



# The Joy of the Dharma: Esoteric Buddhism and the Early Medieval Transformation of Japanese Literature

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The Joy of the Dharma:  
Esoteric Buddhism and the Early Medieval Transformation of Japanese Literature

A dissertation presented  
by  
Ethan David Bushelle  
to  
The Department of East Asian Language and Civilizations

in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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Advisor: Ryūichi Abé

Author: Ethan David Bushelle

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the nexus between Buddhism and literature in Japan's early medieval period. Specifically, it elucidates the process by which forms of court literature such as Chinese-language verse (*kanshi*), Japanese poetry (*waka*), and romance tales (*monogatari*) were incorporated into Buddhist rites and liturgies from the tenth through twelfth centuries and attempts to show how this process supported and was supported by Esoteric Buddhist discourse. I call special attention to a discourse on ritual performance that understands the chanting of a mantra, hymn, or poem as an act of giving the joy of the Dharma (*hōraku*) to the kami and buddhas. By attending to this discourse and the rituals through which it was articulated, this dissertation sheds light on the doctrinal reasons why and the practical paths by which even literary genres that were considered to be “worldly” such as nature poetry, love poetry, and romance tales were reconceived as vehicles for offering the joy of the Buddha's teachings.

The three body chapters examine a variety of rites and liturgies intended for a lay audience—often called “Dharma assemblies” (*hōe*) in Japanese-language scholarship—and endeavor to demonstrate how they contributed to key transformations in Japanese literature. Chapter 1 investigates the liturgy of the lecture assembly (*kō-e*) at Shinto shrines and elucidates how it shaped the formation of a key genre of medieval Japanese

poetry called “Dharma joy” waka (*hōraku waka*). Chapter 2 analyzes repentance rites dedicated to Fugen (Sk. Samantabhadra) bodhisattva and considers their impact on the invention of Buddhist love poetry. Finally, Chapter 3 looks at sutra-offering ceremonies and clarifies their role in the consecration of the exemplary Heian-period romance tale, *The Tale of Genji*, and the imagination of its author, Murasaki Shikibu.

In addition to situating a particular transformation of court literature in its ritual context, each chapter also locates a given example of ritual in its discursive locus. I show that at the center of this locus lies a system of Esoteric Buddhist doctrine and ritual concerned with demonstrating the identity of the esoteric teachings (*mikkyō*) with those of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Terming this system “Lotus-Esoteric discourse,” I show how it provided the epistemic framework for the practice of using a mantra, hymn, or poem as a medium for *giving* the joy of the Dharma to others, rather than receiving it for oneself (*jiju hōraku*), as was stressed in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism of the late ancient period.

In short, through its attention to Lotus-Esoteric discourse on Dharma joy, this study offers a corrective to an over-emphasis on the liturgical formula of “wild words and fanciful phrases” (*kyōgen kigo*), which has been the focus of many previous studies on the relationship between Buddhism and medieval Japanese literature, and clarifies the concrete discursive strategies and ritual practices by which Buddhism in early medieval Japan consecrated new liturgical uses for three representative genres of court literature—*kanshi* verse, *waka* poetry, and *monogatari* tales. In this way, it endeavors to show how Buddhist discourse on Dharma joy—in both its doctrinal and ritual dimensions—may constitute a new paradigm for understanding the early medieval transformation of Japanese literature.

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## Abbreviations & Conventions

BKZS	<i>Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho</i>
DNZ	<i>Dai Nihon zoku zōkyō</i>
GSRJ	<i>Gunsho ruiju</i>
KZ	<i>Kōbō Daishi zenshū</i>
KST	See <i>Shintei zōho kokushi taikai</i>
NKBT	Nihon koten bungaku taikai
NKT	Nihon kagaku taikai
NST	Nihon shisō taikai
SNKT	Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai
SNKZ	Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū
SZS	<i>Senzai wakashū</i>
T	Taishō shinshū daizōkyō
WBT	Waka bungaku taikai
ZTZ	Zoku Tendaishū zensho

Poems from named anthologies are given as follows: *Anthology name*: poem number(s).

## INTRODUCTION

While the composition and recitation of Japanese court poetry (*waka*) after Buddhist liturgies, or “Dharma assemblies” (*hōe*),<sup>1</sup> can be traced as far back as the Nara period (710–794), it was not until the mid-tenth century that *waka*, along with Chinese-language verse (*kanshi*), began to be systematically incorporated into Buddhist liturgy—that is, within a specific Buddhist liturgical program. At this early stage, only *waka* that gave explicit praise to the Buddha, or rather overtly conveyed the message of his teachings, were consecrated for use in Buddhist liturgy. This practice was established by a confraternity of lay literati from the state university and Tendai monks from Mount Hiei called the Assembly for the Promotion of Chinese Learning, or Kangaku-e.

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<sup>1</sup> In his 2009 *Chūsei hōe bungei ron*, Komine Kazuaki examines “Dharma assemblies” (*hōe* 法会) as a key site (*ba* 場) for the creation and reception of literature in medieval Japan. Komine proposes the term “*hōe bungei*” (the literary arts of the Dharma assembly) to refer to the variety of cultural performances that take place at “the site of the Dharma assembly” (*hōe no ba*). By doing so, he challenges a long tradition in the study of national literature in Japan that focuses on the liturgical performance of preaching (*shōdō* 唱導) specifically and thus fails to locate it alongside other art forms—visual, linguistic, and gestural—within the site of Buddhist liturgy. Uejima Susumu has also recently questioned the usefulness of the term *shōdō* from a historical perspective. See below, p. 331. The term is vague and can refer to a wide range of liturgical activities: from those that resemble “preaching” as we might recognize it today, such as the recitation of the prayer statement (*ganmon*) and invocation (*hyōbyaku*) at an offering ceremony or the intonation of the ceremonial text (*shikimon*) at a lecture assembly (*kōe*) to those that we might recognize as “chanting,” such as the singing of hymns (*san*) or the chanting of *gāthā* from the sutras. This study focuses on both preaching and chanting and, following Komine, analyzes them within the broader ritual context, or *ba*, of Buddhist liturgy—that is, *hōe*. It is worth mentioning that the term “*hōe*” is not without ambiguity. It is not clear, for example, whether it includes also esoteric rites (*shuhō*) that do not presuppose a human audience. In this study, I use the term *Buddhist liturgy* to refer to what Komine and others would consider *hōe*. My use of the term *liturgy*, moreover, is intended to emphasize the etymological sense of the term from the ancient Greek, *leitō*- “public” (from *laos* “people” cf. “lay”) and *-ergos* “that works” (from *ergon* “work”). I, therefore, distinguish this kind of liturgy, which presupposes a lay audience, from that of esoteric rites, which do not. Lastly, the term “*hōe*,” moreover, does not help us distinguish between formal state-sponsored rituals such as the Lecture on the Golden Light Sutra (Misai-e) from “popular” liturgies such as the lecture assembly (*kōe*). Issues concerning what to term and how to analyze this latter category of *hōe* are examined in the conclusion.

Founded in 964 by the premier court poet of the day, Yoshishige no Yasutane (933–1002), the Kangaku-e held biannual assemblies based on a liturgical program that called for sutra lectures (*kōkyō*) on the *Lotus Sutra* in the morning and *nenbutsu*, the chanting of Amida Buddha’s name, in the evening, or “*daimoku* in the morning, *nenbutsu* in the evening” (*asa ni daimoku, yū ni nenbutsu*).<sup>2</sup> This program was first introduced by the Tendai monk Ennin (784–864) in the mid-ninth century and had become an important component of Tendai Buddhism by the mid-tenth. The Kangaku-e assembly followed its basic outline during the day but added a session at night dedicated to the composition and oral recitation of kanshi verse. Records indicate that these verses were composed on lines from the *Lotus Sutra*, such as “seeking joy in a quiet place” or “gathering sand to make a Buddhist stupa.” The limited scope of the topics severely restricted the content of Kangaku-e verse, which comprised mostly either glosses on the scriptural passages or praise for the Buddha. In this regard, verses produced at Kangaku-e assemblies resemble the liturgical genre of the hymn, which would have figured prominently in the sutra lecture in the morning service.

“Hymn” (Jp. *san*, Ch. *zan*) refers to verses that praise the Buddha and his teachings. This genre of versification comprises *gāthā* (Jp. *ge*, Ch. *ji*)—a Sanskrit term for “song” or “verse”— from sutras such as the *Lotus* and *Nirvana* as well as treatises and collections of *gāthā* such as Jiakai’s *Jingtu lun* (Treatise on Rebirth) or Shandao’s

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<sup>2</sup> “*Daimoku*” refers to the title of the *Lotus Sutra* specifically, and in this formulation designates a variety of rites centering on the vocalization and visualization of the *Lotus Sutra*, such as the sutra lecture (*kōkyō*) and the Fugen (or Lotus) repentance rite (*Fugen/Hokke senbō*). The former will be discussed in chapter 1, and the latter in chapter 2. For more on the term “*daimoku*,” see footnote 196, p. 126.

*Wangsheng lizan jie* (*Gāthā* for Praise and Worship Dedicated to Rebirth).<sup>3</sup> In Japan, hymn singing came to the fore of Buddhist liturgy after Ennin’s introduction of new styles for singing *nenbutsu* called the “five patterns for *nenbutsu*” (Jp. *goe nenbutsu*, Ch. *wuihui nianfo*). These styles were also applied to the genre of the hymn; and this mode of liturgical performance eventually developed into what came to be known as *shōmyō*, or chanting.<sup>4</sup>

Ennin’s new vocal styles for singing *nenbutsu* (which were understood as hymns) had a far-reaching impact on Buddhist liturgical practice, both esoteric and *Lotus*-based practices. The Tendai scholar-monk Annen (b. 841), for example, suggested that certain hymns could be used and understood as mantra in the context of esoteric initiation rites (*kanjō*).<sup>5</sup> The real showcase for the hymn, however, was the *Lotus*-based Pure Land liturgical program of *daimoku* in the morning, *nenbutsu* in the evening. In this program, both the morning and evening services feature hymn singing broadly construed, the latter being dedicated exclusively to a special class of hymn, the *nenbutsu*. The morning

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<sup>3</sup> Jiakai 迦才 (dates unknown) was a Tang dynasty monk and early propagator of the Pure Land teachings. Shandao 善導 (613–681) is one of the early patriarchs of the Pure Land traditions in both China and Japan.

<sup>4</sup> The term *shōmyō* 声明 began to be used to refer to the chanting of hymns, *gāthā*, and *nenbutsu* in the twelfth century. The *Shōmyōshū* 声明集, a collection of compiled by the Tendai preacher Kekan 家寛 (dates unknown) and commissioned by Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa, provides an early example of this usage. The central figure of this study, the famed Tendai preacher Chōken, wrote the preface. In it, he offers the following definition: “Now chanting (*shōmyō*) is primary among ritual practices for the cultivation of merit on the ceremonial mat of the assembly. Rites are performed by means of sound and rhythm (*on’in*). Voice (*koe*) is constitutive of the rites of the Buddha (*butsuji*). For the exoteric teachings, it is standard practice to use the crosier staff and songs of praise, while for other teachings, we use Brahmancial and Tang hymns, *gāthā* from the sutras and śāstras, the Fugen repentance rite (*Fugen senbō*), and Amida *nenbutsu*. All are rites of the Way created through sound and melody (*onkyoku*). In each, chanting is used to guide the practice of contemplation (*shōmyō wo motte kangyō wo michibiku*).” ZTZ 1.

<sup>5</sup> This study will examine three examples in detail: the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms (*shichisan*), the Vajra Hymn (*kongōsan*), and the Hymn to Original Enlightenment (*hongakusan*). See p. 70, p. 171, and p. 80, respectively. The last, in particular, played an important role in the development of Pure Land doctrine and practice. It also figures centrally in Chōken’s invocation for a hall dedication ceremony at Kamo Shrine in 1180. See Chapter 1, Part 3, Section 2 below p. 145.

service of the sutra lecture, by contrast, featured a variety of hymns, such as the following in praise of Amida's Pure Land, one of twelve hymns attributed to Nāgārjuna in both Jiakai's and Shandao's collections and also cited in the *Ōjō yōshū*, the early eleventh century manual on Pure Land practice by Genshin (942–1017):

Existence in this world is impermanent and selfless,  
Like the moon on the surface of the water—is it a reflection or a drop of dew?  
He preaches the Dharma for sentient beings, without names or letters;  
Thus I pay homage to Amida Buddha.<sup>6</sup>

This and the other eleven hymns attributed to Nāgārjuna are recorded to have been sung at Kangaku-e assemblies by the monks during the night service as part of a call and response with the literati, who recited kanshi verse.<sup>7</sup> It, therefore, represents an example of the kind of verse that the monks recommended to the literati as an exemplary model for the composition of kanshi as hymn in a liturgical setting.

The Kangaku-e also developed an influential rhetorical strategy for justifying the liturgical use of kanshi—a genre of court poetry—as hymn. In his *Sanbōe*, lay literatus and Kangaku-e member Minamoto no Tamenori (d. 1011) cites two verses chanted by the monks and literati during the night session that suggest how participants understood the rationale for the practice of composing and reciting kanshi on lines from the Buddhist sutra. First, the monks chanted a *gāthā*. The specific citation, from the *Lotus*, claims that to hear the Dharma and sing its praises is equivalent to making an offering to all buddhas

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<sup>6</sup> This is the ninth of the twelve hymns. See Jiakai's *Jingtu lun* 淨土論 (*T* 47:96c23–24), Shandao's *Wangsheng lizan jie* 往生禮讚偈 (*T* 1980, 47:442b), and Genshin's *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集 (*T* 2682, 84:45b26–c1).

<sup>7</sup> In his account of Kangaku-e assemblies in the *Sanbōe*, Minamoto no Tamenori notes that “Nāgārjuna's Twelve [Verses] for Worship” (*Ryūju bosatsu no jūni reihai* 龍樹ノ十二礼拝); see *Sanbōe*, p. 173.

in the universe.<sup>8</sup> Second, the literati chanted a prayer composed by the Tang poet Bai Juyi (772–846) for a dedication of a poetry collection to the Xiangshan Si Temple in 840 as he approached the last years of his life:

May the karma of my worldly writings conceived in this lifetime—  
All the transgressions of my wild words and fanciful phrases—  
In the world to come, turn into a cause for praising the Buddha vehicle,  
And a factor for turning the wheel of the Dharma.<sup>9</sup>

Bai’s prayer expresses his wish for his “worldly writings” (*sezoku moji*) to serve, in the world to come, as a vehicle for praising the Buddha and preaching the Dharma. After its introduction by the Kangaku-e, Bai’s prayer became the basis for a liturgical formula that condemns the “wild words and fanciful phrases” (*kyōgen kigo*) of waka poetry in particular as a transgression (*ayamachi*) or sin (*tsumi*) only to ultimately consecrate its use as a vehicle for the Buddhist teachings.

The use of wild words and fanciful phrases justified by the Kangaku-e’s liturgical formula was severely limited: only to praise the Buddha and to preach his teachings, as Bai’s prayer indicates. Such use of waka poetry is exemplified in the practice of composing individual poems for each of the twenty-eight chapters of the *Lotus Sutra*, which was the basis for the genre of “poems on the twenty-eight chapters” (*nijūhappō no uta*). In the eleventh century, this genre came to occupy a central position in a topical classification (*butate*) in imperial anthologies, “Poems on Śākyamuni’s Teachings,” or *shakkyōka*, which first appeared unlabeled in the 1007 *Shūi wakashū* and then labeled as

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<sup>8</sup> Cited below, see p. 103.

<sup>9</sup> *Sanbōe*, p. 173.

such in the 1086 *Go-shūi wakashū*.<sup>10</sup> During the early stages of its development, *shakkyō-ka* were mostly poetic glosses on a line from the sutras. This form of poetry was also called “poems on the meaning of the sutras” (*kyōshi-ka*) or “poems on Dharma texts” (*hōmon-uta*). One of the most celebrated examples is a verse by Izumi Shikibu (976–1030) on the line “from darkness they enter into darkness, to the end never hearing the Buddha’s name” from the *Lotus Sutra*:

<i>Kuraki yori</i>	Now from out the dark
<i>kuraki michi ni zo</i>	Into yet a darker path
<i>irinubeki</i>	I must enter:
<i>haruka ni terase</i>	Shine upon me from afar,
<i>yama no ha no tsuki</i>	Moon on the mountain crest. <sup>11</sup>

The composition and oral recitation of waka poetry that were neither glosses of Buddhist scripture nor paeans to the Buddha were introduced into Buddhist liturgy in the twelfth century. This liturgy was based on the practice of delivering a sutra lecture before a kami altar at a Shinto shrine. In this practice, offerings of Buddhist objects such as sutras, statues, and halls are accompanied by an array of performances such as sutra chanting, hymn singing, and *nenbutsu* chanting, and, through these performances, the objects are consecrated as offerings of Dharma joy (*hōraku*) to the kami, conceived as flowing traces (*suijaku*) emanating from an original ground (*honji*) of a buddha or bodhisattva. Waka poetry was introduced into this liturgical form in the early twelfth century by the famed Tendai preacher Sensai (d. 1127), and its use was eventually further

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<sup>10</sup> For a comprehensive study of this poetic genre, see Stephen D. Miller’s *The Wind from Vulture Peak*. My narrative of its development follows Yamada Shōzen’s account in “Shakkyō-ka no seiritsu to tenkai.”

<sup>11</sup> *Go-shūi wakashū*: 1342. Translation by Cranston, *Waka Anthology*, p. 432.



developed in the mid- to late twelfth century by one of his most influential successors in the tradition of Buddhist preaching, Chōken (1126–1203).

Contemporaneous to Chōken’s activities, late Heian-period waka poets such as Saigyō (1118–1190), Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204), and Jien (1155–1225) began to develop a new genre of waka based on the offering of poems to the kami and buddhas, which they called “Dharma joy waka” (*hōraku waka*). In contrast to the genre of poems on Śākyamuni’s teachings, Dharma joy waka were often arranged as thirty-six, fifty, or one-hundred round poetry contests (*utaawase*)—sometimes collectively and sometimes individually in what was known as a personal poetry contest (*jikaawase*)—in a sequence that followed the structure of imperial waka anthologies, progressing through seasonal topics, such as the cherry blossoms in spring and the moon in autumn, to those concerned with emotions, such as complaints (*jukkai*) and love (*koi*). This genre thus differed from the genres of Buddhist poetry that came before in that rather than being limited to explicitly Buddhist topics, it included a wide range of images and figures drawn from the entire canon of waka topics. These poems seldom express overt religious themes, and their Buddhist significance is often difficult to discern. Some of the most celebrated poems of the medieval period have their origins in this practice. The following poem on the topic of “snipe” (*shigi*) by Saigyō, from a personal poetry contest collection that he dedicated to Ise Shrine in 1190, is an example:

*Kokoro naki  
mi ni mo aware wa  
shirarekeri  
shigi tatsu sawa no  
aki no yūgure*

Even in a body  
That has been freed of the mind,  
Pathos is made known—  
The snipe takes wing from the marsh,  
Twilight in autumn.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Mimosusogawa utaawase*: 35; Takeda, *Saigyō jikaawase zenshaku*, p. 70.

This poem has been often cited as a prime example of the medieval aesthetic of “mystery and depth,” or *yūgen*; however, from the point of view of the history of Buddhist poetry in Japan, it is perhaps more significant as a marker of a pivotal shift in early medieval poets’ understanding of what makes a poem Buddhist. Unlike a poem on Śākyamuni’s teachings, the connection to Buddhist teachings is ambiguous: the poem expresses a moment when the poet questions his ability to remain unperturbed in the face of a moving event in the natural world; it thus does not serve the purpose of praising the Buddha and preaching the Dharma but rather makes innovative use of a canonical waka topic to present an image of a life dedicated to the realization of the Buddhist teachings.

Like Saigyō’s famed verse, the waka poems used in liturgies by Chōken and his contemporaries often seem to have nothing to do with Buddhism. Not only do they include affecting scenes in nature, some even seem to oppose Buddhism’s basic precepts against excessive emotionality and passion. The liturgical use of such poetry was justified by rhetorical strategies that asserted waka as a form of Dharma joy, or what I call “Dharma joy discourse.” This claim first appears in the preaching records of Chōken and is further elaborated in the writings of Jien, who was a Tendai abbot as well as a waka poet. In the writings of both Chōken and Jien, the term *Dharma joy*, or *hōraku*, constitutes a node around which a constellation of statements about the meaning and purpose of waka poetry takes shape. At its center is an understanding of waka as an autochthonous custom (*fūzoku*) of the Yamato court in which the kami and buddhas as well as emperors and eminent Buddhist monks have “delighted” (*mote asobu*)—that is, taken joy—since the age of the kami.

This understanding of waka is displayed in an 1166 invocation (*hyōbyaku*) for an offering ceremony held at the personal residence of the poet-monk Shun'e (1113–1191) and sponsored by a group of poets who called themselves the Waka Mandokoro but are more commonly known today as the Karin'en. Therein, Chōken offered the following prayer:

Thus we pray:

May the arising of the wind, clouds, grasses, and trees  
Return once again to the soil of the three grasses and two trees;  
May compositions on the yearnings of lovers and the pangs of parting  
Fuse completely with the principle of unfolding and awakening.<sup>13</sup>

Chōken's prayer expresses the wish for poems on love and partings to be fused with the Buddhist teachings. In the course of his invocation, Chōken employs an ensemble of rhetorical strategies to reveal how this is possible. At the most basic level, he argues that waka is a custom of the Yamato court in which even the Dharma body Buddha—the main Buddha of the esoteric teachings—delights; waka, therefore, he insists, should not be regarded as the sin of fanciful phrases (*kigo*). What I have identified as Dharma joy discourse thus operates as the basic premise underlying his argument. However, on the basis of this premise, Chōken also introduces rhetorical strategies that he developed for the practice of repentance rites dedicated to the bodhisattva Fugen. In accordance with these strategies, he argues that sin itself is essentially empty and may, therefore, be sanctified by means of various kinds of repentance (*sange*) rites based on the visualization of Samantabhadra, or Fugen in Japanese, the protector bodhisattva of practitioners of the *Lotus Sutra*. In this view, even love poetry may be fused with the Buddhist teachings through the act of repenting for one's poetic sins not by renouncing

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<sup>13</sup> Yanase, *Shun'e kenkyū*, p. 260.

the composition of love poetry altogether but rather by embracing it as means for revealing the Buddhist teachings.

Chōken himself provides perhaps the best example of how the poets of the Karin'en attempted to fuse love poetry with the Buddhist teachings:

As part of compositions on the topic of “Transforming Love into Aspiration on the Path” by people at Shigeyasu’s residence on the fifth day of a thirty-[day] lecture series at Kamo [Shrine].<sup>14</sup>

<i>Saritomo to</i>	The brocade sticks
<i>tateshi nishikigi</i>	I planted in the past,
<i>kōrihatete</i>	Now frozen over—
<i>kyō Ōhara ni</i>	Thus this cloth of Ōhara
<i>sumizome nomi zo</i>	Now dyed wholly black. <sup>15</sup>

According to an ancient folk custom in northern Japan, brocade sticks were planted by men outside a lover’s home as a sign of romantic intent. In his poem, Chōken describes sticks that have been ignored and now stand frozen. The last two lines suggest that the feelings of rejection evoked by the image of the frozen brocade served as the impetus for taking up the black robes of the Buddhist priest. It thus reveals the experience of love—or rather the heartbreak of love—as a negative occasion for inspiring the practice of the Buddhist path and, in doing so, shows how poetry on love can serve the Buddhist end of engendering the aspiration for enlightenment, or *bodhicitta*, and thus “be fused” with the Buddhist teachings.

In Japanese literature of the Heian period, the love poem was closely associated with the genre of the romance tale, or *monogatari*. Thus, it was not long after the Waka

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<sup>14</sup> Kamo no Shigeyasu, the sponsor of the hall dedication ceremony examined in chapter 1, has been identified as a leading figure in the Karin'en circle, hosting many poetry contests that featured Karin'en poets at the Kamo Shrine from the Heiji through Angan eras (1159–1117). See Sugiyama, *Tsukimōde wakashū no kōhon to sono kisoteki kenkyū*, p. 139.

<sup>15</sup> *Tsukimōde wakashū*: 477; Sugiyama, *Tsukimōde wakashū no kōhon to sono kisoteki kenkyū*, p. 139.

Mandokoro offering ceremony in 1166 that Chōken, likely working in collaboration with the same group of poets, held a similar sutra-offering ceremony dedicated to consecrating the genre of a romance tale, namely, *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu (c. 978–1014 or 1025), thus initiating a liturgical practice that came to be known as *Genji* offerings (*Genji kuyō*).<sup>16</sup> Prior to this offering, Buddhist discourse on the romance tale was emphatically condemnatory. In the preface to his *Sanbōe*, Tamenori, for example, quite famously rails against the genre of the romance tale as “a thing that sends the hearts of women” (*onna no mikokoro wo yaru mono nari*) away from the Buddhist teachings. In his invocation for this offering, Chōken begins by similarly condemning the genre of monogatari and Shikibu’s work in particular as a medium for eliciting the desires and yearnings of men and women; but then, making a rhetorical about-turn, he concludes with a prayer for Shikibu’s “words of love” (*aigo*)—that is, the *Genji*—to be transformed into “the seed of enlightenment” (*shuchi*). While no reference is made to the term *Dharma joy*, or even the notion of “delighting in” poetry, in Chōken’s invocation, there remains nonetheless a basic concern for reconciling the desire and emotions engendered by the creation and enjoyment of literature with the basic Buddhist task of disseminating the Dharma and saving thereby sentient beings in samsara. In this sense, even Chōken’s revelation of Shikibu’s *Genji* as a seed for enlightenment may be properly situated in the discourses and rituals centering on the idea of waka as a form of Dharma joy.

In Buddhist scripture, the term *joy-of-the-Dharma* (*hōraku*) is contrasted with the term *joy-of-desire* (*yokuraku*), a kind of joy that in English would be associated more

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<sup>16</sup> Komine has argued the importance of the Waka Mandokoro as a precedent for *Genji* offerings. See *Chūsei hōe bungei ron*, part IV, chapters 3 and 4.

closely with the term *pleasure*. *Dharma joy*, in this formulation, signifies the act of renouncing desire (*yoku*) and finding joy (*raku*) in the Dharma preached by the Buddha. Chapter 4 of the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, “The Bodhisattvas,” provides the *locus classicus* for this term. In this chapter, the lay bodhisattva Vimalakīrti preaches the Dharma to a bevy of heavenly maidens sent by Mara to seduce him. Having inspired them to arouse the aspiration for enlightenment, Vimalakīrti instructs them to transform their desire for pleasure into a dedication to spiritual joy-in-the-Dharma:

Now that you have generated the intention for enlightenment, you may amuse yourselves in the joy of the Dharma, never again taking pleasure in the five desires.<sup>17</sup>

The heavenly maidens then ask Vimalakīrti to explain the joy of the Dharma. He responds:

Joy is to always have faith in the Buddha. Joy is to desire to hear the Dharma. Joy is to make offerings to the assembly [of the Buddha]. Joy is to transcend the five desires. . . . Joy is to cultivate the dharmas of the countless factors of enlightenment. This is the bodhisattva’s joy-in-the-Dharma (*bosatsu hōraku*).<sup>18</sup>

Vimalakīrti preaches to the heavenly maidens that true “pleasure,” or *raku*, lies in the *joy* of a life based on the teachings of the Buddha. In the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, in other words, to immerse oneself in the practice of the Buddha’s teaching is “Dharma joy,” or *hōraku*.

In Japan, Dharma joy became an important criterion in discussions of the esoteric teachings (*mikkyō*) through the writings of Kūkai (774–835). Kūkai distinguished two types of Dharma joy—joy that one receives oneself, or self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma (*jiju hōraku*), and joy that one gives to others, or other-bound joy-in-the-Dharma (*taju*

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<sup>17</sup> T 475, 14:543a28–29.

<sup>18</sup> T 475, 14:543a29–b12.

*hōraku*)—and correlated each with the esoteric and what he called exoteric teachings (*kengyō*), respectively. The esoteric teachings, for Kūkai, are defined by the preaching of mantra by the Mahāvairocana Buddha out of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma—that is, purely for the joy he receives by doing so; by contrast, the exoteric teachings are characterized by the preaching of Mahāyāna sutras such as the *Lotus Sutra* by Buddhas such as Śākyamuni for the sake of giving the joy of the Dharma to others.<sup>19</sup> In Kūkai’s system of Esoteric Buddhism, the Mahāvairocana’s self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma provides the exemplary model for the practice of the esoteric ritual technologies of the three mysteries—mudra, mantra, and mandala. Thus, within this system, the highest form of Dharma joy is the self-bound joy that the practitioner, as the ritual double of the Mahāvairocana, receives by practicing the Dharma. In this regard, it differs little from the approach to Buddhist practice advocated in the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* in which emphasis is placed on the practitioner receiving, rather than giving, the joy of the Dharma.

The way the esoteric teachings were defined and practiced in Japan did not go uncontested after Kūkai’s construction of Esoteric Buddhist discourse in the late ancient period. From the mid-ninth through early tenth century, in particular, Tendai scholar-monks Ennin (794–864), Enchin (814–891), and Annen (b. 841) reformulated Kūkai’s system of Esoteric Buddhism by attempting to demonstrate the fundamental identity of the esoteric teachings with the central teachings of their own school, which they called the “perfect teachings” (*engyō*)—that is, those based on the *Lotus Sutra*. Thus, in contrast to Kūkai’s hierarchical distinction between the esoteric and the exoteric, or *kenmitsu*,

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<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Kūkai’s key statement in his *Benkenmitsu nikyōron*: “The self-nature function buddha [that is, the Dharma body of Mahāvairocana], out of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, preached the gate of the three mysteries to his own self-retinue. This teaching is called the Esoteric.” *T* 2427, 77:375a2–3.

Ennin, Enchin, and Annen developed a system of Esoteric Buddhism predicated on the identity of the perfect and the esoteric teachings (*enmitsu*), or what is known in Japanese-language scholarship as “thought on the identity in purport of the perfect and esoteric teachings” (*enmitsu itchi shisō*),<sup>20</sup> which I term Lotus-Esoteric discourse, for reasons I will explain below.<sup>21</sup> This system, or discourse, which operated on a doctrinal (*kyōsō*) as well as ritual (*jisō*) level, reconciled the differences between the preachers (*kyōshū*) of the *Lotus* and the esoteric teachings by reconceiving the Dharma body Buddha of the esoteric teachings as a kind of “other-bound” (*taju*) Buddha body that preaches the Dharma not for his own benefit (*jiri*) but for that of others (*rita*) as well. As a consequence, the Dharma body’s preaching of mantra was reconceived as a kind of Dharma joy that was oriented toward all sentient beings rather than exclusively toward the esoteric practitioner, as in Kūkai’s system. To put it simply, Lotus-Esoteric discourse redefined the Esoteric Buddha’s preaching—that is, his ritual language of mantra—as a kind of other-bound joy-in-the-Dharma. This redefinition of mantra by Lotus-Esoteric discourse provided the doctrinal and ritual foundations for the formation of Dharma joy waka in which language is understood as a medium for giving, rather than receiving, the joy of the Buddha’s teachings.

Discussions of the medieval Japanese Buddhist orthodoxy known as “exo-esoteric Buddhism” (*kenmitsu Bukkyō*) often take for granted Kūkai’s distinction between the

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<sup>20</sup> See Ōkubo Ryōshun ed., *Tendai kyōgaku no tanjin*, and Mizukami Fumiyoshi, *Taimitsu shisō no kenkyū*. Both of these works elaborate a new understanding of *enmitsu itchi shisō* as a central paradigm not only in medieval Japanese doctrinal studies but also in ritual practice and even art, literature, and culture. The implications of this new understanding are explored in chapter 1.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 17 below.



exoteric (*ken*) and esoteric (*mitsu*).<sup>22</sup> This dissertation draws attention to an understudied form of esotericism—namely, Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism—and considers how it introduced multiple layers of significance into the category of the esoteric that made it more accommodating to the teachings and practices of the *Lotus Sutra*, or what Kūkai understood as “the exoteric.”<sup>23</sup> Ennin’s taxonomy of the esoteric provides a paradigmatic example. Ennin argued that there are two kinds of esoteric teachings: those that are esoteric in principle only (*rimitsu*) and those that are esoteric in principle *and* practice (*riji gumitsu*). According to this taxonomy, the *Lotus Sutra* is esoteric in principle, while

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<sup>22</sup> This point has recently been made, for example, by Ōkubo Ryōshun in his essay, “Tendai mikkyō no kenmitsu-setsu,” pp. 227–28. On ambiguity of the terms *ken* and *mitsu* in Kuroda Toshio’s formulation of *kenmitsu*, see Sueki Fumihiko, “Kenmitsu taisai to hongaku shisō,” p. 2. Ryūichi Abé has also raised this issue in the epilogue to his *The Weaving of Mantra*; see p. 424. The concept of *enmitsu*, or Lotus-Esoteric, may help nuance our understanding of exo-esoteric, or *kenmitsu*, Buddhism. In contrast to the *ken* of *kenmitsu* that it replaces, *en* is not a pejorative, but rather refers to the “Perfect Teachings” (*engyō* 円教) of the *Lotus Sutra*. In other words, the *enmitsu* formulation, in contrast to that of *kenmitsu*, pairs two terms that are understood to have equal value. In the context of medieval Japanese Buddhist discourse, the term “*ken*” (exoteric) of “*kenmitsu*” is pejorative, referring to a lesser form of teaching. In this sense, it is similar to an important term in the classification of Buddhist traditions, Hinayana (literally, “lesser vehicle”). Just as the term Hinayana is no longer used to refer to non-Mahāyāna Buddhism, now often called “Theravada,” for it implicates the scholar using the term in an insider’s game of disparaging the other against which it defines itself, we should likewise avoid the term “exoteric” altogether, which I shall attempt in the pages that follow. Simply put, to invoke “*kenmitsu*” is to participate in a rhetorical system devised by Buddhist monks for sectarian purposes. The term’s original appeal for historians such as Kuroda Toshio lay in the fact that it was once used by historical actors of the period and, for this reason, presented itself as a more historically accurate appellation for the Buddhism of the period than the term it replaced: namely, “old Buddhism” (*kyū Bukkyō* 旧仏教). For Kuroda, it seemed more innocuous because it had been developed independently of modern historiographical debates that were predicated on certain sectarian agendas. Kuroda, however, as a historian, was not attuned to the rhetorical, sectarian implications that the term carried in Buddhist discourse of the Heian period. The ultimate consequence was, then, his replacement of one value-laden term with another, one that is perhaps even more problematic in its subtle reproduction of a sectarian bias against non-esoteric teachings. In English, the term *esoteric*, like the Sanskrit term *Mahāyāna*, implies already a sense of superiority that the adherents of this form of Buddhism ascribed to it. It is thus redundant to then, in addition, introduce a pejorative term that only reinforces this sense of superiority.

<sup>23</sup> Lucia Dolce has greatly advanced our understanding of this form of esotericism, which she calls Taimitsu, a modern term in Japanese-language scholarship that refers to Tendai Esoteric Buddhism. Her use of the term “Taimitsu” includes the way this form of Esoteric Buddhism shaped also the Esoteric Buddhism of the Shingon School, which, in Japanese-language scholarship is termed “Tōmitsu,” (with “Tō” referring to Tōji, the head temple of the Shingon School). In this study, I use the term “Lotus-Esoteric” to emphasize the way this form of esotericism extended beyond the sectarian boundaries of the Tendai School and became a catalyst for developments with the broader system of medieval Japanese Buddhism often termed “exo-esoteric” Buddhism.

the *Mahāvairocana Sutra*, which elaborates the practice of the three mysteries, is esoteric in both principle and practice.

Ennin's twofold taxonomy of the esoteric had far-reaching implications for the practice of Buddhist ritual. Specifically, it allowed for a reconception of mantra such that even non-esoteric forms of ritual language such as hymns or even waka poetry could be understood to have an esoteric significance—for example, as a means for re-enacting the Dharma joy of the Mahāvairocana. Consequently, hymns, poetry, and other linguistic mediums such as *nenbutsu* could be used in much the same way as mantra in the context of Buddhist ritual, whether the ritual be esoteric in practice or esoteric in principle only. Thus, Annen, for example, in the late ninth century advocated the use of hymns in lieu of mantra at esoteric initiation rites (*kanjō*) into the practices of the Womb Realm and Diamond Realm mandalas; and, conversely, later Tendai monks such as Genshin in the tenth century argued for the esoteric significance of hymns and *nenbutsu* as mantra in the context of Pure Land liturgies.

Lotus-Esoteric discourse was particularly crucial to the development of sutra lectures at Shinto shrines. These rites were predicated on the idea of kami-emanations, or traces, of Buddhist archetypes, or original grounds. This idea of origin (*hon*) and trace (*jaku*) was worked out extensively by Ennin already in the ninth century and presupposes his “economical” view of the buddha's body, which understands even the Dharma body as a kind of function (*yō*) that benefits others. As we saw above, Dharma joy waka, which were created in the context of a sutra lecture liturgy for the kami, were also predicated on origins-trace buddha-body theory. Thus, Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the buddha's body provides the basic presuppositions for the practice of Dharma joy waka. This suggests

that buddha-body theory provided one important avenue through which Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism shaped medieval Japanese literature.

By drawing attention to the role of Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism in mid- to late Heian rites and liturgies, this dissertation challenges a prevailing view of medieval Japanese Buddhism that presupposes a neat distinction between the exoteric and esoteric, and shows instead how Esoteric Buddhist discourse functioned as an undercurrent that supported and was supported by a wide variety of rites and liturgies that are often inaccurately characterized as “exoteric.” In this way, it demonstrates the subtle and not-well-understood ways in which Esoteric Buddhism, through the medium of Tendai as well as Pure Land and Shinto liturgy, contributed to the early medieval transformation of Japanese literature.

My use of the term *Lotus-Esoteric discourse* is intended to refer to something like “*enmitsu itchi shisō*” described in the recent scholarship of Ōkubo Ryōshun and Mizukami Fumiyoshi. In English, the term *thought* (*shisō*) can imply a kind of Platonic idea and suggest something that is ahistorical and disembodied. For this reason, I suggest the term *discourse* in lieu of *thought*. By *discourse*, I mean a repertoire of rhetorical strategies that both enables and is enabled by practice. It does not, in other words, signify a static linguistic system divorced from practice. For this reason, it may perhaps more aptly be termed an “apparatus” in the sense recently suggested by Giorgio Agamben;<sup>24</sup> however, I will save further discussion of terminological issues for the conclusion.

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<sup>24</sup> Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory*, and *What is An Apparatus?*

The question of the relationship between Buddhism and literature in Japan's medieval period has been an enduring one in the study of both Japanese Buddhism and medieval Japanese literature. Many studies have focused in particular on the liturgical formula of "wild words and fanciful phrases."<sup>25</sup> Little attention, however, has been paid to the specific ritual contexts in which this formula was invoked and reinterpreted; and thus, as a result, the ways in which the liturgical use of poetry and the Buddhist discourse thereon evolved and transformed after the Kangaku-e has remained obscure. This dissertation attempts to re-examine the question of Buddhism's relationship to literature in the medieval period by shifting focus away from the formula of wild words and fanciful phrases and toward discourse on Dharma joy. By doing so, it casts new light on how waka poetry on nature and love and even monogatari tales about romance were reconceived as vehicles for preaching the Buddhist teachings, and, in this way, endeavors to show how Lotus-Esoteric discourse on Dharma joy may constitute a new paradigm for understanding the early medieval transformation of Japanese literature.

### **Outline of the Chapters**

Chapter 1 traces a genealogy of discourse on Dharma joy, first, in Esoteric Buddhist doctrine and ritual of the ninth century, then in Pure Land liturgy of the tenth and eleventh centuries, and finally in offering ceremonies for the kami in the twelfth century. Part 1 investigates the development of esoteric Buddhist discourse on ritual language after Kūkai. Specifically, it examines an "economic" theory of the buddha's

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<sup>25</sup> This is true in both English-language scholarship since William LaFleur's groundbreaking study *The Karma of Words* and Japanese-language scholarship. Misumi Yōichi has made this observation in regard to the latter in his 1995 essay, "Iwayuru kyōgen kigo kan."

bodies elaborated by Ennin and Annen in the ninth and early tenth centuries that placed emphasis on the function (*yū*) of the Dharma body Buddha. I suggest that this theory, which I locate within Lotus-Esoteric discourse, reconceived the Dharma body's preaching (*hosshin seppō*) as a Buddha function that operates not only for the self-benefit (*jiri*) of the Dharma body but also for the benefit of others (*tari*). I show that as a consequence of this theory, the esoteric ritual language of mantra, whose exemplar is the Dharma body's preaching, is no longer conceived exclusively as a form of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, as in Kūkai's system, but rather is redefined as a kind of other-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, which Kūkai associated with Mahāyāna sutras such as the *Lotus*. This reconception of mantra, I argue, anticipates Dharma joy waka in which the joy of language operates within a larger economy, offered beyond oneself to others—including the kami, who as native emanations of buddhas and bodhisattvas delight in Yamato verse, as well as ordinary sentient beings, who similarly (the aristocrats in question, at least) take pleasure in court poetry.

Part 2 observes the articulation of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in esoteric initiation rites in the late ninth century and then Pure Land liturgies in the tenth and eleventh centuries. I first look at Annen's analysis of the use of hymns at esoteric initiation rites. His analysis, I show, sheds light on how non-esoteric forms of liturgical performance were understood to be esoteric in significance and, on the basis of this rationale, incorporated into esoteric rites as a kind of mantra. I then turn to Genshin's analysis of *nenbutsu* as mantra in his early eleventh century manual for Pure Land practice, the *Ōjō yōshū*. Contrary to the common view of Pure Land as a heterodox movement opposed to the exo-esoteric (*kenmitsu*) Buddhist orthodoxy, I identify elements of Lotus-Esoteric

discourse in Genshin's conception of *nenbutsu* and consider how this, in turn, shaped and was shaped by the liturgy of the lecture assembly (*kōe*). I then examine two important early examples of the lecture assembly—the Assembly for the Twenty-Five Samadhis (Nijūgo Zanmai-e), a confraternity of Tendai monks founded by Yasutane in 985, and its precursor, the Kangaku-e. In this way, I situate the Kangaku-e and its introduction of court poetry into Buddhist liturgy in the specific ritual context of the lecture assembly and the discursive locus of Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism. In the lecture assembly liturgy, hymns and *nenbutsu* function as modes of performance for reproducing the joy of hearing the Dharma and seeing the Buddha in the Pure Land, and this liturgical use, I argue, represents an important precursor to the use of hymns, *nenbutsu*, and waka poetry as Dharma joy in Buddhist liturgies offered specifically for the kami, which are examined in Part 3.

Part 3 elucidates the impact of Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the incorporation of waka poetry into Buddhist ritual in the late Heian period (late eleventh through early thirteenth centuries). Through close analysis of recently discovered records of a preaching performance by Chōken, the renowned Tendai preacher, for the 1180 dedication of a Buddhist hall at the Upper Kamo Shrine, I clarify the role of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in offering ceremonies dedicated to giving the joy of the Dharma to Shinto kami. Then, turning to the emergence of Dharma joy waka specifically, I show how Jien drew on Lotus-Esoteric discourse in applying the concept of Dharma joy to waka poetry, and argue that his discourse on and practice of Dharma joy waka contributed to the emergence of waka-mantra theory.

Chapters 2 and 3, both narrower in scope than Chapter 1, each presents a case study that illustrates the application of Dharma joy in the broad sense described above to two genres of medieval Japanese literature that had until then remained excluded from Buddhist liturgy: the love poem and romance tale, respectively.

Chapter 2 contests William LaFleur's reading of an early-Kamakura period poetic treatise, the *Korai fūteishō*, by one of Japan's most celebrated poets, Fujiwara no Shunzei. In his reading, LaFleur focuses on a Tendai ritual practice called *shikan*—or “calm-and-contemplation”—mentioned by Shunzei in his treatise and, characterizing it as a kind of Zen, or sitting meditation, attempts to demonstrate its role in the development of *yūgen*, an aesthetic quality he considers to be paradigmatic of medieval Japanese literature.

Contrary to LaFleur, I locate Shunzei's poetics in the ritual context of the repentance rite dedicated to Fugen bodhisattva and show that this rite cannot be reduced to the kind of “Zen” that came into prominence later in the Kamakura period but rather represents the late-Heian period extension of the Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism examined in chapter 1. My analysis reveals how the Fugen-centered repentance rites provided a paradigm for rationalizing the creation of love poetry, which was considered sinful, as an essential condition for the practice of repentance and thus also for the attainment of the liberation it promised.

Chapter 3 examines two opposing perspectives on the afterlife of Murasaki Shikibu, the author of *The Tale of Genji*, in the late Heian period. The first, exemplified by Chōken in his preaching for an 1166 sutra-offering ceremony dedicated to Shikibu's salvation, condemns her work as empty words, which is classified as one of ten cardinal sins in Buddhism, only to then reveal the possibility of her redemption through the act of

making offerings of the *Lotus Sutra* on her behalf. This dialectic of condemnation and redemption, I argue, represents an extension of the kind of preaching Chōken originally developed for rites of repentance centering on the composition of waka poetry, examined in chapter 2, to the genre of *monogatari*. Prior to Chōken, this particular genre, even more than love poetry, remained beyond the reach of Buddhist discourse and ritual and was condemned, without hope of redemption, for diverting the attentions of women. Chōken's dialectical preaching represents the first instance of a Buddhist discourse that consecrates a *monogatari* composed by a woman as a work of enlightenment. In my analysis thereof, I treat it as an example of the concrete strategies by which male preachers such as Chōken, who were also important figures in the Buddhist orthodoxy, attempted to capture the imagination of women and bring them into the fold of the Buddhist religion in late Heian Japan. Such strategies, however, I show, did not go uncontested. The second perspective that I examine in this chapter is one articulated in the voice of an old nun in the epilogue to the historical tale, the *Imakagami*. The old nun emphatically rejects the way that Shikibu's fiction is often condemned as sinful, while poetry by male writers is celebrated as the work of a bodhisattva. The second half of the chapter clarifies how the old nun draws on earlier traditions of Buddhist discourse on female salvation going back to Yasutane to argue that Shikibu should in fact be understood as an emanation of a bodhisattva such as Kannon or Myō'on of the *Lotus Sutra*. In this way, Chapter 3 elucidates the concrete strategies by which Buddhism attempted to appeal to and convert women in late Heian Japan and also how those strategies were contested by women themselves.



Taken together, the three chapters of my dissertation tell the story of how Esoteric Buddhism gradually extended its reach into ever-wider fields of literary creation, and, in this way, situated itself at the center of art and culture in medieval Japanese society. In the conclusion, I introduce recent studies on the political function of Buddhist liturgy in medieval Japanese society and reflect on avenues for future research in light of these studies; specifically, I point to the possibility of investigating how this political function enabled and was enabled by the early medieval transformation of literature that I attempt to elucidate in the chapters that follow.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Songs of Dharma Joy: Esoteric Buddhism and Medieval Japanese Poetry

One of the most popular genres of waka in the medieval period was based on the practice of orally reciting waka poems at Shinto shrines. Many of these poems were composed on common topics in waka poetry such as the cherry blossoms and the moon and, as a consequence, often did not express overt religious themes or messages; yet nonetheless such poetry was intended explicitly as offerings of the joy-of-the-Dharma, or *hōraku* 法樂, to the Shinto kami. They thus came to be known as Dharma joy waka, or *hōraku waka*.

In the early thirteenth century, particularly after the adoption of this term by the Tendai priest and waka poet Jien 慈円 (1155–1225), *hōraku waka* developed into a major genre of waka poetry. The *Dai Nihon kasho sōran*, an annotated catalogue of extant poetic works from the premodern period, lists one-hundred and twenty examples of *hōraku waka* under the category “poetic collections made as offerings” (*hōnō kashū* 奉納歌集)—one of twelve major categories used by the catalogue for classifying waka poetry.<sup>1</sup> The term *hōraku* was also adopted by poets of linked verse, or *renga* 連歌, in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods. Dharma joy *renga*, like its precursor in the waka medium, enjoyed widespread popularity as both a means of worship as well as entertainment throughout the medieval period.

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<sup>1</sup> *Dai Nihon kasho sōran*, 2:829–52.

This chapter traces a genealogy of Dharma joy waka in three parts. Part 1 examines Lotus-Esoteric discourse on ritual language and attempts to show how it opened up the economy of the Dharma body's joy and wisdom to include ordinary sentient beings and, in so doing, introduced a new conception of mantra as a medium not only for the self-benefit (*jiri* 自利) of the Dharma body but for the benefit of others (*rita* 利他) as well. This reconception of mantra, I argue, provides an importance antecedent for Dharma joy waka in which the joy of language operates within a larger economy, offered beyond oneself to others—including the kami, who as native emanations of buddhas and bodhisattvas delight in Yamato verse, as well as ordinary sentient beings, who similarly (the aristocrats in question, at least) take pleasure in court poetry. Part 2 clarifies how Lotus-Esoteric discourse promoted the incorporation of hymns and a related mode of performance, the chanting of *nenbutsu* 念佛, into esoteric initiation rites (*kanjō* 灌頂) in the late ninth century and then Pure Land lecture assemblies (*kō-e* 講会)—including the biannual assemblies of the Kangakue 勧学会—in the tenth and eleventh centuries. I argue that the use of hymns and *nenbutsu* as modes of performance for reproducing the joy of hearing the Dharma and seeing the Buddha in the Pure Land within the context of the lecture assembly liturgy represents an important precursor to the use of hymns, *nenbutsu*, and waka poetry as Dharma joy in Buddhist liturgies offered specifically for the kami. Part 3 observes the articulation of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in lecture assemblies, or sutra-lectures (*kōkyō* 講經), at Shinto shrines in the late Heian period (late eleventh through early thirteenth century) and argues that it underpinned not only the practice of Dharma joy waka but also the influential medieval theory of poetry that understands waka as a Japanese form of Indian mantra.

## 1 The Economy of the Buddha's Body: Lotus-Esoteric Discourse on Buddhist Ritual Language

Discussions of “exoteric-esoteric,” or *kenmitsu* 顯密, Buddhism have often taken for granted Kūkai's distinction between the esoteric and the exoteric. Kūkai's formulation, however, represents only one example of the way that the esoteric was understood to differ from the exoteric. That is to say, such a distinction was historically made, and, as Lucia Dolce has recently shown, underwent significant transformations and evolutions well after Kūkai.<sup>2</sup>

Central to Kūkai's definition of the esoteric teachings is a notion of the Mahāvairocana Buddha conceived as a body of the Dharma that, out of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma (*jiju hōraku*), preaches the wisdom of his inner enlightenment exclusively for his own self-retinue. Lesser beings, in this view, are excluded from direct access to this preaching and instead receive it indirectly through the intermediary of the other-bound function body and the transformation body. Thus, for Kūkai, the exclusivity of the Dharma body's preaching announces the superiority of *mikkyō* and its exemplary ritual language of mantra.

Kūkai's new taxonomy soon gained prestige and influence both at court and at major Nara temples. In its wake, Tendai monks on Mount Hiei formed lineages dedicated to the study and practice of the esoteric teachings. However, Tendai monks, in contrast to their Shingon counterparts, had to grapple with the problem of how to demonstrate the identity of the esoteric teachings with the teachings on which their school was based—namely, those of the *Lotus Sutra*, which they called the “perfect teachings” (*engyō* 円教).

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<sup>2</sup> Dolce, “Reconsidering the Taxonomy of the Esoteric.”

Strategies to respond to this problem were carried out both the doctrinal and ritual levels.<sup>3</sup> Doctrinally, scholar-monks developed highly combinatory theories of the equality and identity of Śākyamuni, the preacher of the *Lotus Sutra*—that is, the perfect teachings—with Mahāvairocana, the preacher of esoteric scriptures.<sup>4</sup> Ritually, they introduced new rites that integrated *mikkyō* practices of mantra, mandala, and mudra with the latest Tiantai liturgical performances from the continent.

Ōkubo Ryōshun and Mizukami Fumiyoishi have independently suggested the term “thought on the identity in purport of the perfect and esoteric,” or *enmitsu itchi shisō* 円密一致思想, to refer to this new system of doctrine and ritual. In contrast to the term “Taimitsu” that is often used to describe this discursive formation, *enmitsu* is not a sectarian label, as it includes a consideration of how new syntheses of the *Lotus* teachings with those of the esoteric also shaped thought and practice in Shingon (or so-called Tōmitsu) lineages, and even played an important role in the development not only of Buddhism in medieval Japan but also of medieval Japanese culture in general. Ōkubo suggests that key to this role is the combinatory nature (*yūgōsei* 融合性) of *enmitsu itchi* thought, which he understands as the product of an ambitious mission to comprehensively integrate all forms of Buddhism, especially the esoteric teachings.<sup>5</sup> The combinatory nature of perfect-esoteric thought, in his view, promoted some of the most notable religious cultural developments in the mid- to late Heian period, such as the

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<sup>3</sup> See Ōkubo, *Tendai kyōgaku tanjin* on the unity of practice and doctrine

<sup>4</sup> The doctrine of the identity of Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana is termed *Shaka Dainichi dōtairon* 釈迦・大日 同体論 in Japanese scholarship. Misaki Ryōshū discusses this in his 1989 monograph *Taimitsu no kenkyū*. See also Mizukami Fumiyoishi’s 2008 *Taimitsu shisō keisei no kenkyū*.

<sup>5</sup> Ōkubo, *Tendai kyōgaku no tanjin*, p. 3.

emergence of Pure Land Buddhism in the tenth century, the formation of new understandings of the relation between the kami and the buddhas (*shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合), and the incorporation of waka poetry into Buddhist practice. While these phenomena have been examined in various fields of study, from history to literature and art, little attention has been paid to the doctrinal and ritual foundations for these cultural developments. To redress this lacuna in the field and draw attention to the important role of “*enmitsu*” Buddhism in the cultural and religious history of medieval Japan, I use the term “Lotus-Esoteric” discourse to refer to this new form of Esoteric Buddhist discourse that took shape after Kūkai and was predicated on a complex negotiation between the *Lotus* teachings and those of the esoteric.

Like Kūkai before them, the major architects of Lotus-Esoteric discourse, Ennin, Enchin, and Annen, delineated the contours of the esoteric category by developing new theories of how mantra worked. In this sense, they may be situated firmly within Kūkai’s legacy, for whom the Dharma body was characterized not by his substance (*tai* 体) but rather by his function (*yō* 用)—namely, his preaching the Dharma. Indeed, the theory of the Dharma body’s preaching, or *hosshin seppō* 法身說法, is widely considered one of Kūkai’s signature contributions to Japanese Buddhism. Kūkai’s theory was radical for its time, and he received considerable resistance from conservative Nara Buddhist clerics.<sup>6</sup> This is because it was fundamentally opposed to an established Mahāyāna view that the Dharma body, or Vairocana, cannot be known in language because it is in its essence a quiescent substance. Kūkai’s radical assertion that the Dharma body can be known in its

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<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of Kūkai’s theory of the Dharma body’s preaching and the push back he received from Nara clerics, see Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, pp. 213–20.

function may be characterized as “economic” in the precise sense that it is fundamentally concerned with the function, or economy, of the buddha’s body. Within this framework, Lotus-Esoteric discourse can be understood as an expansion of Kūkai’s economic buddha-body theory, or buddhology. While Kūkai introduced the possibility of knowing the Dharma body in its economy, Ennin, Enchin, and Annen significantly expanded this economy to include within its sphere of activity ordinary sentient beings. The resulting transformation in the way that esoteric ritual language was conceived laid the discursive framework for subsequent reformulations of the way mantra was used, first, in esoteric ritual in the late ninth and early tenth century and, later, in Pure Land and Shinto liturgy in the tenth through twelfth centuries, which we will examine below.

Doctrinally, the Lotus-Esoteric expansion of the Dharma body’s economy was developed in response to the basic problem that Tendai thinkers faced: that is, how to demonstrate the equality of the central Buddha of their teachings, Śākyamuni, with Mahāvairocana, the central Buddha of the esoteric teachings. In response to this problem, Tendai esoteric scholars developed a view on the Buddha’s bodies that asserted that both Mahāvairocana and Śākyamuni are dharma bodies and, therefore, identical in both substance (*tai* 体) and function (*yō* 用). The origins of the problem of the relation between these two buddhas can be traced back Saichō’s introduction of the esoteric teaching into Japanese Tendai. In establishing his new school, Saichō developed two courses of training for Tendai priests: the first, a Chinese Tiantai course (*shikangō* 止觀業); the second, an esoteric course (*shanagō* 遮那業).<sup>7</sup> Saichō’s dual emphasis on

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<sup>7</sup> Groner, *Saichō*, pp. 70–71.

the Tendai and the esoteric teachings shaped the course of his school's development.<sup>8</sup>

Lotus-Esoteric discourse emerged out of this institutional structure introduced by Saichō.

Chinese Tiantai thinkers, until perhaps Yixing 一行 (683–727),<sup>9</sup> did not concern themselves with the relation the preacher of the *Lotus* teachings and that of the esoteric. Zhiyi 智顛 (538–597) developed the Tiantai teaching in the sixth century, generations before the construction of the taxonomic knowledge of the esoteric by Śubhakarasiṃha 善無畏 (637–735) and Vajrabodhi 金剛智 (671–741). While, as Misaki Ryōshū has shown, Zhiyi did draw extensively on elements of Buddhist practice and doctrine that we today consider “esoteric,” or according to an older view, “mixed esotericism” (*zōmitsu* 雜密),<sup>10</sup> he did not have a taxonomic knowledge of this category. Thus the problem of integration of the *Lotus* and the esoteric represents an epistemological problem that is peculiar to Japanese Esoteric Buddhism.

Tendai scholar-monks of the ninth century drew mainly on two sources for Lotus-Esoteric conceptions of the identity between Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana. The first is Chinese Tiantai buddha-body theory. The second is the theory against which they were opposed—namely, Kūkai's hierarchical conception of Buddhist ritual language. Tendai thinkers formulated the counterargument that both the Mahāvairocana, the preacher of the esoteric sutras, and Śākyamuni, the preacher of the *Lotus Sutra*, are the Dharma body, for if this were not so, there would be a split in the Dharma realm between the substance of

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<sup>8</sup> Ōkubo has recently made this point in the introduction to his 2014 volume on Tendai doctrinal studies and medieval Japanese religious culture. See Ōkubo, *Tendai kyōgaku tanjin*, p. i.

<sup>9</sup> As Lucia Dolce has pointed out, Yixing was trained as a Tiantai monk before becoming a disciple of Śubhakarasiṃha and elaborated some of the first syntheses between *Lotus* and esoteric teachings. Dolce, “Reconsidering the Taxonomy,” p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> The pure/mixed dichotomy in classifications of esotericism will be examined below.



the Dharma body and its function. Because the Śākyamuni Buddha, in the Chinese Tiantai tradition, is understood as a preacher that teaches and converts sentient beings—that is, not just his own self-retinue—to establish his identity with Mahāvairocana, they needed to open up the sphere of the Dharma body’s preaching to include sentient beings. To do so, they emphasized the co-identity and co-equality of all the Buddha’s bodies, in both their substance and function. Let us first examine Chinese Tiantai buddha-body theory.

### 1.1 Chinese Tiantai Buddha-Body Theory

The scriptural basis for Tiantai conceptions of the Vairocana Buddha comes in the *Contemplation of Samantabhadra Sutra* (hereafter, the *Fugen Sutra*):<sup>11</sup>

Thereupon the voice preached these words, “Śākyamuni is named Vairocana Who Pervades All Places. The place of abiding of this Buddha is called the Light of Permanent Tranquility.”<sup>12</sup>

In his commentary on the *Lotus Sutra*, *Fahua wenju* (Words and Phrases of the *Lotus Sutra*), in an exegesis on the chapter “Eternal Life,” Zhiyi cites this passage to assert the unity of the three bodies of the Buddha:

The Dharma body Tathāgata is called Vairocana 毘盧遮那. This translates to Permeating All Places. The Reward Body Tathāgata is called Rocana 盧舍那. This translates to Purifying and Filling. The Response Body Tathāgata is called Sakyamun [sic.]. This translates to Deliverer from the Burning Rock. It is not possible to grasp these three Tathāgatas individually . . . In the passage on binding the lotus in the *Contemplation of Samantabhadra*, it is stated, “Śākyamuni is called Vairocana.” Thus,

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<sup>11</sup> Ch. *Guan Puxian pusa xingfa jing*, Jp. *Kan Fugen bosatsu gyōhō kyō* 觀普賢菩薩行法經. *T 277*, 9:389–394. Extant translation into Chinese by Dharmamitra 曇摩蜜多 (356–442) between 424 and 442.

<sup>12</sup> Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō keisei*, p. 18; *T 277*, 9:392c15–17. My discussion of Ennin’s and Annen’s buddha-body theory are indebted to Mizukami’s monograph. See Part I, Chapters 2 and 4.

although his name may differ, he is not distinct in substance [from Vairocana]. He comprehends the meanings of the sutras. Thus, let it be known, this [passage] demonstrates that each of the three buddhas is not different [from any other].<sup>13</sup>

Zhiyi makes similar statements elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> In the passage above, he elaborates a threefold buddha-body theory. He argues that the Dharma body, Vairocana 毘盧遮那 Buddha, exists in the realm of awakening, while the reward body, which he names Rocana 盧舍那, permeates the world, and the response body, which is Śākyamuni, saves beings from samsara.<sup>15</sup> None of these buddhas, he insists, can be understood individually. Citing the passage from the *Fugen Sutra*, he argues that Śākyamuni, as a response body, is different but not distinct from Vairocana, the Dharma body. For Zhiyi, all three buddhas are to be understood as non-dual with each other and mutually identical.

Although Zhiyi understood the three buddhas as mutually identical, he also insisted that to each pertained specific characteristics. He explains how differences in the Buddha are perceived by beings of varying faculties:

The Buddha, in the state of the Dharma body, perfectly illuminates the diverse faculties with his Buddha eye of eternal quiescence. If [a being] has sharp faculties and light defilements, then he preaches the Dharma of the One Vehicle using the image of Rocana. If [a being] has dull faculties and heavy defilements, then he takes away their diadem and with an image of an old bikhu, he enters into the burning house and unfolds the three [teachings] as expedient means. Only according with the time and faculties [of sentient beings], he refers to contemplating the self with the Buddha eye.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō keisei*, p. 19; *T* 1718, 34:128a. Ch. *Fahua wenju* 法華文句, Jp. *Hokke mongu*; *T* 1718, 34:1–149. The commentary, based on Zhiyi's teachings, was recorded by his disciple Guanding 灌頂 (561–632).

<sup>14</sup> *Hokke gengi*, fasc. 7 and 6, respectively. See Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō keisei*.

<sup>15</sup> See Ōkubo, *Tendaigaku tanjin* on the difference between Vairocana 毘盧遮那 and Rocana 盧舍那.

<sup>16</sup> *T* 1718, 34:60a.

Zhiyi here describes the Dharma body as an eternal quiescence that illuminates all sentient beings. He distinguishes this body, however, from the way it appears to different audiences. For those with sharp faculties, it manifests as the reward body Rocana; while for those with dull faculties, it appears as a response body Śākyamuni. The act of teaching and converting sentient beings is performed only by the Dharma body's manifestations, either the reward or response bodies.

In his commentaries on the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, Zhiyi attributes the activity of preaching to the Dharma body, even as he maintains his position on its fundamental quiescent character. This statement appears in both his Zhiyi's *Weimo jing wenshu* 維摩經文疏 (Commentary on the Text of the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, fascicle 1)<sup>17</sup> and *Weimo jing lueshu* 維摩經略疏 (Brief Commentary on the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, fascicle 1).<sup>18</sup> The following is from the latter:

As for the statement that preaching and teaching in the land of eternal quiescent light is not the same [as in other lands], when we consider the ultimate land of eternal quiescent light, there is no preaching and no manifestation and yet there are words and preaching. The Dharma body is unconditioned and yet mysteriously helps all. Thus, to preach without preaching—this is the preaching of the Dharma body.<sup>19</sup>

Here we see the suggestions of a theory of the Dharma body's preaching. However, Zhiyi makes clear that this preaching is not a kind of concrete preaching but rather a kind of conditioned suchness.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Jp. *Yuimagyō monsho*. T 1777, 38:519–62.

<sup>18</sup> Jp. *Yuimagyō ryakusho*. T 1778, 38:562–710.

<sup>19</sup> T 1778, 38:566c.

<sup>20</sup> This passage is translated and discussed in detail in Ōkubo, “Perfect and Esoteric Teachings.”

Zhiyi's statement that, even though the Dharma body does not preach, at least not with words, he nonetheless helps all sentient beings, including ordinary people, to attain buddhahood, was picked up by Japanese Tendai exegetes. Their interpretation was mediated especially by the gloss on Zhiyi's buddha-body theory by Zhanran 湛然 in his *Fahua xuanyi shiqian* 法華玄義積籤 (Commentary on the Profound Meaning of the *Lotus Sutra*; fascicle 14).<sup>21</sup> Therein, Zhanran formulates the pithy statement on Tiantai buddha-body theory: "The three bodies are all eternal in co-substantiality and co-functionality" (*sanshin mina tsune ni gutai guyō* 三身並常俱体俱用).<sup>22</sup> This concise formula is further elaborated in Zhanran's *Fahua wenju ji* 法華文句記:

Sentient beings and buddhas are nondual. If the Three Bodies exist, how could they not preach the Dharma? As for the Reward [Body], it spans two aspects [of other- and self-bound function] and the Response Body definitely preaches. Thus, the three bodies, [if they preach,] preach together and [if they do not preach,] they not do preach together.<sup>23</sup>

Zhanran's notion of co-substantiality casts a long shadow in later formulations of Tendai buddha-body theory, beginning with Saichō's concept of the One Great Dharma Body (*ichidai hosshin* 一大法身).<sup>24</sup> This concept refers to the universality of the buddhas that are mutually identical in the three bodies and displays a concern for demonstrating the relation between the Dharma body and sentient beings. The latter concern anticipates subsequent developments in Tendai buddha-body theory by Ennin and by Annen.

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<sup>21</sup> Jp. *Hokke gengi shakusen*. T 1717, 33:815–964.

<sup>22</sup> T 1717, 33:919a8.

<sup>23</sup> T 1719, 34:330b13–15.

<sup>24</sup> Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō keisei*.

## 1.2 Ennin's Buddha-Body Theory

Ennin 円仁 (794–864) developed a theory of the Dharma body's preaching that builds on Kūkai's theory while, at the same time, extends it by including sentient beings within the sphere of benefit and joy. Among works known to have been authored by Ennin himself, the *Kongōchō daikyōōgyō sho* 金剛頂大教王經疏 (Commentary on the *Vajraśekhara Sutra*) provides the most extensive elaboration of this theory. In fascicle 2, he explains the difference between Vairocana and his transformation bodies by introducing the distinction between the substance (*tai* 体) and function (用 *yō*) of the buddha's body:

The Vairocana Tathāgata, by the practice of self-benefit (*jirigyō*), displays his self-realm. The transformation buddhas, by the practice of other-benefit (*tarigyō*), reveal the other-realm. Furthermore, Vairocana demonstrates perfect fulfillment of the five wisdoms of self-benefit because he is the master of this realm. The transformation buddhas realize the perception of the five wisdoms of other-benefit because they are the master of the other-realm. Furthermore, the Vairocana is the origin (*hon*) and the transformation buddhas (*jaku*) are the traces. This is because [there is a distinction between] substance and function. Furthermore, these two buddhas preach this same Dharma [of Shingon] and thus reveal that holy and ordinary [beings] alike are endowed equally with the nature of vajra. Therefore, the preaching [of the two buddhas] is also the same.<sup>25</sup>

In Ennin's conception of the buddha's bodies, Vairocana is characterized by the practice of self-benefit (*jirigyō* 自利行), while transformation buddhas by that of benefit-for-others (*ritagyō* 利他行). He then correlates this distinction with that between the origin (*hon* 本) and the trace (*jaku* 迹) and, additionally, with a third distinction, substance (*tai* 体) versus function (*yō* 用). These correlations suggest that the Vairocana and his

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<sup>25</sup> T 2223, 61:29b.

transformation bodies are really of a single nature (*sei* 性)—a key term in Ennin’s conception of the buddha’s bodies—that is co-expressed in two forms, origin and trace, substance and function. The important consequence of this view is the inference that if their fundamental nature is the same so too must be their preaching. This exposition of difference on the basis of a fundamental identity provides the premise for an important claim: ordinary (*bon* 凡) people, by virtue of the preaching of the function body (i.e., the transformation bodies of the Vairocana), which is identical in nature to that of the substance body (i.e., the Vairocana), are endowed with the nature of the Diamond Realm. Thus, by introducing the concept of “nature” as a common ground that dissolves the dichotomy between the substance and function of the Buddha, Ennin advances the key doctrine that all beings have buddha-nature.

Ennin’s division of the Buddha’s body according to the distinction of self-benefit and other-benefit is derived from a commentary on the six-fascicle edition of the *Sutra for Recitation Abridged from the Vajrasekhara Sutra* (Ch. *Jingangding yujia zhong lüechu niansong jing* 金剛頂瑜伽中略出念誦經), the *Determinations of the Meaning of the Vajrasekhara Sutra* (Ch. *Jingangding dayujia mimi xin di famen yijue* 金剛頂經大瑜伽秘密心地法門義訣), attributed to Amoghavajra.<sup>26</sup> In the first fascicle, (pseudo-) Amoghavajra offers an interpretation of the entirety of the *Vajrasekhara Sutra* according to the dichotomy of self- versus other-benefit:

Thus the greatest practice of this sutra is the practice of self- and other-benefit. If divided, they form two [practices that give benefit]. First, the general gate—from those who have just begun cultivating practice to those

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<sup>26</sup> Misaki notes that much research has been focused on how this sutra is apocryphal; *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, p. 356. Misaki points to how this method of annotation provides the structure for Ennin’s approach to his commentary on the text, p. 394.

who have cultivated the discipline of sitting yoga—attains the place of the Tathāgata who, by his great wisdom of the secret and well adorned inner realization, has perfected the seeing of the Dharma. Second, the general gate from those who have cultivated the discipline of yoga to the end of the sutras, by skillful means, have constructed the mark of the wisdom of the mysteries, embraced [and saved] living beings, and placed them in the rank of a Buddha. Yet these two correlate and form one gate.<sup>27</sup>

(Pseudo-)Amoghavajra's exegesis proposes that volumes 1 through 3 of the sutra should be understood as concerning the perfection of insight into the Dharma that comprehends the truth and attains thereby the status of the Tathāgata, which is self-benefit, while volumes 4 through 6 should be understood as addressing the way sentient beings are saved by the Buddha and guided to buddhahood, which corresponds to benefit-for-others.<sup>28</sup> However, even as (pseudo-)Amoghavajra introduces a distinction between self-benefit and benefit-for-others, he insists that both complement each other and are therefore really one. Thus, like Ennin, (pseudo-)Amoghavajra also puts forward a distinction between self- and other-benefit only then to reveal its fundamental relativity.

Ennin's basic claim that the dharmakaya also encompasses the nature of benefit-for-others and, therefore, his preaching also embraces ordinary beings signals a fundamental departure from the conception of the dharmakaya advanced by Kūkai in which the dharmakaya's joy in preaching is purely self-bound. The scriptural source for Ennin's new conception, however, can be traced back to the *Treatise on Consciousness-Only* (*Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論). In Fascicle Ten, the treatise unfolds a three-body

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<sup>27</sup> T 1798, 39:808c.

<sup>28</sup> Later in *Commentary on the Vajrasekhara Sutra*, Ennin more explicitly adopts the interpretive approach of this passage from Zhizang in his subsequent analysis of Vairocana and his transformation bodies according to the self- and other- benefit distinction. See T 61:33b–c.

theory that emphasizes the continuity between the self-benefit of the self-nature body (or Dharma body) and the benefit-for-others that is the purview of the transformation bodies:

Furthermore, the Self-Nature Body correctly encompasses Self-Benefit (*jiri*). It is Quiescent Silence and Peaceful Joy and without activity. Yet It also includes Benefit-for-Others (*rita*). Because, by creating superior conditions, It gives Benefit and Joy (*riraku*) to sentient beings, It serves as a basis for the Function Body and the Transformation Bodies. Thus, the Self-Bound Function Body belongs entirely to Self-Benefit, while the Other-Bound Function and Transformation Bodies belong entirely to Benefit-for-Others.<sup>29</sup>

This passage argues that the self-nature body, which Kūkai's identifies with the Dharma body and the self-bound function body, consists not only of self-benefit but includes (*kaneru* 兼) also the nature of benefit-for-others that gives benefit and joy to sentient beings. Thus, while the self-nature body is quiescent and without activity, it also inheres within itself the potential for the activity of giving benefit and joy to sentient beings. (Pseudo-)Amoghavajra's *Yijue* states this idea more forcefully when it states that the two practices of self- and other-benefit are, in fact, one. Nonetheless, this passage from the *Cheng weishi lun* demonstrates how Ennin made use of Yogacarin doctrine, traditionally not classified as "esoteric," to reformulate key esoteric concepts.

For Ennin, the equivalence of Vairocana's preaching with that of his transformation bodies is crucial. Yet he begins his elaboration of this claim by identifying self-benefit with the "self-realm" and benefit-for-others with the "other-realm." This tight correlation would seem to suggest that the transformation body buddhas abide in a realm separate from that of the Dharma body buddha. In Ennin's lexicon, however, the term

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<sup>29</sup> T 31:58b.



*realm* has an idiosyncratic meaning. Earlier in Fascicle One of his commentary, he glosses the term “realm” as “nature” (*sei* 性):

What is called a “realm” can be understood as a “nature.” The meaning [of this term] can be discerned according to different categories. It is said that, inside the bodies of sentient beings, there exists the nature of the five wisdoms of the Tathāgata. . . . “Nature” is none other than the “Nature of Reality.” “Nature of Reality” is none other than the “Nature of the Principle,” which exemplifies reality and is free of errors. Thus, it is another name for “Buddha Nature”—that is, the Nature of the Dharma Body Tathāgata of the Vairocana. It is because [Vairocana] manifests this principle that all sentient beings attain the Three Bodies of the Secret Mystery.<sup>30</sup>

Ennin’s gloss on the term “realm” as a kind of “nature” elaborates an apparently contradictory argument: the “realm” of “vajra realm” refers to an original nature that is at once the real nature (*jitsuzai* 実性) of the Vairocana Dharmakaya and a nature that exists only in principle (*risei* 理性). Ennin dissolves this distinction between reality 実 and principle 理 within the category of nature by introducing a third category: “Buddha nature” (*busshō* 仏性). This passage thus follows a similar logic to the above passage from Fascicle Two of his *Vajra Commentary* in which he displaces the distinction between self-benefit and other-benefit with a third distinction, substance versus function, and, on the basis of this distinction, predicates the identity of the two buddhas and their preaching. Both passages moreover argue the same thesis that all beings are endowed with the nature of the vajra realm (*kongōkaishō* 金剛界性). For Ennin, self-realm and benefit and other-realm and benefit co-arise and interpenetrate; both mutually constitute two sides of the same coin.

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<sup>30</sup> T 2223, 61:10a–b.

In fascicle 1 of his *Commentary on the Vajraśekhara Sutra*, Ennin elaborates further on how the esoteric teaching, which he calls the “secret teaching” (*hikkyō* 秘教), does not exclude but actively engages the nature of the faculties (*konjō* 根性) of sentient beings:

Now this Secret Teaching is not opposed to the Nature of the Faculties [of sentient beings] according to the Exoteric Teachings of the Three Vehicles. However, [Vairocana] preaches the Secret Way for the Retinue in the Mind State of His Inner Realization. Therefore, in this sutra, it is Said, “At that time, the World-Honored One Vairocana Tathāgata, without delay, realized his Mind of Universal Wisdom of the Supremely Awakened All-in-One Tathāgata... Thus let it be known. This sutra is thus preached in the Realm of Inner Realization.

Q: The Inner Realization of the Tathāgata is Quiescent and Luminous and Without Words, far cut off from mental thoughts. How then does He preach this Sutra in the State of Inner Realization?

A: It is as you have explained. The State of Inner Realization destroys languages and cuts off conceptualization. For what reason? Because it is not the state of the various ordinary people. Moreover, that the Inner Realization of the Tathāgata is nothing but quiescence and illumination without words is what is preached in the Exoteric Teachings. These teachings, therefore, do not yet know the Profound Meaning of the Inner Realization of the Tathāgata. Now this Secret Teaching does not [propound] this doctrine. This is because it [reveals] quiescence as the coincidence of quiescence and illumination. Because the Dharma Realm is endowed with quiescence and illumination, the Dharma Realm is diffuse. Its diffusion does not obstruct quiescence. Its quiescence does not obstruct its diffusion. The Inner Realization of the Tathāgata is thus.<sup>31</sup>

In this passage, Ennin explains Vairocana’s preaching from the point of view of the “secret teaching.” Dismissing the view that the Vairocana’s state of inner realization is beyond language as a doctrine preached in the exoteric teachings, Ennin sets forth a key doctrine in his theory of the Buddha’s body. According to the secret teaching, he argues, the Vairocana is the “coincidence of quiescence and illumination” (*jakushō guji* 寂照俱

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<sup>31</sup> T 61:15a-b

時). This means that the inner realization of Vairocana is simultaneously passive and active; it is a kind of movement that does not destroy stillness and a kind of stillness that does not preclude movement. Thus, the Vairocana is quiescent and yet, at the same time, it also inheres the potential for converting and teaching sentient beings. Quiescence and the potential to act do not mutually obstruct each other but are co-created at the same time.

The interlocutor then points to the problem that, if, as Ennin claims, Vairocana preaches the dharma exclusively to his own self-retinue, then it is not clear how he would benefit others (*rita*). If he does not, this then contradicts the conventional Mahayana view that Buddhas, in contrast to arhats, preach the dharma for the benefit of others:

Q: The various buddhas always preach for the purpose of benefit-for-others (*rita*). Now, [the Vairocana Buddha] preaches for the sake of the retinue of his inner realization. What benefit is there in this?

A: For the sake of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma. Just as the self-retinue of the Wheel-Turning King receives much pleasure, it is not something that is known by the myriad people in the kingdom. The *Vajra Peak Yogin Sutra* states, “The Bodhisattvas of the Various Stages cannot see the Tathāgata that pervades and illuminates the Vajra realm and the Vajra arms of his retinue produced by his self-nature...” Thus I know. This sutra is preached from the self-realm of the Tathāgata and is not well known...

Q: If the bodhisattvas of various stages cannot perceive [Vairocana], then, according to this sutra, there are no Emanations [of Him] among sentient beings. Who, then, propagated this sutra in the world?

A: When I say that the bodhisattvas of the various stages cannot perceive him, I mean the bodhisattvas of the various stages in the Exoteric Teachings. However, in reference to the faculty for the Mysteries, then even the ordinary man fettered [by attachments] should be able to perceive it. How much more so, the bodhisattvas of the various stages of the Esoteric Teachings. What transmission do they attain? For this reason, [the *Yogin*] *Sutra* says, “Eternally in the Three Realms, without destroying the transformation body, he benefits sentient beings. During this time, for a while, he does not rest...By means of the Eternally Abiding Dharmakāya of the Universal Self-Nature of the Mental State of the Profound Secret,

[Vairocana] subsumes the bodhisattvas.” If we rely on this text, then, truly [Vairocana] does not destroy the transformation body and is able to perform the Vajra Vehicle for sentient beings.

Ennin addresses the problem by making reference to the *Yogin Sutra*. He first points out that the self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma of the inner realization, according to this sutra, cannot be known by any being other than the self-retinue of the Vairocana. However, as in the above passages on the distinction between self-benefit/realm and other-benefit/realm, Ennin breaks down this dichotomy according to which Vairocana is confined to the self-realm only. In response to the specific question of whether the bodhisattvas can perceive the Vairocana, he asserts that the notion that bodhisattvas cannot perceive it is an exoteric teaching. From the standpoint of the esoteric teachings, he argues, even ordinary men fettered by attachments (*bonpu guhaku* 凡夫具縛) can perceive the Vairocana’s preaching. For evidence, he cites another passage from the *Yogin Sutra* that states that the Dharma body of the Vairocana does in fact encompass (*sessu* 攝) bodhisattvas. Thus, in his extremely dialectical and perhaps even contradictory style, Ennin presents an unprecedented interpretation of the self-bound function body of the Vairocana. In contrast to Kūkai’s view in which the Vairocana’s self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma can only be perceived by his own self-retinue, Ennin argues that, from the standpoint of the esoteric teachings, it can in fact be perceived not only by bodhisattvas but even ordinary beings mired in attachments.

In summary, although Ennin does not ultimately articulate a cogent critique of Kūkai’s conception of the dharmakaya’s preaching, he shifts the focus of esoteric buddha-body theory. In Ennin’s view, while the Dharmakaya’s preaching must be understood as a kind of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, this joy is not limited only to his

self-retinue but rather also includes within its sphere not only bodhisattvas but even ordinary people fettered by the attachments of saṃsāra. Thus, Ennin opens up the economy of the Vairocana's joy-in-the-Dharma also to sentient beings.

### 1.3 Annen's Buddha-Body Theory

Annen's buddha-body theory represents a further expansion of the economic buddhology developed by Ennin. Specifically, he elaborates a more systematic argument for the identity of the Dharma body with the preacher of the *Lotus* and, extending Ennin's emphasis on the unity of the substance of the Buddha's body with its function, demonstrates the infinite extent and universal inclusivity of the Dharma body's preaching. This inclusivistic view of the economy of the Buddha's body laid the foundation for Annen's reformulation of esoteric ritual language that we will examine in part 2 of this chapter.

In his *Dialogue on Teachings and Time Periods* (*Kyōji mondō* 教時間答)<sup>32</sup>, Annen argues that all four buddha bodies described in the esoteric teachings are actually one Buddha:

Q: All exoteric teachings refer to the buddhas of the response and transformation bodies. These [buddha bodies] are not the Dharma body. Why do we say that all of these [response and transformation bodies] the body of the Dharma realm?

A: In the *Yishi*, "Regarding his eternal preaching, some say the pure tranquility of the Dharma body is like the empty void, without activity. They do not preach that He is endowed with power and function. Therefore, they posit that he gives rise to divine transformations and all of these have the mind of his being and the power of his samadhi. However,

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<sup>32</sup> Full title: *Shingonshū kyōjigi* 真言宗教時義 (Meaning of Esoteric Teachings and Time Periods); *T* 2396, 75:374–450.

the substance of the Dharma cannot be described thus. It is something that has yet to be thoroughly elucidated.”<sup>33</sup> Now, our school of holds that all [response and transformation bodies] are the Dharma body. Thus, Priest Kūkai states, “The Mahāvairocana Tathāgata with the four kinds of Dharma body of his self-retinue, out of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, preaches this teaching.” Thus, we understand all buddhas to signify one Buddha.<sup>34</sup>

The interlocutor asks why the speaker of the text, which I shall for convenience’s sake call “Annen,” posits that even transformation and response buddha-bodies are Dharma bodies when, in the exoteric teachings, these emanational buddha bodies are taught to be distinct from the Dharma body. In his reply, Annen cites the *Darijing yishi* 大日經義釈 (Explanation of the Meanings of the *Mahāvairocana Sutra*)<sup>35</sup>, a revised edition by Zhiyan 智儼 (d.u.) and Wengu 溫古 (d.u.) of the *Commentary on the Mahāvairocana Sutra* (Ch. *Darijing shu* 大日經疏, Jp. *Dainichikyō sho*) by Yixing, imported to Japan by Ennin.<sup>36</sup> The passage from the *Explanation of the Meanings of the Mahāvairocana Sutra* states that, in contrast to the interpretation of the Dharma body’s preaching as essentially quiescent, the *Mahāvairocana Sutra* does not posit a split between the substance (*tai* 体) of the Dharma body and its “power and function” (*rikiyū* 力用). Annen uses this passage to argue that his school of esoteric teachings, which, like Kūkai, he calls “Shingon,” preaches that the Dharma body is identical to its transformations, that the substance of the Buddha’s body is no different from its function.

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<sup>33</sup> ZTZ *Mikkyō* 1.

<sup>34</sup> T 2396, 75:404c.

<sup>35</sup> Jp. *Dainichikyō gishaku*; ZTZ *Mikkyō* 1. The commentary was introduced to Japan by Ennin.

<sup>36</sup> Tendai esoteric thinkers used the former text, which was imported by Ennin, to demonstrate the identity of the perfect and the esoteric teachings. See Dolce, “Reconsidering,” pp. 147–48. Shingon thinkers of Kūkai’s lineage, by contrast, preferred the *Darijing shu* 大日經疏 (T 1796), the variant imported by Kūkai.

Annen's argument for the identity of the Dharma body with its transformations runs counter to Kūkai's emphasis on the superiority of the Mahāvairocana and his self-retinue vis-à-vis the transformation bodies. Yet nonetheless, to support this view, Annen cites, or paraphrases rather, the key passage from Kūkai's *Benkenmitsu nikyōron* on the self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, which was analyzed above. According to Annen's paraphrase, the Mahāvairocana, out of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma, preached the Dharma along with his own self-retinue, which, Annen adds, consists of the four kinds of Dharma bodies (*shishu hosshin* 四種法身). In the passage as it appears in Kūkai's text, there is no mention of the four kinds of Dharma body.<sup>37</sup> This is an idea rather that figures prominently in Annen's *Kyōji mondō*, as we shall see. Nonetheless, Annen draws on Kūkai's authoritative statement to assert the doctrine that all buddhas are, from an esoteric standpoint, one Buddha.

Annen's four-in-one theory of the Buddha's bodies shifts the focus of esoteric buddha-body theory away from the superiority of the Dharma body as such toward its immanent presence in the world. This shift, moreover, is made possible by an emphasis on the continuity between the function (*yō* 用) and substance (*tai* 体) of the Buddha.

Later in *Kyōji mondō*, Annen examines the character (*sō* 相) of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma and explains how it includes in the act of preaching (*kensetu* 兼説) the practices (*ji* 事) of other-bound and transformational bodies:

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<sup>37</sup> The four kinds of Dharma body refers to the self-nature body 自性身, the function body 受用身, the transformational body 變化身, and the equally flowing body 等流身. See *T* 2396, 75:420b. Translated below, pp. 34–35.

Q: Among the *Mahāvairocana Sutra*, *Vajraśekhara Sutra*, *Yogin Sutra*, *Susiddhi Sutra*,<sup>38</sup> and *Subāhu Sutra*,<sup>39</sup> which are the Preaching of the Self-Bound Function Body, which the preaching of the Other-Bound Function Body, and which the Preaching of the Transformational Bodies?

A: The *Mahāvairocana Sutra*, *Vajraśekhara Sutra*, and *Yogin Sutra*—these are the Preaching of the Self-Bound Function Body of Mahāvairocana Tathāgata. The *Susiddhi* and *Subāhu Sutras*—these are the Preaching of the self-bound function body. Thus, in the Dharma preached out of Self-Bound joy-in-the-Dharma, [Mahāvairocana] encompasses the practices (*ji*) of the Other-Bound Transformational Bodies and, in this way, presents the character (*sō* 相) of Self-Bound joy-in-the-Dharma. Thus in the *Mahāvairocana Sutra* it is said, “[Mahāvairocana] at all times and places manifests the Treasury of Adornment. This is Self-Bound joy-in-the-Dharma. Furthermore, he manifests the Vajra-Armed Body and preaches the Path of True Words (mantra) throughout the Realms in the Ten Directions.” This is Self-Bound joy-in-the-Dharma. Now, when the Bodhisattvas of the Ten Stages in the Realms in the Ten Directions receive this Dharma, they call it “Other-Bound joy-in-the-Dharma.” Now, when the sentient beings of the six paths in the realms in the ten directions receive this Dharma, they call it “Dharma Preached by Transformational Bodies.”<sup>40</sup>

In response to the question of which of five sutras associated with the esoteric teachings is preached by the self-bound function body, Annen argues that this body preaches all of them. He makes this claim on the basis of the assertion that the Dharma preached by the Vairocana out of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma encompasses the practices of other-bound transformational bodies. In this view, then, even sutras preached by transformational buddha bodies are in fact preached by the Mahāvairocana out of self-bound joy. For scriptural support of this view, Annen cites a passage from the *Darijing*, which was first

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<sup>38</sup> Ch. *Suxidi jieluo jing* 蘇悉地羯羅經, Jp. *Soshijikyō*. Translated by Śubhakarasiṃha 善無畏 in 726; 3 fascicles. *T* 893, 18:603–92.

<sup>39</sup> *Supohu tongzi qingwen jing* 蘇摩呼童子請問經, Jp. *Sobako dōjikyō*, Three Fascicles. Translated by Śubhakarasiṃha. *T* 895, 18:719–46. A basic text on the practical aspects of esoteric ritual, explained by Vajrapāṇi in response to questions from the youth Sūbahu. Often grouped with a number of other early treatises on ritual theory and practice

<sup>40</sup> T 75.407b



cited by Ennin in his *Commentary on the Vajrasekhara Sutra*. Therein, Ennin uses it to attribute activity to the Mahāvairocana and assert his immanent presence in the world.<sup>41</sup> On the basis of this passage, Annen argues that, while the name for the self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma of the Mahāvairocana differs depending on its audience (bodhisattvas call it an “other-bound function body,” while sentient beings call it a “transformation body”), all preaching by all buddhas is, from the viewpoint of the esoteric teachings, none other than the preaching of the Dharma body.

Annen’s most extensive elaboration of buddha-body theory appears in fascicle three of the *Kyōji mondō*. In the question portion of the dialogue, Annen presents the doctrines of various schools on the differences in the preaching of the four buddha-bodies:

Q: The various Mahāyāna sutras and treatises and the teachers of the various schools all state that the Dharma body of principle is without the character of form and does not preach the Dharma. Only the Dharma body of wisdom is understood to be the self-bound function body.<sup>42</sup> This is the place of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma wherein ordinary faculties do not exist. Thus he does not preach. Only the Other-Bound Function Body and the Transformational Bodies are able to adapt to faculties and conditions and thus they preach the dharma. However, in the four bodies [you have now described] all are understood to preach the Dharma. The *Lankāvatāra Sutra*, for example, preaches the doctrine of [a specific kind of] preaching [for] each of the Three Bodies. According to the preaching in this sutra, characterless and formless is the character of the Preaching of the Dharma body. Permeation of Compassion and Wisdom is the character of the Preaching of the Reward Body. Statements in Response to the World is the character of the preaching of the Response Body. Therefore, that which gives rise to discourse is the practice of the Other-Bound Response Body. Therefore, in the Hossō School, these sutras are cited as evidence for the non-preaching of the Dharma body.” In addition, in the Tendai

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<sup>41</sup> See *T* 61:16b above.

<sup>42</sup> The division of the Dharma body into principle (*ri* 理) and wisdom (*chi* 智) is set forth, for example, in *Golden Light Sutra* (*Jinguangming zuisheng wang jing* 金光明最勝王經) translated by Yijing 義淨 (635–713). See *T* 665, 16:408b–c.

School, it is held, “although the three bodies exist, the Dharma is definitely not preached and the Reward body spans two doctrines; the Response and Transformation [Body] definitely preaches. Thus, if the three bodies are [mutually] identical then together they preach and together they do not preach.” This is the Gate of the [mutually] identical three bodies. It posits only the preaching of the Other-Bound Transformational [Bodies] as the self-bound preaching of the Dharma body and, at the same time, it posits the non-preaching of the self-bound Dharma body as the non-preaching of the other-bound transformational bodies. Now, does our School of Shingon [here referring to Taimitsu] hold [a view] similar to the Hossō Lankāvatāra [theory] of the preaching of the three bodies? Or is it like the Tendai [view] on the preaching together of the three bodies [according to] the Gate of the mutual identity of the three bodies.<sup>43</sup>

The question begins by pointing out how Annen’s view of the four buddha-bodies differs from that of Mahāyāna teachings: whereas Mahāyāna scripture teaches that only the Dharma body of wisdom (*chi hosshin* 智法身) has the quality of self-bound function that is exclusive of ordinary beings,<sup>44</sup> Annen teaches that all four buddha-bodies preach the Dharma. The interlocutor offers Annen two points of reference for distinguishing his Shingon teachings on the Dharma body’s preaching: first, the “Hossō Lankāvatāra” position that all three bodies preach but not in the same way; second, the Tiantai position that the three bodies of the buddha are mutually identical and therefore, if they do in fact preach, must necessarily preach together.

In his response, Annen asserts that neither of these positions characterizes the view of his Shingon school:

A: [The position of our school] is not that which is interpreted in the Tendai and Hossō schools. Now, to state the position of our Shingon school, the four bodies mutually endow each other. Therefore, what is

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<sup>43</sup> T 75:420a–b.

<sup>44</sup> This is set forth in the *Golden Light Sutra* (Ch. *Jin guangming jing* 金光明經, Jp. *Kongōmyō kyō*, Sk. *Suvarṇa-prabhāsōttama-sūtra*). It is contrasted with the Dharma body of principle (*ri hosshin* 理法身). For an explanation, see Oda 1605b-c.

called the Self-Nature Body [refers to] the Four Bodies that are all Self-Nature Bodies; what is called the Function Body [refers to] the Four Bodies that are all Function Bodies; what is called the Transformational Bodies [refers to] the Four Bodies that are all Transformation Bodies; what is called the Equally Flowing Body [refers to] the Four Bodies that are all Equally Flowing Bodies. Why? Because the principle of suchness has for its substance the Dharma Realm. Therefore, the *Amoghapāśa Sutra*<sup>45</sup> states, “The one substance of the Three Bodies is equal to the Self-nature Body of the Vairocana. Thus, the one substance of the three bodies is equal to the Function Body, the Transformational Body, and the Equally Flowing Body of the Vairocana.” This, to a large extent, is the same as the Tendai [theory] of the co-substantiality and co-functionality of the Three Bodies.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, in [Kūkai’s] *Meaning of Voice, Letter, and Reality*, the Dharma body Tathāgata is thus called the Venerable Mahāvairocana, the Reward Body Buddha is thus called the Venerable Mahāvairocana, the Response Body is thus called the Venerable Mahāvairocana, and the Equally Flowing Body is thus called the Venerable Mahāvairocana.”<sup>47</sup> Thus, among these, all have the same meaning. Therefore, in the *Yogin Sutra*, it is stated, “The Dharma body of four kinds refers to the function body of the four kinds, the transformational body of the four kinds, and the equally flowing body of the four kinds.”<sup>48</sup>

In this passage, Annen deploys a four-in-one logic according to which each of the four buddha bodies encompasses all the others. Annen’s citation of Kūkai’s *Meaning of Voice, Letter, and Reality* would seem to suggest the influence of this text. However, the crux of Annen’s argument lies in his use of the Tiantai theory of the consubstantiality and co-functionality of the three bodies to assert the character of the Mahāvairocana Buddha as a composite being made up of four mutually constituting bodies. In this way, he breaks with the Tiantai teaching that acknowledges only the preaching of the Reward Body and

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<sup>45</sup> Ch. *Bukong juansuo zhouxin jing* 不空羼索呪心經, Jp. *Fukū kenjaku shinkyō*.

<sup>46</sup> Zhanran’s gloss on Zhiyi’s buddha-body theory in his *Xuanyi shiqian* 玄義積籤. T 33:919a8. See above.

<sup>47</sup> *Shōji jissō gi* 声字実相義; T 2429, 77:404a.

<sup>48</sup> T 75:420b.

thus provides a new premise for a view, which he attributes to Kūkai, that posits the four-in-one unity of the Vairocana's body.

As the foregoing passages from *Kyōji mondō* indicate, key to Annen's strategy for addressing the problem of the division between the self-bound and other-bound function of the buddha's body was his emphasis on the identity of the substance, or *tai*, of the Dharma body with its function, or *yō*. This emphasis, as we saw above, has its antecedent in the buddha-body theory of the Tiantai exegete Zhanran. In another important commentarial work on esoteric doctrine, the *Bodaishin gishō* 菩提心義抄 (Compilation on the doctrine of the mind of enlightenment), Annen specifies the precise nature of the preaching of this kind of Dharma body that is identical with its function:

Q: The *Abhidharmakośa* [*Treatise*] and the *Chengshi* [*Treatise*] state...The Faxiang and Sanlun [Schools] similarly state...Moreover, [these schools] cite a passage from the *Lankāvatāra* [*Sutra*] that states that all three bodies do not ultimately preach in discourse and posit only the other-bound [function body] and transformation body as preaching in discourse. In the Tendai school...and according to the general classification, "If the Three Bodies exists, then they definitely preach the dharma. As for the Reward [Body], it spans two meanings [of other- and self-bound function] and the Response Body definitely preaches. Thus, the three bodies, [if they preach,] preach together and [if they do not preach,] they not preach together." If the Reward [Body] spans two meanings, then the Self-Bound [Function Body] does not preach, while the Other-Bound [Function Body] definitely preaches. Now in this Shingon School, there are only the eight leaves in the Lotus Pedestal of the Womb. The Dharma body and Self-Bound [Function Body] all thus preach the dharma. For what assembly, does He [preach]?<sup>49</sup>

In this passage, the interlocutor overviews the various positions on the Dharma body's preaching, including that of the Hossō and Sanron schools. All except the Shingon school deny that the Dharma body preaches and instead assert that only the other-bound function

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<sup>49</sup> T 2397, 75:508b–c.

bodies preach. As representative of this position, he cites the *Lankāvatāra Sutra*. He then refers to a “general classification” of the Tendai school that corresponds to the above-cited passage from Zhanran’s *Fahua wenju ji* 法華文句記.<sup>50</sup> In his analysis of this passage, Annen puts forward the interpretation that the division of the Reward body into two aspects implies that the self-bound aspect does not preach while the other-bound aspect does. This division is then contrasted with the teachings of the Shingon school according to which the self-bound function body of the Dharma body preaches from the eight-leafed lotus pedestal—that is, as depicted in the Womb Realm mandala.

The interlocutor then poses the question: according to the teachings of the Shingon school, for what assembly does the self-bound function body of the Dharma body preach? Annen replies:

Although the Dharma body and the Self-Bound [Enjoyment Body] both preach, their preaching is not the same as the voice and speech of the Other-Bound [Enjoyment] and Transformation Bodies. Zhiyi also stated, “The Dharma body does not preach but mysteriously helps all.”<sup>51</sup>

In his response, Annen puts forward the argument that the self-bound function body does in fact preach but its preaching is fundamentally different from that of the other-bound function and transformational bodies that preach using speech and voice. He then cites an unidentified passage from Zhiyi that seems to contradict his claim. As Ōkubo Ryōshun has shown, however, Annen used this passage in his writings in an idiosyncratic way.<sup>52</sup> To clarify Annen’s use of this passage, Ōkubo cites a passage from the *Kyōji mondō*:

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<sup>50</sup> *T* 34:330b13–15. See above.

<sup>51</sup> *T* 75:508c.

<sup>52</sup> Ōkubo, “Perfect and Esoteric Teachings,” pp. 87–88.

For example, all of the six elements, the ten realms, the myriad phenomena accordingly realize sagehood and are embraced in Mahāvairocana’s preaching at all times. Why? Because all phenomena are the Self-Substance of Mahāvairocana. Whenever activities of the Buddha occur, they are encompassed within the actions of Mahāvairocana. According to Tiantai tenets, the Dharmakaya does not preach, does not manifest, but mysteriously helps all. This is the meaning of this statement.<sup>53</sup>

In this passage, Annen argues that the Mahāvairocana does not preach in the traditional sense of the word. Rather it preaches in a metaphorical sense. Its medium is not language but rather phenomena. It is in this non-linguistic medium that the Mahāvairocana preaches. Annen thus understands Zhiyi’s statement that the Dharma body does not preach to indicate that he preaches but just not in a conventional way. As Ōkubo has pointed out, Annen’s interpretation seems to be based on the passage from Zhiyi’s *Weimojing wenshou* 維摩經文疏 (Commentary on the text of the *Vimalakīrti*, fascicle 1) and his *Weimo jing lueshu* 維摩經略疏 (Brief commentary on the *Vimalakīrti*, fascicle 1) quoted above in this section.

In the *Bodaishin gishō*, after citing Zhiyi, Annen advances a view of the self-bound function body that resembles that expounded in the *Kyōji mondō* passage above:

According to the *Lankāvatāra Sutra*, “The Dharma body emits light that eternally illuminates all.” In Our School, the Self-Bound [Function Body] of the Dharma body ultimately takes all sentient beings, lands, and the myriad phenomena as their Substance. All the myriad dharma (phenomena) are none other than His preaching of the Dharma. The various Buddhas take all sentient beings and lands as the Three Mysteries of the Dharma body and as the Dharma Instruments of the Self-Bound joy-in-the-Dharma of the Self-Bound Function Body. Yet living beings, lost in the midst of delusion, do not know this. Thus the *Yuanjuejing* (Sutra of perfect enlightenment) states, “O Samantabhadra, you should know that from the beginning, all sentient beings are filled with illusions

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<sup>53</sup> T 75.409a

and ignorance, yet all are established from the Perfect Enlightenment of the Minds of the Tathāgatas.”<sup>54</sup>

In his exegesis of Zhiyi’s statement and the passage from the *Lankāvatāra*, Annen suggests that all dharmas, or phenomena, constitute the substance of the self-bound Dharma body and, therefore, all dharmas are used by him as instruments as part of his incessant preaching of the Dharma. He then extrapolates further and even suggests that all sentient beings are embraced by all buddhas as the three mysteries of the Dharma body itself and the very instruments by which it takes joy-in-the-Dharma purely for its own sake. Viewed as ideology, Annen’s economic buddha-body theory presents a vision of the world from which there is no escape from the infinite operativity of the Buddha’s body. He concludes his response by stressing that it is only because of ignorance and delusion that sentient beings do not know this important truth. For Annen, then, the problem of the Dharma body’s preaching lies not in whether it can be perceived but rather in how.

In her essay, “Reconsidering the Taxonomy of the Esoteric,” Lucia Dolce identifies Annen as a pivotal figure in the turn within discussions of the esoteric away from a concern for the exclusivity of the secret teachings toward an emphasis on training and practice:

Annen thus seems to shift the focus from an epistemological concern for the most profound doctrine, to which access is gained on the basis of capacity, to an understanding of the doctrine being dependent on training. In other words, the emphasis is no longer, or not exclusively, on the content of the secret teaching, which may change, but on the method to reach it.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *T* 2397, 75:508c14–20.

<sup>55</sup> Dolce, “Reconsidering,” p. 144.

The foregoing analysis has shown how this shift toward practice is anticipated in his theory of the buddha's body. By emphasizing the functionality of the buddha's bodies, Annen develops an economic buddhology that underscores action and performance as a fundamental characteristic of being a Buddha. In this view, to be a buddha is no longer to be engaged in a practice that is oriented only toward the self-benefit of the buddhas in the realm of Mahāvairocana's inner realization but is rather to enter into a mode of performance that engages all sentient beings at all stages of delusion and enlightenment.

## **2 Esoteric Modes of Performance in the Mid-Heian Period: Hymn Singing as Mantra and the Development of Pure Land Liturgy**

In Japanese-language scholarship, Annen is often called the “systematizer” (*taiseisha*) of the esoteric teachings within Tendai Buddhism. In his 1989 monograph *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, Misaki Ryōshū has suggested that Annen's systematization of Taimitsu doctrine (*kyōri* 教理) ushered in the “zenith” (*zensei jidai* 全盛時代) of Taimitsu ritual practice (*jisō* 事相).<sup>56</sup> By zenith of esoteric ritual practice, Misaki refers to the way that “magical prayers” (*jujutsuteki kitō* 呪術的祈祷) were systematically reformulated as esoteric rites based on the “Eighteen Paths” (*jūhachi dō* 十八道). This fundamental ritual curriculum of the Shingon school, he stresses, is an “esoteric practice” (*mikkyō no jissen* 密教の実践) because, in contrast to magical prayers, which tend to emphasize this “worldly benefits” (*genze riyaku* 現世利益), it is aimed at enlightenment.

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<sup>56</sup> Misaki, *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, p. 6.



Elsewhere, Misaki calls this kind of esoteric practice “pure esotericism” (*junmitsu* 純密), as opposed to the “mixed esotericism” (*zōmitsu* 雜密) of magical practices. Thus, for Misaki, what defines the post-Annen era of Taimitsu practice as a golden age is the elimination of magical practices coupled with the rise in “pure” esoteric practice.

Misaki does not presume *all* forms of esotericism (*mikkyō*) are magic. He reserves this appellation only for the impure mixed variety.<sup>57</sup> As Ryūichi Abé has shown, however, this pure/mixed dichotomy has not proven useful in understanding the diverse modes in which Esoteric Buddhist elements existed in early Heian-period religious culture.<sup>58</sup> In addition, it has also skewed our understanding of how Lotus-Esoteric discourse developed by Tendai esoteric thinkers shaped non-esoteric ritual practice during and after Annen’s time.

In chapter 7 on the central Tendai practice of the four samādhis (*shishu sanmai* 四種三昧, Ch. *sizhong sanmei*), Misaki explains how he understands the relation of Annen’s systematization of pure esotericism to the subsequent development of Pure Land Buddhism. He suggests specifically that the transmission of an organized “pure” esotericism based on the Womb- and Diamond Realm mandalas contributed to the elimination of “impure” esoteric elements from the four samādhis, especially the two samādhis reformulated by Ennin, the always-moving and the moving-and-sitting

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<sup>57</sup> Misaki dedicates an entire chapter to the fundamental distinction in sectarian historiography of esoteric Buddhism between “pure esotericism” (*junmitsu*) and “impure esotericism” (*zōmitsu*). In it, he demonstrates that these terms are a later constructions from the mid-Tokugawa period. See pp. 146–68. Nonetheless, he continues to make ample use of the terms in his discussion of esotericism in both the Tang and on Mount Hiei after Kūkai. In some instances, he distances himself from these terms by qualifying them with the prefix “so-called” (*iwayuru*). Yet this dichotomy, despite his self-awareness of its constructedness, seems to inform his narrative on triumph of “esoteric practice” on Mount Hiei.

<sup>58</sup> Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, pp. 152–54.

samādhis. As the esotericist tendency (*mikkyō-teki keikō*) of the four samādhis attenuated after Ennin gradually in the mid-Heian period, what he calls “aesthetic” elements, such as movements of proceeding and stopping along with chanting and singing come to the fore in Tendai Buddhism with the rise of Pure Land liturgy.<sup>59</sup> In Misaki’s view, in other words, Annen’s Tendai-esoteric synthesis, which I call “Lotus-Esoteric discourse,” is understood in inverse relation to Pure Land Buddhism, as its opposite. To clarify the kind of esoteric, or *kenmitsu*, Buddhism that Taira suggests played an important role in the development of Pure Land, it is necessary to move beyond Misaki’s dichotomization of Pure Land and Esoteric Buddhism.<sup>60</sup>

To this end, this second part of the chapter emphasizes the mixed nature of Lotus-Esoteric discourse both during and after Annen’s time. Rather than a triumphant story of the purification of the esoteric teachings as they became increasingly segregated from exoteric practices, on the one hand, and magical incantations, on the other, I present a narrative that reveals the ambiguity of the relation between esoteric and non-esoteric practices in the early to mid-Heian period. The first section looks at the reception of new forms of hymn singing transmitted by Ennin as a kind of mantra and demonstrates their incorporation into esoteric ritual. A generation after Annen, hymn singing was to become a central part of Pure Land liturgy, especially the lecture assembly (*kōshiki* 講式) examined below; thus its esoteric reception as mantra provides a compelling example of

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<sup>59</sup> Misaki, *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, p. 107.

<sup>60</sup> Recent research has focused attention on the important relation between esoteric Buddhism and Pure Land. In *Tendai kyōgaku no tanjin*, Ōkubo Ryōshun alludes to this in his preface (p. ii) to the volume. An essay by Kakehashi Nobuaki 梯信暁 therein, “Tendai jōdokyō no tenkai,” examines the role of Tendai esoteric thought in the development of Pure Land Buddhism. Tomabechi Seiichi 苦米地誠一 has examined this topic extensively from the point of view of Shingon. See his 2008 monograph, *Heianki Shingon mikkyō no kenkyū*. I draw on these works in section 2 below.

how Lotus-Esoteric discourse contributed to the formation and spread of Pure Land Buddhism. Moreover, that hymn singing, a mode of performance understood to have a special effect on human audiences, became understood and incorporated as mantra within esoteric rites indicates how the more expansive understanding of Buddhist ritual language that developed within Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the economy of the buddha's body was crucial to the transformation of esoteric ritual into a mode of performance—that is, a kind of ritual for the pleasure not only of Buddhas but of humans as well. In the second section, I examine how Annen's reception of hymn singing as mantra shaped Genshin's discourse on *nenbutsu* in the *Ōjō yōshū* and argue that this contributed to the development of Pure Land liturgies centered on the performance of hymn singing and *nenbutsu* chanting.

As Taira Masayuki has argued, Pure Land Buddhism was crucial to the spread of esoteric Buddhist ideology among the people in the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>61</sup> For Taira, this development marks the origins of the medieval period of Japanese Buddhist history and the formation of the esoteric Buddhist system, or *kenmitsu taisei*. By elucidating its doctrinal and ritual foundations in Lotus-Esoteric discourse, I aim to cast light on the working and articulation of the apparatus that made possible this historical transition from ancient to medieval Buddhism.

## **2.1 Annen's Hymnology: Hymn Singing as Mantra in Initiation Rites and the Transformation of Esoteric Ritual into a Mode of Performance**

After his return to Japan from the Tang in 847, Ennin introduced new vocal styles for chanting *nenbutsu* called the *go'e nenbutsu* 五会念佛. These vocal styles were also

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<sup>61</sup> See Taira, *Nihon chūsei*, ch. 3, “Chūsei ikōki no kokka to Bukkyō” (pp. 75–109).

applied to hymns and featured prominently in a pair of liturgies that Ennin also transmitted from the Tang: the moving-and-sitting samādhi (*hanza hangō sanmai*) of the “Lotus repentance rite” (*Hokke senbō* 法華懺法) and the always-moving samādhi (*jōgyo sanmai*) of “rite for regular practice” (*reiji sahō* 例時作法), which were performed as part of a daylong liturgical program, the former in the morning and the latter in the evening. Misaki has suggested that these rites exemplify a trend toward the increasing segregation of esoteric practices from “exoteric” liturgies as a result of the systematization of the esoteric teachings initiated by Ennin and brought to its apex by Annen. This section, however, will demonstrate that Annen, the exemplary sytematizer of Tendai esoteric doctrine, not only understood Ennin’s hymns, of which he considered *nenbutsu* to be an example, as equivalent to mantra but also even incorporated them into esoteric practice.

The doctrinal basis for Annen’s reception and use of hymn singing as mantra is located in Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the economy of the buddha’s body. In part 1, we looked at how Annen’s economic buddhology revealed the infinite extent of the Dharma body’s preaching. We noted how this contrasted with Kūkai’s understanding of the Dharma body’s preaching as limited in its reach to the inner realm of his self-realization. One important consequence, doctrinally speaking, of Annen’s expansion of Kūkai’s economic theory of the buddha’s body is the idea that all things and beings are in fact, as Annen puts it in his *Bodai shingishō* cited above: “instruments of the Mahāvairocana’s self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma.”<sup>62</sup> This idea suggests that even unenlightened ordinary beings can, from an esoteric standpoint, be understood as manifestations of the Dharma

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<sup>62</sup> T 2397, 75:508c14–20. See above.

body. Within this framework, all things possess a secret esoteric significance. This view underpins Annen's taxonomy of the esoteric teachings as well as his interpretation of Tendai ritual practice.

Annen's taxonomy of the esoteric is an extension of a twofold classificatory system introduced by Ennin. In his taxonomy, Ennin distinguishes two types of esoteric teachings: those that contain only the principle of esoteric Buddhism (*rimitsu* 理密) and those that reveal both its principle and practice (*riji gumitsu* 理事俱密). Thus, according to this taxonomy, the perfect teaching of the *Lotus* and the teachings of esoteric scriptures such as the *Mahāvairocana Sutra* are both classified as esoteric in principle (*rimitsu*); however, because only the latter preaches the methods for the practice of the mysteries of the inner realization of the Tathāgata, only it is given the special designation of esoteric in principle and practice (*riji gumitsu*). In other words, both are esoteric, but only the latter is esoteric in practice. Annen's taxonomy similarly establishes the *Lotus Sutra* as a kind of "second-class" esoteric teaching. Using the Commentary to the *Dari Jing*, Annen characterizes the *Lotus Sutra* as an "abbreviated explanation" (*ryakusetsu* 略説) that illuminates only the principle of esoteric Buddhism. The esoteric scriptures, on the other hand, he designates as "comprehensive explanations" (*kōsestu* 広説) that clarifies both the practice and the principle of esoteric Buddhism.<sup>63</sup>

Annen applies this same kind of hermeneutical operation in his interpretation of Tendai ritual. In fascicle 2 of *Bodaishin gishō*, Annen explains that the two core practices in Tendai Buddhism for *shikan* contemplation, the Ten Vehicles of Contemplation (*jūjō*

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<sup>63</sup> Lucia Dolce has reviewed these taxonomic classifications in her 2006 essay, "Reconsidering," p. 146.

*kanbō* 十乘觀法) and the four samādhis, differ from the three mysteries of the esoteric teachings only in their practice. They share, however, the same significance:

The ten rites of Tendai are a vehicle and thus serve as a method of practice for the practitioner of the perfect teachings, while the three mysteries of Shingon serve as the method for the practice of Shingon.<sup>64</sup> The Rite of the Fourfold Samādhi of Tendai is called the Discipline of the Body, the Discourse of Speech, and the Contemplation (*shikan*) of the Mind. These have the same significance as the Three Mysteries. Only the character of their practice is different. In Shingon, moreover, there are [the practices for] the mind of enlightenment and the nonarising with conformity in the way and love of the Dharma. These have the same name and significance as the Ten Vehicles. Only the character of their practice is different.<sup>65</sup>

This view becomes further developed by later Tendai commentators after Annen.<sup>66</sup>

Annen's doctrine that all things, including even ritual practices, have an esoteric significance allowed him, as a practitioner and interpreter of ritual, to do two things: first, substitute esoteric practices with non-esoteric practices in esoteric ritual; second, interpret non-esoteric practices as esoteric in significance. The latter—using esoteric discourse to interpret non-esoteric practices—became important especially for Genshin, as we shall see in the next section. By the medieval period, this multifaceted appreciation of the esoteric within the exoteric produced what Lucia Dolce has called “an ambiguous discourse of compatibility and differentiation.”<sup>67</sup>

This section will demonstrate the ambiguity, or, at least, mixed, nature of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in the late ancient period by examining the multiple ways that hymns

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<sup>64</sup> The ten ways of observing the mind, taught by Tiantai to lead the practitioner to enlightenment.

<sup>65</sup> *T* 2397, 75:492a3–8.

<sup>66</sup> Shōshin 証真 (d.u.), author of *Hokke sandaibu shiki* 法華三大部私記, also cites a similar theory: 四種三昧に真言密教同様の効用を包含するという立場を探るとする. See Misaki, *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, pp. 107–108.

<sup>67</sup> Dolce, “Reconsidering,” p. 158.

were put to use at esoteric rituals during Annen's time and elucidating how he interpreted them as mantra. The first subsection will examine Annen's commentary on the use of hymns as a dharma transmission seal (*denbōin*), which traditionally comprised a mantra and accompanying mudra, for *ācārya* initiation rites into the practice of the Womb Realm. The second subsection will focus on Annen's interpretation of a specific hymn called the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms (*shichisan* 四智讚) as mantra within the practice of the Inner Four Offerings (*uchi no shikuyō* 内四供養), which was an important part of initiation rites into the practice of the Diamond Realm.

Annen's most extensive discussions of esoteric ritual appear in a set of three commentarial works on dharma transmission rites based on each of the three categories of mandala: the *Taizōkai daihō taijuki* 胎藏界大法対受記 (Records of the Transmission of the Great Rites of the Womb Realm; hereafter, *Taizōkai taijuki*), *Kongōkai daihō taijuki* 金剛界大法対受記 (Records of the Transmission of the Great Rites of the Diamond Realm; hereafter, *Kongōkai taijuki*), and the *Soshitsuji taijuki* 蘇悉地对受記 (Records of the Transmission of *Susiddhi*).<sup>68</sup> The first two collections, the *Taizōkai taijuki* and the *Kongōkai taijuki*, in particular, amply document the use of hymns at esoteric rituals and offer insight into Annen's interpretation of their significance and function. Using these two sources, this section will examine a central mantra in dharma transmission rites within esoteric lineages and demonstrate how it evolved into a musically arranged form of hymn singing sometime after Enchin's return from Tang China in Ten'an 天安 2 (858). This substitution of hymns for mantra signals a

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<sup>68</sup> *Taizōkai daihō taijuki* (T 2390); *Kongōkai daihō taijuki* (T 2391); *Soshitsuji taijuki* (T 2392). On the threefold system of mandala in Tendai esotericism, see Hunter, "Faquan's Transmission."

fundamental transformation in both the theory and practice of ritual language in late ancient Buddhism. The hymn, for Annen, in contradistinction to mantra, was a medium of ritual language that moved the hearts of people. By thus associating the two, he articulates a new conception of esoteric ritual language as a mode of performance—that is, a medium for entertaining both buddhas and humans. In this sense, Annen’s ritual hermeneutics opens up the possibility of a kind of performance that is both “esoteric” and “exoteric”: at once, a secret revelation of the Mahāvairocana’s inner joy and wisdom and a performance of this revelation in a manner that can be understood and enjoyed by ordinary people.

### 2.2.1 The Dharma Transmission Seal for Womb Realm *Ācārya* Initiation Rites

In both his *Taizōkai* and *Kongōkai taijuki* commentaries, Annen devotes considerable attention to investigating the history of the dharma transmission seal for *ācārya* initiation rites (*ajari kanjō* 阿闍梨灌頂) based on the Womb Realm tradition.<sup>69</sup> Fascicle 7, section 186 of the *Kongōkai taijuki*, “On the Proper Method for Mindful Chanting” (*shōnenju no hō* 正念誦法), provides his most extensive treatment. Annen frames his discussion with a story of the third son of Emperor Heizei, Prince Takaoka 高岳親王 (Buddhist name Shin’nyo 真如; 799–865) and his attempts to acquire the dharma transmission seal for the Womb Realm *ācārya* initiation first from the Tendai priest and esoteric master Ennin 円仁 (794–864) and then the Shingon priest Shinzei 真濟 (800–860):

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<sup>69</sup> This section draws on Mizukami Fumiyo’s discussion of Annen’s theory of hymns in *Taimitsu shisō keisei no kenkyū*. See Part III, Chapter 1, pp. 363–389.



When the Great Teacher of Compassion and Enlightenment [Ennin] received his order to return from the Tang, the Third Prince of Heizei asked him, “For the three groups [of Buddha, Padma, and Vajra in the Womb Realm] are there seals for dharma transmission?” The Great Teacher [Ennin] replied, “As for the substance of this Path, it is not permitted to preach it to those who have not yet acquired the *sanmaya* precepts.” The Prince’s wish to receive [the dharma transmission seal] was thus [also] rejected by the Archbishop of Ki [Shinzei]. As a result, the Prince expressed his intention to go to the Tang. In his request, he said, “In the commentaries [for Womb Realm initiation rites], there are texts [i.e., mantras] for each of the *ācārya* for each group. However, Kūkai used only “Nowhere that is Not Reached” as his dharma transmission seal. This is the seal for the category of the Buddha. Why are there not dharma transmission seals for the other two groups [of Padma and Vajra]?”<sup>70</sup>

Rhetorically, in the context of Annen’s commentary, this story—of an imperial son so intent on obtaining a particular dharma transmission seal that he traveled to Tang China to acquire it—underscores the critical value of this seal and its significance for not only monastics on Mount Hiei but also members of the imperial court in the capital. The prince, who was ordained in the Shingon school, astutely points out an inconsistency in the use of dharma transmission seals for Womb Realm *ācārya* initiation rites: Why, for initiation into the practice of the Womb Realm, would Kūkai use only the Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached (i.e., the dharma transmission seal for the Buddha group of that realm), when in that realm there are two other groups (the Padma and Vajra), each with its own mantra? In other words, why would Kūkai not have handed down a dharma transmission seal for each of the groups in the Womb Realm? Unable to accept that the Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached was not paired with other seals corresponding to the other two groups, the prince traveled to the Tang in Jōgan 4 貞觀 (862) in search of a

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<sup>70</sup> T 2391, 75:189a1–a15. *Kundoku* for this and subsequent citations by Mizukami; see *Tendai shisō keisei*, ch. 4, sec. 5.

dharma transmission seal for the Womb Realm *ācārya* initiation rites that was more consonant with the realm's structure.

In his commentary on this story, Annen asserts that the monks Enchin 円珍 (814–891) and Shuei 宗叡 (809–884)—who studied in the Tang after Ennin—introduced the kind of seal about which Prince Takaoka had queried Ennin:

Later, the Great Teacher of Compassion and Enlightenment [Ennin], for a dharma-transmission [rite] for the conferral of office, also used [the Seal of] Nowhere that is Not Reached without [the seals for] the other two groups. Later, Archbishop [Shu]ei, under Priest [En]chin, received the [rite] for rank-conferral and went to the Tang [in 863]. When he returned [in 865], he told Lord Taka[muko] [Tankei], “*Ācārya* in the Tang also add another dharma transmission seal. It resembles the Seal [i.e., the mantra] for the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms.” This indicates that there are differences between Enchin and Shuei. Later, when Priest Enchin conferred a dharma transmission to Kanchūin [Henjō], he first conferred the [Seal] of Nowhere that is Not Reached and then conferred the Seal of the Preaching of the Three Bodies. This Seal of the Three Bodies is also known as the Seal for the Dharma Transmission of the Three Categories. In the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 8<sup>th</sup> year of Gangyō (884), Chūin [Henjō] gave two people, [Yui]shu and [An]nen, the Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached and the Seal of the Preaching of the Three Bodies for a Womb Realm initiation rite for conferral of the rank of *ācārya*.<sup>71</sup>

In this passage, Annen unfolds two important revelations about the dharma transmission seal for Womb Realm *ācārya* initiation rites. Taken in chronological order: the first is that Enchin added the Seal of the Preaching of the Three Bodies (*sanshin seppō no in* 三身說法印), which fits Prince Takaoka's supposition of a mantra for each of the three groups in the Womb Realm. For evidence that Enchin used this seal, Annen cites a dharma transmission Enchin gave to Henjō 遍昭 (816–890), the renowned waka poet and Tendai monk who was Annen's primary teacher. He identifies the seal as the Seal for the

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<sup>71</sup> T 2391, 75:189a1–15.

Dharma Transmission of the Three Categories (*sanbu denbō no in* 三部伝法之印) and attests to having received this seal along with the Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached in an initiation from Henjō in 884. The second, related to Annen by Tankei 湛契 (817–881), one of Annen’s most important teachers,<sup>72</sup> is Shuei’s claim that esoteric masters in China use a dharma transmission seal whose mantra resembles the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms (*shichisan* 四智讚). This passage thus indicates that Annen was particularly interested in a seal that, on the one hand, was composed of three elements that each correspond to one of the three parts of the Womb Realm mandala and, on the other, was sung as a hymn. With respect to Annen’s theory of hymns, or hymnology, it indicates his interest in establishing precise ritual functions within an esoteric doctrinal structure for the practice of singing hymns at esoteric initiation rites. The particular appeal of hymns for Annen is not made clear in this passage, however. The *Taizōkai taijuki* provides another account, which sheds light on how Annen understood hymns as distinct from mantra.

The *Taizōkai taijuki* provides the same information as the above but frames it within a broader investigation about a dream Annen had of Ennin, under whom he is known to have studied at a young age, but perhaps too young to receive any direct teachings from the eminent monk.<sup>73</sup> Annen’s dream appears twice in the *Taizōkai taijuki*: first in the introduction and then later in fascicle 6 in his analysis of the Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached, the dharma transmission seal for Womb Realm *ācārya* initiation rites. As this dream is suggestive of the ways that Annen imagined the power of singing

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<sup>72</sup> See Groner, “Annen,” pp. 134–36.

<sup>73</sup> Although Annen studied under Ennin for several years, it is not likely that he received any direct transmissions before the latter’s death in 864 when Annen was only twenty-four. See Groner, “Annen,” p. 131.

hymns at esoteric rituals, let us begin by looking at his first citation of the dream in the introduction before proceeding to Annen's discussion of a hymn that could be used as mantra.

Annen's introduction (fascicle 1) carefully attests to his initiation into all major esoteric rites. It also describes his reception of all essential esoteric ritual manuals for the practice of these rites, especially those composed by the Chinese esoteric master Faquan, who was teacher to three Japanese monks who traveled to the Tang, Ennin, Shuei, and Enchin. As part of his documentation of these initiations, Annen includes a dream transmission from Ennin, in which the elder monk reveals the dharma transmission seal for the Womb Realm:

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the same month [6<sup>th</sup> month of Gangyō 元慶 6 (882)], I dreamt that night that the Great Teacher of Compassion and Enlightenment [Ennin] transmitted [the rite] of the Womb Realm and conferred the dharma transmission seal.<sup>74</sup>

Annen then reports that on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month of Gangyō 7 (883), he received the mantra for the Womb Realm and the Śakyamuni dharma transmission seal from Henjō and states that this matched the oneiric transmission from Ennin.

In fascicle 6, under item 243, entitled "Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached," Annen provides a more exhaustive account of this dream. It is preceded by a slightly different version of the story about Prince Takaoka's search for the Womb Realm dharma transmission seal that also appears in the *Kongōkai taijuki* and is cited above.

Immediately following this story, Annen describes his own initiation into this rite (rather than, as he does in the *Kongōkai taijuki* account, citing Enchin's Preaching of the Three Bodies mantra and Tankei's statement about an alternative that resembles a hymn). He

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<sup>74</sup> T 2390, 75:54b3–5.

provides further information about his transmission from Henjō in Gangyō 6 (882) that he first mentions in fascicle 1.<sup>75</sup> He notes specifically that he received the rite along with Henjō's son, Soshō 素性 (ca. 859–923):<sup>76</sup>

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Gangyō 6, Annen, along with the venerable Yūshō [Soshō], at the head of the river, again received the Great Rite of the Womb Realm from Supernumerary Archbishop Great Priest Henjō.<sup>77</sup>

Both Henjō and his son Soshō were renowned waka poets. In the *Kana* Preface to the *Kokin wakashū* (hereafter, *Kokinshū*), Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 recognizes Henjō as one of the six poetic geniuses.<sup>78</sup> Henjō was also admired for his beautiful voice and ability to chant sutras and *dhāraṇī*, as described in a tale about a romantic encounter with Ono no Komachi in *Yamato monogatari* 大和物語.<sup>79</sup> Sōshō is also well-represented in the *Kokinshū* with thirty-six poems, fourth-most in the entire collection. Later generations of waka poets in the mid-Heian period ranked him as one of the thirty-six poetics geniuses.

While Annen does not make any mention of poetry recitation or hymn singing in the initiation rite presided over and attended by two of the most renowned waka poets of

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<sup>75</sup> T 2390, 75:54a15–16. Annen goes on to note that his teacher Henjō studied with Ennin's disciple An'ne because of a dream in which Ennin stated that he should do so. Other sources state that Ennin directed Anne to teach Henjō in his will. This indicates Annen's interest in dreams of dharma transmission. See Groner, "Annen," p. 132; Mizukami, "*Taizōkai daihō taijuki*."

<sup>76</sup> Groner identifies Yūshō 由性 as the older brother of Soshō 素性. See Groner, "Annen," 149–50. Mochizuki, however, identifies Yūshō as another name for Soshō and refers to the older brother as one Hironobu 弘延 (d.u.). Mochizuki 1963, 3154c. Soshō is also mentioned in the *Yamato monogatari*, pp. 340–41. For a translation, see Tahara 1980, pp. 122–123. In the *Kokinshū*, approximately one-fourth of his poems are love poems. Many of these are written from a woman's perspective. McCullough, *Brocade by Night*, pp. 371–75, 452–59.

<sup>77</sup> T 2390, 75:100b16–17.

<sup>78</sup> *Kokinshū*, p. 26.

<sup>79</sup> NKBT 9: pp. 339–40. For a translation, see Tahara, *Tales of Yamato*, pp. 117–22. See also Groner, "Annen," p. 149. Sensuality of the voice is here associated with amorous affairs with women.

his day, he explains in the next section of the text that the night after the initiation, he had a dream in which he imagined precisely this possibility. In the dream, which, as we saw above, he first mentions in passing in fascicle 1, Annen receives the Great Rite of the Womb Realm (*taizō no daihō* 胎藏大法)—the initiation for the rank of *ācārya*—directly from Ennin. He explains in careful detail the mudra that Ennin taught him, but it is the image of his old teacher chanting a hymn (*san* 讚) in a wondrous and beautiful melody (*kyokuchō* 曲調) that leaves the strongest impression:

That night, I saw the Great Teacher of Compassion and Enlightenment [Ennin]. He was at the first seat on the west side in the central space of the lecture hall on Mount Hiei. Annen was at the third seat at the southern head. One other priest received the Great Rite with me. The Great Teacher then taught me [this Great Dharma] [elided: detailed description of the mudra]. The Great Teacher then faced the northern door and left. He chanted a hymn. Its melody was beautiful and wondrous, but I am not able to recall it.<sup>80</sup>

Annen's oneiric transmission from Ennin indicates his interest in the possibility of singing hymns set to melody at esoteric rites of initiation. To what extent this was informed by the initiation he received from Henjō along with Soshō earlier that day is not clear from Annen's description of the rite. Annen, however, does tell us in the passage that follows that his teacher Henjō did recognize his dream transmission from Ennin as equivalent to an actual transmission.<sup>81</sup>

In the next passage, Annen mentions that three months later, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, he had another dream of Ennin. In this dream, he, along with Henjō, participated in an esoteric initiation with Ennin and received from instruction in the

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<sup>80</sup> *T* 2390, 75:100b19–c2.

<sup>81</sup> *T* 2390, 75:100c3–7.

mudra for this rite.<sup>82</sup> After the second dream, he reports both to his teacher Henjō, who then confirms the authenticity of the transmission:

Later, Annen reported the above dreams to the Great Priest [Henjō]. The Great Priest said, “You have attained a dream transmission that matches an actual transmission. You have truly comprehended the acceptance of the dharma and the illumination of the mind.”<sup>83</sup>

Henjō’s confirmation of Annen’s dream transmission from Ennin suggests that he, too, accepts the use of hymns for *ācārya* initiation rites.

It is at this juncture that Annen finally turns to Tankei’s statement that Shuei knew of the use of another dharma transmission seal that resembles a hymn:

According to the Governor of Sanuki [Tankei], long ago, when Archbishop Shō [Shuei] returned from the Tang, he said, “There is another seal for the dharma transmission for the rank of *ācārya*. It resembles the seal for the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms.” Annen later asked [Shuei’s] disciples. Some said there was such a thing. Others said there was not.<sup>84</sup>

Annen’s citation of Tankei’s statement here, in the context of an investigation into his dream of Ennin singing a hymn at a Womb Realm rite, suggests his desire to discover a kind of dharma transmission seal for initiation rites that could be sung like a hymn to a melody (*kyokuchō* 曲調).

In the *Kōngōkai taijui* and *Taizōkai taijuki* accounts, as he analyzes the dharma transmission seal for Womb Realm *ācārya* initiation rites, Annen highlights differences first between Ennin and Enchin and then between Enchin and Shuei. First, Enchin, in contrast to Ennin before him, added the Seal of the Preaching of the Three Bodies to the Seal of Nowhere that is Not Reached, the seal used by Kūkai and which Prince Takaoka

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<sup>82</sup> T 2390, 75:100c8–24.

<sup>83</sup> T 2390, 75:100c24–26.

<sup>84</sup> T 2390, 75:100c26–28.

found inconsistent with the structure of the Womb Realm. Second, in contrast to Enchin, Shuei imported, according to Annen's teacher Tankei, a seal for Womb Realm initiation rites that resembled a hymn called the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms. The difference between Enchin and Shuei are given particular attention in the *Kongōkai taijuki* account.

Enchin and Shuei studied under the same esoteric master, Faquan 法全 (d.u.), at the same temple, Qinglongsi 青龍寺, in China and imported the same ritual commentary by that master, the Qinglongsi recension of Faquan's ritual commentary. For Annen, it is remarkable that two monks, who studied under the same teacher in China with a separation of only a few years, should have imported a different dharma transmission seal for such a centrally important rite. There may however be another reason why Annen is intrigued by Shuei's reference to a hymn-like dharma transmission seal. This is suggested by his dream in which he hears Ennin singing a hymn as part of a Womb Realm rite. In light of this dream, it can be inferred that Annen was interested not only in an inconsistency or discrepancy a dharma transmission seal but rather in the specific possibility of using hymn singing as a medium for teaching and practicing the esoteric teachings.<sup>85</sup>

### 2.2.2 The Hymn to the Four Wisdoms

The Hymn to the Four Wisdoms, mentioned in both the *Taizōkai* and *Kongōkai taijuki* by Tankei citing Shuei's statement about a hymn-like dharma transmission seal, figures prominently in other discussions of hymn singing in esoteric rites in both of Annen's dharma transmission records. In these works, this hymn, more than any other, is

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<sup>85</sup> This point is overlooked by Mizukami in his extended analysis of Annen's commentary on the dharma transmission seals used by Ennin, Enchin, and Shuei. See *Taimitsu shisō keisei no kenkyū*, p. 375.



explicitly characterized as a kind of mantra, or *dhāraṇī*.<sup>86</sup> In section 892, “Seal for [the Offering of] Holy Water” (*aka no in* 關伽印) in fascicle 8 of *Kongōkai taijuki*, for example, Annen refers to the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms as the “Vajra Hymn” and analyzes its function in the Diamond Realm based rite of the “Inner Four Offerings” as a *dhāraṇī*:

The *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* states, “Perform offerings to the tathāgatas and assemblies in the Vajra group and form the Karma Mudra and Samādhi. Make offerings in this way and chant the Vajra Hymn as a *dhāraṇī*. As part of the Rite of the Four Secret Offerings, chant this *gāthā*:

By virtue of Vajrasattva’s embrace,  
We attain the unsurpassed treasure of Vajra.  
By singing and reciting Vajra words,  
We pray for the fulfillment of the supreme act of Vajra.<sup>87</sup>

[This hymn along with] the Vajra Dance, [Vajra] Prayer, and Vajra Merriment constitute the Secret Offering Rites.<sup>88</sup>

The *Sutra Abridged for Recitation*, or the *Sutra for Recitation Abridged from the Vajrasākhara Yoga* (4 fascicles), composed and translated by Vajrabodhi 金剛智 (671–741), provides the first citation of what came to be known as the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms.<sup>89</sup> The “translation,” or compilation rather, by his disciple Amoghavajra 不空

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<sup>86</sup> The distinction between mantra and *dhāraṇī* is fluid and differs depending on the interpreter. In the case under examination here, for example, the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms is described as a *dhāraṇī* in Vajrabodhi’s *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* and as a mantra in the corresponding passage of Amoghavajra’s translation, or compilation as it were, of the same text. For Amoghavajra’s citation, see *T* 865, 18:223b12–13.

<sup>87</sup> There are various interpretations of the meaning of this hymn. My translation is based on the interpretation put forward in Sakauchi Ryūō 坂内龍雄, *Shingon darani*, p. 125.

<sup>88</sup> *T* 2391, 75:198c25–199a5. Annen used the six-fascicle recension of the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation*. The above passage corresponds more or less to the following passage in recension of the sutra included in the Taishō canon: *T* 867, 18:253b17–23.

<sup>89</sup> *T* 866, 18:248c6–8. A slightly different version of the hymn is cited later in the text; *T* 866, 18:253b20–21. *Sutra for Recitation Abridged from the Vajrasākhara Yoga*, Ch. *Jingangding yujia zhong*

三藏 (705–774) of the same text<sup>90</sup> gives a Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit. Both texts describe this hymn as a *dhāraṇī* or mantra. Amoghavajra’s text, however, is perhaps more explicit, calling it the Mantra of Adamantine Poetry Recitation (*kongō kaei shingon* 金剛歌詠真言).<sup>91</sup>

The *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* instructs the practitioner to chant the Vajra Hymn as part of the Rite of the Four Secret Offerings, more commonly known as the Inner Four Offerings (*uchi no shikuyō* 内四供養). With the complementary Outer Four Offerings (*ge no shikuyō* 外四供養), they together comprise the Eight Offerings (*hachi kuyō* 八供養). The Eight Offerings is a practice based on the Diamond Realm mandala. It re-enacts the economy of the joy and wisdom of the five buddhas in the center of that realm—namely, Mahāvairocana, Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi.

Scriptural sources diverge in their characterization of the Inner and Outer Four Offerings. Vajrabodhi’s *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* and Amoghavajra’s treatise on the divinities of the Diamond Realm, *Essentials of the Thirty-Seven Honored Ones Abridged for the Yoga of the Vajraśekhara* (hereafter, *Essentials of the Vajraśekhara*)<sup>92</sup> provide two authoritative but conflicting accounts. In his analysis of the Inner Four Offerings in his commentary on the *Vajraśekhara Sutra*, the *Kongōchō daikyō ōkyō so* 金剛頂大教王

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*luechu niansong jing* 金剛頂瑜伽中略出念誦經, Jp. *Kongōchō yuga chū ryakujutsu nenju kyō*. Abbrev. *Ryakushutsu kyō*. T 866, 18:233–53.

<sup>90</sup> Jīngāngdīng yīqiè rú lái zhēnshí shè dàshèng xiānzhèng dàjiāowáng jīng 金剛頂一切如來真實攝大乘現証大教王經. T 865.

<sup>91</sup> T 865, 18:223a25.

<sup>92</sup> Jp. *Kongōchō yuga ryakujutsu sanjūshichizon shinyō* 金剛頂瑜伽略述三十七尊心要. Abbrev. *Konchōchō shin’yō*. T 871, 18:291–97.

經疏, Ennin points out that the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* classifies Vairocana's act of offering to the four buddhas as Outer Offerings, whereas the *Essentials of the Vajraśekhara* states the opposite. In both texts, this act of offering is carried out by four bodhisattvas emanated by Vairocana Buddha—namely, Vajra Joy 嬉 (Vajralāsyā), Vajra Garland 鬘 (Vajramālā), Vajra Song 歌 (Vajragītā), and Vajra Dance 舞 (Vajranṛtyā).

Ennin's analysis focuses on the interpretation of these four bodhisattvas:

These Bodhisattvas [of Joy 嬉, etc.] are transformations emanated by Vairocana. Because they make offerings within the principle, this is called the Secret Offerings of the Myriad Tathāgatas. However, in the variant manuscript (i.e., the six-fascicle recension of the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation*), these four offerings are called the Vairocana's Outer Offerings [to] the Tathāgatas of the Four Directions. [Amoghavajra's] *Essentials [of the Vajraśekhara]* clarifies these four offerings and calls the above four bodhisattvas the Inner Offerings. Because they are transformations manifested by Vairocana they are called the Inner Offerings. Because they are derived from the act of making offerings to the outer four Buddhas, it is also called the Outer Offerings. These two texts are both based on the same doctrine.<sup>93</sup>

In his characteristic style, Ennin dissolves the contradiction between the two texts by insisting that they are derived from the same basic doctrine: that is, the secret offerings by the four bodhisattvas of Joy, Garland, Song, and Dance. Nonetheless, it is clear that he regards Vajrabodhi's interpretation to be aberrant. To elucidate, then, the Inner Four Offerings as understood by mid-Heian period scholastics such as Ennin and Annen, it will be best to focus on Amoghavajra's interpretation.

In the *Essentials of the Vajraśekhara*, Amoghavajra explains how each of the four bodhisattvas emanate from Vairocana, help facilitate his act of offering to the four

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<sup>93</sup> T 2223, 61:98a15–121.

buddhas, and, in this way, enable the abiding of each in the four moon discs surrounding

Vairocana in the Diamond Realm mandala:

When Vairocana is abiding in the contemplation of the mind of bodhi, thoroughly luminous and perfectly clear, he issues forth various kinds of offerings of joy and adornments. This is the wondrous function of the mind of the great bodhi of the Bodhisattva of Adamantine Joy and Playfulness. [As a result of this function], Akṣobhya Tathāgata abides in the moon disc on the left side of the mandala. . . .

Now when he endows the offering of joy and playfulness, Vairocana issues forth from his inner mind the Adamantine Treasure and Garland [Bodhisattva] who decorates its body and performs adornments by gathering and using myriad treasures. This [act of] collecting treasures perfectly fills [everything] with light and virtue and satisfies the five kinds of prayer practice. [As a result], Ratnasambhava Tathāgata abides in the moon-disc on the left side of the mandala in the southern direction. . . .

After the offering of the Treasure Garland, then Vairocana issues forth from his inner mind the expedient means of great compassion, abiding in the mind of *samādhi*, he utters songs, hymns, and rhapsodies and having enjoyed the offering, he attains sixty-four kinds of Brahma sounds, and abides in unobstructed preaching of the Dharma. His sound is pure and elegant and pleases the assembly, and, with flutes, he makes offerings. This is thus to perform Buddhist services by means of sound and voice. He expounds on the benefits of the dharma and his body is, of itself, as a condensation of suchness, empty—it is the purity of the Dharma Realm. This is the wisdom of language of the offering of the Bodhisattva of the Vajra Song. [As a result], Avalokiteśvara Tathāgata abides in the moon disc on the left side of the mandala. . . .

Although he has performed poetry recitation, he has not yet obtained spiritual powers. Therefore, Vairocana issues forth from within his inner mind the deeds of the Tathāgata and the deeds of sentient beings and makes offerings of all kinds of Skillful Wisdom and Self-Bound Wisdom. He forms the Vajra Dance Gesture and, through great ritual acts, manifests the great spiritual powers and performs Buddhist services by means of wondrous dance and adornments. He makes offerings as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River to the finely particulated Buddha fields and passes through and leaves the gate of *samādhi* with obstruction. This is the wondrous functioning of the Bodhisattva of the Vajra Dance. [As a result], Amoghasiddhi Tathāgata abides in the moon disc on the left side of the

mandala ... The foregoing is the Inner Offering of the Four Bodhisattvas.<sup>94</sup>

According to Amoghavajra, Mahāvairocana issues forth from his inner enlightenment four kinds of offerings of bliss (*tekietsu* 適悦) and adornment (*shōgon* 莊嚴) that constitute the function (*yō* 用), or action, of four kinds of bodhisattvas. These bodhisattvas, in their performance of these functions, enable the abiding of the four Buddhas.<sup>95</sup> Amoghavajra calls this action of the four bodhisattvas emanated by Mahāvairocana out of his enlightenment the Inner Offerings 内供養. While interpretations of the Inner Four Offerings varied in the Heian period, at least one mid-Heian period commentator explicitly characterizes the Inner Four Offerings as a kind of “self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma.”<sup>96</sup>

The passage from the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* cited by Annen above closely identifies the Vajra Hymn with the practice of the Inner Four Offerings. Because these Inner Four Offerings are understood to be the act through which each of the four buddhas that personify the four wisdoms of the Mahāvairocana are empowered to abide in the moon discs surrounding him, the Vajra Hymn came to be known by later commentators such as Annen as the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms. While Annen, like Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra, was interested in this hymn as mantra or *dhāraṇī*, he also calls special attention to the fact that it is in Chinese:

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<sup>94</sup> *T* 871, 18:294a–b.

<sup>95</sup> Acala 不動 (or Akṣobhya 阿闍), Ratnasambhava 宝生, Lokêndra Rāja 觀自在王 (or Amitābha 阿弥陀), and Amoghasiddhi 不空成就.

<sup>96</sup> Chōen 長宴 (1016–1081), for example, in fascicle 4 of the *Shijū jōketsu* 四十帖決 makes such a claim. See *T* 2408, 75:859b14.

Now, I state that the line in the sutra, “Perform the Four Secret Offerings by chanting the Vajra Hymn as a *dhāraṇī*,” means that we should perform the Four Offerings by using the Seal for the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms. As per [the protocol described in] *One Letter [Ritual] Protocol [for Becoming a Buddha Through Recitation, Anytime, Anywhere, by the Yoga of the One-Syllable Wheel-Turning Ruler from the Vajrasekhara]*, [chant] this *gātha*.<sup>97</sup> This [however] is a hymn in Tang language (*tōgo* 唐語). [It, along with] the Vajra Dance, Prayer Gesture, and Merriment make up the Four Inner Offerings.<sup>98</sup>

In his analysis of *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* statements on the performance of the Inner Four Offerings, Annen identifies the Vajra Hymn as the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms and specifies that, in contrast to other citations of this hymn in such texts as the *One Letter Protocol*, it should be chanted in the Tang language (*tōgo* 唐語)—that is, Chinese. In this passage, then, Annen asserts that to chant this hymn in Chinese is equivalent to chanting a *dhāraṇī*: like *dhāraṇī*, it also, along other forms of liturgical performance such as dance and song, has the power to evoke the originary buddhic act of the Inner Four Offerings.

What is at stake for Annen in substituting hymn singing for mantra? In section 181, “Offerings for All Directions,” (*zuihō kuyō* 隨方供養) in fascicle 6 of his *Kongōkai taijuki*, Annen stresses the specificity of hymn-*qua*-hymn. Therein, he elaborates on the method for chanting, or rather, singing, hymns such as the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms. He begins by citing Vajrabodhi’s explanation in the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* of how to chant two hymns that he calls the Vajra Words (*kongō gonshi* 金剛言詞) and Vajra

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<sup>97</sup> Ch. Jingangdingjing yizi dinglunwang yujia yiqie shi chu niansong chengfo yigui 金剛頂經一字頂輪王瑜伽一切時處念誦成佛儀軌, Jp. Kongōchōkyō ichiji chōrinō yuga issai jisho nenju jōbutsu giki. T 957, 19:324a4–b18. Hereafter, One Letter Protocol.

<sup>98</sup> T 2391, 75:199a5–a8.

Speech (*kongō gogon* 金剛語言), respectively. The former corresponds to the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms:

I state that, after the Sixteen Great Offerings [set forth] in the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation*, there is poetry recitation of Vajra Words (*kongō gonshi*). In the chapter on chanting hymns, it states, “In this way, by means of mudra and *dhāraṇī*, perform offerings to the myriad Tathāgatas and the assemblies of the holy Ones. Thus, perform Vajra Words by using this hymn. The poetry recitation (*kaei*) goes thus:

By virtue of Vajrasattva’s embrace,  
We attain the unsurpassed treasure of Vajra.  
By singing and reciting Vajra words,  
We pray for the fulfillment of the supreme act of Vajra.

Next Vajra Speech (*kongō gogon*): with a beautiful and clear voice, sing this. The ode goes thus:

...  
After singing these hymns, if there are other supremely wondrous hymns and odes, these should be sung at the repentance ceremony [after the rite of the Sixteen Offerings]. Regarding the method for recitation of these hymns, at dawn, use the cleansing tone (*sairō’on*), in the afternoon, use the middle tone (*chū’on*), at dusk, use the breaking tone (*ha’on*), in the evening, use the fifth tone to sing these [hymns]. Those who do not understand this should recite these hymns with a clear and pleasant voice.”<sup>99</sup>

After citing the two hymns, the sutra specifies three tones (*on* 音) in which they should be sung at three different times of the day.<sup>100</sup>

In his commentary, Annen first correlates these tones to those practiced in Japan and then underscores their power to give joy and inspire the human heart:

The pure and soft tone is equivalent to the cleansing [tone]. It is a musical melody (*onkyoku*) that is practiced in the Great Tang and is [what we call] the even and gentle tone. The fifth tone is the sixth [and final] note of the five-syllable name of Amida Nenbutsu. In the Hymn to the Pleasing

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<sup>99</sup> T 2391, 75:178c17–179a10. Annen’s citation of the six-fascicle recension of the *Sutra Abridged for Recitation* corresponds roughly to the following passage in the four-fascicle recension preserved in the Taishō canon: T 867, 18:248a6–24.

<sup>100</sup> For more on these tones, see Szczepanski, *Instrumental Music*, pp. 5–7.

Marks of Amida . . . Immediately, by virtue of mindfully listening to the five[-tone] scale, the human heart is inspired. The five[-tone] scale inspires the hearts of people and they receive the blissful joy of the four directions. Receiving blissful joy, when they hear the five[-tone] scale, they awaken to non-arising.<sup>101</sup>

For Annen, singing a hymn in the five-tone scale has the power to move the hearts of people (*jinshin* 人心), give them joy (*kairaku* 快樂), and even guide them to awakening to the truth of non-arising (*mushō* 無生), a core esoteric teaching in both Shingon and Tendai. In this view, joy is not opposed to esoteric wisdom but constitutive of it. This accords with Kūkai's theory of examined above. In contrast to Kūkai, however, Annen is concerned particularly with how esoteric wisdom and joy are received, not by the Mahāvairocana and his inner retinue but rather by human beings. Hymn singing, as an exemplary mode of performance for people as well as buddhas, thus represents the ritual analog to Annen's economic theory of the buddha's bodies in which the Mahāvairocana's substance and function is not cut off from ordinary beings.

Annen then tells the story of how these tones were transmitted, first, from a far-away land to China by the esoteric priest Fazhao 法照 (751–838) and, then, from China to Japan by Ennin:

In the past, when Priest Fadao [Fazhao] of the [Tang] Kingdom went to the Kingdom of Ultimate Joy in his present body, he became adept at hearing the water, birds, trees, and forest. He then transmitted [these sounds] to his kingdom as vocal [styles for reciting] *nenbutsu*. When the Great Teacher of Compassion and Enlightenment [Ennin] went to Mount Wutai, he studied these musical arrangements and transmitted them to Mount Hiei. These are the elongated note, the double note, and the closing note of the *nenbutsu*.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> T 2391, 75:179a20–b1.

<sup>102</sup> T 2391, 75:179b1–5.



Fazhao was a Tang-period priest who propagated a kind of *nenbutsu*, called “five-toned *nenbutsu*” (*go'e nenbutsu* 五会念仏), that was chanted rather than recited. The reference to hearing “the water, birds, trees, and forest” is an allusion to the twelfth contemplation preached by Śakyamuni in the *Sutra of Immeasurable Meaning*<sup>103</sup> in which one is instructed to visualize oneself reborn in the Pure Land:

Visualize this lotus flower as closed; as it opens, five hundred rays of colored light illuminate your body; then your eyes open and you see buddhas and bodhisattvas filling the sky and hear the sounds of the water, birds, and trees, and the voices of the buddhas all expounding the wonderful Dharma in accord with the twelve divisions of the scriptures.<sup>104</sup>

This scriptural allusion stresses the origin of the five-toned *nenbutsu*, imported to China by Fazhao, as the voice of the buddha preaching the Dharma in the Pure Land.

This description of Ennin’s *nenbutsu* is evocative of Annen’s discussions of a panaural preaching that fills the entirety of the Buddhist cosmos. In this case, however, such preaching is carried out by Amitābha rather than the Dharma body. The relation of hymn singing to these notions of panaural preaching also figures prominently in Genshin’s vision of the Pure Land. The above passage suggests Annen’s familiarity with this Pure Land teaching.

Annen credits Ennin for having transmitted these musical arrangements (*onkyoku* 音曲) for *nenbutsu* singing. He then concludes his discussion of hymn singing by specifying the vocal style from the five-toned *nenbutsu* singing technique to be used with which of the hymns that Ennin imported from China, including the Hymn to the Four

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<sup>103</sup> Ch. *Foshuo guan wuliangshou fo jing* 仏説觀無量壽仏經, Jp. *Bussetsu kanmuryō jubutsukyō*. Abbrev. *Kanmuryōjukyō*. T 365, 12:340–46.

<sup>104</sup> T 365, 12:344b16–19. Translation: Inagaki and Stewart, “The Larger Sutra on Amitāyus,” pp. 78–79.

Wisdoms.<sup>105</sup> This operation of correlating the vocal styles of Fazhao's *nenbutsu* with hymns indicates that Annen understood *nenbutsu* as a kind of hymn. In addition, because he associated hymns so closely with mantra, we may infer, moreover, that Annen conceived of *nenbutsu* as mantra. This view of *nenbutsu* as a kind of hymn and, therefore, as a kind of mantra was later further elaborated by Genshin in his *Ōjō yōshū*, as we shall see below.

To sum up, Annen's commentary on Vajrabodhi's explanation of the method for reciting the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms suggests two important points about his theory of hymn singing: first, it was fundamentally shaped by Ennin's transmission of hymn singing and the musical recitation of *nenbutsu* from Tang China to Japan in the mid-ninth century, a generation before Annen's time. This suggests the influence of late Tang esoteric Buddhism on the introduction of hymn singing into esoteric ritual on Mount Hiei in Japan. Second, what interested Annen in particular about hymn singing is its appeal to a human audience. When read in light of Annen's understanding of the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms as a mantra it suggests that what was at stake in Annen's interpretation of hymns as mantras in esoteric rites of offering is nothing less than the transformation of esoteric ritual practice into ritual performance—that is, into a kind of ritual intended for the pleasure of buddhas and humans alike.

### 2.2.3 The Hymn to Original Enlightenment

One of the most important hymns for Annen is also one that came to figure prominently in early medieval Tendai Buddhism. This hymn is the hymn that later came to be known as the Hymn to Original Enlightenment (*hongaku san* 本覺讚). The

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<sup>105</sup> T 2391, 75:179b10–15.

influential Tendai abbot Ryōgen 良源 (912–985) is credited with having composed the first Japanese vernacular rendering of the hymn called the Annotation on the Hymn to Original Enlightenment (*Chū hongaku san* 註本覺讚).<sup>106</sup> In addition, Genshin is credited with the authorship of an extended exegesis on the hymn called the Exegesis on the Hymn to Original Enlightenment (*Hongaku san shaku* 本覺讚釈).<sup>107</sup>

The Hymn to Original Enlightenment appears in the *Lotus Samadhi Sutra* (*Renge zanmai kyō* Ch. *Lianhua sanemei jing* 蓮華三昧經; or the *Myōhō rengo zanmai himitsu sanmaya kyō* 妙法蓮華三昧秘密三昧耶經), which asserts the unity of the Womb and Diamond Realms by unfolding an esoteric interpretation of the *Lotus*.<sup>108</sup> The sutra opens with the eight-line *gāthā* that came to be known as the Hymn to Original Enlightenment:

Mahāvairocana the universally illuminating Bhagavān, playing in the palace of the Dharma Realm, takes self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma along with his assembly of quiescent light. From the Vajra of the Tathāgata Domain to the Womb Realm of Great Compassion, he preaches this *gāthā* of self-realization:

I take refuge in the Dharma body of the mind of original enlightenment,  
Eternally, I abide on the lotus pedestal of the mind of the wondrous Dharma;  
Originally, I am endowed with the virtue of the three bodies.  
The thrity-seven honored ones abide in the domain of the mind.  
The samadhis of universal gates as numerous as particles [in the cosmos]  
Far transcend cause-and-effect and become endowed as the Suchness of the  
Dharma;  
The Limitless Ocean of Merit is originally perfect and fulfilled,

<sup>106</sup> NST 8: pp. 98-99. This hymn is composed in a mix of *kanbun* and a form of *kana* called *senmyōtai* 宣命体 and represents one of the earliest examples of a Japanese-language hymn that later came to be known as “Japanese hymns” (*wasan* 和讚).

<sup>107</sup> Both attributions can be found in the early modern-period historical tract on Tendai Buddhism, the *Tendai kahyō* 天台霞標. While many works have been spuriously attributed to Genshin, attributions in the *Tendai kahyō* are generally more reliable than those made by doctrinal texts under Genshin’s name. See Suzuki Sanai, “San kara wasan e,” p. 115.

<sup>108</sup> *Dai nihon zoku zōkyō* attributes its translation to Amoghavajra. This attribution, however, has been called into question.

Thus, I pay homage to the Buddhas of My Mind.

The sutra introduces the hymn as a “*gāthā* of self-realization” (*jishō ge* 自証偈) that is preached by the Mahāvairocana out of his self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma in his inner palace of the Dharma-realm. The hymn gives praise to the Buddhas that eternally dwell in the mind (*shin* 心). After Annen, this hymn became widely chanted as one of the sacred texts of the Tendai school and is still performed today.

The hymn appears only in the *Lotus Samadhi Sutra*. Recently, Lucia Dolce and others have evaluated this sutra to be an apocryphon produced in Japan. The first citation of this sutra in a source with a confirmed author is in Annen’s writings. After Annen, it became widely cited in Japanese Tendai texts as well as non-Buddhist works as well, and served as one of the key scriptural sources for the development of original enlightenment doctrine. Annen thus seems to have played a key role in the formation and spread of this hymn. To shed light on its origins, it will help then to investigate how Annen “cited” the *Lotus Samadhi Sutra* and its central hymn.

Annen attributes the *Lotus Samadhi Sutra* to Kūkai. In fascicle 5 of the *Bodaishin gishō*, he claims that Kūkai imported this text from Tang China.<sup>109</sup> This is the first instance of this theory of its provenance. There is no evidence in bibliographic catalogues, however, that Kūkai in fact imported this text. The Hymn to Original Enlightenment, moreover, appears only in the variant recension of the *Sokushin jōbutsu-gi*. Though attributed to Kūkai, the authorship of this text is unknown.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> T 2397, 75:541b1–7.

<sup>110</sup> On the differences between the variant recension of *Sokushin jōbutsu-gi* and the recension confirmed to have been authored by Kūkai, which is included in KZ 1:506-520, see Mashiba, “Ihon sokushin jōbutsu ni tsuite.” The variant recension cites the hymn four times, once in each of four fascicles from the fourth to the sixth. See T 77.389a (f.3); 393a (f.4); 397b (f.5); 399c (f. 6).

Among the works we know to have been authored by Annen, the Hymn to Original Enlightenment appears: four times in *Kyōji mondō*,<sup>111</sup> eight times in *Bodai shingishō*,<sup>112</sup> once in *Kyōjisō* 教時諍,<sup>113</sup> and once in *Futsu kōshaku* 普通広釈.<sup>114</sup> Misaki Ryōshū has summarized the gist of what Annen is arguing in these passages. According to Misaki, Annen uses the Hymn to Original Enlightenment as a scriptural source for demonstrating that the mind of sentient beings before and after the aspiration of enlightenment, or *bodhicitta*, at every stage leading to enlightenment, from the first to the last, is endowed with the Thirty-Seven Honored Ones of the Diamond Realm. This interpretation is based on Annen’s reading of Ennin’s commentary on the *Vajrasekhara Sutra*, the *Kongōchō kyō so* 金剛頂經疏, in which Ennin, analyzing a line from Amoghavajra’s translation of this sutra,<sup>115</sup> argues that the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the Diamond Realm mutually traverse (*gosō shōnyū* 互相涉入) and interfuse (*gosō yūnyū* 互相融入) with each other at each stage of the mind’s unfolding from the first stage of ordinary man, or *bonpu* 凡夫, to that of enlightenment, or *kaku’i* 覺位.<sup>116</sup>

As Mizukami Fumiyo has shown, Annen’s “citation” of the Hymn to Original Enlightenment also belongs to his broader hermeneutical strategy of creating corresponding practices and doctrines for the Diamond and Womb Realms. To establish

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<sup>111</sup> T 75.384c; 379a; 426c; 427b (hymn is not named in this last “citation”)

<sup>112</sup> T 75.469c; 470c; 490b (referred to as “a doctrine of the vajrasekhara” *kongōchō shū* 金剛頂宗); 492b (referred to as “vajrasekhara” *kongōchō* 金剛頂), 524c; 525c; 527s; 541b

<sup>113</sup> T 75.355c

<sup>114</sup> T 74.775a

<sup>115</sup> T 18.207c

<sup>116</sup> T 61.29c

the unity of the Womb Realm with teachings of the Lotus, Annen often drew on the revised edition of Yixing's Commentary on the *Darijing*, the *Darijing yishi* 大日經義積, which was imported by Ennin. Yixing trained as a Tiantai monk before becoming a disciple of Śubhakarasiṃha and, in the *Yishi*, presents the Womb Realm as the Pure Land of the Lotus Sutra. As Lucia Dolce has argued, this prefigured the esoterization of the Lotus that took place within the Tendai school in Japan.<sup>117</sup> Yixing's commentary on the *Darijing*, however, does not provide a framework for unifying the Diamond Realm with the Lotus teachings. Thus, to establish this unity and thereby create a parity between the Womb and Diamond Realms in terms of their synthesis with the Lotus, Annen often "cited" the Hymn to Original Enlightenment as an authoritative scriptural source. The following passage from Fascicle Two of the *Bodai shingi-shō* offers an example of how Annen drew, on the one hand, on the commentarial tradition on the *Darijing* to establish the unity of the Lotus with the Womb Realm and, on the other, the Hymn to Original Enlightenment in presenting this same unity with regard to the Diamond Realm:

A: All the bodies in the fourfold altar of the diagram of the mind-state of the equality of all wisdoms, according to the doctrine of the *Darijing*, identically respond throughout the ten realms and four vehicles of all sentient beings. In accordance with that which they desire, [each] attains that fruit. . . . When, in accordance with their own vehicle, they cultivate the rites [of that vehicle], in each of the embryonic hearts of their own mind, they contemplate the Eight-Petal Lotus of Mahāvairocana and, [in so doing], unfold the Real Character of their mind and become a Buddha in this very body . . . The Dharma body of the Mind of Original Enlightenment, according to the Diamond Realm tradition, endows the virtue of the Three Bodies on the Lotus Pedestal of the Mind of the Wondrous Dharma and the Thirty-Seven [Honored Ones] issue forth the Mandala of the Samadhis of the Universal Gate. After completing Self-Bound Joy-in-the-Dharma, they make others receive the Joy of the

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<sup>117</sup> Dolce, "Reconsidering the Taxonomy," p. 148. On Annen's use of the *Yishi* as a complement to the Hymn to Original Enlightenment, see Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō no kenkyū*, pp. 208–14.

Dharma and thus they permeate throughout the Dharma Realm and manifest the Eight Phases of Attaining the Way.<sup>118</sup>

In this passage, Annen draws on the tradition of the *Darijing* to establish the correlation between the “embryonic heart”—or *bodhicitta*—of the sentient being at each stage of the enlightenment process with each of the Buddhas in the eight petals of the lotus flower in the Womb Realm mandala. To establish a parallel between the mind of sentient beings with thirty-seven honored ones of the Diamond Realm, he then presents a paraphrase of the first five lines of the Hymn to Original Enlightenment. He suggests specifically that these lines represent the self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma of the thirty-seven honored ones. His subsequent gloss indicates that he understands the remaining three lines as representing other-bound joy-in-the-Dharma—that is, the way that the buddhas of the Diamond Realm give the joy of the Dharma for the benefit of others and, in so doing, lead them to enlightenment. This passage thus illustrates the way Annen used the Hymn to Original Enlightenment as a scriptural source for elaborating an interpretation of the Diamond Realm that corresponds with how the Womb Realm has been interpreted in commentaries on the *Darijing* from the point of view of the Lotus teachings, or, more specifically, the way in which the Lotus-based interpretation of the Womb Realm reveals the equality of the Buddha’s bodies and their identity with the mind of sentient beings.

Annen’s use of the Hymn to Original Enlightenment reveals that this particular hymn fulfilled a crucial function within his broader hermeneutical strategy to provide an authoritative scriptural basis for synthesizing the practice of the Diamond Realm with the teachings of the Lotus. The hymn, moreover, also distills into eight seven-character lines

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<sup>118</sup> T 75:490b8–26.

two key aspects of his doctrinal thought: first, the equality of the Buddha's bodies and, second, the identity of the mind of the sentient beings with all Buddha-bodies.. The Hymn to Original Enlightenment thus bears the imprints of both Annen's buddha-body theory and his ritual hermeneutics. In light of this fact, the most recent commentator on the *Lotus Samadhi Sutra* and the hymn on which it centers, Mizukami Fumikoshi, has cautiously suggested that, if, as Lucia Dolce and other scholars have shown, this sutra is in fact apocryphal, then there is no better candidate for its authorship than Annen.<sup>119</sup> Of course, this proposal is based on inference and perhaps cannot be demonstrated with certainty. Nonetheless, it is clear from the foregoing that Annen, if not the author of the *Lotus Samadhi Sutra* and its Hymn to Original Enlightenment, played a key role in promoting its use within Tendai Buddhism. This hymn, therefore, perhaps more than any other, provides a paradigmatic example for considering how Annen's buddha-body theory and hymnology was received and further developed by subsequent generations of both Buddhist priests and, as we shall see, waka poets.

## 2.2 Genshin's Hymnology: Hymn Singing as Mantra in the *Ōjō yōshū* and the Development of the Lecture Assembly

By the end of the ninth century, state-supported Buddhism and the social order upon which it was predicated—the system of codes known as *ritsuryō* 律令—began to fall into decline. This left monastic institutions searching for new economic bases, which prompted a new focus on reaching out directly, first, to aristocratic patrons at court and, eventually, to the common people whose land they began to incorporate and manage as

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<sup>119</sup> Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō no kenkyū*, p. 215.



part of their own independent jurisdiction. The form of Buddhism that emerged in this new social context offered to common people and aristocrats alike the promise of rebirth in a pure land called “Ultimate Joy” (*gokuraku* 極樂) and taught a practice called “*nenbutsu*,” which centered on chanting the name of the Amitābha Buddha (Jp. Amida): *Namo Amida Butsu*.

In the early Kamakura period, Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212), a monk of the Tendai school, denounced the form of Buddhism practiced on Mount Hiei as decadent and poorly suited to the needs of people living in the age of the end of the Dharma (*mappō* 末法), and attempted establish his own tradition of Pure Land Buddhism independent of the esoteric Buddhist regime (*kenmitsu taisei*). The form of Pure Land Buddhism that Hōnen preached emphasized simple recitation of *nenbutsu*—that is, without any form of visualization of Amida or knowledge of doctrines concerning the nature of his body and function; it also stressed faith in Amida’s vow to lead all sentient beings into rebirth. By the end of the medieval period, after the formation of Shinran’s True Pure Land sect, Hōnen came to be revered as the first Japanese patriarch of Pure Land (*Jōdo* 浄土, Ch. *Jingtu*) Buddhism.<sup>120</sup> Pure Land is the most widely practiced form of Buddhism in Japan today, with many adherents around the world. Its influence is evident in the modern construction of Buddhist history, especially with regard to an issue of burning importance for sectarian scholars associated with the Pure Land school—namely, the early origins and development of their school in the ninth century.

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<sup>120</sup> On the historical process by which early Kamakura-period figures such as Hōnen, Ippen, and Shinran were made into founders of the Pure Land School, see Christopher Callahan, “Kakunyo.” See also James Dobbins, “Envisioning Kamakura Buddhism,” in *Re-Visioning Kamakura Buddhism*, ed. Robert Payne, pp. 24–38.

Pure Land scholars motivated by a sectarian agenda to legitimize Hōnen's teachings have tended to project Hōnen's form of Pure Land backward in time to the ninth century when a distinct emphasis on *nenbutsu* and rebirth in a pure land came to the fore of the Buddhist world with figures such as Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤 (933–1002) and Genshin 源信 (942–1017), to whom we shall return in a moment. Taira Masayuki, though himself not a sectarian scholar, has similarly been enchanted by the figure of Hōnen. In chapter 2 of his *Nihon chūsei shakai to Bukkyō*, he champions Hōnen as the liberator of the people from the oppressive spell of esoteric Buddhist ideology. In this view, pre-Hōnen Pure Land teachings are understood as complicit with the tyranny of the esoteric Buddhist regime and, therefore, represent nothing more than a new, more effective spell for mystifying the consciousness of the people. The picture of Pure Land Buddhism, even during Hōnen's time, however, is not that simple. The early fourteenth-century text, the *Keiran shūyōshū* 溪嵐拾葉集, for example, delineates four kinds of *nenbutsu*: esoteric, Tendai, Mahāyāna, and that which was introduced by the Chinese Pure Land monk Shandao 善導 (613–681).<sup>121</sup> The situation is perhaps even more complex in the early stages of Pure Land development in the ninth century.

In his 1956 *Nihon Jōdokyō seiritsu-shi no kenkyū*, Inoue Mitsusada identifies the Buddhism developed by Genshin as the precursor to the kind of Pure Land teachings that reached its apex with the appearance of Hōnen and his Pure Land sect in the late twelfth century.<sup>122</sup> According to Inoue, Genshin introduced a kind of Amida worship and

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<sup>121</sup> T 2410, 76:551a–552a. *Keiran shūyōshū*, an compedium of esoteric Tendai information, was compiled by the Tendai monk Kōshū 光宗 (1276–1350).

<sup>122</sup> See chapter 2, “Sekkan seiji no jōjuku to Tendai Jōdokyō no kōki,” pp. 93–168.

*nenbutsu* practice that, on the one hand, is dedicated purely to personal salvation (*jiko kyūsai* 自己救済) and, on the other, purges Pure Land faith of any vestiges of “magic” (*jujutsu* 呪術) that can be traced back to “folk religion” (*minzoku shūkyō* 民俗宗教). As opposed to such folk religion, Genshin’s Buddhism represents the first example of “developed” (*hattatsu shita* 発達した) Pure Land teachings. Inoue’s Hōnen-centric analysis of the origins of Pure Land in Japan is founded on a teleological approach to sectarian history that places Hōnen at its apex; consequently, it excludes from view the important and often complex ways that the Buddhist doctrines and practices of Genshin’s own time shaped his form of Buddhism.

This section will clarify the impact of Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the development of Pure Land Buddhism in the late ninth century. The first part will consider Genshin’s theory of *nenbutsu* in the *Ōjō yōshū* 往生要集 and attempt to elucidate its foundations in Lotus-Esoteric doctrine and ritual. The second will consider two examples of ritual contexts that shaped Genshin’s discourse on *nenbutsu* in the *Ōjō yōshū*: the Nijūgo Zanmai-e 二十五三昧会 (Assembly for the Twenty-Five Samadhis) and the Kangaku-e 勧学会 (Assembly for the Promotion of Learning). Rituals performed by these two bodies are early examples of a new form of liturgy called the lecture assembly (*kō-e* 講会). The lecture assembly featured the use of hymn singing alongside other forms of performance, including dance and music. It thus provides a paradigmatic case for analyzing the process by which modes of performance such as poetry came to be incorporated into the rituals of medieval Buddhism. By examining the doctrinal and ritual foundations for the development of the lecture assembly liturgy, this section will

elucidate the ways in which esoteric Buddhism shaped the ritual uses of poetry and other performing arts in early medieval Japan (tenth through eleventh centuries).

### 2.2.1 Hymn Singing (Nenbutsu) as Mantra in the *Ōjō yōshū*

In the opening lines of the preface to the *Ōjō yōshū*, a voluminous work that presents the first systematic interpretation of *nenbutsu* practice in Japan and which gained widespread popularity among lay aristocrats at court, Genshin invokes the term “*kenmitsu*” to situate the special function and significance of his teachings on rebirth in the Pure Land of Ultimate Joy:

Now, the practice of the teachings for rebirth in [the Pure Land] of Ultimate Joy is the eyes and feet of [i.e., an essential means for guiding] [people living in] this defiled world at the end of times. Among lay and ordained, high and low, who does not take refuge [in this practice]? Yet the rites of the exoteric and esoteric (*kenmitsu*) teachings are not uniform in content. Karmic causes [that determine one’s rebirth] [i.e., Pure Land practice] may be [grounded in either] phenomena (*ji*) or principle (*ri*). Forms of practice are numerous and manifold. For people who are intelligent and diligent, such practices are not difficult. However, why should foolish ones such as myself even attempt them? Thus, for this reason, I have gathered a few essential passages from sutras and treatises about a single gate [of practice called] *nenbutsu*. To examine these [passages] and cultivate [the practices set forth therein] should [help make the Pure Land teachings] easy to understand and easy to practice.<sup>123</sup>

At the outset of his collection, Genshin states his intention to present a form of teaching that even the dull and indolent will find easy to understand and easy to practice. This teaching, he explains, centers on just one form of practice called *nenbutsu* and will help all people achieve rebirth in Amida’s Pure Land. These claims, however, should not be taken at face value. Genshin’s purpose here is rhetorical: to establish his work as a text

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<sup>123</sup> T 2682, 84:33a6–10.

for the people. Thus, after asserting that the esoteric and exoteric, or *kenmitsu*, teachings differ, he adduces two examples of esoteric practice—contemplation based on phenomena and contemplation based on principle—and contrasts them with his easy teaching of *nenbutsu*. This would seem to suggest that such esoteric practices fall outside the purview of his work. Yet this is not the case. Later in his work, Genshin devotes considerable attention to these two practices, even assigning them a superior value to simpler forms of Pure Land practice that center on vocal recitation without any accompanying visualizations or contemplations. We will return to this point below. First, however, let us examine the way that Genshin predicated his exposition of his Pure Land teachings on the basis of both “exoteric” and “esoteric” teachings (*kenmitsu no oshie* 顯密教).

In chapter 3, “Proof of [the Pure Land] of Ultimate Joy,” the interlocutor asks the narrator why he stresses rebirth in Ultimate Joy as opposed to the numerous other pure lands and buddha lands described in the sutras. The narrator, Genshin, explains that this is because “the Great Teacher of Tiantai” (Zhiyi), on the basis of a comprehensive examination of all sutras and treatises in the Buddhist canon, placed special emphasis on rebirth in Ultimate Joy. Genshin then lists twelve exoteric sutras and seven treatises that Zhiyi used to set forth his notions of the Pure Land of Ultimate Joy, many of them closely associated with Pure Land Buddhism today: the *Sutra of Infinite Life* (*Muryōju kyō* 無量壽經), the *Sutra on the Meditation of Infinite Life* (*Kan muryōju kyō* 觀無量壽經), and the *Amida Sutra* (*Amida kyō* 阿彌陀經). He adds that he has also found that a number of Mahāyāna texts such as the “Medicine King” chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* and the Vows of Samantabhadra from the *Flower Garland Sutra* as well as numerous esoteric scriptures

such as the *Sutra of the Dharani of the One-Thousand Armed One* (*Senju darani kyō* 千手陀羅尼經) and the *Sutra of the Infallible Lasso Mantra* (*Fukū kenjaku shinpen shingon kyō* 不空羂索神變真言經), among others, all expound the Pure Land of Ultimate Joy.<sup>124</sup> He concludes: “The teachings of both the exoteric and esoteric singularly recommend Ultimate Joy; there are too many [scriptures] to name here. Thus, I privilege seeking and praying for [rebirth in Ultimate Joy].”<sup>125</sup> Genshin does not reject the esoteric teachings but rather explicitly embraces them as an authoritative source for his teachings on the Pure Land. Thus, he, like Ennin and Annen before him, displays an ambiguous relation to the category of the esoteric.

This ambiguity is evident in chapter 4, “Proper Practice of *Nenbutsu*,” in which he elaborates the contemplation practices based on phenomena and principle that he dismisses in the preface as beyond the capacity of ordinary people. This chapter, which follows three chapters on the perils of hell and the joys of the Pure Land, begins the main portion of the *Ōjō yōshū*: a systematic description of *nenbutsu* practice. However, rather than focusing exclusively on a single kind of easy-to-practice and easy-to-understand *nenbutsu*, Genshin presents five different categories of *nenbutsu* based on the *Treatise on Rebirth* (*Ōjōron* 往生論)<sup>126</sup> by Indian Buddhist scholar Vasubandhu (c. 420–500): *nenbutsu* for worship (*reihai* 礼拝), for singing praise (*santan* 讚歎), for prayer (*sagan* 作願), for contemplation (*kansatsu* 觀察), and for transferring [merit] (*ekō* 廻向). We

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<sup>124</sup> T 2682, 84:46b18–22.

<sup>125</sup> T 2682, 84:46b23. *Sho kenmitsu kyō no naka ni moppara gokuraku o susume, shoukei su bekarazu. Yue ni hitoe ni negaimotomu* 諸顯密教中。專勸極樂不可稱計。故偏願求

<sup>126</sup> Full title: *Gāthās for Rebirth: Treatise on the “Sutra of Infinite Life”* (Ch. *Wuliangshoujing youbotishe* 無量壽經優婆提舍願生偈, Jp. *Muryōjukyō ubadaisha ganshō ge*, Sk. *Sukhāvātīvyūhōpadeśa*);

will look more closely below at *nenbutsu* for singing praise, which corresponds to hymn singing, but first a consideration of *nenbutsu* for contemplation will help to elucidate what Genshin meant by his reference in the preface to rites of the esoteric teaching for rebirth in the Pure Land.

Genshin elaborates three kinds of contemplative *nenbutsu*: for the focused contemplation of the Buddha's marks (*bessō kan* 別相觀), for the comprehensive contemplation of the Buddha's marks (*sōsō kan* 総相觀), and for the simplified contemplation of the Buddha. Under the second category, he delineates two additional categories: contemplation based on phenomena (*jikan* 事觀) and contemplation based on principle (*rikan* 理觀). The rites of the esoteric teachings that Genshin, in the preface, deems too difficult for ordinary people refer precisely to these two categories. Yet he assigns the highest value to the practice he classifies as the most difficult: contemplation based on principle. This practice, Genshin asserts, leads not just to rebirth in Amida's Pure Land but rather to the supreme goal of the Buddhist path, the attainment of Buddhahood. In this sense, it represents somewhat of an anomaly within Genshin's system, at least with regard to his rhetoric in the preface of easy practice for rebirth. It is precisely in this aporetic moment in his text that the Lotus-Esoteric underpinnings of Genshin's Pure Land are revealed most clearly.

Commenting on this aporia, Taira Masayuki has argued that it reveals the two-dimensional, hierarchical structure of Genshin's Pure Land teachings in which there are two distinct kinds of *nenbutsu*: one for experts (*tatsujin* 達人) and another for the masses (*taishū* 大衆). The inclusion of *nenbutsu* for the masses as a lower-grade *nenbutsu*, he suggests, represents the subordination of the popular form of *nenbutsu* spread by Kūya

空也 (903–972) a generation before Genshin within the *kenmitsu* hierarchy. By contrast, the prioritization of contemplative *nenbutsu* for the elite reveals the operation of *kenmitsu* Buddhist ideology that legitimizes the authority of the aristocrat over and above the common person. As proof of Genshin’s disdain for the common person who lacks the focus to practice *nenbutsu*, Taira cites the following passage from the *Ōjō yōshū*, which appears at the end of Genshin’s discussion of *nenbutsu* for simplified contemplation:

If there are those who are incapable of contemplating (*kannen*) the auspicious marks [of Amida], while dwelling on taking refuge in him, on his coming to welcome them, or on their own rebirth, they should single-mindedly call and reflect (*shōnen*) on the Buddha.<sup>127</sup>

Thus, Taira argues that Genshin’s twofold hierarchical organization of *nenbutsu* practice is part of an ideological strategy for bringing people into the fold of the *kenmitsu* system, while, at the same time, marginalizing them as inferior. Within this regime, commoners who chant vocal *nenbutsu* (*shōnen* 称念)—that is, *nenbutsu* without contemplation—never achieve religious independence but rather, by doing so, only become ever more enmeshed in the system. In this way, they become the populist foundation (*minshūteki kiban* 民衆的基盤) of *kenmitsu* Buddhism. Taira’s analysis lays bare the ideological function of Genshin’s twofold system for *nenbutsu* chanting. To show then that such *nenbutsu* were not a kind of magical spell, let us consider the discursive conditions for the formation of this system.

Genshin’s exposition of *nenbutsu* for the contemplation of principle begins by asserting the fundamental identity of Amida with the three bodies of the Buddha: “Let us contemplate in this way: that Buddha [Amida] is the body of the one substance of three

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<sup>127</sup> T 2682, 84:0056b3–5. Translated by Andrews, *Ōjōyōshū*, p. 64.



bodies” (*arui wa masa ni kanzu beshi. Kano butsu kore sanshin ittai no mi nari* 或應觀。彼佛是三身一體之身也).<sup>128</sup> He then goes on to describe how to contemplate each buddha body, emphasizing that each has a particular aspect that is identical with all other buddhas: for the response body, its phenomenal nature (*ji* 事); for the reward body, its mind (*i* 意); and for the Dharma body, its substance (*tai* 體).<sup>129</sup> This emphasis on the identity of the three bodies resonates with the economic buddha body theory of Lotus-Esoteric Buddhist discourse. After elaborating the threefold contemplation of the mutual identity of the three bodies of the Buddha, Genshin reiterates the doctrine of the threefold body of Amida using lines from the classical formulation of the three truths of the empty, the provisional, and the middle from the *Maka shikan* 摩訶止觀 (Ch. *Mohe zhiguan*) by Zhiyi 智顓 (538–597):

Thus, we know: The mutually constituting Buddha marks that we contemplate are the Auspicious Marks and Brilliant Light of the Three Bodies in One (*sanshin soku itchi* 三身即一), the Auspicious Marks and Brilliant Light of the Identical Substance of all Buddhas, the Auspicious Marks and Brilliant Light of the Perfect Fusion of Myriad Merits. Form is emptiness. Therefore, it is called the True Mark of Suchness. Emptiness is form. Therefore, it is called the Auspicious Marks and Brilliant Light. There is no form or scent that is not the Middle Way. Feeling, perception, impulse, and consciousness are also thus. Both the three evil paths in which we exist and Amida’s myriad merits are originally empty, quiescent, and of one substance without obstruction.<sup>130</sup>

Genshin cites a key line from this “core” statement from the preface to the *Maka shikan* composed by Zhiyi’s disciple Guanding 灌頂: “There is no form or scent that is not the

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<sup>128</sup> *T* 2682, 84:55c17.

<sup>129</sup> *T* 2682, 84:55c–56a. For a translation, see Andrews, *Ōjōyōshū*, p. 60.

<sup>130</sup> *T* 2682, 84:56a8–14.

Middle Way.”<sup>131</sup> This line figures prominently in Annen’s writings, appearing five times in his *Bodai shingishō* alone.<sup>132</sup> In these passages, it is associated with the doctrine of the Dharma body’s immanent presence in all things. The following passage in fascicle 3, is a prime example:

Tendai [School] states: “The one thousand suchnesses<sup>133</sup> of the one hundred worlds are called the real marks of the dharmas. This is the realm realized by the buddhas of the three worlds. There is no form or scent that is not the Middle Way.” [And] “Thus, the three karmas [body, speech, and mind] of the three worlds [past, present, and future] of the ten realms are the self-bound [joy] of the Dharma body in the three mysteries [mudra, mantra, and mandala].<sup>134</sup>

This passage appears just after Annen’s discussion of the infinite immanence of the self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma of the Dharma body examined above in section 1.3. In it, Annen predicates Zhiyi’s doctrine that all things are none other than the Middle Way on the esoteric doctrine of the infinite extent of the Dharma body’s self-bound joy and function.

Genshin’s use of Zhiyi’s key statement is similarly predicated on an economical conception of the Dharma body. Genshin, however, frames his citation with the foundational Mahāyāna doctrine at the core of Zhiyi’s doctrine of the three truths—that is,

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<sup>131</sup> T 1911, 46:1c23–25. For *yomikudashi*, see Sekiguchi, *Maka shikan*, vol. 1, p. 24. For the translation, I have also consulted Donner and Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*, pp. 112–13.

<sup>132</sup> T 2397, 75:483a27; 75:485b15; 75:487a9; 75:495a7; 75:509a2.

<sup>133</sup> The thousand “suchnesses,” or characteristics, is a term of the Tiantai school. In each of the ten realms 十界, from Buddha to purgatory, the ten are present, totaling one hundred 百界. These multiplied by the ten categories of existence make a thousand, and multiplied by the three categories of group existence make three thousand. This is an object of Tiantai contemplation called *kan fushigi kyō* 觀不思議境. See Zhiyi’s *Miaofa lianhua jing xuanyi* 妙法蓮華經玄義 (Jp. *Myōhō rengo kyō gengi*); T 1716, 33:693c18.

<sup>134</sup> T 2397, 75:509a1–4.

the nonduality of form and emptiness. The basic premise of his argument is nonetheless similar. Form is emptiness and emptiness is form, he argues, precisely because the substance of the Dharma body is immanent in all phenomena in *samsāra*. Genshin's pairing of Zhiyi's discourse on the middle way with an understanding of the Dharma body's immanence thus bears the imprint of Lotus-Esoteric doctrine not unlike that elaborated by Annen in the *Bodai shingishō*.

Lotus-Esoteric discourse also underpins Genshin's theory of *nenbutsu* for singing praise. The term "singing praise" (*santan* 讚嘆) refers to the liturgical genre of the hymn (*san* 讚). Hymns, as we saw in the last section, were central to Annen's reformulation of esoteric ritual language. This genre is central to Genshin's text as well. Chapter 2, "Longing for the Pure Land" (*gongu jōdo* 欣求淨土), punctuates the end of each of its ten sections on the ten kinds of joy associated with rebirth in the Pure Land with a hymn from *Wangsheng lizan jie* 往生禮讚偈 (*Gāthā* for Worship and Praise of the Pure Land, Jp. *Ōjō raisange*), a compilation of hymns for Amida worship by Shandao 善導 (613–681). Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* is composed in *kanbun*, but in a relatively simple style that would have been easy to read aloud in Japanese, a strategy toward aural comprehensibility that was unprecedented in Genshin's day.<sup>135</sup> The alternating structure, in Genshin's second chapter, of prose followed by a closing hymn would have been

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<sup>135</sup> Most Buddhist treatises composed by Japanese monks of the time were much less amenable to oral renderings of the text. This is true of the closest precedent to Genshin's own work, the *Kuhon ōjō gi* 九品往生義 by his teacher Ryōgen 良源. That Genshin's text was received orally is suggested by the fact that its passages on the ten joys of the Pure Land were chanted as contemplative *nenbutsu* in the early twelfth century. See *Chūyūki* 中右記, the diary of Fujiwara no Munetada 藤原宗忠 (1062–1142), entry dated the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Hōen 3 (1137); also cited in Inoue, *Nihon jōdokyō seiritsu no kenkyū*, p. 146. Richard Bowring characterizes Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* as a text designed "to open up Buddhism for the layman" and written "in response to a demand"; see "Preparing for the Pure Land." That this demand may have been the result of the success of Genshin's liturgies will be examined below.

particularly effective in the context of an oral performance of the text. *Ōjō yōshū* is primarily known for its visuality—especially its graphic depictions of hell—and, indeed, the hymns themselves often center on the visual qualities of Amida and his Pure Land. However, this oral quality of the text also played an important role in its widespread acceptance and popularity. It is a quality, moreover, that has its roots in liturgical practice, as we shall see.

Nine of the ten section-closing hymns in chapter 2 of *Ōjō yōshū* are from pseudo-Nāgārjuna. One of these seems to have had a special significance for Genshin: it is referenced again in the first section of chapter 4 on *nenbutsu* for worship, where Genshin suggests it is an ideal for those who like to spread the practice of Amida worship.<sup>136</sup> In addition, it was also featured in an influential liturgical rite in which Genshin is likely to have participated. We will return to this below. First, however, before considering Genshin’s theory of hymns, it will help to analyze what he took to be a paradigmatic example of a hymn.

The hymn is the Twelve [Verses for] Worship [of Amitābha] (*junirei* 十二礼) from Shandao’s hymn collection *Wangsheng lizan jie*.<sup>137</sup> The same hymn can also be found in the *Treatise on Rebirth* (*Wangsheng lun* 淨土論) by Jiakai 迦才 (7th c.).<sup>138</sup> Both compilations attribute it to Nāgārjuna. Genshin first cites it in chapter 2, section 8, “The Joy of Seeing the Buddha and Hearing the Dharma” (*Hotoke o mi Nori o kiku tanoshimi*

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<sup>136</sup> T 2682, 84:48a22.

<sup>137</sup> T 1980, 47:442a26–c19.

<sup>138</sup> T 1963, 47:96b29–97a8. Jiakai’s citation omits phrase Namō With utmost sincerity I take refuge in the Amida Buddha of the Western Direction (*namo shishin kimei saihō Amida Butsu* 南無至心歸命禮西方阿彌陀佛). This phrase is included in Genshin’s citation in the *Nijūgo zanmai kōshiki*; thus suggesting Genshin’s source for Nagarjuna’s Twelve Hymns was Shandao’s *Wangsheng lizan jie*.

見仏聞法樂). In this section, citing a quatrain from a verse from chapter 16 of the *Lotus*, “The Immeasurable Life of the Buddha,” he stresses the privilege of living in an age in which the Dharma can be heard. He then goes on to present a vision of Amida’s Pure Land in which all sounds of all living things therein constitute the preaching of the Dharma. He cites an extended passage from the *Sutra of Immeasurable Life* (Jp. *Muryōjūkyō* 無量壽經) on the “majestic voice” (*bonshō* 梵聲) of Amida that, “thunder-like” (*kaminari no gotoku* 猶雷), “produces wondrous vibrations in the eight qualities of voice” (*hachion myōkyō wo nobu* 八音暢妙響) throughout the entirety of his Pure Land.<sup>139</sup> In his comments on this passage, Genshin adds that, in Amida’s Pure Land, it is not only Amida’s voice that preaches the Dharma but in fact all living things:

Also, the birds of water and the trees of the forests all will preach the wondrous Dharma.<sup>140</sup> Thus whenever one wants to listen, they will be able to do so naturally. In this way, Dharma joy (*hōraku* 法樂) resides in any and all places.<sup>141</sup>

Genshin expresses this vision using the phrase from Śākyamuni’s exposition of the twelfth contemplation in the *Sutra of Infinite Life*, which was also cited by Annen in his discussion of Fazhao’s *nenbutsu*, as examined above.<sup>142</sup> This place where all sounds constitute the preaching of the Dharma, Genshin adds, marks the epitome of Dharma joy. Thus, while Genshin’s *Ōjō yōshū* is generally associated with visuality, this text

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<sup>139</sup> T 2682, 84:45b17–18. The line from the *Sutra of Immeasurable Life* includes, in addition to thunder, earthquake as an analogy for the Buddha’s voice. See T 360, 12:273a08.

<sup>140</sup> The reference to hearing “the water, birds, trees, and forest” is an allusion to the twelfth contemplation preached by Śākyamuni in the *Sutra of Immeasurable Meaning* 仏説觀無量壽仏經 in which one is instructed to visualize oneself reborn in the Pure Land; T 365, 12:344b16–19.

<sup>141</sup> T 2682, 84:45b24–25.

<sup>142</sup> See above.

emphasizes, in addition to the panopticism of Amida's body in the Pure Land, the panaurality of his voice, which, he is careful to add, extends even to living creatures. In his emphasis on the panaurality of the Dharma, Genshin draws on Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the Dharma body's preaching but shifts its focus from the realm of the present to that of the afterlife.

At the end of this section, after establishing the panaurality of the Dharma in the Pure Land, Genshin cites two of Nāgārjuna's Twelve Verses for Worshipping Amitābha (*Jūnirei* 十二礼). The hymn reiterates his emphasis on the panaurality of the Dharma:

Nāgārjuna's hymn goes thus:

The flowers of the pond that grow among jewels on its golden floor  
Are the wondrous pedestal for creating good roots.  
There He sits on His seat like the king of mountains.  
Thus I pay homage to Amida Buddha.

Existence in this world is impermanent and selfless,  
Like the moon on the surface of the water—is it a reflection or dew?  
He preaches the Dharma for sentient beings, without names or letters.  
Thus I pay homage to Amida Buddha.

Let us then pray together, with all sentient beings, to be reborn in the  
kingdom of peace and joy.<sup>143</sup>

In this hymn, we are presented with a vision of Amida's preaching of the Dharma that, like Annen's conception of the Dharma body's preaching above, is not predicated on words or language: "He preaches the Dharma for sentient beings without names or letters" (*shu no tame ni myōji naku seppō su*). Genshin's citation of Nāgārjuna's hymn in this section of his chapter on longing for the Pure Land thus presents a view of preaching that

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<sup>143</sup> Genshin cites the seventh and ninth verses; *T* 2682, 84:45b26–c1. He elides the eight verse. See Jiakai's *Jingtu lun*, *T* 47:96c23–24. The twelve verses are also cited in Shandao's *Wangsheng lizan jie* 往生禮讚偈; *T* 47:442b.

applies the salient features of Annen’s theory of the Dharma body’s preaching to a vision of Amida’s Pure Land.

Genshin’s use of Nāgārjuna’s Twelve Hymns forms the backdrop against which he sets forth his theory of *nenbutsu* for singing praise in the section dedicated to this topic in chapter 4. This section opens by correlating hymns of praise (*santan*) with the karmic action of speech. Earlier in the chapter in section 1, Genshin correlates *nenbutsu* for worshipping Amida with the karmic action of the body, while in section 3, he correlates *nenbutsu* for prayer with the karmic action of the mind. This correlation of *nenbutsu* for singing praise with the karmic action of speech forecasts the identification of hymns with mantra with which he concludes the section.

Genshin’s discussion of *nenbutsu* for singing praise consists primarily of an extended citation of a thirty-two verse hymn from *Commentary on the Sutra of the Ten Bodhisattva Stages* (Ch. *Shizhu piposha lun* 十住毘婆沙論, Jp. *Jūjū bibasha ron*, Sk. *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā śāstra*) attributed to Nāgārjuna.<sup>144</sup> This hymn praises Amida’s wisdom, his light, his speech, and so forth.<sup>145</sup> In his commentary, Genshin cites as additional examples of hymns: first, *gāthās* from Jiakai’s *Treatise on Rebirth*, a number of which are cited in chapter 2 at the end of the sections on kinds of joy associated with the Pure Land;<sup>146</sup> second, “hymns to the Buddha of the Shingon teachings” (*Shingon kyō no bussan* 真言教仏讚); and third, “the special hymn to Amida” (*Amida bessan* 阿弥陀

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<sup>144</sup> 7 fasc. *T* 1521, 26:20–123. A commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sutra* 十地經 attributed to Nāgārjuna 龍樹, translated by Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 around 405 CE. Consists primarily of an explanation of the bodhisattva stages contained in the *Flower Garland Sutra* (Ch. *Huayan jing*); also contains one of the early expositions regarding Amitābha.

<sup>145</sup> *T* 26:43a13–c18 (samples) 十住毘婆沙論. Also cited in 淨土論 (1963) 0095a15-0095a19:

<sup>146</sup> Sections 5, 7, 8, and 9.

別讚). It is not clear to what specifically Shingon hymns to the Buddha refers.

Biographies of Genshin, however, tell us that he chanted the Great Spell (*daiju* 大呪) and the Small Spell (*shōju* 小呪) of Amida.<sup>147</sup> While the latter is obscure, the former, the Great Spell, appears in the *Muryōju giki* 無量寿儀軌, an esoteric text on Amida's Pure Land attributed to Amoghavajra and imported to Japan by Kūkai. This Great Spell of Amida corresponds to the Foundational Dhāranī of Amitābha Tathāgata (*Muryōju nyorai konpon darani* 無量寿如来根本陀羅尼), which is still used today. Reference to this spell can be found in Murasaki Shikibu's *Genji monogatari* as well as in Sei Shonagon's *Makura no sōshi*.<sup>148</sup> The Special Hymn to Amida may refer to a hymn called the Hymn in Japanese to Amida in Twenty Lines (*Amida wasan nijū yogyō* 阿弥陀和讚廿余行), attributed to the monk Senkan 千觀 (d. 983), who was a major figure in the spread of hymns, including hymns in Japanese (*wasan* 和讚), just before Genshin's time. This first mention of this hymn appears in Yoshishige no Yasutane's *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki* 日本往生極樂記, a major source of influence for Genshin, as he himself remarks in his introduction.<sup>149</sup> We will examine the contexts for the performance of these mantras and hymns below. Genshin's discussion in this section of the *Ōjō yōshū* is remarkable for its close coupling of hymns with mantras and, especially, its explicit identification of hymns

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<sup>147</sup> See, for example, Genshin's biography in the *Shuryōgon'in Nijūgo zanmai kesshū kakochō* 楞嚴院二十五三昧結衆過去帳. Hirayabashi, "Ryōgon-in nijūgo zanmai kesshu kakochō," p. 51b. Translated in Rhodes, "Seeking the Pure Land," p. 68.

<sup>148</sup> *Genji monogatari*, ch. 38 ("Suzumushi" [Bell Cricket]): 阿弥陀の大呪 (*Amida no daizu*)、いと尊くほのぼの聞ゆ. *Makura no sōshi*, p. 172: 経は、法華経は更也。千手経。普賢十願。随求経。尊勝陀羅尼。阿弥陀の大呪。千手陀羅尼. These references probably refer to the same mantra above.

<sup>149</sup> See *T* 84:76b12.



with mantra. Genshin continues by emphasizing first that these hymns need only be chanted once with sincere intent for the practitioner to attain rebirth and then cites a *gāthā* from the Lotus Sutra as a scriptural source for this view:

These texts, if chanted once or many times, even just one line or many lines, with a sincere heart, the number does not matter. Now, if one does nothing other than sing these songs of praise, one will certainly attain rebirth according to one's prayer. As it is stated in a *gāthā* from the *Lotus Sutra*:

Or if one with a joyful mind  
sings a song in praise of the Buddha's virtue,  
even if it is just one small note,  
then all who do these things have attained the Buddha way.<sup>150</sup>

This citation of this key verse from the *Lotus* prompts Genshin to remark in his commentary that if only one note has efficacy to lead one to the “fruit of Buddhahood” (*bukka* 仏果)—that is, enlightenment—how much more so the constant singing of hymns. This suggests that Genshin advocated the constant singing of hymns as not only a means for rebirth in the Pure Land, like *nenbutsu*, but a technique for enlightenment, like mantra. This identification of hymns with mantra is made explicit in the concluding line of the section: “The merit of mantra for praising the Buddha (*shingon sanbutsu* 真言讚仏) is extremely profound and cannot be explained or illustrated.”

Genshin's discussion of *nenbutsu* for singing praise in chapter 4 does not examine *nenbutsu* per se but rather hymns, (*san*). This lacuna, on the one hand, suggests his broad understanding of what constitutes a “*nenbutsu*” and, on the other, indicates the special place of hymns within that understanding. Here, hymns, more so than *nenbutsu*, insofar as they may be distinguished therefrom, are given the special value of mantra—that is,

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<sup>150</sup> See chapter 2, “Expedient Means” of the *Lotus Sutra*: 或以歡喜心 歌頌佛德 乃至一小音 皆已成佛道 (*T*9:9a15–16)

the karmic act of speech that has the power to make the practitioner a buddha. In this sense, Genshin's theory of hymns represents a further extension of Annen's hymnology. Genshin, like Annen, understood *nenbutsu* as a kind of hymn, and understood hymn as a kind of mantra. The difference between the two is one of focus: whereas Annen was concerned with predicating his theory of hymn on the Lotus-Esoteric system of the three mandala, Genshin was interested more in how hymns captured the sounds of the Pure Land.

Genshin is known today primarily as a scholar-monk. However, his most important work (at least among those we can confirm to have been authored by him)—the *Ōjō yōshū*—is written in an accessible, almost vernacular style. Inoue Mitsusada has shown how this text represents a radical departure in both form and content from its nearest antecedent. Authored by Genshin's teacher Ryōgen, the *Kuhon ōjō gi* presents a more subdued vision of the Pure Land and is presented in a scholastic annotative style.<sup>151</sup> Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū*, by contrast, Inoue suggests, exhibits the character of a manual. Its title, he points out, reveals precisely this aspect of the text: it is a collection (*shū*) that explains the essentials (*yō*) for rebirth (*ōjō*). This meaning is made explicit in the last section of chapter 5, which begins with a question: “I do not yet understand. What are the karmic [actions] we take to be essential for rebirth?” (*Imada shirazu. Izure no gō wo ojō no yō to nasanya* 未知、何業為往生要). Genshin replies: “These are the rites we take to be essential for rebirth.” (*yue ni korera no hō wo ōjō no yō to nasu* 故此等法為往生要).<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Inoue, *Nihon jōdokyō seiritsu no kenkyū*, pp. 145–52.

<sup>152</sup> *T* 84:66c28–67a1.

Inoue adduces examples of how Genshin's text was used as a manual in the generations after Genshin.<sup>153</sup> He cites, for example, the *ācārya* Shōzen 聖全 (d.u.) who documents its use for deathbed practices, a topic discussed at length in chapter 6, section 2 of the *Ōjō yōshū*: “Nenbutsu for Special Occasions.” Its reception, however, was not confined to deathbed practices. Furthermore, Genshin's work was particularly valued for its descriptions of gruesome hells and joyous Pure Lands. It appears that a generation after Genshin, waka poets were especially interested in this aspect of his work.

The waka poet and literatus Fujiwara no Akihira 藤原明衡 (d. 1066) testifies to using this work as a source for poetic composition. In his *Gokuraku waka no ki* 極楽和歌記 (Record of Ultimate Joy Waka), a *kanbun* preface to a collection of waka poems included in the *Honchō bunshū*, Akihira states the intent behind this practice.<sup>154</sup> In the past, he notes “people of charm” (*ennin* 艶人) and poetic geniuses (*kasen* 歌仙), such as the *Manyōshū* poets Hitomaro 人丸 and Akabito 赤人 and the *Kokinshū* poets Mitsune 躬恒<sup>155</sup> and Tsurayuki 貫之, composed poems on flowers and birds. Unfortunately, however, it was unheard of at the time to use poetry as a technique for directing one's attention to the arising of things—that is, contemplation on natural phenomena—or to use poetry to praise (*tan zu* 嘆) the merits of the Buddha. Akihira then compares the practice of intoning poetry (*gin'ei* 吟詠) to the sounds of the Pure Land that constantly praise the Buddha, thus applying Genshin's characterization of a panaural Pure Land to waka

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<sup>153</sup> Inoue, *Nihon jōdokyō seiritsu no kenkyū*, p. 162.

<sup>154</sup> KST: 30, pp. 200–01.

<sup>155</sup> Ōshikōchi no Mitsune 凡河内躬恒 (d.u., late 9<sup>th</sup> c., early 10<sup>th</sup> c.). One of the thirty-six poetic geniuses.

poetics. In this view, waka, like hymns, can serve as a means for rebirth in the Pure Land. Consequently, in the closing statement of his preface, Akihira reports that he has used the thirty-one syllables of fanciful phrases to praise the karmic rewards of Amida's forty-eight vows and specifies that these poems have been composed on lines from Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū*. The assumption underlying this prayer is that waka composed in this way will deliver not only the poet but also his or her poetic ancestors from suffering in the afterlife.

Akihira's reception of Genshin's text suggests how it was used as a manual for a kind of *nenbutsu* practice that was closely identified with waka poetry. Such reception, of course, indicates the profound impact of Genshin's text on the life of the courtier in the mid-Heian period. However, as Inoue has pointed out, the circumstances in which Genshin produced the text suggests that its manualistic character was made possible by ritual and liturgical practices not dissimilar to those described by Shōzen and Akihira.

#### 2.2.4 Pure Land Liturgy: The Nijūgo Zanmai-e

The colophon to Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* states that he began composing in the work in the 11<sup>th</sup> month of 984 and finished it six months later at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> month in 985.<sup>156</sup> There are two well-documented liturgical practices that shed light on Genshin's activities before and after this time. The first is the liturgies of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e 二十五三昧会 (Assembly of the Twenty-Five Samadhis). The second is the liturgies of the assembly that was the precursor to the Nijūgo Zanmai-e, the Kangaku-e 勧学会, or Assembly for the Promotion of Chinese Learning. Both were organized by the renowned court poet Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤 (c. 933–1002). The former after his tonsure

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<sup>156</sup> T 84, 89b5.

in 985 and the latter while still serving at court in 964. The Kangaku-e, in fact, disbanded after Yasutane's tonsure. Genshin is known to have played an important role in the founding and organization of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. In addition, while his participation is not documented in Kangaku-e ceremonies, it is likely that he had become closely involved with the activities of this group, if not from its founding in 964, then at least near its disbanding in 984. Genshin not only helped Yasutane found the Nijūgo Zanmai-e in 985; he was also likely the reason why Yasutane became a monk at Ryōgon'in, Genshin's temple. To examine these liturgies in more detail will help clarify how Genshin's text both reflected and contributed to the transformation of ritual practice on Mount Hiei in the mid-to late ninth century as Pure Land began to emerge as a distinct movement within the Tendai school.

Much attention has been devoted to the deathbed practices of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e.<sup>157</sup> It has been overlooked, however, that that this assembly was responsible for introducing a new form of liturgical practice called the lecture-assembly, or *kō-e*. In Japanese scholarship, the lecture-assembly is more commonly referred to by the genre of liturgical text in which this practice is recorded, the *kōshiki*, or *Lecture Protocol*, and is considered an example of a broader category of ritual called the Dharma-assembly, or *hōe*. This form of Buddhist ritual was a group-oriented mode of worship. The character 会 in Nijūgo Zanmai-e refers both to this mode of liturgy, the lecture-assembly, and the group that formed around it.

Two founding documents called *kishō* 起請, or covenants, set forth the rules and practices of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. Both are titled *Nijūgo zanmai kishō* 二十五三昧起請

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<sup>157</sup> Bowring 1998; Stone 2008; Horton 2008.

(“Founding Regulations for the Twenty-Five Samadhis”). The first is by Yasutane and is dated 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month of 986 (Kanwa 2).<sup>158</sup> It lays out eight rules for the assembly. The second is by Genshin and is dated 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Eien 永延 2 (988).<sup>159</sup> It further expands on Yasutane’s *kishō*, setting forth twelve rules. While they share many points in common, Genshin’s covenant of 988 provides more detailed directions for the practice of the rituals that make up the assembly, as well as more thorough expositions of the doctrines that form the backdrop against which they are practiced.

The first article of Genshin’s covenant concerns the practice of “Constant *Nenbutsu*” (*fudan nenbutsu* 不断念仏). This practice begins in the early afternoon and continues into the break of dawn the next day. Members are instructed to chant sutras, intone *nenbutsu*, and worship Amida. Also mentioned is the practice of a “Sutra-Lecture” (*kōkyō* 講經) at four in the afternoon before the start of the constant *nenbutsu*: “Gather together in the early afternoon and at about four o’clock begin our reading of the sutras. Having transferred that merit, we shall then read out the text of this our covenant.” (*oyoso, miji ni daishu o atsume, kōji ni kōkyō wo shuse yo. sore o ekō seru nochi, masa ni kishōmon o yomu beshi.* 抑未時集大衆。申時修講經。其迴向之後。將讀起請文。)<sup>160</sup>

The second article is then devoted to a justification and description of this “*kō*,” or lecture:

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<sup>158</sup> DNBZ 49:28c-30b; T 2724, 84:878b-880b. See Yamada 2012.

<sup>159</sup> DNBZ 49:27-30; T 2723, 84:876b-78b. See Yamada 2012.

<sup>160</sup> T 84, 876b23-b24

We shall, in the afternoon of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of every month, before the nenbutsu [service], hold a lecture on the Lotus Sutra.

The merit of the above rite for listening to the Dharma is immeasurable. It is a medium for converting the dull into sharp, a device for converting the ordinary into holy. The five hundred monkeys immediately awaken [and become] a Buddha of a single horn [i.e., pratyekabuddha]. The one thousand geese ultimately return [and become] ascetics on Vulture Peak [i.e., audience to the preaching of the Lotus]. How much more so human beings! How much more so monks! Thus the Mahasattvas who grind their bones into powder [to arrive] at the Fragrant City,<sup>161</sup> the autumn moon that the crane seeks in the pond, the acolyte who throws his body in the snowy mountain, the spring wind that carries the crane through the woods – how sad that we have not seen the Golden Body endowed with the Three Bodies<sup>162</sup> and have not heard the voice of the eight qualities that fill [up the Pure Land]! Just drifting on the ocean of the entanglements of the five desires, not yet arrived at the wellspring of the liberation of one Suchness. Thus, on the fifteenth day of every month, [in the morning] before nenbutsu, have Zen monks Possessed of Wisdom preach the Lotus Sutra. This will surely make the people of feeble knowledge see and hear and will demonstrate the rank of unfolding [the teaching] and setting [sentient beings] on the [path] of awakening [i.e., Buddhahood]. With delight we shall listen [to the Dharma].<sup>163</sup>

The first half of this second article sets forth a justification of the *kō* that refers to a number of key Lotus-Esoteric tropes that we identified in Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū*: the vast extent of the Buddha's preaching, the identity of the three bodies, the majestic voice of

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<sup>161</sup> A Buddha-land (city) called All Fragrances (Sk. Sarvagaṇḍha), the abode of the preaching bodhisattva Dharmōdgata 曇無竭, to which Sadāpralāpa 常啼菩薩 (the Ever-weeping) makes his way at the cost of great effort, in order to hear the Dharma. ) (摩訶止觀 T 1911, 46:20a27; 大智度論 T 1509.25.734a-b] . [Paul Swanson]

<sup>162</sup> “Endowed with the Three Bodies” (*sanshin gusoku* 三身具足) is a term used in esoteric texts. See, for example, Annen's *Kyōji mondō*: T 75.399b10. It is often associated with the idea of the perfect filling up 円満 of the Buddha's merit in the ten realms. Its locus classicus is a line attributed to Nagarjuna in *Shaku maka enron* 釋摩訶衍論 (1668) 0637b23-0637c22:

<sup>163</sup> T 84.876c05-c17

the Buddha that fills the universe. The practice of the lecture is cast as a performance of precisely this vision of the panaural preaching of the Amida Buddha in the pure land. Then, in the second half, Genshin specifies that “Zen monks possessed of wisdom” (*yūchi no sō* 有智禪僧) preach the Lotus for the assembly. This term, as Yamada Shōzen has suggested, would seem to refer to scholarly monks such as Genshin.<sup>164</sup> The service for the lecture on the Lotus Sutra mentioned in article one and further described in article two, moreover, would seem to refer then to the liturgy of the lecture-assembly.

The protocol for the lecture-assembly liturgy of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e is recorded in the liturgical text, *Nijūgo zanmai kōshiki* 二十五三昧講式 (also titled *Nijūgo zanmai shiki* 二十五三昧式), the first example of its kind. The text is attributed to Genshin. Dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of 5<sup>th</sup> month of Kanwa 2 (986), it would have been recorded just days after one of the first meetings of the assembly.

The lecture assembly has been characterized as a “comprehensive Buddhist art form” (*sōgō Bukkyō geijutsu*).<sup>165</sup> Its liturgical program included hymn-singing, storytelling, image-making, and theatre in the form of procession and dance. At the center of the liturgy is the ceremonial text called the *shikimon* 式文. This text is intoned according to a set rhythm and melody in front of the main image of worship, or *honzon* 本尊. Accompanying the head officiant, or *dōshi* 導師, who leads the ceremonies and intones the *shikimon*, is a group of ten to twenty monks who sing hymns, or what today is often called *shōmyō* 声明, before the main image. The audience to the rite may also include a

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<sup>164</sup> Yamada, *Kō'e no bungaku*, p. 126.

<sup>165</sup> See Chapter Five of Yamada's *Kō'e no bungaku: Kōshiki: Bukkyō geijutsu no sōgō* 講式—仏教芸術の総合, pp. 139-154.



number of lay worshippers. These worshippers along with the ordained monks often formed social circles that revolved around the attendance and performance of lecture assemblies. Some of these groups, especially in the early modern period, acquired considerable social influence.<sup>166</sup>

The protocol for the performance of a lecture assembly is recorded in a genre of liturgical text called the “lecture protocol,” or *kōshiki* 講式. The term *kō* in this context refers not to a formal lecture but rather to a conversational style of oratory performance that aims to present the teachings of the Buddhist sutras in an accessible way to lay people. The lecture assembly, or *kō-e*, refers to the assembly, or gathering, for the performance of the *kō*. The term *shiki* refers to an established method or protocol for practice.<sup>167</sup> In the last twenty years, Japanese-language scholarship on the liturgical genre of *kōshiki* has grown considerable. With a new special edition of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* due out in the next few months, it is also beginning to receive significant attention in English-language scholarship as well.<sup>168</sup>

Genshin’s *Nijūgo zanmai kōshiki* follows the standard form of the *kōshiki* genre. It begins with what is called “general worship” (*sōrai* 惣礼), which is an abbreviation for “the *gāthā*, or *kada* 伽陀, for general worship.” *Kada* are hymns from sutras that praise

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<sup>166</sup> The *ikki* alliances of the fifteenth century are one example. See Eiko Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 116.

<sup>167</sup> In this chapter, I have tried to maintain a distinction between “*kōshiki*” and “*kō’e*,” using the former to refer to the liturgical genre of “lecture-protocols” and the latter the liturgical practice of “lecture-assemblies.” However, this distinction is not often maintained in Japanese-language scholarship.

<sup>168</sup> See JJRS 2015 forthcoming.

the merits of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Genshin cites the following *kada* from Zhiyi's *Fahua chanfa* 法華懺法 (“Lotus Repentance Rite”):<sup>169</sup>

In this place of practice, like one of Indra's jewels,  
I am reflected within the Three Jewels of the ten directions.  
With my body thus reflected before the Three Jewels,  
I take refuge and pay homage by prostrating myself before the feet of the  
Buddha.

Reference to Indra's net implies a Huayan vision of the infinite reflection of all beings in all things. This image later become prominent in eleventh century Pure Land discourse on the identity of one's own mind with Amida, which drew extensively on Lotus-Esoteric discourse.<sup>170</sup>

This *kada* would have been sung as the twenty-five monks walk in procession into the hall led by the head officiant. Once inside the hall, the head officiant and accompanying monks face the main image of worship, or *honzon*, and while chanting *gāthā* bow before it. Hence the allusion to this procedure in the above *kada*. Next, *kōshiki* texts often indicate that the main officiant takes his seat (*dōshi chakuza* 導師着座), although this is omitted in Genshin's text. The head officiant is positioned directly before the *honzon* in the center. After him, the accompanying monks take their place to either side of him according to an arranged seating that is based on the rank of each monk and their function within the rite. After the monks take their places, the practice of the rite begins. In standard *kōshiki* texts, this is notated as the “Dharma-function,” or *hōyō* 法用. The Shingon school traditionally performs what is called the Four Dharma-Functions,

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<sup>169</sup> T 77:265a11–12

<sup>170</sup> See for example, Chapter Four of the *Kanjin ryakuyōshū* 観心略要集: “*Kūkeichū o tokashite shū o tokasu* 空仮中を弁じて執を蕩かす. Sueki Fumihiko, *Kanjinryaku yōshū no kenkyū*, p. 18. Eshin sōzu zenshū, p. 288.

which consists of four *shōmyō* pieces: Paeon to the Tathāgata (*nyorai bai* 如来唄), Scattering of the Lotus Petals (*sange* 散華), Brahma’s Voice (*bonnon* 梵音), and the Monk’s Staff (*shakujō* 錫杖). Genshin’s *Nijūgo zanmai kōshiki* suggests only three procedures: three obeisances (*sanrei* 三礼), paeans to the Tathāgata, and prostration before the Buddha. During this time, the following words are chanted:

Let us pray:

May sentient beings attain the eye of non-obstruction and see all Buddhas.

Let us pray:

May the Tathāgatas take pity on me and show me the Great Mercy Body.

Never tiring of the three forms of karma,

We serve the Honored Ones and

Quickly leave the realm of birth and death, returning to Suchness;

We pay homage to Amida Tathāgata, the Deliverer to Ultimate Joy, Kannon, Seishi, and all the Three Jewels in the three realms in the ten directions.

This hymn announces Amida as the main object of worship, along with Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) and Seishi (Mahāsthāmaprāpta). Yasutane’s Covenenat of 986 also refers to these three buddhas.<sup>171</sup> In one instance, he also pairs them with Śākyamuni.<sup>172</sup> Amida-Kannon-Seishi trinity has its locus classicus in the canonical Pure Land scripture, the *Contemplation of Infinite Life Sutra* (*J. Kammuryōju-kyō*), and, for this reason, is often associated with Pure Land Buddhism. Genshin here however suggests an esoteric significance for this trinity.

The term “Great Mercy Body” refers to the first of six emanations of Kannon called the Great Mercy Kannon, as set forth in the *Petitioning Kannon Sutra* 請觀音經.

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<sup>171</sup> Bowring, p. 242. *T* 84:878a25.

<sup>172</sup> Bowring, p. 245.

This scripture prescribes six *dharani* for the contemplation of each emanation. Zhiyi examines the use of these *dharani* in the context of rites of repentance in fascicle two of the *Maka shikan*. He suggests that each have the efficacy to save sentient beings from the three obstructions on the six paths.<sup>173</sup> After this analysis, he adds that this sixfold contemplation constitutes the Twenty-Five Samadhis. Yet he then goes on to enumerate only six samadhis for each of the six Kannon emanations. The reason for the number twenty-five is thus not clear. Nonetheless, this, as Misaki Ryōshū has pointed out, seems to be the likely source for the name of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. Misaki, however, argues that this allusion is only superficial. In his view, Pure Land practice by this time, after the systematization of the esoteric teachings by Annen, has been purged of all forms of “impure esotericism,” or *zōmitsu* 雜密, and Genshin’s Nijūgo Zanmai-e is exemplary of this trend.

In the fourth article of his covenant, Genshin describes the use of mantra for the worship of Amida in Nijūgo Zanmai-e deathbed practices that offers a point of reference for considering the *honzon* described in the above hymn. In it, he stipulates that members should chant the mantra of light (*kōmyō shingon*) as they sprinkle empowering sand (*kaji dosha* 加持土砂) on the corpses of deceased members. This thus indicates the use of esoteric ritual language in the wider practices of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. Genshin then states that, after this empowerment rite by means of mantra, one should pay obeisance to four buddhas and one sutra: Śakyāmuni Tathāgata, the Preacher Mahāvairocana (*Dainichi kyōshu Shaka Nyorai* 大日教主釈迦如来); Amida Tathāgata, the Deliverer to the [Pure Land of] Ultimate Joy (*gokuraku keshu Mida nyorai* 極樂化主弥陀如来),

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<sup>173</sup> T 46.15b01-b14. For a discussion of this, see Misaki 1988 p. 93.

Kannon Bodhisattva of Great Mercy (*Daihi Kanzeon bosatsu* 大悲觀世菩薩); Great Seishi Bodhisattva (*tokudai Seishi bosatsu* 得大勢菩薩); and the Lotus Sutra of the Wondrous Vajra (*myōkon renga kyō* 妙金蓮花經).<sup>174</sup> In this arrangement of objects of worship, Genshin articulates the cardinal doctrine of the Lotus-Esoteric teachings, the identity of Śakyāmuni with Mahāvairocana. He also implies an esoteric conception of the Lotus in his association of this sutra with the “Wondrous Vajra.” While, in contrast to Annen, Genshin does not elaborate a system of correlations between these buddhas and the three categories of mandalas in the Tendai esoteric school, he nonetheless draws on tropes from Lotus-Esoteric discourse to articulate a framework for worshipping the main objects of veneration in the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. This suggests that the name Nijūgo Zanmai-e, *pace* Misaki, does in fact point to an understanding of the significance of the practices of the assembly. If so, then the term “Great Mercy Body” in the hymn that sets the stage for the introductory invocation, moreover, may also have been understood to have an esoteric significance.

The hymn-singing that opens the ceremony is then followed by the main portion of the lecture assembly: the reading aloud of the introductory invocation, or *hyōbyaku* 表白, followed by the prayer text, or *ganmon* 願文, and then, finally, the ceremonial statement, or *shikimon* 式文, which brings the liturgy to its crescendo. Genshin’s *hyōbyaku* invokes Amida as the deliverer of sentient beings to the pure land of ultimate joy and stresses the efficacy of chanting his name, or *nenbutsu*, in attaining rebirth there. It then explains the origins of the liturgy and previews its program:

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<sup>174</sup> T 84.877a11-a15.

Thus, we have transferred the former rite from [Shu]ryō'gon[-in] and, transmitting the old Flower Pedestal, we practice turning [i.e., quickly chanting] six times the sutra [i.e., the Amida Sutra], and offer up [the merit thereof] to sentient beings on the six paths. Let us pray: may we endeavor to perform [this practice] the fifteenth day of every month and may we never flag [in our efforts]. On the eve of [a member's] death, let us have the strength to chant *nenbutsu* ten times.

Genshin explains that the Nijūgo Zanmai-e is heir to the “former rite” at Shuryōgon'in.

The reference to the flower, or Lotus, pedestal refers to the construction of a Mausoleum of the Lotus Pedestal described in Yasutane's covenant of 986.<sup>175</sup> Genshin then previews the rite to follow: the Amida sutra will be chanted six times—according to the protocol described later in the *kōshiki*, once after each of the six parts of the *shikimon*—and then the merit gained thereby will be transferred to the beings on the six paths—this refers to the statement for the transference of merit that concludes the *kō-e*. Finally, Genshin notes that this practice is to be performed every month on the fifteenth day. The deathbed practices are thus carried out within this context of regular monthly lecture-assemblies.

The next part of the rite is the *ganmon*. Genshin's *ganmon* has already been translated in full, so I will offer only a summary here.<sup>176</sup> The three realms of form, formlessness, and desire are characterized by suffering and impermanence. We, members of this assembly, have passed our days idly and so it is certain that each of us shall fall into an evil path of existence after our death. However, the *Sutra of Infinite Life* preaches that if, at the end of our life, we chant the name of the Buddha of immeasurable life with utmost sincerity, then, no matter how grave our bad karma in this life may be, we shall eliminate the sins of ten million eons and attain rebirth in the Land of Ultimate Joy. And

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<sup>175</sup> See Bowring 1998, p. 238.

<sup>176</sup> See Bowring 1998, pp. 222-223.

so, we have organized a group of twenty-five likeminded fellows and have vowed to support each other in our efforts for a good rebirth by chanting nenbutsu at the sickbed of a member before he passes. After a member passes, the member assigned to their care shall also inform the living members of the group so that they too may engage in efforts to ensure the rebirth in the Pure Land of their fellow member. And thus, in this way, we assemble together in the evening of the fifteenth day of every month to practice ceaseless *nenbutsu* (*fudan nenbutsu* 不断念仏) and anticipate the arrival of the lotus pedestal of Amida upon our death.

The *ganmon* is then followed by the *shikimon*. Typically the *shikimon* is composed of three, five, or seven paragraphs, or *dan* 段. Genshin's *Nijūgo zanmai kōshiki* does not refer explicitly to the *shikimon*, but includes a series of prose passages that corresponds to what later came to be known by this name. This section is made up of six paragraphs, one for each of the six paths of transmigration, from hell to heaven. After each stanza, Genshin cites two hymns from Nagarjuna's Twelve Hymns. In later *kōshiki* texts, the *shikimon* refers both to the prose paragraphs (*dan* 段) and the *kada*, or hymns, that follow each paragraph. The *gāthā* that punctuate each section of the *shikimon* praise the merit of the main object of worship of the lecture assembly.<sup>177</sup> In the *Nijūgo zanmai-e kōshiki*, Genshin cites Nagarjuna's Twelve Hymns from Shandao's *Wangsheng lizan jie*, two hymns for each of the six paragraphs.

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<sup>177</sup> In comparison to the prose paragraphs of the *shikimon*, the *kada* are generally rather brief, typically comprising four lines of seven characters, and are set to a more musically inflected melody and rhythm. In performance, the chanting of these *kada*, despite their brevity, take up more time than the reading aloud of the prose portion of the *shikimon*. See Yamada, *Kō-e no bungaku*, p. 86.

The final lines of the final paragraph of Genshin's *shikimon* make reference to a key idea that emerged from the Lotus-Esoteric doctrine of Ennin and Annen and then became central to Pure Land Buddhism, especially after Genshin. This idea is the doctrine of original enlightenment. Genshin concludes the *shikimon* with the following prayer for the transference of merit, or *ekō* 廻向:

With this merit, let us quickly sport in the empty void of the Dharmature, identically manifest the moon of our Original Enlightenment, and thus let it shine upon the long night of Birth-and-Death, together awakening from the dream of delusion.

### 2.2.5 Pure Land Liturgy: The Assembly for the Promotion of Chinese Learning

From 964 until his tonsure in 986, Yasuatane organized an assembly called the Kangaku-e. This assembly, like the Nijūgo Zanmai-e after it, also featured lectures in the morning and *nenbutsu* in the evening, but, in addition, included the composition and recitation of Chinese verse, or *kanshi*, as hymns through the night. There are no extant *kōshiki* of Kangaku-e assemblies. There are however a number of other sources that shed light on their practices, including kanbun prefaces to poetry collections by members of the assembly, most of which are preserved in the *Honchō monzui*, and also an extended description by Kangaku-e member Minamoto no Tamenori 源為憲 (941–1011) in his *The Three Jewels, with Illustrations* (*Sanbōe* 三宝絵, ca. 984), a didactic work on Buddhist ritual and scripture composed at the bequest of Princess Sonshi 藤原尊子 (966–984), daughter of Emperor Reizei and recent convert to the faith.



In the volume of the *Sanbōe* devoted to Buddhist ritual, Tamenori gives an account of the Kangaku-e's biannual assemblies.<sup>178</sup> He explains that, in the kenpō 康保 era, during the reign of Emperor Murakami, every third and ninth month on the full moon, that is the fifteenth day of the month, twenty Confucian scholars of history (*kiden* 紀伝) from the state university in the capital along with twenty Tendai monks from Mount Hiei spend one night at a temple on the foot of Mount Hiei, listen to lectures on the Lotus, and together compose verses for praising the Buddha and praising the Dharma. The opening paragraph of his description describes the intent of the assemblies to form bonds between lay literati and ordained monks and also the practice of lecturing on sutras (*kyō o kōji*) and performing *nenbutsu* (*Hotoke o nenzuru*):

We pray that we may form karmic bonds with monks and hold an assembly. In the twilight of spring and at the end of autumn, we have designated a day for this aspiration and endeavor to fulfill it by lecturing on the sutras and contemplating the Buddha.<sup>179</sup>

Tamenori then explains that by establishing an assembly with ordained monks, the lay literati of the Kangaku-e sought to dedicate themselves to the combined study of the Way of the Dharma (*nori no michi* 法ノ道) and the Way of Literature (*fumi no michi* 文ノ道).

He then describes the opening procession, in which the courtiers, as they approach Mount Hiei near Sakamoto, chant a line from a verse by Bai Juyi:

The seeds of enlightenment last for billions of *kalpas*;  
The virtuous rewards of eighty-three years create a forest.<sup>180</sup>

In response to the call of the courtiers, the monks chant a verse from the *Lotus*:

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<sup>178</sup> SNKT 31, pp. 172–74. Kamens 1988, p. 295.

<sup>179</sup> SNKT 31, p. 172.

<sup>180</sup> SNKT 31, p. 173. Kamens 1988, p. 295.

Those who seek the Buddha's Way  
Are countless, billions—  
But those who do so with reverent hearts  
Will certainly attain his realm.<sup>181</sup>

The opening procession carries out in the performance of these hymns the intent of the assembly—that is, to reveal that *kanshi*, like verses from the sutras, can be chanted as Buddhist hymns.

Tamenori then outlines the three parts of the assembly: lectures (*kō* 講) on the *Lotus Sutra* during the day, contemplation (*nen* 念) of Amida in the evening, and the composition of verses in praise of the Buddha and the Dharma through the night:

In the morning of the fifteenth day, we lecture on the Lotus Sutra. In the evening, we contemplate Amida, and then after, until dawn the next day, we [compose verses] that praise the Buddha and praise the Dharma. We [then] store these verses at the temple.<sup>182</sup>

In light of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e documents examined above, this passage suggests the performance of a kind of *kōshiki* before *nenbutsu* recitation in the evening and the composition of poems to praise the Buddha and Dharma at night.<sup>183</sup>

Tamenori cites two verses chanted (*jusu* 誦す) by the courtiers at the assembly as part of the evening services for the recitation and composition of verse. Both are by Bai Juyi. The first is Bai's prayer for the conversion of "wild words and fanciful phrases" (*kyōgen kigo*):

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<sup>181</sup> SNKT 31, p. 173. Kamens 1988, p. 295.

<sup>182</sup> SNKT 31, p. 173. Kamens 1988, p. 295.

<sup>183</sup> This calls into question Minowa Kenryō's assessment of this *kōkyō* as a formal debate-style "lectures" (*kōkyō*) such as the Vimalakīrti Assembly (*Yuima-e* 維摩絵) and the Golden Light Assembly (*Saishō-e* 最勝会) held at major temples in Nara. See Minowa, *Nihon bukkyō no kyōri keisi*, p. 65. For more on debate-style rituals, see Sango, *The Halo of Golden Light*.

Also, a verse written by [Bai] Juyi when he presented a collection of his poems to the Xiangshan Si temple:

May the karma of my profane writings conceived in this lifetime—  
All the errors of my wild words and fanciful phrases—  
In the world to come, turn into a cause for praising the Buddha vehicle,  
And a factor for turning the wheel of the Dharma.<sup>184</sup>

This prayer later developed into a liturgical technique for consecrating secular verse as Buddhist hymn and came to be known by the four-character compound *kyōgen kigo*, or even simply *kigo*. By invoking Bai's prayer, the literati cast the Kangaku-e as the fulfillment of his wish. The second is a verse on the impermanence of the body:

Why should I feel any love for my body?  
It is the source of ten thousand *kalpas* of suffering.  
Why should I feel any hatred for this body?  
It is only a pile of dust in a void.<sup>185</sup>

The monks, for their part, chant this *gāthā* from the *Lotus*:

Hear the Dharma and sing its praises:  
Even if you produce a single sound,  
It is the same as if you made an offering  
To all the Buddhas of the three ages.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> SNKT 31, p. 173. The prayer in Chinese: 願以此今生世俗文字之業狂言綺語之過轉為將來世世讚仏乘之因轉法輪之緣。See “Record of Bai's [Dedication] of Collected Writings to Xiangshan Si Temple” 香山寺白氏洛中集記 in *Baishi wenji* 白氏文集, vol. 7. The prayer became well known in Japan as a piece of verse from its inclusion in the ca. 1013 *Wakan rōeshū* 和漢朗詠集. See SNKZ 19, p. 309. Misumi 1995 stresses that the idea of literature as *kyōgen kigo* was actually invented by the Kangaku-e, not Bai Juyi himself, who used the phrase only in passing in an obscure passage from his collected works. On the history of the phrase *kuangyan qiyu* 狂言綺語 in China, Misumi notes that the phrase *kuangyan* first appears in the *Zhuangzi* in the chapter entitled “Knowledge Traveled North” 知北遊篇 and that the second half, *qiyu*, figures prominently in Buddhist sources influential during Bai's time, such as the *Sutra of Brahmā's Net*, which cites fanciful phrases as the seventh of ten forms of bad karma.

<sup>185</sup> Translation by Kamens 1988, p. 295.

<sup>186</sup> Translation by Kamens 1988, p. 295. See chapter 2 “Expedient Means” of the *Lotus*. T 262:9\_10b.

Tamenori then notes that the monks also chant Nagarjuna's Twelve Hymns, which, as we saw above, figures prominently in both Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* and the Nijūgo Zanmai-e assemblies.

The liturgical format of the Kangaku-e assemblies establishes a close parity between the secular verse of the Tang poet Bai Juyi—that is, the “Way of Literature”—and the *gāthā* and hymns of the Buddhist sutras—that is, the “Way of the Dharma.” By doing so, the Kangaku-e attempts to enact in the medium of Buddhist liturgy the intent of Bai's prayer to turn (*kaeshite*) his profane writings (*sezoku no moji*) into a cause for praising the Buddha vehicle (*sanbutsujō no in*) and a factor for turning the wheel of the Dharma (*denbōrin no en*)—that is, to consecrate a new genre of Buddhist literature, the *kanshi* hymn.

In addition to Tamenori's account in the *Sanbōe*, there are also six *kanbun* prefaces to *kanshi* poetry collections by Kangaku-e members composed for their assemblies. Four are included in the *Honchō monzui* 本朝文粹 and two in the *Zoku honcho monzui* 続本朝文粹. All of them mention the composition of verse on a line from the sutras—that is, a kind of *daiei*, or topic-based composition practice, using scriptural texts as sources for poetic topics. The style of these poems resembles those chanted at the Kangaku-e assemblies described by Tamenori. Yasutane, for example, in his “Five-Character Line Songs on ‘Gathering Sand to Make a Buddhist Stupa’ from the *Lotus Sutra* Heard at Lecture held at a Kangaku-e Assembly in late Autumn at Chikurinji” (*Gogen boshū Kangaku-e Chikurinji ni oite Hokkekyō o chōkō shi onajiku 'tsuna o atsume butsutō o nasu' no fu* 五言暮秋勸学会於禪林寺聽講法華經同賦聚沙為仏塔) states that after the lecture-assembly, *kanshi* were composed at a banquet—a social affair

involving alcohol (*shu* 酒) and forms of entertainment (*raku'yū* 樂遊)—and cites as an example of the poetic topics for the event a line from Chapter Two of the Lotus,<sup>187</sup> as indicated in the title.<sup>188</sup> The preface to another collection by Ki no Tadana 紀齊名 (c. 957–1000) states: “First, there is a lecture on the sutras and then words of poetry. On the inside, we maintain faith, but, on the outside, we present fanciful phrases (*kigo*).”<sup>189</sup> The title of his preface, in addition, specifies that members together composed on the line “Collecting thoughts in the forest on the mountain” (*sanrin ni nen o sessu* 掇念山林) from Kumarajiva’s preface to the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>190</sup>

These descriptions of *daiei* composition on lines from the sutra accord with extant examples of *kanshi* composed at the Kangaku-e. The poems represent the first examples of the genre of “*kanshi* on Śakyāmuni’s teachings,” or *shakkyō-shi* 釈教詩.<sup>191</sup> Extant examples from Kangaku-e assemblies comprise mostly verses of praise to the Buddha and the Dharma and poetic glosses on passages from the sutras. It thus closely resembles the hymns chanted in the morning *kō* and evening *nenbutsu* segment of the liturgy. Such use of *kanshi* as hymn seems to have been a part of Kangaku-e assemblies from the beginning.

What is perhaps the first record of a Kangaku-e assembly was recently discovered in 1984. It is dated the fifteenth day of the eleventh month of Kenpō 1 (964); however,

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<sup>187</sup> T 09.08c24.

<sup>188</sup> SNKT 27, p. 293.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> T 09.03b08.

<sup>191</sup> Yanagii Shigeru, “Kangaku-e ni okeru shakkyōshi,” p. 16.

Gotō Akio understands the number eleven to be a scribal error. He suggests instead that it should be dated the fifteenth day of the *ninth* month, when we know, from Tamenori's *Sanbōe* and other accounts, the biannual assemblies of the Kangaku-e were held. The manuscript has been compromised, with numerous lacunae. Gotō has provided a typeset transcription of the manuscript along with a detailed analysis of its content.<sup>192</sup> The preface states that it was composed by one of the the original members of the assembly, Kamo no Yasuaki 賀茂保章 (d.u.), for the first meeting of the Kangaku-e. Therein, Yasuaki explains that monks assigned the topics of composition to the literati: “Zen monks displayed the topic and we copied them out on paper” (*zenryo wa daimoku o shimishi, wa ga dō wa hensō wo utsusu* 禅侶示題目、我堂写篇草).<sup>193</sup> He goes on to specify that the poems were composed not for pleasure but rather for the purpose of creating karmic bonds, or *kechien* 結縁. Yasuaki thus describes a more serious and perhaps sober affair than that described by Yasutane in his preface. Yasuaki's preface also includes three *kanshi* poems composed for the assembly. These too suggest a more sober, even ascetic, approach to composing poetry. The poems are on the topic of “Seeking joy in a quiet place” (*seisho ni raku o kokorozashi* 志樂於静処) from Chapter Fifteen of the *Lotus*, “Emerging from the Earth.”<sup>194</sup> The following is an example:

Wishing for a quiet place, I dwell in the Forest of Intimates.  
Forming bonds with lay and ordained, my austerities are deep.

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<sup>192</sup> Gotō “Kangaku-e-ki ni tsuite.”

<sup>193</sup> Gotō “Kangaku-e-ki ni tsuite,” p. 93. Another record of the Kangaku-e assemblies by Tamenori, the 964 *Kenpō gannen Kangaku-e ki* 康保元年勸学会記, also indicates that monks assigned the topics of composition to the literati: “The ordained [monks] confer topics, the fellowship of literati thus rise from their seats and take [the topic from them].” (*Shito daimoku o sazuken, bun'yū sunawachi za yori okoshi, kore o toru* 緇徒授題目、文友即從座起取之). Cited in Sawada 2001, p. 8.

<sup>194</sup> T 09.41b16.

In the cave of the luminous moon that penetrates the mind entering into concentration;  
On the summit among the clouds at dusk,  
The traces of my *zazen* practice grow dark,  
The pine of one thousand years closes its stone door.  
I rejoice in the single sound of the water falling from the moss on the path  
And the sound of the Sutra Lecture and *Nenbutsu*.  
Desiring to return, I feel apprehension about the onslaught of the profane dust.<sup>195</sup>

Yasuaki's poem describes sitting meditation, or *zazen*, and concentration exercises along with lectures on the sutras and *nenbutsu* chanting. While this poem has a documentary quality, it is first and foremost a paean to the power of Buddhist practices to give solace and peace of mind to practitioners. It thus should be viewed as a kind of hymn. This hymnification of *kanshi* verse grew in popularity in the eleventh century and soon contributed significantly the development of waka poetry as well, as we shall see in chapter 2.<sup>196</sup>

The Kangaku-e disbanded in 986 with the tonsure of their leader, Yasutane. Soon thereafter, Yasutane, with the help of Genshin, whose temple, the Shuryōgon'in 首楞嚴院, he entered as monk under the name Jakushin 寂心, formed the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. There is a great deal of continuity between the former and the latter. Both stipulate a fixed number of members, regular meetings, gathering together in a single Buddhist hall, staying the night at a temple, and, importantly, the performance of lectures on the *Lotus* in the early part of the program and *nenbutsu*-chanting in the evening. The differences suggest a more fervent devotion to the practice of Buddhism exclusively. Whereas the

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<sup>195</sup> Gotō 1993, p. 96. Kundoku rendering also by Gotō.

<sup>196</sup> While none of the extant poem-prefaces composed for Kangaku-e assemblies indicate the composition of waka, an entry dated the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Kenpō 1 (964) in the *Fusō ryakki* 扶桑略記 mentions specifically the composition of *kanshi* alongside the recitation of “*uta*.” See KST 12: 241. This indicates that Kangaku-e assemblies may also have been the matrix for the development of *shakkyō-ka* as well.

Kangaku-e met biannually in spring and autumn, the Nijūgo Zanmai-e met every month, twelve times a year. Also, the latter did not include within its ranks any laypeople and, importantly, eliminated from their program the composition of verse as hymns. The focus shifted exclusively to the performance of the lecture-assembly and nenbutsu-chanting.

### 2.2.6 Pure Land Liturgy: *Daimoku* in the Morning, *Nenbutsu* in the Evening

Both the Kangaku-e and the Nijūgo Zanmai-e are thus structured around the performance of lectures in the morning (or early afternoon) and nenbutsu in the evening (or throughout the night). If as Inoue and other have suggested, these assemblies provided a major impetus for the formation of the Pure Land movement in tenth century Japan, they reveal that the ritual practices through which this new form of Buddhism was disseminated were not founded on an exclusive practice of *nenbutsu* alone, as in later sectarian incarnations of Pure Land, but rather through a specific liturgical program: *kōkyō* in the morning, *nenbutsu* in the evening. This liturgical program has a history that goes back to Ennin and became known by the formula, “*Daimoku* in the Morning, *Nenbutsu* in the Evening” (*asa ni daimoku, yū ni nenbutsu* 朝題目夕念仏). “*Daimoku*” in this context refers to a variety of practices centering on the Lotus sutra, from chanting and lecturing on the Lotus to various forms of repentance, or *senbō* 懺法.<sup>197</sup> “*Nenbutsu*,” as we saw in our examination of Genshin’s *Ōjō yōshū*, also is not a singular practice but refers to a variety of contemplative and liturgical practices, from simply chanting Amida’s name to singing hymns and contemplating the three truths according to a Lotus-

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<sup>197</sup> Kiuchi Gyō’ō 木内堯央 has suggested that “*daimoku*” in the mid-Heian context encompassed the following activities: chanting (*dokuju* 読誦) of and lectures on (*kōen* 講演) the lotus, the practice of the Lotus Samadhi, or a form that combines both called the Lotus Repentance Rite (*Hokke senbō* 法華懺法). See Volume 2 of *Kiuchi Gyōō ronbun shū*.



Esoteric conception of the three bodies of the Buddha. The liturgical program of “*Daimoku* in the morning, *Nenbutsu* in the evening,” thus reveals that Pure Land liturgy in the tenth century was not, as Misaki has suggested, thoroughly exotericized—that is, segregated from esoteric ritual practices—but rather underpinned by a highly combinatory Lotus-Esoteric paradigm that accommodated various forms of Amida worship.

The combinatory character of this liturgical program is attested in Yasutane’s *Nihon ōjō gokuraku-ki* (ca. 983–986). In this collection of biographies of monks who attained rebirth in the Pure Land, Yasutane presents a wide variety of Pure Land practices. Some depict the combination of *nenbutsu* with Zhiyi’s *Maka shikan*,<sup>198</sup> others the *Lotus* and *nenbutsu*, while others still esoteric rites with *nenbutsu*. Of the last, there are fourteen examples.<sup>199</sup> Yasutane’s biography of the Enryakuji Abbot Eishō 延昌 (880–964) provides an illustrative example.

Since he received the precepts, [Eishō] chanted the Superlative Dhāranī [of the Buddha’s Crown] (Sk. *usnisavijaya dhāranī*. Jpn. *Sonshō daranī*) one-hundred times every night.<sup>200</sup> On the fifteenth day of every month, he would invite a group of monks to Enryakuji to chant hymns to Amida and, as a cause-and-condition for [rebirth in] the Pure Land, hold debates on the inner meaning of the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> See, for example, 春素伝.

<sup>199</sup> 4: 慈覚大師; 5: 律師隆海; 6: 僧正增命; 7: 律師無空; 12: 延暦寺東塔住僧某申, 13: 梵釈寺十禪師兼算, 16: 延暦寺座主僧正延昌, 19: 延暦寺僧明靖, 20: 石山寺真頼, 26: 陸奥国小松寺の住僧玄海, 27: 延暦寺沙門真覚, 35: 源憩, 36: 伊予国越智益躬, 37: 女弟子伴氏

<sup>200</sup> The Buddha’s crown is one of the 32 marks of Sakyumuni (as Butchōson) represented in the Matrix Assembly (*taizōkai*). This *dhāranī* is based on the *Butchō sonshō daranikyō* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經. Hayami Tasuku has shown how the *dharani* developed side-by-side with the mantra of light within the context of Pure Land liturgy in the late tenth century. See Hayami, *Jōdo shinko ron*.

<sup>201</sup> NST 7. 27

Yasutane understood accounts such as these as not only descriptive of practices for rebirth in the Pure Land but also as prescriptive—that is, as exemplary models of Japanese monks who attained rebirth.<sup>202</sup> In the preface to the collection, he states his intent to shape the practice of Pure Land in Japan:

However, the wisdom of sentient beings is slight and cannot reach the Sage's (that is, the Buddha's) purport. Unless I note down (descriptions of) people who actually attained birth (in the Pure Land), it is impossible to influence their minds (to seek the Pure Land).<sup>203</sup>

Thus, by presenting biographies of monks who attained rebirth in the Pure Land such as the Enryakuji abbot Eishō above, Yasutane aimed to adduce exemplary models for Pure Land practice. Consequently, the biographies in *Ōjō gokuraku ki* offer a glimpse of what Yasutane held to be normative and efficacious practices for rebirth. That many of them are highly combinatory, especially with esoteric ritual practices, suggests that Yasutane himself was not only familiar with esoteric practices for rebirth but even advocated them as exemplary models to be followed by subsequent generations of Pure Land practitioners.

This raises the question then of whether and to what extent the liturgical program of “*Daimoku* in the morning and *Nenbutsu* in the evening” was, as Misaki suggests, a purely exoteric practice. How did the Lotus-Esotericism of Ennin especially and Annen after him contribute to the development of this practice? In what ways was it founded on the Lotus-Esoteric paradigm?

The liturgical program of *Daimoku* in the Morning, *Nenbutsu* in the Evening combines two components of the core Tendai ritual curriculum called the Four Samadhis

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<sup>202</sup> This is one of the central contentions of Rhodes' analysis of Yasutane's *Nihon ōjō gokuraku-ki*. See Rhodes 2007, pp. 257-58 and p. 268.

<sup>203</sup> Translated by Rhodes 2007, p. 258. NST 7:11.

(*shishu sanmai* 四種三昧): the Both Moving and Sitting Samadhi (*hanza hangyō sanmai* 半坐半行三昧) and the Always Moving Samadhi (*jōgyō sanmai* 常行三昧), respectively.<sup>204</sup> The Four Samadhi curriculum was established by Zhiyi. Saichō studied them under Daosui 道邃 (7th patriarch of Tendai), a disciple of Zhanran 湛然 (711-782). Misaki Ryōshū has shown that Zhiyi’s formulation of these four practices already exhibits the influence of yogic conceptions that later came to be associated with the esoteric teachings. This claim calls into question the commonly held view that the Four Samadhi were based on what came to be known as “Zen.”<sup>205</sup> The “esoteric” character of these rites remained pronounced in Saichō’s transmission as well, as his description of them in his debate with the Hossō monk Tokuitsu attests.<sup>206</sup> Despite their centrality to Tendai practice, it appears, however, that the only samadhi that became well established on Mount Hiei was the Both Moving and Sitting Samadhi in the form of a repentance-focused practice called the Lotus-Samadhi (*Hokke sanmai* 法華三昧).<sup>207</sup>

After the return of Ennin in 847, the practice of the Four Samadhis on Mount Hiei was transformed. Ennin’s transmission introduced major modifications to this practice.<sup>208</sup> First, it reformulated the Lotus-Samadhi as a repentance rite, often called the “Lotus

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<sup>204</sup> The other two samadhis are the the Both Moving and Sitting Samadhi (*hanza hangyō sanmai* 半坐半行三昧), and the Neither Moving Nor Sitting Samadhi (*higyō hiza sanmai* 非行非坐三昧).

<sup>205</sup> In English-language scholarship, see, for example, Bowring’s reference to Zhiyi’s formulation of the Four Samadhis as “a meditational technique.” Although this term is somewhat vague, he seems to have had zen meditation in mind. See Bowring 1998, p. 230.

<sup>206</sup> *Dengyō Daishi zenshū* Vol. 2, p. 359. For an analysis, see Matsumoto 2014, p. 42.

<sup>207</sup> See Bowring 1998, p. 229; Robert 1990, p. 170; Swanson 1995, p. 111.

<sup>208</sup> For a detailed analysis, see Satō 1961, Matsumoto 2014.

Repentance Rite” (*Hokke senbō* 法華懺法), that centered on hymn-singing and sutra-chanting. Second, it introduced a Moving and Sitting Samadhi called the “Rite Performed at the Regular Time” (*reiji sahō* 例時作法) that featured nenbutsu-chanting, particularly the five vocal styles Ennin learned Fazhao. Finally, in addition, Ennin paired these two practices together as part of a daylong program that became the foundation of Four Samadhi practice, the former in the morning and the latter in the evening. This daylong liturgical program came to be known by the above-mentioned formula “*Daimoku* in the morning, *Nenbutsu* in the Evening.”

Ennin’s transmission of the Always Moving Samadhi features *Nenbutsu*-chanting alongside chanting of the *Amida Sutra* using the new vocal styles introduced by Fazhao. Prior to this, Tendai priests, for the practice of the Always Moving Samadhi, did not chant the *Amida Sutra*, but rather the *Prajña samadhi sutra* (*Banzhou sanmei jing* 般若三昧經).<sup>209</sup> In addition, Ennin also eliminated from the practice of the Lotus samadhi the use of a number of dharani from the *Lotus* and *Fugen Sutras* and replaced them with Lotus-based practices such as the Repentance of the Six Senses (*rokkon sange* 六根懺悔) and the Four Practices for Peace and Joy (*shian rakugyō* 四安樂行). As noted above, in his analysis of Ennin’s transmission of these rites, Misaki Ryōshū has argued that it entirely eliminated “impure esoteric,” or *zōmitsu*, elements from the practice of the Four Samadhis.<sup>210</sup> This claim, however, assumes, on the one hand, that Fazhao’s *nenbutsu* practice was purely exoteric and, on the other, that the systematization of esoteric ritual

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<sup>209</sup> One of four versions of the *Pratyatpanna Sutra* (T no. 417), an important sutra in early history of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism. Misaki treats this as an esoteric sutra. See *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, p. 92.

<sup>210</sup> Misaki 1988 pp. 95-97.

and doctrine carried out by Ennin, Enchin, and Annen had the effect of segregating esoteric practices from exoteric rituals. This latter view, however, as we have seen in the case of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e, and, as we will find also in the case of Ennin’s own practice of nenbutsu, is too quick to dismiss the significance of esoteric practices and discourse in Tendai rituals—that is, “non-esoteric” rites—after Ennin.

In his account of his travels in the Tang, the *Nittō guhō junrei gyōki* 入唐求法巡礼行記, Ennin records that, on the fifth day of the fifth month of Kaicheng 5 (840), he stayed at Zhurinsi 竹林寺 on Mt. Wutai, a temple built by Fazhao, and attended a dharma assembly called the Zhurinsi Ceremony for Worship of the Buddha 竹林寺齋礼仏式.<sup>211</sup> He then mentions that he studied the “melodies” (*onkyoku* 音曲) of Fazhao’s chanting style during that summer. There are two texts attributed to Fazhao that set forth the practice of his five vocal styles for chanting *nenbutsu*: an expanded recension called the *Jingtu whui nianfo songjing guanjuan yi* 淨土五會念佛誦經觀行儀 (Taishō no. 2827) and an abridged recension called the *Jingtu wuhui nianfo lue fasshi yizan* 淨土五會念佛略法事儀讚 (Tashō no. 1893). Ennin’s catalogue, the *Nittō shingu shōgyō mokuroku* 入唐新求聖教目錄 indicates that he imported the latter abbreviated edition of this text.<sup>212</sup>

Only a generation before Ennin’s stay at Fazhao’s Zhurinsi, the esoteric master Amoghavajra had transformed the practice of Buddhism on Mt. Wutai. Specifically, he coordinated the construction of two temples, Jingesi 金閣寺 and Yuhuasi 玉華寺.

Fazhao’s Zhurinsi was not unaffected by Amoghavajra’s influence on the mountain. In

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<sup>211</sup> BKZS 113: 229a-230a. The following discussion about the esoteric elements of Ennin’s nenbutsu follows the recent analysis of Tomabechi Seichi 苦米地誠一 in *Heianki Shingon mikkyō no kenkyū*.

<sup>212</sup> T 55.1085a.

his diary, Ennin records that an image of Manjusri was hung in the cafeteria according to Amoghavajra's prescription. He also describes that at the Huayanyuan Chapel of Zhurinsi, there was a Diamond Realm mandala. Moreover, in his description of the Zhurinsi Ceremony for Worship of the Buddha, he notes that hymns were song to multiple buddhas, not just the Amida *nenbutsu* associated with the lineage of Fazhao's five vocal styles. Taken together, this suggests that the *nenbutsu* to which Ennin was exposed in the Tang was not an exclusive practice devoted solely to the worship of Amida but was inclusive of iconographic traditions and worship practices associated with Amoghavajra's esoteric teachings.

A few years after his return from the Tang in 847, Ennin had a hall specially constructed in the Tōtō 東塔 sector for the practice of Fazhao's *nenbutsu* called Jōgyō dō 常行堂 ("Hall for the Always-Moving [Samadhi]"). We do not know what this hall looked like but we do know that when it was rebuilt by Sōō 相応 (831–918) in 883, it enshrined five statues: Amida plus the four bodhisattvas depicted in the Assembly of the Attained Body (*jōjinne* 成身会) of the Diamond Realm mandala.<sup>213</sup> If Sōō's reconstruction followed the original design designated by Ennin, this would suggest then that Ennin situated the practice of Fazhao's *nenbutsu* samadhi in an esoteric program of worship.

Annen's discussion of how Ennin transmitted Fazhao's five vocal styles for *nenbutsu* chanting examined above offers a glimpse into how the practice of *nenbutsu*

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<sup>213</sup> Bowring 1998 discusses this as well, see p. 230. Ryōgen later rebuilt the hall in the early tenth century and replaced these Buddhas with an arrangement based on Zhiyi's *Mohe zhiguan*: 觀音・姿至二菩薩 二比丘.

samadhi in such an esoteric context may have been interpreted. As discussed section one of this part, in his analysis of the Hymn to the Four Wisdoms as a mantra in the *Kongōkai taijuki*, Annen devotes considerable attention to musical techniques for singing this hymn, and he focuses especially on Fazhao’s five vocal styles for chanting *nenbutsu*. This suggests then that the method of go-e *nenbutsu* transmitted by Ennin was received as a technique for chanting hymns in Sanskrit and Chinese—that is, a kind of music, or what is known today as *shōmyō* 声明. It was not, in other words, used exclusively as a method for achieving rebirth in the Pure Land, but rather as a more general liturgical technique for praising the Buddha at Buddhist liturgies. This would suggest that already at the time of Ennin’s transmission, the practice of *nenbutsu* was highly mixed.

### **2.2.7 Kakuchō and the Development of Pure Land Liturgy and Doctrine after Genshin**

After Genshin, one of his disciples, Kakuchō 覚超 (960–1034), emerged as a leading figure in the development of the lecture-assembly. This is attested in the diary of Minamoto no Tsuneyori 源経頼 (985–1039), the *Sakeiki* 左経記. In an entry dated the fourteenth day of the tenth month of Kannin 3 (1019), Tsunenobu tells that the morning and evening lectures 朝夕講 handed down from Ryōgen and Genshin had lost funding and fallen into decline and, consequently, the monk Kakuchō approached him to solicit financial support for these practices.<sup>214</sup> This record indicates that, by Tsuneyori’s time, Kakuchō was regarded as the heir to Genshin’s liturgy of the lecture-assembly and also that he was instrumental in promoting this liturgy after his teacher’s death.

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<sup>214</sup> *Sakeiki*, p. 80.

During Genshin's lifetime, Kakuchō was a member of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e who had also acquired recognition as a lecturer, or *kōshi* 講師, at major annual rites funded by the imperial court. In 1002, he served as lecturer for the Lecture on the Golden Light Sutra (*Saishōkō* 最勝講) and in 1004 he participated in the Series of Eight Lectures on the Lotus Sutra (*hokke hakkō* 法華八講) at Higashi-Sanjō In. Appointment to these rites were crucial to advancement within the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the sanga, or *sōgō* 僧綱.<sup>215</sup> In 1029, he was appointed Supernumerary Lesser Bishop (*gonshō sōzu* 權少僧都). Kakuchō also received training in the esoteric teachings at Enryaku-ji in his youth. He is known to have authored numerous works on esoteric doctrine and practice such as the above-cited *Tōzai mandara-shō* 東西曼荼羅抄. In addition, he composed works on Pure Land teachings such as the *Ōjō gokuraku mondō* 往生極樂問答. After his death, he came to be regarded as the founder of the Kawa lineage 川流 on Mount Hiei, one of thirteen lineages centering the esoteric teachings within Tendai.

Kakuchō, during his lifetime, was particularly well known for his ability as a preacher, or *sekkyōshi* 説教師. His preaching activities are recorded in numerous contemporary diaries of the time, including, in addition to Tsuneyori's *Sakeiki*, the *Gonki* 権記 by Fujiwara no Yukinari 藤原行成 (972–1028) and the *Midō kanpaku-ki* 御堂関白記 by Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道長 (966–1028). Particularly illuminating for understanding his contribution to the liturgical form of the lecture-assembly is a *kōshiki* text dated 989 and composed in his own hand called the *Shuzen kōshiki* 修善講式.

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<sup>215</sup> See Sango, *The Halo of Golden Light*, Chapter Three: "Clerical promotion: domination, resistance, and alternatives."



Kakuchō's *Shuzen kōshiki* was discovered as recently as 1961 at the personal residence of the Ikebe 池辺 family in Izumi City of Osaka Prefecture.<sup>216</sup> This *kōshiki* documents a performance of a lecture-assembly for the local people of Izumi, Kakuchō hometown. According to the text, its purpose was to pray for the liberation from suffering and the attainment of joy for the spirits of local residents and their ancestors. Kakuchō's *kōshiki* describes the construction of a sutra and stipulates the practice of an annual lecture-assembly. It also indicates that the assembly consisted of forming mudras, drawing images of the Buddhas, copying sutras, building a stupa, and performing a memorial offering there.

In comparison to the Nijūgo Zanmai-e, Kakuchō *Shuzen kō* is decidedly more combinatory. The divinities invoked at the assembly included the Pure Land trinity of Amida, Seishi, and Kannon, but also featured, in addition, are Śakyāmuni Buddha as well as a number of bodhisattvas, Fugen, Monju, Kyokūzō, Jizō, and Miroku. The sutras chanted, moreover, were also not limited to those associated with the Pure Land Teachings. Of the three major canonical Pure Land sutras, only the Amida Sutra was chanted. In addition, Kakuchō's *Shuzen kō* also includes praise of the Lotus and Golden Light Sutras. Perhaps even important, however, is the inclusion of Shinto kami in the final statement for the transference of merit. Therein, Kakuchō invokes all kami in the land, not just all sentient beings on the six paths, as in the Nijūgo Zanmai-e. Merit from the assembly is, moreover, also offered up to benevolent and malevolent local spirits. The inclusion also of local spirits would have provided a compelling impetus for local people to participate also in the assembly.

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<sup>216</sup> For an analysis and transcription of this text, see Akamatsu Toshihide, *Kamakura Bukkyō no kenkyū*, "Fujiwara jida Jōdokyō to Kakuchō," pp. 305-332.

Another important point of contrast with the Nijūgo Zanmai-e is the textual form of Kakuchō's *kōshiki*. In contrast to Genshin's *Nijūgo Zanmai kōshiki*, Kakuchō's text is composed in a style of kanbun mixed with kana. The vernacular quality of his text, combined with the fact that it was written in his own hand, suggests that Kakuchō likely used it as notes for the performance of the assembly in a less formal setting to a more popular audience. Kakuchō himself was born into a class of local powerholders (*dogō* 土豪) from Izumi. In contrast to Genshin, Yasutane, and the members of the Kangaku-e, he was not, in other words, of aristocratic birth. It follows therefore that he would be interested in attempting to appeal to the people in their own language and, also, knew well their religious concerns, such as the spiritual wellbeing of their ancestors in the afterlife, and how to bring them to the fore of liturgies for rebirth in the pure land.

In the mid-twelfth century, Kakuchō was remembered among preachers as the founder of the tradition of *sekkyō* 説経 (also 説教), or preaching, a form of liturgical performance that emerged out of the lecture-assembly. The *Tenpōrin hiden* 転法輪秘伝, a twelfth-century secret transmission text on the history and practice of *sekkyō* in Japan, for example, venerates Kakuchō as an exemplary predecessor in the tradition of preaching, or *sekkyōshi*.<sup>217</sup> As an example of his preaching, the text describes Kakuchō's service as the officiant for a Buddhist ritual to send off the monk Jakushō 寂照 on his journey to China. Emphasis is placed on his ability to appeal to the people and move their hearts.

Inoue Mitsusada has also singled out Kakuchō as a pivotal figure in the popularization of Pure Land in the eleventh century. Key to Kakuchō's success, he argues,

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<sup>217</sup> Tabuchi Kazuo 馬淵和夫, "Honkoku, Daigojizō *Tenpōrin hiden*," p. 10. For a discussion of Kakuchō's preaching activities, see Abe Yasurō "Shōdō: shōdō setsuwa kō," pp. 22-25.

was his mastery of the kind of magic, or *jujutsu*, that he believes was essential also to Kūya's dissemination of the Pure Land teachings among the people a generation earlier.<sup>218</sup> This view however is predicated on Inoue's agenda to discover in what he calls the Pure Land Teachings of the Fujiwara-Period—that is, the early tenth-century—an precursor to Hōnen's Pure Land Teachings in the Kamakura period and distinguish it from a communal form that was based on magic and was more popular among the people in the tenth century. This agenda attributes a sectarian telos to the development of Pure Land: all forms of Pure Land that cannot be understood as antecedents to Hōnen's school are dismissed as either aesthetic (*biteki* 美的), quietistic (*sei-teki* 靜的), and abstract (*kansō-teki* 觀想的)—that is, as aristocratic Buddhism—or magical, cacophonous (*kyōsō-teki* 狂躁的), and shamanistic (*shamanisuteikku*)—that is, as popular Buddhism.

The figure of Kakuchō does not fit well within Inoue's rigid dichotomization of Pure Land in the late tenth and early eleventh century. Kakuchō was at once a learned scholar and popular performer. While he may have adapted his teachings to his audience, his writings demonstrate that his liturgical practices were not founded on a kind of voodoo or magic but rather followed the rules of Lotus-Esoteric discourse. One of the few doctrinal writings attributed to Kakuchō that has been confirmed to have been authored by him, the *Tō mandara shō bekkān* 東曼荼羅抄別卷 (T 2997), displays his knowledge and creative re-interpretation of the kind of economic buddhological system devised by Annen. As we saw in part 1, section 2 on Annen's buddha-body theory, Annen posited a view of the Dharma body's preaching as infinite in its scope, embracing all sentient beings as instruments of self-bound joy-in-the-Dharma and, in so doing,

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<sup>218</sup> Inoue, *Nihon Jōdokyō seiritsu-shi no kenkyū*, p. 120.

renders the distinction between self-bound and other-bound bodies inoperative. In his *Tō mandara shō*, Kakuchō extends this line of analysis yet further, put forward the radical proposal that the Vairocana Buddha is not a self-bound function body at all, but rather an other-bound function body: “Now this preacher Vairocana is an other-bound function reward body. This other-bound function [body] is also called the supreme response body.”<sup>219</sup> Thus, Kakuchō, far from a kind of shaman, was well versed in the recondite doctrines of Lotus-Esoteric discourse, and yet, at the same time, was also an effective performer who was able to appeal to the imagination of the common people.

After Kakuchō, Lotus-Esoteric discourse was brought further to the fore of Pure Land liturgy and doctrine. From the mid-eleventh through early twelfth centuries, early medieval Tendai witnessed the formation of a lineage of Tendai Pure Land Buddhism variously called Kanjin hōmon, Kuden hōmon, and Hongaku hōmon. This lineage produced a number of influential doctrinal texts that were retrospectively attributed to Kakuchō and his teacher, Genshin. For the purposes of our discussion, these texts are valuable for the light they shed on how eleventh century Tendai thinkers drew on Lotus-Esoteric discourse to formulate new conceptions of Amida and his pure land. These conceptions challenge certain stereotypes about Pure Land Buddhism, such as that it was opposed to the idea of Buddhahood or that it was predicated on a pessimism about this life, stereotypes, in other words, that derive from a sectarian understanding of Hōnen’s Pure Land Buddhism. This tradition of Pure Land thought, however, was especially important in the development of lecture-assemblies in the twelfth century, as will be discussed in the next part of this chapter.

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<sup>219</sup> *Ima kyōshū Birushana, kore taju-yō hōshin. Tajū-yō mata shō’ōjin to nadzuku nari* 今教主毘盧遮那、是他受用報身歟。他受用亦名勝應身也。

An eleventh-century commentary spuriously attributed to Kakuchō on another apocryphal text attributed to Genshin, the *Jigyō ryakki chū* 自行略記注 (“Commentary on the Abbreviated Record of Self-Practice”), provides an example of how early medieval Tendai Pure Land thought drew on Lotus-Esoteric discourse to develop theories that challenge contemporary stereotypical notions of Pure Land Buddhism. In a commentary on a line from pseudo-Genshin’s *Jigyō ryakki* 自行略記注 that examines a central scriptural passage from the *Fugen Sutra* on the infinite permeation of Śakyāmuni that was used to argue the identity of Śakyāmuni Buddha with Mahāvairocana, pseudo-Kakuchō explains:

“Śakyāmuni Buddha is called the Vairocana who Permeates All Places.”<sup>220</sup> This suggests that Vairocana is Mahāvairocana Dharmakaya. “All places” refers to the Dharma-realm in the ten directions. Because [Śakyāmuni] is a Dharma body that permeates and fills the realms in the ten directions, He is also the Dharma body that fills our body and mind. Moreover, because the Dharma realm exists in our mind, our mind is the Dharma-realm. The Dharma realm is the Dharma body. The Dharma body is our mind. Our mind is the Dharma body. The place where this Buddha abides is the Land of Eternal Quiescence and Light. Thus, our body is the Dharma Body Tathāgata. Our body is the Pure Land of Ultimate Joy of Quiescence and Light. When we do not know this, we seek the Buddha body on the outside and long for the Pure Land separate [from our body]. This is a delusion within a delusion. If form and mind are separate, they become impermanent dharmas, and we receive the reward of birth-and-death. If form and mind are nondual, we become one-body with the Buddha and his land. This is what is known as “Buddhahood in this body.” [The Pure Land of] Ultimate Joy is not outside; it lies within the mind of the True Character. Amida is not far. [His name] refers to the wisdom of the virtue of nature. This is the non-arrival of the arrival [of Amida]. This is the non-departure of rebirth [in the Pure Land]. Nenbutsu refers to the Buddha of the Dharma body. Rebirth refers to the land of Quiescence and

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<sup>220</sup> *Fugen Sutra*, T 9:392c15–16. Zhiyi also cites this in a key passage from his *Fahua xuanyi* 法華玄義, T 33:766c23–26. Pseudo-Genshin then cites it in his *Jigyō ryakki* 自行略記, *Eishin sozu zenshū* (ESZ) Vol. 5: 600–601. On the importance of this line in Tendai esotericism, see Ōkubo, “Tendai kyōgaku no konpon shisō,” pp. 8–17.

Light. For this reason, it is taken to be that which refers to *nenbutsu* and gives rise to our expectations for rebirth.<sup>221</sup>

Commenting on pseudo-Genshin's gloss on the infinite permeation of Vairocana, pseudo-Kakuchō extrapolates that Vairocana is a Dharma body that permeates the body and mind of sentient beings. This claim is then used as a premise for the doctrine that all sentient beings only attain Buddhahood but also rebirth in the pure land in their own bodies. The Pure Land, the text argues, is not external, but resides within. This passage thus provides a striking example of how early medieval Tendai thinkers made use of Lotus-Esoteric buddha-body theory to reconcile two seemingly opposing claims: rebirth in the pure land, on the one hand, and Buddhahood in this body, on the other.<sup>222</sup>

The doctrines of the Kanjin Hōmon lineage demonstrate the importance of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in the development of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan. This calls into question the view first put forward by Kuroda Toshio that the system of esoteric Buddhism that he called “*kenmitsu*” was essentially a top-down regime, a kind of ideology conspired by the intelligentsia and imposed by them, the ruling class, upon the common people below. Kakuchō offers an exemplary case of a monk who was both well-established within the so-called *kenmitsu* orthodoxy but at the same also directly engaged with popular Buddhist movements.

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<sup>221</sup> Cited in Ōkubo, *Tendai kyōgaku to hongaku shisō*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>222</sup> Even Hayami Tasuku, who attempted to show the importance of esoteric practices in mid-Heian period Pure Land Buddhism, characterized Pure Land as other-worldly (*genze hiteiteki* 現世否定的) and esoteric Buddhism as this-worldly (*genzeteiki* 現世的).

### 3 Esoteric Modes of Performance in the Late Heian Period: Waka as Mantra and the Transformation of Buddhist Liturgy for the Kami

In Part 2 of this chapter, we examined the articulation of Lotus-Esoteric discourse, first, in esoteric initiation rites in the late ninth century and, then, in Pure Land liturgies in the late tenth through twelfth centuries. The Pure Land liturgy of the lecture-assembly, in particular, I argued, was crucial to the spread of esoteric Buddhist ideology among both aristocrats and the common people. We also observed that this liturgy played an important role in the incorporation of *kanshi* into Buddhist ritual as a form of hymn-singing. This third part of the chapter considers Lotus-Esoteric discourse in the late Heian-period and shows how it contributed to the development of another form of liturgy that was also crucial to the spread of Buddhism among the people: offering ceremonies (*kuyō* 供養) dedicated to the kami. In addition, like the lecture-assembly examined in Part 2, the liturgy of the kami-offering ceremony opened up a new context for the performance of secular court poetry. The form of poetry that took shape in this context came to be known as “Dharma joy *waka*.” It was closely associated with the poetic theory that posits *waka* to be a Japanese form of mantra. Our investigation of Dharma joy *waka* will conclude with an examination of this theory as it was first worked out by Jien in the late Heian and early Kamakura period.

#### 3.1 Traces of the Buddha’s Body: *Honji suijaku* and Lotus-Esoteric Discourse

As discussed in Part 1, the Tendai reformulation of the esoteric in the late ancient period was predicated on an economic theory of the buddha’s body. We noted that, in the wake of Kūkai’s taxonomy of the esoteric, Tendai scholar-liturgists in the ninth century

became fundamentally concerned with establishing the identity of Śakyāmuni, the preacher of the main scripture of their school, the *Lotus Sutra*, with Mahāvairocana, the preacher of the esoteric scriptures. To do so, they had to reconcile the differences between the way each Buddha is understood to preach: the former, in his inner palace of enlightenment to an audience of his own self retinue; the latter, in the realm of samsara to an audience of ordinary sentient beings. Attempts at reconciling this difference led to the position that the Dharma body of Mahāvairocana not only preaches in his inner palace but, like Śakyāmuni, preaches also to ordinary sentient beings. This shift in discourse on the language of the esoteric Buddha, which I called Lotus-Esoteric discourse and characterize as an expansion of an economical view of the Buddha's body, was correlated, on the level of ritual practice, to an opening up of the esoteric ritual language of mantra to other non-esoteric modes of ritual performance such as hymn-singing.

In Part 2, we then looked at how later, in the tenth century, with the rise of Pure Land Buddhism, this same economic paradigm of the buddha's body was then applied to conceptions of Amida. The argument was then made that the articulation of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in Pure Land liturgy suggests that, contrary to classical *kenmitsu* theory, esoteric Buddhism (*kenmitsu*) played an important role in the spread of Pure Land among the people.

The working of Lotus-Esoteric Buddhist discourse in the dissemination of Buddhist ideology became even more prominent in the mid-to late Heian period. At this time—that is, beginning with the Michinaga era—kami worship, as Uejima Susumu has shown, became a crucial part of a broader Buddhist ritual system, or *hōe no taikei* 法会の体系, implemented as a politico-religious strategy to disseminate the sovereign power, or



*ōken*, of, first, the Fujiwara regency in the early eleventh century and then, the Retired emperor in the late eleventh through twelfth.<sup>223</sup> The ideological linchpin for this sociopolitical development was a new buddhological doctrine called “original ground and flowing traces,” or *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹. This doctrine stated that kami were the Japanese trace, or emanation, flowing out from a Buddha, or original ground.

The distinction between origin (*hon* 本) and traces (*jaku* 跡) figures prominently in Zhiyi but, as we saw in Section 2 of Part 1, it was Ennin who articulated a systematic understanding of the relation between the origin, or substance (*tai* 体), and trace, or function (*yō* 用), of the Buddha’s nature as a being who preaches the Dharma to save sentient beings. In the view developed within Lotus-Esoteric discourse, kami represented a function of the Buddha’s body that was responsive to the ritual acts of Buddhist liturgy and also particularly efficacious in its interventions into the human world. This view emerged specifically out of the liturgical practice of offering the Dharma to kami.

While it was under Michinaga’s religious policies that such Buddhist liturgies for the kami acquired a more crucial political function, the beginnings of the practice can be traced all the back to 794, the first year of the Heian period. At this time, with the spread of Buddhism throughout the country, Buddhist temples began to be built on near Shinto shrines, the sacred purview of the kami. These shrine-temple complexes became known as *jungūji* 神宮寺.<sup>224</sup> The rationale for the existence of such religious institutions was predicated on a belief that the kami, like other sentient beings in samsara, needed to be

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<sup>223</sup> Uejima, *Nihon chūsei shakai no keisei to ōken*. See Chapter 3, “*Chūsei shūkyō shihai chitsujo no keisei*,” pp. 228–292.

<sup>224</sup> For a discussion on the establishment of *jungūji*, see Grapard, *Protocol of the Gods*, pp. 72–74.

saved by the Buddha's teachings. This view came to be known by the four-character compound *shinjin ridatsu* 神身離脱, or the liberation of kami from their bodies (trapped in samsara). To deliver kami from samsara, Shinto priests engaged in the practice of reading Buddhist scriptures in front of altar to the kami at *jingūji* shrines (*shinzen-dokkyō* 神前読経).<sup>225</sup> The Kami thus converted came to be known as “Good Dharma-Protecting Kami” (*zenshin gohō* 善神護法) and could be counted on for various blessings and protections.

By the early twelfth century, the practice of *shinzen-dokkyō* had become explicitly associated with the concept of “Dharma joy.” In this context, Dharma joy signified specifically the act of offering the joy of the Dharma to kami. The early twelfth century collection of tales, the *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集, provides the first citation of this usage. It tells the story of how a monk from Kyoto who, though not particularly distinguished in his practice of the dharma, was diligent in chanting sutras and one day decided to chant sutras for a kami enshrined at an altar on the corner of Higashi Sanjō in Kyoto. The *Konjaku* describes this monk's act as an offering of Dharma joy, or *hōraku*. The tale then goes on to recount the numerous miracles and blessings the kami manifested to repay the monk for his kindness.<sup>226</sup> In this tale, the offering of Dharma joy is understood as an act oriented toward beings other than the practitioner. In its emphasis on benefitting others, this usage thus represents an extension of Lotus-Esoteric discourse on Dharma joy. However, it also, at the same time, implies a further extension of this

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<sup>225</sup> Grapard, *Protocol of the Gods*, p. 72. See also Kusunoki, “Heian-shoki no shinzen dokyō” and Sagai, “Chūsei ni okeru shinzen dokkyō no ba.”

<sup>226</sup> SNKZ 36, p. 566.

discourse that addresses the question of how Buddhist liturgical performance, in this case sutra-reading, effects the divine sympathy and response of the kami.

### 3.2 Chōken's Preaching for an 1180 Kamo Shrine Hall Dedication Ceremony: Hymn-singing as Mantra and the Divine Sympathy of the Kami

On the basis of origins-traces buddha-body theory, Buddhist priests in the late Heian period began to incorporate waka-recitation, which they called *eika* 詠歌, into their offerings of Dharma to the kami. The first example of this practice is documented in an 1106 Kanbun preface to a collection of waka poems authored by Fujiwara no Mototoshi 藤原基俊 (1060–1142), the teacher of renowned Heian-period waka poet Fujiwara no Shunzei 藤原俊成 (1114–1204). The preface is titled: “Preface to Waka Poems by the Adept of Ungo’ji (Sensai) in Repentance for Wild Words and Fanciful Phrases” (*Ungoji Shōnin Kyōgen kigo o sen suru waka no jo* 雲居寺聖人讖狂言綺語和歌序).<sup>227</sup>

Sensai 瞻西 (d.1127) was a renowned Tendai preacher based out of Ungoji located in what is now the precincts of Kyoto’s Kōdaiji. Historical sources indicate his dual expertise in Tendai esotericism and Pure Land teachings. In his diary, the *Chūyuki* 中右記, Fujiwara no Munetada 藤原宗忠 (1062-1141) records that in the third month of 1104 Sensai performed Dharma-preaching, or *seppō* 説法, for a memorial offering of a Lotus-mandala (*Hokke mandara* 法華曼荼羅), a paradigmatic articulation of Lotus-

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<sup>227</sup> KST 30, p. 236. Mototoshi’s preface is included in the *Honchō shōjoshū* 本朝小序集, a collection of poem-prefaces that shed valuable light on the practice of waka from the eleventh through mid-twelfth century. For more on this collection, see Honma, “Honchō shōjo shū.”

Esoteric discourse in Buddhist ritual.<sup>228</sup> Munetada also records numerous instances of Sensai's performance at Pure Land liturgies. Especially noteworthy is his dedication of a large gilt Amida statue in 1125. Based on the prominence of Amida in the iconographic program of Ungoji, Sarah Horton has recently suggested that this temple served as a key site for the performance of the lecture-assembly based on Genshin's Nijūgo Zanmai-e called the Mukae-kō 迎講, an important Pure Land liturgy.<sup>229</sup>

Contemporary accounts praise Sensai as an extraordinarily eloquent preacher.<sup>230</sup> His creative use of waka poetry as part of his performance seems to have been one of the qualities that distinguished him from preachers who came before him. In his collection of tales about waka poetry, the *Fukuro sōshi* 袋草子, leading waka poet and theorist, Fujiwara no Kiyosuke 藤原清輔 (1104–1177), for example, tells a story about a humorous poem improvised by Sensai during one of his preaching performances.<sup>231</sup> Another tale in the twelfth-century collection, the *Kokon chomonju* 古今著聞集, suggests

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<sup>228</sup> This overview of historical sources on Sensai is based on Koguma 1987. For a timeline, see p. 32. For more on the significance of the Lotus mandala, see Dolce 2006 and Mizukami 2008, Part 3, Chapter 2, “Hokke mandara to enmitsu itchi shisō no ‘mandara,’” pp. 390-411.

<sup>229</sup> Horton 2008, p. 51.

<sup>230</sup> Contemporary accounts of Sensai's preaching can be found in the diary of Fujiwara no Tametaka 藤原為隆 (1070–1130), *Eishō ki* 永昌記, Mototoshi's personal poetry collection, the *Mototoshi shū* 基俊集, and a collection of tales about waka poetry by Fujiwara no Kiyosuke 藤原清輔 (1104–1177), the *Fukuro zōshi* 袋草子. In an entry dated the second day of the fourth month of Hoan 4 (1124), Tametaka's *Eishō ki* describes Sensai's preaching as being “like the welling up of a fount of words” (*gosen waku ga gotoshi* 如湧言泉). See p. \_\_. Mototoshi expresses similar praise: “His words on the Dharma were inexhaustible, welling forth like out of a fount” (*deru izumi no waka ga goto, Nori no kotoba mo tukusezarikeri* 出る泉の湧くが如、法の言葉も尽せざりけり). These contemporary accounts of Sensai's preaching are cited in Abe 1998, p. 110.

<sup>231</sup> Incidentally, Kiyosuke's description of Sensai follows a tale about poem composed by Kakuchō during one of his preaching performances, which, moreover, is then followed by a tale about Genshin's revelation about the Buddhist efficacy of waka. We will examine the latter below. See SNKT 29, pp. 110-111.

the innovative ways that Sensai put waka to use in the context of Buddhist liturgies dedicated to the goal of raising funds for his temple. The tale mentions a “waka mandala” that Sensai produced along with waka poets and used for liturgies for soliciting donations for the construction of a hall at Ungoji.<sup>232</sup> It is likely that hall mentioned in this tale refers to the hall that stored the large Amida statue dedicated in 1125. Sensai is also known to have organized a number of poetry gatherings as part of his efforts to rebuild Ungoji.<sup>233</sup> His name is mentioned in the personal collections of some of the most renowned poets of his day, including Minamoto no Toshiyori 源俊頼 (Shunrai; 1057–1129),<sup>234</sup> Mother of Yasusuke’ō 康資王母 (Shijō no Miya no Chikuzen 四条宮筑前; dates unknown),<sup>235</sup> and Mototoshi.<sup>236</sup> His activities as host of poetry gatherings and close associations with waka poets suggest that Sensai hosted a kind of literary salon based out of Ungoji. Based on these activities, Ogawa Toyō 小川豊往 has identified Sensai as a key figure in the invention of new rituals and theories that characterized early Insei-period Buddhism.<sup>237</sup>

Mototoshi’s poem preface explains how Sensai, in order to repent for the sin, or transgression (*ayamachi* 過), of “coarse words” (*sogon* 麁言) and “fanciful phrases”

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<sup>232</sup> Section 5, Entry 164: “How the Adept Sensai Shōnin Completed the Construction of Ungoji and Drew a Waka Mandala” (*Sensai shōnin, Ungoji o zōkyū shi waka mandara wo zue shitaru koto* 瞻西上人、雲居寺を造畢し和歌曼陀羅を図絵したる事). NKBT 84: pp. 152-53.

<sup>233</sup> Utaawase hosted by Sensai: 永久四年 (1116) 七月「雲居寺歌合」; 永久四年 (1116) 八月「雲居寺結縁経後宴歌合」; 永久四年 (1116) 九月十八日「雲居寺後番歌合」. See *Heian utaawase taisei* 平安歌合大成, Vol. 6, pp. 286-288.

<sup>234</sup> *Sanboku kikashū* 散木寄歌集: 131, 252, 324, 520, 568, 874, 882.

<sup>235</sup> Yasusuke’ō no Haha-shū 康資王母集: 134–139.

<sup>236</sup> *Mototoshi-shū* 基俊集: 51, 102, 116, 148, 156, 157, 175.

<sup>237</sup> Ogawa Toyō. “Netsuzō sareru ‘hajimari.’”

(*kigo* 綺語), drew an image of Sumiyoshi and, in front of that image, lectured on the sutras (*kōkyō* 講經):

As for the origins of waka, its spirit harks back to [times] long ago. Ever since the Principles of *Yin* and *Yang* took shape and the forms of the mountains and rivers differentiated, the Luminous Deities have responded to the recitation of poetry (*eika* 詠歌). Thus, the Luminous Deity of Sumiyoshi unfurls traces [in response to] allegory. Literati of later generations have learned these subtle words and [have thus] inherited his motes of dust. Inquiring carefully into the original ground (*honji*) of this Luminous Deity, we [discover that] he is none other than Kōkitokuō Bodhisattva. Investigating closely the identity of this Bodhisattva, [we find that] he is the one who gathered the sutra when the Buddha died in the Śāla forest and later preached them.<sup>238</sup> The sutra states: “Coarse words and refined language alike return to the texts of the Ultimate Principle.” How true indeed are these words. In the [space] that remains from calm-and-contemplation (*shikan* 止觀) practice, in the gap that [opens up in] *zazen*, I spontaneously compose waka poetry from time to time. Just for fun, on mornings in spring, I describe the cherry blossoms as clouds. As a lighthearted game, under the moon in autumn, I refer to the moonlight as snow. It is difficult indeed to avoid the error of coarse words—how much more so the transgression of fanciful phrases. Therefore, I have drawn a portrait of this bodhisattva and copied a sutra. With them, I face the image and lecture on the sutras. Worshipping the sutras, I repent my sins. Let us pray: May the wild words I have produced in my lifetime turn into a cause and condition for threefold [perfect] enlightenment.<sup>239</sup>

Mototoshi’s preface opens with a history of waka poetry that emphasizes the power of poetry-recitation, or *eika*, to evoke the response (*kan* 感) of the kami. Based on this, it can be inferred that waka-recitation was also included in the offerings to Sumiyoshi.

Mototoshi, presumably under Sensai’s instruction, offers the following rationale for this practice: Sumiyoshi is a kami that, in response to poetry, unfurls its trace; the original

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<sup>238</sup> This reference to the Śāla forest seems to have been informed by lecture-assemblies on the Nirvana Sutra. See, for example, the fourth stanza of the *shikimon* for the *Nehan kōshiki* 涅槃講式 in which reference is made to the twin Śāla trees where Śakyāmuni entered into nirvana. See Yamada, *Kō’e no bungaku*, p91.

<sup>239</sup> For another translation, see Plutschow 1990, p. 161.

ground for this trace is Kōkitokuō Bodhisattva; the discourse expounded by this original-ground bodhisattva is no different from the sermons of Śakyāmuni; therefore, waka, though it resembles the error (*toga* 咎) of coarse words (*sogon* 麁言) and fanciful phrases (*kigo* 綺語), accords with the Buddha's teachings.

The next generation of preachers after Sensai held him in particularly high regard. The most renowned preacher of the late Heian period, Chōken 澄憲 (1126–1223), who came to be considered the founder of the illustrious lineage of Tendai preachers called the Agui 安居院, hailed Sensai as a living “emanation” (*gonja* 権者) and told fantastical stories about the miraculous events that took place when he preached.<sup>240</sup> Chōken also, more than any other preacher of his generation, was particularly committed to further developing Sensai's innovative uses of waka poetry for Buddhist liturgies dedicated to the kami.

The comprehensive collection of Agui preaching texts, the *Tenpōrinshō* 転法輪鈔, compiled by Chōken's son and heir to the Agui lineage, Shōkaku 聖覚 (1167–1235), includes a record of a preaching performance by Chōken for a dedication of a Buddhist hall at the Kamo Shrine sponsored by its chief priest Kamo no Shigeyasu 賀茂重保 (1119–1191). There are two extant manuscripts of this record, the Rekihaku manuscript preserved at the National Museum of Japanese History 国立歴史民俗博物館 and the Kanazawa Bunko manuscript preserved at the Kanazawa Bunko Museum 金沢文庫.

While they both have a similar title, the *Kamo shinshu Shigeyasu dō kuyō hyōbyaku* 賀茂

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<sup>240</sup> See Chōken's *Hongan shōnin tantoku no koto* 本願上人歎徳 (“Praise for Hongan Shōnin”) in his collection of exegeses (*shaku* 釈) on the *Lotus Sutra* and *Amida Sutra*, the *Hokke kyō narabi Amida kyō shaku* 法華經阿弥陀經釈. See Abe 1998, pp. 181-183 and 187-88. I would like to thank Michael Jamentz for bringing this fascinating text to my attention.

神主重保堂供養表白 (“Invocatory Statement for the Dedication of a Hall by Chief Priest of Kamo Shigeyasu”) and the *Kamo shinshu dō kukyō* 賀茂神主堂供養 (“Hall Dedication by the Chief Priest of Kamo”), respectively, each differs in content. The Kanazawa record is more comprehensive. In addition to the *hyōbyaku*, it also includes other elements of preaching performance, including the sutra exegesis (*kyōshaku* 經尺) and section on the patron (*sesu dan* 施主段)—two less formal elements of preaching that were not often recorded in writing. Both manuscripts however present a similar description of the event and share a similar understanding of its significance.<sup>241</sup> For this reason, Abe Yasurō, the scholar who led the team that transcribed the Rekihaku manuscript in 2012, understands both records to refer to the same event, which he identifies as an 1180 hall dedication at the Upper Kamo Shrine sponsored by Shigeyasu.<sup>242</sup>

The concept of “Dharma Joy” figures prominently in both manuscripts. However, only the Rekihaku manuscript explicitly identifies it with waka poetry. After describing the offering of the hall and the sculptures of the three buddhas and two bodhisattvas that were installed there, Chōken refers to a dais set up in the back of the hall behind the statues:

In addition, we have set up a dais behind the Buddha, copied essential passages from the Mahayana [Scriptures], and drawn Venerable Images of Holy Ones and Sentient Beings alike. On square colored paper, using the

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<sup>241</sup> Michael Jamentz has point out, in personal correspondence with the author, that the *honzon* described in each record differs: the Rekihaku record describes the installation of a five-*shaku* Amida Tathāgata as the central icon, accompanied by a three-*shaku* Śakyāmuni and Yakushi statue, and flanked by Kannon and Seishi; the Kanazawa bunko record, by contrast, describes an eight-*shaku* Amida and without any accompanying statues. On this basis, Jamentz has expressed reservations that they refer to the same dedication ceremony.

<sup>242</sup> See Makino and Abe, forthcoming.



folk custom of the Land of the [Rising] Sun, we have created arrangements of poems for recitation (*eika* 詠歌).

By Chōken's time, it was commonplace to refer to waka as a "folk custom" of our land.<sup>243</sup> We can assume, therefore, that the poems for recitation, or *eika*, that were inscribed on colored paper were waka poems. The commonplace of waka as a folk custom is repeated again in the next line, followed by a prayer for transforming waka poems on nature into a Buddhist medium for praising the Buddha and lecturing on the sutras—that is, as a hymn:

Now, this is a folk custom of Our Realm and, moreover, is something Our Patron enjoys. Thus, we endeavor to turn the arising of the Wind, Clouds, Grasses, and Trees into a condition for praising the Buddha and lecturing on the Sutras.

Chōken here refers to the fact that the patron, Kamo no Shigeyasu, enjoys poetry. In addition to serving as Kamo Shrine priest, Shigeyasu was an active poet and leading figure in a poetry circle known as the Karin'en 歌林苑.<sup>244</sup> In 1182, he compiled the *Tsuki mode wakashū* 月詣和歌集, a collection of poems composed mostly at poetry gatherings he hosted at Kamo Shrine in the 1170s. The preface to the collection states that he along with the monk Yūshō 祐盛,<sup>245</sup> another leading Karin'en participant, dedicated the collection to the Kamo deity, Wake-ikazuki, and stored it among the sacred regalia of the kami in the shrine. The rationale for this practice, he explains, lies in waka's power to offer kami karmic conditions (*en* えん) for play and enjoyment (*asobi tawamure* あそび

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<sup>243</sup> We will examine this in Jien's discourse on waka poetry below.

<sup>244</sup> The Karin'en will be examined in detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>245</sup> Yūshō was a well-known for using waka poetry in his preaching. See the anecdote about Yūshō in the *Mumyōshō* 無名抄 by another Karin'en member, Kamo no Chōmei 鴨長明 (1155–1216), section 15: "Uta no fūtei no koto" in Yanase, *Mumyōshō zenkō*, pp. 117-120.

たわむれ) that soften their hearts (*kokoro o nagomuru* 御ころをなこむる) and evoke their divine sympathy.<sup>246</sup>

Chōken’s prayer invokes a liturgical formula that can also be found in his *hyōbyaku* for a sutra-offering ceremony organized by the Karin’en called the *Waka mandokoro ipponkyō hyōbyaku*. We will analyze this *hyōbyaku* in detail in the next section, but suffice it to say here that this indicates that the consecration of *waka* as a means of praising the Buddha—that is, as a hymn—in the context of “sutra-lectures” was a central part of this hall dedication.

Chōken then describes the date and setting for the offering and beseeches the kami of the Upper Kamo Shrine, Wakeikazuchi and his attendants, to reveal their divine presence in response to the “Adornment of Dharma Joy” (*shōgon hōraku* 莊嚴法樂):

Moreover, the Great Imperial Wakeikazuchi Luminous Deity of Kamo and the Retinue of the Prince of Kifune Kataoka, [in response to] the Adornment of Dharma Joy and the Expansion of Radiant Authority, emanate from the jeweled hedges of the madder plant, manifest in the space of the place for practice of the Way, abandon offerings in the paddy fields, and descend upon the tatami mat of Dharma Joy [where the officiant of the ritual offering leads the congregation].

In Chōken’s use of the term, Dharma joy here refers, in addition to the performance of *waka* poetry, hymn-singing, and preaching mentioned above, also to the material objects made as offering for the ceremony, first and foremost, of course, the hall itself as well as the statues installed therein.

The Rekihaku *Tenpōrinshō* explicitly labels this record for the Kamo Shrine hall dedication as an “invocatory statement,” or *hyōbyaku*. A *hyōbyaku*, in this context, refers to a statement composed by the leading officiant of the ceremony, the *dōshi* 導師, and

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<sup>246</sup> Sugiyama 1987, pp. 17–19.

whose purpose is to set forth its intent and merit. The Kanazawa bunko *Tenpōrinshō* record is not labeled a *hyōbyaku*, but rather appears under the title: Hall dedication by the Chief Priest of the Kamo Shrine (*Kamo shinshu dō kuyō* 賀茂神主堂供養). Its contents reveal that this document is much more than an introductory invocation, or *hyōbyaku*, but rather represents a comprehensive record of key facets of the art of preaching other than *hyōbyaku* that are usually not recorded, such as the sutra-exegesis (*kyōshaku* 經釈) and the section on the patron (*seshudan* 施主段). More than a typical *hyōbyaku*, this record therefore provides a detailed account of not only the offering but also the doctrines that underpin the practices that accompany the offering. Specifically, the Kanazawa bunko record documents the centrality of hymn-singing at the dedication ceremony for the Kamo Shrine hall and demonstrates the ways in which a leading figure in the integration of Buddhism with literature, Chōken, drew on and reformulated Lotus-Esoteric discourse to consecrate and rationalize this practice.

In the Kanazawa bunko record, Chōken opens with an invocation of divinities featured in the Womb- and Diamond Realms. After a series of esoteric Buddhist divinities, he addresses all Good Dharma-Protecting Kami (*Zenshin gohō* 善神護法):

In reverence, we address: the Preacher of Mantra, Eternally Abiding in the Three Realms, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata, in the Eight-Part Lotus Pedestal of the Womb of Great Compassion, surrounded by the Venerable Sattvas of the Four Wisdoms and Four Practices, the Venerable Sages and Beings of the Three Divisions and Five Divisions, the Thirty-Seven Honored Ones of the Vajra Realm Assembly, the Venerable Sages and Beings of the Nine Assemblies of the Mandala, the Great Wrathful Ones of the Four Elements and Eight Elements of the Outer Vajra Division, all Heavenly Ones of the Five Kinds, including the Twelve Great Heavenly Ones and the Twenty Heavenly Ones, the Great Teachers of the Repository of the Lamp of Transmission across the Three Countries, Nagarjuna and Nagabodhi, all places luminous and quiescent in the Eye of the Buddha,

and the Good Dharma-Protecting Kami who reveal and conceal mysterious blessings.

The opening invocation lays out the buddhological framework for the dedication ceremony. In this framework, kami perform the role of manifesting mysterious blessings (*genroku* 玄祿). This suggests an emphasis on benefiting others that we saw in Annen's buddha-body theory, but focused specifically on the kami as the agents of this function of the buddha-body.

After the opening invocation, Chōken describes the offering: a hall (*dō* 堂) that he calls a *garan* 伽藍, or “monastic building,” in which they installed an eight-*shaku* Amida statue. For the dedication, they also made a copy of the Lotus Sutra. The service was conducted over the course of one day (*ichinichi sai'e* 一日齋会). Chōken then praises the merit of erecting monastic buildings and cites three figures from ancient India, China, and Japan, respectively, as exemplars of this practice. Noting the special importance of offerings in the last days of the Dharma (*mappō* 末法), Chōken praises Shigeyasu's generosity in making offering to the Three Jewel. With these statements of praise, Chōken consecrates his offering of a hall as “Dharma Joy” and dedicates it to the deity of the Upper Kamo Shrine, Wake'ikazuchi Myōjin 別雷明神:

With these good roots that we have cultivated, we first offer the Joy of the Dharma (*hōraku* 法樂) to the Great Luminous Deity of Wake'ikezuchi. May the Upper and Lower Luminous Kami and the shrines of their retinue let their Acceptance of [Human] Suffering (*aimin nōju* 哀愍納受) be known and manifest to all. May the Radiant Authority of Every Kami Altar throughout the Kingdom and the Heavenly Ones of the Three Realms, through the Adornment of Dharma Joy (*hōraku shōgon* 法樂莊嚴), each increase the light of their glory. Thus, may the four kinds of beings, from the peaks on high to the limitless depths below, all transcend the domain of suffering and may the three realms [desire, form, and formless] equally receive the benefits of the Dharma (*hōri* 法利).

Chōken here submits a prayer for the hall dedication and its accompanying offerings to give the joy of the Dharma to kami and, thereby, evoke their compassionate response, increase their glory, and cause all sentient beings to receive the benefits of the Dharma. This prayer thus echoes the opening invocation's emphasis on the kami as agents for bringing benefits, in this case the benefits of the Dharma, to others.

The next section of the Kanazawa Bunko record describes the ceremony performed for the dedication of the hall and its Amida statue. It focuses specifically on the performance of hymn-singing as mantra:

We have erected an *ārāma* and have enshrined in it an eight-*shaku* venerable image of Amida Tathāgata, adorned an altar for the Three Mysteries, and [now] carry out a dedication in one day. We have placed [our faith in] the efficacious power of Mudra and Mantra in the Way of the Attainment [*siddhi*] of Great Prayers. The Exoteric Teachings [teach that] the efficacious power of [singing] hymns of praise is an act performed by man. However, according to the statements in the Esoteric Teachings, we should proclaim hymns of praise according to a certain form.

As part of the daylong dedication, Chōken emphasizes that participants have pursued the esoteric path of “attainment” (*jōju* 成就) and placed their faith in the efficacy of mantra and mudra (*shingon'in* 真言印). However, by mantra, Chōken makes clear that he is referring specifically to “hymns of praise” (*santan* 讚嘆) as taught in the esoteric teachings. The term *santan*, as we saw above, was also used by Genshin to refer to the second category of nenbutsu for praise in the *Ojo yoshu*. Here however Chōken mentions specifically that it is performed according “to a certain form” (*katachi no gotoki*). Taken in relation to the discussion that follows, this refers to a hymn that he cites at the end of this section. This hymn is the Hymn to Original Enlightenment examined above in our discussion of Annen. To set the stage for his citation of this hymn, Chōken first presents

an extended exposition of both “exoteric” and Shingon teachings on Amida, and thus assigns the hymn an esoteric significance.

Chōken begins his exposition with a summary of the exoteric view of Amida:

First, the Vows and Teachings preached by Amida Thus Come One that are studied by the Esoteric School differ vastly [from that of the Exoteric]. According to the understanding of the Exoteric Teachings, Amida, as his former self, King Uncontentious Mindfulness of the Kingdom of Śaṇḍilya, aroused the aspiration and practiced the Bodhisattva path, and is regarded as the Savior of Ultimate Joyousness. In the past, when he was still in the rank [of Bodhisattva], his name was Bhikṣu Dharmākara. Now, he proclaims the perfection of the Way and his name is Amida Thus Come One. In the past, he was a prince, one of the sixteen sons of Mahābhijñā Jñānābhībhū. Now, he preaches the perfection of the Way in the eight directions. There are two Buddhas in the Western Direction. One is named Amida. The other, the sixteenth son, is named Śākyamuni, who is the Preacher of the Sahā World. Amida will proclaim [i.e., attain] correct enlightenment in Ten Kalpas. The foregoing is an overview [of the Exoteric interpretation of Amida].

In the exoteric teachings, Chōken explains, Amida lived in the past as King Uncontentious Mindfulness 無諍念王 (*Compassionate Flower Sutra*), then became a bodhisattva called Bhikṣu Dharmākara (*Sutra of Immeasurable Life*), but is now the bodhisattva known as Amida. Because, he continues, he used to also be one of the sixteen sons of Mahābhijñā Jñānābhībhū 大通智勝 along with Śākyamuni (*Lotus Sutra*), he is paired with the sixteenth son, Śākyamuni, as one of two Buddhas in the west. This seems to be a reference to the pairing of a Śākyāmuni statue with the Amida *honzon* as one of three images installed in the hall as described in the Rekihaku record. Chōken then preaches that Amida will in the future attain Buddhahood. Thus, Chōken makes clear that, according to the exoteric teachings, Amida, is a bodhisattva who has a past, present, and future—that is, he exists in time.

Chōken then presents the esoteric view of Amida:

Now, the Amida of the Shingon Teachings differs vastly from that of the Mahā-(Sukhāvati-vyūha). He is possessed of the Four Kinds of Dharma body and the four kinds of mandala. Insofar as there are four kinds of Dharma body, it differs little from the exoteric teaching of the three bodies.<sup>247</sup> In regard to the four kinds of mandala, it is nothing like the perspective of the Exoteric Teachings. [This teaching] is only revealed in Shingon. Neither the Womb nor the Diamond Realm elucidate the origins of Amida Tathāgata’s arousing the aspiration in the Western Direction, nor are his vows before he attained Buddhahood discussed. He is the Buddha eternally abiding in the Three Realms, the Preacher without beginning or end, the Tathāgata [Thus Come One] who neither comes nor goes. First, the Thirty-Seven Venerable Ones of the Diamond Realm all were originally non-arising,<sup>248</sup> eternally abiding-unchanging Buddhas.<sup>249</sup>

Chōken here invokes two doctrines formulated by Annen for the purpose of distinguishing his esoteric, or “Shingon,” teaching on the buddha’s body from that of the exoteric: the four kinds of Dharma body and the four kinds of mandala.<sup>250</sup> In contrast to Annen, however, Chōken uses them to assert the identity of Amida with these four bodies. This assertion resembles Genshin’s statements in Chapter Four in the *Ojo yoshu* examined above in which he asserts that Amida is endowed with the three buddha-bodies. By comparison, however, Chōken displays a more virtuosic command of Lotus-Esoteric doctrine on the Buddha’s bodies.

Chōken continues by emphasizing that, contrary to the exoteric teachings, Amida does not reside in the pure land to the west but rather only in the realm of the Tathāgata’s inner realization—that is, the Diamond Realm mandala:

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<sup>247</sup> See Annen’s argument to this same effect: *T* 75:420b, Annen’s elaboration of buddha body theory in Fascicle Three of *Kyōji mondō*.

<sup>248</sup> Ennin on Mahāvairocana as originally non-arising. See above: 『金疏』卷二の別序. *T* 61.29c02-23

<sup>249</sup> KJMD describes self-bound enjoyment body as 常住不変: *T* 2396, 75:407c11.

<sup>250</sup> On four kinds of Dharma body, see *Kyōji mondō* citation above (*T* 75.404c). Annen invokes the Four Mandala Bodies as a distinguishing feature of the esoteric conception of the buddha’s body later in the same text. See *T* 75.436a02-437b. See also Asai Endō, *Jōko Nihon Tendai honmon shisō shi*, p. 692-94.

Thus the [*Yogin*] *Sutra* states, “In the Palace of the Luminous Mind of the Full Moon in originally existing Diamond Realm, the Self-Existent Great Symbol, the Self-Aware Original Great Intent for Bodhi, the Universal Knowledge of the Indestructible Diamond, the Mahāvairocana Tathāgata and the attendant Thirty-Seven Venerable Ones that give life to the Self-Essence, together abide in the Dharma.” As to the place where they abide, it is not clear. The Sacred Teachings do not mention what Kingdom or where. He does not exist in the West nor in the East. There is no place in the Ten Directions he can be sought. One may investigate the Three Realms, but his name will not be known. [He exists] only in the perceptual sphere of the Inner Realization of the Thus Come One. The Bodhisattvas of Equal Enlightenment in the Ten Stages, moreover, are far removed from this perceptual sphere. How much more so the class of ordinary beings of the Two Vehicles.

Amida is thus portrayed as a buddha endowed with the four dharma-bodies and four mandalas who exists in the inner realization of the Tathāgata as depicted in the Diamond Realm.

Chōken next reiterates this same idea once again, stressing that the place where Amida abides cannot be designated precisely because he is the activity of “contemplation” (*kansatsu*) itself that enables all sentient beings to attain Buddhahood:

Truly, this is a place where only Buddhas abide among Buddhas. The direction and distance cannot be explained. Consequently, among the Thirty-Seven Venerable Ones, we should not designate Amida as the World Savior of the Western [Land] of Ultimate Joy. The benefits of radiant illumination, the welcoming approach for the Nine Levels of Rebirth, all of these are the manifestations of the emanation-body. Though the King of the Forty-Eight Vows may abide in the One Hundred Million Lands in the Ten Directions to the Western Direction, [his abiding] cannot be designated. [We know] only this: the Attainment of the Way and Perfection of Buddhahood of all sentient beings is performed entirely by the Wisdom of the Wondrous Contemplation of A-MI-DA Tathāgata.

The reference to contemplation refers to Genshin’s fourth category of nenbutsu: nenbutsu for contemplation. In this passage, Amida is thus identified with the act of chanting “a-mi-da” contemplatively.



Chōken's exposition of the esoteric interpretation of Amida culminates in the revelation that Amida has been ceaselessly saving sentient beings for eons as he abides constantly in the bodies of sentient beings:

Consequently, since he attained Buddhahood, it cannot be said that for the last Ten Kalpas up to now he has been embracing and saving [sentient beings]. Rather sentient beings since before Ten Kalpas ago, [have been saved by him]. For incalculable limitless Kalpas as numerous as fine particles, he has been constantly delivering sentient beings. He is a Buddha who constantly performs the embrace of salvation. What is more, the Thirty-Seven Venerable Ones abide constantly in the breasts of sentient beings.

Thus finishing his exposition of Amida according to the esoteric teachings, Chōken then cites the Hymn to Original Enlightenment that he introduces at the outset as a hymn chanted according to the form designated by the esoteric teachings.<sup>251</sup> In his commentary, he restates his central point from the foregoing exposition:

This text thus offers us this thought: Because the Originally Enlightened Thirty-Seven Venerable Ones constantly abide in the Lotus of the Mind of Sentient Beings, it cannot be thought that [Amida] exists in the distant Western [Land] of Ultimate Joy. Rather, he abides majestically in the Palace of the Luminous Mind of the Full Moon of Universal Knowledge; he exists constantly in the breast of the Great Patron.

Here again Chōken emphasizes that Amida abides not in the pure land to the west but rather in one's own mind. He thus uses the Hymn to Original Enlightenment as a device for illustrating and elaborating an esoteric understanding of Amida and a device for illustrating this doctrine.

This section concludes by relating the foregoing exposition of Amida to the immediate context of the dedication ceremony:

Now, [Our Patron] has erected an ārāma and for the first time has invoked the [*honzon*] of this newly consecrated object. [To do so] is to invoke the

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<sup>251</sup> See above for a translation.

Thirty-Seven Venerables of the Lotus in our mind. Not only does Amida Buddha abide thusly, but also Aksobhya and Ratnasambhava. The Sixteenth Bodhisattva of the Non-Empty Attainment of the Universal Illumination of Dainichi, by means of offerings, internal and external, never departs from the minds of sentient beings. Now, the originally existent Buddha in your breast appears before your eyes. Thus, the message of the [line from the above] text, “the Mind by which one pays homage to the Buddhas,” lies therein. The foregoing is an overview of the doctrine of the Merit of Amida Thus Come One.

Chōken interprets the significance of the dedication ceremony in which the honzon of the hall are for the first time called upon by the patron of the ceremony and chief priest of the shrine, Shigeyasu, as an invocation of the Amida Buddha and thirty-seven venerables that eternally abide in the mind of the individual. This interpretation thus assigns a specifically esoteric significance to the *honzon* of Shigeyasu’s hall.

The next section is clearly demarcated in the manuscript as concerning the topic of the merit of the hall. In it, Chōken, adducing a number of exemplary instances of hall construction in Buddhist history, asserts the superiority of offering a hall to offering an image or text. The reason for this, he explains, is because a hall will endure far into the future.

After the section on the merit of the hall, Chōken presents an exegesis on the *Lotus Sutra*. Similar to the above exposition of Amida, he delineates two interpretations of the Lotus: exoteric and esoteric. According to the exoteric interpretation, he explains, the Buddha appears in the world to proclaim a direct path to Buddhahood for all sentient beings. The esoteric interpretation is entirely different:

By contrast, as for the essence of the Shingon Teachings, the Lotus Sutra, from the beginning to the end, constitutes nothing other than the significance of the Originally Non-Arising Letter *A*. The principle of the Originally Non-arising Letter *A* is the Originally Existent Buddha-Nature of sentient beings.

According to esoteric interpretation, the *Lotus Sutra* is none other than the originally non-arising letter *A*, which he glosses as the originally existent Buddha-Nature of sentient beings.

Chōken then elaborates further on this teaching by citing Enchin’s esoteric interpretation of the *Lotus Sutra* as the expression of what, according to the esoteric teachings, the letter *A* reveals—namely, the eternal mind-state of Mahāvairocana, also known as Buddha-nature in the lotus of the mind:

In other words, since [the Principle of the Originally Non-Arising Letter *A*] constitutes the inner realization of Dainichi Mahāvairocana, it is called the Dharma Gate for the Mind-Ground of Mahāvairocana Tathāgata. Thus, Great Teacher of Wisdom and Realization (Enchin) said, “[The Letter *A*] refers to the Wondrous Dharma of the Greatest Secret. The Eternal Mind-State of Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called the Buddha-Nature in the Lotus of the Mind. Therein lies the significance of the Substance of the Lotus.”

Chōken’s citation can be found in Enchin’s *Aji hishaku* 阿字秘釈.<sup>252</sup> This text, as Chōken’s citation suggests, elaborates an interpretation of an essential doctrine of the esoteric teachings, the letter *A*, as identical to that which is preached in the *Lotus Sutra* and, in this way, attempts to demonstrate the identity of the lotus and esoteric teachings. It is thus a paradigmatic text of Lotus-Esoteric discourse.<sup>253</sup> In the next section of his sermon, Chōken elaborates further on Enchin’s interpretation by explaining how the four levels of meaning contained in the letter *A* corresponds to a particular chapter in the Lotus.

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<sup>252</sup> See DNBZ 28.

<sup>253</sup> For more on the development of the interpretation of the letter *A* within the Tendai school in the Heian period, see Suzuki 2010.

After this series of exegeses on Amida, the hall, and the *Lotus Sutra*, Chōken then turns to the discussion of the patron, Shigeyasu. This section is titled the “Section on the Patron”, or *seshu-dan*, a less formal element of preaching delivered in a more colloquial style and, therefore, less often recorded in comparison to more formal elements such as *hyōbyaku* and *ganmon*.<sup>254</sup> This section begins by invoking the common Buddhist trope that stresses how rare it is to be born as a human and have the opportunity to hear the Buddha’s teachings. It then goes on to tell the history of hall dedications in Japan, noting that most have been sponsored by emperors, citing as examples Emperor Kinmei 欽明 (509–571), Empress Suiko 推古 (554–628), and Emperor Shōmu 聖武 (702–756). Chōken then notes that the current hall dedication differs in that it is sponsored by a shrine priest whose vocation is dedicated to serving the kami and evoking thereby their divine acceptance (*nōju* 納受):

Thus, [Shigeyasu] reveres no form of work other than [that dedicated to] the Kami. At this place, where no matters other than those affairs related to the Kami, he erects, for the people for whom he serves as shrine priest, a hall for many generations and, by means of Buddhist rites, he recompenses the Divine Virtue of the Kami. [The service] is not for the enjoyment of the people, but rather for the holy purpose of the [evoking] the Acceptance of the Luminous Kami.

Chōken then rationalizes this practice of using Buddhist rites for the purpose of evoking the divine acceptance of the kami by invoking origins-trace buddha-body theory:

If one examines this carefully, [it is clear that] the source of the Kami is the Buddha. The Buddha unfurls the trace from which many Kami are created. Therefore, the benefits of the Kamis and Buddhas derive from the same source.

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<sup>254</sup> See Komine 2009, p. 26.

This buddha-body theory of buddhic origins and kami traces places emphasis on the kami as the function, or trace, of the buddha that brings benefits to sentient beings. It thus shows how origins-traces buddha-body theory represents a view of the relation between kami and the buddhas that builds on Lotus-Esoteric doctrine on the function and economy of the buddha's bodies.

The section on the patron continues by considering the taboo on any mention of the Three Jewels—that is, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—by a shrine priest. Shigeyasu, of course, by dedicating this hall, in a technical sense, is violating this taboo. However, Chōken, using origins-trace theory, provides the rationalization that Shigeyasu's practice of Buddhism is acceptable precisely because it elicits the divine acceptance of the kami. As an example, he tells an anecdote about the Kamo Shrine priestess Daisai'in Senshi, who carried an image of the Buddha in her purse while in service at the Kamo Shrine, yet was not punished because the kami are emanations of buddhas.

In the concluding portion of the sermon, Chōken returns to the key idea of Dharma joy:

Thus, today's Great Assembly for the dedication of the Ārāma, first and foremost contributes to the Dharma Joy of the Great Luminous Kami. Just as the moon illuminates the Palace of Suchness, [this assembly] moreover contributes to the Light that Softens to Mingle with the Dust. Just as the wind perfumes the Capital of Quiescent Light,<sup>255</sup> it further enhances the Scent of the Emanations that Confer Benefits.

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<sup>255</sup> In Lotus-Esotericism, "quiescent light" refers to the passage from the Fugen Sutra cited also by Kakuchō above in which Śakyāmuni is described as Vairocana Buddha who abides in a place called the "Light of Quiescence."

The merit of the hall dedication, Chōken preaches, contributes to the Dharma joy of the kami, which, in turn, contributes to the softening of the light of the kami, a common trope in origins-trace discourse that refers to the compassionate and enlightened intervention of the kami in the world of humans. As the last line indicates, this kind of intervention is understood to confer benefits. Thus, in Chōken's preaching for the 1180 Kamo hall dedication ceremony, the term Dharma joy is linked with an economic view of the relation between kami and buddhas that places emphasis on the conferral of benefits by the kami for the sake of humans.

### 3.3 Jien's Songs of Dharma Joy: Waka as Mantra in Offering Ceremonies for the Kami and the Poetics of Emptiness

Chōken's sermon for the 1180 Kamo Shrine hall dedication provides the first example of an extended discourse on waka poetry as a medium for offering the joy of the Dharma to the kami. Not long thereafter, the Tendai monk and waka poet Jien adopted this as a key term in his own discourse on waka poetry. Among extant writings by Jien, there are nine instances of this term, eight of which appear in either the preface or postscript to one-hundred poem sequences, or *hyakushu* 百首, dedicated to Shinto shrines.<sup>256</sup> The first citation appears in his *Hiyoshi hyakushu waka* 日吉百首和歌 dated 1187.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> On the structure, content, context for the production of these sequences, see Ishikawa Hajime, *Jien waka ronkō*, pp. 585-601.

<sup>257</sup> WKBT 58: 279. Chōken composed the closing prayer statement (kechigan 結願) for a number of Buddhist services of offering. Abe "Chūsei shūkyō shisō bunken no kenkyū (II)," p. 196. In it, he also invokes the idea of hōraku, thus suggesting his crucial role in Jien's adoption of this term.

Jien's most elaborate statement on waka as Dharma joy appears in a postscript to a hundred-poem sequence dedicated to the Kamo Shrine in 1219. It begins with a prayer in Japanese for the "wild words and fanciful phrases" of his waka poems to be revealed as means for praising the Buddha and preaching the Dharma:

This Kingdom of Yamato is the Venerable Kingdom of Amaterasu, and thus the venerable Principle has reached its ultimate [expression]. The language of this Kingdom is issued forth in the thirty-one-syllable form called *uta*. With this, we have expressed in words the myriad things, and have from ancient times and continue to this day to use it as a technique of language. The blossoms and the moon of spring and autumn, the rain and snow of summer and winter, the atmosphere of the sky in which they interact, the color of the field to which they turn are all means for eliciting profound pathos and mediums for binding with the superficial truth. By focusing [our thoughts] with this [*uta*], we may express the Principle of the Way and, by chanting this [*uta*], we may anticipate the blessings of the Kami and Buddhas. Thus, the Great Teacher Who Transmitted the Teachings (Saichō) prayed for mysterious empowerment [with the line] "This Mount Somayama (Mount Hiei) I have established (*wa ga tatsu Somayama*)" and the Great Teacher of Compassion and Enlightenment (Ennin) made known old age with "The days and months that pass by (*tsuki hi o tsuguru*)."<sup>258</sup> Thus, the [many occasions] in which [our ancestors] have used this technique of language have frequently been chosen for inclusion in an imperially commissioned collection and so the feelings of the oceans and mountains, the pathos of the peaks and valley, the blossoms of spring and the leaves of autumn, as they fall, move our hearts. The moon in the sky and the storm on the mountain [reach] the dwelling in summer and the room in the winter. [In these places] where people are few, there are many ways to elicit the heart. Therefore when one directs one's thoughts with this [*uta*], one may orient one's intentions toward the Venerable Kami. Thus I pray: May these shallow wild words and fanciful phrases be returned to the Profound Way of Praising the Buddha-Vehicle and Turning the Dharma-Wheel.<sup>259</sup>

Jien predicates his prayer on the idea that Japan, or "Yamato," is the kingdom of Amaterasu. Consequently, he suggests, it has developed a venerable "principle," or *kotowari*, and a language called "*uta*"—that is, waka poetry—that is a "technique of

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<sup>258</sup> SKKS 1587. SNKT 43: 460.

<sup>259</sup> WKBT 58: 310-311.

language”, or *kotowaza*, that reveals the unfolding of this principle in nature. This principle thus revealed by waka is specifically the “Principle of the Way”—that is, the Buddhist Way. This suggests then that waka poetry is a technique for demonstrating the unity of the kami and buddhas in the divine kingdom of Amaterasu and the principle underpinning this unity. Jien further elaborates this idea in other statements on waka that we shall examine below. Here, it serves as the rationale for waka’s efficacy to evoke the blessings of the kami and buddhas. For this reason, Jien explains, two eminent figures in the history of Tendai Buddhism, Saichō and Ennin, also composed waka. Next, Jien returns to the idea of waka as a means for revealing the divine principle in the manifestations of nature and thereby worship the kami. Finally, he invokes the liturgical formula of “wild words and fanciful phrases.” In contrast to the Kangaku-e, for example, Jien situates the possibility for revealing the Buddhist function of waka poetry as a form of hymn to the Buddha on the specificity of this form of expression as a technique of language autochthonous to the kingdom of Yamato. Thus, in this passage, Jien’s discourse on waka is predicated on two interrelated premises: first, the idea that Japan is a divine kingdom, or *shinkoku* 神国; second, the doctrine that kami are local manifestations of Buddhas, or origins-traces buddha-body theory. This latter premise is brought to the fore in a coda in Chinese to the above prayer in Japanese that concludes the postscript.

In this Chinese-language coda, Jien introduces the notion that the Kamo kami has an original ground and flowing traces, and explains why he uses waka poetry as a means for eliciting its divine response, or *kannō*:

Great Luminous Deity of Kamo: Your Original Ground is difficult to fathom, and so we contemplate the Principle of the Ultimate and Worldly [Truths] in our mind. Your Flowing Traces are ever evolving, and so we call upon the mysterious forces for Your Divine Response that benefits



sentient beings. Waka is a folk custom of Our Court. Oral recitation shapes our intentions. Now, we taint our consciousness with the form the Two Truths so that we may transfix the Awakening of the Three Forms of Karma with the Joy of the Dharma. Wild words and yet more wild words; the voice [of waka poetry] is the True Word of Kannon, and its meaning thus [accords with] the Divine Intent [of the Kami]. How could such vulgar sentiments be in contradiction with the Holy Intent!<sup>260</sup>

The original ground of the Kamo kami, Jien asserts, cannot be known, and, for this reason, he states, he contemplates the two truths. In the Japanese-language prayer above, Jien notes that observing nature can be a means for realizing the “superficial truth.” In light of the above Chinese-language statement, this “superficial truth” would seem to refer to the worldly truth of the two truths. Thus, contemplation of the two truths, for Jien, as we shall also see below, is associated especially with the act of composing waka. To paraphrase the first line of the above then, because the original ground of the kami cannot be known, Jien has composed waka to apprehend the original ground, which, he argues, is possible precisely because waka is a means for connecting with the superficial, or worldly, truth. He then suggests that he has used waka, which he characterizes as the custom of Japan, to invoke the divine response of the flowing traces of the Kamo kami. He explicitly states also that he has done so by means of “oral recitation” (*gin'ei* 吟詠). Then, using somewhat obscure language, he explains that he has tainted his consciousness with the form of the two truths—that is, he has composed waka poetry—for the purpose of giving the joy of the Dharma to what he calls “the Awakening of the Three Forms of Karma.” This figure seems to anticipate the reference to Kannon in the next line, and suggests that Kannon is the, or at least an, original ground of the Kamo kami. Waka, as he explains, when orally recited with the voice, or *koe*, has the power to

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<sup>260</sup> WKBT 58: 312-313.

give the joy of the dharma to the kami precisely because it is the “True Words of Kannon.” Therefore, he concludes, it accords with their divine intent, and is sacred. What, however, is the meaning of the statement that waka is the true words of Kannon? To unpack this further will help to elucidate the buddhological underpinnings of Jien’s discourse on waka as Dharma joy.

Jien elaborates his views on Kannon in a document called *Hokke betchō* 法華別帖.<sup>261</sup> Therein, Jien contrasts Kannon with another key bodhisattva from the Lotus, Samantabhadra, or Fugen, which he identifies with Vajrasattva of the esoteric teachings. He characterizes the latter as the basis, or origin, for ascetic practice (*shugyō* 修行) and the former as the substance of “benefits for sentient beings” (*rishō* 利生):

In the gate of practice, Vajrasattva is the origin. In the [gate of] benefits, Kannon is the substance. In terms of the layers of originally existent virtue, they are the same. Entering into the secret, [Fugen] practices. In accordance with even lesser conditions, [Kannon] unfolds awakening and [manifests as] benefits for sentient beings in the human realm before our eyes.<sup>262</sup>

Jien thus frames his views on Kannon in a Lotus-Esoteric discourse that places emphasis on her (or his?) identity with bodhisattvas associated with the esoteric teachings. What distinguishes her, however, is her activity of unfolding awakening in the human realm and bringing benefits to sentient beings, which he emphasizes, appears before their eyes. Jien then goes on to identify two “emanations,” or *gonja*, of Kannon in Japan: Prince Shōtoku and the Tendai abbot Ryōgen. Jien adduces other examples of Kannon-

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<sup>261</sup> Dolce, “Reconsidering the Taxonomy,” also discuss this text in relation to the Lotus-Esoteric liturgy of *Hokke-hō*. See pp. 151-152. My discussion of Jien’s views on Kannon in this text is based on Mizukami, *Taimitsu shisō keisei no kenkyū*, pp. 562-568.

<sup>262</sup> ZTZ 3: 283b

emanations in Japan in other writings as well. These examples underscore the extent to which Kannon was understood to be actively present in the kingdom of Japan especially.

Elsewhere in the *Hokke betchō*, Jien expounds on the interpretation of Kannon from the point of view of the esoteric and exoteric teachings, placing emphasis again on her activity in the human realm saving sentient beings from samsara:

If one desires to fulfill [a prayer] by encapsulating the entire sutra in a mantra as the mantra of the Lotus, then one should use the mantra of Kannon. How can one, though dimwitted, realize the true intentions that take shape in the unfolding of awakening? First, in the exoteric teachings, Kannon is another name for the main object of focus in the Lotus Sutra. According to the original significance of the esoteric tradition, the lotus flower of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma is the lotus flower of the lotus flower division [in the Womb Realm]. Generally speaking, the Mahāvairocana Tathāgata and Great Teacher Śakyāmuni, on the one hand, preach the Esoteric Teachings and, on the other, the Lotus. Both are the original intent of each Buddha and the ultimate pinnacle of the Dharmagate... The Lotus-Flower Division is the Wisdom of Wondrous Contemplation; when in the World of Ultimate Joy, [she] is called a bodhisattva; when she is in the world of saḥā, [she] is called the One Who Bestows Fearlessness. This lotus flower is the eight-petaled lotus of [eight kinds] of flesh in the minds of all sentient beings. Because [she] saves sentient beings in the realm of enduring [transmigration] (i.e., saḥā), she forms the original intent of the Buddhas. Because she [appears] in the body of a savior, [she] is called Kannon. The teaching of salvation is the Lotus Flower; thus, it is called the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma. There is no Dharma beyond this Dharma; thus, it is called Wondrous. This is the Dharma of Kannon; thus, [she] is called the Lotus Flower.<sup>263</sup>

In this passage, Jien identifies Kannon, from the perspective of the exoteric teachings, as another name for the main theme of the Lotus—that is, saving sentient beings—and, from the perspective of the esoteric teachings, as a figure in the lotus flower division of the Womb Realm. For this reason, she is, he suggests, “the body of the sutra” and the heart of the eight sections of the human body that correspond to the eight petals of the lotus that

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<sup>263</sup> TZ 3: 283a-b.

reside in the mind of sentient beings. Her immanence in sentient beings underscores her identity as a savior of the saḥā realm, or samsara. Because, moreover, she exemplifies the act of saving sentient beings, she is identified with the main focus, or teaching, of the *Lotus Sutra*. Thus, in this passage, Jien provides an interpretation of Kannon grounded in Lotus-Esoteric discourse that characterizes her as an emanation who gives benefits for sentient beings in the human realm before their very eyes.

These passages from the *Hokke betchō* indicate that Jien understood Kannon as the exemplary original ground for emanations who gives benefits to sentient beings in the human realm, particularly Japan. This suggests that Jien understood the Kamo deity as a trace of Kannon. If so, waka, then, is the language of the original ground that gives the joy of the Dharma that awakens the trace to its original buddhic identity; this would seem to be the meaning of the phrase, “the true words of Kannon.” This phrase also suggests waka’s mantric function, like Kannon’s mantra described above, to bring benefits to sentient beings in the human realm, particularly in Japan, even to the dull and dimwitted. Thus, although waka poetry may seem to be “wild words,” when recited with the proper intention, it reveal its true function as the divine language of the Japanese kami.

A postscript (or possibly a preface) by Jien to a lost sequence of one-hundred poems sheds light on the specific theory of language that underpins Jien’s view of waka as a “custom” that gives the joy of the Dharma to the kami. He begins by correlating the five lines of waka poetry with the five elements and five phases:

The Japanese language has flourished as technique of our Kingdom. It has five lines of five-seven-five-seven-seven. These signify the five elements and five phases. There is no thing, from an ultimate or worldly [perspective], that is separate from it. [From the perspective of] the Ultimate Truth, there is no thing that is separate from the five elements, from the body of the Buddha to the insentient trees and grasses. And [from

the perspective of] the Worldly Truth, there is no phenomenon separate from the five phases, from Heaven and Earth to the oceans and mountains.<sup>264</sup>

In esoteric Buddhism, the five elements are earth, water, fire, wind, and space. In his theory of mantra, Kūkai correlated these elements with the syllables of the root mantra of Mahāvairocana, *A Vi Ra Hūm Kham*, and understood them as the five essential forces of emptiness, respectively: stability (earth), permeation (water), purity (fire), growth (wind), and spacing (space).<sup>265</sup> Jien's correlation of the five lines of waka poetry with the five elements and five phases may be understood as extension of this hermeneutic operation. In this passage, Jien associates the five elements specifically with an economic view of the Buddha's body as immanent in all things in the world, even insentient beings such as trees and grasses—an idea that resonates with Annen's well known doctrine of Buddhahood for grasses and trees, or *sōmoku jōbutsu* 草木成佛.<sup>266</sup> The five phases—wood, fire, earth, metal, and water—refer to Chinese cosmology. Jien correlates each of these two fivefold classifications with one of the two truths: the five elements with the ultimate truth (Sk. *paramārtha-satya*) and the five phases with the worldly truth (Sk. *loka-satya*). In either case, there is nothing in the world, he stresses, that exists independently from these five elements and phases. Therefore, Jien's claim that waka contains in its five lines these five elements and phases suggests that a single waka poem encapsulates the entire universe. In esoteric Buddhism, this special power to encapsulate the world in language constitutes on key criterion that distinguishes mantra from exoteric

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<sup>264</sup> WKBT 59: 253.

<sup>265</sup> T 18:38b-c. For a translation and analysis of this passage, see Abé 1999, p. 6 and pp. 298-300.

<sup>266</sup> For a discussion of Annen's theory of *sōmoku jōbutsu*, see Sueki, *Sōmoku jōbutsu no shisō*.

forms of ritual language. Thus, in the above passage, Jien, who was well trained in the esoteric teachings, articulates an understanding of waka based on esoteric discourse on mantra.

The next section of the postscript describes waka as the primordial language of the kami and compares it to the languages of India and China. Jien concludes: “These [languages of Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese] are just the customs (*fūzoku* 風俗) of those kingdoms. There are no distinctions between them of superiority or inferiority.” Despite the fundamental equality between the languages of these three kingdoms, Jien identifies a special affinity, even identity, between Sanskrit and Japanese:

In a limited sense, it is the Sanskrit language of mantra that is the language that issued forth from the Venerable Mouth of the Buddha; thus those who set forth on the Way of the Buddha should know the original meaning (*hon'i*) [of the Buddha]. When we gloss kanji with kana, it does not fit into the forty-seven sounds. The Sanskrit language, conversely, is closer to Japanese. We might even say that it is the same.<sup>267</sup>

Jien notes that the language of the Buddha is that of mantra, which is in Sanskrit. In order to practice the Buddha’s path, practitioners must know the meaning of the Buddha’s words, and, therefore, he implies, they must translate them into other languages. Jien then points out that the Japanese language, in comparison to Chinese, is closer to Sanskrit. He bases this inference on the fact that when Chinese is translated into the Japanese syllabary, it does not “fit” its forty-seven sounds—a notion that is based on the organization of the Japanese language according to the *iroha* poem spuriously attributed to Kūkai. The sounds of Sanskrit, by contrast, he notes, are closer to those of Japanese. He even suggests they are, in fact, identical.

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<sup>267</sup> WKBT 59: 253-54.

In his discussion of Japanese phonology and its relation to Sanskrit, Jien is drawing on the tradition of Sanskrit, or Siddham, studies in Tendai esoteric Buddhism. Annen is a major figure in this tradition. In 880, he compiled one of the first studies of Siddham, the *Shittan zō* 悉曇藏, which subsequently served as the foundation for the study of Sanskrit in medieval Japan. As Itō Satoshi has argued, it is likely that Jien's theory is shaped by the phonological theories of the Tendai monk Myōgaku 明覚, who based his study of Sanskrit on Annen.<sup>268</sup> In his influential treatise on Sanskrit phonology, *Han'non sahō* 反音作法, Myōgaku elaborates a chart of the fifty-sounds of the Japanese-language (*gojū-on zu* 五十音図) based on Sanskrit phonology and argues that all sounds of the Sanskrit language can be correlated to Japanese sounds in the chart.<sup>269</sup> Jien's use of this theory reveals the importance of esoteric Buddhist language theory in the formation of waka-mantra theory.

Jien then uses this implied identity between Sanskrit mantra and Japanese waka as the basis for his claim that the Way of Waka (*uta no michi*) is identical to the Buddhist path: “Since it is the technique of language of our Kingdom, the Way of Waka is also the Way of the Buddha.” (*wa ga kuni no kotowaza nareba, tada uta no michi ni te Butsudō o mo narinu beshi* わが国のことわざなれば、たゞ歌の道にて仏道をもなりぬべし). Thus, in this poem preface, Jien articulates a view of waka as the Japanese analog to

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<sup>268</sup> Itō Satoshi, “Bon, kan, wago no dōitsu-setsu.” Itō characterizes Jien's theory of the identity of Japanese with Sanskrit as a kind of extension of divine kingdom discourse in the realm of language theory that, like the origins-traces buddha-body theory on which it is based, creates a close link between Japan and India and, in so doing, uses the prestige of the latter in elevating the status of the former.

<sup>269</sup> On the reception of the fifty-sounds chart in early modern Kokugaku, see Regan Murphy, “Esoteric Buddhist Theories of Language.”

Indian mantra. This represents the earliest example of this theory, which, as noted above, came to figure centrally in medieval Japanese poetics.

Jien's comparison of waka to mantra shares the same basic assumption underpinning his claim that waka is Dharma joy: namely, that waka, as a custom of the Yamato kingdom, is the primordial language of the kami. These two claims thus both operate within a broader discourse on Japanese language. While waka-Dharma joy theory emphasizes the efficacy of waka to elicit the response of the kami, waka-mantra theory explicates this efficacy by revealing the elements of waka poetry as coextensive with the elements of the Buddhist universe that make up the body of the Buddha. This suggests that esoteric Buddhist discourse on mantra played a formative role in the development of Dharma joy waka.

Waka-mantra theory came to figure prominently in medieval discussions of waka poetry.<sup>270</sup> In later expositions, waka is associated specifically with *dhāranī* understood as a mnemonic device, or *sōji* 惣持, or literally “holding everything,” a Chinese translation that closely reflects the term's verbal root *dhr* in its root sense of “to uphold.” This association of waka with *dhāranī*, moreover, is more explicitly predicated on origins-traces buddha-body theory. In his late thirteenth-century collection of homiletic tales *Shasekishū* 沙石集, Mujū Ichien 無住一円 (1227–1312) provides a paradigmatic example:

In regard to the virtue of waka, it eliminates the mind of distraction and impulse and has the virtue of quieting and stilling [the mind]. Also, in a

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<sup>270</sup> For a recent English-language discussion of this theory, see Keller Kimbrough, “Reading the Miraculous Powers of Japanese Poetry.”



few words, it encapsulates meaning (*kokoro*). It has the virtue of comprehensive apprehension. Comprehensive apprehension is “*dhāranī*.” The Kami of our Realm are flowing traces of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, a kind of Response Body. Susano’o composed the first thirty-one syllable composition, “Eight-layered fence of Izumo.” This is no different from the words of the Buddha.<sup>271</sup>

In this formulation, waka is presented specifically as a kind of *dhāranī* defined as device for comprehending everything. While Mujū, like Jien, also emphasizes waka’s special economy of language as a point of comparison with *dharani*, he predicates his theory more explicitly on origins-trace buddha-body theory.

The most extensive elaboration of waka-mantra theory appears in the early-Kamakura period biography of the Kegon monk Myōe, *Togano’o Myōe shōnin denki* 尾明恵上人伝記, compiled by Kikai 喜海 (1178–1251).

The Adept Saigyō would always come and tell stories. [Once], he said, “These *uta* I compose differ vastly from what is common in our world. Even as I direct [my attention] to the arising of myriad things—from flowers and cuckoos to the moon and snow—that all such marks of existence are illusory enters my eyes and fills my ears. How could lines of poetry composed in this way be anything other than mantra! Even when I compose on flowers, I do not think that they are *really* flowers. Though I compose on the moon, I do not think that it is *really* the moon. Thus, in this way, I compose by according with karmic conditions (*en*) and following the arising [of things]. The rainbow as it extends [its arc] seems to color the empty sky; the bright sun as it radiates seems to illuminate the empty sky. And yet the empty sky is not something originally luminous nor is it something that has been colored. And so, I, with a mind like the empty sky, color the appearance of things, and yet do not [leave] a trace. *Uta* is none other than the true substance of the Tathāgata. Thus, to compose a poem is to form the thought that creates a Buddha-image; to think continuously on one line is equivalent to chanting a secret mantra. By means of *uta*, I am able to attain the Dharma. Those who do not follow this example and study language randomly shall fall onto an evil path.”<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> SNKZ 52: 252.

<sup>272</sup> Myōe Shōnin shiryō, p. 717.

In this citation of the theory, which Kikai attributes to Saigyō, mantra is understood not so much as a kind of *dharani* in the sense of a mnemonic device but rather as an exemplary medium that reveals in its performance the Buddhist truth of emptiness.

In our analysis of Jien's waka-mantra theory, we noted that the understanding of mantra as an exemplary medium for the revelation of emptiness can be traced back to Kūkai. There we saw that it was associated specifically with the idea of the five elements as the five forces of emptiness that make up the body of Mahāvairocana. This relation between the body of the Buddha and the teaching of emptiness is made explicit in the above in the claim that *uta* is the true substance, or body, of the Tathāgata. It thus shares the same general theory of mantra developed within esoteric Buddhism that informs Jien's conception of the five elements inherent in the five lines of waka poetry.

To what extent Kikai's anecdote offers us a historically accurate depiction of Saigyō's poetics has been a controversial topic in the study of medieval Japanese poetry.<sup>273</sup> While recent research has cast serious doubts on the possibility that it represents a faithful record of Saigyō's conversation with Myōe, there are, as Yamada Shōzen has shown, a number of poems in Saigyō's oeuvre that indicate that an understanding of waka poetry as a mantric medium for the realization of emptiness did in fact seem to inform the discursive universe of his poetry. The following exchange with Jien in 1189 provides perhaps the most compelling evidence:

When the Adept En'ni [Saigyō] climbed Mudōji, he looked out across the lake from the extension of the Daijō'in Chapel:

*Nioteru ya*

In the soft glow

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<sup>273</sup> In his 1987 monograph *Saigyō no waka to Bukkyō*, Yamada Shōzen presented a case for its historicity. However, in 2000, Hirano Tae has recently called this into question. See Hirano, "Togano'o Myōe Shōnin denki' ni okeru Saigyō kawa no saikentō."

<i>nagitaru asa ni</i>	of the morning light,
<i>miwataseba</i>	I gaze afar—
<i>kogiyuku ato no</i>	Not even a wave from
<i>nami dani mo nashi</i>	The trace rowing away.

As [Saigyō] was about to head home, since it was still [early] morning, he had some time, so he said, “Now, I had renounced this thing called *uta*, but then I composed this, thinking it will be the last poem I ever exchange.” It was difficult to pass this up and so I replied with a poem:

<i>Honobono to</i>	Faintly, the boat
<i>aumi no umi o</i>	Rows across the
<i>kogu fune no</i>	Lake of Ōmi—
<i>ato naki kata ni</i>	A mind that moves toward
<i>yuku kokoro kana</i>	A direction that leaves no trace. <sup>274</sup>

In 1189, Saigyō was seventy-two years old and Jien thirty-five. A year earlier, Saigyō had just returned from a trip to Ōshū in Northern Japan to raise funds for the reconstruction of the Great Buddha statue at Tōdaiji in Nara. Upon his return, he offered to Jien and other waka poets a copy of two collections of poems he dedicated to the inner and outer shrines of Ise, the *Mimosusogawa Utaawase* 御裳濯川歌合 and Miyakawa Utaawase 宮川歌合, respectively. It appears that Saigyō produced these collections as part of his fundraising efforts.

Saigyō was to pass in 1190, and he compiled the *Mimosusogawa* and *Miyakawa* like a retrospective of his best poetry. Each collection is composed as what Saigyō called a “personal poetry contest” (*jikaawase* 自歌合) in which he paired two of his own poems against each other and had Shunzei and Teika, respectively, each judge a thirty-six round sequence. Of the seventy-two rounds in total, the most common topic is nature (47 rounds), followed by complaints, or *jukkai* (10), and then love (7). Like the snipe poem cited

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<sup>274</sup> WKBT 59: 161.

in the introduction, many do not express overt religious themes or messages. Some give voice to the feeling of sadness over the passing of time, such as the following plaint from round twenty-nine of the *Miyakawa* collection:

<i>Toshitsuki wo ikade wa ga mi ga okurikemu kinō mishi hito kyō ha naki yo ni</i>	The months and years How they have made this Life of mine pass— Those people I saw yesterday No longer in the world today.
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<i>Mukashi omou niwa ni ukigi wo tsumiokite mishi yo ni mo ninu toshi no kure kana</i>	Thinking of the past, In the garden, the driftwood Piles up— No longer resembling world I once knew, O the twilight of life. <sup>275</sup>
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Others explore the feeling of love, such as the following poem in round twenty-five of the *Mimosusogawa* collection.

<i>Tanomenu kimi ku ya to matsu yoi no ma no fukeyukade tada akenamashikaba</i>	No promises have been made, Yet I wonder, “Will milord come?” As I wait for him through the night— If only dawn would arrive now Without the night growing deep. <sup>276</sup>
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In this poem, Saigyō adopts the voice of the pining lover waiting for her partner to visit her in the night.<sup>277</sup> Shunzei’s judgment praises this poem as expressive of a “deep heart” (*kokoro fukashi*). This would seem to suggest that he understood the strength of the poem

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<sup>275</sup> *Miyakawa utaawase*: 57-58; Takeda, *Saigyō jikaawase zenshaku*, p. 100.

<sup>276</sup> *Mimosusogawa utaawase*: 50; Takeda, *Saigyō jikaawase zenshaku*, p. 92.

<sup>277</sup> Jack Stoneman notes that Saigyō often adopted the stance of a pining woman in poems addressed to absent friends. He suggests that such poetry reveals that the topic of *koi*, or “love,” did not necessarily imply a kind of heterosexual romantic love as is often assumed in modern studies in Japan and the West. For this reason, he proposes that we read this and other similar poems by Saigyō addressed to male friends (usually monks) through the lens of recent critical theory on “homosocial desire.” Stoneman however is careful not to reduce this form of poetry to homo-sexual or -social, noting that this kind of love poetry, “was pliable enough to be the ideal mode of expression for a continuum of desire that included sexual, social, and religious yearning.” Stoneman, “Between Monks,” p. 439–442.

to be the way it sympathetically depicts the psychology of the lover who fears being neglected or betrayed.

In his analysis of the structure of the Mimosusogawa and Miyakawa collections, Yamada Shōzen has suggested that these collections follow a mandalic organization of the sacred geography of the Ise Shrines; and, on the basis of this, he has proposed that Saigyō may have understood the significance of waka poetry as a kind of Dharma joy.<sup>278</sup> The term, however, does not appear in these collections. That it may have informed Saigyō's understanding of the practice is suggested by its many citations in later collections, especially those compiled by Jien.

As noted above, Jien also imitated Saigyō's practice of the *jikaawase*. In the preface to his own collection dedicated to the Ise Shrine in 1188, Jien states that he dedicates his poetry to the purpose of giving the great kami of Ise (Toyouke and Amaterasu) the "joy of the Dharma" (*hōraku*). He moreover writes that since he is acting at the behest of Saigyō, he has composed these poems for the purpose of forging a karmic tie (*kechien*) with him. He even pays homage to his poetic mentor in the first poem of the collection. Alluding to Saigyō's much-celebrated "awesome nightfall" poem, Jien's *Mimosusogawa hyakushu* opens with following waka poem.

<i>Hito wa mina</i>	People might have lived
<i>aware mo shirate</i>	Without coming to know <i>aware</i>
<i>yaminamashi</i>	If it were not for
<i>aki no yūgure</i>	The autumn twilight,
<i>haru no akebono</i>	The spring dawn. <sup>279</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Yamada, *Saigyō no waka to Bukkyō*, PIII: "Saigyō jikaawase kō," pp. 213-231.

<sup>279</sup> Cited in Suzuki Masamichi, *Jien kenkyū josetsu*, p. 223.

Jien continued to dedicate such waka collections to kami in order to “delight them with the Dharma” throughout his life. In 1199, again following in Saigyō’s footsteps, he asked Shunzei to act as judge for his own solo poetry contest, *Jichin oshō jikaawase*, which he then dedicated to the seven shrines of Hie Sanno, the Shinto complex associated with his temple of Enryakuji. For each of the seven shrines, Jien composed fifteen rounds at two poems per round for a total of two hundred and ten poems. Like Saigyō’s dual solo contests before him, most poems treat standard poetic topics such as the moon, flowers, seasons while also implicitly or explicitly singing praise of the kami and buddhas.<sup>280</sup> In the preface, Shunzei underscores the primary goal of the project: to delight the kami/buddhas.

Since the way of poetry is a custom of the Japanese archipelago and the idiom of the land of the rising sun, from men and women born in this age to the kami and buddhas who have left their traces in this country, they all certainly take delight in (*mote-asobu*) it.<sup>281</sup>

This point is again reinforced in Shunzei’s final comments appended at the end of the collection.

All poetry comes from the wisdom of the great sage Manjusri. Since there are emanations of Manjuśri who have left their traces in this sacred place and dwell among the kami of these shrines, surely all of them take delight in (*mote-asobi*) all of your poems. I cannot but feel that, in the world to come, Fugen Tathāgata too will look upon your poems with radiant benevolence.<sup>282</sup>

Jien in collaboration with Shunzei then christened the practice of donating waka to shrines with the purpose of delighting the deities, or *waka hōraku*. The extent to which

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<sup>280</sup> Ibid. p. 225.

<sup>281</sup> *Gokyōgoku-dono onjikaawase, Jichin Oshō jikaawase zenchūshaku*, p. 191. Shunzei’s emphasis on Fugen will be examined further in Chapter 2. This passage suggests the important link between Fugen and the idea that waka poetry delights the kami—that is, that it is a kind of Dharma joy.

<sup>282</sup> *Gokyōgoku-dono onjikaawase, Jichin Oshō jikaawase zenchūshaku*, p. 352.

Jien engaged in the production of such *waka hōraku* is evident in the various sorts of *waka* collections presented as offerings to shrines such as Kitano Tenjin, Kamo Daimyōjin, Hiyoshi Jinja, Kumano Sansyo Gongen, and Iwashimizu Hachimangū. As Yamada Shōzen commented, “The frequency of his *waka* dedications to kami and buddhas gives one the impression that this activity become [as ordinary for Jien] as a cup of tea.”<sup>283</sup>

There has been much speculation about whether Jien really learned *waka*-mantra theory from Saigyō. In *Shasekishū*, Mujū recounts the following exchange between Jien and Saigyō.

After Dharma Master Saigyō renounced the world, the essence of the Tendai esoteric mantras [*shingon*] was transmitted to him. At that time, Abbot Jien of Yoshimitsu asked Saigyō to transmit it to him. Saigyō said, “We should become adept at *waka*. If we do not understand *waka*, we will not understand the essence of the esoteric teachings.” Therefore, it is said that Saigyō transmitted the esoteric teaching to Jien only after he became adept at *waka*.<sup>284</sup>

Kubota Jun has argued for the historicity of this episode. He suggests that Saigyō, prior to leaving for his second trip to the north in the 1186, did in fact urge other poets such as Teika, Jakuren, Jien, Ietaka, Takanobu and others to make offerings of collections of one hundred poems to the Inner and Outer Shrines of Ise.<sup>285</sup> Among these, the one hundred poem collections of only Teika, *Futaminoura hyakushu* and *Ise hyakushu*, and Jien, the *Mimosusogawa hyakushu*, are still extant.

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<sup>283</sup> Yamada Shōzen. “Waka soku darani kan no tenkai.” In *Shinbutsu shūgō to shugen*. Nihon no Bukkyō 6, 1989. p. 102.

<sup>284</sup> NKBT 85: 251.

<sup>285</sup> See Suzuki Masamichi, *Jien kenkyū josetsu*, p. 203.

Jien records the above poetry-exchange with Saigyō in fascicle four of his *Shūgyokushū*. In the footnote to Saigyō's poem, he notes that Saigyō said to him that he composed this with the intention of it being his very last poem of his life, or *kekku* 結句.<sup>286</sup> His poem alludes to a poem from the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 by the poet, Śramaṇa Mansei 沙弥满誓 (d.u.):

<i>Yo no naka wo</i>	To what shall we compare
<i>nani ni tatoemu</i>	This world of ours?
<i>asaborake</i>	White waves from the wake
<i>kogiyuku fune no</i>	Of a boat that rows away
<i>ato no shiranami</i>	At dawn to parts unknown. <sup>287</sup>

By Saigyō's time, however, this poem had become a kind of folk song, or *yōkyoku* 謡曲, for oral recitation. This development was promoted especially by its inclusion in the 1018 collection of Chinese and Japanese verse for recitation, the *Wakan rōeishū*, compiled by court poet Fujiwara no Kinto 藤原公任 (966–1041). That it was widely known is indicated by its citation in the *Genji monogatari* by Murasaki Shikibu and the *Hōjōki* by Kamo no Chōmei. A variation on this poem by Kunaikyō 宮内卿 (d.u.) included in the *Shin kokin wakashū* indicates that by the late twelfth century, the poem had come to be associated specifically with the landscape of Lake Biwa. Saigyō's poem locates itself on the extension of Mudōji Temple on Mount Hiei from which Lake Biwa can be seen. It thus also belongs to this trend of associating Mansei's poem with Lake Biwa. More salient for our discussion, however, is the prominence of this poem in twelfth-century discourse on the Buddhist value of waka.

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<sup>286</sup> On Saigyō's foreswearing of poetry, see Stoneman pp. 64-66. Stoneman, citing Hirano, dismisses Takao karon as irrelevant to this discussion, saying that most of the ideas found in the Takao karon were likely later additions and not the words of Saigyō at all.

<sup>287</sup> NKBT 4, p. 179.



In the *Fukuro sōshi*, Kiyosuke tells how Genshin changed his opinion of waka poetry after hearing someone reciting this poem:

Genshin would not compose waka, saying that it was nothing more than wild words and fanciful phrases, but one morning [at Yokawa], as he gazed afar at the water on the lake, he saw a boat coming from the shore. When he heard the recitation of the poem, “White waves from the wake of the boat rowing away,” he thought it most excellent and said that waka could serve as an aid to contemplation (*kannen no joen*). Ever since, he composed waka poetry.<sup>288</sup>

In Kiyosuke’s apocryphal legend, Genshin, upon hearing this poem by Mansei, had the realization that waka can serve as an “aid to contemplation” (*kannen no joen* 観念の助縁). In esoteric Buddhism, mantra too, of course, were used for precisely this purpose. This anecdote thus provides the first intimation of waka being understood as something like a mantra. As Kiyosuke was a major figure in the world of late Heian-period waka poetry, it is hard to imagine that this anecdote would not have been known by both Saigyō and Jien.

Jien’s poem alludes to another poem that was thought to have been authored by a *Man’yōshū* poet. In volume ten of the *Kokin wakashū*, the following poem is tentatively attributed to Hitomaro:

<i>Honobono to</i>	Dimly, dimly
<i>Akashi no ura no</i>	In the morning mist that lies
<i>asagiri ni</i>	Over Akashi Bay,
<i>shimagakureyuku</i>	My longings follow with the ship
<i>fune o shi zo omou</i>	In vanishing behind the distant isle. <sup>289</sup>

Yamada Shōzen notes that this poem was also chanted at twelfth-century worship ceremonies dedicated to Hitomaro known as Hitomaro *eigu* 人麿影供. These ceremonies

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<sup>288</sup> SNKBT 29, p. 111.

<sup>289</sup> Translation by Brower and Miner, p. 316.

were closely related to the development of lecture-assemblies dedicated to Hitamaro called *Hitomaro kōshiki* 人麿講式. In such a context, it is not unlikely that this poem spuriously attributed to Hitamaro would have been understood as a kind of mantra.

These two base poems for Saigyō's poem-exchange with Jien situate the exchange in a tradition of poetry closely associated with oral recitation and Buddhist ritual, if not directly a discourse on waka as mantra. The content of the poems themselves, however, make use of the same tropes central to Kikai's account of Saigyō's poetics in Myōe's biography. In light of these tropes, the poems are not merely statements on the impermanence of life, but suggest a coherent theory of waka as a kind of exemplary medium for the revelation of emptiness. Saigyō's poem presents the image of a boat rowing off into the distance without making a wake. The boat, in this poem, is the poet. The absence of traces indicates that the poet has found a way to create poetry without leaving a trace—that is, without producing the bad karma that results from using poetry to express emotions. This idea of creating poetry without leaving a trace is central to Kikai's account of Saigyō's poetics. Therein, it is explained that this is the result of taking an extraordinary approach to poetry in which the poet uses poetry to empty language of its referent. Such a use of language should, according to the narrator Saigyō, be understood as equivalent to using a mantra. Jien's poem replies by confirming that he too cannot see any wake from the boat and makes explicit that this is because the mind of the poet is empty.

## Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to elucidate the doctrinal and ritual foundations for the formation of Dharma joy waka, a central genre of poetry in medieval Japan. Specifically, it locates the idea of offering poetry as Dharma joy in the ritual context of the sutra-lecture for an offering ceremony at a Shinto shrine and then traces this ritual practice back through Genshin and the lecture-assembly to esoteric initiation rites and, ultimately, Lotus-Esoteric discourse on Dharma joy. This discourse, I show, was key to reconceptualizing the purpose of esoteric ritual language as a medium not only for the self-benefit of the practitioner-cum-Dharma body Buddha but for the benefit of others as well, and this reconceptualization of esoteric ritual language such as mantra, I argue moreover, underlies the understanding of language upon which later liturgies such as the lecture-assembly and offering-ceremony for the kami were predicated. Thus, this chapter situates the formation of a key medieval poetic genre in its ritual context and then, using this context of ritual practice, locates it in a specific discursive locus—namely, Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism. By doing so, I do not mean to impute to either Buddhist discourse or ritual a more primordial genetic power or archetypal origin. I show instead how Buddhist discourse on Dharma joy—in both its doctrinal and ritual dimensions—may constitute a new paradigm for understanding the process by which new forms of court literature were incorporated into Buddhist liturgy in the early medieval period.

In the last part of this chapter, I situate the concept of Dharma joy within a broader constellation of discourse on waka poetry. In the remaining two chapters of this dissertation, I will proceed to consider how this broader discourse on waka poetry

developed by Chōken and Jien was extended into two genres that had previously been excluded from Buddhist liturgy: namely, the love poem and the romance tale.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Poet's Repentance: Shikan Contemplation and Love Poetry in Shunzei's *Korai Fūteishō*

Perhaps the most well-known anecdote about one of Japan's most celebrated poets, Fujiwara no Shunzei 藤原俊成 (1114–1204), describes his intensely focused approach to the composition of poetry. The story first appears in the early to mid-fifteenth century poetic treatise *Kirihioke* 桐火桶 (The Paulownia Brazier), a Nijō-line forgery attributed to Shunzei's son Teika 定家 (1162–1241):

The late lord my father [Shunzei], as the night grew cold, would turn away from the dimming lamp flame, put on just the outer cloak of his soot-darkened white purification robe, tie the cords, pull a quilt over him, [then] underneath that quilt, hug a paulownia brazier for warmth, rest his elbows on that brazier, and, sitting on the floor, compose poetry by intoning it, all alone, completely solitary and quiescent.<sup>1</sup>

The anecdote depicts Shunzei huddled next to the paulownia brazier while orally composing poetry in a state of solitary quiescence (*kanso jakumaku*). This iconic image of the venerable poet is also cited in two other fifteenth-century poetic treatises, including Shinkei's *Sasamegoto* and Shōtetsu's *Shōtetsu monogatari* 正徹物語, and still figures prominently in the modern imagination of Shunzei's poetic practice.

In *Japanese Court Poetry*, Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner cite Shinkei's version of the tale in their discussion of Shunzei's and Teika's poetic practice. In

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<sup>1</sup> *Kirihioke*, p. 274. Also translated in Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality*, p. 250.

commenting on it, they suggest that it indicates the influence of a Buddhist contemplation practice called *shikan* 止觀:

The insistence on a kind of mystical fusion of the poet and his materials achieved by intense concentration was influenced by the practice of *shikan*, or “concentration and insight,” identified with the Tendai sect of esoteric Buddhism patronized by most of the Court.<sup>2</sup>

Brower and Miner’s observation has since inspired a number of other important inquiries, most notably a key chapter in William LaFleur’s 1983 book *The Karma of Words*.

In chapter 4, “Symbol and Yūgen,” LaFleur explains that he will attempt to clarify the significance of an “apt observation” by Brower and Miner regarding the importance of the “sermons of the Buddha” for the “art of poetry,” which is made just below the above quotation.<sup>3</sup> To do so, LaFleur states that he will “take seriously the claim made by poets such as Shunzei, Teika, Saigyō, and Jien that their minds and their literary ideals were shaped by certain texts and religious practices.”<sup>4</sup> LaFleur’s investigation of these texts and religious practices focuses mostly on passages from the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Maka shikan* 摩訶止觀 (Ch. *Mohe zhiguan*) by Zhiyi—the text that sets forth the classical Tiantai exposition of *shikan* practice. Based on his investigation, he concludes, citing Konishi Jin’ichi, that: “the content of *shikan* is equivalent to the content of Zen.”<sup>5</sup>

As we saw in chapter 1, even in Zhiyi’s formulation of the term *shikan* did not refer only to the practice of “Zen,” or *zazen*; rather *zazen* constituted only one of four kinds of samadhis, or contemplative practices, called the Four Samadhis (*shishu sanmai*

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<sup>2</sup> Brower and Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry*, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 81. LaFleur cites Brower and Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry*, p. 257.

<sup>4</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

四種三昧). Moreover, even during Zhiyi's time, as Misaki Ryōshū has shown, these Four Samadhis were never purely “Zenlike” (*zenkan-teki* 禪觀的) or philosophical (*tetsugaku-teki* 哲學的) but instead already included many of the practices that would later be identified as “esoteric,” such as *dhāranī* and mantra.<sup>6</sup> I also argued, *pace* Misaki, that Esoteric Buddhist discourse continued to play a central role in the performance of the Four Samadhis even after Ennin's transmission of the Protocol for Regular Practice (*reiji sahō*) and the Lotus Repentance Rite (*Hokke senbō*) in the mid-tenth century.

This chapter will take advantage of liturgical sources that have become available since LaFleur's investigation in order to re-examine the important question posed in his key chapter in *The Karma of Words*. Namely, what were the texts and religious practices that shaped the literary ideals of Shunzei and the poets in his circle? Through analysis of liturgical texts such as invocatory statements (*hyōbyaku* 表白) and sutra-homilies (*kyōshaku* 經尺), alongside literary texts, such as homiletic tales (*setsuwa* 說話) and waka poems, I will locate the development of Shunzei's literary ideals in the ritual context of repentance rites dedicated to the bodhisattva Samantabhadra, or Fugen 普賢. These rites, moreover, I will show, do not exhibit the character of the kind of “Zen” that came into prominence later in the Kamakura period but rather represent the late-Heian period extension of the Lotus-Esoteric discourse that we examined in chapter 1.

In their assessment of *shikan*, Brower and Miner describe this practice as a kind of “mystical fusion.” Similarly, LaFleur, citing Konishi Jin'ichi, characterizes it in phenomenological terms as a collapse of “the confrontational relationship between the

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<sup>6</sup> Misaki, *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, p. 98. See chapter 5, pp. 90–111.

perceiver and the perceived.”<sup>7</sup> On the basis of this understanding of *shikan*, LaFleur argues that it served as the matrix for what he, following Hisamatsu Shin’ichi, suggests is the quintessential aesthetic quality of the medieval period: namely, “mystery and depth,” or *yūgen* 幽玄.<sup>8</sup> In this view, the experience of *shikan* teaches the poet to understand poetry’s “dimension of depth”—that is, *yūgen*—not as a place inside or outside of an independent self but rather as a process of signification without any fixed signified or tenor. He terms this style of poetry “tenorless symbolism” and identifies numerous examples of it in the poetry of Shunzei, Teika, and Saigyō.<sup>9</sup>

The importance of *yūgen* in Shunzei’s poetics, however, has been somewhat overdetermined in studies of medieval Japanese aesthetics and literature. As Brower and Miner point out, Shunzei left us “nothing in the way of a detailed poetic of *yūgen*.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the term does not appear once in the most extensive elaboration by Shunzei of his views on poetry, the 1197 *Korai fūteishō* 古来風体抄, which LaFleur examines at length. Even in the single passage that figures most prominently in modern studies of Shunzei’s views on *yūgen*—his postscript to a self-poetry contest by Jien—the term, as Clifton

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<sup>7</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> LaFleur draws especially on the 1971 English-language monograph by Hisamatsu Shin’ichi 久松真一, *Zen and the Fine Arts*, originally published in Japanese in 1958. In addition, on the importance of *yūgen* in medieval aesthetics, he also cites the 1963 English-language monograph, *The Vocabulary of Japanese Aesthetics* by Hisamatsu Sen’ichi 久松潜一.

<sup>9</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 94.

<sup>10</sup> Brower and Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry*, p. 266. LaFleur also cites this statement, but argues that Shunzei’s poetic of *yūgen* can be inferred from his poetry. In making this argument, LaFleur notes that he is following a line of interpretation laid out by Konishi Jin’ichi. LaFleur, in fact, seems to have drawn a great deal of his views on the relation between *shikan* and *yūgen* from Konishi’s 1973 English-language essay, “Image and Ambiguity: The Impact of Zen Buddhism on Japanese Literature.” In this work, Konishi, as we saw above, tends to project the Zen of the Kamakura period back onto the Tendai Buddhism of the late Heian. In this chapter, I attempt to redress this by situating Shunzei’s poetics in the tradition of Lotus-Esoteric discourse.



Royston has pointed out, is not central to the main thrust of his argument, which fundamentally concerns the power of the voice (*koe* 声) to evoke overtones that he calls the “aura” (*keiki* 景気) of the poem when it is read aloud to a rhythm. That Shunzei himself did not place particular emphasis on this term is, moreover, suggested by the fact that when he makes a similar, almost verbatim statement in a key passage from the *Korai fūteishō*, he replaces the term *yūgen* with *aware* (pathos), a term that, at least statistically speaking, figures much more prominently in his writings on waka poetry.

In my investigation, by locating *shikan* practice within the broader ritual context of Fugen repentance, I shed light on a key aspect of Shunzei’s poetry and poetics that has received little attention but stands as one of his most original contributions to the integration of Buddhism and waka in the late Heian period: his composition and doctrinal rationalization of poems on the classical waka topos of love (*koi* 恋) as a Buddhist practice.

Prior to Shunzei, for a poem to serve a Buddhist purpose—such as producing good karma for rebirth in the Pure Land or serving as an expedient means for realizing enlightenment—it had to make overt reference to the Buddhist teachings. As we saw in chapter 1, Kangaku-e assemblies in the mid-tenth century introduced into Pure Land liturgical practice the performance of *kanshi* composed on lines from the *Lotus Sutra*. This liturgical practice formed the basis for what came to be known as *shakkyō-shi* (*kanshi* on Śakyāmini’s teachings). It was soon extended to waka poetry as well, which, in turn, contributed to the formation of *shakkyō-ka* (waka on Śakyāmini’s teachings), a subclassification (*ko-budate* 小部立) in imperial anthologies that first appeared in the 1086 *Go-shūi wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集. Over the next century, this poetic genre gradually

expanded in its treatment of themes and materials. Yet, although poems became less overt in their use of Buddhist concepts and more sophisticated in their blending thereof with waka motifs, poems on the topic of love remained beyond the purview of poems composed for Buddhist purposes.

This changed in the mid-twelfth century when, sometime between 1156 and 1164, the poet-monk Jakuzen 寂然, one of Shunzei's closest companions in poetry, composed a one-hundred poem sequence (*hyakushu*) of “poems on the doctrines of the Dharma” (*hōmon-uta* 法門歌), called the *Hōmon hyakushu* 法門百首. Jakuzen's *hōmon-uta* were a subcategory of *shakkyōka*, in the prevailing style of topic-based composition (*daiei* 題詠) on compound topics (*musibi-dai* 結題). Following the standard *hyakushu* form of the time, which was inaugurated by the *Horikawa hyakushu* in 1105, topics in the *Hōmon hyakushu* progress from spring to winter (10 for each season) and move through celebrations (10), partings (10), love (10), and other categories from the imperial anthologies. For each poem within each of these topics, Jakuzen assigned a line from the Buddhist scriptures.

Jakuzen's experimentation with the *hōmon-uta* was revolutionary. In his work, poems intended for Buddhist purposes were no longer confined to explicit expressions of praise to and faith in the Buddhist teachings. Instead, each poem conveys a Buddhist meaning by recasting the classical connotations of waka topics such as love. In *daiei* composition, these connotations, which were normative in the context of poetry contests (*uta-awase*), were called the “root significance” (*hon'i* 本意) of the topic. By overlaying a Buddhist significance based on a line from the sutras onto the *hon'i* of a classical waka topos, Jakuzen demonstrated the ways that Buddhist meanings can be attributed to all

essential topics in the waka canon. He, therefore, opened the possibility for the composition of any waka poem, even those on the topic of love, to serve as an occasion, or expedient means, for realizing enlightenment and attaining rebirth in the Pure Land.

From 1156 to 1164, Jakuzen lived in Ōhara, a Tendai site northeast of Kyoto. During this time, he and Shunzei along with other notable poets, including Saigyō, studied Buddhism and composed poetry together. We also know that he attended Buddhist liturgies at which the famed Tendai preacher Chōken gave sermons (*sekkyō* 説經) on the Buddhist teachings.<sup>11</sup> Ōhara was home at the time to the influential lineage of Tendai *shōmyō* called the Ōhara Gyozan, and it was sometime during or not long after this period that Chōken began to develop a new form of repentance practice based on a style of musically inflected repentance practice developed by the Ōhara Gyozan lineage called the Fugen Repentance Rite, or *Fugen senbō* 普賢懺法. As part of this new liturgical form, Chōken also elaborated a new Buddhist discourse on sin (*tsumi* 罪) that opened up the possibility of sanctifying what, from the Buddhist point of view, constituted the most problematic genre of poetry, namely, love poetry. Love poetry, as Jien testifies a generation later, was widely believed to be “an exemplary instance [of something] that keeps us from detaching from the world of sorrow” (*uki yo wo hanarenu tameshi* うき世をはなれぬためし)—that is, a particularly sinful genre of poetry. Chōken, however, preached that sin is fundamentally empty; not only that, sin even constitutes an essential condition for enlightenment. In this view, repentance without sin is not possible, and, without repentance, one’s original enlightenment (*hongaku* 本覚)

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<sup>11</sup> The headnote to poem number 82 in *Jakuzen hosshi shū* 寂然法師集 indicates that Jakuzen heard Chōken preach in Ōhara.

will not be revealed. Beginning in the 1160s, Chōken applied this view to the “sin” of “fanciful phrases” for an offering of waka poetry by a circle of poets called the Karin’en 歌林苑, with which both Shunzei and Jakuzen were closely associated. We will examine Chōken’s *hyōbyaku* for this occasion in detail below.

Chōken was seven or eight years younger than Jakuzen and attained widespread recognition as a preacher only after returning from exile to the capital in 1160, likely sometime after Jakuzen composed the *Hōmon hyakushu*. Chōken’s discourse on waka poetry and his own composition of Buddhist poetry on the topic of love, as we will demonstrate below, closely resemble that of Jakuzen in his *Hōmon hyakushu*. On this basis, Yamamoto Akihiro has recently suggested that it was Jakuzen who influenced Chōken, not the other way around—thus, representing an example of how the waka tradition shaped Buddhism in medieval Japan. My concern in this chapter, however, is not one of influence. My aim rather is to demonstrate the ways in which Lotus-Esoteric discourse in late Heian Japan, through the apparatus of Fugen repentance, incorporated a mode of performance that had until then remained outside its reach. Shunzei’s discourse on waka poetry in the *Korai fūteishō*, I will argue, provides a paradigmatic example for observing this articulation of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in the production of what had remained an irredeemable genre of waka poetry, poems on love. Chapter 3 will extend this inquiry by showing how the reach of this apparatus extended even further into the genre of romance tales, or monogatari, another field of literary creation fundamentally concerned with love.

In the pages that follow, I will locate the ritual contexts for Shunzei’s discourse on the Buddhist significance of waka poetry in the *Korai fūteishō* by identifying the

specific liturgies and ceremonies contemporaneous to Shunzei in which his citations of scriptural sources are invoked and elaborated upon. My aim is not to demonstrate that Shunzei necessarily attended any specific ritual or ceremony but to show instead the *kinds* of rituals that would have been familiar not only to Shunzei but also to the eminent personage to whom Shunzei's text is addressed—Princess Shikishi 式子, who was one of his students—as well as poets in their social network, especially the circle of poets known as the Karin'en 歌林苑. This approach is predicated on the contention, first put forward by Watanabe Yasuaki, that Shunzei's discourse on poetry was not so much an internally consistent theory of poetry (*karon* 歌論), as it has often been viewed but rather an ensemble of rhetorical strategies addressed to a specific audience.<sup>12</sup> Thus, I shall begin my investigation with an analysis of Shikishi, the addressee of Shunzei's discourse in the *Korai fūteishō*, and, by doing so, attempt to shed light on the dialogical context in which Shunzei's rhetorical strategies operate. After establishing the dialogical context, I will consider how this dialogue between Shunzei and the addressee of his text was informed by a shared set of assumptions that itself was shaped by Buddhist ritual practice and liturgical performance—particularly that of Fugen repentance.

## 1 Dialogical Context: Princess Shikishi and Love Poetry on Buddhist Topics

Near the end of the general preface to the *Korai fūteishō*, Shunzei explains the request in response to which he compiled his anthology:

Now, one lofty personage, desiring to know deeply the spirit of the Way of these leaves of Yamato words, has asked me, "What configuration

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<sup>12</sup> Watanabe, *Chūsei waka no seisei*, chapter 3, "Korai fūteishō," pp. 290–96.

(*sugata*) of a waka poem (*uta*) do we consider good? What diction (*kotoba*) do we consider interesting? And why do we consider them so? Please kindly describe in general how a waka poem should be composed [and recited], even if the seagrasses you gather together should grow as long as the ropes of the *ama* divers.”<sup>13</sup>

The “lofty personage” (*aru mitaki yama*) cited by Shunzei has been identified as Imperial Princess Shikishi (or Shokushi) Naishinnō 式子内親王 (1149–1201), a waka poet and passionate devotee of Buddhism. She was also, along with Shunzei’s son Teika, one of Shunzei’s most accomplished students in waka poetry. By the time of her request in 1197, Shikishi had studied under the master poet for more than twenty years.

Shikishi’s questions to her teacher are first mentioned, in paraphrastic form, earlier in the general preface, at the end of its opening section:

When it comes to the configuration and diction (*sugata kotoba*) of this poetry, it is quite difficult to explain what we should consider good and how we should distinguish it from what is bad and, indeed, there are few people who know [how].<sup>14</sup>

Immediately following this statement is the oft-cited passage, translated in full by LaFleur, on the ways in which waka poetry resembles “Tendai *shikan*.”<sup>15</sup> The passage begins with the conjunctive adverb “therefore (*shikaru ni* しかるに).” This transition indicates that what follows—viz., Shunzei’s comparison of waka poetry to Tendai contemplation—is formulated in response to what preceded it—viz., his statement that the answer to Shikishi’s questions is “quite difficult to explain” (*nakanaka imijiku toki*

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<sup>13</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 252. Shikishi, in fact, requested a copy of the work on two occasions: the first in 1197 and the second in 1203 before her death. This chapter cites the *Shin nihon koten bungaku zenshū* version, which is based on the later version. For a transcription of the first draft, see *Kodai chūsei geijutsuron* 古代中世芸術論.

<sup>14</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 250.

<sup>15</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 90.

*nobe gataku*). In other words, it implies that the comparison to Tendai contemplation is part of his response to Shikishi's questions about the configuration and diction of waka poetry. The comparison may thus be thought of as a kind of pedagogical device. To understand it as such, it will help first to look more closely at the life and poetry of the student to whom it is addressed.

Princess Shikishi was born the third daughter of Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa in 1149 and served as Kamo Shrine Priestess (*saiin* 齋院) during her teenage years.<sup>16</sup> After retiring from the post in 1159 at the age of twenty, she continued to lead a life of relative seclusion. Though she rarely participated in public *uta-awase*, she conducted poetry exchanges with leading waka poets of her day, which included, in addition to Shunzei, a number of the best poets of the rear court (*kōkyō*): Kenrei Mon'in Ukyō no Daibu 建礼門院右京大夫,<sup>17</sup> Inpu Mon'in no Taifu 殷富門院大輔,<sup>18</sup> and Shunzei's Daughter 俊成女, who served as her attendant.<sup>19</sup> Shikishi also received training and instruction from renowned Buddhist priests in the most advanced forms of Buddhism of the time. In 1194, at the age of 45, she was initiated into the Shingon esoteric rite of the Eighteen Paths (*jūhachi dōi* 十八道位) by Dharma Prince Dōhō 道法法親王, a disciple of her brother and abbot of Ninnaji, Dharma Prince Shukaku 守覺法親王. Also around the same time, Shikishi began correspondence with the Pure Land priest Hōnen 法然

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<sup>16</sup> There is a veritable cottage industry in Japan devoted to the study of Princess Shikishi. For an overview of her life and translations of her complete poetry, see Hiroaki Sato's *String of Beads: Complete Poems of Princess Shikishi*.

<sup>17</sup> See *Kenrei Mon'in Ukyō Daibu shū* 建礼門院右京大夫集: 73–74.

<sup>18</sup> *Shin kokin wakashū* 新古今和歌集 (hereafter, *SKKS*): 415–16, 605–6.

<sup>19</sup> *Kenrei Mon'in Ukyō Daibu shū*: 73–74.

(1133–1212) and, not long thereafter, likely took the Buddhist vows from him, acquiring the name Shōnyohō 正女房. In a long letter to her, Hōnen admonishes her to chant *nenbutsu* and not to doubt that by the power of the Buddha she will be reborn in the pure land of Ultimate Joy (*gokuraku ōjō* 極樂往生). The letter thus indicates her interest in *nenbutsu* recitation, which was growing in popularity at the turn of the thirteenth century.

Shikishi was known among her peers as a recluse. Dedicated to the practice of Buddhism, she spent much of her life secluded in the former residence of her father, the Ōi Palace 大吹殿. However, her life was not divorced from the pursuit of sensuous beauty. After a visit to Shikishi's Ōi Palace in 1197—the year she requested Shunzei to compile the *Korai fūteishō*—the poet Minamoto no Ienaga 源家長 (d. 1223) described with considerable astonishment the extraordinary refinement of her home.

Last year, on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month, [Emperor Toba] suddenly paid a visit to [Shikishi's] Ōi Palace to play *kemari*. At that time, the blossoms in the garden covered over the path, the wisteria wrapped in [the scent of] the pines, and the yellow globeflower inside the bamboo hedge, without any attention, bloomed here and there. The scent of fine incenses competed with the fragrance of the blossoms. And the scent of the incense wafting from the Personal Buddha Hall was no less superior. In my mind I thought it curious, “So this is how one who has turned her back on the world lives in her home.” On some old hanging eaves, the grasses of longing and the grasses of forgetting thickly grew over each other, which I found more interesting than a newly constructed mansion. . . . When the sun set, the sound of the bells tinkling deep inside [the mansion] and the sound of the [temple] bells ringing out was exquisite and holy.<sup>20</sup>

Impressed by the fragrance of the blossoms in the garden and the scent of the fine incense in the Buddha Hall, Ienaga found her lifestyle incongruous with his expectations for

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<sup>20</sup> See *Minamoto no Ienaga nikki* 源家長日記, pp. 78–81. For my translation, I consulted Hiroaki Sato, *String of Beads*, pp. 6–7. The date is not specified in this account, but according to Kujō Kaneyane in his diary *Gyokuyō* 玉葉, this imperial visit took place in 1203 before Shikishi's death.



someone who has “turned her back on the world” (*yo wo somuku*). Shikishi, he reports, was no ordinary recluse.

Her unique ability to combine the pursuit of beauty with the practice of Buddhism, which is so vividly depicted in the above excerpt from Ienaga’s diary, is also eminently displayed in her poetry. As a poet, Shikishi was known especially for her lyricism. In his poetic treatise *Go-Toba-in go-kuden* 後鳥羽院御口伝, Retired Emperor Go-Toba names Shikishi along with Fujiwara no Yoshitsune (1169–1206) and Jien (1155–1225) as one of the “outstanding” poets in “recent times” and praises her poetry as *momimomi*, or “intricate.”<sup>21</sup>

Although Shikishi became known by later generations as an exemplary composer of love poetry (*koi no uta*), she did not limit her poetry to that topos alone. Like so many of the poems on the topic of love in the waka tradition, Shikishi’s love poetry explores the feelings of rejection, loss, and sadness that love provokes. This pathos of sadness pervades her poetry even when the topic is not love. This is true especially of her poems on Buddhist topics. The following is an example:

From a one-hundred poem sequence, a poem on the meaning of [the line],  
“Entering into meditation every morning”

*Shizukanaru  
akatsuki goto ni  
miwataseba  
mada fukaki yo no  
yume zo kanashiki*

In the calm  
Before every dawn  
I gaze afar—  
Still the night is deep,  
Troubled with dreams.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Go-Toba-in go-kuden*, p. 318. Cited in Hirai, *Shikishi Naishinnō no kafū*, p. 12. Hirai suggests that the term *momimomi* denotes a particular configuration (*sugata*) of a poem in which the lyrical expression of feeling (*kokoro*) and the regulation thereof through language (*kotoba*) are well balanced.

<sup>22</sup> *SKKS*: 1969. See also Sato, *String of Beads*, p. 107.

This poem was selected for the *Shin kokin wakashū* imperial anthology, compiled a decade after her death, under the category of *shakkyōka*. In a note in the Shōgakukan edition of the *Shin kokinshū*, Minemura Fumito 峯村文人 suggests that the topic “Entering into meditation (*jō* 定, Sk. *dhyāna*) every morning” is a line from the *Kṣitigarbha Sutra for Prolonging Life* 延命地藏菩薩經.<sup>23</sup> The source for this poem, however, has been a matter of contention. The early modern-period Shingon monk Keichū 契沖 suggested that it was based on the *Shinji-kan kyō* 心地觀經 (Ch. *Xindiguan jing*<sup>24</sup>), a text that sets forth a number of esoteric Buddhist theories such as the three bodies of the self-nature body, the function body, and transformation body as well as practices such as the moon-disc contemplation (*shin gachirin* 心月輪) and the three mysteries.<sup>25</sup> Yamada Shōzen, however, has recently suggested that we need not go all the way back to the sutras to find the immediate source of this poem.<sup>26</sup> He cites an annotation in a mid-Kamakura period collection, the *Yaku-wa wakashū* 訳和和歌集, compiled by Jikkai 実海 (1269–1318), that identifies the source of this poetic topic as a *kada* included in a *kōshiki* called the *Jizō kōshiki* composed by the mid-twelfth century Shingon monk Kakuban 覚鑿 (1095–1143). Yamada, however, believes that it likely derives from a more open (*kaihōteki* 開放的) example of this *Jizō kōshiki* attributed to Genshin.<sup>27</sup> In

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<sup>23</sup> SKKS, p. 570.

<sup>24</sup> Full title: *Dasheng bensheng xindi guan jing* 大乘本生心地觀經, Jp. *Daijō honshō shinji-kan kyō* (8 fascicles); T 159, 3: 291–331.

<sup>25</sup> *Keichū zenshū*, vol. 15, p. 557.

<sup>26</sup> Yamada, *Kō-e no bungaku*, p. 113.

<sup>27</sup> See DNBZ 49.

either case, it is likely that Shikishi derived the topic for this poem from the performance of a lecture assembly. This suggests that, while it refers to solitary meditation practice, Shikishi's approach to this practice was mediated by Buddhist liturgy.

In the poem, Shikishi imagines the world viewed from the perspective of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva (Jp. Jizō 地藏, Ch. Dizang) whose vow it is to bring all sentient beings to the other shore of salvation in the afterlife. What she sees before her is a world that is, literally, “the dream of the deep night” (*fukaki yo no yume*). In Buddhist poetry, the dream is a metaphor for delusion. She is thus troubled, or saddened (*kanashiki*), to see the world still suffering from delusion. The figure of “dreams” (*yume*), in addition, is important to Shikishi's love poetry, in which the figure signifies, according to a classical trope in the waka tradition, the desire to see one's lover in one's dreams at night.<sup>28</sup> It thus also refers to the romantic desires of the poet—or, more precisely, the poetic persona—and her deep sense of regret that even Buddhist meditation cannot free her from her attachments.

Shikishi's poem indicates two aspects of her poetic practice relevant to Shunzei's discussion of Tendai *shikan* in the *Korai fūteishō*: first, her knowledge (and perhaps also her practice) of Buddhist meditation; second, her interest in introducing sentiments and figures associated with the topic of love into poetry on Buddhist topics.

In 1187, over a decade before the *Korai fūteishō*, Shunzei included in the *Senzai wakashū* imperial anthology, for which he was the sole compiler, the following poem by Shikishi on one of Fugen's “Ten Vows”:

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<sup>28</sup> Kutsukake, *Shikishi Naishinnō shishō*, pp. 160–64.

In a poem on the Gate of the Dharma in a one-hundred poem sequence, on the heart of Fugen's vow, "Only this King of Vows shall not foresake you."

<i>Furusato wo</i>	Even as I leave
<i>hitori wakaruru</i>	My birthplace alone
<i>yūbe ni mo</i>	In the evening,
<i>okuru wa tsuki no</i>	The light of the moon,
<i>kage to koso kike</i>	I hear, will see me off. <sup>29</sup>

In this poem, Shikishi skillfully employs the conventions of the poetic topic "Parting" (*ribetsu* 離別)—which often implies parting from one's lover and is therefore closely associated with the topic of *koi*—to illustrate the universal saving power of Fugen's vow to never foresake the faithful, one of ten vows set forth in the Vows and Practice of Fugen in the *Flower Garland Sutra*.<sup>30</sup> Thus, in this poem, as in the above, Shikishi skillfully introduces sentiments associated with the topos of love into a poem on a Buddhist theme.

Shikishi's poems indicate that she was well versed not only in poetry but in Buddhism as well. Although we do not have specific documentation that she studied the *Maka shikan*, the treatise on meditation by the Tiantai master Zhiyi 智顛 (538–597), it was not uncommon for aristocratic women of her day to do so; moreover, we know from her poetry that she was at least familiar, if not expertly acquainted, with Buddhist meditation practices.<sup>31</sup> It is likely then that, for someone like Shikishi, Shunzei's

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<sup>29</sup> *Senzai wakashū* 千載和歌集: 1222. See also *Shikishi Naishinnō zenka shinshaku* 式子内親王全歌新釈, p. 227. For another translation, see Satō, *String of Beads*, p. 101.

<sup>30</sup> Jp. *Kegon kyō* 華嚴經, Ch. *Huayan jing*, Sk. *Avatamsaka Sutra*.

<sup>31</sup> For evidence of aristocratic women's interest in the late Heian period in the practice of Tendai *shikan*, see the tale about Owari, an attendant to the Retired Empress Taiken Mon'in 待賢門院, and her dedication to the study of *Maka shikan* under Ryōnin of Ōhara in the *Jikkunshō* 十訓抄, p. 455.

reference to *shikan* would have provided a familiar point of reference for understanding the master poet's views on poetry.

As leading scholar of medieval waka poetry Watanabe Yasuaki 渡部泰明 has argued, most studies of Shunzei's *Korai fūteishō*—of which there are many in Japanese—assume that the text sets forth an internally consistent “theory of *uta*,” or *karon* 歌論.<sup>32</sup> This assumption is apparent in English-language studies as well, almost all of which refer to the *Korai fūteishō*—a long text comprised mostly of poems from across the ages—as a “poetic treatise” rather than what it is, a poetic anthology. In this section, by identifying the addressee of the *Korai fūteishō* and offering a brief sketch of her life, I have attempted to situate Shunzei's poetic discourse in its dialogical context. This sets the stage for the following section in which I will examine Shunzei's analogy to Tendai *shikan* as a kind of pedagogical strategy for teachings his views on how to compose and appreciate waka poetry.

## 2 Waka Poetry and Tendai *Shikan* I: The Sacred Vocalizable Text

Shunzei unfolds his analogy in three parts. Each highlights a different aspect of waka by means of comparison with a particular aspect of Zhiyi's *Maka shikan* text: first, the way the text sounds when it is recited or preached; second, the history of its oral transmission; and third, the structure of its central doctrine of the three truths (*santai* 三諦; Ch. *sandi*). LaFleur focuses primarily on the third aspect and misses entirely

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<sup>32</sup> See Watanabe, *Chūsei waka no seisei*, ch. 3, “*Korai fūteishō*.”

Shunzei's emphasis on the orality of Zhiyi's text in the first and second parts of the analogy. To redress this lacuna, this section will re-examine the first two parts of Shunzei's analogy. The argument will be made that Shunzei, in these two parts of the analogy, uses the oral performance of Zhiyi's text as strategic point of reference for recasting waka as a form of written word that, like the *shikan* text, has the potential to reveal "the deep mind of things" by its sound alone, which I term a "sacred vocalizable text." Subsection 2.1 demonstrates the ritual context for this new conception of waka poetry by investigating liturgies for the recitation and oral exposition of the *Maka shikan* organized by Shunzei's lifelong friends and comrades-in-poetry, the poet-monks Jakuzen, Jakuchō, and Saigyō.

Shunzei prefaces his analogy with the assertion of the difficulty of explaining the configuration and diction of waka poetry. Immediately following this, he unfolds a three-part comparison of waka poetry to what he calls "Tendai *shikan*":

Thus, in the opening words of a text called *Tendai Calm and Contemplation*, a person called Great Teacher Zhang'an wrote, "The clarity and tranquility of calm-and-contemplation is beyond anything known to previous generations." Just by *hearing* it, the limitless depth of things and their inner significance is surmised and we feel most reverent. In the same way, we may come to know the good, the bad, and the deep mind (*fukaki kokoro*) of waka poetry (*uta*), which, though difficult to describe in words, is something that, I believe, can be compared to this.<sup>33</sup>

The cited line on the "clarity and tranquility" (*myōjō* 明静) of *shikan* appears in the *Maka shikan*'s preface, which, as Shunzei notes, was composed by Zhiyi's disciple Guanding 灌頂 (561–632). Drawing special attention to the way the text sounds when recited, Shunzei states that simply by hearing this, one can grasp the limitless depth of things

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<sup>33</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 250.

(*koto no fukasa*) and know their inner principle (*oku no gi*). He then suggests that just as listening to a recitation of the *Maka shikan* allows one to surmise the deep inner meanings of text, one may similarly come to know the “deep heart” (*fukaki kokoro*) of waka. It is because, he explains, this deep heart is, echoing his previous statement about the configuration and diction of waka (*uta*), difficult to describe in words (*kotoba wo motte nobegataki wo*), that he has proposed that it might be thought of in terms of “this” (*kore*)—that is, Tendai *shikan*. While in the final part of Shunzei’s analogy, “Tendai *shikan*” does refer to the seated practice of meditation (the meaning suggested by LaFleur and others), in the first two parts, *shikan* refers to Zhiyi’s text (*fumi* 文) and more specifically to its oral performance. Thus, in this passage, Shunzei explains that he will use the *Maka shikan* as a paradigm for what might be called a “vocalizable text”—a kind of written word whose oral performance has the power to evoke deep inner meanings and feelings of reverence.

Shunzei proceeds to unfold the second part of his analogy, in which he considers a key narrative theme in the opening section of the preface to the *Maka shikan*, the transmission of the dharma:

Now, also in this *Calm and Contemplation*, [there is a passage that] illuminates the manner in which the Buddha transmitted the Dharma of the Buddha and makes known to people how the Way of the Dharma has been transmitted up to the present. The Great Enlightened One, Śakyamuni, proclaimed the holy Dharma to Kaśyapa, who, in turn, proclaimed it to Ānanda. It was transmitted in this manner from teacher to disciple down through twenty-three generations. When we hear about the manner in which this law was passed down, we cannot help but feel reverence. Poetry has similarly been transmitted from the distant past, and things called anthologies were compiled, which, beginning with the *Man’yōshū* and continuing through the *Kokinshū*, *Gosenshū*, *Shūishū* and on down, enable us to deeply apprehend in our minds the forms of poetry.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, pp. 250–51.

Shunzei places particular emphasis on how the Dharma was transmitted (*tsutau* 伝ふ) through the oral act of proclamation (*tsugu* 告ぐ). In addition, he reiterates how to hear (*kiku*) this section of the *Maka shikan* gives rise to feelings of reverence (*tōtōsa*). He then uses this theme of Dharma transmission for his next point of comparison: the similarity in the transmission history of waka poetry and of the Buddha’s teachings. Waka poetry, like the Dharma, he argues, has been transmitted from the distant past and, moreover, is deeply apprehended in the mind (*fukaku kokoro u* 深く心得) by people today.

Shunzei’s emphasis in these first two parts of his analogy on the oral performance of the *Maka shikan* text presupposes an understanding of “Tendai *shikan*” that cannot be reduced to the kind of quiet seated meditation, or *zazen*, by which LaFleur and others have understood the term. The subsection that follows will identify the rituals for the oral performance of *Maka shikan* to which Shunzei alludes in the above and consider the social network through which he became acquainted with these rituals. By doing so, it will demonstrate the ritual contexts that informed Shunzei’s concern for revealing waka as a sacred vocalizable text. Attending to Shunzei’s emphasis on voice in this way will help to clarify how he borrowed performative elements of Buddhist liturgy to recast as Buddhist practice the composition and oral recitation of poetry whose words (*kotoba*) are not explicitly Buddhist.

## **2.1 Ritual Context: Dharma Talks on *Maka shikan***

It was only at the age of sixty-three that Shunzei took the Buddhist vows and acquired the religious status of novice on the Path (*nyūdō* 入道), a custom that was not



uncommon among aristocrats of the late Heian court. Prior to then, he had lived his life as a lay courtier in the service of the court. He, therefore, did not belong to a temple or receive formal training under a certified master in Buddhist doctrine or practice until very late in life. We should not conclude on this basis, however, that he did not have access or was not exposed to Buddhist practices and doctrines. In fact, many of his closest friends and acquaintances were monks and, with them, he seems to have learned much about Buddhism.

Throughout his life, Shunzei's closest collaborators and friends were poet-monks. He began his studies of waka in earnest in his early twenties under the auspices of Tokiwa no Tametada 常盤為忠, the father of his first wife. Tametada's family included at least one other daughter and seven sons, and Shunzei was particularly close with the three brothers who were especial inheritors of their father's literary gifts: Tamenari 為業 (Buddhist name Jakunen 寂念; dates unknown), Tametsune 為經 (Buddhist name Jakuchō 寂超; dates unknown), and Yorinari 頼業 (Buddhist name Jakuzen 寂然; 1118–1183?), later known by the collective sobriquet “Three Jaku of Ōhara,” all eventually became monks who were also widely recognized for their poetic accomplishments. The talents of Tametada's sons and son-in-law were showcased in two major poetic events, *Tametada-ke shodo hyakushu* 為忠家初度百首 and *Tametada-ke kōdo hyakushu* 為忠家後度百首, sponsored by Tametada in the mid-1130s shortly before his death. In 1143, Jakuchō took the vows and moved to live in seclusion in Ōhara; Jakuzen soon followed him. The brothers' retreat to the northeastern mountains notwithstanding, Shunzei

maintained close ties with the brothers and the family, and five years later, he married Jakuchō's former wife, Bifukumon'in no Kaga 美福門院加賀 (d. 1193).<sup>35</sup>

The three brothers counted Saigyō 西行 among their close associates, and Shunzei is thought to have met the poet through them. Saigyō's personal poetry collections document a number of poem exchanges (*sōtōka* 贈答歌) and linked poetry (*renga* 連歌) sequences with Jakuzen and Shunzei. One example appears in Saigyō's *Kikigakishū* 聞書集:

When lay practitioner San'i of Gōjō was living at the Ōmiya residence, Jakuzen and Saijū gathered together, and after telling tales about the hereafter, they composed on the topic "Facing the Blossoms, Contemplating the Pure Land."

<i>Kokoro wo zo</i>	My heart
<i>agate hasu ni</i>	Has finally blossomed
<i>sakase tsuru</i>	Into a lotus flower—
<i>ima miru hana no</i>	Though now the petals scatter,
<i>chiru ni taguete</i>	May they be gathered together.

In this way, they went on linking poems as they told tales.<sup>36</sup>

The headnote describes how Shunzei, before he moved to Gōjō in 1167, along with three poet-monks—Saigyō, Jakuzen, and Saijū—told tales (*monogatari*) about the afterlife, which they concluded with a poem on the Pure Land. The combination of waka poetry with tales about the afterlife, which certainly would have been influenced by the extremely widely read text by Genshin, *Ōjō yōshū*, prefigures the development of an important Buddhist tale that similarly uses poetry to punctuate narrative, the *Hōbutsushū* 法物集—a key intertext for reading Shunzei's poetics in the *Korai fūteishō*, as will be

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<sup>35</sup> Kaga is also considered to be the sponsor of the *Genji* offering that we will examine in chapter 3.

<sup>36</sup> *Kikigakishū*: 244.

further discussed below. In any case, the above headnote, poem, and interlinear comment provide evidence of Shunzei's participation in informal gatherings dedicated to the combined pursuit of literature and Buddhism along with his poet-monk friends Jakuzen and Saigyō.

Jakuchō, Jakuzen, and Saigyō all record studying the *Maka shikan* in headnotes (*kotobagaki* 詞書) and poems in their personal poetry collections. A headnote to a waka poem in Jakuzen's *Yuishinbō-shū* 唯心房集 describes how he and his older brother Jakuchō studied “*shikan*” under Ennin Shōnin 緣忍上人 (1108–1180):

When we were studying calm-and-contemplation [*shikan*] under Ennin Shōnin of Ōhara, I, along with Jakuchō of Iimuro [Yokawa on Mount Hiei] and others arrayed ourselves on the mat of the Dharma.<sup>37</sup>

Ennin Shōnin was a priest trained in the Vairocana esoteric course (*shanagō* 遮那業) under Ryōnin Shōnin 良忍上人 at Raigō-in 来迎院 in Ōhara. Ryōnin Shōnin is also known to have preached on the *Maka shikan* to lay practitioners, including women. Ennin Shōnin later came to be known as the Second-Generation Elder of Raigō-in and Adept of Original Enlightenment 来迎院二世長老本覚上人, the first-generation being his teacher Ryōnin Shōnin. After the esotericization of Tendai on Mount Hiei by Ennin and Enchin in the ninth century, priests trained in the Vairocana esoteric course, as opposed to the exoteric course in calm-and-contemplation (*shikangō* 止観業), drove the development of Tendai doctrinal studies. Ennin Shōnin produced a commentary on Ennin's *Soshitsuji kyara kyō* 蘇悉地羯羅經略疏 (Commentary on the Tantra of Uncanny Success) that added vernacular reading marks, or *kunten* 訓点, to the text. He also composed waka

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<sup>37</sup> *Yuishinbō-shū*: 159.

poetry. In 1167, he conducted a poetry exchange (*zōtōka* 贈答歌) with Saigyō.<sup>38</sup> He was thus not only an authority on Tendai doctrine—which would have included both esoteric and exoteric texts, such as the *Maka shikan*—but also a leading figure in adapting recondite buddhological doctrines for lay practitioners and enthusiasts, such as Jakuchō, Jakuzen, and Shunzei.

An *ima'yō* 今様 poem also in the same collection by Jakuzen sings the praises of Zhiyi's text:

<p><i>Kōbō no daiku wa</i>  <i>ōkaredomo</i>  <i>Tendai chisha koso</i>  <i>tōtokere</i>  <i>zendai mibunno</i>  <i>maka shikan</i>  <i>ikadeka chigiri wo</i>  <i>musubamaku</i></p>	<p>Though techniques for          Spreading the Dharma are myriad,          Truly it is that of the Tendai Sage [Zhiyi]          That is most venerable.          “The Great Calm-and-Contemplation          Never before heard in previous generations.”          How much I would like          To make a link therewith!<sup>39</sup></p>
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Jakuzen, like Shunzei after him, cites the same opening line of *Maka shikan*—“Never heard before in previous generations.” He also similarly extols Zhiyi's text as worthy of veneration (*tōtokere*). The phrase “*chigiri wo musubamaku*” in the last two lines, moreover, suggests the ritual concept of karmic bonds, or *kechien* 結縁, with a Buddha or scripture, which constituted the soteriological goal of dharma talks, or *dangi* 談義—a kind of lecture-assembly, or *kō-e* 講会, often for lay people, that had become increasingly common in the twelfth century.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> See *Zokugo senshū*: 1120 and *Sankashū*: 1239. For more on Saigyō's relation to Ennin, see Yamada, “Ennin to Saigyō.”

<sup>39</sup> *Yuishinbō-shū*: 78.

<sup>40</sup> For more on the rise of *kō-e* in late Heian Japan, see Minowa, *Nihon bukkyō no kyōri keisei*.

A headnote to a poem in another personal collection of Saigyō, the *Saigyō shōnin kashū* 西行上人家集, describes Jakuchō giving a dharma talk on *shikan* in Ōhara:

Hearing that lay priest Jakuchō was giving a dharma talk on calm-and-contemplation, I sent this...<sup>41</sup>

The poem, not cited here, expresses Saigyō's regrets for being unable to attend Jakuchō's dharma talk. The date is not specified. However, Yamada Shōzen conjectures that it must have taken place after Ennin Shōnin's lecture on the *Maka shikan* in 1167 but not long after Saigyō's journey to Sagi in the 12<sup>th</sup> month of 1167.<sup>42</sup> Taken together, the headnotes indicate Shunzei, Saigyō, Jakuchō, Jakuzen, and possibly a number of other poets, such as Saijū, held a kind of study group—or *kenkyūkai* as Yamada Shōzen suggests—on *shikan* in the mid- to late 1160s in Ōhara.

### 3 Waka Poetry and Tendai Shikan II: Voice as the Middle Way

For his third and final point of comparison between waka and *shikan*, Shunzei turns to the Tendai doctrine of the three truths:

That [*Maka shikan*], however, has the profound meaning of a dharma text [preached by] the Golden-Mouthed One. *This* [waka poetry] [by comparison] may seem to resemble the play of floating words and fanciful phrases. And yet, it manifests the deep meaning of things. So that we may render this [waka poetry] a karmic activity for setting forth on the Way of the Buddha: The passions are none other than enlightenment. In the *Lotus Sutra*, it says, "if [one] should expound on classical texts of profane society...or those relating to work and livelihood, one will always accord with the correct Dharma." In the *Contemplation of Fugen* [*Sutra*], it is

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<sup>41</sup> *Saigyō shōnin kashū*: 348.

<sup>42</sup> Yamada, "Ennin to Saigyō," p. X.

preached, “To what can we point and say this is sin and this fortune? Sin and fortune lack an intrinsic essence and our mind is of itself empty.” Thus, now, when I speak of the deep Way of waka poetry), I shall speak of it by drawing comparisons to the ways in which it resembles the three truths (*santai*) of the empty, the provisional, and the middle (*kūgechū*).<sup>43</sup>

Shunzei presents his comparison in the form of a defense of waka poetry against the charge of “floating words and fanciful phrases,” or *fugen kigo* 浮言綺語. He argues that waka poetry should not be condemned as a form of frivolous play because it manifests the deep meaning of things (*koto no fukaki mune*) and may serve as a karmic activity (*en* 縁) for practicing the Buddhist path. To demonstrate his thesis, he cites three passages from Buddhist scripture. Subsections 3.1 to 3.3 will examine the ritual context for each of Shunzei’s scriptural citations. In this introductory subsection, I will present a close reading of Shunzei’s defense and attempt to clarify his comparison of three-truth doctrine to waka poetry.

In his reading of Shunzei’s defense, LaFleur has suggested that Shunzei was aware of “more puritanical members of the Buddhist community” who were troubled by “Japanese courtly conventions, according to which it was necessary to write amorous verse.”<sup>44</sup> While LaFleur aptly draws attention to the issue of amorous verse, or love poetry, as central to Buddhist discussions of waka, he assumes that the formula of *fugen kigo* represents the views of “puritanical” Buddhists who were opposed to waka poetry. By Shunzei’s time, however, the term “fanciful phrases” (*kigo*) had come to serve a rhetorical function as a liturgical shorthand for a prayer invoked at Buddhist ceremonies for the offering of court poetry, both Chinese *kanshi* and Japanese waka. Therefore, the

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<sup>43</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 251.

<sup>44</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 91.

term always implied a reversal; thus, it did not represent the viewpoint of the Buddhist puritan who rejected poetry but rather that of a rhetorical strawman against which the Buddhist significance of waka poetry could be revealed.

The rhetorical function of the term *kyōgen kigo* is operative already at the time of its introduction by the Kangaku-e. What changed specifically over time is the technique by which this reversal took place. As we saw in our analysis of the Kangaku-e in chapter 1, Bai's prayer for *kyōgen kigo* referred to the repurposing of his *kanshi* poems for use as hymns at Buddhist liturgies for rebirth in the Pure Land. This method entailed citing verses by Bai Juyi that could be used as either hymns that give praise to or as didactic verses that preach the Buddhist teachings. One consequence of this method, as we saw in the example of the *kanshi* poem by Kamo no Yasuaki, was that the poems the Kangaku-e produced were overtly Buddhist in content. Poems that did not refer explicitly to Buddhist themes or messages remained excluded and irredeemable.

Also as described in chapter 1, the Kangaku-e followed the liturgical format of “*daimoku* in the morning, *nenbutsu* in the evening.” While we do not have records of the morning practice of *daimoku*, which would likely have featured a strong repentance element, we can infer from Bai's prayer, in which he refers to the “karma of his worldly writings” (*sezoku moji no gō*) as a transgression (*ayamachi*), that the practice of repentance was in fact important to the assemblies of the Kangaku-e. The repentance rites that we will examine in this chapter are situated in the Kangaku-e tradition but, at the same time, also extend it by introducing a new discourse on sin founded on a new ritual technology for the practice of repentance that centered on the worship of Fugen. Chōken, I will show, was a key figure in this development. According to the discourse that he

developed, which is closely associated with what is often termed “original enlightenment thought” (*hongaku shisō* 本覚思想), all sin is not only empty but also a necessary condition for enlightenment. In rites predicated on this discourse, the composition of sinful poetry on such topics is not condemned but rather celebrated—precisely because of its extreme sinfulness—as an effective means for attaining enlightenment.

At the outset of his defense, Shunzei signals his departure from the Kangaku-e tradition by slightly altering the four characters of “*kyōgen kigo*”:

*That* [the *Maka shikan*], however, conveys the profound meaning of a Dharma Text [preached by] the Golden-Mouthed One. *This* [waka poetry] [by comparison] seems to resemble the play of floating words and fanciful phrases (*fugen kigo*). And yet, it manifests the deep meaning of things.<sup>45</sup>

In place of “wild words” (*kyōgen*), Shunzei substitutes “floating words” (*fugen* 浮言).

This substitution, though entirely overlooked by previous studies, is not inconsequential. It forecasts, through play on the word *fugen*, a centrally important element in Shunzei’s understanding of *shikan*: worship of Fugen Bodhisattva.

Shunzei demonstrates his claim that the floating words and fanciful phrases of waka poetry manifest the profound meaning of things by invoking a series of scriptural passages. He begins by stating his intent in doing so:

So that we may render this [waka poetry] a karmic activity for setting forth on the Way of the Buddha.<sup>46</sup>

The term *en* 縁 in this key statement has been interpreted variously by English-language commentators. In LaFleur’s reading, this statement represents the core of Shunzei’s response to the charge of *kyōgen kigo*. LaFleur, however, offers more of a paraphrase

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<sup>45</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 251.

<sup>46</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 251.



than a precise translation: “this [i.e., the reason why waka manifests the deep meaning of things (interpolation mine)] is because there exists a reciprocal flow of meaning between such things [as poetry] and the way of Buddhism, a way that maintains the interdependence of all things.”<sup>47</sup> In his translation, “interdependence” seems to refer to the concept of *en* in its specific philosophical sense of dependent origination (Sk. *pratītyasamutpāda*). This interpretation misinterprets Shunzei’s *tame*, or “so that,” as an inferential “because” and therefore misses its subjunctive character as a liturgical prayer. Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen recognizes the term’s reference to Bai’s prayer and translates it in its primary Buddhist sense as a “circumstance”—that is, the *en* of the term *innen* 因縁, signifying the “causes” and “conditions” that are more generally identified with the concept of karma.

Both interpretations miss, however, an important nuance of the term *en*. The second sense of the term given in *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, after its primary meaning as karmic condition, is a kind of impetus (*hataraki kake* はたらきかけ) for focusing the mind on things. It cites *Fukuro zōshi* 袋草紙, the circa 1157 poetic treatise by Fujiwara no Kiyosuke 藤原清輔 (1104–1177), a rival of Shunzei’s in the Rokujō school of waka poetry: “*en* is the mind (*kokoro*) that does the hearing and seeing of things.”<sup>48</sup> In the context of his poetic treatise, this *kokoro* is the mind, or heart, that creates poetry. Kiyosuke’s usage thus indicates that among Shunzei’s contemporaries, the concept of *en* was closely associated with the mind (*kokoro*) that perceives things.

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<sup>47</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 95.

<sup>48</sup> *Fukuro zōshi*, p. 141. “*En wa mono o kiki mo shi, mi mo suru kokoro nari*” 縁は物を聞きもし、見もする心也。縁ハモノヲキハモンミモスル意也。

This association between the Buddhist term *en* and the perceiving mind can be also found in what is known as the “core” statement of the *Maka shikan*. This “core” statement figures prominently in liturgical texts produced for Fugen repentance rites, as will be shown below. It was also chanted as part of daily religious offices of Tendai priests.<sup>49</sup> As a lay novice, Shunzei would have been intimately familiar with it.

In this core statement, *en* connotes the practice of mindfulness that is associated with the highest form of *shikan* practice called the “perfect and sudden.”

Perfect and sudden [*shikan*] begins by binding one’s field of perception (*en zu*) with the true character of reality (*jissō*). No matter what is created in this field (*kyō*), it is identical to the middle (*chū*), for there is nothing that is not the true reality (*shinjitsu*). When one binds one’s field of perception (*en*) with the Dharma realm and unifies one’s mindfulness with the Dharma realm, there is no color or scent that is not the middle way.<sup>50</sup>

This passage, which includes only the first lines of the larger core statement, enjoins the practitioner to bind and unify one’s field of perception (*en*) and mindfulness (*nen*) with what it variously calls the “real character,” “true reality,” and “Dharma realm.” *En* refers, in this context, as Donner and Stevenson note in their translation, to the Yogacarin sense of the term as an object in one’s field of perception.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, as a verb, the form in which the term is used in the first instance above, *en* refers to the act of rendering something an object in one’s perceptual field. In light of this passage, Shunzei’s use of the term suggests a kind of mental act that enables perfect and sudden *shikan* by rendering perceptible the true nature of a thing according to Buddhist doctrine. The true

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<sup>49</sup> Donner and Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*, p. 112

<sup>50</sup> *T* 1911, 46:0001c23–25. For *yomi-kudashi*, see Sekiguchi, vol. 1, p. 24. For the translation, I have also consulted Donner and Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*, pp. 112–13.

<sup>51</sup> Donner and Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*, p. 112. They cite the commentary by Zhanran 湛然 on this passage.

nature of the thing revealed by this practice is its identity with the “middle” (*chū*). This refers to the middle truth of three truth doctrine wherein the sensory forms of all things—every color and scent—is understood as both empty and provisional. Shunzei’s prayer for waka poetry to serve as an *en* for setting forth on the Buddhist path is thus a proposal to use it as an aid for the highest form of *shikan* contemplation, one that, importantly, is predicated on three truth doctrine. Shunzei’s use of *en* at this juncture thus may be understood to forecast his turn to three truth doctrine at the end of his defense.

Shunzei provides scriptural support for his prayer in the form of three citations that elaborate on a specific nondual relation. The first, from the *Maka shikan*, provides the axiomatic starting point for his argument: “The passions are none other than enlightenment.”<sup>52</sup> The second citation, from the *Lotus Sutra*, asserts that non-Buddhist discourse is none other than the true Dharma:

In the *Lotus Sutra*, it says, “If [one] should expound on classical texts of profane society or those relating to work and livelihood, one will always accord with the correct Dharma.”<sup>53</sup>

The third is from what Shunzei calls the “Contemplation of Fugen,” which refers to a *sutra* more commonly known as the *Sutra on the Method for the Contemplation of Fugen Bodhisattva* (hereafter, *Fugen Sutra*).<sup>54</sup> It asserts that sin (*tsumi* 罪) is none other than fortune (*fuku* 福):

In the *Contemplation of Fugen [Sutra]*, it is preached, “To what can we point to and say this is sin and this fortune? Sin and fortune are without

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<sup>52</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p. 251

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Jp. *Kan Fugen bosatsu gyōhō kyō* 觀普賢菩薩行法經, Ch. *Guan Puxian pusa xingfa jing*; T 277, 9:389–394. Extant translation into Chinese by Dharmamitra 曇摩蜜多 (356–442) between 424 and 442.

an essence and our mind is of itself empty.”<sup>55</sup>

Shunzei’s demonstration of the claim that waka manifests the deep meaning of things and, therefore, may serve as a Buddhist activity, or *en*, is dense. The general arc of the argument unfolds from the principle of nonduality between passions and enlightenment (*bonnō soku bodai* 煩惱即菩提). On the basis of this, Shunzei, citing the *Lotus* and the *Fugen Sutras*, extrapolates two inferences. First, profane discourse accords with the true Dharma. In light of his invocation of *kyōgen kigo* rhetoric at the outset of this passage, preaching on profane topics corresponds to the play of floating words and fanciful phrases. This citation thus supports Shunzei’s view that even profane waka poetry accords with the true Dharma. The second inference is more obscure. It explains why an act as sinful as the composition of waka on profane topics can be understood as fortune and thus as conducive, rather than adverse, to progress on the Buddhist path.

To conclude his defense of waka poetry, Shunzei argues that the deep Way of waka can be compared to the Three Truths of the empty, the provisional, and the middle (*kūkechū*):

Thus, now, when I speak of the deep Way of waka poetry (*uta no fukaki michi* 歌の深き道), I shall speak of it by drawing comparisons to the ways in which it resembles the Three Truths of the empty, the provisional, and the middle.<sup>56</sup>

The first truth is *kū* 空 (Sk. *śūnyatā*), or emptiness, that all phenomena are empty of an independent existence and are therefore dependently arisen. The second truth is *ke* 仮 (Sk. *prajñapti*), or the provisional, that all phenomena, though empty, exist from the point of

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<sup>55</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, p.251

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

view of conventional understanding and therefore should be understood as having a provisional existence. The third truth is *chū* 中 (Sk. *madhya*), the middle way, which entails holding both extremes of *kū* and *ke* in dynamic tension. The world is understood to be both empty and provisional, as both *nirvāna* and *samsāra*, at the same time; the two are not separate but nondual. By introducing this notion of the middle, Shunzei shows how something profane like *waka* poetry could be nondual with something sacred like the Buddhist teachings.

The invocation of Three Truths doctrine, in addition, serves a hidden rhetorical function that becomes apparent only in the next section. In the lines that immediately follow Shunzei's analogy to Zhiyi's doctrine of the Three Truths, he shifts to a critique of the poetics of Fujiwara no Kintō 藤原公任 (966–1041) and Fujiwara no Michitoshi 藤原通俊 (d. 1099):

In attempting to state the good in poetry, Lord Kintō, the Major Counselor of the Fourth Ward, called his collection the *Collection of Golden Jewels*,<sup>57</sup> and Lord Michitoshi in the preface to the *Goshūishū* said, “Its words (*kotoba*) are like brocade; its meaning (*kokoro*) is deeper than the ocean.” Even a poem (*uta*) that is not like a brocade, when read aloud and recited to a rhythm, there should be something about it that resounds with allure (*en*) and pathos (*aware*). [Waka poetry] was originally called “poems for recitation” (*eika*), and so, depending on the voice (*koe*), it may sound good or bad.<sup>58</sup>

Kintō and Michitoshi both emphasized, in accordance with traditional *waka* poetics, a proportional balance between *kokoro* and *kotoba*. Shunzei, by contrast, asserts that a *waka* poem need not have *kotoba* like a brocade. What matters most is voice: by it, and

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<sup>57</sup> *Kingyoku-shū* 金玉集 (1007), a personal anthology compiled by Fujiwara no Kintō, with 718 poems.

<sup>58</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, pp. 251–52.

its resonance of allure and pathos, a poem's worth may be heard. Hence, Shunzei asserts, waka poetry was originally called "poems for recitation," or *eika* 詠歌.

The above passage is not the only example of the statement "when a waka poem is read aloud and recited to a rhythm, there should be something about it that resounds with allure and pathos." Shunzei makes similar statements elsewhere as well. In the Jūzenshi Postscript 十禪師跋 to the *Jichin oshō jika-awase* 慈鎮和尚自歌合, a personal poetry contest by the poet-monk Jien, Shunzei asserts that the oral recitation of a waka poem should make it resound with "allure" and "mysterious depth":

[Waka poetry] was originally called "poems for recitation" (*eika* 詠歌). Whether it is simply read aloud (*yomiage*) or formally intoned (*uchi nagame*), there should be something about it which resounds (*kikoyuru*) with allure (*en*) and mysterious depth (*yūgen*).<sup>59</sup>

In this citation of the statement, Shunzei replaces "aware" with "yūgen," thus suggesting that what, for Shunzei, was essential to this statement was, as Royston suggests and as mentioned in the introduction, the power of the voice to evoke certain impressions in the listener. Shunzei goes on to explain how the oral recitation of a poem produces not only a certain configuration (*sugata* 姿) of the poem but also an aura, the effects of which he compares to visual, auditory, olfactory, and, finally, tactile sensations derived from the close observation of natural phenomena:

A fine poem, in addition to the configuration (*sugata*) of its words (*kotoba*), seems to be accompanied by an aura (*keiki*) of its own. This aura hovers above the poem much as a veil of haze trails among spring cherry blossoms, as the belling of stags is heard before the autumn moon, as the scent of springtime pervades a hedge of plum blossoms, or as the autumn rains permeate the crimson leaves upon a peak.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> *Jichin oshō jika-awase*, p. 472.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

Shunzei's Jūzenshi Postscript thus describes how the voice *produces*, rather than represents, the poem's *sugata*, which he describes here as being associated with a multisensory aura.

In the *Korai fūteishō* statement on voice, Shunzei does not mention *sugata*. *Sugata*, however, is the central focus of the anthology. Later in the general preface, Shunzei glosses the Chinese title in Japanese as “*Inishie yori kono kata no uta no sugata no shō*”—that is, *Notes on the Configuration of Waka Poems from Antiquity up to Present Day*. Thus, in the *Korai fūteishō* as in the Jūzenshi Postscript, voice is associated (albeit more indirectly) with *sugata*.

In her 2006 book on Buddhist poetics in medieval Japan, *Emptiness and Temporality*, Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen puts forward an interpretation of how Shunzei understands the relation of Three Truth doctrine to the “Way of Waka” in the *Korai fūteishō*. She suggests specifically that the doctrine points to the ways in which waka poetry is: first, a verbal construct and, therefore, empty; second, contingent on everyday reality and, therefore, provisional; and third, self-referential of itself as empty and contingent and, therefore, analogous to the truth of the middle.<sup>61</sup> This reading, however, misses the specific relation between *sugata* and voice that becomes apparent when Shunzei's statement on the Three Truths is read in light of his statement on the voice that follows it.

Considered alongside the passage on voice, Shunzei's invocation of Tendai doctrine on the Three Truths refers to not only the nonduality of waka poetry and Buddhist sutras but also, on a more implicit level, the threefold structure of the waka

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<sup>61</sup> Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality*, p. 91.

poem. The set of correspondences between each element in the two threefold structures is not explicitly laid out, but rather implied in the citation of the *Fugen Sutra* in the preceding section. Therein, emptiness is associated with *kokoro*: “Our mind is of itself empty” (*wa ga kokoro wa onozukara kū nari*). This hidden association between the *kokoro* of waka poetics and the truth of the empty reveals the two other correspondences. Since *sugata*, which is implicitly associated with voice, serves a mediating function between *kokoro* and *kotoba*, it can be inferred that it corresponds correspond to the middle. This leaves *kotoba* as the corresponding term to the truth of the provisional.

By linking *koe* via the poetic element of *sugata* with the doctrine of the middle, Shunzei thus establishes a close link between voice and *shikan* contemplation. This extends the connection, shown above in section 2, that he already established between the *Maka shikan* text and voice in the first two points of his comparison to Tendai *shikan*. This raises the question: Why would Shunzei use *shikan* as point of reference for emphasizing the importance of voice in waka poetry?

Fujihira Haruo 藤平春男, a pioneer in the study of waka poetry theory (*karon*) was the first to identify the correspondence Shunzei establishes between the Tendai doctrine of three truths and his threefold interpretation of waka poetics.<sup>62</sup> Fujihira insists that this correspondence is essentially rhetorical. Shunzei’s interest, he argues, lies primarily in revealing *sugata* created in the medium of the voice as the essence of waka poetry. While this theory clarifies the rhetorical function of Shunzei’s invocation of three truth doctrine, it does not explain why he focuses specifically on the *Maka shikan*, in lieu of any number of other texts, doctrines, and practices in the Buddhist tradition. The

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<sup>62</sup> Fujihira, *Karon no kenkyū*, pp. 172–74.



subsections that follow will discuss the practice of Lotus repentance (*Hokke senbō* 法華懺法), also known as Fugen repentance (*Fugen senbō* 普賢懺法), as a key ritual apparatus for the production and dissemination of the nondualism exemplified by the three truths doctrine and attempt to show how this apparatus, or technique, shaped Shunzei's discourse on poetry in the *Korai fūteishō* by providing it with an epistemological framework for recognizing the composition and oral recitation of all waka poetry, even the sinful form of love poetry, as a Buddhist activity. In addition, by situating Shunzei's poetics in its ritual context of Fugen repentance, subsections 3.1 through 3.3 will also clarify the reasons why Shunzei consistently foregrounds voice throughout his comparison of waka poetry to Tendai *shikan* contemplation.

### **3.1 Ritual Contexts for Shunzei's Scriptural Citations (1): Nonduality of the Passions and Enlightenment**

The nondual formula that states that the passions are none other than enlightenment, figures prominently in *Maka shikan*. It appears in multiple variations throughout the text but perhaps the most significant citation for waka poets of the late Heian period appears in a passage from Guanding's preface that is known as the "core" statement of the entire treatise, whose opening lines were discussed in the preceding subsection. This core statement was for centuries chanted daily by Chinese Tiantai and Japanese Tendai priests<sup>63</sup> and was certain to have been familiar to Shunzei. His attribution of "Tendai *shikan*" in the *Korai fūteishō* to Guanding may in fact be related to his reverence for this passage in particular. This and the following subsections will show

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<sup>63</sup> Donner and Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*, p. 112

that the passage was also widely cited by monks and poets close to Shunzei. To consider it in some detail here will help to elucidate the ways in which Shunzei and those in his circle understood Tendai *shikan*.

The opening lines of the *Maka shikan*'s core passage provides doctrinal context for Shunzei's reference to "en" in the *Korai fūteishō*. Therein, as discussed above, *en* signifies a kind of karmic activity that enables the practice of perfect and sudden *shikan* by which the middle truth—the teaching that all things are dependently arisen and therefore both empty and provisionally existent at the same time—may be revealed. The second part of the core statement then elaborates on the truth of the middle using the language of nonduality:

The same goes for the realm of self, the realm of Buddha, and the realm of living beings. Since all aggregates and sense-accesses [of body and mind] are suchness, there is no suffering to be cast away. Since ignorance and defilements (*mumyō jinrō*) are themselves identical with enlightenment (*bodai*), there is no origin of suffering to be eradicated. Since the two extreme views are the middle way and false views are the right view, there is not path to be cultivated. Since saṃsāra is identical with nirvāṇa (*shoji soku nehan*), there is no cessation to be achieved.<sup>64</sup>

The core statement continues for several more lines. It will suffice to note here that the doctrine revealed in perfect and sudden *shikan*—that is, that all things should be understood as examples of the middle truth—underpins the fundamental nondual doctrine that the passions are enlightenment, nirvāṇa is saṃsāra.

The poetry of Jakuzen provides the best material for understanding how poets in Shunzei's circle understood *shikan* and its relation to waka poetry. His *Hōmon hyakushū* is especially useful, as it makes frequent reference to the *Maka shikan* text as well as

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<sup>64</sup> T 1911, 46:1c25–a2. See Sekiguchi, *Maka shikan*, vol. 1, p. 24; Donner and Stevenson, *The Great Calming and Contemplation*, p. 113.

*shikan* practice in both its poems and its running commentary. As argued in section 2, it is likely that Jakuzen and Shunzei, along with Saigyō and Jakuchō, held a study group for reading the *Maka shikan* in Ōhara in the mid- to late 1160s, around the time that Jakuzen composed his *Hōmon hyakushu*. It, therefore, provides a valuable intertext for reading Shunzei's poetic discourse in the *Korai fūteishō*.

The first poem in the *Hōmon hyakushu* is based on the idea of passions-enlightenment nonduality and the transformation of the one into the other as it is set forth in the *Maka shikan*. Jakuzen cites specifically a passage in chapter 1 in which Zhiyi associates the formula of the passions are enlightenment (*bonnō soku bodai*), first, with that of the nonduality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and, then, ignorance (*mumyō* 無明) and illumination (*myō* 明). The discussion then culminates in the metaphor of ice (ignorance) melting into water (enlightenment):

Saṃsāra is none other than nirvāṇa . . . The passions are none other than enlightenment . . . Ignorance transforms and turns into illumination, just as ice becomes water.<sup>65</sup>

Jakuzen's first poem is built around the image of ice melting into water:

Ignorance turning into illumination is like ice melting into water.

*Harukaze ni  
kōri tokeyuku  
tanimizu wo  
kokoro no uchi ni  
sumashite zo miru*

The wind of spring  
Melts away the ice  
In the waters of the valley,  
Clearing away my inner mindstate,  
And thus I now can see.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> T 1911, 46:0009a24–b2. Sekiguchi, *Maka shikan*, vol. 1, p. 60.

<sup>66</sup> *Hōmon hyakushu*: 1.

The image is used here by Jakuzen as a metaphor for the inner state of the poet's mind (*kokoro no uchi*) that has been made clear (*sumashite*). He also combines Zhiyi's image with figures from the waka tradition, suggesting that the clearing away of the thoughts in his mind resembles the winds of spring melting away the ice in the water of the valley.

For each of the one hundred poems in the sequence, Jakuzen provides commentary explaining the poem's Buddhist significance. For this first poem, he explains that the state of mental clarity described in the poem was achieved by means of *shikan* contemplation:

At my dwelling deep in the mountain, the new year has begun. The sound of the storms has changed. The morning sun over the mountain has become tranquil. I open the window [where I practice] calm-and-contemplation. Setting my gaze on the misty valley, the waters in the mountain have ceased to make a sound and the waves express a visage that knows the spring, which I find extremely moving (*aware*). When delusive notions naturally come to a rest and the doctrines of the Dharma rise up in my mind, I think this must be the wind of spring that is the wisdom of contemplation melting away the ice of ignorance and the old stream of birth and death becoming the water of the Dharma nature. This is the meaning of "clearing away and seeing."<sup>67</sup>

He thus explains that the poem makes use of traditional imagery associated with the topic of early spring—the water of the valley, wind of spring, and ice melting—to convey the poet's sense of the heightened awareness achieved in the act of *shikan* contemplation. In this state, according to the poem, the poet sees (*miru*)—that is, contemplates in the root sense of the term—the transformation of things into their opposite, ignorance into illumination, the passions into enlightenment.

In the larger context of the one-hundred poem sequence, the above poem functions as a statement about the act of poetry composition itself. The last poem in the

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<sup>67</sup> *Hōmon hyakushū*: 1.

*Hōmon hyakushu* returns to the image of water. The topic for the poem comes from a well-known simile in the *Fahua wenju ji* 法華文句記,<sup>68</sup> a subcommentary on Zhiyi's commentary on the *Lotus Sutra*,<sup>69</sup> by the Chinese Tendai exegete Zhanran 湛然 (711–782):

The flow of water naturally tends toward the ocean of the Dharma and thus does not halt.<sup>70</sup>

<i>Samazama no</i>	The ocean gathers
<i>nagare atsumaru</i>	The multitude of flows
<i>umi shi areba</i>	Of all waters, and thus
<i>tada ni wa kieji</i>	They do not simply disappear—
<i>mizuguki no ato</i>	These traces of my brush. <sup>71</sup>

The poem draws an analogy between two aqueous substances, ink and water. Using Zhanran's simile, Jakuzen suggests that both the ink from his brush—that is, his poems—will, like the water in the myriad streams on earth flowing into the ocean of Dharma, ultimately return to their source in the Buddhist teachings.

In his autocommentary, Jakuzen explains that the image of the water in this poem connotes the ink from the traces of his brush that composes thirty-one syllable poems—that is, as he states, the play of profane writing (*sezoku moji no tawabure*):

Coarse words and refined language all return to the Ultimate Meaning. No dharma contradicts the Principle of the True Character. How much more so these traces from my brush of the thirty-one syllables! Far from the play of profane writing, all sport in the texts of the teachings of the Provisional Truth. [In the poem], in examining the source that draws all

<sup>68</sup> Jp. *Hokke mongu ki*. T 1719, vol. 34.

<sup>69</sup> Jp. *Myōhō renga kyō mongu* 妙法蓮華經文句, Ch. *Miaofa lianhuajing wenju*. Abbreviated titles: Jp. *Hokkekyō mongu* 法華經文句, Ch. *Fahuajing wenju*; Jp. *Hokke mongu* 法華文句, Ch. *Fahua wenju*; *Wenju* 文句. T 1718, vol. 34.

<sup>70</sup> T 1719, 34:244a26.

<sup>71</sup> *Hōmon hyakushu*: 100.

these flows together, I suggest that, because it emanates from the Ocean of the Dharma-nature, [poetry] naturally pacifies the waves of delusive conceptualizations and serves as an expedient means for arriving at the [Other] Shore of Nirvāṇa. To arouse the mind by taking the Principle of the True Character as a condition is called the Mind that Arouses the Bodhi according to the Perfect Teachings. This is the Supreme Arousal of the Mind. It illuminates the Mind of the Four Teachings, from the Three Baskets to the Arousal of the Mind.<sup>72</sup>

By manipulation of Zhanran's simile, Jakuzen suggests that "the flow" of *kyōgen kigo* waka ultimately pours into the ocean of the true Dharma. Like Shunzei after him, Jakuzen asserts that waka poetry is not merely "play" (*tawabure*) but rather a medium that has its beginning and end in Buddhist teachings. What is essential then, according to Jakuzen, is not to cease composing waka poetry but rather to use it as an expedient means (*hōben* 方便) for attaining nirvāṇa.

Jakuzen's reflection on the Buddhist implications of composing waka in the last poem reveals a layer of self-reflexivity to the first poem. Returning now to the first poem in light of the last, it becomes clear that the opening verse functions to forecast the idea that waka poetry created in the practice of *shikan* contemplation, though perhaps resembling the play of fanciful phrases, in fact, has the significance of a kind of a prayer for turning the passions into enlightenment, coarse words into refined language. In this view, poetry is not an effect of contemplation but rather a constitutive element that promotes the attainment of one of its primary goals: the transformation of suffering into liberation.

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<sup>72</sup> *Hōmon hyakushū*: 100.

Jakuzen’s autocommentary on his first poem tells us that he composed his poem upon “opening the window of *shikan* contemplation.”<sup>73</sup> In a *kanbun* preface to a collection of poems by the poet-preacher Sensai Shōnin, Shunzei’s poetry teacher, Fujiwara no Mototoshi 藤原基俊 (1060–1142), explains how he composes waka poetry after practicing *shikan*: “In the contemplative calm that remains [from *shikan* practice], in the space [that] *zazen* [opens up], I, from time to time, spontaneously intone waka poems” (*yo, shikan no amari, zazen no suki, tokidoki waka no kōgō ari* 予止觀之餘座禪之隙時々有和歌之口號).<sup>74</sup> In this description of the relationship between *shikan* and poetry, the oral recitation of poetry is not an effect but a constitutive element of *shikan*—one that spontaneously arises in the space opened up by sitting meditation.

Jakuzen’s poems on *shikan* and *waka* in his *Hōmon hyakushu* suggest that Shunzei’s invocation of *bonnō-bodai* nonduality is in fact grounded in a practice of contemplation that is closely associated with *zazen*, as suggested by Shunzei’s own teacher. It thus lends evidence to LaFleur’s suggestion that *shikan* may be identified with *zazen*. However, a closer reading of Jakuzen’s poetry reveals that this form of sitting *shikan* contemplation is presented not as a silent practice but rather as a kind of performance constituted in the act of poetry recitation (*eika*). In other words, poetry recitation creates the contemplation practice. It is, as Shunzei suggests, an active condition (*en*) for contemplation, not one of its effects.

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<sup>73</sup> *Hōmon hyakushu*: 1.

<sup>74</sup> “Ungoji no Shōnin kyōgen kigo wo kuyuru waka no jo” 雲居寺の聖人狂言綺語を讖ゆる和歌序, Kashō 嘉承 1 (1106) thirteenth day of the ninth month. In *Honchō bunshū* 本朝文集, p. 236. This text is also discussed in chapter 1.

### 3.2 Ritual Contexts for Shunzei’s Scriptural Citations (2): Nonduality of Profane Discourse and the *Lotus Sutra*

After positing the nonduality of the passions and enlightenment, Shunzei cites a passage from chapter 19 of the *Lotus*, “Benefits of the Teacher of the Law”:

In the *Lotus Sutra*, it says, “if [one] should expound on classical texts of profane society . . . or those relating to work and livelihood, one will always accord with the correct Dharma.”

This scriptural citation demonstrates the claim that even non-Buddhist texts accord with the teaching of the *Lotus* and, consequently, advances Shunzei’s larger argument that waka poetry can serve as a karmic activity for practicing the Buddhist path.

In his citation, Shunzei elides a single four-character phrase from the sutra passage: *chise gogen* 治世語言 (“discourses on matters of governance”).<sup>75</sup> The larger passage in the *Lotus Sutra* from which Shunzei cites offers a more expansive affirmation of “profane” (*zoku* 俗) texts—one that includes also the “political” (*se* 世):

If [those who uphold and accept the *Lotus*] should expound on a classical text of profane society or [deliver] discourses on matters of governance or those relating to work and livelihood, they will in all cases accord with the True Dharma.<sup>76</sup>

Shunzei’s ellipsis of the phrase *chise gogen* from this passage of the *Lotus* was unorthodox in its time. This phrase figures prominently in a common liturgical formula in late Heian Japan. Its first citation appears in an 1166 invocatory statement for a sutra offering ceremony organized by a circle of poets called the Waka Mandokoro.<sup>77</sup> In the

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<sup>75</sup> The elision is indicated in Shunzei’s citation by 略之.

<sup>76</sup> *T* 262, 9:50a23–24.

<sup>77</sup> On the date of the Waka Mandokoro sermon, see Yanase, *Shun’e kenkyū*, p. 267.



“Waka Mandokoro ipponkyō kuyō hyōbyaku”<sup>78</sup> 和歌政所一品經供養表白, the famed Tendai preacher Chōken 澄憲 (1126–1203), its author offers the following pair of scriptural citations in the concluding section of the invocation that sets up the central prayer of the ceremony:

Thus I have heard,  
Language, whether coarse or refined,  
Always return to the form of the Ultimate Truth;  
Discourses on matters of governance  
Never contradict the Principle of the True Character of Suchness.<sup>79</sup>

Chōken’s formula combines two passages from the two most important sutras in the Tendai school: the *Nirvāṇa Sutra* and the *Lotus Sutra*. The first half of the formula cites two lines of verse in chapter 20 of the *Greater Nirvāṇa Sutra*: *sogo oyobi nango / mina daiichigi ni ki su* 僂語及軟語 皆歸第一義.<sup>80</sup> The second half of the invocation is a variation on the same passage that Shunzei cites from chapter 19 of the *Lotus*:

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<sup>78</sup> Transcription by Yanase Kazuo 築瀬一夫; Yanase, *Shun’e kenkyū*, pp. 253–64. Yanase’s transcription is based on a critical comparison of the manuscript of the Sanzen’in 三千院 recension of the *Shūjushō* and Ōsone Shōsuke’s 大曾根章介 transcription of the Jitsuzōbō shinnyozō 実藏坊真如藏 recension of the *Chōken sakubunshū* 澄憲作文集, the collection of Chōken’s work. For Ōsone’s transcription see Akiyama, *Chūsei bungaku no kenkyū*, pp. 427–28. For a transcription of the *Shonin zōshūzen*, in which the sermon appears under the slightly different title “Waka mandokoro kechienkyō hyōbyaku” 和歌政所結縁經表白, see Yamazaki, “Agui shōdō shiryō,” pp. 153–54.

<sup>79</sup> Yanase, *Shun’e kenkyū*, p. 259–60. *Kundoku* and translations are mine.

<sup>80</sup> T 374, 12:485a. *Greater Nirvāṇa Sutra* (Jp. *Nehankyō* 涅槃經, Ch. *Da banniepan jing*, Sk. *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutra*. As Hirano Tae 平野多恵 has pointed out, the exact locution of *sogon nango* appears in Zhiyi’s *Fahua wenju*; see T 1718, 34:16c. Therefore, she suggests, this latter text may have exerted a more direct influence than that of the *Nirvāṇa Sutra* on the formulation of this invocation in Japan; see Hirano, “Myōe.” Its first citation in Japanese sources can be traced back to the circa 1072 “Wakashū Byōdōin kyōzō ni osamura ki” 納和歌集於平等院經藏記 (Record for the Dedication of a Waka Poetry Collection to the Byōdōin Scriptorium) by the mid-Heian kanshi poet and member of a revived Kangaku-e Koremune no Takatoki 惟宗孝言: “Coarse words and refined language—ultimately return to the form of the Middle Way / delusive conceptualization and idle speculation—all mingle with the moon of the True Character” (*sogon nango, tsuini chūdō no fū ni ki shi / mōsō keron mina jissō no tuski ni kon zu* 僂言稟語、遂歸中道之風、妄想戲論、皆混実相之月). For a transcription of this text, see *Honchō zoku monzui*, pp. 189–90. This short record is an important antecedent for Chōken’s sermon. For a detailed analysis, see Araki, *Setsuwa no kōsō to ishō*, pp. 74–78 and Fukuyama, *Nihon kenchikushi kenkyū*

The Dharma preached [by those who accept and uphold the Lotus] will conform to the essential significance [of the sutra]. Never will it contradict the True Character. If they should preach on a classical text of the profane world or [deliver] discourses on political matters or those relating to wealth and livelihood, they will in all cases accord with the True Dharma.<sup>81</sup>

The dotted underline indicates text cited by Chōken and the wavy underline text cited by Shunzei. Shunzei thus cites precisely the lines from the *Lotus* that do not appear in Chōken’s liturgical formula.

As mentioned above, Chōken’s liturgical formula appears in his invocatory statement for a sutra offering sponsored by a group of poets who called themselves the Waka Mandokoro. The Waka Mandokoro belonged to a broader circle of poets called the Karin’en 歌林苑 (lit., Garden in the Forest of Poetry).<sup>82</sup> As Nakamura Aya 中村文 has recently argued, the Karin’en was not a poetic faction or house (*ie*) like the Rokujō or Mikohidari but rather a socially diverse network of renunciants (*tonseija*) and low-ranking aristocrats (*jige*), both male and female, who gathered at non-elite spaces, such as the residence of the poet-priest Shun’e 俊恵 (1113–1191) and shrines inside and outside

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*zoku hen* (see “Byōdōin no kyōzō to nōwakashū ki”). For more on the revival of the Kangaku-e, see Momo, *Jōdai gakusei no kenkyū*, pp. 369–88.

<sup>81</sup> *T* 262, 9:50a22–24.

<sup>82</sup> Yanase Kazuo makes the inference that Waka mandokoro is another name for the Karin’en based on a note to a poem composed at a monthly Karin’en meeting recorded in the 1315 *Kaen rencho jisho* 歌苑連署事書, a piece of criticism on the *Gyokuyō wakashū* 玉葉和歌集. See Yanase, *Shun’e kenkyū*, pp. 265–67. See *Gyōkuyō wakashū*: 151. Hatakenaka Sakae has recently argued that the name “Waka mandokoro” does not designate a private waka circle but rather a governmental office responsible for the administration of ceremonies related to waka. This office, she notes, evolved out of the Hitomaro eigū sponsored by the Rokujō family and then was reappointed by Go-Toba as Waka Bureau for the compilation of the *Shinkokin wakashū*. See Hatakenaka, “Waka mandokoro.” Hatakenaka’s revisionist proposal, however, does not take into consideration Chōken’s close connections with the Karin’en circle. On Chōken and the Karin’en circle, see Nakamura, *Go-Shirakawa-in jidai kajinden no kenkyū*, ch. 1.

the capital, to compose and recite poetry.<sup>83</sup> Shunzei participated in and judged many of their poetry contests, including the 1170 *Sumiyoshi-sha uta-awase* 住吉社歌合 and the 1172 *Hirota-sha uta-awase* 広田社歌合 organized by Dōin 道因 as well as a number of other poetry contests at the Upper Kamo Shrine organized by Kamo no Shigeyasu 賀茂重安.<sup>84</sup> In addition, Shunzei is recorded to have participated in a number of similar sutra offering ceremonies that featured the composition and recitation of poetry.<sup>85</sup> The Waka Mandokoro ceremony offers an illuminating window onto the kind of rituals that shaped Shunzei's understanding of Buddhist scripture and practice, especially as it pertains to the creation and performance of waka poetry.

The Karin'en circle was also indirectly connected to Princess Shikishi. Somewhat of a recluse, Shikishi, much like Saigyō, was not known to have attended many poetry contests or public offering ceremonies. However, during her tenure as the Kamo Priestess in the 1160s, she conducted numerous poetry exchanges with two prominent female Karin'en poets: Shunzei's Daughter 俊成女<sup>86</sup> and Inbu Mon'in no Daibu 殷富門院大輔, who was her maternal sister.<sup>87</sup> In her personal poetry collection, Inbu Mon'in no Daibu records her participation in an sutra-offering ceremony dedicated to the poet Kakinomoto

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<sup>83</sup> Nakamura, *Go-Shirakawa-in jidai kajinden no kenkyū*, ch. 15, "Uta ga yomidasareru basho: Karin'en josetsu." Nakamura's view that "Karin'en" refers to an open space for the creation of diverse forms of art, not only waka, challenges a previous understanding, first set forth by Yanase Kazuo 築瀬一夫 in 1977, of the Karin'en as an exclusive literary group (*bungei shūdan* 文芸集団).

<sup>84</sup> In his collection of poems from Karin'en gatherings at the Kamo Shrine, Kamo no Shigeyasu included more poems by Shunzei than any other poet, thus suggesting his prominent place in the Karin'en circle. See Sugiyama, *Tsukimōde wakashū*, p. 521.

<sup>85</sup> *Chōshū eisō*, pp. 335–48.

<sup>86</sup> See *Kenrei Mon'in Ukyō no Daibu shū*: 73–74.

<sup>87</sup> See *SKKS*: 415–16, 605–606.

no Hitomaro—that same poet whom Chōken identifies in his invocation as the exemplar of the Way of waka practiced by the Waka Mandokoro.<sup>88</sup> In addition, other poems attest to Inpu Mon'in no Daibu's connections with the host of the Waka Mandokoro, Shun'e,<sup>89</sup> and also Chōken himself.<sup>90</sup> It, therefore, is also likely that Shikishi was familiar, if not on a first-hand basis, with the kind of ceremonies and ritual events sponsored by the Karin'en in general, if not the Waka Mandokoro ceremony in particular.

Chōken's invocatory statement for the Waka Mandokoro was subsequently copied, adapted, and rearranged by a number of other late Heian and early Kamakura-period preachers. The citation of Chōken's discourse in these adaptations attests to the extent of its reception among courtiers and poets during and just after Chōken's time. One of these adaptations will be examined in further detail below. In view of its widespread reception, Chōken's discourse on waka poetry and the liturgical practice of the offering ceremony itself would likely have provided a common point of reference for poets like Shunzei and Shikishi. Therefore, in what follows, I will investigate more carefully Chōken's invocatory statement for the Waka Mandokoro offering as an example of one important ritual context for Shunzei's discourse on waka poetry in the *Korai fūteishō*.

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<sup>88</sup> See *Inpu Mon'in no Taifu shū*: 295 (p. 252).

<sup>89</sup> *Inpu Mon'in no Taifu shū*: 295 (pp. 252–53). Poem 295 was composed for an *ipponkyō* sponsored by Shun'e.

<sup>90</sup> See *Inpu Mon'in no Taifu shū*: 244 (p. 202). This poem describes Chōken's performance of a lecture on the *Golden Light Sutra* (*Saishō-kō* 最勝講). It appears immediately after a series of poems composed for the sutra offering dedicated to Hitomaro and thus suggests that Inpu Mon'in no Taifu attended the Waka Mandokoro offering.

Chōken’s invocation opens with a dedication of a *Lotus Sutra* manuscript and the main object of worship (*honzon* 本尊) for the service, an image of Fugen, here named by his epithet, “the King of Ten Vows”:

Here today, our great patron and more than thirty fellows, make this dedication:

Drawing upon the vermilion sincerity of our hearts, we have purified ourselves with the white karma of the three rings [of body, speech, and mind], and painted the holy image of the King of the Ten Vows. We have copied the True Writing of the Wondrous Scripture of the Unifying Vehicle and have made a single-day offering of food, so that, in communion, the threefold seed of our Buddhahood may burgeon forth.<sup>91</sup>

Chapter 28 of the *Lotus Sutra*, “Encouragement of Fugen Bodhisattva,”<sup>92</sup> describes Fugen as the protector of those uphold the *Lotus*. Specifically, Fugen, addressing Śakyamuni, preaches that whenever anyone reads and recites (*dokuju* 讀誦) or sits down and meditates on (*shiyui* 思惟) the *Lotus*, he will mount the six-tusked white elephant and protect and serve that person.<sup>93</sup> Practitioners of the *Lotus* in Heian Japan, inspired by this passage, worshipped Fugen’s image as a personal icon for daily devotion and contemplation.

Fugen is also the subject of the *Fugen Sutra*, the third of the scriptural sources cited by Shunzei in the *Korai fūteishō*.<sup>94</sup> The sutra prescribes the visualization of Fugen—again mounted on a six-tusked elephant—as a method by means of which the

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<sup>91</sup> Yanase, *Shun’e kenkyū*, pp. 253–54.

<sup>92</sup> Jp. *Fugen bosatsu kanbotsu hon* 普賢菩薩勸發品, Ch. *Puxian Pusa quanfa pin*.

<sup>93</sup> *T* 262, 9:61a28–b3.

<sup>94</sup> The sutra, a continuation of the “Encouragement of Fugen Bodhisattva” chapter of the *Lotus*, is the concluding sutra to the *Threefold Lotus Sutra* (Jp. *Hokke sanbu kyō* 法華三部經, Ch. *Fahua sanbu jing*), a three-part *Lotus Sutra* consisting of the *Sutra of Immeasurable Meaning* (Jp. *Muryōgikyō* 無量義經, Ch. *Wuliangyi jing*), the *Lotus Sutra*, and the *Fugen Sutra*. English translation by Katō, Tamura, and Miyasaka.

*Lotus* practitioner can, “without cutting off their earthly cares or renouncing their five desires, purify their sense organs and destroy their sins.”<sup>95</sup> In the mid-Heian period, the Fugen image began to be used as the main image (*honzon*) for *ipponkyō* memorial offerings (*tsuizen kuyō* 追善供養) dedicated to women. Chōken further expanded the use of Fugen imagery in Buddhist liturgy, introducing it also into ceremonies other than memorial services, as Michael Jamentz has shown.<sup>96</sup> In one such ceremony, an *ipponkyō* offering sponsored by Jōsai Mon’in 上西門院 (1126–1289), Chōken specifies that the Fugen image depicted the bodhisattva with a retinue of ten female demons (Jp. *rasetsunyo* 羅刹女, Sk. *rākṣasīs*, Ch. *luochanu*): “the holy image of the women of the King of the Ten Vows’ *rākṣasīs*” (*nyonin jugan ō jūrasetsu no shōyō* 女人十願王十羅刹之聖容).<sup>97</sup> There are two traditions of depicting the ten *rākṣasīs*. One depicts them in Chinese-style dress, the other in Japanese-style. Art historian Mukasa Akira has suggested that it is likely that Chōken preferred the latter as part of a strategy to appeal to retired empresses (*nyoin* 女院) at court by visually depicting them in the *honzon*. Figure 1 is an early thirteenth-century example of Fugen and the ten female demons in Japanese-style dress (*Wasō fugen jūrasetsunyo zō* 和装普賢十羅刹女像) painting, formerly in the Masuda collection.

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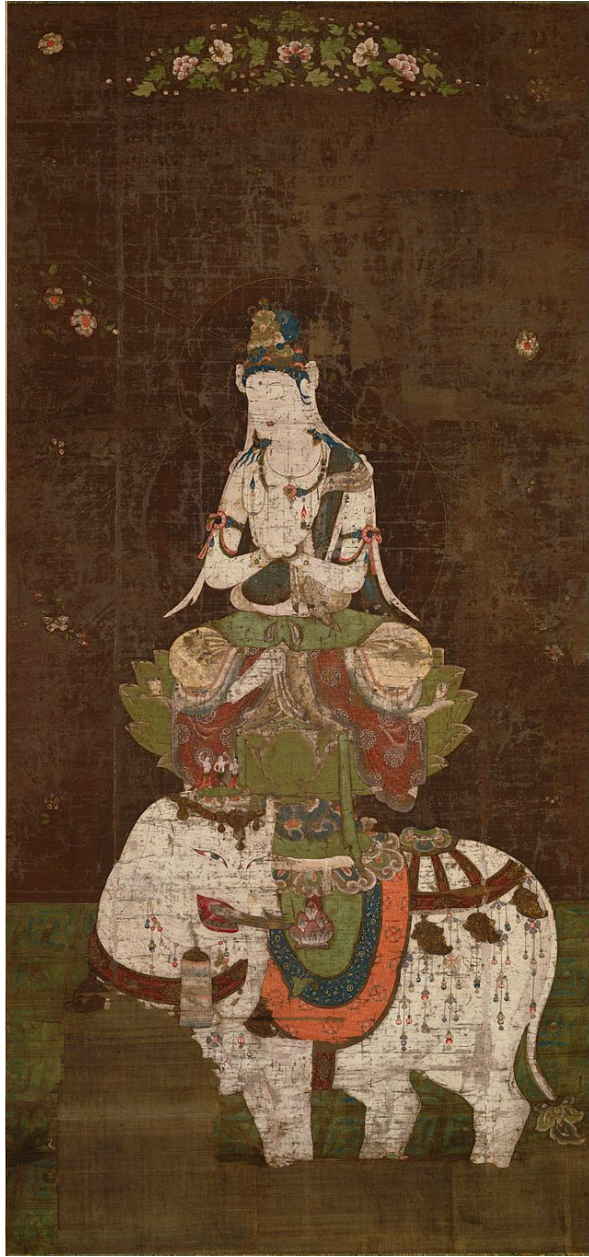
<sup>95</sup> *T* 277, 9:389c7–8.

<sup>96</sup> Jamentz, “Aguiryū shōdō ni okeru kokubungaku to bijutsushi no renraku.”

<sup>97</sup> Cited in Mukasa, “Genji kuyō to Fugen jūrasetsunyo,” pp. 200–201. On iconography of the Fugen jūrasetsunyo in Japanese Buddhist art, see Fabricand-Person, “Demonic Female Guardians of the Faith.”



*Figure 1. Fugen Bodhisattva with Ten Rākṣasīs in Japanese-Style Dress.*



*Figure 2.* Fugen Bodhisattva. Tokyo National Museum



The Fugen image described in the opening of the invocatory statement signals that the offering ceremony will center on the practice of repentance. In the next section, Chōken explains why, according to the doctrine of original enlightenment (*hongaku*), repentance is necessary for everyone by expounding on the origins, structure, effects, and ultimate endpoint of ignorance:

The moon of original enlightenment suddenly becomes hidden. The long night of saṃsāra is loath to break. Once we rouse from the slumber of ignorance, after being long bound to dreams of delusion, [we know] the eighty thousand struggles are vast in extent and the mind of passion is like being intoxicated; that the twelve links of origination are intricately bound and the suffering of karma resembles a chain; that from our penchant for prolixity, the beginningless delusive graspings have accumulated interminably.<sup>98</sup> [We know that] from the defilements of sights and sounds, the five desires have been piling up attachments insufferably long.<sup>99</sup> Thus we know that we are born in vain, and in vain, we die; that many are those who plunge into the suffering of bloodbaths of blades in the Inferno; and that, from darkness unto darkness, rarely do we hear the names of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.<sup>100</sup>

After underscoring the ineluctability of ignorance and its consequences, defilement (*jin* 塵) and attachment (*chakushin* 着心), Chōken states the purpose of the Waka Mandokoro:

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<sup>98</sup> “Eighty thousand” is an abbreviation for eighty-four thousand, which was thought to be the number of atoms in the human body. The twelve links of origination is an application of the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination (Sk. *pratīyasamutpāda*). They diagnose the origin of suffering to be ignorance and describe the emergence and formation of suffering in twelve stages, or links. “Penchant for prolixity” (*airon kenron* 愛論見論) refers to the idea that the origins of ignorance itself lie in idle discourse and frivolous speculation (*keron* 戲論, Sk. *prapañca*, Ch. *xilun*). In the *Lotus*, idle discourse is mentioned as a practice that should be strictly avoided by the bodhisattva. See ch. 14, “Peaceful Practices” (*T* 9:38b).

<sup>99</sup> The five desires are for wealth, sex, food, fame, and sleep.

<sup>100</sup> Yanase, *Shun'e kenkyū*, p. 254. “Bloodbaths of blades in the inferno” (*kakettō* 火血刀) appears in the *Maka shikan*; *T* 46:1c. It recalls the graphic depictions of hell in Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* and also in Chōken's description of Shikibu's sufferings in hell in the *Genji* invocatory statement, which Ii suggests can be traced back to a poem by Izumi Shikibu. See Ii, *Genji monogatari no densetsu*. “From darkness unto darkness” (*kuraki yori kuraki ni irite* 從冥入冥) also alludes to a poem by Izumi Shikibu. See *Shūishū*: 1342.

By virtue of what causes and conditions do we gather here today? We are neither brothers related by blood; nor are we [priests] of the Dharma engaged in austerities in remote forests. It is because of waka that we are here. By gathering together words in the Forest of Letters, we unify our intent. We take His Lordship Kakinomoto no Hitomaro as the exemplar of this Way. For this reason, with an Image of His True Likeness, every month we hold a service of worship in His honor.<sup>101</sup>

This passage explains that the Waka Mandokoro sutra offering was part of a monthly assembly for the worship of Hitomaro. As Anne Commons has shown, this practice was heir to a tradition of Hitomaro portrait offerings (*Hitomaru eigu* 人丸影供) that can be traced back to poetry gatherings of the Rokujō 六条 house organized by Fujiwara no Akisue 藤原顕季 in the early twelfth century.<sup>102</sup> The next section, however, suggests the casual nature of the affair, something like what Ikegami Eiko has described as “aesthetic socialization”:

From time to time we gather at this place. We each give expression to our thoughts. Men and women let poetic compositions fly. Ordained and lay chant verses in harmony. We call this “The Bureau of Waka.” How truly [significant] it is!<sup>103</sup>

This passage presents an image of the Waka Mandokoro as a gathering of diverse individuals—men and women, ordained and lay—who gather together “from time to time” (*tokidoki*) at this place. This place has been identified as Shun’e’s residence, the Karin’en,<sup>104</sup> and, as Nakamura Aya has shown, the headnotes and records of activities at the Karin’en indicate that the poets who gathered there were in fact from diverse

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<sup>101</sup> For a translation of this section and two other sections of the sermon related to the worship of waka poets, see Commons, *Hitomaro*, pp. 120–21.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>103</sup> Yanase, *Shun’e kenkyū*, p. 255.

<sup>104</sup> See footnote 85, p. 50.

backgrounds and social classes. This diverse network of poets thus contrasts with the confraternities, or *kessha* 結社, of the mid-Heian period such as the Nijūgo Zanmai-e and the Kangaku-e that were composed entirely men, limited to a set number of people, and performed at a fixed time.

While the Waka Mandokoro offering ceremony seems to have drawn on elements of Hitomaro worship as developed by the poets of the Rokujō, it also introduces elements from the practice of memorial offerings (*tsuizen kuyō* 追善供養) in which the living pray for the salvation of their deceased ancestors and, in so doing, cultivate good roots for both the living and the dead.

The next section of the invocation sets forth a justification for the composition of all forms of waka poetry. It begins by emphasizing that waka is a custom, or *fūzoku*, that is unique to Japan, or “our court” (*wa ga chō* 我朝)—here referring to the imperial court of Japan. He characterizes it as a way to manifest externally in language feelings that stir on the inside and then offers examples of such waka poetry: remarks at banquets, verses of lament and mourning, lines upon parting for travels, and prose on the flowers, birds, wind, and moon (*yūen kango no ji, aishō hentaku no ei, gyōryo senbetsu no ku, kachō fūgetsu no hen* 遊宴歡娛之辭、哀傷貶謫之詠、行旅餞別之句、花鳥風月之篇).

These genres, Chōken emphasizes, are expressions of feeling (*jō* 情). Chōken then elaborates the buddhological rationale for this practice: waka, since the age of the kami, has been used to “move Heaven and Earth, stir the spirits and kami, cultivate human morality, and soften [the relations between] man and woman” (*tenchi wo ugokashi, kishin wo kanzeshime, jinrin wo kaseshime, fūfu wo yawaragu* 動天地感鬼神化人倫和夫婦); for this reason, the mysterious aura, or *yūgen*, of the way of the kami, or Shinto, still

remains in waka and, moreover, there has not been single emanation or transformation-body in Japan who has not composed waka. Chōken cites four examples. The first is Prince Shōtoku, whom he identifies as the World-Savior Kannon, which is also how Jien identifies him in his *Hokke betchō*. The second is Gyōki, whom he identifies as a transformation body of Mañjuśrī. The third and fourth is Saichō and Kūkai, respectively. Chōken’s claim that all emanations in Japan have composed waka resembles one made by Shunzei in the *Korai fūteishō*, after the discussion of Buddhism and waka in the general preface: “All people born in our Kingdom and who have come here, even emanations and holy people have composed *uta*.”<sup>105</sup> Shunzei also cites many of the same examples as Chōken; though these were quite standard for the day. On the basis of this genealogy, Chōken concludes: “Even the Dharma Body Mahāsattva, when he sojourns in this country, revels in this custom of our Kingdom” (*hosshin daishi toiedomo, wa ga kuni ni asobu toki kono fūzoku o moteasobu* 雖法身大士遊我国時玩此風俗).

Central then to Chōken’s rationale for the composition of all genres of waka poetry—not only those overtly Buddhist in content—is Lotus-Esoteric discourse on the Dharma body and the ritual language of his emanations and transformation bodies. His conclusion, moreover, that even the Dharma body, when it manifests itself in the kingdom of Japan, composes waka suggests a view of waka poetry as a kind of mantra used by emanations in Japan.

After establishing the doctrinal rationale for the practice, Chōken then recites a confession by the Waka Bureau regarding their frivolous pursuit of the Way of Waka and

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<sup>105</sup> SNKZ 87: 262. *kono kuni ni umaremoshi, kitari mo suru hito wa, gonja mo shōja mo, mina uta o ba yomu koto nareru naru beshi* この国に生まれもし、来たりもする人は、権者も聖者も、皆歌をば詠むことなれるなるべし

their intent to redeem it by creating karmic bonds (*kechien*) with both their poetic ancestors in the past for the sake of their salvation (*tokudatsu*) in the afterlife and their fellow poets in the present for the sake of their good karma (*zen'en*) in the future.

Today the members of this assembly have stated in unanimous agreement: “By merely reveling in this Way [of waka poetry], we have made it into nothing more than a frivolous pursuit [that exists only] in the present right before your eyes. We should pray for the liberation of our ancestors in the distant past and contemplate the destiny of our good roots in the near future.

How vainly we have eviscerated the Way of Akahito and Hitomaro! How thoroughly removed are our aspirations from peace and tranquility!”<sup>106</sup>

At this juncture, Chōken pivots and returns again to the theme of delusion and attachment but applies it specifically to the problem of waka composition:

All the more so, since by waiting for the moon in autumn to set behind the peak, the dark night of *samsāra* will not be illuminated. By seeking the blossoms of spring in the far off mountains, how will we cultivate the base root of the tree of awakening? What is more, the thought of resentment against the clouds when they block the moon leaves traces of delusive conceptualizations in the heavenly sky at dawn. The feeling of ill will toward the wind when we rue the passing of the blossoms forms evil attachments in the sunlight of spring.

Chōken preaches that waka poetry on natural phenomena, such as the blossoms in spring and the moon in autumn, promotes attachment and, as a result, suffering. It is, therefore, a kind of sinful transgression (*zaika* 罪過) known as “fanciful phrases” (*kigo*):

In principle, although [the creation of waka] is not a grave sin on the order of theft or murder, it does often invite the sinful transgression of fanciful phrases.

Poems on nature, however, are not the central problem. Far more problematic, according to Chōken, is poems on love:

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<sup>106</sup> Yanase, *Shun'e kenkyū*, p. 257. The subsequent citations follow this passage immediately and consecutively; pp. 257–60.

How much more so do compositions on the beauty of women arouse longing in the thoughts of autumn! Words of romance between men and women stir up impure feelings in the dreams of spring. In a vicious cycle, [the creation of waka] nourishes the roots of sin on the round of birth and death and sows the karmic seeds for their dissemination and conversion.

Chōken then poses a question to his congregation of poets: how to repent for and eliminate these sins of poetry and thereby create good roots for rebirth in the afterlife for both the living and those whom they regard as poetic ancestors?

How may we practice this Way  
And thus repent for and eliminate (*senjo su*) the sinful taints of our sage predecessors?  
How may we use this Way  
And thus sprout and burgeon forth the good roots of those among us here today?

Chōken's response follows the approach set forth in the *Fugen Sutra*. Rather than renouncing poetry and the attachments it incites, the poets of the Waka Mandokoro need only, Chōken preaches, use poetry for the purpose of attaining Buddhist enlightenment:

Now,  
Just as he who falls on the ground,  
Conversely, gets back up by means of that ground;  
Just as he who loses his way by going down a path,  
Conversely, finds his way by means of that path;  
It is our belief that  
Without altering the spirit of waka poetry,  
We may seek the moon of enlightenment.

Chōken's proposal is radical. The "spirit" of poetry that will lead the poet back to the path of Buddhism does not, he insists, need to be altered. The nature and love poetry that he condemned in the preceding section may, then, just as they are, serve as a vehicle for pursuing the Buddhist goal of enlightenment.

The next section of Chōken's invocation describes the offerings presented by the Waka Mandokoro. What is crucially important, according to the preacher, is not the content of the poetry but rather the ends to which it is put to use,

particularly in the context of a ritual. Therefore, he emphasizes that the intent of the waka poetry offered by the Waka Mandokoro is to praise (*sanzu* 讃ず) the

*Lotus Sutra*:

For this reason, we have drawn the divine likeness of the King of Ten Vows on his six-tusked elephant and copied the true writing of the threefold exposition of the One Vehicle. By using the form of the thirty-one syllables [of waka poetry], we give praise to the themes of the twenty-eight chapters [of the *Lotus*]. By dedicating ourselves in the forest of words, we form a salon dedicated to the Way. By reciting waka, we give praise to the king of sutras [the *Lotus*].

Chōken here explains that the poets of the Wakamandokoro, in addition to drawing a Fugen image and copying the *Lotus*, also gave praise by composing/orally reciting (*eizuru* 詠ずる) poems composed on lines from each chapter of the *Lotus*.

The next section invokes the liturgical formula from chapter 19 of the *Lotus Sutra*, which contains the key phrase “*chise gogen*,” omitted from Shunzei’s elliptical citation of the same passage in the *Korai fūteishō*. The formula functions to demonstrate scripturally that even waka poems without explicit Buddhist content are in fact expressions of the ultimate truth:

Thus I have heard:

Language, whether coarse or refined,  
Always returns to the form of the ultimate truth;  
Discourses on political matters  
Never contradict the principle of the true character of suchness.

This liturgical formula that seems to have shaped Shunzei’s citation of the *Lotus Sutra* in the *Korai fūteishō* is paired with another formula in Chōken’s invocatory statement. This second formula aims to reveal love poetry as an expression of the Buddhist teachings:

Thus we pray:

May the arising of the wind, clouds, grasses, and trees

Return once again to the soil of the three grasses and two trees;  
May compositions on the yearnings of lovers and the pangs of parting  
Fuse completely with the principle of unfolding and awakening.

According to the parable of the medicinal herbs in the *Lotus Sutra*, when soil receives the moisture of the Dharma rain (the one truth of the unifying vehicle preached by Śakyamuni in the *Lotus*), it produces both the three grasses (śramanas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas) and two trees (the lesser and greater vehicles) alike.<sup>107</sup> In the context of this liturgical prayer, the “arising” of natural phenomena in the first line, through its symmetrical relation to “the written words” on love and parting in the third line, implies love poetry. The allusion to the medicinal herbs parable suggests that even love poetry, like the lesser and greater vehicles, arose from the one truth of the dharma rain. It may, consequently, as the second half of the prayer proposes, be “fused” (*konzu*), or combined, with Buddhist principles for the revelation of enlightenment. By means of this prayer, then, Chōken provides scriptural justification for the composition of love poetry at Buddhist rituals.

Chōken’s invocatory statement for the Waka Mandokoro offering ceremony thus draws on discourses and practices associated with the worship of Fugen in order to demonstrate that even amorous waka poetry may serve as a medium for realization of the Buddhist teachings. Its rhetorical strategy follows the example of the *Fugen Sutra*. This sutra preaches repentance through contemplation of Fugen as the best method for attaining liberation from suffering. In repentance practice, sin is not a real obstruction to practice but rather its essential condition. In accordance with this view, Chōken’s condemns waka—particularly poems on the topic of love—at the outset of the invocation

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<sup>107</sup> Jp. *sanboku nisō* 三草二木, Ch. *sancao ermu*.



for rhetorical effect. By first emphasizing the sinfulness of waka poetry, Chōken is able to effectively enhance the paramount importance of repentance. Therein lies his primary concern as a preacher. In the Waka Mandokoro offering, then, repentance constitutes the ritual practice that underpins Chōken’s affirmation of the potential for any and all forms of waka poetry to serve as a condition on the path to enlightenment.

Later adaptations of Chōken’s invocation articulate more explicitly the character of the ceremony as a rite of repentance dedicated to Fugen. Recently, Michael Jamentz has highlighted the close relation between Chōken’s Waka Mandokoro invocation (*hyōbyaku*) and an early Kamakura-period liturgical text for a lecture service (*kōshiki* 講式) dedicated to Fugen.<sup>108</sup> The lecture opens with a dedication to Fugen and proclaims that to practice repentance (*sange* 懺悔), destroy sinful obstructions (*zaishō* 罪障), and contemplate (*miru* 観る) the true character (*jissō* 実相) is the deep and true meaning of the Mahāyāna teachings. It then turns to the problem of attachment produced by waka poetry. After citing the lines in Chōken’s invocation about awaiting the moon in autumn and seeking the blossoms in spring, it makes explicit its intent to repent for the sin of poetry by making a Fugen image:

Thus, we have made Fugen our object of worship (*honzon*) and repented for the sinful obstructions of our six senses.<sup>109</sup>

It next returns to a citation of Chōken’s Waka Mandokoro invocation. Specifically, it cites the liturgical formula that advances waka poetry’s expression of the ultimate truth, the second half of which appears in Shunzei’s *Korai fūteishō*:

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<sup>108</sup> Jamentz, “Tōdaiji Toshokan Fugen Kōshiki.”

<sup>109</sup> For a transcription, see Jamentz, “Tōdaiji Toshokan Fugen Kōshiki.”

Thus I have heard:

All language, whether coarse or refined,  
Returns to the form of the ultimate truth;  
Discourses on political matters  
Never contradict the principle of the true character of suchness.

As in Chōken's invocation, this formula is paired also with a prayer for love poetry:

Thus we pray:

May the canon of wind, clouds, grasses, and trees  
Return once again to the wellspring of the bodhi of the one truth.  
May compositions on the yearnings of lovers and the pangs of parting  
Fuse completely with the principle of unfolding and awakening.

The lecture text then reiterates the intent of the lecture ceremony (*kōen no mune*

講筵之旨) to bring to light and thereby eliminate the sin of poetry:

Now, this lecture presentation may be summarized in three parts. First, by repenting to Fugen, we expose and make dissipate sinful obstructions. Second, by means of the Way of waka poetry, we pray that we will attain the Way of the Buddha. Third, we set forth a prayer for transference of merit.

The early thirteenth century Tōdaiji Toshokan Fugen *kōshiki* brings to the fore two aspects of Chōken's 1176 Waka Mandokoro *hyōbyaku*: first, its character as a repentance rite; and second, its concern for demonstrating the potential for love poetry to be integrated with the Buddhist teachings.

Taken together, they shed light on the set of discourses with which Shunzei engages in the *Kora fūteishō*. That is, Shunzei sets forth his argument that even love poetry may serve as a condition for Buddhist practice not so much, as LaFleur suggests, against "puritanical members of the Buddhist community" who condemned the composition of love poetry but rather alongside liturgical and homiletic discourses developed and performed as part of rites for the practice of repentance. These discourses developed for and performed at Buddhist rituals provided the model for the rhetorical

dialectic of Shunzei's argument in which he moves from an initial condemnation of waka poetry as frivolous toward a revelation of its potential to serve as a condition for Buddhist practice. Considered in relationship to contemporaneous preaching techniques, it becomes clear that Shunzei's argument does not presuppose as its interlocutor Buddhist purists opposed to waka poetry; rather he posits this view only as a kind of rhetorical strawman to advance his own argument. It may well be the case therefore that puritanical Buddhists such as those identified by LaFleur were an invention of a dialectical discourse invented by preachers to enhance the drama and effect of their preaching to poets already dedicated to waka as a Buddhist path.

### **3.3 Ritual Contexts for Shunzei's Scriptural Citations (3): Nonduality of Sin and Fortune**

In his third and final scriptural citation, in support of waka poetry's role as an impetus for setting forth on the Buddhist path, Shunzei advances two claims. First, sin (*tsumi*) and fortune (*fuku*) are without an intrinsic essence (*nushi*); and second, one's own mind (*wa ga kokoro*) is of itself empty (*kū*):

In the *Contemplation of Fugen* [Sutra], it is preached, "To what can we point and say this is sin and this fortune? Sin and fortune lack an intrinsic essence and our mind is of itself empty."

Asserting that sin is no different than fortune, Shunzei rejects the idea that waka poetry is sinful. He concludes on the basis of this assertion, by means of a logic that is somewhat hard to follow, that "our mind" is "empty." Then, as discussed above, he forecasts his

invocation of three-truth doctrine in the next line and introduces a new significance to the key term *kokoro*.<sup>110</sup>

Shunzei's citation reverses the order in which the two claims are presented in the sutra passage. This allows him to underscore the idea of the emptiness of the *kokoro*. However, at the same time, it also obscures the logical relation between the two statements, which is stated more clearly in the sutra passage. In the larger passage from the *Fugen Sutra*, these lines elaborate on a particular kind of repentance rite (*sange no hō* 懺悔法):

In contemplating the mind, there is no mind we can seize, except the mind that comes from a distorted imagination. The mind imagining such a form arises from a deluded imagination (*mōsō*), like the wind in the empty sky, which has no foothold. Such a form of the Dharma is neither created nor destroyed. What is sin? What is fortune? As our own mind is of itself empty, sin and fortune are without an intrinsic essence. So too all other dharmas are neither abiding nor decaying. Thus, when we repent (*sange*) in this way, using the mind to contemplate no-mind, there are no dharmas abiding in a “dharma.”<sup>111</sup>

This passage teaches that, in repentance through mind-contemplation (*kanjin* 觀心), the mind is revealed as a product of the deluded imagination (*mōsō* 妄想) and, therefore, is of itself empty (*onzukura kū* 自空), like wind blowing in the empty sky (*sora* 空).

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<sup>110</sup> Up to this juncture in the text, the term *kokoro* has appeared five times. In the passages analyzed thus far, Shunzei has emphasized that waka has a deep mind (*fukaki kokoro*). The analogy to Tendai *shikan*, as he explains, has been for the purpose of describing this mind, which, he insists, is difficult to describe in words. In the opening section of the general preface, which will be analyzed in section 4, Shunzei elaborates on the “original heart” (*moto no kokoro*) of waka. When read backward, this sixth instance of the term in the *Fugen Sutra* citation, which emphasizes the emptiness of the individual's mind (*wa ga kokoro*), underscores the notion of waka poetry's *kokoro* as a collective mind grounded in the poetic tradition—a mind, that is, empty of self. When read forward in relation to the next line in which he invokes the doctrine of three truths, the statement creates an association between mind and emptiness that helps establish the implicit correlation between the poetic element of *kokoro* with the teaching of the empty.

<sup>111</sup> *T 277, 9:392c24–c28; Katō, Tamura, and Miyasaka, Threefold Lotus, p. 223.*

Because the mind is empty and, moreover, because it is the mind that invents the distinction between sin and fortune, this distinction, the sutra reasons, must also be empty.

Shunzei's citation of the *Fugen Sutra* thus suggests a specific kind of repentance practice centering on a form of contemplation called "mind-contemplation," or *kanjin*. This section will examine two late Heian-period texts that describe how this kind of contemplation-based repentance was practiced among poets in Shunzei's circle. The first text is a section entitled "Repentance" (*sange* 懺悔), from the late Heian-period collection of Buddhist tales, the *Hōbutsushū* 宝物集; the second is a homily (*kyōshaku* 経釈) on the *Fugen Sutra* by Chōken in the *Kemonshū* 花文集, his collection of homilies on the *Lotus*. Analysis of these texts will reveal the ritual context and function of the kind of *shikan* practice with which Shunzei and poets in his circle were familiar.

The scriptural passage that links Shunzei's *Korai fūteishō* with both the *Hōbutsushū* and Chōken's homily is not the passage from the *Fugen Sutra* that is cited by Shunzei but rather the verse section that reiterates the main ideas expounded in that passage. In this versic summary, the argument of the prose section is stated more clearly. It argues specifically that karmic obstructions (*gōshō* 業障)—as opposed to the mind itself—are the product of a deluded imagination (*mōsō* 妄想):

The ocean of all karmic obstructions  
Arises from our deluded imagination.  
Should we wish to repent of it,  
Let us sit upright (*tanza*) and be mindful (*nen*) of the True Character.  
All sins are just as frost and dew,  
Thus the sun of wisdom makes them evaporate and disappear.  
Therefore with our utmost devotion,  
Let us repent of our six sense faculties.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> T 277, 9:393b11–b14. See also Katō, Tamura, and Miyasaka, *Threefold Lotus*, p. 224.

The verse goes on to specify that this doctrine of the emptiness of karma should be the object of a seated meditation practice and, as a mnemonic image for this meditation, it then offers the image of the frost and dew of karmic obstructions evaporating in the light of wisdom.

Chapter 6, “Repentance,” in the *Hōbutsushū* opens with a citation of the “Sermon on Rebirth” (*Ōjō kō* 往生講) by the early twelfth-century preacher Eikan 永觀 (1033–1111).<sup>113</sup> In the sermon, Eikan praises the power of repentance to destroy and eliminate sin. The *Hōbutsushū* text then identifies Fugen as the “savior of repentance” (*sange no kyōshu* 懺悔の教主) and outlines the three forms of repentance that he teaches: with form (*usō* 有相), without form (*musō* 無相), and for *kṣatriyas* and laymen (*setsuri koji* 刹利居士).

The Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three realms in the ten directions are emanation-bodies of the same body. Even though their benefits are equal, Mahāsattva Samantabhadra took the vow of the repentance of karmic obstructions and is considered the savior of repentance. He teaches the three repentances—with form, without form, and for *kṣatriyas* and laymen. We should grasp this well with our minds and repent our karmic obstructions.<sup>114</sup>

It then defines form repentance (*usō no sange*):

First, “form repentance.” Ruing the sins (*tsumi* 罪) that we have created since beginningless births and deaths, we confess them out loud and weep in lamentation either by facing a holy image or by consulting a holy sage and repenting (*sange* 懺悔).<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Yōkan was a pioneering figure in the development of *kōshiki*, a kind of lecture assembly that featured the recitation of Buddhist texts and hymns. See Abe 2013, p. 109. See also Yamada, *Kō-e no bungaku*.

<sup>114</sup> *Hōbutsushū*, p. 256.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

The *honzon* image depicting Fugen is centrally important in form repentance. According to this definition, the Waka Mandokoro offering represents an example of this. The reference to weeping out loud suggests especially the emotional power of repentance. Repentance practice thus was not an entirely a matter of sensation and perception, but rather tapped into the deepest human emotions.

The *Hōbutsuhū* then describes the more contemplative practice of formless repentance (*musō no sange*):

Next, in what is called “formless repentance,” all karmic obstructions (*zaishō*) arise from a deluded imagination (*mōsō*), they are thus without anything one could call a body (*tai to iu mono*). Because it is a contemplation (*kanzuru*) on this [principle], it is called “repentance of principle.”<sup>116</sup>

This passage defines formless repentance as a practice to contemplate the principle that all karmic obstructions are the result of a deluded imagination and are therefore without an essence (i.e., are empty).

The text then offers two images to illustrate the doctrine of the insubstantiality of karmic obstructions:

For example, even if the clouds and mist of evil karma (*akugō no unbu*) is thick, when the winds of repentance (*sange no kaze*) blow, the sky of the dharma nature clears. Even if the frost and dew of the passions (*bonnō no sōro*) is heavy, when the lifegiving light of repentance (*sange no e' nichī*) comes out, they disappear.<sup>117</sup>

The *Fugen Sutra* is then cited as the scriptural source for the doctrine as well as for the second image of the frost and dew. The citation is the eight lines of verse, discussed above, As shown above, however, the first image of the wind of repentance does not

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<sup>116</sup> *Hōbutsuhū*, pp. 257–58.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.

appear in the verse summary. Where it does appear—albeit in a modified form—is in the prose passage for which this verse is a summary—that is, in the section of the *Fugen Sutra* cited by Shunzei. The *Hōbutsushū* in its pairing of the dual images of wind of repentance and the light of repentance thus correlates the above verse passage with its prose counterpart cited by Shunzei.

After the explanation of formless repentance, the *Hōbutsushū* then cites poems that illustrate the practice by drawing on the imagery of dew and light from the *Fugen Sutra*. Three of the five poems are by leading figures in the Karin'en circle: Tōren 登蓮, Kamo no Shigeyasu, and Inpu Mon'in no Daibu.

Tōren's poem suggests that sin, like frost formed from dew, lasts only in the interval of time that we lament it, which is metaphorically expressed here as the time before the sun rises, which is the hour when formless repentance contemplation should be performed:

<p><i>Tsuyu musubu shimo ni tatouru tsumi nareba asahi matsu ma no nageki narikeri</i></p>	<p>As sin is comparable To frost formed From dew, It is a nothing more than a lament Lasting only while we wait for the morning sun.<sup>118</sup></p>
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Shigeyasu's poem is an expression of gratitude and joy for having encountered the light of the dharma through the practice of repentance:

<p><i>Omoi toku nori no hikarishi terasazu wa mi ni oku shimo wo tare harawamashi</i></p>	<p>If the light of the Dharma that melts away my feelings Had not shone on me, Who would have swept away The frost that forms on my life?<sup>119</sup></p>
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<sup>118</sup> *Hōbutsushū*, p. 260.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*



Inpu Mon'in no Daibu's poem takes a different tack. Rather than praising the light of repentance that melts away one's sins, she states that such light no longer exists for her and, as a result, frost has formed in her heart:

*Kokoro yori  
musubi okikeru  
shimo nareba  
omoi toku hi wa  
nokorazarikeri*

Since the frost  
Has started forming  
In my heart,  
The light that melts away my feelings  
No longer remains.<sup>120</sup>

This poem, in contrast to the others, follows closely the conventions of love poetry in which the poet laments the lover who has abandoned her and made her heart cold. Like Princess Shikishi, one of her closest comrades in poetry, Inpu Mon'in imbues a poem on the Buddhist topic of repentance with the sentiments of abandonment and rejection associated with the poetic topos of love.

The *Hōbutsushū*'s classification of repentance practice into three different kinds—form, formless, and for *kṣatriyas* and laymen—is unusual. The *Fugen Sutra* mentions only repentance for *kṣatriyas*, while Genshin's 985 *Ōjō yōshū*, a major source for the *Hōbutsushū*, mentions two kinds: form and formless. Even the sermon cited by the *Hōbutsushū* in its discussion of repentance, Yōkan's *Ōjō kōshiki*, also mentions only two. However, a homily (*kyōshaku*) on the *Fugen Sutra* by Chōken in his collection of homilies on the *Lotus Sutra*, the *Kemonshū* 花文集, however, elaborates three kinds of repentance. For this reason, scholar of medieval Buddhist literature Ōshima Kaoru 大島薫 has argued that Chōken's preaching—not that of Yōkan, despite the text's explicit reference—provided the framework for the presentation of formless repentance in the

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

*Hōbutsushū*.<sup>121</sup> If so, Chōken’s homily should shed light on the ritual context and function of the kind of repentance contemplation practiced by Karin’en poets.

Chōken’s homily begins by proclaiming repentance the best technique for destroying sinful karma (*zaigō* 罪業):

At that time, the Buddha, in response to a question by Ānanda, preached that, for sentient beings whose karmic obstructions (*zaigō*) in the evil world and world-to-come are deep and heavy, the method of destroying sin through repentance is foremost. For what is called “repentance,” there are three kinds.<sup>122</sup>

After elaborating the three kinds of repentance, Chōken defines formless repentance with a couplet on its method of contemplation:

Bind the mind with the perceptual field of the One Truth,  
Contemplate deeply the true character of the myriad dharmas.<sup>123</sup>

This couplet is a variation on a statement in Guanding’s preface to the *Maka shikan*; the full passage is cited by Chōken a few lines later. Here, he offers his vernacular gloss: he describes formless repentance as a contemplation that concentrates the mind on the One Truth—that is, the ultimate truth according to which all things are manifestations of the Dharma—and, in this way, contemplates the true nature of all phenomena.

This description seems consistent with Brower and Miner’s characterization of Shunzei’s practice of *shikan* as “mystical fusion” or LaFleur’s definition of it as a “collapse in the confrontational relationship between the perceiver and perceived.”<sup>124</sup> The next section in the homily clarifies that this kind of mystical or phenomenological

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<sup>121</sup> Ōshima, “Kenin.”

<sup>122</sup> *Kemonshū*, p. 521.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Brower and Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry*, p. 257; LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 102.

component in formless repentance is dedicated to a specific religious purpose: the elimination of sin. To make this point, Chōken refers to the first half of the verse from the

*Fugen Sutra* cited in the *Hōbutsushū*:

The ocean of all karmic obstructions  
Arises from our deluded imagination.  
Should we wish to repent of it,  
Let us sit upright and be mindful of the True Character.<sup>125</sup>

This citation provides an authoritative scriptural source for the practice of sitting meditation and mindfulness for the purpose of repentance.

Chōken then cites the larger passage from the core statement in Guanding's preface, also an important scriptural source in the *Korai fūteishō*, that expounds the lines already glossed above:

The *Shikan* states, "When one binds one's perceptual field (*en*) with the Dharma Realm and unifies one's mindfulness with the Dharma Realm, each and every color and scent is none other than the Middle Way. The aggregates and fields are all semblances and are not [forms] of suffering to be renounced. The defilements of ignorance are none other than enlightenment (*mumyō jinrō sunawachi kore bodai nari*)."<sup>126</sup>

Following these two citations, Chōken offers a gloss that assigns the practice of *shikan* contemplation the ritual function of destroying sin:

Therefore, bind your mind to the perceptual field of the One Truth and the afflictions of the three forms of karma will be destroyed. When you recognize the Three Truths through the gate of contemplation (*kanmon*), the sinful obstructions of the six faculties will be eliminated. This is [called] "formless repentance."<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> *Kemonshū*, p. 521.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

While the first of his two symmetrical references to *shikan* reiterates the first line in his couplet about “binding the mind,” the second refers to contemplation on the three truths.

Chōken’s *kyōshaku* on the *Fugen Sutra* brings together three elements in Shunzei’s scriptural demonstration of his claim that waka may constitute a karmic activity for Buddhist practice: first, the *Fugen Sutra* and its doctrine that sin is empty of intrinsic essence; second, the *Maka shikan* and its doctrine of the nonduality of the passions and enlightenment; and third, the practice of contemplation and the doctrine of the three truths. Although it does not specifically address the topic of waka, it is likely, as Kaoru Ōshima has suggested, that the *kyōshaku* provided the threefold classification of repentance adopted by the *Hōbutsushū*. It, therefore, clarifies the ritual context and function of this practice as it was carried out among Karin’en poets. As an example of a possible ritual context for Shunzei’s discourse on waka poetry in the *Korai fūteishō*, Chōken’s *kyōshaku* suggests specifically that *shikan* contemplation among waka poets of the late Heian period was dedicated to the religious purpose of destroying bad karma and eliminating sin through their repentance.

Previous commentators on Shunzei’s poetics in the *Korai fūteishō* have misunderstood or passed over the significance of the poet’s invocation of the Fugen contemplation.<sup>128</sup> As the third and final scriptural citation, however, it is crucial to his central argument that even something sinful like the composition of waka poetry can be understood as an activity for practicing the Buddhist path. In addition, as I have shown in

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<sup>128</sup> LaFleur, in his translation of the *Fugen Sutra* passage, renders “*tsumi*” and “*fuku*” as “bad” and “good” and suggests that it exemplifies the “dialectic of the Mahayana,” which “demands a rejection of any bifurcation of the holy and profane.” See LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 91. Ramirez-Christensen also overlooks the crucial importance of Shunzei’s final citation of the *Fugen Sutra*. Like LaFleur, she also focuses on the philosophical dialectic of nonduality. See Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality*, p. 88.

the foregoing, it also provides an indication of the ritual practice of formless repentance that informed this view.

Shunzei's citation of the *Fugen Sutra* is not the only time the poet refers to Fugen in the *Korai fūteishō*. He also invokes the tutelary bodhisattva of repentance at a key juncture in the conclusion to his discussion of Buddhism and waka poetry in the general preface:

May those who set their hearts on this path, whether they, during the time the traces of their brush, like the leaves of the pine, remain and are not lost [in this world], invest themselves in the pathos [of waka] or challenge [my views of waka], after ten thousand generations of spring and one thousand years of autumn, by means of the profound significance of Yamato poetry, awoken to the inexhaustibility of the texts of the Dharma, form a karmic bond (*en*) for rebirth in [the land of] ultimate bliss [the Pure Land], and enter into the ocean of Fugen's vows. May they turn over the words of poetry recitation (*eika*), praise the Buddha, hear the Dharma, visit all buddha lands in the ten directions, and lead sentient beings from the saha realm.<sup>129</sup>

In a liturgical style, Shunzei offers a prayer for the Way of waka poetry, by virtue of its profound significance, to inspire poets after him to awaken to the Buddhist teachings, create good karma for rebirth in the Pure Land, and dedicate themselves to Fugen's vows. It thus underscores the central importance of Fugen, alongside rebirth in the Pure Land, in Shunzei's notion of *waka* as a Way (*michi*).

Shunzei's prayer and its suggestions of Fugen worship and of Pure Land faith indicates the influence of a form of mixed Tendai-Pure Land practice that came into prominence in the twelfth century. In this practice, repentance rites (*senbō*) dedicated to Fugen, called either Lotus or Fugen repentance, are carried out in the morning, followed by *nenbutsu* chanting, termed *nenbutsu samādhi* (*nenbutsu sanmai* 念仏三昧) or *reiji*

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<sup>129</sup> *Korai fūteishō*, pp. 253–54.

*sahō* 例時作法, in the evening. Modern commentators on the history of this practice refer to it by the formula “Repentance in the morning; *nenbutsu* in the evening” (*asa ni senbō, yū ni nenbutsu* 朝懺法夕念仏). Yanagisawa Masashi 柳澤正志 has outlined three types of this combined repentance-*nenbutsu* practice.

The first is repentance-*nenbutsu* practice performed as part of memorial offerings (*tsuizen kuyō* 追善供養). In the *Ryōjin hishō* 梁塵秘抄, his collection of modern songs (*imayō* 今様), Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa describes how he performed repentance in the morning and *nenbutsu* in the evening to pray for the salvation of his *imayō* teacher Otomae 乙前:

In the morning, we chant the rite of repentance and repent and atone all six sense faculties. In the evening, we recite the *Amida Sutra* and pray for rebirth in the ninth level [of the Pure Land] in the west in this way for fifty-days.<sup>130</sup>

The second is repentance-*nenbutsu* practice carried out as part of public Buddhist liturgies (*hōe* 法会). Yanagisawa cites the Kangaku-e assemblies in the tenth century as an example. Kangaku-e member Minamoto no Tamenori’s account in his *Sanbōe* provides the most concise description of this practice:

On the fifteenth day, in the morning, we lectured on the *Lotus Sutra* and, in the evening practiced mindfulness of Amida Buddha.<sup>131</sup>

Writing two centuries before Go-Shirakawa, Tamenori does not place emphasis on the act of repentance but rather describes the practice in the morning as consisting of lectures (*kō*

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<sup>130</sup> *Ryōjin hishō*, p. 164

<sup>131</sup> *Sanbōe*, p. 173. See also similar descriptions of Kangaku-e assemblies in *kanbun* poem prefaces by Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤 (933–1002) and Takashina Moriyoshi 高階積善 (dates unknown) preserved in the *Honchō monzui* 本朝文粹; p. 292 and p. 294, respectively.

講) on the *Lotus Sutra*. As mentioned in section 3, while the Kangaku-e assemblies represent an example of a repentance practice, they do not center on the worship of Fugen, as in the Waka Mandokoro offering ceremony. Shunzei would have been more familiar with the latter, as his multiple references to Fugen in the *Korai fūteishō* suggest.

The third is repentance-*nenbutsu* as a daily ritual practice performed by individuals as part of a curriculum for ascetic training. In his diary *Chūyūki* 中右記, lay courtier Fujiwara no Munetada 藤原宗忠 (1062–1141) describes his practice of this form of repentance-*nenbutsu* while in seclusion at his privately funded temple Hōkaiji 法界寺 on the twenty-ninth day of the ninth month of 1120:

In the morning, I listened to the Lotus repentance rite, and the sinful obstruction of the six sense faculties were destroyed. In the evening, I chanted Amida *nenbutsu* and devoutly prayed for rebirth in the ninth level [of the Pure Land].<sup>132</sup>

Shunzei's reference to "Fugen Contemplation" in his third scriptural citation and his pairing of Fugen worship with Pure Land faith in his liturgical prayer that concludes his discussion of waka and Buddhism in the general preface suggests the influence of this form of combined repentance-*nenbutsu* practice that came to prominence in late Heian ritual culture. As Yanagisawa's classification makes clear, this practice took different forms. It was carried out within the context of Buddhist liturgies, or *hōe*, such as the Kangaku-e assemblies, as well as less public ritual practices, such as those described by Munetada during his retreat. Using this classification scheme, the Waka Mandokoro offering examined in subsection 3.2 represents an example of the practice in the context of a memorial offering, while the formless repentance discussed in this subsection

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<sup>132</sup> *Chūyūki*, p. 254.

represents a kind of daily ritual practice performed by individuals in a more private setting.

Chōken describes formless repentance as a kind of sitting meditation. His emphasis on binding one's mind (*kokoro*) and unifying one's mindfulness with the true reality suggests a kind of collapse of the distinction between perceiver and perceived described by LaFleur in his analysis of *shikan*. Crucial, however, to Chōken's analysis is the religious purpose of this form of contemplation to eliminate bad karma and destroy sin. This ritual function of *shikan* introduced the possibility of developing a discourse that recognizes the sinfulness of waka poetry as a condition for practicing the Buddhist path. The next section will examine how this form of contemplation dedicated to the act of repentance shaped Shunzei's notion of love poetry as a Buddhist practice.

#### **4 The Original Heart of Waka Poetry: Love Poetry as Buddhist Practice**

Sections 2 and 3 of this chapter have considered the ritual contexts for Shunzei's analogy of waka to Tendai *shikan*, which is set forth in the second section of the *Korai fūteishō*'s general preface. This section will clarify the relation of this analogy to a key term that Shunzei introduces in the preface's opening section: the "original heart" (*moto no kokoro* 本の心).

In the opening section of the general preface, after a brief history of waka poetry from the age of the gods, Shunzei turns to the question of the heart, or *kokoro*, of waka poetry. He takes as his starting point Ki no Tsurayuki's well-known statement about the heart in the *Kana Preface to the Kokinshū*:



As it is written in the Preface to the *Kokinshū*, [waka poetry] takes as its seed the heart of the person (*hito no kokoro*) and has burgeoned forth into a myriad leaves of words . . .

To pivot to his own statement in the lines that follow, Shunzei modifies the verbal tense of Tsurayuki's classical formulation. In place of the continuative *ri* in Tsurayuki's copulative construction *nare-ri keru* (has been becoming), Shunzei inserts a completative *ni*, thus creating the copula *nari-ni kereba* (has become). Through this substitution of verbal tense markers, Shunzei underscores the idea that waka poetry has *already* created a myriad leaves of words. This then allows him put forward an inference that introduces an entirely new conception of the heart in waka poetry:

Therefore, whether we examine the cherry blossoms in spring or see the crimson leaves in autumn, if we did not have such a thing as poetry, not a person would know their color or fragrance. What then would we take to be our original heart (*moto no kokoro*)?

This inference suggests that waka poetry creates the original heart of the person. It is a reversal of Tsurayuki's thesis that the heart of the person creates the poem. In addition, Shunzei's *moto no kokoro*, in contrast to Tsurayuki's *hito no kokoro*, is associated with the act of examining (*tazuneru*), seeing (*miru*), and knowing (*shiru*). In this sense, the *moto no kokoro* is that which the poet uses as an original foundation, a kind of *archē* (*moto*), for perceiving and knowing. *Kokoro*, in Shunzei's formulation *moto no kokoro*, is, in other words, both heart and mind.

To describe the things known in the original heart-mind, Shunzei uses two figures emblematic of the waka tradition: “cherry blossoms in spring” (*haru no hana*) and “crimson leaves in autumn” (*aki no momiji*). Taken denotatively, they suggest the sensorial qualities of natural phenomena. Taken connotatively, however, as emblems of the tradition, they imply the poetic conventions that prescribe decorous treatment of a

poetic topic. This connotative sense is reinforced when the term *moto no kokoro* is understood as a Japanese rendering (*kundoku*) of the term, *hon'i* 本意, a key term in late Heian poetic practice referring to the foundational (*moto/hon* 本) or root significance (*kokoro/i* 意) of a topic (*dai* 題).

Based on the hidden correspondence between *moto no kokoro* and *hon'i*, waka scholar Tanaka Yutaka 田中裕 has argued that the former implies the later.<sup>133</sup> As a poet who also often served as judge at poetry contests, Shunzei surely would have been keenly sensitive to the problem of *hon'i* in waka composition and appreciation. It is likely therefore that *moto no kokoro* addresses, through a play on the readings of its characters, this important concept in the waka tradition. However, as we saw in section 1, Shunzei insists that a poem is “difficult to describe” (*toki nobe gataki*). This comment, in light of the correspondence between *hon'i* and *moto no kokoro*, suggests that *moto no kokoro* is intended to articulate an understanding of poetry that cannot be reduced to the formulas of poetic convention, or *hon'i*. Shunzei’s formulation of the term *moto no kokoro* is composed of implicit allusions and tacit references to both waka poems and Buddhist texts. To unpack its significance, then, it will help to consider more closely the multiple intertexts that contribute to the multiple layers of significance evoked by Shunzei’s formulation.

The most direct allusion in his formulation appears in the phrase he uses to describe the person possessed of *moto no kokoro*: “the person who knows the color and

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<sup>133</sup> Tanaka, *Chūsei bungakuron kenkyū*, p. 14. The preface to volume 2 of the *Korai fūteishō* goes on to systematically rehearse the poetic conventions associated with commonplace topics in the waka tradition lends further evidence for Tanaka’s theory. See *Korai fūteishō*, pp. 371–73.

scent” (*iro wo mo ka wo mo shiru hito*). In the waka tradition, this phrase alludes to a love poem by Ki no Tomonori 紀友則 (845–907) in the *Kokinshū*:

<i>Kimi narade</i>	To whom am I to show them
<i>dare ni ka misemu</i>	Unless it be you,
<i>ume no hana</i>	Blossoms of the plum
<i>iro o mo ka wo mo</i>	Their color and fragrance,
<i>shiru hito zo shiru</i>	No person but you can truly know.

In Tomonori’s poem, the person (*hito*) who knows the color and scent of the blossoms is none other than the lover, which in classical waka discourse is also denoted by the term *hito*. By alluding to this poem as a kind of foundation poem (*honka* 本歌) for his statement on *moto no kokoro*, Shunzei suggests that waka poetry teaches poets to appreciate the color and scent not only of the blossoms in fall and leaves in autumn but also of a lover. This poem suggests the significance of the *moto no kokoro* as a feeling heart as well as a knowing mind. Thus, the *moto no kokoro* that is the source for waka poetry includes also in its orbit of significations not only knowledge but also love.

For poets in Shunzei’s circle, the rhetorical figure of “color and fragrance” would have connoted an additional layer of Buddhist significance. There are three poems in Jakuzen’s *Hōmon hyakushū* that shed light on the Buddhist significance of Shunzei’s key term *moto no kokoro*.<sup>134</sup> The following will examine each separately.

The first is the fifth poem in his one-hundred poem sequence. It clarifies specifically the Buddhist significance of the waka figure “color and scent.” The poem treats the compound topic of spring combined with a line from the *Fahua xuanyi shiqian*

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<sup>134</sup> Jacqueline Stone has already pointed to the relation of Jakuzen’s poetry to Shunzei’s notion of *moto no kokoro*; Stone, *Original Enlightenment*, p. 45. In what follows, I provide further support for this suggestion by identifying and analyzing the specific poems that shed light on Shunzei’s key term *moto no kokoro*.

法華玄義釋籤, another subcommentary by Zhanran on Zhiyi's commentary on the *Lotus*

*Sutra*:

“It is not for having been dyed so that leaves are green and flowers red.”<sup>135</sup>

<i>Nushi ya tare</i>	Wherein lies the creator?
<i>yanagi no ito wo</i>	The thread of the willow
<i>yorikakete</i>	Twines around
<i>iroiro ni nū</i>	Weaving the many colors of
<i>mume no hanagasa</i>	The hat of plum blossom.

Jakuzen's poem is a reevaluation of a classical conceit in the waka tradition from the point of view of Buddhist doctrine. The foundation poem is from the *Kokinshū*:

<i>Aoyagi wo</i>	Takes the green willow,
<i>kataito yorite</i>	So they say, the warbler does,
<i>uguisu no</i>	Twines the single threads,
<i>nū chō kasa wa</i>	Sews itself a hat—it's true:
<i>mume no hanagasa</i>	See its hat of plum blossom. <sup>136</sup>

This poem is built around the conceit that the warbler weaves the plum blossoms, of which they were known to be fond, with the fine tendrils of a willow branch. Jakuzen's poem challenges this old notion from the point of view of Zhanran's doctrinal formulation, which he posits as the topic for his poem. Zhanran's formulation teaches that there is nothing that comes from outside of a thing to give form to it; the leaves are green and flowers red not because a creator has made them so.

In his autocommentary on the poem, Jakuzen explicates the Buddhist implications of the poem:

This analogy is one among others that illuminate the natural [arising] of the dharmas. From the plum blossom of early spring to the chrysanthemum withered by frost, looking upon the many colors of

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<sup>135</sup> *T* 1717, 33:905c09–10.

<sup>136</sup> *Kokinshū*: 1081. Translation by Cranston; *Grasses of Remembrance*, p. 7.

flowers of all sorts, [we realize that] there is nothing that comes from the outside and dyes them nor does their color emanate from within the plant itself. Just according with the seasons, they unfold of themselves. When we calm our mind and reflect, [we see that] all sorts of colors and forms of the dharmas are endowed with this unfathomable principle. When we continue to reflect and examine this principle yet further, [we find that the world is] more interesting than if we just look at it casually. It is said that Princess Saho<sup>137</sup> dyes the threads of the willow green, and that the warbler weaves the hat of plum blossom, but this is nothing more than a conceit. Truly there is no such thing as a creator who determines [their color and form]. Thus, for this reason, it is preached, “There is no color or fragrance that is not the middle way.” Green leaves and red flowers provide only one [example of this teaching]. All colors and fragrances are no different. This [principle] is not limited to the color of flowers. It means that all the myriad things are without a creator.

Jakuzen’s commentary explains his contention against the waka conceit of the warbler as a kind of “creator” (*nushi*) who weaves the colors of the plum blossoms in spring. He argues that, when one calms the mind and reflects, one will observe the natural unfolding of forms in accordance with the change of the seasons and realize thereby that there is no creator behind these forms and that, therefore, all are examples of the way everything is dependently arisen without a prime mover or creator—that is, they are manifestations of the middle way.

Read in light of Jakuzen’s poem and commentary, Shunzei’s suggestion that the *moto no kokoro* is the faculty by which a person perceives “the color and scent” of spring blossoms and autumn leaves takes on a new Buddhist significance. Jakuzen’s poem suggests specifically that Shunzei’s *moto no kokoro* connotes a mind that contemplates all things as none other than the middle way. Superimposing this additional Buddhist layer of significance back onto Shunzei’s allusion to Tomonori’s poem suggests that the waka poet understands the color and fragrance of the lover also as dependently arisen

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<sup>137</sup> The goddess of spring.

phenomena that are empty and impermanent and, thus, as instantiations of Buddhist truth. In this view, the *moto no kokoro* has the power to reveal even activities considered deeply sinful, from a Buddhist standpoint, as potential occasions for realizing the Buddhist teachings.

The second intertext is poem 61. This poem articulates the resemblance between feelings of love and the practice of *shikan* and thus sheds light on the relation of Shunzei's *moto no kokoro* to *shikan*. It figures as the first of ten poems on the topic of love in Jakuzen's hundred-poem sequence on Buddhist doctrine. It is, in other words, a kind of "Buddhist love poem." Its topic is drawn from a line in the core statement from the *Maka shikan* that appears just before the line on "color and scent":

On love (*koi*)

Bind your karma with the Dharma Realm and unify your mindfulness with the Dharma Realm.<sup>138</sup>

*Hito shirezu  
kokoro hitotsu wo  
kakekureba  
munashiki sora ni  
mitsu omoi kana*

When we set out to  
Make our hearts one with a person  
Without them knowing,  
How our feelings  
Fill the empty sky!

The poem recasts, from a Buddhist point of view, the following love poem from the *Kokinshū*:

*Wa ga koi wa  
munashiki sora ni  
michinurashi  
omoiyaredomo  
yuku kata mo nashi*

It seems my love  
Has filled  
The empty sky,  
For though I try to ease my thoughts,  
There is no where they can go.<sup>139</sup>

Jakuzen's allusive variation on this celebrated love poem from the *Kokinshū* puts a

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<sup>138</sup> *T* 1911, 46:1c24.

<sup>139</sup> *Kokinshū*: 844.

positive spin on the pangs of love. Rather than being a form of suffering, loving a person (*hito*) wholeheartedly can be understood positively as an analogy for how dedicating one's heart to the practice of the path can create a feeling of wholeness.

In his autocommentary, Jakuzen compares this feeling of wholeness to the practice of *shikan*, which he associates with the practice of “mind-contemplation” (*kanjin*):

This refers to the state of what a person of mind-contemplation thinks. To expansively lay out our heart in the Dharma Realm is called “binding karma.” To place the Dharma Realm in the mind is called “unifying mindfulness.” The Middle Way is none other than the Dharma Realm. The Dharma Realm is none other than calm-and-contemplation (*shikan*). The Ten Realms and Ten Suchnesses in the trichilocosm all expansively spread out like the mind of the One Thought. The old saying [in the *Kokinshū*] “For though I try to clear away my thoughts, there is nowhere they can go,” as long as one loves the path of Buddhism, very much resembles the meaning of this poem.

The feeling of unrequited love is no different from *shikan* practice in which one fuses one's karma and mindfulness with the Dharma Realm, as long as, Jakuzen insists, this love is dedicated to the Buddhist path. Thus, the poem explains the practice of *shikan* by means of an analogy to the experience of love.

If, as I have argued, the term *moto no kokoro* in the *Korai fūteishō* signifies also the capacity to feel and know love, then Jakuzen's identification of love with *shikan* in the above would suggest that Shunzei may have understood a close link between *moto no kokoro* and *shikan*. Shunzei's understanding of this link differs, however, from that of Jakuzen. Whereas Jakuzen is interested in using love poetry in order to explain *shikan* practice, Shunzei is interested in the converse relationship: that is, how *shikan* practice can be used by the poet to cultivate the heart that appreciates all sensations *and* emotions as expressions of the Middle Way—that is, the *moto no kokoro*.

The third intertext from Jakuzen's *Hōmon hyakushu* sheds light on the significance of the term *moto*, or original, in “*moto no kokoro*.” In poem 41, which is a celebratory (*shuku* 祝) poem, Jakuzen treats a key line from the doctrinal treatise *Bodaishingishō* 菩提心義抄 by the Tendai scholastic Annen 安然 (841–915?) that expounds the idea that all things are expressions of the Dharma:

All the verdantly green bamboo are the Dharma body

<i>Irokaenu</i>	When we inquire into
<i>moto no satori wo</i>	The original awakening
<i>tazunureba</i>	Whose form is unchanging,
<i>take no midori mo</i>	Even the green of the bamboo
<i>asakaranu kana</i>	Is not merely superficial.

In his autocommentary, Jakuzen explains that the color of the green bamboo is an image for the truth that all things have buddha-nature, which is the fundamental teaching associated with original enlightenment doctrine:

This means that all things all the way up to the grasses and trees are endowed with buddha-nature. Among them, the color of the green bamboo is the color of the Unchanging Truth. Appearing before our eyes, the awakening of the eternally dwelling buddha-nature grows from within our mind. This perfuming within is that which leads us to knowledge of the good [Dharma]. Truly, we should [as Bai Juyi once wrote] think of [the green bamboo] as our good friend. This is what is meant by “not superficial.” “Original awakening” refers to the Principle of Original Enlightenment (*hongaku*). Original enlightenment is none other than the Body of the Dharma, or Dharmakāya.

According to this commentary, the phrase “original awakening,” or *moto no satori*, refers to the teaching of original enlightenment, which puts forth that all things have buddha-nature. As we saw in section 3.2, Chōken made use of this doctrine to argue that even profane love poems, if dedicated to the worship of Fugen and the act of repentance, have the potential to express the Buddhist teachings.



These three intertexts from Jakuzen's *Hōmon hyakushu* indicate that Shunzei's reference to "color and scent" connotes the Buddhist teaching that all things are expressions of the middle way. The third poem above explicates this teaching by using the image of the green bamboo, which in Annen's *Bodaishingishō* is paired with Guanding's statement on "color and scent." Jakuzen's poem thus illustrates a doctrine long associated with the one Shunzei links with his key term *moto no kokoro*. The name that Jakuzen gives to the faculty that perceives this Buddhist truth is not "the original heart" but rather the "original awakening," or *moto no satori*. This term suggests that the *moto* of *moto no kokoro* refers to an original potential of the *kokoro* to recognize the buddha-nature of all things.

Shunzei's poetic concept of *moto no kokoro* thus suggests the poet's interest in how *shikan* practice can aid the composition of waka poetry in general and love poetry in particular. This interest is not limited to his poetic theory. In his own poetic compositions, Shunzei displays a unique ability to introduce both Buddhist and romantic connotations into poems on conventional waka topics. Take, for example, his most celebrated poem, the one Teika selected for his *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets (Hyakunin isshu* 百人一首) as exemplar of his father's verse:

"Stag"

*Yo no naka yo  
michi koso nakere  
omoiiru  
yama no oku ni mo  
shika zo naku naru*

In this world  
Truly, there is no way—  
Even deep in the mountain,  
Where I enter, heart set,  
The stag cries out.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> *Senzai wakashū*: 1151; *Chōshū eisō*: 146.

The poem is carefully crafted to reveal a new layer of signification with the unfolding of each line. The word “way” (*michi* 道) in line 2, for example, when read only in relation to the upper three lines of the poem (*kami no ku*), signifies a “political order” in society (*yo no naka*). Shunzei originally composed this poem for a one hundred-poem sequence of complaints (*jukkai hyakushu* 述懷百首) expressed from the point of view of a conventional topic, in this case, “stag.” The *jukkai* mode during Shunzei’s time was used by courtiers as a poetic medium for remonstrating with their sovereign. In this context, therefore, the sense of *michi* as a “political order” is primary. However, when read in light of the lower two lines (*shimo no ku*), its meaning shifts: first, to a more denotative sense—“there are no paths deep in the mountain”; and second, to a more connotative sense—“even deep in the mountain, there is no [Buddhist] path.” In waka poetry, the crying stag was a figure for a man pining lustfully for his lover. In a *jukkai* poem, it was often used as a figure for the courtier pining for his sovereign. The stag, therefore, in this poem, is a figure for the poet.<sup>141</sup> If, in addition, its original sense of pining lover is reintroduced, the poem reveals an image of a man who has renounced the world and yet cannot overcome his passions. For such a person, it suggests, in this world of suffering, there is no Buddhist path. The poem is thus multifaceted—at once about the political world, love, and the Buddhist teachings.

Shunzei’s celebrated poem on the stag only implies the themes of love and Buddhist practice. In his personal anthology *Chōshū eisō* 長秋詠藻, Shunzei includes a number of love poems that similarly make implicit reference to both romantic and

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<sup>141</sup> The word *stag* (*shika*) is homophonous with the word *thus*. The last line of the poem, therefore, could also be rendered, “Thus I cry.” This play on the word *shika* thus underscores the identity of the poet with the stag in the poem.

Buddhist themes. These poems, however, in contrast to the above, also feature a headnote that explains that the poem, first, was composed for a Buddhist ceremony and, second, treats the topic of love from a Buddhist point of view. The following, from a sequence of love poems composed for Buddhist rituals, is an example:

At the flower offering ceremony as part of the [*Golden Light Sutra* lecture] service in the fifth month at the Retired Emperor [Go-Shirakawa]'s residence at Hōjūji on the topic of “love that disappears after a connection is made”

<i>Tanomekoshi</i>	In the field I used to depend on,
<i>nobe no michishiba</i>	The grasses on the path
<i>natsu fukashi</i>	Have grown thick,
<i>izuku naru ramu</i>	Where I wonder have you gone?
<i>mozu no kusa guki</i>	Finch hidden in the brush. <sup>142</sup>

In the waka tradition, the finch that disappears among the thick grasses in summer signifies the elusiveness and ephemerality of love. In light of the ritual context described by its headnote, this poem implies the Buddhist teaching of impermanence—that nothing, including especially love, lasts forever. Like Shunzei's poem on the stag, this is not stated in the verse. The Buddhist significance of the poem instead lies implicit in the language of the waka tradition.

In the foregoing two poems, both of which may be considered examples of Buddhist love poetry, Shunzei takes differing approaches to the subject of love. In the first poem, love is the pernicious desire that he cannot overcome even after he has renounced the world. In the second, love represents an exemplary instance of suffering and thus is a negative condition that inspires one to renounce the world. Jakuzen's Buddhist love poem on the feelings of love filling the empty sky treats love yet differently still. Instead of a kind of desire or instance of suffering to be escaped, love, for

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<sup>142</sup> *Chōshū eisō*: 356.

Jakuzen, is like *shikan* and, consequently, provides a positive condition for practicing Buddhism.

Among such poems, topics such as “love that obstructs bodhī” (*renbō bodai* 恋妨菩提) were especially common.<sup>143</sup> The Karin’en however took an entirely new approach. Besides Jakuzen and Shunzei, other members of the circle were interested in developing new Buddhist uses and significances for the love poem. At Karin’en gatherings, poets composed Buddhist poems on topics such as “Love that Elicits Aspiration on the Path” (*rensai dōshin* 恋催道心), “Love That Elicits [An Understanding of] Impermanence” (*rensai mujō* 恋催無常), “Entering into Bodhī by Means of Love” (*koi ni yorite bodai ni iru* 依恋入菩提) and “Transformation of Love into Aspiration on the Path” (*renhen dōshin* 恋變道心). As these topics indicate, Karin’en poets attempted to use poetry to demonstrate how love could be used as an occasion—or as Shunzei suggests in the *Korai fūteishō*, a “karmic condition” (*en* 縁)—for practicing the Buddhist path.

The preacher Chōken was also a practitioner of this form of poetry. As we saw in section 3, for his invocatory statement for the Waka Mandokoro, an offshoot of the Karin’en circle, he composed the key liturgical formula for justifying the integration of love poetry with the Buddhist teachings. At a Buddhist lecture service at the Kamo Shrine, hosted by shrine priest Kamo no Shigeyasu, a leading figure in the Karin’en circle in the 1170s, Chōken composed the following poem on how love can turn into spiritual aspiration:

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<sup>143</sup> See Yamamoto, “Koi to Butsudō.”

As part of compositions on the topic of “Transforming Love into Aspiration on the Path” by people at Shigeyasu’s residence on the fifth day of a thirty-[day] lecture series at Kamo [Shrine].

<i>Saritomo to</i>	The brocade sticks
<i>tateshi nishikigi</i>	I planted in the past,
<i>kōrihatete</i>	Now frozen over—
<i>kyō Ōhara ni</i>	Thus this cloth of Ōhara
<i>sumizome nomi zo</i>	Now dyed wholly black. <sup>144</sup>

According to an ancient folk custom in northern Japan, brocade sticks were placed by men outside a lover’s home as a sign of romantic intent. In his poem, Chōken describes sticks that have been ignored and now stand frozen. The last two lines suggest that the feelings of rejection evoked by the image of the frozen brocade served as the impetus for taking up the black robes of the Buddhist priest. For Chōken, love serves a negative occasion for practicing the Buddhist path.

In his personal anthology *Shūgyokushū* 拾玉集, the poet-priest Jien offers yet another explanation for how a love poem could be used for Buddhist purposes:

Though it seems that everyone has come to regard the act of composing love poems (*koi no uta*) as an exemplary instance [of something] that keeps us from detaching from the world of sorrow, if we study and think more closely about it, [we find that] it is precisely by directing [our thoughts] to this [i.e., love] that [poetry] teaches us the heart of detachment and thus helps give expression to the heart that seeks joyfully [rebirth in the Pure Land].<sup>145</sup>

This passage, which was originally composed as a postscript for a now lost one-hundred poem sequence of Buddhist love poems, explains that, contrary to popular opinion, poems on love do not further enmesh the poet in the world of sorrow (*uki yo*) but rather

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<sup>144</sup> *Tsukimōde wakashū*: 477. Sugiyama 1987, p. 139.

<sup>145</sup> *Shūgyokushū*, p. 255.

teaches him or her to detach from the world and, ultimately, to seek with great joy and energy rebirth in the world to come.

In this section, I have argued that Shunzei's key poetic concept of *moto no kokoro* refers to the heart of the poet that recognizes the originally enlightened quality of all things, even love, and that the practice of *shikan*, to which he refers in the next section of the general preface, represents an analogy for the kind of approach by which this heart is to be cultivated by the poet. I have also shown that this is a view of poetry that, on the one hand, was explicitly articulated by poets and preachers in Shunzei's circle and, on the other, was borne out also in their poetry. This reading of *moto no kokoro* departs from that of Japanese scholars such as Tanaka Yutaka who seek to identify it with the poetic concept of *hon'i*, or the accepted treatment of a topic. It also challenges the most recent analysis of Shunzei's *moto no kokoro* by Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen in her 2008 book *Emptiness and Temporality*.

In her reading of Shunzei's statement on *moto no kokoro*, Ramirez-Christensen offers a critique of Tanaka Yutaka's argument that this term is to be equated with the concept of *hon'i*. She suggests that, if that were the case, then *hon'i* in the context of Shunzei's poetics would refer not to the accepted treatment of particular topics in the poetic tradition but rather "to their essential nature as seen in Buddhist philosophy."<sup>146</sup> The *moto no kokoro* of the poet that perceives this essential Buddhist nature of a thing is, she suggests, a "heart-mind" that grounds "an impersonal contemplation of objective reality."<sup>147</sup> Ramirez-Christensen's notion of "heart-mind," however, places more

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<sup>146</sup> Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality*, p. 87.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

emphasis on mind than heart. In her examination, she identifies *moto no kokoro* as primarily “a form of knowledge and understanding” and thus overlooks its nature as a source of feeling, an *archē* for not only knowledge but also love. In my reading, *moto no kokoro* embraces both *logos* and *eros*, thus explaining how Shunzei used the practice of *shikan* to articulate a Buddhist defense of all forms of poetry, even those deemed particularly sinful.

## Conclusion

In his chapter “Symbol and Yūgen: Shunzei’s Use of Tendai Buddhism,” William LaFleur, following the lead of Konishi Jin’ichi, characterizes *shikan* as a kind of sitting meditation and describes the implications of this practice for waka poetry:

. . . citing the importance of Chih-i, Konishi reminds us that the “content of *shikan* is equivalent to the content of Zen. He pursues the implications of this, using the distinction between vehicle and tenor, signifier and signified: “. . . the Zennist strives for the cessation of understanding arrived at through processes of judgment; this means, therefore, that there is no substantive element that can serve as tenor. This leads to the conclusion that imagery in Zen is tantamount to tenorless symbolism.”<sup>148</sup>

LaFleur argues that sitting meditation contributed to the formation of a style of poetry he calls “tenorless symbolism.” In this style, the poem, in accordance with the movement of the three truths as expounded in Zhiyi’s *Maka shikan*, never comes to a rest at a single fixed place of meaning. For this poetry, which LaFleur associates with the aesthetic of

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<sup>148</sup> LaFleur, *Karma of Words*, p. 94.

*yūgen*, there is no “substantive tenor” or fixed signified that can put an end to signification.

In this chapter, I have set forth an alternative to reducing *shikan* to a form of *zazen* characterized by a phenomenological experience of subject-object nonduality. By situating the practice in its ritual context of Fugen repentance, I have shown that while waka poets were in fact engaging in a kind of seated *shikan* contemplation, this practice was fundamentally concerned with the problem of sin. My analysis of repentance practice has, moreover, suggested that the Buddhist discourse on original enlightenment as it was preached for repentance rites provided a paradigm for understanding how the creation of poetry that leads to attachment, suffering, and sinful karma can in fact serve as a karmic condition or activity for practicing the Buddhist path. Thus, the significance of what Shunzei calls Tendai *shikan* lies not in the medieval aesthetic of *yūgen* to which LaFleur assigns it but rather extends to the central category of love poetry in the waka tradition. Shunzei’s argument in the *Korai fūteishō* that even love poetry could be used as a means for practicing the Buddhist path was unprecedented and represents this celebrated poet’s most original contribution to the development of Buddhist poetics and poetry in medieval Japan.



## CHAPTER THREE

### The Afterlife of Murasaki Shikibu: Genji Offerings and the Imagination of the Female Author

Toward the end of the Heian period, a rumor spread among lay female devotees of Buddhism about the author of *The Tale of Genji*. Murasaki Shikibu, it claimed, has been suffering in hell as a punishment for her creation of fictional tales (*monogatari*). To save her, these devotees along with waka poets, both male and female, organized offering ceremonies, known as *Genji* offerings (*Genji kuyō* 源氏供養), in which they prayed for the author's redemption in the afterlife by copying out the *Lotus Sutra* and inscribing on the frontispiece of each scroll waka poems on the Buddhist implications of her work. Underpinning the notion of Shikibu's damnation presupposed in these ceremonies was a Buddhist discourse on language, which lays it down that words without reference to true events are "empty words" (*soragoto* 虚言)—a kind of sin (*tsumi* 罪) on the order of false language (*mōgo* 妄語) or fanciful language (*kigo* 綺語), two of the ten evil deeds (*jūaku* 十惡). The act of offering the *Lotus Sutra* along with waka poems was aimed at reversing the sinful karma that Shikibu was thought to have accrued as a result of her fiction writing. It thus always ended with her redemption as author of a work of Buddhist enlightenment, even as her damnation was necessarily presupposed at the outset.

This dialectic of damnation and redemption appears in paradigmatic form in an invocatory statement (*hyōbyaku* 表白) delivered by the famed Tendai preacher Chōken

澄憲 (1126–1203) at the first documented performance of a *Genji* offering ceremony in 1166. From around the 1170s, mentions of the practice begin to appear in Buddhist historical and ritual texts. Among them, those composed in a feminine voice, such as the epilogue to the historical tale, the *Imakagami* 今鏡 attributed to Jakuchō 寂超, articulate a poignant critical counterpoint to the dialectical rhetoric exemplified by Chōken’s preaching for the 1166 offering. Opposing the fundamental presupposition underlying the practice of *Genji* offerings—namely, that fiction writing is a sin that would result in damnation, it proposes instead that Shikibu is in truth a transformation body<sup>1</sup> (*keshin* 化身) of the Buddha, like the bodhisattvas Myō’on 妙音 or Kannon 觀音 of the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>2</sup> According to this view, Shikibu does not need to be saved, for her work has always already been an expression of the Dharma.

This chapter will locate these two opposing perspectives on the author of the *Genji* in late Heian-period Buddhist discourse on writing and female salvation. Both, I argue, make use of Buddhist discourse for their own purposes: Chōken, to enhance the value of holding offering ceremonies presided over by preachers such as himself; the old nun of the *Imakagami*, to challenge misogynistic assumptions about women’s writing and female salvation prominent in male Buddhist discourse. Chōken’s use of Buddhist discourse represents an extension of the kind of dialectical preaching on sin and literature that we observed in Chapter 2. The old nun, by contrast, draws on an older tradition of Buddhist discourse on female salvation that goes back to Yasutane. Thus, she does not, I

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<sup>1</sup> Sk. *nirmāṇa-kāya*, Ch. *huashen*.

<sup>2</sup> Sk. Gadgadasvara, Ch. Miaoyin; Sk. Avalokitêśvara, Ch. Guanyin. The bodhisattvas give their name to chapters 24 and 25 of the *Lotus Sutra*, respectively.

will show, reject Buddhist assumptions altogether but rather works within the tradition to identify alternatives to the hegemonic Buddhist discourse on female salvation represented by preachers like Chōken.

In her 2010 dissertation, “The Making of Murasaki Shikibu,” Naito Satoko draws attention to the importance of both Chōken’s *hyōbyaku* and the *Imakagami* epilogue in the early medieval construction of Murasaki Shikibu as author. Naito classifies both texts as examples of what she calls the *Genji kuyō* myth, one of two “Murasaki myths” she examines in her dissertation, and suggests that they both indicate that readers of the late Heian and early Kamakura period held Murasaki Shikibu accountable for the “responsibility of authorship,” while, at the same time, denying her the “authority of authorship.” My reading of these texts, by contrast, emphasizes their differences and the way those differences were articulated within the parameters of late Heian Buddhist discourse. By doing so, my aim is twofold: first, to elucidate the discursive and ritual conditions for the imagination of female authorship in late Heian Japan; second, using the ritual and discursive construction of Shikibu’s authorship as an example, clarify the ways in which the apparatus of Lotus-Esoteric discourse extended its reach beyond even love poetry to what was an even more problematic genre for Buddhists, the monogatari written by women.

My investigation into the role of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in the imagination of the female author in late Heian Japan unfolds in three sections. The first section situates the rumor of Shikibu’s damnation in the history of Heian Buddhist discourse on monogatari. Beginning with Minamoto no Tamenori’s condemnation of monogatari as “roots of sin” (*tsumi no ne*) that capture the hearts of women in his 985 *Sanbōe* 三宝絵, it

traces the formation and transformations of a prejudice against monogatari as a sinful gen(d)re up through Fujiwara no Shunzei in the late Heian period and suggests the ritual contexts and liturgical discourses that may have fostered Shunzei's re-evaluation of the *Genji*. The second section examines a *Genji* offering sponsored by Bifukumon-in no Kaga 美福門院加賀 (d. 1193)—waka poet and wife of Shunzei. Through analysis of the invocatory statement for the offering by Chōken, it elucidates the extreme dialectic by which he damns Shikibu to hell for her sinful creation of fictional monogatari only to redeem her in the end as author of a work of Buddhist enlightenment. The third section locates Chōken's dialectical preaching on Shikibu's redemption in the afterlife in the broader tradition of preaching by men on female buddhahood (*nyonin jōbutsu* 女人成佛) at memorial offerings (*tsuizen kuyō* 追善供養) for women. Through a close reading of two prayer statements (*ganmon* 願文) by a pioneering figure in the tradition of Buddhist discourse on female salvation, the lay literatus Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤 (933–1002), I show how Chōken's preaching is, from a buddhological standpoint, more doctrinally consistent but, from a contemporary critical standpoint, more double-edged. That is, one wonders whether the dialectical reversals of Chōken's preaching on the topic of female salvation reinforced rather than overturned the sinfulness of women's bodies that he posits as the condition for enlightenment. To bring to the fore feminine voices from the late Heian period critical of the male bias in Buddhist discourse on literature, the fourth and final section examines the critique of Chōken's preaching on the *Genji*, particularly his predication of Shikibu's suffering in hell, set forth by the old nun in the epilogue to the *Imakagami*. Focusing on her exposition of Shikibu as a transformation body of a female bodhisattva in the *Lotus Sutra*, it clarifies the rhetorical strategies by

which she articulates an alternative view to men's preaching on the *Genji* and suggests the ways that these strategies echo and recast Yasutane's discourse on female buddhahood. By thus situating the practice of *Genji* offerings in the history of liturgies for the consecration of literature and memorial services dedicated to the salvation of women in the afterlife, this chapter shows how Buddhist discourses and ritual practices introduced the basic assumptions that framed the late Heian imagination of Murasaki Shikibu as the exemplary female author of monogatari fiction.

## 1 Waka Poets and the Transformation of Buddhist Discourse on Monogatari

Waka poets of the late Heian period were active promoters of Shikibu's *Genji*. In a judgment for an 1192 poetry contest, the *Ropyyakuban utaawase* 六百番歌合, leading waka poet and critic Fujiwara no Shunzei expressed high praise for her prose writing:

Rather than her poetry (*utayomi*), it is in the art of writing prose (*monokaku*) that Murasaki Shikibu excels. The chapter "Beneath the Cherry Blossoms," in particular, has a special charm (*en*) to it. For a poet (*utayomi*) to compose waka without having read the *Genji* is a regrettable thing.<sup>3</sup>

By favorably comparing her prose writing to her waka poetry, Shunzei gives recognition to Shikibu as a monogatari author, first, and waka poet, second. The "charm" (*en*) moreover, for which he gives her prose such high praise, is, in his poetics, an essential quality of waka poetry. In his view, then, poets who do not read the *Genji* do not know charm and, therefore, cannot write poetry.

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<sup>3</sup> *Ropyyakuban utaawase*, p. 188.

Shunzei himself was a pioneer in the development of waka poetry inspired by Shikibu's *Genji*. In his 1187 imperial anthology, the *Senzai wakashū* 千載和歌集, he included, for the first time in the history of imperial anthologies of waka, two poems on the *Genji*. Both are on the topic of "Love in the *Genji*" (*Genji monogatari ni yosuru koi* 寄源氏物語恋) by unnamed poets.<sup>4</sup> Shunzei's personal anthology, the *Chōshū eisō* 長秋詠藻, moreover, compiled in 1178, preserves the earliest example of a poem on a *Genji* topic.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to Shunzei, monogatari such as the *Genji* were not considered an acceptable source for waka composition at formal poetry contests, at least not for men. The twelfth-century oral transmission text attributed to Retired Emperor Go-Toba (1180–1239), the *Go-Toba In onkuden* 後鳥羽院御口伝, explicitly states that it was only in his lifetime that the practice of composing poems on the *Genji* and other monogatari became widely accepted.<sup>6</sup> While this may have been true for male poets like Go-Toba, it is likely that the practice had a much longer history among the women of the inner court (*kōkyū* 後宮). As early as 1055, Princess Baishi 祿子内親王, leader of a literary salon of ladies-in-waiting (*nyōbō* 女房) in Emperor Suzaku's court, hosted a poetry contest for the pairing of poems from eighteen specially commissioned works of monogatari.<sup>7</sup>

It is not for a lack of admiration among men for Shikibu's work, however, that the *Genji*'s appearance in formal poetry contests did not occur until the late Heian period. In

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<sup>4</sup> *Senzai wakashū*: 871.

<sup>5</sup> *Chōshū eisō*: 354.

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Teramoto, *Genji monogatari jūyōshi ronkō*, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> On Baishi Naishinnō's 1055 poetry contest, see Mihara, *Baishi naishinnō ke utaawase*.

her diary, Shikibu herself records a compliment paid to her by none other than the most eminent poetic authority of her day, Fujiwara no Kintō 藤原公任 (966–1041). Even Emperor Ichijō is recorded to have praised ladies in his court for their recitation of the *Genji*, calling them “genius” (*sai* 才), comparable even to the official reciters of the imperial history, the *Nihongi* 日本紀.

Despite high praise from eminent figures at court, for Shikibu’s work to be accepted as a canonical source for formal literature, it had to overcome a marked prejudice against the genre of monogatari among male literati at the Heian court. In the general preface to his 984 collection of Buddhist stories, the *Sanbōe* 三宝絵, prominent literatus Minamoto no Tamenori 源為憲 (941–1011) explains to the addressee of the text, Princess Sonshi 尊子内親王 (966–984), the problem with monogatari:

Monogatari is a thing that moves the hearts of women. They flourish in numbers greater than the grasses of Ōaraki grove, more countless than the sands on the Arisome beaches. They attribute speech to trees and plants, mountains and rivers, birds and beasts, fish and insects that cannot speak; they invest unfeeling objects with human sentiment and ramble on in meaningless phrases like so much flotsom in the sea, putting together words with no more solid basis than has swampgrass growing by a river bank. *The Sorceress of Iga, The Tosa Lord, The Fashionable Captain, The Nagai Chamberlain*, and all the rest depict relations between men and women like so many flowers or butterflies, so do not let your heart get caught up, as though it were a drop of dew in these roots of sin in the forest of leaves of words.<sup>8</sup>

In a florid style that seems to contradict his message, Tamenori decries the ubiquity (grasses and sands), insubstantiality (flotsom and swampgrass), and allure (flowers and butterflies) of monogatari. Having established his premises, he culminates his condemnation with a figure that is later picked up by Chōken: the roots of sin (*tsumi no*

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<sup>8</sup> *Sanbōe*, p. 6. Translation modified from Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, p. 93.

ne 罪の根). According to this figure, which recalls the image of the grasses introduced at the outset of the passage, monogatari are a sinful diversion (roots) of the pure potential of the human heart (dewdrop) to nourish written expression (leaves) for the reproduction of literature (forest). The erotic undertones of the botanical metaphors—the dewdrop of pure potential captured by the roots of sinful (female) diversion—are not inconsequential, as they provide Tamenori with an essential natural referent, the female sex, for justifying his condemnation of monogatari as a threat to the order of literature. His condemnation of a *textual* corpus is thus predicated on a *sexual* hierarchy. Thus, for Tamenori, monogatari is a genre in the etymological sense of the term: a class or kind of thing that always already signifies a particular gender.<sup>9</sup>

Tamenori was an original member of the Kangaku-e 勧学会 (Assembly for the Promotion of Chinese Literature), an elite confraternity of lay literati and Buddhist priests founded by the famed court poet Yoshishige no Yasutane. The Kangaku-e, as Tamenori documents in volume three of his *Sanbōe*, held biannual assemblies that consisted of lectures on the *Lotus Sutra* in the morning, chanting *nenbutsu* in the evening, and composing Chinese-language verse (*kanshi* 漢詩) dedicated to praising the Buddha and preaching the Dharma at night. The prayer recited by the lay literati as they approached the hall on the foot of Mount Hiei where they met became a liturgical formula for consecrating profane forms of literature by dedicating them to Buddhist ends. Tamenori cites the prayer, which he explicitly attributes to the Tang poet Bai Juyi, in full:

May the karma of my profane writings conceived in this lifetime—  
All the errors of my wild words and fanciful phrases—  
In the world to come, turn into a cause for praising the buddha vehicle,

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<sup>9</sup> See the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the etymology of *gender*.



And a condition for turning the wheel of the Dharma.<sup>10</sup>

In the context of the Kangaku-e assemblies, Bai's prayer announces the confraternity's intent to use *kanshi*, which is self-deprecatingly termed “profane writing” (*sezoku no moji* 世俗の文字) and “wild words and fanciful phrases” (*kyōgen kigo* 狂言綺語), to praise and preach the Dharma. In this context, Tamenori's condemnation of monogatari lays bare a hidden bias underpinning the liturgical tradition, which came to be known simply as “fanciful phrases.”

The Buddhist prejudice against women's writing even figures thematically in Shikibu's own text. In the “Fireflies” chapter, Genji, sauntering about his mansion on a hot rainy day in the fifth month, eavesdrops on his new favorite plaything, Tamakazura, chatting about illustrated monogatari with her gentlewomen. Hearing her describe how in all of the monogatari in her possession that, whether fiction (*itsuwari*) or fact (*makoto*), there was not a single story like her own—that is, of a daughter being seduced by her father—Genji chimes in:

Oh, no, this will never do! Women are truly born to be duped without a murmur of protest. There is hardly a word of truth in all this, as you know perfectly well, but there you are caught up in such frivolous stories (*suzurogoto*), taking them quite seriously and writing away without a thought for your tangled hair in this stiflingly warm rain!<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Sanbōe*, p. 173. The prayer in Chinese: 願以此今生世俗文字之業狂言綺語之過轉為將來世世讚仏乘之因轉法輪之緣. See *Hakushi monjū* 白氏文集 (Ch. *Baishi wenji*), vol. 12b, “Record of Bai's [Dedication] of Collected Writings to Xiangshan Si Temple” 香山寺白氏洛中集記. The prayer became well known in Japan as a piece of verse from its inclusion in the ca. 1013 *Wakan rōeishū* 和漢朗詠集, p. 309. Misumi Yōichi 三角洋一 stresses that the idea of literature as *kyōgen kigo* was actually invented by the Kangaku-e, not Bai Juyi himself, who used the phrase only in passing in an obscure passage from his collected works. See Misumi, “Iwayuru kyōgen kigo.” On the history of the phrase *kuangyan qiyu* 狂言綺語 in China, Misumi notes that the phrase *kuangyan* first appears in the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (Jp. *Sōji*) in the chapter entitled “Knowledge Traveled North” (Ch. *Zhibeiyou pian* 知北遊篇) and that the second half, *qiyu*, figures prominently in Buddhist sources influential during Bai's time, such as the *Sutra of Brahmā's Net*, which cites fanciful phrases as the seventh of ten forms of bad karma.

<sup>11</sup> Translation modified from Tyler, *The Tale of Genji*, p. 461. *Genji monogatari*, vol. 1, pp. 210–11

In the context of his relationship with Tamakazura, Genji's denial of the truth of monogatari in this passage is also a denial of her attempt to imagine an alternative. The erotic image of the women's tangled hair in the warm rain underscores the sexual overtones of his frustration with monogatari as an obstacle to the satisfaction of his desire.

Perhaps aware of the sexual overtones, Genji laughs and, lightening his tone, goes on to concede that "there truly are some plausibly touching scenes" in monogatari and that, even though they may be "vacuous fictions" (*hakanashi goto* はかなしごと), they are moving nonetheless. He concludes, however, that when listening to the stories told to his little girl, Murasaki no Ue, he cannot help but feel that they are products of a "habit of speech adept in empty language" (*soragoto* そらごと). Tamakazura responds by turning the tables on Genji:

Yes, truly (*ge ni*), for various reasons someone adept in telling falsehoods (*itsuwari*) will no doubt interpret it that way, but it seems impossible to me that they should be anything other than simply true (*makoto*).

Here Tamakazura casts Genji as an author of the very monogatari he had just so whimsically dismissed. In response, Genji adopts a new tack. Conceding that "it is wrong to always dismiss what one finds [in monogatari] as nothing more than empty language (*soragoto*)," he proceeds to argue a position contrary to his original argument:

Similarly, in the Venerable Teachings of the Buddha expounded from the very pureness of his heart, there is what is called "expedient means" (*hōben* 方便). For the unenlightened, it gives rise to doubts as to the consistency [of the Buddhist Teachings]. Nevertheless, though there are many [examples of expedient means] in the sutras, since [all] follow from a single purpose, in the end, the gap [that expedient means opens] between enlightenment and passion is no wider than the gap [which, in monogatari,

sets off] the good guys from the bad guys. To put it nicely, nothing about it is merely vacuous (*hakanashikarazu*).<sup>12</sup>

Genji's reversal pivots on the term "vacuous" (*hakanashi*), which first appears in his description of monogatari as "vacuous fictions" (*hakanashigoto*). "Empty language" (*soragoto*) is not vacuous, Genji argues, but empty in the same way that the difference between enlightenment and passion, good and evil, is empty.

Shikibu's critical set piece in the "Fireflies" chapter represents only the second statement by a woman about the genre of monogatari. Mother of Michitsuna in the preface to her diary, *Kagerō nikki* 蜻蛉日記, tells how she found old romance tales (*furu monogatari*) to be nothing more than "empty language" (*soragoto*). Unlike both Mother of Michitsuna and Tamenori before her, Shikibu does not ultimately condemn monogatari as empty or frivolous but rather, in a dramatic rhetorical about-turn, compares monogatari to expedient means (*hōben*), a pedagogical device, often a parable, used by a buddha or bodhisattva to teach the Dharma and save sentient beings from samsara. Monogatari, like expedient means in the sutras, Genji argues, takes an element of suffering in samsara (evil and passion) and turns it into a device for teaching the Dharma (good and enlightenment). Thus, Shikibu's character Genji, in contrast to Tamenori, sets forth a discourse on monogatari that, though condemnatory in the beginning, ultimately reveals the true character of monogatari as a technique of enlightenment. The dialectical structure of Genji's discourse whereby he predicates his consecration of monogatari on the essential "emptiness" of the genre prefigures Chōken's preaching on the *Genji*, as we shall see. As a set piece, moreover, the context in which Shikibu casts the debate

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<sup>12</sup> Translation modified from Tyler, *The Tale of Genji*, p. 461. *Genji monogatari*, 1:213.

implicitly gestures at the ways in which male discourse on monogatari could be deployed as a tactic of seduction. In this sense, it can be read as a parody of Tamenori's discourse in the *Sanbōe*, or even, anachronistically, of Chōken's preaching on the *Genji*.

The Buddhist prejudice against women's fiction writing had a considerable impact on the first century of *Genji* reception. It figures prominently in a valuable source in the early history of *Genji* reception, the mid-eleventh century diary by Daughter of Takasue 孝標女 (c. 1008–after 1059), *Sarashina nikki* 更級日記. The author, writing in the voice of her teenage self, describes the excitement she felt after she finally received her first complete copy of *The Tale of Genji*:

My heart pounding with excitement, I was able to read *The Tale of Genji* (this tale that had confused me and made me so impatient when I had read only a piece of it) right from chapter one. I did not have anything to do with the rest of the household; I just lay down inside my curtains, and the feeling I had as I unrolled scroll after scroll was such that I would not have cared even if I had had a chance to become empress. I read all day long and as long as I could stay awake at night with the lamp pulled close to me. I found it quite amazing that passages I knew by heart would come floating unbidden into empty space (*sora*) [since I did nothing but read, I suppose it was only natural]. Then in a dream, I saw a pure-looking priest wearing a surplice of yellow cloth who said to me, “Quickly, study scroll five of the *Lotus Sutra*.” But I told no one, nor did I feel particularly inclined to study the *Lotus Sutra*. I was just infatuated with tales. I was rather ugly in those days, you know, but I was sure that when I grew up I would be extremely beautiful and my hair, too, would be splendidly long. I would just be like the Shining Genji's Yūgao or the Uji Captain's Ukifune—now it seems to me that my thoughts were frightfully vacuous (*hakanaku*) and superficial.<sup>13</sup>

The medium of the monogatari casts a spell on young Daughter of Takasue: traces of the manuscript's calligraphic lines linger in her mind's eye and then, in a dream, transform into the image of a priest exhorting her to study the *Lotus*. Her unconscious displacement

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<sup>13</sup> Translation modified from Shirane, *Traditional Japanese Literature*, p. 463. *Sarashina nikki*, p. 104

of the *Genji* for the *Lotus* through the figure of the priest sets the *Lotus Sutra* in opposition to the *Genji* as the holy antidote to romantic fantasies. That this displacement of the *Genji* for the *Lotus* has its origins in waking reality is suggested by the specific reference to “scroll five,” which in an eight-scroll format of the *Lotus* includes the “Devadatta” chapter. Named after Śakyamuni’s evil cousin, the chapter reveals the teaching that even evil ones will attain buddhahood (*akunin jōbutsu* 悪人成仏); but it was better known for the episode in which the eight-year-old Dragon Princess dramatically enacts her buddhahood (*ryūnyo jōbutsu* 龍女成仏). During Daughter of Takasue’s time, this story was often cited often cited on the fifth day of an eight-day lecture series on the *Lotus* (*Hokke hakkō* 法華八講), which was devoted to Scroll Five, as a scriptural example of women’s potential to become a buddha.<sup>14</sup> It also commonly appeared in *ganmon* 願文 composed for memorial services for women, as will be examined below. It is therefore not unlikely that Daughter of Takasue’s anxiety over her failure to prioritize the *Lotus* over the *Genji* was provoked by an actual performance of preaching, or *sekkyō* 説經, in waking reality.

As Tamenori and then later Shikibu’s character Genji make clear, from a male perspective, the problem with monogatari lay in the way they invent vacuous (*hakanashi*) fictions (*itsuwari*) about romances between men and women that, according to Tamenori, ensnare women’s hearts in the roots of sin and, according to Genji, entangle their long hair in the warm rain with longing and desire. Daughter of Takasue implies an awareness of this criticism when, looking back at her teenage self, she writes that her infatuation

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<sup>14</sup> See section 3 below, “Preaching Buddhahood for Women.” For evidence that the story of the Dragon Girl may have figured prominently in day 5 of *Hokke hakkō* lectures, see *Konjaku monogatari shū* 3:394–95 (vol. 23, no. 43).

with tales gave her the misconception that she too would grow up to be like one of the female characters who are the objects of male desire, either Genji's Yūgao or Uji Captain's Ukifune. At the heart of men's objection to monogatari, then, is not only the problem of fiction per se but, more specifically, how fantasy—that is, “empty language” (*soragoto*) in the broadest sense—about love between men and women gives rise to desire, which, according to Buddhism, is the root cause of sin.

By the late Heian period, waka poets had developed a sophisticated discourse on the problem of desire in literature. Ki no Tsurayuki, in the *Kana* Preface to the *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集, attempted to elevate the formal status of waka poetry at court by distancing it from the way it was used by people he calls the “erotically inclined” (*irogonomi* 色好み). Though an admirer of Tsurayuki's poetry and poetics, Shunzei adopted a different tack to love poetry (*koi no uta*). Rather than disparaging this use of the poetic medium, Shunzei embraced it. He was in fact highly regarded for his love poetry (*koi no uta*). Shunzei's experimentation with the *Genji* a source for poetic composition is part of his broader approach to poetry that focuses on pathos and feeling. The first extant poem on the *Genji* included in his personal anthology is an example.

On “Love in the *Genji*”

<i>Uramite mo</i>	I despise you,
<i>nao tanomu kana</i>	And yet, need you still—
<i>mi wo tsukushi</i>	Recalling the channel markers
<i>fukaki e ni aru</i>	Deep within the tide into which I spend myself
<i>shirushi to omoeba</i>	As signs of our karmic connection. <sup>15</sup>

It takes as its base poem (*honka*) a poem by Genji addressed to the Akashi Lady in Chapter 14, “Channel Markers” (*miotsukushi*).

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<sup>15</sup> *Chōshū eisō*: 354.

<i>Mi o tsukushi</i>	I have spent myself
<i>Kouru shirushi ni</i>	Not for nothing in this love—
<i>Koko made mo</i>	These channel markers
<i>Meguriaikeru</i>	Standing deep within the tide
<i>Eni wa fukashi na</i>	Measure the fate of our meeting. <sup>16</sup>

In the base-poem, Genji compares the depth of their karmic connection—“in the tide” (*eni*) as “karma” (*en*)—to the channel markers in Naniwa where they have coincidentally crossed paths. Through allusive variation on this poem, Shunzei’s poem evokes the scene of Genji’s exchange with the Akashi Lady to communicate more vividly the conflicting emotions of resentment and need felt by the jilted lover, who, despite rejection, cannot help but recall the depth of the karmic connection that brought them together and into which s/he has spent his/her life (*mi o tsukushi*).

As we saw in chapter 2, Shunzei did not consider love poetry as a kind of “fanciful language” (*kigo*) but rather as a karmic condition (*en* 縁) for practicing the Buddhist path. It is likely that he similarly approached love poetry based on scenes from the *Genji*. The location of the poem among other poems on the topic of love composed during or after Buddhist rituals suggests Shunzei may have, unlike Daughter of Takasue more than a century before him, understood fictional forms of expression that provoked desire and longing as a means consistent with, rather than opposed to, Buddhist practice. The following poem is an example.

At the Flower Offering Ceremony as part of the [Golden Light Sutra Lecture] Service in the Fifth Month at Retired Emperor [Go-Shirakawa]’s Residence in Hōjūji Temple on the topic of “Love that Disappears After a Connection is Made” (*keigo inren* 契後隠恋),

<i>Tanomekoshi</i>	In the field upon which I once depended,
<i>nobe no michishiba</i>	Grasses on the path

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<sup>16</sup> Translation by Cranston, *Grasses of Remembrance*, p. 283.

*natsu fukashi*  
*idzuku naru ramu*  
*mozu no kusa guki*

Have grown thick,  
Where I wonder have you gone?  
Finch hidden in the brush.<sup>17</sup>

In the waka tradition, the finch that disappears among the thick grasses in summer is a figure for the elusivity and ephemerality of love. This poem, in light of the ritual context described by its headnote, implies the Buddhist teaching of impermanence—that is, that nothing, including especially love, lasts forever. It does however not state it explicitly. The idea instead lies implicit in the language of the waka tradition.

From around the 1160s until the end of the Heian period, Shunzei participated in poetry gatherings organized by a circle of poets called the Karin'en 歌林苑, after the residence of the poet-priest Shun'e 俊恵 (1113-1191) near Shirakawa River in Kyoto where they regularly met.

Shun'e also hosted Buddhist services at his Karin'en residence, including monthly assemblies dedicated to the worship of the *Manyōshū* poet Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (*Hitomaru eigu* 人丸影供). The poets who organized these assemblies called themselves the Waka Mandokoro 和歌政所 (lit., the Waka Bureau). Later early Kamakura-period commentarial works identify the Waka Mandokoro with the Karin'en, as Yanase Kazuo has shown.<sup>18</sup> In an invocatory statement (*hyōbyaku* 表白) by Chōken for a sutra offering sponsored by them on the occasion of one of their monthly meetings, he invokes a prayer that announces their intent to use waka poetry—even poems on love and parting—as a medium for expounding the principle of enlightenment.

Thus we pray:

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<sup>17</sup> *Chōshū eisō*: 356.

<sup>18</sup> See Yanase, *Shun'e kenkyū*, pp. 265–67.



May the teeming flux of the Wind, Clouds, Grasses, and Trees

Return once again to the fertile soil of the Three Grasses and Two Trees,  
May written words on the Yearnings of Lovers and the Pangs of Parting  
Fuse completely with the Principle of Unfolding and Awakening.<sup>19</sup>

According to the parable of the medicinal herbs in the *Lotus Sutra*, when soil receives the moisture of the Dharma rain—that is, the one truth of the unifying vehicle preached by Śakyamuni in the *Lotus*, it produces both the three grasses (śramanas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas) and two trees (the Greater and Lesser Vehicles) alike. By comparison to this botanic imagery, the parable explains the diversity of practitioners and teachings in a single vehicle—the ekayana. In the context of this liturgical prayer, “the teeming flux” of natural phenomena in the first line, through its symmetrical relation to “the written words” on love and parting in the third line, implies the arising of the passions provoked by love poetry. The fertile soil of the grasses and trees, moreover, suggests the originally enlightened context to which these passions may, through the composition of love poetry, be reunited. By means of this prayer then, Chōken provides a scriptural justification for the composition of love poetry at Buddhist rituals.

In chapter 2, I examine preaching texts by Chōken, including his invocatory statement for the Waka Mandokoro above, that shed light on ritual contexts for Fujiwara no Shunzei’s scriptural justification of waka poetry—even love poems—in the General Preface to his 1197 *Korai fūteishō*. In the next section of this chapter, I will examine Chōken’s invocatory statement (*hyōbyaku*) for a *Genji* offering sponsored in 1166 by waka poet and Bifukumon’in no Kaga, wife of Shunzei, as an example for analyzing the ritual techniques and rhetorical strategies by which waka poets of the late Heian period

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<sup>19</sup> Transcription in Yamazaki, “Agui shōdō,” p. 150.

overcame the Buddhist prejudice against monogatari and turned Shikibu's work into a Buddhist text. Through close reading of Chōken's invocation for Kaga's *Genji* offering, I will show how his consecration of Shikibu's *Genji* represents the application of his dialectical method for the consecration of waka poetry examined in Chapter Two to the genre of monogatari. Section three will then identify and trace the development of a topic central to Chōken's preaching on the *Genji* but not addressed in his invocation for the Waka Mandokoro—namely, the issue of salvation for women in the afterlife.

## 2 Chōken's Invocatory Statement for Kaga's Genji Offering

Chōken's invocation opens with a theory of the canon (*tenseki* 典籍):<sup>20</sup>

Since the origins of writing, the canon has evolved. Its purposes are manifold, its principles well-articulated. The sutras of the Tathāgatas and the śāstras on bodhi expound the conditions for comprehension of śīla, samādhi, and prajñā, and they open the distant gate to the nirvāna of awakening. The writings of the Duke of Zhou and the sayings of Confucius unfold the way of humanity, righteousness, rites, and knowledge and rectify the conduct of public office and writing. Therefore, although the inner canon and outer canon differ, both accord with the true principle of the supramundane and mundane.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the records of the court historian set forth in detail the order of the Hundred Kings and the peace of the Four Seas. The verses of the literatus elicit the vernal delights of smoke and mist and the autumnal yearnings for the wind and moon. Beyond these, in our Realm, there is what is called waka, which as a matter of course is a common custom of our Land of the Rising Sun. In our Realm, too, there is what is called monogatari, a form that has been created since antiquity to the present. To name a few, there are: *Ochikubo*,

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<sup>20</sup> The following translation is unabridged. It is based on Yamazaki Makoto's 山崎誠 transcription of the Ōkura Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo manuscript included in the collection of Agui preaching materials, the *Shonin zōshūzen* 諸人雜修善. See Yamazaki, *Agui shōdō*. For a transcription of the Ōhara Sanzen-in 大原三千院 manuscript included in the *Shūjushō* 拾珠抄, see Abe, Oka, and Yamagishi, *Genji monogatari*, p. 37. For a partial translation, see Shirane, *Envisioning*.

<sup>21</sup> The "outer canon" (*geten* 外典) is a Buddhist term for the Confucian canon.

*Iwaya, Nezame, Shinobine, Sagoromo, Ōginagashi, Sumiyoshi, Mizu no Hamamatsu, Sueba no tsuyu, Ama no hagaromo, Kaguyahime, and Hikaru Genji.*

The hierarchy of canonical genres according to their purposes (*mune* 旨) and principles (*gi* 儀) is presented in descending order: first, the inner and outer canons, Buddhist scriptures and Confucian classics; then a pair of prestigious genres in the Chinese canon, history and verse; and finally beyond these, Japanese poetry (*waka*) and prose (*monogatari*). This last genre is the focus of the final passages of Chōken’s introduction, which condemns *monogatari* as romances created from nothing more than empty fantasies:

As for these *monogatari*, they neither transmit the moral sense of the ancients nor gloss the past events of our ancestors. By reference to people and events, all invent their content by means of empty constructions (*kyotan* 虚誕); by predications of time and history, all present things founded on emptiness (*kyomu* 虚無). Their intents are diverse, but all narrate only the way of romance between men and women.

Chōken’s repetition of the character 虚 *kyo*, or “empty,” in this passage echoes Genji’s famed “defense of *monogatari*” in the “Fireflies” chapter, which similarly unfolds according to an opposition between history and *monogatari*. Therein, Genji makes a rhetorical about-turn from condemnation of *monogatari* as empty language (*soragoto*) to consecration as expedient means (*hōben* 方便), which pivots on the semantic ambivalence of this character. *Kyo* signifies, on the one hand, the senses of vacuousness (*hakanashi* 空し) and falseness (*itsuwari*) that Genji imputes onto *monogatari* in his condemnation (the former sense is implied when it is read as *munashi* and the latter when read as *itsuwari*). On the other, it implies the gap (*hedatari*) that, according to Genji’s consecration of the *monogatari* genre, Buddhist expedient means open up between

passion (*bonnō* 煩悩) and enlightenment (*bodai* 菩提), one that he contends is not merely “empty” (*hakanashikarazu*), at least not in the pejorative sense of the term, but rather, as he seems to insinuate via this negation, truly empty in the Buddhistic sense of emptiness.<sup>22</sup> By echoing Genji’s dialectical play on the character 虚, Chōken, like Genji before him, in the very midst of his condemnation of monogatari, deftly forecasts his own rhetorical about-turn unveiled in the conclusion of the invocation.

The next section sets *The Tale of Genji* apart from other old romances (*furu monogatari* 古物語) by first citing its authorial source and then exalting Shikibu’s work as the greatest of the genre. Significantly, the element of story, which Chōken found reprehensible in other monogatari, is mentioned along with length and language as a distinguishing mark of the *Genji*’s excellence:

Among them, *The Tale of Genji* is the one created by Murasaki Shikibu. Its scroll rollers add up to sixty scrolls.<sup>23</sup> Its list of chapter titles includes forty-nine chapters. Its language traverses the inner and outer canons. Its story ingeniously presents elegant discourse between men and women. Among the old romances, this [work] is most excellent. Its charming words (*enshi*) are extraordinarily alluring; its heartfelt pathos, truly moving.

Chōken’s paean to the greatness of the *Genji* as a work of prose is, however, double-edged:

Of men and women from families who venerate sensuality;  
Of noble and common who serve charm (*en*),  
Many are those who have used this tale to engage in conversation and  
augment their mental faculties.

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<sup>22</sup> *Genji monogatari*, 1:213.

<sup>23</sup> The figure of “sixty scrolls” is an allusion to the Tendai canon of commentaries on the *Lotus* by Zhiyi—the *Fahua xuanyi* 法華玄義 (Jp. *Hokke genki*), *Fahua wenju* 法華文句 (Jp. *Hokke mongu*), and the *Maka shikan*—so called because each text spans twenty scrolls. The number sixty is thus a figure that, through numerological association, implicates an identity between the *Genji* and the *Lotus*. See Ii, *Genji monogatari no densetsu*, p. 160.

According to the dialectic of Chōken's preaching, it is precisely because the *Genji* so eminently exemplifies the old romance genre that it is particularly efficacious in giving rise to the sins for which the genre was known. This distinctive quality in turn constitutes, as Chōken states in the next lines, the ultimate cause for the damnation of both the author and her readers:

Thus, in deep interiors, women who have not yet wed read this [tale] and secretly awaken passions of vernal longing. In cold beds, men who sleep alone unroll this [tale] and vainly suffer feelings of autumnal melancholy. Thus, the revenant spirit of her work and the multitude of its readers have certainly formed roots of sin on the Round of Birth and Death. Each and every one of them has plunged headlong into the Forest of Blades in Hell.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the revenant spirit of Murasaki Shikibu revealed the burden of her roots of sin in a dream to a person long ago.

Chōken portrays the exemplary author of monogatari as the victim of her own success. According to his reasoning, Shikibu's readers are filled with idle chat and prurient thoughts precisely because her work, as the greatest of all the old romances, moves the hearts of women and men with its exceptionally charming words. As a consequence, he continues, both she and her readers have formed the roots of sin (*zaikon* 罪根) that are the basis for their mutual damnation in hell. Thus, Chōken concludes, Shikibu's revenant spirit has revealed in a dream the karmic effects of her work, which he evocatively describes, for the second time in the passage, as "roots of sin"—a key rhetorical figure that can be traced back to Minamoto no Tamenori's condemnation of monogatari in the preface to the *Sanbōe*.

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<sup>24</sup> *Naraku no kenrin* 奈落之劔林. The word *naraku* is a transliteration of a Sanskrit term for the underworld, *naraka*. In Buddhist eschatology, *naraka* refers to the Sword Forest Hell (*kenju jigoku* 劔樹地獄), one of the sixteen smaller hells. Its trees have daggers for leaves, which fall whenever the wind blows. The term *naraku* also appears in the epilogue to the *Imakagami*; see pp. 46–47 below.

In the conclusion to his invocation, Chōken reveals the possibility for the reversal of the author's damnation. This last section begins with Kaga's dedication of the offering.

Here today, our great sponsor, Nun Samādhi, makes this dedication:

So that the phantom spectre of her work may be saved and the multitude of its auditors redeemed, we have called upon the lay and the ordained, noble and common, to copy the True Writing of the Twenty-Eight Chapters of the *Lotus* and draw, on the frontispiece of each [*Lotus*] scroll, a [scene] from a chapter of the *Genji*. And thus, so that Passion may be turned into Enlightenment, each chapter of the Sutra has been assigned a chapter title from the *Monogatari*.

Kaga's dedication describes the offering: a *Lotus Sutra* with frontispiece pictures of scenes from the *Genji* accompanied by waka poems on lines from corresponding chapters in the *Lotus* and the *Genji*.<sup>25</sup> Mukasa Akira 武笠朗 suggests that the frontispiece pictures for the *Genji ipponkyō* offering were rendered in a *monogatari emaki*-style not unlike those featured in the most well-known example of the decorated sutra (*sōshokukyō* 裝飾經) genre, the *Heike nōkyō* 平家納經 (1164).<sup>26</sup> Although Kaga and her circle were undoubtedly familiar with this work, a perhaps more salient model for the *Genji ipponkyō* was the 1142 *Kunōjikyō* 久能寺經, an *ipponkyō* offering sponsored by Retired Emperor Toba in collaboration with retired imperial ladies (*nyōin* 女院), including Kaga's own

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<sup>25</sup> That waka poems were included in the offering can be inferred from headnotes to extant poems that specify that they were composed for a *Genji* offering service. How *Genji* chapters were correlated to *Lotus* chapters is not clear. See Teramoto, *Genji monogatari jūyōshi ronkō*, pp. 725–30.

<sup>26</sup> Mukasa, "Genji kuyō," p. 196. Mukasa furthermore speculates that the principal object of worship (*honzon* 本尊) for the *Genji ipponkyō* offering was an image of *Fugen* 普賢 (Sk. Samantabhadra) on a white elephant surrounded by ten female demons, or *rākāsas*, in Japanese-style dress (*Wasō fugen jūrasetsunyo zō* 和装普賢十羅刹女像). For more on the use of this imagery in Agui ritual, see Jamentz, "Aguiryū shōdō."

master, Bifukumon'in 美福門院. Another figure close to Kaga, Shunzei, was commissioned to compose waka poems for the event.<sup>27</sup>

The *Kunōjikyō* frontispiece picture for chapter 5, “Parable of the Medicinal Herbs” (*Yakusōyubon* 薬草喩品; figure 1), in particular provides an illuminating example for considering how Kaga’s offering may have combined elements from the *Genji* and the *Lotus*. On the one hand, the image of two Heian noblemen under an umbrella evokes the depiction of Genji and Koremitsu in the “Waste of Weeds” chapter of the twelfth-century *Genji monogatari emaki* 源氏物語絵巻. On the other, the pictorial elements in the foreground and background compose in rebus-like fashion a line from Shunzei’s poem on the “Parable of the Medicinal Herbs” chapter of the *Lotus*:

<i>Harusame wa</i>	Spring rains fall
<i>kono mo kano mo no</i>	Here and there
<i>kusa mo ki mo</i>	On grasses and on trees
<i>wakazu midori ni</i>	Without discrimination,
<i>somuru narikeri</i>	Dying them all green. <sup>28</sup>

Like those of the *Kunōjikyō*, the frontispiece pictures created for Kaga’s *Lotus* offering likely featured pictures in a monogatari emaki-style that evoked scenes from the *Genji* and encoded in their pictorial elements the waka poems on chapters from the sutra that were composed as part of the offering.

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<sup>27</sup> Shirahata Yoshi was the first to draw attention to Shunzei’s participation. Shirahata, *Hokkekyō uta-e*, p. 116. Her inference is based on the headnote to a series of poems on *Lotus* chapters (*nijūhappōn uta* 二十八品歌) in Shunzei’s *Chōshū eisō*, p. 335.

<sup>28</sup> *Chōshū eisō*: 407. As Shirahata has shown, the half-wheel (*wa*), the rock in the shape of the kana *ka*, and the crane (*zu* of *tsuru*) form the three syllables of the word *wakazu*, the cluster of three birds suggests the visual pun of *midori* (three birds), and the luggage (*nimotsu*) imply the syllable *ni*. See also Meech-Pekarik, “Disguised Scripts.” The poem alludes to the parable of the medicinal herbs.



Figure 3. Kunōjikyō: “Parable of the Medicinal Herbs” (Yakusōyubon, chapter 5) frontispiece. 1145. Tesshūji Collection, Shizuoka Prefecture.

The central importance of the offering’s medium is rhetorically underlined by the locution “phantom spectre of her work” (*kano seisaku no yūkon* かの製作の幽魂) in Kaga’s dedication. This phrase, which echoes “the revenant spirit of her work” (*kano seisaku no bōrei* かの製作の亡霊) in the previous paragraph, implies that it is the phantom of the work, rather than that of the author, that is the underlying cause for the damnation of both Shikibu and her readers: their karma are mutually implicated through the medium of the work, which attains to the significance of a *medium* in the occult sense, as a means for communicating with the spirits of the dead. Thus, in Kaga’s offering, the redemption of the author and her readers of the *Genji* is entirely dependent on the



consecration of the work itself, a point that underscores how for late Heian readers the author existed as the effect as much as the creator of her work.

The description in the dedication of the pictures on the margin (*hashi*), or frontispiece—the flipside of the scroll’s title page—invites the play on “turning” in the closing prayers:

So that words of passion may be turned over and become a seed of wisdom:

In the past, Bai Juyi uttered a prayer:

May the mistake of my wild words and fanciful phrases become a cause for praising the Buddha Vehicle, and serve as a factor for turning the Wheel of the Dharma.<sup>29</sup>

In the present, the nun makes this offering:

May the error of [her] many chapters of charming words be turned over and reunited (*kiitsu*) with the Principle of the One True Character and serve as a cause for the Threefold Ultimate Enlightenment.<sup>30</sup>

May we make that moment in the past merge with this moment in the present. May together we transcend the sea of suffering and in communion arrive upon the shore of awakening.

Just as Bai Juyi once prayed for the karmic reversal of his mistake (*ayamari*) of wild words and fanciful phrases (*kyōgen kigo*), Kaga makes an offering for the turning over (*hirugaesu* 翻) of the errors (*ayamachi*) of Shikibu’s charming words (*enshi*). The two prayers share the intent of *turning* the karma of profane writing into a cause and a factor

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<sup>29</sup> “Turning the Wheel of the Dharma” is a common figure of speech in the *Lotus Sutra* to signify efficacy in preaching, which is associated with bodhisattvas, who never “retrogress,” or literally turn back (*futaiten* 不退轉), in their pursuit of perfect enlightenment, in contrast to arhats, whose outflows have come to an end (*moromoro no ro wo sudeni tsukushi* 諸漏已盡). It is thus suggestive of the endless practice of the bodhisattva who voluntarily transmigrates along the round of birth and death to preach the Dharma to sentient beings in samsara without retrogression on the Buddhist path. See *Lotus Sutra* (Jp. *Myōhō rengekyō* 妙法蓮華經; Ch. *Miaofa lianhua jing*); T 262, 9:2a.

<sup>30</sup> In the *Lotus Sutra*, the doctrine of the true character (*jissō* 実相) signifies the truth revealed by the teaching of the one vehicle (Sk. *ekayana*, Jp. *ichijō* 一乘) preached by Śākyamuni in his last invocation before his parinirvāṇa, which is the subject of the sutra. The one vehicle is the teaching that unifies the three vehicles that Śākyamuni preached previously in his career. Therefore, “threefold” in the lines above also refers to the *Lotus*.

for its opposite: for Bai, wild words and fanciful phrases are turned into praise and instruction of the Dharma, and for Kaga, charming words into ultimate enlightenment. They are thus tropes in the etymological sense of the term, figures of speech, that is, that turn the meaning of one thing into another.

### 3 Preaching Buddhahood for Women: From Yasutane to Chōken

In the *Sarashina nikki*, Daughter of Takasue reveals how anxiety over her infatuation with the *Genji* manifested in her dreams in the form of a pure-looking priest admonishing her to study the *Lotus*, Scroll Five in particular. From the late tenth century on, as Kudō Miwako has recently shown, women increasingly played a leading role in organizing and sponsoring private memorial and other merit-making services for members of their family (*tsuizen kuyō* 追善供養).<sup>31</sup> The prayer texts, or *ganmon*, for ceremonies that they sponsored and for those sponsored on their behalf shed light on the ritual events at which aristocratic women such as Daughter of Takasue would have encountered Buddhist theories of salvation, particularly as they pertain to women.

Two prayer texts by Yoshishige no Yasutane in the year 985 for memorial services dedicated to prominent female figures at the imperial court document how the leader of the Kangaku-e attempted to demonstrate the soteriological doctrine of buddhahood for women (*nyonin jōbutsu* 女人成佛). The first was composed for a forty-nine day memorial service for the Tonsured Princess Sonshi, daughter of Emperor Reizei; the second just two months later for another forty-nine day memorial service for Fujiwara no Teishi, a consort of Emperor Kazan. Previous discussions of the latter have focused on

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<sup>31</sup> Kudō, “Heian-ki ni okeru josei to bukkyō ni tsuite.”

Yasutane's invocation of "the five obstructions" peculiar to women, leaving unexamined the context in which the invocation was made. Moreover, the former, because the rhetoric of the five obstructions does not appear therein, has received much less attention. The first part of this section will present a close reading of both prayer texts in order to bring into clearer view the ensemble of rhetorical strategies by which Yasutane preached salvation for women in the afterlife.

In 985, just a year after Tamenori dedicated his *Sanbōe* to her, Sonshi, who had already cut her hair (*rakushoku* 落飾) three years earlier at the age of sixteen, received the precepts from Tendai Abbot Ryōgen. She died just months later in the Fifth Month. After an opening lament of the ineluctability of impermanence and suffering in the round of birth-and-death, Yasutane tells the story of Sonshi's short career as a consort in Emperor Kazan's Rear Court.

The Second Daughter of the Emperor, in the Fifth Month of this year, suddenly entered into nirvana. The Princess entered the palace at the age of fifteen.

In blossoming forth and returning back,  
She was the former appearance of [the spirit of the plum on] Mount Luofu.  
Her hair dark and brows full,  
She was no less a beauty than [the Nymph] of the Luo River.<sup>32</sup>

According to an entry in the court diary of historian Fujiwara no Sanesuke 藤原実資, the *Shōyūki* 小右記, on the day of the memorial service, the Seventeenth Day of the Sixth Month, Sonshi's younger brother, Emperor Kazan, read an invocation (*fūjū* 諷誦), followed by Sonshi's father, Retired Emperor Reizei, and her husband, Retired Emperor En'yu. The memorial thus seems to have been co-sponsored by the three

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<sup>32</sup> *Honchō monzui*, p. 346.

imperial figures. Generally, in the genre of the prayer text, the lay literatus articulates the story behind the ritual, its intent, and its merit from the point of view of the ritual sponsor. Yasutane's biography of Sonshi, however, because it is for a co-sponsored service, is narrated from a more generic, albeit decidedly male perspective.

“The old appearance of Mount Luofu” alludes to the story of how Zhao Shixiong (lit., Male Teacher of Zhao) encountered a plum spirit manifested in the form of a beautiful woman at the foot of Mount Luofu, known for its plum trees, included in the collection of tales, the *Longcheng lu* 龍城錄 by Tang-period writer Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819). “The beauty of Luo River,” moreover, refers to a description of a River Goddess in a poem by the third-century poet Cao Zhi, “Preface to a Ballad for the Deity of the Luo [River]” (*luoshen fuxu* 洛神賦序). By means of these flowery allusions to classical Chinese literary texts, Yasutane establishes an analogy between Sonshi and the beautiful nature spirits of the Girl of Mount Luofu and the Goddess of Luo River. His focus, in other words, lies entirely in her enchanting power of her beauty as a young girl.

Yasutane then praises her intention to practice the Buddhist path without attachment to the beauty of her own body, which he compares to a flower, or to the palace in which she lived.

Though it is not the case that the flower in the hollow of the yomogi bud was not fragrant,  
Her earnest intent was to eternally strive for the Seven [Limbs] of Enlightenment.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> “The hollow of the yomogi bud” (*hōraitō no hana* 蓬萊洞花), in classical Chinese literature, referred to the dwelling of an ascetic, and, then, by metaphorical extension, the residence of the Retired Sovereign. The flower that grows therein, of course, refers to young Sonshi. The “seven limbs of enlightenment,” set forth in the *Abhidharmakośa*, the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, and the *Flower Garland Sutra* (Jp. *Kegon kyō* 華嚴經, Sk. *Avataṃsaka Sutra*, Ch. *Huayen jing*), refers to a set of seven methods for attaining enlightenment.

Though it is not the case that the moon of the palace of the long autumn was not pure,  
Her long-cherished hope was to fully acquire the Three Kinds of  
[Supernormal] Gnosis.<sup>34</sup>

Yasutane's short biography ends with yet more praise for Sonshi's practice of the Buddhist path, which, he notes, centered on chanting the "Devadatta" chapter, in which the story of the Dragon Princess appears, and *nenbutsu* invocations.

She did not find glory in receiving imperial favors,  
But made it her only intention to escape the profane dust [of the world].

Ah! From dawn to dusk she would chant the Devadatta Chapter and invoke Holy Amida. Last month on the tenth day, she summoned the Former Abbot of Enryakuji, Ryōgen, appointed him as her preceptor, and entered onto the Path.

Next, Yasutane expresses a mix of praise and bewilderment at Sonshi's young tonsure. He begins by making two generalizations about why women take the tonsure.

In general, in this world, in the past and present, ladies tonsure either:  
because they have reached the twilight of their years and have become widows or because they have many hardships and lack a backer.

He notes that Sonshi's case, however, is different. Not only is she an imperial princess, but in contrast to most women, she tonsured when she was still young and beautiful, which, for Yasutane and perhaps also the sponsors of the service, was understood as a The Princess is the daughter of the Former Retired Emperor [Reizei], the Queen of the Latter Retired Emperor [En'yu], and the older sister of His Majesty [Kazan]. Under Heaven, moreover, she is not profane.

For the plum [flower] whose color has not [yet] faded;  
For the mulberry [leaf] on which the light has not [yet] declined,  
To renounce the world is extremely painful.

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<sup>34</sup> "The three kinds of gnosis" (*sanmyō* 三明) refers to three kinds of supernormal power, set forth in the *Abhidharmakośa*, the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, and the *Flower Garland Sutra*.

Compare this with Murasaki Shikibu's treatment of Uji no Hachinomiya's tonsure at a young age in "The Bridge Maiden" chapter. She gives praise to the young girl but does not particularize Uji no Hachinomiya's gender in doing so. Absent is a lamentation of refrains from emphasizing the sincerity of her spiritual aspirations by highlighting how she was able to turn her back on the beauty of her female body. Shikibu, that is, This contrasts starkly with Yasutane's treatment of Sonshi in which he is focused entirely on her feminine beauty.

Just as the story of the tragedy of Sonshi's tonsure reaches its peak in Yasutane's narrative, Yasutane unveils a shocking revelation: Sonshi was none other than a transformation-body of a female bodhisattva like Myō'on and Kannon in chapters 24 and 25 of the *Lotus Sutra*.

Looking back on these past events, we realize that she was indeed a transformation in [the shape of] a person (*kenin* 化人).

Without anyone knowing,  
Myō'on came from her own world and temporarily lived in the Rear Quarters.

Or perhaps, again without anyone knowing,  
Kan'on, in order to deliver each according to their kind, manifested herself as a transformation-body (*keshin* 化身).

The next section describes the offerings made for the service. Among the sutras offered is the *Sutra for Trans-Female Buddhahood* (*Ten'nyo jōbutsukyō* 転女成仏経), which is referenced by Yasutane in the closing prayer. In this sutra, which was widely copied for such memorial services for women, the claim is made that, from the perspective of the ultimate truth, there is no fundamental difference between men and women. However, from the perspective of the conventional truth, women should resent their female body (*nyoshin* 女身), become a man, and thereby attain buddhahood.

Now, good women, if there is a woman who can truly contemplate the transgression of the female body and give rise resentment in their hearts, [she shall] quickly separate herself from her female body and become a man. The transgressions of the female body—that is, the afflictions of desire, ill will, and folly—are graver than that of men. In this [female] body lie one hundred insects that are the cause for constant suffering and duress. Therefore, the afflictions of the female body are much graver.<sup>35</sup>

In such prayer texts, it is not clear whose decision it was to copy *The Sutra for Trans-Female Buddhahood*. Yasutane does not include any statements that women cannot attain buddhahood; indeed, he even suggests that Sonshi was a kind of transformation body. He does not, however, call the skeptical view into question. What then does the copying of this sutra and his citation of Sonshi's recitation of the Devadatta Chapter accomplish for Yasutane? In the context of the ceremony, as composer of the prayer text, Yasutane's task, far from calling into question the sexist assumptions underlying Buddhist soteriological doctrines for women, was rather to marshal forth an array of canonical scriptures to guarantee the fact of Sonshi's buddhahood. The next section, which describes the scene of Sonshi's death and her chanting of *nenbutsu*, underscores this rhetorical strategy.

When the Imperial Princess was facing her end, she faced west, leaned on a desk, and without unsettling her mind an inch she performed the Ten *Nenbutsu* without break. Then, when she peacefully came to rest at the ornate window, [then I knew that] it was none other than the day of her sitting cross-legged on the Lotus Pedestal. Certainly, before we knew it, her existence was no longer and she immediately arrived to [the Pure Land] in the west.

The dramatic scene of Sonshi's chanting of *nenbutsu* before her imminent death in the context of Yasutane's prayer text serves to demonstrate that she will in fact be

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<sup>35</sup> T 564, 14:919a26–29.

reborn in the Western Pure Land after death. The penultimate prayer expands on this point.

Now, the Imperial Daughter,  
If she were to lie in the bud of a flower that remains closed,  
The wind of permanent joy would blow and immediately cause the  
unfolding [of its petals].  
If she were to have the disc of a moon not yet luminous,  
The clouds of residual habits would disperse and forever cause the  
perfection [of its illumination].

The sequence implied by the images invoked in the prayer is significant. First, returning to the figure of Sonshi as a flower, Yasutane suggests that she will be reborn in the Pure Land and only afterwards attain enlightenment.

The closing prayer for the transference of merit invokes the symbol of the *muktā-hāra* diadem (*yōraku* 瓔珞). In the *Sutra for Trans-Female Buddhahood*, this is the gift given by the Immaculate King Thus-Come-One to the Daughter of Immaculate Light, the protagonist of the sutra. When she put the diadem on, it emanated light, a testament to her potential to become a buddha.<sup>36</sup> Yasutane's prayer, in other words, ends with a figuration of Sonshi as the protagonist of *The Sutra for Trans-Female Buddhahood*.

As for today's service, may the upper [half of its merit] increase the light of the *muktā-hāra* diadem on the new Buddha [i.e., Sonshi] and may the lower [half of its merit] liberate us from the condition of suffering on the karmic wheel of rebirth.

Yasutane's prayer text for Sonshi's forty-nine day service is rife with contradictions. Sonshi is at once compared to nature spirits to whom men had strong attachments in Chinese literary tradition—namely, the Plum Spirit of Mount Luofu and the Goddess of Luo River—to the transformation-body of Myō'on and Kan'non in the

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<sup>36</sup> T 564, 14:916c19–c20.



*Lotus Sutra*, and to a new Buddha (*shinbutsu* 新仏) adorned with the Daughter of Immaculate Light's diadem. In later periods, as exemplified the genre of Noh plays, woman, especially nature spirits, who caused attachment for men were condemned as a source of bad karma. Yasutane, however, does not attempt to reconcile any potential contradictions between Sonshi's identification with such female nature spirits and also her identity as a Buddha. Rather, the composer of Sonshi's prayer praises her every aspect by freely associating her with celebrated female figures in the mid-Heian cultural imagination.

In terms of its soteriological doctrine on the salvation of women, Yasutane's prayer text seems to suggest that, even before Sonshi was reborn in the Pure Land after her death, she was a transformation-body preaching the Dharma to women in the Rear Quarters. Although this view would mean that Sonshi had attained buddhahood in this body (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成佛), the closing prayer indicates that Yasutane understands Sonshi will become a buddha only *after* rebirth in the Pure Land. What this suggests is that, internal contradictions notwithstanding, Yasutane's soteriology aligns with that expounded not only in the *Sutra for Trans-Female Buddhahood*—wherein a woman must first be reborn as a man in the Pure Land before she attains buddhahood—but also by Sonshi's preceptor Ryōren, cited by Yasutane above, who posited buddhahood for women only after rebirth as a men in the Pure Land.<sup>37</sup>

Just months after the tragic death of Tonsured Princess Sonshi, Yasutane was once again commissioned to compose a prayer text for the forty-nine day memorial

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<sup>37</sup> See “Funmei hosshin tennyō jōnan gan” 聞名発心転女成男願 (*Zoku Jōdoshū zensho* 続浄土宗全書, 8:8) on Ryōgen's interpretation of Amida's thirty-fifth vow as one for the transformation of women into men in the Pure Land.

service to commemorate the death of another women in the service of the imperial court, Fujiwara no Teishi 藤原悌子 (968–985), consort to Emperor Kazan. Unlike his prayer text for Sonshi, the voice of the sponsor of the service, Teishi’s father, Fujiwara no Tamemitsu 藤原為光 (942–992), is foregrounded. The text begins, “Śramana Tamemitsu shall proceed and address the Buddha...” Teishi’s Father’s characterizations of his daughter, however, resonate with those of Sonshi in the above.

In recounting her career at Kazan’s court, he uses the twin figures of the flower and moon to highlight his daughter’s beauty and intelligence.

Though her beauty and intelligence was not unsurpassed in her day,  
imperial favor [for her] was not put to shame by others.  
The flower of spring in the cool palace gets to be admired as the day  
grows late.  
The moon of autumn in koki palace is not allowed to be alone in the long  
night.<sup>38</sup>

The text later describes Tamemitsu’s sadness after the loss of his daughter and his wish to visit her soul in the realm of the dead.

In the past, to summon back the soul of Lady Li, [Emperor Wu of Han] hired a Scholar of Methods (*hōshi* 方士)...I have wanted to go on a journey to visit her soul, but did not yet have a method. And so, by drawing the Golden Person, we made our messenger and, though we were trying to communicate a message by voice, we did not yet have a medium and thus we in addition substituted [writing] text with copying Jeweled Gāthās.

Here, through reference to a poem by Bai Juyi, “Lady Li” (*Lifuren* 李夫人), the text compares Teishi to Emperor Wu of Han’s lover whose spirit appeared out of smoke rising from incense burning at a thaumaturgical rite. It then extends the analogy by

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<sup>38</sup> *Honchō monzui*. In *Kokushi taikai* 30, p. 347.

characterizing the ritual offering, an image of the Buddha, as a medium for communicating with Teishi in the land of the dead.

After a description of the offerings, which, notably, do not include the *Sutra for Trans-Female Buddhahood*, the phrase “five obstructions” figures in a prayer by Tamemitsu:

May she never become a raincloud among the people. May she not, out of self-love, receive the pleasures of Heavens. How would she attempt to deal with the Five Obstructions [in the realm of the] former? How would she attempt to deal with the Five Decrepitudes [in the realm of the] latter?

“Becoming a raincloud among the people” alludes to lines from a ballad in the *Wenxuan* 文選 describing how a “divine woman” (Ch. *shen nu* 神女) disappeared after spending a night with King Huai of Chu. By means of this figure, Tamemitsu’s prayer expresses his wish for his daughter never to be reborn as any kind of woman, whether a powerful shamanness on earth or a goddess in heaven. For, he asks, if she were to be reborn as the latter, how would she overcome the five obstructions that pertain to women: namely, as laid out in the Devadatta Chapter, that women cannot become a god in Brahma’s heaven, a god in Indra’s heaven, a Mara king, a wheel-turning sage king, or a Buddha. For again, advancing his argument one step further, even if, contrary to the doctrine of the five obstructions, she were to be reborn as a goddess, how would she escape the five decrepitudes? As loving father, Tamemitsu does not want to see his daughter, who died in pregnancy, suffer as a women of any kind, whether heavenly or earthly.

In his closing prayer, Tamemitsu, on the merit of the memorial services, states:

By preaching the Buddha Fruits of *The Lotus Sutra*,  
My daughter becomes no different than the Dragon Princess.  
She [achieved Buddhahood] in this life,  
Whereas [my daughter] in the afterlife.

Tamemitsu here compares his daughter Teishi to the Dragon Princess. However, rather than understanding the Dragon Princess as a paradigm of Buddhahood by transformation into a man (*henjō nanshi* 變成男子), he refers to her instead as an example of Buddhahood in this life (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成仏), that is, in her female body.<sup>39</sup> By means of this comparison, Tamemitsu suggests that Teishi will, like the Dragon Princess, attain buddhahood without transformation into a man but with just the exception, necessitated by her death, that she will do so in the afterlife (*kōshin* 後身).

Compared with the prayer text for Sonshi's memorial service, this text is less singularly focused on female beauty and refrains from generalizations about the inferior motivations of women who take the tonsure. Nonetheless, like the Sonshi text, Yasutane leaves contradictions in the figures he uses to image Teishi—from the soul of a lover from the spirit realm to the Dragon Princess—unresolved.

In his invocatory statements for memorial services dedicated to women, Chōken was decidedly more explicit in his censure of women. For a premortem merit-making offering (*gyakushū kuyō* 逆修供養) sponsored by a female patron, for example, Chōken, even as he invokes the doctrine of the originally enlightened nature of sentient beings, he at the same time explicitly condemns the female body as profane (*iyashi* 賤しい):

Now, the moon of the original enlightenment of Suchness is hidden behind the cloud of the abiding ground of ignorance and since the Lotus of the eternally abiding Buddha nature was buried and blindly tainted with the muck of birth and death, the pulling of the twelve-spoked cartwheel [of karma] is ceaseless and the flowing and turning of the twenty-five existences [in the three realms] is difficult to cut off. Thus, we are lost in the darkness before a Buddha and after a Buddha and among those whose bodies suffer in the extreme state of the

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<sup>39</sup> On the Dragon Princess as a paradigm of Buddhahood in this life/body, see Kudō, “Heian-ki ni okeru josei to bukkyō ni tsuite.”

kalpa of defilement and the life of defilement, women's bodies [especially] are profane (*iyashiku* 賤しく) and even the Dharma of the Buddha at the end of the Dharma is base. Even though [the female patron's] wish to practice and attain the Way may be [therefore] limited, how could it be that there would be no merit gained for having sown seeds and forged bonds [with the Dharma]?<sup>40</sup>

The above is quoted in the *Gonsenshū* 言泉集, a collection of exemplary phrases used by Chōken and subsequent preachers in his lineage as models for the composition of liturgical texts. The *Gonsenshū* abounds in yet more derisive statements about women, such as “A woman's emotions are weak, her wisdom shallow, and her desires deep” and “Let it be known: wisdom does not abide in the roots of women (*nyokon* 女根) [i.e., the female genitals].”<sup>41</sup>

The way Chōken uses this misogynistic bias as the necessary premise for an extremely dialectical, or “nondual,” redemption of women is eminently displayed in his homilies (*shakumon* 釈文) on the “Devadatta” chapter in his collection of preaching notes, the *Sōanshū* 草案集. He praises the *Lotus* as the only sutra in the Buddhist canon to preach, through the story of Devadatta and the Dragon Princess, correct awakening (*shōgaku* 正覚, Sk. *samyak-sambodhi*) for evil ones (*akunin* 悪人) and women (*nyonin*), a pairing that remains unremarked in his writings. Chōken further lauds how the sutra reveals the mutual dependence

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<sup>40</sup> Nagai and Shimizu, *Agui shōdō shū*, p. 183. The *Gonsenshū* is a collection of exemplary phrases, compiled by Chōken's son, Seikaku (also pronounced Shōkaku 聖覚 [1167–1235]), as reference for composition of sermonic pieces. Although not all excerpts were composed by Chōken himself, the collection sheds light on the kinds of discourse the Agui school of preaching invoked as part of their ritual performances. This particular excerpt was most likely composed by Chōken. A footnote after the excerpt notes that the sponsor for the ritual was the widow of Sanjō Kinyūki (1105–1148), a contemporary of Chōken.

<sup>41</sup> Nagai and Shimizu, *Agui shōdō shū*, pp. 146, 187. See also pp. 97–98, 137–142, 145, 184.

of (male) good/suchness and (female) evil/ignorance and even hails this “nonduality of good and evil” (*zen'aku funi* 善惡不二) as the essential significance of the *Lotus*:

The Dharma nature of the Tathāgata does not arise of itself but is always dependent on ignorance. Even Śākyamuni in the past served Devadatta and heard [from him] the [*Lotus*] *Sutra*. Ignorance does not manifest [of itself] but is always dependent on Dharma nature. Now even Devadatta follows Śākyamuni and received a prophecy. All other teachings besides the *Lotus* consider only how from one birth to the next suffering is constituted by the marks of evil. They discuss only good and do not discuss evil; they discuss only men and do not discuss women. This sutra is exceptional in that it preaches the correct awakening of women and evil ones ... Those who are called evil ones take Devadatta as their model. This is like the ignorance of the [three] disturbances. Those who are called women take the Dragon Princess as their model. This is like the Folly (*guchi* 愚癡) of the three poisons ... The nonduality of good and evil is made known in this [Devadatta Chapter]. The unity of the correct and the perverse is without obfuscation. Thus, the essential significance of the main part of the *Lotus* [excluding the prefatory *Muryōgikyō* 無量義經 and the concluding *Fugenkyō* 普賢經] lies in this chapter.<sup>42</sup>

As this passage makes clear, the nondual dialectic by which Chōken preaches buddhahood for women is predicated on an assumption of the folly of women, which he regards, in accordance with the structure of the “Devadatta” chapter, to be analogous to the ignorance of evil people. In comparison with his predecessor, Yoshishige no Yasutane, who lacked a consistent method for demonstrating the salvation of women, Chōken, in his invocatory statements for women’s memorial services, deploys with great consistency a highly double-edged dialectic for redeeming women from the sinfulness of the female body.

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<sup>42</sup> Yamazaki, “Sōanshū to sono kenkyū,” pp. 116–17.

#### 4 The Kannonization of Shikibu: Critical Perspectives on Genji Offerings

The severe condemnation of Shikibu upon which *Genji* offerings were founded did not go unnoticed by those involved in the literary culture of the inner court. Reference to the practice of *Genji* offerings first in the *Imakagami* 今鏡 (1170), a historical tale (*rekishi monogatari*) narrated by an old nun to a group of young women on a pilgrimage to Hasedera 長谷寺 in Nara. The epilogue, “Tsukuri monogatari no yukue” (Whither Fictitious Tales), opens with one of the young women describing how she would like to pray for the one who constructed (*tsukuri*) the tales of *Genji* (*Genji no monogatari*).

Is it true? All we have been hearing about is how, in *The Tale of Genji* constructed (*tsukuri*) [by Murasaki Shikibu] long ago, there are such baseless stories, which she has so elegantly and charmingly raked together like seagrass, that [she is suffering in] the smoke of the world beyond (*nochi no yo no keburu*). Though [her writing] may give occasion to idle charm (*en*), I find this upsetting and want to pray for her.<sup>43</sup>

The young woman cites a rumor that she describes as being all people have been hearing about (*nomi kikoe tamau*). Shikibu, according to the rumor, is suffering in the world beyond (*nochi no yo*) for her fictional construction of *The Tale of Genji* like so many elegantly raked stacks of seagrass. “Seagrass” (*moshigusa*) in the *waka* tradition is a figure for *kana* script. Raking it into stacks (*kakiatsume*) refers to the act of composing *kana* writing. “Smoke” (*keburu*) is one of its linked words, or *engo* 縁語. The sequence of figurative associations echoes a poem by Genji in chapter 41, “Seer” (*Maboroshi*), of Shikibu’s work. Mourning the loss of his beloved Murasaki no Ue, Genji reads through old letters she wrote him while he was living in exile on the shores of Suma. As prepares to burn them, he writes on the margins of one letter:

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<sup>43</sup> *Imakagami*, p. 519. Citations are from *Imakagami zenshaku*, edited by Unno Yasuo.

*Kakitsumete  
miru mo kai naki  
moshiogusa  
onaji kumoi no  
keburi to o nare*

Raked into these piles,  
Seagrass rich in brine of years,  
But useless now,  
Burn, become one smoke with her  
In the cloudland where we go.<sup>44</sup>

In his farewell poem to his deceased lover, Genji prays that the smoke emanating from her old letters, which he has been gathering together into piles (*kaki[a]tsumete*) like seagrass, become one with the smoke that has already risen from her funeral pyre.

Through the figure of seagrass, the poem creates a series of analogies between Murasaki no Ue's corpus of letters and, by lexical association with the image of smoke, her corpse burning in the funeral pyre. Smoke, in this poem, then, functions as a metonym for the union through destruction of Murasaki's corpus with her corpse. Transferred to the context of prayer offerings for Murasaki Shikibu, the image of "the smoke of the world beyond" evokes in a similar manner the undead corpse of the author burning in the funeral pyre of her work.

In her reply, the old nun confirms the young woman's sense that this rumor is widespread: "Truly, in this world, this is all that is being talked about..." She does not, however, agree with her interlocutor's premise that Shikibu is suffering in hell. Instead, she argues that truly moving writing in no way constitutes a profound sin (*fukaki tsumi* 深き罪) deserving of an extreme form of retribution (*mukui* 報い):

"True indeed. This is all one hears about in this day and age, but according to those learned in the true principle, in Tang and Yamato, it is commonplace to create literature that moves the hearts of people and guides their benighted minds. [Such literature] should not be called 'delusive speech.' Now there is what is called 'empty language': a sinful act in which one speaks with an honest face and persuasive words about something that never existed, making people believe that what is bad is

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<sup>44</sup> Translation by Cranston, *Grasses of Remembrance*, p. 901.



actually good. This should be called a kind of ‘wishful thinking.’ Though it is also called ‘fanciful phrases’ or ‘impure words,’ it is really not such a profound sin. To take the life of any living creature or to steal treasure from whomsoever—now *this* is a grave sin for which one would plunge into the depths of hell (*naraku*). Rather, since I have never heard of there being such a retribution [for any of these sins], this [damnation of the author of the *Genji*] should be something considered strange indeed.”<sup>45</sup>

Learned ones, she claims, know that literature has always been a matter of both enjoyment and knowledge, both moving the hearts of people (*hito no kokoro wo yukasu*) and guiding their benighted minds (*kuraki kokoro wo michibiku*). According to her argument, since Shikibu’s work is merely empty of reference, speaking movingly of things that do not exist, it could be considered a lesser sin on the order of “empty language” (*soragoto*) and “fanciful phrases” (*kigo*), which, she suggests, ought to be understood as mere “wishful thinking” (*aramashigoto*) rather than delusive speech (*mōgo* 盲語), which is identified as a cause for damnation in hell by Genshin in the *Ōjō yōshū* 往生要集 (The Essentials of Salvation, 985).<sup>46</sup>

The old nun pushes her argument further. The moving power of Shikibu’s writing, she contends, is emphatically not a vice but indeed a virtue:

“In fact, the act of enthraling the hearts of people should be considered meritorious. By eliciting the passions (*nasake*) and charming (*en naramu*) people in this way, [Shikibu], to be sure, committed a karmic act on the round of birth and death, but is such an act really deserving of this fall into Naraka Hell?”<sup>47</sup>

The old nun plays on the double meaning of two key terms to underscore her point: first, *nasake* 情け as both the sinful passions and enlightened compassion; second,

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<sup>45</sup> Imakagami, p. 519.

<sup>46</sup> T 2682, 84:34c.

<sup>47</sup> Imakagami, p. 519.

en as 縁, or the good conditions of karmic bonds and acts, and also as 艶, charm and seductive allure. Thus, according to this word play, by extending her compassion and creating good conditions, Shikibu's creation of the *Genji* is far from any kind of sin that would turn the round of birth and death, at least not in an unvirtuous way. For this reason, she argues, Shikibu is, like the celebrated male poet of the Tang, Bai Juyi, the emanation of a Buddhist saint, albeit a female one:

“While it is difficult to be certain even of things of this world [i.e., in Japan], I have heard of a person from the Tang called Bai Juyi who created a work of seventy scrolls that, finely wrought in its language and use of simile, inspired dedication [to Buddhism] in the hearts of people, and, therefore, is said to be a transformation body of Mañjuśrī. Even the Buddha preached what is called the *Parable Sutra*, whose preaching is founded on fictions about nonexistent things. And yet, nevertheless, this is said *not* to be ‘empty delusion.’ For a woman to create such a thing [as the *Genji*], she could not be a mere ordinary human being. Rather, she would have to be an unsurpassed female saint like Gadgadasvara (Jp. Myōon) or Avalokitêśvara (Jp. Kannon) who, through her preaching of the Dharma, guides (*michibiku*) people.”<sup>48</sup>

The old nun denounces a double standard in the Heian canon of Buddhist letters: whereas Bai Juyi, a male poet celebrated for his fanciful language and use of simile (*tatoi*), is hailed as an emanation of Mañjuśrī and the Śākyamuni Buddha's preaching of parables (*hiyu* 比喩) in the *Lotus* is consecrated as scripture (*kyō* 經), the female author of fiction is condemned to hell for her empty delusions (*kyomō* 虚妄). To challenge this double standard, the old nun, rather than encouraging her interlocutors to pray for Shikibu's redemption, elevates Shikibu to the level of Bai Juyi, understood as Mañjuśrī, the exemplary male agent of salvation, by unveiling the author's original identity as Avalokitêśvara or Gadgadasvara, two bodhisattvas who take diverse forms in the *Lotus*,

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. Gadgadasvara, literally “wonderful sound,” is the female bodhisattva after whom chapter 24 of the *Lotus* is named.

including that of women and girls, in order to save people.<sup>49</sup> As Taira has shown, Gadgadasvara was received by women of the inner court in the Nara period as a paragon of female enlightenment, and it was with the decline of women's social status in the mid-Heian period that Gadgadasvara was surpassed by the Dragon Princess as a central figure in the ritual activities of women.<sup>50</sup> Taira, however, overlooks the invocation of Gadgadasvara in Yasutane's exposition of Princess Sonshi as a transformation body. The old nun's argument, therefore, in response to the rhetoric of women's redemption prevalent in *Genji* offering rituals, turns not to a discourse of salvation for women that harks back to a prepatriarchal era in Heian society but rather a discourse preached at memorial services for women. By drawing on the tradition of preaching on female buddhahood at memorial services for women, the old nun apotheosizes the author as an active *agent* of salvation, as opposed to a passive *subject* of redemption. Her canonization of Shikibu is thus, in contrast to Chōken's redemption, a deification, or "Kannonization," as it were, of the female author.<sup>51</sup>

A page girl in attendance challenges the old nun's unconventional claim that a work such as the *Genji*, known for its depiction of gallantry and romance, should be considered the work of a female bodhisattva. She first cites two celebrated examples of enlightened women, Queen Vimaladattā and Queen Śrīmālā:

“As for [examples] of [bodhisattvas] who have become women [in order to] guide others: there is Queen Vimaladattā who guided the Emperor [down the Buddhist path], inspired him to dedicate himself to the Buddha

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<sup>49</sup> See chapters 24 and 25 of the *Lotus*.

<sup>50</sup> Taira, “Chūsei bukkō to josei,” p. 80.

<sup>51</sup> For more examples of the ways women “talked past” the androcentric rhetoric on women's salvation prevalent in the medieval Buddhist community, see Meeks, *Hokkeji*, ch. 7.

and rectified his crooked mind.<sup>52</sup> Also, there is Queen Śrīmālā who, in her exchange of letters with her parents, sent to them words of praise for the Buddha, which, since they have been passed down to the age of the end, can be considered a kind of ‘Manifestation of the Universal.’<sup>53</sup>

She then underscores the profane content of the *Genji*:

“This [tale] depicts in vivid detail charming (*en*) stories of men and women and thus does nothing more than taint the hearts of people and toy with their passions (*nasake*). How could this be considered a Sacred Teaching of the Venerable Dharma?”<sup>54</sup>

In response, the old nun points to two aspects of the *Genji* that she suggests could not be the work of an ordinary human being (*tadabito*): its exemplary form (*kotosama*) and its exemplary figures (*arisama*), or characters. First, she praises its form:

“That may be true, but contemplating at length the excellence of its exemplary form, I must say that it seems strange indeed that [the *Genji*] would be commonly called a profound sin when, though it is a ‘monogatari,’ it is a work of writing that spans, not one or two scrolls, but rather sixty chapters, without even a single loose thread, and which has been appreciated and enthusiastically written out by the likes of emperors and empresses since antiquity to the present, and thus treated as a cherished treasure, as though it were without peer in the world.”<sup>55</sup>

Chōken similarly exalts the *Genji* for the quality of its form. He too mentions its length of sixty chapters. The old nun’s apotheosis of Shikibu, however, differs especially from Chōken’s redemption in her emphasis on the intention of readers, which, if cultivated by the practice of praying for Shikibu, has the power to transform Shikibu’s work into an expedient means for guiding people on the Buddhist path:

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<sup>52</sup> Queen Vimaladattā is also mentioned in Chōken’s Waka Mandokoro invocation. See above, p. 37.

<sup>53</sup> *Imakagami*, p. 524. Queen Śrīmālā is the narrator of the *Śrīmālā Sutra*. “Manifestation of the Universal Gate” (*fumon no shigen* 普門の示現) is a reference to Avalokitēśvara’s compassionate acts of emanating in diverse forms for the sake of saving people described in chapter 25 of the *Lotus*.

<sup>54</sup> *Imakagami*, p. 524.

<sup>55</sup> *Imakagami*, p. 526.

“For those who would confess the profound state of [their own] sinfulness, chant the Name of the Buddha, and pray for her, [the *Genji*] can become a way to guide others and is nothing less than a means for teaching the heart of compassion, setting onto the good path those who have fallen into a world of misery, showing them the frivolousness of the world, and steering them away from the evil path and encouraging them onto the path of the Buddha.”<sup>56</sup>

What makes possible this compassionate use of Shikibu’s work as an expedient means is its exemplary characters:

“In contemplating these exemplary figures yet further, in one instance [Uji Hachinomiya 宇治八宮], [we are presented with the example of one] who, despairing over the sorrow of parting, upholds the precepts of the lay monk. In another [Ōigimi 大君], [we are presented with the example of one] who keeps to the pure way of women and, without disobeying the commandments [of her father], lives out her days in this world. [Both of these examples] definitely have significant content from which others may learn. Also, people who can see the vacuousness of the world surely have something to learn from [the example of Kiritsubo 桐壺], who, though she received the endless favor [of the emperor] because of the rare karma of her previous life, vanished like the phantasms of a dream. [The example of the Suzaku 朱雀] Emperor, who renounced his status in the world, became a disciple of the Dharma and resides in the valley of Nishiyama 西山 presents a venerable paradigm that resonates with the profound Dharma by which we enter onto the Buddhist path. The venerable image of the emperors of old preached in the ‘Devadatta’ chapter [of the *Lotus*] also comes to mind. Can [*The Tale of Genji*] really be reduced to nothing more than the affairs between men and women?”<sup>57</sup>

The next section suggests the old nun’s familiarity with Chōken’s prayer for the return of coarse words to the ultimate truth:

“In general, other than true wisdom, there is no *way* to turn over (*hirugaesu*) the mind *lost* in the dark abyss. Because the extent of its confusion is profound, it wanders along a bottomless sea in a world of misery. Thus it is expounded at the beginning of a text created by Vasubandhu. Therefore, by discerning the significance of things and keeping to the Way of awakening, we create a seed for the dissemination

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> *Imakagami*, p. 529.

of the Buddha's venerable Dharma that, whether coarse or refined, may return to the ultimate truth. Therein lies the venerable intent of the Buddha."<sup>58</sup>

Although clearly familiar with nondualist rhetoric for consecrating profane literature, the old nun rejects it and, in doing so, sets the stage for her own proposal, which centers on the compassion (*nasake*) of the reader:

“Thus it is said, but since [the *Genji*] is *not* the venerable word of the Dharma untainted by the muck of defilement, there are many leaves of words laden by the dew and frost which form on them. For all those who, in approaching the morning sun of the Dharma, are ample in their compassion (*nasake*), praying for [the author of the *Genji*] will establish a profound bond [with the Dharma], even if they are still attached to the enjoyment [of monogatari] and hung up, with a tainted mind, in how it makes them feel.”<sup>59</sup>

In the conclusion to her discourse, the old nun, in contrast to Kaga's prayer in Chōken's invocation, does not seek to reveal the original unity of Shikibu's charming writing with the Dharma but rather asserts its essential difference from the Buddha's words, which are fundamentally pure. Nor, moreover, does she seek to redeem Shikibu, whom she takes as the personification of Kannon. The rhetoric of redemption, which was the signature feature of Chōken's preaching, does not appeal to her. Instead, she places emphasis on compassion as a means for cultivating a bond with the Buddha: since Shikibu was in fact an emanation of Kannon, her work, if approached with a heart of compassion, will offer readers exemplary models of conduct for progress on the Buddhist path. According to this view, one prays for Murasaki Shikibu by participating in *Genji* offerings *not* for the purpose of the author's redemption. Rather, one offers prayers for the purpose of cultivating the compassion necessary to forge a bond with the Dharma by

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> *Imakagami*, p. 531.

means of her work, which was, in the old nun's view, Shikibu's original bodhisattvic intent.

It is tempting at this point to speculate on the identity of the historical person speaking through the voice of the old nun. Because of limited documentary evidence, very little can be known with certainty, but based on the foregoing analysis of both Chōken's *Genji* invocation and the epilogue to the *Imakagami*, it is clear that the two documents are in dialogue. Moreover, since it is likely, that *Imakagami* (ca. 1170) appeared after Chōken's invocation, the former can be understood as a response to the latter. If this is so, Kaga's presence in the background of each—as patron of the *Genji*-*Lotus* offering and as former wife of the author of the *Imakagami* and mother of his only son—becomes especially tantalizing. Takanobu, who was also in attendance at the *Genji* offering, appears to have provided Jakuchō with information about contemporary events to which the tonsured man did not have direct access, such as Bifukumon-in's funeral in 1160. It is, consequently, not difficult to imagine that he communicated his mother's critique of *Genji* offerings to his father and that, through his mediation, the *Imakagami*'s epilogue represents Kaga's critique of the rhetoric employed by Chōken in the *Genji* invocation.<sup>60</sup> In that case, one can only wonder: Could it be that the closing prayer attributed to Kaga by Chōken is a misrepresentation of her position, an imposition of an androcentric rhetoric that she rejects for reasons so eloquently articulated in this epilogue? Might the figure of the old nun be a fictive device for voicing Kaga's dissatisfaction with the male-dominated tradition of preaching and its nondualist interpretation of the possibility of Shikibu's redemption? Whatever the case may be, the

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<sup>60</sup> That Takanobu may have been the source for Jakuchō's account of Bifukumon-in's funeral is discussed by Unno Yasuo 海野泰男 in *Imakagami*, pp. 33–34.

apotheosis of author of the *Genji* in the *Imakagami* is decidedly more radical than her redemption from damnation in Chōken's *Genji* invocation. The preacher condemns the female author and her work, the old nun, the androcentric paradigm of literary creation. Furthermore, whereas Chōken preaches the consecration of Shikibu's work as Buddhist allegory, the old nun praises the *Genji*'s fine characters and form as the signs of Shikibu's bodhisattvic compassion to guide her readers.<sup>61</sup> Insofar as these aspects are exemplary, a work of fiction, whether coarse or refined, if approached with a compassionate intention, may serve to inspire dedication on the Buddhist path. Such a consecration exalts the original content of the *Genji*, without alteration, veiled denigration, or reinterpretation, and canonizes the author as exemplar of the Buddhist way of literature.

## Conclusion

The rumor about Shikibu's damnation in the afterlife exhibits the twin hallmarks of preaching at memorial services for women: sin and redemption. The homiletic techniques used by Chōken to redeem Shikibu in the afterlife, moreover, follow the same dialectical structure as his preaching on female buddhahood. According to the nondual dialectic of Chōken's preaching, immersion in the profane realm of sin and suffering is the indispensable means for knowing Buddhist truth. Therefore, in order for Shikibu's work to be consecrated, its sinful effects must first be diagnosed and condemned. For this reason, Chōken, invoking a key figure in Tamenori's discourse on monogatari, condemns Shikibu's work as the *roots of sin* on the round of birth and death and, ultimately, the

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<sup>61</sup> The *Mumyōzōshi*, closely related to the *Imakagami* and authored by Kaga's daughter (or granddaughter), similarly places emphasis on character. See Shirane, *Envisioning "The Tale of Genji,"* p. 21.



cause of her and her readers' damnation in hell. Thus, in spite of the female author's ultimate redemption, her body remains, as it was for the *Kangaku-e*, an essential point of reference for naturalizing Chōken's condemnation of monogatari. As a consequence, it is by an extremely double-edged dialectic that Chōken consecrates the *Genji* and redeems Shikibu from the karma of her words. On the one hand, it makes possible the consecration of women's writing by revealing the sacred in the profane. This upshot to his dialectical technique made Chōken's preaching a particularly compelling model for imagining Shikibu's redemption from the sin of fiction writing in late Heian Japan. On the other, it necessarily posits the inherent sinfulness of women's writing. Thus, in Chōken's preaching, although the female sex and text are redeemed in the end, the misogynistic assumption of their sinfulness is never called into question.

It is precisely this assumption of women's sinfulness that feminine voices in the late Heian period such as that of the old nun in the *Imakagami* called into question. To overturn this assumption, the old nun, however, did not reject the basic premises of Buddhist discourse on female salvation, but instead drew on an alternative model—namely, that of the female transformation body (*kenin*)—that was also developed at memorial services for women by lay literati like Yoshishige no Yasutane. Thus, in both preaching on the *Genji* by male preachers such as Chōken and feminine voices critical of such preaching for its presupposition of female sinfulness, Buddhist discourses and ritual practices constructed the discursive universe in which the afterlife of Shikibu as exemplary author of monogatari fiction was imagined and contested.

## CONCLUSION

This dissertation has focused on a variety of Buddhist liturgy called the Dharma-assembly (*hōe*) and has considered how the process by which it incorporated new forms of court literature, from kanshi to waka and monogatari, during Japan's early medieval period supported and was supported by discourse on Dharma joy. Chapter 1 began by locating Dharma joy discourse within the larger Esoteric Buddhist tradition of Lotus-Esoteric discourse on ritual language, from Ennin to Annen, and showed how this tradition redefined mantra as an act of giving, rather than receiving, the joy of the Buddha's teachings. It then observes the articulations of this discourse, first, in esoteric initiation rites (*kanjō*), then in the Pure Land liturgy of the lecture assembly (*kōe*), and finally in sutra-lectures (*kōkyō*) at Shinto shrines. In each case, I attempted to elucidate the working of Lotus-Esoteric discourse in the conceptions of the buddha's body upon which each liturgical practice was predicated—from the preaching of the Dharma body (*hosshin seppō*) to the identity of Amida with the three bodies (*sanshin soku itchi*) and the relationship between the flowing traces of the kami and their original ground in the body of a buddha or bodhisattva (*honji suijaku*), respectively. In this way, Chapter 1 traces the genealogy of a key genre of medieval poetry, Dharma joy waka, back to the locus of Lotus-Esoteric discourse and the variety of liturgies through which it was articulated. Chapters 2 and 3 focused on how Lotus-Esoteric discourse on Dharma joy, broadly construed, extended into the genres of the love poem and romance tale in the late Heian period. Chapter 2 analyzed repentance rites dedicated to Fugen (Sk.

Samantabhadra) bodhisattva and clarified their impact on the invention of Buddhist love poetry. Finally, Chapter 3 looked at sutra-offering ceremonies and considered their role in the consecration of an exemplary romance tale, *The Tale of Genji*, and the imagination of its author, Murasaki Shikibu. Taken together, these three chapters tell the story of how Buddhism, through the apparatus of Dharma joy, extended its reach into ever-wider fields of literary creation and, in this way, situated itself at the center of art and culture in early medieval Japanese society.

This study has thus been fundamentally concerned with how Buddhist liturgy, working in concert with Lotus-Esoteric discourse, shaped the development of Japanese literature in the early medieval period. Recent studies on medieval Japanese Buddhist history, however, have approached Buddhist liturgy from another angle by showing how it constitutes a point of reference for elucidating Buddhism's role as a medium for reproducing and disseminating the power of the medieval Japanese sovereign. I will therefore use this conclusion to reflect on how I might pursue future investigations into the relationship between Buddhism and medieval Japanese literature in light of these studies in the field of Japanese Buddhist history.

Recent English-language studies on medieval Japanese Buddhist history have drawn attention to the importance of state-sponsored rituals such as the Vimalakīrti Assembly (*Yuima-e* 維摩会) and the Lecture on the Golden Light Sutra (*Saishō-kō* 最勝講), and have elucidated their character as theater of state<sup>1</sup> and their role in the projection of imperial authority.<sup>2</sup> This study, by contrast, has looked at rituals that were sponsored

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<sup>1</sup> Bauer, "The Yuima-e as Theater of State."

<sup>2</sup> Sango, *The Halo of Golden Light*.

not by the state but rather by a self-organized network of diverse individuals: from the assemblies of the Kangaku-e to Kamo no Shigeyasu's hall dedication and the sutra-offerings of the Waka Mandokoro.<sup>3</sup> Uejima Susumu has recently argued that such rituals, which are often overlooked in discussions of *kenmitsu* Buddhism, played an important role in the dissemination of sovereign power, or *ōken* 王権, in early medieval Japanese society.

In his 2010 monograph, *Nihon chūsei shakai no keisei to ōken*, Uejima investigates the genealogy of sovereign power in medieval Japan. The distinguishing feature of this form of power, he suggests, lies in its multidimensional structure that comprised, in addition to the emperor, first the regent in the early eleventh century and then the retired emperor in the late twelfth century. Within this structure, the relation between governing bodies in the capital (the regent or retired emperor) and the local governing class in the peripheries, or *zuryō*, becomes especially important. To negotiate this key relation, governing bodies in the capital—such as Regent Michinaga in the early eleventh century and Retired Emperor Shirakawa a half-century later—turned to religion and, as part of their political policy for governance of the periphery, instituted a system of Dharma assemblies (*hōe no taikai* 法会の体系) to be performed at major shrines and temples throughout the realm. As religion acquired this important political function, Uejima argues, Buddhist ritual transformed and the state-sponsored debate-style lecture

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<sup>3</sup> In a recent review article on the study of religion and politics in Heian-period Japan, Heather Blair has pointed out that most Japanese historians concerned with Kuroda's *kenmitsu* theories are trained in political and economic history and, as a result, often focus on economic and institutional relationships and structures. Based on this, she has suggested that “examining issues not directly related to the state that authors writing in Western languages stand to make the most important contributions.” Blair, “Religion and Politics in Heian-Period Japan,” p. 285.

rituals, also called *kōkyō* in Japanese, began to develop into popular liturgies such as the lecture assembly and the assembly for the repentance of transgressions (*keka-e* 悔過会).<sup>4</sup>

There has been some debate about what to call these rituals that were so important for the formation of medieval Japanese culture and society. In his 2011 article “Nihon chūsei shakai no keisei, tenkai to shushō-e to shuni’e: kōkyō no taihi kara,” Uejima notes that their importance has long been recognized by historians at least since Tamura Enchō 田村円澄. Uejima cites the latter’s 1962 chapter on Heian Buddhism in the Iwanami Kōza series on Japanese history in which he refers to such rituals as “lecture assemblies” (*kō-e* 講会) and parenthetically as “sūtra lectures” (*kōkyō* 講經), and emphasizes their “important role in opening the gates of aristocratic Buddhism and creating connections between Buddhism and the general populace.”<sup>5</sup> After Tamura, Uejima comments, historians began to also refer to these *kō-e/kōkyō* as “preaching,” or *shōdō* 唱導. This term, however, Uejima points out, occludes the repentance assembly. To redress this lacuna, he proposes a new term: *exoteric Dharma assemblies*, or *kengyō hōe* 顕教法会.

The foregoing, however, has shown that the term *exoteric Dharma assembly* does not accurately reflect the content and perceived significance of the lecture assembly. As we have seen, these rituals featured a complex blend of esoteric elements alongside Tendai, Pure Land, Shinto elements that, depending on the context and audience, may or may not have been understood to be esoteric in significance. To highlight the importance

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<sup>4</sup> The research of Satō Michiko has greatly advanced our understanding of *keka-e* and their important role in the development of the performing arts, or *geinō* 芸能, in the mid- to late Heian period. See especially her 2002 *Keka-e to geinō*.

<sup>5</sup> Tamura, “Heian Bukkyō,” p. 200.

of esoteric Buddhist discourse, particularly that of Lotus-Esoteric Buddhism, I have thus called the lecture assemblies and offering ceremonies examined in this dissertation “esoteric modes of performance.”

The term *mode of performance* specifically is intended to displace the common term in *kenmitsu* theory used to describe esoteric ritual—that is, magic, or *jujutsu* 呪術. Taira Masayuki, a leading interpreter of *kenmitsu* theory, has argued that esoteric Buddhism was a form of ideology that operated as a kind of “magical spell,” or *jubaku* 呪縛, cast on the consciousness of the people, or *minshū ishiki* 民衆意識.<sup>6</sup> To put it in classical Marxist terms, this understanding presupposes a view of ideology as false consciousness. In this view, ideology is the product of a top-down process of mystification in which the people at the bottom are duped by elites at the top, thus creating a situation in which, as the well-known phrase from Marx’s *Capital* puts it, “they do not know it, but they are doing it.”

By reconceptualizing esoteric ritual as a mode of performance, we may be able to shed light on how it worked, not as a spell enchanting the populace, but rather as an *apparatus* in the Foucauldian sense—that is, a set of rational and concrete strategies for manipulating and intervening in relations of powers in society. At the root of this apparatus, as Uejima has suggested, lie the rites and liturgies overlooked in *kenmitsu* theory—that is, what are often called “exoteric Dharma assemblies.” By situating these rites and liturgies in the locus of Dharma joy discourse, we may be able to catch a glimpse of something like the apparatus by which Buddhism in early medieval Japan captured the imagination of people from diverse segments of society and converted their

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<sup>6</sup> Taira, *Nihon chūsei shakai to Bukkyō*, p. 99.

desire for pleasure into a joyous glorification of the Buddhist teachings. Thus, liturgies such as Kakuchō's Pure land lecture assembly for the people of Izumi and Chōken's *Genji* offering may reveal the ways Buddhism used literary forms such as the hymn and monogatari to appeal to new audiences of potential converts and, in so doing, promoted its spread through society. By doing so, we may also gain a better understanding of not only the early medieval transformation of Japanese literature but also how this transformation enabled and was enabled by the working and articulation of Buddhist ideology in early medieval Japanese society. The title of this dissertation, "The Joy of the Dharma," is thus intended to draw attention to the importance of the human desire for joy not only in the creation and reception of Japanese literature but also in the dissemination of Buddhist ideology during Japan's medieval period. In this sense, it alludes to the recent work of critical theorists such as Slavoj Žižek and Giorgio Agamben that has identified the element of joy and desire as basic to the functioning of ideology in society.<sup>7</sup> To elucidate further the ideological function of the Dharma joy apparatus constitutes the primary task that I hope to pursue further in future research.

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Žižek, *Sublime Object*, and Agamben, "What is an Apparatus?"

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