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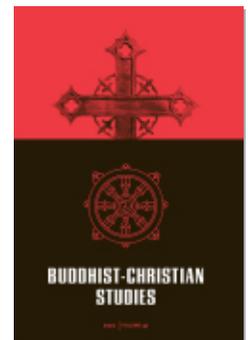
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Regarding Elephants in the Room: What Buddhists Could Learn from Christians about Preventing Teacher Misconduct

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ABSTRACT

Although American Buddhist communities have done much to address the problem of sexual and other teacher misconduct over the years, thanks in large part to the efforts of feminist teachers and leaders, more remains to be done. Using American Sōtō Zen as a case study, this essay describes three structural problems that create conditions conducive to teacher misconduct in the North American context. These are: (1) vastly different paradigms of ordination and professional expectations for clergy in Asian Buddhist and American cultures, which have enormous implications for how clergy working in America are trained; (2) inadequate polity (governance) in the West, at both the level of individual North American congregations and across Buddhist lineages or schools; and (3) patriarchal structures in American culture, in Buddhism generally, and in Zen institutions particularly that support clericalism and insularity. It argues that three resources from the American Protestant tradition could be useful for American Buddhists to think about and to think with when considering how to address these problems. These are: (1) graduate-level professional education and certification for ministry; (2) certain aspects of the polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and (3) the Protestant—and more recently, Papal—critique of clericalism. The author's aim is not simply to critique, but to offer constructive suggestions.

KEYWORDS: Soto Zen, clergy formation, Dharma Transmission, misconduct, polity, ordination

When I told one well-known American Zen teacher that I was writing an essay about what Buddhists could learn from Christians about preventing teacher misconduct, she physically recoiled. A Protestant clergyman had sexually abused her in her youth, she told me, so she doubted that Buddhists had anything useful to learn from Christians on this topic. Given the frequency with which Christian clergy make headlines for sexual misconduct of all kinds, her skepticism is understandable. She also objected to

what she assumed my intention to be: setting the two traditions in opposition to each other. In fact, my purpose here is constructive dialogue.

Over several decades of practicing, observing, studying, discussing, and writing about Buddhism in the United States, particularly Zen Buddhism, I have encountered quite a lot of resistance among (white) Buddhist converts to suggestions that we might have valuable things to learn from our Protestant colleagues.¹ Buddhist-Catholic dialogue and exchange has been fruitful among members of contemplative/monastic religious communities, but I am not aware of much denominational-level dialogue or active collaboration between Buddhists and Protestants.² Yet American Buddhists could benefit from taking a few *institutional* lessons from our Protestant friends, when it comes to preventing sexual and other misconduct by people in positions of religious leadership. Protestants have been operating in and shaping America culture for centuries longer than Buddhists, and have developed some institutional safeguards that, by and large, American Buddhist groups have not. These are not perfect, but I will argue they are preferable to the status quo.

When I mentioned to a Protestant minister friend that I was working on this article, her response was less intense than the Zen teacher's, but also dubious: "What do we have that you don't have?" she asked. My answer: required graduate-level professional education for ministry, presbyterian polity, and the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers." These three resources from the mainline Protestant tradition, appropriately applied, could be very helpful to American Buddhist communities as they think about how to prepare clergy and lay leaders for their roles; support their work; hold them accountable within and beyond the congregations they serve; and consider the long-term development of their lineages and denominations in American culture.

To situate myself in relation to this topic: I'm a white, middle-aged, American, woman priest of Sōtō Zen Buddhism, which I have practiced for nearly forty years. I was raised in Congregational and Presbyterian churches by broad-minded parents, had formative experiences with a fundamentalist, Pentecostal community in my youth, was formally shunned by that community for questioning Biblical literalism, began practicing Jōdō Shinshū Buddhism during college, converted formally to Sōtō Zen Buddhism soon after college, and many years later had the good fortune to study Buddhism and Christianity in an ecumenical Protestant seminary and at three research universities. My Master's thesis was a cross-cultural and interfaith analysis of clergy formation in the American Protestant mainstream, Japanese Sōtō Zen, and three communities of American converts to Sōtō Zen that range along a spectrum from more to less monastic.³ In 2003, I received initial ordination as a priest in the Japanese school of Sōtō Zen (Sōtōshū). I identify as Buddhist, not a dual-belonger, but I am very glad to have discovered breadth and depths in Christianity that previously I had not known existed.

I have been engaged in dialogue with Christians of many stripes for a long time, have tasted many flavors of Christian practice, and have benefitted immensely, both personally and professionally, from these experiences. As a college professor, I taught religious studies courses to many Christian students, including many sections of introductory Biblical studies. I also work as a professional chaplain, a field in which

I have had mostly Christian colleagues. In medical contexts, including in my work as a hospice chaplain, if the patients I serve are religious at all, they are mostly Christian. I have learned a great deal from these encounters and want to share some of those lessons here.

Before I do so, I will say a bit more about how I became interested in studying the problem of sexual abuse and other misconduct by Buddhist teachers. In doing that, I will offer a timeline of misconduct scandals across most of the major, meditation-oriented Buddhist communities that have established themselves in the West: from 1983, when I started my own Buddhist practice, to 2020. This will clarify the scope of the problem, which spans (at least) Zen lineages originating in Japan and Korea, Tibetan Vajrayāna groups, Vipassana/Insight communities, yoga communities, and hybrid traditions.⁴ After describing the problem across communities, I will narrow my focus to American Sōtō Zen, a case I have studied in particular detail, both academically and experientially.

Because Buddhism in the United States is so complex, it is necessary to define a few key terms as I will be using them here. The broad category of “American Zen” includes teachers who are credentialed in Buddhist lineages from China, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. Within Japanese Zen, the major schools are Sōtōshū and Rinzai-shū. A Rinzai-Sōtō hybrid called the Sanbōkyōdan is a small minority in Japan but quite significant in the United States.⁵ In Japan, Sōtōshū is the second-largest school of Buddhism (it claims roughly 15,000 temples and 8 million adherents);⁶ it also has temples and priests across the Americas and Europe. It is governed by Sōtōshū Shumicho, hereafter Shumicho, the denomination’s administrative headquarters.⁷ The first two Sōtōshū temples on the mainland United States were founded in Los Angeles (Zenshū-ji in 1922) and San Francisco (Sōji-ji in 1934), for Japanese immigrants and their descendants.

Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a few Sōtōshū priests who had been trained in Japan, licensed by Shumicho, and sent to the United States as missionaries gained followings of Western students, who were interested in meditation (*zazen*) and Dōgen’s philosophy and practice of Zen. Some of these missionaries developed new organizations that were more or less independent of Shumicho. Jiyū Kennett, the first Western woman trained and authorized to teach in Japan and founder of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (OBC), severed ties with Shumicho after she left Japan. Others have maintained ties, more or less. Rev. AKIBA Gengo, the Sōtōshū *Sokan* (“bishop”) for North America, has worked tirelessly over the past several decades to develop ties between American Zen communities and Shumicho. In this discussion, “Sōtōshū” refers to the Japanese denomination run by Shumicho. “Sōtō Zen” is a broader and more diverse category that includes Sōtōshū but is not limited to it. It also includes the OBC, communities associated with the Sanbōkyōdan, and other independent and/or hybrid groups that draw on Sōtō teachings and practice. “American Sōtō Zen” refers to Sōtō Zen broadly in the United States. An estimated 200 or more American Sōtō Zen temples or centers operate around the country; they have produced several hundred priests.⁸

Shumucho's English-language website lists fifty Sōtō Zen temples and centers in the United States.⁹ Americans who are registered with and credentialed as priests by Shumucho organized the Association of Sōtō Zen Buddhists (ASZB); Shumucho treats them as missionaries in their home country.¹⁰

The largest group for American Sōtō clergy, the Sōtō Zen Buddhist Association (SZBA), includes some priests who are registered with Shumucho and some who are not. SZBA lists 115 American Sōtō temples on its website, plus ten in other countries and online. The Shumucho and SZBA lists overlap somewhat, and the longer list is not comprehensive.¹¹ It does not include temples associated with the OBC, for example, because the OBC also opted to disaffiliate with the SZBA after some years of initial involvement.¹² A third group, the American Zen Teachers Association (AZTA), includes both ordained and lay Zen teachers from multiple East Asian Buddhist schools, lineages, and orders. These are all considered peer groups; they do not exercise formal oversight of their members.

Zen Buddhism developed in Chinese culture, so some aspects of its rhetoric and institutionalization reflect the values and norms of a Confucian family system. Zen encompasses multiple teaching "lineages" in which new teachers are understood to be the "heirs" of their own teachers, whose lineages purportedly date back to the historical Buddha Shakyamuni and the seven mythical Buddhas said to have preceded him.¹³ Priests and teachers of San Francisco Zen Center (SFZC) are in the lineage of SUZUKI Shunryu and his disciples, for example. Those of the White Plum Asanga are in the lineage of MAEZUMI Taizan; those of the Minnesota Mountain Zen Center are in the lineage of KATAGIRI Dainin. All three of those men initially came to the United States to serve members of the Japanese Sōtōshū temples in Los Angeles or San Francisco, but later established separate organizations. Members of the OBC inherited Jiyū Kennett's Japanese/Sri Lankan/Anglican hybrid "family style."

These (and other) pioneering Zen teachers ordained some of their own Western students as Zen priests and authorized them as teachers, and some of their second- and third-generation students went on to found yet more new Zen centers and organizations. Some American Sōtō clergy are registered with Shumucho, and many are not. Some are affiliated with larger institutions such as SFZC, the OBC, or the White Plum Asanga, and some operate independently. American Zen communities are also legally incorporated in various ways: for example, as corporations sole, as non-profit religious or educational corporations, and so on. Some groups operate informally, without being legal corporations. Thus, even a single American Sōtō Zen teaching lineage can encompass a variety of more-or-less independent organizations with different forms of governance. The White Plum Asanga is especially diverse and includes both the monastic Mountains and Rivers Order and the non-monastic Zen Peacemaker Order, for example. SFZC, which owns and operates three temples in California, identifies sixty affiliated Zen centers and meditation groups in the United States and another nine abroad. Although these disparate groups have a sense of belonging to the same religious "family," they operate mostly independently.¹⁴ Outside Japan, there is no overarching denominational institution like Shumucho.

So American Sōtō Zen includes not just multiple teaching lineages but dozens, if not hundreds, of independently run organizations. In this article, I will focus primarily on the SZBA, the largest organization for American Sōtō Zen teachers who both are and are not bound by Shumicho regulations.

I regard myself as a loyal critic of American Sōtō Zen. I am registered with Shumicho as a senior novice priest. I have trained entirely in the United States, with both Japanese and American teachers, male and female.¹⁵ As a scholar of religions, I also learned to take a critical, historical perspective on the traditions I study and teach, including the one I practice. As a professional chaplain, I am subject to the professional standards of that field, as well. While I feel personal fidelity to Sōtō Zen, I also believe that thinking critically about it is one way to express commitment to it. I want to see American Buddhist institutions of all stripes develop in healthy ways, alleviate suffering, and help living beings flourish. To do that, we must engage constructively with other institutions, including those of religious “others.”

Although American Buddhist communities have done much to address the problem of sexual and other teacher misconduct over the years, thanks in large part to the efforts of feminist teachers and leaders, more remains to be done. Using American Sōtō Zen as a case study, I will describe three structural problems that I believe create conditions conducive to teacher misconduct in the North American context. These are: (1) vastly different paradigms of ordination and professional expectations for clergy in Japanese and American cultures, which have enormous implications for how clergy working in America are trained; (2) inadequate polity (governance) in the West, at both the level of individual North American congregations and across American Zen lineages; and (3) patriarchal structures in American culture, in Buddhism generally, and in Zen institutions particularly, that support clericalism and insularity.

I will conclude by explaining how three resources from the American Protestant tradition could be useful for American Buddhists to think about and to think *with* when considering how to address these problems. Specifically, these are: (1) graduate-level professional education and certification for ministry; (2) certain aspects of the polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PC(USA)]; and (3) the Protestant—and more recently, Papal—critique of clericalism. My aim here is not simply to critique but to offer constructive suggestions. Scholars and practitioners who specialize in other forms of Buddhism in the West can decide how well my comments may apply to those traditions.

BUDDHIST TEACHER MISCONDUCT IN NORTH AMERICA: A TIMELINE

In 1984, SFZC forced its first American abbot, Zentatsu Richard Baker, to resign for abuses involving power, money, and sex. Several months later, while I was a junior in college, I took my first deep dive into Zen practice: I spent the fall semester at Green Gulch Farm, one of three temple communities owned by SFZC. I did not meet Baker until years later, and then only in passing, but I could see that he was highly charismatic and that his effect on the community had been profound, given the emotional and institutional paroxysms his departure had left in its wake. I watched the

organization struggle for years to come to terms with the trauma. SFZC leaders spent nearly a decade sorting through the lessons and developing ethical guidelines and grievance procedures. Baker's successor, Tenshin Reb Anderson, was arrested in 1987 for brandishing a pistol in a public housing project, where he had chased an alleged mugger, and it was revealed that he had taken the gun from a dead body he had discovered four years earlier in Golden Gate Park and visited several times without reporting it to police. Abbatial leadership at SFZC was then distributed to more than one person and has remained so ever since.¹⁶

These SFZC leadership scandals were not the first and would by no means be the last. In 1983, MAEZUMI Taizan, the Japanese founder of Zen Center of Los Angeles (ZCLA), had entered treatment for alcoholism after apologizing to his community for extramarital affairs with students, including a teenager.¹⁷ In 1985, the *Yoga Journal* published an informal survey of fifty-four teachers in meditation-oriented traditions in the United States and found that 64 percent reported at least occasional sexual relations with students.¹⁸ In 1986, Chögyam Trungpa, founder of Shambhala International, died at age 47 of alcoholism; he had been open about his sexual relationships with women students. In 1987, his successor, Ösel Tendzin, revealed that he had infected three students with HIV over the preceding three years, believing himself impervious to the disease. He was wrong: it killed him and at least one of his partners.¹⁹ That same year, the Korean Zen teacher Seung Sahn, founder of the Kwan Um School of Zen, was accused of multiple sexual relationships with students, despite claiming to be celibate.²⁰ In 1990, after the death of KATAGIRI Dainin, founder of the Minnesota Mountain Zen Center, it was revealed that he had relationships with women students, as well.²¹

Throughout the 1990s, additional allegations of misconduct by Buddhist and yoga teachers in the United States continued to circulate. Accusers were typically silenced, shamed, and shunned when they come forward. In 1996, I guest-edited an issue of *Turning Wheel*, the journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, on teacher sexual misconduct and contributed an essay that I now deeply regret, wondering why women didn't just walk away from inappropriate sexual advances. Never having been subjected to sexual abuse myself, I did not understand the process by which predators choose and groom vulnerable people to be their victims, or the profound confusion and harm such misconduct causes. Soon thereafter I learned that someone close to me was such a victim, yet I found myself unable to do anything to stop the offending teacher's predations. In 1997, *The Guardian* published allegations of sexual misconduct by Sangharakshita, founder of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. (A 2019 report revealed widespread misconduct by multiple teachers.)²² That same year, a doctoral dissertation by Caryl Gopfert described nine cases of betrayal by Zen teachers (male and female) of their American women students.²³

Problems continued to surface in the twenty-first century. In 2010, Eido Tai SHIMANO of the Sanbōkyōdan was forced to resign from the Zen Studies Society of New York after decades of allegations of sexual misconduct, which finally reached the pages of *The Atlantic*.²⁴ The leadership of its Dai Bosatsu monastery in the Catskills passed to a female Dharma successor, Shinge Sherry Chayat. Around the

same time, Eko Little, the head of the OBC, stepped down after “an escalating pattern of conduct spanning over 10 years that included betrayals of trust, sexual boundary violations, and misuse of power.”²⁵ In 2011, sixty-six American Zen teachers signed a letter asking Dennis Genpo Merzel to stop teaching because of his multiple relationships with women students. He is still teaching.²⁶ In 2012, Ken McLeod of Unfettered Mind and Fusho Al Rapoport of Open Mind Zen faced allegations of sexual misconduct.²⁷ In 2013, SASAKI Joshu, the 107-year-old Rinzai Zen master who led the Mt. Baldy Zen Center, was exposed as having preyed sexually on women students for half a century.²⁸ In 2017, an independent investigation found evidence of horrific physical, sexual, and financial abuse by Sogyal Lakar, the author of the popular *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* and head of the Rigpa Buddhist community. He was also revealed as a fraud who lacked any substantive Buddhist education.²⁹ In 2019, Noah Levine, founder of Against the Stream and Refuge Recovery communities, was stripped of his teaching authority by the Insight Meditation Community Teachers Council and Against the Stream was dismantled.³⁰ The same year, Shambhala International released a report saying its third leader, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, had committed sexual misconduct for decades. In 2020, Pema Chödrön, the head of Shambhala’s Gampo Abbey in Halifax, Nova Scotia, resigned from her position in the community in protest of his reinstatement without adequate reckoning for his misdeeds.³¹

If we look *only* at American Zen organizations, we are talking about founders or prominent teachers of SFZC, the ZCLA and White Plum Asanga, the Sanbōkyōdan, Minnesota Mountain Zen Center, the OBC, the most prominent Rinzai monastery in the United States, and the Kwan Um School of Zen, at least. In other words, nearly *all* of the largest and most influential Zen organizations in the country, which have produced hundreds of priests, Zen teachers, and authorized lay teachers.

In 2018, I presented a paper on teacher misconduct in American Zen at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting and posted it online. Rev. Edo Frances Carney, past president of the SZBA, wrote a response, also published online. This article incorporates and responds to a number of her comments and critiques. She wrote that she is aware of “approximately eight” cases of sexual misconduct by Sōtō Zen priests in the United States, all of them male, over the past six decades. She noted that “by and large, priests from the United States in Sōtō Zen have led their Zen communities with dignity, grace, inspiration, and ethical uprightness even as the School of Sōtō Zen [what I call “American Sōtō Zen”] has endeavored to find agreement and cohesion in its ethical guidelines and training standards among its teachers and temples.”³² I grant the point, yet the long-term damage to individuals, marriages, and institutions in the wake of such misconduct cannot be overstated. A focus on individual “miscreants” also obscures the larger *structural* problems that I wish to explore here.

If we step back and look beyond Western Zen communities, we see that almost every meditation-oriented, convert Buddhist institution of any significant size in the United States has been affected by the misconduct of its leaders, particularly male sexual misconduct. Why is this? Most of the literature on misconduct by spiritual

teachers, in both academic and popular sources, focuses on the psychological dynamics between offenders and their victims (projection, transference, denial, enabling, and so on), and the internal group dynamics that support abuse. Articles and books have described how predatory teachers go about their predations; how their communities respond or fail to respond; how survivors are affected; and the resources available to help prevent violations or heal communities after misconduct occurs.³³ The larger cultural and historical contexts of Buddhist teacher abuses are less often considered.

Some observers have pointed out that the male Asian missionaries who developed followings and Buddhist institutions among American disciples during the 1960s and 1970s were unprepared for Second-Wave Feminism and the associated Sexual Revolution. They came from cultures in which meditation was practiced by a minority of monks and nuns, not by laypeople, and where monastic training was strictly gender-segregated. Suddenly these teachers found themselves training male and female students together, in intensive monastic or semimonastic environments, and didn't know how to deal with the sexual energies and problems that arose.

That may be so, but other cultural and institutional conditions are also involved. People raised in Buddhist cultures and those raised in Christian ones tend to have vastly different understandings of how people become religious professionals and of what they do. Translating any Asian Buddhist tradition into American culture is no easy task, and it requires critical, historical perspective. Buddhist institutions, like Christian ones, also tend to be strongly patriarchal—that is, hierarchical and androcentric—and this can foster clericalism and insularity, which adds to the risk of power abuse. In the United States, meditation-oriented convert Buddhist communities also tend to be predominantly white, middle-class, and privileged economically and educationally. To broaden beyond this demographic, culturally appropriate training in ministerial skills would help. Master's-level education in Buddhist Studies and Buddhist ministry is now available in a few places; it is also expensive and time-consuming.³⁴ Most problematic, however, is the absence of independent Buddhist judicatories that could investigate and address allegations of misconduct. Each of these problems will be considered here in turn.

PROBLEM 1: DIFFERENT PARADIGMS OF ORDINATION

Ordination is understood and practiced differently in Japanese Buddhism than it is in much of Buddhist Asia, and differently than it is in the American religious mainstream, which is shaped primarily by Protestant Christianity. Because Christian norms predominate in Western cultures, I will devote relatively little space to describing the Mainline Protestant³⁵ paradigm here; differences with Buddhism will receive more attention.

Among Christians, an ordained minister is understood to be called by God and the community to a special position of religious leadership and is anointed for that role. Theologies vary by denomination, but in general, in the Protestant Mainline, a Christian priest, minister, or pastor is a religious professional who is authorized to teach and interpret scriptures, administer Christian sacraments, and perform life-cycle

rituals (weddings, funerals, etc.). Their job is typically to lead and serve a lay congregation, although some denominations ordain clergy to do other kinds of work, such as teaching or chaplaincy. Rabbis function in similar ways in American synagogues.

Among American Mainline Protestants, as well as Roman Catholics, Unitarian Universalists, and Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Jews, prospective clergy complete several years of graduate-level academic and practical training for ministry, and ordination typically occurs *after* this training, according to the procedures of each denomination. Seminary students study their traditions' histories and theologies, learn to read and interpret scriptures in their original languages, absorb the polity and rituals of their specific denominations, and develop their own theologies, "pastoral imaginations," and professional ethics.³⁶ As they prepare for ordination, clergy candidates are required to explain their religious beliefs and their understandings of ministry to various local, regional, and perhaps national oversight committees. Many undergo obligatory psychological testing and criminal background checks, because clergy deal routinely with emotionally vulnerable people. Some clergy candidates must pass rigorous exams and/or produce detailed professional dossiers. Seminary training does not guarantee character, and ecclesiastical hierarchies can both provide oversight and protect the status quo by concealing problems. Yet this training does help to prepare people intellectually and practically for ministry, and clergy in American mainline denominations *are* subject to oversight and can be defrocked for misconduct, according to detailed denominational policies, procedures and rules. One example from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is discussed below. Most Protestant clergy and American rabbis are hired and can be fired by their congregations or denominations.

Buddhist clergy in Asia, on the other hand, function rather differently in their cultures than Christian or Jewish ones do in the United States. In most of Buddhist Asia, they are (presumably) celibate monks and nuns. They depend upon laity for donations of food, clothing, medicine, and shelter. In Japan, status as a Buddhist cleric, or priest, is now largely hereditary. The primary role of Japanese temple priests has been to perform culturally prescribed memorial rites on behalf of temple donors' ancestors, in keeping with the Confucian values embedded in Japanese culture. The Japanese Zen missionaries who attracted American students were reformers who wanted to pass on what they saw as authentic monastic Zen training. American Protestant culture does not particularly value or support monastic vocations, however. Even the monastic orders in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions struggle to attract new members in the global North. To support themselves, American Buddhist teachers must therefore function more like Christian clergy and Jewish rabbis. They lead lay congregations and provide religious instruction, ritual services, and pastoral counseling in ways that are normative within white, middle-class, American, individualistic culture. Some work as professional chaplains in various institutional settings. They need training for these roles like that of similarly situated religious professionals. They need to be equipped to understand and navigate the cultural differences, so they

can do the painstaking work of cross-cultural translation, interpretation, and adaptation.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ORDINATION IN CHINESE AND JAPANESE BUDDHISM

For most of the 2500-year history of Buddhism throughout Asia, ordination has meant celibate monasticism, undertaken for a temporary period or for life. With few exceptions, some of which I will mention, ordination has been governed by the *Vinaya*, one of the three major sections of the Buddhist canon. Differing Buddhist schools in India did not originally experience schisms over matters of doctrine, but over interpretations of the *Vinaya*. Six versions still exist, three of which are still in use. Only one, the Pāli *Vinaya* of Southeast Asian Theravāda, has been translated fully into English. The *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya* (Ch. *Ssu-fen-lü*) is used within Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism and in various Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, and Taiwanese schools derived from it. The *Mulasarvastivadin Vinaya* is used in Tibetan *Vajrayāna* schools.³⁷ Collectively, these three *Vinayas* are more alike than different: each consists of a set of vows or precepts grouped into categories, and a textual explanation of how each rule came to be implemented. Each requires prospective ordinands to meet certain conditions in order to qualify for ordination, and to take ten “precepts” or monastic vows as novices, then hundreds more at full ordination. New ordinands’ heads are shaved and they receive monastic robes and begging bowls, as well as other requisites. The monastic precepts regulate every aspect of daily life and deportment, and govern the affairs of the monastic community. By the Song Dynasty in China (960–1279), “Pure rules” such as the *Bhaijang Code* (*Bhaijang Chingguei*) were also composed to govern daily life in state-supported monasteries, in much the same way the Benedictine Rule governs Roman Catholic members of the Benedictine Order.

The Mahāyāna *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya* was first translated into Chinese in the fifth century. Another fifth-century Chinese text, the *Fan-wang jing* (Jp. *Bonmokyō*),³⁸ enumerates ten major and forty-eight minor precepts specifically prescribed for practitioners of Mahāyāna Buddhism.³⁹ The first ten *Fan-wang jing* precepts resemble the “Ten Moral Actions” recommended in both the Pāli canon and Tibetan Buddhist literature composed for both laypeople and monastics.⁴⁰ The forty-eight minor precepts of the *Fan-wang jing* are similar in content to portions of the Pāli *Brahmajala Sutta*, the first text in the *Digha Nikāya* of the Pāli Canon.⁴¹ Although the *Fan-wang jing* claims to have been translated from Sanskrit to Chinese, it also addresses issues prominent in Chinese Buddhism, such as filial piety and relations between Buddhism and the state.⁴² Some of the *Fan-wang* minor offenses relate only to the laity and some only to the clergy, but eventually it became standard practice for ordained Chinese monks and nuns to adopt precepts from both the Indian *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya* and the Chinese *Fan-wang jing*.⁴³

[Chinese] Bodhisattva ordinations seem to have included not only the precepts of the *Fan-wang*, but also several related sets of vows found in other Mahāyāna scriptures, such as the three refuges, ritual confession and repentance, the four

universal vows [to save all sentient beings, overcome all delusions, master all practices, and attain Buddhahood] and the three pure precepts [to refrain from evil, to do good, and to purify the mind and/or live for the benefit of all sentient beings].⁴⁴

All these elements eventually made their way into Japanese Sōtō Zen ordination rites, as well.

By the ninth century CE, Buddhist ordinations in the large Chinese monastic institutions were regulated by the government. Prospective monks had to pass tests of reading, writing, concentration, scriptural memorization, and commentary before becoming certified. Status as a monk was attractive because it exempted one from taxation and corvée labor. Although novices could go on to full ordination, the majority of Chinese monks and nuns did not.⁴⁵ They simply adopted the ten novice precepts of the *Vinaya* and the Mahāyāna precepts of the *Fan-wang jing*.

Saichō (767–822), the founder of Tendai Buddhism in Japan, pioneered using only the *Fan-wang* precepts for ordination. His school was dominant in Japan by the time Dōgen (1200–1252) was born. Dōgen was ordained as a Tendai monk at thirteen. He later undertook Zen study and traveled to China, where all the large, state-supported monasteries were called Ch’an (Zen), though monastics engaged in ritual, devotional, and scholarly practices besides meditation. Having been shaped by Confucian culture and values, Ch’an monasteries from the Song Dynasty (960–1279) onward stressed the importance of religious lineages and veneration of one’s religious ancestors. Ordination rites came to include the transmission of religious genealogies that purported to certify the direct transmission of Buddhist insight from seven Buddhas before the historical Shakyamuni Buddha down through twenty-eight generations of teachers in India and approximately two dozen generations in China. Such lineage documents greatly impressed Dōgen when he visited China as a young monk in the early thirteenth century; he carried one home and his disciples continue reproducing them today.⁴⁶

Dōgen also penned a set of “pure rules,” the *Eibei Shingi*, modeled on the *Ch’anyuan Chinguei*, to govern his monastic community. The ordination ritual in Sōtō Zen involves adopting sixteen precepts: the three refuges, three pure precepts, and the first ten of the fifty-eight Mahāyāna precepts of the *Fan-wang jing*. Japanese Buddhist monks and nuns were also regulated by the government. Until the late nineteenth century, clergy of all major Japanese Buddhist schools were expected to maintain celibacy (except those in the Jōdō Shinshū “True Pure Land” tradition), keep their heads shaved, wear monastic robes, and refrain from consuming meat or alcohol. Jōdō Shinshū clergy have married since the school’s founding in the thirteenth century, although this was anomalous in the Buddhist world.

ORDINATION IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE BUDDHISM

After Buddhism was disestablished as Japan’s state religion in the late nineteenth century, it ceased to be illegal for male clergy to wear nonclerical clothing, to let their

hair grow, to eat meat, or to marry. Many male priests felt they needed wives to help them manage the temples they ran. By the end of World War II, marriage became normative for male clergy in all forms of “Temple Buddhism,” that is, schools founded before the 1600s (Tendai, Shingon, Pure Land, Zen, and Nichiren schools). Nuns in Japan’s second largest Buddhist denomination, Sōtōshū, on the other hand, are still expected to wear clerical attire at all times, to remain celibate, and to hew closer to other monastic ideals.⁴⁷

Male priests typically raise a family and pass temple property and the role of priest down to an heir, ideally the eldest son. “Approximately 74 percent of male priests are from temple households; virtually all economically viable temples are passed on from father to son and are not open to competition.” A temple son is typically ordained as a novice by his father at age ten or eleven, and begins an apprenticeship helping with ceremonies for *danka*, the temple’s member families. In contrast, “As many as 90 percent of women who enter the priesthood come from lay backgrounds.” This means “there are far fewer [temple] vacancies for nuns, and very few *danka* prefer the temple to pass on to a temple daughter, even if she becomes ordained.”⁴⁸

Ordination as a novice Zen priest marks the *beginning* of one’s clerical training, not the end: a characteristic it retains from Buddhist traditions elsewhere in Asia. A temple son typically attends college at a denominational university, where he receives academic training in Buddhist history, literature, and other topics relevant to his priestly career, and is tested on his knowledge. He then attends a training monastery to receive practical instruction in liturgy, ritual, and perhaps meditation. After that, he is likely to return home to help manage the family temple. As was mentioned, the primary *function* that Buddhist priests perform in Japan is to offer culturally prescribed funeral and memorial services. Japanese people generally visit temples on festival occasions and to participate in rituals for specific purposes.

In the United States, however, most Zen clergy are adult converts who have practiced intensively in monastic or semimonastic contexts for at least several years before receiving novice ordination. Practices vary by temple and teacher, but in my own experience, when Western clergy receive initial ordination, they tend to receive the same sort of deference from laypeople accorded to Christian clergy and rabbis despite their Buddhist status as trainees. Nearly half of all fully ordained American Sōtō priests are women, and many of them have led a “cultural shift in how Sōtō Zen communities deliberate, govern their resources, and communicate within their bodies of practice.”⁴⁹ With some exceptions such as the OBC, neither male nor female American Zen priests are expected to be celibate, although our vows include refraining from sexual misconduct.

SŌTŌSHŪ MONASTIC AND TEACHING RANKS

On the way to full ordination, Sōtō trainee priests pass through a series of monastic stages or “Dharma ranks”: novice priest (*jōza*), head novice (*shuso, zagen*), full priest (*oshō*), and “great priest” (*daiosbō*). At novice ordination, a trainee’s head is shaved and the person makes vows and receives a Buddhist name, robes, and other requisites.

After several years, the novice is expected to serve as *shuso*, or the head monk of an intensive, ninety-day period of monastic training called an *ango*. The *shuso*'s term culminates in a ceremony (*bossen-shiki*) to test the person's understanding of the Dharma. The *shuso* occupies the teacher's seat and answers questions posed by senior clergy. (This ceremony may be done *pro forma* in Japan, without an actual *ango*.) Full ordination in Sōtōshū requires a combination of *both* formal academic education, months to years of monastic training, and a culminating series of ceremonies known as Dharma Transmission (*Shibō* and *Denpo*) plus *Zuise*, which involves rites at the two head temples in Japan that acknowledge the priest as a full member of a Sōtōshū lineage. After *Zuise*, the cleric is called an *osbō*, or fully ordained priest. An *osbō* may then wear brown (or green or blue) robes, instead of the black ones that novices wear. If the *osbō* leads an *ango* and trains a novice as *shuso*, the *osbō* becomes a *daiosbō* ("great priest") and may wear a red robe.⁵⁰

All Sōtōshū clergy are expected to pass through the Dharma ranks *and* to receive a teaching rank. They typically receive Dharma Transmission from the person who initially ordained them—normally their own fathers—after their postcollege monastery training is complete. "Because Dharma Transmission is a prerequisite to becoming head priest of a Sōtō branch temple, virtually all Sōtō priests meet this ritual requirement at an early stage in their careers."⁵¹ Contrary to common practice in the United States, Dharma Transmission "in and of itself does not qualify one to accept students or to train disciples." It qualifies a priest to run a local Japanese temple, which is not a site for meditation or other monastic training, but of "ceremonial services to lay patrons."⁵²

Nuns have faced extensive discrimination in Japanese Zen. Sōtōshū nuns now have access to three training monasteries, compared to twenty-six for men. For centuries, women were discouraged from engaging in any religious activity until they reached the age of 40, the presumed end of their childbearing years. During the Tokugawa era (1603–1867), devout Buddhist women could only practice together at small sub-temples of larger institutions.

It is only in the post-war [WWII] era that nuns have managed to gain, on paper at least, rights and privileges equal to those of their male counterparts in the Zen establishment. Sōtō nuns, after a long struggle, first won the right to ordain disciples and give Dharma Transmission in 1951, and since 1970 they have been allowed to serve as the head priests of low-ranking branch temples.⁵³

In 1923, 10 percent of Sōtōshū clergy were women.⁵⁴ Even with the gains just mentioned, by 1984 the proportion had dropped to 7 percent.⁵⁵ In 1985, 5.1 percent of temple head priests were women. The school stopped distinguishing between male and female priests in 1989, which effectively rendered the tiny minority of women even less visible. A survey by the school showed that in 1995, the proportion of female head priests had dropped to 4.3 percent.⁵⁶ The wives of temple priests now perform many functions that otherwise might be done by nuns.

In addition to Dharma ranks, Sōtōshū clergy also receive teaching (*kyōshi*) ranks based on the number of years of formal education and monastic training they have completed. (Some ranks can be achieved through qualifying exams.) One's *kyōshi* status determines the level at which one is allowed to provide religious instruction to others. Dharma Transmission and *Zuise* are qualifications for the lowest rank, *Santokyōshi* or "Third-Class Teacher." Therefore, Dharma Transmission is also "a preliminary step, after which one's real development begins."⁵⁷ The next rank, which is the default in most cases, is *Nitokyōshi*, or "Second-Class Teacher," which requires various combinations of academic education and monastery training. The more education one has—and the more one's education has specialized in Buddhism, particularly at Komazawa University, a Sōtōshū school—the less time one is required to spend in formal monastic training. For example, someone with a junior-high education must spend three years in a training monastery to become a *Nitokyōshi*, but a person with a PhD in Buddhist Studies needs only six months. An *Ittokyōshi*, or "First-class Teacher," has more monastic training than a second-class teacher. A person with a doctorate in Buddhist Studies, however, may be appointed *Ittokyōshi* without examination or monastery training.⁵⁸

In some smaller Japanese schools of Zen, such as Rinzaishū and the Sanbōkyōdan, authorization to function as a teacher is separate from ordination as a cleric, so laypeople have been authorized as Zen teachers, but not as priests. In Sōtō Zen, authorization as a teacher and full ordination as a priest are linked, although that too is changing in North America as lay teachers have been receiving "Dharma Entrustment."

In Japan, in order to serve as the abbot of a regional Sōtōshū temple that trains novice monks, one must attain the rank of *Seikyōshi*, or "Upright Teacher." For a person with an undergraduate degree in a subject other than Buddhism, four and one-half years of monastic training are required. People with graduate degrees in Buddhist studies from Komazawa University need between six months and two years in a monastery; this rank can also be achieved by written exam. Teachers at training monasteries must *also* complete a special three-year course called *Shike* training, after which the priest can properly be identified as a "Zen master." This is why Shumuchō does not recognize American Zen monasteries as equivalent to Japanese training monasteries: American ones lack priests with sufficient credentials to train novices in the Japanese system. Shumuchō also confers several higher, honorary ranks, which involve special service to the denomination and payment of fees amounting to many thousands of dollars.

Until World War II, "the highest rank a nun could attain was below the lowest monk rank." Even if she were functioning as the head priest of a temple, she could not perform *Zuise* to be recognized as such. All nuns were required to wear black robes, the color for novices. "They were not permitted to receive the requisite monastic or secular education for the higher ranking positions that would have entitled them to wear colors commensurate with the rank."⁵⁹ Since the war, women have gained the right to train disciples, to earn teaching ranks and wear robes of the associated colors, and to vote on school business.⁶⁰

AMERICAN SŌTŌ ZEN TRAINING STANDARDS

In American Zen communities, many (but not all) novice priests pass through the monastic ranks. The teaching ranks are not used commonly or consistently. Training typically consists of meditation and rotation through various Zen center jobs; it may or may not include any extended monastic retreats, academic education, or professional training geared specifically toward the North American religious context. An American ordained as a novice Zen priest may or may not receive Dharma Transmission, and in many cases not until after many years of training. Considerable mystique is associated with the esoteric ceremonies, which are conducted in secret over one to three weeks. The newly minted full priest is said to have the “same mind as Buddha,” a topic to which we will return.

In 1995, priests from the SFZC and ZCLA communities organized the SZBA as a professional association promoting peer support and collegiality.⁶¹ This was one antidote to the problem of isolation and secrecy that had fueled teacher misconduct in their communities. Eight years later, in 2004, ten lineages were represented at the first national SZBA conference. Over time, the group developed a set of shared ethical guidelines based on the sixteen vows made during Sōtōshū initiation, ordination, and Dharma Transmission rites. In 2005, it sponsored a training retreat for Associate members, which I attended.

In 2006, two women SZBA members, Rev. Eido Carney and Rev. Kyoki Roberts, invited me to help them draft a proposal for a “Sōtō Zen Institute” that could provide appropriate training to American Zen priests. I was asked because I hold a conventional Protestant MDiv degree, had written an MA thesis on Zen clergy formation, and was working on a PhD. In addition to traditional monastic roles, the proposal recommended training external to local Zen congregations in fourteen areas:

1. Critical perspectives on Zen and other Buddhist traditions, and on American and Japanese religions and cultures. (This is necessary to help trainees shift from naïve, sentimental, or uncritical belief to thoughtful faith, and to awareness of complexity, unexamined assumptions, and unearned privilege. It also facilitates careful interpretation/translation of Zen traditions to the current American historical and cultural context.)
 - a. Awareness of one’s own social location (race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, education, physical abilities) as an aspect of that critical perspective—where we stand affects what we can see about the world.
 - b. Theories of religion.
2. Power dynamics and systems theory—both larger social institutions in which we function, and smaller systems such as families and congregations.
3. World religions and interfaith dialogue and collaboration. This might also include skills in extemporaneous prayer and ritual.
4. Pastoral care/spiritual direction. Includes professional ethics and Buddhist and Western psychologies.
5. American religious history and culture.

6. Buddhist history and philosophy, including critical, scholarly, secondary literature in the field.
7. Buddhist “theology”: recognizing and using different Buddhist/Zen frameworks to analyze and respond to specific situations of human suffering. Learning to apply Dharma teaching to daily life in nuanced and sophisticated ways.
8. Preaching (various styles), which is linked to scriptural analysis and interpretation.
9. Buddhist languages.
10. Transforming social/institutionalized greed, hate, and delusion (privilege, racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty, violence, addiction, consumerism, etc.).
11. Religious education for children and families.
12. Conflict resolution.
13. Legal issues for clergy.
14. Other electives.

Numbers 4 and 6–8 made it into priest-training guidelines the SZBA adopted in 2008. Items 1a, 3, and 12 are also included in the membership standards adopted in 2017.

After surveying members about how they trained their own students, the SZBA disseminated “Guidelines for the Formation of Sōtō Zen Priests in the West,” a general “profile of the characteristics and skills one could hope to find in the ideal fully realized priest.” It covered four areas in general terms. “Carrying the Tradition” includes priestly deportment, Zen meditation and ritual, and service to the Zen community. “Personal Conduct” refers to personal maturity, ethical behavior, teaching by example, and constancy in the community. “Self Understanding” entails a realistic understanding of one’s habits, biases, strengths and weaknesses, and an ability to show restraint and practice ongoing introspection. These qualities are certainly important in religious professionals. “Knowledge of Source Texts” refers to knowledge of Buddhist and Zen history and literature, and the ability to communicate effectively. A list of about eighty primary and secondary texts is included in the guidelines, all but three of which were written or translated by white or Asian men, and none of which reflect feminist, critical race, or postcolonial analysis. Training continues to be inconsistent across (and sometimes within) American Sōtō Zen lineages.

In comparison, virtually all mainline Protestant denominations in the United States require a three-year Master of Divinity degree (seventy-two units of graduate-level academic and practical training) from a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and a regional accrediting body. Professional chaplains of any religion typically must earn an MDiv or its equivalent, including coursework in nine areas and 1600–2000 hours of highly structured clinical training. Chaplains and clergy must be ordained or endorsed for ministry by their respective denominations, of which they must also remain members in good standing. National recognition as a Board Certified Chaplain requires an additional 2000 hours of full-time, supervised, clinical work as a professional chaplain and a lengthy review process involving both written essays and direct observations intended to assess competence in thirty-one specific professional areas. These include the ability to integrate theology

with insights from psychology and other social sciences, apply ethical theories, analyze group dynamics, maintain professional boundaries, recognize personal limitations, deal with various forms of diversity, work with people who are traumatized and bereaved, lead rituals, facilitate groups, analyze scholarly literature in relevant fields, perform spiritual assessments and develop plans of care, safeguard confidential information, and cultivate relationships with professionals of different disciplines and with community clergy of various faiths. Professional chaplains are also bound by a rigorous code of ethics designed specifically for providers of spiritual care.

Because the SZBA regards itself as a professional association, not a denominational body, until 2017 all that was required for membership was Dharma Transmission and payment of membership dues. The SZBA now requires at least five years of training as a novice priest and Dharma Transmission from a teacher in a lineage that can be traced back to one in Japan, even if its connection to Shumicho has been severed. A prospective member's teacher, however, is not expected to meet any qualifications other than Dharma Transmission: virtually all members who belonged to the organization when the standards were adopted were "grandfathered" in, regardless of what standards they did or didn't meet themselves. Thus, a fundamental qualification for membership in the main professional association is almost entirely at the discretion of teachers whose qualifications were not vetted by anyone but their own teachers. The 2017 SZBA Membership Standards stress, in boldface type on the first page, "**Dharma Transmission is solely a matter between teacher and student. SZBA standards are intended to delineate requirements for SZBA full membership, not a person's readiness for dharma transmission.**"⁶² American Zen communities seem to conflate Dharma Transmission (the monastic rank of *asbō*) with the various Japanese teaching (*kyōshi*) ranks, and do not normally require American Zen teachers to have any formal academic or professional training outside their home congregations.

The SZBA standards emphasize intensive meditation experience and running an American-style Zen center, rather than other common forms of ministry such as chaplaincy, social services, or teaching. As in their earlier "Guidelines for the Formation of Zen Clergy in the West," candidates for full membership today are expected to have engaged in intensive meditation; led a "temple-centered life"; and served in roles typical of Japanese training monasteries and American lay Zen centers, such as head cook (*tenzo*), altar attendant (*chiden*), head of practice (*tanto*), temple officer, or assistant to a teacher. Candidates are expected to be familiar with a variety of Buddhist texts and to have experience teaching classes in Buddhism, but no formal academic preparation is expected. Experience in teaching basic meditation, performing Zen ceremonies, and using ritual implements is necessary. Clergy are also expected to be able to counsel students in discussions about their Zen practice, to support people dealing with significant life transitions or losses, and to aid the dying, but are not explicitly required to have formal training as pastoral counselors, social workers, spiritual directors, or chaplains. Nor are they evaluated according to whether they understand the professional ethics, boundaries, and local laws governing pastoral care. In some jurisdictions, for example, mandated-reporter laws require clergy to notify law-enforcement agencies if they learn about elder or child abuse or neglect, or threats of self-harm or

violence toward others. Formal, academic and professional training in Buddhist Studies, ministerial skills, nonprofit management, conflict resolution, interfaith engagement, and issues of diversity are allowed, but not expected or required. The candidate's primary teacher is responsible for supervising and evaluating the candidate's professional, spiritual, and psycho-social development.

This is a result of the process by which Zen Buddhism was introduced to American lay practitioners. Asian missionaries came to the United States initially to serve immigrant communities. Pioneers such as Suzuki, Katagiri, Maezumi, and others emphasized *zazen* practice and developed followings of American-born converts who shared their interest in meditation. These Asian teachers' ties with Shumicho became attenuated or were cut, and they authorized American students as Zen priests and teachers without requiring them to meet Japanese standards. Shumicho has offered various forms of training to American Zen teachers, but these have been inconsistent. Second-generation, American-born teachers went on to develop their own Zen centers and train their own students as they wished. If one doesn't care about joining the SZBA, even its general standards are moot.

Carney wrote,

The reason for [the] slow transition to Standards is that the SZBA has not wanted to alienate teachers who might have the proclivity to go rogue and sidestep the requirements of training for their students. Some teachers have been slow to accept the authority of the organization, wishing to maintain independence at all costs to the future of the unification of Sōtō Zen temples and teachers in the U.S.⁶³

That is a remarkable statement: in order to prevent teachers from "going rogue" rather than accept oversight, the SZBA opted not to exercise oversight. A substantial number of members wanted the organization to remain an informal association of peers, not to provide governance.

Japanese standards for teaching ranks among Sōtōshū clergy—minimally, a baccalaureate degree and postcollege monastic training by the most highly trained and educated Zen teachers—are similar to those for mainstream religious professionals in the United States. So what is the resistance to professional standards among some American Zen teachers about? I suspect that it reflects multiple conditions. Some are cultural: most of the first-generation American Sōtō Zen teachers were products of the 1960s Counterculture; many of them lack(ed) graduate-level education; and American religious culture has a strong anti-intellectual streak deriving from its history of Protestant evangelicalism from the 1830s onward. Furthermore, SZBA documents reflect a belief that Zen training is primarily a "special transmission" between master and disciple, rather than formation in *multiple* contexts including the family, the local temple community, academy, and specialized training monasteries, as it is in Japan. Perhaps there is some reluctance to recognize that being a member of the clergy is both a personal vocation *and* a professional role.

The SZBA does require its members to uphold a set of ethical guidelines rooted in the Zen ordination vows. Members and the temples they lead are required to

establish and enforce their own ethical guidelines and grievance procedures, but the SZBA has no power to enforce them. In *Safe Harbor*, a ground-breaking publication of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, then headed by Rev. Hozan Alan Senauke of Berkeley Zen Center, several essays and examples of American Buddhist ethical guidelines and grievance procedures are offered.⁶⁴ A flow chart provided by FaithTrust Institute, an organization based in the Protestant tradition that works to prevent and repair clergy misconduct, indicates that the first step in a case of alleged misconduct should be a report to an independent judicatory. The problem for American Zen Buddhists is that no such judicatory exists, because it would limit teachers' autonomy to train students however they see fit.

PROBLEM TWO: INADEQUATE POLITY

After different paradigms of ordination, the second major problem in American Sōtō Zen is thus inadequate polity, or governance structures. As was mentioned earlier, American Zen groups, even those within the same lineage, are organized and incorporated in a variety of ways, and have different policies and procedures for handling conflicts and grievances. Among Christian denominations, three basic forms of polity are common: episcopal, meaning governance by bishops, as in the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican/Episcopal, and Orthodox churches; presbyterian, in which elected bodies of ordained and lay leaders govern in the place of bishops (Presbyterian churches); and congregational, in which individual congregations govern themselves autonomously, although they may join regional or national coordinating bodies for shared purposes (Baptists, the United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Unitarian-Universalists, etc.). American Zen communities operate with a problematic combination of episcopal and congregational styles: senior teachers have considerable authority within their communities, and communities operate more or less autonomously.

American Zen teachers are often entrepreneurs who found their own religious organizations, hold virtual lifetime appointments in them, and may be accountable only to people over whom they hold spiritual authority, even if the community is formally governed by a board of directors. In the case of residential Zen centers or monasteries, teachers may hold considerable practical power over students' work, education, training, housing, and personal relationships. Students' advancement through monastic ranks is entirely at a teacher's discretion. The focus on Dharma Transmission in American Zen, understood as a person-to-person confirmation of awakening to the core insights of Buddhist teaching, obscures the professional competencies and systems of accountability and support that clergy *also* need to serve safely in the role of religious leader, counselor, and teacher.

Carney noted that

in each instance of sexual misconduct in Sōtō Zen, the temples and communities dealt with the problem, they sought counseling and outside conflict resolution assistance, they removed the teacher from his teaching platform, they

installed a new teacher who assisted in the recovery from the wounding of the event, and they required the teacher to complete treatment in counseling. The Zen communities did not simply walk away from or ignore the problem when it came to the forefront; they faced it and restored the good name of their communities and their temples.⁶⁵

These experiences led the SZBA to insist that members agree to enforce ethical guidelines and grievance procedures within their respective communities. I do not doubt the veracity of the above statement, but it cannot be verified independently because not all cases have been made public. The problem remains that teachers are accountable primarily to the communities in which they already hold substantial spiritual authority, rather than to any independent, external body.

PRESBYTERIAN POLITY AND PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALLEGED MISCONDUCT

Presbyterian polity for handling clergy misconduct offers an interesting contrast. In the PC(USA), polity operates on four levels: the Session, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Individual congregations are governed by a Session, which consists of lay leaders elected by the congregation and designated as "ruling elders." They should represent the diversity of the congregation and may serve no more than two, three-year terms consecutively.⁶⁶ A professional minister, also called a "teaching elder," moderates the Session and may vote on community matters, but the majority rules.⁶⁷ A Presbytery oversees a group of at least ten congregations within a geographic region; all teaching elders (clergy) and an equal number of elected ruling elders serve on this body.⁶⁸ A Synod is a group of three or more adjacent Presbyteries. Nationally, the General Assembly meets biennially and consists mostly of Presbytery representatives.

Ministers are ordained by Presbyteries, not by bishops or congregations, and are hired by elected committees within congregations. Terms of employment are set forth in contracts and the national denomination provides benefits such as pensions and medical insurance. Ministerial relationships may only be dissolved by a Presbytery, in consultation with the congregation.

Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly all have permanent judicial councils composed of equal numbers of elected teaching and ruling elders, who serve staggered terms of no more than six years. Accusations of misconduct must be submitted in writing to the clerk of the appropriate judicial council. If sexual misconduct by a minister is alleged, two members of the council are chosen within 72 hours to determine whether the minister should be placed on administrative leave and suspended from ministerial functions while a subcommittee of three to five members investigates the allegations. The church's Book of Discipline lays out detailed procedures for investigations, the standards of evidence, and the rights of both accused persons and alleged victims. No statute of limitations exists for accusations of sexual misconduct. Disputes can be resolved by mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution, but if the investigating committee determines that formal charges of

misconduct should be filed, the appropriate judicial council conducts a trial. Two thirds of the council must agree that the accused is guilty of the charge(s). In findings of guilt, victims may make impact statements, and verdicts and penalties are announced in open meetings. Decisions may be appealed to the next level of authority. Penalties include rebuke, rebuke with supervised rehabilitation, temporary exclusion from ministry or membership (voting or holding office), or removal from ministry and/or membership altogether.

In a case in which the offense is sexual abuse of another person, the rehabilitation program may include the advice that the person found guilty complete a voluntary act or acts of repentance. Such acts may include: public acknowledgement of guilt, community service, symbolic restoration of what was lost by the person harmed, and/or contributions toward documented medical/psychological expenses incurred by the person who was harmed.⁶⁹

People under temporary exclusion must apply for readmission. When a person is removed from ministry or membership by a Presbytery, the General Assembly is notified and reports this to the other Presbyteries.

The advantage of this system is that allegations are investigated and guilt or innocence is determined by bodies *outside* the one where an accused person exercises religious or administrative authority. Trial procedures include protections for accusers and the accused; decisions are public and may be appealed to higher authorities, up to the General Assembly's permanent judicial council.

PROBLEM THREE: PATRIARCHY

A third problem contributing to power abuses is patriarchy, which feeds clericalism, which leads to insularity. Patriarchy is pervasive in many, if not most human cultures, and only in the past century or so has it begun to receive serious religious critique. William Bodiford, a historian of Sōtō Zen, argues that Zen was so successful in China because it was the most Confucian: it is modeled on the Confucian family structure, which is hierarchical and patriarchal. The "five relationships" on which Confucian societies are built and that constitute individuals' identities are ruler and subject, father and son, elder and younger brother, husband and wife, and friend and friend. Women are consistently taken less seriously than men and are valued for their reproductive and supportive roles, rather than in their own right.

Bodiford identifies seven areas in which Zen replicates the Confucian family model: ancestral, biological, linguistic, ritual, legal, institutional/financial, and temporal. "Ancestors (*so*) constitute a fundamental source of power (both benevolent and malevolent) in East Asian kinship systems and religious life. People in positions of responsibility must devote much ritual effort (whether in the form of Confucian, Buddhist, or Daoist rites) to commemorate the ancestors" of their clan, household, and immediate family. "Because the Buddhist order (*sangha*) constitutes a pseudo-kinship group with its own Dharma clans, dharma households, and dharma families, members of that order must perform similar rites to commemorate their spiritual ancestors."⁷⁰ The biological

dimension compares the mystery of birth with the private rituals of Dharma Transmission, which produce a new member of the religious lineage. Teacher and student promise to ensure the continuance of the “family line.” In the linguistic dimension, teachers give their disciples new Buddhist names, as parents name their children. In the ritual dimension, descendants are expected to perform proper funeral and memorial rites for their religious ancestors. Confucian tradition, like Zen tradition, also stresses ritual deportment as a basic form of moral and spiritual training. Disciples are ranked by seniority. Legally, financially, and institutionally, parents are obliged to discipline their children, as well as to feed, clothe, and educate them. Zen teachers in Asia have these rights over and obligations toward their students, and students have an obligation to obey their teachers. Children are expected to support the family and may inherit the “family business.” Temporally, ancestors, parents, and children coexist together over time and develop close bonds.⁷¹ “To be ordained is to join a dharma family that functions exactly like any other family, with the same Confucian family values and the same Confucian family expectations and obligations.”⁷²

This makes perfect sense in East Asian cultures. What happens, however, when this kind of hierarchical, potentially authoritarian family system is transplanted uncritically into a culture rooted in very different values? Many American families “lack multigenerational cohesiveness,” and “family roles seem to be so much in flux that the definition of family itself has become subject to political debate. Can a religious practice continue to draw strength from a secular model that is foreign to its practitioners? The traditional Asian ideals of honoring ancestors, filial piety, and hereditary privilege seem to directly conflict [with] many celebrated American values, especially notions of personal freedom, individual autonomy, and egalitarian (self-) reinvention.”⁷³ The reciprocal obligations and benevolence expected between seniors and juniors in Confucian cultures are not valued in capitalist systems, either. Even when women inhabit positions of authority in a fundamentally patriarchal system—for example, by becoming the head priest of a temple—the underlying structure of patriarchy remains unchanged.

This hierarchical arrangement is ancient, but it is not inevitable. Some American Zen priests, including women who were abused by their own male teachers, have advocated strongly for more safeguards and less hierarchical governance. Some such women also have been bitterly attacked by male peers for publicly critiquing male sexism and misconduct.

To be sure, American Buddhist communities have democratic elements and systems, demanded in part by American laws regarding tax-exempt, nonprofit religious corporations. But the vastly different worldviews and ideologies underlying Confucian and American cultures deserve more attention. This is another reason that critical, historical perspective through academic training would be helpful to American Zen clergy.

A problem related to patriarchy in American Sōtō Zen is clericalism. Pope Francis identified the tendency of clergy to protect their own privileges and prerogatives as the root of the sexual misconduct scandals in the Roman Catholic church.⁷⁴ Catholic theology maintains that priests have a special status as intermediaries between laity

and God, and their ability to administer valid sacraments is independent of their personal character. In American Sōtō Zen, clericalism seems to manifest in the assumption that only people who have received Dharma Transmission can or should decide on training standards or exercise religious authority, even though there are no agreed-upon standards for Dharma Transmission among teachers within a single Buddhist organization, much less across Buddhist lineages or schools.

Bodiford notes, “it seems each individual [American Sōtō Zen] Center has developed its own individual culture of dharma transmission: here it might signify eligibility to join the Center’s board of directors, there it might mark completion of a kōan curriculum, and somewhere else it might be seen as equivalent to clerical ordination, and so forth.”⁷⁵ The SZBA’s biannual “Dharma Heritage Ceremony” is an attempt to create a shared culture of Dharma Transmission: in it, priests with Transmission recognize new peers across lineages who have recently received it. Again, however, there is no consistency in how people qualify to participate in the ceremony; it is entirely at the discretion of their own respective teachers.

Unlike most Japanese Zen novice priests, however, American novices are typically adult professionals who bring considerable life experience, skill, and talents to their roles and communities. They are unable to vote in any of the three major American organizations of Zen clergy, however, because Dharma Transmission is a *sine qua non* for membership in all of them. An American adult novice, “often in his or her forties or fifties before receiving dharma transmission,”⁷⁶ is thus treated like a minor child in a Japanese temple family. Does this really make sense? One could argue that this kind of training helps individualistic Americans to soften their egocentricity, and I don’t disagree, but for members of already targeted groups, such as racial and sexual minorities, it can feel downright oppressive. This is why a model like the presbyterian one described above is useful to consider: governance is carried out by a combination of elected, lay and ordained leadership at each level of organization.

A group of American Sōtō Zen teachers, mostly women, developed a “women’s document” naming important women Buddhist teachers. These include the female Arhats named in the scriptural *Tberigatha*, plus a number of (deceased) Chinese, Japanese, and American Zen teachers. Their names are arranged in a circle, rather than vertically. This is an important symbolic gesture on the path to imagining more diverse, equitable, and inclusive religious communities. How to implement that vision institutionally remains an open question.

Bodiford observes that the religious mythology of person-to-person transmission in the Zen lineage is less meaningful to many North American laity, because the spiritual genealogy is not historically accurate before the tenth century or so, and because many North Americans “approach Zen more as a form of self-realization therapy than as a religious faith.” He adds, “what religious distinction can dharma transmission convey in a society of fluid identities where even the traditional Buddhist distinction between priest and laity tends to disappear?”⁷⁷ Whether, how, and how far to *expand* the circle are open questions, as well. Senauke, a past president of the SZBA, remarked that “it is unclear to me whether ordination and formal dharma transmission are the way of the future.”⁷⁸

“PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS” AS A WAY FORWARD?

The Protestant doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers” is relevant in an American religious culture where most Zen clergy are neither celibate monastics nor typical of Asian Buddhist lay practitioners. (American laity practice intensive meditation in ways unknown within Buddhism before the latter twentieth century). Many American Buddhist converts and sympathizers do not regard Zen teachers as “fields of merit,” gifts to whom can help them generate good karma and attain a favorable rebirth. The Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, developed by Martin Luther during the Protestant Reformation, holds that all Christians have equal access to God; they do not need priestly intermediaries. All are equally responsible for sharing the Gospel and supporting one another in prayer and ministry. Some people—clergy—have specialized functions and training that others do not have, but they are not spiritually superior because of this.

Senauke noted that some American lay Zen students’ “steadiness, dedication, and understanding is the equal of priests in Japan.” In some communities, including the Berkeley Zen Center that Senauke leads, lay students serve as *shuso* [head monk], teach classes, give talks, provide forms of pastoral counseling, and receive a form of dharma transmission called “Lay Entrustment.” Such laypeople taught Senauke “that everyone had a vital role in *sangha*, distinguished by ability and training, not by ordination.”⁷⁹ At the same time, because “there is very little economic base for institutional Buddhism” in the United States, most Zen priests must earn a livelihood in some other way, “as therapists, administrators, musicians, and taxicab drivers.” American Zen clergy [and dedicated laypeople] therefore occupy an unprecedented position somewhere between Buddhist monk, priest, and layperson.

Zen rhetoric about enlightenment claims that Dharma Transmission signifies that a new teacher has “the same mind as Buddha.” The Buddha is an idealized, mythic figure, however. Actual human Zen teachers are ordinary people with blind spots and feet of clay, while they may also have deep spiritual insight. Emphasizing this could help to avoid inappropriate idealization of teachers, which would benefit both teachers and students in the long run.

Analyzing and addressing the systemic, structural issues raised here can help American Buddhists create conditions that make teacher misconduct less likely. To dissect the problem and devise effective solutions, I think Buddhist teachers in the West, particularly American Sōtō Zen teachers, need critical, historical, cross-cultural, and interreligious training—both academic and practical, of the kind that has historically been offered in Protestant seminaries—plus oversight that many American Zen teachers have refused. They also need to look beyond the rather insular world of American Zen and study the professional standards, credentialing mechanisms, ethical codes, disciplinary procedures, and best practices applying to other religious professionals in American culture. As Senauke wrote, “in order to see Zen and ourselves clearly, we much reach out widely.”⁸⁰ Professional standards and oversight mechanisms are no panacea, because even religious groups that have them still experience cases of clergy misconduct. But having them is better than

not having them. Promising developments are evident, and more work remains to be done.

NOTES

1. Some African American Buddhists speak warmly of their roots in the Protestant Black Church tradition. One example: Janice Dean Willis, *Dreaming Me: From Baptist to Buddhist, One Woman's Spiritual Journey*, 1st Riverhead trade pbk. ed. (New York: Riverhead Books, 2002). The Buddhist Churches of America adopted many Protestant norms when Japanese and Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II.

2. A number of Catholics have been authorized as Zen teachers in the Sanbōkyōdan school. For examples of Catholics who have found explorations of Buddhism fruitful, see Paul F. Knitter, *Without Buddha I Could Not Be a Christian* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009); Ruben Habito, *Living Zen, Loving God* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publishing, 1995); *Zen and the Spiritual Exercises* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2013); *Be Still and Know: Zen and the Bible* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017). For an example of a convert to Buddhism who does not find Christianity relevant to her spiritual path, see Grace Burford, "If the Buddha Is So Great, Why Are These People Christian?" In *Buddhists Talk About Jesus, Christians Talk About the Buddha*, eds. Rita M. Gross and Terry C. Muck (New York: Continuum, 2000).

3. Wakoh Shannon Hickey, "Religious Leadership in American Zen: A Comparative Study of Priesthood in Three Communities of American Converts to Japanese Sōtō Zen" (Masters Thesis, Pacific School of Religion, 2001).

4. The broad category of "American Zen" includes multiple "schools," the oldest and largest of which were founded by teachers from Buddhist cultures in Asia. These include but are not limited to Dharma Drum (Taiwan); the Kwan Um School (South Korea); the Order of Interbeing/Communities of Mindful Living (Vietnam); and the Sanbōkyōdan, Rinzai Zen, and Sōtō Zen (Japan). These schools are "independent from one another in terms of their organization, culture, oversight, finances, and responsibilities." Eido Frances Carney, "Regarding Teacher Misconduct in American Zen," 2009: 2, at Academia.edu. I do not have data on Soka Gakkai or other Nichiren lineages, the Buddhist Churches of America, the Community of Mindful Living, or other Chinese or Taiwanese lineages in the United States.

5. Robert H. Sharf, "Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22, nos. 3–4 (1995). The Obaku school of Zen, a small minority in Japan, does not appear to have any significant presence in the West.

6. Sotozen.com: "History," at <https://www.sotozen.com/eng/what/history/index.html>, accessed April 4, 2021.

7. Sotozen.com, "What's Sōtōshū?>Denomination," at <https://www.sotozen.com/eng/what/denomination/index.htm>, accessed April 24, 2021.

8. Sotozen.com, "North America Office," at https://www.sotozen.com/eng/activity/regional_office/north_america.html, accessed April 4, 2021.

9. Sotozen.com, "America," at https://www.sotozen.com/eng/temples/outside_jp/America/, accessed August 26, 2021.

10. Carney, "Regarding Teacher Misconduct in American Zen," 6; Sōtōshū Shumuchō, "Regulations Concerning the Ranks of Priests and Ranks of Kyoshi of the Sōtōshū," (n.d.); "Sokanbu Application Guideline," (Los Angeles, CA: Sōtō Zen Buddhism North America Office, 2021).

11. SZBA. "Centers by State," at <https://www.szba.org/centers-1#/zen-centers-by-state>, accessed April 4, 2021.
12. The OBC website lists a dozen temples and meditation groups in the United States and Canada, six in Europe, and thirty-five in the United Kingdom. <https://obcon.org/temples-and-meditation-groups/>, accessed May 1, 2021.
13. Sotozen.com, "Denomination," at <https://www.sotozen.com/eng/what/denomination/index.html>, accessed April 4, 2021.
14. "Branching Streams," at <https://branchingstreams.sfzc.org/affiliates/directory-of-affiliates/>, accessed May 8, 2021.
15. I made lay vows in 1987 with Sojun Mel Weitsman of Berkeley Zen Center; later trained with his students Maylie Scott and Zenkei Blanche Hartman, the first female abbot of SFZC; and received novice ordination from AKIBA Gengo Sokan, the Sôtōshū Bishop for North America, in 2003. I completed my "head monk" training with him in 2010, then formally transferred discipleship to Shosan Victoria Austin, a Dharma Teacher at SFZC and a member of ASZB, SZBA, and AZTA. I also received important mentorship from Dai-en Bennage, an American woman who trained for many years in Japan and is licensed by Shumucho as a *Shike* who may train junior priests in the Japanese system. I was an Associate (nonvoting) member of SZBA from 2003 to 2014.
16. Katy Butler, "Events Are the Teacher," *CoEvolution Quarterly* 40 (Winter 1983); Michael Downing, *Shoes Outside the Door: Desire, Devotion, and Excess at San Francisco Zen Center* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2001); Rick Fields, "Perils of the Path," *CoEvolution Quarterly* 40 (Winter 1983).
17. Katy Butler, "Encountering the Shadow in Buddhist America," *Common Boundary* 8, no. 3 (1990).
18. Jack Kornfield, "Sex Lives of the Gurus," *Yoga Journal* (July–August 1985).
19. Butler, "Encountering the Shadow in Buddhist America"; Stephen T. Butterfield, "When the Teacher Fails," *The Sun*, 162 (May 1989).
20. Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Shambhala, 1992), 364.
21. Natalie Goldberg, *The Great Failure: My Unexpected Path to Truth* (San Francisco and New York: HarperOne, 2005).
22. Madeleine Bunting, "The Dark Side of Enlightenment," *The Guardian*, October 27, 1997; Jamie Doward, "Buddhist, Teacher, Predator: Dark Secrets of the Triratna Guru," *The Guardian*, July 21, 2019.
23. Caryl Reimer Gopfert, "Student Experiences of Betrayal in the Zen Buddhist Teacher/Student Relationship" (PhD Dissertation, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, 1999).
24. Mark Oppenheimer, "The Zen Predator of the Upper East Side," *The Atlantic*, December 18, 2014.
25. General Meeting of the OBC, "Public Statement from the General Meeting of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives 2011," at <https://shastaabbey.org/pdf/PublicStatement102011.pdf>.
26. Staff, "Open Letter to Dennis Genpo Merzel Signed by Sixty-Six Zen Teachers," *Lion's Roar*, April 20, 2011, at <https://www.lionsroar.com/open-letter-to-dennis-genpo-merzel-signed-by-sixty-six-zen-teachers/>; Alan Senauke, "The Cloud of Knowing and Not-Knowing: Sex, Power, and Sangha," February 23, 2011, at <https://www.clearviewproject.org/2011/02/the-cloud-of-knowing-not-knowing-sex-power-and-sangha/>, both accessed August 26, 2021.
27. *Lion's Roar* Staff, "Open Mind Zen at Center of Ethical Misconduct Allegations," <https://www.lionsroar.com/open-mind-zen-at-center-of-ethical-misconduct-allegations/>; and Justin

Whitaker, “From Scandal-like to Just Plain Ugly,” October 2, 2012, in the “American Buddhist Perspectives” section of Patheos.com, at <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/americanbuddhist/2012/10/from-scandal-like-to-just-plain-ugly.html>, both accessed August 26, 2021. The original article on the Sweeping Zen website, Adam Kō Shin Tebbe, “In the News,” August 16, 2012, at <http://sweepingzen.com/sexual-controversy-surrounds-open-mind-zen/>, is no longer available online, as Tebbe closed the site in 2019.

28. Paul Vitello, “Joshu Sasaki, 107, Tainted Zen Master,” *The New York Times*, August 4, 2014.

29. Mary Finnegan and Rob Hogendoorn, *Sex and Violence in Tibetan Buddhism* (Portland, OR: Jorvik Press, 2019); Tahlia Newland, *Fallout: Recovering from Abuse in Tibetan Buddhism* (Australia: Escarpment Publishing, 2019).

30. Matthew Abrahams, “Against the Stream Closes Doors as Investigation Finds Misconduct by Founder Noah Levine,” *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*, August 27, 2018, at <https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/against-the-stream-closes-doors/>.

31. Michelle Boorstein, “Famed Buddhist Nun Pema Chodron Retires, Cites Handling of Sexual Misconduct Allegations against Her Group’s Leader,” *The Washington Post*, January 17, 2020.

32. Carney, “Regarding Teacher Misconduct in American Zen,” 3, 1.

33. Peter Rutter, *Sex in the Forbidden Zone: When Men in Power — Therapists, Doctors, Clergy, Teachers & Others — Betray Women’s Trust* (Fawcett, 1991); Scott Edelstein, *Sex and the Spiritual Teacher* (Boston: Wisdom Publishing, 2011); Marie M. Fortune, et al., *Responding to Clergy Misconduct: A Handbook* (Seattle, WA: FaithTrust Institute, 2009); Karen A. McClintock, *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2004); Nancy Meyer Hopkins and Mark Laaser (eds.), *Restoring the Soul of a Church: Healing Congregations Wounded by Sexual Misconduct* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995).

34. The Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, CA; Harvard Divinity School; Naropa University in Boulder, CO; and the University of the West in Southern California all offer accredited degree programs in Buddhist ministry. Other, unaccredited programs are also available.

35. Lutherans, Anglicans/Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ, the United Church of Christ, Reformed churches, and the Church of God in Christ.

36. Charles R. Foster et al., *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Education, Preparation for the Professions* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).

37. The other three are: Mahāsaṃghika, Mahīśāsaka, and Sarvāstivāda. Prebish, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline: The Sanskrit Pratimokṣa Sūtras of the Mahāsaṃghikas and the Mulasarvāstivādins* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), 28.

38. For English translations, see Bhikṣhuni Heng Tao, *The Buddha Speaks the Brahma Net Sūtra* (Talmadge, CA: Dharma Realm Buddhist University Buddhist Text Translation Society, 1982); and “The Scripture of Brahma’s Net,” trans. Hubert Nearman, OBC, in *Buddhist Writings on Meditation and Daily Practice: The Serene Reflection Meditation Tradition*, ed. Jiyu Kennett, MOBC, and Daizui MacPhillamy, MOBC, 1st ed. (Mt. Shasta, CA: Shasta Abbey Press, 1994), 59–188.

39. Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Series, 1984), 9.

40. The Ten Moral Actions are: not killing; stealing; committing sexual misconduct; lying; engaging in malicious speech, harsh speech, or prattling; being covetous; harboring anger or ill will. See *ibid.*, 119, 216; *Mahākammavibhaṅga Sūtra*, Bhikkhu Bodhi and Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, trans., *Majjīma Nikāya* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publishing, 1995),

1058–1065. See also Patrul Rinpoche, *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*. Sacred Literature Series, eds. Kerry Brown and Sima Sharma (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), 101–112; and Robert Thurman, *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 82. According to Groner, some Japanese Tendai monks later interpreted the Ten Moral Actions as synonymous with the ten novice precepts of the Vinaya. Groner, *Saichō*, 119 n. 43B.

41. *Digba Nikāya*, trans. Walshe, 1.8–1.29, 68–73.
42. See, for example, the reference to “filial compliance” with one’s parents and teachers. Heng Tao, *The Buddha Speaks the Brahma Net Sutra*, 10.
43. Groner, *Saichō*, 9.
44. William Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: Kuroda Studies in East Asian Buddhism, University of Hawai’i Press, 1993), 165, also n.13, p. 269.
45. *Ibid.*, 245–246.
46. Bodiford, “Dharma Transmission in Theory and Practice.”
47. Paula Kane Robinson Arai, *Women Living Zen: Japanese Sōtō Buddhist Nuns* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 47.
48. Stephen Grover Covell, *Japanese Temple Buddhism: Worldliness in a Religion of Renunciation*, Topics in Contemporary Buddhism (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), 82.
49. Carney, “Regarding Teacher Misconduct in American Zen,” 6.
50. Sōtōshū Shumucho, *Sōtōshū Regulations Regarding Vestments*, unofficial English translation, ed. Sōtōshū Shumucho (1952, draft amendment December 21, 2006).
51. T. Griffith Foulk, “The Zen Institution in Modern Japan,” in *Zen: Tradition & Transition*, ed. Kenneth Kraft (London: Rider & Co., Ltd., 1988).
52. William M. Bodiford, “Dharma Transmission in Theory and Practice,” in *Zen Ritual: Studies of Zen Buddhist Theory in Practice*, eds. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 276.
53. Foulk, “The Zen Institution in Modern Japan,” 175.
54. Arai, *Women Living Zen*, 64.
55. The Sōtōshū recorded 15,527 male and 1177 female priests in 1984. Foulk, “The Zen Institution in Modern Japan,” 158.
56. Covell, *Japanese Temple Buddhism*, 131.
57. Bodiford, *Zen Ritual*, 276.
58. Shumucho, *Sōtōshū Regulations Regarding Vestments*.
59. Arai, *Women Living Zen*, 49–50.
60. *Ibid.*, 66, 68–70.
61. Seven of the eight founding Board members were men; six of the men and the one woman are white.
62. Soto Zen Buddhist Association, “SZBA Membership Standards,” (2017), 1.
63. Carney, “Regarding Teacher Misconduct in American Zen,” 7.
64. Alan Senauke (ed.), *Safe Harbor: Guidelines, Process, and Resources for Ethics and Right Conduct in Buddhist Communities* (Berkeley, CA: Buddhist Peace Fellowship, 1998), 53.
65. Carney, “Regarding Teacher Misconduct in American Zen,” 5.
66. USA Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Part Ii: Book of Order* (Louisville, KY: Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2019–2021), G-2.0401, G-2.0404.
67. *Ibid.*, G-3.0201.
68. *Ibid.*, G-3.0301.
69. *Ibid.*, D-12.0104c.

70. Bodiford, "Dharma Transmission," 264.
71. *Ibid.*, 264–268.
72. *Ibid.*, 267–268.
73. *Ibid.*, 278.
74. Pope Francis, "Letter to the People of God," Aug. 20, 2018, at <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-08/pope-francis-letter-people-of-god-sexual-abuse.html>, accessed May 23, 2021; Cindy Wooten, "Clericalism: The culture that enables abuse and insists on hiding it," Catholic News Service, August 23, 2018, at <https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2018/08/clericalism-the-culture-that-enables-abuse-and-insists-on-hiding-it/>, accessed May 23, 2021.
75. *Ibid.*, 278–279.
76. Hozan Alan Senauke, "A Long and Winding Road: Soto Zen Training in America," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 9, no. 2 (2006): 129.
77. *Ibid.*
78. *Ibid.*, 131.
79. *Ibid.*, 128.
80. *Ibid.*, 131.

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