

## Metaphorical Imagery and the Fashioning of Caodong Identity in Hongzhi Zhengjue's 宏智正覺 (1091–1157) Commentarial Verses on Old Cases\*

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### Abstract

This paper examines how Hongzhi Zhengjue 宏智正覺 (1091–1157) attempted to re-fashion the identity of the Caodong 曹洞 school through his *gong'an* commentarial verses. Throughout Hongzhi's collection of recorded sayings, he viewed the doctrine of the interpenetration of adjunct (*pian* 偏) and proper (*zheng* 正) (interpenetration of principle *li* 理 and phenomena *shi* 事) as the characteristic pedagogical instrument of the Caodong tradition. By delving into the doctrinal aspect in Hongzhi's *gong'an* poetry concerning this teaching, this paper analyzes two essential ways in which Hongzhi distinguished the Caodong from other Chan schools. First, Hongzhi asserted that the interpenetration of principle and phenomena was the central teaching of his lineage. Second, Hongzhi infused the Caodong point-of-view into his *gong'an* commentaries through metaphors associated with this doctrine. In order to explore the utility of metaphors in Hongzhi's commentarial verses, this paper first examines crucial metaphors associated with the doctrine of the dyad of principle (proper 正) and phenomena (adjunct 偏) in Caodong literature. It will further demonstrate how Hongzhi used metaphors associated with this teaching to characterize the essence of the Caodong school. It then explores how Hongzhi employed particular metaphors to represent the Caodong tradition and thereby distinguish it from other Chan lineages. Hongzhi's commentarial verses not only used conventional Caodong metaphors, but also created new ones to convey the doctrine of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena—many of which drew elements from secular literature. He arguably

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did this to help the Caodong school gain recognition among a broader readership, including the literati. Since the Caodong school was languishing in a state of accelerated decline, revitalizing the school as a whole was a more pressing issue for Hongzhi than Caodong school intersectorian rivalries.

**Keywords:**

Hongzhi Zhengjue, interpenetration of proper and adjunct, principle and phenomena, commentarial verses on old cases, Caodong school

## 宏智正覺頌古中隱喻意象與曹洞宗風之形塑

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### 摘要

本文探討宏智正覺（1091–1157）如何透過頌古嘗試重塑曹洞宗風。在其語錄中，宏智將偏正回互（理事圓融）視為曹洞宗之宗風。本文深入探究宏智頌古中偏正回互的義理內涵，分析宏智如何以兩種不同的基本方式區別自宗與他宗：其一，宏智宣稱偏正回互是曹洞宗的中心思想；其二，通過與偏正回互義理相關之隱喻，將曹洞宗風注入於頌古中。關於宏智頌古中隱喻的應用，本文首先考察曹洞文獻中象徵理事（正偏）之主要隱喻，進一步論證宏智如何運用這些隱喻代表曹洞宗風，最後探討他如何運用特定隱喻襯出自宗與他宗的區別。宏智的頌古不僅使用傳統的曹洞隱喻，還從世俗文學中取材創造新隱喻，傳達理事圓融之教義。宏智的作法，或可視為他嘗試在包括士人階級的社會中普及曹洞宗的一種努力。由於曹洞宗當時正處於加速衰落的狀態，因此對宏智而言，比起宗內派系之爭，整體曹洞宗之復興才是更迫切的課題。

### 關鍵詞：

宏智正覺、偏正回互、理事、頌古、曹洞宗

## Introduction

Hongzhi Zhengjue 宏智正覺 (1091–1157) was an influential monk in the revival of the Caodong 曹洞 Chan lineage during the Song Dynasty (960–1279). As a prominent representative of the school, he produced an enormous collection of recorded sayings (*yulu* 語錄)—one of the largest in existence. His *yulu* collection is generically diverse, featuring verses (*gāthā*, *jisong* 偈頌), portrait encomium (*zhenzan* 真贊), and commentaries on *gong'an* in verse (*songgu* 頌古) and prose (*niangu* 拈古). Among these different genres, Hongzhi's anthology of *gong'an* commentarial verses represents his most enduring textual legacy,<sup>1</sup> for while it appears that the complete Song edition of Hongzhi's collection of recorded all but vanished from public circulation prior to its recovery in the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), his collection of *gong'an* commentarial verses circulated widely.<sup>2</sup> This occurred because of two reasons. First, Hongzhi's *gong'an* commentarial verses were preserved in other *gong'an* commentary collections. On account of their revered status, Hongzhi's *gong'an* commentarial verses were themselves the subject of new *gong'an* commentaries, and thus incorporated into new collections. Such texts can be found both in China and Japan. In China, one such later masterpiece of *gong'an* literature is the *Congrong lu* 從容錄 (*The Record of Serenity*), compiled by Wansong

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<sup>1</sup> Hongzhi's anthology of *gong'an* commentarial verses and prose was his first publication. According to Morten Schlütter, “Hongzhi's first publication also became his most enduring written legacy.” Schlütter, “The Record of Hongzhi and the Recorded Sayings Literature of Song-Dynasty Chan,” 191.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Sōtō monk Dosui Getan 洞水月湛 (1728–1803), the complete Song edition of Hongzhi's recorded sayings was lost very early in China. He indicated that an unknown author compiled a letter to Qian Muzhai 錢牧齋 (1582–1644) which stated that the recorded sayings of Hongzhi and Zhenxie 真歇 (1089–1151) were lost. Because Mao Zijin 毛子晉 (1599–1659) had a block printed carve, this author had asked Qian to pass on a request to Mao to reprint the two masters' recorded sayings. As a result, the two masters' teachings would be able to be circulated. This reference shows that at the time of Qian, Hongzhi *yulu* did not survive, or at the very least was not widely circulated. Furthermore, Dosui pointed out that in the edition compiled by Jingqi 淨啟 (d. 1674), which was printed in Jiaxing 嘉興 canon, most of the text preserved in the Song edition could not be found. However, this edition of Jiaxing survived in China. See Ishii Shūdo 石井修道 ed., *Wanshi roku* 宏智錄, vol. 1, 522; also, Ishii Shūdo, “*Wanshi kōroku kō*” 宏智廣錄考, 114–115.

Xingxiu 萬松行秀 (1166–1246).<sup>3</sup> In Edo period Japan, which witnessed the revival of Sōtō Zen, many Zen monks compiled commentaries on Hongzhi’s anthology. Among these texts, Menzan Zuihō’s 面山瑞方 (1683–1769) *Wanshi kobutsu jiyuko hiyakusoku monge* 宏智古仏頌古百則聞解 (Commentary of the Ancient Buddha Hongzhi’s Commentarial Verses on Hundred Old Cases) and *Shishū kobutsu jiyuko shōtei* 隰州古仏頌古称提 (Explanations of the Commentarial Verses on Old Cases by the Ancient Buddha of Province Xi) were most famous.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, Hongzhi’s commentarial verses were included in other texts that outlined essential Caodong teachings. One such example is Yongjue Yuanxian’s 永覺元賢 (1578–1657) *Dongshan guche* 洞上古徹 (The Ancient Track of the Caodong).<sup>5</sup> On the premise that scholars have not fully appreciated the significance of verses in the intellectual history of the Caodong, this paper examines Hongzhi’s *gong’an* commentarial verses in order to better understand Hongzhi’s representation of his lineage.<sup>6</sup>

Regarding *gong’an* commentaries, in Chinese Chan literature the practice of commenting on *gong’an*, or sayings selected from the records of prior Chan masters, first began in the middle of the tenth century.<sup>7</sup> From the latter half of

<sup>3</sup> A Ming monk, Tianqi Benrui 天奇本瑞 (d. 1508) also commented on the *Hongzhi songgu*. This became the text of the *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu* 堯絕老人天奇直註天童覺和尚頌古, X 1306, 67: 447b1–454a13. In addition, Zibo Zhenke 紫柏真可 (1543–1603) commented on several of Hongzhi’s commentarial verses in the section of comments on old cases (*niangu*). *Zibo zunzhe quanji* 紫柏尊者全集, X 1452, 73: 283c6, 284a24.

<sup>4</sup> An alternative title of *Wanshi kobutsu jiyuko hiyakusoku monge* 宏智古仏頌古百則聞解 is *Shishū kobutsu jiyuko shōtei monge* 隰州古仏頌古称提聞解. Menzan Zuihō, *Wanshi kobutsu jiyuko hiyakusoku monge*, undated manuscript held by Komazawa University Library; *Shishū kobutsu jiyuko shōtei monge*, undated manuscript held by Komazawa University Library; *Shishū kobutsu jiyuko shōtei* 隰州古仏頌古称提 in *Wanshi roku*, edited by Ishii Shūdo, vol. 2. For Menzan Zuihō, see David E. Riggs, “Meditation for Layman and Laywomen: The Buddha Samādhi (*Jijuyū Zanmai*) of Menzan Zuihō,” 247–274; also, David E. Riggs, “The Rekindling of a Tradition: Menzan Zuihō and the Reform of Japanese Sōtō in the Togugawa Era.”

<sup>5</sup> *Yongjue Yuanxian chanshi guanglu* 永覺元賢禪師廣錄, X 1437, 72.

<sup>6</sup> Regarding research on Hongzhi’s poetry, see Christopher Byrne, “Poetic of Silence: Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091–1157) and the Practice of Poetry in Song Dynasty Chan *Yulu*.” Also see Yu-Chen Tsui, “The Poetic Practices of Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091–1157): *Gong’an* Commentarial Verses on Old Cases and Verses for Lay Literati.”

<sup>7</sup> According to Morten Schlütter, “It is not clear exactly when the practice of commenting on old [*gong’an*] cases started, but the earliest Chan master to have such commentaries included in his recorded sayings is the ‘founder’ of the Yunmen

the eleventh century one begins to see separate sections discretely entitled “raising old cases” (*jugu* 舉古), “comments on old cases” (*niangu* 拈古), and “commentarial verses on old cases” (*songgu* 頌古) included in the larger recorded sayings compendia of individual Chan masters.<sup>8</sup> From that time onward, Chan masters devoted themselves to commenting on old cases in different literary forms in order to illustrate crucial points of Chan teaching, thereby producing a plethora of *gong'an* commentaries. Among those works, the *Sijia songgu* 四家頌古 (*Commentarial Verses on Old cases of the Four Houses*), first published in 1342, came to represent the mainstream textual tradition during the Yuan (1271–1368) dynasty.<sup>9</sup> This work contains four *gong'an* collections, which are arranged in the following sequence: *Tiantong Hongzhi Jue heshang songgu ji* 天童宏智覺和尚頌古集 (*The Collection of Commentarial Verses on Old Cases of Monk Hongzhi Jue at Tiantong*), *Xuedou Mingjue heshang songgu ji* 雪竇明覺和尚頌古集 (*The Collection of Commentarial Verses on Old Cases of Monk Xuedou Mingjue*), *Touzi Shan Qing heshang songgu ji* 投子山青和尚頌古集 (*The Collection of Commentarial Verses on Old Cases of Monk Touzi at Touzi Mount*), and *Danxia Chun Chanshi songgu ji* 丹霞淳禪師頌古集 (*The Collection of Commentarial Verses on Old Cases of Chan Master Danxia Chun*).

This paper explores how Hongzhi employed *gong'an* commentarial verses as a vehicle to reshape the image of the Caodong tradition and distinguish it from other lineages of Chan. Hongzhi's redefinition of the characteristic teaching style of his Caodong lineage centered on the use of metaphor to convey the doctrine of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena—the teaching that he regarded as the core of Caodong tradition. This teaching explicates the relationship between conventional and ultimate truth. The core concepts of this teaching also figure prominently in Hongzhi's sermons and writings, a fact that demonstrates Hongzhi's emphasis on their centrality to Caodong soteriology and pedagogy. By delving into the doctrinal resonances and ramifications of Hongzhi's *gong'an* writings, this paper analyzes two essential ways in which Hongzhi distinguished the Caodong position from that of other schools. Firstly, Hongzhi asserted that the interpenetration of principle and phenomena was the

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tradition, Yunmen Wenyan [雲門文偃] (864–949).” Schlütter, “‘Before the Empty Eon’ versus ‘A Dog Has No Buddha-Nature’: Kung-an Use in the Ts’ao-tung Tradition and Ta-hui’s Kung-an Introspection Ch’an,” 179.

8 Griffith Foulk, “The Form and Function of Kōan Literature: A Historical Overview,” 17.

9 Shiina Kōyū 椎名宏雄, “Gen-ban Shikeroku to sono shiryō” 元版『四家録』とその資料, 230.

central teaching of his lineage. Secondly, Hongzhi infused the Caodong point-of-view regarding this doctrine into his *gong'an* commentaries through use of associated metaphors. In order to understand the ways in which Hongzhi applied metaphors to this effect, I will first examine crucial metaphors associated with this doctrine of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena in Caodong literature. Specifically, I will demonstrate how Hongzhi used metaphors associated with the teaching of the dyad of principle and phenomena to carve out a unique identity for the Caodong lineage. I will then explore how Hongzhi employed particular metaphors to define the essence of the Caodong tradition in his *gong'an* commentarial verses. In these verses, Hongzhi not only used metaphors conventionally associated with the Caodong school, but also created new ones, and together he used these metaphors to reshape his school's image.

### **Crucial Metaphors for the Doctrine of Principle and Phenomena**

The origins of the doctrine of principle and phenomena can be traced back to the doctrines associated with dualism in Buddhism. Among them, the cardinal doctrines were the teaching of emptiness, which denies dichotomization (dualism), and that of the mutual interpenetration of principle and phenomena, which were derived from the Mādhyamika and the Huayan traditions respectively.<sup>10</sup> According to Robert Gimello, the Huayan doctrine “provided a rationale for sublimating the teaching of emptiness into an affirmative category.”<sup>11</sup> Through a process of negative dialectics, the doctrine of emptiness denies the duality between *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, delusion and enlightenment, and phenomenal and ultimate truth. Taking a more positive approach, Huayan doctrine addresses the integral relationship between these dualities. This positive approach manifests in the doctrine of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. This provides a doctrinal foundation for Chan, a tradition that emphasizes engaging with the mundane world to pursue realization, and attaining enlightenment amidst mundane

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<sup>10</sup> William F. Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 8–9. In addition, according to Robert H. Sharf, Buddhist usage of the duality between principle and phenomena can be traced back to Six Dynasties *xuanxue* 玄學 metaphysics. Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise*, 159–160.

<sup>11</sup> According to Robert Gimello, “Principle, however, subsumes both emptiness and forms, and the inter-fusion of principle with phenomena gives a more affirmative and concrete cast to the discernment of the dharma-element.” Gimello, “Chih-Yen (602–668) and the Foundation of Hua-yen Buddhism,” 481.

phenomena.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Chan adopted many of the core concepts of Huayan as it rose to greater prominence—a process which coincided with the decline of the Huayan school, proper. Among the teachings of the different Chan lineages, Gimello points out that the formula of the “Five Positions” (Wuwei 五位) can be seen specifically as a transmutation of Huayan doctrine.<sup>13</sup> It was this pivotal formula on the relationship between principle and phenomena which the Caodong school’s founders Dongshan Lianjie 洞山良价 (807–869) and Caoshan Benji 曹山本寂 (840–901) used to craft a core teaching for their new lineage. In the Caodong teaching of the Five Positions, the terms proper (*zheng* 正) and adjunct (*pian* 偏) refer, respectively, to principle and phenomena. These symbols will be explained in detail at a later point. However, Gimello fittingly points out that the creation of the Five Positions marks a new phase in the history of Huayan after Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (784–841), the Fifth Patriarch of the Huayan tradition.<sup>14</sup> In this respect, Huayan doctrine served as an integral factor in the formation of Chan thought, while its teachings in turn came to inform practice in the different Chan schools.

Unlike exegetical traditions such as Tiantai and Huayan, which traditionally relied on formal systems of doctrinal terminology to explicate Buddhist teachings, Chan monks tended to employ metaphors to convey core principles of Buddhist teaching. This practice is likely due to their professed rejection of traditional notions of scriptural authority.<sup>15</sup> As a part of this broader trend,

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<sup>12</sup> Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 10.

<sup>13</sup> The Five Positions Verses elucidate five stages of practice: 1) The first position: the adjunct within the proper (*zheng zhong pian* 正中偏); 2) the second position: the proper within the adjunct (*pian zhong zheng* 偏中正); 3) the third position: (the adjunct) coming from the proper (*zheng zhong lai* 正中來); 4) the fourth position: going within together (*jian zhong zhi* 兼中至); 5) the fifth position: arriving within together (*jian zhong dao* 兼中到). The “proper” symbolizes “principle” (*li* 理) and the “essence” (*ti* 體), while the “adjunct” symbolizes “phenomena” (*shi* 事) and “function” (*yong* 用). Thus, the Five Positions doctrine also elucidates the interpenetration between the essence and function, and principle and phenomena. For a detailed discussion of Five Positions doctrine, see Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 11–12.

<sup>14</sup> Robert M. Gimello, “Li T’ung-Hsüan and the Practical Dimensions of Hua-Yen,” 323. For further studies on the relationship between Huayan doctrine and Five Positions thought, see Jana Benická, “(Huayan-like) Notions of Inseparability or (Unity) of Essence and its Function (or Principle and Phenomena) in some Commentaries on ‘Five Positions’ of Chan Master Dongshan Liangjie,” 231–240.

<sup>15</sup> Concerning the different uses of language by Chan and other Buddhist tradition, Robert Buswell points out that it was the special place of Ch’an to envision itself

Caodong monks constructed diverse systems of metaphors and images to convey their core teaching, the doctrine of the dyad of principle and phenomena. Let us, then, examine crucial metaphors used to elucidate teachings on principle and phenomena in Caodong literature.

The metaphor of “brightness” (*ming* 明), “darkness” (*an* 暗) in the *Cantong qi* 參同契 (The Concordance of Difference and Sameness) provided the archetype from which Caodong monks constructed both metaphorical symbols and imagery to convey the doctrine of principle and phenomena.<sup>16</sup> Traditionally attributed to Shitou Xiqian 石頭希遷 (700–790), the *Cantong qi* is a short text that is comprised of five-syllable verses in 220 characters. It first appeared in the biography of Shitou contained in the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 (Anthology of the Ancestral Hall, 960).<sup>17</sup> Two essential ideas are highlighted in the *Cantong qi*. First, brightness and darkness are used as metaphors for

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as separate from the rest of the Buddhist tradition. One way to affirm that independence was to express Buddhist doctrines in a new way, using language with the Chinese preference for concrete, laconic description rather than the Indian preference for abstract, periphrastic formulation. Robert E. Buswell Jr., “The ‘Short-cut’ Approach of K’an-hua Meditation: The Evolution of a Practical Subitism in Chinese Ch’an Buddhism,” 334.

<sup>16</sup> I have adopted Brook Ziporyn’s translation for the title of the *Cantong qi*. Ziporyn provides a complete translation of this text in Ziporyn, “The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and Its This-Worldly Implication,” 86–88, 91. According to the explanation in *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, the character “*can* 參” means to “consider,” “compare” or “differentiate;” the character “*tong* 同” means “sameness;” and “*qi* 契” means “tally.” This text is attributed to the famous Daoist master Wei Boayang 魏伯陽 (d.u.). *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, edited by Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Donald S. Lopez Jr., 166. According to the explanation in *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang*, the *Zhouyi cantongqi* 周易參同契 (Concordance of the Three according to the Book of Changes of the Zhou Dynasty) was attributed to Wei Boyang, a legendary immortal. This work is a short treatise in verse and prose that explains the alchemical process regarding the cosmology of the *Yijing*. *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang*, Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, eds., 1: 323.

<sup>17</sup> Yongjue states that the *Cantong qi* is “the source of Caodong tradition” 洞宗之源也. *Yongjue Yuanxian chanshi guanglu*, X 1437, 72: 536a11. According to the commentary in *Zongtong biannian* 宗統編年, the text of *Cantong qi* “completely raised the essential point of interpenetration of brightness and darkness, and interpenetration of the phenomena and the principle” 全提明暗回互，事理相涉之旨. *Zongtong biannian*, X 1600, 86: 153c14.

phenomena and principle.<sup>18</sup> Second, the term “reversing” (*huihu* 回互), is used to denote the doctrinal tenet of mutual interpenetration. On the basis of these two concepts, Caodong monks devised different systems of metaphors and rhetoric to illustrate the interpenetration of principle and phenomena.

Regarding the metaphorical use of the images of brightness and darkness, initially, Shitou used brightness to symbolize principle, and darkness, phenomena:

- 靈源明皎潔， The numinous source when it illuminates becomes bright and pure.  
枝派暗流注。 When it darkens, it flows into the branches of the stream.  
執事元是迷， Attaching to phenomena is originally delusion.  
契理亦非悟。 Tallying with principle is not enlightenment, either.<sup>19</sup>

Herein the brightness of the source refers to principle, whereas the darkness of the stream branches symbolizes phenomena. Drawing on these images, Shitou communicates the point that clinging to either phenomena or principle is not genuine enlightenment. The numinous source refers to the mind, or potential of Buddhahood. When the mind becomes luminous, its clarity can tally with the cardinal principle.<sup>20</sup> In contrast, when the mind becomes obscure, it deludedly pursues and attaches to phenomena, as branches of a stream flow forth from a spring. This refers to the deluded mind mistaking illusory phenomena for truth. Through highlighting the parallel between enlightenment and delusion, the imagery of brightness and darkness conveys the concept that relying on a dyadic division between delusion or enlightenment will confuse oneself.

In addition to the imagery of brightness and darkness in the *Cantong qi*, Shitou introduces yet another critical term, that of “reversing” *huihu* 回互 or 迴互, which refers to interpenetration or interdependence. This term has a significant place in Caodong literature, as it carries the sense of the coexistence

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18 Juefan Huihong 覺範慧洪 notes in *Linjian lu* 林間錄, “The profound words are brightness and darkness. The text only contains over forty phrases; however, in half of the text, brightness and darkness are used to explicate [the teachings]” 易玄要之語為明暗耳，文止四十餘句，而以明暗論者半之。 *Linjian lu*, X 1624, 87: 263b21–22.

19 *Zutang ji* 祖堂集, J B144, 25: 375b4–5.

20 According to Yongjue’s commentary, the first line about the numinous source describes a state in which one is able to tally with principle. *Yongjue Yuanxian chanshi guanglu*, X 1437, 72: 536a.

or mutual accommodation of dualistic dichotomy in order to depict the integral relationship between principle and phenomena. The *Cantong qi* states:

門門一切境， Cognitive faculties and all objects  
 迴互不迴互。 turn back toward each other or do not turn back.<sup>21</sup>  
 迴而更相涉， When reversed toward each other, they interpenetrate.  
 不爾依位住。 When not reversed, they abide in their own position.<sup>22</sup>

Employing the images of sense (*men* 門 refers to *geng* 根, cognitive faculties) and object (*jing* 境 refers to *chen* 塵, objects), Shitou delineates both the independent and the interdependent relationships among all phenomena. When they turn back toward each other, the six cognitive faculties and objects interpenetrate with each other. Their mutual interpenetration makes them inseparable. This indicates that each of the faculties and objects is incapable of sustaining its own individual and separate existence. Conversely, when the faculties and objects are not turned back towards each other, each is independent and stands alone. In other words, due to non-interaction, every faculty or object retains independence and its own individuality. Consider the case of seeing an object. Seeing is a sense faculty and shape is its object. Seeing and object are distinct entities. However, when seeing (*yan* 眼) interacts with an object (*chen* 塵), visual consciousness arises. Visual consciousness entails the interaction of eyes and objects; at the same time, eyes and objects exist on their own, respectively. These stanzas suggest how the interrelationship between principle and phenomena operates. They explain also why enlightenment and delusion are depicted in the previous stanza. Each can be regarded as an independent entity; nevertheless, they interpenetrate each other. To put this another way, enlightenment cannot be pursued without delusion. If one abandons phenomena, the principle of emptiness cannot be realized.

After demonstrating the interrelation between sense faculties and objects, Shitou proceeds to describe the different characteristics of objects of sight and hearing, form and sound. Turning to the example of speech, Shitou reverses this imagery of the brightness and the darkness to symbolize phenomena and principle. The line in question reads:

色本殊質象， Form originally differs in its shape.

<sup>21</sup> I adopt Ziporyn's translation with slight changes. Ziporyn, "The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and its This-Worldly Implications," 83–126, and especially 87.

<sup>22</sup> *Zutang ji*, J B144, 25: 375b5–6.

- 聲元異樂苦。 Sound initially differs in happiness and suffering.  
暗合上中言， Darkness brings together superior and average speech.  
明明清濁句。 Brightness illuminates the clarity and turbidity of phrases.<sup>23</sup>

From the perspective of conventional truth, all phenomena manifest distinctly, such as forms that take on different shapes, and sounds that can be heard in joyful or painful ways. At this pivotal point, Shitou reverses the imagery of brightness and darkness to symbolize phenomena and principle. From the perspective of principle, everything is empty. Here darkness conveys the sense of obscurity or hiddenness that connotes the principle that is cloaked by phenomena. The third line means that from the principle of emptiness, which is marked by equality, teachings are adjusted according to people's different capacities. On the other hand, the principle of non-self manifests in different teachings that cater to individuals with different aptitudes. Turning to the perspective of phenomena, individual reception of teachings appear as either wisdom or vexation.

After delineating the relationship between phenomena and principle using the examples of the four elements, sense faculties, and objects, Shitou illuminates the central theme of the integration of brightness and darkness:

- 當明中有暗， When there is darkness in brightness,  
勿以明相遇。 do not regard it as encountering brightness.  
當暗中有明， When there is brightness in darkness,  
勿以暗相覩。 do not look at it as facing darkness.<sup>24</sup>

Through the bright-dark imagery, Shitou makes an important point that there is neither absolute brightness nor absolute darkness due to the intrinsic mutual

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<sup>23</sup> My translation follows the version in *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄, T 2076, 51: 459b11–12. In addition to the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CBETA), I have extensively surveyed both Chinese and Japanese scholarship on the commentaries and translation of these key lines to find explanations on the meaning of the symbols of brightness and darkness, and why their metaphorical referents are different in this instance. However, the sources I have surveyed thus far either did not properly translate these terms, or stated equivalences without noting this apparent change: i.e., they merely repeated the premise that brightness represents phenomena or function while darkness represents principle or essence. As such, I have been unable to find an appropriate translation or commentary concerning these lines which explains the apparent reversal of the use of brightness and darkness to represent, alternatively, phenomena and principle.

<sup>24</sup> *Zutang ji*, J B144, 25: 375b10–11.

interpenetration, or perennial coexistence, of brightness and darkness. In other words, there is no absolute duality between brightness and darkness; brightness and darkness are interpenetrated with each other from the outset. Taking the imagery of brightness and darkness, these stanzas imply that phenomena are within principle and principle is within phenomena. Through elucidating the coexistence of brightness and darkness, these lines might also convey the cardinal point that neither delusion nor enlightenment exists in the absolute sense.<sup>25</sup>

Building on this use of brightness-darkness imagery, Caodong masters were subsequently able to devise a rich inventory of metaphors to convey the doctrines of principle and phenomena.<sup>26</sup> Aside from constructing metaphors based on bright-dark imagery, which was first seen in Shitou's *Cantong qi*, Caodong monks drew ideas from Chinese indigenous traditions to create additional metaphors. Among the indigenous elements, the dual symbols of adjunct (*pian* 偏) and proper (*zheng* 正), derived from *yinyang* 陰陽 hexagrams found in the *Yijing* 易經, stand out most prominently in the Caodong canon as tools for expressing the dyad of phenomena and principle. These symbols first appeared in the *Baojing sanmei ge* 寶鏡三昧歌 (The Samādhi of Jeweled Mirror Song). The *Baojing sanmei ge*, a poem in four-character verse containing 292 characters, is commonly attributed to Dongshan Liangjie; however, it was originally found in the biography of Caoshan Benji in Juefan Huihong's 覺範惠洪 (1071–1128) *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* 禪林僧寶傳 (1123).<sup>27</sup> The pivot of this text is its articulation of the adjunct and the proper.<sup>28</sup> The dual symbols of the adjunct and the proper were the core

<sup>25</sup> *Yongjue chanshi guanglu*, X 1437, 72: 536b.

<sup>26</sup> One of the most prominent uses of bright-dark imagery is the moon-night or dawn-night imagery in Dongshan Liangjie's "Verse on the Five Positions." See Ziporyn, "The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and Its This-Worldly Implication," 111–119.

<sup>27</sup> Schlütter points out that "*Baojing sanmei* is not found in any source prior to *Sengbao zhuan*." Schlütter argues that this text was probably produced during the Song dynasty, since it did not appear prior to *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* and its style is different from the early Caodong writings. Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 158. *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* 禪林僧寶傳, X 1560, 79: 492b. Ziporyn provides a translation of *Baojing sanmei ge* in Ziporyn, "The Use of Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and Its This-Worldly Implications," 106. Whalen W. Lai, "Sinitic Maṇḍalas: The Wu-wei-t'u of Ts'ao shan," 233.

<sup>28</sup> In the commentary of the *Baojing sanmei ge*, *Baojing sanmei benyi* 寶鏡三昧本義 composed by Jieliu Xingce 截流行策 (1628–1682), the author stated that the interpenetration of the proper and the adjunct is pivot of the *Baojing sanmei ge*.

constituents of the doctrine of the Five Positions, a central Caodong formula that represents variant “perspectives” or “vantages” on the relationship of principle and phenomena. Dongshan’s diagrams elucidate this point as follows:

重離六爻，      It is like the six lines of the double *li* [hexagram],  
偏正回互。      In which proper and adjunct transpose.  
疊而為三，      They stack up into three,  
變盡成五。      And all their permutations come to five.<sup>29</sup>

Before delving into a close reading of these lines, considering the nature of hexagrams can help us understand a possible reason why Caodong monks employed symbols and concepts from the *Yijing*. The use of symbols aligns with the Chan tenet of “not depending on words and letters” (*buli wenzi* 不立文字). Chan monks consider ultimate truth to be ineffable, hence it cannot be conveyed by conventional means such as language. In alignment with this, words were considered inferior to trigrams/hexagrams for conveying the subtle mysteries of cosmological changes.<sup>30</sup> The *Yijing*’s usage of images might have inspired Chan monks to also use hexagrams as a means to elucidate ultimate truth, as the latter transcends language. As non-linguistic signs, trigrams/hexagrams offered Chan monks a means to overcome the limits of language. In addition, Whalen Lai has suggested that new *Yijing* interpretations during the Song dynasty may have inspired Chan monks to turn to the *Yijing*.<sup>31</sup> Aside from the *Yijing*’s influence, however, the usage of *yinyang* symbols in the *Baojing sanmei ge* was probably done in self-reference to concepts embedded in and particular to the *Baojing sanmei ge* itself. This poem, for example, explicitly advances the notion that ideas cannot be expressed through words. As one line of the verse reads, “To portray it in any literary form is already to defile it” *dan xing wencai ji shu wuran* 但形文彩即屬污染.<sup>32</sup> This statement reflects the Chan position of

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According to Jieliu Xingce, “words like ‘the six lines of *li* [hexagram] in which proper and adjunct transpose’ are the pivot in the text [*Baojing sanmei ge*]” 於中如「離六爻、偏正回互」數語，為一篇之樞紐。 *Baojing sanmei benyi*, X 1237, 63: 216b12.

<sup>29</sup> *Ruizhou Dongshan Liangjie chanshi yulu* 瑞州洞山良价禪師語錄, T 1986B, 47: 526a4–5. I use Ziporyn’s translation with minor changes. Ziporyn, “The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and its This-Worldly Implications,” 95.

<sup>30</sup> Lai, “Sinitic Maṇḍalas,” 229.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>32</sup> I use Ziporyn’s translation. Ziporyn, “The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and its This-Worldly Implication,” 93.

eschewing any literary description of ultimate truth—even if it is perhaps ironic that poetic verses were the instruments used to convey this position.

Having suggested some possible reasons for the adoption of *Yijing* terms and imagery, let us now turn to the above lines concerning the symbols of the proper and the adjunct. Here I focus only on the dual symbols of the proper and the adjunct, rather than analyze the five configurations of hexagrams in relation to the Five Positions. Attempts to correlate hexagram analysis with the formation of the Five Positions has led to very broad and complicated history of exegetical interpretation that would take us well beyond the scope of this paper.<sup>33</sup>

Turning to the images of proper and adjunct in the *Yijing*, the former, “proper position” (*zheng* 正), means that a solid *yang* 陽 line (—) is in a *yang* position and a broken *yin* 陰 line (— —) is in a *yin* position. In the construction of the six lines of the *yinyang* hexagrams, the lines at odd numbers—counting from the bottom upwards—are called *yang* positions, while the lines at even numbers are *yin* positions. In contrast, if a *yang* line is in the position of the *yin* or a *yin* line is in the position of the *yang*, then these lines would be in what is called the “adjunct (*pian* 偏) position.”<sup>34</sup> In addition to the proper and the adjunct, there is another term, “*hu*” 互, as used in the compound “*huihu*” 回互, that also appears in the *Cantong qi*. *Hu* carries a technical connotation in hexagram interpretation as well, which we find in the use of the compound, *huti* 互體. *Huti* refers to taking trigrams embedded in a hexagram (those of the second to fourth line, and third to fifth line respectively) and duplicating them to create two other hexagrams.<sup>35</sup> Throughout the Caodong tradition, Caodong masters employed *pian* (adjunct) to symbolize phenomena while *zheng* (proper) referred to principle. Caoshan Benji explains the meaning of these symbols as follows:

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<sup>33</sup> Several primary and secondary sources have discussions that correlate hexagram analysis with the formation of the Five Positions. See, for example, *Yongjue Yuanxian chanshi guanglu*, X 1437, 72: 537c; Jieliu Xingce, *Baojing sanmei benyi*, X 1237, 63: 217a–218b; and Jingna 淨訥, *Baojing sanmei yuanzong bianmiushuo* 寶鏡三昧原宗辨謬說, X 1238, 63. For secondary sources, see Brook Ziporyn, “The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and Its This-Worldly Implication.” Also see Chen Rongbo 陳榮波, “Yijing li gua yu Caodong Chan” 易經離卦與曹洞禪, 224–244.

<sup>34</sup> Ziporyn, “The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and Its This-Worldly Implication,” 101–102.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

The proper position is the empty realm, where there is originally nothing. The adjunct position is the realm of forms, where there are myriad phenomena and forms. The adjunct within the proper is to forsake the principle to approach phenomena. The proper within the adjunct is to discard phenomena to enter the principle. Congruence of both is to obscurely respond to myriad conditions without falling into existence. It is neither defiled nor pure. It is neither proper nor adjunct. Therefore, it is called the empty and profound Great Way, the non-abiding true tenet. 正位即空界，本來無物。偏位即色界，有萬象形。正中偏者，背理就事。偏中正者，舍事入理。兼帶者，冥應眾緣不墮諸有。非染非淨，非正非偏，故曰虛玄大道無著真宗。<sup>36</sup>

Caoshan clearly sets forth the respective valences of the proper position and adjunct position here. The proper position signifies emptiness, which is regarded as the absolute and the equivalent of principle; the adjunct position symbolizes form, which is equated to the relative and phenomenal.<sup>37</sup> Realizing either “phenomena within principle” or “principle within phenomena” does not constitute perfect realization. Caoshan indicates that perfect realization and the true teaching are to be found in the integral congruence of principle and phenomena. “Phenomena within principle” means an experience of reality in which all phenomena are perceived as empty. To counteract this biased and one-sided perspective, people in this state should engage with phenomena by relinquishing absorption in emptiness, or principle.

In contrast, “principle within phenomena” signifies an experience of reality in which the ultimate truth of emptiness manifests in all phenomena of the conventional world. Those who realize this state should turn to the realm of emptiness because of their tendency to become attached to worldly phenomena. The term “congruence of both” has the same semantic sense as *huihu* 回互 in the *Cantong qi*. This term conveys the meaning of mutual “interpenetration.” Those who are in the state of interpenetration of the principle and phenomena can respond to any condition without being attached to phenomena or to the principle of emptiness. Because they are not trapped by dualities such as perceiving pure principle vs. defiled phenomena, they can attain non-dual thinking and action.

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<sup>36</sup> *Fuzhou Caoshan Benji chanshi yulu* 撫州曹山本寂禪師語錄, T 1987B, 47: 536c24–28.

<sup>37</sup> The more common translations of “proper” and “adjunct” are “absolute” and “relative.” Lai, “Sinitic Maṇḍalas,” 229–254.

The symbols of the proper and the adjunct became dominant metaphors not only in Caodong writings, but also in other Chan texts, where these dual symbols were often used to explain Caodong teachings. Caodong monks themselves also constructed alternative metaphors for Caodong doctrine by correlating proper and adjunct with other symbols and images.<sup>38</sup>

Aside from elements lifted from indigenous Chinese traditions, the Caodong masters drew on ideas from other Buddhist sources to create their metaphors. For example, metaphors that feature the paradox between images of inanimate entities and sentient activity are very prevalent in Caodong writings. The inanimate images symbolize absolute principle or the essence of existence, while activity represents phenomena, or the functions that arise from principle or the essence. This imagery probably originated from a stanza in the *Samādhi of Jeweled Mirror Song* that states, “When the wooden man sings, the stone woman begins to dance” *muren fang ge shinü qi wu* 木人方歌，石女起舞。<sup>39</sup>

The images of the wooden man and the stone woman are commonly seen in Caodong texts. In *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben* 永覺禪師洞上古轍上口辨, Taihaku Kokusui 太白克醉 (d. 1700) indicates that earlier usages of these images had a different meaning. *The Dazhidu lun* 大智度論 (*Treatise of the Great Perfection of Wisdom*) states “In the Dharma that the Buddhas of the ten directions speak, there is neither self nor self-possession. However, [when] the myriad dharmas come together and coalesce we provisionally call it ‘a sentient being.’ They are like the mechanism of a wooden man. Although they can move, inside there is no master of their bodies” 十方諸佛所說法，皆無有我，亦無我所，但諸法和合，假名眾生，如機關木人，雖能動作，內無有主，身亦如是。<sup>40</sup> However, the wooden man in the *Samādhi of Jeweled Mirror Song* has

<sup>38</sup> Caoshan correlated proper and adjunct with the dyadic set of “lord” and “minister,” the first of the three social relationships known as the Three Mainstays (*sangang* 三綱), the three principal ethical relationships in Confucianism. Based on this paradigm, there are other parallel symbolic dyads as well, such as host and guest, father and son. Lord, host, and father are symbols for the proper, the cardinal principle; minister, guest and son refer to the adjunct, or phenomena. Caoshan explained lord-minister metaphors in detail in his recorded sayings. See *Fuzhou Caoshan Benji chanshi yulu* T 1987B, 47: 536c. In addition, the proper-adjunct symbolic set was aligned with black-white imagery. Black imagery represents the proper, or cardinal principle; white imagery symbolizes the adjunct, or phenomena. See Danxia’s explanation in *Rentian yanmu* 人天眼目, T 2006, 48: 314c.

<sup>39</sup> *Ruizhou Dongshan Liangjie chanshi yulu*, T 1986B, 47: 526a16.

<sup>40</sup> Taihaku Kokusui has indicated that the metaphor of a wooden man may have originated from *Dazhidu lun*. Taihaku, *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*, manuscript dated in 1683 held by Komazawa University Library, 33a. *Dazhidu lun*, T 1509,

a different meaning. Taihaku explains that since both the wooden man and the stone woman symbolize no mind (*wuxin* 無心), the state of non-dual thinking, both connote the perspective of the proper. Singing and dancing seem to have mind; as a result, they symbolize the adjunct, and refer to the marvelous functions that emanate from no-mind: non-thinking.<sup>41</sup> The imagery of the paradoxical action of insentient entities symbolizes that the non-thinking mind is the essence from which great function arises.<sup>42</sup> Building on this conception, Caodong masters constructed similar extenuating metaphors to elucidate the interpenetration of principle and phenomena.<sup>43</sup>

As we have seen above, early Caodong masters constructed specific imagery to use as pedagogical instruments for conveying the core doctrinal dyad of principle and phenomena. The images used are generally not to be found in the texts of other lineages—or, at least, they are used to different symbolic effect when they do appear. As these particular images were primarily associated with Caodong masters, masters from other lineages in time came to use them to represent the Caodong style of Chan teaching.<sup>44</sup> With the Song period, these

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25: 281a22–25. According to *Zengaku daijiten*, *muren* 木人 refers to a wooden marionette; *shinū* 石女 refers to a stone statue of a woman or a barren wife. *Zengaku daijiten* 禅学大辞典, 656a, 1148d.

41 Taihaku, *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*, 33a.

42 In his *Dongshang guche* 洞上古轍, Yongjue comments, “This exactly illumines the true and marvelous function that cannot be reached by intelligence” 此正明天真妙用，非智力所及. *Yongjue Yuanxian chanshi guanglu*, X 1437, 72: 538c6.

43 For example, the images of the clay ox and wooden horse are also very prominent in Caodong writings. The *Verses on the Diagram of the Five Positions* has, “The clay ox roars on the water. The wooden horse neighs into the wind” 泥牛吼水面，木馬逐風嘶. *Fuzhou Caoshan Benji chanshi yulu*, T 1987B, 47: 537a16–17. In *Dongshang guche*, according to Yongjue, “The clay ox and the wooden horse represent the proper position, while ‘roaring on the water’ and ‘neighing into the wind’ represent the adjunct. They show the interpenetration of the principle and phenomena, and the interpenetration of the adjunct and proper.” *Yongjue chanshi guanglu*, X 1437, 72: 538c.

44 Monks outside of the Caodong tradition also employed particular metaphors to represent the Caodong tradition. Tanying Dagan 曇穎達觀 (989–1060), a Linji monk, delineates the distinctive features of the five lineages’ teaching style in his *Five Schools of the [Chan tradition]* (Zongmen wupai 宗門五派), contained in the *Jianzhong jingguo xudeng lu* 建中靖國續燈錄 (1101). With respect to the Caodong tradition, he states: “The proper and the adjunct are mutually interwoven, / and they completely avoid [keeping] a distance. / The dragon gate should be penetrated; / the bird path cannot be tread. / The stone woman weaves in the frost. / The clay ox plows in the fire. / If both sides could be dropped, / it would be like

images become very prevalent in Caodong writings, to the point where use of these particular metaphors actually functions as a key marker of the new Caodong identity that developed during the late-Northern and Southern Song Dynasty.

### **Hongzhi's Attempt to Reconstruct the Identity of the Caodong Tradition**

We have seen that Caodong masters devised a variety of systems, rich with accompanying metaphors, in order to convey teachings associated with the dyad of principle and phenomena. Hongzhi further employed metaphors associated with this doctrine to characterize the particular brand of his own Caodong lineage. In doing so, Hongzhi created a clear Caodong profile with the doctrinal dyad of principle and phenomena as the definitive core of Caodong teaching. On several occasions, when students asked Hongzhi to define the representative teachings of the five Chan traditions, Hongzhi singled out the doctrine of

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the flourishing of a branch of withered wood” 偏正互縱橫/迢然忌十成/龍門須要透/鳥道不堪行/石女霜中織/泥牛火裏耕/兩頭如脫得/枯木一枝榮。

This poem is teeming with abundant metaphors related to the principle and phenomena. Through these metaphors, Tanying delineates the characteristic style of the Caodong teaching as the doctrine of principle and phenomena. The first couplet depicts the mutual inclusion of principle and phenomena—neither can exist without the other. The dragon gate in the third line might be an analogy for the state of realizing emptiness, indicating principle. This line asserts that one has to penetrate the realm of principle—of emptiness—instead of just abiding in it. The bird path might refer to changing and illusory phenomena, if one understands that, when a bird flies, it leaves no trace of its route. Because the bird's path is traceless, it cannot be tread upon. This also suggests that one should not become attached to phenomena. In the third couplet, Tanying likens the non-duality between principle and phenomena to the paradoxical imagery between inanimate entities and dynamic action. The stone woman parallels the clay ox, and “weaves in the frost” parallels “plows in the fire.” The final couplet depicts how proper and adjunct meld together without falling into either extreme. In other words, by relinquishing duality, one can transcend duality to reach non-duality. The paradoxical imagery of a withered piece of wood becoming invigorated again conveys a sense that true enlightenment leads to great function. In other words, a non-thinking mind can vividly respond to active phenomena. Tanying's characterization of the Caodong tradition draws freely from prominent Caodong imagery that symbolizes the doctrine of principle and phenomena. Through these Caodong metaphors, Tanying defines Caodong's sectarian identity. *Jianzhong jingguo xudeng lu*, X 1556, 78: 821c9–10.

principle and phenomena as the distinguishing characteristic of Caodong, and did so by employing metaphors to refer to this doctrine.

For example, in a public sermon, a student asked, “What is Caodong’s essential teaching” 如何是曹洞宗? Hongzhi replied, “A black dog with shiny silver hooves. A black person rides on a white elephant” 黑狗爛銀蹄，白象昆侖騎。<sup>45</sup> This phrase comes from the eulogy for Taiyang Jingxuan 大陽警玄 (943–1027) written by Fushan Fayuan 浮山法遠 (991–1067).<sup>46</sup> Hongzhi employed the black and white imagery to refer to the proper and the adjunct, thereby defining the central teaching of the Caodong tradition.

According to Fushan’s self-annotation of this eulogy, the phrase about a black dog means there is an adjunct position within the proper position; the black dog symbolizes the proper position, while silver hooves represent the adjunct position. “A black person riding on a white elephant” suggests there is a proper position in the adjunct position. These two lines make the point that “the proper and the adjunct do not mutually obstruct each other” 於斯二無礙. It conveys the idea of “not falling into either existence or non-existence” 不墮

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<sup>45</sup> *Hongzhi lu*, 1.8b9; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 2a28–b2. According to Menzan Zuihō’s commentary, although *kunlun* 昆侖 (alt., 崑崙) generally is used as a place name, or a name for the people who come from that place, in this context of Caodong imagery, *kunlun* refers to “black people.” Menzan Zuihō, *Wanshi zenji kōroku monge* 宏智禪師廣錄聞解, in *Wanshi roku*, edited by Ishii Shūdo, vol. 2, 18a. In addition, according to *Hanyu dacidian*, a biography of a queen (*Xiaowuwen Li Taihou* 孝武文李太后) in *Jin shu* 晉書 describes that in the palace, people who worked for weaving looms were black and called *kunlun* 崑崙. *Hanyu dacidian*, vol. 3, 834. Cf. Fang Xuanling 房玄齡, *Jin shu* 晉書, 32.981.

<sup>46</sup> *Wudeng huiyuan* 五燈會元, X 1565, 80: 288c. Special thanks to Professor William Bodiford for indicating the correct romanization of Dayang 大陽, where Dayang 大陽 should be romanized as Taiyang, as indicated by the Japanese pronunciation たいよう in *Zengaku daijiten*, 818c. In the entry of 太陽寺 in Buddhist Studies Place Authority Databases, it indicates the alternative names of 太陽寺 are 太陽長慶禪寺 and 大陽寺, and this monastery is located in 太陽山. Accessed January 5, 2018, <http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000027462>. In addition, during the Dazhong xiangfu 大中祥符 reign period (1008–1016), the glyph 玄 became a taboo character. Therefore, Jingxuan 警玄 became known as Jingyan 警延, according to the entry on Jingxuan 警玄 in *Foguang dacidian*. *Foguang dacidian* 佛光大辭典, 6816.

有無二邊。<sup>47</sup> Phenomena exist in the midst of principle; principle exists in the midst of phenomena. Principle is inseparable from phenomena, and phenomena are inseparable from principle. In other words, the true realization means always perceiving empty nature while simultaneously remaining engaged with changing worldly phenomena.

In addition, in Caodong writings black-white imagery evolved from symbols of darkness and brightness. Based on the black-white metaphorical system, Caodong masters constructed an array of black-white imagery to refer to the teaching of the dyad of principle and phenomena. By employing these black-white imageries, and other prominent Caodong metaphors created by his Caodong predecessors, Hongzhi continued to promote the doctrine of the dyad of principle and phenomena as a core Caodong teaching.<sup>48</sup>

Aside from using metaphors created by his predecessors, Hongzhi made reference to appropriate new metaphors in secular literature in order to illustrate defining characteristics of his Caodong lineage. This creative approach to

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<sup>47</sup> Menzan Zuihō, *Wanshi zenji kōroku monge: tai ichi kan* 宏智禪師廣錄聞解：第1卷, manuscript dated 1804–1818 held by Komazawa University Library; Menzan, *Wanshi zenji kōroku monge*, 18a. Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163) referred to Fushan’s self-annotation of the eulogy for Taiyang in *Zheng fayan zang* 正法眼藏 (*Treasury of the True Eye of the Dharma.*) X 1309, 67: 632a18–24.

<sup>48</sup> In an informal sermon, Hongzhi also described the Caodong core teaching of the doctrine of principle and phenomena by drawing on the analogy of darkness and brightness. A student asked Hongzhi, “What are the essential teachings of the Caodong tradition” 如何是曹洞宗? Hongzhi replied, “In the darkness, one distinguishes turning back toward each other. Yet in the brightness, one turns back [to darkness]” 暗裏分回互，明中却轉身. As previously discussed, darkness represents principle while brightness refers to phenomena. Here Hongzhi also uses the term *huihu* 回互 (translated here as “turning back toward each other”), which denotes the concept of interpenetration as is introduced in the *Cantong qi*. Hongzhi regarded the interpenetration of principle and phenomena as the essential Caodong teaching. Hongzhi’s informal sermon makes the point that, when one realizes the principle of emptiness, one should also recognize the distinguishing characteristics of phenomena. At the same time, one should dwell on the principle that all phenomena are at a deeper level undifferentiable on account that they possess the same non-self nature. In contrast, when one dwells on mundane phenomena, one should also shift attention to their underlying state of emptiness, in which sense there is uniformity. Thus, perfect realization entails simultaneous awareness of both the unvariegated realm of emptiness, and multifarious phenomenal forms, without allowing oneself to indulge the fallacy that principle and phenomena are either completely undifferentiable/unitary or completely dichotomous/separate. *Hongzhi lu*, 4.278a1–2; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 68b20–21.

crafting metaphors distinguished him from his Caodong predecessors. For example, in an informal sermon he asked students, “What is the Caodong style of teaching” 作麼生是曹洞家法? He himself replied, “The massive whale exhausts all the water of the great ocean. A black person embraces coral branches” 長鯨飲盡滄溟水，昆侖抱得珊瑚枝.<sup>49</sup> The imagery of the whale and coral branches are from a Tang poem attributed to the monk Hanxi 含曦 (d.u.), entitled, *Response to Lutong's Visit without Meeting* (*Chou Lutong jianfang buyu tibi 酬盧仝見訪不遇題壁*).<sup>50</sup> The poem reads: “[When] the whale completely swallows the ocean, coral branches emerge” 鯨吞海水盡，露出珊瑚枝。

Hongzhi uses the massive whale to indicate principle, and symbolizes phenomena with the great ocean. He uses black-white imagery to convey the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. The black person refers to principle; coral branches represent phenomena (because they are white). In addition, Hongzhi uses two verbs, “swallow” and “embrace,” to convey the notion of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. In this portrayal of the Caodong style of teaching (*Caodong jiafa* 曹洞家法), Hongzhi thus not only uses typical Caodong black-white imagery, but also incorporates literary expressions from secular poetry to define Caodong doctrinal positions on the relationship between principle and phenomena. Hongzhi's use of references from secular literature is a striking feature that distinguishes his writings from his predecessors. In constructing metaphors to articulate this tenet, his predecessors tended to draw elements from earlier symbols. In contrast, Hongzhi took ideas not only from Caodong writings but also from a variety of secular sources. I will return to this issue when analyzing examples of his *gong'an* works.

While delineating the distinctive features of his particular brand of Caodong Chan practice, Hongzhi employed metaphors associated with the doctrine of principle and phenomena to define Caodong lineage's identity. He viewed this teaching as the Caodong core teaching. Thus, Hongzhi created a more distinct Caodong identity vis-a-vis other Chan schools, which emphasized the authoritative status of this doctrine as its core teaching. By employing certain closely related metaphors, Hongzhi also reshaped the image of Caodong Chan.

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<sup>49</sup> *Hongzhi lu*, 4.294b6–7; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 72c23–25.

<sup>50</sup> This poem is in *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩, 823.9357.

## Portraying the Caodong Identity in *Gong'an* Commentaries

Having examined how Hongzhi distinguished the Caodong lineage from its other Chan counterparts by highlighting the doctrinal construct of principle and phenomena as the representative Caodong teaching, let us now explore how Hongzhi reshaped the image of the Caodong school through his *gong'an* writings. We will begin by examining the external circumstances and internal conditions that prompted Hongzhi to create a distinct Caodong profile in his *gong'an* works. We will then take up the question of how Hongzhi staked out a position that could be identified as a discrete “Caodong style” by drawing on a variety of dyadic metaphors linked to the definitive Caodong teaching of principle and phenomena.

Hongzhi’s effort to establish Caodong identity through his *gong'an* writings was significant not only within the broader religious milieu of his days, but also within the context of his attempt to revive what was perceived to be an imperiled Caodong tradition. Hongzhi wrote his *gong'an* commentarial verses during his early career, shortly after he became the abbot (1124–1127) of Puzhao Monastery (Puzhao si 普照寺).<sup>51</sup> Recognizing the broader religious context of this time is instructive. A strong supporter of Daoism, Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r.1100–1126) and was the only anti-Buddhist emperor of the Song.<sup>52</sup> At the time of Hongzhi’s first abbacy at Puzhao Monastery, half of the property of the

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<sup>51</sup> According to Ishii Shūdō, Hongzhi compiled his *gong'an* commentarial verses between the age of 34 and 37 (1124–1127), during his abbacy at Puzhao Monastery. Hongzhi wrote his *niangu* commentary from the age of 38 to 39 (1128–1129), while he was abbot of Changlu Monastery. Ishii also indicates these two *gong'an* commentaries represent Hongzhi’s work in the earliest stage of his career. See Ishii, “Wanshi roku no rekishi teki seikaku: Wanshi juko nenko o chūshin toshite” 宏智録の歴史的性格：宏智頌古拈古を中心として, 105. In introducing the collection of Hongzhi’s recorded sayings, Schlütter points out that Hongzhi’s commentarial verses and prose were published as one collection in 1129, with a preface dated 1120 attributed to Hongzhi’s prominent disciple, Xuedou Sizong 雪竇嗣宗 (1085–1153). It was reprinted in 1134, with a postscript written by Xiang Ziyin 向子諲 (1085–1152). Schlütter, “The Record of Hongzhi,” 190–191.

<sup>52</sup> In presenting the political context of Chan tradition under the supervision of the Song court, Schlütter notes that Buddhism suffered suppression at the hands of the only anti-Buddhist Song emperor Huizong in the beginning of the twelfth century. Schlütter also indicates that Huizong’s anti-Buddhist policies culminated in 1119, when he ordered a series of decrees placed Daoism in a position of superiority and forced Buddhists to assimilate to Daoism. Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 51.

monastery was owned by Shenxiao Temple (*Shenxiao gong* 神霄宮), a Daoist establishment.<sup>53</sup> Although Hongzhi did not encounter repression during his career as an abbot, Buddhism was still less favored by the court when Hongzhi began his tenure at the monastery. It is possible that, when Hongzhi assumed his post, he may have considered compiling *gong'an* commentaries as a way to propagate Chan teachings to a broader audience. Because his first appointment as a Chan abbot occurred when interest in the Caodong Chan tradition was growing, the composition of *gong'an* collections might have appealed to him as an important medium for facilitating the resurgence of his tradition. Hongzhi reveals his reasons for reviving the Caodong teaching through *gong'an* commentaries in the preface that he wrote the preface for his teacher's *gong'an* work, *The Collection of Commentarial Verses on Old Cases of Chan Master Danxia Chun* (*Danxia Chun Chanshi songgu ji* 丹霞淳禪師頌古集):

[My teacher] lamented that the style of our tradition is on the verge of decline. Therefore, he selected and collected encounter dialogues. From the first, Qingyuan Xingsi 青原行思 (671–741), to the last, Dahong Baoshouen 大洪保壽恩 (or Dahong Baoen 大洪報恩, 1058–1111), there are total one hundred cases. He collected them and wrote verses so that the ultimate way will be passed down to benefit future generations. The way he illuminated the essential teaching of our tradition is to submerge and penetrate that which lays prior to any sign of existence (the state of non-duality).<sup>54</sup> The way he established the seminal teachings is to correspond closely with the state that is after non-

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<sup>53</sup> Hongzhi's biography describes that Hongzhi led the assembly of Puzhao Monastery to greet emperor Huizong when he inspected the southern of China, at which time he requested emperor Huizong to return the half of the original property of the monastery that had been given to the Daoist Shenxiao Temple. See *Hongzhi lu*, 318a7–8; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 120a23. In addition, in discussing Song emperor Huizong's support of Daoism, Schlütter points out that "in 1117, Huizong established a network of Shenxiao [神霄] (Divine Empyrean) Daoist temples. Many Shenxiao temples were existing Daoist temples that had been renamed, but where no suitable Daoist temples that had been, the local authorities were instructed to take over Buddhist monasteries and to convert them into Shenxiao temples." Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 51.

<sup>54</sup> According to *Zengaku daijiten*, the term *weizhao* 未兆 means the state before the existence of all phenomena. It is also equal to the state before the birth of parents. Therefore, *weizhao* conveys the absolute state of non-duality. *Zengaku daijiten*, 1183c. According to *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*, it means "before signs of existences appear."

effort.<sup>55</sup>

慨宗風之欲墜，乃採摭從上機緣。首自清源，下之保壽，總一百則，集而為頌，俾乎至道垂裕後昆。其明宗也，潛通於未兆之前。其立旨也，密契於無功之後。<sup>56</sup>

Hongzhi indicates that when the Caodong was felt to be on the verge of decline, Danxia compiled commentarial verses to “illuminate the essential teachings of his tradition” (*mingzong* 明宗) and “establish the seminal teachings of his tradition” (*lizhi* 立旨), so as to make sure that followers of future generations could recognize the cardinal teachings of their tradition. Evidence that Danxia was himself intent on promoting his own tradition can also be found in his selections of cases: he only included cases from masters in the Caodong lineage, or those of “neutral” monks who were lineage descendants of Qingyuan Xingsi.<sup>57</sup>

Differing from his teacher’s approach, Hongzhi selected cases from a variety of lineages. Despite commenting on a broader and more diverse selection of cases, vivid depictions of Caodong identity nonetheless emerge clearly in Hongzhi’s appended comments. This is particularly evident when it comes to *gong’an* cases involving Caodong masters. Thus Hongzhi retained his teacher’s technique of expressing a distinctive Caodong identity through commentarial verses. It is also significant that Hongzhi’s collection of *gong’an* commentarial verses and prose was his first publication. Hongzhi may have been attempting to reach larger audiences by aiming to gain recognition of his tradition through dissemination of his *gong’an* works. In doing so, Hongzhi promoted his lineage in the face of internal decline and the pressures of anti-Buddhist sentiment and policies circulating during Huizong’s recent reign. Since the Caodong school was languishing in a state of accelerated decline, revitalizing the school as a whole was a more pressing issue for Hongzhi than internal rivalries between the various Caodong master and disciple sub-lineages. Through the *gong’an* commentarial verses, Hongzhi attempted to reshape the image of the larger, reemergent Caodong school to distinguish it from other Chan houses. Such an approach reflects Hongzhi’s commitment to revive his tradition.

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<sup>55</sup> According to *Zengaku daijiten*, the term *wugong* 無功 means no effort. *Zengaku daijiten*, 1202d.

<sup>56</sup> *Sijia lu*, D 8942, 49: 248a4–249a2.

<sup>57</sup> Schlütter, “The Record of Hongzhi,” 191.

The theme of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena appears prominently in Hongzhi's verse and prose commentaries on *gong'an* cases. Take, for example, his remarks on a case concerning a dialogue between Dongshan and his teacher Yunyan.<sup>58</sup> By explicating crucial points of Yunyan's saying, "Just this is it," Dongshan conveys the doctrinal point of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. Hongzhi's commentarial verse reads:

爭解恁麼道？	How could he know to speak this way?
五更雞唱家林曉；	At the fifth watch, when the rooster crows, the day breaks in the woods of home.
爭肯恁麼道？	How could he be willing to speak this way?
千年鶴與雲松老。	The thousand-year crane and the pine amidst the clouds grow old together.
寶鑑澄明驗正偏，	The jeweled mirror, clear and bright, confirms the proper and adjunct.
玉機轉側看兼到。	The jade loom turns to the sides and sees the arrival of the congruence of both [proper and adjunct].
門風大振兮規步綿綿，	The style of the tradition is greatly revived and proper steps continued without breaking.

<sup>58</sup> The case in question unfolds as follows: "Dongshan made an offering to the portrait of Yunyan, after which he raised previous dialogues [between him and Yunyan] about a portrait. A monk asked, 'Yunyan said "just this is it." What is the essential message?' Shan said, 'At that time, I almost misunderstood my late master's intent.' The monk said, 'Did Yunyan know that [reality]?' Shan said, 'If he did not know it, how could he know to say thus? If he knew it, how could he be willing to say "thus"?' 洞山供養雲巖真次，遂舉前邈真話。有僧問：「雲巖道『祇這是』，意旨如何？」山云：「我當時洎錯會先師意。」僧云：「未審雲巖還知有也無？」山云：「若不知有，爭解恁麼道？若知有，爭肯恁麼道？」 *Hongzhi lu*, 2.100a7–b1; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 23a1–5.

This confrontational exchange addresses the central relationship between principle and phenomena. Dongshan illuminates that if one is attached to phenomena, just as in indicated in Dongshan's response, one cannot realize principle. According to Wansong's commentary, Dongshan's final two answers demonstrate core concept of Huayan teaching: "Principle is perfect and speech is partial. When speech emerges, principle is lost. Principle and the phenomena should mutually unite and penetrate each other." *Congrong lu*, T 2004, 48: 258a19. In Dongshan's recorded sayings, there are two anecdotes about the encounter dialogue between Dongshan and Yunyan. *Ruizhou Dongshan Liangjie chanshi yulu*, T 1986B, 47: 519b. For an English translation, see Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 27–28.

父子變通兮聲光浩浩。Father and son adapted to circumstance and their reputation shines far and wide.<sup>59</sup>

Hongzhi here deploys prominent Caodong doctrines, the proper and the adjunct, to convey the doctrinal import of the dyad of principle and phenomena. According to Tianqi Benrui's 天奇本瑞 (d. 1508) comments in *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu* 堯絕老人天奇直註天童覺和尚頌古 (*The Elder Qiongjue Tianqi's Direct Commentary on the Commentarial Verses on Old Cases of Monk Tiantong Jue*), the rooster's crowing symbolizes the profound teachings revealed by Dongshan. The first couplet illuminates "the adjunct amidst the proper 正中之偏," which represents phenomena in the midst of principle. At this stage, one turns one's back on principle to approach phenomena. In other words, one departs from absorption in emptiness to engage in the phenomenal world. In the following couplet, the imagery of a thousand-year crane represents the proper position, while the pine amidst clouds connotes phenomena. This couplet illustrates "the proper amidst the adjunct" 偏中之正, which represents principle amidst phenomena. In this stage, one discards phenomena to enter principle,<sup>60</sup> thereby realizing the principle of emptiness and release from the bondage of phenomena. The third couplet symbolically conveys the doctrine of the interpenetration of the proper and adjunct, which entails the mutual inclusion of principle and phenomena. The jeweled mirror likely alludes to *The Samādhi of Jeweled Mirror Song*; the images reflected in the mirror symbolize phenomena, and the mirror represents principle.

Because a loom remains motionless while the shuttle weaves the woof thread back and forth between its two sides to facilitate weaving, the loom and the shuttle are typical metaphors for the proper and the adjunct.<sup>61</sup> The loom and shuttle portray vertical "warp" and horizontal "woof" threads interweaving. This imagery of interweaving is equivalent to the interpenetration of principle

<sup>59</sup> *Hongzhi lu*, 2.100b2–4; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 23a6–9.

<sup>60</sup> *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu*, X 1306, 67: 453c.

<sup>61</sup> Hongzhi often used the images of a loom and a shuttle to connote the proper and the adjunct. For example, in a public sermon, he said, "When the jade loom is turned to the side, who can distinguish the thread on the shuttle?" 玉機轉側，梭頭絲路誰分。 *Hongzhi lu*, 1.17b5; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 4b26. In addition, in his comments on this line from Hongzhi, Tianqi states: "Vertical and horizontal threads are interwoven. Proper and adjunct mutually penetrate" 經緯交羅，正偏通貫。 *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu*, X 1306, 67: 453c18–19.

and phenomena. What is more, the expression *jiandao* 兼到 (the congruence of both [proper and adjunct]) might be an abbreviation of *jianzhongdao* 兼中到 (in the midst of the congruence of both [proper and adjunct]), a term that represents one of the Five Positions.<sup>62</sup> This particular position represents the experiencing of ultimate reality by letting go of both principle and phenomena. By doing so, one transcends the dichotomy or duality of principle and phenomena and realizes their interpenetration.<sup>63</sup>

Hongzhi concludes the verse by indicating the significant contributions of Yunyan and Dongshan to the Caodong tradition. As pioneers, they both helped Caodong teachings become prominent and paved the way for their transmission to future generations. In addition to drawing on typical Caodong metaphors, such as the dual symbols of the proper and the adjunct and the imagery of the mirror and the loom, Hongzhi employs the imagery of the crane and the pine—which are well-known motifs in traditional Chinese secular poetry—to convey the core Caodong doctrines of principle and phenomena.

Through the rich use of metaphors that signify the unity of principle and phenomena, such as those in the commentarial verse cited above, Hongzhi reshaped the image of the Caodong school. In conveying this fundamental Caodong teaching, he not only used salient Caodong metaphors constructed by past Caodong masters but also fashioned new imagery, elements of which he often drew from secular literature. Though he builds on the metaphorical repertoire set in place by earlier Caodong masters, Hongzhi's eagerness to draw upon secular sources distinguishes him from his predecessors, since they tended only to employ conventional Caodong metaphors.

For example, Hongzhi employed poetic imagery from secular poetry to comment on a case from Qinglin Shiqian 青林師虔 (d. 904) involving the dilemma of encountering a dead snake that blocks one's path.<sup>64</sup> In offering his

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<sup>62</sup> Regarding *jianzhongdao* 兼中到, see footnote 13. Lai translates this term as “arriving amid both.” Powell translates this term as “arriving within together.” Ziporyn's translation is “From within both to within both (phenomena arriving at enlightenment as enlightenment arriving at phenomena.” In short, this term means interpenetration of proper and adjunct. It signifies being fully attuned to the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. Lai, “Sinitic Maṇḍalas,” 240; Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 11–12; Ziporyn, “The Use of the Li Hexagram in Chan Buddhism and Its This-Worldly Implication,” 118.

<sup>63</sup> Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 12.

<sup>64</sup> The case reads: “A monk asked Qinglin, ‘What would happen when students go directly?’ Lin said, ‘A dead snake blocks the great road. I urge you not to confront it.’ The monk said, ‘What would happen if [I] confront it?’ Lin said, ‘You would

response to the impasse of the dead snake, Qinglin conveys the doctrinal message that one should not fixate on either emptiness or phenomena. Qinglin tells his monk-interlocutor that when he encounters the dead snake, the monk should neither confront the dead snake nor go off into the grassy field to circumvent it. The dead snake is a metaphor for principle, which represents the state of realizing emptiness.<sup>65</sup> Not confronting the dead snake can thus be taken as a metaphor that expresses non-abiding in the realm of emptiness. The grass is associated with vexation, thereby symbolizing phenomena, i.e., dualistic thinking. The case, as a whole, illuminates the point that one should strive to achieve a mutual accommodation between principle and phenomena. Hongzhi's commentarial verse reads as follows:

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lose your life.' The monk asked, 'What would happen if I do not confront it?' Lin said, 'There is not a place where you can escape it, either.' The monk asked, 'What would happen at that time?' Lin said, 'You would lose.' The monk asked, 'I do not know where I should go?' Lin said, 'The place where grass is deep and one cannot be found.' The monk said, 'Master, [you] should also begin to take precautions.' Lin clapped his hands and said, 'It is the same as noxious vapors.'" 僧問青林：「學人徑往時如何？」林云：「死蛇當大路，勸子莫當頭。」僧云：「當頭時如何？」林云：「喪子命根。」僧云：「不當頭時如何？」林云：「亦無回避處。」僧云：「正當恁麼時如何？」。林云：「却失也。」僧云：「未審向什麼處去也？」林云：「草深無覓處。」僧云：「和尚也須隄防始得。」林撫掌云：「一等是箇毒氣。」 *Hongzhi lu*, 2.104a6–b2; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 23c28–24a5.

The case demonstrates the nonduality between principle and phenomena and conveys the doctrinal message that one should not fixate on either emptiness or phenomena. According to Menzan's comments, "When the guest confronts the host, the guest is not the guest. When the host confronts the guest, the host is not the host. Both the host and the guest are forgotten" 賓見主時賓不是賓，主見賓時主不是主，賓主相忘. The host and the guest are alternative symbols for the proper and the adjunct. Menzan's interpretation highlights the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. Menzan Zuihō, *Wanshi kobutsu jiyuko hiyakusoku monge* 宏智古仏頌古百則聞解, undated manuscript held by Komazawa University Library; also *Shishū kobutsu jiyuko shōtei* 隰州古仏頌古稱提 in *Wanshi roku*, vol. 2, 316b. *Yongjue Yuanxian chanshi guanglu*, X 1473,72: 543a.

<sup>65</sup> When Yuanwu comments on a case about Dongshan in *Biyān lu*, Yuanwu states that in the Caodong tradition there are images of a stone woman, a wooden horse, a bucket without a bottom, night-bright curtains, and a dead snake. All of these images illuminate the proper position. Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤, *Foguo Yuanwu chanshi Biyan lu* 佛果圓悟禪師碧巖錄, T 2003, 48: 180c.

三老暗轉舵，	In darkness, a helmsman turns the rudder. <sup>66</sup>
孤舟夜回頭。	At night, a single boat turns back.
蘆花兩岸雪，	Reeds catkins along both banks are like snow;
煙水一江秋。	Misty water on a river in the autumn.
風力扶帆行不棹，	The force of the wind supports the sail, moving without oars.
笛聲喚月下滄洲。	The sound of the flute beckons the moon, one heads down to a secluded shore. <sup>67</sup>

The verse poetically extemporates on the relationship between principle and phenomena. Hongzhi employs typical Caodong imagery of the bright-dark dualism and images based on the dialectic of sameness-difference; that is, within sameness there is difference, and within difference there is sameness 同中有異，異中有同。In addition to these, Hongzhi uses other prominent metaphors, which he crafts by drawing on expressions from secular literature.

The first couplet implies the adjunct within the proper (*zheng zhong pian* 正中偏).<sup>68</sup> It metaphorically expresses that one should not get stuck in the realm of emptiness and should return to the realm of phenomena. The images of darkness and night symbolize the proper position, namely, the state of realizing the nature of emptiness, while “turn the rudder” (*zhuanduo* 轉舵) and “turn back” (*huitou* 回頭) suggest turning to the adjunct position, or returning to the mundane world and the phenomenal realm.

In the second couplet, Hongzhi uses images based on the conception of sameness-difference that originate from *The Samādhi of Jeweled Song* to portray the state of emptiness in which everything is the same in terms of the emptiness of nature, yet each manifests discrete forms.<sup>69</sup> Hongzhi depicts these

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<sup>66</sup> The term, helmsman (*sanlao* 三老) is from Du Fu's 杜甫 poem, *The Song of Kuizhou* (*Kuizhou ge* 夔州歌). Kuizhou was the Tang dynasty name for a county in present-day Chongqing, Sichuan. Hongzhi alludes to Du Fu's lines, “Within the songs of helmsman and boatman, / during daytime gamble games that were played amidst of high waves” 長年三老長歌裏/白晝攤錢高浪中. *Quan Tang shi*, 229.2057.

<sup>67</sup> *Hongzhi lu*, 2.104b3–4; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 24a6–8.

<sup>68</sup> Taihaku, *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*, 59b (*juan* 6).

<sup>69</sup> This usage comes from the verse in *The Samādhi of Jeweled Mirror Song* that reads: “Like snow in a silver bowl, / an egret hidden in the bright moon. / Categorized together, they are not the same; / When merge together, / their own place is distinguishable” 銀盃盛雪/明月藏鷺/類之弗齊/混則知處. *Dongshan Liangjie chanshi yulu*, in *Wan xuzang jing* 卍續藏經, vol. 119, 886a. According to

qualities of the interfusing of form and emptiness by merging the paired images of reeds and snow, misty water and rivers, which together symbolize the shared nature of emptiness within which images manifest distinctly. The snow and the autumn represent the proper, the cardinal principle, while reeds and misty water refer to the adjunct, or phenomena. The second couplet suggests the proper within the adjunct position (*pian zhong zheng* 偏中正).<sup>70</sup> In this state, one realizes that all phenomena manifest distinctly, while there is the same emptiness of nature shared by all particulate phenomena.

The final couplet portrays the state where principle and phenomena merge. The imagery of wind and the sound of the flute refer to phenomena, or the mundane world, and the image of the moon symbolizes principle. The expression, “*cangzhou*” 滄州 is a literary allusion for the desolate abode of an official living in reclusion. This term is from the poet Xie Tiao 謝朓 (464–499), and perhaps symbolizes true enlightenment.<sup>71</sup> The verse concludes with an assertion that within the state of realizing the interpenetration of principle and phenomena, one forgoes practice effortlessly as if moving in a boat without the need of oars. Furthermore, one becomes involved in the mundane world and responds to conditions spontaneously in a way that likens the pursuit of true enlightenment to following or moving with the wind.<sup>72</sup>

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Gyokusen’s 玉線 commentary in *Tōjōkotetsu jigi* 洞上古轍字義, this stanza depicts the proper (principle) and the adjunct (phenomena). The solid nature of the silver bowl contrasts with the nature of snow. The silver bowl represents the proper position. The color of snow is white, and snow can melt. The snow represents the adjunct position. Gyokusen, *Tōjōkotetsu jigi*, undated manuscript held by Komazawa University Library, 40–41 (*juan* 1). In addition, Taihaku Kokusui explains that the imagery of silver bowl, snow, moon and egrets convey the sense of mutual inclusion (*huihu* 回互) since they share the same color but manifest distinct forms. Taihaku, *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*, 3b–4a (*juan* 2).

<sup>70</sup> Taihaku, *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*, 59b (*juan* 6).

<sup>71</sup> See Xie Tiao’s poem entitled *Going to Xuan city, from Xinlinfu to Banqiao* 之宣城出新林浦向板橋, in which Xie writes, “Although I joyfully embrace the feeling of prosperity, how can this feeling run parallel with the joy of a reclusive life in a desolate land” 既懼懷祿情，復協滄州趣。Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501–531), ed., *Wen xuan* 文選, 27.1259.

<sup>72</sup> My interpretation of this commentarial verse makes reference to Tianqi’s comments in *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu* and Taihaku’s comments in *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*. *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu*, X 1306, 67: 455b7. Taihaku, *Yōkaku zenji Tōjōkotetsu kuben*, 59b (*juan* 6).

In this verse, Hongzhi incorporates elements from secular literature to create imagery to convey this core Caodong teaching. His use of secular sources probably aims to impress literati readers. Thus, in an innovative way, Hongzhi promotes Caodong identity through creative metaphorical language associated with the lineage's cardinal teachings.<sup>73</sup>

As earlier noted, Hongzhi's predecessors tended to use conventional Caodong metaphors. Commenting on this same case, Hongzhi's teacher, Danxia employed the more mainstream Caodong symbols of brightness-darkness to convey the doctrines of principle and phenomena. His verse reads:

長江澄澈即蟾華，	The long river, clear and luminous, reaches the moonlight.
滿目清光未是家。	Pure light fills eyes but it is not home.
借問漁舟何處去？	May I ask where the fishing boat is going?
夜深依舊宿蘆花。	The night is deep; one stays overnight among the reed flowers. <sup>74</sup>

Danxia here uses the bright imagery of light and the dark image of night to represent phenomena and principle respectively. In the first line, the river symbolizes phenomena, whereas the moonlight connotes principle. The imagery of merging the river with the moonlight connotes the state in which principle and phenomena are seen to interpenetrate. Danxia then proceeds to employ “the light” to refer to phenomena, while of “home” is often associated with enlightenment. Thus, the second line means that involvement in the phenomenal world is not enlightenment. By using the dark and black imagery of night to express the principle, as well as the white imagery of reed flowers to indicate phenomena, the closing line illuminates a state of mutual fusion between principle with phenomena. In this verse, Danxia employs dominant Caodong metaphors including brightness-darkness and white-black imagery to convey the Caodong core teaching of interpenetration.

Another commentarial verse from Hongzhi, composed on the case of “Jiufeng's head and tail,” demonstrates Hongzhi's deft mastery at drawing allusions from secular sources to construct new symbolic representations of the core Caodong doctrines of principle and phenomena. The example of the Jiufeng case conveys the important point that complete realization comprises a congruence of principle and phenomena that is conveyed through the images of

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<sup>73</sup> *Danxia Zichun chanshi yulu* 丹霞子淳禪師語錄, X 1425, 71: 766c.

<sup>74</sup> *Danxia Zichun chanshi yulu*, X 1425, 71: 766c18–19.

a head and tail.<sup>75</sup> A monk asks Jiufeng 九峰 (d.u.) about the state of having either a head or a tail or having both. The head represents the position of the proper—cardinal principle and essence—while the tail symbolizes the adjunct, or phenomena and function.<sup>76</sup> Through the use of the head and tail metaphors, Jiufeng makes the point that having either a head or a tail constitutes only an incomplete realization. Having both a head and tail constitutes a perfect approach to practice capable of lead to full realization of the fusion of principle and phenomena.<sup>77</sup> Hongzhi’s commentarial verse reads:

<sup>75</sup> The metaphors of a head (*tou* 頭) and a tail (*wei* 尾) also connote the opening and the ending.

<sup>76</sup> According to the entry on “Jiufeng *touwei*” 九峰頭尾 in *Foguang dacidian*, the head symbolizes the realization that all dharmas are ultimately empty; whereas the tail represents the transcendence of myriad phenomena in the mundane world to manifest a marvelous function at ease. *Foguang dacidian*, 143.

<sup>77</sup> The complete case reads: “A monk asked Jiufeng, ‘What is the head?’ Feng said, ‘Open one’s eyes without being aware of the dawn.’ The monk asked, ‘What is the tail?’ Feng said, ‘Do not sit on a ten-thousand-year bed.’ The monk asked, ‘What would it be when there is the head without the tail?’ Feng said, ‘Ultimately it is not noble.’ The monk asked, ‘What would it be when there is the tail without the head?’ Feng said, ‘One becomes full but gains no strength.’ The monk asked, ‘What would it be when the head and the tail are congruent?’ Feng said, ‘Sons and grandsons obtain strength. [Nobody] knows [congruence of the head and the tail] in the quarter.” 僧問九峯：「如何是頭？」峯云：「開眼不覺曉。」僧云：「如何是尾？」峯云：「不坐萬年床。」僧云：「有頭無尾時如何？」峯云：「終是不貴。」僧云：「有尾無頭時如何？」峯云：「雖飽無力。」僧云：「直得頭尾相稱時如何？」峯云：「兒孫得力，室內不知。」 *Hongzhi lu*, 2.106b4–8; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 24b19–24.

Realizing the emptiness of all phenomena is equivalent to having a head. Thus, having a head means to immerse in emptiness without engaging in the mundane world, as if one were to open one’s eyes without seeing the dawn. Here the imagery of a bright dawn denotes phenomena. Conversely, involving oneself in phenomena is equivalent to having a tail. Thus, having a tail means to engage in the phenomenal realm without realizing the non-self nature behind phenomena; it is as if one does not sit on a myriad-year bed. The image of a myriad-year bed connotes realizing emptiness, since the mind experiences timelessness that transcends time. Having either a head or a tail is ultimately incomplete. Having both a head and a tail means to attain complete enlightenment—the state where the principle and phenomena mutually fuse. In this state, one realizes every phenomenon is emptiness, which is an intrinsically enlightened condition without being revealed; it is as if one stays in a room without being noticed. According to Wansong’s commentary, the line “sons and grandsons gain strength” is a metaphor extended from an earlier analogy, that “one becomes full and gains no strength.” Yet here descendants not only become full but also gain strength. Thus, this

規圓矩方，	A compass makes a circle; a quadrature makes a square.
用行舍藏。	One moves forward [when one is employed]; one holds oneself in reserve [when one is removed from office]. <sup>78</sup>
鈍躑棲蘆之鳥，	A bird resting in the reeds is dim-witted and tottering.
進退觸藩之羊。	A ram butting against a hedge can neither move forward nor step backward.
喫人家飯，	One eats others' rice.
臥自家床。	One lays on one's own bed.
雲騰致雨，	Clouds fly to make rain.
露結為霜。	Dew freezes to become frost. <sup>79</sup>
玉線相投透針鼻，	Jade threads mutually match through the eyes of needles.
錦絲不斷吐梭腸。	Silk threads come unceasingly from the hollow of a shuttle.
石女機停兮夜色向午，	The stone woman stops the looms as the night scene advances toward noon.

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metaphor expresses that having both the head and the tail constitutes a whole or complete practice. It means that perfect realization entails the fusion of principle and phenomena. Wansong says of “sons and grandsons gain strength” that they become full as well as gain strength. *Congrong lu*, T 2004, 48: 268a22.

78 This line alludes to the Confucian *Analects*. I have used Edward Slingerland's translation with minor changes. Slingerland's translation: “The Master [Confucius] remarked to Yan Hui [Yuan], ‘it is said, “When he is employed, he moves forward; when he is removed from the office, he holds himself in reserve.” Surly this applied only to you and me?’” 子謂顏淵曰：「用之則行，舍之則藏。唯我與爾有是夫！」 Chen Shude 程樹德, ed., *Lunyu jishi 論語集釋*, 13.450. Edward Slingerland, trans., *Confucius Analects: with Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, 67.

79 These two lines allude to the *Qianziwen* 千字文 (*Thousand Character Classic*), traditionally attributed to Zhou Xingsi 周興嗣, dated 507–521. According to Francis W. Paar's translation, the passage in question reads: “Heaven and earth, dark and yellow; / The universe, vast and great. / Sun and moon, full and setting; / Stars and lunar mansions, arranged and spread. / Cold comes, and heat goes; / Autumn gathering, and winter storing. / An intercalary surplus completes the year; / Odd and even pitch-pipe harmonize the Yang. / Clouds rise, and cause rain; / Dew congealing forms frost” 天地玄黃/宇宙洪荒/日月盈昃/辰宿列張/寒來暑往/秋收冬藏/閏餘成歲/律呂調陽/雲騰致雨/露結為霜. Francis W. Paar, ed. and trans., *Ch'ien tzu wen 千字文: The Thousand Character Classic*, 7.

木人路轉兮月影移央。The wooden man turns on the road as the shadow of the moon moves to the center.<sup>80</sup>

In this verse, in addition to Caodong metaphors, Hongzhi employs not only poetic expressions from secular literature but also vernacular expressions from the original case to create new metaphors. Through this rich array of metaphors, Hongzhi echoes the essential message of the initial case in a more refined way: complete realization entails the interpenetration of principle and phenomena, or the fusion of essence and function.

The verse opens by pointing out that a head and a tail each have their own important place. Having both a head and a tail is likened to the way in which a compass functions to make a circle and a quadrature makes a square. Hongzhi draws these allusions from the *Zhuangzi* 莊子.<sup>81</sup> The images of a compass and quadrature carry the sense of essence or principle, whereas a circle and a square connote function or phenomena. The first line means that essence manifests in function; function manifests through essence. In the second line, by employing an allusion from the *Analecets*, Hongzhi depicts the defects of having solely a head or a tail—or to dwell either in principle or phenomena.<sup>82</sup> In the second couplet, Hongzhi draws on a reference from the *Baozang lun* 寶藏論 (*The Treasure Store Treatise*) to discuss the condition of having a tail without a head (*wu tou zhi wei* 無頭之尾).<sup>83</sup> This state is like a dim-witted bird which nests

<sup>80</sup> *Hongzhi lu*, 2.106b10–107a3; *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu*, T 2001, 48: 24b25–29.

<sup>81</sup> The potter says, “I’m good at managing clay! I round it until it matches the compass and square it until it matches the T-square.” 陶者曰：「我善治埴，圓者中規，方者中矩。」 See Brook Ziporyn, trans., *Zhuangzi: The Essential Writings with Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, 61; Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩, comp., *Zhuangzi jishi*, 9.330.

<sup>82</sup> According to Tianqi’s commentary, Hongzhi uses the phrase, “one moves forward when one is employed” to indicate that one should respond to conditions without merely dwelling in the proper position of principle and realization of emptiness. This is just like only having a head, a metaphor for mere immersion in emptiness nature, according to Zhiqi’s commentary. On the contrary, the phrase, “one holds oneself in reserve when one is removed from office” indicates that one should enter the state of emptiness without merely fixing on the phenomenal realm, which is likened to being humble. This depicts only having a tail, the metaphor for entanglement in worldly phenomena. *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu*, X 1306, 67: 456a16.

<sup>83</sup> The reference to “the birds resting on a reed” is from *Baozang lun* 寶藏論. According to Sharf’s translation, “In advancing along the Way, one comes across a myriad stray paths. A fish in distress will pause in a small puddle. A sick bird will rest on a reed. These two know not of the great sea nor of the dense forests.

on a reed and is unable to fly because it does not know how to survive in the forest. Hongzhi then proceeds to employ an allusion from the *Zhouyi* 周易 to delineate the status of a head without a tail (*wu wei zhi tou* 無尾之頭). That he likens to a ram confronted with the dilemma of having its horns get caught in a hedge.<sup>84</sup>

These two lines make the point that perfect enlightenment cannot be actualized by fixating solely on either absorption in emptiness or engagement with phenomena—just as one with only a head or a tail cannot function fully. Through the use of vernacular depictions of a bed and rice, which appear in the original Jiufeng case, the third couplet illuminates that a head should eat meals to gain strength, whereas a tail should sit on a bed.

By referencing images of natural phenomena from the *Qianziwen* 千字文 (*Thousand Character Classic*), the fourth couplet depicts how the mind mired in duality either gravitates precipitously to the phenomenal world or precipitously seeks to enter the realm of emptiness, without ever being able to freely entertain involvement in the two realms concurrently. Clouds are a familiar and frequent metaphor for the changing nature of the phenomenal world, and frost represents the frozen mind that is motionlessly absorbed in emptiness.<sup>85</sup> Together they elucidate how one becomes lively and actively engaged upon suddenly realizing formlessness, instead of only remaining immersed in mundane phenomena. In other words, one is enjoined to maintain

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People hastening about their petty tasks are just the same” 夫進道之由，中有萬途。困魚止瀝，病鳥棲蘆，其二者不識於大海，不識於叢林。人趨乎小道，其義亦然。Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 162; *Baozang lun*, T 1857, 45: 144a2–4.

<sup>84</sup> According to Edward L. Shaughnessy's translation, "A ram butts a fence, is not able to retreat and not able to follow; there is no place beneficial; difficult but then auspicious" 羝羊觸藩，不能退，不能遂，無攸利，艱則吉。Edward L. Shaughnessy, trans., *I Ching: The Classic of Changes*, 89; Huang Shouqi 黃壽祺 and Zhang Shanwen 張善文, ed. and annot., *Zhouyi yizhu* 周易譯註, 284.

<sup>85</sup> According to Tianqi's commentary, "Clouds fly to make rain" means that "one should not abide in the proper [emptiness]; otherwise, upon going to the phenomena world, one suddenly becomes thriving" 須不守正，出則乍興。This expresses the state in which one is suddenly thriving while still involved in the phenomenal world, rather than staying in mere stillness of emptiness. In the opposite perspective, "Dew freezes to become frost" is equivalent to a state in which "one should not indulge in worldly phenomena; otherwise, once entering the realm of emptiness, one suddenly declines" 須不戀偏，入則乍廢。Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu, X 1306, 67: 456a18–19.

an awareness of the fusion of principle with phenomena, without adhering biasedly to one side or the other, in order to attain perfect enlightenment.

Hongzhi concludes the verse by underscoring the point that complete realization entails the constant union of principle and phenomena, the condition of which he depicts through the adept use of salient Caodong metaphors. Drawing on images such as a thread strung through a needle's eye, or the image of threads from a shuttle, Hongzhi points to the importance of the seamless unity between the principle and phenomena. In the closing couplet, in addition to the bright-dark symbolism, Hongzhi employs the paradoxical imagery of insentient beings performing animate actions to explicate the mutual inclusion of principle and phenomena: in principle, there are phenomena; and in phenomena, there is principle. Upon apprehending the state in which principle and phenomena seamlessly merge and interfuse, one transcends the duality of principle and phenomena.<sup>86</sup>

Through these distinctive Caodong-style images, the final couplet conveys the perfect realization of the congruence of the head and the tail, which is equivalent to the unity of principle and phenomena. In this state, one can actively involve engage any phenomenon with a selfless mind. In short, in his commentary, Hongzhi not only creatively imbued references from secular literary writings with doctrinal import, he also imbued vernacular expressions

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<sup>86</sup> The concluding couplet can be read according to two different pairings of parallel images, which together illustrate the doctrinal message of the interpenetration of the principle and phenomena. First, according to the original pairing, Tianqi comments, “The loom stopping and advancing toward noon” means not to abide in the adjunct position, or phenomenal realm 機停向午，不住偏方, while “turn on the road and move to the center” means not to dwell in the adjunct position, or realm of emptiness 路轉移央，不居正位. According to the second, alternating parallel structure (*gejudui* 隔句對), the final two lines can be read as one line: when the stone woman stops the loom, the wooden man already turns on the road; as the night advances toward noon, the shadow of the moon already moves to the center. The imagery of the stopping of the loom indicates realization of non-self, whereas “the wooden man turns on a road” means one turns to the mundane world from the realm of contemplating emptiness. When the night moves toward the noon, the moon moves to the center. In the same vein, through the merging bright-dark imagery, the brightness of “the noon” as well as darkness of “the shadow of moon” connote that from the mundane world, one moves to the empty state. In a poem of four lines, alternating parallel structure (*gejudui* 隔句對) refers to having the first line parallel to the third line as well the second line parallel to the fourth line. This kind of parallelism might involve antithesis or pairing, as well, the lengths of these lines may differ. *Qiongjue laoren Tianqi zhizhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu*, X 1306, 67: 456a.

contained in the initial case with doctrinal meaning. He innovatively created metaphors that were distinctive from mainstream Caodong symbols. By using elements from a variety of sources, Hongzhi reshaped the image of Caodong as a Chan school through his commentarial verses. His usage of discrete references from such a wide range of sources may have represented an attempt on Hongzhi's part to appeal to a broader audience, and especially the literati. With the purpose of sectarian promotion in mind, it may be the case that Hongzhi aimed to help the Caodong gain recognition among a broader readership.

This paper has sought to demonstrate how Hongzhi, in his *gong'an* commentarial verses, set out deliberately to use a variety of carefully chosen metaphors and imagery to highlight the core Caodong teaching of the interpenetration of the principle and phenomena. That repertoire of images included metaphors that were significantly different from those used by his Caodong predecessors. While predecessors tended to draw on and repeat conventional Caodong metaphors, Hongzhi not only employed traditional Caodong symbols, but also drew upon a variety of elements from secular sources, which together ultimately helped give a more distinctive profile to the Caodong tradition and its teaching. Thus, with the intention of reviving his tradition, Hongzhi reshaped the likeness of Caodong image by employing an abundance of fresh and hitherto unseen images in his *gong'an* writings. His strategy of employing new metaphors may have been a way to appeal to a larger audience in order to secure broader recognition and support for the Caodong school. The fact that Hongzhi wrote commentarial verses to reshape the image of Caodong during an early state in his career as an abbot suggests that his initial motivation was to revitalize the Caodong school.

## Concluding Remarks

This paper has examined Hongzhi's attempt to reshape the image of the Caodong school. It presents two core arguments. First, Hongzhi identified the essence of the Caodong Chan as the doctrine of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. Second, he reshaped the image of the Caodong school by using metaphors associated with this teaching in his *gong'an* commentarial verses. This paper first places Hongzhi's attempt to reshape the Caodong school's image within the context of a broader trajectory in the development of Buddhist doctrine to demonstrate that the seminal Caodong teaching of the principle and phenomena was indeed a continuation of a cardinal Huayan teaching. What differentiated the two, thus, was that the Caodong and the Huayan explicated

this teaching in different ways. As a doctrinal tradition, the Huayan elucidated this teaching through a conventional form of doctrinal exegesis, whereas the Caodong illuminated it through metaphors. Caodong's metaphorical usage also reflected the trend of the broader Chan tradition that discredited conventional forms, and words in particular, to convey ultimate truth.

We have also seen that Caodong monks constructed diverse sets of metaphors to express the core Huayan doctrine of the interpenetration of principle and phenomena. These specific images are prevalent in Song Caodong texts. As other lineages did not use these particular metaphors, the prominent usage of these metaphors in Caodong literature shows that it became one of the key features of the new Caodong identity that formed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to mainstream Caodong metaphors, Hongzhi also used metaphors associated with secular literary and intellectual traditions.

As his *gong'an* compilation was his first publication, and was circulated as an independent manuscript not attached to his recorded sayings collection, his incorporation of elements from secular literature to create metaphors may have indeed been to reach a larger audience, and specifically the literati. By doing so, he attempted to help Caodong gain greater recognition among a wider readership. This can be seen as a part of his strategy to revitalize a tradition that was still in a state of decline.

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### Abbreviations

- B *Dazangjing bubian* 大藏經補編. Taipei: Huayu chubanshe, 1985.
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- Baozang lun* 寶藏論. T 1857, 45.
- Chanlin sengbao zhuan* 禪林僧寶傳. X 1560, 79.
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