning The "Special Transmission" of Ch'an," in *Buddhism in the Sung*, ed. Peter N. Gregory et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 220.

²⁴⁰ Zhiru Shi, "Scriptural Authority: A Buddhist Perspective" *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 30 (2010): 92-96.

Conversely, Morten Schlütter has suggested, as many of the writings contained in *yulü* collections were works not written by a teacher, but were instead his words recorded by his students, “the master is left without any responsibility for his own words, and the *yulü* becomes an authored text without any author at all.” See Morten Schlütter, "The *Record of Hongzhi* and the Recorded Sayings Literature of Song-Dynasty Chan," in *Zen Canon: Understanding the Classic Texts*, ed. Steven Heine et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 197.

²⁴¹ According to Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, this is the only extant example of this subject in Chinese Buddhist painting. See catalogue entry 13 for this painting in Fontein and Hickman, *Zen Painting*, 36-37.

²⁴² *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳, compiled by Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001) in 988. T. 50, n.2061: 773b17-c06.

from inside the object. Further pressed, he was asked, “But how can you get sacred relics from an ordinary piece of wood?”²⁴³ His reply: “If it is nothing more than an ordinary piece of wood, then why scold me for burning it?”²⁴⁴ The story of Tianran’s destruction of a buddha image as an object of worship and the story’s inclusion in his Song-era biography, hints at the Chan school’s critique of images in this period.

As testified by the sheer number of portrait-eulogies recorded in monastic collections, portraits, as well as images of all varieties, were an important part of temple life and devotional practices for clerics and laity of all Buddhist schools. Chan monks, the most outspoken in their rhetorical rejection of images and texts, were also some of the most prolific writers in the history of Chinese Buddhism. Throughout the Song period, Chan writers developed numerous new genres of literature, including the “flame histories,” “recorded sayings,” and *gong’an* 公案 (Jpn: *kōan*) collections. Contemporary readers, as noted by Morten Schlütter, did not overlook the irony of the voluminous text production of Chan monks in face of the creed “not dependant on texts.”²⁴⁵ Throughout this period, this rhetoric informed artistic practice in those very media that were said to hold no meaning: text and image.

Techniques of Likeness: Song Dynasty Artistic Practices

Chan clerics were not alone in their interest in naturalistic imagery. As has been well documented by many scholars in the last forty years, by the tenth century, interested arts communities had developed a sophisticated vocabulary for discussing all aspects of pictorial

²⁴³ 木頭何有

²⁴⁴ 若爾者何責我乎

²⁴⁵ Schlütter notes one commentator altered the phrase “not dependent on texts” phrase to read “never separated from texts,” thus creating a homophonic pun. See Schlütter, “*Record of Hongzhi*,” 181-182.

naturalism. In tandem, artists working with painting had created an expansive repertoire of techniques to depict it. Sculpture, such as the works at Lingyan temple, was considered a craft rather than art in pre-modern China and was often excluded from discussions on art and art theory. However, pictorial naturalism, as describing the style of an artwork, is not limited to a particular medium. For an educated Song dynasty viewer interested or involved in the arts, the naturalism of the Lingyan sculptures would have resonated with contemporary discussions around art theory and painting.

For artists during the late Northern Song, a fundamental goal in painting was the demonstration of similitude 形似 to the represented subject matter, achieved through the naturalism 自然 of its artistic style.²⁴⁶ During the tenth and eleventh centuries in the genre of landscape painting, artists developed a nuanced visual vocabulary making use of specialized types of brushstrokes to deftly articulate the elements of a painted image, including volume, mass, and texture, which would bring it to life as “real.”²⁴⁷ Methods were developed for defining spatial relationships between forms to render pictorial space highly legible, such as Li Cheng’s 李成 (919-967 C.E.) so-called “level distance” to indicate recession into space. Stylized patterning was eschewed for the variations inherent in nature, whether it was the seemingly random placement of tree leaves or the individualization of rocks and cliffs to simulate surface

²⁴⁶ Many researchers have written about this aspect of Chinese painting, including Martin J. Powers, "Discourses of Representation in Tenth and Eleventh Century China," in *The Art of Interpreting*, ed. Susan Scott (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1995), 88-125; Alfreda Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China: The Subtle Art of Dissent* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2000), 121-25; Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shi (1037-1101) to T'ung Ch'i-Ch'ang (1555-1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); James Cahill, "Some Rocks in Early Chinese Painting," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, XVI (1962): 77-87.

²⁴⁷ See Cahill, "Some Rocks," 77-87 and Martin J. Powers, "The Jiangshan Genre of Landscape: the Shanghai Museum's "Mountains and Rivers" Hand Scroll," in *Masterpieces of Ancient Chinese Paintings: Paintings from the Tang to the Yuan dynasty in Japanese and Chinese Collections* 千年丹青: 细续中日藏唐宋元绘画珍品, ed. Chen Xiejun 陈燮君 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2010) 45-46.

texture.²⁴⁸ The renowned landscape painter Guo Xi 郭熙 (ca. 1000-1090 C.E.), whose son wrote of Lingyan temple, challenged artists to explore the ways three-dimensional objects appear to change form depending on the distance, angle, and position of the viewer.²⁴⁹

Many artists working with natural scenes were acutely aware of the seasonal and environmental changes the natural world undergoes, which alter a viewer's perception. In discussing a contemporary artist's depiction of bamboo, rocks, and dead trees, the poet and civil official Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) praised the artist's work by noting "there are innumerable changes and transformations never once repeated, yet each part fits in its place, and is compatible with nature's design and accords with men's conceptions" 與可之於竹石枯木, 真可謂得其理者矣...千變萬化, 未始相襲而各當其, 合於天造, 厭於人意.²⁵⁰

As indicated by Su Shi, artists were not just observing the various forms found in nature, but were also looking at the processes behind those forms, such as growth cycles, the environment, and the organic relationships between plants and trees. To maintain integrity with the actual processes of living matter ("compatible with nature's design"), even the most mundane was not overlooked. The art critic Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (act. latter part of 11th century) referenced this directly when he wrote, "Everything down to garden vegetables and wild grasses has its own form and nature in emerging from the ground" 諸園蔬野草咸有出土體柱/性.²⁵¹

Those working with figural representations were equally interested in the underlying processes responsible for variations with the human form, those very features that mark persons

²⁴⁸ Powers, "Discourses," 90.

²⁴⁹ Guo Xi 郭熙, "The Lofty Message of Forest and Streams," 林泉高致. ZGHLLB, 635. A translation of portions of this treatise are found in Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 150-154.

²⁵⁰ Su Shi's observation were about Yu Ke 與可 (1018-1079), a less well known artist of the Northern Song dynasty. Translation adapted from Bush, *The Chinese Literati*, 42. Original text reprinted on p.191 of the same volume.

²⁵¹ Chinese text and trans. found in Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛, *Experiences in Painting* 圖画見聞誌, ed. Alexander C. Soper (Washington: American Council of Learned Societies, 1951), vol. 1, no. 18.

as individuals. Of his own method with painting figures, the artist Mi Fu 米黻 (1051-1107) said: “[I] make the eye-pupils, facial patterns, and bone structure according to their own natural character. This is not something one can do by following a model” 余爲目睛面文骨木, 自是天性, 非師而能.²⁵² The artist dismissed the idea of rendering a face using pictorial conventions or by following the style of a particular master artist 師. For him, as for many painters of the Northern Song period, depicting faces involved being attentive to the ways the underlying structure of a face and its surface features combine to create a distinctive visage, such as seen with the Wuzhun Shifan portrait. With paintings that had living models, the image needed to reflect the uniqueness of the individual sitter.

Mi Fu’s remarks find a resonance with the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple, where the attention to skeletal and muscular structures in the body contribute to the rendering of individualized figures. For example, the previously discussed #25E sits with his legs raised to the platform and crossed over one another. His arms casually encircling his legs, he distractedly gazes off into the southern portion of the room (fig. 3.6). His lips, turned up slightly at the corners, create an ambiguous expression (fig. 3.2).²⁵³ However, this ambiguity disappears when we consider more closely how the artist/s molded the areas around the mouth and nose. Deep wrinkles are sculpted on both sides of the nose and extend down to the sides of the mouth. The areas between the wrinkles and the mouth are gently rounded to emulate contracted muscles. When these muscles are contracted in a person, so are those that radiate vertically along the cheeks, creating wrinkles in the skin high along the cheekbones. These too are visible on the face of #25E, as close viewing reveals several curving lines etched into the surface underneath the

²⁵² Translation in consultation with Bush, *The Chinese Literati*, 73 and Bush, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting*, 213.

²⁵³ On the numbering system used for the set, see Chapter Two.

corners of the eyes. All of these muscles contract to produce the most recognizable of expressions, a smile. The artist/s captured the moment when those muscles are contracting, but before the expression itself became manifest on the lips. No detail on these faces is extraneous; all function together to persuasively create a believable character.

Likeness and "Truth": From Xie He to Su Shi

One of the first people to expressly deal with painting theory, and by extension naturalistic imagery's rhetorical claim of likeness, was the sixth-century writer Xie He 謝赫 (act. ca 500-535?) in his book, *A Classification of Painters* 古畫品錄.²⁵⁴ In its preface, Xie outlined "six principles of painting" 繪畫六法, three of which focus on likeness in relation to physical and visual resemblance (form, color, and composition).²⁵⁵ Another principle, which has been the subject of wide debate by modern art historians, addresses the relationship between internal qualities and external forms, 氣韻生動.²⁵⁶ At the center of the debate is the meaning of the first two characters used by Xie, *qiyun* 氣韻.²⁵⁷ The translations for these terms range from "spirit resonance" to "sympathetic responsiveness of the vital spirit." Arguing for a less esoteric meaning, Martin J. Powers has suggested something closer to "character," as it originally "described the manner or character detectable in a person's posture, motions, and gestures."²⁵⁸

The phrase might then be translated as "the character of bodily gestures," which more succinctly

²⁵⁴ ZGHLLB, 355-356.

²⁵⁵ These are the third, fourth, and fifth principles respectively.

²⁵⁶ Xie He highlights this principle by putting it first.

²⁵⁷ For a discussion of the translation differences, see Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, 10-14; Alexander C. Soper, "The First Two Laws of Hsieh Ho," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (August 1949): 412-23; William Acker, *Some T'ang and Pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E.J. Brill), xx; James Cahill, "The Six Laws and How to Read Them," *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961): 372-81.

²⁵⁸ Martin J. Powers, "How to Read a Chinese Painting: Jing Hao's "Bi fa ji," in *Ways with Words: Writing About Reading Texts from Early China*, ed. Pauline Yu et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 221.

reveals the link between the portrayal and the interior qualities of the represented person.²⁵⁹

During the sixth century when Xie He was writing, “character” was linked to an individual’s social status. By the ninth century, writers like Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846) had begun to identify it as something unique to the individual, not predicated on status.

In a poem about a portrait of himself, Bai Juyi identifies it as both a reflection and a reminder of his own personal inclinations.

A man can’t recognize himself,
[So] Li Fang has painted my portrait.
Quietly observing me, body and soul,
In full, it looks like a hermit.
Living among wild willows, he’s apt to get senile.
With a heart like a wild elk, he is hard to tame.
How did this man end up in court,
Serving as officer for five long years?
All the more reason he’s tough and mulish,
How should he mix with the herd?
It isn’t just that he lacks a noble mien,
One fears he might bring calamity upon himself.
Better to forsake public life early,
And keep to his misty mountain-spring self.²⁶⁰

我貌不自識，李放寫我真。
靜觀神與骨，合是山中人。
蒲柳質易朽，麋鹿心難馴。
何事赤墀上，五年為侍臣。
況多剛狷性，難與世同塵。
不惟非貴相，但恐生禍因。
宜當早罷去，收取雲泉身。

²⁵⁹ Martin J. Powers, "Character and Gesture in Early Chinese Art and Criticism," in *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Chinese Art History, 1991: Painting and Calligraphy, Part 2* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1992), 917-21.

²⁶⁰ This translation is indebted to Martin Powers and Christian de Pee. A consulted translation and the original text are found in Stephen Owen, *The Late Tang: Chinese Poetry of the Mid-Ninth Century* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 61-62.

Bai Juyi saw in Li Fang's portrait a likeness on the level of the visible (his physical appearance) and the not visible (his personal characteristics), as indicated when he wrote, "quietly observing me, body and soul; in full it looks like a hermit." Bai's description of his depicted appearance as a hermit may have been an allusion to Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (Tao Qian, 365-427), a Six Dynasties poet and official, whose writings on the joys of leaving official life for the freedom of rural living was instrumental in forming the topos of the hermit in the visual and literary arts.²⁶¹ Bai recognized in his painted representation an attitude and associated mannerisms that, like Tao Yuanming, reflected an independence of spirit and action.²⁶²

By the late Tang dynasty (602-906), viewers expected to see more in an image than just physical similarity. Consider a eulogy written by the eighth-century monk-poet Jiaoran 皎然 (720-796) for the portrait of a man named Yi.

The painting is in accord with principle as the two bodies (i.e. painting and subject) are not different. [It has] a depth of feeling and a penetrating knowledge. The [close correspondence between them, as if of] 'eyebrows and lashes' is just perfect. What does he want to say, what is he thinking of doing? Sitting alone on the bed, his implements of the Way have long accompanied him—the water pitcher he holds could be poured, and the rosary turns as if it's moving. A clear breeze blows his plain garments as if straightening his majestic demeanor.²⁶³

畫與理冥，兩身不異。
淵情洞識，眉睫斯備。
欲發何言？正思何事？
一床獨坐，道具長。
瓶執堪瀉，珠傳似移。

²⁶¹ For discussions on Tao Yuanming, his writing, and his impact on the arts, see Stephen Field, "Ruralism in Chinese Poetry: Some Versions of Chinese Pastoral," *Comparative Literature Studies* 28, no. 1 (1991): 1-18; Susan E. Nelson, "Catching Sight of South Mountain: Tao Yuanming, Mount Lu, and the Iconographies of Escape," *Archives of Asian Art* 52 (2000/2001): 11-43, and Martin J. Powers, "Love and Marriage in Song China: Tao Yuanming Comes Home," *Ars Orientalis* 28 (1998): 51-62.

²⁶² Stephen Owen suggests that as a literary strategy in this poem, Bai Juyi used the portrait as a vehicle to supposedly "discover" what the man already knew about himself. See Owen, *Late Tang: Chinese Poetry*, 61-62.

²⁶³ Translation by Wendi Adamek in *The Mystique of Transmission*, 257.

清風拂素，若整威儀。²⁶⁴

Jiaoran notes the portrait had been rendered naturalistically (first line) and to such a degree that the forms in it had a three-dimensional sense of movement (last lines). Between these comments, he questions the motivations and desires of the figure itself (“what does he want to say, what is he thinking of doing”). We can infer a relationship between the two—Jiaoran understood the naturalism of the work as opening a door to the depicted figure’s interior emotional life. Further, those hints at the sitter’s inner emotional complexity provoked Jiaoran to engage with the depicted subject, compelling him to pose questions of that individual.

Into the tenth century, pictorial naturalism continued to be viewed as having the capacity to depict external and internal similarities between a representation and its referent, but new issues were beginning to brew. In the painting treatise, *Methods of the Brush* 筆法記 by Jing Hao 荊浩 (ca. 870-930), an unnamed narrator sketching trees in the forest encounters a woodsman with whom he discusses the finer points of painting theory. Surprised and humbled by the old man’s knowledge, the narrator asks, “What do you call lifelikeness and what do you call truth?” 何以為似。何以為真?²⁶⁵ Jing Hao uses the term *zhen* 真 in the second part of his question, which here is translated as ‘truth,’ but has also been glossed as “authenticity” and “reality,” and

²⁶⁴ Jiaoran 皎然, “Portrait-Eulogy for Yi at Dayun Monastery” 大雲寺逸公寫真讚, *Complete Prose of the Tang dynasty* 全唐文, vol. 1649, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), 453.

²⁶⁵ ZGHLLB, 605. The framing device for this literary work, as a man who unexpectedly meets a rural person in a natural setting, is also found in the fourth-century B.C.E. Daoist philosophical text *Zhuangzi* 莊子 in a story entitled, “The Old Fisherman” 漁父. In this case, it is Confucius who meets a fisherman while out in the forest with his disciples. Much like Jing Hao’s unnamed narrator, Confucius after a bit of conversation asks of the fisherman, “what do you call truth?” 請問何謂真, which leads to an exposition of the idea. This story is found in the Miscellaneous Chapters 雜篇 of *Zhuangzi*.

could easily be rendered “genuine” as well.²⁶⁶ With many subtle variations of meaning with this word, one is left wondering what exactly did Jing Hao mean with *zhen*?

The woodsman’s answer to the narrator provides some clarification: “Likeness captures the form, but loses the character [of the object]. When the portrayal is true, then character and substance are equally present” 似者得其形遺其氣，真者氣質俱盛。²⁶⁷ While the woodsman’s response is in keeping with how Bai Juyi and Jiaoran both viewed portraits, we can see a subtle, but distinctive difference. Jing Hao juxtaposed *zhen* with another term noting likeness, but similarities based on physical resemblance, *si* 似.²⁶⁸ In doing so, he drew attention to and distinction between resemblance derived from similarities of form and resemblance based on qualities not found on the physical level. However, as Martin Powers has argued, *zhen* carries an authority, because demarcating what is ‘true’ also demonstrates what is ‘not true.’ In China, *zhen* like ‘Truth’ in Europe “served as [an] effective device[s] for establishing social priorities.”²⁶⁹ In other words, Jing Hao was defining “truth” and was using the authority invested in it, and in doing so, he was helping set a precedent that would redefine the discourse around pictorial naturalism in the mid-eleventh century.

In the years following the publication of Jing Hao’s treatise, the artistic tools and terms for creating naturalistic works continued to develop, especially through the genre of landscape painting. By the latter half of the eleventh century, writers began to shift the focus of this question in their changing views of pictorial representation. Su Shi, writing about his own

²⁶⁶ For two translations of this term as “authenticity” in the Jing Hao passage, see Stephen West, “A Record of the Methods of the Brush: A Personal Reading (the Codger and the Painter Wannabe,” in *Ways with Words: Writing About Reading Texts from Early China*, ed. Pauline Yu et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 205. In the same volume, Martin Powers also translates *zhen* as “authenticity.” See Powers, “How to Read a Chinese Painting,” 235. For its translation as “reality,” see Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 146.

²⁶⁷ Translated adapted from Powers, “How to Read a Chinese Painting,” 235. Original text in ZGHLLB, 605.

²⁶⁸ Stephen Owen, “*Bi Fa Ji*,” in *Ways with Words: Writing About Reading Texts from Early China*, ed. Pauline Yu et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 214, fn. 3.

²⁶⁹ Powers, “How to Read a Chinese Painting,” 235.

portrait in 1074/5 alludes to Bai Juyi, but his concerns with the painting are not the same as those expressed by the earlier poet.²⁷⁰

Presented to the Portraitist He Chong, an Exceptional Talent

I ask you sir, why did you trouble yourself to paint my portrait?
You respond that it is your pleasure, it befits your personality.
With a course yellow hat and rustic clothes, [you give me] a mountain man's appearance;
[Your] intention is to place me amidst mountains and cliffs.²⁷¹

贈寫真何充秀才

...

問君何苦寫我真？
君言好之聊自適。
黃冠野山家容，
意欲置我山巖中。

...

While the ninth-century poet had seen in his portrait a likeness between himself and the free spirit of a “hermit,” Su Shi was more interested in the artificiality of the presentation itself. In writing that the artist gave him “a mountain man’s appearance,” he identifies the painting as a fabricated object. He acknowledges the hand responsible for its production, He Chong, and probes into his motivations in painting it (“I ask you sir, why did you trouble yourself to paint my portrait?”) Unlike Bai Juyi, Su Shi sees the portrait not as a mirror of himself, but as a product of the artist’s intentions and skills. While Su Shi never suggested that similitude should be abandoned entirely, he was critical of artists who regarded it as necessary and sufficient for

²⁷⁰ Su Shi 蘇軾, *Presented to the Portraitist He Chong, an Exceptional Talent* 贈寫真何充秀才 in *Annotated Collected Poems of Su Shi* 蘇軾詩集合注, ed. Feng Yingliu 馮應榴, vol. 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001), 560-561.

²⁷¹ Consulted translation: Peter C. Sturman, "In the Realm of Naturalness: Problems of Self-Imaging by the Northern Sung Literati," in *Arts of the Sung and Yuan*, ed. Maxwell K. Hearn et al. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 166.

fine art.²⁷² In his most famous quote, he expresses his opinion of those who do just that: “If anyone discusses painting in terms of similitude, his understanding is nearly that of a child” 論畫以形似, 見與兒童鄰.²⁷³ Su Shi’s work marks the beginning of a shift in the discourse around pictorial naturalism and likeness; writers were taking notice of the construction of art in addition to its visual results.

However, not all people took a critical view of pictorial naturalism and its claim of likeness during the Song dynasty. As noted earlier with Wuzu Fayan’s portrait-eulogy, he assumed some viewers would “see” the portrait as demonstrative of the sitter’s personal qualities. In encountering a portrait-sculpture of the abbot Zhaojue 照覺, the twelfth-century civil official Lu You 陸游 (1125-1209) understood this image as capable of visualizing the personal qualities of the depicted subject. In his diary chronicling his travels across the southwestern part of the country, he relates encountering the portrait-sculpture at Donglin Temple 東林寺 in modern day Jiangxi 江西 province. He noted the image of the abbot showed the sitter was “a serious and outstanding person.”²⁷⁴ Within this setting and this instance, Lu You visually understood the illusionistic qualities of the portrait as conveying more than just a similarity of physical form to the abbot. His “reading” of the sculpture recalls Bai Juyi’s expectations of his portrait in the eighth century.

Institutional Networking: Lingyan Temple and Interested Arts Communities

²⁷² Ronald Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1994), 284.

²⁷³ Original text found in Bush, *Chinese Literati*, 188.

²⁷⁴ 嚴重英持人. Lu You 陸游, *Record of a Trip into Shu* 入蜀記, j. 2, SKQS, 12. The temple’s full name as given by the author is Donglin Taiping Xinglong Temple 東林太平興龍寺.

During the very years Chan writers were protesting against imagery through portrait-inscriptions and literati was debating the “truth” of pictorial naturalism, Lingyan temple was becoming more integrated into a larger network of affiliation with highly ranked Chan clerics and civil officials. In the Jingde era 景德 (1004-1007) of Emperor Zhenzong 真宗 (968-1022; r. 968-1022), the temple was registered for the first time with the government as a Chan temple.²⁷⁵ With this registration its name was changed to Jingde Lingyan Chan Temple 景德靈岩禪寺. As discussed in the last chapter, in 1070 it was registered again as a Chan public temple 十方 (temple of the “ten directions”) with a name change to Lingyan Temple of the Ten Directions 十方靈巖禪寺.²⁷⁶ The latter registration required that the temple adhere to official regulations for Chan institutions, which included filling the position of abbot with someone recognized by both the Buddhist institution and the government as part of a Chan dharma lineage.²⁷⁷ As discussed later in this chapter, clerics who attained these positions were highly educated and well versed in current theological trends and Chan politics. Although most of the abbots at Lingyan temple during the Song dynasty are not recorded, the registration of the temple would have given the monastic community access to well-trained individuals conversant in contemporary religious issues.

²⁷⁵ In the recent past there has been a great deal of controversy over what, if anything, classified a temple, a practice, or a monk as “Chan.” Research by T. Griffith Foulk and Morten Schlütter, among others, has shed light on how few distinctions there were between various schools of Buddhism. For instance, in the Song period there were no architectural or organizational differences between temples designated “Chan” and other types of temples. Further, almost every public temple would have clerics who specialized in various practices and studied different sutras and other doctrinal materials. For a more in-depth discussion of this topic, see T. Griffith Foulk, “Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch’an Buddhism,” in *Religion and Society in T’ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1993), 147-208.

²⁷⁶ A stele inscribed with the official edict that registered the temple, dated to 1070, resides at the temple. The edict is transcribed Wang Rongyu 王榮玉 et al. ed., *Lingyan Temple 靈巖寺* (Beijing: Wenwu Press, 1999), 104-105.

²⁷⁷ Public monasteries were one of two main types of institutions as designated by the government. The other, “hereditary” 甲乙 monasteries allowed for the abbacy to be handed down from a monk to one of his students. For a discussion on this history, see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 36-39.

The temple's registration also provided the temple community opportunity to interact with civil officials and other intellectuals, many of whom were as invested in issues surrounding pictorial naturalism as Chan monks. In order to implement and maintain governmental procedures for Chan institutions, the monastic order would have had extensive interactions with local and regional officials. These would range from purely administrative encounters (processing the annual/bi-annual registration forms of the clerics or travel documents from visiting monks) to ones involving more cooperative efforts, such as reviewing the pool of applicants for the position of abbot.²⁷⁸ In some cases, prefectural-level civil officials would also attend the "opening the hall" 開堂 ceremonies that officially welcomed a new abbot into his position at a temple.²⁷⁹ In short, the institutional opportunities for networking with a diversity of people active in the national arts scene was established by the early eleventh century, some sixty years before the sculptural works at Lingyan temple were produced.

Additionally, the seventeenth-century temple gazetteer, *Lingyan Temple Records*, contains numerous writings by Song dynasty intellectuals not directly affiliated with the complex. Many of these works describe the temple's scenery, important persons associated with it, or its history. Some of the more recognizable people include the previously mentioned Su Shi and his scholar official brother Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039-1112), both of whom wrote poems about the temple.²⁸⁰ Guo Si 郭思 (act. ca. 1070-after 1123), a scholar official and the son of the famed

²⁷⁸ On travel permits and registration, see Yifa, *The Origins of Buddhist Monastic Codes in China: An Annotated Translation and Study of the Chanyuan Qinggui* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 74-80; 122-123. Also see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 39-41.

²⁷⁹ Morten Schlütter, "The Record of Hongzhi," 188, 199-200.

²⁸⁰ LYZ, j. 3, 181, 178. An English translation of Su Shi's poem is found in Ronald C. Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, and the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1994), 177-8 and Michael A. Fuller, *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi's Poetic Voice* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 224-5. It is unclear if Su Shi actually visited the temple and wrote a poem about it. It is possible that the poem was written for another temple and, at some point, was "re-used" by the Lingyan community to enhance the public visibility of the temple. This idea is indebted to conversations I had with several monks residing at the temple in 2008.

landscape painter Guo Xi 郭熙, wrote a lengthy prose work for the temple in 1108.²⁸¹ In a parting poem to an un-named cleric leaving the capital to take up the abbacy at the temple, the prime minister Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086) described the beautiful sights the monk would see on his journey.²⁸² His son-in-law Cai Bian 蔡卞 transcribed several sutras for the temple, including the *Śūraṅgama Sutra* 楞嚴經 in two parts, in 1099 and 1101, which the temple had inscribed on a tablet and placed in Yushu Pavilion 御書閣 in 1102.²⁸³ It is unclear how many of these individuals personally visited the temple, as Song abbots often solicited commemorative texts or calligraphy examples from famous people. These writings helped raise the public profile of a temple by enhancing its prestige.²⁸⁴ No doubt, some of these scholars visited Lingyan temple, but more importantly their contributions indicate the temple's monastic community had developed a relationship with a diversity of influential people in the very years when the *luohan* sculptures were being created.

Within this context, the naturalism of the Lingyan sculptures was no accident. Those intellectuals involved in developing the artistic theories and practices of the period were among the best known cultural critics and artists of the period. Their writings were widely circulated in multiple media. Most likely the educated members of the Lingyan temple community were aware, at least generally, of these trends in artistic taste.

Naturalistic Images: Authoritative and Objective

²⁸¹ This inscription is transcribed in Wang, *Lingyan Temple*, 103.

²⁸² LYZ, j. 3, 174-5. Although Wang Anshi does not name the monk in his poem, it was most likely Hang Xiang 行詳 (號道光), who was appointed abbot in 1070. His name and the official record of him taking this position are found on the “Lingyan Temple Imperial Edict” stele 敕賜十方靈巖寺碑. See Wang, *Lingyan Temple*, 104-105.

²⁸³ This inscription is transcribed in Wang, *Lingyan Temple*, 109.

²⁸⁴ Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960-1279* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 15-17.

As Chan writers were engaged in negating the “truth” of images and demonstrating their own authority, others within the Song educated public made effective use of the rhetorical power of highly naturalistic imagery. W. J. T. Mitchell has suggested that a “realist representation might be understood as a picture accompanied by the tacit legend: ‘this is the way things are.’”²⁸⁵ One of the clearest examples of the possibilities of this rhetorical claim occurred in 1074 in the midst of a series of controversial agricultural and economic reforms, known as the “New Policies,” spearheaded by the prime minister Wang Anshi. Among the many opponents of these reforms was the civil official Zheng Xia 鄭俠 (1041-1119). While at his first official posting in Guangzhou between 1069-1072, he had seen for himself the disastrous effects these policies had on the lives of average people. Responding to the suffering he had witnessed, he sent an official memorial and an album of paintings, *Portraits of Refugees and Famines* 流民圖, to Emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1048-1085; r. 1067-1085) to persuade the Emperor to change the policies.²⁸⁶

With the painting no longer extant, we cannot know the degree of naturalism employed, though a naturalistic style was normative at that time. However, Zheng Xia could have relied solely on his firsthand knowledge of the situation to convince the emperor, and no doubt, that did contribute to the Shenzong’s response. Yet, the official felt it necessary to provide visual documentation as well. This suggests he believed the images would be understood as objective proof of the people’s hardships. Zheng Xia utilized the persuasive capabilities inherent in pictorial naturalism to visually document the effects of current political policy on the people.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 325-26.

²⁸⁶ Wang Cheng 王稱, *Brief Account of Events in the Eastern Capital* 東都事略 (Taipei: Zhongyang tushuguan, 1991), 117.1811–1813. Preface dated 1186.

²⁸⁷ Artists were not the only ones to employ highly descriptive means of representation to bear witness to the suffering of the average people. The civil official and poet Bai Juyi used textual means to describe the hardwork

Another artwork, which illustrates the use of the documentary authority of visual imagery is the early twelfth-century handscroll, *Along the River During Qingming Festival* 清明上河圖, attributed to Zhang Zeduan 張澤端 (ca. 1115) (fig. 3.7). As a *jiehua* (ruled-line) painting, perspective and accuracy in the representation of forms (objects, people, building) was paramount. The scroll depicts the activity and excitement of life in the Northern Song capital Bianjing 汴京 (now called Kaifeng 開封) during the spring festival. The people are shown happily shopping, preparing for the festivities, or contentedly going about their usual work (fig. 3.8). Through the emphasis on the smallest of details, the composition is constructed as a comprehensive and objective view of life in the capital--a “day in the life” snapshot. Yet what is most telling about the image is what is left out—the dirt, the poverty, and the realistic chaos of life in any metropolitan setting. The painting was produced during the early part of the twelfth century, which was not a period of ease and leisure for the average person. Tax increases combined with the imperial court’s pressure on communities to supply building materials and luxury items for construction projects by Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082-1135; r. 1100-1126) led to widespread discontent, which led to a rebellion lasting for over a year at the cost of over a million dead.²⁸⁸ In other words, the authority invested in the painting through the naturalistic detail documents a reality that may not have existed in Kaifeng at this particular moment in history.

work of farmers, whose limited income he was dutied to garnish in his position as tax collector. See Field, "Ruralism in Chinese Poetry," 26-30.

²⁸⁸ Alfreda Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China: The Subtle Art of Dissent* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2000), 197.

Part of the authority of the “objective” view presented in the painting is what Richard Vinograd has referred as its “nearly oppressive similitude.”²⁸⁹ The overwhelming amount of information provided by the image suggests the artist was simply transcribing what he saw. W.J.T. Mitchell has argued the rhetoric of objectivity is produced by an image’s denial of its own status as a constructed object.²⁹⁰ Through this lens, Zhang Zeduan’s creative role as the artist is masked.

We see this same rhetoric at work with the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple sculptures where any marks of the creative process have been obscured. The organic materials used to create the figures were manipulated, concealed, and transformed, removing all visual references to them, leaving no traces of the human hand responsible for the process. In the sculptures’ original condition, all traces of their construction, such as wood and wire frames and clay, hemp, and cotton were hidden (figs. 3.9 and 3.10). The exterior layers of material were meticulously modeled into smooth curvaceous planes to mimic flexibly soft human skin stretched over muscle and bone. The natural color of the clay and hemp was effaced through thick polychrome pigments and an egg yolk glaze to denote the bright colors of monastic robes and the shine and hue of skin. Fitted with glass orbs to catch and reflect light, the figures’ eyes sparkle and shine like a person’s. There are no visual clues of the artistic choices made in the creation of these figures (figs. 3.11 and 3.12).

Just as with the Zhang Zeduan painting, the Lingyan sculptures present an authoritative and “objective” view. In this case, it claims *luohan*, sacred and supernatural personages, are human monks. As discussed in Chapter Two, canonical sources on *luohan* emphasize their

²⁸⁹ Richard Vinograd, "Situation and Response in Traditional Chinese Scholar Painting," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* XLVI, no. 3 (Spring, 1988): 371.

²⁹⁰ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 37.

unassuming presence, establishing that any living cleric could be a *luohan* in disguise. The naturalism of the figures with its attendant claim of objectivity persuades viewers to see *luohan* as just that—ordinary everyday monks.

The “Authentic” Image and the “Authentic” Person

Returning to Wuzu Fayan’s portrait-eulogy, the writer suggested that looking to a portrait to see any type of resemblance was fruitless. However, his use of *zhen* was not simply because it was a useful tool in the discourse on the negation of images and texts. He used it for its malleability; that it could contain multiple meanings simultaneously. The Caodong monk Zhengjue 正覺 (1091-1157), known posthumously as Hongzhi 宏智, inscribed hundreds of portraits and, much like Wuzu, he often used the term *zhen* in those writings.²⁹¹ His use of this term gives us a somewhat clearer picture of what was at stake for monastic writers of *zhenzan*. A segment from a longer inscription found in his “recorded sayings” literature reads: “This portrait/*truth* is not the face [it portrays]; this face is not a (true) portrait (of the self) 是真非相。是相非真。”²⁹² Its rhetoric is one found throughout his writings—he raises the topic of portraiture or representation only to negate it and often through *zhen*.

Hongzhi set two terms in a binary relationship, *zhen/truth* and *xiang/face*, which are rotated within the couplet into positions that both affirm and negate the other. In both sentences, the first position is in the affirmative—“this portrait,” “this face.” The second position is in the negative—“not the face” “not a (true) portrait.” Robert Sharf has suggested that in Chan

²⁹¹ In the twelfth century, the monk was more often known as Tiantong Zhengjue 天童正覺 or Tiantong Jue 天童覺. Reference to him as Hongzhi only came into fashion at a later date. See Schlütter, “*Record of Hongzhi*,” 202, fn. 14.

²⁹² *The Extensive Records of Chan Master Hongzhi*, 宏智禪師廣錄. T. 48, n. 2001: 113b24. Foulk and Sharf also translate this inscription in “Ritual Use,” 206.

literature, the presentation of binaries did not indicate either/or choices, but instead presented seemingly opposite ideas as relational or contingent “truth” claims.²⁹³ While this logic was not unique to these writers—it is common throughout *Zhuangzi*—it was commonly reiterated in Chan rhetoric. What may appear to be contradictory or even nonsensical became a display of the author’s knowledge and dexterity with philosophy and logic.²⁹⁴ *Zhen* was crucial to Hongzhi’s demonstration of his acumen with Chan ideas.

Within their own religious communities, which were composed of other monks, students, and lay people, Chan teachers were seen “as [the] final arbiter of the spiritual value of all words past and present,” yet they were also well aware their words left them open to being challenged by students, and presumably other masters, who were equally interested in refining and demonstrating their skills.²⁹⁵ In this context, when Hongzhi wrote so playfully of *zhen*, the authority traditionally invested in the term revealed that Hongzhi himself was an authority on these matters. In other words, Hongzhi was demonstrating his skills in logic and rhetoric and through that was affirming his role as an eminent member of the monastic order.

For Hongzhi, the portrait he was writing on was a fundamental component in the demonstration of his skills. Yukio Lippit has argued the “discursive negation” of images through their inscriptions was paramount with clerical portraits, that the image and text are mutually supportive.²⁹⁶ The rhetorical value of Hongzhi’s theological expertise was enhanced by the

²⁹³ Robert H. Sharf, “How to Think with Chan *Gong’an*,” in *Hsiung Ping-Chen*, ed. Charlotte Furth and Judith Zeitlin (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007). 228.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 235.

²⁹⁵ T. Griffith Foulk, “The Form and Function of Koan Literature: A Historical Overview,” in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, ed. Steven Heine et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000): 35.

²⁹⁶ Lippit coined the phrase “negative versimilitude” to describe the engendered tension between the portrait and the text that denies it. He suggests it is this very feature that makes *dingxiang/chinzo* unique in the global history of portraiture. Lippit, “Negative Versimilitude: The Zen Portrait in Medieval Japan,” in *Asian Art History in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai (Williamstown, Mass: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007), 87. T. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf have made a similar point about the term *zhen* itself as well as the term *dingxiang*. See Foulk and Sharf, “On Ritual Use,” 205.

accompanying image. Although we cannot make broad statements about the portraits themselves, for those that were rendered like Wuzhun Shifan's, the status of the sitters reflected through the portrait conventions offered further visual "proof" of the sitters monastic authority.

Like Hongzhi, the monk Huanglong Huinan 黃龍慧南 (1002-1069) set the term *zhen* in a binary dynamic alternating between "portrait" and "truth" in a portrait-eulogy written for an image requested by a Chan lay adherent 禪人. In this case, his contrast between these two meanings of the term tells us something further about what was invested in "truth."

A strip of white silk, and a painted figure; this they call my portrait/*zhen*. It is merely the thief of my self. My true self/*zhen* has no form; my appearance is not revealed.²⁹⁷

一幅素繒. 丹青模勒. 謂吾之真. 乃吾之賊. 吾真匪狀. 吾貌匪揚.

Huanglong takes as his reference point the materiality of the painting, implying the portrait itself is a more formal composition—the characters he used for "painted figure" are literally the red (丹) and green (青) inks artists used for painting.²⁹⁸ Unlike the other *zhenzan* examined, the specificity to the material of artistic production indicates that the author was writing for an audience that was both familiar with and invested in the contemporary arts. Morten Schlütter has argued Song Chan literature was intended as much for non-monastic readers, if not more so, than clerics.²⁹⁹ Not only were the "flame histories" and other works in the Buddhist canon printed with assistance from the government during the Northern Song period,

²⁹⁷ *The Discourse Records of Chan Master Huanglong Huinan* 黃龍慧南禪師語錄: T. 47, n.1993: 0636a11-a12. Translation in consultation with Martin Powers and Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation*, 162.

²⁹⁸ In their translation of this inscription, Brinker and Kanazawa understood the "red" and "green" to refer to the colors of silk along the top and bottom of the painting. See Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation*, 162. In other texts that use these two terms, namely Liu Daochun's *Song Dynasty Painters of Renown*, Charles Lachman has translated them as "red and blue," and has noted that more simply they refer to "painting" as the red refers to powdered cinnabar and crushed malachite or azurite that were used for pigments. See Lachman, *Song Painters of Renown*, 18, fn. 7.

²⁹⁹ Schlütter, "Record of Hongzhi," 198-200.

which allowed for wide circulation, but individual male and female lay believers also sponsored printing projects.³⁰⁰ Clerics were aware their inscriptions had a potentially wide-ranging audience.

The specificity emphasized by the very object he was writing on, a painted portrait, forms a dramatic contrast to the amorphous and indescribable interiority Huanglong champions in the second set of sentences, his “true” self. Although the structure of this inscription is different from Hongzhi’s couplet, Huanglong’s eulogy is still constructed through a binary contrast and thus can also be understood as a demonstration of his dexterity with Chan philosophy. What is different is that he specifies that his “true” self has no form. Of fundamental concern for Buddhist clerics was one’s Buddha-nature 佛性 (*foxing*), a concept in which all sentient beings exist as enlightened, but most do not recognize this innate state. The goal of a Buddhist practitioner is to actualize this inherent quality. A synonym for *foxing* in Song Buddhist writings was *zhen* 真.³⁰¹ Thus, Huanglong was not just referencing his skills, but also his enlightened state.

For accomplished monks, such as those who had their portraits painted, the concept of Buddha-nature was more than just religious doctrine, it had real-life implications. A cleric’s upward mobility within the monastic system, leading to a top-ranked position as the abbot of a temple, took many years and involved a complex institutional process.³⁰² He would first have to

³⁰⁰ Tansen Sen, "The Revival and Failure of Buddhist Translations During the Song Dynasty," *T'oung Pao* Second Series, vol. 88, no. 1/3 (2002): 27-80. For sponsorship of text projects, see Schlütter, "Record of Hongzhi," 195.

³⁰¹ Foulk and Sharf, "On Ritual Use," 202. *Foxing* 佛性 is associated with the Mahayanist doctrine of tathāgatagarbha, the “womb” or “embryo” of Buddhahood 如來藏. See Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 3. The method of actualizing enlightenment was controversial in earlier Tang period, while the differences between inherent and actualized enlightenment was a provocative issue for Song clerics. For a discussion on the approaches different lineages took and the controversies surrounding them, see Morten Schlütter, "Silent Illumination, Kung-an Introspection, and Competition for Lay Patronage in Sung Dynasty Ch'an," in *Buddhism in the Sung*, ed. Peter N. Gregory et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 109-47.

³⁰² Foulk, "The 'Ch'an School,'" 71-73.

serve in a variety of lower-ranked administrative offices, giving him experience with the procedures, organization, and administration of temples. He also had to have extensive theological training, usually under the direction of an already established abbot or master teacher. In order to qualify for positions of greater responsibility and rank, he was required to pass multiple written examinations at different points, which demonstrated his knowledge and capabilities.

In addition to all of these requirements, a cleric also needed to establish that his Buddha-nature was actualized, that he had recognized this enlightened state, and was a member of a Dharma lineage. The latter refers to the one-to-one association between a religious teacher and a student that can be traced backward through to the founders of particular schools of Buddhism in China, and even further back to the historical Buddha himself in India as detailed in the flame histories.³⁰³ Those relationships were also referred to as mind-to-mind transmissions.

Documentation of a monk's state of enlightenment and position in a particular lineage took several forms, one of which was a government-issued certificate 嗣書 verifying the individual's religious rank.³⁰⁴ This document was required of any cleric who wanted to be considered for the position of abbot at a public temple, such as Lingyan Temple. Although an increasing number of temples were registered with the government throughout the Northern Song period, the abbacies of these institutions were the most sought after positions. Huanglong's use of *zhen* then is not simply a reference to doctrine nor can it be viewed solely from within the confines of the genre of *zhenzan* literature. It evokes his achievements leading up to and

³⁰³ The genealogy of Chan as constructed in the Song period was composed of one patriarch or recipient of the transmission/Dharma per generation from the historical Buddha in India through the sixth patriarch of the school in China, Huineng (638-713 C.E.). From Huineng onward, each generation could include multiple patriarchs/clerics. Most well known clerics who were highly ranked within the monastic system had their biographies included in one of the flame histories. For a discussion on Chan Dharma lineages, see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 14.

³⁰⁴ In the pre-Song periods, possession of a master's robes and begging bowl were "proof" of being a Dharma heir. The practice of documentation via certificates only began in the Song period. See Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice," 159-161.

including his actualized state of enlightenment: his knowledge, skills, and expertise, which have been recognized both by the Buddhist institution and the civil government. Through his own actions, he is a genuine representation of the theological ideas of the Buddha-nature within everyone. In this context, Huanglong's use of *zhen* as Buddha-nature is inherently tied to authenticity. He occupies a singular place in a Dharma lineage based on his own actions and capabilities.³⁰⁵ His *zhen* is authentic.

In their analysis of *zhenzan*, Foulk and Sharf also discovered these paintings were given to people of all ranks within a temple's organization and were requested by and given to laypeople.³⁰⁶ Building upon the textual evidence collated by Foulk and Sharf, Yukio Lippit has argued that the abbots who wrote these portrait-eulogies "were fully aware of the ability of such works to recall the past and to personalize affiliations between the recipients and themselves, their monasteries, their congregations, and the Chan/Zen lineage itself."³⁰⁷ These "extramonastic constituencies" were increasingly important for abbots and the temples they represented throughout the Song period.³⁰⁸ Financial support from the government for registered temple steadily decreased throughout the Northern Song period putting increasing pressure on individual institutions to seek funding from other sources.³⁰⁹ Portraits were also used in fundraising campaigns by temples where they would be given to those who were financially generous, to others, such as civil officials, with whom the temple wanted to maintain a good working

³⁰⁵ On the point of the effort and education of clerics, and in particular as it is seen through the subgenre of *gong'an* commentaries, see Shi, "Scriptural Authority," 93-4.

³⁰⁶ Foulk and Sharf, "On the Ritual Use," 198-200. Foulk and Sharf's arguments are still not wholly accepted among Chan scholars. For examples of the on-going controversy, see Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen*, 117, fn. 248 and Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 174-5.

³⁰⁷ Gregory P. Levine and Yukio Lippit, "Patriarchs Heading West: An Introduction," in *Awakening: Zen Figure Painting in Medieval Japan*, ed. Naomi Noble Richard (New York: Japan Society, 2007), 19.

³⁰⁸ Lippit has further characterized these paintings as part of an "economy of lay-monastic exchange." See, Yukio Lippit, "Awakenings: The Development of the Zen Figural Pantheon," in *Awakenings: Zen Figure Painting in Medieval Japan*, ed. Naomi Noble Richard (New York: Japan Society, 2007), 36, 38.

³⁰⁹ Morten Schlütter, "Silent Illumination," 179.

relationship, or to lay fans of a temple's abbot.³¹⁰ In this context *zhen* did carry a greater significance for Huanglong and other prestigious abbots—"true" also implied "authentic." The inscriptions and portraits alike were rhetorical tools used for patronage purposes and claiming authenticity for both the abbot and the temple they represented would have been advantageous in securing financial support.

As noted earlier, Su Shi was one person outside of the monastic institution who was beginning to question pictorial naturalism in the mid-Northern Song period, but he was not alone. Consider a colophon written by the early twelfth-century official and connoisseur, Dong You 董適 (act. first quarter of the twelfth century).

Those in the world who discuss painting talk about similitude/*xingsi*. If they say the work is accurate in resembling natural appearances/*xingsi*, then (in my view) they speak of worthless paintings, not those that have achieved a genuine/*zhen* image . . . How can one merely match the colors on the painting with (those in nature) and expect to achieve a [genuine] image, and then copy outlines and achieve this? When someone has truly achieved mastery in painting, it is merely a matter of loosening one's clothes and squatting on the floor, and being unable to bow and hasten to the court.³¹¹

世之論畫謂其形似也。若謂形似長，說假畫非有得於真相者也...豈媿紅配綠求象，後摹寫界而之爲邪？畫至於此，是解衣槃礴，不能偃偻而趨於庭矣。³¹²

Immediately noticeable from the first line is that Dong You acknowledges there were varying opinions regarding naturalism, including a highly valued assessment of it. In the second line, he stakes out a very definitive position within that range of opinions. He does not see

³¹⁰ 化主 as the monks who traveled to solicit funding. See Foulk and Sharf, "Ritual Use," 199. Morten Schlütter also discusses these, albeit briefly, in conjunction with references to these types of monks found in Hongzhi's portrait-inscriptions. See Schlütter, "Record of Hongzhi," 195.

³¹¹ Translation indebted to Martin Powers.

³¹² 董適, "Record of Yan Liben's Wei Bridge" 閻立本渭橋記 as found in Dong You's collection of colophons. Dong You, *Colophons on Painting* 廣川畫跋, p.1, j. 4 in *Collectaneum of the Studio of a Hundred Thousand Volumes* 十萬卷樓叢書 vol. 28 (歸安陸氏, 1879).

naturalism/similitude as the defining characteristic of a “true”/*zhen* image and explicitly tells the reader the deficiencies of these types of paintings: they rely upon the use of outlines and maintain strict observance between colors used in the painting and those of the actual referent. Dong You is lambasting both the final artistic product (“worthless paintings” 假畫) and the artistic method itself (matching colors 媿紅配綠 and outlines 摹寫界).

What the author values in a painting he reserves for the final line. A *zhen* image is created when the artist is relaxed, not constrained by artistic protocols nor beholden to an exterior authority. Contemporary readers would have understood this through the author’s allusion to a story in the aforementioned fourth-century B.C.E. text, *Zhuangzi* 莊子. In the story, an artist working at court defies convention by “loosening his clothes and squatting on the floor” to paint.³¹³ For Dong You, what is *zhen* about painting is positioned via the artist and artistic process against what the imperial court represents: formality and ceremony. It is the difference between what is produced through artificial guidelines and prescriptions and what is created based on an individual’s skills and choices.³¹⁴ Dong You, like Huanglong, implies that what is *zhen* is authentic to the individual.

In a section from *Painting Continued* 畫繼 (ca. 1167), the author Deng Chun 鄧椿 (act. mid-eleventh c.), addresses the same issue of formality and individual agency, but through the expectations made of artists working in the Imperial Painting Academy 翰林圖畫院.³¹⁵

³¹³ 解衣般礴. This story, Tian Zifang 田子方, is found in Chapter 21 of the Outer Chapters of *Zhuangzi* 莊子.

³¹⁴ This analysis is based in great part on Martin Powers’ examination of this same passage in “Discourses,” 103-4.

³¹⁵ Although painting academies had been imperially established earlier, the Hanlin Painting Academy established in 984 became an especially important department under Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082-1135; r. 1100-112), a man who was not only a connoisseur of art, but also an artist himself. For a full discussion of the Academy from the Northern through Southern Song periods, see James Cahill, “The Imperial Painting Academy,” in Wen Fong ed. *Possessing the Past: Treasures From the National Palace Museum, Taipei* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 159-199.

At that time, what was especially appreciated was similitude (*xingsi*). If someone had individual [artistic] aspirations or was unavoidably expressive or free, then people would say that he did conform with the rules or that he was not maintaining the [artistic traditions] of a master painter... Generally, the selection of men for the Painting Academy was not solely on the basis of brush technique. Frequently, an individual's personality was the first consideration.

蓋一時所尚專以形似, 苟有自得, 不免放逸, 則謂不合法度, 或無師承... 凡取畫院人不專以筆法, 往往以人物先...³¹⁶

The artists Deng Chun discusses were professionally trained painters working at the imperially sponsored Painting Academy. For those painters, their livelihood depended upon producing works with themes and styles deemed acceptable to the imperial court. Not all artists at that time though were beholden to an external artistic authority, such as an imperial employer. Beginning in the mid-eleventh century, some one hundred years before Deng Chun wrote his book, individuals not professionally trained began to experiment with the art of painting. This is often viewed as originating with the poet and statesman Su Shi, but by the late eleventh century a significant shift occurred in the qualitative values ascribed to painting. Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and other literati took up painting as a vehicle for self-expression, much like calligraphy. Many framed the act and product of painting as solely for their own individual purposes and pleasures. In their writings on art and the artistic process, they emphasized they were not professionally trained and did not receive money for their works.³¹⁷ They were establishing a rhetoric of independence, of not being obligated to conform to anyone else's standards.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Deng Chun 鄧椿, *Painting Continued* 畫繼 in ZGHHLB, 81. Translation adapted from Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, 138.

³¹⁷ Often writers like Su Shi made the distinction between themselves as scholars 士人 and professional painters 畫工. This is more reflective of how an individual writer was fanning a particular issue, as this distinction could be rather blurry at times. Although it is true that professional artists were not eligible to become civil officials, many painters were, in fact, extremely well educated and were involved in the early formation of ideas about self-expression in painting. In other cases, there were those who were civil officials, but were better known and sought

Returning to Dong You's passage, his citation of the *Zhuangzi* story valorized an unfettered naturalness in the creative process, in a manner consistent with Deng Chun's comment on artists being "expressive and free." In both instances, contemporary readers would have recognized where these writers stood within the shifting discourse on pictorial naturalism. As the range of people both discussing art and producing art expanded during the Song dynasty, painting was no longer understood simply through the lens of artistic skill in verisimilitude. The expressive qualities of an image, whether configured as demonstrative of the artist's personality or her/his unique ability to convey an idea or subject, became a priority for many viewers. The naturalism of a painting with its goal of similitude 形似 gave way to the naturalness 天然 of a painting, emphasizing the individual behind the creation.³¹⁹

Consider what the artist Mi Fu 米芾 (1052-1107) had to say about the work of an earlier painter Dong Yuan 董源 (c. 934-962).

As a man of character he is unrivaled. His peaks and ranges appear and disappear, while his clouds and mists are distinct and thick. His paintings make no pretense at artfulness but are entirely natural (天) and genuine (真).³²⁰

...格高無與比也。峯巒出沒，雲霧顯晦，不裝巧趣，皆得天真。³²¹

Like other literati and monastic writers discussed above, Mi Fu employed the term *zhen* to describe a painting, but he did so as a parallel to the term natural (天 as a form of 天然). Mi Fu

after for their painting skills. Beyond Su Shi, some of the other individuals active in these discourses included, Li Gonglin 李公麟 (1049–1106), Mi Fu 米芾 (1052-1107), and Wang Shen 王誥 (ca. 1048- ca 1103).

³¹⁸ Many contemporary scholars have written on the subject of the Song literati and their roles in the artistic movements of the period. See Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting*, chapter 1; Powers, "Discourses of Representation;" Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed*, 261-309.

³¹⁹ The most in-depth examination to-date of this shift within the evaluation of art has been done by Martin J. Powers in "Discourses of Representation."

³²⁰ Translation by Martin J. Powers, "Discourses," 102.

³²¹ Mi Fu 米芾, *The History of Painting* 畫史, in ZGHLLB, 653.

was not only identifying these two words with the qualities he saw in Dong Yuan's painting, but also with the artist himself. Dong Yuan's work is genuine and natural because the artist is authentic to himself—he is “a man of character” and thus is un-swayed by outside forces. Like the monk Huanglong, his *zhen*, according to Mi Fu, is authentic.

This shift within the artistic trends of the period cannot be divorced from the political and social context of the Song dynasty. The late Tang (mid-8th century-907 C.E) had seen the erosion of the aristocracy. In the reunification of the country under Emperor Taizu 宋太祖 (960-976 C.E.), inherited status was no longer the determining factor in the assignment of political office. The implementation of a comprehensive merit-based and anonymous testing system for government service allowed individuals from various backgrounds to participate in the administration of government policies and regulations.³²²

This expansion of the civil service selection process had wide-ranging effects. Martin Powers has suggested that “a network of evolving social tensions” allowed for the development of alternatives to “traditional aristocratic discourses.”³²³ These developed as the hegemonic control the aristocracy and the imperial court held was confronted by an array of diverse views from the new participants in the government, the scholar-officials. This is evidenced in both Dong You and Deng Chun's references to the imperial court and its culture. The scholar-officials challenged the scale of values established by the inherited elite of former times, and as persisted in courtly decorum or displays of wealth and opulence. In painting and painting theory, this challenge was reflected in the rejection of similitude as a necessary quality in painting and a new

³²² Peter Bol, “*This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 36-58, E. A. Kracke, “Family Vs. Merit in Chinese Civil Service Examinations under the Empire,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 10, no. 2 (Sept., 1947): 103-23.. There were some limitations placed on who could sit for the civil service exams, namely merchants, artists, and clerics. There was not a consensus on these exclusions as some felt artists and business people should be allowed to participate in the examinations. See Bol, “*This Culture of Ours*,” 175.

³²³ Powers, “Discourses,” 94.

emphasis on the expression of an artist's mood, characteristics, and identity. Similitude was not entirely abandoned, but it was no longer a necessary goal for artists.

The monastic community was a vital part of this same social, political, and artistic environment. Like the civil officials, the higher-ranking members of the institution had earned their positions through hard work, concentrated study, and diligence. Many clerics were not only educated in similar ways, but came from comparable socio-economic backgrounds and were often a part of the same social networks. Further, the Song-era administrative regulations placed on temples coupled with decreased government funding, afforded greater opportunities for monks to interact with civil officials. These encounters would have occurred as temple officials submitted paperwork or fulfilled other bureaucratic responsibilities, through fundraising campaigns for temples, requests for inscriptions and poems from scholars, or even as civil officials spent the night at temples during their travels. Monastic communities were clearly aware of the changes occurring within artistic discourse at that time, and participated in the evolving discourse drawing upon their own tradition of logic and imagery.

The Naturalness of Gesture, a Quotidian Exchange

While the shift toward naturalness was tied into the “authenticity” of the artist, it was also conceived as having implications for the ways figures were pictorially realized as illustrated by a passage written by Su Shi.

Portraiture is based on the same principle as physiognomy. The goal is to find the person's nature (天); and to do it you must secretly observe his mannerisms when he is together with friends and colleagues. Nowadays, [portraitists] make their subjects dress up in robes and caps, making them sit and pose, having them concentrate on a single

object causing them to compose their expressions and freeze. How then could his nature ever show through?³²⁴

傳神與相一道, 欲得其人之天, 法當於衆中陰察之. 今乃使人具衣冠坐, 注視一物, 彼歛容自持, 豈復見其天乎?³²⁵

Su Shi employs the term *tian* 天 as “nature” much in the same way that Mi Fu in the previously discussed quote used it to reference “natural,” to indicate what is unique to the individual sitter. According to him, this cannot be found through the stateliness of formal portraits as evidenced by his reference to “robe and cap” 衣冠, portraits of civil bureaucrats in which the sitter would be dressed in the clothes appropriate to his office.³²⁶ They paralleled monk portraits as they not only depicted sitters of similar socio-economic status, but also relied upon a shared set of conventional markers, such as clothes or sitter’s posture, to identify that status.

Su Shi’s idea of “natural” stands in opposition to artifice, but he further links this ideal to an individual’s idiosyncratic mannerisms. We can surmise that by “mannerisms” Su Shi means a person’s movements, gestures, and facial expressions seeing as his critique of portraits comprises a list of the ways the process itself stifles these elements of the sitter: one has to “sit and pose,” “concentrate on a single object,” “and “compose their expression and freeze.” What these criticisms share with some of the Buddhist *zan* is that portraits do not account for the ways individuals move their bodies. Movement and gesture then are able to reveal a person’s nature, what is “authentic” to that person. In this respect, Su Shi’s argument against formal portraiture

³²⁴ Many scholars have translated this passage by Su Shi. My translation was done in consultation with both Ronald Egan’s version found in *Word, Image, and Deed*, 282 and Peter C. Sturman’s version “In the Realm of Naturalness: Problems of Self-Imaging by the Northern Sung Literati,” *Arts of the Sung and Yuan* ed. Maxwell K. Hearn et al. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 169.

³²⁵ Su Shi, *Chuan shen ji* 傳神記 in ZGHLLB, 454.

³²⁶ Portraits of officials were referred to as “robe and cap” paintings 衣冠畫.

mirrors Xie He's *qiyun* principle of painting, if it is understood as interior qualities manifest through a person's body and movements.

The differences suggested by Su Shi can be seen in a comparison of a portrait of the Linji monk, Lanqi Daolong 蘭溪道隆 (Jpn: Rankei Doryu, 1213-1278) and an early twelfth-century handscroll attributed to Qiao Zhongchang 喬仲常 (fl. early twelfth century) entitled, *Illustration to the Second Prose Poem on the Red Cliff* 赤壁圖 (figs. 2.73 and 3.13). The portrait of Lanqi Daolong displays all of the qualities that Su Shi railed against in the above passage: the monk is in his ceremonial attire with accoutrements as the equivalent of a civil official's "robes and caps," he is seated and posed on a chair, and his eyes look off toward the right of the viewer fixed on something outside of the picture plane.³²⁷ According to Su Shi, Lanqi Daolong's "nature" could never show through with this type of naturalistic image. Conversely, Lanqi Daolong and other Chan monks would say that there is no way the image could possess any "truth" at all.

Although the Qiao Zhongchang painting as a narrative handscroll served a very different function than that of Lanqi Daolong's memorial portrait, it does suggest the new scale of value for pictorial naturalism occurring in the late Northern Song period. As such, many modern scholars have regarded it as representative of those changes. The painting is based on the second of Su Shi's two prose-poems 賦 recounting trips (real or imagined) with friends to Red Cliff, the site of a historical battle in 208 C.E.³²⁸ This detail depicts the author standing in his front yard with his wife and child in the doorway to their home. The setting is the small town of Huangzhou

³²⁷ This image is discussed more fully in Chapter Two.

³²⁸ The second work is known as "Later Odes to Red Cliff" 後赤壁賦. See *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, ed. Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1986), 8. For an English translation, see Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed*, 245-6.

黃州 in present-day Hubei province where Su Shi was posted in 1080 after he was demoted as a result of his trial for treason and where he was living when he wrote the prose-poems.³²⁹

In this scene, as per the story, Su Shi has returned home to find libations for the boating trip with his friends. Aware of his proclivities, his wife had squirreled away a jug of wine, which she pulls out for him to share with his friends. The artist's rendering of the poet-official reveals much. First, his robes are loosely tied and slightly disheveled. With his left sleeve bunched up at the shoulder, one imagines he was afraid of dirtying himself with the raw fish dangling in his hand. In his right hand, he holds the jug of wine (fig. 3.14). His deportment is that of a relaxed man, one who is not worried about his appearance. His body language tells us something further about him. While his torso is faced toward the front gate, his face and his right foot are turned back toward his family standing in the front doorway. This simple and seemingly casual stance suggests an interior conflict: Su Shi wants to spend time with friends, but his wife's compassionate knowledge of his habits pulls at his heart. Rather than a claimed likeness to the actual man Su Shi, the naturalness of the depicted figure's body language is intended to reference the man's personality and integrity.

A term that might be applied to both the qualities of the depicted figure of Su Shi and the artist's techniques in rendering that figure is *pingdan* 平淡. This word's eleventh-century usage reflected a range of meanings, including "unrefined" and "rough," but it is commonly translated

³²⁹ Jerome Silbergeld, "Back to the Red Cliff: Reflections on the Narrative Mode in Early Literati Landscape Painting," *Ars Orientalis* XXV (1995): 22. Su Shi's most famous political and legal problem began with his arrest in 1079. He was charged with various crimes against the government and the Emperor, all of which related to his writing. A full account of the trial and Su's responses to it were compiled in a book entitled, *Crow Terrace Poetry Trial* 烏臺詩案 attributed to Peng Jiuwan 朋九萬 in the early twelfth century. "Crow Terrace" refers to the name of the prison where Su Shi was held during the trial. For a discussion of his political problems during the Yuanyou era and his earlier trial, see Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed*, 46-53, 86-107, 392 fn. 77.

into English as “plain” or “bland.”³³⁰ Martin Powers has argued a more historically accurate translation is “understatement,” which corresponds with Peter Sturman’s evaluation that regardless of its particular semantic subtlety in any given context, the underlying similarity to its usage is that it refers to “a lack of artifice.”³³¹ The calligrapher and painter Mi Fu often used this term in discussing the aesthetics of both painting and calligraphy. In offering further accolades to the art of Dong Yuan, he wrote: “Dong Yuan’s [work] has such understatement/*pingdan* and naturalness, there was no painting like this in Tang times.”³³² For literati of the period, the naturalism of a painted figure was a secondary concern to the lack of artifice or affectation in the figure’s gestures, movements, and expressions.

As is well established in art historical studies of the Northern Song period, this shift in the viewing of pictorial imagery correlated with the values championed in literary theories of the early Song *guwen* 古文 movement.³³³ This movement can be characterized as both a literary style that rejected ostentatiousness and superficiality in prose in favor of simplicity and directness and as a broader set of ethics surrounding learning, conduct, and cultural heritage.³³⁴ In this latter respect, the discourse around *guwen* was often tied into the politics of statecraft, the roles and moral standards for civil officials, and the responsibility of the government toward the

³³⁰ Peter Charles Sturman, “Mi Youren and the Inherited Literati Tradition: Dimensions of Ink-Play,” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University 1989), 111.

³³¹ Sturman, “Mi Youren,” 111 and Powers, “Discourses,” 101.

³³² 董源平淡天真多。唐無此品。 See Bush, *The Chinese Literati*, 72, 135.

³³³ There are numerous translations for “*guwen*,” including classical prose movement and plain style movement. Using Albert Welter’s gloss of *wen* as “culture and literary activity,” a less succinct translation might be a “classical literary and cultural movement.” See Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*, 163.

³³⁴ Several contemporary scholars have examined *guwen* from a number of perspectives. For its history and political implications, see Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 22-27; 160-175. For *guwen* proponents’ attitudes toward Buddhism, see Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*, 163-172. Ronald Egan has addressed *guwen* in relation to the calligraphy and painting of Su Shi in *Word, Image, Deed*, 261-281. Susan Bush provides a good summary of how *guwen* values were important across poetry, calligraphy, and painting during the Song dynasty in *The Chinese Literati*, 5. Martin J. Powers has looked at its relationship to the arts of the mid-Northern Song period in “Discourse,” 101-102. Yu-shih Chen has analyzed differences in the literary aesthetics of major *guwen* figures from the Tang and Song periods in *Images and Ideas in Chinese Classical Prose: Studies of Four Masters* (Stanford, C.A.: Stanford University Press, 1988).

people. As a literary style, the roots of this movement are found in the earlier Tang dynasty, specifically with the writings and values of the civil-official and writer Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824). However, Yu-shih Chen has argued there is a crucial difference between the *guwen* supporters of these two eras: Tang writers were interested in what was extraordinary and uncommon about people and life, while those in the Song were focused on the commonalities and universalities between people and their experiences with life.³³⁵ In this context, the image of Su Shi in Qiao Zhongchang's painting resonates as the depiction of an average man torn by a very mundane quandary: spend time with friends or with the woman and family he loves.

In Chan literature of the Song-era, there was a similar value placed on naturalness, informality, and directness. This is seen most clearly with the “recorded sayings” genre, which developed in the early eleventh century. As mentioned earlier, *yulü* references a monk's lectures to his monastic community, his private conversations with students, or any of his other significant oral communications, which were gathered together as his “recorded sayings” to be added to his biography for inclusion in one of the lineage histories 傳燈錄. Separate volumes of a monk's verbal teachings were also published independently from lineage collections.³³⁶ These works were written in the vernacular and were styled as accurate records of a monk's words “secretly” recorded by his students. Although the works of Song dynasty monks are included in this genre, it was the *yulü* of earlier Tang masters that were most often used as teaching tools for Song clerics, and which have proven the most popular across history.

Many of the “encounter dialogues” 應機對答 in these collections, exchanges between a monk and one of his students, feature vivid language and emphasize seemingly spontaneous

³³⁵ Chen, *Images and Ideas in Chinese Classical Prose*, 111-116.

³³⁶ The parameters of this genre are debated by modern scholars as is the precise development of these works as a body. On these subjects see Welter, *Record of Linji*, 54-53; 64-72 and Judith A. Berling, "Bringing the Buddha Down to Earth: Notes on the Emergence Of "Yu-Lu" As a Buddhist Genre," *History of Religions* 27, no. 1 (August 1987): 74-75.

physical interactions between the participants. One such example is found in the *Record of Linji* 臨濟錄, a collection of sayings of Linji Yixuan 臨濟義玄 (d. 866), the patriarch of the Linji lineage.³³⁷ In this encounter, the monk has just ascended the platform in the Dharma Hall (teaching hall) and has begun his sermon to the temple community.

“my fellow compatriots, within your lump of red flesh there is a true man with no rank, constantly entering and exiting the openings of your face. Any of you who haven’t figured this out yet, look! Look!”

At that time, a monk asked: “Who is this true man of no rank?”

Linji got down off his meditation seat, grabbed the monk and said: “Speak! Speak!”

The monk tried to say something.

Linji let go of him and said: “The true man with no rank—what a dried lump of shit!” He then returned to his quarters.³³⁸

汝等諸人。赤肉團上有一無位真人。常從向汝諸人面門出入。未證擬者看看。時有僧出問。如何是無位真人。師下禪床把往云。道道。其僧擬議。師托開云。無位真人是什麼乾屎橛。便歸方丈。³³⁹

Linji opens his discussion with a question delivered emphatically to his audience. Before progressing further, he is presented with a seemingly unscripted question from a monk in attendance. His response is as much physical as it is verbal: he descends the teaching platform, walks over to the monk, and grabs him while decisively issuing another question in the monk’s

³³⁷ The full title of this work, which references its status as a *yulü*, is *Recorded Sayings of the Great Master Huizhao of Linji in Zhenzhou* 鎮州臨濟慧照公大宗師語錄.

³³⁸ Translation, Albert Welter, *Linji lu*, 88.

³³⁹ T. 47, n.1985: 496c10-c14. This is a version of the *Linji lu* as originally published in 1080 by the Dongchan temple 東禪寺 in Fuzhou 福州, Fujian province. It is considered the standard version. This is one of several versions of this text that appeared in the Song period. Albert Welter has argued that it may not be the closest to any original account of this exchange as it has more florid language and physical interactions than other copies. However, as it was published and circulated in the Song dynasty, we can assume that it reflects Song dynasty trends in Chan literature. See Welter, *Linji lu*, 81-90, 195 fn. 12.

face. Lacking a satisfactory response, Linji proceeds to denigrate with harsh words (“dried lump of shit”) the very thing he asked about that instigated this exchange.

There is little formality to this encounter, unlike what might be expected between the highest ranked member of a temple and an un-named monk in the audience. All of the *yulü*, whether of a past master or contemporary teacher feature this informality, which is at odds with monastic manuals of the period that reflect highly codified teaching interactions between abbots and monks, even as students were exhorted to openly speak in these encounters.³⁴⁰ These recorded sayings, which were used by Song masters as teaching tools, were styled as highly physical and spontaneous exchanges in which a teacher’s gestures and body language were as important, if not more so, than his words. There is little emphasis placed on religious protocol or on discussion of sutras, issues of ceremonial devotional practices, or even primary Buddhist figures, such as buddhas or bodhisattvas.³⁴¹

Encounter dialogues, especially those that featured a teacher’s brutal words and actions were associated primarily with the Chan Linji lineage, but the recorded utterances of monks of other lineages were also compiled together for publication. An example is found in the enlightenment of the Caodong monk Zhenxie Qingliao 真歇清了 (1088-1151), who was the older Dharma (lineage) brother of the previously mentioned Hongzhi. While living at a temple under the leadership of the monk Danxia Zichun 丹霞子淳 (1064-1117), Qingliao entered the abbot’s rooms 入室 to talk with him. Danxia Zichun immediately asked the monk: “How was your self before the empty eon?” Before Qingliao had a chance to respond, the abbot slapped him and his

³⁴⁰ These teacher-student encounters are also discussed in Chapter Two. For an example of the type of ritualization of these encounters, see the *Rules of Purity for the Chan Monastery* 禪苑清規, compiled in 1103 by the Chan Buddhist monk Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗曠 (?-1107?); XZJ 63 1245. Some of the many modern scholars to have written on this aspect of *yulü* include Berling, “Bringing the Buddha Down to Earth,” 56-88; Foulk, “Myth, Ritual,” 153; Sharf, “How to Think with Chan *Gong’an*,” 232; Schlütter, *Zen*, 73-74; and Welter, *Linji lu*, especially chapters 3 and 4.

³⁴¹ Berling, “Bringing the Buddha Down,” 61.

enlightenment was realized.³⁴² The speech and the physicality of Danxia Zichun and the monk Linji both appear unmediated by religious protocols or social expectations.

As far as I am aware there are no extant images that depict the physical brutality of these encounters, but paintings of historical meetings between Chan monks and lay people offer a sense of the importance of body language and naturalness encoded in the textual encounter dialogues. This subject matter became especially important in the thirteenth century, as there was a greater emphasis on systematizing these types of stories in the “recorded sayings” genre.³⁴³ One such example of these “Chan encounter” paintings 禪會圖 is a thirteenth-century hanging scroll entitled, *Discussion Between Mazu Daoyi and the Recluse Pang* (fig. 3.15).³⁴⁴ Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (709–788) was the “founder” of the Hongzhou School 洪州宗, which several generations later became the Linji branch associated with Linji Xuanyi discussed above.³⁴⁵ He was most known for his focus on teaching “ordinary mind” and with the phrase “ordinary mind is the way” 平常心是道. His conversation partner and student Pang Yun 龐蘊居士 (740-888) was a layperson highly skilled and adept with Buddhist teachings, who was often linked in the Song period to the layman Vimalakīrti and his debates with the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*.³⁴⁶ In this painting both master and lay student are depicted seated on rocks in a landscape setting. With a relaxed demeanor, Mazu Daoyi has his shoes off and one leg

³⁴² 一日入室。震問如何是空劫以前自己。師擬進語。震與一掌。師豁然開悟。“Recorded Sayings of Chan Master Zhenxie Qingliao 真歇清了禪師語錄, XZJ. 71. 1426. 777c15-c16. This passage is discussed in Schlütter, *Zen*, 99.

³⁴³ Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen*, 167.

³⁴⁴ Fontein and Hickman, cat. 17. The Northern Song painter Li Gonglin 李公麟 (1049–1106) was one of the first artists associated with these types of paintings. An-Yi Pan deals extensively with the artist, his associations with the Chan school, and the history of the stories of Pang Yun, including the layman’s friendship with Danxia Tianran, who was discussed earlier. See An-yi Pan, *Painting Faith: Li Gonglin and Northern Song Buddhist Culture*, (Boston: Brill, 2007), 136-146.

³⁴⁵ One of Mazu Daoyi’s students was reputed to have gone to Lingyan temple in the eighth century to preach. See Chapter One.

³⁴⁶ Records of their exchanges and history are found in both Mazu Daoyi’s recorded sayings collections 馬祖道一禪師廣錄 and Pang’s 龐居士語錄. For Mazu Daoyi see XZJ. 69, n. 1321 0004c13. For Pang see XZJ. 69, n. 1336.

up in a modified *līlāsana* pose.³⁴⁷ His hand is raised and he is pointing at Pang as a gesture of teaching. This gesture in combination with Mazu Daoyi's informal comportment presents an image in keeping with Su Shi's proposals for depicting an individual's "nature."³⁴⁸

In a similar fashion, the Lingyan temple figures depict *luohan* with the deportment of Chan masters at ease while debating or teaching. Several of the figures, including sculptures #27E, #33E, #34E, and #18W also feature the same gesture as Mazu Daoyi (fig. 3.16). The figures do not have the stiff formality of extant abbot portraits. Instead, through their gestures, mannerisms, and facial expressions they too correspond with Su Shi's proposals. Although the sculptures have no actual referent and represent *luohan*, Buddhist beings who are outside of historical time and space, the discursive context of the period renders them as "true" or "authentic" images. These images, in other words, were informed by the same discursive practices that were current among both intellectuals and leading monks in the late Northern Song period.

Conclusion

The Lingyan temple sculptures can be understood through their naturalistic style as being claim-based, but not argument-driven. There is no one particular "message" or even a comprehensive set of arguments that are being proffered through the naturalism of their rendering.³⁴⁹ However, numerous claims are produced out of pictorially naturalistic images, such

³⁴⁷ Although only one shoe is visible, that it is in front of him is most likely a reference to his status as an esteemed monk as seen with monks' portraits in the Song period.

³⁴⁸ Another comparable image is a thirteenth-century painting by Ma Gongxian entitled, *The Chan Master Yaoshan Weiyuan in Conversation with Governor Li Ao*. See Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen*, 146-7.

³⁴⁹ For a brief discussion of the distinctions of argument, as opposed to persuasion, see J. Anthony Blair, "The Possibility and Actuality of Visual Arguments," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 33, no. 1 (summer 1996): 23-39.

as likeness, objectivity, or authenticity, which were key elements in eleventh-century discourse on the “truth” of imagery. Created during a pivotal moment in Chinese art history and in a context of changing institutional relationships, the *luohan* sculptures reflect the debates and critiques surrounding these claims. For a Song dynasty educated person, “truth” was complex, flexible, and laden with associations.

For monastic and lay viewers, the artistic mode of the sculptures may have been understood as bringing the legendary figures of the *luohan* “to life” as real monks, similar to those in their own communities. As Norman Bryson has noted, “because of the prejudice of the natural attitude, meanings that are found enjoy the privilege of trust; no authority has thrust these connoted meanings on the viewer, no process of training or education seems to claim them.”³⁵⁰ In other words, the naturalism of the figures appears neutral, unmarked by religious agenda or otherwise. It claims that *luohan* are just ordinary monks or, given the religious and social context, it is a claim that ordinary monks are *luohan*.

For some viewers, the sculptures might have provoked consideration on Chan denial of imagery and text and the ability of images to represent anything at all. As the artistic discourse on pictorial naturalism shifted in the late eleventh century, other viewers would see the mannerisms and relaxed deportments of the figures through the lens of a newer focus on naturalness and the authenticity of individuals. At the same time, those familiar with the Chan “recorded sayings” literature, which was popular in the Northern and Southern Song periods, would see the relationship between the seemingly casual and interactive teaching methods of Chan masters and the gestures and relaxed body language of the *luohan* figures.

To have produced this set of sculptures at this particular moment in the history of art, the Lingyan Temple leaders and its surrounding community were not just responding to trends

³⁵⁰ Bryson, *Word and Image*, 17.

current in society-at-large—they were participating in them. Naturalism was a point of convergence for issues ranging from the role of the visual form to the agency of the individual, issues that were not exclusive to any one community of people. A viewer, whether a monk, a lay believer, or interested arts patron, would recognize in the sculptures an awareness of these larger issues, regardless of their personal stance on pictorial naturalism. Through this artistic mode, the Lingyan temple sculptures were able to engage with the spectrum of their educated viewership, a viewership that was crucial for the temple's sustainability.

Chapter Four

Experiences of “Seeing:” Song dynasty Viewers and Religious Imagery

In the previous chapters, the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple were discussed both through their status as art historical objects and within the Song-era discursive practices around naturalism. This chapter turns in a different direction to examine the visual practices of educated people in “seeing” religious imagery during the tenth through thirteenth centuries. While the naturalism of the Lingyan temple sculptures may have provoked an arts savvy Song dynasty individual to consider the “truth” presented by the works, socially and religiously constructed protocols and expectations for viewing shaped the behaviors considered appropriate and rewarding with respect to religious imagery. In other words, “seeing” religious objects was experiential.

“Seeing,” however, is not a neutral activity, but is an experience informed by education, fashion, cultural practice, and many other factors. As in other advanced art cultures, Song artists made presumptions about the viewer’s expectations, institutional expectations, and general considerations of decorum.³⁵¹ Some expectations varied from person to person, but others were shared by broad sectors of population. All of these considerations can be thought of as the

³⁵¹ Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 40; E.H. Gombrich, *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, vol. 2. (London: Phaidon Press, 1985), 7-9.

visualities of the Song period—the artistic practices, assumptions about the role/s of images, and the expectations of viewers regarding the representation of the visual world.

To probe the logic underlying these visualities we need to trace the way the experience of looking was described or, to borrow a phrase from W.J.T. Mitchell, we need to “show seeing” in order to de-naturalize the vision of the early modern Chinese viewer.³⁵² We are fortunate to have a broad range of texts that discuss the act of viewing or the protocols involved in it: from Buddhist scriptures on the protocols of consecration, the role of *luohan*, and the production of imagery to eyewitness accounts of the devotional practices around these sacred monks and travel literature 游記, poems, and prose describing encounters with religious art; not to mention essays on art and art theory. The breadth of these works attest to the importance of the experiences tied into viewing during the Song dynasty.

The first half of this chapter investigates the experiences of looking for viewers who approached religious objects, such as the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures, with expectations of a response from the represented divinity. Focusing on the visual practices of clerics and laity around *luohan* imagery, this section suggests the location of an object in a larger visual program, its consecrated status, and the religious protocols for “looking” were all factors in the viewing experience, and all were predicated on the expectation of a particular kind of response. Religious art, as Michael Baxandall has suggested, does not simply indicate subject matter, but “that the pictures existed to meet institutional ends, to help with specific intellectual and spiritual activities.”³⁵³ The process of viewing might be highly personal, as with individuals approaching specific objects with the hope of an equally specific response, or involve a collective body, as was the case with clerics.

³⁵² W.J.T. Mitchell, “Showing Seeing: A Critique of Visual Culture,” in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 99.

³⁵³ Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 40.

The second half of this chapter addresses the viewing practices of those who approached religious images as works of art. Song art critics regularly included this type of imagery in their discussions, evaluating religious images as they did other genres of art. Yet, “looking” was not without controversy. The art critic Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (fl. 11th c.) felt the need to defend the practice of viewing religious icons at home in an essay published in the 1070s.³⁵⁴ For him, as with others whose work is examined, viewing was an experience to be shared and was defined by respect for the skills of the artist and materiality of the object.

The diversity of opinions implied by Guo’s essay was due, in part, to the expansion of places where an individual could view religious art, such as in temples, public markets, restaurants, and in private homes. Further, the increase in travel and sightseeing during Song times widened an individual’s opportunities to see artworks. As suggested in this section, similar factors were at stake, in many cases, regardless of whether or not the artwork was religious in subject matter or whether it was viewed at home, in a temple, or while traveling. Entries in travel journals, such as the civil official Lu You’s *Journey into Shu*, suggest some educated viewers approached “looking” through the lens of skepticism and authenticated their experience by personally verifying critical information about an artwork and by situating themselves and their opinions on it within a larger intellectual community through publication.

Neither of these approaches, however, can be understood as fixed viewing strategies. Some individuals, such as the poet and statesman Su Shi, felt comfortable viewing religious art through both lenses. “Seeing” was not a singular experience during the Song dynasty. The multiplicity of factors involved in shaping these encounters allowed religious images, like the

³⁵⁴ Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛, “On Collecting Icons”論收藏聖像, in *Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞誌, j. 1, pp. 15-6. Reprinted in Alexander Coburn Soper, *Kuo Jo-Hsu's Experiences in Painting (T'u-Hua Chien-Wen Chih): An Eleventh Century History of Chinese Painting Together with the Chinese Text in Facsimile*, trans. and annotated Alexander Coburn Soper (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1951).

eleventh-century *luohan* sculptures at Lingyan temple, to encompass the concerns of a broad audience. Through the eyes of the viewing public, these sculptures were neither solely religious objects nor works of art.³⁵⁵ Instead, the experiences of “seeing” these sculptures were multifaceted, reflecting a diverse and complex society.

Religious Protocols and Expectations

“Seeing” in Banzhou Hall

A first consideration in examining the experience of “looking” is to identify how the location and physical setting of a seen object impacts that experience. In other words, encountering an object endowed with religious significance in the sacred space of a temple surrounded by similarly sacred objects will shape a viewing experience in ways different than encountering that same object in someone’s home or in a marketplace.

With the Lingyan temple sculptures, we are fortunate to have some information about their original viewing space. As discussed in Chapter Two, the sculptures most likely were originally two sets of sixteen *luohan* figures installed in 1066 in Banzhou Hall 般舟殿, a hall no longer extant. Banzhou Hall was more than just a space for viewing the sculptures, it needed to accommodate a variety of people and functions at that time: lay believers visiting for individual worship, clerics and laity participating in larger ceremonies, and people interested in viewing the sculptures themselves. Unlike paintings that could be hung up temporarily for specific ceremonies, these sculptures were permanently installed along all three walls of the original hall.

³⁵⁵ James Elkins has suggested that objects do not exist in isolation nor are they static, but constantly change depending on the moment and the viewer. Elkins, “The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing,” in *Religion, Art, and Visual Culture: A Cross-Cultural Reader*, ed. S. Brent Plate (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 40-46.

There are no known Song dynasty accounts of activities in this hall, but we can deduce facets of viewers' experience nonetheless.³⁵⁶ First, the central platforms indicate this hall was not used solely for the worship of *luohan*. This was not unusual for these types of spaces during this period. Although sets of the Sixteen *Luohan* were produced in the earlier tenth century, during the Song dynasty halls were specifically built or designated for *luohan* images. Guo Daiheng 郭黛姮 has argued there were two types of *luohan* halls in this period: those located in the second story of a temple's main mountain gate and those in separate buildings to the side of the main temple complex.³⁵⁷

While Banzhou Hall fits neither of the types identified by Guo, eyewitness accounts of Song-era *luohan* halls reflect similarly diverse visual programs. While in China on pilgrimage in 1072, the Japanese monk Jōjin 成尋 (1011–1081) saw many sets of *luohan* figures in the various temples he visited. As an example, in the upper pavilion of the Great Hall 大殿高閣 at the imperially-sponsored temple Xiangguo temple 相國寺 in the capital, he encountered a set of five-hundred life-size figures flanking a central sculpture of Śākyamuni.³⁵⁸ In the latter half of the thirteenth century, while visiting Jingci temple 淨慈寺 in the West Lake area 西湖 of the Southern Song capital Lin'an 臨安 (present-day Hangzhou 杭州, Zhejiang province 浙江), the civil official Liu Yiqing 劉一清 (fl. late 13th-early 14th c.) saw five hundred *luohan* figures

³⁵⁶ We do know that Banzhou hall was not the primary lecture hall (Dharma hall) during this period, as that was Hall of Scriptures 獻殿 located directly south. The Hall of Scriptures is currently named Jeweled Hall of the Great Hero 大雄寶殿.

³⁵⁷ Guo Daiheng 郭黛姮, *The History of Ancient Chinese Architecture: Architecture of the Song, Liao, Jin, and XiXia* 中国古代建筑史: 宋, 辽, 金, 西夏建筑, vol. 3 (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, 2003), 262.

³⁵⁸ Jōjin 成尋, *Diary of a Pilgrimage to Tiantai and Wutai Mountains* 參天台五臺山記, in *San Tendai Godaisan Ki: Kōhon Narabini Kenkyū* 參天台五臺山記校本並に研究, annotated Hirabayashi Fumio 平林文雄 (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1978), 456.

surrounding an image of a Thousand-Armed Guanyin.³⁵⁹ A figure of Guanyin is also found with a set of sixteen Song-era *luohan* sculptures in the East Tower 東樓 of the upper portion of Qinglian temple 青蓮寺 in Shanxi province.³⁶⁰ The visual program of Banzhou Hall with its *luohan* figures and other sculptures would not have surprised educated persons in Song times.

Although some temple halls were reserved for monastic use only, many were open for lay worship and for cleric-led ceremonies. The experience of viewing the *luohan* figures in Banzhou Hall would vary depending on the viewer (lay person or cleric) and the activity. For practices centered on individual *luohan*, the three central buddha sculptures would occupy the space either behind or to the side of the viewer, depending upon the chosen figure (figs. 2.9-2.11). In ceremonies that required engagement with each of the *luohan* in turn, the worshipper would find the main buddha figures consistently in her/his peripheral vision as she/he moved from sculpture to sculpture. Likewise, as a believer circumambulated the three central figures, one after another of the *luohan* figures would appear on his/her left side.³⁶¹ This assembly of *luohan* would appear to accompany the worshipper throughout her/his practices. As all of the various sacred figures shared the same physical and visual space, none could be completely visually segregated while worship was taking place.

Within the group's animated ambience some of the figures were sculpted so as to appear to be engaged with viewers, creating a more intimate experience. *Luohan* #16W faces forward, his head up, and his mouth slightly open as if just beginning to speak (fig. 4.1). The large pupils of the inlaid eyes give the impression the figure is staring at something. When a viewer is

³⁵⁹ His visit took place between 1268-9. According to Liu, this hall was to the side of the Merit of the Ancestors courtyard 祖宗功德院 and was in the shape of the character *tian* 田. Liu Yiqing 劉一清, "The *Luohan* [Sculptures] of Jingci Temple" 淨慈寺羅漢 in *Anecdotes of Qiantang* 錢塘遺事. SKQS, j. 1, pp. 9b-10a.

³⁶⁰ The upper temple is often referred to by the name Fuyan Chan monastery 福嚴禪院. This *luohan* sculptural set is discussed in Chapter Two.

³⁶¹ For a discussion on ceremonial circumambulation (Skt: *pradaksinā*), see Stanley K. Abe, "Art and Practice in a Fifth-Century Chinese Buddhist Cave Temple," *Ars Orientalis* 20 (1990): 10-11.

standing in front of it, *luohan* appears to stare directly at that person. Liu Yiqing noted a sculpture in his visit to Jinci temple, which reflected a similar interaction with viewers. He described the figure of Aśvinī, one of the Five Hundred *luohan*, as “gazing at the people while smiling” 目覩人而笑.³⁶² From this description, we can surmise the figure was sculpted with its eyes directed toward where viewers would stand, thus appearing to be personally engaged with them.³⁶³

This was not a random outcome to the artistic form of the sculpture. The Tang dynasty monk-artist Weize 惟則 indicated artists were well aware of the impact of their works when he wrote:

Images are a powerful means of persuading others to goodness. For this reason, we must create them in great numbers. When one first looks [at a Buddha image], it seems like a stern father. Next one finds that one’s mind is calm. Then one perfects the skill of contemplation, and in the end all is thusness, a great expanse.³⁶⁴

常言像是生善之強緣. 不得不多立. 初之觀也如對嚴君. 次則其心不亂. 中則觀門自成. 末則如如焉. 蕩蕩焉.³⁶⁵

The architectural space of Banzhou hall along with its visual program were factors in shaping the experience of “looking” at the *luohan* sculptures. However, as demonstrated by Weize’s comments, sculptural works themselves were a part of this process, transforming “looking” into a personal experience that held the possibility of inspiring the viewer toward action, toward “goodness.”

³⁶² Liu, “The *Luohan* [Sculptures] of Jinci Temple,” j. 1, 9a. SKQS.

³⁶³ John Kieschnick has noted that buddha and bodhisattva figures were also sculpted to appear to look directly down at viewers thus fostering a sense of personal engagement. John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 66.

³⁶⁴ Translation by Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism*, 65-6.

³⁶⁵ *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳. T50, n. 2061: 880c07-c19.

Like their Christian counterparts in medieval and early modern Europe, Buddhist images in China—whether the life-size Lingyan temple *luohan* sculptures, hanging scrolls, or other types of objects—were simply objects, a collection of materials and craftsmanship, until they consecrated with religious power.³⁶⁶ Consecration helped to define the ontological status of the personage or deity and established expectations for interactions with the icons. A primary method for consecrating objects, the “eye-opening” 開眼 ceremony, was widely practiced in China by the sixth century.³⁶⁷ Officiated by a monk, this process animated an object through codified procedures that allowed the object to become the “locus” 坐 for the depicted deity.³⁶⁸ Invested with a “responsive power” 靈驗, the object was conceptually transformed into an icon 靈像, a status that reflected its efficacy, thereby making it worthy of devotion.³⁶⁹

Two types of procedures consecrated an object. For paintings and sculptures, painting (“dotting”) the eyes of the figure was the act that called the divinity into the object.³⁷⁰ In another

³⁶⁶ While many scholars have addressed the subject of the consecration of objects in the European Christian context, David Freedberg looks at this issue and the power afforded objects through the insertion of relics through the lens of viewer response in *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 27-37; 82-98.

³⁶⁷ Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism*, 60.

³⁶⁸ *Yiqie rulai anxiang sanmei yiqi* 一切如來安像三昧儀軌經, T. 21, n.1418: 0933c.21. This monastic ritual manual was translated into Chinese at the end of the tenth century by the Indian monk Dānapāla. See T. 21, n. 1227: 148c. As far as I am aware there has not been a full study done on it, its circulation in the medieval period, or its practical use in consecration ceremonies. For discussion on this text, see Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism*, 61.

³⁶⁹ Helmut Brinker, *Secrets of the Sacred: Empowering Buddhist Images in Clear, in Code, and in Cache* (Lawrence, Kansas and Seattle, Washington: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas in association with University of Washington Press, 2011), 10-11. Wu Hung has suggested that not all icons were equal in the medieval period, arguing that after the mid-eighth century different types of icons were distinguished based on their ontological statuses. While divinities were present in some images making them worthy of devotion, other images were “meta-images” in which the depicted figure was not present. See Wu Hung, “Rethinking Liu Sahe: The Creation of a Buddhist Saint and the Invention of a ‘Miraculous Image’,” *Orientalism* 27, no. 10 (1996): 32-43.

³⁷⁰ This process was not limited to Buddhist images. Audrey Spiro has argued that in at least one instance, the famous painter Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (ca. 345-406) in discussing “dotting the eyes” was referencing a Daoist talisman. See Audrey Spiro, “Seeing through Words: *Shishuo Xinyu* and the Visual Arts, a Case Study,” *Early Medieval China* 13/14, Part 1 (2007): 146-8.

rite of consecration, relics 舍利 (Skt: *śarīra*) or relic-like objects were inserted inside of sculptures. Any number of items, ranging from sacred syllables written on paper to relics of the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni, and others could be inserted into cavities inside of sculptures. As discussed in Chapter Two, the Lingyan sculptures were consecrated with coins, mirrors, and a complete set of silk and cotton viscera (五臟六腑) (figs. 2.4 and 2.5).³⁷¹ An object lacking these ceremonies was, according to the tenth-century ritual manual, *Yique rulai anxiang sanmei yiqui jing* 一切如來安像三昧儀軌經, functionally inert, thus unable to provide any benefit to the worshipper.³⁷²

Bernard Faure has suggested some objects, such as some sculptures and paintings, the lacquered mummies of esteemed monks and relics, such as bones and hair, can be considered to have acted as “doubles.”³⁷³ As these objects embody the religious power 靈 of the depicted divinity, they are, according to Faure, “substitute bodies” for the figures, not representations of them, and thus “point(ing) to no reality beyond themselves.”³⁷⁴ Period sources, including an eyewitness account of a *luohan* ceremony by the monk Jōjin that is discussed below, and procedures for interacting with monastic portraits as found in *Pure Rules for Chan Monasteries*, indicate that once consecrated these types of figures were treated as if they were alive by being given gifts and food.³⁷⁵ Within this framework, the consecrated status of the Northern Song

³⁷¹ Both Song and Ming dynasty sculptures from the set contained objects. Those sculptures are: #2S, #8W, #10W, #11W, #14N, #15N, #19N, #31E, #29E, #28E, #24E, and #22E. Consecration through object insertion was performed in both China and Japan. The most famous example of this is the tenth-century Śākyamuni sculpture at Seiryōji in Kyoto, Japan, which contained a corpus of objects including a set of silk viscera much like Lingyan temple sculpture #8W. See Chapter 2, fn. 62 for other sculptures that have been found to contain similar objects.

³⁷² *Yique rulai anxiang sanmei yiqui* 一切如來安像三昧儀軌經, T. 21, n.1418: 0933b19-b21. See Kieschnick, *Impact of Buddhism*, 61.

³⁷³ Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 176.

³⁷⁴ Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 170. Also see Brinker, *Secrets of the Sacred*, 10-11.

³⁷⁵ Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 141. According to the *Pure Rules for Chan Monasteries* 禪苑清規, after an abbot's death and funeral his portrait was to be hung in an area near his rooms. Incense and meals were to be offered to it

Lingyan temple sculptures shaped the viewing experience through the specific behaviors that were considered appropriate for interactions with these types of figures. For the faithful, the Lingyan sculptures did not depict *luohan*, they were *luohan*.

While the artistic style of *luohan* figures appears secondary to their divine presence, John Kieschnick has argued visual presentation did matter. Historically, relics, which share in Faure's rubric of "doubles," have not been endowed with human attributes, but stories abound in the Tang and Song times of sculptures and paintings that could miraculously move, sweat, cry, or otherwise operate like humans. As Kieschnick states, "icons whether made of clay or of human remains, were attributed with human qualities not because of what they were but because of what they looked like."³⁷⁶ In other words, viewers were distinguishing between different types of objects endowed with religious power on the basis of presentation and materiality. Form and function are not necessarily at odds in considering the viewing experience of Song-era religious audiences. The religious protocols of consecration were important in establishing which objects were worthy of worship and in guiding viewer behavior in their presence, but viewers were still aware of the materiality and artistic qualities of those objects.³⁷⁷

twice a day. See XZJ: 63, n. 1245: 543a21-a23. For an English translation of this passage see Yifa, *The Origins of Buddhist Monastic Codes in China: An Annotated Translation and Study of the Chanyuan Qinggui* (Kuroda Institute Classics in East Asian Buddhism. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 218. East Asian Buddhists were not the only religious communities to have these types of practices. Richard H. Davis has addressed the consecration protocols in India that transformed objects into "living" Hindu divinities in *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 14-50.

³⁷⁶ Kieschnick, *Impact of Buddhism*, 36.

³⁷⁷ As noted by Brinker, Roger Goepfer discussed an Edo period (1603-1868) commentary on the eye-opening ceremonies by an unknown Japanese author that pointedly addresses the materiality of objects in the process of consecration. The unknown author stated that "after the main priest has consecrated the image by dotting in its eyes, and has bestowed upon it the force of grace by means of mudrā, mantras, and meditative vision, the now dignified wooden substance or plain woven material [of the painting] has merged inseparably with the original substance of the depicted deity, although the priest has in no way effected a change in the basic material of the wood, clay, or stone." See Goepfer, "Icon and Ritual in Japanese Buddhism," *Enlightenment Embodied: The Art of the Japanese Buddhist Sculptor (7th-14th Centuries)*, ed. and trans. Reiko Tomii et al. (New York: Japan Society, Inc., 1997), 74; Brinker, *Secrets of the Sacred*, 12-14.

The responsive power established through consecration allowed those objects to be the focus of devotional practices that generated merit (功德 or 福德; Skt: *puṇya*). This merit could produce tangible real-world benefits in the form of the health and well-being of one's family, the successful completion of a project, or the birth of a boy child, among other results. In the same manner, merit could be transferred 迴向 to other people, such as family members and ancestors. Clerical communities performed merit-producing ceremonies to help their own temple, local donors, and the emperor and the imperial family.³⁷⁸ These performances also solidified a network of associations for the religious community, extending beyond their own local institution to the imperial court.

For the laity, merit could be generated in other ways as well, for instance through the financial sponsorship of objects. The *Mahāyanā Scripture on the Merit Gained through the Production of Images* 大乘造像功德經 tells readers that creating Buddhist images in any kind of material (metals, brocade, woods, etc.) can result in good health and attractiveness in later life, rebirth as a good or a wealthy person, or rebirth into a wealthy, prominent, or loving family.³⁷⁹ This type of support took the form of individuals who donated money for a specific object, wealthy families that funded the visual program for architectural spaces, and collective bodies who invested together toward a specific goal.³⁸⁰ An inscription on the base of the iron sculpture

³⁷⁸ For discussions on "merit" in Chinese Buddhism, see Wendi L. Adamek, "The Impossibility of the Given: Representations of Merit and Emptiness in Medieval Chinese Buddhism," *History of Religions* 45, no. 2 (Nov. 2005): 135-80 and T. Griffith Foulk, "Religious Functions of Buddhist Art in China," in *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*, ed. Marsha Weidner (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 15

³⁷⁹ *Mahāyanā Scripture on the Merit Gained through the Production of Images* 大乘造像功德經 translated into Chinese in 691 by the Khotanese monk Devaprajñā 提雲般若 (fl. late seventh c.). T. 16, n.693. In enumerating the possible results of creating images, this scripture is similar to an earlier one, *Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images* 佛說作佛形像經 (T. 16, n.692). Robert H. Sharf has argued this earlier scripture was translated in the late Eastern Han dynasty (25-220 C.E) and, as it was quite short, had a wide circulation. The circulation of the later text is unclear. See Robert H. Sharf, "The Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images," in *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 261-67.

³⁸⁰ For discussion on the sponsorship of *luohan* images, see Wen Fong, "The Five Hundred Lohans at the Daitokuji," (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1956), 59 and Chang Qing, "Feilafeng and the Flowering of Chinese Buddhist

found inside of Lingyan temple sculpture #11W illustrates this last type of sponsorship (fig. 2.6). The inscription states an association of lay believers from three local villages, Tianhua, Nanguan, and Houqiu, donated the monies for the sculpture in 1070.³⁸¹

The doctrinal directive to laity to be generous in their support of local temple had tangible results as evidenced by the Lingyan temple iron sculpture. As with any religious institution dependant upon public support, whether Buddhist temples in eleventh-century China or Christian churches in medieval Europe, lavish visual programs benefited the monastic community as well. It not only demonstrated a temple's wealth, but also helped to bring more people—potential donors—to that institution.

In the Song and pre-Song periods, the role of *luohan* in the process of acquiring merit was outlined in two popular texts: *The Method of Inviting Piṇḍola* 清賓頭盧法 translated into Chinese in the fifth century by the monk Huijian 慧簡 (fl. 457) and *A Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma, Narrated by the Great Arhat Nandimitra* 大啊羅漢難提密多羅所說法住記, translated in the seventh century by the Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang 玄奘 (600-664).³⁸² While in both scriptures the *luohan* are described as “fields of merit” (福田; Skt: *puṇyakṣetra*), *A Record of the Perpetuity* states that it was the historical Buddha himself who designated the *luohan* as such, and that they were to receive gifts presented by donors 施主 and reward them with merit for this world or the next.³⁸³ Possible gifts included monies donated for specific festivals,

Sculpture from the Tenth to Fourteenth Centuries," (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 2005), 158-9. For other types of sponsorship, see Ning Qiang, *Art, Religion, and Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 3-6 and Amy McNair, "On the Patronage by Tang-Dynasty Nuns at Wanfo Grotto, Longmen," *Artibus Asiae* 59, no. 3-4 (2000): 161-2.

³⁸¹ This inscription is transcribed in full in Chapter Two of this present study.

³⁸² The former text centers on one *luohan* Piṇḍola, who in the Tang dynasty was the singular focus of devotional activity (T. 32, n.1689: 784b02-784c17). The latter text was the first translated into Chinese that named each of the Sixteen *Luohan* and their divine residences (T. 49, n.2030). For more in-depth discussion on these two texts, see Chapter Two of this present study.

³⁸³ T.32, n.1689: 784b13 and T.49, n.2030: 0013a06.

invitations to monks for meals in one's home, as well as donations of "clothing, medicine, drink, or food" (衣藥飲食奉施僧眾).³⁸⁴

The most notable thing about these meritorious activities is that *luohan* images did not have to be the focus of a ceremony in order to produce religious benefit for the donor. It was instead the clerical community that was central to this process. Positive gestures toward the monastic community in any number of material or financial ways rendered the *luohan* present and thus encouraged laity to view interactions with monks as real world encounters with the sacred personages.³⁸⁵ As discussed in Chapter Two, these same texts describe the *luohan* as able to manifest themselves in the guise of monks of any rank within the Buddhist institutional structure. Scriptural directives shaped the experience of looking at *luohan* imagery by closely connecting those figures with the clerical community, which extended to various merit-making practices that did not rely on images.

Sacred Spaces and the Viewing Experiences of Clerics

What factors were at stake for clerics, those very people who were linked so closely to *luohan*, when they looked at these images? Although there are no extant Song dynasty liturgical texts on the cleric-led practices around these images, we are able to get some sense of monks' viewing experiences through other sources. The earliest extant Chan monastic manual in China, the previously mentioned *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries*, noted there were monks in

³⁸⁴ T.49, n.2030: 0013b22.

³⁸⁵ The scriptural connection between monks and *luohan* is widely acknowledged in scholarship on these figures and is discussed in Chapter Two.

charge of *luohan* halls 羅漢堂主, suggesting regular activities took place in these space.³⁸⁶ The Japanese Linji 臨濟 (Jpn: Rinzai) monk Eisai (榮西1141-1215) visited China twice on pilgrimages, and after returning from his second journey in 1191 noted in an essay entitled, *Essay on the Promotion of Zen and the Protection of the State* 興禪護國論 (Jpn: *Kōzen gokoku ron*) that in China *luohan* observances 羅漢會 were held on the first month of the year in accordance with a schedule of annual celebrations.³⁸⁷ Presumably these ceremonies took place in the *luohan* halls mentioned in the *Rules of Purity for Chan Monasteries*.

In his travel journal, *Diary of a Pilgrimage to the Tiantai and Wutai Mountains* 參天台五臺山記, the Japanese pilgrim-monk Jōjin provided the most detailed information about the clerical experience of “looking” at *luohan* imagery. In 1072, he encountered a set of *luohan* at Guoqing temple 國清寺 on Mount Tiantai 天台山 in Zhejiang province. This temple was one of the most important destinations of his pilgrimage, as it was the primary temple of the Tiantai 天台 tradition of Buddhism. He recorded that first he had tea with the abbot and other monks of the temple and then was taken to the Imperial *Luohan* Cloister 勅羅漢院.³⁸⁸ There he saw life-size wooden sculptures of the Sixteen *Luohan* and smaller figures of the Five Hundred *Luohan*. Although each of the sixteen *luohan* had a teapot in front of it, the abbot led the author and several local monks in a simple ceremony of offering incense to them. The ceremonial offering

³⁸⁶ XZJ 63. 1245. Mario Poceski has written about an even earlier set of monastic codes, compiled by the Tang dynasty Chan monk Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰義存 (822-908). This short work contains only six rules, none of which apply directly to *luohan* ceremonies, except rule four states that all monks needed to be present for donor-sponsored liturgies. See Mario Poceski, "Xuefeng's Code and the Chan School's Participation in the Development of Monastic Regulations," *Asia Major* 16, no. 2 (2003): 33-56.

³⁸⁷ T. 80, n.2543. 0015a13. For discussion on Eisai's life and his role in the development of Linji (Rinzai) Buddhism in Japan, see Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzaï Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1981), 36-41.

³⁸⁸ Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 23. An overview of this text is found in Robert Borgen, "San Tendai Godai Sanki' as a Source for the Study of Sung History," *Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies* 19 (1987): 1-16. The various versions and translations of this text are detailed by Bong Seok Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China from the Seventh through Thirteenth Centuries: Narrative, Art, Space and Ritual," (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2007), 219, fn. 310.

of incense was not a practice specific to *luohan* images, but was one of the protocols for worship of any Buddhist divinity. Jōjin performed this act in most halls he visited.³⁸⁹

Five months later while in the capital of Bianliang, Jōjin witnessed a far more lavish ceremony for *luohan* at Dapingxingguo temple 大平興國寺, an imperially-sponsored temple for scripture translation. He duly recorded in detail the events of the multi-day community celebration in his journal. His observations began with a description of the events and images in the Dharma Hall (main lecture hall) where the festivities started.

Around noon [11 a.m.-1 p.m.] [in preparation for the] *Luohan* Offerings Ceremony, the Dharma Hall was decorated with canopies and embroidered images of the Sixteen *Luohan* and one of the monk Sizhou. Each [image] was 2 *chi* wide and 4 *chi* in height.³⁹⁰ In front [of the images] were placed offerings of gold, silver, flowers, etc. Next were golden [images] of musical bodhisattvas.³⁹¹ Their height was 2 *chi*. Next came foods of all flavors. Then offerings of incense were made [to the *luohan*.] Cymbals were struck four times, a small drum once, hand bells once, [and] a wooden percussion instrument once. The sounds of praise fully filled the room.³⁹²

午時，羅漢供，講堂莊嚴，張帳幕，懸縫物十六羅漢，泗州大師一鋪，各廣二尺，高四尺前居金銀作雙供花等。次前立金色伎樂菩薩廿體。高二尺。次前供百味膳。即燒香供養。打鈸四口。小鼓一口。鑊一口。法蛋一口。讚聲滿院內。³⁹³

This celebration was not one of the annual observances for *luohan* as it occurred in the tenth month of the year. Bong Seok Joo has suggested this was a donor-sponsored “*luohan* invitation ritual” ceremony, in which *luohan* were invited to partake of a specially prepared feast in order

³⁸⁹ For discussion of this diary, see Robert Borgen, "The Case of the Plagiaristic Journal: A Curious Passage from Jōjin's *Diary*," in *New Leaves: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Edward G. Seidensticker*, ed. Aileen Gatten et al. (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1993), 76.

³⁹⁰ Approximately 66 centimeters wide by 132 centimeters tall.

³⁹¹ The term “*jile*” 伎樂 (Skt: *gāndharva*) more commonly refers to music or female dancers/musicians. As far as I am aware, it is not the name of a specific bodhisattva. Jōjin may have been describing images of bodhisattvas that were sculpted as if dancing. Given the small size of the figures, Bong Seok Joo has suggested they were images of dancers or musicians made of gold-colored paper or sugar. See Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 321, fn. 430.

³⁹² Translation in consultation with Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 321.

³⁹³ Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 141.

for the sponsors to accrue merit.³⁹⁴ These ceremonies most likely developed out of the worship of the *luohan* Piṇḍola, who was the focus of devotional practices in the pre-tenth century exclusive of other *luohan*. The text, *Method of Inviting*, is associated with these early practices.³⁹⁵

According to Jōjin's description of the ceremony, initially the *luohan* images play an important role in the celebrations, and thus the viewing experience of the participating clerics. With the sixteen embroidered images hung up, rows of offerings were placed before them. Jōjin paints a picture of opulence with golden objects, flowers, and foods all presented to the *luohan* in an organized manner. This is a far cry from the protocols laid out by the monk Dao Shi, 道世 (ca. 661) in the *Collections of Various Sutras* 諸經要集, in stating the *luohan* Piṇḍola could not receive extravagant offerings because *luohan*, like monks, were bound by the fifty monastic precepts (Skt: *prātimokṣā*).³⁹⁶ The lavishness of the ceremony at Daipingxingguo temple speaks not only to the temple's status as a major Buddhist institution funded by the government in the cosmopolitan capital, but also to the wealth of the unknown donors. It also attests to the difference between protocols established in the scriptures and actual religious practice during the Song dynasty.

The organization of those offerings indicates one impact on the viewing experience. Laid out in rows before the images, the offered objects would have acted visually as both extensions of the *luohan* images themselves and as a "path" between the viewers and the *luohan*. In looking at the wall hangings, the offerings would have been in the viewer's sightline. Equally, in looking at the offerings, the viewer would have been visually led to the *luohan* images themselves, thus

³⁹⁴ Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 320-325.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 291-303; Richard K. Kent, "The Sixteen Lohans in the Pai-Miao Style: From Sung to Early Ching," (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1995), 16-17, fn. 11.

³⁹⁶ T. 54, n.2123: 43a29-b06. For short discussions on Dao Shi's prohibitions, see Fong, "The Five Hundred Lohans," 214-5, fn. 74 and Kent, "The Sixteen Lohans," 29-30, fn. 30.

connecting that person with those sacred personages. However, those additional objects also formed a barrier between the audience and the *luohan*, which indicates a difference from the simple offering of incense Jōjin presented directly to the *luohan* figures at Guoqing temple. In some viewing circumstances, clerics maintained visual and physical proximity to the *luohan* figures, while in other situations the process of viewing included additional visual factors, such as lavish offerings, which shaped the experience as less personal.

From the author's report, *luohan* may have been the reason behind the festivities, but they were not always the visual focus. He describes the ceremony as extending into other parts of the monastery with monks lighting incense and singing in the halls. As they circulated throughout the complex, the monks carried with them a buddha image.³⁹⁷ Jōjin does not specify which one nor where it was originally located. At one point, the assembly of monks stop to venerate “the Earth Guardian, Protector of the Dharma” 地主護法, a deity that may have been associated with the physical site of the temple itself.³⁹⁸ When the assembly returned to the lecture hall, the visual primacy of the main *luohan* images was re-established.

The monks' movements established a relationship between the *luohan* (as the reason for the festivities) and every area of the temple complex itself. In other words, the experience of viewing was not limited to the primary “seen” objects or by location. It was a process that occurred in multiple spaces, thereby connecting the *luohan* with the monastery as a whole—a connection in keeping with the supernatural monks' status as “protectors of the Dharma.” Further, the addition of other devotional objects in the celebration indicates the inclusive rather than exclusive nature of this viewing experience. A buddha image, demonstrative of the larger

³⁹⁷ 次向諸房持佛. Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 141.

³⁹⁸ Ibid, 141. Chan monasteries often had earth spirit halls specifically for images of these non-Buddhist figures and other deities designated to protect a monastery. See T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 171.

devotional practices of the monastery, and a site-specific “earth guardian” were both a part of this experience. For a cleric taking part in this ceremony, such as Jōjin, “looking” was tied into the monastery as a physical site and into the larger devotional aims of the Buddhist monastic institution.

Although the ceremony was ostensibly configured around *luohan*, the clerics themselves were in the spotlight in tangible and less tangible ways. Benefitting from the festivities, the monastic community as a whole received extravagant meals several times throughout the celebrations, as well as having snacks of porridge and fruits, probably donated by wealthy lay individuals or families as the sponsors of the celebration.³⁹⁹ The monks themselves were also expected to give donations with Jōjin recording each donor’s name, rank, and the exact amount the person contributed. While going hall-to-hall chanting, the monks stopped at the living quarters of the temple, where they asked for donations from any monk sequestered in his room not participating in the festivities. These donations were in the form of money as well as goods, such as bolts of silk. While Jōjin did not feel it necessary to fully describe the wall hangings or all of the details of the ceremony itself, he did acknowledge each of these individuals.⁴⁰⁰ As recorded by Jōjin, the experience of viewing the *luohan* images was formed by the celebration itself, which vacillated in focus from those images, to the monastic body as a whole, and to individual clerics.

One other significant element of this eyewitness account has not yet been mentioned—the figural representation of the monk Sizhou in the collection of central images in the Dharma Hall. This figure was most likely the well-known Tang dynasty monk whose monastic name was

³⁹⁹ 諸僧各別皆有, 今朝送羹八杯珍菜, 今夜重如此, 其志丁寧也...終日竟夜伎樂歌贊, 飲食粥果. Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 141.

⁴⁰⁰ Some of the people and donations included a Master Tripitaka for one string of cash (三藏房出錢一貫), Master Chongfan for a roll of silk (崇梵大師房絹一疋), and Masters Guangzhi and Zhao, who also each offered one roll of silk (次廣智大師房絹一疋. 次照大師房絹一疋). Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 141.

Sengqie 僧伽 (617-710), but who was also known as the monk of Sizhou, as the temple he founded was in the Sizhou area.⁴⁰¹ Bong Seok Joo has noted this monk was seen as a reincarnation of one of the five hundred *luohan*. More commonly, he was believed to be a reincarnation of the bodhisattva Guanyin and was a popular devotional subject from the tenth century onward.⁴⁰² Jōjin encountered a painted image of this same monk while at the previously mentioned Guoqing temple. There it was hung behind the main buddha images in Zhizhe Repentance Hall 智者大師懺堂 along with paintings of the Sixteen *Luohan* and one of the founder of the Tiantai school, the monk Zhizhe (智者; 538-597).⁴⁰³

The inclusion of Sizhou's image was significant to the viewing experiences of the temple's clerical community. Jōjin implies the portrait was given equal prominence with the *luohan* images. Although he is not specific as to the picture's location, he does indicate all of the wall hangings were of the same size—2 chi 尺 wide by 4 chi 尺 tall. The structure of his text also gives equal value to the image: it directly follows the citation of the Sixteen *Luohan* images and none of the artworks are prioritized with additional details or descriptions. It is reasonable to assume Sizhou's image was placed in close proximity to the others and the offerings were made to all of the figures equally. Jōjin's reference to them as the "Sixteen *Luohan*" suggests the figures operated as both a collective body (the Sixteen *Luohan*) and individually, as each of the sixteen was commonly known by name during the Song dynasty. By placing Sizhou's image next to the other wall hangings, a visual continuity would have been established between the

⁴⁰¹ *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳. T. 50 n.206: 822a-823b11.

⁴⁰² Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 323, fn. 428. His status as the reincarnation of Guanyin is discussed both in his biography in the *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* as well as in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* 景德傳燈錄. T. 51 n. 2076: 433a04-a20. For a discussion on this figure, see Chang Qing, "Indigenizing Deities: The Budai Maitreya and the Group of Eighteen *Luohan* in Niche No. 68 at Feilafeng," *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 32 (2010): 30-31.

⁴⁰³ Jōjin, *Diary of a Pilgrimage*, 24. Zhizhe was also known as Zhiyi 智顛. For further discussion of this passage, see Borgen, "The Case of the Plagiaristic Journal," 77 and Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 222-223.

monk and the *luohan* as a collective. Just as a viewer's gaze on the vertical axis would connect the offerings to the *luohan*, the monk's image would be tied to them on the horizontal axis as well.

The addition of Sizhou's portrait in the visual program parallels the orientation of the ceremony itself. The impetus behind the celebration may have been the *luohan*, but its focus shifted between the supernatural monks, the monastic community, and individuals. The *luohan* images constituted both a unit of divinities designated "*luohan*" and a grouping of individually named exalted legendary figures from Buddhist history, which was expanded to include a verifiable member of that history, the monk Sizhou. Similarly, the performance itself both highlighted the monastic community as a whole and the individuals within it. A monk's visual experience may have been further shaped by identification with Sizhou as a cleric or the *luohan* as individual supermundane exemplars of monkhood. In this respect, the doctrinal association between monks and *luohan* discussed previously was visually and ceremonially actualized.

Lay Practice and the Expectation of Response

Jōjin's encounter with the hanging images of *luohan* at Dapingxingguo temple was unique within his experiences while traveling in China. Most of the time, such as at the Imperial *Luohan* Cloister at Guoqing temple, he saw an image, burned incense, and prayed. The previously mentioned civil official Liu Yiqing writing about his visit to Jingci temple 淨慈寺 described an experience for lay people, which was superficially similar. Focusing on the four hundred and forty-second *luohan* figure in the hall, Aśvinī 阿濕毗尊者, Liu explained both how and why a person might worship the figure.

The four hundred forty-second [*luohan*] Aśvinī, the honorable [one], has an independent niche covered with yellow cloth. Right next to it, there is a container of bamboo divination slips....The married women of Lin'an who want to pray for a son always go to this [figure]. [By] lighting incense, quietly praying, and rubbing his stomach, [people] say there will be a response [from the *luohan*]. With many hands having added [to this] over time, the clay surface of its stomach [has become] dark and reflective [like] a mirror.

其第四百四十二位阿濕毗尊者獨設一龕用黃羅幙之旁致籤筒其羅漢像則...臨安婦人祈嗣者必詣此,炷香默禱以手摩其腹云有感應.積日既久羣手加於泥粉之上其腹黑光可鑒邪.⁴⁰⁴

From Liu's description, the protocols for a layperson to engage with a *luohan* figure were similar to those for clerics: the individual lit incense and prayed. These actions were undertaken with the expectation of a response 感應 from the figure. For Jōjin, that was most likely a general hope for religious merit, but according to Liu, the women of Lin'an expected something quite specific, a child. The viewing experience for the women also included one feature that Jōjin did not mention, namely that they touched the sculpture. Hans Belting, speaking of European Christian practices, has suggested icons both “give an impression of the person and provide the experience of a personal encounter.”⁴⁰⁵ Although the actions of the Lin'an women were guided by religious protocols, the experience as described by author seems far from rote. The women sought out that particular *luohan* figure, offered prayers to it, and physically interacted with it. “Seeing” a *luohan* image was not only tied into the expectation of a response, but was also formed as an intimate encounter with a specific object, much as alluded to by the monk-artist Weize.

These same practices took place with at least one of the Lingyan sculptures. The hands and body of the Song-era iron sculpture found inside of #11W display distinctly different surface

⁴⁰⁴ Liu Yiqing, “The *Luohan* [Sculptures] of Jingci Temple,” SKQS, j.1, p. 9b.

⁴⁰⁵ Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 11.

qualities (fig. 4.2). The body is corroded and pitted from time and humidity, but the hands are smooth and glossy, which suggests they have been repeatedly touched. It is unclear whether this is the result of historical devotional practices or contemporary ones. Put on display in Thousand Buddha Hall after its discovery in the 1980s, the sculpture has been physically accessible to viewers since that point. Presently, a small security fence is placed in front of the entire set of sculptures, but the iron figure is close enough to the fence to allow people to touch its hands and place money in them. Both money and flowers are also laid on the floor in front of it as offerings. The markers of religious practice seen on its hands could have occurred in the pre-Ming period, the post-1980s period, or during both eras. Those markers indicate the process of “seeing” this particular sculpture was also shaped as an intimate experience.

The expectation of the Jingci temple *Aśvinī* figure to provide a response in the form of a baby boy, as described by Liu, was not unique to that figure. The Southern Song writer Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1203) in his book, *Record of the Listener* 夷堅志, recounted a story of a man named Huang Kuo 黃廓 who, along with his wife and concubine, visited a *luohan* hall to pray for children. The supernatural monks first responded by appearing to both women in dreams. Within several years of one another they gave birth to sons, which was attributed to the parents’ devotion to the *luohan*.⁴⁰⁶

Even as the scriptures indicate a *luohan* image was not necessary in order for a person to acquire religious merit, the lay people in both Hong Mai’s story and Liu’s account went to a *luohan* image to pray for children. The visual form of the deity was a central and critical component in a specific instance of worship that was predicated on family matters. In other

⁴⁰⁶ Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123—1203), “Mr. Huang, the Story Teller, Prays for a Son” 黃講書禱子 in *Record of the Listener* 夷堅志. SKQS, j. 10, 4b-5a. Also see Joo, “The Arhat Cult in China,” 337.

words, when Song believers wanted the *luohan*' response to a particular family matter, they sought out a visual encounter with a *luohan* image.

Children, however, were not the only desired outcome from worship of these figures. Bong Seok Joo has argued laity-produced memorials for *luohan* indicate there was a range of possible outcomes for worship: those specific to the individual, such as help in passing the civil examinations to the more generic hope of the well being of one's family.⁴⁰⁷ These memorials were written as part of the "*luohan* invitation rituals." Most of these works do not indicate the location of the ceremonies (homes or temples) or whether *luohan* images were present during the act itself. With these particular practices, the need for a *luohan* image may have been less critical as the ritual itself visualized the sacred personages arriving to accept the invitation.

Two other sources speak to more general community practices around *luohan* and their figural representations. The art critic Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (fl. late eleventh century) and the scholar-official Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126-1193) both mention images being worshipped in the hopes of receiving rain. In his *Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞誌, Guo Ruoxu noted that in the Five Dynasties period (907-960) government officials from Zhejiang prayed to a painting by the famous *luohan* artist Guanxiu 貫休 (832-912) to solicit rain for the region.⁴⁰⁸ Guo makes no reference to the efficacy of these practices, as his concern was the artistic value of Guanxiu's paintings. In 1154, Fan Chengda wrote of villagers in Henan province who also appealed to one particular *luohan* for this reason. In the poem, Fan wrote: "even before the incense burner begins

⁴⁰⁷ Bong Seok Joo discusses several different memorials for *luohan*, which he highlights for their focus on very mundane and earthly matters, specifically texts by a Song scholar named Shi Tianzhi 史天秩, a lay believer named Li Qubing 李去病, and the Song literatus Han Ju 韓駒. See Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 325-336.

⁴⁰⁸ According to Guo's entry, the painting was located at Cloud Hall Cloister 雲堂院 on the Western Mountain 西山 in Yuchang 豫章 (Zhejiang province). Guo Ruoxu, *Experiences in Painting*, j. 2, 25.

to sputter, [their] sincerity has reached [him] [i.e. the *luohan*] 爐燎未吐誠先通。”⁴⁰⁹ Given the use of incense, the townspeople most likely focused their efforts on an image of that *luohan*. While it may have been more common for a Song lay believer to engage with *luohan* imagery with the expectation of help with family matters, there was a range of circumstances under which an individual might “look” at these images and a similarly wide array of expectations brought to bear on the experience of viewing.

The physical location of a *luohan* image was not a factor in its efficacy or a viewer’s expectation of a response; people also worshipped privately in their own homes. Any number of Buddhist icons could occupy an important part of a household. Hong Mai tells a story of his own father describing (to a ghost no less) all of the deities worshipped in their home, which included the Daoist divinity Zhenwu 真武,⁴¹⁰ various Buddha figures, and images of earth 土地 and stove 灶神 deities.⁴¹¹ The author’s story suggests families had varied and personalized practices, which integrated figures from multiple religious traditions. No single religion or set of practices was dominant, but instead individuals had a high degree of agency in devotional matters.

“Seeing” Outside of Devotion

Visual Consumption of Religious Images

⁴⁰⁹ Fan Chengda, “In a Year of Drought, Villagers Prayed to the Fifth *Luohan* and Received Rain—A Poetic Response to the [Poem] of Mr. Le 岁旱邑人祷第五罗汉得雨乐先生有诗次韵, in *Stone Lake Poetry Collection* 石湖詩集, j. 4, p. 1b-2a, SKQS. For an English translation, see Joo, “The Arhat Cult,” 331-334.

⁴¹⁰ Zhenwu was a martial deity who became popular during the Northern Song dynasty. One of his functions was to protect the nation and as such, he was closely associated with the imperial court. See Noelle Giuffrida, “Representing the Daoist God Zhenwu, the Perfected Warrior, in Late Imperial China, (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 2008), 26-31.

⁴¹¹ Hong Mai, “Office of the Xiuzhou Department of Records” 秀州司錄廳, in *Record of the Listener* 夷堅志, j. 8, SKQS.

In his discussion of visuality, Craig Clunas observed that “who gets to look, where, and when,” is as relevant as what is being viewed. During the tenth through thirteenth centuries in China, the audience for religious art was extensive and, in general corresponded to where people encountered it. As temples were open to the public, an individual might engage with any number of objects during his/her devotional practices—sculptures, wall paintings, hanging scrolls, or other art objects. Song temples, however, were more than just sacred spaces for worship; they functioned as sightseeing destinations, lodgings for traveling monks or officials, and study facilities for students and scholars. Individuals from across the socio-economic spectrum could view religious imagery in temples under a wide variety of circumstances.

Outside of temples one could view works of art in trendy restaurants and wine bars where hanging scrolls and wall screens were displayed to attract customers and to enhance the dining and drinking experience for cosmopolitan customers. The art critic Liu Daochun 劉道醇 (fl. mid-11th century) suggested the progenitor of this fad was Gao Yi 高益 (active c. 960-990), an artist associated with Sun Sihao 孫四皓, a restaurateur in the Northern Song capital of Bianliang 汴梁 (present-day Kaifeng 開封 in Henan province).⁴¹²

Art was also bought and sold at private shops and public markets. Meng Yuanlao 孟元老 (ca. 1090-1150) in his *Record of Dreaming of Hua in the Eastern Capital* 東京夢華錄 (1148), notes the many shops that sold painting in the capital and described two types of outdoors markets selling artworks: “ghost markets” 鬼市子 and temple markets.⁴¹³ In the former, groups

⁴¹² Liu Daochun 劉道醇, *Evaluations of Sung Dynasty Painters of Renown* 宋朝名畫評, trans. and annotated Charles Lachman (T'oung Pao. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989), j. 1 4b-5b. For further information on Gao Yi and the identity of Sun Sihao, see p. 23, fn. 48 of the above text.

⁴¹³ Meng Yuanlao 孟元老, *Record of Dreaming of Hua in the Eastern Capital* 東京夢華錄 (Shanghai: Han fenlou, 1922). Modern historians know little about Meng beyond his occupation as a lower level official and as the author of this memoir. See Stephen H. West, "The Interpretation of a Dream: The Sources, Evaluation, and Influence of the "Dongjing Meng Hua Lu,"" *T'oung Pao* 71, no. Livr. 1/3 (1985): 63-108.

of vendors set up shop in different parts of the city in the pre-dawn hours and sold their goods only until the light of day. According to Meng, one could find paintings among the various items for sale in these temporary markets.⁴¹⁴ The second type were those held regularly on the grounds of Buddhist temples. Meng lavished much detail in describing the diversity of goods found at the market located at largest and most well known temple in the capital, Xiangguo si 相國寺. There a person could find food, clothing, jewelry, animals, and new baubles to tempt the trendsetters and the curious. In one area vendors sold books and paintings, and so was frequented by scholars and students. One of these was the civil official and collector Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081-1129), who visited the market when he was a student at the National University 太學 in the capital.⁴¹⁵ In the epilogue to a catalogue of inscription rubbings written by Zhao, his wife, the poet Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1081-c. 1141), recalled that early in their marriage when Zhao was still a student, he and his friends would stop at this market on the occasional days off from school to buy fruit and rubbings.⁴¹⁶

Temple markets of this type were not limited to the capital city. When Jōjin traveled across China in the 1070s, he too witnessed markets in different cities, but was most impressed by the vivaciousness of the markets in Hangzhou 杭州, the city that would become the capital of

⁴¹⁴ “East Pan’s Tower Street,” 潘樓東街巷. Meng, *Record of Dreaming*, j. 2, p. 5b-6a. The city landscape of Bianliang as found in Meng’s description is discussed in Chye Kiang Heng, *Cities of Aristocrats and Bureaucrats: The Development of Medieval Chinese Cityscapes* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 117-135.

⁴¹⁵ “Xiangguo Temple Public Market” 相國寺萬姓交易. Meng, *Record of Dreaming*, j. 3. p. 2b-3b. Passages from this chapter are translated in Alexander C. Soper, “Hsiang-Kuo-Ssü: An Imperial Temple of Northern Sung.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 68, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar., 1948): 26-7.

⁴¹⁶ Although Zhao Mingcheng put together his catalogue, *Record of Inscriptions* 金石錄, while alive, it was finished and published by his wife in 1132 after his death. Li Qingzhao 李清照, “Epilogue to the Record of Inscriptions,” 金石錄後序, in *New Edition of Historical Materials Carved on Stone* 石刻史料新編 (Taipei, Xinwenfeng, 1977). For a discussion of Zhao Mingcheng and his collecting habits, as well as translations of portions of Li’s epilogue, see Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 84-86.

China during the Southern Song period (1127-1279).⁴¹⁷ Bo Liu has noted the vigorous market for fan painting in both Bianliang and Hangzhou, where one could purchase either ready-made fans or have one painted with a theme suited to one's personal taste.⁴¹⁸ While not everyone would have been able to afford the higher-end items at any given market or purchase a fan or other painting at a store, the public nature of those venues would ensure that anyone, regardless of social or economic status, would have had visual access to a selection of the pictorial arts during this period.

While anyone may have encountered art, who was actually buying religious artwork in the Song dynasty? A variety of sources indicate art was being discussed, bought, and collected by a range of people, from the wealthiest tier of society to educated, middle income intellectuals. Literati, such as Su Shi and others owned, gifted, and commented on Buddhist artworks. The market for Buddhist art was so great that some collectors were willing to invest significant time and money into acquiring works by particular artists. An entry in the early eleventh-century *Record of the Famous Painters of Yizhou* 益州名畫錄 notes Zhang Xuan's 張玄 (fl. 890-930) *luohan* paintings were so highly valued that "people from the regions of Jing, Hu, Huai, and Zhe came to the state of Shu [Sichuan] to the markets to buy [his paintings] at exorbitant prices [to then] return home again" (荆, 湖, 淮, 浙, 令人入蜀縱價收市, 將歸本道).⁴¹⁹ Religious paintings were also an important component of imperial collecting during the reign of Emperor Huizong

⁴¹⁷ Robert Borgen, "'San Tendai Godai Sanki' as a Source for the Study of Sung History," *Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies* 19 (1987): 9-10.

⁴¹⁸ Bo Liu, "Political Expression in Song Dynasty Fan Painting" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2009), 5-7.

⁴¹⁹ Attributed to Huang Xiufu 黃休復 (fl. 1004) with preface written by Li Tian and dated to 1006. Huang Xiufu 黃休復, *Record of the Famous Painters of Yizhou* 益州名畫錄. SKQS, 2a-2b.

徽宗 (1082-1135; r.1101-1126), as evidenced by a special category for religious subjects (道釋門) in the *Imperial Painting Catalog of the Xuanhe Era* 宣和畫譜 (1120).⁴²⁰

Although critics and connoisseurs of the eleventh century were less interested than their Tang dynasty counterparts in religious artworks, Song writers did not assess the visual arts primarily on the basis of its subject matter.⁴²¹ As discussed in Chapter Three, sculpture, however, was not typically included in discussions on the finer points of the pictorial arts. The art critic Liu Daochun 劉道醇 (fl. mid-11th century) did not exclude religious art from his book, *Evaluations of Song Dynasty Painters of Renown* 宋朝名畫評 (ca. 1059). Over half of the artists discussed under the rubric of figure painting 人物 specialized in religious subjects.⁴²² His contemporary, the art critic and civil official Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (fl. 11th c.) did the same in his

⁴²⁰ Huashi congshu 畫史叢書, ed. Yu Anlan 于安瀾 vol.2. (Shanghai: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1963). As Yen-wen Cheng points out, even as earlier art catalogues and art books on painting did not have special category for religious works, these were not overlooked. Zhang Yanyuan discussed wall paintings in Buddhist and Daoist monasteries in Chang'an and Luoyang (“兩京寺觀等畫壁”) and sculptors of Buddhist artwork as well in his book *Famous Painters of History* 歷代名畫記. Yen-wen Cheng, “Tradition and Transformation: Cataloguing Chinese art in the Middle and Late Imperial Eras” (Ph.D diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2010), 38-39, fn. 91.

⁴²¹ This is not to suggest that Buddhism, as a religious practice, was not without its detractors in the Song period. Literati especially held a wide range of opinions about the social, economic, and cultural merits of Buddhism. Su Shi's mentor, the writer Ouyang Xiu, was one of its more outspoken critics, while Su Shi himself was more tempered in his opinions. Many scholars have written on this topic including Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960-1279* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 159-205.

⁴²² Liu Daochun only includes artists working from 950-1050. He divides his book into sections based on subject matter, each section is further divided into three “classes” of artists: “inspired 神, “subtle” 妙, and “talented” 能. Figure painting has an additional division of artists into upper, middle, or lower tiers. For all six of the artists in the “inspired” class, Liu mentions their work with Buddhist or Daoist subjects. Of the fifteen artists listed in the “subtle” class, the biographies of seven of the artists include references to work with religious themes. These artists are: Wang Qihan 王齊翰, Hou Yi 侯翌, Pu Shixun 蒲師訓, Sun Zhiwei 孫知微, Meng Xian 孟顯, Zhang Fang 張昉, and Wang Jianji 王兼濟. Nineteen artists are listed in the “talented” class, ten of which Liu notes their work with religious subjects. These artists are: Yang Fei 楊斐, Gao Wenjin 高文進, Zhao Yuanchang 趙元長, Wang Daozhen 王道真, monk Yuan Ai 沙門元霽, Yin Zhi 尹質, Wang Zhuo 王拙, Ye Jincheng 叶進成, Yan Wengui 燕文貴, and Hao Cheng 郝澄. See Lachman, *Evaluations*, 99. Charles Lachman has argued Liu was the first to organize his evaluations solely on subject matter, not taking into account the artists' social status. Social status did continue to be an organizational component for some Northern Song critics, such as Guo Ruoxu in his *Experiences in Painting*. Lachman, *Evaluations of Sung Dynasty Painters*, 3-5.

book, *Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞誌 (ca. 1074).⁴²³ Further, in Guo's short essay entitled, "Discussion on Models" 論製作楷模, he offers advice on how to appreciate different genres of painting, including Buddhist and Daoist works.⁴²⁴ Patricia Ebrey has noted that the compilers of the *Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era* 宣和畫譜 (1120), the record of the paintings in the collection of Emperor Huizong, did separate out "religious" 道釋 paintings from "figure" 人物 painting. However, while some painters specialized in religious works, others painted religious and secular subjects.⁴²⁵ A Song artist might have been famous for his skill in depicting a particular subject, such as Zhang Xuan and *luohan*, but as these texts suggest, most artists painted a diversity of subjects. Charles Lachman has suggested that by the Southern Song period artists in the Imperial academy 翰林圖畫院 were producing religious painting that had no devotional purposes whatsoever, but were created for aesthetic considerations alone.⁴²⁶ During the Song dynasty not only did the general public have access to religious imagery in a number of areas of everyday life (temples, markets, private homes), but also the educated arts community considered this genre of art through the same critical lens as they did other genres. Within this context, some viewers might have approached the Northern Song Lingyan temple sculptures solely as works of art.

In all of these instances, paintings of Buddhist subjects were being collected primarily for their artistic value and not as objects of religious veneration. However, elite members of the Buddhist community, abbots, in their management of the acquisition, production, or distribution

⁴²³ Guo did distinguish out monk-painters from other artists in his book as this related to their social status.

⁴²⁴ Guo, "Discussion on Models" 論製作楷模, in *Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞誌, j. 1, p. 7. Reprinted in Soper, *Kuo Jo-Hsu's Experiences in Painting*.

⁴²⁵ Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 263-264; 275-6.

⁴²⁶ Charles Lachman's argument is based on the fourteenth-century text *Precious Mirror for Examining Painting* 圖繪寶鑑 (preface dated 1365) by Xia Wenyan 夏文彥, which discusses religious subjects painted by non-monastic painters. See Charles Lachman, "Art," in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, ed. Donald S Lopez Jr. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 49.

of art at individual temples also necessarily exercised some level of critical artistic judgment. In some cases, the abbots themselves became the subject of artworks, as with monastic portraits (*dingxiang*) which were used for memorial purposes, made for students, and distributed to laypeople to aid in fundraising.⁴²⁷

From the tenth through the thirteenth centuries, the audience for religious art encompassed most of society. It was not only a part of the larger visual culture of the Song dynasty, it was also a genre of art that various communities of people were invested in as devotional viewers, buyers, sellers, producers, or just as arts lovers.

Religious Imagery as Art: Social Protocols of Viewing

While some individuals and families did worship *luohan* or other religious figures in their homes, for others looking at these types of objects outside of the confines of religious practice was controversial. In the essay, “On Collecting Icons” 論收藏聖像, Guo Ruoxu reveals some of the issues at stake in these situations.

Critics sometimes say that it is improper to collect Buddhist or Daoist icons; this is the fear that it is difficult to unroll and enjoy them from time to time without treating them irreverently or [getting them] dirty. Whenever scholars and gentlemen get together to view and discuss calligraphy and painting, the space must be quiet and clean. There is only appreciation for skill and respect for the [images.] How then could there be any irreverence for these images preserved from the past?

Furthermore, the Buddhist and Daoist votives created by the men of the past required concentration and determination to bring out their subtleties. Perhaps the principal motivation [for those who believed] was the hope of increasing their blessings [religious merit]. From Cao Buxing of the Wu kingdom, Gu Kaizhi and Dai Kui of the Jin

⁴²⁷ See Chapter Three on this subject.

dynasty...how could such men not have accomplished great things for Buddhism and Daoism? Without the grandeur and majesty of Indra and Brahma, without the illustrious transformations of the true immortals, how would they have had any way of displaying their vast talents, or of realizing the refinement and depth of their study and aspirations? This is [how] I know that the opinion that it improper to collect [religious icons] is of no importance.⁴²⁸

論者或曰不宜收藏佛道聖像，恐其褻慢葷穢，難可時時展玩。愚謂不然。凡士君子相與觀閱書畫為適，則必處閒靜。但鑒賞精能，瞻崇遺像，惡有褻慢之心哉？且古人所製佛道功德，則必專心勵志，曲盡其妙，或以希福田利益，是其尤為著意者。況自吳，曹不興，晉顧愷之，戴逵...無不以佛道為功。豈非釋梵莊嚴，真仙顯化，有以見雄才之浩博，盡學志之精深者乎？是知云不宜收藏者，未為要說。⁴²⁹

In the opening sentence of his essay, Guo indicates that not only were people viewing religious images in their homes divorced from devotional practices, but that there was a range of opinions about this type of viewing experience. According Guo, the argument against collecting these objects was based on the possibility they would get “dirty” or would be treated “irreverently.” In the following lines, Guo stakes out his own position on this matter. He first identifies who he understands as the collectors and viewers of religious icons, “scholars and gentlemen,” implying arts enthusiasts. Guo refutes the fear religious paintings would get dirty in a domestic setting by arguing art lovers will only view paintings in spaces that are “quiet and clean.” He counters the possibility of irreverence in suggesting in this environment “there is only appreciation for skill and respect for the [images].” Further, in mentioning “images of the past” and “men of the past,” Guo is placing religious artworks, whose artists may have had religious motivations, clearly within the art historical traditions of China. In other words, the social protocols of looking—the viewing conditions and attitudes of the viewers—were the same regardless of an object’s religious significance.

⁴²⁸ Translation in consultation with Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 107 and Soper, *Kuo Jo-Hsu's Experiences*, 18.

⁴²⁹ Guo, “Considerations on Collecting Icons,” 論收藏聖像 in *Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞誌, j. 1, p. 15-6.

One type of viewing experience Guo may have had in mind when he wrote his essay is referenced in a eulogy entitled, *On the Eighteen Luohan Painting in the Collection of the Esteemed Monk Hong* 跋洪上所藏十八羅漢畫 written by the scholar and bureaucrat Yao Mian 姚勉 (fl. 2353-1264). While the body of the eulogy is an exposition on the talents and greatness of the Eighteen *Luohan*, in the final line Yao tells us that “while drinking tea together, six friends viewed this painting on the Upper Prime day of the first year of Jingding (1260-1264)” (時景定元年上元日與友六人啜茶同觀).⁴³⁰ Yao and his friends had organized a viewing party and one can guess it was not solely the painting that compelled him to ponder the abilities of the *luohan* in his eulogy, but also the companionship and discussion that accompanied the viewing. It was not unusual during the Song period for arts lovers to organize gatherings of this nature. Richard Vinograd has observed that for the literati, paintings were not static solitary objects, but instead were an “interweaving of event, painting, and aesthetic or critical response that all took place within a kind of small group communion.”⁴³¹ Yao Mian’s eulogy provides the specifics of one of the viewing practices for educated individuals in the Song dynasty hinted at in Guo’s essay.

We are given another glimpse into the viewing practices around religious artworks, specifically those that feature *luohan*, in a letter written by the Song poet and statesman Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) to his younger brother Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039-1112). In the letter, the older brother describes some of the routine practices around *luohan* images in his home.⁴³²

⁴³⁰ Yao Mian, *Collection of Xuepo* 雪坡集, j. 41, p. 13b, SKQS. See Joo, “The Arhat Cult in China,” 158-161.

⁴³¹ Richard Vinograd, “Situation and Response in Traditional Chinese Scholar Painting,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* XLVI, no. 3 (Spring, 1988): 368.

⁴³² Su Shi along with his brother and their father Su Xun 蘇洵 were all well-known literati during the Song period and were referred to as the “Three Su” 三蘇.

In our [Su] family, [we] had cherished paintings of the Sixteen *luohan*. Each time tea offerings were set up [before them], the tea became milky with the [shape] of snow, flowers, peaches, plums, or chrysanthemums. To only mention them by name and some people say that with great mercy they will quickly [help] with any matter. Thus, they have appeared many times, and isn't that so? From Hainan [I] have gotten paintings of the Eighteen *luohan* to give to [you], my little brother Ziyou. Do make the time to pay respect [to them.] On the birthdays of [both] yourself and your wife set up food offerings and pray for lots of blessings for the year. [I] am adding these [paintings] to the poems I have written [and] am mailing them off [for you.]⁴³³

軾家藏十六羅漢像。每設茶供則化為白乳或凝為雪，花，桃，李，芍藥，僅指名或云羅漢慈悲深重急於接物。故多現神變，儻其然乎？今於海南，得此十八羅漢像，以授子由弟。使以時修敬。遇夫婦生日輒設供以祈年集福。并以前所作頌寄之。⁴³⁴

Su Shi's letter provides several critical factors of the viewing process in the domestic sphere. He describes a participatory encounter with *luohan* images in which he sets tea before the paintings. He notes that every time tea was placed before the paintings it changed, becoming cloudy with abstracted shapes of fruits and flowers. On the one hand, this can be understood as referencing contemporary practices of offering tea to religious images, as mentioned earlier. On the other hand, Su's reference to the tea's changeability was also a poetic allusion to tea with ground leaves floating in it. His mentor, the writer Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩(1007-1072), made a similar statement about tea in writing: "Halting my spoon, I tip the bowl to test the path of the water, gazing at it level with the sky, I watch the milky flowers" 停匙側盞試水路，拭目向空看乳花。⁴³⁵

Secondly, Su Shi encourages his brother, whom he affectionately refers to by his style name Ziyou 子由, to appreciate these paintings often by making "time to pay respect [to them]. This could be understood as Su Shi encouraging his younger brother in particular religious

⁴³³ Translation in consultation with Joo, "The Arhat Cult in China," 334-5.

⁴³⁴ Su Shi, *Collected Works of Dongpo* [Su Shi] (東坡全集, j. 98, 15a-15b, SKQS).

⁴³⁵ Colin Hawes has discussed this work by Ouyang Xiu and has noted that writer's reference is similar to one in Lu Yu's 陸羽 (733-804) work *Tea Classic* 茶經, in which he likens the tea leaves to "chrysanthemum blossoms." See Colin Hawes, "Mundane Transcendence: Dealing with the Everyday in Ouyang Xiu's Poetry," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 21 (Dec., 1999): 112 and fn. 52.

practices. In other words, Su Zhe did not practice this particular type of worship, but his brother did indicating one's religious practices as an adult were not predicated on the religious orientation of one's early family. In China, unlike in most parts of the world at that time, individuals had choices. Yet, as suggested by Guo Ruoxu's essay, for arts lovers "respect" in viewing religious images outside of religious spaces was due to the appreciation given to the object as a work of art. As Su Shi and his brother were both well known for their love of art, his suggestion to his younger sibling could be read in multiple ways.

There is an additional factor that can be considered a part of the viewing experience as described by Su: "seeing" as a shared experience. As the writer indicates it was the Su household that owned paintings of the Sixteen *Luohan*, presumably he is referring to the household where he and his younger brother were raised. Their mother had an interest in Pure Land Buddhism when they were young and Su Shi himself had written of their maternal grandfather's recollection of meeting sixteen monks whom the older man thought were *luohan*.⁴³⁶ In purchasing the paintings of the Eighteen *Luohan*, Su Shi is reminded of their shared experiences as youths. Like a good older brother, he sends them off to Ziyou.⁴³⁷ Just as with viewing parties, one social protocol involved with "seeing" was sharing the experience with other people, if only through memories and the mail system.

The painting Su Shi described in the letter to his brother was one he bought while exiled to Hainan 海南 in 1098.⁴³⁸ In the preface to a lengthy ode he wrote about it, he spoke of his joy in

⁴³⁶ Su Shi's story of their grandfather and the Sixteen *Luohan* is found in his "Ode to the Eighteen Great *Luohan*" 十大阿羅漢頌 in the *Collected Works of Dongpo* [Su Shi] 東坡全集, j. 98, 9b-10a. SKQS.

⁴³⁷ Su Shi and his brother had a close relationship throughout their lives both traveling together with their families and writing to one another often. They also shared an interest in art. The painting that Su Shi sent to his brother was most likely one by the artist Zhang Xuan 張玄 (fl. 890-930), a famous Tang dynasty painter of these figures.

⁴³⁸ This period of exile, which occurred between 1097-1100, stemmed from political conflicts that developed in the Yuanyou era 元祐 (1086-1093). This was not Su Shi's first experience with exile or demotion—his most famous political and legal problem occurred some twenty years earlier with his arrest in 1079. See Ronald C. Egan, *Word,*

discovering the painting by Zhang Xuan, the famed painter of *luohan*, in the rural outback of Hainan. He also noted that after taking the painting home, he had it mounted, and as a gesture of reverence, placed lamps, incense, and fruit in front of it (乃命過躬易其裝標, 設燈塗香果以禮之).⁴³⁹ His actions are not surprising given that his home life included some religious practice. However, in the preface he also lauded the skills of the artist himself, stating that “of Zhang’s painting, his *luohan* were the most famous and during the late Tang dynasty there was no one matched to his artistic skills” 張氏以畫, 羅漢有名, 唐末蓋世擅其藝.⁴⁴⁰ One would imagine then, that another primary reason he sent the paintings to his brother was the artistic value he saw in the works.

As indicated by Su Shi’s letter to his brother, not all people approached religious art in the same manner. As the range of viewers expanded during the Song dynasty, so too did the range of views on how to appreciate these types of images. While Guo Ruoxu did not elaborate further on the “appropriate” viewing conditions of artwork in one’s home, Liu Daochun did in the preface to his previously mentioned book.

Generally, when viewing paintings [a person] should limit distractions. One cannot be concerned whether the weather is dark or cloudy, the wind is whipping to and fro, the room is in the shadows, if it is dusk, or if it is night [and one is using] candles. Why? Because then one would not be able to appreciate the exceptional subtleties [of the work.] and it is hard to bring into accord the six essential features of art or the six excellences in art. [Viewing] should take place on a bright, clear day in a south-facing empty room that has an appropriate wall on which to display [a painting]. A person should clear [his/her] thoughts and calm

Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, and the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1994), 46-53, 86-107, 392 fn. 77.

⁴³⁹ Su Shi, “Ode to the Eighteen Great *Luohan*” 十八大阿羅漢頌 in *Dongpo’s Collected Works* 東坡全集, j. 98, 9b-10a. SKQS. Translation in consultation with Beata Grant, *Mount Lu Revisited: Buddhism in the Life and Writings of Su Shih* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994), 169.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.* j. 98, 9b-10a. SKQS. Translation in consultation with Grant, *Mount Lu Revisited*, 40.

[his/her] anxieties to be able to indulge the eyes for viewing. Moreover, the method of looking is first to observe the character and expressive disposition of the objects in the painting, then determine what has been ignored or selected for inclusion in the composition. Next get to the base of its ideas, and finally seek its principles. This then is the key to judging painting.⁴⁴¹

大凡觀畫抑有所忌，且天氣晦冥，風勢飄迅，屋宇向陰，暮夜執燭，皆不可觀。何哉？謂其悉不能極其奇妙而難約以六要六長也。必在乎爽霽清，虛室面南，依正壁而張之。要當澄思靜慮，縱目以觀之。且觀之之法，先觀其氣象，後定其去就，次根其意，終求其理，此乃定畫之鈐鍵也。⁴⁴²

Liu outlines for his readership the conditions under which one should viewing paintings: the viewing space needs to be well lit by natural light, clean, proportionally appropriate, and free of uncontrollable weather conditions. Both Liu and Guo were concerned with the maintenance of the material objects themselves, but Guo used those very concerns to counter the argument that viewing religious icons at home would lack the reverence some people felt was due to religious objects.⁴⁴³

Earlier authors had similar apprehensions regarding the materiality of artworks. The late Tang dynasty author Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (ca. 815-ca. 877) was so invested in this issue he dedicated two entire sections of his book *Famous Painters of History* 歷代名畫記 (c. 847) to them. The chapters “On Connoisseurship, Preservation, Collecting, and Appreciation” 論鑒識收藏購求閱玩 and “On Mounting, Backing, Ornamental Borders, and Rollers” 論裝背裱軸 both

⁴⁴¹ Translation in consultation Martin J. Powers and Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, 99.

⁴⁴² Liu Daochun 劉道醇, preface to *Evaluations of Song Dynasty Painters of Renown* 宋朝名畫評 in ZGHLLB, 408. Charles Lachman has noted that this preface is problematic. Not only is it not signed or dated, but also not all versions of the book have the preface in a complete form. Further, several topics addressed in the preface are not discussed anywhere in the main body of the book. However, other art historians, including Susan Bush, Hsiao-yen Shih, and Yu Jianhua have accepted it as the work of Liu Daochun. See Lachman, *Evaluations*, 3, fn. 10.

⁴⁴³ The preservation practices of several other Song collectors are discussed in Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 92.

discuss in detail the proper treatment of art objects. However, his guidelines, in comparison with Liu and Guo's, suggest something different about his readership. In one passage he wrote:

One should never look at calligraphy and painting near a fire or candle. Also, one should never look at calligraphy in wind or sunlight, or when one has just been eating, drinking, spitting, or blowing the nose, without first washing one's hands.⁴⁴⁴

近火燭不可觀書畫, 向風日, 正滄飲, 唾涕, 不洗手, 並不可觀書畫.⁴⁴⁵

Like Guo and Liu, Zhang is highly aware of the viewing environment and admonishes his readers not to look at artwork near potentially damaging sources of light. He follows this by designating a set of activities a viewer should not engage in while looking at art, namely eating, drinking, spitting, etc. Given the stress both Guo and Liu placed on cleanliness, they too would have found those activities incompatible with looking at art. Yet, they did not feel the need to address them. Underlying this difference may be the change between the Tang and the Song periods in the accessibility and audience for art. As previously discussed, from the late tenth century onward, the market for art began to expand and art became accessible to a wider audience through its display and commerce in public venues. The full spectrum of society could take part in some aspect of the viewing process, even if this was the informal experience of looking at paintings while buying shoes at a temple market. This suggests the codes of behavior or decorum listed by Zhang were not significant enough for the later writers to mention because they were already well established.

Liu and Guo both suggested that beyond the setting, the viewers themselves needed to be prepared to look at imagery. Liu Daochun states, "a person must clear [his/her] thoughts and

⁴⁴⁴ Translation by Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, 73.

⁴⁴⁵ Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠, *Famous Painters of History* 歷代名畫記, ZGHLLB, 1225-26.

calm [his/her] anxieties to be able to indulge one's eyes for viewing." He follows this with step-by-step instructions on how someone should "look" and what she/he should be attentive to in the viewing process. Guo's remarks were more limited, only suggesting that when looking at any type of artwork viewers will be focused on appreciation for the skill of the artist and respect for the object.

The poet and civil official Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126–1193) had come across a sentiment similar to Liu's about preparing oneself for viewing inscribed on a kiosk while traveling between the Southern Song capital Lin'an and Jingjiang 静江 (present-day Guilin 桂林, Guangxi province) in 1173 for a new job posting. The couplet read, "sir, you must clean and wash your south-bound eyes. From here on, the mountains and rivers surpass the northern counties (煩君淨洗南來眼, 從此山川勝北州).⁴⁴⁶ The couplet was from a poem by the contemporary writer Zhang Xiaoxiang 張孝祥 (1132-1169), and as James Hargett has noted, Fan Chengda's transcription does not completely match Zhang's original work.⁴⁴⁷ However, as Fan Chengda recorded it, preparing one's eyes for "looking," in this case at a natural landscape, had an almost physical approach with the use of the word "wash" 洗. The couplet also finds a correspondence with the emphasis placed on looking at the natural world in the pursuit of verisimilitude in painting landscapes during the Song period, as discussed in Chapter Three. With the couplet recorded by Fan Chengda, Liu Daochun's guidelines, and Guo's statements, there is the sense that not all experiences of "looking" are the same.

⁴⁴⁶ Fan Chengda, "Register of Mounting a Simurgh" 驂鸞錄 in *Register of Grasping the Carriage Reins, Register of Mounting a Simurgh, Treatises of the Supervisor and Guardian of the Cinnamon Sea* 攬轡錄, 驂鸞錄, 桂海虞衡志 (Shanghai: Gushu liutongchu, 1921), 23. Translation in consultation with James M. Hargett, *On the Road in Twelfth Century China: The Travel Diaries of Fan Chengda (1126-1193)* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1989), 203.

⁴⁴⁷ Hargett, *On the Road*, 246, fn. 342. The couplet is from Zhang Xiaoxiang's poem entitled, "Passed into Guilin and Stopped to Rest at Slippery Rock Station; Wrote a Poem to be Inscribed at Cyan Jade Spring" 入桂林歇滑石驛題碧玉泉 in Xu Peng 徐鵬 ed. *The Collected Works of the Retired Scholar of Yu Lake* 于湖居士文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1980), 10.96.

Guo Ruoxu, unlike the other two authors, was writing specifically about collecting and viewing religious images. Underlying his need to justify the practice of collecting religious artwork may have been anxiety around collecting art and cultural objects more generally. Patricia Ebrey has argued that up through 1020, the imperial court was at the forefront of this trend through the acquisition of paintings, calligraphy, and books. Throughout the remaining years of the eleventh century, it was educated scholars and collectors who were primary in the area of collecting.⁴⁴⁸ Many such individuals had no reservations about their acquisition habits, but for others, collecting was tinged with a sense of unease. The poet Li Qingzhao 李清照 expressed her qualms about the very activity she and her husband enjoyed together by likening greed for objects to greed for money.⁴⁴⁹ Su Shi disclosed his own anxieties about these practices in an essay written in 1077 to commemorate a painting exhibition hall built by the distinguished collector Wang Shen 王詵 (ca. 1048-ca. 1103).

A gentleman may dwell in works of art, but should not allow his mind to remain there. In this way, although a work may be of slight value, still it will be sufficient to give him joy, and a great work will not be such as to cause anxiety. But should he allow his mind to remain in the work, although it be a work of little value, it will still create anxiety. And although it be a great work, it will not be sufficient to give him joy.

As a young man I too was obsessively fond of calligraphy and painting. I worried constantly that my family might lose what works we owned, and I was also distressed that other people would not give us what they owned. Later, I laughed at myself, thinking that I made little of wealth and position but made much of calligraphy, and that I took death lightly but gave importance to painting. Were not my priorities upside down, and had I not lost my innate sense of things?⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁸ Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 76-101. Collecting practices were quite extensive with some people collecting inscription rubbings, ancient bronzeworks, or writing implements, such as inkstones. Yang Xiaoshan has addressed the collecting of unusual and rare rocks by some scholar-officials and the anxiety around it in *Metamorphosis of the Private Sphere: Gardens and Objects in Tang-Song Poetry* (Cambridge, M. A.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 91-142.

⁴⁴⁹ Stephen Owen, *Remembrances: The Experience of the Past in Classical Chinese Literature* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1986) 80-98.

⁴⁵⁰ Translation indebted to Martin J. Powers and Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 98.

君子可以寓意於物，而不可以留意於物，雖微物足以為樂，雖尤物不足以為病；留意於物，雖微物足以為病，雖尤物不足以為樂。

始吾少時嘗好此二者，家之所有，惟恐其失之，人之所有，惟恐其不吾予也。既而自笑曰：吾薄富貴而厚於書，輕死生而重於畫，豈不顛倒錯繆失其本心也哉？自是不復好。⁴⁵¹

In this excerpt from the essay, Su Shi delved into his own personal history of collecting. His early attachment to these material goods he juxtaposed with his attitude toward larger concerns in life, such as economic stability (“wealth”), education and occupation (“position”), and even death. The essay was framed to alert Wang Shen to the pitfalls of missing the joy of collecting by becoming too possessive.⁴⁵²

The Skeptical Viewer: Authenticating “Looking”

The same people who collected, viewed, and appreciated religious images in their homes and in public also encountered this type of art in temples outside of the context of worship. Many writers from the late Tang period onward, including Zhang Yanyuan and Guo Ruoxu, mention

⁴⁵¹ Su Shi 蘇軾, “Precious Painting Hall Record” 寶繪堂記 in *Collected Writings of Su Shi* 蘇軾文集, ed. Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), j. 11, p. 356-7.

⁴⁵² Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 98-99. Ronald Egan has also addressed Su Shi and other people’s unease with collecting in *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 162-236. Other portions of Su Shi’s essay are translated and discussed in Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed*, 159. The issue of collecting continued to provoke commentary and debate into the early part of the twelfth century, especially during the reign of Emperor Huizong. Partly in imitation of literati collecting practices, Huizong greatly expanded the imperial collections of paintings, calligraphy, and ancient objects, such as bronzes and jades, and also produced extensive catalogues for those collections. However, he notoriously collected more than just art objects. In building his royal park, known as Genyue 艮嶽, he procured large numbers of rare plants, trees, and rocks from all over the country. His desire for these items was so great that a transportation system, the Flower and Rock Network 花石綱, was built to facilitate the movement of those objects to the capital. His collecting habits came at a great expense to the local people responsible for acquiring them. The hardship and suffering he caused coupled with his focus on matters outside of the scope of government business were viewed as significant factors in the downfall of the government in 1126 at the hands of the Jurchens. For further discussion of this topic, see James M. Hargett, “Huizong’s Magic Marchmount: the Genyue Pleasure Park of Kaifeng,” *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 38 (1988-1989): 1-48.

wall paintings, hanging scrolls, and other artworks located in temples. Some institutions, such as the imperially-sponsored Xiangguo Temple 相國寺 in Bianliang, were lavishly decorated with paintings by major artists.⁴⁵³ Even temples with fewer resources, such as Lingyan temple, sought to fill their halls and walls with artwork.⁴⁵⁴ Many monasteries owned artworks or calligraphy donated by patrons. Often these works had been donated at the request of an institution's abbot.⁴⁵⁵ At Lingyan temple, the Yushu Pavilion 御書閣 was dedicated to housing the temple's collection of stele inscriptions of the calligraphy of notable people, most of which were likely solicited by the institution's various abbots.⁴⁵⁶ In the Song dynasty, individuals interested in the arts might have visited a temple for the sole purpose of viewing its artwork.

Song-era temples, however, were multi-functional and thus, there were any number of situations in which an individual could encounter a temple's art. Many people visited temples for the natural scenery, to learn about a specific institution's history, or simply because it was famous. Liu Daochun, in his entry on the artist Wang Juzheng 王居正 (act. early to mid-eleventh c.), noted that, seeing as temples were favorite sightseeing spots for young women, the artist would frequent temples in order to capture candid depictions of them.⁴⁵⁷ Some temples had large libraries, which students studying for the civil examinations might use, not to mention the public markets held at those sites.⁴⁵⁸ Given the variety of circumstances under which someone could

⁴⁵³ Soper, "Hsiang-Kuo-Ssü," 32-45.

⁴⁵⁴ Although not as large or as wealthy as many temples in the capital, Lingyan temple was neither small nor impoverished. According to the scholar-official Su Zhe, the complex had around three hundred monks in residence when he visited in the 1073. Further, throughout most of the eleventh century, the temple underwent significant renovations and additions to the visual programs of the various halls. See LYZ, j. 3, 178.

⁴⁵⁵ Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960-1279* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 15-17.

⁴⁵⁶ This hall was built during the Zhenguan era 貞觀 (627-649) of the Tang dynasty by abbot Huichong 慧崇, was renovated in the Northern Song period by abbot Renqin 仁欽 (abbot between 1102-1110), and had most of its valuable works destroyed during the Zhenyou era 貞祐 (1213-1217) of the Jin dynasty (1115-1234).

⁴⁵⁷ Liu Daochun, *Evaluations of Sung Dynasty Painters*, j. 1, 22a.

⁴⁵⁸ Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song Dynasty China* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 39.

encounter religious imagery at a temple, devotional practice and the expectation of a response from an image were not always primary factors in someone's viewing experience.

Many civil officials, in the course of their work, had regular contacts with the temples within their administrative jurisdiction and thus, many opportunities to view an institution's art collection. Some of these encounters were strictly business-related, such as gathering documents for the registration of a temple's monks or processing travel forms for visiting clerics. Other associations were based on their positions as local leaders, as in cases where they assisted in the organization of community celebrations and religious festivals. While traveling between job postings, which occurred at regular intervals, officials frequently housed overnight at temples. There they might find conversation and companionship with well educated clerics, as well as learn about the temple and the region's history.⁴⁵⁹

Much like Jōjin, some scholar-officials documented their trips, whether they were day trips to specific sites or longer ones taking them across the country for a new job posting. These travel records 游記 formed an important genre of writing in Song times, encouraged both by publishing opportunities available following the invention of printing and the greater ease with which people were able to travel in this period.⁴⁶⁰ Lu You's 陸游 (1125-1210) travel journal entitled, *Record of a Journey into Shu* 入蜀記, provides many examples of his encounters with religious imagery both within and outside of religious practice. The journal documents the trip taken by the official and his family from Shanyin 山陰 (present-day Shaoxing 紹興, Zhejiang province 浙江) to Kuizhou 夔州 county (present-day Fengjie 奉節, Sichuan province 四川) for a

⁴⁵⁹ Examples of these types of interactions are found in the travel journals of two well-known authors of the Song period: Lu You's *Record of a Journey into Shu* 入蜀記, which is discussed below, and Fan Chengda's various journals.

⁴⁶⁰ For discussion on the infrastructure of China during this period and the logistics of travel, specifically for bureaucrats, see Cong Ellen Zhang, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 43-82.

new job posting in 1170. The long trip covered eighteen hundred miles and took one hundred and fifty-seven days. In his categorization of various types of travel literature, James Hargett has designated Lu You's journal as a "river diary," given that the author and his family traveled primarily by boat.⁴⁶¹ Although most of his entries are brief, only mentioning the location and type of artwork, we can still get a sense of some of the components of the viewing experience.

For example, on the first day of the trip they stopped for a break in Xiaoshan county 蕭山縣 near Jueyuan temple 覺苑寺 and Lu You wrote:

There is a painting of water by the Piling native Qi Shunchen [996-1052] on the great wall behind the back panel of the buddha image. Suddenly seeing it, I was shocked by the power of the intense waves. Some former scholars have called it "lifeless water." They were being overly critical.⁴⁶²

又有毗陵人戚舜臣所畫水，蓋佛後座大壁也。
卒然見之，覺濤瀾洶湧可駭，前輩或謂之死水，過矣。⁴⁶³

Lu You's entry displays a "reportorial" quality, which Hargett has identified as one of the characteristics of "river diaries."⁴⁶⁴ Upon viewing, the civil official first identified the artist and then recorded his reaction to the skill of the painter. In his remarks, Lu You acknowledges the larger historical dialogue on Qi Chunshen's painting ("some former scholars") and then situates his own opinion about the artwork within that dialogue ("they were being overly critical"). A short entry to be sure, but one that demonstrates two features found in many of Lu You's records

⁴⁶¹ The other categories identified by Hargett are "daytrip essays" and "embassy essays." James M. Hargett, "Some Preliminary Remarks on the Travel Records of the Song Dynasty (960-1279)." *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 7, no. 1/2 (July, 1985): 85-87.

⁴⁶² Translation adapted from Lu You, *South China in the Twelfth Century: A Translation of Lu Yu's Travel Diaries, July 3-December 6, 1170*, trans. Chun-shu Chang and Joan Smythe (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1981), 39.

⁴⁶³ Lu You 陸游 *Record of a Journey into Shu* 入蜀記, j.1, p. 2. SKQS.

⁴⁶⁴ Hargett, "Some Preliminary Remarks," 85-87.

of artworks: he identifies basic information about a work and then offers his own opinion in reference to the larger historical and critical discourse.

In the cases where Lu felt that his knowledge of an object was insufficient, he sought to verify the critical information. In an entry dated to the eighth day of the seventh month of the year, Lu visited Master Daolin Zhenjue Pagoda 道林真覺大師塔 at Taipingxingguo temple 太平興國寺 on Zhong Mountain 鍾山.⁴⁶⁵ There he viewed a gilt bronze image of the monk Baogong 寶公 (418-514), which had an inscription on its chest.⁴⁶⁶

The monks say this ancient object was taken to the Qisheng Temple in the Eastern Capital (Bianliang) and that, in the early period of the dynasty, whenever prayers were offered to the image, it was the Qisheng Temple and this pagoda that performed the services. [I] checked [and] this is correct.⁴⁶⁷

僧言古像取入東都啟聖院。祖宗時每有祈禱，啟聖及此塔皆設道場，考之信然。⁴⁶⁸

For Lu, the experience of seeing was tied into the verification of information. By authenticating the details, checking to see if the monks were correct, he was also authenticating his experience in viewing it, identifying, as it were, the historical record for the object being viewed. An educated viewer looking at religious art under other circumstances might employ this same strategy. In viewing a painting by Wang Wei 王維 (701-761), the poet Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊 (1187-1169), composed a eulogy entitled, “[A Painting] of *Luohan* Crossing the Water by

⁴⁶⁵ Zhong Mountain is also known as Zijin Mountain 紫金山 and is located in Jiangsu province near Nanjing.

⁴⁶⁶ Baogong was a monk of the Liang dynasty (502-557), who is documented under several different names, including Baozhi 寶誌/保誌. According to his biography as listed in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* 高僧傳, he died at the age of ninety-seven and was buried at Dulong hill 獨龍之阜 on Zhong Mountain 鍾山 where a temple was erected in his honor. T. 50, n.2059: 394a15-395a03. In 982, the monk was designated as the Bodhisattva Daolin Zhenjue. See Yannick Bruneton, "The Figure of Baozhi (418-524): A Model for the Buddhist Historiography of the Koryŏ Dynasty?" *Journal of Korean Religions* 3.2 (2012): 122-123.

⁴⁶⁷ Translation in consultation with Martin J. Powers and Chang and Smythe, *South China in the Twelfth Century*, 71.

⁴⁶⁸ Lu You, *Record of a Journey*, j.1, p. 6, SKQS.

Wang Mojie 王摩詰渡水羅漢. As Bong Seok Joo has observed, the poet begins the eulogy with a very specific concern: to establish the authenticity of the painting.⁴⁶⁹

This scroll must have had sixteen monks. Therefore, the one [we] have must be the last part of the scroll [as it only] has three monks. [It has] three characters, "Wang Mojie." It is regrettable that no other calligraphy by Wang Mojie is extant and so this inscription cannot be checked [against another]. On the upper corner [of the painting] is a round seal, which has [the characters] "Yeshi." Could this be another style name for Mojie?⁴⁷⁰

此軸必有十六僧, 所存者卷末三僧爾. 王摩詰三字, 恨無摩詰它字可參校. 上用圓角印, 其文為桼釋, 豈摩詰別號耶?⁴⁷¹

Like Lu You, Liu was interested in verifying the historical background of the artwork with a view to its authenticity. In this case, the question was whether the painting was an authentic work by the artist Wang Mojie, a Tang dynasty artist, poet, and scholar-official better known as Wang Wei. Liu too wanted to consult other sources to verify the identification of the artwork had they been available ("regretful...cannot be checked.") He even acknowledged both his readership and presumably, the future viewers of the painting, by posing the rhetorical question: "could this be another style name for Mojie?" After carefully inspecting the painted *luohan*, Liu declared, "Oh, how could this not have been painted except by Mojie?" 嗚乎, 此固非摩詰不能作歟? It is his evaluation of the painting, his knowledge of the artist and his work that ultimately authenticated the work for him.

The viewing strategy employed by both writers was not limited to looking at religious art, as evidenced by another example from Lu's travel journal. Several months after having visited Master Daolin Zhenjue Pagoda temple on Zhong Mountain, he visited Zhixi Hall 至喜堂 built

⁴⁶⁹ Joo, "The Arhat Cult," 162.

⁴⁷⁰ Translation in consultation Martin J. Powers and Joo, "The Arhat Cult," 162.

⁴⁷¹ Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊, "[A Painting] of *Luohan* Crossing the Water by Wang Mojie" 王摩詰渡水羅漢, *Collected Works of Houcun* 後村集, j. 32, p. 13a, SKQS.

by the civil official and poet Ouyang Xiu in Yiling county 夷陵縣 (present-day Hebei province), a hall already in disrepair by the time Lu arrived.⁴⁷² While there, he strolled over to the poet's memorial hall located nearby. Inside was a portrait of Ouyang Xiu. Lu observed: "The portrait of does not resemble him at all. What a pity!" (肖像殊不類可嘆)⁴⁷³ Significant is that Ouyang Xiu died in 1072 some fifty years before Lu was born. His response to the portrait then was not based on actual knowledge of Ouyang Xiu's physical appearance nor was it based on the quality of its execution. Instead, it was most likely based on other images of the poet Lu had seen, as well as his knowledge of the man glimpsed through his writings. In stating the portrait did not resemble Ouyang, Lu was positioning himself both within the Song history of intellectuals— i.e. he was familiar with the poet—and as someone with a deep knowledge of the artistic representations of important historical figures. His knowledge meant he had strong opinions about Ouyang Xiu's character as a scholar and a man.

The viewing practices Lu took for granted when viewing Qi Shunchen's wall painting at Jueyuan temple, the portrait sculpture of the monk Baogong, and Ouyang Xiu's portrait, can be found throughout his travel journal. Whether it is a work of art, an inscription, or historic site, Lu is interested in verifying the relevant historical information (who, what, when, and where), formulating his own ideas about it, and—possibly most importantly—connecting his opinion of it within a larger historical dialogue. Cong Ellen Zhang has argued when it came to intellectuals traveling and visiting sites seen by others, those trips "came to function like their collections of antiques and books, the social circles to which they belonged, and the degrees for which they worked so assiduously, as a particular kind of social capital."⁴⁷⁴ Lu You approached "looking"

⁴⁷² This visit occurred on the seventh day of the tenth month of the year.

⁴⁷³ Lu You 陸游 *Record of a Journey*, j.4, p. 20, SKQS.

⁴⁷⁴ Zhang, *Transformative Journeys*, 154.

with a particular viewing strategy, one that authenticated his experience through placing himself in the contemporary and historical networks of educated people.

A correlate to personal authentication as a factor in the viewing experience was the approach to any object or site with some amount of skepticism. As an example, by Song times the late ninth-century painter, poet, and monk Guanxiu 貫休 (832-912) was well known for having painted vivid depictions of *luohan* as unearthly, curious beings of non-Han Chinese origin. He was also known for the inspirational source of his images: his dreams. In the early Northern Song publication *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* 宋高僧傳, compiled by Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001) in 988, the entry on Guanxiu included a remark the painter supposedly made regarding his commission for a *luohan* composition: “Every time I paint one [a *luohan*], [I] always pray that I’ll dream of its true appearance. Only then will I succeed [in painting it.] 每畫一尊必祈夢得應真貌。方成之。⁴⁷⁵ A similar quote is found in the 1007 book, *Record of the Famous Paintings of Yizhou* 益州名畫錄: Reportedly, when someone asked Guanxiu [about his painting of lohans], he said, “[I paint] what I have seen in my own dreams.” 或問之, 云: 休自夢中所睹爾。⁴⁷⁶ Richard K. Kent has noted it was this later quote that was most often associated with the painter thus becoming part of the legend surrounding his uncanny depictions of *luohan*.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁵ T. 50, n.2061: 897a26. According to the record the painting was made for a room in Qiangshi pharmacy located on Zhong’an bridge 眾安橋. Bong Seok Joo has suggested this was located in Hangzhou. See Joo, “The Arhat Cult,” 88, fn. 136. In the entry, as with even those in art historical texts, Guanxiu is referred to by an honorary name given to him by the prince of the Shu kingdom in the early tenth century, Master of the Dhyana Moon 禪月大師. The story of Guanxiu’s life, specifically as it relates to his status as a monk, is found in this biography.

⁴⁷⁶ Although it was a less popular statement, Guanxiu went on to say that it was in this same manner that he was able to depict images of Śākyamuni’s Ten Disciples 又畫釋迦十弟子。亦如此類. Huang Xiufu 黃休復 (fl. 1004), *Record of the Famous Paintings of Yizhou* 益州名畫錄, preface dated to 1006, j. 下, 4a-b. SKQS.

⁴⁷⁷ Kent, “The Sixteen Lohans,” 42, fn. 53.

By the 1070s, when Guo Ruoxu wrote about Guanxiu, he provided an alternative version of the story about the artist and his dreams. Guo wrote:

When I once saw a *luohan* painting in ink by Guanxiu, I said [to myself], “This is the true look of the *luohan* Xiu witnessed while in meditation, and afterwards sketched. This is how he caught to perfection the archaic strangeness of his Indian face and frame.”⁴⁷⁸

嘗觀所畫水墨羅漢，云是休公入定觀羅漢真容後寫之，故悉是梵相，形骨古怪。⁴⁷⁹

Guo did not attribute Guanxiu’s abilities to a dream, but instead framed his remarks around his own experience of viewing the artist’s painting. Some fifty years later, the entry for Guanxiu in the *Imperial Catalogue of Painting of the Xuanhe Era* noted the spectacular qualities of the artist’s *luohan*, but then skeptically refuted the claim that Guanxiu’s dreams were at all related to his artwork. “Viewers are always startled at the sight of them (his *luohan*). [Guanxiu] said that these [images] came to him in his dreams. [We] suspect, however, that he used this [story] just to lend a sense of mystery to his paintings, and that he was merely trying to be unconventional” 見者莫不駭矚。自謂得之夢中，疑其託是以神之，殆立意絕俗耳。⁴⁸⁰ One can assume the individuals who wrote the catalogue had actually looked at the twenty-six works by Guanxiu depicting *luohan* in the imperial collection.

Between the late tenth century and the early twelfth century, we find increasing skepticism toward the story of Guanxiu and his dreams. Some scholars have attributed this change to the “rationalism” of the Confucian-educated viewership of the arts.⁴⁸¹ However, this skepticism should also be seen as a part of a viewing strategy extending beyond *luohan* imagery

⁴⁷⁸ Translation in consultation with Martin J. Powers and Soper, *Kuo Jo-Hsu's Experiences in Painting*, 38.

⁴⁷⁹ Guo, *Experiences in Painting*, j. 2, 25.

⁴⁸⁰ *Xuanhe huapu*, j. 3, p. 12a. Translation (with modifications) by Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 62.

⁴⁸¹ Wen Fong and Richard K. Kent both refer to this in their discussions of Guanxiu and reactions to his work in the Song dynasty. See Fong, “Five Hundred Lohans,” 70 and Kent, “Sixteen Lohans,” 47, fn. 59.

and religious art. In 1084, Su Shi recorded his experience of visiting Stone Bell Mountain 石鐘山 and Pengli Lake 彭蠡 (Poyang Lake 鄱阳湖) (present day Hukou county 湖口, Jiangxi province) in the “daytrip” essay, “Record of Stone Bell Mountain” 石鐘山記. The site was provocative for the author as legends spoke of unusual bell-like sounding rocks in the area. He approached the mountain and the experience with considerable incredulity. Accompanied by a novice monk sent by a local abbot, he visited the site during the day. Unimpressed, he returned with his son for an evening boat ride. Amidst an unearthly atmosphere created by the tall looming rocks of the mountain, cawing birds, and unusual noises from a mountain ravine, Su Shi hears the bell-like sounds of the legends. Although disturbed by the noises, he traces the source of the sound to hollowed out rocks located in the water at the base of the mountain. In this manner, he disproved for himself the superstitions surrounding the area. The experience led him to rhetorically ponder: “is it acceptable for someone who has not personally seen or heard something to have decided views on whether or not it exists?” 事不目見耳聞, 而臆斷其有無, 可乎?⁴⁸² As James Hargett has noted, “Su Shi’s final argument could not have been stated in more lucid terms: one should thoroughly investigate something before formulating any decided views on it.”⁴⁸³

Su Shi’s skepticism over the superstitious claims surrounding Stone Bell Mountain shaped how he “looked” at the site. For him, as with other educated individuals of the Song dynasty, that skepticism provoked him to personally examine the matter. Personal investigation was as much a part of the viewing experience as was the skepticism that formed his expectations

⁴⁸² Su Shi, Record of Stone Bell Mountain in *Historical Travel Records* 歷代遊記, ed. Bei Yuanchen 貝遠辰 et al. (Changsha: Hunan People’s Press, 1981), 45. For a full translation of the essay into English, see Hargett, “Some Preliminary Remarks, 74-76.

⁴⁸³ Hargett, “Some Preliminary Remarks,” 76.

of the site. As an official working for the government, no doubt, part of his job involved this same process: skepticism, investigation, and personal verification.

Conclusion

In a period of expanded accessibility to religious art, viewing this type of art was an experience open to all people in Song China. The audience for the Lingyan temple sculptures would have included the entire spectrum of society, from poor farmers to high-ranking officials. Some people may have approached the *luohan* figures in the belief the sculptures themselves held religious power; an expectation enhanced by the visual program of Banzhou Hall and the sculptures' status as consecrated objects. For laity, the experience of "looking" may have been predicated on specific personal concerns, but it was shaped through the religious protocols deemed necessary for acquiring a response from a sacred figure. Also based on the expectation of response, clerical viewing experiences varied: from those that highlighted a personal encounter to instances when the monastic collective was prioritized.

At the same time, the art historical texts of the period and travel writings of scholar-officials suggest the appreciation of fine art was more important for other viewers. As Michael Baxandall observed, in viewing works of art, people bring to that experience skills they have learned in other walks of life.⁴⁸⁴ And so scholars, such as Su Shi or Lu You, applied the critical skills they learned as scholars and officials to works of art. Skeptical of popular claims, they sought to verify the historical origin of every painting, sculpture, or site they viewed. Their experience of art would have required the personal verification of historical facts, their

⁴⁸⁴ Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 38-40.

awareness of a larger network of contemporary and historical intellectuals, and the recording of their own, personal assessment of the work.

Song society offered a range of possible approaches to viewing religious art. Some practices were controversial in the eyes of some viewers, such as viewing icons at home, but for others this same experience embodied a different kind of “reverence,” reverence for the artist, his artistry, and the product of his art. In this context, “looking” at the Lingyan temple sculptures during the Song dynasty was a multi-faceted experience shaped by a diverse and multi-faceted society.

Epilogue

In 1057, only nine years before the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple were created, in the preface of a book of his poems Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) wrote:

...their diction is easy and approachable, select but not too refined. Yet in their tightly structured repetitions, their starting and stopping, their occasional forays into the strange and wonderful, and their incorporation of joking, teasing and laughter, at their best [these works] achieve a refined subtlety.⁴⁸⁵

...言易而近. 擇而不精. 然稠 繆反復. 若斷若續. 而時發於奇怪. 雜以談嘲笑謔及其至也. 往往亦造精微.⁴⁸⁶

The qualities Ouyang Xiu ascribed to his own poems could easily describe the Northern Song sculptures in Thousand Buddha Hall at Lingyan temple. Through their presentation of *luohan* as life-like clerics with vivacious and engaging poses and gestures, these twenty-seven sculptures are “easy” and “approachable,” and “not too refined.” Not depictions of abbots dressed and posed in the finery of their offices as if sitting for a portrait, they are instead images of “ordinary” monks in the midst of routine monastic activities.

It is not mere chance these sculptures reflect the very qualities the poet and civil official Ouyang Xiu valued. As noted by Ernst Gombrich, “the form of a representation cannot be divorced from its purpose and the requirements of the society in which the given visual language

⁴⁸⁵ Translation by Colin Hawes, “Mundane Transcendence: Dealing with the Everyday in Ouyang Xiu's Poetry,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 21 (Dec., 1999): 127.

⁴⁸⁶ Original work entitled, “Preface to Poems Composed and Answered in the Ministry of Rites” 禮部唱和詩序. See Hawes, “Mundane Transcendence,” 127.

gains currency.”⁴⁸⁷ The sculptures were produced at a moment in China’s history when the artistic, literary, and social issues of the day were pondered, discussed, and debated by educated people from all walks of life: from poets and artists to monks and civil officials. The temple community that commissioned the sculptures, the artists who created them, and Ouyang Xiu were all enmeshed in a social and religious landscape where ideas were in wide circulation across multiple communities of people.

Overlooked in modern scholarship, these sculptures have been placed center stage in this study. In attempting to recover the place of these works within the multi-faceted landscape of the Song dynasty, this project has investigated them through the artistic choices that render each figure an “ordinary” looking monk and the artistic practices around *luohan* and monk imagery, the Song-era discourse on naturalism and representation, and the viewing strategies of their potential contemporary audience.

As figures of *luohan*, these sculptures represent a critical artistic period between the incept phase of the worship of these sacred personages in the early Tang dynasty and the widespread popularity of these practices in the Southern Song period. However, as discussed in Chapter Two, the sculptures blur the line between images of *luohan* and monks. Deconstructing the “ordinariness” of the figures through their iconography, naturalistic style, and gestures revealed a correlation with contemporary Song dynasty monastic imagery and practice. Comparing the sculptures with other sculpted figural sets of the period established the range of choices available to the Lingyan temple sculptors in their depiction of *luohan*, which highlighted the uniqueness of the choice to present them as active, engaged, and average looking clerics. As suggested in this chapter, the visual demonstration of clerics engaged with contemporary

⁴⁸⁷ E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1960), 90.

monastic practices and politics, such as is depicted with the sculptures, would have been advantageous for Lingyan temple during the very years these works were created. In the years prior to their production, the temple was undergoing massive renovation projects in an attempt to raise its public profile in preparation for its registration with the government as a Chan public temple, which occurred four short years after the sculptures were produced. As a rhetorical strategy, claiming knowledge of trends in contemporary monastic regulations and theological issues as well as demonstrating competency with religious practice, positioned the temple as an institution deserving to be included in the larger network of prominent temples recognized by the government. The sculptures played a critical role in this process.

Focusing on the naturalism of these sculptures, those very qualities that render the figures life-like, Chapter Three investigated the discursive practices around this topic in the Song dynasty. As suggested in this chapter, writers from within and outside of the monastic institution were debating, critiquing, and challenging the numerous claims produced out of pictorially naturalistic images, such as likeness, objectivity, or authenticity. At stake in these discussions was the “truth” of imagery, noted by the multivalent term, *zhen* 真. In portrait eulogies, Chan writers were using *zhen* to deny any possible “truth” of imagery and simultaneously were utilizing this term’s rhetorical capabilities to demonstrate their own skill with Chan logic. In the late eleventh century, artistic discourse on pictorial naturalism shifted away from a prioritization on similitude toward naturalness. For writers not associated with the monastic institution, *zhen* was key to re-framing the “truth” of imagery as the “authenticity” of individuals, whether the artist or the depicted subject. Within the literary and intellectual trends of the period, so too was there an emphasis on naturalness and authenticity encapsulated through simpleness, directness,

and casualness as seen through the Chan “recorded sayings” literature and the ideas of the *guwen* movement.

Within this discursive context, the naturalism of the Lingyan temple sculptures presented a “truth” that was complex, yet flexible enough to accommodate multiple interpretations. It was a point of convergence for issues ranging from the role of the visual form to the agency of the individual, issues that were important to multiple communities of educated people. Engaging with the spectrum of their educated viewership was crucial for the temple’s sustainability as it was both financially dependent upon lay support and was becoming integrated into the legal system with its 1070 registration.

Chapter Four turned to look at this viewership more closely. Investigating the viewing strategies, expectations, and assumptions of individuals as they encountered religious art, as found in period documents as diverse as eye-witness accounts of *luohan* ceremonies to travel diaries, revealed the multiplicity of issues at stake with Song-era educated viewers. Some people approached these encounters with the expectation of a response from the depicted divinity. Yet, as suggested by this examination, this alone was not the only factor that shaped the experience of “looking” for these viewers. In approaching *luohan* images, the desire for a specific response, such as the birth of a child, led laity to particular objects and to devotional practices that formed the encounter as highly personal. For clerics too the experience might be formed as a direct encounter with a *luohan* image formed around personal devotional practice. However, the protocols involved with larger monastic-led ceremonies for *luohan* highlighted both the monastic community and an individual’s place within it. In this way, the viewing experience of clerics was shaped around their status as a members of a monastic institution and the connection between the *luohan* and that institution.

Other viewers during the Song dynasty did not encounter religious imagery within the context of devotional practice, and for them there was no expectation of a divine response. Instead, they approached these objects as works of art, engaging many of the same viewing strategies as used with non-religious works. For them, the “reverence” given to religious objects within a devotional context was equated with the respect for the artistic qualities of an artwork and the artist responsible for it. In some instances, “seeing” was a shared experience, the value of which lay in the companionship and conversation sparked by the artwork.

However, as suggested in this chapter, other viewers applied the critical skills they learned as scholars and officials to “seeing” religious works. Skepticism and personal verification of popular claims or the historical facts of an artwork were key facets of their viewing experiences. Through their own investigations into an object, recording their own assessment of the work, and positioning themselves within a larger network of contemporary and historical intellectuals who had also shared the experience of viewing an object, they authenticated their own encounter.

This exploration into the “seeing” experiences of Song-era viewers revealed the diversity of approaches people took with religious art and the multiplicity of factors that shaped those encounters. During the era of their production, the Lingyan temple sculptures could be viewed as objects of religious devotion, as works of art, or as both. “Seeing” them might have been motivated by highly personalized expectations of a response from the *luohan* or formed around the viewer’s engagement with past and present intellectual communities of arts lovers. For the potential audiences of these sculptures, they held the possibility of countless “seeing” experiences.

In placing the Northern Song sculptures at Lingyan temple at the center of the artistic, religious, and cultural politics of the Song dynasty, this dissertation not only deepens our knowledge of these rarely studied works, but also highlights the complexity of Song society. The sculptures demonstrate the relationships temples had with broader communities of people and the uses of the arts to appeal to those diverse audiences. As such, these were not simply objects of Buddhist devotion, but instead held a multiplicity of possible meanings for a multi-faceted potential audience.



Fig. 1.1. *Luohan sculptures north wall east side*. Thousand Buddha Hall 千佛殿, Lingyan Temple 靈巖寺, Changqing county 長清縣, Shandong Province. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.2. *Luohan sculptures east wall north side*. Thousand Buddha Hall 千佛殿, Lingyan temple 靈巖寺, Changqing county 長清縣, Shandong Province. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.3. *Luohan #18W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.4. *Luohan #27E*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.5. *Luohan #17W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.6. *Luohan #37E*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.7. *Luohan #2W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.8. *Luohan #3W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.9. *Luohan #1W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.10. *Luohan #21E*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.11. *Luohan #36E*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.12. *Luohan* #5*W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.13. *Luohan #10W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 1.14. *Seated Arhat*. Yixian County, Hebei province. Liao (947-1125) or Jin (1115-1234) dynasty. Earthenware with tricolor glaze. Musee Guimet, Paris.



Fig. 1.15. *Seated Arhat*. Yixian County, Hebei province. Liao (947-1125) or Jin (1115-1234) dynasty. Earthenware with tricolor glaze. British Museum, London.



Fig. 1.16. *Head of a Luohan*. Liao (947-1125) or Jin (1115-1234) dynasty. Dry lacquer with traces of gilding and paint. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City.

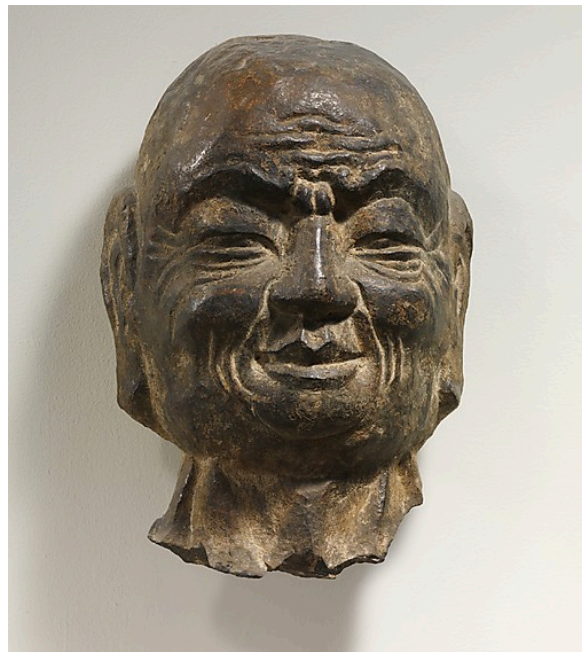


Fig. 1.17. *Head of an Arhat*. 8th-9th century, Tang dynasty (618-907). Limestone with traces of pigment. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 1.18. Attrib. Fanlong 梵隆 (active mid-12th century). Detail of *Sixteen Luohan* 十六應真圖. Southern Song dynasty, mid-12th century. Handscroll, ink on paper. Full dimensions 30.5 x 1062.5 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

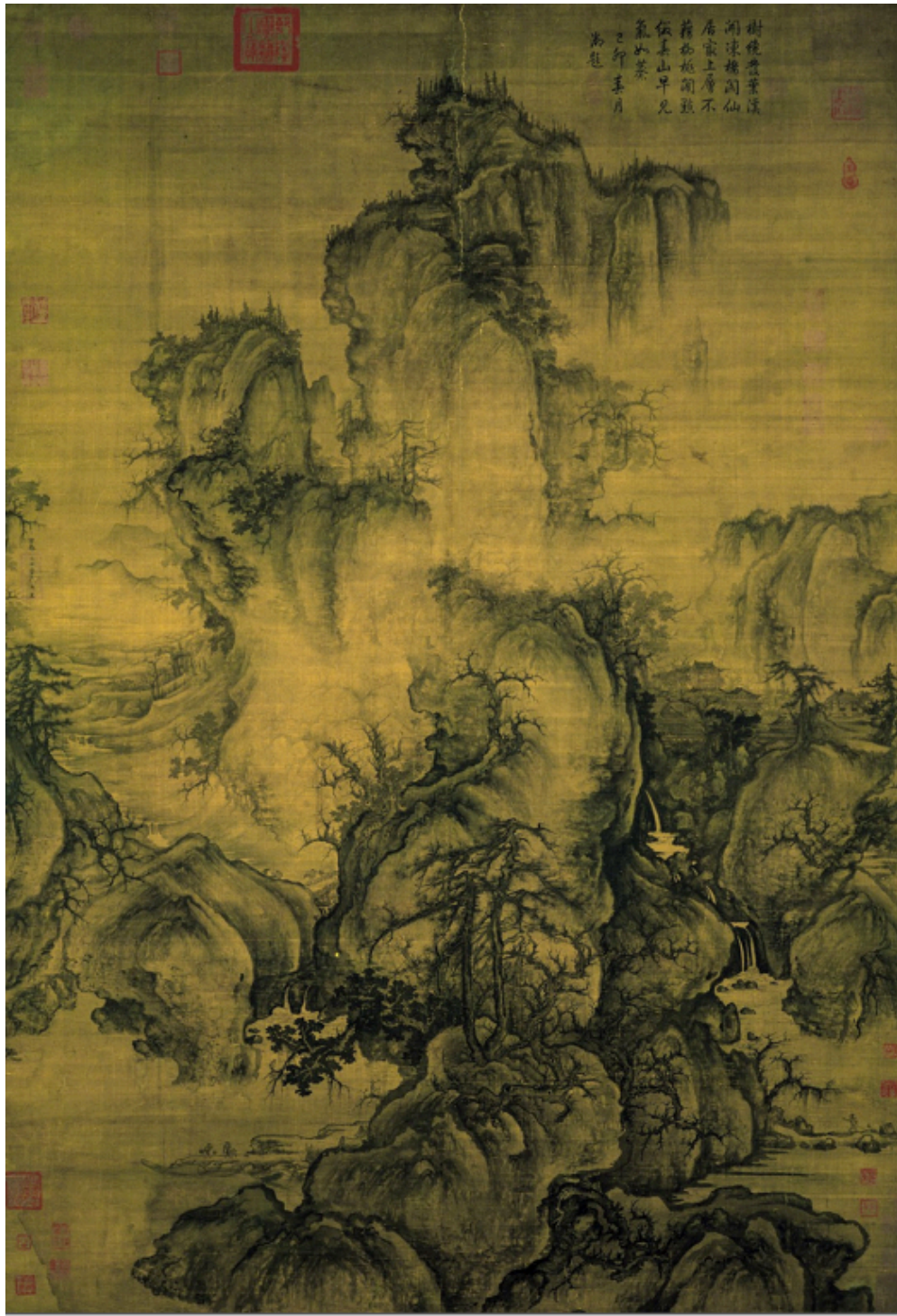


Fig. 1.19. Guo Xi 郭熙 (c. 1020-c. 1090). *Early Spring* 早春圖. Hanging scroll, ink on silk. Northern Song period, 1072. National Palace Museum, Taipei.



Fig. 1.20. Fan Kuan 范寬 (fl. 990-1020). *Travelers by Streams and Mountains* 溪山行旅圖. Hanging scroll, ink on silk. Northern Song dynasty, ca. 1000. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

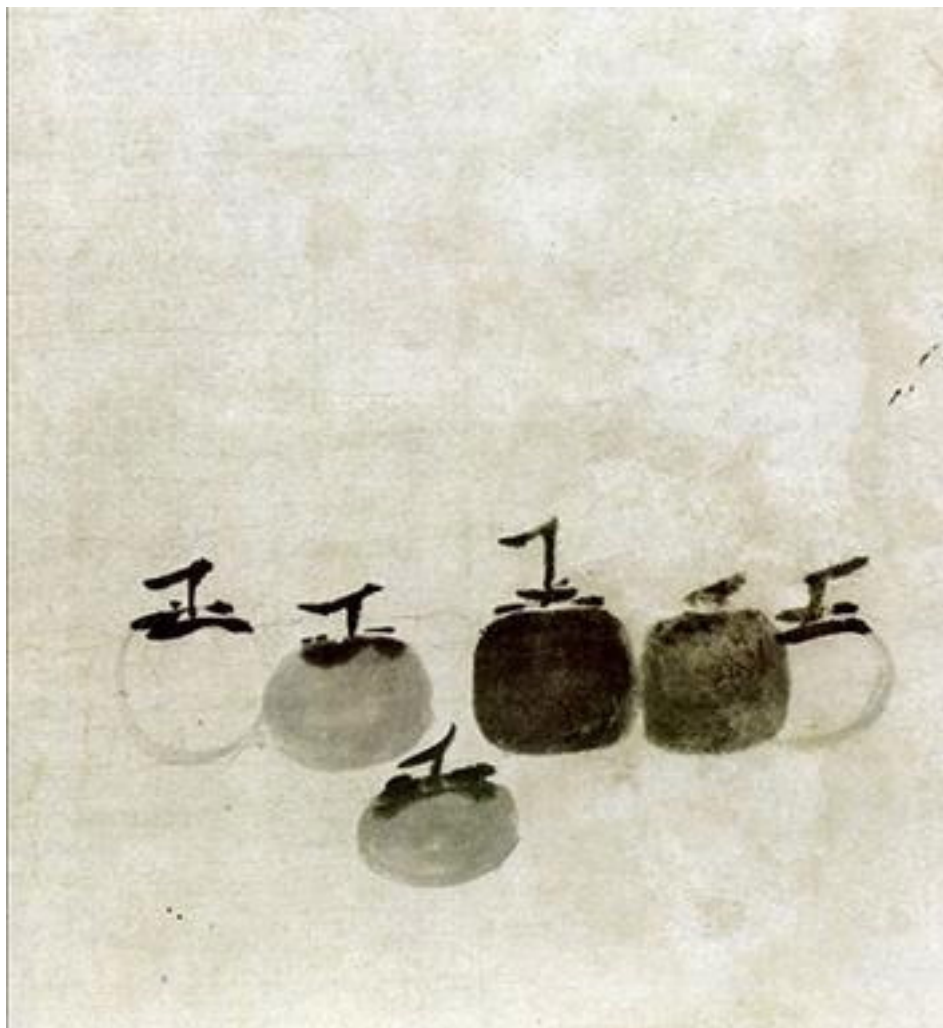


Fig. 1.21. Muqi Fachang 牧溪法常 (act. 1220s-1280s). *Six Persimmons*. 13th century. Ink on paper. Daitokuji, Japan.



Fig. 2.1. *Luohan #7W (Ming dynasty) and #8W (Song dynasty)*. West wall, Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.2. *Luohan #1W, #2W, and #3W*. South wall west side, Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Photo by author.

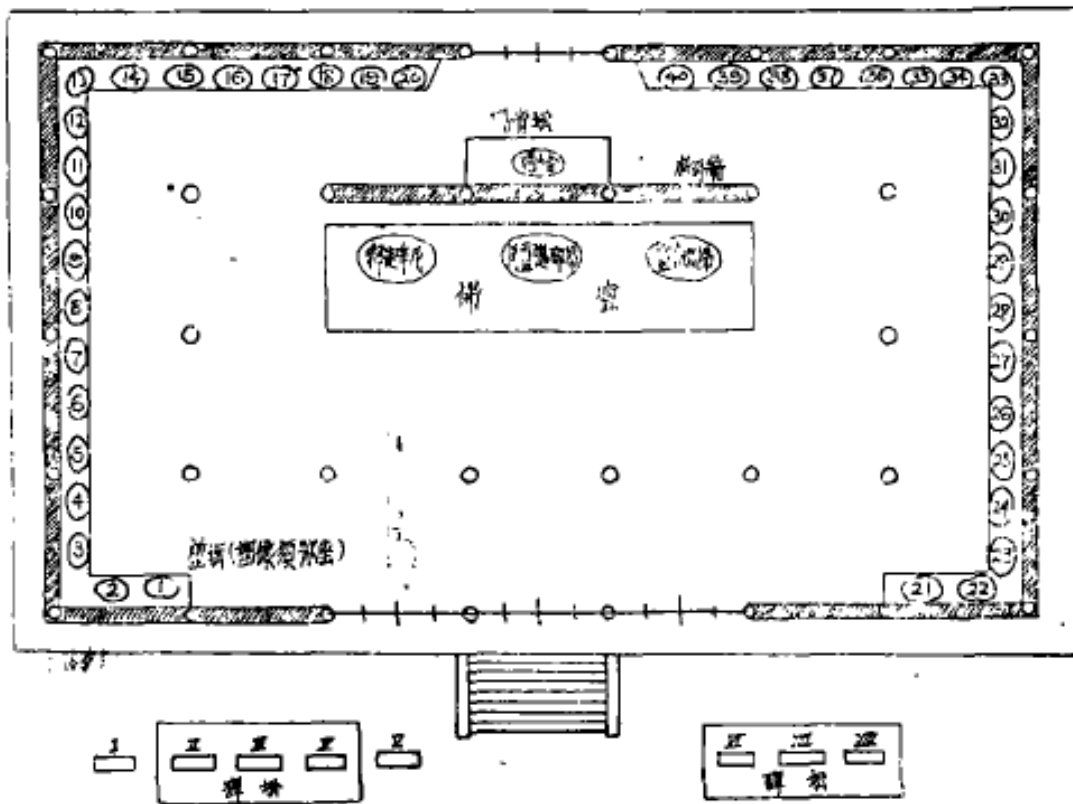


Fig. 2.3. *Schematic of Thousand Buddha Hall*. Reprinted from Zhang Heyun 張鶴云, "Research on the Ancient Sculptures of Changqing's Lingyan Temple 长清灵岩寺古塑像考, *Wenwu* 文物, no. 12 (1959): 1

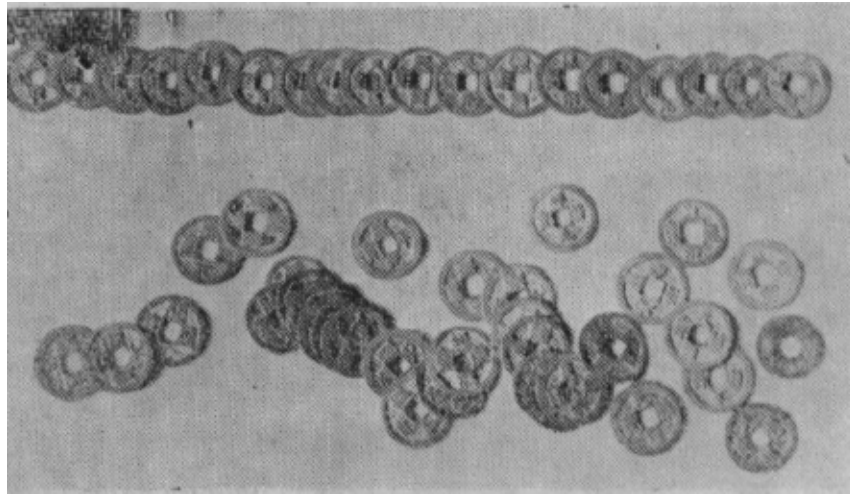


Fig. 2.4. *Coins found in Luohan #8W*. Dates ranging from Sui dynasty (581-618) to Song dynasty, Jiayou era (1056-1063). Reprinted from Zhou Fusen 周福森, "Relevant Questions on the Dating of the *Luohan* Sculptures of the Lingyan Temple in Shandong's Changqing" 山东长清灵岩寺罗汉像的盟制年代及有关问题, *Wenwu* 文物 3 (1984): 79.

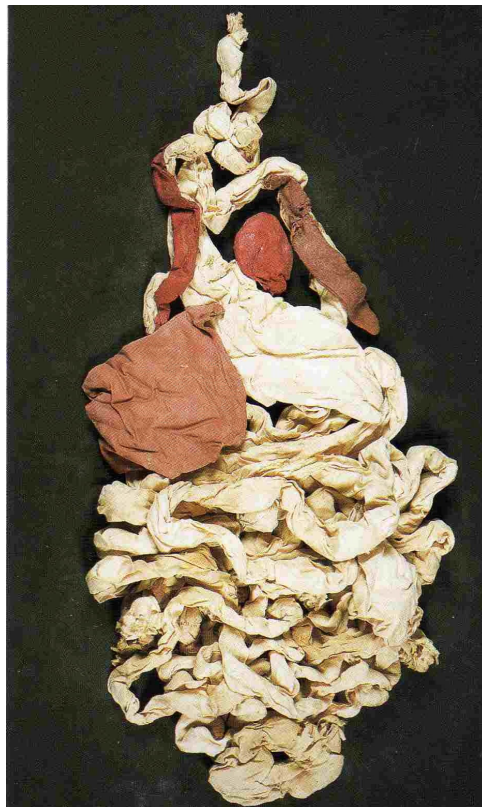


Fig. 2.5. *Silk and cotton viscera found inside Luohan #8W*. Song dynasty (960-1279), circa 1066. Reprinted from Wang Rongyu 王荣玉 et al., *Lingyan Temple 灵巖寺* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社 1999), 44.



Fig. 2.6. *Iron-cast luohan sculpture found inside of Luohan #11W. Northern Song dynasty, 1070.*
Reprinted from Wang, *Lingyan Temple*, 43.

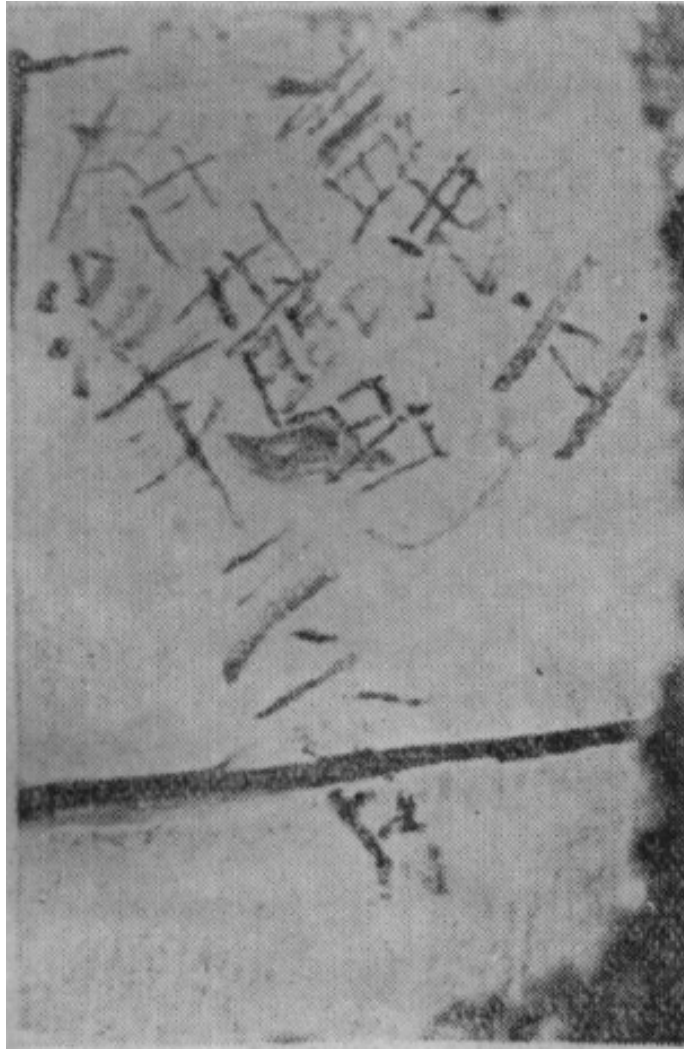


Fig. 2.7. *Gai Zhongli* 盖忠立. *Inscription inside of Luohan #17W*. Song dynasty (960-1279), 1066. Reprinted from Zhou, "Relevant Questions," 79.



Fig. 2.8. *Ruins of Banzhou Hall directly north of Thousand Buddha Hall. Lingyan temple.*
Reprinted from Wang, *Lingyan Temple*, 26.



Fig. 2.9. *Vairocana Buddha* 毗盧遮那佛. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty (960-1126), 1065. Clay, pigment, and gilding; height: 5.46 m. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.10. *Losana Buddha* 盧舍那佛. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Ming dynasty (1368-1644), 1477. Bronze; height: 3.87 m. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.11. *Śākyamuni* 釋迦尼. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Ming dynasty (1368-1644), 1543. Bronze; height: 3.67 m. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.12. View of the west side of Thousand Buddha Hall. Lingyan Temple. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.13. *Luohan #13W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.14. *Luohan* #33E. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Painted clay. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.15. *Sunlight through northern set of doors.* Thousand Buddhas Hall, Lingyan temple.
Photo by author.



Fig. 2.16. *Pizhi Pagoda* 辟支塔. Northwest of Thousand Buddha hall, Lingyan temple. Tang dynasty (618-907). Photo by author



Fig. 2.17. *Ruins of the Five Flower Pavilion* 五花閣. Southeast of Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Song dynasty, Jingyou era 景祐 (1034-1038). Photo by author.



Fig. 2.18. Earlobe comparison: average earlobe of Luohan #36E (left) and extended earlobe of #6W. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, 1066. Photos by author.



Fig. 2.19. Bernd Melcher. *Abbot with Sculptures #26E and #25E*.
Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan Temple, 1921. Original title, *Der jetzige
Abt* [The Current Abbot]. In *Der Tempelbau: Die Lochan Von Ling-Yan-Si,
Ein Hauptwerk Buddhistischer Plastik*, Pl. 22.



Fig. 2.20. *Luohan #6W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan Temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.21. *Face of Luohan #5W* Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan Temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.22. *Face of Luohan #36E*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan Temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Photo by author.



Fig. 2.23. *Faces of Luohans #21E and #27E*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan Temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Photos by author.



Fig. 2.24. *Faces of Luohans #8W, #16W, and #19W*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Photos by Martin J. Powers (#8W) and author (#16W and #19W).



Fig. 2.25. *Hand gestures: Luohan #2W (upper left), Luohan #3W (upper right), Luohan #10W (lower left), Luohan #40E (lower right).* Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, circa 1066. Photo credits: Angela Howard et al. ed., *Chinese Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press and Foreign Languages Press, 2006), 190 (upper left); Martin J. Powers (upper right); author (lower right and left).

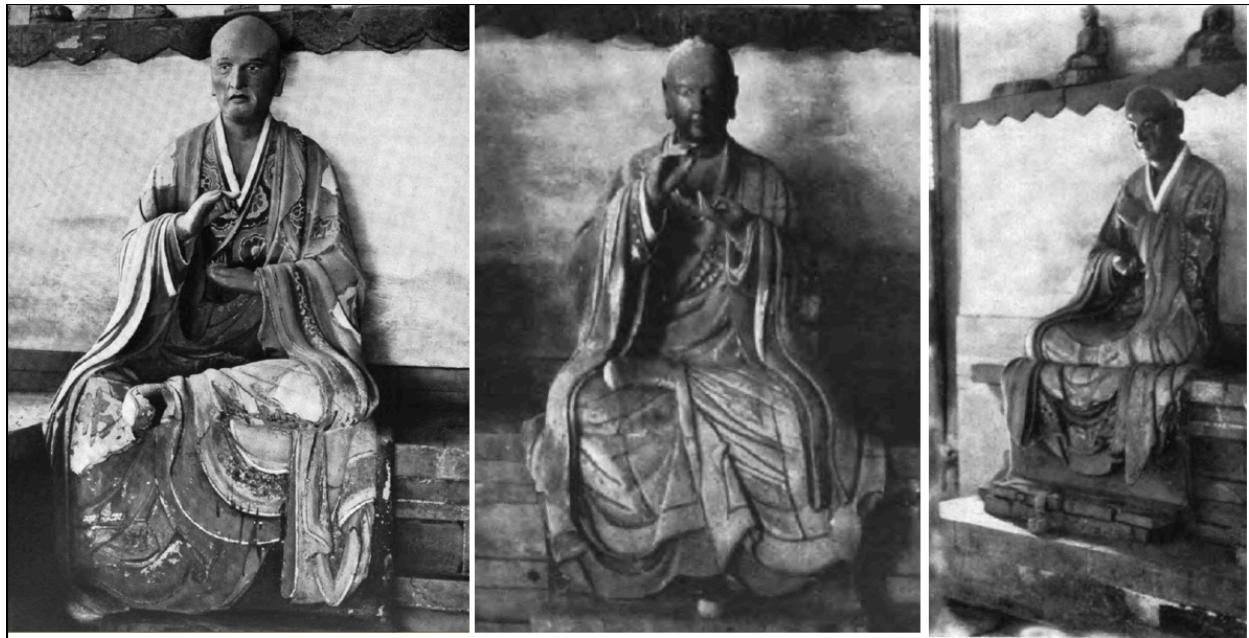


Fig. 2.26. *Hands circa 1921, Luohan #3W (left), Luohan #10W (center), and Luohan #40E (right). Reprinted from Melchers, *Der Tempelbau*, Pls. 31, 21, 33.*



Fig. 2.27. Lin Tinggui 林庭珪 (act. late 12th c.) and Zhou Jichang 周季常 (act. late 12th c.).
Pilgrims Offering Treasures to Luohan. Southern Song dynasty, 1178-1188. Hanging scroll, ink
and colors on silk; 110.5 x 52.0 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

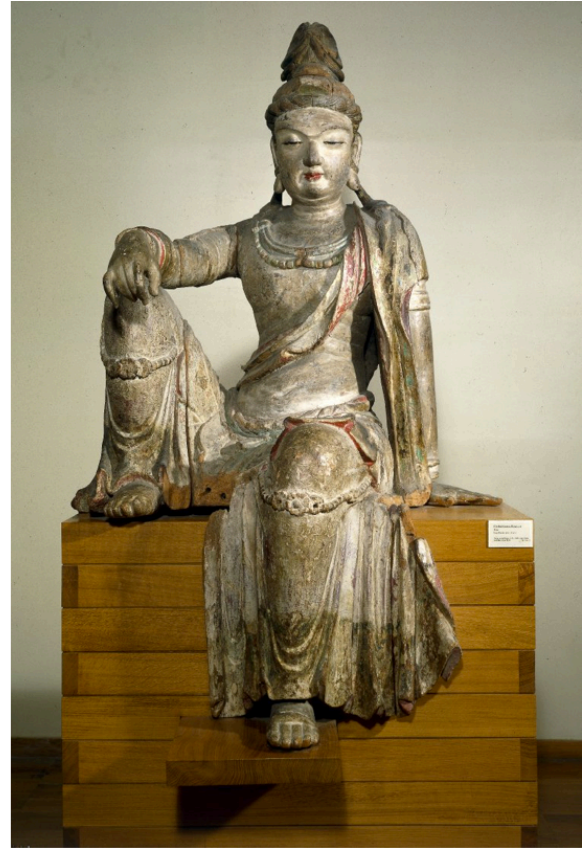
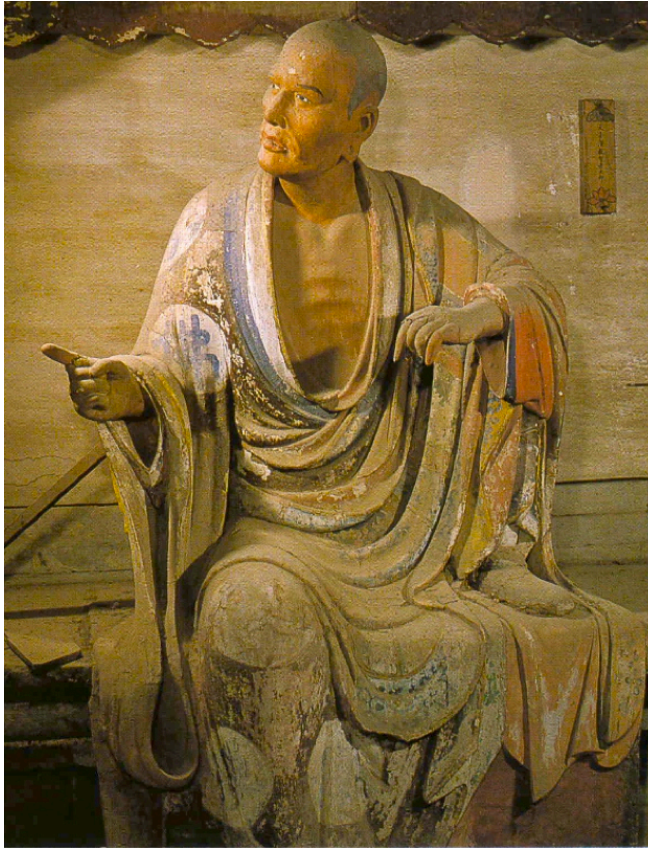


Fig. 2.28. (left) *Luohan #18W seated in a modified royal ease pose*. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty (960-1126), circa 1066. Photo by author.

Fig. 2.29. (right) *Seated Guanyin*. 11th-12th c. Polychrome and wood; height 1.7m. British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.30. *Luohan* #27E. Thousand Buddha Hall, Lingyan temple. Northern Song dynasty, 1066.
Photo by author.