

The fulcrum as agent, the artist as patient. A tree asks the carver to be sculpted in order to make an icon out of it. What the artist does is simply to take off the excess of the form already there, that is a manifestation of the deity.

The fulcrum as agent, the recipient as patient. A calm, detached Buddha icon can induce calmness and detachment, as it indexically points to the state of mind that can be mimicked, while a fierce and strong Myōō can make the person feel strong enough to fight the enemies within and feel reassured that the enemies without have already been taken care of.

The fulcrum as an agent, the prototype as a patient. The best example would be the portrait of Dorian Grey, but in the Buddhist context we can refer to all those stories in which deities are upset by the ill treatment their icons have received. The artist as agent, the fulcrum as patient. This is the typical formula for artistic agency, where we have the artist creating a statue of a deity and whereby in some images the individuality of the artist can be clearly perceived.

The recipient as agent, the fulcrum as patient. In other words those who look at the icon are its social 'producers', as in the case of a patron or a community wanting an image to be made.

The prototype as agent and the fulcrum as patient. This suits the Buddhist believer's view well, as fulcra, especially icons, are a concession the gods make to us.