

misleadingly, become equated with the spirit of “Zen”—Herrigel’s *Archery* and the Ryōanji stone garden in Kyoto—deeply complements Porcu’s subject matter. Both are occupied with the same fundamental question—how and why “Zen” has achieved its iconic status in Japanese culture. Both highlight the role of Suzuki and suggest that the constructed Zen is a kind of mirror for an idealized, attractive Japanese “self.” These two texts can be read in tandem very productively.

In summary, Porcu has assembled an impressive and engaging array of sources and resources that demonstrate the presence of Pure Land concepts in iconic examples of Japanese art and culture, despite an overwhelming tendency to associate these exclusively with Zen. She has produced a significant contribution to the literature on the relationship between Japanese art and religion.

The Record of Linji. Translation and Commentary by Ruth Fuller Sasaki, edited by Thomas Yūhō Kirchner. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2009. xxxii+485 pages. Hardcover \$53.00.

JAMES BASKIND

It is well known among specialists how long (and at times fitful) the gestation of this monumental scholarly work was, although the academic community is more than amply recouped for the wait by the stunning meticulousness and rich, detailed information found throughout this volume. Well over fifty years since the project’s inception, the combined efforts of Ruth Fuller Sasaki, her team of extraordinary scholars, and Thomas Yūhō Kirchner have resulted in this annotated translation of Linji Yixuan’s (d. 866) recorded sayings, one of the most central—and beloved—texts of the Chan (Zen) tradition.

While the scholarly contributions of Sasaki and her team are needless to say, without the superlative efforts and scholarly tools of editor Thomas Yūhō Kirchner the translation would never have seen the light of day. Kirchner, who has lived in Japan over forty years as both a monk and layman, brings a unique perspective (through his Zen training), and commendable skill (through his years as copy editor at the Nanzan Institute of Religion and Culture), to this work. On one occasion while I was at Hanazono

University for research, Kirchner showed me one of the many musty, black folders spilling out with yellowish, handwritten notes by Sasaki, typed pages in various stages of completion, and endless pages of terms, definitions, and translation. To transform that rich confection of information into a smooth, elegant, eminently readable translation takes enormous skill, certainly one from which future students of Chan will benefit greatly.

The Nanzan Institute and the University of Hawai'i Press have combined to produce a beautiful volume, encased within a handsome hardcover. The user friendly and logical layout allows for many levels of enjoyment or edification. The translation is first provided devoid of notes or characters, which allows the reader a smooth perusal without the distracting allure of footnotes or original text. Also, at the end of the volume is the Chinese text for those who may like to read (or scan as the case may be) Linji in his original best. And in between these is the luxurious annotated translation, which allows one to study and appreciate the mechanics of a skillful translation in small, easily-digestible segments.

The contents of the volume include: a foreword by Yamada Mumon Rōshi (pp. vii–viii), a preface to the 1975 edition by Furuta Kazuhiro (pp. ix–xii), editor's prologue (pp. xiii–xxx), abbreviations (pp. xxxi–xxxii), an English translation without notes (pp. 3–55), historical introduction to *The Record of Linji* by Yanagida Seizan (pp. 59–115), commentary (with original text and English translation) by Ruth Fuller Sasaki (pp. 117–346), Chinese text (pp. 349–64), bibliography (pp. 365–436), list of personal names (pp. 437–50), and a cumulative index (pp. 451–85).

The editor's prologue contains interesting background information concerning the editor, his Buddhist training, and how he came to be associated with the publication of Sasaki's translation. Also provided is a helpful summary of Sasaki's life and work, the inclusion of which is greatly appreciated as it is an interesting story in its own right, and one that aids in understanding the translation's history. The summary is limited due to the restraints of space, but a fuller treatment of Sasaki's life and work can be found in *Zen Pioneer: The Life and Works of Ruth Fuller Sasaki* by Isabel Stirling, a book the reader would be well advised to consult.

The historical introduction to *The Record of Linji* contains sections with the subheadings: "The Life of Linji Yixuan," "Development of 'Recorded Sayings (*Yulu*)'," "The *Linji Lu* in China," and "The *Linji Lu* in Japan." Following this are twenty-six pages of detailed notes, nearly as long as the text body itself. This was originally written for the 1975 edition of *The Record*

of *Linji*. It remains unrevised “as an indication of the state of Zen scholarship at that time, and for its value in understanding historical views that still prevail in traditional Zen Buddhism” (p. 59). This may be the stated justification, although greater advantages would have obviously accrued from an inclusion of the latest research. Fortunately, at the end of his note on page 59, the editor refers the reader to a number of sources that include more recent research on the background and development of the *Linji Lu*.

The real beauty of this volume, needless to say, resides in the rich, multilayered, and meticulous annotated translation. This book is unique within Buddhist studies in that not only does it provide a masterful translation, but in its elaborate commentary, it can also effectively serve as an encyclopedia of Chan lore and Buddhist terminology, a historical reference, an abbreviated bibliographic dictionary of Zen sources, and with its detailed explication of Tang/Song grammatical structures, it stands as the most holistic and complete translation and commentary within the world of Buddhist studies in English. To provide a few examples, as an encyclopedia of Buddhist terminology, the entry for “Twelve divisions of the scriptures” 十二分教 (pp. 123–24) does not stop with a definition for the term, but goes on to include all twelve divisions, each of which is provided with: (a) the Sanskrit word, (b) the Chinese transcription, (c) Chinese translation or translations, and (d) an English definition or explanation. This entry alone takes up a page and a half of footnote-sized text. For examples of grammar or linguistic history, one could cite the entry for the Tang colloquial term 與麼, translated as “in a particular way” (p. 139). Over the space of a whole page, the entry discusses the homophones of the characters, its appearance during the Tang and Song periods, and other orthographical variants, not to mention its unique usage in Zen texts. In my own notes to this review I listed numerous candidates throughout the text that were worthy for inclusion as examples of the commentary’s depth and thoroughness, but upon reflection thought it best to leave such pleasures to the inquisitive reader, who would be best served by acquiring this book.

As the editor’s note to the bibliography relates, Sasaki had planned to include an extensive descriptive bibliography of principal and primary sources as part of her project, but only a small amount had been completed by the time of her death. Thus, the bibliography in this volume contains the information compiled by Sasaki, as well as additional material culled from standard reference works. Again, the editor has given us another example of his layered meticulousness, seamlessly augmenting Sasaki’s contributions

with relevant and felicitous additions of his own. As a descriptive compendium of primary texts, this bibliography is a valuable resource for students of Zen. As if all this were not enough, following the bibliography is a list of personal names, arranged alphabetically and including Pinyin, Chinese, Wade-Giles, and Japanese. Used in conjunction with the index, this section makes finding that desired figure a quick and easy exercise.

Even with a conscientious effort, there is little in this splendid volume where one can find fault. There are exceedingly few typographical errors (an obvious one on page 80 renders *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, as 六僧壇經 rather than the correct 六祖壇經). Also, if the character font throughout were a bit darker and larger there would be less strain on the eyes, although this is a minor point. It would be difficult to make this magisterial work of scholarship any more user friendly, and no doubt it will serve as a vade mecum for future generations of students and scholars of the Chan tradition.