



# Leaving for the Rising Sun: Chinese Zen Master Yinyuan and the Authenticity Crisis in Early Modern East Asia

*Jiang Wu*

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In 1654 Zen Master Yinyuan traveled from China to Japan. Seven years later his monastery, Manpukuji, was built and he had founded a new tradition, called Obaku. In this sequel to his 2008 book, *Enlightenment in Dispute*, Jiang Wu tells the story of the tremendous obstacles faced by Yinyuan, drawing parallels between his experiences and the broader political and cultural context in which he lived.

Yinyuan claimed to have inherited the "Authentic Transmission of the Linji Sect." After arriving in Japan, he was able to persuade the Shogun to build a new Ming-style monastery for the establishment of his Obaku school. His arrival in Japan coincided with a series of historical developments, including the Ming-Qing transition, the consolidation of early Tokugawa power, the growth of Nagasaki trade, and rising Japanese interests in Chinese learning and artistic pursuits. While Yinyuan's travel is known in scholarly circles, the significance of his journey within East Asian history has not been fully explored. *Leaving for the Rising Sun* provides a unique opportunity to reexamine the crisis in the continent and responses from other parts of East Asia. Using Yinyuan's story as a bridge between China and Japan, Wu demonstrates that the monk's significance is far greater than the temporary success of a religious sect. Rather, Yinyuan imported to Japan a new discourse of authenticity that gave rise to indigenous movements that challenged, and led to the eventual breakup of, a China-centered world order.

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