

CLASSICS IN EAST ASIAN STUDIES

*Zen in
Medieval Vietnam*

A Study and Translation
of the *Thiền Học Tập Anh*
Chang Tu Nguyen



Zen in Medieval Vietnam



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Classics in East Asian Buddhism

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Cuong Tu Nguyen

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PART I—
A STUDY OF THE *THIEN * UYEN* TAP* ANH*

INTRODUCTION

This study presents a historical analysis of the origin and evolution of the so-called Zen tradition or Zen School within Vietnamese Buddhist history. The scholarly study of Buddhism in East Asia and Southeast Asia has generally neglected the Vietnamese Buddhist tradition, and this work is an effort to remedy this situation. It is not an attempt at a general survey of Vietnamese Buddhist history, but rather an analysis of the place of the Zen tradition within this history.

In the following pages, I present an analysis of one voice telling this story. This voice is a text known to Vietnamese Buddhists as the *Thien * Uyen* Tap* Anh* [Outstanding Figures in the Vietnamese Zen Community, henceforth referred to as *Thiên Uyên*]. The *Thiên Uyên* was compiled in Vietnam around the third decade of the fourteenth century. It is a collection of biographies of eminent Zen monks in Vietnam from the sixth to the thirteenth century, presented in the form of the transmission of three Zen lineages or schools.

The present work is thus a study of a text and its impact on a community of interpreters and how they have interpreted and used the text. Given the current situation of modern scholarship on interpreting or reading texts, I deem it necessary to delineate my approach to the *Thiên Uyên* as well as to analyze its nature as a text. The *Thiên Uyên* is purported to be a narrative history of Vietnamese Zen Buddhism and as such is obviously modeled upon the literary genre called *chuandeng lu* or "transmission of the lamp" or "lamp history" in Chinese Zen Buddhism. What the *Thiên Uyên* tells us is that Vietnamese Buddhist history is a continuation of the development of the Chinese Zen tradition.

Although in reality there are various voices telling us about different aspects of the Vietnamese Buddhist past, the *Thiên Uyên*, at least in the last fifty years, has been the most authoritative voice among the Vietnamese Buddhist elite. One of the reasons for this is that the *Thiên Uyên*

is probably the only extant text that attempts to narrate a cohesive history of Vietnamese Buddhism. It is also true that the *Thiên * Uyen** is the most readily available source. The story that the *Thiên Uyên* tells has been accepted as the official history of Vietnamese Buddhism for more than half a century. Read as the most authoritative presentation of medieval Vietnamese Buddhist history, the *Thiên Uyen's** view of Vietnamese Buddhist history has even had an impact on modern Vietnamese Buddhism. Therefore, it is both worthwhile and necessary to undertake a thorough, critical investigation of this text.

In this study I question this traditional, uncritical reading of the *Thiên Uyên*—a reading that takes as its basic premise that the author of the text faithfully narrates historical events as they were. In sum, I have found this reading of the text not only superficial but misleading, since it fails to contextualize the text or to check the voice of this text against other voices telling Vietnamese Buddhist history. These voices speak not only in words through other texts, but also in concrete facts such as institutions, practices, arts, and popular manifestations.

I am persuaded by a modern philosopher's observation that history is a study of meaning,¹ and I find the notion that history can be a faithful reconstruction of the past naive. At the same time, I recognize that the voice of the tradition under investigation is an indispensable source of data, revealing the tradition's effort to understand itself, to define its meanings and aspirations. I accept Keith Taylor's remark that "[t]he past is vaster and stranger than we have been trained to believe, and it belongs to no one but those who lived it."²

It is obvious that a credulous, uncritical reading of a text like the *Thiên Uyên*, which takes it as a literal account of "the facts" of history, is too simplistic to provide any useful understanding of history—no matter that such a reading is defended in euphemistic terms as "letting the tradition speak for itself." "The tradition" is and has always been multifarious, multivocal, reconceived, and refashioned endlessly through the ages by insiders, each with an agenda and a selective focus. The *Thiên Uyên* itself is one powerful voice from "the tradition," but not the only one we must heed.

Without presuming on the modern perspective and scholarship, I believe that as modern researchers we are capable of differentiating instances where the traditionalist authors construct history from the traditional perspective and system of meanings, from those where the ideas presented are blatant errors or intentional fabrications to serve political or factional purposes.

Some scholars in modern literary criticism, particularly those who emphasize the reader-oriented reading, downplay the significance of the

author's pretextual intention in understanding a text. For these scholars, the text's intention is independent of the author's intention.³ I am of the opinion that the author's intention is extremely relevant in reading the *Thiên* Uyên**, especially since our goal is to understand the historical implications of the text and more than the literal meaning or pedagogic significance of the biographies of the monks.

At one level, the meaning of these biographies is clear. Vietnamese Buddhists can read them as examples of virtuous and heroic behavior, and this is no doubt a revealing dimension of meaning for historians of religion to explore. But awareness of this field of meanings does not hinder us from exploring other meanings hidden in the records of the *Thiên Uyên*—meanings at variance with the author's manifest intent to have the *Thiên Uyên* read to show Vietnamese Zen as a continuation of Chinese Zen, and as the highest form of Vietnamese Buddhism. Nor does respect for the intent of the authors of the *Thiên Uyên* prevent us from discovering meanings at variance with modern-day uses of the *Thiên Uyên* as a charter for certain notions of orthodoxy and for a certain view of Vietnamese Buddhist history that accords Zen a preeminent place in the tradition.

Of course for the *Thiên Uyên*, we do not even know who the author was, and we have reason to believe that he did not compose the biographies de novo, but only put them together by collecting data from different sources. The author draws together what appear to be disparate life stories of monks and refashions them into biographies of Zen masters. He solicits us to read "monks" as "Zen masters" and to believe that the text he compiles—the *Thiên Uyên*—is a "transmission of the lamp" text in the sense that it faithfully and consistently records the biographies of Zen masters.

Guided by an intention to compose a Vietnamese Buddhist history in the context of Zen, the author of the *Thiên Uyên* constructs the Vietnamese Zen tradition based on data that in themselves might reveal to us a different picture of Vietnamese Buddhism. Acknowledging the author's intention lets us gauge the way he handles his materials and thus helps us in our effort to understand the historical meaning of the *Thiên Uyên* and thus Vietnamese Buddhist history.

On Terminology

Inevitably in studies that endeavor to reach across the boundaries of cultures and times, there is a problem of terminology. Many of the generalizing terms of the language in which this study is written were first applied in the context of the study of European history. Some might therefore argue that these terms are so freighted with associations from

the European context that they should not be applied at all in reference to other areas of the world. Writing in English about a non-Western area, such broad terms as "history," "politics," "state," "nation," "culture," "religion," and "philosophy" would then be out of bounds.

To be sure, it could be legitimately argued that all of these terms, and the categorization of human experience they reflect, are culture-bound and parochial, and that how to use them, or whether to use them at all, in reference to phenomena outside their native culture area will always be a problematic issue and an open field for convoluted controversy.

When writing about Vietnam, should we abandon our own language and insist on Vietnamese terms for all the key categories? Can we only discuss Buddhism in a melange of Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, and all the many other languages of the lands where Buddhism has been propagated? This hardly seems a workable solution.

The only way out is to make clear from the outset, and constantly remind readers, that little analytic weight is being put or should be put on such broad category-labels as "history," "politics," "state," "nation," "culture," "religion," and "philosophy." Using these terms is just a convenient shorthand, a way of talking (dictated by the language we are using), and not a way of thinking.

Similarly, using terms like "Vietnam," "China," "Buddhism," and "Confucianism" is not meant to imply that there was or is some essential "Vietnam," "China," "Buddhism," or "Confucianism" outside the particular time-delimited clusters of people and ideas to which these terms are applied as a convenient shorthand. Clearly Vietnam and China in medieval times were not nations in the modern sense of the word. Their states were not modern states, and the concerns of modern nationalists were not the concerns of medieval statesmen and thinkers. Words like "Buddhism" and "Confucianism" are just synchronic abstractions applied as shorthand labels to realities that were multidimensional, multifarious, and ever shifting.

We reject the conventional way of reifying these abstractions and making them actors in the historical narrative, but these terms can serve as shorthand labels—we have no others. Again, saying that "Vietnam changed" or "China posed a threat" is merely a convenient way of talking, not a way of overlooking or denying the complexity of social realities on the ground through time.

Structure of the Work

This study consists of two parts. Part I is a study of the *Thien * Uyen** from both historical and textual perspectives. Part II is a complete translation of the *Thiên Uyên*.

Part I comprises three chapters. In Chapter One, I discuss the date, authorship, and source materials for the composition of the text. With scant materials available, I also endeavor to patch together a picture of the situation of Buddhism in Vietnam up to the time of the composition of the text itself.

My conclusion is that through the outset of the Lý dynasty (1010–1225), Buddhism in Vietnam was of a composite nature. It was a mixture of some Buddhist elements from India and China and the beliefs and practices characteristic of the indigenous people's religious sensibilities and popular cults. This Buddhism emphasized magic, ritual, and thaumaturgy. From the middle of the tenth century on, Chinese Zen literature and probably a number of Zen adherents made their way to Vietnam. Zen literature began to appeal to the Buddhist elite at the capital. It was this newly introduced (Zen) Buddhism that influenced medieval Vietnamese Buddhist intellectuals in forming their conception of Buddhist history and Vietnamese Buddhist history in particular.

In Chapter Two, I suggest a critical reading of the *Thien * Uyen**, that is, a complete textual and historical analysis of the text. In this chapter I delineate the influence of Chinese Zen classic the *Jingde chuandeng lu* [Transmission of the Lamp Composed in the Jingde Era] on the Vietnamese Buddhist conception of Buddhist history, and the use of the "lamp history" paradigm for Vietnamese Buddhism. I also attempt to locate the *Thiên Uyên* within this context.

My goal is to show that the traditional/literal reading of the *Thiên Uyên* as a "transmission of the lamp" text and the corollary interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism as a continuation of Chinese Zen is both superficial and misleading. A thorough textual and historical analysis of the *Thiên Uyên* in light of other available sources and the contemporary social and institutional background brings me to the conclusion that Zen in medieval Vietnam was only a limited presence. Whatever our understanding of the term "Zen school" might be, Zen in Vietnam was never what it was in China, Japan, and Korea.

In Chapter Three, I show how departing from a literal reading of *Thiên Uyên* not only does not detract from the unique value of the text but reveals other layers of meaning of the text that shed light on the situation of Buddhism in medieval Vietnam and underline the text's unparalleled richness as a historical resource.

The *Thiên Uyên* is a treasure trove for the study of Vietnamese Buddhism, packed with vivid information on the beliefs and practices of medieval Vietnamese Buddhism, on the interplay of Buddhism and popular religions, and on how Buddhism was intertwined with social-political life and literary life.

From the above observations, I offer a conclusion that the Zen tradition or school in medieval Vietnam was, more than anything, an imagined community. In the absence of physical, textual, doctrinal, and practical evidence necessary to substantiate its existence as a Buddhist school, it appears that Zen in medieval Vietnam was not an institutionalized entity, but a more diffuse set of attitudes and styles spreading out among its adherents—a blend of life attitude and aesthetic taste and intellectual vocabulary that held considerable appeal for some among the Vietnamese elite, offering a life-style for today and a more abstract romantic visualization of the past of their religion and their country.

Feeling themselves part of this "Zen," this cluster of Zen-derived styles and lore, seeking self-understanding in terms of a view of Buddhist history that makes Zen the paramount achievement, these would-be adherents of Zen in Vietnam have understood themselves as part of Zen history and by so doing have formed an imagined community. A text like the *Thien * Uyen** is a site for this imagined community, where its tone and style, the tales of its exemplars, its landmarks and history are set out in convincingly coherent fashion—and with great artistry and depth. The *Thiên Uyên* can connect its readers to each other and their imagined past, letting them imagine themselves as part of Zen, and Zen as the core of the transmission of Buddhism in Vietnam.

There are three appendixes containing materials that I believe are useful for those who wish to investigate Vietnamese Buddhist history more deeply. Appendixes I and II, respectively, contain additional supporting data to Chapters One and Two. In Appendix III, I offer more translations of biographies of eminent monks from sources other than the *Thiên Uyên*.

The original Chinese text of the *Thiên Uyên* is reproduced at the end of the book.

Chapter One— The *Thien * Uyen* Tap* Anh* in Vietnamese Buddhist History

Modern scholars who study Vietnamese Buddhism seem virtually unanimous in their reliance upon the *Thiên Uyên* as the unique and authoritative source for both the history and philosophy of Vietnamese Buddhism.¹

The *Thiên Uyên* was compiled around the early decades of the fourteenth century C.E. in the style of the Chinese Zen corpus known as the "transmission of the lamp" (*chuandeng lu*) literature. (The exact date of the *Thiên Uyên* is discussed in greater detail in Appendix I.) The *Thiên Uyên* purports to record biographies of eminent Zen monks from the Đinh dynasty (968–980) through the [Former] Lê (980–1009) and Lý (1010–1225) up to the Tran* dynasty (1225–400). Although the author of the *Thiên Uyên* claimed to record Vietnamese Buddhist history from its inception up to his own time (ca. fourteenth century), his earliest records date back only to the late sixth century. Moreover, most of what he records for the period prior to the Đinh dynasty appears to be apocryphal.

Early Buddhism

We have evidence to suggest that Buddhism had come to Jiaozhou (as Vietnam was then called) over routes stretching from India and Central Asia as early as the second century C.E.² Vietnam did not gain political independence from Chinese hegemony until the tenth century.³ Thus, although Buddhism had made its presence felt in Vietnam centuries earlier, it was not until the rise of an independent Vietnamese state that Buddhism became a religion recognized by the ruling dynasties and their subjects as a state-supported and state-supporting religion.

During the four centuries after Vietnam established its independence from China, the Vietnamese ruling dynasties constantly enlisted eminent monks to assist them in religious, political, and literary affairs. During this period Buddhism was able to establish itself as a significant political and cultural force. Some eminent monks served at court, and others who

did not come to court were involved in state affairs in indirect ways. Certain eminent monks who spurned the court's invitations and chose to shun court politics were nevertheless celebrated as paragons of religious purity and embodiments of national values and powers.

Various semihistorical and historical texts meant to solidify Vietnam's national identity were composed for the first time in the centuries after independence.⁴ The historical memory for Buddhist affairs reflected in these texts, however, does not seem to have gone back much further than the period of independence when eminent monks began to collaborate closely with the ruling dynasties. This explains why medieval Vietnamese Buddhist historians apparently had at their disposal only materials for Vietnamese Buddhist history after independence. In other words, Vietnamese Buddhist history appears to begin with the history of Vietnam as a nation.

This paucity of source materials has made it difficult to trace the history of Vietnamese Buddhism from its beginnings (around the second century C.E.) up to the period of independence (tenth century C.E.). This scarcity of reliable data has hindered not only modern scholars but also medieval and premodern scholars in their attempts to depict the history of Buddhism in Vietnam.⁵

With the scant source materials available, in the following sections I shall attempt to give a brief description of Buddhism in Vietnam during the centuries prior to the *Thiên Uyên*. This will help us reconstruct the cultural, religious, and political background and context in which the *Thiên Uyên* was compiled.

Buddhism in Jiaozhou

The scattered data that remain are only enough to let us discern the broad outlines of Buddhism in Jiaozhou. Reasonably well-documented stories of activities by leading Buddhist figures in Jiaozhou can illuminate the general landscape of Jiaozhou Buddhism and supply hints to the pattern of connections between Jiaozhou and the contemporary Buddhist world. From these scattered hints and vignettes, we can understand Jiaozhou Buddhism with some confidence as consistent with the continuum of cultural, commercial, religious, and political influences to which the region was exposed in the first millennium of the common era.

There are a few historical landmarks that can orient us toward the general landscape of Jiaozhou Buddhism. Shi Xie (Si* Nhiep* in Vietnamese), who was governor of Jiaozhou toward the end of the Han dynasty (187–226), is revered in later Vietnamese annals as a shaper of Jiaozhou culture and promoter of Confucian values.⁶ It seems that Buddhist monks

from India and Central Asia formed a conspicuous part of Shi Xie's grand entourage.⁷

Tales set in the days when Vietnam was Jiaozhou show an easy familiarity with such Buddhist elements as the chanting of *sutras**, the building of Buddhist statues, and the magical interventions of Buddhist monks. From these scattered stories, it is not difficult to infer that Buddhist-derived elements were an established part of the religious spectrum of Jiaozhou and that (at least some of) the people of Jiaozhou had recourse to Buddhist-derived images and ritual formulas in their efforts to secure supernatural aid and protection.

Another token of the integration of Jiaozhou in the cosmopolitan Buddhist world of the time is the figure of Kang Senghui. This eminent monk and translator was born in Jiaozhi, the son of a merchant of Central Asian origin who had become assimilated to Chinese culture and did his business in the busy entrepot of Jiaozhi. Eventually, in 247 C.E., Kang Senghui went north to the capital of the Chinese kingdom of Wu and became a leading exponent of Buddhism there.⁸

There are other scattered notices: A wonder-working monk traveled through Jiaozhou and Guangzhou and finally ended up in Luoyang (and hence made his way into the Chinese annals).⁹ A sometime companion of his travels, who was also a wonder-working monk, remained in Jiaozhou and subsequently became closely connected with the origin of a principal indigenous belief and practice.¹⁰ A Central Asian translator-monk who worked in Jiaozhou and was able to recruit a staff of assistants learned enough in Buddhist texts from among the Jiaozhou people.¹¹ A Jiaozhou monk who chanted the *Lotus Sutra** sat in meditation and studied with an Indian teacher in Jiaozhou (who happens to be mentioned in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*).¹² The shadowy figure of Mou Bo, the Chinese scholar official who lived and worked in Jiaozhou possibly in the second century C.E., taught Buddhism and composed his treatise the *Mouzi*.¹³

For data on Jiaozhou, all we have is a handful of shards, and it is risky to deduce the shape of the vessel (or vessels) from which they come. But the picture we glimpse is not inconsistent with what we know about this period of Buddhist history: Buddhist travelers moving across cultural barriers and bringing Buddhist stories, images, texts, ideas, and practices from country to country. Monks engaged in translation work. Buddhists from overseas collaborated with local people to introduce Buddhist beliefs and practices. Monks and lay followers pursued chanting and meditation practices. Buddhist temples were built and images made, with patronage flowing into Buddhist projects. Among high and low alike, appeals for supernatural aid and blessing took on Buddhist coloration. In brief, there

was a blending of Buddhist outlooks and the multilayered local sense of piety and religiosity.

By the time Sui Wendi reunified China late in the sixth century, we can safely presume that Buddhist-derived elements in many forms were already a long-established part of the cultural and religious life of many people in Jiaozhou. Indian, Central Asian, and Chinese monks were regular visitors in Jiaozhou, and they not only contributed to Buddhist studies and activities there, but also inspired native monks to go on pilgrimage trips to India or China to study the Dharma. Buddhism in Jiaozhou may well have in fact been as widespread and solidly rooted as the following famous account from five centuries later claims.

The story goes that late in the eleventh century, the learned Vietnamese Buddhist savant Thông Biện * presented the empress dowager with an account of Vietnamese Buddhist history. Speaking of the period of Sui Wendi (sixth century), Thông Biện told this story:¹⁴

At one time Sui Wendi intended to send Buddhist monks to Jiaozhou to bind the area more firmly to his realm, and to spread the Buddha Dharma there. But a Buddhist monk at the court told the emperor that this was not necessary: He reminded the Chinese emperor that Jiaozhou had long been in communication with India, and Buddhism from there had been brought to Jiaozhou at the same time as to China. Buddhist temples were built, monks were ordained, scriptures were translated. Eminent monks called Jiaozhou their home. Even now eminently qualified Buddhist teachers are at work there. The monk concludes his address to the Sui emperor with these words: "Thus Jiaozhou is no different than China. Your Majesty, you are the compassionate father of all the world. Wishing to bestow your grace everywhere equally, you would send an emissary [to spread Buddhism to Jiaozhou]. But there are already Buddhist teachers there; we do not have to go to convert them."¹⁵

Without having to accept Thông Biện's* account as literally true, we can conclude that there is a core of historical truth in his contention that Buddhism in Jiaozhou already had a long and eclectic history of its own, amalgamating many influences, even before the Sui Tang "Golden Age" of Buddhism in China. During this time Jiaozhou had become a center of Buddhism and Buddhist studies with well-organized Buddhist communities.

Surprisingly, little record of Buddhism in Vietnam during the Tang period remains, but we get hints of a continuing pattern of international links between Vietnam and other parts of the Buddhist world. There were still active links between the Buddhists in Vietnam and Buddhists in India and China.

Several Chinese poems of the period attest to visits to China by monks from Vietnam.¹⁶ The Chinese Buddhist traveler Yijing, in his *Datang*

Xiyu qiufa gaoseng zhuan [Biographies of Eminent Monks of Tang Who Traveled to India to Seek the Dharma], mentions Chinese and Central Asian monks who stopped by Jiaozhou on their way to India and monks from Jiaozhou who sojourned in China and India and were well versed in Sanskrit and Chinese and various Central Asian languages. ¹⁷ Even from the scant evidence that remains, we can infer that Buddhism was a well-established part of the social and cultural landscape in Vietnam during the centuries when the Tang dynasty ruled the Chinese world.

The Early Vietnamese Dynasties

Looking back, we see that Buddhism had existed in Vietnam for nearly a millennium by the time Vietnam established itself as an independent state free of Chinese political hegemony. Continuous interactions with monks from India, Central Asia, and China had helped shape a learned clerical class in Vietnam. Learned monks from elite families were in a position to serve at court and assist the new dynasties (the Đinh, the [Former] Lê, and the Lý) in their efforts to secure their legitimacy and to defend themselves against Chinese pressure. The early Vietnamese dynasties found in the Buddhist clergy a cultural force that could assist them with their political agenda.

In parallel, through a process hidden from historians, by this time in Vietnam Buddhist stories and images had been disseminated among the common people, and Buddhist temples and monks had become a familiar part of the local religious scene. Buddhist monks became figures in traditional tales of magical powers—they were known not only as men of letters but as *religieux* with magical powers that they could use to work wonders, help those in need, and ward off natural and supernatural disasters.

With China disunited after the downfall of the Tang dynasty, Vietnamese leaders had their chance to establish themselves as independent sovereigns in their own right. The Vietnamese Ngô Quyền* defeated the army of the Chinese Southern Han state in a climactic battle on the Bach* Dang* River in 939. But Ngô Quyền died only five years later, ¹⁸ and the Ngô dynasty disintegrated soon after his death. Rival factions from Vietnamese elite backed by their partisans embarked upon a generation of political turmoil known as the Twelve-Warlord Period. Finally in 968 Đinh Bộ* Lĩnh* gained victory over the various Vietnamese warlords and became Đinh Tiên Hoàng (or "the Founding Emperor of the Đinh"). ¹⁹

According to a Vietnamese court chronicle, Đinh Bộ Lĩnh was the first Vietnamese ruler to proclaim himself emperor. He signaled Vietnam's status as an independent entity by instituting a Vietnamese reign era name (until his time Vietnam had been following Chinese reign eras). He changed the name of the country and moved the capital to Hoa Lu'. ²⁰

Three years after ascending the throne, Đinh Bo * Linh* instituted a system of hierarchical ranks for court officials, Buddhist monks, and Daoist priests.²¹ This implies that Buddhist monks already had a recognized place in the social and symbolic order of Vietnamese life, for the new regime to be concerned with including them within its system. Đinh Bô Linh was the first king of medieval Vietnam to attempt to integrate Buddhism—along with Confucianism and Daoism—into the structure of the state.

Historical records reveal little if any detail about the nature of Buddhism in Vietnam during this period. Keith Taylor has observed that "Vietnamese Buddhism up to the tenth century never seems to have gone far beyond the animist perspective."²² His observation appears to be an extrapolation based on one aspect of Lý Buddhism. Archaeologists have recently discovered some steles with inscriptions of mantras erected by Đinh Lien*, Đinh Bô Linh's* eldest son.²³ This has led some scholars to conclude that elements of Tantric Buddhism were already present in Vietnam in the middle of the tenth century.²⁴

The [Former] Lê dynasty (980–1009) succeeded the Đinh. Not much is recorded of Buddhism during this period except the fact that Lê Dai* Hành (r. 980–1005), the founder of the dynasty, also supported Buddhism. He showed great respect for certain of the eminent monks of the time and consulted them on important literary and political issues.²⁵

From historical records and extant Buddhist literature we learn that by this time Buddhism had developed a close affinity with the indigenous religions of Vietnam. This was the usual course of events when Buddhist teachings were initially being propagated in a given culture. Popular and local cults along with their deities were integrated into Vietnamese Buddhism, although they assumed a subordinate position in this composite Buddhist world view. During the early centuries when Buddhist missionary monks came to Vietnam (then Jiaozhou), Buddhist temples were still few and far between, so the monks often took up residence in temples or shrines dedicated to local deities.²⁶ (This explains why the early Lý kings had so many temples built during their reigns.)

Through the charisma and skill in means of these Buddhist missionaries, the indigenous deities—the spiritual representatives and protectors of the Vietnamese terrain and its inhabitants, either nature gods, local genies, or the deified spirits of past national heroes—were eventually brought within the Buddhist fold and converted into protectors of the Dharma. The situation in Vietnam was thus an instance of the typical Buddhist process of incorporating rather than suppressing indigenous cults.²⁷

It appears then that with Buddhists in Vietnam absorbing and inheriting religious attitudes from among the people, Buddhist monks may have had a firmer hold over the people than the Confucian scholars, who were basically more occupied with administrative affairs than with the immediate religious needs of the masses. These eminent monks in times of crisis were able to rally the people for patriotic causes, through their command over religious meanings and symbols in which the people believed. Politically involved monks also created myths and legends for propagandist purposes. They put forth interpretations of omens with supernatural predictions of success for the dynasty and enhanced the dynasty's legitimacy with the masses.²⁸

Chinese classical learning had become the main scholarship of the time for the Vietnamese elite, and numerous Buddhist monks from elite families had received a Confucian education before they took up the monastic vocation. These men were as learned as any Confucian scholar in Confucian political lore and could assist the court both with immediate administrative affairs and with the long-term issue of building political legitimacy. Records of eminent monks at the Đinh and Lê courts show that Buddhist monks did indeed fulfill such functions at court. For example, during the reign of Lê Đại* Hành (r. 980–1005), the founder of the Lê dynasty, the eminent monk Pháp Thuận* (914–990) reportedly played a major role in policy deliberations.

The Lý Dynasty

The kings of the Lý dynasty (1010–1225) continued to draw support from Buddhism, and in return they patronized Buddhism (and the popular and local cults associated with it) on a larger scale. Whereas the Đinh and [Former] Lê had been short-lived regimes that rose and fell amidst political turmoil over a timespan of only three generations, the Lý government lasted two centuries. The Lý had more time to concern themselves with constructing a system of rule and an official world view, and under the Lý the relationship between the court and Buddhism was cast in a more established and organized pattern.

Keith Taylor has referred to the ideological underpinning of the Lý rule as "the Lý national culture" or "Lý dynasty religion," and I believe his characterization of this Lý national culture is a useful interpretive framework for understanding the nature and transformation of Lý Buddhism. According to Taylor, the Lý national culture was "varied, experimental, and nonexclusive."²⁹

The Lý national culture was varied because local cults and deities were being woven into a central ideology that served the building of a national identity and the legitimation of the dynastic authority.

The Lý national culture was experimental because this was a period of self-discovery of the Vietnamese people. During the centuries of Chinese hegemony the heroes who were symbols of a Vietnamese identity had been all but forgotten—except at their native villages where there were shrines dedicated to their memory.³⁰ It was not until the Lý era that the Vietnamese people begin to search seriously for a national identity and to reconstitute a "collective memory." The Lý kings were leaders in this search in the sense that, through their virtue, they became the embodiment of the national spirit. They were able to invoke the potent spirits and recruit them as protectors of the country.

The Lý national culture was nonexclusive in terms of ethnic origin and doctrinal orientation. Chinese, Cham, and Indian cultural and religious elements and deities all had a part in this process. Even within the context of Buddhism, Keith Taylor is correct in his remark that "[d]ifferent forms of Buddhist thought grew side by side, academic scholarship and rustic enlightenment, royal patronage and ascetic self-sacrifice."³¹

Taylor concludes that "[t]he Vietnamese were not consciously disentangling themselves from ten centuries of Chinese rule, they were not working their way through a postcolonial reaction in the twentieth-century sense. They did not feel culturally threatened by China. They were too absorbed by the excitement of discovering and constructing their own culture to erect barriers against any particular influence. Buddhist monks, [D]aoist priests, and classical literati all had positive contributions to make. . . . China was a military and political problem, but not a cultural threat."³²

I believe that this culturally open attitude toward China and the gradual ascent of the Confucian-inclined faction at the Vietnamese court were the major factors that contributed to the emergence of a more exclusive-oriented Sinocentric world view, which in turn inspired the development of a new formulation of Buddhism and guided the Buddhist elites' view of Vietnamese Buddhist history.³³

The Lý kings adopted this "national culture" as both an expedient political strategy and an earnest effort at a cultural self-discovery. Various elements with different ethnic and ideological origins took on specific roles in the process. This "division of ideological labor" became a trademark of the Lý and after them the Tran*. Buddhists, Daoists, and Confucians all had their own roles in this national culture and their own contribution to make in civilizing and elevating the court and the people (although court chronicles mention little if anything about the role of Daoism).³⁴ The Lý regime's attitude toward the usefulness of all three religions probably laid the foundation for the typical pattern of royal

patronage and respect for all three religions in subsequent Vietnamese dynasties, particularly the Tran *.

The Lý clan was the most powerful in the country, but as Keith Taylor points out, "the Lý dynasty was established by general acclamation, not by a campaign of pacification." Powerful regional clans were loyal to the Lý and accepted its legitimacy not through forced compliance but because they believed that the Lý kings were virtuous men, competent to obtain the supernatural blessings from the spirits of the land that could ensure the nation's prosperity.³⁵

Eminent Buddhist monks, due to their influence over local deities, were able to rally them, and thus the masses who believed in them, in support of the kings in patriotic causes. Court chronicles and other semihistorical sources record cases of potent spirits including nature gods, local genies, and spirits of past national heroes who declared their allegiance to the Lý kings, in some cases through the medium of Buddhist monks, and offered their assistance.

The following are a few such instances from the *Viet* Dien* U Linh Tap** [Collected Stories of the Potent Spirits of the Viet Realm]. Formerly when the monk Chí Thành came to dwell at Kien* So' Temple at Phù Dong* Village, he erected a shrine dedicated to the genie on the right side of the temple's gate. (The genie was said to be an incarnation of Phù Đông Thiên Vu'ong or the Celestial King of Phù Đông, a legendary national hero of Vietnam). The shrine was also used as a place for the monks to meditate and chant. Eventually, for some unknown reasons, the temple fell into decay and the masses turned it into a place to worship wicked spirits.

Afterward Monk Đa Bao* repaired the temple and had a mind to pull down the shrine. One day, through his meditative power, Đa Bao invoked the genie by causing a verse to appear on the trunk of an old tree near the shrine:

Who can protect the Buddha-Dharma?
The pillar of virtue that supports the sangha.
If you do not [belong to the Buddha's] lineage,
You'd better move quickly to another place. . . .

The next day Đa Bao saw next to his verse the genie's response in an eight-line verse of his own:

The Buddha-Dharma is immensely compassionate,
Its august light blankets the universe.
There the myriad gods pay homage,
There all sentient beings of the three-realms take refuge.

Our master has given the order,
 How dare any wicked spirit disobey?
 We wish to take the precepts with you,
 All of us vow to support the sangha.

After Lý Thái To * ascended the throne, he paid a visit to the temple. Đa Bao* greeted him. When they passed by the side of the temple, Đa Bao asked in his sonorous voice, "Buddhist, can you pay homage to the new Son of Heaven?" Immediately on the bark of the tree appeared a verse:

The emperor's virtue is as immense as heaven and earth,
 His authority and prestige awe the eight regions into
 obedience.
 In the underworld we benefit from his favor,
 The kindness of this visit soars to heaven.

Lý Thái Tô then conferred upon the genie the title Xung Thiên Than* Vu'ong [the Celestial King Storming the Sky] and ordered that a statue of the genie be made and sacrifices offered to it.³⁶

In another episode the author of the *Viet* Dien** claims to quote from the *Báo Cu'c* Truyen** [Records of Declaring the Unfathomable]. When Lý Thái Tô moved his capital from Hoa Lu' to Long Biên, he often dreamed of a white-haired man standing before the throne, bowing and acclaiming him. Amazed by this, the emperor asked his name and learnt that the old man was the genie of the river Tô Lịch*. Lý Thái Tô said, "Can you genies keep incense and fire burning for a hundred years?" The genie answered, "We wish your dynasty the solidity of rock, Your Majesty boundless longevity, the court and the city great peace. We genies keep incense and fire burning not just for a hundred years." Lý Thái Tô then conferred upon the genie the title of the Great King Patron of the capital city of Thang* Long.³⁷

The *Việt Diên* also records that under Lý Nhân Tông (r. 1072–1127) the Song invaded Vietnam. Grand Commandant Lý Thu'ong Kiet* was called upon to lead the Vietnamese troops to resist the enemy. He stationed his troops on the banks of the Nhu' Nguyet* River near the temple of the two brothers Tru'ong Hong* and Tru'ong Hát—deified national heroes—and awaited the battle. One night a voice was heard from the temple declaiming a verse that nowadays is known by heart by most Vietnamese:

The rivers and mountains of the Nam country are the
 residence of the King of Nam,
 It has been so decided clearly in the Celestial Book.
 How dare you belligerent aggressors invade them?
 You will soon be defeated and destroyed.

The Song troops were eventually defeated. The victory was thus due as much to the valor of the Vietnamese as to the sacredness of the Vietnamese territory protected by its potent spirits.³⁸

I am inclined to go along with suggestions that the Buddhist monks themselves invented these myths and legends as part of their strategy to legitimize the dynastic power and its affinity with Buddhism.³⁹

In the Lý synthesis, then, Buddhism had the role of assimilating and in a sense overpowering the deities of local indigenous cults, and transforming them into protectors of the realm.

The Lý court supported Buddhism both materially and ideologically. The (early) Lý kings dedicated substantial funds to Buddhist projects. Old temples were refurbished and embellished, new temples were erected,⁴⁰ and official envoys went to China to bring back Buddhist texts so copies could be made and placed in the major temples.⁴¹ Some of the Chinese Zen classics, particularly those of the *chuandeng lu* (transmission of the lamp) and *yulu* (recorded sayings) genres, had found their way to Vietnam and attracted the attention of the learned monks at the capital. It was undoubtedly this sort of Chinese Zen literature that inspired the Vietnamese Buddhists to compose a history of their own tradition along similar lines. (This issue is discussed in detail in Chapter Two and Appendix II).

Although Buddhist scholarship was encouraged by the Lý kings, there was nothing in Vietnam at the time remotely resembling a scholastic tradition of Buddhist philosophy or distinctive schools with well-defined doctrinal outlooks. From the scanty documents available to us, we can draw the following picture of Buddhism in Lý times. We can talk in terms of two main trends.

First, there was the "old" Buddhism, which had been prevalent for almost ten centuries. This Buddhism was composite in character, including Tantrism, ritual and devotional practices, and magic, blended together with elements from Indian and Cham Buddhism and Hinduism, Chinese Buddhism, and indigenous popular religions. Second, there was the "new" court Buddhism, which was inclined toward Chinese Patriarchal Zen. This "new" Buddhism reached a higher point under the Tran*, with the Vietnamese elite's appropriation of Chinese Zen literary forms and lineage rituals.

As for the "old" Buddhism, it would be wrong to assume that it was only embraced by rustic village monks and the illiterate masses. We have ample evidence that this trend of Buddhism included many eminent monks who were learned in both Buddhism and the Chinese classics. Literate courtiers also shared the "popular" religious orientation toward ritualism and belief in magical powers. In fact, this form of Buddhism

never lost its grip on people's minds even when Confucianism appeared to overshadow Buddhism at court. ⁴²

The Confucian literati had by no means been idle during the Lý period. Confucianism was an essential element in the "Lý national culture," and as such also enjoyed royal patronage. Confucian temples were built and Confucian-based civil service examination were given more and more frequently. ⁴³ Similar activities were recorded under the Tran*. ⁴⁴ While the Buddhist monks helped in legitimizing the Lý dynastic power with the populace in general by providing mythical and religious justifications for the Lý cause, the Confucian literati worked to put together an administrative mechanism and an education system that contributed to the centralization of the dynastic power in a more secular way.

The Tran Dynasty*

The Trần dynasty (1225–1400) also made serious efforts to legitimize its dynastic power. The official examination system encouraged well-born men to become familiar with Confucian ideas of statecraft and channeled members of the royal clan and other powerful clans into the service of the central power. ⁴⁵ The Mongol invasions ⁴⁶ early in the Trần period caused a national emergency that helped solidify the role of the Trần kings as the leaders of the nation.

Within Vietnamese Buddhism, Zen learning also became more established in this period with the arrival of Chinese Zen monks and literature. For the Trần rulers, Buddhism represented the most profound soteriological aspect of the Three Religions, whereas Confucianism was more effective and appropriate for worldly affairs. ⁴⁷ Most of the Trần kings lived out this world view in their own careers: After abdicating the throne to become "retired emperors," they would withdraw to Mount Yên Tu* to practice Buddhism and become spiritual leaders of their people. ⁴⁸

The kind of Buddhism that the Trần aristocrats embraced was an earnest imitation of the idealistic version of the "new" Buddhism—the Chinese "Patriarchal Zen" that had been finding its way into Vietnam since the Lý dynasty. The Trúc Lâm (Bamboo Grove) Zen school, a genuinely Vietnamese Buddhist "school," was founded by Trần Nhân Tông, the third king of the Trần dynasty. Although the Trúc Lâm School was short-lived, ⁴⁹ it marked the first serious effort to establish a Zen school in medieval Vietnam.

From the few extant writings of its three patriarchs, we can see that Trúc Lâm Zen harks back to Patriarchal Zen. Encounter dialogues were used as a crucial instructional tool. We see descriptions of the typical motifs that appear in Chinese Zen literature: the transmission of the mind of enlightenment directly from teacher to disciple; the construction

of lineages; the teacher leaving behind instructional verses for his disciples, collectively or individually; the teacher bequeathing his robe and begging-bowl to his principal student; the teacher publicly giving the precepts to both monks and laymen; and so forth.⁵⁰ It is clear that Trúc Lâm Zen was principally a form of high-culture Buddhism for aristocrats.

Phúc Dien*, a mid-nineteenth-century Buddhist author, reports that starting from around the end of the Lý dynasty, a number of Chinese Zen monks belonging to the Linji and Caodong schools had come to Vietnam to spread Zen Buddhism. Among their disciples were members of the Tran* aristocracy, including the kings themselves. Phúc Dien's* records show that under the Trần, Zen was popular among the aristocracy and there were a number of temples where Zen was practiced under the guidance of Chinese Zen monks. Unfortunately, all we have now are lists of "lineages" and names of temples where these lineages flourished.⁵¹

The *Thiên Uyên** was composed early in the first half of the fourteenth century. We have no information about its author, but it was probably compiled by royal decree,⁵² and at a time when the enthusiasm for Zen reached a high point—when most of the Vietnamese Buddhist elite at the capital had accepted Zen as the orthodox Buddhism. Accordingly, although in fact Buddhism had come to Vietnam from various sources and had existed there in diverse forms, the author of the *Thiên Uyên* portrays Vietnamese Buddhism as the orthodox offshoot of Chinese Zen.

It is within this historical and intellectual framework that the *Thiên Uyên* will be analyzed in Chapter Two.

The *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh* and the Interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhist History

As we have seen, there is evidence that Buddhism made its presence known in Vietnam as early as the first century C.E.⁵³ However, there is little documentary evidence that could clarify the questions of exactly how and when Buddhism first came to Vietnam, or shed light on how Vietnamese Buddhism developed its distinctive characteristics. The uncertainty that surrounds these issues is due to the complicated political and historical situation of Vietnam in the early centuries of the common era, coupled with the extreme paucity of source materials.

Given the scarcity of historical records on which to draw, the conventional modern presentation of the history of Vietnamese Buddhism blindly follows the *Thiên Uyên*. It usually begins with the formation of the so-called three Zen schools: the Vinitaruci*, the Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao* Đu'ong* as recorded in the *Thiên Uyên*. This version of Vietnamese Buddhist history was self-consciously constructed with the composition of the *Thiên Uyên* in medieval Vietnam, and this constructed history has

been perpetuated by the method of reading this text adopted by modern Vietnamese Buddhist intellectuals.

In modern times, it was the late Tran * Van* Giáp who reiterated the historical viewpoint of the *Thien* Uyen** and helped establish the viewpoint of the *Thiên Uyên* in the Vietnamese Buddhist community as a factual account of the history of their tradition. Giáp accidentally discovered this text in 1927. He then wrote a monograph-length article based on the *Thiên Uyên* entitled "Le Bouddhisme en Annam des origines au XIII^e siècle," which was published in 1932.

Since that time, studies on Buddhism in Vietnam by modern scholars in Vietnamese, Chinese, and Western languages seem to be more or less merely expansions or abridgements of Giáp's article.⁵⁴ In other words, up to the present time, Giáp's work on Buddhism in premodern Vietnam is still unsurpassed. But although Giáp's article shows his usual excellent scholarly skills and care, his work left a legacy that has been more unfortunate than fortunate for the study of Vietnamese Buddhism because it has perpetuated the misconception that an ideologically motivated medieval construction of Vietnamese Buddhist history should be accepted at face value as an account of historical fact.

Giáp was undoubtedly well-versed in the field of Hán-Nôm literature (i.e., Vietnamese literature in Chinese and in the Demotic Script). Nevertheless, his knowledge of Buddhism in general and Chinese Buddhist history and literature in particular left much to be desired. Giáp's article was mainly a reconstruction of the early history of Buddhism in Vietnam from the Đinh and [Former] Lê dynasties through the Lý and early part of the Trần dynasty. Giáp's work is basically a paraphrase of the records in the *Thiên Uyên*, whose content he seems to have accepted uncritically as a veridical history.⁵⁵ According to the *Thiên Uyên* (at least in Giáp's interpretation), the type of Buddhism that flourished in Vietnam was Zen, and from the sixth century up to at least the middle of the thirteenth century there were three schools of Zen Buddhism established in Vietnam: the Vinitaruci*, Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao* Đu'ông schools. This viewpoint, so artfully constructed by the *Thiên Uyên* and perpetuated by Trần Van Giáp, has been accepted for more than half a century.

However, after a careful analysis of the literary style, content, and structure of the *Thiên Uyên* from both historical and interpretive perspectives, I find it impossible to accept this by-now traditional viewpoint.

First of all, the *Thiên Uyên* is not a homogeneous text. It is rather a composite work by an author of the Trần dynasty, who compiled biographies of eminent monks from various sources and of different literary genres that had been gradually pieced together and grafted onto the

genealogical tree of Chinese Zen by some Vietnamese Buddhist authors prior to him.

Second, Tran * Van* Giáp and other authors have constructed a history of Vietnamese Buddhism by relying on the *Thien* Uyen**, which they implicitly accept as a biographical work of the Zen "transmission of the lamp" genre. Curiously enough, none of them has made any effort to investigate the origin and structure of this literary genre in Chinese Buddhism, or of when and how it was appropriated into Vietnamese Buddhism. In short, they have never investigated the motives of the compiler(s) of the *Thiên Uyên* or the nature of the model they followed. This has resulted in an utterly naive reading of the *Thiên Uyên* as if it constituted a veridical report of the historical facts of Vietnamese Buddhism.

The *Thiên Uyên* is undeniably a uniquely valuable text for the study of the history of Buddhism in Vietnam from the sixth to the thirteenth century and for the study of medieval Vietnamese intellectual history in general. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that no single text is as crucial for the understanding of a particular country's Buddhist tradition as the *Thiên Uyên* is to the understanding of Vietnamese Buddhism. That is why it is such an important task to read the *Thiên Uyên* critically and evaluate it carefully, to trace its sources and recognize the design that guided its construction, and to look past its compiler's ideological agenda to the wealth of information revealed in the text.

**Chapter Two—
Reading the *Thiên * Uyen* Tap* Anh*:
A Historical Analysis of the Zen Tradition of Vietnam**

For more than half a century the *Thiên Uyen's** interpretation of the history of Vietnamese Buddhism as a history of the three Zen schools of Vinitaruci*, Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao* Đu'ng* in Vietnam has had the status of an "official history" among the Vietnamese Buddhist elite, modern scholars of Vietnamese studies, and the Vietnamese Buddhist community in general. But upon closer scrutiny, I have found that this viewpoint was never universally, unquestioningly accepted by medieval Vietnamese Buddhist authors. Actually, the *Thiên Uyen* represents only one possible interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhist history. The *Thiên Uyen's* view of Vietnamese Buddhist history was all but forgotten for six hundred years, during which the text itself was left in oblivion, until it was revived in this century by Tran* Van* Giáp after his rediscovery of the text.

At first the *Thiên Uyen's* viewpoint as paraphrased by Trần Văn Giáp was accepted as a factual account by the handful of Vietnamese and French scholars who had some interest in Vietnamese Buddhism, providing them with a ready-made, convenient framework for the study of Vietnamese Buddhism. This was quite understandable, since at that time the scholarly study of Vietnamese Buddhism had barely begun. (It would not be incorrect to say that it has barely begun even now.)

Since Trần Văn Giáp published his work, this viewpoint has become the basis for a rediscovered sense of identity and orthodoxy among Vietnamese Buddhists.¹ Moreover, it was accepted enthusiastically in the mid-1960s in South Vietnam by the Vietnamese Buddhist community in the wake of its presumed "political victory."² This resulted in a self-conscious rethinking on the part of the Vietnamese Buddhist elite of the role of Buddhism in Vietnamese history, and an urge toward a reassertion of this role in modern times. Since Nguyen* Lang published his book³ sentimentally and confidently reaffirming the *Thiên Uyen's* account as veridical history, it has become the "official viewpoint" on

Vietnamese Buddhism.⁴ Vietnamese Buddhists nowadays, both clerical and lay, approach the *Thien* Uyen** with an atavistic reverence. Even scholars in North Vietnam—so far behind and out of touch with the rest of the world in the field of the study of religion—also subscribe to this viewpoint.

From a critical perspective, this viewpoint is a result of the marriage between the writing of the author of the *Thiên Uyên* and the reading of the *Thiên Uyên* (a text) itself by a Vietnamese Buddhist "community of interpreters." Eager to confirm a certain meaning, these readers interpret the reading of the author(s) of the *Thiên Uyên*—in the form of a text—from a particular horizon of expectation. Both the composition of the *Thiên Uyên* and its modern-day acceptance as literal history are part of an expression of a will to orthodoxy.

First, I will investigate in what sense the *Thiên Uyên* was purported to be and constructed as a "transmission of the lamp" text for Vietnamese Buddhism. To do this I will analyze the content and style of the text and examine the pertinent literary and historical evidence. This is an effort to undo the traditional reading of the *Thiên Uyên* as an original "transmission of the lamp" or "lamp history" text, that is, as a document that records the "history" of the transmission of the enlightenment experience directly from teacher to student in the style typical of one genre of Chinese Zen literature. Of course we are well aware that the "history" perceived and recorded (or rather "read") by the "lamp history" texts does not necessarily coincide with "facts" or a more critical way of reading.

Second, I will document the influences of the Chinese "transmission of the lamp" literature, particularly the *Chuangeng lu*, on the composition and content of the *Thiên Uyên*. This will serve to illustrate the model and method of reading and understanding Buddhist history on part of the Vietnamese Buddhist authors.

The *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh* As a "Transmission of the Lamp" Text

Our first concern here is to investigate in what way the *Thiên Uyên* is purported to be a "transmission of the lamp" text.

The *Thiên Uyên* in its present form available to us records the genealogies of the three schools of Zen Buddhism in Vietnam: the Vinitaruci* school, the Vô Ngôn Thông school, and the Thao* Đuờng school. For the latter school the text gives no biographies but only a list of names of five generations of successors. In all the *Thiên Uyên* records the biographies of sixty-six⁵ eminent monks belonging to the two schools of Vinitaruci and Vô Ngôn Thông (thirty-seven belong to the Vô Ngôn Thông and twenty-nine to the Vinitaruci).

I remarked previously that the compiler of the *Thien * Uyen** expressly intended it to be a "transmission of the lamp" text, recording the transmission of the mind of enlightenment from teachers to students. He modeled his work particularly upon the *Chuangdeng lu*, the locus classicus of this literary genre in Chinese Zen.⁶ The *Thiên Uyên* was explicitly intended to be a record of the Zen lineages in Vietnam, which according to its compiler had their roots in China. Thus, to understand the structure and intention of the *Thiên Uyên*, it is necessary to look into the "transmission of the lamp" literature in Chinese Buddhism.

Shunning the attempts of other Chinese Buddhist schools to classify the entire spectrum of Indian Buddhist literature known to them into systems of thought based on the authority of a particular scripture, Zen presented itself as a new Buddhism to the Chinese. Although one famous motto of this new Buddhism is "a separate transmission outside the scriptures," Zen by no means rejected the scriptures; rather, it represents a new attitude toward the scriptures.⁷ Instead of categorizing the scriptures according to their contents, as the other sectarian scriptural schools did in their *panjiao* ("dividing the teachings") schemes, Zen Buddhists saw the underlying unity of the scriptures in the experience of the mind of enlightenment.

For Zen, all the scriptures share the same objective: to lead us to enlightenment. As the Zen saying goes, all scriptural teachings share the same flavor, the flavor of enlightenment.⁸ Enlightenment means realizing the true nature of the mind, its enlightened essence, or Buddha-nature. Consequently, the true meaning of scriptures is to be realized based on awakening to the enlightened essence of the mind.

Zen shares the common Mahayana belief that all sentient beings possess Buddha nature (or pure mind); thus one must realize enlightenment (bodhi) oneself. Fully aware of the fact that human beings differ in spiritual capacity, Zen emphasizes direct, personal experience and not abstract categorization. Although it emphasizes "not relying on words," Zen eventually produced its own literature as a pedagogic tool to express its new attitude toward scriptures and practice.

The massive corpus of Zen literature falls for the most part into three major genres. Listed according to the chronological order of their development, these are (1) the "transmission of the lamp" texts, (2) the "recorded sayings" texts (*yulu*), and (3) the "public case" (*gong'an*) anthologies.

They can be explained briefly as follows:

1. "Transmission of the lamp" texts⁹ consist of works recording the "history" of the direct transmission of the enlightenment experience (subsequently called the mind-seal) from "certified" Zen masters within certain genealogies or schools to their disciples. These texts relate cru-

cial instructions given by the teachers as well as selected encounter-dialogues between masters and disciples and between Zen masters and Buddhists of other sects.

2. "Recorded sayings" texts are anthologies of the teachings and actions of particular Zen masters. They contain short essays, public talks, sermons, letters, records of oral exchanges between the Zen master and disciples, and often poetry. A good example of this genre is the *Mazu lu* [Recorded Sayings of Mazu (709–788)],¹⁰ probably one of the first of its kind in Chinese Zen.

3. The "public-case" anthologies are pedagogic tools composed primarily of short selections of crucial encounter-dialogues between the Zen masters and their disciples. The selected "public cases" are usually followed by the commentary of one or more later masters. The aim of these anthologies is to provide students of Zen a set of topics to help them achieve enlightenment, and to map out landmarks on the path. The best-known work of this genre is the *Biyuan lu* [Blue Cliff Records].¹¹

Most relevant to our discussion of the *Thien* Uyen** is the "transmission of the lamp" genre. The "transmission of the lamp" texts serve three purposes:

1. They give an abstract outline of a moment in the process of enlightenment of the Zen adepts of the past.
2. They attempt to legitimize the status of the adepts they chronicle by showing that they have received enlightenment and "certification" directly from the enlightened ones (buddhas) of the past.
3. They rationalize the existence and origin of Zen by showing that Zen carries on the line of transmission of Buddhism since time immemorial. This is Chinese Zen's claim to orthodoxy and antiquity. We find this same intention on the part of the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* and his predecessors.

Among the Chinese "transmission of the lamp" texts, the one that most influenced the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* and his predecessors in Vietnam was the *Chuandeng lu*.¹² These Vietnamese Buddhists used the *Chuandeng lu* as both a reference and a model for composing their own "transmission of the lamp" texts. The *Chuandeng lu* is probably the pattern-setting work of its genre in Chinese Zen, since it is broader in content than other "transmission of the lamp" texts and is also more ambitious in connecting Zen to the historical Buddha Sakyamuni* and even beyond. The *Chuandeng lu* contains records of (1) seven Buddhas of antiquity,¹³ culminating in Sakyamuni; (2) twenty-eight Indian Patriarchs, beginning with Sakyamuni and ending with Bodhidharma; (3) six Chinese Patriarchs, from Bodhidharma to Huineng; and (4) subsequent Chinese masters descended from Huineng and other early figures, listed according to generations and lineages.

This formula set the pattern for the composing of "lamp history" texts in medieval Vietnam.

Efforts by Buddhists in China to establish the identity of their own schools as legitimate successors of Indian Buddhism are part of the intellectual activity of Chinese Buddhism in general and not exclusive to Zen. The Zen school was not the only Chinese school of Buddhism that created a "transmission history," a religious genealogy, connecting it to Sakyamuni * Buddha and beyond.¹⁴ Still, the "transmission of the lamp" or "transmission history" seems to occupy a more prominent place in Zen than in other schools, probably because Zen emphasizes the transmission of the enlightenment experience directly from teachers to students. Unlike the schools based on a particular scripture, the Zen school intentionally avoids identification with any scriptural tradition. Zen presents itself as a "separate transmission outside the scriptural teachings" and as "not relying on words."

The mere fact that the compiler of the *Thien* Uyen** connects Vietnamese Buddhism to Zen does not necessarily mean that Zen was actually a dominant school of Buddhism in Vietnam or that Zen was the main kind of Buddhism that was first introduced to Vietnam. Rather, it reflects both the absence of a sustained, active, lasting scriptural school in Vietnam, and the compiler's own intention to portray Zen as the original and main stream of Vietnamese Buddhism. By tracing Vietnamese Buddhist history to Zen origins "outside the scriptural teachings," the *Thiên Uyên* can proceed to construct its "history" unembarrassed by the lack of a tradition of tangible, scriptural schools in Vietnamese Buddhism.

Thông Bien*, who could be considered responsible for devising the historical typology of Buddhism in Vietnam, in his talk to the empress dowager in 1096 vaguely ascribed scriptural traditions to the second- and third-century figures Mou Bo and Kang Senghui.¹⁵ Yet there is no evidence whatsoever of any doctrinal school that could be traced back to these two figures. Neither Mou Bo nor Kang Senghui seems to have harbored any intention to establish any school or lineage. And their literary activities do not provide sufficient materials on which to build any tradition or school.¹⁶

Since one main objective of the "transmission of the lamp" texts is to illustrate that each Zen master's realization was catalyzed and authenticated by the enlightened wisdom of his teacher, it is natural that these texts focus on biographical incidents featuring key interactions between the seeker and his or her teachers.

In understanding the *Thiên Uyên*, we should take note of the differences between the biographies contained in the "transmission of the

lamp" texts and the biographies recorded in works of the "biographies of eminent monks" genre, such as the *Gaoseng zhuan* [Biographies of Eminent Monks] (composed around the first half of the sixth century) and the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* [Continuation of Biographies of Eminent Monks] (composed around 664).

The "biographies of eminent monks" genre is broader in content and less sectarian, since it encompasses the entire spectrum of Buddhist activity by recording biographies of translators, exegetes, meditators, ritualists, thaumaturges, and so on. The "biographies of eminent monks" are devoted to describing the lives and works of eminent monks and are not overtly concerned with establishing cohesive genealogies.

In contrast, in the "transmission of the lamp" texts the biographies are organized into lineages and tend to focus on the enlightenment experiences and master-disciple interactions. Although in both cases the biographies are "demand biographies,"¹⁷ the "biographies of eminent monks" genre is more avowedly historical and less factionally tendentious than the "transmission of the lamp" genre.

Even before the *Thien* Uyen**, other texts were composed in Vietnam on the "transmission of the lamp" model, representing earlier efforts to establish the continuity of Vietnamese Buddhism with Chinese Zen. The Buddhist intelligentsia in Vietnam took from the *Chuandeng lu* a conceptual model for Buddhist history and the transmission of the Buddhist teaching. The compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* utilized earlier texts as source materials for his own book. These texts are no longer extant, but taking into account their titles, the few brief notices of descriptions of their contents that are available, and extant fragments, it seems they fit into the "transmission of the lamp" genre: the *Chieu* Doi* Luc** [Collated Biographies], *Hue* Nhat* Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** [Essential Sayings of the Patriarchs Composed by Hue* Nhat*], the *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** [Diagram of the Succession of the Dharma of the Southern School], and the *Lu'o'c* Dan** Thiên Phái Đồ [Summarized Diagram of the Zen Schools]. Their common theme is to connect Vietnamese Buddhism to Zen history as constructed by the "transmission of the lamp" texts. In this pattern, Zen is traced back to Sakyamuni* Buddha's transmission of "the treasure of the eye of the true Dharma, which is the wondrous mind of Nirvana" to his disciple Mahakasyapa*, from whom it was passed down through twenty-eight generations in India to Bodhidharma, who brought the Zen teaching to China. According to the Vietnamese versions of the "transmission of the lamp," the Zen teaching was subsequently brought to Vietnam by disciples of the Chinese Zen Patriarchs.

Unfortunately, except for the *Thien * Uyen**, none of the other Vietnamese "lamp history" texts is extant except in fragments or in brief references in other literary works.

The fact that the authors of the various "lamp history" texts did not offer compatible accounts of Vietnamese Zen, and apparently did not even know of each other, demonstrates that in reality Vietnamese Buddhism at that time was not at all what these authors made it out to be: a coherent, unified transmission derived from some Chinese Zen lineages. Rather, Vietnamese Buddhism consisted of different groups, stationed at different temples, under the influence of émigré monks belonging to different traditions of Chinese, Indian, or Central Asian Buddhism. When the Vietnamese authors recorded what they observed (or heard), they structured their accounts to conform to the *Zen* lineage model that they believed to be orthodox.

A critical reading of the *Thiên Uyên* shows us that its model of Vietnamese Buddhist history is based on interpretations derived from the *Chieu* Doi* Luc**, a text of the "lamp history" genre composed by Thông Bien*, now lost. Although at present the viewpoint of the *Thiên Uyên* is accepted by the Vietnamese Buddhist community as the "official view," the writings of Phúc Dien* show that up to the middle of the nineteenth century the *Thiên Uyên** account of Vietnamese Buddhist history was not accepted unquestioningly as it is nowadays.

The Chinese Zen "School" and the History of Vietnamese Zen

A careful perusal of the Vietnamese "lamp history" texts shows that the authors based their interpretations of Vietnamese Buddhist history on their Chinese predecessors' model of the "school" (*zong*). In the last few decades, however, scholars of Buddhism in general and Zen in particular have realized that the traditional way of looking at the history of Buddhism in terms of well-defined schools does not accurately reflect Buddhist reality.¹⁸ The notion of clear-cut schools characterized by continuity and unity in doctrine and practice is a fiction imposed by chroniclers within the tradition on a more complex, less definable historical reality characterized by many hidden cross-currents and interminglings. (At times, of course, the notion of "school" is just a convenient shorthand for labeling trends, particularly in modern Vietnamese Buddhism.) But we must realize that in general it is impossible to find in Buddhist history cohesive, well-defined, unified entities in the sense implied by the traditional idealized notion of "schools."

To clarify the nature of Vietnamese Buddhism in both traditional and

critical contexts, it is important for us now to investigate the implications of the term "school." Modern scholars have rightly criticized the traditional way of categorizing the "historical" unfolding of ideas and practices into fixed, conceptually static "schools." This kind of division artificially imposes a forced uniformity and false immobility onto fluid realities.

Stanley Weinstein states that full-fledged Chinese Buddhist schools such as Chan, Tiantai, and Huayan, with founders, lineages, supposedly orthodox transmissions of doctrine, and large numbers of followers, only appeared in the second half of the Tang dynasty.¹⁹ But T. Griffith Foulk makes the case that, on closer scrutiny from a critical historical perspective, the concept of the "school" in most cases refers to entities that belong partly or wholly to the realms of religious ideology and mythology. Ostensibly historical lineages were fabricated to fulfill certain religious or cultural/political purposes.²⁰ Foulk also draws a distinction between "lineage" and "school," according to which "school" is a term with larger connotations denoting movements or groups "united in a self-conscious manner by a common set of beliefs, practices, and/or social structure," whereas "lineage" signifies the genealogy of individuals "related by virtue of their inheritance of some sort of Dharma from a common ancestor."²¹ In the context of Zen, "lineage" refers to the "core members" (i.e., the patriarchs) of a "school," those who transmit the mind of enlightenment handed down by the first patriarch, Bodhidharma.²² I find Foulk's distinction useful, since throughout the *Thien* Uyen** and other Vietnamese "lamp history" texts, the term "tông" (*zong*) seems to cover both "school" and "lineage" in the above sense of the terms.

Foulk concludes his essay by saying: "The overall picture of the Sung Ch'an school that emerges is that of individual members of an elite, highly prestigious, mythologically charged fraternity (the Ch'an lineage) holding high monastic office and having around them a wide circle of followers of varying ranks and social standings."²³ This description applies equally well to a medieval Vietnamese Zen "school."

From what I have observed, even today, in most cases when a Vietnamese Buddhist claims that he belongs to the Zen school, it simply means he believes in the Zen lineage and gains inspiration from Zen ideals and world view.²⁴ As for the abbot, what really matters and defines him as a "Zen master" is not necessarily his specific practices (which are generally no different from other "schools" and do not much resemble the typical Zen practices described in the Zen classics). Rather, what defines him as a "Zen master" is his cherished memory of the sacred lineage to which he or, more properly, his teacher belongs.

Foullk's observation that the conversion of Chinese Buddhist temples into "Zen monasteries" in the Song period was nothing but a formality is also relevant in the context of Vietnamese Buddhism. So-called Zen temples in both medieval and contemporary Vietnam are largely indistinguishable in their organization and operation from other Buddhist temples.²⁵

Influences of the *Jingde Chuandeng Lu* on the *Thien* Uyen* Tap* Anh*

I pointed out earlier that the uncritical acceptance by modern scholars of the *Thiên Uyên* as a veridical, univocal "transmission of the lamp" text has distorted their interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhism. In light of the foregoing historical and literary analysis, even a casual reading of the biographies in the *Thiên Uyên* shows us that the *Thiên Uyên* is definitely not a homogeneous "transmission of the lamp" text like the *Chuandeng lu*.

A careful examination of the Vietnamese "lamp history" texts, particularly those that the *Thiên Uyên* draws on, shows that the *Chuandeng lu* was the model for Vietnamese Buddhist authors. For instance, we have evidence that the *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** drew heavily on the *Chuandeng lu*. Even scholars after the time of the *Thiên Uyên* took the *Chuandeng lu* as their model. When Nhu' So'n composed the *Ke* Dang* Luc** in 1734, he also based himself on the *Chuandeng lu*. Because the *Chuandeng lu* was composed in the early Song (in 1004)²⁶ and was included in the Song printing of the Buddhist canon by royal order, the text became an authoritative source on Zen history for later Zen followers, including the Lý Buddhist elite in Vietnam.

The records of the Zen masters in the *Chuandeng lu* vary in both length and content. Some entries contain somewhat detailed biographies of their subjects together with their instructions and encounter dialogues with their students. Some contain only a few short selective dialogues or instructions. However, the records in the *Chuandeng lu* are uniform in the sense that the main goal is always to portray the transmission from teachers to students within their lineages and the various expressions of the enlightenment experience.

In contrast, the biographies recorded in the *Thiên Uyên* are obviously of various different literary genres. The majority belong to the "biographies of eminent monks" genre, although some might be considered as belonging to the "transmission of the lamp" type. A few (for instance, the biographies of Dao* Hanh*, Giác Hai*, and especially Không Lo*) obviously draw on or borrow almost entirely from folktales.²⁷ As for the biography of Viên Chieu*, it is not just a biography, but comprises one of his entire works.²⁸

In terms of dates and contents, the biographies in the *Thien * Uyen** do not constitute clear lineages. Gaps between generations and lost (or unrecorded) biographies make it almost impossible to establish a coherent lineage for any of the three schools. Some eminent monks are claimed by more than one school: Không Lo* and Giác Hai* were claimed by both the Vô Ngôn Thông and the Thao* Đu'ong schools. Some important temples were associated with more than one school: the Thiên Phúc, Van* Tue*, and Luc* To* temples were associated at different times with both the Vinitaruci* and the Vô Ngôn Thông schools. The Phúc Thánh Temple was associated at different times with both the Vô Ngôn Thông and the Thao Đu'ong schools. The Khai Quoc* Temple was associated at different times with all three schools.²⁹

It appears that all the biographies in the *Thiên Uyên* were not written (to be more correct, "rewritten") by one author with a preconceived intention. Among the sixty-six biographies recorded, only twenty-four could be considered to be of the "transmission of the lamp" genre. The remaining ones fall neatly into the "biographies of eminent monks" genre.

Even in those twenty-four biographies that have some "transmission of the lamp" coloring, most of the encounter dialogues that give them the air of the "transmission of the lamp" biographies can easily be identified as borrowings from the *Chuangeng lu*. It is obvious that most of the biographies, restored from various sources both written and oral, had been rewritten by authors earlier than the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên*, and during this process encounter dialogues borrowed from the *Chuangeng lu* were added to them.

To illustrate this point, let us take the biographies of Tinh* Không and Nguyen* Hoc* as examples. Let us first examine the case of Tinh Không.

As mentioned above, even the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* notes that encounter dialogues and instructional verses in Tinh Không's biography are identical with those in the biography of Jiashan in the *Chuangeng lu*. If we retain only the biographical notes, we have the following story about Tinh Không:

Zen Master Tinh Không of Khai Quốc Temple, Thiên Duc* Prefecture, was originally of Phúc Xuyên. His family name was Ngô. At first he was ordained at Sùng Phúc Temple in his native district.

At the age of thirty, he traveled to the south and settled down at Khai Quốc Temple. For five or six years he devoted himself to austerities. Each day he ate only one grain of sesame and one grain of wheat. He would sit [in meditation] all night without sleeping. Whenever he entered *samadhi** (meditative concentration), it would go on for a few days before he arose from it. Donors from all over brought him

mountains of gifts. Some came to spy on him with the intention of stealing, but Tinh * Không would tell them where to get what they wanted.

When Princess Nam Khu'o'ng wanted to leave the mundane world, she privately prepared offerings and invited Tinh Không to preside over her ordination. The emperor [Lý Anh Tông] learned about this and issued a decree to arrest him. Yet when Tinh Không arrived at the court, his countenance was calm. The emperor had even more respect for him and honored him as a great monk of eminent virtue. Tinh Không persistently declined to be at court.³⁰

This reads like a reliable biography because of its stylistic similarity to many short biographies of other eminent monks scattered in various medieval sources.³¹ Besides, there are details related to history and the biography also presents a very common trait in the practice of Vietnamese Buddhism: the practice of austerities.

One can come to the same conclusion about Nguyen* Hoc*, whose biography was recorded as follows in the *Thien* Uyen**.

Zen Master Nguyễn Hoc of Quang* Bao* Temple, Chân Ho* Village, Nhu' Nguyet*, hailed from Phù Cam*. His family name was Nguyen*. When he was young he studied the Dharma with Master Viên Trí of Mat* Nghiêm Temple. After he got the message of the teaching, he first lived in seclusion on Mount Ve* Linh, devoting himself to purification practices for twelve years. Whenever he entered *samadhi**, he would arise only after three days. He always recited the *Hu'o'ng Hai* Dai* Bi Đà La Ni* [The Dharani* of the Fragrant Ocean of Great Compassion] and was always effective in curing illness and praying for rain. Emperor Lý Anh Tông admired his supernatural powers and issued a decree granting him free access to the imperial palace so he could apply his *mantras'* power whenever necessary.³²

After this are recorded in addition two verses instructing his students before he passed away. It seems obvious that these verses are similar to those spoken by Huisi in the *Chuangeng lu*.

Many of the *Thiên Uyên* biographies appear to belong basically to the "biographies of eminent monks" genre, with a few Zen elements grafted on. According to his biography, Nguyễn Hoc is also described as a meditator who devoted himself to practicing austerities, chanting dharanis*, curing illness by supernatural powers, praying for rain, etc.—much like the practices ascribed to many of the eminent monks whose biographies are recorded in the *Thiên Uyên* and other sources. Nothing typical of Zen such as contemplating *gong'an* [public cases] or *huatou* [meditation sayings] is mentioned. Based on the biographical data minus fabrications and borrowings from the *Chuangeng lu*, we can see that Nguyễn Hoc

appears exactly like the monks that are called "thaumaturges" in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*.³³ The same can be said about many other Vietnamese eminent monks in the *Thien* Uyen**: Biographies of some of the most respected monks in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism, such as Khuông Viet*, Dinh* Không, Dao* Hanh*, Giác Hai*, and Không Lo*, do not at all seem to be of the Zen-style "transmission of the lamp" genre.

Upon examination, it is evident that the biographies recorded in the *Thiên Uyên* fit more into the "biographies of eminent monks" genre, since, among other things, most of them do not contain the kind of encounter dialogues expressing the enlightenment experience typical of the Chinese "transmission of the lamp" texts. Some of the biographies do contain verses and instructions on the Dharma, but either these do not seem akin to Zen in their contents at all, or, if they do, they can easily be identified as borrowings from the *Chuangeng lu*.

We can thus conclude that the *Thiên Uyên* is not a homogeneous collection of "Zen biographies" composed/compiled by one author as is the case of the *Chuangeng lu*. It is rather a compilation of biographical notes of eminent monks from various historical sources, both written and oral, blended with hagiographical elaborations from other sources. The Vietnamese authors recast these materials into Zen biographies and imagined lineages, and then grafted them onto the genealogical tree of Chinese Zen.

In sum, the "Zenification" of Vietnamese Buddhism was a gradual process that started with Thông Bien* toward the end of the eleventh century, continued through Thu'ông Chieu* in the thirteenth century, and culminated in the fourteenth century with the compilation of the *Thiên Uyên*. Clearly recognizing that the *Thiên Uyên* is not a homogeneous "lamp history" text but rather a polyphonic pastiche is crucial for a critical understanding of medieval Vietnamese Buddhism.

Thông Biên was the first Vietnamese Buddhist thinker to attempt to cast the history of Vietnamese Buddhism in the mold of the Chinese Zen "lamp history" paradigm of Buddhist history: Zen as something distinct from the scriptural schools—"the separate transmission of the mind-source outside the scriptural teachings." He also cast Vietnamese Buddhist history in the Zen framework of the mind-to-mind transmission of enlightenment down through generations of successors.³⁴

Though many of his contemporaries among the Vietnamese Buddhist intelligentsia may not have known or approved Thông Bien's* model of Vietnamese Buddhist history, it was later taken up by the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* and as re-created in that text went on to have a decisive influence in shaping what has now become the traditional understanding of Vietnamese Buddhist history.

An Evaluation of the Vietnamese Authors' Methodology

It is clear that the viewpoint on Vietnamese Buddhist history adopted by Vietnamese authors such as Thông Biên *, Thu'ò'ng Chieu*, Hue* Nhat*, the author of the *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do**, the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên**, Nhu' So'n, and Phúc Dien* is based on a tacit acceptance of the paradigm of Buddhist history put forth in Chinese Zen, as epitomized in the *Chuangeng lu*. The basic premise is that the core of the history of Buddhism is the history of the transmission of Zen, more specifically the transmission of the sudden enlightenment "Southern Zen" of Huineng, based on the concept "one patriarch per generation."

The Vietnamese authors, particularly Thông Biên, the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên*, and Phúc Điền, like their predecessors and contemporaries in China, certainly did not conceive of the formation of the Zen school as something to be understood in secular social science terms, as a religious phenomenon based on individual creativity embedded in a matrix of cultural, intellectual, economic, and social conditions. They did not compare the source materials they used with other historical sources (except to gather biographical notes of the "Zen masters") and non-Zen documents. Rather, they uncritically accepted a "historical reality" constructed in the "lamp history" texts of the Chinese Zen tradition. In cases where they made use of materials outside the Zen school, these were looked at from the perspective of Zen. (This is most obvious in the case of Phúc Điền.)

Thus, for these Vietnamese authors, the history of Buddhism is the history of Zen, because in their minds Zen represents an unbroken lineage transmitting the mind of enlightenment that can be traced back to the historical Buddha and even beyond.

But as I show in the appendixes, there are instances in which some of these Vietnamese authors openly expressed their confusion about the exact contours of this lineage. They themselves sometimes found it difficult to squeeze what they observed or read (from other sources) into the historical framework they had chosen.

Efforts to force events, books, ideas, and individuals into the "lamp history" model have caused considerable difficulties in the recording and interpretation of Vietnamese Buddhist history. Having been pressed into this interpretive framework, Vietnamese Buddhist history has been "prewritten" and "predetermined" in the imagined history of Chinese Zen.

Zen was adopted by the elite class, which convincingly presented it as the orthodox school of Buddhism. They did this in the absence of a sustained, developed "scriptural school," and blinkered by their limited exposure to Buddhist literature besides a number of Song "lamp history"

texts. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that eventually most educated Vietnamese Buddhist monks and lay litterateurs would choose to align themselves with Zen.

A Reevaluation of the Three Zen Schools in Medieval Vietnam

The foregoing textual, historical, and methodological analysis of the *Thien * Uyen** should be taken as the first part of our understanding of the text's author, the text itself, and the traditional reading of the text.

As the second part of our reading, let us now reexamine the so-called three schools of Zen in medieval Vietnam. Our aim is to develop a more critical and reliable picture of Vietnamese Buddhist history.

Although the *Thiên Uyên* records the biographies of the eminent monks of the Vô Ngôn Thông school before those of the Vinitaruci*, I will follow a chronological order, examining the Vinitaruci school first, then the Vô Ngôn Thông, and finally the Thao* Đu'ò'ng.

The Vinitaruci* School

Tradition has it that the oldest Zen school in Vietnam was founded by an Indian monk named Vinitaruci. Vinitaruci's* biography is translated in its entirety in the second part of this study. For the purpose of the present analysis, however, I quote from it here at some length:

Zen Master Vinitaruci of Pháp Vân Temple, Co* Châu Village, Long Biên Province, hailed from South India. He belonged to a Brahman lineage. As a young man he already harbored the aspiration to go beyond the conventional world: he wandered throughout India searching for the seal of the Buddha-mind. However, his affinity for the Dharma was not met there, so he carried his monk's staff to East Asia.

In the sixth year, *nhâm ngo**, of the Dajian era (574) of the Chen dynasty, Vinitaruci first arrived in Chang'an [the capital of North China] right at the time when Emperor Wu of the Zhou dynasty was trying to destroy Buddhism. He then traveled to Ye [the capital of South China].

At that time the third Zen Patriarch Sengcan, in order to escape political disturbances, had taken his robe and bowl and hidden himself on Mount Sikong. When Vinitaruci met Sengcan and saw his uncommon behavior, his attitude was one of deep respect: three times he came before Sengcan and stood with folded arms. Sengcan just sat there with his eyes closed, saying nothing.

While Vinitaruci stood there pondering, he emptied through and seemed to have attainment, so he prostrated himself three times. Sengcan only nodded his head three times. Vinitaruci took three steps

backward and said, "I come here at a very inconvenient time, yet I beg you, Venerable Sir, to show compassion and permit me to serve by your side." Sengcan said, "You should immediately go south to receive students, it's not fitting for you to remain here too long."

Vinitaruci * then bid farewell to Sengcan and traveled alone to Zhi Zhi Temple in Guangzhou. He remained there for about six years and translated the *Gayasirsa**, the *Differentiation of Karmic Reward*, and other works.

In the third month of the second year, *canh ti*, of the Daxiang era (580) of the Zhou dynasty, he arrived in our country [Vietnam] and settled down at Pháp Vân Temple. He retranslated the *Dharani-Sutra** in one volume.

One day, Vinitaruci called his advanced student Pháp Hien* to his private room and said, "The mind-seal of the Buddhas surely does not deceive us—it is as perfect as space, without lack or surplus, without going or coming, without gain or loss. It is neither one nor many, neither permanent nor impermanent. It has no origination or annihilation, it is neither detached nor not detached. Names are only established provisionally according to temporary circumstances. All the Buddhas of past, present, and future rely on this to attain enlightenment, and so do the successive generations of patriarchs. I rely on this to attain enlightenment, and so do you, and so do all sentient and nonsentient beings—they all rely on this to attain enlightenment. Moreover, when my patriarch Sengcan transmitted this mind-seal to me, he told me to go south quickly to communicate it, because it was not right for me to remain there [in China] too long. It's been a long time since then, and now I have met you. After all, this agrees with his prediction. Now you must preserve it well. It's time for me to leave this world."

After speaking these words, Vinitaruci joined his palms and passed away. Pháp Hiên cremated his body, collected his five-colored relics, and built a stupa to house them. It was the fourteenth year, *giáp dan**, of the Kaihuang era of Emperor Wen of the Sui dynasty (594).³⁵

Another text in Vietnamese Buddhist literature, the fourteenth-century *Co* Châu Pháp Vân Phat* Ban* Hanh* Ngu* Luc** [henceforth referred to as *Cô Châu*] gives the following account of Vinitaruci: "Between the Eastern Jin (317–419) and the Dajian era (569–582) there was a monk named Vinitaruci, originally from Western India, who, by his journeys through many countries, knew that Buddhism already existed in this country [i.e., Giao Châu, Vietnam]. He came to dwell at Pháp Vân Temple. Here he established a sect, admitted students, and spread the Dharma. Because of this the Buddha-Dharma flourished in Vietnam and became prosperous."³⁶

The name Vinitaruci is also mentioned in the following works in Chinese Buddhist literature: the *Lidai sanbao ji*, the *Datang neidian lu*,

the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, and the *Zhenyuan xinding shijiao mulu*.

The earliest Chinese source that mentions Vinitaruci *, the *Lidai sanbao ji*, gives us the following account of him:

The Tripitaka* Master Vinitaruci was a native of Wuzhang country, North India. His name means "Miexi" [joy of annihilation of faults] in Chinese. After hearing that our emperor was restoring the Three Jewels, he undertook a trip of five hundred yojanas to come [to China] to see how Buddhism was flourishing here. He was summoned into the court and asked to translate Buddhist texts at the Da Xingshan Temple (the *Gayasirsa-Sutra** and the *Mahayanavaipulyadharani-Sutra**). Two persons, Daobao and Tanmi, the younger son of Prajnaruci*, were assigned as his assistants. A monk at Da Xingshan Temple, Shi Faquan, a native of Chang-an, wrote down the translations in Chinese, edited them, and compared the meanings. The monk Yanzun wrote prefaces for both translations.³⁷

The accounts in the *Datang neidian lu* and the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*³⁸ are almost the same as that in the *Lidai sanbao ji*. The account in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*³⁹ is almost the same as that in the *Lidai sanbao ji* and informs us that the above *sutras** "were translated in the second year of the Kaihuang era under Emperor Wen [582]." It adds a correction, stating that "Fei Changfang [i.e., the author of *Lidai sanbao ji*] said the translation took place at Da Xingshan Temple. This is incorrect." The *Zhenyuan xinding shijiao mulu* version is the same as the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*.⁴⁰

Except for the name Vinitaruci and the titles of the two scriptures allegedly translated by him, the Chinese versions of Vinitaruci's* biography do not seem to accord with the *Thien* Uyen** version. The *Lidai sanbao ji* was composed in 597, around fifteen years after Vinitaruci's arrival in Chang-an, whereas the *Thiên Uyên* was compiled around 1337, more than six hundred years after Vinitaruci's time. The only Vietnamese source prior to the *Thiên Uyên* that mentions the name Vinitaruci is Thông Bien's* *Chieu* Doi* Luc**. Unfortunately, the *Chiêu Đồi Luc* is lost, so there is no way for us to know where Thông Bien* got his information about Vinitaruci. It is obviously not from the Chinese sources known to us.⁴¹ The Chinese sources differ among themselves on some details regarding the *sutras* that Vinitaruci translated and where he translated them. However, they all agree that Vinitaruci came from North India, whereas Vietnamese sources report that he came from South or West India. Chinese sources also mention nothing about his encounter with Sengcan.

An analysis of the account of Vinitaruci in the *Thiên Uyên* shows that it is rife with technical errors and anachronisms and full of borrowings from the *Chuangeng lu*. The result is that the *Thiên Uyên's** "biography"

of Vinitaruci * cannot be accepted as an authentic account. Let us review the evidence:

1. The *Thien* Uyen's** biography uses technical terms and refers to pedagogic techniques that did not exist during the time of Vinitaruci. In Vinitaruci's* instruction to Pháp Hien*, the term "mind-seal" (*xinyin*) is used twice. We know that this technical term was not used in early Zen and probably appeared for the first time in the biography and Recorded Sayings of Mazu.⁴²
2. The *Thiên Uyen** records an encounter dialogue between Vinitaruci and Pháp Hiên when he first came from Guangzhou to Pháp Vân Temple that is almost identical with the dialogue between Daoxin and Hongren, the Fourth and Fifth Patriarchs of Chinese Zen.⁴³ An encounter dialogue involving Vinitaruci in the sixth century is anachronistic, since this kind of dialogue only developed late in the eighth century and became widely used in Zen literature after that.
3. The Chinese sources do not mention the length of time of Vinitaruci's sojourn in China. The *Thiên Uyên* states that after bidding farewell to Sengcan, Vinitaruci traveled alone to Zhi Zhi Temple and remained there for six years translating scriptures. "Six years" is a conventional interval reflecting the period of time that, according to legend, Sakyamuni* Buddha spent practicing asceticism before attaining enlightenment. This "six years of training" became a convention in the literature of Chinese Zen.⁴⁴ This stereotypical period of practice was also apparently adopted by Vietnamese authors, especially the compiler(s) of the *Thiên Uyên*.⁴⁵
4. The most serious error committed by the (original) compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* was to portray Vinitaruci as a disciple of Sengcan, probably because he was relying on Thông Bien*. Modern scholars specializing in early Zen have discovered that Zen sources earlier than the eighth century do not mention Sengcan as the Third Patriarch, and these scholars consider this tradition fictitious. The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* mentions only a certain meditation master Can in the list of successors in the entry on Fachong. The biography of Sengcan as the Third Patriarch probably is a fabrication based on this list.⁴⁶ The *Chuanfabao ji* [Annals on the Transmission of the Dharma-Treasure],⁴⁷ a text written around 712, is the first text to make Sengcan the Third Patriarch and teacher of Daoxin. The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* contains the earliest biography of Daoxin, yet it does not connect him to Sengcan.

What can we conclude from these points? It appears likely that some Vietnamese Buddhists eager to claim orthodoxy for Vietnamese Buddhism endeavored to connect Vinitaruci to Pháp Hiên, after describing Vinitaruci as a disciple who had received the "mind-seal" directly from Sengcan, the Third Patriarch of Chinese Zen.

The reader may still suspect that there must be some historical basis

for the Vinitaruci * legend in Vietnam. The only plausible explanation I can produce at the present time is as follows:

Nguyen* Duy Hinh has pointed out convincingly through archaeological evidence that by the second century Pháp Vân Temple had become a significant center of Buddhism in Vietnam that housed Buddhist missionaries from India.⁴⁸ The kind of Buddhism that flourished at Pháp Vân at that time—and in subsequent centuries at a system of three sister temples—was a mixture of popular Indian Buddhism and elements of Brahmanism that came from either India or Champa.⁴⁹ Thus, from the period between the second and sixth centuries there might have been an Indian or Cham monk by the name of Vinitaruci who came to dwell at Pháp Vân. Later Vietnamese authors have identified him with the Tripitaka* Master Vinitaruci, the translator of Da Xingshan Temple, and constructed a legend about him as a Zen patriarch.

One can still argue that Vinitaruci the translator did arrive in Vietnam and subsequently came to dwell at Pháp Vân Temple. Later Vietnamese authors, eager to connect Vietnamese Buddhism to Chinese Zen, erroneously related him to the legendary Third Patriarch Sengcan. Even so, this would not alter my contention that Buddhism came to Vietnam quite early from different sources, and Zen was only one among various trends that came later. In any case, the story of Vinitaruci as recorded in the *Thien* Uyen** cannot be taken as factual.⁵⁰

Dinh* Không and the Pháp Vân Lineage

Nineteen generations of Dharma successors of the Vinitaruci School—from Vinitaruci to Y So'n—are recorded in the *Thiên Uyên*. However, from Vinitaruci to Dinh* Không (eighth generation), the biographies of only two masters, Pháp Hien* (second generation) and Thien* Hoi* (fourth generation), are recorded. There is absolutely no information about the third, fifth, sixth, and seventh generations. A brief analysis of the structure of these two biographies will shed some light on this school.

Pháp Hien's* biography appears to be reconstructed from notes taken from the biography of Thông Bien*⁵¹ combined with an enlightenment story in the form of an encounter dialogue typical of Song Zen and probably borrowed from a dialogue (traditionally believed to have taken place) between Daoxin and Hongren, the Fourth and Fifth Patriarchs of Chinese Zen, related in the *Chuangdeng lu*. Thanh Bien's* biography follows the same formula. The encounter dialogue in his biography is obviously based on a dialogue between the Chinese Zen Master Dazhu Huihai and his disciple, which can also be found in the *Chuangdeng lu*.⁵²

At present we have no further information about Pháp Hiên and Thanh Biên. But we do have a hint about how the (original) author of the *Thiên*

Uyen * established the existence of these two monks: He might have found records of them in Thông Biên's* *Chieu* Doi* Luc** and then assigned them their respective places in the Vinitaruci* school based either on Thông Biên's information or on the dates of events or of their deaths.

For the time being I suggest that we can go along with tradition and accept their historicity for the following reasons:

1. Excluding the encounter dialogues borrowed from the *Chuangeng lu*, the biographies of both Pháp Hien* and Thanh Bien* seem to contain some historical facts, that is, events recorded in non-Buddhist history texts.
2. According to his biography, when Pháp Hien first entered religious life, he was a disciple of a monk named Quán Duyên at Pháp Vân Temple. Although nothing else is known about Quán Duyên,⁵³ it is hard to see why the compiler of the *Thien* Uyên* should fabricate his existence. Again, he might have taken it from Thông Biên's *Chiêu Đồi Luc*.
3. A brief biographical note of Pháp Hien is recorded in the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* [Sourcebook of Annam].⁵⁴ Although it was inadvertently ascribed to Nguyen* Hoc*, we know that it is about Pháp Hien, since it is almost identical to a passage in the latter's biography in the *Thiên Uyên*.⁵⁵
4. It is mentioned in Pháp Hien's* biography that Emperor Gaozu of the (Chinese) Sui dynasty "dispatched an envoy to bring Buddha relics and five boxes of official credentials, and ordered Pháp Hien to build a *stupa* to worship them. Pháp Hien built a *stupa* at Pháp Vân Temple, Luy Lâu, and at famous temples in Phong, Hoan, Tru'o'ng, and Ái provinces."⁵⁶ This event is also recorded in Chinese sources. According to Tanqian's biography, Emperor Gaozu sent out relics three times in all. The first time he gave to thirty prefectures in the sixth month of 601, the second time to fifty-one other prefectures in the first month of 602. The third time, in the first month of 604, he ordered the building of more than one hundred *stupas* to receive relics. Pháp Hien's relation with Thien* Chủng Temple is also confirmed.⁵⁷

The remaining biographies—from Đinh* Không (?–808, eighth generation) to Y So'n (nineteenth generation, the last master of the "Vinitaruci school")—seem to present a picture of a coherent trend of Buddhism, describing a Buddhism that features thaumaturgy, asceticism, and ritualism, while being very engaged in the world.⁵⁸ In short, these biographies depict a Buddhism that does not even remotely resemble the practice of Zen as the Zen classics present it to us.⁵⁹

The fact that Đinh Không's biography seems to mark the beginning of a coherent trend has led some to conclude that the so-called Vinitaruci school never existed, and that instead there was a school founded by Đinh Không.⁶⁰ This conjecture is not unreasonable, given the historical and literary evidence that disproves the traditional view that Vinitaruci

came to Vietnam and founded a Zen school bearing his name. However, such an interpretation would entail denying the presence of Pháp Hien* and Thanh Bien* and a tradition of Buddhist practices and activities at Pháp Vân Temple prior to the time of Đinh* Không, and I think denying this is neither necessary nor correct.

Taking into consideration all the evidence presented above, I am inclined to believe that a Buddhist center (and perhaps a lineage, in a loose sense) certainly existed at Pháp Vân Temple at the time of the alleged arrival of Vinitaruci* in Vietnam (sixth century). The fact that Pháp Hiên was assigned to receive the Buddha relics and build a *stupa* there to house them indicates that Pháp Vân Temple was probably a significant center of Buddhism. Although Vinitaruci (the translator) never came to Vietnam and the so-called Vinitaruci Zen school is a mere fiction, there was indeed a line of Buddhism whose center was Pháp Vân Temple. The Buddhism they practiced there, as reflected in the activities of its eminent monks such as Đinh Không, Pháp Thuan*, Van* Hanh*, Dao* Hanh, and others, combined meditation, asceticism, magic, wonder-working, and ritualism, a far cry from the Southern school of Chinese Zen.

Even if we do not deny the historicity of Pháp Hiên and Thanh Biên, we can still draw some conclusions from the inconsistency and dissimilarity in both content and literary style between the extant biographies of Đinh Không and eminent monks after him, and those of the first three figures of the so-called Vinitaruci school:

1. The biographies of the eminent monks from Đinh Không on were probably derived from historical records other than Thông Bien's* *Chieu* Doi* Luc**.
2. The construction of Vinitaruci's* biography and the interpolation of encounter dialogues of the "transmission of the lamp" genre into the biographies of his alleged immediate religious descendant Pháp Hiên and Thanh Biên, the fourth generation of the lineage, is simply another effort to locate the roots of this Vietnamese line of Buddhism in Chinese Zen.

The Vô Ngôn Thông School

The (original) compiler of the *Thien* Uyen** seems reluctant to approve of the "Vinitaruci school" as Zen and only recognizes the Vô Ngôn Thông school, when he notes at the end of Vô Ngôn Thông's biography that "the Zen school in our country [Vietnam] began with Vô Ngôn Thông."⁶¹ However, if one studies Vô Ngôn Thông's biography carefully, one cannot help question whether the traditional account of a man named Vô Ngôn Thông and his activities in Vietnam is at all believable. The issue

of Vô Ngôn Thông's coming to Vietnam is not at all as clear as some might think. ⁶²

Vô Ngôn Thông's biography is recorded in the *Thien* Uyen** as follows:

Zen Master Vô Ngôn Thông (Wu Yan Tong) of Kien* So' Temple at Phù Dong* District, Tiên Du Prefecture, was originally from Guangzhou. His family name was Zheng. From a tender age he respected Buddhist lore and did not attend to the family property. He entered religious life at Shuanglin Temple in Wuzhou. By disposition he was generous, profound, and a man of few words. He silently comprehended and realized the true nature of things, so his contemporaries called him Vô Ngôn Thông (i.e., Wordless Realization) or Bat* Ngu* Thông (Bu Yu Tong) according to the *Transmission of the Lamp*.

Every day Thông paid homage to the Buddha. One day [as he was doing so] a Zen Master asked him, "Venerable Sir, what are you paying homage to?" Thông said, "To the Buddha." The Zen man pointed to the Buddha-image and said, "But what is this one?" Thông had no reply.

That night he went with full formal deportment to the Zen man. After bowing politely Thông said, "What was the meaning of what you asked me before?" The Zen man said, "How many summers since you left home [to become a monk]?" Thông said, "Ten summers." The Zen man said, "Have you ever really left home yet?" Thông became even more confused. The Zen man said, "If you can't understand even this, what good are a hundred summers?" He then took Thông to see Mazu. But when they arrived in Jiangxi, Mazu had already passed away, so Thông went to call on the Zen Master Baizhang Huaihai.

Once [when Thông was present] there was a monk who asked Baizhang, "What is the Great Vehicle doctrine of enlightenment?" Baizhang said, "When the mind ground is empty, the sun of wisdom spontaneously shines." At these words Thông had attainment. He then returned to Guangzhou and became abbot of Hua An Temple.

Once someone asked him, "Are you a Zen Master or not?" Thông said, "This poor monk has never studied Zen." After a long silence, Thông called out to the questioner and he responded. Thông pointed to a coir-palm tree, and the man had no reply.

Once when Zen Master Yangshan was still a novice, Vô Ngôn Thông called out to him, "Hey Ji, move the bed over here for me." Yangshan moved the bed over to him. Thông said, "Now put it back where it was." Yangshan did as he was told. Thông again asked, "Ji, what is there over there?" Yangshan said, "Not a thing." Thông said, "What is there over here?" Yangshan said, "Not a thing." Thông called him, "Hey Ji!" Yangshan said, "Yes?" Thông said, "Go away."⁶³

Except for the introduction of Vô Ngôn Thông as a monk of Kiên So' Temple, this account is identical to the biography of Bu Yu Tong,⁶⁴ a

disciple of Baizhang, in the *Chuandeng lu*. The compiler of the *Thien * Uyen** notes that Vô Ngôn Thông is also called Bat* Ngu* Thông (Bu Yu Tong) in the *Chuandeng lu*, but the *Chuandeng lu* and other Chinese Zen sources never mention that Bu Yu Tong is also called Wu Yan Tong (Vô Ngôn Thông).

The *Thiên Uyên* continues:

In the ninth month, autumn, of the fifteenth year, *canh tí*, of the Yuanhua era (820) of the Tang dynasty, Vô Ngôn Thông came to Kien* So' Temple and planted his staff there. Except for his two simple meals, Thông was absorbed in the joy of meditation. He generally sat facing the wall without uttering a single word. Even after many years, no one knew him except for a monk named Cam* Thành who lived at the temple. Cam Thành honored and revered Vô Ngôn Thông and served by his side, coming into intimate contact with his mystic potential, and receiving his essential teaching in full.⁶⁵

How credible is the above passage? Is Vô Ngôn Thông of the *Thiên Uyên* one and the same as Bu Yu Tong of the *Chuandeng lu*? This is not a trivial matter. In fact, as long as this question cannot be answered, the Vô Ngôn Thông issue cannot be considered solved.

The traditional argument for the authenticity of Vô Ngôn Thông's presence in Vietnam rests on two premises:

1. The fact that the *Chuandeng lu* does not record Vô Ngôn Thông's activities in Vietnam or the date and place of his death indicates that Thông left China for Vietnam later in his life.
2. The record of Thông's activities in Vietnam is credible because the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên*, being a Vietnamese, must have been more aware of Thông's works in Vietnam than the Chinese authors.

I find it hard to agree with this argument for the following reasons:

1. The absence of date and place of death in the biographies of the Zen masters in the *Chuandeng lu* is not restricted only to the case of Vô Ngôn Thông.
2. When the author of the *Thiên Uyên* describes Vô Ngôn Thông, he says that after Vô Ngôn Thông settled down at Kiên So' Temple, "he generally sat facing the wall without uttering a single word." This description seems artificial. The phrase "without uttering a single word" appears to be a dramatization of the *Chuandeng lu*'s description of Bu Yu Tong that he was "a man of few words and he silently comprehended and realized the true nature of things."⁶⁶ Ascribing the practice of "sit facing the wall" to Vô Ngôn Thông seems to be another desperate effort on the part of the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* to connect Cam Thành and the Kiên So' line to the orthodox Zen of Bodhidharma.

It is true that some Chinese Zen sources ascribe this practice to Bodhidharma,⁶⁷ but it is variously interpreted even in these sources. Actually,

two different expressions are used in the original Chinese: *biguan* [literally means "wall contemplation"] and *mianbi* [facing the wall]. A closer scrutiny of these two terms will not only clarify some aspects in Zen doctrine and practice in general but also shed light on our immediate issue of Vô Ngôn Thông. ⁶⁸

The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* (composed in 664) only uses the expression *biguan*, whereas in the *Chuangdeng lu* we find both *biguan* and *mianbi*. The *Xu gaoseng zhuan* interprets *biguan* as a method of pacifying the mind (*anxin*) that Bodhidharma taught his two disciples, Huike and Daoyu. ⁶⁹ *Biguan* is also connected with the famous teaching of "entrance [into the Dharma] through principle (*li*) and practice (*xing*)" traditionally ascribed to Bodhidharma. It is a method of contemplation that helps the practitioner get rid of discrimination between "self" and "others" and to realize the equality of the mundane and the supramundane. ⁷⁰ Here I am inclined to follow Tang Yongtong's interpretation that *biguan* does not mean "wall contemplation" in the sense of contemplating the wall; rather, it denotes a firm, unshakable, nondual contemplation. ⁷¹ Note again that in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, *biguan* is not at all connected with *mianbi* or interpreted to mean physically sitting facing a wall.

In the *Chuangdeng lu* (composed around 1005), both *biguan* and *mianbi* appear. According to this text, Bodhidharma came to China during the time of Liang Wudi (502–550) to teach Buddhism. When he found out that nobody could understand his teaching, Bodhidharma went to dwell at Shaolin Temple on Mount Song, where he "sat silently all day facing the wall (*mianbi*). Nobody could fathom him, so they called him *biguan*-Brahmana*." A few lines after that we also read that "the master [Bodhidharma] sat upright facing the wall (*mianqiang*) without teaching him [Huike] anything." ⁷² Note that here the word *qiang* (wall) is used. Thus, we observe that for the author of the *Chuangdeng lu*, *biguan* is identical to *mianbi*, and he does not seem to be aware of other technical implications of the expression *mianbi*.

Briefly, the Thien* Uyen* description of Vô Ngôn Thông—that "he generally sat facing the wall (*mianbi*) without uttering a single word. Even after many years, no one knew him"—seems to be inspired by the passage on Bodhidharma in the *Chuangdeng lu*. Note that this "wall contemplation" or "wall facing" is not ascribed to the other Zen patriarchs after Bodhidharma, nor to Baizhang, Vô Ngôn Thông's alleged teacher. We find absolutely no trace of this practice in Vô Ngôn Thông's successor Cam* Thành, or, for that matter, in Vietnamese Buddhism, ancient or modern, although the Vô Ngôn Thông school is traditionally referred to as the "Wall-Contemplation school" (*Quán Bích*) in Vietnam.

Because of the abundance of borrowings and fabrications in the *Thiên*

*Uyen** we cannot uncritically accept the authenticity of Vô Ngôn Thông or the identity of this alleged Vô Ngôn Thông with the Bu Yu Tong of the *Chuangdeng lu*. The *Thien* Uyên* was constructed with the aim of bringing an orthodoxy to Vietnamese Buddhism. Together with other factors that will be discussed below, this leads me to believe that—as in the case of Vinitaruci*—the *Thiên Uyên* story of Vô Ngôn Thông's coming to Vietnam to establish a Zen sect bearing his name is nothing more than a construction.

Consider another factor. The *Chuangdeng lu* gives biographies for only thirteen of Baizhang Huaihai's thirty-one successors. These are: (1) Guishan Lingyou, (2) Huangbo Xiyun, (3) Daci Huanzhong, (4) Tiantai Pu-an, (5) Junzhou Changguan, (6) Shishuang Xingkong, (7) Fuzhou Da-an, (8) Guling Shenzan, (9) Guangzhou He-an Tong (i.e., Bu Yu Tong), (10) Longyun Tai, (11) Weiguo Dao, (12) Zhenzhou Wansui, and (13) Hongzhou Dongshan.⁷³

To connect Cam* Thành and the Kien* So' Temple with the Chinese Zen tradition and the lineage of Baizhang belonging to the orthodox Southern school (at least according to tradition), the author of the *Thiên Uyên* had to choose one among these thirteen Zen masters as Cam Thành's teacher. Guishan, Huangbo, Huanzhong, and Shenzan are very well-known personages in Chinese Zen literature, and all have complete biographies that make it difficult to fabricate anything more about them. As for the remaining eight (not including Bu Yu Tong), five lack clear biographies, and the other three are listed with either the places of their deaths or both places and dates of death. This leaves Bu Yu Tong (i.e., the alleged Vô Ngôn Thông of the *Thiên Uyên*), whose short biography contains neither date nor place of death, as the most convenient figure to connect with Cam Thành and the Kiên So' lineage of Vietnamese Buddhism. This supports the thesis that tales of Vô Ngôn Thông's works in Vietnam are apocryphal.

A final note: It is highly likely that the author of the *Thiên Uyên* derived his information from Thông Bien's* *Chieu* Doi* Luc**. It is conceivable that Thông Bien* himself had evidence upon which he based the story of Vô Ngôn Thông in Vietnam. But, unfortunately, the *Chiêu Đới Lục* is not extant, and with the evidence available to us we cannot but distrust this traditional account.

Vô Ngôn Thông School or Kien* so' Lineage

The fact that the author of the *Thiên Uyên* strove to find a master in the Chinese Zen tradition contemporary with Cam Thành to establish an orthodox Southern Zen lineage in Vietnam strongly implies the historicity of Cam Thành.

In Cam * Thành's biography it is said that he built Kien* So' Temple. In the story of Xung Thiên Than* Vu'o'ng [the God King Storming the Sky] in the *Viet* Dien**, an important text on Vietnamese myth and history, there was a monk named Chí Thành who dwelt at Kiên So' Temple.⁷⁴ I am inclined to believe that Chí Thành and Cam Thành are one and the same. Cam Thành's biography in the *Thien* Uyen** tells us that when he first entered religious life his Dharma-name was Lap* Đứ'c. The name Cam Thành was given to him by Vô Ngôn Thông. Note that Cam Thành [Moving Sincerity] and Chí Thành [Utmost Sincerity] are almost synonymous.

In considering Cam Thành's biography, we need to discount borrowed passages, as we did with Pháp Hien's* biography. If we omit the fabricated instruction allegedly given to him by Vô Ngôn Thông—which is identical with a passage from the *Chuangeng lu*⁷⁵—Cam Thành's biography seems consistent in many respects with the biographies of other Vietnamese eminent monks and appears to contain historical facts:

1. At first Cam Thành's Dharma-name was Lập Đứ'c. He devoted himself to chanting *dharanis** and reciting *sutras**.
2. Cam Thành was offered land by a lay Buddhist to build a temple. He repeatedly declined the offer until an immortal appeared to him in a dream⁷⁶ and persuaded him to accept.
3. Cam Thành built Kiên So' Temple at Phù Dong* Village. The temple was named after "Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng" [the Celestial King of Phù Đông, a legendary hero of Vietnam.] The *Viet Diên* states that the monk Chí Thành dwelt at Kiên So' Temple, which was built to worship "Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng."⁷⁷

Lý Te* Xuyên, who compiled the *Viet* Dien** in 1329, seems not to have known of any connection between Chí Thành (Cam Thành?) and any Chinese Zen school or a Zen master named Vô Ngôn Thông.

These facts indicate that Cam Thành was the "founder" of Kiên So' Temple, which evolved into a sacred place in Vietnamese religion and the center of a Buddhist lineage that lasted until the middle of the thirteenth century. An analysis of the biographies of the monks in this lineage and their activities and practices reveals a kind of Buddhism not much different from that of the Pháp Vân lineage.

Hien* Quang and the Linji (Lâm Te*) Zen School

The notion of a Vô Ngôn Thông Zen school in Vietnam seems to have originated with Thông Bien*. None of the other works of the same "transmission of the lamp" genre after Thông Biền speak of a Chinese Zen monk named Vô Ngôn Thông as the founder of a school or lineage.

The *Lu'o'c* Đan* Thien* Phái Do** was composed around 1310–1313 by an author who obviously belonged to the Trúc Lâm school. In addition to his own school he also mentioned three other schools: the first transmitted

by Vu'o'ng Chí Nhân, the second by Nhat * Thien*, and the third by Tianfeng. Among the transmitters of this last school were Dadeng and Nansi. The author of the *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Đô** did not know of the situation of the transmission before Thiên Nguyệt* (or Thiên Lão)—who according to the *Thiên Uyên** belonged to the sixth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school. In explaining his own lineage (Trúc Lâm) he traced it back to Thông Thiên (died 1228)—thirteenth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school according to the *Thiên Uyên*. He did not explicitly claim that the Trúc Lâm school derived from the Linji school, but he did mention a certain Tianfeng as the (Chinese) transmitter of the Linji school in Vietnam.

The writings of Phúc Dien* should help shed some light on the issue. In his *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c Luc**, he mentioned a number of eminent Song monks who came to Vietnam during the Tran* dynasty to transmit the orthodox teachings of the Linji school. These were Dadeng, Yingshun (Ứ'ng Thuan*), Tianfeng, Yuanzheng, Xiaoyao, and Huizhong (Huê* Trung).

According to Phúc Điền, Emperor Trần Thái Tông first studied with Yuanzheng but afterward received the transmission from Tianfeng. Thái Tông's son Trần Thánh Tông received the transmission from National Preceptor Dadeng. Trần Nhân Tông, Thánh Tông's son and the founder of the Trúc Lâm School, received the transmission from the Eminent Huizhong (Huê Trung).⁷⁸ From Phúc Dien's* records we learn that Trần Nhân Tông himself belonged to the sixth generation of the lineage of Hien* Quang of Văn Tiêu Temple, Mount Yên Tu*, Hai* Du'o'ng Province, who was the first patriarch of the Linji school in Vietnam.

Thus, according to Phúc Điền, toward the end of the Lý dynasty there had been Chinese Zen monks of the Linji lineage coming to Vietnam to spread their message. By the end of the Lý and in the early period of the Trần, Linji Zen—or what was perceived and practiced by its Vietnamese adherents as Linji Zen—was taking root in Vietnam. There were various lineages and temples spreading the perspectives and practices of the school. This was the beginning of the lasting influence of this school—at least from the traditional standpoint—on Vietnamese Buddhism.

There are, however, some discrepancies between the records of Phúc Điền and those of the author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô*. According to this author, a proclaimed adherent of the Trúc Lâm School, Trần Nhân Tông, its founder, belonged to a Zen lineage that began with Thông Thiên (died 1228)—a monk of the thirteenth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school, according to the *Thiên Uyên*—who transmitted the Dharma to Tú'c Lu*, to Yingshun (Ứ'ng Thuần), to Xiaoyao, and to Huizhong (Huê Trung). Trần Nhân Tông received the Dharma from Huizhong (Huê Trung). These six masters do not necessarily represent six generations. The author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* also did not

identify his Trúc Lâm school with Linji Zen, only remarking that a certain Layman Tianfeng, who transmitted the Dharma to National Preceptor Dadeng, was a transmitter of Linji Zen.

Phúc Diên *, a self-avowed Linji monk, also listed Trần* Nhân Tông as the sixth generation of the Vietnamese Linji lineage, which began with Hien* Quang as the first patriarch. The five generations before Trần Nhân Tông were Hiên Quang, Yuanzheng, Dadeng, Xiaoyao, and Huihui (Huê* Huê).

The two lineage lists are as follows:

The <i>Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do*</i> list	Phúc Diên's* list
Thông Thien*	Hiên Quang
Tứ'c Lu*	Yuanzheng
Yingshun (Ứ'ng Thuan*)	Dadeng
Xiaoyao	Xiaoyao
Huizhong (Huê Trung)	Huihui (Huê Huê)
Trần Nhân Tông	Trần Nhân Tông

The two lists agree with one another from the fourth generation on, although Huizhong (Huê Trung) became Huihui (Huê Huê) in Phúc Diên's list.⁷⁹ The author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* agreed with Phúc Diên that Dadeng was the teacher of Trần Thánh Tông, but unlike Phúc Diên, he did not include Dadeng in the Trúc Lâm lineage. I am inclined to think that Phúc Diên's records are more credible, since they seem to reflect still observable Vietnamese Buddhist realities. Phúc Diên's approach also appears to be more valid because he derived his information not only from older texts but also from facts gathered at various temples.

Let us sum up: Toward the middle of the Lý dynasty educated Vietnamese monks began to come into contact with Chinese Zen literature and Chinese monks. In China at the time, Zen was the most intellectually prestigious form of Buddhism. By the time of the early Trần dynasty Buddhism had been well received by the elite class and there had been learned Chinese monks arriving at the Vietnamese capital to teach. The fact that some of them claimed membership in the Linji lineage is not surprising because asserting such claims was a common practice in China. The fact that Vietnamese Buddhists claimed to belong to the Linji tradition only shows that Vietnamese Buddhists came into contact with Chinese monks purporting to be representatives of this Chinese Zen school.

Despite what the records tell us, however, in reality the Vietnamese absorption of Linji Zen seems to have taken the form of adopting certain styles of thought and practice taught by different teachers in different localities. There is no reliable evidence for the traditional belief that there were cohesive lineages established and uniform sets of doctrines transmitted. Present-day Vietnamese Buddhism still claims an affiliation

to Linji Zen, but in reality, it practices a kind of easygoing, emotionally reassuring, composite Buddhism that scarcely reflects the uncompromising abstractness and iconoclasm associated with the Linji spirit.

The Thao * Đu'ò'ng School

It is strange that modern scholars in Vietnam write on the history, development, and doctrine of the Thao* Đu'ò'ng Zen school, in the absence of any data about this school except for a list of names of the monks in the lineage.

In what appears to be an appendix to the *Thien* Uyen**, next to the title "Zen Master Thao Đu'ò'ng of Khai Quoc* Temple in the Capital of Thang* Long" there is a note saying "transmitting the lineage of the Xuedou Mingjue school,"⁸⁰ yet absolutely no details about Thao Đu'ò'ng are provided. So far we have not been able to locate any Vietnamese sources that record his teaching. Kawamoto Kunye reported that according to the *Chanlin baoxun* [Precious Instructions from the Zen Forest], Zen Master Caotang (Thao Đu'ò'ng), the founder of the Thao Đu'ò'ng school in Thang Long, was the same as Zen Master Caotang Shanqing, the disciple of Zen Master Huitang Zuxin who belonged to the twelfth generation of the line of the Sixth Patriarch Huineng's disciple Nanyue Huairang. Thao Đu'ò'ng transmitted the lineage of Yunbao Zhongxian.⁸¹ While there are records of some instructions of a Zen Master Caotang in the *Chanlin baoxun*,⁸² I have not been able to verify Kawamoto's identification of this Caotang with the Thao Đu'ò'ng in Vietnam in the same work.

The earliest Vietnamese historical record that mentions the name Thao Đu'ò'ng is the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3, chapter on "Immortals and Buddhist Monks":

Zen Master Thao Đu'ò'ng was very virtuous and well versed in Buddhist literature. The Lý King made him his teacher. Subsequently, Thao Đu'ò'ng passed away sitting upright.⁸³

The *An Nam Chí Lu'ò'c** [Brief Records of An Nam] is the earliest source for the legend about Thao Đu'ò'ng that has been accepted uncritically by scholars in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism. The *An Nam Chí Lu'ò'c* gives the following account of Thao Đu'ò'ng:

Thao Đu'ò'ng followed his teacher to live in Champa. King Thánh Tông of the Lý dynasty, in an expedition against Champa, captured him and gave him to a monk scribe as a servant. One day the monk scribe was composing a text when he had to go outside. Thao Đu'ò'ng secretly corrected the text. The monk thought his servant most extraordinary and reported it to Lý Thánh Tông. The latter subsequently made Thao Đu'ò'ng National Preceptor.⁸⁴

Historical records⁸⁵ tell us that during his reign Lý Thánh Tông made only one expedition against Champa, in 1069. If the story about Thao* Đu'ò'ng in the *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c** is accurate, he must have been captured in 1069 and made National Preceptor⁸⁶ sometime in the next two years, since early in 1072 Lý Thánh Tông fell seriously ill and subsequently died.⁸⁷

There is a strong case for doubting the veracity of the traditional picture of the Thao Đu'ò'ng School:

1. We saw that Thông Biền*, in his dialogue with Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân at a vegetarian feast held at the National Temple in 1096, only mentioned Vinitaruci* and Vô Ngôn Thông when speaking about the Zen schools in Vietnam. He said nothing about the Thao Đu'ò'ng school. This seems odd, since Thông Biền appears to have been a conscientious "historian," despite his limited exposure to Chinese Buddhist historical sources.
2. We learn by way of Than* Nghi's biography that in his *Chieu* Doi* Luc** Thông Biền mentioned the existence of all the secondary sects that he knew of, although he did not record their transmissions in detail. Perhaps he did not consider the "Thao Đu'ò'ng school" as a Zen school at all.
3. If the Thao Đu'ò'ng school flourished in aristocratic circles, as is the opinion of most Vietnamese scholars, how could it be that Thông Biền—who was also National Preceptor—did not know anything about Thao Đu'ò'ng? Thông Biền should have known Thao Đu'ò'ng well since they were almost contemporaries.⁸⁸
4. Thao Đu'ò'ng might have taught a kind of Buddhism that Thông Biền did not find palatable. This would explain why he ignored Thao Đu'ò'ng, just as he did the lineages of Nguyen* Dai* Diên and Nguyễn Bát Nhã, which according to some had a Tantric bent. Yet it is strange that Phù Thánh Linh Nhân herself did not seem to know anything about Thao Đu'ò'ng and his (Zen) school.⁸⁹ This is somewhat strange, considering the fact that Phù Thánh Linh Nhân was a devout Buddhist, as was Lý Thánh Tông's principal concubine. According to tradition, it was Thánh Tông who made Thao Đu'ò'ng National Preceptor and who also succeeded Thao Đu'ò'ng as a patriarch of the first generation of the school. Kawamoto also reported some relationships between Lý Thánh Tông and Thao Đu'ò'ng as recorded in the *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c**, yet I have not been able to locate them in the same book.⁹⁰
5. The list of successors of the school does not seem to be right either: Không Lo* and Giác Hai* are also recorded as belonging to the school, though we know that these two monks belonged to the Vô Ngôn Thông school. Moreover, I believe that these two figures should be classified as thaumaturges rather than Zen masters.
6. Another apparent anomaly is that Lý Cao Tông (r. 1175–1210) is also recorded by the *Thien* Uyen** as a "patriarch" belonging to the fifth

generation of the Thao * Đu'ò'ng school.⁹¹ Lý Cao Tông ascended the throne in 1175 when he was only two years old and reigned for thirty-six years. Historical records tell us that Cao Tông indulged in luxury, and it was during his reign that the Lý dynasty began to disintegrate.⁹² Cao Tông once followed the advice of Grand Tutor Đam Di* Mông, a mediocre, opportunistic Confucian scholar,⁹³ and passed some harsh laws restricting the Buddhist monks. This incident is recorded as follows by the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c** (3: 12b–13a):

[In 1194] Đam Di Mông reported to the King [Lý Cao Tông], "Monks are now as numerous as laborers. They form groups as they please, choosing their own leaders, and flocking together in groups. They commit many odious acts, such as deliberately drinking wine and eating meat in austere places and monasteries or fornicating in monachal alcoves and meditation halls. They disappear by day and appear at night like foxes and rats. Perverting morals and defiling religion is becoming a habit with them. It is time to put an end to such conduct, otherwise, they will only get worse in the long run." The king was in agreement. Di Mông then summoned clergymen from all over the country to a public granary, chose some tens of them of repute as monks, and had the rest marked on the hand and sent back to lay life.⁹⁴

It is clear that Đam Di Mông's report bespeaks his personal antipathy toward Buddhism more than it directly reflects the actual situation. It is hard to understand why, if he had really been a "patriarch" of a Zen school, Lý Cao Tông could take such a report seriously and move against his own religion. Historical records also report many incidents toward the end of his life where Lý Cao Tông behaved more like a psychopath than a "Zen patriarch."⁹⁵ Neither the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c* nor the *Toàn Thu'* mentions anything about Cao Tông's involvement with any Zen school.

There is another feasible explanation of the existence of a monk named Thao Đu'ò'ng in Lý Buddhism. As we saw, *An Nam Chí Nguyên* is the first source to mention Thao Đu'ò'ng, describing him as "very virtuous and well versed in Buddhist literature" and stating that Lý Thánh Tông made him his teacher. Historical sources portray Lý Thánh Tông as an emperor with an ecumenical spirit, and religious activities in Vietnam under his reign were most interesting. Although he was a devout Buddhist, Thánh Tông strongly supported Confucianism and other religions. According to court chronicles, in 1057 Lý Thánh Tông had two temples built (Thiên Phúc and Thiên Tho*), where golden statues of Brahma* and Sakra* (Indra)—the two eminent deities of Brahmanism—were worshipped.⁹⁶

Thao Đu'ò'ng thus might have been the Sino-Vietnamese name of a monk who came from either Champa or India and subsequently became Lý Thánh Tông's personal religious teacher. Thao Đu'ò'ng might have

taught a kind of Buddhism that was a mixture of Mahayana * and Brahmanism. Some among the supposed successors of the "Thao* Đu'ò'ng lineage" had Indian names, and quite a few were laymen. This would explain the report that he was well respected by the court. This could also explain why later scholars like Lê Trac*, the author of *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c**, came up with the story of Thao Đu'ò'ng being captured in Champa, and why the compiler of the *Thien* Uyen** went one step further to connect him with the Zen school of Xuedou Mingjue.

In conclusion, therefore, until evidence is found to confirm traditional belief, I am inclined to think that the so-called Thao Đu'ò'ng Zen school is as specious as the Vinitaruci* and the Vô Ngôn Thông schools.⁹⁷

Conclusion

Even with all the arguments presented above, I am not unaware of the possible counterargument that it is not necessary to deny the actual presence in medieval Vietnam of Vinitaruci, Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao Đu'ò'ng and their Zen schools simply because their biographies and the records of them contain contradictory, inaccurate, and anachronistic elements.

One might argue that these three Buddhist teachers indeed came to Vietnam and established their own schools, and that the dubious character of their biographies results from the work of later Vietnamese Buddhist authors who tinkered with whatever data they might have had at their disposal about the lives of these three masters. It would be no surprise that these medieval Buddhist authors shaped the images of those masters by following the paradigmatic method of biographical writing determined by the interest of their time and their communities. Inevitably, they were writing a "history" of Vietnamese Buddhism from a particular horizon of expectation.

I am not suggesting that after subtracting borrowed passages from the *Chuandeng lu* from the biographies of the Vietnamese eminent monks in the *Thiên Uyên*, what remains really represents the "hard" historical facts of their lives. These facts, nevertheless, do give us more reliable biographical images⁹⁸ of these Vietnamese monks. In the context of Vietnamese intellectual history, these biographies (minus borrowed passages from the *Chuandeng lu*) reflect more directly the images of those eminent monks in the Vietnamese Buddhist communities before there was the need to connect Vietnamese Buddhism to Chinese Zen.

What is beyond dispute is that the historical facts and evidence still do not support the traditional view on the existence and activities of the Vinitaruci, Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao Đu'ò'ng "Zen schools" in Vietnamese history. Vinitaruci, Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao Đu'ò'ng were not what the

traditional Vietnamese authors, both medieval and modern, have claimed them to be. Nor did these "Zen masters" play the kind of roles in Vietnamese Buddhist history that those authors made them appear to play. And even if Vinitaruci *, Vô Ngôn Thông, and Thao* Đu'ò'ng were actually present in Vietnam, their positions and significance in Vietnamese Buddhist history must be looked at from a different perspective. This can only be appropriately done when pertinent historical and other data have been gathered and their value critically analyzed.

Toward the end of the Tang dynasty (618–907), Zen became so dominant a school intellectually in the China-centered world that in most intellectuals' minds Buddhism was almost identical to Zen.⁹⁹ With its powerful approach to Buddhist thought and practice and its poetic brilliance, by the Song dynasty (960–1297) Zen held a fascination for many East Asian intellectuals, including some of the most eminent Confucians of the period.

During the Lý dynasty, Chinese Zen literature began to be brought to Vietnam and caught the fancy of the elite class of the day, including some high-born Buddhist monks, most of them with background in Confucian learning. This development was reflected in the composition of texts of the "transmission of the lamp" genre initiated by Thông Bien*. With the composition of the *Chuandeng lu* in China in 1004, "lamp history" began to supersede the "biographies of eminent monks" style and even influenced the composition of sectarian history, in the form of biographies, in other Buddhist schools.¹⁰⁰

The construction of Vietnamese Buddhist history in terms of supposed Zen schools stems from the efforts of the elite eager to establish a notion of Zen-centered orthodoxy for Vietnamese Buddhism. Chinese Buddhists in general and Zen sectarians in particular endeavor to justify their orthodoxy by connecting their own school to an Indian lineage that can presumably be traced back to the historical Sakyamuni* himself; Vietnamese Buddhists do so by connecting themselves to a school of Chinese Buddhism that they believe to be orthodox. Since for the medieval Vietnamese Buddhist elite Zen is the legitimate school of Buddhism, Buddhism is Zen *tout court*, and their own familiarity with Zen literature is tantamount to involvement in the heart of Buddhism.

**Chapter Three—
Rereading the *Thien * Uyen* Tap* Anh:*
Buddhism in Medieval Vietnam**

Through a close reading of the *Thiên Uyên*, and of its traditional reading, I have made the case that one cannot rely uncritically on this text to reconstruct the historical transmission of Vietnamese Buddhism or to arrive at an accurate idea of the fundamental characteristics of Vietnamese Buddhism. Unfortunately, the standard view of Vietnamese Buddhist history and thought put forward by scholars and believers during the last fifty years has in fact been based on a naive and uncritical reading of the *Thiên Uyên*. Therefore, rereading this book also means reevaluating the received view on Vietnamese Buddhist history. Identifying what is spurious in this critical text is an important contribution to rewriting early Vietnamese Buddhist history.

The careful analysis of both the content and literary genre of the *Thiên Uyên* in the previous chapter has revealed that this text should not be accepted uncritically. Abandoning the interpretation of the *Thiên Uyên* as a "transmission of the lamp" text means reinterpreting Vietnamese Buddhist history. Reevaluating the historical significance of this text does not mean denying its historical value altogether. By the same token, to demonstrate that Vietnamese Buddhism has not always centered on Zen does not in any sense denigrate Vietnamese Buddhism. Though Zen was the most intellectually prestigious form of Buddhism in the East Asian world for many centuries, and in particular during the time when the *Thiên Uyên* was compiled, we do not need to subscribe to this evaluation. From a contemporary secular perspective and, for that matter, from a pan-Buddhist perspective, Zen does not "outrank" other forms of Buddhism, and the composite reality of medieval Vietnamese Buddhism is not in any sense a "lower form" of the religion than Zen.

I have shown that after subtracting borrowed passages (mostly from the *Chuangeng lu*), the biographies of eminent monks recorded in the *Thiên Uyên* seem to reflect historical events. These records give a picture

of the fundamental characteristics of Vietnamese Buddhism that is in some sense fragmentary, but—in its own context—also remarkably cohesive.

The observation I have offered is that the Buddhism pictured in the *Thien * Uyen** shares many common features with modern Vietnamese Buddhism, particularly from the perspective of practice. This may be the best testimony to the fact that the *Thiên Uyên* is a useful historical document and not just a collection of fantastic but formulaic Zen stories. The records in the *Thiên Uyên* reveal to us valuable information about the mentality, attitude, and aspirations of the Buddhist intelligentsia and the Buddhist masses.

Of course, to reconstruct a true multidimensional history of Vietnamese Buddhism is a project that would have to draw on sources from many disciplines—anthropology, archaeology, art history, epigraphy, and fieldwork. In this chapter, therefore, I present what amounts to a prolegomenon for a history of Buddhism in medieval Vietnam.

A historical/critical reading of the *Thiên Uyên* yields significant data regarding the role of Buddhism in medieval Vietnam that can be summarized under the following categories: Buddhism and literary life, Buddhism and sociopolitical life, Buddhism and popular religion, and especially, the image of the monk in medieval Vietnam. The *Thiên Uyên* also provides a general but useful picture of Buddhist doctrine and practice in medieval Vietnam.¹

Although I reject the traditional uncritical reading of the *Thiên Uyên* as a "lamp history" text that records the actual historical transmission of Zen teaching in Vietnam, the text does show us how the Zen school was being constructed or imagined in medieval Vietnam.

Buddhism and Literary Life

Concerning Vietnamese poetry, Maurice Durand and Nguyen* Tran* Huân stated that before Nguyễn Trãi (1380–1443, a significant author of the [Later] Lê dynasty, 1428–1788), "very little Vietnamese writing . . . has survived. It consists mainly of *nôm* poems, some of whose titles are known; and though a few texts exist which have been ascribed to this period, their authenticity cannot be accepted without reserve."² Durand and Huân add that "the period in question covers the Tran (1225–1400) and Ho (1400–1407) dynasties."³

This is a rather surprising remark, overlooking as it does the many poems in classical Chinese written by eminent monks of the Lý and Trần dynasties.⁴ Perhaps the two scholars were unaware of the *Thiên Uyên*, the *Toàn Viet* Thi Luc** [A Complete Record of Vietnamese Poetry], or the *Hoàng Việt Thi Tuyen** [Collected Poems of Vietnam].⁵ In fact, the

first thing a reader with background in Vietnamese culture would notice when reading the *Thien * Uyen** is the influence of Buddhism on Vietnamese literary life. Besides being a collection of biographies of eminent monks, the *Thiên Uyên* is also a precious sourcebook for some of the earliest extant examples of Vietnamese literature.

Vietnam had come into contact with Chinese culture and classical Confucian learning no later than 111 B.C.E. Historical records tell us that during the period of Chinese hegemony there were Vietnamese intellectuals who received Chinese education and held administrative positions in China.⁶ Curiously, though, there are scarcely any extant records of any literary work by a Vietnamese author prior to the Lý dynasty. This may be because writings by Vietnamese authors during the time of Chinese domination did not survive in the absence of indigenous Vietnamese state institutions to support and preserve them, and the early independent Vietnamese dynasties in the two centuries before the Lý were too short-lived and preoccupied with political struggles to play the role of patrons of literature. Not until the time of the Lý was the Vietnamese concept of a national identity of sufficient concern and the court sufficiently organized to establish literary institutes to preserve writings by Vietnamese authors.

While Buddhism only added some novel inspirations, images, and expressions⁷ to an already rich literature in China, especially during the Tang and Song, it played a more significant role in literary life of medieval Vietnam. Buddhist allegiances inspired the composition of what were probably the first written pieces of literature in Vietnam. Both premodern and modern collections of Vietnamese (written) literature usually begin on the eve of the Lý dynasty.⁸ The greater part of Lý literature consists of writings of eminent Buddhist monks. These writings range from poems and short essays to commentaries on Buddhist texts and independent works on various Buddhist topics. Unfortunately, most of these works have been irretrievably lost. In his *Lu'o'c* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, which contains short biographical notes of Vietnamese authors and lists of their writings, Tran* Van* Giáp begins with Khuông Viet* Thái Su', an eminent monk of the Đinh and [Former] Lê dynasties.

According to the *Thiên Uyên*, Khuông Việt studied the Confucian classics as a boy, but when he grew up he turned to Buddhism and eventually became a monk at Khai Quoc* Temple. When he was in his forties, Đinh Tiên Hoàng made him *Tang* Thong** (General Supervisor of Monks), a rank he continued to hold even under the succeeding dynasty, the [Former] Lê. When the Song envoy Li Jue visited Vietnam, Lê Dai* Hành asked Khuông Việt to receive the Chinese diplomat. The literary exchange between them has become a renowned event in Vietnamese

literature. When Li Jue went back to China, Khuông Viet * wrote him a farewell poem, which reportedly won him Li Jue's admiration:

Embroidered sails extended in the auspicious sunshine and
 the fair wind,
 The spirit immortal returns to the sovereign's home.
 Thousands of miles across the blue waves,
 The road home to the ninth heaven is long.
 How sad human feelings are as we face the cup of parting,
 Fondly we try to hold you back, illustrious Sir.
 We hope you will exercise your profound intent on behalf
 of this southern land,
 Report clearly to our sovereign.⁹

The fact that Khuông Việt had studied the Confucian classics shows that there were Vietnamese intellectuals at that period who had been exposed to Chinese literature for some time.

Khuông Việt left an instructional verse to his disciple Đa Bao* before he was about to die:

The fire was already there in the wood,
 Fire was there, then it came to life again.
 If you say there is no fire in wood,
 How could flames spring up when we drill for fire?¹⁰

There is a notable absence of grandiloquent Zen phraseology in Khuông Viet's* verse. The verse expresses in simple language and imagery the fundamental Mahayana* teaching that sentient beings are originally possessed of Buddha nature, without which the Buddhist path would be useless.

We learn from the *Thien* Uyen** that before entering the monastic life, most eminent monks had received an education that emphasized Confucian texts. The elevation of Buddhism to the status of state religion, and especially the arrival of Chinese Zen literature, had served as an inspiration for a new literary enthusiasm among the Vietnamese intelligentsia.

Despite the formula that identifies Zen as a separate transmission beyond the verbal teachings, Zen Buddhism left a rich literary legacy. Zen literature contains, among other things, a kind of poetry that is rich in startling imagery, expressing a paradigm of heroic spirituality. Many Zen classics, such as the *Biyān lu* and the *Wumen guan*, were appreciated as much for their literary elegance as for their philosophical significance. It was exactly the literary brilliance of Zen writings that had attracted Chinese littérateurs to Zen, and that was to fascinate the Vietnamese Buddhist elite.¹¹ There are many examples in Chinese and Vietnamese literature of Confucian scholars who were friends with Zen

monks, although they had no taste for Buddhism as a whole. Some of them composed poems and essays shot through with Zen idioms and metaphors.

Eminent monks in medieval Vietnam began to emulate the Chinese Zen patriarchs and compose poems either in the form of instructional verses for their disciples before passing away or simply as expressions of their spiritual understanding and experience, and their attitudes toward the phenomenal world. Among these poems some are highly original, while others draw heavily on Chinese poetry and classical anecdotes and seem quite derivative.

Quite a few of these poems have become very popular and have been learned by heart by many Vietnamese Buddhists. Foremost among them is probably the verse written by Van * Hanh*, one of the most beloved eminent monks in the hearts and minds of Vietnamese Buddhists:

The body is like lightning: it's there and then it's not,
 It is like myriad plants and trees—fresh in the spring
 but fading in autumn.
 Trust in your destiny unafraid of ups and downs,
 Because ups and downs are [as evanescent] as drops of dew
 on a blade of grass.¹²

This poem displays the Buddhist spirit of fearlessness in the face of the impermanence of the phenomenal world. This fearlessness is one of the principal virtues of a Bodhisattva, which allows him or her to operate in the world without fearing entanglement or disappointment.

Cú'u Chi* composed this instructional verse before he passed away:

Body and mind are fundamentally quiescent and still,
 But through the transformations of spiritual powers,
 all forms are manifested.
 Both created and uncreated phenomena come from this,
 In worlds countless as the grains of sand on the banks
 of the Ganges,
 Though they fill all of space,
 When contemplated one by one, they are formless.
 For a thousand ages this has been difficult to describe,
 But everywhere in every world it is always luminous
 and clear.¹³

As an expression of his spiritual understanding, Cú'u Chi's* verse contains idioms and metaphors as well as philosophical concepts that would certainly be novel to anyone who had been exposed only to Confucian learning. Clearly, the notions of countless worlds and a formless luminous

One Reality giving rise to an infinite variety of forms filling space are beyond the ken of Confucian classics.

Viễn Chiếu *, another eminent monk and particularly talented literary man, wrote this verse:

The body is like a wall—
 it crumbles to the ground,
 All the worldly people are agitated—
 none is not distressed.
 If you comprehend that mind is empty and formless,
 Then you let form and emptiness, the hidden and the
 manifest, follow each other in turn.¹⁴

The Buddhist message is that the phenomenal world is impermanent, and so is one's bodily existence, but if one realizes that the absolute (mind/emptiness) and the phenomenal (form) are identical, then one can wander freely in both ultimate and conventional realms. The poem, in brief, is an eloquent display of the heroic Mahayana* and Zen Buddhist attitude toward life.

In the same vein Mãn Giác wrote:

When spring goes, the hundred flowers wither,
 When spring comes, the hundred flowers bloom.
 One thing after another, life passes before our eyes,
 Old age comes from above.
 Don't think that all flowers fall as spring ends,
 In the courtyard last night a plum branch bloomed.¹⁵

In this poem Mãn Giác, taking a typical East Asian Buddhist attitude, refers to the flow of natural events as emblematic of ultimate reality. Once one realizes this, one experiences no fear in the face of the constantly changing phenomenal world.

Ngo* An's* instructional verse displays in mystical language and beautiful symbolism the fundamental Mahayana Buddhist view of the indestructibility of Emptiness or Buddha-nature:

The wondrous nature of Emptiness is inconceivable,
 Yet with mind empty, it is not at all difficult to realize.
 A jewel burns on the mountain,
 its color constantly bright.
 A lotus blooms in the furnace,
 its moisture never parched.¹⁶

Không Lo * shows the free spirit and sense of mastery of an accomplished thaumaturge:

I've found a land of dragon and snakes to settle down in,
This rustic pleasure brings joy the whole day through.
At times I climb to the solitary peaks,
Sending forth a long whistle that chills the universe.¹⁷

Giác Hai*, his companion, displays the same transcendental spirit in his instructional verse:

Spring comes, flowers and butterflies
know the season well,
Flowers and butterflies must have their own times.
But flowers and butterflies are originally illusions,
Do not occupy your mind with flowers and butterflies.¹⁸

The nun Dieu* Nhân shows the attitude of Patriarchal Zen in her verse before passing away:

Birth, old age, illness and death,
Have always been the same.
If you wish to escape from them,
By trying to untie your bonds,
you add to your entanglement.
It's only when you are deluded
that you search for Buddha,
It's only when you are confused
that you look for Zen.
I seek neither Buddha nor Zen,
I just close my mouth and keep silent.¹⁹

Điêu Nhân's verse expresses with Zen flavor the fundamental Mahayana* view that is the most recurrent theme in the *Thien* Uyen**, that as long as we still harbor a dualistic view, our efforts are delusory. The moment we realize the equality of *samsara** and nirvana, we spontaneously and effortlessly realize our original Buddha nature.

As I established in the previous chapter, the *Thiên Uyên* is a polyphonic pastiche and not a single, coherent literary work. For instance, the encounter dialogue section in Viên Chiêu's* biography appears to contain a great part if not the whole of his short work entitled *Tham Do* Hien* Quyêt** [Revelations of the Decisive Secret for Students]. Viên Chiêu* showed through this work that he was a talented and learned literary man who was versed in classical anecdotes both Buddhist and non-Buddhist and could draw upon them freely. Viên Chiêu died in 1090, which shows that

the composition of Zen-inspired poetry and treatises had begun in Vietnam no later than the early decades of the Lý dynasty.

Most of the authors who figured in the collections of Lý poetry were Buddhist monks. Among the few lay writers were some of the Lý emperors and aristocrats. The *Thiên * Uyển** records a total of nine poems written by lay Buddhist litterateurs: one by Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân, two by Lý Thái Tông, three by Lý Nhân Tông, and three by Đoàn Văn* Khâm.

Phù Thánh Linh Nhân (died 1117), was a principal concubine of Lý Thánh Tông as was the mother of Lý Nhân Tông, Thánh Tông's heir. She was known as a great patron of Buddhism. According to the *Thiên Uyển*, Phù Thánh Linh Nhân studied Buddhism with the celebrated Thông Biện* and had attained some spiritual awakening. She once composed a verse on enlightenment:

Form is emptiness, so emptiness equals form,
Emptiness is form, so form equals emptiness.
Only when you are not attached to either,
Do you mesh with the true source.

The verse shows her familiarity with the *Heart Sutra**, probably the most frequently chanted scripture in East Asian Buddhism. It also displays the Zen spirit of nonattachment.

Lý Thái Tông was the second emperor of the Lý and reigned during its heyday. He was a brilliant man who loved martial arts as well as literature and music. He was also well versed in the Buddhist teachings. Lê Quý Đôn (1726–1784), arguably the greatest Confucian scholar in Vietnamese history, once compared Lý Thái Tông to Emperor Guang Wu of the Han dynasty.²⁰ Of the two poems written by Lý Thái Tông, one was an instruction on the essence of Zen to Zen students:

*Prajna** is really without a source,
It teaches the emptiness of both persons and phenomena.
The Buddhas of the past, present, and future,
Are identical in Dharma nature.²¹

My own opinion is that we should not be too hasty to read profound mystical attainment into these short Zen poems and sayings—most of them are quite formulaic and conventional within the Zen frame of reference. In most cases these Zen poems should be considered as poetic, literary expressions rather than as philosophical statements. Lý Thái Tông's poem, however, shows that at least he was familiar with some of the main technical terms and concepts of Mahayana* Buddhism.

The second one is a poem Lý Thái Tông wrote to commemorate Vinitaruci *, the alleged founding patriarch of the first Zen school of Vietnam:

When you first came to this southern country,
 Everyone knew that you had practiced Zen for a long time.
 You had to open the way for faith in the Buddhas,
 So that people of later generations could live in accord
 with the one mind, the source.
 The moon over Lanka is bright,
 The Lotus flower of transcendent wisdom is fragrant,
 When can I see you face to face
 So we can discuss the arcane lore together?²²

The *Thien* Uyen** relates that after Van* Hanh* died, the court literati and many common people were present at the cremation. Later, Emperor Lý Nhân Tông wrote a commemorative poem:

Van Hanh fused present, past, and future,
 He matched the workings of ancient prophecies.
 His native village was Co* Pháp,
 He planted his staff there to guard the royal territory.²³

Lý Nhân Tông also composed a verse in commemoration of monk Sùng Pham*:

Sùng Pham hailed from the southern country,
 He returned home successful with mind empty.
 Long ears reflect his auspicious quality,
 [He realized that] all phenomena are inherently detached
 [from all forms] and extremely subtle.²⁴

Once, after witnessing a magical feat displayed by the two monks Thông Huyen* and Giác Hai*, Lý Nhân Tông was so amazed that he wrote a poem to praise them:

Giác Hai's* mind is like the ocean,
 Thông Huyen's* way is mysterious.
 Full of supernatural powers and magical skills,
 One is Buddha, the other an immortal.²⁵

The other lay Buddhist writer who was credited with three poems was Đoàn Van* Khâm of the Lý dynasty. Not much is known about him except that he was Minister of Public Works under Lý Nhân Tông. His poems show that he was a devout Buddhist and a talented poet in his time.

The first poem was in praise of the eminent monk Quang* Trí:

Hanging his staff on a perilous peak,
 he has left behind the dusts of the senses.

As I dwell silently amidst dreamlike illusion,
 I ask the floating clouds:
 I am earnest, but there is no way for me to study
 with Fo Tu Teng and Kumarajiva *,
 Entangled as I am with high society,
 that flock of ostentatious storks.²⁶

In this poem Đoàn Van* Khâm displays his utmost admiration for Quang* Trí by likening him to Fo Tu Teng and Kumarajiva.²⁷ The *Thien* Uyen** tells us that Quang Trí was an ascetic who made his abode on Mount Tù' So'n. He always wore a patched robe and fed himself on pine nuts. Quang Trí had a spiritual companion, a hermit-monk named Minh Hue*. His contemporaries said that they were the reincarnations of the illustrious Tang dynasty Zen companions Hanshan and Shide.

When Quang Trí passed away, Đoàn Van Khâm composed a poem in his honor:

He escaped from the capital and dwelt in the forest
 till his hair turned white,
 He shook out his sleeves [rejecting conventional society]
 for the high mountains,
 The more remote, the higher his reputation.
 How often I wished to don simple garb and go to his side!
 Now suddenly comes the news that he has departed
 and his Zen retreat is closed,
 Now in the courtyard of his temple the birds cry in vain
 to the moon.
 Who can compose the inscription for his tomb?
 Companions in the Path should not be sad as he departs
 forever,
 The mountains and rivers in front of his retreat are his
 true portrait.²⁸

Đoàn Van Khâm also wrote a poem to commemorate Chân Không, another eminent monk of the Lý:

His lofty virtue spread pure wind over the capital and
 among the people,
 Those who came leaning on their staffs [to study with him]
 were like evening clouds gathering around a dragon.
 The mansion of humane benevolence was suddenly shaken
 because the wisdom pillar collapsed,
 The forest of Dharma will always lament the fall
 of a great pine tree,
 Green grass surrounds his grave and the new stupa.
 In the river reflecting the green mountains we recognize
 his former face,

How quiet his Zen gate is—who will be knocking
 anymore?
 Passing by I sadly listen to the bells of evening.²⁹

The fact that the elite class was inspired by Buddhism and its eminent monks to compose poetry shows that by this time the monk had acquired an image of heroism and virtue worthy of emulation and praise. We will return to this topic later in this chapter.

When an independent state was established in Vietnam after ten centuries of Chinese suzerainty, the Buddhist monks from well-off families, most of them with a background in the Confucian classics, emerged as the new class of intelligentsia. They found in Buddhist literature, and especially in the rich imagery of Zen literature, with its rich imagery and idioms, a new medium for their literary talents and their Buddhist world view. Other intellectuals of the time followed suit.

The writing of Buddhist poetry, and eventually Zen poetry, became a familiar practice among the Vietnamese Buddhist elite, a practice that has continued up to modern times.³⁰ A learned monk, regardless of his practice in real life, would likely at some point compose poems employing Zen phrases and ideas. It is thus not necessarily accurate to describe a monk as a Zen adherent simply because he composed or left behind some "Zen poems." We can say that Zen in Vietnam has been more of a (religious) literary movement than a real sectarian school with distinctive doctrines, practices, and genealogies.

Besides the short verses quoted above, we also learn from the records in the *Thien* Uyen** that Buddhism, particularly Zen, has inspired learned Vietnamese monks to compose "lamp history" texts such as *Chieu* Doi* Luc** by Thông Bien*, *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** by Thu'ông Chieu*, and *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** by Hue* Nhat* (all discussed in Chapter Two). The *Thiên Uyển* also mentions some treatises on various Buddhist topics composed by medieval Vietnamese eminent monks.

For instance, it is reported in Viên Chieu's* biography that he composed a work called *Duoc* Su' Thap* Nhi* Nguyen* Van** [The Twelve Vows of the Medicine King Buddha] and presented it to Emperor Lý Nhân Tông. Nhân Tông gave it to the envoy from the Song court, who sent it along to the Chinese Emperor Zhezong (r. 1086–1110). The *Thiên Uyển* relates that "Zhezong summoned an eminent Chinese monk to evaluate the text. After he had read it, the Chinese monk joined his palms and bowed in homage and remarked that a living Bodhisattva had appeared in the south and was well qualified to expound the Dharma; he could not add or subtract anything. The Chinese emperor then had another copy made and returned the original."³¹ Viên Chiếu also penned other works such as *Tán Viên Giác Kinh* [Eulogy on the *Complete Enlightenment Sutra**], *Thập*

*Nhi * Bo* Tát Hanh* Tu Chú'ng Dao* Tru'ò'ng* [Enlightenment Realized by the Twelve Bodhisattva Practices], and *Tham Do* Hien* Quyét** [Revelation of the Decisive Secret for Students]³² as well as his collection of poems that were in circulation during the time of the composition of the *Thiên* Uyên** but are now lost.

The *Thiên Uyên* also mentions works composed by other eminent monks, such as *Bo Tát Hieu* Sâm Hoi* Van** [A Bodhisattva's Words of Repentance] by Pháp Thuận*; *Pháp Su* Trai Nghi* [Ritual Forms for Dharma Services and Vegetarian Feasts] and *Chu' Dao Tru'ò'ng Khánh Tân Van* [Celebrations and Eulogy of the Site of Enlightenment] by Hue* Sinh; *Ngô* Dao Ca Thi Tap** [Collected Songs and Poems on Enlightenment] by Khánh Hy*; *Tuyen* Chu' Phat* Tich Duyệt Su'* [Selected Stories of Buddha's Past Lives]; *Hong* Chung Van Bi Ký* [Great Bell Inscriptions]; and *Tang* Già Tap* Luc** [Miscellaneous Records of the Sangha] by Viên Thông.

All these works were said to have been circulated widely during medieval times, but unfortunately, none of them is extant nowadays. Together with many other works by Vietnamese scholars, these writings probably perished during the devastating military incursions of the Mongols and the Ming dynasty armies during the Tran* and Lê dynasties.³³ The fact that most of these eminent monks and talented littérateurs were at one time learned in Confucian classics who subsequently turned toward Buddhism shows that Buddhism was providing new nourishment not only for their spiritual lives but also for their literary imaginations.

Buddhism and Sociopolitical Life

The *Thiên Uyên* provides valuable accounts of the impact of Buddhism on social and political life in medieval Vietnam. It shows us the appropriation of Chinese Buddhist institutions into Vietnamese Buddhism and the degree to which Buddhism had penetrated into Vietnamese social and political life.

Vegetarian feasts were a regular part of Buddhist life in Vietnam (as in China).³⁴ They were held on various occasions. Sometimes they were organized to express gratitude for a monk.³⁵ Sometimes vegetarian feasts were an occasion for a monk to lecture. Some feasts were arranged to pray for a deceased person, and to dedicate the merit earned by providing the feast to the dead person. This kind of vegetarian feast is still popular in modern Vietnamese Buddhism. Kenneth Ch'en is correct when he points out that "whether the sponsors of vegetarian feasts be members of the imperial family or private individuals, it can be said that they were motivated by one underlying concern, the accumulation of merits by their acts."³⁶

The *Thien * Uyen** describes three occasions on which vegetarian feasts were held. Emperor Lý Thái Tông had great admiration for the monk Thien* Lão, the leader of one of the most flourishing Buddhist communities of his time. He eventually dispatched an envoy to bring Thiên Lão to court, but by then Thiên Lão had already passed away. The emperor deeply mourned his death and had a vegetarian feast arranged in his honor.³⁷

A vegetarian feast was given in 1096 by Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân for the monks at the National Temple. It was on this occasion that Thông Bien* gave his memorable lecture on Vietnamese Buddhist history.³⁸ On another occasion, when the monk Chân Không passed away, the empress dowager, Princess Thiên Thành, and Chân Không's disciple, the nun Dieu* Nhân, organized a vegetarian feast in commemoration of him that lasted two days.³⁹

The *Thiên Uyển* also makes passing references to state-established Buddhist institutional ranks that were clearly modeled after Chinese institutions overseeing Buddhism. On three occasions an eminent monk was honored with the title National Preceptor (*Quoc* Sư*): Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân was pleased with Thông Bien's* lecture on the history of Vietnamese Buddhism, so she honored him with the title National Preceptor and rewarded him munificently.⁴⁰ After Minh Không cured Lý Than* Tông of a strange disease, the emperor made Minh Không National Preceptor and the beneficiary of services from hundreds of households as a reward.⁴¹ Viên Thông, a younger contemporary of Minh Không, was also made National Preceptor by Lý Thân Tông.⁴²

The title National Preceptor seems to have had different meanings in individual cases. In the cases of Thông Biên and Minh Không, it appears as simply an honorific title, since neither of them appears to have served at court. Phù Thánh Linh Nhân gave Thông Biên the title National Preceptor out of respect for him. Lý Thân Tông made Minh Không National Preceptor as a token of gratitude. Viên Thông, on the other hand, held different positions at court. The *Thiên Uyển* relates that "In 1143 Viên Thông was promoted to the rank of Superintendent of the Monk Academy on the Left and Right, Inner Servitor Magistrate in charge of Religion, National Preceptor and Protector of the Realm, Expounder of the Canon."⁴³ In any case, this title was only bestowed on monks who were learned in the Buddhist lore.⁴⁴

The practice of giving an eminent monk a purple robe and granting him the title "Purple-Robed Great Monk" as a token of respect and gratitude was also modeled after similar practices.⁴⁵ Thông Biên was given a purple robe by Phù Thánh Linh Nhân.⁴⁶ Mãn Giác was granted the sobriquet "Purple-Robed Great Monk" by Lý Nhân Tông.⁴⁷ At Chân

Không's funeral, another eminent monk, Nghia * Hai*, offered a purple robe.⁴⁸ Viên Thông was also given the title "Purple-Robed Great Monk" by Lý Than* Tông.⁴⁹

The *Thien* Uyen** also mentions the Monk Academy and other official religious ranks, such as *Tang* Thong** (General Supervisor of Monks),⁵⁰ *Tang Luc** (Monk Scribe),⁵¹ and *Tang Quan* (Monk Officer). The first monk to hold the office of General Supervisor of Monks was Khuông Việt*. It is recorded that Đinh Tiên Hoàng instituted ranks for Buddhist monks and Daoist priests in 971 and honored Khuông Việt with the rank of General Supervisor of Monks.⁵² This appears to have been the highest rank for monk-officers at court. However, there is no reason for us to believe that there was an organized sangha at that time and that the General Supervisor of Monks was the head of such a sangha. The extent of political power and administrative duties of the General Supervisor of Monks also appears to have depended on the degree of respect that the emperor had for him, and what services the emperor needed from him.

There is some evidence to suggest that by the middle of the Lý dynasty these institutions had become well established. For instance, Dao* Hanh's* biography states that his father held the office of General Supervisor of Monk-Officers.⁵³ Đạo Hanh* himself passed the royal examination for monk-officers.⁵⁴ It is recorded in Thiên* Nham's biography that his family had been Monk Officials for generations,⁵⁵ and that during the Hoi* Phong era (1092–1110) Thiên Nham participated in the royal examinations on the *Lotus* and *Perfection of Wisdom* literature and both times passed with highest honors.⁵⁶ This implies that by that time examinations had been organized to select learned monks for official positions in the state-sponsored institutional framework for Buddhism.

Buddhism and Popular Religion

Evidence from many lands shows that Buddhism has adapted itself quite well to the cultural and religious background of any new country in which it was propagated. The attitude of Buddhism toward preexisting indigenous religions was usually one of incorporating elements from them rather than excluding them. This had a great effect on the characteristics of the various local Buddhist traditions as they developed in South and Southeast Asian countries outside the Indian subcontinent.

Scholars of religion have observed that the geographical and physical conditions of a country also contribute to the formation of its religious belief, especially its symbols, images, and rituals. For instance, since India is essentially a land of farmers, water eventually became a significant element and symbol in Hindu worship. This type of phenomenon reflects

the fact that religion is concerned not only with transcendental and ultimate concerns but also with mundane and practical issues.

The Ritual of Praying for Rain

Vietnam is basically an agricultural society, a land of farmers. Rain water and river water have always played significant roles in Vietnamese mythology. When Buddhist beliefs and practices first came to ancient Vietnam (i.e., Jiaozhou) and were being adopted by the indigenous people, local deities and cults and holy sites were often given a Buddhist coloration. The previous array of supernatural authorities was amalgamated with new and more powerful ones, as old local deities were included in the Buddhist pantheon. This pattern continued to shape both Buddhism and popular religion of independent Vietnam from the tenth century on.⁵⁷

Early Vietnamese Buddhism was closely connected with the goddesses of rain and thunderstorms (who were subsequently elevated to the rank of Buddhas). I mentioned in Chapter One the legend of Man Nu'o'ng (or A Man)—the female mysterious power of the earth symbolizing the indigenous agricultural culture—and her union with the Buddhist monk Khâu Đà La, representing the new power, Buddhism. This eventually led to the building of the system of four temples for the worship of the four goddesses Pháp Vân (Dharma Cloud), Pháp Vũ* (Dharma Rain), Pháp Lôi (Dharma Thunder), and Pháp Điện* (Dharma Lightning), Man Nu'o'ng's daughters. The most important among these was Pháp Vân Temple, where Pháp Vân Lady Buddha was worshipped. Whenever there was a drought Pháp Vân Buddha would be escorted in a ceremonial procession to the National Temple (or a main temple in the capital) where ritual prayers for rain took place conducted by an eminent monk in the presence of the emperor.

This ritual was practiced throughout the Lý period. The Tran* dynasty was inclined more toward Confucianism in its state rites, so this ritual became less frequent, but it was by no means completely abolished. Even under the [Later] Lê, when Confucianism had assumed the status of a state ideology, during a drought Pháp Vân Buddha was escorted to a temple in the capital and the emperor would preside over a ritual of praying for rain.⁵⁸ This is an indication that this form of syncretic worship had sunk deep roots in the collective consciousness of the country. In fact, this ritual is still practiced today in various localities in North Vietnam. It is interesting to note that the ritual is performed not as a symbolic festival but as an actual prayer for rain.⁵⁹

The *Thien* Uyen** relates that several of the monks it chronicles were experts in praying for rain. One of the better-known stories is about

Tinh * Gió'i. According to the *Thien* Uyen**: "In 1177 under the reign of Lý Cao Tông there was a drought. Lý Cao Tông summoned all the eminent monks to the capital to pray for rain, but their efforts were to no avail. The king had heard about Tinh Gió'i for some time, so he dispatched an envoy to bring him to Báo Thiên Temple in the capital. At midnight, Tinh Gió'i stood in the garden and burnt incense, and immediately rain started to fall. Lý Cao Tông rewarded him munificently and conferred on him the title "Rain Master."⁶⁰

Other eminent monks such as Dao* Hanh* and Thien* Nham also possessed this supernatural power, according to the *Thiên Uyên*, and put it into practice during times of drought.⁶¹

The Cult of Vaisravana* and the Buddhist Incorporation of Popular Deities

The relationship between Buddhism and Hinduism evolved in an intricate, ongoing process at both philosophical and religious levels. It was a process in which each tradition sometimes incorporated and sometimes excluded the ideas, practices, and symbols of the other tradition.

By the first centuries of the common era, Buddhism had managed to incorporate some of the Brahmanical gods into its own pantheon. For instance, Brahma* and Sakra* became Buddhist gods in the form of Dharma-protectors. In the *Suvarnaprabhasa-sutra**, to name only one principal Mahayana* *sutra**, the four celestial kings, originally Hindu deities, became the four Dharma-Protectors of Buddhism.⁶²

When Indian Mahayana Buddhism spread to China and other parts of Asia, it brought these Hindu gods with it, and they were eventually appropriated into popular worship in these regions. It is not uncommon to find instances in which gods of Hindu origin became cultic figures in popular Buddhism in China and Vietnam. Some of these gods might have come to Vietnam by way of Chinese Buddhism.

We saw in Chapter One that under the reign of Lý Thánh Tông (1054–1072) there were temples erected for the worship of Brahma and Sakra. Other Buddhicized Brahmanical elements also found their way into Vietnamese Buddhism. They might have come either directly from Indian Buddhism, from Cham religion (which was very much influenced by Indian patterns), or from Tang and Song Chinese Buddhism. Unfortunately, the worship of Hindu deities in Vietnamese Buddhism and popular religion has not been well documented, and still awaits further studies.

The *Thiên Uyên* records a remarkable story in Khuông Viet's* biography that might shed light on some aspects of medieval Vietnamese Buddhism and popular religion, though it has seemingly escaped the attention of

scholars of Vietnamese Buddhism. For the purpose of our analysis, let me quote the entire story:

Khuông Viet * often visited Mount Ve* Linh in Binh Lo* Prefecture and grew to love the elegant scenery there. He wanted to build a hermitage and settle down there. One night he had a dream in which he saw a spirit wearing golden armor, holding a golden lance in his right hand and a jewel stupa in his left hand. He was accompanied by ten or more fearsome-looking attendants. The spirit came and told him: "I am the Celestial King Vaisravana*, and my attendants are all *yaksas**. The lord of heaven has ordered us to come to this country to protect its border and enable the Buddha-Dharma to flourish. I have a karmic affinity with you, so I have come to entrust this task to you."

Khuông Viêt woke up in astonishment. He heard the sound of shouting in the mountains. He thought the whole thing very strange. When dawn came, he went into the mountains and saw a great tree more than a hundred feet high, with many branches and luxuriant foliage. Above it was an auspicious cloud. Khuông Viêt had some workmen cut it down, and he had it carved into the image of what he had seen in his dream. It was housed in a shrine.

In the first year of the Tianfu era (981), the Chinese army of the Song regime invaded Vietnam. Emperor [Lê Đại* Hành] had heard of [Khuông Viet's* story] before, so he ordered Khuông Viêt to go to that shrine and pray [for national salvation]. The enemy took fright and fled to the Ninh River in Bao* Huu*. Wild waves arose, raised by the wind, and flood-dragons appeared leaping and prancing about. The Chinese army fled in complete disarray.⁶³

Who was Vaisravana, and what can Khuông Viêt's dream tell us about his significance in Vietnamese religion? Vaisravana originally was an Indian god, but eventually his cult was transmitted to Khotan, China, and Japan, and also to Vietnam, where he was given different roles.⁶⁴

Vaisravana was the patronymic of Kubera, a popular, multifaceted Hindu god. Kubera was a Vedic god. In the *Vedas* he was mentioned as the prince of demons and spirits that live in the shadows.⁶⁵ Kubera was known in the *Satapatha* Brahmana** as the lord of thieves and criminals.⁶⁶ In other contexts, Kubera became a patron of merchants and one of the four world guardians (*lokapalas**) or eight guardians of the directions (*dikpalas**).⁶⁷ He was also known as the king of the *yaksas**.⁶⁸ At a later stage, Kubera became primarily the guardian deity of wealth and treasure. In Buddhism Vaisravana was one of the Four Celestial Kings who vowed to protect the Dharma.⁶⁹ In brief, Kubera was associated with fertility, abundance, and kingship. These two main characteristics Kubera or Vaisravana retained as he became a cultic figure in other parts of Asia.

In Khotan he was known as Vaisravana, the protector of the Khotanese

royal family and kingdom. Vaisravana * (Pi Sha Men) came to China from Khotan and was being worshipped in his own right by around the seventh century c.e.⁷⁰ In China he was associated with walls and gates and was worshipped as the guardian of cities and monasteries.⁷¹ By the end of the Song dynasty in the thirteenth century, Vaisravana was worshipped in this capacity all over China.⁷²

According to the passage in Khuông Việt's* biography quoted above, the cult of Vaisravana (or Ty* Sa Môn Thiên Vu'ong in Vietnamese) first appeared in Vietnam toward the end of the tenth century with Khuông Việt's dream. But the fact that Khuông Việt* had a dream about Vaisravana seems to suggest that he must have been known and worshipped in Vietnamese Buddhism and popular religion before Khuông Việt's time. Since the cult of Vaisravana had become widespread in China during the Song dynasty, it is quite possible that Vaisravana might have come to Vietnam from China. Iconographical description of Vaisravana in Khuông Việt's dream seems to confirm this: he wears golden armor, holds a golden lance in his right hand and a jewel stupa in his left hand, and is accompanied by the *yaksas*.*⁷³ In fact, Vaisravana in Vietnam combines both Indian and Chinese as well as Buddhist and popular elements. Vaisravana or Ty Sa Môn Thiên Vu'ong became the protector of Buddha-Dharma and the country of Vietnam. He responded to the prayer of the Vietnamese emperor and helped him turn away the Chinese invaders.

The *Đại* Nam Nhất* Thong* Chí*, an encyclopedia of Vietnamese geography composed during the Nguyen* dynasty, reports that there was a temple of Vaisravana at Ninh Tao* Village, Tù' Liêm Prefecture (North Vietnam). According to this work, however, the god's name was Sóc Thiên Vu'ong, and his title was the Celestial King Vaisravana. Note that in some other works composed after the *Thien* Uyen**, Vaisravana was also referred to as Sóc Thiên Vu'ong. The *Đại Nam Nhất Thong Chí* relates that Lê Đại* Hành had more shrines erected to worship him. Under the Lý a shrine was erected at Minh Tao Village near the West Lake. The Lý kings also conferred on Vaisravana the title "Supreme Deity."⁷⁴

The story of Khuông Việt's dream of Vaisravana is also recorded in later texts on Vietnamese mythology and popular religion such as the *Viet* Dien* U Linh Tap** [Potent Spirits of the Viet Realm] and the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái* [Strange Stories from Linh* Nam]. This story, along with other stories recorded in these two works, sheds some light on how Buddhism incorporated indigenous gods and provides clues about the origin and development of nationalism in medieval Vietnam. The *Việt Diên* (fourteenth century) is a collection of legends of kings, loyal subjects, gods, genies, and human heroes who served the country since antiquity up to the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁷⁵ The *Linh Nam* (fifteenth

century) is a work of the same genre that appears to rely considerably on the *Viet * Dien**. These two works were composed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but the compilers seem to have only put together most of the stories that were in circulation during the Lý dynasty.

In these stories legendary and historical heroes, and the gods and genies who were personifications of natural phenomena and forces, were given titles by the Lý emperors and were worshipped in shrines. Some of the gods were worshipped in Buddhist temples and became protectors of Buddhism and the country.⁷⁶ In some cases, however, Buddhist elements were either inadvertently or intentionally omitted, probably because the stories had gone through Confucian editorial hands.

The story of Khuông Viet's* dream was reproduced by different editions of both the *Viêt Diên* and the *Linh* Nam*. In these various versions Vaisravana* was referred to as Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng and eventually was identified with Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng (Celestial King of Phù Đông), the legendary hero of ancient Vietnam. This is probably because in the *Thiên* Uyen** Vaisravana was connected with Mount Ve* Linh, the site where Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng ascended to heaven after defeating the Chinese troops to liberate Vietnam.⁷⁷

Let me give a brief comparison between the story of the encounter between Khuông Viet* and Vaisravana in the *Thiên Uyen* and the versions of the story recorded in the *Viêt Diên* and *Linh Nam*. Note that all these versions are entitled "Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng Truyen*" (Story of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng) and invariably begin with the phrase "according to the *Thiên Uyen Tap* Anh*."

1. The *Viêt Diên U Linh Tuc* Tập* [Continuation of the Potent Spirits of the Viêt Realm]⁷⁸ gives almost the same version as the *Thiên Uyen*, with a few differences. In this variant, the god is accompanied by a thousand *yaksas**, and he claims that he is Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng obeying the Lord of Heaven's order to protect the people of this land. There is no mention of a stupa in his left hand.
2. The version in the *Viêt Diên U Linh Tập Luc* Toàn Biên* [Complete Continuation of the Potent Spirits of the Viêt Realm]⁷⁹ is almost the same as the *Thiên Uyen*, especially in that the god refers to himself as Ty* Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng. The compiler relates another story about Ty Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng that is identical to the legend of Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng. The commentary to the story asserts that Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng, Vaisravana, and Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng were one and the same.
3. The *Linh Nam Chích Quái Liet* Truyen** [Various Strange Stories of Linh Nam]⁸⁰ seems to draw from both the above two versions. In this version, however, the name Khuông Viêt is mistakenly recorded as Cu* Viêt and Ty Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng as Quí Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng and is also identified with Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng.

4. The *Thiên Nam Vân Lục* * [Cloud Records of Thiên Nam]⁸¹ gives a variant that is almost the same as (3). Yet in this version Khuông Viet*, whose secular name was Ngô Chân Lu'u, is referred to simply as Mr. Ngô, and the compiler does not even seem to know that he was a Buddhist monk. Ty* Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng is referred to as Ty Sa Minh Vu'o'ng and is also identified with the legendary Phù Đông* Thiên Vu'o'ng. The Song invasion is recounted as taking place under the Đinh and not the [Former] Lê as in the above three versions.

Some of the *variae lectiones* regarding the personal names in these four versions can be attributed to scribal errors. However, the fact that in all of them the phrase "enable the Buddha-Dharma to flourish" in Vaisravana's* words to Khuông Việt was invariably omitted seems to reflect Confucian bias on part of the compilers/editors rather than just an editorial mistake. In the *Thien* Uyen**, Vaisravana*, a Dharma-Protector (of Indian Mahayana* Buddhism) promises to protect the Dharma and the country of Vietnam. In the *Viet* Dien** and *Linh* Nam* (despite some mistakes concerning the name Ty Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng in the latter) Vaisravana or Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng is equated with Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng.

Why did Vaisravana become identified with Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng and Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng? The compilers of the *Việt Diên* and *Linh Nam* seem implicitly to suggest that Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng was just another name of Ty Sa Môn Thiên Vu'o'ng (Vaisravana), and Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng himself was Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng. As pointed out above, this identification was probably due to the connection of Vaisravana to Mount Ve* Linh. Besides, most of the compilers/editors of the *Việt Diên* and *Linh Nam* were Confucian scholars who were not knowledgeable about Indian religion and mythology. For instance, if Vaisravana (or Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng) was none other than Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng, why then would Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng have those Indian and Buddhist qualities? Stupas and *yaksas** were not of Vietnamese origin. Besides, the story of Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng is also recorded in the *Việt Diên* and *Linh Nam*. This perhaps only betrays the clumsiness of these writers who either intentionally or unintentionally tried to eliminate Buddhist (or foreign) elements from the story. What is revealing is that a mythical national hero becomes the protector of the country rather than an Indian Mahayana Buddhist deity.

In sum, the story of Khuông Viet's* dream in the *Thiên Uyển* reveals an example of the initial effort on the part of the Vietnamese Buddhist elite to unite all the "potent spirits" under Buddhism in order to protect the autonomy of Vietnam as a (Buddhist) country. This motif can also be detected in the prophetic words of some other eminent monks, such as Dinh* Không and La Quý, which will be discussed in some detail in the next section.

The Image of the Monk in Medieval Vietnam

The *Thien * Uyen** is first and foremost a collection of biographies of eminent monks in medieval Vietnam. Although the compiler made an effort to turn it into a "transmission of the lamp" text along the lines of the Song *Chuandeng lu*, a careful textual analysis of the *Thiên Uyên* has shown us that biographical notes of these eminent monks have been gleaned from various written historical sources and oral traditions. The life stories in the *Thiên Uyên* appear to be more multifarious than those in the Chinese work.

I observed in Chapter Two that these biographies in the *Thiên Uyên* can be characterized in Paul Murray Kendall's term as "demand biography." Kendall defines a "demand biography" as "biography produced to satisfy the requirements of the predilections of an age, to act as a beast of burden for ends other than the illumination of life."⁸² Peter Lee explains further in his work on biographies of Korean eminent monks that such biographies are "instruments for conversion and propagation of faith" because "they uphold the values of eminent monks as a model for emulation."⁸³

Similar observations help define our approach toward the understanding of the records of the *Thiên Uyên* and its significance in the context of Vietnamese intellectual history and religion. We might never be able to determine the exact historicity of these biographies or, for that matter, of any accounts of "historical events." However, after we subjected the book to a rigorous historical-critical-textual analysis, what remains should be considered a core of data that can serve as our source material for reconstructing the history of medieval Vietnamese Buddhism, at least until we have more reliable evidence to modify our knowledge.

The *Thiên Uyên*, in a historical-critical reading, tells us of the emergence of a new intelligentsia, its role, and the encompassing influence that it was able to exercise on the cultural, political, and social life of the time. The monks were men of letters, protectors of the Dharma and the country. They were able to convert popular deities, subdue malevolent forces, and conquer all adversaries.⁸⁴ The biographies in the *Thiên Uyên* delineate for us the image of the adept monk in the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people in medieval times. When the *Thiên Uyên* gathered together tales of the lives of monks, these were meant to highlight their virtues and accomplishments as worthy of respect or emulation. In the hearts and minds of modern Vietnamese Buddhists, some of the eminent monks in the *Thiên Uyên* are fondly remembered more for their patriotic and cultural contributions than for their philosophy or spirituality. These monks appeared on the scene to offer their services when the Vietnamese state was in its infancy. They assisted the early sovereigns in political

and cultural tasks—not only in building the ruling system, but also in protecting it against the much bigger and stronger enemy from the north: China. One of the primary efforts of the *Thien * Uyen** is to portray the eminent monk as the protector of the Dharma and the country. In some biographies the eminent monks are depicted as possessing magical powers that are more than a match for any adversaries coming from China.

Khuông Viet* was the first eminent monk who was directly involved with the imperial court. According to the *Thiên Uyên*, Khuông Việt received Confucian education when he was young, but when he grew up he embraced Buddhism and entered monastic life at Khai Quoc* Temple, where he subsequently became abbot. In his forties word of his fame reached the imperial court.

Emperor Đinh Tiên Hoàng summoned Khuông Việt to the capital for an audience. Đinh Tiên Hoàng was impressed with him and honored him with the rank *Tang* Thong** (General Supervisor of Monks). It was Đinh Tiên Hoàng who granted him the sobriquet Khuông Việt Thái Su' [which means "the Great Master Who Brings Order to Việt"]. Khuông Việt continued to hold the same rank under the reign of Lê Đại* Hành. He was consulted in all military and court affairs. Khuông Việt was well known for the incident when he encountered the Song envoy Li Jue and won his respect.⁸⁵

After Lý Thái To* ascended the throne he often invited Khuông Viet's* disciple Đa Bao*⁸⁶ to court to ask him for lessons in Buddhism. The emperor would reward Đa Bao with generous donations. Đa Bao was also consulted about all court and political matters.

Another of the earliest monks involved with the imperial court was Do* Pháp Thuận*, who assisted Emperor Lê Đại Hành with political and diplomatic matters. His legendary literary exchange with the Song envoy Li Jue has become a beloved anecdote among Vietnamese Buddhists. The *Thiên Uyên* states: "When the [Former] Lê dynasty started to establish itself, Pháp Thuận was instrumental in deciding its political policies. When independence was gained and the country was at peace, he did not hold any office, nor did he accept any reward. Lê Đại Hành respected him more and more. He never called him by his name but always referred to him as Đô Pháp Su' ['Dharma Master Đô'] and entrusted him with literary responsibilities."⁸⁷ According to the *Thiên Uyên*, Lê Đại Hành once asked Pháp Thuận how long the good fortune of the state would last. Pháp Thuận spoke a verse:

The good fortune of the country is like a spreading vine,
In the southern land there is great peace.
If Your Majesty stays in the palace without contrived activity,
Then everywhere the clash of weapons will cease.⁸⁸

The answer reflects the Daoist ideal of ruling through *wuwei* (nonaction). This is indicative of the fact that most of these eminent monks had studied Daoism and Confucianism before they turned to Buddhism.

There are also monks who offered their knowledge and talent to the kings without holding any official rank at court. Van * Hanh* was known for his uncanny power to foretell the future. Van Hanh extended his help to both Lê Đại* Hành and Lý Thái Tô*. The *Thien* Uyen** records that in 980 the Song troops invaded Vietnam. Lê Đại Hành summoned Van Hanh to the capital and asked: "Are we going to win or lose?" Van Hanh said: "The enemy will withdraw within twenty-one days." This later turned out to be true. When Lê Đại Hành wanted to conquer Champa, it was reported that he held long discussions with court officials without reaching any decision. Van Hanh learned of this and immediately submitted a memorial advising the emperor to act quickly and not miss the opportunity. Afterward, Lê Đại Hành did win the war.⁸⁹

Van Hanh was also well known for masterminding the ascent to the throne of Lý Công Uan* (who later became Lý Thái Tô, the founder of the Lý dynasty). The *Thiên Uyên* relates the following story: "At this time Lê Ngoa* Triêu* [the son of Lê Đại Hành who murdered his older brother, the crown prince] was on the throne, a cruel tyrant. Both Heaven and men detested his behavior. Emperor Lý Thái Tô was then his bodyguard and had not ascended the throne. During those years strange omens appeared incessantly in many forms: a white dog with hair in his back that looked like the characters *thiên tu** (Son of Heaven) appeared in the Hàm Toai* Hall, Ứng Thái Tâm Temple, Co* Pháp Prefecture; lightning struck a kapok tree and left writings on its trunk; sounds of chanting at night were heard around the grave of Great Lord Hien* Khánh; insects gnawed at the bark of a bastard banyan tree at Song Lâm Temple forming the character *quoc** (nation). All these events were interpreted as omens that the [Former] Lê dynasty was going to collapse and the Lý was going to flourish."⁹⁰

The traditional view is that the events that led to Lý Công Uan* becoming emperor confirmed the prophecies made years before by Dinh* Không and La Quý, the predecessors of Van Hanh in the so-called Vinitaruci* school. Some modern scholars are of the opinion that it was Van Hanh himself who arranged for these "strange omens."

There are also eminent monks who were considered protectors of the country yet were not involved directly with the imperial court. Among them, the most celebrated were some of the monks supposedly belonging to the so-called Vinitaruci school. These were the monks who looked to Buddhism as a sacred force for protecting the territorial integrity of Vietnam and safeguarding its autonomy against the perennial threat from China.

We read in the *Thien * Uyen** of Đinh* Không, who used his uncanny talents to foretell the future and contribute to the construction of a national discourse. During the Zhenyuan era (785–804) of the Tang dynasty, Đinh Không had the people of his village excavate the ground to lay the foundation for a new temple. They unearthed one incense burner and ten musical instruments, and Đinh Không asked his people to wash them in the river. One of them fell into the water and sank down to the earthen bed of the river.

In the typical manner of explaining omens by analyzing the characters that stand for the things or events involved, Đinh Không remarked: "The character *thap** (土: earth) is where we are living, these instruments came from the earth."⁹¹ He then changed his village's name, *Điên Uan**, into *Co* Pháp* (Ancient Dharma) and composed a verse:

This land offers Dharma vessels,
 Purest first class bronze.
 It is a site where the Buddha-Dharma flourishes,
 Therefore, I give this district the name *Cô Pháp*.⁹²

Based on these omens, Đinh Không prophesied that a man named *Lý* (i.e., *Lý Công Uân*) would become emperor and guide the people and protect the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha). Đinh Không's message is clear: Vietnam is the land of the Dharma; if the Dharma is well preserved, in the future a just king will surely arise to protect the country. When Đinh Không was about to pass away he warned his disciple, *Thông Thiên**, to be on guard against a Chinese man (the Tang general and magician *Gao Pian*) who would use his magic skills to destroy Vietnam. He also instructed *Thông Thiên* to preserve the Dharma and later on to transmit it to a man named *Đinh*.⁹³

La Quý, whose secular name was *Đinh*, received the Dharma from *Thông Thiên*. He fulfilled Đinh Không's prophecy in continuing to uphold Buddhism and to protect Vietnam. The story in the *Thiên Uyên* goes like this:

After receiving the Dharma, *La Quý* travelled all over teaching and converting people. He chose a piece of land and built a temple. Every word he uttered was sure to be prophetic. . . . When he was about to pass away, he instructed his disciple *Thiên Ông*, "Formerly *Gao Pian* constructed a fortress by the *Tô Lịch** River because he knew that our territory *Cô Pháp* has a royal aura. He excavated and disconnected nineteen locations such as the *Điêm** River and the *Phù Chan** Pond, in

order the suppress this. I have advised Khúc Lãm to fill in [the excavations] and restore [the natural contours of the landscape]. I have also had a kapok tree planted at Minh Châu Temple to secure those disconnected locations. I know that in the future a good king is sure to appear to support and nourish our true Dharma. After I die, you should try to build an earthen stupa and hide the Dharma in it. Do not let [unworthy] people see it." ⁹⁴

When La Quí planted that kapok tree, he wrote a verse:

On the great mountain the dragon's head rises,
The baby dragon's tail hides the jewel's light.
Eighteen sons will succeed—
The kapok tree shows a dragon's form.
In the month of rat, day of rooster, hour of rabbit,
We're sure to see the sun come forth in purity.⁹⁵

In his verse La Quí made a prophetic hint at the emergence of Lý Công Uân* and the Lý dynasty. La Quí belonged to the line of monks who, relying on prophecy, established Vietnam as an autonomous land protected by the Dharma and the Vietnamese emperor as the person invested with this protective power.

This motif, also found in some of the narratives in the *Viet* Dien**, began to emerge during the Lý dynasty when certain Vietnamese leaders and their partisans among the local elites started to feel the need to construct a national identity. The Dharma is the sacred force that protects Vietnam from destructive adversaries (represented by the Chinese Gao Pian). The king is the one who supports and nourishes the Dharma. That is the reason why all the gods and genies who were guardians of the territory (mountains and rivers) are brought under his aegis. Monks like Đinh* Không and La Quí were sources of religious and supernatural support standing behind the Dharma and the Vietnamese monarchy.

We can glimpse the way in which Buddhist discourse contributed to the construction of a national identity for Vietnam in these stories of eminent monks like Đinh Không, La Quí, and Van* Hanh* predicting future events of key political significance. The vessels Đinh Không unearthed in his native village indicated that this was "a site where the Buddha-Dharma flourishes" and would be the birthplace of a just king who would nourish the Dharma and defend the country against its enemies. Later, "conforming to the ancient prophecies," Vanh* Hanh recognized the royal potential of Lý Công Uân and assisted him to ascend the throne and establish the Lý dynasty.

La Quí told his disciple Thien* Ông that after he died Thiên Ông should build a stupa and hide the Dharma in it, awaiting the day when a worthy

successor would come forth to receive and sustain it. La Qui's biography also relates that when Thông Thiên *, his teacher, was about to pass away, he instructed La Qui: "Formerly, my teacher Đinh* Không had instructed me to preserve our Dharma, and to pass it on to a man named Đinh." It turned out that La Qui's secular name was Đinh.

These monks had the magical power to know the future in advance, and thus predict and in effect guarantee that Vietnam would survive as an independent state despite the constant threat from China. The Dharma was revealed as the sustainer of the country, and these eminent monks knew how to preserve the Dharma. In adverse times, a teacher would hide it away, and when the time was ripe, he would hand it on to a capable disciple who would rely on it to safeguard the country.⁹⁶

The *Thien* Uyen** also portrayed monks in the role of the teachers of the Dharma. It records quite a few biographies of eminent monks who were not directly involved with political affairs, but instead served the nation primarily in the capacity of religious teachers.

The story goes that Sùng Phạm* spent nine years traveling all over India to broaden his knowledge of Buddhism. He returned home an adept in both precepts and meditative concentration, and he settled in Pháp Vân Temple to propagate these two methods. Students came to him in droves. Emperor Lê Đại* Hành often invited him to court to inquire about the essential message of Buddhism and treated him with appropriate etiquette, rewarding him munificently.⁹⁷

The monk most celebrated as a teacher was probably the National Preceptor Thông Bien*. He was famed for his lecture on Vietnamese Buddhist history to Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân delivered at a vegetarian feast held at the National Temple in the capital Thang* Long in 1096. The empress dowager was so impressed with Thông Bien's* knowledge that she gave him a purple robe and rewarded him richly.⁹⁸

(I argued in the previous chapter that it was Thông Biên who initiated the practice of interpreting Vietnamese Buddhist history on the model of traditional Chinese Zen history, which was to have an unfortunate impact on future generations of Vietnamese Buddhist historians, who took an ideologically motivated construct as literal history. In its own time, on the other hand, Thông Biên's account of Vietnamese Buddhist history undoubtedly played a positive role in the effort to establish the claim that Vietnam constituted an independent cultural entity equal in status and dignity to China.)

Another eminent monk who functioned primarily as a teacher was Mãn Giác, one of the Buddhist leaders of his time. He was of aristocratic lineage and had studied and mastered Confucianism and Buddhism. Mãn Giác was a popular teacher—everywhere he went, students flocked

to him. Emperor Lý Nhân Tông and the Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân became his disciples. They had a temple built for Mãn Giác in the vicinity of the royal palace to make it convenient to visit him to learn the Dharma. Eventually Lý Nhân Tông conferred on him the rank of Inner Palace Teacher of Enlightenment and the sobriquet Purple-Robed Great Monk. ⁹⁹

Viên Thông, who served at court under both Lý Nhân Tông and Lý Than* Tông, was a deeply learned man. He passed the national examinations in the Three Teachings and other subjects with highest honors and was appointed to various religious offices at court. Lý Nhân Tông offered him positions of political power many times, but Viên Thông persistently declined—he would only accept positions concerned with religious matters. He was eventually promoted to the rank of Superintendent of the Monk Academy on the Left and Right, Inner Palace Superintendent, Inner Servitor Magistrate in charge of Religion, National Preceptor and Protector of the Realm, and Expounder of the Canon. ¹⁰⁰

The *Thien* Uyen** relates that on one occasion Lý Thân Tông summoned Viên Thông to court to inquire about the principles of political order and upheaval, prosperity and decline in the world. Viên Thông addressed the following remark to the emperor and his courtiers:

The world is like an instrument. Put it in a safe place, and it is safe; put it in a perilous place, and it is in peril. It all depends on how the leader of the people behaves himself. If his benevolence is in harmony with the hearts and minds of the people, then they will love him as a parent and look up to him like the sun and the moon. This is putting people in a safe place.

Order or chaos depends on [the behavior of the] officials. If they can win the people over, then there is political order; if they lose the people's support, then there is upheaval. I have observed [the activities of] emperors of previous generations. No one succeeded without employing true gentlemen, or failed unless he employed petty men.

When we trace how these things come about, they do not happen overnight, but develop gradually. Just as heaven and earth cannot abruptly produce cold and hot weather, but must change gradually through the seasons like spring and autumn, kings cannot suddenly bring about prosperity or decline: rather it is a gradual process depending on their good or bad activities.

The sage kings of old knew this principle, and so they modeled themselves on Heaven and never ceased to rely on virtue to cultivate themselves; they modeled themselves on Earth and never ceased to rely on virtue to pacify the people. To cultivate oneself means to be cautious within, as cautious as if one were walking on thin ice. To pacify people means to respect those who are below, to be as respectful as one riding a horse holding worn-out reins.

If one can be like that, one cannot but succeed; if not, one cannot but fail. The gradual process of prosperity or decline depends on this. ¹⁰¹

The *Thiên* Uyên** also tells us that Lý Than* Tông never neglected Viên Thông's advice and entrusted everything to him. The Confucian character of Viên Thông's political address is very apparent. Unlike Đinh* Không, La Quí, and others, Viên Thông referred to the "sage kings" and not to the Dharma—the "sage kings" being the legendary rulers of ancient China, Yao and Shun. The content of Viên Thông's advice, and the fact that it was included in the *Thiên Uyên*, indicates that toward the end of the Lý Confucianism had started to assert itself alongside Buddhism at the imperial court.

Hitherto many eminent monks had been educated men who turned from Confucianism to Buddhism. Here we see a Buddhist monk harking back to the fundamental principles of Confucian statecraft—the ruler patterning himself on the impartiality of Heaven, in order to win the hearts of the people by his virtue. This may prefigure the shift in ideological fashion that occurred later when the Tran* succeeded the Lý, and Confucianism began to replace Buddhism as the official state ideology. As I argued briefly in Chapter One, this may have been due, among other things, to the Vietnamese Buddhist elite's lack of exposure to Buddhist literature other than Chinese Zen texts. Buddhist texts dealing explicitly with the role of the monarch and the state were simply not known to the Vietnamese Buddhist elite.

The *Thiên Uyên* also contains stories of many eminent monks who were reluctant to serve, or who even declined to serve at court, yet who still offered their service to the kings and were honored as teachers by them.

One example is Hue* Sinh, who was well versed in both Confucian and Buddhist lore yet preferred to lead the life of a mystic. The story goes that every time he entered *samadhi** it would go on for five days, and his contemporaries called him a bodhisattva in the flesh. Lý Thái Tông heard of him and dispatched an envoy to summon him to the capital.

Huê Sinh gave the envoy a response reminiscent of the Daoist philosopher Zhuangzi: "Haven't you seen a sacrificial animal? At first they dress it with embroidered silk and feed it with fine sweet grass. But when they drag it into the royal temple, though it may wish to be just an orphan animal, even that is unattainable, much less anything better."¹⁰²

At first Huê Sinh firmly refused to come to the imperial court, but after repeated invitations from Lý Thái Tông, he at last presented himself at court and was given the rank of Monk in Palace Service. Many court officials, princes, and nobles became his students. Huê Sinh was finally raised to the office of General Superintendent of the Academy of

Monks, with the same rank as a marquis. ¹⁰³

Cứu Chi* preferred to remain on Mount Tiên Du practicing austerities, but his reputation as a Buddhist teacher still reached the imperial court. Lý Thái Tông invited him to the capital several times, but Cứu Chi declined. Lý Thái Tông personally paid three visits to his temple to inquire after him. Eventually Cứu Chi conceded and became an abbot of a temple in the capital. ¹⁰⁴

Chân Không attained insight by studying the *Lotus Sutra**, and then came to Mount Tù' So'n to settle down. He kept to the precepts and for twenty years did not leave his temple. Nevertheless, his fame spread far and wide. Lý Nhân Tông heard about him and invited him to the imperial palace to lecture on the *Lotus Sutra*. Many aristocrats including Grand Commandant Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiet*, treated him with the greatest respect and often donated money to him. Chân Không always used everything given to him to repair temples, build stupas, and cast big bells for posterity. ¹⁰⁵

It is true that at least up to the end of the Lý dynasty, the eminent monks of medieval Vietnam were known for their involvement with the imperial court, directly or indirectly, voluntarily or reluctantly. Nonetheless, most of the eminent monks whose biographies are recorded in the *Thien* Uyen** were wandering ascetics who firmly turned down invitations to serve at court or only made occasional appearances there. Some were village monks who showed no interest in coming to the capital. Others simply preferred to lead the ascetic life. Still, these monks were revered as paragons of purity, renunciation, virtue, selflessness, and exertion. For the Buddhist masses who did not (and still do not) know or care much about Buddhist philosophy, a monk's virtue represented (and still represents) the consummation of his role as part of the Sangha, one of the Three Jewels.

Bao* Tinh and Minh Tâm devoted themselves to chanting the *Lotus Sutra* unstintingly for more than fifteen years. They only appeared at the imperial court when they were about to pass away. It is recorded that the two masters organized an assembly to explain the scriptures and then together "entered the *samadhi** of firelight" by immolating themselves. The story goes that the bones that remained were all transformed into the seven kinds of jewels. Emperor Lý Thái Tông ordered that these precious relics be kept in Tru'ò'ng Thánh Temple and offerings be made to them. ¹⁰⁶

After grasping the message of the Dharma, Tin Hoc* wandered by himself for years before settling down at Quán Dinh* Temple. He would burn his fingers in front of the Buddha statue and repeat a vow: "I have wandered about in the defiled world for many aeons. I vow not to create any karma that will bind me to it again." He devoted himself to the

practice of the three contemplations according to the *Complete Enlightenment Sutra* *. He ate only one meal a day, so his body and face became pale and emaciated. He persisted in his ascetic practices for many years without a sign of growing weary of it, and he deeply attained the true essence of the three contemplations. Nobles, courtiers, and commoners all respected and honored him highly and vied to serve him.¹⁰⁷

Tinh* Không spent six years practicing austerities at Khai Quoc* Temple. Each day he ate only one grain of sesame and one grain of wheat. He would sit in meditation all night without sleeping. Whenever he entered *samadhi**, it would go on for a few days before he arose from it. Donors from all over brought him mountains of gifts. When from time to time people came with the intention of stealing from him, Tinh Không would simply tell them where to get what they wanted. Tinh Không made only one appearance at the imperial court, to preside over the ordination of a princess. He won Lý Anh Tông's admiration but persistently declined to serve at court.¹⁰⁸

Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn entered Mount Tù' So'n to live in seclusion. He wore straw garments and ate only chestnuts. The whole day long he had only streams and stones, apes and monkeys for companions. He spent all his hours cultivating body and mind, fusing them into one whole. He devoted himself to chanting the scriptures. Five or six years passed, and no one had ever caught a glimpse of him. Emperor Lý Anh Tông heard about Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn, admired his religious virtue, and wanted to meet him. Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn refused, so the emperor ordered Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn's old friend, the court official Lê Hoi*, to convince him to come to the capital. One night as the two men were on their way to the capital Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn regretted having assented to come to the capital and escaped back to his mountain.¹⁰⁹

Some of these monks devoted themselves to austerities and used their spiritual attainment to help the people in both religious and social matters. Trí Bao* was an uncle of Tô Hien* Thành, the famous Grand Commandant under the reign of Lý Anh Tông. Trí Bao abandoned the mundane world and entered the Buddhist Order. He often wore rags and ate coarse food. The story goes that sometimes he went for ten years without changing his clothes and for three days without lighting his cooking stove. Whenever he saw a poor man he would fold his arms and make way; whenever he saw a monk he would kneel down to pay respect. He devoted himself to meditation and after six years achieved enlightenment. Trí Bao then left the mountain with his monk's staff and dedicated himself to good works such as repairing bridges and roads and building temples and stupas, and according to conditions encouraged everyone to embrace the Dharma. He never acted for his own benefit.¹¹⁰

Viên Hoc * wore the same patched robe whatever the weather and went everywhere teaching people, living only on alms. He always took the lead in affairs such as repairing bridges and constructing roads. Later in his life he came to Phù Cam* Village, restored Quoc* Thánh Temple, and cast a big bell. He was always involved in the effort to transform people by means of the Buddhist teaching.¹¹¹

Some of the most beloved eminent monks in Vietnamese Buddhist history, however, are the wonder-workers, healers, and magicians. These monks were believed to possess magical powers such as prophetic abilities, the ability to cure disease, and the ability to bring rain. Despite their apparent disregard for conventional decorum, these monks were compassionately engaged in the world through the typical Buddhist skillful means. They became popular folk heroes whose stories have been often retold and included in collections of folktales. Some were also worshipped in shrines erected for them in various localities.

The story of Ma Ha best illustrates this category of the wonder-working monk. Ma Ha came from a highly placed Buddhist family, his father having held religious office at the Lê court. Of Champa descent, he mastered both Chinese and Sanskrit. At the young age of twenty-four, Ma Ha settled down at Quan Ái Temple and devoted himself to expounding the *sutras**. Once upon a time, while he was so engaged, a spirit who functioned as a Dharma-Protector appeared before him and reproached him that he was merely relying on external learning and thus could never comprehend the true meaning of the *sutras*. As a result, Ma Ha lost his eyesight. He was close to committing suicide until an eminent monk enlightened him. He then moved to Co* So'n Temple to study under the celebrated Do* Pháp Thuan* and devoted himself tirelessly for three years to the practice of repentance and the chanting of mantras. As a result, Ma Ha was cured of his blindness by the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara*, his mind became more pure and calm, and he attained magical skills.

Emperor Lê Đại* Hành had many times invited Ma Ha to the imperial court, but Ma Ha declined every invitation. Pushed further, he would only say, "I'm just a crazy monk of Quan Ái Temple." This enraged Lê Đại Hành, who ordered him to be locked up under guard at Van* Tue* Temple in the imperial palace. The next morning Ma Ha was seen walking outside the palace, although the doors of his cell remained locked. Lê Đại Hành was amazed and set him free.

On one occasion, the story goes, Ma Ha traveled to Sa Đãng province, Ái Châu, where the people had the custom of worshipping ghosts and spirits. Most of the local people were hunters—taking lives was their profession. When Ma Ha exhorted them not to eat meat, they all said

that they dared not go against their gods, who would inflict misfortunes on them if they were disobedient. The story continues:

"Ma Ha said: 'If you can renounce evil and do good, and there is any harm incurred, I will bear the responsibility for it.' The people in the village said: 'For a long time in this area, there have been many people who die of leprosy. All the medicine men and sorcerers have given up [trying to cure this malady]. If you can cure it, we will follow your advice.' Ma Ha then blessed water with mantras and spat it on them—those who suffered from leprosy were immediately cured."¹¹²

The episodes in the story of Ma Ha relate messages that were meant to reach the audience in a symbolic but easily intelligible way. First Ma Ha was reproached by a Dharma Protector for focusing on external learning, and as a result lost his eyesight. Relying on words is likened to blindness because one cannot expect to grasp the Buddhist message simply through studying texts and analyzing words. Ma Ha then devoted himself to practicing repentance and reciting mantras and was eventually cured of his blindness through the intervention of Avalokitesvara*.

The implication of this story is that the sincere practice of ritual, direct experience (in the sense of internalization of the teachings), and the support of "other-power," the sustaining power of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas are also indispensable on the path to enlightenment. That Ma Ha declined to serve at the imperial court and was able to free himself from confinement means that an enlightened person must have and does have the strength to transcend all conventional values. The final message is that only one with such a level of spiritual realization is capable of using skillful means to cure sentient beings from their illness.

Another classic description of the enlightened adept in the *Thien* Uyen** runs as follows. Không Lo* always clothed himself in grass clothes and sustained himself with a meager vegetarian diet to the point that he forgot his own body. He could fly in the air and walk on water, tame tigers and conquer dragons. His supernatural powers were such that no one could fathom them.¹¹³ Giác Hai*, who appears in many popular tales as Không Lo's* Dharma heir and companion, was treated with the etiquette due a teacher by Emperor Lý Nhân Tông. Giác Hai would come to court and display his magical skills.¹¹⁴

The *Thiên Uyên* also relates the story of Giỏi Không. At the outset of his religious quest, Giỏi Không spent five years practicing quiet meditation. After traveling around to preach the Dharma for some time, he went into a cave and devoted himself to austerities for another six years. He reached the point that he could command gods and demons and tame wild beasts.

Emperor Lý Than * Tông summoned Gió'i Không to the capital many times. After repeatedly declining to no avail, Gió'i Không finally came. Once there was a great plague, and Gió'i Không was called upon to cure it. He blessed water with mantras and used it to cure the plague. Thousands of sick people were cured in his presence every day.¹¹⁵

The power of these eminent monks to command gods and demons and to tame wild beasts illustrates two themes: the universal sovereignty and the compassion of Buddhism. The eminent monks, emblems of Buddhist enlightenment, were able to transform all peripheral forces and to exert compassion toward all sentient beings.

This following anecdote in Tri Nhân's biography exemplifies this principle:

One day Tri Nhân was sitting in meditation when he saw a tiger chasing a deer toward him. Tri Nhân said to them, "All sentient beings cherish their lives—you should not harm each other." The tiger bowed its head to the ground as if he were taking refuge [with a teacher], and then went away. Afterward, Tri Nhân built a retreat at the foot of the mountain and accepted students. Donors from all over brought gifts aplenty. In the vicinity of the mountain there was a barbarian tribe whose people would band together to raid and pillage. Every time Tri Nhân went outside, a huge tiger would squat in front of the retreat, so that raiders did not dare to break in. Many among them were guided back to a virtuous life by him.¹¹⁶

No hero is more popular in Vietnamese folklore than Đạo* Hanh*. Among other magical skills, due to his knowledge of the principle of karma, he had foreknowledge of future events extending into his next lifetime. As a young man Đạo Hanh once went into the mountains to live in seclusion. His intention was to develop magical powers in order to avenge his father's murder. After he got his revenge, Đạo Hanh turned to Buddhism. The *Thien* Uyen** tells us that he was effective in everything he did: he tamed multitudes of mountain snakes and wild beasts, burnt his finger to pray for rain, and blessed water with mantras to cure sickness. Đạo Hanh was best known for deliberately directing his rebirth so that he was reborn as the son of Marquis Sùng Hien*, Emperor Lý Nhân Tông's brother, and subsequently became the Emperor Lý Thần Tông.¹¹⁷ Even now there are still shrines and temples in North Vietnam where Đạo Hanh is worshipped as the tutelary god in some localities.¹¹⁸

Minh Không was a disciple of Đạo Hanh. He served Đạo Hanh for seventeen years and received his teaching. When Đạo Hanh was about to pass away, he told Minh Không he would be reborn again in this world as a king, but due to a karmic debt he would contract a strange disease and Minh Không would come and save him. After Đạo Hanh's* death,

Minh Không returned to his native village and took to farming for more than twenty years, unconcerned with fame and fortune. At length the Emperor Lý Than * Tông (the reincarnation of Dao* Hanh*) contracted a strange disease that made him growl and moan. Noted physicians from all over the country came to court in response to the royal edict, but no one could cure him.¹¹⁹

In the meantime children were heard singing popular songs suggesting that only a man named Minh Không could cure the emperor. The court sent emissaries to search among the common people for Minh Không and finally they found him. The *Thiên* Uyên** tells the story as follows:

When Minh Không arrived at court the renowned physicians were performing their arts in the palace. Seeing how crude and rustic he looked they did not bother to greet him. Minh Không took a nail five inches long and planted in into a column of the palace, shouting: "He who can pull the nail out will get to do the job first." He repeated it again and again, but no one dare accept the challenge. Minh Không then used two fingers of his left hand and pulled on the nail and it came out easily. Everybody present was struck with admiration. When he saw the emperor, Minh Không cried out with a stern voice: "Worthy man, you are foremost among the people, why do you act crazy like this?" The emperor trembled with fear. Minh Không had a big cauldron brought in, filled it with water, and boiled it again and again. Then he stirred it with his hand four times and had the emperor bathe in it. The emperor recovered instantly.¹²⁰

As seen in the preceding examples, stories that portray various ideal images of Buddhist monks make up a considerable part of the *Thiên Uyên*. Buddhist monks assumed the roles of prognosticators, rain-makers, magicians, and political counselors, meeting the demands of the people around them for supernatural help and protection. The Buddhist adepts portrayed in the *Thiên Uyên* have moved beyond the ordinary limitations of human life as a result of their dedicated religious practice, but the special powers they gain as religious virtuosi are nevertheless put to use in the service of the Vietnamese people and state.

Doctrine and Practice of Vietnamese Buddhism

Reading the *Thiên Uyên* in its proper historical context and from a correct hermeneutical perspective, we notice that the text presents us with a concentrated but comprehensive panorama of Vietnamese Buddhist doctrine and practice that bears a striking resemblance to modern Vietnamese Buddhism.

Although the *Thiên Uyên* is presented as a "history of the transmission of the lamp"—that is, as a record of the biographies of eminent Zen

monks centering on their enlightenment experiences—it contains relatively few references to Buddhist philosophy. In these references, the most recurrent theme is the Yogacara/Tathagata * garbha doctrine of the identity of the originally pure mind with Thusness or Buddhahood, affirming that all sentient beings are originally possessed of this pure mind.

For instance, the *Thien* Uyen** presents the following lesson delivered by Cú'u Chi*:

All Buddhist teachings originally come from your own inherent nature. The true nature of all phenomena originally comes from your mind. Mind and phenomena are One Thusness: fundamentally there is nothing else. All the defilements that bind you are empty. Misdeeds and merits, right and wrong are all illusions. . . .

You see all phenomena, but without any objects of seeing. You know all phenomena, but without any objects of knowing. You know that all phenomena have interdependent origination (*pratityasamutpada**) as their basis. You see that all phenomena have true reality as their source.

Even amidst defilement, you understand that the world is like a magical apparition. You clearly comprehend that the true identity of sentient beings is the One Reality—there is no other reality. You do not abandon the karmic realm: you use the proper skillful means to show the uncreated Dharma in the realm of the created, but without differentiating and without the marks of creation. This is because desire is ended, self is forgotten, and conceptual elaborations (*prapañca*) are abandoned.¹²¹

In the same vein, Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn instructed his disciples as follows:

How strange! How strange! How is it that sentient beings are deluded by ignorance and delusion but are endowed with the Tathagatha's* wisdom, and do not see and know [that truth]? I often teach them the Dharma so that they can be forever free from discrimination and attachment to their personal existences—so that they will be able to realize the Tathagata's vast wisdom with its benefits, its peace and bliss.¹²²

Thu'ò'ng Chieu*, in his exposition of the Truth Body (*Dharmakaya**), showed his knowledge of the teachings of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra**, *Huayan Sutra*, and *Samdhinirmocana-Sutra** in this statement:

Just as one pore contains the whole Realm of Ultimate Reality (*Dharmadhatu**), so do all pores. You should know that there is not the smallest place anywhere in Mind or in space where there is no Buddha-body. Why so? Because the Truth Body manifests itself in the Emanation Body (*nirmanakaya**) which attains perfect enlighten-

ment (*samyaksambodhi*), there is no place that the Truth Body does not reach.

Thus, you should know that the Tathagata *, through the sovereign power of mind without origination or revolution, turns the Wheel of Truth (*Dharmacakra*). [The Tathagata] knows that all phenomena are not originated, so he uses the three dharmas to teach annihilation, yet he turns the Wheel of Truth without relying on annihilation.

[The Tathagata] knows that all phenomena are free from false views, so he dwells in the realm of separation from desire—but not its annihilation—to turn the Wheel of Truth. The Tathagata also enters the realm of the emptiness of all phenomena; therefore, without relying on words, he turns the Wheel of Truth. [The Tathagata] knows that all phenomena are ineffable, so he dwells in the ultimate peace to turn the Wheel of Truth. The Tathagata knows that all phenomena are originally nirvana—this is called formless true nature, inexhaustible true nature, unborn, undestroyed, selfless true identity, where nothing is not self, true nature without sentient beings, where nothing is not sentient beings, true nature without "bodhisattvas," without the Realm of Ultimate Reality (*Dharmadhatu**), without "emptiness"—true nature where there is no "achieving perfect enlightenment."¹²³

Through the *Thien* Uyen**, we catch a revealing glimpse of various practices in medieval Vietnamese Buddhism. Phúc Dien*, in his *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* [The Sources of the Three Religions] based on the *Thiên Uyên*, lists various kinds of practices that are followed by each individual eminent monk.¹²⁴ But since there are no real lineages or sectarian schools in Vietnamese Buddhism, it is impossible to delineate strictly defined systems of practice. Rather, the practices embraced by Vietnamese Buddhist monks run the entire gamut of East Asian Mahayana* Buddhism. They included the study and chanting of *sutras**, mantras, and *dharanis**; the practice of meditation, austerities, and repentance; and also the contemplation of the Buddha and the Buddha-name.

A very similar list of typical practices could be compiled for contemporary Vietnamese Buddhism. It is curious to note how little change or sectarian development has taken place in either thought or practice in Vietnamese Buddhism for the last ten centuries.

The Sutras*

Vietnamese Buddhism lies within the orbit of East Asian Buddhism, which is basically *sutra**-based Buddhism.¹²⁵ Thus the *sutras* are crucial in Vietnamese Buddhism. *Sutras** not only are studied, along with their various commentaries, but also are memorized and chanted aloud. *Sutras* are chanted in both daily and special rituals, both routinely and on special occasions. The physical texts of the *sutras* are venerated as holy objects

because they contain the words of the Buddha.¹²⁶ Many biographies of eminent monks contain accounts of these monks devoting themselves to chanting *sutras**. Copying the *sutras* is considered to be a meritorious act of piety. The *Thiền Uyển** relates that Bao* Giám copied by hand the *Tripitaka** that was housed at his temple. The practice of chanting *sutras* has always been universal within Vietnamese Buddhism, while the practice of copying *sutras* is still very much alive among modern educated monks.

The *Thiền Uyển* mentions a number of *sutras* that are still widely studied and read in modern Vietnamese Buddhism. Among these, the *Lotus Sutra** has definitely been the most read, studied, and recited in Vietnam.¹²⁷ The *Thiền Uyển* relates that Bao Tĩnh and Minh Tâm devoted themselves to chanting the *Lotus Sutra* for more than fifteen years without ever neglecting it.¹²⁸ The celebrated Thông Bien* often taught people to practice by relying on the *Lotus Sutra*, so his contemporaries gave him the sobriquet Ngo* Pháp Hoa, which means "Awakened to the Lotus."¹²⁹ Minh Trí studied and mastered the essential message of the *Lotus Sutra*.¹³⁰ Chân Không spent many years searching for the gist of the Dharma only to attain some insight through studying the *Lotus Sutra*. Later on he was invited to the imperial court to lecture on the *sutra**.¹³¹

Another *sutra* still popular in Vietnamese Buddhism mentioned in the *Thiền Uyển* is the *Sutra of Complete Enlightenment*. Viên Chieu* always recited the *Sutra of Complete Enlightenment* and was well-versed in its three methods of contemplation. He composed a commentary on the *sutra* entitled *Tán Viên Giác Kinh* [Eulogy on the *Sutra of Complete Enlightenment*].¹³² Minh Trí and Tín Học* also devoted themselves to this *sutra* and practiced the three contemplations taught in it.¹³³ Tinh* Luc* often expounded the *Sutra of Complete Enlightenment* along with various of its commentaries.¹³⁴

The *Diamond Sutra* is another major Mahayana* scripture mentioned in the *Thiền Uyển*. Thu'ng Chiêu referred to the *Diamond Sutra*.¹³⁵ Thanh Biên devoted himself to the chanting of the *Diamond Sutra*.¹³⁶ Giố'i Không often lectured on the *Diamond Sutra*.¹³⁷ The nun Dieu* Nhân also showed an understanding of the *Diamond Sutra*.¹³⁸ Besides these scriptures, the *Thiền Uyển* also tells us that the *Huayan Sutra* and *Benevolent King Sutra* were also studied in medieval Vietnam.¹³⁹

It is interesting to note that these scriptures are used in exactly the same contexts in modern Vietnamese Buddhism as they were in medieval time: the *Lotus Sutra* is used in a devotional context, the *Sutra of Complete Enlightenment* is used for its teaching on meditation, while the *Diamond Sutra* and *Huayan Sutra* serve as the foundation for philosophical discourse.

There is also evidence of the practice of mantra and *dharani* * throughout the biographies in the *Thien* Uyen**. In most cases, this practice is closely associated with the attainment of supernatural powers. The recitation of mantra and *dharani* is usually portrayed as part of a pattern of practice that includes the chanting of *sutra** and the practice of austerities.

It is reported that Dai* Xa* made the chanting of the *Huayan Sutra** and the *Samantabhadra Mantra* his daily practice.¹⁴⁰ Dao* Hanh* went to Mount Tù' So'n to live in seclusion and devoted himself to the chanting of the *Mind of Great Compassion Dharani** daily. It is related that after he had chanted it 108,000 times he was able to move the Dharma-Protector and to attain magical power.¹⁴¹ Nguyen* Hoc* always recited the *Dharani of the Fragrant Ocean of Great Compassion*, and as a result he attained magical power to cure illness and to make rain.¹⁴² Thien* Nham "loved to learn the *dharanis**, and would memorize them and recite them without missing a single word."¹⁴³

Sounds, or, more correctly, sacred sounds in the forms of mantras and *dharanis**, are considered to contain cosmic energy and to constitute the deeper level of reality in Tantric Buddhism.¹⁴⁴ In this context, to recite mantras or *dharanis* is a way to achieve deeper communion with ultimate reality.¹⁴⁵ At a less profound level, reciting mantras and *dharanis* is a way to tap into the source of cosmic energy and manipulate it. However, since there is little information about other aspects of Tantric practices in the *Thiên Uyên* (and other Vietnamese Buddhist sources), it is difficult to make any evaluation of Tantric practices in Vietnamese Buddhism. In modern times the recitation of mantras and *dharanis* is still part of daily practice (or daily chanting) of Vietnamese Buddhists. It is believed that by doing this a devotee will receive the protection of the bodhisattvas and Dharma-Protectors.¹⁴⁶ This is reminiscent of the image of the practice of mantras and *dharanis* in the *Thiên Uyên*.

According to traditional accounts of the Buddha's life, before attaining enlightenment he went into the snowy mountain and practiced austerities for six years, purifying the six senses. Such practice was considered indispensable on the path to realization in medieval Vietnamese Buddhism.

In this context austerities apparently included the entire Buddhist triple discipline fundamental for the attainment of enlightenment. This triple discipline consists of (1) moral purification, meaning the withdrawing one's senses from mundane objects and conserving one's inner energy; (2) meditation, meaning to reorient this energy toward spiritual goals; and (3) meditative concentration, or the fusion of one's mind with true reality.

Pure Land Buddhism

Pure Land Buddhism has been another principal school of East Asian Buddhism. Pure Land combines both meditative and devotional practices, probably with more emphasis on the latter. The Pure Land devotees put their faith in the salvific power of Amitabha * Buddha, who long ago vowed to grant rebirth in his Pure Land to all sentient beings who simply invoke his name.¹⁴⁷ Amitabha's* Pure Land is located in the west. Rebirth in the Pure Land is not considered final liberation, but Amitabha's Pure Land is a paradise where suffering does not exist. Once reborn there, one is virtually assured of eventually reaching perfect enlightenment because one is under the direct guidance of Amitabha.

By the Song dynasty a syncretism of Zen and Pure Land Buddhism had become a common trend in China. By this time, both Zen and Pure Land as well as this syncretic trend had found their way to Vietnam. It was the combined practice of Zen and Pure Land that appears to have been most attractive to the Vietnamese Buddhist elite. Most adherents of Zen used the recitation of Buddha-name as a form of meditative technique rather than a devotional practice.¹⁴⁸ For them the Pure Land is not an external location but a state of purity of mind. For the Pure Land adherents, on the other hand, Zen methods, though correct in principle, were too lofty to meet the needs of most people, and Pure Land practice was to be preferred as the simplest, most widely accessible entry point to salvation.

Although there is ample evidence to conclude that Pure Land practice and belief has always been a central element in Vietnamese Buddhism, the *Thien* Uyen** makes almost no reference to it. The only account that indirectly hints at one of the practices characteristic of Pure Land is found in Tinh* Luc's* biography. Tinh Luc* built a straw retreat and spent all his time there "paying homage to the Buddha and practicing repentance, and deeply attained the *samadhi** of Buddha-contemplation."¹⁴⁹ He also instructed his disciples to contemplate Buddha-qualities and recite the Buddha-name. But in this story there is no mention of Amitabha or the Pure Land. This scant mention of Pure Land Buddhism in the *Thiên Uyên* may be due to the compiler's concern to present his work as a purely Zen book.

In sum, the records in the *Thiên Uyên* give us a very believable picture of a syncretic Buddhism in Vietnam, resting on the Triple Discipline (morality, meditation, concentration), including ritual worship and devotional practices, and featuring the chanting of *sutras** and mantras, and prayers for supernatural aid.

Zen Elements

The Zen element in the *Thiên Uyên* is mostly derivative. As I demonstrated in Chapter Two, in this text most encounter dialogues supposed

to have taken place between Vietnamese monks or Zen statements and instructional verses spoken by them can be identified as borrowings (in some cases verbatim) from biographies of Chinese Zen masters in the *Chuandeng lu*. Even when we come across original verses written by Vietnamese monks that bear some Zen flavor, it is an open question whether they reflect the monks' fascination with the heroic sentiments and grandiloquence of Zen literature or whether they are indeed expressions of direct, personal spiritual experience.

The Zen Tradition of Vietnam: An Imagined Community

From my analysis of the *Thien * Uyen**, I believe that the Zen tradition of Vietnam is an imagined community, to borrow an expression from Benedict Anderson.¹⁵⁰ In his analysis of the origin and spread of nationalism, Anderson concludes that a nation is an imagined political community.¹⁵¹ It is so in the sense that a "nation" arises as certain cultural groupings, in response to political and social circumstances, equip themselves with institutions that a nation implies, and define themselves as a nation.

Some of the ways Anderson characterizes the nation as an imagined community are relevant for our understanding of the religious school:

1. The nation is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them.
2. The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest nation has finite boundaries.
3. The nation is imagined as a *community* because regardless of the actual inequality in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.¹⁵²

We can add that some of the artifacts that members of a certain nation use to imagine their nation are shared memories—a collective consciousness of the past—and a sense of identity that overrides the manifest differences among those grouped as belonging to the same nation.

In Anderson's sense, we can say that a religious school is also an imagined community. A religious school is defined in terms of sites, institutions, and temporal transmission of legitimacy, in a way that is akin to the way a nation is defined in terms of geographical boundaries, guiding institutions, and the heroic champions who have established and defended its independent identity in history.

As with the members of a nation, a member of a Buddhist school may never be personally acquainted with any significant portion of the other members, but still holds in his mind the image of an incontestable solidarity binding them all together into a defined entity. The notion of the Zen school is rooted in certain shared assumptions that those who

consider themselves members commonly accept—for instance, the core reality of an ineffable enlightenment experience that has been handed down personally by Sakyamuni * Buddha via lineages of enlightened masters.

Within this frame of reference, then, to say that the Zen school, like the nation, is an imagined community does not mean to deny its existence as imaginary and false. Even from a strictly Zen point of view, calling the "Zen school" an imagined community raises no objection, since all social identities and all groupings of people, including people with varying degrees of involvement in the Zen teachings, are imaginary identities, at best rightly guided provisional expedients, with no substantive or essential being.

I believe that to view the Zen school as an imagined community is a useful way to evaluate its internal structure, historical formation, and ontological status or degree of reality.

The last quality is particularly important. As we will see in our analysis of the Zen tradition of Vietnam in the following pages, the notion of the imagined community helps us to avoid the methodological error of assigning the same ontological status to every variety of religious school or tradition, simply because members claim membership in or allegiance to some "master school."

In the previous chapter I cited T. Griffith Foulk's view of the "Zen school," which I think sheds light on the Vietnamese Zen tradition. Foulk calls our attention to the fictitious nature of the Zen lineages set forth in the "lamp history" literature. Even the hagiographies and the recorded sayings of the generations of Tang Zen masters following Huineng survive only in late collections and cannot be found in contemporary Tang materials.¹⁵³ Foulk also makes the very interesting point that "the literary qualities of the text in question—especially the use of metaphor, symbolism, dramatic devices, realistic settings, and the verbatim quotation of private conversations and unspoken thoughts—are typical of fiction."¹⁵⁴ Thus, according to Foulk, the Zen concept of a spiritually lineage (*zong*) should be considered a religious, not a historical, category.¹⁵⁵

Foulk's distinction between the Zen lineage and the Zen school is also relevant. The Zen lineage consists of the "enlightened teachers" whose words and deeds were preserved in the lamp histories and recorded sayings. These teachers are revered as patriarchs. The Zen school, on the other hand, consists of everyone who believes in the Zen lineage, gains inspiration from its teachings, reveres its patriarchs, and follows the Zen masters who are its living representatives.¹⁵⁶ The expression "tradition" that I am using could imply both "lineage" and "school" in the

above sense. Most modern Vietnamese Buddhists can be said to imagine themselves belonging to the Zen "school."

According to Foulk, the Zen school in medieval (Song) China, in the final analysis, was not defined by a set of distinctive practices or even a new and revolutionary form of monastic discipline, as is the view normally held among modern scholars. Rather, it consisted of three elements: A lineage, the reenacted rituals, and a corresponding institutional entity. First of all Zen consisted of a mythical lineage of the enlightened patriarchs who carried on the mind of enlightenment. These mythical stories were not only transmitted verbally and in written form but also reenacted in concrete rituals. These rituals were recognized by the government and the Buddhist community at large. This resulted in a Zen institution. Foulk points out that this "institution" contained an elite group of monks, and occasionally a few nuns and laypeople, who were regarded as the living members of the Zen lineage in the sense that they had inherited the mind of enlightenment from other recognized members of the lineage in a ritual of dharma transmission. ¹⁵⁷

Foulk's observations apply quite well to the Zen tradition of Vietnam. First there were efforts to construct lineages of patriarchs modeled after the lamp history texts of Chinese Zen. Then there were reenacted rituals supported by the imperial court during the Tran* and occasionally in the following dynasties. The Vietnamese Zen "institutions" also were an elite group of monks and aristocrats. However, upon closer analysis, we observe that these imagined lineages and institutions were short-lived and much more obscure and elusive than their predecessors in Chinese Zen.

I have pointed out that the Zen lineages recorded in the *Thien* Uyen** were unknown to the Buddhist elites of the immediately following centuries. The Trúc Lâm "Zen school" founded by Trần Nhân Tông around the end of the thirteenth century was noted by Phúc Điền*, a nineteenth-century Buddhist leader and author, as the continuation of the Chinese Linji Zen school. In their extant works, the Trúc Lâm patriarchs never made mention of the two "Zen schools" of Vinitaruci* and Vô Ngôn Thông or their writings, despite their being relatively close in time, although the *Thiên Uyên* states that these works enjoyed wide circulation during those centuries. Both Nhu' So'n (a Lê dynasty author) and Phúc Điền were obviously confused about the Zen lineages in the *Thiên Uyên*.

There are occasional records of Chinese Zen monks who came to Vietnam to teach during the Lê and Nguyen* dynasties. But not much has been recorded about their activities or teachings, and so it is well-nigh impossible to identify the kind of Buddhism they taught.

There are few recognizable traces of any specifically "Zen Buddhism" in Vietnam. In the still extant bibliographies of Buddhist books in Vietnam, we find more writings on *sutras* *, rituals, *vinaya*, but almost nothing on Zen in the form of either independent works or commentaries on Chinese Zen classics.¹⁵⁸ There are no Zen monasteries, no sizable Zen communities (we can even say *no Zen community*),¹⁵⁹ no recognizable Zen monasticism or practices as in the case of Japan or Korea.¹⁶⁰ The only literary traces of Zen we have is Zen poetry, that is, poetry that employs Zen anecdotes, jargon, metaphors, and symbols.

This is quite revealing. In fact, it is not even wrong to conclude that "Zen Buddhism" in Vietnam is as much a literary fascination as a religious development. In explaining what "Zen" was in the Vietnamese context, I would underscore the romantic, heroic quality of many famous Zen stories, such as those of the Sixth Patriarch, the illiterate woodcutter who attained perfect enlightenment, and of many other Zen masters who threw conventional decorum to the winds.

In Vietnam it is the romantic and heroic atmosphere in Zen literature that appears to be the most attractive element. As I have mentioned above, most learned Vietnamese monks at some point would emulate the Chinese Zen patriarchs and compose Zen poetry or sayings to express their romantic aspirations.

A case in point is Viên Chiếu*. His biography mentions four works composed by him: (1) *Duoc* Su' Thap* Nhi* Nguyen* Van** [The Twelve Vows of the Medicine King Buddha], (2) *Tán Viên Giác Kinh* [Eulogy on the Complete Enlightenment *Sutra**], (3) *Thập Nhi Bồ* Tát Hạnh* Tu Chứng Đạo* Trạng* [Enlightenment Realized by the Twelve Bodhisattva Practices], and (4) *Tham Đạo* Hien* Quyệt** [Revelation of the Decisive Secret for Students]. The first three works are lost, but judging from their titles they are treatises on a *sutra** and Buddhist rituals. The last work is a record of encounter dialogues between Viên Chiếu and his disciples. As Foulk has pointed out, the detailed, verbatim record of such dialogues betrays their fictitious nature.¹⁶¹ In the case of Viên Chiếu, it confirms my observation that Zen literature was more a means for the medieval eminent monks of Vietnam to express an aspiration to emulate the heroic ways of the Chinese patriarchs than a description of what is actually practiced.

Vietnamese Buddhist history is fraught with discontinuity.¹⁶² (The same can be said of Vietnamese Confucianism and Daoism.) What we know is that from the first centuries of the common era up to the Nguyen* dynasty there were monks coming mostly from China to Vietnam to spread Buddhism, who had certain affinities with certain schools of Chinese Buddhism. These teachers were independent of each other and

were based at different temples. The Vietnamese they attracted and influenced were mostly from the vicinity of the temples where the teachers were active.

Around the time of the Lý dynasty, under the influence of Zen literature coming from China, and in the general context of defining and validating a new order, we witness the first efforts to define schools of Buddhism in Vietnam. At this time Zen was at the height of its prestige throughout the sinocentric world. Different groups developed in a more or less diffuse fashion under the direct or indirect influence of different teachers were artificially lumped together as Zen lineages in lamp history texts that were modeled after the Chinese *Chuangeng lu*. The imagined Zen-identity started to take shape.

Subsequent generations of Vietnamese Buddhist leaders up to the present time have always laid claim to this Zen-identity whenever there were political or other reasons to invoke an identity. At stake in this effort to tie Vietnamese Buddhism to Zen has been a felt need to establish an orthodox identity. Zen is the preferred affiliation to claim because Zen has always retained the prestige it won in the Tang and Song eras. In the Vietnamese Buddhists' hearts and minds, Zen is felt to be the essence of Buddhism, and its highest form.

In fact, Zen in Vietnam has never been a "school" in the sense of a recognizable social institution with an identifiable set of scriptures, doctrines, and practices. For the ordinary Vietnamese Buddhists, Zen was (and probably still is) merely "a rumor from the monasteries." They never actually embraced it as they did the devotional, ritualistic Buddhism that bears more resemblance to Pure Land Buddhism.

Drawing on Anderson's concept, and taking into account Foulk's analysis of the Zen school in Song China, we can conclude that the Zen school at large is an "imagined community." Even so we can observe that Zen has never been a tradition or school in Vietnam the same way it has been in China, Japan, or Korea. However, even if we do not accept the image of a "school" in the Foulk's sense, it would be wrong to deny the presence of different Zen groups in medieval and premodern Vietnam.

We can say that in Vietnam, Zen Buddhism manifests itself, ever so vaguely but perennially, in philosophical attitudes, styles of ethical behavior, and artistic sentiments. Zen in Vietnam is scattered across religious and cultural life—but not as a cohesive system of thought embraced by a recognizable lasting physical community. ¹⁶³

**PART II—
THE *THIEN * UYEN* TAP* ANH*:
A TRANSLATION**

Preface to a *Collection of Outstanding Figures of the Zen Community*

[1a2] Why is this work called *Thien * Uyen* Tap* Anh* [A Collection of Outstanding Figures of the Zen Community]? Because it selects the most outstanding people from the Zen schools [and tells their stories]. Why do this? The adherents of the Zen school are indeed numerous, but those among them with knowledge of the abstruse inner pattern are few. They are like phoenixes in a flock of chickens, like orchids among the common grasses. If not for their exceptional qualities, and their enlightened perception, how could they have penetrated the abstruse, subtle message [of Buddhism]? How could they have become leaders of those studying Buddhism, and exemplars for succeeding generations? How true it is!— the outstanding ones are rare in the Zen community.

Accordingly, we have selected [the stories of] several adepts of great virtues, in order to prepare an account of true Zen masters for Zen students to emulate. Thus, the work is called *A Collection of Outstanding Figures*.

Bhismagarjitasvararaja* Buddha¹ has appeared in the world since the beginning of time, in the age of chaos, and he was the founder of the Zen school. In his time, customs were still pure and generous, and most people were simple and honest. The scriptural teachings rested in emptiness, **[1b]** and it was not necessary to expound them to save people. But then some people began to take demons as Buddhas, to take delusive forces as enlightening forces. Deception and falsity, treachery and excess grew stronger by the day. Karmic debts accumulated, and the barriers [to enlightenment caused by] wrongful deeds deepened. There was no alternative but to rely on the boat of compassion to rescue them.

Therefore, Sakyamuni* Buddha, our great father, appeared in this Saha-world*,² in order to expound the scriptural teachings and teach and transform sentient beings. For nine aeons he had persevered in cultivating the Path, until he finally succeeded in fully consummating it. With this, the Buddhist Teaching flourished greatly [in the world]. Continuing [this legacy], the Zen school blew like a wind through the six planes of existence³ to make them pure and cool and quenched the burning heat of the three mires. The secret of becoming Buddha and being a Zen master take its starting point from this.

Our country, Dai* Viet*, has been saturated by the Buddhist Teaching and made fertile with the waters of the Dharma-rain. There have been people among us who cut off their hair to become monks and nuns and have realized the [Mind] seal and awakened to [the truth of] emptiness: thus we too have such people. They have left traces showing that the mind of Zen shines like the sun and the mirror of the Path is as clear as

ice. Some have come forth to save the nation and bring peace to the people. Some have come forth to rescue the deluded and saved those drowning in error. Some awakened early to the Mind seal and have wielded the staff of the Zen master to propagate the mentality of Bodhidharma. **[2a]** Some were late to enter the mystic pass and have used lotus-incantations to reveal the secret message of Fo Tu Teng. Some have had the power to tame wild animals, attracting them inside the temple gates to listen to the scriptures, so that the birds and beasts flocked around their compassionate energy and offered them food. It is their genuineness that attracts [the birds and beasts], and their acquired learning that brings their spiritual powers. Is this not the subtle wonder of the intimate transmission? They were indeed worthy of being the outstanding heroes of the Zen community!

Ah! The Buddha Path is most profound, but the Mind is the most profound of all profundities. The Buddha Path is most grand, but the Mind is the grandest of the grand. Ah, the Mind, the Mind! Isn't it what takes the lead in cultivating the Path?

The record of the Zen Community started with Zen Master Vô Ngôn Thông, who started the transmission of the Path. It continues on from lamp to lamp, their lights shining bright. [In this narrative,] the exhaustive accounts were simplified and extensive stories were abridged. Ultimately, it is the Mind that is [the source of] supreme true enlightenment. If we investigate why this is so, we need to cleanse the six senses and detach from the four characteristics. ⁴ Can we do this?

In the past I have studied both the Confucian classics **[2b]** and the Buddhist scriptures. Though there seem to be two different paths, the path of being and the path of nonbeing, when we investigate their destination, they share one and the same truth.

Once I was sitting in my study, with some free time left over from lecturing, when a Zen man [I knew] came discussing Buddhism. We conversed for a time, and it was all mind games around nonexistent issues.⁵ He took out of his sleeve this *Collection of Outstanding Figures [in the Zen Community]* and asked me to help edit it so it could be reprinted free from textual errors.

I noticed that in the text there were many stories of eminent Zen masters of deep learning and great power. Unwittingly my heart was filled with respect and a feeling of deference. The masters discoursed on emptiness and enlightenment, matters in which I am no expert. Nevertheless, in the *Book of Changes* it says that when the young and uneducated ask for our teachings, we must not spurn them, so I could not refuse my Zen friend's request to correct the errors and omissions in the text. Within a week's time, the wording and meaning of the text were

restored to their former lucidity: It was like the light of the moon shining forth even more brightly.

My Zen friend then asked me to write a preface for the new edition to reveal the meaning of the Buddhist Teaching. [3a] I did not decline the job, so I called my servant to bring paper and pen so that I could fulfill the Zen man's request. I dashed off this clumsy preface straightaway, and the Zen man bowed in thanks and accepted it.

Respectfully.

Published on an auspicious day in the fourth month of the eleventh year of the Vinh * Thinh* era of the Lê dynasty (1715)

Transmitter of the Zen school: Thích Nhu' Trí

Novices: Tính Nhu, Tính Quán, Tính Trung, Tính Huy, Tính Kien*, Tính Bon*

Laymen: Tính Phan*, Tính Thành, Tính Từ, Tính Hu'ng, Tính Minh, Tính Thuy*

Laywomen: Dieu* Tang*, Diêu Dao*, Tính Phung*

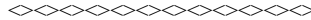
Vô Ngôn Thông (?-826)

[4a2] Zen Master Vô Ngôn Thông (*Wu Yan Tong*) of Kien* So' Temple⁶ at Phù Dong* District, Tiên Du Prefecture,⁷ was originally from Guangzhou (China). His family name was Zheng. From a tender age he respected the Buddhist lore⁸ and did not attend to the family property. He entered religious life at Shuanglin Temple in Wuzhou.⁹ By disposition he was generous, profound, and a man of few words. He silently comprehended and realized the true nature of things, so his contemporaries called him Vô Ngôn Thông [which means "Wordless Realization"] or Bat* Ngu* Thông (*Bu Yu Tong*) according to the *Transmission of the Lamp*.¹⁰

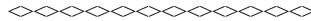
Every day Thông paid homage to the Buddha. One day [as he was doing so] a Zen master asked him: "Venerable Sir, what are you paying homage to?" Thông said: "To Buddha." The Zen man pointed to the Buddha-image and said: "But what is this one?" Thông had no reply.

That night he went with full formal deportment to the Zen man. After bowing politely Thông said: "What was the meaning of what you asked me before?" The Zen man said: "How many summers since you left home [to become a monk]?" Thông said: "Ten summers." The Zen man said: "Have you ever really left home yet?" Thông became even more confused. The Zen man said: "If you can't understand even this, what good are a hundred summers?" He then took Thông to see Mazu.¹¹

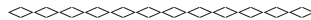
But when they arrived in Jiangxi, ¹² Mazu had already [4b] passed away, so Thông went to call on the Zen Master Baizhang Huaihai. ¹³



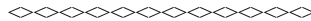
Once [when Thông was present] there was a monk who asked Baizhang: "What is the Great Vehicle doctrine ¹⁴ of sudden enlightenment?" Baizhang said: "When the mind-ground is empty, the sun of wisdom spontaneously shines." ¹⁵ At these words Thông had attainment. He then returned to Guangzhou and became abbot of Hua An Temple.



Once someone asked him: "Are you a Zen Master or not?" Thông said: "This poor monk has never studied Zen." After a long silence, Thông called out to the questioner and he responded. Thông pointed to a coirpalm tree, and the man had no reply.

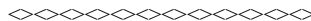


Once when Zen Master Yangshan ¹⁶ was still a novice, Vô Ngôn Thông called out to him: "Hey Ji, move the bed over here for me." Yangshan moved the bed over to him. Thông said: "Now put it back where it was." Yangshan did as he was told. Thông again asked: "Ji, what is there over there?" Yangshan said: "Not a thing." Thông said: "What is there over here?" Yangshan said: "Not a thing." Thông called him: "Hey Ji!" Yangshan said: "Yes?" Thông said: "Go away."



In the ninth month, autumn of the fifteenth year, *canh tí*, of the Yuanhua era (820 c.e.) of the Tang dynasty, Vô Ngôn Thông came to Kien* So' Temple and planted his staff there. Except for his two simple meals, Thông was absorbed in the joy of meditation. ¹⁷ He generally sat facing the wall ¹⁸ without uttering a single word.

Even after many years, no one knew him except a monk named Cam* Thành, who lived at the temple. Cam Thành [5a] honored and revered Vô Ngôn Thông and served by his side, coming into intimate contact with his mystic potential, and receiving his essential teaching in full.



One day, showing no sign of illness, Thông bathed and changed his clothes. He summoned Cam Thành and said to him: "In the old days our ancestral teacher Zen Master Nanyue Rang ¹⁹ said when he passed away:

All phenomena are born from mind.
Mind is intrinsically uncreated,

Therefore, phenomena have nowhere to abide.
 If you realized the mind-ground,
 Your actions are unobstructed.
 Unless you meet someone with superior faculties,
 Do not lightly admit anyone [to the Dharma].²⁰

As his words ended, he joined palms together and passed away.

Cam* Thành cremated Thông's body and collected the relics and built a stupa²¹ for them on Mount Tiên Du. The time was the twelfth day of the first month of the second year, *bính ngo**, of the Baoli era (826 C.E.) of the Tang dynasty.²² The Zen school in our country [Viet Nam] began with Vô Ngôn Thông.²³

Cam Thành
 (?–860)

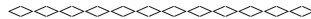
***Dharma Heirs of Zen Master [Vô Ngôn] Thông of Kien* So' First Generation:
 One Person***

[5a11] Zen Master Cam Thành, the second generation [after Vô Ngôn Thông] at Kiên So' Temple, hailed from Tiên Du; his family name is not known. [5b] When he first left home to become a monk, his Dharma name was Lap* Đúc. He remained in his home area around Mount Tiên Du²⁴ and devoted himself to chanting *dharanis** and reciting *sutras**.²⁵

One of the leading men in the village, a Mr. Nguyen*, admired Cam Thành's virtuous conduct and wanted to donate one of his houses as a temple and invite Cam Thành to live there. Though he sincerely extended his invitation many times, Cam Thành did not accept.

One night Cam Thành had a dream that a divine being told him: "If you fulfill Nguyen's* aspiration, after a few years' time there will be great good fortune." So then Cam Thành accepted Mr. Nguyễn's invitation. This was [the start of] Kiên So' Temple at Phù Dong* Village.

Before long, the Zen Master Vô Ngôn Thông arrived. Cam Thành knew immediately that he was an extraordinary man, and so he served him day and night unstintingly. Thông was moved by his sincerity, so he called him Cam Thành [which means "Moving Sincerity"].



One day Thông said to Cam Thành: "In the old days our Lord Buddha appeared in the world for one great cause.²⁶ After accomplishing his salvific work, he appeared entering nirvana.²⁷ Wondrous mind such as this is called treasury of the eye of the True Dharma, the uncharacterizable

true reality, the method of *samadhi* *. The Lord personally entrusted it to the Venerable Mahakasyapa*,²⁸ who became the first patriarch [of Zen]. It was handed on generation after generation until it reached the great teacher Bodhidharma.²⁹

"Bodhidharma came from India [to China] braving the perils of the voyage in order to transmit this Dharma. It was passed along until it reached the Six Patriarch Caoxi, who received it from the Fifth Patriarch,³⁰ they were all still in the line of Bodhidharma. [6a] When Bodhidharma first came, people did not recognize him or believe in him. Therefore, [he started the practice of] passing along the patriarchal robe [and bowl] to be emblematic of [the true successor] who had received the Dharma. Later when people's faith had solidified, the robe [and bowl] became an object of contention, so the Fifth Patriarch told the Sixth Patriarch to let it stop with him and not pass it down any more.³¹ Thenceforth it became a direct transmission from mind to mind without handing down the robe and bowl.

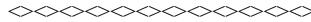
"In those days, Nanyue Huairang first got the Sixth Patriarch's transmission. Nanyue passed it along to Mazu Daoyi. Mazu transmitted it along to Baizhang Huaihai. I received this Mind-Dharma from Baizhang. I had long heard that here in this country there were many people who respected the Great Vehicle. Therefore, I came to the south to look for people of knowledge.

"Now I have met you—this is due to previous karmic links. Listen to my verse:

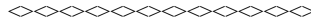
People from all over make noise.
 Falsely arguing over the true transmission.
 They say that our first patriarch,
 Came in person from India,
 To transmit the treasury of the Dharma Eye,
 He called it Zen.
 One flower opens into five petals.³²
 The seeds follow each other in unbroken succession,
 In hidden accord with the Secret Teaching.
 Thousands and thousands have an affinity with it,³³
 Everyone calls it the school of Mind,
 Pure and fundamentally so.
 India is the same as this land,
 This land is the same as India.
 Ancient and modern, the same sun and moon,
 Ancient and modern, the same mountains and rivers.
 If in contact with defilement, you become bogged down,³⁴
 Then Buddhas and patriarchs become enemies.

The slightest deviation,
 And you go wrong by a thousand miles.
 Contemplate and observe well:
 Do not deceive posterity.
 Even if you question me,
 I am fundamentally without words.

[6b] Under [the impact of] these words, Cam * Thành was enlightened.



A monk asked: "What is Buddha?" Cam Thành said: "[Buddha is] everywhere." The monk then asked: "What is the mind of Buddha?" Cam Thành said: "It has never been concealed." The monk continued: "I don't understand." Cam Thành said: "You already missed it."



Later Cam Thành passed away without illness in the first year, *canh thin*, of the Xiantong era (860 C.E.) of the Tang dynasty.

Thien* Hoi*
 (?–900)

Second Generation:
One Person

[6b6] Zen Master Thiên Hôi of Dinh* Thien* Temple³⁵ in Siêu Loai* Village³⁶ hailed from Dien* Lĩnh. Early on he left home and became a monk under the guidance of the monk Tiem* Nguyễn of Đông Lâm³⁷ Temple in his home area. He gave himself the sobriquet To* Phong [which means "Patriarchal Department"]. He traveled everywhere, seeking to study the essential teachings of Zen. Later he met Cam Thành at Kien* So' Temple and served him for more than ten years indefatigably.

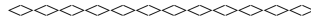
One day Thiên Hôi entered Cam Thành's room³⁸ and asked: "In the scriptural teachings it says that the Tathagata* Sakyamuni* attained Buddhahood only after three immeasurable aeons³⁹ of cultivating the path. But now you, Venerable Sir, always tell me that the mind itself is Buddha.⁴⁰ I'm not clear about this: I hope you will instruct me."

[7a] Cam Thành said: "Who is speaking in the scriptural teachings?" Thiên Hôi said: "Isn't it Buddha speaking?" Cam Thành said: "If so, then why does he say in the *Manjusri-Sutra**⁴¹ 'I stayed in the world for forty-nine years without uttering a single word to anyone'? Moreover, an ancient worthy said, 'Those who search through texts to get realization

become ever more bogged down, and those who seek Buddhahood through asceticism are all deluded. Those who seek Buddhahood apart from mind are outsiders to the Buddhist Path. Those who seek Buddhahood by clinging to mind are deluded demons."⁴²

Thien* Hoi* said: "If so, what is there in the mind that is not Buddha that becomes delusion? What is in the mind that is Buddha?"⁴³

Cam* Thành said: "In the old days there was someone who asked Mazu, 'If mind itself is Buddha, which mind is Buddha?' Mazu said, 'Please point out to me anything you suspect is not Buddha.' The man had no reply. Mazu said, 'When you reach enlightenment, all things [are Buddha]. If you do not awaken, you are forever at odds with everything.'⁴⁴ Do you understand this statement?"⁴⁵ At this Thiên Hôi replied: "I understand." Cam Thành said: "How do you understand it?" Thiên Hôi said: "There is nothing anywhere in anything that is not Buddha-mind." Then he bowed in homage. Cam Thành said: [7b] "This is how it must be." Then he named him Thiên Hôi [which means "Profound Understanding"].



Later on Thiên Hôi passed away at his own temple. This was in the third year, *canh thân*, of the Guanghua era (900 C.E.) of the Tang dynasty.

Vân Phong
(?–956)

Third Generation:
One Person

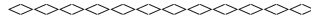
[7b4] Zen Master Vân Phong (also called Chu Phong) of Khai Quoc* Temple⁴⁶ in the capital city of Thang* Long⁴⁷ hailed from Tù' Liêm in Vinh* Khang Prefecture.⁴⁸ His family name was Nguyen*. While pregnant with him, his mother abstained from eating meat and often chanted the scriptures. When he was born, a spiritual light filled the room. Both his parents were moved by this uncanny phenomenon. [Consequently, later on] they permitted him to leave home to become a monk.

When Vân Phong grew up, he served Zen Master Thiên Hôi at Siêu Loai* Temple and became an intimate disciple who entered the master's private room. Through close contact with Thiên Hôi's* mystic potential, his Zen learning increased day by day.

Thiên Hôi often told him: "Birth and death is an important matter. You should strive to comprehend it thoroughly." Vân Phong asked: "When birth and death come, how can we avoid it?"⁴⁹ Thiên Hôi said: "Where there is no birth and death, we are sure to avoid it." Vân Phong

asked: "What is the place where there is no birth and death?" Thiên * Hoi* said: "You should comprehend it right in the midst of birth and death."

Vân Phong said: "How am I to understand it?" Thiên Hôi said: "Go away for a while and come back this evening." Vân Phong came back at the agreed time, [8a] but Thiên Hôi said: "Wait till tomorrow morning and the assembly will give you proof." Vân Phong suddenly emptied through with enlightenment and bowed in homage. Thiên Hôi said: "What truth have you seen?" Vân Phong said: "I've comprehended." Thiên Hôi said: "How so?" Vân Phong held up a fist and said: "It's not worth this one." Thiên Hôi let it go at that.



Vân Phong died in the third year, *bính thìn*, of the Xiande era (956 C.E.) of the Later Zhou dynasty.

Khuông Viet* (933–1011)

Fourth Generation: ***Two Persons***

[8a6] The Great Master Khuông Việt (who earlier was called Chân Lu'u)⁵⁰ of Phat* Đà Temple, Cát Loi* Village, Thu'ò'ng Lac*,⁵¹ was a native of Cát Lo'i. His family name was Ngô. He was a descendant of Ngô Thuan* De*. He had an imposing appearance and untrammelled intent. As a boy he studied Confucianism, but when he grew up he turned to Buddhism.⁵² Together with a schoolmate of his, he went to Zen Master Vân Phong of Khai Quoc* Temple and received ordination from him. From then on he read widely in the Buddhist scriptures⁵³ and plumbed the essential teachings of Zen.

When he was in his forties, his fame made an impact on the royal court. Emperor Đinh Tiên Hoàng (r. 968–979)⁵⁴ summoned him for an audience. The emperor was pleased with him and honored him with the rank General Supervisor of Monks (Tang* Thong*),⁵⁵ In the second year of the Thái Bình era (971), the emperor granted him the sobriquet Khuông Việt Thái Sư [which means "the Great Master Who Brings Order to Việt."]

Emperor Lê Dai* Hành (r. 980–1005)⁵⁶ honored Khuông Việt even more: [8b] Khuông Việt participated in all military and court affairs. He often visited Mount Ve* Linh⁵⁷ in Bình Lo* Prefecture⁵⁸ and grew to love the elegant scenery there. He wanted to build a hermitage and settle down there. One night he had a dream in which he saw a spirit wearing golden armor, holding a golden lance in his right hand and a jewel stupa in his

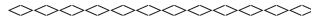
left hand. He was accompanied by ten or more fearsome-looking attendants. The spirit came and told him: "I am the Celestial King Vaisravana *,⁵⁹ and my attendants are all *yaksas**. The lord of heaven has ordered us to come to this country to protect its border and enable the Buddha-Dharma to flourish. I have a karmic affinity with you, so I have come to entrust this task to you."

Khuông Viet* woke up in astonishment. He heard the sound of shouting in the mountains. He thought the whole thing very strange. When dawn came, he went into the mountains and saw a great tree more than a hundred feet high, with many branches and luxuriant foliage. Above it was an auspicious cloud. Khuông Viêt had some workmen cut it down, and he had it carved into the image of what he had seen in his dream. It was housed in a shrine.⁶⁰

In the first year of the Tianfu era (981), the Chinese army of the Song regime invaded Vietnam. The emperor [Lê Dai* Hành] had heard of [the Vaisravana episode], so he ordered Khuông Viêt to go to that shrine and pray [for national salvation]. The enemy took fright and fled to the Ninh River in Bao* Huu*.⁶¹ Wild waves arose, raised by the wind, and flood-dragons appeared leaping and prancing about. The Chinese army [9a] fled in complete disarray.

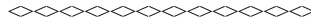
In the seventh year [of the Tianfu era (987)] the Song envoy Li Jue⁶² came [to Vietnam] on a peace mission. At this time the Dharma Master Do* Thuan* was also well known.⁶³ The Emperor Lê Đại Hành ordered Khuông Viêt to put aside his monk's garb and to act as a court minister.⁶⁴ [Along with the delegation of courtiers and the emperor himself,] he met with Li Jue at the frontier. Li Jue saw that he was well-versed in literature and repartee, so he offered him a verse: "Beyond the sky there is another sky which we must reflect back on."⁶⁵ Khuông Viêt told Lê Đại Hành: "This shows that he honors Your Majesty no different than his own lord." When Li Jue went back to China, Khuông Viêt wrote him a farewell verse entitled *Vu'ong Lang Qui* (The Royal Emissary Returns Home), which reads as follows:

Embroidered sails extended in the auspicious sunshine and
 the fair wind,
 The spirit immortal returns to the sovereign's home.
 Thousands of miles across the blue waves,
 The road home to the ninth heaven is long.
 How sad human feelings are as we face the cup of parting,
 Fondly we try to hold you back, illustrious Sir.⁶⁶
 We hope you will exercise your profound intent on behalf
 of this southern land,
 Report clearly to our sovereign.



Later Khuông Viet * resigned from office, pleading old age and ill health, and then returned to his home area and built a temple on Mount Du Hí, which he presided over as abbot. Students gathered around him.

One day his advanced student Đa Bao* asked him: "What is the beginning and end of studying the Path?" Khuông Viêt said: "From beginning to end, there is nothing in the wondrous emptiness. When you can understand Thusness (*tathata**), everything is of the same nature." Đa Bao asked: "How does one preserve it?" Khuông Viêt said: "There is no place for you to set to work." [9b] Đa Bao said: "Master, you have said it all." Khuông Viêt said: "How do you understand that?" Đa Bao gave a shout.



On the fifteenth day of the second month of the second year of the Thuan* Thiên era (1011) of the Lý dynasty, when he was about to die, Khuông Viêt spoke a verse to Đa Bao:

The fire was already there in the wood,
 Fire was there, then it came to life again.
 If you say there is no fire in wood,
 How could flames spring up when we drill for fire?

As his verse ended, he passed away seated in the lotus position. He was fifty-two years old. (Another source says he was seventy-nine.)⁶⁷

Đa Bao*

Fifth Generation: Two Persons

[9b6] It was not known where Zen Master Đa Bao was from or what his family name was. He later dwelt at Kien* So' Temple in Phù Dong* Village, Tiên Du. At the time the Great Master Khuông Viêt was at Khai Quoc* Temple teaching, and Đa Bao came to study with him. Khuông Viêt was gladdened by his insight when faced with situations and the diligent way he dealt with things. Only Đa Bao was permitted to enter Khuông Viet's* private room. After Đa Bao attained the Dharma, he wandered far beyond the mundane world with only a pitcher and a bowl. Finally he came to settle down at Kiên So' Temple.

Before Lý Thái To* (r. 1010–1028)⁶⁸ ascended the throne,⁶⁹ Đa Bao met him and saw his unusual appearance. He said: "This young man has an uncommon physiognomy. In the future he will be a king."⁷⁰ Lý Thái Tô

was greatly shocked and said: "At the present time [10a] our sage king is still reigning and the country is at peace. How can you say something like this that could get my whole family wiped out?" Đa Bao * said: "The Mandate of Heaven⁷¹ has already been decided. Even if you wish to avoid it, it is impossible to do so. If these words prove correct, please do not forsake me."⁷²

When Lý Thái To* ascended the throne, he often invited Đa Bao to court to ask him for lessons in Zen, and he would reward him with generous donations. Đa Bao was even consulted about all court and political matters. There was a royal decree that ordered his temple rebuilt.

Đa Bao subsequently died, but no one knows where or when.

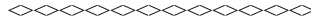
Dinh* Hu'o'ng
(?–1051)

Sixth Generation:

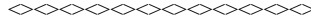
Three Persons, Two Biographies Recorded

[10a7] The Elder Dinh Hu'o'ng of Cam* Ú'ng Temple, Bà So'n,⁷³ Thiên Đúc Prefecture,⁷⁴ was a native of Chu Minh⁷⁵ of the Lu' family. His family had practiced Buddhism for generations. At a tender age he followed Zen Master Đa Bao of Kien* So' Temple, and for twenty-four years he served him. Đa Bao had more than a hundred disciples, and Đinh Hu'o'ng was foremost among them, along with National Preceptor Bão Hoà.⁷⁶ Đinh Hu'o'ng entered deeply into Đa Bao's* mystic secrets.

One day Đinh Hu'o'ng asked Đa Bao: "How can I get to see the true mind?" Đa Bao said: "You have to unfurl it for yourself." Đinh Hu'o'ng emptied through as he got the message and said: "Everything is so, [10b] not just me." Đa Bao said: "Do you understand yet or not?" Đinh Hu'o'ng said: "Even when I have understood, it is no different from when I did not understand."⁷⁷ Đa Bao said: "You must preserve it." Đinh Hu'o'ng covered his ears and stood with his back turned. Đa Bao gave a shout and Đinh Hu'o'ng bowed. Đa Bao said: "In the future you will deal with people like a deaf man."



Commander General and Defense Commissioner Nguyen* Tuân respected Đinh Hu'o'ng's reputation for virtue and invited him to Cam Ú'ng Temple. Đinh Hu'o'ng settled there, and students gathered like clouds. He proselytized with great success and spread the transformative influence [of the Dharma].



On the third day of the third month of the third year, *canh dan* *, of the Sùng Hu'ng Dai* Bao* era (1050) of Lý Thái Tông's reign (1028–1054),⁷⁸ Dinh* Hu'o'ng fell ill. He called together the assembly to say farewell and spoke a verse:

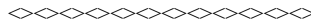
Originally there is no abode,⁷⁹
 Our abode is the true school [of Zen].
 The true school is illusory like this,
 Illusory existence equals emptiness of emptiness.

After his verse ended, he abruptly passed away.

Thien* Lão

[10b9] Zen Master Thiên Lão of Trùng Minh Temple on Mount Thiên Phúc⁸⁰ in Tiên Du studied with Đa Bao of Kien* So' Temple in his early years and comprehended the essence of mind. Then he moved to Tù' So'n⁸¹ and planted his staff there. The influence of his Zen grew stronger and stronger, and students came to him by the thousands. His temple became one of the most flourishing in the Buddhist community. During the years of the Thông Thụy* era (1034–1038), Lý Thái Tông often [11a] visited his temple.

Once Lý Thái Tông asked him: "How long have you been on this mountain, Master?" Thiên Lão said: "I only know the sun and the moon of today. Who knows about past springs and autumns?" The emperor asked: "How do you pass the days?" Thiên Lão replied: "The green bamboos and yellow flowers are not external objects. White clouds and bright moon reveal true nature."⁸² The emperor said: "What does this mean?" Thiên Lão said: "If I say too much now, there will be little benefit later." The emperor suddenly had some insight.



Once Emperor Lý Thái Tông dispatched an envoy to bring Thiên Lão to court to ask for his advice, but Thiên Lão had already passed away.⁸³ The emperor deeply mourned his passing and personally composed verses expressing his grief. He sent an envoy to arrange for a vegetarian feast [in honor of Thiên Lão] and to pay his respects. They built a pyre, cremated the body, and collected his remains. They erected a stupa [for Thiên Lão's remains] outside the temple gate [at Trùng Minh]. The emperor had the temple enlarged and repaired, and assigned people to take care of the upkeep and supplies of the temple.

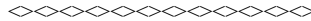
Viên Chiêu *
(999–1090)

Seventh Generation:
Seven Persons

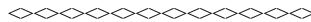
[11a9] Zen Master Viên Chiêu of Cát Tu'ò'ng Temple in the capital of Thang* Long hailed from Phúc Đu'ò'ng⁸⁴ in Long Đàm Prefecture,⁸⁵ his family name was Mai and his personal name Truc*. He was the son of the elder brother of Empress Lý Linh Cam*.⁸⁶ As a child he was very intelligent and studious.

When he heard that there was an elder adept in physiognomy at Mat* Nghiêm Temple in his home area, Viên Chiêu went to seek his advice. The elder looked him over thoroughly [11b] and said: "You have a karmic connection to the Buddha-Dharma. If you leave home to become a monk you are sure to become a great Bodhisattva among humans. If not, it is difficult to guarantee how long you will live." Viên Chiêu felt a sense of realization. He said farewell to his parents and received ordination from Dinh* Hu'o'ng on Mount Ba Tiêu. He served Đình Hu'o'ng for many years and investigated Zen studies. He always recited the *Sutra* of Complete Enlightenment*,⁸⁷ and he was clear in the three methods of contemplation.⁸⁸

One night while Viên Chiêu was in deep concentration he saw the Bodhisattva Mañjusi*⁸⁹ cut open his stomach with a knife and wash out his guts. Then Mañjusi applied medicine to the wound. After this, what Viên Chiêu practiced in his mind seemed preordained to mesh [with Reality],⁹⁰ and he had deep attainment in the *samadhi** of words,⁹¹ expounding the Dharma most eloquently. Subsequently, he established a temple east of the capital and settled there—students came in droves.

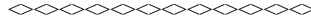


Once a monk asked Viên Chiêu: "What is the meaning of 'Buddha' and 'Sage'?" Viên Chiêu said: "At the autumn festival,⁹² chrysanthemums are blooming under the hedge. In the pure air of spring orioles are singing in the branches."⁹³ The monk continued: "Thank you [for your answer], but I don't understand. Please instruct me again." Viên Chiêu said: "By day the sun shines, by night the moon is bright."

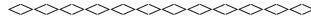


A monk asked: "I already grasped your true message, but how does the mystic mentality work?"⁹⁴ Viên Chiêu said: "If you carry a full bowl of water without being careful and you slip, what's the use of being sorry?" The monk continued: "Thank you for your instruction, Teacher." Viên

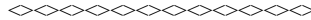
Chieu * said: "Don't jump [12a] into the river and drown. You come in person but you sink yourself."



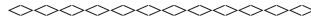
A monk asked: "Bodhidharma⁹⁵ and Sakyamuni*⁹⁶ are the supreme adepts. From ancient times until now who have succeeded to them as masters?"⁹⁷ Viên Chiêu said: "Dark and light, the aspects of heaven, depend on sun and moon. Crooked and straight, the lines of earth become Yue and Huai."⁹⁸



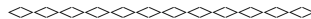
A monk asked: "What is the Great Path, the single road to the source?" Viên Chiêu said: "On high cliffs in the strong wind we know which plants are sturdy. When the country is swept by rebellion we know which ministers are loyal."⁹⁹



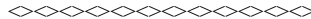
A monk asked: "Where do all sentient beings come from and where do they go after they die?"¹⁰⁰ Viên Chiêu said: "A blind turtle pierces a rock wall; a lame tortoise climbs a high mountain."



A monk asked: "The fresh green bamboos are all Thusness. What is the function of True Thusness?"¹⁰¹ Viên Chiêu said: "I offer this to you a thousand miles away, as I smile and hold a cup of tea."¹⁰² The monk continued: "If so, what have I come here for in vain?"¹⁰³ Viên Chiêu said: "Who knew that on the way to the eastern mound¹⁰⁴ one's hair would turn white?"

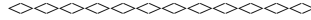


A monk asked: "Dã Hiên's house is deep in the wilderness:¹⁰⁵ Who would know to come knocking at its door in a free and easy way?" Viên Chiêu said: "The Golden Valley¹⁰⁶ is deserted, and flowers and weeds grow wild—day and night cows and goats are free to enter it." The monk continued: "Why is it like this?" Viên Chiêu said: "Those who are wealthy and of noble rank and arrogant to boot should know that richness collapses like a phantom tower."¹⁰⁷

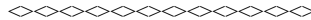


A monk asked: "The Dragon girl¹⁰⁸ [12b] offered her jewel and attained Buddhahood. What would be the merit of a donor who gives many gifts?" Viên Chiêu said: "Cinnamon trees in the moonlight for ten thousand

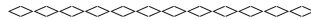
ages—they grow thick in [the light] of a single disc." The monk continued: "What does it mean by 'labor to no effect.'" Viên Chiêu * said: "If we hang a mirror in the sky,¹⁰⁹ we penetrate every place in the human realm."



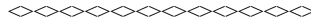
A monk asked: "To cross a river you must use a raft.¹¹⁰ When you reach the shore, it is no longer needed. How is it when we do not cross?" Viên Chiêu said: "When the pond dries up, the fish are left on dry land, but they gain life for ten thousand years of springtime." The monk continued: "What does it mean by 'in order to attain the wondrous truth one must follow the stream?'"¹¹¹ Viên Chiêu said: "I've heard that once Jing Ke¹¹² left [for Qin], he never returned again."



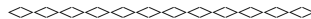
A monk asked: "Gold and ore are mixed together: originally they are a single [complex of] matter-energy. I ask you, Teacher, please use your skillful methods and refine out the pure form." Viên Chiêu said: "If you have never been the guest of the King of Qi, how could you know of the giant fish in the ocean?" The monk continued: "What happens if gentleman Guo¹¹³ does not take the advice?" Viên Chiêu said: "If you want to have your wine to drink first, do not try to complicate matters by drawing feet on a snake."¹¹⁴



A monk asked: "The snake has died on the road. Please, Teacher, bring it back to life."¹¹⁵ Viên Chiêu said: "Where are you from?" The monk said: "Originally I'm from the mountains." Viên Chiêu said: "Go back to your [13a] cliffside retreat right away and live in seclusion. Do not meet with Xu Zhen."¹¹⁶

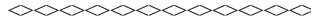


A monk asked: "The ocean store is a vast flood—we must not ask about it. What are the drops from the stream of Caoxi?"¹¹⁷ Viên Chiêu said: "Before the wind, under the pines, a cool rhythm. After the rain, on the road, soaked with mud." The monk continued: "What does it mean by 'it is no different from now?'"¹¹⁸ Viên Chiêu said: "Under the hedge, the autumn chrysanthemums. On the ends of the branches, orioles in the warm sun."

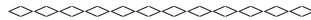


A monk asked: "It is clear in the mind's eye and bright in the form body, yet one can neither discriminate its inner truth nor see its characteristics."

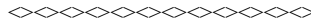
Why can't one see it?" ¹¹⁹ Viên Chiêu* said: "The flowers in the garden are bright, the grass on the shore is sparse."



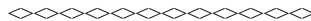
A monk asked: "When the season turns cold and the plants wither, what can we display?" Viên Chiêu said: "I'm glad you realize it yourself. Isn't it something to rejoice in?" The monk said: "I'm fortunate to hear today's decisive instruction. From now on I'll avoid careless mistakes." Viên Chiêu said: "I've just lifted you out of the shallow water, but you turn back [and dive into] a bottomless pond."



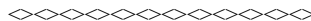
A monk asked: "Even inside the citadel of nirvana it is still perilous. Is there anywhere that is not perilous?"¹²⁰ Viên Chiêu said: "Build your nest on a curtain of flame;¹²¹ your grey hair is like reed flowers." The monk continued: "When one is hard pressed, what good are these two bases?" Viên Chiêu **[13b]** said: "A real man goes along [with circumstances] with total abandon, and wanders free in the windy moonlight."



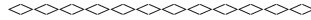
A monk asked: "They say that all sentient beings are Buddhas, but I'm not clear about this teaching. Please instruct me, Teacher." Viên Chiêu said: "I urge you, Sir, to devote yourself to farming. Don't imitate others and waste your energy waiting for a rabbit."¹²² The monk went on: "I'm lucky to meet with your clear decisive explanation, Teacher. I won't seek from others ever again." Viên Chiêu said: "What a pity that, having choked once, you sit here hungry but forget to eat."



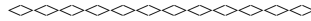
A monk said: "Today here I see before me the precious jewel that has been hidden in a sack for many long years."¹²³ Viên Chiêu said: "I was waiting for the midautumn moon, but instead I get caught in clouds and rain." The monk continued: "Though I hear your explanation, I'm not clear about the principle of it." Viên Chiêu said: "I laugh at the guy who held on to the bridge post and was drowned in midstream."¹²⁴



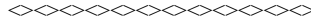
A monk asked: "What is the one Dharma?" Viên Chiêu said: "Even if you do not see spring birth and summer growth, you still meet with autumn ripening and winter harvest."¹²⁵ The monk continued: "What does it mean by 'many people become Buddha'?" Viên Chiêu said: "Let Zu Long stop bustling around, because Xu Fu¹²⁶ labored in vain in far away lands."



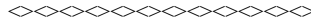
A monk asked: "What is the meaning of 'seeing inherent nature and becoming Buddha'?" Viên Chiếu * said: "When spring comes the withered trees are adorned all over with flowers: the wind blows a thousand miles carrying their **[14a]** divine perfume." The monk continued: "I don't understand. Please instruct me again. Teacher." Viên Chiếu said: "This egg-fruit plant has been around for ten thousand years: its dense branches reach to the clouds."¹²⁷



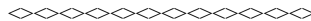
A monk said: "The mani jewel and the many colors are neither together nor apart."¹²⁸ Viên Chiếu said: "Spring flowers and butterflies—how many are fond of each other, how many are opposed?" The monk continued: "What does it mean by 'follow them and mix in'?" Viên Chiếu said: "If you do not have the eyes of the Indian monk,¹²⁹ you labor in vain offering the jewel of Bian."¹³⁰



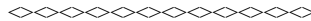
A monk asked: "What is the enlightenment that meets the eye?"¹³¹ Viên Chiếu said: "How many times alarmed by the crooked branch, the bird [which was once shot by a bow]. How often he blows on his cold vegetable, the man [who was once burned by hot soup]." The monk continued: "I don't understand. Please give me another metaphor." Viên Chiếu said: "A deaf man listens to the sound of the lute and a blind man looks up at the crescent moon."



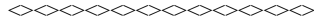
A monk asked: "Inherently what has form also has shadow. Is the shadow sometimes separate from the form?" Viên Chiếu said: "All rivers head for the East Ocean, where the myriad currents flow together. All stars bow to the North Star, where for a thousand ages all turn their hearts."



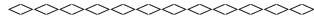
A monk asked: "What is transcending thousands of millions [of phrases] when you completely comprehend a single phrase?"¹³² Viên Chiếu said: "From afar he tucks [the giant mountain] Taishan under his arm and steps across the North Sea. Then turns his face upward¹³³ he throws his staff into the moon."



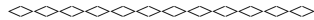
A monk asked: "Only this one is real: the rest are not."¹³⁴ **[14b]** What is real?" Viên Chiếu said: "The wind moves easily on the tip of the staff. Rain on the road makes mud."



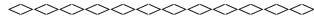
A monk asked: "What does it mean, 'Do not bring up the wondrous treasury to the Tathagata *; do not ask the patriarchs for fire to keep the lamp lit?'" Viên Chiêu* said: "Under autumn skies, the orioles sing; in a snowy landscape, red peonies bloom."



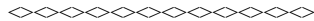
A monk asked: "What is the most wondrous phrase?" Viên Chiêu said: "One man stands in the corner, the rest of the guests drink without joy."



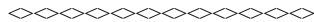
A monk asked: "I'm not asking¹³⁵ about the great events of the past and the present; I only want to know the meaning of Bodhidharma especially coming from the West."¹³⁶ Viên Chiêu said: "Some are with clever speech and enticing appearance;¹³⁷ some are drilling turtle shell and striking tiles."



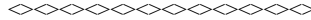
A monk asked: "When mind and phenomena are both forgotten, inherent nature is real."¹³⁸ What is real?" Viên Chiêu said: "The raindrops on the cliffside flowers are the tears of a goddess."¹³⁹ The wind hitting the bamboo in the courtyard is the sound of Bo Ya's lute."¹⁴⁰



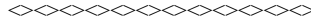
A monk asked: "What is the most wondrous phrase?" Viên Chiêu said: "While the stick is still caught in your throat, you won't live very happily."¹⁴¹ The monk continued: "With realization and cultivation the four kinds of illness are revealed;¹⁴² transcending them, is one able to be free from the cage of sensory experience?" Viên Chiêu said: "The mountain is high and huge: it is able to contain all things; the ocean is vast and deep: it is able to accommodate many rivers."



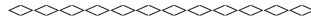
A monk asked: "Only Buddhas understand that."¹⁴³ [15a] What does 'that' mean?" Viên Chiêu said: "In a narrow lane, bamboos are thick; the wind blows, a tune forms by itself."¹⁴⁴ The monk continued: "No need for ordinariness, no need for naturalness, no need for function, what are we supposed to do now?" Viên Chiêu said: "In the thick grass the swallows nest, in the vast ocean the whales hide."



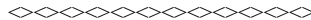
A monk asked: "I have carried along the four elements since time immemorial, please show me the means to get out of cyclic existence." Viên Chiếu * said: "Among the animals in the world, the rhinoceros is most precious, it feeds on thorns and sleeps in the mud." The monk continued: "Both attachment and renunciation lie within cyclic existence, what is it like when there is neither?"¹⁴⁵ Viên Chiếu said: "The purple plant has always been distinguished in its color, it has uneven leaves but no flowers."¹⁴⁶



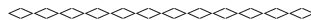
A monk asked: "What does it mean by 'cutting of the route of language'?"¹⁴⁷ Viên Chiếu said: "Following the wind the sound of the horn comes through the bamboos, the moon atop the mountain ridge comes over the wall." The monk continued: "The Buddhas teach in order to transform beings. Awakening to their original intention is called transcending the world. What does 'original intention' mean?" Viên Chiếu said: "Spring weaves flowers like brocade, when autumn comes the leaves look like gold."



A monk asked: "What is the one direct path?" Viên Chiếu [15b] said: "Horses and carriages travel back and forth, dust flies morning and evening." The monk continued: "When there is [a false duality of] subject and object false consciousness arises. How are we to eliminate both subject and object?" Viên Chiếu said: "When you are equal to the lush green towering pine, how can you still be worrying about heavy falling snow and frost?"

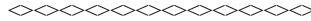


A monk asked: "What is the relationship between the patriarch's intention and the meaning of the scriptural teaching?" Viên Chiếu said: "When my spirits are high I lean on my stick and follow the shortcut through the clouds, when I'm tired I let down the blinds and sleep on my bamboo bed." The monk continued: "The patriarchs transmit it to each other, what do they transmit?"¹⁴⁸ Viên Chiếu said: "When you're hungry you should find something to eat, when you're cold you look for clothes."¹⁴⁹



A monk asked: "Everyone rents a house, where does a leaking man stay?" Viên Chiếu said: "With the sun and the moon, it's hard to tell whether they are full or not." The monk continued: "What is the one path of Caoxi?"¹⁵⁰ Viên Chiếu said: "How pitiable the man who marked his boat,¹⁵¹ he was confused everywhere."

Viên Chiêu * composed a work called *Duoc* Su' Thap* Nhi* Nguyen* Van** [The Twelve Vows of the Medicine King]¹⁵² and presented it to the throne. Emperor Lý Nhân Tông (r. 1071–1127)¹⁵³ gave a copy to the envoy from the Song court, who sent it along to the Chinese Emperor Zhezong (r. 1086–1100).¹⁵⁴ Zhezong summoned the master of Xiangguo Temple [to interpret the text]. When he had read it, he joined his palms and bowed in homage, saying: "In the south a flesh and blood Bodhisattva has appeared in the world, and he is well able to expound the Dharma."¹⁵⁵ [16a] How could this poor monk add or subtract anything?" The Chinese emperor then had another copy made and returned the original. When the Chinese envoy returned [to Vietnam] and reported this, Lý Nhân Tông was very pleased with Viên Chiêu and rewarded him richly.



In the ninth month of the sixth year, *canh ngo**, of the Quang* Huu* era (1090),¹⁵⁶ without any signs of illness, Viên Chiêu instructed his disciples [for the last time] saying: "The bones, joints, sinews and veins in this body of mine are a combination of the four elements¹⁵⁷—all are impermanent. It is like a house that is about to collapse, when all the beams tumble down. I bid you all farewell. Now listen to my verse:

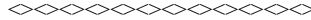
The body is like a wall—it crumbles to the ground,
 All the worldly people are agitated—none is not distressed.
 If you comprehend that mind is empty and formless,¹⁵⁸
 Then you let form and emptiness,
 the hidden and the manifest, follow each other in turn.

His verse finished, Viên Chiêu passed away sitting upright. He was ninety-two years old and had been a monk for fifty-six years. His writings now in circulation include the *Tán Viên Giác Kinh* [Eulogy on the Complete Enlightenment Sutra*], *Thập Nhi Bo* Tát Hạnh* Tu Chứng Đạo* Tràng* [Enlightenment Realized by the Twelve Bodhisattva Practices], and *Tham Do* Hien* Quyết** [Revelation of the Decisive Secret for Students] in one volume.¹⁵⁹

Cú'u Chi*

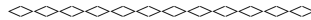
[16a10] Zen Master Cú'u Chi of Diên Linh Temple on Mount Long Doi*¹⁶⁰ in An Lăng was a native of Chu Minh, Phù Đàm. His family name was Đàm. When young he studied both Confucian and Buddhist books¹⁶¹ and thoroughly comprehended them all.

One day as he was reading, [16b] he sighed and said: "Both Confucius and Mozi were attached to being. Both Zhuangzi and Laozi were attached to nonbeing. The conventional classics are not the teaching of liberation. Only the Buddhist teaching approves neither being nor nonbeing and completely comprehends birth and death. One must maintain discipline and advance energetically, and seek the seal of approval from enlightened teachers." So he abandoned conventional studies and went to call on the Elder Đinh * Hu'o'ng of Cam* Ú'ng Temple on Mount Bà So'n to receive ordination.

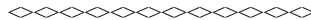


One day while he was asking for instruction, Đinh Hu'o'ng asked him: "What is the ultimate truth?"¹⁶² Cú'u Chi* said: "I don't know." Đinh Hu'o'ng said: "I already gave you the ultimate truth." As Cú'u Chi hesitated trying to think what to say, Đinh Hu'o'ng said: "You've missed it." At these words, Cú'u Chi discovered the gist [of the Buddhist message]. Accordingly, Đinh Hu'o'ng named him Cú'u Chi [which means "Investigating the Gist"].

Subsequently, Cú'u Chi went to Quang Minh Temple on Mount Tiên Du, where he practiced austerities¹⁶³ for six years without leaving the mountain. His reputation as a teacher [nevertheless] reached the imperial court. Emperor Lý Thái Tông invited him to the capital several times, but Cú'u Chi did not come. The emperor paid three visits to his temple to inquire after him. The Grand Preceptor Lu'o'ng Van* Nham*¹⁶⁴ also greatly respected Cú'u Chi.



During the Long Thụy* Thái Bình era (1054–1059), Prime Minister Du'o'ng Dao* Gia built a splendid temple and invited Cú'u Chi to become abbot there. Cú'u Chi declined, but [eventually] he had no choice but to obey the summons. The day he left Mount Tiên Du [17a] he said to his disciples: "I will never return here again." The birds and beasts that lived on the mountain cried with grief incessantly for three weeks.



After three years in the capital, sometime during the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh era (1059–1065), when he was about to depart from the world, Cú'u Chi called together his disciples and said: "All Buddhist teachings originally come from your own inherent nature. The true nature of all phenomena originally comes from your mind. Mind and phenomena are One Thusness: fundamentally there is nothing else. All the defilements that bind you are empty. Misdeeds and merits, right and wrong are all

illusions. There is nothing but cause and effect. In the realm of karma, do not differentiate: if you do you will not find freedom. You see all phenomena, but without any objects of seeing. You know all phenomena, but without any objects of knowing. You know that all phenomena have dependent origination (*pratityasamutpada* *) as their basis. You see that all phenomena have true reality as their source. Even amidst defilement, you understand that the world is like a magical apparition. You clearly comprehend that the true identity of sentient beings is the One Reality—there is no other reality. You do not abandon the karmic realm: you use the proper skillful means to show the uncreated Dharma in the realm of the created, but without differentiating and without the marks of creation. [17b] This is because desire is ended, self is forgotten, and conceptual elaborations (*prapañca*) are abandoned."

Then Cú'u Chi* spoke a verse:

Body and mind are fundamentally quiescent and still,
 But through the transformations of spiritual powers,
 all forms are manifested.
 Both created and uncreated phenomena come from this,
 In worlds countless as the grains of sand on the banks
 of the Ganges,
 Though they fill all space,
 When contemplated one by one, they are formless.
 For a thousand ages this has been difficult to describe,
 But everywhere in every world it is always luminous
 and clear.¹⁶⁵

Cú'u Chi's* body was cremated at noon the same day he died. His remains were collected and a stupa was built to house them.

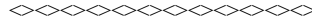
Bao* Tính
 (?–1034)

Minh Tâm
 (?–1034)

[17b6] The two Zen Masters Bao Tính and Minh Tâm¹⁶⁶ of Cam* Ứng Temple on Mount Bà So'n in Thiên Phúc Prefecture were both natives of Chu Minh. Bao Tính's family name was Nghiêm and Minh Tâm's was Phạm*. They were friends when young and later became spiritual companions when they left home to become monks. In their early years, together with Zen Master Viên Chiêu*, both of them served the Elder Dinh* Hu'o'ng and got the marrow [of his teaching]. Afterward, they carried with them his mind-seal and traveled around teaching. They were leading

figures in the Buddhist community. Viên Chieu * left behind many songs and poems lauding their lofty aspirations. These have been gathered together in Viên Chieu's* collected works¹⁶⁷ and need not be recorded here.

The two masters devoted themselves to chanting the *Lotus Sutra** for more than fifteen years without ever neglecting it. Every time they came to the chapter on the Medicine King,¹⁶⁸ [18a] they would shed tears and tell each other: "This Bodhisattva has influenced his causal ground with many aeons of cultivating the Great Vehicle Mind, but he still generates great vigor and advances energetically without cherishing his own life. How much the more so should beginners¹⁶⁹ like us, living in the Last Age¹⁷⁰ of the Dharma, do so! If we are not utterly sincere like this, how can we hope to glimpse enlightenment, the true mind of the Great Vehicle?"



In the fourth month of the seventh year of the Thiên Thành era (1034), when the two masters were about to immolate themselves,¹⁷¹ they were invited to the imperial court. They organized an assembly [at court] to explain the scriptures. Then together they entered into the "*samadhi** of firelight"¹⁷² [and immolated themselves]. The bones that remained were all transformed into the seven kinds of jewel.¹⁷³ Emperor Ly Thái Tông ordered that the relics be kept in Tru'ông Thánh Temple and offerings be made to them. Because of their unique spiritual qualities, the emperor changed the name of the temple [where the relics were housed] to Nguyễn Thông Tu* Tháp¹⁷⁴ [which means the "Stupa-Temple of Nguyễn Thông"].

Quang* Tri

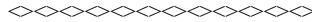
[18a7] Zen Master Quang Tri of Quán Dinh* Temple on Mount Không Lo*¹⁷⁵ hailed from the capital. His family named was Nhan; he was a brother of Chu'o'ng Phung*, the royal concubine. His conduct on the Path was pure as ice. He did not act for the sake of luxury and finery. In the first year of the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh era (1059), he left the conventional world and went to study with Thien* Lão on Mount Tiên Du. Under the impact of his teachings, Quang Tri reached accord with the essential message of Zen. From then on he spent his time refining and cultivating himself, his will strongly set on Zen. Before long his reputation had spread far and wide.

Later Quang Tri made his abode on Mount Tù So'n. [18b] He always wore a patched robe, and he fed himself on pine nuts. He became a

spiritual companion ¹⁷⁶ of the hermit-monk Minh Hue*. ¹⁷⁷ People said that they were the reincarnations of Hanshan and Shide. ¹⁷⁸

The Minister of Public Works Đoàn Van* Khâm ¹⁷⁹ admired Quang* Trí greatly. Once he offered him a poem:

Hanging his staff¹⁸⁰ on a perilous peak, he has left behind
 the dusts of the senses.¹⁸¹
 As I dwell silently amidst dreamlike illusion,
 I ask the floating clouds:
 I am earnest, but there is no way for me to study
 with Fo Tu Teng and Kumarajiva*.¹⁸²
 Entangled as I am with high society, that flock of
 [ostentatious] storks.¹⁸³



When Quang Trí passed away sometime during the Quang Huu* era (1085–1091), Đoàn Van Khâm cried grievously and composed a poem of mourning:

He escaped from the capital and dwelt in the forest¹⁸⁴
 till his hair turned white,
 He shook out his sleeves [rejecting conventional society]
 for the high mountains,
 The more remote, the higher his reputation.
 How often I wished to don simple garb and go to his side!
 Now suddenly comes the news that he has departed¹⁸⁵
 and his Zen retreat is closed,
 Now in the courtyard of his temple the birds cry in vain
 to the moon.
 Who can compose the inscription for his tomb?
 Companions in the Path should not be sad
 as he departs forever,
 The mountains and rivers in front of his retreat
 are his true portrait.¹⁸⁶

Thong* Bien*
 (?–1134)

Eight Generation:
Six Persons

[19a8] National Preceptor (*Quoc* Su'*)¹⁸⁷ Thông Biên of Pho* Ninh Temple in Tù' Liêm¹⁸⁸ hailed from Đan Phuong*. ¹⁸⁹ His family name was Ngô, and he was the son of Buddhists. By nature he was intelligent and sagacious

and clearly understood the three studies [of Buddhism, namely, Discipline, Meditation, and Wisdom].¹⁹⁰ First, he studied with Mai Viên Chieu* of Cát Tu'ờng and received the gist of his teaching. Then he moved his abode to the National Temple in the capital Thang* Long¹⁹¹ and gave himself the sobriquet Tri Không [which means "Empty Wisdom"].

In the spring of the fifth year of the Hoi* Phong era (1096), on the fifteenth day of the second month, Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Cam* Linh Nhân¹⁹² gave a [19b] vegetarian feast for the monks at the National Temple. She enquired of the elders present: "What is the meaning of 'the Buddha' and 'the patriarchs'? Which is superior? Where does the Buddha dwell? Where do the patriarchs live? When did they come to this country to pass on this Path? Who came first, the Buddha or the patriarchs? What is the meaning of reciting the Buddha's name and reaching the mind of the patriarchs?"

No one in the assembly spoke. Thông Bien* then replied to the empress dowager: "The Buddha is the one who abides eternally in the world without birth or demise. The patriarchs are those who illuminate the source of the Buddha-mind and whose understanding and conduct are in accord."¹⁹³ The Buddha and the patriarchs are one. Only undisciplined scholars would falsely assert that either is superior or inferior.

"'Buddha' means 'enlightened.'¹⁹⁴ Fundamentally, enlightenment is profoundly clear and eternally present. All beings share this inner truth. Because they are covered over by sentiments and sensory experience, they drift according to their karma and revolve through the various planes of existence.

"Out of compassion, Buddha appeared to be born in India. This is because India is the center of the world."¹⁹⁵ At nineteen he left home. At thirty he achieved enlightenment.¹⁹⁶ He stayed in the world preaching the Dharma for forty-nine years, setting forth all sorts of provisional teachings to enable sentient beings to awaken to the Path. This is what is called [20a] creating teachings for a certain period. When he was about to enter final nirvana, he was afraid that people attached to delusion would get stuck on his words, so he told Manjusri*, "In forty-nine years I have not spoken a single word. Will they think something was said?" So he held up a flower [in front of the assembly on Vulture Peak]. No one in the assembly knew what to say, except the Venerable Mahakasyapa*, who cracked a slight smile. Buddha knew he had meshed [with truth], so he entrusted the treasury of the eye of the true Dharma to him, and he became the first patriarch [of Zen].¹⁹⁷ This is what is called the separate transmission of the mind-source outside the scriptural teachings.

"Later Moteng (Kasyapa * Matanga*)¹⁹⁸ brought this teaching to Han China [c. first century C.E.]¹⁹⁹ and Bodhidharma traveled to [the Chinese kingdoms] of Liang and Wei [c. sixth century C.E.]²⁰⁰ with this message. The transmission of the teaching flourished with Tiantai:²⁰¹ it is called the school of the scriptural teachings.²⁰² The gist of the teaching became clear with [the Sixth Patriarch of Zen] Caoxi:²⁰³ this is called the Zen school. Both these schools reached our country [Vietnam] many years ago. The scriptural teachings began with Mou Bo²⁰⁴ and Kang Senghui.²⁰⁵ The first stream of the Zen school began with Vinitaruci* (Ty* Ni Đa Lu'u Chi); the second with Vô Ngôn Thông. Vinitaruci and Vô Ngôn Thông are the ancestral teachers of these two streams [of Zen]."

The empress dowager asked: "Leaving aside for now the school of the scriptural teachings, what has been accomplished by the two streams of Zen?"

Thông Bien* said: "According to the biography of Dharma Master Tanqian (542–607),²⁰⁶ the Chinese Emperor Sui **[20b]** Gaozu [r. 580–611] said,²⁰⁷ 'I am ever mindful of the compassionate teaching of the Buddha,²⁰⁸ whose benevolence I cannot repay. As monarch, I have supported the Three Jewels on a wide scale all over the country. I have had all the relics in the country collected, and I have built 49 precious stupas for them. To show the world the way across [to enlightenment] I have built more than 150 temples and stupa. I have built them all across Jiaozhou (Giao Châu), so that their sustaining power and fructifying merit could extend everywhere. Although Jiaozhou belongs to China, we still need to bind it to us, so we ought to send monks renowned for their virtue to go there to convert everyone and let them all attain enlightenment.'

"Dharma Master Tanqian said, 'The area of Jiaozhou has long been in communication with India. Early on, when the Buddha-Dharma came to China²⁰⁹ and still had not been established, yet in Luy Lâu²¹⁰ more than twenty precious temples were built, more than five hundred monks were ordained, and fifteen volumes of scriptures were translated. Because of this prior connection, there were already monks and nuns²¹¹ like Mo Luo Qi Yu,²¹² Kang Senghui, Zhi Jiang Liang,²¹³ and Mou Bo there. In our time, there is the Venerable Pháp Hien*,²¹⁴ who received the transmission from Vinitaruci, **[21a]** and who is now spreading the school of the Third Patriarch (Sengcan). Pháp Hiên is a Bodhisattva living among humans: he receives disciples and preaches the Dharma at Chủng Thiên* Temple, and the congregation there numbers over three hundred. Thus, Jiaozhou is no different than China. Your Majesty, you are the compassionate father of all the world. Wishing to bestow your grace everywhere equally,

you would send an emissary [to spread Buddhism to Jiaozhou]. But there are already Buddhist teachers there; we do not have to go to convert them.' ²¹⁵

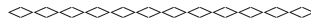
[Thông Biên* continued:] "Moreover, the Tang Minister Quan Deyu composed a preface to transmit the Dharma²¹⁶ which says, 'After Caoxi passed away, the teaching of Zen flourished and spread. There were Zen schools everywhere. Zen Master Zhangjing Yun²¹⁷ carried Mazu's essential teachings on mind to spread the teaching in Wu-Yue.²¹⁸ The Mahasattva* (Great Hero) Vô Ngôn Thông transmitted the essential message of Baizhang's teaching to spread enlightenment in Jiaozhou. [So Your Highness,] this is what has been accomplished by the Zen schools."

The empress dowager also asked: "What is the order of succession in the two Zen schools?"

Thông Biên said: "The present representatives of the Vinitaruci* stream are Lâm Hue* Sinh²¹⁹ and Vu'o'ng Chân Không.²²⁰ For the Vô Ngôn Thông stream, they are Mai Viên Chieu*²²¹ and Nhan Quang* Trí.²²² [The successor of Kang Senghui] is Lôi Hà Trach*.²²³ The other side branches [of these two streams] are too numerous to mention them all."

The empress dowager was very happy [with Thông Biên's* reply], so she honored him with the title "Monk Scribe" (*Tang* Luc**)²²⁴ and gave him a purple robe.²²⁵ She gave him the sobriquet Thông **[21b]** Biên Quoc* Su' [which means "National Preceptor with Consummate Eloquence"] and rewarded him munificently. Subsequently, she revered him so much that she summoned him into the palace and paid homage to him as National Preceptor.²²⁶ She enquired into the essential teachings of Zen and had a deep appreciation of its message. The empress dowager once composed a verse on enlightenment:

Form is emptiness, so emptiness equals form,
Emptiness is form, so form equals emptiness.²²⁷
Only when you are not attached to either,
Do you mesh with the true source.



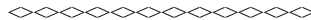
In his later years, Thông Biên moved to Pho* Minh Temple, where he opened a great teaching center and showered down the rain of Dharma²²⁸ on all. He often taught people to practice by using the *Lotus Sutra**, so his contemporaries spoke of him as Ngo* Pháp Hoa ("Awakened to the Lotus"). In the second year, *giáp đan**, of the Thiên Chu'o'ng Bao* Tu*²²⁹ era (1134) on the twelfth day of the second month, Thông Biên announced that he was ill [and passed away].

Mãn Giác (1052–1096)

[21b6] The Great Master Mãn Giác of Giáo Nguyên Temple in Cù'u Liên²³⁰ was a native of An Cách Village, Lung* Mac*. His family name was Nguyen* and his personal name was Tru'ò'ng. His father was Nguyên Hoài To*,²³¹ who held the office of Gentleman of the Chancellory. When Lý Nhân Tông was still living in the heir apparent's palace, before he came to power, the emperor [Lý Thánh Tông, his father] issued a royal decree summoning the children of notable families to come to court to attend upon him. Since Mãn Giác was very learned and erudite and had studied and mastered Confucianism and Buddhism, he was among those invited to participate. After the sessions at court, Mãn Giác was always mindful of *dhyana**. When Lý Nhân Tông came to the throne, because he had respected Mãn Giác back in those days, he bestowed on him the sobriquet Hoài Tin [which means "Filled with Faith"].

During the Anh Vu* Chiêu Thang* era (1076–1084), Mãn Giác asked permission to become a monk. He received the mind-seal from Zen Master Quang* Tri of Quán Dinh* Temple [22a] and then went wandering with his begging bowl and staff, free as a cloud, in search of Dharma companions. Everywhere he went, students flocked to him. He read the great Buddhist Canon and attained teacherless wisdom.²³² He became one of the Buddhist leaders of his time.

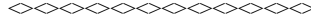
The Emperor Lý Nhân Tông and the Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân were turning toward the study of Zen in those days, so they built the Giác Nguyên Temple next to Canh* Hưng Palace²³³ and invited Mãn Giác to live there, so that it would be easier for them to see him and ask him questions. They did not call him by name, but always "Elder."



One day Mãn Giác told the emperor: "When the perfected people²³⁴ show themselves, it is always to work for the salvation of beings. There is no practice for which they are not fully equipped, nothing they do not cultivate. Not only do they have the power of concentration and wisdom, they have the merit of praising [Buddha] and renouncing [worldly life]. This is the work we should respectfully take up." Then he imparted [to the emperor] the teachings of his school and the mind-seal of the patriarchs beyond cultivation and realization.

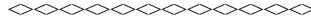
The emperor summoned Mãn Giác into the palace sanctum within the palace and conferred on him the rank of "Inner Palace Teacher of Enlightenment" and the sobriquet "Purple Robed Great Monk." Mãn

Giác was given the rank of "Adviser of the Three Bureaus" with tax exemptions for fifty family members.



At the end of the eleventh month of the fifth year of the Hoi * Phong era (1096),²³⁵ Mãn Giác announced that he was ill and spoke a verse to instruct his disciples:

When spring goes, the hundred flowers wither,
 When spring comes, the hundred flowers bloom.
 One thing after another, life passes before our eyes,
 Old age comes from above.
 Don't think that all flowers fall as spring ends,
 [22b] In the courtyard last night a plum branch
 bloomed.



That evening Mãn Giác passed away while sitting in the lotus position. He was forty-five years old and had been a monk for nineteen years. [To mark his passing] the emperor provided a lavish ceremony, and all the chief courtiers and officials offered incense. The body was cremated and the relics gathered in a stupa at Sùng Nghiêm Temple in An Cách Village. The emperor granted him the posthumous title Mãn Giác [which means "perfect enlightenment"].

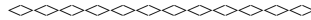
Ngo* An*
(1020–1088)

[22b4] Zen Master Ngô Ân of Long Ân Temple, Mount Ninh So'n,²³⁶ Úng Thiên Prefecture,²³⁷ was a native of Kim Bài Village,²³⁸ Tu' Lý. His family name was Đam, and his personal name was Khí. His mother's maiden name was Cù. Formerly, before getting married she lived near the Mo* forest. Having witnessed the fate of many birds shot down from their nests,²³⁹ she vowed: "I would rather do good and die than commit evil to live."

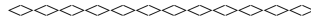
One day, while she was weaving inside, a big ape came from the forest and hugged her from behind for the whole day long before he left. After that Cù felt that she was pregnant. When she gave birth to a child, she detested him so much that she abandoned him in the forest. A Champa monk named Đam who lived in the same village took the child home and brought him up. Therefore, he was named Khí [which means "abandoned"].

At the age of ten, he started studying Confucianism. His knowledge became better every day. He was especially versed in Chinese and Sanskrit. When he was nineteen, he left home to become a monk and was fully ordained. He concentrated on two scriptures, the *Complete Enlightenment* and the *Lotus [23a]*, and plumbed their meanings.

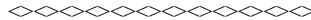
After receiving the mind-seal from Master Quang * Trí of Quán Dinh* Temple, he entered Mount Ninh So'n and built himself a straw hut. He also gave himself the sobriquet Ngo* An* [which means "Seal of Enlightenment"].



Once a monk asked: "What is the great Path?" Ngô Ân said: "The great road." The monk continued: "I was asking about the great Path and you answered me with the great road. I have no idea when I can attain the great Path." Ngô Ân said: "A kitten doesn't know how to catch mice yet." The monk continued: "Does a kitten have Buddha nature?" Ngô Ân said: "No!"²⁴⁰ The monk continued: "Teacher, do you have Buddha nature?" Ngô Ân said: "No!" The monk asked: "All sentient beings have Buddha nature, why only you do not?" Ngô Ân said: "Because I'm not a sentient being." The monk continued: "If you are not a sentient being, are you a Buddha then?" Ngô Ân said: "I'm neither a Buddha nor a sentient being."²⁴¹



Someone asked: "What is Buddha? What is Dharma? What is Zen?" Ngô Ân said: "As for the unexcelled Dharma King, his body is Buddha, his speech is Dharma, and his mind is Zen. Although they are three, their foundation is one. For instance, the water of the three rivers has different names according to different places. Although the names are different, the nature of water is one."²⁴²



On the fourteenth day of the sixth month of the Quang Huu* era (1088), [23b] when he was about to pass away, Ngô Ân spoke a verse:

The wondrous nature of Emptiness is inconceivable,
 Yet it is not at all difficult to realize it with empty mind.
 A jewel burned on the mountain, its color is constantly
 bright,
 And a lotus blooms in the furnace, its moisture
 never dries up.

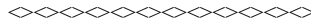
As his verse ended, he passed away peacefully. He was sixty-nine years old. His disciples were in mourning for three years.

Đào * Huệ*
(?–1173)

Ninth Generation:
Eight Persons, Six Biographies Recorded

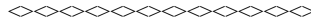
[23b5] Zen Master Đào Huệ of Quang Minh Temple, Mount Thiên Phúc, Tiên Du, was a native of Nhu' Nguyệt*,²⁴³ Chân Ho*.²⁴⁴ His family name was Âu. He had an upright appearance and a clear voice. At the age of twenty-five, he became a monk under Ngô Pháp Hoa²⁴⁵ of Pho* Ninh Temple. He was in intimate contact with his mystic teaching and profoundly comprehended its essence.

Subsequently he came to Quang Minh Temple to rest his staff, where he also investigated and observed the Discipline (*vinaya*) as well as vigorously practicing meditation. For six years he did not lie down.²⁴⁶ He profoundly mastered the three-contemplation *samadhi**. His disciples numbered in the thousands. He chanted the *sutras** day and night, and even apes and monkeys in the mountains were moved [by his virtue] and came to him to hear the Dharma. His fame finally reached the emperor.



In the twentieth year of the Dai* Dinh* era (1161), the royal concubine Thuy* Minh fell ill.²⁴⁷ The Emperor Lý Anh Tông (r. 1138–1175)²⁴⁸ dispatched an envoy to invite Đào Huệ to the capital to cure her illness. When he left the mountain, [24a] the apes and monkeys cried in grief as if they felt the sadness of farewell.

When he arrived at the imperial palace he just stood in front of the concubine's bedroom and she was immediately cured. Lý Anh Tông was greatly pleased and lodged him at Báo Thiên Temple.²⁴⁹ Within a month, his admirers—both court officials and religious men—countless in number, flocked to the temple to have an audience with him. Đào Huệ thus began to teach and convert people [in the capital] and did not return to his mountain. His successors in the Dharma formed a very prosperous school.



On the first day of the eighth month of the tenth year, *at* hoi**, of the Chính Long Bao* Ú'ng era (1172),²⁵⁰ Đào Huệ fell ill. He lamented: "The disorder increases, where does it come from?" He then spoke a verse:

Earth, water, fire, space and consciousness,
Are all originally empty.
Like clouds they gather and disperse,
Yet the Buddha-sun shines unceasingly.

And:

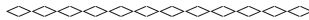
The form body and the mysterious essence ²⁵¹
 Are neither united nor separated.
 If one is to discriminate,
 [It is like] a flower in the furnace.

At the third watch of the night he silently passed away. His disciple Quách Tang* Thong* prepared offerings and brought his body back to his native district to cremate. After the spiritual mourning period was over, a stupa was built at Bao* Khâm Temple on Mount Tiên Du to house his relics. ²⁵²

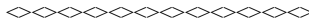
Bao Giám (?–1173)

[24b2] Zen Master Bao Giám of Bao Phúc Temple, Quân Chu'o'ng, My* Lu'o'ng Prefecture, ²⁵³ was a native of Trung Thuy* Village. ²⁵⁴ His family name was Kieu*; his first name was Phù. As a man he was loyal, faithful, courteous, sincere, calm, and simple. At a tender age he specialized in Confucianism and studied thoroughly the Books of *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rites*, and *Changes*. ²⁵⁵ He had great skills in calligraphy. Under the reign of Lý Anh Tông he held the office of Palace Lord in Waiting. ²⁵⁶

At the age of thirty, he resigned from his office and went to shave his head and become a monk under the guidance of the abbot of Bao Phúc Temple at Đa Vân. The *Tripitaka** of this temple was handcopied by Bao Giám himself. When the abbot of the temple passed away, Bao Giám followed in his footsteps and assumed the abbotship. His lifestyle was perpetually simple. He always wore coarse hempen garments—never a bit of silk. He persisted in that lifestyle for years without a thought of retreating.



He once told his disciples: "Exertion is what it takes to enter the Buddha Vehicle, but wisdom is the means to become Buddha and attain perfect enlightenment. It is like shooting at a target at a distance over a hundred feet. What makes [the arrow] reach the mark is one's strength, but what makes it hit the mark is not one's strength [but one's aim]. ²⁵⁷



On the seventh day of the fifth month of the eleventh year of the Chính Long Bao Ủng era (1173), when he was about to pass away, Bao Giám spoke a verse:

The attainment of enlightenment seldom relies
 on cultivation,
 Which only restrains [25a] the excellent wisdom.
 When one realizes the jewel of the mysterious truth,
 It is like the sun appearing in the sky.

And:

Wisdom is like the moon shining in the sky,
 Whose light encompasses this world and shines
 limitlessly.
 If one wants to recognize it one must discern
 That the thickets on the mountain ridges are locked
 in the evening midst.

He also said: "The Tathagata's * mind and intent are inconceivable. One must attain it by means of immeasurable wisdom. Therefore, we know that the Tathagata's mind is like space,²⁵⁸ which is the support of all, and so is the Tathagata's wisdom." After speaking these words, Bao* Giám passed away. His disciples [cremated his body,] collected the relics, and built a stupa to house them.

Không Lo*
 (?–1119)

[25a7] Zen Master Không Lô²⁵⁹ of Nghiêm Quang Temple, Hai* Thanh,²⁶⁰ hailed from Nghiêm Quang, Hai Thanh. His family name was Du'o'ng. His family had been fishermen. Subsequently, he gave up fishing, devoted himself to Buddhism, and practiced chanting *dharanis**. During the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh era (1059–1065), together with his Dharma companion Giác Hai,²⁶¹ he traveled everywhere. Finally, they made their abode at Hà Trach* Temple.²⁶² He would clothe himself in grass clothes and feed himself with wild fruits to the point that he forgot his own body. Outside he cut off yearnings, inside he cultivated Zen. His mind, spirit, ears, and eyes became clear. He could fly [25b] in the air and walk on water, tame tigers and conquer dragons. His supernatural powers were so multifarious that no one could fathom them.²⁶³

Subsequently, he returned to his home district and built a temple. One day his attendant said, "Since I've been here I haven't been instructed about the essence of the mind. I venture to present a verse:

The mind and body need to be cultivated to be pure,
 The straight tree with many branches stands in the
 empty yard.

Someone comes to ask about the Dharma of the
 King of Emptiness,²⁶⁴
 The body sits by the wall reflecting shadows and images.

Không Lô* read it and said, "You brought the scriptures, I took it; you brought the water, I drank. There has never been any occasion that I wasn't instructing you about the essence of the mind."²⁶⁵ Then he burst out laughing. Không Lô once said a verse:

I've found a land of dragon and snakes to settle
 down in,
 This rustic pleasure brings joy the whole day through.
 At times I'd climb to the solitary mountain tops,
 And utter a long whistle that chills the universe.²⁶⁶

He passed away on the third day of the sixth month of the tenth year, *ky* hoi**, of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1119). His students collected his remains and interred them in front of the temple. Later on, the temple was enlarged by royal edict, and the levies on twenty families were collected for its upkeep.

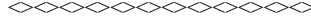
This monk had no date for us to investigate. Now we follow the successions of the transmission of the Dharma in the *Diagram of the Southern School* to write his biography.

Bon* Tinh* (1110–1176)

[26a1] Zen Master Bôn Tinh of Bình Du'o'ng Retreat, Mount Chí Linh, Kiet* Tri,²⁶⁷ was a native of Vinh* Khang, Phù Dien*.²⁶⁸ His family name was Kieu*. As a child he was very studious; he penetrated the Buddhist teaching on the mystic meaning of birth and death and traced the Confucian teaching on humaneness.

He received the essence [of Zen] from Master Mãn Giác of Giáo Nguyên Temple. In the second year of the Đại Dinh* era (1141), he moved his abode to Mount Tù So'n. The official Nguy* Quoc* Bao*²⁶⁹ admired his virtue and served him with the reverence due a teacher.

Afterward Bôn Tinh accepted the invitation of a gentleman named Du'o'ng in the capital to become the abbot of Kien* An Temple. Bôn Tinh often made this great vow, saying: "Life after life, may I never misunderstand the Buddha Dharma; may I attain enlightenment myself and enlighten others; may I always be free from the discrimination between self and others; may I, through skillful means, guide sentient beings into the same truth."



One day in the first month of the first year of the Trinh Phù era (1176), without any illness, Bon * Tinh* instructed his disciples:

One truth, one truth,
The stone cat wags its tail,
And jumps to catch a mouse.
Then it turns into a ghost,
If you want to discern clearly,
Gold is born in the Le* River.²⁷⁰

He also spoke a verse:

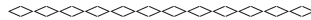
This illusory body comes from the quiescent emptiness,
Like an image appears on a mirror.
When you realize the [true nature of] the image,
all are empty.
The illusory body immediately realizes True Reality.

After speaking the verse he passed away; he was seventy–seven years old.²⁷¹

Minh Trí
(?–1196)

Tenth Generation:
Twelve Persons, Ten Biographies Recorded

[26b3] Zen Master Minh Trí, formerly called Thien* Trí, of Phúc Thánh Temple, Dien* Lãn, was a native of Phù Cam* Village.²⁷² His family name was Tô. He was intelligent and wise by nature and was widely read. When he was in his teens²⁷³ he met the Venerable Dao* Hue*. He then abandoned the mundane world to enter the monk's way. Soon he grasped the mysterious essence [of Buddhism] and clearly understood the purport of the *Complete Enlightenment*, the *Benevolent Kings*,²⁷⁴ the *Lotus*, and the *Transmission of the Lamp*. He taught the people indefatigably; therefore, the emperor bestowed on him the sobriquet Minh Trí [which means "Illuminating Wisdom"].



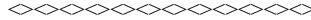
One day while Minh Trí and his students were cutting grass, a monk suddenly stopped working and stood to his left side. Minh Trí threw the sickle down in front of the monk, cutting a blade of grass. The monk said: "The ancient worthies said, 'Teacher, you can only cut that one.'" Minh Trí picked up his sickle. The monk took it and made a gesture as

if he were cutting grass. Minh Trí said: "Do you still remember what has just been said, that 'you can only cut that one, not this one'?"²⁷⁵ The monk stopped his act.

[On another occasion,] Minh Trí was talking to a monk when another monk who stood next to them said: "Talking is Manjusri*, keeping silent is Vimalakirti*."²⁷⁶ Minh Trí said: "Neither [27a] talking nor keeping silent— isn't that you?" The monk agreed. Minh Trí said: "Why haven't you shown your supernatural power?" The monk said: "I'm not declining to show my supernatural power, I'm only afraid that Your Venerable will include me among the adherents of the scriptural teachings."²⁷⁷ Minh Trí said: "You are not the eye of the transmission outside the teaching yet."²⁷⁸

He then spoke a verse:

It is possible to transmit outside the teaching,
The profundity of Buddhas and Patriarchs is subtle and
inconceivable.²⁷⁹
If one wants to discern it,
It is like searching for smoke in illusion.²⁸⁰



On an unknown date during the eleventh year, *bính thin*, of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thụy* era (1196), when he was about to pass away, Minh Trí spoke a verse:

Wind in the pines, moon bright in the water,
It has no image and no form.
This one is the form body,²⁸¹
Amidst empty emptiness, seeking an echo.

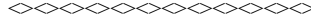
As his verse ended, he silently passed away.

Tín Hoc* (?–1190)

[27a8] Zen Master Tín Hoc of Quán Dinh* Temple, Mount Không Lo*, was a native of Chu Minh, Thiên Đứ'c Prefecture. His family name was Tô. For generations his family was in the profession of carving blocks for printing Buddhist scriptures.

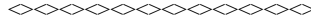
When he was young, he served Master Thanh Giổ'i and did not make friends carelessly. At the age of thirty-two, together with Zen Master Du, he came to Master Dao* Hue* of Mount Tiên Du—he had his head shaved and became a monk. He served Đạo Huệ for three years and

profoundly grasped the message of Zen. Then he went traveling by himself. Afterward, he settled down here at [Quán Dinh *] Temple.



Tín Hoc* would often burn his fingers²⁸² in front of the Buddha statue [27b] and make a great vow, saying: "I have wandered about in the defiled world for many aeons. I vow not to create any karma that will bind me to it again." He devoted himself to the practice of the three contemplations²⁸³ according to the *Complete Enlightenment Sutra**. He ate only one meal a day, so his body and face became pale and emaciated. He persisted that way for many years without a sign of growing weary of it, and deeply attained the true essence of the three contemplations. Nobles, court officials and commoners all respected and honored him highly and vied to serve him.

[One day] he said [to himself]: "Where there is the profit there must be defilement, where there is defilement there must be profit. The Bodhisattva does not act where both defilement and profit are there, but only where there is neither profit nor defilement."



On the ninth day of the first month of the first year, *canh thân*, of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thủy* era (1190),²⁸⁴ Tín Hoc announced he was ill and spoke a verse to instruct his disciples:

The tigers and panthers in the mountain,
Have various patterns and stripes on their bodies.
If you want to tell them apart,
The chicks peck from inside the shell while the mother
pecks from the outside.²⁸⁵

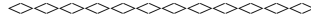
After speaking the verse, he died.²⁸⁶

Tinh* Không
(1091–1170)

[27b8] Zen Master Tinh Không of Khai Quoc* Temple, Thiên Đức Prefecture, was originally from Phúc Xuyên.²⁸⁷ His family name was Ngô. At first he was ordained at Sùng Phúc Temple in his native district.

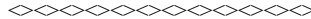
At the age of thirty, he traveled to the south and settled down at Khai Quốc Temple. For five or six years he devoted himself to austerities. Each day he ate only one grain of sesame and one grain of wheat. He would sit [in meditation all night] without sleeping. Whenever he en-

tered *samadhi* * (meditative concentration), it would go on for a few days [28a] before he arose from it. Donors from all over brought him mountains of gifts. Some came to spy on him with the intention of stealing, but Tinh* Không would tell them where to get what they wanted.



When Princess Nam Khu'o'ng wanted to leave the mundane world, she privately prepared offerings and invited Tinh Không to preside over her ordination. The court learned about this and issued a decree to arrest him. Yet when Tinh Không arrived at the court, his countenance was calm. The emperor [Lý Anh Tông] had even more respect for him and honored him as a great monk of eminent virtue. Tinh Không persistently declined to be at court.

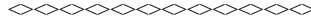
One day, when Tinh Không had gone up to the teaching hall, a monk with a staff came and asked: "What is the Truth Body (*Dharmakaya**)?" Tinh Không said: "The Truth Body is originally without form." The monk continued: "What is the Dharma-eye (*dharmacaksu**)?"²⁸⁸ Tinh Không said: "The Dharma-eye is originally without obstruction." He again said: "There is no Dharma in front of the eye. There is only consciousness in front of the eye. The Dharma is not within range of ear and eye." The monk laughed loudly. Tinh Không said: "What are you laughing about?" The monk said: "You're the type who has left the world to become a monk but has not grasped the message [of Zen]. You should go study with Master Dao* Hue*." Tinh Không said: "Can I still go see this master?" The monk said: "Above there's not a single roof tile, below there's not enough ground to stick an awl into."²⁸⁹ Tinh Không then changed his clothes and headed for Mount Tiên Du.



Đạo Huệ said: "It's not that there's no truth here, but how could you, Reverend, preserve it?" Tinh Không was about to [28b] argue, when Đạo Huệ shouted: "It's right in front of you and you stumbled past it." Tinh Không understood the meaning of Đạo Huệ's* words; after that he stayed on as his personal attendant for three years.

Subsequently he returned to his original temple and accepted students. One day, he assembled his students and spoke a verse:

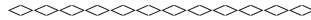
Above not a tile to cover us,
 Below not enough ground to stick in an awl.
 Some change their clothes and come directly,
 Some arrive with their staffs.
 When they move and turn at the point of contact,
 They are like dragons jumping up to swallow the bait.



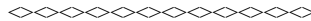
A monk asked: "What is the meaning of the direct pointing [of Zen teaching] since antiquity?"²⁹⁰ Tinh* Không said: "One harvests every day, yet the granary is always empty." The monk continued: "I don't understand." Tinh Không said: "The sun and the moon constantly shine, yet they are covered by floating clouds."

Once, Tinh Không spoke a verse:

The wise ones do not attain enlightenment,
 Only the fools attain enlightenment.
 I'm just a guy who lies at leisure with my legs
 stretched out,
 How could I discriminate between true and false?²⁹¹

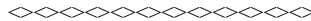


A monk asked: "What is Buddha?" Tinh Không said: "The sun and the moon are in the sky for ten thousands of aeons. Who knows about the cloud and mist that fall on mountains and rivers?" The monk continued: "How can one comprehend it?" Tinh Không said: "The herd boy is used to lounging on the back of a buffalo, but among gentlemen only the brave can sit astride him."²⁹² The monk asked: "Are the intent of the [Zen] patriarchs and the intent of the scriptural teachings the same or different?"²⁹³ Tinh Không said: "Climbing mountains and crossing seas for tens of thousands of miles, all arrive at the imperial city." The monk asked: **[29a]** "If you have something special, Teacher? Why don't you explain it to me?" Tinh Không said: "You blow on the fire, I'll cook the rice; you beg for alms, I'll take the bowl. Who ever lets you down?"²⁹⁴ The monk became enlightened.



On an unknown date in the eighth year of the Chính Long Bao* Ứng era (1170), when he was about to pass away, Tinh Không spoke his last words to his students: "You should take care of yourselves just as in the days when I was still with you. Do not get involved with mundane things and start grieving and longing for me."²⁹⁵

At midnight,²⁹⁶ he sat in lotus position and departed forever. He was eighty years old at that time.



Enlightenment story and encounter dialogues recorded in this biography are somewhat similar to the biography of Venerable Jiashan²⁹⁷ in

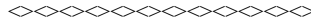
the *Transmission of the Lamp*. When I compared this to the *Hue * Nhat* Liet* To* Yeu* Nghia** [Essential Sayings of the Patriarchs by Hue* Nhat*],²⁹⁸ I found it differently recorded, so I dared not correct it.

Dai* Xa*
(1120–1180)

[29a7] Zen Master Dai Xa of Báo Đức Temple,²⁹⁹ Mount Vu* Ninh,³⁰⁰ was a native of Đông Tác Quarter.³⁰¹ His family name was Hú'a. As a child he entered the Buddhist Order and went to study and practice Zen with Master Dao* Huê of Mount Tiên Du. After getting a rough grasp of their general purport, he made the chanting of the *Avatamsaka-Sutra*³⁰² and the *Samantabhadramantra*³⁰³ his daily practice. Sometimes he forgot to shave his head and neglected his meals. He did not have a fixed abode. The court nobles vied to be first to serve him. Lord Kien* Ninh³⁰⁴ and Princess Thiên Cúc³⁰⁵ also had special admiration for him.

Đai Xa built a temple at Tuyên Minh, Ho* Nham,³⁰⁶ to teach [the Dharma] and convert [people]. [29b] Students were drawn by his renown. A Song monk named Old Man Yan heard of him and was moved with admiration. He then burnt off a finger as an offering to Đai Xa.

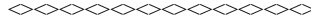
Some suspected that Đai Xa practiced sorcery; during the Thiên Cam* Chí Bao* era (1174–1175), Grand Commandant Do* Anh Vu³⁰⁷ gave orders to take him into custody. Though severely tortured, Đai Xa showed no sign of fear. [Later on,] thanks to the petition of Princess Thiên Cúc, he was released.



One day, Emperor Lý Anh Tông summoned Đai Xa to his palace and asked: "I have many afflictions. Is there any method to deal with them?" Đai Xa said: "The twelve links of dependent origination (*pratityasamutpada**) are the root of cyclic existence. If you want to cure your afflictions, this teaching is the best medicine." Lý Anh Tông enquired about its meaning. Đai Xa said: "Ignorance is the cause and condition for all the links from predisposition up to grief, sadness and suffering. If one wishes to attain the fruit of Solitary Buddhas (*Pratyekabuddha*),³⁰⁸ one should contemplate³⁰⁹ this doctrine of dependent origination and use it to deal with this body: then there will be no afflictive karma."

Lý Anh Tông said: "If so, does that mean that I have to calm my mind and practice?" Đai Xa said: "When you can keep your karmic consciousness under control, then your afflictions are calm. There is no other

method to be practiced. Formerly, Liang Wudi ³¹⁰ often asked Zen Master Baozhi³¹¹ about this, and Zhi also replied like this. Today, I presume [30a] to mention this to Your Majesty."³¹²



On the fifth day of the second month of the fifth year of the Trinh Phù era (1180), after giving instructions to his students, Dai* Xa* spoke a verse:

The four serpents³¹³ together in the box³¹⁴ are originally
empty,
The five aggregates are as high as mountains, yet they are
also without foundation.
The true nature is luminescent and free from obstructions,
Though covered by [concepts of] nirvana and cyclic
existence.

And:

The stone horse has fearsome teeth,³¹⁵
It eats grass and neighs all day long.
People on the street pass by together,
Yet the man on the horse does not go anywhere.

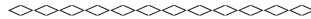
At the fifth watch of the night, Dai Xa took poison³¹⁶ and passed away. He was sixty-one.

Tinh* Luc* **(1112–1175)**

[30a6] Zen Master Tinh Luc of Viet* Vu'o'ng Tri Retreat, Tinh* Cu'o'ng, Vu* Ninh Prefecture, was a native of Cát Lang*, Vu Binh.³¹⁷ His family name was Ngô, his personal name was Tram*. As a young man he was intelligent and well-versed in the three skills, that is, literature, art, and calligraphy. During his study travel he met Master Dao* Hue* of Mount Tiên Du, and they got along extremely well. Since then he lodged his mind on [the attainment of] Buddhahood. He always dressed simply and ate wild fruits. He cultivated both merit and wisdom³¹⁸ for many years, his intent growing ever firmer.

Dao Huê often told him: "You inherently possess the mind seal of Buddha—it is not received from others." Tinh Lu'c said: "You have guided me. Now tell me where I should settle down." Dao Huê said: "You don't have to go to any remote place, Vu Ninh is fine." [30b] Tinh Lu'c then went into the mountains, built a straw retreat, and stayed there. He spent all his time paying homage to Buddha and practicing repentance,

and he deeply attained the *samadhi* * of Buddha-contemplation.³¹⁹ His voice became as clear as the voice of Brahma*. He often expounded the *Complete Enlightenment Sutra**. Wherever the meaning is not clear, he corrected it himself.³²⁰ Contemporaries said he had a songbird's mellifluous voice.



One day during the second year of the Thiên Cam* era (1175), Tinh* Luc* felt indisposed. He told his students: "All of you who study the Dharma should earnestly give offerings and support to Buddha. You should strive for nothing but the annihilation of bad karma. Contemplate with your minds and recite with your mouths; generate faith, strive to understand, listen, and comprehend. Always stay calm and choose a quiet place to live. Draw near to good spiritual companions. Your words should be harmonizing and pleasant: talk must be timely. Harbor no fear in your minds. Realize the true meaning and stay away from ignorance and delusion. Abiding in quietude, observe that all phenomena are impermanent and without a self, unoriginated and uncreated. Always be free from discrimination. That is [the attitude of] a student of the Dharma. Now my teaching mission is ended."

He then spoke a verse:

Though it is said to be auspicious at first, later it is said
to be evil,
From then on we no longer follow the taboo we
inherited.³²¹
Because when you see a dragon you become a Buddhist,
Suddenly you see a rat appear, but the stillness is never
ending.

He passed away sitting upright. **[31a]** He was sixty-four years old.

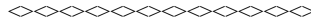
Tri Bao*
(?–1190)

[31a2] Zen Master Tri Bao of Thanh Tu'óc Temple, Mount Du Hi, Cát Loi* Hi Village,³²² Thu'ò'ng Lac* Prefecture,³²³ was a native of Ô Diên,³²⁴ Vinh* Khang.³²⁵ His family name was Nguyen*. He was an uncle of Tô Hien* Thành, who was Grand Commandant under the reign of Lý Anh Tông.

He abandoned the mundane world, entered the Buddhist Order, and came to dwell in this [Thanh Tu'óc] Mountain Temple. He often wore rags and ate coarse food. Sometimes he went on for ten years without changing his clothes and for three days without lighting his cooking

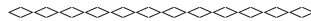
stove. His hands and feet were calloused, and his appearance dried and wizened. Whenever he saw a poor man he would fold his arms and make way; whenever he saw a monk he would kneel down to pay respect. He devoted himself to meditation and after six years he achieved enlightenment.

He then left the mountain with his monk's staff [and dedicated himself to good works, such as] repairing bridges and roads and building temples and stupas, and according to conditions universally encouraged [everyone to follow the Dharma]. He never acted for his own benefit. ³²⁶

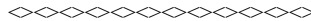


A monk asked: "Whence comes birth and whither goes death?" Tri Bao* hesitated in thought. The monk said: "While you were pondering, the white clouds have traveled ten thousand miles." Tri Bao could not answer. The monk rebuked: "This is a good temple without a Buddha."³²⁷ After the monk left, Tri Bao lamented to himself: "Although I have the determination to leave **[31b]** the world, I have not realized the meaning of leaving the world. It's like digging a well; even if it's a hundred feet deep, but it still has not reached water, one still has to abandon the well. How much more useless is cultivation without attaining enlightenment!"

He then traveled everywhere searching for a spiritual guide. Hearing that Dao* Hue* was teaching at Tiên Du, Tri Bao decided to go see him.



Tri Bao asked Đạo Huệ: "Whence comes birth and whither goes death?" Đạo Huệ said: "Birth comes from nowhere and death goes nowhere." Tri Bao said: "Does this mean falling into annihilation?" Đạo Huệ said: "The true nature is subtle and perfect, it is inherently empty and quiescent, it moves and functions freely, and it is not the same as birth and death. Therefore, birth comes from nowhere and death goes nowhere." At these words, Tri Bao was spiritually awakened and said: "Were it not for the wind which blows away all floating clouds, how can one see ten thousand autumns on the blue sky?"³²⁸ Đạo Huệ said: "What have you seen?" Tri Bao said: "You might know all the people in the world, but how many of them are your intimate friends?" He then bid farewell to Đạo Huệ and returned to his mountain.

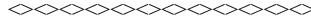


After that Tri Bao preached eloquently. [His words were] like sparks struck from stone.

One day, he went up to the hall with both monk and lay students crowded around. Someone asked: "What does it mean to be content?"

Tri Bao * said: "It is important for both monks [32a] and laymen to know how to be content. If you know how to be content, then externally you do not violate others' rights; internally you do not harm yourself. If it's not given to you, you should not take even something as trivial as a blade of grass, let alone things that belong to others. If you harbor a desire for things that belong to others, it wouldn't stop at this—you would end up generating the thought of stealing, wouldn't you? The same with regard to others' wives. If you harbor desire for others' wives, it wouldn't stop at this—you would also end up generating thought of adultery, wouldn't you? You all listen to my verse:

You who are devoted to Bodhisattva practice should know
 how to stop and how to be content,
 You should be compassionate and merciful toward others
 without desire to violate them.
 You should not take even a blade of grass that is not
 given to you,
 Not coveting others' possessions, your virtue will be
 luminescent as a jewel.
 You who are devoted to Bodhisattva practice should be
 content with your own wives,
 Why should you have desire for others' wives?
 Let other people protect their own wives.
 How could you bear to generate devious thoughts?³²⁹



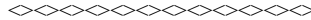
On the fourteenth day of the fourth month of the fifth year of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thuy* era (1190) under the reign of Lý Anh Tông,³³⁰ Tri Bao fell ill and passed away. His students cremated his body, collected the relics, and built a stupa in front of the temple to house them.

Tru'ò'ng Nguyên (1110–1165)

[32a11] Zen Master Tru'ò'ng Nguyên of Sóc Thiên Vu'ò'ng³³¹ Temple, Mount Ve* Linh, Binh Lo* Town, was a native of Tru'ò'ng Nguyên District, Tiên Du Prefecture. [32b] His family name was Phan. He was originally of a minority race from South China.³³² He left his home [to become a monk] and received the seal of approval from Dao* Hue* of Quang Minh Temple. He then entered Mount Tù' So'n to live in seclusion. He wore straw garments and only ate chestnuts. The whole day long he had only streams and stones, apes and monkeys for companions. He spent all his hours

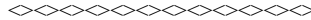
cultivating body and mind, fusing into one whole. He devoted himself to chanting the scriptures. Five or six years passed by and no one had ever caught a glimpse of him.

Emperor Lý Anh Tông heard about Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn, admired his religious virtue, and wanted to meet him, but he refused, so he ordered Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn's old friend court official Lê Hoi * to convince him to come to the capital. [On their way], when they stayed for the night at the guest house of Hu'ò'ng Sát Temple, Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn regretted his decision and escaped back to his mountain.

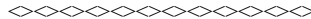


He often told his students: "Those who have a body like a withered [tree] and a mind like [cold] ashes³³³ are not to be moved by elusive and impermanent things of the world. Because my aspiration and practice were not pure enough, I was almost caught by them. Now listen to my verse:

The apes and monkeys carry their little ones back to the
green mountain ridges,³³⁴
From ancient times the sage worthies have been beyond
measure.
Spring comes and the orioles sing deep in the hundred
flowers,
When autumn comes and chrysanthemum blooms, the
other flowers have vanished without a trace.



He also often told people: "How strange! How strange! How is it that sentient beings are deluded by ignorance and delusion endowed with the Tathagatha's* wisdom, **[33a]** and do not see and know [that truth]? I often teach them the Dharma so that they can be forever free from discrimination and attachment to their personal existences—so that they will be able to realize the Tathagata's* vast wisdom with its benefits, its peace and bliss."



On the seventh day of the sixth month of the third year of the Chính Long Bao* Ú'ng era (1165), Tru'ò'ng Nguyễn fell ill and spoke a verse:

In the light, in the dusts,³³⁵ but always detached.
Heart and guts clear all the way through, no attachment
to things.
The embodiment of spontaneity,³³⁶ responding to things
without limit.

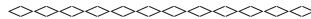
A skillful artisan, shaper of heaven and earth,
 Molder of human norms,³³⁷ source of the myriad things,
 springtime of things.
 Doing the dance—the iron girl,
 Beating the drum—the wooden boy.³³⁸

After speaking the verse, he died. His age was fifty-six.

Tinh* Gió'i
 (?–1207)

[33a8] Zen Master Tinh Gió'i of Quoc* Thanh Temple, Mount Bí Linh,³³⁹ Nghe* An Prefecture (another source says Quoc Thanh Temple, Tru'ò'ng An Prefecture),³⁴⁰ was a native of Mão Village, Ngung Giang, Lô Hai*. His family name was Chu, his personal name Hai Ngung. He came from a poor family. By nature he was sincere and earnest. As a child he studied Confucianism. At the age of twenty-six, he fell seriously ill: in a dream he saw a god who gave him medicine. When he woke up he had been immediately cured. He then decided to leave home [33b] to become a monk, and he went to an elderly monk in his native district to receive ordination. He devoted himself to studying the *vinaya* [precepts of discipline].

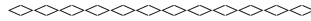
When Tinh Gió'i heard that Lãng So'n³⁴¹ was an ideal place to dwell in seclusion, he immediately set out with his monk's staff on a long eastward journey. After traveling and consulting [with many teachers] for seven years, he met Master Bao* Giác³⁴² of Viên Minh Temple and was spiritually awakened under the impact of his words.



In the tenth month of the year *quí tí** of the Chính Long Bao Ú'ng era (1173), before passing away, Bao Giác said: "Birth, old age, illness, and death are inevitable events in this world, how can I alone avoid them?" Tinh Gió'i said: "How are you today, Venerable One?" Bao Giác calmly smiled and spoke a verse to instruct him:

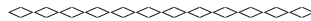
All phenomena return to Emptiness—there is nothing
 to rely on,
 When they return to quiescence, Thusness is what appears
 in front of our eyes.
 When you reach enlightenment, mind's perfection has
 nothing that can be pointed out,
 Contemplating the mind as the moon reflecting in water is
 the method to calm [the attachment to the real] mind.³⁴³

After speaking the verse, Bao * Giác handed him [as tokens of succession] the Dharma utensils. From then on Tinh* Gió'i traveled everywhere teaching people. Subsequently, he came to Quoc* Thanh Temple. He stopped there and stayed put for six years practicing austerities, subduing dragons, and conquering tigers. His power to influence and transform people was miraculous. Provincial Governor Pham* Tù' heard of his renowned virtue and treated him with special reverence. Pham requested Tinh Gió'i to cast a big bell and placed it in front of the temple in his headquarters town.



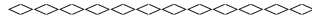
In the second year of the Trinh Phù era (1177) there was a drought during the summer. Emperor Lý Cao Tông (r. 1138–1175) summoned all the eminent monks to the capital to pray for rain, but it was to no avail. Lý Cao Tông had heard about Tinh Gió'i's reputation for a long time, so he dispatched an envoy to bring him **[34a]** to Báo Thiên Temple in the capital. At midnight, Tinh Gió'i stood in the garden and burned incense, and immediately rain fell. That made Lý Cao Tông admire and esteem him even more highly. He always called him "Rain Master"³⁴⁴ and invited him to his private palace to inquire about the essence of his teaching. He rewarded him munificently.

There is another tradition that says:³⁴⁵ When Tinh Gió'i left home as a young man, he owed the government some tax. His sister Chu was concerned and paid it for him. Tinh Gió'i often thought about it and could not find any way to pay her back. When he heard that Emperor Lý Cao Tông had issued a royal decree to pray for rain, he secretly returned to his sister's house and told them to dig a ditch and a pond in the back yard. When night came, he burnt incense and stood there praying. In a little while, rain started to fall only in his sister's garden: everybody in the house was amazed. When they reported it to the court, Lý Cao Tông was very happy and dispatched an envoy to take Tinh Gió'i to Báo Thiên Temple in the capital [to pray for rain]. Within two nights, rain started to pour down in torrents. Lý Cao Tông had him legally ordained as a monk and straightened out his family's tax records.

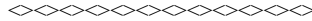


In the fourth year of the Trinh Phù era (1179), Tinh Gió'i was living at Chân Giáo Temple,³⁴⁶ Mount Bao So'n, when the capital summoned all virtuous monks to participate in a celebration. In response to the royal decree, Tinh Gió'i came to court. When he was lodging at Su'o'ng Khoc*, rain fell heavily and the roads were soaked and flooded—this was very

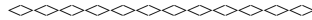
harmful to the harvest. At a ritual gathering to stop the rain, Tinh * Gió'i stood praying for seven days and the rains became normal again.



Subsequently he returned to his native village and repaired Quang* Thánh Temple and collected alms to cast a big bell. When people started playing the drums, dark clouds gathered and it was about to rain. Tinh Gió'i stood in the yard, brandished his staff, and glared [at the sky]. After a short while, the sky became clear again. Despite going through many wars, the bell he made still exists today.



Afterward Tinh Gió'i returned to his original temple [34b] to instruct students and teach the Dharma. One day, a monk inquired about the principle of Buddha, Tinh Gió'i said: "You and I."³⁴⁷ He often said: "The nature of the mind is the Embryo of the Tathagata* (*Tathagatagarbha**)."³⁴⁸ Mind is nature; therefore, the mind of inherent nature is pure (*cittaprakrtiprabhasvarata**)."



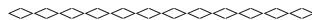
On the seventh day of the seventh month of the third year of the Tri* Binh Ú'ng Long era (1207), when he was about to pass away, Tinh Gió'i spoke a verse:

These days rare are those adept with whom you can discuss
the [Buddhist] Path,
Because nowadays the mind of the Path has been lost.
They can't be like Zu Zhi, the ultimate connoisseur
of music,
He comprehends Bo Ya³⁴⁹ as soon as he heard his zither.

And:

Autumn comes, the cool air makes me feel good inside,
Poets who have eight bushels of talent³⁵⁰ would chant
poetry to the moon.
How laughable—a Zen traveler foolish and dull,
Why does he use words to communicate Mind?

Then he sat cross-legged and passed away.



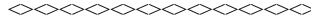
This biography is slightly different than that was recorded in *Quoc* Su** [National History]³⁵¹ and on an engraved stele. Now I have corrected it.

Giác Hai *

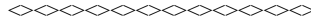
[34b8] Zen Master Giác Hai³⁵² of Diên Phúc Temple, Hai Thanh, hailed from Hai Thanh. His family name was Nguyen*. When he was young he was a fisherman. He made a small boat his home and sailed the rivers and the ocean. At the age of twenty-five, he abandoned his occupation, cut his hair, and became a monk. At first, he and Không Lo* served Master Hà Trach*.³⁵³ Afterward he became the Dharma heir of Không Lô.

Under the reign of Lý Nhân Tông, he and the Taoist adept Thông Huyen* were often invited to the imperial palace. [35a] One day, they were sitting in attendance on the emperor when two lizards started to shriek at each other, making deafening and horrible noise. Lý Nhân Tông ordered Thông Huyền to stop them. Thông Huyền silently recited the mantras, and one of the lizards fell down. Thông Huyền then looked at Giác Hai and smiled, saying, "I leave one of them for you, monk!" Giác Hai fixed his gaze on the second lizard: after a short while, it also fell down. Lý Nhân Tông was amazed and wrote a poem to praise them:

Giác Hai's* mind is like the ocean,
 Thông Huyen's* way is mysterious.
 Full of supernatural powers and magical skills,
 One is Buddha, the other an immortal.³⁵⁴

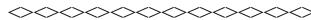


Giác Hai became well known throughout the country, and was admired by both monks and laymen. Emperor Lý Nhân Tông always treated him with the etiquette due a teacher. Every time he came to stay at his provincial palace Hai Thanh, he would first pay a visit to Giác Hai at his temple.



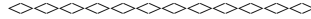
One day Lý Nhân Tông asked Giác Hai: "Can I hear something about your supernatural power?" Giác Hai immediately displayed his magical skills by jumping up into the air fifty or sixty feet above the ground. After a while, he came down again. Lý Nhân Tông and his court officials all applauded and acclaimed him. Thenceforth, Lý Nhân Tông granted him free access to the royal palace.

Under the reign of Lý Than* Tông (1128–1138), Giác Hai was invited many times to the capital, but he declined to come, pleading old age and ill health.



A monk asked: "Between Buddha and sentient beings, who is the host and who is the guest?" Giác Hai answered by a verse:

The young girl's hair is already white,³⁵⁵
 I want to inform you, [35b] o practitioner,³⁵⁶
 If you are asking about the realm of Buddhahood,
 You will be marked on your forehead [like the carps in
 their jumping contest] at Dragon Gate.³⁵⁷



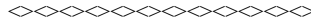
When he was about to pass away, Giác Hai* spoke a verse to his students:

Spring comes, flowers and butterflies know the season well,
 Flowers and butterflies must have their own times.³⁵⁸
 But flowers and butterflies are originally illusions,
 Do not occupy your mind with flowers and butterflies.³⁵⁹

That night, a big meteor fell to the southeast side of his quarters. Giác Hai sat in upright position and passed away. The emperor issued a royal decree donating [the tax revenues from] thirty families to provide for incense and fire. His two sons were given honorary long robes and appointed to offices.

Nguyen* Hoc*
 (?–1175)

[35b6] Zen Master Nguyễn Hoc³⁶⁰ of Quang* Báo Temple, Chân Ho* Village, Nhu' Nguyệt*, hailed from Phù Cam*. His family name was Nguyen*. When he was young he studied the Dharma with Master Viên Trí of Mat* Nghiêm Temple. After he got the message of the teaching, he first lived in seclusion on Mount Ve* Linh, devoting himself to purification practices³⁶¹ for twelve years. Whenever he enter *samadhi**, he would arise only after three days. He always recited the *Xianghai dabei tuoluoni* [the *Dharani** of the Fragrant Ocean of Great Compassion] and was always effective in curing illness and praying for rain. Emperor Lý Anh Tông (r. 1138–1175) admired his supernatural powers and issued a decree granting him free access to the imperial palace so he could be ready to apply his mantras' power whenever necessary.



Subsequently he retired on the pretext of old age and returned to his original temple to serve as abbot. His students numbered not less than a hundred.

[36a] On the eleventh day of the sixth month of the second year³⁶² of the Thiên Cam* Chí Bao* era (1175), when he was about to pass away, he instructed his students:

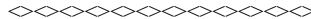
The Dharma has no image or form,
 It is right before your eyes, not far away.
 You have to turn back and find it in yourself,
 Do not seek it from others.
 Even if you got it from them,
 It wouldn't be the true Dharma. ³⁶³
 But suppose you find the true Dharma,
 What kind of a thing is it?

"Therefore, all Buddhas of past, present, and future and the successive generations of patriarchs who transmitted and received this mind seal also taught the same.

"Listen to my verse:

Realize [the true nature] of body and mind and open your
 eye of wisdom,
 Transforming spiritual power reveals the reality-aspect.
 When walking, standing, sitting, lying, it stands out alone.
 The emanation bodies (*nirmana-kaya**) appearing according
 to circumstances and are countless,
 Although they fill the whole universe,
 If you contemplate carefully you will see that they are
 without fixed characteristics:
 There is nothing in this world which can compare,
 Constantly showing a spiritual light,
 Always explaining the inconceivable.
 There is no word which can describe it appropriately. ³⁶⁴

As his verse ended, Nguyen* Hoc* sat cross-legged and passed away.



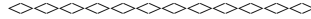
The story that was handed down among the people is somewhat similar to the biography of Huisi³⁶⁵ in the *Transmission of the Lamp*. This follows what was recorded in the *The Essential Sayings of the Patriarchs by Hue* Nhat**.

Quang* Nghiêm
 (1122–1190)

Eleventh Generation:
No Biography Recorded

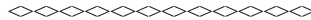
[36a11] Zen Master Quang Nghiêm of Tinh* Qua* Temple, Trung Thuy*, Tru'ong Canh, was a native of Đan Phuong*. His family name was Nguyen*. [36b] He was an orphan as a child and studied with his uncle, Master Bao* Nhac*, with whom he first generated his mind of enlightenment

(*bodhicitta*). After Bao * Nhạc* passed away, he started to travel everywhere, studying at all seats of Zen learning. Hearing about Master Trí Thiên*,³⁶⁶ who was at the time teaching at Phúc Thánh Temple, Dien* Lãn, he came to study with him.

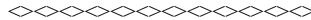


One day, while listening to Trí Thiên explain the *Sayings of Xuedou*,³⁶⁷ when he reached the section where the two masters Daowu and Jianyuan go to a funeral and talk about birth and death,³⁶⁸ Quang* Nghiêm seemed to be awakened, so he asked: "Is there still truth in this meditation saying which the ancient worthies used to discuss birth and death?" Trí Thiên said: "Can you comprehend this truth?" Quang Nghiêm asked: "What is the truth without birth and death?" Trí Thiên said: "You should comprehend it right within birth and death." Quang Nghiêm said: "I have attained birthlessness." Trí Thiên said: "Then comprehend it by yourself." At these words Quang Nghiêm experienced a breakthrough; he asked: "How am I to preserve it?" Trí Thiên said: "Having comprehended it is the same as having not yet comprehended." Quang Nghiêm bowed in homage.

From then on his fame spread in the Zen communities. First he came to Thánh Ân Temple at Siêu Loai* Village to sojourn for a while. The Minister of Defense Phùng Giảng Tu'ò'ng heard of him and developed an admiration for him. He then invited Quang Nghiêm to Tinh* Qua* Temple, which he had built. Here Quang Nghiêm began to propagate the message of the Zen school. [37a] Zen companions came to study—no one went there in vain.

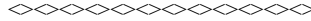


One day, his advanced student Thu'ò'ng Chiêu* quoted the *Diamond Sutra**: "The Dharma that the Tathagata* has attained is neither real nor unreal, what is this Dharma?"³⁶⁹ Quang Nghiêm said: "Better stop slandering the Tathagata." Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "Better stop slandering the *sutra**, Master!" Quang Nghiêm said: "Who teaches this *sutra*?" Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "Venerable Sir, please do not joke with me. It's the Buddha who teaches it, isn't it?" Quang Nghiêm said: "If Buddha teaches it, why is it said in the *sutra* itself that 'if you say that the Tathagata has taught the Dharma, you are slandering the Buddha'?"³⁷⁰ Thu'ò'ng Chiêu could not answer.



A monk asked: "What is the Truth Body (*Dharmakaya**)?" Quang Nghiêm said: "The Truth Body inherently has no form." The monk asked: "What is wisdom (*prajna**)?" Quang Nghiêm said: "Wisdom has no shape." The monk asked: "What is the realm of pure fruition?" Quang Nghiêm said: "The pine and the catalpa by an old grave." The monk continued: "What

is the man in the object?" Quang * Nghiêm said: "Sitting alone to seal the mouth of a pot." The monk continued: "Suddenly coming across an intimate friend, how am I to receive him?" Quang Nghiêm said: "Raise your eyebrow according to the situations." The monk continued: "Who are the offspring of Kien* So' and the grandchildren of Mr. Âu?"³⁷¹ Quang Nghiêm said: **[37b]** "The fool from the country of Chu." The monk was speechless.



On the fifteenth day of the second month of the fifth year, *canh tuat**, of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thụy* era (1190), when he was about to pass away, Quang Nghiêm spoke a verse:

Only when you are free from [the attachment to] peace can
 you begin to talk about peace,
 After you are born in the realm of birthlessness, you
 should talk about birthlessness.
 As a man you have sky-high aspiration,
 Stop following the footsteps of the Tathagata*.³⁷²

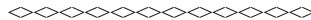
As his verse ended, he joined his palms and passed away sitting upright. He was sixty-nine. Phùng cremated his body and built a stupa [to house the relics].

Thu'ò'ng Chieu*
 (?–1203)

Twelfth Generation:
No Biography Recorded

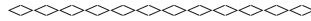
[37b7] Zen Master Thu'ò'ng Chiêu of Luc* To* Temple,³⁷³ Dich* Bang*, Thiên Đúc Prefecture, hailed from Phù Ninh Village.³⁷⁴ His family name was Pham*. He served under the reign of Lý Cao Tông and held the office of Supply Supervisor in Quang Tù' Palace.³⁷⁵ After some time, he resigned from his position and left home to become a monk. He studied with Master Quang Nghiêm of Tinh* Qua* Temple and received the essence of the teaching directly from him. He served Quang Nghiêm for many years.

Subsequently he settled down at Phu'ò'ng Co* Temple, Ông Mac*,³⁷⁶ to propagate the essence of the Dharma. Finally, he moved to Luc Tô Temple. His students increased daily.



A monk asked: "What is it like when subject and object condition each other?" Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: **[38a]** "Forget both subject and object; the

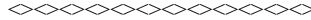
nature of mind is impermanent; ³⁷⁷ it is originated and annihilated all the time, never ceasing for an instant. So which conditions which? Origination is things originating, annihilation is things being annihilated. The Dharma which [an enlightened person] attains never has origination or annihilation. The monk said: "I still don't understand, please instruct me." Thu'ò'ng Chieuh* said: "Once you have realized mind, in the cultivation of the Dharma, you can save power and easily succeed. If you have not completely realized mind, you will only waste your effort for nothing."



A monk asked: "What is the Truth Body (*Dharmakaya**) that pervades all?" Thu'ò'ng Chieuh said: "Just as one pore contains the whole Realm of Ultimate Reality (*Dharmadhātu**), so do all pores. You should know that there is not the smallest place anywhere in Mind or in space where there is no Buddha-body. Why so? Because the Truth Body manifests itself in the Emanation Body (*nirmanakaya**), which attains perfect enlightenment (*samyaksambodhi*), ³⁷⁸ there is no place that the Truth Body does not reach. Thus, you should know that the Tathagata*, through the sovereign power of mind without origination or revolution, turns the Wheel of Truth (*Dharmacakra*). [The Tathagata] knows that all phenomena are not originated, so he uses the three dharmas to teach annihilation; yet he turns the Wheel of Truth without relying on annihilation. [The Tathagata] knows that all phenomena are free from false views, so he dwells in the realm of separation from desire—but not its annihilation—to turn the Wheel of Truth. The Tathagata also enters the realm of the emptiness of all phenomena; therefore, **[38b]** without relying on words, he turns the Wheel of Truth. [The Tathagata] knows that all phenomena are ineffable, so he dwells in the ultimate peace to turn the Wheel of Truth. The Tathagata knows that all phenomena are originally nirvana—³⁷⁹ this is called formless true nature, inexhaustible true nature, unborn, undestroyed; selfless true identity, where nothing is not self; true nature without sentient beings, where nothing is not sentient beings; true nature without "Bodhisattvas," without the Realm of Ultimate Reality (*Dharmadhātu*), without "emptiness"—nature where there is no "achieving perfect enlightenment."³⁸⁰

Thu'ò'ng Chieuh then spoke a verse:

In this world it becomes human existence,
 In the mind it is the Embryo of the Tathagata
 (*Tathagatagarbha**).
 It is luminescent and without abode,
 When one searches for it, it is immense and boundless.



On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the second year of the Thiên Gia Bao * Huu* era (1203), Thu'ò'ng Chieu* had some heart pains, so he assembled his students and spoke a verse:

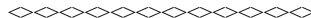
The Dharma is originally without color,
 Yet day after day it shows its freshness.
 In these three thousand great thousands of worlds,
 There is no place that is not its home.

Then he sat cross-legged and passed away. His disciple Than* Nghi and the others cremated his body, collected the relics, and built a stupa to house them. Thu'ò'ng Chiêu had composed a one-volume work entitled *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** [Diagram of the Dharma Succession of the Southern School], which has been in circulation [among the Buddhist communities].³⁸¹

Thông Thiên*
 (?–1228)

***Thirteenth Generation:
 Five Persons, Two Biographies Recorded***

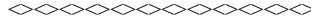
[39a2] Layman Thông Thiên³⁸² of Oc* Village, An La, hailed from Ôc Village. His family name was Dang*. At first, together with Quách Thân Nghi of Thang* Quang Temple, he served Master Thu'ò'ng Chiêu of Luc* To* Temple. One day, he entered Thu'ò'ng Chieu's* private room to ask for instruction,³⁸³ saying: "How can I realize the Buddha-Dharma?" Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "Buddha-Dharma is not to be realized. How can this be something you realize? Buddhas cultivate all dharmas, yet none of them obtains." At these words, Thông Thiên got the gist [of Thu'ò'ng Chiêu's teaching].



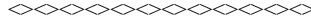
He then returned to his native village and settled down at Lu'õ'ng Pháp Temple. Crowds of students came. To whatever was asked, Thông Thiên sealed it with the mind-seal.

A monk asked: "What is a world-transcending person?" Thông Thiên said: "Haven't you heard the ancient worthies say, 'Just contemplate that the five aggregates are empty; the four elements are without a self; the true mind is without characteristics and neither goes nor comes; at the time of birth, true nature does not come; at the time of death, true nature does not go; it is always pure and completely quiescent, because

mind and objects are one.' If only you can comprehend this, you will abruptly attain enlightenment; when you are not fettered by the three times, then you are a world-transcending person. What is most important is that you should not have the slightest **[39b]** attachment to anything."



A monk asked: "What is the meaning of birthlessness?" Thông Thiên * said: "When you accurately discern these five aggregates, [you will find out that] by nature they are originally empty; surely emptiness cannot be annihilated. That is the meaning of birthlessness." The monk continued: "What is the truth of birthlessness?" Thông Thiên said: "It's only when you investigate the phenomena composed of the five aggregates, that inherent emptiness becomes manifest. Surely emptiness cannot be annihilated. That is the truth of birthlessness." The monk asked: "What is Buddha?" Thông Thiên said: "The original mind is Buddha; therefore, Xuanzang,³⁸⁴ the *Tripitaka** Master of the Tang dynasty, said, 'Just realize the mind-ground—this is called *dharani**. Awakening to the fact that phenomena have no birth is called supreme enlightenment.'"



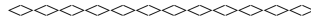
He passed away in the seventh month of the fourth year, *mau** *tí*, of the Kien* Trung era (1228) under the reign of Tran* Thái Tông (1225–1258).

Than* Nghi (?–1216)

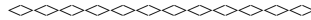
[39b8] Zen Master Thân Nghi of Thang* Quang Temple, Thi* Trung Village, Kim Bài, hailed from Ngoai* Trai*.³⁸⁵ His family name was Quách. His family cultivated purification practices for generations. When he first shaved his head [to become a monk], he served Master Thu'ò'ng Chiêu* of Luc* To* Temple.

When Thu'ò'ng Chiêu was about to pass away, Thân Nghi asked: "All people come to this moment: Why do you, too, die like an ordinary person?" Thu'ò'ng Chiêu asked: "How many people do you remember who were not like ordinary people?" Thân Nghi said: "Only Bodhidharma." **[40a]** Thu'ò'ng Chiêu asked: "What is so extraordinary about him?" Thân Nghi said: "He contentedly returned to the west alone." Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "Whose home is Mount Xionger [Bear Ear]?"³⁸⁶ Thân Nghi said: "He buried his shoe in the coffin."³⁸⁷ Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "In terms of cheating people, Thân Nghi ranks first." Thân Nghi said: "You can't say that Song Yun spread a false rumor; what about the fact that Zhuangdi

did open the coffin?" Thu'ò'ng Chieu * shouted: "A dog barks at nothing."³⁸⁸ Than* Nghi said: "Do you follow conventions or not, Master?" Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "Yes, I do." Thân Nghi said: "Why so?" Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "Because I'm in the same line with them." Thân Nghi was abruptly awakened; then he bowed down and said: "I have misunderstood everything." Thu'ò'ng Chiêu shouted. Thân Nghi again said: "I have served you for many years, but I don't know who was the first to transmit this Dharma? Pray instruct me about the successive generations of this Dharma transmission so that I know about its source." Thu'ò'ng Chiêu praised him for his earnestness. He took out the *Chieu* Doi* Ban** [Collated Biographies] of Thông Bien³⁸⁹ as well as the latter's record of the transmission lines of Zen that analyzes the Dharma succession according to schools, and showed them to him. After looking at them, Thân Nghi asked: "Why were the two schools of Nguyen* Dai* Điền and Nguyen Bát Nhà³⁹⁰ not recorded?" [40b] Thu'ò'ng Chiêu said: "There must be a good reason for Thông Bien's* idea [not to record them]."



On the eighteenth day of the second month of the sixth year, *bính tí*, of the Kien* Gia era (1216), Thân Nghi gave his disciple An* Không the *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** [Diagram of the Dharma Succession of the Southern School],³⁹¹ which Thu'ò'ng Chiêu had handed down to him, and instructed Ân Không: "Although things are chaotic these days, you should carefully preserve this. Don't let it be destroyed in the wars, so our ancestral teaching will not disappear." After speaking these words, he passed away.



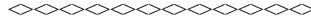
Ân Không formerly lived at Luong* Châu District, Na Ngan* Prefecture.³⁹² His sobriquet was Great Master Na Ngan.

Tú'c Lu*

***Fourteenth Generation:
Five Persons, Two Biographies Recorded***

[40b6] Zen Master Tú'c Lu' (another source says Tinh* Lu') of Thông Thánh Temple, Chu Minh Village, Thiên Đức Prefecture, hailed from Chu Minh. As a child he was brilliant and studied all the conventional literature. One day, he abandoned what he had been studying. He came to serve Layman Thông Thiên* in order to enquire about the mysterious essence [of Buddhism].

Once on a daybreak after the summer retreat, Tú'c Lu * set a trap and shot down a brook ouzel. He brought it back and gave it to Thông Thiên*. Thông Thiên was shocked and said: "You are a monk, why do you commit a killing? What are you going to do about the future retribution?" Tú'c Lu' said: "At that time I didn't see that animal there, nor did I see my own body there, nor was I cognizant of the retribution for killing. That was why I did what [41a] I did." Thông Thiên knew that Tú'c Lu' was a vessel of the Dharma,³⁹³ so he summoned Tú'c Lu' to his private room and intimately transmitted the mind seal to him, saying: "If you function at that level, even if you commit the five sins and the seven obscurations,³⁹⁴ you still attain Buddhahood." A monk who stood nearby eavesdropping cried out: "How miserable! Even if there were such a thing, I would not take it!" Thông Thiên shouted: "Thief! Thief! Don't let this bad man get his way!" At these words Tú'c Lu' was spiritually awakened.



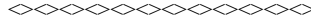
Finally, he returned to Thông Thánh Temple to explore the intent of Zen. A virtuous student called Layman Ú'ng Thuan* was his successor.

Hien* Quang (?–1221)

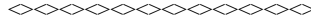
[41a7] Zen Master Hiên Quang of Mount Yên Tu'*³⁹⁵ hailed from the capital. His family name was Lê, and his personal name was Thuan*. He had a soft voice and a fair appearance. As a child he was orphaned and went through many hardships. When he was eleven years old, Master Thu'ò'ng Chieu* of Luc* To* Temple saw him, took him in, and ordained him as a disciple. He was unusually bright in his studies, reading tens of thousands of words every day. Within less than ten years he became versed in the three learnings.³⁹⁶ As for the essential message of Zen, he had not yet discovered it when Thu'ò'ng Chiêu passed away.

Afterward, whenever he was debating about the essence of mind with someone, [41b] he was sure to be defeated. He always castigated himself: "I'm like the son of a rich family who was arrogant and idle beyond measure when his parents were alive; so when his parents died he became lonely and confused and had no idea where the family jewels were, and he ended up a poor man."³⁹⁷

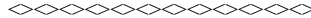
So he then traveled from monastery to monastery seeking adepts to study with. Finally, he abruptly awakened to the mind-ground at a word by Master Trí Thông at Thánh Qua* Temple. Therefore, he stayed and served Thông.



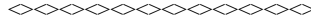
Once because he received alms from Princess Hoa Du'o'ng,³⁹⁸ sharp criticism arose. When he learned about this, he said: "If you get involved with the mundane world, you won't avoid slander and insult. Why should I be in that situation? Moreover, the Bodhisattva Path is wide and the Buddha-Dharma is immeasurable. Even a gentleman of the Mean still sometimes feels confused and distressed. If I'm not sharp and alert, if I do not arm myself with patience (*ksanti**) and energy (*virya**), then how can I attack the armies of delusion and smash their afflictions? How can I attain supreme enlightenment?" He then went directly to Mount Uyên Trùng, Nghe* An Prefecture, and received ordination from Zen Master Pháp Gió'i.



One day Hien* Quang saw an attendant carrying a bowl of rice who accidentally dropped it on the ground. The attendant panicked and tried to scoop up the rice, which was already mixed up with earth. [42a] Hiên Quang felt regret [for his own shortcomings] and said to himself: "If I go through life without benefiting people, and trouble them for their offerings in vain, it will make this kind of thing happen." So he used leaves to make his garments and ceased eating rice for ten years. Finally, in order to build a place to stay in his old age, he went to Mount Tù' So'n; there he built a straw hut and settled down. Everytime he did a *сутра** circumambulation³⁹⁹ in the forest, he always carried a cloth bag at the top of his walking staff.⁴⁰⁰ Wherever he sat down or lay down, all the wild animals that saw him became tame.

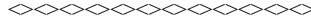


Emperor Lý Hue* Tông (r. 1211–1225)⁴⁰¹ admired his lofty footsteps and many times prepared offerings and invited him [to the capital]. Hiên Quang hid and sent his attendant to reply to the envoy: "For many years I have lived on the emperor's land, enjoying his grace, making this mountain my home to serve Buddha. Yet after many years I have not achieved any merit and I myself am very disappointed and ashamed. Now if I see the emperor, not only will it do nothing to help in governing the people, but it will also attract people's censure. Moreover, at the present time the Buddha-Dharma is flourishing, and all the adepts of Buddhism have already assembled in the imperial palace. Look at this lowly rustic monk who takes refuge in the Dharma on this mountain—what reason has he to be there?" From that point on he decided never to leave the mountain again.



A monk asked: "Since you've been on this mountain, what have you been doing?" [42b] Hien * Quang said:

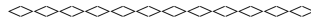
Emulating the virtue of Xu You,⁴⁰²
 How could I know how many springs in a lifetime?
 Without contrived activity I live freely in the wide
 countryside,
 An independent man, wandering happy and content.



In the spring of the eleventh year, *tân ti**, of the Kien* Gia era (1120), when he was about to pass away, Hiên Quang sat upright on a boulder and spoke a verse:

Illusory phenomena are all illusions,
 Illusory practices are all illusions.
 If you don't adhere to these two illusions,
 That removes all illusions.

Then he calmly passed away. His disciple Dao* Viên prepared the funeral ceremony and buried him in a grotto.



The *Tu*' Ngu Tap**⁴⁰³ says: "Hiên Quang died, nobody knows where."

Ú'ng Vu'o'ng

Fifteenth Generation:

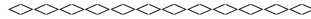
Seven Persons, Only One Biography Recorded

[42b7] Layman Ú'ng Vu'o'ng⁴⁰⁴ hailed from Gió'i Thi* Quarter in the capital Thang* Long. His family name was Do*, his personal name was Van*. He was broad-minded by nature and not very keen for worldly affairs. At first, he served in the court of Chiêu Lang*;⁴⁰⁵ later on he reached the office of Middle Grade Royal Servitor. During his leisure time he devoted himself to studying Zen, never laying down the books. He investigated the patriarchs' intent and realized the mind-source. He was a disciple of Master Tú'c Lu* of Thông Thánh Temple and profoundly grasped his intimate secrets. Through Master Tú'c Lu', with his unobstructed Dharma-eye, Ú'ng Vu'o'ng reached higher and higher levels: he received [43a] the mind-seal and got the transmission.

In the end he became the eyes and ears of the Buddhist community and equaled [teachers] like National Preceptor Nhat * Tông, and Zen Masters Tiêu Diêu, Giới Minh, Giới Viên.⁴⁰⁶

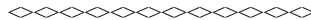
Vinitaruci*
(?-594)

[44a2] Zen Master Vinitaruci (Ty* Ni Đa Lu'u Chi)⁴⁰⁷ of Pháp Vân Temple, Co* Châu Village, Long Biên Province,⁴⁰⁸ hailed from South India. He belonged to a Brahman lineage.⁴⁰⁹ As a young man he already harbored the aspiration to go beyond the conventional world: he wandered throughout India searching for the seal of the Buddha-mind. However, his affinity for the Dharma was not met there, so he carried his monk's staff to East Asia.



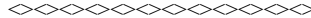
In the sixth year, *nhâm ngo**, of the Dajian era (574) of the Chen dynasty, Vinitaruci first arrived in Chang'an [the capital of North China] right at the time when Emperor Wu of the Zhou dynasty was trying to destroy Buddhism.⁴¹⁰ He then traveled to Yeh [the capital of south China]. At that time, the third Zen Patriarch Sengcan,⁴¹¹ in order to escape political disturbances, had taken his robe and bowl and hidden himself on Mount Sikong. When Vinitaruci met Sengcan and saw his uncommon behavior, his attitude was one of deep respect: three times he came before Sengcan and stood with folded arms. Sengcan just sat there with his eyes closed, saying nothing. While Vinitaruci stood there pondering, he emptied through and seemed to have attainment, so he prostrated himself three times. Sengcan only nodded his head three times. Vinitaruci took three steps backward and said: "I come here at a very inconvenient time, yet I beg you, Venerable Sir, to show compassion and permit me to serve by your side." Sengcan said: "You should immediately go south [44b] to receive students, it's not fitting for you to remain here too long." Vinitaruci then bid farewell to Sengcan and traveled alone to Zhi Zhi Temple in Guangzhou. He remained there for about six years and translated the *Gayasirsa**, the *Differentiation of Karmic Reward*,⁴¹² and other works.

In the third month of the second year, *canh tí*, of the Daxiang era (580) of the Zhou dynasty, he arrived in our country [Vietnam] and settled down at Pháp Vân Temple. He retranslated the *Dharani* Sutra*⁴¹³ in one volume.



One day, Vinitaruci⁴¹⁴ called his advanced student Pháp Hien* to his private room and said: "The mind-seal of the Buddhas surely does not

deceive us—it is as perfect as space, without lack or surplus, ⁴¹⁵ without going or coming, without gain or loss. It is neither one nor many, neither permanent nor impermanent. It has no origination or annihilation, it is neither detached nor not detached. Names are only established provisionally according to temporary circumstances. All the Buddhas of past, present, and future rely on this to attain enlightenment, and so do the successive generations of patriarchs. I rely on this to attain enlightenment, and so do you, and so do all sentient and nonsentient beings—they all rely on this to attain enlightenment. Moreover, when my patriarch Sengcan transmitted this mind-seal to me, he told me to go south quickly to communicate it, because it was not right [45a] for me to remain there [in China] too long. It's been a long time since then, and now I have met you. After all, this agrees with his prediction. Now you must preserve it well. It's time for me to leave this world." After speaking these words, Vinitaruci* joined his palms and passed away. Pháp Hien* cremated his body, collected his five-colored relics, and built a stupa to house them. It was the fourteenth year, *giáp đần**, of the Kaihuang era of the Sui dynasty (594).



Lý Thái Tông wrote a poem to commemorate Vinitaruci:

When you first came to this southern country,
 Everyone knew that you had practiced Zen for a long time.
 You had to open the way for faith in the Buddhas,
 So that people of later generations could live in accord
 with the one mind, the source.
 The moon over Lanka is bright,
 The lotus flower of transcendent wisdom is fragrant,
 When can I see you face to face⁴¹⁶
 So we can discuss the arcane lore together?

He also conferred on him the title Master Vinitaruci of Pháp Vân Temple.⁴¹⁷

Pháp Hiên
 (? –626)

First Generation:
One Person

[45a9] Zen Master Pháp Hiên of Chúng Thiên* Temple, Mount Thiên Phúc, Tiên Du—second generation [of the Vinitaruci school]—hailed from Chu Diên.⁴¹⁸ His family name was Do*. He was over seven feet tall. At first, he was ordained by Master Quán Duyên⁴¹⁹ of Pháp Vân Temple.

He became Quán Duyên's disciple and every day listened to the latter's teaching on the essence of Zen.

When Vinitaruci * [45b] first came from Guangzhou and lodged at Pháp Vân Temple and met Pháp Hien*, he looked him over carefully and said: "What is your name?" Pháp Hiên said: "What is your name, Master?" Vinitaruci said: "You do not have a name?" Pháp Hiên said: "Of course I have a name, but how can you understand it?" Vinitaruci scolded him, saying: "Why use understanding?"⁴²⁰ Pháp Hiên was abruptly awakened and bowed down. He then received the mind-seal from Vinitaruci.

After Vinitaruci passed away, Pháp Hiên went directly to Mount Tù' So'n to practice meditation. He looked like a withered tree—things and self were both forgotten. Birds and beasts became tame and liked to linger around him. People heard about his virtue and came to study with him in countless numbers. So Pháp Hiên built a temple and admitted students. Monks in residence usually numbered over three hundred. The southern school of Zen⁴²¹ has flourished ever since. Chinese Military Governor Liu Fang also informed the Chinese court [about Pháp Hien's* activities]. When Sui Gaozu learned that this land (Viet Nam) admired Buddhism and produced eminent monks of renowned virtue, he dispatched an envoy to bring Buddha relics and five boxes of official credentials, and he ordered Pháp Hiên to build a stupa to worship them.⁴²² Pháp Hiên built a stupa at Pháp Vân Temple, Luy Lâu, and at famous temples in Phong, Hoan, Truong, and Ái provinces. This is recorded in detail in the biography of Zen Master Thông Bien*.

Pháp Hiên passed away in the ninth year, *bính tuat**, of the Wude era (626) of the Tang dynasty.

Thanh Biên
(?–686)

Second Generation:
One Person

Third Generation:
One Person

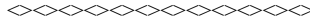
Fourth Generation:
One Person

[46a5] Zen Master Thanh Biên of Kien* Du'o'ng Temple, Hoa Lâm District,⁴²³ Thiên Đứ'c Prefecture, hailed from Co* Giao.⁴²⁴ His family name was Do*. At the age of twelve, he came to study with Master Pháp Dang* of Pho* Quang Temple.⁴²⁵ When Pháp Đang was about to pass away, Thanh Biên asked: "After you're gone, Master, where should I turn?"

Pháp Đăng * said: "You only have Sùng Nghiệp*." Thanh Biền* was confused and could not understand. After Pháp Đăng passed away, he devoted himself to chanting the *Diamond Sutra**.

One day, a Zen man visited him. After a while, the man asked: "This *sutra** is the mother of Buddhas of past, present, and future—what is the meaning of 'the mother of Buddhas'?" Thanh Biền said: "I have been chanting the *sutra* but I do not yet understand its meaning." The man asked: "How long have you been chanting this *sutra*?" Thanh Biền said: "Eight years." The man [46b] said: "If you have been chanting the *sutra* like this for eight years and still can't understand its meaning, then even if you chant it for a hundred years, what will it accomplish?" Thanh Biền bowed down to the Zen man and asked for instruction. The man told him to go to Master Hue* Nghiêm of Sùng Nghiệp Temple for instruction. Thanh Biền felt relieved and said: "Only now do I realize that Pháp Đăng's* words have turned out to be true." He then followed the man to Sùng Nghiệp Temple.

[As soon as Thanh Biền arrived there,] Huê Nghiêm asked: "What are you coming here for?" Thanh Biền said: "There's something in my mind that is not settled." Huê Nghiêm said: "What is it that is not settled with you?" Thanh Biền told him about the previous conversation. Huê Nghiêm sighed and said: "You yourself forget. Don't you remember that the *sutra* said, 'The Buddhas of past, present, and future and their perfect enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*)*, too, all come from this *sutra*.'⁴²⁶ Isn't this the meaning of 'the mother of Buddhas'?" Thanh Biền said: "Yes, yes, I was confusing myself." Huê Nghiêm again asked: "Who speaks this *sutra*?" Thanh Biền said: "Isn't it the Tathagata* who speaks it?" Huê Nghiêm said: "It is said in the *sutra* that 'if anyone says that the Tathagata has said something, he is slandering the Buddha; such a person [47a] cannot understand the meaning of my teaching. Contemplate well on this. If someone says that this *sutra* is not spoken by the Buddha, then that person is slandering the *sutra*. But if someone insists that it is the Buddha who speaks, then that person is slandering the Buddha.' What do you think about this? Speak quickly! Speak quickly!"⁴²⁷ Thanh Biền was about to open his mouth when Huê Nghiêm suddenly struck him on the mouth with his whisk. Thanh Biền was abruptly awakened and bowed down.



Finally, he came to Kien* Du'ong Temple to teach students. When his teaching mission was finished, he passed away in the second year, *bính tuat**, of the Chuigong era (685) of the Tang dynasty.

Dinh * Không
(? –808)

Fifth Generation:
One Person

Sixth Generation:
One Person

Seventh Generation:
No Biography Recorded

Eighth Generation:
Three Persons, Only One Biography Recorded

[47a10] Zen Master Dinh Không of Thien* Chủng Temple,⁴²⁸ Dich* Bang* Village, Thiên Đức Prefecture, hailed from Co* Pháp.⁴²⁹ His family name was Nguyen*. His family had been distinguished for generations. He was a man with a profound knowledge of the destiny of the world. His demeanor was exemplary. [47b] People in the village revered and served him, and all referred to him as "the Elder."

Late in his life, through listening to the teaching of Nam Du'ong of Long Tuyen* Temple, he was able to grasp the essence of Buddhism. Since then he turned his mind toward the teaching of Buddha.

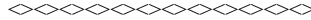
During the Chenyuan era (785–804) of the Tang dynasty, he built the Quynh* Lâm Temple at his native village. When they first excavated to lay the foundation, they found one incense burner and ten stone chimes. Đinh Không asked people to wash them in the river. One of them fell into the water and sank right to the earthen bed of the river. Đinh Không explained this event: "The character *thap** (土 : earth) is where we are living, [these chimes] came from the earth." Therefore, he changed his village's name to Cô Pháp (formerly called Diên Uan*) and composed a verse:

This land offers Dharma vessels,
Purest first-class bronze.
It is a site where Buddha-Dharma flourishes,
Therefore, I give this district the name Cô Pháp
[Ancient Dharma].

He also said: "The Dharma vessels appeared as ten copper bells—this means that [a man named] Lý will become emperor and become successful in three categories."

And:

*Thap** (去),
Make up the name of this village.
When the rooster dwells behind the month of the rat,⁴³¹
This is when the Three Jewels flourish.



When Đinh * Không was about to pass away, he instructed his disciple Thông Thiên*: "I had wished to enlarge our home area, yet I was afraid that we would meet with disaster midway. [48a] Some uncanny man is sure to come and destroy our land. (Later on Gao Pian⁴³² of the Tang did come and cast a spell on this area.) After I die, you should preserve our Dharma well. When you meet a man named Đinh, you must transmit it to him; then my wish will be fulfilled."

After speaking these words, he bid farewell to his disciples and passed away. He was seventy-nine years old: it was in the third year, *bính tí*, of the Yuanhe era (808) of the Tang dynasty. Thông Thiên built a stupa to the west of Luc* To* Temple, recorded his instructions, and interred him there.

La Qui
(851–936)

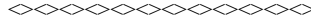
Ninth Generation:
Three Persons, No Biography Recorded

Tenth Generation:
Four Persons, Three Biographies Recorded

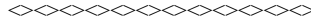
[48a7] The Elder La Qui⁴³³ of Song Lâm Temple, Phù Ninh Village, Thiên Đứ'c Prefecture, hailed from An Chân. His family name was Đinh. When he was young, he wandered everywhere to study with Zen adepts. Many years passed by and he still had not met with the appropriate condition to realize the Dharma, and he was almost ready to give up. Then he heard of Thông Thiên of Thien* Chủng Temple: in his assembly at one word the mind-ground opened up for him. So he stayed on and earnestly served Thông Thiên. When Thông Thiên was about to pass away, he instructed La Qui: "Formerly, my teacher Đinh Không had instructed me to preserve our Dharma and to pass it on to a man named Đinh. You are the right man for it. Now it's time for me [48b] to leave this world."

After receiving the Dharma, La Qui traveled all over teaching and converting people. He chose a piece of land and built a temple. Every word he uttered was sure to be prophetic. He cast a golden statue of the Sixth Patriarch at Luc Tô Temple. Afterward he was concerned that thieves might steal it, so he had the statue buried in front of the temple, and left his instructions:

When there is a wise king it will appear,
In the time of an ignorant ruler it will conceal itself.



When he was about to pass away, he instructed his disciple Thien * Ông: "Formerly, Gao Pian⁴³⁴ constructed a fortress by the Tô Lich* River⁴³⁵ because he knew that our territory Co* Pháp has a royal aura. He excavated and disconnected nineteen locations such as the Diem* River, the Phù Chan* Pond in order to suppress it. I have advised Khúc Lãm to fill them in and restore them. I also have a kapok tree⁴³⁶ planted at Minh Châu Temple to secure those disconnected locations. I know that in the future a good king is sure to appear to support and nourish our true Dharma. After I die, you should try to build an earthen stupa and hide the Dharma in it. Do not let [unworthy] people see it." After speaking these words, he passed away. He was eighty-five years old: it was the third year, *bính thân*, of the Qingtai era (936) of the Tang dynasty.



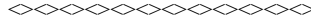
When La Quí planted that kapok tree, he wrote a verse:

[49a] On the great mountain the dragon's head rises,
 The baby dragon's tail hides the jewel's light.
 Eighteen sons will succeed—⁴³⁷
 The kapok tree shows a dragon's form.
 In the month of rat, day of rooster, hour of rabbit,
 We're sure to see the sun come forth in purity.

Pháp Thuan* (?–990)

[49a2] Zen Master Pháp Thuận of Cô So'n Temple,⁴³⁸ Thù Village, Ai* Prefecture. No one knew where he came from. His family name was Do*. He was widely learned and skilled in poetry, and he possessed the talent of a royal minister, with clear understanding of contemporary affairs. As a child he had left home to become a monk and studied with Zen Master Phù Trì⁴³⁹ of Long Thu* Temple. After attaining the Dharma, every word he uttered became prophetic.

When the [Former] Lê dynasty (980–1009) started to establish itself, he was instrumental in deciding its political policies. When independence was gained and the country was at peace,⁴⁴⁰ he did not hold any office, nor did he accept any reward. Emperor Lê Dai* Hành (r. 980–1005) respected him more and more. He never called him by his name but always referred to him as Đô Pháp Su' [which means "Dharma Master Đô"] and entrusted him with literary responsibilities.⁴⁴¹



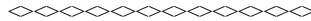
In the seventh year of the Tianfu era (986) the Song envoy Li Jue ⁴⁴² came for some diplomatic mission. Emperor Lê Dai* Hành asked Pháp Thuan* to disguise himself as a diplomatic officer ⁴⁴³ to spy on Li Jue's activities. There happened to be a pair of wild geese swimming in the river. Li Jue playfully hummed:

Geese, geese, a pair of wild geese,
Looking upward toward the sky. ⁴⁴⁴

Pháp Thuân, still holding on to the oar, completed the poem, chanting:

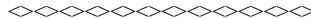
White feathers spread over blue water,
Red oars [49b] cutting through green waves. ⁴⁴⁵

Li Jue was greatly impressed by this.



Emperor Lê Đại Hành once asked Pháp Thuân how long the good fortune of the state would last. Pháp Thuân said:

The good fortune of the country is like a spreading vine,
In the southern land there is great peace.
If Your Majesty stays in the palace without contrived activity, ⁴⁴⁶
Then everywhere the clash of weapons will cease.



In the second year of the Hưng Thong* era (990), Pháp Thuân passed away at the age of seventy-six.

He had composed a one-volume work entitled *Bo* Tát Hieu* Sâm Hoi* Van** [A Bodhisattva's Words of Repentance], ⁴⁴⁷ which circulated widely in the contemporary world.

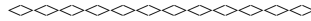
Ma Ha

[49b5] Zen Master Ma Ha, formerly called Ma Ha Ma Da (*Mahamaya**), of Quán Ái Temple, Đào Gia Village, Co* Miet*, ⁴⁴⁸ was of Champa descent. His adopted family name was Du'o'ng. His father Boi* Đà was learned in Buddhist literature and held the office of *Boi* Truong** (formerly called *Đà Phiên*) ⁴⁴⁹ at the Lê court.

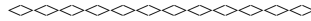
Ma Ha was erudite and sagacious: he mastered both Chinese and Sanskrit. At the age of twenty-four, he settled down at Quán Ái Temple to carry on his father's work.

Once, while he was explaining a Buddhist *sutra* *, the Dharma Protector⁴⁵⁰ appeared and reproached him: "What is the use of external learning?⁴⁵¹ You surely can't comprehend its principle." From this, Ma Ha lost his eyesight; deeply regretting his error, he was about to hurl himself into an abyss to commit suicide. Đông Lâm Viên⁴⁵² saw him and [50a] stopped him, saying: "Stop! Stop!" At these words, Ma Ha dissolved [into enlightenment].

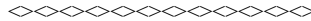
Subsequently⁴⁵³ he came to Co* So'n Temple to study with Do* Pháp Thuan* and devoted himself to the practice of repentance as well as chanting the *Great Compassion Mind Mantra* for three years without slacking off. Thus he was able to move Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara*,⁴⁵⁴ who poured pure water from her willow branch on his head and sprinkled his face and eyes. Ma Ha immediately regained his eyesight, and his mind became even more pure and calm.



In the fifth year of the Thuần Thiên era (1014), Ma Ha moved to Mount Dai* Vân⁴⁵⁵ in Tru'ông An. He practiced diligently every day and attained the "*samadhi*" of retention" and other magical skills. No one could fathom him.



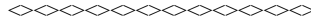
Emperor Lê Đại Hành⁴⁵⁶ had many times invited him to the court to inquire [about Buddhism], but [when questioned] Ma Ha only joined his palms and bowed his head. Only after Lê Đại Hành had repeated his questions several times did he answer: "I'm just a crazy monk of Quán Âm Temple." Lê Đại Hành was enraged and ordered him to be held in custody at Van* Tue* Temple in the imperial palace, and assigned men to guard the door. The next morning, they saw him outside the monk quarters though the door remained locked as before. Lê Đại Hành was amazed and set him free.



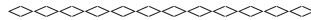
Once, Ma Ha traveled south to Ái Châu⁴⁵⁷ and arrived at Sa Dăng Province.⁴⁵⁸ The people there had the custom of worshipping ghosts and spirits, and most of them [were hunters and thus] were in the profession of taking lives. When Ma Ha exhorted them from eating meat, they all said: [50b] "It is our gods who bestow merit or impose misfortune—we dare not go against them." Ma Ha said: "If you can renounce evil and do good, and there is any harm incurred, I will bear the responsibility for it." The people in the village said: "For a long time in this area, there have been many people who die of leprosy. All the medicine men and sorcerers have given up [trying to cure this malady]. If you can cure it,

we will follow your advice." Ma Ha then blessed water with *mantras* and spat it on them—those who suffered from leprosy were immediately cured. Although they admired him, it was impossible to convert them overnight because they had been deeply influenced by these bad habits.

Once a village notable named Ngô was drunk, so he put wine and meat on the table and pressured Ma Ha [to consume them], saying: "If you can enjoy this with us, Master, then we will follow your teaching." Ma Ha said: "I dare not refuse your kind invitation, I'm only afraid of a stomachache." Ngô was pleased and said: "Should there be any stomachache, I will take it on for you." Ma Ha accepted his invitation. After a while, Ma Ha pretended to have a swollen stomach and from it came rumbling noises and heavy panting. Ma Ha cried out: "Mr. Ngô, why don't you take this pain for me?" Ngô's face became pale. He did not know what to do. Ma Ha then joined his palms together and chanted: "Homage to the Buddha, homage to the Dharma, homage to the Sangha. Please help me." After a while, he spat out the meat, and it turned into animals that ran away; he spat out the fish, and it turned into live fishes flopping around on the ground; he spat out the wine, and it turned into verdigris. Everyone was appalled. Ma Ha said: "When you have a disease, [51a] I cure it. When I have a stomachache, you can't take it on for me. From now on are you going to follow my teaching?" The people [in the village] all paid homage and accepted his teaching. ⁴⁵⁹



In the second year of the Thiên Thành era (1029), Governor General Nguyen* Quang Loi* invited him to take over Khai Thiên Temple in Thái Bình Prefecture. After living there for six years, Ma Ha left for Hoan Châu. ⁴⁶⁰ Nothing is known about his activities after that.



The *Diagram of {the Succession} of the Southern School* said he was a Dharma heir of Nam Du'o'ng. This is incorrect. ⁴⁶¹

Thien* Ông
(902–979)

Eleventh Generation:
Four Persons, Two Biographies Recorded

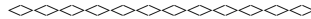
[51a6] Thiên Ông Dao* Gia* of Song Lâm Temple, Phù Ninh Village, Thiên Duc* Prefecture, hailed from Co* Pháp. His family name was Lu*. As a child he was already indifferent toward the mundane world. Afterward

he left home to follow Elder Đinh. ⁴⁶² After receiving the Dharma, he passed away in the tenth year of the Thái Bình era (979) of the Đinh dynasty at the age of seventy-eight.

Sùng Pham*
(1004–1087)

[51a9] Zen Master Sùng Pham of Pháp Vân Temple, Co* Châu Village, Long Biên: his family name was Mâu. He was a man of extraordinary appearance: his earlobes reached his shoulders. ⁴⁶³ When he first renounced the mundane world, he went to study with Vô Ngai* of Hu'o'ng Thành Temple. After receiving the mind-seal, he traveled all over India to broaden his knowledge. After nine years he returned, [51b] clear in both discipline (*sila**) and concentration (*samadhi**).

He then came to Pháp Vân Temple to propagate these two methods. Students came to him as if going home. Emperor Lê Dai* Hành⁴⁶⁴ invited him to court many times to inquire about the mysterious purport [of Buddhism]. Lê Đại Hành treated him with appropriate etiquette and rewarded him munificently.



Sùng Pham passed away in the third year, *dinh* mảo*, of the Quang* Huu* era (1087) of the Lý dynasty at the age of eighty-four.

Emperor Lý Nhân Tông had composed a verse in commemoration of him:

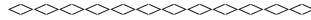
Sùng Pham hailed from the southern country,
He returned home successful with mind empty.⁴⁶⁵
Long ears reflect his auspicious quality,
[He realized that] all phenomena are inherently detached
[from all forms] and extremely subtle.⁴⁶⁶

Van* Hanh*
(?–1025)

***Twelfth Generation:
Seven Persons, Five Biographies Recorded***

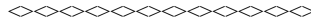
[51b7] Zen Master Van* Hanh* of Luc* To* Temple, Dich* Bang* Village, Thiên Duc* Prefecture, hailed from Cô Pháp. His family name was Nguyen*. His family served the Buddha for generations. As a child he was outstanding

and uncommon. He was well versed in all three learnings⁴⁶⁷ and had studied hundreds of [Buddhist] treatises.⁴⁶⁸ He was plainly indifferent to fame and fortune. At the age of twenty-one, he left home to become a monk, and together with Dinh* Hue*, he served Thien* Ông of Luc* To* Temple. Whenever he had time away from his duties, he studied indefatigably. After Thiên Ông passed away, he devoted himself to the practice of retention (*dharani**) and concentration (*samadhi**).⁴⁶⁹ From then on, [52a] every word he uttered became prophetic for the people. He was very much revered by Emperor Lê Dai* Hành.



In the first year of the Tianfu era (980), the Song general Hou Renbao⁴⁷⁰ came to plunder and stationed his troops at Cu'o'ng Giap, Lãng So'n. Lê Đại Hành summoned Van* Hanh* to the capital and asked: "[Are we going to] win or lose?" Van Hanh said: "The enemies will withdraw within twenty-one days." And so it turned out later.

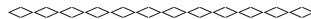
When Lê Đại Hành wanted to conquer Champa, he held long discussions [with court officials] without reaching any decision. Van Hanh submitted a memorial advising him to act quickly and not miss the opportunity. Afterward, Lê Đại Hành in fact did win the war.⁴⁷¹



When a wicked and treacherous man named Do* Ngân⁴⁷² wanted to plot against him, Van Hanh knew about it beforehand. He sent Ngân a verse that said:

Earth (木) are mutually produced,⁴⁷³
 silver (金) go together,⁴⁷⁴
 Why harbor a plot against me?⁴⁷⁵
 The sadness I felt then is ended,⁴⁷⁶
 In the future⁴⁷⁷ I will bear you no grudge.

Dô Ngân was afraid and canceled his plot. There were many instances like this of his knowledge of the future and his insight into the past.



At this time Lê Ngoa* Trieu* (r. 1005–1009)⁴⁷⁸ was on the throne, a cruel tyrant. Both Heaven and men detested his behavior. Emperor Lý Thái Tô was then his bodyguard and had not ascended the throne. During those years strange omens appeared incessantly in many forms: a white dog with hair in his back that looked like the characters *thiên tu** (Son of Heaven)⁴⁷⁹ appeared in the Hàm Toai* Hall, Ứng Thái Tâm Temple, Co* Pháp Prefecture; lightning struck the kapok tree and left writings [52b]

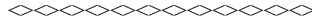
on its trunk; ⁴⁸⁰ sounds of chanting at night were heard around the grave of Great Lord Hien* Khánh; ⁴⁸¹ insects gnawed at the bark of a bastard banyan tree at Song Lâm Temple, forming the character *quoc** (nation). Everything was explained as omens that the [Former] Lê dynasty was going to collapse and the Lý was going to flourish.

Therefore, on the day when Lý Thái Tô* ascended the throne, Van* Hanh* was at Luc* Tô Temple, but he already knew in advance about the event and told the two uncles ⁴⁸² of Thái Tô: "The Son of Heaven has passed away. The Bodyguard is in duty [in the imperial palace]. Thousands of Lý men are inside the city [ready to act]. Before the day is out, the Bodyguard will control the country."

He then placed an announcement at the crossroads that said:

The thorns⁴⁸³ sink into the North Sea,
The Plum tree⁴⁸⁴ grows under the southern sky.
On all sides the weapons are silent,
In all areas the people celebrate peace.

At these words the two lords were very afraid and sent their men to hasten the imperial palace for information. It turned out to be exactly as Van Hanh said.



On the fifteenth day of the fifth month of the sixteenth year, *at** *suu**, of the Thuan* Thiên era (1025),⁴⁸⁵ without any illness, Van Hanh spoke a verse:

The body is like lightning: it's there and then it's not,
It is like myriad plants and trees—fresh in the spring
but fading in autumn.
Trust in your destiny unafraid of ups and downs,
Because ups and downs are [as evanescent] as drops of dew
on a blade of grass.⁴⁸⁶

He again instructed his students: "Where do you want to abide? I abide without abiding place, but do not [53a] depend on not abiding to abide." Shortly after that he passed away.

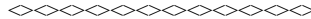
The emperor, court literati, and common people [were present as they] cremated his body, collected the relics, and built a stupa to worship them.

Lý Nhân Tông had written a poem to commemorate him:

Van Hanh fused present, past, and future,
He matched the workings of ancient prophecies.
His native village was Co* Pháp,
He planted his staff there to guard the royal territory.⁴⁸⁷

Dinh * Hue*

[53a14] Zen Master Dinh Hue of Quang Hu'ng Temple, An Trinh Village, Thiên Đức Prefecture, hailed from Cam* Dien*, Phong Châu.⁴⁸⁸ His family name was Khúc. At first, he and Van* Hanh* served Thiên* Ông. Afterward, Đinh Huê received the mind-seal from Thiên Ông. When he passed away he transmitted it to his disciple Lâm Huê Sinh.

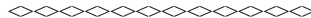


[53b] The *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** [The Diagram of the Dharma Succession of the Southern School] says he succeeded Van Hanh. This might be wrong. I am now following the original biography.

Đao* Hanh*
(?–1117)

[53b3] Zen Master Đao Hanh of Thiên Phúc Temple,⁴⁸⁹ Mount Phat* Tích,⁴⁹⁰ had the family name Tù'. His personal name was Lo*. His father Vinh held the office of General Supervisor of Monk-Officers. Vinh used to study at An Lăng Village.⁴⁹¹ He married a girl of the Tang* family⁴⁹² and made his home there with her. She gave birth to Đao Hanh.

As a young man Đao Hanh was a defender of justice, acted quite unrestrained, and had great aspirations. No one could fathom his personality, his words, his actions. He befriended a Confucian scholar named Phí Sinh, a Daoist master named Lê Toàn Nghĩa*, and an actor named Vi At*.⁴⁹³ At night, he devoted himself to arduous study, yet during daytime he would play the flute, play kickball, gamble, and enjoy himself. His father often scolded him for his laziness. One night, the father sneaked into his room to spy on him. He saw the lamp almost out, books piled up at his side, and Đao Hanh was leaning on his desk sleeping, a book still in his hand. After that his father stopped worrying about him. Subsequently Đao Hanh passed the royal examination for monk-officers (*tang* quan*).



Once, Tù' Vinh offended the Marquis of Diên Thành.⁴⁹⁴ Diên Thành asked the sorcerer Dai* Diên⁴⁹⁵ to use black magic to beat Vinh to death [54a] and hurl him into the Tô River. When Vinh's corpse got to Quyet* Kieu* Bridge, where Diên Thành's mansion was located, it suddenly stood up like a living man and pointed [at the mansion]; he remained there the whole day, unmoving. Diên Thành was scared and rushed word of this to

Dai * Diên. Diên came and said: "A monk's anger should not last overnight!" Even as he spoke, Vinh's body flowed away with the stream.

Dao* Hanh* thought about avenging his father's death, but he had not come up with any plan. One day he lay in wait for Đai Diên to go outside. As Diên appeared, he was about to strike him when suddenly a voice in the air shouted: "Stop! Stop!" Đao Hanh was frightened, dropped his stick, and ran away. He then wanted to go to India to learn special black magic to fight Đai Diên. He went only as far as the country of the golden-toothed barbarians⁴⁹⁶ when he realized that the road was full of difficulties, so he turned back.

He then went to Mount Tù' So'n to live in seclusion and devoted himself to chanting the *Mind of Great Compassion Dharani** daily. One day, after he had chanted it 108,000 times, a god appeared before him and said: "I'm your servant, the Celestial King who is the Guardian of the Four Directions.⁴⁹⁷ I was moved by your achievement in chanting the *sutra**, so I came here to place myself at your disposal." Đao Hanh knew that his magical power⁴⁹⁸ was now complete, so he would be able to avenge his father's death. He then went to the head of Quyet* Kieu* Bridge and tentatively threw his walking stick into the swift running water. The stick went against the current like a dragon and did not stop until it reached the Tây Du'ong Bridge. Đao Hanh was pleased, [54b] saying: "Now my magic arts will prevail."

He went directly to Đai Diên's house. Seeing him, Đai Diên said: "Don't you remember what happened before?" Đao Hanh looked up to the sky, but it was all quiet—there was nothing to be seen. Then he chased Đai Diên and beat him. Đai Diên sickened and died.

After this, enmity he had felt previously melted like snow and his mundane concerns became like cold ashes. Đao Hanh wandered to all Buddhist monasteries to search sanction [for his enlightenment]. When he heard that Kiêu Trí Huyen* was teaching at Thái Bình,⁴⁹⁹ he came for instruction and presented a verse to inquire about the true mind:

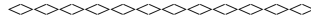
Long mixed with the dusts of the mundane world,
 still unable to recognize pure gold,
 I do not know where the pure mind is.
 Please point it out truly for me⁵⁰⁰—
 extend your skillful means,
 So that I can realize Thusness⁵⁰¹ and cease
 my painful search.

Trí Huyên replied with a verse:

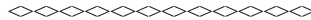
The secret sounds in the jewel [pot of Buddha] reveal the
 subtle voice [of enlightenment].

In it the mind of Zen appears filling your eyes.
 The objects countless as grains of sand on the banks of the
 Ganges River are all the path to enlightenment,
 Yet if you consciously search for enlightenment
 it is far, far away.

Đạo *Hanh* was confused and could not understand. He then went to Sùng Pham* of Pháp Vân Temple and asked: "What is true mind?" Sùng Pham said: "What is not true mind?" Đạo Hanh was abruptly awakened and asked: "How am I to preserve it?" Sùng Pham said: "Eat when hungry, drink when thirsty."⁵⁰² Đạo Hanh bowed down and took leave.



From then on, [55a] his Dharma power increased and his karmic affinity for Zen matured. He tamed hosts of mountain snakes⁵⁰³ and wild beasts; burned his finger to pray for rain; and blessed water with *mantras* to cure sickness. In everything he did he was effective.⁵⁰⁴

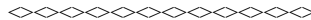


A monk asked: "Walking, standing, sitting, lying are all Buddha's mind. What is Buddha's mind?" Đạo Hanh instructed him with a verse:

If you think in terms of existence, then even
 a grain of sand is existent,
 If you think in terms of nonexistence, then all phenomena
 are nonexistent.
 Existence and nonexistence are like reflections of the moon
 in water,
 Don't be attached to existence, or take emptiness as empty.

And:

The sun and the moon are on the clifftop,
 Everybody [in this world] loses the jewel.
 Like a rich man who has a good horse,
 Yet walks and does not ride it.



At that time, Lý Nhân Tông had no heir. In the second month of the third year of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1112), the authorities in Thanh Hoá Prefecture reported: "A weird supernatural omen has appeared at the seaside. There is a child about three years old who can speak fluently and calls himself emperor, and who has given himself the religious sobriquet Giác Hoàng [which means 'Enlightened Sovereign']. He knows about everything that the emperor has done." Lý Nhân Tông

dispatched an envoy to investigate. It was exactly as reported, so they took the child back to the capital and lodged him at Báo Thiên Temple. Lý Nhân Tông loved him for his intelligence and wanted to install him as Crown Prince. All court officials protested that this should not be done. [55b] Some of them said that if Giác Hoàng was really supernatural, he must reincarnate himself in the royal family before he could be made Crown Prince. Lý Nhân Tông agreed and organized a great reincarnation ceremony, which was expected to last seven days and nights.

Đào * Hanh* heard about it and said: "That child is a devil and has gone too far beguiling people. How can I just sit by and watch without helping, and let him deceive people's minds and disturb the true Dharma?" He then told his sister to disguise herself as a spectator and secretly hung some of his magic seals on the eaves. On the third day of the ceremony, Giác Hoàng⁵⁰⁵ fell ill and said: "The whole country has been covered with iron net. Although I wish to be reincarnated, I'm afraid all the paths are obstructed." Lý Nhân Tông suspected that Đào Hanh had used his *mantras* to obstruct the ceremony, so he ordered him held in custody for an investigation. Đào Hanh admitted what he had done. Lý Nhân Tông had him confined in Hưng Thánh Palace and assembled court officials to discuss his case.

When the Marquis of Sùng Hien*⁵⁰⁶ passed by, Đào Hanh pleaded: "Please try to help me. If I'm fortunate enough to be exonerated this time, in the future I will certainly be reincarnated in the imperial palace and pay back your favor." The marquis agreed.

In the court discussion of [Đào Hanh's case], they all said: "Since Your Majesty has no son, you expected Giác Hoàng to be reincarnated [as your son]. Now Lo* wrongly used his *mantras* to spoil it. It would be fitting to execute his entire family to set an example for the people." [56a] The Marquis of Sùng Hiên calmly petitioned: "If Giác Hoàng really had supernatural power, even a hundred *mantras* of Lô couldn't do anything to harm him. Now that things have turned out this way, it only shows that Lô is far superior to Giác Hoàng. I humbly think that it is better to let him reincarnate than to punish⁵⁰⁷ him." Lý Nhân Tông thus forgave Đào Hanh.⁵⁰⁸

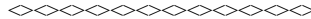
Đào Hanh came to the marquis' house [to express his gratitude]. At that time the marquis' wife was taking a bath, and Đào Hanh caught a glimpse of her. The marquis' wife was angry and told the marquis of the event. The marquis already knew the reason, so he did not reproach Đào Hanh. His wife thus became pregnant. Đào Hanh enjoined the marquis: "Please let me know just before the baby is due."

Later, when the messenger came, Đào Hanh took a bath, changed his clothes, and instructed his students: "My previous nexus of karmic causes

has not terminated, therefore I have to be reborn in this world again as an emperor for a while. ⁵⁰⁹ After that lifespan is over, I will again be reborn as a god on the *Trayatrimsa** Heaven. ⁵¹⁰ When you see my body decay, ⁵¹¹ it means I have entered nirvana and do not dwell in cyclic existence any more." Hearing these words, all his students were moved to tears. Dao* Hanh* spoke a verse:

Autumn comes without informing the wild geese to
return together,
A cold smile for the sadness temporarily generated
among men [by death].
I want to warn my students not to be attached to me,
How many times have the teachers of old [56b]
reincarnated as the teachers of today!

After speaking these words, he solemnly passed away. The body that he cast off still exists today. ⁵¹²



According to *Quoc* Su** [National History], in the eighth year of the Hoi* Tu'ong Dai* Khánh (1117), Emperor Lý Nhân Tông [issued a royal decree to bring the sons of the Marquises of] Sùng Hien*, Thành Khánh, Thành Quang*, Thành Chiêu, Thành Hu'ng, to the royal palace to be brought up and educated. ⁵¹³ The Marquis of Sùng Hien's* son was only two years old then, ⁵¹⁴ but he was greatly loved by Lý Nhân Tông and was installed as Crown Prince.

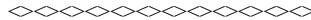
Note: In the twelfth month, in the winter of the first year of the Thiên Phù Khánh Tho* era (1127), Lý Nhân Tông passed away; the crown prince succeeded to the throne. [He died] at the age of twenty-one ⁵¹⁵ and reigned for eleven years. ⁵¹⁶ It is said that Emperor Lý Than* Tông (r. 1128–1138) was an incarnation of Tù' Đạo Hanh. Some said that Giác Hoàng was an incarnation of Đai Diên.

Tri Bát (1049–1117)

[56b8] Zen Master Tri Bát of To* Phong Temple, Mount Thach* That*, ⁵¹⁷ Đai Cau* Village, Tân Trai*, hailed from Luy Lâu. ⁵¹⁸ His family name was Van*. Even as a young boy he respected Buddhism very keenly. At the age of twenty, he took the tonsure and received ordination as a monk under Sùng Pham* of Pháp Vân Temple. Sùng Pham appreciated his diligence and care in dealing with things, so he transmitted the mind-

seal to him and gave him the sobriquet Trì Bát [which means "Carrying the Begging Bowl"].

After Sùng Pham * passed away, Trì Bát traveled to all Zen centers, inquiring of all the experienced worthies. Finally, he came to To* Phong Temple to study. State Minister Grand Commandant Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiet*⁵¹⁹ was one of his patrons. Trì Bát always used all the donations he got for Buddhist affairs. He also restored temples such as Pháp Vân, Thien* Cu', Thê Tâm, Quang* An, and others to pay a debt of gratitude for his rearing in the Dharma.



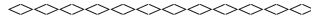
[57a] On the eighteenth day of the second month of the eighth year of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1117), when he was about to pass away, Trì Bát spoke a verse:

If there is death there must be life,
 If there is life there must be death.
 Death is what saddens the worldly beings,
 Life is what they rejoice in.
 Sadness and joy are both endless,
 They mutually establish each other.
 Don't be concerned about life and death,
 An tô rô tô rô tai* li*.⁵²⁰

After speaking this verse, he passed away sitting upright. He was sixty-nine years old. His disciples, Zen Masters Tinh* Hanh*, Pháp Nhãn, and Thuan* Chân, cremated his body.

Thuân Chân (?–1105)

[57a6] Zen Master Thuân Chân of Hoa Quang Temple, Tây Ket* Village,⁵²¹ Thu'ò'ng* Nghi, was a native of Cuu* Ông, Te* Giang.⁵²² His family name was Đào. At a young age he was already versed in the classics and history. Everywhere he went scholars vied to befriend him. Subsequently he met Pháp Bao* of Quang Tinh Temple⁵²³ and reached accord with the truth at a word from Pháp Bao. He then gave up his previous studies to study with Pháp Bao. Within a few years he was able to break through obstructions and [became like] lightning or sparks struck from stone. He expounded and propagated [the Dharma] according to the [state of] the inquirer, guiding the deaf and leading the blind to the full extent of his power.



On the seventh day of the second month of the fifth year, at * *dau**, of the Long Phù era (1105),⁵²⁴ when he was about to pass away, his disciple Bon* Tich* came into his room and asked for instruction. Thuan* Chân spoke [57b] a verse:

The true nature has no fixed identity ever,
 And has never undergone birth and destruction.
 The body is a thing that belongs to birth and destruction,
 But the true nature has never undergone [birth and]
 destruction.

As his verse ended, he passed away. Regent and Grand Guardian Cao Toi* took charge of the cremation [of his body] and the erection of a stupa to house his remains.

Hue* Sinh
 (?–1063)

Thirteenth Generation:
Six Persons, Four Biographies Recorded

[57b5] General Superintendent of Monks (*Tang* Thong**) Huê Sinh of Van* Tue* Temple in the capital of Thang* Long hailed from Đông Phù Liet*.⁵²⁵ His family name was Lâm, his personal name was Khu. He was a descendant of Lâm Phú of Trà So'n, Vu* An. His father Khoáng married a daughter of the Monk Scribe Quách, so he moved to Phù Liêt. The family had two sons. The elder, named Sinh, had held office up to as high as Prime Minister and Attaché of the Department of Army.

Huê Sinh was the second brother. His appearance was extraordinary and his eloquence was like a flowing stream. He was especially versed in literature and skilled in calligraphy and painting. When he was free from Confucian studies he would investigate Buddhist books on the side. He read through all the Buddhist scriptures (*sutras**) and philosophical treatises (*sastras**). Whenever the words touched on some crucial point in Buddhism, he was always deeply moved to the point of shedding tears.

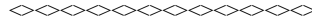
At the age of nineteen he left the mundane world. Together with Pháp Thông of Hac* Lâm,⁵²⁶ he served Dinh* Huê of Quang Hu'ng Temple. [58a] He made steady progress in mystic studies. Dinh Huê cherished him and transmitted the mind-seal to him.

After that, he wandered from monastery to monastery to come fully

to grips with the meaning of Zen. At first, he moved his abode to Bo * De* (*Bodhi*) Peak, Mount Trà So'n. Every time he entered *samadhi** it would go on for five days. His contemporaries called him a Bodhisattva in the flesh.

Emperor Lý Thái Tông heard of him and dispatched an envoy to summon him to the capital. Huế* Sinh told the envoy: "Haven't you seen a sacrificial animal? At first they dress it with embroidered silk and feed it with fine sweet grass. But when they drag it into the royal temple, though it may wish to be just an orphan animal, even that is unattainable, much less anything better."⁵²⁷ He firmly refused to go.

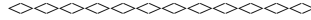
After Lý Thái Tông's repeated invitations, Huế Sinh at last came to court. After meeting with him, Lý Thái Tông was greatly pleased, bestowed on him the rank of Monk in Palace Service,⁵²⁸ and appointed him abbot of Van* Tue* Temple.



One day, during a vegetarian feast in the imperial palace, Lý Thái Tông asked: "I have noticed that scholars have disputed about the mind-source of the Buddhas and patriarchs. I wish that each of you here, men of eminent virtue from various districts, would express his point of view to me so that I could see how to apply mind." Huế Sinh spontaneously uttered a verse:

Dharma is originally like non-Dharma,
 Neither existent nor nonexistent.
 If one knows this truth,
 Then sentient beings and Buddha are one:
 How quiet the moon over Lanka!
 Empty, [58b] empty, the boat that crosses the ocean.
 If one knows emptiness, by means of that emptiness
 one realizes being,
 Free to go everywhere in *samadhi*.

Lý Thái Tông lauded and rewarded him more. Subsequently, Huế Sinh was bestowed the rank of General Supervisor of Monks (*Đó Tang* Luc**). At that time princes and nobles such as Phung* Yet* Thiên Vu'o'ng,⁵²⁹ Princes Uy Vu*, Hi Tù',⁵³⁰ Thien* Huê, Chiêu Khánh, Prince Hien* Minh, General Vu'o'ng Tai*,⁵³¹ Grand Preceptor Lu'o'ng Nham* Van*,⁵³² Grand Guardian Đào Xu* Trung, Administrator Kieu* Bong*, and others all frequented him to inquire about the Dharma and treated him with respect due a teacher. In the reign of Lý Thánh Tông (1054–1072), Huế Sinh was raised to the office of *Ta* Nhai Tang Thong** [General Superintendent of the Academy of Monks], the same rank as a marquis though without the title.⁵³³



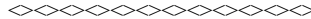
In the fifth year, *giáp thìn*, of the Gia Khánh era (1063),⁵³⁴ when he was about to pass away, Hue* Sinh assembled his disciples and spoke a verse:

Water and fire interpenetrate every day,
 Yet their origins are still unknown.
 You should know that they are without abode,
 Three and three and three and three.⁵³⁵

And:

In the old days when he came for instructions,
 Everybody showed him the way to the south.⁵³⁶
 If there's someone who asks about something new,
 This is like the first sliver of crescent moon on the
 third day of the month.⁵³⁷

Then he took a bath, burned incense, and at midnight silently passed away.



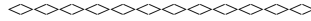
Hue Sinh had composed by royal decree inscriptions on steles at the temples of Thiên Phúc,⁵³⁸ Thiên Thánh, Khai Quoc* at Tiên Du, Dieu* Nghiêm Báo Đứ'c, and others at Vu* Ninh.⁵³⁹ He also composed works such as *Pháp Su* Trai Nghi* [Ritual Forms for Dharma Services and Vegetarian Feasts], and *Chu' Dao* Tru'ò'ng Khánh Tân Van** [Celebrations and Eulogy of the Site of Enlightenment], which are still in circulation.⁵⁴⁰

Thien* Nham (1093–1163)

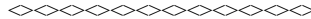
[59a2] Zen Master Thiên Nham of Trí Qua* Temple,⁵⁴¹ Co* Châu Village, Long Biên Province, hailed from Cô Châu. His family name was Khu'o'ng, his personal name Thông. His family had been Monk Officials for generations. His spirit and demeanor were energetic and outstanding and he had a clear voice.⁵⁴² He loved to learn *dharanis** and would memorize them and recite them without missing a single word. During the Hoi* Phong era (1092–1110), he participated in the royal examinations on the *Lotus* and *Perfection of Wisdom* literature, and both times he passed with highest honors.⁵⁴³

Subsequently he was approved with the mind-seal by Pháp Y of Thành Dao* Temple,⁵⁴⁴ so he decided to become a monk there. At first, he dwelt at Thiên Phúc Temple on Mount Tiên Du. His discipline was pure and

strict, and his Dharma mind expanded. For almost six years he only ate wild fruits and drank stream water. Afterward he returned to his native district, restored Trí Qua * Temple, and became its abbot.



During the Dai* Thuan* era (1128–1132) there was a drought.⁵⁴⁵ A royal edict summoned Thien* Nham to the capital. He was immediately effective in his prayers for rain, so Emperor [Lý Than* Tông] recognized him as an eminent monk and bestowed on him royal robes. After that, whenever there were national ceremonies to pray for rain, he would preside over them.



In the first year of the Chinh Long Bao* Úng era (1163), in the middle of spring, during daytime, Thiên Nham burned incense, gave his disciples last instructions, and passed away sitting upright. His age was seventyone.

At present the body that he cast off still exists. Contemporaries [59b] called him "Living Buddha."⁵⁴⁶ Although the temple has gone through many wars through the ages and was burned many times, his body remained intact.

Minh Không (1065–1141)

[59b2] National Preceptor Minh Không of Quoc* Thanh Temple, Tru'ò'ng An,⁵⁴⁷ was a native of Đàm Xá Village, Đại Hoàng.⁵⁴⁸ His family name was Nguyen*, his personal name Chí Thành. He traveled around to study [Buddhism] and met Zen Master Tù' Dao* Hanh* of Thiên Phúc Temple. Đạo Hanh took him as a personal attendant for seventeen years. Đạo Hanh admired his aspirations, so he transmitted the mind-seal to him and gave him the sobriquet [Minh Không].

When he was about to pass away, Đạo Hanh told Minh Không: "Formerly, our Lord Buddha had achieved perfect enlightenment yet still suffered retribution from the golden tiger; how can people—in the last period of the Dharma—with little merit protect themselves? I will be reborn in this world as a king. In my next life it is hard for me to escape sickness as a karmic debt. I have a karmic affinity with you, you should save me."

After Đạo Hanh's* death, Minh Không returned to his native village and took to farming for more than twenty years, indifferent to fame and

fortune. At that time Lý Than * Tông was suffering a strange disease: his mind was confused, and he was growling and moaning fiercely. Renowned physicians from all over the country responded to the royal edict, [60a] but to no avail.⁵⁴⁹ Meanwhile children were heard singing:

To cure the Son of Heaven,
Send for Nguyen* Minh Không.

The court sent emissaries to look for Minh Không among the people and finally found him. When Minh Không arrived at court the renowned physicians were performing their arts in the palace. Seeing how crude and rustic he looked they did not bother to greet him. Minh Không took a nail five inches long and planted it in a column of the palace, shouting: "He who can pull the nail out will get to do the job first." He repeated it again and again, but no one dared accept the challenge. Minh Không then used two fingers of his left hand and pulled on the nail and it came out easily. Everybody present was struck with admiration.

When he saw the emperor, Minh Không cried out with a stern voice: "Worthy man, you are foremost among the people, why do you act crazy like this?" The emperor trembled with fear. Minh Không had a big caldron brought in, filled it with water, and boiled it again and again. Then he stirred it with his hand four times and had the emperor bathe in it. The emperor recovered instantly. Subsequently, the emperor made Minh Không National Preceptor and the recipient of duties from hundreds of households as reward.

On an unknown date in the second year, *tân sui**,⁵⁵⁰ of the Dai* Dinh* era (1141), Minh Không passed away at the age of seventy-six.

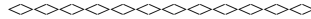
Bon* Tich* (? –1140)

[60b2] Zen Master Bôn Tich (formerly called Pháp Mat*) of Chúc Thánh Temple, Nghĩa* Trú Village, Bình Lac* Prefecture,⁵⁵¹ hailed from Tây Ket*. His family name was Nguyễn. He was a descendant of General Commandant of Inner Palace Services Nguyễn Kha of the [Former] Lê dynasty. Even when he was young he showed contempt for the mundane world. Once he met a strange monk who marveled at his appearance and said: "This child has an extraordinary physique. If he leaves home to become a monk, he will truly carry on the Dharma lineage."

When he grew up he first went to study with Thuan* Chân of Hoa Quang Temple, took the studies [seriously], and reached accord with its intent. Subsequently he received ordination. Thuận Chân saw that his

meditation was perfect and his discipline was pure, and that by studying one he understood ten. He patted his head and said: "The propagation of the Dharma in this southern region is in your hands."

From then on, Bon * Tich* was not attached to being or nonbeing and realized both the sudden and gradual methods. Everywhere he went he showered down the rains of Dharma and moved even remote places with the wind of mystic truth. Monks, laymen, and court officials all turned to him with respect.



On the fourteenth day of the sixth month, in the summer of the third year, *ky* mùi*, of the Thieu* Minh era (1140), he assembled his disciples and told them: "There's nothing to be concerned about." As his words ended, he died.

Khánh Hy*
(1067–1142)

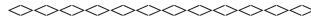
Fourteenth Generation:
Four Persons, Only One Biography Recorded

[61a2] General Superintendent of Monks (*Tang* Thong**) Khánh Hy of Từ Liêm Village, Vinh* Khang, hailed from Co* Giao, Long Biên. His family name was Nguyen*. Being a man of the lineage of purity practices, he abstained from eating meat as a child. When he grew up he came to study with Bôn Tich of Chúc Thánh Temple.

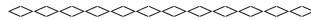
One day, while he and Bôn Tich were on their way to a donor's house to receive offerings, he asked: "What is the true intent of the patriarchs of Zen?" Just then they heard the sounds of a sorcerer ceremony in a house nearby; Bôn Tich said: "Aren't these the words of a sorcerer calling down spirits?" Khánh Hy said: "Please do not joke with me, Venerable Teacher." Bôn Tich said: "I have never showed off to anybody!" Khánh Hy could not understand, so he left Bôn Tich.

When Khánh Hy came to Bien* Tài⁵⁵² of Van* Tue* Temple, Biên Tài asked: "Where are you coming from?" Khánh Hy said: "From Venerable Tich's* place." Biên Tài said: "He is indeed the spiritual guide of the region; what has he taught you?" Khánh Hy said: "I served him for many years, yet he never answered even one of my questions, so I left him." Biên Tài asked: "What is your question?" Khánh Hy related the previous conversation. Biên Tài said: "Alas! [61b] Venerable Tich has gone out of

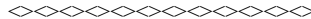
his way to explain everything to you. Better not slander your own teacher!" Khánh Hy * paused in thought. Bien* Tài said: "Haven't you heard that 'When you have realized [mind], all phenomena are sufficient [evidence of enlightenment]; when you are not yet enlightened, you are perpetually confused and at odds.'"⁵⁵³ Khánh Hy was abruptly enlightened and returned to Bon* Tich*. When Bôn Tich saw him, he asked: "Why are you coming back so quickly?" Khánh Hy prostrated himself, saying: "I committed the sin of slandering you, Teacher. I'm back here to ask to be allowed to repent." Bôn Tich said: "The nature of sin is empty, how can you repent?" Khánh Hy said: "I should repent just like that." Bôn Tich said no more.



Once, together with two Zen practitioners Tinh* Nhân and Tinh Nhu', he was standing, waiting on Bôn Tich, when the latter said: "You gentlemen have studied with me for a long time. Why don't each of you present your knowledge to me, so that I can see what your approach to the Dharma is?" As Nhân and Nhu' were about to open their mouths, Khánh Hy gave a shout and said: "When there's an optical illusion in your eyes, you see illusory flowers falling in confusion."⁵⁵⁴ Bôn Tich said: "Master Khánh Hy, what will you do with the boat? You've broken the bailing buckets?"⁵⁵⁵ Khánh Hy said: "Why use a boat?" Bôn Tich said: "You haven't opened up yet, smart guy. You only know about things on this side; you haven't even dreamt of things on the Other Side." [62a] Khánh Hy said: "It's only Him, though." Bôn Tich said: "'Leave the top of a hundred-foot pole and take a step'—what do you say about this?"⁵⁵⁶ Khánh Hy raised his two fists, saying: "Don't be stingy! Don't be stingy!" Bôn Tich said: "I'll spare you a beating!" After that, his fame spread over all the Buddhist communities.

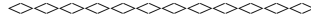


During the Thiên Chu'o'ng Bao* Tu'⁵⁵⁷ era (1133–1138) [Emperor Lý Than* Tông] issued a royal decree inviting him to the capital. The emperor was pleased with his appropriate answers and conferred upon him the rank of Monk Scribe. Later he advanced to General Superintendent of Monks.

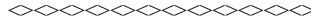


One day, his disciple Pháp Dung asked: "When one comprehends form and emptiness, is form profane or sacred?" Khánh Hy spontaneously uttered a verse:

Don't waste energy enquiring about form and emptiness,
 There's nothing in the Dharma that is superior
 to inquiring of the patriarchs' source.
 If you search outwardly for mind, it is difficult
 to determine its nature,
 [It is like] in this world if one plants one cinnamon tree,
 how can it make a thicket?
 All the universe is the tip of a hair,
 And the sun and the moon are contained in a
 mustard seed, ⁵⁵⁸
 The great function appears right before your eyes
 like the fist from the hand,
 Who cares about sacred and profane, east and west?



On the twenty-seventh day of the first month of the third year, *nhâm tuat**, of the Dai* Dinh* era (1142), Khánh Hy* fell ill and subsequently passed away at the age seventy-six. ⁵⁵⁹ He had composed a work entitled *Ngo* Dao* Ca Thi Tap** [Collected Songs and Poems on Enlightenment], ⁵⁶⁰ which is still in circulation. ⁵⁶¹



Su Ky** [The Recorded History] says that Khánh Hy passed away in the third year of the Thiên Chu'o'ng Bao* Tu'* era (1135). Both sources are available now. ⁵⁶²

Giới Không

Fifteenth Generation:

Three Persons, Two Biographies Not Recorded

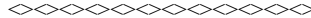
[62b2] Zen Master Giới Không of Tháp Bát Village Temple, Mãn Dau* County, ⁵⁶³ was a native of the same county. His family name was Nguyen*, his personal name Tuân. A son of a well-off family, he loved Buddhism as a child. He was first ordained and became a monk under the guidance of Quang* Phúc of Nguyên Hòa Temple on Mount Chân Ma, ⁵⁶⁴ and he served Quang Phúc for several years.

After comprehending the intent [of Buddhism, he went to Mount Lich* Son⁵⁶⁵ and built a retreat there. For five years he devoted himself to quiet meditation. Afterward he descended from the mountain with his

monk's staff and traveled everywhere to preach the Dharma. On his journey, when he reached Nam Sách ⁵⁶⁶ he went to Thánh Chúa Cave ⁵⁶⁷ and dwelt there. He stayed put for six years practicing austerities to the point that he could command gods and demons and tame wild beasts.

Emperor Lý Thân* Tông summoned him to the capital many times. After repeatedly declining to no avail, Gió'i Không finally came. In the eighth year of the Dai* Thuan*⁵⁶⁸ era, there was a great plague. When Gió'i Không arrived in the capital, Lý Thân Tông lodged him at Gia Lâm Temple. Gió'i Không blessed water with mantras and used it to cure the plague. Thousands of sick ones were cured on the spot every day. Lý Thân Tông rewarded him generously and earmarked the tax money of ten households to support him.

Later in his life, Gió'i Không returned to his native village and repaired ninety-five temples.



One day, without any illness, he uttered a [farewell] verse to instruct his students:

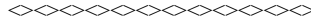
[63a] I have something that's special,
 It's not green, yellow, red, white, or black.
 Among the ones who stay home or leave home,
 Those who cherish life and fear death are traitors.
 Because they do not know that although life and death
 are two separate paths,
 They are nothing but the convergence and dispersion
 [of the five aggregates].
 If they think that life and death are really
 two separate paths,
 They are deceiving both Sakyamuni* and Maitreya.⁵⁶⁹
 If they know that life is death and death is life,
 Only then do they know the hidden profundity
 of this old monk.
 You, who are my students and posterity,
 Do not wrongly accept the starlight in the tray
 as the absolute principle.⁵⁷⁰

After speaking the verse, he laughed loudly, joined his palms together, and passed away. His disciples, including Provincial Governor Lê Kiem*⁵⁷¹ and Defense Commissioner Hán Đình, cremated his body, collected the relics, and built a stupa to house them. A statue of him was also made to be worshipped.

Pháp Dung (?–1174)

[63a7] Zen Master Pháp Dung⁵⁷² of Hu'o'ng Nghiêm Temple, Mount Ma Ni,⁵⁷³ Thanh Hoá Prefecture, hailed from Boi* Lý.⁵⁷⁴ His family name was Lê: he was a descendant of the Governor of Ái Province, Lê Lu'o'ng of the Tang dynasty.⁵⁷⁵ His family was distinguished and held the office of Provincial Governor for fifteen generations. His father was Huyen* Ngap*, who had the sobriquet Tang* Phán.⁵⁷⁶ His appearance and his spirit were elegant and unusual, and his way of speaking was excellent and clear. He had eulogized all the golden scriptures and jewel verses.

As a child he left home [to become a novice] under the guidance of General Superintendent of Monks Nguyen* Khánh Hy*.⁵⁷⁷ Khánh Hy saw at a glance that he was an extraordinary person, and he transmitted [63b] the Dharma seal to him.⁵⁷⁸ He then roamed unobstructed over mountains and rivers and converted people wherever he went. When the time was right he moved his abode to Khai Giác Temple on Mount Thú'u Son*.⁵⁷⁹ Students filled the hall. Finally, he returned to Mount Ma Ni to build a temple and stayed there through his old age.



On the fifth day of the second month of the first year, *giáp ngo**, of the Thiên Cam* Chí Bao* era (1174),⁵⁸⁰ without any illness, he died. His disciples Dao* Lâm and the others cremated his body on this mountain and built a stupa [to house the relics].

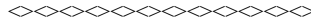
Trí Nhân

[63b7] Zen Master Trí Nhân⁵⁸¹ (also called Tinh* Lu*) of Phù Môn Retreat, Mount Cao Dã, An Lãng,⁵⁸² hailed from Phong Châu.⁵⁸³ His family name was Lê, his personal name was Thu'ớ'c. He was a descendant of Ngu'* Mạn Vu'o'ng⁵⁸⁴ of the Lê dynasty. His grandfather Thuan* Tông⁵⁸⁵ served the Lý dynasty, holding office as high as senior chancellor minister, and married Princess Kim Thành. [His father] Van* Thích held the office of *Minh Tu**. His older brother Kiem* was Inspector as well as Deputy Provincial Governor. In his early days, Trí Nhân devoted himself to studies, passed the National Scholar examination, and was appointed to hold the office of National Archivist.⁵⁸⁶

One day, when he was twenty-seven years old, [64a] he followed his brother to a series of lectures by Zen Master Giới Không to hear him explain the *Diamond Sutra**. When Giới Không explained the verse:

All conditioned phenomena
 Are like dreams, like illusions, like bubbles,
 like images, like dewdrops, like lightning—
 Thus should one contemplate. ⁵⁸⁷

He was suddenly enlightened and exclaimed: "The Tathagata's* six kinds of statements⁵⁸⁸ are certainly not falsely spoken: All mundane things are indeed empty, illusory, and not real; only the Dharma is real. What else am I searching for? The Confucians talk about the normative relationships between ruler and subject, father and son, while Buddhism elucidates the achievements of Bodhisattvas and Disciples (*Sravaka**). Although the two teachings are separate paths, they lead to the same goal. Nevertheless, only Buddhism makes it possible to release oneself from the sufferings of birth and death, and to cut off calculations in terms of being and nonbeing." He then asked to be ordained as a monk.



After comprehending the essence of the teaching, he went directly to Mount Tù' So'n and lived under a tree. During the day he chanted the *sutras**, and at night he practiced meditation, devoting himself diligently to austerities. He vowed to keep this up for six years.

One day he was sitting in meditation when he saw a tiger chasing a deer toward him. Trĩ Nhàn said to them: "All sentient beings cherish their lives—you should not harm each other."⁵⁸⁹ The tiger bowed its head to the ground as if he were taking refuge [with a teacher], and then went away.

Afterward, Trĩ Nhàn built a retreat at the foot of the mountain and accepted students. Donors from all over brought gifts aplenty. In the vicinity of the mountain there was a barbarian tribe [64b] whose people would band together to raid and pillage. Everytime Trĩ Nhàn went outside, a huge tiger would squat in front of the retreat, so that raiders did not dare to break in. Many among them were guided back to a virtuous life by Trĩ Nhàn. During the reign of Lý Anh Tông (1138–1175) and Lý Cao Tông (1176–1210), Trĩ Nhàn was invited to the capital many times, but every time he refused to go.

Regent and Grand Commandant Tô Hien* Thành and Grand Guardian Ngô Hòa Nghĩa*⁵⁹⁰ both requested to be his disciples, yet for ten years they had not been able to see him in person. Suddenly one day they had a chance to see each other, and all were very pleased. After greeting them, Trĩ Nhàn spoke a verse:

If you have cherished the intention to leave the mundane
 world, and nurture it within you,

When you hear subtle words, you joyfully ⁵⁹¹ follow them.
 Greed and desire are banished a thousand miles away,
 And embrace the subtle truth⁵⁹² every day.

And:

Preserve yourself in equanimity,
 Virtue alone is your task.
 If something good is said,
 Work to embody that saying.
 Mind has no self and no other,
 When you have cut off darkness and illusion.
 Although you rise in the morning and rest at night,
 There is no form to dwell on.
 Like a reflection or an echo,
 Without a trace to follow.

After speaking these words, Trí Nhân joined his palms together and passed away sitting upright. Tô, Lê, and other disciples cried with grief, and the sound filled the temple.

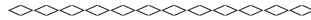
Chân Không (1046–1100)

[65a] Zen Master Chân Không of Chúc Thánh Temple, Mount Pho* Lai*, Phù Lan,⁵⁹³ was a native of Phù Dong*, Tiên Du. His family name was Vu'o'ng, his personal name was Hải* Thiên*. He came from a distinguished family. When his mother was pregnant, his father had a dream in which he saw an eminent monk⁵⁹⁴ give him a monk's staff. In these circumstances Chân Không was born. As a child he loved to spend time by himself reading, and did not involve himself in trivial affairs. At the age of fifteen, he was widely learned in the historical records. At the age of twenty [he became a monk and] traveled to all Zen monasteries searching for the mind-seal.

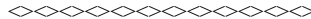
Once while attending a lecture at Tinh* Lu* Temple on Mount Đông Cù'u⁵⁹⁵ to listen to an exposition of the *Lotus Sutra**, Chân Không emptied through and had insight. Since then his potential and causal conditions meshed: it was like a blind turtle coming across a driftwood board to float on.⁵⁹⁶ He stayed there practicing meditation for six years. His investigation developed day by day, and subsequently he received the mind-seal.

Chân Không then came to Mount Tù' So'n to settle down. He safeguarded himself with discipline and for twenty years did not leave his temple. Nevertheless, his fame spread afar. Lý Nhân Tông heard about

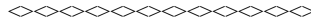
him and invited him to the imperial palace to lecture on the *Lotus Sutra* *. All listeners responded well. At that time Grand Commandant Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiet*, Military Governor of Luong* Châu, and State Minister Thân⁵⁹⁷ treated him with special respect and often donated money to him. Chân Không always used everything given to him to repair temples, build stupas, [65b] and cast big bells for posterity.



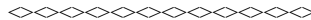
A monk asked: "What is the wondrous Dharma?" Chân Không said: "You only know it after you have awakened." The monk continued: "I have not been able to understand the teachings that have come down from the ancient. How am I to comprehend your present instruction?" Chân Không said: "If you go to the grottos where the immortals dwell, you certainly will be able to bring home elixir that transforms your body." The monk asked: "What is an elixir?" Chân Không said: "After many aeons in ignorance you do not understand it, but the morning of enlightenment you realize everything." The monk continued: "What is illumination?" Chân Không said: "Illumination shines through the entire world,⁵⁹⁸ so that all sentient beings belong to the same family."



A monk asked: "Although one does not discern it clearly, one is face to face with it everywhere.⁵⁹⁹ What is it?" Chân Không said: "The aeon of fire⁶⁰⁰ burns up everything down to the tips of the finest fibers, yet white clouds still float as ever over the green mountain."



A monk asked: "What happens when this form body decays?" Chân Không said: "Spring comes and spring goes—will spring ever end, do you suppose? Flowers fall, flowers open—it's just spring." As the monk tried to think of something to say, Chân Không shouted and said: "After the plain has been there for a long time, each plant has its own distinct fragrance." The monk bowed down.



Later in his life Chân Không returned to his native district and restored Bao* [66a] Cam* Temple. Having finished this task, on the first day of the eleventh month of the ninth year of the Hoi* Phong era (1100), as he was about to pass away, he spoke a verse:

The miraculous original emptiness manifests itself clearly,
Like a mild wind which blows throughout this world.

Everyone should realize the joy of uncontrived activity,
Realizing uncontrived activity, at last you're home.

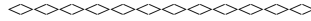
At midnight of the same day, Chân Không again said: "My Path has been accomplished, my teaching has been put to practice. Now I can die." Then he sat cross-legged and passed away. He was fifty-five years old and had been a monk for thirty-six years.

The empress dowager, ⁶⁰¹ Princess Thiên Thành, and Chân Không's disciple, the Nun Dieu* Nhân, ⁶⁰² organized a vegetarian feast in commemoration of him that lasted two days. Great Master Nghĩa* Hải* of Dai* Minh Temple offered a purple robe; Monk Pháp Thành led the monks in preparing the funeral and built a stupa outside the fasting hall. Scholar Nguyen* Van* Cu* complied with the royal order and composed an inscription on the stupa. Minister of Public Works Đoàn Van Khâm wrote a poem to commemorate him:

His lofty virtue spread pure wind over the capital
and among the people,
Those who came leaning on their staffs [to study with him]
are like evening clouds gathering around a dragon.
The mansion of humane benevolence was suddenly shaken
because the wisdom pillar collapsed,
The forest of Dharma will always lament the fall
of a great pine tree,
Green grass surrounds his grave and the new stupa.
In the river reflecting [66b] the green mountains
we recognize his former face, ⁶⁰³
How quiet his Zen gate is—who will be knocking
anymore?
Passing by I sadly listen to the bells of evening. ⁶⁰⁴

Dao* Lâm (?–1203)

[66b3] Zen Master Dao Lâm of Long Vân Temple, Siêu Loai* Village, Long Phúc, ⁶⁰⁵ was a native of Cuu* Cao, Chu Diên. ⁶⁰⁶ His family name was Tang*. At an early age he admired Buddhism. ⁶⁰⁷ His aspiration and behavior were pure and serene. At first, he studied with Pháp Dung of Hu'ong Nghiêm Temple. Within a few years he intimately received the mind-seal. He then began to transmit the flame of the patriarchs himself and continued the light everywhere he went. In contact with beings, he responded to their potentials and benefited people immensely.



In the fifth month of the second year, *qui hoi* *, of the Thiên Tu' Bao* Huu* era (1203),⁶⁰⁸ he sat cross-legged and passed away.

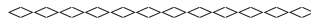
Dieu* Nhân
(1042–1113)

Seventeenth Generation:
Four Persons, Three Biographies Recorded

[66b9] The nun Diêu Nhân of Hu'ong Hai* Temple, Phù Dong* Village, Tiên Du Prefecture, was the eldest daughter of Lord Phung* Yet*.⁶⁰⁹ Her personal name was Ngọc* Kieu*. She was naturally endowed with great beauty, and her speech and behavior were well regulated. Emperor Lý Thánh Tông brought her up in the imperial palace. When she grew up she was married to a man named Lê who was Provincial Governor of Chân Dạng*.⁶¹⁰ When Lê died she vowed to stay single [67a] and not remarry as duty prescribed.

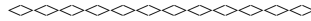
One day she lamented: "As I observe the world, all things are like dreams and illusions. How much more so are these fleeting glories! How can I rely on them?" So she gave away all her personal belongings, shaved her head, and left home. She came to Chân Không of Phù Đông District to receive the Bodhisattva precepts⁶¹¹ and began to investigate the essentials of mind. Chân Không gave her the sobriquet Diêu Nhân [which means "Wondrous Cause"] and appointed her head of the Hu'ong Hai Convent.⁶¹²

Diêu Nhân practiced discipline and meditation and attained true *samadhi**. She towered over others and became an expert adept among the nuns. Those who came to study, she urged to practice the Great Vehicle, telling them: "If you can return your nature to its origin, then you can enter [enlightened mind] freely through either sudden or gradual method." She always kept silent: she was averse to sound and form, words and speech.



A student asked: "I am sick because all sentient beings are sick."⁶¹³ Why should you have an aversion to sound and form?" Diêu Nhân quoted the [*Diamond*] *Sutra**, saying: "If someone sees me through form or looks for me through sound, that person is following a wrong path and cannot see the Tathagata*."⁶¹⁴ The student continued: "What is the use of sitting in

meditation?" Dieu * Nhân said: "It is originally without going." The student continued: "Why don't you speak?" Diêu Nhân said: "The Path is fundamentally without words."⁶¹⁵



On the first day of the sixth month of the fourth year of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1113), Diêu Nhân fell seriously ill [67b] and spoke a verse:

Birth, old age, illness, and death,
 Have always been the same.
 If you wish to escape from them,
 By trying to untie your bonds, you add to your
 entanglement.
 It's only when you are deluded that you search for Buddha,
 It's only when you are confused that you look for Zen.
 I seek neither Buddha nor Zen,
 I just close my mouth⁶¹⁶ and keep silent.

Then she shaved her head, washed her body, sat cross-legged, and passed away. She was seventy-two years old.⁶¹⁷

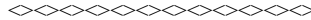
Viên Hoc* **(1073–1136)**

[67b4] Zen Master Viên Hoc of Đại An National Temple, Co* Hanh* Village, Te* Giang, hailed from Nhu' Nguyệt*.⁶¹⁸ His family name was Hoàng. As a child he studied wordly books and when he grew up the Buddhist classics.⁶¹⁹ At the age of twenty, upon hearing a teaching of Chân Không, the mind-ground opened through for him. After that his studies of Zen became more and more profound, and his observation of the precepts was beyond compare. He wore the same patched robe all seasons, cold or warm, and went everywhere converting people living only on alms. He always took the lead in affairs such as repairing bridges, constructing roads, and so forth.

Later, he came to Phù Cam* Village, restored Quoc* Thanh Temple, and cast a big bell. He was always involved in transforming people. His verse says:

With the six consciousnesses constantly in the dark,
 an endless night of suffering,
 Covered over by ignorance, long deluded and indolent.

Day and night hearing the bell waking up
to enlightenment,
The god of indolence swept from the land, I have attained
supernatural powers.

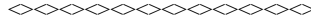


On the fourteenth day of the sixth month, in the summer, of the fourth year, *bính thìn*, of the Thiên Chu'ng Bao * Tu* era (1136), Viên Hoc* passed away at the age of [68a] sixty-four. His disciples Ngô Thông Thiên*, Lu'u Vu'ng Nhân, Lu* Pháp Hoa, and Chu Dieu* Dung* [cremated his body], collected his remains, and built a stupa [to house them].

Tinh* Thiên (1121–1193)

[68a3] Zen Master Tinh* Thiên of Long Hoa Temple, Co* Giao Village, Long Biên, hailed from that same Cô Giao Village. His family name was Phí, his personal name Hoàn. At first, he and his fellow student Tinh Không both served Dao* Lâm of Long Vân Temple. He devoted himself earnestly [to his study] and profoundly penetrated the mysterious essence [of Buddhism]. Dao Lâm knew that he would definitely become a vessel of the Dharma so he gave him the sobriquet Tinh Thiên [which means "Pure Meditation"] and sealed him [with the mind-seal], saying: "*Tinh** (pure) means the pure wisdom which is wondrous and perfect, *Thiên** (meditation) means the mind of *Thiên* which is always calm."

After Dao Lâm died, Tinh Thiên traveled to all Zen centers, searching for spiritual companions. When his affinity with the Dharma had become mature, he returned to his native district and repaired Long Hoa Temple. Besides his practice of meditation and discipline, his thoughts were always of benefiting people.



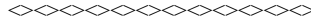
On the twelfth day of the eighth month of the eighth year, *quí suu**, of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thuy* era (1193), Tinh Thiên passed away. He was seventy-three years old. His disciple Pháp Ký composed an inscription on the stele in front of the temple that said: "The master was born in the time when the Lý dynasty was flourishing. He did not forget the six perfections (*paramitas**),⁶²⁰ nor did he neglect the four great vows.⁶²¹ [68b] Where he put down his tea cup, donors throughout the land followed in waves. Where he planted his monk's staff, monks, nuns, laymen, and

laywomen gathered like the dew. His supernatural powers were unfathomable, his miraculous activities impossible to measure. If he himself had not arrived at the locus of Buddha's enlightenment, how could he have carried out such excellent achievements? He is truly the precious moon on the Buddhist firmament, the garden of Dharma in the spiritual village. . . ."

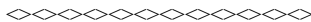
**Viên Thông
(1080–1151)**

***Eighteenth Generation:
Two Persons, Only One Biography Recorded***

[68b5] National Preceptor Viên Thông of Quoc * Ân Temple, Co* Hien* Village, Nam Dinh*,⁶²² hailed from Cô Hiên. His family name was Nguyen*, his personal name was Nguyễn Úc. He moved to Thái Bạch* Quarter in the capital Thang* Long and made his home there. His family had held the office of Monk Official for generations. His father Đứ'c served during the reign of Lý Nhân Tông (1072–1127) and held office as high as Secretary for the Academy of Monks on the Left and Right, and had the sobriquet Zen Master Bao* Giác. Viên Thông was unusually brilliant by nature, and his knowledge was refined and subtle. As a young man he already harbored the aspiration to leave this mundane world. He met Viên Hoc* of An Quốc Temple and so meshed with the purport of Buddhism.



In the sixth year of the Hoi* Phong era (1079), he passed the examination on the Three Teachings⁶²³ with highest honors and was appointed to the office of *Dai* Van**. In the eighth year of the Long Phù Nguyên Hóa era (1108), there was an examination to select great talents from among the people to fill the vacant rank of Leading Monk (*Tang* Dao**). Viên Thông again passed with highest honors. Emperor Lý Nhân Tông was even more [69a] amazed by him and wished to give him political power. But Viên Thông persistently declined it and would not take up any position. Lý Nhân Tông then raised him to the rank of Inner Palace Retainer and Dharma Master. After that Viên Thông expounded the doctrine according to circumstances, enlightening people by guiding them to the meaning [of Buddhism]. He dispelled their delusion and reproached their ignorance until there was none left at all. Those who studied with him and understood his teaching all became famous in their generation.



In the third year of the Đại * Khánh era (1112),⁶²⁴ after he had repaired the Diên Tho* Temple, Lý Nhân Tông asked him to compose the inscription on the stele. Lý Nhân Tông esteemed his talent and raised him to the rank of Secretary of the Monk Academy on the Left.

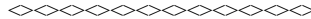
In the third year of the Đại Thuan* era (1130), Emperor Lý Than* Tông summoned him to Sùng Khai Palace to enquire about the principles of political order and upheaval, of prosperity and decline in the world. Viên Thông said: "The world is like an instrument. Put it in a safe place, it is safe; put it in a perilous place, it is in peril. It all depends on how the leader of the people behaves himself. If his benevolence is in harmony with the hearts and minds of the people, then they will love him as a parent and look up to him like the sun and the moon. This is putting people in a safe place."

He also said: "Order or chaos depends on [the behavior of the] officials. If they can win the people over, then there is political order; if they lose the people's support, then there is upheaval. I have observed [the activities of] emperors of previous generations. No one succeeded without employing true gentlemen, or failed unless he employed petty men.⁶²⁵ [69b] When we trace how these things come about, it does not happen overnight, but develops gradually.⁶²⁶ Just as heaven and earth cannot abruptly produce cold and hot weather, but must change gradually through the seasons like spring and autumn, etc., kings cannot suddenly⁶²⁷ bring about prosperity or decline, but rather it is a gradual process depending on their good or bad activities. The sage kings of old knew this principle, and so they modeled themselves on Heaven and never ceased to rely on virtue to cultivate themselves; they molded themselves on Earth and never ceased to rely on virtue to pacify the people. To cultivate oneself means to be cautious within, as cautious as if one were walking on thin ice.⁶²⁸ To pacify people means to respect those who are below, to be as respectful as one riding a horse holding worn-out reins. If one can be like that, one cannot but succeed; if otherwise, one cannot but fail. The gradual process of prosperity or decline depends on this."

Lý Thân Tông was pleased and appointed him Superintendent of the Monk Academy on the Right and Magistrate in charge of Religion. Sometimes Viên Thông had calmly approached Lý Thân Tông and submitted an admonition, and Lý Thân Tông never neglected his advice. Viên Thông then complied with royal order and went to the Tây Du'ong Shrine to pray for the protection of the expected royal child.⁶²⁹ Since his prayers succeeded, Lý Thân Tông respected and rewarded him even more and conferred upon him the title Court Guest, which ranked the same as Crown Prince.

In the fifth year of the Thiên Chu'ong Bao * Tu'* era (1137),⁶³⁰ the royal carriage came [to take Viên Thông to the royal palace] to participate in carrying out the emperor's final command and [70a] composing the royal will. Lý Than* Tông entrusted everything to him.

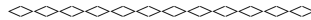
In the first year of the Thieu* Minh era (1138), Lý Anh Tông assumed the throne and the empress dowager assumed power.⁶³¹ In consideration of his previous accomplishments, she rewarded Viên Thông generously.



Finally Viên Thông returned to his native district, built a temple, and settled down there in his old age. The revenue from three villages was provided [for him] by the national treasury. Lý Thân Tông also granted him the imperial insignia⁶³² to honor him.

In the fourth year of the Dai* Dinh* era (1143), Viên Thông was promoted to the rank of Superintendent of the Monk Academy on the Left and Right, Inner Palace Superintendent, Inner Servitor Magistrate in charge of Religion, National Preceptor and Protector of the Realm, and Expounder of the Canon. Lý Thân Tông also bestowed on him the title "Purple Robed Great Monk." His position was lofty and he was greatly admired both among the court officials and throughout the countryside.

On the twenty-first day of the fourth month of the leap year, *tân mùi*, of the Đại Đinh era (1151), Viên Thông assembled his disciples to bid them farewell and passed away without any illness at the age of seventy-two.



Viên Thông had obeyed a royal decree and composed the works *Tuyen* Chu' Phat* Tích Duyên Su** [Selected Stories of Buddha's Past Lives]⁶³³ of more than thirty fascicles, *Hong* Chung Van* Bi Kí* [Great Bell Inscriptions], *Tang* Già Tap* Luc** [Miscellaneous Records of the Sangha] of more than fifty fascicles,⁶³⁴ and more than a thousand poems and rhymed prose pieces that are still in circulation.⁶³⁵

Y So'n
(?–1213)

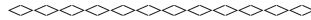
Nineteenth Generation:
Two Persons, Only One Biography Recorded

[70b1] Zen Master Y So'n of Đại Từ Temple, Đại Thông Tru'ong, Long Phúc,⁶³⁶ was a native of Cam* Village, Nghe* An.⁶³⁷ His family name was Nguyen*. His appearance was elegant and his speech was eloquent. As a young boy he was well versed in the Books of *Documents* and *History*. He

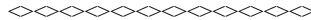
only formed friendships that would be mutually beneficial in widening both friends' skills. He also paid special attention to Buddhist literature. At the age of thirty, he was ordained a monk by an Elder in the district. They went together to the capital to study with National Preceptor Viên Thông. Under the guidance of Viên Thông he reached accord with the message of Buddhism.

Afterward, he traveled everywhere to convert people, concentrating on altruistic activities. He always used all the money donated to him in Buddhist activities. He once wrote an exhortation that said:

Fishing for fame and desiring profit—
 these are like bubbles floating in the water,
 Planting merit and sowing [good] conditions—
 these are truly precious jewels in our hearts.



Late in his life he moved to Nam Mô Temple, An Lãng Village, to become its abbot. He often instructed his disciples: "You should know that when the Tathagata * attained perfect enlightenment (*samyaksambodhi*), there was nothing left for him to contemplate; he had no doubts with regard to universal equality; he was without duality, formless, neither moving nor abiding, immeasurable, without limit, free from the two extremes [of eternalism and annihilationism]. He dwelt in the Middle Way (*madhyamapratipad**) and transcended all words and speech. **[71a]** He could manifest bodies as numerous as sentient beings; he attained the body that is equal to all realms; he attained the bodies as numerous as the three realms; he attained the body that is equal to all Buddhas' bodies; he attained the body that is equal to all words and speech; he attained the body that is equal to Thusness (*Tathata**) ; he attained the body that is equal to the Realm of Ultimate Reality (*Dharmadhatu**) ; he attained the body that is equal to space; he attained the body that is equal to the unbounded realm; he attained the body that is equal to all vows (*pranidhana**) ; he attained the body that is equal to all practices; he attained the body that is equal to all forms of peace."**638**



Y So'n also spoke a verse:

When the Tathagata attains perfect enlightenment,
 He attains the body which is equal to all [conditioned
 and nonconditioned phenomena].
 It intersects with them without intersecting,⁶³⁹
 The living spirit—the pupil of the eyes.

And:

The true body (*dharmakaya* *) becomes myriad forms,
 The myriad forms are the true body.
 The lunar palace gives luster to the red cinnamon tree,
 The red cinnamon tree is in its single orb.

When he was about to pass away, Y So'n told his students: "I will not return to this world." At that time blossoms on the tree in front of the [Dharma] Hall suddenly fell, and swallows and sparrows cried sadly without a stop for three weeks. Y So'n passed away on the eighteenth day of the third month of the third year, *bính tí*, of the Kien* Gia era (1213).⁶⁴⁰

The Thao* Đu'ò'ng School⁶⁴¹

[71b2] Zen Master Thao Đu'ò'ng⁶⁴² of Khai Quoc* Temple in the capital Thang* Long transmitted the lineage of the Xuedou Mingjue⁶⁴³ school.

The successors of Zen Master Thao Đu'ò'ng:

First generation: three persons

Emperor Lý Thánh Tông⁶⁴⁴

Zen Master Bát Nhã (Prajna*)⁶⁴⁵ of Tù' Quang Phúc Thánh Temple,⁶⁴⁶ Dich* Vu'ò'ng Village, Tru'ò'ng Canh⁶⁴⁷

Layman Ngo* Xá⁶⁴⁸ of Bao* Tài Village, Long Chu'ò'ng

(The above three persons all succeeded Thao Đu'ò'ng.)

Second generation: four persons

State Councillor Ngô Ích succeeded Emperor Lý Thánh Tông

Zen Master Hoang* Minh of An Lãng Village, Vinh* Hu'ng, succeeded Bát Nhã

Zen Master Không Lo* of Nghiêm Quang Temple, Hai* Thanh

[72a] Zen Master Dinh* Giác (the same as Giác Hai)⁶⁴⁹

(The above two persons both succeeded Ngô Xá. Their main biographies are based on the *Diagram of the Southern School*, in the section on the Đinh So⁶⁵⁰ lineage.)

Third generation: four persons

Grand Tutor Do* [Anh] Vu*⁶⁵¹ (succeeded State Councillor Vân, who succeeded Đinh Giác.)

Zen Master Pham* Ân of Thanh Uy Village, An La (succeeded Thieu* Minh.)⁶⁵²

Emperor Lý Anh Tông

Zen Master Đô Đô

(The above two persons both succeeded Không Lô. Another source says they succeeded Đinh Giác.)

Fourth generation: four persons

Zen Master Tru'ong Tam Tang (succeeded Pham * Âm. Another source says he succeeded Không Lo*. Still other sources say he succeeded Dinh* Giac.)

Zen Master Chân Huyen*

Grand Tutor Do* Thu'ong⁶⁵³

(The above three persons all succeeded Zen Master Đô Đô. Another source says Grand Tutor Đô Thu'ong succeeded Zen Master Tông Tinh* of Kien* So'.)⁶⁵⁴

Fifth generation: five persons

[72b] Zen Master Hai* Tinh⁶⁵⁵

Emperor Lý Cao Tông

Nguyen* Thúc of Xu'ong Nhi, Quang* Giáp

(The above three persons all succeeded Tru'ong Tam Tang*.)

Pham* Phung* Ngu* and the others succeeded Chân Huyen*. (Another source says they succeeded Grand Tutor Đô.)

**PART III—
APPENDIXES**

Appendix I— Additional Supporting Data for Chapter One

History of the Transmission of the *Thien * Uyen* Tap* Anh*

The text that is the topic of our study here has generally been referred to in Vietnamese literature by two names: *Thiên Uyên Tập Anh* [A Collection of Outstanding Figures of the Zen Community] and *Dai* Nam Thiên Uyên Truyện* Dang* Tập Lục** [A Record of Transmission of the Lamp in the Zen Community of Dai* Nam], after the 1715 edition under the [Later] Lê (1533–1788) and the 1858 edition under the Nguyen* (1802–1945).¹ Actually this text has been referred to by still other names,² yet *Thiên Uyên* seems to be the original title of the text in its first complete, edited version.

Although some information has been provided by the studies of Tran* Van* Giáp and Émile Gaspardone,³ we still do not know much about the situation of the text before and after the edition of 1715. Among extant literary documents, the earliest mention of the *Thiên Uyên* is found in Lê Quý Đôn's *Nghe* Van* Chí* [Description of Arts and Literature],⁴ in which he remarked that the *Thiên Uyên* was a one-fascicle work composed by an author who lived during the Trần dynasty (1225–1400), recording information about Zen sects and biographies of eminent monks of Vietnam from the time of the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties up to the period including the Trần through the Đinh (968–980), [Former] Lê (980–1009), and Lý (1010–1225) dynasties. Phan Huy Chú's *Van Tich* Chí* [Descriptive Bibliography]⁵ was content merely to repeat Lê Quý Đôn's comment, adding that the *Thiên Uyên* consists of six fascicles. The two editions that are currently available to us, however, consist respectively of two fascicles and one fascicle.⁶

Phan Huy Chú's remark seems to indicate the existence of an edition earlier than the Lê edition. First, let us consider the question of the actual existence of this edition, which we will tentatively refer to as the Trần edition, taking into consideration the date of the composition of the text.

The Tran * Edition

Although neither of the two extant editions of the *Thien* Uyen** gives us the exact date of its composition, there are plausible reasons for us to believe that the *Thiên Uyên* is a work composed during the Tran* dynasty. Nowadays, though, the earliest edition of the text that we have at our disposal is the Lê edition of 1715. Thus, whatever information we now have about the text derives from this 1715 edition and Lê Quý Đôn's remarks in his *Nghê* Van* Chí*.

A section on "Immortals and Buddhist Monks" in the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* [Source Book on An Nam], an early fifteenth-century work, records sketchy biographies of twenty Zen Masters. Thirteen of these are mentioned in the *Thiên Uyên*.⁷ Except for Thao* Đu'ông, whose biography is not recorded in the *Thiên Uyên*, the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*'s records of the other Zen Masters are almost identical to certain passages in their biographies in the *Thiên Uyên*. In light of this fact, Lê Manh* Thát has suggested that the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* must have derived its information directly from the *Thiên Uyên*, or at least from a source that quoted the *Thiên Uyên*.⁸ However, it seems that the author of the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* did not know of the existence of the *Thiên Uyên* since he claimed to have gathered the information about those Buddhist monks from either oral sources or other old records.⁹ Since the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* is believed to have been composed around 1419, Lê Manh Thát concludes that the "old records" its author refers to must have quoted from the most ancient edition of the *Thiên Uyên*, or the Trần edition.

In conclusion, we have reasonable evidence to believe that there existed a Trần edition of the *Thiên Uyên*. Nguyen* Van* Chat*¹⁰—an author living in the fifteenth century—who composed an appendix to Lý Te* Xuyen's *Viet* Dien**,¹¹ did mention the *Thiên Uyên* in this work.¹² This is clear evidence that there existed an edition of the *Thiên Uyên* (probably the Trần edition) prior to the Lê edition of 1715. However, the *Thiên Uyên* does not seem to have been in wide circulation, since it was not known to some authors of the Trần dynasty. For example, Lê Trac*, in the section on Buddhist monks in his *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c** [Brief Records of An Nam], does not appear to have had the *Thiên Uyên* at his disposal for reference.

The Lê Edition

This was published in 1715 and is the oldest edition that we have nowadays. The text consists of two fascicles, respectively called *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh Ngu* Luc** [Recorded Sayings of Outstanding Figures of the Zen Community], upper fascicle and *Thiên Uyên Tập Anh*, lower fascicle. The upper fascicle records the Vô Ngôn Thông lineage and the lower

fascicle gives the Vinitaruci * lineage with a list of names of the monks belonging to the Thao* Đu'ông school.

We have almost no information about the editor of this edition. From the preface written in the fourth month of the Vinh* Thinh* era of the Lê dynasty (1715), we know only that he was a learned Confucian who admired Buddhism and edited the text at the request of his friend, a Zen Buddhist monk.¹³

The Nguyen Edition*

This was published by Phúc Dien*¹⁴ as *Dai* Nam Thien* Uyen* Truyen* Dang* Tap* Luc**, upper fascicle. Phúc Điền did not write a preface or record the date of publication of the text. He only gave a short note stating that the edition he used was the old woodblock kept at Tiêu So'n Temple, of which the name of the compiler was lost. Phúc Điền neglected to explain why he renamed the text *Đai Nam Thiên Uyên Truyền Đàng Tập Luc*, upper fascicle. Fortunately, we find the answer in a preface written by Phúc Điền entitled "Truyen* Dang* Ngu* Quyen* Tân Tu*" ["New Preface to the Transmission of the Lamp in Five Fascicles"] found at the beginning of Nhu' So'n's *Thiên Dien* Thong* Yeu* Ke* Đàng Luc* [Continuation of the Record of the Transmission of the Lamp] (*Kê Đàng Luc*).¹⁵ This preface states that the *Đai Nam* was published in 1858 [i.e., the twelfth year of the Tu' Đúc era of the Nguyen* dynasty] as the "upper fascicle" of a larger project intended as a complete history of the Zen transmission in Vietnam. Phúc Điền wrote:¹⁶

In the old days in our country there was the *Thiên Uyên Tập Anh* giving brief records of the virtuous, eminent monks of the three dynasties (of Đinh, [Former] Lê, and Lý). In general, the records are vague and incoherent. Therefore, I have edited and recopied it in order to preserve the ancient text, and have made it a separate upper fascicle. Up through the Tran* dynasty there was the *Thành Đàng Ngu' Luc* [Recorded Sayings of Transmission of the Sacred Lamp] in one fascicle, which recorded only [biographies of] the three patriarchs of the Trần. There were stories but no portraits.

During the Later Lê, the Patriarch Nhu' So'n, basing himself on the *Wudeng huiyuan* [the Chinese Zen collection, The Five Lamps Meeting at the Source] composed a three-fascicle *Ke* Đàng Luc*, which included both stories and portraits. Nhu' So'n's work began with Bhisagarjitasvarar* Buddha, then related the stories of the Seven Ancient Buddhas, and finally recorded the biographies of forty-seven Indian patriarchs, and twenty-three Chinese patriarchs, together with the Linji School of our country descended from the three patriarchs Chuyet* Công, Minh Lu'o'ng, and Chân Nguyễn. As for the true school of Caodong, there

were the Venerable Thụy * Nguyệt* and Tông Dien*. As for the Linji School, [Nhu' So'n] did not record the transmission [of the generations] after Chân Nguyên's transmission to the Eminent Cửu Sinh. Therefore, I follow the order of [Nhu' So'n's] *Ke* Dang* Luc**, supplemented with the [biographies of] the five patriarchs. . . .

I am concerned that the lamp of the patriarchs is about to be extinguished, so I muster all my energy to record briefly [biographies of] the three patriarchs of the Tran* along with those of [the patriarchs of] the two schools of Linji and Caodong. I combine these into a single collection, together with the miscellaneous records from outside sources, and make this into a separate lower fascicle. [I do this] so that the Dharma will continue to be transmitted and the lamp will be perpetuated.¹⁶

According to this, Phúc Dien* had at his disposal the *Thien* Uyen**, the one-fascicle *Thánh Đàng Luc*, which records the biographies of the the three patriarchs (of the Trúc Lâm Zen school) of the Trần dynasty, and Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc*. Phúc Điền considered this last work to be more complete and coherent than the previous two texts, because it records the transmission of the lamp from the time of Bhisagarjitasvara* Buddha and the seven Ancient Buddhas, through all the generations of patriarchs in India and China, up to the founders of the Linji and Caodong schools in Vietnam.¹⁷

What appears to be somewhat unclear is the title of the "Preface." We are not certain what Phúc Điền meant by "the Transmission of the Lamp in Five Fascicles." Nguyen* Lang gives the interpretation that Phúc Dien's* project was to use the *Thiên Uyên* as the upper fascicle, Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc* (in three fascicles) as the middle fascicle, and the *Thánh Đàng Luc* (in one fascicle) and further biographies (from outside sources) of eminent Vietnamese Linji and Caodong monks as the lower fascicle. Thus, the Nguyễn edition of the *Thiên Uyên* was to become the *Dai* Nam* upper fascicle of this complete five-fascicle project. The projected work was named "Transmission of the Lamp in Five Fascicles," obviously because Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc* itself consists of three fascicles. Lê Manh* Thát gives almost the same explanation, except for the fact that he seems to ignore the *Thánh Đàng Luc* and remarks that the last fascicle of the "Five Fascicle" project was Phúc Điền's own work on the three patriarchs of the Trần, the Linji and Caodong schools, and other miscellaneous notes.

Neither of these explanations seems to be completely satisfactory. Phúc Điền himself did compose a text that was explicitly purported to be the continuation (i.e., the lower fascicle) to the *Dai Nam* as the upper fascicle. In fact, he named his work *Thiên Uyên Truyen* Đàng Luc, Quyên* Ha** [The Transmission of the Lamp in the Zen Community, Lower Fas-

cicle], or *Dai * Nam Thien* Uyen* Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc* Tu'* Tran* Chu' To* Lâm Te* Tào Dong* Quyen* Ha** [A Brief Record of the Transmission of the Lamp from the Patriarchs of the Linji and Caodong Schools of the Tran* Dynasty, Lower Fascicle] (*Kê Đàng Lu'o'c Luc*).¹⁸ Furthermore, Phúc Dien* did not state in the preface that he would use the *Thánh Đàng Luc* and Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc* as the middle or lower fascicle. He seems to have mentioned them only as sources or models for his own work. Thus, "the Transmission of the Lamp in Five Fascicles" would mean the *Thiên Uyên* (one fascicle), the *Thánh Đàng Luc* (one fascicle), and Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc* (three fascicles). Phúc Dien's* original intention was probably to edit these three works as a five-fascicle complete history of the Zen transmission in Vietnam. He might have been dissatisfied with Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc*, since this work, relying heavily on the Chinese *Wudeng huiyuan*, records only sketchy biographies of Indian and Chinese patriarchs and nothing on Vietnamese monks. That is why Phúc Điền wrote a new preface stating his aspiration to compose a lower fascicle (i.e., continuation) to the *Thiên Uyên* by combining the *Thánh Đàng Luc* with biographies and short sayings and teachings of the Vietnamese patriarchs of the Linji and Caodong schools which he (and obviously his disciples) had diligently collected from written historical records and other documents found in various temples.

Phúc Điền did not give the date of the composition of the *Kê Đàng Lu'o'c Luc*. It could have been started in 1858, the year he wrote the "Preface." From the contents of this book, one gets the impression that Phúc Điền started the work, but that it was finished by some of his disciples. This is because his name was mentioned several times, particularly in the later part of the book, and there is a section devoted to his own biography.¹⁹

The Lê and the Nguyen* editions are almost identical except for some minor different readings. The main discrepancy is that in the Nguyễn edition the content of the biography of Không Lo* is totally different from that in the Lê edition. In the Nguyễn edition, Không Lo's* biography is inadvertently combined with the biography of Nguyễn Minh Không.²⁰ Thus the biography of Nguyễn Minh Không, who belonged to the thirteenth generation of the Vinitaruci* lineage, is completely missing from this edition. Another minor variation is that the section on Viên Chieu's* biography in the Phúc Điền edition is missing a page compared to the Lê edition.²¹ Finally, the text edited by Phúc Điền, the *Đai Nam*, does not include the preface written by the editor of the 1715 edition. This is more evidence that the old text kept at Tiêu So'n Temple was not identical with the Lê edition.²²

On the Date and Author of the *Thiên * Uyen* Tap* Anh*

Date

The issue of the *Thiên Uyên*'s exact date of composition and author remains unsolved. On the basis of the information provided by Lê Quý Đôn, along with some other historical and internal evidence found in the text, there is a consensus among scholars who have studied the text that it is a work of the Trần* dynasty.

Trần Van* Giáp, who discovered the *Thiên Uyên* and was also the first to study it,²³ summed up these facts and suggested an exact date for its composition. Giáp presents two reasons for believing that the *Thiên Uyên* was composed in the Trần dynasty:

1. The date of the deaths of the latest monks whose biographies were recorded: Y So'n, the last master of the Vinitaruci* school, died in 1213; Hien* Quang, the last master of the Vô Ngôn Thông school, died in 1221; Thông Thien*, although one generation earlier than Hiền Quang, did not die until 1228; the account of the Thao* Đu'ông school ends with Lý Cao Tông, who died in 1205.²⁴

2. Khuông Viet's* biography contains the following record of the Chinese envoy Li Jue's mission to Vietnam, which turns out to be a crucial element for determining the date of the *Thiên Uyên*:

In the seventh year [of the Tianfu era (987)] the Song envoy Ruan Jue (Nguyen* Giác in Vietnamese pronunciation) came to [Vietnam] on a peace mission. At this time the Dharma Master [Do* Thuan*] was also well known. Emperor Lê Dai* Hành ordered Khuông Viet* to put aside his monk's garb and to act as a court minister.²⁵

The same event was also recorded in the *Cu'o'ng Muc** [Outline of History]:

In the second year, *bính tuat**, of the Tianfu era (962) [*sic*] the Song court sent Li Ruoshuo and Li Jue on a diplomatic mission bringing along the decree investing the King of Annam as the Prefect of Giao Chi*.²⁶

The two texts apparently refer to the same historical event, with the only difference that in the *Thiên Uyên* the surname of the Chinese envoy Li Jue (Lý Giác in Vietnamese pronunciation) has been changed to Nguyễn (Ruan in Chinese). The *Toàn Thu'* also informs us that in the sixth month of the first year of the Thiên Ứng Chính Bình era (1232) of the Trần dynasty, the court issued an order to have those with the family name Lý change it to Nguyễn. There were two reasons for this. First, since the

Tran * had overthrown the Lý by force, this decree was intended to uproot any loyalty for the Lý remaining in the people's hearts. Second, this decree reflects the taboo on using the name of the sovereign, since the personal name of the father of Trần Thái Tông, the founder of the Trần dynasty, was Lý.

Giáp argues that the author of the *Thiên* Uyên** must have followed this order and substituted Nguyen* Giác (Ruan Jue) for Lý Giác (Li Jue). From this he concludes that the *Thiên Uyên* must have been composed during the Trần dynasty, sometime after 1232 when the prohibition was issued. Referring to a statement at the end of Vô Ngôn Thông's biography that "[having lasted] up to now, the twenty-fourth year, *dinh* suu**, of the Khai Huu* era (1337), the Zen tradition in our country started with him,"²⁷ Trần Van* Giáp suggests that the year 1337 can be considered as the exact date of the composition of the *Thiên Uyên*.

Émile Gaspardone has pointed out that Trần Van Giáp's solution is not completely satisfactory, since Giáp seems to have ignored some difficulties in the passage on which he bases his conclusions. For instance, the Khai Hu'u era (1329–1341) under Trần Minh Tông lasted only twelve years²⁸ and not twenty-four years. Besides, the year *dinh su'u* was the ninth year of the Khai Hu'u era and not the twenty-fourth. Gaspardone also points out some inconsistencies in Giáp's interpretation of the same passage in his essay.²⁹ Gaspardone concludes that we cannot establish the exact date for the *Thiên Uyên* based on such an obscure passage. We cannot resolve the inconsistency of the passage, and in any case we cannot conclude that the year *dinh su'u* of the Khai Hu'u era (1337) was the year the *Thiên Uyên* was composed. I am inclined, however, to take the date 1337 (*dinh su'u*, Khai Hu'u ninth year) seriously, at least as the earliest plausible date for the *Thiên Uyên*. That the text gives "twenty-fourth" instead of "ninth" could very well have been due to a scribal error. In any case, the author did give us a clue, and taken together with other evidence, it appears to be a significant one.

In sum, we can say only that the *Thiên Uyên* is a work composed during the Trần dynasty, probably sometime after 1232 and before the end of the fifteenth century. Three facts lead to this conclusion: (1) The decree to change the Lý family name to Nguyễn was issued in 1232. (2) Nguyễn Van Chat*, who lived in the fifteenth century, drew on the *Thiên Uyên* to compose the legend of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng in his appendix to the *Viet* Dien**. (3) Although the *Thiên Uyên* claims to record life stories of eminent monks of the Đinh, [Former] Lê, Lý, and Trần dynasties, none of the monks whose biographies were recorded lived beyond the middle of the thirteenth century. This shows that the author did not live beyond the Trần dynasty.

Authorship

At present we know virtually nothing about the author's identity. Lê Quý Đôn and Phan Huy Chú give us nothing. Both Tran * Van* Giáp and Émile Gaspardone are almost silent on this issue. We can conjecture that the author of the *Thiên* Uyen** might have been a monk belonging to the Vô Ngôn Thông school, because the biographies of the monks of this school are put before those of the Vinitaruci* school, and the author remarks at the end of Thông's biography that the Zen tradition in Vietnam began with him. This is somewhat odd, since we know that according to tradition, Vinitaruci arrived in Vietnam and established a Zen lineage almost three centuries before Vô Ngôn Thông.

Lê Manh* Thát, the only modern scholar who attempts to solve the problem of the authorship of the *Thiên Uyen*, has suggested that a monk named Kim So'n was the author of the *Thiên Uyen*.³⁰ Thát makes the following argument.

During the fourteenth century, the only Zen tradition that remained in Vietnam was the Trúc Lâm (Bamboo Grove) school, of which Emperor Trần Nhân Tông (r. 1279–1293) was the first patriarch.³¹ We learn from the [*Hue* Trung*] *Thu'o'ng* Si* Ngu* Luc** [Recorded Sayings of the Eminent Hue* Trung]³² that this school originated with Thông Thiên*,³³ a Zen master of the Vô Ngôn Thông lineage. Trần Minh Tông (r. 1314–1329), Trần Nhân Tông's grandson, reputed to be a literary man, was very interested in history. During his reign he was known for requesting eminent monks to compose books on topics related to Buddhism.³⁴ There are records still extant about the relationship between Minh Tông and Kim So'n.³⁵ Lê Manh Thát therefore suggests that Kim So'n must have composed the *Thiên Uyen* at the request of Trần Minh Tông. Since there are no historical records directly (or indirectly) referring to Kim So'n as the author of the *Thiên Uyen*, I mention Lê Manh Thát's suggestion merely as a hypothesis, pending the discovery of more materials concerning this issue.

Source Materials for the Composition of the *Thiên Uyen Tap* Anh*

The *Thiên Uyen*, as evidenced by the title and contents of the text, was consciously intended as a work in the Zen tradition. This is reflected clearly in his copious borrowing from the model Zen biographical collection, the *Jingde chuangdeng lu* [Transmission of the Lamp Composed during the Jingde Era] (*Chuangdeng lu*).³⁶ It is the author's manifest intent that gives the *Thiên Uyen* its unique historical and cultural value.

Let us examine the sources that the author of the *Thiên Uyen* used and his method of drawing on them. Inspired by Chinese Zen literature, the

author of the *Thien * Uyen** was moved to produce a systematic history of Zen Buddhism in Vietnam. With some oral transmissions and previous compilations as his source materials, and the *Chuandeng lu* as a model, the author composed a work that became the first comprehensive historical treatment of the Buddhist tradition in Vietnam.

The following texts are directly referred to throughout the *Thiên Uyên* as its main source materials:

1. The *Chieu* Doi* Luc** [Collated Biographies] of Thông Bien* and Biền Tài.
2. The *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** [Diagram of the Succession of the Dharma of the Southern School] by Thu'ng Chieu*
3. The *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** [Essential Sayings of the Patriarchs] of Hue* Nhat*

(These texts are discussed in detail in Appendix II.)

As secondary sources, *Thiên Uyên* drew on:

1. The *Su'* Ký* [Record of History]
2. The *Quốc* Su'* [National History]³⁷

The *Quốc Su'* is mentioned three times. According to Lê Manh* Thát, the *Quốc Su'* is probably the *Dai* Viet* Su' Ký* [A Recorded History of Dai* Viet*] composed by Lê Van* Hu'u. This history was a result of the revision of a work by Tran* Chu Pho* by Lê Van Hu'u by royal decree under Trần Thái Tông (r. 1225–1258); it was finished in 1272.³⁸

The second historical source cited in the *Thiên Uyên* is the *Su' Ký* [Recorded History]. It is mentioned only once, in the biography of Khánh Hy*, where it reads: "According to the *Su' Ký*, he passed away in the third year of the Thiên Chu'ng Bao* Tu'* era."³⁹ Hoàng Xuân Hãn suggests that the note was added by the editor of the 1715 edition, and thus identifies the *Su' Ký* with Ngô Sy* Liên's *Đại Việt Su' Ký Toàn Thu'* [A Complete History of Đại Việt]. Lê Manh Thát disagrees: his opinion is that the *Su' Ký* cited here is the *Su' Ký* composed by Do* Thien*, a work quoted four times in the *Việt Diên**.⁴⁰ We know that the *Việt Diên* was composed by Lý Te* Xuyên in 1329, so Đò Thien's* *Su' Ký* must have preceded it.

Analyzing the source materials for the *Thiên Uyên* provides us with a basis for evaluating the methodology and content of the text. Given the explicit content and the implicit intention of the *Thiên Uyên*, I find it hard to agree with Lê Manh Thát's remark that the author of the book "wished to achieve a method of writing history in an objective and scientific way."⁴¹

Rather, in compiling the text, the author of the *Thiên Uyên* had a more complicated intention and objective, one that has exercised a significant and lasting influence on the Vietnamese Buddhist tradition: to provide a legitimating framework for Vietnamese Buddhism as an independent tradition with a definite, deep-rooted history of its own.

Appendix II— Additional Supporting Data for Chapter Two

"Transmission of the Lamp" Texts in Vietnam before the *Thiên * Uyen* Tap* Anh*

From the records in the *Thiên Uyên* we learn of a few texts of the "transmission of the lamp" genre that existed in Vietnam prior to the compilation of the *Thiên Uyên*. This indicates that the efforts to establish Vietnamese Buddhism as a legitimate continuity of Chinese Zen had been going on even prior to the time of the *Thiên Uyên*. It is interesting to note that prior to the period from 1272 to 1400, which E. S. Ungar has characterized as the period of political/historical maturity in Vietnamese intellectual history,¹ the *Chuandeng lu* had provided the Vietnamese Buddhist elite with a conceptual model for an awareness of the transmission of Buddhism as an independent history.

The compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* relied considerably on earlier texts to compile his book. These were the *Chieu* Doi* Luc** [Collated Biographies], *Hue* Nhat* Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** [Essential Sayings of the Patriarchs Composed by Hue* Nhat*], *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** [Diagram of the Succession of the Dharma of the Southern School], and *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thiên Phái Đô* [Summarized Diagram of the Zen Schools]. Unfortunately, none of these works is extant, except for a short preface to the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô*.² Some scanty information about them can be gleaned from the records in the *Thiên Uyên* and from other descriptive bibliographical notes.

Chieu Doi* Luc* or Chiêu Đồi Ban**

This text was composed by Thông Biên* (died 1134) and later revised by Biên Tài.³ We read in the biography of Than* Nghi (died 1216)⁴ that when he asked Thu'ò'ng Chieu* (died 1203) for instruction on the successive generations of Zen transmission in Vietnam, Thu'ò'ng Chiêu showed him Thông Biên's* *Chiêu Đồi Ban**. This tells us that by this time the idea of Zen transmission and lineage had been in circulation for some time

among the Vietnamese Buddhist elite. In Bien * Tài's biography it is said that he obeyed a royal order to revise the *Chieu* Doi* Luc**. We do not know whether the original text was entitled *Chiêu Đồi Ban** and Biên Tài's revised version was called *Chiêu Đồi Luc*, or there was a single text referred to by both names. In any case, both texts are lost so we do not have much information about their contents. They might have been the first works of the "transmission of the lamp" genre in Vietnam, and as such, the first texts to establish the Zen lineages in Vietnam.

Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do*

This was composed by Thu'ò'ng Chieu* (died 1203).⁵ This work is mentioned five times in the *Thien* Uyen**, in the biographies of Thu'ò'ng Chiêu, Than* Nghi, Ma Ha, and Dinh* Hue*, and in the list of the Thao* Đu'ò'ng lineage.⁶ We learn that the *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do**, despite its title, is more than just a diagram of the lineages, for it also contains biographies: The *Thiên Uyên* itself states that the "main biographies" (*benzhuan*) of Không Lo* and Giác Hai* can be found in the *Nam Tông Tu' Pháp Đô*.⁷

Thu'ò'ng Chiêu uses the expression "Nam Tông" [Southern School]. The Vinitaruci* school is traditionally referred to as "the Southern school." We know that the *Nam Tông Tu' Pháp Đô* records biographies of both the Vinitaruci and the Vô Ngôn Thông schools. By "Nam Tông," Thu'ò'ng Chiêu probably means the Southern school of Chinese Zen, the school that considered Huineng the Sixth Patriarch of Zen in China. Thu'ò'ng Chiêu thus seems to agree with Thông Biên in approving of both Zen schools in Vietnam as legitimate offshoots of the Southern school of Chinese Zen. The compiler of the *Thiên Uyên*, on the other hand, does not seem to agree with him.

To sum up, Thu'ò'ng Chiêu appears to have studied Thông Biên's works very carefully and considered them authoritative. He even defended Thông Biên for not recording the two lineages of Nguyen* Dai* Diên and Nguyễn Bát Nhã.⁸ Thu'ò'ng Chiêu, therefore, might have used the *Chiêu Doi Luc* as a model he followed in composing his own *Nam Tông Tu' Pháp Đô*. These two works proved to be the main sources for the author of the *Thiên Uyên* in compiling biographies of Vietnamese "Zen masters" from the sixth to the end of twelfth century.

Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu*

This text was composed by Hue* Nhat*. This work is mentioned twice in the *Thiên Uyên*, in the biographies of Tinh* Không (1091–1170) and Nguyễn Hoc* (?–1181), without giving any information about its author.⁹ Since the *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** is no longer extant, and no other source in

Vietnamese literature besides the *Thien * Uyen** refers to it, we know absolutely nothing about its author, Hue* Nhat*.¹⁰

From the way the *Thiên Uyên* refers to these works, it seems that the *Chieu* Doi* Luc** and *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** provided the compiler of *Thiên Uyên* with biographical notes on eminent monks, and that he had to resort to the *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** for encounter dialogues and instructional verses.

The biographies of Tinh* Không and Nguyen* Hoc* are two explicit examples.¹¹ Even the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* calls our attention to the fact that encounter dialogues and instructional verses in these two biographies are identical with those in the biographies of the two Chinese Zen masters Jiashan and Huisu as recorded in the *Chuangeng lu*.¹² Let us look at a few examples:

1. In Tinh Không's biography, one of his encounter dialogues with another monk reads as follows:

One day, when Tinh Không had gone up to the teaching hall, a monk with a staff came and asked, "What is the Truth Body (*Dharmakaya*)?" Tinh Không said, "The Truth Body is originally without form." The monk continued, "What is the Dharma-eye?" Tinh Không said, "The Dharma-eye is originally without obstruction." He again said, "There is no Dharma in front of the eye. There is only consciousness in front of the eye. The Dharma is not within range of ear and eye." The monk laughed loudly. Tinh Không said, "What are you laughing about?" The monk said, "You're the type who have left the world to become a monk but have not grasped the message [of Zen]. You should go study with Master Dao* Hue*." Tinh Không said, "Can I still go see this master?" The monk said, "Above there's not a single roof tile, below there's not enough ground to stick an awl into." Tinh Không then changed his clothes and headed for Mount Tiên Du.¹³

Compare this with the encounter dialogue between Jiashan and Daowu in the biography of Jiashan in the *Chuangeng lu*:

One day Zen Master Jiashan Shanhui was coming up to the teaching hall when Daowu came with his staff. A monk asked, "What is the Truth Body?" Jiashan said, "The Truth Body is without form." The monk continued, "What is the Dharma-eye?" Jiashan said, "The Dharma-eye is stainless." He again said, "There is no Dharma in front of the eye. The Dharma is not within range of ear and eye." Daowu laughed. Jiashan became confused and asked him, "What are you laughing about?" Daowu said, "Venerable sir, you're the type who left the world to become a monk yet haven't met a teacher. You should go to Zhezong, Huating Village to study with the Venerable Chuanzi." Jiashan

said, "Can I still go see him?" Daowu said, "With that teacher, above there's not a single roof tile to cover his head, below there's not enough ground for him to stick an awl into." ¹⁴

2. It is recorded in Nguyen* Hoc's* biography that when he was about to pass away he spoke two verses instructing his students. One of them reads as follows:

The Dharma has no image or form,
It is right before your eyes, not far away.
You have to turn back and find it in yourself,
Do not seek it from others.
Even if you find it from them,
It wouldn't be the true Dharma.
But suppose you find the true Dharma,
What kind of a thing is it?¹⁵

This is almost identical with a verse spoken by Huisi recorded in the *Chuandeng lu*:

The Dharma is essentially not far away,
The ocean of the True Nature is not immense.
Try to find it within yourself,
Do not seek it from others.
Even if you find it from them,
It wouldn't be the true Dharma.¹⁶

The second verse by Nguyễn Hoc* is also identical to another verse spoken by Huisi. The author of the *Thien* Uyen** also informs us that the encounter dialogues and instructional verses in the above two biographies were taken from the *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu**. This seems to show that the *Liêt Tô Yêu Ngu'* was an earlier Vietnamese "transmission of the lamp" text that drew heavily on the *Chuandeng lu*. (Note that cases of interpolation of dialogues and verses borrowed from the *Chuandeng lu* are not restricted to the biographies of Tinh* Không and Nguyễn Hoc.)

Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do*

This work was composed by an unknown author of the Tran* dynasty: As its title suggests, this is a brief, annotated diagram of the origin and development of the Trúc Lâm [Bamboo Grove] Zen school, the only genuine Vietnamese Zen school with a Vietnamese founder and a lineage of successors.

The *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do** is too brief and does not appear to have been an independent work; it is not mentioned by the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* either. However, it is relevant in this connection, since it was an attempt to trace the transmission of Zen in Vietnam and thus

falls within the "transmission of the lamp" genre, and it is the only extant document of its kind. This "annotated diagram" is included in the preface to the [*Hue * Trung Thu'o'ng* Si* Ngu* Luc** [Recorded Sayings of the Eminent Hue* *Trung*], a Tran* dynasty Zen teacher.¹⁷ We have evidence to believe that the *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do** was written circa 1310–1313.¹⁸ The main purpose of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* as reflected in its preface was to set forth the genealogy of the Trúc Lâm school within the broader context of the Zen tradition:

After our Great Sage Sakyamuni* Buddha transmitted the treasure of the eye of the true Dharma, which is the wondrous mind of Nirvana, to the Venerable Mahakasyapa*, it was transmitted for twenty-eight generations until it reached the Great Master Bodhidharma. He came to China and transmitted [the true Dharma] to the Great Master Shenguang.¹⁹ From Shenguang the transmission continued for six generations until it reached the Great Master Shenhui. It was at that time that the true Dharma came to our country.

It is not known who was the first one to receive it [in our country]. The records begin with Zen Master Chanyue (Thien* Nguyet*) who transmitted [the true Dharma] to Lý Thái Tông, then to the Elder Dinh* Hu'o'ng, then to the Great Master Viên Chieu*, then to Zen Master Dao* Hue*—from one generation to the next, sometimes their names were known sometimes unknown. It is difficult to trace the lineage.

[The Zen tradition in our country] can be divided into three lineages:

1. Our lineage has already been set forth in the diagram, so it is not necessary to recount it again.
 2. Zen Master Vu'o'ng Chí Nhân transmitted it to Venerable Nhiem* Tang*. Nhiem Tang transmitted it to Layman Nhiem Tú. This lineage is now lost, and its transmission is not known.
 3. Venerable Nhat* Thien* received [the true Dharma] from a certain [unknown] teacher. He transmitted it to Prince Chân Đạo. At the present time, this lineage is also fading. Also, there was Layman Tianfeng (Thiên Phong) who came from Zhangquan and was a contemporary of Yingshun (Ứ'ng Thuan*). Tianfeng claimed he belonged to the Linji school. He transmitted [the true Dharma] to National Preceptor Dadeng (Dai* Dang*) and Venerable Nansi (Nan Tu').
- Dadeng transmitted it to our Emperor [Trần] Thánh Tông, to National Preceptor Lieu* Minh, to Huyen* Sách and others. Huyen Sách transmitted it to Pha* Trac* and others. Now this lineage is also deteriorating and is not in a very glorious state. Alas! The flourishing and decline of the Zen School is beyond words.

Now I am briefly enumerating the lineages of the Zen School [in our country] to leave [an account] to posterity, so that the generations of scholars to come will know that Zen has a source that can be traced. This is not just my own fabrication.

In this text, the author describes the origin and the situation of Buddhism in Vietnam during his time as follows:

1. The "True Dharma" (Buddhism) first came to Vietnam at the time of Shenhui (684–758). However, the author of the *Lu'o'c * Dan* Thien* Phái Do** was quick to note that it was not known "who was the first to receive [the Dharma] in our country," and that the record only starts with Chanyue (Thien* Nguyet*),²⁰ who transmitted the Dharma to Lý Thái Tông (r. 1029–1054), then to Đinh* Hu'ong (?–1051), to Viên Chieu* (999–1090), to Dao* Hue* (?–1073), and others.²¹
2. By the early fourteenth century when the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* was written, there were four Zen lineages in Vietnam: The first lineage started with Thông Thiên (?–1228),²² who transmitted the Dharma to Túc Lu*, to Úng Thuan*, to Xiaoyao (Tiêu Diêu), and to Huizhong (Huê Trung). Huê Trung then transmitted the Dharma to Trúc Lâm, i.e., Emperor Tran* Nhân Tông (r. 1279–1293), who founded the Trúc Lâm Zen sect. The second lineage was transmitted by Zen Master Vu'o'ng Chí Nhàn; the third by Zen Master Nhat* Thien*; and the fourth by Layman Tianfeng, a contemporary of Úng Thuân, who claimed to belong to the Linji school. According to the author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô*, these three lineages were already fading at his time and not much was known about them.

As we review this account of Buddhist history, a few things deserve consideration.

First, the author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* remarks that "the True Dharma" (*zhengfa*) came to Vietnam at the time of Shenhui." Whether by "True Dharma" he meant either Zen Buddhism or simply Buddhism, this statement does not seem to be correct, since we have archeological and historical evidence of the presence of Buddhism in Vietnam prior to the time of Shenhui and very little evidence of the introduction of Zen to Vietnam at the time of Shenhui.²³ Still, the connection the author makes between Shenhui and the origin of Zen Buddhism in Vietnam might be more than a chance conjecture: There might have been Chinese monks of Shenhui's lineage who came to Vietnam to spread Zen Buddhism and whose Vietnamese disciples strove to establish some sort of a Zen school in Vietnam.

Second, note that the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* was probably written less than thirty years before the *Thiên Uyển**, yet the author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* seems to know nothing of either Vinitaruci* or Vô Ngôn Thông. In fact, he did not know of any teachers before Thiên Lão.²⁴ Some modern scholars like Lê Manh* Thát have argued that this is because these authors did not have access to the materials used by the author of *Thiên Uyển*. But then again, the author of the *Thiên Uyển* did not seem to know of some of the "lineages" mentioned by the author of

the *Lu'o'c * Dan* Thien* Phái Do**, for instance. This suggests that there were various alternative versions of the history and contemporary situation of Buddhism in Vietnam current at that time.

While the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* might tell us something about the genealogy of the Trúc Lâm school, its author seems surprisingly nebulous about the transmission of Zen Buddhism in Vietnam in general. Nevertheless, the author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* seems to have recorded only what he actually knew, unlike other authors who tried to portray an unbroken line of succession connecting Vietnamese Zen to the Southern School of Chinese Zen (an aspiration that lasts even to the present time). In fact, although the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* is not extremely informative about the transmission of Zen in Vietnam, it does give us a realistic impression of the historical situation. During the period of more than ten centuries before its author's time, there were records of émigré foreign monks of Cham, Indian, and Chinese provenance coming to Vietnam to teach Buddhism. Among them, there must have been some Chinese Zen masters who transmitted their teachings to Vietnamese disciples. Some of these Vietnamese Zen adepts in turn might have made efforts to establish Vietnamese lineages. But there is no documentary record to indicate whether these "lineages" were consistent and lasting enough to become legitimate "sects" or "schools."

By the middle of the eleventh century, under the Lý dynasty, efforts were underway to construct a "history" of the transmission of Vietnamese Buddhism. The Vietnamese Buddhist elite in the Lý dynasty capital must have come under the spell of Zen literature, which enjoyed high prestige among cultured circles in China at the time, and been familiar with the "transmission of the lamp" genre, and especially the *Chuangdeng lu*. Although we know that Buddhism came to Vietnam before the Zen school arose in China (and before the formation of the concept of "schools" in the Zen sense), for the Lý dynasty Buddhist elite, it was natural to portray Vietnamese Buddhist history as part of the history of the transmission of Zen, which was the form of Buddhism both intellectually paramount and socially most prestigious in their cultural horizon. Since the Chinese Buddhist intellectuals composed "lamp history" texts to rewrite the history of Buddhism according to the Zen school, the Vietnamese Buddhist leaders likewise composed "lamp history" texts to assert Vietnamese Buddhism as the legitimate outgrowth of Chinese Zen.

Unfortunately, except for the *Thiên Uyển**, none of the other Vietnamese "lamp history" texts is extant except in fragments or in brief references in other literary works.

The fact that the authors of the various "lamp history" texts did not offer compatible accounts of Vietnamese Zen, and apparently did not

even know of each other, demonstrates that in reality Vietnamese Buddhism at that time was not at all what these authors made it out to be: a coherent, unified transmission derived from some Chinese Zen lineages. Rather, Vietnamese Buddhism consisted of different groups, stationed at different temples, under the influence of émigré monks belonging to different traditions of Chinese, Indian, or Central Asian Buddhism. When the Vietnamese authors recorded what they observed (or heard), they structured their accounts to conform to the Zen lineage model that they believed to be orthodox.

A critical reading of the *Thien * Uyen** shows us that its model of Vietnamese Buddhist history is based on interpretations derived from the *Chieu* Doi* Luc**, a text of the "lamp history" genre composed by Thông Biên*, now lost. Although at present the viewpoint of the *Thiên Uyên* is accepted by the Vietnamese Buddhist community as the "official view," the writings of Phúc Dien* show that up to the middle of the nineteenth century the *Thiên Uyens** account of Vietnamese Buddhist history was not accepted unquestioningly as it is nowadays.

Thông Biên's* Model of Vietnamese Buddhist History

Thông Biên was the first Vietnamese Buddhist author to establish a history of Buddhism in Vietnam based on the paradigms of Chinese Zen: the Zen school versus the scriptural school, the direct transmissions from one patriarch to another in successive lineages. In other words, Thông Biên was the first Vietnamese who endeavored to interpret the development of Vietnamese Buddhism in the form of transmission of the mind of enlightenment based on the model of Chinese Zen's "lamp history."

Thông Biên's biography relates an incident that took place at a vegetarian feast held at the National Temple in 1096, where he gave this explanation on the origin of Buddhism in India and its transmission to Vietnam:

Out of compassion, the Buddha appeared to be born in India. This is because India is the center of the world. At nineteen he left home. At thirty he achieved enlightenment. He stayed in the world preaching the Dharma for forty-nine years, setting forth all sorts of provisional teachings to enable sentient beings to awaken to the Path. This is what is called creating teachings for a certain period.

When he was about to enter final nirvana, he was afraid that people attached to delusion would get stuck on his words, so he told Manjusri*, "In forty-nine years I have not spoken a single word. Will they think something was said?" So he held up a flower [in front of the assembly on Vulture Peak]. No one in the assembly knew what to say, except

the Venerable Mahakasyapa *, who cracked a slight smile. Buddha knew he had meshed [with truth], so he entrusted the treasury of the eye of the true Dharma to him, and he became the first patriarch [of Zen]. This is what is called the separate transmission of the mind-source outside the scriptural teachings.

Later Moteng (Kasyapa* Matanga*) brought this teaching to Han China [ca. first century C.E.] and Bodhidharma travelled to [the Chinese kingdoms] of Liang and Wei [ca. sixth century C.E.] with this message. The transmission of the teaching flourished with Tiantai: it is called the school of the scriptural teachings. The gist of the teaching became clear with [the Sixth Patriarch of Zen] Caoqi: this is called the Zen school. Both these schools reached our country [Vietnam] many years ago. The scriptural teachings began with Mou Bo and Kang Senghui. The first stream of the Zen school began with Vinitaruci* (Ty* Ni Đa Lu'u Chi); the second with Vô Ngôn Thông. Vinitaruci and Vô Ngôn Thông are the ancestral teachers of these two streams [of Zen].

... The present representatives of the Vinitaruci stream are Lâm Huệ* Sinh and Vu'o'ng Chân Không. For the Vô Ngôn Thông stream, they are Mai Viên Chiêu* and Nhan Quang* Trí. [The successor of Kang Senghui] is Lô'i Hà Trạch*. The other side branches [of these two streams] are too numerous to mention them all.²⁵

Thông Biện's* remarks simply reiterated the typical traditional Zen model of Buddhist history. His concept of Buddhist history can be summarized as follows: (1) Both the "scriptural school" and "mind school" or Zen derived directly from the Buddha. (2) The scriptural school culminated in China with the Tiantai school, whereas the Zen school was transmitted by Bodhidharma from India to successive generations of Chinese patriarchs until it reached its zenith with Huineng. (3) Both of these schools, however, had come to Vietnam quite early: the scriptural school began with Mou Bo and Kang Senghui, the Zen school with Vinitaruci and Vô Ngôn Thông.

Note that although Thông Biện* obviously based himself on some of the ideas circulating in Zen circles in Song China, he did not seem to rate the Zen school as superior to the scriptural school as most of his Chinese Zen predecessors and contemporaries did. In fact, according to his biography Thông Biện attained enlightenment by meditating on the *Lotus Sutra** and became known as "Ngo* Pháp Hoa" or "Awakened to the Lotus."

Thông Biện's model of Vietnamese Buddhist history—although not known to or approved by some authors of the Tran* dynasty—was subsequently adopted by the compiler of the *Thien* Uyển** and thus exercised lasting influence on the traditional understanding of Vietnamese Buddhist history.

We have evidence that the author of the *Thiên * Uyển** derived his overall outline of Vietnamese Buddhist history from the *Chieu* Doi* Luc**, a work composed by Thông Bien* himself. We learn from Than* Nghi's biography that when he enquired about the Zen transmission and lineages in Vietnam, his teacher, Thu'ò'ng Chieu*, showed him Thông Bien's* *Chiêu Đới Luc* in which was recorded the transmission of both the scriptural school and particularly the Zen school in Vietnam with the lineages of Vinitaruci* and Vô Ngôn Thông and other minor branches.

Phúc Diên's* Model of Vietnamese Buddhist History

I have pointed out that from the middle of the Lý dynasty there were sporadic efforts by self-conscious Vietnamese Buddhist leaders to compose texts recording or interpreting the transmission of Buddhism in Vietnam. The *Thiên Uyển* itself is one important milestone in this ongoing enterprise of constructing history.

Nhu' So'n, an eminent monk of the [Later] Lê dynasty, composed the *Ke* Dang* Luc*, intending to trace Vietnamese Buddhism back to the time of the ancient, mythical Bhisagarjitasvararaja* Buddha, the paradigmatic symbol of the mind of enlightenment. But Nhu' So'n's work turns out to be nothing but a summary of the *Wudeng huiyuan* chronicle of Chinese Zen and is almost useless for the study of Vietnamese Buddhist history.

It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century, during the Nguyen* dynasty, that there appeared, in the writings of Phúc Diên*, another sustained effort at understanding the transmission of Zen in Vietnam. Phúc Diên's writings inform us of the transmission of Linji and Caodong Zen in medieval Vietnam and shed some light on a few historical issues in the *Thiên Uyển*.

Through Phúc Diên's biography in the *Kê Dang Lu'o'c* Luc*, we learn that one of his main concerns is to collect materials for a complete history of the origin and transmission of Vietnamese Buddhism (which he understood to mean Zen Buddhism).²⁶ This is the reason why Phúc Diên reprinted and edited writings and materials that he thought related to this issue. Phúc Diên stated in his "New Preface to the Five-Fascicle Transmission of the Lamp" that he composed the *Kê Dang Lu'o'c Luc* as a supplement to the *Thiên Uyển*, yet we notice that he did not seem to believe completely in the model of Vietnamese Buddhist history set forth by the *Thiên Uyển*. Phúc Diên wrote:

The successions from generation to generation among monks of various schools in the Zen community of Vietnam from the Đinh, [Former] Lê, Lý and Tran* to the [Later] Lê, could not be recorded. [Concerning the transmission] from the Trần up to the present time (Nguyễn), I have many times searched among the adepts, records,

and legends, without much success, and I have not been able to do a thorough study of the lineages of dharma-heirs. Therefore, I do not dare to compose anything but only record briefly [information] on the Tran * dynasty about the adepts, Buddhist sites, eminent monks, together with famous mountains, monasteries, renowned monks, transmissions from teachers to students, and the patronage by the aristocrats.²⁷

Thus, instead of continuing the *Thien* Uyen**, Phúc Dien's* *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc** becomes an effort to investigate the complete history of "the transmission of the lamp" in Vietnam.

Another point worth noticing is that Phúc Dien* did not discuss extensively Vô Ngôn Thông. In his "New Preface to the Five-Fascicle Transmission of the Lamp" he only mentioned the name of Vô Ngôn Thông as the founder of Zen in Vietnam (actually, he seems to reiterate the viewpoint of the *Thiên Uyên*). In his *Kê Đàng Lu'o'c Luc*, Phúc Điền presents a picture of Vietnamese Zen in which Vô Ngôn Thông does not appear to play any role. It is the same with Vinitaruci*. Phúc Điền only refers to Vinitaruci in passing in the story of Khâu Đà La,²⁸ merely as a monk who dwelt at Co* Châu Temple.

Phúc Điền stated that his intention was to compose a supplement to the *Thiên Uyên*. As a result we have the *Kê Đàng Lu'o'c Luc*. Phúc Điền himself seems to have been of the opinion that the value of Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc* consists in connecting the patriarchs of the two schools of Linji and Caodong—in both China and Vietnam—with the beginning of Zen since Bhisagarjitasvararaja* Buddha; therefore, in his *Kê Đàng Lu'o'c Luc*, he followed the example of Nhu' So'n and strove to retrace the inception of Zen in Vietnam in ancient records.²⁹ Phúc Điền wrote as follows about the beginning of Zen in Vietnam:

The inception of Zen in Dai* Nam: During the reign of Hùng Vu'o'ng there was [a young man named] Dong* Tu'* who went up to the grass hermitage on Mount Quynh* Vi. In the hermitage dwelt a monk from India named Phat* Quang (*Buddhaprabha). When Đông Tu' passed the age of forty, Phât Quang transmitted the Dharma to him, giving him a hat and a staff saying that they contained all his miraculous power. Đông Tu' transmitted the Dharma to Tiên Dung (his wife) and together they cultivated the Dharma.

On their way home, they had to stay overnight at some place, taking shelter under the hat supported by the staff. At the third watch, there appeared citadels, palaces, boy and girl servants, armies, and a whole court. Next morning, the nearby people were amazed and referred to it as the celestial court. [Đông Tu' and Tiên Dung] arranged them into ranks, and they became a separate country. When Hùng Vu'o'ng heard about this, he thought that his daughter (Tiên

Dung) was rebelling, so he sent his troops to fight them but they did not succeed. One night, strong wind arose scattering the sand and shaking the trees. Tiên Dung, Dong * Tu*, their subject, citadels, and palaces all rose to the sky. The empty lot was transformed into a swamp. The next day there was nothing to be seen. People then built a shrine to worship. The swamp was subsequently named Da* Trach*, the province Tu* Nhiên, the town Hà Mau*.³⁰

This strongly mythical story does not seem to have anything to do with the transmission of Zen. Perhaps Phúc Dien's* intention was to say that Zen was as old as the country of Vietnam. Traditional history gives the date of Hùng Vu'o'ng—the mythical ancestor of the Vietnamese people—as 2879 B.C.E.³¹ For Phúc Dien*, Zen had been transmitted by Bhisagarjitasvararaja* Buddha since the beginning of time. Obviously, from the viewpoint of critical history we cannot accept this position, because Zen did not really take shape in China until the middle of the seventh century. To interpret the unfolding of Buddhism in human history symbolically as the transmission of the enlightenment experience in the Zen fashion is one thing, but to regard this as actual history is another.

To sum up Phúc Điền's view, Zen had been present in Vietnam since the time of Hùng Vu'o'ng. Although this ancient transmission was not recorded clearly and there were not sufficient materials to restore a coherent history, the continuous transmission of Zen in Vietnam as a cohesive school was a reality beyond any doubt. In essence, then, Phúc Điền, like Thông Bien*, implicitly adopted the interpretive concepts of the Chinese Zen tradition to construct his view of Vietnamese Buddhist history.

The Linji School

Phúc Điền referred to a number of texts that purported to record Vietnamese Buddhist history from its inception through various dynasties, but he seemed most confident when writing about Buddhism in the Tran* dynasty. According to Phúc Điền, in the Trần dynasty there were already eminent Song monks coming to Vietnam to transmit "the true school of Linji." He wrote:

Since the Trần dynasty, [eminent monks] from the Great Song such as National Master Dadeng, the Venerable Yingshun (Ú'ng Thuan*), the Venerable Tianfeng, the Eminent Yuanzheng, Patriarch Xiaoyao, and the Eminent Huizhong (Hue* Trung), came to our country and went into Mount Yên Tu', transmitting the [doctrine of the] true school of Linji to our Founder Patriarch Dieu* Ngu'*. Subsequently, Điều Ngu' transmitted it to Pháp Loa, and Huyen* Quang, and the

patriarchate was handed down from generation to generation. During the Bao * Thái era of the [Later] Lê dynasty, the Venerable Yuangong, [an eminent monk] from the Great Ming again transmitted the Linji School in Vietnam. . . . [Subsequently], Venerable Yuangong went into Mount Tiên Du to repair the Phat* Tích Temple.³²

According to Phúc Dien*, the true school of Linji was transmitted into Vietnam twice: the first time in the Tran* dynasty beginning with Dadeng, the second time in the Lê dynasty with Yuangong. The founding patriarch of Linji Zen of Vietnam was Dieu* Ngu* (i.e., Trần Nhân Tông, the third emperor of the Trần dynasty, also considered the founder of the Vietnamese Zen sect Trúc Lâm), the Dharma-heir of the Linji lineage starting with Dadeng, Yuanzheng, and Tianfeng of the Song. The second Linji lineage was transmitted to Vietnam in the Lê dynasty with Yuangong (also called Zhuogong). This lineage lasted nine generations. According to Phúc Điền, all the Trần kings were adepts in Zen. Trần Thái Tông studied with Yuanzheng, Tianfeng, and Dadeng; Trần Thánh Tông studied with Dadeng; Trần Nhân Tông studied with Huizhong; Trần Anh Tông and Trần Minh Tông both studied with Puhui.

However, in his record of the Linji lineage at Mount Yên Tu'*, Phúc Điền reported that this lineage lasted twenty-three generations. Its first patriarch was Hien* Quang, the second generation was Yuanzheng, the third was Dadeng, the fourth was Xiaoyao, the fifth was Huihui (probably a scribal error for Huizhong), the sixth was Diêu Ngu', the seventh was Pháp Loa, and the eighth was Huyen* Quang. This seems to accord with other sections of his *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc** and provides us with useful information.

There is one obscure point. In the above record of the Linji lineage in the Trần dynasty, Hiên Quang's name does not figure in the list of eminent monks from Song China. But here Phúc Điền records that Hiên Quang was the first patriarch of the Linji lineage in Vietnam with its headquarters on Mount Yên Tu', without giving us any additional information about Hiên Quang. According to the *Thien* Uyen**, Hiên Quang (?–1221) of Mount Yên Tu' was a Vietnamese monk belonging to the fourteenth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school.³³

If Hiên Quang in Phúc Dien's* text was identical to Hiên Quang of the *Thiên Uyên*, the difficulty would be: why would those eminent monks of the Linji School from China have had to come to Vietnam to study Linji Zen with a Vietnamese monk? According to the *Thiên Uyên*, at first Hiên Quang studied with Thu'ò'ng Chieu*, but afterward he received the mind-seal from Trí Thông and was ordained by Pháp Gió'i. Later in his life he went to Mount Tù' So'n and devoted himself to meditation and

asceticism. When he passed away, his disciple Dao * Viên took care of the funeral ceremony. If the records in the *Thien* Uyen** were reliable, Hien* Quang was keen on practicing austerities and had the personality of a thaumaturge, with nothing about his Buddhism resembling Linji Zen.

According to tradition, Linji himself came from the same lineage as Vô Ngôn Thông. If Hiên Quang himself was a patriarch of the Vô Ngôn Thông School, why did he suddenly become the first patriarch of the Linji lineage in Vietnam? The only plausible answer, albeit still a surmise, is that Hiên Quang himself repaired the temple on Mount Yên Tu*; afterward when Yuanzheng came to Vietnam and went into Mount Yên Tu' to transmit the Dharma, he might have honored Hiên Quang with the title of first patriarch of the (Linji) Zen lineage on Mount Yên Tu'. This explanation seems plausible because one of Phúc Dien's* methods was to record the transmission based on information gathered at the monasteries.

The Caodong School

According to Phúc Điền's records, Caodong Zen came to Vietnam after Linji Zen, was not as popular, and was not transmitted for as long. In his *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc**, perhaps from sectarian loyalties, Phúc Dien* does not seem to pay as much attention to Caodong Zen as he does to Linji Zen.

Phúc Điền reports as follows about the Caodong lineage in Vietnam:

The right branch of the Sixth Patriarch Huineng was the transmission to Venerable Qingyuan Xingsi. The eighteenth generation of the branch was Venerable Dongshan Liangjie who founded the Caodong School which was transmitted to Zen Master Yiju Zhijiao. . . . The Caodong School was transmitted to our country with Venerable Shuiyue, also known as Daonan, as the first patriarch. The second generation was Venerable Zhenrong Zongyan, who founded Hong* Phúc Temple at Hòe Village, Hà Nội* Province, and was granted the title of Dai* Thù'a Bo-Tat* (Mahayana* Bodhisattva).³⁴

According to Phúc Điền, this Caodong lineage with Shuiyue as the first patriarch lasted nine generations with three different centers: Hông Phúc Temple in Hà Nội (from the first to the fifth generation), Đại Quang Thiên* Tu'* Temple in Bac* Ninh (from the sixth to the seventh generation), and Bích Dong* So'n Temple (from the eighth to the ninth generation). Subsequently, three subschools developed: The first had its headquarters at Đại Quang Thiên Temple (Bac Ninh) under the guidance of Dao Nguyên Khoan Duc* and lasted four generations. The second, at Hàm Long (Hà Nội), started with Zen Master Chiêm Giác and lasted three generations. The third subschool was at Pho* Giác (Hà Nội); it started with Zen Master Khoan Hòa and lasted four generations.³⁵

Although Phúc Dien's * records do not verify the traditional image of a "school" as a unified, unbroken lineage transmitting fixed doctrinal systems, they are evidence of the presence of Zen, Linji Zen, and Caodong Zen in Vietnam. In the centuries from the Tran* through the [Later] Lê to the Nguyen* dynasty, there had been a number of émigré Chinese monks with certain connections to Linji and Caodong Zen coming to different temples in Vietnam to spread their religion. Therefore, even though we do not accept the traditional understanding of the term "school," it would be wrong to deny the presence of these Zen "schools" (or rather, "lineages") in Vietnam.

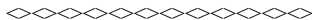
Appendix III— Biographies of Eminent Monks from Other Sources

Không Los * Biography in the *Dai* Nam Thien* Uyen* Truyen* Dang* Tap* Luc**

[20a6] Zen Master Không Lo*, whose personal name was Chí Thanh*, was a native of Lai* Tri, Chân Dinh* Prefecture, Nam Đinh Province. His lay family name was Nguyen*. He was a spiritual companion of Giác Hai* and Tù' Dao* Hanh*. When he was twenty-nine, the three of them went to India together to study with a certain *sramana** and attained the six supernatural powers.¹

When Không Lô returned to his native province, he built Diên Phúc Temple and devoted himself to the chanting of the *Great Compassion Mantra*.² At that time he wished to build the four great vessels of Dai* Nam,³ notwithstanding the fact that his family was poor and his strength was limited. One day, he had the thought that there must be plenty of good copper in the great land of Song that could be used to build them. He immediately traveled northward.

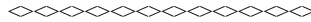
[20b] At first he stayed as a guest at the house of an elder. He asked the latter for a six-foot square of land to build a temple. The elder laughed and said: "Formerly, when the Crown Prince of Liang built a temple, he needed a thousand-square-mile piece of land and covered it with gold. What can you do with a six-foot square of land which is only enough for a hen-coop?" That night Không Lô spread his monk's robe, and it covered ten miles of land. Witnessing his supernatural power, the elder and his family bowed down to thank him. Henceforth, the whole family took refuge in the Three Jewels (*triratna*).



The next day, wearing his monk's robe and carrying his monk's staff, Không Lô came to pay a visit to the Song court and stood in reverent posture in front of the imperial palace. When the Song emperor came to

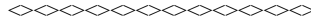
court to discuss political issues with his civil and military officers, seeing the old monk, he called him and asked: "Old man, of what country are you a native? What is your name? What is your reason to come here?" Không Lộ * said: "I am a poor monk from a small country. I left home to become a monk years ago. My present wish is to build the four vessels of Viet* Nam, but my physical strength is not enough to carry out this intention; therefore I took the risk of traveling a thousand miles to come here. I humbly ask Your Sagely Majesty to show your compassion and provide me with a little good copper to facilitate the work of casting [the four vessels]. The Song emperor asked: "How many disciples did you bring with you?" Không Lộ said: "I came here alone. I am only asking for this bagful of copper, and that will be enough for me to carry home." The Song emperor said: "It's a long way to the south, [21a] you are welcome to take as much as you can. It's a trifle not worth talking about."

Không Lộ took all the copper in the Song store, yet his bag was still not full. Some people gaped in amazement, some shook their heads. When they reported this to the emperor, he was stunned and regretted he had given his permission. But because he already promised Không Lộ, he could not do anything about it. When the emperor wanted his officers to escort him back to his country, Không Lộ declined, saying: "I can carry this one bag of copper myself, do not bother to escort me." Then he went outside, and slipping his staff through the bag [to carry it on his shoulder] he gently walked away. He used his bamboo hat to cross the rivers on his way back, and reached the shore of the Yellow River in the twinkling of an eye.



Không Lộ then went to Quynh* Lâm Temple, Đông Triêu* District, Hai* Du'ong Province, and cast a huge statue of Amitabha* Buddha. He also built the Báo Thiên Stupa in the capital, a big bell in Pho* Lai*, and a caldron at Minh Dinh*. He used the rest of the copper to build a big bell at the temple of his native village, which weighed 3,300 pounds. He also cast a big bell at Diên Phúc Temple, Giao Thuy* Prefecture, which weighed 3,000 pounds. After finishing his task, he wrote a eulogy:

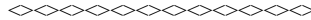
Crossing the great ocean on my straw hat,
A thousand-mile journey in one breath.
Filling my bag with all Song's copper,
My arms can heft ten tons.



In the meantime, Emperor Lý Nhân Tông was building the Hu'ng Long Palace. It took him over a year to finish it. [21b] The palace was extremely

grandiose and ornate. Suddenly two lizards appeared on the beams and raised a great cry: the sound was as a giant thunderstorm. The emperor was very unhappy about the event. The commander then reported: "Only Giác Hai * and Không Lộ*⁴ can do away with this strange apparition." [The emperor ordered the commander to go look for Không Lộ,] and he immediately carried out the order. On the fifteenth day of the first month of that year, he arrived at Không Lộ's* retreat. Không Lộ said: "Why have you come so late, Commander?" The commander said: "How do you already know my rank?" Không Lộ said: "I often ride with the moon and clouds. Sometimes I inadvertently enter the emperor's palace. I already know everything."

On the same day Không Lộ came to the capital. The emperor had a big nail driven into one of the pillars in the palace and said: "Only the one who can pull this out is the Dharma King." Không Lộ easily pulled the nail out with his hand. He then quietly recited the mantras. The two lizards were choked and could not cry any more: in a minute they fell to the ground. The emperor then rewarded Không Lộ with one thousand pounds of gold and five hundred acres of land as temple property, and also bestowed on him the title *Quoc* Su'* (National Preceptor).

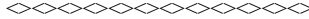


When Lý Than* Tông (r. 1128–1138) was twenty-one years old (1136), he suddenly [contracted a strange malady and] changed into a tiger, crouching there and biting people, wild, fierce, and horrible. The emperor [Lý Nhân Tông] had to build a golden cage to keep him in. In the meantime the children at Chân Đinh* started to sing a ditty:

The country has Lý Thân Tông,
All court affairs are solved.
If we want to cure the country's⁵ illness,
We need Nguyen* Minh Không.

Lý Nhân Tông ordered [22a] the commander to take the dragon boat to welcome Không Lộ [to the capital]. When the commander arrived at his retreat, Không Lộ smiled and said: "You want me to cure the tiger, don't you?" The commander said: "How did you know?" Không Lộ said: "I knew about this thirty years ago." When he came to the royal palace, Không Lộ seated himself peacefully and in a stern voice said: "Let the court officials bring a caldron of oil here immediately. Place one hundred needles in it, and boil it over a great fire, and move the prince's cage next to it." He then picked up the one hundred needles with his bare hand and stuck them into Lý Thân Tông's body, saying the spell: "It's a precious thing to be the Son of Heaven." Immediately, all the tiger's

hair, tail, claws, and teeth fell away and he changed back to his princely body. Lý Nhân Tông rewarded Không Lộ * with a thousand pounds of gold, one thousand acres of fields, tax exempt, for the temple's permanent property.



Không Lộ left the world to become a monk on the fourteenth day of the eighth month of the year *bính thìn*. On the third day of the sixth month of the year *giáp tu at** (1151),⁶ he returned to the Western Paradise. Nowadays in front of the shrine of Lý Quoc* Su' at Tho* Xu'o'ng District, Hà Nội* Province, there still exists a statue of Không Lộ and a stone tablet. The people of Tiên [Du] Village have burned incense and worshipped him there for generations.

Biographies of Du'o'ng Không Lộ and Nguyen* Giác Hai* in the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái*

[From the *Linh Nam Chích Quái Liet* Truyen**]

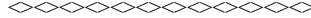
Biography of Zen Master Không Lộ: Zen Master Không Lộ of Nghiêm Quang Temple, Hai Thanh Village,⁷ whose family name was Du'o'ng. He hailed from Hai Thanh. For generations his family lived as fishermen. Later he abandoned the family occupation to become a monk. At the temple he practiced chanting the *Dharani-Sutra**. During the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh era (1059–1065), he befriended Giác Hai and they became spiritual companions. Gradually, they made their way to Ton* Trach* Temple⁸ and made their abode there. He ate herbs and wore tree bark, totally oblivious of his body, outwardly cutting off seeking and inwardly practicing meditation. His mind, ears, and eyes grew more and more penetrating. He could fly in the air, walk on water, tame tigers, and subdue dragons. His supernatural powers were multifarious and unfathomable. Finally, he returned to his native village, set up a temple, and settled there.

One day his attendant asked him: "Since my coming here, I haven't received your instruction about the essence of the mind. May I present you with this verse:

Only by cultivating are body and mind purified,
 Growing luxuriantly the straight branch faces
 the empty awareness.
 Someone comes enquiring about Emptiness-Emptiness,⁹
 The body is next to the screen: its shadow forms an image.

Không Lộ said understandingly: "You bring along your origin, you bring along the scriptures, I accept them for your sake, and for your sake

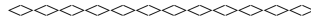
I am concerned. What does not agree with your wish?" And he burst into laughter.



He spoke this verse:

I have found a site with dragons and snakes to settle
 down in,
 The rustic feeling leaves me exceedingly happy all day long.
 At times I go up to the solitary mountaintop,
 And utter a long whistle that chills the whole of heaven.

He passed away on the third day, the sixth month in the tenth year, *ky * hoi**, of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1119). His disciples had his remains buried in front of the temple. By royal edict, the temple was enlarged and duties were levied on two thousand households for the expenses of its upkeep.



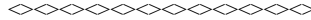
Biography of Zen Master Giác Hai*: Zen Master Giác Hai was also a native of Hai Thanh Village. He dwelt in Diên Phúc Temple in his native prefecture. His family name was Nguyen*. He took up fishing and lived on his boat, sailing here and there. At twenty-five, he gave up fishing and shaved his head to become a monk. Together with Không Lo* he first lived at Ton* Trach* Temple but later moved back to Hai Thanh Village. Under Lý Nhân Tông's reign, along with Daoist adept Thông Huyền* he was often summoned into the Liên Ngõa Palace for audiences and given a seat on cool stone. Once there were two lizards whose cries were grating on everyone's ears. The emperor told Thông Huyền to use magic to silence them. Thông Huyền chanted an incantation and one of them fell to the ground. The emperor smiled and told Giác Hai: "Venerable One, the other is left for you." Giác Hai immediately uttered his incantation and the other lizard immediately fell down. The emperor in amazement composed a eulogy:

Giác Hai's* mind is as vast as the ocean,
 Thông Huyền's* way is profound too.
 One has magic talent, the other the power
 of transformation,
 One is a Buddha and the other an immortal.

Giác Hai became famous throughout the land because of this and attracted disciples from all over the country. The emperor himself treated

him with the deference accorded a teacher. Whenever he took up residence in the Hai * Thanh provincial palace, he would visit Giác Hai's* temple first. One day the emperor asked Giác Hai: "May I be instructed on the mind's concentration power in accordance with reality?" Giác Hai then composed the "Eight Change Mantra" and rose into the air some yards above the ground for a while and then descended. The emperor and his officials applauded in admiration. He then offered Giác Hai a Kiền Du' chariot and the liberty of the palaces.

Under his reign, Lý Than* Tông repeatedly sent emissaries to summon Giác Hai to the capital, but he often declined to come on the grounds of old age and illness.



Someone asked him: "Between Buddha and sentient beings, who is the guest and who is the host?" Giác Hai answered with a verse:

I notice your hair is white,
So I tell you to be the old guest.
If you enquire about the Buddha's realm,
You [failed and] were marked on your forehead
at the dragon gate.

When he was about to pass away, Giác Hai spoke a verse:

Spring comes, flowers and butterflies know
the season well,
Flowers and butterflies must respond to the season.
But flowers and butterflies are originally illusions,
Do not occupy your mind with flowers
and butterflies.

That night a meteor fell into the southeast corner of the Thái Không lodge. At dawn, Giác Hai sat in an upright position and passed away. The emperor issued a royal decree to collect duties from three thousand households for candles and incense to commemorate Giác Hai and, as a reward, appointed his two sons to positions at court.

[From the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái Ngoai* Truyện**]:

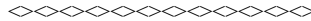
Biography of Zen Master Du'ong Không Lo*: Zen Master Không Lô of Nghiêm Quang Temple, Hai Thanh. Village, whose family name was Du'o'ng, was a native of Hai Thanh. For generations his family lived as fishermen. Subsequently, he abandoned the family occupation to become a monk. At the temple he often chanted the *Dharani-Sutra**. During the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh era under the reign of Lý Thánh Tông (1059–

1065), he befriended Giác Hai * and they came to dwell at Hà Trach* Temple.¹⁰ He ate herbs and wore tree bark, totally oblivious of his body, outwardly cutting off agitation and fear, inwardly practicing meditation and concentration. His mind, ears, and eyes grew penetrating. He could fly in the air, float on earth, tame tigers, and subdue dragons. His supernatural powers were multifarious and unfathomable. Eventually, he attained the [*samadhi**] of the True Seal of Great Mirror. Sometimes he was called an immortal; at other times he was named a fairy. Realizing that he still had to pay karmic debts from previous lifetimes, he eventually built a temple in his native district, settled down there, and took on the sobriquet Không Lo*.

One day his attendant asked him: "Since my coming here, I haven't received your instruction about the essence of the mind. May I present you with this verse:

Only by cultivating are body and mind purified,
 Growing luxuriantly the straight branch faces the
 empty yard.
 Someone comes enquiring about the King of Emptiness,
 The body sits next to the screen: its shadow forms
 an image.

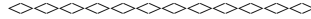
Không Lô said understandingly: "You bring the mountain, I accept it for you. You bring the water, I take it for you. Where have I failed to give you the essence of mind?" And he burst into laughter.



He spoke this verse:

I have found a site with dragons and snakes to settle
 down in,
 The rustic feeling leaves me exceedingly happy
 all day long.
 At times I go up to the solitary mountaintop,
 And utter a long whistle with the universe.

He passed away on the third day, the sixth month in the tenth year, *ky** *hoi**, of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1119). His disciples gathered his relics and buried them in front of the temple. By royal edict, the temple was refurbished and duties were levied on two thousand households for the expenses of its upkeep. Legends have it that beyond the ocean at Hoàn Giang there is a mountain wall that has the shape of a pillar; they are all old traces of the Zen Master.



Biography of Zen Master Nguyen * Giác Hai*: Zen Master Giác Hai hailed from Hai Thanh Village. His family name was Nguyễn. He dwelt at Diên Phúc Temple. When young he took up fishing and made his boat his home, sailing in rivers and oceans. At twenty-five, he gave up his trade and shaved his head to become a monk. In the Chu'o'ng Đứ'c Gia Khánh era under the reign of Lý Thánh Tông, he befriended Zen Master Không Lo*, and together they came to dwell at Hà Trach* Temple. Subsequently he became Không Lo's* Dharma heir. Later he returned to Diên Phúc Temple at his native village. He wandered about enjoying himself and did not trouble anybody. People could help themselves to whatever there was in the temple, since they were donations.

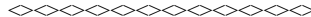
Once the emperor [Lý Nhân Tông] summoned him and the Daoist adept Thông Huyền* to the Liên Ngõa Palace for an audience. Suddenly there were two lizards calling one another whose cries grated on everyone's ears. The emperor told Thông Huyền to chant an incantation and one of them fell to the ground. The emperor smiled and told Giác Hai, "Venerable One, the other is left for your incantation." Before long, the other lizard also fell to the ground. The emperor was pleased and composed a eulogy:

Giác Hai's* mind is as vast as the ocean,
 Thông Huyền's* way is profound too.
 One has magic talent, the other the power of transformation,
 One is a Buddha and the other an immortal.

Since then Giác Hai became famous throughout the land. Disciples came to him in droves. The emperor himself treated him with the deference accorded a teacher. Whenever he took up residence in the Hai Thanh provincial palace, he would visit Giác Hai's temple first.

One day the emperor asked Giác Hai: "May I be instructed in the mind's concentration power in accordance with reality?" Giác Hai then composed a verse called "Eight Change Mantra" and rose into the air some five yards above the ground for a while and then descended. The emperor and his officials applauded in admiration. He then offered Giác Hai a Kiên Du' chariot and the liberty of the palaces.

Under his reign, Lý Than* Tông repeatedly invited Giác Hai to the capital, but he often declined to come on the grounds of old age and illness.



A monk asked him: "Between Buddha and sentient beings, who is the guest and who is the host?" Giác Hai answered with a verse:

I notice your hair is white,
 So I tell you for your information.
 If you enquire about the monk's realm,
 You [failed and] were marked on your forehead [at the
 dragon gate].

When he was about to pass away, Giác Hai * spoke a verse to his assembly:

Spring comes, flowers and butterflies know
 the season well,
 Flowers and butterflies must respond to the season.
 But flowers and butterflies are originally illusions,
 Do not occupy your mind with flowers and butterflies.

That night a meteor fell into the southeast corner of the Thái That* lodge. At dawn, Giác Hai sat in an upright position and passed away. The emperor issued a royal decree to collect duties from three thousand households for candles and incense as a reward.

Biographies of Khong* Lo* and Giác Hai in the *Thiên Nam Vân Lục**

[Không Lo's* Biography]: In the Gia Khánh era of the Lý dynasty, there was a monk whose family name was Du'o'ng, sobriquet Không Lô, who was a native of Thanh Hải. For generations his family lived as fishermen. Không Lô abandoned his family profession and left home to become a monk. A man from his native village named Giác Hai became his good companion. They visited Hà Trach* Temple and dwelt there. He wore grass clothes and tree-bark shoes, devoting himself to chanting the *sutras**, and mastered the meditation techniques of a *bhiksu**. His mind became clear and he roughly attained the True Seal of Great Mirror. Sometimes he was an immortal, other times he was a fairy. Realizing that he had the retribution of previous karma, he erected a temple in his native district and lived there. A Champa monk named Bach* Vân (White Cloud) came to dwell there [and became his attendant]. Once Bach Vân asked him, "Since I came here, I haven't received your instruction on the essence of mind." Then he respectfully presented a verse:

Only by cultivating are body and mind purified,
 Growing luxuriantly the straight branch faces
 the empty yard.
 Someone comes enquiring about the Emptiness
 of Emptiness,
 The body sits next to the screen: its shadow forms an image.

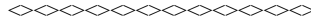
"What does that mean?" Không Lô reminded him, "You come from the mountain, I accept you; you come from the river, I take you in.

Where did I fail to give you the essence of the mind?" Then he burst out laughing. He passed away on the fifth day of the third month of the tenth year, *ky * hoi**, of the Hoi* Tu'ong Dai* Khanh era. His disciples collected the relics and buried them in front of the temple.

[Biography of Giác Hai*]: Formerly Giác Hai loved fishing; he used to sail here and there. Not until he was twenty-five did he give up the [fishing] rod and enter the monastery. He came to dwell at Hà Trach* Temple and became a companion of Khong* Lo*. Subsequently, he became Khong Lo's* Dharma heir. Later Giác Hai returned to Diên Phúc Temple, he wandered about enjoying himself, not relying on others. People were welcome to take whatever there was in the temple, since they were donations. Lý Nhân Tông, together with Thông Huyền* and Giác Hai, once went to Mount Liên Cot*, sitting in meditation on a cool boulder, when suddenly there were two lizards calling to one another with horrific cries. The emperor ordered Thông Huyền to stop them. Thông Huyền quietly recited an incantation and one of them fell down. The emperor laughingly told Giác Hai, "He left one for you." Giác Hai stared at the lizard. In a little while, it also fell to the ground. The emperor was amazed and composed a poem praising them:

Giác Hai's* mind is as vast as the ocean,
 Thông Huyền's* way is profound too,
 Magic talent and power of transformation,
 One is a Buddha the other is an immortal.

Since then Giác Hai became famous throughout the land. Both monks and lay people respected him. The emperor himself treated him with the deference accorded a teacher. Under his reign, Lý Than* Tông repeatedly invited Giác Hai to the capital, but he often declined to come.



Someone asked him: "Between Buddha and sentient beings, who is the guest and who is the host?" Giác Hai answered with a verse:

I notice your hair is white,
 Those who inform you will do you harm,
 If you enquire about the monk's realm,
 You [failed and] were marked on your forehead at the
 dragon gate.

When he was about to pass away, Giác Hai spoke a verse to his assembly:

Spring comes, flowers and butterflies know
 the season well,
 Flowers and butterflies must respond to the season.

When flowers and butterflies come one knows
 there'll be an end,
 Do not occupy your mind with flowers and butterflies.

That night a meteor fell into the east corner of the Dai * Bao* lodge. At dawn, Giác Hai* sat in an upright position and passed away. Up to the present time people still hear about him.

Biography of Tù' Dao* Hanh* in the *Viet* Dien* U Linh Tap**

[From the *Viết Diên U Linh Tập Luc* Toàn Biên*]:

True Record of the Story of the Great Sage Tù' Dao Hanh: Formerly, Dao Hanh's* family name was Tù', his personal name Lo*. His father Vinh embraced Buddhism. He held the office of General Supervisor of Monk Officers under the Lý dynasty. He used to travel to An Lăng Village, so he married Loan, a daughter of the Tang* family, and made his home there at Lang Nam Hamlet, An Lăng Village. The site happened to be propitious. Dao Hanh was born there later. He had the air of an immortal.

When a youngster, Dao Hanh was a virtual delinquent, yet he harbored great aspirations. No one could fathom his behavior and countenance. He befriended a Confucian scholar named Phi Sinh, a Daoist Master named Lê Toàn Nghĩa* and an actor named Phan At*.¹¹ At night, Dao Hanh would study hard while during daytime enjoy himself playing ball, playing the flute, and gambling. His father would always rebuke him for his dissipation, till one night he sneaked a look into Dao Hanh's room and found the lamp almost out, the books scattered about, and Dao Hanh himself leaning on a desk sleeping, with a book still in his hand. After this his father no longer worried about him.

Later on Dao Hanh passed the White Lotus examination as a laureate but refused to serve at the court. He was occupied day and night with thoughts of avenging his father's death. Previously, it had happened that his father Tù' Vinh through wizardry offended the Marquis of Diên Thành. The marquis asked a henchman of his, the sorcerer Đại Diên, to cast a demonic spell on Tù' Vinh and kill him. Then they hurled Tù' Vinh's corpse into the Tô Lịch* River. The corpse drifted downstream to the Tây Du'ong Bridge where Diên Thành's mansion was located and remained there the whole day. Scared out of his wits, the Marquis of Diên Thành hurriedly sent for Đại Diên, who came and uttered the following incantation: "A monk wouldn't stay angry overnight. Life is but a comedy. With death you achieve enlightenment." At that the corpse drifted away to the old village of Nhân Muc* on the Hàm Rong* River

where it stopped. Finding this miraculous, the villagers buried the corpse, erected a shrine, and carved a statue of Tù' Vinh.

They worshipped it every year on the tenth day of the first month as the anniversary day. Dao * Hanh's* mother was buried at Ba Lang* Temple, Thu'o'ng* An Village, now Hoa Lang Temple, where both his parents were worshipped as the Holy Father and Holy Mother. Though intent on revenge, Dao Hanh* still had no plan. One day, he chanced to see Dai* Diên who had been called out for some magic performance. Dao Hanh was about to strike him with his stick when he heard a voice in the air shouting at him not to. Dao Hanh threw his stick away and went home, sad at heart and resentful. He wanted to go to India to improve his magic arts in order to subdue Dai Diên. So he set out together with his two friends Minh Không and Giác Hai*.

When they reached the country of the Gold Teeth Barbarians, they found the road full of dangers and had a mind to turn back. They saw an old man rowing a little boat in a leisurely fashion in the river. They went to him and asked: "Sir, how long is the road from here to India?" The old man said: "The mountainous tracks are quite dangerous. You can't do it on foot. Here is my little boat. I can help you cross over. Here is a little stick. It will guide you straight to India. It won't be a long way. Let me help you." The old man then spoke a verse:

I certainly will accompany you on the path of truth,
Praise be to him who goes afar for wisdom.
The rivers are so many—why bother crossing them?
Just cross the Yellow River and you see the Holy One.

As the verse finished, they looked up and found themselves at the Indian shore, where the miracles are countless. Dao Hanh remained behind to watch the boat. Giác Hai and Minh Không went ashore, learned magic arts and returned home instantly. Dao Hanh had been watching the boat for three days without seeing his friends back. He chanced to see an old woman by the river. He bowed to her and asked: "Old lady, did you see two seekers come?" The old woman said: "They have already received the magic arts I taught them and have gone back home." While bowing Dao Hanh told her the circumstances of their traveling together and expressed his indignation against their abandoning him. The old woman then told him: "Carry these two buckets of water to my home. I will teach you magic arts and also impart to you the power of shortening distances and the *Dharani* Mantra*."

Dao Hanh still resented his friends' disloyalty. He recited the mantra. Minh Không and Giác Hai who were on their way home were caught spellbound and felt a throbbing pain in their abdomens. Using his power

of reducing distances, Dao * Hanh* came back home before them. He changed himself into a tiger, hid himself in a thicket at Ngai* Cau* Village, Tù Liêm District, and roared, frightening everyone on the shore.

Minh Không and Giác Hai* looked at each other in astonishment. Though outwardly afraid, braced up by their knowledge of magic arts, and clever enough to discriminate between the true and the false, they knew for sure that it was Tù Dao Hanh in disguise. They then looked back, saying: "If you want to know your next reincarnation, well, come on, we'll let you know." Dao Hanh said: "We were all taught by Lord Buddha. We have achieved our objective. I still have to be reborn in this world as King, but won't escape sickness. There is karmic affinity between us. We should help one another." Dao Hanh then dropped his old grudges. The three of them taught each other their magic powers. Among them were walking on water, flying in the air, summoning dragons, subduing tigers, soaring up, and reducing distances. They could work all kinds of miracles, appearing in any guise, performing incalculable wonders. After this, Dao Hanh ranked first, Minh Không was next, and Giác Hai was last. The site was now called Báo Kieu*.

Minh Không and Giác Hai took leave of Dao Hanh and returned to Giao Thuy* Temple. Dao Hanh went on practicing at the Thiên Phúc Temple on Mount Thach* That*. In front of the temple, there were two old pine trees popularly called the dragon trees. Dao Hanh devoted himself to chanting the *Mind of Great Compassion Dharani** and after every hundred thousand repetitions a branch would fall from the trees. The day came when both trees were bare. Dao Hanh thought the strength of his incantation had reached the Celestial Court and now enjoyed Avalokitesvaras* support. One day an immortal appeared before him. He came toward him with his feet not touching the ground. Dao Hanh asked, "What immortal are you?" The immortal said: "I am the Celestial King who is Guardian of the Four Directions. Moved by your *sutra** chanting achievement, I come and place myself at your disposal." Dao Hanh knew that his six magical powers were now sufficient for him to avenge his father's death. He then returned to his old village of An Lãng, went to the An Quyet* Bridge over the Tô Lich* River and threw his stick into the stream. The stick instantly stood up straight perpendicular to the water, flew swiftly upstream and did not stop until it reached the Tây Du'ng Bridge. Beaming with satisfaction, Dao Hanh said: "My powers now do excel Dai* Diên's."

Off he went to Dai Diên's house. On seeing him, Dai Diên said: "Don't you remember what happened before?" Dao Hanh looked up but there was nothing stirring. He then beat Dai Diên to death with his stick and hurled the corpse into the Tô Lich River in revenge.

His vengeance now accomplished, Dao * Hanh* felt himself relieved of all worldly bonds and started visiting temples in search of enlightened monks for further initiations. Hearing that Cao Tri Huyen* was spreading the Dharma at Thái Bình, Đạo Hanh came to him and expressed his true mind in a verse:

Long mixed with the dusts of the ordinary world,
 still unable to recognize pure gold,
 I do not know where the true mind is.
 Please point it out truly for me—
 extend your skillful means,
 So that I can realize enlightenment and cease
 my painful search.

Tri Huyên replied with a verse:

The secret, the true transmission [of the path]
 is exceedingly precious,
 In it the mind of Zen appears filling your eyes.
 Stop discussing the objects as numerous
 as the grains of sand on the banks of the Ganges,
 Or enlightenment will be far, far away.

Đạo Hanh was confused and could not understand. He then went to the assembly of Sùng Phạm* of Pháp Vân Temple and calmly asked: "What is true mind?" Đạo Hanh was abruptly awakened. He then returned to Thiên Phúc Temple on Mount Thach* That* and went on practicing as before. From then on his Dharma power increased and his karmic affinity for Zen matured, so that hosts of wild birds and beasts gathered peacefully around the temple. With mantras he cured the sick who came to him, and used his power for the benefit of all.

At that time, Emperor Lý Nhân Tông had no heir and all prayers were to no avail. His younger brother, the marquis of Sùng Hien*, sent for Đạo Hanh to discuss the matter. Đạo Hanh took a vow to reincarnate [in the royal family] in return for a favor the marquis had granted him before. The marchioness who was at that moment taking a bath in the inner building suddenly saw Đạo Hanh's* image appear in the water bucket. Afraid, she reported it to the marquis. Knowing Đạo Hanh's intention, the marquis confided to his wife: "If the image of Đạo Hanh did appear to you in your bath, he has already entered your womb. Don't be alarmed." The lady had the sensation of pregnancy. Đạo Hanh took his leave saying: "Let me know when you are about to give birth." The day the baby was due, she felt unusually indisposed, wanting to give birth but unable to do so. The marquis said: "Đạo Hanh must be sent for immediately." At the news, Tù' Đạo Hanh told his disciples: "My previous nexus of karmic

cause has not terminated. I have to be reborn in this world as an emperor. When that life span is over, I shall preside over the *Trayatrimsa* * Heaven. When you see my body decay, it means I have entered nirvana where birth and death no longer matter." His words moved them to tears. Dao* Hanh* then spoke a verse:

Autumn ends without informing of the
wild geese returning,
And easily causes people to become sad.
Leaving tracks among the people of the time
without any fond longing,
How many teachers of old are reincarnated
as teachers of today!

Having finished speaking, he went up to his cave, knocked his head against the stone wall and stamped his feet on the stone floor. As he sat there in calm dignity, he cast off his body and passed away. Vestiges of this event still remain.

It was on the seventh day of the third month, spring, in the third year, *bính thân*, of the Hoi* Tu'ng Dai* Khánh era. Emerging again from nirvana into the world, Đào Hanh was born as son of the Marquis of Sùng Hien*. He grew up without needing to be cared for and grew intelligent without needing education. He was handsome and excelled everyone in argument and eloquence. Emperor Lý Nhân Tông by edict summoned him into the palace to be brought up, and made him a crown prince.

When Nhân Tông died, he ascended the throne as Emperor Than* Tông. In the year of *bính thìn*, at the age of twenty-one, he one day found his body growing hair and his nails becoming claws. He changed into a tiger. Renowned physicians from all around failed to cure him. At the news of the emperor's condition, Minh Không and Giác Hai* recognized that a former curse was taking effect. They then composed a folk song and taught it to the children to sing:

To cure the Son of Heaven's malady,
Send for Nguyen* Minh Không.

Hearing children singing this, the court sent an envoy to Giao Thuy* Temple to tell Master Minh Không, "The emperor has caught a queer disease. The court sent me here to bring you in to cure him." Minh Không and Giác Hai cooked rice in a little pot and told the envoy and his men, "We have cooked some rice for your meal. Please serve yourselves." They all ate their fill, yet the pot was not emptied.

Then the two masters and the envoy embarked for the capital. Minh Không told the soldiers, "Have a good rest. Let the flood tide come and we'll make for the capital." While they were sleeping soundly in the

boat, the two masters by sheer magic had it fly like an arrow without being rowed, and in no time they reached the Đông Tân dock. They woke the soldiers up and when they saw the Báo Thiên Stupa, everyone was struck with amazement. The two masters were escorted directly into the emperor's chamber.

At the sight of them, of their weird looks and rustic clothing, the other physicians in contempt did not bother to rise from their seats or to offer them a single word of greeting. The two masters reached in their pockets, drew out a nail of about five inches long, pointed at a column and with a slight push of the hand made it penetrate all the way into it. They then said: "He who can pull out the nail will be able to cure the emperor." They repeated this again and again but no one replied. With two fingers of his left hand, Minh Không pulled it so easily that it seemed to slip out effortlessly. All who were present were won over by his magic feat.

Minh Không had a big caldron brought in, together with twelve buckets of oil, one hundred iron nails, and a senna twig. He had the Emperor carried onto the hearth. He let Giác Hai * ignite the fire and boil the oil. When the fire was blazing and the oil was boiling hard, Giác Hai put his hand into the caldron and fished out the one hundred nails. Then Giác Hai let Minh Không perform the magic touch. Minh Không soaked the senna twig in the oil and sprinkled it all over the emperor's body, while reciting a spell saying, "How noble to be the Son of Heaven. Why are you sick?" At these words, the hair, fangs, and claws fell from the Emperor's body and he recovered his old self.

After the emperor's death, the Thiên Phúc Temple was clothed in a peculiar supernatural atmosphere which struck people with awe. This fact was reported to the infant emperor, who commissioned an official to come there and perform rites, and bestowed on the temple the title of Most Sacred Temple. As for Dao* Hanh's* cast-off corpse left in the cave, the villagers assuming it must be miraculous, lodged it in a niche for worship. During the Yongle era of the Ming dynasty (1403–1424), an envoy from China came on a mission to our country. As he was passing by he caught a whiff of a rich fragrance. When he went looking [for where it was coming from], he found Dao Hanh's body intact in the niche, with his jewel-like countenance still lifelike. Assuming it might be an immortal's cast-off body, the envoy had it carried to Hu'o'ng So'n Temple for cremation, but after seven days and nights on the fire, it remained unburned.

He didn't know what more to do and was about to give up. That very night he saw a man in his dream who told him, "I have survived through two dynasties, the Lý and Tran*, and my true body has never decayed.

Supernatural powers are not matters of mere chance. For your vow to be granted, use wood from the trees around my grave to burn my corpse." The Ming envoy did as he was told in his dream and sure enough, it worked. He had the remaining wood carved into a statue [of Dao * Hanh*] and placed it in a niche for worship in a shrine erected to the left of the Thiên Phúc Temple.

Under Emperor Lê Thánh Tông, Empress Dowager Quang Thuc* sent Grand Commandant Trinh Quoc* to offer sacrifices and pray for divine favors in a petition which read:

"We learn that the Buddha is essentially compassionate and also abides in the consummate goodness. Thus he spread his teaching in India and saved people in China. He amply supports the Kingly Path, generously bestows the Sagely Teaching. His merits cover all sentient beings and his grace pervades all lands.

"By divine grace, we are in charge of a great patrimony, and we are fearful of being unable to bear the burden in the face of calamities should they come. We therefore tremble with fear for the security of the country and the welfare of the people. Deep in our heart we sincerely pray to Heaven to bless us with longevity. Hearing that the oracle at the Phat* Tich Temple is divinely effective, we are sending the Palace Guard Commander together with his men to bow before the altar and pray for our longevity. If it is not given to us to live over one hundred years as did Tai Wu of Shang, may we at least live up as did Emperor Gaozong of Tang up to eighty-nine. We also pray that our Infant Emperor Tù' Vy have a long life, that the people work in peace, that they have wise and filial offsprings, that the subjects be loyal, that outside there be no war, and that inside there be peace. In this, we depend on the infinite benediction of the Buddha."

Biography of Nguyen* Minh Không in the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái*

[From the *Linh Nam Chích Quái Ngoai* Truyen**]

Minh Không was a native of Dai* Hoàng Đàm Xá Village, Tru'ong An. His family name was Nguyễn, his personal name Chí Thanh*. When he was a young man he traveled around to study the [Buddhist] Path. He happened to meet Đạo Hanh, under whom he studied for over forty years. Đạo Hanh admired his aspirations, so he transmitted the mind-seal to him and gave him the sobriquet Zen Master Minh Không.

In the Hoi* Tu'ong Đại Khánh era under [Lý] Nhân Tông's reign, as he was passing away, Đạo Hanh told Minh Không: "Formerly, our Lord Buddha on achieving perfect enlightenment still thought of paying tribute to the golden lion. As for me, my knowledge of the Dharma is

still wanting, how can I protect myself? I will be reborn again in this world as a king. In the future life I will become sick: it can't be avoided, being predestined. I have a karmic affinity with you, you should save me." After Dao * Hanh's* death, Minh Không returned to his native village, devoting himself to studying and practicing [Buddhism] for twenty years without looking for fame and fortune.

In the fourth year of the Dai* Thuan* era, the emperor was about to build a palace. In the fourth year of the Thiên Chu'o'ng Bao* Tu*, Lý Than* Tông suddenly contracted a strange disease and was seriously ill. His mind was disturbed, and all medicines were to no avail. He was growling and moaning fiercely like a tiger. Renowned physicians from all over the country, responded to the royal edict, offering thousands of prescriptions, but to no avail. Meanwhile, there was a group of children who sang:

To cure the Son of Heaven,
Send for Nguyen* Minh Không.

The court sent emissaries to look for Minh Không. When he saw the emissary coming, Minh Không took a little pot of rice to feed the entire crew. The emissary was worried that it would not be enough for such a large crew. Minh Không said, "Just go ahead and eat." So the crew, hundreds of men in all, ate their fill, yet could not empty the pot. After the meal, Minh Không told the crew, "You men just have a good sleep. Wait till the tide grows and we'll set sail." They did as they were told and before long were sound asleep in the galley. In a little while, they already arrived at the capital. The crew was amazed.

When Minh Không arrived [at court], there was a huge number of renowned physicians all gathering in the palace, each performing his art. When they saw how crude and rustic he looked, they all had great contempt for him. Minh Không took a nail five or six inches long and planted it into a column of the royal chamber, shouting: "He who can pull the nail out will cure the disease, I will step aside for him." He repeated it again and again, but no one budged. He then used two of his left fingers and pulled on the nail and it came out easily. Everybody present was struck with admiration.

When he entered the royal chamber to examine the emperor, Minh Không cried out in a stern voice: "Worthy man, you are exalted as the Son of Heaven and the richest man of the country, why then do you act crazy and cause disaster?" The emperor trembled with fear. Minh Không had a big cauldron brought in, filled it with water and medicine, and boiled it again and again. Then he stirred the boiling liquid with his hand a few times, and washed the emperor's body with it. The emperor

recovered instantly. (*Recorded History*: When Dao * Hanh* was about to leave his body, he gave Minh Không his medicine and incantation, saying, "Twenty years from now, the emperor will contract a strange malady. Use this to cure him.") He then made Minh Không National Preceptor and the recipient of duties from some hundreds of households as reward.

In the second year of the Dai* Dinh* era under the reign of Anh Tông (1141), Minh Không passed away, at the age of seventy-six. He was miraculous and responsive [to prayers]. People would pray to him whenever there were floods, droughts, calamities or conflicts. Nowadays his statue has been cast and worshipped at the temples of Giao Thủy*, Pho* Lai*, and so forth. Court official Dang* Thoát Hiên wrote a poem commemorating him, "Hieu* Hoàng was brought up in the palace of Trieu* and Tong*. In time of peace the Son of Heaven's destiny grew; in his midlife he unfortunately suffered a strange disease. Thanks to the good taste of Minh Không's medicine [he was cured]." This is to praise the miraculous power of Minh Không.

Note: The stories of the two Zen Masters Đào Hanh and Minh Không are briefly recorded in the *History*. According to history Than* Tông was born as a result of a prayer to the mountain god, here it was said that he was Đào Hanh reincarnated. *History* also records that soon after Đào Hanh left his body, the lady gave birth; so it might not have been due to a prayer to the mountain god. As for Minh Không's cure [of Thân Tông], *History* says that Đào Hanh gave [Minh Không] medicine when he was ill [instructed him to cure Thân Tông in the future]. This means that Đào Hanh knew he could not escape his karma of contracting a disease, so he instructed [Minh Không] to save him. Things were recorded differently. I just record what I heard in order to investigate it. Also studying these two stories and the following two stories, each becomes a separate biography. Now I am relying on the *Thien* Su' Tú' Công Truyen** together with the *Tú' Công Truyền Luc** to clarify the biography.

The Section on "Immortals and Buddhist Monks" in the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*

It is not possible to investigate Buddhism in Giao Chi* [Jiaozhi] from the Han to the Tang dynasties. Since the times of the Lý and Tran* dynasties, there have been many eminent monks. They were famous for their miraculous powers. Kings extended homage to them and enquired about the mystic teachings. Some of the kings even left home to become monks. The court officials and the ordinary people were frequently converted to Buddhism. As for the saintly immortals of Taoism, they were few and far between. Once in a while, one or two appeared. Now I have found old records together with official reports from various localities and oral

transmissions among the elders. I have gathered all of them together and selected the traces that can be verified. I record them here.

An Ky * Sinh [An Qi Sheng], of Chinese provenance, realized the path of Taoism on Mount Yên Tu* [Anzi], east of Trieu* Châu [Chaozhou]. Subsequently, he ascended to Heaven from there.

Thôi Vi* [Cui Wei], of Chinese provenance, once traveled in his native province and accidentally fell into an old well. He saw a big snake eating stalagmite. As Vi was extremely hungry, he ate it too. Subsequently, he became an immortal.

Dong* Phung* [Dong Feng], literary name Quân Di* [Junyi], attended the Governor Si* Nhiệp* [Shi Xie] of Giao Châu [Jiaozhou]. Once Si Nhiệp became sick and was dead for three days. Phung put a medicine tablet in his mouth, and after awhile Nhiệp came to. Within half a day he could move again.

Cát Hong* [Ge Hong], nicknamed Tri* Xuyên [Chichuan], was a native of Tan* [Jin]. He embraced emptiness and respected Taoism, wishing to make the elixir and attain the art of longevity. He wished to become the Magistrate of Gou Lou. Subsequently, he really became an immortal.

Tran* Dao* Can* [Chen Daogen] hailed from Tân An [Xin'an] District, Chí Linh [Zhiling] Prefecture. He abstained from eating grain and helped people set up an altar at which to worship. He would use paper to cover his face and submerge under water. He only emerged again when the incense burned out.

Zen Master Thao* Đu'ò'ng was very virtuous and well versed in Buddhist literature. The Lý king made him his teacher. Subsequently, Thao Đu'ò'ng passed away sitting upright.

Zen Master Tinh* Gió'i was a monk of Đông Quan Prefecture. He practiced austerities and was miraculous in converting people. Once there was a drought in Giao Châu, and the Lý king sent an envoy to invite him [to the capital]. At midnight Tinh Gió'i stood in the yard burning incense. Sweet rain poured down. The Lý rewarded him and conferred on him the title "Rain Master."

Zen Master Tam Mach* was a monk of Tam Đảo Province. During the Lý dynasty he left home to become a monk at Giảng Ân Temple. Subsequently, he attained enlightenment and was able to fly up into the air in broad daylight.

Zen Master Đạo Hạnh* was a monk of Thạch* That* Prefecture who traveled to monasteries all over to study with enlightened masters. Subsequently, his affinity for the Dharma became mature and his supernatural powers increased. He was able to tame mountain birds and wild beast, making them gather around him peacefully. He prayed for rain and cured sickness. Everything he did was effective. Nowadays, his body still remains intact.

Zen Master Viên Chiếu * was a monk of Thanh Đàm District. He was brilliant, studious, and devoted himself to studying Zen. One night in a dream he saw the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī* cut open his stomach with a knife and wash out his brain. Then Mañjuśrī gave him some medicine. After that, everything he had learned in his mind seemed to become clear as if he had always known it. Subsequently, his school flourished greatly.

Zen Master Nghĩa* Tôn* was a monk of Thanh Uy Prefecture. During the Trần* dynasty he dwelt at the monastery on Mount Tiên Lu* to practice [Buddhism] and [subsequently] attained enlightenment. Nowadays, his body still remains intact.

Zen Master Trí Nhân was a monk of An Lăng Prefecture. He diligently practiced precepts. Once he saw a tiger chasing a deer. Trí Nhân preached saying, "All sentient beings cherish their lives. You should not harm each other." The tiger hung his head and walked away. A barbarian tribe at Tiên Sơn used to gather together to plunder. Trí Nhân converted many of them so they became good people.

Zen Master Giác Châu was strict in disciplines. He was successful every time he prayed for rain. The Great King of Trần put buckets in the yard and Giác Châu would make them fill up with rainwater without a drop falling outside. The King praised him and paid homage to him.

Zen Master Y So'n was a monk of Gia Lâm Prefecture. When young he studied literature and was especially versed in Buddhist literature. Afterward, he went everywhere to spread Buddhism and convert people, setting his mind on benefiting people. When he passed away, flowers spontaneously fell from the trees. Birds cried grievously and incessantly.

Zen Master Giác Không was a monk of Gia Lâm District who practiced austerities to the point that he could command ghosts and demons and tame wild beasts. Subsequently, he passed away sitting upright.

Zen Master Thiên* Nham, a monk of Siêu Loai* District, was pure in his precepts. He ate [fruit from] trees and drank stream water. After he died his body was as fresh as when he was alive. Contemporaries called him "Living Buddha."

Zen Master Nguyễn* Học* was a monk of Vũ* Ninh Province. He devoted himself to practicing meditation to the point that his body looked like a withered tree, and he forgot both self and things. Birds and wild beasts lingered around him and became tame like domestic animals. Sui Gaozu ordered an envoy to build a stupa dedicated to him.

The two Zen Masters Bảo* Tịnh and Minh Tâm were monks of Đông Ngàn* District. They were eminent monks in the Buddhist communities. They often organized assemblies to teach the scriptures. Subsequently, they entered the *samadhi** of firelight together. Their remains were all transformed into the seven kinds of jewels.

Zen Master Không Lo * was a monk of Giao Thuy* Prefecture. He could fly in the air and walk on water, tame tigers and subdue dragons. [His supernatural powers] were multifarious and unfathomable.

Zen Master Giác Hai* was a monk of Giao Thuy Prefecture. His supernatural powers were great and miraculous. When he was about to pass away, a meteor fell near the main hall. Early in the morning he passed away.

Dharma Master Ma Ni was a monk of Lê Bình Prefecture. He dwelt at the Dai* Tiên Thánh Cave and attained enlightenment after seven years. He tamed tigers and subdued dragons, prayed for rain and made it stop. Everything he did was successful. Nowadays, his statue still remains in the cave.

Zen Master Thuan* Nhat* was a monk of Nam Sách Province. He studied meditation and was able to make the boulders soft. Subsequently, he passed away sitting in a lotus position. Nowadays, his body still remains intact.

Zen Master Vô Châu was a monk of Phi Loc* Prefecture. When he was born, an auspicious light filled the room and a purple mist rose in the air. When he grew up his countenance was unusual and his hair was long. He built his hermitage on a mountaintop. He attained the cloud-flower *samadhi**. Whenever he explained the scriptures auspicious lights appeared repeatedly. Subsequently, he passed away sitting upright. He was eighty-three years old.

Great Master Tù' Quán Hue* Thông was a nun of Chí Linh Prefecture. She left home to become a nun at the age of twelve. She was utterly pure in discipline. When she was about to pass away at the age of eighty-four, the birds and beasts cried grievously, six kinds of music resounded all around, white clouds covered her hermitage, and uncanny fragrances filled the room.

THE ORIGINAL TEXT OF THE *THIEN * UYEN* TAP* ANH*

重鑄禪苑集英序

禪苑集英何取英乎。曰取其英秀之為愛也。何者禪宗之徒固多其人。玄理之允蓋乏其等。正是群鷄獨鳳。百草一蘭。苟非英特之資。穎悟之見。何以透玄微之旨。而能為隨學之領袖。後人之模楷者乎。信乎禪苑之中。英奇者寡。因摘取各公碩德。以備禪學之祖述。則集英之愛。於是乎而起。名焉。身自毘施之始。時則有。

厥音佛尚立。創為律宗之鼻祖。但其時。俗尚淳厚。人多朴畧。經教在於虛空之中。不

暇說以度化之機也。何求以魔為佛。此求詐傳日生。奸維日起。業懃益結。罪障殊深。非資以極濟之慈航。不可也。故

釋迦大友。出現娑婆。為之說開經偈。教化眾生。九劫歷修。功成果滿。於是大行佛教。相續禪宗。風飄六道。以清涼雪。沃三途之酷熱。成佛佛祖之秘訣。自此而啟其端焉。我大越。被佛教之周伏。殊法雨之波瀾。尚求落髮。証印悟空。蓋亦有其人矣。述其神心。日繳通鏡冰。有出為禱。國寧民有。出為扶顛。拯溺。有早悟心印。卓錫神遊。塵

之機有晚入玄開。毗連顯圖。匿之秘。他如
 山會。朝其德。門裡。野獸。擾其仁。厨中
 供饌。是其感格。所孚之誠。神化所得之學。
 何莫。昧四目。相顧之妙者乎。寔足以為禪
 死之英秀也。已。慧。佛道至玄。而心為玄中
 之玄。佛道寂大。而心為大中之大。心乎心
 乎。其為修道之主宰乎。禪苑一錄。自無言
 通神師。為傳道之始。灯也。相續。麟也。光輝
 然。燁而約之。廣而縮之。舉是無上正覺之
 為心者矣。究其所以然者。得那。洗却六塵
 離了四相。而能如是乎哉。余素習儒經。參

求釋典。玩其無有。雖曰二途。究其歸宿。似
 同一理。因於鐘堂。講讀之餘。見一禪徒。來
 談梵語。對詰移時。候是龜毛。兔角之機。拈
 也。伊因出諸袖中。有集奕一錄。丐余正句。
 得便重刊。以免舛謬。余見錄中。多有高僧
 各祖。厥學甚力。厥証甚靈。不覓心中。敬而
 且服。矢彼談空說覺。固非余之分內事也。
 然易有童蒙求我之說。不得不從。伊所請
 為之。正其闕失。助其遺編。旬日之間。而斯
 錄言說。爰理復宿。宛然。不啻月色。增輝矣。
 伊因求一序文。用刻于篇端。以顯揚佛教。

余不吝其功。喚僕就前。抽取剡藤及管城。以備捨使。爰草一通之。俚語。伊因拜而頌之。

謹序

皆

蔡朝永盛十一年四月穀日重刊

禪宗托跡釋子如智門徒

沙彌

性琮

性申

性忠

性禪

性建

性本

善男子

性分

性成

性慈

性興

性明

性水

善女人

號妙贈

號妙道

性奉

禪苑集笑語錄卷上

罷遊扶童鄉建幼寺無言。通禪師本廣州人

也姓鄭氏少慕空學不治家產

州雙林

寺受業處性沈厚寡言默識了達事繁故時

人號無通言傳登曰不語通常一日禮佛次有禪者問

座主禮甚麼師云禮佛禪者指佛像云抵這

箇是甚麼師無對是夜具威儀就禪者禮拜

問曰禱之所問未審意旨如何禪者云座主

出家以來經逾幾夏師云十夏禪者云還曾

出家麼也未師轉茫然禪者云若也不會百

夏何益乃引師同參馬祖及抵江西而祖已

示寂遂往謁百丈懷海禪師時有僧問如何是

大乘頓悟法門丈云心地若空惠日自照師於

言下有得乃還廣所和安寺住持有人問師是

禪師否師云貧道不曾學禪良久便嘆其人應

諾師指拔欄樹其人無對

仰山禪師作沙彌時師常嘆云寂子為我將鉢

子來仰將鉢子到師若送還本處仰從之又問

寂子那邊有甚麼曰無物迨迨聲曰無物師問

寂子仰應諾師云去唐元和十五年庚子秋九

月師來至此寺卓錫鉸磬之外禪悅為樂凡坐

面壁未嘗嘗說累年莫有識者獨寺僧感誠尤

加禮敬奉侍左右審扣玄機盡得其要一日
 無疾沐浴易服及感誠可昔吾祖南嶽讓禪
 師歸寂時有云一切諸法皆從心生心無所
 生法無所住若達心地所作無碍非遇上根
 慎勿輕許言訖合掌而逝感茶毘收舍利塔
 于僑遊山時唐寶曆二年丙午正月十二日
 二十八年又至開祐丁丑二十四年我越禪

學自師之始

建初通禪師法嗣

第一世一人

建初寺第二世感誠禪師僑遊人也姓氏初

尚家道號立德居本郡僑遊山持齋為業鄉
 豪阮氏高其德行散捨宅為寺延致居之往
 以情扣師弗許夜夢神人告曰苟從阮志不
 數年間得大吉禪師乃應其請今扶董建
物寺是也未幾
 通禪師適至師知其非常人旦夕服事未常
 輒怠通感其誠懇遂以名焉一日謂師曰昔
 世尊為一大事因緣出現於世化緣周畢示
 八涅脥如此妙心名正法眼藏實相無相三
 昧法門親付弟子摩訶迦葉尊者為初祖世
 古相傳至達磨大師自西而來暖涉險危為
 傳此法遠至太祖曹溪得授五祖所於達磨

物至人未知信故以傳衣以明得法今信已
 薰衣乃爭端止於汝身不復傳也於是以心
 傳心不受衣鉢時南嶽讓首得其傳讓授馬
 祖一一授百大海吾於百丈得其心法又響
 比方慕大乘者衆是以南來求善知識今興
 汝遇蓋宿緣也聽吾偈云諸方浩七矣自喧
 傳謂吾始祖親自西天傳法眼藏目謂之禪
 一花五葉種子綿七潛符密語千萬有緣咸
 謂心宗清淨本然西天此土此土西天古
 山川觸塗成滯佛祖成寃差之毫釐失之百
 千汝善觀察莫賺兒孫直饒問我我本無言

師於言下領悟常有僧問如何是佛師云徧
 一切處進云如何是佛心師云不曾覆栽進
 云學人不曾師云嗟過了也後無疾而逝時
 唐咸通元年庚辰

第二世一人

趙顛鄉定禪寺善會禪師典冷人也登依本
 鄉東林寺僧漸源出家自號祖風禪遊方外
 求學禪要後遇建初感誠便委事之一十餘
 年略無倦色嘗一日八室問曰教中道釋迦
 如來因地修行歷三大阿僧祇劫始得成佛
 今大德無謂即心即佛某甲未明願一開示

誠曰教中是什麼人說師云豈不是佻說耶
 誠曰若是佛說為什麼文殊經云吾住世四
 十九年未嘗說一字與人且古德道尋文取
 證者益滯苦行求佛者俱迷離心求佛外道
 執心是佛者為魔師云如是則此心是那箇
 不是佛者為麼師云如是則此心是那箇佛
 誠曰昔有人於馬祖問即心即佻那箇是佛
 祖云汝疑那箇不是佛指出看其人無對祖
 云達即徧境是不悟永乖疎_疎話頭汝還會
 麼師於言下應云某甲會也誠曰汝作麼生
 會師云徧一切處任非佻心便禮拜誠曰直
 須與麼因以善會各焉後於本寺示寂即唐
 先化三年庚申也

第三世一人

昇龍京開國寺雲峯禪師一合水東麗慈燕人
 也阮氏母懷娠時齋素持經生而神光照室
 雙親感異許以出家及長師事超類善會禪
 師為入室弟子密扣玄機禪師曰益會嘗謂
 師云生死事大直須打底師問云生死到來
 如何迴避會云管取無生死處迴避又問如
 何是無生死處會云於生死中會取始得師
 云作麼生會會云偈且夫日暮即來師便如

明果至會云待朝明日衆與汝證明師謬然
 省悟禮拜會云汝見什麼道理師云某甲須
 也會云汝作麼生師豎拳云不肯遮箇會便
 休以後周顛德三年丙辰示寂

第四世二人

常樂吉利鄉佛陀寺匠。越大師真名吉利人
 也。姓吳氏。吳順帝之裔。狀貌魁偉。志尚侷儻。
 少業儒。及長。歸釋。與同學。住持。投開國雲峯。
 受具。由是該覽。竺墳。探頓。禪要。年四十。召震
 于朝。丁先皇帝。召對。稱旨。拜為僧統。太平二
 年。賜號。巨越大師。黎大行皇帝。尤加禮敬。凡

朝廷軍國之事。師皆與焉。嘗避平虜。經衛靈
 山。悅其境。致幽勝。歎爰庵。居之夜。夢神人。身
 披金甲。左執金鎗。右擎寶塔。從者十餘輩。狀
 貌可怖。來謂之曰。吾即毗沙門天王。從者皆
 落叉也。天帝有勅。令往此國。護其疆界。使佛
 法興於彼。有緣故。來相託。師驚寤。闔內中有
 呵鳴聲。心甚異之。及旦。入山。見一大木。長十
 丈許。枝幹繁茂。又有瑞雲覆蔭其上。因命工
 伐取。如夢中所見。刻像祠焉。天福四年。宋兵
 入寇。帝素聞其事。命師就祠。禱禱。身帶驚駭
 靈保。安寧。江。又見風濤。覆陽。蛟龍。騰躍。勇。乃

奔蹟七年宋人既覺來聘時法師杜順亦有盛名帝命變服為紅令迎於江曲竟見其善於文談以詩贈之補外有天外有天應返照之句亦以示師對曰此尊陛下與其主不異覺還師作詞曰玉卽歸憇之其詞云祥光風好錦帆張神僊復帝鄉千重萬里涉滄浪九天歸路長人情慘切對離鵬攀戀星星卽願將深意為南強分明報我皇尋以衰老乞辭歸還本郡遊戲山創寺住持學者輻湊一日入室弟子多竇問云如何是學道始終師云始終無物抄虛空會得真如辭自同竇云如何保任師云無汝下手處進

云和尚道了也師云汝作麼生會坐便喝李朝順天二年二月十五日將告寂不坐偈云木中元有火元火復若謂本無火鑽鐵何由剪傷畢跌踞而逝元生壽五十有二云壽五十九

第五世二人

偈遊扶童鄉建初寺多竇禪師不知何許人亦莫曉其姓氏時巨越大師於開國寺闡化師預參摩大師嘉其臨機領悟更事謹恪獨許入室得法之後惟一瓶一鉢迤邐物外後得建初寺居焉李太祖潛龍時師見其英俊秀異謂曰此兒骨相不凡他日南面必此人也帝大驚曰方今

聖明在上游內暗證吾師何故出此赤族語耶
師云天命素定雖欲逃之不可得已倘教其
言幸勿相棄及帝即位屢召師赴闕詒訪禪
旨恩禮厚隆冷至弘朝廷政事咸預决焉有
詔重修其寺後不知所化

第六世三人

地人

天德府邑山感應寺禿香長老姓呂氏朱明
人也世修淨行弱歲喪父母多寶禪師喻二十
四年實門徒百餘惟師與國抱和為首遠近
師深得其奧一日問寶天如何得見真心宝
云是汝自嚴師豁然領旨悟云一切皆然非

惟某甲寶云汝了也未師不弟子了時還同不
了宝云須以此心保任師掩耳背立寶便喝去
師指宝云汝後還似一箇野驢接人在都將賊
徑使阮師飲其各德延就此寺君焉學徒雲集
教人演化功為不少李太宗崇興大寶三年
庚寅三月三日疾會衆訣別說偈云本來無
處所是真宗真宗如是約幻有即空空偈畢
奄然而化

偈遊天福峰重明寺禪老禪師物變蓮物變
寶領得心要尋就慈雲卓錫禪風日襲學者
千數歸為叢林志盛通瑞祥簡卷云宗常幸

其寺問師云和尚住山來幾時對曰但知今日月誰識舊春秋帝云日過作麼生事對曰翠竹黃花非外境白雲明月露全真帝云有何意旨對曰詞多無後益帝豁然有得將遣使迎師赴闕顧問兩師先以歸寂帝深悼惜御製詩哀挽勅中使厚齎禮結壇闈維收靈骨塔于山門又廣修其寺置徒以香火焉

第七世七人

昇龍京吉祥寺圓照禪師姓梅氏諱直福堂龍潭人李靈感太后兄子也幼聰敏好學聞本麗密嚴寺長老善相試就決焉長老燕視

曰汝於佛法有緣若出家必為善菩薩中人不然則壽夭難保矣師感悟辭親投芭蕉山定香授業執持餘年所究禪學常持圓覺經明三觀法一文定中見文殊菩薩持刀破腹洗腸之藥白是心中所習宛如風契深得言語三昧講說如流尋於京畿之左創寺居焉幸者林幸有僧問佛之與聖其妄云何師云籬下重陽菊枝頭淑氣鶯進云謝學人不會請再指示師云晝則金烏照夜來玉兔明僧又問已後師真旨玄拙示如何師云不換水盤擊滿去一遭睡昧悔何之進云謝師描云莫

江波觸親來却自沉又問少室摩竭女自古
 千今誰將爲主師云幽明乾象因爲魁屈曲
 坤維爲嶽准又問如何是大道根源一踏行師
 云高岸爽風知勁草邦家飯蕩識忠良又問一
 切衆生從何而來百年之後從何而去師云言
 龜穿石壁破籠上高山又問青七翠竹盡真如
 如何是真如用師云贈君千里遠笑把一甌茶
 進云恁麼即空來何益師云誰識東阿去途中
 載白頭又問野野一深戶誰識等閑敲師云金
 谷蕭疎花草亂而今昏曉任牛羊進云爲什麼
 如此師云富貴燕驕秦翻令敗市樓又問龍女

12a

獸珠成佛果檀那捨施福如何師云萬古月中
 桂扶疎在一輪進云恁麼即勞而無功師云天
 上如懸鏡人間處七過又問
 渡河須用筏到岸不須船不度時如何師云涸
 池魚在陸獲活萬年春
 進云恁麼即隨流始獲妙理師云見說荆軻信
 一行竟不迴又問金鑛混交元一氣請師方便
 鍊精形師曰不是齊君客那知海大魚
 進云那君若不納諫語亦矣爲師云若欲先
 提飲休爲巧及蛇又問死後墮諸師救活
 師云汝是何方人僧曰本來山人師云速回

12b

舊若隱莫見許真君又問海藏滄泊應不問曹
 溪滴上是如何師云風前松下凄涼韻兩後途
 中淺濁泥進云恁麼即不異今時也師云籬下
 重陽菊枝頭暖日鶯又問昭七心目之間朗七
 色身之內而理不可分相不可擬爲什麼不觀
 師云 苑中花爛熳岸上草離披進云

歲寒群苗落何以可宣揚師云喜君來自達不
 亦且欲娛進云幸聞今日決從此免忽無師
 云淺溺纒捉出回頭萬丈潭又問涅槃城內尚
 猶危如何是不危之處師云 管策簾煥上巽
 髮常君臺進云君遭時迫近 兩堤是何爲師

云丈夫隨放蕩風月且逍遙又問一切衆生
 看官是佛此理未明請師再示師云勸君且
 務業桑去莫學他人待勉勞進云幸蒙師顯決
 終不向他求師云可憐道一噎飢坐却忘食
 又問幾年久積囊中寶今日當場觀面看師
 云私待中秋月却遭雲雨侵進云雖聞師語
 說此理未分明師云笑他徒抱柱溺死向中流

又問如何是一決師云不見春生無夏長又
 逢秋燕及冬藏進云恁麼即成佛多也師云
 祖龍驅自止徐福遠徒勞又問見性成佛其
 義云何師云枯木逢春花發豈風吹千里破

神香進云學人不會願師再指師云萬年茄
 子樹蒼翠聳雲端又問摩尼與衆色不合不
 分離師云春在與蝴蝶幾戀幾相違進云恁
 麼即隨他混雜師云不是胡僧眼徒勞逞辯
 殊又問如何是觸目菩提師云幾驚曲木鳥
 頭吹冷壘人進云學人不會更請別喻師云
 聾人聽琴響育者望蟾蜍又問本自有形兼
 有影有時影也離形否師云衆水朝東乃萬
 派爭流羣星拱北乃千古歸心又問如何是
 一句了然超百億師云遠挾泰山起北海仰
 拋拄杖入蟠官又問惟此一事實餘二即亦

真如何是真師云杖頭風易動壁上兩成泥
 又問不向如來是妙藏不求祖繼續燈枝
 恁旨如何師云秋天搏黍唳雪景牡丹開又
 問如何最妙之句師云一人向隅立滿座飲
 無惟又問古今大事應酬特地西來意若
 何師云巧言令色者鑽龜打尾人又問心法
 雙忘性即真如何是真師兩滴巖花神女淚
 風敲庭竹伯牙琴又問如何是最妙之句師
 云嶽裏猶存梗常居不快然又問有修有証
 開西病出頭何可脫塵籠師云山高更大容
 空貯海闊能深納細流又問惟佛與佛乃知

斯事如何是斯事師云夾徑森森風吹曲自成又問不用平常不用天然不用侬用而今作什麼師云蓬草棲低鷄滄溟隱巨鱗又問四大帶來由曠劫請師方便出輪迴師云衆世畜徒平是寶 養於荆棘卧於泥又問種種取捨皆是輪迴不取不捨時如何師云寒水紅菟殊常色有葉參差不有花又問言斷其意如何師云角響隨風穿竹到山岩帶月過牆來又問諸佛說法皆是化物若悟本意是名出世如何是本心師云春織花如錦秋來葉似黃又問如何是直截一喏師

云東西車馬走塵土曉昏飛又問有法有心開妄識如何心法蕩俱消師云可奪松梢長轡七豈憂霜雪落紛紛又問祖意與教意如何師云興來携杖遊雲徑困即垂簾卧竹床又問祖祖相傳合傳何事師云飢來須尋食寒即向求衣又問世人皆賃屋漏人何所在師云金烏菩玉兔盈昃護勞分又問如何是曹溪一喏師云可憐刻舟客到處意忽忽師嘗撰藥師十二願文李仁宗皇帝以其藁附使達于哲宗既至相國寺高座法師覽之即各掌檀曰南方有肉身大士出法華說經法

師云貧道宜缺敢增損因再述一本附还使
 回以聞帝深嘉獎廣祐六年庚午九月日無
 疾示衆云我此身中骨節筋脈四大條合所
 有無常譬如屋宇壞時椽相俱落矣汝珍重
 聽吾偈云身如墻壁地頽時奉世忽上燕不
 悲若達心空無色色空隱顯任推移偈竟端
 然而逝壽九十二臘月五十六有讚圓覺經
 十二菩薩行修證道場及參徒顯次一卷今
 行于世

安邱龍墜剎於寺究言禪師朱明扶譚人也
 姓譚氏少好李魯竺之書無不該貫一日附

卷歎曰 孔墨執有落老漏無世俗
 之曲非脩脫法惟有伏教不計有無可了生
 死無修持成精進求善知識印證始得因輪
 俗詰邑山感應寺定香長老其參請山問
 如何是究竟竟耶師云未山云我與汝究竟
 竟了師撥談山云誰過了也師亦言下究竟
 因以名焉尋八儂遊山光明寺頭陀苦行六
 年是下下山演化之聲升闕于上李太宗皇
 帝累徵不執凡三幸其寺以慰問焉太師梁
 公文任亦加禮敬龍瑞太平年間宰相楊公
 道嘉以其寺請師住持固辭不獲從之下山

日語人曰吾不復到此矣山中會獸悲鳴三
 旬不止居甫三年以彰聖嘉慶某年月日將
 示寂會門徒謂曰夫一切法門本從汝性一
 切法性本從汝心一如本無二法牽纏煩惱
 一切皆空罪福是非一切皆幻無所求果非
 因不於業中分別不於報中分別業若有分
 別不得自在雖見一切法而無所見雖知一
 切法而無所知知一切法因緣為本見一切
 法正真為宗雖染實際解了世間皆如變化
 明達眾生惟是一法無有二法不捨業竟善
 巧方便於有為界示有為法而無分別無為

之相蓋欲絕我忘念計較故也乃說偈云覺
 了身心本寂寂神通變化現諸相有為無為
 從此出河沙世界不可量雖無徧滿虛空界
 一一觀來沒形狀千古萬古難此咒界處處
 處常朗是日午結壇闍維收其靈骨起塔
 天德府邑山感應寺寶性明二禪師並朱明
 大性嚴氏心危氏早歲共幼出家為同志友
 物與圓照禪師俱事定香上人深得其髓後
 各佩心印隨方開化傑為叢林之首照常有
 歌詩遺寶美其高志顯在集不與錄二師居常持誦
 法花為業踰十五載未嘗少置每至藥王品

輒沈弟相謂曰吾薩因地累劫薰修於大乘
 心猶能發大勇猛精進不惜身命况我等輩
 於末法中初發人若不如是至誠則於大善
 提真大乘心何可希覲以天咸七年四月二
 師將焚身得請于朝遂建講經會同八火光
 三昧其餘骸骨俱成七寶有詔留長聖寺
 供養李太宗以其靈異改元通瑞寺塔空晞
 山灌頂寺廣智禪師京師人姓顏氏彰奉皇
 妃之兄也道操水絮不事鮮糜彰聖嘉慶初
 辟俗往參禪遊徧老言下契旨由是月練日
 收寫志禪學不周年間風譽遠播後於茲山

卓錫常掛衲衣削松實與山僧明惠為方外
 笑人謂寒山拾得復由工部尚書段公文歛
 所宗嘗贈詩云拄錫危峰撰六塵默居幻夢
 問浮雲殷勤無計參澄什索紳箬纓在鸞群
 廣祐某年月日師歸寂公哭之慟挽以詩云
 林蠻白首逾京城拂袖高山遠更馨幾願淨
 中趨丈席忽聞遺履掩禪高齋庭幽鳥空啼
 月墓塔誰人為作銘道侶不須傷水別院前
 山水是真形時

李太宗皇帝嘗於柵禪老參問禪旨針錐
 鏡示勝蓋通風樂送餘禪悅為樂因與諸方

耆宿講究異同帝先謂曰朕惟佛祖心源自
 古聖賢未免貶訾况後學哉今欲與諸德略
 敘已意各述一偈以觀其用心何如耳皆再
 拜奉命衆方爲思而帝已成偈云般若真無
 宗人空我亦空過現未來佛法性本來同衆
 皆服其敏給云

第八世六人。

慈廡普寧寺通辨國師舟鳳人也姓吳氏釋
 流子也性聰慧尤三學初參吉祥國師舟照
 得旨乃於昇京國寺掛塔自號智空會聖五
 年春二月十五日符聖感靈仁皇太后嘗於

其寺齋僧與諸耆宿究問佛之祖爰有何優
 劣佛住何方祖居何城何時而求至西域土
 傳授此道孰先孰後而念佛名達祖心者至
 相道未知何者是旨衆皆緘口師對曰夫常
 在世間不生不滅謂之佛明伏心宗行解相
 應謂之祖佛祖一也蓋滯學者流矣自稱優
 劣耳且佛者覺也此覺本來湛然常住一切
 有生皆同此理但爲情塵所蔽隨業漂流轉
 戾諸趣佛以慈悲心故示生竺土蓋謂天地
 之正中也十九出家三十成道住世說法四
 十九年開種七法權奪其悟道入此所謂一

代時興教也將般涅槃經看迷滯語文殊曰
 吾四十九年亦曾說無字將謂有所說耶因
 拈起花枝舉目問指獨迦葉尊者破顏微笑
 知其有契遂以正法眼藏付之是為一祖此
 所謂教外別傳之心宗也厥後摩騰以是法
 入劉漢達磨以是旨遊梁魏傳其教者至天
 台為盛謂之教宗得其旨至曹溪為明謂之
 禪宗二宗至于我越有年矣則以牟博康僧
 會為始禪則以毗尼多流支為前派無言通
 為後派是謂二派之祖也后曰教宗且置禪
 之二派有何效驗師曰按曇遷法師傳隨高

祖謂之法也后云朕念調御慈悲之教報德
 無由位忝人王弘護三寶已遍收遺體舍利
 仍於國內立堅室塔凡四十九所表世津梁
 餘一百五十寺塔外各文州諸處建立異寶
 福潤以及大千然彼雖內屬猶繫羈縻宜建
 名德沙門往彼諸處化康令一切俱得菩提
 法師曰交州一方道通天竺佛法初來江東
 未彼而靡縷又重創興室刹二十餘所度僧
 五百餘人譯經一十五卷以其先之故也于
 時則已有丘尼名摩羅耆城康僧會文量良
 牟博之獨在焉今又荷法得賢上法士於昆

尼後沈文_三祖宗冰為菩薩中人於衆善
 寺後沈_死化會下不減三百餘人與中國無
 異陛下是普天慈父歆平寺施可獨遣使將
 逆彼有人焉不須往化又唐相國權德輿傳
 法序云又曹溪沒後梅法盛行各有宗緒者
 彰敬師禪師以馬袒心要化行於吳越無言
 通大士傳百丈宗旨開悟于交州此其效驗
 也后又問二宗傳授之次師曰流支冰者即
 今林思生王真是也無言冰者即今梅國照
 顏廣智即今雷荷澤是也其餘旁出皆不悉
 舉后大喜乃拜師為僧籙賜紫衣袈裟羅通

辨大師兼加厚賞以寵榮焉召入內拜為
 國師訪問禪要深得其旨_{右書有番道得云色}
 本_色法兩其_人修已常以法華經為用故時
 人謂之悟法華龍影室闕二年甲寅二月十
 日告疾_{究連教源寺滿}覺大師安格
 御攏屨人也姓阮諱長父懷素任至中書員
 外郎李仁宗潛龍儲邸詔各來子弟八侍左
 右師以傳聞強記學通儒釋得預其進公退
 常以禪那為念及帝即位因其素尚賜各懷
 信英武詔勝中表請出家既得准頂廣智之

印乃龍錫雲遊徧求道契所至學者鑿集闕
 大藏經得無師智為一時法門領袖帝與感
 靈仁皇太后方留心禪孝乃於景興宮側起
 起其寺延請居之以便顧問與語不名常曰
 長老一日謂曰至人示現必務濟生無行不
 具無事不修非唯定惠之力亦有贊襄之功
 宜敬任之乃授教源禪院依信大師傳祖無
 修無證心印奉詔入內道場賜紫大沙門同
 三司公事時闕戶五十人會豐五年十一月
 晦告疾示衆偈云春夫百花落春到百花開
 事逐眼前過老從頭上來莫謂春殘花落尽

庭前昨夜一枝梅是夕結跡而逝壽四十有
 丑僧臘二十九帝贈紫厚禮公卿名賚香信茶
 毗收舍利塔于安格崇岩寺勅謚滿覺
 應天府寧山隆恩寺悟印禪師金罈御思理
 人也少譚氏諱棄母瞿氏幼未嫁時家在墓
 林之側見弋宿鳥者終然謂曰寧受死為善
 不受生為惡一日方織錦有大獼猴自林中
 出來抱其背竟日乃去瞿氏覺有娠反生而
 惡之棄于林間同鄉占城具師譚氏取而鞠
 之因名以業年至十聽習儒業學問日進尤
 明唐梵字十九歲出家具足戒定於因竟公

華二經憂悉精究既得准頂廣智心印徑入
 此山結茅獨居自苦悟印常有僧問如何是
 大道師云大踏僧云亭人間大道對以大踏
 未審何日達大道師云苗兒未解捉鼠僧云
 苗兒有伏性否師云無僧問一切含靈皆有
 伏性和尚如何獨先師云不我不是含靈僧
 云既非含靈即是伏否師云我不是伏不是
 含靈有人問如何是伏如何是法如何是禪
 師云先去法王在身為伏在口為法在心為
 禪虫是三般其歸則一論如三江之水隨處
 立各各歸不同水性无異廣祐四年六月十

四日將示寂說偈云妙性虛无不可攀虛无心
 悟得何堆玉焚山上色常獨運叢林中濕未乾
 偈畢怡然而逝年六十九門人心喪三年

第九世八人

失記

標避天福山先明寺道惠禪師如月真訪人
 也姓歐氏相貌端正背消毫年二十五修普寧
 吳法華披削寄扣文門深得其奧尋於此寺
 懸錫該諫律乘兼脩定慧屬不至席者六年矣
 深得三觀三摩地間徒一千餘人日夜持經
 感得山中猿猴群而來咱由是名震關下大
 宛二十年瑞明皇姬得疾遣使召師視之信

行錄錄悲觀者知哀戀及至官終立寢門之
 外輝疾遽愈李英宗太悅館于報天寺旬月
 之間公卿道侶欽風而至者不可勝數師乃
 開堂演化不復入山嗣法兒孫一門為盛政
 隆室應十年乙亥八月一日示疾歎曰亂離
 虞矣爰自其來說偈云地水火風識元來一
 切空如雲還聚散佛日照無窮又云色身與
 妙跡不合不分離若人要甄別炷中花一枝
 是夜三更派然而逝門人寂僧統備禮物歸
 本禪茶毗心喪畢塔于仙游山寶龕寺邊舍
 利安置龍京萬歲寺辨才禪師廣州人孝聖

宗時來于我

嗣編歸國師音奉

黃液君章保福寺室鑑禪師中瑞御人也姓
 嬌氏諱淨為人中信悟實恬澹簡素幼習儒
 業詩書禮易粵所不究工於字畫仕李英宗
 朝至恭候舍人年三十去官投多雲保福寺
 主落髮其寺藏經皆手親寫迨寺主去世結
 睡住持其自奉泊如也身常麻結不掛寸絲
 娣此喻年無弛退念嘗語徒曰建佛宗乘者
 勤地佛正覺者智也猶如射者步之外其至
 力也其中非力也政隆室應十一年五月七
 日將圓寂說偈云得成正覺寧憑修積為牢

籠智惠優認得摩尼法理祇如天上顯金鳥
 又云智者猶如月照天光含塵刹照無偏若
 人要識須分別嶺上扶疎鎖暮煙又曰如來
 心意俱不可得但應以無量智故知如來心
 譬如虛空為一切所依如來智惠亦復如是
 言訖而逝其徒收舍利建塔

海清嚴光寺空睹禪師海清嚴人也姓楊氏
 世為縵耆後捨過業歸心空寂居常加持陀
 羅尼門彰聖嘉慶中與覺海道友偕遊方外
 著至荷澤寺棲止草衣木食殆忘其身外絕
 馳求內修禪定心神耳目日覺爽然便得飛

空履水伏虎降龍萬怪千奇人莫之測尋於
 本魏翔寺焉一日有侍者營云某自到來未
 蒙指示心要敢呈一偈云鍛鍊身心始得清
 森七直幹對虛庭有人來問空王法身坐屏
 邊影集形師覽之曰汝將經來吾為汝接汝
 行水來吾為汝受何處不與汝心要乃呵呵
 大笑嘗說偈云憐得龍蛇地可居野情終日
 樂無餘有時直上孤峯頂長嘯一聲寒太壺
 會祥大慶十年己亥六月初三日示寂門人
 收舍利葬于寺門有詔廣修其寺持闔戶二
 手人以奉香火此師每午專可考今做
南宗圖傳法世久故致于此

傑持至靈山辛陽庵本淨禪師未康扶演人
 姓喬氏師少好學洞佛家生死之玄造儒者
 隻之蹟得肯於教源滿竟大定二年徑入茲
 山駐錫右弼魏公國寶欽其風德以師禮事
 之尋受城揚公之請從乾安寺住持常教六
 願云世已生生不昧佛肯自竟也他無間彼
 此方便提携入於一揆貞符元年正月日師
 無疾一日示衆曰一揆一揆石插插尾擲身
 捉單还化為鬼若要分明金生麗水又偈云
 幻身本自空寂生猶如鏡中出千億形像竟了
 一切空幻身須臾證實相偈畢而逝壽七十七

禪苑集英

第十世十二人

二人
英釋

典冷福聖寺明智禪師翻智扶琴鄉人也姓
 蘇氏夙稟聰惠博覽警獨冠邁道患上十捨
 素從繼扣得玄鍵明於覺圓仁王法華傳燈
 之旨講授不倦賜號明智一日刻章次有僧
 欽手左邊立師飛劍子向僧而前刻一根草
 僧云古人云和尚秋刻得那箇仰提起劍子
 僧接得乃作劍勢師云還記得此後句否汝
 紙刻得箇不刻得這箇僧休去師與一僧論
 傍有僧云語底是文冰然底是維摩師云不

語不默莫是汝否僧然之師云何不現神通
 僧云不辭現神通祇怕和尚收入教師云汝
 未是教外底眼乃說偈曰教外可別傳希夷
 祖佛淵若人欲辨的陽燄覓求煙天資嘉瑞
 十一年丙辰某月日將示寂有偈云松風水
 月明無影亦無形色身這箇是空空尋響聲
 偈已奄然而逝
 空昭山灌頂寺信學禪師天德府朱明人也
 姓蘇氏世業雕經少事清介不雜交遊三十
 有二從史禪師投仙迹道惠披剃執役三年
 深契宗旨因孤錫遊方至此寺憇焉常於伏

27a

前燃指爰大弘願曰累劫塵勞斷不復作專
 務圓覺三觀日惟一食形容枯悴如此有年
 絕無厭色深得三觀正受公卿士庶慕高雅
 爭先事之師曰有利必有染有染必有利有
 染有利菩薩不行無利無染菩薩乃行天資
 嘉瑞五年庚申正月九日師告疾示衆偈云
 山林虎豹橫文班駁若欲甄別子啐毋啄偈
 畢
 天德府開國寺淨空禪師本福
 川人也姓吳氏首於本州崇福院出家具受
 其年三十行脚南方到此卓錫五六年間修
 頭陀行一麻一麥長坐不眠每入定中累日

27b

方起四方禮施者山積或來伺盜師必告以其物所在時南康公主意欲捨塵私以戒請師聽披削朝延聞之詔收捕及師至關神色自若帝深加敬拜為碩德名僧固辭不就一日上堂欠有僧策杖至問如何是法身師云法身本無形如何是法眼法眼本無翳師又云目前無法意在目前洪珠耳目所借呵呵大笑師云笑箇什麼僧云和高一等出世未有宗旨須往參道惠始得師云彼師還訪得麼僧云上無蓋尾下無卓錫遂易服直詣仙遊山道惠云此問宗旨印不無闍梨如何保任師謨

甚要當面蹉過了也師領真因執中履者三年後還本寺受徒一日會眾說偈云上無片尾遮下無卓錫地或易服直詣或策杖而至動轉觸處問似龍躍吞餌僧問從上直指為什麼說師云日日去稜禾時七空倉廩僧云某甲不會師云日月長明浮雲蓋庵有說偈曰智人無悟道悟道即愚人伸脚高卧客美識偽兼真問如何是佛師云日月麗天舍德利誰知雲霧落山河進云如何會得師云牧童秣慣卧牛背舂英雄誇得伊問祖意與教意是同是別師云萬里梯航皆歸闕問和

尚奇持事如何不向學人說師云汝吹火
 我着米汝乞食我取鉢誰辜汝僧開悟政
 俗寶應八年某月日將示寂與眾訣云汝等
 善自守護如吾在日勿染世間輒生哀戀夜
 子時臥坐長住壽八十餘

此傳撰錄師與僧
 次山和尚傳師與僧
 令

日別祖要師告已

吳敬不陳改正

武寧山報德寺大捨禪師東作坊人也姓許
 氏少出家投禪遊道惠習禪學粗得其槩常
 以華嚴妙門普賢神呪為日用事時或散髮
 休糧棲止無定所王公爭先事之建寧王天
 德公主尤所尊敬常於宣明虎岩菴寺演化

學者傾響有宋僧若翁聞風感慕遂燃一指
 供養人疑其有妖術天感至寶中太尉杜公
 英武令收入禁內深加嚴責師略無怖色天
 德奏解得免一日李英宗召師問曰朕多煩
 惑何術治之師云十二因緣法是生死循環
 之根本欲以治之此其藥也又問其旨師云
 無明因緣行乃至憂悲苦惱欲求辟支佛應
 說十二因緣須治此身中即無煩惱業帝云
 然則朕當靜心修習師云禁得業穢安靜時
 即是澄清煩惱無有別法可修習也普梁武
 帝嘗以是問寶誌禪師誌亦如是對今竊為

陛下舉似貞符五年二月五日囑弟子已說
偈云四蛇同籠本元空五蘊山高亦不宗真
性靈明無罣碍涅槃生死任遮籠又云石馬
齋狂獐食苗日月鳴塗中人共過馬上人不
行迨五更服髮而逝壽六十有一

武寧井岡越王池庵淨力禪師武昌葛陵人
也姓吳氏諱湛少聰辨長於文藝字淋尤妙
游學時遇仙遊道惠針芥相投棲心佛地草
衣木食福惠雙修久歷星霜秉心彌固惠常
謂曰諸佛心印汝自有之匪從人得師云既
蒙指示當住何方慧云不必遠行武寧可矣

師到山結茅居焉十二時中禮佛懺悔深得
念佛三昧其声清越如梵天音常講圓覺經
義理有所不安親為改正時謂口中雜黃天
感二年某月日示疾告門徒曰汝等一切學
道人勤心供養佛不外求但令除諸惡業心
口念誦信解聞知虛閑寂靜此善知識受言
和悅說必以時內無怯怖了達於義遠離愚
達安住不動觀一切法無常無我無作無為
處所離分別是為學道人也吾今化緣畢矣
乃說云先雖言吉後言凶自是人論先諱不從
為遇見龍為佛子忽遭鼠出寂無窮端然兩

遊壽六十四

常樂吉利鄉遊戲山青雀寺智室禪師末
 康烏爲人姓阮氏原有李朝英宗皇帝太尉
 蘇公憲誠之舅氏也捨俗出家於此山寺常
 弊衣糲食有十年不易一衣三口不炊一爨
 手足胼胝顏色枯槁見一穷人則斂手避道
 遇一沙門則屈膝禮拜精修禪定六年成道
 乃携錫下山或修橋道或建寺塔隨緣普勸
 不爲利養嘗有僧問生從何來死從何去師
 擬議僧云擬議之問白雲萬里師無對僧便
 叱云好寺無佛乃出去師自歎曰我雖有出

家之心未得出家之旨譬如掘井雖至九尺
 而不及泉猶爲棄井况修身不悟道也奚爲
 自此遍遊四方參尋知識聞仙遊道惠演化
 遂往見焉問生從何來死從何去惠云生無
 所從來死無所從去師云莫是脫落空處麼
 惠云真性妙圓體自空寂運用自在不同生
 死是故生無所從來死無所去師於言下領
 悟云不因風捲浮雲尽爭見青天萬里秋慧
 云汝見箇什麼師云相識滿天下知音能幾
 人乃辭還山自是橫說豎說如擊石火一日
 斤堂緇素如堵有問如何是知足師云夫出

家在家止於知足若能知足外不侵人內無
 損我草葉微細彼所不與我不當取况他物
 屬他起他物想終不於此而生盜心乃至他
 妻妾起他妻妾想亦不於此而生淫心諸人
 聽吾偈言菩薩寶財知止足於他慈恕不侵
 欲草葉不與我不取不想他物德如王菩薩
 白妻方知足如何他妻起貪欲於他妻妾他
 所護安忍自心起心曲李朝英宗皇帝天資
 嘉瑞五年四月十四日示疾而逝弟子茶毗
 收靈骨山門起塔
 平虜市衛靈山朝天王寺長原禪師仙逝長

原人也姓潘氏貝種也幼出家得光明道惠
 印可乃徑入慈內跡迹衣草叢食橡粟日與
 泉石猿猴為鄰友二六時中打疊身心渾然
 一片貌以持經踰五六年人未常窺其影嚮
 李英宗聞風慕道欲見不可乃命師故交查
 臣黎晦誘致闕下及至館香刹寺師自悔迷
 歸謂門人曰夫身橋心矢非世間浮偽可物
 也蓋由吾志行未純幾焚麓所困耳聽吾偈
 云猿猴抱子歸青嶂自古聖賢沒可量春來
 鶯轉百花深秋至菊開沒模樣又常語人曰
 奇哉奇哉此諸衆生云何具有如來智惠愚

冥迹感以對梁見收常教以道今其果經安
 想執著於有身由身起怨來廣夫管意利益
 安樂是政隆發愈云祥其月七日復知論得
 云在苑在蓮常離執心胸澄澈胸物曲絲許
 於自無應物無垠宗位口侵開沐人倫享處
 萬物與物為春作舞錢如打鼓木人傷卑而
 化壽五千六

人安府秘矣內國清素淨戒律師明海
 海頭在外卿人也俗籍朱氏講廢曠由自微
 寒性狂魏禽酪魏羊甲服膺儒教旨才太歲
 嬰疾叢毒在莫藥覽轉頓頌快志附家卷

本鄉耆宿進具專習毗尼聞浪山為祥可居
 一錫東遊參學七年遇明寶覺言下必契
 政隆宝應癸巳十月寶公撥赤城講曰生老
 病死世之常然豈吾獨免師開舍曰尊德如
 何宝覺然而笑示偈云萬法歸空無所依歸
 寂寞如目前機達悟心圓無所攝水水心月
 泯心義偈已乃付法具由是隨方行化事得
 此寺懋焉禁足六年修頭陀行降龍伏虎感
 化如神州牧范公慈嚮其名德尤加禮尚請
 鑄洪鍾留鎮山門貞符三年夏遇旱詔天下
 各僧祈雨弗驗李高崇素聞師名遣使迎至

京師報天寺夜半師寤立焚香乃天降雨卒

深嘉龍常呼為雨師

在蘇州云師姓丁山陰人從官說其鄉朱氏召八便殿扣其法要

賞賜甚厚

蘇代輪之師每思念無計符咒於是開朝

廷有新雨師乃降師受法賜金幣後關中霖雨至是開朝有立師儀而雨降止於關中內舉焉異聞奏于明帝大

喜遣使迎至京師報天寺管領之問良符四年萬

寶山真教寺成命諸耆德赴會慶讚師應詔

詣闕寓臨霄閣時方淫雨道塗淋漓妨於藏

事師禱立齊會期滿七日雨復如初後歸本

師重修廣聖寺化緣鑄鐘鼓鞀之間雲陰韻

兩師立庭中振錫矐目有頃天日開霽爾後

姜遭兵火而所鑄之鍾至今存焉尋還本寺

授徒演化僧問佛理師云爾我又嘗謂曰心

之性故是如來藏心即性故是自性心清淨

也治平龍應三年七月七日將示寂偈云此

詩說道罕知音只為如斯道喪心奚似子期

多爽慘聽來一遠伯牙琴又云秋寒涼氣爽

骨襟入斗才高對月吟堪笑禪家癡鈍客為

何將語以傳心乃結助而逝

此傳器乃國史及碑文不同今復考正

海清延福寺費海禪師海清人也姓阮氏幼

慕漁釣常以小艇為家浮遊江海年二十五

捨所業落髮為僧初與空略俱事荷澤尋為

略法嗣李仁宗時常與通玄真人被召入連

覺疎石侍坐忽有蛤蚧對鳴聒耳可惡帝命
 玄主之玄默咒先嗔其一笑謂師曰尚留一
 箇與沙門師法目少頃一亦隨墮帝異之作
 詩讚云覺海心如海通玄道人玄神通兼變
 化一佛一神儂由是各馳天下僧俗傾尚帝
 每以師禮待之每駕南海清行宮必先詣其
 寺一日帝謂師曰應真神足可得同乎師乃
 作八變涌身塵空去地數丈俄而復下帝及
 羣臣皆合爪稱歎於是賜有异出入關庭迨
 神宗朝紫召師辭以老病不就僧問佛典衆
 生誰實誰主師示偈於下角女頭白報偷作

者識若問佛境界龍門遭黥額將告示疾衆
 偈云春來花蝶善知時花蝶應須共應知期
 花蝶本來皆是幻莫須花蝶向心持是夜有
 大星隕於丈室東南偶語旦嘗然而述詔獨
 戶三十以奉香火官其子二人以褒賞
 然月真護鄉廣報寺願學禪師扶琴人也姓
 阮氏少從密嚴因智受法既得旨首於衛靈
 山棲隱專修梵行經十二年每八禪觀三日
 方起常持香海大悲陀羅尼治病禱雨無不
 立驗李英宗感其神驗詔賜僧不官禁以備
 瘳治尋畲老還本寺住持門徒不下百餘人

天賦淨寶公年六月十一日將順寂小衆曰
 道無影像觸目非透自反推求莫求他得縱
 饒求得得即不真設使得真真是何物所以
 三世諸佛歷代祖師印受心傳亦如是說咱
 吾偈云了悟身心開惠眼變化靈通現實相
 行住坐卧袖卓然應現化身不可量雖然克
 寒邊靈空觀來不見如有相世間無物可比
 況長現靈光明朗七嘗時演說不認無得一
 言以為當言訖啾呖而逝世傳身傳打悲思傳略
 同今依思目須想要語所載

第十一世九人

吳人

張耕中瑞淨果寺廣嚴禪師丹鳳人也姓阮

氏蚤失怙恃從舅吳室歡受業為叢心始嶽
 去世乃行脚四方遍拈禪窟聞智禪闡化於
 典冷福聖寺因徃投之一日唯禪公講雪竇實
 語錄至道吾漸源二尊宿至死家問生死話
 若有所得問云這一話頭古人道於生死中
 還有理也無禪云偈體得此理麼師云如何
 是無生死理禪云祇於生死中了取好師云
 你無生了禪云即自了師於言下水釋問如
 何保任禪云既了還同未了師依體由是禪
 林馳譽首於超類聖恩寺慈錫兵部尚書憑
 公降祥聞風起慕乃延就其寺大揚宗旨禪

召陳華者魯虛往十日入室弟子常照舉金
 剛經問云彼來所得法此法無實在虛是甚
 麼法師云彼莫謗如來好照云和尚莫謗經
 言好師云此經是什麼人說照云和尚莫專
 弄某甲豈非佛說耶師云若是佛說何故經
 中又云若言如來有所說法則為謗佛照
 無語僧問如何是法身師云法身本無相如
 何是般若師云般若無形問如何淨果境師
 云松嶽若嶽如何是境中人師云獨坐絨瓶
 口進法忽遇知昔鉢麼坐接師云隨緣揭兩
 眉進云恁麼則建初兒孫歐公宗子也師云

楚國愚人僧無語天資嘉瑞五年庚戌二月
 十五日將示疾說偈云離家方言寂滅去生
 無生後說在生男兒自有衝天志休向如來
 行處行偈已合掌端然而逝壽六十九憑公
 闡維起塔

第十二世七人

大錄

天德府驛榜鄉太祖寺常照禪師扶寧鄉人
 也姓范氏仕高宗朝為廣慈官令都曹後棄
 官求出世法淨果廣嚴乃其親得旨也奉侍
 教年尋居翁莫坊古寺宣揚教旨後遷止其
 寺闍徒曰盛僧問物我攀緣時如何師云物

我兩忘悉性無常易生易滅刹即不停誰是
 攀緣生為物性滅為物滅彼彼法所得常無生
 滅進云學人未了願師每指誨師云了心脩
 道則省力商易成不了心脩道乃費功而無
 益問如何是法身遍一切處師云如一毛孔
 遍法界一切毛孔悉如是當知無有少許心
 空無佛身何以故法身應化成等正覺無處
 不至故應如是知如來以心自在力無起無
 轉而轉法輪知一切法常無起故以三種法
 說新應無斷而轉法輪知一切法離邊見故
 離欲際非除而轉法輪入一切法虛空際故

無有言說而轉法輪知一切法不可說故究
 竟寂滅而轉法輪知一切法涅槃性故所謂
 無相性無盡性無生無滅無性我性無非我
 性無眾生性無非眾生性無菩薩性無法界
 性無虛空性亦復無有成等正覺性乃說偈
 云在世為人身心為如來藏照曜且無方界
 之更絕曠天嘉室祐二年九月二十四日師
 示心痛集眾說偈云道本無顏世新鮮日日
 誇大千沙界外何處不為家乃結伽而弟
 子神優寺閣維收舍利起塔師嘗作南宗嗣
 法圖一卷行于世

第肆卷世五人集

安羅屋鄉。通師居士屋鄉人也。姓鄧氏。幼與
 勝光寺郭神儀俱事大祖常照。嘗一日入室
 請益云。如何覺了佛法。照師云。佛法不可覺
 了。此寧竟法。誰佛如是。修一切法不可得。師
 於言下頷首。尋歸本鄉。興法學者。麇至。凡有
 所問。必以心印印之。或問如何是出世。人師
 云。不見古人道。但觀五蘊皆空。四大無我真
 心。無相無去。無來。生時性不來。死時性不去。
 湛然。因家知境。片如。但能如是。直下頓了。不
 為三世所拘繫。便是由世人也。切勿不得有分

毫。趣向。問如何是無生。姜師云。分別此諸蘊
 其性本空。寂空。故不可滅。此是無生。姜問如
 何是無生理。師云。調蘊之事。方顯性空。性空
 不可滅。是在生理。僧云。如何是佛師。云。本心
 是。伏所以。唐三藏玄奘云。但了心地。故號。摠
 持。悟法。無生。各為妙覺。後以

皇朝建中四年戊子七月示寂

金牌侍中。卿勝光寺。通師。外。寮人也。姓
 郭氏。世修梵行。梳髮。老始師事大祖常照。及
 照將示寂。問云。誰人到此。時師為甚。却隨俗
 死。裴聚云。汝記得。裴。不隨俗師云。碎。廢一

人出照者皆如狀亦奇師有辨經獨兩婦照
 正魁耶是誰家師云蓮優檀處耳照云賺利
 神役師云非謂求云堯傳爭奈莊帝救師
 何照叱云一火吠鹿師云和尚亦隨俗否照
 不隨俗師云為甚磨如此照云是與他同條
 師怒怒憚悟便禮拜云某甲錯會了也照便
 喝師復進曰某甲事和尚有年矣不知首德
 此道者誰欲願家指條傳法世次庶令寺有
 知其源流照嘉其懇切遂抽出通辨照對本
 又記其宗外條為分宗嗣法固以示師覽之
 既乃云師大顛阮般若二外乃不見敘何耶

照云通辨之意抑有以也建嘉六年丙子二
 月十八日師以照所授圖本獨弟子懸空曰
 方今世心放善假此慎勿為兵火所壞則我
 師風不阻矣言訖長往時與僧居寺中
 第十四世五人三人
 天德府朱明知通至寺息慮禪師一名朱明
 已昭歲敏給該殿俗典一日棄所學師語是
 禪居士且扣玄要常於解夏日設機一得一
 買跪于以進禪驚曰汝既為僧何乃記段世
 奈也日果報師云某正恁麼時不見有這物
 小石心有某甲身尔不知有殺生報故如是

作解如疑法器乃許入室審訊云從前用到
 靈神地縱你作五逆七遮亦得成因有僧在
 傍竊听乃叫云苦哉縱有任麼事我不取也
 禪厲声云賊賊安用非人得其便師於言下
 頓悟後還北寺講究宗旨以淑徒云應順居
 士乃其嗣也

安于山現光禪師家師人也姓黎氏諱純為
 人軟吉音美風貌參巖子立歷常艱苦年甫
 十一大祖常照見而拊之度為弟子學問聰
 邁日誦萬言不滿十年該洞三學禪門宗旨
 未及推究而昭靈歸寂矣師後與人辨論心

要必為所挫常竊鞭曰吾今譬如大富家子
 父母在時驕佚無度及父母死筆然迷昧不
 知家中珍寶所在終成窮乏於是遍遊叢林
 參尋作行得聖果智補一言頓明心地便委
 事焉尋以受華陽公主檀施時誇蜂起師聞
 謂曰夫與世俗仰者必不免於毀辱顧我反
 如昇耶且菩薩踰廣佛法無量中庸之士猶
 尚悲絲淫歧若不猛省以忍辱為甲冑以精
 進為干戈則何以攻魔軍破煩惱求取無上
 菩提徑往又安府淵澄山從法界禪師進具
 一日見侍者供米誤覆於地侍者驚遽和泥

掬之師自悔云予生無益於人徒勞供給以
 至如此乃衣葉体量經十年許將營別處為
 終老計遂深入慈山結茅居焉每林下經行
 必以拄杖擔一布袋所至坐卧野獸見之無
 不馴伏李惠宗欽其高躅屢備禮迎之師潛
 匿遣侍者復於使者曰貧道生王土食王祿
 山家奉佛多歷年所功德未就深負愧赧若
 使見王非惟無補治道亦取衆生之謗耳况
 今佛法隆行教中師匠固已畢集禁足羽儀
 毀閣顧茲陋寒一衲棲道山間何乃致此自
 是夫不下山有僧問云和尚在山來作什麼

事師云那以許由德何知世幾春年為君曠
 野道遙自在人建嘉十一年辛巳春將示寂
 端坐石上說偈云幻法皆是幻幻脩皆是幻
 二幻皆不即即是除諸幻乃安然而化門人
 道圓具禮葬於山窟又自思樂云歸
化去不知所之

第十五世七人

在化

應王居士昇龍京盈市坊人也姓杜氏諱文
 性頗疎曠不汲汲於世務初仕我

昭陵朝官至中品奉御公暇則篤志禪學手
 不釋卷搜窮祖意了達心宗於通聖息慮之
 門深造其將由是禪嵐不滯道眼稱高受

印得傳畢為叢林耳目如宗國師迥迥戒
明戒圓禪師之類是也

梅苑集英

龍編古州鄉法雲寺北。已多流支禪師南天竺國人婆羅門種也。少負邁俗之志。徧遊西竺。求伏心印。法緣未契。携錫而東南。陳朝大建六年壬午。初至長安。會周武帝。隳滅佛法。欲往于鄴。時三祖僧粲以避難。故挈其衣鉢。隱司空山。師與之遇。見其舉止。非凡心中起。敬乃向前。叉手立者三反。祖皆駁坐。無語。師於佇思。吹籥。然若有所得。屢拜三下。祖三點頭而已。師退。三步云。弟子向來。也是不着便。和尚大慈悲。故願乞奉侍。左右。祖曰。汝速南

行交接不宜久。住於此。師辭去。卓錫廣州。制旨寺大抵六年。譯得象頭報業差別等經。迨周大律二年庚子三月。來于我土。此寺召。寫復譯出。總持經一卷。常一日召八室弟子。法賢謂曰。夫諸伏心印。必不相踰。同太虛。無欠無餘。無去無來。無得無失。非一異。非常非斷。本無生處。亦無滅處。亦非遠離。非不遠離。為對妄緣。假立各爾。所以三世諸伏。亦以如是。歷代祖師。亦以如是。得我亦以如是。得汝亦以如是。以至有情無情。皆以如是。得且吾祖。察公印。吾心。時謂吾速南行交接不宜

父仕曠歷于茲今與汝遇果符驗記汝善持
 之吾去時至矣一說合掌而逝法賢關維收
 五色舍利起塔時隋開皇十四年甲寅也李
 太宗常有偈追贊云剖自來而國聞吾父習
 禪應開諸伏信遠合一心源皎比楞伽月分
 芬若般蓮何時高不見相與話重玄贈封云
 法雲比丘多疏支法嗣

第一世一人

第二世繼遊天福山觀善寺法賢禪師朱翁
 人也姓杜氏身長七尺三寸首投法雲觀緣
 大師受具曰冀其徒聽講禪要時毘多流支

錄廣而來憇于此寺見師熹視謂曰汝何姓
 師云和尚甚姓支云汝無姓耶師云姓即不
 無和尚作麼生會支呵之曰用會作麼師忽
 然自省便禮拜遂得旨焉支滅已徑入慈山
 習定形如橋木物我俱忘飛鳥就野獸相
 狎時人嚮風來學者不可勝數因剃髮授徒
 居僧常三百餘人南方禪宗於此為盛隋刺
 史劉方以聞高祖又嚮此方欽崇伏教且復
 高師德譽遣使賫伏舍利五函附膝軟師建
 塔俱養師乃於巖隈法雲寺及峯巖長慶寺
 川各寺各起塔說在通辨後以唐武德九

年兩歲示寂。

第二世一人

第三世一人

第四世一人

天德府華林鄉建陽走清辨論師古交人也
 姓杜氏年十二從魯光法燈受業燈將逝寂
 師問云和尚去後弟乎何依記燈云汝但
 崇業而器師憫然不會燈後師乃專持金
 剛經為業忘曰有神客來見且問云此經是
 三世諸父母如何是依母義何師云從來持
 誦未曉經意客云持來多少時師云八載客

云典麻持經八箇載一箇經意也不會縱經
 百載功亦何為師遵作禮且叩其所進蓋客
 今就崇業惠嚴決焉師釋然謂曰吾今乃知
 法燈之語果符矣遂從之纔到寺嚴問云汝
 為什麼事來師云某甲心頭有所未穩嚴云
 汝未穩箇甚麼師舉前語似之嚴歎云汝自
 忘却了也不記經言三世諸父及諸父阿母
 多羅三藐三菩提法皆從此經出豈是依母
 義句耶師云是某甲自昧也嚴又曰此經
 是什麼人說師云豈非如來所說耶嚴云經
 中言若言如來有所說法即為謗伏是人不

辨我啜詫義放雷恩律者言此經不是依
 說即為誇經者者是低說即為誇低汝作麼
 生連道地道師探開口嚴以拂子驀口打師
 漢然有悟便禮拜承就此寺授徒化緣畢以
 唐再執二年丙戌喟寂

第五世一人

第六世一人

第七世一人 五集錄

第八世三人 二人集錄

大德祚驛傍鄉侷眾寺定空海師古奕也姓
 阮氏妻為右族其為人深明世數動有軌則

鄉人尊事咸以長老各為脫歲於龍泉南陽
 會下聞說領旨由是歸心釋教唐貞元中嘗
 於本鄉創濠林寺基構之始塌地得香題一
 枚磨子十口使人盪水洗之一口下水去至
 土乃止師辨云十口成古字水去成法字土
 者我所居也本土也因改其鄉各古法各
 又作領云地呈法器一品精銅置伏法之興
 隆立鄉名之古法又云法鼎出現十口銅鍾
 李興王三品成功又云十口水土去古法各
 鄉號鵝居舊月後正是興三寶師拈掃寂語
 弟子通善曰吾欲興廣鄉里然中間恐遭村

雖必有異人來壞吾境土地

後唐高祖

吾沒

後汝善持其法丁人即傳則吾之願罪矣言

訖告別而終壽七十九時啓元和三年丙子

通善於公祖寺西起淨層且誌其囑語疾焉

第九世三人 並敘解

第十世四人 一人敘錄

天德府扶寧鄉雙林寺長老羅貴安真人姓

丁氏蚤歲遊左徧參禪匠歷年滋久不契法

緣將有遐志後聞禪衆遊善會下一語心地

開豁乃購事焉善將圓寂謂曰昔吾師定公

嘗囑云汝持吾法丁人則傳汝其當之吾今

逝矣師既得法隨方演化擇地初寺每出言

語必為符識常於大祖寺鑄大祖金像後恐

為盜所取埋于寺門且囑曰值明王則出遇

暗主則藏將示寂謂弟子禪翁曰初高駘既

於蘇歷築城知我古法之地有王者氣乃鑿

斷泮江及扶軫池等十九處以馱之吾今已

勸曲覽瓊復如故又於翔字種木綿一樹以

鎮圻處知後世必有興王者由以扶植吾正

法也吾沒後汝善為築土埤浮圖以法曆藏

其中勿令人見言訖而逝年八十五又云唐

精泰三年丙申也師種木綿樹時常有偈云

大山龍頭起虬尾隱朱明十八子定成錦樹
 現竟形龜雞鼠月內定見日出清區郡珍鄉
 鼓山寺法順禪師不知何許人姓杜氏博學
 工詩負王佐之才明當壺之務少出家師竟
 樹扶持禪師既得法皆語必合符識當黎朝
 創業之始運籌定策預有力焉及入下太平
 不受封賞黎大行皇帝愈重之常不名呼為
 杜法師師以文翰之任天福七年宋人陀覽
 來聘帝命師交服為津吏規覽奉勅會有兩
 鶴浮於水中覺戲吟云鶴比兩鶴比仰面詢
 天家師於把掉少足之云白毛鋪綠水紅棹

49a

撰清波覺於是嘆服帝常問師以國祚短長
 師云國祚如藤絡南天裏太平無為居殿閣
 處息刀兵興統二年告終壽七十大常作
 善薩號懺悔文一卷行于世

古戔陶家鄉觀愛寺碑舊名摩訶寺其先
 占城種人冒姓楊氏父貝陀明於貝書仕黎

朝為貝右云

長師為人談鑒了達學該唐梵年二十四襲
 父業終居本寺嘗於演貝經次見護法善神
 詆之曰焉用此外學為必不能通理師由是
 長喇深自悔剝將投淵而死因遇東林遠別

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主書寫止作師於言下候

釋後復從數內寺社。洪順受教專務懺悔及
誦大悲心咒三載未嘗少怠感得觀音大士
以淨水楊枝灌頂變面普證明心加清淨順
天五年遷止長安大雲峯日勤修習得總持
三昧焚燼幻術人莫之測奉大行皇帝三召
至闕答問備各事悠頤而已至再三扣乃對
云嘗覺狂僧帶大慈命羅大肉萬歲寺使人
關門守之遲旦見師已在僧房外門鑰如故
帝慈異之聽從勿增南遊愛州抵沙蕩鎮其
俗好事鬼神率以殺生為業師勸之齋素咸曰

吾之天神禍福不敢違也師云汝等苟能捨惡
從善設有箇害老僧自當之鄉人曰此間有久
病瀕死者醫巫束手汝能愈之吾必從勸師乃
取水噴之病者立愈彼雖感服而舊業已深未
能遽化鄉豪吳氏因飲酣把酒向前逼師曰和
尚能從此樂則吾等當從教矣師曰所不敢
辭但恐腹痛爾具錢曰痛則具自代之師肯
從俄而伴為腹脹腸中雷吼喘息大叫云具
君代我具驚惶問措師自合掌稱念南無佛
南無法南無僧救我有傾乃吐肉成獸走魚
成魚躍潭成銅作衆犬驚異師云汝身病者從

我老愈業腹庸汝不伴我汝今復從吾教否
 鄉人皆拜請天成二年郡尉陀公光喇請居
 太平祥開天寺六年辭去雖卅後不知所終

真淨顯前靈
云前南院也

第十一世四人 元黃母

天德府扶寧鄉雙林寺禪翁道者古法人也
 姓呂氏少兩徇俗後從丁長老出家既得法
 以下朝太平十年已如示寂年七十八
 竟編古卅鄉法雲寺崇範禪師姓牟氏狀貌
 瑰偉耳垂五肩捨素之始首參香城無碍既
 得心印乃徧遊天竺求廣見聞九載而返每

明戒定後於其寺兩宏學者如歸祭大行皇
 帝累召赴闕客究玄旨禮遇隆洽建李朝廣
 祐三年丁卯歸寂壽八十四仁宗尊有倡進
 贈云崇範居南國心空及弟歸耳長回瑞質
 法七尺離微

第十二世七人 元缺錄

天德府驛榜鄉六組寺萬行禪師古法人姓
 阮氏家蓋奉伏師幼歲超異該貫三學研窮
 百論其視軒冕泊如也年二十一出家與定
 惠俱事六祖禪翁巾履之暇字間忘倦翁歎
 後乃專習摠持三摩地門以為已務時或發

詎信為天下符識黎大行皇帝之所尊敬天
 福元年宋僖仁寶來龜屯軍子峒甲浪山帝
 召師問以勝敗付曰三七日中賊必退後果
 然及帝欲伐占城典護未定師奏請速行無
 失機會後戰果勝嘗有姦人杜銀欲謀害師
 師預於未發逸以偶云土木相生銀對金為
 何謀我靈靈當時五口秋心絕真至未來
 不恨心銀懼乃止其先知往鑿平多類此時
 則朝苛暴天人厭德李太祖時為親衛未即
 受禪位其間妖祥雜出如法古州應太心寺
 咸遂院白犬毛皆成天子字雷震木綿樹文

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迹显慶太主墓四方夜誦声双林寺椽木皮
 蟲蝕文成國字寺事皆隨其闕見而辨折之
 每符黎蹶李興之兆故太祖即位日師在大
 祖寺先知之謂伯叔二王曰天子已崩李親
 衛在家李低城內宿直千數日中親衛必得
 下乃榜於通衢曰疾藜沉比水李子樹南天
 四方戈干靜八表賀平安二王聞之甚懼使
 人馳問果如其言後以應天九年五月十五
 日無疾說偈云身如電影有还無萬木春榮
 秋又枯任運盛衰無怖畏盛衰如露頭鋪草
 不示徒曰沙寺要法何處我不以所住兩住不

52b

彼無佳兩佳窮須乃堪帝及士燕收其間雜
 餘曾起塔以香火馬仁宗嘗有追贈偈云萬行
 融三際真符古識機鄉開各古法柱錫鎮王畿

 皇慶大王真聖者師常於夜定同基四坊者有寺其東云慶興
 祥者與桂翠手纏竟動翼和從東則朝宗勳二百大底村天運
 其南云正助共野劫劫神某世男女皆安久入大德為聖廟屋成
 入方會文會諸君云西望望空有石柱高世男女上將百天
 德官官與運動者王清時命九十九北云正北扶琴當白虎安宋
 男女常生君代仁天德長壽堂世世男王所大阻轉受人如取
 并結其聖果來視乃謂信天東有武龍巷南有武龍殿西有佛
 林覺九有聖跡池良久又云蓋日月之內觀洞窟柱柱聚漆
 印圖字十口水土去靈聖者天粉後改古法為大方蓋其顯也
 其錄寺事五物圖史疏不其錄

天德府安貞卿光興寺定惠禪師峯卅錦田
 人也姓曲氏幼與萬行俱事禪翁昇受心印
 迨示寂傳其法於弟子林惠生

按南宗嗣法圖云嗣萬
 行惠肇也今依本傳

伏跡山天福寺道行禪師姓徐氏諱皓父榮
 仕至僧官都按常定學於安朗知娶曾氏女
 因家焉師曾也出少事任俠倜儻有大志奉
 動云為人莫能測常與儒者費生道士黎全
 姜伶人微乙相友善夜則攻苦讀書日則弄
 笛擊球博戲為樂父常責其荒怠一女潛入
 卧內窈伺見燈火闌殘簡編堆積師方據按
 而睡手未解卷燈之餘及殆欲盪蓋由是不
 復為慮後應僧官街試中
 以邪術忤延成侯侯藉大顛法師以法毆殺

於于蘇江屍至于快橋候所聚處忽人立而
 指竟曰弗去候慎馳告顛亡至喟云僧恨不
 隔宿屍應去流去師思復文警計無從出一
 日伺顛出欲要擊之俄聞空中嗟叱云爾也
 師懼捨杖而走欲往印度求靈異術改抗顛
 塗至金壽壘阻險而还乃於慈山岩内隱寫
 日常專持大悲心陀羅尼滿十萬八千遍一
 日見神人來前謂曰弟子即四鎮天王也感
 師持經功德故來相候以荷指使師知其道
 法已圓父警可復親至所夾橋以拄杖至誠
 投急流中杖蓮水竟行至西楊橋乃止師喜

云吾法勝矣直至顛所顛見謂曰汝不記前
 事耶師仰視空中寂無所覩因毘擊之顛發
 病死自是夙冤雪尽俗慮灰寒遍歷叢林訪
 求印證聞喬智玄於太平化導躬往參謁且
 呈問真心偈云久混凡塵未識金不知何處
 是真心願再指的開方便了見如已斬舌尋
 玄答偈云玉裏秘声演妙音箇中滿目露神
 心河沙境是菩提道換向菩提隔萬尋師泐
 然不契遂之法雲崇範會下問云如何是真
 心範云阿那箇不是真心師豁爾自得云如
 何保任範云飢飧渴飲師禮拜辭而退自是

法力有如神變愈靈能使山陀野獸辟來馴
 擾繫指禱霖咒水治病無不立驗僧問行住
 坐卧尽是伏心如何是佛心師示偈云作有
 塵沙有為空一切空有空如水月勿著有空
 空又云日月坐宮頭人亡尽失珠富人有以
 子步行不騎駒時仁宗皇帝無嗣會祥大慶
 三年二月清化府人上言曰頓海沙汀有灵
 異小兒年可三歲辭言語自矜陛下適子號
 為覺皇九陛下所為無不知覺帝使中使往
 視之果如其言迎还京居報天寺以其聰異
 頗愛之將立為皇太子群臣切諫以為不可

且曰彼誠灵異必宜托生官禁然後可也帝
 從之遂設大會七日夜行托胎法師間之私
 謂曰彼咒妖異惑人甚矣吾豈忍坐視弗收
 以煌幻術心靈乱正法耶因使其婦伴為觀
 會者密將師所結印數珠捧于簷上會至三
 日覺皇要疾語人曰徧滿國界鉄網羅罩難
 欲托生恐無睹也帝疑師咒辭投記果伏命
 繫于輿睨樓會臣僚護崇賢侯適过師哀訴
 曰願再力一枚僧幸免異日必寓胎官以謝
 其惠侯領之及會護余曰陛下以無後故求
 彼託生而貽妄身咒辭宜加大戮以謝天下

侯徐春曰覺皇設有神力雖百踴咒辭夫亦
 柯害今反如是上踏出於覺皇遠矣臣愚竊
 謂典其兼賂窮竭之託生也帝厚之師往詣
 侯第於夫人浴久逼視之夫人怒以告侯素
 知其故竟了之許夫人於是覺有娠師駕侯
 曰高誕之時必先相告及期師見報至乃易
 服澡身謂其徒曰吾夙因未了猶且復留世
 間暫爲國王及壽終時又爲三十二天天子
 若見真身噴淚則我方入涅槃不住生滅矣
 門徒聞之無不感泣師說偈云秋來不報薦
 來囑吟笑人間暫發悲爲報門人休惑若布

56a

師幾度依今師言訖辨然而化至今形貌存
 焉按門吏會祥大德人師在崇實此處廣興廟其
 侯子年九二歲在神廟之側立有至天十村慶壽元
 年冬十二月帝崩太子臨儲者我三十一年在位九十年諱
 日神字即覺皇覺皇瑞云大觀是也
 覺皇主區云大觀是也

56b

新寨大亂御石室山徂風寺持鉢禪師羸瘦
 人也姓萬氏弄土之牟慕侯頰功冠投法雲
 崇範披剃受具範見其行已克勤高事謹慎
 途深印許且以號焉範既歸寂師乃恣遊禪
 肆歷叩諸宿尋復此寺誦究相國太尉毗公
 常傑時為核主所得信施悉以資給侯事且
 重攝法雲禪告極心廣安筭寺以答法云

恩云會淨大慶八年二月十八日將示寂偈云有死必有生有生必有死死乃世所悲生為古所喜悲喜兩無旁互然成波叱於諸生死不開依唵嘛嚩比悉哩偈訖端然而逝壽大十九門弟子淨行法眼純真禪師收茶吐

上侵西結鄉華光寺純真禪師江

九翁人也姓陶氏少明經史所至之處逢掖輩爭先從之後遇光淨法室一言契旨遂捨所守以馬不數年間牽開打透電光石火隨扣鼓揚引贖接育殆無餘力童符乙酉二月七日將示寂弟子本寂入室請益師說

偈云真性常無性何曾有生滅身是生滅法
法性未曾滅乃邀輔國太保高公最主茶維
事建塔

第十三壹六人 贊列

昇庵京萬歲寺惠生僧統東扶列人也姓林氏諱樞武安茶山林公富之後曠娶嘉僧錄女因徒扶列家之子二長曰杜至仕尚書兵部員外郎師即其次也相貌琰帔辨若懸河尤善文詞工字登儒學之暇旁究仄書百論諸經靡不周覽每言及佛法要處未嘗不慨歎流涕也年去尤棄俗與鶴林法通俱事光

與施惠文學日進惠拊而器之自是縱步叢
林飽參禪求首於茶山善提峯卓錫一八定
中動筌五日時人謂之肉身大士李太宗聞
之遣使徵起師謂使曰子不見穢性乎依從
繒綉餉以陵瘞及索入太廟願為孤永猶不
可得况其他乎固辭不就至再乃赴關面對
大悅拜內供奉僧勅於其寺住持一日於大
內齋僧次帝謂曰朕惟仗祖心源學者互相
詆訾要與諸方碩德各述所見以觀其用心
何如耳師應言成偈云法本無味有亦非
空若人知此法衆生喪仗同寂也楞伽月空

58a

空渡海舟知空也覺有三昧任通週帝深嘉
賞爭拜都僧錄當時王公如奉軋天王威武
喜慈善惡昭慶显明太子上將王公柱太師
梁公任文太保陶公處忠參政喬公蓬等皆
往來問道執師資禮迨聖宗朝遷至左街都
僧統侯秩不吝嘉慶五年甲辰將示寂集衆
說偈云水火日相參由來未可談報君無處
所三七又三七又云自古來參學人七指為
南若人問新事以月物三乃沐浴焚香夜子
寂然而逝嘗奉詔換仙迹天福天聖開國武
寧妙册報德等寺碑文又有法事虜獲諸道

58b

場慶獲改若于卷行母在

龍編嶺卅鄉窟果香禪岩禪師古卅人也姓姜氏諱通世為僧官神姿爽拔梵唄清朗常習總持陀羅尼門背而讀誦一字不遺會豐中應法華般若御試皆中甲科尋得成道法醫一言印証因出家焉始居仙庭山天福寺戒行精淨道心弘大本管擢飲殆閱六霜後还本鄉重修其寺住持大順間早詔師詣闕祈雨立驗拜名僧賜以上服九國家祈禱師皆主之疎降室應元年仲春白日焚香訣眾併然坐逝壽七十一至今其形貌存焉時人

謂之生佛再後寺遭兵火而獨在焉

長安國清

寺明空國師大黃譚舍鄉人也姓阮氏諱至誠常遊學遇天福寺徐道行禪師行服應給侍歷十七年稔行獎其有志深為印可且賜名焉及將謝世謂師曰昔吾圭尊道果既圓猶有金俗之報况於末法公微豈能自保我今猶現世間在臥王位來生病債決定難逃於汝有緣為憑相救行化已師足故里耕焉二十餘年不求聞達時李神宗方要奇疾憤亂心紳頓痛之甚爾觀可畏天下良醫應詔

而至者皆縮手莫措間有女童講曰欲要天子疾須得沈明空及遣使物也民間竟得師焉既至詣方碩宿已在殿上行法見師扑匐度不加礼師託親把大釘長五寸許釘于殿柱抗声曰有缺拔此則光當推許如是再三莫敢應者師再以左手兩指拈之釘便墮尙衆皆駭服及見帝師厲声曰大丈夫貴有四海胡乃費如此狂亂為哉帝大驚衆師令取巨鑊貯水堵之既百沸以手攬者數四浴帝其中病輒醒愈尋拜為國師融戶數百以褒賞焉大定二年辛丑去世欠某月某日壽七

60a

十六

平樂姜住鄉祝暉寺本寂禪師_{號名}面結人也姓阮氏黎朝內供奉都尉阮公輔之裔蚤有茂常遇異僧奇之曰此兒骨相不凡如其出家真成法種及長先投華光純真受業焚香尋復進具真見其定圓戒繁字一知十摩頂謂曰南方正法待汝闡揚師於是不滯有無兼明頓漸所至之處則普施法雨遐振玄風罷納麻從簪紳皈慕以紹明三年己未夏六月十四日集門弟子謂曰無事任事言訖而化

60b

禪苑集英

第十四世四人 三人敘錄

永康慈廉御慶喜僧統龍編古交人姓阮氏
 淨行種也幼絕瑩茹長從祝暝本寂受業一
 日隨寂赴松家供路次問云何是祖禪的也
 意適聞民家巫鼓寂云莫是這言巫覡降神
 麼師云和尚莫專弄寂云吾不曾賣也弄師
 不會乃辭去至萬歲辨才也問汝從甚處來
 師云寂公來才云彼亦一方善知識曾作什
 麼語句師云某甲事彼有年矣一問不許是
 以去之才云問箇什麼師舉似前話才云噫

寂公為汝忒殺道了莫謗本師好師佇思才
 云不見道達時過境是不悟永乘踈師執然
 頓悟便還寂見問云汝從何處速來師禮拜
 云某甲得謗和尚課故來乞懺耳寂云課相
 性空汝作麼生懺師云當如是懺寂便休又
 常典淨眼淨如二禪者侍立次寂謂曰諸仁
 者於吾門學問日已經久盍各呈見解以觀
 其進道何如眼如擬開口師喟云一翳在目
 空花亂墜寂云屢喜闍梨爭奈船何打破耳
 斗師云用船作麼寂云這令利湊且莫打開
 汝祇解脫到這邊事着那邊事也未夢見在

師云雖熬鐵是他寂云離却百尺竿頭放步
行一汝作麼生道師揭兩手云不險不險寂
云放你一頓師由是各播叢林天彰室中嗣
召闕帝嘉其敷對稱旨拜為僧錄尋進僧統
一曰弟子法融問云了達色空色是凡是
師應声成偈云勞生休問色無空学道在過
訪祖宗天外覓心唯定靜人間植桂豈成叢
乾坤尽是毛頭上日月包含芥子中大用現
前奉在手誰知凡眼裏西東偈畢大定三年
壬戌正月十七日示疾而終壽七十六有
悟道歌詩集行于世史記云天章空崩三年示寂本
西作馬

第十五世 三人 一人錄錄

滿斗郡塔鉢脚寺戒空禪師本郡人姓阮氏
諱珣良家子也少樂佚始從真磨山元和廣
福出家受具服事教檢既得旨於歷山結一
庵五年間專務宴寂尋振錫下山隨方化導
塗抵南棧八曜主岩栖焉禁足六年修頭陀
行至使鬼神奔命惡獸來馴李神宗徵之累
辭乃就大順八年大疫師適至闕勅旨於嘉
林寺以呪水治之病者立愈日以千數帝深
嘉獎融戶十人以充給養歲晚以还故御深
重修慶寺九十五所一日無疾說偈示衆云

我有一事奇持非青黃赤白黑天下在家出家
 家親生惡死為賊不知生死異踏生死秘是
 失得若官生死異塗賺却報迦弥勒若知生
 死死生方會老僧處匿汝等後學門人莫認
 盤皇軌則偈畢大笑一声合掌而逝門人弟
 子卅牧黎公劔防遣使漢公丁茶毗收舍利
 起塔塑像以香火寫清化府摩尼山香辨寺
 洪融禪師貝哩人姓黎氏唐愛卅牧黎公良
 之後歷十五世為卅显疾父玄巖道號僧判
 師形神秀異詞氣清 於金文玉偈靡所不
 讚少依呪僧統慶喜出家喜目而奇之授以

法印自是放恠山水不得所之化道時至乃
 卓錫於鸞峯山開覺寺授徒學者滿室尋遷
 本山創寺以終老焉天感至寶元年甲午二
 月五日無疾而化門人道林等闡維于本山

建塔

第十六世三人

安朗高野山符門庵智禪師一名峯卅人姓黎
 氏諱錄黎朝禦壘王之苗裔也祖順宗仕李
 朝官至中書大僚班尚金城公姓錄官至明
 字元叙造授三源都巡檢並補卅牧師蚤事
 楊屋奉進士中第元恭候書家年二十七曰

從兄引至戒空法席間誦金剛經至一切有
 為法如夢幻泡影如露亦如電應作如是觀
 忽然感悟嘆曰如來五語蓋不虛設世間諸
 法虛幻不實惟道為實我復何求耶儂家可
 說君臣父子之道矣法可言菩薩言聞之功
 二教雖殊其歸則一然尚生死苦海有無計
 非解則不能也遂請披剃契言之後徑入慈
 山樹下晝經夜定精修苦行誓滿六年一日
 坐次見一虎逐鹿來師諭之曰一切眾生皆
 惜性命汝勿相害虎低頭伏地作皈依而去
 尋庵於山下授徒四方披供堆積遂山資僚

相與嘯聚為盜師每由常有巨虎踞卧庵門
 盜莫敢犯其蒙師導誘而歸善者不可勝數
 英高兩朝累徵不起輔國太尉蘇公憲誠太
 保吳公和斐皆求執弟子禮十年未常見面
 忽一日與諸公相見大喜縱問訊已師說偈
 曰既依出素養骨中聞說微言意先從貪欲
 黜除千里外希夷之理日包容又云淡然自
 守惟德是務或云譚拳匕一句心無彼我既
 過昏霾日夜陟降無形可住如影如響無迹
 可趨言訖合掌端然而逝諸公及弟子慟哭

吉振山門

扶蘭普賴山祝暉寺真空禪師僊迹扶藿人
 姓王氏諱海瞻右族也母依姬時父夢明
 僧授以錫杖因得師焉少孤攻苦讀書不親
 細務年十五博通史籍及冠徧踏禪林尋所
 印契因至東究山靜慮寺草一會下聞誦法
 華經訟然有省由是機緣膠合龜木相投八
 室大年究問日益尋受心印就于慈山栖止
 以律自防不下山門再二十載聲譽遠播李
 仁宗聞之詔延入大內誦法華經聽者風靡
 時太尉阮公常傑諒州刺史相國申公尤加
 敬常捨信財供給師悉以所得修寺建塔

及鑄洪鍾以留鎮焉常有僧問如何是妙道
 師云竟後方知進云從上教旨學人未決今
 時言教如何會得師云若到仙家深洞內九
 丹煥骨得依歸問如何是九丹師云歷劫思
 蒙任洞曉今晨一倍得開明問如何是開明
 師云開明照徹娑婆界一切眾生共一家又
 問離妙無辨的處已得逢渠那箇是渠師云
 劫火洞然毫末尺青山依舊白雲飛又問也
 身敗依時如何師云春來春去巖春春花落
 花開秋是春僧擬護師唱云平源經火後植
 物各殊芳僧禮拜師毗年歸本郡重補作寶

感寺訖會豐九年十一月朔一日將遊寂說
偈云妙本虛無明誇和風吹起遍婆人
人
及談無為樂若得無為始是家是日子夜又
云吾道已成吾教已行吾隨化还乃跏趺而
逝壽五十有五臘日三十六皇太后及天城
公主弟子茂因尼師皆齋贈禮越二日大明
寺姜海大師賜紫衣沙門法成率衆備禮塋
之塔于齋堂之外學士阮公文舉奉詔撰塔
銘工部尚書段公文欽有詩定悼云行高朝
野振清風錫駐如雲慕集龜仁宇忽焉崩惠
棟道林長嘆偃貞松墳莹碧草添新塔水蘸

青山認藉容寂比禪開誰更叩經過愁吟暮
天鍾

龍福起類鄉童雲寺道林禪師朱爲九臯人
也姓曾氏蚤慕空宗志行統繁紛依香嚴法
融受業不喻數年密受心印乃親付紹繼隨
處續明觸物應機利人不少以天嘉室祐二
年癸亥五月跏趺而逝

第十七世四人入嗣錄

僊定扶董鄉香海院妙因尼師諱王燭奉軋
王長女天資淑靚言行有則李聖宗鞠於中
宮及笄適真登卅牧黎氏黎卒自誓孀居姜

不再嫁。日嘆曰：我觀世間一切諸法，猶如夢幻。况浮榮之輩，其可恃乎？於是願棄捨施落髮出家。既扶童真，空受菩薩戒。究問心要，空為賜號。咱於尼院住持，其修律行禪。地傑為尼，中宗匠有來求學師，必教習大累。且云：但自性還源，則頓漸可隨入矣。常寂疾忘，吉色言語有學。者問云：一切衆生病，是故我病。何為每忌吉色師奉教云：若以色見我，以音聲求我，是人行邪道，不能見如來。進云：何為冥坐師云：本來無去進云：何為不言師云：道本無言。會祥大慶四年六月初一日疾

67a

華說偈云：生老病死自古常然，欲求出離，解縛蚤纏，迷之求，伏惑之求，禪已伏不求，枉口無言，乃淨髮澡身，跏坐。細江古杏鄉大安國寺圓學禪師如月人也。姓黃氏，韶習外書，冠積凶典，因聞真空一語，心地豁然。自是禪學寂高，律侵無闕。掛身一衲，普度寒暄。瓶錫相從，隨方開以至修。橋菜道莫不身先後於扶琴，鄉重修國清寺。鍾常有綠化偈云：大哉常昏終夜苦，無明披弄久迷慵。晝夜聞鐘開覺悟，頓神淨利得神通。天彰寶嗣四年丙辰夏六月十四日示寂。壽

67b

六十四門弟子吳通禪劉王仁呂法華周妙
用等收遺骸起浮圖

竟編古交鄉苑華寺淨禪師本鄉人也姓
費氏諱完初與同學淨空偕事竟雲道林曰
其切磋深造本要林知其必為法器因賜號
且印之曰淨是淨智妙圓禪是禪心常寂建
林化去師乃遍遊禪園尋所益友道緣既寔
乃還本郡重修其寺考泮律之餘每以利人
為念天資嘉瑞八年癸丑秋八月十二日示
寂壽七十三門弟子法記撰寺碑文有云師
生當季日寅值明時大度寧忘四弘勿捨香

杯浮處十方信主波隨錫杖振時四部学徒
霧集神通巨測玄用難量自來赴伏覺場安
能榆楊勝業真所謂和天室月法苑泥村云

第十八世二人一人破扉

南定古賢鄉國恩寺圓通國師古賢人也姓
阮氏諱元德後寓昇竟京太白坊因家焉立
為僧官父惠昱仕李仁宗朝至左右街僧錄
道號寶覺禪師資稟明邁字造精妙蚤有出
生之志常遇安國國學因契旨焉會豐六年
中三教試中甲科充代問竟符元化八年擢
天下宏才補僧道階缺員師復首其選帝益

奇之將授以牧柄周緯涉就乃進內供奉傅
 誦法師於是應機演教引旨覺人鮮惑政愚
 决無留刃受業於其明者皆显各當世大慶
 三年重興延壽寺成命師拱碑文帝高其才
 遷左街僧錄大順三年李神宗召入崇澗殿
 帝問天下治乱興亡之理師對云天下猶器
 也置諸安則安置諸危則危願在人主所行
 何如耳好生之德合于民心故民愛之如父
 毋仰之如日月是置天下得之安者也又云
 治乱在庶官得人則治失人則乱臣歷視前
 世帝王未常不以用君子而興以用小人

而亡者也原其致此非一朝一夕之故所由
 來者漸矣天地不能頓為寒暑必漸於春秋
 人君頓為興亡必漸於善惡古之聖王知其
 舍此故則天不息其德以脩己法地不息其
 德以修安人修己者慎於中也栗然如履薄
 冰安人者敬其下也懷乎若馭朽索舍是罔
 不興反是罔不亡其興亡之漸在於此也果
 稱旨乃進右街僧統知教門公事師從容嚴
 近猷納箴規未嘗少贊尋奉勅就西陽館所
 休暇貽有驗由是益加珍禮賜朝謁同太子
 秩天彰嘉瑞五年宮車晏駕師預受顧命及

奉遺詔王莫缺付托等事紹明元年英宗既
 即位太后祔制以師有揆日之功屢加厚賜
 尋即本郡勅寺終老罵三村之費皆內帑費
 給且賜宸翰以賁之大定四年進左右街僧
 統內供奉知教門公事傳講三藏文章應制
 諷國國師賜紫衣大沙門其佐重師臣望陪
 朝野者如此大定辛未年閏四月二十一日
 會衆訣別無疾而終壽七十有二師嘗奉詔
 修貞誥佛跡錄事三十餘卷洪鍾文碑記僧
 家雜錄五十餘卷詩賦千餘首行于世

第十九世二人一人缺每

龍福大通場大慈寺依山禪師又安錦鄉人
 也姓阮氏美風姿辨詞說童孺之年頗涉書
 史其擇交遊藝必其所益而於竺典尤加意
 焉年二十從鄉長老出家尋抵京參圓通國
 師言下契旨尔後隨方行化志在利人所得
 信財急供佛事嘗有勸文云鈎各嗜利譬如
 水上浮漚殖福種錄尽是骨中依室迨晚午
 遷于安朗鄉南無寺住持嘗示門徒云汝等
 應知如來成等正覺於一切妄無所觀察於
 法平等無有疑惑無二在相無行無止無量
 每際遠離二邊住於中道出過一切文字言

說傳得一切衆生量等身得一切剎量等身
 得一切三界量等身得一切佛量等身得一
 切言語量等身得真如量等身得法界量等
 身得虛空界量等身得無碍界量等身得一
 切願量等身得一切行量等身得一切寂滅
 量等身又說偈曰如來成正覺一切量等身
 回互不回互眼睛童子神又云真身成萬衆
 萬衆即真身月殿柴丹桂比在一輪將示寂
 謂其徒曰我不復來到此是時堂前花樹自
 然而落燕雀哀鳴三旬不止以建嘉三年丙
 子三月十八日去世

神苑集英

昇菴京開國寺草堂禪師傳實明虎宗派

草堂禪師

第一世三人

李暉宗皇帝

張耕驛王卿慈光福暉寺般若禪師

龍彰保財鄉遇赦居士已上三人並嗣草堂

第二世四人

吳參政益嗣聖宗皇帝

永興安朗鄉弘明禪師嗣嚴若

海清嚴光寺空路禪師

定覺禪師

時號德也上一人並副選教其本僧已依兩宋圖非定揚沙

第三壹四人

杜太傅武

副參政云副定覺

安羅青威御梵音禪師 副紹明

李英宗皇帝

杜都禪似已上三人並副空路或云副定覺

第四世四人

張三藏禪師

副梵音一云副空路或云副定覺

真玄禪師

杜太傅常

已上三人並副杜都禪或云太傅副建初宋

第五世四人

禪列七十

海淨禪師

李高宗皇帝

倡兒管甲

阮諫已上三人並副張三藏

范奉御等

副真玄又云副杜太傅

擲花集英拔後

時聞佛本無形。真經無卷。尚無宗昇。無跡
 法假有相。軌則有開。孤有連輝。有旨。上自
 無始。下至無終。佛祖冲也。尚八不已。寂照
 十方。未來過去。衆生處也。輪轉有為。重也
 疑惑。醍醐毒藥。業也。納纏。白草異草。由於
 一有。大事因緣。圓証三空。廣開休用。尚現
 于世。欲令衆生。四知見故。一偈。饒靈。擲花
 一百四十集英之宗。西方四七仁三無他
 之路。達麼四目相顧。釋迦五眼常明。拈公
 佛印心宗。演開經錄。灯也。相鏡。衆生迷惑

隨順外道。彼旬業也。納身。稱毒。錄覺。声聞
 真如性海。三毒不除。雖昧有味。無殺佛種
 子。妄言綺語。喻衆謂佛。滅度涅槃。他如盲
 人。謂無日月。因緣時節。果滿而成。佛智智
 明。白然之智。安南四器。天地五生。水德山
 慈。佛遊佛出。護術音。薩門。開神扶。童子海
 珠。北王。導師。乾竜。長攢。盤針。坤跡。東山。女
 毋。寄年。月日。金相。醍醐。合乳。妙色。圓身。常
 身。回向。無去。無來。頭。連。拔。階。法。輪。法。轉。有
 顯。示。有。悟。入。不。足。不。究。皆。以。無。念。為。宗。常
 有。常。住。普。照。有。情。無。情。同。圓。種。智。伏。願

法象羅若會內核勸等輩淨出家財荷擔
如來祖錄依如前福出世供養印施十方
興隆

三字所有姓名開陳于后

一經主中牟社阮氏倘號妙法阮氏王瑞號妙濯
阮公敬字性厥寄興字德尊顯考字忠甫
一經主阮公蓮字性專妻阮氏收號妙牧甥阮公觀
字性異親母號妙閨號妙憶

會主紫泥社陳俊德字性持陳氏彬號妙白男子
陳俊希字性道妻阮氏特親母號妙現
會主陳俊旺字性膚妻阮氏榮號妙整

會主段廷魁字性法妻阮氏明號妙光

會主陳文石字性金妻陳氏綿號妙垣甥陳文掇
字性鏗陳文坦

會主欽以信號妙壽女子陳氏副號妙鸞婿黎德輝

會主陳文嚴字性值妻陳以存
會主陳登明字性常妻范氏番號妙來甥陳登鏡
字性得太水號妙迪

會主東山社號妙順號妙和號妙綠號妙燈號妙聖
會主阮氏計號妙淨阮氏單字性寬號敏達妻阮氏明
阮氏理號妙珍阮氏廷男子阮氏佳阮氏細號妙珠
會主德川社阮性精字性鍾妻阮景號妙松

NOTES

Part I—

A Study of the *Thien * Uyen* Tap* Anh*

Introduction

1. See Jean-Francois Lyotard, *La Phénoménologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), pp. 91–119, esp. pp. 116–17.
2. "The past is vaster and stranger than we have been trained to believe, and it belongs to no one but those who lived it. It is a beautiful confusion, and it is beautiful precisely because it is confusion; when it stops confusing us, we can be sure that we have understood it into something dangerous." See Keith W. Taylor and John K. Whitmore, eds., *Essays into Vietnamese Past* (Ithaca: Cornell University SEAP, 1995), p. 6.
3. For a study of these issues see, for instance, Umberto Eco et. al., *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Chapter One

1. For a survey of modern studies of Vietnamese Buddhist history that are based on the *Thiên Uyên*, see note 54 below.
2. See, for instance, Nguyen* Duy Hinh, "Three Legends and Early Buddhism in Vietnam," *Vietnam Forum* 13 (1990): 10–23. In this interesting article the author discusses archaeological evidence indicating the presence of Buddhism in Vietnam in the second century.
3. For a complete study of the history of Vietnam from the beginnings until independence, see Keith Weller Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983).
4. For a survey of these texts, see E. S. Ungar, "From Myth to History: Imagined Politics in 14th Century Vietnam," in David G. Marr and A. C. Milne, eds., *Southeast Asia in the 9th to 14th Centuries* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986), pp. 177–86.
5. This is evidenced by the fact that although the author of the *Thiên Uyên* earnestly strove to write a "complete" history of Buddhism in Vietnam, that is, from its inception up to his time, his records of Buddhism before the Đinh dynasty appear to be spurious. Nhu' So'n, an author of the Lê, and Phúc Dien*, an author of the Nguyễn, also complained about the lack of source materials about Buddhism in Vietnam prior to the Ly-Tran* era.

6. Shi Xie was hailed in Vietnamese history as Sĩ * Vu'ông (King Shi). See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ngoại* Kỳ*," 3:130. Ngô Sĩ Liên, the royal historian of the Lê and compiler of the *Toàn Thu'*, remarks, "Our country understood the *Book of Odes* and the *Book of History*, practiced the *Rites* and *Music*, and became a civilized state under King Sĩ." See *ibid.*, p. 133. In medieval Vietnam Shi Xie became a deity-protector of Vietnam and was worshipped as a national hero. See *Việt* Điện* U Linh Tập** (21–22); *Việt Điện U Linh Tập Toàn Biên* (169–72), in Chan Hing-ho, ed. *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tiểu* Thuyết* Tùng San* (*Collection Romans & Contes du VietNam écrits en Han*) [Collection of Vietnamese Stories Written in Chinese, henceforth referred to as *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiểu Thuyết*], série II, vol. 2 (Paris-Taïpei: Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient and Editions Universitaires de Taipei, 1992). See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ngoại Kỳ*," 3:132; *An Nam Chí Lu'oc**, 88–89; *Việt Su* Lu'oc*, I, 5a. The story of Shi Xie can also be found in *Việt Điện U Linh Tập Luc** (21–22); *Việt Điện U Linh Tập Luc Toàn Biên* (169–72); *Linh* Nam Chích Quái Liet* Truyen** (113–14); *Thiên Nam Vân Lục* (208–09), in Chan Hing-ho, ed., *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiểu Thuyết*, vols. 1–2. See also Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, pp. 70–74.
7. For instance, his biography records that "wherever he went he was accompanied by scores of Hu people bearing lighted incense." "Hu" was a term used by the Chinese to refer to foreigners, particularly those from India and Central Asia. Some modern scholars interpret the Hu people in Shi Xie's retinue as Indian or Central Asian Buddhist monks and take this as evidence that Buddhism was established in Jiaozhou by Shi Xie's time. On this topic, see Hu Shih, "Mouzi Lihoulun," in *Hu Shih wencun*, vol. 4, book 2 (Taipei: Yuandong tushu gongsi, 1932), p. 152; Fukui Kojun*, "Mushi no kenkyu*," in *Dokyo* no kiso teki kenkyu**, vol. 1 of *Fukui Kojun* chosaku shu** (Tokyo: Hozoku* kan, 1987).
8. For a detailed discussion of Kang Senghui's life and activities, see Eric Zurcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), pp. 51–55; for Kang Senghui's biography, see *Gaoseng zhuan* 1, T 50:326a; 235a13–236b13; *Chu sanzangji ji*, T 55:96a29–97a17; Edouard Chavannes, "Seng-Houei," *T'oung Pao* 10 (1909): 199–212. According to Zurcher, the fact that Kang Senghui joined the *sangha* (monastic community) in Jiaozhou shows that at the beginning of the third century Jiaozhou must have been a Buddhist center with an organized Buddhist community. See Zurcher, *Buddhist Conquest*, p. 43.
9. Both the *Co* Châu Pháp Vân Phat* Ban* Hanh* Ngụ* Lục* [Recorded Sayings of the Pháp Vân Buddha at Co* Châu, henceforth referred to as *Cô Châu*] and *Thông Bienen** mention a certain Mo Luo Qi Yu (Ma La Ky* Vuc* in Vietnamese) as one of the earliest eminent monks present in Jiaozhou. See *Thiên* Uyển**, 20b10; *Dại* Nam*, 16a3–4. This Mo Luo Qi Yu appeared to be one and the same as Qi Yu (Jivaka*?), a thaumaturge (*shenyi seng*) who traveled through Jiaozhou and Guangzhou surrounded by supernatural events and arrived in Luoyang around the end of the Jin Huidi's reign (305–306). See *Gaoseng zhuan* (T 50:388a16–c5). See also Tsukamoto Zenryu*, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism: From Its Introduction to the Death of Hui-yuan*, trans. Leon Hurvitz (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1979), 1:179–81. Chinese sources also report that Qi Yu arrived in China around this period (291–307). See *ibid.*, p. 243.
10. See, for instance, *Phúc Dien**, *Đai Nam Thiên Uyển Ke* Dang* Lu'oc Luc*, 2b8–4b1; *Đao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u*, 13b6–9. The *Linh Nam* records the story of A Man (Man Nu'ong) as follows:

"Under Emperor Xian of Han, Governor Shi Xie established his capital city on the southern bank of the Binh Giang River. To the south of the city was located a Buddhist temple named Phúc Nghiêm. There was an Indian monk whose name was Cà-La-Xà-Lê coming to dwell there. He had the power to stand on one leg which won the admiration of many people who called him Master and practiced the Dharma under him.

"There was a girl named Man Nu'o'ng, a destitute orphan, who also came with a great determination to study Buddhism. Being a girl with a stammer, she could not chant the *sutras* * with the congregation, so she would spend most of her time in the kitchen washing rice, trimming vegetables, cooking for the resident monks and guest students.

"One night in the fifth month when nights were short, Man Nu'o'ng had the gruel ready for the monks, but they could not come without finishing the chanting. She then lay down to wait against the kitchen doorstep and unknowingly dropped off to sleep. When the chanting was over, the monks returned to their rooms. As Man Nu'o'ng lay at the doorstep, Xà-Lê stepped across her. She instinctively felt something moving inside her and became pregnant.

"Three or four months passed by, and Man Nu'o'ng felt ashamed, so she set off for home. Feeling ashamed himself, Xà-Lê also left the place. On her way home, Man Nu'o'ng came across a temple at a fork in the road near the river and stayed there. When the time came, she gave birth to a girl. She went in search for the monk and turned the baby over to him. That night, the monk brought the baby girl to a fork in the road. There he saw a luxuriant hibiscus tree with a clean and deep hole in its trunk. He laid the baby into it and said, 'To you I commit the Buddha's child; keep her and you will both attain Buddhahood.' Then Xà-Lê and Man Nu'o'ng took leave of each other. He gave her a staff and said, 'I give you this, take it home with you. Should drought occur some year, plant it in the ground, and water will spout out—the farmers will avail themselves of it and the people will be saved.' Man Nu'o'ng reverently accepted the staff and returned to her temple.

"When there was a year of drought, she took the staff and planted it in the ground. Water gushed forth in torrents and people were saved. When Man Nu'o'ng was fifty years old, the hibiscus tree fell. It drifted to the wharf before the temple where it stopped and lingered.

"People then set out to chop it up for firewood, but it would break any ax. Three hundred men combined their strength to haul it over to the bank but to no avail. Man Nu'o'ng happened along as she was going down to the river to wash her hands. She jokingly tried to pull the tree trunk and it moved. The onlookers were amazed, and asked her to pull it out of the river and had it carved into [four] Buddha statues. The place where the baby had been hidden had turned into a very hard rock. They tried to break it with their axes but it shattered them all. They then threw the rock into the river. A ray of light flashed up, and there was a long moment before it sank down. All the carvers fell dead.

"Man Nu'o'ng was invited to preside over a ritual. Fishermen were hired to fish the rock up. It was brought in a procession into the inner sanctuary and gilded with gold. Monk Xà-Lê named [the four images that had been carved from the log] Dharma Cloud, Dharma Rain, Dharma Thunder, and Dharma Lightning. People from all over came to pray [to these images], and their prayers were always answered, so they called Man Nu'o'ng 'Mother Buddha.'

On the eighth day of the fourth month, Man Nu'o'ng passed away without illness and was interred inside the temple.

"People considered her to be Mother Buddha. Every year, on that day, people from all over would gather at the temple to rejoice, and this occasion was perpetuated as the Buddha-Bathing Festival. It became a custom that has lasted to the present time." See *Linh * Nam Chich Quái Ngoai* Truyen** (162–63) in Chan Hing-ho, ed., *Viet* Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, vol. 1. Slightly different versions of the story are found in *ibid.*, *Linh Nam Chich Quái Liet* Truyen* (69–70); *Thiên Nam Vân Lục** (233–34).

11. The *Lidai sanbao ji* records that in the year 265 Zhi Jiang Liang Zhe, a monk from Central Asia, translated the *Fahua sanmei jing* in six fascicles in Jiaozhou with the assistance of a certain native monk named Dao* Hinh (Daoxin). For a complete biographical note on Zhi Jiang Liang and a detailed discussion of his name, see Zurcher, *Buddhist Conquest*, p. 71, and chap. 2, n. 258.

12. The *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, in its "Meditation Practitioners" section, records a short biography of Hue* Thang*, a monk from Jiaozhou. According to this biography, Huê Thang was a free spirit who traveled widely and led a frugal life. He chanted the *Lotus Sutra** daily. He studied meditation with an Indian monk named Dharmadeva. Every time he entered *samadhi** he would be absorbed in meditative concentration for a day before coming out of it. See *T* 50.550c8–16.

13. Mou Bo, or Mouzi, was author of the *Lihuo lun*, probably the first treatise written by a Buddhist convert in defense of Buddhism. The date of Mou Bo and his work is highly controversial. See *Hongming ji*, *T* 52:1a26–7a22; *Chu sanzangji ji*, *T* 55:82c29–83a1; *Fozu tongji*, *T* 49:332a27–b5; *Fozu lidai tongzai*, *T* 49:510b17–514a9; *Shishi jigulue* *T* 49:769a12–c6. For a detailed discussion on this subject as well as a summary of other scholars' opinions regarding it, see Zurcher, *Buddhist Conquest*, pp. 13–15. For studies concerning Mou Bo's works, see, for instance, Paul Pelliot, "Meou-tseu ou les doutes levés," *T'oung Pao* 19 (1920): 255–433; Matsumoto Bunzaburo*, "Mushi riwaku ron no chosaku nendai ko*," in *Bukkyo* shi zakko** (Osaka: Sogensha*, 1944); Fukui Kojun*, "Mushi no kenkyu*." Traditional Vietnamese Buddhists, probably basing themselves on Thông Biện's* view, claim Kang Senghui as the founder of the "Zen school" of Vietnam and Mouzi as the founder of the "scriptural school." See, for instance, Nguyen* Lang, *Việt Nam Phat* Giáo Su* Luan** [Essays on the History of Vietnamese Buddhism] (reprinted Paris: Lá Bối*, 1978), pp. 73–84.

14. See *Thien* Uyen**, 20a11–21a4; *Dai* Nam*, 15b5–16a8.

15. See *Thiên Uyển*, 21a3–4; *Đại Nam*, 16a7–8.

16. In Vietnamese literature, besides some scant information given in the *Thiên Uyển* by way of Thông Biện's biography, the only other information we have about Buddhism during the Tang period is found in Lê Quý Đôn's *Kien* Van Tiêu Lục* [Miscellaneous Records of Things Heard and Seen, henceforth referred to as *Kiên Van*], an encyclopedic work on a variety of subjects composed in 1777. In the chapter "Thiên Đạt*" (Buddhism), "Eminent Monks of Our Country" section of his work, Lê Quý Đôn devotes a section to records of eminent monks of Vietnam. It is obvious that Lê Quý Đôn did not have at his disposal any Vietnamese sources but only found in Chinese literature four poems written by four prominent Tang poets dedicated to four Vietnamese eminent monks:

1. A poem dedicated to Vô Ngai * Thu'o'ng* Nhân by Shen Quanqi, who, while in Jiaozhou, paid a visit to Vô Ngai at So'n Tinh* Temple, Cuu* Chân District:

Formerly the Buddha was born in India,
 Now he manifests himself here to convert the people of
 Nhat* Nam.
 Free from all defilements,
 He built a temple at the foot of the mountain.
 By the stream the fragrant branches are the standards,
 The boulders on the mountaintop become his home.
 Blue doves practice meditation,
 White monkeys listen to the *sutras**.
 Creepers cover the cloud-high cliffs,
 Flowers rise above the pond at the foot of the mountain.
 The water in the streams is good for performing ritual,
 The trees let him hang his clothes on them.
 This disciple regrets that he is ignorant,
 Not able to discuss the Buddha's doctrine.
 Who one night crossed over the Tiger-stream,
 Amidst mountain fog under a lonely tree.

2. A poem written by Yang Juyuan bidding farewell to Dharma Master Phung* Dinh* on the latter's trip back to Annam (former name of Vietnam):

Your native land is Nam Viet*,
 Thousands of miles away beyond the snow-capped mountains.
 Bidding farewell to worldly discussions at court,
 You'll sail into the ocean of fragrant flowers.
 Despite the high waves your chanting resounds
 Amidst layers of illusory castles.
 Please think of the streets of Chang'an,
 Before you sound your night bell at Jiaozhou.

3. A poem written by Jia Dao bidding farewell to Dharma Master Duy Giám on the latter's trip back home to Annam:

Expounding the *sutras* in the royal palace,
 Flowers fly around the emperor's throne.
 When did you leave the Southern Sea
 Only to return to your homeland in old age?
 Exposed to the wind the imperial seal loses its perfume,
 Fog and rain beat on your clothes.
 Now that you have crossed the ocean,
 We would hardly hear from one another.

4. A poem written by Zhang Ji dedicated to a Nhật Nam monk who dwelt in the mountain:

Growing old with the mountaintops,
 Your two pine doors are always closed.
 Open the *sutras* on banana leaves,
 Your robe falls with the flowers.

Dig a new well through the stony ground,
 Clear the forest to grow hemp.
 Comes a visitor from the Southern Sea,
 Asking in his barbaric tongue whose house this is?

(See Lê Qui Đôn, *Kien * Van* Tieu* Luc**, 1:193–209.) Through these poems, we learn of the four Jiaozhou monks, two of whom had traveled to the Tang court to lecture on Buddhism. In Chinese Buddhist literature Yijing, in his *Datang Xiyu qiufa gaoseng zhuan* [Biographies of Tang Eminent Monks Who Traveled to India to Study the Dharma], makes mention of eminent Chinese and Central Asian monks who stopped by Jiaozhou on their way to India or had some connection with Jiaozhou monks such as Mingyuan, Huiming, Sanghavarma, Tanrun, Zhihong, and Wuxing. (On Mingyuan, see *T* 51.3c2–19; on Huiming, see *ibid.*, 4a2–21; on Sanghavarma, see *ibid.*, 4c15–24; on Tanrun, see *ibid.*, 4c29–5a4; on Zhihong, see *ibid.*, 8c19–9a20; on Wuxing, see *ibid.*, 9a21–10a13.)

17. Yijing also notes six monks from Jiaozhou who traveled to China:

1. Monk Van* Ky* hailed from Jiaozhou. He traveled together with Tanrun. Vân Ky took ordination from Zhixian (Jnanabhadra*). Vân Ky returned to Nam Hai* for more than ten years. He was well versed in the dialects of Central Asia and in Sanskrit. Afterward he returned to lay life and lived in the Srivijaya* country. At the time when Yijing was in India he was still alive. (See *T* 51.4a22–26.)
2. Moksadeva* (Giai* Thoát Thiên) hailed from Jiaozhou. His personal name was not known. He sailed across the southern sea visiting many a country. He came to Mahabodhi* Temple and paid homage to all the sacred places. He died at the age of twenty-four or twenty-five. (See *ibid.*, 4a27–29.)
3. Dharma Master Khuy Xung hailed from Jiaozhou. He was a disciple of Mingyuan. His Sanskrit name was Citradeva. Together with Mingyuan he set sail across the southern sea to Sri Lanka. From there they went westward to India where they met the monk Xuanzhao and traveled together to China. Khuy Xung was brilliant by nature and was good at chanting *sutras** in Sanskrit. Everywhere he went he would collect *sutras* and chant them. First he paid homage to the bodhi tree, then visited Rajagrha* where he became ill at the Bamboo Grove Park. After a while he passed away at the age of about thirty. (See *ibid.*, 4b1–6.)
4. Dharma Master Hue* Diem* hailed from Jiaozhou. He was a disciple of Master Wuxing. He accompanied his teacher to Sri Lanka and remained there. No one knows what became of him. (See *ibid.*, 4b7–13.)
5. Dharma Master Trí Hành hailed from Ái Province (nowadays Thanh Hóa, North Vietnam). His Sanskrit name was Prajnadeva* (Huê Thiên). He sailed across the southern sea to India. Everywhere he went he solemnly paid homage [to sacred places]. He subsequently made his abode at Xinzhe Temple where he died in his fifties. (See *ibid.*, 4b14–16.)
6. Meditation Master Dai* Thù'a Dang* hailed from Ái Province. His Sanskrit name was Mahayanapradipa*. When young he sailed with his parents to the country Dvaravati where he left home to become a monk. Afterward he accompanied the Tang emissary Tan Xu to the capital. He received ordination from the Tripitaka* Master Xuanzang at C'i'en Temple. He remained in the capital for a number of years during which he read widely in the Buddhist scriptures. He was eager to go on a pilgrimage to

sacred places and always yearned for India. He was by nature loyal, tolerant, and honest. He embraced the precepts and was absorbed in meditation. He set his mind on Rajagṛha* and focused his heart on the Bamboo Grove. He aspired to annihilate the eight disasters and attain the four teachings. He then brought along Buddha images and Buddhist texts, crossing the southern sea to Sri Lanka where he paid homage to the Buddha's tooth and experienced various miraculous phenomena. He traveled to South India and then to East India, stopping at the country of Tamralipti. When he entered the river mouth his boat was destroyed by bandits and he could only save himself. He remained in that country for twelve years and mastered Sanskrit. He chanted the *Nīdanasūtra** and so forth, and also cultivated the accumulation of merit.

He met a group of merchants and together with Yijing they traveled to Central India, first to Nalanda*, after that to Vajrasana*, then back to Vaisali*, and finally to the country of Kusinagara*. He traveled across this country with Wuxing. Master Dai* Thù'a Đang* often lamented, "My wish is to spread the Dharma in the East, yet it remains unfulfilled and I have become old and weak. Although I am not able to realize my wish now, I vow to fulfill it in my next life." His most cherished vow was to be reborn in Tusita Heaven to meet Maitreya Buddha. Each day he would draw one or two branches of Nagapuspa* to express his aspiration. Once on a religious trip he passed by the former domicile of Master Daoxi who already passed away at that time. Yet all the Chinese and Sanskrit texts were preserved intact. Seeing those texts, Master Đang was moved to tears and lamented, "Formerly, in Chang'an we sat at the same Dharma assembly—nowadays in a strange country all I can see is your empty place." . . . Subsequently, he passed away at Nirvana Temple in the same Kusinagara country in his sixties. (See 4b17–c14.)

From the above literary evidence, the general picture we can draw about Buddhism in Jiaozhou under the Tang is that although it was a time of political turmoil, there was still communication between the two lands in religious matters. Chinese monks still traveled to India to study, and many of them made prolonged stays in Jiaozhou and developed close connections with native Jiaozhou monks.

We learn from the above biographical notes that Khuy Xung was a disciple of Mingyuan, Hue* Diem* was a disciple of Wuxing, while Van* Ky* befriended Tanrun, and Đai Thù'a Đang was a traveling companion of Wuxing. It seems that many Jiaozhou monks, due to the area's long-standing links with India through Indian merchants and monks, were well versed in Sanskrit and some Central Asian dialects. They could serve as assistants to Chinese monks in translation work (as they had been doing for Indian and Central Asian monks) or as interpreters on trips to India.

18. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ngoai* Ky*," 5:171–72; Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, pp. 267–71.

19. See Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, pp. 275–95; *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:179–87.

20. In 968 Đinh Bo* Linh* ascended the throne, established the name of the country as Đai Co* Viet*, moved the capital to Hoa Lu', built citadels, dug reservoirs, erected palaces, and instituted court ceremonies. The court hailed him

as Brilliant Victorious Emperor. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban * Ky*," 2:180. In 970 Đinh Bo* Linh* established the first Vietnamese reign-era name, proclaiming the first year of the Thái Bình era. Lê Van* Hu'u, the royal historian of the Tran*, remarks, "When our country was without a ruler, the warlords were dividing territories. Tiên Hoàng (i.e., Bồ Linh), with his supreme ability and intelligence and his unexcelled bravery, in one fell swoop, conquered the twelve warlords. Then he opened the country and established the capital. He changed his title to emperor, instituted court ranks, and deployed the six armies, so the regime was complete. Is it not Heaven's will that a wise king was born to Viet* to carry on the tradition of King Trieu*?" See *ibid.* See also Maurice Durand, *Imagerie populaire Vietnamienne* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1960), pp. 205 and 236. According to K. W. Taylor, the role of Đinh Bồ Linh as the first Vietnamese emperor only comes from later historians. See K. W. Taylor, "Looking Behind the Vietnamese Annals: Lý Phat* Mã and Lý Nhat* Tôn in the Viet* Su* Lu'o'c* and the *Toàn Thu'*," *Vietnam Forum* 7 (Winter–Spring 1986): 47–69. Assuming that Taylor is correct, that does not affect Đinh Bồ Linh's* stature and achievements in Vietnamese history.

21. He made Ngô Chân Lu'u tang* thong* (General Supervisor of Monks) conferring on him the title Khuông Việt Thái Su' [Great Master Who Brings Order to Việt], and appointed Tru'o'ng Ma Ni tang luc* (Monk Scribe). He also gave the Daoist Dang* Huyen* Quang the title sùng chân uy nghi (Noble and Upright Majesty). See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:181.

Both Khuông Việt and Tru'o'ng Ma Ni, two eminent Buddhist monks of the Đinh and Lê dynasties, had close affinity with popular religion. Khuông Việt was renowned, among other things, for his affinity with Vaisravana*, a popular Hindu deity turned (Buddha) Dharma-protector. (See chapter 3 for a detailed discussion on this issue.) Tru'o'ng Ma Ni was the monk who founded Kien* So' Temple, which eventually became the center of an important "Buddhist lineage" in medieval Vietnam. Kiên So' Temple was also the place where the legendary national hero Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng (The Celestial King of Phù Đông) was worshipped. Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng was later transformed into a Dharma-protector. Note that Tru'o'ng Ma Ni is mentioned only in one version of the "Phù Đông Thân Vu'o'ng Truyện*" [Story of the God King of Phù Đông] as the founder of Kien So' Temple. See *Tân Đinh Giao* Bình Việt Diện* U Linh Tap**, in Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tiểu* Thuyết**, 2:110. Other versions of the story and the *Thiên Uyên** unanimously record Cam* Thành as the founder of Kiên So' Temple. According to the *Thiên Uyên* Cam Thành died around 860. If we take the *Thiên Uyên* seriously, then Tru'o'ng Ma Ni and Cam Thành could not have been one and the same person.

22. See Keith W. Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy in 11th Century Vietnam," in David G. Marr and A. C. Milner, eds., *Southeast Asia in the 9th to 14th Centuries* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986), p. 161.

23. See Hà Van Tan*, "Tù' mot* cot* kinh Phật nam* 973 v'ù'a phát hien* Hoa Lu'" [On a Buddhist Stele of 973 Recently Discovered at Hoa Lu'], *Nghiên Cứ'u Lịch* Su'* [Studies in History] 78 (1965): 39–50; "Cot* kinh Phật thời Đinh thứ hai ở Hoa Lu'" [The Second Buddhist Stele at Hoa Lu'], *Khảo* Co* Hoc** [Archaeology] 5–6 (1970): 24–31; *Chùa Việt Nam* [Buddhist Temples in Vietnam] (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1993), pp. 32–33.

24. See, for instance, Hà Van Tân, *Chùa Việt Nam*, p. 33. Although we do not have records of the development of Tantrism in Vietnam, there is no denying

that it has been a lasting element in popular Vietnamese Buddhism. For a brief discussion of Tantric elements in Vietnamese Buddhism, see Bruno Révertégat, *Le Bouddhisme traditionnel au Sud-Vietnam* (Vichy: Imprimerie Wallon, 1974).

25. Court chronicles record that Pháp Thuan * (914–990), Khuông Viet* (933–1011), and Van* Hanh* (?–1025) impressed Lê Dai* Hành by their wisdom and uncanny ability to foretell the future. The king entrusted them with literary and diplomatic responsibilities. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:191–92.
26. This explains the close affinity between Buddhism and popular religions in Vietnam. Even at the present time there are still temples in which a certain deity is worshipped in a separate sanctuary behind the Buddha altar. This sanctuary is usually closed and is open only on particular holidays. This practice is referred to as "tien* Phat* hau* than*" (literally, "Buddha before, deity after"). See Hà Van* Tan*, *Chùa Viet* Nam*, pp. 24–25.
27. For a study of the Buddhist conversion of the (non-Buddhist) gods in Chinese Buddhism, see, inter alia, Valerie Hansen, "Gods on Walls: A Case of Indian Influence on Chinese Lay Religion?" in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory, eds., *Religion and Society in Tang and Sung China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), pp. 75–113.
28. Let us look, for instance, at the legend of Lý Công Uân*, who subsequently became Lý Thái To*, the founder of the Lý dynasty. Tradition has it that once Lý Công Uân's* mother, while strolling Mount Tiêu So'n, had intercourse with a deity, became pregnant, and gave birth to him. His mother then brought him as a child to a Buddhist temple and entrusted him to Monk Khánh Vân. Afterward Lý Công Uân, with the assistance of the Monk Van Hanh, took over the throne from the [Former] Lê. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:207. Nguyen* Duy Hinh observes that Lý Công Uân's mother entrusting her son to Monk Khánh Vân was a symbolic act similar to Man Nu'o'ng giving her son to Khâu Đà La. See "Chùa Dau*": Suy Nghi* Su* Hoc*" [Đâu Temple: Some Historical Reflections], *Nghiên Cứu Lịch* Su** [Studies in History] 4 (1983): 25. According to this, Lý Công Uân not only had a supernatural origin but also became son of a monk growing up in a temple receiving Buddhist education. This shows that Buddhist thought had considerable impact on the Lý ideology concerning the role of the king as a personality receiving the sanction of both the earth (representing the native land/mother) and the sky (representing Buddhism/father).
29. See Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," p. 149.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 150.
33. Note in this connection that although Vietnam was under Chinese domination, Buddhism in Vietnam prior to the period of independence, due to Vietnam's exposure to religious elements coming from India and Champa, appeared to share the same characteristics with the Buddhist world of Southeast Asia in general. That is, it is a composite Buddhist world view that includes elements from Brahmanical, Tantric, Mahayana*, and Theravada* beliefs and practices. Nevertheless, after the period of independence and particularly since the beginning of the Lý dynasty (eleventh century), contemporaneous with the development of the monarchical states and the concept of Buddhist kingship in Southeast Asia, Vietnam circumstantially and voluntarily moved into the scope of Chinese culture. For instance, in his edict announcing the moving of

the capital from Hoa Lu' to Thang * Long, Lý Thái Tô* praised Gao Pian, the Chinese general, as "King Cao," in other words, as a paradigm of kingship. This, coupled with the lack of exposure to Pali* Buddhist literature, explains why the concept of *dharmaraja** or Buddhist king was never known in Vietnam. For a study of Buddhism in Southeast Asia, see Donald Swearer, *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), especially chap. 2; "Buddhism in Southeast Asia," in Mircea Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 2:385b–394a.

34. One day Lý Thái Tô entrusted his royal robe to the Daoist priest Tran* Hue* Long of the Southern Royal Daoist Temple. That night there was light all over the temple. Trần Huê Long woke up with a start and saw a yellow dragon appear at the place where the robe was placed. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:221. Keith Taylor suggests that the Daoist priests were experts in dealing with the spirits of local cults and performed an important ritual role at the Lý court. See Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," pp. 148–49. The *Toàn Thu'* also records that under Lý Than* Tông (r. 1128–1138) in 1128 the king sent Lý Công Bình to fight the Chân Lạp*, who were plundering the province of Nghe* An. When the news of victory reached the capital, the king visited Buddhist and Daoist temples in the capital to show his gratitude. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:270.

35. See Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," pp. 169–70.

36. The Story of Xung Thiên Than Vu'o'ng (the title conferred on Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng by Lý Thái Tô) is recorded in various editions of the *Viet* Dien**. See, for instance, "Xung Thiên Uy Tín Đại* Vu'o'ng" (*Việt Điện U Linh Tập* Luc**, pp. 35–36); "Xung Thiên Dung* Liet* Chiêu Ứng Uy Tín Đại Vu'o'ng" (*Việt Điện U linh Tập Luc Toàn Biên*, pp. 205–207), in *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet* Tùng San*, série II, vol. 2. For some general information on the *Việt Điện U Linh*, see "Bibliographie annamite," pp. 126–28; Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," especially pp. 156–69; Taylor, "Notes on the *Việt Điện U Linh Tập*," *Vietnam Forum* 8 (1986): 26–59; *The Birth of Vietnam*, pp. 352–59.

37. See, for instance, *Việt Điện U Linh Tập Luc Toàn Biên*, in Chan Hingho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiêu Thuyết*, 2:189.

38. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:248–49. This story is also recorded in two versions of the *Việt Điện*: *Việt Điện U Linh Tập Luc* and *Việt Điện U Linh Tập Luc Toàn Biên*. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiêu Thuyết*, 2:30 and 195.

39. There is evidence to believe that works such as the *Co* Châu*, *Việt Điện*, and *Báo Cu'c* Truyen** were composed by Buddhist authors. For a general but good discussion of these works, see Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy."

40. Court chronicles record that the (early) Lý kings allocated huge amounts of gold, silver, and copper from the state treasury to support the construction and embellishment of Buddhist temples. (See, for instance, *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:211, 225, 230, 242.) For instance, Lý Thái Tô (r. 1010–1028) in the very first year of his reign gave an order that old and decayed temples and shrines in every village throughout the country should be renovated. Within the first two years of his reign, Lý Thái Tô had eight temples built in the capital. (See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:209.) He also encouraged people to become monks. For instance, in 1010 Lý Thái Tô presided over a mass ordination. In 1014 he again accepted the request of Tram* Uyen* Van*, the General Supervisor of Monks, to preside over a mass ordination ceremony at Van* Tue* Temple. See

ibid., 2:209 and 211. In 1019 Thái Tông again issued a royal decree encouraging people to receive ordination to become monks. See ibid., 2:213.

41. In 1018, eight years after ascending the throne, Lý Thái Tông sent an envoy led by Nguyen* (i.e., Lý) Dao* Thành and Pham* Hac* to China to request a set of the *Tripitaka**. The envoy successfully returned in 1020. Lý Thái Tông had the General Supervisor of Monks Phí Trí officially receive the *Tripitaka* and had an archive built to house it. In 1023 and 1027 he had it copied so that it could be more accessible to monks. (See ibid., pp. 213–15.) In 1034 Lý Thái Tông (r. 1028–1054) sent an envoy to the Song court where he received a set of the *Tripitaka*. Two years after that Lý Thái Tông had copies made and stored at the archive of Trưng Hu'ng Temple. (See ibid., 2:224 and 226).

We have no information about this *Tripitaka* or how widely it was circulated among the monastics. It was probably housed in the main temples in the capital and was not available for the monks at other localities. Lê Quý Đôn, a Confucian luminary of the [Later] Lê dynasty, reported that this edition of the Buddhist canon contained 4826 fascicles, and "the [Lý] kings gave order to the Confucian scholars to read it." See Tran* Van* Giáp, *Tim Hieu* Kho Sách Hán Nôm* [The Hán Nôm Treasury] (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1990), 2:202.

42. It is recorded that when Trần Nhân Tông became Retired Emperor he took time to travel to many localities to exhort the people to renounce "superstitious beliefs" and to disband "depraved temples." See *Tam To* Thuc* Luc**, 3a6–b1, 16b7–17a2; *Tam Tô Hành Trang**, 11; *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc**, 7–8.

43. For instance, according to the *Toàn Thu'*, ("Ban* Ky*," 3:245), in 1070 Lý Thánh Tông had the *Van* Mieu** (Confucius Temple or Cultural Temple) built, in which the statues of Confucius, the Duke of Zhou, and the Four Eminent Disciples as well as the images of the Seventy-Two Worthies were worshipped all year round. The crown prince received his formal education there. Under the reign of Emperor Tang Xuanzong (712–756), Confucius was honored as Văn Tuyên Vu'ong (Wen Xuan Wang), and his temple was called *Van Tuyên Vu'o'ng Miêu* (*Wen Xuan Wang Miao*). From the Yuan and Ming dynasties on, it was referred to in its short form as *Van Miêu* (*Wen Miao*). See *Hanyu Dacidian* (Shanghai: Hanyu Dacidian chubanshe, 1994) 6:1528b and 1542a. A. B. Poliakov claims that "even in China, temples to Confucius were baptized Van Mieu only from 1410 onwards"; therefore, such institutions could not have existed in Vietnam in 1070. See A. B. Poliakov, "On the Date of Construction of Van Mieu (Temple of Literature) and the Beginnings of Confucianism in Vietnam," *Vietnamese Studies* 3, 101 (1991): 28. Poliakov's conclusion does not seem convincing to me. In my estimation, it is highly likely that Lý Thánh Tông, as part of his efforts to incorporate elements of an advanced culture—that is, China—established Confucian institutions, among which were certain temples devoted to Confucius and other Confucian luminaries. It was later historians who inadvertently used the designation *Van Miêu* to refer to these Confucian temples.

44. For instance, in 1253 Trần Thái Tông established the Institute of National Learning (*Vien* Quoc* Hoc**), where statues of Confucius and the Duke of Zhou and portraits of the Seventy-Two Worthies were worshipped. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 5:337.

45. From the historical records it appears that the Trần dynasty did not just put on a Confucian veneer. The Trần court seemed seriously concerned with recruiting virtuous and learned men.

46. On these events, which took place in 1257 and 1284–1288, see Lê Thành Khôi, *Histoire du Viêt Nam: Des origines à 1858* (Paris: Sudestasia, 1987), pp. 182–92.
47. For instance, as early as 1244 under Tran * Thái Tông, the court decreed that Buddhist monks (and Daoist priests) appointed by the Lords would now be called *ta* nhai* (left officers), the highest rank that could be conferred on the Buddhist and Daoist clergies, though this rank would not be counted among court ranks. In other words, the rank now represented only a religious function and not a political one. Only those who were well-versed in their religion could be appointed to this position. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 5:332.
48. According to the *Toàn Thu'*, the early kings of the Trần up to Trần Anh Tông (r. 1294–1314) would go to Mount Yên Tu* to take up the monastic vocation after abdicating the throne to become "Retired Emperor." According to Phúc Dien* at least nine of the Trần kings were serious Zen practitioners who received instructions from Chinese Linji Zen masters. See *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc**, 5a2–7a10.
49. According to Phúc Điền, Trần Nhân Tông belonged to a lineage of Linji Zen. See *Kê Dang Lu'o'c Luc*, 11a3–4. Although some Buddhist sources give us long lists of succeeding patriarchs (for instance, *Kê Dang Lu'o'c Luc*, 11a1–b1), it is fair to say that the Trúc Lâm school virtually ended with its third patriarch Huyen* Quang. There is no denying that some of these three patriarchs' disciples had established various Zen groups stationed at different temples. Some undoubtedly had made efforts to revive the school. Regarding these various Zen groups, we only have a list of names but no extant writings whatsoever.
50. See, for instance, *Tam To* Thuc* Luc*, 9a8, 9b3–4, 21b1, 33b6.
51. See *Kê Dang Lu'o'c Luc*, 5a2–7a10; 11a–43b1.
52. It was a common practice in medieval Vietnam that monks would compose works on Buddhist "history" at the royal request. For instance, Bien* Tài composed a "lamp history" text at the request of Lý Thái Tông.
53. See note 2 above.
54. See (1) Mat* The* Thích, *Viet* Nam Phat* Giáo Su* Lu'o'c* [A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism] (reprinted Saigon: Minh Đức, 1960); (2) Nguyen* Dang* Thuc*, *Thien* Hoc* Viêt Nam* [Vietnamese Zen Buddhism] (Saigon: Lá Boi*, 1967); (3) Nguyễn Lang, *Viêt Nam Phat Giáo Su' Luan**, vol. 1; (4) Nguyễn Tài Thu' et al., *Lịch Su' Phât Giáo Viêt Nam* [History of Vietnamese Buddhism] (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1988); (5) Maurice Durand, "Introduction du Bouddhisme au Viêt-Nam," *France-Asie* (1959): 797–800; (6) Mai Tho* Truyen*, "Le Bouddhisme au Viêt-Nam," *France-Asie* (1959): 801–10; (7) Thích Thiên-An, *Buddhism and Zen in Vietnam* (Rutland/Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1975); (8) Heinz Bechert and Vu Duy Tu, "Buddhism in Vietnam," in Heinrich Dumoulin and John C. Maraldo, eds., *Buddhism in the Modern World* (London: Collier Books, 1976), pp. 186–93; (9) Sheng Yan, "Yuenan Fojiao shilun" [A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism], in Chang Mancao, ed., *Dongnan ya Fojiao yanjiu* [Studies in Southeast Asian Buddhism] (Taipei: Daisheng wenhua chubanshe, 1977), pp. 271–99; (10) Hui Hai, "Yuenan zhi Fojiao" [Vietnamese Buddhism], in *ibid.*, pp. 301–10; (11) Shi Shan-yi [Thích Thiên* Nghi*], "Yuenan fojiao lueshi" [A Brief History of Vietnamese Buddhism], in Wang Jianrui et al., eds., *Yindu fojiao shilun ji, dongnan ya fojiao gaishuo* (Huawu chubanshe, 1988), pp. 241–373; (12) Kawamoto Kunye, "Vietnam no Bukkyo*" [Vietnamese

Buddhism], chap. 4 of Nakamura Hajime, Kasahara Kazuo, Kanaoka Shuyu, eds., *Ajia Bukkyo * shi. Chugoku* hen IV* [History of Buddhism in Asia, Chinese Section IV] (Tokyo: Kosei shuppan sha, 1976), pp. 222–303.

Among these (1) is a rough, brief translation of Giáp's work. The author added some chapters on Buddhism under the Lê and Nguyen* dynasties, but they are sketchy and uncritical. (2) is a thematic doctrinal interpretation of Vietnamese Zen, now dated. Lang repeats Giáp's scheme in (3). In addition, his interpretation of the "philosophy of the Vietnamese Zen schools" is ahistorical. (4) can be considered a major disappointment. It was published as recently as 1988, yet the authors do the readers a great disservice by merely repeating the errors of previous works while not presenting anything new in terms of approach. (5) and (6) are too brief to have any value. It is unfortunate that (7) is the only book on Vietnamese Buddhism in English. It is full of errors, exaggerations, and mistranslations. Needless to say, the author only repeats Giáp's idea. (8) is too brief and concentrates more on modern times, yet the authors still follow traditional views when dealing with medieval Vietnamese Buddhism. (9) and (10) are too brief and do not offer anything new. (11) is a survey of Buddhism in Vietnam from its inception up to the French period. However, this work is not very useful because the author seems to repeat uncritically materials from his predecessors. (12) is definitely the best survey of Vietnamese Buddhism in a non-Vietnamese language. Unfortunately, the author also explains medieval Vietnamese Buddhism by relying on the content of the *Thien* Uyen** without examining influences from Chinese Buddhist literature. Besides, he seems to accept the history of Chinese Zen uncritically.

55. In fact, Giáp even devotes a section of his work to reconstructing the Zen lineage from Bodhidharma to Vô Ngôn Thông. See "Le Bouddhisme," pp. 227–34.

Chapter Two

This chapter is a modified version of my article "Rethinking Vietnamese Buddhist History: Is the *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh* a 'Transmission of the Lamp' Text?" in K. W. Taylor and John Whitmore, eds., *Essays into Vietnamese Past*s (Ithaca: Cornell University SEAP, 1995).

1. Although before the 1960s the *Thiên Uyen*'s* viewpoint was not widely known among the Vietnamese community, it was occasionally reiterated by some among the Buddhist elite. See, for instance, Mat* The*, *Viet* Nam Phat* Giáo Su* Lu'o'c**; and Mai Tho* Truyen*, "Le Bouddhisme au Viêt-Nam." Mât Thê was one of the most respected monks in central Vietnam, and Mai Tho Truyên was a leading intellectual layman in the South.

2. That is, the overthrow of Ngô Đình Diem's* regime in 1963 after extended political disturbances in Vietnam caused by the oppression of Buddhism in Hue*. Up to this time Buddhism had been content to be a popular, depoliticized religion. It seems that not of its own choice Buddhism was forced into a political struggle that eventually led to the fall of Diem*. The most complete study so far on this issue is Chính Đạo*, *Tôn Giáo and Chính Trị*: Phat* Giáo 1963–1967* [Religion and Politics: Buddhism 1963–1967] (Houston: Van Hoa, 1994).

3. Nguyễn Lang, *Việt Nam Phát Giáo Su' Luan**.

4. Lang's writings and hence the *Thiên Uyên*'s view were particularly fortified

by the belated popularization of the ideas of D. T. Suzuki in South Vietnam through a series of translations of his works into modern Vietnamese. Suzuki's writings confirmed and convinced the Vietnamese Buddhists that Zen is the "essence" of Buddhism, the supreme teaching of the Buddha.

5. The number would be sixty-eight if we counted Bien * Tài and Lý Thái Tông. I do not count them because the records on these two personages are too short to be biographies. This is according to the Nguyen* edition, the *Dai* Nam*. In this edition, the compiler inadvertently mixes up the biography of Không Lo* (of the Vô Ngôn Thông school) and that of Minh Không (of the Vinitaruci* school). Thus, the biography of Minh Không is missing in the Nguyễn edition. If we follow the Lê edition, i.e., the *Thien* Uyen**, there are sixty-six biographies with twenty-nine belonging to the Vinitaruci school instead of twenty-eight.
6. The earliest text of this kind is the *Zutang ji* [Records of the Patriarch Hall]. This work was lost within about 150 years of its publication in China and was preserved only in Korea. See T. Griffith Foulk, "The Ch'an *Tsung* in Medieval China: School, Lineage, or What?" *The Pacific World*, New Series, no. 8 (1992): 27.
7. For a brief discussion on this issue, see Yanagida Seizan, "Zenshu* goroku no keisei," *Indogaku bukkyogaku* kenkyu** 18, 1 (1969): 39–47; English translation by John R. McRae, "The Development of the 'Recorded Sayings' Texts of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism," in Whalen Lai and Lewis Lancaster, eds., *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), pp. 189–91. We should note in this connection that this position cannot be interpreted as simply a product of the Zen idiosyncrasy; rather, Zen inherits and carries to the extreme the spirit of interpretation of scriptures initiated by other leading Buddhist thinkers of the Tang dynasty. Stanley Weinstein has discussed at some length this aspect of Tang Buddhism in his article "Imperial Patronage in the Formation of T'ang Buddhism," in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the T'ang* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 271–73.
8. This idea is originally from the *Anguttara* Nikaya**: *Seyyatha pi Paharada* mahasamuddo ekaraso lonaraso**, *evam eva kho Paharada ayam* dhammavinayo ekaraso vimuttiraso* [Paharada*, just as the great ocean has only one taste, the taste of salt; just so this Dhamma and Discipline has only one flavor, the flavor of liberation]. See E. Hardy, ed., *The Anguttara Nikaya* (London: The Pali Text Society, 1899), 4:203.
9. An excellent study of this literature has been written by Tanaka Ryosho*, *Tonko* Zenshu* bunken no kenkyu* [A Study of Tun-Huang Zen Manuscripts] (Tokyo: Daito* shuppan sha, 1983). See especially pp. 21–166 and 549–648. For a brief but lucid exposition, see John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), pp. 73–97.
10. For a study of the "Recorded Sayings" texts in Chinese Zen, see Yanagida Seizan, "Zenshu goroku no keisei"; McRae's English translation, pp. 185–205. For a study of the *Mazu lu*, see Iriya Yoshitaka, *Baso no goroku* (Tokyo: Zen bunka kenkyusho*, 1984); for a discussion of the thought of Mazu, see Yanagida Seizan, *Zen shiso** [Zen Thoughts] (Tokyo: Chuo* koron* sha, 1975), pp. 107–53.
11. See T 48.139a–225c13. For a complete English translation, see Thomas and J. C. Cleary, *The Blue Cliff Records*, 3 vols. (Boston: Shambala, 1977).

12. For a discussion on this text, see Yanagida Seizan, "Zenseki kaidai," in Nishitani Keiji and Yanagida Seizan, eds., *Zenke Goroku* [Recorded Sayings of the Zen Adepts] (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo *, 1974), 2:478. For a useful outline of the text, see Ono Gemmyo*, *Bussho* kaisetsu daijiten* (Tokyo: Daito* shuppan sha, 1932), 1:114–24.
13. On the significance of the Buddhas of the past, see, inter alia, Richard Gombrich, "The Significance of Former Buddhas in the Theravadin* Tradition," in Somaratna Balasooriya et al., eds., *Buddhist Studies in Honor of Walpola Rahula* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1980), pp. 62–72. For a brief description of the structure and function of the "transmission of the lamp" texts, see McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 74–76.
14. For a brief discussion on the "transmission history" in, for instance, Tiantai, see McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 82–83.
15. On Mou Bo and Kang Senghui, see chapter one, nn. 7 and 8.
16. Mou Bo's Buddhism was rudimentary and was not clearly based on any particular scriptural sources. Kang Senghui was the translator of two *sutras**: the **Satparamitasamgraha**, T 3. 1a–52b2, and the *Jiu zaxiyou jing*, T 4.510b3–522b12. Kang Senghui did not leave any independent works; we have no idea about his own thought, so how can we associate him with any scriptural tradition? Besides, Chinese Zen has never associated the names of Mou Bo and Kang Senghui with any scriptural tradition.
17. Paul Murray Kendall characterizes "demand biography" as "biography produced to satisfy the requirements of the predilections of an age, to act as a beast of burden for ends other than the illumination of life." See *The Art of Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), pp. 40–41. Peter H. Lee also quotes this passage in his book and explains further that the purpose of the *Haedong Kosung* Chon**—and works belonging to the "biographies of eminent monks," we may add—is edification, since they are instruments "for conversion and propagation of the faith." These works "uphold the values of eminent monks as a model for emulation." See Peter H. Lee, *Lives of Eminent Monks: The Haedong Kosung Chon* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 13. This description applies well to the situation of Buddhism in medieval Vietnam. For discussions on the issue of Chinese Buddhist biographies, see Yun-hua Jan, "Portrait and Self-Portrait: A Case Study of Biographical and Autobiographical Records of Tsung-Mi," in Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara, eds., *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia* (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1988), pp. 229–46; Albert Welter, "The Contextual Studies of Chinese Biographies," *ibid.*, pp. 247–74.
18. One has in mind, for instance, Junjiro Takakusu's approach in his *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* (reprinted, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973).
19. See Mircea Eliade et al., eds., *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 2:485. Also quoted in Foulk, "The Ch'an *Tsung*," p. 18.
20. Foulk, "The Ch'an *Tsung*," p. 18.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
24. Foulk remarks, "The entity I want to call the Ch'an school included far more members than the few who were recognized as Dharma heirs, although the latter were clearly the leaders. The school consisted of everyone who believed in the Ch'an lineage, gained inspiration from its lore, worshipped its patriarchs,

and followed or supported the Ch'an masters who were its living representatives." Ibid., pp. 28–29.

25. Ibid., p. 29.

26. According to historical records, under the Lý dynasty (1010–1225) envoys were dispatched to China to request Buddhist texts. It was probably through this venue that medieval Vietnamese Buddhist elites came to know the *Chuandeng lu*.

27. The story of Không Lộ* in the *Dai* Nam* is obviously taken from a folktale entitled "Khong* Lo* Đúc Chuông hay Su* Tích Trâu Vàng Ho* Tây" [Không Lộ Casting a Bell or Legend of the Golden Buffalo at the West Lake]. Besides the similarity in content, at least in one instance in Không Lộ's* biography in the *Dai Nam*, the name Không Lộ is written as "Không Lô" (the Giant One). See *Dai Nam*, 21b2. For the story of Không Lộ, see Nguyen* Dong* Chi, *Kho Tàng Truyện* Co* Tích Viet* Nam* [The Treasury of Vietnamese Legends] (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1972), pp. 230–35.

28. That is, the *Tham Do* Hien* Quy*et** [Revelations of the Decisive Secret for Students]. The *An Nam Chí Lu'o*c** records: Zen Master Mai Viên Chiếu* composed the *Tham Đô Hiên Quyết*, which contains sections such as "One day Viên Chiếu was sitting in front of his house when a monk came and asked, 'What is the meaning of Buddha and Sage?' Viên Chiếu said, 'At the autumn festival the chrysanthemums are blooming under the hedge, in the pure air of spring orioles are singing in the branches.'" This is exactly the first of the many encounter dialogues included in Viên Chiếu's* biography in the *Thien* Uyen**. See *An Nam Chí Lu'o*c** (reprinted Taipei: Yinying wenyuan siku quanshu, 1983), 46:15, 464–65; *Thiên Uyên*, 11b7–8; *Dai Nam*, 8b1–2.

29. See Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," p. 146 and notes 32, 33. In addition, monks of the same generation in the same lineage were engaged in practices that were from a sectarian perspective totally different.

30. *Thiên Uyên*, 27b8–28a4; *Dai Nam*, 24a5–b1.

31. For instance, the section on "Immortals and Buddhist Monks" in the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*. See É. Gaspardone, *Ngan-Nan Tche-Yuan* (Hanoi: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1934), pp. 208–12.

32. *Thiên Uyên*, 35b6–11; *Dai Nam*, 31b7–32a1.

33. The biographies of these monks are recorded in fascicles 25–26 of the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*. See T 50, 643c1–678a8.

34. For a discussion of Thông Bien's* model of Vietnamese Buddhist history, see appendix II.

35. *Thiên Uyên*, 44a2–45a3; *Dai Nam*, 38b6–39b–9.

36. "Le Bouddhisme," 236.

37. T 49.102c3–9.

38. T 55.275a14–19; T 50.433b2–6.

39. T 55.547c8–14.

40. T 55.846a8–14.

41. The *Thiên Uyên* is completely silent about this.

42. See T 51.245c27; Iriya, *Baso no goroku*, pp. 10 and 71. Some of these points have also been noted by Tue* Hanh* in her article "Có Hay Không Có Dòng Thiên* Ty* Ni Đa Lu'u Chi Tai* Viet* Nam" [Does the Vinitaruci* School Exist in Vietnam?], *Nguon* Song** 6 (1986): 88–99; 7 and 8 (1986): 77–86; 9 (1987): 70–77.

43. The *Thiên Uyên* records the dialogue between Vinitaruci and Pháp Hien*

as follows: "When Vinitaruci * first came from Guangzhou and lodged at Pháp Vân Temple and met Pháp Hien*, he looked him over carefully and said, 'What is your name?' Pháp Hiên said, 'What is your name, Master?' Vinitaruci said, 'Don't you have a name?' Pháp Hiên said, 'Of course I have a name, but how can you understand it?' Vinitaruci scolded him, saying, 'Why use understanding?'" See *Thien* Uyen**, 45b1–3; *Dai* Nam*, 40a3–5. The dialogue between Daoxin and Hongren is as follows: "One day when Daoxin was on his way to Huangmei Village he happened to meet a boy with extraordinary looks, different from other children. Daoxin asked, 'What is your [family] name?' The boy said, 'I do have a name, but it is not a common name.' Daoxin asked, 'What kind of name is it then?' The boy said, 'My [family] name is Buddha.' Daoxin asked, 'Don't you have a [family] name?' The boy said, 'It is emptiness.'" See *T 51.3.222b10–15*.

Note that in this dialogue Hongren plays with the two characters *xing* 性, which have the same pronunciation but different meanings ("family name" and "nature"). In borrowing this dialogue to make up that between Vinitaruci and Pháp Hiên, the Vietnamese authors seem to miss this point.

44. For instance, Huike studied with Bodhidharma for six years, as did Shenxiu with Hongren. See McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 48.
45. See, for instance, the biographies of Dao* Hue* (18b7), Tinh* Không (24a5), Trí Bao* (27a6), Tinh Gió'i (29b), Thien* Nham (53b), Gió'i Không (55b), and Chân Không (58a).
46. Thông Bien* seems to be the first person to give us this information.
47. *T 85.1291a1–c13*.
48. See Nguyen* Duy Hinh, "Three Legends," passim; "Chùa Dau*: Suy Nghi* Su* Hoc*." Even nowadays Cham Brahmanism can still be found in North, Central, and South Vietnam.
49. See Nguyễn Duy Hinh, "Three Legends"; Tran* Van* Giáp, "Les deux sources du Bouddhisme annamite, ses rapports avec l'Inde et la Chine," *Cahiers de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 33 (1942): 17–20. Note that after returning from successful expeditions to Champa, the Lý kings would give Cham prisoners to Buddhist temples to work as slaves. Among these prisoners there happened to be artists, priests, warriors, and so forth, who subsequently contributed significantly to Vietnamese architecture, music, mythology, and religion. See, inter alia, Nguyễn Duy Hinh, "Three Legends"; Ta* Chí Dai* Tru'ò'ng, *Than* Ngu'ò'i Và Dat* Viet** [Gods, People, and the Land of Viet*] (Westminster: Van Nghe*, 1989), pp. 184–89 and 259–67. See also Trần Quốc* Vương*, "The Legend of Ông Đông from the Text to the Field," and Nguyễn Thế* Anh, "The Vietnamization of the Cham Deity Po Nagar," in K. W. Taylor and John Whitmore, eds., *Essays into Vietnamese Pasts* (Ithaca: Cornell University, SEAP, 1995), pp. 13–41, 42–50.
50. While Kawamoto Kunye expresses some doubt regarding Vinitaruci's* works in China and rejects his alleged relationship with Sengcan, he curiously still accepts that there existed the so-called Vinitaruci Zen school in Vietnam. See Kawamoto Kunye, "Vietnam no Bukkyo*," p. 250.
51. See *Thiên Uyên*, 20b10–21a3 and 45a9–46a1.
52. See *T 51.247a2–6*.
53. Kawamoto remarks that the existence of Quán Duyên at Pháp Vân prior to the arrival of Vinitaruci shows that by the first half of the sixth century the doctrine of Zen that was spread in China by Bodhidharma had already reached

Jiaozhou (i.e., Vietnam) and had been well established there. See Kawamoto, "Vietnam no Bukkyo *," p. 248. If we accept Kawamoto's opinion, then we will have to rewrite the history of the origin and transmission of Zen in China and Vietnam. This is neither feasible nor necessary, since there is no evidence that Quán Duyên was a "Zen Master."

54. See *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, pp. 210–11. The final remark, "Sui Gaozu ordered an envoy to build a stupa dedicated to him," obviously refers to Pháp Hien* and not to Nguyen* Hoc* since Nguyễn Hoc lived in the twelfth century.
55. *Thien* Uyen**, 45b4–6; *Dai* Nam*, 40a6–7.
56. *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.18.573b25–c14. Note in this connection that Phúc Dien*, in his record of Khâu Đà La at Co* Châu (i.e., Pháp Vân) Temple, mentions the same event. Yet, according to him, it was Vinitaruci*, not Pháp Hiên, who received the relics and erected stupas at the above localities. Phúc Điền probably based himself on the Cô Châu *Pháp Vân Phat* Ban* Hanh* Ngu* Luc**. On this book, see *Di San* Hán Nôm* 1:326–27.
57. According to the *Sheli ganying ji* [Miraculous Effectiveness of Relics], in the *Hongming ji*, T 52.216b10, stupas were built at Thien* Chúng Temple in Giao Châu to receive relics.
58. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.
59. I am not limiting Zen to certain practices, such as contemplating on public cases (*gong'an*), engaging in encounter dialogues (*wenda*), shouting, beating, etc.—although these distinguish Zen from other Chinese Buddhist schools. I am only trying to point out that these aspects of Zen practice did not seem to be part of the Buddhist practice of the Pháp Vân lineage.
60. See Tue* Hanh*, "Có Hay Không," pp. 74–76.
61. See *Thiên Uyên*, 5a7–8; *Đai Nam*, 2a7.
62. See Tuê Hanh, "Có Hay Không," p. 76, and "Khoi* Nguyễn Phat* Giáo Viet* Nam" [The Beginning of Vietnamese Buddhism], *Nguồn* Song** 18 (1990): 74. This author, while rejecting the existence of Vinitaruci, is of the opinion that Vô Ngôn Thông's works in Vietnam are truthful beyond doubt.
63. *Thiên Uyên*, 4a2–4b9; *Đai Nam*, 1a3–1b8.
64. T 51.268a28–b13.
65. *Thiên Uyên*, 4b9–5a1; *Đai Nam*, 1b7–2a1.
66. T 51.268c.
67. T 51.219b4–5 and 219b9.
68. For a discussion of *biguan* (wall contemplation) from both traditional and modern viewpoints, see McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 112–15.
69. See *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.551c3–6.
70. *Ibid.*, 551c8–10.
71. See Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin nanbeichao fojiao shi* (reprinted Banqiao: Luoto chuban she, 1976), p. 784. See also McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 113.
72. T 51.219b9.
73. T 51.263c21–268b23.
74. The Story of Xung Thiên Than* Vu'o'ng is recorded in various editions of the *Viet* Dien**. For instance, "Xung Thiên Uy Tín Dai* Vu'o'ng," in *Việt Diên U Linh Tập* Luc** (35–36); "Xung Thiên Dung* Liet* Chiêu Ưng Uy Tín Đai Vu'o'ng," in *Việt Diên U linh Tập Luc Toàn Biên* (205–207). See *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet* Tùng San*, série II, vol. 2. For some general information on the *Việt*

*Diên * U Linh*, see "Bibliographie annamite," pp. 126–28; Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," especially pp. 156–69; "Notes on the *Viet* Diên U Linh Tap**"; *The Birth of Vietnam*, pp. 352–59.

75. *Thien* Uyen**, 5b11–6a2; *Dai* Nam*, 2b10–3a1; *T* 51.223a20; see also *Fabaodan jing* [The Platform *Sutra**], *T* 48.349a28–b3.
76. Khuông Viet's* biography also relates that he saw the celestial King Vaisravana* [a "Dharma Protector" in Buddhism] in a dream in which the deity said he came to entrust him with the task of protecting Vietnam and the Buddha-Dharma. See *Thiên Uyên*, 8b2–6; *Đai Nam*, 5a7–b1.
77. That Kien* So' Temple was closely associated with the worship of the Celestial King of Phù Dong*, the cult of national heroes, a special trait of Lý Buddhism—and religion in general—is a topic beyond the scope of this book.
78. *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc**, 5a2–b7.
79. Note also that there are no biographies of Yuanzheng, Dadeng, and Xiaoyao in the *Thiên Uyên*. Xiaoyao was mentioned in the *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thiên Phái Do**. Tran* Nhân Tông (the alleged founder of the Trúc Lâm Zen School) remarks in his "[Hue* Trung] Thu'o'ng* Si* Hành Trang*" [Activities of the Eminent Huê Trung]: "Even before he reached the age of twenty, the Eminent One already respected Zen. He came to study with Zen Master Xiaoyao of Futang and attained the gist of the teaching." Huê Trung himself mentioned Xiaoyao in three of his poems. Through this evidence we can believe that Xiaoyao was a highly respected monk who flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century.
80. *Thiên Uyên*, 71b2; *Đai Nam*, 64b4.
81. See Kawamoto, "Vietnam no Bukkyo*," p. 271.
82. *T* 48.1030b15–2031a2.
83. See Émile Gaspardone, in *Ngan-Nan Tche-Yuan*, p. 209.
84. See *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, 15:464.
85. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c** [Concise History of Viet], 2:13b, records: "In the spring, the second month [of the first year of the Than* Vu* era (1069)], on the day *mau* tuai**, the King [Lý Thánh Tông], by royal edict, announced his expedition against Champa." See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:245.
86. On the term "National Preceptor" (*quoc* su'*), see, for instance, Paul Pelliot, "Les Kouo-che ou 'maitres du royaume' dans le Bouddhisme chinoise," *T'oung Pao* (1911): 971–76.
87. "In the spring, the first month [of the fourth year of the Thân Vu era (1072)], on the day *canh dan**, the king was seriously ill and passed away in the Hoi* Tiên Chamber, aged fifty, his temple name Thánh Tông, having ruled for nineteen years." See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:14b.
88. Thao* Đu'ò'ng was made National Preceptor in 1070–1071; the vegetarian feast where Thông Biên* met Phù Thánh Linh Nhân took place in 1096. The story gives us the impression that Thông Biên was one of the elders among those present at the National Temple. He thus might have been a younger contemporary of Thao Đu'ò'ng.
89. In fact, she did not seem to know of the existence of any "Zen school" in Vietnam at that time, probably because none existed.
90. See Kawamoto, "Vietnam no Bukkyo*," p. 271.
91. *Thiên Uyên*, 72b1; *Đai Nam*, 65a6. The same list also includes Grand Tutor Do* Anh Vu (1114–1159) as the third patriarch of the lineage. Historical records portrayed Vu as anything but a gentleman and did not mention any

relation between him and Buddhism. Nor did posthumous inscriptions full of Confucian eulogistic jargon dedicated to Vu * connect him to any "Zen school." See Keith W. Taylor, "Voices Within and Without: Tales from Stone and Paper about Do* Anh Vu (1114–1159)," in K. W. Taylor and John K. Whitmore, eds., *Essays into Vietnamese Pasts*, pp. 59–80.

92. See *Dai* Viet* Su* Ky* Toàn Thu'* [Complete History of Dai* Viet*, henceforth referred to as *Toàn Thu'*], ed. Chen Jinghe (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku toyō bunka kenkyūsho*, 1984), 4:301.
93. The *Toàn Thu'* ("Ban Ky*" 4:311) remarked that when "Lý Hue* Tông (r. 1211–1224) first ascended the throne, he entrusted state affairs to Grand Tutor Đàm Di* Mông. Di Mông was ignorant and incompetent, feeble and indecisive. Therefore, political affairs worsened day by day."
94. The *Toàn Thu'* ("Ban Ky" 4:306) also recorded that in 1198 Cao Tông "at the advice of Đàm Di Mông, issued a royal decree defrocking monks and nuns."
95. For instance, the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c**, 3:17b4–6, reports: "The king [Cao Tông] had an innate fear of thunder and would shake with fright at thunderclaps. A courtier named Nguyen* Du' pretended he could silence them. At the same moment a thunderclap was heard crashing. The king told Du' to silence it. Du' looked upward and recited his spells. The thunder sounded even louder. The king demanded an explanation. Du' said, 'I have long since warned them, but they are still that violent.'" The same event is also recorded in *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 4:309. Other instances of eccentric behavior by Lý Cao Tông can also be found in the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c* and *Toàn Thu'*. The *Toàn Thu'* ("Ban Ky," 4:307) records the following incident: "The emperor gave an order to the musicians to compose a piece of music and called it 'Cham Melody.' Its sound was so mournful and sorrowful that brought tears to listeners' eyes. Monk official Nguyễn Thu'ò'ng said: 'I have heard that the Preface to the Odes says that the sound of a disturbed country is mournful and angry. At the present time, the people are in an uproar and the country faces difficulties. Your Majesty indulges himself in luxuries, court affairs are a mess, and the people's hearts are distressed: this is the omen of annihilation.'" Lê Van* Hu'u noted that Cao Tông made people call him "Buddha." See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:224.
96. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:245 and 242. The *Toàn Thu'* noted that the custom to come to these temples to worship Brahma* and Indra started from this.
97. Heinz Bechert and Vu Duy Tu remark, "the third Dhyana* School, Thao-Duong, which dates from the year 1072, has not completely disappeared but exists as a very small sect today." See Bechert and Vu, "Buddhism in Vietnam," p. 188. I find this statement completely groundless.
98. For the meaning of the expression "biographical images," see Frank E. Reynolds and Donald Capps, eds., *The Biographical Process: Studies in the History and Psychology of Religion* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976). See also Welter, "The Contextual Studies of Chinese Biographies."
99. In fact, even during the time of Shenhui (684–758), his "sudden enlightenment" had begun to challenge all schools of Chinese Buddhism. See Yanagida "The *Li-Tai Fa-Pao Chi* and the Ch'an Doctrine of Sudden Awakening," p. 16.
100. For a study of the historical nature of the *Chuangeng lu*, see Ishii Shudo*, *Sodai* zenshushi* no kenkyū** [A Study of the Song Dynasty Zen] (Tokyo: Daito* shuppan sha, 1987), pp. 1–122.

Chapter Three

1. For a general analysis of the *Dai * Nam* or the Nguyen* edition of the *Thien* Uyen**, see J. C. Cleary, "Buddhism and Popular Religion in Medieval Vietnam," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, 1 (1991): 93–118.
2. See Maurice Durand and Nguyen Tran Huan, *An Introduction to Vietnamese Literature*, trans. D. M. Hawke (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 51. Nguyễn Đình Hòa did give a survey of Lý and Tran* literature in his book, but it is too sketchy. See Nguyen Dinh Hoa, *Vietnamese Literature: A Brief Survey* (San Diego: San Diego State University, 1994), pp. 39–53.
3. Durand and Nguyen, *Vietnamese Literature*, p. 51.
4. See, for instance, *Tho' Van* Ly-Tran** [Lý-Trần Poetry and Literature], vol. 1 (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1977).
5. The *Toàn Viet* Thi Luc** was compiled by Lê Quý Đôn of the [Later] Lê. It is a collection of 2,303 poems composed by authors of the Lý, Trần, Ho*, and [Later] Lê dynasties. See entry 3786 in Trần Nghĩa* and François Gros, eds., *Di San* Hán Nôm Việt Nam Thu' Muc* De* Yeu* Catalogue des livres en Hán Nôm* (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1993), 3:350. The *Hoàng Việt Thi Tuyen** was compiled by Bùi Huy Bích of the Nguyễn dynasty. It is a collection of 526 poems written by authors of the Lý, Trần, and [Later] Lê dynasties. See entry 1503 in *ibid.*, 1:857–58.
6. According to the *Toàn Thu'* ("Ngoai* Ky*" 3:130–31), under the reign of Han Lingdi (r. 168–189) a native of Jiaozhou was made *thú' su'** for the first time. Lý Tien* submitted a petition requesting that natives who had held the degrees of *mau* tài* and *hieu* liêm* should be appointed to positions outside their provinces higher than petty positions within their own province. Under Shi Xie (187–226), a native of Jiaozhou named Lý Cam*, who was a Royal Bodyguard (*túc ve**), together with a few Jiaozhou natives submitted a petition requesting that Jiaozhou natives with academic degrees should be promoted fairly. See also Lê Thành Khôi, *Histoire du Việt Nam*, p. 96.
7. See Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 179–239.
8. Among the modern works, see, for instance, *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, vol. I. For a brief discussion on arts under the Lý with its Buddhist influence, see Lê Thành Khôi, *Histoire du Việt Nam*, pp. 154–58.
9. *Thiên Uyên*, 9a5–8.
10. *Thiên Uyên*, 9b2–3.
11. For a study on the relationship between Zen and Tang-Song poetry, see, inter alia, Du Songbai, *Chanxue yu Tang Song shixue* [Zen and the Poetry of Tang and Song] (Taiwan: Liming wenhua shiye gongsi, 1978).
12. *Thiên Uyên*, 52b9–10.
13. *Thiên Uyên*, 17b1–5.
14. *Thiên Uyên*, 16a5–6.
15. *Thiên Uyên*, 22a10–b1.
16. *Thiên Uyên*, 23b1–2.
17. *Thiên Uyên*, 25b7–8. Không Lo's* poem is somewhat similar to a poem written by Li Ao of the Tang dynasty. The *Chuandeng lu* relates: One night Zen Master Yaoshan was walking in the mountains chanting a *sutra**. It was a cloudless night and the moon was clear. Yaoshan burst out laughing, and his laughter traveled ninety miles until it reached east of Liyang. On that occasion Governor Li Ao composed a poem dedicated to him:

He has found a remote site that brings rustic joys,
 All year long he greets no one, says goodbye to no one.
 Sometimes he climbs to the solitary mountaintops,
 To laugh under the moon and the floating clouds.

(See *Chuangdeng lu*, 14:312b22.)

18. *Thien * Uyen**, 35b1–2.

19. *Thiên Uyên*, 67b1–3.

20. See *Tho' Van* Ly' Tran**, 1:241.

21. *Thiên Uyên*, 19a4–5.

22. *Thiên Uyên*, 45a4–6.

23. *Thiên Uyên*, 53a2–3.

24. *Thiên Uyên*, 51b4–5.

25. *Thiên Uyên*, 35a4–5.

26. *Thiên Uyên*, 18b3–4.

27. Fo Tu Teng (died 349), one of the most interesting personalities of early Chinese Buddhism, was a Central Asian monk who arrived in north China around 310 C.E. and impressed the Chinese ruler with his magical powers. Fo Tu Teng's biography can be found in *Mingseng zhuan*, *Gaoseng zhuan*, 9:383b–387a; *Yishuchuan*, and *Jinshu*. For a complete account of his life, see Tsukamoto, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1:251–69. For a briefer account, see Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 79–80; Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, pp. 181–83. For a complete study on his life and works, see Arthur F. Wright, "Fo-t'u-teng: A Biography." *HJAS* 11 (1948): 321–71; reprinted in *Studies in Chinese Buddhism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 34–68. Kumarajiva* (350–413) was a native of Kucha who came to Chang'an in 401 and translated many important Buddhist texts into Chinese, including those of the Madhyamaka School. Through his translations Kumarajiva was responsible for the establishment of the Sanlun School in China. See Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, pp. 81–83; Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, p. 226; *Gaosengzhuan*, T50.330a–333a.

28. *Thiên Uyên*, 18b6–9.

29. *Thiên Uyên*, 66a9–b2.

30. Actually, the writing of "Zen poetry" in Vietnam has never completely died out. In the mid-1960s, following the fall of Ngô Đình Diệm's* régime in 1963, there was some kind of a Buddhist revival in South Vietnam. This brought with it a new enthusiasm for (Zen) Buddhism and the attendant movement of writing Zen poetry that even carries over to the Vietnamese community in America nowadays.

31. *Thiên Uyên*, 15b8–16a2.

32. *Thiên Uyên*, 16a7–9.

33. From 1284 to 1288 the Mongols invaded Vietnam three times. For a study on the Tran's* fight against the Mongols, see Lê Thành Khôi, *Histoire du Viêt Nam*, pp. 182–92. From 1414 to 1427 Vietnam again fell under the domination of the Ming. Lê Loi* defeated the Ming in 1428 and founded the [Later] Lê dynasty. See *ibid.*, pp. 201–18.

34. On vegetarian feasts in Chinese Buddhism, see Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, pp. 276–71.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 278

37. *Thiên Uyên*, 10b1–11a7.

38. *Thiên * Uyên**, 19a11–b1.

39. *Thiên Uyên*, 66a4–6.

40. *Thiên Uyên*, 22a11–b2.

41. *Thiên Uyên*, 60a10–11.

42. *Thiên Uyên*, 68b5–70a10.

43. *Thiên Uyên*, 70a4–6.

44. According to the *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.244b29–c15, the rank of National Preceptor started with the monk Fachang under the Northern Qi (550–577). The rank is defined as follows: "In terms of teachings, he must be well versed in the three baskets, and master the five sciences. The entire country takes refuge in him. This explains the title [of National Preceptor]." The five sciences are philosophy, grammar, logic, medicine, and technology.

45. The bestowal of purple robes on monks began in China with Wu Zetian (684–774). In 690 the monk Falang found in *Dayun jing* a passage justifying the enthronement of Wu Zetian, so he was made prefect and given a purple robe by her. See *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.248c3–249a29.

46. *Thiên Uyên*, 21a11.

47. *Thiên Uyên*, 22a8.

48. *Thiên Uyên*, 66a6–7.

49. *Thiên Uyên*, 70a6.

50. On the origin of this rank in Chinese Buddhism, the *Dasong seng shilüe* recorded: "When the Yao Qin regime established its administrative system in Guanzhong, they set up the rank 'Monk Leader' (*Tang* Chinh*) to be the head of Buddhism. When the Wei took over the north, they changed it into General Supervisor of Monks to supervise the monks. Although a new name was created, the position was the same as before." See *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.243a19–b12. For a gloss on the ranks of monk officials in medieval Vietnam, see *An Nam Chí Lu'oc**, 14:135.

51. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:181, records: "[In the second year of the Thái Bình era (971)] the court hierarchy and ranks for monks and Daoist masters were installed (. . .) National Preceptor Ngô Chân Lu'u was made Khuông Việt* Thái Su', Thu'ong Ma Ni Religious Monk Scribe (*Tang Luc**), Dang* Huyen* Quang Sùng Chính Uy Nghi." Thus, the "*Tang* Luc**" was a rank for Buddhist monks and was instituted from the reign of Đinh Tiên Hoàng. The monk Tru'ong Ma Ni was the first to hold this office. In China, this rank began with Duanfu under Wenzong of Tang (827–840). We can glean some meaning of this rank through the following words of Wuzong: "Since Buddhism has existed until now, let the monk scribes of the two institutions together with the monks versed in the three disciplines write down what evidence there is about its ups and downs, and submit it to me." See *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54, middle volume, 243a26–28. Thus, it seems that beside keeping documents, a monk scribe's responsibilities also included the function of a Buddhist historian.

52. The *Viet* Su* Lu'oc'*, 1:17a9, records: "In the second year of the Thái Bình era (971) ranks were established for administrative and military officers, monks, and Daoist masters." The *Toàn Thu'*, 1:181, also records: "In the second year of the Thái Bình era ranks for administrative and military officers, monks, and Daoist masters were first initiated," and "General Supervisor of Monks (*Tang Thong**) Ngô Chân Lu'u was bestowed the sobriquet Great Master Khuông Việt." Thus, Khuông Việt might have been made *Tang Thong* in 971.

53. *Thiên Uyên*, 53b2–3.

54. *Thien * Uyen**, 53b10.

55. *Thiên Uyên*, 59a3.

56. *Thiên Uyên*, 59a4–5.

57. In this context Keith Taylor's remark proves to be insightful: "In the temples, however, ancient beliefs survived, sheltered by the Buddha and a host of native spirits who stood as guardians of the indigenous cultural heritage. Giao [i.e., Jiaozhou] was the center of Vietnamese Buddhism. The popular cultural outlook of Giao, based on spirit cults in the context of an elastic Buddhism, was eventually the source of the dominant cultural outlook of independent Vietnam as it evolved from the tenth century on." See Taylor *The Birth of Vietnam*, p. 174.

58. For instance, the *Toàn Thu'* records that during a drought in the fourth month of 1434, Emperor Lê Thái Tông (r. 1434–1442) had his court officials escort Pháp Vân Buddha from Cát Châu to the capital to pray for rain. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 9:313. In the third month of 1437, during a drought, the emperor gave the order to pray for rain at prefectures all over the country. In the sixth month of the same year, drought and insects harmed the crops, and the emperor again gave order to pray for rain. *Ibid.*, pp. 337, 339. Under Lê Nhân Tông (r. 1443–1459) in the sixth month of 1448 there was a drought. The emperor gave an order to both literary and military court officials to attend a vegetarian feast at Báo Ân Temple to pray for rain. The emperor himself came to pray. The emperor then ordered Grand Commandant Lê Khai* to escort in a ceremonial procession Pháp Vân Buddha from Co* Châu District to Báo Thiên Temple in the capital. Monks were asked to chant *sutras** and pray. The emperor and the empress dowager came to participate in the ritual. *Ibid.*, 362.

59. The Tú' Pháp (Four Lady Buddhas) system of temples has existed at various localities in the Hong* River delta. A number of these temples, such as the Dâu (Hà Bac* Province) and the Thú'a (Hai* Hu'ng Province), celebrate the "praying for rain ceremony" on April 8 (lunar calendar), which is also the Buddha's birthday. At noontime, Pháp Lôi, Pháp Vũ, and Pháp Dien* are escorted to the Dâu Temple to join Pháp Vân. Afterward, the procession proceeds to the To* Temple so that these four Lady Buddhas pay homage to Man Nu'o'ng, their mother. The ceremony at Thú'a Temple is a bit more complicated. During a year when there is a big drought, a ritual is performed at one of the four temples for three days running. Then the temple is closed for three days. If rain still does not fall, the ritual will resume for another three days. If rain still does not fall, then the officiants' consult the oracles to bring together the four Lady Buddhas to join forces in the ritual. For a detailed description of this ritual at various provinces in North Vietnam, see Hà Van* Tan*, *Chùa Viet* Nam*, pp. 69–72. See also Toan Anh, *Hoi* Hè Đình Đám* [Festivals and Festivities] (Saigon: Nam Chi Tùng Thư', 1974), 1:216, 222–23.

60. *Thiên Uyên*, 34a2.

61. On Dao* Hanh*, see *Thiên Uyên*, 55a2. Thien* Nham was a very learned monk, yet he also possessed this magical power. The *Thiên Uyên* (59a8–9) relates that "during the Dai* Thuân era (1128–1132) there was a drought. A royal edict summoned Thiên Nham to the capital. He was immediately effective in his praying for rain." Praying for rain was also practiced in Chinese Buddhism. For instance, the monk Amoghavajra "was once asked by the emperor to relieve the drought that had plagued the capital during spring and summer.

Amoghavajra set up the altar, performed the necessary rituals, and on the next day, adequate rain fell. The emperor rewarded him with the title 'master of the purple robe,' and presented him with 100 bolts of assorted materials. He also arranged for a thousand-monk vegetarian feast as an expression of gratitude." *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.712b. Quoted in Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, pp. 277–78. Similar to Vietnamese Buddhism, in Chinese Buddhism this and other magical powers were possessed and employed by monks who were renowned for their erudition and intellectual acuteness. It is recorded in the biography of Zhiyi (538–597), the founder of the Tiantai school of Buddhism, that he also displayed his power to produce rain. Guanding, Zhiyi's disciple and biographer, relates that once Zhiyi decided to found a monastery at a desolate and mountainous site that was haunted by ferocious gods, wild beasts, and snakes. A drought occurred that summer, and the local people thought the gods were angry. Zhiyi went to the source of the stream and recited a spell, whereupon rain fell. See Guanding, *Sui Tiantai Zhiyi dashi biezhuàn*, T 50.195a26–b3; *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.566c7–10. Also quoted in Valerie Hansen, "Gods on Walls," p. 89.

The fact that some Buddhist adepts like Zhiyi were not reluctant to resort to means that fall within the framework of popular beliefs has led J. C. Cleary to suggest that we should call into question the validity of the great tradition/little tradition dichotomy. See Cleary, "Buddhism and Popular Religion in Medieval Vietnam," p. 94. I am of the opinion that it is true that the Buddhist masses are not concerned with or are ignorant of the subtle issue of Buddhist philosophy. However, to exclude a Buddhist philosopher from "popular practice" hinders our understanding of him as a religious person considerably. For instance, Nagarjuna * was a practicing Buddhist, and not just a dogmatist whose life and thought should be confined in whatever we could make of the *Madhyamakakarika* *. For a useful discussion of the great tradition/little tradition issue, see Agehananda Bharati, "Hinduism and Modernization," in Robert F. Spencer, ed., *Religion and Change in Contemporary Asia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), pp. 67–104.

62. See R. E. Emmerick, *The Sutra* of Golden Light: Being a Translation of the Suvarnabhasottamasutra** (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 23–43.
63. *Thien* Uyen**, 8b1–9a1.
64. On Vaisravana*, see the entry "Bishamon" in Paul Demiéville, ed., *Hobogirin**, premier fascicule: A–Bombai, deuxième fascicule: Bombai-Bussokuseki (Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1929), pp. 79–83; the entry "Vaisravana" in Fredrick W. Bunce, *An Encyclopaedia of Buddhist Deities, Demigods, Godlings, Saints and Demons*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: D.K. Printworld (P), 1994); Louis Frédéric, *Buddhism: Flammarion Iconographic Guides* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995), pp. 242–46; Hansen, "Gods on Walls," esp. pp. 75–88; the "Chapter on the Four Great Kings" in Emmerick, *The Sutra of Golden Light*, pp. 23–43.
65. See Eva Rudy Jansen, *The Book of Hindu Imagery: The Gods and Their Symbols* (Diever, Holland: Binkey Kok Publications, 1993), p. 70.
66. See Gail Hinich Sutherland, *The Disguises of the Demon: The Development of the Yaksa* in Hinduism and Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 63; Ram Nath Misra, *Yaksa Cult and Iconography* (New Delhi: Munishram Manoharlal Publishers, 1979), pp. 35–45.
67. *The Disguises of the Demon*, p. 65.

68. Ibid., p. 61.
69. See n. 62.
70. See Hansen, "Gods on Walls," p. 84.
71. Ibid., p. 82.
72. Ibid., p. 87.
73. *Thien * Uyen**, 8b3–5. In India he was depicted as carrying a bag of money, a lance, or a mangoose. See Hansen, "Gods on Walls," p. 85.
74. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi* (27:63–64) "Hanoi Province, section on Temples and Shrines," records a slightly different version of Khuông Viet's* dream in the record of the Shrine of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng: "The Shrine of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng was situated at Ninh Tao* Village, Từ Liêm Prefecture. His title was the Celestial King of Vaisravana*. Around the Thiên Phúc era (980–988) during the reign of Lê Dai* Hành, Great Master Khuông Viet* saw him in a dream, so Khuông Việt had a statue of him cast and a temple erected on Mount Ve* Linh to worship him. When the Song army invaded our country, Emperor Lê Đại Hành sent an envoy to the temple to earnestly pray for victory. When the two armies were about to engage in battle, an immortal suddenly emerged from the waves, his hair disheveled and his eyes glaring. The Song troops were terrified and fled. Witnessing such a supernatural omen, the emperor had more shrines erected to worship him. Until the Lý dynasty, to facilitate the ceremonies, a shrine was erected at Minh Tao Village near the West Lake. The Lý emperors also bestowed on him the title 'Supreme Deity.' Successive dynasties continued to confer him with titles. Some said he was Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng." On the *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chí*, see entry 855, *Di San* Hán Nôm*, 1: 490–91.
75. On the *Viet* Dien**, see entry 4276, *Di San Hán Nôm*, 3:586–88. On the *Linh* Nam*, see entry 2012, *Di San Hán Nôm*, 2:206–207.
76. Stories of some of these gods are recorded in the *Việt Diên* and *Linh Nam*. So far no serious effort has been made to study these two important sources of Vietnamese myths and religion.
77. For Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng story, see Chan Hing-ho, 45–46; 148–49; 199–200.
78. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiểu* Thuyết**, 1:39.
79. Ibid., pp. 214–15.
80. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiểu Thuyết*, 2:115.
81. Ibid., p. 222.
82. See chapter two, n. 17.
83. Ibid.
84. For a study of the role of the monks in Sri Lanka, see Michael B. Carrithers, "'They Will Be Lords Upon the Island': Buddhism in Sri Lanka," in Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich, eds., *The World of Buddhism* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1984), pp. 133–58.
85. *Thiên Uyên*, 8a6–9b5.
86. *Thiên Uyên*, 9b6–10a6.
87. *Thiên Uyên*, 49a7–8.
88. *Thiên Uyên*, 49b2–3.
89. *Thiên Uyên*, 52a4–5.
90. *Thiên Uyên*, 52a10–b3.
91. *Thiên Uyên*, 47b2–6.

92. *Thien * Uyen**, 47b7–8.
93. *Thiên Uyên*, 47b11–48a2.
94. *Thiên Uyên*, 48b1–10.
95. *Thiên Uyên*, 49a1–2.
96. This is somewhat similar to the concept *gter-ma* in Tibetan Buddhism. However, we have too little related documentation in Vietnamese Buddhism to attempt any comparison or conclusion. On the *gter-ma* literature, see Tulku Thondup, *Hidden Teachings of Tibet* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1986).
97. *Thiên Uyên*, 51b1–2.
98. *Thiên Uyên*, 21a11.
99. *Thiên Uyên*, 22a8.
100. *Thiên Uyên*, 68b5–70a10.
101. *Thiên Uyên*, 69a6–69b7.
102. *Thiên Uyên*, 58a3–6.
103. *Thiên Uyên*, 58b2–6.
104. *Thiên Uyên*, 16b8–11.
105. *Thiên Uyên*, 65a7–65b1.
106. *Thiên Uyên*, 17b6–18a6.
107. *Thiên Uyên*, 27a8–27b7.
108. *Thiên Uyên*, 27b8–28a2.
109. *Thiên Uyên*, 32b2–7.
110. *Thiên Uyên*, 31a3–9.
111. *Thiên Uyên*, 67b6–9.
112. *Thiên Uyên*, 49b5–51a5.
113. *Thiên Uyên*, 25a11–25b1.
114. *Thiên Uyên*, 34b11–35a3. Kenneth Ch'en makes mention of the *Soushen chi* by Kan Pao of the Chin dynasty, in which four categories of magical feats are ascribed to the Buddhist magicians of China. Ch'en also refers to other eminent monks such as Fo Tu Teng and Kumarajiva* who also displayed their magical powers. See *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, pp. 272–74.
115. *Thiên Uyên*, 62b4–9.
116. *Thiên Uyên*, 64a8–64b2.
117. *Thiên Uyên*, 55a6–56b1. Note that Buddhists believe that those who have achieved a high level of spiritual attainment develop the supernatural power to choose their own births, including their parents and the time and place of birth. According to the *Lalitavistara Sutra**, for instance, the future Buddha made a careful search for the best situation. See P. E. de Foucaux, trans., *Le Lalitavistara: L'histoire traditionnelle de la vie du Bouddha Cakyamuni** [reprinted] (Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1988), pp. 20–28; *The Voice of the Buddha*, trans. Gwendolyn Bays (Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1983), 1:37–43.
118. Even nowadays, dramas reenacting the life story of Dao* Hanh* are part of the annual Buddhist festivals in northern Vietnam. See Hà Van* Tan*, *Chùa Viet* Nam*, p. 197. According to Hà Van Tân, the deification of eminent monks of the such as Đao Hanh, Không Lo*, and Minh Không started with the Tran* dynasty. Yet worshipping them as deities in temples in the style of tien* Phat* hau* Thánh" ("first Buddha, second sage") was a practice of the Lê dynasty. See *ibid.*, pp. 53 and 199.
119. *Thiên Uyên*, 59b9–60a1.
120. *Thiên Uyên*, 60a3–11.

121. *Thien * Uyen**, 17a3–17b1.
122. *Thiên Uyên*, 32b11–33a3.
123. *Thiên Uyên*, 38a5–38b5.
124. *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u*, 15b9–17a1.
125. See Takasaki Jikido*, "A History of East Asian Buddhist Thought: The Formation of a Sphere of Chinese-Canon-Based Buddhism," *Acta Asiatica* 66 (1994): 1–32.
126. For a study of various modes of reception of scripture in Buddhism, see Miriam Levering, "Scripture and Its Reception: A Buddhist Case," in Miriam Levering, ed., *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), pp. 58–101.
127. In daily chanting and special occasions, chapter 25, "The Universal Gateway of the Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds," is chanted. See Burton Watson, trans., *The Lotus Sutra** (Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 299–306.
128. *Thiên Uyên*, 17b10–11.
129. *Thiên Uyên*, 21b5.
130. *Thiên Uyên*, 26b5.
131. *Thiên Uyên*, 65a8–9.
132. *Thiên Uyên*, 16a7.
133. *Thiên Uyên*, 26b5; 27b2.
134. *Thiên Uyên*, 30b2. Kenneth Ch'en gave a vivid description of the teaching of *sutras** in medieval Chinese Buddhism that resembles the practice observed by the *Thiên Uyên*. Ch'en wrote: "In preaching, it was the practice of the Chinese masters to mount a high platform and lecture on their favorite text. Thus we read about a certain Pao-liang, who lectured on the *Nirvanasutra** eighty-four times; the *Vimalakirti**, twenty times; the *Srimala**, forty-two times; the *Satyasiddhi*, fourteen times; and ten or more times on each of the following *sutras*: *Prajna-sutras**, *Lotus*, *Dasabhumika**, *Amitayus**, *Surangama**, etc. The audience numbered more than 3,000 clergy and laymen. Such a lecturer would wander from temple to temple lecturing to large audiences of monks and laymen." See *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, p. 241.
135. *Thiên Uyên*, 37a1–2.
136. *Thiên Uyên*, 46a8–9.
137. *Thiên Uyên*, 64a1.
138. A student asked: "I am sick because all sentient beings are sick. Why should you have an aversion to sound and form?" Dieu* Nhân quoted the *sutra*, saying: "If someone sees me through form or looks for me through sound, that person is following a wrong path and cannot see the Tathagata*." This is obviously the famed verse in the *Diamond Sutra*. *Thiên Uyên*, 67a8.
139. *Thiên Uyên*, 29a9; 26b5.
140. *Thiên Uyên*, 29a9.
141. *Thiên Uyên*, 54a6–10.
142. *Thiên Uyên*, 35b10–11.
143. *Thiên Uyên*, 59a3–4.
144. See, for instance, Lama Anagorika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1974), pp. 17–47.
145. The practice of mantras is also widespread in Hinduism, ancient and modern. For a brief but useful survey, see Harold Coward and David Goa, *Mantra: Hearing the Divine in India* (Chambersburg: Anima Books, 1991).

146. Chanting mantras and *dharanis* * is part of both daily and occasional practice and ritual in modern Vietnamese Buddhism.

147. For a general discussion on Pure Land Buddhism, see the entry "Ching-T'u," by David W. Chappell, in Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 3:329–33. Pure Land is probably the most common form of practice in Vietnamese Buddhism. Unfortunately, there has not been any serious study on this topic. According to Hà Van* Tân*, a statue of Amitabha* has been recently found at Hoàng Kim Temple in Hà Tây Province. This statue was cast in 1099 by Tri Bát, who belonged to the twelfth generation of the Vinitaruci* school. His "Verse to Amitabha" inscribed on the socle of the statue shows that Tri Bát had faith in Amitabha and his Western Paradise. See Hà Van Tân, *Chùa Viet* Nam*, p. 39.

148. See, for instance, the short treatise on Buddha-contemplation (niem* Phat*) written by Tran* Thái Tông, the founding emperor of the Trần dynasty and Buddhist leader of medieval Vietnam. See *Khóa Hu' Luc** [Instructions on Emptiness], Lower Book, 18b7–20b4, vol. 7 of the *Việt Nam Phat* Dien* Tùng San* [Collected Vietnamese Buddhist Texts].

149. *Thiên* Uyên**, 30b1–2. Although Pure Land belief and practice has always been a central element in Vietnamese Buddhism, Pure Land has never developed into a "school" the way it has in China and Japan. There is no evidence that the works of the Chinese Pure Land masters have been known, studied, or commented on by any Vietnamese Buddhist author. From my observation, the practice of contemplating and reciting Buddha-name seems always to involve Amitabha Buddha. Hà Van Tân (*Chùa Việt Nam*, p. 39) reports that of the three Buddha statues of the Lý dynasty recently discovered, one is a statue of Amitabha Buddha. It was cast in 1099 under the supervision of Tri Bát (1048–1117), who also composed the "A Di Đà Phật Tung*" [Amitabha Buddha Chant], which was carved on the base of the statue. In this chant Tri Bát expressed faith in Amitabha's* salvific power and rebirth in his Pure Land. Note that according to the *Thiên Uyên*, Tri Bát belonged to the twelfth generation of the Vinitaruci* school.

150. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), pp. 14–16.

151. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

152. *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

153. See T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory, eds., *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), p. 150.

154. *Ibid.*

155. *Ibid.*

156. *Ibid.*, p. 163.

157. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

158. In addition to bibliographical works that have been referred to, see also Trần Van Giáp, *Contribution à l'Étude des Livres Bouddhiques Annamites conservés à l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* (Tokyo: La Société Internationale du Bouddhisme au Japon, 1943). This is a useful bibliography, although most of the books listed are translations of Chinese works.

159. Except, of course, a few revival movements of the sort both in Vietnam and overseas. However, most of these movements consist of a single "Zen master" with obscure Zen training or connection who claims that he is transmitting

"Patriarchal Zen." There are not enough elements to constitute a Zen institution or community.

160. Contemporary Japanese Zen has been well documented. For a study of contemporary Korean Zen, see Robert E. Buswell, Jr., *The Zen Monastic Experience: Buddhist Practice in Contemporary Korea* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). In this book Buswell studies the Zen practice at Songgwang-sa, a major Korean Buddhist monastery. There is definitely no equivalent Zen institution in contemporary Vietnam.

161. Foulk wrote, "The realism that characterizes the records of the patriarchs' words and deeds is often so finely detailed that it betrays the works as fiction. The point is particularly apt in cases where not only the exact words but also the unspoken thought of a master are quoted verbatim. Raconteurs, poets, and novelists are privy to the innermost thoughts and feelings of their subjects; mere reporters are not." See "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice," p. 153. I am aware that one can argue that the Zen recorded sayings and encounter dialogues should not be taken literally but rather as a mode of Zen discourse. Even so it still does not contradict my conclusion. See also note 162 below.

162. I have been arguing throughout this study that a continuous, cohesive history of Vietnamese Buddhism is only a construction based on the model of Chinese Zen history. On discontinuity in history as discussed by Michel Foucault, see, for instance, Gary Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Scientific Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 246–49.

163. Daya Krishna, in his analysis of the Vedanta * "school" of Indian philosophy/religion from various perspectives, also comes to the conclusion that one cannot find an entity that corresponds to that designation. In other words, there is no Vedanta "school" outside the imagination of the traditionalists. I found Krishna's observation that instead of "schools" there are only styles of thinking particularly useful. See Daya Krishna, *Indian Philosophy. A Counter Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 163–71.

Part II—

The *Thien** *Uyen** *Tap** *Anh*:

A Translation

1. Bhisagarjitasvararaja* Buddha was a Buddha of ancient times. On this Buddha, see, for instance, Leon Hurvitz, trans., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 279–80. In Zen literature his name is used symbolically to refer to time immemorial.
2. According to Buddhist cosmology, the Saha-world* is the world where Buddha Sakyamuni* carries on his salvific activities. See, for instance, Randolph Kloetzli, "Buddhist Cosmology," in Eliade et al., eds. *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 4:113–119.
3. On the six migrations or the six realms of rebirth, see, for instance, John S. Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretations* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1995), pp. 28–31.
4. The four characteristics are suffering, impermanence, no-selfness, and emptiness.
5. Turtle-hair and hare-horn are terms in Buddhism indicative of things that exist only in terms of name and concepts but not in the true sense. In this context, I believe the writer meant he and the Zen man were talking about the unreality of the phenomenal world.

6. Kien * So' Temple was probably one of the most important sites in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism. A careful study of this temple, both historically and archaeologically, will definitely help clarify many obscure points in the study of the history of the formation of Zen in Vietnam. The *Thien* Uyen** tells us that Kiên So' Temple started with Cam* Thành. See *Thiên Uyên*, 5b4; *Dai* Nam*, 2b4. The *Viet* Dien** recorded that formerly there was a certain Zen Master named Chí Thành, who resided at Kiên So' Temple. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2:35, 205. Chí Thành might have been Cam Thành's original name. According to Cam Thành's biography, his original Dharma name was Lap* Đứ'c. The name Cam Thành was given to him by Vô Ngôn Thông. Note that the meanings of Chí Thành ["Utmost Sincerity"] and Cam Thành ["Moving Sincerity"] are very similar. Kiên So' was closely connected with the cult of Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng [The Celestial King of Phù Đông], a legendary hero of ancient Vietnam. Kiên So' thus can be considered a sacred place in Vietnamese religion.
7. According to the *Đại Nam Nhất* Thông* Chí*(28: 11), "Bac* Ninh Province, section Kiên Trí Diên Cách," Tiên Du District was located ten *li* to the northeast of Từ' So'n Province. Its width from east to west measured eighteen *li*, from north to south, ten miles. Nowadays it is known as Tiên So'n Prefecture, Hà Bac Province.
8. *Không học** 空學 [Ch: *kong xue*] in the original text, a term that literally means "the study of Emptiness." Since Emptiness (*sunyata**) is a concept that looms largest in Mahayana* Buddhist philosophy and soteriology, the term Emptiness has become an epithet for Buddhism for the Buddhists.
9. Wuzhou was a subprefecture of Jinhua in Zhejiang, China, now Wuchuan District, Guizhou.
10. For Vô Ngôn Thông's biography in the *Chuangeng lu*, see T 51.268a28–b13. Thông's biography in the *Chuangeng lu* is shorter than the one recorded in the *Thiên Uyên*. It also did not record the date of his death. See also *Wudeng huiyuan*, upper volume, pp. 195–96.
11. Mazu Daoyi (709–788) was a native of Hanzhou. According to the *Chuangeng lu*, during the Kaiyuan period of the Tang, while practicing Zen at Hengyue he met Nanyue Huairang (677–744) and subsequently received the mind-seal from him. During his lifetime Mazu trained around 140 enlightened students who each later became leaders of Buddhist communities in various localities. In the first month of the fourth year of the Zhenyuan era he went up to Mount Shimen at Jianchang to practice *sutra**-circumambulation. He felt pleased with the scene and made a prophecy to his attendant that the place would be a site for his burial in the following month. During the second month of the same year, he felt a bit indisposed, took a bath, sat in the lotus posture, and passed away. See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.245c23–246c7; *Zenshushi* kenkyu**, 1:377–382, 387–396.
12. Jiangxi is located on the northern bank of the middle section of the Yangtze. Under the Tang it belonged to the southern part of Jiangnan.
13. The *Đại Nam* has *huai* 懷. Baizhang Huaihai (749–814) was a native of Changluo, Fuzhou. At a tender age, he left home to become a monk. Subsequently, he received the mind-seal from Mazu Daoyi. According to tradition, Baizhang established the monastic rules for the Zen tradition. The most famous principle of these rules is "A day without work—

a day without eating." He died on the seventeenth day of the first month of the ninth year of the Yuanhua era of the Tang at the age of ninety-five. For a complete biography of Baizhang, see *Chuandeng lu*, T. 51.249b26–250c27. For a detailed discussion on Baizhang's life and teaching, see *Zenshushi * kenkyu**, 2:327–95. The Vietnamese Buddhist tradition claims to have adopted Baizhang's monastic disciplines. For a discussion of Baizhang monastic discipline, see *ibid.*; a brief discussion in English can be found in Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, trans. Paul Peachy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963).

14. *Pháp môn* 法門 [Ch: *fa men*] or *Dharma-paryaya** in Sanskrit. For a brief but comprehensive discussion of the term *paryaya**, see Gadjin M. Nagao, *Madhyamika* and Yogacara**, trans. Leslie S. Kawamura (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 132-133. The term *paryaya* means synonym, method, etc. For instance, there is a section in the *Madhyantavibhaga** called *Sunyataparyaya** where all the synonyms of *sunyata** (Emptiness) are enumerated and explained. See Gadjin M. Nagao, ed., *Madhyantavibhaga-Bhasya** (Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1964), pp. 23–24. *Dharma-paryaya* is rendered into Chinese as *fa men* (or *pháp môn* in Vietnamese) and has the meaning of discourse or teaching. See, for instance, Edward Conze, *Vajracchedika* Prajnaparamita** (Roma: Is. M. E. O., 1974), p. 32; Conze, *Materials for a Dictionary of the Prajnaparamita Literature* (Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1973), p. 210.

15. See *Chuandeng lu*, T.51.250a17: "A monk asked Zen Master Baizhang, 'What is the sudden enlightenment method of the Great Vehicle?' Baizhang said, 'You people should first calm down all karmic conditions, cease all affairs, both wholesome and unwholesome, both mundane and supramundane. As regards all phenomena, don't keep track of them, don't think of them with attachment, let go of your bodies and minds, let them be free. Let your minds be like wood and stone, do not conceptually construct anything. Let the mind have no activity. When the mind-ground is empty, the sun of wisdom spontaneously appears. It is like the sun coming out when there are no clouds.'"

16. Yangshan Huiji was a disciple of Guishan Lingyou (771–853). They were the founders of the Guiyang Zen school. For a complete biography of Yangshan, see *Chuandeng lu*, 11:282a28–283c26. For a short discussion of the Guiyang school, see Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, pp. 107–108.

17. *Thien* duyet** or *thien* duyêt thuc** 禪悅食 [Ch: *chan yue shi*] means having the joy of meditation as food. An advanced meditation practitioner does not eat coarse food but only uses the joy of Dharma or joy of meditation to nourish his body and mind. See, for instance, the *Lotus Sutra**, "Chapter on Receipt of Prophecy by Five Hundred Disciples" (*Pancabhikhsusatavyakaranaparivarta**): *tena khalu punarbhiksava* samayena tasmin buddhaksetre* tesam* sattvanam* dvavaharau* bhavisyatah* katamau dvau? yaduta dharmapriyaharo* dhyanaapriyaharasca** (And at that time, Bhiksus, the living beings of that Buddha-realm, shall feed on two kinds of food, namely, the joy of Dharma-joy and the joy of meditation)." See P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Saddharmapundarikasutra**. Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, no. 6 (Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute, 1960), p. 129. For an English translation from the Chinese version, see Hurvitz, trans., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, p. 159.

18. *Dien* bich* 面壁 [Ch: *mianbi*] comes from the legend of Bodhidharma, the alleged founder of Zen Buddhism in China. According to the Zen tradition, Bodhidharma came to China during the time of Liang Wudi (502–550) to

teach Buddhism. When he found out that nobody could understand his teaching, Bodhidharma went to dwell at Shaolin Temple on Mount Songshan. He sat silently all day facing the wall, so people called him "Wall-Facing Brahmana *." For Bodhidharma's biography, see *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.217a10–220b33. For a discussion on the practice of "wall contemplation," see McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 112–15. In Vietnam the Vô Ngôn Thông school was also called the *Quán Bích* (Wall Contemplation) school.

19. Nanyue Huairang (677–744), whose family name was Du, was a native of Jinzhou. According to the *Chuandeng lu*, he became a monk at the age of fifteen and studied the *Vinaya* diligently. Later he came to study with Huineng (638–713), the Sixth Patriarch, and served him unstintingly for fifteen years. In the second year of the Xiantian era he moved his abode to Panruo Temple at Hengyue. He died on the eleventh day of the eighth month of the third year of the Tianbao era. For a complete biography of Huairang, see *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.240c7–241a26. For a brief discussion on his life, lineage, and teaching, see *Zenshushi* kenkyu**, 1:382–87.

20. Compare to an instruction by Nanyue Huairang: "All phenomena are born from mind. Mind is noncreated and phenomena have nowhere to abide. If you realize the mind ground, your actions are unobstructed. Unless you meet someone with superior faculties, you should be careful with what you say." *Chuandeng lu*, 5:241a13–15.

21. A stupa is a tower-like shrine built to house scriptures or sacred objects. For a study of the origin, development, and meaning of a stupa in Buddhism, see Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Psycho-cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stupa* (Emeryville: Dharma Publishing, 1976). See also Giuseppe Tucci, *Stupa: Art, Architectonics and Symbolism*, trans. Uma Marina Vesce (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1988). For a study of stupas in Vietnam, see Nguyen* Van* To*, "Le stoupa (Tháp) en pays annamite," *BSEMT* 14, (July–Sept. 1934): 466–67.

22. The original text reads as follows: *thò'i duong* bao* lich* nhi* niên bình ngo* chính nguyệt* thap* nhi nhât* nhi thập bát niên huu* chí khai hu'u dinh* suu* nhi thập tú' niên* 時唐寶曆二年丙午正月十二日二十八年又至開祐丁丑二十四年. The meaning of the first thirteen characters is clear: "The time was the twelfth day of the first month of the second year, *bình ngo*, of the Baoli era." The confusion lies in the last fourteen characters, which mean "twenty-eight years. Again until the year *dinh su'u* of the Khai Huu* era (1337), twenty-four years." See, inter alia, Émile Gaspardone, "Bibliographie annamite," p. 174. Lê Manh* Thát suggests some solution to this. However, I found his arguments unconvincing. See *LMT*, p. 169, nn. 14 and 15.

23. Actually, according to the Vietnamese tradition, Vô Ngôn Thông was the founder of the second Zen sect of Vietnam; the first one was founded by Vinitaruci*, who arrived in Vietnam two centuries before Vô Ngôn Thông. (Vinitaruci arrived in Vietnam in 580, whereas Vô Ngôn Thông arrived in 820.) This remark by the compiler and the fact that the lineage of the Vô Ngôn Thông school was recorded before that of the Vinitaruci school only shows that the compiler himself might be an adherent of the Vô Ngôn Thông school. For a general history of the development of these two schools, see, for instance, Nguyễn Lang, *Viet* Nam Phat* Giáo Su* Luan**, 1:111–86; "Le Bouddhisme," pp. 243–44, 235–36; Durand, "Introduction du Bouddhisme au Viet-Nam," pp. 797–800; Mai Tho* Truyen*, "Le Bouddhisme au Viet-Nam," pp. 801–10; Mat* The*, *Viet Nam Phât Giáo Su' Luân*, pp. 75–106; Nguyễn Tài Thu' et al., *Lich* Su'*

*Phat * Giáo Viet* Nam*, pp. 93–121. Note that these discussions are all traditional and historically uncritical.

24. Mount Phât Tích at Tiên Du Prefecture is also called Mount Tiên Du. Legend has it that once when a woodcutter named Vu'o'ng Chat* went to the mountain to collect firewood, he happened to see two old men playing chess under a pine tree. Vu'o'ng Chât laid down his axe and stood there watching. The game finished, he looked again but did not see anybody around, and the handle of his axe was burned. Therefore, the name of the mountain was changed into Mount Lan* Kha (Burnt Handle Mountain). See also *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (28:29–30), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Mountains and River"; *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c**, 1:22.

25. *Trì tung** 誦經 [chanting the *sutras**].

26. See *Saddharmapundarika-Sutra**, chapter "Skillful Means," in Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, pp. 22–47.

27. That the Buddha only appears entering nirvana after accomplishing his salvific works is a very significant point in Mahayana* Buddhist Buddhism. According to this, the historical Buddha that living beings see is only one of countless manifestations or Emanation Bodies (*nirmanakaya**) of Buddhahood or Buddha in his true essence, i.e., his Truth Body (*Dharmakaya**). Buddha in his Truth Body is ever-present and is constantly carrying out his salvific activities. The act of entering nirvana is only a manifestation on the part of the Emanation Body. This is because from the Mahayana point of view, Buddha as Truth Body has attained enlightenment since time immemorial. In other words, Buddha in his essence (i.e., Truth Body) is truth or enlightenment itself. Acts of attaining enlightenment or entering nirvana are only salvific manifestations on the part of the Emanation Bodies. See, for instance, Nishio, *Buddhabhumi-Sutra**, part 1, pp. 6–7. For Silabhadra's* commentary, see *ibid.*, pp. 74–76; for Bandhuprabha's commentary, see *Buddhabhumi-Sastra**, T 26.307b24–308a1.

28. See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.205b26–28: "When the Buddha was about to enter nirvana, he told his disciple Mahakasyapa*, 'I entrust to you the pure Dharma eye, the wondrous mind of nirvana, the uncharacterizable true reality, the subtle true Dharma. You should preserve it well.'"

29. On Bodhidharma, see *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.217a10–220b33. For a discussion on the legend of Bodhidharma and his teaching, see, for instance, *Zenshushi* kenkyu**, 1:2–36; Sekiguchi Shindai, *Daruma daishi no kenkyu* [A Study on Bodhidharma] (reprinted. Tokyo: Shunjusha*, 1969); Heinrich Dumoulin, "Bodhidharma und die Anfänge des Ch'an-Buddhismus," *MN* 7 (1951): 67–83; McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 15–19; Bernard Faure, "Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm," *History of Religion* 25, 3 (1986): 187–98.

30. For a discussion of historical issues concerning the Sixth Patriarch and the *Platform Sutra**, see Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), esp. pp. 58–88. For the biography of the Fifth Patriarch (601–674), see *Chuangeng lu*, 3:222c26–223b5; McRae, *The Northern School*, pp. 35–36.

31. Hongren's instruction to Huineng: "Formerly, when the Great Master Bodhidharma first came to this country, people did not believe him yet. Therefore, he passed along this robe as a sign of faith, and generation after generation received it from one another. The principle is to transmit directly from mind to mind, enabling people to attain enlightenment and understand themselves.

Since the days of old, Buddhas transmitted true reality to each other, and enlightened teachers intimately handed the original mind to each other. Now, the robe has become an object of contention; therefore, let it stop with you and don't transmit it." See *Platform Sutra* *, T 48.394a28. This is also recorded with some slight differences in *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.223a20. Our text obviously took it from the *Chuangeng lu*.

32. This line is taken from a verse traditionally thought to be uttered by Bodhidharma at the moment he transmitted the mind-seal to Huike. The entire verse reads: "I originally came to China, to transmit the teaching and save deluded beings. One flower opens into five petals, and the fruit ripens of itself." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.219c17–18. See also Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra*, p. 176. The third line, "one flower opens into five petals," is traditionally interpreted as Bodhidharma's prophetic statement about the later division of Zen into five schools: Linji, Caodong, Yunmen, Fayan, and Guiyang. For a brief discussion on these five schools, see Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism* pp. 106–22.

33. According to the *Chuangeng lu*, in his final instruction to Huike, Bodhidharma also said: "In hidden accord with the Secret Realization, thousands and thousands have an affinity with it. When you promulgate the Dharma, don't take lightly those who are not yet enlightened." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.219c15.

34. See Venerable Baozhi's "Fourteen Periods of Chanting" in *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.450c13–14: "The ignorant are bound by it, while for the wise ones all contrivances are empty. The Literalist Disciples in contact with defilement got bogged down, whereas the Bodhisattva has perfectly clear eyes." See also *Biyuan lu*, T 48.182a5.

35. According to Tran* Van* Giáp, it is the Dinh* Thien* Temple, which was another name for Pháp Vân Temple. It is, however, not the same with the Pháp Vân Temple, which was situated at Van Giáp Village, Thu'o'ng* Phúc Prefecture, Hà Đông Province. Before the Trần dynasty (1225–1400), it was called Thiên Đĩnh Temple. See "Le Bouddhisme," pp. 244 and 236, n. 3. Lê Manh* Thát suggests that "Đĩnh Thiên" might have been a scribal error for the correct form "Thiên Đĩnh," which denotes Thiên Đĩnh Temple at Khu'o'ng Tu' Village, Siêu Loai* District, now Thuan* Thành, Hà Bac*. Thát might be correct, since it is written in the *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi*(28:73), "Bac Ninh Province, section on Temples and Monasteries": "The Diên Ưng Temple at Khu'o'ng Tu' Village, Siêu Loai District houses four statues of Pháp Vân, Pháp Vu*, Pháp Lô, and Pháp Diên* which have some supernatural traces about them. During the Trần dynasty Mac* Dinh* Chi built a temple with a hundred compartments, a nine-story stupa, a nine-span bridge; the old foundations still remain. According to the *Pháp Vân Phar* Truyen** [Story of the Buddha of Pháp Vân], when Si* Nhip* was Prefect stationed in Luy Lâu, there lived a monk named Khâu Đà La on the mountain to the west of the city. Once Khâu Đà La violated A Man, the daughter of Tu Đĩnh. A Man became pregnant and subsequently gave birth to a girl. Khâu Đà La hid the girl in a large tree trunk deep in the mountain. Later, the tree was uprooted by a storm and drifted on the river to Luy Lâu. People were struck by the event, pulled it out of the water, carved it into four Buddha statues, and built a temple called Thiên Đĩnh, now Diên Ưng Temple, to house those statues for worship. Afterward, prayers for rain got responses each time. Therefore, they named the statues Pháp Vân, Pháp Vu, Pháp Lô, and Pháp Diên

[which mean Dharma Cloud, Dharma Rain, Dharma Thunder, and Dharma Lightning]. According to the *Dai * Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (27:75), there were also four temples bearing the names Pháp Vân, Pháp Vu*, Pháp Lôì, and Pháp Dien* situated in the vicinity of the two villages of Van* Giáp and Gia Phúc of Thu'o'ng* Phúc District. It is also written in the *Thap* Di Ký* [Ten Posthumous Records] of Lý Te* Xuyên: 'People at Co* Châu used to gather together annually at Thien* Dinh* Temple to celebrate the Buddha's birthday. Under Emperor Tran* Nghe* Tông the temple was given a title honor. The *Lê Chronicle* recorded that in the sixth year of the Thái Hoa* era (1448), Lê Nhân Tông sent Grand Commandant Lê to Cô Châu to bring the Pháp Vân statue to Báo Thiên Temple in the capital to pray for rain."

36. Belongs to a district in the province of Bac* Ninh. Siêu Loai* Village was formerly called Tho* Loi* Village. Its name was changed into Siêu Loai in the first year of the Long Chu'o'ng Bao* Tu* era of the Trần dynasty (1266) following the birth of Prince Kien* Đứ'c whose mother hailed from this village. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 244, n. 2.

37. Nothing is known about this monk. According to the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:10b3, Đông Lâm Temple was built in the second year of the Long Thuy* Thái Bình era (1055), but it does not tell us the exact location except that it was on Mount Đông Cúu. According to this biography it must have been in Dien* Lành.

38. *Nhap* that** 入室 [Ch: *ru shi*] is a practice in Zen Buddhism: an advanced student, after contemplating on the essence of Zen for a long time, enters into the teacher's room to enquire about truth.

39. *A tang* ky* kiep** 阿僧期劫 or *asamkhyeyakalpa* in Sanskrit. This metaphorically means that Buddhahood can only be attained after a long period of accumulating both merit (*punya**) and wisdom (*jnana**). On this concept of three *asamkhyeyakalpa*, see inter alia, Randy Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), p. 87; Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakosa* de Vasubandhu*, chap. 3, p. 209; Étienne Lamotte, *Enseignement*, p. 296, n. 37.

40. *Tú'c tâm tú'c Phat** 即心即佛 [Ch: *jixin jifó*], one of the fundamental teachings of Zen, made famous by Mazu Daoyi. For a brief interpretation of Mazu's teaching including this principle, see Yanagida Seizan, *Zen shiso**, pp. 121–30.

41. See, for instance, *Lankavatara-Sutra**, T 16.498c17–19: "During the time between the night I attained perfect enlightenment until the night I entered into Nirvana, I did not speak a word. Nor had I spoken or am currently speaking. Nonspeaking is the Buddha's way of speaking." See also Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *The Lankavatara* Sutra** (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1932), pp. 123–24.

42. Zen Master Dazhu Huihai said: "Those who search texts to gain enlightenment become more bogged down. Those who search for Buddhahood through austerities are all deluded. Those who seek Buddhahood apart from mind are outsiders. Those who think that mind is Buddha are deluded demons." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.248a1–3.

43. Our text is somewhat corrupted here. The two characters *su' vân* on 7a6 are obviously superfluous. See *Dai Nam*, 4a3.

44. A Zen practitioner asked Zen Master Dazhu Huihai: "The mind itself is Buddha, which mind is Buddha?" The Master said: "Please point out to me anything you suspect is not Buddha." The man had no reply. The Master continued: "If you reach enlightenment, all phenomena [are Buddha]. If you do

not awaken, you're forever at odds with everything." See *Chuangeng lu*, 6:247a22–24.

45. *Huatou* 話頭 means a meditation saying. For a brief discussion of this concept, see, for instance, Robert E. Buswell, Jr., *The Korean Approach to Zen* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983), pp. 68–69.
46. According to the *Tây Ho* Chí*, section on "Ancient Vestiges": "The Khai Quoc* Temple was located on the banks of Nhi* Hà River to the north of the West Lake [Tây Ho*], now Yên Phu* Landing Stage. It had the name Khai Quốc because formerly King Nam De* (r. 544–548) of the Former Lý dynasty (544–602) had it built on the old foundation of An Tri Temple under the Hong* Bàng dynasty. Afterward it was repaired by Nguyen* Van* Phong of Tù' Liêm, an eminent monk under the Ngô dynasty. Under the two dynasties Đinh and Lê, National Preceptor Ngô Khuông Viet* used to be the abbot there. The temple was also repaired under the [Later] Lý dynasty." The section on "Temples and Monasteries" in the *Tây Hồ Chí* again recorded: "The Khai Quốc Temple was built by King Nam Đê of the Former Lê dynasty based on the old foundation of the An Tri Temple. The temple was located on the Yên Phu Landing Stage on the northern banks of the river outside the dam to the north of the pond. When the Lý moved their capital there, they had the temple repaired. Eminent monks such as Lý Thao* Đu'ông, Ngô Thông Bien*, Viên Hoc*, and Tinh* Không each had once made his abode there. The emperors of the Tran* dynasty used to visit it." See *LMT*, p. 175, n. 1.
47. Formerly Hoa Lu' was the capital of Vietnam. It was Lý Thái To* who decided in 1010 to move the capital to Dai* La and then renamed it Thang* Long. *Viet Su* Lu'o'c**, 2: 2b8–10 commented on this particular event as follows: "The Emperor [Lý Thái Tô] once found the Hoa Lu' Citadel too confined for space and transferred his capital to the Đai La Citadel. During the transfer, while the royal galley was moored at the foot of the citadel, a yellow dragon appeared aboard it, hence the citadel was renamed Thang Long (which means "Rising Dragon"). See also *Toàn Thu'*, 2:207. See Lý Thái To's* "Thiên Đê Chieu*" [Edict Announcing the Moving of the Capital], in *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:229–31.
48. According to the *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 6.65: "During the Lý and Trần dynasties Vinh* Khang Prefecture was established in Tù' Liêm District." As regards Tù' Liêm District, it is written in the *Dai* Nam Nhất Thống* Chí* (27:12–13): "Hanoi Province," "Tù' Liêm District, its width from the east to the west measured eleven miles, from north to south measured fourteen miles. It is located a mile east of Vinh Thuan* Prefecture, ten miles to the west of Đan Phung* District, five miles from Thanh Trí District, Thu'ông* Tín Province, nine miles to the north of the bank of Nhi* Hà River across the border of Đông Ngan* Prefecture, Bac* Ninh Province, and An Lăng Prefecture, So'n Tây Province. Under the Han it became part of the Luy Lâu District, which was changed into Giao Chi* [Jiaozhi] District under the Sui. In the fourth year of the Wude era of the Tang dynasty (621) it was separated and added to Tù' Liêm Prefecture. (. . .) It was so named because the Tù' and the Liêm Rivers were in that district."
49. "Someone asked Zen Master Qiru: 'When birth and death come, how can we avoid it?' The Master answered: 'Let them come.' The man continued: 'What does it mean by being taken away by birth and death?' The Master replied: 'Ah ha ha.' See *Chuangeng lu*, 21:372c12–13. "Someone asked Dasui Fazhou: 'What do we do when birth and death come?' Fazhou answered: 'When

tea is served, drink it; when rice is served, eat it." Ibid., 286a22–23; also 358c16–17.

50. Actually, Chân Lu'u was his personal name. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban * Ky*," 1:181.

51. According to the *Thái Bình Hoàn Vu** Ký, Thu'ò'ng Lac* District was later changed into An Thuan* District and was located at the area southeast of Châu Ái. According to Đào Duy Anh in his *Dat* Nu'óc Viet* Nam Qua Các Đò'i* (The Country of Vietnam Through Generations), Thu'ò'ng Lac District belongs to the present-day Tĩnh* Gia District, Thanh Hoá Province. See *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:208, n.2.

52. This seems to be very common in Vietnamese Buddhism. It shows that during these centuries both Confucianism and Buddhism flourished in Vietnam. It also implies that for a Vietnamese intellectual or spiritual person at that time, Confucianism represented the mundane or ordinary way, whereas Buddhism represented the supramundane or extraordinary way.

53. *Trúc phan** 天竹 [Ch: *tianzhu*], which means India.

54. Đinh Tiên Hoàng, whose personal name was Bô* Linh*, was the founder of the Đinh dynasty (968–980). Bô Linh hailed from Hoa Lu' and was of humble origin. He was the first Vietnamese king who used his own reign style instead of using the current Chinese one. Bô Linh was also the first king to enlist the help of the Buddhist monks.

55. The *Viet Su** Lu'o'c*, 1:17a9, recorded: "He [Bô Linh] instituted the court hierarchy and ranks for monks." Eminent monks such as Ngô Chân Lu'u, Tru'ò'ng Ma Ni, and Dang* Huyen* Quang all held official positions in the Đinh court. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 1:181. See also "Le Bouddhisme," p. 257 and n. 1 on the same page; *Lich* Chieu* Hien* Chu'o'ng Loai* Chí*, p. 7. The *Toàn Thu'*, 1:181, also recorded that "In the second year of the Thái Bình era ranks for administrative and military officers, monks, and Daoist masters were first initiated," and "General Supervisor of Monks (*Tang* Thong**) Ngô Chân Lu'u was bestowed the sobriquet Great Master Khuông Viet*." Thus, Khuông Việt might have been made Tang* Thong* in 971. On the origin of this rank in Chinese Buddhism, the *Dasong seng shilüe* records: "When the Yao Qin established its administrative system in Guanzhong, they set up the rank "Monk Leader" (*Tang Chinh*) to be the head of Buddhism. When the Wei took over the north, they changed it into General Supervisor of Monks to supervise the monks. Although a new name was created, the position was the same as before." See *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.243a19–b12. For a gloss on the ranks of monk officials in medieval Vietnam, see *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, 14:135.

56. Lê Dai* Hành, whose personal name was Hoàn, was the founder of the Former Lê dynasty (980–1009). Hoàn hailed from Tru'ò'ng Châu and was made the Commander of the Ten Armies by Đinh Tiên Hoàng in 971. When the latter was murdered by Do* Thích in 979, Ve* Vu'ò'ng, the Crown Prince, was still an infant. Hoàn took up the regency and proclaimed himself viceroy. In 980, the Song sent Hou Renbao to fight Vietnam. In face of this danger, the court officials made Hoàn King lead the country to resist the Song. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 1:18b3–21a4; *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 1:188.

57. Mount Vê Linh is located at Kim Hoa District, Bac* Hà Prefecture. Kim Hoa was later changed into Kim Anh. Nowadays there is a Kim Anh

District in Vinh * Phú Province. According to the *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:474, n.1, Bình Lo* County is probably the present day Phù Lô. Mount Ve* Linh was considered to be a sacred site in Vietnamese popular religion, since it was believed to be the place where Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng [the Celestial King of Phù Đông], the legendary Vietnamese hero, left behind his armor to go back to Heaven after defeating the Yin armies. See Chan Hing-ho, *Viet* Nam Hán Văn Tiếu* Thuyết**, 2.2:39, 214.

58. According to the *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:474, n. 1, Bình Lô Prefecture is probably the present day Phù Lô area. See also *LMT*, pp. 178–79, n. 6.

59. Regarding the event of Khuông Viet's* dream, the *Việt Diên** records: "According to the *Thiên* Uyên**, under Emperor Lê Đại* Hành, the Great Master Khuông Viet*, whose family name was Ngô, used to visit Mount Vê Linh in Bình Lô District to enjoy its beautiful landscapes and had a mind to build a temple there. One night he saw in a dream a spirit clad in golden armor holding in his left hand a golden lance and in his right hand a jeweled stupa, with a retinue of over ten beings all fearsome looking. The spirit came before him and said, 'I am the great celestial King Vaisravana*. My attendants are all *yaksas**. By order of the Lord of Heaven, I come to this country to protect its people. I have a karmic affinity with you, so I have come to discuss this task with you.' Khuông Việt woke up frightened and heard roarings in the mountain. He felt very apprehensive. The next morning, he went into the mountain and found a giant tree with a dense foliage and crowned with five-colored clouds. Khuông Việt had some workmen fell it and carve it into the image of what he had seen in his dream. He also had a temple erected." See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiếu Thuyết* 1.1:115, 222; 2.2:39, 214. The *Dai* Nam Nhất* Thông* Chí*(27:63–64) "Hanoi Province, section on Temples and Shrines," records a slightly different version of Khuông Viet's dream in the record of the Shrine of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng: "The Shrine of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng was situated at Ninh Tao* Village, Từ' Liêm Prefecture. His title was the Celestial King of Vaisravana. Around the Thiên Phúc era (980–988) during the reign of Lê Đại Hành, Great Master Khuông Việt saw him in a dream, so Khuông Việt had a statue of him cast and a temple erected on Mount Vê Linh to worship him. When the Song army invaded our country, King Lê Đại Hành sent an envoy to the temple to earnestly pray for victory. When the two armies were about to engage in battle, an immortal suddenly emerged from the waves, his hair disheveled and his eyes wide open. The Song troops were terrified and fled. Witnessing such a supernatural omen, the king had more shrines erected to worship him." Until the Lý dynasty, to facilitate the ceremonies, a shrine was erected at Minh Tao Village near the West Lake. The Lý kings also bestowed on him the title "Supreme Deity." Successive dynasties continued to confer him with titles. Some said he was Phù Đông Thiên Vu'o'ng [The Celestial King of Phù Đông].

60. The *Việt Diên* also recorded this story, claiming to have quoted from the *Thiên Uyên*. However, there are some slight differences. See my discussion on this issue in Chapter Three.

61. Regarding this event the *Việt Su* Lu'o'c**, 1:19a8–9, recorded: "In the spring, the third month of the first year of the Thiên Phúc era (981), Hou Renbao's army arrived at Ngăn So'n, Chen Qinzuo's at Tây Ket*, Liu Cheng's at the Bach* Dang* River. The king himself took the command of the armies to oppose the Song. He had stakes planted across the river. The Song troops

withdrew to Ninh River and held it. The king feigned surrender to trick Renbao. The Song troops were defeated. Renbao was captured and killed. At the news of the defeat, Qinzuo withdrew." See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban * Ky*," 1:188.

62. The original text (*Thien* Uyen* 9a1*; *Dai* Nam*, 5b6) has *Nguyen* Giác*. This is further evidence that the *Thiên Uyên* must have been composed during the Tran* dynasty since the family name Lý is changed into Nguyễn.

63. For the biography of Do* Thuan* (or Pháp Thuân or Đô Pháp Thuân), see 49a3–49b4. This sentence seems to be out of place here.

64. *Giang lenh** 江令 [Ch: *jiangling*], which means "River Officer."

65. Concerning this event, the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 1:191–92, recorded: "[In the eighth year, *dinh* hoi**, of the Thiên Phúc era (987)], the Song again sent Li Jue for investiture. The emperor had Dharma Master Thuan* disguise himself as a boatman to greet him. Li Jue was very fond of literature. At that moment, there happened to be a pair of wild geese swimming in the river. Li Jue playfully hummed:

Geese, geese, a pair of wild geese,
Looking upward toward the sky.

Pháp Thuân, still holding on to the oar, continued the rhyme, chanting:

White feathers spread over blue water,
Red oars cutting through green waves.

Li Jue was quite impressed. When he arrived at the embassy he composed a poem dedicated to Pháp Thuân, which read:

I'm fortunate to live in a righteous era to help with royal affairs,
I've been by myself twice as an envoy to Jiaozhou.
Twice saying farewell to the east my heart's yearning,
I'm still looking toward Nam Viet* ten thousand miles away.
My horse steps on thick clouds, crossing stone waves,
My chariot leaves behind green mountain and my sails set.
Beyond the sky there is another sky which we must reflect
back on,
When the waves are quiet the autumn moon is seen
in the brooks.

Pháp Thuân submitted the poem to the King Lê Dai* Hành, who sent for Khuông Viêt to take a look at it. Khuông Viêt said: 'This shows that he honors Your Majesty no different than his own lord.' The king was pleased with that idea and rewarded Li Jue munificently. When Li Jue came to bid farewell, the king by royal edict had Khuông Viêt write him a farewell verse:

Embroidered sails extended in the auspicious sunshine and
the fair wind,
The spirit immortal returns to the sovereign's home.
Thousands of miles across the blue waves,
The road home to the ninth heaven is long.
How sad human feelings are as we face the cup of parting,
Fondly we try to hold you back, illustrious Sir,
We hope you will exercise your profound intent on behalf
of this southern land,
Report clearly to our sovereign.

Li Jue bowed and left." See also *Viet * Su* Tiêu Án*, pp. 96–97. The *Toàn Thu'* also recorded this farewell verse without giving a title. According to the compilers of the *Tho' Van* Lý Trần**, "Vu'ong Lang Qui" might have been the name of a style of song and not necessarily the title of the verse. See *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, 1:209, n. 1.

66. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (9a7) and the *Dai* Nam* (6a2) have *phan luyen* tinh tinh lang* 攀戀史星郎. See *Tho' Van Lý Trần* 1:209.

67. The compilers of *Tho' Van Lý Trần* (1:208) give us the date 933–1011 for Khuông Việt*, probably following the *Thiên Uyên* and the *Dai Nam*. Thus Khuông Việt must have been seventy-nine years old when he died rather than fifty-two according to our text. The dates 933–1011 seem to make better sense. Our text says that Khuông Việt was already in his forties during the reign of Đinh Tiên Hoàng (968–979), and he died in 1011. There is an interval of thirty-two years between the last year of Đinh Tiên Hoàng's reign (979) and the year when Khuông Việt died (1011). If Khuông Việt was already in his forties by 979, he could not have been fifty-two when he died in 1011. Lê Manh* Thát also argues that according to this biography, Khuông Việt was made General Supervisor of Monks when he was forty. Yet we learn from both *Việt Su' Lu'o'c** (1:17a10) and *Toàn Thu'* ("Ban* Ky*" 1:181) that not until the second year of the Thái Bình era (971) was the determination of ranks completed for administrative and military officers as well as monks and Taoist masters. Therefore, the appointment of Khuông Việt to the position of General Supervisor could not take place prior to 971. So, Khuông Việt must have been born in 930. Now, if Khuông Việt passed away in the second year of the Thuan* Thiên era of the Lý dynasty (1011), he must have been eighty-two years old. Both *Thiên Uyên* and *Dai Nam* recorded that Khuông Việt passed away at the age of fifty-two. Thát suggests that there is some scribal error here. Besides, if Khuông Việt died in 1011 at the age of fifty-two, he must have been born in 959. He could not have been Vân Phong's disciple, since Vân Phong died in 956 when Khuông Việt was not yet born. We learned that Khuông Việt came to study with Vân Phong when he was already a young man.

68. Lý Thái To* (974–1028) was the founder of the Lý dynasty. His personal name is Công Uan*. According to *Toàn Thu'*, Uân hailed from Co* Pháp Village, Tù' So'n District, Bac* Ninh Province (nowadays Tiên So'n District, Hà Bắc Province). Nothing is known about his family except the fact that his mother's maiden name was Pham* and he was adopted by the monk Lý Khánh Vân, the abbot of Cồ Pháp Temple. Afterward he studied with the monk Van* Hanh* and took office in the Lê court to the rank of Commandant of the Palace Guards. When Lê Ngoa* Trieu* (r. 1006–1009) died, the court officials supported Uan's* bid for the throne. Tran* Van* Giáp seems to follow this information. See *Lu'o'c Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, 1:138–39. However, according to the *Toàn Thu'*, when Lý Công Uân ascended the throne, he made his father Lord of Hien* Khánh, his uncle Lord of Vu* Dao*, his older brother Lord of Vu Uy, and his younger brother Lord of Đúc Thanh. This shows that Uân did know his father, siblings, and relatives. Trần Quốc* Vuong*, in his translation of the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c* (p. 64, n. 2), points out that according to a Chinese source, Lý Công Uân was originally from Fujian, China. Trần Quốc Vu'ong is of the opinion that Uân himself might have fabricated the legend to hide his Chinese origin in order

to win the people's support. Lý Khánh Vân was probably the real name of Van * Hanh*, since there was curiously no mention of him after Lý Công Uân* ascended the throne.

69. This is an expression borrowed from the *Yijing*. The dragon symbolizes the creative forces. "Hidden dragon" means that the creative force is still hidden beneath the earth and thus has no effect. It also means a great man who is still unrecognized. See, for instance, Wilhelm/Baynes, *The I Ching or Book of Changes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 7; Thomas Cleary, *The Taoist I Ching* (Boston: Shambala, 1987).

70. *Nam dien** 南面 [Ch: *nan mian*] (facing the south) means to become king, because the king sits facing the south. See, for instance, Burton Watson, section on Han Fei Tzu, p. 90 in *Basic Writings of Mo Tzu, Hsun Tzu and Han Fei Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964). According to the records of both the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c** (2:1a5–6) and the *Toàn Thu'* (2:207), it seems to be Van Hanh, and not Đa Bao*, who made this remark about Lý Thái Tô*. However, the *Việt Dien* U Linh Tap** did record some relationship between Lý Thái Tô and Đa Bao. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.2:35–36, 205–6; see also n. 72 below.

71. Mandate of Heaven (*thiên mệnh** 天命 or *tianming* in Chinese) is borrowed from the *Zhongyong* [Doctrine of the Mean], one of the Confucian Classics. This concept originated in the early Zhou period. H. G. Creel gives a very clear explanation: "The fundamental theory of the Chinese state and governmental authority in China is that of the Decree of Heaven. . . . The essence of the theory is simple. It holds that rulers are appointed by Heaven, that is, the supreme deity, for the purpose of ruling the world so as to bring about the welfare of men. The ruler may legitimately rule only so long as he does so in the interest of his subjects. The moment he ceases to bring about the welfare of the people, it is the right and duty of another to revolt and displace him, taking over the appointment of Heaven and administering the government for the public good." See H. G. Creel, *The Birth of China* (New York: F. Ungar, 1937), p. 367. For more recent and detailed discussion on the Mandate of Heaven by the same author, see H. G. Creel, *Origins of Statecraft in China*, vol. 1, *The Western Chou Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 81–100. See also A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (La Salle: Open Court, 1989), pp. 108 and 134.

72. Regarding Đa Bao's* visit to Kien* So' Temple and his relationship with Lý Công Uân, the *Việt Diên* recorded: "The *Báo Cu'c** *Truyen** recorded: He is said by tradition to be the incarnation of the local god of the Kiên So' Temple. Once Zen Master Chí Thành of Kiên So' Temple at Phù Dong* Village erected a temple to worship the local god on the right side of the temple and serve as a clean and quiet place for the praying to Buddha. As time goes on, things lose their origins, and the monks have not the faintest idea of them. The native population who believe in ghosts and devils will burn incense and pray and bow. The temple is called Dâm Tu* (Wicked Temple). When it was in need of repair, Zen Master Đa Bao had a mind to pull it down for its bad name. One day at the foot of the old tree beside the temple the following verse was seen:

Who preserves the Buddha's Law?
Let him hear the words in Jetavana.
Had I not arranged things well,

I would have been removed to somewhere else.
 The *Diamond Sutra* * is not to be carried along,
 The mystic sign is not to be divulged.
 To realize emptiness there are only a few,
 Practicing Buddhism becomes a punishment.

"Shortly afterward, the god again manifested himself in the following eight-line verse:

The Buddha's Law consists of great compassion,
 Its august light fills universes of galaxies.
 All gods are transformed by it,
 The three realms are suffused with it.
 Our teacher gives his order,
 How dare the spirits not obey?
 I daily make a vow to receive the command,
 To protect the Jetavana come what may.

"Amazed, the Master set up an expiatory altar with vegetarian food as an offering.

"Emperor Lý Thái To*, while still a hidden dragon [i.e., before he ascended the throne], knew that Master Đa Bao* was a lofty-minded man. He made himself a benefactor of the convent. After ascending the throne, he visited the temple. The Master greeted him and, when they passed by the side of the temple, asked in a loud voice: 'Buddhist, you're greeting the new Son of Heaven, aren't you?' 'I am,' a voice was heard, and on the bark of the tree appeared the following poem:

The emperor's virtues are as immense as heaven and earth,
 His authority and prestige awe the eight regions into obedience.
 In the underworld I benefit from his favor,
 My deep gratitude rises up in the sky.

"The emperor read it and took the hint. He on the spot conferred on the god the title of "Xung Thiên Than* Vu'o'ng" (Heaven Storming God King), and the poem vanished by itself. Amazed, the emperor had majestic-looking statues carved of the god together with eight attendants, and had them crimsoned and gilded. On the inaugural day, the following four-line poem was seen at the foot of the old tree:

A bowl of the water of merit,
 According to the circumstances transforms the world.
 The torch is beaming with radiance,
 Dark comes, the sun ascends the mountain.

"Đa Bao reported the poem to the emperor. The latter did not grasp its meaning. After eight reigns the Lý ceded the throne to the Tran*. The words *bát* 山 (mountain) under it, hinting that the sun ascends the mountain. What a wonderful oracle!" See "Xung Thiên Dung* Liet* Chiêu Ủng Uy Tín Dai* Vu'o'ng," in *Viet* Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.2:35–36, 205–206. Three versions of the same story are also recorded in the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái* with some slight differences. See *ibid.*, 1.1:126–27; 183–84; 225–26. However,

according to this book the story was taken from the *Co * Châu Pháp Ký* and *Ky* Đức Ký*. Yet according to the *Toàn Thu'*, 4, 35a4–b1, in Ngô Sy* Liên's comment on the decline of the Lý dynasty, the monk in the story happened to be Van* Hanh* and not Đa Bao*. Ngô Sy Liên wrote: "According to tradition, Emperor Lý Thái Tô*, after ascending the throne, returned with his retinue to Co* Pháp to visit the temple at Phù Dong* Village. There was a spirit who wrote a poem on the temple's pillar:

A bowl of the water of merit,
According to the circumstances transforms the world.
The torch is beaming with its radiance,
Dark comes, the sun ascends the mountain.

"Master Van Hanh showed the emperor the poem. After reading it, Lý Thái Tô remarked, 'This is a supernatural event, it is beyond our comprehension.' The poem was handed down among the people without really knowing its meaning. Not until the Lý declined did people know that the poem was true. Hue* Tông's name was San; it means that when the sun ascends the mountain, the shade disappears."

The *Viet* Su* Tiêu Á n*, p. 165, also recorded the event of Lý Thái Tô coming across this poem without saying who presented it.

73. The *Dai* Nam* (7a2) has Bà So'n, instead of Tiêu So'n. However, in Viên Chieu's* biography it is said that Viên Chieu* came to study with Dinh* Hu'ong on Mount Ba Tiêu. Thus, Bà So'n, Tiêu So'n, and Ba Tiêu So'n must be identical. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c**, 2:1b3, wrote: "Master Van Hanh told Lý Công Uan*, 'Recently, I heard of a strange oracle. I know the Lê shall fall and the Lý shall rise. Nobody of Lý name can equal you in compassion and tolerance and win people's hearts as you do. I am over seventy now. What I most regret is that I will not be able to live long enough to witness a reign of prosperity and peace.' Afraid that such words might leak out, Uân told Van Hanh to go and seek refuge at Bà So'n." The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:202, has "Tiêu So'n" instead of "Bà So'n." The *Việt Su' Tiêu Á n* (p. 104) also has Tiêu So'n. It is clear that "Tiêu So'n" under the Lê dynasty is "Bà So'n" under the Lý and Tran* dynasties.

The *Dai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (28:30–31) "Bac* Ninh Province" wrote: "Mount Tiêu So'n is located eleven miles southwest of Yên Phong District. On it were the temples of Thien* Tâm and Tru'ong Liêu. Once, Lý Thái Tô's* mother visited Tiêu So'n Temple, had intercourse with a god, and gave birth to him. The oracle of the kapok tree promulgated by Van Hanh, the National Preceptor of the Lý dynasty, has its origin here."

74. According to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:2b10, in 1010 Lý Thái Tô changed Cô Pháp into Thiên Đức Prefecture. See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:208.

75. Chu Minh Hamlet is located in Thiên Đức Prefecture. See *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:237, n.1.

76. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (10a9) and the *Dai Nam* (7a4) have *quoc* bảo hoà* 國師抱和. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:237.

77. Zen Master Baizhang Huaihai instructed: "Therefore, the patriarch said, 'Even when I have understood, it is no different from when I did not understand.'" See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.264b25. See also the "Judun song" by Venerable Long'ya: "After you have awakened you're like an ignorant man. Mindless, you're calm in spirit when faced with victory or defeat. Since the old days the

ancient worthies call themselves the poor religious men. How many of those are there in our school?" Ibid., 453a1–2.

78. According to both *Viet * Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:9a2, and *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:236, the year *canh dan** was the second year of the Sùng Hu'ng Dai* Bao* era and not the third. Lý Thái Tông (1000–1054), whose personal name was Phat* Mã, was the eldest son of Lý Thái To*. Lý Thái Tông reigned for twenty-seven years (1028–1054). He was well versed in history and literature. A devout Buddhist, he often got together with learned monks at Thiên Phúc Temple to discuss Buddhist philosophy. Among his literary works are the *Hình Thu'* [Penal Code], a three-volume book on law. See "Les chapitres," pp. 47 and 99; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 43; *Lu'o'c Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, pp. 139–40; *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:4b2–9b6.

79. See Zen Master Tong'an Cha's "Ten Talks on the Arcane": "The wondrous essence originally has no abode, the supernatural power has no source." *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.455b9–10. Zen Master Shouren instructed his students: "All phenomena are originally without abode, the round bright moon reflects on the mind's pond." Ibid., 412a21.

80. Mount Thiên Phúc is the same as Mount Tiên Du or Mount Lan* Kha or Mount Phat Tích which is located in now Tiên Du Prefecture, Hà Bac* Province. See n. 24 above.

81. According to Lê Manh* Thát, Tù So'n here must also be Mount Tiên Du, because according to Thien* Lão's biography, he never left Tù So'n after planting his staff there, and it is said that "Thiên Lão is of Trùng Minh Temple on Mount Thiên Phúc in Tiên Du Prefecture." See *LMT*, p. 187, n. 3. According to the compilers of the *Tho' Van* Lý Trân**, Mount Tù So'n is probably in Tù So'n Prefecture, Vu* Ninh Province, Bac Giang Lo*, which is the present-day Hà Bac. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:239, n. 1.

82. Dazhu Huihai said: "The green bamboos are all the Truth Body, the yellow flowers are all wisdom." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.247c15–16. The terms *nhat** (月) can also mean days and months.

83. According to this, Thiên Lão must have died during the reign of Lý Thái Tông. However, in Quang* Tr'i's biography (18a9–10) we read: "In the first year of the Chu'ong Thánh Gia Khánh (1059), he left the conventional world and went to study with Thiên Lão on Mount Tiên Du." From this it is clear that Thiên Lão could not have died during the reign of Lý Thái Tông, because the Chu'ong Thánh Gia Khánh was the reign era of Lý Thánh Tông, whereas Lý Thái Tông died in 1054.

84. According to Lê Manh Thát, since Phúc Đu'ong includes Long Đàm, it must include the present Thanh Trì District as well as some others, among them probably Thu'ong* Phúc. The name Phúc Đu'ong was still in use up to the Trần dynasty. Hue* Trung Thu'ong Sĩ's* teacher was Tiêu Diêu, who hailed from Phúc Đu'ong. See *LMT*, p. 188, n. 2.

85. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (27:10), Hà Noi* Province, section "Kien* Trì Diên Cách," wrote: "Formerly, Thanh Trì District was Long Đàm Châu and belonged to Giao Châu Prefecture." According to the compilers of the *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, Long Đàm Prefecture belonged to Thu'ong Phúc Province during the Trần dynasty (1225–1400). It was changed into Thanh Trì Prefecture during the Lê. Nowadays it is a suburb of Hanoi. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:257.

86. Lý Linh Cam*, whose maiden name was Mai, was the mother of Lý Thánh Tông. She was made empress dowager in 1054. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2, 11a1,

wrote: "In the tenth month he (Lý Thái Tông) changed his reign's style, taking the sixth year of Sùng Hưng Dai * Bao* (1054) as the first year of the Long Thụy* Thái Bình. He made his mother Mai empress dowager of Linh Cam*." See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:238.

87. *Sutra* of Perfect Enlightenment* or *Dafangguang yuanjie xiuduoluo liaoyi jing*, translated by Buddhatrata*. See *T* 17, no. 842.

88. 圓覺三觀 means the three methods of contemplation according to the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*. They are (1) contemplation through calming (*samatha**), (2) contemplation through concentration (*samapatti*), and (3) contemplation through meditation (*dhyana**). The first method is to generate quiet wisdom by pacifying all conceptualizations about body and mind. The second is to realize that all phenomena are illusory in order to attain the pure practice of seeing things as illusory and to generate compassion. The third is not to be attached to either purity or illusion in order to transcend all kinds of conceptual obstacles. See *T* 17.917c14–918a4.

89. In the Mahayana* Buddhist tradition, Mañjusri* is the Bodhisattva of Wisdom. For studies on Mañjusri, see, inter alia, Bhattacharyya Benoytosh, "Mañjughosa," in *Jha Commemoration Volume* (Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1937), pp. 59–68; Étienne Lamotte, "Mañjusri," *T'oung Pao* 48 (1960): 1–96; Marie-Thérèse de Mallman, *Étude iconographique sur Mañjusri** (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1964); Alex Wayman, trans., *Chanting the Names of Mañjusri* (London: Shambala, 1985). The *An Nam Chí Nguyên* (p. 209) also commented on this event as follows: "Zen Master Viên Chiếu* was a monk of Thanh Đàm Prefecture. He was intelligent, studious, and loved to study the Zen school. One night in a dream he saw Bodhisattva Mañjusri cut open his stomach with a knife and wash out his guts. Then Mañjusri gave him some medicine. Since then what Viên Chiếu practiced in his mind seemed preordained to mesh [with Reality]. Subsequently, his school flourished greatly."

90. Concerning this anecdote, see *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:209. See also Appendix III.

91. See *Mahaprajnaparamita-sastra**, *T* 25.400c28–29.

92. Trùng du'o'ng 重陽 [Ch: *zhongyang*] is the ninth day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar. It is also called *trùng cuu**.

93. According to the *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c**, 15:147, this passage came from the *Tham Do* Hien* Quyêt** [Revelations of the Decisive Secret for Students]: "The Zen Master Mai Viên Chiếu composed the *Tham Đô Hiên Quyêt*, which contains sections as follows: 'One day Viên Chiếu was sitting in front of his house when a monk came and asked, 'What is the meaning of Buddha and Sage?' Viên Chiếu said, 'At the autumn festival the chrysanthemums are blooming under the hedge; in the pure air of spring orioles are singing in the branches.' His book contains mostly sayings like this." Based on this remark by Lê Trac*, all the dialogues in this biography might come from the *Tham Đô Hiên Quyêt*, or be the entire work itself.

94. The *Dai* Nam* (8b3) has *huyen* co' thi* nhuoc* nhu' hà* 若 is superfluous there.

95. *Thieu* That** 室 [Ch: *Shaoshi*] in the original text. Shaoshi is the name of the mountain on which Bodhidharma had his abode, so the term is indicative of him.

96. *Ma Kier** 摩竭 [Ch: *Majie*] is the Chinese rendition of Magadha, the name of the city where, according to tradition, the Buddha was born.

97. According to tradition Bodhidharma spent nine years contemplating the wall on Mount Shaoshi. Buddha Sakyamuni * spent twenty days in full absorption in Magadha. See Venerable Linji Jingtuo's "Verses on Shallow and Deep Entry into the Path":

Bodhidharma and Sakyamuni,
Successively rise to extol [the Dharma].
Now I'm asking you, my students,
Who will take charge in the future?

See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.454a21.

98. Yue 岳 means a big mountain and is also a short form for *wu yue*, denoting the five great mountains of China. *Huai*, one of the great rivers of China, originates in Hanan, running through Anwei and Jiangsu.

99. Based on the two lines of poetry by Emperor Taizong of Tang: "Only in a storm do we know which plants are strong; only when we're hard-pressed we know which ministers are loyal." See *Quan Tangshi*, 101:2a9–10.

100. *Bách niên* 百年 [*bai nian*] in the original text, which means a hundred years. A human being's lifespan is thought to last at most a hundred years. Hence, the expression "a hundred years" means man's lifespan; "after a hundred years" thus means after one dies.

101. See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.247c15–16; 23:391a25–27.

102. A monk asked Zen Master Mingzhao: "The whole treasury is round and bright, what is its essence?" Mingzhao answered: "You exerted yourself coming from afar." The monk continued: "Isn't that the whole treasury round and bright?" Mingzhao said: "Have a cup of tea." See *Chuandeng lu*, 20:367c13–15.

103. A monk asked Zen Master Chang: "What is it like when one refuses to discuss?" Chang answered: "Then what does he come here for?" The monk continued: "Even if he comes, he doesn't discuss." Chang said: "Then what is the use of coming here in vain?" See *Chuandeng lu*, 20:363b15–17.

104. Dong A was where the old man made a rendezvous with Zhang Liang after thirteen years. Zhang Liang was a subject of Han. After Qin Shihuang unified China, Zhang sought revenge for his country but was not able to come up with any effective plan. One day he met a man on a bridge. The man dropped his shoe and told Zhang to get it for him. Offended, Zhang still did as he was told. After that the old man gave Zhang a plan and told him to meet him at Gu Cheng thirteen years later. Gu Cheng was at Dong A District. This anecdote is recorded in the *Shiji* [Records of the Historian], quoted in *LMT*, p. 190, n. 12.

105. Yexuan (or Dã Hiên in Vietnamese) was the name of a Zen Master of whom we know nothing. In his *Thu'o'ng* Si* Hành Trang** [Religious Activities of the Eminent One], printed in *Thu'o'ng Si Ngu* Luc** [Recorded Sayings of the Eminent One] (40a4–5), Emperor Tran* Nhân Tông wrote that while he was mourning for his mother, he requested Hue* Trung to explain to him the sayings of Xuedou and Yexuan. Xuedou was the Chinese Zen Master Chongxian (980–1052). As for Yexuan, we still do not know who he was. He probably was a Vietnamese Zen Master who lived before Viên Chieu*.

106. Jin Gu [Golden Valley] was where Shi Song, the richest man during the Qin dynasty, built an extremely lavish and luxurious palace. Subsequently, his beloved concubine, Liuzhu, committed suicide. It is now in the northwest of Luoyang District, Honan Province. See *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:291.

107. *Thi * lāu* 市樓 [Ch: *shi lou*], brief form for *hai* thi* than* lāu* [Ch: *hai shi shen lou*], the Chinese rendition of the Sanskrit *gandharvanagara*, which means the city of the Gandharvas, or an imaginary city in the sky. In Hindu and Buddhist mythology, the Gandharvas are the celestial musicians or heavenly singers.
108. For this particular anecdote, see Hurvitz, trans., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, pp. 200–201. See also Venerable Danxia's "Song to the Jewel Verse: The Dragon Girl on Mount Lingshan personally offers her Jewel to the Buddha, this poor monk follows suit." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.463b25.
109. Viēn Chieu's* metaphor of the mirror should remind us of the use of the mirror in the *Buddhabhumi-Sutra** to explain an aspect of Buddha's wisdom that is called the Mirror-Like Wisdom (*adarsajnana**). According to this *sutra**, the Buddha's wisdom is likened to a mirror since, among other things, it has the function of reflecting all objects faithfully without being influenced by the objects themselves. See Kyoō Nishio, *The Buddhabhumi-Sutra and the Buddhabhumi-Vyakhyana** of *Silabhadra**, part 1 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankokai, 1982), pp. 8–12. *Bandhuprabha glosses in his *Buddhabhumi-Sastra**: "Like a round mirror of the world, the Mirror-Like Wisdom of the Tathagata* is without discrimination: They both can make all images appear without any discrimination. This is why [the Buddha's Wisdom] is called the Mirror-Like Wisdom." See T 26.310a16–17. See also Alex Wayman, "The Mirror-Like Knowledge in Mahayana* Buddhist Literature," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 25 (1961):353–63; "The Mirror as a Pan-Buddhist Metaphor-Simile," *History of Religions* 13 (1974): 251–69.
110. The metaphor of the raft came from a statement of the Buddha in the *Vajracchedikaprajnaparamita-Sutra**: "Subhuti*, if the Bodhisattvas, the great beings, generate a perception of a dharma or a non-dharma, there would be in them an attachment to a self, to a being, to a soul, to a person. Why so? Because, Subhuti, the Bodhisattvas, the great beings, should not be attached to either a dharma or a nondharma. Therefore, this saying has been taught by the Buddha with a hidden intention. By those who know that the teaching on dharma is likened to a raft, even dharmas should be renounced, how much more so nondharmas." (*sacet Subhute* tesam* bodhisattvanam* mahasattvanam* dharmasamjna* pravarteta, sa eva tesam atma-graho* bhavet, sattva-graho* jiva-grahah* pudgalagraho* bhavet. saced adharma-samjna* pravarteta, sa eva tesam atma-graho bhavet, sattva-graho jiva-grahah pudgala-graha iti. tat kasya hetoh*? na khalu punah* Subhute bodhisattvena mahasattvena* dharma udgrahitavyo* na-adharmah. tasmad* iyam Tathagatena* sandhaya* vag* bhasita*: kolopamam* dharma-paryayam* ajanadbhir* dharma* eva prahatavyah* prag* eva-adharma-iti**). Sanskrit text from Conze, *Vajracchedika* Prajnaparamita**, pp. 31–32. *Diamond Sutra**, T 8.749b10. Zen Master Yongjia Xuanjue wrote in his "Ten Ways of Contemplating the Mind": "Yet if one wants to cross the ocean one has to get on a raft, without a raft how can one cross the ocean?" See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.242a18–19.
111. Compare to the verse transmitting the Dharma traditionally attributed to Manorhita, the so-called twenty-second Zen patriarch in India:

The mind transforms following all phenomena,
 The transformation is really profound.
 One must follow the stream to realize true nature,
 Then one is free from both joy and sorrow.

See *Chuangeng lu*, 2:214a24–25. Also: A monk asked Venerable Dalang,

"If one were already the river god, why is he swept away by the water?" Dalang said, "One must follow the stream to attain the wondrous truth, if one clings to the shore one becomes deluded." See *ibid.*, 396a18–19.

112. Jingke was a swordsman who was sent by the Prince of Yan to assassinate the emperor of Qin. See *Zhanguo ce*, 31:5b10–11. See *LMT*, p. 191, n. 19.

113. Jing Guo of Qi wanted to build the Jie Citadel. There were many who wanted to talk him out of it. Guo told the guard not to let them in. A man from Qi asked for permission to come in to say just three words and was willing to die after that. The permission being granted by Guo, the guest came in shouting three words: "big ocean fish," then turned and ran away. Guo was flabbergasted and had the man brought back. He then explained what those three words mean. Guo gave up his idea of building the citadel. See *Zhanguo ce*, 8:1b–2a quoted in *LMT*, pp. 191–92, n. 21.

114. "There were two men of Chu who competed at drawing a snake as an excuse to drink. See "Qi Wen" in *Zhangguo ce*, 9:2b–3a quoted in *LMT*, p. 192, n. 22.

115. Zen Master Qinglin said: "A snake has died on the road. I advise you not to deal with it." See *Congrong lu*, T 48.264a26–c6; *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.362a15–16.

116. Xu Zhen, whose personal name was Zun, was governor of Xingyang during the Northern Wei dynasty. Tradition has it that he practiced Daoism and flew up to the sky. The Zhaosong conferred on him the title "Shengong miaoqi zhenjun," hence the name Xu Zhenjun. See *Weishu*, 46:2b8; see also *Taiping Guangji*, "Shen Xian" 14. See *Tho' Van * Ly Tran**, 1:292.

117. Here "the ocean store" denotes the Buddhist teachings in the scriptures while Caoxi symbolizes the Zen school. Foguo came to ask for instruction from Zhenjue Sheng. Sheng cut his hand to draw blood and said: "This is a drop from Caoxi." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.450b16–17; 634a5.

118. "It's not different from now," an expression in Zen literature that means that after one has attained enlightenment, it is no different from when one has not attained it.

Suppose your mind is clear since beginningless time,
Through innumerable lives it's not different from now.

See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.50b16–17; 395b8–9.

119. Zen Master Mingjue ascended the pulpit. A monk asked: "It is clear in the mind's eye and yet not characterizable. It is bright in forms yet one can't discriminate it by truth. If it is in the mind's eye, why can't one see it?" See *Mingjue Yulu* [Sayings of Mingjue], T 47.670a4.

120. See Zen Master's Tong'an Cha's "Ten Talks of the Arcane":

Even inside the citadel of nirvana it's still perilous,
Unexpectedly we meet one another in the streets.
Provisionally wearing dirty clothes and is called
being a Buddha.
What are you called if you wear royal clothes?
At midnight the wooden man puts on his shoes
and leaves,
Early in the morning the stone girl wears her hat
and returns.

Since time immemorial the moon is reflected
in the blue pond,
It is only after searching again and again
that one understands.

See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51. 455c5–8.

121. The *Dai * Nam* (10a2) has *mac** 燻. See *Tho' Van* Ly' Tran**, 1:289, n. 4.

122. This is based on an anecdote from chapter "Wu Du" [The Five Vermin] in *Hanfei zi*: Once there was a farmer in the Song country who happened to see a rabbit accidentally bumping into a tree and die. The farmer took the rabbit home, cooked it, and ate it. The next day, he went to the field, forsaking his work, to sit at the foot of a tree and wait for another rabbit. Not only couldn't he catch any more rabbits, but he became a laughingstock for the entire Song country. See Watson, trans., *Basic Writings of Mo Tzu, Hsun Tzu, and Han Fei Tzu*, p. 67. See also *Tho' Van Ly' Trân*, I :29.

123. This metaphor comes from chapter 8, "Receipt of Prophecy by Five Hundred Disciples," of the *Lotus Sutra**. See, for instance, Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, pp. 157–67.

124. This is based on an anecdote from the *Zhuangzi*, chapter "Daozhi" [Robber Zhi]: Weisheng had a tryst with a girl under a bridge. She did not show up. The river ebbed. Weisheng held on to the bridge-post and was drowned. English translation can be found in A. C. Graham, *Chuang-Tzu: The Inner Chapters* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1986), p. 238.

125. "Spring birth, summer growth, autumn harvest, and winter store: this is the great principle of heaven and earth." This saying is taken from the preface to the *Shiji* [Recorded History] by the author himself.

126. Zu Long is a nickname of Qin Shihuang, who became interested in the art of longevity and sent the Daoist master Xu Fu leading one thousand children to the eastern sea to search for paradise in 217 B.C.E. He never found paradise, and seven years later Qin Shihuang died. Xu Fu and the children never returned. See *Shiji*, 6:11a11 and 21a8, quoted in *LMT*, p. 193, n. 32.

127. Someone asked Zen Master Huiqing: "What is it like when the ancient Buddha hasn't yet appeared in the world?" Huiqing answered: "An egg-fruit plant that bears fruit every thousand years." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.297c18–19.

128. See Zen Master Fayuan Wenyi's "Wenyi's Verses":

The mani jewel does not rely on the colors,
Within the colors there is no jewel.
The mani jewels and the many colors,
Are neither together nor apart.

See *Ibid.* 454b19.

129. *Ho* tang** 胡僧 [Ch: *hu seng*]. *Hu* means Indian or barbarian, *seng* means monk. In Zen literature, this term refers to Bodhidharma. See, for instance, *Biyuan lu*, T 48.183b18–19.

130. This is based on an anecdote in the *Hanfei zi*: "Bian Hua of the Chu country obtained a natural jewel and submitted it to King Li. The king instructed the jeweler to examine it. The jeweler reported that it was only a stone. So King Li had one of Bian Hua's feet cut off, thinking that he was trying to deceive him. Afterward, Bian Hua again submitted it to King Wu,

who succeeded King Li, and again had the other foot cut off for the same reason. Bian Hua went to the foot of the Chu Mountains and wept for three days and nights. Hearing this, the king sent someone to question him. Bian Hua replied that he did not weep because his feet were amputated. He wept because a precious jewel was thought to be a mere stone and a man of integrity was called a deceiver. Finally, the king ordered the jeweler to cut and polish the matrix, and after he had done so, they really found a precious jewel." See Watson, *Basic Writings of Mo Tzu, Hsun Tzu, and Han Fei Tzu*, p. 80.

131. Shishuang Qingzhu came to Daowu for instruction, asking: "What is the enlightenment that is obvious to the eye?" Daowu called out to a novice. He answered: "Yes?" Daowu said: "Put more water into the jug." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.320c11. A monk asked Venerable Quanzhou of Mount Shuilong: "What is the enlightenment that is obvious to the eye?" Quanzhou chased him with his stick. The monk went out." *Ibid.*, 373b22–23; *Mingjue yulu*, T 47.676a16.

132. See, inter alia, Yongjia Xuanjue's *Zhengdao ge* [Song of Enlightenment]: "Pulverizing this body it is not enough to repay [the benevolence of the Buddha]. When you completely comprehend a single phrase you transcend thousands of millions of phrases." *Zhengdao ge*, T 48.316c21. Also *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.304b20–21: A monk asked Zen Master Shoushan Shengnian: "When you completely comprehend a single phrase you transcend thousands of millions [of phrases]. What is this single phrase?" Shoushan said: "Tell it to people everywhere."

133. The *Dai * Nam* (11a1) has *khu'ó'c*, it should be emended to *ngu'ó'ng*. See also *Tho' Van* Lý Tran** 1:271.

134. This means that only the teaching of "One Vehicle" is real. The rest, i.e., the teachings of Two or Three Vehicles, are not. See, for instance, chapter on "Skillful Means" in the *Lotus Sutra**; Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, p. 30.

135. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (14b5) and the *Dai Nam* (11a5) have *gian* 問.

136. "What is the meaning of the Patriarch [Bodhidharma] coming from the west?" is one of the most fundamental Zen koan. The question is similar to "what is the meaning of Zen?" See, for instance, *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.246a25–26: "A monk asked Mazu, 'What is the meaning of Bodhidharma coming from the west?' Mazu said, 'What is the meaning of the present moment?'" See also *ibid.*, 423b24–26; 396b1–2.

137. This is borrowed from a phrase in the *Lunyu*: "xao* ngôn lenh* sac*, tien* hi* nhân" [Ch: *qiaoyan lingse xian xi ren* 巧言令色矣仁] (Those with clever speech and enticing appearance hardly have the mind of comiseration). See chapter "Xue Er" in *Lunyu*, 1, 1b8 and 17, 6b7.

138. See Yongjia Xuanjue's "Song of Enlightenment":

Mind is the base, phenomena are objects,
They are like stains on the surface of a mirror.
It is only when the stains are wiped out, that its brightness
appears,
When mind and phenomena are both forgotten,
inherent nature is real.

See "Zhengdaoge," T 48.396b22.

139. A man asked Zen Master Mingjue: "What is the nature of the Buddhas'

original vow?" Mingjue answered: "The cold color of a thousand mountains." The man continues: "Is there a cause for the transcendent path?" Mingjue said: "The raindrops fall on the cliffside flowers." See *Xu chuandeng lu*, T 51.476a8–9.

140. The *Lüshi chunqiu*, "chapter Benwei" wrote: "Bo Ya played his lute, Zizhi listened. When Bo Ya thought about Mount Tai while playing, Zuzhi would say: 'How good your playing is, it is as lofty as Mount Tai.' A little while later, Bo Ya was thinking about a drifting stream, Zuzhi would say: 'You're playing really well, it is as overwhelming as a flowing stream.' When Zuzhi died, Bo Ya destroyed his lute, cut the strings and never played music again, thinking that there was no one in this life who could really appreciate his playing." See *Lüshi chunqiu*, 14, 4a7–14, quoted in *LMT*, p. 194, n. 35.

141. According to the *Dai * Nam*, Viên Chieu's* dialogues with his students end here. Thus, compared with the *Thien* Uyen**, more than 360 words are missing.

142. See *Yuanjue jing* [*Sutra* of Complete Enlightenment*], T 17.920b19–c3: "Son of a good family, the wise one who realizes the true Dharma should be free from the four kinds of illness. What are these four kinds of illness? The first kind is the illness of contrivance: Some wish to attain complete enlightenment, thinking that 'I have performed various practices regarding the mind.' But since complete enlightenment is not attained through contrived practice, this is called illness. The second kind is the illness of passivity: Some wish to attain complete enlightenment thinking that, 'We do not cut off samsara*', nor strive for nirvana. Nirvana and samsara are beyond the concepts of origination and annihilation. Let everything follow its true nature.' But since complete enlightenment does not come about through chance, this is called illness. The third kind is the illness of cessation: Some wish to attain complete enlightenment thinking that, 'I have pacified forever all thoughts in my mind and have realized that all things are equally peaceful.' But since complete enlightenment is not identical with cessation, this is called illness. The fourth kind is the illness of annihilation: Some wish to attain complete enlightenment, thinking that 'Now I have annihilated all afflictions, my body and mind are ultimately nonexistent, much less are the sense-faculties, the sense objects and the illusory objects which are eternally nonexistent. But since complete enlightenment is not of the nature of nonexistence, this is called illness. When one is free from these four kinds of illness, one realizes peace. To contemplate this way is called right contemplation. Otherwise, it is called wrong contemplation."

143. See *Lotus Sutra*, "Chapter on Skillful Means," T 9.5c10–14: "Regarding the true, precious, and hard to understand objects that the Buddha has realized, only Buddhas can exhaust their true characteristics, namely, their true characteristics, their true nature, their true essence, their true powers, their true functions, their true causes, their true conditions, their true fruitions, their true retributions, and their ultimate beginning and ending." See also, Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, pp. 22–23. The Sanskrit is somewhat different: *tathagata* eva sariputra* tathagatasya* dharmam* desayeti**, *yan* dharmanstathagato* janati* / sarvadharmanapi* sariputra tathagata eva desáyati / sarvadharmanapi tathagata eva janati, ye ca te dharmah**, *yatha* ca te dharmah, yadrsasca* te dharmah, yallaksanasca* te dharmah, yatsvabhavasca* te dharmah, ye ca yatha* ca yadrsasca yallaksanasca yatsvabhavasca te dharmam* iti / tesu* dharmesu* tathagata eva pratykso'-parokshah* //* See *Saddharmapundarikasutram** (Vaidya ed., p. 21).

144. Zen Master says: "The black beans hang at the tree top; the wind blows without making a tune." See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.358c25–26.

145. See Xuanjue's "Song of Enlightenment":

[Do not] abandon the false mind and be attached to the truth,
The mind of abandonment and attachment becomes error.

See *Chuangdeng lu*, 30:460c5–6.

146. A monk asked Zen Master Jianshan Cheng of Hongzhou, "How do the patriarchs of our [Zen] school explain the entire teaching of the Buddha to the present time?" Cheng said, "There are already people who enquired about that issue." The monk continued, "How do you, Teacher, explain it to people?" Cheng said, "How sad that the amaranth plant in the front yard, every year sprouts leaves but grows no flowers." See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.384a1–4.

147. See *Mahaprajnaparamita-sastra* *, T 25.61b6–8; *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.457b23–24; 395c29–396a1.

148. A monk asked Nanquan Puyuan, "The patriarchs transmit it to each other. What should they transmit?" Nanquan said, "One two three four five." See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.259a8–9.

149. Zen Master Nanyang Huizhong says: "When you're hungry you eat, when you're cold you put on clothes." See *Chuangdeng lu*, 28:439a22–23.

150. A monk asked Zen Master Xingchong, "What is the general meaning of the Buddha's teaching?" Xingchong said, "Crush it in a mortar." The monk continued, "I beg you to illustrate the one path of Caoxi." Xingchong said, "Aren't you wronging Caoxi?" See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.383c1–3.

151. This anecdote is taken from the *Lüshi chungiu*. For a similar anecdote, see *The Sutra* of a Hundred Examples*, T 4.545c619: "Once there was a man who crossed the ocean on a boat and happened to drop a silver nail in the water. He thought, 'Now I will draw a picture of the water and memorize it. I'll just leave it here and get it later.' After a two-month trip he arrived at the Lion Country where he saw a river. The man dived into the water to look for the nail that he lost. When people asked what he was doing, the man answered, 'I lost a nail, now I'm looking for it.' They asked, 'Where did you lose it?' The man said, 'I lost it when I crossed the ocean.' They then asked him when he lost it. The man said, 'Two months ago.' They asked, 'You lost it two months ago, why look for it here?' The man said, 'When I lost it, I drew a picture of the water and memorized it. The water that I drew a picture of is not different from this. Therefore, I'm looking for it here.' People said, 'Although the water is not different, you were there when you lost it. Now you're looking for it here, how can you find it?' At that time everyone burst out laughing." See also *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.454b15.

152. Lê Qui Đôn's *Nghe* Van* Chí* [Description of Arts and Literature] recorded: "*Duoc* Su' Thap* Nhi* Nguyen* Van* [The Twelve Vows of the Medicine King], 1 book, composed by Zen Master Viên Chieu* of Long Đám." Phan Huy Chú's *Van Tich* Chí* [Descriptive Bibliography] only recorded the title without mentioning the author. This was probably an essay on the twelve vows of Bhaisajyaraja*. See *Les Chapitres*, pp. 95 and 139; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 138.

153. Lý Nhân Tông (1066–1128), whose personal name was Càn Đức, was the son of Lý Thánh Tông. Nhân Tông reigned for fifty-six years (1072–1127). See *Lu'oc* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, 1:145.

154. Lê Manh * Thát suggests that this might have been the envoy of 1087 headed by Gentleman Lê Chung as chief envoy and Do* Anh Boi* as deputy envoy, because Zhezong ascended the throne in 1086, and not until 1090, the year Viên Chieu* passed away, did Vietnam send another diplomatic envoy to China. Therefore, if the envoy of 1090 brought the *Essays on the Twelve Vows of the Medicine King* to China and the book was acclaimed by Chinese eminent monks, Viên Chiêu did not survive the event to receive praise from Lý Nhân Tông. See *LMT*, p. 196, n. 53.

155. The two words *su' vân* 善說經法 seem to be out of place here.

156. A word denoting the day seems to be missing from our text, since it only has "*Quang* Huu* luc* niên canh ngo* cuu* nguyet* nhât**." The *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:266 gave the date of Viên Chieu's* death as the twenty-sixth day of the twelfth month of the sixth year of the Quang* Huu* era [i.e., January 18, 1091]. Tran* Van* Giáp also gave the same date; see *Lu'o'c* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, p. 141.

157. Sanskrit: *mahabhuta**, which means the four gross elements of reality, namely, earth, water, fire and space. See Nakamura Hajime et al., *Bukkyo* jiten* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1992), p. 3611.

158. Here (16a6) there is one character *sac** too many. The character *tu'ó'ng* 相 should be added instead.

159. *Thien* Uyen** lists another work entitled *Essays on the Twelve Vows of the Medicine King*. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:266. These works are indefinitely lost, except a part of the *Revelations of the Decisive Secret for Students* part of which is probably included in this present biography. Note that we read in the biography of Minh Tâm and Bao* Giám that "Viên Chiêu left behind many songs and poems lauding their lofty aspirations. These have been gathered together in Viên Chiêu's collected works and need not be recorded here." This seems to suggest that there was another work by Viên Chiêu, probably his collected literary works.

160. Mount Long Doi*, also called Mount Đồi, is located at Đồi So'n Village, Ly Nhân District, Ly Nhân Province, Dai* La, which is the present-day Đồi So'n Village, Duy Tiên Prefecture, Hà Nam Province. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:253, n. 2.

161. *Lo* trùc chi thu'* 魯竹之書 [Ch: *lu zhu zhi shu*] in the original text (*Thiên Uyên*, 16a11; *Dai Nam*, 11b10). *Lô* (Ch: *Lu*) means the country of Lu and *trùc* (Ch: *zhu*) stands for *thiên trùc* (Ch: *tianzhu*) which means India. Confucius was a native of Lu and the Buddha was from India, hence *lo* trùc chi thu'* means Confucian and Buddhist books.

162. In Mahayana* Buddhism ultimate truth or ultimate reality (*paramarthasatya**) is synonymous with the absolute identity (*parinispanna-svabhava**), the Realm of Ultimate Reality (*dharmadhatu**), True Reality (*dharmata**), Thusness (*tathata**), the true nature of mind-only (*cittadharmata**), Emptiness (*sunyata**), True Body (*dharmakaya**), etc., the many various terms that are used to denote the true reality as opposed to phenomenal reality in Mahayana Buddhism. See, for instance, *Buddhabhumi-Sutra**, *Mahayanasutralamkar**, pp. 22–24; *Madhyantavibhagabhasya**, pp. 23–24; *Madhyantavibhagatika**, pp. 49–51.

163. Note the tendency toward austerity among the Vietnamese eminent monks. See Appendix III.

164. Both the *Thien * Uyen** (16b10) and the *Dai* Nam* (12a8) have Lu'o'ng Van* Nham*, but both the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c** and the *Toàn Thu'* have Lu'o'ng Nham Van. According to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c* and the *Toàn Thu'*, Lu'o'ng Nham Van was made Grand Preceptor in 1028 by Lý Thái Tông. Nham held positions of *Viên Ngoai* Lang* and *Ngu* Su' Dai Phu* under Lý Thái To*. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:218; *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:5a3. On the two ranks of *Viên Ngoai Lang* and *Ngu' Su' Dai Phu* in Vietnamese history, see *Lich* Trieu* Hien* Chu'o'ng Loai* Chí*, 13:67 and 71.
165. Compare to a verse by Huisi (514–577); see *Chuangdeng lu*, 27:431b5–9.
166. The *Dai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (28:103) "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Buddhist Monks" records a brief biographical note about these two Zen masters: "Both these two Zen masters hailed from Đông Ngan* District. They erected a lecture hall to explain Buddhist scriptures [to the people]. Subsequently, they entered into the fire [of samadhi*] to immolate themselves. The relics were transformed into seven kinds of precious jewels. Emperor Lý Thái Tông ordered them to be kept in Tru'ò'ng Thánh Temple. See also *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:211; Appendix III.
167. These works are indefinitely lost. See n. 159 for a brief discussion on Viên Chieu's* works. See also *Lu'o'c Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, 1:141–42.
168. See Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, pp. 293–302.
169. *Sò' phát tâm nhân* 初發心人 [Ch: *chu faxin ren*] literally means "those who just generate their mind [of enlightenment]." The generation of the mind of enlightenment (*bodhicittotpada**) is the first and most essential step in a Mahayana* practitioner's path toward the attainment of Buddhahood. A detailed discussion on the mind of enlightenment and its association with other qualities of a bodhisattva is found in Edward Conze, *The Large Sutra* on Perfect Wisdom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 45–55; *Mahayanasutralamkar**, pp. 13–19; *Bodhisattvabhumi**, pp. 5–14; *Bodhicaryavatara**, pp. 1–21; *Kasyapaparivartatik**, p. 37. Cecil Bendall and Louis de La Vallée Poussin have provided a useful outline of this concept in English in "Bodhisattva-Bhumi: Sommaire et Notes," *Le Muséon*, n.s. 6 (1905): 45–52. For an interesting interpretation of this concept, see Robert A. F. Thurman, *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti** (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), p. 113, n. 60.
170. Or the degenerate age of the Dharma (*mo fa*). On this concept in Chinese Buddhism, see, for instance, Alfred Bloom, *Shinran Gospel of Pure Grace* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965), pp. 12–13.
171. On the topic of self-immolation in Buddhism, see Yun-hua Jan, "Buddhist Self-Immolation in Medieval China," *History of Religion* 4, 2 (1965): 243–58. In this article Jan mentioned in passing the issue of self-immolation in modern Vietnamese Buddhism. See also Walpola Rahula, "Self-Cremation in Mahayana Buddhism," in *Zen and the Taming of the Bull: Towards the Definition of Buddhist Thought* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1978), pp. 111–14.
172. *Huaguang sanmei* 華光三昧 in Chinese or *tejpravhasamadhi** in Sanskrit. In a Vinaya text of the Mula-Sarvastivadin*, it is related that the Buddha entered into the samadhi of firelight and emitted successively fire and water from various parts of his body to convert the women in the palace. See Noel Péri, "Les femmes de Sakya-Muni*," *BEFEO* 18, 2 (1918): 6. See also *Fo benxing jijing*, 40: "At that time the Tathagata* also entered into the samadhi of firelight, and his body emitted a great fire."

173. The seven kinds of jewel are described somewhat differently in different *sutras* *. See, for instance, Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, p. 125; *Buddhabhumisutra-sastra**, T 26.393a13–16. See also Xinru Liu, *Ancient India and Ancient China. Trade and Religious Exchanges AD 1–600* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 92–102.
174. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:224, recorded: [In the fourth month of the seventh year of the Thiên Thánh era (1034)] the reign's style was changed into the first year of the Thông Thụy* era. At that time, two monks, Nghiêm Bao* Tĩnh and Phạm* Minh Tâm, immolated themselves and were transformed into the seven kinds of jewel. The emperor issued an edict to have the remains kept in Tru'ò'ng Thánh Temple for worship. The emperor thought it was a good omen, and so he changed the reign's style into Thông Thụy [Thoroughly Auspicious].
175. The *Cu'ò'ng Muc* Chính Biên*, 13, 34b4–5, wrote: "Mount Không Lo* was in Thạch* That* District, Quoc* Oai Prefecture, So'n Tây Province. On it was Lac* Lâm Temple. Formerly, this mountain was the site of Zen Master Không Lo's* transformation, hence the name." See *LMT*, p. 199, n. 1. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (29:44–45), "So'n Tây Province, section on Mountains and Rivers," however, corrects the above note from the *Cu'ò'ng Muc Chính Biên* as follows: "According to the inscriptions on the stele at Lac Lâm Temple on Mount Phung* Hoàng, An So'n District, this temple was erected by the Chinese under the Lý dynasty [of Vietnam]. There was no mention of Không Lô's death there, nor was he worshipped inside the temple. The *An Nam Chí Lu'ò'c** said that this mountain is at Thạch Thất District. Thạch Thất was formerly called An Xuyên, and the mountain was named So'n Lô after the district. Here So'n is changed to Không. That might have been the origin of the name [Không Lô]."
176. *Phu'ò'ng ngoai* khe** 方外契 [*fang wai qi* in Chinese]. The term *fang wai* is derived from *Zhuangzi*, chapter "Dazongshi," and means beyond the conventional world. It is subsequently used to designate Buddhist monks or Daoist masters. See Victor Mair, trans., *Wandering on the Way: Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Bantam Books, 1994), pp. 51–65.
177. Nothing is known of Minh Hue*. According to both the *Thien* Uyen** (11a8) and the *Dai Nam* (8a2), the seventh generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông School consists of seven persons. Yet only six—if Lý Thái Tông's is also counted—biographies are counted. Minh Huê might have been the seventh person of this generation.
178. Hanshan and Shide were two Zen companions of the Tang dynasty. See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.433c6–434a18. Hanshan himself was a renowned poet.
179. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (18b2) and the *Dai Nam* (14a1) have Liem*, but it is obviously a scribal error. All other sources have 欽 Khâm. Nothing is known about when he was born or when he died. We only know that he was minister of public works under Lý Nhân Tông (1072–1127). His poetry shows Buddhist influence. See *Lu'ò'c truyện* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, 1:149; *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:335. In the biography of Chân Không (66a9) is also recorded a poem written in 1100 commemorating him; its author is said to be the minister of public works, Đoàn Van Khâm. The two poems by Đoàn Van Liêm in this biography were also recorded by Lê Quý Đôn in his *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 4: 13a6–b6 and their author was said to be the minister of public works, Đoàn Van* Khâm."

180. The *Thien* Uyen** (18b3) and other texts [*Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:335] have *tru* tich* 掛錫 [hanging his staff].

181. *Luc* tran** 六塵 literally means "the six kinds of impurity" and stands for the six sense objects: form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental objects.

182. Fo Tu Teng (died 349), one of the most interesting personalities of early Chinese Buddhism, was a Central Asian monk who arrived in North China around 310 and impressed the Chinese ruler with his magical powers. Fo Tu Teng's biography can be found in *Mingseng zhuan*, *Gaoseng zhuan*; *Yishuchuan*, and *Jinshu*. For a complete account of his life, see Tsukamoto, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism*, 1:251–69. For a briefer account, see Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 79–80; Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, pp. 181–83. For a complete study of his life and works, see Arthur F. Wright, "Fo-tu-teng: A Biography," *HJAS* 11 (1948): 321–71; reprinted in *Studies in Chinese Buddhism*, pp. 34–68. Kumarajiva* (350–413) was a native of Kuccha who came to Changan in 401 and translated many important Buddhist texts into Chinese, including those of the Madhyamaka school. Through his translations Kumarajiva was responsible for the establishment of the Sanlun school in China. See Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 81–83; Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, p. 226; *Gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.330a–333a.

183. According to the *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc*, 4:295, this poem was dedicated to Zen Master Không Lo* Quang* Trí.

184. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (18b6) and the *Đại Nam* (14a3) have *man* 鸞.

185. See *Chuangeng lu* for Bodhidharma's shoe. *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:337, n. 2. Three years after Bodhidharma passed away. Song Yun, heading a diplomatic envoy to the eastern country, met Bodhidharma on Mount Congling, carrying one shoe on his shoulder. When he was back in China, Song Yun reported the event to King Xiaozang of the Northern Wei (528–530), who had Bodhidharma's grave opened. Only one shoe was found in his coffin. Thenceforth, the expression "*chích lý tây qui*" [returning to the west with a single shoe] or "*dì lý*" [leaving behind a shoe] is used to denote the death of a Zen Master. See *Chuangeng lu*, 3:220b5–10.

186. Quang Trí's biography ends here. However, in the text, 18b10–19a6, (*Đại Nam*, 14a6–14b3) there follows a short paragraph about Lý Thái Tông that reads: "Emperor Lý Thái Tông often came to Thien* Lão of Mount Thiên Phúc for instructions of Zen teachings. As soon as the needle and the hammer* came down, his brain immediately became clear. Whenever he was free from his duties, the emperor was engrossed in the joy of meditation. Therefore, he loved to compare his understanding with the Zen adepts from all over the country. The emperor once said,** "I contemplate on the mind-source of the Buddhas and patriarchs, together with the sages of old; even they themselves are not free from reproach, much less the students of today. Now, I wish to present my own understanding to you, sirs. Each of you please give me a

* *Châm chúy* [Ch: *zhen zhu*] is an expression denoting severe training in Zen Buddhism. See *Biyan lu*, T 48.139a5.

** The text has: *De* tiên vi** viet*, *tram* duy Phat* to** . . . ; perhaps it should be emended to *Đê vi viêt, tiên trâm duy Phât tô. . .*

verse, so that I can observe the way you apply your mind.' They all bowed and obeyed the order. While they were still thinking, the emperor had already finished his verse, which reads:

Prajna * is really without a source,
It teaches the emptiness of both persons and phenomena.*
The Buddhas of the past, present, and future,
Are identical in the Dharma nature.**

They all admired his intelligence.

187. On the term *quoc* su'* [National Preceptor], see, for instance, Paul Pelliot, "Les Kouo-che ou 'maitres du royaume' dans le Bouddhisme chinois," *TP* (1911): 971–976.

188. Now belonging to Hòa Đức Prefecture, Hà Đông Province. See n. 48 of Vân Phong's biography.

189. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi* (29:17–18), "So'n Tây Province," recorded: "Đan Phuong* Prefecture is located thirty-five miles east of the town. Its width from the east to the west measures twenty miles; from the north to the south twenty-five miles. From its district town to the east of Tù' Liêm Prefecture of Hà Nội* is a distance of twelve miles, its western side is eight miles from the Hát River across from the territory of An So'n Prefecture. Its southern side is thirteen miles from Tù' Liêm, Hà Nội. Its northern side is twelve miles from Phúc Tho* Prefecture, Quang* Oai Province. It was a remote land under the Han and was changed into Đan Phu'o'ng before the Tran* dynasty." It is now Đan Phu'o'ng Prefecture, Hà Tây Province.

190. These are the three trainings (*trisiksa**) that a Buddhist practitioner must master in order to attain enlightenment. For a discussion on these by an Indian authoritative master, see Alex Wayman, "Asanga's* Treatise on the Three Instructions of Buddhism," in George Elder, ed., *Buddhist Insight. Essays by Alex Wayman* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984), pp. 353–66.

191. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (19a10) and the *Đai Nam* (14b5–6) have *thang* kinh quốc tu** (開) might have been omitted from, the text, since it probably denotes Khai Quốc* Temple of the Capital of Thang* Long. Khai Quốc Temple used to house many eminent monks of the Đinh and Lê dynasties. See *LMT*, p. 203, n. 4. On this temple, see n. 46 to Vân Phong's biography.

* These are the two fundamental categories of Mahayana* Buddhist ontology. These two kinds of emptiness are antidote to the substantial view of the reality of persons (*puḍgala*) and phenomena (*dharma*). The realization of these two kinds of emptiness leads one to liberation (*mokṣa**) and omniscience (*sarvajñai*). For a most insightful exposition of this topic, see, for instance, Sylvain Lévi, ed., *Vijñaptimatratasiddhi*: Deux traités de Vasubandhu: Vimsatika* et Trimsika** (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1911), p. 15.

** It is curious that this passage on Lý Thái Tông is found here. It does not seem to be a biography of Lý Thái Tông as a patriarch of the school due to its length and structure. However, the *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thiên Phú Do** [Simplified Diagram of the Zen School] found in the beginning of the *{Hue* Trung} Thu'o'ng* Si* Ngu* Luc** [Recorded Sayings of the Eminent Hue* Trung], 5b6–7a6, tells us that Lý Thái Tông received the Dharma from Zen Master Thien* Nguyet*. Our text said that "the emperor often came to Thiên Lão of Mount Thiên Phúc for instructions on Zen." Thiên Lão's real name must be Thiên Nguyet. It was changed to avoid the name taboo.

192. Both the *Thien * Uyen** (19a11) and the *Dai* Nam* (14b6–7) have "Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Cam* Linh Nhân." Yet, according to the *Viet* Su'* Lu'o'c** and *Toàn Thu'*, it should be changed into "Phù Thánh Linh Nhân." Linh Nhân, whose family name was Lê, was Emperor Lý Nhân Tông's mother. She was a native of Tho* Loi* Village, became a concubine of Lý Thánh Tông in 1063, and was named Lady Lan. In 1073, after ascending the throne for one year, Nhân Tông had Empress Dowager Du'ong killed and made his mother Empress Dowager Linh Nhân. She died in 1117 and was given the posthumous title Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Linh Nhân. Linh Nhân was a devout Buddhist and had contributed considerably to the propagation of Buddhism during her time. See Hoàng Xuân Hãn, *Ho* Xuân Huong* Thiên Tinh Sui* [Ho* Xuân Húóng: A Love Story] (Hanoi: Nha* Hoc*, 1995), pp. 57–174; *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:352; *Lu'o'c Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, p. 145.
193. Yang Xuanzhi asked Bodhidharma: "What is the meaning of 'patriarchs'?" Bodhidharma answered: "The patriarchs are those who illuminate the source of the Buddha-Mind and whose understanding and conduct are in accord." *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.220a5.
194. The word "buddha" derives from the root *budh*, which means to wake, wake up, be awake, etc. See Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1899), p. 733, col. 2. note that the term "buddha" [awakened or enlightened one] was used by many religions during the Buddha's time.
195. See "Mouzi Lihoulun" in *Hongmingji*, T 52.1c25–26: "Therefore he was born in India, which is the center of heaven and earth, and dwells in harmony."
196. For the age at which Sakyamuni* left home to search for enlightenment, see Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nagarjuna**, (Louvain: Université de Louvain, 1981), 1:208, n. 1.
197. According to the Zen tradition, this is the first transmission of the mind outside the scriptures. Wang Anshi asked the monk Huiquan about the origin of this anecdote. Huiquan said he did not find it recorded in the Tripitaka*. Wang said he chanced upon it in the *Da Fantianwang wen fo jueyi jing*. According to Wang, the story reads as follows: "Brahma* came to Mount Lingshan, brought yellow bala flowers as offerings, and offered his body as a chair, requesting the Buddha to preach the Dharma for the good of sentient beings. The Lord ascended the pulpit and raised a flower. None among the millions of celestial and worldly beings who were present could understand the message. Only Mahakasyapa* cracked a smile. The Lord said, 'I have the true eye treasure of the True Dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana, the uncharacterizable true reality, now I transmit it to Mahakasyapa.' Wang also remarked that this scripture discusses mostly royal affairs. Therefore, it was stored in royal palace and thus not many people know of it." See *Rentian yanmu*, T 48.325b3–13.
198. Kasyapa* Matanga* was one of the first Indian Buddhist missionaries and translators who came to China. See *Gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.1:322c13–323a23. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, pp. 28 and 30.
199. "Liu Han" in the original text. The Han dynasty is called thus because it was founded by Liu Bang. There are two Han dynasties: the Former Han [206 B.C.E.–8 C.E.] and the Later Han [25–219 C.E.].

200. The Liang dynasty [502–557], the Wei dynasty [534–556].

201. I.e., Zhiyi (538–597). Since Zhiyi made his abode on Mount Tiantai, he was called Great Master Tiantai. He was the founder of the Tiantai school based on the *Lotus Sutra* *. The Tiantai school was famed for its particular method of practicing *samatha* * and *vipasyana* *. For a biography of Zhiyi, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, 17:564a18–568a15. For studies on Zhiyi and his teachings, see, inter alia, Leon Hurvitz, "Chih-i (538–597): An Introduction to the Life and Ideas of a Chinese Buddhist Monk," *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques*, 12 (1960–62); Neal Donner and Daniel B. Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation: A Study and Annotated Translation of the First Chapter of Chih-I's Mo-ho Chih-Kuan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993); Paul L. Swanson, *Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy: The Flowering of the Two Truths Theory in Chinese Buddhism* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1989).

202. For Zen followers the term "scriptural teachings" denotes all the other schools of Buddhism. It is odd that Thông Bien* particularly identifies the "scriptural teachings" with Tiantai.

203. I.e., Huineng (638–713), also called Caoxi because he lived in Nanhua Temple near Caoxi. See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.235b10–237a12 and *Song Gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.754c1–755c10. For a thorough study of historical issues concerning Huineng, see Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*.

204. Mou Bo or Mouzi, author of the *Lihuolun*, probably the first treatise written by a Buddhist convert in defense of Buddhism. The date of Mou Bo and his work is highly controversial. See *Hongmingji*, T 52.1a26–7a22; *Chu sanzangji ji*, T 55.82c29–83a1; *Fozu tongji*, T 49.35:332a27–b5; *Fozu lidai tongzai*, T 49.510b17–514a9; *Shishi jūgūlue* T 47.769a12–c6. For a detailed discussion on this subject as well as a summary of other scholars' opinions regarding it, see Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, pp. 13–15. For studies concerning Mou Bo's works, see, for instance, P. Pelliot, "Meou-tseu ou les doutes levés," *TP* 1.9 (1920):255–433; Matsumoto Bunzaburo*, "Mushi riwaku ron no chosaku nendai ko*," in *Bukkyo* shi zakko* (Osaka: Sogensha*, 1944); Fukui Kojun*, "Mushi no kenkyu*," in *Dokyo* no kiso teki kenkyu** (Tokyo: Risosha*, 1952).

205. Kang Senghui, a Sogdian monk born in Jiaozhou, was one of the most important Buddhist figures in Wu. For a detailed discussion on Kang Senghui's life and activities, see Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, pp. 51–55; for his biography, see *Gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.326a; 235a13–236b13; *Chu sanzangji, ji*, T 55.96a29–97a17.

206. For the biography of Tanqian (542–607), see *Gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.571b12–574b6; for a summary of his biography in English, see Whalen Lai, "Tan-ch'ien and the Early Ch'an Tradition: Translation and Analysis of the Essay 'Wang-shih-fei-lun!'," in *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, ed. Whalen Lai and Lewis Lancaster (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), pp. 65–87. Obviously, this is Dharma Master Tanqian of the Sui dynasty and not the Capital Tanqian of the Qi (*Gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.413a18–26) as Tran* Van* Giáp has erroneously identified him in "Le Bouddhisme," p. 210. Tanqian had a very close relationship with Sui Gaozu.

207. Obscure passage (*Thien* Uyen**, 20b1; *Dai* Nam*, 15b6). The five characters *chi pháp dã hau* vân* 之法師云). Trần Van Giáp ["Le Bouddisme," p. 208] interprets the

character *hau* * as "the Queen," i.e., Sui Gaozu's wife; this is wrong, since in his reply Tanqian said, "You are the compassionate father [tù' *phu** 慈父] of all the world," and he was obviously responding to Sui Gaozu. See *Thien* Uyen**, 21a3; *Dai* Nam*, 16a7.

208. The original text has *dieu* ngu** 調御, which is one of the ten epithets of the Buddha. The ten epithets of the Buddha have been discussed by Kotatsu Fujita, *Tamaki Comm. Vol.*, pp. 81–98.

209. *Giang dong** 王東 [Ch: *jiangdong*] in the original text.

210. Luy Lâu was the capital of Giao Châu (Jiaozhou).

211. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (20b10) and the *Đai Nam* (16a3) have *khâu ni danh* 丘陀羅, who, according to the *Co* Châu Pháp Vân Phat* Ban* Hanh* Ngu* Luc**, together with Mo Luo Qi Yu were two monks who came to the Luy Lâu Citadel, administrative territory of Shi Xie (Si* Nhiep*) around the end of Han Lingdi's reign (168–189). They were invited by a layman named Tu Dinh* to stay. Mo Luo Qi Yu declined and went on with his journey. Khâu Đà La remained and later on transmitted his teaching to A Man, and with this the provenance of the four sages Pháp Vân, Pháp Vu*, Pháp Lôi, and Pháp Dien* [Dharma Cloud, Dharma Rain, Dharma Thunder, and Dharma Lightning]. The *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u*, upper volume, 9b6–9, in the section "Indian Monks Under King Hùng" considered Khâu Đà La one of those monks who had met Tu Đình and transmitted his teaching to A Man. See *LMT*, p. 206, n. 17. In three different versions of the same story recorded in the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái*, the monk was referred to as Xà Lê or Ca Xà Lê and not Khâu Đà La. See *Viet* Nam Hán Văn* Tiêu* Thuyet**, 2.1:69, 162, 234. Note, however, that "xà lê" simply means "master," and "Ca Xà Lê" might be another reading for "Khâu Đà La." Concerning Tu Đình, the *Cô Châu Tú' Pháp Pha* Luc** recorded as follows: "At the time when King Si [Nhiệp] governed Giao Châu, a man from Cambodia [Cao Man in Vietnamese] named Tu Đình came to settle down at Mãn Xá Village, Siêu Loai* District. He was a simple man who preserved his good nature, but his behavior was beyond all conventional rules. He took 'Man' as his family name." See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 219, n. 1.

212. The *Gaoseng zhuàn*, T 50.388a16–c5, mentioned a Qi Yu, who had traveled through Jiaozhou and Guangzhou amidst supernatural events and arrived at Luoyang around the end of the Jin Huidi's reign (305–306). The *Cô Châu Pháp Vân Phât Ban Hanh Ngu' Luc* [Recorded Sayings of the Pháp Vân Buddha at Co* Châu] also recorded a Qi Yu [Ky* Vuc*], who arrived in Luy Lâu at the same time with Khâu Đà La toward the end of the Han Lingdi era (168–189). Note a difference of almost a hundred years between the dates given by the two texts. Lê Mạnh Thát, distrusting the accuracy in terms of dates given by the *Cô Châu Pháp Vân Phât Ban Hanh Ngu' Luc*, is of the opinion that the Qi Yu mentioned in these two texts was one and the same person who arrived in Luy Lâu simultaneously with Khâu Đà La around 290–300. See *LMT*, p. 206, n. 18.

213. Zhi Jiang Liang or Zhi Jiang Liang Zhe (c. third century). Not much is known about this man except that he was an Indo-scythian who translated

the *Fahua sanmeijing* in Jiaozhou. According to Zurcher, Zhi Jiang Liang might have been the same as Zhi Liang Lou Zhi, who translated the *Shi'er youjing* in Guangzhou. See Zurcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, p. 71.

214. Both the *Thien * Uyen** (20b11–21a1) and the *Dai* Nam* (16a4–5) have *kim huu* huu* pháp dac* hien* thu'o'ng* pháp si**
今又有法賢上士得法於毘尼多流支 . For Pháp Hiens* biography, see this translation.

215. We do not find such conversation in Tanqian's biography in the *Gaoseng zhuan*.

216. Quan Deyu (757–818) was prime minister under Tang Xianzong. Quan was also a Buddhist and wrote extensively on the temples and lives of the monks of his time. However, according to Tran* Van* Giáp, this "preface" could not be identified. Giáp reported that he had searched through Quan Deyu's literary works entitled *Quan Wengung shi*, published in the *Qinding quantangwen*, but could not find this "preface." See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 211.

217. For a biography of Zhangjing Yun (?–818), see *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.252b19–c23; *Wudeng huiyuan*, upper vol., pp. 153–54. Yun seemed to be a minor figure in the Chinese Zen tradition. We do not know why Thông Bien* especially mentioned him in this connection.

218. On the relations of the Wu-Yue Kingdom with Buddhism, see Albert A. Dalia, "The 'Political Career of the Buddhist Historian Tsan-ning,'" in David W. Chappell, ed., *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society. Buddhist and Taoist Studies II* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), pp. 155–66.

219. Lâm Hue* Sinh (?–1063) or the National Preceptor Huê Sinh of the thirteenth generation of the Vinitaruci* school. According to our text, this generation consists of six persons, but the biographies of only three of them are recorded, namely, those of Lâm Huê Sinh, Khuong Thien* Nham, and Nguyen* Bon* Tich*. See also *Lu'o'c* truyện* Các Tác Gia Việt* Nam*, 1:140.

220. According to our text (65a1–66b3), Vu'o'ng Chân Không (?–1100) was one of the three Masters belonging to the sixteenth generation of the Vinitaruci school. The other two are Trí Nhân and Dao* Lâm. See also *Lu'o'c truyện Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, 1:143.

221. Mai Viên Chieu* (998–1091) belonged to the seventh generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school. See also *Lu'o'c truyện Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, 1:141.

222. Nhan Quang* Trí also belonged to the seventh generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school.

223. The phrase "the successor of Kang Senghui" figures only in the *Dai Nam* (16b3) in smaller characters as a marginal note obviously by the compilers of the *Dai Nam*. The *Thiên Uyển* does not have it. See *Thiên Uyển*, 21a10. Nothing is known about this Lôi Hà Trach*. According to Thông Biên, the scriptural teachings began with Mou Bo and Kang Senghui. It is not known whether Lôi Hà Trach studied directly with Kang Senghui or whether Thông Biên only referred to him as someone who carried on the scriptural school represented by Kang Senghui. The *Linh* Nam Chích Quái* says that when they first became monks Không Lo* and Giác Hai* came to dwell at the temple of Hà Trach. See Chan Hing–ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.1:173–74.

The biography of Giác Hai (who belonged to the tenth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school) in our text also tells us that at first Không Lô (who belonged to the ninth generation of the same school) and Giác Hai served

Master Hà Trach *. So there might have been a Zen Master named Hà Trach belonging to either the seventh or eighth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school under whom both Giác Hai* and Không Lo* studied. However, according to our text the seventh generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school consists of seven persons. Yet it only recorded the biographies of six persons, namely, Mai Viên Chieu*, Đàm Cú'u* Chi*, Nghiêm Bao* Tĩnh, Phạm* Minh Tâm, Nhan Quang* Tri, and probably Lý Thái Tông. Besides, none of the patriarchs who belonged to generations either before or after the seventh has the name Lôi Hà Trach. According to the *Thien* Uyen**, Hà Trach was the name of a Zen Master who lived at Moc* Nguu* Temple at Do* Bo* District. See *Tho* Van* Lý Tran**, 1:443, n. 2. However, we do not know whether Lôi Hà Trach was the same as this Hà Trach.

224. The *Toàn Thu**, "Ban* Ky*," 1:181, records, "[In the second year of the Thái Bình era (971)] the court hierarchy and ranks for monks and Daoist masters were installed (. . .) National Preceptor Ngô Chân Lưu* was made Khuông Việt* Thái Su', Truong* Ma Ni Religious Monk Scribe, Dang* Huyen* Quang Sùng Chính Uy Nghi." Thus, the "Tang* Luc*" was a rank for Buddhist monks and was installed since the reign of Đinh* Tiên Hoàng. The monk Tru'ong Ma Ni was the first to hold this office. In China, this rank began with Duanfu under Wenzong of Tang (827–840). We can glean some of the significance of this rank through the following words of Wuzong: "Since there was Buddhism until now, what evidence there is about its ups and downs, let the monk scribes of the two institutions together with the monks versed in the three disciplines write down and submit it to me." See *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.243a26–28. Thus, it seems that a monk scribe's responsibility beside keeping documents, also holds the function of a Buddhist historian.

225. The bestowing of a purple robe to a monk began in China with Wu Zetian (684–774). In 690, monk Falang found in *Dayun jing* a passage justifying the enthronement of Wu Zetian, who was made prefect and given a purple robe by the latter. See *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.248c3–249a29.

226. According to the *Dasong seng shilüe*, T 54.244b29–c15, the rank National Preceptor started with monk Fachang under the Northern Qi (550–577). The rank is defined as follows: "In terms of teachings, he must be well versed in the three baskets, and master the five sciences. The entire country takes refuge in him. This explains the title [of National Preceptor]." The five sciences are philosophy, grammar, logic, medicine, and technology.

227. This is obviously a paraphrase of the famous passage from the *Hrdaya-Prajnaparami*ta-Sutra* [Heart *Sutra**] *rupam* sunyata* sunyataiva* rupam, rupan* na prthak* sunyata sunyataya* na prthag* rupam, yad rupam sa sunyata ya* sunyata yad rupam*. For an extensive study of the statement "form is emptiness, emptiness is form" in the *Heart Sutra*, see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *The Heart Sutra Explained* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), pp. 57–93; Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Heart of Wisdom* (London: Tharpa Publications, 1986), pp. 26–76.

228. For the expression "rain of Dharma," see, for instance, *Mahayanasutralamkara** 9.6: Buddhahood is said to be all phenomena, and alternatively to be removed from all phenomena. Because it produces the jewel of Dharma so great and vast, it resembles the mine of Dharma-jewels. Because it is the cause producing the accumulation of virtues for living beings, it becomes a cloud showering on them a rain of Dharma, vast, well disposed, and inexhaustible. (*buddhatvam sarvadharmah* samuditamatha va* sarvadharmavyapetam, prodbhute*-*

*dharmaratnapratatasumahato dharmaratnakarabham */ bhutanam* suklasasyaprasavasumahato hetuto meghabhutam*, danaddharmambuvarsapratatasuvihitasayasya* prajasu*/). See Sylvain Lévi, Asanga*. Mahayana-Sutralamka*ra. Exposé de la doctrine du grand véhicule selon le système Yogacara* Tome I. Texte (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1907), p. 34.*

229. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (21b5) and the *Dai* Nam* (16b9) have Long Chu'o'ng Bao* Tu*, but it should be corrected to Thiên Chu'o'ng Bao Tu'. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:277; *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3:2a5.
230. Cú'u Liên was the name of a prefecture. According to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3, 20b7 "in the fourth month of the eighth year of the Kien* Gia era (1218), the king visited Cú'u Liên Châu to watch fishing." It was also the site where Tran* Tu' Khánh stationed his troops in the spring of 1215 to fight Nguyen* Non*.
231. Hoàng Xuân Hân reported in *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiet** that according to the *Tu' Tri* Thông Giám Tru'ò'ng Biên*, the original name of Mãn Giác's father was Lý Hoài To*, who led an envoy to the Song court in 1073 to report the death of Lý Thánh Tông. Because of the name taboo under the Trần, the last name Lý was changed into Nguyen*. See *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:298, n. 1.
232. Teacherless wisdom is a term used to denote the Buddha's wisdom or omniscience. "Chapter on Parable" in the *Lotus Sutra** talks about "Omniscience, Buddha's wisdom, natural wisdom and teacherless wisdom." See Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, p. 63.
233. According to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:12b6–7, in the eighth month of the seventh year of the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh era (1065), Lý Nhân Tông visited the Cú'u Lan Provincial Palace and named it Canh* Hu'ng.
234. *Chí nhân* 至人 [Ch: *zhiren*] in the original text. The term obviously denotes a Bodhisattva according to Mãn Giác's teaching.
235. According to Lê Manh* Thát, Mãn Giác might not have died in 1096, because Mãn Giác had a disciple named Bon* Tinh*, who belonged to the ninth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school, and Bôn Tinh died in 1176 at the age of seventy-seven. Bôn Tinh, thus, must have been born in 1110 and could not have met Mãn Giác to become his disciple. See *LMT*, p. 210, n. 6.
236. The *Dai* Nam Nhất* Thông* Chí* (27:30), "Hà Noi* Province," wrote: "Mount Ninh So'n was nineteen miles to the north of the district town Chu'o'ng Đứ'c, opposite the Hát River. Under the Lê a provincial palace was built there as a recreation place." According to the *Đai Nam Nhất Thông Chí* (27:16–17), Chu'o'ng Đứ'c District was contiguous to Thanh Oai District in the east, to My* Lu'o'ng District So'n Tây Province to the west, Hoài An District to the south, and Yên So'n District So'n Tây Province to the north. Chu'o'ng Đứ'c is thus now Chu'o'ng My District, Hà Đông Province.
237. Ứng Thiên Prefecture, also called Nam Kinh, was a prefecture belonging to the capital Thang* Long. See *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, 1:264, n. 1. See *LMT*, p. 210, n. 2.
238. The name Kim Bài appeared twice in our text. Than* Nghi's biography said: "Zen Master Thân Nghi of Thang* Quang Temple Village, Kim Bài . . ." (39b8). Kim Bài thus must be a geographical unit larger than a village. Yet in this biography Kim Bài is said to be a village. Lê Manh Thát suggests that there might have been a Kim Bài Village pertaining to Kim Bài Prefecture or Kim Bài Province. See *LMT*, p. 211, n. 3.

239. See A. Waley, *The Analects of Confucius* (London, 1949), p. 128.

240. A monk asked Zen Master Zhaozhou: "Does a dog have Buddha-nature?" Zhou said: "No!" See *Wumenguan*, T 48.1:292c21.

241. A monk asked Zen Master Weikuan: "What is the Tao?" The Master said: "The great mountain is beautiful." The monk continued: "I asked you about the Tao, why are you talking about the beautiful mountain?" Weikuan said: "You only know about the beautiful mountain, how can you attain the Tao?" The monk asked: "Does a dog have Buddha-nature?" Weikuan said: "Yes!" The monk asked: "Do you have it, Teacher?" Weikuan said: "I don't." The monk said: "All sentient beings have Buddha-nature, why don't you alone have it?" Weikuan said: "I'm not all sentient beings." The monk asked: "If you're not all sentient beings, are you a Buddha then?" Weikuan said: "I'm not Buddha either." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.255a16–22.

242. Bo Juyi used to come and asked Zen Master Weikuan: "What do you use, sir, to preach the Dharma?" Weikuan said: "Supreme enlightenment clothing one's body is the precept, speaking from one's body is the law, acting through one's body is meditation. Its application is threefold but the goal is one. It is like the rivers of Yangzi, Huang, Huai, and Han; each has its name according to its site. The names are various, yet the nature of water is nondual. Since the precept is the law, and the law is meditation, how could any discrimination arise between them?" See *Chuandeng lu*, 7:255a25–29.

243. At the end of Dao * Hues* biography we read: "His disciple Quách Tang* Thong* prepared offerings and brought his body back to his native district to cremate it." Based on this passage, Lê Manh* Thát suggests that Nhu' Nguyet* must be a district under the Lý. It might have been a brief name for Nhu' Nguyet Giang Lo* that the *An Nam Chí Lu'oc**, 1:19, has mentioned. Its territory probably includes the villages at the trifurcation at present-day Nhu' Nguyet Village, including the Yên Phong Prefecture. See *LMT*, 212, n. 3.

244. Which is now Chân Ho* Village, Yên Phong Prefecture, Bac* Ninh Province.

245. I.e., Thông Bien*, whose last name was Ngô and who was well versed in the *Lotus Sutra**.

246. According to tradition the Buddha, after leaving home to search for enlightenment, spent six years in the snow mountain (or the forest) practicing austerities. See, for instance, *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing* [*Sutra on the Past and Present Cause and Effect*] T 3.622b4–6. This seems to have a very significant meaning in Vietnamese Buddhism.

247. We read in the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 4:293: "In the spring, the tenth month [of the twelfth year of the Dai* Dinh* era (1151)], Princess Thuy* Minh passed away." Thus, in 1151 Princess Thuy Minh, Lý Anh Tông's grandmother and Lý Than* Tông's daughter, was already dead. So what is recorded here might be an error.

248. Lý Anh Tông (1136–1175), whose personal name was Thiên To*, was the second son of Lý Thần Tông. Anh Tông was particularly interested in geography. During his reign, he traveled to all the islands and areas in the North and the South and had maps drawn and records made about the landscapes of those areas. He had composed a work on geography entitled *Nam Bac* Phiên Gió'i Dia* Do**, which is now lost. See *Lu'oc Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, 1: 147; *Việt Su** *Lu'oc*, 3:2b4–8b1.

249. The *Dai * Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi* (27:73), "Hà Nội* Province," wrote: "Bảo Thiên Temple was located at Thiên Thi Village, Tho* Xu'ong Prefecture, formerly called Bảo Thiên, erected by Lý Thánh Tông. The emperor also had the Dai* Thang* Tu'* Thiên Stupa erected, which stood about a few dozen yards high, consisting of twelve stories. Thánh Tông also had 12,000 pounds of copper taken from the royal store to build the bell." The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c** and the *Toàn Thu'* recorded that in 1056 Lý Thánh Tông had the Sùng Khánh Bảo Thiên built, and the following year he had the Đai Thang Tu' Thiên Stupa erected.

250. According to both the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:7b9, and the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*", 4:299, the tenth year of the Chính Long Bao* Úng era was the year of *nhâm thìn* and not *at* hoi**. Lê Manh* Thát pointed out that none of the years during the Chính Long Bao Úng era (1163–1172) was the year of *ât hoi'*. See *LMT*, p. 214, n. 8.

251. *Dieu* the** 妙体 [Ch: *miaoti*] in the original; obviously means the Dharmakaya*.

252. Note a mispunctuation in the *Đai Nam* (19a10) here: a period is placed at the end of the words Thang* Long, which reads: *tong* xá loi* an trí thang* long* 送舍利安置升龍 [brought his remains to be kept in Thang Long]. However, the punctuation should be before the words Thang Long, since they are the site where Van* Tue* Temple was located. This temple was the abode of Zen Master Bien* Tài, only a paragraph of whose biography was recorded following Dao* Hues* biography. It reads as follows [24a11–24b1]: Zen Master Biên Tài of Van Tuê Temple* in the capital of Thang Long was a native of Guangzhou who came to our country during the reign of Lý Thánh Tông.** He received the Dharma from National Preceptor Thông Biên and, obeying the royal edict, edited the *Chieu* Doi* Luc** [Collated Biographies].***

253. According to the *Đai Nam Nhật Thông Chí*(29:17), "So'n Tây Province, Kien* Trí Diên Cách section," My* Lu'ong District formerly was Quang* Oai District. According to *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:482, it is My Lãng 美良, which nowadays belongs to Hòa Bình Province.

254. Here it is only said that Bao Giám was a native of Trung Thuy* Village, yet in Quang* Nghiê'm's biography we read that his temple, Tinh* Qua*, was in Trung Thuy, Tru'ng Canh (36a11). Regarding Tru'ng Canh, we read in the

* The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:3a6, wrote: "In the same year (i.e., 1011), in the precincts of the city were built the Thái Thanh Palace, the Van Tuê temple. . . ." *The Tây Ho* Chí*, section on "Temples," wrote: "Van Niên Temple was located to the west of Tây Ho* (West Lake) in the territory of Quán La Village, formerly called Van Tuê, subsequently changed to Van Niên. In the fifth year, *giáp dan**, of the Thuan* Thiên era (1014), the General Supervisor of Monks of the Right Office petitioned to establish an altar there to ordain monks. The emperor granted permission. During that period, eminent monks such as Lâm Hue* Sinh, Lý Thao* Đu'ng, successively became its abbot. Afterward, there was an extraordinary monk from Guangzhou who made his abode there. He also edited the *Collated Biographies*, which is still in circulation. This temple still exists today."

** The text has Hieu* Thánh Tông. *Hieu** 李.

*** The *Chiêu Đồi Luc* [Collated Biographies] was also mentioned in Than* Nghi's biography (40a9) as *Chiêu Đồi Ban**, whereas here it is called *Chiêu Đồi Luc*. This text is lost, and the *Tây Hồ Chí*, a work written after 1851, was the only book that mentioned this work.

*Kien * Van* Tieu* Luc**, 6:65, that "the Lý and Tran* dynasties established the Tru'o'ng Canh District at Đan Phung*." The same book (6:63) also tells us that Trung Thuy* Village belongs to Đan Phung District.

255. These are the principal scriptures of Confucianism. The *Book of Odes* recorded some of the most ancient folk poems and songs of China. Tradition has it that Confucius edited it. The *Book of Documents* is a book of history. The *Book of Rites* recorded the rites and rules of behavior of ancient China. The *Book of Changes* is, among other things, a book of divination.

256. On this rank, see *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c**, 14:133.

257. See Dongshan Liangjie's "Baojing Sanmei Ge" [Song of the Precious Mirror of Concentration]:

The archer Yi relies on the strength of his skills,
Hits the target within a hundred feet everytime.
But what makes the tip the arrow hit [the mark],
Does not have anything to do with the strength of his skills.

See *Rentian yanmu*, T 48.321b5. See also *Huainanzi*, 20, 3b4–6.

258. The *Buddhabhumisutra** uses the metaphor of space to describe the ten characteristics of the *Dharmadhatu** [the Realm of Ultimate Reality] or the ground of the Tathagatas* wisdom. The original Sanskrit of this *sutra** is lost. The Tibetan text is found in Nishio Kyoo, *The Buddhabhumi-sutra**, pp. 4–8. Chinese text in *Buddhabhumisutra**, T 16.721a4–b11. For Silabhadras* commentary, see Nishio, part 2, pp. 213–28; for Bandhuprabha's commentary, see *Buddhabhumusutra-sa*stra*, T 26.304b25–306a18.

259. There is definitely some confusion regarding the name Không Lô*. The biography of a man by the name of Không Lô has been recorded in many books. See, for instance, *Linh* Nam Chích Quái (Viet* Nam Hán Van Tieu Thuyet**, 2.1:173–74); *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, 15:147. According to the *Tho' Van Lý Tran**, 1:384, n. 4), the biography of a certain Không Lô is also recorded in the *Thinh* Thánh Vu'o'ng Không Lô* Thien* Su' Dai* Khoa*. This book is unfortunately not available to me at the present time.

260. The *Đại Nam Nhất* Thong* Chí*, "Nam Dinh* Province, section on Temples and Shrines," records: "Than* Quang Temple, formerly Nghiê'm Quang, is located at Dung* Nhue* Village, Giao Thuy* District. A big temple, which used to be the abode of Du'o'ng Không Lô, it is now considered to be miraculous. Whenever there is calamity or drought people would come to the temple and pray, and every time their prayer is answered."

261. According to our text, Giác Hai* belonged to the tenth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school. His biography is recorded in many literary sources.

262. Hà Trach* Temple might be the temple of Lô'i Hà Trach, a Zen Master, who, according to Thông Bien*, was the same generation as Mai Viên Chieu* and Nhan Quang* Trí. See n. 223 to Thông Biens* biography. Ngô Thi Si* remarked in *Việt Su* Tiê'u Án* (p. 143): "The Lý dynasty supported Buddhism. Since Van* Hanh* became famous, people took after him. Then there were Du'o'ng Không Lô and Nguyen* Giác Hải, both natives of Hai Thanh, who served Hà Trach as their teacher. . . ."

263. The *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:211, recorded as follows about Không Lô: "Zen Master Không Lô was a monk from Giao Thủy Prefecture. He could fly in the air and walk on water, tame tigers and subdue dragons. [His supernatural

powers] were magnificent and multifarious. No one was able to fathom them." Note that the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* does not agree with the *Thiên * Uyển** and the *Dai* Nam* as regards where Không Lo* came from. The *An Nam Chí Nguyên* said nothing about Không Lo*'s relationship with Giác Hai* but recorded that Giác Hai also hailed from Giao Thủy*. The *An Nam Chí Nguyên* was composed later, when geographic names might have been changed. The fact that it recorded that Không Lô and Giác Hai came from the same place simply confirms that these two masters were actually religious companions, since according to the *Thiên Uyển*, Không Lô and Giác Hai came from the same place [i.e., Hai Thanh]. Note that the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái* recorded in another story about Minh Không that formerly Minh Không lived at a temple named Không Lô at Giao Thủy Village. See Chan Hing-ho, *Viet* Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.1:80.

264. The King of Emptiness means the Buddha, because he has realized the emptiness of all phenomena. See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.303b5.

265. Zen Master Zongxin told his teacher Daowu: "Since I've been here I haven't been given instruction about the essence of the mind." Daowu said: "Ever since you've been here there hasn't been a moment that I didn't give you instruction about the essence of the mind." Zongxin said: "When did you instruct me?" Daowu said: "You brought the tea, I took it. When you greeted me, I bowed my head. When have I not instructed you about the essence of the mind?" See *Chuangdeng lu*, 14:313b19–22. See also Shenhui's remark in his biography in *ibid.*, 324b6.

266. One night Zen Master Yaoshan was walking on the mountain chanting a *sutra**. It was a cloudless night and the moon was clear. Yaoshan burst out laughing, and his laughter traveled ninety miles until it reached the east of Liyang. On that occasion Governor Li Ao composed a poem dedicated to him:

He has found a remote site that brings rustic joys,
The entire year he greeted no one, bade farewell to no one.
At times he would climb to the solitary mountaintops,
And utter a laughter under the moon and the floating clouds.

See *Chuangdeng lu*, 14:312b22.

According to the *Dai Nam*, Không Lô's personal name was recorded as Chí Thành or Minh Không, his family name was Nguyen*, and Không Lô was apparently his Dharma name. In the *Linh Nam Chích Quái* there are two biographies: one of Không Lô and one of Nguyễn Minh Không. According to this book, Không Lô's family name was Du'ong and he was a native of Hai Thanh District. This Không Lô was a religious companion of Giác Hai, also of Hai Thanh, and both served Master Hà Trach* in their early days as monks. The other biography is of Zen Master Minh Không. According to this, Minh Không's personal name was Nguyễn Chí Thành. He was a native of Dai* Hoàng Đàm Xá District, Tru'ờng An, and was a disciple of Tù' Dao* Hanh*. It was this Nguyễn Minh Không who cured Lý Than* Tông's illness. It is quite clear that according to *Linh Nam Chích Quái*, Du'ong Không Lô and Nguyễn Minh Không were two different persons: Minh Không was a disciple of Tù' Dao Hanh, Không Lô was a companion of Giác Hai. Some earlier authors, such as Ho* Nguyễn Trùng and Phan Huy Chú, were of the opinion that there was only one Không Lô (*Tho' Van Lý Tran**). It is difficult to say whether there was only

one Không Lo * since not only are different family names given but also different dates regarding his death. The *Thien* Uyen** recorded that he died in 1119; the *Toàn Thu'*, 1141, whereas in the present biography we have 1151. See Chan Hing-ho, *Viet* Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.1:80–81; 92–94; 172–74; 229–33. I am of the opinion that Du'ong Không Lô and Nguyen* Minh Không are two different persons, and that it was the compiler(s) of the *Thiên Uyên* who inadvertently mixed two biographies into one and took Minh Không and Không Lô to be one and the same person. Note that the *Việt Dien** also recorded that Dao* Hanh*, Minh Không and Giác Hai* were religious companions. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Van Tiêu Thuyết*, 2.2:221–25.

See Appendix II for complete translations of Không Los* biography from the *Dai* Nam* and the *Linh* Nam*.

267. The text has Kiet* Tri but should definitely be amended to Kiêt Đac*. According to Lê Manh* Thát, Mount Chí Linh is identical with Mount Phung* Hoàng, Kiêt Đac. This is based on the description of Mount Phung Hoàng in the *Lich* Trieu* Hien* Chu'o'ng Loai* Chí* and the description of Mount Chí Linh, Kiêt Đac, in *Bac* Thành Dia* Du' Chí* and *Đai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí*. Kiêt Đac Village is now Chí Linh District, Hai Du'ong Province. See *LMT*, p. 220, n. 1. See also *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:506, n. 1.

268. Now Phù Dien* Village, Hoài Đức District, Hà Đông Province.

269. On Nguy* Quoc* Bao*, see *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*", 1:263, 265, 269, 271, 273.

270. Le* River [Li in Chinese] is in Yunnan (China). It is also called Jinsha River. According to the *Hanfeizi*, chapter "Daoyan," there was gold in the Li River in Jingnan. The government put a ban on panning gold from it. Those who violated it would be killed and their bodies exposed in the marketplace. Yet people continued stealing gold, knowing that they would not be apprehended. Hanfeizi remarked: "Even with the severe punishment of being killed and one's corpse being exposed, if we cannot catch those who do it, the stealing will not cease." See *LMT*, p. 221, n. 6.

271. According to this, Bon* Tinh* died in 1176 at the age of seventy-six. Thus, he must have been born in 1100. If that is the case, Bôn Tinh could not have "received the essence [of Zen] from Master Mãn Giác of Giáo Nguyên Temple" as the text has it, since Mãn Giác died in 1096 at the age of forty-five. Either the year of Mãn Giác's death or the lifespan of Bôn Tinh is incorrect.

272. Now Phù Cam* Village, Yên Phong District, Bac* Ninh Province.

273. *Nhuoc* quan* 弱冠 [Ch: *ruo guan*]: in ancient China when a young man reached the age of twenty, a "hat" (*quan*) ritual was organized for him to mark his maturity. Subsequently, the expression *ruo guan* was used to denote a young man around twenty years old.

274. I.e., the *Renwang panruo boluomi jing*, trans. Kumarajiva*, 2 vols., *T* 8.245. This probably was the text in circulation during the Lý dynasty. There is an earlier translation by Amoghavajra in 765 bearing the same title and also in two volumes. See also *T* 8.246.

275. This probably refers to a dialogue between the two Zen masters Shitou and Yinfeng recorded in the *Chuangeng lu*, *T* 51.259b11: "One day while Shitou was cutting grass, Yinfeng stood by one side, his arms folded. Shitou threw the sickle down in front of him cutting a blade of grass. Yinfeng said,

'Venerable sir, you can only cut this one, not that one.' Shitou picked up his sickle. Yinfeng took it and made a gesture as if he were cutting grass. Shitou said, 'You can only cut that one, not this one.'

276. According to the *Vimalakirtinirdesa-sutra*, when all the Bodhisattvas had given their explanations on the principle of nonduality, Manjusri* asked Vimalakirti* to elucidate on the subject. Vimalakirti just kept silence, saying nothing at all. Mañjusri then praised Vimalakirti for giving the profoundest explanation of nonduality. See Étienne Lamotte, *L'enseignement de Vimalakirti** (Louvain: Université de Louvain, 1962), p. 317; Thurman, *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti*, p. 77.

277. I.e., the doctrinal school as opposed to the Zen School.

278. One day Zen Master Yangshan Huiji was talking to a monk when another monk who stood next to them said, "Talking is Mañjusri, keeping silent is Vimalakirti." Huiji said, "Neither talking nor keeping silent, isn't that you?" The monk had no answer. Huiji said, "Why haven't you shown your supernatural power?" The monk said, "I'm not declining to show my supernatural power. I'm only afraid that you will include me among the adherents of the verbal teaching." Huiji said, "Considering where you're coming from, you're not the eye of the transmission outside the teaching yet." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.283b29–c3.

279. *Hi di* 希夷 [Ch: *xi yi*] are terms borrowed from the *Daodejing*. See Ellen M. Chen, *The Tao Te Ching* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), p. 88.

280. *Yang yan* 陽焰, see *Lankavatara-sutra**, T 16.491a7–10.

281. The *Dai* Nam* (23b3) has *sac* tu'o'ng* 色相 [form and characteristic] instead of *sac tân* [the form body].

282. Self-immolation, such as burning one's finger, is a form of offering to the Buddha or showing one's seriousness in taking a particular vow. This practice is still observed in Vietnamese Buddhism.

283. On the three contemplations according to the *Sutra* of Perfect Enlightenment*, see n. 88.

284. According to the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3, the fifth year of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thuy* era (1190) was the year *canh tuat** and not *canh tân*, which was the fifteenth year of the Thiên Tu' Gia Thuy (1200). It is possible that the word *thap** 五 [five].

285. See Great Master Xiangyan Jideng's verse:

The chick pecks from inside while the mother pecks
from outside,
The mother and the chick are both forgotten,
Responding to the conditions properly.
They rise in harmony,
One leg in the wondrous cloud.

See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.452b16–18. See also *Biyan lu*, T 48.156a21–24: "A monk asked Jingqing, 'I spit, will you please peck, Teacher.' Jingqing said, 'Can you be alive again?' The monk said, 'If I can't, I would be derided by people.' Jingqing said, 'There goes another scarecrow.'"

286. *Hóa* 化 [Ch: *hua*] in the original text, literally meaning "to transform," an honorific term for "die."

287. Phúc Châu [Fuzhou] was a prefecture since the Tang dynasty. Formerly called Minzhou, nowadays it belongs to Fujian Province, China. See *Tho' Van * Ly' Tran**, 1:477, n. 1; "Le Bouddhisme," p. 249.

288. Dharma-Eye (*dharma-caksu**) is one among the "Five Eyes," namely, the Physical-Eye (*mamsa-caksus**), Divine-Eye (*divya-caksus**), Wisdom-Eye (*prajna*-caksus**), Dharma-Eye (*dharma-caksus**), and Buddha-Eye (*buddha-caksus**). When a practitioner attains the Dharma-eye, he enters the Dharma (truth). See Hajime Nakamura, *Bukkyo* jiten*, p. 266r.

289. One day Zen Master Jiashan Shanhui was coming up to the teaching hall when Daowu came with his staff. A monk asked: "What is the Truth Body?" Jiashan said: "The Truth Body is without form." The monk continued: "What is the Dharma-eye?" Jiashan said: "The dharma-eye is stainless." He again said: "There is no Dharma in front of the eye. There is only consciousness in front of the eye. The Dharma is not within range of ear and eye." Daowu laughed. Jiashan became confused and asked him: "What are you laughing about?" Daowu said: "Venerable sir, you're the type who has left the world to become a monk yet hasn't met a teacher. You should go to Zhezong, Huating Village, to study with the Venerable Chuanzi." Jiashan said: "Can I still go see him?" Daowu said: "That teacher, above there's no single tile to cover his head, below there's not enough ground for him to stick an awl into." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.323c25–324a7.

290. A monk asked Zen Master Jiashan Shanhui: "Since the old days the intentions of the patriarchs and the teachings have been established, why are you, Venerable Sir, teaching nonbeing?" Jiashan said: "I haven't been eating rice for three years, there is no puppet in front of my eyes." See *Chuandeng lu*, 324a20–21.

291. Compare with a verse by Zen Master Jiashan Shanhui:

One who is clear in mind does not attain enlightenment,
Only the deluded ones attain enlightenment.
I'm just a guy who lies at leisure with my legs stretched out,
I'm concerned neither with true nor false.

292. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (28b10) and the *Dai* Nam* (25a5) have *khoa* 跨. See also *Tho' Van Ly' Tran*, 1:478.

293. See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.287b17; 384b28; 397a8–9.

294. "A young novice after serving Zen Master Jiashan Shanhui for many years left him to go search for other Zen adepts all over the country without achieving any spiritual attainment. The novice then heard that people were flocking to Shanhui to study Zen. He himself returned to Shanhui and asked, "Teacher, you have something so special, why didn't you tell me before?" Shanhui said, "You cooked the rice, I blew on the fire; you begged for alms, I carried the bowl. When did I ever let you down?" The novice became enlightened." See *Chuandeng lu*, 15:324b2–7.

295. Compare with the passage in Jiashan Shanhui's biography: "On the seventh day of the eleventh month of the first year, *xinchou*, of the Zhonghua era of the Tang (881), the Master invited his patrons over and said, 'I have been discussing the Dharma with the monks for many years. Each of you should yourself grasp the profound intention of the Buddha's teaching. My illusory body has reached its time, I'm going to leave this world. You should

take care of yourselves just as in the days when I was still with you. Don't be like the ordinary people and start grieving.' His instructions finished, at midnight, he silently passed away." See *Chuandeng lu*, 15:324b22–26.

296. The *tí* hour or hour of the rat is midnight.

297. Jiashan Shanhui's biography is found in the *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.323c20–324b28.

298. I.e., the *Hue * Nhat* Liet* To* Yeu* Nghia** [Record of Essential Sayings of the Patriarchs by Master Hue* Nhat*]. This work is mentioned twice in our text, once here and another time in Nguyen* Hoc's* biography (36a9). Based on this we can say that some of the dialogues in our text are taken from this work. In these two biographies, although most of the encounter dialogues are similar to those that take place in Shanhui's and Huisi's biographies in the *Chuandeng lu*, the compiler of our text did not correct them because "they have been recorded in the *Essential Sayings* of Master Huê Nhat." We know nothing about who Huê Nhat was and when he lived, although we might have a rough idea about the content of his book.

299. According to the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:11a8, "[in] the sixth year, *ky* hoi**, of the Long Thuy* Thái Bình era (1059) . . . the Sùng Nghiêm Báo Đứ'c Temple was built in Vu* Ninh Province." Thus, its complete name was Sùng Nghiêm Báo Đứ'c.

300. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi*(28:33–34) "Bac* Ninh Province" wrote: "Mount Trâu So'n, also called Mount Vu Ninh, is located twelve miles east of Que* Đu'ò'ng District-Town." The book also tells us that Mount Vu Ninh was also the site where the Vietnamese legendary hero Phù Dong* Thiên Vu'o'ng defeated the Yin army. According to the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, Mount Vu Ninh is at Vu Ninh Châu. See also "Le Bouddhisme," p. 249, *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:512, n. 1.

301. According to Tran* Van* Giáp Đông Tác was a village situated in Hoàn Long District, Hà Đông Province. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 249, n. 3.

302. On the *Avatamsaka-Sutra** see T 10, no 279.

303. Also called *Puxian pusa xingyuan zan*, T 10.880a1–882c17. This is the same as the *Toc* Tat* Mãn Pho* Hien* Hanh* Nguyen* Đà La Ni* but was later made a separate work.

304. The *Viêt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:11a6–8, wrote: "In the spring [of the tenth year, *at* ti**, of the Trinh Phù era (1185)] Lord Kien* Ninh, Long Ích, led twelve thousand troops to fight the tribal Lao of the Linh settlement in revenge for the La Bieus* defeat. On his arrival at the Do* Gia Hamlet, Long Ích sent emissaries to reassure and win over the rebels." Lord Kiên Ninh is thus the title of Lý Long Ích, son of Emperor Lý Anh Tông. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 4:304, also recorded the same event, yet has "Kiên Khu'o'ng Vu'o'ng" instead of "Kiên Ninh Vu'o'ng." On Kiên Ninh Vu'o'ng, see *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, 1:512.

305. The *Viêt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:7b2–3, records as follows about Princess Thiên Cu'c*: "[In] the fifth year, *dinh hoi**, of the Chính Long Bao* Ú'ng era (1167) . . . Princess Thiên Cu'c was married to the Marquis of Hoài Trung, Chief of Lang* Châu." Among the events of the fifth year of the Tri* Bình Ú'ng Long era (1209), the same text (3:19b4–7) wrote: "The emperor sent Pham* Du to Hong* Lo* to train troops for an eventual fight against the Thuan* Lu'u. When the Hồng Lô men came to take him at the appointed time, Du was making love to Princess Thiên Cu'c and had forgotten all about the appointment and missed it. He

then took a galley and sailed to the Co * Châu landing stage, went ashore and walked to the A Cao Village at Ma Lãng where he was seized by Nguyen* Nâu and Nguyễn Nãi, natives of Bac* Giang, and handed over to Prince Sam* who killed him." And again among the events of the first year of the Kien* Gia era (1211) we read (3:22a7–8): "In the sixth month, one night Tô Trung Tu'* went to Gia Lâm Mansion to make love to Princess Thiên Cu'c* and was killed by her husband Vu'ong Thu'ong, an orderly officer." See also *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:512.

306. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (29:115) "So'n Tây Province," section on "Temples and Shrines" mentioned a temple named Ho* Nham under the Mac*. This might have been the temple built by Dai* Xa* under the Lý.

307. According to the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 4:296, Do* Anh Vu* died in the autumn, the eighth month of the nineteenth year of the Đai Dinh* era (1158). If the *Toàn Thu'* is correct, Đô Anh Vu would not have been alive during the Thiên Cam* Chí Bao* era (1174–1175).

308. Solitary Buddhas are sages who attain enlightenment through contemplating the doctrine of dependent origination. See Nakamura Hajime, *Bukkyo* jiten*, 76–771.

309. The original text (29b8) has *thuyet** 說 which means to speak or preach. However, it is obvious in this context that "contemplate" would make better sense.

310. Emperor Wu of Liang, a.k.a. Xiaoyan, was the one who overthrew the Qi in South China and founded the Liang dynasty in 502. In 549 Houjing rebelled and forced him to die at Dacheng. Liang Wudi was usually considered one of the most devout Buddhists among the Chinese sovereigns.

311. Zen Master Baozhi (419?–515) interpreted some auguries for Liang Wudi. For his biography, see *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.429c18–430a23.

312. This dialogue is very similar to the one between Emperor Wu of Liang and Baozhi in the *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.430a6–11: "One day, Emperor Wu of Liang asked Baozhi, 'I have many afflictions, what is the method to deal with them?' Baozhi said, 'By means of the twelve [links of dependent origination].'"

313. The four serpents symbolize the four elements. See *Mahaparinirvana-Sut*ra*, T 12.23:501c24–27.

314. Here the box symbolizes the body.

315. See Zen Master Cuiyan's "Dialogue about Meritorious Accomplishments":

The mud ox drinks up the moon in a clear pond,
The stone horse under heavy whip doesn't turn his head.

See *Rentian yanmu*, T 48.316b5–6.

316. Probably because of Đô Anh Vus* pressure. See also n. 307 above.

317. According to *Cu'o'ng Muc* Toàn Biên* 3:15a1–4: "Vu Binh originally belonged to Phong Khe* Vi, established around the beginning of the Ngô, comprising seven districts. Under the Sui its status as a county was abolished and it was changed into Long Binh District. Under the Tang it was again changed into Vu Binh District, and subsequently Dang* Châu. Under the Đinh and the Lê it became Thái Binh Prefecture. The Tran* changed it into Khoái Lo*. . . . It is now the territory of Hưng Yên Province."

318. In Mahayana * Buddhism the cultivation of merit and wisdom (*punyajnana-sambhara**) is fundamental in the attainment of perfect enlightenment or Buddhahood. See, for instance, E. Obermiller, "The Doctrine of *Prajna-paramita** as Exposed in the *Abhisamayalamkara** of Maitreya," *Acta Orientalia* 11 (1932): 33–34; Chr. Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana*: Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nagarjuna** (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982), pp. 249–77.
319. *Buddhanusmrti-samad*hi* is a method of concentration by putting one's thoughts on Buddha. In early Buddhist scriptures this practice is fourfold: (1) meditations on the virtues of Buddha, (2) hearing the name of Buddha, (3) repetition of the name of Buddha, and (4) meditation on the figure of Buddha. In the context of Vietnamese Buddhism, this might have been meditation upon Amitabha* Buddha. See, for instance, *Guan wuliangshou jing*, T 12.340c–346b, and **Mahavaipulyamahāsāmpaśāmbodhisattvabuddhanusmrtisamadhi**, T 13.855b–859c.
320. This means he corrects the other commentaries.
321. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (30b10) and the *Dai* Nam* (27a4) have *tu** thi* thái to* húy tiên húy ba* t tùng* 乘, which is the personal name of Thái Tô of the Tran* dynasty.
322. Lê Manh* Thát (*LMT*, pp. 231–32, n. 1) pointed out that in the documents of the Lý and Trần dynasties that are still extant nowadays, we find either Cát Lo'i* or Lo'i Hi but never Cát Lo'i Hi. As regards the name Cát Lo'i, the *Viet* Su** Lu'o'c**, 3:24a2, wrote: "In the second month [of the second year, *nhâm thân*, of the Kien* Gia era (1212)] in an attack against Ngô Thu'ò'ng Vu* and Vu Cao of Cát Lo'i, Nguyên Tu** was hit by an arrow and withdrew to the Tây Du'ò'ng Alley." Lo'i Hi was designated as a village according to the inscription on a stele established in the fifth year of the Tri* Binh Long Ú'ng (1210) under Emperor Lý Cao Tông at Báo Ân Temple in Thap* Mieu* Village, Yên Lãng District, Vinh* Phú Province.
323. The *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:208, n. 2 reports that according to the *Thái Bình Hoàn Vu* Ký*, Thu'ò'ng Lac* Prefecture, which later was changed to An Thuan*, was located to the southeast of Ái Province. According to Đào Duy Anh in his *Dat* Nu'ó'c Viêt Nam Qua Các Đò'i* [The Country Vietnam Through the Ages], it is the present-day Tinh* Gia Prefecture, Thanh Hoá Province.
324. *Cu'ò'ng Muc* Toàn Biên*, 4, 12a4–6, wrote: "Ô Diên belongs to Giao Chi*. Formerly, in the fourth year of the reign of Wudi of Tang (621), the three districts of Ô Diên, Tù' Liêm, and Vu Lap* which pertained to Giao Chi were established. The old history said that Ô Diên was Hà Mô Village at Tù' Liêm." The old history that *Cu'ò'ng Muc* referred to is the *Toàn Thu'. Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 6:64, also tells us the same. See *LMT*, p. 232, n. 2.
325. See *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, 1:517.
326. *Loi* du'ò'ng* 利養 [Ch: *liyāng*] in the original. See Nakamura Hajime et al., *Bukkyo* jiten*, p. 7741.
327. This remark is borrowed from a dialogue between Daoyi and Wuyue. See *Chuangdeng lu*, T.257a8–9: "When Daoyi first met Wuyue, seeing his lofty stature, his voice liked the sounds of a bell. Daoyi said, 'This is an imposing temple without a Buddha.'" See also *ibid.*, 168a10–14: "After leaving his teacher to come to study with Baizhang, Zen Master Shenzan returned to his

former teacher, who asked him, 'After you left me, did you achieve anything in particular?' Shenzan answered, 'I have achieved absolutely nothing.' His teacher had him serve as an attendant. One day he asked Shenzan to bathe him. Shenzan rubbed his back saying, 'A beautiful temple, yet the Buddha in it is not sacred.'"

328. See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.293a22–23.

329. The main idea of this verse is based on the "Leaving Behind Defilements" section in the *Avatamsakasutra* *, T 10.185a23–b1. "A Bodhisattva, as regards his own possessions, knows when they are sufficient. He is compassionate and forgiving toward others and does not want to violate or harm them. If something belongs to others, he generates the thought that it belongs to others, and thus he does not entertain the thought of thief regarding it. He would not take even a blade of grass or a leaf if it were not given to him, much less things that are of use to others. . . . A Bodhisattva should be content with his own wife and should not have desire for others' wives. A Bodhisattva should not even generate defiled thoughts toward others' wives, the females under others' protection. . . ." Dharmika Subhuti* remarks, "he who abstains from the wives of others will obtain the wives he desires; and he who stays away from his own wives, when the place and time are not right, will be reborn as a man." See Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism*, p. 31.

330. It should be Lý Cao Tông instead of Lý Anh Tông, because Thiên Tu' Gia Thuy* was the reign's style of Lý Cao Tông (1186–1201).

331. Both the *Linh* Nam* and *Viet* Dien** contain several different versions of the story of Sóc Thiên Vu'o'ng. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.1:115, 222; 2.2:39, 214–15.

332. *Bei (boi*)*; see *Hanyu dacidian* (Shanghai, 989), 10:44r.

333. This is an expression borrowed from the *Zhuangzi*. See Mair, *Wandering on the Way*, p. 10.

334. Someone asked Zen Master Shanhui of Jiashan about the Jiashan landscape. He said:

The monkeys carry their little ones back to the green
mountain ridges,
The birds carry flowers in their backs and drop them in front
of the blue cliffs.

See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.324b20–21; 4:230a6–7.

335. Light and dust, *Daodejing*, chap. 4. See Chen, *Tao Te Ching*, p. 60.

336. *Tu* nhiên* 自然 [Ch: *zi ran*], or spontaneity, is a crucial concept in Taoism. See, for instance, Graham, *Chuang-tzu*, pp. 6–8.

337. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (33a5) and the *Dai* Nam* (29a6) have *dao* thai** 陶冶 [Ch: *taoye*].

338. Iron girl (or more frequently stone girl) and wooden boy are metaphors used in Zen literature to illustrate the wondrous function of Zen. Zen Master Tong'an Cha said in his "Ten Discourses on the Arcane": "At midnight, the wooden boy puts on his shoes and goes away; at dawn, the stone girl returns wearing her hat." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.455c6–7. See also "Gusu shizhi tongzhen wenda": "Though the wooden boy doesn't speak, the stone girl turns her head to look." *Rentian yanmu*, T 48.305c5–6; "Baojing sanmei": "The wooden man sings, the stone girl dances." *ibid.*, 321b6–7.

339. According to Lê Manh * Thát, among the many mountains of the two provinces of Nghe* An and Hã Tinh* recorded in the *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí*, none has the name Bì Linh. Its name might have been changed. See *LMT*, p. 233, n. 1.
340. Tru'ò'ng An Prefecture located in what is now the prefectures of Yên Khánh, Gia Khánh, Gia Viên, and Yên Mô in Ninh Bình Province. See *LMT*, p. 233, n. 2.
341. Lãng So'n was probably what is at present Lap* Thach* District, So'n Tây Province. See *LMT*, p. 234, n. 4.
342. We read in the biography of Viên Thông, who belonged to the eighteenth generation of the Vinitaruci* school: "His [Viên Thông's] father Đứ'c* served during the reign of Lý Nhân Tông (1072–1127) and held offices as high as Secretary for the Academy of Monk on the Left and Right, and had the sobriquet Zen Master Bao* Giác" (68b7–8). Could this Bao Giác of Viên Minh Temple be Viên Thông's father? However, Viên Thông died in 1151 at the age of seventy-two; it is highly unlikely that Bao Giác was still alive after 1151. Yet this biography tells us that this Bao Giác died in 1173. See *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:484.
343. See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.262c5; 8:263a12–13.
344. The event of Tinh Gió'i praying for rain was also recorded in the "Story of the Two Ladies Tru'ng" in *Viet* Dien**. According to this, the event took place under Lý Anh Tông: "During a drought Emperor Lý Anh Tông sent Zen Master Tinh* Gió'i to pray for rain and rain fell, fresh if not chilly. Beaming with joy, the emperor proceeded to the temple and, in a sudden daydream, saw two beautiful young ladies dressed in green and pink, red hatted and girdled, mounting on iron horses and rambling past following the rain. He inquired in surprise and was told, 'We are the two sisters Tru'ng, we have come down to make rain by order of the King of Heaven.' When he woke up, he was deeply moved and decreed that the temple was to be restored, and sacrifices prepared. Then he attended himself to the ceremony, and afterwards ordered that the statues be transferred to the commemorative temple of Vu* Su' erected west of the main palace. Afterwards, they again appeared in the emperor's dream and asked him to build them a temple at Co* Lai Village. The emperor granted their request and conferred on them the title of Ladies Linh Trinh." See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tiểu* Thuyết**, 2.2:124–25.
- According to Tinh Gió'i's biography, the praying for rain took place in the second year of the Trinh Phù era (1177). However, neither the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c** nor the *Toàn Thu'* recorded any drought during that year. For a description of the ritual of praying for rain in popular Chinese Buddhism, see, for instance, Lewis Hodous, *Buddhism and Buddhists in China* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), pp. 24–28.
345. Note that the character *huu** 有.
346. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:9b9–10, wrote: "In the fifth month [of the fourth year, *ky* hoi**, of the Trinh Phù era (1179)] the Chân Giáo Temple was extended and repaired. The emperor decreed it to be the pilgrimage site on Emperor Anh Tông's anniversary day." According to the *Tây Ho* Chí*, "Chân Giáo Temple was on Phúc Tuong* Peak of Mount Vân Bao in the Dai* La Citadel. The temple was built in the autumn of the fifteenth year of the Thuan* Thiên era (1024) as the site for the emperor to come and attend the chanting of *sutras**. Of the temple, one section remains nowadays, even the old sign is lost. Therefore,

- few know about its origin. The temple is traditionally called Tuong * So'n Temple." Also, according to the *Tây Ho* Chí*, Mount Vân Bao* is in now Vinh* Thuan* Canton. On this mountain there still exist the remains of the foundations of temples and shrines built during the three dynasties of Lý, Tran*, and Lê. See *LMT*, p. 237, n. 9.
347. See *Chuangeng lu*, 394a17–18.
348. On the concept of *tathagatarabha** in Mahayana* Buddhism, see, for instance, David Seyfort Ruegg, *La théorie du tathagatarabha et du gotra* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1969); Takasaki Jikido*, *Nyoraizo* shiso* I* (Tokyo: Hozokan*, 1988).
349. On Zu Zhi and Bo Ya, see *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:536.
350. See *ibid.*
351. According to Lê Manh* Thát, the *Quoc* Su*** here is probably the *Dai* Viet* Su' Ký* [Recorded History of Dai* Viêt], composed by Trần Chu Pho* and Lê Van* Hu'u. See *LMT*, p. 237, n. 11. This stele has not been found.
352. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:443, n. 1. For a complete biography of Giác Hai* from other sources, see appendix II. The *Đai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (37:54–55), "Ninh Bình Province, section on Temples and Shrines," in its record on the Nguyen* Giác Hai Shrine, wrote: "The Nguyễn Giác Hai Shrine is located at Yên Vệ* Village, Yên Khánh District. His Holiness' family name was Nguyễn, his personal name Quoc* Y, his sobriquet Giác Hai. He hailed from Giao Thuy*, Hai Nam, now Nam Dinh*, and was born around the period of Lý Thái Tông's reign. As a young man he took up fishing, his father's trade. Afterward, he followed his mother to Yên Vệ, befriended Nguyễn Minh Không, and went to India to search for the Dharma. After attaining it, he returned to Giao Thuy and became the abbot of Nghiêm Quang Temple."
353. See also appendix II for the story of Không Lo* and Giác Hai in the *Linh* Nam Chích Quái*.
354. The same verse is also recorded in the *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 4:294.
355. Different from *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:443. Someone asked Zen Master Douzi Datong: "Your Venerable, what scene did you have living here?" Datong said: "A little girl's tuft of hair, which has become white." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.319c13.
356. The *Thien* Uyen** (35a11) has *lieu* giác* 不覺 [Ch: *bujue*], which seems to make the best sense.
357. Longmen is in Sichuan, China. Legend has it that there was a big pond called Wumen. In the seventh month the water rose and carp everywhere gathered there, vying to jump over that gate. Those who succeeded were transformed into dragons, whereas those who failed would be marked on the forehead and sent back to where they came from. We also find this metaphor in the biography of Zen Master Lingjiu Ren: Venerable Mingrui asked Zen Master Lingjiu Ren: "What does it mean by 'quickly attain the Truth Body'?" Ren said: "Once you get to the Dragon Gate, look beyond the clouds. Don't be a fish that is marked on the forehead in the Yellow River." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.278b18–19.
358. The *Thiên Uyên* (35b2) has *u'ng tri ky** 知期 [Ch: *zhi qī*].

359. Both the *Thien * Uyen** (35b3) and the *Dai* Nam* (31b4) have *mac* tu* 莫將 [Ch: *moxiang*]. See *Viet* Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.1:174, 233.

360. The *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:210, wrote: "Zen Master Nguyen* Hoc* was a monk originally from Châu Vu* Ninh. He devoted himself to practicing Zen and looked like a withered tree. He forgot both things and self. Birds and beasts lingered around him and became tame like domestic animals. Sui Gaozu had a stupa erected to dedicate to him." This is obviously taken from Pháp Hiens* biography. See the *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* (16b1) for an exactly similar passage. However, in the same book (16a12) right before it was a passage on Nguyễn Hoc, which reads: "Zen Master Nguyễn Hoc was a monk originally from Châu Vu Ninh who devoted himself to purification practices. Whenever he entered *samadhi**, he would get up only after a few days. Subsequently, he died sitting in the Lotus position." Thus, what is written about Nguyễn Hoc in the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* was mistakenly taken from Pháp Hiên's biography. Since both of them came from Châu Vu Ninh, the compiler might have omitted a few lines when copying. The *Dai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (28:102), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Buddhist Monks," records a biographical note about Nguyễn Hoc, according to which he hailed from Vu Giang District.

361. *Brahmacarya** in this context means pure moral conduct. See Nakamura Hajime et al., *Bukkyo* jiten*, 747r.

362. According to both the *Việt Su* Lu'o'c**, 3:8a1–8, and the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 4:209–300, the Thiên Cam* Chí Bao* era consisted of only two years, 1174 and 1175. Thus it should be corrected to either Thiên Cam Chí Bao first or second year.

363. This is based on Huisi's verse instructing his students, which reads:

The Dharma is essentially not far away,
The ocean of True Nature is not immense.
Try to find it within yourself,
Do not seek for it from others.
Even if you find it from them,
It wouldn't be the true Dharma.

See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.431b2–4.

364. Compare to the following verse by Huisi:

When the mind-source is suddenly realized, the precious
treasure is opened,
The mystery hidden and manifest shows all phenomena.
Walking alone, sitting alone, one is majestic,
The emanation bodies that appear are countless.
Although they fill the entire universe,
When you look you don't see the characteristic of even a
speck of dust.
How laughable that phenomena are of innumerable forms,
The true reality is like a jewel radiating bright light.
Always explaining the inconceivable,
There is no word which can describe it appropriately.

See *ibid.*, 431b5–9.

365. See *ibid.*, 431a14–c8, for Huisi's biography.

366. This Trí Thiên * was definitely the same as Minh Trí. It is said in Minh Trí's biography (26b3) that he was formerly called Thiên Trí. Thiên Trí might have been a scribal error for Trí Thiên or the other way around. Here it is recorded that Trí Thiên was teaching at Phúc Thánh Temple, Dien* Lãn. In his biography, Minh Trí [i.e., Thiên Trí] is said to be a monk of Phúc Thánh Temple, Diên Lãn. Besides, Quang* Nghiễm belonged to the eleventh generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông school, while Minh Trí belonged to the tenth generation.

367. *Sayings of Xuedou* or *Sayings of Mingjue* in 6 books, T 47. 669a12–711c22, by Zen Master Chongxian (980–1052) of Mount Xuedou, Mingzhou. He was given the posthumous name Mingjue by the Song emperor.

368. See *Biyan lu*, T 48.198a: Daoyu and Jianyuan went to a funeral. Jianyuan tapped on the coffin and said: "Life or death?" Daoyu said: "Life doesn't talk, death doesn't talk." Jianyuan asked: "Why not?" Daoyu said: "Not talking means not talking." See also *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.321b1–4.

369. See *Vajracchedika-Prajnaparamita-sutra**, T 8:750b29.

370. Dazhu Huihai asked a monk who lectured on the *Diamond Sutra**: "Who speaks this *sutra**?" The monk said: "Are you kidding? Isn't it the Buddha who speaks it?" Huihai said: "It is said in the *sutra* that if you say that the Tathagata* preaches the Dharma, you are slandering the Buddha, and do not understand the meaning of my words." See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.247a2–5.

371. Kien* So' stands for Vô Ngôn Thông because according to tradition the latter made his abode at Kiên So' Temple when he first arrived in Vietnam. Âu means Dao* Hue* because his family name was Âu.

372. See Zen Master Tong'an Cha's "Ten Talks on the Arcane": "A man should have sky-high aspirations, do not follow the footsteps of the Tathagata." *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.455b16–17.

373. According to the *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi*(28:72), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Temples and Shrines," Luc* To* Temple was identical with Tru'ong Liễu Temple. The *Su* Ky* recorded that Master Van* Hanh* was the abbot of that temple. When he died Emperor Lý Thái Tô himself came to pay homage and had an altar erected to pray for his salvation. He also assigned men as temple attendants to look after worship services the whole year." According to this, we have on the one hand Tru'ong Liễu Temple at Tiễu So'n, Yên Phong District; on the other hand, it is said in this biography that Luc Tô Temple was at Dich* Bang* Village, Thiễn Đức Prefecture, now Đình Bang Village, Tù' So'n Prefecture. Thus, Luc Tô Temple and Tru'ong Liễu Temple could not be identical.

374. According to Lê Manh Thát, the Phù Ninh Village in Thu'ong Chieus* biography is the same as the present-day Phù Ninh Village in Tù' So'n Prefecture, Hà Bac Province, which is located south of Đình Bang Village and north of Phù Đông Village. See *LMT*, p. 241, n. 2.

375. The *Viet* Su' Lu'o'c**, 3:3b6, wrote: "In the summer, the fourth month [of the fourth year, *quí hoi**, of the Đai Dinh* era (1143)] . . . the Quang Tu* Palace was built as the empress dowager's residence."

376. According to Lê Manh* Thát, it is now Đông Mac* Quarter in the capital of Hà Noi*.

377. Note that in Mahayana* Buddhist literature, the term "mind" sometimes is used in the sense of the conceptualizing mind which, to be specific, is consciousness (*viññana**) or the impure aspect of mind. "Mind" sometimes is

used to denote the pure mind, or the inherent Buddha wisdom or Buddha nature or, in this context, the *Tathagatagarbha* *. Mind in this connection means consciousness and not *Tathagatagarbha*.

378. For an interesting investigation of the early Chinese Buddhists' understanding of the "Buddha body" theory, see Zurcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, pp. 223–29.

379. The statement that "all phenomena are originally of nirvana" is part of the fundamental ontology enunciated in the *Prajnaparamita** literature that "all phenomena are without intrinsic nature, nonoriginated, nonannihilated, originally calm, and essentially quiescent" (*nihsvabhava** *sarvadharma** *anutpannah** *sarvadharma aniruddha** *adisantah** *praktiparinirvrtah**). This doctrine was subsequently embraced by all the schools of Mahayana* Buddhism, especially the Yogacara*. See, for instance, the *Samdhinirmocanasutra**, p. 193. The same formula can be found in the *Ratnameghasutra**, quoted in *Madhyamakavrtti**, p. 225, 1.9, and *Subhasitasamgraha**, *Le Muséon*, 1903, p. 394, 1.13: *adisanta** *hy anutpannah** *prakrtyaiva** *ca nirvrtah** *dharmas** *te vivrta** *natha** *dharmacakra-pravartane*//. See also *Mahayanasutralamkara**, 11, 51, reconstructed from the Tibetan by Sylvain Lévi in his translation, p. 122: *nihsvabhavataya** *siddha** *uttarottaranisrayat**// *anutpannanirudhadi** *santapraktinirvrtah*//.

380. *Avatamsakasutra**, T 10.275b17–276a6.

381. This work is mentioned twice in the *Thien** *Uyen**, once in Ma Ha's biography and one in Dao* Hues* biography. According to the "Nghe* Van* Chi" [Description of Arts and Literature] in Lê Quý Đôn's *Dai** *Viet** *Thông Su** [General History of Đại Việt], it was composed by Thu'ò'ng Chieu*. The "Van Tich* Chi" [Chapter on Descriptive Bibliography] in the *Lich** *Trieu** *Hien** *Chu*'ò'ng *Loai** *Chi* informs us that the *Diagram* had a preface written by Lu'ò'ng The* Vinh. See *Les Chapitres*, pp. 96 and 140; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 139. This work is not extant nowadays. According to the records of Lê Quý Đôn and Phan Huy Chú, Thu'ò'ng Chiêu also composed another work entitled *Thích Dao** *Khoa Giáo* [Instructions on Buddhism]. The *Thiên Uyển* did not mention this work.

382. The text has *thông su' cu' si** 通師居士 [layman Thông Su'], but he was otherwise known as Thông Thien*, who was identical with Thông Thiên mentioned in Tú'c Lus* biography.

383. *Think** *ich* 請益 [Ch: *qing yi*] is one among eighteen ways to ask for instruction. See "Eighteen Ways of Inquiry by Fenyang" in *Rentian yanmu*, T 48.307c3–308a25.

384. Xuanzang (604–664), one of the premier figures in Chinese Buddhism, translated many significant Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese and was responsible for the propagation of Yogacara* philosophy in China. For his biography, see T 50.2053. I have not been able to trace this saying.

385. Ngoai* Trai* was mentioned twice in the *Viêt Su' Lu'o'c**: "On the day of *mau** *ngo** [in the sixth year, *bính tí*, of the Kien* Gia era (1216)] the emperor went to Ngoai Trai and sent an emissary to Tu* Khánh asking for troops to repress Nhue*" (*Viêt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:29b7). And: "In the winter, the twelfth month [of the fourteenth year, *giáp thân*, of the Kiên Gia era (1224)], Mount Phat* Tich at Ngoai Trai cracked open crevices thirty yards long" (*ibid.*, 3:32b3–4).

386. According to the Zen tradition, Bodhidharma died on Mount Xionger [Bear Ear]. See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.220b4–5.

387. According to the Zen tradition, Bodhidharma passed away on the fifth day of the tenth month of the nineteenth year of the Taihua era under

- Hsiaomingdi of the Later Wei and was interred on the twenty-eighth day of the twelfth month of the same year on Mount Xionger. A stupa was erected in Tinglin Temple [to house his remains]. Three years after that, Song Yun of Wei, on his way back from a diplomatic trip to India, saw Bodhidharma walking leisurely on Mount Congling, his hand carrying one of his shoes. Song Yun asked where he was going. Bodhidharma said he was going back to India. Later, Song Yun reported the event to Zhuangdi, who gave an order to open Bodhidharma's coffin. All they saw was an empty coffin with a single shoe in it. See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.220a-b.
388. See *ibid.*, 303a28–29; 368a21–23.
389. These works are not extant.
390. Thu'ò'ng Chieu* said there must be a good reason for Thông Bien* not to record the two Zen schools of Dai* Diên and Bát Nhà. However, in his reply to Empress Dowager Phù Thánh Cam* Linh Nhân's inquiry about the Zen schools in Vietnam, Thông Biên did not even mention these two names. Lê Manh* Thát's suggestion that Nguyen* Đại Diên here must be the same as Đại Diên in Tù' Dao* Hanhs* biography is totally baseless. Nguyễn Bát Nhã was Zen Master Bát Nhã of Tù' Quang Phúc Thánh Temple at Dich* Vu'ò'ng Village, Thu'ò'ng Canh. Tradition has it that he was a disciple of Zen Master Thao* Đu'ò'ng. See Appendix I.
391. My translation is based on Lê Manh Thát's suggestion that the words *Do* Ban** here mean the *Nam Tông Tu** *Pháp Đô* and the *Chieu* Doi* Ban*.
392. Na Ngan*, see *Toàn Thu'*, 1:347, n. 53. Nothing else is known about An* Không.
393. *Pháp khí* 法器 [Ch: *fa qi*] literally means "vessel of the Dharma." The term is used to indicate someone who is capable of receiving and transmitting the Dharma.
394. The five sins consist of the unwholesome acts whose retribution is *Avīci** hell. These five sins are: (1) patricide, (2) matricide, (3) murdering an arhat, (4) shedding blood from the body of a Buddha, and (5) causing division among the monk congregation. The seven obscurations are the kind of sins that obstruct one from receiving Bodhisattva's precepts. These seven sins are: (1) shedding blood from the body of a Buddha, (2) patricide, (3) matricide, (4) murdering an elder monk, (5) murdering one's teacher, (6) harming monks who are capable of turning the Wheel of Dharma, and (7) murdering a sage. See *Fanwangjing*, T 24.100bc1; see also *Ajatasatrukaukrtyav*inodana*, T 15, no. 626.
395. According to the *Bac* Thành Dia* Du' Chí*, Mount Yên Tu'* was at Nam Mau* Village, Đông Triều. It was also called Mount Tuong* So'n. See *LMT*, p. 247, n. 1.
396. The three teachings in this connection mean the three religions: Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.
397. This seems based on a metaphor in the "Chapter on Belief and Understanding" in the *Lotus Sutra**. See Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom*, pp. 84–100.
398. The *Viet* Su'* Lu'ò'c**, 3:10a11, wrote: "In the winter [of the fifth year, *canh tí*, of the Trinh Phù era (1180)], Princess Hoa Du'ò'ng was married to Hà Phu, chief of Vĩ Long Province." Princess Hoa Du'ò'ng is thus the daughter of Emperor Lý Anh Tông.
399. *Kinh hành* 經行 [Ch: *jingxing*] is a kind of walking meditation that

has its roots in Indian Buddhist practice. In traditional Vietnamese Buddhism, however, the practice of *kinh hành* is associated with the worship of Amitabha * Buddha. It can be described briefly as follows: (1) During the summer retreat, after lunchtime, the monks would circumambulate three times in the main hall while doing the recitation of Buddha's name, usually Amitabha Buddha's name. (2) The practice is a little different in some ancient temples: in the morning or evening, after the *sutra**-chanting, usually the *Surangama-Sutra** and *Heart Sutra**, the monks circumambulate the Buddha statue in the patriarch hall three times. This kind of practice seems to have some root in the ritual of circumambulation (*pradaksina**) of the stupa in Indian Buddhism. See, for instance, Luis O. Gómez, "Buddhism in India," in Joseph M. Kitagawa and Mark D. Cummings, eds., *Buddhism and Asian History* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), p. 63.

400. Venerable Budai, a Zen Master of the Tang who died in 916, used to carry a cloth bag at the top of his walking staff. See *Chuandeng lu*, 27:434a19.

401. Lý Huệ Tông, whose personal name was Hao* Sam*, was the third son of Lý Cao Tông. Lý Huệ Tông was the last emperor of the Lý dynasty (1009–1225). A devout Buddhist but not a very capable sovereign, he lived most of his life in sorrow. In 1224 he abdicated in favor of his daughter Princess Chiêu Thánh to become a monk at Chân Giáo Temple. Later, Huệ Tông was forced to commit suicide by Tran* Thu* Do*, a talented but ambitious man who was at that time regent and in charge of the government. Chiêu Thánh was married to Trần Canh*, Thu Dos* nephew. In 1225 Chiêu Thánh abdicated in favor of Trần Canh, who became the founder of the Trần dynasty (1225–1400). See *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3:20b5–33a1. The *Viet Su' Lu'o'c* was composed during the Trần dynasty so it did not record Trần Thủ Độ's plot to overthrow the Lý dynasty and to get rid of Lý Huệ Tông, even though the latter had abdicated and at that time was a monk at Chân Giáo Temple. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 4:311–17.

402. Xu You was a hermit during the reign of King Yao. Yao offered him the country, but Xu You declined. The compilers of the *Tho' Van* Lý Trân* (1:554) suggest that the word *di** 似.

403. The *Tu* Ngu Tap** might have been composed by Ngu Ông, a disciple of Xiaoyao (Tiêu Diêu).

404. It is said in Túc Lus* biography (40b6–41a6) that "a virtuous student called Layman Ứng Thuận* was his successor." Here we have Ứng Vu'ng instead of Ứng Thuận. Either *vu'o'ng* is a scribal error for *thuan** or it might be an honorific title.

405. Chiêu Lang* denotes the reign of Emperor Trần Thái Tông (1225–1257). His shrine was posthumously called Chiêu Lang. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 5:321–40.

406. Of these monks, we have only some information about Tiêu Diêu. According to the "Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do*" [Simplified Diagram of the Zen Schools] in *Thu'o'ng* Si* Ngu* Luc**, 7b, Tiêu Diêu (Xiaoyao) was a student of Ứng Thuận (Yingshun) and teacher of Huệ Trung. Besides Tiêu Diêu, the "Diagram" also named Quoc* Nhat*, Dao* Su', Que* Thâm, and Chân Giám as other students of Ứng Thuận. Among the students of Tiêu Diêu were also Thach* Dau*, Vi* Hải, Dao Tiêm, Than* Tấn, Lai Toan*, Thach Lâu, Thôn Tang*, Thu* Nhân, Ngu Ông, and Vô So'.

It is also said in the *Thu'o'ng Si Ngu' Luc*, 38a8–b1: "As a young boy, Huệ Trung had respect for Buddhism and came to study with Zen Master Tiêu

Diêu at Phu'óc Đu'ò'ng. He got the gist of the teaching and unflinchingly served Tiêu Diêu as his teacher." In his preface written in 1763 to the *Thu'o'ng * Si* Ngu* Luc**, Hue* Nguyễn said: "The great patriarch Tiêu Diêu, already enlightened when he first came to our country, entered the capital with a fishing rod without a hook." Thus, Tiêu Diêu might not be of Vietnamese provenance. The preface also tells us that the *Thu'o'ng Si Ngu' Luc* was part of Tiêu Diêu's work.

407. The name Vinitaruci* has been mentioned briefly in the following works in Chinese Buddhist literature: *Lidai sanbao ji*, T 49.102c3–9; *Datang neidian lu*, T 55.275a14–19; *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.433b2–6; *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, T 55.547c8–14; *Zhenyuan xinding shijiao mulu*, T 55.846a8–14. In Vietnamese Buddhist literature, the *Co* Châu Pháp Vân Phat* Ban* Hanh* Ngu' Luc* also mentions a certain Vinitaruci. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 236.

408. The *Cu'o'ng Muc* Chính Biên*, 3, 32a1–3, wrote: "Pháp Vân Temple was located at Van* Giáp Village, Thu'o'ng* Phúc District, Hà Noi* Province. Legend has it that one day during a great thunderstorm, a mangrove tree fell down. People in the village used it to carve statues and erect a temple to worship them. That is how the temple got its name." According to Lê Mạnh Thát, the *Cu'o'ng Muc Chính Biên* was only following the *Bac* Thành Địa* Du' Chí*, 3, according to which the temples of Pháp Vân, Pháp Vu*, Pháp Lô, and Pháp Dien* were all at Van Giáp Village, Thu'o'ng Phúc District. See *LMT*, p. 250, n. 2; see also *Dan* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (27:75) "Hanoi Province, Section on Temples and Shrines."

409. The Brahman caste is one among the four castes in the Hindu social order. The main duty of the Brahman is to study and teach the Veda. For this concept, see, inter alia, Klaus K. Klostermaier, *A Survey of Hinduism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), pp. 320–26; Madeleine Biardaeu, *Hinduism: The Anthropology of A Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 58–65.

410. On this particular event, see Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 186–94; Zenryu* Tsukamoto, "Hokushu* no haibutsu ni tsuite," *Toho* gakuho** 16 (1948): 29–101; 18 (1950): 78–111; "Hokushu no haibutsu shukyo* haiki seisaku no hokai*," *Bukkyo* shigaku* 1 (1949): 3–31; "Le Bouddhisme," p. 235. The *Fozu lidai tongzai*, T 49.557a, wrote: "On the seventeenth day of the fifth month of the third year, *jiawu*, of the Jiande era (574), Zhou Wudi issued a decree to destroy Buddhism."

411. According to the Zen tradition, Sengcan was the thirtieth patriarch reckoning from the Buddha, and the third patriarch in China. It is not known where he hailed from. He first came to inquire about Zen with the second patriarch as a layman. After receiving the Dharma, he lived in seclusion at Mount Wangong, Shuzhou. During the persecution of Buddhism by Zhou Wudi, he wandered around the area of Mount Sikong in Taihu District. For more than ten years no one knew of him. He subsequently transmitted the mind-seal to Daoxin. He died on the fifteenth day of the tenth month of the second year of the Daye era under Sui Yangdi (604–617). See *Chuangdeng lu*, 3:221c14–222b1. For a discussion on some historical issues surrounding Sengcan, see McRae, *The Northern School*, p. 280, n. 80.

412. *Gayasirsasutra**, see T 14, nos. 464, 465, 466, 467; T 1, no. 80. According to Chinese sources, the translator of this *sutra** is Dharmaprajna* and not Vinitaruci. See *Lidai jabao ji*, T 49.102b17–19.

413. **Mahayanavaipulyadharanisutra**, T 9, no. 275.

414. The *Thien * uyen** (44b4) has *thu'ò'ng* 師

415. See Sengcan's *Xinxinming* [Inscription of the Mind of Faith]:

It is as perfect as space,
Without lack or surplus.
It is due to our attachment or indifference,
That it is not the same.

See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.457a21–22.

416. Both the *Thiên uyên* (45a6) and the *Đại Nam* (39b8) have *hà thờ'ì lâm bat* kien** 何時臨面見. See also *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:243–44.

417. The three characters *tang* phong vân* 贈封云 (conferred on him [the title]) after Lý Thái Tông's poem seem to be confusing, since they obviously do not go with the phrase *pháp vân tu* ty* ni da* lu'u chi pháp tu'* [the Dharma lineage of Vinitaruci* of Pháp Vân Temple], which introduces what is recorded next—i.e., the Vinitaruci lineage.

418. The *Cu'ò'ng Muc* Toàn Biên*, 2, 10b1–2 wrote: "Chu Diên Village was part of Giao Chi* District. Under the Tang it was changed to Diên Châu, and Tam Dai* Prefecture under the Lê. Nowadays it pertains to Vinh* Tu'ò'ng Prefecture, So'n Tây Province." In Đào Lâm's biography (66b3) he was said to be a native of Cuu* Cao, Chu Diên. According to the *Đại Viet* Lịch* Triêu* Dang* Khoa Luc**, 2, Cu'u Cao was a village in Hat* Gia Lâm. Thus, Pháp Hiens* birthplace must be in Gia Lâm Village, Bac* Ninh Province.

419. Nothing is known about this monk. However, if what is recorded here is reliable, it only shows that before the alleged arrival of Vinitaruci, there already existed some kind of a lineage at Pháp Vân Temple.

420. See the dialogue between Daoxin and Hongren in the *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.222b10–16: "One day when Daoxin was on his way to Huangmei Village he happened to meet a boy with extraordinary looks, different from other children. Daoxin asked, 'What is your family name?' The boy said, 'I do have a name, but it is not a common name.' Daoxin asked, 'What kind of name is it then?' The boy said, 'My family name is Buddha.' Daoxin asked, 'Don't you have a family name?' The boy said, 'It is emptiness.' Daoxin, knowing that the boy was a Dharma vessel, sent his attendant to his house to ask his parents' permission for him to become a monk. They knew that there was some previous karmic affinity, so they happily let the boy become Daoxin's disciple with the sobriquet Hongren."

421. Note that the Vinitaruci school is also traditionally referred to as "Nam Tông Thiên" [the Southern school of Zen], while the Vô Ngôn Thông school is referred to as "Bích Quán Thiên" [the Wall-Contemplation school].

422. According to Tanqian's biography in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T 50.573b25–c14, Sui Gaozu (r. 581–604) sent out relics three times in all. The first time he gave them to thirty prefectures in the sixth month of 601, the second time to fifty-one other prefectures in the first month of 602. The third time, in the first month of the fourth year of the Renshu era (604), he ordered them to build more than one hundred stupas to receive relics. According to the *Sheli ganyingji* [Miraculous Effectiveness of Relics] in the *Hongmingji*, T 52.216b10, stupas were built at Thien* Chúng Temple at Giao Châu to receive relics.

423. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban * Ky*," 5:326, recorded the event of Tran* Thu* Do* burying the Lý royal family as follows: "In the winter [of 1232], when the Lý family went to pay respects to their ancestors at Thái Đu'ò'ng, Hoa Lâm, Thu Đô, who had secretly had a deep hole dug under the house, ordered his men to pull the rope of the trap door to bury them alive, when they were all drunk." *Cu'ò'ng Muc* Chính Biên*, 6:13a2, notes that "Hoa Lâm was the name of a village, Thái Đu'ò'ng, of a hamlet; both pertain to Đông Ngan* District, Bac* Ninh Province." See *LMT*, p. 254, n. 1.

424. The name Co* Giao was mentioned in the biographies of Khánh Hy* and Tinh* Thien*. Both times it was called "Cô Giao Village, Long Biên." According to Lê Manh* Thát, Cô Giao must be one of the villages located somewhere around Cô Châu Village of present-day Thuan* Thành District. This is because Pháp Vân Temple was at Cô Châu, Long Biên, and we have been able to locate Cô Châu Village. See *LMT*, 1:254, n. 2. Some scholars identified Cô Giao with Cô Diên of Thanh Trì District, Hà Đông Province. See *Lu'ò'c* Truyện* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, p. 190, and "Bibliographie Annamite," p. 215. See also *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:458, n. 1.

425. Nothing is known of this monk. According to Lê Manh Thát, this Pho* Quang Temple might be identical to the Phô Quang Temple at Nghia* Trú Village, Van Giảng District, which the *Tam To* Thuc* Luc** (26a4) mentioned as the abode of Trung Chiêu, the monk who presided over the casting of one thousand Buddha statues in 1322. See *LMT*, p. 254, n. 3.

426. See *Vajracchedika-Prajnaparamita-sutra**, 74b23.

427. "Zen Master Daizhu Huihai asked a monk who was lecturing about the *Diamond Sutra**, 'Who speaks this *sutra**?' The monk said, 'Zen Master, are you kidding, don't you know that it's the Buddha who speaks that *sutra*.' Huihai said, '[It is said in the *sutra* that] if anyone says that the Tathagata* still preaches the Dharma, he is slandering Buddha; such a person does not understand the meaning of my words. If someone says that this *sutra* is not spoken by the Buddha, then that person is slandering the *sutra*.' The monk had no answer." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.247a2–6.

428. The *Sheli ganyingji* written by Wang Zhao around the end of 610, quoted in the *Guang hongmingji*, 17:216b10, has mentioned Thien* Chúng Temple as a site where stupas were built to house relics in that year. Dich* Bang* Village is Đình Bang Village, Tù' So'n District, Hà Bac Province.

429. Cô Pháp, see "Le Bouddhisme," p. 237, n. 4. The *Cu'ò'ng Muc Chính Biên*, 2:6b3–6, wrote: "Cô Pháp was the name of a prefecture, which was called Cô Lâm Prefecture in the Đinh dynasty and previously. Under the Lê it was changed to Cô Pháp, under the Lý it was promoted to Thiên Đức Prefecture, and under the Trần it was changed to Đông Ngan* Village. The Later Lê kept it that way. It is now Đông Ngan Village, Bac Ninh Province. In this biography, it is said that Đinh* Không changed the name of his native village Diên Uan* to Cô Pháp." See *LMT*, p. 255, n. 2. But if Đình Không had changed Diên Uân into Cô Pháp, why was it still called Diên Uân under Lý Công Uân?

Again, concerning the event of lightning that left marks on a kapok tree prophesying the ascendance of Lý Công Uân, the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 1:202, wrote: "Formerly, the kapok tree at Diên Uân Village, Cô Pháp Province, was struck by lightning." The *Việt Su** *Lu'ò'c*, 2:1a9, wrote: "In his (Lý Công Uân's) native village, a kapok tree was struck by lightning." It is obvious that Lý Công Uân's native village was called Diên Uân Village during his time. In any case,

we know for sure that Co * Pháp and Diên Uan* are identical. Regarding the temple of Cô Pháp Village, the *Cu'o'ng Muc* Chính Biên*, 2.7b2, wrote: "Cô Pháp Temple was at Đình Bang* Village, Đông Ngan* District, Bac* Ninh Province." See *LMT*, p. 255, n. 2. Thus, the Cô Pháp Village in Đình* Không's biography was present-day Đình Bang Village, Từ So'n District, Hà Bac Province.

430. *Khau** 匚 [Ch: *kou*] also means a classifier for instruments.

431. Both the *Thien* uyen** (47b10) and the *Dai* Nam* (42a10) have *kê cu' loan nguyet* hau** 鼠月. This reading is attested to by the fact that La Quí also said in his verse that "in the month of the rat, year of the rooster, hour of the rabbit, we're sure to see the sun come forth in purity" (49a2). We know that this prophetic verse was to refer to Lý Công Uans* ascending the throne in the tenth month, which is the month of the rat, in the year of the rooster (*ky* dau**), which is the second year of the Canh Thuy* era (1009).

432. On the recorded activities of Gao Pian in Vietnamese history, see *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 36–38; *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:138–41.

433. Both the *Thiên uyên* (48a7) and the *Dai* Nam* (42b8) have *truong* lão la quí an chân nhân* 長老羅貴安真人, which is usually rendered as "the True Man La Quí An, the Elder." However, Lê Mạnh Thát suggests a slightly different punctuation and emendation that leads to a reading of the line as "the Elder La Quí, a native of An Chân." Thát based his interpretation on the fact that the *Bac* Thành Địa Du' Chí* did enumerate two villages named An Chân that pertained to So'n Nam Ha* Province. Of these two villages, one was in Đông Hoi* Canton, Thanh Quan District, Tiên Hu'ng Prefecture; the other was in Đông Chân Canton, Quynh* Côi District, Thái Bình Prefecture. Thát also suggests that An Chân might have been a scribal error for An Trinh, because we read in Đình* Hues* biography that An Trinh District belonged to Thiên Đứ'c Prefecture (53a9), and La Quí's biography seems to suggest that he was a native of Cô Pháp. See *LMT*, p. 256, n. 2. I found Thát's position convincing for many reasons: The use of the term *chân nhân* [Ch: *zhenren*] (True Man) to refer to La Quí is somewhat curious in itself. Besides, "La Quí An" sounds like a full name, and not a sobriquet, with La as the family name. Yet we know that La Quí's family name was Đình. Besides, Phúc Dien* in his *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* (15a9) also has "La Quí."

434. Gao Pian (?–887) began constructing that fortress around the eleventh month of the seventh year of the Jiantong era (866). This is the Dai* La Citadel, located in the territory of what is now the capital of Hanoi. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 1:12b2, and *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 5:14b–15a.

435. According to the *Bac Thành Địa Du' Chí*, the Tô Lịch* River is to the east of Hanoi. See *LMT*, p. 271, n. 9.

436. This was probably one and the same as the kapok tree at Diên Uân Village, which was struck by lightning and a prophetic message was left on its trunk predicting Lý Công Uân's ascending the throne. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:1a–b, and *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 1:202. See also note 480 to Van* Hanhs* biography below.

437. The characters *thap** 李.

438. The *Dai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (29:47), "So'n Tây Province, section on Mountains and Rivers," mentioned a mountain named Cô So'n located to the

north of Tam Du'ong Village, six miles from the district town. Pháp Thuans * Temple might be on this mountain.

439. Phù Trì must have been one of the three patriarchs belonging to the ninth generation of the Pháp Vân (i.e., Vinitaruci*) school whose biographies are lost.

440. Up to the time of the [Former] Lê dynasty, Vietnam had enjoyed independence for some time.

441. It is regrettable that all of Pháp Thuận's literary works have been lost, except for a letter requesting the investiture of Đinh Tuyên which was submitted to the Song dynasty in 980 by Giang Cu* Hoàng and Vu'o'ng Thieu* Tô. This letter can be found in the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:12a8–b2. For a complete record of this event, see *ibid.*, 1:180.

442. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (49a8) and the *Dai* Nam* (43b8) have Nguyen* Giác (Ruen Jue). We know that under the Tran*, the family name Lý was forced to be changed to Nguyễn. The *Thiên Uyển* was composed during the Trần dynasty, hence the name Lý was changed into Nguyễn. The *Cu'o'ng Muc** recorded Lý Giác's trip to Vietnam as follows: "In the second year, *bình tuat**, of the Tianfu era (962), the Song court sent Lý Nhuoc* Chuyet* (Li Ruozhuo) and Lý Giác (Li Jue) on a diplomatic trip bringing a decree investing the Annam King as Prince of Giao Chi*." See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky*," 1:190; "Le Bouddhisme," p. 196.

443. *Tân lai** 津吏 [Ch: *jin li*] means "river officer."

444. Both the *Thiên Uyển* (49a11) and the *Đai Nam* (43b10) have *thiên gia* 天涯 [Ch: *tianya*].

445. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky*," 1:191–92, wrote: "[In the eighth year of the Thiên Phúc era (987)] the Song again sent Li Jue to Sách Giang Temple. The emperor then asked Dharma Master [Do*] Thuan* disguised as a 'river officer' to greet Li Jue. Li Jue, who was well versed in literature, happened to notice two geese swimming in the river. He playfully hummed:

Geese, geese, a pair of wild geese,
Looking upward toward the sky.

"The Dharma Master, still holding on to the oar, completed the poem, chanting:

White feathers spread over blue water,
Red oars cutting through green waves."

This is nothing but an anecdote, though not an insignificant one. It expresses Vietnamese confidence and asserts its people's identity and dignity less than thirty years after gaining independence. These lines are obviously based on a poem entitled "Ode to the Goose" by Luo Binwang, composed when he was a little over ten years old. The poem reads as follows:

Goose, goose, goose,
Raising its head toward the sky singing.
White feathers spread over blue water,
Red feet cutting through green waves.

See *Quantangshi*, 2, 79:864, quoted in *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:202, n. 2.

446. *Vô vi* 無爲 [Ch: *wu wei*], which means "no [contrived] activity" or "no action," is one of the central teachings in the *Daodejing*. See, for instance, chap. 2.3: "Therefore the sages manage affairs with no action, carry out teaching without speech"; 3.3: "Act by no-action. Then, nothing is not in order"; etc. English translation by Ellen M. Chen in *The Tao Te Ching*, pp. 54 and 58.

447. This work is not extant.

448. According to Lê Manh * Thát, Co* Miet* is in Thanh Hà District, Hai* Du'ong Province, because this province was the territory of Hong* Lo* under the Lý and the Tran*. See *LMT*, p. 259, n. 1.

449. I.e., he was in charge of Buddhist ritual music.

450. *ho* pháp* 護法 [Ch: *hufa*] (*Dharmapalas** or Dharma protector) means those who support the True Dharma of Buddha. Dharma protectors include all categories of sentient beings, from Heavenly Kings, nonhuman beings, and worldly monarchs to ordinary human beings. For a brief description of different forms of *Dharmapalas*, see, for instance, Frédéric, *Buddhism: Flammarion Iconographic Guides*, pp. 234–40.

451. Chanting is also considered external learning. See *Shisonglu*, T 23.269c6–21.

452. Đông Lâm Viên* might have been a contemporary of Pháp Thuan*.

453. The *Thien* Uyen** is corrupted here; the *Dai* Nam* (44a9–10) has *ngôn ha* hoán nhiên thích hau* hau* 言下煥然有釋後.

454. Note that according to the description here Avalokitesvara* was already conceived of as being a female Bodhisattva.

455. Also called Mount Long Trieu*, located at present-day Tru'ong Yên Ha* Village, Gia Viên District, Ninh Bình Province. The *Đại Nam Nhất* Thông* Chí* (37:39), "Ninh Bình Province, section on Mountains and Rivers," wrote: "Mount Long Triều, another name Dai* Viên, is ten miles from Gia Viên District. At the foot of the mountain were shrines worshipping the emperors of the Đinh and the Lê."

456. There is probably some anachronism here. According to the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 1:21a3, Lê Đại Hành died in the eleventh year, *at* ti**, of the Úng Thiên era (1005), and we learn from Ma Ha's biography that he did not move to Mount Đại Vân until 1015. The entire episode thus must have happened under Lý Thái Tô*. Moreover, both the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:3a6, and the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:209, tell us that the Van* Tue* Temple was erected by Lý Thái Tô in 1011. Thus, the event of Ma Ha being held in custody must have happened after 1011.

457. Ái Châu was what is now Thanh Hóa Province. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 283, n. 3.

458. The *Việt Su Lu'o'c*, 2:12a1, mentioned a cavern named Sa Đăng: "[In] the third year, *tân su'u*, of the Chu'ong Thánh Gia Khánh era (1061) . . . Sa Đăng Cavern revolted. The emperor led the campaign and won." Sa Đăng Cavern and Sa Đăng Province might be identical.

459. This part of Ma Ha's biography remarkably resembles the activities of a certain Master Xiang in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*: "No one knows where Master Xiang hailed from. He came to Feifu Temple at Mount Qingcheng in Yizhou around the beginning of the Liang dynasty. He was happy [with the scene] and had a mind to spend the rest of his life there.

"At that time people had a custom to go hiking in the mountain on the third day of the third month. Most of them brought along meat and wine to feast and have fun with each other. Xiang kept advising them to break the custom, but without any success. In the third month of the next year, people gathered together [on the mountain] as usual. After everyone took a seat, Xiang asked people to dig a hole about ten square feet nearby.

"No one seemed to understand his intention. Xiang said, 'You benefactors

of the Dharma always feast with each other without ever inviting me. Today, I would like to join everyone in this party.' People vied with each other to offer him food and wine. Xiang consumed whatever they offered him. It was like filling a big valley. Those who knew him were amazed.

"At the end of the day, Xiang said, 'I'm dead drunk. Please help me to the hole lest I dirty the ground.' When they arrived at the hole, Xiang opened his mouth wide and spat. The chicken that came from his mouth immediately [turned into live poultry that] could fly and crow; the beef spat out from his mouth [turned into cows and] ran off. Wine and food flowed from his mouth profusely, almost filling the hole. Fish, geese, and ducks swam to and fro in throngs. People were flabbergasted. They then vowed to renounce killing. Up to now they have completely given up feasting on the mountain. This is thanks to the virtue of Master Xiang.

"When the Vice Prefectural Governor Luo Yan of Yizhou returned to court, Liang Zhi asked him, 'Is Xiang respected or despised at Yizhou?' [Which can also mean "Is the price of incense at Yizhou high or low?" Yan obviously understood this way]. Yan said, 'Very low.' [Which can also mean "despised," as Zhi understood it]. At first Yan did not think that Zhi was talking about a person. Zhi asked, 'If he is despised by people, why did he stay there that long?' Yan could not understand these words either. Afterward he related the dialogue to people who knew Xiang. Some said, 'He meant Master Xiang of Qingcheng, didn't he?' He then went to the mountain and related the whole story to Xiang. Xiang said, 'You came from afar, I know you're not telling lie.' That night he passed away. His disciples erected a tomb and were about to bury him. They were surprised that the coffin was so light. When they opened it, they only saw his walking staff." See *T* 50.657a21–b10.

460. Ái and Hoan provinces were the sites where Pháp Hien * had stupas built to house Buddha's relics given by Sui Gaozu.

461. There is a footnote at the end of Ma Ha's biography that reads: *nam tông do* nam du'o'ng vân tu* nam ngo* dã* 南宗圖南陽云自南誤也. The *Dai* Nam* (45a10) also has the same. It seems to be corrupted and should probably be emended to *nam tông dô vân tu' nam du'o'ng ngô dã*, which means "the *Diagram of [the Succession of] the Southern School* said he was a Dharma heir of Nam Du'o'ng. This is incorrect."

462. I.e., La Quí, whose last name was Đinh.

463. An auspicious sign of the Buddha. For a discussion of the thirty-two auspicious marks of Buddha, see Wayman, *Liebenthal Festschrift*, pp. 243–60.

464. This seems to be an error. If Sùng Pham* died in 1087 at the age of eighty-four, he could never have met Lê Dai* Hành, who died in 1005. It should be Lý Thái Tông instead of Lê Đại Hành.

465. Layman Pang Yun paid a visit to Mazu and asked: "Who is the one who does not keep company with all phenomena?" Mazu said: "When you swallow all the water of the West River in one gulp, then I'll tell you." Pang Yun was awakened and composed a verse:

People gather from all over,
Each one of them studies the principle of spontaneity.
This is the place to select Buddhas,
I return home with mind empty having passed the test.

See *Biyan lu*, *T* 48.179c3–6. See also *Chuangeng lu*, *T* 51.310b24–27.

466. See *Baozang lun*, T 45.146a7–15.

467. I.e., precepts (*сила* *), meditation (*samadhi**), and wisdom (*prajna**).

468. Here the term *bách luận** 百論 [Ch: *bailun*] should be taken as a common noun and means "hundreds of treatises." It is definitely misleading to take it as the title of a treatise—the *Satasastra**, composed by Aryadeva—as did most scholars. See, inter alia, Nguyen* Dang* Thuc*, *Thien* Cua* Van* Hanh* [The Zen Teaching of Van* Hanh*] (Saigon: Kinh Thi, 1973), pp. 74, 83–84, 97, etc; *LMT*, p. 262, n. 1. We have no records concerning Madhyamaka studies in Vietnam. Furthermore, too little exists of Van Hanhs* writings for us to point out any specific Madhyamaka influence.

469. See *Da zhidu lun*, T 25.398b24 and 401c27–28.

470. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 1:19a8–10, wrote: "In the spring, the third month [of the first year, *tân ti**, of the Tianfu era (981)], Hou Renbao's army arrived at Ngán So'n, Chen Qinzuo's at Tây Ket*, Liu Cheng's at the Bach* Dang* River. The emperor [Lê Dai* Hành] himself took command of the armies to oppose the Song. He had stakes planted across the river. The Song troops withdrew to Ninh Giang and held it. The emperor feigned surrender to trick Renbao. The Song troops were defeated. Renbao was captured and killed. At the news of the defeat Qinzuo withdrew."

471. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 1:19b1–3, wrote: "[In] the second year, *nhâm ngo**, of the Tianfu era (982)], Tù' Muc* and others sent by the emperor on a mission to Champa were held as hostages. Infuriated by this, the emperor took personal command of the armies to fight the Champas, killed their King Phe* Mi Thue* in the battle, made countless prisoners, together with some hundreds of palace singing girls, and a huge booty of precious things, razed their city, demolished their ancestral shrines, and returned to the capital the same year."

472. This event cannot be found in any recorded historical documents. We do not know who Do* Ngán was.

473. The character *tho** 杜, which is the family name of Đô Ngán.

474. The compilers of the *Tho' Van* Lý Trần** (1:214) suggest that the character *ngân* 良 together become the character *ngân*, which is the first name of Đô Ngán.

475. The character *ngu** 愁.

476. See also *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, 1:215.

477. Both the *Thien* Uyên* (52a7) and the *Dai* Nam* (46b3) have *chân* 直, which is definitely better.

478. Lê Ngoa* Triêu*, whose personal name was Long Dinh*, was Lê Đại Hành's fifth son. He usurped the throne from Crown Prince Lê Trung Tông and became a psychopathic tyrant who loved to torture people for fun. Due to his hemorrhoids, he held audience lying down. Thus, he was called "Ngoa Triêu" [which means "The King Who Held Audiences Lying Down"]. See *Toàn Thư*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:198–201.

479. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:2b5–7, wrote: "Once a bitch at Úng Thiên Temple of Co* Pháp Village gave birth to a white pup with black hair on his back figuring the two characters *thiên tu** (Son of Heaven). Now the emperor was born in the

year *giáp tuat* * (*tuât* is a zodiac sign for dog). See also *Toàn Thu'*, 2:207. According to the *Viet* Su'* Tiêu Án*, p. 106, this happened at Thien* Tâm Temple.

480. The *Viêt Su' Lu'o'c**, 2:1a9–b3, wrote: "In his (Lý Công Uans*) native village, a kapok tree was struck by lightning, which left character-like traces reading as follows:

Deep are the roots of the tree,
Green is its bark.
The tree, the rice plants and the sword fall,
Eighteen seeds are formed.
The sun appears in the east,
The stars hide behind the west mountains.
In about six or seven years' time,
The country will have peace.

"Monk Van* Hanh* told Uan*, 'Recently, I heard of a strange omen. I know the Lê shall fall and the Lý shall rise. Nobody of Lý name can equal you in compassion and tolerance, and win people's hearts as you do. I am over seventy now. What I will most regret is not to live long enough to witness a reign of prosperity and peace.'" See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ký*," 1:202; *Viêt Su' Tiêu Án*, pp. 103–104.

481. When Lý Công Uân ascended the throne he made his father Great Lord Hien* Khánh. See *Viêt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:2a1; *Toàn Thu'*, 1:203. At the end of Van Hanhs* biography there was a note about the event around the grave of Lord Hiên Khánh as follows: [*Thien* Uyen* Tap* Anh*, 53a4; *Dai* Nam*, 47a8] "As regards the event around the grave of Lord Hiên Khánh, at night when the master (Van Hanh) was sitting in meditation, voices could be heard from the four sides of the grave. The voice from the east said:

Khánh Vân, Tu'ò'ng Nham, and Que* Phu'o'ng,
The entrails of the goat and the dragon site follow each other.
Đông Liet* three hundred positions,
The six kinds of barbarians (two characters missing) facing
the sky.*

[*Dai Nam Thiên Uyên*, 47b] The voice from the south said:

The home protector is Phù Ninh in the south,
Men and women from Vinh* The* are numerous.
Thiên Đứ'c with its richness and nobility fill its city and houses.
The emperor met a woman during a ritual at Bát Van*.**

*Khánh Vân, Tu'ò'ng Nham, and Quê Phu'o'ng are names of places still unknown to us.

**Phù Ninh is the name of a village. It is said in Thu'ò'ng Chieus* biography that he is native of Phù Ninh Village (37b7). Then in the biographies of La Quí and Thiên Ông we are informed that Phù Ninh Village was at Thiên Đứ'c Prefecture (48a7 and 51a6). The last line of the verse has *bát phu'o'ng* 八万. This is based on the fact that at Siêu Loai* District, which is now Thuan* Thánh District, there is a mountain called Bát Van. The *Dai Nam Nhất* Thong* Chí* (28:30), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Mountains and Rivers," tells us that Mount Bát Van is located two miles southeast of Tiên Du District. Tradition has it that Gao Bian of Tang erected the Bát Van shrine to cast a spell on it, hence the mountain is thus called.

The voice from the west said:

Looking far to the west toward Mount Thiên Trù *,
Men and women of Cao Thê* are at the head of the
Thu'o'ng* Tu'ó'ng Star.
Thiên Đứ'c is rich and noble as Vien* Thê,
The emperor's lifespan is ninety-nine.*

The voice from the north said:

Phù Cam* in the north facing Bach* Ho*,
Men and women are happy and do not suffer.
Thiên Đứ'c enjoys longevity and is everlastingly happy,
Generation after generation the emperor searches for Luc* Tô*.***

Van* Hanh* had people note down the words and mark the boundary of the grave. He then visited it and spoke a verse:

In the east there is Vu* Long Quarter,
In the south there is Vu Long Wharf.
In the west there is Hac* Lâm Temple,
In the north Trần Hai* Pond.****

After a while he continued:

Within three months,
The Royal Bodyguard will ascend the throne.
The country will be happy,
The seal will carry the character "quoc*" [country].
Ten vessels sink down to the water,
Meeting a sage called Thiên Đứ'c.*****

Subsequently, the emperor changed Co* Pháp to Thiên Đứ'c.** Van Hanhs* words turned out to be true. Other events that happened in the temples were recorded in *National History*. We do not record them here.

482. The *Viet* Su' Lu'o'c**, 2:2b3, wrote that after ascending the throne Lý Công Uan* conferred lordships (*vu'o'ng*) on his father and brothers but did not mention any of his uncles. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:204, however, informs us that an uncle of Uân was made Lord Vu Dao*.

*Thiên Trù is a technical term in geomancy. Thiên Trù is also another name of Mount Tiên Du (see *LMT*, p. 266, n. 18). Cao Thê and Viên Thê are probably names of places still unknown to us today. Thu'o'ng* Tu'ó'ng was the first star in the Van* Xu'o'ng constellation, according to ancient Chinese astrology.

** Phù Cam* is the name of a village. Both Minh Trí and Nguyen* Hoc* are said to be natives of Phù Cầm Village (26b3 and 35b6). Bach Ho is either a name of a place or a geomancy term. As we know, Luc Tô was the name of the temple where Van Hanh lived and where Lý Công Uân got his education before he ascended the throne. See *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi*, 28:72; *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky*," 2:207.

**** This verse is to determine the site of Great Lord Hien* Khánh's grave. Yet we still are in the dark concerning the location of Vũ Long, Hac Lâm, and Trần Hai*.

***** *Thap* chau* thuy* tho* khú'* (ten vessels sink down to the water). This refers to the event about Dinh* Không's changing the name of his native village to Cô Pháp.

** It is recorded in the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c**, 2:2b10, that in the second year of the Thuan* Thiên era (1010) Cô Pháp was changed to Thiên Đứ'c Prefecture. The *Việt Su' Tiêu Án*, p. 107, also gives us the same information.

483. The character 藜, which means "thorn," is pronounced the same as "Lê," the name of the Lê dynasty.

484. Lý 李 means plum tree but also means the family name Lý.

485. Our text records that Van * Hanh* passed away on the fifteenth day of the fifth month of the ninth year of the Ứng Thiên era (1003). But according to the facts in his biography, Van Hanh could not have died before Lý Công Uân* ascended the throne in 1010. Therefore, some scholars—Tran* Van* Giáp, for instance—have suggested the date of Van Hanhs* death as the ninth year of the Thuan* Thiên era (1018) instead of the ninth year of the Ứng Thiên era (1003). See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 239, and *Lu'o'c* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, 1:183. This is also incorrect, because according to both the *Việt Su'** *Lu'o'c*, 2:4a7, and the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky," 2:215, Van Hanh died in the sixteenth year, *at* suu**, of the Thuận Thiên era (1025). *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:124, n. 4; *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:215.

486. The *Việt Su' Tiêu Án*, 1:83a7–b1, also recorded the same event together with the verse with some slight differences.

487. The *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 4:294, and the *Việt Su' Tiêu Án*, p. 104, also recorded this poem. The expression *tam te** stands for the past, present, and future. It means that Van Hanh knew clearly about all the events of the past, present, and future.

488. Phong Châu belonged to the territory of present-day Vinh* Phú Province. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:198, n. 5.

489. See Appendix II for a complete translation of Dao* Hanh's biography from the *Việt Diên*.

490. On Mount Phat* Tích, see "Le Bouddhisme," p. 239, n. 4. See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:257; *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (29:42–43), "So'n Tây Province, section on Mountains and Rivers." Mount Phât Tích (or Sài So'n) was considered to be one among twenty-one famous mountains in Vietnam and a sacred site of Vietnamese Buddhism and popular religion. The *Kien Van Tiêu Luc*, 6:65, wrote: "Mount Sài So'n, Yên So'n District, was called Mount Bo* Đà Lac* under the Lý and Mount Tiên Tích under the Trần. On the mountain there were temples and caverns of the immortals everywhere. . . . At the foot of the mountain was located Thiên Phúc Temple. In front of the temple was a big pond, and at its back a bell tower cast by Zen Master Tù' Đạo Hanh."

491. An Lăng Village is also called Láng Village. It is not known to which prefecture it belonged under the Lý. Under the Trần it belonged to Tù' Liêm Prefecture, Đông Đô District, Đại La Citadel Province, nowadays Tù' Liêm Prefecture, a suburb of Hanoi. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:343, n. 1.

492. Note that here only his father's name and his residence are mentioned, but not his mother's name and his birthplace. The *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chí* (29:113), "So'n Tây Province, section on Temples and Shrines," in its record of Zen Master Tù' Đạo Hanh of Mount Sài So'n, Yên So'n District, wrote: "Within the shrine, on the left was the statue of Tù' Đạo Hanh, on the right was Lý Thân Tông, and in the middle was the Buddha. One tradition said that Đạo Hanh was a native of Dong* But* Village, Yên So'n District, his father was Tù' Vinh, and his mother Tang* Thi* Loan. Legend has it that the old foundation of the Tù' residence can still be found at Đông But. In front of the temple are seventy acres of field belonging to the Tù's, now become the temple-field of that village."

493. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:16a10, wrote: "In the spring, the second month [of the seventh year, *tân mùi*, of the Quang* Huu* era (1091)] *Kiên Quan* Lê Toàn

Nghia * presented a five-hued tortoise." The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:252, recorded the same without mentioning Lê Toàn Nghĩa*'s rank. We have absolutely no information about Vi At*.

494. The Marquis of Diên Thành (?–1117) was the son of Lý Thánh Tông and the brother of Lý Nhân Tông. He must have been a very fierce man. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:20a3, recorded an event involving him that happened in the fourth year, *giáp thân*, of the Long Phù Nguyên Hoá era (1104): "In the autumn, the ninth month, on the first day, the Marquis of Diên Thành hit the Marquis of Trung Nghĩa with his blade in the Thiên An Chamber." The Marquis of Trung Nghĩa was also a son of Lý Thánh Tông and probably Diên Thành's brother. The Thiên An Chamber was a place where the emperor held audience, yet Diên Thành did not refrain from hitting Trung Nghĩa.

495. Lê Manh* Thát identified him with Nguyen* Dai* Diên who was mentioned in Than* Nghi's biography as representing another Zen school under the Lý. See *LMT*, p. 270, n. 8. The *Đại Nam Nhất* Thông* Chí* (29:126), "So'n Tây Province, section on Buddhist Monks," mentioned a monk named Nguyễn Đạo* Hanh* and said: "The Master, a native of Tiên Phong, was a descendant of Zen Master Thái Diên, who during his lifetime befriended Nguyễn Minh Không and Từ Đạo Hanh to study and practice the Dharma. Afterward, he was transformed at Chiêu Nhân Village. The villagers erected a shrine to worship him." Lê Manh Thát was of the opinion that this Thái Diên was the same man as Đai Diên because it is written in the *Việt Su' Tiêu An*, 1: 108b9: "Đạo Hanhs* father, Từ Vinh, was killed by Thái Diên through magic."

496. According to Tran* Van* Giáp, this country was in the subprefecture of Yongchang, Yunnan Province. The inhabitants of this country had the habit of adorning their teeth with gold. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 239, n. 3; P. Pelliot, "Deux itinéraires de la Chine en Inde," *BEFEO*, 4, 243. The *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, 1:19, said that "The Đà Giang Lo* was adjacent to Kim Xi*." It is probable that Từ Đạo Hanh went just beyond the border of Vietnam.

497. See *Qishi yinbenjing*, T 1.6:394c.

498. The text has *dao* pháp* 道法 [Ch: *daofa*], which seems to mean "Buddha Dharma." However, we know from the context of the story as well as from the *Việt Diên* and the *Linh* Nam* that Đạo Hanh was intent upon learning magic to revenge his father's death. Only after he had accomplished this did he devote himself to studying the Dharma.

499. This Thái Bình Prefecture might have been the same as Thái Bình Prefecture, the site of Khai Thiên Temple, of which Ma Ha was the abbot. Yet according to Lê Manh Thát (*LMT*, p. 272, n. 14), we cannot find any village in Hu'ng Yên that has a temple worshipping Đạo Hanh. Hu'ng Yên is the territory belonging to what used to be Thái Bình Prefecture. According to the *Đại Nam Nhất Thông Chí* (29:126), however, Đạo Hanh was worshipped in a few villages in Nam Chân District, Nam Định Province, such as the villages of Chân Nguyên, Vân Chàng, and Kinh Lung*. The *Đại Nam Nhất Thông Chí* also glosses that "as a young man Đạo Hanh liked to travel. He went to Chân Nguyên Village, built the Đai Bi [Great Compassion] Temple, and dwelt there. Subsequently, the people of the village honored him as patriarch." Thái Bình Prefecture thus might have belonged to Nam Định Province.

500. Both the *Thiên* Uyên** (54b6) and the *Đại Nam* (49a5) have *chi* dich** 指教 [Ch: *zhijiao*]. See Chan Hing-

ho, *Viet * Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.2:223. I have decided to follow the *Viêt Dien**.

501. The *Viêt Diên* and the *Linh* Nam* have slightly different readings. See Chan Hing-ho, *Viêt Nam Hán Van Tiêu Thuyết*, 2.2:224; 2.1:77–78. See also *Tho' Van Lý Tran**, 1:346, n. 3.

502. A Vinaya Master named Yuan came to Zen Master Daizhu Huihai and asked: "Teacher, do you make any effort in practicing the Dharma?" Huihai answered: "Yes, I do." Yuan continued: "What is your effort?" Huihai said: "When I'm hungry I eat, when I'm tired I go to sleep." See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.247c1–3; 382c28, 283c1.

503. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (55a1) and the *Dai* Nam* (49a10) mistakenly have *da** 禽.

504. For a similar record on Dao* Hanh*, see *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:209; Appendix III.

505. The story of Đạo Hanhs* reincarnation in the *Viêt Diên* does not mention Giác Hoàng but only remarks that at that time Lý Nhân Tông had no heir and all prayers were to no avail. When the Marquis of Sùng Hien* discussed this matter with Đạo Hanh, "Đạo Hanh took a vow to reincarnate [in the royal family] in return for a favor the marquis had granted him before." See Chan Hing-ho, *Viêt Nam Hán Van Tiêu Thuyết*, 2.2:223; see also *Dai Nam Nhất* Thong* Chí* (29:53–54).

506. See Marquis of Sùng Hiên was Lý Nhân Tông's younger brother.

507. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (56a3) and the *Dai Nam* (50a10) seem to be corrupted here. I follow a version of the *Linh Nam* (*Viêt Nam Hán Van Tiêu Thuyết*, 2.1:79), which seems to be better.

508. The *Viêt Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:21a4–b5: "In the second month [of the third year of the Hoi* Tu'ông Đại Khánh era (1112)], the people of Thanh Hoá reported that there was in the coastal land a strange child of three who understood everything said to him. He claimed to be the emperor's own child and said Giác Hoàng was his name. He knew in advance everything the emperor was about to do. The emperor sent an emissary to ask him questions, and his answers all proved correct. The emperor then had Giác Hoàng moved to Báo Thiên Temple, and finding him miraculous he grew all the more infatuated with him. As he had no heir by then, he had a mind to make the child crown prince, but the court officials advised him not to, so he desisted. The emperor then organized a vegetarian feast in the prohibited palace with the design to invoke Giác Hoàng to be reincarnated as his own son.

"A monk named Tù' Lo*, alias Đạo Hanh, who lived on Mount Phat* Tích heard about it and was concerned. He then sent his sister Tù' Thi* to the ceremony, secretly handed her some charmed pearls of his, and enjoined her to hang them under the roof of the temple without anyone being the wiser. Tù' Thi did as he said. Giác Hoàng suddenly grew feverish and said that iron nets were being spread over the country, and he could not find access into the palace for reincarnation. The emperor ordered a thorough search and the pearls were discovered. He then had Tù' Lo arrested and bound in the Hu'ng Thánh Corridor awaiting a death penalty. Catching sight of the Marquis of Sùng Hiên, who was on his way to the audience, Lô appealed to him, saying, 'Please help me. Should I escape death, I shall reincarnate as your son to pay my debt

of gratitude.' The marquis agreed. At the audience, he pleaded Lo* cause with the emperor, telling him, 'If Giác Hoàng does have miraculous powers as he claims, and yet Lo* can lay him under his spell, it is proof that Lô is better than Giác Hoàng. Why not opt for Tù' Lô's reincarnation!' So the emperor decided to pardon Lô." The *Toàn Thu'* did not record this event.

509. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:22a5 wrote: "In the sixth month [of the seventh year, *bính thân*, of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1116)], Master Dao* Hanh* reincarnated (Than* Tông was born)."

510. On the *Trayatrimsa** Heaven, see, for instance, Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Abhidharmakosa-Bhāṣyam**, trans. Leo M. Pruden (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1988), 2:463–69; Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology*, pp. 29–39; "Buddhist Cosmology," in Eliade et al., eds., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 4:113–19.

511. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (56a9) and the *Dai* Nam* (50b5) have *chân thân* 眞身 [Ch: *zhenshen*], which means "true body."

512. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:257–58, wrote: "The Master's body was burned by the Ming around the Yongle era of the Ming [1403–1414]. The villagers made a statue of him and worshipped as before. The statue still exists." The *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, 15:147–48, said: "His body still exists today." The *An Nam Chí Nguyễn*, 3:209, wrote: "Now his true form still exists." See also "Le Bouddhisme," p. 239, n. 4; *Đai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí*, 19:112.

513. Our text is corrupted here. I follow the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:259.

514. It means that the Marquis of Sùng Hiên's son Du'o'ng Hoán, who later became emperor Thân Tông was two years old in 1117.

515. According to the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:268, Thân Tông died at the age of twenty-three.

516. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (56b3) and the *Đai Nam* (51a2) have *cuu* thap* nhat* niên* 九十一年 [Ch: *jiushiyi nian*], which is obviously a mistake. I follow the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:268, and correct it to *thập nhất niên* [Ch: *shiyi nian*].

517. The *Việt Su' Tiêu Án* (p. 134) said that Tù' Đạo Hanh was a monk of Mount Thach* That*. Yet, in Đạo Hanhs* biography, it is said that he lived at Thiên Phúc Temple, Mount Phat* Tích. Could it be possible that Mount Phât Tích under the Lý became Mount Thach Thât in the time of Ngô Thì Sĩ*, the author of the *Việt Su' Tiêu Án*. However, according to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:31b4, Mount Phat Tích was at Ngoai* Trai*, whereas in Trì Bát's biography it was said to be at Tân Trai. Since Ngoai Trai and Tân Trai are not identical, Mount Phât Tích and Mount Thach Thât cannot be the same. On Mount Thach Thât see *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:350, n. 4.

518. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (52b5) and the *Đai Nam* (51a4) have Doanh Lâu. It should be corrected as Luy Lâu. See ""Le Bouddhisme," p. 209, n. 2; *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:350, n. 1. According to Lê Manh* Thát, Luy Lâu was part of now the territory of the villages of Khu'o'ng Tu'* and Đai Tu', Thuận Thanh District, Hà Bac* Province. See *LMT*, p. 278, n. 2.

519. The text has Nguyen* Thu'ò'ng Kiet*. It should be emended to Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt (1019–1105). See *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt*, p. 149.

520. See *LMT*, p. 278, n. 4.

521. According to Lê Manh Thát, Tây Ket* must be the name of a village located on the bank of the Hong* River, Đông Anh District, Hu'ng Yên Province, which is now Khoái Châu District, Hai* Hưng Province. See *LMT*, p. 279, n. 1.

522. Now Van * Giang District, Hưng Yên Province. Under the Nguyen* Van Giang District pertained to Bac* Ninh Province. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi* (28:14), "Bac Ninh Province, section Kien* Tri Diên Cách," wrote: "Before the Tran* dynasty Van Giang District was called Te* Giang." *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:316, n. 1.
523. Pháp Bao* of Quang Tinh* Temple could be the same as Pháp Bao of Phúc Diên* Tu' Thánh Temple, who had the sobriquet Great Master Hai* Chieu* and was the author of the inscription discovered on a stele at Linh Xú'ng Temple composed in 1126. This Pháp Bao was also the author of another inscription for the Sùng Nghiêm Diên Thánh Temple composed in 1118, which Lê Qui Đôn had found and recorded in his *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 4:240. Unfortunately, he did not record the entire essay. See also *LMT*, p. 280, n. 3.
524. According to both the *Viet* Su' Lu'o'c**, 2:19b1 and 20a5, and the *Toàn Thu'*, 3:255, the first year of the Long Phù era was the year *tân ty** and not *au**, which was the fifth year of the Long Phù era. Thus, Thuan* Chân might have died in the fifth year of the Long Phù era (1105).
525. The *Bac* Thành Dia* Du' Chí Luc* (3:12) mentioned a village called Đông Phù Liet* pertaining to Nam Phù Liệt Canton, Thanh Tri District, So'n Nam Thu'o'ng* Province. Thus, Đông Phù Liệt Village was located in the present Thanh Tri District, Hà Đông Province. See *LMT*, p. 280, n. 1. See also *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:257, n. 1; "Le Bouddhisme," p. 240, n. 2.
526. Hac* Lâm Temple might be the same as the Hac Lâm Shrine mentioned in Van* Hanhs* verse, noting the boundary of Lord Hien* Khánh in the former's biography.
527. This idea is borrowed from *Chuangzi*, chapter "Lieh Yu K'ou": Someone sent gifts to Chuang Tzu with an invitation to office. Chuang Tzu replied to the messenger in these words: "Have you ever seen a sacrificial ox? They deck him out in embroidery and trimmings, gorge him on grass and beanstalks. But when at last they lead him off to the great ancestral temple, then, although he might wish he could become a lonely calf once more, is it possible?" See Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 360–62.
528. On this rank in Chinese Buddhism, see *Dasong seng shilüe*, lower volume, 250a4–10.
529. I.e., Lord Phung* Càn, a title Lý Thái Tông conferred on his son, Lý Nhat* Trung, in 1035. See *Viet* Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:6a8, and *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:225.
530. Probably Lord Vu* Uy. In 1009, after ascending the throne, Lý Công Uan* made his brother Lord Vu Uy. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:2b3 and *Toàn Thu'*, 1:204. However, there was also a Marquis of Vu Uy, son of Lý Thái Tông and brother of Lord Phung Càn. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:8a4, recorded that in 1048 the Marquis of Vu Uy was sent together with Grand Commandant Quách Thinh* Ich to fight the rebel Nùng Tri Cao. As regards the title Crown Prince, historical records said that except for the eldest son, other sons of the Lý emperors were granted the title of marquis. Yet according to the *Linh* Ngoai* Đại Đáp* (see *LMT*, p. 281, n. 9), all the sons of the Lý emperors were made crown princes. These princes might be all sons of Lý Thái Tông.
531. Might be the same as Vu'o'ng Hành, who was made Advance Guards Right Commander by Lý Thánh Tông in 1054 when he first ascended the throne. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:10a5.

532. See *Viet * Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:5a3–5; *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 2:219.

533. Concerning the relationship between Lâm Huệ Sinh and Lý Thánh Tông, the *Báo Cu'c* Truyen** recorded as follows: "Formerly, during his expedition against Champa, when he reached the estuary of Hoàn Hải*, Emperor Lý Thánh Tông was surprised by a violent storm. The royal galley was dangerously shaken by the billowy waters, which much frightened the emperor.

"In a somewhat drowsy state, he suddenly glimpsed a girl about twenty with a cherry-like face, willow-colored brows, eyes shining like stars, wearing a flowery smile, a white gown, green trousers and girdle, who glided towards him and said, 'I am the spirit of the land of Nam and have been residing at Thuy* Vân Village for a very long time, waiting to make my appearance in due time. Now that Your Majesty is coming, my lifelong vow is fulfilled. I beg Your Majesty to be diligent in this expedition and the victory will be yours. Though a frail and weak girl, I nonetheless pledge myself tacitly to assist you as far as lies within my meager power. On the day of triumph, I will be here to pay you my respect.' Upon that she vanished.

"The emperor woke up in a fright, but quite delighted. He summoned his entourage and told them the dream. The General Superintendent of Monks Lâm Huệ Sinh said, 'The spirit said she was embodied in a tree at Thuy Vân Village. Now let's search among the trees. We may get some clue.' The emperor agreed. He had the beaches searched and a tree was indeed found with a top shaped like a human head and traces of paint as seen in his dream. The emperor named her Lady Hau* Tho* and had an altar set up right in the royal galley. The wind and waves subsided by themselves, and trees stopped shaking. When he reached Champa and joined battle, the emperor had the feeling of being assisted by an obscure force, and the victory was his. On the triumphal day, the royal galley moored at the same place. The emperor decreed the erection of the temple. Yet, a storm arose all the same. Lâm Huệ Sinh told him, 'Let me first consult the oracle. The building can wait until our return to the capital.' The response came at once. The storm subsided. On his return to the capital, the emperor searched for a propitious site, and the temple was erected in An Lăng Village and became famous for its oracle. Profaners and blasphemers would instantly meet with afflictions." See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn* Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.2:33, 201.

However, Lý Thánh Tông undertook only one expedition against the Champa in 1069. According to his biography, Huệ Sinh died in 1063. How could he have accompanied Lý Thánh Tông in that expedition? It is possible that Lý Thánh Tông here might be an error for Lý Thái Tông. The latter himself led an expedition against Champa in 1044, and Huệ Sinh might have accompanied him.

534. According to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, (2:12a5), the fifth year of the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh was the year *quí mão* and not *giáp thìn*, which was the sixth year of the Chu'o'ng Thánh Gia Khánh (1064).

535. Zen Master Wuzhu spoke with Manjusri* on Mount Wutai. Wuzhu enquired about the activities of the monks there and their number. Manjusri answered: "Before three and three, after three and three." See *Biyānlū*, 4:173b29–174a7.

536. Sudhana was on a journey to study the Dharma. Manjusri advised him to go to the south to study with fifty-three *kalyānamitras**. See *Avatamsaka-Sūtra**, 62–80.

537. See *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.297a25–27.

538. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 2:11a1, wrote: "In the twelfth month [of the fourth year, *dinh* dau**, of the Long Thuy* Thái Bình (1057)] were the two temples of Thiên Phúc and Thiên Tho* built. Gold was drawn out to cast two statues of Sakra* for display there." See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:242.

539. The *Viết Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:11a8, wrote: "In the spring, the third month [of the sixth year, *ky* hoi**, of the Long Thuy Thái Bình era (1059)], the Sùng Nghiêm Báo Đứ'c Temple was built in Vu* Ninh Province." Thus, the Dieu* Nghiêm Báo Đứ'c in Hue* Sinh's biography was the same as the Sùng Nghiêm Báo Đứ'c. The latter was usually called in its short form Báo Đứ'c Temple. It was also the abode of Zen Master Dai* Xa* (29a7).

540. Both the "Nghe* Van* Chi" and the "Van Tich* Chi" recorded: "*Pháp Su* Trai Nghi*, one volume, composed by Monk Huê Sinh, a native of Đông Phù Liet*, Thanh Trì District." These works are definitely lost. The other work, the *Chu' Dao* Trạng Khánh Tân Van*, was not mentioned. See "Les Chapitres," pp. 97 and 140; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 138.

541. Trí Qua* Temple was located at now Phu'o'ng Quan Village on the right bank of Dâu River across from Van Quan Village. It was where Pháp Điền, one among the four Dharma Protectors, was worshipped. See *LMT*, p. 283, n. 1.

542. *phan* boi** 唄匿, a transliteration of the Sanskrit *patha**, which means to recite and chant. Originally the expression *phan boi* meant to chant *stotra* (songs of praise) in Sanskrit; nowadays it even includes songs, prayers, and so forth in Chinese. It also means Buddhist ritual music. See Nakamura Hajime et al., *Bukkyo* jiten*, p. 753r. The same expression is also found in Không Los* biography in the *Linh* Nam*. In this context it simply means to chant the *sutras** and *dharanis**. See Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Văn Tieu* Thuyet**, 2.1:232.

543. No examination was recorded during the Hoi* Phong era (1092–1099). However, it is said in Viên Thông's biography that in the sixth year of the Hôi Phong era (1097) he passed the examination on the Three Teachings and was appointed to the office of *Dai* Van* (68b9–10). Thus, Thien* Nham and Viên Thông might have passed the same examination.

544. This Thành Dao* Temple might be the present-day Thành Đạo Temple at Đông Cốc* Village, Thuận Thành District, Bac* Ninh Province. This is where Pháp Vu, one of the four Dharma Protectors, is worshipped. Since Pháp Điền, another among the Four Protectors, was worshipped at Trí Qua* Temple, Thiên Nham's abode, it is reasonable that Thiên Nham had some affinity with temples where one of the Four Protectors was worshipped. However, at Van Giáp Village, Thu'o'ng Phúc District, Hà Đông Province, there is also a temple named Thành Đạo where Pháp Vu was worshipped. Yet Lê Manh* Thát was of the opinion that the Thành Đạo Temple where Pháp Ý was the abbot was the Thành Đạo Temple at Đông Cốc Village. See *LMT*, p. 283, n. 4.

545. The *Viết Su' Lu'o'c*, 3.17b8, wrote: "In the sixth month [of the third year, *canh tuat**, of the Đại Thuận era (1130)] there was a drought. The emperor (Lý Thân Tông) ritually prayed for rain and his prayer was instantly answered." Yet according to the *Toàn Thu'*, there was a drought every year during the period 1128–1132. Therefore, the *Viết Su' Tiều Án* (p. 144), in discussing the tactic against drought under Lý Than* Tông, remarked that "during those ten years there was no year without a drought."

546. In the *Dai * Nam Nhat* Thong* Chi* (28:102), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Buddhist Monks," there is a biographical note on Thien* Nham: "Zen Master Thiên Nham hailed from Siêu Loai* District. Strictly following the Buddhist precepts, he only ate fruit and drank stream water. People called him 'Living Buddha.'" See also *An Nam Chi Nguyên*, 3:210; Appendix III.

547. Present-day Yên Khánh District, Ninh Bình Province. So far nothing is known about Quoc* Thanh Temple. See *LMT*, p. 284, n. 1.

548. The *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chi* (37:55), "Ninh Bình Province, section on Temples and Shrines," records as follows about the Nguyễn Minh Không Shrine: "[It was] located at Gia Viên* District. Formerly, Minh Không was worshipped by the inhabitants of both districts of Đàm Xá and Diem* Giang. A native of Đàm Xá District, his family name was Nguyễn and his personal name Chí Thành. According to *External History*, Minh Không traveled around to study the Buddhist Path and subsequently received the mind-seal from Tù Dao* Hanh* [who gave him] the sobriquet Zen Master Minh Không. He became the abbot of Quốc Thanh Temple. During the Hoi* Tu'ong Đai Khánh era under Lý Nhân Tông's reign (1110–1119), when Đào Hanh was about to pass away, he told Minh Không, "In my next life I will be reborn as a king, but it is hard for me to escape sickness. You should save me." After that Lý Than* Tông suffered a strange disease and was transformed into a tiger. Meanwhile children were heard singing, "To cure the Lý King, send for Nguyen* Minh Không." The king summoned Nguyễn Minh Không to court. The Master first lectured to the king on the law of causality, and the latter got some spiritual awakening. Nguyễn Minh Không then had a hundred *cân* of oil boiled and washed the king with it. Cured of his sickness, the king made Minh Không National Preceptor and the recipient of duties from a hundred households as a reward. In the second year of the Đai Đinh* era, during Lý Anh Tông's reign (1141), Minh Không passed away at the age of seventy-six. People in the village erected a shrine to worship him. There was a stone lamp of one *thu'óc* high in front of the shrine. Legend had it that it was built by the abbot Zen master in order to chant his *sutras**. The shrine was miraculous. Nowadays Minh Không's statues are worshipped in all temples at Giao Thủy* and Pho* Lai*.

549. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:279, records: "The king was seriously ill; all medicines were to no avail. The monk Minh Không cured him. The king made him national preceptor and the recipient of duties from hundreds of households. Legend had it that when Tù Dao Hanh was about to leave his mundane body, while feeling indisposed he gave medicine and a mantra to his disciple, Minh Không, saying, 'Twenty years from now, when you hear that the king suffers from a strange disease, come and cure him.' It was this event." See also Appendix II for the story of Nguyễn Minh Không from the *Linh* Nam*.

550. According to the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky*," 4:286, the second year of the Đai Đinh era was *tân dau** and not *tân suu**.

551. Bình Lạc* belonged to what is now the districts of Van* Giang and My* Hào, Hưng* Yên Province. There is a canal named Nghĩa* Trú running through these two districts. The name Bình Lạc came into existence in 621 when Lý Uyên established Long Châu, which consisted of the three districts of Long Biên, Vu* Ninh, and Bình Lạc.

According to Lê Manh * Thát, Nghia* Trú Village was the same as the Nghia Trang Village, Sài Trang Canton, Du'ong Hào District, Hai* Du'ong Province, mentioned in *Bac* Thành Dia* Du' Chí Luc* 2*, and which is now My* Hào District, Hu'ng Yên Province. See *LMT*, p. 286, n. 1. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3:29a4, referred to it as a hamlet: "[In] the fifth year, at* hoi*, of the Kien* Gia era (1215) . . . Chu Dinh*, a native of Nghia Trú, put his hamlet at [Nguyen*] Nons* disposal."

552. This is the same as Bien* Tài, who was a disciple of Thông Biền and editor of the *Chieu* Doi* Luc* (Collated Biographies).

553. Dazhu Huihai said: "When you have realized [mind], all phenomena are sufficient [evidence of enlightenment]; when you are not yet enlightened, you are perpetually confused and at odds." See *Chuangeng lu*, T 51.247a24.

554. Furong Lingxun asked: "How to take care of it?" Xun said: "When there's an optical illusion in your eyes, you see illusory flowers falling in confusion." See *ibid.*, 280c26.

555. See *ibid.*, 282b26–27.

556. See Jingcen's verse:

Although a man who stops at the top of a hundred foot pole,
Has gained access [to the Dharma], it is still not true
[realization].
At the top of the hundred foot pole take another step,
The Truth Body manifests throughout the universe.

See *ibid.*, 274b6–8.

557. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (62a3) and the *Dai* Nam* (55a7) have *thiên chu'o'ng bao* trung tu**, which should be amended to *thiên chu'o'ng bao tu' trung*.

558. See *Vimalakirtinirdesa**, fasc. middle, 546b25–c18; *Avatamsaka**, 80:440c21–22. See also *Chuangeng lu*, 7:256b9–18: "Governor of Jiangzhou Li Bo asked Guizun, 'If the *sutra** said that Mount Sumeru contains a mustard seed, then I have no doubt about that; but when it says that a mustard seed contains Mount Sumeru, isn't that silly?' Guizun said, 'I heard that you've read ten thousand books, haven't you?' Li Bo said, 'Yes.' Guizun said, 'From your head to your toe, you're about the size of a palm tree, where do you have space to hang ten thousand books?' Li Bo only nodded. On another occasion Li Bo asked, 'What does the *tripitaka** [Threefold Buddhist Canon] really teach?' Guizun raised his fist, asking, 'Do you understand?' Li Bo said, 'No, I don't.' Guizun said, 'Holding high office as you do, you can't even understand a fist?' Li Bo said, 'Teacher, please instruct me.' Guizun said, 'If you meet the right person on the road, give it to him. If not, leave it alone.'" See also *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:459, n. 2.

559. Hoàng Xuân Hãn wrote: "The *Thiên Uyên* recorded that Khánh Hy* passed away on the twenty-seventh day of the first month of the third year, *nhâm tuat**, of the Dai* Đinh era (1142), at the age of seventy-six. Reckoning on that, he must have been born in 1067 and thus was only ten years old when Dao* Dung came to Thang* Long. How could he be Dao Dung's teacher then? The *Toàn Thu'* also recorded the fact that the *hau** (Marquis) of Khánh Hy died. The *Toàn Thu'* might have mistaken the word *tang** (monk) for *hâu*. The editor of the *Thiên Uyên*, published during the Vinh* Thinh* era, also stated that "According to *Su' Ký* [Recorded History], Monk Khánh Hy passed away in

1135. If we follow this information, Khánh Hy * was only seventeen years old then. I believe that the *Thien* Uyen** recorded incorrectly the date of Khánh Hys* death and his age when he died. He died probably at the age of ninety-six. The character *cuu** (nine) and the character *that** (seven) are easily mixed up. If Khánh Hy died at the age of ninety-six, then when Dao* Dung came to study with him, Khánh Hy was thirty-seven. That is more reasonable." See Hoàng Xuân Hãn, *Lý Thu'o'ng Kiet** (Saigon: Van* Hanh* University Press, 1966), p. 474.
560. See *Les Chapitres*, pp. 60 and 112.
561. This work is definitely lost.
562. Both Lê Quý Đôn's "Nghe* Van* Chí" and Phan Huy Chú's "Van Tich* Chí" mentioned *Ngo* Dao* Thi Tap** in one volume, composed by Master Khánh Hy, a native of Co* Giao, Long Biên. See "Les Chapitres," pp. 60 and 112; *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:458, n.2; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 86.
563. The *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (28:102), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Buddhist Monks," notes: "Zen Master Gió'i Không was a true Buddhist monk who attained enlightenment. Subsequently he passed away sitting upright." See also *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3, 210; Appendix III.
564. Mount Chân Ma has never been mentioned in any historical or geographical records. The *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 4:70, mentioned a mountain named Đán Ma. Lê Manh* Thát suspected that Mount Chân Ma was identical to Mount Đán Ma, since from Đán Ma to Lich* So'n is not too far away. Lich So'n was the mountain on which Gió'i Không subsequently erected a temple and moved his abode there. See *LMT*, p. 289, n. 2.
565. According to *Kiên Van Tiêu Luc*, 6:70, Mount Lich So'n was located at Yên Lich Village, So'n Du'ong District. See also *Dai Nam Nhất Thông Chí* (29:48), "So'n Tây Province, section on Mountains and Rivers."
566. Nam Sách was located in the present-day Hai* Hu'ng Province. See *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:446, n.1
567. Thánh Chúa Cave was the same as Kính Chúa Cave at Kính Chúa Village, Giáp So'n District, Hai Du'ong Province, under the Nguyen*, which is the present-day Mount Thach* Môn, Du'ong Nham Village, Kinh Môn District, Hai Hu'ng Province. Nowadays the cave there is still called Thánh Chúa Cave. See *LMT*, p. 289, n. 4.
568. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (62b8) and the *Dai Nam* (56a1) have Dai* Thuan*, which seems to agree with the *Viet* Su'* Lu'o'c**, whereas the *Toàn Thu'* and all other historical documents have Thiên Thuân, the reign's style of Lý Than* Tông (1228–1132). It is impossible to have "the eighth year of the Đại Thuân era." Moreover, during the Đại Thuân era, neither the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c* nor the *Toàn Thu'* recorded any great plague.
569. Sakyamuni* is the Buddha of the present, and Maitreya is the Buddha of the future.
570. *Bàn tinh* 般星 [Ch: *banxing*]: the starlight in the tray. In the old days 般 people used to place a tray in the yard to watch lunar and solar eclipse. The idea is that life and death are as illusory as the starlight in the tray, one should not be attached to them as absolute principle.
571. Lê Kiem* was the grandson of Governor of Phong Châu Lê Thuân Tông and Princess Kim Thành, and the brother of Zen Master Trí Nhân. According to Trí Nhân's biography, Lê Kiem was the governor of Phong Châu.

572. According to the stele at Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple discovered by Hoàng Xuân Hãn and quoted in his *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt* *, pp. 453–61, Pháp Dung's name should have been Đao* Dung. However, all extant documents referred to him as Pháp Dung. This is because of a name taboo under the Trần*, avoiding Trần Hu'ng Daos* personal name. Our text was a work of the Trần dynasty; therefore, Đao Dung was changed into Pháp Dung.

573. Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple still exists today at Phu* Lý Village, Đông Sơ'n District, Thanh Hoá Province. It was here that a stele, erected in the fifth year, *giáp thìn*, of the Thiên Phù Due* Vu* (1124), recorded the stories about the temple and Đao Dung. According to Hoàng Xuân Hãn, Mount Ma Ni was originally called Càn Ni. After 1299 it was changed to Ma Ni due to a name taboo. See *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt*, p. 456; see also *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:116.

574. Which is now Phu Lý Village, Đông Sơ'n District, Thanh Hoá Province, because Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple is still found there. Moreover, to the west of this village are the two villages of Viên Quang and Ho* Đâm; the territory of Viên Đâm hamlet was mentioned in the stele at Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm as one of the parties in a land dispute with Boi* Lý Hamlet. See *LMT*, p. 291, n. 3.

575. According to the stele at Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple, Lê Lu'o'ng was the first man to erect this temple at Bôi Lý Hamlet in the Later Tang era (923–937). Lê Lu'o'ng came from a prestigious family at Cuu* Chân District, Ái Province, and held some public office. He was also a devout Buddhist. When Đinh Tiên Hoàng ascended the throne, Lê Lu'o'ng was enfeoffed. According to the stele he also built the temples of Trình Nghiê'm and Minh Nghiê'm, which have not been located yet. See *LMT*, p. 291, n. 4.

576. According to the Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple stele, Emperor Lý Thái Tông had visited the temple once. Hoàng Xuân Hãn based himself on the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, and the *Toàn Thu'* suggested that Lý Thái Tông visited the temple in 1031. He also had the temple, which was already in bad shape then, repaired, and assigned the Elder Đao Quang as the abbot and Zen teacher. See *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt*, p. 456. Thus, Đao Dung (i.e., Pháp Dung's father), according to the stele, was the Elder Đao Quang, probably another sobriquet of Huyen* Ngung, alias Tang* Phán.

577. The Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple stele said: "In the year *bính thìn* (1076), he left his native village to search for [spiritual] companions. Setting sail to the sea, he subsequently arrived at Thang* Long. There he met a monk with the sobriquet Cao Tang and became his student out of admiration for him." See *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt*, p. 457.

578. The Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple stele said: "Đao Dung asked, 'What is essential in the Dharma?' Cao Tang said, 'The Dharma is essentially without rules, how should I instruct you now?' Đao Dung emptied through and gained enlightenment." See *Lý Thu'ò'ng Kiệt*, p. 457.

579. The Hu'o'ng Nghiê'm Temple stele said: "The Master traveled up the Lô (Nhi* Hà) River and went to Mount Thứ'u Đài. He was pleased with the beautiful landscape and stopped traveling. (He then had the facade planned, assembled stones to build the foundation, and erected a temple, which he called Khai Giác Temple.) *Ibid.*, p. 458.

580. Hoàng Xuân Hãn remarked: "The *Thien* Uyen** recorded: 'Subsequently, he returned to his native village, built a temple, and stayed there through his old age. He passed away on the fifth day of the second month of the first year,

giáp ngo *, of the Thiên Cam* Chí Bao* era (1174)." There is probably some error in this record, since Pháp Dung arrived in Thang* Long as early as 1076, and if he was still alive by 1174, he must have been at least 120 years old. Ibid., p. 460.

According to Hoàng Xuân Hãn's report on the Hu'o'ng Nghiêem Temple stele, there are problems concerning the date of Pháp Dung. The stele tells us that in 1076 Pháp Dung arrived at Thang Long and met Khánh Hy* and in 1077 he returned to his native village and requested his cousin Lu'u Khánh Đàm to repair the Hu'o'ng Nghiêem Temple. In the same year Pháp Dung was summoned by Lý Nhân Tông to the capital of Thang Long to establish Buddhism in the court. In 1122 Pháp Dung returned to his native village and had Hu'o'ng Nghiêem Temple repaired again. Then he composed the inscription on the stele in 1124. At that time he was already around seventy years old. It is highly unlikely that he could have lived until 1174.

581. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (63b7) and the *Dai* Nam* (56b9) have "Trí Thien* Su" (Zen Master Trí). However, the *Dai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* (29:126), "So'n Tây Province, section on Monks," recorded a Zen Master named Trí Nhân and described him as follows: "A native of An Lãng who devoted himself to practicing Buddhism. One day he saw a tiger chasing a deer; he said, 'All sentient beings cherish their lives. You should not harm each other.' The tiger bowed its head and went away. In the vicinity of the mountain there was a barbarian tribe whose people would band together to raid. The Master guided and taught them. Many were moved by his teaching and returned to virtuous lives." Phúc Dien*, in his *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* (upper vol., 16a7–8), also refers to him as Trí Nhân and recorded the same story.

The similarities in terms of geography and events in the descriptions of the Zen Master Trí Nhân of the *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chí* and the *Dao Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* lead us to believe that he must be one and the same as Zen Master Trí of our text. The *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chí* and the *Dao Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* might have relied on the *An Nam Chí Nguyên* for source material because the section about Trí Nhân found in the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:210, is identical to that in the *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chí*. Thus, it is only reasonable to correct Trí to Trí Nhân.

582. According to the *Dai Nam Nhat Thông Chí* (29:20–21), "So'n Tây Province, section Kien* Trí Diên Cách," An Lãng was a district that existed since the Đinh and Lý dynasty. It is now An Lãng District, Vinh* Phúc Province.

583. Phong Châu includes the territory of the prefectures of Lâm Thao (Phú Tho*), Vinh Tu'ong, the districts of Bach* Hac* (Vinh Yên) and So'n Vi (Phú Tho). See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 241, n. 3.

584. Lê Long Dinh*, the fourth son of Emperor Lê Dai* Hành, was conferred the title of Ngu* Man Vu'ong (Lord of Ngu' Man) in 991. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:193. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 1:20a, wrote: "In the second year, *tân mảo*, of the Hu'ng Thong* era (991), the emperor conferred upon his younger brother's son the title of Lord of Ngu' Man and Commander of Phong Châu."

585. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:226, wrote: "In the third month [of the third year of the Thông Thụy* era (1036)], the emperor gave Princess Kim Thành in marriage to Lê Thuan* Tông, Chief of Phong Châu." The *Viet Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:6b2, had "Princess Khánh Thành" instead of Kim Thành. Lê Thuân Tông was son of Lê Long Đình and grandson of Lê Đai Hành. On Princess Kim Thành, daughter of Lý Thái Tông, see *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 2:213.

586. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban * Ky*," 7, 40b8, wrote: "In the second year of the Long Khánh era, a National Scholar examination was organized." Yet according to Tri Nhân's biography, this examination already existed during the reign of Lý Anh Tông. For a gloss on the rank of *cung hau* thu' gia* [National Archivist], see *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c**, 14:133.
587. See *Vajracchedika-prajnaparamita-sutra**, 752b27–28.
588. Our text (64a3) has *nhu' ai ngu** ngu'* 如來五語 [Ch: *rulai wuyu*], whereas the *Dai* Nam* (57a5) has *nhu' lai luc* ngu'* [Ch: *rulai liuyu*], which is more correct.
589. See appendix III, section on "Immortals and Buddhist Monks in *An Nam Chí Nguyên*."
590. Tô Hien* Thành (?–1179) was a court minister during the reign of Lý Cao Tông. Nothing is known about Ngô Hoà Nghĩa* except that he was Grand Guardian during the reign of Lý Anh Tông.
591. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (64b6) and the *Dai Nam* (57b7) have *doai** 悅.
592. *Hi di chi lý* 希夷之理 in the original. *Hi di* [*xi yi* in Chinese] are terms borrowed from the *Daodejing*. See a definition of the expression *hi di* as follows: "What is looked at but not seen is named the extremely dim (*yi*). What is listened to but not heard is named the extremely faint (*hsi*)." See Chen, *The Tao Te Ching*, p. 88.
593. Mount Pho* Lai* was located at Phô Lai Village, Que* Đu'ông District. It was a high rocky mountain overlooking the Luc* Dau* River. The landscape here is spacious. On the mountain was Chúc Thánh Temple, where Zen Master practiced the Dharma and cultivated his nature. See *Dai Nam Nhất* Thông* Chí* (28:32), "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Mountains and Rivers." It is now Mount Phô Lai, Quê Đu'ông District, Hà Bac Province.
594. *Minh tang** 明僧 [Ch: *mingseng*] in the original text.
595. The *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c*, 2:10b3–4, wrote: "[In] the second year, *at* mùi*, of the Long Thuy* Thái Bình era (1055) . . . the temples of Đông Lâm and Tinh* Lu* were built on Mount Đông Cú'u." According to the *Dai Nam Nhất Thông Chí* (28:34), "Bac Ninh Province, section on Mountains and Rivers," Mount Thiên Thai, located five miles northwest of Gia Bình District, was also called Mount Đông Cú'u. Note that in the first year of the Minh Mang* era Gia Dinh* District was changed into Gia Bình District. As for the monk Thao* Nhat*, nothing is known about him.
596. This metaphor originally came from the *Samyutta-Nikaya**, sutta 16: "In the great ocean, there was a blind turtle whose lifetime lasted innumerable *kalpas*. The turtle would raise its head once every one hundred years. In the meantime, there was a floating piece of wood that had only one hole, drifting with the waves, now to the east, now to the west, according to the wind. For a turtle that would raise its head once every hundred years to meet with the hole of that piece of wood, this is difficult indeed." See also *Mahaparinirvana-Sutra**, 2: "Being born human is difficult. Being born at the right time [when the Dharma still flourishes] is also difficult. It is like for a blind turtle in the great ocean to chance upon the hole in a piece of drifting wood." Here the metaphor is used to describe the extraordinariness of Chân Không's insight.
597. I.e., Thân Dao* Nguyên, son of Thân Thieu* Thái and Princess Bình Du'ông. This is because not only was Nguyên a contemporary of Lý Thu'ông Kiet*, but his wife, Princess Thiên Thành was also a follower of Chân Không. According to the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:11a7–8 and 15a2, Nguyên was chosen by Lý

Thánh Tông as royal son-in-law in 1059 and was officially married to Princess Thiên Thành in 1066. Note that on p. 11a8 Nguyễn was referred to as Thân Canh * Nguyễn, whereas on p. 15a2 he was called Thân Dao* Nguyễn.

598. "Saha-world*" in the original text. See n. 2 above.

599. Zen Master Dongshan Liangjie, seeing his reflection in the water while crossing a bridge, attained enlightenment. He then composed a verse:

Don't look for it elsewhere,
It is always beside me.
Now I'm coming by myself,
Yet I'm face to face with it everywhere.
Now it is me,
Now I am not it.
One should understand it this way,
Then one is agreeable with Thusness.

See *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.321c19–24.

600. See *Abhidharmakosa** for this. In Zen literature the image of the aeon of fire has been used in many koans. See, for instance, *Biyān lu*, T 51.169a17–18, case 29: "When the aeon of fire is rampant, the universe is burned away, what is destroyed. What is not destroyed?" See also *Chuangdeng lu*, T 51.286a16–17: A monk asked Zen Master Dasui Fazhen: "When the aeon of fire is rampant, I don't know whether this one is destroyed or not?" Fazhen said: "It is destroyed."

601. The empress dowager here is Linh Nhân (?–1117), Lý Nhân Tông's mother.

602. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (66a6) and the *Dai* Nam* (59a5) have Mau* Nhân. It should be emended as Dieu* Nhân, whose biography is on pp. 66b9–67b3.

603. Both the *Thiên Uyển* (66b1) and the *Đại Nam* (59a10) have *ta** 舊. Note that in the *Đại Nam* there is a correction at the margin into *cu'u*.

604. The *Kien* Van Tieu* Luc**, 4:297, also recorded this poem with some different readings.

605. The name Long Phúc was mentioned twice in our text, another time in Y So'n's biography. See *Thiên Uyển*, p. 70b1.

606. Former name of Vinh* Tu'o'ng Prefecture, So'n Tây Province. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 242, n.1.

607. The text has *không tông* 空宗 [Ch: *kong zong*], which means the Emptiness school. The term *kong zong* is usually used to denote Buddhism. See, for instance, *Zongjinglu*, T 48.616a6–617a4.

608. It is said in Tinh* Thiens* biography that "after Đào Lâm died, Tinh Thiên* traveled to all the Zen centers, searching for spiritual companions." *Thiên Uyển*, p. 68a7–8. Tinh Thiên died in 1193. At least Đào Lâm must have died a few years before that. Yet, his biography has it that he died in 1203, i.e., ten years after Tinh Thiên died. In addition, the reign's style Thiên Gia Bao* Huu* is only found in the *Toàn Thu'*, 4:307–308, whereas in the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c** it is recorded as Thiên Tu' Bao Hu'u.

609. I.e., Lord Phung* Càn, title of Lý Nhất* Trung conferred upon him by his father Emperor Lý Thái Tông in 1035. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2:6a8. Due to a name taboo under the Trần, Càn was changed to Yet*. See, for instance, *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 6:30a2–3: "The Càn Gate, formerly called Càn, later was changed to Yêt due to a name taboo." On Phung Yêt, see *Tho' Van Lý Trần*, 1:339.

610. Chân Dạng * Province belonged to the area of Tam Nông, Hưng Hóa, nowadays Vinh* Phú Province. See *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:339, n.2; "Le Bouddhisme," p. 242, n. 2.

611. The Bodhisattva precepts in Vietnamese Buddhism are fundamentally based on the *Fanwang jing* (T 24, no. 1484). Both monks and laymen can take the Bodhisattava precepts. Those who take these precepts can make a vow to embrace the five precepts first and then ten more afterward. A monk who takes the Bodhisattva precepts needs to have the approval of ten teachers. After the ceremony, a monk usually burns certain part of his body or, more commonly, some incense on his head, as an offering to the Buddhas. The difference between a monk and a layman who take the Bodhisattva precepts is that a monk has to strictly keep the vow of celibacy whereas a layman does not.

612. This shows that in the time of Diêu* Nhân, the community of nuns was already well established. It is not reasonable to suggest as some still do that Diêu Nhân was the first nun in Vietnam. Note that the *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:212, records a brief biographical note about a nun called Great Master (*Thái Su'*) Từ Quán. See Appendix III.

613. See *Vimalakirtinirdesa-sutra**, T 14.544b21; Robert A. F. Thurman, *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti** (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), p. 43.

614. The original Sanskrit of this verse is *ye mam* rupena cadraksur* ye mam ghosena* canvayuh* mithya-prahana-prasrta* na mam draksyanti te janah*//*. See Conze, *Vajracchedika* Prajnaparamita**, p. 56. This verse has been quoted by many other Buddhist scriptures and philosophical treatises. See, for instance, *Yogacara-Bhumi**, (Tibetan) D. 4035, tshi. 248a7; *Yogacara-Bhumi*, (Chinese) T 30.382b24–25; *Prasannapada** (Louis de La Vallée Poussin, ed.) *Bibliotheca Buddhica*, 4:448; *Anguttara Nikaya**, 2, 65:71. The first half of this verse is identical with *Theragatha** 469: *ye mam rupena* pamimsu* ye ca ghosena* anvagu* thanda-raga vasupeta* na mam janenti te jana//*.

615. See Vô Ngôn Thông's instruction to Cam* Thành, *Thien* Uyen**, 6a6–11.

616. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (67b2) and the *Dai* Nam* (60a9) have *tru** 杜. This verse is very similar to a verse found in *Trần Thái Tông Hoàng Đế* Ngu* Che* Khoá Hu' Luc** [Instructions on Emptiness Composed by Emperor Trần Thái Tông], lower book, 33b1–4, and is said to be a verse instructing disciples by Trần Thái Tông:

Birth, old age, illness, and death,
Are an eternal truth.
If you wish to attain liberation,
By trying to untie your bonds you add to your entanglement.
It's only when you are deluded that you search for Buddha,
It's only when you are confused that you look for Zen.
The Zen adept seeks nothing,
He just closes his mouth and forgets the words.

It is likely that Trần Thái Tông had borrowed the verse from Diêu Nhân. This is not surprising since the concept *nhat* hoi* niem xuat* nhât hoi tân* 回拈出一回新 [each time you bring it to mind, each time it becomes new] was widespread under the Trần. When Trần Nhân Tông was asked why should

one keep repeating the koans of the previous generations, he said: "Each time you bring it to mind, each time it becomes new." See *Thánh Đăng * Luc** [Recorded on the Transmission of the Sacred Lamp], 4b1–2.

617. The *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:257, wrote: "In the summer, the sixth month [of the fourth year of the Hoi* Tu'ò'ng Dai* Khánh era (1113)], the wife of the Provincial Governor of Chân Đăng* Province, a Princess of the Lý, died. The Lady's personal name was Ngoc* Kieu*, and she was the eldest daughter of Lord Phung* Càn. She was brought up in the royal palace by Lý Thánh Tông and subsequently was given in marriage to Provincial Governor Lê of Chân Đăng Province. When Lê died, she vowed to stay a widow and later left home to become a nun. She died at the age of seventy-two. Than* Tông bestowed on her the title of Nun Master."

618. Which is now Nhu' Nguyet* Village, Yên Phong District, Bac* Ninh Province. On Nhu' Nguyet, see *Tho' Van* Lý Tran**, 1:448, n. 1.

619. *Noi* dien** 內典 [Ch: *nei dian*] means Buddhist literature. Dao-an wrote in his "Erjiao lun" in *Guang hongmingji*, T 52.136c–11–16: "The teaching that investigates the form is called external, that which examines the spirit is called internal. . . . Buddhist teaching is the internal teaching whereas Confucian teaching is called external."

620. On the six perfections, see, for instance, Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine*, pp. 168–71.

621. These consist of vowing to save all sentient beings, innumerable as they are; vowing to cut off all afflictions, endless as they might be; vowing to master all the teachings, immeasurable as they are; and vowing to realize the unexcelled Buddhadharma. See Nakamura, *Bukkyo* jiten*, 345r–346l.

622. According to the *Jiu tangshi*, Nam Đinh* was a district first established in 621 and belonged to Tông Châu together with two other districts, namely, Tông Bình and Hoang Giáo. The following year Tông Bình District was divided into two, namely, the districts of Giao Chi* and Hoài Đức. In 627 the three districts of Giao Chi, Hoài Đức, and Hoàng Giáo were united to become Tông Bình District, together with Nam Đinh District, which was adjoined to Giao Châu. See *LMT*, p. 298, n. 1.

The *Bac* Thành Di** *Du' Chí* (3:9) listed a few villages and cantons bearing the name Co* Hien*. See also *LMT*, p. 298, n. 1. Tran* Van* Giáp wrote in his *Lu'o'c* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, 1:190 that in the present time there are two villages named Cô Hiên, one in Thu'o'ng* Tín Prefecture and one in Phú Xuyên District, both pertaining to Hà Đông Province. On Cô Hiên, see *Tho' Van Lý Trân*, 1:460, n. 1.

623. Even though the *Van Mieu** (Cultural Temple), where Confucius, the Duke of Zhou, and the seventy-two Confucian sages were worshipped, was built in 1070 under Lý Thánh Tông's reign; only in 1075 were school and examination systems first established in Vietnam. In the second month of this year, Lý Nhân Tông for the first time by royal decree ordered the organizing of the first examination for the Capital Scholar Degree in the Three Teachings. Lê Van Thinh*, a Confucian scholar, was the first one to pass this examination. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:245 and 248.

624. Both the *Thien* Uyen** (69a3–4) and the *Dai* Nam* (61b9) have *dai* khánh tam niên* 大慶三年 [the third year of the Đại Khánh era]. This might be an error, because according to the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 3:266, "on the *dinh* ty**

day, in the autumn, the seventh month [of the first year of the Thiên Phù Khánh Tho * era (1127)], the Trùng Hưng Diên Tho was inaugurated.

625. A character *bat** 不 seems to be missing here in the original text. See *Thien* Uyen**, 69a10; *Dai* Nam*, 62a5.

626. This is based on the Kun diagram in the Yijing: "When a subject kills his sovereign, a son kills his father, this is not a random event happening in a morning or an afternoon, but must be the outbreak of a longtime cause." See Wilhelm/Baynes, *The I Ching*, p. 393.

627. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (69b3) and the *Đai Nam* (62a7) have *quân don* vi hu'ng vong* 君不能頓爲興亡.

628. This expression comes from the *Book of Poetry*. See *Hanyu dacidian*, 4:276r.

629. The Tây Du'ong Shrine here might be the same as the Ladies Tru'ng Shrine that Lý Anh Tông erected outside Tây Du'ong Bridge as the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3:7b9, has recorded. See *LMT*, p. 300, n. 7.

630. Both the *Thiên Uyên* (69b11) and the *Đai Nam* (62b4) have Thiên Chu'o'ng Gia Thuy* which is wrong.

631. The empress dowager here was Lady Cam* Thánh, whose family name was Lê, mother of Lý Anh Tông. Neither the *Việt Su' Lu'o'c* nor the *Toàn Thu'* say much about this event.

632. *Luân* 寒.

633. Lê Quý Đôn's "Nghê* Van* Chí" recorded: "*Chu' Phat* Tich Duyên Su'* [Selected Stories of Buddha's Past Lives], 30 books, composed by Master Bao* Giác, following Lý Nhân Tông's order." See "Les Chapitres," pp. 60–61 and 95; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 139. However, the *Chu' Phât Tich Duyên Su'* was a work of Viên Thông and not Bao Giác, who was Viên Thông's father. We have no idea what led Lê Quý Đôn to this error. Phan Huy Chú did not mention this work in his "Van Tich* Chí."

634. The "Nghê Van Chí" recorded: "*Tang* Già Tap* Luc** [Miscellaneous Records of the Sangha], 50 books, composed by Master Bao Giác." The "Van Tich Chí" also mentioned this work but did not say who was the author. See "Les Chapitres," pp. 61, 90, and 131; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 139.

635. Both the "Nghê Van Chí" and the "Van Tich Chí" recorded: "*Viên Thông Tap* [Collected Works of Viên Thông], 2 vols., composed by Bao Giác, a native of Co* Hien*." It is obvious that *Viên Thông Tap* collected the works of Viên Thông and not Bao Giác's. See "Les Chapitres," pp. 60 and 112; "Bibliographie annamite," p. 86.

636. The *Đai Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí* 28:1020, "Bac* Ninh Province, section on Buddhist Monks," wrote: "Zen Master Y So'n, a native of Gia Lâm, when a young man was well versed in the classics and history, and especially Buddhist literature. He harbored great aspirations to benefit people. When he was about to die, plants, flowers, birds, and beasts were all moved." And a note: "[His biography] is recorded in detail in *An Nam Chí Nguyên*. The Master's date has not been investigated."

It is true that *Đai Nam Nhat Thông Chí* based itself on *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3, 210. The latter itself said that it collected facts about Y So'n from the old *Chí* (Records) and government reports as well as from popular legends. Yet *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, for instance, did not record anything about Y So'n.

637. This might be the same as An Lăng Village, the birthplace of Tù' Dao * Hanhs* mother. This is now Lăng Village, located in the southern suburb of the capital of Hanoi. Nowadays, at this village there is Chiêu Thiên Temple, where Tù' Dao Hanh* and Lý Than* Tông are worshipped. *Dai* Nam Nhat* Thong* Chí*, "Hanoi Province, section on Temples and Shrines," also mentions this temple, which is called An Lăng Temple in *Bac* Thành Dia* Du' Chí Luc**, 1:22. Yet no record has ever mentioned a Nam Mô Temple at An Lăng.

638. See *Avatamsaka-Sutra**, T 10.274c29–275a17.

639. See Shitou's "Centongqi" in *Rentian yanmu*, 5.327a19.

640. According to both the *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3.24b9, and the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 4:313, the third year of the Kien* Gia era (1213) was the year *quí dau** and not *bính tí*, which was the sixth year of the Kiên Gia era.

641. In both the *Thien* Uyen** and the *Đai Nam*, the section on the Thao* Đu'ò'ng lineage is an integral part of the text. However, since it only consists of a list of names of the monks belonging to the lineage rather than biographies, it seems to be a later interpolation to the text.

642. The legend about Thao Đu'ò'ng in the Vietnamese Zen tradition is quite remarkable. The *An Nam Chí Lu'o'c*, 15:7, wrote: "Thao Đu'ò'ng followed his teacher to live in Champa. King Thánh Tông of the Lý dynasty, in an expedition against Champa, captured him and gave him to a monk scribe as a servant. One day, the monk scribe was composing his Sayings when he had to go outside. Thao Đu'ò'ng secretly corrected the text. The monk was surprised about his servant and reported it to Lý Thánh Tông. The latter subsequently made Thao Đu'ò'ng National Preceptor." The *An Nam Chí Nguyên*, 3:209, wrote: "Zen Master Thao Đu'ò'ng was a very virtuous man who was well versed in Buddhist literature. Emperor Lý [Thánh Tông] treated him as a teacher. Later Thao Đu'ò'ng died sitting upright." According to *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 2.13b3–14a6, during his reign Lý Thánh Tông made only one expedition against Champa in the first year of the Thân Vu* era (1069). Note that both the *Thiên Uyên* (71b) and the *Đai Nam* (64a4) do not give us any information about Thao Đu'ò'ng except the fact that he transmitted the lineage of the Xuedou Mingjue school.

If the story about Thao Đu'ò'ng is accurate, he was captured during that year and was made National Preceptor probably in 1070 or 1071 at the latest, since early in 1072 Lý Thánh Tông fell seriously ill and subsequently died. We have no idea who the monk scribe might be. It could have been Hue* Sinh, since according to the *Việt Dien** he was already General Superintendent of Monks by then, and he accompanied Lý Thánh Tông on an expedition against Champa. The *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u*, upper vol., 15b10, recorded the same as *An Nam Chí Nguyên*. The *Tây Ho* Chí*, section on the temples of Khai Quoc* and Van* Niên, said that Thao Đu'ò'ng's family name was Lý and was abbot of both of these temples. See *LMT*, p. 303, n. 1. See also "Le Bouddhisme," p. 254, n. 1.

643. Xuedou Mingjue or Chongxian (980–1052), a student of Zhimen Guangzuo of the Yunmen school. For his biography, see *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.475a9–476a25.

644. Lý Thánh Tông (1023–1072), whose personal name was Nhat* Tôn, was the third son of Ly Thái Tông. According to this source, Thánh Tông was a patriarch in the line of Thao Đu'ò'ng. During his reign, Thánh Tông had many

temples built and *stupas* erected, among which were the famous Sùng Khánh Báo Thiên Temple and the Dai * Thang* Tu* Thiên Stupa. Yet Thánh Tông also ardently promoted Confucian studies. It was under his reign that for the first time the "Cultural Temple" (*Van* Mieu**) was built and statues of Confucius and other Confucian sages were made to be worshipped there. Thánh Tông also institutionalized some of the court etiquette more or less modeled after Confucianism. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 3:241–46.

645. It is not known whether this Bát Nhã is the same as Nguyen* Bát Nhã, the founder of a Zen school of which we know nothing, but which must have flourished at least before Thông Bien*.

646. This might be the same as the Phúc Thánh Temple erected in the sixth year of the Đại Định* era (1145), as recorded in the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 4:289.

647. Now Đan Phung* district, Hà Đông Province.

648. Nothing is known about this person. This source seems to suggest that Ngo* Xá was the teacher of Không Lô* and Giác Hai*. However, nothing is mentioned about Ngô Xá in the biographies of Không Lô and Giác Hai. It is said in the Giác Hai's* biography that the two of them first studied with Hà Trach*.

649. Không Lô and Giác Hai were recorded above as belonging to the Vô Ngôn Thông school. It is mentioned here that their main biographies are based on the *Diagram of the Southern School* in the section of the Kien* So' lineage. Unfortunately, this book is lost otherwise the information therein might shed some light on the historical facts about Không Lô and Giác Hai.

650. The text has "Đinh So'" but obviously should be emended to "Kiên So'."

651. Could be identical with Do* Anh Vu* (?–1159), who was Grand Commandant under Lý Nhân Tông. See *Viet* Su* Lu'o'c**, 3:3a4.

652. Might be an error for Hoang* Minh.

653. The *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:24a6, recorded that while escaping from the capital in the event of 1211, Lý Hue* Tông and the empress dowager took refuge "at the residence of High Official Đỗ Thu'ò'ng on their way to Lang* Châu." We know that the ranks of "High Official" [*dai* lieu ban*] and "Grand Tutor" [*thái phó*] are identical, since in 1159 Lý Anh Tông issued a decree that *dai lieu ban* should be referred to as *thái phó*. See *Việt Su' Lu'o'c*, 3:6b3.

654. We know that Kiên So' means the lineage of Vô Ngôn Thông. However, there is no mention of Đỗ Thu'ò'ng in this lineage in our text.

655. Phúc Dien* records in his *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u*, under the section "Xuedou Lineage," that "Great Master Thao* Đu'ò'ng of Khai Quoc* Temple in the Capital of Thang* Long represented the first generation of Xuedou's disciples here [in Vietnam]. Bát Nhã was the second generation. Hoang* Minh was the third generation. The fourth generation consisted of four patriarchs whose names have been lost. The fifth generation was Chân Huyen*. The sixth generation was Hai Tinh*." See *Dao Giáo Nguyên Lu'u*, 15b5–6.

Appendix I

1. For brief but useful remarks on this text, see Tran* Van* Giáp, *Tim Hieu* Kho Sách Hán Nôm*, 2:217–18. The original texts used in this study are the *Thien* Uyen**, microfilm A. 1276 from the Social Sciences Library in Hanoi and the *Dai* Nam*, microfilm A. 2767. #279 from the École Française d'Extrême-Orient.

2. See Émile Gaspardone, "Bibliographie annamite," *BEFEO* 34(1935): 140.

3. See Tran * Van* Giáp, "Le Bouddhisme en Annam des origines au XIII^e siècle," *BEFEO* 32 (1932): 191–286; "Les chapitres bibliographiques de Lê Quý Đôn et de Phan Huy Chú," *Bulletin de la Société des Études Indochinoises*, ns, 3 (1938): 90; Gaspardone, "Bibliographie annamite," pp. 140–43.
4. See "Les chapitres," p. 90.
5. See *ibid.*
6. The *Thiên* Uyen** (the Lê edition) contains two fascicles, the first recording the Vô Ngôn Thông lineage and the second, the Vinitaruci* lineage. The *Dai* Nam* (the Nguyen* edition), on the other hand, is counted as one volume within a larger project of Phúc Điền*.
7. See Émile Gaspardone, *Ngan-nan tche yuan et son auteur* (Hanoi: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1932). See Appendix III for a complete translation of these short biographies. These twenty Zen masters are Thao* Đu'ò'ng, Tinh* Gió'i, Tam Mach*, Dao* Hanh*, Viên Chieu*, Nghia* Ton*, Trí Nhân, Gió'i Châu, Y So'n, Gió'i Không, Thien* Nham, Nguyen* Hoc*, Bao* Tinh, Minh Tâm, Không Lo*, Giác Hai*, Ma Ni, Thuan* Nhat*, Vô Châu, and Tù' Quán Hue* Thông. Seven among these (namely, Tam Mach, Nghia Ton, Gió'i Châu, Ma Ni, Thuần Nhât, Vô Châu, and Tù' Quán Huê Thông) are not included in the *Thiên Uyên*.
8. See Lê Manh* Thát, *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh* (referred to as *LMT*) (Saigon: Van* Hanh Buddhist Studies Institute, 1976), p. 7.
9. See *Ngan-nan tche-yuan*, 3: 208.
10. Nguyễn Van Chat* hailed from Vu* Di Village, Bach* Hac* District. He passed the National Scholar Examination in 1448 at the age of twenty-seven and subsequently held several important posts at the Lê court. See "Bibliographie annamite," p. 127.
11. This is a record on historical and legendary national heroes of Vietnam. The work is believed to have been composed by Lý Te* Xuyên around 1329. For a useful textual and historical analysis of this work, see *Tim Hieu* Kho Sách Hán Nôm*, 1:180–86. See also "Bibliographie annamite," pp. 126–28; Ungar, "From Myth to History," pp. 179–80; Taylor, "Authority and Legitimacy," pp. 156–69; "Notes on the *Viet* Diên* U Linh Tập*," *The Birth of Vietnam*, appendix O, esp. pp. 352–59. All editions of the original texts in classical Chinese can be found in Chan Hing-ho, ed., *Việt Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet**, série II, vol. 2. The *Thiên Uyên* is mentioned in the story of Sóc Thiên Vu'ò'ng. See *ibid.*, p. 39, 214. On Lý Tê Xuyên, see Trần Van Giáp et al., *Lu'ò'c* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, 1:179.
12. See the story of Sóc Thiên Vu'ò'ng in *Việt Diên U Linh Tuc* Tập* in Chan Hing-ho, *Việt Nam Hán Van Tiêu Thuyêt*, 2:39.
13. See *Thiên Uyên*, 2b2–3a2.
14. Phúc Điền is the sobriquet of An Thiên, Buddhist author, editor, translator, and activist of the Nguyễn dynasty. See *Tim Hieu Kho Sách Hán Nôm*, 2:218–19. Phúc Diên's* most significant work is the *Dao* Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* [Sources of the Three Religions]. See *Tim Hieu Kho Sách Hán Nôm*, 2:10. Nguyễn Lang takes An Thiên and Phúc Diên as two different persons and provides two different biographical notes without telling us his sources. See Nguyễn Lang, *Việt Nam Phat* Giáo Su' Luan**, 2:252–53; 255–56.

The *Ke* Dang* Lu'ò'c Luc** records the following about Phúc Diên: "Venerable Mat* Nhân Phúc Diên, the sixth generation at Liên Tôn Temple in Hà Nội*, hailed from Bach Sam, So'n Minh, Hà Nội. His lay family name was Vu. He

left home to become a monk at the age of twelve. At first he came to Thinh * Liet* Dai* Bi Temple to study with Master Viên Quang Hai* Tiem*. After three years Master Viên Quang passed away. Phúc Dien* then came to Nam Du' Phúc Xuân Temple to pay homage to Venerable Tù' Phong and asked to be instructed in the Ten Dharmas. He was given the Dharma name Tich* Tich. After Tù' Phong's death, at the age of twenty, he came to study with Master Tù' Quang Tich Giang* of Pháp Vân Temple at Phú Ninh Village, Bac* Ninh Province. He received full ordination and spent six years studying and practicing Buddhism. When Tù' Quang passed away, Phúc Điền had his body cremated and the Hàm Long stupa erected in the temple [to house the relics]. In the twenty-sixth year, *canh tý*, of the Minh Menh* era,* the people of Bo* So'n Village, Bac Ninh Province, invited him to build Bô So'n Temple. In the third year, *qui mão*, of the Thieu* Tri* era (1843) he also erected Thiên Úng Phúc Temple at Gia Thuy*, Phúc Nhi Temple in So'n Tây Province, and Hoàng Vân Temple at Nhue* Thôn Village.

"He also reprinted Buddhist texts such as the *Huayan Sutra** in eighty volumes, re-collected scriptures for daily chanting; one collection of diagrams, re-collected Zen *sutras** and incantations, one volume each; Zen monastic rules for monks and nuns, one volume each; compiled *Dai* Nam Thien* Uyen* Ke* Dang** [Continuation of the (Transmission of the) Lamp in the Zen Community of Vietnam], one volume; compiled *Tam Giáo Quan* Khuy Nho Thích Dao** [An Introduction to the Three Religions: Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism], 3 vols.; *Tam Giáo Nguyên Lu'u* [Sources of the Three Religions], 3 vols. (. . .); reprinted the *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh* and the old text of the three-volume *Phat* To* Kê Đàng*, (. . .) edited the *Hufa lun* [Treatise on the Protection of the Dharma] (. . .), the *Chanlin baoxun* [Precious Instructions in the Zen Forest] (. . .). All the above texts are kept at Bô So'n Temple and Liên Tôn Temple. . . .

"At that time Phúc Điền was eighty years old. One day he asked his assembly, 'What date is it now?' They said, 'It is the sixteenth day of the eleventh month, the rat hour.' Phúc Điền said, 'It is time for me to return to the Western [Paradise of Amitabha*]. He then recited a verse to transmit the Dharma, 'All doctrines reveal the entrance to enlightenment; based on enlightenment, perfection is developed. Outside the [Buddhist] Path there is no path; in Emptiness there is nonemptiness. At the present time I am transmitting the True Dharma, but I have practiced the true school since time immemorial. Because there is nothing to be attained, it is not to be found in words.' His verse finished, he passed away facing the west."

15. See *Viet* Nam Phât Dien* Tùng San* [Collected Vietnamese Buddhist Texts] (Hanoi: École Francaise d'Extrême-Orient, 1943), 3:1a–4a. Nhu' So'n's name is not mentioned by either Lê Quý Đôn or Phan Huy Chú in their descriptive bibliographies. Phúc Điền informs us that Nhu' So'n was a monk of the [Later] Lê dynasty who composed the *Kê Đàng Luc** in three volumes by basing himself on the *Wudeng huiyuan* [The Five Lamps Converging at the Source] of Chinese Zen. Phúc Điền apparently shows great respect for Nhu' So'n, since he complains that the *Thiên Uyên* and *Thánh Đàng Luc* were somewhat nebulous, whereas Nhu' So'n's *Kê Đàng Luc* was systematic and cohesive and could help

This is obviously an error because Minh Menh reigned for only twenty-one years (1820–1840).

- provide context and perspective for Vietnamese Buddhist history. (This is somewhat odd, since Nhu' So'n's work is principally a paraphrase of parts of the *Wudeng huiyuan*.) This, however, indicates that even up to the middle of the nineteenth century, Vietnamese Buddhist leaders were still struggling to "Zenify" Vietnamese Buddhism, a process initiated by the compiler(s) of the *Thien * Uyen**. The *Wudeng huiyuan* was composed by Puji of the Song. For a modern critical edition of the text, see Su Yuan, ed., *Wudeng huiyuan*, 3 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989). On the biographies of the three patriarchs of the Tran* dynasty, see also Trần Tuan* Khai*, trans., *Tam To* Hành Trang** [Religious Activities of the Three Patriarchs] (Saigon: Office of the Secretary of State, Board on Cultural Affairs, 1971), pp. 5–38.
16. See *Viet* Nam Phat* Dien* Tùng San*, 8:1b–2a.
 17. See Nguyen* Lang, *Việt Nam Phật Giáo Su* Luan**, pp. 117–18; *LMT*, p. 15.
 18. It is strange that the current microfilm text of the *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc** kept in the library of the Hán-Nôm Institute is part of the *Thiên Uyên* and not of the *Dai* Nam*.
 19. The *Kê Dang Lu'o'c Luc* is obviously an effort to write a complete history of the transmission of Zen in Vietnam from antiquity to the time of Phúc Dien*. It proves to be an informative and thus valuable document for Vietnamese Buddhist history. The book, however, is not very organized in both content and style. For instance, some sections are even written in Nôm (the demotic script).
 20. See *Đai Nam*, 20a6–22a9.
 21. Pages 14b9–15b8 in the *Thiên Uyên* are missing in the *Đai Nam*.
 22. This seems to show that at the time of Phúc Điền at least two different editions of the *Thiên Uyên* were in circulation.
 23. Giáp related that on the eve of his departure for Paris on a research mission for the École Française d'Extrême-Orient in 1927, he chanced upon the *Thiên Uyên* in the private library of a retired Vietnamese scholar who lived around Hai* Phòng. See Tran* Van* Giáp et al., *Lu'o'c Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam*, 1:193. It is hard to imagine what the scenario of the study of Vietnamese Buddhist history would have been like had Giáp not made this serendipitous discovery.
 24. See "Le Bouddhisme," pp. 195–96. We need to note that Giáp failed to point out that Tú'c Lu*, Thông Thien's* disciple, and Ứng Vu'o'ng, Tú'c Lu's* disciple, must have died much later than 1228, although the *Thiên Uyên* does not record the dates of their death.
 25. See *Thiên Uyên*, 9a1–2; *Đai Nam*, 5b6–7. There seems to be some textual confusion in this connection since the phrase "at this time the Dharma Master Do* Thuan* was also well known" is obviously out of place here. According to the *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban* Ky*," 1:191–92, Lê Đại* Hành asked Pháp Thuân, not Khuông Viet*, to receive Li Jue.
 26. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 196. The year 962 should be corrected to 982. See also *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 1:191.
 27. See "Le Bouddhisme," p. 196; *Thiên Uyên*, 5a7–8; *Đai Nam*, 2a6–7.
 28. See *Toàn Thu'*, "Ban Ky," 6:407; 7:420.
 29. See "Bibliographie annamite," pp. 142–43.

30. See *LMT*, p. 41.

31. For a general study of this Zen school, see Nguyen * Hoàng Anh, "Le Bouddhisme Dhyana* Trúc Lâm," *Vietnam Forum* 5 (1985): 37–65. See also Nguyễn Tài Thu' et al., *Lịch* Su* Phat* Giáo Viet* Nam* [History of Vietnamese Buddhism] (Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1988), pp. 246–66; Thích Thanh Từ, "Thiền* Trúc Lâm qua van* dap*" [Trúc Lâm Zen through Dialogue], in Thích Thanh Từ' et al., *Thiền* Học* Đô'i Tran** [Zen in the Tran* Dynasty] (Institute of Vietnamese Buddhist Studies, 1992), pp. 84–89; "Thiền Trúc Lâm qua van* tho' Hán" [Trúc Lâm Zen through literature in Chinese], pp. 90–96; "Vài nét dac* thù của* Thiên Su' Pháp Loa" [A Brief Study on Zen Master Pháp Loa], pp. 129–34; Minh Chi, "Vua Trần Nhân Tông và dòng Thiền Trúc Lâm Yên Tu'" [King Trần Nhân Tông and the Trúc Lâm Yên Tu' Zen Lineage], pp. 97–103; "Mot* so* van de* ve* Pháp Loa, To* thú' hai của phái Thiền Trúc Lâm" [A Few Problems on Pháp Loa, the Second Patriarch of the Trúc Lâm Zen School], pp. 145–51; "Tho' Huyen* Quang" [Huyền Quang's Poetry], pp. 173–80; Thích Phu'óc So'n, "Trúc Lâm So' Tô" [The First Patriarch Trúc Lâm], pp. 104–16; "Nhi* Tô Pháp Loa" [The Second Patriarch Pháp Loa], pp. 134–44; "Tam Tô Huyền Quang" [The Third Patriarch Huyền Quang], pp. 167–72; Thích Minh Tue*, "Nhưng* dong* góp cho Phat* Giáo Viet* Nam của Thiên Su' Pháp Loa (1284–1330)" [The Contributions to Vietnamese Buddhism of Zen Master Pháp Loa (1284–1330)], pp. 152–60; "Thiên Su' Huyền Quang, mot* nhà tho' lớn" [Zen Master Huyền Quang, A Great Poet], pp. 181–88; Trần Lê Nghĩa*, "Trần nhân Tông và dòng Thiền Trúc Lâm Yên Tu'" [Trần Nhân Tông and the Trúc Lâm Yên Tu' Zen Lineage], pp. 117–28; Nguyễn Duy Hinh, "Tim hieu* ý nghĩa* xã hội* của phái Trúc Lâm thời Trần [The Social Significance of the Trúc Lâm Zen School under the Trần Dynasty], in Bùi Văn Cán, ed., *Tim Hieu* Xã Hội* Viet* Nam Thời Lý Trần* [Studies on Vietnamese Society under the Lý and Trần Dynasties] (Hanoi: Social Science Publishing House, 1983), pp. 639–91. Note that none of these studies from a critical standpoint.

32. See *Việt Nam Phat* Dien* Tùng San*, 8:1a–47b.

33. For his biography, see *Thiên Uyên**, 39a2–39b7; *Dai* Nam* 34b10–35b3.

34. See Trần Văn Giáp, *Lu'oc* Truyen* Các Tác Gia Việt Nam* 1: 166.

35. See *LMT*, p. 41.

36. The *Jingde chuandeng lu*, 30 books, written by Daoyuan in 1004. He finished it in 1007, the fourth year of the Jingde era; therefore, it is called *Jingde chuandeng lu*.

37. The *Quoc* Su** is mentioned in the biographies of Tinh* Gió'i (*Thiên Uyên*, 34b7; *Dai nam*, 30b8), Van* Hanh* (*Thiên Uyên*, 53a8; *Dai Nam*, 47b9), and Dao* Hanh (*Thiên Uyên*, 56b2; *Dai Nam*, 50b8).

38. *LMT*, pp. 48–49. Lê Văn Hu'u (1230–1322) hailed from Phu* Lý Village, Đông So'n District. He composed the *Su* Ký* by royal decree, finishing it in the spring of 1272. The *Su' Ký* was the first history of Vietnam, which recorded historical events from the time of Triệu* Vu* De* (207 B.C.E.) to Lý Chiêu Hoàng (1224 C.E.). The work is not extant nowadays, except for a few fragments quoted by Ngô Sĩ* Liên in his *Đại Việt Su' Ký Toàn Thư*. See *Tim Hiều Kho Sách Hán Nôm*, 1:38–39. See also "Les chapitres," p. 87; "Bibliographie annamite," pp. 49–50; E. S. Ungar, "From Myth to History," p. 179;

*Lu'o'c * Truyen* Các Tác Gia Viet* Nam*, 1:160. That the author of the *Thien* Uyen** quoted Lê Van* Hu'u's *Su* Ky** shows that the *Thiên Uyên* must have been composed at least after 1272.

39. See *Thiên Uyên*, 62a11; *Dai* Nam*, 55b3.

40. See *LMT*, pp. 48–49.

41. See *LMT*, p. 54.

Appendix II

1. See Ungar, "From Myth to History."

2. Printed in the beginning of the "[Hue* Trung] Thu'o'ng* Si* Ngu* Luc*" (Recorded Sayings of the Eminent [Huê Trung]), in *Việt Nam Phat* Dien* Tùng San*, 8:1a–47b.

3. According to the *Đại Nam*, 19b1: "Zen Master Bien* Tài of Van* Tue* Temple in the capital of Thang* Long was a native of Guangzhou who came to our country during the reign of Lý Thánh Tông. He received the Dharma from National Preceptor Thông Biên and, obeying the royal edict, edited the *Chieu* Doi* Luc**."

4. See *Thiên Uyên*, 40a7–10; *Đại Nam*, 36a2–5.

5. Lê Quý Đôn stated that the *Nam Tông Tu* Pháp Do** was composed by Thu'ò'ng Chieu*. However, in his "Descriptive Bibliographies," Phan Huy Chú made this note: "*Nam Tông Tu' Pháp Đố*, one book, composed by Monk Viên Chiêu, prefaced by the scholar Lu'o'ng The* Vinh." Tran* Van Giáp remarks that it was only a scribal error. See "Les chapitres," pp. 96 and 140; *Tim Hieu* Kho Sách Hán Nôm* 1: 204. This seems to indicate that neither Lê Quý Đôn nor Phan Huy Chú had these works at their disposal at the time.

6. *Thiên Uyên*, 38b10–11, 40b2, 51a4, 53b1, 72a1; *Đại Nam*, 34b7–8, 36a8, 45a–10, 48a–2; 64b5.

7. *Thiên Uyên*, 72a1; *Đại Nam*, 64b4.

8. His dialogue with Than* Nghi gives us the impression that Thu'ò'ng Chiêu showed him Thông Bien's* *Chiêu Đôi Luc* alongside other works on the transmission of Buddhist lineages. See *Thiên Uyên*, 40a9–b1; *Đại Nam*, 36a4–7.

9. *Thiên Uyên*, 29a5–6, 36a9; *Đại Nam*, 25b1–2; 32a9.

10. Neither Lê Quý Đôn nor Phan Huy Chú mentions Huê Nhat* in their "descriptive bibliographies."

11. Although the *Liet* To* Yeu* Ngu** is no longer extant, this is indicative of its reliance on the *Chuandeng lu*.

12. It is somewhat puzzling that the compiler of the *Thiên Uyên* points out only these two particular cases while totally ignoring many obvious borrowings from the *Chuandeng lu*. This at least seems to show that he only put together what was recorded in previous works, but did not himself compose the biographies. In fact, he did note that he found some similarities in the biographies of Tinh* Không and Nguyen* Hoc* with those of Jiashan and Huisi in the *Chuandeng lu*, but he only followed the *Liệt Tô Yêu Ngu'* and did not dare to correct them.

13. *Thiên Uyên*, 28a4–10; *Đại Nam*, 24b1–6.

14. T 31.323c25–324a7. For another similarity, see *Thiên Uyên*, 28b11–29a2; *Đại Nam*, 25a7–8 and *Chuandeng lu*, T 51.324b2–7.

15. *Thiên Uyên*, 36a2–3; *Đại Nam*, 32a3–4.

16. See *T* 51.431b2–4.

17. Hue * Trung (1230–1291), popularly referred to as Huê Trung Thu'o'ng* Si*, the most eminent lay Zen adept in Vietnam. He was the teacher of Tran* Nhân Tông. For his "Recorded Sayings" see *Thu'o'ng* Si* Ngù Luc**, *Viet* Nam Phat* Dien* Tùng San*, 8:1a–47b.

18. In his "Afterword" to the *Thu'o'ng Si Ngù' Luc*, Trần Khắc* Chung (?–1330) reported that Trần Nhân Tông—while he was Retired Emperor—solicited high court officials to write a preface to the *Thu'o'ng Si Ngù' Luc* and had it printed. Chung also informed us that Trần Anh Tông (r. 1293–1313) instructed him to write an "Afterword." We know that Trần Nhân Tông died in 1308 and Trần Anh Tông abdicated in 1313. See *Thu'o'ng Si Ngù' Luc*, 47a4–6; *LMT*, p. 37. In any case, the change of the last name Nguyen* into Lý in the *Lu'o'c* Dan* Thien* Phái Do** is an indication that it was written in the Trần dynasty.

19. Shenguang is the personal name of Huike, a direct disciple of Bodhidharma and Second Patriarch of the Chinese Zen tradition. For his biography, see *T* 51.220b34–22113.

20. Or Thien* Lão (eleventh century), belonging to the sixth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông lineage, whose biography can be found in *Thiên Uyên**, 10b8–11a7; *Dai* Nam*, 7b3–8a1.

21. Here the author of the *Lu'o'c Dân Thiên Phái Đô* obviously agreed with the *Thiên Uyên* as regards the relationship between these figures. However, he either did not know of or did not approve of Thông Bien's* works. According to the *Thiên Uyên*, both Thiên Lão and Dinh* Hu'o'ng studied with Đa Bảo* and belonged to the sixth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông School.

22. Thông Thiên (died 1228) belonged to the thirteenth generation of the Vô Ngôn Thông lineage. For his biography, see *Thiên Uyên*, 39a2–39b7; *Dai Nam*, 34b10–35b3.

23. See Nguyễn Duy Hinh's article, "Three Legends and Early Buddhism in Vietnam." See note 77 for Chinese sources indicating the flourishing of Buddhism in Jiaozhou (Vietnam) early in the seventh century.

24. It is hard to imagine that this author lived in the Trần dynasty and yet did not know of, for instance, Khuông Viet*, whose story was mentioned in the Trần dynasty historical records. This might point to the fact that he did not accept Khuông Việt as belonging to the Vô Ngôn Thông lineage—the existence of which he did not even know—as the author of the *Thiên Uyên* did thirty years later.

25. *Thiên Uyên*, 19b9–21a11; *Dai Nam*, 15a4–16b3.

26. *Ke* Dang* Lu'o'c Luc*, 40a2–41b10.

27. *Ibid.*, 2a10–2b4.

28. *Ibid.*, 2b8–4b1.

29. Phúc Dien* makes mention of texts such as *Báo Cu'c* Truyen**, *Thánh Đàng Luc*, *Co* Châu Luc*, *Thiên Uyên Tap* Anh*, *Cung Dieu* Ngu* Khoa*, *Linh* Nam Chích Quái*, and *Chu' To* Luc*.

30. This is obviously an abridged version of the "Story of Dong* Tu* and Tiên Dung." The *Linh Nam Chích Quái* records different versions of this story. See Chan Hing-ho, ed., *Việt Nam Hán Van* Tieu* Thuyet* Tùng San*, série II, vol. 1: "Nhat* Da* Trach* Truyen*," in *Linh Nam Chích Quái Liet* Truyen* (41–44); "Chu* Đông Tu* Truyen*," in *Linh Nam Chích Quái Ngoai* Truyen* (149–52); "Nhật Da Trach Truyen*," in *Thiên Nam Vân Luc* (202–204).

31. On Hùng Vu'o'ng, see Taylor, *The Birth of Vietnam*, pp. 306–11.
32. *Ke * Dang* Lu'o'c* Luc**, 1b7–2a4.
33. For a complete biography of Hien* Quang, see Part II of this study.
34. *Kê Đàng Lu'o'c Luc*, 19b3–8.
35. *Ibid.*, 19b5–20a10.

Appendix III

1. According to the *Mahavyutpatti**, the six supernatural powers or the six *abhijnas** consist of (1) *divyam* caksuh** (divine eyes), the knowledge of death and rebirth; (2) *divyam srotam** (divine hearing), the supernatural power to hear all kinds of human or divine sounds in the whole universe (this is also the power to hear the voices of all the Buddhas who teach in their Buddha-lands); (3) *paracitta-jnana** (the knowledge of the thoughts of others), the power to discern the contents of the thoughts of others; (4) *purva-nivas-anusmrti-jnanam** (recollective knowledge of previous existences), the power to remember one's own previous lives and those of others including all actions that were done in those lives; (5) *rddhi-vidhi-jnanam** (the knowledge of all forms of miraculous powers), the power to perform various kinds of miracles; (6) *asrava-ksaya-jnanam** (the knowledge of the destruction of impurities), the power to destroy all kinds of desires. In Buddhist philosophy *asrava-ksaya-jnana** is not only the sixth *abhijnas*, but also one of the ten *balas* (powers) and the four *vaisaradyasm** (ground of confidence). For a detailed description of the six *abhijñās*, see Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 106–34. Note that in Buddhist philosophy, supernatural knowledge is a kind of cognitive power. The relationship between knowledge and powers is an interesting issue in Buddhist philosophy.
2. *Mahakaruna-dharani** (T 20, nos. 1060 and 1066) is one of the most chanted *dharanis** in Vietnamese Buddhist ritual.
3. According to this biography, the Four Great Vessels of Dai* Nam are a huge statue of Amitabha* Buddha at Quynh* Lâm Temple (Đông Trieu* District, Hai* Du'o'ng Province), the Báo Thiên stupa in the capital, a big bell in Pho* Lai*, and a caldron at Minh Dinh*. These seem to be objects that really exist.
4. Our text (21b2) has *khong* lo** 空路. This is more evidence that Không Lo's* biography in our text draws heavily on the popular tale of Khong* Lo* [the Giant One]. See Chapter One of Part I of this study.
5. Our text (21b10) has *thiên hạ** 天子 according to the various versions of the *Viet* Dien** and *Linh* Nam*.
6. *Toàn Thu'* ("Ban* Ky*" 4:286) records that Minh Không died in the year *tân dau**, 1141.
7. The *Dai* Nam* records that Không Lo* was a native of Lai* Tri, Chân Dinh* Prefecture, Nam Dinh Province. I remarked earlier that the editor of this edition of our text inadvertently mixed the biographies of Không Lô and Minh Không into one and made them one person.
8. This is obviously a scribal error for Hà Trach*. See note 10 below.
9. "Emptiness of Emptiness" (*sunyata-sunyata**) is one of the sixteen, eighteen, or twenty modes of Emptiness. For a discussion of scriptural sources and philosophical meaning, see, for instance, T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955), pp. 351–56.

10. Hà Trach * Temple here probably refers to the temple of a monk named Hà Trach. According to the *Thien* Uyen**, both Không Lo* and Giác Hai* dwelt at Hà Trach Temple. We do not know whether this Hà Trach was the same as Lôi Hà Trach who, according to *Thông Bien**, carried on the scriptural school of Kang Senghui. Hà Trach might have been a real person and belonged to either the seventh or the eighth generation of the Vinitaruci* lineage. Note that in Không Lo's* biography in the *Dai* Nam*, there is no mention of his dwelling at Hà Trach Temple. This only shows that the editor of the *Dai Nam* inadvertently incorporated the story of Nguyen* Minh Không into Không Lô's biography.

11. All other versions have Vi At*.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cuong Tu Nguyen, who holds a Ph.D. in comparative religion (Indian Buddhism) from Harvard University, is currently assistant professor of religious studies at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. He regularly writes and lectures on Vietnamese Buddhism and culture.