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Article Contributors and Summaries

Slaying the Serpent: Comparative Mythological Perspectives on Susanoo's Dragon Fight

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In the "Slaying of the Great Eight-Headed Serpent," one of the most iconographic episodes in Japanese myth, the god Susanoo rescues a maiden from a dragon and marries her. Comparing the Japanese narrative with international dragon-slayer tales, this essay draws attention to the dragon's close connection to water and iron. It argues that myths have to be adapted to new circumstances in order to remain relevant to the group that transmits them. In the myth of Susanoo's dragon fight, as related in the ancient chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, these repeated adaptations are still visible as various layers of meaning. The essay illuminates some of these layers and connects them to cultural techniques such as wet-rice cultivation or metallurgy. This approach makes it possible to trace the evolution of the myth, which found its culmination in the written versions of the early eighth century.

Chinese Poetry in Hiragana: *Kana-shi* in Thought and Practice

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In the Edo period there was a type of poetry called *kana-shi*. In terms of form and style it was modeled on Chinese poetry (*kanshi*) yet written with a mixture of hiragana and kanji. It can be thought of as a literary form that occupied the space in between *haikai* and Chinese poetry. *Kana-shi* was frequently composed in the early eighteenth century by Morikawa Kyoriku, Kagami Shikō, and other disciples and associates of Matsuo Bashō, and it took shape amid rising nationalist sentiment and an accompanying decline in the status of Chinese poetry and prose. Influenced by the mood of this intellectual environment, *kana-shi* seems to have emerged as an ambitious literary form that, while modeled on Chinese poetry, sought to reconstruct it as Japanese. This essay considers these

and related issues through analyses of specific poems. It also introduces several related poetic styles that developed in the same time period, arguing that *kanashi* was a precursor of famous works like Yosa Buson's "Mourning the Old Sage Hokuju" as well as the new-form poetry (*shintaishi*) of the Meiji period.

Yamato-e: Illuminating a Concept through Historiographical Analysis

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Yamato-e is a familiar but confounding concept in Japanese art history. Meaning simply "Japanese pictures," the term is widely understood as much more. Scholars use it to refer to an alleged genre that includes pictorial artworks featuring Japanese subject matter and a distinct style most often characterized as soft, colorful, and independent from outside influences (especially Chinese). This paper analyzes the twentieth-century historiography of *yamato-e* in terms of semantics, parameters, and narrative histories as established by various Japanese scholars, explains why our current definition of *yamato-e* is problematic, and examines how the concept of *yamato-e* reveals more about scholarly concerns of the early twentieth century than a specific painting style or type.

Dharma Devices, Non-Hermeneutical Libraries, and Robot-Monks: Prayer Machines in Japanese Buddhism

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This article explores the little-known subject of the presence, in the Japanese Buddhist tradition, of machines (understood here as special tools, instruments, and various mechanical devices) used for the production and proliferation of prayers and prayer-related activities. Following a description of representative examples from various historical periods and ritual contexts (the *shakuhachi* flute as performed by adepts of the Fuke Zen sect, prayer wheels and rotating sutra repositories, Tokugawa period automata, and, more recently, robot-monks and virtual [online] ritual services), the article discusses the status of those devices within the Buddhist cultural system and the conceptual challenge that they pose to issues of individual agency, religious practice, and, ultimately, soteriology.

Futanari, Between and Beyond: From Male Shamans to Hermaphrodites in *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses*

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In ancient and medieval Japan, female shamans had the task of divining messages from the gods. Yet there were also male shamans (*otoko miko*) who donned female clothing. The "Futanari" section of *Yamai no sōshi* (The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses) depicts one such figure: an intersex (*futanari*) soothsayer. The scroll is thought to have been completed in the late twelfth century, around the zenith of Emperor Goshirakawa's cultural influence. It was Goshirakawa who compiled the collection of *imayō* (popular songs) entitled *Ryōjin hishō* (Songs to Make the Dust Dance on the Beams), which includes songs that ridicule male shamans for belonging to the marginal cultures of the eastern hinterlands and the emerging warrior class. This same mocking gaze is cast upon the intersex soothsayer by the figures in the scene and potentially by the contemporaneous reader/viewer for "Futanari." By focusing on representations of male shamans, as well as Buddhist teachings that informed the treatment of intersex figures, this essay explores the basis of the multiple meanings of "Futanari" and *futanari*.

Illuminating the Sacred Presence of Hasedera's Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara

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The Buddhist mountain-temple of Hasedera (Nara Prefecture) is famous for its miraculous icon, Hase Kannon, a monumental image of Jūichimen Kannon (Sk. Ekādaśamukha, the Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara). This essay focuses on the origins of the Hase Kannon statue as narrated in *Hasedera engi emaki* (Illustrated Scrolls of the Accounts of Hasedera) and argues that the creators of the text carefully constructed the sacred aura of the image by highlighting the extraordinary qualities of the material used to make the icon and its stone pedestal. To enhance the sacred nature of the image, the writer(s) used the idea that non-sentient beings could reach enlightenment, and created a story in which the log seems to follow the various steps required before its transformation into a Kannon image. Moreover, the stone pedestal where the icon stands was believed to be connected to real and imaginary Buddhist sacred sites.

Underground Buddhism: The Subterranean Landscape of the Ise Shrines

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This article analyzes the history of Buddhist practice by priests of the Ise Shrines, traditionally presented as the paradigmatic site of an indigenous religion untouched by Buddhism. It challenges modern claims of an exclusive tradition with archeological evidence for the Buddhist aspirations of Ise's sacerdotal lineages and the material record of the objects and individuals responsible for the construction of Ise as a Buddhist site. By focusing on the material objects and ritual acts created by collaborative networks of institutional groups that have been conventionally assumed to be rivals, the article argues that the ritual practices and material culture produced by and for the priestly lineages of the Ise Shrines established a sustaining relationship between the gods and the buddhas and lay the necessary substructure for later Buddhist developments at the Ise Shrines.

REVIEW

Tansen Sen. *India, China, and the World: A Connected History*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

BOOK REVIEW BY JAMES ROBSON

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KYUSHU AND ASIA

Report on the 2017 Inscription of "Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region" as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

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This report sketches the World Heritage story of Okinoshima, a remote island off the coast of northern Kyushu, and Munakata Grand Shrine (a triad of shrines that include a site on Okinoshima). The discovery of eighty thousand artifacts (collectively designated a "National Treasure" today) found on the island in twentieth-century archaeological excavations and a reference in the eighth-century chronicles *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki* have catapulted the island to global fame, inspiring grand narratives about Japan's origins and premodern polity. Okinoshima and Munakata Grand Shrine have also drawn critical attention in the context of the World Heritage bid, first over the shrine's policy of banning women from the island, and second over the Japanese government's nationalistic presentation of Okinoshima that diminishes the transregional significance of the island's identity and material culture.

Slaying the Serpent: Comparative Mythological Perspectives on Susanoo's Dragon Fight

DAVID WEISS

"Japanese mythology, too, is a part of the world and should be examined as such; after all it remains true that Japan is an island nation only in a geographical, but not in a cultural sense."[1]

Introduction

YAMATA *no orochi taiji* 八岐大蛇退治 or the "Slaying of the Great Eight-Headed Serpent" is without doubt one of the most iconographic scenes in the ancient Japanese myths related in the court chronicles *Kojiki* 古事記 (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) and *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (Chronicles of Japan, 720).[2] A brief summary of the narrative should suffice to show that the subject of the tale is by no means unique to the Japanese tradition. A traveler from a distant land learns that a maiden is to be devoured by a giant reptilian monster that demands a sacrifice every year. He devises a clever plan, slays the monster, and marries the maiden. The traveler is Susanoo (*Kojiki*: 須佐之男; *Nihon shoki*: 素戔嗚), the shady little brother of the sun goddess Amaterasu 天照 who has just been banished from his sister's heavenly realm. In Izumo (the eastern part of present-day Shimane Prefecture) he chances upon an old couple who tearfully tell him how an eight-headed serpent that spans eight mountains and eight valleys had appeared each year to devour one of their eight daughters. Now only one daughter is left and the time of the monster's appearance is drawing near. Susanoo promises to rescue the maiden if in return he is promised her hand in marriage. When her parents agree, Susanoo transforms the maiden into a comb that he sticks in his hair. He manages to slay the serpent by getting it drunk and hacking it to pieces in its stupor. In its tail, he finds the precious sword Kusanagi (*Kojiki*: 草那芸; *Nihon shoki*: 草薙), which he offers up to his sister. Then he finds a suitable place to build his palace and at length consummates his marriage.[3]

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1   Antoni, "Japanische Totentwelt," p. 91. All translations by the author, unless otherwise stated.

2   The characters for *yamata no orochi* provided in the text follow the *Nihon shoki*. The *Kojiki* uses the following characters: 八俣遠呂知. Due to the characters used to write *yamata* in both works, the term is often interpreted to mean "eight-forked," but John Bentley argues that *mata* is an old word for "head," being cognate with the Early Middle Korean "head" 麻帝 (*matay* or *matæ*). Bentley, *Sendai Kuji Hongi*, p. 177, note 6.

3   *Kojiki*, pp. 68–73; *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 90–102. In addition to the main version, the *Nihon shoki* contains five variants of this

In this paper, I will subject the Japanese tale to a narratological analysis by comparing it to a number of international dragon-slayer tales. In doing so, I will place special emphasis on two aspects that the Japanese narrative has in common with other tales of this type, namely the dragon's connection to water and to metal.[4] I will supplement this narratological analysis with an examination of historical sources and archaeological artifacts in order to draw a connection between the *yamata no orochi* myth and the arrival of new metallurgical techniques from the Asian mainland in Kofun-period Japan (250 CE–600 CE).

Such an approach, I believe, can fruitfully complement recent works by literary studies scholars like Kōnoshi Takamitsu who regard the *Kojiki*, the *Nihon shoki*, and other ancient sources as literary works, each of which has its own internal structure and coherence, and expresses a specific worldview. Such studies tend to emphasize the differences between particular sources rather than their similarities, let alone parallels outside Japan.[5] To give one concrete example, Kwŏn Tongu in a recent study describes the Susanoo of *Kojiki* and the Susanoo of *Nihon shoki* as "completely different deities (*mattaku betsu no kami*)."[6] For him, the *Nihon shoki*'s Susanoo is a purely evil deity, since the work's internal yin and yang structure calls for a negative counterpart to Amaterasu, whereas the *Kojiki*'s Susanoo is purified by Amaterasu and ultimately becomes a great heroic deity.[7] While it is not my intention to deny the differences between the two chronicles and their relevance for an assessment of the respective sources and their agendas, this interpretation seems to exaggerate the differences while passing over the similarities in silence. I would rather speak of two particular articulations of a common idea—in this case, a deity—both of which

function as specific representations of the universal character of the dragon-slayer in the tale under discussion.

As Hayashi Michiyoshi points out,

> Myths are universal and particular at the same time. While on the one hand motifs and structures that are common to many peoples are found in mythology, significant differences can be discovered between different mythologies if one looks at how these common motifs are used.[8]

Bearing these caveats in mind, I will endeavor to point out both universal and particular aspects of the *yamata no orochi* myth. For example, I will demonstrate in the following pages that the dragon or serpent's connection to water is a universal theme that can be observed in myths and folktales around the globe. However, the idea of the dragon as giver or withholder of rain had to be adapted to the Japanese cultural context in order to remain relevant. Thus, the myth became linked to the water-intensive business of wet-rice cultivation. This example also demonstrates another point that will be central to the following analysis: myths change over time. They take on new meanings as they are adapted to changing geographical, social, cultural, or economic circumstances. The *yamata no orochi* myth as it is related in the ancient court chronicles is thus the result of a long evolution. I will argue that the Japanese tale is an articulation of the universal or nearly universal dragon-slayer myth. However, since it accreted various layers of meaning over time and space, being adapted to the specific living conditions of the groups who received and transmitted it, the tale differs quite substantially from other articulations of this mythical theme.[9]

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episode, some of which leave out important components such as the slaying of the serpent (var. 1), Susanoo's marriage (var. 4), or both (var. 5).

4 The term "dragon" is used broadly in the present study to denote a reptilian or serpentine monster. Often dragons are depicted as multiheaded and capable of flight. As will become apparent, these creatures share some characteristics such as their close connection to water, thunder, and metal in myths and folktales around the globe.

5 See, for example, Kōnoshi, *Kojiki to Nihon shoki*.

6 Kwŏn, *Susanoo no henbō*, p. 128.

7 Ibid. Kwŏn limits himself to the *Nihon shoki*'s main version of the myth and, following Kōnoshi, *Kojiki to Nihon shoki*, pp. 110–12, chooses to ignore all the mythical variants contained in the same source.

8 Hayashi, *Mikoto to miko*, p. 6.

9 Nakanishi Susumu has pointed out that the myth of Susanoo consists of various layers of meaning. Nakanishi, *Ama tsu kami*, p. 205. In his dissertation completed in Vienna in 1935, the anthropologist Oka Masao linked certain mythical motifs with material artifacts, religious ideas, and modes of social organization and subsistence in order to reconstruct so-called cultural strata of ancient Japan. He connected these strata with successive waves of immigration from different regions like Indonesia or Korea that brought their own religious ideas, forms of social organization, and cultural technologies with them to Japan. Oka, *Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan*. On Oka and his connection to the Viennese School of Ethnology, see, for example, Kreiner, *Nihon minzokugaku*. Although many of Oka's conclusions did not stand the test of time, his approach inspired the present analysis.

Any fundamental changes in the transmitting group's life experience, such as the emergence of a new cultural technique like wet-rice cultivation or metallurgy, by necessity leads to an adaptation of the myth as well.[10] Otherwise the myth would lose its significance for the group and eventually be forgotten. I follow Alan Dundes' definition of myth as "a sacred narrative explaining how the world and mankind came to be in their present form."[11] In other words, myth "explains the why and how of the here and now."[12] This definition implies that a myth would lose its raison d'être as soon as it is no longer linked to the everyday experiences of the transmitting group. Migration, of course, amounts to a fundamental change in a group's everyday life. Thus, myths traditionally transmitted by the migrant group might no longer be appropriate in their new living environment and have to be modified or vanish. An analysis that takes these dynamics of mythical adaptations and reformulations into consideration will not only further our understanding of a particular episode of Japanese mythology but also allow us to place the genesis of this episode in the context of both Asian and world history.

The Myth of the Dragon Fight

"The Dragon-Slayer" (ATU 300) is one of the best known and most widely distributed tale types documented in the international folktale index originally devised by Antti Aarne and later modified by Stith Thompson and Hans-Jörg Uther.[13] The index summarizes the plot in the following manner: a youth with three wonderful dogs comes to a town and learns that once a year a dragon demands a virgin as a sacrifice. This particular year, the king's daughter is to be sacrificed and the king offers her hand in marriage to whoever might rescue her. With the help of his dogs, the youth overcomes the dragon and then disappears. In the meantime, an impostor claims the reward, but the dragon-slayer returns in time, unmasks the impostor, and marries the princess.[14] The closest parallel to this type in Japanese folklore is the narrative of "The Monkey-God Slayer" (Ikeda 300) that is attested in fifty versions by Ikeda Hiroko.[15] Although the "Slaying of the Great Eight-Headed Serpent" lacks the motifs of the dogs and the impostor, it is usually subsumed under the same type.[16]

As it is related in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, the narrative is not a folktale, however, but a true myth insofar as it addresses fundamental questions of human existence.[17] In this context, Nelly Naumann draws attention to the eight-headedness of the monster. While dragons are imagined as multiheaded beasts in many cultures, the number eight has a specific meaning in Japanese myth: it represents "totality."

> Like the eight islands [of Japan] or the eight mountains and the eight valleys [mentioned in the *yamata no orochi* myth] are an image of the mundane world, the eight-headed serpent monster is the symbol of an all-destroying force. This force has to be destroyed in order to save the world.[18]

Similar interpretations have been suggested for dragon-slayer myths outside Japan as well. Thus, the dragon in the Indo-European as well as in the Near and Middle Eastern traditions has been regarded as a symbol of chaos: "The dragon symbolizes Chaos, in the largest sense, and killing the dragon represents the ultimate victory of Cosmic Truth and Order over Chaos."[19] This cosmic struggle found expression in myth as a fight between "the sky god as champion of order" and a dragon, the "demon of disorder."[20]

In a similar vein, Miura Sukeyuki regards the myth of Susanoo's fight with the eight-headed serpent as a tale of conflict between culture and nature. He views

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10 Such adaptations could be achieved with relative ease as long as the myth in question is not fixed in writing. Van Baaren, "Flexibility of Myth," pp. 218–24.
11 Dundes, "Madness in Method," p. 147.
12 Van Baaren, "Flexibility of Myth," p. 223.
13 The acronym ATU refers to the classification according to the Aarne-Thompson-Uther index.
14 Uther, *Types of International Folktales*, vol. 1, p. 174.
15 Ikeda, *Type and Motif Index*, pp. 68–70.
16 Ibid.; Seki, "Yamata no orochi," p. 150.
17 I distinguish myths from other forms of folk narrative like folktales (which are recognized as fictional by the society transmitting them) and legends (which are set in a specific historical period). I am fully aware that this distinction is a modern European one, but still find it useful for analytical purposes. See, for example, Bascom, "Forms of Folklore"; Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*, pp. 5–8; Dundes, "Madness in Method"; Ellwood, *Politics of Myth*, p. 21. It would be a mistake to draw overly sharp distinctions, however, since the same motifs can and do appear in all three categories of narrative. Doty, *Mythography*, p. 11.
18 Naumann, *Mythen des alten Japan*, p. 106.
19 Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, p. 299.
20 Fontenrose, *Python*, pp. 218–19.

the serpent as a river god and hence as a symbol of nature, whereas he believes the maiden who is about to be sacrificed to the monster to be the symbol of a rice field, as her name Kushiinada-hime 寄稲田姫 or "Lady Wondrous Rice Paddy" suggests.[21] The annual sacrifice of a daughter to the river god can thus be interpreted as a contract between Kushiinada-hime's parents and the river god that ensures a rich harvest. In this situation, the culture hero Susanoo descends from heaven and asks for Kushiinada-hime's hand in marriage. Her parents agree, thereby breaking their contract with the river god and entering into a new one with Susanoo. In both cases, Miura points out, they lose their daughter to the representative of an otherworld. The crucial difference in his view is that whereas the daughters sacrificed to the eight-headed serpent had only been devoured—that is, consumed—the marriage with Susanoo is productive insofar as it will bring forth children. According to Miura, this forms the core of the "culture" brought by Susanoo. "Viewed in this light, the various characteristics of Susanoo depicted in the serpent-slaying myth symbolize 'culture' that brings a new order."[22] This interpretation firmly situates the tale in the agricultural context of wet-rice cultivation.

The Dragon's Connection to Water

Often the eight-headed serpent is not only seen as a river god as in Miura's interpretation but rather as a personification of the Hi (*Kojiki*: 肥; *Nihon shoki*: 簸) River (present-day Hii 斐伊 River), the largest river in the Izumo region, which features prominently in most versions of the myth.[23] This is not surprising if one pays

attention to the description of the serpent's appearance, which is indeed reminiscent of a mighty river:

> Its eyes are like red cherries and it has eight heads and eight tails. Covered in moss, cypress and cedar, it spans eight valleys and eight peaks, and when you look at its belly you see blood oozing out everywhere.[24]

The Hi River frequently burst its banks until its course was redirected during the Edo period (1600–1868). On the other hand, the river's nourishing waters were an indispensable prerequisite for any form of agriculture, especially for the irrigation of rice paddies. The river's significance for those who lived in its vicinity can be inferred from a passage in the *Izumo fudoki* 出雲風土記 (Topography of Izumo, 733):

> On both sides of the river, the soil is fertile. In some places, prosperous fields provide the people with abundant harvests of the five sorts of grain, mulberry, and hemp. In other places, the soil is fertile and herbs and trees grow profusely. There are *ayu* 年魚 [sweetfish], salmon, trout, dace, mullet, and sea eel. They crowd the deep and shallow waters. The people of the five districts between the mouth of the river and the headwaters at the village of Yokota 横田 live off the river.[25]

It is no wonder, then, that the local farmers, who depended on the river for their livelihood, regarded it not only with awe but also with fear. Like the eight-headed serpent, the river brought both fertility and destruction.

The dragon's close connection to rivers and water is by no means limited to Japan. The Egyptologist Grafton Elliot Smith, for instance, regarded "the control of water" as the "fundamental element in the dragon's powers." This control extends over both the "beneficient and destructive aspects [of] water" and includes the regulation of tides, streams, and rainfall. Moreover, dragons were believed to dwell in pools or wells and were associated with thunder and lightning.[26]

21 This name is used only in the *Nihon shoki*; in the *Kojiki*, the young woman is called Kushinada-hime 寄名田比売, a name that is not directly relatable to rice fields. However, Matsumura Takeo argues that this name resulted via elision from the one used in the *Nihon shoki*. Matsumura, *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, vol. 3, pp. 207–208.

22 Miura, *Kojiki kōgi*, pp. 122–26. I am indebted to Robert Wittkamp for pointing out this reference to me.

23 See, for instance, Aston, *Shinto*, p. 105; Matsumoto, *Kojiki shinwa ron*, p. 69; Matsumura, *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, vol. 3, pp. 188–89; Saigō, *Kojiki no sekai*, pp. 73–75. All versions of the serpent-slaying myth are set beside a river. Only variant 2 of the *Nihon shoki* provides a name different from Hi River in this context, namely the E 可愛 River in Agi (the western part of present-day Hiroshima Prefecture). Yet even this variant mentions the Hi River in Izumo as the site where Susanoo finally settled down with his bride.

24 Heldt, *The Kojiki*, p. 26.

25 *Izumo fudoki*, pp. 218–19.

26 Smith, *Evolution of the Dragon*, p. 78. Robert Miller discusses a large number of Near Eastern variants of the dragon-slaying myth, in most of which the dragon is explicitly associated with rivers or the sea. Miller, "Tracking the Dragon."

How can the dragon's connection to water be reconciled with the conception of it being an embodiment of chaos? A look at Greek mythology provides a possible answer to this question. In Hesiod's *Theogony* (eighth century BCE), Chaos is the first deity that comes into being. The goddess is depicted as one of the two primordial mothers—the other being Gaia, that is, Mother Earth.[27] Several Greek philosophers therefore identified Chaos with water. Possibly this conception can be traced back to a time when the ocean formed the limit of the world known to humankind, an insurmountable barrier hostile to human life. "Hence Chaos—a living state of disorder, inactivity, and preëxistent death— was conceived as a waste of waters."[28] Calvert Watkins, on the other hand, interprets the Indo-Iranian theme of the pent-up waters or "the blockage of life-giving forces, which are released by the victorious act of the hero," discussed below, as a manifestation of the chaos symbolized by the dragon.[29]

While it is difficult to assess whether these interpretations are correct, the dragon's connection to water is indisputably a very pronounced feature in a large number of myths and folktales and can thus justifiably be called a universal motif. Marinus Willem de Visser has amply documented this motif in the Indian, Chinese, and Japanese traditions. He demonstrated that the Indian nagas, "serpent-shaped semi-divine kings, living in great luxury in their magnificent palaces at the bottom of the water," share their role as givers or withholders of rain with Chinese and Japanese dragons.[30]

Of special importance in this context is the *jiao long* 蛟龍, a type of dragon that is attested to in the myths and folklore of central and southern China. The *jiao long* is variously described as a "four-legged snake," "hornless dragon," or as "a snake with a tiger head, [which] is several fathoms long, lives in brooks and rivers, and bellows like a bull"; it has to be distinguished from the "real dragon" (*long* 龍), "which can ascend to heaven, is mainly benevolent, and provides rain and fertility." The *jiao* dragon, in contrast, "is usually malevolent and dangerous for man.… [It] is a special form of the snake as river god."[31] Nelly Naumann emphasizes the relatedness of Chinese *jiao* dragons to Japanese conceptions

of malevolent snakes that inhabit rivers or ponds and that feature in local flood legends.[32] These conceptions doubtless colored the description of the eight-headed serpent in the ancient Japanese court chronicles. The conception of the dragon as a water god who must be propitiated in order to ensure sufficient water supply for agriculture and to prevent floods seems to form the oldest layer of the dragon-slayer myth. In Japan this theme finds a specific expression in the eight-headed serpent's close connection to wet-rice cultivation.

Perseus and Andromeda

The parallels of the "Slaying of the Great Eight-Headed Serpent" with dragon-slayer myths around the globe have not gone unnoticed in previous scholarship. As early as 1896, W. G. Aston emphasized "the resemblance of this story to that of Perseus and Andromeda, and many others."[33] In the same year, Edwin Sydney Hartland included a discussion of the Japanese myth in the last volume of his influential study *The Legend of Perseus*.[34] Since that time scholars inside and outside Japan have frequently compared the myth of Susanoo slaying the eight-headed serpent with the Greek narrative of Perseus and Andromeda.[35] The Greek narrative can be summarized thus: Andromeda was the daughter of Queen Cassiopeia who had unwisely boasted that she was fairer than the sea nymphs. To punish this sacrilege, Poseidon sent a flood and a sea monster to eradicate Cassiopeia's kingdom. According to an oracle, this disaster could only be avoided if Andromeda was sacrificed to the monster. Hence, the princess was chained to a rock at the shore, where Perseus, a son of Zeus, found her. The youth killed the monster and took

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27 Caldwell, *Hesiod's Theogony*, p. 3.
28 Fontenrose, *Python*, pp. 225, 238–39.
29 Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, p. 300.
30 Visser, *Dragon in China and Japan*, p. 231.
31 Eberhard, *Local Cultures*, pp. 378–79.

32 Naumann, "Yama no Kami," p. 89. Naumann has demonstrated the presence of a number of elements associated with the southern Chinese Yue 越 culture in the material and spiritual culture of Izumo. Naumann, *Umwandeln des Himmelspfeilers*, pp. 218–29.
33 Aston, *Nihongi*, vol. 1, p. 53, note 4.
34 Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, vol. 3, pp. 51–53.
35 See, for example, Fontenrose, *Python*, p. 500; Lyle, "Hero," p. 6; Matsumae, *Nihon shinwa no keisei*, pp. 195–97; Matsumoto, *Kojiki shinwa ron*, pp. 68–69; Matsumura, *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, vol. 3, pp. 166–69; Miura, *Kojiki kōgi*, p. 116; Ōbayashi, *Nihon shinwa no kigen*, pp. 166–70; Philippi, *Kojiki*, p. 406; Seki, "Yamata no orochi," pp. 164–65; Yamaguchi, *Tsukurareta Susanoo shinwa*, pp. 133–59.

Andromeda as his wife.[36]

The structural parallels to the *yamata no orochi* myth are apparent: in both cases, a girl is to be sacrificed to a water dragon; she is rescued by a hero from abroad, and becomes his wife. While the dragon in the Greek tale is explicitly connected with a flood, a similar connection is at least implied in the Japanese tale if we accept the identification of the eight-headed serpent with the Hi River bursting its banks each spring.[37] It must be emphasized, however, that the Greek tale differs from the *yamata no orochi* myth insofar as it is not linked to agriculture.

Releasing the Waters

Michael Witzel challenges the view that the "Slaying of the Great Eight-Headed Serpent" belongs to the same type of narratives as the myth of Perseus and Andromeda by drawing attention to another group of myths that are also concerned with dragons and water, albeit in a different way: instead of a flood, they deal with a drought. In a massive work on the origins of the world's mythologies, Witzel endeavors to reconstruct a basic storyline that is common to most of the world's mythologies.[38] In this storyline, he assigns an important position to the slaying of the dragon: after the creation of the universe, he argues, the earth has to be moistened so it can nurture living beings. In many traditions it is not ordinary water but the blood of a primordial dragon that fertilizes the earth. He explicitly mentions the *yamata no orochi* myth as an articulation of this mythical idea.[39]

In a recent article, Emily Lyle draws on Witzel's work but remarks that in the Japanese myth "aspects of the 'release of the waters' and the 'prevention of flood' are found together."[40] According to Lyle, this is no coincidence, since both aspects can be traced to the same narrative framework, namely the "world-shaping process" in which the dragon-slayer has to fight off "a number of extreme conditions," among them the situations "too dry" and "too wet."[41]

In the *yamata no orochi* myth the two episodes are connected by the sword Kusanagi that Susanoo extracts from the serpent's tail. This sword, Lyle argues, is in fact the sky god's phallus that "is left embedded in the primal goddess" after the separation of sky and earth.[42]

This interpretation becomes comprehensible if one considers the cosmogony described in Hesiod's *Theogony*. The Greek work relates how Gaia mated with her son Ouranos, the first sky god, who imprisoned their children in Gaia's body. Eventually Gaia could not bear the pain and therefore made a sickle for her sons to punish their father. Kronos, the youngest, took the sickle and castrated his father. A number of children were born from the sky god's blood that fell on the earth, and his severed phallus was transformed into the goddess Aphrodite.[43]

While the castration motif is characteristic first of all of Near Eastern mythologies,[44] the idea of the sexual embrace of sky and earth that had to be broken at the beginning of time is widely distributed over the globe.[45] The *Nihon shoki*, too, opens with the separation of heaven and earth:

> In ancient times, heaven and earth were not yet
> separated; the female and the male principles were
> not yet divided. They formed a chaotic mass like
> a hen's egg which was dark and hard to discern
> and contained germs. The clear and bright [parts]
> expanded thinly and became the heaven, the
> heavy and murky [parts] lingered and became
> the earth. The pure and fine parts easily merged,
> while the coagulation of the dark and murky parts

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36 Ingersoll, *Dragons and Dragon Lore*, pp. 124–25.

37 Hartland suggested a similar interpretation for the Greek myth: "It may, of course, be that the monster sent to devour Andromeda is to be regarded simply as the personification of water, or of specific rivers in their sinister aspect." Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, vol. 3, p. 94. Hartland's view, in turn, inspired Aston's interpretation of the Japanese myth. Aston, *Nihongi*, vol. 1, pp. 104–105.

38 Witzel, *Origins*. It goes without saying that Witzel's undertaking is not only an ambitious but also a controversial one. A discussion of his methodology is well beyond the scope of this article. Although the study draws attention to astounding parallels in the structures of mythologies widely dispersed in time and space, Witzel's inattention to the textual genesis of the individual sources under consideration is a serious drawback and his conclusions should therefore be questioned. For a critical assessment of his work, see Lincoln, "Review."

39 Witzel, "Slaying the Dragon," pp. 266–67.

40 Lyle, "Hero," p. 6.

41 Lyle, *Ten Gods*, pp. 106–107.

42 Lyle, "Hero," p. 7.

43 Caldwell, *Hesiod's Theogony*, pp. 6–7.

44 Mondi, "Greek Mythic Thought," pp. 155–56.

45 Witzel, *Origins*, pp. 128–37. This is also true for Korean mythology. See Hyŏn, "Nihon shinwa to Kankoku shinwa," pp. 70–80; Yoda, *Chōsen no ōken*, pp. 5–11.

was completed with [greater] difficulty. Therefore, the heaven came into being first and the earth was formed afterward. Thereafter, divine beings (*shinsei* 神聖) were born between them.[46] . . . At this time, one thing was born between heaven and earth. Its form was like that of a reed shoot. Then it became a deity and was called Kuninotokotachi no Mikoto 国常立尊 (Eternally Standing Deity of Earth).[47]

The *Kojiki* frames the origin of the world somewhat differently. Here heaven and earth are not separated but "first became active."[48] Afterwards a deity called Amenotokotachi no Kami 天之常立神 (Eternally Standing Deity of Heaven) comes into being.[49] In this context, Witzel regards Amenotokotachi no Kami as "the prop supporting heaven and separating heaven and earth." As he shows, such props or pillars appear in a number of mythologies in different regions of the world. This may suggest that the separation of heaven and earth was conceived as a violent act.[50]

This phenomenon throughout world mythology shows that it is possible to compare the Japanese account of the separation of heaven and earth, at least in its broad outline, with the separation of Ouranos from Gaia as related by Hesiod. Therefore, Lyle's interpretation of Kusanagi as the sky god's phallus is not impossible, although it admittedly remains speculative. The merit of her hypothesis is that it allows us to overcome one of the greatest contradictions in the myth of Susanoo's fight against the eight-headed serpent. As discussed later in this article, the magical weapon is a typical feature of dragon-slayer myths the world over. In many tales, this weapon—often an iron sword—is needed to defeat the dragon. Why then does Susanoo

obtain the mighty sword Kusanagi only *after* he has killed the eight-headed serpent? And how did he come by the sword he used to kill the eight-headed serpent in the first place? If we follow Lyle's interpretation, this contradiction emerged when two episodes of the narrative sequence associated with the "world-shaping process" were fused into one. In the first of these episodes, she argues, the hero plucks out the sky god's phallus, which was left embedded in the earth goddess when the sky was separated from the earth. Thereby he gains a powerful weapon and releases the life-giving waters, whose flow was obstructed by the weapon/phallus. In the second episode, he "uses his weapon to defeat the sea dragon" and thus to prevent a flood.[51]

The Dragon's Connection to Metal

The sword Kusanagi brings us to another important aspect of the cluster of ideas and motifs centering on the dragon, namely its connection to metal. While this theme is not as widely distributed as the dragon's association with water, many traditions, especially in Asia, connect the dragon with metal. This connection is an ambivalent one: dragons are believed to dislike iron and can be defeated only with the help of special (often iron) weapons, yet at the same time they guard treasures of gold and can even transform themselves into money or swords.

In his aforementioned study, Smith observes that "throughout the greater part of the area which tradition has peopled with dragons, iron is regarded as peculiarly lethal to the monsters."[52] Visser provides rich documentation for this belief in China, where dragons were commonly believed to be afraid of iron. This conception is expressed, for example, in a tale about the repairs of a dike that could be completed only after great quantities of iron were buried under the dike and the dragons dwelling in the water were thus defeated, or in the belief that one could cause rains by throwing iron into ponds, thus stirring up the dragons. The latter practice was imported to Japan as well.[53]

The idea that serpents can be killed with iron is attested by a Japanese folktale in which a farmer's daugh-

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46 The *Nihon shoki*'s compilers created this passage by combining sections from Chinese works like the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (Master Huainan, second century BCE) and the *Sanwu liji* 三五曆紀 (Historical Records of the Three Sovereign Divinities and the Five Gods, third century CE). See Kōnoshi, *Kojiki to Nihon shoki*, pp. 116–20. Witzel points out that this might in fact only be a matter of wording. Even if the ideas expressed in this cosmogonic myth were already known in the Japanese islands prior to the arrival of the Chinese yin and yang concept, the Chinese-educated compilers of the *Nihon shoki* would have had to look for Chinese models in order to express it in Chinese writing. Witzel, *Origins*, pp. 125–26.

47 *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 18–19.

48 This translation follows Quiros, "Chapter 1," p. 306.

49 *Kojiki*, pp. 28–29.

50 Witzel, *Origins*, pp. 131–37.

51 Lyle, "Hero," p. 7.

52 Smith, *Evolution of the Dragon*, p. 135.

53 Visser, *Dragon in China and Japan*, p. 67; Eberhard, *Local Cultures*, p. 376.

ter prevents herself from being married off to a serpent by throwing a needle at it, thus killing the beast.[54] In a similar vein, the *Nihon ryōiki* 日本霊異記 (Records of Miracles of Manifest Retribution of Good and Evil in the Land of Japan, ninth century) relates that a farmer was surprised by a rainstorm while he was working in his rice fields. He took shelter under a tree, holding a metal rod (*kanazue* 金杖) in his hand.

> When it thundered, he raised the rod in fear. At that moment the thunder struck in front of him in the form of a child, who made a deep bow. The farmer was about to strike it with the metal rod when the child said, "Please don't hit me. I will repay your kindness."[55]

As a reward for not killing him, the child, who was in fact a thunder god, gifted the farmer with a son of supernatural strength. The text notes that the baby had a snake coiled around his head.[56] This may be taken as a hint of the child's connection to the thunder god and the latter's reptile nature. According to one interpretation, the child is a reincarnation of the deity himself.[57] What is important in the present context is the underlying assumption that the thunder god was afraid of the farmer's metal rod, a tool that was believed to ward off water gods, dragons, or serpents in Japanese folk belief.[58]

There is another side to the dragon's connection with metal, however. Often dragons are believed to guard treasures of gold, a concept that is known in India and East Asia, although the most famous exam-ples belong to European traditions.[59] In Korea, dragons were believed to inhabit mines and guard their metals jealously.[60] Dragons can even turn themselves into metal. According to a Chinese folktale, a man finds a pot full of gold. When another man steals the pot, he finds only snakes inside. In revenge, he pours the pot's contents through the rightful owner's roof, where the snakes retransform into gold. In a variant, the gold turns into water, supporting the interpretation of dragons or serpents as water gods or even embodiments of water.[61] The connection of serpents to treasures can also be observed in a number of Buddhist tales, where the snake is turned into a symbol of the attachment to earthly riches.[62]

Wolfram Eberhard has pointed to the centrality of the *jiao* dragons in this context. He has shown that they, like snakes in general, are not only defeated by iron, but actually *embody* metal.[63] As already noted, these ideas, which form a part of the southern Chinese snake cult, can be traced in the myths of Izumo as well. An analysis of the "Slaying of the Eight-Headed Serpent" has to take this cultural background into account. There is no need for an elaborate explanation that regards the sword Kusanagi as the phallus of the sky god, as suggested by Lyle, if Japanese and Chinese tales suggest a simpler interpretation, namely that the sword is an alternate form of the serpent itself.

According to Visser, Chinese dragons can "transform themselves into old men, beautiful women, and fishes, or sometimes assume the shapes of trees and objects, *as e. g. swords.*"[64] A southern Chinese tale may serve as an example: A man found two carp that suddenly turned into iron. He made two swords out of them that were sharp enough to cut through rocks. With these swords, the man established himself as a king. As Eberhard points out, these carp are nothing else than transformed *jiao* dragons.[65]

As mentioned above, Susanoo found the sword Kusanagi in the eight-headed serpent's tail. This might

54 Ikeda 312B, *Type and Motif Index*, pp. 74–75; Seki, "Yamata no orochi," pp. 150–52. Another related tale type that is attested to in southern Korea and Japan is that of the "Snake Paramour," in which a young woman is visited every night by a stranger. She uses a needle to attach a thread to his clothes. When next morning she follows the thread, she finds that her lover is actually a serpent. In *Kojiki*, pp. 184–88, this motif is associated with the deity of Miwa, who appears in serpent form in another passage in the *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 282–84. This tale does not belong to the dragon-slayer type; however, it does imply a connection between serpent and metal, since the iron needle is an important motif in all versions. See also Antoni, *Miwa*, pp. 91–97; Yoda, *Chōsen minzoku bunka*, pp. 26–28; Ikeda 411C, *Type and Motif Index*, p. 103. Ikeda mentions Japanese versions in which the snake husband is killed with an iron needle. Ibid.
55 Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories*, pp. 105–106.
56 *Nihon ryōiki* 1:3 (pp. 204–205).
57 Kelsey, "Salvation of the Snake," p. 92.
58 Ouwehand, *Namazu-e*, pp. 176–77.

59 Blust, "Origin of Dragons," p. 520.
60 Ingersoll, *Dragons and Dragon Lore*, p. 88.
61 Eberhard, *Typen chinesischer Volksmärchen*, pp. 229–30; Eberhard, *Volksmärchen aus Südost-China*, pp. 201–202.
62 Kelsey, "Salvation of the Snake," pp. 101–102.
63 Eberhard, *Local Cultures*, p. 378.
64 Visser, *Dragon in China and Japan*, p. 233, my emphasis.
65 Eberhard, *Local Cultures*, pp. 376–78. For another southern Chinese example of a snake deity turning into a sword, see Eberhard, *Volksmärchen aus Südost-China*, pp. 181–82.

reflect an ancient folk belief that figures in the oral traditions of many regions of Japan. According to this belief, potholes (smooth cavities or holes that form in the rocks of riverbeds through erosion) were in fact drilled by dragons ascending to heaven with the sharp swords growing from their tails.[66]

Roy Andrew Miller and Nelly Naumann draw a connection between the word *kusanagi* and Korean *kurŏng'i* 구렁이 (a serpent, a large snake). They reconstruct the Old Korean form **kusïnki*, "which was then borrowed into Old Japanese to appear there as *kusanagĭ*." Yet they admit that one link is missing to make this etymology "fully convincing."[67] Considering the evidence presented in this section, it seems not at all implausible that the sword as a *pars pro toto* is named after the serpent from whose tail it emerged.[68]

A close connection between serpent and sword is also suggested by an alternate name for the sword that is mentioned in the *Nihon shoki*:

> According to one writing, the original name [of the sword Kusanagi] was Amanomura-kumo no Tsurugi 天叢雲劍 (Sword of the Gathering Clouds of Heaven). Perhaps it came by this name because there were always clouds and mist over the place where the serpent was.[69]

Thus, the sword, like the serpent itself, is associated with clouds and rain. This makes it even more likely that the sword was perceived as a part of the serpent's body.

Ingersoll emphasized the contradictory roles played by the deities mentioned in Egyptian and Babylonian myth: they were, he claimed, "dragon, dragon-slayer and the weapon employed, all in the same personage."[70] The above entitles us at least to assert a close relationship between serpent and sword in the Japanese tradition.

The *Yamata no Orochi* Myth and its Connection to Metallurgy

Many scholars have associated the myth of Susanoo's fight against the eight-headed serpent with the arrival of advanced techniques of metalworking from the Korean Peninsula. In this context, rationalizing and euhemeristic interpretations abound, especially in Japanese scholarship. A scholar might claim, for instance, that the serpent's red eyes symbolized smelting furnaces, and that the serpent's blood that turned the river red, as we are told in *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, was actually nothing else than red-hot iron.[71] In such interpretations, Susanoo is usually regarded as the ancestral deity or the leader of a group of metalworkers, often of Korean descent.[72] One scholar viewed the eight-headed serpent as a mountain spirit that was fond of causing rainstorms and deluges. The ensuing landslides, he argued, brought rich deposits of iron sand to the surface that were, in turn, made into swords. Hence, swords made of iron taken from the bowels of the mountain came to be viewed as parts of the tail of the mountain spirit in its serpent form.[73] Euhemeristic overtones can also be perceived in an otherwise highly readable recent study by James Grayson, who maintains that Susanoo "became the [Izumo] region's ruler because he is the bearer of an advanced culture, the metallurgic and agricultural civilization of continental East Asia."[74]

The fundamental problem with such interpretations is that they regard myths as nothing more than "the allegorical representation of actual historical events and persons,"[75] thereby missing most of the various layers of meaning that constitute myth. A narrative that has undergone a complex development and was adapted to changing social, economic, and cultural circumstances is thus turned into an embroidered account of a specific historical event, in this case the introduction of metallurgical techniques by a group of immigrants. It seems much more likely that the introduction of metalworking techniques added a new layer of meaning to a preexisting narrative. It seems plausible that by incorporating the discovery of the mighty sword Ku-

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66 Matsumura, *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, vol. 3, p. 240; Takioto, *Izumo no kuni fudoki*, pp. 102–103.

67 Naumann and Miller, "Old Japanese Sword Names," pp. 405–406.

68 Cf. Naumann, "The 'Kusanagi' Sword," pp. 163–64.

69 *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 92–93.

70 Ingersoll, *Dragons and Dragon Lore*, p. 26.

71 Yoshino, *Fudoki sekai*, p. 322.

72 See, for instance, Mizuno, *Kodai no Izumo*, pp. 198–99; Yoshino, "Suson tesshinron," p. 237.

73 Katō, "Yamata no orochi shinwa," pp. 283–85.

74 Grayson, "Susa-no-o," pp. 482–83.

75 Burns, *Before the Nation*, p. 48.

sanagi, the Japanese dragon-slayer myth adapted to the introduction of a new cultural technology that was connected to two aspects already addressed in the narrative: water and agriculture. As will be elaborated below, in ancient Japan iron sand for the production of iron utensils was obtained from the bottoms of rivers; and it goes without saying that the increased availability of iron tools from the early Kofun period revolutionized agriculture. I would therefore argue that it was natural for a myth preoccupied with the importance of rivers and agriculture such as the "Slaying of the Great Eight-Headed Serpent" to incorporate the new technological innovation and thus remain relevant in a new age. Of course it is equally possible that metallurgical ideas were already a part of the narrative when it was first introduced to Japan from the Asian mainland. While the agricultural and the metallurgical layers of meaning are relatively easy to discern in the *yamata no orochi* myth as it is related in *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, it is nearly impossible to pinpoint the exact location or timeframe of their emergence.

Rationalizing and euhemeristic approaches also fail to account for the existence of strikingly similar tales in different cultures. Ōbayashi Taryō, on the other hand, compares the Japanese myth with tales of the Perseus–Andromeda type told among the Gilyak (Nivkh) of Sakhalin and the Ainu as well as with similar tales from Korea, Mongolia, southern and central China, Indochina, Borneo, and the Philippines. From this comparison, he concludes that in most regions, motifs connected with swords play an important role in the narrative. More specifically, he observes the following motifs and notions: (1) a human sacrifice is necessary to obtain a magical sword (Japan, China, Indochina, Mindanao); (2) a magical sword is obtained inside a mountain or under the earth (Japan, Korea, China, Mindanao); (3) a magical sword is discovered in a body of water (Japan, China, Indochina); and (4) sword and dragon or serpent are closely connected (Japan, Korea, China, Indochina).[76]

The centrality of the sword, Ōbayashi argues, suggests that these tales originated in societies that possessed advanced knowledge of metallurgy. He points out that in works dating to the Later Han period (25 CE–220 CE), like *Wu Yue chun qiu* 吳越春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals of Wu and Yue) or *Yue jue shu*

越絕書 (A History of the Glory and Fall of Yue), the southern kingdoms of Wu 吳 and Yue 越 were famed throughout China for their supreme swords. According to Ōbayashi, the tales from this region show the most striking similarities to the Japanese myth of the eight-headed serpent. The Indochinese tales, on the other hand, are associated with Dongson culture, the first metal-producing culture of Indochina and Indonesia that entered the region from the north around 800 BCE.[77]

Ōbayashi argues that these diverse manifestations of metal culture were not unrelated to each other. He draws attention to the close parallels between Asian and European versions of the dragon-slayer myth and concludes that the tales can be traced back to a common origin. Situating the diffusion of metallurgic techniques and the myths of the Perseus–Andromeda type in the framework of Robert Heine-Geldern's (1885–1968) so-called Pontic Migration (*Pontische Wanderung*),[78] he argues that they were carried from the Pontic area to East and Southeast Asia in the first half of the first millennium BCE and were finally transmitted to Japan from the area to the south of the lower reaches of the Yangzi River, possibly via southern Korea.[79] The folklorist Seki Keigo similarly argues that the Korean Peninsula functioned as a mediator in transmitting the dragon-slayer myth from China to the archipelago. Like Ōbayashi, he emphasizes the southern route of transmission of the myth, focusing on variants from Korea, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, India, and Turkey.[80]

In a more recent study, Yamaguchi Hiroshi draws attention to the heroic epics of northern Eurasia, in many of which the hero has to fight a many-headed monster. He raises examples from the Ukraine, Russia, southern Siberia, Mongolia, and China that show remarkable parallels to the Japanese myth of Susanoo's fight with

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76 Ōbayashi, *Nihon shinwa no kigen*, pp. 170–93.

77 Ibid., pp. 169, 189–90; Villiers, *Südostasien vor der Kolonialzeit*, p. 32.

78 According to Heine-Geldern, elements of European and Caucasian cultures were transmitted to Mongolia, China, and Indochina in the context of mass migrations during the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, where they gave the impetus for the emergence of Dongson culture. He bases his conclusions on typological comparisons of a number of archaeological artifacts. See Heine-Geldern, "Das Tochararproblem," pp. 237–38. On Heine-Geldern's methodology, see Kaneko, "Robert von Heine-Geldern."

79 Ōbayashi, *Nihon shinwa no kigen*, pp. 191–95.

80 Seki, "Yamata no orochi," p. 196 and *passim*.

the eight-headed serpent.[81]

One such example is the legend of Geser, which is told in a number of different versions in southern Siberia, Mongolia, and Tibet. One of the most important feats of Geser is his fight against a many-headed monster that had abducted one of his wives. In the oldest extant version of the epic—a woodblock print that was produced in Beijing in 1716 in the Mongolian language—the monster is described as a twelve-headed *mangus* 蟒古斯.[82] This term connotes a monster resembling a dragon or a giant serpent. It combines Indian, Iranian, and Buddhist notions of demons that merged in the course of centuries.[83]

Geser defeated the monster and cut off its heads, one after the other. When he had already cut off eleven heads, the *mangus* begged him to spare his life. Geser hesitated, but his allies warned him that the monster's body would soon turn into cast iron, making it impossible for Geser to kill it. This warning proved true: when Geser tried to separate the last head, his sword could not penetrate the monster's throat; neither could his blade penetrate the beast's armpit. When Geser finally managed to cut open its abdomen, liquid ore gushed out and he was able to cut off the last head.[84]

The similarity to the Japanese myth, where Susanoo's sword broke (*Kojiki*) or was blunted (*Nihon shoki*), when the god tried to cut off one of the tails of the eight-headed serpent, is striking. Significantly, it is inside the serpent's tail that Susanoo finds the sword Kusanagi. Yamaguchi draws attention to this parallel and argues that the soul of the eight-headed serpent was transformed into an indestructible iron sword, like the soul of the *mangus* that turned into the material for such a sword.[85]

Other traces suggest a connection of the Geser epic with metallurgy. The Tibetan versions of the tale, for example, relate that Geser (here called Gesar) worked as a blacksmith's apprentice before setting out to retrieve his wife. As Siegbert Hummel has pointed out, this is only one of a number of motifs in the epic of Geser that show parallels to the tale of Siegfried in the *Niebelungenlied*. This leads Hummel to hypothesize that motifs from Germanic myth might have traveled to Tibet in the course of the Pontic Migration mentioned above.[86]

It seems somewhat rash to postulate the occurrence of a full-scale *Völkerwanderung* from the west to the east of the Eurasian continent based solely on the results of typological comparisons of a very limited number of artifacts. Nonetheless Heine-Geldern's hypothesis accords surprisingly well with the distribution of the dragon-slayer tale across Eurasia. The prominent role played by iron swords in many of these tales suggests a close connection to metallurgy. Yet the diffusion of ideas and cultural techniques does not necessarily require mass migration. Trade and plundering are only two alternative explanations. As we have seen, however, there is strong evidence that metallurgy, including its representation in myth, was transmitted from the area around the Black Sea to Southeast and East Asia. It can easily be imagined—though hardly proved—that this cultural transmission occurred in several waves and split into several arms, as already suggested by Heine-Geldern.[87]

Some of these arms of transmission might have re-joined at the eastern rim of the Eurasian continent, namely on the Korean Peninsula. Archaeologists point out that two separate traditions of ironworking entered the peninsula at roughly the same time. One was the method of smelting ore in a bloomery furnace and forming products through smithing methods on an anvil. This mode of ironworking was characteristic for peoples in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East, from where it diffused into the Central Asian steppe and was carried to eastern Siberia by Scythians around 700 BCE. The Chinese, in contrast, cast nearly all iron products using huge blast furnaces. Cautioning that as of yet no one has traced the precise routes of transmission of ironworking into and down the penin-

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81 Yamaguchi, *Tsukurareta Susanoo shinwa*, pp. 130–47.

82 Heissig, *Geser-Studien*, pp. 4–5; Herrmann, *Kesar-Versionen aus Ladakh*, p. 9; Schmidt, *Die Thaten Bogda Gesser Chan's*, p. 112.

83 Heissig, *Geser-Studien*, p. 230.

84 Schmidt, *Die Thaten Bogda Gesser Chan's*, pp. 155–56.

85 There are further parallels between the two tales: both Geser and Susanoo cut their enemies to pieces in their sleep; and Geser's wife intoxicates two giant spiders that guard the entrance to the *mangus*'s lair in the same way that Susanoo intoxicates the great eight-headed serpent. See Nekljudov and Tömörceren, *Mongolische Erzählungen über Geser*, pp. 119–29.

86 Hummel, "Anmerkungen zur Ge-sar-Sage," pp. 524–33. Geser's dogs Asar and Husar, who assist him in his dangerous quest, are another motif that connects the epic of Geser with European dragon-slayer tales. See Nekljudov and Tömörceren, *Mongolische Erzählungen über Geser*, pp. 123–29. As noted at the beginning of this paper, the assistance of three wonderful dogs forms one of the core motifs of tale type ATU 300 "The Dragon-Slayer."

87 Heine-Geldern, "Das Tocharerproblem," p. 237.

sula, William Farris estimates that by 400 BCE "both the Scythian and Chinese methods were probably available to residents of northern Korea."[88]

Even if we choose not to adopt Heine-Geldern's hypothesis with its far-reaching implications, Ōbayashi's approach to position the dragon-slayer myth in the context of metallurgy is fruitful since it allows us to take archaeological findings into account when trying to trace the route of transmission of the mythic motifs in question. Such an undertaking is hardly possible without the aid of archaeological data, especially considering the fact that most of the tales discussed above were committed to writing at a rather late date. If one were to consider only dragon-slayer tales in written sources older than the Japanese court chronicles, the comparison would basically have to be limited to Chinese tales. A related problem concerns the dearth of dragon-slayer tales from Korea. The Korean folktales discussed by Ōbayashi and Seki differ quite markedly from the myth of Susanoo's fight with the eight-headed serpent. Although the Korean tales open with a similar situation, namely a girl who is to be sacrificed to a giant serpent (or centipede), in these tales the monster is killed not by a youthful hero but rather by a grateful toad, whom the girl had nourished and cared for. Consequently, there is no marriage and no iron sword involved.[89] Another tale, related in the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, thirteenth century), not only contains the motif of marriage but also shows striking similarities to the overall structure of the *yamata no orochi* myth. In this legend, Kŏt'aji 居陁知, a Silla envoy to the Tang court, is asked for help by an old man, who introduces himself as the god of the West Sea and explains that a young monk had appeared and eaten the livers of his children; now only the old man, his wife, and their last daughter are left. Kŏt'aji hides himself and waits for the monk's reappearance. When he shoots him with an arrow, the monk transforms back to his original shape, a fox, and dies. As a reward, the old man, who is actually a dragon, offers his daughter's hand to Kŏt'aji. The wife-to-be is turned into

a flower, which Kŏt'aji carries with him to Tang China.[90] While the structural similarities to the myth of Susanoo's fight with the eight-headed serpent are unmistakable, it cannot be denied that a core element—the iron sword—is missing altogether, while another one—the dragon—plays a very different role in the Korean tale.

The lack of documented Korean tales comparable to the *yamata no orochi* myth makes it difficult to postulate a transmission of the tale via the Korean Peninsula. On the other hand, a number of names mentioned in variants of the Japanese myth in the *Nihon shoki* clearly point towards Korea. Most significantly, the sword Susanoo uses to slay the serpent is called "Serpent's Korea Blade" (*orochi-no-kara-sai no tsurugi* 蛇韓鋤之劍) in one of the variants.[91] Naumann and Miller draw attention to another passage in the same source that mentions a "supreme blade from Wu" (*kure no masai* 句礼能摩差比)[92] and remark that "*karasaFĭ* 'a blade from Korea' (*kara*) naturally points to a blade of Korean origin just as *kure.nö masaFĭ*, 'a blade from Wu,' boasts of its continental origin."[93] In another variant, the blade is called *orochi no ara-masa* 蛇之麁正.[94] While the translation of this name is contested, the component *ara* has been linked to Ara Kaya 阿那加耶, one of the five Kaya states situated in the southeastern part of the peninsula.[95] Both archaeological evidence and Chinese sources like the *Sanguozhi* 三國志 (Records of the Three Kingdoms, third century) suggest that the Kaya Federation was an important center of metal production with close ties to the Japanese islands as early as the Yayoi period.[96] A further variant in the *Nihon shoki* asserts that Susanoo crossed over to Izumo from the Korean kingdom of Silla.[97] If these variants are taken into account and the transmission of the dragon-slayer tale is considered in the context of the arrival of metallurgical techniques on the Japanese archipelago, the lack of Korean written sources can be compensated to a certain degree.

As Michael Como rightly points out,

88 Farris, *Sacred Texts*, p. 70; Barnes, *State Formation in Japan*, pp. 65–67; Barnes, *Archaeology of East Asia*, p. 269.

89 Ōbayashi, *Nihon shinwa no kigen*, pp. 175–76; Seki, "Yamata no orochi," p. 150. An English translation of a version of this tale appears as Tale 113 in Grayson, *Myths and Legends from Korea*, pp. 274–76.

90 *Samguk yusa*, pp. 258–60; cf. Ōbayashi, *Shinwa to shinwagaku*, pp. 213–17.

91 *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 96–97.

92 Ibid., Suiko 推古 20 (612).1.7 (vol. 2, pp. 566–67).

93 Naumann and Miller, "Old Japanese Sword Names," p. 411.

94 *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 96–97.

95 Bentley, *Sendai Kuji Hongi*, p. 179, note 17; Yoshino, *Fudoki sekai*, p. 322.

96 Seyock, *Spuren der Ostbarbaren*.

97 *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 98–99.

continental technologies related to sericulture, medicine, and metalworking were firmly embedded in continental ritual and conceptual frameworks, [thus] their transmission necessitated the simultaneous transmission and adoption of a body of rites and legends that were part of the basic fabric of popular cultic practice in the Chinese empire(s) and in the Korean kingdoms.[98]

In the last part of this paper, I will therefore shift the focus from a narratological analysis of the *yamata no orochi* myth to an examination of metal production in ancient Izumo, the site of the dragon fight. This examination will consider both written and archaeological evidence.

Metallurgy in Izumo: Evidence from the *Izumo Fudoki*

The *Izumo fudoki* contains a number of passages that allow us to draw a rather clear picture of the locations of iron production sites in Izumo Province during the Nara period (710–794), the period during which both the *Izumo fudoki* and the court chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were completed. The districts of Iishi 飯石 and Nita 仁多 in the hinterlands of the province play a key role in this context.

The section dedicated to Iishi in the topography mentions that iron sand was obtained from the Hata 波多 River and the Iishi River.[99] Historians generally conclude from this entry that iron sand was obtained from the bottoms of rivers in ancient Izumo.[100] The Hata River and township of the same name located in the northeastern part of the district have often been associated with the Hata lineage group 秦氏.[101] The Hata were a group with Chinese roots that left the Korean Peninsula, where they were probably based in Silla, and emigrated to the Japanese archipelago around the turn

of the fifth century. In Japan, they seem to have played a leading role in establishing technologies of sericulture, weaving, irrigation, and, most important in the present context, metalworking.[102]

The most significant center of iron production in Izumo, however, seems to have been located in the neighboring Nita District. This district comprised the four townships of Mitokoro 三処, Fuse 布勢, Misawa 三沢, and Yokota 横田. "The iron obtained in all of the [four] townships mentioned above," the *Izumo fudoki* relates, "is exceedingly strong. Manifold tools can be produced from it."[103] This entry becomes even more interesting if one considers that this is the region that serves as the setting for the *yamata no orochi* myth in both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*—and thus is the place where the mighty sword Kusanagi was discovered. Strangely, the *Izumo fudoki* does not mention Susanoo's fight against the eight-headed serpent. Hence, many scholars argue that the narrative was fabricated at the imperial court and is not based on any local tradition.[104]

Nonetheless, the *Izumo fudoki* too contains some entries that suggest a connection of Susanoo to metalworking. The topography, for example, mentions two sons of Susanoo with the telling names Tsurugi-hiko 都留支日子 (Sword Prince) and Tsuki-hoko-tooyoru-hiko 衝杵等乎而留比古 (God of the Penetrating Halberd).[105] Moreover, the township of Susa, from which Susanoo, according to one theory, received his name,[106] is situated in Iishi District, one of the centers of iron production in Nara-period Izumo. All in all, the view that Susanoo must have been a deity venerated by a

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98 Como, *Weaving and Binding*, p. xii. In contrast to the present paper, Como is interested mainly in the transmission of these technologies and legends to Japan during the Nara and early Heian periods and does not address protohistorical or prehistorical developments.

99 *Izumo fudoki*, pp. 246–49.

100 Katō, *Izumo no kuni fudoki*, p. 400; Uchida, "Kodai Izumo no shio," p. 235; Yoshino, "Suson tesshinron," p. 239.

101 See, for example, Lewin, *Aya und Hata*, p. 88; Yoshino, "Suson tesshinron," pp. 240–41.

102 Como, *Weaving and Binding*, p. 254; Katō, *Hatashi to sono tami*, pp. 109–44; Lewin, *Aya und Hata*, p. 34; Naumann, "Yama no Kami," pp. 131–33.

103 *Izumo fudoki*, pp. 250–53.

104 Miura draws attention to a passage in the *Izumo fudoki* that casts doubt on this view: the entry on the township of Mori 母理 in Ou 意宇 District relates that Susanoo's descendant Ōnamochi 大穴持 had subjugated Eight Mouths (*yakuchi* 八口) of Koshi 越. *Izumo fudoki*, pp. 138–40. While Miura does not claim that this passage refers to the *yamata no orochi* myth, he points out that in the *Kojiki* the monster is called the eight-headed serpent *of Koshi* 高志. *Kojiki*, pp. 68–69. Hence, it is not unreasonable to suggest some sort of connection between the two narratives. Miura, *Kojiki kōgi*, pp. 240–44, 252–53.

105 *Izumo fudoki*, pp. 160–61, 186–87. The interpretation of the latter deity's name follows Aoki, *Records of Wind and Earth*, p. 110, and Katō, *Izumo no kuni fudoki*, p. 258. The reading and meaning of the name are disputed.

106 See, for example, Aston, *Shinto*, pp. 140–41; Matsumura, *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, vol. 2, pp. 602–604.

group of metalworkers, probably of Korean descent, who lived in Susa does not seem implausible.[107]

This view is supported by an interesting shrine name reported in the *Izumo fudoki* that points to the Korean origin of metalworkers in Izumo, namely Karakama 韓鉏 Shrine in Izumo District.[108] While the first character of the name refers to the Korean Peninsula, the second means sickle.[109] The shrine is also mentioned in the *Engishiki* 延喜式 (Ritual Procedures of the Engi Era, 928), where the graph 竈 (stove, hearth) is used for *kama*. In the same source, *karakama* 韓竈 (Korean stoves), are mentioned as utensils needed to brew *sake* and cook rice at religious festivals.[110] Both sickles and hearths are linked to metalworking, and the shrine's connection to the peninsula is apparent from its name. For these reasons, the shrine has been associated with groups of metalworkers who emigrated from the Korean Peninsula. The *Un'yōshi* 雲陽誌 (Description of Un'yō [= Izumo], 1717), a topography of the Izumo region compiled by Kurosawa Nagahisa 黒沢長尚 (d. 1737) under the auspices of the lord of Matsue Domain, informs us that Susanoo is the shrine's main deity.[111] There is no way of knowing whether this was already the case at the time of the *Izumo fudoki*'s compilation.

Archaeological Evidence

It is generally assumed that the inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago learned about the use of bronze and iron at about the same time, probably in the fourth or third century BCE.[112] As noted above, Chinese written sources point to the special role played by southern Korea in the transmission of iron implements to the archipelago. It is not known, however, whether the Jap-

anese imported iron ore, raw iron, or finished products from the peninsula.[113] Iron axes and daggers that were probably produced in China and imported via the peninsula have been excavated from Kyushu sites dating from the late centuries BCE.[114]

Local production of bronze and iron products is thought to have begun in northern Kyushu during the middle Yayoi period (ca. 100 BCE–100 CE). During excavations carried out in 1984 and 1985 at Kōjindani 荒神谷 in Shimane Prefecture, archaeologists unearthed an unprecedented number of 358 bronze swords, six bronze bells, and sixteen bronze halberds, all dating from around 100 CE.[115] Since then, Izumo has been regarded as one of the most important cultural centers of Yayoi and Kofun Japan, characterized principally by its advanced skills in metalworking. In 1988, a casting mold dating from around 100 CE was excavated on the Hii plain, suggesting that the bronze objects found at Kōjindani were locally produced in Izumo. The bronze-casting technology probably entered Izumo from Silla.[116]

As noted above, two modes of ironworking were known in early Korea: the Scythian mode of forging iron and the Chinese mode of casting iron. The peninsula's inhabitants seem to have preferred the simpler Scythian method. Ironworkers on the archipelago followed this Korean method rather than the Chinese one, which strongly suggests a transmission of ironworking technologies from the Korean Peninsula.[117]

During the Kofun period, the use and production techniques of iron implements gradually diversified and spread over the Japanese islands. The first half of the fifth century in particular is marked by a dramatic increase in the quantity of iron objects excavated from mounded tombs. During this period, the Chūgoku region (comprising the present-day prefectures of Yamaguchi, Hiroshima, Shimane, Tottori, and Okayama) emerged as a fourth center of iron production beside

107 See Yoshino, "Suson tesshinron," p. 237; Takioto, *Izumo no kuni fudoki*, pp. 61–63.

108 *Izumo fudoki*, pp. 214–15.

109 Takioto, *Kodai no Izumo jiten*, p. 190. According to Murakami Yasuyuki, the crescent-shaped stone blades that were used for the rice harvest during the Yayoi period were replaced in the early Kofun period with iron sickles. Murakami, "Eisenerzeugnisse der Kofun-Zeit," p. 358.

110 *Engishiki*, pp. 46–47, 112–13, 672–73. Alexander Vovin argues that the Middle Japanese word *kama* (cooking pot), which has been demonstrated to be part of the Old Japanese word *kamaNtô* (cooking place, hearth) is a loan from Korean. Vovin, *Koreo-Japonica*, p. 132.

111 *Un'yōshi*, p. 277; cf. Grayson, "Susa-no-o," pp. 469–70.

112 Kidder, *Himiko*, p. 88.

113 Seyock, *Spuren der Ostbarbaren*, pp. 131–32.

114 Farris, *Sacred Texts*, p. 71; Mizoguchi, *Archaeology of Japan*, p. 142; Piggott, *Emergence of Japanese Kingship*, p. 25.

115 Piggott, "Sacral Kingship," p. 46.

116 Mizoguchi, *Archaeology of Japan*, pp. 140–42; Seyock, *Spuren der Ostbarbaren*, p. 152; Piggott, "Sacral Kingship," pp. 48–49.

117 Farris, *Sacred Texts*, pp. 70–72. While granting the possibility that bloomery technology might have been transmitted to the peninsula by nomads of the Northeast Asian steppes, Gina Barnes points out that it is equally possible that peninsular bronze-workers discovered the technology independently. Barnes, *State Formation in Japan*, p. 66.

Kyushu, the Inland Sea region, and the Kinai.[118] As Joan Piggott points out, "iron-working and mastery of new irrigation techniques proceeded together in fifth- and sixth-century Izumo, for cultivators needed iron tools to open the great river plains of eastern Izumo."[119] The second half of the sixth century saw the emergence of settlements consisting of a number of smithies as well as settlements in which the various stages of production, like smelting, forging, and timber production, were implemented in the Chūgoku and Kinai regions.[120]

This marks the culmination of a centuries-long development, in which the polities on the Korean Peninsula played a decisive role. An influx of Korean-borne goods and services can be observed during the period from the late fourth to the late seventh centuries. Farris ascribes this phenomenon to four causes: (1) trade; (2) the peninsular states' foreign policies (especially that of Paekche, which donated cultural and technological aid in return for Wa soldiers); (3) plundering by Wa soldiers, and, most importantly, (4) immigration.[121] The substantial waves of immigration during these four centuries can easily be explained by the tumultuous situation on the Korean Peninsula, which was characterized by incessant warfare between the Korean states. This state of affairs lasted until 668, when Silla unified most of the peninsula under its rule. The *Nihon shoki* reports the arrival of numerous refugees from the peninsula during this period; hence it seems natural to ascribe a large proportion of the new ideas and technologies that emerged in Kofun-period Japan to immigrant lineages.[122] As a matter of course, these immigrant groups brought with them not only their expertise but also their own deities and cults.[123] Como draws attention to the concurrency and interdependence of the development of these newly arrived technologies on the archipelago:

> It is . . . probably no accident that the developments of crafts such as weaving and metalworking came to permeate the Japanese islands during the same period in which writing, record-keeping,

and rudimentary bureaucratic institutions took root at the Yamato court. By the middle of the sixth century, service groups specializing in these technologies already appear to have been formed across the Japanese islands, so it would hardly be surprising if, as changes in the material culture of Yamato stimulated new modes of production and new forms of social organization, they also played an important role in the development of the cultic and ritual practices.[124]

Against this historical background, it is reasonable to assume that the belief in Susanoo and the myth of his fight with the eight-headed serpent mirrors the advent of a group of metalworkers (perhaps the Hata) from the peninsula. Susanoo's close connection with Izumo, which was an important center of metal production conveniently located at the Sea of Japan (East Sea), suggests that this group may have settled in this region and initiated Izumo's impressive development during the Kofun period. Based on the data presented in this paper it is not possible to discern exactly how this group of metalworkers is connected to the metallurgical layer of the *yamata no orochi* myth. Possibly they brought the tale with them. This interpretation makes sense only if the immigrant group's life environment and everyday life in Izumo was so similar to that on the peninsula that the myth remained significant without major adaptations. In this case the merging of ideas linked to wet-rice cultivation and metallurgy would already have occurred on the continent. Another possibility is that the tale, with no mention of the sword Kusanagi, was told among the farmers inhabiting the Hii plain and acquired its new layer of meaning when the newcomers arrived from the peninsula and turned Izumo into a center of metal production, thus affecting the whole area. In this case the merging of agricultural and metallurgical ideas would mirror the cultural integration of the metalworkers into Izumo society. A last possibility is that the tale of a dragon that troubled rice farmers was transmitted in some other region of Japan and became associated with the metallurgical powerhouse Izumo only in the late seventh or early eighth century, when scribes writing down the imperial chronicles at the Yamato court added the discovery of Kusanagi as a motif in order to explain the origin of one of the imperial re-

118 Farris, *Sacred Texts*, pp. 71–72; Murakami, "Eisenerzeugnisse der Kofun-Zeit."
119 Piggott, "Sacral Kingship," p. 56.
120 Murakami, "Eisenerzeugnisse der Kofun-Zeit," p. 359.
121 Farris, *Sacred Texts*, p. 110.
122 Farris, *Sacred Texts*, pp. 108–109; Lewin, *Aya und Hata*, pp. 1–11; Lewin, *Der koreanische Anteil*, pp. 31–40.
123 Naumann, "Yama no Kami," p. 175.
124 Como, *Weaving and Binding*, pp. 113–14.

galia. The association of the myth with Izumo would then only mirror the court's perception of Izumo's paramount importance as a center of metallurgical expertise and metal production that had to be linked to the ancestors of the imperial family in order to strengthen the latter's claim to hegemony over the region.

Conclusion

After relating the myth of Susanoo's fight with the eight-headed serpent to the transmission of metallurgical techniques from the Korean Peninsula, I would like to return to the broader comparative framework discussed in the first part of this article. As noted above, the union and separation of Father Heaven and Mother Earth forms an important motif in many cosmogonies. A shamanist song from Jeju Island relates that heaven and earth separated in olden times. Afterwards, blue dew descended from heaven and black dew streamed from the earth. When the two kinds of dew mixed, all things came into being.[125] This description clearly mirrors human procreation and can thus be seen as a variant of the Father Heaven and Mother Earth theme, although it lacks the motif of a violent separation of the primordial pair. In this way, the idea of a sexual union between heaven and earth found expression in rather different terms according to the cultural and historical contexts. In other words, we are dealing with particular articulations of a universal theme.

I would argue that the advent of metallurgy might well have caused a modification of this theme that also forms the background for the *yamata no orochi* myth. Mircea Eliade has emphasized that meteorites that fell to earth "charged with celestial sanctity" inspired many early cultures with awe. Often Neolithic tools were given names such as "thunderstones," "thunderbolt teeth," or "God's axes" when they were first discovered, since the sites of their discovery were thought to have been struck by a thunderbolt.[126] This concept is also documented in Heian Japan (794–1185), where the fourth and the sixth of the official court histories—that is, the *Shoku Nihon kōki* 続日本後紀 (Later Chronicles of Japan Continued, 869) and the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録 (True History of Three Reigns of Japan, 901)—report the discovery of stone arrowheads and conclude that they must have fallen from the sky during a thunderstorm.[127]

Eliade points to the phallic connotations of the thunderbolt and the tools associated with it: they "'cleaved' the earth; they symbolized, in other words, the union between heaven and earth." At the same time, the thunderbolt was "the weapon of the God of Heaven,"[128] as can be seen in the examples of Zeus or Indra.[129] Before the discovery of smelting, meteoritic iron was used in many cultures to produce tools modeled on their stone counterparts. Yet the idea of the heavenly origin of iron often remained relevant even after the discovery of metallurgical techniques.[130] Thus, the dragon's special connection to metal does not contradict but rather reinforces Lyle's interpretation of Kusanagi as the phallus of the sky god.

This is not the only possible explanation of the tale, however. As we have seen, the myth of Susanoo's fight with the eight-headed serpent places special emphasis on the obtaining of the sword Kusanagi, whose significance can be inferred from the fact that it was venerated as one of the imperial regalia. Is it, therefore, not more likely that the obtaining of the sword itself, and thus of iron, is the point of the tale rather than the "releasing of waters"? Eliade has drawn attention to the widespread conception that ores grow in the womb of Mother Earth like embryos. It is the metalworkers' task to assist in their "birth,"[131] a task befitting a deity of metalworkers like Susanoo. Some might object that the eight-headed serpent is commonly associated with the Hi River and *not* with Mother Earth. While this objection poses a problem for Lyle's interpretation, it does not contradict the new one offered here, since, as we have seen, iron sand was obtained from the bottoms of rivers in ancient Izumo. Thus the material for the production of swords could in a very real sense be said to have been extracted

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125 Hyŏn, "Nihon shinwa to Kankoku shinwa," pp. 71-77; Yoda, *Chōsen no ōken*, pp. 5-7.

126 Eliade, *The Forge*, pp. 19–20. Mircea Eliade has been rightly criticized not only for openly sympathizing with the fascist Iron Guard in the late 1930s but also for his universalistic approach and his sweeping generalizations. Nonetheless, his comparative studies have opened up new perspectives on mythology that should not be rejected out of hand. For a balanced assessment

of Eliade's life and work, see Ellwood, *Politics of Myth*, pp. 79-126.

127 Bleed, "Almost Archaeology," p. 58.

128 Eliade, *The Forge*, p. 21.

129 Lyle, *Ten Gods*, p. 110; Miller, "Tracking the Dragon," p. 226.

130 Eliade, *The Forge*, pp. 21–29.

131 Ibid., pp. 38-42.

from the serpent's tail.[132]

The success of smelting, moreover, was often thought to require a human sacrifice.[133] This idea can, for example, be observed in the famous Chinese story of the smith Gan Jiang 干將 of Wu and his wife Mo Ye 莫邪, who threw herself (or her hair and nails) into the furnace in order to accomplish the casting of two legendary swords that were named after the couple. This story is already mentioned in chronicles from the late centuries BCE.[134] It would be rash, however, to interpret the sacrifice of Kushiinada-hime's sisters in the same way. Both the *Kojiki* and the main version in the *Nihon shoki* state that the eight-headed serpent came to devour one daughter *every year*.[135] This strongly suggests a connection to the seasonal cycle and thus to the tale's agricultural layer that pertains to the cyclical need for fertilizing waters (as well as the fear of floods).

The present analysis has shown that the *yamata no orochi* myth has undergone a long evolutionary process. I regarded the tale as a particular articulation of the universal dragon-slayer myth. Only a comparative analysis that takes material from outside Japan into account can shed light on the question of how this myth was appropriated on the Japanese archipelago. A central assumption underlying the present study is that myths are embedded in the life experiences of the people who transmit them. Therefore, myths can only remain relevant if they adapt to changes in people's everyday lives. At a time when the Hi River was the lifeline not only for wet-rice cultivators but also for metalworkers based in Izumo, the *yamata no orochi* myth had to consider this circumstance and incorporate the new group into its narrative.

Throughout this article, I have talked about myths accreting new layers of meaning without specifying the actors behind this process. Of course myths do not change of their own accord. Somebody has to change them. However, it is impossible to answer who this somebody is. Myths are by definition collective products. Most scholars agree that a story becomes a myth only when it is transmitted within a certain group. In the process, it becomes an anonymous tale that is believed to have been created by the group rather than an individual. Thus it is impossible to identify an in-

dividual author of a myth.[136] The same is true for the transmission process. Although changes to the *yamata no orochi* myth obviously were introduced by individuals, their agency is obscured by the same "process of cultural amnesia."[137] Metalworkers certainly played a role in this process, but there is no way of knowing whether they brought the ready-made tale from their homeland, introduced changes to a preexisting narrative in their new home, or whether farmers in Izumo modified a myth they had inherited from their ancestors in order to accommodate the newcomers. There is only one group of agents in the transmission of the Japanese myths that we can identify with any degree of certainty, namely the courtiers who compiled *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* at the imperial court in Nara. They introduced a new layer of meaning by weaving individual myths into a coherent mythohistory that explained the origin of the imperial family and its mandate to rule over the Japanese islands. Susanoo's offering up of the sword Kusanagi to the sun goddess Amaterasu, the progenitress of the imperial family, can be ascribed to this layer. It is only this last layer that can be addressed by employing the literary-studies approach of Kōnoshi Takamitsu and others; and even this uppermost layer can be grasped only partially since a purely text-immanent analysis cannot account for the restrictions placed on the courtiers by the preexisting tales on which they based their mythohistory.[138] To gain a deeper understanding of Japanese myths and the historical background of their genesis a consideration of non-Japanese material is indispensable. A comparative approach that takes into account both particular and universal aspects of the myths under consideration makes it possible to connect Japanese mythology to the international discourse on mythological studies and situate Japan in the context of world history.

132 Cf. Matsumae, *Nihon shinwa no keisei*, pp. 195–96.
133 Eliade, *The Forge*, pp. 62–70.
134 Birrell, *Chinese Mythology*, pp. 221–24.
135 *Kojiki*, pp. 68–69; *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 90–91.

136 Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*, p. 134; Doniger, *Other Peoples' Myths*, pp. 28–30.
137 Doniger, *Other Peoples' Myths*, p. 29.
138 Matsumoto, *Kojiki shinwa ron*, pp. 11–14, 27, 43, 67.

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Chinese Poetry in Hiragana: *Kana-shi* in Thought and Practice

TOSHIFUMI KAWAHIRA
TRANSLATED BY ASHTON LAZARUS

What Is *Kana-shi*?

THE term *hiragana no kanshi* ひらがなの漢詩 has the ring of a contradiction. *Kanshi* 漢詩 (Chinese poetry) is called *kanshi* because it is written with *kanji* 漢字 (Chinese characters), so writing *kanshi* in hiragana would indeed be logically impossible. And yet, in the Edo period (1603–1868) there was a literary form that can only be described as *hiragana no kanshi*. The simplest way of understanding what it was is to take a look at an actual poem.[1]

あめ ひ かぎゅう あい
雨の日に蝸牛を愛す

かたつぶり〳〵
くに つの
国はおもし角のうへ
とら たけ その
虎にあらで竹の園
ちょう ず ばち
手水鉢にあそべども

あめ ひ
雨の日のおもしろみ
いえ から
家はかるし殻のうち
りゅう に むばら かき
龍に似て茨の垣
うき な
なめくじりの憂名なし [2]

This translation is based on Kawahira, "Hiragana no kanshi: Kana-shi shi hotei" and incorporates material from Kawahira, "Hiragana no kanshi: Kana-shi to sono shisō." Translations of poems are by Ashton Lazarus unless otherwise noted.

1   Lineation follows the original. For the sake of readability, *furigana* has been added above the kanji.

2   Kagami Shikō, *Wakan bunsō*, p. 532.

"Love for a Snail on a Rainy Day"

Snail, snail—
the pleasure of a rainy day.

The kingdoms on your horns are heavy,
the families within your shell are light.

Though not a tiger, you live in the bamboo garden;
though resembling a dragon, you creep around the
     bramble gate.

You play among the washbasin
but you don't have the slug's dreadful reputation.

The author is Fūkyoku 風曲, a poet of the Mameda 豆田 family from Kanazawa, and it appears in a collection called *Wakan bunsō* 和漢文操 (The Appeal of Japanese and Chinese Writing, 1727) edited by Matsuo Bashō's 松尾芭蕉 (1644–1694) disciple Kagami Shikō 各務支考 (1665–1731). As indicated by the title, the poem is about a snail on a rainy day. The poem (see figure 1) consists of four couplets each made up of two lines of five syllables, a structure similar to that of five-character eight-line regulated verse (*gogon risshi* 五言律詩). As is customary in regulated verse, the ends of the even-numbered lines rhyme (that is, in the original the
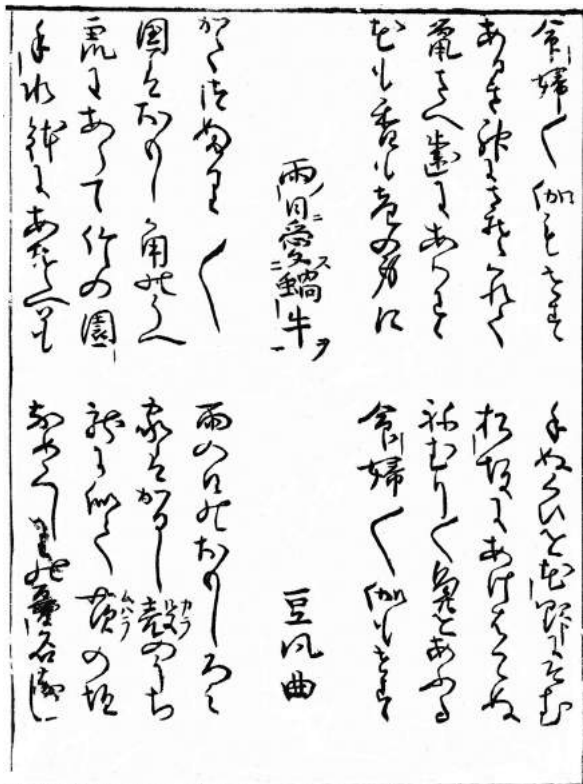
Figure 1. Fūkyoku. "Love for a Snail on a Rainy Day." *Wakan bunsō*. Ed. Kagami Shikō. 1727, Edo period. Fukuoka. Permission of Kyushu University.

i sound is repeated: *omoshiromi*, *uchi*, *kaki*, *nashi*).

The poem alludes to both Chinese and Japanese sources. The second line is a reference to the so-called "Battle on the Horns of a Snail" passage from the "Zeyang" 則陽 section of the *Zhuangzi* 荘子 (ca. third century BCE). It tells of how war between two kingdoms seems important to those involved, but when placed in perspective becomes as insignificant as that which occurs between the horns of a snail. The fifth and sixth lines delineate a contrast: "Though it certainly does not appear to be a tiger, it nonetheless plays in a noble's bamboo garden" leads to "Though he possesses a dragon horn, symbol of the emperor, he crawls about the bramble-laden gate of a commoner's dwelling." The final, eighth line of the poem asserts that the snail's reputation is not as bad as that of the slug, which appears in Sei Shōnagon's 清少納言 (dates unknown) list of "Exceedingly Filthy Things" in *Makura no sōshi* 枕草

子 (The Pillow Book, ca. 995–1004).[3] Love for a snail on a rainy day—this sort of world cannot be expressed through the "refined" (*ga* 雅) language of *waka* 和歌 (court poetry) and it also resists the *kanshi* form with its rough lack of charm. Indeed, the invocation of "snail, snail" is what gives the poem its flavor.

Kana-shi 仮名詩 was hence a new kind of poetry (*shi* 詩) that differed from preexisting forms like *kanshi*, *waka*, and *haikai* 俳諧 (later known as haiku). During the Edo period the endeavor to compose avant-garde, experimental *shi* was undertaken by several poets. Their poems shared much of the same spirit and method as the later *shintaishi* 新体詩 (new-form poetry) of the Meiji period (1868–1912), which was influenced by Western poetry.[4] But since Edo-period Chinese-style poetry written in kana—that is, *kana-shi*—is still not widely known, this essay aims to introduce the story of its formation and development through readings of specific poems. It is furthermore worth noting that in the Edo period *kanshi* written in hiragana was known variously as *kana-shi*, *haishi* 俳詩, and *washi* 和詩. I prefer the term *kana-shi* and will hereafter use it to refer in general to this kind of poetry.[5]

There is a work by Yosa Buson 与謝蕪村 (1716–1783) that is sometimes referred to as a miracle of the Edo period. This "Chinese poem" mourns the death of Buson's friend Shinga 晋我 (d. 1745), referred to here as Old Sage Hokuju. It became widely known in the modern period, with the poet Hagiwara Sakutarō 萩原朔太郎 (1886–1942) lavishing praise upon it.[6]

北寿老仙をいたむ

君あしたに去ぬ　ゆふべのこゝろ干ゝに

3　Sei Shōnagon, *Makura no sōshi*, p. 377.
4　Hino Tatsuo has pointed to translations of long-form Chinese poetry as a forerunner of *shintaishi*. See Hino, "Shintaishi no ichi genryū." And while it seems that *kana-shi* did not have a direct influence on *shintaishi*, the two share a sensibility that challenged dominant poetic forms like *kanshi* and *waka*.
5　For earlier research on *kana-shi*, see Matsumoto, "Haishi (Jō)" and "Haishi (Ge)," and Hori, "Kana-shi no konkyo." Besides this, little of substance has been done on the topic. Matsumoto's study introduces various forms of *kana-shi* through a rich selection of poems, while Hori's study describes and explains *kana-shi*'s theoretical background. Building on these studies, this essay engages with not only the history of *haikai* but also problems of intellectual history in order to analyze the historical background of *kana-shi*'s formation and later development.
6　Horikiri, "Buson no haishi."

何ぞはるかなる
君をおもふて岡のべに行つ遊ぶ
をかのべ何ぞかくかなしき
蒲公の黄に　薺のしろう咲たる
見る人ぞなき
雉子のあるか　ひたなきに鳴くを聞ば
友ありき　河をへだてゝ住にき
へげのけぶりの　はと打ちれば　西吹風の
はげしくて　小竹原　真すげはら
のがるべきかたぞなき
友ありき　河をへだてゝ住にき　けふは
ほろゝともなかぬ
君あしたに去ぬ　ゆふべのこゝろ干ゝに
何ぞはるかなる
我庵のあみだ仏　ともし火もものせず
花もまいらせず　すごへとイめる今宵は
ことにたうとき [7]

"Mourning the Old Sage Hokuju"

You left in the morning. In the evening, my heart in
    a thousand shards
How far you have gone!

Thinking of you, I wander in the hills.
Why are the hills so sad?

Among the yellow dandelions, shepherd's purse
    blooms white.
But you are not here to see this.

Is the pheasant here? I hear its mournful voice:

"I had a friend. He lived on the other side of the
    stream.

Eerie smoke rose and scattered, a strong west wind
swept over the bamboo field, over the sedge moor,
leaving nowhere to hide.

I had a friend. He lived on the other side of the
    stream; today

There's no sound at all."

You left in the morning. In the evening, my heart in
    a thousand shards
How far you have gone!

In my hut, I have no strength to offer a light to the
    Amida Buddha,
have given no flowers. In the twilight, lingering
    snow,
a sense of awe.[8]

With refrains like, "You left in the morning. In the evening, my heart in a thousand shards" and "I had a friend. He lived on the other side of the stream," this is a remarkable composition that could be described as a modern free-verse poem written in classical language. As several scholars have already written commentaries on the poem[9] there is no need to go into the details of its formation and interpretation, though I will revisit its significance and relationship to *kana-shi* later in the essay.

On the Eve of *Kana-shi*

The creation of *kana-shi* according to a clear genre-consciousness and methodology can be dated to the Kyōhō 享保 era (1716–1736). To wit, volume one ("Chinese Poems") of Shikō's compilation *Honchō bunkan* 本朝文鑑 (Prose Mirror of Japan, 1718) includes eighteen *kana-shi*, while volume two ("Kana-shi") of *Wakan bunsō* (mentioned above) contains thirty-five *kana-shi*. During these twenty years the composition of *kana-shi* was becoming more popular.

I delve further into the development of *kana-shi* below, but first I would like to discuss a literary experiment that likely had the same roots as *kana-shi* and immediately preceded the period of its popularity. It is a text titled *Wakun santaishi* 和訓三体詩 (Japanese Glosses of *Santishi*, 1715), written by Bashō's disciple Morikawa Kyoriku 森川許六.[10] *Santishi* 三体詩 (Jp. *Santaishi*) was an anthology of mid- and late Tang (618–

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7   Yosa Buson, *Isonohana*, pp. 258–59.

8   Translation by Haruo Shirane. Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, pp. 548–49.

9   See, for example, Horikiri, "Buson no haishi," and Kiyoto, "'Hokuju rōsen o itamu' shiron."

10   Murakami, "Kyoriku 'Wakun santaishi' o megutte."

906) poetry collected by the Song-dynasty (960–1279) poet Zhou Bi 周弼 (active mid-thirteenth century). It was read widely in Japan starting in the Muromachi period (1336–1573) and especially in the early Edo period.

According to the preface of *Wakun santaishi*, because Japan and China have different natural environments, even poems about scenery will naturally have different content. If a Japanese poet went to Lake Xihu in China and composed a poem, it would likely be similar to a Tang-period poem. And if a Chinese poet went to Suma or Akashi in Japan and composed a poem, it would likely be similar to a *waka*. Therefore, it is only natural that Chinese people are not able to understand *kanshi* composed by Japanese poets in Japan. "In Japanese *kanshi* and other Sinitic forms of writing," Kyoriku writes, "the particles *te*, *ni*, *o*, and *wa* are inserted in between characters, creating something close to *waka*."[11]

In other words, Kyoriku asserts that it is a physical impossibility for Japanese poets to compose *kanshi* on the same level as Chinese poets. If a Japanese poet composed a verse on Lake Xihu, it would end up infused with Japanese poetic sentiment and would be completely different from that composed by a Chinese poet. Something similar occurs when *kanshi* are translated into Japanese. As a way to experience more directly the world of *kanshi*, Kyoriku advocates creating translations that take into account the rhythms of the original verse and in which Chinese place names, plants, customs, and historical references are replaced by things Japanese.

Let us look at a concrete example, a poem by Zhang Ji 張継 (active early eighth century) that is well known in Japan. First is the original poem, followed by Kyoriku's translation into 7-5 syllabic verse, which functions as a kind of poetic explication.

楓橋夜泊

月落烏啼霜満天　　江楓漁火対愁眠
姑蘇城外寒山寺　　夜半鐘声到客船[12]

"Moored at Night by Maple Bridge"

Crows caw, and frost fills the sky under a sinking
　　moon.
Downcast I doze by the riverside maples, across
　　from fishermen's fires.
Outside the walls of Suzhou City, in Cold Mountain
　　Temple,
The sound of a bell rung for midnight reaches as far
　　as my boat.[13]

Kyoriku's translation:

鞆の夜泊の梶枕。室の浮き寝の波の床。汐馴衣ひ
と夜妻。かさねて寝んと漕よせて。上りくだりの
舟懸り。近付ぶりにかいま見の。空約束に待佗る。
門のじやらつき階子の轟き。胸つぶるゝ折からに。
田舎渡りのわけ知らず。まかれて人に囃はるゝ。

只独寝の床寒く。月落かゝる淡路島。生田の森の
村烏。秋の霜夜の明けかねて。海士のあさり火行
違ひ。寝覚の多葉粉くゆらせて。すこし晴行うき
眠り。松の嵐の一の谷。須磨寺につく鐘の声。波
の枕に伝ひ来て。舟は湊を押出しける。[14]

Moored at night, I sleep among the waves of Muro with my oar for a pillow. A "wife for one night," her robes accustomed to the tides, rows in pursuit of her next customer, tying her boat to those moving upriver and downriver. I wait impatiently for the fulfillment of false promises glimpsed while she pretends to approach. The clattering of a gate, the scraping of a ladder: my heart racing, I feel like a country bumpkin, ignorant of the world. She leaves, laughing at me.

Alone on the cold deck, the moon dips down past Awaji Island. The crows of Ikuta Forest, the autumn

11 Morikawa Kyoriku, *Wakun santaishi*, vol. 1, fol. 1b.
12 Ibid., fol. 7b.

13 Translation by Peter Harris. Harris, *Three Hundred Tang Poems*, p. 259. Slight typographic changes have been made for the sake of consistency.
14 Morikawa Kyoriku, *Wakun santaishi*, vol. 1, fol. 8a. For ease of reading, Kyoriku's translation has been divided into two paragraphs.

frost of an endless night. Fishermen's fires flicker, the tobacco of wakefulness smolders. The weather clears up a bit and I doze on the deck. The storm of pine trees at Ichinotani, the sound of the bell being struck at Sumadera: they resound atop this pillow of waves. The boat departs from the harbor.

The site of the original poem has been replaced by Murotsu, on the Inland Sea, and the content transformed into a particularly Japanese situation: a fleeting tryst with a "female entertainer from Muro."

Next is another famous poem, Wang Wei's 王維 composition about a friend's departure.

送元二使安西

渭城朝雨浥軽塵　客舎青々柳色新
勧君更尽一盃酒　西出陽関無故人[15]

"Seeing off Yuan Er on His Mission to Anxi"

A morning rain at the city clears up the light dust,
At the guesthouse, the new willow stand, lush and
　　green.
How about take another cup of wine, my lord?
Once out of the Yangguan Pass, no old friend will
　　be seen.[16]

Kyoriku's translation:

落花の雨に踏迷ふ。旅の別の都出で。鄙の遠山
渺々と。霞渡れる磯づたひ。柳の空に麦の風。春
の旅寝や寒からん。懇に別を送つて。こしかた行
末をかたらふうちに。土器干かねて畳にすえたり。
今はやる宮古の時行ぶし。宿の出女。道の馬士。
五十里までは諷ふとかや。箱根の関のその先きは。
必ず吾妻の歌なるべし。今諷ふ一ふしに。更に一
盃を尽すべしと。鞍馬の木の芽漬に。にしめ辛皮
をぞ挟みける。[17]

Rain like falling leaves obscures the path. You set out from the capital, departing on your journey. The countryside's distant mountains stretch on and on. Along the rocky shore thick with mist, wheat-stirring wind plays in the willow-green sky. How cold the traveler's lodgings in spring. I send you off warmly: while you talk of your itinerary, the drinking cups are ceaselessly filled and remain out on the tatami. And now a popular song from the buzzing capital: women waiting at the inns, packhorse drivers on the road—I hear you can keep singing for fifty *ri*. Once past Hakone Barrier, you're sure to hear the songs of the East. But since we're still singing the songs of the capital, stay for just one more drink. The simmered bark of young stalks placed between pickled buds from Kurama.

Unfortunately, the translation does not quite capture the fresh atmosphere of "the morning of parting" expressed so concisely in the original. But in the second half of the translation, Kyoriku skillfully transposes "Yangguan Pass" as Hakone Barrier and has the speaker sing one more song from the capital for his friend who is about to depart for the eastern countries.

In ancient Japan a unique method of reading Chinese texts called *kakikudashibun* 書き下し文 was developed, in which diacritic marks and Japanese glosses were added to the original to enable reading according to Japanese word order. Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728) criticized this tradition, advocating in *Yakubun sentei* 訳文筌蹄 (Translating with Nets and Snares, 1715) that Chinese texts be read according to their original word order, from top to bottom. He furthermore thought translations should make use of vernacular language and capture the meaning of the original without adding or subtracting anything.[18] *Yakubun sentei* was written in 1711, just before *Wakun santaishi*, though both texts were published in 1715. So it is interesting that right when Sorai was developing his thesis Kyoriku was experimenting with vernacular translation for an entirely different reason. And in fact, Kyoriku's vernacular interpretation of *kanshi*—especially his attempt to structure it as verse with a 7-5 syllabic rhythm—bore a striking similarity to the *kana-shi* that Shikō would compile just a few decades later. The next section will focus on this development.

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15 Morikawa Kyoriku, *Wakun santaishi*, vol. 4, fol. 14a.
16 Translation by Ye Yang. Luo, *A Concise History of Chinese Literature*, p. 289.
17 Morikawa Kyoriku, *Wakun santaishi*, vol. 4, fol. 14b.

18 Ogyū Sorai, *Yakubun sentei*, pp. 1–16.

Wa-kan Conflicts

The origins of *kana-shi* can be traced back to the medieval period, when both monk and layman alike composed *gishi* 戯詩 (parodic poetry) and *kyōshi* 狂詩 (humorous poetry), and more recently to the early modern period with the Japanese-style Chinese poetry (*washū* 和習) written by the Hayashi 林 family of Confucian scholars. But it makes more sense to think of *kana-shi* as emerging directly from the efforts to establish *haibun* 俳文 (*haikai* writing) as equal to the more traditional *wabun* 和文.

Wabun signifies Japanese prose writings in contrast to verse forms like *waka* and *renga* 連歌 (linked verse). Representative works include *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (The Tale of Genji, ca. 1010) and *Sagoromo monogatari* 狭衣物語 (The Tale of Sagoromo, ca. 1069–1077). On the other hand, there was initially no corresponding prose equivalent of *haikai* poetry. So Bashō and his contemporaries launched a movement to create one, and they were in the end drawn to the polar opposite of *wabun*: *kanbun* 漢文 (Chinese writing).

Kanbun consists not only of famous anthologies like *Wenxuan* 文選 (Jp. *Monzen*, Selections of Refined Literature, early sixth century) and *Guwen zhenbao houji* 古文真宝後集 (Jp. *Kobun shinpō kōshū*, Later Collection of True Treasures of Ancient Writing, late thirteenth century) but also works of literary analysis like *Wenzhang guifan* 文章軌範 (Jp. *Bunshō kihan*, Models of Composition, ca. mid-thirteenth century). The *haikai* poets took as their models the different styles codified by these texts—for example, records and accounts (*ki* 記), inscriptions (*mei* 銘), encomia (*san* 賛), prefaces (*jo* 序), and sayings (*setsu* 説)—and created a new, playful literary style that mixed high and low, *wa* 和 and *kan* 漢. The results are archived in the *haibun* collections of the time, including Kyoriku's *Honchō monzen* 本朝文選 (The *Wenxuan* of Japan, 1706, also called *Fūzoku monzen* 風俗文選) and Shikō's *Honchō bunkan* and *Wakan bunsō* (see above). These poets did not stop at stylistic imitation, cultivating a Chinese style in the poems themselves as a way to develop a new form of *haikai*. This was *kana-shi*.

It is important to point out that *kana-shi* was not thought of as simply an "imitation" of Chinese poetry, but seems to have been produced out of a desire to reevaluate the Japanese language and transcend Chinese poetry. In the Chinese-language preface to volume 1 of *Wakan bunsō*, Shikō (using the name Renjibō 蓮二房) writes:

> Savoring writing in a Chinese style is the shame of our country. As a result, from the Hōei era [1704–1711] on, poets have experimented with writing Chinese poems in hiragana, introducing kana words into Chinese poems, and making use of Chinese verse in *kana-shi*. Our country's poetry will help us surpass the Chinese.[19]

In volume 2 of the same text, in a piece entitled "Preface to Writing Chinese Verse in Kana," Rokuandō 鹿安道 (dates unknown) comments:

> Even if words have Chinese and Japanese pronunciations, why should the content of poems be separated in the same way? . . . It was perhaps six years ago when Tōkasen [Shikō], who lives in eastern Mino Province, asked why we should disregard our country's easy-to-read kana script and study the difficult script of another country. He went on to create Chinese poetry in hiragana, and indeed a whole new method of composing Chinese poetry. This should truly be adopted as our country's model writing.[20]

The first passage criticizes the inclination of the Japanese to revere Sinographic culture by stating, "savoring writing in a Chinese style is the shame of our country." And the second passage praises the ease of kana by asking, "why should we disregard our country's easy-to-read kana script and study the difficult script of another country?" What is expressed here is not the conventional, fundamentally passive attitude toward Sinographic culture, but rather one that both reevaluates kana culture and actively engages with and transforms Sinographic culture. This is why the poems of *Wakun santaishi* occupy a position similar to Shikō's *kana-shi*: they are united by a common mentality due to their shared open approach to Chinese poetry. In other words, with *Wakun santaishi* abandoning the interpretive restrictions of reading by gloss (*kundoku* 訓読) and *kana-shi* abandoning the lexical restrictions of Chinese words (*kango* 漢語), there was an attempt to create a literary terrain in which *kanshi* was realized *in Japanese*.

This attitude was anticipated by a fundamental shift, along the lines of a kind of nationalism, in how the Japanese perceived Chinese poetry and writing. The no-

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19 Kagami Shikō, *Wakan bunsō*, p. 504.
20 Ibid., p. 525.

tion that Japanese poetry and prose and Chinese poetry and prose are to be treated equally can be traced back to ancient times. For example, *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 (Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern, 905) has both kana and *mana* 真名 (Chinese) prefaces, while works such as *Wakan rōeishū* 和漢朗詠集 (Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing, ca. 1013) arrange Japanese and Chinese poetry to be enjoyed together, and forms such as *wakan renku* 和漢聯句 consist of sequences of alternating Japanese and Chinese verses. Such activity was supported by the idea that while "language" might change, "content" was still the same—in other words, the idea of a mutual Japanese-Chinese sensibility.

But by the seventeenth century it was apparent that this notion of "equality" was being supplanted by a discourse of the superiority of Japanese poetry and prose. Various factors can be offered in explanation, including the relative decline in the status of China (and Chinese culture) brought about by the shifting international situation triggered by the Ming-Qing transition,[21] or the spread of simple and practical kana literacy prompted by the domestic expansion of the literate class.[22] Instead of pursuing the details of these sociohistorical explanations, I will limit myself to introducing several examples of the theory that Japanese poetry and prose was superior.

The first example comes from *Kōshi ben'inshō* 紅紫弁引抄 (On Distinguishing Orthodoxy from Heresy, 1662), a text written by Itō Eiji 伊藤栄治 (d. 1685), the Shimabara-domain scholar of Ise Shinto and Yoshida Shinto. Eiji develops the following argument about the "Japanese language" (*wago* 和語) (that is, Japanese before the introduction of kanji):

The Japanese language consists of true words from the age of the gods. It fulfills the will of the gods and guides human endeavor. As such, long ago humans were able to use the language of the gods unaltered, but as time passed Chinese words gradually worked their way in. Growing accustomed to this, we lost our Japanese language and began to despise it as though it were a foreign language. It reached the foolish point where it was more venerable to speak with Chinese words. This is the primary expression of our contemptible situation of having forgotten all obligation to the country.[23]

According to Eiji, Japanese is a "god's language" passed down from the age of the gods, but the later influx of Chinese words led to a tendency to revere Chinese and look down on Japanese, and this was a grave mistake. As a Shinto scholar, Eiji's use of a discourse that relativized Chinese is hardly surprising, but even Confucian scholars such as Yamaga Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622–1685) undertook a radical reevaluation of Chinese civilization. For example, in the "China" section of *Chūchō jijitsu* 中朝事実 (Facts about the Central Realm, 1669), he wrote:

It is a matter of natural topography that Japan is the center of the world. The gods were born, the blood of the imperial line was passed down, and we achieved excellence in the ways of the sword and the brush and indeed in all things. Truly it would be appropriate to refer to Japan as the "Middle Kingdom.[24]

And in the "Teachings of the Gods" section he continued:

Imagine someone who voices the following misgiving. "China does not know much about Japan, but its civilization flourishes. Japan has relied on Chinese civilization and made frequent use of it. In that case, does China not surpass Japan?" Reflecting on this, I find it mistaken. From its founding, Japan has been endowed with the gods' lofty deeds and wise teachings, and even without the knowledge of Chinese texts not a single thing was missing. Fortunately, Japan learned much from China, using

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21 For example, in the second volume of "Chōnin bukuro sokobarai" 町人嚢底払 (Emptying the Merchant's Bag, 1719), Nishikawa Joken 西川如見 (1648–1724) writes, "It is deeply troubling that the Ming dynasty, despite its tremendous expansion of knowledge, has now become the domain of the 'northern barbarians'. . . . Should it then be said that countries where knowledge thrives are also full of disorder? There were few texts to consult in ancient Japan; Shinto and Buddhist teachings spread, the country was wealthy, and the people were obedient." Nishikawa Joken, "Chōnin bukuro sokobarai," pp. 140-41.

22 For example, Konta Yōzō has observed that during the Genroku 元禄 era (1688–1704) wealthy farmers in the rural areas around Osaka purchased and consumed large quantities of kana texts, for both educational and entertainment purposes, including *ukiyozōshi* 浮世草子 fiction, *terakoya* 寺子屋 textbooks, practical handbooks (*chōhōki* 重宝記), and encyclopedic dictionaries (*setsuyōshū* 節用集). Konta, *Edo no hon'ya san*, pp. 55–58.

23 Itō Eiji, "Kōshi ben'inshō," vol. 1, fols. 2b–3a.
24 Yamaga Sokō, *Chūchō jijitsu*, p. 19.

the strong points to aid in the administration of imperial rule, but this has more to do with Japan's tolerant attitude.[25]

In this way, Sokō situated Japan at the center of the world and espoused a kind of Japanese Sinocentrism. That he would go so far as to say "even without the knowledge of Chinese texts not a single thing was missing" demonstrates, I think, Sokō's precarious position as a Confucian scholar.

These expressions of Japanese supremacy in the second half of the seventeenth century eventually developed into the nativist ideologies of *kokugaku* 国学 and *mitogaku* 水戸学 in the first half of the eighteenth century. *Kana-shi* reached peak popularity in the early eighteenth century, right in between these two phenomena. As we will see below, it was widely accepted during this period that Japanese poetry and prose (kana writing) was superior to Chinese poetry and prose, a fact that must be acknowledged if the history of *kana-shi* is to be properly understood.

The Suika Shinto scholar Tomobe Yasutaka 伴部安崇 (1667–1740) discussed the differences between Japanese and Chinese in *Wakan mondō* 和漢問答 (A Dialogue on Japan and China, copied in 1710). He declares:

> It is foolish to look down on Japanese readings in kana and venerate Chinese writing. Language is a flower that blooms from the heart. If one's heart is clear, one's words will have elegance. Writing takes shape according to the country in which it develops. Furthermore, with kanji it is always the case that not enough can be said, and unless there is a large number of annotations the meaning will be unclear. When reading by gloss [*kundoku*] immediate understanding is possible with only a single character or perhaps a few words. Let it be known that if you compare composing a Chinese poem to composing a Japanese poem, the meaning of the latter is transmitted and understood more easily than that of the former.[26]

In other words, language is a representation of the thoughts of a people from a particular nation, and the form of writing also reflects the character of the na-

tion. So for the language of the Japanese people, it is Japanese words and not Chinese words, kana and not kanji, that can communicate thoughts more completely. The thinking here is not that Chinese words and kanji are essentially inferior to Japanese words and kana, but rather that the latter occupy a position of superiority within the territory of Japan.

Furthermore, the Yoshida Shinto scholar Masuho Zankō 増穂残口 (1655–1742), in a discussion of *Wakan rōeishū* in his *Suguji no tokoyogusa* 直路乃常世草 (Notes on the Direct Path to the Eternal Land, 1717), makes the following argument:

> As early as *Wakan rōeishū*, there was the idea of organizing a text around recitations of Japanese and Chinese poetry. Japan occupied the higher position and Japanese readings softened the scrap-metal characters [i.e., kanji] of that other country, demonstrating the straightforward way. Comparing the two educates all people about the superior feelings of the country of the gods.[27]

Zankō then writes, borrowing the words of Kenkō 兼好 (active fourteenth century) and Gensei 元政 (1623–1668), "It is regrettable that compared to Japanese poetry, Chinese poetry has no deep emotion." In this passage Zankō develops the idea that Japanese poetry and prose can express straightforward feelings and deep emotions, while Chinese poetry and prose cannot. This is close to a theory of absolute Japanese supremacy, far removed from the theory of Japan's relative superiority or the idea of mutual Japanese-Chinese feeling.

It seems that similar ideas influenced the Nagasaki astronomer Nishikawa Joken 西川如見 (1648–1724). In the first volume of "Chōnin bukuro sokobarai" 町人囊底払 (Emptying the Merchant's Bag, 1719), he refers to the Japanese mentality as the "Yamato heart" and its expression as the "Yamato form," and criticizes the tendency to look down on these while extolling the "Chinese form." He writes:

> [Japanese writing] is thoroughly pure and mild because it took shape amid the natural environment [of Japan], greatly benefitting the Japanese people. It is the same with Chinese poetry: originally transmitted from China, it has now developed into

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25 Ibid., pp. 265–66.
26 Tomobe Yasutaka, "Wakan mondō," fol. 6a–6b.

27 Masuho Zankō, *Suguji no tokoyogusa*, p. 253.

different forms in Japan and China. The Chinese heart, however, is moved only by elegant forms of Chinese origin, while the Yamato heart is softened and made peaceful by not only Japanese poetry but also Chinese poetry, since both forms are created in this country. It follows, then, that reading and reciting a Chinese poem in a Japanese manner should be considered wrong.[28]

The Chinese poetic style was of course formed in China, but because Chinese poetry composed by Japanese poets was inevitably influenced by the "Yamato heart," it was naturally different from that composed by Chinese poets. According to Joken, the imbuing of Chinese poetry with a so-called Japanese style (*washū*) was inevitable, and in reality poems created in Japan were better able to achieve the goal of composition: the cultivation of a peaceful mind.

This is the opposite of Kyoriku and Sorai, who for precisely the same reasons criticized the practice of reading by gloss (*kundoku*) and thought the true meaning of the original text could be reproduced through translation. But both groups shared a manner of thinking that did not treat Chinese poetry and prose as absolute, and actively affirmed techniques of naturalization like reading by gloss and translation.

In the end *kana-shi* was by no means unrelated to the appearance, during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, of this notion of the contingency of Chinese poetry and prose, and the accompanying superiority of Japanese poetry and kana prose. Longer than *waka* and *hokku* 発句 (the opening stanza of a *renga* poem) but shorter than *chōka* 長歌 (long poems of alternating 5-7 syllabic phrases) and *renga* sequences, *kana-shi* marks the creation of a new kind of Japanese fixed-pattern poetry. In terms of form it can be thought of as a fusion of *wa* and *kan*, but from the viewpoint of intellectual history it should be seen as a literary art that came into being under the particularly strong influence of *wa*.

The Evolution of *Kana-shi*

In this way, *kana-shi* developed as a literary form that had a uniquely tense relationship with both domestic forms like *waka* and *renga* and the foreign form of Chinese poetry. Having given only one example of *kana-shi* thus far, I would now like to analyze several more from the Kyōhō era. The first is by Tōkasen 桃花仙, an alias of Shikō.

和漢に花を賞す

花はよし花ながら　　見る人おなじからず
ぼたんには蝶ねむり　さくらには鳥あそぶ
たのしさを鼓にさき　さびしさを鐘にちる
唐にいざ芳野あらば　詩をつくり歌よまむ [29]

"Japanese and Chinese Praise for Flowers"

Flowers are always flowers,
but the people who look at them are different.

A butterfly sleeps on a peony,
a bird plays amid the cherry blossoms.

Peonies bloom happily to the sound of the drum,
cherry blossoms scatter with sadness to the sound
　　of the bell.

If there were indeed a Yoshino in China,
we could compose both Chinese and Japanese
　　poems.

Since this poem consists of four couplets, with each line made up of two five-syllable phrases, it takes the basic form of five-character regulated verse (*gogon risshi*). The even-numbered lines rhyme, ending with the sounds *zu*, *bu*, *ru*, and *mu*. The gist of the poem is that while there may be disagreements about which flower is best, Japanese and Chinese poetry display a similar admiration for flowers. The poem sets up skillful oppositions between *wa* and *kan*—for example, "peony" (*kan*) and "cherry blossom" (*wa*) in the second couplet—and

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28 Nishikawa Joken, "Chōnin bukuro sokoharai," pp. 105–106.

29 Kagami Shikō, *Honchō bunkan*, pp. 247–58.

ends with an expression of their affinity for one another. This takes the form of an allusion to a *haikai*[30] by Fujiwara no Tokihira 藤原時平 (871–909) from the "Miscellaneous" section of *Kokin wakashū*: "although you retreat / deep within the Yoshino / Mountains distant as / far Cathay I am not one / who will be left behind here"[31] (唐土の吉野の山に籠もるとも遅れむと思ふわれならなくに).[32] The poem makes expert use of contrasting lines and it is a work that truly deserves the title of *hiragana no kanshi*.

Next is a poem by Seki Kakaku 石過角 (dates unknown) from Naoetsu in Echigo Province:

雪に寄する恋

笠に越路の雪踏みわけて
　　とはぬ心を君はしらずも
あだなりし名の風も吹ねば
　　変らぬ色を松にたぐへよ
人は臂さへたちあかせしに
　　我も船には乗りおくれじと
実に見渡せば月の夜すがら
　　木にも茅にもつもる思ひを[33]

"Love Visited by Snow"

Beneath this sedge hat I walk the snow-covered
　　Echigo road,
though you do not know I have no intention to visit.

If only no one had caught wind of my rumored bad
　　reputation,
then you might still think me everlasting as the
　　color of pines.

Like the one who cut off his own arm in pursuit,
I too pledge not to miss the boat.

Casting out a glance at the moon-drenched night,
my thoughts accumulate like snow on the trees and
　　the thatch.

Since this poem consists of four couplets, with each line made up of two seven-syllable phrases, it takes the basic form of seven-character regulated verse (*shichigon risshi*). The even-numbered lines rhyme, ending with the sounds *mo*, *yo*, *to*, and *o*. The poem encapsulates the heartbreak of wanting to visit one's beloved but not being able to because of the snow. The first two couplets declare the speaker's unwavering love using thoroughly *waka*-like imagery, while the last two couplets use two allusions to express how the speaker's desire to immediately be with his beloved compounds like all-pervading snow. "Cut off his own arm" alludes to the story of how Huike 慧可 cut off his own arm on a snowy day and offered it to Bodhidharma to show his dedication as a disciple. "I too pledge not to miss the boat" alludes to the story of the Eastern Jin (317–420) literatus Wang Huizhi 王徽之 (courtesy name Ziyou 子猷, d. 388), who on a snowy night took a boat to the residence of his friend Tai Kui 戴逵 (courtesy name Andao 安道, d. 395?) so that they could enjoy the moon together. Coursing with elegant language (words used in *waka* and *renga*), the poem feels like a sustained *waka* and yet it is not a *chōka*, which shares the same 7-5 syllabic rhythm. It instead forms its own coherent world.

And lastly a poem by Kō Saha 高左把 (1714–1799) from Owari Province:

梅を詠ず

梅よ　先ひらけ　　みんなみのえだ
雪の　降とても　　春めきながら
闇は　あやなしと　たれかいふらむ
窓に　香をおくる　あかつきのはな

"On Plum Blossoms"

O plum blossoms!　First, bloom　branches facing
　　south.
Snow　though it falls　it is springlike.
Darkness　how foolish it is.　Who said that?
Through the window　drifts a scent　the flowers
　　at dawn.

30 The "Miscellaneous" section contains a total of fifty-eight *haikai*, a term that in the context of *Kokin wakashū* signifies a humorous poem that uses language otherwise considered unfit for *waka*. Rodd and Henkenius, *Kokinshū*, p. 348.

31 Ibid., p. 359.

32 *Kokin wakashū*, p. 390.

33 Kagami Shikō, *Honchō bunkan*, p. 264.

This poem about the scent of early spring plum blossoms is modeled on Li Bai's 李白 (701–762) "three-five-seven-character poems" (unorthodox poems made up of lines consisting of three, five, and seven characters) found in volume seven of *Guwen zhenbao houji*.[34] Here a combination of three, five, and seven characters forms each line, which repeated four times makes up a quatrain. The lines end on an "a" rhyme: *da*, *ra*, and *na*. The third line is clearly based on a poem by Ōshikōchi no Mitsune 凡河内躬恒 (fl. ca. 900) from *Kokin wakashū*: "how foolish is the / darkness on this spring night— / though it conceals the / plum blossoms' charm and color / it cannot hide their perfume"[35] (春の夜の闇は あやなし梅の花色こそ見えね香やはかくるゝ).[36] Variations like this, quite distant from the established form, were attempted.

The poems I have discussed so far are all what we might call "pure" *kana-shi*. But there are actually more than a few *haibun* that contain *shi*-like elements even if they do not take the form of *shi*. Examples include Ranran's 嵐蘭 (1647–1693) "Ka o yaku no ji" 蚊を焼くの辞 (Song of Burning a Mosquito)[37] and Sodō's 素堂 (1642–1716) "Minomushi no setsu" 蓑虫の説 (On a Bagworm),[38] which with no fixed rhyme scheme or syllable count can be described as free-verse poetry written in classical language. A particularly good example is Shikō's "Shōkon no fu" 招魂の賦 (Rhapsody on the Return of a Spirit, in volume 3 of *Honchō monzen*). Since it is a long piece I will analyze only the opening section:

西方に吾翁の魂あり。行ていづこにか帰ざらむ。
たましゐ速に帰来れ。

ことし神無月十日あまり。湖南の旧草に、門人あ
そむでたましゐをまつ。またばなどか帰り来ざら
む。たましゐ、それかへり来れ。

柴門に春の花ちれば、鳥驚て別をうらむ。蓬窓に
秋の月落れば、人荒て住ずなりぬ。

されば、すみれ草の住よき世中に、何に卯の花の
垣ねとはよみけむ。時鳥の行衛なからむにも、春
の雁の終にかへらずやあらむ。

しからばたましゐ、いづこに行としてか、還るに
道なからむ。還来れ〳〵。[39]

The old man's spirit is in the west. Has he gone somewhere, never to return? Come back quickly, spirit!

Around the tenth day of the tenth month of this year, the disciples will gather in his old residence and wait for the spirit. How could it not return when we're waiting? Spirit, come back!

When blossoms scatter on the brushwood gate, startled birds will cry out in lament. When the autumn moon descends over the mugwort hut, people will panic and stop visiting.

So why would he write about "a hedge of deutzias"[40] in a comfortable world full of wild violets? Even if the cuckoo has lost its way, how could the spring geese not return in the end?

And so, spirit, regardless of where you've gone, there must be a way to return home. Come back, come back!

Shikō wrote this on the sixth anniversary of his teacher Bashō's death. "Old man" here refers to Bashō, and the poem speaks of an attempt to bring back his spirit. What makes it unique is the refrain, immediately evident upon an initial reading: "Spirit, come back!" It repeats three times in the passage I have quoted, and the word *kaeru* ("return" or "come back") appears eight times.

As mentioned, this is not a pure *kana-shi*, though the refrain "Spirit, come back!" endows it with a poetic rhythm and the piece certainly gives the overall impression of a Chinese poem. Furthermore, its structure is

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34 Kagami Shikō, *Wakan bunsō*, p. 528.
35 Rodd and Henkenius, *Kokinshū*, p. 60.
36 *Kokin wakashū*, p. 75.
37 Morikawa Kyoriku, *Honchō monzen*, pp. 389–90.
38 Ibid., pp. 423–24.

39 Ibid., pp. 411–12. Line breaks have been added for readability.
40 The "u" in *u no hana* (deutzia) simultaneously denotes the word *u* 憂 (sorrow). In *waka* poetics, deutzias are often associated with the cuckoo.

similar to Buson's "Mourning the Old Sage Hokuju," discussed above. There are several theories about how Buson's poem came into being,[41] but if we pay close attention to its poetic form we see that instead of being a pure *kana-shi* it was in fact largely influenced by poetic *haibun* such as those written by Shikō. Furthermore, the basic content of "Rhapsody on the Return of a Spirit"—the feeling of anguish that comes with mourning the deceased—is also shared by "Morning the Old Sage Hokuju."

Another *Kana-shi*

The *kana-shi* theorized by Shikō and his contemporaries during the Kyōhō era continued to be composed by their disciples, but unlike *waka* and *haiku* it never achieved popularity among a more general audience. Buson's "Morning the Old Sage Hokuju" is deemed a miracle because in actuality most of his *kana-shi* (or works similar to *kana-shi*) do not remain. It is astounding that it is one of the few pieces that have survived.

In this way, by the second half of the eighteenth century *kana-shi* had mostly fallen out of fashion, and I would next like to introduce a text from this time period that has rarely been discussed. Entitled *Shibun seishiki* 詩文製式 (Model Poetry and Prose, preface dated 1770), it was written by a man named Hori Seijun 堀正純 (courtesy name Shūan 修安, art name Tōsen 東川, dates unknown). Not much is known about Hori, but considering the contents of the text he seems to have been a scholar of the Chinese classics with a particular interest in poetry. It also appears that Hori inherited the text after it was left unfinished by his grandfather Hakusui 栢翠 (familiar name Seiku 正矩, art name Ketsuho 絜甫, dates unknown). Ōe Genbō 大江玄圃 (1729–1794), known for works like *Maniai hayaga-*

kumon 間合早学問 (Makeshift Easy Learning, 1766), contributed the preface. The text states:

> Poetry and composition are originally vocal literary arts, so sound and rhythm occupy an important position. As such, Chinese poetry and composition created by contemporary Japanese has little meaning. The reason is that prosody is influenced by a country's language and natural features. As non-native speakers of Chinese, Japanese poets cannot produce anything of quality, even if they imitate Chinese works. Doing so is no different from reciting a spell. Japan and China are utterly alike in terms of rationality, but when it comes to language and natural features there is a decisive difference.[42]

For example, the famous poem by Wang Wei discussed above along with Kyoriku's translation would have been read with Chinese-style pronunciations as follows:

渭	城	朝	雨	浥	軽	塵
oi	*jin*	*chau*	*iu*	*ii*	*kin*	*jin*

客	舍	青	々	柳	色	新
ke	*sei*	*tsuin*	*tsuin*	*riu*	*sue*	*suin*

勧	君	更	尽	一	盃	酒
gen	*kyun*	*ken*	*tsuin*	*i*	*poi*	*chiu*

西	出	陽	関	無	故	人
sui	*chiu*	*yan*	*kuwan*	*ū*	*kū*	*jin*[43]

What makes the original a poem is its prosody and melody; simply reading it with Chinese pronunciations made it as unintelligible as the wording of a sutra. On the other hand, adding reading glosses (*kunten* 訓点) would have distorted the meter, causing it to lose its poetic quality.

Hori's suggestion was to translate the poem in the following way:

> よどのあしたにむら雨ふりて
> 　みちもきよらに軒端のやなぎ
> いともうつくしみどりのころも
> 　つねはめさずとかはらけまいれ
> 須磨の関路を過こしかたは
> 　けゝらしる人あらざらめ [44]

41 According to Ebara Taizō, Buson was not influenced by *kana-shi* but instead by the popular poetic works created by the Edo school 江戸座 of *haikai* poets. See Ebara, "Shunpū batei kyoku no genryū." Shimizu Takayuki critiqued this view, pointing out that *kana-shi* were popular among the Edo-*za* poets and situating Buson's poem within the development of *kana-shi*. See Shimizu, "Haishi to sono kanshō." Other scholars have argued similarly (see Matsumoto, "Haishi (Jō)" and "Haishi (Ge)," and Horikiri, "Buson no haishi"). Hino Tatsuo further notes that climbing a hill to mourn the dead was a conventional theme in Chinese poetry, and so Buson's poem can also be understood as an adaptation into Japanese of this sort of elegy. See Hino, "Shintaishi no ichi genryū."

42 Hori Seijun, *Shibun seishiki*, vol. 1, fols. 1a–4b.
43 Ibid., vol. 1, fols. 2b–3a.
44 Ibid., fol. 2b.

Figure 2. Hori Seijun. *Shibun seishiki*. 1770, Edo period. Kyoto. Permission of the National Diet Library.

Passing showers fall this morning at Yodo,
cleansing the road. A willow tree by the eaves,
exceptionally beautiful clothed in green.
You don't usually drink but go ahead and have a
    cupful.
If you've passed the barrier at Suma,
no one is likely to know your thoughts.

Hori translates the original poem using lines made up of two seven-syllable phrases, while also remaining conscious of rhyme. In this way he is able to transfer the meaning and meter of the original poem into Japanese (figure 2).

This first half of Hori's argument seems mostly aligned with the problems that Kyoriku and Shikō tackled in the early eighteenth century. Hori does not, however, comment on these and instead claims that the argument is solely his own. On the other hand, it is possible that the *kana-shi* composed by Shikō and his contemporaries had become such an obscure current that by the Meiwa 明和 era (1764–1772) it had mostly lost the attention of those beyond *haikai* circles.

In line six of his translation Hori uses the word *kekera* ("thoughts"), which is found in the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, compiled ca. 759) and seems to have been eastern dialect for *kokoro*. Also, in the original manuscript the rhyming characters are circled; in my transcription, rhyme is indicated by a small dot placed above the character (the same method is used below). In lines one and two *furite* rhymes with *yanagi*, while in lines four and six *maire* rhymes with *arazarame*.

Hori referred to this kind of *kana-shi* as *washi* (Japanese Chinese-style poetry), so I will use the same term from here on. It seems that Hori's aim in composing *washi* was somewhat different from that of the *haikai* poets in composing *kana-shi*. This takes us into the second half of his argument:

It might be said that the experimental *washi* I compose are without skill. But they are a necessary step in the eventual appearance of a writer of Japanese

who can create literature equal to the hymns and eulogies from the *Shijing* 詩経 [Book of Songs] and the canons and consultations from the *Shujing* 書経 [Book of Documents]. Then enlightenment will spread, even to women and fools, and we will say, "China is not a civilized country. *Zuo zhuan* 佐伝 [Commentary of Zuo], *Guoyu* 国語 [Discourses of the States], *Chu ci* 楚辞 [Songs of Chu], and the *Zhuangzi*—these are not exceptional works of literature. Shun 舜, who is that? How is he any different from me?" Our country will expand the light of knowledge ever more, "and won't it be the kind of pleasure that comes once every thousand years?"[45]

In sum, in terms of the general framework of poetry and prose—for example, structure and rhyme for poetry, the major and lesser hymns for prose—the "form" was borrowed from China while the "content" was supplied by Japan. Continuing like this Japan would close in on the poetic level attained by China and one day *surpass* it. Hence compared to the *kana-shi* of Shikō and his contemporaries, the unique feature of Hori's poetics was its lack of a belletristic, playful orientation in favor of one more didactic and practical.

What were *washi* composed according to these concepts actually like? Let us first examine a work classified by Hori as a *kuniburi uta* 国風 (Ch. *guofeng*). The term was originally the name of a section in the *Shijing* and it refers to folk songs and popular songs.

高槻川(たかつきがわ)

いさやむかしのをとづれたへて。思(おも)ひかへなんね
　　たくはあろと。
まめにたへなばまかるもよしな。これもいましの
　　ひとはなごゝろ。
高槻川(たかつきがわ)のせゞのみづ。すまばなれぎぬあらはまし。
高槻川(たかつきがわ)のせゞのみづ。にごらばあとをあらはまし。[46]

"Takatsuki River"

And so the visits of old have ceased.
Reflecting on it, she must've been envious.

Had she been able to bear it admirably, it would
　　have been foolish to leave.
This too is merely a moment's fleeting affection.
The shallows of the Takatsuki River:
if they're clear, I'll wash my well-worn robe.
The shallows of the Takatsuki River:
if they're muddied, I'll wash my feet.

The poem consists of eight lines. Each of the first four lines contains two seven-syllable phrases, while each of the last four contains one seven-syllable phrase and one five-syllable phrase. The rhyming schema is somewhat complex, with *ro* repeating in the second and fourth lines, *tzu* repeating in the fifth and seventh, and *shi* repeating in the sixth and eighth. The poem seems to tell of a man who is considering whether or not he should call on a woman who has not visited in a long time. The meaning is slightly unclear, but in any case it indeed has the feel of a *kuniburi uta* and is firmly a part of the limitless world of folk song. The second half is clearly an adaptation of "Yufu ci" 漁父辞 (The Fisherman's Song), attributed to Qu Yuan 屈原 (ca. 340–278 BCE).[47]

Next I will turn to one of the poems that Hori calls a *sunai masauta* 小雅 (Ch. *xiaoya*, "lesser hymns").

花(はな)の月(つき)

秋(あき)の最中(もなか)や花(はな)の月(つき)。てりそふみきのすがむしろ。
今宵(こよい)思(おも)ひはたがふかい。恋(こい)の波(なみ)うつきぬのをと。[48]

"Moon Flowers"

A mid-autumn moon shines on the blossoms,
illuminating the sedge mats placed around the trees.
Which feelings run deeper tonight?
The sound of fulling clothes brings swells of love.

Hori annotates this poem as "corresponding to a Chinese five-character quatrain";[49] each of the four lines consists of one seven-syllable phrase and one five-syllable phrase. The rhyme occurs at the end of the second and fourth lines with *ro* and *to*. This poem is impossible to distinguish from a folk love ballad and would be

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45　Hori Seijun, *Shibun seishiki*, vol. 2, fol. 15b.
46　Ibid., fol. 16b. In Hori's original poem there are no "forced" line breaks, but they are added both here and in the next poem for ease of reading.

47　*Kobun shinpō: Kōshū*, p. 12.
48　Hori Seijun, *Shibun seishiki*, vol. 2, fols. 16b–17a.
49　Ibid.

at home in *Kanginshū* 閑吟集 (Collection of Intoned Songs, 1518) or *Matsu no ha* 松の葉 (Pine Needles, 1703).

In the end Hori's experiments with *washi*, despite having the lofty goal of surpassing the literary achievements of China, hardly appear to have achieved their ambitions. If his intention was to incite national pride, advocating the direct study of Japanese poetry and prose in opposition to China, as contemporary native studies scholars did, would have been more effective. Even in terms of content, Hori's poems are inferior to the *haikai* poets' imaginative and wide-ranging *kana-shi* discussed above. Hori's *washi* lacks appeal in multiple senses of the word, and his declarations ended in a misfire. Nonetheless, it does show that the idea of Chinese poetry providing the "form" and Japanese expression providing the "content" was employed in contexts other than *haikai*, and thus deserves more attention than it has received.

Conclusion

Kana-shi was a new kind of poetry, distinct from *kanshi*, *waka*, and *haikai*. As stated above, in this sense it shared a deep conceptual similarity with Meiji-period *shintaishi*. So why is it that *kana-shi* declined and *shintaishi* flourished? This is a fascinating problem that is beyond the scope of this essay. What I can say is that in the end *kana-shi* was essentially derivative of *kanshi*, *waka*, and *haikai*. Of course, *kana-shi* has its own particular points of interest and seems to have attained literary significance, and my decision to write this essay was motivated by a desire to engage with it more actively. But in the Edo period it was for the most part treated simply as an eccentric and pedantic experiment. In his text *Fumyōja* 不猫蛇 (An Enemy Neither Cat Nor Snake, 1725), Shikō's intellectual rival Etsujin 越人 (ca. 1656–1730) of Nagoya wrote that "Chinese poetry is being composed in kana but we already have *waka*. These poets must simply like making imitations that mislead people."[50] And the mid-Edo *haikai* poet Kasaya Saren 笠屋左簾 (1714–1779) wrote the following in *Kojiki bukuro* 乞食袋 (Beggar's Bag, date unknown):

Lately a type of *kyōshi* [humorous poetry] called *kana-shi* is being composed. It seems to consist of four lines of seven kana characters, a vowel-based rhyme scheme, and the four-part structure of a Chinese poem (introduction, development, turn, conclusion). The best works of Chinese poetry delight in subtext and disdain practical utility, and it goes without saying that the poems of Li Bai and Du Fu 杜甫 [712 – 770] exemplify this. One could say that *haikai* poems endowed with this same spirit are also exemplary works, but I would like to know what is so interesting about *kana-shi*. It should not even be called *kyōshi*.[51]

From Saren's perspective, *kana-shi* lacked the deeper meaning that characterized Chinese poetry and *kyōshi*.

On the other hand, Meiji-period *shintaishi* is thought to have been modeled on Western poetry, but since actual Western poetry does not seem to have been widely recognized at the time, *shintaishi* could not have been regarded as simply an "imitation." Furthermore, in both form and content *shintaishi* displayed an extremely high degree of freedom and informality that overturned the conventional poetics that had persisted throughout the Edo period, meaning writers active at the time must have sensed the possibility of creating an entirely new kind of poetry.[52] This development hence has implications for understanding the rapid shift in aesthetic sensibility from high to low[53] that took place during the transition from Edo to Meiji, but that is a matter for another essay.

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50 Etsujin, *Fumyōja*, pp. 319–20.

51 Kasaya Saren, "Kojiki bukuro," vol. 2, fol. 8a.
52 Hino, "Shintaishi no ichi genryū"; Ibi, *Kinsei bungaku no kyōkai*, pp. 439–64; Aoyama, "Kinsei inbun to shite no shintaishi."
53 Nakano, *Jū-hachi seiki no Edo bungei*, pp. 2–65.

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Yamato-e: Illuminating a Concept through Historiographical Analysis

YAN YANG

Introduction

PRESENTED as a long-standing artistic genre that embraces a variety of themes, styles, and formats, *yamato-e* stands as a central yet confounding concept in the field of Japanese art history. Generally understood as a type of Japanese painting, scholars widely acknowledge that a certain amount of confusion surrounds the precise parameters of *yamato-e*, yet many nevertheless employ the term uncritically in their works. Tracing the twentieth-century historiography of *yamato-e*, this article contends that current understandings of the term—diverse though they may be—are based on contrasting studies that were born in an era of imperialism and haphazardly synthesized into a single narrative. This is not an attempt to redefine *yamato-e* itself, but rather to clarify modern factors for the nebulous understanding of *yamato-e* and its conflicting applications and connotations.

In recent decades, historiography has emerged as an important tool for examining the late-nineteenth-century roots of Japanese art history and the post-Meiji concerns about national identity that have directly impacted the field.[1] A discourse on Japanese art his-

tory—one that included elements of nationalistic ideology—already existed in the nineteenth century, thanks to the efforts of pioneers like Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin 岡倉天心 (1862–1913).[2] Yet neither the category nor concept of *yamato-e* was central to the field until several studies published in the 1930s and 1940s cast a spotlight on it. Individual essays on *yamato-e* may seem convincing, but taken as a whole, scholarship on the subject is both inconsistent and contradictory. One of the most confounding aspects is that multiple written forms of the term *yamato-e* appear in these studies but are not well-characterized. Another is the lack of consensus regarding the early history of *yamato-e* during the Heian period (794–1185), leading scholars to date the origin of the phenomenon to different centuries. Scholars have also

1   Satō Dōshin has been at the forefront of this research. See Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*; Satō, *'Nihon bijutsu' no tanjō*; Kitazawa, *Me no shinden*; and Tōkyō Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, *Ima, Nihon no bijutsushigaku o furikaeru*.

2   Okakura promoted nationalism through art historical discourse by claiming that each culture held its own values and should foster its own character to encourage creativity among its members. Tanaka, "Imaging History."

Table 1. Major *yamato-e* studies.

Year	Japanese Title	Transliteration of Title	Author
1933	やまと絵序説 [3]	*Yamato-e josetsu*	Tanaka Ichimatsu
1941	平安時代の「唐絵」と「やまと絵」: 上	"Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Jō"	Akiyama Terukazu
1942	平安時代の「唐絵」と「やまと絵」: 下	"Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Ge"	Akiyama Terukazu
1944	大和絵史研究	*Yamato-e shi kenkyū*	Shimomise Shizuichi
1944	唐絵と大和絵	*Kara-e to yamato-e*	Shimomise Shizuichi
1946	上代倭絵全史 [4]	*Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*	Ienaga Saburō
1976	大和絵の研究 [5]	*Yamato-e no kenkyū*	Minamoto Toyomune
1994	やまと絵の形成とその意味	"Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi"	Chino Kaori
2009	平安時代の「倭絵」: その成立と展開	"Heian jidai no 'yamato-e': Sono seiritsu to tenkai"	Kobayashi Manabu

disagreed on what constitutes *yamato-e*, and whether it appears in large formats such as folding screens (*byōbu* 屏風) or in small formats such as album leaves and picture scrolls (*emaki* 絵巻). This article will reveal that the conflicting narratives and characterizations result from the reality that early twentieth-century studies of *yamato-e* historicized it from two different perspectives using incompatible methods: as paintings that featured Japanese subject matter based on textual sources only, or as art that constituted a distinctive pictorial style using extant artwork as examples.

In this article, I first address the semantics of *yamato-e* by examining how various scholars defined this term in their studies, and I show that the lack of uniform employment of the term has contributed to our present confusion regarding *yamato-e* as a putative genre. I then trace and critique the modern history of *yamato-e* studies as well as the methodologies deployed in them. Finally, I address the broader issue of the significance of *yamato-e* in the history of Japanese art and what is at stake in recognizing its current definition as a modern invention.

Yamato-e Semantics

Before delving into scholarship on the putative genre of *yamato-e*, let us first consider the term in question. Although this term has only one transliteration in English scholarship, three main written forms (i.e., three different sets of kanji or hiragana and kanji) of *yamato-e* appear in Japanese scholarship (倭絵, 大和絵, and やまと絵). Table 1 shows the most frequently occurring examples.

Even a cursory glance at this list discloses the lack of scholarly consensus regarding terminology. The obvious question that arises is whether word choice signifies nuances in meaning or different historical backgrounds for the artistic phenomenon. Although none of the scholars explicitly defined *yamato-e* or explained their preferences, and to further complicate matters, Tanaka, Minamoto, and Ienaga introduced multiple versions of the written form *yamato-e*, we can still map a general pattern by analyzing the historical and conceptual characteristics that each scholar associated with the term. Since my premise is that the modern definition of *yamato-e* is inadequate, we must start anew by stripping the word of all accreted meanings. We may do well to forget everything we think we know about *yamato-e* and treat it as an empty vessel to be labeled then filled with connotations and denotations based on how each scholar characterized the art historical phenomenon in their study.

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3 Note that in his study Tanaka also used 大和絵 to refer to *yamato-e*.
4 Note that in his study Ienaga also used 大和絵 to refer to *yamato-e*.
5 Note that in his study Minamoto also used 倭絵 to refer to *yamato-e*.

Three of the seven scholars listed in table 1 used *yamato-e* written with the Japanese characters 倭絵 within their discussions (two in their titles), and each applied the term differently. For Kobayashi Manabu, 小林学 *yamato-e* denoted a pictorial style in use from the tenth to the twelfth century that included both large-format media such as folding screens and small-format media including picture scrolls.[6] Minamoto Toyomune 源豊宗 (1895–2001) used this written form of *yamato-e* to define Heian-period works with a clear Japanese subject matter.[7] For Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎 (1913–2002), the same term represented only folding screens painted with Japanese subject matter, a genre of art that he claimed first appeared in the ninth century and lasted until the beginning of the medieval period (*chūsei* 中世). Ienaga also introduced a second kanji rendering of *yamato-e* 大和絵 when referring to paintings in the medieval period.[8] This second form of *yamato-e* denoted an artistic style distinguished by a more realistic mode of depiction in works of art painted on picture scrolls and portraits.[9]

Three other scholars also used this second rendering of the term yet they defined it differently. For Shimomise Shizuichi 下店静市 (1900–1974), *yamato-e* is defined by Heian-period screens and picture scrolls in a Japanese pictorial style.[10] Minamoto argued for a pictorial style of *yamato-e* in the Heian period on small-format media using this same term.[11] Tanaka Ichimatsu 田中一松 (1895–1983) also associated a particular decorative style (i.e., a pictorial style *sōshokuteki naishi moyōteki* 装飾的乃至模様的) in the Heian period with these same kanji (大和絵) for *yamato-e*.[12]

Curiously, Tanaka also used a combination of hiragana and kanji (*kana-majiri* 仮名交じり) for *yamato-e* やまと絵, to define paintings from the Heian period that contained Japanese subject matter.[13] Likewise, Akiyama Terukazu 秋山光和 (1918–2009) used this written form when he declared that *yamato-e* artwork extended only to Heian-period screens featuring Japanese subject matter without explaining his semantic choice.

In 1994 Chino Kaori 千野香織 (1952–2001) surveyed the history of *yamato-e* using as her heading the *kana-majiri* form of *yamato-e* やまと絵. According to Chino, *yamato-e* during the Heian period were artworks that depicted Japanese subject matter, but after the Kamakura period (1185–1333)—when Song- (960–1279) and Yuan-dynasty (1271–1368) paintings from China were imported to Japan—*yamato-e* became associated with the pictorial styles of Japanese paintings that had been created since the Heian period, and later the concept of artistic lineages such as the Tosa school were also incorporated into its meanings.[14] Chino noted that the use of the *kana-majiri* form has become common practice among researchers when discussing the general history of *yamato-e*.

There are two conclusions one can make regarding the semantics of *yamato-e* in secondary scholarship. First, the employment of the written form of *yamato-e* in these studies does not reflect the historical usage of the term *yamato-e* in the primary sources. For example, Akiyama used やまと絵 consistently throughout his study but his primary texts clearly employed other written forms of *yamato-e* including 倭絵, 倭画, 和絵, and やまと絵. Minamoto explained that the association of *yamato-e* (he used 大和絵) with pictorial style does not go further back than the Ashikaga period 足利時代 (1336–1583) even though the term cited in his primary source was 倭画 for *yamato-e*. To further confuse the matter, Minamoto argued that a pictorial style had existed since the Heian period shortly after declaring that the pictorial style of *yamato-e* could not be traced before the Ashikaga period, all the while using the same written form 大和絵.[15] Second, even though the choice of the term *yamato-e* in the individual studies may not faithfully reflect the historical employment of this term in primary sources, the chosen written form of *yamato-e* within the confines of those studies remained consistent, and this is especially visible when scholars, such as Ienaga and Minamoto, introduce multiple renderings of the term to distinguish between certain historical characteristics, signifying that there is a different connotation to each of the written forms of *yamato-e*. It is only when read against the other studies that the inconsistencies associated with each writ-

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6   Kobayashi Manabu's 2011 dissertation reexamined the characteristics of *yamato-e* during the Heian period. Kobayashi, "Heian jidai 'yamato-e' no saikōsei."
7   Minamoto, *Yamato-e no kenkyū*, p. 5.
8   Ienaga, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, p. 471.
9   Ibid., p. 487.
10 Shimomise, *Kara-e to yamato-e*, p. 6.
11 Minamoto, *Yamato-e no kenkyū*, p. 6.
12 Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 59.
13 Ibid., p. 5.

14 Chino, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi," pp. 488-89.
15 Minamoto, *Yamato-e no kenkyū*, p. 6.

Table 2. Semantics of *yamato-e* in Japanese scholarship.

Author and Work(s)	倭絵	大和絵	やまと絵
Tanaka (1933, *Yamato-e josetsu*)		Pictorial style, Heian period	Subject matter, Heian period
Akiyama (1941, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e: Jō'"); (1942, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e: Ge'"); (1964, *Heian jidai sezokuga no kenkyū*)			Subject matter, large-format medium, Heian period
Shimomise (1944, *Kara-e to yamato-e*)		Pictorial style, both large- and small-format medium, Heian period until medieval period	
Ienaga (1946, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*)	Subject matter, large-format medium, Heian period until medieval period	Pictorial style, small-format medium, medieval period	
Minamoto (1976, *Yamato-e no kenkyū*)	Subject matter, Heian period	Pictorial style, small-format medium since Heian period	
Chino (1994, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi")			Subject matter in Heian period, pictorial style and painting lineages in medieval period
Kobayashi (2009, "Heian jidai no 'yamato-e': Sono seiritsu to tenkai")	Pictorial style, large-format and small-format media, Heian period (tenth–twelfth century)		

ten form become visible and the precise meaning of *yamato-e* becomes blurred. In other words, although scholars understood why a certain written form of *yamato-e* was chosen, it remained a personal preference not shared across the field. Today, the common practice is to use the *kana-majiri* form of *yamato-e* やまと絵, but in this article, I will argue that the wide deployment of やまと絵 to represent the entire history of the art historical phenomenon buries the consistencies as well as the inconsistencies, and contributes to our confusion about the concept by obfuscating important distinctions concerning time period, medium, subject matter, and pictorial style that were carefully conveyed by the characters for *yamato* (倭 and 大和) in early *yamato-e* studies. Another consequence of using やまと絵 is the

facilitation in streamlining various avenues of scholarship into a single historical narrative.[16] Given the persistent confusion regarding the nature of *yamato-e*, a vital first step is to acknowledge the existence of these different written forms of the term and the limits each *yamato-e* scholar attached to them. This is a critical point not only in Japanese scholarship but also when writing about *yamato-e* in English because the diverging meanings and historical parameters associated with

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16 The term 倭 is understood as a pejorative historical Chinese reference to Japan, while 大和 embodies nationalistic sentiments. However, the author has yet to find any scholarly articles that address the connotations of the term *yamato* in any of its iterations.

these different terms disappear into the same phonetic rendering of *yamato-e*, conveniently concealing the nuances outlined above. These nuances are summarized in table 2.

▪ *Yamato-e* as Heian-period Artwork with Japanese Subject Matter

The multiple usage of different written forms of the term *yamato-e* across different studies echoes an even larger problem: that our current narrative of this phenomenon results from various approaches that are ultimately methodologically incompatible. One school of *yamato-e* scholarship presented *yamato-e* as Heian-period artwork that contains Japanese subject matter, including paintings of seasonal themes (*tsukinami-e* 月次絵), paintings of annual Japanese customs (*nenchū gyōji-e* 年中行事絵), and works that celebrate famous Japanese places (*meisho-e* 名所絵). Such scholarship relied exclusively on textual sources such as courtier diaries, poetry anthologies, and protocol manuals for its definitional standards.

The earliest study using this method was Tanaka's 1933 *Yamato-e josetsu* やまと絵序説 (A Yamato-e Introduction). He wrote, "According to the contemporary textual examples of '*yamato-e*' from the Heian period, it stood in opposition to '*kara-e*' から絵 (Chinese pictures) and represented paintings featuring Japanese subjects and customs."[17] Tanaka mentioned a screen from Kannin 寛仁 2 (1018)—which he called a "*yamato-e* screen"—but did not elaborate on its subject matter.[18] In 1942, Akiyama Terukazu provided a more systematic analysis of primary sources from the Heian period, including diaries, protocol manuals, and fictional tales in his two-part article, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e'" 平安時代の「唐絵」と「やまと絵」 (Kara-e and Yamato-e of the Heian Period). According to Akiyama, the term *yamato-e* first appeared in the diary *Gonki* 権記 (Yukinari's Diary) of Fujiwara no Yukinari 藤原行成 (972–1027).[19] An entry dated the thirtieth day of the tenth month of Chōho 長保 1 (999) reads:

> I [Yukinari] traveled to Nishi no kyō, to brush poetry on the poetry sheets [*shikishigata*] of a *yamato-e* folding screen, four *shaku* in height, that featured paintings by the late [Asukabe no] Tsunenori.[20]

Akiyama provided corroborating evidence from two other contemporary diaries—Fujiwara no Michinaga's 藤原道長 (966–1028) *Midō kanpaku-ki* 御堂関白記 (Diary of the Midō Regent, eleventh century) and Fujiwara no Sanesuke's 藤原実資 (957–1046) *Shōyūki* 小右記 (Record of the Ononomiya Minister of the Right, eleventh century)—and argued that the screen was part of the furnishings provided for the presentation of Michinaga's oldest daughter, Fujiwara no Shōshi 藤原彰子 (988–1074), to the imperial court.[21] Akiyama identified two poems from *Eiga monogatari* 栄花物語 (A Tale of Flowering Fortunes, eleventh century), composed by high-ranking courtiers for a screen that would be sent to the palace with Shōshi. He then cross-referenced them with poems composed for the same occasion that appear in the oeuvre of Fujiwara no Kintō 藤原公任 (966–1041).[22] Based on descriptions in Kintō's poetry anthology, *Kintō-kyō shū* 公任卿集 (Collected Poems of Lord Kintō, eleventh century), Akiyama was able to determine the contents in the six panels of Shōshi's screen. He noted that the first panel features a pine tree and plum blossoms standing adjacent to a house and a person playing a flute in front of some bamboo blinds. The second panel contains a scene of flowers and trees next to a house and a lady with an ink stone. The third panel depicts a wisteria vine intertwined with the branches of a pine beside a house. The fourth panel shows a flock of cranes near a residence. The fifth pictorially captures the comings and goings of

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17 Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 5.

18 Ibid., p. 6. Tanaka did not elaborate on the subject matter of *yamato-e* in his work because his primary objective was to trace the pictorial style of *yamato-e* during the Heian period. I will introduce his arguments in the section "*Yamato-e* as Pictorial Style from the Heian period."

19 Akiyama mentioned an earlier textual instance of *yamato-e* found in *Songshi* 宋史 (History of the Song Dynasty, fourteenth century),

in which a *yamato-e* screen was among the objects presented to the Song imperial court by the Japanese monk Chōnen 奝然 (938–1016) via his disciple Kain 嘉因 in Eien 永延 2 (988), during the reign of Emperor Ichijō 一条 (r. 986–1011). Yet Akiyama considered this source to be unreliable. See Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Jō," pp. 377–78.

20 *Shaku* 尺 is a measure of length, roughly 30 centimeters. 自内参西京、書倭繪四尺屏風色唐形、故常則絵, as quoted in Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Jō," p. 378.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., p. 379.

people through the gate of a seaside residence. Finally, the sixth panel illustrates a mountain setting with passersby gazing at birds in the yard of a house as smoke rises from its chimney.[23]

The second-oldest reference Akiyama noted was the same screen from 1018 that Tanaka had offered as evidence. According to Akiyama, it was painted by Oribe Sashinnosuke 織部佐親助 (n.d.) and was intended for a New Year's banquet. "A four-*shaku* tall, twelve-panel *yamato-e* screen was brought out. The artist was Oribe Sashinnosuke. Chinese poetry and *waka* poetry appeared on the poetry sheets."[24] Akiyama scoured *Eiga monogatari* to ascertain the screen's pictorial content. Among the eighty poems recited on this occasion, Akiyama identified nine that contained seasonal motifs and annual customs, and hypothesized that the panels of the 1018 screen corresponded with scenes from the twelve months of the year.[25]

Although Akiyama was able to provide concrete pictorial evidence for only Shōshi's screen, and offer an educated guess regarding the contents in the Oribe screen, he identified a total of fifteen references to *yamato-e* in Heian-period sources, dating from 999 to the middle of the twelfth century.[26] From these sources, Akiyama noticed that all references to *yamato-e* denoted large-format works such as folding screens, leading him to conclude that *yamato-e* was not used by Heian-period writers when referring to paintings on other media such as picture scrolls or album leaves, nor to any distinguishable pictorial style.[27]

In 1946, four years after Akiyama's article, Ienaga Saburō contributed his thoughts on *yamato-e* in *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi* 上代倭絵全史 (The Complete History of Yamato-e in the Classical Period). Ienaga offered examples of Japanese nouns with the prefix "*yamato*" 倭 (Japan) or "*kara*" 唐 (China) as arguments that Heian-period audiences made distinctions between what is native and what is not, thereby allowing him to argue that *yamato-e* 倭絵 was understood as "paintings of Japan."[28] Following this semantic rubric, Ienaga

surveyed textual references to landscape paintings, portraiture, and illustrated tales that contained ostensibly Japanese themes as examples of *yamato-e*.

In 1964, Akiyama Terukazu revised his 1940s articles for his book *Heian jidai sezokuga no kenkyū* 平安時代世俗画の研究 (Research on Heian-period Secular Paintings). This effectively marks the historiographical end of scholarship that frames *yamato-e* in terms of subject matter. Scholars thereafter typically direct readers to Akiyama or Ienaga for references on *yamato-e* history and its applications. Akiyama's contribution was particularly influential. Chino Kaori's 1994 introduction of *yamato-e* to a new generation, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi" やまと絵の形成とその意味 (The Formation and Meaning of Yamato-e), published over fifty years after Akiyama's articles, defined Heian-period *yamato-e* in close alignment with Akiyama's conclusions as paintings with Japanese subjects found on screen panels and sliding doors (although not on scrolls or album leaves).[29]

▪ *Yamato-e* in Poetry Anthologies

Although these four scholars (Tanaka, Akiyama, Ienaga, and Chino) all traced the first textual appearance of *yamato-e* (as a screen with Japanese subject matter) to the late tenth or early eleventh century, they insisted that *yamato-e* screens had existed since the latter half of the ninth century. By locating references to screen paintings with Japanese subject matter in imperial poetry anthologies, each scholar thus presented different examples of the earliest *yamato-e*.

Tanaka chose a Japanese poem (*waka* 和歌) composed by Ariwara no Narihira 在原業平 (828–880) in the *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 (Collection of Japanese Poems from Ancient and Modern Times, also called *Kokinshū*; ca. 905).[30] Although he did not identify its number in the anthology, it is commonly known as *Kokinshū* 294 and, according to its headnote, the screen "showed autumn leaves floating down the Tatsuta Riv-

23 Ibid.
24 四尺倭繪屏畫工織部佐親助、色紙形、有詩並和歌, as quoted in Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Jō," pp. 379–80.
25 Ibid., p. 380.
26 Although Akiyama's articles cited here list only thirteen sources, he includes fifteen references in his book. Akiyama, *Heian jidai sezokuga no kenkyū*, pp. 39–40.
27 Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Ge," pp. 21–22.
28 Ienaga, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, pp. 67–68.

29 Chino, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi," pp. 488–89.
30 Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 6. The original, which is not reproduced by Tanaka, is: ちはやぶる神世も聞かずたつた河から紅に水くゝるとは. Kojima and Arai, *Kokin wakashū*, p. 99. Rodd and Henkenius translate the poem as: "unheard of even / in the stories of the age / of the awesome gods– / the waters of Tatsuta / stream dyed a Chinese red." Rodd and Henkenius, *Kokinshū*, p. 131.

er."[31] To Tanaka, the headnote explained that the poem was composed when the Nijō empress Takaiko 二条后高子 (842–910) was known as Harunomiya no Kisaki 春宮妃.[32] This led him to date this poem prior to the Jōgan 貞観 era (859–878).[33]

Akiyama considered two different poems from the *Kokinshū* as the earliest evidence of *yamato-e*. The first poem he cited is commonly known as *Kokinshū* 930, by Sanjō no Machi 三条町 (d. 866):

> 田村御時に、女房の侍にて、御屏風の絵御覧じけるに、滝落ちたりける所面白し、これを題にて歌よめと、侍ふ人に仰せられければ、詠める

> 思せく心の内の滝なれや落つとは見れどをとのきこえぬ[34]

> During the Tamura period, ladies-in-waiting were serving the emperor as he looked upon a folding screen and said to those in attendance, "The cascading waterfall is quite enchanting. Use this topic to compose poems about it."

> Could this be / the waterfall of the feelings / stopped up in my heart? / Though I can see it fall, / I cannot hear its sound.[35]

Akiyama dated the Tamura period to the reign of Emperor Montoku 文徳天皇 (r. 850–858).[36] Akiyama—and Chino, later—also selected *Kokinshū* 293 by the poet Sosei Hōshi 素性法師 (active early Heian period):

> 二條の后の、東宮の御息所と申しける時、御屏風に立田川に紅葉流れたる繪を書けりけるを題にて詠める

もみぢ葉の流れてとまるみなとには紅深き浪や立つらん[37]

> On the topic of autumn leaves floating down the Tatsuta River as painted on a screen seen at the residence of the Nijō Consort when she was known as Mother of the Crown Prince.[38]

> Down at the harbor / where the flow of autumn leaves / reaches its end, / could there be a deep crimson tide / that crests upon the waters?[39]

The headnote of *Kokinshū* 293 states that it was composed when Empress Takaiko (the poem's "Nijō Consort") was known as "the mother of the crown prince." The crown prince ascended the throne as Emperor Yōzei 陽成天皇 (r. 876–884) in 876, thus Akiyama dated the poem to between the reign years Jōgan 11 and 18 (869–876).[40]

Ienaga looked to two poems in the *Shūi wakashū* 拾遺和歌集 (Collection of Gleanings, often abbreviated as *Shūishū*; ca. 1005). In "Miscellaneous Autumn" (*Zasshū* 雑秋), the seventeenth volume of the *Shūishū*, a poem composed by Taira no Sadafumi 平定文 (d. 923) responds to a screen from the Ninna 仁和 reign period (885–889):

> 仁和御屏風に、七月七日、女の河浴みたる所

> 水のあやをおりたちて着む脱ぎちらしたなばたつめに衣かす夜は[41]

31 龍田川に紅葉流れたるかたをかけりける, as quoted in Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 6. This orthography differs slightly from Kojima and Arai, *Kokin wakashū*, p. 99. Although Tanaka treated this headnote as one belonging to *Kokinshū* 294, it is actually shared with *Kokinshū* 293.

32 Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 6.

33 Ibid.

34 Kojima and Arai, *Kokin wakashū*, p. 280. Akiyama included both the headnote and poem in Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Ge," p. 11; however, there are misquotes in both, so the correct version from SNKT is offered here.

35 Sorensen, *Optical Allusions*, p. 67.

36 Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Ge," p. 11.

37 As quoted in Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Ge," p. 11. The headnote and poem, in a slightly different orthography, appear in Kojima and Arai, *Kokin wakashū*, p. 99. The Nijō empress mentioned here is the same empress mentioned by Tanaka when he introduced the poem about the Tatsuta River composed by Ariwara no Narihira.

38 Rodd and Henkenius, *Kokinshū*, p. 131.

39 Sorensen, *Optical Allusions*, p. 72.

40 Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Ge," p. 11. Tanaka Ichimatsu's dating of *Kokinshū* 294, which also concerns Takaiko, to before the Jōgan era differs from Akiyama's conclusion. It is unclear how Tanaka arrived at his conclusion.

41 The poem is numbered 1091 in *Shūi wakashū*. Komachiya, *Shūi wakashū*, p. 313. The headnote in Ienaga's version mistakes the twentieth day of the seventh month for the seventh day of the seventh month. Ienaga did not provide the poem itself, as he was more interested in the information given in the headnote. Ienaga, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, p. 71.

Table 3. First appearance of *yamato-e* in poetry anthologies

Author and Work	Poetry Anthology	Poem Number	Date of Poem
Tanaka (1933, *Yamato-e josetsu*)	*Kokinshū*	294	Before 859
Akiyama (1941, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e: Jō'"); (1942, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e: Ge'"); (1964, *Heian jidai sezokuga no kenkyū*)	*Kokinshū* *Kokinshū*	930 293	850–858 869–876
Ienaga (1946, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*)	*Shūishū* *Shūishū*	1091 1257	885–889 885–889
Chino (1994, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi")	*Kokinshū* *Kokinshū*	293 294	869–876 869–876

A screen [produced] during the reign of the Ninna emperor shows a scene of women bathing in a river on the seventh day of the seventh month.

I will wear a robe woven in the patterns of the waters in which I wade, and then will lend it to the Weaver Maiden on her special night.[42]

The second poem, numbered 1247 in *Shūishū*, appears in the nineteenth volume on "Miscellaneous Love" (*Zatsuren* 雑恋). It is composed by Ōnakatomi no Yorimoto 大中臣頼基 (886–958), and is based on another screen from the Ninna era.

仁和の御屏風にあま汐たるる所に鶴なく[43]

しほたるゝ身は我とのみ思へどもよそなる鶴も音をぞ鳴くなる[44]

On a screen from the Ninna reign period, there are crying cranes and a diving woman soaked with water.

I thought I was the only one soaked in salty drops, but distant cranes are also crying in sorrow.[45]

Chino Kaori chose two *Kokinshū* poems already introduced above by Tanaka and Akiyama as examples of the earliest *yamato-e*. She dated the two poems about the autumn leaves on the Tatsuta River (*Kokinshū* 293 and 294) to between 869 and 876.[46] Table 3 above summarizes the earliest examples of *yamato-e* according to the scholars.

▪ A Critique of the Methodology

Although Tanaka, Akiyama, Ienaga, and Chino all treated *yamato-e* as Heian-period screens with Japanese subject matter, this idea has not been definitively proven by their studies. Tanaka defined *yamato-e* as screen paintings depicting Japanese customs and subject matter, but he failed to explain the process of arriving at that conclusion (nor did he discuss what might be construed as "Japanese" in the 1018 Oribe screen). Akiyama was able to clarify the contents of Shōshi's screen (999), but he did not declare it as irrefutably Japanese. When we review the content of the screen as outlined by Akiyama, there are references to pines, plum blossoms, wisteria, and cranes, but there are no descriptions of overtly Japanese landmarks or customs. Although

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42 My translation of the poem is adapted from a translation by Edward Kamens (personal communication by email, 12 July 2015).

43 As quoted in Ienaga, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, p. 71; it appears in a slightly different orthography in Komachiya, *Shūi wakashū*, p. 362.

44 Once again, Ienaga did not provide the actual poem in his article, as his focus was on the headnote. The poem quoted here appears in Komachiya, *Shūi wakashū*, p. 362.

45 Poem translation adapted from that by Edward Kamens (personal communication by email, 12 July 2015).

46 Chino, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi," pp. 491-92.

pines and cranes tend to be associated with Japan, are they always exclusively Japanese subjects? There were references to geographical locations within Japan in the nine poems from 1018, but Akiyama did not prove that those poems were the basis for the pictorial subjects in the Oribe screen. Akiyama's assumption that *yamato-e* screens must contain Japanese subject matter was more evident when he argued that even though the Oribe screen contained Chinese poetry (*kanshi* 漢詩), which is conventionally understood to suggest the presence of Chinese subject matter, by 1018 Chinese poetry was no longer considered foreign. Thus, Japanese topics could also be expressed using Chinese poetry, increasing the likelihood that Japanese subject matter appeared in this *yamato-e* screen.[47] Ienaga made the most explicit link between *yamato-e* and Japanese themes by defining the term as "paintings of Japan." At the same time, Ienaga's understanding of what constituted "paintings of Japan" reveals a logical conundrum. He framed the waterfall featured in *Kokinshū* 930 as "without a doubt, a Japanese landscape" and treated it as an example of *yamato-e* because, according to him, waterfalls frequently appear as a subject of *yamato-e* landscape paintings.[48] Yet he did not introduce any external evidence that supported a Heian-period connection between *yamato-e* and landscape paintings, thus revealing a methodological obstacle that none of the scholars of the early subject matter were able to fully overcome. But by the time Chino was writing at the end of the twentieth century the notion that *yamato-e* was a Heian-period artistic development featuring Japanese themes was so widely accepted that she did not need to address it.

Yamato-e as a Pictorial Style from the Heian Period

Moving from subject matter to pictorial style, the scholars working in this camp deployed completely different methods and used alternative resources to argue that *yamato-e* was a featured pictorial style during the Heian period. It bears noting that scholars attempting to trace the pictorial style of *yamato-e* during the Heian period must overcome two challenges. First, they must establish that a pictorial style known as *yamato-e* actually existed at this time. Second, they must find illustrative evidence from a period that, as the scholars themselves have admitted, lacks surviving examples of *yamato-e*. Consider Tanaka who, as we have seen, framed *yamato-e* as artworks featuring Japanese subject matter, and did so by using extant works of art as examples of *yamato-e* pictorial style. But he first addressed the emergence of *yamato-e* in the Heian period by citing a passage from the *Masakane-kyō ki* 雅兼卿記 (The Diary of Lord Masakane, twelfth century), as quoted in an annotation of *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (The Tale of Genji, early eleventh century) called *Kachō yosei* 花鳥余情 (Lingering Sentiments for Flowers and Birds, 1472): "Kanaoka folded mountains into fifteen layers, Hirotaka [painted] five layers."[49] According to Tanaka, this passage alluded to the evolution of landscape painting, specifically how the depiction of mountains transformed into a native style from the time of Kose no Kanaoka 巨勢金岡 (active ninth century) to Kose no Hirotaka 巨勢弘高 (active eleventh century).[50]

To demonstrate this change in pictorial style during the Heian period, Tanaka turned to several stories about Kose-family artists preserved in the mid-thirteenth-century *Kokon chomonjū* 古今著聞集 (A Collection of Tales Written and Heard in Ancient and Modern Times). One story noted that "before Kintada [公忠], painted pictures showed subjects as if they were living things, but after Kinshige [公茂], they became what they are now."[51] This passage does not explicitly describe a change in pictorial style, but Tanaka reasoned that a shift in pictorial style, "from the realistic to the decorative, from the majestic to the elegant, from depiction to expression," must have occurred.[52] The reason was rather simple: the Kose patriarch Kanaoka, the father of both Kintada and Kinshige (also known as Kinmochi 公望), painted in a realis-

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47 Akiyama, "Heian jidai no 'kara-e' to 'yamato-e': Jō," p. 380.

48 Ienaga, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, pp. 70–71. Decades later, Chino Kaori was less convinced of the *yamato-e* nature of this waterfall and chose other poems as her evidence. Chino, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi," pp. 491–92.

49 金岡畳ㇾ山十五重、廣高五重也, as quoted in Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 29. This passage, appearing in a slightly different orthography, can be found in Ichijō, *Matsunaga-bon kachō yosei*, pp. 28–29.

50 Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 29.

51 公忠よりさきは畫きたる繪生きたる物の如し、公茂以下今の體にはなりたるとなん, as quoted in Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu*, p. 45. Both Kintada and Kinshige were active during the mid-tenth century.

52 Ibid.

tic manner, as evidenced by another *Kokon chomonjū* story about a painted horse in a Kanaoka mural that escaped the painting each night to destroy nearby rice fields.[53] Tanaka then shared a remark from Kinshige to his grandson Kose no Hirotaka about a painting by his brother Kintada in which he said the field and pine in the screen were not comparable to what Hirotaka could make.[54] From this, Tanaka concluded that the pictorial transformation in painting style must have occurred during the time of Kinshige, around the Tenryaku 天暦 reign period (947–957).[55]

Tanaka turned to a picture competition in *Genji monogatari*, where Akikonomu's 秋好 team presented paintings of scenes from *Taketori monogatari* 竹取物語 (The Bamboo Cutter's Tale, late ninth to early tenth century) featuring illustrations by Kose no Ōmi 巨勢相覧 (ca. late ninth century) and calligraphy by Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 (868–945). The rival team chose paintings from *Utsuho monogatari* 宇津保物語 (The Tale of the Hollow Tree, late tenth century) brushed by Asukabe no Tsunenori 飛鳥部常則 (active mid-tenth to early eleventh century) with calligraphy by Ono no Michikaze 小野道風 (894–967). Paintings from *Utsuho monogatari* were praised as "modern" (*imamekashi* 今めかし), which for Tanaka indicated a more recent date of creation for *Utsuho monogatari* paintings, and also that the court painter Asukabe no Tsunenori had employed a new pictorial style.[56] In another story about the artist, Tsunenori supposedly critiqued a painting by Kinshige on a partitioning screen (*tsuitate shōji* 衝立障子) owned by Ononomiya Sanesuke 小野宮実資 (also known as Fujiwara no Sanesuke, the author of *Shōyūki*), claiming that the pine tree resembled a furry potato but could not be criticized otherwise.[57] Tanaka argued that such a statement was more than a mere critique of artistic skill, and in fact reflected a changing pictorial style from the dominant mode of Tang (618–907) China to a "Japanese" manner (*nihon-teki* 日本的).[58]

As mentioned earlier, Tanaka recognized *yamato-e* of the Heian period as works on folding screens, but the paucity of extant examples from the period presented him with a roadblock.[59] To move beyond this, Tanaka argued that while screens were a part of the public lives of Heian period aristocrats, picture scrolls and other small format artworks were from their personal lives and represented Japanese creativity and artistry.[60] Therefore, he turned to picture scrolls, including the *Genji monogatari emaki* 源氏物語絵巻 (The Tale of Genji Picture Scroll, twelfth century, Tokugawa Art Museum and Gotoh Art Museum) to highlight features of the pictorial style of *yamato-e*.[61] Tanaka focused on the thin lines used for eyes and hooks for noses known as *hikime kagihana* 引目鈎鼻, and the roofless viewing of interiors (*fukinuki yatai* 吹抜屋台) in the picture scrolls and identified these elements as stylistic characteristics of *yamato-e*.[62] The lack of individualization in faces rendered by the *hikime kagihana* technique served as a prime example of Fujiwara aesthetic tastes; for Tanaka, it lent a sense of elegance and peace free from foreign influences and was the purest form of *yamato-e*.[63]

In 1944, Shimomise published two books on the history and characteristics of *yamato-e* called *Kara-e to yamato-e* 唐絵と大和絵 (Kara-e and Yamato-e) and *Yamato-e shi kenkyū* 大和絵史研究 (Study of Yamato-e History). Although Shimomise believed that *yamato-e* was rooted in Chinese paintings, he also used the account noted above from *Kachō yosei* of Kose no Kanaoka painting fifteen layers of mountains and Hirotaka painting only five layers to illustrate a major difference between *yamato-e* and Chinese paintings, namely, the simplification of the pictorial composition.[64] Shimomise dated the shift in *yamato-e* pictorial style to after the era of Kintada through another passage from *Kokon chomonjū*: "This Hirotaka was the great-grandson of Kanaoka, the grandson of Kinshige, and the son of Fukae. Before Kintada, [who was] Kinshige's older brother, paintings resembled actual things. After Kinshige, they became what they are now."[65] Shimomise interpreted this passage to mean that before Kintada's

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53 Ibid.
54 この野筋この松汝及ぶべからず, as quoted in Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu,* p. 46.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., pp. 45–46.
57 かしら毛芋に似たり、他所難なし, as quoted in Tanaka, *Yamato-e josetsu,* p. 46.
58 Ibid.

59 Ibid., p. 44.
60 Ibid., p. 47.
61 Ibid., pp. 47–50.
62 Ibid., pp. 50–53.
63 Ibid., p. 53.
64 Shimomise, *Kara-e to yamato-e*, pp. 30–31.
65 此弘高は、金岡が曽孫、公茂が孫、深江が子なり。公忠公茂兄より
　　さきは、かきたる絵、生たる物のごとし。公茂以下、今の体には
　　成たるとなん, as quoted in Shimomise, *Kara-e to yamato-e*, p. 30.

time, artistic practice dictated that people, animals, tall mountains, and deep valleys were rendered realistically.[66] Shimomise then proceeded to explore the differences between Chinese and Japanese paintings, contrasting features including the classically Chinese knobby trees with the simple pine trees of Japanese paintings, the complex mountain formations found in Chinese paintings to the simpler hills in Japanese works, and the mushroom-like clouds that proliferated in Chinese paintings with the misty patches known as *yarikasumi* やり霞 that covered Japanese paintings, ultimately concluding that the primary characteristic of Chinese works was complexity while the foremost characteristic of *yamato-e* was simplicity.[67] He praised the innovative *fukinuki yatai* technique and the heightened psychological drama infused into *Genji monogatari emaki* by the *hikime kagihana* technique.[68] Shimomise considered both screens and picture scrolls as valid media for *yamato-e* (as did Tanaka, due to a lack of pictorial examples), but he also turned to literary sources for corroborating evidence on Heian-period *yamato-e*. These included the *Kokinshū* for lists of screens with Japanese subject matter, the *Tsurayuki-shū* 貫之集 (Collected Works of [Ki no] Tsurayuki, mid-tenth century) for lists of screens of the four seasons, and the *Shūishū* for screens of famous places.[69]

▪ A Critique of the Methodology

Tanaka and Shimomise argued for a change in pictorial style, leading to the formation of *yamato-e*, during the Heian period, but here too we can detect methodological loopholes. First, although the excerpts that they presented from the *Kokon chomonjū* and other textual sources seem to suggest artists working in different pictorial styles, these stories do not explicitly state that *yamato-e* was the result of any pictorial shift. For example, Kinshige's statement (to Hirotaka in front of Kintada's screen) that "this field and pine cannot compare with yours" meant to Tanaka that Kinshige was alluding to a new and native pictorial style. The remark could also, and more simply, be an assessment of artistic skill.

The lack of direct supporting evidence of any surviving pictorial work regarded as *yamato-e* dating from the Heian period presents a more critical problem. Shimomise contended that *yamato-e* developed from Chinese paintings, and thus it was possible to trace its development by remaining sensitive to Chinese elements in extant works of art. Yet he never satisfactorily explained which stylistic features representing *yamato-e* in extant paintings should be recognized as characteristic of *yamato-e* in the Heian period as well. In other words, without evidence that proves surviving pictorial examples were also considered *yamato-e* in the Heian period, we are left with only early twentieth-century insistence of how tenth-century examples of *yamato-e* should have appeared.

Tanaka and Shimomise seem to have held set assumptions regarding the appearance of *yamato-e* prior to seeking corroborating evidence, and those preconceived notions would have influenced their selections. It is revealing that they both pointed to *fukinuki yatai* and *hikime kagihana* as examples of *yamato-e* without explaining how these stylistic characteristics would have been considered aspects of a distinct form or genre of painting, or *yamato-e*, by a Heian-period audience, or how they became associated with *yamato-e*.

▪ *Yamato-e* as *Onna-e* and *Tsukuri-e*

In the latter half of the twentieth century, Minamoto Toyomune and Kobayashi Manabu turned to explore the relationship between picture scrolls and the concept of *onna-e* 女絵, or "women pictures," in their pursuit of the elusive Heian-period *yamato-e* pictorial style.

At the outset of his *Yamato-e no kenkyū* 大和絵の研究 (A Study of Yamato-e), Minamoto acknowledged that the earliest reference to *yamato-e* in association with a pictorial style dates to the fifteenth century. According to *Sekiso ōrai* 尺素往来 (Compendium of Short Writings, fifteenth century) by Ichijō Kaneyoshi 一条兼良 (d. 1481):[70]

> The sliding-door panels are colorful *yamato-e* showing the four seasons; [painters from] the

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66 Ibid., pp. 30–31.
67 Ibid., pp. 42–118.
68 Ibid., p. 106.
69 Shimomise, *Yamato-e shi kenkyū*, pp. 215–95.

70 *Sekiso ōrai* is a compilation from the Muromachi period (1392–1573) that contains lists of annual customs and the names of plants and animals, as well as terms for paintings. Ichijō Kaneyoshi is also the author of the aforementioned *Kachō yosei*.

painting bureau were called to [my residence to] paint them.[71]

Minamoto explained the lateness of this first reference to *yamato-e* (as a pictorial style) in terms of the lack of a necessity to distinguish between native and foreign pictorial styles until the great influx of ink paintings from China after the Kamakura period before proceeding to trace the pictorial style of *yamato-e* during the Heian period.[72] Highlighting the female authorship (Sanjō no Machi) of the aforementioned waterfall poem (*Kokinshū* 930), Minamoto argued that Heian women honed their sense of refinement by viewing art and composing *waka*.[73] In other words, as Chinese influences receded, court women expressed themselves by celebrating their world—a world of Japanese aesthetics, desires, and identity.[74]

Tales (*monogatari* 物語) were popular in the tenth century, and it was at this time that the genre of art known as illustrated tales (*monogatari-e* 物語絵), which Minamoto claimed was closely associated with women, most likely appeared.[75] Fujiwara no Onshi 藤原温子 (872–907), consort of Emperor Uda 宇多 (r. 887–897), commissioned poems based on stories from *Yamato monogatari* 大和物語 (Tales of Yamato, 951) and perhaps even made small-format paintings herself.[76] In the Yomogiu 蓬生 chapter of *Genji monogatari*, a female character named Suetsumuhana 末摘花 kept various illustrations of old tales in her cabinet.[77] Minamoto reasoned that the experience of listening to stories while looking at accompanying illustrations inspired court ladies to create their own pictorial works, and this laid the foundations for *onna-e*.[78] Since noble ladies were unencumbered by the historical painting traditions that limited court painters, they were able to create their own styles according to their refined sensibilities.[79] The resulting pictorial style manifested in paintings via a technique called *tsukuri-e* つくり絵 (also written as 作絵), which

involved applying layers of richly colored pigments to a painted surface. Minamoto considered *tsukuri-e* as a fitting mode of representation that reflected the vibrant lifestyle of the Heian period.[80]

Features of *onna-e*, as defined by Minamoto, include *hikime kagihana*, *fukinuki yatai*, and a unique sense of perspective. Rather than viewing the *hikime kagihana* technique as restrictive or unrealistic in style, Minamoto argued (as Tanaka had) that the simplification of style in expressionless faces provided a glimpse of the ideal elegance of the Fujiwara period between the tenth and twelfth century.[81] Further, *fukinuki yatai* was created as a result of the increasing number of stories that took place indoors and required a creative solution to allow viewers access into buildings.[82] For Minamoto, a key distinction of *onna-e* was the injection of the artist herself into the narrative environment of the pictorial subject. She was no longer a mere bystander.[83] *Onna-e* showed both visual scenes and the emotional state of the characters—known as *mono no aware* 物の哀れ, or the sadness of things—via the intimate, small format of the medium rendered through *tsukuri-e*.[84] All of this, Minamoto argued, reveals that *onna-e* is the essence of *yamato-e*.[85]

Writing in 2009, Kobayashi Manabu focused on the history of *tsukuri-e* as the key to unlocking the stylistic mystery of *yamato-e* via *onna-e* during the Heian period in his article "Heian jidai no 'yamato-e'" 平安時代の「倭絵」 (Yamato-e of the Heian Period). For Kobayashi, the earliest references to *tsukuri-e* appeared in the Wakana 1 若菜上 and Suma 須磨 chapters of *Genji monogatari*.[86] In Wakana 1, on the occasion of Genji's fortieth birthday, a folding screen showing spring and autumn motifs was called a *tsukuri-e* screen. In the Suma chapter, Genji painted pictures to fill idle time during his exile. When his attendants beheld his works, they wished that Chieda 千枝 or Tsunenori could complete them as *tsukuri-e*.[87] Chieda is lost to history, but Kobayashi discovered that Asukabe no Tsunenori had been responsible for painting and decorating the frontispieces of several sutras for a memorial to the late

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71 障子者彩色四季之倭画紹絵所令図之, as quoted in Minamoto, *Yamato-e no kenkyū*, p. 6.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid., p. 12.
74 Ibid., p. 14.
75 Ibid., pp. 16–17.
76 Ibid., p. 16.
77 Ibid., pp. 16–17.
78 Ibid., pp. 20–22.
79 Ibid., pp. 23–24.

80 Ibid., p. 27.
81 Ibid., p. 25.
82 Ibid., pp. 25–26.
83 Ibid., p. 26.
84 Ibid., pp. 26–27.
85 Ibid., p. 29.
86 Kobayashi, "Heian jidai no 'yamato-e,'" p. 26.
87 Ibid.

mother of Emperor Murakami 村上天皇 (r. 946–967), Fujiwara no Onshi 藤原穏子 (885–954), in Tenryaku 8 (954).[88] Because Tsunenori held the official title of Minor Officer of the Gate Guards of the Right (Uemon Shōshi 右衛門少志), Kobayashi concluded that he was a painter from the Imperial Painting Bureau (Edokoro 絵所).[89] According to *Kokon chomonjū*, "Tsunenori was called the [artist with] greater skill, [Kose no] Kinmochi was the [artist with] lesser skill."[90] Kobayashi ultimately concluded that Tsunenori likely worked in the Imperial Painting Bureau along with Kinshige, and that they—or painters like them—probably invented the *tsukuri-e* technique in the tenth century.[91]

To reconstruct the appearance of *tsukuri-e*, Kobayashi relied on the description of Genji's painting process in the Suma chapter. He explained that first, the monochromatic ink outlines must be set down. Then, a professional painter such as Tsunenori would add layers of color to complete the work.[92] In the Wakana 1 chapter, Kobayashi believed that the term *tsukuri-e* referred to the colorful artistic technique used to create the spring and autumn folding screen.[93] Analyzing the usage of the term *tsukuri* 作 in textual sources, Kobayashi noted that the term appeared in *Ise monogatari* 伊勢物語 (The Tales of Ise, early tenth century) in the context of women applying makeup, thus reinforcing the link between the layering of colorful makeup on women's faces and the layering of bright pigments on paintings.[94] He concluded that, in the narrowest sense, *tsukuri-e* denotes a technique of layering colors to create a work of art, while its broader definition refers to a work of art created through this technique.[95] The medium for *tsukuri-e* included screens, handscrolls, and album leaves.[96]

Kobayashi found references to *onna-e* produced during the Heian period through literary sources including the late tenth-century diary *Kagerō nikki* 蜻蛉日記 (Gossamer Diary) and the Agemaki 総角 chapter

of *Genji monogatari*.[97] In *Kagerō nikki*, an *onna-e* work was transported inside someone's clothing, indicating that it was physically small enough to be carried in this manner. The content of this *onna-e* was described as a vignette from a love story.[98] Likewise, in the Agemaki chapter, an *onna-e* was among the paintings scattered around the living quarters of Lady Ōgimi 大君; this painting also depicted a scene from a love story.[99] Encouraged by these two examples, Kobayashi believed that the term *onna-e* indicated a work in a picture scroll or album leaf featuring paintings from tales or *monogatari*.[100] Although the above references do not describe the pictorial style of *onna-e*, Kobayashi cited a passage in the *Murasaki shikibu nikki* 紫式部日記 (Diary of Murasaki Shikibu, early eleventh century) that described a frantic scene of ladies-in-waiting dressing and painting their faces in order to be presentable before a visit by Emperor Ichijō 一条天皇 (r. 986–1011). Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部 (ca. 973–1014) even mused that the vignette before her resembled *onna-e*.[101] From this passage, Kobayashi hypothesized that *onna-e* in the early eleventh century referred to beautiful artworks displaying the *tsukuri-e* technique of layering bright, thick colors, and showing Japanese women without individualized features.[102]

After exploring the pictorial styles of *tsukuri-e* and *onna-e* during the Heian period, Kobayashi used the Fujiwara no Yukinari diary entry from 999 to remind the reader that Asukabe no Tsunenori was the painter responsible for Lady Shōshi's *yamato-e* screen.[103] Believing that Tsunenori was the painter who likely invented the *tsukuri-e* technique in the mid-tenth century, Kobayashi argued that the *tsukuri-e* painting style became known as *yamato-e* by the end of the tenth century, and was recognized by the aristocratic elites as something unique to Japan.[104]

88 Ibid., pp. 26–27.
89 Ibid., p. 27.
90 常則をば大上手、公望をば小上手とぞ世は稱しける, as quoted in Kobayashi, "Heian jidai no 'yamato-e,'" p. 27.
91 Ibid., p. 27.
92 Ibid., pp. 27–28.
93 Ibid., p. 28.
94 Ibid., pp. 29–30.
95 Ibid., p. 28.
96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., pp. 30–31.
98 Ibid., p. 31.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid.
101 The diary entry is dated to the sixteenth day of the tenth month of Kankō 寛弘 5 (1008). Ibid., p. 32.
102 Ibid., pp. 32–33.
103 Ibid., p. 33.
104 Ibid., pp. 33–34.

▪ A Critique of the Methodology

Minamoto and Kobayashi both dated the development of the pictorial style of *yamato-e* to the tenth century, but their theories on who invented this type of painting diverged. Minamoto attributed the technique to court ladies whereas Kobayashi gave the credit of invention to Asukabe no Tsunenori and the court painters of the Imperial Painting Bureau. Neither scholar, however, offered any direct evidence from the Heian period that definitively connects the colorful technique of *tsukuri-e* or the larger category of *onna-e* to *yamato-e*. Kobayashi's sole link between *tsukuri-e* and *yamato-e* rests on the tenuous argument that Fujiwara no Shōshi's *yamato-e* screen was painted by Asukabe no Tsunenori in the *tsukuri-e* style, but this is not certain. Even if we accept Kobayashi's hypothesis that Tsunenori invented the *tsukuri-e* style, it is plausible to expect that a skillful painter of the Imperial Painting Bureau had more than one artistic style in his arsenal, and he must have painted in another style before he found *tsukuri-e*. Yet we do not know whether Tsunenori painted Shōshi's screen before or after his alleged development of *tsukuri-e*, and thus it remains impossible to determine the precise pictorial style of Shōshi's screen. In summary, the relationship between *onna-e*, *tsukuri-e*, and *yamato-e* remains circumstantial, with little direct evidence that Heian-period writers considered the first two as examples of the third.

As the foregoing reveals, scholars who sought to identify *yamato-e* as works with a pictorial style faced many logistical challenges. Not only did they have to suggest changes in pictorial style during the Heian period, but they also had to indicate *yamato-e* features in surviving works while contending with the widely acknowledged fact that few examples of *yamato-e* survive from the Heian period. Most scholars turned to the *Kokon chomonjū*, which provides circumstantial anecdotes about the Heian-period painters and serves as the primary literary source for these scholars. However, this text was compiled in the mid-thirteenth century, roughly three hundred years after the alleged formation of *yamato-e*. Perhaps the more critical obstacle for this group of scholars as they attempted to trace the pictorial style of *yamato-e* is the lack of supporting evidence that verifies the *yamato-e* status of any surviving works of art from the time of the genre's alleged formation in the Heian period.

The Significance of *Yamato-e* Today

This historiographical examination of *yamato-e* has revealed two primary avenues of inquiry: *yamato-e* as subject matter and *yamato-e* as pictorial style. Yet the methods by which scholars arrived at these conclusions are mutually exclusive. Scholars who emphasized subject matter, such as Akiyama, dealt solely with Heian period textual references to *yamato-e*, which made no mention of pictorial styles. This led them to conclude that it was possible to speak definitively only about *yamato-e* themes depicted on Heian screens and sliding doors but impossible to determine the pictorial style of those works. Pictorial-style scholars such as Shimomise focused on extant artworks that allegedly illustrated formal features native to Japan even though these paintings lacked secure provenance and documentation as examples of *yamato-e* before the modern era. In other words, among many other things, we do not know how far back in history artworks framed today as *yamato-e* were regarded as such—including during the Heian period.

The scholars discussed here laid the foundation for today's dual understandings of *yamato-e*. It was within widely disseminated books targeting a general readership and published throughout the twentieth century, however, that the confounding definition of *yamato-e* was created and refined through a process of streamlining disparate conclusions regarding *yamato-e* into a single historical narrative. Japanese publications that introduce *yamato-e* as works of art that contain Japanese subject matter—and that are painted using a distinct Japanese pictorial style—appear as early as 1949.[105] In sum, *yamato-e* scholars of the early twentieth century argued for a definition of *yamato-e* characterized by either a pictorial style or by subject matter. Akiyama did not agree that a Heian-period *yamato-e* pictorial style is demonstrated in contemporaneous textual sources, while other scholars such as Shimomise and Minamoto attempted to retrieve the lost pictorial style of the Heian period *yamato-e* via extant artworks. Later textbooks created a single definition that included both

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105 Fujikake, *Nihon bijutsu zuroku*, p. 24. Fujikake's book is an illustrated compendium of Japanese art. In 1954, this composite definition of *yamato-e* as both subject matter and pictorial style appeared in a reference book for teachers and students of Japanese art. See Mochimaru and Kuno, *Nihon bijutsushi yōsetsu*.

pictorial style and subject matter without regard to the origins, methods, and reasoning behind disparate theories or definitions by the *yamato-e* scholars. This is not surprising given the compressed and generalized nature of textbooks. Let us also recall that the modern preference for the *kana-majiri* form of *yamato-e* (やまと絵) also helped obscure the convoluted history of a phenomenon that is represented by a term with various written forms and studied using opposing methods. All of this is also a bleak reminder of the impossibility of defining the current art historical genre *yamato-e* because it is no longer a faithful reflection of any single source of scholarship. This streamlining of *yamato-e* characterizations and facts also crossed language barriers: the earliest English-language publication on *yamato-e*, namely the 1942 article "The Rise of Yamato-e" by Alexander C. Soper (1904–1993), characterized it as something possessing both Japanese subject matter and pictorial styles—a faithful synopsis of a composite conclusion supported by evidence from both scholarly camps.[106]

▪ *Yamato-e* and Japanese Identity

The definition(s) and applications of Heian-period *yamato-e* have been so thoroughly complicated by its own historiography that ultimately it may prove impossible to identify its precise characteristics. It is beyond the scope of this article to trace the evolution of the concept of *yamato-e* throughout the post-Heian periods, but what stands out in the twentieth century is the conviction that *yamato-e* originates in the Heian period and represents the beginning of true Japanese painting, or even Japanese artistic identity. This mode of interpretation hints at the greater ideological forces that shaped conceptualizations of *yamato-e* and drew many Japanese scholars to study it. Ienaga, for example, revered *yamato-e* as a representation of Japan, a vehicle for discovering the fundamental spirit of the national culture. In the introduction of *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, he wrote:

> Originally, our ancestors fervently sought out foreign cultures, and at times were so focused on absorbing them that some might have suspected

[these ancestors] to have been blind to all other things. Finally, using those [foreign] elements, they created a Japanese culture so unique that it can no longer be called "foreign." Needless to say, through a process of repetition, this became an important characteristic of Japanese cultural history. Japanese painting may be called the most typical example [of this phenomenon]. Just as laid out in this book, the Japanese began to learn painting techniques from traditions that came from the continent, but at some point, our ancestors completely internalized these foreign skills and finally created the unique painting style called *yamato-e*, which cannot be found anywhere on the continent. Furthermore, the *yamato-e* thus developed is not only a cultural product that should be esteemed throughout the world as a highly valuable art form with an abundance of unique sensibilities, but its line of development is unbroken, and to this day in the Shōwa period [1926–1989], [*yamato-e*] remains the origin of Japanese painting and continues to support the art and life of the modern people. Therefore, we should be doubly grateful. The author hopes that the reader remembers that the author's strong historical interest in *yamato-e* is based on these reasons; because of them, the author's *yamato-e* research begins from the perspective of a historian who attempts to thoroughly understand the country's culture and spirit, [which makes] my perspective different from the existing books and so-called art history books.[107]

In the preface to *Kara-e to yamato-e*, Shimomise noted that "*yamato-e* is a term that conveys a deep, familiar resonance for us because *yamato-e* are paintings that possess the clearest artistic representation of our Japanese personality."[108] In the opening paragraph of *Yamato-e shi kenkyū*, Shimomise shared his motivation for studying *yamato-e*: it is "the most Japanese form [of art]" and "representative of this incomparable venerable nation."[109] Shimomise also lamented that the "lack of recognition by foreign cultures of our venerable imperial culture's uniqueness is due to insufficient understanding and perspective."[110] Minamoto similarly

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106 Soper, "The Rise of Yamato-e."

107 Ienaga, *Jōdai yamato-e zenshi*, p. 2.
108 Shimomise, *Kara-e to yamato-e*, p. 5.
109 Shimomise, *Yamato-e shi kenkyū*, p. 1.
110 Ibid.

characterized *yamato-e* as a "painting style that best expressed the technical prowess and unique spirit of the Japanese people."[111] Even in Soper's English article, he singled out *yamato-e* for discussion as "the purest presentation in art of [Japan's] national traditions and preferences."[112]

Let us briefly consider the significance of the nationalistic overtones in these interpretations of *yamato-e*. Before 1933, *yamato-e* was not emphasized in Japanese scholarly circles. The term (written as 倭絵) appeared as a chapter heading in the 1850 compilation of artworks known as *Koga bikō* 古画備考 (Considerations of Old Paintings) by Asaoka Okisada 朝岡興禎 (1800–1856), but it was not lauded as a uniquely Japanese form of art.[113] The concept of *yamato-e* was nowhere to be found in the government-sponsored art catalogue compiled for the 1900 Paris World Fair.[114] Even Okakura Tenshin, who greatly influenced modern perceptions of Japanese art as culture, did not hold *yamato-e* in high esteem in his writings. He did not mention *yamato-e* at all in his 1903 book *Ideals of the East*, and noted only in passing that "*yamato-e* landscape paintings" developed during the Kamakura period in his book *Nihon bijutsushi* 日本美術史 (Japanese Art History).[115]

Given the politically charged environment of the 1930s and 1940s, one can easily imagine how *yamato-e*, a term that historically existed in the Heian period, could be refashioned as the heart of a thousand-year-old artistic tradition. One must wonder whether *yamato-e*'s enduring prominence was also aided by the personal attention from this group of influential scholars, most of whom were towering figures in the field of Japanese art history, who taught generations of Japanese art historians and reached an even wider audience through their numerous publications.[116]

Yamato-e continues to demonstrate cultural longevity in the postwar period as the foundation of Japanese painting in art-historical narratives. Consider, for example, the 2012 publication of a special edition of the prominent art history journal *Bessatsu taiyō* 別冊太陽, entitled "Yamato-e: Nihon kaiga no genten" やまと絵：日本絵画の原点 (Yamato-e: The Origin of Japanese Paintings). The primary editor Murashige Yasushi writes:

> With the decline and annihilation of China's Tang dynasty at the beginning of the tenth century, our country lost its dominant model [for political and cultural emulation], and was confronted by the necessity of creating its own culture through its own efforts. This hastened the process of domestication, and the establishment and development of "*yamato-e*" may be understood in this context.
>
> Needless to say, even without the annihilation of the Tang, it could have been foreseen that Japan's cultural development during this period inevitably would become independent and unique. Leaving the Nara area, which was influenced heavily by the continent, the capital was moved to Kyoto, and with the making of the new capital and the beginning of the Heian period (at the end of the eighth century), there was great momentum to develop a national culture unique to Japan centered on this location. It was the self-awakening of our inherent sensibilities that allowed us to realize a Japanese-style culture by pursuing the ideals that befitted our tastes, instead of the unconditional admiration for, and emulation of, continental culture that had persisted up to that time.
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> The Japanese script known as *kana* was invented, Japanese *waka* poetry was born, and narrative stories were created based on subjects found in our

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111 Minamoto, *Yamato-e no kenkyū*, p. 5.
112 Soper, "The Rise of Yamato-e," p. 351.
113 Asaoka's *Koga bikō* was revised and enlarged upon its publication in 1904. See Asaoka, *Zōtei koga bikō*.
114 The only mention of *yamato* in the catalogue had to do with geographical markers for Nara Prefecture. Kojita, *Nashonarizumu to bi*.
115 The term in the 2001 edition of the book was *yamato-e sansui* 大和絵山水. See Okakura, *Nihon bijutsushi*, p. 138. He developed his book from lectures he delivered to students between 1890 and 1893 at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. It first appeared in *Tenshin zenshū* 天心全集 (Complete Works of [Okakura] Tenshin) in 1922. It was published as an independent volume in 2001.
116 Tanaka served as the ninth Director General of the Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (Tōkyō kokuritsu kenkyūjo shochō 東京国立文化財研究所長) between

1953 and 1965, and was editor in chief of the Japanese art journal *Kokka* 国華 from 1965 to 1977. Akiyama, Shimomise, Minamoto, and Chino were all professors of art history at prominent Japanese universities. Alexander Soper was an influential American scholar who specialized in Asian art and taught in the United States. Japanese historian Ienaga taught at the university level and published widely. His introductory book on *yamato-e,* distributed by Heibonsha, is one of the few English-language sources on the topic. See Ienaga, *Painting in the Yamato Style*.

country. And in the world of art, indigenous paintings derived from familiar and original Japanese stories, landscapes, and customs gained favor over the formerly popular "*kara-e*" [Chinese pictures], which showed Chinese things and customs. These were "*yamato-e*," and the pictorial style was appropriately soft, delicate, and distinctive. These paintings were primarily done on folding screens and adorned both sides of sliding doors.[117]

Conclusion

Our understanding of *yamato-e* is clearly more a reflection of modern concerns than of tenth-century sentiments. Early twentieth-century scholars have focused intently on excavating the meaning of *yamato-e* in the Heian period, ignoring the fluctuating meanings of the term throughout its history and seemingly unaware of how contemporary attitudes affected their interpretation of the more distant past.[118] As the historiography of Japanese art history comes to be recognized as a critical component of research in contemporary art history—both within and outside Japan—this is changing.[119] Scholars in other fields such as Japanese literature have effectively explored the influence of eighteenth-century nativist writings on modern perceptions of ancient Japanese writings.[120] The time is ripe for a similar approach to be taken in art history concerning *yamato-e*. One potentially fruitful avenue of inquiry is the artistic group Yamato-e Revival (Fukkō Yamato-e 復興大和絵) active in the early nineteenth century, whose conception of *yamato-e* and attitude toward it has yet to be thoroughly explored. I have avoided the concept of *kara-e*, which is often paired with *yamato-e* to explain the development of Japanese art in the tenth century. In addition to the fact that there is even less scholarship on

kara-e than *yamato-e*, the concept of *kara-e* warrants a similar historiographical review as *yamato-e*. Since *kara-e* is most often introduced as a foil for *yamato-e*, embodying everything *yamato-e* is not, this raises another important issue that has yet to be sufficiently interrogated in Japanese art history: the extent of the binary cultural constructs that frame Heian-period society in terms of "Japanese" and "non-Japanese." What did *yamato* really mean to a Heian-period audience? And what does *yamato*, and by extension *yamato-e*, mean to the artists, writers, and scholars who have invoked these terms since? These are questions that deserve further exploration, which is only possible when we recognize that our contemporary definition of *yamato-e* is a modern invention formulated during extraordinary times and propagated under unusual circumstances. Understanding *yamato-e*—its reception, transmission, and evolving meaning for artists and scholars throughout history—is a large task, and this short study will, I hope, become a small contribution.

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117 Murashige, "Yamato-e: Nihon kaiga no genten," p. 6.

118 By the end of the twentieth century, Chino Kaori was aware of the different forms of the term *yamato-e* and the difficulties in defining it. She further attributed the modern confusion of *yamato-e* to the fact that *yamato-e* meant different things in different time periods. She did not, however, offer any citations or pursue this avenue of inquiry. Chino, "Yamato-e no keisei to sono imi," pp. 488–89.

119 Trede, "Terminology and Ideology."

120 Two recent publications that delve into this topic are LaMarre, *Uncovering Heian Japan*, and Yoda, *Gender and National Literature*.

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Dharma Devices, Non-Hermeneutical Libraries, and Robot-Monks: Prayer Machines in Japanese Buddhism

FABIO RAMBELLI

I T is a well-documented fact—albeit perhaps not emphasized enough in scholarship—that Japanese Buddhism, historically, often has favored and contributed to technological developments.[1] Since its transmission to Japan in the sixth century, Buddhism has conveyed and employed advanced technologies in fields including temple architecture, agriculture, civil engineering (such as roads, bridges, and irrigation systems), medicine, astronomy, and printing. Furthermore, many artisan guilds (employers and developers of technology)—from sake brewers to sword smiths, from *tatami* (straw mat) makers to potters, from makers of musical instruments to boat builders—were more or less directly affiliated with Buddhist temples. In addition, numerous professions specialized exclusively in the production of Buddhist objects and developed their technologies for that purpose.[2] From a broader perspective of more general technological advances, it is interesting to note that a Buddhist temple, Negoroji 根来寺, was the first organization in Japan to produce muskets and mortars on a large scale in the 1570s based on technology acquired from Portuguese merchants.[3] Thus, until the late seventeenth century, when extensive epistemological and social transformations gradually eroded the Buddhist monopoly on technological advancement in favor of other (often competing) social groups, Buddhism was the main repository, beneficiary, and promoter of technology.

It should come as no surprise, then, that Buddhism also employed technology for religious and ritual purposes. Xylography is perhaps the most obvious example. Since the seventeenth century, the enormous development of the printing industry was fostered in part by temple presses and publishing houses related

1   A lack of more comprehensive, intercultural studies of Buddhist attitudes toward technology, especially in Southeast Asia, makes it impossible to decide whether this is a constant feature of Buddhism in general or a Japanese cultural specificity.

2   See Rambelli, "Sacred Objects and Design in Buddhism."
3   See Conlan, "Instruments of Change," p. 124. While it is unclear whether the priests involved in that endeavor envisioned modern weapons as new forms of Buddhist tools, they may have thought that the capacity for a strong military defense would protect their temple from its enemies; in any case, their enemies proved stronger and better equipped, and the temple was destroyed by the army of warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537–1598) in 1585.

to Buddhist organizations. Buddhists printed all kinds of materials, from prayers, scriptures, doctrinal texts, and commentaries to temple gazetteers, legends, histories, and hagiographies. This vast range of printed material was envisioned as a support for prayer activities. An important precedent, based on earlier Chinese and Korean models, existed for the printing of the early modern period (early seventeenth to mid-nineteenth century): around 770 the Japanese government ordered the printing of one million copies of a prayer (the so-called *Hyakumantō darani* 百万塔陀羅尼) to be placed inside miniature models of a pagoda and distributed to temples all over Japan.[4] Although the printing of the *Hyakumantō darani* occurred within social and historical circumstances that were very different from those of the Edo period (1600–1868), this does suggest a strong interest, within Buddhist institutions, for technology and its possible religious uses.

Temple bells, musical instruments (such as the *shakuhachi* 尺八 flute, gongs, and drums), and ritual implements (including the *vajra* club and *juzu* 数珠 rosary) were also envisioned as tools to convey prayers in non-linguistic forms. In fact, any number of mechanical devices can be turned into prayer machines, even toilets.[5] In this context, "machine" refers to any device created in order to carry out specific tasks, one typically made of multiple parts and using some kind of power (physical, bodily, or mechanical), created in order to carry out specific tasks. In a premodern historical context, machines often were operated by human power (in some cases, also by natural agencies as with windmills and watermills, or animal force as with ploughs), and functioned in close symbiosis with the human body; as we shall see below, this is a significant difference with modern automated machines.

Concerning Buddhist "prayer," the English equivalent for contemporary Japanese terms such as *kigan* 祈願, *kitō* 祈祷, and *inori* 祈り, here it may be understood as any interaction, mostly and primarily verbal (or translatable in discursive terms), with one or more divine beings (buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other beings of the Buddhist pantheon), carried out for multiple purposes. Often a prayer is made to ask something of the divinity on behalf of oneself or others (this also includes so-called magic formulae), to express gratitude to the divinity, or to perform and display sentiments and acts of devotion. In certain Buddhist traditions, prayers also can be used as instruments or supports for visualization or, more generally, for actualizing the presence of the divinity. This is the case for mantras in Tantric Buddhism and repeated formulae such as the *nenbutsu* 念仏 (the praise given to the Buddha Amida 阿弥陀, a formula that actually started as a visualization practice) in the Pure Land sects and the *daimoku* 題目 (chanting of the title of the *Lotus Sutra*) in sects related to the teachings of the thirteenth-century monk Nichiren 日蓮 (1222–1282). Contemplative prayers involving visualizations of sacred realms also belong to this category. In all cases, prayer is believed to generate some form of merit (*kudoku* 功徳), that is, religious virtue that not only can improve the karma of the practitioner but also can be transferred to others. The term "prayer" also may define a ritual that includes prayer as defined above. Prayers do not need to be voiced: even when the prayer is silent or meditative (such as when no specific words or, in extreme cases, even well-formed thoughts are present), silence can be configured as a semiotic system different from, and superior to, speech in matters of communication with the divinities. A prayer can be performed by an individual or a group, either by following established procedures (rituals, liturgies, or ceremonies) or by "improvising" ritual acts. Moreover, a prayer can be performed directly by the practitioner or by mediators such as monks, priests, and ritual specialists in charge of defining the appropriate words and procedures for the prayer, and often leading the proceedings. In some cases, a prayer (both text and ritual procedure) is claimed to have originally been revealed directly by a divinity. Finally, a prayer can be extemporaneous (only done when needed) or performed at regular, specific times defined by liturgical calendars (*nenjū gyōji* 年中行事).

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4 See Kornicki, "The *Hyakumantō Darani* and the Origin of Printing in Eighth-Century Japan."

5 This is not an exaggeration. Present-day toilets at some Japanese temples function as machines to cleanse the impurities caused by human excrement by mobilizing the power of Ususama Myōō 烏枢瑟摩明王 (Sk. Ucchusmā vidyārāja). The user of the toilet is invited to chant or visualize the initial letter of Ususama's mantric seed *hūṃ* (Jp. *un* 吽), pronounced "*nn*" in Japanese. Now, the sound of defecation is normally rendered in the Japanese language as "*nn*," which therefore sounds the same as the mantra *un*. In this way, the sound of the polluting act is also the very cause of its purification; these two acts (polluting and purification) are thus deeply related by virtue of semiotic mechanisms centered on the mantra *un*, its sound, and its meanings (see Rambelli, *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics*, pp. 136–37). All of this is made possible by the toilet, which changes its status from a mere practical tool into a veritable prayer machine.

This essay will present and discuss the little-known subject of the presence, in the Japanese Buddhist tradition, of machines (special tools and other mechanical devices) used for the production and proliferation of prayers and prayer-related activities, their status within the Buddhist cultural system, and the conceptual challenge that they pose to issues of individual agency, religious practice, and, ultimately, soteriology.

Buddhist Prayer Machines

Even a cursory search of online sites selling Buddhist objects and implements yields an impressive list of artifacts, including Tibetan prayer wheels powered by solar energy, software with mantra-chanting loops to be installed on computers, loop machines chanting continuously the invocation to the Buddha Omituo 阿弥陀仏 (Sk. Amitābha) in Taiwan, even a wallet with an automated scripture-chanting chip that activates when opened. Ritual services involving technology include internet rituals in China and elsewhere, and Buddhist TV rituals in Taiwan.[6] All of these machines and machine-based services ostensibly are sold as ways to promote and facilitate Buddhist practice; many are created, used, and promoted by Buddhist organizations.

Some of these devices may appear exotic if not even far-fetched, more like souvenir-shop curios than prayer devices, or even as technological degenerations away from the true, spiritual purpose of Buddhism. Indeed, many observers and practitioners, especially in the West, cling to an image of Buddhism as a purely spiritual religion, unburdened by objects and hardly needing any ritual. Yet Buddhism throughout history has been characterized by the important role played by materiality, understood as both a system of objects and as philosophical speculations on them. To begin with, the Buddhist ideal of renunciation was predicated upon material objects and worldly attitudes to be abandoned; Buddhist rituals require a wide variety (and, not infrequently, vast amounts) of items (such as sacred images, scriptures, ritual implements, and offerings); large monastic organizations need numerous kinds of materials, commodities, and services, some of which have been sacralized (transformed into direct manifestations of the sacred); and the diffusion and success of Buddhism in general has required many types of material things, including books, images, implements, tools, documents and certificates, maps and instructions, furniture, food, flowers, incense, clothes, vehicles, and countless other items[7] Still, it is somewhat surprising to find machines, and especially prayer machines, among the stuff that made Buddhism what it is, not only today but also in premodern Asia.

The realization that machines, including prayer machines, have been an important part of the Buddhist cultural system challenges received perceptions (widespread mainly in the West and dating back to the early modern period) about Western technological superiority to other countries, on the one hand, and the separation of science and technology from the sphere of the religious, on the other.[8] With Buddhism, we have a major religion actually promoting technological developments also for religious, salvific purposes.

A full treatment of the entire spectrum of Buddhist prayer machines throughout history and across cultures goes far beyond the scope of this essay. Here, the focus will be limited to a few representative instances of prayer machines from the Japanese Buddhist tradition, both premodern and modern. They are, in order of increasing mechanical complexity, the *shakuhachi*, prayer wheels and rotating sutra repositories, early modern mechanical devices (*karakuri* からくり or 機巧), and recent digital technologies such as robot priests. We shall see how each of these devices contributed to promoting novel and specific ways to "pray" and spread Buddhism. Next, the semiotic status of those prayer machines as special devices for disseminating *signifiers* associated with Buddhism and its teachings will be evaluated. Finally, the relationship of these prayer machines to Buddhist doctrines on materiality, practice, and salvation will be assessed.

▪ *Shakuhachi* Flute

The *shakuhachi* is a vertical flute, made of one single piece of bamboo with five holes (four in front and

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6   For internet rituals, see Travagnin, "Cyber-Activities and 'Civilized' Worship."

7   Whereas all religions require material objects, it may be argued that the sheer amount of material objects and the vastness of their presence in Buddhist practice set Buddhism apart from most religious traditions.

8   On this subject, see Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*.

one in back), measuring approximately one foot, eight inches (about 54.5 cm). It was brought to Japan around the seventh or eighth century as one of the instruments used for court music (*gagaku* 雅楽), but at the time it was not widely played and eventually fell into oblivion. The *shakuhachi* as we know it today began to be used in the early Edo period (early seventeenth century) by monks belonging to a newly formed and elusive Zen sect, the Fukeshū 普化宗, to which the Japanese government granted exclusive use of the instrument.

Musical instruments, especially relatively simple wind instruments such as the flute, normally are not considered machines. Buddhist monks treated the *shakuhachi*, however, as a peculiar device, made with specific technologies, that employed musical techniques in order to spread the Dharma in its unique ways. According to governmental regulations, the *shakuhachi* could not be played in public performances of a non-religious nature, but was only to be used by Fuke monks (known as *komusō* 虚無僧) in meditation and other rituals as their unique Dharma device (or Dharma instrument, *hōki* 法器). Because the *komusō* did not have a public to please, they were relatively free to develop new playing techniques and musical forms, which constituted the bases of today's *shakuhachi* music.[9] In addition, the Fuke sect came to develop what can be considered the first meditative instrumental music of the entire Buddhist tradition, much before contemporary New Age music. For the *komusō*, playing the *shakuhachi* amounted to practicing Zen; their quest for the absolute and ultimate sound (*tetteion* 徹底音) aimed at attaining enlightenment (*satori* 悟り).

As mentioned above, for the *komusō* the *shakuhachi* was not just a musical instrument, but a veritable Dharma device (*hōki*). This term, literally meaning "Dharma vessel," has a broad semantic range. Normally it refers to a worthy recipient of the teachings, as in the case of the best disciples of a Buddhist master. Yet "vessel" also may refer to "material objects," as in the expression "realm of material objects" (*kikai* 器界 or *kisekai* 器世界), with a special connotation indicating tools and ritual implements. Because of its nature as a ritual implement made specifically to express the Dharma and attain awakening, the *shakuhachi* came to

be sacralized and eventually turned into a sort of mandala, a microcosm that embodies all of the fundamental forces and components of the entire Buddhist universe. Throughout the early modern period, the Fukeshū produced doctrinal documents in which the mandalic nature of their instrument, their music, and their playing style was defined and explained. What follows is a brief summary of their instrumental and musical doctrines.

Mandalization began with the very name and shape of the instrument itself (in analogy with the Esoteric Buddhist interpretations of mantras and other texts, which focused on the terms and the shapes of the objects to which they referred). Thus, *shaku* 尺 (one foot) was taken to represent the nature of awakening, whereas *hachi* 八 (eight [inches]) stood for the eight types of mind (*hasshiki* 八識) in Buddhist epistemology. The empty bamboo tube out of which the instrument was made was seen as the supreme Dao of vacuity (*kyomu shidō* 虚無至道), while the three nodes on the bamboo represented either the three components of the Confucian world (heaven, earth, and mankind; *ten chi jin* 天地人) or the three realms of the Buddhist cosmos (the realms of desire, forms, and formlessness, unified by the single, universal, and pure mind, or *yuishin* 唯心). The two openings on the top and bottom of the instrument were seen as the sun and the moon, heaven and earth, and the two fundamental mandalas of Esoteric Buddhism. The five fingering holes represented the five elements (*gogyō* 五行) of Chinese cosmology (wood, metal, fire, water, and earth), or, in certain interpretations, a number of different sets of correlative series of cosmic elements: the five *cakra* centers of the body and the universe (*gorin* 五輪), the five musical modes (*gochō* 五調), the five Chinese elements of reality (*gogyō*), the five fundamental sounds of the pentatonic scale (*goon* 五音), or the five buddhas at the center of the mandala (Sk. Śākyamuni, Jp. Shaka 釈迦; Sk. Ratnasambhava, Jp. Hōshō 宝生; Sk. Mahāvairocana, Jp. Dainichi 大日; Sk. Amitābha, Jp. Amida; and Sk. Akṣobhya, Jp. Ashuku 阿閦), all of which are envisioned together as the origin and the condensation of the totality of phenomena (*shinra banshō* 森羅万象 or *banbutsu* 万物).[10]

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9   See Gurtzwiller, "Shakuhachi: Aspects of History, Practice and Teaching"; Gurtzwiller, *Die Shakuhachi der Kinko-Schule*; Johnson, *Shakuhachi: Roots and Routes*.

10 In this regard, the *shakuhachi* was similar to other professional tools that were sacralized in different forms and to different extents by their users (such as the scale for merchants or the axe for carpenters); see Rambelli, "*Honji Suijaku* at Work"; Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp. 172–210.

Concerning musical practice, the Fuke sect taught that the breath running through the empty bamboo tube transcends all dichotomies, and that each melody is a manifestation of the absolute silence of enlightenment. The *komusō* playing the instrument did so not for individual pleasure, but as a way to enable listeners to understand that the forms are not different from mind (*shiki soku shin* 色即心), and as a way to attain Zen *samādhi* (*zenjō zanmai* 禅定三昧), understood as a spiritual state of fusion between the self and the universe (*banbutsu yo ga yūmei* 万物與我幽冥). In this way, *shakuhachi* music served as a means to attain liberation from delusion, or nirvana (*jakujō mui chi* 寂静無畏地).[11]

In the case of the *shakuhachi*, thus, a musical instrument is used as a Buddhist device to propagate the Dharma in a different form from verbal or visual dissemination, through manipulation of sound and silence, in ways that the human body alone cannot do. The status of the *shakuhachi* and its music does not depend only on the semiotic substance (sound and music) that they employ. Rather, *shakuhachi* music enables performers and listeners alike to represent and envision alternative ways to understand, practice, and experience Zen. Specifically, strategies of doctrinal encoding (mandalization) turned the instrument into a mandala or microcosmic device, and composition and performance techniques were correlated with particular doctrinal elements (such as nondualism and enlightenment). In other words, the *shakuhachi* became a prayer machine because, once the semiotic system associated with performance techniques and aesthetic principles was mastered, playing music on it enabled the player to "pray" and practice Buddhism in ways that would not have been possible with other tools/machines—or, indeed, without them.

• **Prayer Wheels and Rotating Sutra Repositories**

One of the most peculiar and conceptually interesting forms of Buddhist scripture worship is certainly the use of rotating sutra repositories (figure 1, an example from Kegonji 華厳寺, Ibigawa-chō 揖斐川町, Gifu Prefec-

ture). Known in Japanese as *rinzō* 輪蔵 (abbreviation of *tenrinzō* 転輪蔵, literally, "revolving [sutra] repository"), these devices consist of a sort of multisided (normally, octagonal) bookcase, with shelves on all sides, placed on a rotating axis; the bookcase contains sutra scrolls of the entire Buddhist canon. The invention of this device is attributed to Fu Xi 伏義 (497–569), an eccentric Chinese religious figure also known as Fu Dashi 伏大士 (Bodhisattva Fu; Jp. Fu Daishi), who was worshiped as a manifestation of Maitreya, the buddha of the future.[12] Rotating sutra repositories were brought to Japan by Zen monks in the late fourteenth century; one of the oldest existing *rinzō*, built in 1408 (Ōei 応永 15), is located inside the Sutra Hall (Kyōdō 経堂) at Ankokuji 安国寺 in Takayama (Gifu Prefecture in central Japan), and is designated by the Japanese government as a National Treasure.[13]

A noh play attributed to Kanze Nagatoshi 観世長俊 (ca. 1488–ca. 1541), entitled *Rinzō*, describes a traveling monk's visit to the rotating sutra repository at Tenmangū 天満宮 Shrine-temple in Kitano, Kyoto. At the sacred site, the god of fire (Sk. Agni, Jp. Kajin 火神) and the spirit of Fu Dashi appear to the monk, and tell him that by turning this device he can, in fact, pay homage to the entire Buddhist canon.[14] This drama points to the novelty and exoticism of the device to the Japanese audience in the early sixteenth century. In the early seventeenth century, these devices spread beyond Zen institutions to temples of other sects as well. At that time, many large temples in big cities and regional centers, which owned the entire Buddhist canon, also built rotating sutra repositories. *Rinzō* provided a way for these temples to display their prestige (owning the entire Buddhist canon was a rare and great privilege, strengthened by the novelty of the rotating repository), while at the same time enabling them to share the canon with the illiterate and semi-literate masses, to many of whom the sutras were accessible only through this device.

In some cases, the rotating sutra repository was used

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11 Based on documents quoted in Takahashi, *Fukeshū shōshi*, pp. 59, 60, 61, 62, 64; see also 187–88.

12 In fact, the first reference in China concerning revolving bookcases used for sacred texts dates from the ninth century, but such devices became very popular and widespread only during the twelfth century. On the history of the prayer wheel in China, see Goodrich, "The Revolving Bookcase in China."

13 The version of the Buddhist canon stored inside this bookcase was printed at a temple in Hangzhou during the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368).

14 *Rinzō*, in Sanari, ed., *Yōkyoku taikan*, vol. 5, pp. 3373–84.

Figure 1. Rotating sutra repository (*rinzō*). 1902. Wood and metal. Size unknown. Kegonji, Ibigawa-chō, Gifu Prefecture. Public domain; https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%BC%AA%E8%94%B5#/media/File:Gifu-kegonji5738.JPG.

to worship its putative inventor, Fu Dashi, whose statue is sometimes enshrined in front of the device, alone or with other saintly figures. For example, the rotating sutra repository at Zenkōji 善光寺 in Nagano (central Japan) enshrines the two Japanese patriarchs of the Tendai 天台 sect, Saichō 最澄 (Dengyō Daishi 伝教大師; 767–822) and Ennin 円仁 (Jikaku Daishi 慈覚大師; ca. 793–864), together with Fu Dashi. The technical principle of the rotating sutra repository was also applied to other devices. For instance, the Rokkakudō 六角堂 (Hexagonal Hall) at Mizusawadera 水沢寺 (Shibukawa, Gunma Prefecture), built in 1787, enshrines a very unusual rotating device with six statues of the bodhisattva Jizō 地蔵菩薩, one for each of the six destinations of transmigration (the realms of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, demigods, humans, and deities), as a way to represent both the process of reincarnation and the all-pervading salvific power of the bodhisattva.

Japanese and East Asian rotating sutra repositories appear to be variants of devices, commonly known as "prayer wheels," that are particularly popular in Tibet. Gregory Schopen has suggested that both may be derived from some kind of device used in India toward the eleventh century, but the evidence is inconclusive.[15] Whereas Japanese *rinzō* are large devices containing the entire Buddhist canon, however, Tibetan prayer wheels are rotating cylinders of various kinds and sizes, upon which only one mantra normally is inscribed (most often, the mantra *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*).

Westerners came in direct contact with rotating prayer devices in various parts of Central and East Asia from around the nineteenth century. Several decades ago, however, historian of technology Lynn White Jr. suggested that European religious prohibitions against taking Christian slaves issued in the fifteenth century led slave traders to enslave people from Central Asia, some of whom might have brought along with them aspects of prayer-wheel technology. Indeed, the bell-and-chain governor (from hand-held wheels), the vertical-axis windmill (from wheels turned by wind), and the hot-air turbine (from wheels turned over fireplaces) were found in Renaissance Italy.[16] If this thesis is correct, it would confirm both Buddhism's interest in technology and, at the same time, the fact that technology in the West was not directly related to religious practices but was used mostly for practical, secular endeavors.

Not much doctrinal or exegetical material regarding the prayer wheel seems to exist in China or Japan. In Tibetan Buddhism, however, where these devices are widely used, we can find a detailed theoretical treatment.[17] The Tibetan tradition states that the great Indian scholar and Buddhist patriarch Nāgārjuna (ca. 150 CE) found the prayer wheel in the land of the nagas (mythological serpents) and transmitted it to a *ḍākinī* (a demi-god, very important in Tantric Buddhism), who in turn handed it down to Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism.[18] Yet not much is known about actual historical processes of transmission of this device to Tibet. Some authors argue that a prayer wheel

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15 Schopen, *Figments and Fragments of Mahayana Buddhism in India*, pp. 345–49; see also Goodrich, "The Revolving Bookcase in China," pp. 130–65.

16 White, *Medieval Religion and Technology*, pp. 49–50.

17 For a selection of Tibetan commentaries on the prayer wheel, see Ladner, *The Wheel of Great Compassion*, pp. 33–84.

18 Ibid., pp. 36, 47–48, 55.

embodies all the actions of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions. To benefit sentient beings, the buddhas and bodhisattvas manifest in the prayer wheel to purify all of our negative karmas and obscurations and to cause and actualize awakening. All beings—not only humans but also animals and insects—in the area where the prayer wheel is built are saved from rebirth in the lower realms.[19]

This salvific power seems to derive from the fact that prayer wheels contain the powerful mantra *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*, which embodies the buddhas and their virtues. Thus, touching or turning a prayer wheel puts the practitioner directly in contact with that powerful mantra and, by extension, with all of the buddhas and the benefits they generate. The salvific effects of the wheel are magnified when it comes into contact with the natural elements (earth, water, fire, and wind), because then the wheel's benefits are transmitted to the elements, which carry and spread them throughout the universe.[20]

Tibetan Buddhism also has developed visualization techniques centered on the prayer wheel. The first visualization describes a centrifugal process in which light emitting from the mantra in the prayer wheel is visualized; this light permeates the world and purifies it by sweeping away all negative karma. The second visualization is about a centripetal process in which the light emitting from the wheel's mantra absorbs and eliminates all negative elements.[21]

William Simpson, one of the first Westerners to study the prayer wheel (focusing mostly on its Tibetan versions), pointed to its main function as a merit-making device. As he wrote,

> according to the Buddhist doctrine of *Karma*, or good works, the more a wheel is turned, the more *Karma*, or merit, is acquired by the person who causes it to turn; and from this it may be assumed that in the case of the cylinders propelled by wa-

ter-wheels, the constant turning would add to the merit of those connected with their erection.[22]

Simpson also indicated that merit-making does not result from a mere mechanical act of putting the wheel in motion, but involves the chanting of the mantra *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*, often inscribed in Tibetan prayer wheels: "Before turning the wheels, the performer should repeat the Mantra, else he will derive no merit from it; while he is turning, he may repeat the words as often as possible, and at the end a repetition is necessary, or the whole of the performance will be useless."[23] In any case, Simpson described here the two ends of the spectrum of the functions of prayer machines, from a situation in which merit is accrued without further need of human intervention to cases in which humans must at least operate the machine and/or chant a mantra while doing so.

Regarding China, an account of the practice of a revolving Dharma repository at Wutaishan 五台山 given by a Western traveler toward the end of the nineteenth century suggests that "those who turn this ponderous cylinder believe that they acquire as much merit by the act as if they read all the books [contained in the device], repeated the prayers, and knocked their heads on the ground before all the gods whose images are enshrined in the wheel."[24] Miss Gordon Cumming, a Western traveler to China and Japan during the same period, reports the presence of revolving Dharma repositories, which she calls "Scripture-Wheels," at many temples, but they were kept inside closed buildings and rarely used.[25]

In Japan, it is said that by making this apparatus rotate, an amount of merit equivalent to that produced by actually reading the scriptures would be acquired. This was clearly a ritual act, as indicated by the fact that, in premodern times, people turned the prayer wheel while chanting the *nenbutsu*.

We can clearly see a continuity in both action and significance between Tibetan prayer wheels and Sino-Japanese rotating sutra repositories: the action sets in motion a rotating device, the function of which is understood as the generation of merit; merit is in turn explained as being produced by the power of the sa-

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19 Quoted in ibid., p. 37.
20 See also ibid., pp. 48–50. Some of the semiotic strategies in which mantras are deemed effective in Tantric Buddhism, with special focus on the Japanese Shingon tradition, are discussed in Rambelli, *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics*, especially chapter 4.
21 Ladner, *The Wheel of Great Compassion*, p. 39.

22 Simpson, *The Buddhist Praying-Wheel*, p. 16.
23 Ibid., p. 28.
24 Ibid., p. 21.
25 Quoted in ibid., p. 115.

cred words (either mantras or entire scriptures) carried by those devices. In the specific case of sutra repositories, we do have indirect contact with the sutras (touching the shelves where they are placed), but none of the actions we usually attribute to "reading" (even if we understand this action in a very broad sense); the scriptures themselves are not even touched. And yet, this practice is supposed to produce merit. How can we explain its underlying logic?

The efficacy of the prayer wheel seems to be based on the complex semiotic drift of an influential Buddhist image, the "turning of the wheel of the Dharma," which originally referred to the Buddha preaching the Dharma. Rhys Davids, almost a century ago, explained that this expression should be understood as referring to "the setting in motion onwards of the royal chariot-wheel of the supreme dominion of the Dhamma," which means "the inauguration, or foundation, of the Kingdom of Righteousness."[26] In prayer wheels, we observe a metaphor (the expression "turning of the Dharma wheel" as referring to the Buddha's preaching and, by extension, to spreading Buddhism) being taken literally and made into a blueprint for mechanical devices. In these rotating objects (wheels), often incorporating the shape of the Indian *cakra* wheel (to reinforce their meaning), placed at temples or other religious sites to be used by pilgrims and devotees, parts—if not the totality of the Dharma (individual mantras or the entire canon)—literally are "turned" to indicate the spread of Buddhism and its efficacy. As such devotional operations involve manipulation of Buddhist sacred objects, they are considered to be highly meritorious and, by extension, to contribute to the diffusion of Buddhism.

Later, an additional layer of signification was added to these devices, as the rotating apparatus came to contain written mantras and even entire Buddhist scriptures. The new implication is that the actual turning of the entire apparatus carrying the scriptures, or of its components inscribed with sacred writings, would spread those sacred words into the air. In this case, the Buddha's speech has been transformed into writing, but the Dharma wheel presupposes the idea that writing can be spread through the air similarly to speech. "Dharma" is understood here as "scriptures," "wheel" is the revolving bookcase, and "turning" is the actual performance of the ritual. In other words, *rinzō* is a rit-

ual device that bases its efficacy on Buddhist scriptures while at the same time making their "reading" completely unnecessary.

Despite these operational and functional similarities, prayer wheels and rotating sutra repositories also show important differences in technological structure and economic scale. The former is a relatively small object, easy to build and carry; the latter is a large device, which cannot be moved, the construction of which requires specific skills and huge investments. In this respect, we can see why rotating sutra repositories were considered tokens of prestige for the temples owning them.[27]

▪ Early Modern Automata and Mechanical Devices

Japan has a long history of fascination with automata and clockwork mechanisms. Legends dating back several centuries tell of magicians or master carpenters creating mechanized humanoids to help them in construction work—veritable "robots" (laborer-automatons) *ante litteram*. In most versions of these legends, the automata eventually were discarded after the job was completed, but they continued to live; they married human females and raised progeny, whose descendents became some of the leading families of carpenters in premodern Japan.[28]

The technology of automata flourished during the Edo period, when a number of artisans and professionals began to specialize in producing automated devices, known as *karakuri* in Japanese. Typically, *karakuri* were moving dolls carrying cups of tea or sake, but we also find walking or horse-riding dolls, dolls playing a drum, and pairs of animated puppets performing plays. Artisans also built clocks and clockwork models of the earth, and even of the Buddhist world centered on Mt. Sumeru.[29]

A stunning example of an automated puppet, dating

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26 Quoted in ibid., p. 52.

27 For a fascinating study on rotating sutra repositories in Japan, addressed from a different perspective than that discussed here, see Eubanks, "Circumambulatory Reading."

28 See Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp. 177–78.

29 For a study of premodern Japanese automata, see Tatsukawa, *Karakuri*. On clockwork representations of Mount Sumeru, see Rambelli, "Sada Kaiseki: An Alternative Discourse," pp. 104–42; Rambelli, "Visions of the Invisible: Images and Representations," pp. 132–43.

from the late eighteenth century and still functioning today, is a representation of the monk Hotei 布袋 on a stage (called Hoteidai 布袋台).[30] With two acolytes (*dōji* 童子) flying above him, Hotei performs various movements for about fifty minutes until the fan he holds in his left hand opens up to reveal the religious message *wakō dōjin* 和光同塵 ("dimming one's radiance and becoming one with the dust of the secular world"), a passage originally found in the ancient Chinese classic *Laozi* 老子 that was used widely in premodern Japan to refer to the way in which divinities appeared and intervened in this world. This mechanical device was used at temple festivals.[31]

A *karakuri* catalogue of 1757 (Hōreki 宝暦 7), entitled *Ōkarakuri etsukishi* 大からくり絵尽, authored by Nishimura Shigenaga 西村重長 (1697–1756), includes an image of the *tainai totsuki no zu* 体内十月図 ("image of the ten months inside the womb"), also known as *tainai totsuki henge* 体内十月変化 ("transformations in the ten months inside the womb"). It represents the development of the baby inside the womb during the ten months of gestation, overlooked by ten Buddhist divinities (from Fudō 不動 to Amida), one for each month (figure 2). The conceptual framework for this device is based on medieval embryology and the cult of the ten buddhas (in itself, a variation of the cult of the thirteen buddhas), as described in texts such as *Sanken itchisho* 三賢一致書 (1649) by Dairyū 大龍 (n.d.).

According to Furukawa Miki, Buddhist priests used this device as a ritual implement to explain gestation—and, additionally, the cycle of life and reincarnation. Furukawa reports a typical sermon as follows:

> The woman's jade gate is the origin of the three worlds. All ornaments of the buddha-body are tools (*dōgu* 道具) abiding inside women's wombs. If pulled apart they become Buddhist ritual implements, if kept together they stay inside the womb as women's tools. The shape of the fetus in the first month, and in general the shape of the human being when it is born, they all arise from this staff (*shakujō* 錫杖).

Figure 2. *Tainai totsuki karakuri* (mechanical device representing the fetus's transformations inside the womb). From Nishimura, *Ōkarakuri etsukushi*, vol. 2, p. 5. Courtesy of the National Diet Library, Tokyo.

This statement was followed by explanations of the two mandalas of Esoteric Buddhism, the existence of a lotus in the body corresponding to the heart, and a narrative about a spear (man) placed in the sea (woman) until it reaches the lotus (vagina) at the bottom; when that happens, after ten months a baby is born.[32]

One of the last of these devices is reported in Asakusa in 1862.[33] This type of Buddhist-inspired *karakuri*, very popular in the Edo period, suggests the need for further study on early modern prayer machines and Buddhist attitudes toward technology.

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30 Hotei (Ch. Budai) is commonly known in the West as "laughing Buddha" or "fat Buddha"; he is a figure of early modern Chinese folk religion who also became popular in Japan.

31 See Tatsukawa, *Karakuri*, pp. 59–61.

32 Furukawa, *Zusetsu shomin geinō*, pp. 185–86.

33 Toward the end of the Edo period, this type of device inspired other *karakuri* related to sex and pornography; see Kinoshita, *Bijutsu to iu misemono*, p. 102.

▪ Robot Monks and Virtual (Online) Services

These premodern precedents can perhaps contribute to explaining the Japanese interest in technological gadgets and, recently, in robots, as well as the fact that Japan is the country where the most advanced research in robotics is carried out.[34] In recent years, robots have also surfaced in religious settings. A robot monk welcomes visitors to Hōtokuji 報徳寺 in the city of Kakogawa, Hyōgo Prefecture, in central-western Japan. It normally sits still and silent in meditation (*zazen* 座禅) position, with a rosary (*juzu*) in its left hand, but when a sensor detects a visitor in the temple hall, the robot automatically begins chanting a Buddhist scripture while striking the *mokugyo* 木魚 (literally, "wooden fish"), a percussion instrument used in Buddhist ceremonies. This robot monk, built out of recycled material, is a low-tech device, closer to a doll than to a full-fledged robot. The resident priest of the temple found that the parishioners actually like the robot monk, who has become a sort of "temple mascot."[35]

A very recent and more developed version of a robot monk is an adaptation of Pepper ペッパー, SoftBank Group Corp.'s humanoid robot. Since the summer of 2017, a specially programmed variety of Pepper is able to recite sutras from four major Japanese Buddhist denominations; it is mostly intended to perform accompanying a human priest. This robot monk is now available to chant Buddhist scriptures at funerals for a significantly cheaper fee than that charged by human monks, reflecting changing perceptions in Japan about the role of traditional Buddhist funerals and a growing secular-minded attitude.[36] Other robots engaging in funeral-related activities are also under development. For instance, neurologist and entrepreneur Fujii Naotaka 藤井直敬 uses a version of Pepper as the prototype for the so-called "Digital Shaman" (*dejitaru shāman* デジタルシャーマン). This shaman-like Pepper will have a mask reproducing the facial image of the dead person, and will speak with his or her voice (pre-recorded before death). It will stay with the family of the bereaved for forty-nine days, the traditional period of mourning; on the last day, it will say some final words and shut off. According to Fujii, this limited scope of activity will facilitate the labor of mourning; of course, nothing will prevent future customers from keeping robotic versions of deceased people for a longer time.[37]

A more complex device, called Robo-Priest, has been employed at a Yokohama funerary chapel since 1993. It has been programmed to deliver prayers in ceremonies according to the liturgy of seven Buddhist sects, Shinto, and two Christian denominations. A computer records the date of death of each individual memorialized at the chapel. On that day every year, the Robo-Priest comes down from its location in the chapel's ceiling to a place in front of the altar and chants the appropriate prayers—according to the religion of the deceased person—for thirty minutes. This robot, developed by a commercial, for-profit funeral enterprise, offers customers (the deceased and their families) ritual services that are cheaper and more accurate than those normally offered by Buddhist monks and other religious specialists.[38] The fact that this robot is customized to pray according to different religious traditions is also noteworthy, as it indicates an emphasis not on the actual person offering the prayers, but on the prayers per se.

An even more high-tech type of memorial service recently has been developed by Shunkeiji 春慶寺 in Oshiage, one of Tokyo's northeastern suburbs. Parishioners can log on to a specific website, called Netto Nōkotsudō ネット納骨堂 (literally, "internet crypt"), where they can view images of the funerary tablets (*ihai* 位牌) of their departed relatives and order sutra-chanting for them, in which case they will see a recorded image of a Buddhist priest chanting scriptures for the dead.[39] The temple's website offers a free demonstration of how the system works.[40] An additional service is the so-called "computer memorial service" (*pasokon kuyō* パソコン供養), in which parishioners can view, for a fee (currently, approximately US $1300), the funerary

34 On the situation of robotics in Japan, see Robertson, *Robo Sapiens Japonicus*.

35 See "Robo-Monk: Sutra-Chanting Doll Becomes Temple Mascot," 1999.5.28, http://web-japan.org/trends00/honbun/tj990527.html.

36 See "Funeral rites of the future" and "Pepper to don monk's robe in new funeral role," *The Japan Times*, 2017.8.17, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/multimedia/2017/08/17/news/funeral-rites-future/.

37 Nagakura, "Shijūkunichi made wa robotto de issho ni."

38 See Ben Hillis, "The robot priest," http://benhills.com/articles/japan-unlimited/the-robot-priest/; originally published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1993.5.4.

39 See Tim Hornyak, "Japanese turning to robotic crypts, virtual grave visits," 2013.4.10, http://www.cnet.com/news/japanese-turning-to-robotic-crypts-virtual-grave-visits/.

40 See http://www.syunkeiji.jp/html/taiken.html.

tablets of their deceased family members, request and view a virtual sutra-chanting, and also watch a slide show of selected pictures of the deceased. The temple's internet contractor also provides computer installation and support.[41] This type of funeral service, known as "computer tomb" (*dennō haka* 電脳墓), is receiving increased interest in Japan.[42]

In addition, companies are developing digital forms of ancestor worship (*dejitaru kuyō* デジタル供養) for the home. A recent example is the digital-worship set "Fenestra" created by Uriu Daisuke 苽生大輔 at Tōyō University. The set consists of a round digital display resembling a mirror, a digital photo frame, and a candle holder. When a worshipper stands in front of the mirror for a few seconds, an image of the deceased person will appear; similarly, when the candle holder is placed in front of the digital photo frame and the candle is lit, pre-recorded images of the deceased will appear.[43]

Arguably, the development of these kinds of automated services points not so much to a degeneration of Buddhism, but rather to the attempts of Buddhist institutions to address new challenges in contemporary Japanese society—in particular, the growing number of senior citizens (the segment of the population most involved in Buddhist practices) and their reduced mobility, and the increasing fragmentation of Japanese families, with younger people living far from their parents and grandparents and their family tombs. Most Japanese today (and especially Buddhist priests) see Buddhism from a sociologically pragmatic stance that encourages the tradition to adapt to changing social conditions in order to better serve its adherents (but also in order to survive). Automated technologies and the internet make it possible to have religious services available at all times, and from a distance.

The Japanese robotics field is well known for its development of humanoid robots that are engineered to operate in close contact with human beings in the household (as pets, toys, and—in recent prototypes—even as sex objects), in the hospital (as nurses), and in the workplace (as receptionists). In this regard, unlike people from other countries, many Japanese show a distinctive interest in, and willingness to interact with, robots. Robert Geraci, among others, explains this is a consequence of Japan's religious heritage: "Valorization of being human in Shinto and Buddhism explains the Japanese preference for humanoid robots."[44] This supposed "valorization of being human," however, stands in contrast to the lack of differentiation between humans and inanimate entities that we encounter in many aspects of the Japanese religious tradition, as discussed by many authors including Geraci. Geraci and others, moreover, seem to overemphasize, on the one hand, the positive view of technology and robots held by the Japanese, and on the other hand, the negative, dystopian views that supposedly dominate Western visions of robots. Just as motifs such as Frankenstein and authors such as Philip Dick are not representative of the entire range of positions expressed in Europe and America about robots and artificial life, anime characters such as Astroboy, created by Tezuka Osamu 手塚修, and popular robots such as ASIMO (produced by Honda) do not exhaust Japanese attitudes on the subject. The West has a long tradition of visions of a technological, robotic utopia, and Japan has produced some of the most violent and disturbing dystopian visions of a technologically dominated future.[45]

These treatments of attitudes toward Japanese robotics also ignore the distinction between natural entities and man-made artifacts, a distinction that is also present in premodern Japanese philosophical speculation. Such treatments also are characterized by a remarkable confusion between Shinto and Buddhism, and by the vagueness of philosophical arguments regarding issues of materiality and sentience, as we shall see below.[46]

Theoretical Perspectives on Buddhist Prayer Machines

Elsewhere I have proposed a general classification of ob-

41 See http://www.syunkeiji.jp/html/kuyou.html.

42 See Robertson, "Robot Reincarnation," p. 23, and especially Robertson, *Robo Sapiens Japonicus*; also, Dutei-Ogata, "New Technologies and New Funeral Practices in Contemporary Japan," pp. 227–44. For other recent developments, see the "web *butsudan*" at http://www.onrain.jp.

43 Nagakura, "Shijūkunichi made wa robotto de issho ni," p. 25. See also www.fenestra.jp.

44 Geraci, "Spiritual Robots," p. 10. In this passage, Geraci repeatedly refers to Reader and Tanabe, Jr., *Practically Religious*, pp. 34–35, 46.

45 On this subject, see Gomarasca, "Robottoni, esoscheletri, armature potenziate," pp. 220–62.

46 For an analysis of the cultural and ideological scenarios behind contemporary Japanese robotics, see the recent work by Jennifer Robertson on the subject, in particular her "Gendering Robots," pp. 405–26.

jects on the basis of their nature and function, by elaborating on the work done by cultural historian Krzysztof Pomian and philosopher Maurizio Ferraris.[47] The classifications under this system are natural objects (raw objects found by humans in their environment), ideal objects (such as numbers and scientific facts, which do not occupy a place in space and do not depend on subjects for their existence), social objects (such as texts, rituals, and countries), human-made objects (tools, food, and waste), and virtual objects (digital entities). Human-made objects include tools, those objects used to make and modify other objects; machines also belong to this category. These categories are not necessarily distinct and impermeable. A piece of bamboo is a natural object, but it can be worked into a *shakuhachi*, thus becoming a human-made object; a *shakuhachi* is also a tool that transforms aspects of the materiality of the Dharma by playing music (a social object). In another set of transformations, a rotating sutra repository can become waste (another type of human-made object) as a consequence of iconoclastic actions, and be recycled as mere pieces of wood (natural objects) ready to be assembled in other configurations (tools).

In the context of this article, this typology allows us to see that Buddhist prayer machines are conceptually amphibious objects, situated as they are at the intersection of human-made objects (artifacts) and social objects (texts): they are tools, made by other tools, used to modify reality by enhancing the human capacity to pray, but they also produce intersubjective sense effects (more or less directly related to their use, functions, and signification) in a broad sense, in uses such as spreading the Dharma and creating ways to understand the teachings and attain salvation. Furthermore, prayer machines are the product of different types of labor: material (the physical labor involved in the transformation of the raw materials and their assembling), semiotic (conceptualization, design, and artistic aspects), ritual (the type of labor that goes into the ritual uses of these machines), and performance (involving the user, other participants, and possible observers).[48]

In order to better understand how machines intervene in Buddhist prayer activities, a detour through Umberto Eco's discussion of the various types of objects that extend the natural capacities of the human body is in order here. Eco divides such objects into three distinct groups, which he calls prostheses, instruments, and machines.[49] Broadly speaking, a prosthesis is "an extension of our body's capacity"; instruments and machines are both prostheses. Prostheses are made by imitating the body and its natural functions, and can be used more or less intuitively; instruments and machines are not modeled after the body. Moreover, instruments require human force to function, whereas machines operate automatically with only minimal human intervention and supervision.

Eco further distinguishes between four types of prostheses, which he calls substitutive, extensive, perfective, and magnifying. A "substitutive prosthesis does what the body used to do but by accident is no longer able to"; this type includes artificial limbs, walking sticks, and eyeglasses. Extensive prostheses "extend the body's natural actions"; they include cups, spoons, chopsticks, and mirrors. Next, perfective prostheses enable the body to accomplish, with a higher degree of perfection, actions that it was already able to carry out naturally; these prostheses include chairs, tables, beds, houses, and stairs. Finally, magnifying prostheses enable the body to perform actions that it would not be able to accomplish by means of its own natural capacities; examples are lenses, telescopes, bicycles, TV sets, and musical instruments.

Instruments (which Eco envisions as operated manually) perform actions that the human body is not able to do; they include knives, scissors, hammers, and even cinema. An important feature of instruments as Eco conceives of them is that they produce new objects and, in so doing, contribute to creating a new reality. Unlike prostheses and instruments, machines do things independently of the bodily organs that they replace or perfect. Moreover, a machine operates by itself, without significant human intervention; often, human beings operating machines do not even know how their mechanisms (and their inner operations) function.

It is possible to envision a continuum, rather than

47 Pomian, "Histoire culturelle, histoire des sémiophores," pp. 82–83; Ferraris, *Documentalità*. See Rambelli, "Materiality, Labor, and Signification of Sacred Objects in Japanese Buddhism," pp. 5–8.

48 For a preliminary definition of these types of labor, see Rambelli, "Materiality, Labor, and Signification of Sacred Objects," pp. 8–14.

49 Eco, "Osservazioni sul design del futuro prossimo," pp. 1–4; the following discussion is based mostly on pp. 2–3. On the semiotic value of prostheses, see also Eco, *Kant e l'ornitorinco*, pp. 317–18.

clear-cut distinctions, between prostheses, instruments, and machines—a continuum characterized by a gradual abstraction and separation from direct bodily connections. In Eco's interpretation, prostheses are based directly on the shape of the body part that they are enhancing. Instruments are less direct, but their use can still be inferred fairly well by their shape and design. In the case of machines, however, the direct relationship between their function and the human body has disappeared almost completely, being replaced instead by an "interface" such as a button, a keyboard, or a lever. Eco argues that the expanding presence and role of "machines" (as he defines them vis-à-vis prostheses and instruments) in human life might end up dehumanizing our interactions with tools in general. Of course, we may note that dehumanization is being balanced by a counter-tendency to humanize complex machines, including robots, but the potential problem still remains.

In the case of Buddhist machines, however, it may be argued that practically all ritual implements—not only the most complicated apparatuses, but also the simplest tools—are similar to "machine interfaces" in Eco's sense. Their use may be simple and fairly intuitive, but very few users would understand how these devices actually operate and why they are supposed to work. Understanding requires competence in advanced Buddhist doctrine, especially on the status of inanimate objects and the possibility for inanimate entities to spread the Dharma and play a salvific role (which can be either passive or active, according to the interpretation and the tradition). A *shakuhachi* can be played rudimentarily in a relatively intuitive way, and listeners may associate its sound with Zen Buddhism, but only very few of them will be able to actually spell out why sound—and, in some cases, even noise, including natural noise such as breath and the effects it produces by vibration through the bamboo tube of the instrument—can have a soteriological effect. The same applies to rotating sutra repositories. Paradoxically, however, complex machines such as robots and internet ritual services have been designed to be the easiest to understand and operate.

Doctrinal Issues Related to the Efficacy of Buddhist Prayer Machines

In order to assess the theoretical role of machines in Buddhism as devices primarily used to spread the Dharma and generate merit, a discussion of both the

Buddhist understanding of what it means to spread the Dharma and of the standard ways to accomplish this through scriptures (and images based on them) is in order. Spreading the Dharma implies not only a quest to win adherents, but also the achievement of various goals, such as the proliferation of material tokens of Buddhism (temples, texts, images, and various types of sacred artifacts), the prosperity of religious institutions, and social respect for Buddhist practitioners. Normally, the diffusion of specific scriptures in ancient and medieval Buddhism took the shape of scripture worship. The *Lotus Sutra*, one the most influential scriptures in Japanese Buddhism, presents four different and orthodox modes of sutra worship: possession (*juji* 受持), reading (*dokuju* 読誦), copying (*shakyō* 写経), and explaining (*gesetsu* 解説).[50] These practices originally comprised means of spreading the teachings, but with the development of the Mahayana tradition, they became full-fledged religious and devotional activities that were believed to produce merit.

Possession (*juji*) is often translated as "embracing," as indicating a belief in the teachings of the sutra. From the context in which it appears, however, this term—literally meaning "receiving and holding"—should be translated more accurately as "keeping," "owning," or "holding," perhaps with the nuance of "holding dear" but also "remembering." This is the primary mode of scripture worship. To worship a scripture, indeed, the worshipper first must "own" it in some form: as an object, as a memorized series of sounds or graphs, or as a set of teachings.

Reading (*dokuju*, Sk. *svādhyāya*, *adhyayana*) refers to two different forms of "reading" a scripture: a direct reading from the text, either voiced or silent (*doku* 読); and chanting (*ju* 誦)—that is, a memorized form of reading. This distinction in the actualization of the semiotic expression of a scripture—i.e., between reading or listening aimed at understanding, and chanting as a voicing of the written signifier of the text—is particularly important here, because the former is not privileged over the latter.[51]

Sutra copying (*shakyō*) is one of the most distinc-

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50 *Miaofa lianhua jing wen gou* 妙法蓮花経文句 (Jp. *Myōhō rengekyō mongu*), attributed to Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597), contains a description of modes of worshiping the *Lotus Sutra*; see especially pp. 107c–12c.

51 For a history of sutra chanting with a discussion of its various functions, see Shimizu, *Dokyō no sekai*.

tive Buddhist devotional practices. In Japan, we find essentially two forms: handwritten copying and printing. Handwritten copying (*shakyō* proper) consists literally of copying the text onto various materials (usually paper) with a brush. Printing (*surikyō* 摺り経) historically was carried out by the incision of the characters on wooden boards, which were then painted with ink and finally brayed.[52]

Explaining (*gesetsu*) is the general term for any kind of commentarial activity on a scripture. This ranges from the practices of itinerant preachers to scholastic teaching, and from exegetical activity to state-sponsored lectures on specific scriptures attended by the emperor and the highest secular authorities; such lectures were included among the official activities conducted for the religious protection of the political system (*chingo kokka* 鎮護国家).

To summarize, sutra worship as a means of spreading Buddhism consists of various ways to disseminate the material and semiotic aspects of a scripture. Possession is the most general form of sutra worship, as it presupposes the availability of actual copies of the sutra. Reading refers to the proliferation of the phonic signifier, whereas copying is the proliferation of the written signifier. (Here, it is methodologically important to distinguish between a sutra as an object and its two signifiers.) Explaining disseminates the signified of the sutra (its doctrinal content). From this classification, we see that understanding the doctrines of a scripture—that is, the hermeneutic activity—was just one, and perhaps not even the most important, form of sutra worship and source of religious merit.

It is important to note that scripture worship was related to the development of methods and devices used to ensure the broadest possible diffusion of the scriptures/teachings (the Dharma), thus resulting in a maximization of accrued merit. Study and exegesis (the fourth mode of scripture worship), because of their very nature, could only be pursed on an individual basis (or, at most, in small groups). The other forms of worship, in contrast, lent themselves to large-scale endeavors, such as printing (copying) and continuous chanting at busy crossroads (recitation) so as to be heard by many

people. Tools and technological devices also could be mustered in order to contribute to a more massive and pervasive diffusion of the Dharma by various means.

Now, these modes of Dharma diffusion were focused on spreading not so much the signified of the teachings, but their signifiers. This raises an important doctrinal issue: the intentionality of, and direct participation in, ritual activity aimed at spreading the Dharma. Prayer wheels and rotating sutra repositories, for instance, were built to spread the teachings (their written signifiers) to the four elements, and these devices, in turn, became channels for the diffusion of Buddhism (again, of its signifiers) by giving a concrete, literal form to the image of the Buddha's "turning of the wheel of the Dharma." At the least, the *shakuhachi* creates a Buddhist atmosphere, but transmission of the Dharma through it is only possible through a non-textual, non-linguistic exegesis of musical signifiers: the musical expression of *shakuhachi* Zen music cannot be directly and fully translated into verbal doctrines, and ends up creating a music-based Zen experience. Robot and online priests substitute with a virtual reality the traditional need of a direct, physical co-presence of ritual specialist and participant. They are not real monks, only images (on websites) or simulacra (robots). This suggests not only that full ordination of the performer is not important (Japanese Buddhism has a long history of downplaying the role and importance of monastic precepts), but that the emphasis is placed on ritual itself and not on direct performance or attendance; again, the emphasis is on ritual as signifier, not as a set of signifieds. Moreover, we can also detect a trend (already pointed out by Umberto Eco in his discussion of prosthetic devices) towards the diffusion of easy-to-employ digital interfaces as Buddhist prayer machines that require only limited use of the human body in religious activities: no need exists to play the *shakuhachi*, it is enough to play some digital recordings of it; there is no need to go to a temple to memorialize one's deceased family members, as this can be done from home via personal computer. Direct bodily involvement has always been one of the key features of Buddhist practice, and we may wonder how that will change with the further diffusion of digital technologies and simple interfaces.

In general, scholars tend to present ritual uses of sutras aimed at spreading the Dharma and its benefits as merit-making activities. Especially in contemporary Japan, however, merit does not seem to be a major concern among participants in Buddhist rituals involving

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52 The oldest sutra copy extant in Japan is a copy of the *Jinggang chang touluoni jing* 金剛場陀羅尼経 (Jp. *Kongōjō darani kyō*), dating to the fourteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tenmu (686). The practice of *surikyō* already existed in the Nara period (710–794).

scripture manipulation. The use of sutras often is considered simply as an activity defined as *arigatai* ありがたい, a term meaning something valuable, blessed, edifying, or uplifting—something to be appreciated and thankful for. The idea of merit being transferred both to the memorialized person and the sponsors of the ritual is largely absent in Japan today. Still, scriptures are present as material objects (as amulets or paraphernalia in the family's Buddhist altar), and they are "actualized" in rituals through chanting (sound is another "material" form of scriptures). Hence, sutras today (and perhaps, to a certain extent, also in the past) are not used primarily to produce merit; they tend to function as just another liturgical implement, part of the ritual setting. As such, they contribute to creating what we could call a Buddhist "atmosphere," much like design objects and other commodities.

The fact that machines are entrusted with spreading the Dharma raises another important doctrinal issue, an extension of traditional doctrines about "nonsentients preaching the Dharma" (*mujō seppō* 無情説法), and, more fundamentally, questions about the status of both sentience and the nonsentient. Authors have pointed out that, in the Japanese religious tradition (usually identified with Shintoism), no ontological distinction is made between animate and inanimate beings, humans and machines. Thus, it has been argued that "Shinto acknowledges no necessary contradiction between animism and modern scientism."[53] As Asakura Reiji has written, "In Japan … where the native religion sees kami … in all the myriad manifestations of nature, it follows naturally that a robot would have a spirit as well."[54] Perhaps, then, it is not surprising to find out that, in the early phases of the introduction of robots to industrial manufacturing processes, companies hired Shinto priests to perform consecration and naming rituals for the newly installed machines; later, when robots became commonplace in industry, such ceremonies were discontinued.[55] As recently indicated by Jennifer Robertson, however, a new web-based service was inaugurated in 2014 to provide "robot funerals" (*robotto sō* ロボット葬), mostly aimed at the ritual

disposal of pet robots (such as Sony's AIBO).[56] In addition, a Buddhist temple, Kōfukuji 光福寺 in the city of Isumi (Chiba Prefecture) east of Tokyo, has begun to officially perform Buddhist funerals for robots—again, with a special focus on AIBO pets. For the temple priest, in this ceremony "the robots could pass from their body."[57]

One of the most influential proponents of the animated nature of robots is engineer and AI scientist Mori Masahiro, who famously wrote, "robots have the buddha-nature within them—that is, the potential for attaining buddhahood."[58] Mori argues for the ontological identity of human beings and machines. His starting point is a pantheistic view of the universe, in which a fundamental and eternal life-force permeates all beings and entities. This life-force "forms and moves everything from the elementary particles through … human beings, society … to the entire cosmos."[59] Mori refers to this basic life-force by the Buddhist term "Emptiness" (Sk. *śūnyatā*, Jp. *kū* 空), inaccurately rendered in the English version of the book as "Void." It appears that Mori considers Emptiness to be equivalent to another Buddhist concept, that of the buddha-nature. He writes, "The buddha-nature, then, is the principle or law that moves everything. It exists throughout the universe and fills it completely."[60] Elsewhere, Mori seems to equate the buddha-nature with the Buddha himself, envisioned as the totality of the universe.

It is worth mentioning that, in strictly doctrinal terms, Emptiness is emphatically *not* a life-force; Mori's interpretation hews closely to modern developments in Japanese Buddhist thought that, in many respects, are not in line with traditional, orthodox doctrines. This modernist pantheism lies at the basis of Mori's argument that robots are also endowed with the buddha-nature and therefore are not different from human beings. According to Mori, machines are created by men, but as men are "appearances created by the Void," by which he means Emptiness or cosmic life-force, "then whatever men create must also be created by the Void. It must also partake of the buddha-nature, so do the rocks and

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53 McFarland, *Rush Hour of the Gods*, p. 26.
54 Asakura, "The Androids are Coming," p. 18.
55 Schodt, *Inside the Robot Kingdom*, pp. 196, 197, and 195–212; Henry Scott Stokes, "Japan's love affair with the robot," *New York Times*, 1982.1.10; Harry W. Clifford, "Japan's robot revolution," *New York Times*, 1982.2.14.
56 See http://robotsou.com.
57 Robertson, "Robot Reincarnation," pp. 13–14. On Kōfukuji's robot funerals, see Suzuki, "An Inside Look at a Japanese Robot Dog Funeral."
58 Mori, *The Buddha in the Robot*, p. 13.
59 Ibid., p. 112.
60 Ibid., p. 174.

trees around us."[61] Even more fundamentally, "everything in the universe is identical with the mind of the Buddha."[62] Thus, continues Mori,

> From the Buddha's viewpoint, there is no master-slave relationship between human beings and machines. The two are fused together in an interlocking entity. Man achieves dignity not by subjugating his mechanical inventions, but by recognizing in machines and robots the same buddha-nature that pervades his own inner self.[63]

Despite their overall modernist framework, in which a vague pantheistic and spiritualist animism predominates, Mori's theories are not unrelated to classical Japanese Buddhist doctrinal speculation going back to the ninth century. Mori indeed refers to some Zen teachings as formative of his understanding of the symbiotic relationship between humans and machines. Zen Buddhism developed the idea that nonsentients (objects and natural entities such as trees and mountains) preach the Dharma; words on this subject by the Zen patriarch Dōgen 道元 (1200–1252) are well known.[64] In East Asian Buddhist thought, the inanimates (mostly, material entities in the environment) normally have been considered to be able to preach the Dharma only to an enlightened person. Another position has maintained that no ontological distinction exists between animate beings and inanimate entities, and thus the latter are also able to preach the Dharma. The argument is that ultimately no distinction is found between subject and object, the enlightened being and his/her own environment; thus the Dharma is not present in specific places (scriptures, temples) or associated with specific people (the Buddha, Zen masters).[65] Esoteric Buddhism, in both its Shingon and Tendai variants, formulated an analogous doctrine, according to which the entire universe, in all its individual phenomena and entities, is in fact the material body of the cosmic buddha Mahāvairocana. Thus, everything in the universe is part of a cosmic semiotic process of Dharma transmission, called *hosshin seppō* 法身説法 (the Dharmakāya, i.e., the Buddha in its absolute mode of existence, preaching the Dharma). According to this pansemiotic doctrine, tools (including ritual implements) are one of the four fundamental modes of existence of the cosmic buddha as represented by the karma mandala.[66]

Conclusion

Thus far, we have seen that Buddhism historically is not against technological advances and their application to religious devices. One of the reasons for this attitude is the effort to promote the Dharma, an effort that requires methods and tools for reproducing and proliferating tokens of Buddhism. The privileged types of Dharma tokens that have been reproduced most extensively through mechanical devices relate directly to the teachings themselves (in a literal understanding of the Dharma), as sanctioned and encouraged by influential Mahayana scriptures, particularly the *Lotus Sutra*.

It is important to note, though, that this proliferation of tokens of the teachings (Dharma) through mechanical means takes the shape of reproducing and spreading signifiers of Buddhism: copies of the scriptures or of mantras produced by mechanical printing presses, musical sounds associated with Zen Buddhism, ritual forms and appearances as embodied in robots and internet memorial services, and perhaps, in more theoretically problematic forms, the exposure of written signifiers of the scriptures to the four elements as channels for universal diffusion through revolving sutra repositories and prayer wheels in general. In many cases, these types of Dharma machines or their uses were explicitly sanctified and ritualized in order to sanction their use in an orthodox, Buddhist context. This sanctification mobilized doctrines of merit-making by contact with Buddhist tokens, and doctrines of the universal pervasiveness of the Dharma and buddha-nature. One of the consequences of this use of technology for religious purposes, with its almost exclusive focus on signifiers, has been the narcotization of the signifieds (the actual contents of the teachings themselves),

61   Ibid., p. 179.
62   Ibid.
63   Ibid., pp. 179–80.
64   See Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō*, vol. 2, pp. 61–71; vol. 1, pp. 331–41.
65   On the status of nonsentients in East Asian Buddhism, with particular attention to Japanese doctrinal developments, see Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp. 11–57; for a brief overview of Japanese views on nature in relation to discussions about nonsentients and sentience, see Rambelli, "Buddhist Environmentalism: Limits and Possibilities," pp. 32–40.

66   On all of this, see Rambelli, *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics*, pp. 66–68.

which have become more vacuous as their connections with their signifiers became more tenuous.[67] Thus, we observe that, in several cases (and perhaps not only in Japan), the proliferation and presence of Buddhist tokens (signs and symbols) does not necessarily result in a deeper understanding of the Buddhist teachings, but rather contributes to create a kind of Buddhist atmosphere or ambience that may or may not induce people to Buddhistically defined and desirable thought and behavior.

While the creation of a Buddhist atmosphere may be considered a skillful means (Sk. *upāya*, Jp. *hōben* 方便) for the diffusion of Buddhism, it also resonates with another aspect of Buddhism, largely under-recognized, which can be defined as its non-hermeneutical dimension.[68] This non-hermeneutical dimension actually may be closer to the core of Buddhist teachings than one might expect: with its focus on the direct presence of—and immediate interactions with—materiality, it tries to overcome the dualities that arise from all hermeneutical endeavors, such as sign/referent, signifier/signified, text/interpreter, and things/words.

In light of all of the above it may be argued that mechanical prayer devices, despite their individual differences (related to the technologies employed, the historical contexts of use, and others), situate themselves at the intersection of received dichotomies—such as body and technology, material and spiritual, mechanicism and intentionality—and, ultimately, the sacred, salvation, and personal agency, all of which are questioned by the devices. In this sense, the non-hermeneutical product of prayer machines—a mechanically generated interaction with the sacred, the effects of which are almost completely independent of direct human agency and will—is something that transcends any dualistic distinctions (because it makes them irrelevant); as such, it is perhaps the ultimate form of Buddhist prayer.

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67 The opposite also could be argued; namely, that because the Buddhist teachings are so complex and hard to master, the circulation of even simple understandings is important for the spread of Buddhism.

68 On the non-hermeneutical dimension of Buddhism, see Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp. 89, 126–28, 259–73; Rambelli, "Materiality, Labor, and Signification," pp. 18–19.

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Futanari, Between and Beyond: From Male Shamans to Hermaphrodites in *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses*

SATOMI YAMAMOTO

Introduction

YAMAI *no sōshi* 病草紙 (The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses) is thought to have been completed in the late twelfth century, around the zenith of Emperor Goshirakawa's 後白河上皇 (1127–1192) cultural influence. It contains twenty-one depictions in its extant form. Not limited to basic ailments such as toothaches and abdominal pain, the scroll also includes depictions of a great variety of medical cases such as hermaphroditism, albinism, and dwarfism.[1]

Among these cases is an entry titled "Futanari" 二形, which depicts an intersex soothsayer, a figure seemingly based on Heian-period (794–1185) male shamans (*otoko miko* or *okannangi* 男巫) who sometimes dressed in women's clothing. This essay investigates the culture of male shamans with respect to their depiction in *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses*.[2]

As in the case of Himiko 卑弥呼 of Yamataikoku 邪馬台国 in ancient Japan, shamans who mediated the gods' oracles were mainly women, although some were men. For example, the *Midō kanpaku-ki* 御堂関白記 (Diary of the Midō Regent) by Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道長 (966–1029) contains an account in which a male shaman was summoned to treat Emperor Sanjō's 三条天皇 (976–1017) eye disease on the thirteenth day of the sixth month of Chōwa 長和 4 (1015). Based on this document, it seems Michinaga and his contemporaries could choose between female and male shamans. At the time there was no sense that a male shaman was a strange phenomenon.

A different perspective on male shamans can be found in the popular songs, or *imayō* 今様, of the late Heian period. These songs were recorded in the *Ryōjin hishō* 梁塵秘抄 (Songs to Make the Dust Dance on the Beams), compiled around the Jishō 治承 era (1177–1181) by Retired Emperor Goshirakawa. Some of the songs make reference to male shamans, mocking them

1 For all twenty-one depictions, see Kasuya and Yamamoto, *Yamai no sōshi*, pp. 2–43.

2 In this essay, the word "soothsayer" indicates the *futanari*'s profession. It is based on the following text found in the scroll: "A man who walked around . . . and told fortunes" (占し歩く男). On the other hand, the word "male shaman" corresponds to the translation of the historical term *otoko miko* or *okannangi*.

for their ties to the marginal cultures of the eastern hinterlands and the emerging warrior class. Furthermore, these songs show the same kind of mocking gaze cast upon the intersex soothsayer in the text and image of "Futanari." In this essay I will discuss the basis of the multiple meanings of "Futanari" and the term *futanari* by focusing on Buddhist teachings and the Heian-period culture of male shamans.[3]

Description and Illustration in "Futanari"

The "Futanari" section, currently held at the Kyoto National Museum, features an intersex soothsayer. He is described as follows:

中頃、京都に鼓を首に懸けて、占し歩く男あり。
形男なれども、女の姿に似たることもありけり。
人これを覚束ながりて、夜寝入りたるにひそかに
衣をかき上げて見ければ、男女の根、共にありけ
り。これ二形の者なり。[4]

Not too long ago, there was a man who walked around the capital. He had a drum hanging from his neck and told fortunes. He looked like a man,

but it is said that, in certain aspects, he resembled a woman. Thinking that was strange, some people crept in on him while he was asleep at night. Lifting up his clothing, they looked and saw that he had the organs of both a man and a woman. He was someone of "two forms."

The illustration depicts a man sneaking into the soothsayer's bedchamber (figure 1). Lifting the soothsayer's gown, the man discovers that the soothsayer has both male and female sex organs.

At first glance, the intersex figure, wearing a black *eboshi* 烏帽子 hat and a fully grown beard, appears to be depicted as a male figure. Upon closer inspection, however, the more feminine characteristics of the person—his red-painted lips and cheeks, as well as the red fan hanging on the wall—tell a different story. Moreover, the prayer beads hanging from his neck as well as the flute and drum by his pillow all suggest that he works as a shaman. The intruder invites another man to come closer. Although the second man is clearly attempting to escape the scene, with the lower half of his body turned away from the room, his face peeping from behind the curtains betrays his curiosity. The two intruders laugh and sneer as they look upon the sleeping person's genitalia.

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3 Also see Yamamoto, "'Yamai no sōshi' ni okeru setsuwa no ryōbun."

4 Kasuya and Yamamoto, *Yamai no sōshi*, p. 240.

Medical Science and Sutra Teachings Regarding Hermaphroditism

According to present-day medical science, "intersex" is understood to be a condition in which a deviation from the typical development of the sexual organs has occurred. There are several causes—for example, variations in chromosomes and gonads, or a hormonal imbalance.

A case such as that illustrated in this work of both the male and the female external genitalia developing into adulthood cannot, however, be verified medically. In other words, the illustration does not depict a medical condition that is known to exist naturally. Rather, it depicts a fictitious patient associated with the word *futanari*. What are the word's origins and how was it used in the Heian period?

This condition is not identified in the *Ishinpō* 医心方 (Formulas From the Heart of Medicine), a medical treatise in thirty volumes completed by the mid-Heian-period physician Tanba no Yasunori 丹波康則 (912–995), who referenced handwritten Chinese medical documents dating to no later than the eighth century. On the other hand, the words *futanari* and the synonymous *nikon* 二根 appear frequently in Buddhist sutras.

Bussetsu daijō zōzō kudokukyō 仏説大乗造像功徳経 (Sutra of Mahayana Buddhism on the Merit of the Construction of the Buddha's Image), which describes the construction of a statue of Śākyamuni (the historical buddha) by King Udayana, is but one example of the word's frequent appearance in Buddhist texts. The sutra opens with the virtuous construction of a Buddhist statue and explains that people are always born as men, and not as women, eunuchs, hermaphrodites, or others of low rank.[5] The sutra divides the human race into four varieties: men, women, eunuchs, and hermaphrodites, and states that not being born a man is a form of karmic retribution because, according to Buddhist thought, only men have the potential to be a Buddha.

Similar teachings are included in the *Shōbō nenjokyō* 正法念処経 (Sutra of Meditation on the True Law), which is also one of the sources for *Jigoku zōshi* 地獄草紙 (The Scroll of Hell) and *Gaki zōshi* 餓鬼草紙 (The Scroll of Hungry Ghosts).[6] Within the "Meditation on

the Body" chapter (*Shinnenjobon* 身念処品), a passage regarding "The Womb-Turning Wind" 転胎蔵風 dictates how the different sexes are divided:

> For acts of evil committed in a previous life, one who was intended to be a man instead becomes a woman. Another becomes a eunuch, while another dies in the womb. Given that this is caused by sins, those without sin from a previous life do not suffer punishment.[7]

This passage, which uses words such as "a man instead becomes a woman," is reminiscent of the description in "Futanari" ("Although his appearance was that of a man, he would occasionally dress as a woman") as well as the visual depiction of the person having both male and female sex organs.

This sutra also attributes eunuchry to licentious acts committed in a previous life. For example, in the "Beasts" chapter (*Chikushōbon* 畜生品),[8] those who engage in bestiality or force others to commit crimes first descend into hell, then become beasts, and when they finally achieve rebirth in the human realm they do so in the form of a eunuch.[9]

In the "Ten Good or Bad Deeds" chapter (*Jūzengōdōbon* 十善業道品), the word *nikon*, synonymous with the word *futanari*, appears in a passage that explains, "Those who enjoy acts of licentiousness will enter the realm of hell, hungry ghosts, or beasts. Even if they are reborn as humans, their wives will not be obedient, or they will be hermaphrodites scorned by the world."[10]

The intersex figure in *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses* faces ridicule from society as represented by the two intruders in the illustration and the unspecified number of people mentioned in the text. This disdain and derision reflects teachings about karmic retribution found in the Buddhist sutras. Since *Shōbō nenjokyō* is one of the sources of the *Scroll of Hell* and the *Scroll of Hungry Ghosts*, this sutra would have been familiar to the creators of the picture scrolls in the Heian period. For both the creators and readers of this scroll, a hermaphrodite

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5 *Bussetsu daijō zōzō kudokukyō*, p. 793c.
6 These scrolls are thought to have been produced as a series of *rokudō-e* 六道絵 along with *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses*. See Ueno, "Emakimono ni tsuite"; Tanaka, *Jigoku zōshi*;

Kobayashi, "Hekija emaki ni tsuite" and "Butsumyō to Shamon jigoku"; Shinbo, "Harake-bon Jigoku zōshi no gadai to shutten"; Umezawa, "Ya o hagu Bishamonten zō to 'hekija-e' no shudai."
7 *Shōbō nenjokyō*, p. 392b.
8 Although the chapter is called "Beasts," it also includes the realm of Ashura 阿修羅.
9 *Shōbō nenjokyō*, p. 104a–b.
10 Ibid., p. 3c.

would have been recognized as an object of derision and an obviously sinful individual. It is at this juncture that *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses* and teachings from sutras coincide.

However, the depiction in *The Illustrated Scroll of Illnesses* has many issues that cannot be explained by Buddhist sutras. The "Futanari" scene also contains many items that came from outside the sutras. The text describes the figure as a wandering "soothsayer," and even the illustration depicts prayer beads around the man's neck as well as the characteristic possessions of a shaman, a flute and drum, strewn on the floor.

Why are these attributes associated with a *futanari*? The answer can be found only in the contemporaneous existence during the Heian period of these androgynous soothsayers—male shamans in women's clothing. The work's depiction of the *futanari* thus reflects the superimposition of the sutra's conception of intersexuality onto a male shaman.[11] In this way, the text and image of "Futanari" can be connected to the actual state of male shamans in the Heian period.

The Male Shaman in the *Midō kanpaku-ki*

The Heian period saw the existence of male shamans in women's clothing who acted as mediums. As already mentioned, Fujiwara no Michinaga's *Midō kanpaku-ki* contains an account in which a male shaman is summoned on the thirteenth day of the sixth month of Chōwa 4 (1015) to treat Emperor Sanjō's eye disease:

> Thirteenth day of the year of *kanoto-u* [辛卯, 1015]. Lord Sukehira said, "There is someone who claims he can cure His Majesty's eyes. What do you think about having him do it?" Then Lord Sukehira explained the method of the cure: "We will have the person make offerings and perform the ritual near Kitano." I agreed with his suggestion. Soon after, I went to the palace to confirm the details of this. It was a male shaman, and he was rewarded with a few gifts.[12]

This is a record from the period when various prayers were offered for Emperor Sanjō, who had been suffering from an eye disease for some time. News of the male shaman coming to cure Emperor Sanjō's eye disease was relayed to Michinaga through Fujiwara no Sukehira 藤原資平 (986–1068), who acted as an intermediary between Emperor Sanjō and Michinaga during their frequent political disagreements.

Michinaga ordered that rites be performed—rites in which someone would "make offerings and perform a ritual near Kitano." Then he went to the palace immediately to confirm the details of the shaman. Finally he was informed it was a male shaman.

"Near Kitano" refers to a location in the vicinity of Kitano Tenmangū Shrine 北野天満宮. It remains unclear whether the male shamans who performed rituals at the time did so in women's clothing. The fact that Michinaga uses the term "male shaman," however, suggests that the word "shaman" was inherently associated with women. Multiple studies have found that it was largely women who acted as oracles, mediums, and soothsayers.[13]

We can look to Yanagita Kunio's early work of 1913 to 1914, "Fujo kō" 巫女考 (On Shrine Maidens), which consists of groundbreaking research on the traditions of female shamans and soothsayers all around Japan.[14] He would later continue this work in "Tamayorihime kō" 玉依姫考 (On Tamayorihime, 1917), in which he focused on the role women played with regard to the gods of heaven and earth.[15] Yanagita developed his ideas further in "Tamayorihiko no mondai" 玉依彦の問題 (The Problem of Tamayorihiko, 1937), which explored the tradition of a pair of brother and sister gods (*onarigami* おなり神) in Okinawa.[16] A few years later he published one of his landmark works, *Imo no chikara* 妹の力 (Sisters' Power, 1940), which examined female shamans from the viewpoint of native Japanese folklore.[17] In this study Yanagita argues that women, who in ancient Japan were often the sisters of political statesmen, were in charge of religious rituals. He suggests that in most cases it was women who, as shamans, were tasked

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11 Abe, "Sei no rinkai o ikiru"; Abe, "Sei no ekkyō," pp. 206–12.
12 Yamanaka, *Midō kanpaku-ki zenchūshaku*: *Chōwa 4 nen*, pp. 112–13.

13 Nakayama, *Nihon fujo shi*; Hori, *Nihon no shāmanizumu*; Yamakami, *Miko no rekishi: Nihon shūkyō no botai*; Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*.
14 The work was serialized in twelve issues of *Kyōdo kenkyū* 郷土研究 from March 1913 to February 1914.
15 Yanagita, "Tamayorihime kō."
16 Yanagita, "Tamayorihiko no mondai."
17 Yanagita, *Imo no chikara*.

with divining messages from gods and ancestors. Yanagita defines their role as women who provided counsel for the government with the impressive term "the sisters' power." It was this "sisters' power" granted only to women that male shamans attempted to wield.

As additional evidence to prove that the shaman was a women's role, there is an entry on *fugeki* 巫覡, or shaman, in the *Wamyō ruijushō* 和名類聚抄, the Japanese dictionary of Chinese characters written by Minamoto no Shitagō 源順 (911–983) in 934. Taken from the *Setsumon kaiji* 説文解字 (Ch. *Shuowen jiezi*) of the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220) and the *Moji jūryaku* 文字集略 (Ch. *Wenzi jilüe*) of the Liang dynasty (502–587), the entry states that, "According to the *Setsumon kaiji*, the *fu* 巫, also *kamunaki*, in *fugeki* refers to female mediums."[18] The *Moji jūryaku* states that the *geki* 覡, also *onokokamunaki*, refers to male mediums.[19] Focusing on the Japanese nomenclature of *kamunaki* (or *miko*, "medium" or "shrine maiden") and *onokokamunaki* (or *kannagi*, "medium" or "diviner"), we can assume that most shamans were female "shrine maidens" and that "male shamans" existed as a separate category.

Going back to the context of the aforementioned *Midō kanpaku-ki*, could it be possible that Michinaga felt a tinge of surprise or alarm knowing that the person conducting the rituals was a male shaman? Certainly, it is not possible to interpret this as Michinaga's discriminatory feelings toward male shamans. While they did have a role and place different from those of female shrine maidens, it can be assumed based on the account in *Midō kanpaku-ki* that at times such rituals were conducted by male shamans.

The Dissimilation of Male Shamans

The views held toward male shamans during the Insei period (1086–1156) must be clarified. The *Ryōjin hishō*, compiled by Retired Emperor Goshirakawa, is an instructive source for this purpose.[20] While many of the popular songs, or *imayō*, were composed by female shamans, a number were composed by male shamans. In the best-known song, male shamans are marginalized as a strange feature of the culture of the eastern provinces (*Tōgoku* 東国 or *Kantō* 関東, terms that include a

nuance of being far from the capital): "In the east, there are no women, for the gods possess male shamans."[21]

Another song specifically references male shamans: "Oh, how I remember the great mansion of fine horses, the mansion of warriors. Little apprentices dance on the shoulders of magicians, and the diviners were male shamans of Hakata."[22] In this song, "male shamans of Hakata" could be seen among the gathering of performers at the warriors' mansion with fine horses. Already marginal due to hailing from Kyushu, far from the capital, these male shamans were doubly marginalized within the warrior culture, which itself was marginal in relation to the court nobles in the capital.

Let us look at another song: "At the gate to Sumiyoshi, the dancing shaman is possessed by the gods [*tsukigami*] and wears borrowed *kariginu* robes ripped from behind."[23] Here two words function with double meanings: *tsukigami*, meaning both "possessed by the gods" (憑神) and "attached hair" (付髪); and *kariginu*, referring to "hunting robes" (狩衣) worn by men and "clothing borrowed" (借衣) from a female shaman. This song has various interpretations, but two possible images within it are pertinent here: that of a low-ranking shrine maiden dancing near the gate to Sumiyoshi, and that of a dancing male shaman who wears a wig and is dressed in the "borrowed clothes" of a woman. Situated at the farthest point from the main shrine, the image in this song of a shaman who dances at the boundaries of the sacred and the profane can surely mean that he or she is relegated to the fringes of society.

The appearance of male shamans dressed in women's clothing is also described in the *Nenchūgyōji emaki* 年中行事絵巻 (The Illustrated Scroll of Annual Events and Ceremonies), which was completed during Emperor Goshirakawa's lifetime. The sixteen-scroll Sumiyoshi version is considered to be the most faithful copy of the twelfth-century original, which was destroyed in a fire at the beginning of the Edo period (1615–1868). Its third scroll depicts commoners engaging in cockfighting on the grounds of the local shrine. Situated behind them is a humble building where a soothsayer, dressed in exquisite robes, may be seen performing divinations while playing a drum (figure 2). We can assume that this is a male shaman from the moustache on the fig-

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18 Minamoto no Shitagō, *Wamyō ruijushō*, p. 568.
19 Nakayama, *Nihon fujo shi*, p. 6.
20 Kim, *Songs to Make the Dust Dance*.

21 *Ryōjin hishō*, p. 147 (song 556).
22 Ibid., p. 100 (song 352).
23 Ibid., p. 145 (song 545).

ure's face.[24]

The male shaman depicted in this illustration is situated not in the middle of the shrine grounds, but rather in the margins away from the main buildings, performing rituals. This setting calls to mind the previous image of the male shaman in the *Midō kanpaku-ki*, who was performing rituals at a place vaguely described as "near Kitano." The scene also resonates with the gender-ambiguous shaman at the gate of Sumiyoshi Shrine 住吉神社 in the aforementioned *imayō*. These male shamans were not affiliated with a particular shrine like priests or shrine maidens, but rather were called "wan-

dering shamans," or *aruki miko* 歩き巫女, low-ranked individuals who moved from place to place acting as spirit mediums and performing divinations.

Let us return to the *Ryōjin hishō* songs concerning "wandering shamans." One song goes:

> My child is surely no longer a child; they say she wanders as a shaman. Surely the fishermen gather 'round her when she walks along the bay of Tago. How they mock her, questioning whether she is right or wrong. How painful her life must be![25]

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24 Mitsuhashi, *Joshō to Nihonjin*, pp. 45–52; Komatsu, *Nenchūgyōji emaki*.

25 *Ryōjin hishō*, p. 103 (song 364).

Figure 3. *Nenchūgyōji emaki*, Sumiyoshi version, scroll III, section 1. 17th c., Edo period. Handscroll, ink and colors on paper. H 45.3 cm, W 693.9 cm. From Komatsu, *Nenchūgyōji emaki*, p. 17. Private collection.

The song describes a roaming shaman who performs divinations for fishermen in the hinterlands, who ridicule her whether her prophecies are right or wrong.

Returning to the scene in the *Nenchūgyōji emaki*, at the corner of the crowd of people engaged in the cockfight, next to a small shrine, sits an old woman with her obi laid out under her (figure 3). With a drum used for divination placed in front of her, she has the typical appearance of a wandering shaman. It is thought that these shamans made a living by travelling to popular gathering spots and performing divinations, and would at times even give forms of public entertainment.

We will now situate the *futanari* described at the beginning of this essay within the spectrum of the male shamans and wandering shamans who both existed during the time of the Retired Emperor Goshirakawa. We can now connect the marginalization of male shamans or wandering shamans as peripheral figures, as seen in the *imayō* and the *Nenchūgyōji emaki*, with the doubt and suspicion of society incurred by *futanari* whom, as described in the text of the "Futanari" section, "people found suspicious."

These historical and literary contexts unlock a greater understanding of the narrative in the "Futanari" scene. This is a rich, multifaceted narrative in which the concept of hermaphroditism, which was once considered possible only in Buddhist texts, becomes associated with in-the-flesh male shamans. The male shaman who performed rituals to cure Emperor Sanjō's eye disease, the male shaman from the eastern hinterlands, the male shaman who danced beneath the gate to Sumiyoshi, the male shaman who donned a wig and woman's clothing, the wandering shaman from the bay of Tago, and the wandering shaman amid the crowd of people— all of these figures are situated within text and image in a way that blurs the lines between truth and fiction.

When considered in light of the Buddhist sutra teachings on karmic retribution, the "Futanari" scene takes on an even greater complexity, revealing the true nature of the *futanari* to be fundamentally liminal. Returning to the text and image of the "Futanari" section, the text states that the figure whom people found suspicious "carried a drum around his neck as a soothsayer" and "had the appearance of a man, but would occasionally dress as a woman." The otherness of hermaphroditism is hence revealed. Moreover, the intersex figure is ridiculed and rejected by society, as indicated by the two intruders who laugh and point at him. By putting the intersex body of the male shaman on display and showing the spectator's reactions, the viewers of the scroll are themselves made to grasp the place of *futanari* within the social hierarchy.

However, the otherness signified by hermaphroditism does not merely exclude or marginalize. It also possesses an appeal that draws out the interest of people. While the male shaman who appears in the *imayō* takes on a different appearance, he is still someone who holds an unusual sway over those around him, mesmerizing them with his incantations and performances. This is the unique charm of the male shaman who dressed in women's clothing.

Moreover, we cannot overlook the greater complexity of the physical body of the intersex figure in this depiction. Having both male and female sex organs, the *futanari* is ultimately neither a man in women's clothes nor a woman in men's clothes. The male guise (represented by the hunting robe, the black *eboshi* hat, and the moustache) and the female guise (represented by the deep red lips, cheeks, and crimson fan) exist simultaneously as one body, thereby transcending the male-female dichotomy. Realizing this, viewers of the scroll discover that the object of ridicule and pointed fingers is actually a part of themselves. In viewing the "Futanari" scene the viewer's sexuality itself becomes destabilized, prompting the question, "What is a male, what is a female, and what are you?"

Conclusion

The tale of an intersex figure transcending gender relates to yet another tale of bodily change that permeates the literature and art of the Insei period, namely the metamorphosing male, or the tale of the Dragon King's daughter found in the "Devadatta" chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*. According to the text, "The bodies of women are defiled and therefore cannot receive the teachings of the Buddha. They cannot achieve enlightenment."[26] Women are thus scorned and cannot achieve buddhahood due to the Five Hindrances of their bodies: their inability to become the Bonten King, the Taishaku King, the Devil King, the Wheel-Turning King, and finally a buddha. However, Shakara, the daughter of the Dragon King (Sk. Sāgara-nāgarāja), hears a recitation of the *Lotus Sutra* at the age of eight and prays with earnest conviction that she achieve buddhahood. She offers a precious jewel in her possession to the Buddha. The Buddha accepts this offering, and in an instant, be-

fore the whole world, the woman is transformed into a man and achieves buddhahood.

The woman with a body tainted by sin became a man, then a bodhisattva, and finally a buddha. The tale of the Dragon King's daughter, which vividly depicts the metamorphosis of the physical body, mirrors the tale of the intersex figure. According to the Buddhist teachings, being born anything other than a man is a mark of sin from a previous life.[27] On the other hand, someone can be transformed into a man due to good deeds. Both of these conceptualizations transgress the boundaries of gender and as such, the assignment of binary gender identity. The intersex figure depicted in "Futanari" goes back and forth between two genders; it both accepts the scorn of the world and transcends it. The figure invalidates the question of whether the individual depicted is a man or woman and clears the way for a new tale to be told.

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26 *Myōhō rengekyō*, p. 35c.

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27 Although this concept was widespread in Heian- and Kamakura-period society, it is also true that women did not themselves consider their bodies innately sinful. There has been a great deal of recent scholarship on this point; in particular, see Abe, "Revisiting the Dragon Princess."

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Illuminating the Sacred Presence of Hasedera's Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara

CHARI PRADEL

Introduction

THE Buddhist mountain-temple Hasedera 長谷寺, located on Mt. Hase in the city of Sakurai (Nara Prefecture), has been a popular pilgrimage site since the Heian period (794–1185). The main reason for the popularity of the site is its miraculous icon, a monumental wooden image of Jūichimen Kannon 十一面観音 (Sk. Ekādaśamukha, the Eleven-Headed Avalokiteśvara), known as the Hase Kannon 長谷観音.[1] The exact date and circumstances of the establishment of the temple are controversial and form the subject of scholarly debate, as the sources related to the temple are diverse—some are historical and others legendary.[2] By the late eighth century, however, Hasedera was mentioned in the official historical records, and in the ninth century, it was ranked as a *jōgakuji* 定額寺 (state-sponsored temple) controlled by Tōdaiji 東大寺.[3] This situation changed in the late tenth century, as related in *Tōdaiji yōroku* 東大寺要録 (Essential Records of Tōdaiji, twelfth century), which states that in Shōryaku 正暦 1 (990), Hasedera became a *matsuji* 末

1 The stories about the miracles performed by the Hase Kannon were compiled in *Hasedera genki* 長谷寺験記 or *Hasedera reigenki* 長谷寺霊験記 (Records of the Miracles at Hasedera), which includes fifty-two stories. Some address the origin of the temple, the construction of its halls and statues, and the ceremonies performed, while others recount the benefits obtained by devotees. See Dykstra, "Tales of the Compassionate Kannon," pp. 117–19; and Yokota, *Hasedera genki*. The proposed dates for its compilation range from the first half of the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. See Dykstra, pp. 121–22.

2 The Hasedera Bronze Plaque (late seventh century) and its controversial inscription have been used as evidence for the establishment of the temple. Kataoka Naoki has concluded that the inscription engraved on the artifact does not relate to the establishment of the temple, but to the creation of the bronze plaque itself. Moreover, the content of the plaque's inscription did not influence any of the later sources related to Hasedera. Kataoka, "Hasedera dōban," pp. 65–66.

3 Hasedera is mentioned in *Shoku Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan Continued, 797) in an entry for Jingo keiun 神護景雲 2 (768), when Shōtoku Tennō 称徳天皇 (r. 764–770) visited Hasedera and donated rice lands. *Shoku Nihon kōki* 続日本後紀 (Later Chronicles of Japan Continued), written in the early Heian period, records that in Jōwa 承和 14 (847), the mountain temples (*yamadera* 山寺) Hasedera and Tsubosakadera 壷阪寺 became *jōgakuji* because they were acknowledged as miraculous places. *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録 (Veritable Record of Three Reigns of Japan, 901) reports that in Ninna 仁和 1 (885), their status as *jōgakuji* was reaffirmed. Tsuji, *Hasederashi no kenkyū*, pp. 68–71.

寺 (branch temple) of Kōfukuji 興福寺 in Kyoto.[4]

In addition to these historical records, stories about the creation of the Kannon image and its miracles, as well as the patronage of the temple's establishment, are found in compilations of Buddhist stories. The earliest extant narrative about the Hase Kannon is found in *Sanbō ekotoba* 三宝絵詞 (Text of the Illustrated Three Jewels), written by Minamoto Tamenori 源為憲 (d. 1001). The short story tells us about a vow made by the monk Tokudō 徳道 (b. 656) to sculpt an image of Kannon, focusing on the unusual characteristics of the wood used to create the image and the stone for its pedestal.[5] This became one of the key narratives about Hasedera, and expanded versions proliferated during the medieval period (roughly the eleventh to sixteenth centuries).[6]

Along with the textual material, sets of illustrated handscrolls known as *Hasedera engi emaki* (Illustrated Scrolls of the Accounts of Hasedera) were created between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. The textual component of these scrolls is a modified version of *Hasedera engibun* 長谷寺縁起文 (Accounts of Hasedera, hereafter *Engibun*), one of the expanded versions of the Hasedera narratives from the medieval period.[7] *Engibun*'s introduction states that it was written by

Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845–903) in the late ninth century.[8] This attribution has been questioned, and although most scholars agree that Michizane is not the author, no consensus has been reached about the general date of *Engibun*'s composition; the proposed dates range from the late twelfth to the late thirteenth centuries.[9] The textual material associated with Hasedera has been studied thoroughly by scholars of Japanese literature and religion.[10] Yet studies about the scrolls are scant. Selected scenes from the scrolls have been included in exhibitions and collection catalogues with summaries of the story and brief descriptions of the paintings, and a few studies have addressed certain themes of the narrative and illustrations.[11] The only comprehensive study of the scrolls, however, which

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4 Tsuji, *Hasederashi no kenkyū*, p. 76.

5 Minamoto, *Sanbō ekotoba*, pp. 91–96. For an English translation, see Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, pp. 320–25. A note in this text suggests that this story was recorded in *Kannon engi narabi ni zakki* 観音縁起並雑記 (Accounts of Kannon and Miscellaneous Records), dated to Tenpyō 天平 5 (733). Tokudō's birth year is cited in the medieval *Hasedera engibun* 長谷寺縁起文 (Accounts of Hasedera) but may be spurious.

6 Later versions are included in *Fusō ryakki* 扶桑略記 (Brief History of Japan, late Heian period), *Tōdaiji yōroku*, *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集 (Anthology of Tales from the Past, late Heian period), *Shichidaiji nenpyō* 七大寺年表 (Chronology of the Seven Great Temples, 1165), *Kenkyū gojunrei ki* 建久御巡礼記 (Record of the Pilgrimage in the Kenkyū Era, 1191), *Kojidan* 古事談 (Account of Ancient Matters, 1212–1215), *Shoji konryū shidai* 諸寺建立次第 (Circumstances of the Establishment of Various Temples, ca. 1216), *Shoji engishū* 諸寺縁起集 (Anthology of Accounts of the Origins of Various Temples, ca. 1235), *Iroha jiruishō* 伊呂波字類抄 (Iroha Dictionary, thirteenth century), *Hasedera engibun*, and the *Hasedera engi emaki* 長谷寺縁起絵巻 text. For a study of these sources, see Tsuji, *Hasederashi no kenkyū*, pp. 171–91. For an excellent comparative analysis of the themes addressed in these sources, see Uchida, "Jisha engi," pp. 206–12.

7 See *Hasedera engibun*, in *Gunsho ruijū*, vol. 24, pp. 454–62. For a transcription of the *Hasedera engi emaki* text, see Miya, "Hasedera engi kotobagaki, kōkan," pp. 142–48; and "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," pp. 223–31.

8 Scholars, such as Abe Yasurō and Fujimaki Kazuhiro, contend that *Engibun* must be read together with *Hasedera missōki* 長谷寺密奏記 (Record of Hasedera's Secret Report to the Emperor, hereafter *Missōki*), also attributed to Michizane (i.e., ninth century). According to these scholars, these two texts complement each other, giving a clear picture of the beliefs prevalent at Mt. Hase. *Engibun* and *Missōki* refer to the monk Tokudō's quest to make an image of Jūichimen Kannon. In *Missōki*, the narrative centers on the role of *kami* and (what we now refer to as) *shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合 beliefs (discussed below). For instance, *Missōki* states that Techikarao Myōjin 手力雄大明神, the local *kami* at Hase, encountered Tokudō and told him that Hase was a sacred site associated with Amaterasu no Ōmikami 天照大神, the imperial *kami*. For this reason, Tokudō visited Ise, where the shrine of Amaterasu is located. During his visit, he discovered that Amaterasu no Ōmikami was Jūichimen Kannon and Dainichi Nyorai 大日如来 (the cosmic buddha), and Tokudō had a vision of the Hase Kannon's form. *Missōki* also explains that the sculptors who carved the icon transformed into the *honji* 本地 (buddha originals) of the first and third *kami* of Kasuga Daimyōjin 春日大明神 (the composite divinity of Kasuga Shrine). Importantly, *Missōki* includes a list of all of the *kami* at Hase. See Abe, "Hasedera engi to reigenki," p. 326; and Fujimaki, "Hasedera no engi: Saiseisan," pp. 113–14. Yet *Missōki* is not mentioned in *Engibun* or *Hasedera engi emaki*. For a study of *Missōki*, see Fujimaki, "Hasedera missōki."

9 For a summary of the dating of the text by different scholars, see Uejima, "Chūsei shinwa no sōzō," pp. 546–47.

10 Literature scholars studying texts related to Hasedera include Fujimaki Kazuhiro, Yokota Takashi, and Uchida Mioko.

11 A list of publications that include information about *Hasedera engi emaki* can be found on Refarensu Kyōdō Dētabēsu, "Hasedera engi emaki no zentai ga keisai sarete iru shiryō no chōsa." Studies about the scrolls include Pradel, "La Leyenda Ilustrada de Hasedera"; Sakakibara, "Rokkan bon"; and Yamamoto, "Hasedera engi emaki no misogi denshō." Color photographs of the Idemitsu Museum scrolls are published in Idemitsu Bijutsukan, *Yamatoe*, plates 7-1 to 7-29, and black and white photographs of five sets of scrolls appear in the Hasedera catalogue of treasures, Gangōji Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, *Buzan Hasedera shūi*, pp. 190–237. In addition, the scrolls from SAM are available on ARTstor.

includes a transcription of the text sections, was published in the 1970s by the art historian Miya Tsugio.[12]

This essay explores the way in which the creator(s) of the *Hasedera engi emaki*—its text and illustrations—revamped the original story of the Hase Kannon by emphasizing the extraordinary qualities of the materials used to make the icon and its stone pedestal. An analysis of the text of *Hasedera engi emaki* reveals that the story contained in *Sanbō ekotoba* regarding the origins of the Hase Kannon, which appears to be related to indigenous beliefs, was expanded by adding Buddhist elements that explain the transformation of an allegedly cursed log into the appropriate material for a buddha image through Buddhist prayer, ritual, and the intervention of Buddhist deities. In the same way, the story of the stone pedestal was enhanced to lend it a Buddhist significance by connecting the pedestal to real and imaginary Buddhist sacred sites.

As is the case with many cultic centers in medieval Japan, the beliefs and practices at Mt. Hase centered on *shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合, "the amalgamation of *kami* and buddhas." This combinatory religious system was largely Buddhist in nature, but contained Chinese yin-yang practices as well as Japanese cults of *kami* or local deities.[13] Although some sections of *Hasedera engi emaki* reflect *shinbutsu shūgō* beliefs, the revamped stories associated with the wood and stone used to make the statue of the Hase Kannon emphasize the role of Buddhist prayer and ritual in the transformation of the log into an image of Kannon and its connections to the Buddhist world to confirm its sacred nature.

This essay is divided into three main sections. The first focuses on *Hasedera engi emaki* and introduces the stories and the characters, explaining the division of the stories into sections and the subject of each illustration.[14] The second discusses the story about the numinous log used to make the icon. In the medieval version of *Hasedera engi emaki*, the wood used to make the icon came from an ill-fated log, as in the earlier

version found in *Sanbō ekotoba*, but in *Hasedera engi emaki*, the transformation of the wood into a buddha image is explained through the Buddhist doctrine that non-sentient beings—more specifically, plants—can attain enlightenment, known as *sōmoku jōbutsu* 草木成仏 (literally, "grasses and trees become buddhas"). The log is introduced as having buddha-nature and subsequently is transformed into a Kannon icon through Buddhist prayer and the intervention of Buddhist deities. The third section examines the story of the large stone that serves as the platform for the Kannon image. In this case also, the story is more complex than that found in the earlier version, highlighting the role of the deities that inhabit Mt. Hase, the sacredness of the mountain, and its connections to the Buddhist world. The illustrations in *Hasedera engi emaki* rendered the invisible world of the deities visible to the viewers of the scrolls, making the story more credible and also more entertaining.

Hasedera engi emaki and *Engibun*

Before discussing the extant illustrated scrolls, the significance of the term *engi* in both *Engibun* and *Hasedera engi emaki* should be examined briefly. By the eighth century, the term *engi* began to be used to refer to accounts of the establishment of temples as well as accounts of the ordination of monks and nuns. Later, it came to refer to textual and visual materials that narrated the histories of religious institutions.[15] Although the titles *Hasedera engibun* and *Hasedera engi emaki* include the term *engi*, the narratives are not limited to the origins of the temple but include other related stories, such as those that refer to the sacred qualities of Mt. Hase and the possibilities for devotees to communicate with the various deities who reside there.

The main source used for this study is the sixteenth-century *Hasedera engi emaki* in the collection of the Seattle Art Museum (SAM), a work of the late Muromachi period (1392–1573).[16] Currently, eleven sets of *Hasedera engi emaki* are extant in temples, museums,

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12 Miya, "Hasedera engi jō" and "Hasedera engi ge."

13 For a historical overview of the development of *shinbutsu shūgō* and *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 (literally, "original ground and manifest traces," the theory of *kami* as local manifestations of Buddhist deities), see Teeuwen and Rambelli, *Buddhas and Kami in Japan*, especially pp. 1–53.

14 This section is an updated and more complete version of the author's article "La Leyenda Ilustrada de Hasedera," which also discusses certain aspects of the narrative related to Shugendō 修験道 (a highly syncretic religious tradition) and *kami*.

15 For a comprehensive discussion of *engi*, see Kawasaki and Blair, "*Engi*: Forging Accounts of Sacred Origins."

16 The first scroll measures 1530.1 x 30.8 cm; the second scroll, 1595.1 x 30.8 cm; and the third, 1310.1 x 30.8 cm. All the illustrations in this article are from SAM.
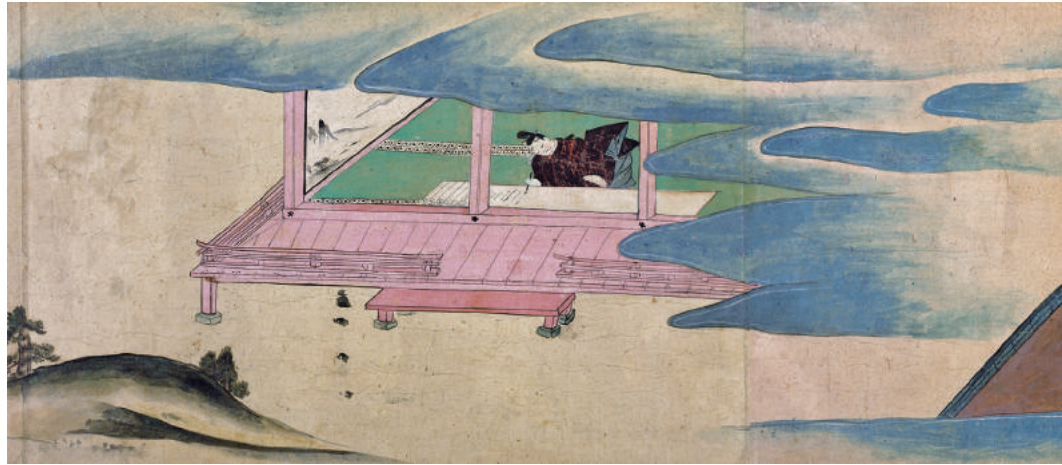
Figure 1. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll I, section 1. 16th c., Muromachi period. Handscroll, ink and colors on paper. H 30.8 cm. Margaret E. Fuller Purchase Fund. Gift to a City: Masterworks from the Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection in the Seattle Art Museum. Acc. # 57.15.1. Photograph by Susan A. Cole. Permission of Seattle Art Museum. Description and credit information applies to figs. 2–6.

and private collections in Japan and the United States.[17] Because all of the sets include similar texts and scenes, Miya Tsugio has suggested that they all were created using the same model.[18] As mentioned above, the text of *Hasedera engi emaki* is slightly different from *Engibun*.[19] In addition, minor differences in the text are found among the extant scrolls (especially omissions or mistakes in the transcriptions), but these do not significantly change the meaning of the story. In the case of the illustrations, although the scenes seem to follow the same model, slight variations are apparent in the compositions and the style of representation. Also, the amount of pigments used differs between the sets. For instance, in the SAM set, the pigments are dissolved in large amounts of water, producing an effect like watercolor painting. Other examples, such as the six-scroll set at Nara National Museum attributed to Tosa Mitsumochi 土佐光茂 (1494–ca. 1559), are painted using the expensive *tsukuri-e* 作り絵 or "built-up" technique, using multiple layers of mineral pigments and gold.[20] Most *Hasedera engi emaki* consist of three scrolls, except for the set attributed to Mitsumochi. In all cases, however, the narrative is divided into thirty-three sections, each with a corresponding illustration, and a postscript. The choice of this number is intentional and relates to the thirty-three manifestations of Kannon.[21]

The scrolls are unrolled from right to left, allowing the viewer to read each portion of the text and then see the corresponding illustration. Due to the location of the story told in *Hasedera engi emaki*, most of the illustrations include a landscape setting. In each of these settings, the characters involved in the specific section of the story are portrayed. In some cases, the same character, object, or building is represented two or more times in the same composition (figures 1 and 2).

This type of visual narrative strategy is known in Japanese as *iji dōzu* 異時同図, meaning "different

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17 A list of the owners of the eleven *Hasedera engi emaki* sets is available in Gangōji Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, *Buzan Hasedera shūi*, pp. 17–18.

18 Miya, "Hasedera engi ge," pp. 69–70.

19 *Engibun* is written in *kanbun* (literary Chinese for Japanese usage), and the text of *Hasedera engi emaki* is written in vernacular Japanese using kanji and kana. Some sentences of *Engibun* are not included in *Hasedera engi emaki*; similarly, a few sentences in *Hasedera engi emaki* are not in *Engibun*. This circumstance demonstrates that the creators of *Hasedera engi emaki* made specific choices when designing the narrative scrolls.

20 This set of six scrolls was painted in 1523. For reproductions of some scenes, see Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Shaji engi-e*. See also McCormick, *Tosa Mitsunobu*, pp. 52–53. For a detailed study about authorship, see Sakakibara, "Rokkan bon."

21 For the thirty-three manifestations of Kannon, see Frédéric, *Buddhism*, pp. 156–62.
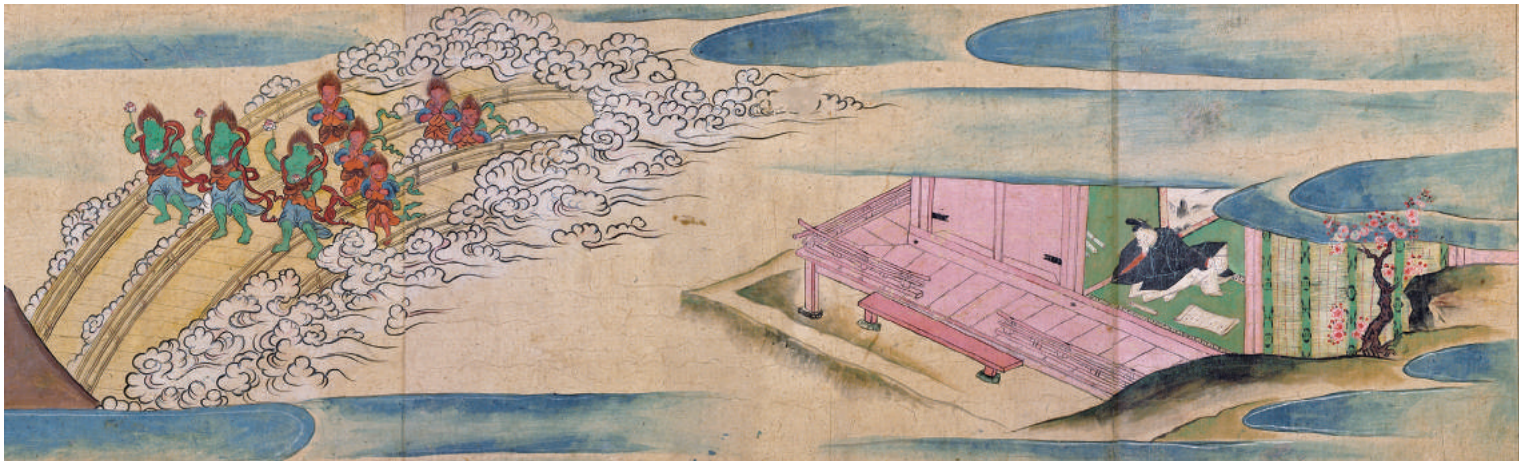
time, same picture," referring to the representation of two or more successive events in the same depiction.[22] Most scenes include a representation of mist, which functions as a transitional element between locations or events. Another key element in the composition is trees and flowers, representative of the four seasons, which serve to suggest the passing of time between the scenes.[23]

Uchida Mioko has researched the narratives about Hasedera written before *Engibun*, concluding that they are not exclusively about the origins of the temple and its image (as the term *engi* might suggest), and demarcating ten distinctive stories.[24] Following her model, table 1, at the end of this essay, includes a summary of the ten stories, as divided into the thirty-three sections of *Hasedera engi emaki*. To avoid confusion between the different items, each of the ten stories is given an ordinal number and title. The three scrolls are numbered using Roman numerals, and the stories are divided into sections listed by cardinal numbers, followed by a brief description of the corresponding illustration. In short, this table is a vertical version of the progression of the *Hasedera engi emaki*.

The number of sections contained in each scroll differs. Scroll I includes thirteen sections, Scroll II has fourteen sections, and Scroll III consists of six sections and a postscript. Likewise, the number of sections and

illustrations allotted per story is not uniform: some stories are illustrated by a single painting, whereas others include as many as nine scenes. In addition, the length of the illustrations is not standardized. Certain scenes, especially those representing the sacred landscape of the mountain (illustration 28) and the temple halls and Mt. Hase landmarks (illustration 32), are complex, expanded compositions. Furthermore, scenes such as illustration 1 (figure 1) include all of the events narrated, whereas others, such as illustration 12 (figure 6), show only selected events. Importantly, the textual component of the scrolls also varies. The texts in certain scrolls are long and include Buddhist concepts and terms, whereas others are short and factual. An interesting feature of *Hasedera engi emaki* is that some paintings include notes inscribed on the surface. These notes identify the characters and important features of the setting, and, in a few instances, explain the choices made by the artists in creating the paintings.[25]

Uchida has pointed out that none of the narratives written before *Engibun* contains all ten stories; most of the earlier Hasedera narratives include the stories of the making of the Hase Kannon (fourth, fifth, and sixth stories). She also has noted that two stories in *Engibun*, the eighth (Gyōki's 行基 (668–749) pilgrimage to Mt. Hase) and the tenth (Shōmu Tennō's 聖武天皇 (r. 724–749) visit to Hasedera), are only found in *Engibun*.[26] As mentioned above, these two stories are illustrated in extremely long compositions in the later medieval scrolls.

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22 In English, the term "continuous narrative" is used to refer to this type of visual narrative. For a detailed study of forms of visual narrative in India, see Dehejia, "On Modes of Visual Narration." For *iji dōzu*, see Chino and Nishi, *Fikushion*, pp. 30–38.

23 Tamamushi, "Kaiga," pp. 85–89.

24 Uchida, "Jisha engi," pp. 206–13.

25 The set in the Idemitsu Museum contains many explanatory notes. See "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," pp. 223–31.

26 For a useful table, see Uchida, "Jisha engi," p. 207.

Figure 2. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll I, section 2.

In the eighth story, the viewer journeys with Gyōki and a divine boy through the landscape of Mt. Hase and encounters the sacred spots on the mountain and the deities that inhabit it. Similarly, the tenth story takes the viewer on a tour through the temple grounds and sacred landmarks, following Shōmu's journey.[27]

In sum, in addition to describing the origins of the Kannon image, the establishment of Hasedera, and the temple's patronage, the contents of *Hasedera engi emaki* suggest that the creator(s) aimed to demonstrate the numinous nature of Mt. Hase by revealing its sacred spots, divine inhabitants, and protectors, which include *kami* as well as Chinese yin-yang and Buddhist deities. Importantly, these stories also suggest that, at Mt. Hase, it is possible to communicate with some of these deities through dreams. The illustrations allow the reader/viewer to see this invisible world. Moreover, the text also states that a visit to Hasedera grants Kannon's protection and the promise of salvation in the Pure Land of the buddha Amida. Furthermore, two of the sets also state that the illustrated scrolls were made for laypeople and monks who could not visit the temple, giving us an idea of the purpose of the scrolls.[28]

Tokudō, the Cursed Log, and the Hase Kannon

The monk Tokudō is the central character in *Hasedera engi emaki*. His life, and his efforts to make an image of Kannon and build a temple at Mt. Hase, are the focus of five of the ten stories. The fourth and fifth stories relate how the ill-fated log was used to make the Kannon image, and describe the patronage of Fujiwara no Fusasaki 藤原房前 (681–737). These two stories reflect beliefs associated with trees as the primary material for Buddhist icons, the idea that non-sentient beings can reach buddhahood, the role of Buddhist prayer and ritual in the production of icons, and the necessity of economic support for making Buddhist icons. As some of these themes do not appear in the original story, a broader analysis is necessary.

The religious significance of trees in the Hase Kannon story has been addressed by many scholars.[29] Some have propounded the idea that the concept of the ill-fated log is associated with *kami* cults, because, within this belief system, trees (and also stones) are thought to serve as *yorishiro* 依代 for a *kami*. *Yorishiro*, usually translated as "receptacle," is the place, object, or person inhabited by a *kami* when it descends for a religious

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27 These scenes will be discussed in a forthcoming publication.
28 Miya, "Hasedera engi ge," p. 66; for the text of the SAM version, see Miya, "Hasedera engi kotobagaki, kōkan," p. 147.

29 For a summary of these positions, see Yamamoto, "Hasedera engi emaki no misogi," pp. 92–93. Rambelli has argued that, in *kami* belief, trees served as abodes of the *kami* and rarely were deemed to be *kami* themselves. See Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp. 141–42.

ceremony.[30] Other scholars argue that the story of the log relates to Buddhist ideas, especially those associated with the enlightenment of non-sentient beings, including plants.[31] The argument presented here is that the elements added to the log story aimed to emphasize the effective role of Buddhist prayer and ritual in the transformation of a numinous log into a Buddhist icon, and to parallel the making of the icon with the log's progression towards enlightenment. In the story as narrated in *Sanbō ekotoba* and in sections of the *Hasedera engi emaki* text, omitted or added elements helped to emphasize the creators' message, with the illustrations also playing a role.

In *Sanbō ekotoba*, the Hase Kannon story appears in the chapter titled "The Bodhisattva Ordination at Hatsuse" (third volume, chapter 20). This chapter includes the Hase Kannon story followed by an explanation of the bodhisattva ordination ritual. The short story about the Hase Kannon addresses three themes related to the making of the icon: two about the material (wood and stone), and one about its patronage. In this section, we focus on the wood.[32]

According to the text, during a great flood in the Year of the Rooster (601), "a large tree was set adrift until it came to rest at Miogasaki 三緒が崎 in the Takashima 高島 District in Ōmi 近江 Province.[33] A villager tried to cut off a piece of the log, and his house burned down. Destruction spread through the village and many people died. When these incidents were investigated, the villagers concluded that the log was cursed. For this reason, no one came close to the log. From Miogasaki, the log was moved to the village of Taima 当麻 in the Lower Katsuragi 葛城下 District by a man called Izumo Ōmitsu 出雲大満. When Ōmitsu first heard about the log, he vowed to "make that tree into a Jūichimen Kannon."[34] But he did not have the means to move it from Miogasaki. When he finally found men to help him, to their surprise, the log was light and could be moved easily. Unfortunately, Ōmitsu was not able to fulfill his vow, timed passed, and he died. After eighty years, the tree was still in Taima. When a plague struck the village, the cursed tree was blamed. Ōmitsu's son was ordered by the village authorities to move the log. In the Year of the Dragon (668), he and a group of villagers moved the log and cast it into the Hatsuse 長谷 River in the Upper Shiki 磯城 District. The log remained in Hase for about thirty years until the monk Tokudō heard about it. He thought of making an image of Jūichimen Kannon, because the log seemed to have a numinous quality; thus he moved the log to the northern peak, where the temple stands now. Unfortunately, Tokudō could not find the financial support to make the image. For seven or eight years, he prayed to the log:

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30 See Havens and Inoue, *An Encyclopedia of Shinto*, vol. 2, p. 32.
31 This idea is discussed by Nedachi Kensuke, as cited by Yamamoto, "Hasedera engi emaki no misogi," p. 93.
32 For the sections related to the wood, see Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, pp. 320–21; and Minamoto, *Sanbō ekotoba,* pp. 91–93.

33 Kamens, ibid., p. 320; and Minamoto, ibid., p. 91.
34 Kames, ibid.; and Minamoto, ibid.

Figure 3. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll I, section 9.

Figure 4. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll I, section 10.

"May the wondrous power of prayer spontaneously create a buddha [image]" (*raihai iriki, jinen zōbutsu* 礼拝威力、自然造仏).[35] The events that follow in the text are related to patronage and the discovery of the stone used for the pedestal.

In brief, the *Sanbō ekotoba* story begins by stating that the monumental tree was uprooted from an unknown location during a storm, landing in Miogasaki.

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35 Kamens, ibid., p. 320; and Minamoto, ibid., p. 93. The term *jinen* or *shizen* is usually translated as "nature." The meaning of the term, however, is "individual essence." In medieval Japan, the idea that enlightenment could be attained through non-ordinary experience of the human material world was developed into rituals to acquire "spontaneous wisdom" (*jinenchi* 自然智). For a detailed discussion of the term *jinen* in the Buddhist context, see Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp.133–35.

Figure 5. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll I, section 11.

From there, it was hauled to Taima, and lastly to the Hase River. Certain unfortunate events at the places where the log landed also are related, as well as the difficulties experienced by Ōmitsu and Tokudō in fulfilling their vow of making an image of Jūichimen Kannon. This story might reflect the Japanese belief that a dead tree was considered a negative sign leading to disasters, such as diseases and death, among others. Thus, from the introductory segment that tells about the tree being set adrift after a storm, to the ensuing tragic events occurring at the places where the log was taken, we may surmise that this story, as recorded by Tamenori, reflected popular beliefs about trees in the tenth century. In addition, the tale shows that, although trees were readily available, making them into buddha images was not necessarily a simple task.

In *Hasedera engi emaki*, the story of the numinous log is told in sections 7 through 14.[36] This story includes the narrative about the disasters at the sites where the log was moved, with some slight variations (sections 11 and 12). The beginning of the story omits the reason why the tree died (i.e., its uprooting by the storm). Instead, the writer adds an explanation about the log's unusual qualities. In section 9, the log is described as measuring about thirty meters and having the wondrous power to grow fragrant white lotus flowers when lotus petals are scattered by celestial beings. Due to this unusual feature, the valley where the log rested was known as White Lotus Flower (*byakurenge* 白蓮華, Sk. *puṇḍarīka*) Valley.[37] As is well known, in Buddhism the lotus (Jp. *renge* 蓮華, Sk. *padma*) is a symbol of purity and spontaneous generation. It is also a symbol of mercy and compassion, and an attribute of Kannon.[38] In Esoteric Buddhism, the heart of a being is compared to an unopened lotus—when the virtues of the Buddha develop therein, the lotus blossoms.[39] The illustration of this scene (figure 3) provided the means of convincingly recreating the alleged supernatural qualities of the monumental log. The addition of the celestial being scattering lotus petals further emphasizes the numinous incident. Importantly, the notion that lotus flowers bloom from this log might indicate that the tree had the buddha-nature within itself.

The writers also included various deities to accompany the log, who are depicted in the scrolls multiple times. These deities are introduced in section 7, when the monk Dōmyō 道明 (n.d) recounts his dream and conversation with "a group of different beings" (*sūhai ikei no tagui* 数輩異形のたぐい). Thus, *Hasedera engi emaki* states that the log was accompanied by an old man (*okina* 翁) dressed in white, who claimed to be the *kami* Mio Daimyōjin 三尾大明神.[40] He said that his role was to protect the log and therefore, he

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36 "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," pp. 224–26.

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37 Ibid., 225.

38 For various meanings of the lotus, see Saunders, *Mudrā*, pp. 159–64.

39 Tajima Ryūjin, as cited by Frédéric, *Buddhism*, p. 62.

40 The inclusion of *okina* in narratives was a new feature of medieval literature; see Drott, *Buddhism and the Transformation of Old Age*.

Figure 6. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll I, section 12.

had been travelling with his retinue throughout the country to fulfill this mission. In addition to the old man was a *dōji* 童子 (literally, youth or child; hereafter, divine boy) holding a baldachin, who said that he was a protector of Mt. Hase, and that he had invited the log to the mountain because this was a suitable place for it.[41] The illustration of section 7, however, does not include any of the deities mentioned; it only shows Dōmyō and Tokudō talking. These "different beings" are represented for the first time in illustration 10 (figure 4), which corresponds to the section narrating how the log was washed away from the White Lotus Flower Valley by a storm.

Accordingly, the painting includes a stormy scene, with the log being moved by a flood and accompanied by Mio Daimyōjin and the divine boy, as stated in the text; the scroll portrays an old man dressed in white and a boy holding a baldachin. The five demon-like

figures are part of Mio Daimyōjin's retinue, and the popular Fūjin 風神 (Wind God) and Raijin 雷神 (Thunder God), one holding a bag and the other with a ring of small drums around his head, are surrounded by heavy clouds to convey the storm. The addition of Mio Daimyōjin, the divine boy, and their entourage validates the extraordinary nature of the monumental log as they accompany it to its destination, Mt. Hase. They are portrayed repeatedly in the illustrations (eight times in total), during the log's journey from the White Lotus Flower Valley to Mt. Hase, and through the carving of the wood.[42]

Because Mio Daimyōjin is a *kami*, his inclusion in the story has been considered evidence that the log story was related to *kami* beliefs, yet Yamamoto Yōko has rightly pointed out that Mio Daimyōjin identifies himself as the "protector of the log.[43] According to Edward Drott's study on *okina*, this character as a *kami* associated with cultic centers often was added to narratives, especially in the Kamakura period (1185–1333).[44] Moreover, Buddhist clerics seem to have been involved

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41 The term *dōji* has multiple meanings. In the Buddhist context, *dōji* refers to a child who has entered a temple to become a monk, to some forms of bodhisattvas who appear as young princes, and also to the attendants of bodhisattvas and Wisdom Kings (Myōō 明王, Sk. Vidyārāja). *Kōjien*, s.v. "dōji." The *dōji* in *Hasedera engi* are guardian spirits who appear in the form of boys, which Blacker has named "divine boys." For *dōji* as guardian spirits, see Blacker, "The Divine Boy." For *dōji* as young princes, see Guth, "The Divine Boy in Japanese Art." Following Blacker's nomenclature, "divine boy" is used in this essay.

42 The different beings are portrayed in sections 10 (figure 4), 11 (figure 5), 12 (figure 6), 13, 15 (figure 8), 16 (figure 9), 18 (figure 10), and 19 (figure 11).

43 Yamamoto, "Hasedera engi emaki no misogi," p. 94.

44 Drott, *Buddhism and the Transformation of Old Age*, pp. 96–109.

Figure 7. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 14. 16th c., Muromachi period. Handscroll, ink and colors on paper. H 30.8 cm. Margaret E. Fuller Purchase Fund. Gift to a City: Masterworks from the Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection in the Seattle Art Museum. Acc. # 57.15.2. Photograph by Susan A. Cole. Permission of Seattle Art Museum. Description and credit information applies to figs. 8–13.

in the development of the *okina*'s *kami* identity, because the titles *myōjin* 明神, *daimyōjin*, or *gongen* 権現 usually were given to local gods who sought Buddhist salvation.[45]

In medieval literature, divine boys appear as protectors, usually associated with monks and ascetics who have acquired spiritual powers through ascetic practices. They are servants, guardians, saviors, and agents of the monks' powers.[46] In the case of *Hasedera engi*, the divine boy holding a baldachin claims to be one of the protectors of Mt. Hase who accompanies the log because "it has been invited to move" to the mountain. Di-

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45 Ibid., p. 179.

46 For specific stories about each of these roles, see Blacker, "The Divine Boy."

Figure 8. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 15.

vine boys with slightly different roles appear three more times in the *Hasedera engi emaki* story; two of them are associated with the discovery of the stone pedestal.[47]

As mentioned above, the presence of Mio Daimyōjin, the divine boy, and their entourage is highlighted in the illustrations. For instance, illustration 11 (figure 5) depicts the disasters and deaths caused by the log in Ōtsu.

The illustration follows the text, which states that the villagers tried to cut the log, precipitating disasters such as fires and disease; the performance of a divination also appears in the scene. In the house, a woman (dressed in red) and a man are seated facing each other, with some sticks in front of them.[48] Section 12 recounts the story of two people: Oi no Kadoko 小井門子, a woman from the village of Yagi 八木; and Hōsei 法勢, a novice from the village of Taima. Both wanted to make a buddha icon, but died without fulfilling their vow.

In this case, the illustration (figure 6) shows a group of men pulling the log, accompanied by its protectors, as it is moved out of Taima, and a house with a deceased pearson and people in mourning. The long scene stra-

tegically aims to emphasize the monumental size of the log.[49]

In *Hasedera engi emaki*, the journey of the log to Hase is slightly longer than that described in *Sanbō ekotoba*. Rather than the Miogasaki–Taima–Hase route, the log begins its trip in White Lotus Flower Valley in 518, arriving in the village of Ōtsu 大津 in the Shiga 志賀 District, where it remains for about seventy years. In 585, it is moved to the village of Yagi in Yamato 大和 Province; in 598, to Taima in the Lower Katsuragi District; and in 668, the log ends up in Hase River.[50] The last section of the fourth story, section 14, tells us about Tokudō not being able to fulfill his vow (figure 7):

> After about fifteen years, Tokudō continued his religious practices, but he could not fulfill his vow. When he asked for divine help, he dreamt that there were three lights on the eastern peak. A strange person told him that the three lights represented the benefits of the three times (*sanze no riyaku* 三世の利益), and that he should carry the

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47 Yokota discusses in detail the role of each of the divine boys in *Engibun*. See Yokota, "Hasedera no zen'aku shoshin."

48 In the Idemitsu version, the note states, "Divination is performed for the village's misfortunes." See "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 225.

49 In the Idemitsu version, the first note states, "The move of the log from Ōmi to Yamato was complicated, hence omitted"; and the second states, "The Death of Oi no Kadoko. Hōsei's death is omitted." Ibid., pp. 225–26.

50 The choice of these villages is not random; they are related to the ancient fluvial transportation of lumber. Uchida, "Jisha engi," pp. 215–16.

numinous log to this peak and make the Buddhist image there.[51]

This move to the eastern peak is a modification found in *Hasedera engi emaki*. *Sanbō ekotoba* explains that Tokudō could not fulfill his vow because he did not have the means to carve the image, and that funding was provided by the female ruler Iitaka 飯高 (better known under her Chinese-style name, Genshō Tennō 元正天皇, r. 715–724), who decided to support Tokudō's project after Fujiwara no Fusasaki himself made a contribution. The image was finished and dedicated in Jinki 神亀 4 (727).[52]

In contrast to the short reference to patronage given in *Sanbō ekotoba*, in *Hasedera engi emaki*, five sections are dedicated to this subject and the process involved in the making of a Buddhist image. These additions to the story are significant because they also include motifs depicted in the illustrations about the beliefs and practices related to the transformation of wood into a buddha image. Thus, section 15 begins when the log is pulled to the eastern peak in 720. The narrative tells us that Tokudō built a hut, made offerings of flowers, and prayed to the Three Treasures. He prayed to make an image of Jūichimen Kannon that would bring benefits, such as peaceful imperial rule, a prosperous Fujiwara family, and peace in the Dharma realm (*hokkai* 法界, Sk. *dharmadhātu*). Importantly, he specifically says, "I pray so that 'the great compassion of the universal vow of the bodhisattva' (*daiji no guzei* 大慈の弘誓) listens to my vow, and this numinous tree spontaneously shapes (*naritamae* 成給へ) into a buddha image."[53] The last sentence in section 15 states that, in 724, Fujiwara Fusasaki went to Yamato as an imperial messenger and to hunt. The painting (figure 8), however, shows only two scenes: the log accompanied by its protectors being pulled up a hill by a group of men, and Fujiwara no Fusasaki and his hunting party.

Particularly important in this section is the sentence about praying so the numinous tree spontaneously shapes into a buddha image. This obviously derives from a sentence in *Sanbō ekotoba*: "May the wondrous power of prayer spontaneously create a buddha [image]." If interpreted literally, both sentences suggest that Tokudō was expecting the log to transform magically into a buddha image through the power of his prayer in *Sanbō ekotoba*, and, more specifically, through the power of Kannon in *Hasedera engi emaki*. Yet, the transformation of the log into a buddha image might not be limited to the physical transformation of the wood, but might be related to the controversial Buddhist doctrine that non-sentient beings can attain enlightenment, a

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51 "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 226. Unless otherwise noted, translations from the *Hasedera engi emaki* are by the author. *Sanze no riyaku*, the benefits of the three times, refer to the benefits of the three time periods of past, present, and future.

52 Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, p. 321; Minamoto, *Sanbō ekotoba*, pp. 93–94.

53 "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 226.

Figure 9. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 16.

possibility discussed in Mahayana Buddhism. It was argued that non-sentient beings have the potential to become buddhas, that they have the buddha-nature in principle, but do not have the buddha-nature in practice, and for this reason, cannot reach enlightenment on their own.[54]

The new themes added to *Hasedera engi emaki* seem to follow the ideas propounded by the Shingon 真言 school that plants and other material objects can become buddhas. More specifically, Shingon doctrines stipulate that the soteriological journey to buddhahood includes four stages: 1) arousing the desire for enlightenment; 2) performance of ascetic and religious practices; 3) awakening; and finally, 4) nirvana. These stages correlate to the four phases of a sentient being's life, the cycles of the seasons, and the cardinal directions governing vegetal life, as shown below.[55]

Section 16 refers to the encounter between Fusasaki and Tokudō and section 17 to Fusasaki's successful request to the imperial court to support Tokudō's project.[56] Interestingly, the illustration of section 16 (figure 9) includes the hut built by Tokudō on the eastern peak, where he is fervently praying, as mentioned in section 15.

On the right side, Fusasaki and his attendants listen respectfully to Tokudō's prayer, and on the left side, Fusasaki and Tokudō are having a conversation that will culminate with Fusasaki's support and Tokudō's fulfillment of his vow.

The text of section 18 tells us that, "On the eighth day of the fourth month of 729 (Jinki 6), an auspicious date and time were selected to perform the empowerment prayer (*kaji* 加持) for the *misogi* 御衣木. The person in charge was the monk Dōji 道慈 (d. 744)."[57] At this point, the material is no longer called a tree or log, but *misogi*, a noun used to refer to the wood used for making icons.[58] The painting shows the prepared block of wood inscribed with a sketch of Jūichimen Kannon, and the monk Dōji performing the empowerment

Life phase	Season	Direction	Soteriology
Birth	Spring	East	Desire for enlightenment
Growth	Summer	South	Practice
Degeneration	Fall	West	Enlightenment
Death	Winter	North	Nirvana

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54 This is a complex theme. See La Fleur, "Sattva"; Rambelli, *Vegetal Buddhas*; and Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*.

55 For a detailed discussion, see Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, pp. 19–27.

56 Section 16 contains important political and religious statements. See Fujimaki, "'Hasedera engibun' Amaterasu no ōmikami, Kasuga daimyōjin."

57 "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 226.

58 *Misogi* refers to the trees that are used as material to make icons of buddhas or *kami*. *Kōjien*, s.v. "misogi."

Figure 10. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 18.

prayer, an important step before the sculptors begin to work. Some monks and courtiers sit nearby, as well as the protectors of the log (figure 10).[59]

Section 19 tells us that the making of the image began right away, and that the sculpture, measuring two *jō* 丈, six *shaku* 尺 (about 8 meters), was finished in three days by the sculptors Kei Bunkai 稽文会 and Kei Shukun 稽主勲.[60] This section includes an interesting twist: a man named Tsumaro 津麿呂 went to the mountain searching for lumber, and when he looked toward the place where the craftsmen were working, he saw that Bunkai was a six-armed Jizō 地蔵 (Sk. Kṣitigarbha) and Shukun was a six-armed Fukūkenjaku Kannon 不空羂索観音 (Sk. Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara).[61] Tsumaro informed Tokudō, but when they returned, the craftsmen had a human appearance. The first scene of the illustration shows Tsumaro looking toward the working area where the Buddhist deities and the craftsmen work side by side, and the last scene shows a puzzled Tsumaro and Tokudō looking toward the same area. In this case, Jizō and Fukūkenjaku Kannon represent Tsumaro's vision, and the craftsmen working show Tokudō's view. The addition of these two deities certainly enhances the story by suggesting divine intervention. Although the text states that the image of Kannon was finished, the illustration does not show it completed (figure 11).

In sum, the new themes added to the story of the numinous log in *Hasedera engi* aimed to correlate the making of the Hase Kannon to the log's progression toward enlightenment. By claiming that white lotus flowers bloomed from the log, the writer transformed it into a supernatural log, suggesting that, although the log was technically dead, it had the buddha-nature, and therefore, that its salvation was possible. The addition of the move to the eastern peak might be associated with the desire for enlightenment. As non-sentient beings do not have the buddha-nature in practice, Tokudō's performance of prayers and offerings fulfilled the required practice, which was reinforced by Dōji's performance of the empowerment prayer. The illustration shows the *misogi* inscribed with a sketch of Jūichimen Kannon, which could be also be interpreted as part of the progression toward becoming a buddha. If the writer was influenced by the aforementioned Shingon ideas, then it might not be a coincidence that the stone pedestal, upon which the Hase Kannon stands, was found on the northern peak of the mountain.

59 In the SAM version, a wooden frame marks the sacred space (figure 10), but this is not the case in all versions.

60 The names of these artists seem to appear only in the Hasedera narratives and do not refer to historical figures. They are also mentioned in *Fusō ryakki*, *Shichidaiji nenpyō*, *Shoji konryū shidai*, and *Hasedera genki*. Miya, "Hasedera engi ge," p. 68.

61 *Missōki* explains that the sculptors who carved the icon transformed into the *honji* of the first and third *kami* of Kasuga Daimyōjin, Takemikazuchi 武雷槌 and Amenokoyane 天児屋根, respectively. See Yokota et al., "Chūsei Hasedera kīwādō shōjiten," pp. 162–63. Because *Engibun* and *Missōki* were written during the time that Hasedera was a branch temple of Kōfukuji, these documents reveal the Kōfukuji-Kasuga agenda. See Tsuji, *Hasederashi no kenkyū*, pp. 207–32.

Figure 11. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 19.

▪ Stone Platform

Stones are a significant element in the Hasedera narratives, and many are mentioned in the text and portrayed in *Hasedera engi emaki*.[62] An unusual flat stone serves as the pedestal for the Hase Kannon image.[63] In *Sanbō ekotoba*, a short paragraph tells us that, after the image of Kannon was finished and dedicated in Jinki 4 (727), in a dream Tokudō saw a deity, pointing to the northern peak. This unidentified deity informed him about a large rock buried at the base of the peak and instructed him to unearth it and place the image of Kannon on it. Tokudō woke up, went to the peak, and dug up a large flat stone, which measured eight feet wide and eight feet long.[64]

In *Hasedera engi emaki*, the discovery of the stone is more complex, and is recounted vividly in three sections. Furthermore, section 27, which describes the monk Gyōki's pilgrimage through the mountain landscape, includes a detailed discussion of the stone's significance. The story of the stone platform begins in section 20, which refers to the message from the deity.

It continues in section 21, which tells about the unearthing of the stone by deities, and ends in section 22 with the placement of the icon on top of the stone. In all instances, epithets are used to refer to the stone platform. The story begins,

> Tokudō was worried because he had to build a Buddhist hall on the steep mountain. While performing his Buddhist practices, he had a dream in which Konjin 金神 appeared.[65] [Konjin] pointed to the northern peak and told Tokudō that an adamantine treasured large stone (*kongō hō banjaku* 金剛宝盤石) with gold on its surface lay on the peak. He explained that the stone connected Hase to the edge of a golden wheel (*konrinsai* 金輪際), and that it had three branches.[66] This stone is the place where the bodhisattva of great compassion [Kannon] preaches the Dharma; it is his adamantine treasured lion throne (*kongō hō shishiza* 金剛宝獅子座).[67] I, the *hachibushū* 八部衆, and myriads of other deities live on the mountain.[68] Since ancient times, we have protected this mountain.[69]

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62 For a comprehensive study of the stones at Mt. Hase, see Yokota, "Hase Kannon daizaseki denshō no tenkai," "Hase Kannon daiza sakikusa setsu no keisei," and "Hasedera shūhen no ishi to kamigami." Sections 27 and 31 of *Hasedera engi emaki* include many stones associated with *kami* names. See also Fujimaki, "Nantōkei Hasedera engi," pp. 77–79.

63 The flat square pedestal is an unusual feature for a Buddhist icon. For a short study about the uncommon iconographical features of the Hase Kannon, see Hatta, "Hasedera Jūichimen Kannon zō no zōyō," pp. 16–19.

64 Kamens, *The Three Jewels*, p. 321; Minamoto, *Sanbō ekotoba*, pp. 93–94.

65 Konjin is a deity associated with yin-yang beliefs. *Kōjien*, s.v. "Konjin."

66 Yokota explains that, in the Buddhist worldview, the edge of a golden wheel supports the earth. Yokota, *Hasedera genki*, p. 5. The term *banjaku* refers to a large rock. *Kōjien*, s.v. "banjaku."

67 *Shishiza* (Sk. *siṃhāsana*, lion's throne) is the seat that a buddha or enlightened master uses when delivering a discourse. Buswell, *The Princeton Dictionary*, s.v. "siṃhāsana."

68 *Engibun* lists the names of the Eight Classes of Beings and the names of the Eight Dragon Kings, but they are not listed in *Hasedera engi emaki*. *Engibun*, p. 458. For the names of the Eight Dragon Kings, see Inagaki, *A Dictionary*, s.v. "Hachi dairyūō."

69 "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 227.

Figure 12. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 21.

The illustration for section 20 shows Tokudō, dozing off within a house, and Konjin, pointing to the hills depicted in the background. Konjin looks like a divine boy, with his hair parted in the middle and tied in pigtails; he is dressed in a white jacket and pants with red sections, and holds a single-pronged *vajra*.

As mentioned above, in *Sanbō ekotoba*, Tokudō excavates the stone by himself. The unearthing of the stone is dramatic in *Hasedera engi emaki*. Section 21 describes the conditions and the beings involved in this process:

> When Tokudō woke up in the middle of the night, a strong wind blew on the peak, and a Dragon King (Ryūō 竜王) created a thunderstorm with heavy rains and landslides, which produced loud sounds as the rocks broke. Tokudō gathered the courage to peek through the window and, when lightning hit the ground, he could see the Tenryū Eight Classes of Beings (Tenryū hachibushū 天竜八部衆, i.e., protectors of Buddhism) and the Eight Divine Boys (Hachi daidōji 八大童子) frantically digging in the ground.[70]

In figure 12, Tokudō is represented peeking through the sliding door, looking at the stormy scene while the divine beings dig up the stone.

The painting does not follow the text faithfully, as not all of the Eight Classes of Beings and Eight Divine Boys are portrayed. The storm is depicted in a dynamic composition, with black clouds framing the Wind God, who creates strong winds from his bag, and the Thunder God, who bangs on his drums to generate thunder. Two divine boys—one holding a single-pronged *vajra*, and the other, a trident—dig up the large square stone with the assistance of another divine being who uses his sword.[71] The large square stone is represented with swirling lines on the surface and appears to be surrounded by water. On the left side of the composition, a Dragon King and a demon-like figure carry logs and stones.

The narrative about the stone pedestal ends in section 22:

> When dawn broke and Tokudō looked toward the northern peak, he saw a flat stone, the adamantine treasured seat (*kongō hō za* 金剛宝座). It measured about eight *shaku* on each side; the surface was flat as the palm of a hand and looked like the texture of twill fabric. It had the holes for the feet of the bodhisattva [image], and they were exactly the size of the statue's [feet].[72]

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70 Ibid. The Eight Classes of Beings include gods or heavenly beings, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kiṃnaras*, and *mahoragas*. See Sawa, *Butsuzō zuten*, pp. 122–26. The Eight Divine Boys are the attendants of Fudō Myōō 不動明王 (Sk. Acalanātha).

71 The divine boy holding the single-pronged *vajra* might be Anokuta Dōji 阿耨達童子, and the one holding the trident might be Eki Dōji 慧喜童子. Sawa, *Butsuzō zuten*, p. 107.

72 "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 227.

Figure 13. *Hasedera engi emaki*, scroll II, section 22.

The illustration of this scene (figure 13) is particularly important because, for the first time, we get a glimpse of the monumental sculpture of Kannon holding his attribute, a *shakujō* 錫杖 (monk's staff), and standing on the square stone pedestal. Tokudō and a group of men and women stand in awe, dwarfed by the monumental image.[73] Because Hasedera burned down many times in the medieval period, this painting of the Hase Kannon would have had special significance as an object of worship when the icon was not available.[74] As Kevin Carr has proposed, narrative paintings were not just experienced as illustrations of entertaining stories, but also as iconic images that represented the deity and created a sense of its sacred presence. Because stories like *Hasedera engi emaki* combine iconic and narrative modes, Carr has suggested the term "iconarrative," an object that is a story in form, but functions as an icon or object of worship.[75]

Further explanation of the significance of the

stone is included in section 27, when Gyōki performs a spiritual pilgrimage on the mountain guided by a divine boy, who is a messenger of Kongō Dōji 金剛童子 (Sk. Vajrakumāra).[76] During this journey, the divine boy gives a detailed explanation of the stone platform. He tells Tokudō that this "adamantine treasured seat" has three branches, and that we can see the top of the seat on this mountain, but the bottom connects with the edge of the golden wheel. One branch is connected to the west, to central India, to the stone of enlightenment; the second branch is linked to the pure mountain Potalaka (the Pure Land of Kannon, Jp. Fudarakusen 補陀落山) and the seat of Kannon; and the third branch is on this mountain. Unfortunately, these important features are not visually represented in the illustrated scrolls.

The idea of three branches connecting the stone platform to the stone of enlightenment and to Potalaka is not original to *Engibun* and *Hasedera engi emaki*. Yokota has found that the earliest extant source containing a similar statement is *Kenkyū gojunrei ki* 建久

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73 The two figures dressed in white might be the sculptors, as the one next to Tokudō holds a carpenter's square.

74 Records indicate that the temple burned down in 944, 991, 1025, 1052, 1094, 1219, 1280, 1495, and 1536.

75 Carr, "The Material Facts," pp. 31, 40–41.

76 Kongō Dōji is a Wisdom King thought to be the metamorphosed body of the buddha Amida 阿弥陀 (Sk. Amitābha). In Japan, he is the god of war, invoked against calamities affecting the state. See Frédéric, *Buddhism*, pp. 216–17. See also Sawa, *Butsuzō zuten*, p. 121.

御巡礼記 (Record of the Pilgrimage in the Kenkyū Era), dated to Kenkyū 建久 2 (1191). This twelfth-century text, however, states that the stone platform is specifically linked to Maghada (southern Bihar) in India, where three generations of buddhas reached enlightenment, and that Mt. Potalaka is in the southern sea.[77] Yokota searched for possible Buddhist sources for these ideas, and found some of them (such as Maghada being the place where three generations of buddhas reached enlightenment), along with the terms used to refer to the stone platform, in Buddhist texts, but none of the texts coherently explains the significance of the connections between the stones and the sites mentioned. He also has proposed that the idea of the three branches might be related to knowledge of the transmission of Buddhism through the three countries (India, China, and Japan), specifically to the stories that involve the miraculous move of foreign sacred mountains to Japan. These stories were popular at sites of Shugendō practice, traditions associated with mountain ascetics; as Mt. Hase was one of those sites, it is likely that such ideas reached the Hasedera monks.

In sum, the short story included in *Sanbō ekotoba* about Tokudō's discovery of the large stone that serves as the Hase Kannon's platform was given a specifically Buddhist significance by the creators of *Hasedera engi emaki*. In so doing, Mt. Hase was connected to the land where Buddhism originated and to the Pure Land of Kannon, enhancing the sacred nature of the mountain and the icon.

Conclusion

Among the many legendary accounts about Hasedera, the creators of *Hasedera engi emaki* chose as their source *Hasedera engibun*, allegedly composed by Sugawara no Michizane in the tenth century. Current scholarship agrees that *Engibun* is a product of the twelfth or thirteenth century, and that various *Hasedera engi emaki* were produced between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. The focus of this study, the set at the SAM, is dated to the sixteenth century. By comparing the stories of the log and the large stone recorded in *Sanbō ekotoba* to the *Hasedera engi emaki* text, it becomes clear that the additions to the *Engibun* and *Hasedera*

engi emaki versions of these stories carried a specific message. To construct the Hase Kannon's sacred aura, the creators of *Hasedera engi emaki* underscored the wondrous qualities of the material. In the case of the log, they kept some motifs that demonstrated its numinous nature, such as the disasters that it caused in the places where it landed. Yet, the motifs that were added, such as the deities whose main role is to protect the log, served to enhance the log's perceived sacredness. Furthermore, the writer(s) used the idea that non-sentient beings could reach enlightenment, showing that the log followed the various steps in this process before its transformation into a Kannon image. The white lotus blooming from the log served to demonstrate that the log had the buddha-nature, and that it could move to the next step through Tokudō's devoted prayers and offerings, and Dōji's empowerment prayer. With its move to the northern peak, the log finally reached "enlightenment" when it was transformed into an image of Jūichimen Kannon through the intervention of two Buddhist deities. At Hasedera, the preservation of the sacred material used to make the Hase Kannon was important; thus, after some of the fires that destroyed the temple through the centuries, new stories about the wood were created. These stories created after the fires claimed that some small part of the statue had survived and was used to make, or inserted into, the new image.[78]

In the same way, the expanded story about the large square stone platform not only highlights the size and unusual shape of the stone, but explains that Mt. Hase is connected through the stone to a site associated with the historical Buddha and to Mt. Potalaka, the imaginary site associated with Kannon. In *Hasedera engi emaki* certain sections of the text contain complex religious and political statements, which are not illustrated. Yet, the sections that are illustrated allow the scrolls to show the presence of the deities who accompanied the log through its journey, Tokudō's ability to receive messages from the protectors of Mt. Hase, and, importantly, the progressive transformation of the log into the miraculous Hase Kannon.

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77 Yokota, "Hasedera Kannon daiza sakikusa no keisei," pp. 16–17.

78 Discussed by Yokota, "Hasedera Kannon no misogi."

Table 1. Stories as divided among the three scrolls of Hasedera engi emaki, summary of sections, and brief description of illustrations.

SCROLL I	
First Story	**Sugawara no Michizane and the compilation of *Engibun* in Kanpyō 寛平 8 (896)**
Section 1	Michizane visited Hasedera to compile *Hasedera engi*. While studying temple documents, he had a dream in which three Zaō Gongen 蔵王権現, using golden ladders, came down to Hasedera's Main Hall from Mt. Kinpu 金峯山 and told him about the virtues of the mountain.[79]
Illustration 1 *Figure 1*	Three scenes: Michizane dozes off, the three Zaō Gongen come down on golden ladders, and Michizane writes the *engi*.
Second Story	**Establishment of Hatsusedera 初瀬寺 and Hasedera and explanation of the temples' names**
Section 2	A stupa fell from the hand of an image of Bishamonten 毘沙門天. This image was in a hall next to the shrine of Takikura Gongen 瀧倉権現, the local *kami*.[80] The stupa was found by Takeshiuchi no Sukune 武内宿祢; after performing divinations, Sukune concluded that Mt. Hase was a blessed place, and buried the stupa.[81] Three hundred years later, this stupa was discovered by the monk Dōmyō, who established Hatsusedera, the first temple on the mountain, with the support of Tenmu Tennō 天武天皇 (r. 673–686).
Illustration 2 *Figure 2*	The composition includes the shrines of Takikura Gongen and Bishamonten, Takeshiuchi no Sukune picking up the stupa from Hatsuse River, and Dōmyō holding the same stupa and walking toward a Buddhist hall and a pagoda. A representation of the Hasedera Bronze Plaque is also part of the composition.
Third Story	**The life and religious training of the monk Tokudō**
Section 3	The second temple is known as Hasedera, and it was established by the monk Tokudō. He was born in Saimei 斉明 2 (656), and his birth name was Kara Yatabe no Miyatsuko Komemaru 辛矢田部造米丸. He was an incarnation of Hokki (also Hōki) Bosatsu 法起菩薩, and his mother was impregnated when the Myōjō Tenshi 明星天子 entered through her mouth.[82]
Illustration 3	Komemaru's mother is being impregnated by the morning star while she sleeps in a house. In the same house, the birth of Tokudō is portrayed.[83]
Section 4	After the deaths of his parents, Komemaru decided to follow the Buddhist path for their salvation. He entered Mt. Hase to perform religious practices, receiving the precepts and his religious name in Tenmu 天武 4 (676).
Illustration 4	Tokudō is tonsured in a small structure in a mountain setting.
Section 5	Tokudō mastered the Buddhist teachings, but could not master *shugen* 修験 (the generation of miraculous powers through ascetic practices). Thus, he continued to perform virtuous acts.
Illustration 5	Tokudō practices the Buddhist way in a mountain setting.

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79 The references to Mt. Kinpu and Zaō Gongen are evidence of the prevalence of Shugendō practices on Mt. Hase. Mt. Kinpu is an important center of Shugendō practices in Nara Prefecture, and Zaō Gongen is the tradition's main deity. For the various roles of Zaō Gongen, see Blair, *Real and Imagined*. For aspects of Shugendō in *Hasedera engi emaki*, see Pradel, "La Leyenda Ilustrada de Hasedera," pp. 61–64.

80 Takikura Gongen is an ancient *kami* of Hase. Three shrines dedicated to this *kami* are located on the grounds of Hasedera today. See Yokota et al., "Chūsei Hasedera kīwādō shōjiten," pp. 148–49.

81 Takeshiuchi no Sukune, or Takeuchi no Sukune, is a legendary character who appears in *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (Chronicles of Japan, 720) and *Kojiki* 古事記 (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) where he plays an important role at the court of such early rulers as Kōgen 孝元 (214–158 BCE) and Keikō 景行 through Nintoku 仁徳 (71–399 CE). *Kōjien*, s.v. "Takeuchi no Sukune."

82 Hokki Bosatsu is a bodhisattva mentioned in *Kegongyō* 華厳経 (Sk. *Avataṃsaka sūtra*, the Garland Sutra). This deity was the protector of Mt. Katsuragi, a center of Shugendō practice. Miyake, *Shugendō jiten*, p. 346. For an overview of Shugendō, the religion of mountain ascetics, see Kasahara, *A History of Japanese Religion*, pp. 314–31. Myōjō Tenshi (Sk. Aruṇa) is a Vedic deity. He accompanies Indra and fights against darkness before the sun god Surya rises in the morning. Nakamura, *Bukkyōgo daijiten*, p. 1307.

83 For a detailed analysis of birth scenes in *emaki*, see Suzuki, "Twanging Bows and Throwing Rice."

Section 6	While at Mt. Hase, Tokudō discovered that it was a sacred mountain and decided to build a temple. When he looked toward the northern peak, he saw a golden light. This light appeared every time he performed his Buddhist practices.
Illustration 6	Tokudō looks toward the light emanating from the northern peak while performing his religious practices.
Fourth Story	**The numinous log**
Section 7	Tokudō wanted to make a buddha image for the temple, and searched for appropriate wood. He asked the monk Dōmyō, who told him about a strange log lying in Hatsuse River. Dōmyō told him that, in a dream, he had talked to an *okina*, who identified himself as Mio Daimyōjin, the protector of the log, and to a divine boy, who said that he was a protector of Mt. Hase.
Illustration 7	Dōmyō and Tokudō talk.
Section 8	Tokudō asked a village elder about the log's history. The elder responded that the log was cursed.
Illustration 8	An old man and Tokudō talk.
Section 9	The elder told Tokudō that the log measured more than ten *jō* 丈 (about thirty meters total), and that fragrant lotus flowers bloomed from it when celestials scattered lotus petals on it. For this reason, the locals named the site the White Lotus Flower Valley.
Illustration 9 *Figure 3*	A celestial being scatters lotus petals, while white lotus flowers bloom from the log.
Section 10	The elder also told Tokudō that in Keitai 継体 11 (518), a storm washed the log out of the valley.
Illustration 10 *Figure 4*	The large log is being washed away during a storm. It is accompanied by the Wind God, the Thunder God, Mio Daimyōjin (represented as an old man), a divine boy holding a baldachin, and five demon-like figures.
Section 11	The log ended up in the village of Ōtsu in the Shiga District, where it stayed for nearly seventy years; many disasters happened in that village. After performing divinations, the villagers found out that the log was cursed.
Illustration 11 *Figure 5*	Mio Daimyōjin, the divine boy holding a baldachin, and three demons sit near the log. A village is shown where villagers try to cut the log, which causes sickness, fires, and death.
Section 12	A woman named Oi no Kadoko from the village of Yagi in Takechi 高市, Yamato Province, thought of making a buddha icon for the sake of her parents and husband. In Yōmei 用明 1 (585), she had the log moved to a crossing, and died due to the curse. The log stayed in Yagi and tragic events continued. In Suiko 推古 7 (599), a novice named Hōsei decided to make a Jūichimen Kannon image and moved the log to Taima in Lower Katsuragi, but he died. The log stayed in Taima for about fifty years and tragic events continued to occur there.
Illustration 12 *Figure 6*	The long log is hauled by a group of men, and a person appears on his deathbed in a house.[84]
Section 13	In Tenji 天智 7 (668), the log ended up in the sacred river at Hase, and remained there uneventfully for about thirty-nine years. After hearing the stories, Tokudō understood that the log was numinous, and requested permission from the villagers to take it.
Illustration 13	The log at Hase; Tokudō talks to an elder.

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84 In the SAM version, the house scene is placed before the log hauled by a group of men. Figure 6 has been reconstructed based on other extant versions of *Hasedera engi emaki*.

SCROLL II	
Section 14	After nearly fifteen years had passed, Tokudō could not fulfill his vow of making the buddha image. In a dream, he saw a strange person, who told him to carry the numinous log to the eastern peak, where three lights represent the benefits of the three times.
Illustration 14 *Figure 7*	Tokudō sleeps and a man points toward the eastern peak, where three oil lamps are lit.
Fifth Story	**Interactions between Tokudō and Fujiwara no Fusasaki and the making of the Hase Kannon**
Section 15	In Yōrō 養老 4 (720), Tokudō moved the log to the eastern peak, made offerings, and prayed that the log would transform itself into a buddha image for the prosperity of the imperial and Fujiwara 藤原 families. In Yōrō 8 (724), Fujiwara no Fusasaki went to the Yamato Province as an imperial messenger. He also went hunting, and while doing so in the mountains, he heard someone praying fervently.
Illustration 15 *Figure 8*	The log is hauled to the eastern peak; Fusasaki and his hunting party arrive in Hase.[85]
Section 16	Fusasaki asked Tokudō about the reason for his prayers. Tokudō explained about his vow to make a Jūichimen Kannon image, which he wanted to do because the prosperity of Buddhism in Japan depended on Amaterasu no Ōmikami 天照大神 and Kasuga Daimyōjin 春日大明神, as both *kami* had promised each other to protect the country.
Illustration 16 *Figure 9*	Fusasaki listens to Tokudō's prayer; Tokudō fervently prays to the log (accompanied by its protectors); and Fusasaki and Tokudō talk.
Section 17	Fusasaki decided to support Tokudō. In Jinki 1 (724), he presented a petition and received a positive response from the emperor. Three months later, the emperor donated three hundred bushels of rice.
Illustration 17	Fusasaki reads the imperial response, and farmers carry the rice bushels.
Section 18	In Jinki 6 (729), the monk Dōji performed an empowerment prayer for the *misogi*.
Illustration 18 *Figure 10*	Dōji performs the prayer ceremony in front of a block of wood with an image of Kannon sketched on it, as the protectors of the log watch.
Section 19	The image, which measured two *jō* six *shaku*, was finished in three days. A man named Tsumaro saw that the craftsmen, Kei Bunkai and Kei Shukun, had transformed into a six-armed Jizō and a six-armed Fukūkenjaku Kannon, respectively. He informed Tokudō, but the latter could not see the deities.
Illustration 19 *Figure 11*	Tsumaro looks toward the craftsmen's working area. Two sculptors work side by side with their deity counterparts. The log's protectors are near the working area. Tsumaro points toward the working area as Tokudō looks on.[86]
Sixth Story	**Discovery of the monumental stone**
Section 20	Konjin appeared to Tokudō in a dream, and informed him about a large stone that could serve as the bodhisattva's platform.
Illustration 20	Tokudō sleeps and a divine boy, holding a *vajra*, points to the northern peak.
Section 21	During a loud, stormy night, Tokudō saw the Tenryū Eight Classes of Beings and the Eight Divine Boys frantically digging up a stone.
Illustration 21 *Figure 12*	Tokudō peeks through a sliding door as the deities unearth the large stone. The Wind God and Thunder God actively create the storm.

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85 In the SAM version, the scene of the log being hauled to the peak is located after illustration 19. Figure 8 has been reconstructed based on other extant versions of *Hasedera engi emaki*.

86 Figure 11 has been reconstructed based on the narrative and the Idemitsu version. In the SAM version, section 20 and illustration 20 are between the scene representing Tsumaro looking toward the working area and the workshop scene.

Section 22	The following morning, Tokudō saw the "adamantine treasured seat", i.e., the adamantine platform. It measured eight *shaku* (about 2.6 meters) on each side. It was flat, and the image's feet fit perfectly on top of it.
Illustration 22 *Figure 13*	The monumental statue of Kannon stands on the pedestal, while Tokudō worships along with other men and women.
Seventh Story	**The Hase Kannon's eye-opening ceremony**
Section 23	The eye-opening ceremony was scheduled. Shōmu Tennō ordered a copy of the *Dai hannya kyō* 大般若経 (Great Wisdom Sutra).
Illustration 23	A group of monks copies sutras.
Section 24	On Tenpyō 5 (733).5.18, Fusasaki brought the imperial offerings to Hasedera. On 5.20, he presented the offerings and music. The monk Gyōki was the leading officiant, the monk Gira 儀邏 (n.d) oversaw the prayers, and one hundred monks participated in the ceremony. During the night, the Kannon image emitted light from its forehead and illuminated the whole mountain.
Illustration 24	In the scene of the eye-opening ceremony, the officiants are seated facing each other, a group of monks is seated on a square stage, and lay people are behind them. The space is decorated with banners, and a shaft of light coming through the mist indicates the presence of Kannon.
Section 25	The same night, eight divine boys appeared to Tokudō and informed him that they were the protectors of the stone seat. They also pledged to protect those who pray to the Buddha, and to give them good fortune and the promise of salvation.[87]
Illustration 25	Eight divine boys appear to Tokudō, who worships them.
Section 26	On 5.21, the *Dai hannya kyō* was offered. The leading officiant was Gyōki, the prayer officiant was the Vinaya monk Zen'ei 禅叡 (n.d), and sixty other monks participated. The emperor had a dream in which he saw a light entering the palace, and he rejoiced.
Illustration 26	A shaft of light enters the palace.
Eighth Story	**The monk Gyōki's pilgrimage to Mt. Hase**
Section 27	Gyōki embarked on a one-hundred-day retreat at Mt. Hase. On the seventy-seventh day, a golden-colored divine boy appeared from the right side of the Kannon image, and identified himself as one of the protectors of the mountain and a messenger from Kongō Dōji. He explained the sacred spots at the site and the divine beings who inhabit Mt. Hase.
Illustration 27	Gyōki talks to a divine boy. They are surrounded by worshippers, who appear to be impressed by the large size of the icon.

SCROLL III	
Section 28	Gyōki wanted to see the mountain, and the divine boy took him.
Illustration 28	Long and complex composition showing Gyōki and the divine boy exploring the sacred spots on the mountain.

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87 These eight divine boys are not the Eight Divine Boys associated with Fudō Myōō. They are the protectors of the stone pedestal who promise spiritual benefits to the people who visit Mt. Hase. Their names are listed in the text. See Miya, "Hasedera engi kotobagaki, kōkan," p. 146; and "Hasedera engi emaki kotobagaki," p. 228.

88 *Samādhi* (Jp. *sanmai* 三昧) means "concentration," and refers to the Buddhist meditation theory and practice that relates to the ability to focus on a specific object of concentration. Buswell, *The Princeton Dictionary*, s.v. "*samādhi*."

89 The term *ryōkai* used here refers to the mandalas of the Two Realms.

Section 29	The divine boy explained to Gyōki that the glorious sites can only be seen in a state of *samādhi*.[88] Gyōki reached *samādhi*, saw the deities of the Two Realms (*ryōkai* 両界), and worshipped them.[89] Both returned to the side of the Kannon image, and the boy disappeared.
Illustration 29	Gyōki sees the buddhas of the Two Realms.
Ninth Story	**Construction and dedication of Hasedera's main hall**
Section 30	Gyōki returned to his temple and reported to the throne about Mt. Hase, and requested the construction of a Buddhist hall. In the meantime, Tokudō organized a fundraising effort that included people from high and low classes.[90] The ridgepole-raising ceremony took place on Tenpyō 7 (735).5.16.
Illustration 30	Gyōki reports to the throne, Tokudō writes the fundraising slips, craftsmen are shown at work, and preparations for the ridgepole ceremony are made.
Section 31	The halls were finished on Tenpyō 19 (747).9.28, and the completion ceremony (*rakkei kuyō* 落慶供養) was performed. One hundred monks participated in the ceremony. Bodhisena (704–760), an Indian monk, was the leading officiant, and Gyōki was in charge of the prayers.
Illustration 31	Music and dances are performed during the halls' dedication ceremonies.
Tenth Story	**Shōmu's donation and visit to the temple**
Section 32	Shōmu visited Hasedera on Tenpyō shōhō 天平勝宝 4 (752).11.16. He offered a copy of the *Saishōō kyō* 最勝王経 (Golden Light Sutra) and one section of the *Lotus Sutra* that he himself had written.[91]
Illustration 32	Long composition showing Shōmu's cart and entourage, important halls of Hasedera, and landmarks at Mt. Hase.
Section 33	On Tenpyō shōhō 5 (753).11.19, Shōmu had a dream, and by imperial command, a curtain was hung on 12.20. Prayers needed to be offered for the generations to come, for the security of the empire, and for the happiness of the people. The monk Kengyō 堅璟 (714–793) received the imperial donation.
Illustration 33	A red curtain with motifs of circles on lotus flowers is shown. Each circle contains the seed syllable (Sk. *bīja*) for Kannon. A monk, courtiers, and women look at the scene; Kengyō is also portrayed.
Postscript	The postscript reiterates that Mt. Hase is a sacred Buddhist site, and that Shōmu is a manifestation of Kannon; Tokudō, of Hokki Bosatsu; Gyōki, of the bodhisattva Monju 文殊 (Sk. Mañjuśrī); and Bodhisena, of the bodhisattva Fugen 普賢 (Sk. Samantabhadra).[92]

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90 This constitutes the last mention of Tokudō in the text.

91 The SAM version includes a postscript stating that the painting of the temple grounds (illustration 32) is intended for monks and laypeople who have not yet visited Hasedera.

92 Fujimaki calls the people listed "the four saints of Hasedera." Except for Tokudō, the three others mentioned are also part of a group known as "the four saints of Tōdaiji." The fourth figure in the latter group is the monk Rōben 良弁 (689–773). Fujimaki, "'Hasedera engibun' ni miru 'Tōdaiji,'" pp. 151–56.

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Underground Buddhism: The Subterranean Landscape of the Ise Shrines

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F or the past one hundred and fifty years, the Ise Shrines (Ise Jingū 伊勢神宮) have been presented as the homeland of an indigenous religion untouched by Buddhist traditions. Although more recent scholarship has revealed this image to be an ideological fantasy invented by nineteenth-century Nativists and perpetuated by the Japanese government until the end of the Pacific War, it nevertheless remains the common understanding of Ise, an understanding that continues to be promoted by the shrines today. The policy of the Meiji government (1868–1912) known as the "separation of Shinto and Buddhism" (*shinbutsu bunri* 神仏分離), which segregated religious deities, clergy, institutions, and images into the mutually exclusive categories of Buddhist or Shinto, was a political act that sought not only to change the status, structure, and administration of Ise, but also to erase its past. For the previous thousand years, Buddhist practices, practitioners, texts, objects, and aspirations were integral to Ise's religious and institutional culture. The work of such scholars as Abe Yasurō, Itō Satoshi, Kadoya Atsushi, Fabio Rambelli, and Mark Teeuwen has revealed the centrality of Buddhist traditions in formulating the pantheon, doctrine, and ritual at Ise. In doing so, these scholars have established a new intellectual and literary history of Ise that focuses on the hermeneutic strategies and esoteric texts that "saw their final redactions in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries."[1] Abe Yasurō, for example, has studied the temple archives of Shinpukuji 眞福寺 to examine "Shinto as written representation" and analyze "medieval Shinto as text."[2] And Mark Teeuwen has charted the "fluid body of cross-referencing texts" that constitute what he calls the genre of "Ise literature."[3]

This article seeks to complement and complicate this new history of Ise by shifting our attention from doctrinal elaborations of distinct priestly lineages to the material objects and ritual acts created by collaborative networks of institutional groups that have been assumed conventionally to be rivals. The ritual practices and material culture produced by and for the priestly lineages of the Ise Shrines established a sustaining relationship between the gods and the buddhas at the ground level, and lay the necessary substructure for later Buddhist developments at the Ise Shrines.

Ise as a Buddhist Construction

Buddhist institutions, practices, discourses, and rep-

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1   Teeuwen and Breen, *A Social History of the Ise Shrines*, p. 61.
2   Abe, "Shintō as Written Representation."
3   Teeuwen and Breen, *A Social History of the Ise Shrines*, p. 61.

resentations were a part of Ise's religious landscape since at least the eighth century. According to the *Shoku Nihongi* 続日本紀, the state history composed in 797, Takidaijingūji 多気大神宮寺, the shrine-temple (*jingūji* 神宮寺) of the imperial princess at Ise (*saigū* 斎宮), was established in Watarai-gun 度会郡 in 698 to better serve the shrines.[4] In 766, an imperial envoy was sent to "the temple of the Great Deity of Ise" with the gift of a life-size (*jōroku* 丈六) statue of a buddha to serve as its principal icon.[5] In the same year, the court ordered that Ōkasedera 鹿瀬寺 be established as the state-sponsored temple of the Ise Shrines in perpetuity.[6] Yet the earliest records of Ise Shrine ritual, the *Protocols of the Imperial Great Shrine* (*Kōtaijingū gishikichō* 皇大神宮儀式帳) of 804, declare such basic Buddhist terms as "buddha," "sutra," "pagoda," "monk," "temple," and "lay practitioner" as taboo (*imi* 忌).[7] The prohibitions at Ise of Buddhist vocabulary, practices, and practitioners at particular religious sites and ritual occasions suggest at once a tension and an intimacy between shrine and temple traditions. The isolation of *kami* and buddhas at Ise indicates that a difference was drawn between the traditions, and yet this difference remained in need of explanation.

It is this complex relationship that the Buddhist monk Mujū Ichien 無住一圓 (1227–1312) attempts to explain in the opening tale of his thirteenth-century *Collection of Sand and Pebbles* (*Shasekishū* 沙石集):

> While I was on a pilgrimage to the Great Shrine during the Kōchō Era [1261–1264], an official explained to me why words associated with the Three Treasures of Buddhism were forbidden at the shrine, and why monks could not closely approach the sacred buildings. In antiquity, when this country did not yet exist, the deity of the Great Shrine, guided by a seal of the Great Sun Buddha (*Dai Nichi Nyorai* 大日如来) inscribed on the ocean floor, thrust down her august spear. Brine from the spear coagulated like drops of dew, and was seen from afar by Mara, the Evil One, in the Sixth Heaven of Desire. "It appears that these drops are forming into the land where Buddhism will be propagated and people will escape from the round

of birth-and-death," he said, and came down to prevent it. Then the deity of the Great Shrine met with the demon king and said, "I promise not to utter the names of the Three Treasures, nor will I permit them near my person." Being thus mollified, he withdrew. . . . Outwardly the deity is estranged from the Dharma, but inwardly she profoundly supports the Three Treasures. Thus, Japanese Buddhism is under the special protection of the deity of the Great Shrine. . . . Since all of this arose by virtue of the seal of the Great Sun Buddha on the ocean floor, we have come to identify the deities of the Inner and Outer Shrines with the Great Sun Buddha of the Two-Part Mandala; and that which is called the Heavenly Rock Cave is the Tusita Heaven of the Buddha Maitreya.[8]

The true history of Buddhism at Ise, according to Mujū's tale of origins, is thus purposely concealed. It is a history that reaches back before the Japanese islands even existed, yet it remains forever hidden, buried deep beneath the waves. Mujū's answer to an apparently inexplicable situation—the prohibition of Buddhist institutions, individuals, discourses, rituals, and representations at the Ise Shrines—is to reformulate the classical myth of Japanese cosmogony to expose the apparent ban on Buddhism as a clever ruse concocted by the Sun Goddess to thwart the archenemy of the Dharma and establish Ise as the secret headquarters of a national Buddhist underground. What appears on the surface as taboo is shown to have a deeper underlying meaning, inscribed on the ocean floor by the Great Sun Buddha before the Land of the Gods was even formed, representing not a prohibition but rather a promise of protection and preservation. The implication of this primordial arrangement between the Sun Goddess Amaterasu 天照 and the Great Sun Buddha reveals the sacred landscape of the Ise Shrines as essentially Buddhist. Beneath the outward appearance of the two Ise Shrines lies the underlying structure of the Mandala of the Two Realms (*ryōkai mandara* 両界曼荼羅): the Womb Realm (*taizōkai* 胎蔵界) and Diamond Realm (*kongōkai* 金剛界), the substrate of all forms of esoteric Buddhist thought and practice. The Heavenly Rock Cave (Ama no Iwato 天岩戸), behind

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4 *Shoku Nihongi*, Monmu 文武 2 (698).12.29 (vol. 1, p. 14).
5 Ibid., Tenpyō jingo 天平神護 2 (766).7.23 (vol. 4, p. 128).
6 Teeuwen and Breen, *A Social History of the Ise Shrines*, p. 34.
7 Ibid., pp. 33-34.

8 Mujū Ichien, *Shasekishū*, pp. 59–61; Morrell, *Sand and Pebbles*, pp. 72-74.

which Amaterasu concealed herself in the Age of the Gods, is none other than the heavenly cavern of Tuṣita, in which Maitreya (Jp. Miroku 弥勒), the Buddha of the Future, awaits the dawning of a new Buddhist age.

Mujū's double reading of Ise's sacred landscape represents an advanced stage of a Buddhist discourse on the shrines and their deities that had developed over a period of some two hundred years. As early as the mid-eleventh century, the monk Seizon 成尊 (1012–1074) of the Shingon 真言 school had equated the Sun Buddha with the Sun Goddess.[9] In the late twelfth century, texts such as the *Reading and Explanation of the Nakatomi Purification Formula* (*Nakatomi harae kunge* 中臣祓訓解) and the *Ritual Manual for the Worship of Amaterasu* (*Tenshō Daijin giki* 天照大神儀軌) marked "the beginning of a flood of writings that offered a broad array of new interpretations of the site of Ise, its shrines and its *kami*."[10] Yet, as Mujū's account suggests, it was not until the medieval period that the Ise Shrines were fully explained as a fundamental and foundational Buddhist site in a wide body of literature that circulated beyond Ise's clerical elites. This Buddhist vision of Ise, however, is presented in medieval sources less as an historical development than as an original condition, like the seal of the Great Sun Buddha inscribed at the bottom of the ocean, always already there. Let us take a step back from this fully formed textual claim to examine earlier practices that contributed to the conditions of its possibility: practices carried out in the late twelfth century by members of Ise's sacerdotal lineages that identify the individual and institutional agents responsible for the transformation of the religious culture and religious landscape of the Ise Shrines. An analysis of the archeological evidence allows for an understanding of Ise that has long been buried and even longer obscured, not only by a century of ideological and intellectual assumptions about the difference between temple and shrine traditions, but also by more recent approaches to the study of Japanese religion that prioritize doctrinal discourse over material culture. The archeological evidence, however, suggests a more complicated and vibrant picture, in which a network of actors working across religious traditions, institutions, and lineages collaborated to produce the devotional activities and material objects necessary to assure the preservation of their faith and the salvation of their loved ones.

Underground Buddhism

Compared to the underwater seal of the Great Sun Buddha and Amaterasu's undercover support of the Three Treasures, these activities and objects represented a different kind of underground operation and a different sort of textual practice. In the second half of the twelfth century, prominent members of the priestly lineages of the Ise Shrines—the Watarai 度会, Arakida 荒木田, Isobe 磯部, and Ōnakatomi 大中臣—buried consecrated copies of Buddhist sutras, dharanis, and mandalas, together with sacred objects and images, in the earth at sites in the immediate vicinity of the Inner and Outer Shrines. The burial of sutra texts and other objects of Buddhist visual and material culture was an open secret, a public act in an age of personal crisis. For the twelfth century represented, to many Japanese, a crucial turning point in the history of Buddhism: the onset of *mappō* 末法, the final degenerate age of the Buddhist Dharma, in which both the availability of Buddhist texts and the ability of people to realize their teachings would reach their lowest points. The ineluctable decline of the Dharma presented soteriological problems for both the tradition and the individual. The death of the Dharma challenged, of course, the very existence of Buddhism, and required acts of protection and preservation to ensure its survival. But *mappō* also had implications for individual practitioners for whom personal salvation became increasingly difficult as the source of the teachings receded into an inaccessible past, and the spiritual capabilities of humans diminished. Although a concern with *mappō* clearly informs the practice of sutra burial, the preservationist impulse was not necessarily the sole motivating factor. Inscriptions accompanying sutra burials also express the hope that, due to this meritorious act, the donor (or other individuals to whom the merit is being transferred) will be reborn in the Pure Land of the buddha Amitābha (Jp. Amida 阿弥陀) or in Maitreya's Tuṣita Heaven. Sutra burials illustrate the belief that the future of the Dharma and the future of the individual are linked, and that this critical juncture in the salvation of both Buddhism and Buddhists could be addressed with the same

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9   On Seizon's text, *Shingon fuhō san'yōshō* (T 2433), see Iyanaga, "Medieval Shintō as a Form of 'Japanese Hinduism,'" pp. 269–74; and Andreeva, *Assembling Shinto*, pp. 25–27.

10 Teeuwen and Breen, *A Social History of the Ise Shrines*, p. 61. On the *Nakatomi harae kunge*, see Teeuwen and van der Veere, *Nakatomi Harae Kunge*; on the *Tenshō Daijin giki*, see Teeuwen and Breen, *A Social History of the Ise Shrines*, pp. 61–63.

Figure 1. Site of the Kyōgamine sutra burials on Mt. Asama. 1156–1186, Heian period. Photograph by Suzuki Risaku. Courtesy of Suzuki Risaku.

religious practice. Sutra burials offered the ritual strategies and material means whereby the end-time could be prepared for, and paradise secured.

By the early twelfth century, sutra burials could be found in every province of the country from Satsuma to Dewa.[11] They were carried out most commonly at or near temples, shrines, or sacred mountains, and performed either by Buddhist monks or laity under monastic supervision. What makes the Ise burials so notable and so surprising, given the received understanding of Ise, is that they were performed by members of the priestly lineages of the Inner and Outer Shines, individuals commonly thought to abhor all things Buddhist, and directed toward the Buddhist salvation of the Ise priests themselves. The direct involvement of Ise's sacerdotal

lineages in Buddhist practices had a long history. As early as the tenth century, the priests of the Ise Shrines built Buddhist temples to gain salvation after death, took the tonsure and became Buddhist monks in the final years of their lives, and received Buddhist funerals and memorial services. Rengeji 蓮華寺, Rendaiji 蓮台寺, and Shakusonji 釈尊寺 served as the family temples of the Ōnakatomi, who occupied the central Office of the Great [Ise] Shrines (Daijingūji 大神宮司); Jōmyōji 常明寺 and Jōshōji 常勝寺 were the family temples of the Watarai, the priests of the Outer Shrine; and Dengūji 田宮寺 and Tengakuji 天覺寺 were the family temples of the Arakida, who served as priests of the Inner Shrine.[12] The excavated materials from the sutra burials at Ise, however, provide physical evidence of the depth of the Buddhist faith of these lineages and a material record of the construction of Ise as a site of Buddhist texts and objects, Buddhist rituals and clergy, and Buddhist aspirations and ideals. It is a record,

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11 For the chronology and locations of these sutra mounds, see Seki, *Kyōzuka to sono ibutsu*, pp. 37–53.

12 On the shrine-temples of Ise, see Hagiwara, "Ise jingū to bukkyō," pp. 231–39.

moreover, of great historical specificity in which the names, dates, and motivations of the practitioners are inscribed in ink and clay in the hopes of outlasting the Final Age.

The sutras buried at Ise were transcribed according to strict ritual protocols and then interred underground to protect and preserve the Dharma until the arrival of the buddha Maitreya some 5.67 billion years in the future. As Ise's Heavenly Rock Cave is none other than Maitreya's Tuṣita Heaven (as Mujū explains), the sacred ground of the shrine's landscape is an ideal site for securing the sutras in anticipation of the advent of the future buddha. The scriptures and related deposits were produced in a variety of materials—paper, copper, bronze, glazed and unglazed ceramic—and were buried at nine different sites between the years 1156 and 1186.[13] Our discussion will be limited, however, to the two principal sites that most clearly document the role of Ise's priestly lineages in such practices. One group of sutras, transcribed in ink on paper, placed into cylindrical stupa-shaped containers made of copper, and then encased in secondary outer ceramic vessels, was buried at what is known as the Mt. Asama Kyōgamine 朝熊山経ヶ峰 sutra mounds, 542 meters above sea level, east of the Inner Shrine (figure 1). Like many other examples across Japan, the Mt. Asama materials were interred in small underground chambers lined and sealed with stones and marked, like a grave, with earthen mounds and stone stupas.

A second group of sutras, signaling perhaps an even more explicit concern with the preservation of the Dharma, was inscribed on clay tiles that were glazed, fired, and then buried at three sites in the hills just west of the Outer Shrine, known as the Komachi 小町, Bodaisan jingūji 菩提山神宮寺, and Eitaizan Kyōgamine 永代山経ヶ峰 sutra mounds (figure 2).[14] These burials speak to more than the historical and soteriological anxieties of the age. They also specify Ise as the site where such anxieties were expressed and where, it was hoped, they could be conquered as well.

Figure 2. Clay tile inscribed with Buddhist texts. 1174, Heian period. Glazed terracotta. 24 cm x 30 cm. Excavated from the Komachi sutra mound, Ise, Mie Prefecture. Collection Tokyo National Museum, acc. no. J-36661.

Preparing for the Pure Land

In 1959, a major typhoon struck the Ise region and uprooted numerous trees on Mt. Asama. The storm damage exposed a large group of sutra burials within a thirty-meter-square area beside the Shingon temple of Kongōshōji 金剛證寺 near the summit of the mountain. Excavations, carried out between 1960 and 1963, have identified forty-three burial sites, in rectangular plots measuring between one and two meters by two to two and a half meters, spaced approximately three meters apart. The sites, dating from 1156 to 1186, contained sutras housed within cylindrical copper vessels, which were themselves encased within outer ceramic vessels. In addition to the sutras and their containers, a wide range of other items also were included in these burials, such as bronze mirrors engraved with Buddhist images, ceramic lotus-form pedestals for Buddhist images, knives, scissors, flints, needles, covered dishes of porcelain and lacquer, plates of various sizes, tea bowls, flower vases, sake decanters and cups, cypress fans, glass beads, and coins.[15] As rich and varied as the objects themselves, the individuals responsible for the

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13 Ceramic sutra containers with inscriptions dated Hōgen 保元 1 (1156) and Bunji 文治 2 (1186) have been excavated from Mt. Asama sites 5, 8, and 10c. Kodama, *Ise Yamada no gakyō*, p. 10.

14 For a comprehensive history of these sites and their scholarship, see ibid., pp. 29–72.

15 The contents are itemized in Seki, *Heian jidai no maikyō to shakyō*, pp. 457–58. The citations of sutra burial inscriptions that follow all refer to the transcriptions included in the appendix to Seki's volume.

Figure 3a. Sutra case (left) and outer case (right). 1159, Heian period. Copper, ceramic. Sutra case: Diam. 12.2 cm, H 29.6 cm; outer case: H 25.7 cm. Figs. 3a and 3b, excavated from Mt. Asama Kyōgamine sutra mound no. 3, Ise, Mie Prefecture. Collection Kongōshōji, Mie Prefecture. From Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Ise jingū to kamigami no bijutsu*, pp. 56–57, fig. 26.

Mt. Asama burials reveal a complex network of familial and institutional lineages that formed the texture of the religious communities of Ise in the late twelfth century. The excavated materials not only identify Ise as a site for the preservation of the Dharma, they also identify the head priests (*negi* 禰宜) of the Ise Shrines as the individuals seeking Buddhist salvation.

Among the earliest and most revealing of the Mt. Asama burials is a copper sutra case and ceramic outer case (figure 3a) dated by inscription to Heiji 平治 1 (1159).8.15 containing thirteen scrolls, including the *Lotus Sutra* (*Myōhō renge kyō* 妙法蓮華経), which in the East Asian tradition includes the *Sutra of Innumerable Meanings* (*Muryōgi kyō* 無量義経) and the *Sutra of Meditation on the Bodhisattva Universal Virtue* (*Kanfugen bosatsu gyōbō kyō* 観普賢菩薩翹望経) as its opening and closing sections. The sutras—transcribed and dated the previous day by the nuns Benkaku 弁覚,

Myōi 妙意, Ryōjitsu 良実, Jōzen 定禅, and Jōi 定意 from Jōkakuji 常覚寺, a temple located in the Yamada 山田 region of Watarai District—were dedicated by the five nuns so that members of the Ōnakatomi and Watarai lineages might, according to their inscription, "avoid rebirth in the Six Realms and all become buddhas and attain the way."[16] The sponsor is identified as the nun Shinmyō 真妙, from Jōshōji 常勝寺, another temple of the Watarai lineage in the same region, and the names of another ten monks who contributed to the project, in the hope of "forming karmic connections (*kechien* 結縁)," are also listed. The central purpose of these pious efforts of so many Buddhist nuns and monks was to guarantee the post-mortem salvation of the former

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16 The inscription, which appears at the end of the third chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*, is transcribed in ibid., p. 456 (no. 121).

Figure 3b. *Sutra of Meditation on the Bodhisattva Universal Virtue* and inscription. 1159, Heian period. Handscroll, ink on paper. H 23.4 cm. Contained within sutra case (fig. 3a).

head priest of the Outer Shrine of Ise, Watarai Masahiko 度会雅彦 (d. 1159), who had died exactly four months earlier. An inscription on the back of the *Sutra of Meditation on the Bodhisattva Universal Virtue* states that the sutras were "transcribed to assure the rebirth of Masahiko's noble spirit in Amida's Gokuraku Pure Land" (figure 3b). A copy of the *Sutra of the Dhāraṇī of the Jubilant Corona* (*Bucchō sonshō daranikyō* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼経), an esoteric text for the eradication of

karmic obstacles and the prolongation of life, was also buried on the same day, and was similarly transcribed, according to the inscription, "so that the noble spirit of Masahiko become a buddha and attain the Way."[17]

In addition to the sutras, three high-quality mirrors made of a nickel-copper alloy included in the burial give visual and material expression to the petitioners'

17 Ibid. (no. 122).

Figure 4. Mirror with images of Amida (front, on right) and birds and maple (back, on left). 1159, Heian period. Bronze. Diam. 13.4 cm. Excavated from Mt. Asama Kyōgamine sutra mound no. 3, Ise, Mie Prefecture. Collection Kongōshōji, Mie Prefecture. From Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Shinbutsu shūgō*, p. 65, fig. 50-4.
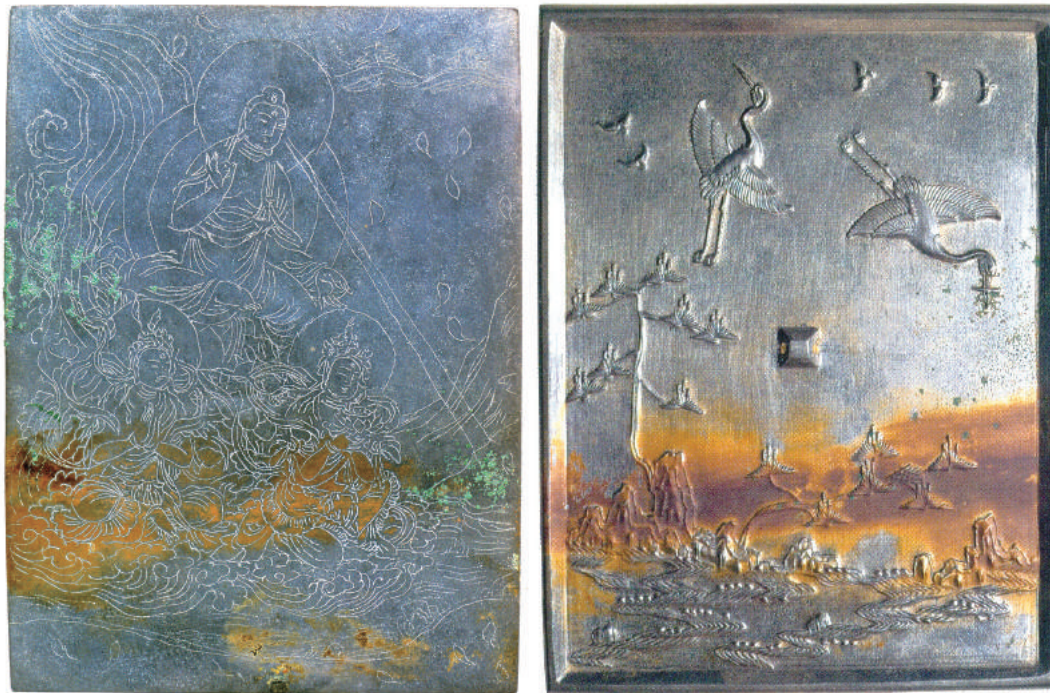

Figure 5. Mirror with images of descent of Amida triad (front, on left) and islands with cranes and pines (back, on right). 1159, Heian period. Bronze. 20 cm x 14.7 cm. Excavated from Mt. Asama Kyōgamine sutra mound no. 3, Ise, Mie Prefecture. Collection Kongōshōji, Mie Prefecture. From Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Ise jingū to kamigami no bijutsu*, p. 59, fig. 26; and Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Shinbutsu shūgō*, p. 65, fig. 50-3.
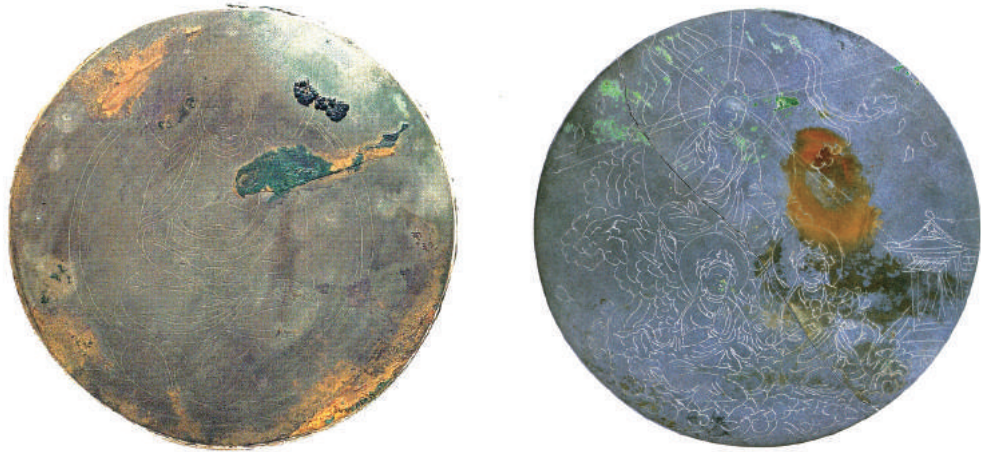
Figure 6. Mirror with images of Amida on two sides (back, on left; front, on right). 1159, Heian period. Bronze. Diam. 12.9 cm. Excavated from Mt. Asama Kyōgamine sutra mound no. 3, Ise, Mie Prefecture. Collection Kongōshōji, Mie Prefecture. From Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Ise jingū to kamigami no bijutsu*, p. 58, fig. 26; and Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Shinbutsu shūgō*, p. 65, fig. 50-5.

aspirations. Two of the mirrors are round, and the third rectangular; all bear images of Amida, the buddha of the Western Pure Land. The back of one of the round mirrors is decorated with embossed images of birds, butterflies, and sprigs of maple, and the front is incised with an image of a seated Amida attended by the bodhisattvas Kannon 観音 and Seishi 勢至 (figure 4).

The rectangular mirror offers a double vision of the afterlife. The back of the mirror depicts a landscape of a Daoist paradise with images of cranes and pines, both auspicious symbols of longevity, and islands of immortality rising from the sea, whereas the face of the mirror is incised with a welcoming descent (*raigō* 来迎) of Amida and his attendant bodhisattvas among swirling clouds and fluttering lotus petals (figure 5). A ray of light from Amida's forehead falls on a rocky coast and the base of a mountain beside the sea. Further in the background are pine trees atop mountains. The coastal setting of Amida's descent is appropriate to the burial site, a mountain overlooking the sea, and seems to offer a close-up of the more distant landscape depicted on the mirror's back.

A second round mirror is incised on both sides with images of Amida (figure 6). On the back side, the buddha of the Western Pure Land is shown seated alone on a lotus pedestal with hands held in a mudra of meditation. The front side depicts the very salvation that the burial was meant to assure. Amida is shown, attended by two bodhisattvas, descending amid clouds and flower petals, rays of light emanating from his halo, toward the open doors of a pavilion where a devotee—in this case Watarai Masahiko himself—receives the Buddha's light and is offered a lotus throne by Kannon, on which he will return with them to the Pure Land.

The families of the Watarai and Ōnakatomi priests, together with the nuns and monks who sought to effect and form karmic bonds with their Buddhist salvation through the production and interment of Buddhist texts, objects, and images, provide physical evidence for social networks that extended across devotional and lineal affiliation. They also offer a rare example of innovations in Buddhist iconography. The two mirrors depicting the welcoming descent, which were buried for the head priest of the Outer Shrine, are the earliest extant examples of the welcoming descent of an Amida triad in any medium.[18]

The choice of the *Lotus Sutra*, the scripture transcribed by the nuns of Jōshōji and Jōkakuji for the Pure Land rebirth of Watarai Masahiko, was entirely in keeping with the practices of sutra burials in the late Heian period (794–1185). The *Lotus Sutra*, a text that explicitly encourages its own preservation, enshrinement, and veneration, was the scripture interred most commonly.

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18   Okazaki, *Pure Land Buddhist Painting*, p. 110.

Figure 8a. Seated Yakushi Nyorai. 1145, Heian period. Wood with gold leaf. H 103.6 cm. Figs. 8a and 8b, Myōjōji, Mie Prefecture. Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Ise jingū to kamigami no bijutsu*, p. 54, fig. 25.

Figure 7. Sutra case. 1173, Heian period. Ceramic. Diam. 15.3 cm, H 32.7 cm. Excavated from Mt. Asama Kyōgamine sutra mound no. 3, Ise, Mie Prefecture. Collection Kongōshōji, Mie Prefecture. From Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Ise jingū to kamigami no bijutsu*, p. 55, fig. 27.

Like a number of other early Mahayana sutras, the *Lotus Sutra* claims that, because of its status as the textual corpus of the Buddha's teachings, it supersedes the corporal relic of the Buddha himself as the true body of the Buddhadharma. Indeed, the *Lotus Sutra* reserves the highest praise for those "who shall receive and keep, read and recite, explain, or copy in writing a single verse of the *Scripture of the Blossom of the Fine Dharma*, or who will look with veneration on a roll of this scripture as if it were the Buddha himself."[19] In carrying out these scriptural instructions, the sponsors of the Ise burials enjoyed the combined merit of copying and protecting the sutra together with that of building a stupa in which to enshrine and venerate it. These practices were

Figure 8b. Inscription on interior of seated Yakushi Nyorai, Myōjōji (fig. 8a).

particularly timely, as the buddha of the *Lotus Sutra* emphasizes that such methods of textual preservation and devotion are to be undertaken specifically "after my

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19 *Myōhō renge kyō*, p. 30b.

extinction, in an evil age."[20]

Rebirth in Amida's Pure Land was also a common goal in Heian religious culture, and a goal advocated and idealized within the *Lotus Sutra* as well. The representation of Amida's welcoming descent incised on the interred mirrors follows a standard iconography found in countless texts and later paintings. Although the landscape elements depicted on the mirrors—mountains rising precipitously from the sea, island archipelagos viewed from afar—are the sort of idealized images commonly represented in scenes of Buddhist and Daoist paradises, they also share a decidedly local flavor: they are very like the sort of landscape viewed from the summit of Mt. Asama looking out toward Ise Bay. Further local references are to be found among the names of those involved in the burials. The Kyōgamine burials were not exclusively for the benefit of the Watarai and Ōnakatomi lineages. A ceramic sutra vessel dated Jōan 承安 3 (1173).8.11 excavated from Mt. Asama site 1 contained another copy of the *Lotus Sutra* transcribed and offered for "peace and tranquility in the present and future life" for "the Shrine Priest Arakida Tokimori 時盛, Senior Fourth Rank Lower Grade Priest of the Great Shrine of Ise" (figure 7).[21] Although often portrayed as hereditary rivals in histories of Ise, the side-by-side burial of sutras transcribed for the Pure Land rebirth of leading priests of both the Watarai and Arakida lineages illustrates an intimacy in matters of Buddhist practice.

Another illustration of this is to be found within a seated image dated to 1145 of Yakushi Nyorai 薬師如来, the Buddha of Healing, donated to Jōsenji 定泉寺, one of the eight temples of the sacerdotal lineages of the Ise Shrine, and now housed at the nearby temple of Myōjōji 明星寺 (figure 8a). The image was offered jointly by an Arakida shrine priest (*kannushi* 神主) and a member of the Watarai lineage, who may have been his wife. Their names appear side-by-side, inscribed on the interior of the image (figure 8b).[22]

A Canon in Clay

An example of even greater cooperation between priestly lineages is illustrated by tile sutras buried at the

Figure 9. Mandorlas. 1174, Heian period. Terracotta. H 25.6 cm. Excavated from the Komachi sutra mound, Ise City, Mie. Collection Tokyo National Museum, acc. no. J-36772, J-36773.

Komachi, Bodaisan, and Eitaizan sites near the Inner Shrine. More than 420 inscribed ceramic tiles, each measuring approximately twenty-five by thirty centimeters, were buried at the three sites between the fifth and seventh month of 1174. An undertaking of such an enormous scale required the participation of many individuals, members of the Ōnakatomi, Isobe, Watarai, and Arakida lineages, as well as the funds, materials, and technologies necessary to produce, inscribe, and transport the sutra tiles. The sutras inscribed include the *Lotus Sutra* in 169 tiles; the *Mahāvairocana Sutra* (*Dainichikyō* 大日経) in 122 tiles; the *Diamond Peak Sutra* (*Kongōchokyō* 金剛頂経) in 40 tiles; the *Tantra for Wondrous Achievement* (*Soshitchikyō* 蘇悉地経) in 83 tiles; the *Sutra that Transcends Principle* (*Rishukyō* 理趣経) in 7 tiles; the *Amida Sutra* (*Amidakyō* 阿弥陀経) in 4 tiles; and the *Heart Sutra* (*Hannyashingyō* 般若心経) in a single tile. In addition to these sutras were also dharani texts, a Lotus Mandala in Siddhaṃ characters (a type of Sanskrit script introduced to Japan in the ninth century, in connection with esoteric Buddhism), a Diamond Realm and Womb Realm Mandala, a lotus pedestal, four mandorlas, and a seated Buddha image, all made of the same light gray clay (figure 9 shows two mandorlas). The selection of scriptures transcribed, like the presence of the *Sutra of the Dhāraṇī of the Jubilant Corona* at Mt. Asama, reflects the Shingon affiliation of many of the lineage temples of the Ise priests.

A concern with the preservation of the Dharma throughout the dark days of the Final Age is evident in the material employed: fired clay of the sort used for

20 Ibid., p. 31a.
21 Seki, *Heian jidai no maikyō to shakyō*, p. 457 (no. 128).
22 Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Ise jingū to kamigami no bijutsu*, p. 179.

roof tiles, a material intended to withstand the test of time. In their votive prayers, the participants refer explicitly to the Final Dharma. Inscriptions on three separate tiles and on one of the mandorlas announce the age as "the time of Śākyamuni's Final Dharma" 釈迦末法之時.[23] As with the Mt. Asama burials, the identities of those involved reveal the interwoven lives, afterlives, and aspirations of Ise's religious community. The names of two monks who played a leading role in the production and burial of the sutra tiles appear throughout the inscriptions as Shamon Nikan 沙門西観 and Kongōbushi Junsai 金剛仏子遵西. They are identified as monks from Mankakuji 万覚寺 in Irago 伊良, Atsumi District 渥美郡, Mikawa Province. Nikan and Junsai are listed in the colophons of the tile *Lotus Sutra*, *Dainichikyō*, *Kongōchōkyō*, *Soshitsujikyō*, and the Diamond Realm mandala. Nikan was also responsible for a seated buddha image that was dedicated in a memorial service for the monk's departed parents. Like the Mt. Asama burials, the tile sutras were dedicated to assuring the Pure Land rebirth of a head priest of the Ise Outer Shrine, in this case Watarai Tsuneyuki 度会常行, who served as *negi* from 1144 until his death in 1160 at the age of seventy-four.[24] Yet, as at Mt. Asama, the enormous ritual production offered the opportunity for members of Ise's other sacerdotal lineages to contribute to the Buddhist salvation of additional family members as well. One of the ceramic mandorlas was offered for a nun of the Ōnakatomi lineage.[25] Another was offered by a male and female member of the Watarai lineage, together with Nikan and Junsai and six other monks, for the benefit of a member of the Isobe lineage.[26] A third mandorla was offered for a member of the Arakida lineage.[27] Three senior members of the Watarai lineage are listed among the names of those associated with the production of the *Lotus Sutra* tiles, but so, too, are members of the Isobe and Mononobe 物部 clans. The *Dainichikyō*, offered for the benefit of "Watarai Tsuneyuki's noble spirit," similarly includes the names of members of the Ōnakatomi and Arakida lineages.

The inscriptions suggest connections not only between and across sacerdotal lineages but also between the material resources and technologies of multiple shrine and temple institutions. Although the sutras were buried at Ise, they were not local products. According to inscriptions on the tiles, they were produced in Irago, Atsumi District, Mikawa Province. Irago, located at the tip of the Atsumi peninsula directly across Ise Bay, was a region covered with estates that supplied tribute and resources to the Ise Shrines. The growth of commended estates in the late twelfth century marked a decisive transformation of Ise's institutional base and economic status.[28] Estates across the Atsumi peninsula, a site for ceramic production since the Kofun period (300–538), were commended to the shrines throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[29] An inscription on one of the Komachi sutra tiles identifies "Watarai *kannushi* Tsuneyuki [as] the lord of the estate (*mikuriya ryōshu* 御厨領主)" where the tile was produced. Thus, the role of Irago's estates in the massive production of ceramic sutras, images, and objects for the Pure Land rebirth of the Ise priests also reveals the extent of Ise's institutional and territorial authority. Other excavated materials identify the Atsumi peninsula as the place of origin for the ceramic materials buried at Ise. An outer ceramic sutra case buried elsewhere at Ise is signed by a monk who identifies himself as "a resident of the shrine land of Kachi," an estate held by the Inner Shrine on the peninsula. Kachi 鍛治 (also written 加治), the site of numerous kilns, also produced lotus-form pedestals of the kind excavated from Komachi.[30] One of the ceramic mandorlas from Komachi is inscribed by Fujii Narishige 藤井成重 as "an offering of white clay, for rebirth in the Pure Land, at the time of Śākyamuni's Final Dharma, produced at Mankakuji in Irago, Atsumi Province."[31]

The ceramic sutra tiles, containers, mandorlas, and lotus-form pedestals buried at Ise, intended to ensure the Buddhist salvation of the priests of the Ise Shrines, thus were produced out of the local clay from estates controlled by these shrines on the Atsumi peninsula, manufactured and inscribed by artisans, scribes, and the monks Junsai and Nikan at Mankakuji, fired in the kilns of Irago, and transported, like any other tribute due, by boat across Ise Bay. This massive production of

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23 Seki, *Heian jidai no maikyō to shakyō*, pp. 460 (no. 134), 461 (no. 134), 463 (no. 145), 466 (no. 160). Śākyamuni is the buddha of this world.
24 Ibid., p. 461 (no. 135).
25 Ibid., p. 466 (no. 159).
26 Ibid., p. 467 (no. 160).
27 Ibid. (no. 162).

28 Teeuwen and Breen, *A Social History of the Ise Shrines*, p. 60.
29 Okamura, "Ise chihō ni okeru maikyō," p. 18.
30 Ibid., p. 19.
31 Seki, *Heian jidai no maikyō to shakyō*, p. 466 (no. 160).

Buddhist texts—a canon cast in clay—was then buried underground at the Ise Shrines, to preserve the Dharma for the next 5.6 billion years, and also, according to the donative inscription, to secure for the shrine priests "the proper state of mind at the moment of death, rebirth in Amida's Pure Land, protection of the state in all ten directions, benefit and joy to all sentient beings, presence at the advent of the future buddha, Maitreya, and the proper performance of all Buddhist memorial services."[32]

The Buddhist texts, objects, and images buried at Ise in the twelfth century offer material evidence of an historical consciousness. For the members of the shrine's sacerdotal lineages—the Watarai, Arakida, Isobe, and Ōnakatomi—the sutra burials marked a crucial juncture in Buddhist history. They signaled, in the words of the inscriptions themselves, "the time of Śākyamuni's Final Dharma," a long age of religious decline, a downward descent in the perpetual cycle of Buddhist chronology until "the advent of the future buddha, Miroku." But the burials also mark a more personal kind of crisis in the life cycles of the families themselves: the transition from life to death and from death to rebirth. The burial of sutras was a common and communal response by the members of Ise's priestly elites who collaborated across differences of lineage and institution to address this confluence of the personal and the historical, a crisis of mortality in their familial lives and in the life of Buddhism, and an attempt to address the inevitability of impermanence.

For us today, the sutra burials at Ise call attention to a history of interrelations obscured by claims of separation. Such claims, legislated by the Meiji state, sought to restore Japan to a religious past it never had. This invented tradition required the erasure of Ise's religious history and the construction of a past untouched by Buddhism. Ise's sutra burials, however, reveal that beneath such recent ideological constructions lie earlier strata of religious complexity in which the priests of Ise turned to Buddhist texts, Buddhist images, Buddhist rituals, and Buddhist ritualists to address a time of crisis in their personal lives and in the history of their religion. In this sense, the sutra burials at Ise offer another kind of buried treasure, one that reveals the material and ritual culture of a place that we long thought we knew. Sutra burials, like so many time capsules, provide

the corpus for an archeology of religious aspiration. They allow for an excavation of Ise's religious history that requires us to look deeper than modern claims of a uniform and unaltered tradition, and reveal a religious landscape not isolated from Buddhist traditions but deeply grounded therein.

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32 Ibid., p. 464 (no. 147).

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BOOK REVIEW BY JAMES ROBSON

*I*NDIA, *China, and the World: A Connected History* is a big book with equally large ambitions. This thick volume of 541 pages (and a rather large typeface) is befitting of the size of the two geographic regions—India and China—that are its primary subject. As if these two sizeable countries, with exceptionally long histories, were not enough to cover in a single volume, the author also extends his reach to situate the book within a broader world historical context. This expansion of the scope of the book was necessitated by the fact that South Asia and China had networks of connections that linked them to other parts of the world. *India, China, and the World* covers everything from the movement of people, objects, and ideas across the ancient Silk Road up to the formation of the contemporary One Belt, One Road Initiative. Rather than simply depicting the flows between South Asia and China as traveling along a one-way street, the author does an admirable job of demonstrating how those movements were circulatory, drawing from Prasenjit Duara's recent work, and expanded to include Japan, Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

As one would expect from a book with such a broad reach, the material is rich, dense, and complicated. To his credit, the author weaves together a vast amount of material to present a compelling narrative of the long-term connections between India, China, and the world

that explicitly rejects a simple tripartite scheme that depicted those connections in terms of three stages: "Buddhist, colonial/decline, and revival" (p. 20). Some of the material discussed in this book will be familiar from the author's earlier work[1]—such as the many references to the role of Mañjuśrī in China at Wutaishan—but most of the material is based on new research using different types of archives and sources and extending the time frame up to the present. Each chapter is well researched and packed with detailed information and striking observations. Even though not everything will strike the reader as new, one significant contribution is the way that it brings a vast array of disparate information together into a coherent larger narrative. Not all questions are resolved, but the theories that are implicitly and explicitly forwarded here will no doubt engage future scholars in lively conversations as they challenge, refine, and explore the implications of the material presented in this book.

India, China, and the World begins with a Foreword by Wang Gungwu, and contains an introduction, five chapters that are arranged chronologically, and a conclusion. The book covers a large time span that stretches from the early centuries BCE up to the pres-

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1   Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade*.

ent. Sen uses four broad goals to delineate the overarching framework for the detailed discussions of each chapter. The first goal aims to impress upon the reader that the study of "pre-twentieth century interactions between these two regions should not be construed within the framework of modern nation-states" (p. 2), since the two did not exist before the 1940s. The second is that "the connections between these two regions, from the early phases . . . to the contemporary period, have been intimately linked to people living in several other regions, including locations outside of the Asian continent" (pp. 3–4). The third is that "the presence of European colonial powers in Asia did not terminate these connections. Rather, the exchanges witnessed significant growth and diversification with the emergence of new sites of interactions; more intensive circulation of knowledge, goods, and people; and close collaborations between Indians and Chinese" (p. 4). The fourth concerns how "the formation of these territorialized nation-states in the mid-twentieth century created wedges in the relations between the ROI and the PRC that eventually resulted in an armed conflict in 1962 and the subsequent contraction of the broader linkages that had defined and fostered earlier connections between the two regions" (p. 4).

Chapter 1, "The Circulations of Knowledge," addresses the circulation of knowledge about geography, manufacturing technologies, astronomy, medicine, and linguistics between South Asia and China from the early years BCE to the sixteenth century CE. How did ideas and concepts travel? How were they translated? How were they transformed? These are some of the ways that the author approaches the complex nature of the circulation of knowledge and technology between South Asia, China, and beyond. Sen details how Buddhism was a key factor in fostering connections across Asia. The concept of circulatory connections is in many ways an appealing model, but certain applications of that theory—such as with medical knowledge and paper-making technology—are only supported by rather speculative evidence.

Chapter 2, "The Routes, Networks, and Objects of Circulation," turns to the circulation of goods and objects and the networks they traveled in the period prior to the arrival of Europeans. In this chapter, the author does well to discuss maritime routes in addition to the more commonly studied overland routes. Sen argues that the three main motivators for exchange between the regions were Buddhism, the Chinese tributary sys-

tem, and the demand for bulk goods. This chapter is as much about the objects in circulation—including exotic things like frankincense, giraffes, and pepper—as it is about the networks that facilitated their movement not just between South Asia and China, but also out into the wider global flow of things.

Chapter 3, "The Imperial Connections," argues that the expeditions undertaken by the Ming-dynasty admiral Zheng He in the early fifteenth century had a significant impact on the circulation of people and goods between India and China. Here we begin to see more clearly the importance of the maritime flows between those regions and beyond. Throughout this discussion, Sen includes interesting discussions of related topics concerning migrant communities and new places where Indians and Chinese would have congregated during this period that also saw the arrival of European colonial powers. Yet, the period between the sixteenth and nineteenth century was not, the author argues, a period of decline precipitated by the increasing presence of those imperial powers, but should be seen as a period of expanded commercial activity and newly forged connections. Sen ends the chapter by saying that "the period between the fifteenth and the late nineteenth centuries needs to be examined for the vibrancy and the multilayered connections it created. In fact, the discussion above suggests that this period may have been a critical nexus between the pre-Ming phases of interactions and the contemporary bilateral relations between the Republic of India (ROI) and the People's Republic of China (PRC)" (p. 290). This midpoint in the book is also a transition point in the historical narrative since the discussion shifts to consider important developments that led up to the formation of the modern nation-states of India and China. This chapter struck me as presenting a novel thesis, but one that might have been developed further. I suspect that some readers would have appreciated a more sustained discussion and analysis of this period so that the author could further develop his ideas and also engage with other recent research on imperialism and the concomitant rise of nation-states like India and China.

Chapter 4, "Pan-Asianism and Renewed Connections," discusses how, in the aftermath of European colonialism, India and China began to establish stronger connections as a new sense of pan-Asianism developed and they had to face the reality of Japanese imperialism. Sen tracks these developments through to their decline during the 1930s and the period of decolonialization in

the mid-1940s. Much of the focus in this chapter is on the role intellectuals played, including the important Asian Relations Conference convened in 1947.

Chapter 5, "The Geopolitical Disconnect," concerns the latter half of the twentieth century, a period the author describes as one of failed opportunities (such as the principles outlined during the Bandung Conference in 1955), increasing mutual suspicion, and finally the armed conflict of 1962. Even though this phase is marked by significant bilateral relationships (such as the Republic of India being the first non-Communist state to recognize the new People's Republic of China in 1950), the author argues that the connections were largely rhetorical—captured in the phrase "Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai" or "Indians and Chinese are brothers" (p. 409)—and did not lead to any breakthroughs in cultural understanding or concrete action. Tensions between the two countries remained due to ongoing territorial disputes and the status of Tibet. Sen guides the reader through a voluminous collection of interesting books, pamphlets, and newspaper articles that express well the aspirations and vicissitudes of this period of interaction. Sen's focus primarily remains on voices depicting the fate of Chinese in India—such as through the intimate portrait of the artist Chang Xiufeng and his imprisonment and deportation—and only briefly mentions the detention of Makhan Lal Das and Indians detained in China during this period. Perhaps this issue of balance is due to available sources. Sen carries forward the discussion of tensions, from the role played by the philosopher Bertrand Russell as a kind of broker between the Indians and Chinese through to the recent One Belt, One Road Initiative of the Chinese President Xi Jinping. Due to ongoing tensions and territorial issues, India remains the only major Asian country to refrain from signing that initiative.

The conclusion provides a map of the large territory covered in the book, from periods of harmonious connections and fruitful exchanges to mutual suspicion and even outright conflict. Sen sums up the historical connections between India and China well as a "mishmash of complexities stemming from multiregional interconnectedness and indispensable interdependencies as well as detrimental perceptions and geopolitical antagonism" (p. 479). In *India, China, and the World*, Sen makes much of Liang Qichao's welcome address to Rabindranath Tagore on his trip to China, in which he concluded his talk by saying, "the responsibility that we bear to the whole of mankind is great indeed, and

there should be, I think, a warm spirit of cooperation between India and China. The coming of Rabindranath Tagore will, I hope, mark the beginning of an important period of history" (p. 2). It has been almost a century since Liang spoke those words. The "warm spirit of cooperation" did come, but it remained short-lived and quickly gave way to a much cooler spirit of distrust and conflict.

Over the years, scholars interested in Sino-Indian relations and world history will no doubt subject many of the details presented in this study to rigorous analysis. It is not possible for me to do that in this review so I will merely raise a few larger conceptual issues. The author rightly begins by problematizing the key terms "India" and "China" in the title of the book (p. 14ff). In the premodern period these terms did not refer to anything like the modern nation-states we now associate with them. It was only in the 1940s that they came to correspond to the current political boundaries of the Republic of India (ROI) and the People's Republic of China (PRC). This is an important point to emphasize. That being said, the author's discussion is rather confusing to follow. For reasons unclear to me, in dealing with the premodern period the author avoids the use of "India," which is replaced by South Asia. Yet, China is retained as unproblematic. It seems from the introduction that the author circumvents the problem of using "China" by providing dynastic specificity. These principles are not strictly adhered to throughout the book. "China" is consistently used without dynastic referents, but the author goes back and forth between referring to "India" (or Indic) or "South Asia" (especially in chapter 2). The author admits that his use of shifting terminologies will be "befuddling at times" (p. 18). I wonder if a different method might have been adopted. Would it have been possible to just stipulate at the outset that the terms "India" and "China" are being used as a convenience and should not be understood as coincident with the modern referents? Then, in each chapter dealing with each period of history the author could define or refine the area that is encompassed by those two terms. One of the reasons for preferring such an approach is the simple fact that even a designation like "South Asia" is itself a modern category that has its own complex set of issues. The author might have been able to avoid some of the befuddlement associated with the complex terminology by referring readers to Martin

W. Lewis and Kären Wigen's work[2] or other works in humanistic geography that have considered the issues related to these labels.

Given the wealth of material that is covered in this book it may seem picky or overly pedantic to suggest that the author could have engaged in further scholarly conversations, but the lack of engagement with some key topics and books will strike some readers as a lost opportunity. Although this is a big book that covers a lot of ground over a long stretch of time, my sense is that it could have also more expansively engaged with some of the ideas of scholars who have been working on similar issues related to regional and global/world history. The author uses the word "world" in the title—ostensibly signaling its place in world history—but does not discuss the upsurge in works on global or world history (a field that has been introduced and assessed by, among others, Lynn Hunt and Pamela Crossley).[3] One of the reasons it would have been compelling for the author to engage with global or world history is that due to his broad linguistic capabilities he does not fall neatly into the empirical researcher or the philosophical interpreter camps. Since the author is interested in the places where South Asians/Indians and Chinese came into contact with each other, one might have also expected some reflection on Mary Louise Pratt's notion of "contact zones."[4] Throughout the book the author has a tendency to cite recent work on a topic, but does not refer to some of the classic older works on which the newer works depend (see, for example, the discussion of the cult of the book on p. 156 which refers to Jinah Kim, but does not mention the seminal work of Gregory Schopen).[5] I would have also liked to read the author's reflections on older works by scholars like Hu Shih, Jan Yün-hua ("Buddhist Relations between India and Sung China") and Wilhelm Halbfass since their works have informed general knowledge on a range of topics related to the interactions between India, China, and other parts of the world.[6] It would be good to know where, in the author's opinion, they made contributions

and where they missed the mark or have been superceded. The author might have also profitably engaged with the more recent work of Victor Lieberman in his *Strange Parallels* series.[7] It should also be noted that there is a near complete lack of reference to the voluminous body of Japanese-language scholarship. I raise these suggestions here since the works I mention might have inspired the author to provide more analytic rigor to this heavily descriptive work. Finally, there remain small issues with regard to Pinyin romanization (for instance, Sida should be Xida [p. 85], Saifoding should be Saifuding [p. 166], to note just a couple).

None of these oversights detract from the overall quality of *India, China, and the World: A Connected History* nor do they detract from the pleasure that the reader will enjoy as they learn fascinating new details with every turn of the page. This book will make for engaging reading for specialists and general readers who are interested in the *longue durée* history of exchanges between India and China. Rather than being the end of the story, however, this work strikes me as more of a new beginning that will initiate a new phase of research on the vast, complicated, and continually evolving history of the relationship between India and China in the context of world history.

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2   Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*.
3   See Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era*; and Crossley, *What is Global History*?
4   See Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*.
5   See Kim, *Receptacle of the Sacred*; and Schopen, "The Phrase '*sa pṛthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet*' in the *Vajracchedikā*."
6   See Hu, "The Indianization of China"; Hu, "Rabindranath Tagore in China"; Jan, "Buddhist Relations between India and Sung China"; and Halbfass, *India and Europe*.

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7   Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia*; Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Volume 2*.

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Report on the 2017 Inscription of "Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region" as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

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ON 9 July 2017, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) inscribed "Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region" on its World Heritage List.[1] The decision marks the culmination of a nearly decade-long effort, and puts a spotlight on the rich religious and cultural landscapes of Kyushu, Japan, and the broader maritime sphere of Japan, the Korean peninsula, and the continent. The tiny size and remote location of Okinoshima 沖ノ島 belies its great cultural and historical significance. Rituals on the island can be traced over the course of five hundred years in four distinct forms. At the same time, the reasons for the sacredness of the remote island—a place difficult to navigate to and anchor on in fine weather, let alone storms, and off limits to nearly all visitors today—and the locus of the ritual practices remain unclear.[2] Unlike many other ancient sacred sites in Japan, however, the role of Okinoshima and Munakata 宗像 in the mythol-

ogy of the early Yamato rulers' imperial-style sphere (fifth–eighth century) can be confirmed. The 712 *Kojiki* 古事記 (Records of Ancient Matters) and 720 *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (Chronicles of Japan) describe Okinoshima as the sacred abode of one of the three Munakata goddesses, who are today worshipped at the three locations of Munakata Grand Shrine (Munakata Taisha 宗像大社).[3]

Three intensive rounds of archaeological excavations on Okinoshima (1954–1955, 1957–1958, 1969–1971)

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1 Note that, in Japanese, the name of the site differs slightly from the English: "'Island where gods dwell' Munakata Okinoshima and the Associated Heritage Group" (*"Kami yadoru shima" Munakata Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun* 「神宿る島」宗像・沖ノ島と関連遺産群).

2 A concrete harbor was built by the government in 1951 to provide access to the island for military personnel.

3 Munakata Shrine assumed its current name, Munakata Taisha, in the wake of its 1901 designation by the Meiji government as a major imperial shrine (*kanpei taisha* 官幣大社). Okitsumiya 胸形之奥津宮 (rendered as 遠瀛 in the *Nihon shoki*) on Okinoshima enshrines Takiribime no mikoto 多紀理毗売命 (alternatively, Okitsushimahime no mikoto 奥津嶋比売命). Nakatsumiya 中津宮 on Ōshima, eleven kilometers off the coast, enshrines Takitsuhime no mikoto 湍津姫命. Hetsumiya 辺津宮 in Tashima on the Kyushu mainland enshrines Ichikishimahime no mikoto 市杵島姫命 (alternatively, Sayoribime no mikoto 狭依毗売命). The *Kojiki* and versions of the *Nihon shoki* present slightly different names (e.g., Tagorihime 田心姫, Tagorihime no mikoto 田心姫命, and Tagirihime no mikoto 田霧姫命) for the goddesses, and only one version of the *Nihon shoki* specifies Okitsumiya as Tagorihime's dwelling. Takeda and Nakamura, ed., *Kojiki*, p. 35. A digital version of the *Kojiki* is available from the Japanese Historical Text Initiative, University of California, Berkeley, https://jhti.berkeley.edu/Kojiki.html, p. 22, paragraph 2 (trans. Donald Philippi). *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 106–107. For an English translation of the *Nihon shoki*, see Aston, *Nihongi*, pp. 34–35.

yielded some eighty thousand artifacts dating from the fourth to the ninth century. The excavations revealed that four styles of rituals were performed on the island at twenty-three sites over five centuries: (1) rituals atop rocks (late fourth–early fifth century); (2) rituals in rock shadows (late fifth–seventh century); (3) rituals partly in rock shadows and partly in the open air (late seventh–eighth century); and (4) open air rituals (late eighth–end of ninth century). The ritual goods range from a miniature golden loom to gilt-bronze horse trappings, bronze mirrors, iron swords, comma-shaped beads, ceramics, and much more; they are collectively designated a National Treasure (*kokuhō* 国宝).[4]

Okinoshima's immense and ritually specific material treasures, combined with its mytho-historical record, have catapulted the island to global fame, inspiring grand narratives about Japan's origins and premodern polity. The findings also pose many questions concerning cultural exchange in East Asia before the consolidation of "state" Buddhism in Japan in the mid-eighth century. In quantity and value, the "discovery" of Okinoshima's treasured goods in the middle of the twentieth century came as a great surprise to many. Munakata Shrine officials certainly had some previous knowledge of the cache, as they already held in their archive several objects (e.g., bronze mirrors) said to have been deposited on the island between the fourth and sixth century. Moreover, military personnel had been stationed on the island regularly since the seventeenth century, first at the behest of the Fukuoka domain, and later, the Meiji government. These people, too, must have known something of the island's treasures, many of which were visible on the ground, but apart from a fantastic tale of flying treasures and godly wrath included in an eighteenth-century shrine history, nothing about them was officially reported. The first documentary evidence concerning the wealth of ritual goods on the island is a scholarly report of 1891 that includes

rough sketches of some of the items that would be rediscovered decades later.[5]

Okinoshima's modern World Heritage narrative begins with Idemitsu Sazō 出光佐三 (1885–1981), a petroleum tycoon and Munakata native. Idemitsu, self-described as "richly blessed with divine favour from childhood," attributed his success in business to his faith in the three Munakata goddesses.[6] When Idemitsu visited Munakata Shrine in 1937 and witnessed the "undeserved decay" of its buildings and precincts, he made a "solemn vow" to restore them, and in November 1942 organized the Society for the Restoration of the Munakata Shrine (Munakata Jinja Fukkō Kiseikai 宗像神社復興期成會). In addition to spearheading efforts to restore the shrine in Tashima 田島, the society sponsored extensive historical investigations, which resulted in several major publications, and funded the large-scale archeological investigations on Okinoshima.[7]

The movement to make Okinoshima a World Heritage site took shape in earnest through the efforts of local residents of the city of Munakata (which today includes Ōshima 大島). The locally formed Okinoshima Tales Executive Committee (Okinoshima Monogatari Jikkō Iinkai 沖ノ島物語実行委員会) organized the "Munakata Grand Shrine Great National Treasures Exhibition" (*Munakata Taisha dai kokuhō ten* 宗像大社大国宝展) in 2002. The same year, a symposium was held in Munakata; it was there that archaeologist Yoshimura Sakuji 吉村作治, an authority on Egyptian studies, affirmed publicly that "Okinoshima is worthy of World Heritage."[8]

When the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkachō 文化庁) sought proposals from local governments for candidates to be added to the World Heritage Tentative List in 2006, Fukuoka Prefecture submitted "Okinoshima and Associated Sites" (*Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun* 沖ノ島と関連遺産群) for consideration. Three years later, in May 2009, "Munakata, Okinoshima and Associated Sites" (*Munakata, Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun* 宗像・沖ノ島と関連遺産群) was added to

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4   The first attempt to designate objects from Okinoshima as National Treasures in 1959 was unsuccessful; the items instead were assessed as Important Cultural Properties (*jūyō bunkazai* 重要文化財). More items were added and the listing was upgraded to the status of National Treasure in 1962. Subsequent excavations revealed many more items, which were designated as Important Cultural Properties in 1978 and 2003. The entire lot of eighty thousand objects was collectively designated as a single National Treasure in 2006, as "Artifacts from the Okitsumiya ritual site of Munakata Grand Shrine" (*Fukuoka-ken Munakata Taisha Okitsumiya saishi iseki shutsudohin* 福岡県宗像大社沖津宮祭祀遺跡出土品).

5   Etō, Masazumi "Okitsushima-kikō."
6   Okinoshima Gakujutsu Chōsatai and Okazaki, *Munakata Okinoshima*, p. 614.
7   Munakata Jinja Fukkō Kiseikai, ed., *Munakata jinja shi*; Munakata Jinja Fukkō Kiseikai, ed., *Okinoshima*.
8   Maeda Toshio 前田敏郎, "Seikai isan Okinoshima 'ichibu jogai'" 世界遺産　沖ノ島「一部除外」, *Mainichi shinbun* 毎日新聞, 2017.5.7, https://mainichi.jp/articles/20170507/ddl/k40/040/272000c?ck=1.

Japan's Tentative List for World Heritage inscription. A World Heritage promotional committee was formed that same year, a collective effort of the cities of Munakata and Fukutsu, and Fukuoka Prefecture.[9] The nomination remained on the Tentative List for seven years, during which time the promotional committee sponsored more than twenty conferences, symposia, and exhibitions, and commissioned four volumes of study reports by Japanese and international scholars.[10]

On 28 July 2016, the Bunkachō selected "Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region," a grouping of eight sites in total, for official consideration by UNESCO and its external advisory body, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Six weeks later, on 8 September, New Caledonia archaeologist Christophe Sande was dispatched from ICOMOS to survey all eight sites, including the restricted island. The ICOMOS evaluation that followed recognized only Okinoshima and its three neighboring reefs as having "Outstanding Universal Value" (UNESCO terminology).[11] ICOMOS determined that the value of Munakata Grand Shrine and the mounded tomb group was limited to the domestic level, and recommended that all other constituent assets be dropped from the inscription (with the name changed simply to "Sacred Island of Okinoshima").

The Bunkachō responded that ICOMOS simply did not understand the connection between the eight properties, or the history of the Munakata region and Munakata Grand Shrine. Fukuoka Prefectural Governor Ogawa Hiroshi 小川洋 lamented the "very regrettable and harsh recommendation" (*hijō ni zannen de kibishii kankoku* 非常に残念で厳しい勧告).[12] Munakata City Mayor Tanii Hiromi 谷井博美, similarly disappointed but inspired by local sentiment, announced that they would still endeavor to register all eight sites. The Bunkachō prepared an easy-to-understand (illustrated) rebuttal to present to World Heritage Committee members at the annual meeting in order to persuade them to adopt the eight-property serial inscription. The Japanese delegation argued that the ICOMOS presentation of Okinoshima as an isolated site with no connection to other ritual sites or cultural practices ignored significant archaeological evidence from the seventh through ninth century that was excavated not only on Okinoshima but on Ōshima (Mitakesan 御嶽山) and Tashima (Shimotakamiya 下高宮), the two other Munakata Shrine locations. They emphasized that the earliest surviving chronicles about Japan, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* (sources contemporaneous with Okinoshima's use as an active ritual site), link the three specific sites by name with three deities. From the perspective of the Japanese delegation and Munakata Grand Shrine, all eight proposed sites had formed an active and ongoing cultural landscape from at least the eighth century.

At the forty-first session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Poland in July 2017, ICOMOS presented its judgment, and the inscription was put to a vote. First, however, the Japanese delegation was asked to explain the tradition of male-only access. Their response was brief: "As a matter of principle, the access to the island of Okinoshima has been restricted to the priests of the Munakata Grand Shrine and priests are male by its tradition." No further discussion on the controversial ban was permitted, save a brief statement by World Heritage Centre Director Mechtild Rössler reminding Committee members that other sites that restrict access to either women or men have received World Heritage designations in the past.[13] Of note, the

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9 The promotional committee was known as "Munakata, Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun" Seikaiisan Suishin Kaigi 「宗像・沖ノ島と関連遺産群」世界遺産推進会議.

10 See "Munakata, Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun" Seikaiisan Suishin Kaigi, ed., *Munakata, Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun chōsa kenkyū hōkoku*, 4 vols.

11 The six criteria that delineate "Outstanding Universal Value" for cultural sites include: a "masterpiece of human creative genius," an "important interchange of human values," a "unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition," a monument, a human settlement, or a living tradition. UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines* 2016.

12 "Seikaiisan Okinoshima igai 'sekai kachi nai' jogai 4-ken ni ikomosu" 世界遺産 沖ノ島以外「世界価値ない」 除外４件にイコモス, *Mainichi shinbun*, 2017.5.6. https://mainichi.jp/articles/20170506/ddg/001/040/003000c.

13 "Gender equality is a priority for UNESCO, but I wish to inform the World Heritage Committee that it had taken other decisions on sites where women have no access like for example Mt. Athos in Greece. There are many World Heritage sites where men cannot access certain parts of the site or women cannot access certain parts of the site and we have written about this extensively. I will be very happy to give you further information but we are running out of time" (41st Session of the World Heritage Committee, Krakow, Poland, 9 July 2017). To my knowledge, three UNESCO-related publications exist that address gender exclusion: UNESCO, "In Focus," a special edition of *World Heritage*, the official UNESCO publication from the World Heritage Centre; UNESCO, *Gender Equality*, a 2014 report on gender equality and culture; and UNESCO, *UNESCO's Promise,* a digital UNESCO document. First, Rössler's preface to "In Focus: World Heritage and Gender Equality," for which

nomination file written by Japanese authorities and accepted by the World Heritage Committee does not specifically mention the fact that women are banned from Okinoshima. When Okinoshima was added to Japan's World Heritage Tentative List in 2012, the official proposal mentioned taboos that are "still observed today, such as purifying oneself before setting foot on the island, banning women from entering, and prohibiting anyone from taking a single item from the island."[14] The external advisory body evaluation by ICOMOS notes twice that no women are allowed on the island.[15] Yet the "Statement of Outstanding Universal Value" accepted by the World Heritage Committee, which will hereafter institutionalize perceptions of the island, states only that "[e]xisting restrictions and taboos contribute to maintaining the aura of the island as a sacred place."[16]

Next, the delegation from the Republic of Korea, in an oral intervention to the session, reprimanded Japan for neglecting Okinoshima's important connection to Korea, and urged caution to the Japanese government concerning the portrayal of Okinoshima visually and in writing as an exclusively "Japanese" site.[17] Korea is largely omitted from the UNESCO narrative

on Okinoshima, although travel routes between mainland areas in Japan, Korea, and China were crucial to Okinoshima's significance as a ritual site from the fourth through ninth centuries, and to the eighty thousand ritual remains excavated there in the twentieth century. Unearthed articles dating from the second half of the fifth to the first half of the sixth century found at Jungmak-dong, a ritual site on the southwestern coast of the Korean Peninsula, which are almost identical to the objects found at Okinoshima, point to transregional and transcultural ties from the earliest phase of Okinoshima rituals. This fact also has been marginalized in World Heritage documentation.[18] When voting commenced, the Korean delegation did vote in favor of the inscription, although they sided with the ICOMOS evaluation that the island alone was worthy of World Heritage status. The remaining twenty members of the World Heritage Committee voted unanimously for inscription of all eight sites in a somewhat rare reversal of the ICOMOS recommendation.[19]

Okinoshima is known locally as the "island of mystery" (*shinpi no shima* 神秘の島), and indeed it is mysterious. Who ventured across the rough waters of the

she served as editorial director, introduces the Kii mountains in Japan as having "separate access for men and women only." This claim, which presents nearby Inamuragatake as a mountain for women, is false. As noted in DeWitt, "A Mountain Set Apart" (p. 155), Inamuragatake is a popular day hike enjoyed by both men and women; no worship facilities or ritual sites are present along the trail or at the summit. Second, *UNESCO's Promise: Gender Equality, a Global Priority* emphasizes that UNESCO employs an approach of "gender mainstreaming in all programmes and activities" (p. 3), and defines gender equality as situations in which "women and men equally enjoy the right to access, participate and contribute to cultural life" (p. 14). Finally, in *Gender Equality: Heritage and Creativity*, Rössler describes Ōminesan as an example of "gendered heritage" (p. 60), and notes that the World Heritage Centre received letters of protest in regard to the male-only mountain's potential World Heritage inscription. "Outstanding Universal Value" is a universal right, Rössler concludes, but inscribing a site on the World Heritage List also "enshrines the gendered traditions, history and rituals." Rössler cites two sources for her information on Ōminesan: a 2004 article from *The Japan Times* newspaper and the website for "JapanVisitor," an internet tourist guide.

14 Government of Japan, *Munakata, Okinoshima to kanren isan-gun*, pp. 3–4.

15 International Council on Monuments and Sites, *ICOMOS Evaluation*, pp. 2, 12.

16 World Heritage Committee, *41COM 8B.19*.

17 Referencing a photograph of the boat parade of Munakata Grand Shrine's Miare Festival, which reunites the three Munakata goddesses yearly at the Hetsumiya Shrine in Tashima,

the delegate from the Republic of Korea requested an oral intervention and expressed the following concern: "As far as I am not mistaken the ritual covers the time span around A.D. fourth century to ninth century, but I recognize the Japanese national flag together with two rising sun flags on the ship adopted by the Japanese imperial army during the second world war, so I think I am very doubtful all of a sudden—is the justification for worshipping for security and safety, for navigational purposes, or some kind of other politically motivated purposes?" Republic of Korea, 41st Session of the World Heritage Committee, Krakow, Poland, 9 July 2017.

18 Objects found at Jungmak-dong in excavations sponsored by the Chonju National Museum in 1992 include celadons from the Northern Wei (386–534), Jin (265–420), and Southern and Northern dynasties (420–589) of China, as well as horse trappings together with soft stone imitations of objects (sickle, cuirass, adze, knife) from Korea, nearly identical to those excavated on Okinoshima. On the Jungmak-dong ritual site, see Ko, "Kankoku ni okeru saishi iseki"; Woo, "Chikumakudō"; Nelson, *Gyeongju*.

19 From 2006 to 2009, roughly 14 percent of ICOMOS' recommendations against inscription were reversed by the World Heritage Committee. Tabet, *ICOMOS*, p. 72. The exact number of decision reversals is difficult to estimate, given that ICOMOS may recommend one of three options (inscribe, defer, or refer back to the State Party for further information), and the same three options are presented to the World Heritage Committee. Serial nominations like the eight-property Okinoshima inscription, which received partial recommendation for inscription by ICOMOS, comprise a rare but growing category of nomination.

Genkai Sea with valuable objects to perform rituals there, and why did they do it? How did the cache of artifacts that are so treasured today end up forgotten by most from the ninth century until modern times? What are the historical roots of the taboo against women? Answers to these inquiries and others are not forthcoming, at least not yet. Moving forward to the present day, many are wondering what the future will hold for Okinoshima in its new capacity as a World Heritage site. A delicate balance exists between caretakers dedicated to preserving the so-called "untouched" (although this is hardly true, considering the human history of the island) sanctity of Okinoshima, and critics dissatisfied that a site of "Outstanding Universal Value" is off-limits—and for historically unsubstantiated reasons—to half the world's population. Okinoshima's gender taboo has been sensationalized by the media, but it seems doubtful that critics voicing cries of discrimination will be answered anytime soon. In the wake of the World Heritage inscription, Munakata Shrine authorities have taken measures to restrict the island even further. In addition to canceling the yearly on-site celebration of Japan's historical naval might, the shrine has just implemented another new policy stipulating that no men at all, except for the single male shrine priest, will be permitted on the island (members of the media and most researchers will now be banned as well). Okinoshima seems destined to remain enigmatic for now, a World Heritage site floating alone out at sea.

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