

The Chan Whip Anthology

A COMPANION TO ZEN PRACTICE



Translated by JEFFREY L. BROUGHTON
with ELISE YOKO WATANABE

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For Hakeda Yoshito 羽毛田義人 (1924-1983)

若論此事。正如逆水撐船。上得一篙。退去十篙。上得十篙。退去百篙。愈撐愈退。退之又退。直饒退到大洋海底。掇轉船頭。決欲又要向彼中撐上。若具者般操志。即是到家消息。如人上山。各自努力。

此事的實用工切處。正如搭對相撲相似。纔有絲毫畏懼心。纖塵差別念。蘊于胷中。何止十撲九輸。未著交時。性命已屬他人了也。若是鐵眼銅睛。憤憤悻悻。直要一拳打碎。一口吞却。假使喪身失命。以至千生萬劫。心亦不忘。諸上座。果能如是知非。果能如是著鞭。剋日成功。斷無疑矣。勉之勉之。

*If we are to discuss **this matter**: It's just like poling a boat upstream against the river current—you'll go upriver [i.e., lift the huatou/the cue to full awareness] by one pole length, and you'll fall back [i.e., produce deluded discrimination] by ten pole lengths. You'll go up by ten pole lengths, and you'll fall back by a hundred pole lengths. The more you pole, the more you'll fall back—falling back over and over again. Even if you've fallen back to the very floor of the great ocean, take the prow of the boat and turn it back around—you absolutely, positively must keep poling up towards **that**. If you possess this kind of ambition and fortitude, then you will arrive at the **home situation**. As with people who go up a mountain, each one of them makes the effort on his own.*

This matter, in fact, [deliberately] puts you into an anti-thetical position—just like that of a sumō fighter about to lock horns with his opponent. The moment you harbor even the slightest thought of fear—the moment you allow even the finest dust particle of discriminatory thought to linger within your mind—how will you avoid losing nine out of ten bouts? Even before contact has been made,

your life will belong to the opponent. But if you have the iron-and-copper eye [i.e., the eye that sees right through everything], if you are filled with the fury that leaves you speechless, you will smash [your sumō opponent/your cue] to pieces in a single blow—in one single gulp. Suppose you lose your life [in the process, not just in the present birth but over and over again] for a thousand births and ten thousand aeons: you will never lose this mind-set. Practitioners! If you can in this way come to know your mistake [i.e., harboring fear and discriminatory thought], if you can in this way apply the whip [of zeal], there will be a specific day that you will achieve success and chop off [the sensation of] indecision-and-apprehension. Strive on!

Strive on!

—FROM CHAN MASTER GAOFENG YUANMIAO'S
ESSENTIALS OF CHAN 高峰原妙禪師禪要 (1294)

—CBETA, X70, no. 1401, p. 706, b16-c1 // Z 2:27, p. 355, d10-p. 356, a1 // R122, p. 710, b10-p. 711, a1 (the first saying also appears in *Chan Master Gaofeng Yuanmiao's Sayings Record*; CBETA, X70, no. 1400, p. 686, c9-12 // Z 2:27, p. 336, c9-12 // R122, p. 672, a9-12)

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Abbreviations

- Bamboo-Window* Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲祿宏 *Bamboo-Window Jottings* (*Zhuchuang suibi* 竹窗隨筆) in *Yunqi fahui* 雲棲法彙 (CBETA, J33, no. B277, p. 44, a2-4)
Miscellaneous notes on a variety of subjects, many Buddhist
- CBETA Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association, <http://www.cbeta.org>.
- Chan Whip* Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲祿宏 *Whip for Spurring Students Onward through the Chan Barrier Checkpoints* (*Changuan cejin* 禪關策進; T.2024.48.1097c10-1109a16)
Anthology of extracts from Chan records dating from the late Tang dynasty to the Ming dynasty; also includes extracts from sutras and treatises; many with Zhuhong's appended comments
- Chikusō* Araki Kengo 荒木見悟, ed. *Chikusōzuihitsu: Minmatsubukkyō no fūkei* 竹窓隨筆: 明末仏教の風景. Fukuoka: Chūgoku shoten, 2007.
Annotated modern Japanese translation of Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲祿宏 miscellany *Bamboo-Window Jottings* (*Zhuchuang suibi* 竹窗隨筆)
- Daie sho* Araki Kengo 荒木見悟, trans. *Daie sho* 大慧書, Zen no goroku 17. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1969.
Annotated modern Japanese translation of *Dahui's Letters* (*Dahui shu* 大慧書), mostly to laymen interested in Chan

- F (for Fujiyoshi) Fujiyoshi Jikai 藤吉慈海, trans. *Zenkan sakushin* 禪關策進, Zen no goroku 19. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1970.
Annotated modern Japanese translation of Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲株宏 anthology *Whip for Spurring Students Onward through the Chan Barrier Checkpoints* (*Changuan cejin* 禪關策進)
- K (for Kōgi) Wakao Gyōzan 若生形山. *Zenkan sakushin kōgi* 禪關策進講義. Tokyo: Kōyūkan, Meiji 42/1909.
Available online in the National Diet Library's "Digital Library from the Meiji Era," <http://kindai.da.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/899711/1>.
Meiji-period course of lectures on Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲株宏 *Whip for Spurring Students Onward through the Chan Barrier Checkpoints* (*Changuan cejin* 禪關策進). Many of its glosses have been inserted directly into the translation within brackets.
- Mujaku Dōchū's *Kōrōju* Mujaku Dōchū 無著道忠. *Daie Fukaku zenji sho kōrōju* 大慧普覺禪師書栲栳珠. Kyoto: Zen bunka kenkyūjo, 1997.
Mujaku Dōchū's masterful commentary on *Dahui's Letters* (*Dahui shu* 大慧書) entitled *Willow Basket and Pearl* (1723)
- Ming Masters* Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲株宏 *Abbreviated Collection of Famous Monks of the Imperial Ming* (*Huangming mingseng jilue* 皇明名僧輯略; CBETA, X84, no. 1581, p. 358, c6 // Z 2B:17, p. 202, b1 // R144, p. 403, b1)
Anthology of extracts from the records of ten Ming-dynasty Chan masters, with Zhuhong's appended comments
- S (for Senge) Jikugyō Keizan 竺堯稽山. *Zenkan sakushin senge* 禪關策進箋解. Kyoto: Baiyō shoin 貝葉書院, n.d.
Interlinear commentary on Yunqi Zhuhong's 雲棲株宏 *Whip for Spurring Students Onward through the Chan Barrier Checkpoints* (*Changuan cejin* 禪關策進) dated 1836 (corrects and supplements a lost interlinear commentary commissioned by Hakuin Ekaku's [白隱慧鶴; 1685–1768] disciple Tōrei Enji [東嶺圓慈; 1711–92]). This commentary

has been invaluable in translating the *Changuan cejin*. It is a traditional woodblock print in two font sizes: the text itself in large font, and commentary in small font. The small-font commentary is of two formats: discursive endnote-type annotations; and words or phrases inserted directly into the large-font text to enable ease of reading. The latter have been indicated by brackets in the translation that are specifically labeled in the notes with the phrase “S ... inserts.” These notes have not preserved the differentiation between the original large-font text and the small-font commentary.

- T Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭, eds. *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–34.
- YQFH Yunqi Zhuhong’s 雲棲株宏 collected works entitled *Yunqi’s Dharma Categories* (*Yunqi fahui* 雲棲法彙; CBETA, J32, no. B277, p. 565, a1; first twenty-one of thirty-four fascicles)
- Zengaku Komazawa daigaku nai zengaku daijiten hensanjo 駒澤大學内禪學大辭典編纂所, ed. *Zengaku daijiten* 禪學大辭典. 3 vols. Tokyo: Taishūkan shoten, 1978.
- ZGK Yoshizawa Katsuhiro 芳澤勝弘, ed. *Shoroku zokugo kai* 諸録俗語解. Kyoto: Zen bunka kenkyūjo, 1999. *Explanations of Colloquial Words in [Zen] Records* is a compilation of the researches of Kyoto Rinzai scholar-monks dating to sometime after 1804. The first section is a glossary of difficult words and phrases in Yunqi Zhuhong’s 雲棲株宏 *Whip for Spurring Students Onward through the Chan Barrier Checkpoints* (*Changuan cejin* 禪關策進).

禪關策進

The Chan Whip Anthology

Introduction

YUNQI ZHUHONG (雲棲株宏; 1535–1615) entitled his compact Chan anthology *Whip for Spurring Students Onward through the Chan Barrier Checkpoints* (*Changuan cejin* 禪關策進; henceforth shortened to *Chan Whip*). The title plays on the metaphor of “whip” (*ce* 策), which here has two connotations: the “whip” a horserider applies in order to spur his horse onward; and “warning whip” (*jingce* 警策) as a literary term for a pithy text of few words that is concise and to the point (an accurate description of the *Chan Whip*).¹ For Zuhong, it is the whip that encourages “perfection of zeal or energy” (*vīrya pāramitā*), the fourth of the six perfections of the bodhisattva

1. This title consists of four logographs in two units, *changuan* 禪關 and *cejin* 策進. The late Edo Japanese commentary on the *Chan Whip* by Jikugyō Keizan 竺堯稽山, the *Zenkan sakushin senge* 禪關策進箋解 (henceforth S), 1a, glosses, “*Guan* 關. . . means *gate of a border pass*” [關. . . 城塞門也]. My translation is *barrier checkpoints*, checkpoints at the dusty border passes of China’s frontiers where the gatekeeper scrutinizes the credentials of those wishing to pass on through (section 1 makes it clear that it is plural). S, 1a also glosses, “*Ce* 策 means *horse whip*; also, *to whip a horse is ce*” [策馬箠又策馬曰策]. *Jin* 進 means *advance; forward; onward*. The *Commentary to Guishan’s Warning Whip* (*Guishan jingce zhu* 滄山警策註), which is quoted in section 109 of the *Chan Whip*, says at another point (CBETA, X63, no. 1239, p. 224, c15-16 // Z 2:16, p. 142, d12-13 // R11, p. 284, b12-13), “*Guishan’s Way* was transmitted to the world; he created the text called *Warning Whip* to warn those who are not yet awakened and *whip those who have not yet advanced*” [道傳天下。乃作警策。警其未悟。策其未進者也。]. The sayings record of a Ming-dynasty Linji master, the *Xuedou Shiqi chanshi yulu* 雪竇石奇禪師語錄, shows *cejin* with the direct object *students* (*xuezhe*): “The ancients’ kind similes of this sort are for no other reason than spurring students onward” [古人如此親切譬喻。策進學者。無他。] (CBETA, J26, no. B183, p. 486, a20). This has led me to supply *students* to the translation of the title. Xuedou Shiqi (1594–1663) was a much younger contemporary of Zuhong. The sixth-century literary anthology *Selections of Refined Literature* (*Wenxuan* 文選, *Lu Ji Wenfu* 陸機文賦) states: “A text of few words that rests in the essentials is a *warning-whip* [*jingce* 警策] volume” [文片言而居要。乃一篇之警策。]. Additionally, “warning whip” (*jingce* 警策; Japanese *keisaku* or *kyōsaku*) refers to the long

path. As he says in his preface to the *Chan Whip*, “With this warning whip in hand, spur your horse as fast as it will go and gallop off into the distance—smash the final barrier checkpoint of mystery!” He is simultaneously referring to a riding whip and his anthology the *Chan Whip*.

Zhuhong published the *Chan Whip* in 1600, the late Ming dynasty. However, to characterize the *Chan Whip* as simply “late Ming Chan” would be grossly inaccurate. It surveys most of the history of Chan literature, not just that of the late Ming, as it is a compendium of extracts, over 80 percent of which are drawn from an enormous Chan corpus dating from the late Tang dynasty (ninth century) to the late Ming. The remaining 20 percent or so consists of extracts from sutras and treatises. (For an overview, see *Index to the Chan Whip by Section*.) The *Chan Whip* was conceived by Zhuhong as a portable, convenient, no-nonsense “pocket companion guide” that addressed practitioners directly, providing not just method but morale. As such, its selections deliberately eschew abstract discussions of theory in favor of sermons, exhortations, sayings, autobiographical narratives, letters, and anecdotal sketches dealing frankly—and encouragingly—with the concrete ups and downs of lived practice.

The *Chan Whip* is perhaps the best practical guide to the method of Buddhist cultivation associated with the Song-dynasty Linji master Dahui Zonggao (大慧宗杲; 1089–1163), commonly referred to by the Japanese coinage *kanna Zen* (看話禪; Chinese *kanhua Chan*; Korean *kanhwa Sŏn*) and often translated as “observing-the-meditative-topic Zen” or the like.² Dahui’s method of practice “spread explosively and was decisive in determining the nature of subsequent Linji Chan.”³ It consists of two exercises, *cross-legged sitting* and *keeping an eye on the cue* (*kan ge huatou* 看箇話頭).

Interestingly, Dahui did not absolutize cross-legged sitting—he “usually” (*xunchang* 尋常) prescribed sitting for students, though this depended upon each student’s “illness.” He himself sometimes engaged

wooden stick (*bang/bō* 棒) employed in the halls of Chan/Zen monasteries to encourage alertness by delivering a ritualized hit to the shoulders of monks on the sitting platform.

2. The term *kanna Zen* was coined by Japanese Zen scholars and adopted by Western scholars; it is not attested in Chinese Chan literature. A CBETA search does not turn it up in the vast sea of Chan texts in the collections. The terms *kanhua* 看話 and *kan huatou* 看話頭, however, are quite common in the collections.

3. Ishii Shūdō 石井修道 expresses this view of “*kanna Zen* 看話禪” in his chapter on Song-dynasty Chan in Tanaka, *Zengaku kenkyū nyūmon*, 147–48: 大慧の大成した看話禪は、爆発的に広まり、その後の臨済禪の性格を決定づけた。Ishii is a leading Dahui researcher. For a convenient discussion of Dahui’s works and list of Ishii’s numerous Dahui

in the practice at need, but insisted that sitters must not have any attachment to sitting in and of itself as an “ultimate” (*jiujing* 究竟) or “highest criterion” (*jize* 極則).⁴ Perhaps the most insightful encapsulation of Dahui’s attitude toward cross-legged sitting is found in Mujaku Dōchū’s (無著道忠; 1653–1744) *Willow Basket and Pearl of Chan Master Dahui Pujue’s Letters* (*Daie Fukaku zenji sho kōrōju* 大慧普覺禪師栲栳珠), a commentary on *Dahui’s Letters*: “Dahui considers the smashing of the birth-and-death mind the most important thing—this is *not necessarily bound up with Zen sitting*.”⁵

For Dahui, the *sine qua non* is not sitting, but smashing the birth-and-death mind. To this end, he recommends the practice of *keeping an eye on the cue* as most effective. This exercise of *keeping an eye on the cue* consists of constantly, twenty-four hours a day, lifting to full attention a single pivotal word or phrase, the *cue*, extracted from a longer Chan *case* (*gong’an* 公案). (Note: In the introduction and translation, the term *huatou* (話頭) has been rendered as *cue*. The usual renderings in the secondary literature are *topic of inquiry*, *critical phrase*, *key word*, and so forth.⁶ The reasoning behind this choice is

articles, see Ahn, “Malady of Meditation,” 153–54 n. 77, 356–57. For a pioneering treatment of Dahui, see Levering, “Ch’an Enlightenment for Laymen.”

4. Dahui’s *Third Letter in Answer to Vice Minister Ceng* (答曾侍郎第三書): “It’s not that I *don’t* usually teach people to practice cross-legged sitting *dhyāna*—to do *gongfu* in a quiet place. This is simply a matter of providing medicine in accordance with their illnesses. In reality, there is no such thing as *in-that-way* [i.e., ultimate-truth] instruction of people” [雲門尋常不是不教人坐禪向靜處做工夫。此是應病與藥。實無恁麼指示人處。] Dahui’s *Second Letter in Answer to Vice Minister Chen* (答陳少卿第二書): “When it is desirable to do quiet sitting, just do quiet sitting. At the time of sitting, you must not have an attachment to sitting and consider it as *ultimate*. At present the party of perverse teachers is prone to taking silence-and-illumination quiet-sitting as the *ultimate dharma*, misleading younger followers” [要得靜坐。但靜坐。坐時不得執著坐底為究竟。今時邪師輩。多以默照靜坐為究竟法。疑誤後昆。] (Araki, *Daie sho*, 20, 71 [henceforth *Daie sho*]; T1998A.47.918b4-5, 923c22-24). In his *General Sermons* (*Dahui Pujue chanshi pushuo* 大慧普覺禪師普說) Dahui says: “I frequently hear this sort of talk: ‘Miaoxi [i.e., Dahui] doesn’t teach people to do cross-legged Chan sitting.’ This also is a misapprehension. Did they ever understand *upāya*? I just want you to [realize that] walking is Chan and sitting is Chan—speaking *and* silence, movement *and* stillness, [all] embody calmness. There are times when I am asleep at night and wake up. I immediately get up and sit. Having sat for a while—no thought at all. I say myself [in relief]: ‘Realm of the buddhas!’ But that’s all—you must not take [sitting] as the *highest criterion*. [Sitting] isn’t letting go of body and life” [往往聞恁麼道却謂妙喜不教人坐禪又是錯認何曾解方便我只要你行亦禪坐亦禪語默動靜體安然山僧有時夜裏睡纔覺便起來坐坐既久都無所思自謂諸佛境界只這是然不要把為極則不是放身命處] (CBETA, M059, no. 1540, p. 849, b7-11).

5. Mujaku Dōchū, *Daie Fukaku zenji sho kōrōju*, 175: 忠曰以生死心破為肝要不必拘坐禪也。The manuscript is in Mujaku’s own hand (henceforth Mujaku Dōchū’s *Kōrōju*). Mujaku started composing this commentary in 1712 and completed it in 1723.

6. Buswell and Lopez, *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 358, gives the standard renderings: “*huatou*. (J. *watō*; K. *hwadu* 話頭). In Chinese, ‘topic of inquiry’; in some contexts, ‘critical phrase’ or ‘key word.’ . . . *Huatou* (which literally means ‘head of speech,’ and thus ‘topic’)