THE PRAGMATISM OF FOOD PORN:
MODERN MEDIA AS A MODE OF ZEN PERPETUATION

by

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in
Religious Studies

Charlotte

2018

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ABSTRACT

GABRIELLE JAYNE HALEY. The Pragmatism of Food Porn: Modern Media as a Mode of Zen Perpetuation. (Under the direction of DR. JOANNE ROBINSON)

The revolving door of food trends – particularly those regarding vegetarianism and veganism – provides a unique opportunity for food cultures that are traditionally associated with religions to sit down at the table and enter the conversation. This thesis aims to investigate how the tradition of *shōjin ryori* – Japanese temple cuisine – manages to eke out a niche for itself within the broad genre of vegetarian cookbooks by altering the presentation of the teachings found in Dōgen Zenji's *Tenzo Kyōkun* to better reach a large "spiritual-but-not-religious" audience. Not only do I look at the textual shifts present in the cookbooks that serve as the project's data set, but also what role the modern fixation on visual aesthetics via social media (namely Instagram) play in promulgating these teachings. I argue that the changes in presentation and the decisions made regarding visual representation in the cookbooks are pragmatic moves on the parts of their authors, editors, and publishers that incorporate both the need to remain present in the global marketplace as well as the desire to encourage proliferation in today's generations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Joanne Robinson, whose patience, enthusiasm, and constructive criticisms encouraged me to think outside the realm of my comfort zone so that I could produce a piece of work that reflects my scholarly interests and passions. Her guidance aided me in all segments of this project, from developing the research question to compiling everything into its final format, and imparting her experience allowed me to evolve both as a scholar of religion and as a teacher.

Dr. Alexandra Kaloyanides deserves a great deal of thanks for all of the time and effort she devoted to helping in the development project across two semesters and two independent studies. I also extend my gratitude to Dr. Dan White who originally drew me into the department of religious studies, and to whom I will be eternally grateful for his immense knowledge and constant encouragement both in and out of the classroom.

Last but certainly not least is my husband, Patrick Haley, without whom none of this would have been possible. He was my pillar of sanity through six years of intense education, a change in major, and ultimately a change in the direction I wanted to take my life. His constant support and gentle pushing is a large part of what allows me to look back on this journey and take pride in what I’ve accomplished.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY vi
CHAPTER I: SAKIZUKE 1
CHAPTER II: SUIMONO 6
CHAPTER III: HASSUN 15
  Shōjin Ryori: A Cuisine for the Spirit 16
  The Enlightened Kitchen 17
  The Heart of Zen Cuisine 22
CHAPTER IV: TAKIAWASE 29
  Pragmatism and Marketing: A Necessary “Evil” 30
  Let Me Take a Picture First! Social Media Food Documentation 32
CHAPTER V: MIZUMONO 37
REFERENCES 41
APPENDIX A: GINGERED GREEN BEANS 42
APPENDIX B: AUTUMN LEAVES 43
APPENDIX C: ERINGI MUSHROOMS WITH VEGETABLE-MISO DRESSING 44
APPENDIX D: GINGER RICE 45

GLOSSARY

Buddhist precepts: Refers primarily to the ideas of *ahimsa* (non-violence), the emphasis placed on sutras and meditation, and the Noble Eightfold Path which consists of: right understanding, right thought/attitude, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

five strong flavors: Refers to the five allium vegetables prohibited to monks, as they are thought to have a negative spiritual effect on the mind. Also, consumption of these vegetables breaks the *ahimsa* precept, as it is the bulb or "living" part of the plant that is widely consumed. These vegetables are: garlic, scallions, onions, leeks, and chives.

kaiseki: A style of cuisine in which numerous intricate small dishes are prepared and served in a specific order for maximum effect on the senses. The dishes also gradually increase in difficulty of skill required.

Orientalism: In terms of this project, Orientalism is defined as the representation of East and South Asian (as well as Middle Eastern) cultures that trends toward the stereotypical representation provided by colonist attitudes. In this case, the "hyperspiritualization" of Buddhism as a peace-loving religion that is one with nature is being referenced.

religious seekers: A term commonly found in Benjamin Zeller's *Heaven's Gate* that refers to Americans who spent years trying to find themselves in the postwar period. In this project, this term is used in conjunction with “religious cherry-picking” – what some may identify with Sheilaism a la Robert Bellah – to denote a kind of individual who may not find the type of self-transformation they’re looking for in a single institutionalized religion and instead opt to take advantage of the exposure provided by modern globalization to see how various religious and spiritual practices and precepts can fit into the lifestyle they want for themselves.

ryokan: A type of traditional Japanese inn.

Shōjin ryori: “Shojin” translates to “effort,” and typically refers to the zeal with which one progresses toward enlightenment. “Ryori” means “cooking” or “cuisine.” A common translation of the term is “devotion cuisine.”

tenzo: Jisho Warner’s definition of tenzo is as follows: “one who prepares meals as an expression of wholehearted practice of the Buddha Way and as the generous offering of one’s life efforts on others’ behalf, whether in a monastery or diner.” This is the definition followed here.

CHAPTER I: *SAKIZUKE*

In Buddhist discourse it is difficult - if nigh impossible - to separate the religion's overall historical journey from the inception of its various branches. We tend to consider "from whence it came" when referencing the background of Buddhist sects; the *dharma* of Siddhartha Gautama that serves as the foundation of Buddhism eventually spread out like the roots of the famed Bodhi tree through his disciples, and their disciples, until they touch the edges of the world far beyond India. When we speak of this global spread, oftentimes a reference is made to the adaptability of Buddhism as part of the religion's very nature - after all, the Buddha himself preferred to preach in the local dialects of regions he visited, resulting in a dissemination of oral discourse and written texts in a myriad of languages. But in the age of the Internet, when globalization has been taken to the extreme and massive amounts of information is readily available to the general public, this adaptability is put to the test when the religion is forced to compete in the global marketplace; the production of Buddhist texts that expound on religious philosophies and rituals alone isn't enough to ensure that the teachings will be both disseminated and make a lasting impact. Rather, those who are interested in preserving the teachings of their sects by ensuring there are new disciples to hand the teachings down to are forced to approach the global marketplace in a way that is perhaps slightly subtler than originally anticipated, appealing to things other than their audience's spiritual curiosity.

The purpose of my thesis, then, is to show how altering the presentation of Buddhist teachings enables the incremental proliferation of Zen teachings by appealing to the trends of modern generations. Doing so sets up an invitation for today's religious and spiritual seekers to delve deeper into the study of Zen while simultaneously providing the secular means (primarily financial security) that allow Buddhist institutions to not only survive but thrive. This project focuses on Dōgen Zenji and the *Tenzo Kyōkun,* particularly how the Soto Zen rhetoric expressed in the *Tenzo Kyōkun* can be found in modern day *shōjin ryori* cookbooks. Even within the genre of *shōjin*-style cooking lie varying levels of religiosity, the presentation of which differs depending on the intended audience.

To begin with, we look at a brief historical background of Zen in both China and Japan to show early representations of the pragmatic adaptation that is posited later. The intention is that providing these historical instances of pragmatism and its relationship with religious dissemination will help ease the bitter taste commonly left in the mouths of readers when marketing strategies are suggested for things considered "more than secular." Taking into consideration Japan's religiopolitical climate at the time of the establishment of Soto Zen around 1246CE – namely the emphasis placed on practices that, due to social stratification, prevented most lay practitioners from fully engaging Buddhism – allows for us to better imagine how the presentation of the *Tenzo Kyōkun* would have appealed to Zen followers outside the monastery. As such, this background segment also provides a crash course in the philosophies expounded by the *Tenzo*

Kyōkun, with a focus primarily on those aspects that are applicable to both the volume's referenced *tenzo* and the rural lay audience.

From here we turn to the cookbooks that will comprise the bulk of the analysis. These two books – Mari Fujii's *The Enlightened Kitchen* (2012) and Soei Yoneda's *The Heart of Zen Cuisine* (1987) – were chosen as they are representative of two "levels" of *shōjin ryori* cookbooks and as such indicate a path of natural progression available to those who wish to take the next step in their Zen education. They are not, obviously, the only members of their subgenre; however, a full exploration of the effect globalization has had on the promulgation of Zen, and of Buddhist culinary practices in particular, would require scrutiny of a large set of *shōjin* cookbooks, and an analysis of sales and marketing data would be required. Though these are steps that would likely aid the argument presented here, acquiring this data is beyond the scope of this project in its current state but would certainly be considered as the project evolves into a doctoral dissertation.

After looking at the introductions of the cookbooks and both the language and visual aspects used therein, we will turn to the idea of pragmatic adaptation and its role in carving out a place for texts that can be said to straddle the line between the religious and the secular. By analyzing the altered rhetoric presented in their introductions, the aim is to show that the larger audience engaged by doing so plays a two-part role in the overall dissemination. This segment also looks at how the visuals provided in the "gateway" titles such as Fujii's play to the aesthetic culture that is driven by social media, a move that acknowledges the technological advances of the present but moreover uses those advances to encourage the continuation of a traditional culinary art form.

The intersection of food studies and religion is rich, and it deserves to take a more prominent place within academic discourse. However, outside discussions of what religions allow or disallow in terms of consumption, or the role food plays in various rituals or reenactments, the relationship between food and religion tends to be split between disciplines. Anthropology and religious studies take up this mantle but through separate lenses, lenses that should overlap more often than they do to make the bigger picture come into focus. *The Oxford Handbook of Food History* regards cookbooks as potential historical documents (unsurprising, given the title of the volume) from which culinary historians can glean insight into the cooking habits of a given people during a given time period.[1] A recipe that calls for sugar in the 14th century, for example, may illuminate the intended audience for that particular cookbook as sugar was a rare and expensive commodity at that time, thus suggesting that the book was written for someone in the upper reaches of society.[2] This kind of rhetorical analysis can bring to light numerous things about a culture's standards of beauty (recipes referencing health and diet), the purported audience (whether the more nitty-gritty parts of food preparation are mentioned), or the prominent religious belief of the time (expressed in the inclusion or exclusion of ingredients), and that information can aid in understanding a culture's relationship with food. This kind of analysis focuses primarily on the objects (ingredients, cookware, serving-ware) and perhaps the language used to present the recipes – a route that makes sense when considering the lens of a historian or anthropologist. But as this project is housed in the realm of religious studies, it is important to consider the inferred intentions behind both the rhetoric and the aesthetic properties, particularly when cookbook authors blatantly include aspects of their religion that go beyond dictating what ingredients are profane or what prayer to say before mealtime. It is the rhetoric, the aesthetics, and the actions that are contained within these books, books that will play one part in handing the religious teachings on to the next generation.

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[1] Albala, Ken, "Cookbooks as Historical Documents." In *The Oxford Handbook of Food History,* ed. Jefferey M. Pilcher (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 227.

[2] Ibid. 231.

CHAPTER II: *SUIMONO*

It can be said that Japanese Buddhism developed due to the adaptability exhibited by the religion and its sects throughout history. Despite anthropological evidence showing that Buddhism was likely present on the Japanese archipelago prior to written accounts, the *Nihon Shoki* - a history of Japan from its mythical origins up to 697 CE, compiled under imperial order - makes Buddhism a part of the country's imperial history around 552 CE. In this account, it is King Song who sends an emissary to the infant Yamato kingdom, seeking a political alliance. This emissary brought the Dharma, a statue of the Buddha, and accompanying sutras as tribute, turning something multifaceted into a single, tangible offering that could be traded between kingdoms for political gain. It isn't until 604 CE that an official decree encouraging Buddhist practice is handed down by the imperial party, allowing Buddhism to make the jump from a foreign religion practiced by immigrants and traders from mainland Asia, to the religion of the ruling party and upper echelons of society in the much the same way as it had been in China and Korea.[3] Using China and Korea as examples, the budding Yamato dynasty worked to develop a unique culture that would be endemic to Japan; as such, the acceptance of this offering from king to king comes of little surprise. However, it is important to note that this is an imperial story; the tale told by those in power does not take into consideration the pieces of Buddhism that existed outside the ruling class before the imperial line established it as a concrete part of Japanese religious culture.

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[3] This is an oversimplification, made for the sake of brevity.

Unfortunately for the imperials and other members of the court, there is always someone willing to push back against established leadership. Dōgen Zenji - whose ordained name was Dōgen and who used the name Dōgen Kigen later in life - became that man. Though born into a prominent aristocratic family, Dōgen fled court life after the death of his parents in the early years of his childhood and wound up in the care of Koen, the head of the Tendai school, of which he remained an active member for many years. Despite devoting all his energies to religious life, he was plagued by a question that would drive subsequent development of his teachings in later years. He saw that both Tendai and Shingon - the prominent Buddhist schools at the time - taught the inherent buddha-nature of all things. If that is to be believed, Dōgen surmised, then why is it that buddhas and bodhisattvas strive for enlightenment and perform religious austerities?[4] Essentially, if buddha-nature is within everyone, why is it that individuals need to strive toward realization - surely that means that performance of the Buddhist precepts in daily life is the same as religious practice.[5] Having searched Japan for an answer, Dōgen came to be a student of Myozen, the successor to Eisai, founder of the Rinzai sect of Zen. Together, the two made the way to China, the birthplace of Zen, in hopes of finding answers to their questions.

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[4] Dumoulin, Heinrich. *Zen Buddhism: A History – Japan.* (World Wisdom Inc., 2005). 52.

[5] "Buddhist precepts" refers primarily to the Noble Eightfold Path, as well as the ideas of ahimsa (non-violence), and the emphasis placed on sutras and meditation. See the glossary for a full list of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Early in his arrival to China, Dōgen had an encounter with a monk who served as the head cook of the monastery at Mount A-yü-wang; this encounter would later transform his personal philosophies as well as those he held as a Buddhist. When asked what was so important about the work he seemed eager to return to, the monk replied that his kitchen work was his form of Zen practice.[6] Confused, Dōgen inquired as to why the elder monk did not devote himself to sutras or meditation, to which he was told he (Dōgen) did not yet understand what practice, words, or scriptures truly were. Though the monk's departure thereafter was abrupt, Dōgen received the chance to inquire further when he met with the same monk later that year. What transpired was the realization that daily tasks born of enlightenment (something that, again, all creatures inherently have) are religious practice, and that one can practice Zen through conscious interaction and service to the community just as well as one can via sutra reading.[7] It can be argued that it was his initial questions and his conversation with the Chinese monk that prompted a re-evaluation of who, exactly, was practicing Zen and who was being left by the wayside. If he wanted to include the laity in Zen practice, a change needed to be made that accounted for the busyness of their daily lives and the notion that religious performance could be woven within tending to the farm and family, while simultaneously ensuring that the work performed by the monks of a monastery was not denigrated. Fourteen years after his return from China, all of these considerations culminated in Dōgen producing the *Tenzo Kyōkun* or *Instructions for the Zen Cook*, a title to which we will now turn, and whose teachings propel us forward.

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[6] Dumoulin, 53.
[7] Ibid.

Written not long after his return from China, the *Tenzo Kyōkun* is the first part of a larger volume known as the *Eihei Shingi*, a work that speaks directly to the disciples of Dōgen Zenji and teaches them how to incorporate his religious teachings into everyday life, in a manner suited to the laity that would have followed him.[8] The *Tenzo Kyōkun* uses a *tenzo* to illustrate this point, as cooking is a daily activity that is required even by Buddhists practicing austerities, making it a segment of the day where the individual can foster a particular kind of energy or focus.[9] It just so happens that it is usually the individual's desire for something such as a particular flavor profile or presentation (or simply that they want the food to taste good and want the praise that accompanies that success) that sets the overall foundation of food preparation. It is important to note that while a *tenzo* can be simply described as the cook at a monastery, a more accurate description would be "one who prepares meals as an expression of wholehearted practice of the Buddha Way and as the generous offering of one's life efforts on others' behalf, whether in a monastery or diner," a description provided by Jisho Warner in his commentary on the *Tenzo Kyōkun* .[10] Dōgen stalwartly explains every step that a *tenzo* must take in order to ensure each meal is properly prepared; the cutting of vegetables, the rinsing of rice and removal of any stones, measuring of water, and even the mental counting of all those who are present in the monastery. Each step is accounted for and summarily discussed among the *tenzo* and the heads of the monastery, and not a single step is considered trivial. Cooking, however, is only the vehicle used to expound upon a greater philosophical purpose. The following passage highlights the dichotomies Dōgen insists one should avoid – a task that becomes monumentally difficult when one is talking about food preparation:

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[8] Dōgen, Thomas Wright, and Kōshō Uchiyama. *Refining your life: from the Zen Kitchen to enlightenment*. (New York: Weatherhill, 1983). 31.

[9] To many in the Zen schools, eating is more akin to taking one's medicine, as not eating causes harm to the body which negates the suffering-ceasing activities being performed.

[10] Warner, Jishō Cary. *Nothing is hidden: essays on Zen Master Dōgen's instructions for the cook*. (New York: Weatherhill, 2001). 16.

> When you prepare food, never view the ingredients from some commonly held perspective, nor think about them only with your emotions. Maintain an attitude that tries to build great temples from ordinary greens, that expounds the *buddhadharma* through the most trivial activity. [11]

This first segment acknowledges that having immediate reactions (disappointment or excitement, for example) regarding something you are passionate about is a common occurrence, but it is up to the reader (both Dōgen's current *tenzos* at the time of writing, and those to come in the future) to set those feelings aside. One does not need the best of things to practice the Way, particularly if one follows Dōgen's teachings and upholds the Buddha's teachings in every aspect of life, which is a point that is repeatedly hammered home. The use of cooking and vegetables as an analog continues through the passage, as seen below:

> When making a soup with ordinary greens, do not be carried away by feelings of dislike towards them nor regard them lightly; neither jump for joy simply because you have been given ingredients of superior quality to make a special dish. By the same token that you do not indulge in a meal because of its particularly good taste, there is no reason to feel an aversion towards an ordinary one. Do not be negligent and careless just because the materials seem plain and hesitate to work more diligently with materials of superior quality. Your attitude towards things should not be contingent upon their quality. A person who is influenced by the

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[11] Dōgen. 7.

> quality of a thing, or who changes his speech or manner according to the appearance or position of the people he meets, is not a man working in the Way.[12]

The second half of this passage further discourages forming dichotomous opinions, but it isn't necessarily the vegetables themselves that are the primary focus. It can be surmised that Dōgen is referencing the attitude sangha members should hold when regarding not only their own members, but the laity as well. By breaking down the common attachments one makes to labeling things in good versus bad quality, one is less likely to apply those labels to the people who may come to the monk looking for a path to the Way. If the energy cultivated by the *tenzo* is transferred to the rest of the sangha through the food, as Dōgen would have us believe, then it only makes sense for this non-dichotomous attitude to first and foremost be produced by the *tenzo* so that the rest of the sangha may perform their duties and engage with followers with the proper mindset.

While this passage blatantly references the Buddhist philosophy of non-attachment, there is something to be said about the use of food here as well. Buddhist precepts on food actively avoids what are considered the five "strong flavors"- garlic, scallions, leeks, onions, and chives - on the belief that they are stimulating odors and tastes that can produce negative mind-altering effects in those who eat them.[13] That being said, those are five of the flavors most often used in Chinese and Japanese cooking, and without them there is the possibility of bland food (and food is one of the great pleasures in life). Therefore, not only is Dōgen encouraging his disciples to set aside their preferences, their assumptions of good versus bad, he is also asking that they embrace the ingredients they have been given just as they are, as they were created purposely to harmonize with the rest of the universe. This refers to the idea of *zazen* and simply accepting one's thoughts as existing, but not further acting directly upon them. One can notice that these vegetables are slightly misshapen, but that should not have any effect on how one prepares them, nor should it affect how the individual focuses on the completion of the task at hand. The *tenzo*'s entire being should be focused on the preparation of the meal, and each task should be focused on with a single-minded clarity that is, in and of itself, the activity of a buddha.[14]

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[12] Ibid.

[13] "Five strong-flavored foods." *Dictionary of Buddhism | Nichiren Buddhism Library*, Accessed February 15, 2018, http://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/F/91.

If one considers the power struggles evident in Japanese history - between the imperials, the shogunate, and the religious sects - it is unsurprising that Dōgen was met with considerable resistance. Having refused to get involved with the games of political intrigue running rampant in both the shogunate and the head monastery at Mt. Hiei, Dōgen's teachings were outside their purview, and more importantly, outside their realm of control.[15] His teachings were applicable to anyone, of any rung of the social hierarchy, and did not require a student-teacher relationship in order to be practiced (though Dōgen did eventually take on disciples and name a successor). In a study that is far too large to be contained here (though it would, no doubt, be interesting), detailed parallels can be drawn between the various schools of Japanese Buddhism, which can then be boiled down to core precepts, beliefs, rules, etc. - after all, the assumption that we can do such a thing is often how introductory World Religions courses are developed. In developing the

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[14] Dōgen. 14.

[15] At this point in time it was affluent members of society who were sent to study at Hiei. The monastery then churned out individuals who were sent back into the courts and other areas of government, meaning that the government and the prominent Buddhist sects of Rinzai, Tendai, and Shingon operated together.

foundation of Soto Zen Buddhism, it can be argued that Dōgen Zenji kept the religion the same at its core, yet re-emphasized segments to make it more in line with his own philosophies, as well as intimately enticing to the rural laity that made up his target audience.

Today, Buddhist lineages still exist and play a significant role in maintaining the religious precepts. However, as Buddhism has become a global religion and is no longer confined to the Asian continent, there is a greater opening for individuals to take specific teachings or sutras, manipulate their interpretation, and reapply them as they see fit. Not that this is a new occurrence; in 1967, Philip Yampolsky published his study of the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* based on new translations of manuscripts discovered in a cave at Tun-huang, which claimed that by organizing and reorganizing the names of various patriarchs, Ch'an Buddhism had fabricated a lineage that went back through Bodhidharma to the Buddha himself.[16] While we can see the importance of keeping an authority within a religion to ensure its survival, the idea of these authority figures participating in willful manipulation can leave a bad taste. This is particularly true of the famous story of Hui-neng, the illiterate monk who supposedly bested his superior in a poetry competition to become the Sixth Patriarch. There is a belief that Hui-neng was not as lowborn as textual history leads us to believe; rather, it was a dedicated and zealous follower of Hui-neng – Ho-tse Shen-hui – who invented a hagiography and embellished the story of the poetry competition to win influence in the Imperial Court. In Ho-tse Shen-hui's version, not only did his illustrious teacher emerge victorious over an eminent priest of the time, he also received the seal of dharma transmission from Hongren in secret, so as to not upset the monks. Ho-tse Shen-hui was so convincing in his tale-telling that Hui-neng's secret reception of the dharma became established as history, and it could be surmised that the spiritual bolstering of a lower-class individual over a well-known and well-established monk allowed for the inclusion of the laity as capable of progressing further on the path toward enlightenment than was previously believed. Though the events of the Hui-neng and Dōgen's establishment of Soto Zen are separated by several centuries, the acceptance of an illiterate Sixth Patriarch as the founder and spiritual ancestor to Ch'an lineages, coupled with Dōgen's focus on the rural laity and the "mundane" activities that occupied their daily lives opened a spot at the table for today's Soto Zen practitioners.[17] This malleability enables them to subtly modify the presentation of dharmic teachings to appeal to current generations in an act known as "pragmatic adaptation", a term we will investigate further going forward.

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[16] Dumoulin, xv.

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[17] For my purposes here, I use this word to refer to individuals who, while potentially not ordained by the Soto Zen school or involved in monastery practices, have an affiliation beyond casual practice. E.g. Mari Fujii was taught by her husband who was a Soto Zen monk, and Soei Yoneda was brought up in a Rinzai monastery before becoming abbess herself.

CHAPTER III: *HASSUN*

Food has always played a role outside of biological necessity. Socially, it is a great binder; the imagery of the mother and daughter and granddaughter sharing special family recipes, or of the family - extended and immediate - gathered around the table sharing food and re-establishing bonds are both common. With the rise of culinary experimentation, food also serves as a way of introducing oneself to another culture; it is the gateway of cultural exposure. In the last two decades, with the Internet, food television, and the availability of cookbooks (both hard copy and electronic), this idea of food as cultural experience has exploded, ushering in a new breadth and depth of globalization.

If you browse the cookbook section of your local Barnes and Noble - or, as is more common, the cookbook segment of Amazon - you're bombarded by a variety of themes ranging from cuisines to how to eat with certain dietary restrictions. The genre of vegetarian cooking has staked its own permanent spot in the cooking landscape; in recent years, the push for organic, clean eating of locally sourced ingredients and the increased importance of a vegetable-based plate has caused people to reassess how they look at vegetables and vegetarian diets in particular. The focus on physical health and our relationship with food has given additional traction to the vegetarian cookbook genre, allowing for the development of culturally based subgenres.

Shōjin Ryori: A Cuisine for the Spirit

Shōjin ryori - a term which can be translated as meaning “cook the way to enlightenment” - is a cuisine with its beginnings in China, but which took root and blossomed within Japanese Zen Buddhism.[18] Based primarily on the Buddhist precept of *ahimsa* or non-violence, *shōjin ryori* dishes are strictly plant based, with the ingredients and cooking techniques used derived from the current season. Seasonings - namely soy sauce, mirin (rice wine), sake, and miso - are light and natural (i.e. sans additives) and are chosen to enhance the flavors of the chosen ingredients, rather than forcibly create a taste through the addition of an outside source. Because it originated as a temple cuisine, the five “strong flavors” are avoided on the grounds that they are believed to cause energy imbalances that would be detrimental to the monks of the monastery.[19] Though only monks were required to follow the strict meatless dietary requirement, as Buddhism became more ingrained in Japanese society and culture so did temple cuisine, eventually taking its place as part of the tea ceremony and the art form that became modern-day *kaiseki*.[20,21] While aspects of *shōjin ryori* have certainly made it into the modern haute-*kaiseki* culinary scene, it is the more simplistic setup of one soup, three side dishes, and a bowl of rice that the monastery *tenzo* – including the addressee of Dōgen's *Tenzo* - would prepare and serve to their brethren monks. It is the *shōjin ryori* style of cuisine endemic to the 13th century Kamakura period that Dōgen's *tenzo* would have prepared, and as such it is *shōjin ryori* that would be infused with Soto Zen's emphasis on mindfulness, non-dualism, and the importance of incorporating the cultivation of one's innate buddha-nature into the most mundane of activities.

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[18] “*Shōjin*” translates to “effort”, and typically refers to the zeal with which one progresses down the path toward enlightenment. “Ryori” means “cooking” or “cuisine”. Thus, a common translation of the term is “devotion cuisine.”

[19] These were previously mentioned but will be listed again for ease: garlic, scallions, onions, leeks, and chives. There is also the thought that eating these five allium vegetables breaks the ahimsa precept, as it is the bulb or “living” part of the plant that is widely consumed.

[20] The imperial decree encouraging Buddhist practice came in 604 CE. Prince Shotoku later passed the “Seventeen Article Constitution” that stated the upholding of Buddhist morality was necessary for running a successful government.

[21] Kaiseki is a style of cuisine in which numerous intricate small dishes are prepared. The “original” kaiseki was more Buddhist in nature, in that it focused on simplicity and the spirituality of colors and seasonality. Eventually kaiseki became associated with the shogunate as an expression of the upper echelon of the social hierarchy. It is now analogous to Western haute cuisine, due to the skill required for artful preparation and presentation.

Today, however, the spiritual practice encouraged by cooking in this style is set on the back burner to simmer and wait for an opportune moment. It is rare for those shelves of vegetarian cookbooks to have "spiritual cultivation" as the strongest flavor, the attention-grabber, as the thing to draw people in. Rather, we return to the health benefits of vegetarian diets, a common thread that weaves the genre together. But among the glossy covers with macro-focused photos of carrots lie titles such as Mari Fujii's *The Enlightened Kitchen* and Soei Yoneda's *The Heart of Zen Cuisine*. At first, they appear inconspicuous, their presence tickling the edge of the Western obsession with the "mystical Orient," but their titles hint at something more than just another Asian cookbook. Having tempted the reader with the flavor of something familiar enough to be comfortable, yet unique enough to satisfy our love of the exotic (or, even, our love of posting pretty food on Instagram), these cookbooks open the door for today's spiritual explorers and culinarians alike.

The Enlightened Kitchen

Written in a style that evokes a sense of familial comfort, *The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan* strikes a balance in teaching both Japanese-cuisine novices and experienced cooks. Its author, Mari Fujii, invokes the memory of her husband Sotetsu who spent upwards of ten years training as a Buddhist monk, particularly as the monastery's head cook, as she introduces a bare-bones backstory to *shōjin ryori*'s religious foundations. In a clever move on her part - or the part of her editor - the specificity of Buddhist precepts is kept toward the end of the introduction, even while the title itself hints at the birthplace of the recipes found within. Presenting the religiosity at the fore runs the risk of scaring off more readers than it entices, so this *shōjin ryori* beginner's guide casts its net on a huge scope by appealing to themes the modern reader may find both familiar and relatable.

"Natural, creative, and healthy" – subtitles given in the book's introduction - are three descriptions given to this style of cooking. Fujii calls attention to the importance of paying attention to the seasonality of vegetables, explaining the belief that eating the foods of a specific season provides the body with the nourishment it needs at a given time of year, with the cooling effect of summer's melons, tomatoes, and cucumbers, and the warmth provided by winter's root vegetables offered as examples. Dōgen's emphasis on wasting nothing is presented in terms of environmentalism, a hot-button topic in today's media, as *shōjin* cuisine promotes the use of all parts of ingredients, from root to stem, whether for nutritious consumption or palette cleansing. But it is on the topic of health where the line is smudged the tiniest bit. In the *Tenzo Kyōkun,* much of Dōgen's reference to the ingredients rests on the kind of attitude one should foster when handling them, and how that attitude essentially infuses the ingredients with the *tenzo*'s energy and intent. Aside from stating how mealtimes should be enjoyable for all in attendance, there is little mention of the health benefits of the vegetables used (though this can perhaps be chalked up to the period in which the manuscript was written). Fujii references this attitude and energy cultivation through her mention of temple cuisine being called “soul food” by one of her students, and how those who join her for cooking classes and meals tend to feel more relaxed afterward. But she puts more emphasis on the nutritional benefits of the food, perhaps because it is a characteristic that is more tangible and science-backed that readers can understand. Sun-dried ingredients, rich in fiber, calcium, and other vitamins and minerals, are good not only for infusing the cuisine with concentrated flavor but also aid in controlling blood pressure. Products such as soybeans - whether as the raw pods, pressed into tofu, or frozen and reconstituted as koyadofu - offer a meatless alternative that is high in protein yet low-calorie and low-fat.

As previously mentioned, the modern health craze that has been whipped into a frenzy due to rising instances of heart disease, diabetes, and other ailments makes it easier to see just how *The Enlightened Kitchen*’s net was cast into the global marketplace. Though it doesn’t offer a miracle cure for such bodily ailments, it does present the opportunity for home cooks to avoid the pitfalls of an unhealthy diet while making vegetarian dishes and healthy choices more appealing - to both the palette and the eyes. To someone looking to add new recipes to their repertoire, this might be enough. *The Enlightened Kitchen* may have hooked another reader, another buyer, allowing it to remain in print and therefore attempt to reach its far less obvious audience. For woven subtly between the talk of food that is delicious, nutritious, and light on the stomach are descriptions not relating to bodily health or the food itself. Fujii eases the reader into the mind-and-spirit end of the pool with the language tweaks made during her discussion of seasonal eating. The language used is what many have come to expect from Buddhism and East Asia at large: being one with nature, balancing dichotomous elements, keeping things fresh, clean, and pure. But it is only after the reader's feet are wet that more of the mental and spiritual benefits are explored.

More than a cuisine that is good for the body, proper preparation of *shōjin ryori* can serve as a time of focused grounding amidst the hectic bustle of modern daily life, one that Fujii says she hopes her readers' hearts and bodies will reap the benefits of. Again, the language shift to accommodate the change in audience is subtle; is it a necessary requirement to cook the recipes held within the volume's 100 pages with the mind of a *tenzo* seeking enlightenment? Of course not. But for those looking to heal more than their physical being, the respite offered by using ordinary chores - cooking, in this instance - as a way of bringing their whole selves into the present moment in order to care for their loved ones, *The Enlightened Kitchen* may introduce the flavor that will reinvigorate their palettes.

While *The Enlightened Kitchen* is more of a beginner's guide geared toward blending modernity with a traditional cuisine in a way that home cooks will be able to handle with little difficulty, it also serves as a brief introduction to Soto Zen.[22] There is no denying *shōjin ryori*'s Buddhist roots, and while Fujii certainly doesn't ignore them, the religiosity behind this cuisine is kept light enough so as to not distract those who may be more interested in Asian vegetarianism than a Buddhist cultural lesson. It is the beginnings of a showcase of Buddhism's adaptability; modern audiences may trend toward the secular and there is a line drawn between religion and spirituality, with Buddhism and its accoutrements tending to fall into the latter category. Couple that with the rising health food trend and the fixation of people (particularly Westerners) on all things "Oriental," and you've got a marketing strategy.[23] But while the manipulation of the rhetoric is all well and good to maintain in print, that may not be the ultimate goal. Rather, by softening the presentation of religion, Fujii manages to disseminate Dōgen's teachings through the modern love of culinary globalization and the acknowledgement that her readers likely live fast-paced lives that they wish to slow down. Though she may not mention the *Tenzo Kyōkun* or Dōgen by name, the connection is unmistakable for those who are familiar, and the uninitiated receive their first taste of the cuisine's purported spiritual effects: "When my husband was training as *tenzo,* he was told by his master to 'pour the spirit of heaven and earth into every dish.' Even a meal that consists of one simple dish can be made with care and attention. Thinking of the people who will eat the food you make, and cooking with your whole heart, will affect all other parts of your daily life. In other words, carrying out ordinary chores earnestly is good spiritual practice for everyone."[24] This may not quote Dōgen word-for-word, but the intention remains the same; by cultivating the right mindfulness, right concentration, right thought, and putting forth the right effort (all of which are aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path) one can perform beneficial spiritual practice for oneself while also caring for the community (or one's family).

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[22] Fujii points out substitutions that can be made for harder to find ingredients, a subtle nod to the opportunities afforded by expanded globalization, but with the unspoken caveat that the traditional ingredients will be best. "If you can't find fresh daikon, picked at the base of Mt. Fuji, store bought is fine."

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[23] For us, Orientalism will be defined as the representation of aspects of East and South Asian (as well as Middle Eastern cultures) that trends toward the stereotypical representation provided by colonialist attitudes. In this case, the "hyperspiritualization" of Buddhism as a peace-loving religion that is one with nature is being referenced.

[24] Fujii, Mari. *The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan*. (Kodansha International, 2012). 8-9.

Mari Fujii's cookbook casts a wide net that lures in the curious – the culinarily adventurous, the lovers of food aesthetic, those who find comfort in the kitchen – and opens the door for further investigation. References to the unfamiliar – both terms and people – are general enough that they do not bog down the pace of the cookbook but are made specific enough that a particularly investigative individual could turn to the Internet for more information, which, as is the argument here, is precisely the point. Dissemination and promulgation are both incremental and subtle in this subgenre of Zen, and in the case of these "gateway" volumes the promulgation may not be entirely intentional. Mari Fujii closes her introduction by saying that she hopes her readers will "reap the benefits of this soothing, healthful way of cooking and eating" in both heart and body – she is seemingly concerned with their well-being, rather than whether the Zen message has been received. But there are other chances for that, offered in other cookbooks, and with authors like Fujii writing in a style that is both familiar and inviting other, *shōjin ryori* cooks are able to form the platform that makes up the next step of culinary exploration.

The Heart of Zen Cuisine

If Mari Fujii's tone and writing style are akin to the concerned grandmother looking to instill her knowledge of food and life in the hearts of the next generation, then Soei Yoneda's relationship with her readers is much more reminiscent of the traditional, yet no less relatable, teacher and student. The tone is friendly, but direct, with the introduction itself being longer than that in *The Enlightened Kitchen* and the book's purpose is made blatantly clear: "But the main purpose of [temple] food is pleasure and enjoyment, and the purpose of this book is to be practical."[25] It is perhaps the attention paid to the aforementioned practicality and the cultural and religious detail set alongside vegetarian recipes that puts this volume as a potential next step in a reader's progression. Broken into five subsections, the introduction to *The Heart of Zen Cuisine* addresses the "whats" and "whys" behind *shōjin* cuisine more deeply than Mari Fujii's volume. For example, when talking about her late husband's *tenzo* training within the monastery, Fujii says that "[i]n other words, carrying out ordinary chores earnestly is good spiritual practice for everyone," and Yoneda expounds upon this statement in her subsection on the *tenzo*.[26] Before even delving into the attitude and discipline the *tenzo* must cultivate if he is to be successful, Yoneda refers to the *Tenzo Kyōkun* and Dōgen but in a way that makes the relationship between the *Tenzo Kyōkun* and her own cooking personal. The *Tenzo Kyōkun* "stood me in particularly good stead in my own *shōjin* cookery," she says, bringing the reader back into her own kitchen, her own classroom.[27] This is a subtle move on her part, and one that I believe serves to draw in a generation of readers who may lack familiarity with the names and titles she mentions within these early pages. The history she provides may feel disconnected or confusing to those unprepared for such narration in a seemingly simple cookbook, but by following the presented information with a quick personal anecdote she manages to ground something foreign and intangible in real world application.

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[25] Yoneda, Soei, Koei Hoshino, and Robert Farrar Capon. *The Heart of Zen Cuisine: A 600-year tradition of vegetarian cooking.* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1987). 59.
[26] Fujii. 8-9.
[27] Yoneda. 35.

Yoneda's inclusion of this personal background makes the discussion of Zen more real and allows for readers to see it as more than something found in a textbook. Oftentimes individuals retain more knowledge of an intangible topic – particularly one they have little to no background in – if the presentation is made relevant to the perceived everydayness of their lives. By providing these anecdotes Yoneda is showing her audience that the position of *tenzo* – a position she has invited her audience to fill – and all of its spiritual accompaniments are used not only by Dōgen's 13th century audience, but they are also applicable to the modern person. The repetition of her belief in the spiritual attitude of cooking – that "being totally present to what you are doing and allowing no distractions" – is something that today's audience can understand and apply.[28] It is a notion mentioned in Fujii's book as well, and one that has likely expanded since Yoneda's publishing in 1982, the idea that today's people are so busy multitasking that they physically, mentally, and spiritually run themselves down. If nothing else, a reader can take away from *The Heart of Zen Cuisine* the need to slow down and focus entirely on whatever singular thing they are doing in that moment – including paying attention to the teachings of Abbess Soei Yoneda and the cookbook on their laps.

In a manner similar to Dōgen's, Yoneda acknowledges the passage of time, understanding that change is inevitable, and it is to one's benefit to change along with them. More specifically, she states that while global commerce increased between Japan and the west after World War II, allowing for the experimentation of *shōjin* techniques with Western vegetables, she remained faithful to Dōgen's teachings and the spiritual cultivation of the position of *tenzo*.[29] The style of *shōjin* cookery practiced at the Sankō-in nunnery, of which Yoneda served as abbess since she was 28, has its foundations in that of the Bamboo Palace in Kyoto, the nunnery where Yoneda spent her early years. Those at the Sankō-in have done their best to preserve some of the stylistic aspects practiced at the Bamboo Palace, both the refined nuances of food served to the imperial family as the Donke-in temple served as a repository for imperial princesses at the time of their retirement, as well as the simplicity afforded to the Zen religious life.[30] At the same time, the Sankō-in has introduced new techniques and ingredients into the mix in order to keep one foot in the present, while its foundation rests in the past. With these subtle changes it can be inferred that this alteration of presentation to fit the times is nothing new in the promulgation of Zen Buddhism; Dōgen serves as a prime example, as it can be argued that he remained faithful to the long-standing Buddhist traditions that comprised his own spiritual foundations while he simultaneously shifted focus away from the politically entrenched monastic life of his time to include the farmers and lay-folk in his understanding of how to nourish their inherent buddha-nature.

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[28] Ibid. 37.

This attention paid to the potential generation gap between Yoneda and her readers, and her desire to pass on information she sees as being beneficial to living one's best life, is perhaps best driven by the practical nature of the book itself. The use of the term “practical” in describing the purpose of the cookbook says to me that it is a tool to be used – it is meant to teach – rather than to serve as a piece of aesthetic decoration on a bookshelf or otherwise. As such, *The Heart of Zen Cuisine*’s matte pages on heavy stock are suited for making notes in the margins, dog-earring the pages, or otherwise inflicting signs of wear that one may be hesitant to perform on a more decorative volume. The book is, at its binding, practical and speaks to the stylistic simplicity the audience will encounter in its pages.

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[29] Ibid. 38.
[30] Ibid.

Even considering this ode to practicality, the cookbook does not ignore the importance of presentation. Yoneda herself states that “people are naturally attracted to gorgeous and attractive cuisine” a category more than suited to *shōjin ryori*.[31] But rather than use that natural attraction to her advantage by liberally peppering the book with glossy photographs, Yoneda instead gives a nod to the clean, simple style that comprises her chosen cookery. This seemingly enhances the practical nature of the book; rather than follow the trend of many modern cookbooks which tend to break up the text with pictures, *The Heart of Zen Cuisine* provides colorized, glossy photos of the recipes in the front of the book, harkening back to the idea of a textbook and its glossary. Commonly used vegetables, recipe photos (with page numbers for reference and cleverly organized by season to tie in the oft-mentioned seasonality of the cuisine), as well as examples of seasonal tray settings are arranged away from the recipes themselves, seemingly implying that having the photograph on the recipe’s facing page would be distracting for the reader. Which could very well be the case; though some recipes are presented with very little introduction, others have an accompanying cultural lesson explaining the dish's origins, suggested substitutions, or seasonal associations.[32] This method of presentation could be less engaging to someone still on the aesthetics-driven beginnings of their *shōjin ryori* journey. But to someone who has "graduated" from the gateway cookbooks, being offered the chance to put the single-minded focus discussed in both Fujii and Yoneda's introductions (in this example) may be more beneficial, as in the moment, having stepped into the role of *tenzo*, the reader is more focused on the "doing" than whether their end product matches the picture.

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[31] Ibid. 43.

That isn't to say one should completely ignore how a dish looks when presented. Yoneda takes the time to further expound upon the sense-based aspects of *shōjin* cuisine that are important in its preparation, among them the interplay of taste, color, and texture via cooking methods. Balance is the name of the game here, as it is up to the *tenzo* to properly utilize the five cooking methods (boiling, grilling, deep-frying, steaming, and serving raw) in order to bring about the six flavors (bitter, sour, sweet, spicy, salty, and "delicate", which we recognize as "umami").[33] Doing so, she says, brings about the three virtues that express the spirit of *shōjin* cuisine: lightness and softness, cleanliness and freshness, and precision and care.[34] The idea here appears to be that only by practicing the single-minded focus described in the *Tenzo Kyōkun* can one obtain such a delicate balance.

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[32] See Appendix, figures 1 and 2.
[33] Ibid. 37.
[34] Ibid.

But for those who have just begun this culinary adventure, how are they to know where to start? Conveniently, Yoneda's theme of the practical textbook springs to the rescue in the form of two detailed chapters on the basics, something that Fujii's cookbook has in the form of a brief how-to on washing rice and making stock, as well as a glossary that is similar to, but somehow less detailed than, Yoneda's. Interestingly, this information – presented in black and white – is relegated to the back of Fujii's book, after the reader has had time to ogle the vividly colored images and recipes in the pages before. Yoneda's presentation is exactly the opposite, with her chapters on the basics and glossary of vegetables (some of which receive a color photo, grouped together on a single page before the introduction) all gathered before the presentation of the recipes. This may very well be another showing of the differences in the authors' audiences; while Fujii's are likely as new as the leaves on spring bamboo shoots, it is safe to say that Yoneda's intended audience already has some experience in cooking Japanese vegetarian cuisine and are looking for the foundational steps to further perfect their ventures.

CHAPTER IV: *TAKIAWASE*

So far, two cookbooks with direct ties to Zen Buddhism have been presented, the purpose of which seem to be to teach modern readers how to prepare *shōjin ryori* cuisine in their own homes. If that is the case, why would they go so far as to include a rather heavy dose of Buddhist historical and religious background? Would it not make more sense to give only the basics of religious generality, knowing that there are other avenues to which the religious or spiritually curious can turn? After all, those who wish to study Zen - or convert, if you're taken with that kind of language - aren't going to be found in the vegetarian cookbook aisle of the local bookstore… or are they?

Therein lies the basis for my argument. With the expansion of globalization - already rampant when Yoneda published the first edition of her book in 1982 - and the trend of "religious seekers" that persisted through the 1970s only to evolve into a kind of religious-spiritual-new age cherry-picking, came the need for Zen to modify its presentation to appeal to its audience in the new generation.[35] Just as it can be said that Dōgen adapted his presentation of Zen to account for his primarily lay followers who did not have the luxury of spending hours studying sutras (thus resulting in the zazen-driven and "mindfulness" focused Soto Zen) there is convincing evidence to support the idea of

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[35] This is a term commonly found in Benjamin Zeller's *Heaven's Gate* that refers to Americans who spent years trying to find themselves in the postwar period. I use this term in conjunction with "religious cherry-picking" - what some may identify with Sheilaism, a la Robert Bellah - to denote a kind of individual who may not find the type of self-transformation they're looking for in a single institutionalized religion and instead opt to take advantage of the exposure provided by modern globalization to see how various religious and spiritual practices and precepts can fit into the lifestyle they want for themselves.
Zeller, Benjamin. "The Spiritual Quest and Self-Transformation." *Heaven's Gate: America's UFO Religion*. (New York: NYU Press, 2014). 43-63.

the same adaptation being applied in modernity. Soei Yoneda and Mari Fujii, along with other Zen cookbook authors like them, have taken advantage of the vastness of sources provided by the Internet and the booming popularity of health food trends to cast a wide net. This does two things: first, it allows for them to reach a greater audience, with the idea that the audience will narrow as inclusion of Buddhist teachings increases as readers progress to more and more specialized texts. Secondly, those who do opt to progress become the subtle audience to which the Zen-focused segment of the cookbooks wished to reach; these are the people who may become the new generation of disciples through whom the precepts are promulgated over time.[36] Both sectors of readers can be considered important for the continuation of the teachings, as well as for the livelihoods of some of the monasteries themselves. Some readers will be interested in only the food and thus are unlikely to branch out beyond the cookbooks that are more recipes than Buddhist life-coaching, and that is not only okay - it's expected.

Pragmatism and Marketing: A Necessary "Evil"

Publishing cookbooks, hosting cooking classes, and running a monastery are not inexpensive affairs; as Yoneda points out in her introduction, the Sankō-in nunnery was at risk of closing its doors until the junior abbess pitched the idea of housing a *shōjin ryori* restaurant and cooking classes in the monastery itself, with both open to locals and tourists, in order to provide financial stability. In the cases of the cookbooks alone, when the number of sales determines whether or not a book stays in print, it becomes necessary to appeal to a wide swath of the general populace. Doing so allows niche publications to make enough revenue to maintain a presence, while simultaneously lighting the fires of curiosity in the seekers who wound up wanting a Zen lifestyle makeover - and maybe a dash of enlightenment - to go along with their *shōjin ryori* meals. The idea of "pragmatic adaptation" was introduced early on in this project; this term is often used in conjunction with the adaptation of stories to different kinds of media (books, moves, and television shows) and refers to the addition or removal of story elements or characters in order to better fit the new media. For this project, this term references the changes made to the presentation of Soto Zen material in order for it align with today's audience. The idea is that providing a familiar foundation (health trends or the use of the term "mindfulness" for example) rather than evangelizing a foreign concept with a millenia-old history may make the suggested lifestyle changes more palatable.

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[36] While this is my argument, I acknowledge that a counter-argument can be made that there may be no intention of appealing to the proposed audience. Rather, it may be a monetary move or one that creates art – as the aesthetics of Japanese food presentation are considered such – for art's sake.

The ability of Buddhist practitioners to adapt to new surroundings, societal changes, political landscapes, or advances in technology is nothing new. As inferred in the historical background provided in the beginning of this project, it is possible for the core teachings – both of Buddhism and those expressed in the *Tenzo Kyōkun* – to remain the same while subtle, pragmatic shifts in the rhetoric allow for the presentation to be altered to account for a new audience in a new era. However, for those not taken with the idea of pragmatism, this suggestion may sound simply like a sly, manipulative marketing scheme that is bent on fulfilling an individual agenda. Oftentimes pragmatism is given negative connotations, connotations need be suspended on the grounds that in an age where capitalism is a ruling force, it makes the most sense for a niche publication to "play the game" to their advantage. In this case that may mean altering the language to emphasize participation in a health trend or providing a crash course in Buddhist precepts alongside a personal anecdote to make a foreign topic more relatable. Luckily for authors in the *shōjin ryori* subgenre, language isn't the only tool at their disposal. The adage that we first "eat with our eyes" has only grown more prominent in recent years. Now, you are unlikely to find even the simplest of recipes without a beautifully staged photo accompaniment - whether your medium is a hard copy book or a blog post - and *shōjin* cuisine is no different.

Let Me Take a Picture First! Social Media Food Documentation

The advent of social media - namely Facebook and Instagram - has provided an avenue through which people are able to instantly share their experiences with others around the globe. One of the more popular categories of sharing revolves around "food porn," a term that references the sense of desire that is invoked by the portrayal of food in an appetizing or aesthetically pleasing way. A precursory search for the term "*shōjin ryori*" on Instagram nets over 3,000 results, results that are breathtakingly beautiful and that capture the aesthetics of *shōjin ryori* and, by extension, *kaiseki*.[37]

Amidst colorful spreads of food in their compartmentalized presentation are images that include *kaiseki* being served at what appears to be a *ryokan*, as well as stills of Japanese restaurants and landscapes that are reminiscent of the *shōjin* cuisine in surrounding images.[38] These bits and pieces of Japanese culture are interspersed throughout Instagram's *shōjin ryori* tag in much the same way Mari Fujii peppers her cookbook's introduction with an ode to the cuisine's roots that provides a means for the curious to step beyond the food itself. Browsing this tag, one finds snapshots of other *shōjin* cookbooks, as well as videos of the cuisine being prepared in a restaurant setting. A video post by Oldur Elisson, an Icelandic-Danish artist whose book *The Kitchen* documents the communal aspect of cooking among members of his studio, describes the Buddhist foundation of the cuisine in terms of vegetarianism and the concepts of seasonal, waste-free cooking.[39] It is an interesting addition to what one may consider casual and flippant social media, but its presence and the potential path it leads to is exactly my focus. Though it may not be put together by the Zen schools with the purpose of attracting new disciples, there is nothing stopping members of these schools from using an Instagrammer's psychology as a guiding principle. The attraction people feel toward aesthetically pleasing food is strong, strong enough to hold the attention of today's social media gurus and culinary colonizers. The presence of videos like Elisson's works to the advantage of authors like Fujii and Yoneda in that it is another breadcrumb - or rice grain if you prefer - to tempt the spiritually curious and culinarily adventurous. The point is, that while it certainly isn't a guarantee, by playing to the trend of "food porn" when taking photos for their cookbooks *shōjin ryori* authors are extending an invitation and encouraging exploration of the cuisine and its foundations.[40] Once hooked, more in-depth titles like Yoneda's *The Heart of Zen Cuisine* become the next stage of natural progression; there is less focus on photos that romanticize Japanese food and its perfect, clean presentation and artfully combined colors. Rather, practicality takes the fore in matte recipe pages that are preceded by a glossy index of commonly used vegetables that reads more like a textbook than a coffee table centerpiece. The textbook-style presentation acts as a kind of encouragement for those who wish to take their studies further; it is unlikely (though certainly not impossible) that an individual would be willing to muss up the pretty, glossy pages with notes, whereas the matte, heavy-weight paper of Yoneda's book is perfectly suited for that. Being able to highlight, to take down notes, to jot down ideas of substitutions for oneself suggests its own kind of generational continuance as well. Rather than handing down recipe cards, people are able to hand down the whole cookbook – recipes and cultural notes included. Though it can be argued that definitively proving this occurrence is would be extraordinarily difficult, there is potential for an extensive study that uses the power of Instagram and the internet at large to inquire among the masses. The availability of platforms like Instagram as daises on which individuals can display their lives suggests an attitude of freedom of expression, one that scholars and researchers can use to get individuals to talk about their experiences in a way similar to how they engage their peers.

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[37] This obviously does not account for images that are either untagged or hidden by a user's privacy settings.

[38] A type of traditional Japanese inn.

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[39] soe_kitchen. "Studio Kitchen Visits: Shojin Ryori." *Instagram video.* February 23, 2018. Accessed April 17, 2018. https://www.instagram.com/p/BfipXHGlbfW/?taken-by=soe_kitchen

[40] See Appendix, figures 3 and 4.

If we were to apply a level ranking to Instagram for the sake of this study, it would perhaps fall before the "gateway" cookbook volumes like Fujii's, and its audience would be the more technologically-minded generations for whom a display of their lives on social media is nothing new. This audience also tends to exhibit a high saturation threshold, meaning that they are just as likely to have Instagram or Tumblr or Facebook open on any device while simultaneously doing something else.[41] For publishers and photographers, this also means that they need to be bright and flashy, relying on more pictures and less verbose descriptions in order to stick out amongst the expanse of information the average social media user absorbs at any given time.[42] But those who do opt to take this route may find it a pragmatic use of a marketing tool. The suggested scenario plays out something like this: a social media user sees pictures and/or video of Japanese temple cuisine on their social media feed that may be posted by other casual users or by a business or other professional. That piece of media may have a description attached (or tagged, perhaps, as descriptions aren't required), but it is the aesthetic that initially draws in the user who, assuming they are interested in this cuisine, becomes part of the target audience. Desiring more information, the user may first turn to other social media platforms – including YouTube – for more information; though a hardcover book is being used in this study, it is possible for the same promulgation to take place using electronic resources as well. Our user may read blog posts containing the sought-after information regarding *shōjin* cooking but the point still stands: even the author of that blog will have had to have received the information from somewhere, and it is possible that they have gone through a similar process as our user.[43] Having gone deeper down the rabbit hole, the user has the option to use the recipes and nothing more, to take another step forward that may involve the purchase (in digital or tangible format) of a book like Fujii's, or to make the jump to a volume like Yoneda's should they so choose.

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[41] I say this as a member of this group, and as someone whose friends are members of this group. Social media usage and multitasking go hand-in-hand.

[42] It would be beneficial to know which publishers, if any, use Instagram as a marketing tool and how they go about it. But interviews of that magnitude are beyond the scope of this project.

[43] This assumes accuracy for the sake of argument. There is no way to completely vet everything you come across on the internet for accuracy.

Acknowledging the fact that there are so many variables that would result in dead ends seems prudent; for the above pathway to occur perfectly it would, likely, have to occur in a vacuum. But the fact of the matter is that the information gleaned from analyzing the style and composition of photography found on popular social media platforms enables authors, editors, and publishers of shōjin cookbooks to tailor their visual aesthetics to better appeal to today's audience, with the hope that Buddhist teachings are consumed alongside the delicious cuisine.

CHAPTER V: *MIZUMONO*

The first chapter of this project introduced the category of cookbooks-as-historical documents, a route that could very well be incorporated into the study of material culture that has seen a rise in the religious studies academy. This inclusion would be of benefit to scholars like Meredith McGuire, whose book *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* argues for a re-examination of what the academy considers religious experience for the everyday individual. In her book is a brief segment on food wherein she references an experience she had with the Buddhist monks of the Tassajara Zen Center in California, and how their practice of mindfulness (a term that she uses seemingly with an assumption that the reader knows exactly what she means) was constantly present and pervaded the actions of preparation, serving, and eating food.[44] This idea that "eating and cooking are thus spiritual practices that become paths to enlightenment, a realization of Buddhist be-here-nowness" is precisely the attitude that is argued as being presented in the cookbooks of this project, but with a twist. McGuire's experience occurred within the bounds of a Zen Buddhist monastery (albeit on American soil) and as such it is unlikely that the cookbooks presented here were written for that audience. However, the message is similar. As such, would it not be beneficial for McGuire to follow the paths constructed by these cookbooks to show that her argument for the mundane-as-experience extends into the lives of the "common man"? That is one gap this project wishes to fill. Just because the cookbooks themselves are a commodity, easily affected by the whims of the market, does not mean that they do not make valued contributions in the lives of those who use them. In an extended version of this project, using a combination of the ethnography present in McGuire's book plus an in-depth analysis of sales and marketing data could help in drawing the divide between those who find benefit beyond the bodily in *shōjin ryori* and those who do not; it would be difficult, but not impossible.

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[44] McGuire, Meredith B. *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). 106.

Another gap this project looks to bridge is one that is present in the realm of food studies and the religious studies academy itself. As stated in the beginning, "food studies" is a broad, interdisciplinary field that has broken out of the box of agriculture, production, and distribution to include the humanities and social sciences. In their book *Food Studies: An Introduction to Research Methods*, Jeff Miller and Jonathan Deutsch name several subcategories of the humanities and social sciences, but leave religious studies completely by the wayside.[45] In fact, besides passing glances to things that may be considered vaguely religious, there is little to no mention of the religiosity that can surround food. Their discussions of food choices as they relate to an individual or national identity paints a broad picture, one that - intentionally or unintentionally - skips over the role religion plays in how both communities and individuals see themselves and the world around them. The decision on what can and cannot be prepared or consumed can just as easily come from religious determination as it can social status or "folklore," a term they use once again in passing and do little to define it. The category of material culture also takes up a chapter of their book, in that objects we interact with daily can do much to tell researchers about the political climate and economic structure being researched. This is similar to the claims made by the Ken Albala in the *Oxford Handbook of Food History,* however it is unclear if Miller and Deutsch would have seen cookbooks as the information-rich documents Albala suggests.[46] Their opinion of cookbooks is that while they are prescriptive and are capable of telling researchers what food could have been made and how, they do little in the way of telling us whether or not they were truly used. Is that not the point of food studies being interdisciplinary? The language used in a cookbook, as well as whether or not pictures are included (and what kind of pictures, at that), and what kind of techniques are used (boiling and frying versus sous vide, for instance) can infer just what kind of audience the book was written for. The usefulness of cookbooks as research objects seems to, as far as Miller and Deutsch are concerned, entirely rest on whether an individual actively used them to cook rather than have them sitting on a shelf. Again, interdisciplinary studies would have researchers performing ethnographic studies to find out if the McMansion owners used or even read the cookbooks, to determine if they fall in one of the two camps suggested by this project: those whose investment is primarily fiscal and aids in maintaining the *shōjin ryori* subgenre's presence in the global market, and those who discover "something else" within the pages of the cookbook that extends beyond the food.

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[45] Miller, Jeff and Jonathan Deuthsch. *Food Studies: An Introduction to Research Methods.* (New York: Berg Publishers, 2009). 10.

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[46] Interesting to note is that their chapter on food history as a research method ends with an interview with Ken Albala, and yet their written attitude on cookbooks as research documents doesn't reflect this interaction.

Miller and Deutsch (correctly) identify food studies as being a burgeoning field within the academic venue, and as such its presence in the classroom is limited. Alongside that, however, is the moniker of "interdisciplinary," something that speaks to the malleability of the field. This project is indicative of that. We have looked at the adaptability of Buddhism as it went from a practice of the elite to one made accessible by the layperson in their kitchen. That accessibility allowed the act of preparing *shōjin ryori* to become enmeshed in the lives of Japanese people, to be handed down to the point where it has staked a claim on part of today's vegetarian market beyond the Japanese archipelago. This project speaks from a largely American perspective, and as such recognizes that the presentation of Zen teachings in Japan (as well as in other countries with heavy Buddhist foundations or influences) may very well be entirely different; not only that, it could quite possibly be that individuals in those countries do not turn to these styles of cookbooks at all for their dose of ethic Zen cookery. Unfortunately, those are 'what-ifs' that must be saved for a larger project that allows for personal investigation in Japan, as well as analysis of sources written in Japanese. But it is a start. Just as Jon Kabat-Zinn altered his presentation of Buddhist meditation (what we now know as mindfulness) to appeal to his largely scientific (and secular) audience, applying a pragmatic approach to disseminating Dōgen Zenji's teachings by making use of the aesthetics that drive social media and providing optional knowledge paths will, hopefully, result in *shōjin ryori* filling the hearts and minds of culinary seekers for generations to come.

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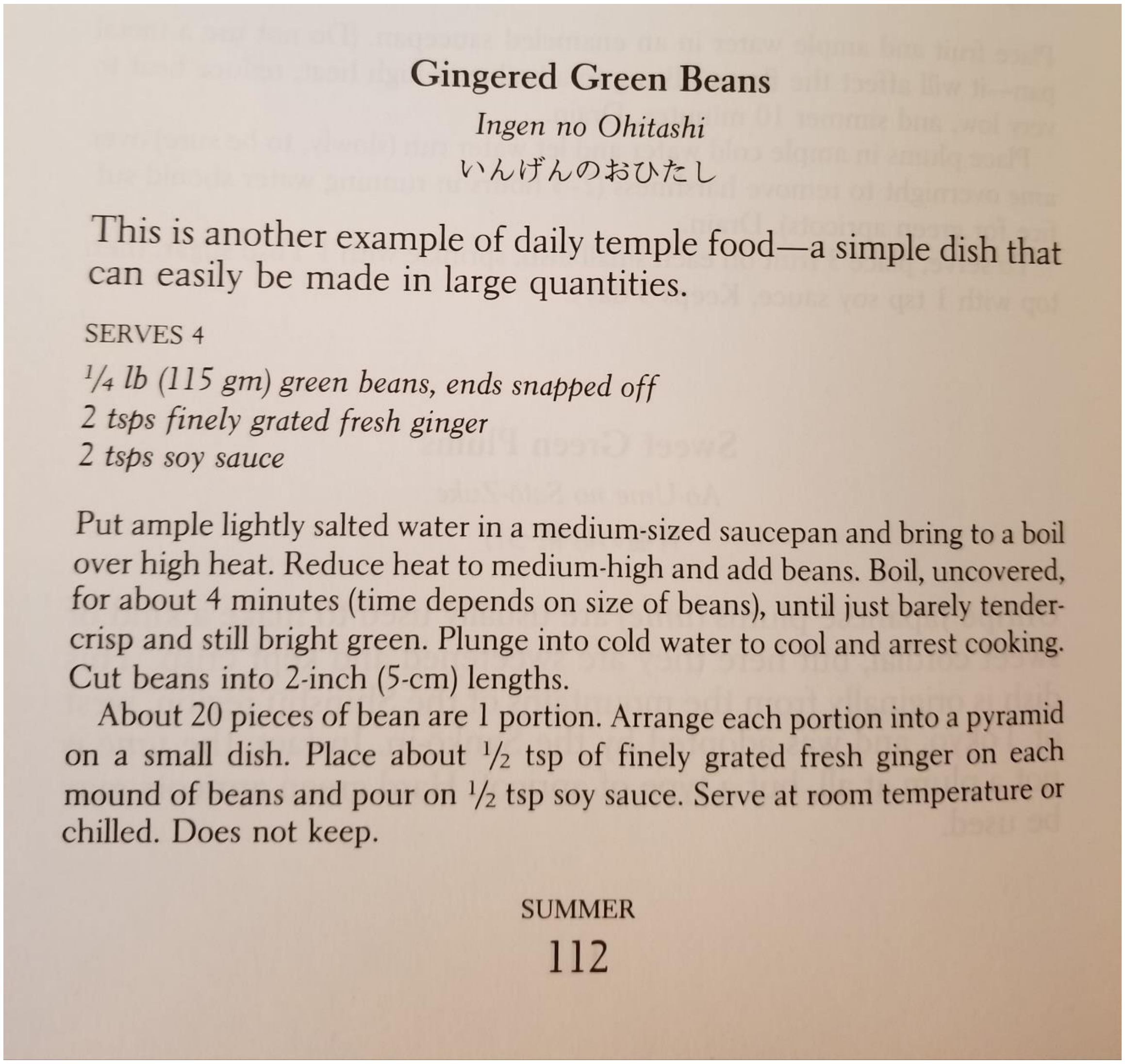
APPENDIX A: GINGERED GREEN BEANS



Gingered Green Beans

Ingen no Ohitashi

いんげんのおひたし

This is another example of daily temple food—a simple dish that can easily be made in large quantities.

SERVES 4

¼ lb (115 gm) green beans, ends snapped off
2 tsps finely grated fresh ginger
2 tsps soy sauce

Put ample lightly salted water in a medium-sized saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-high and add beans. Boil, uncovered, for about 4 minutes (time depends on size of beans), until just barely tender-crisp and still bright green. Plunge into cold water to cool and arrest cooking. Cut beans into 2-inch (5-cm) lengths.

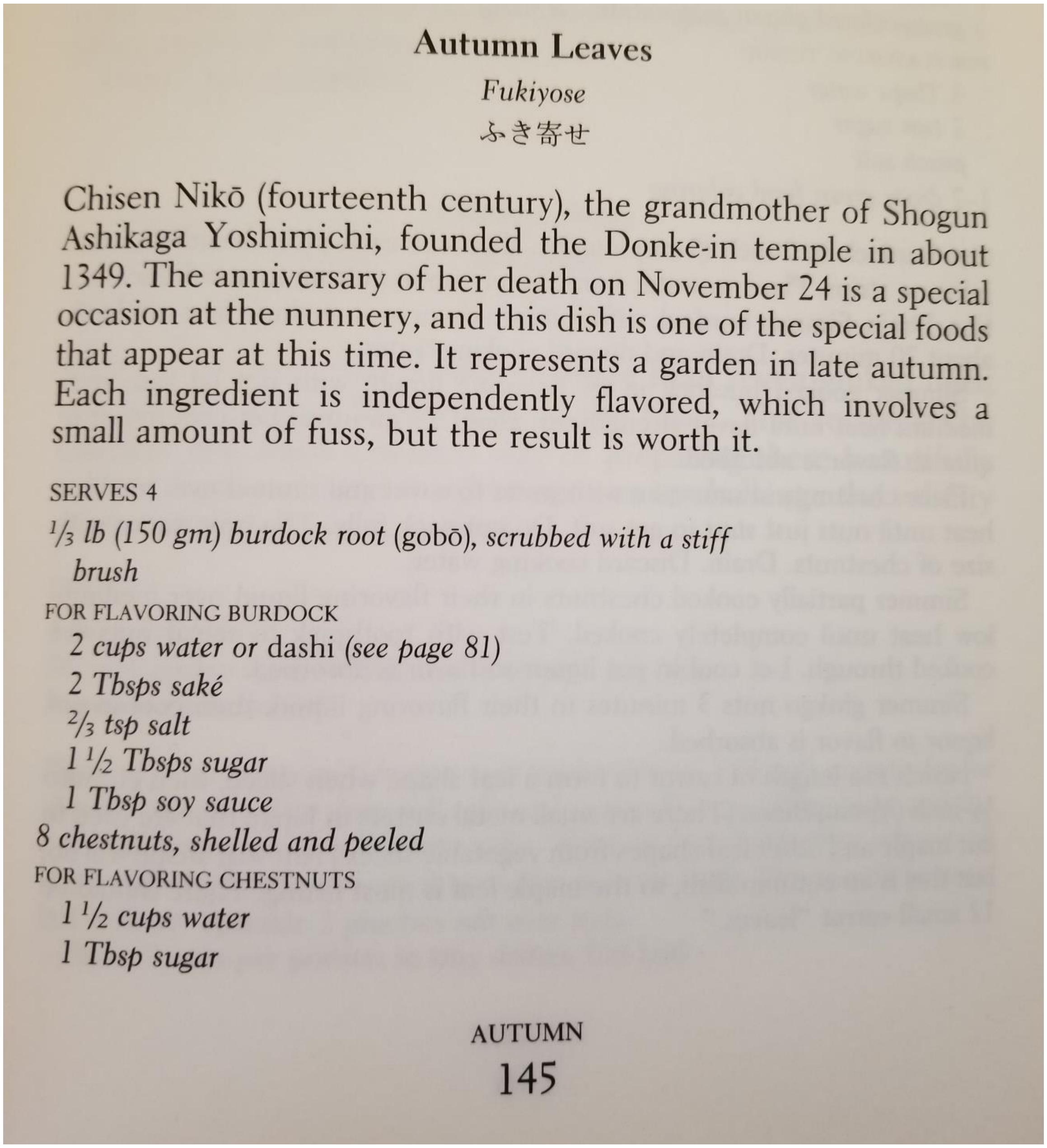
About 20 pieces of bean are 1 portion. Arrange each portion into a pyramid on a small dish. Place about ½ tsp of finely grated fresh ginger on each mound of beans and pour on ½ tsp soy sauce. Serve at room temperature or chilled. Does not keep.

SUMMER

112

Fig. 1: Yoneda, Soei, Koei Hoshino, and Robert Farrar Capon. *The Heart of Zen Cuisine: A 600-year tradition of vegetarian cooking.* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1987). 112.

APPENDIX B: AUTUMN LEAVES



Autumn Leaves

Fukiyose

ふき寄せ

Chisen Nikō (fourteenth century), the grandmother of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimichi, founded the Donke-in temple in about 1349. The anniversary of her death on November 24 is a special occasion at the nunnery, and this dish is one of the special foods that appear at this time. It represents a garden in late autumn. Each ingredient is independently flavored, which involves a small amount of fuss, but the result is worth it.

SERVES 4

1/3 lb (150 gm) burdock root (gobō), *scrubbed with a stiff brush*

FOR FLAVORING BURDOCK

- *2 cups water or* dashi *(see page 81)*
- *2 Tbsps saké*
- *2/3 tsp salt*
- *1 1/2 Tbsps sugar*
- *1 Tbsp soy sauce*

8 chestnuts, shelled and peeled

FOR FLAVORING CHESTNUTS

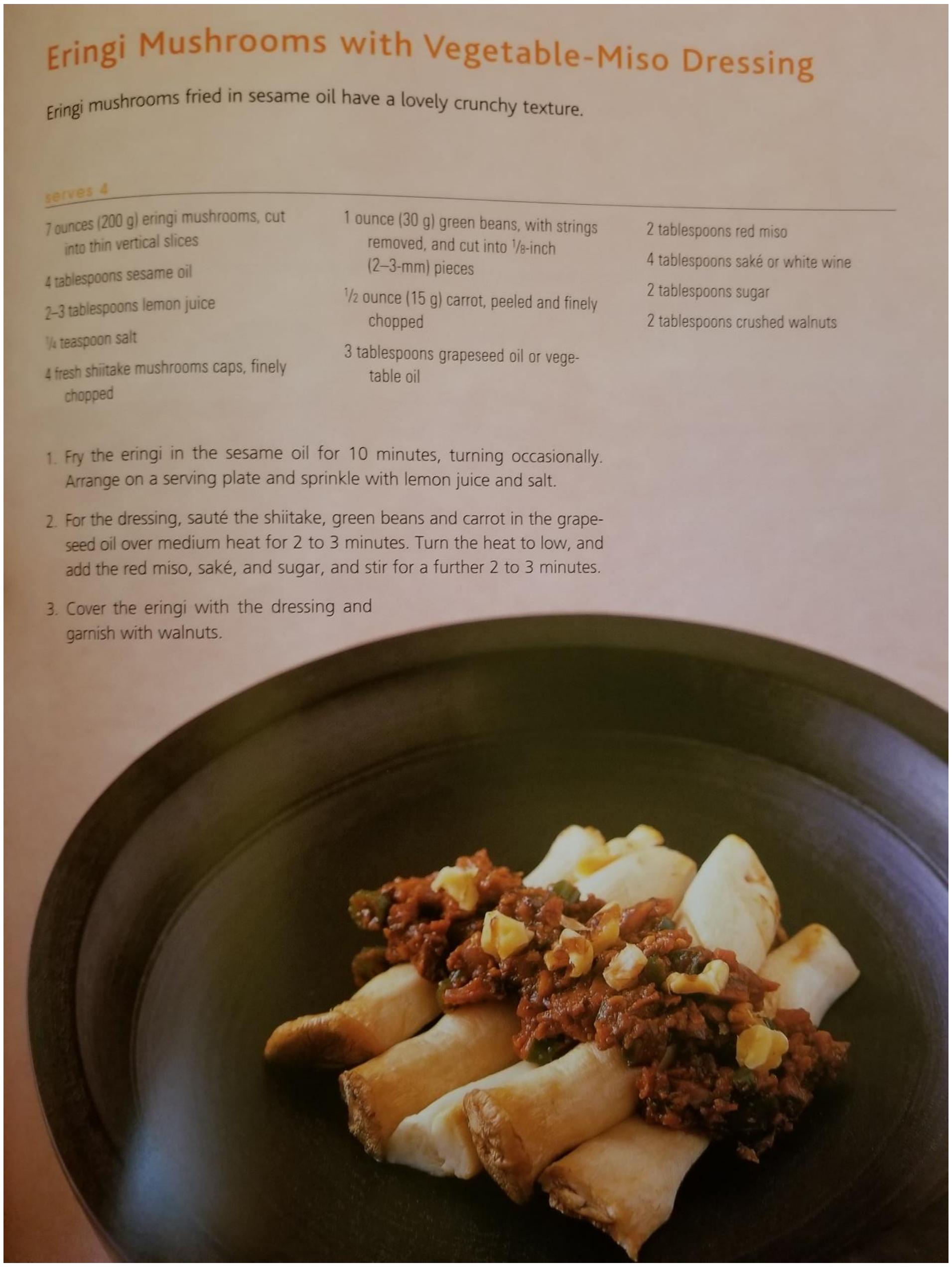
- *1 1/2 cups water*
- *1 Tbsp sugar*

AUTUMN

145

Fig. 2: Yoneda, Soei, Koei Hoshino, and Robert Farrar Capon. *The Heart of Zen Cuisine: A 600-year tradition of vegetarian cooking.* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1987). 145.

APPENDIX C: ERINGI MUSHROOMS WITH VEGETABLE-MISO DRESSING



Eringi Mushrooms with Vegetable-Miso Dressing

Eringi mushrooms fried in sesame oil have a lovely crunchy texture.

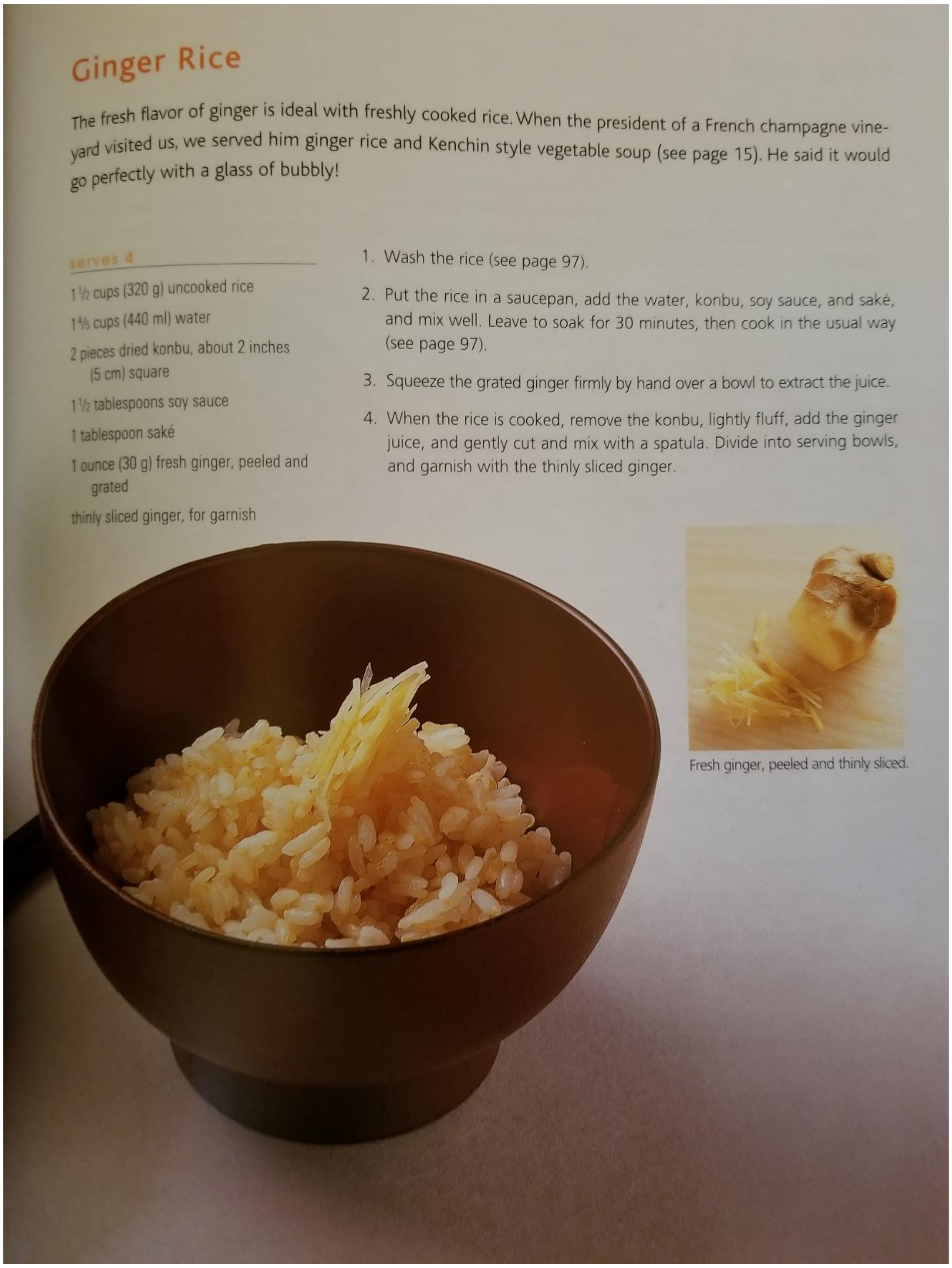
serves 4

- 7 ounces (200 g) eringi mushrooms, cut into thin vertical slices
- 4 tablespoons sesame oil
- 2–3 tablespoons lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 4 fresh shiitake mushrooms caps, finely chopped
- 1 ounce (30 g) green beans, with strings removed, and cut into ⅛-inch (2–3-mm) pieces
- ½ ounce (15 g) carrot, peeled and finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons grapeseed oil or vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons red miso
- 4 tablespoons saké or white wine
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons crushed walnuts

1. Fry the eringi in the sesame oil for 10 minutes, turning occasionally. Arrange on a serving plate and sprinkle with lemon juice and salt.
2. For the dressing, sauté the shiitake, green beans and carrot in the grapeseed oil over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Turn the heat to low, and add the red miso, saké, and sugar, and stir for a further 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Cover the eringi with the dressing and garnish with walnuts.

Fig. 3: Fujii, Mari. “*The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan*. (Kodansha International, 2012). 61.

APPENDIX D: GINGER RICE



Ginger Rice

The fresh flavor of ginger is ideal with freshly cooked rice. When the president of a French champagne vineyard visited us, we served him ginger rice and Kenchin style vegetable soup (see page 15). He said it would go perfectly with a glass of bubbly!

serves 4

1 ½ cups (320 g) uncooked rice
1⅘ cups (440 ml) water
2 pieces dried konbu, about 2 inches (5 cm) square
1 ½ tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon saké
1 ounce (30 g) fresh ginger, peeled and grated
thinly sliced ginger, for garnish

1. Wash the rice (see page 97).
2. Put the rice in a saucepan, add the water, konbu, soy sauce, and saké, and mix well. Leave to soak for 30 minutes, then cook in the usual way (see page 97).
3. Squeeze the grated ginger firmly by hand over a bowl to extract the juice.
4. When the rice is cooked, remove the konbu, lightly fluff, add the ginger juice, and gently cut and mix with a spatula. Divide into serving bowls, and garnish with the thinly sliced ginger.

Fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced.

Fig. 4: Fujii, Mari. *The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan*. (Kodansha International, 2012). 85.