

From Outcasts to Emperors

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From Outcasts to Emperors

*Shingon Ritsu and the Mañjuśrī Cult
in Medieval Japan*

By

David Quinter



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Cover illustration: *Five-Syllable Mañjuśrī Painting* (with Monkan's 1334/6/9 dedication), Collection from Nara National Museum. Important Cultural Property. Photograph provided by Nara National Museum.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Quinter, David, author.

From outcasts to emperors : Shingon Ritsu and the Mañjuśrī cult in medieval Japan / by David Quinter.
pages cm. — (Brill's Japanese studies library, ISSN 0925-6512 ; volume 50)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-90-04-29339-7 (hardback : acid-free paper) — ISBN 978-90-04-29459-2 (e-book)

1. Ritsu (Sect)—Japan—History. 2. Mañjuśrī (Buddhist deity)—Cult—Japan—History. I. Title.

BQ8782.Q26 2015

294.3'92—dc23

2015010669

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual 'Brill' typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see www.brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 0925-6512

ISBN 978-90-04-29339-7 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-29459-2 (e-book)

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*For three mothers:
Kumi, Mom, and Okāsan*



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Acknowledgements

Karmic debts are long and life is short. Recognizing the number of people and organizations who have supported this project over the years is humbling, and I can only hope that both those mentioned and unmentioned here know that they have my deep gratitude. I would first like to thank my former Stanford University advisers, Carl Bielefeldt and Bernard Faure, who guided this project in its early stages. I am also indebted to Yoshida Sanae for sponsoring me at the University of Tokyo Historiographical Institute, where much of the research was carried out. Kikuchi Hiroki, also of the Historiographical Institute, provided timely aid acquiring the permissions for the images and other helpful advice. Ōtsuka Norihiro helped greatly in deciphering the primary sources translated in this study. For additional support during research trips to Japan, I am grateful to Matsuo Kenji, Niels Guelberg, Saeki Shungen of Saidaiji, and Kudō Ryōnin of Hannyaji. To name just a few of the many other scholars who contributed to this project in diverse ways, I would like to thank Ryūichi Abé, Abe Yasurō, Susan Andrews, Janet Goodwin, Paul Groner, Iyanaga Nobumi, the late Jeffrey Mass, Lori Meeks, Minowa Kenryō, Eisho Nasu, Robert Rhodes, Sueki Fumihiko, Melinda Takeuchi, Mark Unno, Zhaohua Yang, and Michael Zimmermann.

Friends who lent sympathetic ears and insights over the years are even more numerous. To Conan Carey, George Clonos, Hank Glassman, Andrew Goble, Will and Kelly Hansen, Caroline Hirasawa, Christina Laffin, Max Moerman, and James Robson; my colleagues at the University of Alberta; my family and friends in Maryland, Edmonton, Tokyo, and Kami Ooka; and many others, you have my lasting friendship and gratitude.

This project would not have been possible without the generous support of multiple institutions. I gratefully acknowledge fellowships and grants from the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program, the Stanford Institute for International Studies, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Washington University in St. Louis, the Killam Research Fund and the Office of the Vice President (Research) at the University of Alberta, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. A subvention from the University of Alberta enabled the final copyediting and indexing. I would also like to thank Erika Stevens and Winifred Olsen for their careful editing, Cynthia Col for preparing the index, and my research assistant Rachael Heffernan for help with the proofreading and indexing.

I am grateful to the Eastern Buddhist Society for permission to include a revised version of my article “Emulation and Erasure: Eison, Ninshō, and the Gyōki Cult,” *Eastern Buddhist*, n.s., 39, no. 1 (2008): 29–60, as part of Chapter 1. *Monumenta Nipponica* kindly granted permission to reprint a revised version of my article “Creating Bodhisattvas: Eison, *Hinin*, and the ‘Living Mañjuśrī,’” *Monumenta Nipponica* 62, no. 4 (2007): 437–79, as part of Chapter 3 and two translations in the Documents section. I am deeply indebted to Hannyajī, Saidaiji, the Nara National Museum, and Tankōsha for permissions to publish the images included here; specific credits are noted in the captions.

I am equally indebted to Brill’s Japanese Studies Library and the series editors, especially Kate Nakai, who introduced my work to the managing editor, Joshua Mostow, and to my steadfast acquisitions editor, Patricia Radder. Referees’ comments have also helped the book in many ways. I am grateful for the advice of all; any errors that remain are, of course, my responsibility.

Last, I cannot adequately express my gratitude and love to Kumi, Angie, Mom, and Okāsan, who have sacrificed much as I have pursued this project and the itinerant, demanding, and rewarding academic career to which it belongs. Thank you so much for your support and the absences you have endured in the process. I love what I do and you make this possible.

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Conventions

All translations from Chinese and Japanese are my own, except where otherwise noted. Terms in parentheses in passages that I have translated, except for romanizations, represent interlinear comments in the original. Terms in brackets are my insertions. Unless indicated by Sk. for Sanskrit or Ch. for Chinese, all romanized terms in parentheses are Japanese. My rule of thumb is to transliterate where the Sino-Japanese sources transliterate. I have thus referred to such Buddhist deities as Mañjuśrī (Monju or Monjushiri) and Śākyamuni (Shaka or Shakamuni) by their Sanskrit names, while using the Japanese for deities whose names are rendered in Sino-Japanese translation, such as Fugen (Sk. Samantabhadra) and Kannon (Sk. Avalokiteśvara).

Foreign-language terms used frequently in this study are italicized on first mention only. The characters for Sino-Japanese terms are supplied on first mention. As the study is primarily concerned with the Japanese context of the cited scriptures, they are generally referred to by Japanese pronunciation, with pinyin transliterations for Chinese scripture titles supplied on first mention. However, in cases where an English translation for a scripture title is well-established (such as the *Lotus Sutra*) or for clarity elsewhere (such as repeatedly cited Mañjuśrī scriptures), I have used English title translations. References to texts in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (T) are identified here by text number then, as needed, by volume, page, register, and line numbers.

Premodern dates based on Japanese sources are rendered in the format Western year/lunar month/day, as needed. Ages for historical figures in premodern Japan are rendered according to traditional Japanese calculations, in which a child is considered age one from birth to the child's first New Year's Day.

Prologue

The monks and nuns of medieval Japan, like most of us, juggled multiple identities. Our identities include those we have cultivated in the past, sometimes long ago, but that continue to play roles in our personal narratives: daughter or son, sister or brother, wife or husband, mother or father, blue-collar or white-collar worker, native or immigrant. I have played multiple roles—as author, editor, translator, student, professor, colleague, husband, father, and so forth—in the course of writing this book. Such are the multiple identities we juggle.

The monks and nuns of medieval Japan were real people as well, with multiple roles and identities. As simple as this insight sounds, it bears remembering. I am a twenty-first century historian of religion and a buddhologist, and I will never reach those real people of medieval Japan. But the knowledge that there were real people behind the texts and tropes and figments and fragments keeps me going.¹ And as real people, these monks and nuns also incorporated their multiple roles and identities in their devotions.

Take Eison 叡尊 (or Eizon; 1201–90), founder of the Shingon Ritsu 真言律 movement that is the subject of this book. Eison began his monastic career specializing in Shingon, a form of esoteric (or tantric) Buddhism. As he tells the story in his autobiography, however, after ten years of earnest study and practice, he was plagued by doubts as to why so many of his fellow esoteric practitioners were falling into an evil realm of rebirth (*madō* 魔道). He concluded that it was because they had failed to keep the Buddhist behavioral precepts, and he therefore vowed to study the teachings and practices of monastic discipline and spread the precepts in order to benefit sentient beings. In 1234, the same year that he had awakened to the significance of the precepts and monastic discipline (Jp. *ritsu*; Sk. *vinaya*), he received funding to dwell at the Nara temple Saidaiji 西大寺 as a pure precepts-keeping monk who would engage in esoteric practice.² Eison was eventually able to found a new monastic order there that developed into the Buddhist school now known as Shingon

1 I have borrowed the phrase “figments and fragments” from Schopen 2005.

2 See the entry for 1234 in the *Kongō Busshi Eison kanjin gakushōki* 金剛仏子叡尊感身学正記 (The Diamond Buddha-Disciple Eison's Record of Physical Response and Study of the True; hereafter *Gakushōki*). For the text of the *Gakushōki*, I have used the unannotated Chinese version in NKBK 1977; see pp. 6–8 for the entry here. I have also benefited from the annotated *yomikudashi* 読み下し version in Hosokawa 1999, which covers two parts of the full three-part autobiography (*yomikudashi* refers to a method of “reading out” Chinese texts and rendering them in a form of classical Japanese).

Ritsu. In brief, this is the origin story of Eison and his monastic order's twofold identity as specialists in Shingon and Ritsu.

Such origin stories, however, show only a few of the many roles we voluntarily play or are cast into by others. Eison's own writings and those featuring him variously portray him as a monk's son, bereaved child, shrine attendant adoptee, teenage novice, poor ascetic, eager student, and accomplished master. He is shown to be a creator of images and author of texts, a provider to the poor and preceptor to emperors. He plays the roles of a fundraiser and restorer of temples and convents, both patron and patroness. The diversity of Eison's roles leads modern commentators to assess him in diverging ways. Most studies treat him as primarily a Ritsu master, although a few recent ones flip the prioritization within his twofold identity and suggest that he always privileged the esoteric aspects (Shingon) over the exoteric (Ritsu). Based on his involvement with diverse members of society from outcasts to emperors, some studies treat him as an innovative champion of the poor and the outcast, others as an upholder of the status quo that oppresses those same poor and outcast.

Monkan 文觀 (1278–1357), a grand-disciple of Eison and the subject of this book's final chapter, also illustrates well the diverse identities of a single medieval monk. Self-statements and those of disciples show him variously as a filial son and provincial novice, a trainee in the Ritsu school in Nara, and eventually a fully ordained monk in Eison's precepts lineage. Also a master in Eison's esoteric lineage, Monkan parlayed those credentials into affiliation with Daigoji's 醍醐寺 prestigious Sanbōin 三宝院 and Hōon'in 報恩院 esoteric lineages. He finally attained such renown as to become attendant monk to Emperor Go-Daigo 後醍醐 (r. 1318–39) and esoteric initiator of more than two hundred disciples. In addition to being portrayed as a master ritualist, Monkan was an author of liturgical and doctrinal texts, as well as a creator of elaborate paintings, sketches, diagrams, and other illustrations. Statements by opponents, however, show him as a pretender and usurper of the Sanbōin lineage, the systematizer of the "heretical Tachikawa 立川 cult," and a practitioner of black magic and sexual rituals. Monkan continues to play many of these roles today, occasionally cast as a gifted artist and an innovator at the apex of medieval Shingon thought and ritual but more commonly as an aberrant monk, political sycophant, inept warrior, or wanton purveyor of Shingon secrets.

Buddhist deities also bear multiple identities. Take Mañjuśrī, who is typically called the Bodhisattva of Wisdom. Such a tagline suggests that the Mañjuśrī cult—the collective devotion to Mañjuśrī expressed in narratives, images, and rituals—would be most concerned with insight and knowledge. This is a concern not only to Buddhist practitioners but to students and scholars across religious and professional affiliations. Indeed, the deep associations of the

bodhisattva with *prajñā*, the active “wisdom” or insight that discerns the true nature of phenomena, has proven appealing to such scholar-monks as Eison and Monkan as well as to present-day students preparing for entrance exams or otherwise praying for academic success, in Japan and elsewhere in Asia.

The quest for wisdom or success in intellectual matters, however, is only part of the diverse identities and hopes projected onto Mañjuśrī and manifested in his cult. Mañjuśrī is one of the most prominent bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhist literature, and cultic devotion to Mañjuśrī has a long history in East Asia. Various complementing and contrasting the understanding of Mañjuśrī as the Bodhisattva of Wisdom has been another leitmotif, that of devotion to the deity as a bodhisattva of compassion. Traditions extolling Mañjuśrī’s benefits for the poor and afflicted extend from the circa fifth-century Chinese scripture known as the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*.³ These traditions include egalitarian feasts and manifestations of the bodhisattva on China’s Mt. Wutai 五台—which is believed to be his pure land in this world—and Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan that combined devotion to the bodhisattva with charitable relief activities. Also throughout East Asia, due especially to esoteric traditions around the bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī has been invoked as a state-protecting deity, adding to his appeal among ruling elites and the monks and nuns leading prayers for them. Significant for Shingon Ritsu expressions of the cult in particular is the association of the bodhisattva with filial devotion and memorial rites for loved ones.

The Mañjuśrī cult blurs the lines between popular and elite, this-worldly and other-worldly, and public and private. So too do Eison and his Shingon Ritsu disciples as they adopt and adapt the diverse aspects of the cult in their activities. My interest in Eison, Shingon Ritsu, and the Mañjuśrī cult in early medieval Japan (ca. 1150–1350) is motivated by the tantalizing glimpses that the textual and iconographic sources yield into the lives of real people dead long before my time, people with real-world concerns and hopes and strategies. Through veils of time and language we see people choosing where and how to live and balancing their desires to help themselves, their institutions, and others. We see people who need funds, livelihoods, and the support of others to acquire them. We see sexual and power dynamics both real and imagined, and relations among varied social classes and groups—to quote many medieval Japanese texts: between high and low, male and female, monastic and lay. Although our studies can never reach those real people on the other

3 Jp. *Monjushiri hatsunehangyō* 文殊師利般涅槃經 (Ch. *Wenshushili banniepan jing*; T 463). For an annotated translation and analysis of this scripture, including its likely dating to the fifth century, see Quinter 2010.

side of the historical gap, we can see how they are portrayed, the roles they play and into which they are cast, and the models those roles draw on.

I came to see the roles and models analyzed in this book largely by undertaking close readings of the premodern Chinese and Japanese texts related to the rituals and icons of the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult, especially those written by Eison and his disciples themselves. I was first drawn to the study of Eison and his disciples, however, by the sheer variety of contexts in which their activities were *mentioned* in secondary scholarship contrasted with the relative scarcity of direct studies on them, especially in Western-language scholarship. My encounters with Eison's movement in the scholarly literature began with varied but interrelated interests: in the founder of Shingon, Kūkai 空海 (774–835); in the literature and devotional practices around saints; and in how models of monastic and extramonastic Buddhist practitioners interacted in shaping saints' cults. These interests led me to pursue a better understanding of the relationships between the “biographical process” for such monastic founders as Kūkai and popular traditions of itinerant or reclusive practitioners, particularly those known as *hijiri* 聖 (holy persons).⁴

Exploring my interest in Shingon for periods after Kūkai's time, I discovered Eison, founder of the Shingon Ritsu school (alternatively known as the Saidaiji order) in the Kamakura period (1185–1333). A time of great social and religious change, the Kamakura period is typically celebrated for such *other* well-known founders as Dōgen 道元 (1200–53) for Sōtō Zen, Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212) for the Pure Land school, Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262) for the True Pure Land school, and Nichiren 日蓮 (1222–82) for the Nichiren school. Collectively, the founders of these movements, which variously developed from the Tendai 天台 school, had been treated as representative of “Kamakura Buddhism.” Neither Shingon nor Ritsu and the other Nara Buddhist schools were prominent in such representations.⁵ But who was this Eison, and what was the nature of “Shingon Ritsu” and the combination of esoteric and exoteric Buddhist schools which that designation suggested?

I soon discovered that Eison had written one of the most detailed autobiographies of any monk in early and medieval Japan. He was also deeply involved

4 “Biographical process” here is adopted from Reynolds and Capps 1976.

5 The six Nara schools are Kegon 華嚴, Hossō 法相, Ritsu, Sanron 三論, Jōjitsu 成実, and Kusha 俱舍. These schools are all considered exoteric ones. After Kūkai's introduction of the esoteric Shingon school in the ninth century, however, the major Nara temples were also strongly influenced by Shingon esotericism (*mikkyō* 密教). The other main tradition of esotericism in Japan is that linked to the Tendai school, which comprises a mix of exoteric and esoteric traditions.

in temple promotional campaigns, which were considered a specialty of *kanjin hijiri* 勧進聖 (“promotional saints” involved in fundraising). These promotional campaigns were for a diverse array of projects, including the restoration of temples and convents, icon construction, and civil works and social welfare projects. Eison’s most renowned disciple, Ninshō 忍性 (1217–1303), had also been deeply involved with such temple and social welfare projects, as well as hijiri traditions. The activities of both monks brought them into contact not only with itinerant Buddhist practitioners but with varied people who moved in the margins of medieval Japanese society. Such itinerant or marginalized people included wandering entertainers and craftsmen, prisoners, courtesans, and, most significantly for this study, outcasts.

As a result of my findings, new series of questions began to drive my research. These questions aimed to flesh out the intertwined material, social, ritual, and narrative contexts for the activities of Eison and his disciples as well as portrayals of those activities. How did Eison’s monastic order obtain the social and material support for its wide-ranging activities? How did Eison portray his activities in his writings, and how did other people—past and present—portray them? How about the activities of other leading monks in his order, such as Ninshō or Shinkū 信空 (1229–1316),⁶ who eventually succeeded Eison as head of Saidaiji? What roles did the devotion to multiple deities and saints expressed in these writings and in the monks’ extensive temple and icon constructions play in their diverse activities? Who were the marginalized people wandering in and out of the rituals and narratives and why were they there? Finally, given the Saidaiji order’s diverse array of activities and its rise to prominence in the Kamakura period itself—the most widely studied period of Japanese Buddhism—how could the order have slipped through the historiographical cracks?

Such are the driving questions behind my specialization in Eison’s Saidaiji order, all of which inform this book in broad terms. In specific terms, I address these questions through a focus on Saidaiji order cultic activities for one deity in particular, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Fundamental to the Saidaiji order’s involvement with the Mañjuśrī cult and outcasts was a belief that Mañjuśrī would incarnate as an outcast to elicit charitable deeds and that if one performed such charitable deeds, one would see the “living Mañjuśrī.” Moreover,

6 There are discrepancies in sources regarding whether Shinkū was born in 1229 or 1231; however, Oishio Chihiro argues that 1229 is more likely, and I follow Oishio here (1998, 380).



FIGURE 1 Seated Statue of Kōshō Bosatsu Eison (1280), held by Saidaiji. *Important Cultural Property.*

COURTESY OF SAIDAIJI, NARA. PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED BY SAIDAIJI.

Eison and his fellow monastics wedded this belief to conceptions of living icons, statues considered alive and actual manifestations of the deities they embodied.⁷ They promoted these beliefs through dedicatory rituals for icons they constructed, and these rituals provided opportunities for soliciting material and other support for their temple construction projects and charitable deeds. Here, then, I found one key to links between their cultic activities, involvement with outcasts and other marginalized people, and icon-constructing activities and other temple projects.

7 For a statue of Eison himself that came to be viewed as such a living icon—the 1280 Saidaiji statue commissioned by his disciples—and the items inserted inside, see Figures 1–2 here. See also the analyses in Nakao 1993, Brinker 1997–98, and Groner 2001, 142–50.

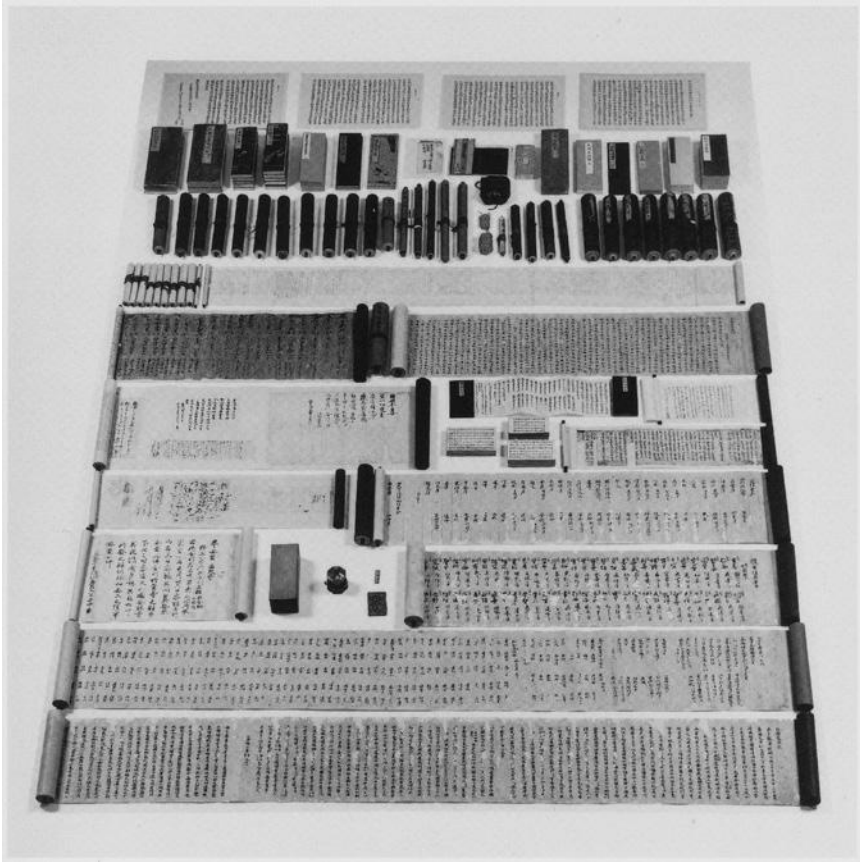


FIGURE 2 *Deposits inside Seated Statue of Kōshō Bosatsu Eison (1280), held by Saidaiji. Important Cultural Property.*
 COURTESY OF SAIDAIJI, NARA. IMAGE REPRODUCED FROM NARA
 KOKURITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN, *SAIDAIJI TEN* (1990).

I first envisioned the structure of this study, however, when I discovered Monkan's strong connections to both the Saidaiji order and the Mañjuśrī cult. Monkan was best known in scholarship as the purported systematizer or perfecter of the Tachikawa lineage, a lineage widely treated as the embodiment of "heretical" Shingon practices. How, I wondered, could Monkan have moved from his training in Shingon and precepts traditions under Eison's eminent disciple Shinkū to his associations with the supposed black magic and sexual aberrance of the esoteric Tachikawa lineage?

I learned that—among many other examples of Monkan's involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult—in 1324 he dedicated a Mañjuśrī statue to the Nara temple

Hannyaji 般若寺, with an inscription linking the statue to esoteric subjugation rites that Emperor Go-Daigo performed against the warrior government in Kamakura. But Hannyaji was also the Nara temple most strongly linked to Eison's relief activities for outcasts. The temple's main icon was a different Mañjuśrī statue, one that Eison called the "living Mañjuśrī" and dedicated in 1267 and 1269. Shinkū dedicated attendant figures for the main Mañjuśrī image in 1287, and both Eison and Shinkū connected the living Mañjuśrī to outcasts and relief activities. How could monks ultimately from the same monastic order have moved from relief activities for outcasts (Eison and Shinkū) to subjugation rites (Monkan) invoking the same deity at the same temple in such a short time? Put differently, why was Mañjuśrī now being invoked at Hannyaji for such esoteric rites?

Even within Eison's Nara monastic milieu in the Kamakura period, the Mañjuśrī cult clearly embraced much more than just charitable relief for outcasts. Although the historical accuracy of Monkan's link to the Tachikawa lineage in his own lifetime is dubious, his status as an attendant monk to Emperor Go-Daigo, and the evidence of the link to Go-Daigo in his Hannyaji Mañjuśrī inscription, is undeniable. Thus it also became clear to me that the influence of Eison's movement had in a relatively short time extended far from its humble origins when he first entered Saidaiji. So I began to ask: what does Monkan's linked involvement in the Saidaiji order and the Mañjuśrī cult tell us about changes in the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult, and in Eison's movement more broadly, over the Kamakura period? And what do changes in the movement—and perceptions, past and present, of monks affiliated with the movement—tell us about the gaps in our constructions of "Kamakura Buddhism" more broadly?

Introduction

The Kamakura period (1185–1333) was a turbulent time in Japanese politics and religion. The warrior elite established a new seat of government in Kamakura that rivaled and complemented imperial rule in Kyoto, leading to a ruling system best characterized as a dual polity. Anxiety accompanying shifting relationships among social classes was heightened by perceptions that the age was corrupt and plagued by wars, natural disasters, and declining moral standards. As the ruling classes turned to Buddhist groups for ideological and ritual support amid the turbulence, elites and commoners alike sought material and soteriological relief. The new Zen, Pure Land, and Nichiren movements in this turbulent time have received by far the most scholarly attention. This book, however, illuminates the breadth and prominence of another new Buddhist movement: the monastic order founded by Eison at the Nara temple Saidaiji, now known as the Shingon Ritsu school.

Shingon practitioners are widely recognized for esoteric ritual expertise, specializing in the “three mysteries” (*sanmitsu* 三密) of body, speech, and mind as expressed through mudras (bodily gestures), mantras (incantations), and mandalas (cosmographs). Ritsu monks and nuns specialize in the texts and practices of monastic discipline, or the *vinaya*, and the behavioral precepts for monastic and lay followers. Shingon Ritsu is a designation used from the sixteenth century on to refer to the school that developed from Eison’s Saidaiji order. The term, however, well reflects the order’s dual emphases on Shingon esotericism and Ritsu and helps distinguish it from other Ritsu groups. Moreover, medieval sources variously refer to Eison and his disciples as esoteric and as Ritsu practitioners, as well as by such designations as the Saidaiji group or lineage. I thus use both “Shingon Ritsu” and “the Saidaiji order” here for Eison’s movement to convey current and past designations for his group, their main areas of expertise, and their medieval through modern institutional base at Saidaiji.

In broad terms, the Saidaiji order provides an exemplary opportunity for interdisciplinary study of early medieval religion and society, as Eison and his followers were involved in an extremely wide range of activities in this time. The order is significant due to its innovative synthesis of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism, rituals and social welfare activities that included a spectrum of society, and temple restoration projects that created an artistic and architectural legacy still visible in modern-day Nara, Kyoto, and Kamakura, among other areas. Twentieth-century repairs to several of the group’s many surviving statues from the medieval period have revealed treasure troves of texts, images,

and relics inserted in the statues. Exploration of these repositories alongside related texts and rituals vividly attests to the group's broad social reach and the "lived religion" of medieval Japan.

The multifaceted activities of Eison and his disciples were tied to the cults of many deities and saints. Their promotion of images and relics associated with these holy figures helped establish cultic centers for the Saidaiji order's construction projects and related fundraising efforts, as they crafted miracle accounts and ritual activities for the images and relics that attracted support from both monastics and laypeople. Eison and his colleagues legitimized their new ordination lineage itself through a belief in the direct conferral of precepts by buddhas and bodhisattvas. The Saidaiji order's cultic orientation was thus clearly pluralistic. However, the Mañjuśrī cult provides a powerful unifying lens through which to view the order's ideals, activities, and social context in the Kamakura period, for three principal reasons.

First, among the various cults in which Eison and his disciples were involved, the Mañjuśrī cult was the most strongly associated with their charitable efforts toward *hinin* 非人. *Hinin*, translated in this study as "outcasts," literally means "non-persons." In scholarship on medieval Japan, the term has been used to refer to a wide variety of people considered "polluted" or of ambiguous status, including lepers, beggars, courtesans, prisoners, executioners, and attendants at funerary grounds.¹ Eison's views and practices related to *hinin*, however, were particularly concerned with beggars, the gravely ill or disabled, and orphans or otherwise abandoned people (Oishio 1995, 245). Eison and his order's involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult is thus significant for understanding religious views toward such marginalized people in the medieval period, which have received less study than those in the early modern and modern periods, for which sources are more abundant.

Second, the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult also has links with imperial and warrior rule that serve as a counterpoint to the Saidaiji order's links with commoners and outcasts. In particular, the invocation of Mañjuśrī by Shingon Ritsu monastics in ritual preparations for war—first against the invading Mongols and later amid impending civil war—shines varied light on both

1 "Lepers" here indicates people referred to in Saidaiji order texts as having the skin disease of *rai* 癩 or *kairai* 疥癩. Strictly speaking, as Andrew Goble indicates (2011, 67–68), there were many types of *rai* in the medieval period, reflecting various skin conditions. In the texts examined for this study, however, it is clear that considerable social stigma was attached to *rai*, and Eison and his immediate disciples understood it as a severe disease. I therefore use the translation "leper" to reflect this perceived stigma and severity and intend no disrespect to sufferers of Hansen's disease (also known as leprosy).

their charitable activities for outcasts and the interplay of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism in the cult. While their relief activities for outcasts were closely related to such exoteric precepts as the need to perform good deeds and refrain from evil ones, even these activities showed esoteric aspects from the start. And while ritual activities to subjugate enemies were especially the provenance of Shingon and other esoteric practitioners in early medieval Japan, Eison and such fellow monks as Monkan who invoked Mañjuśrī for state protection simultaneously invoked traditional exoteric aspects of the bodhisattva. The Mañjuśrī cult thus illuminates revealing constellations of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism, both in the Shingon Ritsu movement and medieval Nara Buddhism more broadly.

Third, fundraising appeals, inscriptions, votive texts (*ganmon* 願文), origin stories (*engi* 縁起), liturgical texts (*kōshiki* 講式), and autobiographical and hagiographic accounts linked to the cult form vivid, concrete portraits of the Saidaiji order's self-understanding and the social context for the order's activities. Such concrete sources supplement—and frequently contrast with—the trans-historical orientation of most Buddhist sutras. Close attention to the texts and contexts of Saidaiji order participation in the Mañjuśrī cult helps reveal Eison's understanding of the transmission of Buddhist teachings and practices, the manner in which he promoted his movement, and historical changes in the activities and perceptions of the founder, his disciples, and related practitioners. Thus in this study I explore the rich interplay between the Mañjuśrī cult, the Saidaiji order's self-construction, and its place in the religious and social landscape of early medieval Japan. In doing so, I suggest ways to re-envision our understanding of Nara Buddhism more broadly amid the influential social and religious changes of the time.

The reasons for the Saidaiji order's emergence and rise to prominence in the Kamakura period were multiple. Scholars have typically characterized such Nara Buddhist movements as competitive responses to the emergence of the new groups commonly understood as representing “Kamakura Buddhism,” especially the Pure Land lineages of Hōnen and Shinran. Based in part on a scheme of the dharma's progressive decline from the Buddha's time and belief that the “latter days of the dharma” (*mappō* 末法) had begun in 1052, Hōnen and his renowned disciple Shinran preached that in this degenerate age one could only attain enlightenment through reliance on the “other-power” of the buddha Amida 阿弥陀 (Sk. Amitābha or Amitāyus) and birth in his pure land. Their new Pure Land movements contrasted reliance on the other-power of Amida with such “self-power” practices as generating the aspiration for enlightenment (Jp. *bodai shin* 菩提心; Sk. *bodhicitta*), keeping the precepts, chanting mantras, and accumulating meritorious deeds (e.g., through contributions to

temple construction projects or other good works). In doing so, they did challenge typical emphases in the Nara and other established Buddhist schools on pluralistic forms of practice and devotion suited to practitioners with differing capacities. Thus in the early Kamakura period, such celebrated monks linked to the Nara schools as the Hossō monk Jōkei 貞慶 (1155–1213) and the Kegon-Shingon monk Myōe 明恵 (1173–1232) argued against Hōnen's Pure Land teachings, reasserting the necessity of the aspiration for enlightenment and diverse forms of practice and devotion, including maintaining the precepts.²

As we will see in coming chapters, Eison credited disciples of Jōkei for transmitting to him teachings on the vinaya and the precepts, and he placed great emphasis on the aspiration for enlightenment and Mañjuśrī's role in inspiring that aspiration. Moreover, in Chapter 5, we will explore parallels among Eison's and Myōe's movements concerning syntheses of precepts traditions with devotion to Mañjuśrī. Thus at one level, Eison and his movement's emphases on the precepts and diverse cultic practices can be seen as an extension of the revival of Nara Buddhism and of the precepts initiated by such immediate predecessors as Jōkei and Myōe, which were in turn partly inspired by challenges from the new Pure Land movements. However, the challenges facing practitioners from the Nara and other established schools in the early Kamakura period, and their innovations in light of those challenges, were much broader than just threats posed by the newer, more exclusive Buddhist movements and responses to those threats.

For example, the Saidaiji order's integrated emphasis on temple construction projects, the precepts, and diverse cultic activities extended broader trends in Nara Buddhism from the late twelfth through early thirteenth centuries that can hardly be characterized as a competitive response to the new Kamakura movements. The Genpei 源平 War (1180–85) that led to the establishment of the warrior government in Kamakura caused much damage to Nara Buddhist temples and helped motivate vigorous restoration activities afterward. Particularly renowned are the Shingon and Pure Land devotee Chōgen's 重源 (1121–1206) efforts to restore Tōdaiji 東大寺 and its branch temples, starting with reconstruction of the Great Buddha statue that served as Tōdaiji's main icon.³ Eison and his disciples' restoration of Saidaiji—the “Great Western Temple” founded in the eighth century as the counterpart to Tōdaiji,

2 For monographs examining the emergence and development of Hōnen's and Shinran's Pure Land lineages, see Blum 2002 and Dobbins 1989. On responses by Jōkei and Myōe to Hōnen's teachings, see Ford 2006 and Tanabe 1992, chapter 4.

3 See in particular Goodwin 1994, chapter 4, and Rosenfield 2011.

the “Great Eastern Temple”—and their development of a network of branch temples mirrored many earlier activities of Chōgen and his colleagues.⁴

Especially relevant to this book is the Saidaiji order’s twofold involvement with both elite and marginalized people, which strove to reconcile often-conflicting demands on what monastics of the time could or should do. While links between religious groups and social welfare may seem natural in modern religions, such links were not always so natural to the leading Buddhist schools in the early Kamakura period. Links between these schools and the dominant political powers, on the other hand, *were* natural. Cooperation between “church and state” was assumed, and many high-ranking monks avoided activities considered ritually polluting—including contact with outcasts and corpses—that might interfere with their ability to perform rituals for the state and for elite lay patrons. Undertaking civil works projects such as building bridges or roads was also problematic because of the risk of killing living beings in the soil during the construction process; prohibitions against killing were among the most fundamental Buddhist precepts. A gap existed in Buddhist communities between their official ritual functions and their involvement in social welfare activities. Into that gap stepped the Saidaiji order.

Rhetorically, the Saidaiji order and related new Ritsu lineages in the Kamakura period asserted the purifying power of the precepts, suggesting that their strict adherence to the precepts enabled them to engage in activities that would otherwise be considered defiling. Practically, however, they also seem to have employed a carefully stratified monastic structure in which higher-ranking Ritsu monks were protected from ritual impurity by employing lower-class followers to do much of the dirty work, such as handling corpses and maintaining funerary grounds.⁵ Aided by both perceptions of their purity as Ritsu monks and these hierarchical monastic structures, Eison and his disciples carved their niche in Kamakura-period society by performing esoteric rituals for both sides of the dual polity (warrior and imperial rulers), while undertaking such social welfare practices as providing charitable relief to outcasts, building funerary grounds for commoners, and constructing or restoring temples, roads, bridges, ports, shelters, and hospices. As specialists in precept traditions they were also qualified to ordain others, and they forged bonds with people from various social classes by widely conferring precepts to monks and nuns, warrior and courtier leaders, and commoners and outcasts.

4 The grouped essays on Chōgen, Eison, and Ninshō in Nakao and Imai 1983 are informative for exploring these parallels.

5 On this division of labor, see Hosokawa 1987, especially 9–20.

While Saidaiji order monastics interacted with a range of social groups from humble to elite, their own positioning within and toward such broader social hierarchies belies simple characterization. Eison and his male disciples' involvement with the Kamakura-period revival of female monastic orders provides an instructive case in point. Eison's autobiography and other records show him as deeply concerned with this revival based on his desire to see the full, properly ordained "five groups" of Buddhist monks and nuns established in Japan.⁶ Eison and colleagues who eventually established a new Ritsu lineage believed that previous lines of ordination in Japan had been broken because they had been granted by monastics who themselves did not properly keep the precepts or who had otherwise never followed proper ordination procedures in the first place. Thus, as we will see in Chapter 1, as the first step in establishing what they viewed as the authentic monastic community in Japan, Eison and three colleagues re-ordained themselves in an innovative self-ordination ceremony in 1236, before proceeding to grant ordinations to others. Eison and monks in his new Ritsu lineage also believed, based on vinaya teachings, that the male monastic order needed to be established first, and they first concentrated their efforts there. But it was after Eison had conferred the precepts to all three levels of nuns, from the novice to fully ordained, that he took credit for having established the complete orthodox sangha (community of practitioners) in Japan for the first time, highlighting the significance of this endeavor to him.⁷

Based largely on Eison and his fellow male monks' characterizations of their roles in the revival of female monastic orders, modern scholars have typically portrayed them as holding authority over the female monastics they ordained and their affiliated convents, such as Hokkeji 法華寺 and Chūgūji 中宮寺 in the Nara area. Depending on the scholar's perspective, that authority has been portrayed in more negative terms, as misogynistic control, or more benign terms, as social outreach to marginalized or oppressed people

6 The "five groups" (*goshu* 五衆) refers to the five monastic classifications of Buddhist disciples: 1) monks (*biku* 比丘; Sk. *bhikṣu*); 2) nuns (*bikuni* 比丘尼; Sk. *bhikṣuṇī*); 3) female novices receiving training for ordination (*shikishamana* 式叉摩那; Sk. *śikṣamāṇā*), especially those observing the six precepts for female novices; 4) male novices (*shami* 沙弥; Sk. *śrāmaṇera*); and 5) female novices (*shamini* 沙弥尼; Sk. *śrāmaṇerikā*). When laymen (*ubasoku* 優婆塞; Sk. *upāsaka*) and laywomen who have received the five precepts (*ubai* 優婆夷; Sk. *upāsikā*) are added to this list, it forms the full "seven groups" (*shichishu* 七衆) of monastic and lay practitioners.

7 See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1249/2/6 (NKBK 1977, 22), where Eison comments, after noting his ordination of twelve nuns with the *bikuni* precepts at Hokkeji, that the seven groups of practitioners "in accordance with the dharma" were now complete in Japan for the first time.

akin to the Saidaiji order involvement with outcasts. But the view of Eison and Saidaiji as somehow standing over the nuns to whom they were connected tended to be shared in both portrayals. Recently, however, Lori Meeks has challenged both forms of these portrayals, arguing that Hokkeji held a position of relative autonomy respective to Saidaiji and showing the elite standing of such female leaders of the nuns' revival movements as Hokkeji's Jizen 慈善 (b. 1187) and Chūgūji's Shinnyo 信如 (b. 1211). Moreover, nuns' own writings generally emphasized their own roles and those of founding female figures in establishing and restoring convents, rather than the contributions of Saidaiji monks or other male figures. Although leading Hokkeji nuns did seek and receive ordinations and vinaya teachings from Eison, thereby recognizing his status as an expert in Ritsu traditions, Meeks characterizes the nuns not as lower-standing supplicants but as patron-disciples who stood out from courtiers and other elites patronizing monks only by the level of their religious commitment (e.g., taking monastic ordinations rather than remaining as lay sponsors). Finally, letters from Eison to Jizen show that he himself recognized her and Hokkeji's elite standing.⁸

I agree with most of Meeks's arguments on the relationship between the revival of female monastic orders and Eison's Saidaiji order in the Kamakura period and do not intend to rewrite them here. However, I would like to raise two fundamental observations emerging from this analysis that we should keep in mind during our exploration of the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult, especially in light of the twofold engagement with marginalized people and elites that I argue is characteristic of the cult. First, one-sided portrayals of Eison and his Saidaiji order colleagues as either elite authority figures or champions of the oppressed cannot do justice to the diversity of their social positioning and activities. This remains the case whether we focus on their involvement with nuns and other female practitioners, with outcasts and lower-status itinerant people, with courtier and warrior patrons, or with people of many other social groups. Second, female practitioners' solicitation of diverse levels of ordinations and teachings on the precepts from Eison and other members of new Ritsu lineages—whether doing so as patrons, disciples, or combinations of the two—helps show that the time was ripe for such a precepts-revival movement that would encompass a broad range of participants and concerns.

As important as the Saidaiji order's vinaya teachings and precepts conferrals were to the group's emergence and rise in early medieval Japan, equally important was the esoteric side of their twofold expertise in Shingon and Ritsu. Here, the development of links between Eison's movement and traditions that came

8 See Meeks 2007 and 2010a.

to be known as Ise 伊勢 or Ryōbu 兩部 Shinto provides a provocative example, one that also underscores the increasingly elite patronage of Eison as his fame spread (an issue that I will examine in more detail in Chapter 4).⁹ As with the Saidaiji order's connections to the medieval revival of female monasticism, fuller elaboration of the order's connections to Ise and related kami cults is beyond my focus on the Mañjuśrī cult here; however, a brief excursion should further illuminate the order's significance within the broader Japanese religious tradition.

Eison made three pilgrimages to the Ise shrines. These pilgrimages came at the invitation of leading priest-officials of Ise's Inner Shrine, which housed the ancestral deity of the imperial house, Tenshō Daijin 天照大神 (also known as Tenshō Kōtaijin 天照皇大神 or Amaterasu 天照). Eison carried out the first pilgrimage from the end of the second through the third months of 1273, when he brought two sets of the *Great Wisdom Sutra* and donated one each to the Inner and Outer Shrines for the kami's "dharma-enjoyment" (*hōraku* 法樂).¹⁰ On his second pilgrimage, in the third month of 1275, Eison again presented a copy of the *Great Wisdom Sutra* for the dharma-enjoyment of the two shrines, this time leading the offering rites for a Song-period (960–1279) China copy that Ninshō had brought to Ise and an abbreviated reading of the sutra at Bodaisen 菩提山.¹¹

Ritual and material offerings involving the *Great Wisdom Sutra* or other Perfection of Wisdom (Sk. *Prajñāpāramitā*) scriptures, which are generally classified as exoteric texts, were a typical dharma-offering made to shrines and kami by Buddhist monks. Eison did raise the level of scriptural offerings significantly during his third pilgrimage to Ise, in the third and early fourth months of 1280, when he donated to the shrines two sets of the complete scriptures, obtained from the Saionji 西園寺 courtier family and Retired Emperor

9 For a succinct explanation of distinctions and overlaps between these categories of Shinto, see Rambelli 2009, 237–38. See Kuroda 1981 for an influential revisionist analysis of "Shinto" itself as a category. Before Kuroda, practices centered on local deities, or kami, were generally analyzed under the rubric of Shinto as a discrete religion apart from Buddhism. Kuroda, however, considered kami cults to be part of what he called the "exoteric-esoteric system," which I will discuss below. In the West, Allan Grapard has been at the forefront in emphasizing Buddhist-Shinto combinatorial systems; see, for example, Grapard 1982, 1988, 1989, and 1992. See also the multiauthored essay collections, Breen and Teeuwen 2000, Teeuwen and Scheid 2002, and Teeuwen and Rambelli 2003.

10 For the *Great Wisdom Sutra* (*Daihannyakyō* 大般若經; Ch. *Da bore jing*), see T 220.

11 Details of Eison's first two trips to Ise here are based on the *Gakushōki* entries for fall 1271, 1273/2, 1275/3, and 1279/9 (NKBK 1977, 38–39, and 46).

Kameyama 亀山 (r. 1259–74).¹² But the vast majority of these scriptures as well are classified as exoteric. Moreover, Inner Shrine priests urging Eison's visits also showed close contacts with Enshō 円照 (1221–77) from Tōdaiji's Kaidan'in 戒壇院 (Precepts Platform Cloister), who, like Eison, was deeply involved in the precepts-revival movement of the time.¹³ Thus it may seem that Eison's pilgrimages to Ise were not particularly related to his esoteric expertise. But such a view would be a mistake. Fundamental to the context for Eison's pilgrimages was the threat of Mongol invasions, which began to loom large after the arrival in Japan of an official letter from the Mongol leaders in the first month of 1268. The court ordered ritual prayers at shrines to avert the threat as early as the second month that year, and such prayers were repeated over the ensuing years through and beyond Eison's trips, with both exoteric and esoteric monks taking part. Esoteric monks, however, were particularly valued for their expertise in subjugation rites against foreign invaders and other enemies, and Saidaiji order records clarify that all three of Eison's pilgrimages to Ise were related to such rites.

Eison reports that the aim of his 1273 pilgrimage and offerings was “to eliminate the harm caused by the foreign country, pray for peace in the realm, spread the buddha-dharma, and benefit sentient beings.”¹⁴ A votive text by the novice monk Kanzei 寛誓 (or Kansei), dated 1275/3/12 and inserted in the 1280 Saidaiji statue of Eison, invokes a prayer against the Mongols while on pilgrimage, and the timing and contents show it to be part of Eison's second Ise trip.¹⁵ During Eison's third pilgrimage, in an interview on the way to the Inner Shrine with a female shrine attendant who was skilled at oracles, Eison indicated that his pilgrimage was intended “to pray against the foreign country threat and for peace in the realm and the prosperity of the buddha-dharma.”¹⁶

In addition to esoteric monks' expertise in such prayers to subdue foreign threats, much other evidence suggests the significance of Eison and fellow Saidaiji order monks' esoteric side in their connections with Ise kami traditions.

12 *Gakushōki* entries for 1279/9–11 and 1280/3–4 (NKBK 1977, 46).

13 See Itō 2011, 614, and Andreeva 2006, 364, on the priest Arakida Nobusue's 荒木田延季 reception of Enshō at Ise and his contribution of a preface to one of Enshō's works.

14 *Gakushōki* entry for 1279/9/18 (NKBK 1977, 46).

15 See NKBK 1977, 390–91, for Kanzei's vow, and Kondō 1985, 123–24, for further analysis.

16 See NKBK 1977, 333–34, for this account by the monk Shōkai 性海 (b. 1235) of events that took place on 1280/3/17. The interview took place at the *torii* gates before Kaze no miya 風宮, the furthest point Buddhist monks could journey on the way to the Inner Shrine due to Ise ritual prohibitions. The account by Shōkai—who often accompanied Eison and served as a scribe for his activities—was one of the documents preserved in the Saidaiji portable shrine housing the Ise “True Body,” which I discuss below.

In particular, Ryōbu, or “Dual Realm,” Shinto links the Inner and Outer Shrines with Shingon’s Dual Realm mandala of the Womb and the Diamond, and records concerning Eison’s visits to Ise show his movement contributing to these links in various ways. For example, on Eison’s 1275 journey, he donated a Dual Realm seed-syllable mandala along with other exoteric and esoteric texts.¹⁷ The Saidaiji order also founded the branch temple Kōshōji 弘正寺 near the Inner Shrine, which became a center for the order’s activities related to the shrine. Kōshōji was largely destroyed in the late medieval period and its records lost, but the *Saidai chokushi Kōshō Bosatsu gyōjitsu nenpu* 西大勅諭興正菩薩行実年譜 (hereafter *Nenpu*)—an influential chronological record of Eison’s activities from the early modern period—indicates that the temple enshrined the Womb and Diamond Realm Dainichi 大日 (Sk. Mahāvairocana) and served as the “Original-Source Cloister” (Honji’in 本地院) for the Inner and Outer Shrines.¹⁸

One of the most striking iconographic and textual testimonies to Eison and his disciples’ links to Ise, revealing a multi-tiered application of Shingon Dual Realm thought to the Inner and Outer Shrines, is found in a portable shrine held by Saidaiji and referred to as the *Ise jingū mishōtai zushi* 伊勢神宮御正体厨子.¹⁹ This small shrine contained eight documents related to Eison’s pilgrimages to Ise and two mirrors representing the *mishōtai* (“True Body”) of the Inner and Outer Shrine kami, Tenshō Daijin and Toyouke 豊受. Behind one set of doors for the portable shrine, we find an inserted wooden panel with a seed-syllable mandala for the Womb Realm painted on the front and one for the deity Butsugen 仏眼, or “Buddha-Eye” (also known as Butsumo 仏母, or “Buddha-Mother”) on the back. These two mandalas and the larger of the two mirrors, which was inscribed with a spring landscape scene, are generally understood to represent the Inner Shrine. The Outer Shrine, in turn, is represented by seed-syllable mandalas for the Diamond Realm and for the deity Aizen 愛染 (in a kind of fusion with the mandala for Daishō Kongō 大勝金剛) painted on the front and back of the panel behind the doors on the

17 *Gakushōki* entry for 1275/3 (NKBK 1977, 39).

18 The *Nenpu* was compiled by the Jōjūji 淨住寺 monk Jikō 慈光 (d.u.) in the Genroku 元禄 era (1688–1704). For the reference here, see the *Nenpu* entry for 1280 (NKBK 1977, 171–72). As Itō notes (2011, 614–15), the *Nenpu*’s indication that Kōshōji was founded in 1280, close in time to Eison’s visit to Ise in the third month that year, is supported by an entry for Kōshōji practitioners in the *Jubosatsukai deshi kyōmyō* 授菩薩戒弟子交名, a roster of Eison’s disciples inserted into the Saidaiji Eison statue and dated 1280/9/10.

19 I use “portable shrine” here to render the term *zushi*, which, as in this case, often refers to cupboard-style shrines, with two doors on each side, used to enshrine buddha-images, scriptures, or relics.

opposite side and by the smaller mirror, which was inscribed with an autumnal theme.²⁰ Associations of the Inner and Outer Shrines with the Womb and Diamond realms were typical in medieval Ryōbu and Ise Shinto; however, as Nakahara Yasunori suggests, the additional associations of the two shrines with Butsugen and Aizen appears to be a distinctive Saidaiji order contribution to the Ise mythos (Nakahara 1998).

The correlative logic at work in the Saidaiji portable shrine is complex, but such logic was typical of medieval exoteric-esoteric Buddhism and its fusion with kami cults. The style of the shrine suggests that it was constructed in the first half of the fourteenth century, and some of the inserted documents clearly postdate Eison's death. Thus theories that Eison was responsible for its construction are questionable.²¹ But I maintain that for this very reason, the shrine provides a vivid example of elaborations of traditions surrounding Eison's trips to Ise—and related Saidaiji order contributions to kami cults in the fourteenth century and beyond—that are evident in the activities of many medieval monks.²²

For now, however, I will reserve further investigation of these latter cultic developments for other scholars and another day. Like the Saidaiji order's connection to the medieval revival of female monasticism, the order's connection to the development of medieval kami cults is valuable for understanding its place in the religious changes of the time, and these are stories well worth telling. But I suggest that the Mañjuśrī cult is not as central to those stories as it is to the ones that I will tell here, and a focus on the Mañjuśrī cult can yield its own distinctive insights into the order and its place in both Japanese and broader East Asian traditions. So let us now home in more closely on the Mañjuśrī cult in East Asia, the specific subjects of the ensuing chapters, and the historiographical issues motivating this study.

20 For a detailed study of the portable shrine and the inserted documents, see Kondō 1985. The typical representations of the associations with the Inner and Outer shrines described here are outlined in Kondō's study and Itō 2011, 611. See also the color plates and identifications for the shrine and the mirrors in Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 1990, 92–95 (exhibit no. 51). Nakahara 1998 identifies the fusion of the Aizen and Daishō Kongō mandalas.

21 See Kondō 1985 for an influential example of this theory. For a concise summary of arguments against this theory, see Nakahara 1998, 805.

22 For more on such developments, see especially Kubota 1973, 348–67; Itō 2011, 607–55; and Andreeva 2006 and 2010. As Andreeva's work underscores, many scholars have pointed to Saidaiji order influence on the Miwa 三輪 lineage of Shinto, which shows close connections to medieval developments in the Ise traditions.

Imagining Mañjuśrī

The Mañjuśrī cult, and its longstanding role in the religious landscape of East Asia, was more influential in premodern Japan than previous studies have shown.²³ Moreover, the multifaceted uses of the cult in the Saidaiji order highlight both distinctive and shared characteristics of the order relative to other East Asian Buddhist lineages. Even an abbreviated list of celebrated images of Mañjuśrī in East Asian Buddhism over the centuries would include the following.

First is Mañjuśrī's reputed role as the preacher of the *Prajñāpāramitā* (Perfection of Wisdom) sutras. Based on Mañjuśrī's strong association with wisdom and eloquence, he is frequently cast in the role of a protector of sutra repositories or of a scholastic interlocutor of the Buddha and other enlightened figures, such as the famed lay adept Vimalakīrti.²⁴ Also reflecting his association with wisdom, Mañjuśrī is often paired with the bodhisattva Samantabhadra (Jp. Fugen 普賢)—representing principle, meditation, or practice—as attendant figures to Śākyamuni. As the main guide to the youth Sudhana (Jp. Zenzaidōji 善財童子) on his journey to enlightenment in the *Flower Garland Sutra* (Jp. *Kegongyō* 華嚴經), Mañjuśrī is celebrated both in Kegon traditions and across East Asian Buddhist schools. In traditions stemming from one of the most popular sutras in East Asia, the *Lotus Sutra*, Mañjuśrī is renowned as an ancestral teacher of the Buddha and for his association with the dragon king and the king's eight-year-old daughter, who famously transformed into a man and manifested enlightenment instantaneously.

Pilgrims from Japan and other parts of Buddhist Asia have revered Mt. Wutai in China for more than twelve hundred years as Mañjuśrī's abode in this world. The great ritualist and translator Amoghavajra (705–774), who was responsible for the Chinese compilation of many esoteric scriptures and treated by Shingon as a patriarch, promoted Mañjuśrī as a state-protecting deity on Mt. Wutai and

23 There is no previous published scholarly monograph on the Mañjuśrī cult in Japan. In Western-language literature, there is only one on the cult in China, Raoul Birnbaum's 1983 study of the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī in the Tang period (618–ca. 907), although Cartelli 2013 and Lin 2014 do give substantial attention to the cult as part of a focus on Mt. Wutai. On Mt. Wutai, see also Birnbaum 1986, 1989–90; Gimello 1992, 1994; and Hibino and Ono 1995. On the cult in Indian and Tibetan traditions, see Mallmann 1964, Harrison 2000, and Harrington 2002. Lamotte 1960 is a classic study on the cult in both South and East Asian traditions.

24 See the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* (Ch. *Weimojie suoshuo jing* 維摩詰所說經; T 475) and Watson 1997 for an English translation.

throughout China.²⁵ Influenced by Amoghavajra's program during his journey to China in 804 and 805, Saichō 最澄 (767–822) promoted the enshrinement of Mañjuśrī in the seat of honor for the dining halls of “exclusively Mahayana temples” as part of his founding of Tendai in Japan upon his return.²⁶ In halls known as monks' or meditation halls in Zen temples, established in Japan from the early medieval period, Mañjuśrī is commonly enshrined wearing monastic robes and serves as a kind of tutelary deity (*shōsō Monju* 聖僧文殊).²⁷ In a more distinctively Japanese tradition, the youthful Mañjuśrī came to be seen as a symbol of homoerotic interest in temple pages (*chigo* 稚児) in the late medieval and early modern periods.²⁸ In modern-day Japan, students pray to Mañjuśrī for success in the all-important university entrance exams and other scholastic endeavors.

The examples given above of how Mañjuśrī has been imagined and used in East Asia could be greatly multiplied. Even this abbreviated list, however, suggests the longstanding elite and popular devotion to this bodhisattva. In this study, rather than focusing on the myriad cultic aspects of Mañjuśrī across traditions and centuries, I am motivated by how differing aspects came together for a particular set of devotees at a particular time: Eison's Saidaiji order in Kamakura-period Japan. For this period, which represented such a turning point in Japanese religious and political history, I suggest that the most dramatic expressions of the Mañjuśrī cult were led by monastics affiliated with the Saidaiji order. These expressions of the cult synthesized the traditional emphasis on Mañjuśrī and wisdom with charitable activities, memorial rites, precepts conferrals, temple and icon construction projects, and political concerns. Such a synthesis required an innovative hand and a firm eye on both past precedent and contemporary needs. Moreover, their performative enactments of the cult reflect the degree to which Nara Buddhist monastics were creative actors and not simply passive reactors to the changes of the time (as they are often portrayed in secondary scholarship). Thus while taking advantage of the trans-sectarian insight that the study of the Mañjuśrī cult can offer, this study keeps its focus on those aspects central to the Saidaiji order and its Nara Buddhist context in this period.

25 See Birnbaum 1983, 29–38, and Orzech 1998, 198–202.

26 See Saichō's *Kenkairon* 顯戒論, T 2376 74:602a15–603c6, and Quinter 2010, 102–3, on Saichō's use of the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* there. On the influence of Amoghavajra and the specifics of Saichō's recommendation, see Groner 1984, 138–41.

27 See Collcutt 1981, 210, 238; Muller 2014, s.v. “shōsō” (entry by Griffith Foulk).

28 See Hosokawa 1999, 292n. 5, and Atkins 2008, 954–55, 965.

This book is primarily concerned with how Eison and his disciples positioned themselves relative to the greater populace, from marginalized people to elites, and how they applied and *imagined* the Mañjuśrī cult in that context. I follow Bernard Faure in using the term *imaginaire* to refer to “the way beliefs are rendered in images”—including in dreams, visions, icons, and hagiographical portraits—in early medieval Japan (1996, 3). This book thus stands firmly within the ongoing “re-visioning” of medieval Buddhism, and the emphasis on lived religion, undertaken by Faure and other recent scholars.²⁹ At the same time, I extend that re-visioning through the spotlight on the Saidaiji order and its narrative, ritual, and iconic imagining of the Mañjuśrī cult.

The first chapter centers on the late 1230s through the 1240s and examines the early activities of Eison and his disciple Ninshō, the two most renowned members of the Saidaiji order (both historically and in modern scholarship). In Ninshō’s first meeting with Eison, in 1239, he tearfully related his vow to compose seven Mañjuśrī images and enshrine them at seven outcast communities as a memorial to his deceased mother. This meeting led to the linked incorporation in Saidaiji order activities of Mañjuśrī assemblies and social welfare practices, as the assemblies featured both offerings rites to Mañjuśrī and charitable donations to outcasts. Yet despite the master-disciple relationship and close collaboration between Eison and Ninshō from this time, significant contrasts existed in their approaches to social welfare and the interlinked cults of Mañjuśrī and the itinerant saint Gyōki 行基 (668–749). Recognizing the differences provides a more nuanced view of Eison’s and Ninshō’s models for practice and the range of concerns they expressed through the Mañjuśrī cult.

Chapter 2 steps back to investigate the precedents for the Mañjuśrī assemblies led by Ninshō and Eison. I first examine the four precedents most commonly cited: the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*, the Mañjuśrī cult on Mt. Wutai in China, Gyōki’s activities, and Japanese state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies that began in the early ninth century. My analysis suggests that generally speaking, all four do serve as precedents for Saidaiji order involvement in the cult. I also argue, however, that we need to widen our perspective on the precedents, looking more closely at both warrior government-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies in the early thirteenth century and the link between memorial rites for mothers and the Mañjuśrī cult in the Saidaiji order assemblies. This broader look at the precedents clarifies the intersecting public and private concerns

29 “Re-visioning” is adopted from the title of Payne 1998. In addition to Faure’s work, for provocative recent studies of lived religion in medieval Japan, see Dobbins 2004, Meeks 2010a, and Glassman 2012.

in the cult and the appeal of the Saidaiji order's practices to diverse followers, including warrior rulers.

In Chapter 3, I investigate a "living Mañjuśrī" statue that served as the centerpiece for the restoration of Hannyaaji. Hannyaaji was near Yamato 大和 Province's largest outcast community and was the Nara temple most strongly linked to Saidaiji order involvement with outcasts. Eison held enshrinement ceremonies for the Mañjuśrī statue in 1267 and 1269 as large-scale assemblies, and he authored dedicatory texts for the ceremonies that promoted Mañjuśrī, charitable and soteriological relief for outcasts, and the order's exoteric-esoteric orientation more broadly. I examine Eison's writings on Mañjuśrī and outcasts in connection with the Hannyaaji restoration and their links with changing interpretations of universal enlightenment and *icchantikās* (beings traditionally believed to lack the capacity for enlightenment) among related Hossō monks in Nara. In doing so, this chapter gives fuller life to Eison's own voice and monastic milieu. Simultaneously, I illustrate intertwined material, ritual, and doctrinal concerns in Eison's participation in the Mañjuśrī cult and his characteristic juxtaposition of egalitarian and hierarchical views.

Chapter 4 explores fundraising for the Hannyaaji restoration and the Mañjuśrī main icon. Such integrated fundraising, temple restoration, and cultic activities were typical of the Saidaiji order, and the Hannyaaji restoration provides a rich case study. Focusing on Eison's writings and a 1287 text by Shinkū dedicating attendant statues, I illuminate the rhetorical nature of their claims to "unattached" (*muen* 無縁) status and how such rhetoric was necessitated by a tension between their status as precepts-keeping "reclusive monks" and esoteric masters gaining increasing patronage from political elites for their ritual expertise.

Chapter 5 focuses on a dream-vision account attributed to Eison and dated 1269/8/25. This account purports to record a direct, precepts-based esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Eison to Shinkū. This chapter shows, however, that questions of the text's provenance are more complex than previously acknowledged. I argue that, to evaluate this transmission text, we must consider an increasing esotericization of the Saidaiji order after Eison's death (1290) and the influence of fourteenth-century accounts of an esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to the Kegon-Shingon monk Myōe. Eison's reputed 1269 transmission served to legitimize the transition from Eison to Shinkū and successive Saidaiji "elders" as well as the very relationship between Shingon and Ritsu in the order.³⁰ However, the text did so in a manner that privileged

30 "Elder" (*chōrō* 長老) is the designation the Saidaiji order uses for head monks and nuns within its temple network.

esotericism. Together with analysis of the related synthesis of esoteric and exoteric precept traditions in the fourteenth-century Myōe-lineage transmission texts, I thus highlight how dream-visions served as a legitimizing strategy for varied exoteric-esoteric formulations of medieval Nara monastics, including later followers of Eison and Myōe.

Chapter 6 centers on the late Kamakura period, from the final decade of the thirteenth century through the first few decades of the fourteenth. Building on recent iconographic and textual discoveries, this chapter explores Monkan's participation in the Mañjuśrī cult alongside his twofold biographical construction as an orthodox Shingon and Ritsu monk and as a heretical tantric practitioner. I suggest that continuities between the activities of Monkan and those of Eison and his leading first-generation disciples, including their shared emphasis on the Mañjuśrī cult, have been obscured by portrayals of Monkan as the "systematizer" of the Shingon Tachikawa lineage and the lineage as a purveyor of black magic and aberrant sexual rituals. In the process, I show how the lines between Ritsu and Shingon, the heterodox and orthodox, and the public and private cross in Monkan's activities and the biographical material we use to assess those activities.

In the Epilogue, I place the varied evidence for the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult throughout the Kamakura period in the context of competing theories on the relationship between the exoteric and esoteric elements in the cult and the Saidaiji order more broadly. I then situate these issues, and the findings of the book as a whole, within changing understanding of medieval Buddhism and suggest areas for further research.

The Documents section comprises nine annotated translations of classical Chinese (*kanbun* 漢文) and classical Japanese sources significant to this study and the cult.³¹ The translations complement and provide an important reference point for the historical narrative of the main chapters, which is informed throughout by the texts. To my knowledge, the majority of these texts have not been translated into any modern language by previous scholars. Even filtered through the lens of translation, the language and narrative flow of such primary texts is crucial to giving fuller life to the voices of Nara Buddhist monastics and the broader exoteric-esoteric imaginaire informing those voices. The translations and annotations should therefore contribute to both Western and Japanese understanding of the literature for Shingon Ritsu and the Mañjuśrī cult.

31 *Kanbun* refers to texts composed in Japan in classical Chinese. For simplicity, I refer here to the language of these texts as Chinese.

The Study of Medieval Japanese Buddhism

This project's focus on the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult in the context of medieval Nara Buddhism is motivated by persistent historiographical issues in the study of Kamakura Buddhism. Long influenced by the sectarian categories of Meiji-period (1868–1911) scholarship, Japanese and Western studies traditionally concentrated on the lives and teachings of the founders of the newer Zen, Pure Land, and Nichiren schools in the Kamakura period. It is no coincidence that these schools—which scholars collectively called Kamakura New Buddhism—are the ones dominant in modern Japan. Tendai, Shingon, and the Nara schools (including Ritsu) in medieval Japan were typically labeled as Old Buddhism, pointing to their origins in the Nara (710–84) and Heian periods (794–1185), and neglected or disparaged. An image of a dynamic, popular, and reformed New Buddhism versus a moribund, aristocratic, and corrupt Old Buddhism has both sustained and been reinforced by this tendency.

The corruption of the Buddhist establishment has been liberally used to explain broad changes in Japanese religious history. The shift of the capital from Nara to Heian (modern Kyoto) at the end of the eighth century; the emergence of Tendai and Shingon in the Heian period; the supposed deterioration of Tendai, Shingon, and the Nara schools and rise of the Kamakura-period schools; the renewed interest in Shinto and Confucian thought in the early modern period; and the proliferation of “new religions” in modern Japan have all been attributed to such corruption. Applied so liberally, this corruption theory glosses over historical complexities in the emergence of new religious movements and loses its explanatory value.

For the Kamakura period, the principal period investigated here, a more balanced picture has gradually emerged. Since the mid-1970s, revisionist scholars have increasingly shown that previous characterizations created a distorted picture, in which schools and figures who were relatively minor in the Kamakura period itself were given much greater scholarly attention than those more prominent in their own time. Inspired especially by the late Japanese historian Kuroda Toshio, recent scholars have thus insisted on analyzing medieval Japanese religion in terms that more accurately reflect medieval contexts. Incorporating a growing emphasis in religious studies on socially contextualized, interdisciplinary approaches over abstract doctrinal studies, specialists have urged that doctrinal issues not be privileged over Buddhism's ritual and devotional practices or its involvement in politics, economics, and other aspects of Japanese society. This book stands firmly within these trends. However, lingering biases from the earlier model of New Buddhism versus Old

Buddhism still influence leading new models of medieval Buddhism, and this book also aims to redress these biases.

In particular, two newer models bear elaboration. The first is Kuroda's model of medieval Buddhism within the "system of ruling elites" (*kenmon taisei* 権門体制). Kuroda's model classifies Tendai, Shingon, and the Nara schools not as Old Buddhism but as "exoteric-esoteric" schools within the system. This model bears elaboration as the most influential recent paradigm for medieval Japanese religion, adopted by such leading scholars of Eison's movement as Hosokawa Ryōichi and Ōishi Masaaki. The second model is Matsuo Kenji's revised interpretation of Kamakura New Buddhism and Old Buddhism, which he opposes to Kuroda's model of the "exoteric-esoteric system" (*kenmitsu taisei* 顕密体制). Although not as influential as Kuroda's theories, Matsuo's model bears elaboration due to his emphasis on Eison's and other new Ritsu movements.³²

In contrast to the founder-centered approach of earlier studies privileging New Buddhism, Kuroda invigorated the study of the older schools by focusing on the significance of their institutional and discursive roles in the ruling order. Kuroda considered these schools integral to the medieval system of ruling elites, which comprised the court aristocracy, warrior authorities, and leading religious establishments. The older schools' role in the ruling order was based on considerable wealth and influence through the control of private estates (*shōen* 荘園) and branch temples and their construction of a unifying ideology for the medieval religious-political order. Kuroda dubbed this ideology "exo-esotericism" (*kenmitsu shugi* 顕密主義). He argued that the exoteric-esoteric system supporting this ideology operated within and reinforced the mutual identity of religion and the state. His model accordingly emphasized the economic and political might of the older schools. Simultaneously, the model placed these schools in a revised, trans-sectarian framework.

The exoteric-esoteric system, Kuroda argued, developed alongside increased emphasis on the complementarity of esoteric and exoteric Buddhism across schools in the Heian period. Thus in addition to refocusing our understanding of religion and rulership in medieval Japan, Kuroda's theories stimulated trans-sectarian studies of Buddhism in the Heian and medieval periods. Kuroda suggested that the eight Heian-period schools of Tendai, Shingon, and the Nara schools should not be interpreted as "reciprocally opposing, mutually exclusive" entities but as "a mildly competitive religious order resting on a shared base" (Kuroda 1996, 261). Turning to the Kamakura period and the rise

32 In addition to the various studies by Matsuo cited below, Matsuo's model was adopted by Minowa Kenryō in his thorough doctrinal study of early medieval precepts-revival movements (Minowa 1999).

of the new Buddhist schools, Kuroda's analysis remained fixed on the older schools as the religious orthodoxy, and he saw the newer groups as reform or heterodox elements acting within and against the greater exoteric-esoteric system. These medieval heterodox-reform movements embraced a broad range of traditions, from the precepts-revival efforts in the Nara schools, including that of the Saidaiji order; to the newer Pure Land, Zen, and Nichiren schools; to the radical non-dualism attributed to Shingon's Tachikawa lineage; and even to Ise Shinto. By grouping and analyzing together the newer schools and the reform movements within the exoteric-esoteric establishment, Kuroda broke with the dominant New/Old Buddhism distinctions drawn on sectarian lines.³³

Influenced by Kuroda's and other revisionist Japanese-language studies of medieval religion, Western-language scholarship since the 1980s has made many programmatic calls for reconstructing our models of Kamakura Buddhism.³⁴ The present study is indebted to this re-visioning of Kamakura Buddhism. The production of monographs applying that re-visioning, however, has only recently gained steam, particularly for the Nara schools.³⁵ The picture improves when we look for monographs on broad-based, trans-sectarian themes, rather than on individual schools or figures, and that trend also dovetails with revisionist Japanese scholarship. The strengths of such revisionist studies notwithstanding, it is revealing that most work on the older schools in the Kamakura period has been done in studies emphasizing trans-sectarian institutional history and the political and economic might of the established temples.

On the positive side, this emphasis has clarified the continuing prominence of the older schools in the Kamakura period: whether one focuses on medieval Buddhism and outcasts (Hosokawa 1994, Matsuo 1998a), temple fundraising campaigns (Goodwin 1994), the cult of relics (Ruppert 2000), the revival of female monasticism (Meeks 2010a), or many other broad topics for the Kamakura period, the preponderance of data relates to Tendai, Shingon, and the Nara schools. This emphasis also suggests the degree to which recent scholars focusing on the older schools are involved in a fundamental reorientation of the study of medieval Buddhism, one that is both trans-sectarian and

33 For fuller depictions of Kuroda's theories, see the translations of his essays and other articles in Dobbins 1996. For a comprehensive posthumous collection of Kuroda's writings, see Kuroda 1994–95. For the revising of Kuroda's theories, in addition to Dobbins 1996 and the critiques cited below, see Satō 1998, 439–51; Kikuchi 2000; and Bauer 2011.

34 See Foard 1980; Morrell 1987; McMullin 1989; Dobbins 1998; Payne 1998; Stone 1999 (particularly chapters 2 and 5); and Abé 1999, "Postscript."

35 For monographs on medieval figures from the Nara schools, see Girard 1990, Tanabe 1992, and Unno 2004 on Myōe; Blum 2002 on Gyōnen 凝然 (1240–1321); and Ford 2006 on Jōkei.

interdisciplinary in refusing to abstract Buddhist teachings or organizations from their broader contemporary contexts.

The downside, however, is that the Old Buddhist or exoteric-esoteric schools—particularly in Japanese-language scholarship—tend to be analyzed as *institutions*, embroiled in the oppressive aspects of politics and economics, as James Ford aptly suggests (2006, 186–87). Meanwhile, the majority of New Buddhism-centered studies still focus on the founders, the great *individuals* reaching out to the masses. The problem with such a split is that individuals or “the people” are easier to sympathize with than institutions or the establishment. In short, the “new,” “reform,” and “heterodox” classifications of medieval Buddhist schools in modern scholarship lend themselves to positive valuations and their counterparts to negative valuations. Such value judgments remain problematic in the study of Eison’s Saidaiji order and other Nara Buddhist or “exoteric-esoteric” movements as they tend to impose pre-determined conclusions on the material studied.

The present book contributes to the research on medieval Japanese religion as an extended case study that corrects notions of Kamakura Buddhism which continue, often subtly, to privilege the traditionally understood New Buddhist schools. Eison’s group represents just one exoteric-esoteric movement and the Mañjuśrī cult one devotional cult among many. But the spotlight on the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult here casts into strong relief Eison and his disciples’ involvement with a spectrum of society in the Kamakura period, and that involvement attests to the movement’s influence in this pivotal time in Japanese history. Moreover, in addition to examining Shingon, Tendai, and the Nara schools in trans-sectarian studies, there remains value in examining specific figures and schools, as long as the schools are not treated in a social vacuum.³⁶

First, in focusing on specific figures from the older schools, as this study does for Eison and other Nara Buddhist innovators, we can cast a more personal face on leaders of the exoteric-esoteric lineages.³⁷ Second, Heian- through Tokugawa-period Japanese Buddhism is replete with specific exoteric-esoteric lineages manifested in distinctive institutions, practices, and teachings. In-depth study of the particular combinations of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism, as well as their variety, thus helps provide more nuanced interpretations of religion in premodern Japan. Kuroda’s formulation of exoteric-esoteric Buddhism is reductive in that it consistently assigns the dominant position in that twofold identity to esotericism and emphasizes Tendai original

36 In Western-language scholarship, leading examples of this approach for the newer schools include Collcutt 1981; Bielefeldt 1988; Dobbins 1989 and 2004; Bodiford 1993; and Faure 1996.

37 Ford urges and accomplishes this in his monograph on Jōkei (2006).

enlightenment thought (*hongaku shisō* 本学思想) as representative of that esotericism.³⁸ However, as Sueki Fumihiko and Jacqueline Stone have shown, there were many different formulations of original enlightenment thought and we cannot simply reduce them to esoteric Buddhism nor to Tendai as the representative of such esotericism. I suggest that the same holds true for the varied formulations of exoteric-esoteric Buddhism in Eison's movement and medieval Nara Buddhism more broadly, which were diverse, were more influenced by Shingon than Tendai, and did not always privilege esotericism over the exoteric aspects.³⁹

An alternative new model of medieval Buddhism to Kuroda's exoteric-esoteric system paradigm is Matsuo's model, which does recognize the significance of the exoteric aspects of Eison's and related movements in medieval Nara. Matsuo's work is therefore an important precursor to the present study. In a series of studies since the 1980s, Matsuo pushes for a new understanding of the Kamakura New/Old Buddhism distinction, based instead on a distinction between the New Buddhism of reclusive monks (*tonseisō* 遁世僧) and the Old Buddhism of official monks (*kansō* 官僧), who operate primarily within the state-sponsored ordination and monastic ranking system.⁴⁰ To understand this distinction, it helps to recognize that a process called "double renunciation" is well documented in Japanese Buddhism. Double renunciation refers to monks who have already renounced household life and been ordained but who subsequently renounce full participation in monastic affairs, retreating to smaller temples and hermitages. Such double renunciation was typical of monks identified in early medieval sources as *tonsei* (referring to the act or status of reclusion) or as "black-robed" monks, in contrast to the "white-robed" ones that Matsuo calls official monks. Matsuo's research is valuable for illuminating this process within the Kamakura-period Nara context of Eison and his milieu.⁴¹ As part of this redressing of the basis for the new/old distinction,

38 Kuroda called original enlightenment thought the "most archetypal form" of exoteric-esoteric ideology and suggested that "We could go so far as to describe *hongaku* thought as esoteric Buddhism, in both essential concept and actual practice, operating under the title of Tendai" (Kuroda 1996, 262, 264–65).

39 On original enlightenment thought and Kuroda's theories, see Sueki 1996, 458–59, and Stone 1999, 84–85, 152, 363–64. On the variety of formulations of the relationship between the exoteric and esoteric, see Sueki 1998 and Abé 1999, 427–28. Related to the critique that Kuroda overstated the unification of exoteric-esoteric Buddhism is that he also overstated the unification and political power of the religious elite as a separate establishment from court and warrior authority; see Taira 1996 and Adolphson 2000.

40 See in particular Matsuo 1995 and 1998c, and in English, Matsuo 1997, 2007, and 2008.

41 On the concept of "double-renunciation" (*nijūshukke* 二重出家 or *saishukke* 再出家), see Matsuo 1998c, 182–84, and Kleine 1997, 2.

Matsuo's categorization reevaluates monks associated with the precepts-revival movement as representatives of New Buddhism rather than restorers of Old Buddhism.

However, Matsuo's model of reclusive monks versus official monks in the Kamakura period, and their connections with the categories of "new" and "old" Buddhism, is controversial. We again fall into a binary opposition that risks obscuring the variety of identities and models for practice within those categories.⁴² Comparisons in this book among Eison, Ninshō, Shinkū, and Monkan underscore the variety even within Eison's lineage, while comparisons of their activities with such monks as Jōkei and Myōe underscore both variety and continuity among "reclusive monks" with different lineage affiliations.

This book's focus on the Saidaiji order helps redress lingering historiographical issues in the study of medieval Buddhism in part because Eison's movement serves as a category buster, highlighting problems inherent even in the revised classification schemes. For example, when the Saidaiji order is considered part of the "reform" branch of the exoteric-esoteric establishment, as in Kuroda's model, it may be seen in a positive light—but only at the expense of an establishment *in need of* reform. At the same time, to the degree the Saidaiji order is still considered part of that establishment, it too is often cast as an oppressor of the common people. That said, anti-establishment or trans-establishment interpretations of the Saidaiji order also lead to distortions.⁴³ Taking after Amino Yoshihiko (1978), many scholars have emphasized the "unattached" (*muen*) status of the order, as a kind of freelance group detached from high-ranking political patronage, in contrast to the more powerful Shingon, Tendai, or Nara temples. This approach, however, glosses over the rhetorical nature of the claim to unattached status and obscures the patronage that contributed greatly to the success of the order. The present book thus focuses closely on the narrative and religious contexts of the source materials for the Saidaiji order and its involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult to illuminate both the egalitarian ideals and political realities of the order's activities. Doing so in turn helps us construct more nuanced characterizations of medieval exoteric-esoteric Buddhism, especially Nara Buddhism, more broadly.

42 See also Hank Glassman's suggestion that often "the categories of *tonseisō* and *kansō* can be seen as a continuum or a rhetorical typology rather than the sort of opposition imagined by Matsuo" (Glassman 2012, 79).

43 "Anti-establishment" and "trans-establishment" here are adapted from Sasaki 1988 and 1997, which argue for a threefold division of medieval Buddhist movements comprising these two categories and "establishment Buddhism."

Living Bodhisattvas and *Hijiri*: Eison, Ninshō, and the Cults of Mañjuśrī and Gyōki

In the ninth month of 1239, a young Buddhist practitioner came to meet Eison at Saidaiji. Eison was just beginning his efforts to establish a new order of precepts-keeping Ritsu monks at Saidaiji and to restore the temple, which featured a proud history as one of the “seven great temples of Nara” but had greatly deteriorated. Eison conferred on his visitor the ten major precepts according to the *Brahmā Net Sutra*, then recommended that he “leave the household” life (*shukke* 出家).¹ In other words, Eison urged him to become a fully ordained monk.²

This story might have been uneventful for the development of Eison’s Saidaiji order if not for what happened next. The young practitioner was the twenty-three year old Ninshō, who eventually became one of the two most influential leaders of the order (alongside Eison himself) and oversaw its development in the eastern region (Kantō 關東). Based on the evidence from Eison’s autobiography, however, their more than fifty-year collaboration began with Ninshō’s emotional reaction to Eison’s recommendation that he leave the household. Ninshō burst into tears and explained that his dying mother had longed for him to become a monk. Accordingly, at that time—seven years before his meeting with Eison—Ninshō “quickly took the tonsure and put on the dharma-robles.” This indicates that Ninshō had his head shaved and at least started on the monastic path then. But even this act failed to put his mother at peace, and she died troubled over her son’s future. Ninshō was sixteen.

One’s mindset at death was a matter of deep concern within the Buddhist imaginaire of the time, as that mindset was believed to have a strong karmic influence on one’s post-mortem fate. Dying in a state of excessive attachment to

1 In East Asia, these precepts were conferred as specifically Mahayana ones on monastic and lay practitioners alike. The ten major precepts based on the *Brahmā Net Sutra* (Jp. *Bonmōkyō* 梵網經; Ch. *Fanwang jing*; T 1484) are: not to kill; not to steal; not to engage in sexual misconduct; not to lie; not to sell alcohol; not to speak of the transgressions of bodhisattvas, monks, or nuns; not to praise oneself and criticize others; not to begrudge property or the teachings to others; not to vent anger; and not to slander the three jewels (buddha, dharma, and sangha).

2 See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1239/9 (NKBK 1977, 14–15).

her son suggested that Ninshō's mother was bound for an unfavorable rebirth. Based on his ensuing lament to Eison, however, any training Ninshō had on the Buddhist path by the time his mother died was insufficient to assuage her troubled spirit. As a result, Ninshō indicated, all he could do was to depend on the power of Mañjuśrī to aid him in ensuring her future liberation. He thus resolved to compose seven images of Mañjuśrī and enshrine them at seven outcast (*hinin*) communities in Yamato Province for the important thirteenth-year memorial of her death. He would have Mañjuśrī's name chanted "from morning until night" at the outcast communities on the twenty-fifth day of each month. In so doing, he intended to generate merit that he could direct to his mother, thereby helping to liberate her from the cycle of birth and death.³

This story of Ninshō's resolve to memorialize his mother and how he intended to do so is seminal for understanding several major developments in the Saidaiji order. It is especially revealing for the order's incorporation of the Mañjuśrī cult, or devotional activities centering on Mañjuśrī as expressed through images, narratives, and rituals. This story is Eison's first mention of Mañjuśrī in his autobiography; afterward Mañjuśrī became the most frequently mentioned deity in the autobiography (Groner 2001, 133). The story is also the first mention of activities involving outcasts, and the holding of Mañjuśrī assemblies near outcast communities (*shuku* 宿), in which offerings were made to both Mañjuśrī and outcasts, quickly became a hallmark of the order's activities. Collated with other records of Eison's activities, it suggests that Ninshō sparked the linked incorporation of the Mañjuśrī cult and charitable relief activities in the order. But even in this brief account—Eison's origin story of the Saidaiji order's involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult—the connection to outcasts is only part of the story. Eison's account simultaneously links the Mañjuśrī cult to memorial rites, image-making activities, and recitation of the bodhisattva's name or spell,⁴ practices that I will address throughout this study.

Most salient in this chapter is that the account of Eison and Ninshō's first meeting also serves as the origin story of Ninshō's entrance into the order, framed within a revealing dialogue on ordination and cultic activities. This latter origin story is all the more noteworthy because Ninshō left behind few writings, in contrast to Eison, whose more scholarly character is shown in his detailed autobiography and the many other texts he authored. Thus Eison's

3 *Gakushōki* entry for 1239/9 (NKBK 1977, 14–15).

4 "Spell" is used in this study to translate *myō* 明 or *ju* 呪, referring to esoteric phrases such as *vidyā*, mantras, or *dhāraṇī* (Jp. *darani* 陀羅尼). These spells are believed to capture the essence of a particular deity, sutra, or teaching and are used to invoke the deities or scriptures as well as to bring about other spiritual and tangible benefits.

comments on Ninshō provide valuable insight into the character of his most renowned disciple, who became a highly influential monk in his own right.

The dialogue between Eison and Ninshō raises intriguing questions about different models of Buddhist practice that the two monks brought to their collaboration and the nature of the ordination that Eison was recommending. These questions illuminate a give-and-take in their relationship that incorporates their different monastic and cultic orientations. I suggest that these different orientations influence their varied approaches to the cults of Mañjuśrī and Gyōki—who was widely celebrated as Mañjuśrī’s manifestation in Japan—and to the social welfare activities tied to the two cults. Recognizing such differences highlights the challenges in distinguishing the biographies of founders and leading disciples, but those very challenges illuminate the biographical process that informs and is informed by their legacy. Background on Eison’s and Ninshō’s early careers will provide context for exploring these issues.

Eison’s Early Career

The son of a low-ranking scholar-monk affiliated with the Nara temple Kōfukuji 興福寺, Eison was seven when his mother died, leaving behind three small children. Since his family was poor and his father could not raise them all, the next year Eison was sent to live with a female shrine attendant (*miko* 御子) near Daigoji, on the outskirts of Kyoto. At age eleven, when his adoptive mother died, he was sent to live with her sister, also a shrine attendant. That same year, Eison began his monastic career performing miscellaneous tasks for a Shingon master at a subtemple of Daigoji, who took over his care.⁵ Three aspects of these childhood experiences are most important for understanding later developments in Eison’s career addressed in this study. First is that Eison developed a keen, firsthand experience of the impermanence of human lives and material resources, and Ninshō’s story of losing his own mother at sixteen and wanting to properly memorialize her must have resonated with him. Second is the fact that Eison’s father was a monk affiliated with Kōfukuji, which likely influenced Eison’s later receptivity to a precepts-revival movement taking place at Kōfukuji. It was not unusual in Eison’s time for monks to take wives and have children, but one of the most fundamental Buddhist precepts that monastics took was the vow of celibacy. Eison may have been painfully aware of the contradiction inherent in his status as a monk’s son, contributing to his

5 Except where otherwise noted, this summary of Eison’s early career is based on the *Gakushōki* entries for the relevant years.

later determination to strictly keep and spread the monastic precepts. The third salient factor of these childhood experiences here is that Daigoji esoteric traditions were a formative influence.

Following his ordination at age seventeen, Eison studied Shingon esoteric Buddhism at Daigoji as well as at Mt. Kōya 高野 and at Tōdaiji in Nara. By the time he was twenty-five he had progressed so far in his esoteric training as to receive the exalted *gushi kanjō* 具支灌頂 initiation and the seal of dharma transmission (*injin* 印信) from the master Jōkei 静慶 (1150–1243) at Chōgakuji Ryōzen'in 長岳寺靈山院.⁶ This transmission meant that Eison too was now qualified as a master of the esoteric teachings and could initiate disciples in the tradition. The arc of his career to this point also suggests that he was following the path of a scholar-monk and, in this sense at least, his father's footsteps.

As Eison tells the tale, however, by 1234, although he had remained diligent in his training in the ten years since receiving the dharma transmission, he was nagged by doubt about the esoteric teachings: "Despite the unbroken lineage of transmission, many practitioners have fallen into the evil realm (*madō*), just like Śāriputra. Has Māra disguised himself as the Buddha in order to derange our minds?"⁷ In Buddhist scriptures, Māra was portrayed as a deluded god (Sk. *deva*) who strove to keep people in the realm of desire. Based on Eison's examination of various scriptures, he concluded that esoteric practitioners of his time were falling into Māra's evil realm because they did not keep the precepts. For Eison this meant that to be orthodox monks or nuns, the practitioners needed to keep the full exoteric monastic precepts as well as the esoteric *samaya* precepts.⁸ This is not to say that he renounced esoteric Buddhism—far from it. Rather, it was precisely through keeping the precepts, and thereby avoiding evil deeds, that one could penetrate the depths of the esoteric teachings.⁹ Eison thus vowed to advance toward enlightenment, study Ritsu, and benefit sentient beings. In his goal of benefiting sentient beings,

6 *Gakushōki* entry for 1225/9/26 (NKBK 1977, 5). Chōgakuji was a branch temple of Kōfukuji's Daijōin 大乘院 in the Kamakura period.

7 *Gakushōki* entry for 1234 (NKBK 1977, 6–7). Śāriputra was one of the Buddha's ten great disciples, but was said in the *Daichidōron* 大智度論 (Ch. *Dazhidu lun*; T 1509) to have abandoned the Mahayana path and fallen into the evil realm, after a one-eyed beggar, who asked for his eye, abused and rejected it (Hosokawa 1999, 50–51n. 7).

8 According to Kūkai, the *samaya* (Jp. *sanmaya* 三摩耶 or 三昧耶) precepts were 1) not to abandon the true dharma or develop incorrect behavior; 2) not to abandon the *bodhi*-mind; 3) not to be stingy with any of the teachings; and 4) not to give up the thought of benefiting sentient beings (Hakeda 1972, 95–96).

9 For this relationship between the precepts and esoteric Buddhism in Eison's thought, see the full *Gakushōki* entry for 1234 (NKBK 1977, 6–8) and Oishio 1995, 180–203. Significantly, all the

Eison found Ritsu to be appealing because, in the broad sense in which he and most Japanese practitioners understood the tradition, it embraced precepts not only to avoid evil deeds but also to actively perform good deeds.

Eison's career as a Ritsu monk was formally launched with his participation in a groundbreaking "self-ordination" ceremony (*jisei jukai* 自誓受戒) at Tōdaiji in 1236, alongside Kakujō 覚盛 (1194–1249), Ensei 円晴 (1180–1241), and Ugon 有嚴 (1186–1275). Believing that there were too few pure monks who had properly kept the precepts and could thereby legitimately confer those precepts in ordination ceremonies, the four monks undertook the ceremony to establish a new ordination lineage of Ritsu monks (as specialists in the rules of monastic discipline, or the vinaya, Ritsu monks were considered especially qualified to conduct ordinations). The ceremony they performed entailed an elaborate series of repentance rites, ordination before an image of a buddha or bodhisattva, and the reception of auspicious signs while dreaming or awake. These signs confirmed the purification of one's transgressions and attainment of the precepts, and the precepts were considered to have been conferred directly by a buddha or bodhisattva.¹⁰

Doctrinally, the monks grounded the new lineage in an innovative interpretation of the comprehensive self-ordination ceremony (*jisei tsūju* 自誓通受). They saw the ceremony as one enabling them to simultaneously attain the status of a bodhisattva and a *bhikṣu* (a fully ordained monk). Thus from this time, Eison, Kakujō, and their fellow monks identified themselves as "bodhisattva-bhikṣu." To understand how their attainment of this twofold status in a single step departed from earlier Japanese traditions, we need to recognize that outside Tendai, such a twofold status was previously believed to be attained only through a two-step process. Monks affiliated with the Nara schools and Shingon traditionally took the full monastic precepts (*gusokukai* 具足戒) based on the *Four-Part Vinaya* and attained bhikṣu status through a separate-ordination ceremony (*betsuju* 別受) at an official Nara-lineage ordination platform. In Nara since the time of Ganjin 鑑真 (Ch. Jianzhen; 688–763), however, "bodhisattva" status was believed to be attained only through a comprehensive-ordination

scriptures Eison cites in the *Gakushōki* on this investigation and conclusion are esoteric. He cites fascicle 2 of the *Dainichikyō* 大日經 (Ch. *Dari jing*; T 848), fascicle 9 of the commentary on the *Dainichikyō* recorded by Yixing 一行 (683–727) (Ch. *Darijing shu* 大日經疏; T 1796), and two *yuikai* 遺誡 (admonitions to disciples) attributed to Kūkai, on 813/5/30 and 834/5/28.

10 Eison addresses the self-ordination ceremony and the events leading to his participation in it in the *Gakushōki* entries for 1235 and 1236 (NKBK 1977, 8–10). He also details his participation in his 1236/9 *Jisei jukaiki* 自誓受戒記 (NKBK 1977, 337–38).

ceremony (*tsūju* 通受) that could be conferred on monastics and laity alike. Although the comprehensive ceremony for monks included the full monastic precepts, it was not considered to confer full monkhood (bhikṣu status) and thus soon fell into disuse. Tendai, on the other hand, followed a different ordination system altogether, in which monks were ordained solely through the *Brahmā Net Sutra* bodhisattva precepts, on dedicated Tendai platforms. The Tendai single-stage ordination also differed from the single-stage one that Eison and his colleagues undertook in that the Tendai one was not conducted through self-ordination.¹¹

Thus after Eison entered Saidaiji and made it the base for his efforts to develop a new order of Ritsu monks and nuns, he did so fortified with both the orthodox qualifications of a Shingon master and an innovative interpretation of monastic ordinations. Eison was able to move permanently into Saidaiji in 1238.¹² One year later, he met Ninshō. Keeping in mind Eison's affiliation with Ritsu movements, but also the novelty of the ordinations he performed, will help us better understand what drew Ninshō to Eison as well as Ninshō's initial reluctance to follow Eison's recommendation that he "leave the household."

Ninshō's Early Career

We have little direct evidence for why Ninshō, when he was twenty-three, visited Eison at Saidaiji, apart from Eison's statement that he conferred the ten major precepts on Ninshō and recommended that Ninshō leave the household life. Ninshō was not yet affiliated with Saidaiji, but based on Eison's brief statement, we can infer that Ninshō already saw Eison as having particular authority on precepts traditions and that Eison's new status as a Ritsu specialist helped draw Ninshō to him. Even so, Eison's account of this meeting shows that Ninshō was reluctant to leave the household, which in this context meant receiving the full monastic precepts from Eison and becoming a fully ordained

11 The *Four-Part Vinaya* refers to *Shibun ritsu* 四分律 (Ch. *Sifen li*; T 1428). For more on the self-ordination rites, their doctrinal foundations, and their significance, see Matsuo 1995, 220–22; Minowa 1999, particularly chapters 4 and 7; Groner 2005, 212–15; and Minowa 2008. On the establishment of the Tendai system of bodhisattva precepts, see Groner 1984, 107–246.

12 Eison initially entered Saidaiji in the first month of 1235, shortly after his vow to study the precepts. In late 1236, however, he was forced to leave due to difficulties caused by the warrior government-appointed estate steward (*jitō* 地頭). Eison was unable to return and move in permanently until the eighth month of 1238. See the *Gakushōki* entries for 1236 and for 1238 (NKBK 1977, 11–13).

monk in his new lineage. Let us return briefly to this dialogue and investigate its conclusion, as this will help us see more clearly differences in the concerns of the two monks at the start of their collaboration.

After Ninshō's tearful account to Eison of having taken the tonsure before his mother died when he was sixteen, and his vow to perform the Mañjuśrī assemblies at outcast ceremonies and transfer the merit for her post-mortem liberation, he indicates that only after properly memorializing her and fulfilling this vow would he "leave the household and study the [Buddha] Way." Eison in turn responds by urging that Ninshō not wait to leave the household until his mother's thirteenth-year memorial rite. Eison suggests instead that "since the merit of leaving the household is vast and limitless," Ninshō should "receive and keep the Buddha's precepts, then send that generated merit to the place where she has been reborn" (NKBK 1977, 15). Eison's emphasis here is on the importance of taking the full monastic vows and the greater merit of that single deed than even the cumulative merit of the good deeds that Ninshō intended to perform on behalf of his mother.

Eison's argument, however, fails to immediately persuade Ninshō, as he initially takes his leave without assenting to Eison's recommendation. But four months later, in the first month of the following year (1240), Ninshō returns to Eison and informs him that he has decided to leave the household life. He tells Eison:

This spring, I will compose one image of Mañjuśrī's revered form and enshrine it at the [hinin] community on Gakuanji's 額安寺 west side. I will have the members of this community receive and keep the pure precepts for one day and night and have the procedures for the eye-opening ceremony [to consecrate the image] carried out.¹³ In this way, I plan to fulfill my original vow to repay my mother's kindness and express my gratitude for her virtue. After that, I will leave the household. (NKBK 1977, 15)

This passage shows that Ninshō added precepts conferrals to his plans for the rites at the outcast communities; he did not mention this aspect in his previous account of his intentions for the rites. Thus fittingly—as Eison influenced Ninshō's increasing emphasis on the precepts—Ninshō then asks Eison if he would come to the Gakuanji hinin community to confer the eight pure precepts (*hassaikai* 八齋戒) for lay followers. In doing so, he again acknowledges

13 The "pure precepts" (*saikai* 齋戒) here refer to the eight pure precepts for laypeople; see n. 14 in the Documents section for the full list. "Eye-opening ceremonies" are a ritual means of consecrating and animating images.

Eison's authority as a Ritsu master. Eison agrees and on 1240/3/6 he carries out the rites, conferring the eight pure precepts on four hundred "people and hinin" and the bodhisattva precepts on thirty "people."¹⁴ Eison closes his account of how Ninshō started his memorialization project and came to be ordained under him by noting that at the end of the same third month, Ninshō does indeed leave the household. Ninshō then receives from Eison the ten precepts of a novice on 4/3 and the full precepts on 4/11. These acts mark the start of Ninshō's formal affiliation with the Saidaiji order and place him in Eison's lineage of Ritsu monks as a fellow "bodhisattva-bhikṣu."

The preceding account reveals Ninshō's Mañjuśrī faith and monastic orientation before his entry into Eison's order. It also suggests a give-and-take in the relationship between the two men that is easily belied by Eison's seniority and status as Ninshō's teacher. As Eison's own words made clear, in their first meeting, Ninshō at first simply listened but left the meeting unconvinced to "leave the household." It was four months before Ninshō returned and seven months before he completed the full ordination and entered the Saidaiji order. Although he did eventually relent on his intention to wait until the thirteenth anniversary of his mother's death, Ninshō still insisted on at least starting the memorialization project before accepting that ordination.

Ninshō's initial hesitancy in accepting the ordination is noteworthy considering the following. First, it was evidently Ninshō's mother's dying wish that he become an ordained monk, just as Eison was recommending. Second, according to the first detailed biographical source on Ninshō, the 1310 *Shōkō daitokufu* 性公大徳譜 (hereafter *Daitokufu*), he had been associated with monastic institutions to varying degrees for twelve years by the time he met Eison.¹⁵ The *Daitokufu* shows Ninshō starting his Buddhist practices with journeys to Mt. Shigi 信貴 when he was eleven; residing at Gakuanji for eighty days, taking the tonsure, and "leaving the household" when he was sixteen; and "ascending

14 There is much variation in how previous scholars have interpreted this passage, concerning who gave which precepts to whom; see the annotations to my translation in the Documents section. The bodhisattva precepts used by Eison were a Mahayana form of precepts, based on the *Brahmā Net Sutra*. They comprised ten major and forty-eight minor precepts, including both negative injunctions against certain activities and more positive exhortations to perform good deeds (such as caring for the sick or helping the less fortunate).

15 References to the *Daitokufu* biography are based on the collated edition in Tanaka 1973. The *Daitokufu* was compiled by Ninshō's disciple Chōmyō 澄名 seven years after Ninshō's death. We must allow room for hagiographic interpolation in the *Daitokufu* (or any monastic biography), but in general the *Daitokufu* corresponds well with the *Gakushōki* and other records from the time.

the platform and receiving the precepts” at Tōdaiji when he was seventeen. The only earlier biography of Ninshō—the *Ryōkan-shōnin sharibyōki* 良觀上人舍利瓶記 (Reliquary Biography of Ryōkan-shōnin; hereafter *Sharibyōki*), written immediately after Ninshō’s death in 1303—is a very brief account inscribed on his reliquary. The *Sharibyōki* does, however, confirm the *Daitokufu*’s account of Ninshō initially leaving the household at sixteen, then being more fully ordained at Tōdaiji at seventeen.¹⁶

The juxtaposition of these early biographical records of Ninshō with Eison’s account of their initial meeting raises significant questions. If Ninshō had already left the household and entered Gakuanji when he was sixteen, and further received the precepts at Tōdaiji when he was seventeen, why was Eison still recommending that Ninshō “leave the household” (*shukke*) when Ninshō was twenty-three? What was the nature of the *shukke* Eison was recommending, and why should Ninshō have been so hesitant to do so if he had already been a monk to varying degrees for seven years?

Answering these questions requires first looking closer at the nature of Ninshō’s ordinations. Before his encounter with Eison, Ninshō appears to have followed the state-sponsored, two-stage ordination process of *shukke* and *jukai* for Nara monks at the time. *Shukke* in this process referred to the reception of the ten precepts to become a novice monk (Jp. *shami* 沙弥; Sk. *śrāmaṇera*), while *jukai* usually referred to the ritual for administering the precepts necessary for a novice monk to become fully ordained. The precepts in question varied among different Buddhist groups, but for monks ordained at the Tōdaiji ordination platform, the traditional site for Nara and Shingon practitioners in the central region, this meant receiving the full 250 precepts of the *Four-Part Vinaya* (Matsuo 2004b, 190–91).

Although Ninshō had already been officially ordained in two stages, Eison seems to have rejected the authority of these ordinations, much as he had come to reject his own initial ordination. In short, Eison and his colleagues in the 1236 self-ordination ritual believed that the traditional ordination process had been corrupted because monks who themselves did not properly keep the precepts were conferring them. Eison thus thought that Ninshō likewise should be re-ordained in the new Ritsu lineage they had established. Eison and his colleagues date their monastic ages to their ordination in this new lineage, regardless of any previous ordination status, as Matsuo has clearly

16 For an annotated yomikudashi version of the *Sharibyōki*, based on the inscription for Ninshō’s reliquary enshrined at Chikurinji and excavated in 1986, see Inoue 1997, 356–59. A Chinese version based on a 1579 transcription from the Gokurakuji 極楽寺 reliquary can be found in Kamakura-shi Shi 1956–58, 3:400–1.

shown (1998c, 198). After entrance into a new Ritsu order, they are known as “reclusive” (*tonsei*) monks, a designation that signaled their renunciation of monastic ranks and appointments within the official state-sponsored system and monastic hierarchy. For Eison, this represented the true *shukke*.

I thus suggest that there are two major components to Ninshō’s initial hesitancy to accept full ordination under Eison. The first component centers on Ninshō’s having already been fully ordained and having “left the household” and the unorthodox nature of Eison’s rejection of such previous ordinations. Ninshō’s initial reception from Eison of the ten major bodhisattva precepts, which did not necessarily confer a *monastic* status, was one thing. For Ninshō to leave the household under Eison, however, was another. Doing so would mean entering Eison’s new Saidaiji order as a fellow reclusive monk and implicitly renouncing any previous status. This required careful thought and partially explains the gap between Eison’s recommendation and Ninshō’s ultimate acceptance.

The second component of Ninshō’s hesitancy is explicitly stated in Eison’s account and centers on Ninshō’s desire to first properly memorialize his mother. This, however, leads to further questions, which are tied to the cultic orientation Ninshō reveals in his first meeting with Eison. Eison’s account of this meeting, and their interactions the following year, suggest that Ninshō’s main goal at the time was to memorialize his mother and secure her post-mortem liberation through the merit accrued from cultic practices devoted to Mañjuśrī. Moreover, relief activities at outcast communities were integral to these practices. How did Ninshō develop this particular cultic orientation? And what was it about accepting the fuller ordination under Eison that Ninshō thought might interfere with these cultic practices (as is suggested by his determination to carry them out before accepting the ordination)? Taking a deeper look at Ninshō’s early career before meeting Eison, and different models influencing Ninshō’s and Eison’s practices by the time they met, will help us address these questions.

For insight into formative influences on Ninshō, let us examine more closely the account of his early career in the *Daitokufu* and the temples he frequented.¹⁷ When the *Daitokufu* introduces Ninshō’s journeys to Mt. Shigi at age eleven, it is in connection with the Mañjuśrī cult, as the text indicates that he learned the five-syllable Mañjuśrī spell there. One of the most common practices for such esoteric spells was recitation, and the reference here suggests that from an early age, Ninshō already engaged in liturgical chants devoted to Mañjuśrī—a

17 My reading of the *Daitokufu* itself is based on the edition in Tanaka 1973, but my analysis of the temples mentioned there is indebted to Oishio 1995, 291–96.

practice we would see again when Ninshō has Mañjuśrī's name chanted at out-cast communities. Simultaneously, the reference to Mt. Shigi, in the southern Ikoma 生駒 mountain region of Nara, points to an early connection with such practitioners as hijiri (holy persons) and *shugenja* 修験者 (mountain ascetics) who frequented the area, as Oishio suggests (1995, 291–92). Although *hijiri* could refer to practitioners of various kinds, in this context Oishio uses the term to refer to itinerant or reclusive practitioners who emphasized ascetic and magical practices, as did *shugenja*. The *Daitokufu* portrait of Ninshō's early career indeed shows him increasingly engaging in itinerant and ascetic practices up to his initial meeting with Eison, suggesting that such practitioners were important models for his activities by then.

At thirteen, according to the *Daitokufu*, Ninshō vowed not to eat meat, following the example of the future buddha Maitreya.¹⁸ At fourteen, he made printed images of Mañjuśrī and began to keep the precepts. These were young ages to undertake such practices of self-discipline, revealing a precocious ascetic orientation. After his mother's death and his initial entry into Gakuanji when he was sixteen, Ninshō made pilgrimages every month to Abedera 安部寺, a temple that housed a renowned Mañjuśrī image first dedicated in 1203.¹⁹ He continued this practice for four years, praying for the awakening of the bodhi-mind, or the aspiration for enlightenment. When he was eighteen, the year after his formal ordination at Tōdaiji, he learned to recite the *Lotus Sutra*, again showing an emphasis on recitation. He also picked flowers and offered them to the Buddha for the entire summer, which was a mountain austerity at the time.²⁰

For six years starting from age nineteen, Ninshō journeyed every month to Mt. Ikoma. Home to the temple Chikurinji 竹林寺, Mt. Ikoma was a famed locus for the practices of the itinerant saint Gyōki, Mañjuśrī's most renowned manifestation in Japan. Thus it is no surprise that Ninshō's Mañjuśrī contemplations and ascetic practices deepened after he began journeying to Mt. Ikoma. At age twenty, he fasted for seven days three times and recited the five-syllable Mañjuśrī spell five hundred thousand times. At twenty-three, he vowed to

18 For the connection between Maitreya and the vow to abstain from eating meat, see the *Shinji kangyō* 心地觀經 (Ch. *Xindi guan jing*; T 159 3:305c29–a1).

19 Abedera is also known as Sūkeiji 崇敬寺 and is now commonly referred to as Abe no Monju'in 安倍の文殊院. See Kanda 1979 on the Mañjuśrī image and its attendant statues.

20 Kikuchi Hiroki points out that the flower offering rite (*kugegyō* 供花行) was practiced by "hall monks" (*dōshu* 堂衆) as part of their regular summer rituals from about the twelfth century on. See Kikuchi 2008, 4, and 2010, 138.

abstain from sex and alcohol forever. Going into seclusion at Mt. Ikoma for fourteen days, he prayed for the bodhi-mind and contemplated Mañjuśrī. The biography then brings us to the time of the *Gakushōki* passages introducing Ninshō, with Ninshō's receiving the ten precepts from Eison that same year.

The *Daitokufu* account of Ninshō's early career illuminates the development of the cultic orientation that he brought to his initial meeting with Eison. Although Ninshō's devotions and practices are pluralistic, the *Daitokufu* repeatedly refers to concrete practices and sites associated with the Mañjuśrī cult. The text also shows a pattern of ascetic itinerancy linked to hijiri traditions and Gyōki as a model. Gyōki, like many later hijiri, had operated as a largely "freelance" monk, carrying out his activities among and between varied temples and practice sites. Moreover, a significant part of Gyōki's biography as a model for practice was his reputation for charitable relief activities, suggesting that traditions associated with Gyōki influenced Ninshō's desire to hold the Mañjuśrī assemblies dedicated to his mother at outcast communities. The nature and timing of Ninshō's migrations to Chikurinji on Mt. Ikoma at age nineteen are therefore conspicuous because they indicate that he had direct links to the Gyōki cult (rather than just implied links through the connection to Mañjuśrī).

According to the *Ikomayama Chikurinji engi* 生駒山竹林寺縁起, in the ninth month of 1235—the year Ninshō began journeying to Chikurinji—a series of oracles by Gyōki and Gyōki's mother to the monk Keion 慶恩 (or Kyōon; d.u.) in 1234 and 1235 led to the miraculous discovery of Gyōki's reliquary in the eighth month of 1235.²¹ The account highlights the simultaneously public and fabulous nature of this episode, which may have drawn Ninshō to the temple and nurtured his faith in Gyōki. The *Ikomayama Chikurinji engi* relates that in response to the first oracle Keion discovered two relics in a stone pagoda atop Gyōki's gravesite on 1234/6/26. The oracle also told Keion where to find a record of Gyōki's deeds. The assemblage of monks and laypeople to whom Keion reported this did not believe him, however, because the stone pagoda had only been put there in recent years. Nevertheless, an oracle by Gyōki's mother followed, directing Keion even more specifically to the record and indicating that he and a group of monks would discover Gyōki's remains. On 12/25 of that year, white smoke filled Keion's hermitage, and the local people gathered there, fearing a fire. They found none, however, and the smoke then rose and covered Gyōki's mausoleum. On 8/11 the following year, Keion

21 The *Ikomayama Chikurinji engi* was written by the monk Jakumetsu 寂滅 (d.u.). My account of the episode that follows is based on the yomikudashi version in Inoue 1997, 350–56. See also the summaries and analyses in Hosokawa 1987, 43–46, and Augustine 2005, 115–16.

was directed by Gyōki to excavate his mausoleum on 8/25 to dispel the doubts. Ultimately, the “monks and laypeople with a single mind” decided to conduct the excavation together on the specified day. When they did, they discovered an octagonal stone container with a silver urn inside. The urn was inscribed with the words “Reliquary containing the remains of Gyōki Bodhisattva . . .” and Gyōki’s epitaph.²²

Given the timing of Ninshō’s arrival, he could well have been among the “monks and laypeople” who opened the mausoleum (Oishio 1995, 295). Moreover, the excavation was led by Ritsu monks who used the episode as a springboard for a campaign to establish Chikurinji there as a Ritsu temple. By enabling Ninshō to see firsthand the promotional effectiveness of the Gyōki cult in temple fundraising campaigns, the episode would have nurtured Ninshō’s ability to mobilize the support of laypeople for projects he later led (Hosokawa 1987, 43–47). The connection to Ritsu monks here is also conspicuous. Prior connections to Ritsu monks likely helped lead him to Eison, who was similarly just starting a major temple restoration project. Both instances are early examples of an association between Ritsu monks and temple restoration projects that only grew over the Kamakura period. Collated with the *Daitokufu* account of Ninshō’s early career, the discovery and excavation of Gyōki’s mausoleum thus shines light on early models for Ninshō’s combined engagement in the Mañjuśrī and Gyōki cults and how he was led to Eison.

We are still left, however, with the question of why Ninshō seemed to think that accepting the full ordination from Eison and entering the Saidaiji order would interfere with his goal of holding Mañjuśrī assemblies to memorialize his mother. Here, the contrast Oishio draws between the “hijiri”-like nature of Ninshō’s early career and Eison’s more scholarly nature is informative. Oishio concludes that after his initial ordination at Gakuanji, rather than becoming a scholar-monk, Ninshō followed in the footsteps of the mountain ascetics and hijiri with whom he’d had contact since childhood. Indeed, four years of monthly pilgrimages to Abedera, six years of monthly pilgrimages to Chikurinji, and the various ascetic practices in the *Daitokufu* account of his early career strongly suggest a pattern of itinerancy and asceticism associated with hijiri. Such practitioners often only had loose if any residential ties to major temples, a pattern that is also suggested in Ninshō’s early career. Conversely, Ninshō’s activities before meeting Eison show little evidence of the scholarly training

22 Jonathan Augustine indicates that although scholars had believed this to be a fabricated account, in 1915 a triangular inscribed stone was discovered in the Ikoma area, and the inscription matched the oldest copy of the *Daisōjō sharibyōki* 大僧正舍利瓶記, Gyōki’s “Reliquary Biography.” The glaze on the inscription was consistent with that used for funeral urns at the time of Gyōki’s death in the eighth century (Augustine 2005, 115).

that Eison had undertaken nor do they suggest that he was on a path to becoming a scholar-monk. To the degree that Ninshō was drawn to Eison as a Ritsu monk, it was likely based on the asceticism associated with keeping the precepts and the burgeoning link between Ritsu masters and temple restoration projects. Contributing to temple restoration projects was a tangible, concrete way to perform good deeds and accumulate merit—one that hijiri often participated in by this time and which did not require broad learning.

Based on Ninshō's formative career, I suggest that we take seriously his stated hesitancy to “study the Way (*gakudō* 学道)” (emphasis mine) in his initial reply to Eison about entering Saidaiji. According to Eison's account, Ninshō's main goal was first to accrue the merit necessary to liberate his mother through charitable deeds and devotion to Mañjuśrī. Although such scholarly activities as reading, parsing, and commenting on scriptures were not the only activities that Ninshō would be expected to undertake at Saidaiji, he may well have feared that they would take his attention away from that goal.

To understand better both how Ninshō and Eison differed in their emphases as practitioners and how they came to influence each other, let us now look at passages in Eison's writings that reflect Ninshō's struggles with scholarship after entering Saidaiji. These struggles are linked to the question of models for Ninshō's practice because they initially inclined him to resume the itinerant pattern he showed in his early career.

Mutual Influences: Scholarly Training and Mañjuśrī Assemblies

Three different passages in Eison's writings make clear that Ninshō struggled with scholarship after entering Saidaiji. Significantly, two of these passages are linked directly to Ninshō's desire to journey away from Saidaiji because he did not believe that scholarship was how he could best benefit sentient beings. The portrait of Ninshō's early years at Saidaiji tallies with the *Daitokufu* image of his pre-Saidaiji years as one characterized by itinerancy and asceticism more than scholarship.

Ninshō initially left Saidaiji for the eastern region in 1243, only to return in the seventh month of that year, according to the *Daitokufu* (Tanaka 1973, 45). The *Kōshō Bosatsu gokyōkai chōmonshū* 興正菩薩御教誠聽聞集 (hereafter *Chōmonshū*)—a record of sermons attributed to Eison and largely delivered when he was in his eighties—recalls Ninshō's motivations:²³ “Thinking, ‘I am

23 For an English-language introduction to the *Chōmonshū* and translation of selected sermons, see Watt 1999.

not fit for scholarship and therefore have no ability, but somehow or other must save sentient beings,' Ryōkanbō 良觀房 [Ninshō] went to Kantō." However, during this journey, Ninshō twice encountered monks who asked him basic questions on Ritsu terminology. As a result, Eison elaborates, Ninshō realized that

"Being ignorant, I had believed myself unfit to establish this dharma. In this latter age, however, even such knowledge as this is rare. Although I may be ignorant, while studying, etc., at Saidaiji, I became accustomed to hearing such things and at least came to know this much." Thus realizing the benefits of scholarly training, [Ninshō] returned to the Southern Capital [Nara] and studied for ten years. After generally learning such matters, wishing to save sentient beings in a world without a buddha, he went to Kantō once again. Even if Ninshō's scholarship is weak, at the same time his compassion is very deep, and therefore he has been able to accomplish great deeds and establish the buddha-dharma to such an extent. (*Chōmonshū*, in Tanaka 1971, 200)

Even after returning to Saidaiji, Ninshō at first still had doubts about his own capacity for such scholarly training and how he could best serve the temple. In the *Gakushōki* entry for fall 1243, Eison comments:

Ninshō (Ryōkanbō) vowed after leaving the household to spread the dharma and benefit sentient beings. However, [he believed that] since his faculties were dull, even though he had begun to study he could not benefit other people. Thus it was his solemn wish to travel to China, gather vinaya texts and commentaries, and thereby contribute broadly to future students.²⁴

Eison dissuades Ninshō from this plan and convinces him on the merits of staying at Saidaiji and studying Ritsu there, much like he had countered Ninshō's initial resistance to formal entry into Saidaiji a few years earlier.

Eison helped direct Ninshō toward a more settled monastic life and scholarly training; Ninshō, in turn, influenced Eison's beliefs about the merits of combining social welfare with cultic activities. Before the initial encounter with Ninshō, there is scant indication in Eison's autobiography of his involvement in the cults of specific deities and saints, nor any mention of social

24 NKBK 1977, 19. The third passage in which Eison refers to Ninshō's struggles with scholarship appears in the *Chōmonshū*, in a parable about the virtues of compassion rather than excessive rationalization; see the passage in Tanaka 1971, 216–17.

welfare activities. Yet at Ninshō's request, Eison joined him in dedicating his first Mañjuśrī image at the Gakuanji west-side outcast community on 1240/3/6. After Ninshō formally entered Saidaiji, they performed a similar Mañjuśrī offering ceremony (*kuyō* 供養) at the Miwa 三輪 community on 1241/11/18 with the help of Keijitsu 繼実 (d.u.), a monk acquainted with Ninshō. Eison's remarks on that ceremony clarify his own movement toward the position Ninshō showed in their initial dialogue: "I reflected, 'To distance oneself from fame and profit and perform such pure good deeds—nothing surpasses this.' I shall compose a Mañjuśrī image, enshrine it, and perform an offering ceremony at the Wani 和爾 community near my compassionate mother's gravesite" (NKBK 1977, 16). Eison accomplished the plan the next year, on 1242/1/25.

Two months after the Mañjuśrī assembly at Wani, on 1242/3/25, they held one at the Kitayama 北山 community, the largest outcast community in Yamato Province. In the second month of 1243, they held a second offering ceremony at the Gakuanji community, just before a collective one at a marketplace, Ōjidō no Ichiba 大路堂市庭, on 2/25 to commemorate the ceremonies at all four outcast communities. A few days later, on 1243/2/29, they again held one at the Miwa community. Finally, on 1244/2/25, they carried out their largest assembly to date, when they held a collective ceremony for seven Yamato communities and offered rice gruel to more than one thousand hinin at Imasatono 今里野, in fulfillment of a vow made by Jōsen 乗詮 (d.u.).²⁵ The next day, Eison joined Ninshō in carrying out the thirteenth-year memorial rite for Ninshō's mother.

Such ceremonies dedicating Mañjuśrī images and providing offerings to hinin became a hallmark of Eison's order. While Eison helped Ninshō fulfill his vow to memorialize his mother through the assemblies, Ninshō's introduction of the assemblies to the Saidaiji order provided concrete opportunities for Eison to showcase the good deeds promoted in the precepts. Equally important, these opportunities were staged in the performative context of cultic devotion to a specific, recognizable deity. Both the charitable deeds and the cultic practices they are tied to—devotion to Mañjuśrī expressed through venerating his image and chanting his name—were concrete and accessible. And as their performance at multiple locations around Yamato Province suggests, the assemblies were transferable to various locales.

Simultaneously, the intertwined charitable deeds and devotion to Mañjuśrī in the assemblies are suggestive of the closely linked cult of the itinerant saint Gyōki, who was renowned for his social welfare activities. But here too, regarding links among social welfare activities and the cults of Mañjuśrī and

25 See the *Gakushōki* entries for 1244/2/25 and 2/26 (NKBK 1977, 19), as well as the entry for 1241/8, which records Jōsen's initial offer to assist Ninshō (NKBK 1977, 16).

Gyōki, different models influence Ninshō and Eison. Investigating these different models helps clarify the broader biographical process around Gyōki in early medieval Japan, variations in the social welfare activities related to the Gyōki and Mañjuśrī cults, and often-subtle differences in Ninshō's and Eison's engagement in those cults.

Public Works and the Emulation of Gyōki

As noted in the previous section, Ninshō influenced Eison regarding the synthesis of charitable relief activities, memorial rites, and the Mañjuśrī cult, while Eison moved Ninshō toward greater emphasis on scholarship, including the study of Ritsu. One aspect of social welfare activities and the Mañjuśrī cult in which they differed, however, concerns public works projects—which can be considered part of such social welfare activities—and their respective emulations of Mañjuśrī and Gyōki. In modern scholarship, Gyōki is widely considered the prototypical hijiri, and both Ninshō and Eison are said to have had hijiri-like qualities and to have emulated Gyōki. For Ninshō in particular, scholars point to hijiri-like qualities and emulation of Gyōki based in part on the itinerant practices associated with Gyōki and with hijiri traditions. Indeed, we saw a pattern of such practices in Ninshō's early career and a direct link to the Gyōki cult through his six years of journeys to Mt. Ikoma, which at the time was burgeoning as a center of the Gyōki cult. When scholars point to Ninshō and Eison's hijiri-like qualities and their emulation of Gyōki, however, they also base the assessment on a more specific characterization of hijiri and Gyōki as a model, one identified as that of *kanjin hijiri*.

Kanjin hijiri can be translated as “promotional saint” and points to varied, often itinerant practitioners engaged in fundraising and other promotional campaigns (*kanjin* 勧進) for Buddhist temples. In the Kamakura period, fundraising campaigns were conducted to restore or construct icons and temples—including the many Nara ones damaged in the Genpei War (1180–85)—and for such public works projects as the construction of roads, bridges, hospices, and ports.²⁶ By the time Ninshō and Eison began their Mañjuśrī assemblies and charitable relief work in the 1240s, Gyōki had long been renowned for extensive construction activities, including public works projects. The eleventh-century

26 For two well-known English-language studies of hijiri, see Horii 1958 and Goodwin 1994, the latter of which focuses on medieval fundraising campaigns (*kanjin*). For a revisionist study of hijiri that challenges many earlier scholars' use of the term, see Kleine 1997, which is based primarily on evidence from Heian-period Buddhist tale collections.

Gyōki bosatsuden 行基菩薩伝 (Biography of Gyōki Bodhisattva), for example, claims that “Gyōki was involved in the construction of six bridges, nine road-side shelters, forty-nine practice halls, two ports, fifteen reservoirs, seven irrigation canals, and three wells.”²⁷ The *Hokke genki* 法華驗記 (Miraculous Tales of the Lotus Sutra), compiled from 1040 to 1044, records that “After studying how paddy fields should be farmed and irrigated, he [Gyōki] dug ponds for reservoirs and built irrigation dikes. Hearing of this, the people came to help him, and the jobs were finished in no time at all. Even now, farmers reap the benefits of his projects.”²⁸ Through such hagiographic portraits, Gyōki’s legacy was tied to construction projects that mobilized and benefited a wide range of people, including commoners.

Medieval portraits of Ninshō’s activities clearly build on and extend this legacy. The 1310 *Daitokufu* records that he constructed 189 bridges and 71 roads, dug 33 wells, and built bath-houses, treatment facilities (*byōshitsu* 病室), and hinin dwellings at 5 places each.²⁹ Among these was an ambitious medical facility at Kuwatani 桑谷 (or Kuwagayatsu) in Kamakura in 1287 as well as the first treatment facility for horses in Japan, in 1298. To give a sense of the scale of the Kuwatani facility, according to the biography of Ninshō in the *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書 (Genkō-Era Annals of Buddhism) over a twenty-year period 46,800 people were cured there while 10,450 people died.³⁰ Ninshō is also often credited with the construction of the oldest relief facility for leprosy sufferers in Japan, the Kitayama Jūhachikendo 北山十八間戸 near Hannayaji. Although Ninshō’s leading role in the construction of the Kitayama Jūhachikendo may be apocryphal, it is significant that this legend would accrue to Ninshō, rather than Eison, who had much more sustained involvement with outcast relief in the Hannayaji vicinity.

In contrast to Ninshō, Eison is known to have directly participated in only one public works project during his long and multifaceted career, the repair of the Uji 宇治 bridge in Yamashiro 山城 Province in 1284. Moreover, Eison’s account of his participation in this project shows that his primary motivation was not the practical benefits of the bridge so much as his desire to prohibit net fishing there. The account notes that when he was initially asked to partake in the Uji bridge repair he refused three times because of his long-held distaste

27 Translation from Augustine 2005, 38–39.

28 Goodwin’s translation (1994, 30).

29 *Daitokufu*, Tanaka 1973, 52.

30 See the *Genkō shakusho* biography in Tsuji 1976, 285, for the original passage. The *Genkō shakusho* was compiled by Kokan Shiren 虎関師鍊 (1278–1346) in 1322; see Ury 1970 on this biographical collection.

for lay projects. Yet as part of his commitment to the precept against taking life and his desire to save others from that transgression, Eison had long promoted the establishment of no-hunting and no-fishing zones. He thus finally agreed to oversee the repair of the bridge on the condition that the wicker net used there for fishing be destroyed.³¹

Eison's reluctance to join public works projects was consistent with his commitment to the precepts: the *Four-Part Vinaya* had prohibited such projects due to the inevitability of killing living beings in the soil during construction (Nakamura 1964, 82–88). Furthermore, Eison's commitment to the precepts was evident in his avowed distaste for entanglement with lay authorities. For example, when leaders of the warrior government offered to commend private estates to Saidaiji in 1262, Eison reportedly replied, "I despise things that are attached to the world and prefer those that are unattached [*muen*]. This is the expedient means [*hōben* 方便] to preserve the Buddhist law."³²

Eison's stance is largely rhetorical; remaining "unattached" to political authorities proved more difficult to maintain in practice than in the ideal. Most significant here, however, is that Eison's involvement in social welfare projects was mainly limited to a model he attributed to the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* (hereafter *Mañjuśrī Sutra*), that of providing charitable relief to the "impoverished, solitary, or afflicted."³³ Eison identified the sutra's targets of compassionate deeds with such hinin as beggars, orphans or elderly left on their own, and lepers or others with grave illnesses who had no regular means of support—in other words, the poor, solitary, and afflicted. The public works projects that Ninshō more vigorously engaged in, following the legacy embedded in the Gyōki cult by then, could be considered part of such compassionate deeds. But they were not necessarily so, and they risked the entanglement with lay authorities that Eison professed a desire to avoid.

The contrast between Eison's and Ninshō's attitudes about and engagements in social welfare projects suggests a reinterpretation of the two Saidaiji order

31 For the full text of the 1284/2/27 Council of State directive (*daijōkanpu* 太政官符) containing Eison's account, see Tsuji 1976, 275–76. For an analysis of Eison's motivations in undertaking this project, with excerpts from the directive, see Oishio 1995, 246–49.

32 Goodwin's translation (1994, 118); for the original quote, see the *Kantō ōkanki* 関東往還記 (Record of the Journey to Kantō and Back) in NKBK 1977, 91.

33 Eison quotes this sutra in the *Gakushōki* entry for 1268/9, when he described his proposal to his fellow monks for a grand "non-discriminatory" Mañjuśrī offering ceremony (*musha dai-e* 無遮大会) to be held on 1269/3/25 at Hannyaaji, which was close to the Kitayama hinin community. For the *Gakushōki* passage, see NKBK 1977, 34. The passage Eison quoted can be found in the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* (Ch. *Wenshushili banniepan jing*); T 463 14:481a28–29, b1–3.

leaders' emulations of Gyōki and Mañjuśrī. The assessment of Ninshō as emulating a kanjin hijiri paradigm of Gyōki is warranted, based on his formative practices, his involvement with Chikurinji during the restoration activities tied to the Gyōki cult there, and the breadth of his public works activities. Ninshō's emulation of such a paradigm also highlights then-recent developments in the biographical process around Gyōki. Gyōki had long been associated with charitable activities, but the spotlight on his construction projects sharpened in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. This was due to the compilation of an influential biographical account listing such projects, the *Gyōki nenpu* 行基年譜, and the linking of Gyōki with Chōgen's (1121–1206) campaign to restore Tōdaiji, the most widely celebrated temple restoration project near the start of Eison's and Ninshō's careers.³⁴ Such accounts represented significant elaboration of sparser accounts composed in Gyōki's own Nara period (710–84), and their historical reliability has been rightly questioned (Augustine 2005). As Janet Goodwin has demonstrated (1994), however, the increasing emphasis on this image of Gyōki in the late Heian and Kamakura periods reflects the growing importance of temple fundraising campaigns. As is so often the case with saints' biographies, the historical significance of Gyōki's biography lies more in the varying appropriation of that biography over time than in what he may or may not have done in his own lifetime.

Yet I maintain that it is primarily Ninshō's biography, rather than Eison's, that belongs to this strengthening kanjin hijiri image of Gyōki and monks such as Chōgen who promoted it. Ninshō's location within a tradition of fundraising saints extending from Chōgen was confirmed by his appointment as the fifteenth holder of the office of Great Promoter (*daikanjinshiki* 大勸進職) for Tōdaiji in 1293/8, an appointment by lay authorities that began with Chōgen. The appointment reflects the renown Ninshō shared with Chōgen for their ability to mobilize both monastics and laypeople in large-scale projects.³⁵ Thus when Goodwin writes regarding the ideals of kanjin hijiri that "religious and secular projects . . . were not necessarily distinguished or viewed as contradictions" (1994, 141), this is a fitting description of Ninshō's approach. For Eison, however, this is the very distinction that he did make regarding construction projects, viewing temple restoration projects, but not secular public works

34 On Chōgen and Gyōki, see Goodwin 1994, 30, and chapter 4, especially 78–80 and 95; Kleine 1997, 36–37. See Augustine 2005 on the *Gyōki nenpu* and the evolution of Gyōki's biography to the medieval period.

35 On this appointment, see Oishio 1995, 305–6, and Matsuo 2004c, v, 160–63. See Hosokawa 1988, 181–83, for the appointment of Ritsu monks to this post more generally, and Goodwin 1994, 96–100, 110, on Chōgen and this post.

projects, as consistent with his status as a Ritsu monk. Here, Eison draws a line that his most influential disciple would not.

Eison's Emulation of Mañjuśrī and "Erasure" of Gyōki

Because he mainly limited his involvement in social welfare activities to the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* blueprint, in contrast to Ninshō and other so-called kanjin hijiri, Eison signaled that he was more interested in modeling himself directly after the deity than the saint said to have incarnated that deity. Admittedly, this is a fine distinction. However, the plethora of Eison's references to Mañjuśrī coupled with the scarcity of his explicit references to Gyōki—despite much direct and indirect evidence for Saidaiji order participation in both cults—suggest a curious "erasure" of the earlier saint and substitution of Eison himself in the role of Gyōki as a founding teacher (*soshi* 祖師).

Eison's relative silence on Gyōki, and the manner in which he substituted himself for Gyōki, was first pointed out in an insightful article by Kanbayashi Naoko. Although Kanbayashi (2003, 97) notes that no direct references to Gyōki appear in Eison's autobiography, she nevertheless suggests that there is ample evidence for Eison's participation in the Gyōki cult, as do most other scholars of his movement. The most commonly cited evidence for Eison's strong Gyōki faith include the facts that: 1) Gyōki had long been hailed as a manifestation of Mañjuśrī in whose cult Eison had participated energetically; 2) Gyōki, like Eison and his disciples, had been renowned for his social welfare activities and wide-ranging involvement with commoners and the poor; and 3) Gyōki was considered by both monastics and laypeople as a model for monks such as Eison and Ninshō who engaged in temple fundraising campaigns and construction projects.

There is evidence for the association in other historical indicators as well. One is Eison's involvement in the restoration of temples associated with Gyōki, particularly Ebaraji 家原寺, Gyōki's birthplace. Another indicator is found in a directive by Retired Emperor Kameyama to posthumously award the title *Kōshō Bosatsu* 興正菩薩 to Eison. In that directive, the retired emperor specifically cited Gyōki's "Bosatsu" (bodhisattva) title as a precedent.³⁶ Also, in 1302, a package purportedly containing Gyōki's remains and fragments of a sutra copy attributed to Gyōki were inserted into the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī image dedicated for Eison's thirteenth-year memorial service. Finally, Ninshō's connections to Chikurinji, where the dramatic excavation of Gyōki's mausoleum

36 For the directive (*inzen* 院宣), dated 1300/7/4, see NKBK 1977, 203.

was carried out in 1235, as well as his and other disciples' energetic involvement in public works projects, are cited as evidence for Eison's participation in the cult.

In general terms, I support Kanbayashi's and other scholars' association of Eison with the Gyōki cult. There are, however, limitations to the commonly cited evidence, which attests only indirectly to Eison's own Gyōki faith. That Eison's *disciples* and other contemporaries—such as Retired Emperor Kameyama—participated directly in the Gyōki cult or associated Eison with the Nara-period saint is clear. But the evidence does little to show how Eison himself conceived of Gyōki. It was Eison's disciples, including Ninshō, who conceived the plans for the 1302 Mañjuśrī image and inserted the objects associated with Gyōki. And while we have substantial documentary evidence for the items inserted into the earlier Hannayaji Mañjuśrī image commissioned by Eison (and after which the Saidaiji one was modeled), there is no mention of any items associated with Gyōki.³⁷

The other commonly cited evidence is also not as specific as one might expect, given the widespread notion that Eison emulated Gyōki in his activities. It is true that by Eison's time Gyōki was the most famous Japanese saint attested as a manifestation of Mañjuśrī. However, as made clear even in Eison's own multiple references to manifestations of Mañjuśrī other than Gyōki, there were many diverse examples of Mañjuśrī's manifestations in sources available to thirteenth-century Japanese monks. Similarly, although Gyōki's association with charitable relief activities was indeed renowned by then, as we will see in the next chapter, Eison did not need to leap back to the Nara period to find inspiration for his own charitable relief activities. Taken separately or together, neither factor is evidence that Eison sought to emulate Gyōki in particular. Finally, it is necessary to distinguish Eison's attitudes about public works projects—such as bridge, road, and port construction—from those of his disciples. The evidence points more toward Eison's disciples' emulation of Gyōki than his own.

In addition to such commonly cited evidence for Eison's Gyōki faith, Kanbayashi also calls attention to the remains of a document, the *Gyōki Bosatsu ganangūki* 行基菩薩御參宮記 (Record of Gyōki Bodhisattva's Pilgrimage to

37 Three different sources by Eison list the items inserted in the Hannayaji image, the *Gakushōki* entries for 1267/7/20 and 7/22 (NKBK 1977, 31–32), the 1267 *Hannayaji Monju engi*, and the 1269 *Hannayaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon*. The *Hannayaji Monju engi* can be found in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a–36a, and the *Hannayaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon* in Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:24–26 (doc. 10404). I address these sources in detail in Chapter 3.

Ise; hereafter *Gyōki sangūki*), that was inserted into the small shrine for two ornate mirrors, representing the “True Body” of the Ise kami, housed at Saidaiji (Kanbayashi 2003, 98). The *Gyōki sangūki* was one of eight texts inserted into the shrine, and these documents show that the shrine and the mirrors were connected to Eison’s three pilgrimages to Ise (see the Introduction). As the text’s title indicates, the *Gyōki sangūki* concerns a reputed pilgrimage by Gyōki to Ise Shrine. But here too, the evidence cited is problematic. We do not know when these documents were inserted into the shrine or by whom, and only two of the eight can be directly attributed to Eison. At least one was indisputably written and inserted after his lifetime: it begins with a reference to Eison as “Kōshō Bosatsu,” the title awarded in 1300, ten years after his death.³⁸ Moreover, art historians date the style of the shrine itself to the first half of the fourteenth century.³⁹ There is thus no reason to assume that the *Gyōki sangūki* was penned or even inserted by Eison himself, and this document as well may testify more to his disciples’ direct participation in the Gyōki cult than his own.

Eison’s wide-ranging temple construction and restoration efforts arguably provide better evidence for his emulation of Gyōki. He was vigorously involved in these activities, including those at various sites associated with Gyōki. To the degree a kanjin hijiri is understood as one involved in campaigns to restore temples specifically, there is accuracy to the portrayal of Eison as a kanjin hijiri-type figure. Here, too, though, the evidence for Eison’s emulation of Gyōki specifically is less clear-cut than one might think. First, a great many temples and other places all over Japan were associated with Gyōki by this time. Saidaiji order temple restoration projects were extensive, thus it was inevitable that many sites would be associated with Gyōki. Second, Eison was often *invited* to participate in these projects. The mere fact of Eison’s participation does not indicate his own preference for Gyōki or for temples associated with the Nara-period saint. This includes his reported restoration of Ebaraji, Gyōki’s birthplace. Although Eison does indicate in his autobiography that he and his colleague Kakujō in 1245 led the first separate-ordination ceremony for their new lineage at Ebaraji,⁴⁰ he does not mention the restoration of the temple. The restoration is mentioned, however, in the well-known Genroku-era (1688–1704) record of Eison’s activities, the *Saidai chokushi Kōshō Bosatsu gyōjitsu nenpu* (the *Nenpu*), indicating that the restoration also began in 1245.

38 See Kondō 1985 for a fuller discussion of these documents and their colophons, particularly p. 139, which quotes the legible portion of the *Gyōki sangūki*.

39 See Nakahara 1998, 805.

40 See the *Gakushōki* entry for the middle of the ninth month in 1245 (NKBK 1977, 20).

But even if we accept this later account, it is noteworthy that the record indicates that Eison was invited to restore the temple.⁴¹

While previous scholars cite much indirect evidence for Eison's emulation of Gyōki as a kanjin hijiri, Eison makes a direct reference that escapes attention. In the *Hannyaji Monju engi*, Eison insists that “On still another occasion, [Mañjuśrī] manifested as Gyōki and assisted Emperor Shōmu's external activity” (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3: 135a). Notably, this reference does show Eison's belief in Gyōki as a manifestation of Mañjuśrī and implies Gyōki's involvement in the construction campaign for the original Great Buddha statue at Tōdaiji, which was sponsored by Emperor Shōmu 聖武 (r. 724–49). The most important question here, then, is not whether Eison shared these commonly held notions of Gyōki, or even whether in varying indirect and direct fashions he participated in the Gyōki cult that was so popular in his lifetime. Rather, much as Kanbayashi astutely asked regarding Eison's complete silence on Gyōki in the *Gakushōki* (2003, 97), the question is why *didn't* he refer to Gyōki more often?

Kanbayashi's arguments on this relative silence are compelling. She suggests that Eison was demonstrating a “principle of covert substitution” (*suri-kae no ronri* すり 替えの論理) in which he superimposed his own image over Gyōki's (106–7), thereby leading others to view Eison himself as a founder and “living buddha” (*shōjin butsu* 生身仏) in the vein of Gyōki. Gyōki had similarly been referred to as a living bodhisattva, and by Eison's time he was widely considered one of the founding fathers of Japanese Buddhism. Kanbayashi argues that by metaphorically aligning himself with Gyōki and having faith in Gyōki as a salvific force for the masses, Eison uses the “concealed Gyōki” to help render orthodox his own charitable relief activities and to construct his own image as a living buddha within a broader cult of founders.

The cult of founders was indeed thriving in Eison's time, as suggested by the burgeoning devotional activities to both specific lineage founders and such founding figures of Japanese Buddhism more broadly as Shōtoku Taishi 聖徳太子 (Prince Shōtoku; ca. 574–622) and Gyōki.⁴² Eison's activities dramatically reveal his own faith in living buddhas and bodhisattvas, particularly as expressed in the linked cult of relics and miraculous statues serving as such living deities, as we will see in Chapter 3. Moreover, testimonies of miraculous

41 See the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 124).

42 On the cult of founders in Eison's time, see Fujii 1986 and Matsuo 1995, 1997, and 1998c. On Gyōki faith in the medieval period, see Augustine 2005 and Inoue 1997. Concerning Eison's involvement in the Shōtoku Taishi cult, see Narita 1974 and Quinter 2014. For monographs on the Shōtoku cult in medieval Japan more broadly, see Hayashi 1980, Lee 2007, and Carr 2012.

relic manifestations in response to Eison's activities played significant roles in his ability to attract followers and in perceptions of Eison himself as a living buddha (Nakao 1993). These factors all support Kanbayashi's arguments.

We also, however, need to consider another aspect of her arguments in assessing Eison's positioning of himself relative to the cults of Gyōki and relics—and, I would add, Mañjuśrī. As Kanbayashi suggests, many of Eison's activities are *not* recorded in the *Gakushōki*. His construction of this document clearly shows a process of selection and rejection, and we need to consider why he would choose to record certain things—such as the relic manifestations—while omitting others, such as any direct mention of Gyōki. Kanbayashi thus assesses the *Gakushōki* as Eison's consciously constructed self-portrait and the relic manifestations as a necessary “fiction” to create the image of Eison himself as a living buddha for his disciples (2003, 94–97). The possibility that Eison composed and conferred his autobiography as a kind of last testament to his disciples, intended to serve as a model for the activities of a bodhisattva, is strong. Thus Kanbayashi's emphasis on the importance of considering to whom the *Gakushōki* was intended and why is laudable.⁴³

I will conclude this chapter, however, by taking Kanbayashi's arguments one step further. There is indeed evidence to suggest that Eison was trying to *implicitly* associate himself with Gyōki and thereby help legitimize his activities. Eison's relative lack of direct reference to Gyōki in his writings may be designed to lead others to make the connection themselves, as Kanbayashi suggests. We could view this as an act of “erasure” or “strikethrough,” in which the earlier saint is at once concealed yet rendered visible beneath the erased or crossed-out part of the narrative. This act helps make the linking of Eison's activities with the earlier saint's seem natural rather than contrived, and thus more likely to inspire devotion. Such a strategy may strike some as devious or self-serving, but devotion to Eison himself helped promote his teachings and projects more broadly.

That said, the one time Eison does explicitly refer to Gyōki is simply as one of many manifestations of Mañjuśrī. Based on Eison's writings, these manifestations served not only to promote charitable acts but to legitimize various Mahayana schools and ensure the continuity of transmission in this vast time between buddhas. As Paul Groner points out (2001, 133), from the time of

43 Groner's remarks on the purpose of the *Gakushōki* are also apt, when he similarly notes that Eison “may have intended to bequeath to his disciples an account of his life legitimizing his new ordination lineage and monastic order. Therefore, the autobiography was likely compiled in much the same spirit as were various accounts of other patriarchs in the Kamakura period” (2001, 116).

Ninshō's entrance into Eison's order, references to Mañjuśrī in the *Gakushōki* "soon outnumber those of any other buddha or bodhisattva." In part, this is due to the attention Eison devotes to the 1267 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image. Yet this degree of attention itself demonstrates Eison's active process of "selection and rejection" in his autobiography. Given the preponderance of *explicit* attention to Mañjuśrī in his autobiography and elsewhere, I argue that the stronger identification Eison sought was with Mañjuśrī, the deity Gyōki was said to incarnate. Therein lies the deeper legitimization that Eison sought for his founding of a new monastic order and his broader activities.⁴⁴

Conclusions

Ninshō may have introduced the practice of holding Mañjuśrī assemblies to the Saidaiji order's activities, but Eison was already familiar with broader traditions around Mañjuśrī. In Eison's synthesizing of those traditions, the more scholarly character that he brought to his and Ninshō's fruitful collaboration is clear. Under Eison's influence, Ninshō did gain greater appreciation of the merits of scriptural study, and this helped shape his ability to eventually lead the development of the Saidaiji order in the eastern region. But throughout Ninshō's career, there is greater evidence for the concrete ritual activity applied in devotional cults and the practical skills necessary for wide engagement in public works projects. Eison also came to be vigorously involved in devotional cults, starting with the Mañjuśrī assemblies that he helped Ninshō lead at outcast communities in Yamato. Although he did not engage in public works nearly as extensively as Ninshō, Eison's ability to found a new monastic order and raise funds for both temple restoration projects and charitable deeds similarly attests to his practical know-how. What Eison could do in a way that the less scholarly Ninshō could not, however, was to creatively synthesize the traditions around Mañjuśrī or other objects of devotion and mold them through combined literary, iconographic, and ritual efforts to support his vision of a new monastic order. And Eison's vision embraced more than just a new monastic order. It was a vision of returning to the source of Buddhist practices and teachings and rendering the source present in the Japan of his time.

44 Here, I do not intend to slight the significant role played as well by the Śākyamuni cult in legitimizing Eison's activities. As with Mañjuśrī, there is also evidence to suggest a superimposition of Eison's activities with those of Śākyamuni, particularly in the *Chōmonshū*. Analysis of Eison's Śākyamuni faith, however, is beyond the scope of this study, and I refer readers to Matsuo 1996, 84–95, and 1998b; McCallum 1996; and Groner 2001, 121–33.

Eison writes in his *Monju kōshiki* 文殊講式 (Mañjuśrī Ceremonial): “Who, scooping from the stream, would not try to trace the source? . . . Why, breaking off a branch, would we not try to return to the roots?”⁴⁵ The context of the passage is how Mañjuśrī serves as the guide to enlightenment for buddhas—the source and the roots for Śākyamuni, buddha for the present eon, and Maitreya, buddha for the future. Whether receiving the precepts through direct conferral by a buddha or bodhisattva at the 1236 self-ordination ceremony, or striving to restore the true dharma of Śākyamuni’s time, Eison always sought to return to the source. In the context of devotion to Gyōki and Mañjuśrī, for Eison, that source was Mañjuśrī. As we will see in coming chapters, however, for Eison, Mañjuśrī’s influence is a source that is *always* streaming, through his multiple manifestations and the awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment that he inspires. Eison’s vision, here as elsewhere in his activities, is fixed on both past precedent and contemporary circumstance.

45 My translation of this text is based on a handwritten manuscript published in the *Kōyasan kōshiki shū* CD-ROM (Kōyasan Daigaku Toshokan 2001). See the Documents section here for a full translation and further bibliographic details. The *Nenpu* records that Eison composed the text on 1246/2 (NKBK 1977, 129).

Tradition and Transformation: Precedents for the Saidaiji Order Mañjuśrī Assemblies

Elite and popular devotion to Mañjuśrī has a long history in East Asia. The bodhisattva appears in many of the early Chinese translations of Mahayana scriptures from the late second to the early third century CE. In those scriptures he figures variously as a simple audience member or interlocutor of the Buddha, an ideal Mahayana practitioner, or even the progenitor of the aspiration for enlightenment for Śākyamuni and other buddhas. Textually, the earliest Chinese Buddhist literature thus shows varying degrees of devotion to Mañjuśrī. Iconographic evidence of devotion to Mañjuśrī and indications of specific rituals devoted to the bodhisattva, however, only appear later. When narrative, iconographic, and ritual expressions of devotion to the bodhisattva come together—as they would in Mt. Wutai and Saidaiji order traditions—we have more concrete evidence for a cult to Mañjuśrī specifically.¹

One of the earliest indications in East Asia of the Mañjuśrī cult as such is the Chinese *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāna Sutra* (hereafter *Mañjuśrī Sutra*). This brief, one-fascicle sutra was composed in Chinese by the fifth century CE and had made its way to Japan by the latter half of the eighth century. The *Mañjuśrī Sutra* interweaves a brief biography of Mañjuśrī, praise for his spiritual attainments, and instructions on how to properly contemplate the bodhisattva, including chanting his name and venerating his image. A passage in the sutra stating that Mañjuśrī would manifest as a poor, solitary, or afflicted sentient being in order to elicit acts of compassion is the main scriptural source for the Japanese tradition of holding assemblies that combined devotion to Mañjuśrī with charitable deeds, as cited in our earliest evidence for the assemblies.² It is thus no surprise that the scholar-monk Eison—who so actively promoted returning to the source of Buddhist teachings and practices—should also cite this sutra as a precedent for the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies held near outcast communities.

1 On Mañjuśrī in early Chinese translations, and the gap between the dates of these texts and iconographic representations of Mañjuśrī, see Lamotte 1960 and Harrison 2000.

2 See *Monjushiri hatsunehangyō* (Ch. *Wenshushili banniepan jing*; T 463), for the full text of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and 14:481a28–b3 for this passage. I will explore the 828 Council of State directive and other early Japanese citations of the sutra passages below.

The connections between the Mañjuśrī cult and charitable deeds, however, are only part of the story of the Saidaiji order assemblies and its precursors. The Mañjuśrī assemblies that Eison and Ninshō led starting from the 1240s included several conspicuous features. They began with Ninshō's aim to properly memorialize his mother and dedicate the merit from the assemblies to her liberation. But they were typically held near outcast communities, and the rituals and material offerings were simultaneously dedicated to Mañjuśrī and to outcasts and other suffering sentient beings in the vicinity. Ritually, the assemblies combined veneration of Mañjuśrī images with chanting of the bodhisattva's name or an esoteric spell. Veneration of images and liturgical chants were common in the cults of many Buddhist deities across sectarian affiliations. By the Kamakura period, however, well-trained esoteric monks such as Eison had particular expertise in the multiple iconographic forms, mantras, and spells of various deities. The Mañjuśrī assemblies thus helped showcase Eison and his colleagues' Shingon expertise. The assemblies also showcased their expertise in Ritsu, however, as Eison conferred varied levels of precepts to the gathered monastic and lay participants. Accordingly, the Mañjuśrī assemblies were closely tied to his movement's twofold Shingon and Ritsu identity, and the roots for the assemblies were diverse.

To understand better the roots of the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult, in this chapter I adopt a wide view of the precedents for the Mañjuśrī assemblies that Ninshō and Eison led. Scholars generally point to four interrelated aspects of the East Asian Mañjuśrī cult as precedents for those assemblies: the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* (*Mañjuśrī Sutra*), the cult of Mañjuśrī on China's Mt. Wutai, the activities of Gyōki, and Japanese state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies that began in the early ninth century.³ The *Mañjuśrī Sutra* was at the forefront of a broad tradition of venerating Mañjuśrī as a bodhisattva of compassion, a tradition often obscured by his tagline as the Bodhisattva of Wisdom. From the seventh century on, Chinese sources widely celebrated Mt. Wutai as Mañjuśrī's dwelling place in this world, and the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult adopted several key features of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* portrait of the bodhisattva. Most notable here are frequent invocations in Mt. Wutai accounts of Mañjuśrī's manifestations in humble forms and the Mt. Wutai practice of holding egalitarian feasts, a practice reported to have originated when Mañjuśrī manifested as a poor pregnant woman. The tradition of venerating Mañjuśrī as a bodhisattva of compassion is also evident in eighth-century and later Japanese accounts of

3 See Horiike 1982; Yoshida 1983; Miyazaki 1987, 70–98; Miyagi 1987 and 1993, 75–84; and Groner 2001, 133–37.

Gyōki as a manifestation of Mañjuśrī; Gyōki was renowned for his charitable deeds and such renown is integral to his identification as Mañjuśrī.

I suggest that the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, chronicles of the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult, and traditions linking Gyōki, charitable deeds, and Mañjuśrī combined to influence the implementation of state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan in the early ninth century. Each of these aspects of the Mañjuśrī cult, alongside the state-sponsored assemblies themselves, was also a source of inspiration for the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies. We will thus first examine in turn these different aspects of the Mañjuśrī cult. More fully understanding the ways in which Eison and his disciples inherited and transformed earlier practices, however, requires a more diverse look at the precedents. Those precedents closer to home—in the late twelfth- to early thirteenth-century context of Nara and other forms of exoteric-esoteric Buddhism—merit particular examination. As I will show in the latter half of the chapter, the inspiration behind Eison and his disciples' activities does not lie exclusively in geographically or chronologically distant sources.

The *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* (*Mañjuśrī Sutra*)

The *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* is extant only in Chinese, and there is no solid evidence of any Indic-language original. The Chinese scripture has traditionally been dated to the late third century. This dating, however, is based on a dubious translator attribution made by a Chinese cataloguer in 597,⁴ and the fifth century is a more likely date for the scripture's composition in Chinese (Quinter 2010). Even so, the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* remains one of our earliest Chinese scriptures dedicated to Mañjuśrī and showing at least prescriptive signs of integrated narrative, ritual, and iconographic devotion to the bodhisattva.

In the sutra, the Buddha recounts how Mañjuśrī had long been dwelling in the meditative concentration known as the *śūraṅgama-samādhi* and, through the power of the *samādhi*, manifesting throughout the ten directions to benefit sentient beings. Most famously for later developments in Chinese Buddhism, the Buddha proclaims that four hundred and fifty years after his own nirvana, Mañjuśrī will arrive on the “Mountain of Snows” and convert five hundred sages. Although likely intended to indicate the Himalayas, the reference to the

4 See *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶紀, T 2034 49:65c7, 66a22–26, for our first reference to Nie Daozhen 聶道真 as the translator of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*. Nie Daozhen collaborated with Dharmarakṣa (b. ca. 233) on translations between 280 and 312 CE, which forms the basis for the traditional, but misleading, dating of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* to about the late third century.

Mountain of Snows came to be associated with Mt. Wutai and the five hundred sages with originally non-Buddhist transcendents (Ch. *xian* 仙) inhabiting the mountain.⁵ The scripture has thus long been cited by Chinese monks as one of the “proof texts” for Mt. Wutai as Mañjuśrī’s dwelling place, and it was quoted in the two principal medieval monographs on the mountain.⁶

Developments specific to the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult aside, the prescriptive and cultic qualities of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* are evident in how it advocates devotion to Mañjuśrī. The scripture urges the audience to contemplate the miraculous marks that the bodhisattva manifests after attaining *parinirvāṇa*, the transformation of those marks into a beryl statue, and the benefits of reciting his name, revering his image, and making offerings in his honor. Creating and venerating icons associated with a given deity, or performing recitations or other rituals in the deity’s name, are typical ways of making offerings to that deity in Buddhist devotional cults. Also typical is providing material donations to help craft the icons, perform the rituals, or build the structures in which the icons are housed or the rituals performed. One of the most distinctive contributions of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, however, is that it suggests that offerings made to specific suffering sentient beings can be viewed as offerings to Mañjuśrī, because Mañjuśrī manifests to practitioners as an “impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being” in order to elicit acts of compassion. In cultivating such acts of compassion, the scripture insists, the practitioners will be able to *see* Mañjuśrī.⁷ Herein lies the main link between this scripture and Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan that incorporated charitable offerings to the poor, the abandoned, or the severely ill or disabled. This link would be highlighted in the Japanese governmental directive establishing official Mañjuśrī assemblies, in tale literature (*setsuwa* 説話), and in dedicatory and liturgical texts, from the early ninth century through Eison’s thirteenth-century expressions of the Mañjuśrī cult.

5 For example, see Daoxuan’s 道宣 (596–667) 664 *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三宝感通録, T 2106 52:424c25–27, and Birnbaum 1986, 120 and 123, on the Daoxuan passage.

6 The first monograph is the *Koseiryōden* 古清涼伝 (Ch. *Gu qingliang zhuan*; T 2098), hereafter referred to as *Ancient Records of Mt. Clear-and-Cool*. This text was compiled by Huixiang 慧祥 (d.u.), who made a pilgrimage to Mt. Wutai in 667. The second is *Kō seiryōden* 廣清涼伝 (Ch. *Guang qingliang zhuan*; T 2099), hereafter *Extended Records of Mt. Clear-and-Cool*. This text was compiled by Yanyi 延一 (b. 999) around 1060. The name used for Mt. Wutai in the title of both texts, “Clear-and-Cool” (Ch. *Qingliang* 清涼), is a common epithet.

7 See the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, T 463 14:481a28–b3.

Motifs in the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī Cult

The origins of the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult are obscure and shrouded in many obviously apocryphal accounts. It is clear, however, that Chinese literary traditions celebrating the mountain first flourished in the seventh century, when a series of chronicles about the mountain and visionary accounts of Mañjuśrī there began to be recorded. By the mid-eighth century, several such texts had been copied in Japan, indicating that knowledge of the cult was already available in Japan at that time. For example, the Chinese *Ancient Records of Mt. Clear-and-Cool*, the earlier of our two principal medieval monographs on the mountain, was copied in Japan in 740. The text collates the original author's own experiences on Mt. Wutai during a pilgrimage in 667 and the reports of others, with much attention to the miraculous signs and manifestations attesting Mañjuśrī's presence on the mountain. The Chinese *Records of the Flower Garland Sutra* also contains references to the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult and was copied in Japan in 744.⁸ Likely influenced by such accounts, such Japanese monks as Gyōga 行賀 (729–803), a Hossō monk from Kōfukuji who entered China in 753, made their own pilgrimages to the mountain and accordingly could report firsthand experiences of the cult when they returned.⁹

Our earliest detailed accounts of Wutai practices by a Japanese pilgrim are in the travel diary of the Tendai monk Ennin 円仁 (794–864). Most significant here, due to parallels with the Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan, is Ennin's account of vegetarian feasts on Mt. Wutai in which food was offered equally to all, whether "high or low, old or young, monastic or lay, male or female." Ennin reports that the practice began after a sponsor held a feast but announced that he had only intended to provide food for the Mt. Wutai monks, not for the laypeople or beggars who came to share the meal. When a pregnant woman asked for portions for both herself and her unborn child, the sponsor drew the line and refused in anger. The woman then transformed into Mañjuśrī and left. In remorse, the Wutai monks instituted the practice of holding egalitarian feasts, offering food regardless of status and without begrudging anyone who asked for more.¹⁰

8 *Records of the Flower Garland Sutra* refers to *Kegongyō denki* 華嚴經伝記 (Ch. *Huayan jing zhuanji*; T 2073).

9 On the copying of Mt. Wutai records in Japan in the 740s and Gyōga's subsequent pilgrimage to Mt. Wutai, see Yoshida Yasuo 1977, 30–32.

10 For an English translation of the origins of the Mt. Wutai vegetarian or "maigre" feasts (Jp. *sai* 齋; Ch. *zhai*) in Ennin's travel diary for his pilgrimage to China (*Nittō guhō junrei*

Ennin did not return to Japan until 848, twenty years after the establishment of state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan in 828. The link between egalitarian feasts on Mt. Wutai and Mañjuśrī, however, was likely known in Japan before 828, given that Ennin reports the feasts as an established custom and that other Japanese monks had been copying Wutai accounts and visiting the mountain since the eighth century. Thus in the early ninth century, the Japanese monks Gonzō 勤操 (754–827) and Taizen 泰善 (d.u.) may well have been influenced by accounts of egalitarian feasts on Wutai when they began holding Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan that included offerings of rice and other provisions to the poor.¹¹ By the 1240s, when Eison and Ninshō began the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies, accounts of the Wutai egalitarian feasts were available through multiple sources. Eison's recognition of the origin story for the practice is attested in his circa 1246 *Monju kōshiki* (Mañjuśrī Ceremonial) when he writes that Mañjuśrī “appeared as the likes of a poor woman and began the non-discriminatory grand assemblies (*musha dai-e*) at Mt. Clear-and-Cool.”¹²

More broadly, Mañjuśrī's manifestation as a poor pregnant woman in the stories of the egalitarian feasts is part of a recurring Wutai motif that we can call “the hidden Mañjuśrī.” Accounts of the mountain often feature Mañjuśrī manifesting in disguised form to test people's sincerity and prod them toward good deeds. An influential example appears in an account of how the *Sutra of the Supreme Dhāraṇī of the Buddha's Crown* was brought to China. The 689 preface to a Chinese translation of the sutra records that when the Brahman monk Buddhapālita arrived at Mt. Wutai in 676, he prayed to see Mañjuśrī. An old man then appeared, speaking the language of the Brahmans, and asked if he had brought the sutra, which could extinguish the transgressions of the Chinese people. When Buddhapālita replied that he had not, the old man told him that his visit was a waste: even if he saw Mañjuśrī, he would not recognize him. The old man went on to tell the monk, however, that if he brought the sutra, he would show him where to find Mañjuśrī. Buddhapālita was overjoyed, and bowed down in respect. But when he looked up, the old man had disappeared.

gyōki 入唐求法巡礼行記), see Reischauer 1955, 257–59. See also Palmer 2009, 114–22, on such feasts in Ennin's diary more broadly.

11 On this point, see also Yoshida Yasuo 1977, 43–44.

12 See the *Monju kōshiki* copy dated Tenbun 天文 19 (1550) in Kōyasan Daigaku Toshokan 2001 for the original passage and the translation of this *kōshiki* in the Documents section here. As one example of the additional sources on the Wutai egalitarian feasts available by Eison's time, see the ca. 1060 *Extended Records of Mt. Clear-and-Cool*, T 2099 51:1109b26–c20, which provides an alternative version to Ennin's of Mañjuśrī's transformation into a poor pregnant woman.

Nonetheless, Buddhapālita dutifully went to the Western Countries, retrieved a copy of the sutra, and presented it to the Chinese emperor in 683. After the text was translated, Buddhapālita took the Sanskrit original to Wutai and, according to this version of the account, was never heard from again.¹³

In the preceding account, the old man never reveals himself as Mañjuśrī, but the implication that he was Mañjuśrī is clear. Later expressions of the Wutai cult are explicit on this. For example, Ennin identifies the old man as Mañjuśrī in the account of the story in his pilgrimage diary (Reischauer 1955, 246–47). Elsewhere, Ennin reports seeing both a painting depicting the encounter (217, 228) and a banner with the story inscribed during his Wutai journey (266), thus attesting the significance of this encounter among origin stories associated with the mountain. That Eison was likewise aware of the story's significance is evident from his reference to it in his 1267 *Hannyaji Monju engi*.¹⁴

The good deeds that the hidden Mañjuśrī urges people to do vary. Many concern the transmission of specific teachings, as in the story of the transmission of the *Sutra of the Supreme Dhāraṇī of the Buddha's Crown* to China, and that is the context of Eison's reference. But the portrayal of Mañjuśrī manifesting specifically as an old man, and the respect that Buddhapālita shows the old man in the Wutai story, is revealing when considered alongside the charitable deeds in the egalitarian feasts. Wutai accounts of the hidden Mañjuśrī often show Mañjuśrī manifesting in such humble forms as an old man or a poor woman when he urges people toward good deeds. Origin stories of the egalitarian feasts, and Mañjuśrī's manifestation as a pregnant woman, illustrate the moral of these accounts well. A person without the proper mindset could easily ignore or look down on such humble beings, never realizing that they are actually Mañjuśrī himself. The stories thus remind the audience that such humble beings are no less worthy of respect—and hence of offerings that show that respect—than Mañjuśrī himself, in all his glory. Both the Japanese state-sponsored and Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies, similarly to the egalitarian feasts, ritually enact this moral by synthesizing the Mañjuśrī cult with charitable offerings to the poor, the orphaned or the abandoned elderly, and other suffering sentient beings. Simultaneously, the assemblies enact the

13 See *Butchō sonshō daranikyō* 仏頂尊勝陀羅尼經 (Ch. *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*; Sk. *Uṣṇīṣa-vijaya-dhāraṇī-sūtra*), T 967 19:349b2–c5. See Lamotte 1960, 86–88, for a French translation of the preface.

14 See *Hannyaji Monju engi*, Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a. Eison writes there that “on one occasion [Mañjuśrī] manifested as an old man and lamented the evil deeds of monastics and laypeople in the Land of the Han [China]. He thus ordered a Western Country *śramaṇa* to transmit the *Supreme [Dhāraṇī Sutra]* to China.”

prescriptive injunction in the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* to perform compassionate deeds for such afflicted beings, as any one of them could actually be Mañjuśrī. In this regard, we can trace a strong thread of continuity from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, through Mt. Wutai traditions of egalitarian feasts and the role of the hidden Mañjuśrī in sparking them, to the recurring link between Mañjuśrī assemblies and charitable deeds in Japan.

Gyōki as Mañjuśrī

By Eison and Ninshō's time, Gyōki had long been regarded as an incarnation of Mañjuśrī and renowned for his charitable relief activities for the poor and the ill. Gyōki legends and biographies also celebrated his construction projects, which included temple restoration as well as public works activities. His activities are often viewed as a precedent for the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies, as Saidaiji order monks also widely undertook such projects. Their enshrinement of Mañjuśrī images at the assemblies was part of a broader synthesis of icon construction, temple restoration, and fundraising campaigns. As Gyōki's renown was spurred by accounts of his involvement in Emperor Shōmu's fundraising efforts to construct the Great Buddha for Tōdaiji in the 740s,¹⁵ he came to serve as a model for monks spearheading temple campaigns in the Kamakura period (1185–1333) as well. Thus to the degree that Gyōki, like Eison and Ninshō, was strongly associated with the Mañjuśrī cult, charitable relief activities, and temple construction projects, the attribution of Gyōki as a precedent for Eison and Ninshō's Mañjuśrī assemblies is sound.

Given the widespread identification of Mañjuśrī with Gyōki, there is surprisingly no concrete evidence that he participated in the Mañjuśrī cult during his own lifetime. The hagiographic identification of Gyōki and Mañjuśrī, however, developed quickly after Gyōki's death in 749. Gyōki's "reliquary biography," the *Daisōjō sharibyōki* 大僧正舍利瓶記 composed just after his death, reports that, due to his compassion, the people widely called him a bodhisattva. This account is echoed in the *Shoku nihongi* 続日本紀 (Chronicles of Japan Continued), the second of six official court histories, completed in 797.¹⁶ Although these two accounts do not specify a connection with Mañjuśrī, the

15 On Gyōki, Shōmu, and the project to construct the Great Buddha, see Augustine 2005, 77–83; Goodwin 1994, 68, 78–80, 95; and Piggott 1997, 255–79.

16 For the text of the *Daisōjō sharibyōki*, see Inoue 1997, 276–93; for an English translation, see Augustine 2005, 16. The *Shoku nihongi* biography of Gyōki appears in the entry for 749/2/2; see the discussions in Fujisawa 1999–2000, 140, and Horiike 1982, 477.

perception that Gyōki had been a living bodhisattva due to his compassionate and miraculous deeds is amplified in the Buddhist tale collection *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記 (Miraculous Stories from Japan), compiled around the same time as the *Shoku nihongi*.¹⁷ Gyōki is the most venerated figure in this collection, appearing in seven tales, more than any other monk or any emperor (Nakamura 1997, 76). For the first time in surviving records, he is portrayed as an incarnation of Mañjuśrī (Vol. 1, Tale 5; Nakamura 1997, 115).

The author of the *Nihon ryōiki*, Kyōkai 景戒 (d.u.), writes that “On the outside he had the form of a monk, but within were hidden the deeds of a bodhisattva. Emperor Shōmu was so impressed with his virtue that he had great respect for and belief in [Gyōki]. In reverence and praise his contemporaries called him Bodhisattva” (Vol. 11, Tale 7; 168). The emphasis in the *Nihon ryōiki* is on Gyōki’s characteristics as a “hidden sage,” outwardly humble but inwardly blessed with miraculous powers. We thus see here a parallel with the motif of the hidden Mañjuśrī in Wutai accounts. Gyōki’s social welfare activities also likely contributed to the identification, given that Mañjuśrī had been linked to manifestations prodding people to undertake such charitable deeds, in both the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and in Wutai accounts. The *Nihon ryōiki* highlights Gyōki’s social welfare activities and links them to interactions with a broad spectrum of people: “The Most Venerable Gyōgi opened up a canal from Naniwa, built ferries, and preached Buddhist teachings to convert people. Clerical and lay, high and low, all gathered to hear him” (Vol. 11, Tale 30; 201–2).¹⁸

The identification of Gyōki with Mañjuśrī was repeated in many Heian-period tale collections, including *Sanbōe* 三宝絵 (Illustrations of the Three Jewels) completed in 984;¹⁹ *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki* 日本往生極樂記 (Records of Those in Japan Who Attained Birth in the Pure Land; ca. 985–86); *Hokke genki* (1040–44); and *Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語集 (Tales of Times Now Past; ca. early- to mid-twelfth century).²⁰ In addition, hagiographies of

17 On the problems of dating the *Nihon ryōiki*, see Nakamura 1997, 9–14. Scholars are divided over whether it was principally compiled during the Enryaku 延暦 era (782–806) or the Kōnin 弘仁 era (810–24). Its author, however, refers to events in Emperor Saga’s 嵯峨 reign (809–23), thus whenever it was originally compiled, it was likely completed in the Kōnin era.

18 Translations from the *Nihon ryōiki* are Nakamura’s (1997). On the portrayals of Gyōki in this tale collection, see also Augustine 2005, 101–5; Fujisawa 1999–2000, 140–41, 156n. 3.

19 This text is also commonly referred to as *Sanbōekotoba* 三宝絵詞. For an English translation of the Gyōki biography there, see Kamens 1988, 197–202.

20 For a helpful list of the passages identifying Gyōki with Mañjuśrī in these works, see Groner 2001, 236n. 66. For English translations, in addition to the aforementioned translations of the *Nihon ryōiki* by Nakamura (1997, 115) and of *Sanbōe* by Kamens (1988, 199), see

Gyōki include accounts of his meeting the Indian monk Bodhisena (704–60), who arrived in Japan in 736 and in 752 led the ceremony dedicating the Tōdaiji Great Buddha sponsored by Shōmu. The accounts report that the Indian monk recognized Gyōki as an incarnation of Mañjuśrī as soon as he saw him.²¹ Again we see a variation of the motif of the hidden Mañjuśrī, this time emphasizing that only a sage can recognize a fellow sage.

However much embellishment there may be in the later accounts of Gyōki as Mañjuśrī, the references in the *Nihon ryōiki* and Gyōki's renown by the start of the ninth century suggest that the identification of Gyōki as Mañjuśrī influenced the next major development of the Mañjuśrī cult in Japan, the establishment of Mañjuśrī assemblies.

State-Sponsored Mañjuśrī Assemblies

In the early ninth century, the Daianji 大安寺 monk Gonzō and the Gangōji 元興寺 monk Taizen began holding Mañjuśrī assemblies that combined offering ceremonies to Mañjuśrī with charitable practices. Exactly when they began doing so as a private practice, rather than one sponsored by the state, is unclear, but in 828 they received state support for the assemblies. Gonzō at one point resided at Sayamaike 狭山池 in Kawachi 河内 Province, a reservoir believed to have been repaired by Gyōki and where Gyōki was reported to have constructed a practice hall (Sayamaike'in 狭山池院). Thus it is possible that Gonzō was influenced by Gyōki's broader social welfare activities, in addition to the specific belief in Gyōki as Mañjuśrī. As for Taizen, although little is known about him apart from his involvement in the Mañjuśrī assemblies, Horiike Shunpō's assessment that he was part of a Gangōji lineage of monks engaged in social welfare activities is reasonable. Significantly, this lineage included the learned Hossō master Dōshō 道昭 (629–700), who was reported to have been a teacher of Gyōki's at Asukadera 飛鳥寺. Thus this broader Gangōji lineage seems to have informed both Gyōki's and Taizen's social welfare activities, including,

Dykstra 1983, 29, for a translation of the *Hokke genki* passage. See also the *Chikubushima engi* 竹生島縁起, said to have been compiled in 931, and the early-twelfth-century *Tōdaiji yōroku* 東大寺要録, cited in Horiike 1982, 477.

21 This account appears in the *Tōdaiji yōroku* and all the aforementioned tale collections except the *Nihon ryōiki*. For more on the reputed encounter between Gyōki and Bodhisena, see Kamens 1988, 31, 198, 201n. 15 and n. 17; Fujisawa 1999–2000, 142; and Augustine 2005, 107–8, 136.

for Taizen, the Mañjuśrī assemblies.²² Also, as discussed earlier, accounts of the egalitarian feasts and other traditions linked to Mt. Wutai likely influenced Gonzō and Taizen's conceptions of the assembly.

Whatever other traditions motivated Gonzō and Taizen to begin holding Mañjuśrī assemblies as a private practice, the record of the public establishment of the assemblies is clear. It explicitly credits the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* for the inspiration. On 828/2/25, a Council of State directive granted Taizen's request for public support for the assemblies that he and Gonzō had been leading. The directive summarizes the process and purpose of the establishment of the assemblies, and the text reveals many parallels with those later led by Ninshō and Eison, including how it uses the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*. The directive thus merits a close look here.²³

Issued the year after Gonzō's death in 827, the directive begins by quoting a petition from the Office of Monastic Affairs (*sōgō* 僧綱) stating that Gonzō and Taizen had instituted Mañjuśrī assemblies throughout the central Kinai 畿内 area, "preparing rice and other provisions and offering them to the poor." The petition indicates that this practice was based on the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and quotes the following passage:

If there are sentient beings who hear Mañjuśrī's name, their transgressions from birth-and-death through twelve hundred million kalpas will be removed. Those who pay reverence and make offerings will always be reborn, lifetime after lifetime, in the households of the buddhas and will be protected by the might of Mañjuśrī. [. . .] If they wish to make offerings and cultivate meritorious deeds, then Mañjuśrī will transform himself, turning into an impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being, and appear before practitioners.²⁴

The petition then explains that when Taizen was left on his own after Gonzō's death, his longing to continue the practice only increased. He therefore

22 See Horiike 1982, especially pp. 476 and 489, on lineage connections among Gyōki, Gonzō, and Taizen.

23 See the Documents section here for my full translation and annotations. The original directive can be found in the *Ruiju* (or *Ruijū*) *sandaikyaku* 類聚三代格 (Kuroita et al. 1929–, 25:53–54) as well as Horiike 1982, 483, which quotes it in full from the *Ruiju sandaikyaku*.

24 The directive quotes here from T 463 14:481a15–17, a29–b1 (bracketed ellipsis marks in my translation indicate the directive's ellipsis from the original sutra).

pleaded for a directive “to the capital, Kinai, and the provinces of the seven regions” that would recommend the following:

At one village per district, pure and diligent dharma-masters should be invited to serve as ceremony leaders. The rite should be performed every year on the eighth day of the seventh month. In addition, repairs to the halls and stupas and to damaged scriptures should be offered on the day of the assembly. On the three days before, during, and after the assembly, killing sentient beings shall be prohibited. The men and women gathered for the assembly should first be granted the three refuges and the five precepts.²⁵ Then they should chant the treasured names of Yakushi 藥師 [Sk. *Bhaiṣajya-guru*] and Mañjuśrī one hundred times each. I pray that widely under the heavens, meritorious deeds will similarly be performed and that throughout the land, all may look forward to the pleasures. (Kuroita et al. 1929–, 25:53–54)

Having completed the quotation of the original petition, the directive then declares that an imperial edict to accord with the petition has been received and that “emergency-relief rice earnings should be allocated and distributed appropriately” to provide for the assemblies. The text concludes by noting that “there are no restrictions to the provincial and district officials making additional offerings in accordance with the capacities of local cultivators.”

The details of the directive are significant because they provide the blueprint for the state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies and a concrete basis for comparisons with the Saidaiji order assemblies. Parallels between the state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies that began in the ninth century and the Mañjuśrī assemblies that Ninshō and Eison led in the thirteenth century are multiple. Even just looking at Ninshō’s intentions according to Eison’s account of their first meeting, there are direct parallels in the Saidaiji order assemblies to the state-sponsored ones in the involvement of the poor, the granting of the precepts to those gathered for the assembly, the chanting of Mañjuśrī’s name, and the need for a “pure and diligent dharma-master” to perform the ceremonies.²⁶

25 The “three refuges” refer to seeking protection, or expressing faith, in the three jewels. The five precepts comprise the first five of the eight precepts for laypeople and refer to refraining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and drinking alcohol.

26 Ninshō invoked the fact that “ordinary ceremony leaders” would have impediments or reservations (*habakari* 憚) to carrying out the rites, presumably due to the need to administer the precepts (which only qualified preceptors could do). He thus requested that Eison, who was known as a pure precepts-keeping monk, perform them.

Indirect parallels include memorialization as a motivation for the assemblies and the connections between the assemblies and temple restoration efforts. The specific reference in the Council of State directive to Taizen's loss of Gonzō, and the timing of the directive—early in the year immediately following Gonzō's death—suggest that a memorial to the illustrious dharmamaster Gonzō was part of the motivation for the state-sponsored assemblies. Ninshō, as indicated earlier, was first motivated to carry out such assemblies as a memorial to his mother. Also, although Ninshō did not mention temple repairs, as the 828 directive had, he did express his intention to enshrine his first Mañjuśrī image in the outcast community on the west side of the temple Gakuanji. The production and repair of Buddhist images, scriptures, and physical structures was a common feature of temple restoration projects, and the Saidaiji order came to connect the offering ceremonies at outcast communities with such projects. A vivid example of this is provided by the construction and dedication of the Mañjuśrī statue as the cultic focal point for the restoration of Hanniyaji, which was located near a major outcast community. In 1269, Eison held a massive “non-discriminatory assembly” at Hanniyaji that combined offerings to thousands of outcasts with the dedication of the statue and celebration of the temple's restoration.

Scripturally, the clearest direct parallel between the state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies in the early Heian period (794–1185) and those in Eison's movement lies in their shared inspiration from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*. That the sutra continued to be recognized as an inspiration for Mañjuśrī assemblies is evident in many explicit and implicit references to the same passage quoted in the directive. For example, later in the Heian period, an abbreviated version of that passage, specifically citing the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, was quoted in Minamoto Tamenori's 源為憲 (d. 1011) description of state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies in his 984 tale collection *Sanbōe*.²⁷ In the thirteenth century, the attraction of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* to Eison and his fellow monks—especially the section on Mañjuśrī turning into an “impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being” cited in the Council of State directive—is evident in several Saidaiji order texts.

In Eison's *Monju kōshiki* (ca. 1246), he first quotes the following passage from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*:

The Buddha proclaimed to Bhadrapāla: “This Mañjuśrī has innumerable spiritual powers and innumerable manifestations, which cannot be fully explained. I will now briefly explain them for the blind sentient

27 See Mabuchi et al. 1997, 198–99, for the original passage citing the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, or Kamens 1988, 333, for an English translation.

beings of future generations. If there are sentient beings who merely hear Mañjuśrī's name, their transgressions from birth-and-death through twelve hundred million kalpas will be removed. [...] After the Buddha's nirvana, all the sentient beings who have been able to hear Mañjuśrī's name or see his image will not fall into the evil paths for one hundred thousand kalpas. Those who have received, retained, read, and recited Mañjuśrī's name, even if they have grave obstacles, will not fall into the horrible and vicious fires of Avīci Hell. Constantly reborn in the pure lands of other directions, they will encounter buddhas, hear the dharma, and attain the receptivity to [the dharma of] non-arising."²⁸

Later in the *kōshiki*, Eison again specifically cites the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, quoting the passage:

The Buddha proclaimed to Bhadrāpāla: "The Dharma-Prince Mañjuśrī [...] turns into an impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being and appears before practitioners. When people call to mind Mañjuśrī, they should practice compassion. Those who practice compassion will thereby be able to see Mañjuśrī."²⁹

Eison immediately follows this second quote from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* with the explanation:

You should know that Mañjuśrī is none other than compassion. To promote compassion, Mañjuśrī manifests in the form of a suffering being. For example, when we see the form of a suffering, ordinary being, if we arouse our compassion, we will see Mañjuśrī afresh.

The quoted portion of the Buddha's proclamation—including the ellipsis from the original text—as well as Eison's own appended explanation are consistent with the rendering of this passage in the *Gakushōki* entry for 1268/9, in which Eison describes his proposal to his fellow monks for the "grand non-discriminatory" Mañjuśrī offering ceremony to be held at Hannayaji, next to the Kitayama outcast community (NKBK 1977, 34).

28 Translation based on the facsimile reproduction of the *Monju kōshiki* copy dated Tenbun 19 (1550) in Kōyasan Daigaku Toshokan 2001. The "receptivity to the dharma of non-arising" (Sk. *anutpattikadharmakṣānti*) refers to a state of realization in which one recognizes and accepts that all phenomena are unproduced.

29 This passage is from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, T 463 14:481a28–29, b1–3.

Implicit references in Saidaiji order texts to the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*'s indications of Mañjuśrī's special connections to the "impoverished, solitary, and afflicted" include a 1247/5/25 vow collectively signed by Eison, Ninshō, and nine other monks; Eison's 1267/7/23 votive text in conjunction with the eye-opening ceremony for the Hannyaaji Mañjuśrī image; and his 1269/3/25 votive text for the Hannyaaji non-discriminatory assembly. For example, shortly into the 1247 text, Eison and his disciples vow that "patterning our conduct after Mañjuśrī, we will take pity on all impoverished, solitary, and afflicted sentient beings."³⁰ In the 1267 text, Eison singles out "the deaf, blind, and mute, or those with leprosy and boils," and it is clear that he sees them as both solitary and impoverished: "They have no one to treat their ills . . . they have no companions to show them the way. When they beg for food and drink from the high and the low, they are despised and arouse feelings of disgust."³¹ The 1269 text characterizes outcasts similarly.³²

The multiple Saidaiji order references to the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* are significant because they reveal how the sutra was central to their imagining of the Mañjuśrī cult and they show continuity with the Council of State directive officially establishing Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan. As mentioned earlier, in scholarship on medieval Japan, the term *hinin* has been used to designate a wide variety of people on the margins of society—including lepers, beggars, criminals, courtesans, traveling entertainers, and attendants at funerary grounds—many of whom were considered "polluted." The degree to which such wide-ranging applications of the term were actually used in medieval Japan has been a matter of debate, and the Council of State directive was written before *hinin* was used widely in referring to outcasts.³³ It is clear, however, that Eison's views and practices related to *hinin* centered on beggars, orphans or other solitary people with no visible means of support, and the disabled or those afflicted with serious diseases such as leprosy. In this regard, Eison's conception of *hinin* dovetails closely with the "impoverished, solitary, and afflicted sentient

30 See NKBK 1977, 342, for this quote. The vow was included in the documents placed inside the 1280 Saidaiji Eison statue (NKBK 1977, 341–42) as well as the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 133–34).

31 Translations are from the *Hannyaaji Monju engi* (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b).

32 See the *Hannyaaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon* (NKBK 1977, 156–57; Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25–26 [doc. 10404]). See the Documents section for complete translations of the three texts quoted in this paragraph.

33 On the varying usages of the term *hinin* in Japanese scholarship, as well as such related categories as "dispersed-place people" (*sanjomono* 散所者) and "riverbed dwellers" (*kawaramono* 河原者), see Kim 2004, 197–212. See also Keirstead 2009 on the fluidity of categories of outcasts and people who could be considered "polluted" in medieval Japan.

beings” referred to in the same *Mañjuśrī Sutra* passage quoted in the 828 directive establishing Mañjuśrī assemblies.

Our examination of the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult, records of Gyōki’s activities, and state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies in the early Heian period suggests that all four aspects of the Mañjuśrī cult did influence the Saidaiji order synthesis of charitable activities with the cult. However, an examination of near-contemporary precedents for Eison’s and Ninshō’s activities, together with a broader look at the writings of Eison and his colleagues on Mañjuśrī, will provide a fuller picture of the precedents for the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies.

Warrior-Sponsored Mañjuśrī Assemblies: Rulers, Rituals, and Relief

The inspiration for Eison’s participation in the Mañjuśrī cult, or in any other cultic practice he promoted, becomes clearer through an investigation of both the precedents he actually mentions and those we can infer from the contemporary context. Apart from other Buddhist deities such as Śākyamuni or Maitreya, past examples of inspiration that Eison explicitly mentions include the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, Mañjuśrī’s manifestations on Mt. Wutai, the *Sutra of the Supreme Dhāraṇī of the Buddha’s Crown*, the *Shinji kangyō* (Mind-Ground Contemplation Sutra) in connection with Ninshō’s memorial rites for his mother, Mañjuśrī’s manifestation as a starving man before Shōtoku Taishi and his manifestation as Gyōki, and the assistance of Emperor Shōmu. In addition, Eison cites Mañjuśrī’s role in the proliferation of Mahayana Buddhist schools, including the transmission of the Shingon teachings to the Indian patriarch Nāgārjuna, of Hossō teachings to the Chinese monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (600–64), of Tendai via Huisi 慧思 (515–77), of Kegon and Sanron in general, and of the buddha-mind of the Zen patriarch Bodhidharma (d. 530?).³⁴

These references do support most of the main precedents for Eison’s and Ninshō’s Mañjuśrī assemblies examined earlier, including the emphasis on the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult. Curiously, however, there is never any mention of the state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies from the Heian period. It is thus clear that Eison’s account does not tell the whole story of the precedents for the Mañjuśrī assemblies that he and Ninshō led, as it is hard to imagine that they began holding them without awareness of these earlier ones. In widening our perspective on the precedents for the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī

34 Eison’s references to these sources of inspiration in his writings on Mañjuśrī can all be found in the annotated translations in the Documents section here.

assemblies, it is thus helpful to first consider another form of state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies that Eison never mentioned, those from the Kamakura period and sponsored by leaders of the new warrior government rather than the court.

The practice of holding widespread assemblies sponsored by the court had waned in the late Heian period, and Eison and Ninshō are generally credited with reviving the Nara-area tradition of Gonzō and Taizen. The immediate precursors to their combination of charitable offerings and Mañjuśrī faith, however, were ceremonies ordered by such rulers of the Kamakura warrior government as Minamoto Sanetomo 源実朝 (1192–1219) and Hōjō Yasutoki 北条泰時 (1183–1242). For example, the *Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡 (Mirror of Eastern Japan) records that on 1213/4/20 an offering ceremony to hinin was held at the Fifteen Great Temples of Nara in fulfillment of “a long-held earnest vow of the Shogun family.” On 1241/12/30, Yasutoki sponsored an offering ceremony for prisoners and beggars.³⁵ Although Mañjuśrī was not mentioned in connection with those ceremonies, Sanetomo is reported to have sponsored many Mañjuśrī offering ceremonies from 1205 through 1217.³⁶ In light of the long-held association between Mañjuśrī assemblies and charitable offerings by this time, as well as this evidence for Sanetomo’s Mañjuśrī faith, the vow for the 1213 hinin offering ceremony was likely based on his Mañjuśrī faith (Miyagi 1993, 78).

To lead the Mañjuśrī assemblies, Sanetomo commissioned Eisai 栄西 (1141–1215) and Gyōyū 行勇 (1163–1241), both of whom synthesized Rinzai Zen, traditional exoteric teachings, and esoteric practices that reflected not only Tendai but Shingon esotericism (Sasaki 1997, 82–89). Sanetomo and Yasutoki were succeeded in their charitable relief efforts by Hōjō Tokiyori 北条時頼 (1227–63) and his policy of “relief for the people” (*bumin seisaku* 撫民政策). That these warrior rulers sponsored charitable offering ceremonies and Mañjuśrī assemblies, and did so using monks who combined exoteric and Shingon esoteric teachings, is illuminating considering the later ritual connections between the warrior government and the Saidaiji order. In particular, Tokiyori had close associations with Ninshō and received the precepts from Eison shortly before his death. I suggest that the ability of the Saidaiji order monks to lead such offering ceremonies and Mañjuśrī assemblies, and the twofold expertise in

35 See *Azuma kagami*, Kuroita et al. 1929–, 32:679, for the 1213 ceremony and 33:293 for the 1241 one.

36 The dates for those Mañjuśrī assemblies and their references in the *Azuma kagami* are: 1205/5/25 (Kuroita et al. 1929–, 32:624), 1210/9/25 and 11/25 (653–54), 1211/12/25 (660), 1215/1/25 (715–16), and 1217/5/25 (731).

both exoteric and Shingon esoteric practices they displayed in doing so, contributed to the appeal that Ninshō and Eison held for such warrior leaders as Tokiyori.

The question remains, however, as to why Eison never refers to the state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies, whether they were sponsored by the court or the warrior government. Eison's silence on these Heian and early Kamakura-period precedents may simply reflect the fact that older precedents were more highly revered. Alternatively, perhaps little reminder was needed of the state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies, which were still being held in some capacity, even if no longer so widespread. But Eison's silence also suggests a desire to distinguish his and Ninshō's assemblies from the state-sponsored ones, thereby better reflecting their stance as "reclusive monks" who sought to distance themselves from such official state support. And there are indeed clear material and ritual differences between the state-sponsored assemblies and those that Eison and Ninshō led.

First, the Mañjuśrī assemblies that Eison and Ninshō led were privately sponsored, as Gonzō's and Taizen's had originally been. Such private sponsorship would not prevent court or warrior leaders from making offerings to support the assemblies if they so wished and the Saidaiji leaders accepted their support. However, the assemblies they led were not *dependent* on such support, and the impetus for the assemblies was now on the side of the monks leading the rites, not the lay rulers sponsoring the rites. Second, the scale of both the precepts and the chanting in the Saidaiji order assemblies was elevated. Whereas the five precepts were administered in the Heian-period state-sponsored rites, Ninshō requested that Eison administer the eight precepts. As even the first of Eison and Ninshō's Mañjuśrī assemblies showed, the Saidaiji order monks also administered the bodhisattva precepts, which comprised ten major and forty-eight minor precepts. Moreover, while Mañjuśrī's and Yakushi's names were to be chanted one hundred times in the yearly, court-sponsored rites, Ninshō intended to have Mañjuśrī's name chanted for a full day—which would entail much more than one hundred repetitions—on the twenty-fifth of each month.

The greater scale of the chanting in the Saidaiji order assemblies is tied to the more continuous nature of Ninshō and Eison's synthesis of the Mañjuśrī cult with relief activity, in contrast to the yearly state-sponsored Mañjuśrī rites in the Heian period or the sporadic official assemblies sponsored by the warrior government in the early Kamakura period.³⁷ Recitation of mantra and dhāraṇī was a popular method for treating ailments in ancient and medieval

37 See Matsuo 1998c, 276–79, and 2004c, 23.

Japan, and Eison and Ninshō believed in the power of mantra to eradicate the past evil karma of lepers and other outcasts and thus to help heal them (Abé 2002–03). Chanting Mañjuśrī’s “treasured name” (*hōgō* 宝号), in Ninshō’s conception, was thus more than simple praise of the deity: it represented an integral part of his relief strategy.

In combination, the elevated precepts conferrals and chanting activities in the assemblies that Ninshō and Eison led clearly reflects their twofold emphasis on Ritsu and Shingon. The increased precepts and chanting helped the Saidaiji order in two concrete but contrasting ways. On one hand, they created opportunities for wider participation in the ceremony by both monastics and laypeople and enabled them to become more deeply involved in the ritual activities of the assemblies. On the other, they reinforced the twofold ritual expertise qualifying the Saidaiji order monks to lead the assemblies. Diverse participants could join different aspects of the Buddhist practices in the assemblies. But the Saidaiji order monks were both the directors setting the stage and the actors playing the lead ritual roles.

The ritual expertise of the Saidaiji order monks is also reflected in an increased emphasis on rites connected to images in their Mañjuśrī assemblies versus the state-sponsored ones. No mention is made of images in the 828 directive establishing Mañjuśrī assemblies, and the records for the first Heian-period official assemblies suggest that Mañjuśrī images may not even have been used.³⁸ Yet the Saidaiji order assemblies began with Ninshō’s intention to compose seven Mañjuśrī images, enshrine them at seven outcast communities, and have eye-opening ceremonies performed. Eison, moreover, devotes much attention to one such eye-opening ceremony in his description of the 1267 assembly dedicating the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue. Eye-opening ceremonies were widely believed to animate images, bringing them to life in such a way that they no longer merely represented, but rather *embodied*, the main deity.

The increased emphasis on images in the Saidaiji order rites also gave greater opportunities for involvement in the rites by diverse participants: whether one had the expertise to consecrate an image through an eye-opening ceremony or not, during rites or prayers before the image one could connect to the image, and hence form karmic bonds with the deity embodied therein. The rites associated with Mañjuśrī images were thus integral to the order’s Mañjuśrī assemblies from the start, and both the monks’ ritual expertise and the opportunities they afforded others to forge karmic bonds with the deity were keys to their ability to attract supporters. And whatever distinctions there may have been

38 See Yoshida Yasuo 1977, 41, and Fujisawa 1999–2000, 143.

between Eison and Ninshō's privately led ceremonies and the state-sponsored ones, the warrior government's preexisting stake in hinin offering ceremonies and Mañjuśrī assemblies helps explain why warrior rulers came to number among those supporters.

Memorial Rites, Mothers, and Mañjuśrī

The issue of memorialization also merits a closer look in assessing the precedents for the Saidaiji order assemblies. In the phrasing of the petition for state sponsorship of Mañjuśrī assemblies, there was an implicit link to the memorialization of the illustrious dharma-master Gonzō. Regarding the privately sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies that Gonzō and his colleague Taizen had led, the petition states:

Now Gonzō has passed away, and Taizen has been left on his own. Taizen wanted to continue the practice, and his longing to do so has only increased. He thus pleads that “a directive to hold the aforementioned assembly be issued to the capital, Kinai, and the provinces of the seven regions.” (Kuroita et al. 1929–, 25:54)

Thus when the Council of State issued the directive in 828, the year after Gonzō died, honoring the deceased master was implicit. In the early Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies, however, the memorial aspect was explicit, and different in character, because it centered on the monks' mothers.

As Ninshō's dialogue with Eison regarding his intentions for the assemblies showed, his primary motivation was to use the assemblies to accrue merit that he could dedicate to his mother's salvation: “I shall send the generated merit to the place where my departed mother has been reborn and effect the supreme cause for her liberation. I only wish to fulfill this long-dwelling vow.” In this sense, the charitable aspects of Ninshō's first Mañjuśrī assemblies were means to a more personal end, at least initially. Tellingly, Eison offered no disagreement with Ninshō's overriding motivation to liberate his mother. His counterargument to Ninshō's intention to delay “leaving the household and studying the Way” until he had fulfilled his vow centered on the best means to that end, not the end itself. Eison maintained that taking the full monastic precepts was the superior way for Ninshō to generate and transfer the necessary merit to liberate his mother.³⁹

39 *Gakushōki* entry for 1239/9/8 (NKKB 1977, 15).

The two monks ultimately compromised and influenced each other concerning Ninshō's ordination and the institution of Mañjuśrī assemblies. Ninshō formally entered Saidaiji after accomplishing part of his original vow to hold Mañjuśrī assemblies at seven outcast communities, and Eison helped him to fulfill the rest of the vow. Along the way, Eison even resolved to compose an image himself and hold a ceremony on behalf of his own mother. Both the initial dialogue with Ninshō and the subsequent actions of the two monks reflect the increasing intensity of rhetorical and ritual attention to the salvation of mothers in medieval Japan.⁴⁰ Of particular interest here, however, is why Ninshō and Eison may have tied the salvation of their mothers to the Mañjuśrī cult specifically.

As Uchida Keichi has indicated, the Saidaiji order's repeated synthesis of Mañjuśrī faith with rites to send merit to the dead shows a new aspect of the Mañjuśrī cult.⁴¹ Uchida's work calls attention to the ubiquity of Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī activities taking place on the twenty-fifth day of the month, representing the day associated with Mañjuśrī, or his "karmic-affinity day" (*ennichi* 縁日).⁴² In medieval Japan, both memorial rites and pre-memorial rites (*gyakushu* 逆修) were widely held on such karmic-affinity days. Yet even considering the increased attention in medieval Japan to the salvation of mothers and related memorial rites, many buddhas and bodhisattvas could be and were invoked toward this end, including Jizō 地藏 (Sk. Kṣitigarbha), Kannon, Amida, and others. Why then did Ninshō and Eison turn to Mañjuśrī specifically for this?

As usual, because Eison wrote so much more than Ninshō did, it is easier to answer this question for Eison. His writings reveal that his synthesis of the Mañjuśrī cult and memorial rites was inspired by Ninshō (as well as Ninshō's colleagues Jōsen and Keijitsu, who were themselves inspired by Ninshō). Thus

40 On cultic efforts to ensure the salvation of mothers in medieval Japan, see Glassman 2001 and Meeks 2010a, 265–83. On monks and mothers in both Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, see Faure 2003, 145–80. For Chinese Buddhism specifically, see Cole 1998.

41 Uchida contrasts this aspect with the more frequent recognition of Mañjuśrī as a scholarly interlocutor in the *Vimalakīrti* and other Mahayana sutras, as the "wisdom-Mañjuśrī," or as the "Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī." See Uchida 1988, especially p. 58.

42 Building on Uchida's work, Asanuma Takeshi suggests that Eison may have popularized the notion of the twenty-fifth as Mañjuśrī's karmic-affinity day in Japan. Asanuma points out that the Heian-period Mañjuśrī assemblies were not ordinarily performed on that day, nor was this the day designated in the 828/2/25 Council of State directive authorizing public support for the rites (Asanuma 2008, 41). However, the Sanetomo-sponsored assemblies from 1205 through 1217 are consistently depicted as taking place on the 25th. We should also note that Ninshō influenced Eison on the timing of the assemblies.

at one level, Eison was merely following the lead of his dharma-colleagues. Having lost his own mother when he was seven, he may well have been moved by Ninshō's affection for his mother and the sincerity of his faith (Kaneko 1987, 82). As the founder of the monastic order and a dedicated scholar-monk, however, Eison took primary responsibility for lecturing on the scriptural precedents for the order's involvement in the cult and memorial rites. In this regard, the entry in his autobiography for the 1244/2/25 collective Mañjuśrī assembly for seven outcast communities is revealing. Eison notes there that the following day, he lectured on the *Hōon* 報恩 chapter of the *Shinji kangyō* at the thirteenth-year memorial rite for Ninshō's mother.⁴³ This text was a fit choice for several reasons. The *Hōonbon*, or "Chapter on the Repayment of Kindness," of the *Shinji kangyō* explains the four major debt-incurring "favors" (*on* 恩) that sentient beings should repay: those of one's parents, other sentient beings, the king, and the three jewels (buddha, dharma, and sangha). The term *on* has the sense of both the favor that one bestows as well as the recipient's indebtedness for that favor, and the chapter lists parents first among the four objects of debt. After a perfunctory reference to the "compassionate favor" of the father (T 159 3:297a14), the chapter details at length the kindness and sufferings of mothers for their children and the great merit of repaying that kindness; there is hardly any other reference to the father alone in this chapter. It is the mother's distinctive travails and compassion, including her "ten months of long suffering while the child is in the womb" and "her many discomforts, whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying down" (301c9, c11), that are spelled out. The merit of making offerings to the "compassionate mother's field of great benevolence" is therefore "limitless and immeasurable" (301c7–8).⁴⁴ Based on such passages, this chapter was particularly appropriate for the memorial service for Ninshō's mother.

Lecturing on a chapter from the *Shinji kangyō* is also fitting as a synthesis of the initially different emphases that Eison and Ninshō revealed in their first meeting. The sutra emphasizes monasticism and the precepts, particularly Mahayana precepts, and it reinforces Eison's fundamental stance on the merits of leaving the household and taking the monastic precepts. The chapter also contains a verse that is one of the most frequently invoked passages on Mañjuśrī in Saidaiji order writings:

43 For the *Gakushōki* entry, see NKBK 1977, 19. The *Hōon* chapter on which Eison lectured is the second fascicle of the *Shinji kangyō*; see T 159 3:296b22–306b14.

44 On these passages, see also Uchida 1988, 55. On the discourse of the four debts in early medieval Japan more broadly, see Ruppert 2001.

The various buddhas of the three times
 take the Honored Great Sage Mañjuśrī as their mother.
 The initial awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment for all the
 Thus Come Ones of the ten directions
 is due to the power of Mañjuśrī's guidance. (T 159 3:305c25–26)

It is telling that in Eison's *Monju kōshiki*, although many scriptures are implicitly referred to, the only ones explicitly cited are the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and the *Shinji kangyō*. We have already seen examples of Eison's citations from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*; from the *Shinji kangyō*, in addition to the verses quoted above, Eison indicates: "The *Shinji kangyō* states: 'The subtle fruit of bodhi is not hard to attain. Yet a true good spiritual friend is actually hard to meet.'"⁴⁵ Such a spiritual friend guiding one toward bodhi, or enlightenment, is consistent with the *Shinji kangyō* reference to Mañjuśrī as the guide leading all buddhas to enlightenment. These examples illustrate the fundamental importance of both the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and the *Shinji kangyō* to the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult, but it is with the *Shinji kangyō* that the mother motif comes into play most strongly.⁴⁶

The *Shinji kangyō* verse on Mañjuśrī as the mother of the buddhas is echoed in his common epithet, the Mother of Awakening (*kakumo* 覺母). This suggests another reason why Mañjuśrī was an appropriate choice for memorial rites to Ninshō's mother: "he" too is widely portrayed as a mother. Although the gender-bending aspects of the bodhisattva Kannon are more widely recognized, the Mañjuśrī cult also shows such aspects. From Tang (618–ca. 907) and Song (960–1279) China, iconographic portrayals of Mañjuśrī wearing elaborate women's garments began to flourish (Kaneko 1992, 33). These garments were believed to have been outerwear for Indian noblewomen or female palace servants. Adorning Mañjuśrī in this fashion signaled his identification with the female warrior bodhisattva Prajñā, who was adorned in the same attire and, like Mañjuśrī, was known as the mother of all buddhas. Within Shingon, the most common portrayal of Prajñā in this attire is in the Wisdom-Holding Hall

45 The quote in the *Monju kōshiki* is from the *Shinji kangyō*, T 159 3:305a16. The *Monju kōshiki* also contains a verse indicating that those who hear the name, see the body or manifestations, or bathe in the light of the bodhisattva "will all attain the inconceivable buddhaway." Here, Eison does not name the source, but it is a near-exact quote from the *Shinji kangyō*, T 159 3:305c27–28.

46 My position here contrasts both Horiike's argument that the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* was fundamental but the *Shinji kangyō* was not and Uchida's argument that the opposite was the case. See Horiike 1982, 488–89, and Uchida 1988, 48, 57–58.

(Jimyōin 持明院) of the Womb Realm Mandala.⁴⁷ The iconographic identification of Mañjuśrī with Prajñā Bodhisattva was a natural one, as the association of *prajñā* (wisdom) with Mañjuśrī was deep and longstanding. Both deities are also portrayed as the protector of sutra repositories, strengthening their identification.⁴⁸

Portrayals of Mañjuśrī in the Prajñā Bodhisattva fashion, wearing the elaborate garments, were popular by the Kamakura period, and the Saidaiji order was no exception: the renowned 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue, constructed for Eison's thirteenth-year memorial service and patterned after the Hannyajī Mañjuśrī statue completed in 1267, belongs to this tradition. In addition, the tremendous Abedera Mañjuśrī statue was garbed in this style and completed in the early thirteenth century shortly before Ninshō began making pilgrimages there. Other notable examples of Mañjuśrī in this style in early medieval Japan—also in pentad-style sculptures of Mañjuśrī, like the Saidaiji and Abedera images—include sculptures at Chūsonji in Iwate Prefecture, Henmyōin 遍明院 on Mt. Kōya, Kōfukuji in Nara, and Konkaikōmyōji 金戒光明寺 in Kyoto, among others.⁴⁹

None of the images Ninshō and Eison enshrined at the outcast communities in the 1240s survive, and there are no details on their iconography in extant records. However, in light of the popularity of the garment style by the Kamakura period, and particularly the use of this attire in the Mañjuśrī sculpture at Abedera, Ninshō was surely familiar with this iconography when he began composing Mañjuśrī images for his mother. While portrayals of Mañjuśrī signaling his identification with the female bodhisattva Prajñā emphasize his qualities as a spiritual mother, they may well have enhanced Ninshō's perceptions of Mañjuśrī as particularly appropriate for memorializing his earthly mother.⁵⁰

47 See Kaneko 1992, 35, and plate 59 on p. 41.

48 For two examples close to Eison and Ninshō's time, a votive text for the Chūsonji 中尊寺 Mañjuśrī pentad (mid to late twelfth century) refers to Mañjuśrī as the "lord of the sutra repository," while the Shingon iconographic compendium *Kakuzenshō* 覺禪鈔 points to Prajñā Bodhisattva as the main deity for the sutra repository (see Kaneko 1992, 35–38, and *Kakuzenshō*, in Bussho Kankōkai 1978–83, 48:1340–41).

49 On the Konkaikōmyōji pentad, see Asanuma 2008, which suggests that the sculpture may have been connected to Eison's group. On additional pentads with Mañjuśrī in this attire, see Kaneko 1992, 33–35, and the photos in that study, as well as Wu 2002, 76–78. On the identification of the garment style with feminine attire and the female bodhisattva Prajñā, see Kaneko 1992, 33–35, and Fujisawa 1999–2000, 245–46, 251.

50 On the significance of this identification for Eison's practices, see Abé 2002–03.

Esoteric conceptions and practices not necessarily tied to gender also illuminate Ninshō's decision to dedicate Mañjuśrī images for his mother. In Shingon rituals, it was common to link specific iconographic forms of a deity with specific mantras or spells. For Mañjuśrī, specific forms were typically matched with either the five-syllable or eight-syllable spells. The *Daitokufu* portrayal of Ninshō's early years emphasizes the five-syllable Mañjuśrī, thus his images were likely based on a five-syllable, esoteric iconography or otherwise influenced by esoteric conceptions of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī. The *Daitokufu* portrayal also suggests esoteric scriptures that may have particularly influenced Ninshō's practices related to Mañjuśrī and hence his choice of Mañjuśrī for the images he used to memorialize his mother.

As Fujisawa Takako indicates, the practice of chanting Mañjuśrī's five-syllable name five hundred thousand times—which Ninshō did when he was twenty, according to the *Daitokufu*—can be traced to esoteric scriptures on the five-syllable Mañjuśrī (Fujisawa 1999–2000, 244). Fujisawa singles out the *Kongōchōgyō Manjushiri Bosatsu goji shin darani hon* as the likely basis for this practice of Ninshō's.⁵¹ However, references to this practice can also be found in at least two other five-syllable Mañjuśrī scriptures: the *Kongōchōgyō yuga Monjushiri Bosatsu hō* (hereafter *Rite of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva*), which Jōkei draws on in his “Mother of Awakening” chapter in *Shin'yōshō* 心要鈔 (Essentials of the Mind),⁵² and the *Kongōchō chōshō sangaikyō setsu Monju goji shingon shōsō*.⁵³ Significantly, Eison's disciples inserted a printed copy of the preface to the *Rite of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva*, as well as two written versions, into the Mañjuśrī image dedicated for his thirteenth-year memorial service, and

51 Ch. *Jingangdingjing Manshushili pusa wuzi xin tuoluoni pin* 金剛頂經曼殊室利菩薩五字心陀羅尼品 (Chapter on the Five-Syllable Essential Dhāraṇī of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva According to the *Vajraśekhara-sūtra*); T 1173. This translation is attributed to Vajrabodhi (671–741) in 730. The portion Fujisawa refers to can be found in T 20:710b20–22.

52 Ch. *Jingangdingjing yuqie Wenshushili pusa fa* 金剛頂經瑜伽文殊師利菩薩法 (Rite of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva According to the *Vajraśekhara-sūtra*); T 1171. This scripture was translated by Amoghavajra and brought to Japan by Kūkai. For Jōkei's excerpts, see *Shin'yōshō*, in Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan 1973–78, 63:350b. The passages Jōkei draws on, in the order they appear in his “Mother of Awakening” chapter, correspond to T 1171 20:705a12, 17–18; 707a23–26; 705b5–9; and 705b24–25.

53 Ch. *Jingangding chaosheng sanjiejing shuo Wenshu wuzi zhenyan shengxiang* 金剛頂超勝三界經說文殊五字真言勝相 (Superior Aspects of Mañjuśrī's Five-Syllable Mantra According to the *Vajraśekhara-sūtra*); see T 1172 20:709c8–11. Like the *Rite of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva*, this text was also translated by Amoghavajra. For the related *Rite of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva* passage, see T 1171 20:705b21–27.

the original printing is believed to have been directed by Eison.⁵⁴ Thus it is possible that the esoteric aspect of Mañjuśrī in Jōkei's *Shin'yōshō*, the depiction of Ninshō's five-syllable practice in the *Daitokufu*, and Eison's conception of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī were all principally informed by the same scripture.⁵⁵ My conclusions here therefore differ from those of Fujisawa, who points instead to a contrast between the five-syllable texts informing Ninshō's practice and those for Eison's practices (1999–2000, 250–52). Again, however, a look at closer-to-home precedents to Ninshō and Eison's involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult helps us see likely models for their practices more clearly.

Conclusions

Both exoteric and esoteric practices related to Mañjuśrī informed the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies from the start. The exoteric aspects are evident in their conferral of precepts during the assemblies and conceptions of Mañjuśrī influenced by the exoteric scriptures *Mañjuśrī Sutra* and *Shinji kangyō*. The state-sponsored Mañjuśrī assemblies that started in the ninth century and the Saidaiji order ones in the thirteenth century each cited the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* as the scriptural precedent for the charitable offerings performed during their respective assemblies. In addition to this explicitly stated scriptural precedent, however, the synthesis of the Mañjuśrī cult with charitable deeds in both sets of assemblies was likely influenced by paradigmatic practices and motifs in the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult. Such practices and motifs include the Wutai egalitarian feasts and the motif of the hidden Mañjuśrī manifesting in humble forms to promote good deeds. Interlinked connections between Gyōki, Mañjuśrī, and charitable deeds are also significant precursors to both the state-sponsored and Saidaiji order assemblies.

54 The *Rite of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva* passage in question appears in the portion of the sutra included in the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue. Colophons dated 1290/7, shortly before Eison died on 8/25, can be found in both the printed version and one handwritten one. See Fujisawa 1999–2000, 250; Nara Rokudaiji 1973, 49 no. 28; and partial images of the texts in Nara Rokudaiji 1973, inserted p. 15, plates 54–55, and Mainichi Shinbunsha 1978, 57, plates 42–44.

55 A ritual text on the contemplation of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī, *Goji Monju Bosatsu nenju shidai* 五字文殊菩薩念誦次第, is attributed to Eison as having been compiled on 1277/12/27. An early Muromachi-period (1333–1568) copy of this text is preserved in the Kōzanji 高山寺 archives, and Eison's colophon is printed in Kōzanji Tenseki 1973, 396. The text itself remains unpublished, however, and I have not seen any analysis of its authenticity.

More original and personal to the early Saidaiji order assemblies were their ties to memorial rites for Ninshō's mother. Eison's use of the *Shinji kangyō* reflects these ties: in the culminating Mañjuśrī assembly for Ninshō's mother, Eison lectured on a chapter in the sutra that emphasizes repaying the debt to one's mother and that invokes Mañjuśrī as the mother of buddhas. At the same time, Eison's use of the monastic-centered *Shinji kangyō* reflects his insistence that leaving the household and taking the monastic precepts is a superior means to repay that debt, a stance he showed in his first discussion with Ninshō on the assemblies.

Evidence for the esoteric aspects of Saidaiji order involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult grows as we move through the Kamakura period. For the Mañjuśrī assemblies that Ninshō and Eison led in the 1240s, the evidence is relatively subtle and much has to be inferred from broader knowledge of their careers and the specializations of esoteric monks. Performing charitable deeds in the Mañjuśrī assemblies is not specifically esoteric, nor are Buddhist rites to memorialize one's mother. But the identification of Mañjuśrī with the female bodhisattva Prajñā—signaled by their shared epithet as the Mother of Buddhas and in iconographic representations—could well have influenced Ninshō's desire to turn to Mañjuśrī as the main deity for the rites to memorialize his mother. Considering esoteric monks' expertise in iconographic traditions and lore by this time, and their clear fondness for such multilayered deity identifications, we may see esoteric influence here. Here too, however, there are both esoteric and exoteric aspects. Mañjuśrī and Prajñā were each widely venerated in esoteric traditions, but the wisdom (Sk. *prajñā*) that they represented was not exclusive to esoteric traditions nor was their iconography.

It is in practices related to Mañjuśrī's five-syllable and eight-syllable forms that we see the esoteric side most clearly. The *Daitokufu* biography of Ninshō shows his strong early engagement in five-syllable Mañjuśrī practices, and these practices surely influenced his conception of the Mañjuśrī assemblies. Moreover, even the first Saidaiji order assemblies incorporated eye-opening ceremonies for images and chanting practices in which esoteric monks had particular expertise. These practices, in combination with the flexible administration of precepts during the assemblies, highlighted the Saidaiji order monks' twofold specialization in Shingon and Ritsu and facilitated various levels of participation by others in the assemblies.

I thus suggest that the Mañjuśrī assemblies, carried out repeatedly from the early years of Eison's movement in the 1240s, were performative opportunities that showcased the Saidaiji order's particular exoteric-esoteric expertise. Exploring the multifaceted precedents for the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies clarifies how they adopted and adapted earlier traditions in performing

the assemblies. But understanding the seminal role that the assemblies played in Eison and colleagues' ability to attract *elite* supporters is aided most by our recognition of the following precedent: warrior government rulers also sponsored offering ceremonies for outcasts and Mañjuśrī assemblies in the early thirteenth century, and they did so by commissioning as ceremony leaders Rinzaï Zen monks who, similarly to Eison, synthesized new Buddhist teachings and practices with traditional exoteric and esoteric ones.⁵⁶ However earnest Eison's stance as a reclusive monk, and despite genuine differences between the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies and such "official" ones, it was no accident that warrior rulers came to number among the supporters of Eison's movement. As we will see, such warrior support, and links with court support, grew steadily from the 1260s through the end of the thirteenth century, contributing greatly to the Saidaiji order's success in expanding its influence to near and distant provinces.

56 Kamakura warrior leaders' shared interest in Rinzaï Zen and Ritsu monks reflects the monks' frequent grouping together in early medieval Japan as new movements, recognized both for their importation of recent Song-period Chinese practices and for their discipline and asceticism (stories of eccentric Zen masters notwithstanding). For a careful and provocative recent study of "Zenritsu" monks in medieval Japan, see Ôtsuka 2009.

Discrimination and Empowerment: Hannyaji, Outcasts, and the Living Mañjuśrī

One of our richest examples of the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult in the Kamakura period is the construction and dedication of a tremendous Mañjuśrī statue for the Nara branch temple Hannyaji. The Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue, which Eison called the “living Mañjuśrī,” receives more attention in Eison’s autobiography than any other image.¹ This attention underscores the importance Eison placed on the image. Moreover, the activities related to the statue formed the centerpiece for the Saidaiji order restoration of Hannyaji, and temple restoration projects were one of the order’s best-known and most influential activities. The examination here affords a close look at one such temple restoration project and the integrated links between material, ritual, and doctrinal concerns in the Mañjuśrī cult, which played such a key role in that restoration.

The restored Hannyaji soon became the Nara temple most closely associated with Saidaiji order relief activities for outcasts (*hinin*). This was due to Hannyaji’s location next to Yamato Province’s largest outcast community and Eison’s explicit invocation of material and soteriological relief for outcasts in the ceremonies dedicating the Mañjuśrī statue. The two principal texts analyzed in this chapter—Eison’s 1267 votive text dedicating the Mañjuśrī statue as Hannyaji’s main deity and his 1269 votive text for a “non-discriminatory assembly” in honor of the living Mañjuśrī—reflect both the breadth of Eison’s activities and his views on Mañjuśrī and outcasts specifically. Written for large assemblies incorporating the contributions of diverse supporters, the two texts show how Eison promoted the cult and related relief activities for outcasts among both monastics and laypeople.

To establish the material and ritual contexts for Eison’s views on the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī and the statue’s links to outcasts, we will first explore Hannyaji’s restoration and the construction and dedication of the statue. Next, for doctrinal context, we will investigate the concept of *icchantikas* (beings traditionally considered to lack the buddha nature) and efforts to reconcile the concept with notions of universal buddhahood among Jōkei and other Hossō monks who influenced Eison’s movement. We then turn to Eison’s 1267

1 See Groner 2001, 136. Unfortunately, the Hannyaji statue was destroyed by fire in 1490, but the textual records for the image are rich.

and 1269 votive texts for the Hannyajī Mañjuśrī (see Figures 3–4).² Here, we will focus on the interrelated views of icchantikas and hinin in these texts and Eison’s promotion of multiple practices to effect ritual purification, empowerment, and salvation.



FIGURE 3 1267 Origin Account of the Hannyajī Mañjuśrī, by Eison (1379 copy), held by Hannyajī. COURTESY OF HANNYAJI, NARA. PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY NARA NATIONAL MUSEUM.

2 I will also refer to the 1267 votive text here as the *Hannyajī Monju engi*, a title that was apparently added later but which helps distinguish it from the 1269 votive text.

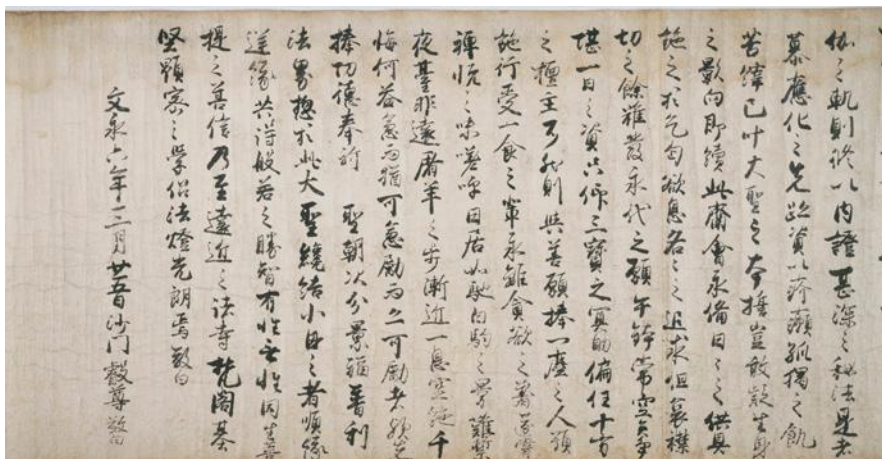


FIGURE 4 1269 Votive Text for the Construction of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva Statue, by Eison, held by Hannyaji. Important Cultural Property. COURTESY OF HANNYAJI, NARA. PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY NARA NATIONAL MUSEUM. EISON'S SIGNATURE IS BELIEVED TO BE IN HIS OWN HAND.

I argue that by preaching the Mañjuśrī cult as a means of salvation embracing “the high and the low”—with elite society representing the high, and hinin and icchantikas the low—Eison reinforced hierarchical categories that lent themselves to discrimination. At the same time, his emphasis on the universal applicability of Mañjuśrī faith and the Buddhist practice that faith engenders resulted in an egalitarian collapsing of these same categories. Such a juxtaposition of hierarchical and egalitarian views does not paint a simple portrait of Eison, his participation in the Mañjuśrī cult, or his relief activities for outcasts.

But tensions and inconsistencies are also part of the real lives on the other side of the historical gap, and a complex portrait is truer to the sources we would use in our attempts to narrow that gap.

History of Hannyaji and Its Restoration

The early history of Hannyaji and the surrounding area is both obscure and dark. Located on the Nara slope at the north entrance to the city, along the route connecting Nara and Kyoto, Hannyaji occupies a militarily strategic spot. The temple paid a steep price for that location during the Genpei War (1180–85), on the eve of the Kamakura period. The *Heike monogatari* 平家物語, a celebrated early medieval “war tale” of the late twelfth-century battles between the Minamoto and the Taira families, records that Hannyaji was destroyed in 1180 when the Taira forces set fire to much of Nara. The text also indicates that the decapitated head of Taira Shigehira 平重衡 (1156–85) was later displayed in front of Hannyaji, the temple he destroyed. Although the *Heike monogatari* is a fictionalized work, the damage to Nara temples during the Genpei War is well known and the passages accurately reflect Hannyaji’s strategic location and the area’s role as an execution grounds.³ Burial grounds slightly south of Hannyaji interred many who died in the military conflicts of the late twelfth century, including, it is believed, Fujiwara Yorinaga 藤原頼長 (1120–56), one of the leading figures in the Hōgen Disturbance in 1156.

Outcasts living in the area helped dispose of the dead and maintain the burial grounds. Kitayamajuku 北山宿, just north of Hannyaji, was the largest outcast community in Yamato Province in the medieval period. As the ruling outcast community for Yamato and one of the two main communities for the central Kinai area (along with Kyoto’s Kiyomizuzaka 清水坂), the Kitayama community included a wide range of hinin, from the leaders and assistant leaders to beggars, the disabled, and lepers.⁴ To care for the lowest outcasts in this hierarchy, those suffering from leprosy, monks affiliated with Eison

3 The *Heike monogatari* passages are from fascicles 5 and 11 respectively; see Ichiko 1973–75, 29: 415–16 and 30:444 (see also Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:83n. 16, which excerpts the passages). As evidence of Hannyaji’s continued strategic importance later in the medieval period, Hosokawa cites the 1428 Shōchō land uprising (*Shōchō no tsuchi ikki* 正長の土一揆), when a unit of the *ikki* forces planning to invade Nara assembled at Hannyaji (1987, 56). On the area as a location for execution grounds, see Hosokawa 1987, 55–56, and Abé 2002–03, 120–21.

4 On the range of outcasts in this community, see Abé 2002–03, 120. “Leaders” and “assistant leaders” here translate *chōri* 長使 and *chōri no geza* 長使の下座.

constructed the Kitayama Jūhachikendo hospice.⁵ Even this hospice did not escape the ravages of war, however, as it was burned down in a 1567 battle, before being rebuilt at its present location (Sugiura et al. 1979, 80).

It was at this militarily strategic spot—surrounded by execution and burial grounds, a large outcast community, and a hospice for lepers—that Eison and his colleagues restored Hannayaji and enshrined the Mañjuśrī image as “the main deity for all sentient beings.”⁶ Hannayaji soon became one of Saidaiji’s leading branch temples and the Mañjuśrī icon the most celebrated image in Eison’s writings. As was often the case with his temple restoration projects, Eison was invited to help lead the restoration, thus we should not attribute his participation solely to his own initiative. That said, Hannayaji’s strategic positioning on the route leading north from Nara to Kyoto—which could also heighten its value as a pilgrimage destination—the opportunities its location afforded the Saidaiji order to showcase their relief activities, and its once-storied history all likely influenced his recognition of the potential for the restored temple.

Despite the *Heike monogatari* account, it is not clear when the temple actually deteriorated. But sources show that an ancient temple had existed at the site and that little remained by the mid-thirteenth century, when Ryōe 良恵 (d.u.), a monk affiliated with Tōdaiji, enlisted Eison’s help in restoring it.⁷ Reconstructing the origins of the temple was part of Eison’s role as a scholar-monk helping lead, and narrate, the restoration. In his 1267 *Hannayaji Monju engi*, he makes a point of noting that the temple was founded by Emperor Shōmu and is a legacy also of the famed Shingon master Kangen 観賢 (854–925).⁸ The form and dating of this “origin account” (*engi*) classifies it more as a votive text (*ganmon*) and suggests that it was read aloud during ceremonies dedicating the statue. Eison thus had an immediate audience for his remarks. But he also had a future audience; the text was inherited by Hannayaji’s monks, and they likely spread the theory that Shōmu founded

5 Later sources credit Ninshō with building the hospice, but it may actually have been built by Eison’s dharma-colleague Ryōe 良恵 (d.u.). Ryōe was the initial sponsor of the Hannayaji restoration, and his activities in connection with Hannayaji and the neighboring outcasts have often been mistakenly attributed to Ninshō due to similarities in their alternate monastic names and to Ninshō’s greater fame. Ryōe’s and Ninshō’s alternate names, or their *azana* 字, were Kanryōbō 観良房 and Ryōkanbō 良観房, respectively. See Hosokawa 1999, 287n. 31.

6 *Gakushōki* entry for fall 1268 (NKBK 1977, 34).

7 Ryōe donated about three-fourths of an acre (three *tan* 段) of land to Saidaiji in 1248, so he may have enlisted Eison’s help around that time. See the 1298 *Saidaiji den’en mokuroku* 西大寺田園目録 (Takeuchi 1971–97, 26:232 [doc. 19893]) and Hosokawa 1999, 286n. 31.

8 *Hannayaji Monju engi*, in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b.

the temple as well as the link with Kangen, although there is little historical support for either of these figures as a founder or restoring founder.⁹ Based on links to Emperor Shōmu, Eison's text also helped spread notions that Gyōki was connected to the temple. Shōmu is mentioned twice in Eison's text, and the first reference indicates that Mañjuśrī manifested as Gyōki and "assisted Emperor Shōmu's external activity." Eison was pointing to Gyōki's renowned participation in the Tōdaiji construction campaign sponsored by Shōmu, but this very association between Gyōki/Mañjuśrī, Shōmu, and temple campaigns may well have contributed to later theories that Gyōki founded the temple.

Most important here is the rhetorical strength of Eison's account, regardless of its historical accuracy. The value of invoking Emperor Shōmu and Gyōki's involvement with Tōdaiji had been demonstrated in Chōgen's celebrated campaign to restore the Tōdaiji Great Buddha statue at the end of the twelfth century, after the damage it too had suffered during the Genpei War. Kangen, moreover, had served as the abbot for three of the most storied Shingon centers: Tōji 東寺, Kōyasan 高野山, and Daigoji. Eison thus provided an illustrious imperial and Shingon pedigree for the temple. Doing so helped him elevate the status of the temple and solicit continued support for his activities in connection with it, even as he dedicated the completed Mañjuśrī statue.

Whoever the actual founder of Hannyaji was, tiles from the Tenpyō 天平 era (729–49) have been excavated in the area around the temple, thus suggesting that a temple was indeed located there during Shōmu's reign. References to a "Hannyaji" are also found in eighth- and ninth-century documents, and the first clear reference to the Nara-area Hannyaji appears in the entry for 863/9 in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録 (True Records of Three Reigns of Japan). Thus the Hannyaji restored under Ryōe's and Eison's leadership did have ancient roots, and evidence from Eison's own texts indicates the deteriorated nature of the temple before their reconstruction efforts.

The earliest historical reference to the Kitayamajuku appears in a 1209/10 vow by Jōkei to help construct a Mandala Hall for the hinin community,¹⁰ and Eison records in his autobiography that he held a Mañjuśrī assembly at the Kitayama community on 1242/3/25 (NKBK 1977, 17). Neither account, however,

9 The existence of multiple temples called "Hannyaji" is one of the leading sources of confusion on the founder for the temple. See Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:79–82, and Sugiura et al. 1979, 83–88, on the varying theories.

10 Hosokawa 1999, 135n. 11. For Jōkei's original Chinese text, along with an annotated yomikudashi rendering by Hosokawa, see Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo 1988, 168–70.

mentions Hannyaji. Eison had explicitly identified Gakuanji in his accounts of the Mañjuśrī assemblies near that temple, thus his omission of any reference to Hannyaji when he mentions the 1242 Kitayama assembly suggests that “Hannyaji” was merely a name at that point, with little in the way of a proper temple (Kobayashi 1966, 5). His *Hannyaji Monju engi* makes this explicit, noting after the reference to Shōmu and Kangen that

after the successive passage of years, the temple buildings disappeared, leaving only the cornerstone. After the repeated change of seasons, the buddha images were quickly reduced to ashes. Wild foxes made the site their home, and only lines of old graves remained. A temple in the strict sense existed in name only, with no substance (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b).

Eison’s account of the reconstruction efforts shows how little of the structure had been preserved and simultaneously provides an allegory of the devotion and commitment involved in restoring such a temple:

At this point, a great artisan appeared, and he was filled with longing for former days. He then made a vow to restore the temple and set out to build a thirteen-story pagoda. With difficulty, he managed to place the first great stone layer on the foundation stone, but he passed away before his vow could be fulfilled.

Subsequently, however, a meditation-monk decided to settle there. He again promoted [the restoration of] the remnants, and the great construction was finally completed. Even so, there was only a stone pagoda and still no buddha hall. The *shōnin* 上人 [eminent monk] grieved repeatedly over this and thus vowed to discover the former icon and rebuild the buddha hall. But the records had been lost, and the main deity from former times was unknown. Still, the temple is called Hannyaji, and it is said in the explications on the *Hannyakyō* [Great Wisdom Sutra] that [the difference between] this sutra and Mañjuśrī is just the distinction between the person and the dharma; they are one and the same, not-two. This can be seen in both exoteric and esoteric teachings. The temple’s main icon must be this deity; they already fit like box and cover. (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b)

Based primarily on the *Gakushōki*, inscriptions on two five-wheeled stone stupas at Hannyaji, and records of the thirteen-story stone pagoda, we can flesh out much of this account. Although the identity of the original “great artisan” mentioned by Eison remains unknown, the *Gakushōki* clarifies that the

“meditation-monk” and “shōnin” in the *Hannyaji Monju engi* account was Ryōe. In the entry for 1267/7/28, at the conclusion of his description of the eye-opening ceremony for the Mañjuśrī image, Eison writes of Hannyaji’s restoration:

The construction of the numerous buildings was accomplished naturally, without seeking it. Truly, this was due to the match between the adroit expedient means of the Great Sage Mañjuśrī and the uncontrived good intentions of the vow-sponsor shōnin (Ryōe). Subsequently, in response to the shōnin’s earnest desire to have it administered as a branch temple of Saidaiji, I sent my dharma-colleague, the bhikṣu Shinkū, to dwell there. (NKBK 1977, 33)

Little is known about Ryōe, the “vow-sponsor” (*ganshu* 願主) for the restoration of Hannyaji, apart from his connections with that restoration. A colophon to a biography of Kūkai held by Tōdaiji states that the first part of the text was copied by Ryōe at “Kitayama Hannyaji” in 1245.¹¹ This suggests that Ryōe was already connected to Hannyaji by 1245, but it is unclear when he first took over the task of having the stone pagoda built. We do know, however, that the pagoda reconstruction was already well under way and gaining attention by 1240. A 1240 entry in the *Tōdaiji bettō shidai dankan* 東大寺別当次第断簡 (Fragment of the Records of the Successive Chief Administrators of Tōdaiji) indicates that on 6/12 a monk or artisan referred to as Junjō-hokkyō 順定法橋 inserted relics and a copy of the *Heart Sutra* into the fifth level of the Kitayama Hannyaji stone pagoda, amid a broad gathering of “monastic and lay, men and women” (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:89n. 6). Junjō’s title, *hokkyō*, was often used for artisans, thus it is possible that he was the initial “great artisan” referred to in Eison’s account (completing the pagoda to a greater level than Eison’s account suggests),¹² and Ryōe became involved sometime between 1240 and 1245. Alternatively, Ryōe could have begun the restoration before 1240 and enlisted Junjō’s help.

Although the identity of the artisan who began constructing the pagoda remains unclear, the artisan who completed it as a full, thirteen-story pagoda is named in inscriptions on two five-wheeled stupas now located within the

11 The first part of a copy of the *Kōya daishi gokōden* 高野大師御広伝 held by Tōdaiji states: “On 1245/10/24 at Kitayama Hannyaji in the Southern Capital, I completed the copying . . . śramaṇa Ryōe” (cited in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:83n. 18).

12 On this point, see also Kobayashi 1966, 21.

Hannyaji temple grounds.¹³ The surfaces of the stupas are well weathered and the inscriptions cannot be fully deciphered, but the legible portions reveal that they were dedicated on 1261/7/11 by the Chinese stonemason Yi Xingji 伊行吉. One was for his father, Yi Xingmo 伊行末 (ca. 1160–1260) who had passed away exactly one year earlier, and the other for his mother, who was still alive. The inscriptions indicate that Yi Xingmo came from Ming Province 明州 in China, participated in the reconstruction efforts for Tōdaiji, and served as the main artisan for the Hannyaji pagoda.¹⁴

The thirteen-story Hannyaji pagoda principally constructed by Yi Xingmo is a remarkable achievement in its own right and a predecessor to the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue as a “repository of the exoteric and esoteric dharma-gate.”¹⁵ The pagoda is considered one of the finest examples of ancient pagodas in Japan and was found to contain a wealth of buddha statues, prints, reliquaries, and sutras from multiple periods during a 1964 dismantling and repair. The existence of many of these items had long been known because the pagoda had been repaired on four previous occasions: 1) pre-1596 (believed to have been in the early Muromachi period [1333–1568]); 2) between 1700 and 1702; 3) in 1860; and 4) in 1870. The items catalogued in 1964 had been inserted in four stages, including the first stage of construction and all of the earlier repairs except the 1860 one. Many of the deposited objects, however, can be dated to the Kamakura period and were likely inserted by the time the pagoda was originally completed.

The multilayered nature of the deposits in the pagoda, and their historical value, are well illustrated by an exquisite bronze statue of a buddha found in the fifth level.¹⁶ This statue originally dates to the Hakuho 白鳳 era (645–710) but came to contain three Kamakura-period miniature statues (Eleven-Headed Kannon, Dainichi, and Jizō). Also noteworthy are a group of reliquaries in the first level, a small-character copy of the *Lotus Sutra* in ten fascicles in

13 The two stupas were originally placed at the entrance to the graveyard outside the temple, then moved to within the temple grounds in the early Meiji period (1868–1911).

14 The legible portions of the inscriptions are reproduced in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:98n. 3. See also the discussion of these inscriptions and other projects associated with Yi Xingmo in Sugiura et al. 1979, 93–95.

15 These words were part of Eison's description of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image; see the *Gakushōki* entry for 1267/7/22 (NKBK 1977, 32).

16 In Genroku-era and Meiji-period records of the repairs, the statue is referred to as Amida (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:92b); however, Kobayashi identifies it as an image of Śākyamuni (1966, 20).

the eighth level,¹⁷ and three Song-period (960–1279) small-character printed sets of the *Lotus Sutra*, each in its own container, in the fourth level. One container indicates that it contains a copy of the *Lotus Sutra* inserted into the “Hannyaji stone pagoda” and is dated 1253, thus it is believed that the pagoda was substantially completed by then. Moreover, the roster on the container includes various names found in the *Jubosatsukai deshi kyōmyō* and the *Gonjū nannyo kyōmyō*—two rosters of disciples inserted into the 1280 Eison statue at Saidaiji—while a second container includes names that can be found in the *Saidaiji uon kakochō* inserted into the same statue.¹⁸ The Saidaiji order frequently used such rosters, whether inscribed on constructions or inserted into them, to establish karmic bonds among those listed and with the object or objects of devotion invoked by the construction. The names listed in the 1253 *Lotus Sutra* donation suggest that Eison’s disciples were involved in the pagoda restoration before its completion.

According to the *Hannyaji Monju engi* account, once the pagoda was completed, Ryōe turned his attention to the construction of the main icon for the temple, the Mañjuśrī statue, and a buddha hall to house the image. With the decision to construct the Mañjuśrī statue, Eison’s involvement becomes conspicuous, and he underscores the statue’s construction and significance in several writings.

Construction and 1267 Dedication of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī

Eison’s entries on the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī in his autobiography provide a clear chronology for the statue’s construction and illuminate the close integration of iconographic and ritual activities in temple restoration projects. In the entry for 1255, Eison notes that he commissioned the Buddhist artisan Zenkei 善慶 (1197–1258), who then began constructing the Mañjuśrī figure. Although Zenkei passed away before he could complete the statue, on 1261/2/25 the partially finished statue was turned over to Hannyaji. Eison notes that because the hall for the image was only half finished, a temporary shrine was constructed

17 The *Lotus Sutra* in ten fascicles is accompanied by the Opening and Concluding Sutras, referring to the *Muryōgikyō* 無量義經 (Ch. *Wuliangyi jing*; T 276) and the *Kan Fugengyō* 觀普賢經 (Ch. *Guan puxian jing*; T 277), which are often paired with the *Lotus Sutra*.

18 The *Jubosatsukai deshi kyōmyō* and the *Gonjū nannyo kyōmyō* 近住男女交名 can be found in NKBK 1977, 359–79, and 379–83, respectively; see also corrected versions in chapter 4 of Matsuo 2003. See NKBK 1977, 348–59, for the *Saidaiji uon kakochō* 西大寺有恩過去帳.

and placed in the northwest corner.¹⁹ Such a shrine would help protect the figure but also establish it as an honored image even before it was completed.

The following year, on 1262/2/4, Eison departed for a six-month journey to the Kantō region at the invitation of the warrior government leaders in Kamakura. The trip is noteworthy here because shortly after Eison's return to Saidaiji, Hōjō Tokiyori, the retired shogunal regent (*shikken* 執権) of the warrior government, proved to be one of many who would establish karmic bonds with the Hannayaji Mañjuśrī image through donations. On 1262/11/8, Eison received a letter from Tokiyori dated 10/5, expressing joy over Eison's safe return and donating scriptures and pigment. This letter is preserved in the *Gakushōki* with an addendum by Eison noting that the pigment had been donated for the lion statue.²⁰

In the *Gakushōki* entry for summer 1263, Eison records that because Zenkei had passed away, he commissioned Zenkei's son Zenshun 善春 (fl. 1263–82) to complete the work. Construction of the lion on which the Mañjuśrī figure was to ride was completed using wood to form the bones and clay to form the flesh. In the fall of 1264, Eison recruited six hundred scribes to copy the *Great Wisdom Sutra* in six hundred fascicles, an offering to be inserted into the body of the Mañjuśrī figure.²¹ By 1267, the sutra was ready to be inserted and the ceremonies to dedicate the statue were fast approaching. In the entry for 4/10 that year, Eison writes:

As the *Great Wisdom Sutra* was to be inserted into the Mañjuśrī figure, a sutra explication and recitation was held at that temple [Hannayaji]. The following day, the 11th, the Kōfukuji past lecturers, successful candidates, and other temple-monks (*jisō* 寺僧) held another sutra recitation throughout the day.²² Afterward, the painter Gyōson-hokkyō 堯尊法橋 was commissioned and he completed the painting of the lion. (NKBK 1977, 31)

19 See the *Gakushōki* entries for 1255 and 1261/2/25 (NKBK 1977, 25–26 and 28).

20 *Gakushōki* entry for 1262/11/8 (NKBK 1977, 30).

21 See the entries for these dates in *Gakushōki* (NKBK 1977, 30). In the entry for 1258, Eison mentions that Zenkei passed away at the beginning of the fall (26–27).

22 “Past lecturers” (*ikō* 已講) refers to monks who had served as lecturers at the Three Assemblies (*san'e* 三会 or *sanne*: the Yuima-e 維摩会 at Kōfukuji, the Saishō-e 最勝会 at Yakushiji 薬師寺, and the Gosai-e 御齋会 (or Misai-e) at the imperial palace. “Successful candidates” (*jōgō* 成業) indicates monks who had passed the exams for the Yuima and Hokke 法華 assemblies at Kōfukuji and the Saishō assembly at Yakushiji (Hosokawa 1999, 281n. 1 and 282n. 2).

On 1267/7/20, in preparation for the eye-opening ceremony to be held on the 25th, the artisans commissioned by Eison constructed a four-sided, three-level shrine to contain the *Great Wisdom Sutra* and many other offerings to be inserted into the statue. In the *Gakushōki* entry for 7/20, after describing the appearance of the three-level shrine, Eison details the offerings:

Inserted in the upper level were buddha relics along with a “one-letter, three bows” version of the *Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Law*;²³ in the same fashion, the Opening and Concluding Sutras, the *Amida Sutra*, and the *Heart of the Wisdom Sutra* in one fascicle each; in the same fashion, one ten-fascicle set of a one-letter, three-bows *Supreme Kings Sutra*; 1,000 copies of the *Heart Sutra* in Sanskrit; 1,000 copies of the *Treasure Casket Seal Dhāraṇī*; 10,000 copies each of the five-syllable and eight-syllable [Mañjuśrī] mantras; 1,000 copies each of the mantras of the sixteen deities equipped with blazing radiance;²⁴ and a Chinese-character version of the *Wisdom Sutra That Transcends Principle* in one fascicle.²⁵ Inserted in the lower two levels was one 600-fascicle set of the *Great Wisdom Sutra*. (NKBK 1977, 31–32)

In the entry for 7/22, Eison first notes that the main deity was finally set into place on the lion seat, then expounds on the additional offerings placed into the figure on this auspicious occasion:

At this time, the shrine was inserted into the body and the five-syllable, eight-syllable, and Dual Realm seed-syllable mandalas were drawn on the front and back interior of the figure (I wrote the seed syllables myself, while bowing three times with each letter written). In addition, seventy-five vows by monks and nuns expressing their aspiration

23 “One-letter, three bows” (*ichiji sanrai* 一字三礼) refers to a ritual method of copying scriptures while bowing three times upon the copying of each letter. This method applies to the following five sutras as well, which are introduced by “in the same fashion.”

24 “The sixteen deities equipped with blazing radiance” refers to the Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas of the Attainment Body Assembly in the center of the Diamond Realm Mandala; see Hosokawa 1999, 282n. 5; Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 899b, s.v. “jūroku son;” and 900b–c, s.v. “jūroku daibosatsu.” See also the *Hannyaji Monju engi* reference to the insertion of the “True texts of the Assembly of Sixteen” (*jūroku-e . . . no shinmon*), in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3: 135b.

25 *Hannya rishukyō* 般若理趣經; commonly abbreviated as *Rishukyō* (Ch. *Liqu jing*; T 243). The *Rishukyō* is not included in the lists of items inserted in the figure in the 1267 and 1269 votive texts.

for enlightenment and one donations list for the construction of the main deity were inserted here. The additional buddha images and sutra fascicles inserted by all the monastic and lay, the high and low, to establish karmic bonds were countless. Also, a name list of the 30,158 people in the bodhisattva seven groups who received the precepts and fifty-six pledges from various places prohibiting the killing of sentient beings were placed inside the lotus seat.²⁶ This was none other than an assemblage of immeasurable merit and a repository of the exoteric and esoteric dharma-gate. Though this may be an inferior age (*gyōki* 澆季), how could it not provide miraculous efficacy? (NKBK 1977, 31–32)

Eison closes his account of the 7/22 offerings by noting that during the construction the various craftsmen involved all kept the eight pure precepts (NKBK 1977, 32). Preparing and inserting all the material and scriptural offerings for the Mañjuśrī statue was a massive effort, incorporating the contributions of a spectrum of supporters. Within the exoteric-esoteric imaginaire of Eison and his colleagues, such contributions played key roles in the “adornments” befitting the tremendous statue. The contributions also created opportunities for the many people involved to establish karmic bonds with the deity, Mañjuśrī, that would be embodied by the statue. A major step, however, remained to complete the adornments and thus bring the statue to life: the performance of the eye-opening ceremony on 7/25, just a few days after the offerings were inserted into the statue.

In Eison’s autobiography, after he details the inserted offerings, he summarizes the eye-opening ceremony. It was apparently in the interval between the 7/22 offerings and the eye-opening ceremony that he completed the first votive text to be analyzed here, dated 1267/7/23. The 1267 votive text was likely read aloud in front of the assembly during rites leading to or during the eye-opening ceremony.²⁷ The passages in Eison’s autobiography thus provide a concrete account of one of the eye-opening ceremonies that played such

26 The “seven groups” (*shichishu*) refers to the seven classifications of monastic and lay Buddhist practitioners. The 1269 votive text shows that the name list in question refers to those who received the bodhisattva precepts specifically, hence the reference here to “bodhisattva seven groups” (*bosatsu shichishu*). “Pledges . . . prohibiting the killing of sentient beings” refers to pledges establishing no-hunting and no-fishing zones.

27 Pointing to Eison’s 1269 votive text for the Mañjuśrī image, Nakao suggests that Eison likely read the text at the eye-opening ceremony (1993, 124). The suggestion is valuable for establishing the ritual context of such a text, but his citation of the 1269 text for the 1267 eye-opening ceremony is anachronistic.

a prominent role in the group's Mañjuśrī assemblies and other dedicatory rites for images, and they help us better understand the ritual context for the 1267 votive text. Here, then, I would like to provide a detailed paraphrase of the full account in Eison's autobiography.²⁸

First, an esoteric platform was set up in front of the Mañjuśrī image. In the inner sanctuary, three rows of mats were laid from south to north for the various monks' seats. At the front, two rows were laid from east to west for those participating in the rites (*hōyōshu* 法要衆), with each seat marked. The outer sanctuary was used to provide seats for the auditors. Eison then notes that "on this day [7/25], monks from various temples assembled to establish karmic bonds." At the start of the hour of the ram (1 p.m.–3 p.m.), the great drums to convene the assembly were struck, and a monastic assemblage numbering more than 180 gathered on the north side of the monastic lodgings. The monks Shōson 璋尊 and Dōshun 道俊 each carried a banner and lined up the other monks into two rows. They then struck their individual gongs and led the assemblage around the left and right sides of the monastic lodgings. Entering the hall from the back (behind the image), they lined up at their seats in accordance with the banners, prostrated themselves three times, and sat down. Eison, serving as offering master (*kuyō-hosshi* 供養法師), ascended the altar. Next, the chanting master (*baishi* 唄師) Chōgen 長玄 intoned the verses of praise. During this time, the novice monks brought in flower baskets. Shōkai 性海 performed the flower-scattering rite, chanting and scattering the flowers before the Mañjuśrī image.²⁹ Next, the eye-opening itself was performed, immediately followed by the five repentances.³⁰ After these "five great vows" were finished, the monks took their seats. The eulogy was then chanted by

28 My paraphrases and translations are based on the Chinese passages in NKBK 1977, 32–33. I have also benefited from Hosokawa's annotated yomikudashi rendering (1999, 280–86) and Wu 2002, 261–65.

29 Eison notes that the flower-scattering was carried out according to the "Vairocana *shidai*." In esoteric Buddhism, *shidai* 次第 generally refers to specific ritual procedures or texts outlining those procedures, but I have been unable to identify the source for Eison's reference.

30 In Shingon, the five repentances (*goge* 五悔) refer to: 1) taking refuge in the buddhas (*kimyō* 歸命); 2) repenting one's obstacles or transgressions (*sange* 懺悔 or *zange*); 3) rejoicing over the meritorious deeds of others (*zuiki* 隨喜); 4) supplicating the buddhas to appear in the world and teach (*kanshō* 勸請); and 5) transferring merit (*ekō* 廻向); see Hosokawa 1999, 284n. 19. These are based on Fugen's ten great vows, as described in the so-called "Chapter on Fugen's Practice and Vows" (Jp. *Fugen gyōgan hon* 普賢行願品; Ch. *Puxian xingyuan pin*) of the *Flower Garland Sutra* (T 293 10:844b24–28); see Nakamura 1981, 358d, s.v. "goge," and 1180a, s.v. "Fugen jūgan."

Jōben 静弁, and gongs believed to contain the powers of the “threefold power verse” were struck.³¹ Afterward, the various monks chanted the five-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra. The chanting was followed by the offering rites, and when they were completed, the eulogy was chanted in the same manner as before. Finally, the offering master, Eison, descended from the altar and withdrew. Eison closes his account of the proceedings to this point by noting that “in this manner, the opening pronouncement (*kaibyaku* 開白) was performed.”³²

Eison’s mention of auditors in the outer sanctuary shows that the assembly for the eye-opening ceremony included both monastic performers and an audience. Eison later refers to an “inner group” and “outer group” in connection with the assembly (NKBK 1977, 33), and such terms in this context likely referred to monastics and laypeople. Thus the audience may have included both the monastics from multiple temples who came “to establish karmic bonds” and lay auditors. The account also shows how the ceremony was staged as an esoteric ritual, beginning with the monks’ establishment of a platform used for esoteric rites invoking the deity. After liturgical chants praising Mañjuśrī, the monks make an initial material offering to the as-yet invisible deity in the form of flowers. Eison then laconically mentions the ensuing eye-opening itself, which typically featured the lead monk for the ceremonies or an artisan “dotting” or painting in the eyes of the image. The eye-opening is, however, a crucial moment because it ritually denotes the deity’s entrance into the image. When Eison and his fellow monks next immediately repent before the image, they are effectively repenting before Mañjuśrī himself. All the ensuing rites should be understood as staged in like manner: they are performed in front of not just a mere statue but the “living deity” (*shōjin*) himself, now visible and embodied in his image. Having invoked Mañjuśrī, the monks then chant his esoteric five-syllable spell before concluding the first day’s rites with additional offerings and a eulogy to the deity.

31 The “threefold powers” are the power from one’s own merit, the power of the buddha transferred to the practitioner (*kaji* 加持), and the power of the dharma-realm. The verse (*sanrikige* 三力偈) appears in the *Dainichikyō* (T 848) and is quoted in Hosokawa 1999, 284n. 22. The three powers were said in this verse to enable the practitioner to freely traverse the realms of sentient beings. The term Eison uses for the gong is *sanrikikane* 三力金 or “threefold power gong.”

32 An “opening pronouncement” (*kaibyaku*) can refer to the opening statement announced before a deity at the start of a rite or to the first day of a multi-day rite. As Eison next moves to a description of the three days and nights’ chanting of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī spell, again starting at 1 p.m. (apparently on the following day), he may be referring here to the entire day’s proceedings as the opening pronouncement.

After describing the first day of rites for the eye-opening ceremony in his autobiography, Eison next turns to the monks' performance of the three days and three nights' uninterrupted chanting of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī spell. He and his colleagues divided the twelve two-hour periods of a day and night into four shifts, each featuring a different leader and group of monks. Each shift lasted two hours, and each group of monks gathered three times in a twenty-four hour period. Eison concludes the account by noting that 138 people participated (the 4 leaders and 134 additional monks). The account thus shows both the scale of monastic participation in the performance and how sustained chanting rituals before images could be in the Saidaiji order's rites. Moreover, the account makes clear that the chanting was itself an offering to the image; Eison notes for the first shift, which he led himself, that "the various groups all gathered and performed the offering rite of harmonizing their voices."³³

The 1269 Non-Discriminatory Assembly

The next major event in the life of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue was a grand assembly that Eison led in the third month of 1269. Eison dedicated the assembly to the living Mañjuśrī, and the assembly included thousands of monks, actual and potential lay donors, and outcasts. To understand how the 1269 assembly incorporated and addressed the contributions of varied social groups—and what the assembly tells us about the Saidaiji order and their involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult—we need to explore interlinked material, ritual, and doctrinal contexts.

Material and Ritual Context

According to the *Gakushōki*, in the ninth month of 1268 (a year and a half after the eye-opening ceremony), Eison proposed to his fellow monks that they broadly gather outcasts and hold a "non-discriminatory assembly," in which they would provide charitable offerings to the outcasts. Eison identifies the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* image of the "living Mañjuśrī" as the inspiration for the assembly. He describes his proposal as follows:

33 For the full account of the eye-opening ceremony, see *Gakushōki* (NKBK 1977, 32–33). For a well-annotated yomikudashi rendition, including biographical details on the monks involved, see Hosokawa 1999, 280–86.

In the fall, I met with my dharma-colleagues (*dōhō* 同法) and told them, “The great vow to construct the Mañjuśrī [statue] has already been brought to fruition. The offering rites should accord with the sutra explanation. In short, the *Mañjuśrī* [*Parinirvāṇa*] *Sutra* states, “The Dharma-Prince Mañjuśrī [...] turns into an impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being and appears before practitioners. When people call to mind Mañjuśrī, they should practice compassion. Those who practice compassion will thereby be able to see Mañjuśrī.”³⁴ You should know that compassion and Mañjuśrī are two different words for the same thing. To promote compassion, Mañjuśrī appears in the form of a suffering being. This is the basis for the origins of such charitable acts (*segyō* 施行). Accordingly, on [Mañjuśrī’s] karmic-affinity day in the third month of next year,³⁵ I would like to gather hinin widely, hold a non-discriminatory great assembly, and pattern it after the offering rites to the living Mañjuśrī (*shōjin Monju* 生身文殊).” All my dharma-colleagues were overjoyed. The reason for constructing this statue was so that it could serve as the main deity for all sentient beings. (NKBK 1977, 33–34)

According to this conception, the monks and other donors participating in the non-discriminatory assembly would actually *see* the living Mañjuśrī, as represented by both the statue and the gathered outcasts. Stories of living statues were widespread in Buddhist tale literature by this time, and Eison’s 1267 eye-opening ceremonies had already ritually consecrated the Hannyaaji Mañjuśrī as such a living icon. What was novel, however, in Eison’s conception of the 1269 assembly was how he combined the image of the Hannyaaji Mañjuśrī as a living icon with the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* image of Mañjuśrī manifesting as an afflicted sentient being to elicit charitable acts. For Eison, such afflicted beings were exemplified in the actual hinin communities near Hannyaaji and elsewhere in Yamato Province. The “living Mañjuśrī” is thus both the Hannyaaji statue and the hinin themselves.

With this understanding of the assembly in place, Eison moved into Hannyaaji in the second month of 1269 to prepare. At the beginning of the third month, he had the hinin from the Kitayama community, just north of Hannyaaji, prepare the land for the ceremony. He then instructed the hinin leaders (*chōri*)

34 This passage is from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, T 463 14:481a28–29, b1–3. The ellipsis marks in brackets indicate Eison’s ellipsis from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* passage rather than my own.

35 As explained earlier, Mañjuśrī’s “karmic-affinity day” (*ennichi*), or the day of the month particularly associated with him in Japan, is the twenty-fifth.

to provide name lists of the hinin from the various communities. On 3/25, the outcasts gathered at the designated spot and the offering ceremony was held.

Two accounts from outside the Saidaiji order provide additional information on the ceremony. The entry for 1269/3/25 in the record of the Kasuga 春日 Shrine priest Nakatomi no Sukekata 中臣祐賢 (1219–82) reports that two thousand hinin and one thousand monks attended. The entry also details the provisions the hinin received and summarizes the procedures of the rite.³⁶ The *Hōryūji bettō shidai* 法隆寺別当次第 (Records of the Successive Chief Administrators of Hōryūji), on the other hand, indicates that more than six thousand people participated in the ceremony, including more than three thousand hinin who received provisions gathered by the monks.³⁷ This brief account also mentions some of the donations that are listed in the Kasuga Shrine record. Given the greater detail in the record from Kasuga Shrine, it may be the more reliable one for the numbers of hinin and monks involved. Yet whichever account is accepted, the assembly was clearly a dramatic event that included both monastics and laypeople, drawing significant attention to the Saidaiji order's restoration of Hannyaji and their broader activities.³⁸

Sukekata's Kasuga Shrine record indicates that on the designated day, the hinin gathered in the western field of Hannyaji and were lined up in ten rows running from south to north. Each hinin was given a measure of rice in a reusable sack, a straw hat, a six-foot straw mat, a fan, a shallow pan, a needle and thread, two nested bowls, a rice cake, a partitioned wooden lunch box (*warigo* ワリゴ [破子]) inscribed with a lotus flower, a head-covering cloth, two scoops of broth, a mandarin orange, and water. The offerings were given to the hinin at the northern head of each row and then passed down the rows. Sukekata records that the hinin all received the pure precepts. Offering

36 The original entry in the *Nakatomi no Sukekata ki* 中臣祐賢記 can be found in *Kasugasha kiroku 2* 春日社記録二 (Takeuchi 1979, 77). Sukekata was the head priest of Kasuga's Wakamiya 若宮 Shrine. For my full translation and annotations, see the Documents section.

37 The *Hōryūji bettō shidai* entry is printed in *Zoku gunsho ruijū* 続群書類従, vol. 4 (Hanawa 1904, 818a).

38 Regardless of the relative accuracy of the Kasuga Shrine and *Hōryūji bettō shidai* accounts, a record in the *Nenpu* of more than thirty thousand people receiving food at the ceremony must be mistaken (NKVK 1977, 158). I suspect that the *Nenpu* figure was based on the reference in Eison's 1269 votive text to a name list of 30,158 people who had received the bodhisattva precepts (NKVK 1977, 155). However, this name list likely refers to the *cumulative* number of people ordained in the bodhisattva precepts under Eison by that time, rather than at this event alone, and not the number of people who received offerings at the ceremony.

lamps were presented to each one and music was played during the offering ceremony. Afterward, the monks circumambulated the hinin. In addition to the main offerings listed above, Sukekata remarks that there were countless additional offerings. The priest concludes by noting that the event was planned by Eison and Ryōe and exclaiming “What a rare and shocking event!”

Sukekata’s closing comment reflects the novelty of the rite and his own status as an “official” shrine priest. Major shrines such as Kasuga (which formed a temple-shrine complex with Kōfukuji) and their allied temples typically employed hinin or other menial workers to purify (*kīyome*) shrine and temple grounds by removing animal carcasses and other waste. Unless removed, carcasses were seen as a polluting threat to the rituals performed at the shrines and temples. But the people who handled the carcasses—the outcasts and other workers employed to do so—also constituted a polluting threat due to fears of contact pollution. Thus while outcasts could help *set* the stage for ritual performance, much as they did in preparing the field for the 1269 non-discriminatory assembly, to actually inhabit the ritual stage as they also did in that assembly was rare. Eison and Ryōe went so far as to ritually venerate the hinin in a manner usually reserved for deities. Typically, offering lamps were presented to buddhas, bodhisattvas, or kami, and the term Sukekata used for the monks’ “grand ceremonial procession” around the hinin, *daigyōdō* 大行道, generally referred to circumambulation of a deity image or a hall (which enshrined such deities) accompanied by sutra recitation. The outcasts thus inhabited center stage in the assembly as incarnations of Mañjuśrī.

There is, however, a more mundane aspect to Eison and Ryōe’s treatment of the outcasts in the rites. As Hosokawa has indicated, the rites and offerings in the assembly simultaneously reflect the idealized conception of the gathered outcasts as incarnations of Mañjuśrī and their actual livelihood as beggars.³⁹ Eison and his monastic colleagues provided outcasts with items that would help them in their begging practices, reinforcing their harsh socioeconomic realities. Hosokawa explains that the sack they received not only served to hold the rice granted on the occasion of the ceremony but could be used in their begging afterward.⁴⁰ Similarly, the lepers could use the cloth to cover their

39 See Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo 1988, 174–78.

40 Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo 1988, 176. The *Daitokufu* biography of Ninshō also notes that, after moving into Gokurakuji in 1267/8, Ninshō gave sacks to hinin, among other charitable acts; see the original passage in Tanaka 1973, 47.

faces when they begged. The straw hat could protect them from the sun while they made their rounds, and the mat provided something to sleep on.⁴¹

Hosokawa's focus on both mundane and idealistic elements in Eison's approach to outcasts is valuable. I would like, however, to propose a few qualifications to his views. Hosokawa has repeatedly used the contrast between the ritualized conception of hinin as Mañjuśrī and the mundane quality of the provisions given them to argue for the limited nature of Eison's understanding of hinin as Mañjuśrī and the "salvation" or "relief" (*kyūsai* 救済) he offered them.⁴² Propounding a view first suggested by Yoshida Fumio,⁴³ Hosokawa holds that Eison regarded the hinin as divine only within the ritual context of Mañjuśrī assemblies, not outside. Yoshida's and Hosokawa's views have become a standard theory in characterizations of Eison's Mañjuśrī faith and his charitable relief activities.⁴⁴ However, the issue is more complex than their interpretation suggests.

First, Eison and his disciples constructed shelters, bathhouses, and medical facilities designed to provide *ongoing* care for outcasts. Second, as mentioned earlier, mantra and dhāraṇī were widely used in healing rites in premodern Japan. Eison expressed faith in the power of Mañjuśrī and of mantra to extinguish the evil karma of lepers and other outcasts and thereby help heal them. The recitation of Mañjuśrī's name in the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies thus cannot be dismissed as purely formalistic. By this time, discriminatory views of hinin rested not just on occupational grounds and the "contact pollution" those occupations risked but also on the assumption that outcasts were polluted by both illness and karmic transgression. Thus in potentially healing them and erasing their past-life transgressions, Eison's practices simultaneously held the potential to change their status. Furthermore, the chanting of mantra and dhāraṇī and the conferral of precepts at such ceremonies were believed to be causes for attaining buddhahood in the future. Saidaiji order physical and soteriological relief of outcasts were therefore closely related and extended beyond the ritual context of the assemblies.⁴⁵

41 As Hosokawa also suggests (*Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo* 1988, 177), there is much overlap between the items presented to the hinin here and those associated with hinin in the famous *Ippen hijiri-e* 一遍聖絵, an illustrated account of the life of Ippen 一遍 (1239–89), founder of the Ji school of Pure Land Buddhism.

42 See in particular Hosokawa 1994, 26–28, 143–44.

43 Yoshida 1983, 405–6; originally published in 1969.

44 See, for example, Ōishi 1987, 161; Taira 1992, 486–87; Sueki 1998, 410–11; and Minowa 1999, 466.

45 On these points, see also Matsuo 1996, 28–33; Matsuo 2004c, 22–25; and Abé 2002–03, 110–25. On the invocation of Mañjuśrī for healing, see Ueda 1993.

Finally, on theoretical grounds, I question the assumption that Eison saw the hinin as divine only in the ritual context of such ceremonies. True, as the provisions he offered the hinin suggest, he *simultaneously* recognized them as beggars. There is indeed tension between this recognition and his ritualized veneration of the hinin as Mañjuśrī. I am not convinced, however, that the ritual and its context show a rigid separation between Eison's understanding of hinin during the sacred (*hare*) time of ritual and the profane (*ke*) time of everyday life, as Yoshida and Hosokawa argue. Rather, I maintain that the ritual logic at work is closer to a pattern that Jonathan Z. Smith has identified for ritual in general:

*Ritual is a means of performing the way things ought to be in conscious tension to the way things are in such a way that this ritualized perfection is recollected in the ordinary, uncontrolled, course of things.*⁴⁶

The way things *ought to be* was that any hinin any time should be seen as a potential incarnation of Mañjuśrī and treated with respect, as they were in the ceremony. The *way things are* was that many were beggars met with revulsion due to their social or physical conditions. The controlled circumstances of the 1269 ritual, I suggest, called attention to this gap in such a dramatic way that the participants and the audience might be expected to remember the idealized view of hinin amid the ordinary, uncontrolled circumstances of daily life.

These various assertions about the ceremony and the ritual logic at work in Eison's Mañjuśrī assemblies—whether by Yoshida and Hosokawa or me—are difficult to prove. But this is where close analysis of Eison's own writings on the assemblies within their broader ritual, doctrinal, and narrative contexts is so valuable. Although Eison's writings on the 1267 and 1269 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī assemblies do not necessarily allow us to get inside the head of this thirteenth-century subject, they at least show how Eison explicitly framed the intentions behind the two ceremonies. I suggest that the 1267 and 1269 votive texts for the assemblies reveal shared characteristics in his soteriological approach to different social classes, characteristics that are obscured by overemphasis on the discriminatory consequences of his views on outcasts. In short, Eison also viewed hinin as capable of contributing to their own salvation through generating the aspiration for enlightenment and engaging in Buddhist practice. Like other participants in the Mañjuśrī assemblies, however, they could be led to that practice through the power of Mañjuśrī that Eison and his fellow monks invoked.

46 Smith 1982, 63; emphasis in original.

To understand the broader doctrinal context for Eison's views on the salvation of outcasts, it will be helpful to first address efforts within his monastic milieu to reconcile the notion of icchantikas with the teaching that all sentient beings had the buddha nature (meaning that they had the potential for enlightenment or full buddhahood). Particularly relevant are the writings of Kōfukuji-trained Hossō monks. Hossō monks had great influence on Eison's Ritsu thought and his overall doctrinal positions,⁴⁷ and their ideas helped shape his view of icchantikas and hinin as examples of grave transgressors who could still be led to practice, and ultimately salvation, through Mañjuśrī faith.

Doctrinal Context: Icchantikas and Universal Buddhahood

In Buddhist scriptures, icchantikas were traditionally considered to constitute a class of beings lacking the potential, or “seeds,” to attain enlightenment. The language of seeds here suggests karmic causes that, once planted, will inevitably ripen. But one has to already have or be able to generate the seeds to plant. Members of the Hossō school expounded the concept of icchantikas as part of their teachings on the five natures (*goshō* 五性) of sentient beings. Hossō scriptures taught that sentient beings could be divided into five groups, based on the type of seed in their store-consciousness, and that only certain groups possessed the untainted seeds necessary for enlightenment.

The five groups comprised those with the natures 1) of *śrāvakas* (“auditors,” referring to “Hinayana” disciples), 2) of *pratyekabuddhas* (solitary, self-enlightened buddhas), and 3) of bodhisattvas (Mahayana practitioners); 4) those of indeterminate natures; and 5) those without nature. In traditional Hossō doctrine, the differing seeds possessed by beings in the first three groups predetermined them to a specific Buddhist “vehicle,” with Mahayana practitioners at the top and capable of attaining full buddhahood. Members of all three groups, however, could attain enlightenment (nirvana) and thus be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. The fourth group represented beings whose nature accorded with more than one of the three previous vehicles, but again, they could attain enlightenment. By contrast, the fifth group—the “icchantikas

47 Many scholars have called attention to the close institutional connections between Kōfukuji and the Saidaiji order; see, for example, Tanaka 1966; Hosokawa 1987, particularly chapter 2; Oishio 1995, 298; Matsuo 1998a, 185–93; and Ōishi 2004, particularly 23–61, 88–126. On a personal level, Eison's father was a Kōfukuji monk. Even Eison's Shingon study has a connection to Kōfukuji: his training for the exalted *gushi kanjō* initiation and reception of the seal of dharma transmission from Jōkei 静慶 took place at Chōgakuji's Ryōzen'in, and in the Kamakura period, Chōgakuji was a branch temple of Kōfukuji's Daijōin.

without nature” (*mushō sendai* 無性闡提)—were believed to lack untainted seeds and to be incapable of developing them through practice or study, meaning that they could not attain enlightenment.⁴⁸

In contrast to this Hossō perspective, other Buddhist schools taught more universalistic notions of the potential for enlightenment or even the fully awakened state of a buddha. According, for instance, to the “one-vehicle” teaching of the *Lotus Sutra*—a scripture widely revered in Japanese and other Mahayana traditions across the different schools—the distinctions between the “three vehicles” of *śrāvakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, and bodhisattvas are merely provisional. Ultimately, the scripture teaches, the Buddha offers the highest vehicle, the buddha-vehicle, to all equally.⁴⁹ This *Lotus Sutra* teaching is in direct contrast to the traditional Hossō teaching outlined above. However, many Hossō monks also revered the *Lotus Sutra*, and as a sutra it too represented the words of the Buddha. Thus over time, various Hossō monks in Japan made efforts to overcome the divergence between these perspectives. Prominent among them were two monks who were earlier contemporaries of Eison’s, Jōkei and Ryōhen 良遍 (1194–1252). Alike trained at Kōfukuji and influential in the Nara precepts-revival movement, Jōkei and Ryōhen strove to reconcile the five-nature classification with views of universal buddhahood.

In *Hossōshū shoshin ryakuyō zokuhen* 法相宗初心略要統編 (Addendum to the Introduction to the Essentials of the Hossō School), for example, Jōkei initially defends the traditional Hossō five-nature doctrine, asserting that just as dharmas are various, so too are people’s natures. Subsequently, however, he argues that the one-vehicle and the five-nature teaching are equally true: “The various teachings [preached by Śākyamuni] are all true. The five classes [teaching] reconciles with the one vehicle [teaching]. . . . The one vehicle reconciles with the five classes [teaching]. . . .”⁵⁰ Here, Jōkei argues for the reconciliation of the five-nature and the one-vehicle teachings by invoking the widely held view that all the Buddha’s teachings are true. Apparent differences between them are thus merely expressions of the Buddha’s “expedient means” (Sk. *upāya*) of adapting his message to the capacities of the audience at hand. The *Lotus Sutra* one-vehicle teaching itself is a paradigmatic example of the

48 For more details on these issues, see the cogent analyses in Groner 1984, 97–101, and Ford 2006, 43–44, 47–48.

49 See, in particular, the Burning House parable (see Watson 1993, 56–79, for an English translation of the parable, and T 262 9:12b13–16b6 for the original).

50 Translation from Ford 2006, 62 (ellipses are mine; interlinear interpolations are Ford’s). On Jōkei’s argument that the one-vehicle and five-nature doctrines were equally true, see also Rhodes 1993, 320.

use of upāya to promote a new teaching. Thus in promoting a reconciliation of the five-nature and one-vehicle teachings thought to be in opposition, Jōkei at one level simply employs a familiar Mahayana strategy for which the *Lotus Sutra* itself is renowned. Simultaneously, however, he reminds his audience why the Buddha employed expedient means in the first place: people's natures, or their capacities, are different. Thus different people at different times and places need different teachings. Recognition of people's differing natures, to Jōkei, suggests support for the Hossō five-nature teaching.

As for those believed to lack any untainted seeds and therefore to be bound to transmigration—the icchantikas without the buddha nature, according to the five-nature teaching—Jōkei writes:

The vow common to all Buddhas of the three worlds is the unrestricted vow to save all sentient beings. Those who enter the Buddhist path, from the first stage of arousing the aspiration for enlightenment, will surely embrace this vow. They seek enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. And although sentient beings are not the same, the great compassion [of the Buddhas] is undifferentiated. If those without the nature [of enlightenment] were rejected, how could it be the great undifferentiating compassion?⁵¹

Without specifically denying the five-nature teaching that icchantikas lacked the buddha nature, Jōkei insists that such a nature did not ultimately bind them to transmigration; they could be liberated through the compassionate activity of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Similarly to Jōkei, Ryōhen simultaneously affirms the doctrine of five natures and the doctrine of universal enlightenment. Also intrinsically based on the notion of expedient means, Ryōhen's affirmation of both doctrines begins by recognizing that different Buddhist teachings are based on different standpoints. In *Kanjin kakumushō* 觀心覺夢鈔 (Compendium on Contemplating the Mind and Awakening from a Dream), Ryōhen explains the reconciliation of the two doctrines by arguing that “from the standpoint of the homogeneity of the underlying substance of dharmas [or phenomena],” the Hossō school recognizes that “all sentient beings attain enlightenment . . . and that

51 Translation from Ford 2006, 62–63 (interlinear interpolations are also Ford's). As Ford notes (63), Jōkei resorts to a strategy found in the *Lañkāvatāra Sutra*; he affirms the existence of those “without nature” while insisting that they can be saved through the power of the buddhas. For Ford's full discussion of Jōkei's reconciliation of the five-nature and one-vehicle teachings, see pp. 60–65.

there is no ultimate division of sentient beings into five groups.” The difference between the two doctrines has arisen because “the doctrine of one vehicle is formulated from the standpoint that recognizes the unchangeable quality of the underlying substance of dharmas, whereas the doctrine of the five groups of sentient beings has its roots in the distinctiveness of conditioned phenomena.” On this basis Ryōhen concludes that “since our standpoint is that the relationship between the absolute and conditioned phenomena is one of ‘neither identity nor difference,’ both the concept of one vehicle as well as the concept of five groups of sentient beings are equally valid.”⁵² Although Ryōhen’s views are formulated in more complex doctrinal terms than Jōkei’s quoted above, common to both is an insistence on the need to take into account not only the undifferentiated nature of buddhahood, or the absolute, but the differentiation within the conditional world (among people’s capacities and other phenomena).

Reconciliation between the realms of the unenlightened—as exemplified by icchantikas—and the realm of enlightenment—as exemplified by bodhisattvas and buddhas—is also evident in the notion of “icchantika bodhisattvas” within Eison’s Hossō-influenced monastic milieu. Alongside the traditional Hossō notion of icchantikas as beings lacking the buddha nature, there had long existed a second interpretation of some icchantikas as referring to such bodhisattvas as Mañjuśrī or Kannon, who had vowed to remain in the realm of transmigration until all sentient beings were saved. Most significantly here, Kōfukuji-trained monks affiliated with Eison’s movement and Eison himself repeatedly referred to such icchantika bodhisattvas in connection with Mañjuśrī. These references flesh out Jōkei’s teaching that icchantikas could be saved through the power of buddhas and bodhisattvas. Simultaneously, they suggest how such teachings helped lead Eison to advocate modeling oneself after Mañjuśrī—a being who could save even the “incorrigible” icchantikas, or anyone else at the lowest rungs of Buddhist or contemporary social categories.

Eison’s circa 1246 *Monju kōshiki*, for example, includes the following supplication:

We pray to Mañjuśrī, in accord with your producing the compassionate icchantika vow; we pray to Mañjuśrī, in accord with your serving as the

52 These translations from *Kanjin kakumushō* (T 2312) are from Weinstein 1965, 150–51; quoted in Ford 1999, 84–85. For Ford’s fuller discussion of Ryōhen’s views in this regard, see Ford 1999, 58, 80–87; his 2006 study includes a briefer analysis on pp. 64–65. See also the analysis of Ryōhen’s views on the five natures in Weinstein 1965, 19–22.

Mother of Awakening for the various buddhas: may you take pity on our sincere hearts and enable us to spread the dharma and benefit sentient beings.⁵³

The next year, Jōkei's disciple Kakujō and five other monks composed a votive text that was ultimately inserted into the 1280 statue of Eison.⁵⁴ The text refers to the icchantika vow three times, in connection with the monks taking the vow themselves and in emulation of Mañjuśrī and Kannon.

Two items in Eison's *Chōmonshū* likewise are devoted to the icchantika vow. Titled "On the fact that one should take the icchantika vow," item 24 insists that all bodhisattvas of the three times have taken the vow to save the entirety of those in the realm of sentient beings. Analyzing the statement in the *Dainichikyō* that "expedient means are the ultimate,"⁵⁵ Eison's sermon explains:

Because sentient beings are never exhausted, the vow, too, is never exhausted. Because the vow is never exhausted, there should not be any limit to expedient means either. All of you, carefully considering others even until the end of all future generations, should not trouble over where you are born or die but, taking the vow to save the entirety of those in the realm of sentient beings, should put spreading the dharma and benefiting sentient beings first.⁵⁶

Item 22 describes a secret teaching on the "great compassionate icchantika bodhisattvas" that Jōkei purportedly imparted to his disciple Kainyo 戒如 (d.u.).⁵⁷ Eison's sermon here also relates that Jōkei conveyed this teaching to scholar-monks during a doctrinal debate held as a dharma-offering before

53 See the *Monju kōshiki* copy dated Tenbun 19 (1550) in Kōyasan Daigaku Toshokan 2001.

54 For the vow, dated 1247/7/1, see NKBK 1977, 342–43.

55 This statement is from the first fascicle of the *Dainichikyō*; see T 848 18:1c1.

56 My translation is based on Tanaka 1971, 199, with reference to Matsuo et al. 2003, 114–15.

57 Item 22 is held to be one of the lectures that Eison gave on the *Hyōmuhyōshō* 表無表章 beginning on 1282/4/5. The *Hyōmuhyōshō* is a chapter in the third fascicle of *Daijō hōon girinjō* 大乘法苑義林章 (Ch. *Dasheng fayuan yilin zhang*; T 1861) by the Hossō patriarch Cien 慈恩 (Jp. Jion; 632–82), also known as Kuiji 窺基 or simply Ji 基. The chapter starts on 45:299a12 and continues until the end of the fascicle (316a1). This chapter includes recognition of a self-ordination procedure distinct from the separate-ordination bhikṣu precepts (Hosokawa 1999, 73n. 23); it thus played an important role in Kakujō's and Eison's conceptions of the self-ordination procedure used in their precepts-revival efforts. On this issue, see also Minowa 1999, 142–43.

the Kasuga deity. As a reclusive monk, Kainyo lacked the rank to receive such a teaching, but Jōkei made an exception for him.⁵⁸ Eison states that Kainyo recounted the episode to him “when these practices were first being established.” According to Eison’s description of Kainyo’s account,

[Jōkei stated]: “Even though there is no teaching in the gate of compassion that the icchantika bodhisattvas of great compassion can attain buddhahood, by relying on the gate of wisdom, they will surely attain buddhahood. Just like Kannon and Mañjuśrī, they are *tathāgatas* [buddhas] from the distant past.” Also, in the same manner, the shōnin [Jōkei] (in the same manner, before the deity) disclosed the secret-treasury teaching, saying, “Actually, after generating the bodhi-mind, none will fall into the evil destinies. Therefore, if this is expounded to beginners, there will be misunderstandings, and it should not be expounded freely.”

Kainyo added that:

I heard that the scholar-disciples (*gakuto* 学徒) all expressed doubts and did not believe this, but as for myself, I did not have the slightest doubt, because this principle can be seen in the scriptures as well.⁵⁹

This episode underscores the importance to Eison of the teachings on the icchantika vow and the bodhi-mind as well as the influence of Jōkei’s Kōfukuji disciples on him. By including the episode in his sermons, Eison establishes a direct transmission from Jōkei to Kainyo to himself for this secret teaching on icchantika bodhisattvas, on the generation of the bodhi mind as an irrepressible force saving one from evil destinies, and on the salvation of all sentient beings. The specific connection between Mañjuśrī and the icchantika vow is significant for our analysis because Eison and monks associated with his precepts-revival movement viewed Mañjuśrī as a model of those who had taken the icchantika vow. Moreover, Eison himself came to be viewed as such a model, contributing to perceptions of him as a “living buddha.” In the imperial edict (*rinji* 綸旨) of Emperor Go-Fushimi 後伏見 (r. 1298–1301) that granted

58 According to Kainyo’s account, the teaching was supposed to be reserved for those at the level of a debate judge (*shōjōshi* 証誠師) or above. Because he was a reclusive monk (*tonsei*)—and thus had renounced such appointments—it was impossible for him to attain this rank, but Jōkei disclosed it to him as well (*Chōmonshū*, in Tanaka 1971, 198).

59 My translation is based on the original text in Tanaka 1971, 198, with reference to Matsuo et al. 2003, 112–13.

Eison the posthumous title Kōshō Bosatsu, the emperor refers to Eison both as one who has “taken the great compassionate icchantika [vow] as his personal vow” and as such a living buddha.⁶⁰ Eison and his colleagues believed that the salvific intentions and activity embodied in the icchantika vow extended to the lowest members of the Buddhist and social hierarchies, ordinary icchantikas (i.e., those who were not already bodhisattvas) and outcasts. Within the Mañjuśrī faith of Eison and his colleagues, who would be better suited to save icchantikas than an icchantika bodhisattva? Who would be better suited to save outcasts than a bodhisattva who manifests himself as an outcast?

Eison’s 1267 and 1269 Votive Texts for the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī

Eison’s 1267 and 1269 votive texts dedicating the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue illustrate the linked place of outcasts and icchantikas within his views of Mañjuśrī’s universally salvific power. Recognizing how such texts were used helps contextualize Eison’s views. Typically at dedicatory rites for images, the sponsor would read aloud or have someone read aloud the votive text (*ganmon* 願文) summarizing the intentions for constructing the image. *Ganmon* can be literally translated as “vow-text” or “prayer-text,” as the character *gan* includes both meanings, and statements within such texts variously express intentions and supplications. Such texts, however, were typically composed and read as part of the ritual proceedings that were also interpreted as an “offering” (*kuyō*), and in the Saidaiji order, they were often inserted along with other offerings into the statues the order constructed. I have thus translated *ganmon* as “votive text” here to convey the multifold meanings of the documents as offerings as well as vows or prayers.⁶¹

Based on both broader uses of *ganmon* in the dedication of images and the specific Saidaiji order context here, it is likely that Eison read each of the votive texts in front of the assemblies for the ceremonies in 1267 and 1269 and that copies of one or both texts were inserted into the statue along with the other items listed. We can thus identify three uses for the texts. First, as a public pronouncement of the significance of the statue, addressed to all the participants in the ceremonies, including the monastic assemblies; donors; and, for the 1269 ceremony, hinin. Second, as a pronouncement and offering to the deity, Mañjuśrī. Third, as written records in the Saidaiji order of Eison’s teachings

60 Dated 1300/intercalary 7/3, the edict is printed in NKBK 1977, 203–4.

61 Although the 1267 text was titled the *Hannyaji Monju engi*, that title was added later and the form and content show it to be a *ganmon*.

and activities, a use suggested by the preservation of copies of the texts outside the Mañjuśrī image.

Ichchantikas, Outcasts, and Other Transgressors

Examining the narrative content of the 1267 and 1269 texts, we see several consistent themes that illuminate both Eison's broad understanding of Mañjuśrī and how that understanding relates to outcasts. One theme is the continuity of Mahayana teachings and practices that Mañjuśrī ensures through his many manifestations. Mañjuśrī's epithet identifies him as "the Mother of Awakening for the Three Times,"⁶² and while Eison accordingly describes him as the teacher of the previous buddha, Śākyamuni, and the next buddha, Maitreya, he emphasizes Mañjuśrī's role in the present time, between Śākyamuni and Maitreya. Mañjuśrī maintains the bodhisattva path in this vast span of time between buddhas by engendering the bodhi-mind in practitioners and ensuring the transmission of Mahayana teachings across Buddhist schools. In the 1267 text, Eison insists that "the spread of the various Mahayana schools was entirely due to [Mañjuśrī's] power" and cites as examples the Shingon, Hossō, Tendai, Kegon, Sanron, and Zen transmissions. Presumably because of the importance he placed on the Shingon and Hossō traditions, in the 1269 text he refers to just these two: the Shingon transmission to the Indian patriarch Nāgārjuna and the Hossō transmission to the Chinese patriarch Xuanzang.⁶³ Eison indicates that the objects of the aforementioned transmissions were "virtuous monks," but he also makes clear that Mañjuśrī's salvific power, expressed through multiple transformations, extends far more widely. In the 1267 text he notes several such instances, including the bodhisattva's appearance in Japan as a starving man before Shōtoku Taishi and as the ascetic Gyōki aiding Emperor Shōmu. The driving motive behind both the transmissions to virtuous monks and Mañjuśrī's countless transformations is to extinguish the transgressions of sentient beings and induce the initial awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment, as Eison indicates in the 1267 text (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a–b).

A second theme in the two texts is the universality of transgression and its karmic consequences. Each text lists transgressions associated with specific occupations. The shorter 1269 text emphasizes the sins of hunters, fishers, and courtesans and—in a passage that has received the most scholarly

62 *Sanze kakumo* 三世覺母; the "three times" refer to the past, present, and future.

63 For these citations from the 1267 and 1269 votive texts, see Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a, and Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25, respectively.

attention—cites blindness, deafness, and leprosy as evidence of karmic retribution for those who have slandered the Mahayana.⁶⁴ The fuller 1267 text includes a similar passage:

Then there are the deaf, blind, and mute, or those with leprosy and boils. They have impediments to hearing the dharma and no means of speech; or their limbs are rotting and falling off, and they have no one to treat their ills. The eyes of others are dark and shut tight, and they have no companions to show them the way. . . . Do they not realize that due to the grave sin of slandering the Mahayana, they incur the torment of the ten directions' Avīci Hell? That because of the gravest, incessant residual karma, they catch the serious disease of humans' leprosy? If they do not repent in this life, the future will surely be the same. (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b)

Passages in the 1269 text highlighting the transgressions of lepers and the disabled have received the most scholarly attention largely because of what they suggest about Eison's negative views of the very *hinin* he is trying to help: *hinin*'s current karmic conditions are retribution for their own past transgressions. Focus on such passages in the 1269 text outside the broader narrative context of both texts, however, obscures the fact that as dramatic as these examples of retribution are, they are exemplary rather than unique. In passages preceding the one translated above, the 1267 text points to “noblemen [who] take possession of the mountains and seas and brazenly kill many living beings” and to “their inferiors [who] lean on their authority and brazenly commit the same deeds.” The point here is that the transgression of hunting will also lead to negative karmic consequences. Eison also reminds Buddhist renunciants that their own improper intentions and deeds will similarly generate karmic retribution. The 1267 text goes on to decry “those who recite passages to gain the fees for clothing and food . . . or interpret the principles to gain stratagems for victory over others.” Denouncing such disciples of the Buddha who neglect the law of cause and effect, Eison declares:

64 See Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25, for the original passage. For discussions of the passage, see Oishio 1995, 245; Hosokawa 1994, 28; Niunoya 1986, 120; Ōishi 1987, 160; and Taira 1992, 486. While also citing the passage in question, Yoshihara 1996; Wu 2002, 216–17, 267–70; Abé 2002–03, 121–22; and Miyagi 2004 adopt more balanced views of the 1269 document. None of these studies, however, analyze the text in its entirety or consider it in combination with the fuller narrative of the 1267 votive text.

People who [truly] renounce the world are rare; though they may choose a mountain-forest dwelling, their minds are disturbed by delusive objects. Though they may adopt a Mahayana name, their acts are stained by self-interest. . . . Turning sweet nectar into bitter poison, they use clarified butter to spread [rather than cure] grave illnesses. (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b)

But if transgression and retribution is universal, a third theme, fundamental to both texts, is the possibility of overcoming this state through the virtues of Mañjuśrī. In each text, Eison first outlines the genesis and symptoms of the disease (ignorance of the law of cause and effect, continued transgressions, and karmic retribution) and then he points to the cure: Mañjuśrī, who awakens the bodhi-mind among *all* who turn to him, whether they are future buddhas, monks and nuns, lay sponsors, or outcasts. The 1267 text specifies:

Disciples, when we consider carefully, from the sort below who have never heard and lack the teachings, to the masters above who turn nectar into poison—all have been our parents life after life, all have been our benefactors time after time. Through what expedient means can we ensure that their hands do not leave the treasure-mountain empty? Through what stratagem can we immerse their minds in the buddha-sea? Accordingly, we have copied the revered features of the Mother of Awakening for the Three Times, to bring forth the guide *who will awaken their aspiration for enlightenment*. (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b; emphasis mine)

The text concludes:

May the high and the low who look up to [Mañjuśrī] have their grave sins extinguished and advance toward bodhi. May the monastic and lay with karmic bonds generate the great [bodhi] mind in the present and encounter this deity in the future . . . may they all have their hindering transgressions removed and together generate the great mind. (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b)

The “low” include the hinin, and Eison does emphasize the transgressions of lepers and other outcasts in past lives. Yet he also emphasizes the transgressions of the “high” in *this* life and reminds the audience—which likely included both lay benefactors and monastics—that in previous lives the hinin had also been benefactors and parents of monastics. In the 1269 text, moreover, Eison reiterates that Mañjuśrī’s saving powers extend to icchantikas:

Even those who commit the ten evil acts are welcomed, because those who hear his name [Mañjuśrī's] will have the grave sins [condemning them to] Avīci Hell erased. Even icchantikas are not abandoned, because those who pay reverence to his statue will arouse the great mind of a bodhisattva. (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25b)

The invocation of icchantikas here is helpful to Eison as a broadly recognized Buddhist category of beings whose grave transgressions would ordinarily prevent them from attaining liberation. Like Jōkei and Ryōhen, however, Eison maintains the *category* of icchantikas (or those “without nature”) while simultaneously undermining it and denying the permanence of icchantika status.

Ritual Empowerment, Purification, and Practice

In Eison's eyes, the very chance to encounter the Buddhist teachings is based on the virtue of Mañjuśrī. However slight transgressors' faith in the principle of karmic cause and effect may be, that there is such faith at all is due to Mañjuśrī's unseen, but *living* influence. The role of the living Mañjuśrī in Eison's soteriology, however, does not rest on an exclusivist conception of “other-power,” such as we find in the Pure Land schools' faith in Amida. Consistent with Eison's Nara-area milieu, effecting Mañjuśrī's salvific power requires a plurality of practices embracing both the esoteric and the exoteric: the living Mañjuśrī is largely called forth by the ritual efforts of the artisans and monks constructing, enshrining, and opening the eyes of the image, and Eison uses the cult to exhort both lay sponsors and hinin toward Buddhist practice.

As we have seen from Eison's *Gakushōki* account, in preparation for the 1267 eye-opening ceremony, he and his colleagues inserted many sutras, relics, mantras, and other texts and offerings into the image. Lists of such offerings stand at the head of both the 1267 and 1269 votive texts. These lists attest to the intertwined nature of Eison's emphases on Shingon and Ritsu, the esoteric and the exoteric. The offerings listed in the 1269 votive text, for example, include esoteric mandalas, dhāraṇī, and mantras combined with core exoteric Mahayana texts: the *Great Wisdom*, *Lotus*, *Amida*, and *Heart* sutras. The *Supreme Kings Sutra*, sets of written vows, lists of donations, rosters of those who received the bodhisattva precepts, and no-hunting pledges reflect the importance that Eison placed on the power of the precepts and link a spectrum of people—high and low, monastic and lay, male and female—to the Mañjuśrī image. Eison thereby establishes karmic bonds among those listed and between them and the bodhisattva. The inclusion of the lists in Eison's votive texts and the

insertion of the rosters into the statue ritually seals the karmic bonds, making the official registry much more than an inert collection of documents.

The lists embody a wide variety of activities: icon construction, relic offering, mandala composition, mantra and dhāraṇī recitation, scripture copying, and precept propagation. All such activities create merit, and in the Buddhist imaginaire of the time, merit was a powerful force. By gathering and offering to the Mañjuśrī image the meritorious activities represented in the lists, Eison establishes that the people named participate in Mañjuśrī's "field of merit" (*fukuden* 福田). When practitioners dedicate their good deeds toward such a worthy recipient as Mañjuśrī, they plant their good karmic seeds (causes) in a fertile field that yields a richer harvest (positive effects). Enriched by its association with Mañjuśrī, the contributors' merit can then be extended more readily to benefit others, including the gathered *hinin*, or to contribute to the protection of the state and the emperor, as Eison would do at the end of each text.

In the Buddhist exoteric-esoteric imaginaire of Eison and his monastic milieu, however, offerings are not just empowered by the link with Mañjuśrī. They also empower the statue, helping bring it alive. In the 1269 text, Eison describes the "extraordinary rites" for the statue's construction:

From the lowering of the wondrous arm's axe to the placing of the painter's brush, every one of the artisans received and kept the eight precepts. All their help arose from spontaneous faith. How much more [extraordinary] are the Buddha's remains we inlaid to represent the white curl between the eyebrows and illuminate dark ignorance? Or the *prajñā* we inserted to endow the statue with spirit and eliminate our attached, deluded selves?⁶⁵ In addition, as for the exoteric and esoteric dharma texts [inserted into the statue], there is no room to list them all. In sum, gathering that merit, we formed the body—who would call this a mere wooden image of a deity? Accumulating good roots, we completed the adornments—how could it not possess the majesty of a "living body"?⁶⁶

Here, Eison refers back to the rites connected to the original 1267 dedication of the image. From the passage, we can see that when Eison and his fellow monks

65 With the reference to *prajñā* (Jp. *hannya* 般若), Eison signals the insertion of the *Great Wisdom Sutra* (*Daihannyakyō*), and perhaps the *Heart Sutra* (*Hannyā shingyō* 般若心經; Ch. *Bore xin jing*), into the statue.

66 Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25–26. See also a similar passage in the 1267 text (*Hannyaji Monju engi*, Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b).

offered relics to the Mañjuśrī image and set them between the eyebrows of the figure, they helped animate the image and amplify the perception of it as a living icon, the “living body” of Mañjuśrī himself.⁶⁷ But so too did all the contributions to the image: The insertion of Perfection of Wisdom (Sk. *Prajñāpāramitā*) sutras into the statue provided it with wisdom and endowed it with spirit. The ritual purity and performances of participants heightened the merit of the various offerings, and hence their power. The ritual copying of a sutra by bowing three times with each letter written added to the merit of the act of copying a sutra. The keeping of the eight precepts by the artisans constructing the statue incorporated the precepts’ purifying power *into* the statue.

Hannyaji’s location heightened the significance of this purifying power. In both texts, Eison pointedly remarks that the temple is located between funerary grounds and a leper community, both of which were considered “polluted” areas. He calls this location a “fitting site” for enshrining the Mañjuśrī image,⁶⁸ and he emphasizes both the need and the opportunity to turn away from transgressions and toward Buddhist practice and enlightenment. In the 1269 text, he writes:

Here, there is a numinous place, named Hannyaji. To its south is a graveyard, which serves as an intermediary for the salvation of departed spirits. To its north are homes for lepers, which affords a means for repenting residual sins. Thus we have chosen this fitting site and enshrined the statue here. Although previously, in the fall of Bun’ei 文永 4 [1267], we opened the lotus-eye of great compassion, now it is a day at the end of the month in late spring [i.e., the third month] and we have additionally provided charitable offerings without discrimination (*musha no danse*

67 Perceptions of relics themselves as living presences in medieval Japan were strong, thus an alternative interpretation is that the relics did not merely animate the Mañjuśrī image but *served as* the living deity. Two examples connected to the Mañjuśrī cult testify to this possibility. A privately held statue and one held by the Nara temple Kongōji 金剛寺, believed to date respectively to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, feature reliquaries seated on a lion in a style typically used for Mañjuśrī. An identification between Mañjuśrī and the relics themselves as the main deity is thus made concrete through visual metaphor. The flaming wish-fulfilling jewel shape of the reliquaries was a style promoted by Eison and his disciples, and these statues may have been influenced by their combined engagement in the cults of relics, Śākyamuni, and Mañjuśrī. See Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 2001, plates 91 and 92, and the discussion of the images on p. 220. (I am grateful to Bernard Faure for this reference.)

68 For Eison’s references to Hannyaji as a “fitting” or “superior” site (*shōchi* 勝地), see *Hannyaji Monju engi*, in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b; and Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:26.

無遮の壇施). Then, we adhered to the rules of Yoga, and it was the deepest secret dharma of inner realization that we practiced. Now, we emulate the precedents of “response and transformation” bodies,⁶⁹ and it is the hunger of lepers and the solitary that we seek to appease. Truly, this accords with the Great Sage’s original vow. How can we dare doubt the manifestation of this living body? (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:26)

Having composed this text as part of a broad offering ceremony for hinin, and understanding Mañjuśrī to manifest himself as a hinin to elicit charitable acts, Eison likely directed his remarks to both the hinin and the monastic and lay sponsors of charitable acts on their behalf. The opportunity for “repenting residual sins” offered by the presence of the leper community was similarly twofold. In Eison’s conception, thanks to Mañjuśrī and the Shingon Ritsu monks representing him, the lepers and other hinin had an opportunity to repent their transgressions from previous lives and awaken their aspiration for enlightenment. At the same time, Eison called on the sponsors to bear witness to the outcasts’ miserable conditions as well as their capacity for transformation. His hope, it seems, was that in seeing the condition of hinin and hearing his teachings at such ceremonies, the donors would be moved to reflect on the future karmic consequences of their own transgressions, trust in the unseen aid of Mañjuśrī, and direct their efforts toward Buddhist practice.⁷⁰ Eison thus synthesizes what he perceives as the outcasts’ need for spiritual and material relief with potential donors’ need to lose their attachment to their possessions.

On a material level, Eison offered relief to the hinin in the 1269 ceremony by emphasizing that donations inspired by the living Mañjuśrī image could be turned over to them. In the 1269 text, immediately after exhorting potential donors and other members of his audience to recognize that the statue was the “living body” of Mañjuśrī, Eison writes:

Thus, following this feast, we shall long prepare daily offerings and give these to the beggars, hoping to quell their respective cravings. . . . We can only turn to the unseen aid of the three jewels and leave it entirely to the sponsors of the ten directions. Thus those who arouse good prayers and offer a single dust mote, those who receive donations and accept a single meal, shall leave behind the attachment of covetousness and finally savor the delights of meditation (*zen’etsu* 禅悦). (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:26)

69 “Response and transformation” (*ōke* 応化) refers to buddhas and bodhisattvas transform- ing themselves in response to people’s needs.

70 On this point, see also Yoshihara 1996, 132.

Earlier in the text, Eison had insisted that the outcasts “long only for food and clothing and think of nothing else,” and asked, “When can they be liberated?” Here he answers his own question: only after their material needs for food and clothing are satisfied can they be freed from coveting these items and turn their attention to Buddhist practice, which is what can ultimately effect their liberation. Eison thus ties the material relief of hinin directly to their soteriological relief. Similarly, once the donors, through performing charitable deeds, have detached themselves from coveting, they too can better turn their attention to “the delights of meditation.” The *need* to detach oneself from coveting, however, applies equally to the donors and to the hinin. This stance is in keeping with the various examples of transgression in the earlier 1267 text. While the severity of the hinin’s hardships and karmic transgressions may be greater, there is again a continuum linking those “above” to those “below” in Eison’s writings.

The closing prayers for each text vividly illustrate the mix of egalitarian and hierarchical thought so prevalent in Eison’s teachings. Explaining how the accumulated merit composing the statue can be extended outward, the first part of the merit transfer and closing prayers for the 1267 text reads:

Taking this merit, we pray for the sacred court: may the Jewel Body be free from harm and the lawful rule long be just.⁷¹ . . . May the high and the low who look up to [Mañjuśrī] have their grave sins extinguished and advance toward bodhi. May the monastic and lay with karmic bonds generate the great [bodhi] mind in the present and encounter this deity in the future. Not choosing between those who rejoice in the good of others and those who slander, not distinguishing between the hostile and the amicable, may they all have their hindering transgressions removed and together generate the great mind. In particular, may those with grave illnesses cleanse the stains of their transgressions in the dharma-water of prajñā, and may their seeds of buddhahood bask in the wisdom-light of Mañjuśrī. (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b)

The closing prayers in the 1269 text are more condensed, typical of the text as a whole. But, significantly, Eison echoes the prayer for universal enlightenment from the earlier text: “In sum, may those who bind even small causes to this Great Sage, in favorable or adverse conditions, together obtain the supreme wisdom of prajñā. May those with and without [the Buddha] nature alike generate the good faith in enlightenment” (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:26).

71 The “Jewel Body” (*gyokutai* 玉体) refers to the emperor.

Eison thus promoted a plurality of practices for attaining salvation in the context of Mañjuśrī faith: constructing, ritually empowering, and venerating Mañjuśrī images; chanting and hearing Mañjuśrī's name; making charitable offerings; receiving the precepts; repenting and eliminating transgressions; awakening the bodhi-mind; and engaging in contemplative practices. He saw all these practices as necessary, even if they varied in relative weight for different practitioners. The full empowerment of Mañjuśrī icons, for example, depended on the esoteric ritual expertise of monks such as Eison. Likewise, there were different levels of precepts, from the five, eight, or bodhisattva precepts that Eison typically conferred on lay followers, to the full monastic precepts for monks or nuns, to the samaya precepts for esoteric practitioners. Hinin figured as the recipients of charitable offerings, while Eison called upon other laypeople to make the offerings. At the same time, underlying these different approaches were consistent themes that applied to all: emphases on forging karmic bonds with Mañjuśrī (for example, by contributing to the statue's construction and enshrinement), on turning away from transgression (by repenting and extinguishing past sins, losing attachments, and regulating one's behavior), and on turning toward enlightenment (by generating the bodhi-mind and engaging in Buddhist practice).

Among these varied practices, awakening and maintaining the bodhi-mind was pivotal. For the bodhi-mind at once represented a firm resolution to attain enlightenment on behalf of sentient beings and, in keeping with that resolution, a force that would help prevent regression into evil acts. In preventing such evil acts, the bodhi-mind would also prevent falling into evil destinies, much as Jōkei had taught in the "secret" teaching passed down to Eison through Kainyo. The emphasis on generating the bodhi-mind went hand in hand with Eison's employment of the full range of exoteric and esoteric precepts, which similarly exhorted one to refrain from evil acts and practice good deeds.⁷²

Within the framework of Eison's exoteric-esoteric imaginaire, one could participate in the cults of many deities or saints to advance toward enlightenment. But as the Mother of Awakening who inspires the bodhi-mind in past and future buddhas, and as the bodhisattva who ensures the transmission of the Mahayana teachings in the vast time between buddhas, Mañjuśrī occupied

72 The pivotal importance of the bodhi-mind for Eison is also evident in the *Chōmonshū*, where the terms "the bodhi-mind" (*bodaishin*) or "generating the aspiration" to seek enlightenment (*hosshin* 発心) are used in at least eighteen items, including items 1, 2, 14, 15, 22, 23, 26, 27, 30, 33, 34, 35, 44, 51, 52, 66, 75, and 76. On the interrelated significance of the bodhi-mind and the precepts for Eison, see also Abé 2002–03, 111–25.

a privileged place in Eison's soteriology. Notions of living icons and the premise that Mañjuśrī manifested himself as an outcast to elicit charitable acts enabled Eison to construct an innovative twofold notion of the "living Mañjuśrī." This twofold notion linked the Hannyaaji icon, the suffering beings in the vicinity of the temple, and the soteriological and material relief of those suffering beings. Eison thereby anchored the bodhisattva's universal salvific power in the specific physical and social context of the icon's enshrinement, highlighting the keen interpenetration of the universal and the local.

Conclusions

Recognition of the breadth of Eison's teachings in the two votive texts sheds light on contrasting scholarly portraits of him and his movement. Eison has been alternatively depicted as a selfless monk, aligned with the lower classes and dedicated to the salvation of hinin, and as an upper-class scholar-monk reinforcing discrimination toward those same hinin.⁷³ The texts and practices examined here vividly illustrate the basis for such contrasting images. Although Eison declared that hinin could be manifestations of Mañjuśrī and ritually venerated them as such, he simultaneously taught that the chronically ill and chronically poor, the isolated and the abandoned, were responsible for their own karmic conditions, possessors of "residual sins" in need of repentance. It thus is understandable when, for example, Taira Masayuki criticizes Eison and his colleagues for making lepers "cry tears of shame," as recorded in the *Kantō ōkanki* 關東往還記 (Record of the Trip to Kantō and Back).⁷⁴

We should, however, acknowledge three salient issues here. First, Eison largely reflected traditional Mahayana teachings and the standards of his time in positing karma from previous lives as the root of outcasts' present misery. One finds similar notions in such widely circulated sutras as the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutra*, the *Laṅkāvatāra Sutra*, and even the *Lotus Sutra*.⁷⁵ The *Lotus Sutra*—long considered a foremost representative of the teaching of universal buddhahood—was immensely popular in medieval Japan and

73 See, for example, the analyses in Matsuo 1998b; Oishio 1995, 242–52; Hosokawa 1994; Sueki 1998, 410–11; and Taira 1992, 486–87.

74 See Taira 1992, 486–87. For the original *Kantō ōkanki* passage, see the entry for 1262/6/11 (NKBK 1977, 82).

75 For analyses of the views on icchantikas in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutra* and the *Laṅkāvatāra Sutra*, see Liu 1984 and Rhodes 1993, 172–205, 224–30.

paraphrased liberally in both Eison's 1267 votive text and his *Monju kōshiki*. The *Lotus Sutra* also declares, however, that one who slanders the sutra and is reborn as a human being "will be deaf, blind, dumb. Poverty, want, all kinds of decay will be his adornment; water blisters, diabetes, scabs, sores, ulcers, maladies such as these will be his garments."⁷⁶ The tensions in Eison's dual emphases on compassion for icchantikas and hinin and on their culpability for their own karmic conditions are thus part of a broader tension in Mahayana scriptures, including some of those most strongly associated with the notion of universal buddhahood.

Second, although Eison may have seen hinin and icchantikas as in particular need of repentance, in the 1267 and 1269 texts he aimed to shame *everyone*: noblemen who hunt and fish as well as their inferiors who mimic them; sentient beings who, even knowing the teachings of the Buddha in the *Lotus Sutra*, stubbornly remain in "the burning house" and just "covet more and more"; selfish Buddhist practitioners of the present era; and hinin. Third, repentance rituals were an integral part of the ordination rites that Eison and his Ritsu colleagues emphasized, including the 1236 self-ordination ceremony that launched their new lineage.⁷⁷ The need for repentance applied to all who would generate the aspiration for enlightenment and ride in the buddha-vehicle.

The two votive texts are also revealing for their portrayals of specific transmissions. It is telling that of the six Mahayana transmissions cited in the 1267 text, in the condensed 1269 representation, Eison includes only Shingon and Hossō. Shingon's importance to Eison is clear throughout his career and is reflected in the name "Shingon Ritsu" by which his movement came to be known. And as part of a new lineage of Ritsu monks, Eison naturally propounded Ritsu teachings along with Shingon. Yet his Ritsu thought is indebted to Hossō scriptures and teachings, and Hossō elements played an important role in his exoteric-esoteric synthesis. We should remember, however, that Eison was influenced by *progressive* Hossō monks such as Jōkei and his disciples. This point bears particularly on our evaluation of Eison's soteriological strategies for different social classes.

As we saw in the votive texts, Eison freely employs such categories as hinin, icchantikas, and those "without nature." The categories of icchantika and

76 Translation by Burton Watson (1993, 77), from the "Simile and Parable" chapter. For the original *Lotus Sutra* passage, see T 262 9:16a2–5.

77 On the significance of repentance rituals in the 1236 self-ordination ceremony, see Minowa 1999, 303–6. For connections between "visionary repentance and visionary ordination" rites more broadly, see Yamabe 2005.

those without the buddha nature seem to indicate that he subscribed to the traditional Hossō view on the five natures of sentient beings, including those unable to attain enlightenment. But the specific reference to those without the buddha nature appears in a prayer that they too shall generate the faith in *bodhi*, or enlightenment, and Eison had already indicated in this text that even icchantikas could arouse the bodhi-mind if they paid reverence to Mañjuśrī's image. The 1267 text suggests even more clearly Eison's belief in universal buddhahood: "In particular, may those with grave illnesses cleanse the stains of their transgressions in the dharma-water of prajñā, and may *their seeds of buddhahood* bask in the wisdom-light of Mañjuśrī."⁷⁸

Such views are consistent with a sermon by Eison recorded in the *Chōmonshū*. Item 53, titled "On the Fact that One Should Respect People," declares: "All sentient beings have the same buddha nature; what discrimination can there be?" (Tanaka 1971, 212). Matsuo cites this passage to refute Oishio's suggestion that Eison varied his cultic practices and salvific methods for different social classes based on Hossō five-nature thought (with salvation through the Mañjuśrī cult reserved for hinin).⁷⁹ The evidence presented here, however, suggests that both positions may need adjustment. Given the syntheses between five-nature thought and universal buddhahood in texts by such Hossō monks as Jōkei and Ryōhen, Eison could well have subscribed to the five-nature theory, but in a form that allowed an "out" for those at the bottom. Effectively, this results in a doctrine of universal buddhahood, but the *categories* of the five natures are maintained. At the same time, the continuity in Eison's teachings in the two votive texts on "the high and the low," and his understanding of the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī statue as the main deity for *all* sentient beings, suggest a broader social target for the cult than Oishio's comments imply. In Eison's view, the Mañjuśrī cult was a means to enlightenment for all who would walk the bodhisattva path—a path icchantikas and hinin could also walk.

For the broader study of medieval Japan, I suggest that the means through which Eison conveyed this message are as significant as the message itself. The growing emphasis in studies of premodern Japanese religion on such "on-the-ground" practices as icon veneration, simplified chanting rituals, healing and memorial rites, pilgrimage, and cultic practices is welcome. Many of these studies, however, contrast the practices and concerns of such scholar-monks

78 *Hanniyaji Monju engi*, Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b; emphasis mine.

79 See Matsuo 1998b, 6–7; Matsuo 2004a, 36–37; and Oishio 1995, 144, supplementary note 5. For Oishio's view that Eison targeted only hinin as the objects of Mañjuśrī's salvation, see Oishio 1995, 245–46.

as Eison with the “lived religion” of female, lay, or “popular” practitioners. Yet Eison’s intertwined promotion of the Hannyaaji restoration and the Mañjuśrī cult—and of the doctrine of universal buddhahood that he found embodied in that cult—shows that these same on-the-ground practices were integral to his concerns and identity as an elite scholar-monk. The Hannyaaji “living Mañjuśrī” thus serves as a needed reminder that scholar-monks lived their religions too.

Fundraising, Patronage, and the Hannyajī Mañjuśrī: From Eison to Shinkū

The narrative and iconographic life of the Mañjuśrī statue that Eison dedicated as the main icon for Hannyajī in 1267 and 1269 extended to two attendant statues dedicated in 1287 by Eison's disciple Shinkū. The two surviving fragments of the Hannyajī image (Figure 5), and the modeling of the 1302 Saidaijī Mañjuśrī pentad after the Hannyajī image, suggest that the image was eventually completed as a pentad. Even this fragmentary testimony to the extended life of the Hannyajī Mañjuśrī image proves rich for exploring broader issues accompanying the Saidaijī order's growth and socioeconomic context in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

Shinkū's direct move from his position as head monk of the branch temple Hannyajī to head monk of the main temple, Saidaijī, upon Eison's death in 1290 heightens the significance of his succeeding Eison in promoting the Hannyajī Mañjuśrī image. In addition, a document attributed to Eison and dated 1269/8/25 portrays a direct esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Eison to Shinkū. Saidaijī order records thus suggest both exoteric and esoteric links between Eison's and Shinkū's participation in the Mañjuśrī cult and their successive leadership of the order.¹ An exploration of the parallels in the two monks' participation in the Mañjuśrī cult will thus shed light on issues of central concern to the Saidaijī order itself.

This chapter focuses on linked rhetorical strategies and social positioning surrounding the Mañjuśrī image and its attendant figures, placing them in the context of Eison and his disciples' broader stance on fundraising, patronage, and contributions from the humble to the elite. To explore these issues, I will examine Eison's writings on the fundraising for the image and a 1287 votive text by Shinkū dedicating two attendant statues. The stance toward fundraising and political connections in these texts fits a broader "rhetoric of reluctance" throughout Saidaijī order accounts of Eison's activities. This rhetoric

1 We will examine the purported 1269 esoteric transmission document from Eison to Shinkū in the next chapter. I suggest there that the document was likely composed by later disciples and only retroactively attributed to Eison. However, the contents remain revealing as a Saidaijī order *portrait* of links between Mañjuśrī and the succession of Saidaijī from Eison to Shinkū.

shows Eison's repeated reluctance to accept major donations and appointments from courtier and warrior leaders, typically followed by his attainment of consensus within his order enabling him ultimately to accept the donation or appointment. I thus suggest that the notion of *muen*, or "unattached," status highlighted in many studies of the order is best examined alongside this rhetoric of reluctance and the patronage that is both problematic for the order's ideals and necessary for its success.

The Saidaiji order's rhetoric of reluctance is intimately tied to their foundational stance as reclusive monks (*tonseisō*) who rejected full participation in the state-sponsored system of monastic appointments. Such a stance relieved monks in the order from many "worldly" obligations accompanying the appointments. Similarly, Eison hesitated to accept donations of private estates (*shōen*) from courtier and warrior elites because such donations also incurred substantial obligations to those lay donors and risked compromising the order's independence. In theory, this stance freed Eison and his disciples to focus on activities they considered more consistent with their monastic status: promoting the precepts, spreading the dharma, and benefiting sentient beings through soteriological and charitable relief. However, the stance simultaneously risked denying the order the financial support that also accompanied the appointments and donations.

Like any institutionalized monastic group, the Saidaiji order needed funds to carry out their activities. The order's wide-ranging endeavors underscore this need: restoring temples from Kantō to Kyūshū, stationing monks and nuns at the temples, constructing icons, and building shelters, hospices, and other facilities required substantial material resources and labor. The religious motivations and activities of Eison and his Saidaiji order colleagues are therefore—as always in the history of religions—inseparable from broader socio-economic issues. Illuminating how Eison and Shinkū imaginatively framed their construction of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image and its attendant statues in the context of such socioeconomic issues is the goal of this chapter. I suggest that the ideal and practical aspects of fundraising and patronage in the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult are as interpenetrating as the symbolic and material realities of the Hannyaji "living Mañjuśrī."

The Hannyaji Restoration and the Rhetoric of Reluctance

The year 1261, when Eison first enshrined the unfinished Mañjuśrī image in Hannyaji, marked a turning point for his monastic order. His disciple Ninshō, who had moved to the Kantō region in 1252, took up residence in

the Śākyamuni Hall of the Kamakura temple Shin Seiryōji 新清涼寺;² his presence there surely contributed to the warrior government's interest in Eison, who was soon invited to Kamakura by the shogun, Hōjō Sanetoki 北条実時 (or Kanezawa 金沢 Sanetoki; 1224–76). The warrior government's interest in the Saidaiji order also reflected their mutual interest in Mañjuśrī assemblies and offering ceremonies for outcasts; warrior leaders' sponsorship of such rites in the early thirteenth century was a precursor to those led by Ninshō and Eison in the 1240s (see Chapter 2). In his autobiography, Eison frames his trip to Kantō with mention of a large-scale Mañjuśrī rite he led beforehand and a donation he received from the retired shogunal regent Hōjō Tokiyori for the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue afterward. During the trip, Eison and his Saidaiji order colleagues held both Mañjuśrī assemblies and offering ceremonies for Kamakura-area outcasts, amid many other rites. What concerns us here, however, are mainly the processes the warrior leaders went through to finally convince Eison to accept their invitation to come to Kantō and Eison's responses. This incident provides a revealing example of Eison's stance toward patronage by elites and how he strove to assert his group's independence even amid the patronage.

Sanetoki's initial invitation, delivered to Eison by the messenger Ken'a 見阿 on 1261/10/8, was accompanied by an offer to commend the Kamakura temple Shōmyōji 称名寺 and a copy of the complete scriptures to Saidaiji.³ Eison, however, refused the commendations. His refusal was likely based on wariness over the obligations acceptance would bring, including the obligation to take the trip and turn his attention away from his many other ongoing activities. The shogun persisted, and on 11/25 Eison received a second letter, indicating that "the donation of the complete scriptures was not dependent on whether or not [he] went [to Kantō]." Sanetoki sent the scriptures, which arrived at Saidaiji on 12/18. On the 28th, Jōshun 定舜, a longtime colleague of Ninshō and Eison's, arrived from the Kantō region and urged Eison to make the trip, but Eison still demurred (NKBK 1977, 29).

The turning point in Eison's decision to make the trip came at the start of the new year in 1262. Ken'a, the messenger, arrived again, this time with a letter

2 See the *Daitokufu*, Tanaka 1973, 46. The *Daitokufu* only refers to the temple as the Śākyamuni Hall in Kamakura, but scholars believe that this was the Shin Seiryōji Śākyamuni Hall where Eison stayed in 1262 when he journeyed to Kamakura.

3 The full monastic name for Ken'a (or Kenna; d. 1265) was Ken'amida-butsu. Hosokawa (1999, 257, 260n. 6) renders Ken'a as 見阿, in contrast to 具阿 as it is rendered in the NKBK 1977 version of the *Gakushōki* (29). Here, I follow Hosokawa and the *Kantō ōkanki zenki* 関東往還記前記 (NKBK 1977, 67–68).

from Tokiyori. According to the *Gakushōki*, the letter recorded Tokiyori's "earnest entreaties . . . to spread the dharma and confer the precepts" (NKBK 1977, 29). The *Kantō ōkanki zenki*—which recounts the events leading to Eison's six-month journey to Kantō and back—makes clear that Tokiyori's request in the letter was both for spreading the dharma and for his personal reception of the precepts (67–68). Tokiyori was in poor health at the time, and the precepts had long been used in healing as well as deathbed rites for elite patrons. Thus after repeated requests from Kamakura, Eison recalled in his autobiography that "because these various circumstances were difficult to turn away from, I reluctantly consented."⁴ Eison was committed to spreading the dharma widely and promoting the precepts, and Tokiyori's letter likely struck the right chords with him. However, the repeated nature of the requests in light of such warrior leaders' political power also surely contributed to his ultimate acceptance; with each ensuing request, the pressure to accept grew.

The increasing frequency of requests by elites to Eison from 1259 to 1262 and the rhetoric he uses with respect to those requests are both significant here. Singling out the rhetoric may seem cynical, but rhetoric is a fundamental means by which Eison constructs and displays to his followers his stance as a pure precepts-keeping, reclusive monk. The language of reluctant consent in Eison's ultimate acceptance of the invitation to Kantō appears repeatedly when he discusses invitations by elites to perform specific services. The first invitation to Eison by the leader of a state-level shrine recorded in the *Gakushōki* (1259/8) was from the Iwashimizu Hachimangū 石清水八幡宮 administrator Miyakiyo 宮清 (1226–76). Miyakiyo sent a letter requesting an abbreviated reading of the complete scriptures for the dharma-enjoyment of the kami Hachiman. He "petitioned precepts-keeping monks from the Southern and Northern capitals" (Nara and Kyoto) for the rite. Eison's initial response was that "ever since taking the precepts, I have never accepted such requests and, accordingly, I shall refuse" (NKBK 1977, 27).

The request for the Hachimangū rite was rare because Eison was being officially asked to perform an esoteric prayer-ritual (*kitō*) at a state-sponsored shrine, outside the network of Saidaiji and its branch temples, for the first time since he became a reclusive monk. He therefore held a council meeting of his order's senior monks to discuss the invitation. Eison typically held such council meetings when faced with major institutional decisions for the order, based on his understanding of vinaya principles calling for consensus within the monastic community. In this case, most of his dharma-colleagues agreed

4 *Gakushōki* (NKBK 1977, 29). The phrase I translate here as "reluctantly consented," 懃領状, is read out as *namajū-ni ryōjō su*.

that he should not go. One, however, had an auspicious dream indicating that he should. At that point the others, “in awe of the will of the kami, *reluctantly consented*” (emphasis mine). In other words, they believed that the dream was a message from Hachiman himself suggesting approval of the trip. But Eison continued to deliberate until another letter arrived, stating: “Through the good roots of the abbreviated reading of the complete scriptures, if you perform the current esoteric prayer, you will perceive the Great Bodhisattva of the Sincere [Hachiman].”⁵ In response, Eison writes, “reflecting on the previous dream-sign, I [too] was in awe of the will of the kami and consented.” Accordingly, Eison joined the Hachiman offering service, participated in the reading of the complete scriptures, and “performed the eulogy for the rites of the great dharma assembly” on 1259/9/1 at the conclusion of the offering ceremony (*Gakushōki*, NKBK 1977, 27–28).

Eison’s renown as a ritual master was clearly growing even before the invitation to Kantō. In 1261, the nobleman-turned-monk Jōnen 定然 (1208–72) requested that Eison come to his private retreat, Nishiyama Hamuro 西山葉室, after the summer retreat and perform services. In response, Eison writes, “It was hard to turn my back on his benevolent intentions, thus I reluctantly consented.”⁶ Significantly, scholars generally point to Jōnen’s various entreaties toward Eison—which began in 1260, the year after Eison’s participation in the Iwashimizu Hachimangū rites—as the first instance of elite courtier patronage of Eison.⁷

In short order, then, Eison found himself invited to lead a grand esoteric prayer at a major state-level shrine, gaining the personal patronage of a high-ranking courtier, and requested to perform services for the leaders of the warrior government in Kamakura. Eison’s own accounts of these invitations and his ultimate acceptance are all characterized by the language of reluctant

5 Hachiman was called the “Great Bodhisattva of the Sincere” (*shōjiki no daibosatsu* 正直の大菩薩) because in the Kamakura period it was believed that the deity would dwell in the heads of sincere believers, not mere flatterers (Hosokawa 1999, 251n. 10).

6 See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1261/4/16 (NKBK 1977, 28). Jōnen was also known as Hamuro Teishi-nyūdō 葉室定嗣入道, based on his lay name, Hamuro Sadatsugu 定嗣. For additional biographical details, see Hosokawa 1999, 254–56n. 1, and Oishio 2006, 240–79.

7 See, for example, Wajima 1959, 36–37; Sawa 1990, 60; and Hosokawa 1999, 254–55n. 1. Meeks, however, argues for reconsidering the relationship between aristocratic Hokkeji nuns and Eison according to the model of “patron-disciples” that we see in Jōnen’s relationship to Eison (2010a, 127–30, 139–40). As Eison’s involvement with nuns from courtier backgrounds predates Jōnen’s patronage, pushing Meeks’s arguments further, we might instead consider such nuns as Eison’s first courtier patrons.

consent.⁸ The process of the warrior leaders' entreaties to Eison in 1261 and 1262, and Eison's stance toward these entreaties, are embedded within this interlinked social and rhetorical context.

Eison embarked on his journey to the Kantō region on 1262/2/4, following an enshrinement ceremony for the complete scriptures that included the chanting of Mañjuśrī's spell by more than one hundred monastics and laypeople on 1/25.⁹ As mentioned earlier, after Eison's return, he received a letter from Tokiyori dated 1262/10/5, in which Tokiyori donated pigment for the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue. This donation is noteworthy considering Eison's hesitance to accept donations from the Hōjō leaders before and during his trip to Kantō, as well as his and Shinkū's portrayals of fundraising for the Hannyaji restoration and for the Mañjuśrī image so central to that restoration. Typical of their stance toward donations more broadly, these successive leaders of the Saidaiji order each emphasized the spontaneous and humble nature of the donations they received. However, a closer consideration of the kind of donations they received, and how those donations changed over time, will illuminate tensions between the order's ideals and their socioeconomic realities.

"Muen" and the Donations for the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī Image

Many scholars, influenced especially by the late Japanese historian Amino Yoshihiko, have cited the Saidaiji order as an example of those demonstrating the significance of "unattached" (*muen*) status in medieval Japan. Amino's concept of *muen* status, based on changing social patterns and uses of the term *muen* in medieval Japan, refers to individuals or often loosely knit groups that were institutionally, politically, or geographically unattached except to

8 For additional examples of the rhetoric of reluctance in Eison's responses to politically charged invitations by elites, see the account of his invitation and ultimate first meeting with Retired Emperor Go-Saga 後嵯峨 (1220–72; r. 1242–46), with Jōnen originally serving as the intermediary, in the *Chōmonshū* (item 61; see Tanaka 1971, 215–16, and Matsuo et al. 2003, 138–39). This account cites two scriptural precedents for Eison's reluctance to associate closely with rulers and other elites, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*'s insistence that "those who have left home should not pay reverence to laypeople" (see T 374 12:399c) and *Lotus Sūtra* passages on the importance of bodhisattvas not becoming familiar with kings (see T 262 9:37a21–22, b19–21; for an English translation, see Watson 1993, 197–98). See also the *Gakushōki* account of the request by both sides of the dual polity that Eison serve as *bettō* 別当, or chief temple administrator, for Shitennōji 四天王寺, a usually coveted post that had traditionally been fulfilled alternatively by Enryakuji 延暦寺 and Onjōji 園城寺 monks (NKBK 1977, 58–59).

9 *Gakushōki* (NKBK 1977, 29–30).

the emperor or Japan as a whole. These individuals or groups represented a wide range of people, including newly formed Zen and Ritsu groups, freelance monks engaged in fundraising campaigns for various temples (often referred to as *hijiri* or *shōnin*), female entertainers and courtesans known as *asobi* 遊女, itinerant entertainers and craftsmen of various kinds, and outcasts, among others. The Saidaiji order stands out in this context due to both their self-professed muen status and their broad engagement with other people identified as muen. Monks who were actively engaged in temple fundraising campaigns (*kanjin*)—as many Saidaiji order and other Ritsu monks were in the thirteenth century—often defined themselves as “muen,” and texts related to their fundraising emphasized the collaborative efforts of a wide community. They highlighted the breadth of the communal contributions by using such phrases as “the high and low, male and female, monastic and lay” and by conspicuously mentioning such humble contributions as “half a penny” or a “scrap of wood.”¹⁰ We must recognize, however, both the rhetorical nature of these invocations and the elite patronage crucial to the success of such campaigns. To illustrate this, it is helpful to examine the Saidaiji order’s self-statements regarding muen status, humble contributions, and the construction of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image.

Saidaiji order recognition of the value of unattached status is exemplified in the record of Eison’s 1262 trip to Kantō, the *Kantō ōkanki*. According to this account, the shogunal household offered to commend estates to Saidaiji (NKBK 1977, 90). However, Eison is reported to have refused the financial support of the Hōjō regents, insisting, “I despise things that are attached to the world and prefer those that are unattached (muen). This is the expedient means (*hōben*) to preserve the Buddhist law.”¹¹ Modern scholars frequently quote this passage in studies of the Saidaiji order to highlight the order’s muen status and their fundamental attitude toward donations under Eison.¹² Moreover, Eison’s own dharma-colleagues reminded him of the significance of this 1262 dialogue with Tokiyori as late in his career as 1285. At that time, the Saidaiji council of senior monks recommended that he refuse an appointment as chief administrator (*bettō*) of Shitennōji issued by both sides of the dual

10 On muen more broadly in medieval Japan, see Amino 1978. My understanding of Amino’s views and their connections to monks engaged in medieval fundraising campaigns has benefited from Goodwin 1994.

11 This is Goodwin’s apt translation of the passage (1994, 118). See NKBK 1977, 91, for the original.

12 In addition to Goodwin’s treatment, see, for example, Wajima 1959, 55; Inoue 1971, 83; and Tanaka 1971, 446.

polity ruling Japan. According to the *Gakushōki* entry for 1285/1/9–11, the council based its recommendation on the following rationale:

The court and warrior leaders (*kuge buke* 公家武家) have issued a solemn directive. While we dwell under [the rule of] both parties and it is difficult to refuse, from long ago, you [Eison] have not sought temple holdings. In Kantō, to preserve the Ritsu-dharma and as the wish of the shogun's household, the Saimyōji Zenmon 西明寺禪門 [Tokiyori] wanted to commend holdings to Saidaiji. Although his intentions were considerate and earnest, in the end, no holdings were accepted. How much more so should this be for temple administrative positions such as this? This is what worldly groups compete and long for. Bhikṣu who have left the world should scorn this, and it is not fitting to accept. (NKBK 1977, 59)

In this latter case, Eison ultimately accepted the appointment with the usual “reluctant” or “half-hearted” (*namajū* 懃) consent. As with the earlier 1261 and 1262 invitations to Kantō, the insistent, repeated nature of the requests from rulers for the Shitennojō appointment suggest that Eison felt mounting political pressure to accept. But the invocation by his fellow monks of the earlier exchange and the refusal of Tokiyori's offer to commend temple holdings does support the significance of that exchange for understanding his group's values and ideals. As Janet Goodwin explains, in the phrasing of Eison's 1262 refusal of Tokiyori, “Eison not only defined the concept of muen as independence from political authorities, he also linked it to the welfare of Buddhism and its institutions. At the same time, he justified his muen status by the doctrine of *hōben* [expedient means], which was often used to recommend compromise of various types” (1994, 118). Goodwin suggests that such political independence could be achieved “by relying on the small gifts of many donors” (118–19), donations akin to what Shinkū in his 1287 votive text would call “pure resources.”¹³ Here, however, we need to look more closely at the actual donations they received and when.

There is certainly some truth to the gradual build-up of Saidaiji under Eison through relatively small donations by those not at the highest ranks of the social order. The *Saidaiji den'en mokuroku* 西大寺田園目録, a 1298 Saidaiji order record of land holdings donated to the temple, overwhelmingly shows only small plots of land donated from 1240, at the start of Eison's restoration

13 See Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256, for the original passage in Shinkū's text.

efforts, until 1267, and most were from local holders in Yamato Province.¹⁴ Cumulatively, even small donations did help financially support the order's activities. Accepting small donations also would not entail the level of obligation to the donors—and hence potential “worldly entanglements”—that larger donations would. Inoue Mitsusada, who has analyzed the donations in this record and their changes over time, suggests that Eison and his colleagues managed Saidaiji on a relatively small scale due to their stance as strict precepts-keeping monks who “shunned worldly fame, wealth and impure property” (Inoue 1971, 83). However, as Inoue also notes, the rate of year-to-year increase in land donations to Saidaiji accelerated rapidly from 1267 to 1290, the year of Eison's death. And from 1278, Saidaiji began to receive donations of estates, including several from Retired Emperor Kameyama in 1288. Acceptance of estates from ruling elites suggests a changed stance from that in 1262, when Eison rejected such donations from warrior rulers based on the principle of *muen*.

Inoue largely attributes the increase in the frequency and size of the land donations to greater recognition of the Saidaiji order after Eison's participation in state-protecting esoteric rites to repel the threatened and attempted Mongol invasions (primarily from 1268 to 1281). He also credits the order's propagation of the popular Mantra of Light (*kōmyō shingon* 光明真言) practice, which began in 1264 (Inoue 1971, 94–95). Notably, both practices underscore Eison's role as an esoteric master.¹⁵ Inoue's interpretation suggests that Eison's increasing renown as an esoteric master played a strong role in the order receiving larger donations. However, the *Saidaiji den'en mokuroku* and other records also clarify that small gifts from local donors do not paint the whole picture of the Saidaiji order's development, even in the mid-1260s, just after Eison displayed his *muen* stance toward donations from warrior leaders. I suggest that the success of the Saidaiji order owes much to steadily increasing political connections from 1259 through the end of the thirteenth century, rather than the institutional detachment invoked in the *muen* ideal (or even a *sudden* shift in Eison's renown in connection with the Mongol threat).

14 Inoue Mitsusada points out that during this time “contributions of 4 to 5 *tan* were exceptional with the overwhelming majority donating about one *tan* of land” (Inoue 1971, 82); one *tan* 段 equals approximately 0.245 acre. For the original text, see *Saidaiji den'en mokuroku*, in Takeuchi 1971–97, 26:231–60 (doc. 19893). See also Goodwin 1994, 119.

15 On the connections between Eison's status as an esoteric master and his participation in rites to repel the Mongol threat, see also my account of his three pilgrimages to Ise in the Introduction.

In short, there is a gap between muen as an ideal and elite patronage as a necessity for temple restoration projects and other activities of the Saidaiji order. This gap is underscored by aspects of the donations for the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image that are elided by the order's rhetoric on muen and on the fundraising process for the statue. Eison's trip to Kantō in 1262 was on behalf of Tokiyori, and when Eison returned to Saidaiji, Tokiyori wrote him a letter, preserved in Eison's autobiography, expressing joy over his safe return and donating scriptures and pigment. Eison's own addendum to the letter notes that the pigment was for the lion statue on which the Mañjuśrī figure was to sit.¹⁶ Although Eison was willing to accept the pigment gift for the Mañjuśrī statue, he had invoked the concept of "muen" to refuse the Hōjō leaders' offer of an estate just a few months earlier.

Granted, there are varying levels of donation, and to accept the gift for the lion statue is of a different order than accepting an estate. Eison's reported decision to reject the estate commendation reflects not only Buddhist ideals of purity but political pragmatism: he likely was wary of the obligations accepting estates would entail. As Jeffrey Mass succinctly puts the issue, "when aristocrats made donations to temples and shrines, they were targeting institutions with which they hoped to strike, or deepen, special arrangements" (1997, 24). Mass's conclusion here is as relevant to large donations from warrior elites like the Hōjō rulers as it is to courtier aristocrats; such lay elites maintained a great degree of control over the estates they "donated." Yet, as the *Saidaiji den'en mokuroku* shows, the Saidaiji order's refusal of estates did not persist, even under Eison's management.

Although the level of donation and corresponding obligation was different, the donation for the Mañjuśrī lion statue and the accompanying letter still provide concrete evidence for the *interdependence* of Eison and the Kamakura government just when Eison was ostensibly asserting his *independence*. In the same letter donating the pigment, Tokiyori expresses surprise that the retired emperor had not yet visited Eison. Such a visit is not likely something that Tokiyori would have simply assumed. His mention of the expected visit suggests that there were already discussions between the retired emperor's office

16 See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1262/11/8 (NKBK 1977, 30). The letter offers a one-hundred scroll set of the *Shūkyōroku* 宗鏡錄 (Ch. *Zongjing lu*; T 2016) as well as *konjō* 紺青 (deep blue) and *rokushō* 綠青 (verdigris) pigments in the amount of five hundred *ryō* 両 each (one *ryō* equals about 37.5 grams). In addition to the *Gakushōki*, the full text of the letter can be found in the *Kamakura ibun* (Takeuchi 1971–97, 12:234 [doc. 8880]).

and the warrior leaders about such a visit by late 1262.¹⁷ Eison's strengthening political connections—with both sides of the dual polity—are already in evidence at this point, when he was in the midst of the Hannyaji restoration and the construction of the Mañjuśrī statue to which he gives so much attention in his autobiography.

Tokiyori's gift for the lion statue thus sheds light on the rhetorical nature of the descriptions of the contributions for the Hannyaji restoration and the Mañjuśrī image. Eison's first reference to fundraising for the Hannyaji restoration appears in the *Gakushōki* entry for 1267/7/28, after his description of the eye-opening rites for the statue. He notes that, after the Mañjuśrī image was initially housed in Hannyaji in the Kōchō 弘長 era (1261–64), “although not many years had passed, two or three sponsors *spontaneously* came forth, and the buddha hall, monastic lodgings, bell tower, and dining hall were constructed and added.” Eison further notes that “the construction of the numerous buildings *was accomplished naturally, without seeking it*” and attributes the success of the restoration to the match between Mañjuśrī's expedient means and the uncontrived good intentions of the shōnin, Ryōe, who had vowed to restore the temple.¹⁸ Eison's passage shows a characteristic rhetorical emphasis on spontaneous contributions. He suggests that the increased level of donations after the housing of the image in Hannyaji in the Kōchō era—the same era in which he took the trip to Kantō and back—was a natural development. By crediting the donors' own initiatives, and Mañjuśrī's unseen help, he distinguishes the contributions from a deliberate fundraising campaign (kanjin) in which monks would directly appeal to donors for contributions.

Donations for the Mañjuśrī statue may not have been directly solicited, but Tokiyori was only one of various elites who got the word and contributed to the “adornments” that played a crucial role in bringing the statue to life. In fact, the dedication of the statue itself in 1267 enlisted the help of elites and provided an opportunity for Eison to secure further donations and patronage. In this case, however, the elites were monks. In his autobiography, after his description of the 1267 eye-opening ceremony and conclusion of the chanting shifts for the three days and nights' five-syllable Mañjuśrī spell, Eison reports that “the top-ranking Kōfukuji monks on down proffered the material offerings” and arranged them before the Mañjuśrī image. As is often Eison's style in the autobiography, he mentions the Kōfukuji monks laconically. Their role in the ceremony, however, indicates the participation of some of the most

17 On this point, see also Sawa 1990, 61; Sawa suggests that the passage points to behind-the-scenes maneuvering of the Hōjō family in linking Eison and the retired emperor.

18 NKBK 1977, 33; emphasis mine.

socially elite monks in Japan at the time. Kōfukuji was one of Nara's two most politically powerful temples, alongside Tōdaiji, and was a leading landholder for Yamato Province. The presence of top-ranking Kōfukuji monks thus helps clarify the audience for the eye-opening ceremonies and related rites; such monks themselves could be substantial donors.

Eison's ensuing comments shed further light on the audience—suggesting that both monastics and laypeople may have been present—when he remarks on rumors of a miraculous manifestation that took place during the assembly:

For today's rite, it was said that those from the inner group [monastic] and the outer group [lay] all believed that auspicious petals fell from the sky during the dharma-assembly. However, although there were many rumors about this, the truth has not been verified. Such a matter appears and disappears in accordance with one's capacity; whether one believes it or rejects it depends on the person. There is no need to forcibly promulgate this. (NKBK 1977, 33)

Eison insists that there is no need to promulgate such rumors of miraculous events; however, his inclusion of this account serves a similar purpose to accounts in his writings of spontaneous relic manifestations: they help document and construct the image of Eison himself as a “living bodhisattva” with numinous powers. Eison's accounts suggest that his ritual performances lead to the perception of miraculous events, and he is at once self-effacing and self-promoting in his mention of the rumored miracle. Moreover, placing this account at the end of his dedication of the “living Mañjuśrī” links Mañjuśrī's miraculous image with his own. Whether out of devotion to Mañjuśrī or to Eison himself, such an image would help attract further support from laypeople and monastics alike.

Eison follows his account by noting that “on 7/28, the procedures for the concluding prayers were carried out in the customary manner . . . On this day, the material offerings were distributed, and the Buddhist artisans, painters, and other craftsmen were compensated” (NKBK 1977, 33). After the report of the rumored miracle, such remarks may seem quotidian. They remind us, however, that material donations received in connection with the dedication of the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī image help support the order's broader activities. Artisans forging the icons that played such key roles in their temple restoration projects needed to be compensated, and there were further icons, halls, and temples to be restored and maintained. And narratively, the successful restoration of Hanniyaji itself is what all the passages on the construction of the Mañjuśrī image lead to in Eison's autobiography; he concludes his entries for 1267 by

summarizing Hannyaji's restoration and his appointment of Shinkū as the first Saidaiji order elder for the restored temple.

In another *Gakushōki* passage a little over a year later, Eison highlights the lack of a direct fundraising campaign for the Mañjuśrī statue itself, but he also shows that he soon used the completed statue to help launch such a campaign. In his 1268 proposal to his fellow monks for the non-discriminatory assembly on behalf of the “living Mañjuśrī” to be held at Hannyaji in 1269, Eison comments on the differing fundraising processes for the construction of the statue and for the 1269 offering ceremony:

The reason for constructing this statue was so that it could serve as the main deity for all sentient beings. Ordinarily, one would appeal (kanjin) to the noble and the base and use the funds from their donations to obtain the materials for the construction. However, the city and the countryside were filled with fundraising appeals to supporters (*chishiki* 知識). Because these were no longer exceptional, the people all considered them a routine affair and they would not necessarily arouse deep faith. Accordingly, we did not spread the word of a fundraising appeal and merely relied on spontaneous contributions. At the offering-ceremony stage, however, we vowed from the start that we should appeal widely among the ten directions and allow many to form small karmic bonds. After a discussion conveying these general sentiments, all the dharma-colleagues and monks united their efforts, contacted those they were connected to, and appealed to intimates and strangers alike.¹⁹

Eison makes a point of noting that the Mañjuśrī *statue* was built without a fundraising campaign (kanjin). In this context, Goodwin calls attention to the reaction against coercive fundraising campaigns in which special taxes and tolls were levied under the name kanjin (1994, 107–17). She writes:

Such methods gave kanjin a bad name and seem to have generated efforts to distinguish voluntary from coercive campaigns. Increasingly in the middle and late Kamakura period, voluntary efforts were designated as such by terms such as “half-penny, scrap of wood” kanjin (114).

19 *Gakushōki* entry for 1268/9 (NKBK 1977, 34). The character that I have translated as “monks” in the final sentence is rendered as *zoku* 俗 (laypeople) in NKBK 1977, 34, but corrected to *ryo* 侶 (monks) in Hosokawa 1999, 289 and 361. For an alternative, partial translation of Eison's remarks here—omitting the significant passages on the fundraising campaign for the 1269 ceremony—see Goodwin 1994, 119.

Thus, noting that the land was overwhelmed with fundraising solicitors, Eison comments on his decision to instead rely on “spontaneous contributions.” Yet as Goodwin also observes, “he nevertheless got the word out somehow”; the statue and its dedication were a success. Goodwin’s analysis is insightful, but caveats are in order.

Eison did conduct a fundraising campaign for the 1269 Mañjuśrī offering ceremony, which he openly acknowledges in the same passage describing his reluctance to do so for the construction of the statue itself. Goodwin suggests that “the spontaneous donations [for the Mañjuśrī statue] probably came from the same local holders who had been sustaining Saidaiji itself with gifts of small plots of land” (119). Although this may be correct, the emphasis on humble, spontaneous contributions in descriptions of the donations even for the Mañjuśrī statue neglects the fact that Tokiyori was one of those who “got the word.” Significantly, Tokiyori’s contribution comes toward the start of the era during which, in Eison’s words, “two or three sponsors spontaneously came forth” to aid the Hanniyaji restoration. Whether Tokiyori’s own contribution reflected or spurred the appearance of such sponsors, the patronage of those with greater means and political connections is implicit.

That the warrior government and other elites had stakes in the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī image and temple restoration efforts is likely, considering the earlier pattern of Mañjuśrī assemblies and hinin offering ceremonies sponsored by the warrior government. As Goodwin (1994, 120) and other scholars have pointed out, hinin were considered a potential threat to public order, and the warrior government was charged with maintaining that order. With Hanniyaji located next to the largest hinin community in Yamato, and the Saidaiji order involved with hinin almost from its inception, both warrior and courtier elites turned to Eison, Shinkū, and their dharma-colleagues as intermediaries and moderating influences for the control of hinin.

Glimpses of Eison having a supervisory relationship to hinin are evident in the 1269 non-discriminatory assembly for the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī, when he had the invited hinin prepare the land for the ceremony. Eison does not mention any specific payment to entice them to do so (although this does not rule out the possibility that he did provide such a payment). But the hinin did receive material offerings as part of the ceremonies. We can thus consider Eison to have “employed” the hinin for their labor, whether he promised them explicit payment beforehand or compensated them through a share in the offerings for the ceremonies. Such an exchange of labor and compensation places Eison in a supervisory relationship to the hinin in this context.

Some scholars have also viewed Eison’s solicitation of name rosters from the hinin leaders before the 1269 ceremony as evidence of the control he exercised

over the hinin. Because such rosters played a strong role in the karmic bond-forming (*kechien*) activities of the Saidaiji order, however, this act is more ambiguous. On one hand, the act could be seen as a form of census-taking that is hard to distinguish from exertions of control over the members populating that census. On the other, it was typical for Eison's group to compile rosters of contributors to the rites and constructions they sponsored, thereby helping establish karmic affinity between the contributors and the deities invoked in the rites and constructions. Viewed in this latter light, Eison's solicitation of the name rosters of hinin from the various hinin communities that participated in the 1269 Mañjuśrī ceremony is simply consistent with the Saidaiji order's use of rosters more broadly.

Eison's role as an authority figure over hinin is clearer, however, in hinin relief activities when Mañjuśrī is *not* specifically invoked; *Gakushōki* entries for 1275 and 1282 show Eison making offerings to hinin while soliciting pledges (*kishōmon* 起請文) from their leaders regulating their begging practices and other activities.²⁰ Whether this exchange reflects a qualitative difference from offering ceremonies for hinin that Eison led as part of Mañjuśrī assemblies, or a change over time in his relationship to hinin, is difficult to say; the 1275 and 1282 offering ceremonies were later than the Mañjuśrī assemblies in the 1240s and 1260s when, apart from the leveling of the land for the 1269 ceremony, evidence for Eison having a supervisory or controlling relationship to hinin is more implicit than explicit.

Issues of Eison's control over hinin notwithstanding, it remains significant that his writings on the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī image strove to align the order with outcasts and contributions from a wide social range of followers. Shinkū, Eison's successor in both the leadership of the Hanniyaji restoration and the Saidaiji order itself, would closely echo the founder in this regard. Thus for further insight into how these Saidaiji order leaders framed the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī in the context of social support from outcasts to rulers, let us turn to Shinkū's 1287 votive text dedicating attendant statues and its iconographic context. We will see that Shinkū strikes similar notes to his teacher even while

20 For the references to hinin leveling the land and Eison's solicitation of hinin rosters for the 1269 ceremony, see the *Gakushōki* entry for 1269/3/5 (NKVK 1977, 34). For the later pledges from hinin leaders, see the entries for 1275/8/27 and 1282/10/22 (41–43, 52–53). Among secondary sources, see Wajima 1959, 77–79; Matsuo 1998a, 180–85; and Groner 2001, 141–42. On Saidaiji order control of hinin more broadly, see Yoshida 1983, 405–9; Matsuo 1980 and 1998a, 159–209; Hosokawa 1994, 132–38, 145–49, 152–64; Niunoya 1986, 87–105; and Ōishi 1987.

adding his own contributions to the material and symbolic construction of the “living Mañjuśrī.”

Shinkū's 1287 Votive Text and the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī Attendant Statues

Shinkū wrote the *Hannyaji Uten'ō Zenzai-dōji zō zōryū ganmon* 般若寺宇填王善哉童子像造立願文 on 1287/4/24 to dedicate statues of the Buddhist king Uten'ō and the youth Zenzai-dōji (Sk. Sudhana) for Hannyaji.²¹ With the help of two Kōfukuji monks, Shinkū had these statues built as attendant figures for the Mañjuśrī image commissioned by Eison. Despite the significance of the Mañjuśrī statue to Hannyaji, as Shinkū describes in his votive text, the lion-riding Mañjuśrī figure had no attending figures for years. To correct this, he sought to have the statues of Uten'ō and Zenzai-dōji built. Such pairing of a main figure with attendants was common for many deity images. However, the particular figures completed in 1287, and the pentad configuration they became part of, give us insight into both iconographic contexts specific to Mañjuśrī and the broader imaginaire informing Shinkū's dedication of the statues.

Iconography and Social Positioning

The identification of Uten'ō, who serves as a groom for Mañjuśrī's lion, in images of Mañjuśrī with attendants is ambiguous, because some sources identify the groom as the King of Khotan and others as King Udayana.²² In either case, however, sources do identify the figure as a king and as part of Mañjuśrī's retinue on Mt. Wutai. And the very existence of this confusion makes it plausible that Shinkū or others coming into contact with the Uten'ō statue would have associated it with legends of Udayana. It is thus noteworthy that Udayana was renowned as a king devoted to Buddhism and healed by a statue of Śākyamuni.

The best-known legend of Udayana in Japan relates that when the Buddha went to Tōriten heaven (Sk. Trāyastriṃśa) for three months to preach the dharma for his mother, the king grew sick with worry. His ministers therefore

21 Uten'ō (宇填王 in Shinkū's text) can alternatively be read as Utennō or Udenñō.

22 See the discussions in Kaneko 1992, 46–47, and Wu 2002, 87–88, 105–8, 130. As Wu points out (130), the characters that Shinkū uses do not quite conform to standard Sino-Japanese renderings for either the King of Khotan (于闐王) or King Udayana (優填王), either of which could be read as Uten'ō, Utennō, or Udenñō.

had a statue of the Buddha made, which cured the king. Japanese historical records indicate that the Tōdaiji monk Chōnen 喬然 (938–1016) had a copy of the Udayana Śākyamuni made in China in 985, which he brought to Japan in 986. The statue now resides in Seiryōji 清涼寺 in Kyoto. According to Japanese legend, however, the original and the copy Chōnen had made were switched at the last moment, and the Seiryōji Śākyamuni is the one originally commissioned by Udayana. The Seiryōji Śākyamuni had a strong influence on the image-making activities of the Saidaiji order, as the order commissioned various copies, including Saidaiji's main image.²³

The legends associated with Udayana thus promote within the Saidaiji order and beyond an imaginative realm in which Buddhist statues are not static images but living, vibrant forces, capable of healing—or of disciplining, as we will see in Shinkū's text. Moreover, whether the Hannyaji Uten'ō statue is understood as the King of Khotan or as King Udayana, the figure reminds us that this same imaginative realm is part of a world where the patronage of rulers matters very much to Buddhism in symbolic, economic, and political terms. Building and dedicating a statue of a king that is an *attendant* to a bodhisattva celebrates a Buddhist notion of kingship in which the king's authority is ultimately under that of Buddhism and not the other way around. It is a political statement. At the same time, since the bodhisattva represents boundless wisdom and compassion, promoting the close connection between the king and the bodhisattva does not necessarily diminish the stature of rulers. The *Supreme Kings Sutra* that Eison had inserted into the Mañjuśrī figure serves a similar function.²⁴ Simultaneously rendering provisional the authority of kingship while promoting kingship in cosmic terms is one way to solicit continuing financial and political patronage of Buddhism.

The second figure that Shinkū dedicated, Zenzai-dōji, is another attendant of Mañjuśrī's who is considered part of the Mt. Wutai retinue. Zenzai-dōji is the name of the youth in the *Flower Garland Sutra* who was guided on the Buddhist path by fifty-three spiritual friends (also rendered as fifty-four or fifty-five). Zenzai is closely linked to Mañjuśrī because Mañjuśrī is the only teacher of his to appear twice, as he starts Zenzai on his journey and appears again in the penultimate fifty-third stage of the journey. More generally, it is noteworthy that even these two figures, Uten'ō and Zenzai, invoke broad-ranging social

23 On the Seiryōji Śākyamuni image and its replication in the Saidaiji order, see McCallum 1996 and Matsuo 1996, 84–85.

24 For concise comments on the *Supreme Kings Sutra* and its connections with Buddhist notions of kingship, see Orzech 1998, 116–17.

connections to Mañjuśrī, suggesting that the bodhisattva's attendants—and hence devotees—range from a mature king to a mere youth.

The full “Mt. Wutai” pentad in early medieval Japan suggests the broad social range of Mañjuśrī's attendants more clearly. The typical configuration includes a relatively humble-looking old man and the Indian monk Buddhapālita. The old man and Buddhapālita were not yet added to the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image by the time of Shinkū's votive text, but Hannyaji holds two statue remnants widely believed by art historians and other scholars to have been part of the attendant figures for this image, Utenō's sword and the old man's left hand (see Figure 5).²⁵ In addition, the extant Saidaiji Mañjuśrī pentad, dedicated in 1302 for the thirteenth anniversary of Eison's death, was modeled after the Hannyaji image.²⁶ Thus the consensus opinion—with which I concur—is that the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image was completed in the full pentad configuration sometime after Shinkū's 1287 votive text. The old man in this pentad configuration most likely represents Mañjuśrī manifesting before Buddhapālita on Wutai, in light of the many narrative and visual depictions of their encounter by this time (see Chapter 2). As with other trans-border instantiations of the Mt. Wutai Mañjuśrī cult, part of what the Hannyaji iconography does is to localize and render more concrete the power of Mañjuśrī's pure land in this world. But even apart from the more specific identifications, as with the king and the youth in the pentad, the inclusion of an apparently humble old man and a monk is significant because it extends the social range of attendants in the iconography.

Shinkū's Narrative

Shinkū begins his dedication of the attendant statues by describing Eison's intentions in constructing the original Mañjuśrī figure. He does so in a manner that similarly highlights the social range of devotees forging karmic connections with Mañjuśrī. Shinkū establishes the karmic connections through their specific contributions to the construction of Hannyaji's living Mañjuśrī. He first

25 See also the color images in Sugiura et al. 1979, plates 35 and 36, and the analysis of the remnants on pp. 135–36.

26 The tremendous scale of the original Hannyaji image can be gleaned from comparing the size of one of these fragments with the figures for the Saidaiji pentad. The lion-riding Mañjuśrī figure in the Saidaiji pentad stands (or sits, as it were) 82.5 centimeters tall, while the attendant figures include an 87.0-centimeter Zenzai-dōji image, a 119.6-centimeter Utenō, a 104.8-centimeter Buddhapālita, and a 106.0-centimeter old man. By comparison, the remnant of the old man's hand alone from the Hannyaji image measures 32.4 centimeters.



FIGURE 5 Sword from Utenō Statue and Left Hand from Saishō Rōjin Statue (believed to be remnants from attendant figures to the 1267 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue), held by Hannyaji.

COURTESY OF HANNYAJI, NARA. IMAGES REPRODUCED FROM KOJI JUNREI NARA 5: HANNYAJI (KYOTO: TANKŌSHA, 1979)

notes Eison's "peerless great vow," taken "to benefit wicked sentient beings and to revive the buddha-dharma of various temples."²⁷ He then turns to a description of the humble contributions of the faithful to the original Mañjuśrī figure:

Monastic and lay, men and women, spontaneously awakened faith and donated a single cloth or bowl, contributed a piece of paper or half a penny. After many years gathering such pure resources, the statue was constructed.

Here we see an example of the "half-penny, scrap of wood" language used increasingly from the latter half of the thirteenth century to distinguish voluntary from coercive kanjin campaigns (Goodwin 1994, 113–14). We also find in Shinkū's account a clear echo of his teacher in the emphasis on spontaneous, humble donations as well as the contributions of a wide range of followers.

For example, after his description of the contributions, Shinkū—like Eison before him for the 1267 and 1269 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī assemblies—singles out the "artisans of various disciplines, from the woodcutters who gathered the wood to the Buddhist craftsmen who applied the paint." Again like Eison, Shinkū highlights the fact that the workers kept the eight precepts for extended periods during the construction. Shinkū then briefly mentions the various sutras and other items placed inside the statue before concluding his description of Eison's intentions by celebrating Mañjuśrī's "living body": "In accordance with such sincere intentions, much merit was gathered and thus the Mañjuśrī statue is not just a wooden image. Rather, we should call it the 'living body' [of the bodhisattva]." Shinkū's opening remarks show strong parallels with Eison's 1267 and 1269 votive texts in suggesting that the cumulative merit of a broad range of followers was built into the statue, helping transform it into a living icon.

Shinkū follows these opening remarks with a more original contribution to the mythos of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī when he describes specific miracles associated with the living Mañjuśrī:

One time, Mañjuśrī appeared as a hinin and came to a birthing hut. Another time, he manifested in his actual form and applied moxa to a sick person. On another occasion, he turned into a giant leper and thrashed

²⁷ This translation and all citations in this chapter from Shinkū's document are based on the text in Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256–57 (doc. 16245), with reference to Hosokawa 1987, 58–59. For my complete translation and annotations, see the Documents section.

the temple's lazy monks. Moreover, the number of times he manifested in dreams and the like was countless. (Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256)

Within the narrative flow, Shinkū cites these miracles to segue from the intentions for the original Mañjuśrī statue to a discussion of the intentions for the new statues. He first laments that, despite the miraculous nature of the Mañjuśrī image and the bodhisattva it embodied, the figure had no attendants. He compares and contrasts the lion-riding Mañjuśrī figure appearing before sentient beings to nobility going out in public in horse-drawn carriages: such nobility would never be found riding alone, without attendants, thus why should Mañjuśrī, “Mother of Awakening for the three times, the teacher of the buddhas”? Shinkū here makes a real-world comparison between Mañjuśrī as a noble figure and customs even for “worldly” nobility in his time; however, the inferior status of worldly nobility to such Buddhist nobility, as with the depiction of a king as one of the attendants to Mañjuśrī, is clear.

Further underscoring Mañjuśrī's grandeur, and now making the Mt. Wutai inspiration explicit, Shinkū notes that “the ten thousand bodhisattvas of Mt. Clear-and-Cool [Mt. Wutai] are his retinue,” yet “whenever disciples visited his hall, there was [] not a single attendant.²⁸ Although many years passed, nothing could be done” (256). The Mañjuśrī figure's unaccompanied status changed thanks to the intervention of two Kōfukuji monks, identified by Shinkū as Rin'ei-tokugō 琳英得業 (d.u.) and Eishun-sōzu 英春僧都 (d.u.). Rin'ei's and Eishun's titles suggest that they were relatively elite Kōfukuji scholar-monks; thus, when Shinkū indicates that Eishun constructed the Uten'ō statue and Rin'ei the Zenzai-dōji figure, he may mean that they were the ones who directly commissioned the construction. The collective sponsorship of the constructions was both a visible and visionary success, as Shinkū then records that “when these two plain wood figures were brought together, there was more than one dream oracle. Delightfully, they must have met the Great Sage's expectations” (256). The remark is significant because Shinkū suggests that Mañjuśrī, the Great Sage himself, expressed his approval of the completed attendant figures through dream-signs—and thus that it was not just the original Mañjuśrī figure that gave rise to wondrous occurrences. Such invocation of dream-signs is another significant part of the legitimizing rhetorical strategies that Shinkū, Eison, and their fellow Saidaiji order monks employ, as indicated by the earlier account of Eison's acceptance of the 1259 invitation to Hachimangū and many other records (see Chapter 5).

28 Before the “not” there is an illegible character, indicated by [] in my translation.

Shinkū concludes the text by indicating that sixteen Hannyaaji monks copied sixteen scrolls of the “Entering the Dharma World” chapter of the sixty-fascicle *Flower Garland Sutra*. They then petitioned the renowned Kegon scholar Gyōnen 凝然 (1240–1321), who was affiliated with the cloister for Tōdaiji’s precepts platform (Kaidan’in). On 1287/4/23, Gyōnen performed the sutra explication and eulogy. On the same day, they inserted the copied scrolls into the Zenzai-dōji figure. Then, “to establish karmic bonds for the future,” they inserted a roster of the monks from Hannyaaji and the Kaidan’in who attended the 4/23 ceremony (256). The involvement in these ceremonies of monks from both Kōfukuji and Tōdaiji, Nara’s two most powerful temples, represents another parallel with the Mañjuśrī assemblies that Eison led in 1267 and 1269.

There are many interesting details in this brief document, including the ritual cooperation among major temples that, in other circumstances, often competed for elite patronage and the resources accompanying that patronage. But for understanding how Shinkū amplifies the association of the living Mañjuśrī with those at the opposite pole of social hierarchies in his day—outcasts—the most provocative passages are the miracles Shinkū describes. These passages are striking in their appropriation and reversal of discriminatory associations with hinin, representing a means by which Shinkū further aligns the Saidaiji order with concern for people lacking social status. Birthing huts, such as Shinkū refers to in his account of Mañjuśrī manifesting as a hinin, constituted a potentially polluting presence, and later records show that outcasts were employed to remove placentas from the huts and bury them.²⁹ Employing outcasts to remove polluting objects was common in Shinkū’s time but problematic because beliefs in contact pollution contributed to views of the outcasts handling such objects as polluted. Here, however, Shinkū portrays Mañjuśrī himself manifesting as a hinin at a birthing hut, reminding his audience that the hinin around Hannyaaji also incarnate the “living body” of Mañjuśrī. Shinkū’s remark further suggests that the potentially polluting birthing hut is ritually protected by the appearance of the hinin-Mañjuśrī. Moreover, while lepers were often reviled, Shinkū’s account of the manifestation of the leper-Mañjuśrī thrashing the temple’s lazy monks portrays the leper-Mañjuśrī as a purifying force within his own monastic community. Even when, according

29 Hosokawa suggests that the reference to Mañjuśrī’s visit to the birthing hut as an outcast may indicate that the Muromachi-period practice of having outcasts called *kawaramono* (riverbed dwellers) remove and bury the placenta on a nearby mountain was already a function of hinin by the time of Shinkū’s text (Hosokawa 1987, 60). On changing perceptions of birthing huts and their “polluted” status over time, see Tonomura 2007.

to Shinkū's text, Mañjuśrī appears in his "actual form" (rather than as an outcast) and treats a sick person, the contact with a potentially polluting illness is transformed into the deed of a bodhisattva, as Goodwin aptly points out (1994, 126). Simultaneously, Shinkū's miracle stories promote the Saidaiji order's own protection from pollution as a strict, precepts-keeping monastic group linked to Mañjuśrī and his purifying power.

Conclusions

Collectively, the iconographic arrangement of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue with attendant statues (especially in its full pentad format), Shinkū's depiction of the fundraising for the statue, and his miracle stories present the Saidaiji order's ideal image of their monastic community and its relationship with society from the outcast to the elite. The rhetoric of *muen* is in full force in Shinkū's narrative: when he stresses contributions of "a single cloth or bowl, a piece of paper or half a penny" and Mañjuśrī's manifestations as a *hinin*, he reinforces a portrait of Saidaiji order monks as not discriminating between "the high and the low" and free from cumbersome political ties. But the real world is messy, and this idealizing rhetoric elides the contributions of elites such as Tokiyori to the original Mañjuśrī figure. Tokiyori had been at the pinnacle of power in the warrior government and was much closer to a king than to a "woodcutter" when he made his 1262 contribution. Both Shinkū's votive text and Eison's writings on the dedication of the Mañjuśrī figure show that elite monks from Kōfukuji also helped with the promotion of the Mañjuśrī statue and its attendant figures.³⁰ This temple exercised great control over the land of Yamato at the time and was arguably the leading power in that area. The success of the Hannyaji restoration, and the construction of the Mañjuśrī and attendant figures as the restored temple's main icon, cannot be divorced from the patronage of ruling elites, however much the movement's rhetoric and involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult celebrates egalitarian ideals.

I do not doubt that the ideal of avoiding worldly fame and wealth was critical to Eison and Shinkū's mission in promoting the Hannyaji restoration amid the group's other activities. I simply wish to emphasize that the *muen* status invoked by or ascribed to Eison and his disciples is indeed a form of expedient means, as Goodwin suggests. Yet that is to say that the *claim* of *muen* is an expedient means to promote their fidelity to Ritsu ideals of shunning "impure

30 See the *Gakushōki* entries for 1267/4/11 and 7/25 (NKBK 1977, 31 and 33); Hosokawa 1987, 56–58.

resources” and the direct solicitation of patronage by rulers or other lay elites. However, for any monk such as Eison or Shinkū involved in restoring temples and constructing such tremendous statues as the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī, truly unattached status is a polite fiction.

The very need for such a polite fiction is intimately connected to the nature of Eison’s movement. The notion of *muen* is but one part of a rhetorical expedient means through which Eison and his disciples strive to reconcile their dual status as precepts-keeping “reclusive monks” and as ritual masters with ever-increasing support from powerful patrons. Whether the issue is the Hōjō leaders’ invitation to Eison to travel to Kantō, offers by elites to commend estates or confer high-ranking temple appointments, or the donations for the Mañjuśrī image and the Hannyaji restoration, there is a recurring motif in Saidaiji order portrayals of Eison’s activities in particular: significant donations and politically charged invitations and appointments are rarely sought, repeatedly refused, but usually accepted in the end. The “expedient means” compromise of *muen* in temple promotion, and of the rhetoric of reluctance more broadly, is between the ideal of monastic purity and institutional independence and the inevitable necessity of political patronage and corresponding obligation.

Exoteric-Esoteric Lineage Construction and Mañjuśrī: Dream-Visions in Eison’s and Myōe’s Lineages

Shinkū’s 1287 votive text dedicating two attendant figures for the Hannyaaji Mañjuśrī statue, explored in the previous chapter, sheds light on his inheritance of Eison’s rhetorical strategies toward fundraising and patronage. It is also revealing, however, as a narrative reinforcing the power of Shinkū’s exoteric-esoteric lineage and his place in it, using dream-visions of Mañjuśrī as part of the strategy of legitimization.¹ Shinkū begins the text by referring to Eison and the construction of the original Hannyaaji Mañjuśrī figure and the wondrous events that happened after completing that first statue, which included Mañjuśrī manifesting himself “in dreams and the like.” Shinkū then moves to a description of the construction of the new statues and the “auspicious dreams” that occurred when they were joined with the Mañjuśrī figure, before mentioning the ceremony for which his document was composed. This narrative construction establishes a clear parallel between 1) Eison, the original Mañjuśrī figure, and the ceremonies dedicating that image and 2) Shinkū, the attendant figures, and the ceremony dedicating them. The significance of the latter set is heightened by the miracles associated with the former, which helps boost Shinkū’s standing.

The suggestion here of links between Mañjuśrī, the Hannyaaji restoration, and Shinkū’s elevated standing in the Saidaiji order is reinforced by three factors. First is reference in the *Gakushōki* to Shinkū’s appointment to Hannyaaji immediately following the description of the 1267 eye-opening ceremonies for the Mañjuśrī statue. Second is *Eison’s Statement of Transmission to Shinkū* (hereafter *Eison’s Statement*) reporting Eison’s reception of an esoteric precepts transmission directly from Mañjuśrī in a dream-vision and his supposed

1 Medieval Japanese texts do not make the same distinction between visions perceived while awake or asleep that modern Western cultures tend to. For example, Myōe’s renowned *Dream Diary* (*Yume no ki* 夢記) records both meditative visions and dream-visions or signs freely under the rubric of *yume*. Some Buddhist scriptures do suggest a hierarchical arrangement in which visions perceived while awake are evaluated higher, but that distinction is not as significant here as the broader grouping of dream-signs and visions. Thus in the discussion that follows, I have grouped both types under the hybrid designation “dream-visions.”

1269 conferral of that transmission to Shinkū alone among his disciples. Third is Shinkū's transition from elder of Hannyaji to Eison's successor as elder of the main temple Saidaiji. These three factors suggest that Eison gave Shinkū pride of place among his disciples in appointing him to head the nearby branch temple Hannyaji and choosing him as the fittest recipient for the esoteric transmission Eison miraculously received from Mañjuśrī, the very Mother of Buddhas. The reputed 1269 transmission document thus helps create a portrait of the Saidaiji succession in which Eison himself secretly signaled Shinkū as his most appropriate successor, even though he did not explicitly designate such a successor.

Eison typically convened councils of senior monks in his order to make major institutional decisions, based on vinaya principles calling for harmony and consensus within the monastic community. Our explicit Saidaiji order records on Eison and the appointment of his successor suggest that in this important matter too, he deferred the decision to such a council. Unable to decide after Eison's death in 1290, the senior monks turned to Ninshō—leader of the order's development in the eastern region (Kantō)—to make the decision, and Ninshō was the one who explicitly appointed Shinkū. But since the council had collectively turned to Ninshō for this, such an appointment process was consistent with precedents that Eison had set.

Relying on vinaya principles of consensus was one means to designate a successor and was in keeping with Eison's vision of the ideal monastic order. However, such vinaya-based ideals in Eison's activities and the Saidaiji order more broadly coexisted with another, esoteric method of succession that was much more prevalent in the exoteric-esoteric Buddhism of his time: succession through direct, master-to-disciple dharma-transmission. Both esoteric dharma transmission, in which a master designated a particular disciple as the most fit "vessel" to carry on his or her teachings, and esoteric initiatory transmissions that could be conferred to multiple disciples were performed through conferring specific mudras and spells in a consecration ceremony (*kanjō* 灌頂; Sk. *abhiṣeka*). These conferrals included a document attesting the transmission, signed by both master and disciple in colophons. Possession of such documents was one of the most fundamental "proof-tests" of the authenticity of the transmission. When such documents suggested a dharma-transmitting rite to a sole disciple of the master's, the stakes were high. The documents were frequently faked and only retroactively attributed to the master in question by later monastics with varying stakes in the succession.

Eison, Shinkū, and other Saidaiji order leaders were simultaneously Shingon esoteric practitioners and promoters of the vinaya. Thus an analysis of how they constructed their lineage requires attending to practices and principles

reflecting both sides of their exoteric-esoteric specialization. *Eison's Statement* looms large in this analysis because it integrates Eison's esoteric practices and Ritsu (Sk. *vinaya*) but does so in the form of an esoteric transmission and proof document conferred to Shinkū alone. As Eison's sole reported first-generation recipient of the transmission, Shinkū was uniquely qualified to choose the fittest disciple for subsequent conferral. Later records report that Shinkū chose Senyu 宣瑜 (1240–1325), who succeeded him as elder of Saidaiji. Seventeenth-century and later versions of *Eison's Statement* and its colophons suggest that the transmission was passed down in the same fashion from each successive Saidaiji elder. The document, and its reported transmission history, thus forge an image of a direct line of master-to-disciple esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī, to Eison, to the successive Saidaiji elders for centuries.

It would be more convenient for this book if I could simply accept the authenticity of the attribution of "Eison's" *Statement* to Eison himself, as previous scholars citing the document ultimately have.² But while this book is a story, like any narrative is, the genre for my story is bound by certain rules of play. Fundamental to academic rules of play is that I cannot simply accept reported historical evidence out of convenience for my preferred story. The current evidence for *Eison's Statement*, amid broader evidence for his and related movements in the Kamakura period, recommends skepticism when it comes to the attribution of the document to Eison—and thus his conferral of the document and transmission to Shinkū.

I maintain, however, that deeper questioning of the provenance of *Eison's Statement*, its contents, and closely related texts will help us better understand exoteric-esoteric lineage construction, not only in Eison's movement but also in that of Myōe (1173–1232), who was affiliated with both Shingon and Kegon lineages. In particular, the document reveals many similarities to fourteenth-century and later records of a direct esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe to Myōe's disciples. Comparing our records of the Saidaiji order transmission with those for the Myōe-lineage transmission, we will see how both sets of records use dream-visions of Mañjuśrī to legitimize varied syntheses of exoteric-esoteric Buddhism and the precepts and thus help construct unique exoteric-esoteric lineages.

² See Kaneda 2006, 68–71 (originally written in 1943), and 90–91 (originally written in 1957); Kamikawa 1991, 286–87; Matsuo 1998b, 9; Oishio 1998, 380–84; Wu 2002, 245–46; and Saeki 2005, 280–86. Oishio, Wu, and Saeki briefly discuss doubts on the provenance of *Eison's Statement*, but as with the other scholars cited here, they ultimately treat the text as accurately attributed to Eison.

Provenance and Contents of *Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*

Eison's Statement is an esoteric transmission document, but in broader terms the document is an example of a *shōgyō* 聖教, or “sacred work.” In medieval and early modern Japan, *shōgyō* referred to esoteric and exoteric texts copied or edited from works produced by Japanese monks (as opposed to by their continental Asian counterparts), including ritual texts as well as scriptural commentaries and excerpts.³ Through colophons, scholar-monks such as those in the Saidaiji order attested their access to the texts as well as an authoritative line of the text's transmission and the teachings it contained. Thus the colophons, as much as the contents of the “original” text, were essential to the construction of exoteric and esoteric lineages in medieval and early modern Japan. Our investigation of *Eison's Statement* properly begins with the early modern records in which the text has been preserved and the testimony provided by the dates of those copies and their colophons.

The standard source for *Eison's Statement* is the Genroku era (1688–1704) *Nenpu*, the chronological record of Eison's activities compiled by the monk Jikō 慈光 (d.u.). Jikō does not provide colophons for the copy he relied upon when including the transmission document in his record, but the document is also found within a text called *Samaya kanjō* 三摩耶灌頂 in the collected writings of Jiun Sonja 慈雲尊者 (or Onkō 飲光; 1718–1804). Jiun was a renowned Shingon Ritsu master who, like Jikō before him, had a strong stake in movements to revive both components of that dual specialization in early modern Japan. Jiun's version does include three colophons.⁴ The first colophon is attributed to Shinkū, attesting the transmission to the third Saidaiji elder Senyu on 1313/1/25. The second is attributed to Senyu, verifying that transmission, and the third is signed by the forty-eighth elder Kōki 高喜 (1586?–1663) attesting the transmission to Emyō 慧猛 (1614–75). Jiun's recording of the document, however, postdates its appearance in the *Nenpu*, and even the internal evidence for Jiun's version dates the copy he used to the seventeenth century at the earliest, not long before the inclusion of the text in the *Nenpu*.

There is also a surviving “oral transmission” record (*kuketsu* 口訣) that presumes the events described in *Eison's Statement*. The Saidaiji scholar-monk Kaneda Genjō (1887–1973) repeatedly refers to the oral transmission record

3 For a good, concise discussion of *shōgyō* in medieval Japan, see Sango 2012, 241–45. As Sango explains, the term also has a more general meaning as Buddhist scriptures; however, like Sango I use it here in the more specific sense described above.

4 See *Samaya kanjō*, in Hase 1974, 16:348–51.

attributed to Senyu and quotes extensively from the record in a posthumously published compilation (Kaneda 2006, 354–68). Kaneda does not, however, provide any bibliographic details, and all the copies that I can identify in the *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* and the *Nihon kotenseki sōgō mokuroku* database date from the Tokugawa period.⁵ Interestingly, a postscript to the *Samaya kanjō* in Jiun's collected writings refers instead to a *kuketsu* by Shōyu 性瑜 (1229–1307), who is considered to have transmitted the esoteric Saidaiji lineage to Senyu. This may simply have been a mistake for Senyu—but the reference also reminds us of the flexible attribution of authorship for many oral transmission records.

Based on the dates of the actual documents (that is, the dates of the copies themselves, not the events they purport to record), the earliest apparent reference I have found to the events described in *Eison's Statement* is to a copy of a text called the *Myōju daiji* 冥授大事 (Great Matter of the Mysterious Conferral). According to the *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten*, the text is dated 1536 and held by Kōyasan's Hōki'in 宝亀院.⁶ Although I have not had access to this text, it may refer to the purported transmission, because *myōju daiji* is a common name for this event in Shingon Ritsu (based on the use of the term *myōju* to refer to Mañjuśrī's conferral in *Eison's Statement*).

As to the dating of the events recorded in *Eison's Statement*,⁷ Jikō indicates in prefatory comments to the document in the *Nenpu* that during the night of 1245/8/25, Mañjuśrī appeared to Eison and “personally granted him the consecration for the buddha-nature samaya wondrous precepts.” Jikō then adds that “This rite was extremely profound and was not to be recorded by brushstroke. Later, in 1269, it was transmitted for the first time, to Shinkū-daitoku 大徳.” Next, he quotes Eison's reputed transmission document in full.

The words attributed to Eison first state that on that evening in 1245, between three and five a.m., he was engaged in his customary practices during the last watch of the night. After completing the fivefold contemplation for attaining the body of a buddha (*gosō jōshingan* 五相成心觀), his mind suddenly “became deep and still, just like when entering a state of concentration, neither dreaming nor awake.” At that point, a large disk of light appeared in the air and Mañjuśrī manifested, “seated on a jeweled lotus and riding a golden lion.” Eison was filled with faith, and placed his palms together in reverence. The document then records that Mañjuśrī told Eison:

5 See Ono and Maruyama 1974–88, 10:390c, s.vv. “*Myōju kuketsu* 冥授口訣,” “*Myōju daiji kuketsu* 冥授大事口訣”; National Institute of Japanese Literature 2014, s.v. “*Myōju kuketsu*.”

6 See Ono and Maruyama 1974–88, 10:390c.

7 The following summary is based on the printed Chinese text in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 125). For my complete translation and annotations, see the Documents section.

I shall grant you—as a disciple in the latter ages practicing the esoteric dharma, transmitting the precepts, and maintaining Ritsu—the mudras and spells of the consecration for the buddha-nature precepts. Transmit this, and do not let it be lost.

After Mañjuśrī completed the conferral, he disappeared. Eison finished his practices and committed the proceedings of the conferral to memory, “inscribing them only in [his] mind.”

The document next shows Eison indicating that his restoration of the precepts was “entirely for the sake of the samaya precepts,” referring to the specifically esoteric precepts first promoted in Japan by Kūkai, the founder of Shingon. Thus Eison indicates that he was “able to unveil the *Yuga* proceedings and receive the full precepts through self-ordination.”⁸ An interlinear comment notes that this referred to “both the comprehensive and the separate ordinations.” In contrast to these exoteric self-ordination procedures, the new “transmission of the consecration for the precepts-dharma attainment of buddhahood” that Mañjuśrī conferred to Eison was based on “the procedures for receiving ordination from another.” “Eison” here invokes both the esoteric samaya precepts and the full range of exoteric precepts that he received, but he effectively subsumes the exoteric ones under the pursuit of the esoteric ones. To these he now adds receiving directly from Mañjuśrī the transmission of a new esoteric consecration rite for attaining the “buddha-nature precepts,” which he equates to attaining buddhahood *through* the precepts.

The text then shifts to advice for future generations of disciples, with Eison cautioning:

Throughout all future generations, the masters who transmit the precepts should inherit this in succession, from teacher to disciple, and never let it be cut off. If this seal of transmission (*inka* 印可) is allowed to be cut off, my restoration of the Ritsu-dharma will also be cut off. The Ritsu-dharma and the esoteric teachings, within the One Mind, are just like the sun and

8 The “*Yuga* proceedings” (*yuga konma* 瑜伽羯磨) here refer to the practice of self-ordination based on the *Yugashijiron* 瑜伽師地論 (Ch. *Yuqie shidi lun*; T 1579; Sk. *Yogācāra-bhūmi-sāstra*). In the *Gakushōki* entry for fall 1235, Eison writes that he had “decided to use the *Yugaron’s* self-ordination proceedings (*jju konma* 自受羯磨) to attain the great precepts of a bhikṣu” (NKBK 1977, 9).

the moon.⁹ At this time, 1269/8/25, I confer this to Shinkū-daitoku. This should be granted to one person only, not to two. (NKBK 1977, 125)

Here, Eison asserts that precepts masters in his lineage should successively receive and confer this transmission. The reference to granting the transmission to only one person, however, suggests that it should be granted to only one master per generation, marking it as a rarified transmission fit for only the most exalted disciples. Moreover, the endurance of Eison's broader restoration of the vinaya and the precepts is tied to the continued succession of this transmission.

The document closes with the simple signature "Saidaiji Eison," but Jikō contributes to the lineage construction process when he adds the comment: "The bodhisattva [Eison] kept this rite secret and treasured it, as described above—how could his disciple not receive and honor it?" Jikō's comment reaffirms the secret, esoteric nature of the transmission while suggesting that Shinkū did indeed receive it and pass it on faithfully, as Eison instructed.

Despite the late appearance of this document in the *Nenpu* and other Tokugawa-period texts (and perhaps in the *Myōju daiji* from the late Muromachi period), previous scholars have accepted it as authentic. Exploring ways in which the text tallies with significant events in the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult and Eison's activities more broadly will help us understand why. Let us start by examining the reputed timing of both Eison's initial vision of Mañjuśrī and his conferral of the transmission and its authenticating document to Shinkū.

By 1245, when Eison reportedly received the transmission from Mañjuśrī, he was in the midst of his most concentrated period of participation in Mañjuśrī assemblies. As I detailed earlier, he and Ninshō led a series of Mañjuśrī assemblies for hinin communities in Yamato Province from 1240 to 1244. Eison's intense participation in the Mañjuśrī cult in the years around his reputed 1245 vision is also suggested in other Saidaiji order writings. The *Nenpu* records that a Mañjuśrī statue was enshrined at Saidaiji's Shingon Hall immediately upon the hall's completion on 1245/11/25, exactly three months after the recorded esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī (NKBK 1977, 128). This reference must be treated with caution; there is no concrete support elsewhere for a Saidaiji Shingon Hall built then or a Mañjuśrī statue enshrined there. However, a vow inserted into the 1280 Saidaiji statue of Eison, dated 1246/1/6, indicates that the

9 The "One Mind" (*isshin* 一心) has many meanings in exoteric and esoteric Buddhism. The term here likely refers to the all-pervading buddha-mind or the one consciousness underlying all phenomena. Kaneda (2006, 70–71), however, suggests that the term refers to *bodaishin*, or the aspiration for enlightenment, and this interpretation is also possible.

text was originally “placed inside the body of the hinin Mañjuśrī” (340). It is possible that this “hinin Mañjuśrī” refers to the image indicated in the *Nenpu*, even if it was not enshrined in the Shingon Hall. The *Nenpu* also records that Eison composed his *Monju kōshiki* in one fascicle in 1246/2 and that the eulogy and the chanting of Mañjuśrī’s five-syllable spell one thousand times was to be performed every month on the 25th. If the practice was carried out as described (and the *Nenpu* record is consistent in this regard with the extant *kōshiki*), it would likely have been done before a Mañjuśrī image. This suggests that a Mañjuśrī statue may have been completed and enshrined somewhere at Saidaiji, or in the vicinity, not long after the timing of the vision recorded in *Eison’s Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*.¹⁰

In addition, on 1246/10/25, Eison extended his participation in Mañjuśrī assemblies to other provinces, when he led a collective assembly at Hajidera 土師寺 for the various Kawachi Province hinin communities.¹¹ Finally, Eison, Ninshō, and nine other monks collectively signed a 1247/5/25 vow indicating that they would “pattern [their] conduct after Mañjuśrī” and “take pity on all impoverished, solitary, and afflicted sentient beings.” The monks signing the document pledged accordance with both Śākyamuni’s and Mañjuśrī’s vows and prayed directly to Mañjuśrī to manifest and join them in their efforts to benefit sentient beings.¹² Given the intensity of Eison’s engagement with Mañjuśrī during the period from 1240 to 1247, as well as the importance Eison and other Nara exoteric-esoteric monks of his time placed on dream-signs and other visions, it is plausible that Eison experienced a vision of Mañjuśrī in 1245.

The timing of Eison’s reported 1245 Mañjuśrī vision is also conspicuous in its proximity to Eison and Kakujo’s first conferral of separate ordinations. In the *Gakushōki*, Eison records that they “started the practice of the orthodox separate-ordination bhikṣu precepts” in the middle of the ninth month of 1245 and that Eison himself received the “perfect-and-full precepts” (*enmankai* 円満戒) on 9/13—less than one month after Mañjuśrī’s reputed conferral of the consecration rites for the esoteric precepts (NKBK 1977, 20). The suggestion of a connection between the two events is heightened by the location chosen for the separate-ordination ceremony, Ebaraji; the temple was believed to have been the birthplace of Gyōki, the most widely recognized manifestation of Mañjuśrī in Japan.

10 On this point, see also Wu 2002, 259–60.

11 See the *Gakushōki* (NKBK 1977, 21). Hajidera, as Eison referred to the temple in that *Gakushōki* entry, later developed into the Ritsu convent Dōmyōji 道明寺 affiliated with Eison’s movement. See Borgen 2007 on the history of this temple.

12 See NKBK 1977, 341–42. For my translation of this 1247 vow, see the Documents section.

The timing of Eison's reported one and only conferral of Mañjuśrī's esoteric transmission to a disciple—to Shinkū on 1269/8/25, exactly twenty-four years after the initial experience—also shows a connection to significant events in the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult and the order's activities more broadly. The conferral was said to have occurred precisely five months after the completion of the renowned 1269 non-discriminatory Mañjuśrī assembly and two years after Shinkū was appointed elder of Hannyajī. If Eison did experience such a numinous transmission and transmit it to only one disciple, Shinkū is a plausible candidate considering: 1) Shinkū was stationed by Eison at the significant and nearby branch temple Hannyajī, 2) Hannyajī's main icon was Mañjuśrī, and 3) Shinkū was appointed as Eison's successor by Ninshō following Eison's death. Thus there is *indirect* evidence to suggest that among his leading disciples, Eison particularly favored Shinkū.

Given the aforementioned connections with other Saidaiji order texts, as well as the timing of the events depicted in it, *Eison's Statement* could be authentic. Despite the consistencies the document shows with other aspects of Eison's activities, however, the document is exceptional in ways that should give us pause. First, there is no reference to the dream-vision of Mañjuśrī or the transmission to Shinkū in any other text by Eison examined to date. Second, as detailed above, our copies of the documents referring to this event all date from the late Muromachi period or beyond.¹³ Third, this conferral was only said to have been made and recorded twenty-four years after Eison's initial experience. It is possible that Eison was merely awaiting a fit dharma-vessel to whom he could entrust the conferral. However, it is noteworthy that even the content of the text speaks to a much later recording of events. Documents purporting to record direct and exclusive master-to-disciple transmissions often represented after-the-fact legitimizations of particular lineages, and this may be one such case.

While there is indirect evidence to suggest Eison's particular favor of Shinkū, there is no direct evidence that he designated Shinkū his successor at Saidaiji. In fact, the evidence we do have suggests that Eison deliberately never appointed a successor, choosing instead to leave it—as he did so many important decisions concerning the order—to the recommendation of the council of senior monks. The *Saidaiji Kōshō Bosatsu gonyūmetzu no ki* 西大寺興正菩薩御入滅の記 (Record of Kōshō Bosatsu's Entrance into Nirvana), dated 1290/10, reports that in 1285, when he was ill, Eison entrusted the affairs of the

13 That said, the aforementioned records do suggest that the third Saidaiji elder, Senyu, may have played an early role in spreading the tradition. I will address this possibility in the conclusions to this chapter.

order after his death to six disciples.¹⁴ Although perhaps a later embellishment based on this text, the *Nenpu* fleshes out the account by naming the six disciples (NKBK 1977, 190–91). Even if both texts are actually later sources, it is significant that neither shows Eison designating a *single* successor. In this regard, they tally with evidence from Ninshō's correspondence with Sōji and Shinkū, shortly after Eison's death, on the deliberations over the Saidaiji successor. This correspondence suggests that the council of senior monks entrusted with the task was unable to decide on the successor. They thus turned to Ninshō, who ultimately chose between Shinkū and Eison's nephew Sōji 惣持 (1233–1312), the elder of Sairinji 西琳寺 in Kawachi Province.¹⁵

If various inconsistencies concerning *Eison's Statement* suggest that its date and attribution to Eison may have been spurious, an internal consistency in the *Nenpu* that singles out Shinkū also points in this direction. *Eison's Statement* represents one of at least three instances in the *Nenpu* in which Shinkū's singular importance among Eison's disciples is highlighted in a manner that lacks support among documents reliably dated to the thirteenth century. For example, the entry for 1266/2/8 records that attendees at an Eison lecture at Shitennōji had a vision of him as the Buddha, emitting an aura of light. Placing their palms together and prostrating in reverence, they called him Shien Buddha (Eison was also known in his lifetime as Shien-shōnin 思円上人). An oracle delivered by the kami Miwa through a seven-year-old girl indicated that this was because Śākyamuni had been reborn as Eison, and Mahākāśyapa (reportedly Śākyamuni's foremost disciple and his successor as head of the sangha) had been reborn as Shinkū.¹⁶

Another episode in the *Nenpu* involving Shinkū makes a metaphorical connection between him and the Miwa oracle. In the entry for the morning of 1290/8/25, the day Eison died, the *Nenpu* reports that Eison entrusted robes to Shinkū, Sōji, and Ninshō. These three robes had been given to Eison by Retired Emperor Kameyama in 1284,¹⁷ and they were said to have been originally

14 See NKBK 1977, 297–98. The editors of the *Saidaiji Kōshō Bosatsu gonyūmetsu no ki* point out that, as the Gokurakuji copy of it is from a much later date, there is room for doubt concerning the 1290/10 date attributed to the original. They add, however, that the contents are generally solid and they do not believe it to be entirely from later ages (450).

15 See Wajima 1963 and Wajima 1970, 66, on this correspondence.

16 The *Nenpu* recounts the Miwa oracle in a record attributed to Kyōe 鏡恵 (d.u.), who served as Eison's scribe from around this time until the end of Eison's life; see NKBK 1977, 151–52. On the oracle, see also Oishio 1998, 383. On connections between the Saidaiji order and the medieval Miwa cult, see Andreeva 2006 and 2010.

17 This part of the account appears to be historical, as the transmission of the robes from Kameyama to Eison is recorded in the *Gakushōki* as well. See the entry for 1284/intercalary 4/21; NKBK 1977, 56–57.

possessed by Ganjin, transmitter of the Ritsu teachings to Japan. According to the *Nenpu*, Eison entrusted the largest and most formal of the robes to Shinkū, the mid-sized robe to Sōji, and the smallest, most informal robe to Ninshō (NKBK 1977, 197–98). This account thus suggests that these three were Eison's most cherished disciples but that Shinkū was foremost among them. The metaphorical link with the earlier story of Shinkū being a reincarnation of Mahākāśyapa is that, in entrusting the order to Mahākāśyapa after his death, Śakyamuni is said to have given him his robes.

While such *Nenpu* accounts add color to the transmission of Saidaiji from Eison to Shinkū, there is little corroborating evidence for them and the manner in which they raise Shinkū above all other disciples while Eison was still alive. It is in this narrative context, as much as in the consistencies with indirect evidence elsewhere, that the rendering of *Eison's Statement* in the *Nenpu* should be placed. That said, I cannot conclusively reject the attribution to Eison. What I will argue, however, is that closer investigation of the document's consistencies and inconsistencies with other texts yields valuable insights into the medieval and early modern construction of Eison's Shingon Ritsu movement as well as the state of scholarship on the movement.

Shingon, Ritsu, and Uses of *Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*

Essential to what is at stake in the *Statement* is the very relationship between Shingon esotericism and Ritsu in Eison's movement. The following passage from the document underscores this: "If this seal of transmission (*inka*) is allowed to be cut off, my restoration of the Ritsu-dharma will also be cut off. The Ritsu-dharma and the esoteric teachings, within the One Mind, are just like the sun and the moon" (NKBK 1977, 125). Two experts on Eison's movement reach opposite conclusions on the relationship suggested in this passage. Emphasizing the esoteric nature of the mudras and mantras that the text transmits, Kaneda argues that in Eison's sun and moon analogy, esoteric teachings are the sun and therefore primary (2006, 90–91). In direct contrast, Matsuo insists that Eison is identifying Ritsu with the sun. To Matsuo, this suggests that Ritsu is more central to Eison than esotericism, represented by the moon (1998b, 9).

These opposing conclusions on the sun and the moon analogy underscore its ambiguous nature. I argue that the analogy is too ambiguous for us to deduce, from it alone, a hierarchy between Shingon and Ritsu. However, the document containing the analogy is in the form of an esoteric transmission document, and the purport of the broader passage quoted above is that the continuity of

Eison's Ritsu-dharma is *dependent* on the continuity of that esoteric transmission. In addition, whoever actually composed it, the document elevates Shinkū above Eison's other disciples by singling him as the one recipient of this esoteric transmission from Eison. Reading the passage as implying the superiority of Ritsu over esotericism thus goes against the grain of the text as a whole (and in this regard, my position is closer to Kaneda's than to Matsuo's).

Despite my reservations about Matsuo's argument here, his highlighting of the Ritsu side of Eison's activities raises a critical point for understanding the document and the possibility that it was fabricated. I maintain that the degree of the text's emphasis on esotericism is precisely what makes its provenance so difficult to determine. First, the esoteric texts attributed to Eison have still been little published or analyzed beyond Kaneda's sectarian writings, which lack the text-critical analysis we may seek in more academic studies. Second, there are indications that—whatever the relative importance of the Ritsu and esoteric elements in Eison's own teachings and practices—after his death the Saidaiji order increasingly emphasized the esoteric.

Some scholars see *Eison's Statement* as evidence for Eison elevating and justifying Shinkū's status in the order through the esoteric transmission,¹⁸ again suggesting that Eison himself privileged the esoteric over exoteric, but this time concerning principles of monastic succession. However, various evidence suggests that Saidaiji itself increasingly privileged the esoteric over the exoteric after Eison's death. For example, the character of Saidaiji itself as a temple specializing in state-protecting esoteric prayers (*kitōji* 祈禱寺) strengthened during Shinkū's reign as elder. Eison's participation in state-protecting rites against the Mongols from 1268 to 1281 may have spurred the process, but the 1298 designation by the warrior government of thirty-four Saidaiji order temples as *Kantō kitōji* took this aspect to a new level.¹⁹ Although the designation here of the temples as specifically "Kantō" *kitōji* shows Ninshō's influence from Kamakura, during Shinkū's reign as elder Saidaiji served as a *kitōji* for both the warrior government and the court, as Oishio convincingly shows (1998, 391–401). Moreover, even when we examine the Mañjuśrī cult specifically after Eison's death, at least in the Nara area, the charitable relief side fades as the

18 See Oishio 1998, 380–84, and Kamikawa 1991, 286–87.

19 See Takeuchi 1971–97, 26:101–2, 128–29, and 188–89, for the Saidaiji petition for this designation (doc. 19616), three lists of the designated temples (docs. 19668–70), and four versions of a ban on incursions by warrior representatives into the lands of the Saidaiji *Kantō kitōji* temples (docs. 19800–03). See also Borgen 2007, 35–36, on the designation.

esoteric aspects assume greater prominence.²⁰ Thus the question remains as to who is privileging the esoteric in the Saidaiji order and when.

Saidaiji's extended esotericization after Eison's death is further supported by Inagi Nobuko's analysis of the sacred works attributed to Eison and held by Saidaiji. Inagi's analysis clearly suggests an increasing privileging of esoteric documents by later generations of Saidaiji monks. Of the ninety-seven sacred works held by Saidaiji and attributed to "Eison" or "Kōshō Bosatsu" in the Saidaiji catalogue, sixty-three were copied or printed from the early- to mid-Tokugawa period. Notably, this was also when the *Nenpu* was compiled and when *Eison's Statement* spread. Inagi aptly ascribes this proliferation of Saidaiji-related texts to the Ritsu-revival movement taking place during this period (a movement which the aforementioned Jiun Sonja would join).²¹ At the same time, it is significant for investigating the provenance of such esoteric texts as *Eison's Statement* that over half of these texts attributed to Eison are Shingon esoteric ones. In contrast, the Ritsu texts attributed to Eison tended to be printed in his lifetime or shortly thereafter. The *Nenpu* records that Eison authored thirty-five esoteric texts alongside his forty-nine exoteric ones. Esoteric texts, however, constitute "the overwhelming majority" of the surviving texts held by Saidaiji and attributed in colophons to Eison that are *not* listed in the *Nenpu*. The process of privileging esoteric texts had already begun in the medieval period after Eison's death, and this privileging continued well into the early modern period.²²

In sum, two major issues are at stake in uses of *Eison's Statement*: clarifying the relative relationship between esotericism and Ritsu in Eison's movement and legitimizing the line of Saidaiji elders, from Eison to Shinkū and successive elders. As both a Shingon and a Ritsu monk and the founder of the Saidaiji order, Eison himself had stakes in both issues and thus could have been the one doing the clarifying and legitimizing as formulated in *Eison's Statement*. But the relatively late appearance of texts attesting the transmission in the *Statement*, its overall privileging of the esoteric over the exoteric, and how such privileging dovetails with increasing esotericization of the Saidaiji order after Eison's death all suggest the hands of disciples after Eison's time. And as conspicuous as the 1269/8/25 date for the document may be—precisely twenty-four years after the Mañjuśrī vision attributed to Eison—the date is also a bit too conspicuous: Eison died on 8/25 in 1290. The alignment of the vision, the transmission to Shinkū, and Eison's death all on the 25th day of the 8th month

20 I will address this issue in the Epilogue to the book.

21 On Jiun Sonja and this revival movement, see Watt 1982.

22 See in particular Inagi 2002, 34, 44–46, and 50.

could reflect coincidence, synchronicity, or the great will of an esoteric master well-attuned to such confluences and to the 25th as Mañjuśrī's karmic-affinity day—a master in control of the timing of his own death, as so many a great saint is said to be. Yet how much simpler is the recognition of the significance of the 8/25 date in Eison's life *after* he died on that day?

That said, the importance of dream-visions, including those of Mañjuśrī, in the activities of Eison and related exoteric-esoteric practitioners in early medieval Japan is undeniable. Moreover, religious movements typically face uncertainty and a need for new forms of legitimization after the death of a charismatic founder such as Eison. Thus although copies of *Eison's Statement* or other sacred works attesting the transmission from Mañjuśrī cannot yet be dated before the late Muromachi or early modern periods, the early generations of Saidaiji elders after Eison's death, especially in the fourteenth century, remain ripe for the particular exoteric-esoteric lineage formulation in the document. To more fully elucidate this, let us now examine the dream-visions of Mañjuśrī attributed to the Shingon-Kegon monk Myōe and their development into a similar precepts-based, esoteric transmission, a transmission that was spread by monastics in both Myōe's and Eison's lineages.

Myōe, Mañjuśrī, and Dream-Visions

Many parallels between Myōe and Eison suggest that the earlier Nara monk's activities served as a powerful model for Saidaiji order ideals and cultic practices, much as the Hossō monk Jōkei had. Myōe, Jōkei, and Eison are all exemplars of early medieval scholar-monks who adopted the stance of "reclusive monks," disavowing full participation in the monastic hierarchy of larger temples and the state-appointed ranking system. Myōe was strongly affiliated with both Kegon and Shingon lineages and, like Jōkei and Eison, became renowned as a promoter of the precepts. As part of their efforts to promote the precepts, both Myōe and Eison were active in ordaining female practitioners and establishing convents. Like Eison, Myōe promoted his own portrait as a renunciant through autobiographical writings, including his renowned *Dream Diary* (*Yume no ki* 夢記). These and other texts show Myōe engaging vigorously in the pluralistic cultic practices of exoteric-esoteric monks in the early medieval period, including many also emphasized by Eison. To name just a few, we can point to Shingon's popular Mantra of Light practice and the cults of Śākyamuni, relics, kami, and, most significantly here, Mañjuśrī.²³

23 For a comparative study of Myōe and Eison, see Abé 2002–03. On Myōe and the precepts, see Unno 1994 and Maegawa 2005. For comparisons of Myōe's and Eison's stance toward

The importance of dream-visions to Myōe amid these varied activities is clear; he chronicled dreams and meditative visions for over three decades in his *Dream Diary*. His participation in the Mañjuśrī cult features prominently in accounts of his dream-visions. Myōe's *Dream Diary* appears to have been arranged in roughly chronological order, and the version collated from standard Japanese editions and translated by George Tanabe, Jr., begins with a vision of Mañjuśrī: "25th day, same [month and year]. While I was practicing the meditation of no-thought in front of the great master Śākyamuni, the great sage Mañjuśrī appeared in the sky. He was gold in color and sat on the lion king. He was about an arm's length long."²⁴

Although the month and year of the reported Mañjuśrī vision is unclear, based on the placement relative to other parts of Myōe's *Dream Diary* and correspondence with other texts, late 1195 or early 1196 is likely. The passage quoted above shows close connections to an account in the *Kōzanji Myōe-shōnin gyōjō* 高山寺明恵上人行状 (*Kana gyōjō* 仮名行状). The *Kana gyōjō* is generally believed to be the most reliable early biography of Myōe and to have been written by his close disciple Kikai 喜海 (1178–1250). According to the story we can construct from the *Kana gyōjō*, in the fall of 1195 Myōe withdrew from the monastic assembly at the Shingon temple Jingoji 神護寺 in Kyoto and secluded himself on a peak in Shirakami 白上, in Kii 紀伊 (or Ki) Province. Having brought with him scriptures, buddha images, and ritual implements, he made a vow before an image of the female deity Butsugen and cut off his ear. An interlinear comment in the text says that the blood flowed onto the image and the ritual implements.²⁵ Significantly, Butsugen, or "Buddha-Eye," is also referred to as Buddha-Mother (Butsumo), similarly to Mañjuśrī. An implicit link between this event and the vision of Mañjuśrī described in the *Dream Diary*, or a very similar one, is suggested by the ensuing flow of the *Kana gyōjō* passages.

The radical act of cutting off his ear, represented as a bodily offering to Butsugen, only strengthened Myōe's longing to be present in the assemblies of the Buddha and to hear his teachings directly. Fervently reciting sections of the *Flower Garland Sutra* and the first fascicle of the *Shinji kangyō*, he had dream-visions of doing just that. When we recognize that the Buddha is often referred to in fatherly terms by Myōe and others, these passages do suggest a pairing of

nuns and other female followers, see both Abé's study and Meeks 2010a, chapter 3. On Myōe's *Dream Diary*, see Tanabe 1992 and his English-language translation of the diary there (159–98). See Girard 1990 for a French-language translation.

24 The interpolation is Tanabe's (1992, 160). See also *Myōe-shōnin yume no ki*, in *Kōzanji Tenseki* 1971–2000, 2: 115.

25 *Kana gyōjō*, in *Kōzanji Tenseki* 1971–2000, 1:22, 24–25.

Butsugen as Myōe’s “mother” and Śākyamuni as his “father,” a motif noted by various scholars of Myōe.²⁶ But it is also notable that during this process, after Myōe revered the encountered Śākyamuni and immediately recited scriptures before the main deity (Butsugen), it was *Mañjuśrī* who manifested. The vision of *Mañjuśrī* is the one described in the most visual detail in this section, in terms similar to those in both the *Dream Diary* account and *Eison’s Statement*. Suddenly perceiving a radiance above his eyes, Myōe opened his eyes, looked up, and saw *Mañjuśrī* in the sky riding a golden lion about seven to eight feet above his head. *Mañjuśrī*’s body is described as being about three feet in size and emitting light. Myōe then put aside all other matters and single-mindedly prayed to the bodhisattva.²⁷

Many more examples of Myōe’s *Mañjuśrī* faith could be culled from the *Dream Diary*, *Kana gyōjō*, and other texts by Myōe and his close disciples. But the two described above stand out here for several reasons. First, the *Dream Diary* and *Kana gyōjō* accounts are similar to the description in “Eison’s” *Statement* of a disk of light suddenly appearing while he was in a meditative state, then *Mañjuśrī* manifesting in the air riding a golden lion-king. The *Dream Diary* account stating that Myōe’s vision occurred on the 25th day of the month (*Mañjuśrī*’s karmic-affinity day) also corresponds with the account attributed to Eison. Moreover, part of the context for the *Mañjuśrī* vision in the *Kana gyōjō* account was Myōe’s recitation of a fascicle of the *Shinji kangyō*, or the *Mind-Ground Contemplation Sutra*. As we have seen, well-known verses on *Mañjuśrī* in this sutra are strongly connected to Saidaiji order *Mañjuśrī* faith, based primarily on depictions of *Mañjuśrī* as a spiritual guide and mother of the buddhas. Also forming an important context for the *Kana gyōjō* account are Myōe’s recitations from the *Flower Garland (Kegon) Sutra*; Kegon faith in *Mañjuśrī* is frequently related to his pivotal role as Zenzai-dōji’s spiritual guide in the “Entering the Dharma World” chapter of that sutra. The interweaving of these two scriptural contexts for *Mañjuśrī* faith is reinforced when Myōe is described amid the recitations of both as having quelled his doubts, pacified his mind, and even put aside the pain from his ear when he attained the “mind-ground” (*shinji*) of being in the assembly before the Buddha. This description appears shortly before the account of the *Mañjuśrī* manifestation.²⁸ Although

26 See, for example, Tanabe 1992 and Abé 2002–03.

27 *Kana gyōjō*, in Kōzanji Tenseki 1971–2000, 1:25–26. The unit of measurement I translate as “feet” here is *shaku* 尺. See also the summary and analysis of the *Kana gyōjō* passages on this *Mañjuśrī* manifestation, and a comparison with the *Dream Diary* account as well as other early hagiographic accounts, in Shibazaki 1992, 59–78.

28 *Kana gyōjō*, in Kōzanji Tenseki 1971–2000, 1:25–26.

the depiction of Eison's frame of mind in his *Statement* is less detailed, we also find a correspondence here in the passage that "suddenly [Eison's] mind-spirit (*shinjin* 心神) became deep and still" right before Mañjuśrī's manifestation.

Due to these correspondences, as well as broader parallels between Myōe's and Eison's activities, such early accounts from Myōe's lineage of Mañjuśrī's manifestation may have influenced the reputed 1269 recording of *Eison's Statement*. Shifting our focus from the vision of Mañjuśrī to the full text of the *Statement*, however, other elements show a closer intertextual relationship with fourteenth-century and later accounts of an esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe. Before examining these accounts, a few preliminary remarks on the terminology for the transmission are warranted.

Records of the reported transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe and later disciples feature a wide array of titles. In studies of Myōe, however, the transmission and its records are most commonly referred to as *Jikai shōjō inmyō* 持戒清淨印明, and I will follow that convention here in my English rendering of the title as the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts*. But transmissions of the mudra and spell were recorded primarily in the form of *injin* 印信, records of esoteric dharma transmission like *Eison's Statement*, and the Myōe text is often referred to as *Jikai shōjō injin* in Muromachi- and Tokugawa-period records.²⁹ Also, although *jikai shōjō* is sometimes rendered in English as "pure observance of the precepts,"³⁰ in this context I opt for the more ambiguous "purity of keeping the precepts": the emphasis is as much on the purity associated with the precepts as on how one keeps them. Keeping the precepts faithfully, as Myōe and Eison urged their disciples to do, is one way to attain that purity. But the conferral of the mudra and spell of this transmission is another.

Our oldest copy of the *injin* attesting this transmission appears to be one held by Kanazawa Bunko 金沢文庫. Tanaka Hisao has printed this version and suggested that it was copied "not long after the Enbun 延文 era (1356–61)."³¹ Fuller

29 The best-known studies of this transmission are Tanaka 1982, 464–89 (originally published in 1966), and Nōdomi 1980, which each address copies from various archives across sectarian traditions. Tsuda 1995 prints a copy dated 1411 (with a colophon of reception dated 1435) from Tōji Kanchi'in Kongōzō 東寺觀智院金剛藏. Nakayama Kazumaro has investigated several newly identified versions from the Zuishin'in 隨心院 archives (Nakayama 2005, 2006), and Tokunaga Yoshitsugu has investigated those from the Kōzanji archives (Tokunaga 2010, 2011). Tokunaga notes in both studies that the earliest of the *Jikai shōjō injin* documents in the Kōzanji archives dates to 1437.

30 Muller 2014, s.v. "jikai shōjō;" Inagaki 1992, 132, s.v. "jikai shōjō."

31 See Tanaka 1982, 470. The latest transmission apparent in the Kanazawa Bunko copy is dated 1370/5/8, and subsequent scholars generally accept Tanaka's dating. Although the beginning and end of the Kanazawa Bunko copy are missing, Tanaka supplements it from

exploration of this intriguing record and the context of its transmissions merits a separate study, but we can select a few highlights for our purposes here. First are the close links to the Saidaiji order revealed in the text's oral transmissions and colophons and even its preservation in the Kanazawa Bunko. The Kanazawa Bunko evolved from the archives housed by Sanetoki at Shōmyōji. Despite Eison's aforementioned 1261 rebuff of Sanetoki's offer to commend the temple to Saidaiji, Shōmyōji quickly developed alongside Gokurakuji into one of the two leading bases in the Kamakura area for Saidaiji order monks. It is significant, then, that our *injin*-based records of the transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe show intimate ties with Shōmyōji. Thus equally important to us as the story of the transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe is the story of the text's transmission to and from Shōmyōji. I will first address this latter story.

The fullest *narrative* accounts of the “mudra and spell of the purity of keeping the precepts” and its accompanying oral transmissions—as opposed to just excerpts of the mudra and spell or lineage charts—can be traced to the record of the monk Kōe 高惠 (1284–1338). Kōe records receiving the transmission on 1325/1/8 from the Shōmyōji monk Tan'ei 湛睿 (1271–1346).³² The colophon by Tan'ei preserved in Kōe's record reports that Tan'ei received the transmission in 1314 during a stay at Aho estate's 阿保庄 Jizō Hall in Iga 伊賀 Province. There, on the second day of the intercalary third month, Tan'ei “received the aforementioned mudra and spell from the temple chief Gyōganbō Genkai 行願房 玄海-shōnin.”³³ The Jizō Hall in Iga where Tan'ei received the transmission is listed alongside eleven other Iga branch temples of Saidaiji in the 1391 *Saidaiji shokoku matsuji chō* 西大寺諸国末寺帳 (Register of Saidaiji Branch Temples in the Various Provinces) held by Saidaiji, and it is now a Shingon Ritsu temple named Hōgonji 宝厳寺. Saidaiji order monks actively promoted the Jizō cult in the late Kamakura period, and it is clear from the original name of the temple that the cult was central there. However, based on the reported transmission of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* to Tan'ei there—as well as several sheets of Mañjuśrī images inside a 1364 Jizō statue at nearby Chōfukuji 長福寺, another of the twelve branch temples—we can

a fuller 1647 copy in the Kōzanji archives (referred to as the Togano 桐尾 copy in his study). Tokunaga has recently printed this version (2011), affirming Tanaka's choice of it as the comparative text for the Kanazawa Bunko copy and suggesting that it presents the clearest picture among thirty documents related to the *injin* from the Kōzanji archives (62).

32 *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 469.

33 *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 467.

readily picture a context of devotion to Jizō incorporating influences from the Saidaiji order and the Mañjuśrī cult.³⁴

By all accounts, the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* spread widely after it was introduced to Shōmyōji, propelled in no small part by Kōe's interest. Kōe's record shows that after the 1325 transmission from Tan'ei, on 1328/3/18, he brought the text he copied to Kōzanji, the temple on the outskirts of Kyoto where Myōe had served as abbot. At Kōzanji, Kōe collated the "great matter" (*daiji* 大事) in consultation with Shōkū 照空-shōnin.³⁵ Returning to Kamakura, Kōe enthusiastically reports the miraculous discovery (*kantoku* 感得) by Ichijō 一乘-shōnin (or Zenkai 全海; d.u.) of the original scriptural source for the mudra and spell transmitted to Myōe. The passages were discovered in a Kannon dhāraṇī scripture in the Shōmyōji storehouse, on 1336/6/18, and Kōe quickly excerpted and recorded them the next day. He remarks that Shōkū's earlier teaching that the meaning of the mudra and spell was "attaining [for] all sentient beings the benefit of the purity of keeping the precepts" tallied precisely with that of the scriptural passages.³⁶ After the transmission to Kōe, we find accounts of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* spreading further in the eastern capital area of Kamakura, including to Gokurakuji, and to such temples as Tōji and Saihōji 西芳寺 in the Northern Capital (Kyoto), Saidaiji and the affiliated convent Hokkeji in the Southern Capital, and Kōyasan.³⁷

34 Chōfukuji is now a Sōtō Zen temple named Manjuji 万寿寺. On the Jizō Hall, Chōfukuji, and the other Iga branch temples, see Hayase 1973, 526–44. See Glassman 2012, especially chapter 2, on the Saidaiji order's involvement in the Jizō cult more broadly.

35 Shōkū 照空, also known as Jijun 慈順 (d.u.), is from the cloister Ikenobō Kakuon'in 池房覚蘭院. For the full account of Kōe's encounter with Shōkū, see *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, in Tanaka 1982, 468 and 469–70.

36 As part of the description of Ichijō's discovery of the Kannon scripture is in the missing portion of the Kanazawa Bunko version, that record is supplemented by the Kōzanji version. See *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 467–68 (from the Kanazawa Bunko version) and 472–73 (from the Kōzanji version) or Tokunaga 2011, 66b. The scripture in question is the *Kanjizai Bosatsu zuishin ju kyō* 觀自在菩薩隨心呪經 (Ch. *Guanzizai pusa suixin zhou jing*), whose translation is attributed to the seventh-century monk Zhitong 智通. See the section on "the purity of keeping the precepts (*shōjō jikai*), mudra number 21" in T 1103A 20:465a23–29. For the fuller quoted passages as they appear in the Kōzanji version, see Tanaka 1982, 472–73, or Tokunaga 2011, 66a–b.

37 The best source on the geographical and trans-sectarian spread of the tradition remains Nōdomi 1980. Nakayama 2005 and Tokunaga 2010 are valuable for their in-depth exploration of multiple versions from individual archives.

Keeping in mind the contemporary fourteenth-century context of the transmission of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* to and from Shōmyōji and other Saidaiji order temples, let us now turn to the story of the transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe and a comparison with the transmission to Eison reported in his *Statement*. During the discussion that follows, it will help to keep in mind that although the terms *kuden* 口伝 and *kuketsu* 口決 are largely considered interchangeable, and can each be rendered as “oral transmission” or “oral transmission record,” in the Kanazawa Bunko copy of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* Tan’ei’s account of Mañjuśrī’s manifestation is referred to as *kuden*, while there are various references to other monks’ teachings as *kuketsu*. Thus to help maintain the distinction, I will continue to supply the appropriate Japanese term below. The transmission to Myōe in the Kanazawa Bunko version reads:

When the Shōnin [Myōe] was practicing at Kii Province’s Mt. Shirakami and attained a certain samādhi, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī manifested and descended to a pine tree. He declared to the Shōnin: “The four groups of disciples in the latter days all break the precepts and are impure. If they break the precepts, samādhi will not manifest. Thus they should form and recite this mudra and spell, which will enable them to fulfill the Code of the Precepts and purify themselves. Truly, they should cultivate that samādhi.” He then completed the conferral on the Shōnin. Now, the trace of this can be found at the pine tree of Mañjuśrī’s manifestation.³⁸

Immediately following this account, Kōe adds a colophon indicating that he copied it on 1325/1/8 and declaring: “Privately, I (Kōe) state that the above oral transmission (*kuden*) was not written down in the past. Tan’ei-shōnin first wrote this.”³⁹ I will return to the issue of Tan’ei first recording this *kuden* shortly. First, however, let us look at the *kuden*’s correspondences with *Eison’s Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*.

In each case, after Myōe or Eison enters a state of meditative concentration, Mañjuśrī suddenly manifests, confers the esoteric mudras and spells for a precepts transmission for latter-day disciples, and explicitly urges the founding figure (Myōe or Eison) to pass on the transmission. The commandment to

38 *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 468. “Code of the Precepts” here translates *kaihon* 戒本 (Sk. *Prātimokṣa*). Although the term often refers to the full monastic precepts, Myōe and other early medieval Nara monks also used *kaihon* based on the *Brahmā Net Sutra* precepts.

39 *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 469.

spread the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* transmission is even clearer in a variant *kuden* account of Mañjuśrī's manifestation. This account appears on the enclosing paper for a 1470/8/25 copy of the *injin* made at Takao Mitsuzō'in 高雄密藏院, as well as later copies based on this. In this version of the *kuden*, Mañjuśrī is reported to have told Myōe:

“Because the four groups of disciples in the latter generations break the precepts, I confer to you the secret seal of the purity of keeping the precepts. You should spread this in the world and benefit sentient beings.” These precepts are the buddha-nature untainted samaya precepts secret mudra and spell. At the roots of a pine tree on Kii Province's Mt. Shirakami, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva personally manifested and conferred these on Myōe-shōnin.⁴⁰

This version of the *kuden*, as well as additional oral transmission records (*kuketsu*) in the Kanazawa Bunko copy of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts*, reveal a further parallel between the transmission reputedly conferred to Myōe and *Eison's Statement*: they are each primarily concerned with the esoteric samaya precepts amid the varied precepts traditions associated with Myōe and Eison. Many of the records of the “mudra and spell of the purity of keeping the precepts” use titles linking them to the *Brahmā Net* (Jp. *Bonmō*) precepts.⁴¹ In the fuller *kuketsu* in the Kanazawa Bunko and closely related versions, however, the *Brahmā Net* precepts are rendered inferior to those conferred through this mudra and spell. Although the beginning of the Kanazawa Bunko copy is missing, by collating it with the Kōzanji one used by both Tanaka (1982) and Tokunaga (2011), we can reconstruct the beginning of the narrative portion of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* as follows. The narrative begins with a *kuketsu* attributed later in the text (in Shōkū's instructions to Kōe) to Enkō 円光-shōnin (or Ryōgan 良含):

It was revealed: When Mañjuśrī transmitted this, there was no separate oral transmission record (*kuketsu*). However, privately I considered the meaning and state that the mudra is the Buddha-section mudra equal to

40 My translation is based on the *Ninnaji monjo* 仁和寺文書 version cited in Tanaka 1982, 477–78. See as well Nakayama's printing of the account from a *Zuishin'in* copy, also from the enclosing paper, which is identical apart from minor grammatical indications (2006, 75).

41 See especially Nōdomi 1980 and Tokunaga 2010 for examples from varied traditions.

the buddha-nature precepts.⁴² The *Brahmā Net* sentient beings receive the buddha [nature] precepts and immediately enter the stage of the buddhas. This being the case, they accord with the great awakening stage; truly, this is the various buddha-disciples' meaning. Thus the *Brahmā Net* precepts are shallow and abbreviated, but this is deep and secret.⁴³

The *kuketsu* portion subsequently suggests: "Because this mudra and spell is the mind-ground of the *Brahmā Net*, secret buddha-nature precepts, it synthesizes the exoteric and the esoteric as one."⁴⁴ This is, however, a synthesis attained from a rather esoteric stance. In this regard, we can place the text in a tradition of relativizing the exoteric precepts in light of the esoteric ones. In Japan, this tradition is particularly evident in the teachings of the Tendai monk Annen 安然 (ca. 841–89), which were also influential for Shingon followers.⁴⁵ It is thus appropriate that the *kuketsu* attributed to Enkō also refers to an oral transmission attributed to the Tendai monk Kōgei 皇慶 (977–1049) and to Annen's (or Godai'in's 五大院) "eye of *shingon*" for the principle of attaining buddhahood through reception of the precepts (Tanaka 1982, 465–66). In its

42 "Buddha section" (*butsubu* 仏部) is a collective epithet for the group of deities in buddha form in a mandala or mandalas. References that follow to the Lotus and Diamond sections suggest that the Buddha section refers here to the buddhas of the Womb Realm mandala specifically, which is commonly divided into these three sections.

43 The text up to "This being the case," is reconstructed and translated from the Kōzanji version; see Tanaka 1982, 471, or Tokunaga 2011, 64, for the original passages. The remainder is based on the Kanazawa Bunko version in Tanaka 1982, 464–65, with reference to the Kōzanji version. Here and elsewhere, I have also benefited from the Zuishin'in copy printed in Nakayama 2005, 68–72, which closes with a colophon dated 1740/3/27. All three versions include the apparent attribution of this *kuketsu* to the late-thirteenth-century monk Enkō-shōnin, or Ryōgan, who was reported to have been the teacher of Myōchibō Seiki 妙智房静基, the head of Higashiyama Byakugō'in 東山白毫院 (also known as Taishi Hall). See in particular the original passages from the Kanazawa Bunko version in Tanaka 1982, 469–70, and the analyses of Tanaka (485–86) and Nakayama (2005, 79).

44 *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 466. "The mind-ground of the *Brahmā Net*, secret buddha-nature precepts" here translates *Bonmō shūnji busshōkai himitsu* 梵網心地仏性戒秘密.

45 See the insightful analyses of Annen's understanding of the precepts in Groner 1990 and Unno 1994, 31–34. See in particular Groner's translations from Annen's *Futsū jubosatsukai kōshaku* 普通授菩薩戒廣積 (T 2381) and *Kyōji mondō* 教時間答 (or the *Shingon-shū kyōjigi* 真言宗教時義; T 2396) on pp. 262–63 of his study, which refer to the *Brahmā Net* precepts as "shallow and abbreviated" or "elementary" (*senryaku* 淺略) aspects of the *Kongōchō* 金剛頂—indicating the *Vajraśekhara-sūtra* (Ch. *Jingangding jing*; Diamond Peak Sutra; T 865)—in a manner similar to the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts*.

glorification of the esoteric precepts, however, the text relativizes Myōe's own practice of exoteric precepts in a manner similar to *Eison's Statement*.

As we have seen, *Eison's Statement* claims that his "restoration of the precepts" was "entirely for the sake of the samaya precepts." The text then immediately cites Eison's reception of the full exoteric precepts through self-ordination. The peak of this process in the *Statement*, however, is clearly Mañjuśrī's conferral of the "mudras and spells of the consecration for the buddha-nature precepts" through "the procedures for receiving ordination from another."⁴⁶ Similarly, although the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* indicates that Myōe taught the *Brahmā Net Sutra* precepts at Toganoo (Kōzanji) using "the ritual procedures (*sahō* 作法) for the self-ordination precepts," it cautions that "for this mudra and spell, the principle of self-ordination was not permitted. Thus it should definitely be transmitted [by another] and received." Then, by means of explanation for the earlier use of self-ordination rites, the initial *kuketsu* portion of the Kanazawa Bunko version concludes by stating: "In the world, the successive transmitters of the precepts were cut off, thus the self-ordination rites [for the *Brahmā Net Sutra* precepts] were performed."⁴⁷

It is hard to imagine that such parallels are coincidental. Both texts show a move from exoteric precepts obtained through self-ordination to the mudras and spells for esoteric precepts transmitted by a teacher, a move legitimized by a vision of Mañjuśrī's direct conferral of the esoteric transmission on the lineage founder. Although not framed in the specific esoteric terms of *Eison's Statement*, additional colophon remarks by Tan'ei preserved in Zuishin'in versions of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* are also revealing. In the Kanazawa Bunko version and the Kōzanji one used for comparison, the preceding *kuketsu* statement on the self-ordination rites is immediately followed by Tan'ei's colophon indicating his 1314 reception of the transmission while on pilgrimage to Ise Shrine. In the Zuishin'in copy that Nakayama Kazumaro uses as his base text, however, the *kuketsu* portion is followed by these "privately" stated remarks before the recounting of the 1314 transmission:

Privately, I [Tan'ei] state that the principle of self-ordination for the bodhisattva threefold pure precepts comes from the *Senzatsukyō*.⁴⁸ However,

46 NKBK 1977, 125, emphasis mine.

47 *Jikai shōjō inmyō*, Tanaka 1982, 466. See also the Kōzanji (Tokunaga 2011, 65a) and Zuishin'in (Nakayama 2005, 69a) versions, which make it even clearer that the self-ordination precepts referred to in this last sentence were those of the *Brahmā Net Sutra*.

48 *Senzatsukyō* is the abbreviated Japanese name for the Chinese sutra *Zhancha shan'e yebao jing* 占察善惡業報經 (T 839). This sutra taught that if no pure monks could be found to

in the Shōnin's [Myōe's] time, this was not yet known. Saidaiji's Shien-shōnin Eison first determined this. Having already received the precepts through self-ordination, one should certainly also confer them on others. Based on this, the principle of "receiving from another" (*jūta* 従他) was settled upon. Later people, do not be troubled by this, do not think it strange.⁴⁹

In a subsequent study, Nakayama interprets the remarks as suggesting that Eison started the practice of transmitting this mudra and spell through self-ordination rites (2006, 81). Although this line of interpretation is possible, based on the flow from the directly preceding *kuketsu* passages, I read the remarks attributed to Tan'ei here as a comparison of: 1) Myōe's use of self-ordination procedures for the *Brahmā Net Sutra* precepts and of transmission by another for this mudra and spell, with 2) Eison's initial use of self-ordination procedures for the threefold pure precepts and subsequent use of ordination by another (see Chapter 1). My view coincides with Nakayama's, however, in interpreting this portion of the Zuishin'in colophon as a further indication of the Saidaiji order's strong role in spreading the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* and in helping formulate biographical traditions around Myōe in the late Kamakura through Nanbokuchō periods (approximately the fourteenth century). Such a view also dovetails with Maegawa Ken'ichi's argument that Eison's precepts-revival movement contributed to a changing image of Myōe as a pure, precepts-keeping monk and preceptor of others at this time, an image especially apparent in the *Toganoo Myōe-shōnin denki*.⁵⁰

As part of a later copy's colophon, not found in the Kanazawa Bunko version or even in all the copies at Zuishin'in, "Tan'ei's" comparative remarks on Myōe and Eison could have been a later interpolation. It remains telling, though, that Kōe points to Tan'ei as the first person to have written down the *kuden* on the transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe, that the comparison in the Zuishin'in version quoted above is made, and that the comparison is attributed to Tan'ei. I am not ready to claim that the tradition of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity*

perform an ordination, one could receive the precepts through self-ordination. The sutra thus provided an important doctrinal precedent for Eison and Kakuō for the 1236 self-ordination ceremony. See Minowa 1999, 144–45, 181–82; 2008, 137.

49 *Bosatsukai inmyō* 菩薩戒印明, in Nakayama 2005, 69a.

50 For Nakayama's remarks, see 2006, 81–82. For Maegawa's, see 2005, 136–37. On the *Jikai shōjō inmyō* connection to the formation of biographical traditions around Myōe in this period, see Tanaka 1982, 488.

of *Keeping the Precepts* originated in the Saidaiji order. But our reliable documentary trail starts in very closely connected circles. In turn, however, I suggest that the spread of sacred works related to the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts*, including Tan'ei's *kuden*, contributed to the formation of *Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*. Given the reported 1269 date of the *Statement* versus the 1314 and 1325 dates for the *Mudra and Spell* transmission to and from Tan'ei, it is possible that any direct influence went in the other direction. But given the much broader spread of the *Mudra and Spell* tradition, the former scenario is more likely.

Conclusions

The origins of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* and *Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū* notwithstanding, both texts attest to the strong role played by dream-visions, including of Mañjuśrī specifically, in Myōe's and Eison's movements. The documentary evidence, however, suggests the great importance of dream-visions as a *rhetorical legitimizing strategy*, much as we saw for the Saidaiji order rhetoric of reluctance on fundraising and patronage issues examined in the previous chapter. As Tanabe points out (1992, 12), some accounts in Myōe's *Dream Diary* show the monk in an unflattering light, and there is a candor that suggests the text was not just for self-promotion. It is also evident, however, that Myōe turned to such dream-visions as part of the "unseen aid" of bodhisattvas and other deities for guidance and confirmation of his practices, and that he shared many of the dream-visions with disciples who helped develop a rich hagiographic tradition around the Shingon-Kegon master. Such hagiographic traditions are part of the process for securing continued patronage for Myōe's movement, as they are for Eison's and many other religious movements in medieval Japan (and beyond). Thus whether as a form of self-legitimization or one by and for others, the legitimizing function of the recording of dream-visions by Myōe and other medieval monastics is clear. And through this legitimization, they help construct distinctive exoteric-esoteric lineages.

Dream-visions legitimize Myōe's rejection of human masters and the adoption of Mañjuśrī and other deities as his direct masters.⁵¹ They legitimize the spread of a distinctly precepts-based esoteric transmission attributed to Myōe among later disciples in his, Eison's, and many other lineages. Dream-visions legitimize the very establishment of the new Ritsu lineage to which Eison,

51 See Tanabe 1992, Shibazaki 1992, and Unno 2004.

Ninshō, and Shinkū belonged as confirmation of Eison's attainment of the precepts in the 1236 self-ordination ceremony. They legitimize the establishment of that lineage again in 1243, when a laywoman, later known as the Chūgūji nun Shinnyo, witnesses the orthodox ordination of an acolyte at Saidaiji and delightedly reports an auspicious dream that she had at the time the revival began.⁵² Dream-visions legitimize Eison's decision to lead a large-scale esoteric prayer outside the network of Saidaiji and its branch temples, at the Iwashimizu Hachimangū shrine, in 1259. They legitimize Ninshō's activities restoring Gokurakuji after the damage wrought by a fire in 1275 (an event that could cast doubts on Ninshō's worthiness as elder, as Nichiren was to do) by showing that Mañjuśrī appeared in a dream and added his support to Ninshō's efforts.⁵³ Most notably here, dream-visions legitimize Eison's purported transmission of a unique esoteric precepts consecration, and they legitimize the succession of the order from Eison to Shinkū to successive Saidaiji elders.

Considering the significance of dream-visions to Eison even in writings reliably attributed to him, my hesitations on the authenticity of "Eison's" *Statement* are not a categorical denial that he may have had or recorded such an experience. Vast numbers of sacred works (*shōgyō*) remain uncatalogued in Japanese temple collections—not to mention unpublished and unstudied—and documents reinforcing the validity of the text's date and attribution may still come to light. Whenever the attribution to Eison began, that he had and recorded such an experience, that such a distinctive esoteric transmission exists in the Saidaiji order, has been a living tradition since at least the Tokugawa period and possibly even the fourteenth century. Our copies of sacred works suggesting the fourteenth-century reception of the transmission by Senyu, who subsequently became the third Saidaiji elder, may be from later periods. However, the documentary trail of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* does suggest that the early to mid-fourteenth century was ripe for recording and spreading such a tradition. The tracing of one line of the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* transmission through

52 See the *Gakushōki* entry for fall 1243 (NKBK 1977, 18–19). See also Meeks 2007, 363–64.

53 This is one of two significant dreams of Mañjuśrī recorded in the *Daitokufū*. The first passage recounts Mañjuśrī's revelation of verse (*eika* 詠歌) in a dream, at a time when Ninshō was composing Mañjuśrī images and making prints of "*hannya*," perhaps referring to the *Heart Sutra* (*Hannya shingyō*). This passage is positioned between accounts of Ninshō's entrance into Saidaiji in 1240 and the events of 1243, or when Ninshō was twenty-four to twenty-seven. For the two dreams, see *Shōkō daitokufū*, in Tanaka 1973, 45, 48–49.

Nichiren often scathingly referred to Ninshō as "Ryōkabō" 両火房, or the "two-fires" monk, in a phonetic pun on Ninshō's alternate name (his *azana*) Ryōkanbō 良観房 and as a critique of the fires at Gokurakuji.

the seventh Saidaiji elder Seikan 静観 (d. 1352) to Musō Soseki's 夢窓疎石 (1275–1351) Saihōji lineage of Rinzai Zen only reinforces this.⁵⁴ One could well argue that it is this living tradition that is most significant, not the question of what was actually recorded in Eison's lifetime.

In casting more doubt on the attribution of the *Statement* to Eison, however, we expand our possibilities for interpreting the document, the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts*, and the creativity of later disciples of Eison and Myōe. These later disciples, especially in the fourteenth century and beyond, deserve much of the credit for the creative constructions of their distinctive exoteric-esoteric lineages in the sacred works traditions of *Eison's Statement* and the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts*. Regarding the Saidaiji order specifically, the preceding analysis thus underscores the need for further text-critical analysis of the writings attributed to Eison and his early disciples, particularly esoteric documents, like the *Statement*. I do not doubt that someone was striving to clarify the relationship between esotericism and Ritsu in the order and to legitimize the religious orthodoxy of Shinkū and, by extension, successive Saidaiji elders with this document. But it remains an open question who that someone was. In remaining open to this question, we remain open to the still little-explored realm of Saidaiji order developments after Eison's death.

Even immediately after Eison's death, records show three powerful leaders of the order at dispersed locations (Ninshō at Gokurakuji in Kamakura, Shinkū at Hannyaji in Nara, and Sōji at Sairinji in Kawachi Province). It is clear, moreover, that the decision over the succession of the main temple involving all three was a difficult one.⁵⁵ Also significant is the monk Shōyu, even though he was evidently not a final candidate for the succession. Shōyu is treated as the leading esoteric master among Eison's disciples in various sources, and he is positioned directly between Eison and the third Saidaiji elder, Senyu, in transmission charts of the esoteric Saidaiji lineage (which came to be known as the *Saidaiji-ryū* or *Bosatsu-ryū* 菩薩流).⁵⁶ The possibility for competing lineages within the Saidaiji order to have formed quickly—with differing stakes

54 Tamamura 1981, 259–61, prints and briefly analyzes colophons attesting this transmission through “Seikan-shōnin (Saidaiji elder)” from within a Rinzai Zen text called “Procedures of the Bodhidharma-Transmitted One-Mind Precepts” (*Datsuma sōjō isshinkai giki* 達磨相承一心戒儀軌). The reference to Seikan suggests the seventh Saidaiji elder, Shinshō Seikanbō 信昭静観房.

55 See Wajima 1963; 1970, 66.

56 On Shōyu, see Uchida 2006a. For his place in *bosatsu-ryū* lineage charts, see Kaneda 2006, 243, and Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 757, s.v. “Saidaiji-ryū.”

not only in the succession of the Saidaiji elder, but in the very relationship between Shingon and Ritsu—is thus also clear. Even if such competing lineages and stakes were only later developments, the basis for the 1269 dating of *Eison's Statement* is murky enough that it could well be such later developments that motivated the text's composition and spread. In short, a pressing need for a better understanding of the relationship between the esoteric and the exoteric in Eison's movement, and of the movement's development into both a specific esoteric lineage and the early modern Shingon Ritsu school, is addressing the question: what do we know about the esoteric writings and transmissions attributed to Eison and when do we know it? For the present study, no document better attests to this need than *Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*.

Double Vision: The “Tachikawa” Monkan and Shingon/Ritsu

The roles we play, both in life and after death, are not just constructed by our own intentions and actions. Some roles we actively choose, others we more passively accept, and still others we are cast into by people with very different agendas from our own. Recognizing such mixed constructions of our own roles reminds us that the lineages and life stories we use to understand the roles of Buddhist practitioners in medieval religion and society are constructed not only by the practitioners and their colleagues but by their rivals as well. Among early medieval Shingon and Ritsu monks, never is the construction by rivals clearer than in the case of the now-notorious monk Monkan (1278–1357).

This chapter provides a revisionist analysis of Monkan. Having entered Saidaiji at an early age, Monkan became a direct Ritsu and Saidaiji-lineage Shingon disciple of Shinkū's during Shinkū's early years as the Saidaiji elder. Building on those credentials, Monkan later received esoteric dharma transmission from the Daigoji Hōon'in-lineage monk Dōjun 道順 (d. 1321) and the favor of Retired Emperor Go-Uda 後宇多 (r. 1274–87) and his son Emperor Go-Daigo. Monkan eventually rose to the highest ranks of Shingon temple hierarchies, becoming head monk of Tōji and Daigoji in the Kyoto area and Kongōbuji 金剛峰寺 on Mt. Kōya. Most modern analyses of his activities, however, have been strongly influenced by portrayals of Monkan as the “systematizer” of the Shingon Tachikawa lineage, which is accused of practicing black magic and aberrant sexual rituals and treated as the exemplar of Shingon heresies. Monkan's activities have thus been cast in a rather different light from those of Eison and such leading first-generation disciples as Ninshō and Shinkū, who are generally portrayed as orthodox (if at times innovative) precepts-keeping monks.

This chapter first undertakes a revised biographical portrait of Monkan, highlighting those activities we can reliably attribute to him—especially his connections with the Saidaiji order and the Mañjuśrī cult—and how the link between Monkan and the Tachikawa lineage was constructed. I argue that rivals aligned with opposing doctrinal and political factions created a distorted picture of both Monkan and the Tachikawa lineage, but that distortion itself is a significant part of our historical record. My analysis here highlights the need for continued vigilance concerning the provenance and nature of the sources

we use to construct our portraits of Saidaiji order and other medieval exoteric-esoteric monastics, the roles those monastics play in religion and society more broadly, and *when* they come to play those roles.

Building on the revisionist biographical portrait in earlier sections of the chapter, the final two sections examine Monkan's Mañjuśrī paintings, then connections between two of his Mañjuśrī images and his texts on the "three-deity combinatory rites" (*sanzon gōgyō hō* 三尊合行法). The three-deity rites are associated particularly with the Daigoji Sanbōin lineage, but they also show continuities with Saidaiji order involvement in the interlinked cults of relics, wish-fulfilling jewels (which were believed to incorporate relics), and such deities as Mañjuśrī and Kannon. These two sections thus shine further light on continuities between Monkan's Saidaiji-order and Daigoji-lineage Shingon activities. For understanding the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult specifically, the analysis here and in the book's Epilogue shows how Monkan's activities reflect both continuities and changes in the cult over the Kamakura period. I suggest, however, that to accurately assess those continuities and changes we need to first apply a "double vision" to Monkan's multiple roles and identities, enabling us to see how they have been constructed both by Monkan and supporters and by religious and political rivals.

Sex, Power, and Distortion: Issues in Portraits of Monkan

In the chronicles of history, Monkan never stood a chance. He simply ended up on the wrong side of too many battles. As an outsider to the Shingon establishment and the influential families at the highest ranks of that establishment as well as the political elite, Monkan's rise to power incurred resentment from many factions. After he received dharma-transmitting consecration from the Daigoji Sainan'in 西南院 monk Dōjun on 1316/4/21,¹ which signaled him as a direct heir of Dōjun's Sanbōin-Hōon'in esoteric lineage, Monkan ended up on the wrong side of a battle over the succession of the prestigious Sanbōin lineage of Shingon. Appointed first head (*ichi chōja* 一長者) of Tōji by Emperor Go-Daigo on 1335/3/15, and thus simultaneously the abbot (*zasu* 座主) of Mt. Kōya's Kongōbuji, he was reportedly castigated by the Mt. Kōya establishment for his background as a Ritsu monk and a fundraising holy man.

1 The *Daigoji shinyōroku* 醍醐寺新要録, fascicle 12, in the section on the Hōon'in, records that "Shuon-shōnin [Monkan] (a Saidaiji monk and the Chikurinji 竹林寺 elder)" received the transmission from "the Sainan'in great senior monastic officer (*daisōjō*) Dōjun" on 1316/4/21 (Daigoji Bunkazai Kenkyūjo 1991, 2:753).

Politically aligned with Go-Daigo and the Daikakuji 大覚寺 imperial branch, he ended up on the wrong side of the battles between Go-Daigo’s Southern Court and the Northern Court dominated by the Ashikaga 足利 warrior family. Doctrinally aligned with Shingon scholars who emphasized immanentist *hon’u* 本有 (or *honnu*) thought, he also ended up on the wrong side of the “unification” of Shingon teachings on Mt. Kōya spearheaded by the influential scholar-monk Yūkai 宥快 (1345–1416), who endorsed the opposing doctrinal branch of more gradualist *shushō* 修生 thought.² Condemned by Yūkai, Monkan became known as the systematizer of the Tachikawa lineage, which Yūkai cast as permeated with sexual rituals and black magic and as the embodiment of “heretical” tantrism. Linked from that time to the present with the sexual practices claimed to have permeated the Tachikawa tradition, other aspects of Monkan’s biography have been overshadowed by the sensationalizing draw of sex and aberrance.

A series of revisionist studies from the early twentieth century have clarified that portraits of Monkan as a representative of the Tachikawa lineage and a highly sexualized esoteric tradition are based on polemical attacks by opponents. That so many scholars have continued to suggest his “Tachikawa” connections despite these studies is a testimony to our own fascination with the alignment of sex and power. Viewed over the broad span of six-and-a-half centuries since his death, therein may lie the most enduring significance of Monkan’s biography, whatever its historical accuracy for his own time. However, this book *is* concerned with Monkan’s own time, especially the Kamakura period, which almost spans Eison’s through Monkan’s lifetimes. Examining the chronological and ideological layers of our sources on Monkan

² *Hon’u* literally means “originally existent,” and this branch of Shingon emphasized the innate nature of buddhahood in all things. Thus even delusions and our own bodies, just as they are, are equipped with all merits and embody buddhahood from the start. This branch is sometimes referred to as *funi* 不二, or “non-dual,” because adherents taught a more radically non-dual form of Shingon; Mt. Kōya’s Dōhan 道範 (1179 or 1184–1252) is a leading representative. By contrast, *shushō* (“cultivated through practice”) was considered a more provisionally non-dual form, sometimes referred to as *nini* 而二, with Yūkai as a leading representative. Although sharing the principle of inherent buddhahood, this latter branch taught that the original buddha nature becomes obscured by our delusions and we consequently manifest our deluded natures. Thus *shushō* scholar-monks emphasized the necessity of transforming delusions and cultivating enlightenment through esoteric practice. As Sawa Ryūken suggests, however, Shingon had long contained the principles of both *hon’u* and *shushō*, and differences between the branches are largely a question of emphasis (Sawa 1975, 645, s.v. “honnu, shushō”; see also Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 2060a–b, s.v. “hon’u shushō”).

helps us see more clearly the biographical process at work in both contemporary and later assessments of his twin roles as a Ritsu and a Shingon monk.

The main sources used by scholars to construct Monkan's biography can be arranged into the following seven groups: 1) the evidence from the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue dedicated for the thirteenth anniversary of Eison's death; 2) images commissioned or composed by Monkan; 3) colophons of texts he composed or transmitted; 4) the biography in the 1365 *Yuga dentō shō* 瑜伽伝灯鈔 (Compendium of the Yoga Transmission of the Lamp) by his disciple Hōren 宝蓮;³ 5) the 1375 *Hōkyōshō* 宝鏡鈔 (Compendium of the Precious Mirror) by Yūkai, including a reported 1335 Mt. Kōya petition contained therein; 6) the mid- to late-fourteenth century war tale *Taiheiki* 太平記 (Chronicle of the Great Peace) and 7) the biography in the *Zoku dentō kōroku* 続伝灯広録 (Continued Extended Records of the Transmission of the Lamp) by the Shingon monk Yūhō 祐室 (1656–1727), composed around the Genroku era.

The first four sets of sources are the best ones for understanding the activities of Monkan that we can reliably date to his own lifetime. The latter three sources, with the exception of some of the details in the Mt. Kōya petition, are strongly biased and historically dubious. The *Hōkyōshō* is well-known as an anti-Tachikawa-lineage polemic, and its portrait of Monkan revolves around the reported 1335 petition by Mt. Kōya monks seeking to overturn the appointment of this “outsider” as head of Tōji and Kongōbuji. Yūkai never explicitly calls Monkan a member of the Tachikawa lineage but suggests the association by bracketing the section on Monkan with attacks on the Tachikawa tradition as the embodiment of heretical Shingon tendencies. The violence within Yūkai's “will to orthodoxy” is evidenced by the burning of writings labeled “Tachikawa” and the forceful expulsion of *nenbutsu hijiri* 念仏聖 from Mt. Kōya.⁴ The *Taiheiki* is a work of historical fiction designed to entertain as well as edify. As such, it takes much license and embellishes, and in later chapters shows an increasing bias against the Southern Court and its allies, such as Monkan. The *Zoku dentō kōroku* biography paints the most explicit portrait of Monkan as a heretical and sexually debauched Tachikawa practitioner. However, this work simply melds the anti-Tachikawa and anti-Monkan portraits in the *Hōkyōshō* and, like the negative portraits of Monkan in later chapters of the *Taiheiki*, reflects the perspective of those loyal to the Northern Court. We can draw a

3 Tsujimura (1999, 2) renders the date of the *Yuga dentō shō* biography as 1368 (Shōhei 正平 23), but this may just be a typographical error, as Tamura (1966, 4), Uchida (2000, 77, 95n. 11; 2006b, 18n. 20), and Abe (2010, 122) render it as 1365 (Shōhei 20).

4 I have borrowed the phrase “will to orthodoxy” from Faure 1997. *Nenbutsu hijiri* refers to itinerant practitioners of devotion to Amida and his pure land.

clear line from the *Hōkyōshō* to the *Zoku dentō kōroku* and the explicit links between Monkan and the Tachikawa lineage propounded in the Tokugawa period (1600–1867).⁵

Despite the negative bias of these latter three sources, they help us see how the antagonistic portrait of Monkan developed over time and how negatively motivated (and not just hagiographic) distortion is also part of the larger biographical process around medieval monks. I tentatively accept the authenticity of the Mt. Kōya petition, which is cited in its entirety in the *Hōkyōshō* and, with modest differences, in the *Zoku dentō kōroku*. If the petition is indeed authentic, it provides valuable testimony about Monkan from his own lifetime, even though that testimony comes from an opposing faction. The *Taiheiki* is revealing for a marked shift in its treatment of Monkan between earlier and later sections. This shift reflects the hands of multiple authors in composing the war tale and the later references' date of compilation, after the defeat of the Southern Court was clear. But the shift also reminds us of the “double vision” necessary to understand the twofold biographic construction of Monkan as protagonist and antagonist.

New Biographical Portrait of Monkan

Hōren's *Yuga dentō shō*, although hagiographic, is the most reliable primary biography of Monkan, as much of it tallies well with evidence we can confirm elsewhere.⁶ I will thus use Hōren's biography as my fundamental source for exploring Monkan's early career, supplemented by evidence from Monkan's colophons to images and texts he composed. Before we turn to the depiction of Monkan's early years in the *Yuga dentō shō*, however, it is helpful to note the various names Monkan used. The names reflect the multiple, often overlapping identities he assumed in his diverse activities.

In Monkan's early years, in connection with the Saidaiji order, he was known as Monkanbō Shuon 文觀房殊音 and he variously signed his name as Monkan

5 As early as 1919, Fujikake Shizuya pointed out the unreliability of the *Taiheiki* and *Zoku dentō kōroku* for understanding Monkan. See also Manabe 1999, 199, on the direct line from the *Hōkyōshō* to negative portrayals of Monkan as a leading representative of the Tachikawa lineage in the Tokugawa period.

6 References to the *Yuga dentō shō* biography below are based on the classical Japanese edition in Tsujimura 1999, 1–2, and the printed Chinese version and facsimile in Uchida 2000, 78–79. On this biography and its reliability, see also Tamura 1966, 4; Uchida 2006b, 11–12, 17n. 19–20n. 23; and Abe Yasurō's remarks in Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan 2006, 532.

or Shuon. These two names clearly reflect his faith in Mañjuśrī (Monju) and Kannon, because they are formed from different combinations of the Chinese characters for these deities.⁷ Monkan received both the precepts and Shingon esoteric transmissions in the Saidaiji order and thus can be considered both a Ritsu and Shingon monk prior to his later affiliations with separate “exclusively” Shingon temples (as opposed to the combined Shingon and Ritsu of Saidaiji). However, scholars typically refer to Shuon as his Ritsu name, a practice that I will continue below. After receiving esoteric transmission from Dōjun in 1316, he used Monkanbō Kōshin (or Gushin) 文觀房弘真 as his Shingon name. However, he did not abandon his Saidaiji Ritsu name Shuon after this but used both Shuon and Kōshin.⁸ Moreover, all three names (Monkan, Shuon, and Kōshin) are used in contemporary and near-contemporary documents by others. As “Monkan” was common to both his full Ritsu and Shingon names, and this is the name by which he is best known in modern studies, I use that name here.⁹ In the *Yuga dentō shō* biography, Hōren identifies him formally by his Shingon name Kōshin, but the import of the Monkan and Shuon synthesis of the names of Monju and Kannon remains clear there.

Monkan's Early Career

Hōren indicates that Monkan was born on 1278/1/11 in Harima 播磨 Province. Then—in a reminder that, however reliable many of the details, the biography is also hagiography—the text reports that before Monkan was born, his mother prayed to both the Wish-Fulfilling (Nyoirin 如意輪) and the White-Robed (Byakue 白衣) Kannon for a filial son. In a dream, she saw Kannon extend her hand and take a moon disk from the air. On the moon disk were three wish-fulfilling jewels, a white one between blue and red ones. At that point, Kannon told Monkan's mother to take whichever one she wished. She chose the white one, became pregnant, and her son was born. The inclusion of the details of his mother's dream reflect Monkan's related involvement in the cults of Kannon and wish-fulfilling jewels and how both cults played roles in a series of paintings dedicated to his mother in the 1330s and in the three-deity combinatory rites he promoted.

Hōren further reports that at age thirteen (1290), Monkan entered Hokkezan 法華山 in Harima Province and took the precepts under the preceptor (*rishshi* 律師) Keison 慶尊 (or Kyōson). Given Monkan's later entrance into Saidaiji,

7 Compare Monkan 文觀 and Shuon 殊音 with Monju 文殊 and Kannon 觀音.

8 See Inoue 1999; 2003, 56n. 1.

9 Similarly, while some scholars prefer the reading “Gushin” for Monkan's Shingon name, I have opted for Kōshin as the more common reading (like in Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師).

support for these *Yuga dentō shō* details can be found in the facts that Eison traveled to Hokkezan in 1285 at the request of the temple monks and that a Keison from Harima is listed in the *Jubosatsukai deshi kyōmyō*, a roster of Eison’s disciples inserted in the 1280 statue of him.¹⁰ Thus perhaps already reflecting a Saidaiji order influence through Keison, Monkan is then reported to have taken refuge in Mañjuśrī in 1291/2, prayed for the bodhi-mind, and had an auspicious dream. In the dream, he saw his compassionate mother insert a wish-fulfilling jewel and a monk’s staff into a sutra container. In response, he moved to Nara at the age of fifteen, studied Hossō under Ryōon-tokugō 良恩得業 of Kōfukuji, and learned Ritsu under the Saidaiji elder Shinkū. The connections between the dream details and Monkan’s decision to move to Nara are not entirely clear, but Shingon esoteric traditions—including those in both the Saidaiji order and Daigoji—placed great emphasis on wish-fulfilling jewels. Moreover, the monk’s staff was used by monks when traveling and was a common emblem of Kannon (as well as Jizō), while a sutra container holding *Perfection of Wisdom* scriptures was a common emblem of Mañjuśrī. The passage thus suggests that Monkan took the dream as an auspicious sign from Mañjuśrī, helping direct him toward Nara and his combined exoteric-esoteric studies and cultic practices there.

The biography reports that Monkan received the ten precepts of a novice from Shinkū at the age of eighteen and attained bodhisattva-bhikṣu status when he was twenty-three (1300). Monkan’s bodhisattva-bhikṣu status indicates that he received the full precepts in a comprehensive-ordination ceremony, according to the understanding of this ceremony in Eison’s Ritsu lineage (see Chapter 1 here). The reference to Monkan’s attaining bodhisattva-bhikṣu status at twenty-three finds support in reliable records elsewhere. For example, in the colophon to a scroll of seed-syllable mandalas, Mañjuśrī images, and mantras inserted in the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue, Monkan notes his comprehensive-precepts age as two.¹¹ Most significantly, Monkan continued to recognize himself as a bodhisattva-bhikṣu, thereby signaling his identification with Eison’s Ritsu lineage, even long into the specifically “Shingon” part of his career, after his 1316 reception of esoteric transmission from the Daigoji-lineage monk Dōjun.¹²

10 See Tamura 1966, 5, and, for the full account of Eison’s trip to Harima and back, the *Gakushōki* entries for 1285/7/23 to 8/15 (NKBK 1977, 60–61).

11 See Kobayashi 1954, 46, for this 1302/6/16 colophon (the rendition of the colophon in Moriyama 1997, 269–70, omits this significant detail).

12 For just one of various examples of Monkan’s continued self-identification as a “bodhisattva-precepts bhikṣu” (*bosatsukai bishu*) long after this transmission, see his

In the same year that Monkan attained bodhisattva-bhikṣu status, he completed a painting of Eison, on 1300/intercalary 7/21 at Yoshino's Genkōji 吉野現光寺.¹³ The reverence Monkan displays here for a founding father of the new Ritsu lineage inaugurated by Kakujō, Eison, and others in 1236 is also echoed in his activities well after his affiliation with institutionally separate Shingon lineages. As Uchida points out (2000, 80, 84), Ninshō, Shinkū, and Kakujō were awarded posthumous titles by the court in successive years from 1328 to 1330, just after Monkan's 1327 appointment by Go-Daigo as deputy senior monastic officer (*gonsōjō* 權僧正) in the Office of Monastic Affairs. Given the timing of these awards and clear testimony to Monkan's hand in the title conferral to Shinkū,¹⁴ Monkan's involvement in the other two conferrals is likely as well.

Accordingly, when the *Yuga dentō shō* biography follows the reference to Monkan's attaining bodhisattva-bhikṣu status by indicating that Monkan first "entered" Shingon at the age of twenty-four (receiving the twofold mandala consecration, or *ryōbu kanjō* 兩部灌頂, from Shinkū, then the exalted *gushi kanjō* transmission from Dōjun), we should not consider this a conversion *away* from his status as a Ritsu monk in Eison's lineage. Rather, Monkan began to specialize in Shingon within Eison's order, and he subsequently—as did many exoteric-esoteric and specifically Shingon monastics in his day—received additional initiations into other esoteric lineages. The additional affiliations represented accumulations rather than erasures or rejections of prior lineage affiliations.

The *Yuga dentō shō* biography moves directly from Monkan's entrance into Shingon at the age of twenty-four (1301) under Shinkū to his reception of transmission from Dōjun, which we know from other records to have taken place in 1316. Thus for exploring Monkan's activities between 1301 and 1316, we need to turn to other records. While records for his activities during this time are few, they do continue to link him to the Saidaiji order. To explore these links, let us now look at the records of the deposits in the 1302/8/25 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue, dedicated on the thirteenth anniversary of Eison's death, and colophons to Monkan's *Saigyokushō* 西玉抄, a text he completed in 1314 which documents the nature and orthodoxy of the Saidaiji esoteric transmission he had inherited.

signature on a 1330/8/25 five-syllable Mañjuśrī painting now held by the Hakutsuru 白鶴 Museum (Uchida 2000, 81).

13 The painting is now held by Shisenji 室泉寺 in Tokyo; see Hirata 1997, plate 1, for a color image.

14 See the *Chokushi Jishin-wajō senge no ki* 勅諭慈真和尚宣下記. This text was appended to the Saimyōji copy of the *Saidaiji Kōshō Bosatsu gonyūmetsu no ki* and can be found in Kumahara 1961, 212–14.

The 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī Pentad

The discovery of the deposits inside the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī pentad, beginning with repairs to the statue in 1934, was a landmark event in our understanding of Monkan. Coupled with the analysis of the inscription inside the 1324 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue, this discovery brought to the fore Monkan's Saidaiji order connections. Although not on the scale of the destroyed original Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image, the Saidaiji pentad, modeled after the Hannyaji image, is a stunning achievement in its own right (see Figures 6–7).¹⁵ The image, now housed in Saidaiji's main hall alongside the Śākyamuni main icon, features the lion-riding Mañjuśrī in the full pentad configuration, with Zenzai-dōji, the royal groom, the Indian monk Buddhapālita, and the old man as attendants. From the deposits and an inscription inside the lion, we know that the vow to construct the figure was made by Eison's disciples in 1293 and that it was completed in 1302. A Diamond Realm seed-syllable mandala, a Sanskrit-syllable Dainichi (Sk. Mahāvairocana) Buddha mantra, and a five-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra were drawn in the interior of the Mañjuśrī figure, which—much like the original Hannyaji image—was filled with votive texts, sutras, relics, and other offerings.

Among the various offerings, Monkan's contributions are multiple. Art historians are unsure of the extent of Monkan's role in completing the more elaborate paintings he dedicated in the 1330s, suggesting that he may have employed a professional Buddhist artist for the actual painting. However, there is enough consistency in the often-unique style and iconography of the paintings to suggest Monkan's skillful hand in composition; his skill was already recognized in the Saidaiji order by the time of the 1302 statue. For example, at the request of three monks, he composed a scroll for the statue containing the Dual Realm seed-syllable mandalas, four colored Mañjuśrī images, and mantras and seed-syllables associated with Mañjuśrī.¹⁶ Based on many similarities to the images in this scroll, Monkan was also likely responsible for an unsigned eight-syllable Mañjuśrī mandala painting inside the statue.¹⁷ He was one of two monks to compose and insert daily Mañjuśrī sketches into the image, a

15 For additional plates of the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī image and deposited items, see Umehara et al. 1979, plates 21–28; Mainichi Shinbunsha 1978, plate 3; 51–58, plates 1–46; and Nara Rokudaiji 1973, inserted p. 2, plates 6–9; inserted p. 18, plate 68; 46–47, plates 19–21.

16 The full 1302/6/16 colophon to these images and an accompanying votive text can be found in Kobayashi 1954, 45–46; see also Tamura 1966, 7. Nara Rokudaiji 1973, inserted p. 2, plate 8, and Mainichi Shinbunsha 1978, 52, plates 7–8, show different portions of this scroll.

17 See Mainichi Shinbunsha 1978, plate 3, and the accompanying description, as well as Okami 1982, 474.



FIGURE 6 Statue of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva Seated on a Lion and Four Attendant Statues (1302), held by Saidaiji. Important Cultural Property. COURTESY OF SAIDAIJI, NARA. PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED BY SAIDAIJI.



FIGURE 7 *Detail of Statue of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva Seated on a Lion (1302), held by Saidaiji. Important Cultural Property.*

COURTESY OF SAIDAIJI, NARA. IMAGE REPRODUCED FROM NARA KOKURITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN, *SAIDAIJI TEN* (1990).

practice he continued in his later years.¹⁸ In addition, colophons and votive texts appended to the *Great Wisdom Sutra* inserted in the statue show that he performed readings of many fascicles from 6/2 to 6/20 in 1302, including the first two fascicles of the six-hundred fascicle text.¹⁹ Being chosen to read the first two fascicles of the *Great Wisdom Sutra* was likely a position of honor, suggesting that his voice may have been esteemed as well as his artistic talents.

Monkan's signatures themselves in the colophons to his offerings are also noteworthy. He variously signs them as "Saidaiji Shuon Monkanbō," "Saidaiji junior bhikṣu" (*shō-bishu* or *shō-biku*), or simply Shuon or Monkan. He signed the scroll of seed-syllable mandalas and Mañjuśrī images, mantras, and other seed-syllables as "Saidaiji junior bhikṣu, Mañjuśrī's retainer, Monkan" (Kobayashi 1954, 46; emphasis mine). These records thus show Monkan's energetic involvement in the preparations for the statue's dedication, his self-identification with both the Saidaiji order and Mañjuśrī, and his status as a bhikṣu, or a fully ordained monk.

Monkan's 1314 Saigyokushō

The aforementioned evidence from the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue suggests that by then Monkan had at least studied the vinaya and the precepts enough to attain the status of a fully ordained monk within the Saidaiji order. Interestingly, however, his own testimony in the colophon to his 1314 *Saigyokushō* shows that he cut short this part of his training and specialized in esotericism sooner than stipulated by Eison. This colophon is significant because, as far as I am aware, it is the only clear record for Monkan after his involvement in the 1302 dedication of the Mañjuśrī pentad at Saidaiji until the record of his 1316 gushi kanjō transmission under Dōjun.²⁰ Furthermore,

18 The colophon for Monkan's daily sketches and accompanying mantras can be found in Kobayashi 1954, 46, and Moriyama 1997, 270. See also Nara Rokudaiji 1973, inserted p. 12, plate 39; 49 no. 8; and Mainichi Shinbunsha 1978, 53, plate 11. On Monkan's continuation of this practice, see Uchida's analysis of the daily Mañjuśrī sketches held by the Nara National Museum, dated to 1337 and 1338 (2000, 91–93).

19 For the colophons to these first two fascicles, and seven others for which Monkan performed the reading, see Moriyama 1997, 270–73. Moriyama's collation of these colophons was based on the partial publication of the inserted items in Kobayashi 1954; subsequent investigations have revealed more *Great Wisdom Sutra* fascicles and other scriptures read by Monkan.

20 Excerpts of the colophon have been printed and analyzed by Oishio (1998, 388–90), and the fuller colophon has been printed in Inoue 2003, 54–55, and Abe 2010, 128. My translations and paraphrases here are based on the text in Abe's study, with reference to Inoue and Oishio.

the colophon provides an early glimpse of the recognition of a separate “Saidaiji lineage” (*Saidaiji-ryū*) of esotericism.

The *Saigyokushō* is a record of the succession (*sōjō shidai* 相承次第) of the Saidaiji esoteric lineage, including the Daigoji lineage Eison inherited, down to Monkan. The document clearly records the succession “Eison—the present elder (Shinkū-daitoku)—the bhikṣu Shuon [Monkan]” (Oishio 1998, 388). It is thus a text designed to show the orthodoxy of the Saidaiji transmission Monkan inherited, and the colophon reveals his understanding of the Saidaiji *ryū* 流, literally “stream” or “current,” a term used for the various esoteric lines of transmission. The colophon to the document first indicates that it was recorded on 1314/9/21 at the lodging of the Saidaiji elder (Shinkū). Monkan then explains:

It was decided by Kōshō Bosatsu [Eison] that those in this lineage should train for five summers in the study of the precepts (*kaigaku* 戒学), then proceed to the practice of the three mysteries. Although the stipulations should be kept, upon entering the gate of this lineage, whether due to the germination of residual karma or to the urgings of ‘unseen response,’²¹ it was difficult for me to wait through the years and months of five summers. Thus I earnestly and exhaustively sought out various luminous teachers to receive the secret depths of the twofold [mandala], fix the mind of the three points,²² transmit the Yoga of the various deities, and attain the understanding of the four layers.²³

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- 21 The reference to “the urgings of ‘unseen response,’”—which points to the influence of a buddha, bodhisattva, or other deity—is omitted in Inoue’s version of the colophon (2003, 54) but found in both Abe’s (2010, 128) version and the portion Oishio quotes (1998, 388).
- 22 “Twofold” (*ryōbu*) refers to the twofold Diamond and Womb realm mandala, or the Dual Realm mandala. The term I have translated as “secret depths” (*hiō* 秘奥), based on Abe 2010, 128, and Oishio 1998, 388, is simply rendered as “secrets” (*himitsu* 秘密) in Inoue 2003, 54. The “three points” (*santen* 三点) is an esoteric term referring to principle, wisdom, and phenomena. Phenomena are understood to be produced through the union of wisdom and principle; see Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 817a–b, s.v. “santen.”
- 23 In esoteric Buddhism, Yoga (*yuga* 瑜伽) refers to union with deities through practice of the “three mysteries” of body, speech, and mind. The term can also serve as an alternative name for Shingon esotericism; see Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 2201a, s.v. “yuga;” 2201c, s.v. “yugashū.” As Oishio suggests (1998, 389), although the “four layers” (*shijū* 四重) can refer to the “four major” precepts, given the sequence of esoteric terms, the Shingon term the “four-level secret understanding” is the likely meaning here. The four levels refer to progressively higher stages of understanding that can be applied to any phenomena; see Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 931b–c, s.v. “shijū hishaku.”

In this context, references to the three mysteries, the twofold mandala, and “the Yoga of the various deities” all point to esoteric practices. The passage thus shows that Monkan shifted from the Ritsu part of his training and specialized in esotericism sooner than was stipulated for Saidaiji order monks. After a metaphorical indication of the difficulty of transmission, Monkan writes: “Therefore, again drawing from the Bodhisattva’s [Eison’s] bequeathed stream,²⁴ I received the present teacher’s seal.” As a result of having received Shinkū’s seal—or his recognition of Monkan’s reception of esoteric transmission—Monkan indicates that his faith in having grasped the essence of the “teachings” or “school” (*shū* 宗) and its depths was aroused and his mind was pacified. He then wanted to record the *Saigyokushō* to capture the heart of the transmission. However, as Monkan next writes, “the response of the unseen is hard to gauge.” Thus, wanting to settle any lingering doubts on whether he had accurately captured the heart of the esoteric teachings transmitted to him through Eison’s lineage,²⁵ he “conveyed the principle and title [of the text] before the Bodhisattva’s altar (*hōzen* 宝前).”²⁶

The reference to conveying the text’s contents before the Bodhisattva’s altar suggests that the conveyance occurred in front of Eison’s statue, as Oishio points out (1998, 389). The 1280 Saidaiji statue of Eison is the most likely candidate, filled as it was with relics, texts by Eison and others, and even a silver and copper coil behind the *ūrṇā* spot effectively channeling Eison’s spiritual power.²⁷ The statue served as a living icon of Eison himself, much as the 1267 Hannyaji image did for Mañjuśrī. Eison’s statue was thus an appropriate vehicle for confirming the deceased master’s approval of the text. Monkan indicates that he “cast an oracle” before the altar and received an approving sign. This practice echoes the emphasis on miraculous confirmation before a buddha or bodhisattva statue in Eison’s own 1236 self-ordination. Fortified by this

24 Here, I have translated the term *ryū* 流 (generally rendered as “lineage” in this study) literally to maintain the water imagery and the play with the verb *ku(mu)* 酌, which suggests “drawing” or scooping water or other liquid.

25 Differences in Abe’s (2010, 128) and Inoue’s (2003, 54) renderings of the colophon passage immediately after Monkan’s reference to the difficulty of gauging the response of the unseen, as well as three ensuing illegible characters, create challenges in interpreting this part. That said, the context of Monkan’s seeking additional confirmation of his understanding before Eison’s altar is clear.

26 The phrase I have translated above as “conveyed the principle *and* title” (云義理、云題名; emphasis mine), based on Abe 2010, 128, is alternatively rendered as “conveyed the title *of* the principle [i.e., Monkan’s text]” (云義理の題名; emphasis mine) in Inoue 2003, 54.

27 See Brinker 1997–98, 53–55, which features both images and diagrams of the coil.

affirmation from the founder, Monkan then took his text to Eison’s successor, Shinkū, to receive his verification.

At this point, Monkan’s part of the narrative ends, and he signs his name “Bodhisattva-precepts bhikṣu diamond-disciple Shuon,” signaling his twofold status as a Ritsu and esoteric practitioner, and affixes his seal.²⁸ This signature is immediately followed by a briefer colophon from Shinkū, confirming his own inspection and approval of the text:

Having completed my inspection of the *Saigyokushō*, it truly is the model of this lineage and must have met with the unseen response of our former teacher. For the diligence of [Monkan’s] study and the merit of his labors, my ensuing joy is overflowing, and I hereby affix my name. 1315/3/10.

Shinkū then signs his colophon as the head of the Saidaiji order and adds his seal, thereby authenticating it.²⁹

The colophon shows the importance that Monkan placed on the Saidaiji esoteric transmission shortly before his reception of gushi kanjō under Dōjun in 1316. It is unclear from the colophon when Monkan received this transmission from Shinkū, but from the context, it seems that it was shortly before Monkan began composing the *Saigyokushō* itself, which he completed on 1314/9/21 at Shinkū’s own Saidaiji lodging. Then, on 1315/3/10, he received Shinkū’s seal of approval for this text. It was likely no coincidence that Monkan received the seal just a year before his reception of gushi kanjō under Dōjun. As Eison, who had conferred esoteric transmission to Shinkū, was a verifiable inheritor of the Daigoji Matsuhashi 松橋 lineage from his training under Jōkei 静慶,³⁰ Monkan was already establishing a link to Daigoji lineages. The *Daigoji shinyōroku* record of Dōjun’s transmission on 1316/4/21 indicates that Monkan was a Saidaiji monk and elder of Chikurinji 竹林寺 at the time, most likely pointing to the Saidaiji branch temple Kasayama 笠山 Chikurinji in Yamato Province.³¹ Given the nature of the *Saigyokushō* and the timing, however, it

28 “Diamond-disciple” (*kongō shi* 金剛資/金剛子) is a self-designation used by esoteric practitioners, including Eison, Shinkū, and many others.

29 My translations and paraphrases from Shinkū’s colophon are based on Inoue 2003, 55; the rendering of Monkan’s colophon in Abe 2010, 128, does not include the additional comments by Shinkū.

30 On Jōkei’s transmission of the Daigoji Matsuhashi lineage, which belonged to the broader Ono branch of Shingon, see Oishio 1995, 170. On Eison’s early esoteric training and his Daigoji connections more generally, see pp. 147–79.

31 See Daigoji Bunkazai Kenkyūjo 1991, 2:753. Hosokawa suggests that before becoming elder of Chikurinji, Monkan may have served as the restoring founder of Hōjō Jōrakuji

may be said that Monkan was already in 1314 and 1315 putting together his esoteric “CV,” or perhaps a graduation thesis, before branching out beyond the order. In turn, the timing of the transmission from Dōjun may be connected to Shinkū’s death, on 1316/1/26, about three months before the transmission and ten months after Shinkū affixed his seal to the *Saigyokushō*.

Monkan’s Post-1316 Shingon Career

After Monkan’s reception of the transmission from Dōjun, he is both a Shingon and a Saidaiji order Ritsu, or “Shingon Ritsu,” monk. “Shingon Ritsu” accurately describes the order’s synthesis of the two areas of specialization, but in the medieval period Saidaiji was institutionally distinct from the major temples considered to represent the Shingon school, such as Tōji, Daigoji, and Kongōbuji. Yet while Eison’s career moves from a specialization in Daigoji-lineage Shingon to a Shingon-Ritsu synthesis and entrance into Saidaiji as a “reclusive monk,” Monkan’s career moves from that of a reclusive monk in the Saidaiji order to an ever-increasing affiliation with Daigoji and other leading Shingon establishments. The transmission under Dōjun is the turning point in Monkan’s affiliation with major Shingon temples.

Both Monkan’s launch from outside the network of major Shingon temples and his entrance into that network under Dōjun ultimately get him into biographical trouble: his Shingon rivals later used his Ritsu background to question his Shingon credentials, and Dōjun’s rivals did not accept his credentials to transmit the Daigoji Hōon’in lineage in the first place. In keeping with Eison, however, Monkan’s status as both a Ritsu and a Shingon monk contributed greatly to the favor he received from elite lay patrons—in Monkan’s case, the Daikakuji-line emperors Go-Uda and Go-Uda’s son Go-Daigo.

Go-Daigo and Monkan were likely first linked through Dōjun’s relationship with Go-Uda. Dōjun’s teacher Kenjun 憲淳 (1258–1308) had been an intimate of Go-Uda from childhood, and Kenjun conferred esoteric consecration on Go-Uda after the emperor retired. Go-Uda grew close to Dōjun as well. Kenjun, however, had two leading monastic disciples, Ryūshō 隆勝 (1264–1314) and Dōjun. After Kenjun died, Go-Uda wanted the succession of the Daigoji Hōon’in lineage to go to Dōjun. But Ryūshō held a transmission document purporting to be Kenjun’s final testament, designating him direct heir of the transmission. A protracted dispute ensued over the succession between Dōjun and Ryūshō and their respective supporters, exemplified by

北条常楽寺 in his native province of Harima and made it a branch temple of Saidaiji. On this point and the identification of Chikurinji, see Hosokawa 1986a, 120, 123n. 35; 1986b, 221–22.

the Daikakuji imperial-line support of Dōjun and the rival Jimyōin 持明院 imperial-line support of Ryūshō. Monkan, as a disciple of Dōjun and later an intimate of the Daikakuji-line emperor Go-Daigo, became embroiled in this dispute. Thus rivals of Dōjun’s dharma lineage, as well as of Go-Daigo and the Daikakuji line more broadly, had interlinked sectarian and political stakes in disparaging him.³²

Yet if Monkan’s specifically Shingon connections drew both support and fire, so too did his Saidaiji order Ritsu connections. Inoue Mayumi has fleshed out the development of the link between Monkan and Go-Daigo by also showing a direct link between Monkan and Go-Uda. The link was largely based on the esteem in which Ritsu monks were held for their managerial skills in temple restoration and other construction and fundraising activities. Go-Uda sent a retired emperor’s directive (*inzen an* 院宣案) dated 1320/12/18 to Monkan at Kanshinji 観心寺 in Kawachi Province. The directive confers control of the Kanshinji estate holding Azumazaka no shō 東坂庄 to the temple monks (*jike* 寺家) and dedicates it for use in temple repairs. Given that 1) the decree was addressed to “Shuon-shōnin,” using Monkan’s Ritsu name, 2) Azumazaka no shō was on a strategic transportation route, and 3) there was much precedent for Ritsu monks’ fundraising and construction activities at such strategic routes (and their involvement with lay elites in doing so), Inoue convincingly argues that Go-Uda was employing Monkan in a similar manner, consistent with his Ritsu background.³³

Not long after Monkan’s temple repairs at Kanshinji, his esoteric activities related to Go-Daigo become conspicuous. The *Yuga dentō shō* records that Monkan entered the imperial palace under Go-Daigo in 1323, which is plausible in light of the events that follow. On 1324/3/7, Monkan dedicated an eight-syllable, lion-riding Mañjuśrī statue for Hannyaji, which now serves as the temple’s main icon. He painted in black ink an inscription on the interior faces of the wood pieces joining at the knees, praying that “the dharma-realm’s sentient beings will generate the bodhi-mind and the prayers of the Golden-Wheel Sacred Lord will be fulfilled” (see Figures 8–9).³⁴ The reference to the Golden-Wheel Sacred Lord (*konrin shōju* 金輪聖主) points to the Golden-Wheel Sacred King (*konrin jōō* 金輪聖王)—the most powerful of the four

32 On the Ryūshō-Dōjun dispute, see Moriyama 1997, 360–63. Conlan 2011, 85–86, addresses this dispute more briefly, focusing on the actions of Go-Uda.

33 Inoue 2003, 48–50. On Ritsu monks’ fundraising activities and transportation routes, see Hosokawa 1988.

34 See also Sugiura et al. 1979, plates 27–31, for color images of the statue. For a full transcription of the inscriptions, accompanied by black and white photographs, see pp. 130–31.



FIGURE 8 Statue of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva Seated on a Lion (1324), held by Hannyaji. *Important Cultural Property.* COURTESY OF HANNYAJI, NARA. PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED BY NARA NATIONAL MUSEUM.



FIGURE 9 *Inscriptions inside Statue of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva Seated on a Lion (1324), held by Hannyaaji. Important Cultural Property.*
 COURTESY OF HANNYAJI, NARA. IMAGE REPRODUCED FROM KOJI JUNREI
 NARA 5: HANNYAJI (KYOTO: TANKŌSHA, 1979).

kinds of Wheel-Turning Sacred Kings (*tenrinjōō* 轉輪聖王; Sk. *cakravartin*)—who is said to rule all four continents of the world. As various scholars have surmised, the reference to the Golden-Wheel Sacred Lord was to Go-Daigo, and this part of the inscription appears to have been a prayer for the success of Go-Daigo’s first attempt to overthrow the warrior government, culminating in the Shōchū 正中 (1324–26) Incident six months after the dedication.³⁵

35 See, for example, Sugiyama 1962, 14–15; Okami 1982, 474–75; and Amino 1986, 162. For a contrasting view on the dedication, see Uchida 2006b, 118–19. Uchida is skeptical that the reference to fulfilling Go-Daigo’s prayers was linked to rites against the warrior government, but I find the timing here too conspicuous and agree with the majority view.

In the inscription, we see evidence of Monkan's close ties to Go-Daigo already in 1324 as well as esoteric conceptions of Mañjuśrī linked to his role as a state-protecting deity.

The inscription includes the seed-syllables for the five-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra, the five great elements, the Womb Realm Dainichi mantra, and the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra, as well as individual seed-syllables for the guardian deity Fudō 不動, Aizen, and Mañjuśrī. The chief donor is listed as "the former Ise no kami 伊勢守 [Ise governor] Fujiwara Kanemitsu 藤原兼光," and Amino persuasively argues that this refers to Go-Daigo's court favorite, Iga Kanemitsu 伊賀兼光 (1986, 162–68). For our purposes, it is significant that Monkan refers to himself three times: as a "Buddha-disciple who keeps the perfect-and-full precepts"; as a "bodhisattva-precepts [bhikṣu]"; and, on the lotus pedestal for the statue, as the "Diamond Buddha-disciple Shuon." Thus even here, in this esoteric eight-syllable Mañjuśrī figure and inscription, Monkan identifies himself in terms of his status both as a precepts-keeping monk and as an esoteric disciple. The dedicatory prayer also fits the emphasis on the bodhi-mind in Eison's and related writings on Mañjuśrī. Moreover, as we will see, Monkan's use and visual arrangement of the seed syllables in the inscription show intriguing links to key passages in his later texts on the three-deity combinatory rites used especially in the Daigoji Sanbōin lineage. These links are significant because they underscore continuity between Monkan's involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult with Saidaiji order temples and as a Daigoji-lineage Shingon monk.

Monkan's dedication of the statue simultaneously belongs to a broader esoteric tradition venerating the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī as a state-protecting deity. Both the Hannyaji and the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī pentads constructed by Eison and his disciples incorporated eight-syllable Mañjuśrī mantras and images among the various deposits. Moreover, as suggested particularly in Eison's invocation of Mañjuśrī in rites to ward off the Mongols, state protection also played a role in his Mañjuśrī faith.³⁶ In East Asia, state-protecting uses of the Mañjuśrī cult have been most strongly linked to Mañjuśrī's eight-syllable form. A brief review of how this tradition developed and came to Japan will thus help contextualize Monkan's use of the Hannyaji statue and links to esoteric understandings of Mañjuśrī as a state-protecting deity in the Saidaiji order.

In East Asia, the tradition linking the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī to state protection dates to at least Tang-period China. For example, in 710 the South Indian

36 I will address this issue in the Epilogue to the book.

monk Bodhiruci “translated” the *Mañjuśrī Dharma-Treasury Dhāraṇī Sutra*.³⁷ Here, Śākyamuni is said to have prophesied that after his passing Mañjuśrī would manifest in Mahā Cīna, or “Great China,” at a mountain called “Five Peaks” and would display his transcendent powers.³⁸ Śākyamuni emphasizes the recitation of Mañjuśrī’s eight-syllable mantra in the “latter terminal age, when the Buddha-dharma is extinguished, when woesome teachings are on the ascendant, [when] disasters will increasingly arise . . . and woesome stars will cause transmutations.”³⁹ Due largely to the influence of this sutra, the later eighth-century efforts of Amoghavajra in promoting the Mañjuśrī cult, and the *Eight-Syllable Mañjuśrī Dhāraṇī and Mandala Rites*,⁴⁰ the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī became popular in China, particularly in times of national threat, whether from astrological factors or foreign invaders and other usurpers.

Importing this Tang esoteric tradition to Japan, Saichō’s disciple Ennin is one of three esoteric monks known to have brought the *Eight-Syllable Mañjuśrī Dhāraṇī and Mandala Rites* (T 1184) from China in the ninth century. The thirteenth-century Tendai esoteric iconographic compendium *Asabashō* 阿娑縛抄 cites Ennin’s leadership of the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī rites to cure Emperor Ninmyō 仁明 (r. 833–50) in 850 as the first Japanese precedent.⁴¹ As the state was believed to be embodied in the emperor, healing rites for emperors are inseparable from state protection. Shingon iconographic compendia similarly celebrate the astrological benefits of eight-syllable Mañjuśrī rites

37 This scripture is extant in two translations attributed to Bodhiruci, the *Monjushiri hō bōzō daranikyō* 文殊師利法寶藏陀羅尼經 (Ch. *Wenshushilifa baozang tuoluoni jing*; T 1185A) and the *Monjushiri hōzō daranikyō* 文殊師利寶藏陀羅尼經 (Ch. *Wenshushili baozang tuoluoni jing*; T 1185B). For convenience, and as both versions are treated as translations of the same scripture, I refer to both here as the *Mañjuśrī Dharma-Treasury Dhāraṇī Sutra*, but I provide the appropriate Taishō number when citing specific passages.

38 See T 1185A 20:791c11–19. See Birnbaum 1983, 11–12, for a translation of most of the passage. “Five peaks” (*wuding* 五頂) here readily signals Wutai, because the latter term literally means “five terraces.”

39 See T 20:1185A 20:791c21–26 (translation from Birnbaum 1983, 13; interpolation and ellipses mine).

40 This is an abbreviated rendering of the title of the scripture *Daishō Myōkichijō Bosatsu himitsu hachiji darani shugyō mandara shidai giki hō* 大聖妙吉祥菩薩秘密八字陀羅尼修行曼荼羅次第儀軌法 (Ch. *Dasheng Miaojixiang pusa mimi bazi tuoluoni xiuxing mantuluo cidai yigui fa*; T 1184). This scripture was composed or compiled by Bodhiruci in 824. Birnbaum suggests that it is “the most important ritual text on Eight-Syllable Mañjuśrī” (1983, 68).

41 The text further notes major eight-syllable Mañjuśrī rites in 1099, 1142, 1143, and 1157 for such state-protecting purposes as praying for rain and averting destructive astrological influences. See T 3190 94:248a–b; Birnbaum 1983, 68–69, 94; and Hirata 2003, 90.

and the link to state protection. In the twelfth-century *Kakuzenshō* 覺禪鈔, for example, a passage on the pronouncement of intentions (*hyōbyaku*) for the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī rites lists such benefits as subjugating all demons, averting negative transformations of the constellations, protecting the country, and preserving the safety of the “Jewel Body” (the emperor). The rites are thus deemed a “wondrous technique for protecting the state” (Bussho Kankōkai 1978–83, 47:1226–27).

Clearly, Monkan draws on such an esoteric, state-protecting Mañjuśrī tradition in his dedication of the Hannyaji statue. His use of the statue in support of Go-Daigo’s “prayers” also fits a pattern of esoteric subjugation rites performed by Go-Daigo and his attendant monks against his rivals in Kantō. Go-Daigo and his monastic allies performed these esoteric prayers under the pretext of rites to ensure the safe pregnancy of an imperial consort. These rites lasted for at least the four years spanning 1326 to 1329, with Go-Daigo himself conducting some of the esoteric rites. Indeed, they may have lasted even longer, as the consort’s freakishly long conditions of “pregnancy” continued until Monkan and Enkan 円觀 (1281–1356) were arrested in 1331/5 for their involvement in the subjugation rites (Amino 1986, 180–81).

There was certainly precedent for retired emperors receiving ordination and initiation into esoteric rites, such as Go-Daigo’s father Go-Uda had. Direct participation by an *acting* emperor such as Go-Daigo undertook in the rites against the warrior government, however, was extremely rare. Monkan had a close relationship with Go-Daigo both before his arrest and banishment to Iōgashima 硫黄島 and after his return to the capital in 1333/5, following Go-Daigo’s defeat of the Hōjō-led warrior government. Thus Monkan surely played key roles in the subjugation rites and in the Shingon initiations of Go-Daigo. According to the *Yuga dentō shō*, in 1325/10 Monkan conferred his seal of transmission along with the *Ninnōkyō hihō* 仁王經秘法 (Secret Rite of the *Sutra for Humane Kings*) on Go-Daigo and, as a reward, was granted the status of an official imperial palace monk (*naigubu* 内供奉). The text also indicates that in 1327/10, Monkan conferred the consecration for the Dual Realm dharma transmission (*ryōbu denbō kanjō* 兩部伝法灌頂) and was appointed deputy senior monastic officer. He was further said to have granted the Yogi (Yugi 瑜祇) consecration to the emperor on 1330/10/26 and to the empress dowager on 11/22.⁴² The Yogi consecration was a rarified esoteric initiation,

42 See Tsujimura 1999, 1, and the photographic reproduction in Uchida 2000, 78–79. Concerning the date of the Yogi consecration to the empress dowager, Uchida’s printed version renders it as 11/23, but the facsimile version on the same page (79) shows that this should be 11/22, as in Tsujimura’s version.

based on the *Yuga yugikyō* 瑜伽瑜祇經 (Sutra of Yogas and Yogis). This sutra was particularly significant for the Aizen cult, known for its efficacy in both subjugating others and controlling one’s own passions.⁴³

For all Monkan’s activities during this time as an esoteric “Shingon” monk, he never abandoned his Saidaiji order “Ritsu” connections. Monkan enshrined the 1324 Mañjuśrī statue at Hannyaji. He played a role in awarding Shinkū his posthumous title—bringing the edict to Saidaiji personally on 1329/3/26⁴⁴—and likely the 1328 and 1330 title conferrals to Ninshō and Kakujō as well. A Tōji record for 1330/5/7 indicates that “Great Promoter (*daikanjin*) Monkan-shōnin” borrowed a folding screen, featuring the Twelve Heavenly Generals, for repairs. Monkan acknowledged reception of the screen, signed his name as the “Chikurinji elder,” and affixed his seal.⁴⁵ This at once shows his continued affiliation with the Saidaiji branch temple Chikurinji and his engagement with the Shingon temple Tōji as a fundraising monk, a role common for Ritsu monks. On 1330/11/8, Monkan inscribed his name as “Great Promoter *śramaṇa* Shuon” on a reliquary donated to Tōji. This signature is notable because, as Inoue has shown, Monkan consistently used the name “Shuon” or “Monkanbō Shuon” for activities that were in keeping with those of Ritsu monks, even after his adoption of the Shingon name Kōshin following the gushi kanjō initiation from Dōjun.⁴⁶

Monkan was thus able to parlay both his Ritsu background and his Shingon training into favor from Go-Uda and Go-Daigo and his official affiliation with Tōji. Monkan’s Ritsu background, however, was not always looked upon so favorably by Shingon elite. Once he gained appointments to leadership positions at central Shingon institutions, not long after his triumphant return to the capital in 1333/5, he apparently encountered fierce opposition from the Mt. Kōya establishment. By about the sixth month of 1334, he was appointed abbot (*zasu*) of Daigoji, and that same year, he became one of the head monks (*chōja*) of Tōji. On 1335/3/15, he was promoted to the position of first *chōja*, an appointment that simultaneously made him the head of Kongōbuji on

43 See the *Yuga yugikyō* (Ch. *Yuqie yuqi jing*; T 867) and Goepper 1993. Also noteworthy here is that Eison kept an icon of Aizen in his quarters for his personal devotion. Although Eison never mentions Aizen in his autobiography, later traditions such as the *Nenpu* claim that Eison invoked Aizen as part of his subjugation rites against the Mongols (see Groner 2001, 117–20).

44 See the *Chokushi Jishin-wajō senge no ki*, in Kumahara 1961, 212.

45 See Inoue 2003, 53, for the document.

46 On Monkan’s involvement in these fundraising activities for Tōji, see Inoue 2003, 53–54. On Monkan’s differing names and his use of them, see Inoue 1999; 2003, 56n. 1.

Mt. Kōya. According to a petition recorded in the *Hōkyōshō* and the later *Zoku dentō kōroku*, the Mt. Kōya monastic assemblage responded by petitioning the court to overturn the appointment, denouncing Monkan in scathing terms.

*The 1335 Mt. Kōya Petition, Monkan's Mañjuśrī Rites,
and Shingon Activities*

As quoted in the *Hōkyōshō*, the Mt. Kōya petition begins by referring to Monkan as “Tōji kanjin hijiri Monkan-hosshi,” ignoring his monastic titles as well as his Shingon name, Kōshin, which the text never uses.⁴⁷ The designation was scornful, and *kanjin hijiri*, or “promotional saint,” was likely used to castigate him as a low-ranking monk (Amino 1986, 173). Official appointments as *daikanjin* (Great Promoter)—the leaders of fundraising campaigns for Tōdaiji, Tōji, and other major temples—such as Chōgen, Ninshō, and Monkan held were positions of honor. Many of the *kanjin* monks working under them in such campaigns, however, were low ranking. Although the term *hijiri* had long been used to refer in praise to such “sages” or “saints” as Shōtoku Taishi and Gyōki, by Monkan’s time the term also referred to monks engaged in menial tasks for temples. Implicitly suggesting that Monkan was a *mere* *kanjin hijiri* at the start of the petition thus contrasts with the ensuing history of Tōji’s exalted status as an esoteric state-protecting temple, established by Kōbō Daishi (Kūkai).

Further calling Monkan a “semblance of a bhikṣu,” the text singles out his origins as a Ritsu monk from the Saidaiji branch temple Hōjōji 北條寺 in Harima and casts him as an outsider to the Shingon school. It goes on to claim:

Simultaneously, he learned the ‘way of calculation,’⁴⁸ was enamored of divination, wholeheartedly studied magical techniques (*jujutsu* 呪術), and practiced mystical efficacy (*shugen* 修験). His lustful mind is excessive and his conceited thoughts are extreme.

The text accuses him of “usurping the position of Shōdō-shōnin” as Great Promoter of Tōji.⁴⁹ “In the black robes of a recluse,” he illegitimately joined

47 Except where otherwise noted, my paraphrases and translations from the Mt. Kōya petition are based on its quotation in full in the Chinese text of the *Hōkyōshō*—its earliest known appearance—printed in Broucke 1992, 134–141. I have benefited from Broucke’s annotated translation of this version, as well as Tsujimura’s (1999) yomikudashi rendering of the *Zoku dentō kōroku* and the petition as it is quoted there.

48 The “way of calculation” (*sandō* 算道) is a practice employed in astrology, according to Goepper (1993, 108).

49 Shōdō 証道 (1247–1339) had been named Tōji *daikanjin* in 1326 (Broucke 1992, 74n. 256; for more biographical details, see Moriyama 1997, 297).

the ranks of the Office of Monastic Affairs. He is full of the desire for fame and wealth and is shameless. In addition, he is reckless in his duties as head monk of Tōji, and only fear of the imperial law and the emperor’s authority prevents the high and the low from speaking out against him. Like a jackal (literally, “wild fox”) who was said to have preached the dharma to the Indian god Indra, the *dākinī*-worshipping Monkan approaches the emperor and makes his reports. “Although he may enjoy petty worldly arts, how could he be allowed to practice the highest, unsurpassed dharma?” He is a disgrace to his school and to the dharma. Thus, the text argues, he should be expelled.

The petition did not stop there, however, and continued to build the case against Monkan. Further lamenting that, “from the beginning, he was no follower of the Daishi [Kūkai],” the text criticizes Monkan as “a precept master of Hinayana,” again using his Ritsu background to cast doubt on his Shingon qualifications. He has studied false, magical texts, nothing but the vulgar customs of a peripheral land (as Japan was considered relative to India). The petition then quotes from the *Yuigō* 遺告—a text long attributed to Kūkai as his last testament to his disciples⁵⁰—and a directive from the Shōwa 承和 era (or Jōwa; 834–48). The key point of the petition in these passages is that non-Shingon monks were forbidden from practicing at Tōji by Kūkai and the court. Thus the Mt. Kōya assembly contends that ever since the Shōwa era, “kanjin hijiri, monks of a different gate” had never been permitted to intermingle among the ranks of the head monks of Tōji. Accordingly, neither should Monkan, a Ritsu monk who “shamelessly broke the precepts,” who “upon entering Shingon, violated the samaya [precepts].” He was “neither on the proper path nor a recluse.” They then rhetorically ask, “enamored of military prowess and weaponry,” how could he have become head monk of Tōji? Thus the assembled monks petition that, for the prosperity of the Buddhist establishment (*bukke* 仏家) and the glory of the emperor, Monkan be removed from his positions as head monk of Tōji and abbot of “this mountain.”⁵¹

The vehemence of the Mt. Kōya monks’ reported reaction against Monkan is striking. Surely, part of this reaction was due to Monkan’s background as a Saidaiji Ritsu monk, just as the petition attests. Although I have seen little evidence of open hostility toward Eison from his contemporary Shingon monks,

50 Few modern scholars accept the *Yuigō* as authentic. However, by the Kamakura period, it had long been accepted as such in Shingon. On this text and its reliability, see Hakeda 1972, 16n. 12.

51 Here, “this mountain” (*tōzan* 当山) likely refers to Monkan’s position as abbot of Mt. Kōya accompanying the Tōji appointment. The version of the petition in the *Zoku dentō kōroku*, however, writes “Mt. Daigo” instead of “this mountain” (Tsuji-mura 1999, 3b). As Monkan was also abbot of Daigoji, this interpretation is possible.

Monkan's institutional rise was a different matter. Monkan was the first Ritsu monk to become a senior monastic officer (*sōjō* 僧正) and enter the Office of Monastic Affairs (Amino 1986, 172–73). But Eison and his fellow Ritsu monks' status as “black-robed” or “reclusive” (*tonsei*) monks was based on a *disavowal* of participation in such offices, whether by giving up one's position or never accepting the position in the first place. By contrast, Monkan's appointments as head of Tōji and Daigoji placed him at the institutional peaks of Shingon hierarchy. As long as Ritsu monks remained reclusive monks, and as long as the Shingon of Saidaiji order Ritsu monks remained “separately established”—as Yūkai described Eison and the “*Saidaiji-ryū*” in the *Hōkyōshō* (Broucke 1992, 16)—they were not such a threat. Yet Monkan was now competing with Mt. Kōya monks on their own terms, as an official representative of Shingon and the state-appointed monastic hierarchy. His entrance from outside the Shingon sectarian “gate” thus threatened their established networks of power and influence.⁵²

Whatever the validity of the accusations against Monkan, or the motivations of the monks recording them, the Mt. Koya petition had little near-term effect on Monkan's standing in the monastic hierarchy and his official functions. For example, on 1335/10/7, about five months after the date of the petition, Monkan donated to Tōji an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī painting he had completed for his mother's fifth seventh-day memorial on 1334/6/23.⁵³ In addition, a record by the Tōji monk Gōhō 杲宝 (1306–62)—who is often reported in secondary sources to have burned Monkan's writings—depicts a seven-day *Ninnōkyō* 仁王經 rite from 1335/10/21 to 10/28 led by the “head monk, dharma-administrator, senior monastic officer Kōshin.” Here, Gōhō uses Monkan's monastic title for Tōji, his title as a member of the Office of Monastic Affairs, and his Shingon name, all signs of respect and recognition of his offices. Gōhō also notes that he himself was one of the hundred monks gathered for the assembly, and nothing

52 Thomas Conlan suggests that the ill will toward Monkan in the petition arose less from sectarian issues than from concerns that he was spreading Shingon secrets to the uninitiated (2011, 90). But as Conlan's own study clearly shows, notions of esoteric “secrecy” in medieval Japan were intimately tied with lineage, hence sectarian, concerns. What qualified as secrets—and from whom they were to be kept secret—shifted along with sectarian and other insider/outsider relationships. Thus I do not believe that the two sets of concerns can be separated.

53 See the colophon to the painting in Fujikake 1919, 108a–b. The painting, formerly held by Tōji, is now privately held. Various recent studies thus refer to this painting as the “former-Tōji” Mañjuśrī painting, a practice I will echo here.

in the passage suggests that this was anything but a point of honor for him.⁵⁴ Moreover, about a month after the assembly, on intercalary 10/23, Monkan led the relics-counting rite at Tōji as part of his role as head of the temple. Finally, records dated to the 11th and 12th months of 1335, concerning texts Monkan had requested for Go-Daigo, show that Mt. Kōya monks did yield to him as abbot (Moriyama 1997, 312–14).

These examples outline just a few of Monkan's activities as a Shingon practitioner and Tōji head monk shortly after the Mt. Kōya petition was reputedly issued. Even after the Ashikaga forces invaded Kyoto and Monkan retreated to Yoshino with Go-Daigo, he continued to be favored by the Southern Court and to lead an active life as a Shingon monk. In particular, he composed many ritual texts, including several commissioned by Go-Daigo and Go-Daigo's son Emperor Go-Murakami 後村上 (1328–68; r. 1339–68). Reliable records can be found in the archives of Tōji, Kawachi Province's Kongōji 金剛寺 and Shinpukuji 真福寺, Kinpusenji 金峰山寺, and other temples for Monkan's textual and ritual activities from the time he left Kyoto, through his reinstatement as head monk of Tōji in 1351/11 after the Southern Court's defeat of Ashikaga Takauji 足利尊氏 (1305–58), to his final years in Kongōji.⁵⁵ Of particular significance for this study is that the texts compiled and transmitted by Monkan during the years shortly after his retreat to Yoshino included a *Five-Syllable Mañjuśrī Rite* on 1338/4/25, a set of four ritual texts related to Mañjuśrī beginning with the *Thousand Bowls Mañjuśrī Rite* (*Senpatsu Monju hō* 千鉢文殊法) also on 1338/4/25, and an *Eight-Syllable Mañjuśrī Rite* completed on 1339/6/28 in response to an imperial edict.⁵⁶

54 See fascicle five of the *Tōbōki* 東宝記 (or *Tōhōki*), quoted in Moriyama 1997, 312. Given the way Gōhō refers to Monkan in this text, more research is necessary on his reputed burning of Monkan's writings, as Moriyama points out. The claim that Gōhō burned Monkan's writings can be found in the late-seventeenth to early-eighteenth-century *Zoku dentō kōroku* (Tsujimura 1999, 4), but I have not yet been able to trace the claim to fourteenth-century texts.

55 Colophons for the texts Monkan copied or compiled, along with other primary documents related to his life, can be found in the *Dainihon shiryō*, series 6, vol. 21 (Tōkyō Daigaku 1924, 458–500). Abe's chronology of Monkan's writings (2010, 128–32) includes new colophon details to some of the texts mentioned in the *Dainihon shiryō* as well as colophons for recently discovered texts.

56 Colophon details for these texts are based on Monkan's *Ono kōhishō* (or *guhishō*) 小野弘秘抄, a compilation of ritual procedures and oral transmissions for devotion to various deities, and can be found in Abe 2010, 130–31. The compilation itself, however, remains unpublished.

The other three texts in the sequence of texts accompanying the *Thousand Bowls Mañjuśrī Rite* were a *Bowl-Hurling Mañjuśrī Rite* (*Hōhatsu Monju hō 放鉢文殊法*) on 1338/4/28, a *Mañjuśrī Spiritual Friends Rite* (*Monju chishiki hō 文殊知識法*) on 4/29, and a *Zenzai-dōji Rite* on 5/1. The title of the *Bowl-Hurling Mañjuśrī Rite* suggests that it was based on the *Hōhatsukyō 放鉢經* (Sutra of the Bowl-Hurling [Miracle]), which, along with the previously discussed *Shinji kangyō* verses (see Chapter 2), was one of the locus classici in East Asia for views of Mañjuśrī as the mother and father of buddhas.⁵⁷ In turn, the *Mañjuśrī Spiritual Friends Rite* and the *Zenzai-dōji Rite* were both likely connected to Mañjuśrī's role in the *Flower Garland Sutra* as the guide for the youth Zenzai (Sk. Sudhana) through his encounters with fifty-three "spiritual friends." Most noteworthy here, however, is the *Thousand Bowls Mañjuśrī Rite* that heads the list, which is identified in the colophon as "extremely secret" and thereby claimed as a particularly esoteric and exclusive ritual text. This rite is surely linked to the esoteric *Sutra of the Mañjuśrī of a Thousand Arms and a Thousand Bowls*.⁵⁸ Although never referring to the sutra by name, both Jōkei and Eison drew from it in their respective *Monju kōshiki*. Eison implicitly did so again in the *Hannyaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon*.⁵⁹ This esoteric sutra on Mañjuśrī thus played an important, if somewhat furtive role in the imaginative of Eison's exoteric-esoteric milieu. Even treated as "extremely secret," however, the use of the sutra becomes explicit in Monkan's hands. We see this again in Monkan's 1339/6/18 *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu 当流最極秘訣* (Ultimate Secret Transmission of This Lineage), one of his texts related to the three-deity combinatory rites, when Monkan cites an oral transmission pointing to this sutra as part of the basis for his significant use of Mañjuśrī's seed-syllable *maṅ* (Jp. *man*) there.⁶⁰

57 For the key passage in the *Hōhatsukyō* (Ch. *Fang bo jing*), see T 629 15:451a14–19; for an English translation of the passage, see Quinter 2011, 287.

58 *Daijō yuga kongō shōkai Mañjushiri senbi senpatsu daikyōōkyō 大乘瑜伽金剛性海曼殊室利千臂千鉢大教王經* (Ch. *Dasheng yuqie jingang xinghai Manshushili qianbi qianbo dajiaowang jing*; T 1177A). For brief introductions to this sutra in English, see Gimello 1996, 402–5n. 67, and Gimello 1998. Gimello indicates that the scripture is an apocryphal sutra said to have been brought to China by Vajrabodhi and translated by Amoghavajra (1998, 154).

59 On these connections, see the annotations to my translations of Eison's *Monju kōshiki* and the *Hannyaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon* in the Documents section.

60 For the reference to the oral transmission, see Abe 2010, 155b. The beginning of Monkan's text, including the original title, is missing, but the title has been provisionally supplied by Abe based on Monkan's colophon (Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan 2006, 608). I will address this text and its use of Mañjuśrī's *maṅ* syllable in more detail later in the chapter.

Monkan's foregrounding of the *Thousand Bowls Mañjuśrī Rite* among the set of four Mañjuśrī-related ritual texts compiled in the fourth and fifth months of 1339, and his compilation of the *Five-Syllable Mañjuśrī* and *Eight-syllable Mañjuśrī* rites in 1338 and 1339, highlight his continued participation in the Mañjuśrī cult and the emphasis on its esoteric aspects that we saw in the 1324 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image. The continued context of military conflict between Go-Daigo and warrior leaders—now manifested as the war between the Northern and Southern courts—suggests that Go-Daigo continued to seek the power to protect the state and subdue his enemies in such esoteric Mañjuśrī rites.

Monkan's activities after Go-Daigo's death in 1339 show that even with the loss of his most powerful patron, he remained a well-connected and active synthesizer of esoteric and exoteric cultic traditions. For example, if there truly was a rupture between Monkan and the Mt. Kōya establishment at the time of the reported 1335 petition, Monkan's later years show a reconciliation with that same establishment: Mt. Kōya's own archives and annals reveal that he donated a significant set of twelve “numinous treasures” to the Portrait Hall (Miedō 御影堂) at Kongōbuji, where Kūkai's image was enshrined. Monkan's records of the enshrinement of these treasures, dated 1348/7/25 and 7/27, are held by Mt. Kōya itself. In these records as well, we see continuing evidence of his participation in the Mañjuśrī cult, including his promotion of Eison's legacy as a master transmitting the source of exoteric and esoteric teachings and of Mañjuśrī's significance as such a source.

An intriguing group of three consecutive items are a gold and silver Mañjuśrī statue, three monastic robes originally donated by Eison to Emperor Kameyama, and an iron begging bowl. First, in Monkan's description of the intentions behind his donation of the Mañjuśrī statue, he repeats significant images of Mañjuśrī that are found in Eison's *Hannyaji Monju engi*, including the depiction of Śākyamuni revering Mañjuśrī as his ancestral teacher and of Mañjuśrī as ultimately responsible for unveiling the esoteric dharma treasury. Eison's text attributed to Mañjuśrī's influence the opening of the Iron Tower esoteric repository by the third Shingon patriarch, Nāgārjuna. Monkan goes even further, suggesting that “the originally enlightened Dainichi, following Mañjuśrī, opened the jewel storehouse” (Tōkyō Daigaku 1924, 480). He thereby attributes even the revelation of the teachings by the first patriarch, the primordial buddha Dainichi, to Mañjuśrī's influence. Similarly, the *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu* passage on the oral transmission pointing to the *Sutra of the Mañjuśrī of a Thousand Bowls* summarizes the gist as “the five buddhas follow Mañjuśrī and are born” (Abe 2010, 155a), and the five buddhas in the Diamond and Womb Realm mandalas feature Dainichi as the central buddha. Thus in his description of the Mañjuśrī statue donation to Mt. Kōya as well, Monkan

was likely influenced by the *Sutra of the Mañjuśrī of a Thousand Arms and a Thousand Bowls*, in which Vairocana states that Mañjuśrī had been his teacher in the distant past.⁶¹

In the second of the three items, the three robes donated by Eison, a link to the Saidaiji order is clear.⁶² Most intriguing, however, is the narrative juxtaposition of the statue, robes, and bowl and their descriptions. In the third item's description, Monkan links the intentions behind the bowl donation to Śākyamuni's five hundred vows—a popular motif in Saidaiji order texts—and to Amoghavajra, Kūkai, Gyōki, Mañjuśrī's "thousand bowls," and the three robes. The chain of associations in this description is complex, reflecting a correlative logic typical of esoteric texts at the time.⁶³ But noteworthy here is that, having already linked the revelation of the esoteric and exoteric teachings to Mañjuśrī and the robes to Eison, and now the bowl to the robes as well as to Gyōki and patriarchs of Shingon, Monkan suggestively aligns Mañjuśrī (and Mañjuśrī manifesting as Gyōki), Eison, and the transmissions of the exoteric and esoteric teachings. This is in keeping with Eison's emphasis on Mañjuśrī as the deity responsible for ensuring the continuity of Mahayana transmission. It is also in keeping with the associations between Eison and Mañjuśrī-Gyōki that were common among Eison's disciples by this time. Here, however, Monkan's primary association of Mañjuśrī-Gyōki is with Kūkai, as he indicates that Gyōki's iron bowl was conferred to Kūkai.⁶⁴ That said, while Monkan reinforces many associations in these descriptions, part of what he reinforces are his connections to an illustrious lineage of Shingon patriarchs through Eison and other masters.

In sum, Monkan's longstanding "orthodox" Shingon connections and activities—including his involvement in Eison's Daigoji-derived Shingon lineage and the Mañjuśrī cult—are supported not only by his and his disciples' testimony but by records from Saidaiji, Daigoji, and many other temples. Most notably, these temple records include even those held by Mt. Kōya itself, the temple establishment apparently responsible for our most scathing portrait

61 See T 1177A 20:725b14–17.

62 Monkan's direct connection to the robes, however, came through Go-Daigo, who, he reports, had inherited the robes and revered them.

63 On this correlative logic in medieval esoteric texts, see Stone 1999, especially 160–63. There are many other instances of such logic at work in Monkan's own writings; see, for example, the texts collected and introduced in *Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan 2006* by Abe Yasurō and in Abe 2010 by Abe and Gaétan Rappo. See also Dolce 2010.

64 For the passages on these three items, see Tōkyō Daigaku 1924, 480–81. Monkan's full record of the donations, from the *Kōyasan monjo* 高野山文書, can be found in Tōkyō Daigaku 1924, 477–83.

of Monkan during his own lifetime. After his death, however, the negative portrait of the Mt. Kōya petition was spread and embellished by opponents and became enmeshed in the construction of the Tachikawa lineage as the embodiment of “heretical” Shingon. As we will see below, the interlinked construction of Monkan and the Tachikawa lineage as heretical shows how distortion itself becomes part of the historical record, as the lines drawn between the orthodox and heterodox converge and diverge.

The Construction of the “Heretical” Monkan and the Tachikawa Lineage

The portraits of Monkan in the *Hōkyōshō*, the latter part of the *Taiheiki*, and the *Zoku dentō kōroku* discount the evidence for his actual Shingon connections and credentials while casting him as an illegitimate, heterodox practitioner. For example, to invalidate Monkan’s place in the Daigoji Hōon’in lineage, Yūkai writes in the *Hōkyōshō* that Monkan is “no vessel filled by Dōjun,” but “a distant disciple” whose “reception of the dharma was not detailed.” He proceeds to report that Monkan “reading sacred works (*shōgyō*) here and there, composed more than one thousand fascicles of writings, multiple ‘great matter’ texts (*daiji*), and more than thirty *injin*.”⁶⁵ The implication is that Monkan produced a great many texts based on only superficial knowledge of Shingon. To further discredit Monkan, Yūkai quotes the Mt. Kōya petition in full, and he concludes the section on Monkan by insisting that “the writings of Kōshin’s [Monkan’s] school circulate everywhere . . . it is said that the sacred works by Kōshin’s own brush have been destroyed by fire in the vicinity of Saga 嗟峨.”⁶⁶ In Yūkai’s text, there is a break between this section on Monkan and the next one, which renews the diatribe against the Tachikawa lineage. This break is significant because it highlights how Yūkai brackets the long section on Monkan with two sections on the Tachikawa lineage, while never *specifically* using the term “Tachikawa” in the section on Monkan. Yūkai’s construction and the reference to his writings being burned, like the Tachikawa writings were, effectively lumps Monkan with the Tachikawa “heresy.”

Yet among the contemporary Tachikawa-lineage transmission documents investigated to date, none include Monkan,⁶⁷ suggesting that he was simply

65 Translations based on the *Hōkyōshō* (Broucke 1992, 133–34). For a slightly different translation, see Broucke’s rendering on pp. 21–22.

66 Translation from Broucke 1992, 27, slightly modified. See also the original Chinese on p. 142. The Saga burning of Monkan’s texts referred to is the aforementioned one generally attributed to Gōhō. However, Yūkai does not mention Gōhō here.

67 See Kushida 1964, 383–88; Inoue 1999, 51.

scapegoated alongside this lineage with little supporting evidence. Kushida points out that Monkan's teacher, Dōjun, did inherit a *Bodaishinron kanjō inmyō* 菩提心論灌頂印明 accompanied by a transmission chart showing the Tachikawa lineage (1964, 388). There is, however, no direct evidence that Monkan received this transmission. Moreover, even if he did, we should not assume that the lineage listed there was widely regarded as heretical at the time: the renowned Shingon monk Raiyu 頼瑜 (1226–1304) is listed in the chart as having transmitted the text to the also-renowned Kenjun, who transmitted it to Dōjun.

Yūkai's portrait of Monkan as a heretical Shingon practitioner is also suspect considering the evidence from Monkan's texts and related colophons created during his lifetime and shortly after his death. This evidence shows that Monkan had a loyal following among Shingon monks considered "orthodox." Such disciples include Hōren, author of the *Yuga dentō shō*, who was entrusted with and copied many of the texts compiled by Monkan, and the Kongōji monk Zen'e 禅惠 (or Zenne; 1284–1364), who composed the record of Monkan's death and funeral rites.⁶⁸ Investigations of Monkan's available texts by such leading twentieth-century Shingon scholars as Toganoo Shōun and Moriyama, as well as the more recent investigations by Abe Yasurō and fellow researchers, have revealed little evidence of the defining attributes Yūkai assigns to the Tachikawa "heresy." Finally, Monkan's donations to Kongōbuji or any other indications of a reconciliation between him and the Mt. Kōya establishment find no place in Yūkai's text.

Turning to the *Taiheiki*, we first find in chapter 1 a neutral-to-positive portrayal of Monkan's participation in the Go-Daigo-sponsored subjugation rites against the warrior government, which it indicates began around the spring of 1322. After a lengthy list of the rites that Monkan and Enkan performed—including an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī rite—the text comments that the confinement of the supposedly pregnant princess later was revealed as a pretext for the performance of the prayers, whose true aim "was to exorcise the wickedness of the Kantō."⁶⁹ But at this point, the text does not openly criticize Go-Daigo's imperial household or his allies for this. Similarly, in chapter 2, when the war tale records Monkan's arrest and summons to Kantō, there is little of the disparagement that appears in later chapters. In fact, the text praises him as a

68 Zen'e's record is quoted in Moriyama 1997, 346, and Fujikake 1919, 111.

69 McCullough 1959; 12–13; translations here and elsewhere from the *Taiheiki* are McCullough's.

“great deacon” of Shingon who “served as abbot of the Tōji and the Daigoji, and was a pillar supporting the four mandalas and the three mysteries.”⁷⁰

By the twelfth chapter, however, the depiction of Monkan changes radically. Here, the *Taiheiki* lambastes Monkan’s conduct, comparing him negatively to the Hossō monk Jōkei (also known as Gedatsu-shōnin):

In vain had Monkan left the world of renown and profit to meditate on the three mystic things, for he thought only of gain and reputation, caring nothing for holy contemplation. Beyond all need he piled up goods and treasures in storehouses, instead of rendering aid to those who were poor and in want. He gathered together arms of war, kept soldiers in very great numbers, and gave presents for nothing to people who flattered him. (McCullough 1959, 366)

The section goes on to suggest that perhaps his behavior was due to possession by “demons and heretics” (367), before comparing him negatively to Jōkei. The text then reports that Monkan became a wandering beggar soon after the start of the Kenmu 建武 disturbance and died with no disciples to inherit his teachings (370–71).⁷¹ The contrast between the earlier and later sections on Monkan suggests the presence of multiple hands in the *Taiheiki*’s composition, as do many aspects of its different versions. The war tale seems to have drawn on and embellished the accusations made in the Mt. Kōya petition, and the report of his activities from the Kenmu era (1334–36) on is belied by many other records for his later years.

Of course, the protagonistic portraits of Monkan in such records as Hōren’s *Yuga dentō shō* and the Kongōji and Shinpukuji archives are also selective—as is my own portrait. Hōren explicitly numbered himself among the 207 disciples he recorded as having received dharma transmission from Monkan. Zen’e, who recorded Monkan’s death and funeral rites alongside other records of his activities at Kongōji, was also numbered among his disciples.⁷² Two hundred and seven is a very large number of dharma recipients, and the claim may be exaggerated. That said, Hōren’s text does provide the names of these monks, and he composed it only a few years after Monkan’s death. Comparing Hōren’s

70 McCullough 1959, 33; see also 32–36, for the full account of Monkan’s arrest and banishment to Iōgashima.

71 This and the previously cited *Taiheiki* chapter 12 passages on Monkan can also be found, in classical Japanese, in Tōkyō Daigaku 1924, 476–77.

72 Zen’e was also a grand-disciple of the illustrious Shingon master Raiyu; see Ruppert 2009, 59–61, on this connection.

list with contemporary records of monks linked to the Saidaiji order and to Shingon temples associated with Monkan, Uchida has identified many monks for whom transmission from Monkan was possible and even likely (2003–04; 2006b, 287–312).

Even temple establishments responsible for some of the most scathing portraits of Monkan offer contrasting positive testimony to his activities. For example, although the *Zoku dentō kōroku* biography—which incorporates both the Mt. Kōya petition and accusations in the *Hōkyōshō*—was written by a Daigoji-lineage monk, the *Daigoji zasu shidai* 醍醐寺座次第 (Records of the Successive Abbots of Daigoji), praises the sixty-fourth abbot “Senior Monastic Officer Kōshin” for “the merit he accumulated over the years and months” and his standing as “a person unparalleled in ritual efficacy.” The text cites these merits as the basis for Monkan’s participation in the Kantō subjugation rites by imperial order, leading to his arrest and banishment to Iōgashima. Yet it also shows his successful return to prominence after the exile and even closes by likening him to a rebirth of the “founding teacher” (*soshi*), which could be a reference to Shōbō 聖宝 (832–909), who was considered the founder of Daigoji, or to Kūkai.⁷³

Despite the existence of more positive portrayals in various “orthodox” Shingon records after the reported 1335 Mt. Kōya petition, the accusations made in the petition carried the day in such biographical portraits of Monkan after his death as the *Hōkyōshō*, chapter 12 of the *Taiheiki*, and the *Zoku dentō kōroku*. Yūkai’s contrasting, more gradualist doctrinal position was part of the basis for the negative portrait of Monkan in the *Hōkyōshō*. But all three works also reflect the authors’ bias toward the ultimately victorious Northern Court and the political capital to be gained by opposing such leading representatives of the Southern Court as Monkan. That said, while exaggerated for polemic effect (and for interlinked religious and political reasons), some of the claims in the negative portraits could, of course, be historically accurate.

For example, Amino writes: “Of course, we cannot take at face value the Kōya monks’ insistence that Monkan worshipped *dākinī*, female divinities in tantric sexual yoga who were also believed to be the spirits of foxes, or that he widely practiced magic.” Then, based largely on the *Daigoji zasu shidai*, he adds: “However, Monkan, accumulating merit through his participation in the Mañjuśrī and Kannon cults, was said to have been ‘a person unparalleled in ritual efficacy (*hōgen* 法驗)’ and repeatedly performed ‘great rites and secret rites’ for Go-Daigo” (1986, 175). While the references in the Mt. Kōya petition to Monkan’s “magical techniques” and “mystical efficacy” (*shugen*) were used

73 Tōkyō Daigaku 1924, 462; see also Tamura 1966, 2, and Okami 1982, 476.

derogatorily, that was not the thrust of these *Daigoji zasu shidai* passages, but this positive portrait from Daigoji does reinforce the petition’s emphasis on Monkan’s “magical” orientation.

Leaders of Shingon establishments, much like their counterparts in Christianity and other religious traditions, often want to draw a sharp line between their “orthodox” rites and heterodox “magical” rites. But that line is easier to draw in principle than in practice. Thus—with no intention of criticism, much as in the Daigoji account—I find it easy to believe that Monkan was recognized in his own day as an adept of “magical” rites, including both “orthodox” Shingon rites and rites drawn from other traditions. This holds true, however, for many esoteric Buddhist masters of his time.⁷⁴ Moreover, a perception that Monkan was *particularly* endowed with “ritual efficacy” would have been strongly appealing to Go-Daigo and other emperors.

More difficult to assess are the Mt. Kōya petition’s claims that Monkan was “enamored of military prowess and weaponry” and that he venerated *dākini*. Amino writes that “in truth, it was an unmistakable fact that Monkan was enamored of military prowess and weaponry, as in the monastic assemblage’s criticism” (1986, 175). However, the only evidence he cites for this claim are later passages in the *Taiheiki*.⁷⁵ In addition to the passages criticizing Monkan in chapter 12, Amino cites a passage in chapter 14 concerning the ascent of Ashikaga Takauji’s army into the capital in 1336 (which ultimately led to the establishment of the Northern Court). The passage reports that when the army met Go-Daigo’s forces at Yamazaki 山崎, Monkan’s retainers were among the forces. The passage then ridicules those forces as useless.⁷⁶ These chapter 12 and 14 passages, however, must be seen in the context of the *Taiheiki*’s shifting narrative voices and increasingly negative portrayals of Monkan and the Southern Court in later chapters. That said, in light of Monkan’s status as an attendant monk of Go-Daigo in the midst of civil war, and the well-attested use of warriors by the major temple-shrine complexes of the time, it is plausible that Monkan did have armed retainers and much contact with military forces.⁷⁷ But his being “enamored” of such contact is a different claim—one

74 On the significance of Shingon monks’ ritual efficacy in Monkan’s time, see Conlan’s provocative recent study of fourteenth-century ritual and the legitimization of rulership (2011).

75 Conlan makes similar claims based on the *Taiheiki* in his recent study (2011, 92–93), which elsewhere includes a sober assessment of the limitations of the *Taiheiki* as a historical source (9–13).

76 Amino 1986, 175–76; see also Hosokawa 1998, 134, on this passage.

77 On major temples’ uses of warriors in medieval Japan, see Adolphson 2000 and 2007.

which, like Monkan's reported participation in *ḍākinī* veneration or in the "Tachikawa cult," should not be taken at face value.

The Mt. Kōya petition reference to *ḍākinī* veneration (if the text and its 1335 dating are authentic) is our clearest testimony from Monkan's lifetime linking him to the Shingon "heresies" that came to be labeled "Tachikawa." The Mt. Kōya petition did view such veneration as heterodox. In doing so—as well as choosing this as part of their disparagement of Monkan—the author or authors may well have been influenced by the *Juhō yōjinshū* 受法用心集 (Collection of Precautions on Receiving the Dharma).⁷⁸ This two-part text, composed around 1270 by the Shingon monk Shinjō 心定 (d.u.), has long been considered the opening diatribe against the Tachikawa lineage. Little is known about Shinjō apart from the evidence in the text, but it is helpful in understanding how certain *ḍākinī* rites, and the Tachikawa lineage alongside them, came to be seen as leading representatives of heterodox Shingon practices. However, the broader narrative context of the text suggests that Shinjō did not condemn the Tachikawa lineage or *ḍākinī* rites *as a whole* but rather *certain* texts and rites, which themselves may not even have been produced by the Tachikawa lineage. To understand this, let us look at how Shinjō's critique unfolds, before assessing the import for portraits of Monkan as a heterodox Shingon practitioner.

In the first part of the *Juhō yōjinshū*, Shinjō reports his 1250 discovery of "seven or eight folios of the oral transmission of Kikuran [菊蘭] on the Three Inner Sutras" that were "*mixed in among*" *orikami* of the Tachikawa lineage that was flourishing in Etchū 越中.⁷⁹ Shinjō proceeds to detail his efforts to ascertain the source of these texts and their contents, and records a chance meeting the following year with an anonymous monk. Claiming that "the highest secret teach-

78 This text has been analyzed, with many English translations of specific passages, in Sanford 1991. See also Iyanaga 2003, 2006, and 2011, and, on the various (mostly unpublished) versions of the text, Sueki 2014. A modern printed version of the full two-part *Juhō yōjinshū*, in mixed classical Japanese and Chinese, can be found in Moriyama 1997, 530–71. For a recently published alternative version, based on a 1313 copy held by Kōzanji, see Sueki 2008–2011. In general, the Moriyama edition is much clearer, and Sueki's 2014 study acknowledges that his printing of the Kōzanji version was provisional and has errors. I have thus used the Moriyama edition as my base text.

79 See Sanford 1991, 6, and Moriyama 1997, 531. The translations here are Sanford's; emphasis mine. Sanford translates *orikami* 折紙 (or *origami*) as "lineage documents." However, the material recorded in these "folded paper" documents was wideranging in Shingon, and they included the fundamental procedures for many different rites based on the traditions of specific lineages (see Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 193a, s.v. "orikami."). I have thus left the term untranslated.

ing of Bodily Buddhahood is that found in the Three Inner Sutras,” the monk transmits to Shinjō “five kinds of scripture and commentary” (Sanford 1991, 7). Eventually, Shinjō determines that these scriptures and their related lineage documents are forged and that the dharma associated with them is heretical.

Shinjō devotes considerable attention in the second part of the text to a “skull ritual” based on oral commentaries associated with the teachings of the *Three Inner Sutras*. Most significant here is the following passage in his description of the “heretical rite”: “Taking care that the skull is kept warm and nourished for seven years is a secret ritual for the *ḍākinī* who live in the *honzon*. These *ḍākinī* are manifestations of Mañjuśrī and of Nāgākanyā, the serpent girl.”⁸⁰ The *honzon*, or main object of veneration in the ritual, was elaborately constructed from the skull itself, while Nāgākanyā is the eight-year-old daughter of the dragon king Sāgara. In the *Lotus Sutra*, the dragon girl is depicted as transforming herself into a man, carrying out all the bodhisattva practices, and manifesting her perfect enlightenment instantaneously. She is often connected to Mañjuśrī because, in the sutra, Mañjuśrī introduces her as an example of those who had attained buddhahood quickly, after he emerged from the ocean palace of the dragon king. There, Mañjuśrī had been expounding the *Lotus Sutra* and converting innumerable sentient beings; thus, by inference, the dragon girl can be considered to have been one of his disciples.⁸¹

The import of the *Juhō yōjinshū* passage here is twofold. First, the text—which had drawn considerable attention in Shingon circles by the time of the Mt. Kōya petition (Iyanaga 2003, 8)—attacks the skull ritual as an example of heretical esoteric teachings that were flourishing then. Shinjō’s text thus contributed to an increasing association of *ḍākinī* veneration with “heretical” esoteric practices, and the petition’s reference to *ḍākinī* veneration in castigating Monkan reflects this. The second import of the passage here is the association of *ḍākinī* with Mañjuśrī. This raises the question of whether such an association influenced the petition’s claim that Monkan venerated *ḍākinī*. As both of the names he used, “Monkan” and “Shuon,” reflect his faith in Mañjuśrī (and Kannon), and considering that there was much other evidence for his participation in the Mañjuśrī cult by the time of the petition, Monkan’s Mañjuśrī faith was no secret. The petition could hardly attack him for venerating this orthodox Mahayana bodhisattva, who was widely revered in Shingon and many other schools. Yet if a link between “heterodox” *ḍākinī* veneration and

80 Translation from Sanford 1991, 15, with the Sanskrit transliteration of Mañjuśrī’s name corrected.

81 See T 262 9:35a22–c21 for the full passage, or Watson 1993, 185–89, for an English translation.

Mañjuśrī was well known in Shingon circles by this time, this may have been a subtle way to cast doubt even on his participation in the Mañjuśrī cult.

Whether Monkan actually practiced *ḍākinī* rites or not, two fundamental problems remain with respect to the Mt. Kōya petition's claim as evidence for his participation in the "heretical Tachikawa cult." First, as evidence from the *Juhō yōjinshū* itself suggests, not *all* *ḍākinī* rites were considered heterodox—even among Shingon monks such as Shinjō, who refuted the "heretical" esoteric teachings claimed to be gaining popularity in the late thirteenth century. At the beginning of Shinjō's text, when he details his Shingon training under "various luminous teachers," he includes a reference to a *ḍākinī* rite among those for twenty-eight different deities. Shinjō indicates that he learned the rites for these twenty-eight deities in the first period of esoteric training he mentions, under Rentoku 蓮徳, from age eighteen to twenty-one. The *ḍākinī* rite is the first of four specific deity transmissions that Shinjō singles out for the inclusion of special oral instructions (*hiketsu* 秘訣),⁸² and he gives no indication that he considered Rentoku or the transmissions heterodox. Thus, despite the treatment of *ḍākinī* veneration in the Mt. Kōya petition, it is debatable how heterodox such rites truly were in Monkan's lifetime.

The second fundamental problem is the tendency of many modern scholars to use "Tachikawa" as a blanket term for the Shingon "heresies" of the time, even when the primary sources in question do not. Certainly, after Yūkai's condemnation of the Tachikawa lineage in the 1375 *Hōkyōshō*, similar condemnations in late medieval and early modern Shingon texts gained momentum. But it is ironic—and telling—that our strongest reported evidence for a link between Monkan and the Tachikawa "heresy" from Monkan's own lifetime, the Mt. Koya petition, never mentions Tachikawa. And despite widespread scholarly suggestion to the contrary, there is even little evidence that the earlier author of the *Juhō yōjinshū* used "Tachikawa" as a blanket term for heterodox Shingon practices, such as the skull ritual.

As Iyanaga Nobumi astutely points out, the term "Tachikawa" appears only twice in the entire detailed text.⁸³ The first appearance is near the beginning of the first fascicle, when Shinjō describes his Shingon training. From the context, I maintain that Shinjō here is establishing his credentials for writing the text

82 See Moriyama 1997, 531. The term Shinjō uses here for *ḍākinī* is *daten* 吒天, which he also uses in his reference to the skull rite's equation of *ḍākinī* with Mañjuśrī (559). See also p. 544 and another use of this term on p. 559; in each case, it clearly refers to *ḍākinī*.

83 See Iyanaga 2003, 8; 2006, 208; 2011, 810. The Moriyama 1997 edition of the *Juhō yōjinshū*, in compact classical Japanese and Chinese, amounts to forty-two pages; a full English translation would likely be two or three times that length.

and that this reference belongs to the depiction of his orthodox Shingon training: in the midst of the summary of his training under various illustrious masters, Shinjō writes that, when he was twenty-five, he received initiation from the esoteric master Ashō 阿聖 (d.u.) of Etchū Province and copied all the secret writings of “the Tachikawa lineage.”⁸⁴

The second reference appears not long afterward, when Shinjō notes that on one of his visits to the hermitage of Kōamidabutsu 弘阿弥陀仏 (d.u.) at Shinzenkōji 新善光寺 in Echizen 越前 Province, he spotted a large bag on the monk’s desk. Kōamidabutsu opened the bag and took out some scrolls. Shinjō reports that they numbered almost a hundred. Opening and inspecting them, Shinjō sees that, as noted above, “most of them were *orikami* of the Tachikawa [lineage] flourishing in Etchū. *Mixed in among these* were the seven or eight folios of the oral transmission of Kikuran on the Three Inner Sutras.”⁸⁵ Shinjō never again uses the term Tachikawa in the text. Instead, he repeatedly uses phrases such as “this teaching” (*kono hō* 此の法), “that teaching,” (*kano hō* 彼の法), or “evil teaching” (*jahō* 邪法) to refer to the heretical dharma he has encountered—both before and long after any references to “Tachikawa.”⁸⁶ I suggest that the intent of the two references to Tachikawa in the *Juhō yōjinshū* was not to disparage that lineage as a whole. Rather, the point is that Shinjō received the Tachikawa lineage transmission and sacred texts, as part of his orthodox training in various Shingon lineages. Therefore, when inspecting the contents of the bag on Kōamidabutsu’s desk, he can at once recognize that it contains many Tachikawa documents and that these texts on the *Three Inner Sutras* are *not* part of them. Nowhere does the text even indicate that the issue is the difference between authentic and inauthentic *Tachikawa-lineage* texts—not in the words in Shinjō’s own voice, nor the questions posed by Shinjō’s interlocutor,⁸⁷ nor the anonymous preface in Moriyama’s edition.

A recently revealed copy of the *Juhō yōjinshū* from the Kōzanji archives, however, does include an appendix by a monk named Ekai 恵海 (d.u.) suggesting that the teachings Shinjō describes referred to the Tachikawa lineage. Ekai’s copy—from which the 1313 Kōzanji version was recopied—is dated 1281, and the appendix quotes a work that Ekai calls the *Haja kenshō shū* 破邪顯正集 (Collection on Destroying Heresy and Revealing the True). In response to

84 See the text in Moriyama 1997, 531–32.

85 Translation from Sanford 1991, 6, slightly modified; emphasis mine. See Moriyama 1997, 532–33, for the original passages.

86 Iyanaga 2003, 21; 2006, 208; 2011, 804.

87 As Sanford suggests (1991, 5), the questioner quoted in the text is most likely a creation of the author’s, a common Buddhist rhetorical device.

an interlocutor's question, the unnamed author of the *Haja kenshō shū* indicates that “this teaching” is reported to have begun with either Ninkan 仁寬 (d. 1114?), who later changed his name to Rennan 蓮念, or Rennan's disciple Kenren 見蓮, who resided in Tachikawa.⁸⁸ These names do point to the key early figures in most accounts of the Tachikawa lineage. That said, this appendix account openly reveals itself as a secondary—or more precisely tertiary—addition to Shinjō's own text. Even the Kōzanji version of the main text, by Shinjō, does not clearly attribute the skull ritual or the other “evil teachings” to the Tachikawa lineage.⁸⁹

Tracing the basis of the persistent claim that Monkan was the systematizer of the heretical “Tachikawa” lineage immerses us in a textual hall of mirrors that reflect the viewpoints of the varying authors more than the “Monkan” we are trying to see. In a process like that which Sam Gill has called “storytracking,”⁹⁰ if we trace, for example, the reference to Monkan in the influential *Mikkyō daijiten* (Encyclopedia of Esotericism) as the “great systematizer of the Tachikawa lineage,”⁹¹ we find the *Zoku dentō kōroku* composed around the Genroku era. Tracing the source of that text's claims of Monkan's incorporation of the “heretical lineage” from Tachikawa, of his broad forging of texts, of his *ḍākinī* veneration, and the Mt. Kōya petition the text quotes, we find the 1375 *Hōkyōshō*. Yet the *Hōkyōshō*, for all its condemnation of Monkan, the Tachikawa lineage, and an insinuation of a link between the two, never specifically says he was a member of the lineage. Examining the Mt. Kōya petition embedded in both the *Zoku dentō kōroku* and the *Hōkyōshō*, we find no mention of the Tachikawa lineage, but we do find a reference to *ḍākinī* veneration as one of the hallmarks of Monkan's “heretical” practices. Because Shinjō's *Juhō yōjinshū* has long been considered the opening Shingon diatribe against the Tachikawa lineage, much of it is devoted to a heretical rite involving *ḍākinī*, and it was referred to in the *Zoku dentō kōroku* biography,⁹² we investigate that text. But

88 See Iyanaga 2011, 807, for a translation of the passage and Sueki 2007, 7b, for the original.

89 The Kōzanji version lacks one of the two references to “Tachikawa” found in Moriyama's edition, the one in which Shinjō recounts his initiation from Ashō and copying of the Tachikawa lineage texts then. But the Kōzanji version does include the second reference, with the same language of the texts related to the Three Inner Sutras being “*mixed in among*” the *orikami* of the Tachikawa lineage; see Sueki 2008–11, part 4, 37b. I have benefited here from Iyanaga Nobumi's comparison of the two texts in the first of two messages dated August 25, 2011, in the kuden-ML discussion group.

90 For Gill's methodological formulation and application of this process, see Gill 1998b, especially chapters 2 and 7.

91 See Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 513c, s.v. “Kōshin.”

92 In the *Zoku dentō kōroku* (Tsujimura 1999, 2), the text is referred to as Seigan's record, using an alternate name for Shinjō (whose full monastic name was Seiganbō 誓願房

we find no indictment of the Tachikawa lineage as a whole. Instead, in addition to a long indictment of a particular *ḍākinī* rite that is never referred to as a “Tachikawa-lineage” rite, we find reference to a *ḍākinī* rite into which Shinjō was initiated—a rite that he apparently considers orthodox. Finally, even this transmission is not attributed to Tachikawa. Our view of “Monkan” blurs as the lines drawn between heterodox and orthodox, Tachikawa and other lineages, and even Ritsu and Shingon converge and diverge. We are left with the confusion and the clarity of our double vision and the play between them.

Repaying Mother and Protecting the State: Monkan’s Mañjuśrī Paintings

To invoke Gill again, as he aptly reminds us, “academic writing is distinguished from the novel by our acknowledgment that we cannot say simply anything we want about our subjects. As academics, we are bound by the rules of our play to have our stories constrained by our real subjects” (1998a, 310). We may never be able to reach Monkan as a real person beyond the textual hall of mirrors—or, to use Gill’s metaphor, the interweaving storytracks—of which the present study is now a part. Yet this and other academic stories cannot exist without that real subject (309), without depending on the otherness of that person across the gap even while “acknowledg[ing] that neither our subjects nor ourselves exist to the other except in relationship” (1998b, 41). As Andrew Goble has written concerning his approach in his insightful book on Go-Daigo, there is value in the attempt “to take into account the quite different lives of real people,” in trying “to make the reader aware of people, of persons with names, and not just those that fit a standard caricature derived from literature” (1996, xx).

In my attempt in this study to put a more personal face on leaders of the Sidaiji order, as representatives of the “old” or “exoteric-esoteric” Buddhist establishment so often cast in impersonal terms, I have been drawn to self-statements, such as Eison’s autobiography or Monkan’s colophon to the *Saigyokushō*. I have also been tantalized by the connections between memorial rites, Mañjuśrī, and mothers in their activities. For the self-statements attest to real voices behind those names, while the concern for the salvation of their mothers attests to the real concerns of real people. Yet there is clearly an element of auto-hagiography in the self-statements, as they too construct an “Eison” or a “Monkan” in accordance with varying standards of Buddhist discourse. As research by Glassman and Meeks has shown well, the trope

Shinjō). The reference to Seigan’s text immediately follows the claim of Monkan’s incorporation of Tachikawa and broad forging of texts.

of filial piety between monastic sons and their mothers was thriving in the Buddhism of the time.⁹³ Thus here too, the line between literary construction and “real lives” remains blurry. In this regard, even the various bodhisattva images dedicated by Monkan for his mother’s memorial rites are part of this auto-hagiography, paving the way for such depictions as the *Yuga dentō shō*’s account of his mother’s dream and realization of a filial son. That said, the embedding of these first-person texts and images within the Buddhist tropes, narratives, and discourse of the time is part of those real lives on the other side of the gap. Moreover, there is a concreteness to the visual images that reminds us that the concerns and beliefs and other constructions are real, even if approachable only through the mediums in which they are embodied.

There are at least four surviving examples of Monkan’s efforts to repay his debt to his mother in his iconographic activities, three of which are images of Mañjuśrī. The fourth is an image of the Wish-Fulfilling Kannon, which is appropriate considering the story of his mother’s dream of Kannon in the *Yuga dentō shō*. The first of these paintings is a five-syllable Mañjuśrī image held by the Hakutsuru Museum. Examining this painting in detail, Uchida connects it with the Saidaiji order emphasis on Mañjuśrī and memorial rites, based on a dedication in the lower left-hand side “to repay the four debts,” and dates it to 1330/8/25 (2000, 88). This is our earliest example of Monkan’s iconographic efforts to repay his debt to his mother, although it belongs to a slightly different category than the other three images. This painting was actually composed before Monkan’s mother passed away, and his requital to her here is part of the broader category of the four debts (to one’s parents, other sentient beings, the ruler, and the three jewels). In addition, given the conspicuous 8/25 date for the painting—the anniversary of Eison’s death—requital of debt to the Saidaiji order founder is surely part of the intentions behind the image. Though manifesting different aspects of debt requital, the connections with Monkan’s later Mañjuśrī paintings for his mother’s memorial rites, as well as with other Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī images, are clear.

In the Hakutsuru Museum painting, Mañjuśrī sits cross-legged in a lotus seat, holding a sword in his right hand and a lotus supporting a sutra container in the left. The sword, one of the most common emblems of Mañjuśrī, symbolizes cutting off delusions. The bodhisattva is depicted in the five-syllable, “child acolyte” (*dōji* 童子) style, with a youthful appearance and a sash across his half-naked upper body. His hair is banded in five topknots, and he wears a necklace

93 See Glassman 2001 and Meeks 2010a, 265–83. See also Cole 1998 on this discourse in Chinese Buddhism. On the plurality of monastic images of mothers in both Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, see Faure 2003, 145–80.

adorned with jewels in five colors. As Uchida explains (2000, 85), Mañjuśrī's emblems in the painting tally closely with depictions of orthodox five-syllable Mañjuśrī images in the Shingon iconographic compendia *Zuzōshō* 圖像抄 (T 3006) and *Kakuzenshō* (T 3022), as well as Amoghavajra's *Kongōchōgyō yuga Monjushiri Bosatsu kuyō giki* and *Manjushiri Dōji Bosatsu goji yuga hō*.⁹⁴ The style of Mañjuśrī's child-like face, his garments, and his adornments all show much in common with an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī painting held by Saidaiji and the former-Tōji eight-syllable Mañjuśrī painting completed by Monkan for his mother's fifth seventh-day memorial rite. Thus, while based on orthodox Shingon iconographical and ritual compendia, the image can be clearly placed with other Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī paintings. At the same time, the painting shows a characteristic that Uchida suggests is distinctive of Monkan (2000, 85–86), as it features five wish-fulfilling jewels in their proper shapes, rather than as simple circles, in the upper portion of the painting. The former-Tōji painting does the same, and I will discuss the significance of the wish-fulfilling jewel depictions following my description of that painting.

Monkan's 1334/6/9 Mañjuśrī painting for his mother's third seventh-day memorial rite, now held by the Nara National Museum (see Figure 10), also depicts the five-syllable Mañjuśrī. The lower left edge of the painting shows the dedication for the third seventh-day rite for the monk's “compassionate mother” and a Siddham (Sanskrit) syllable used to phonetically represent the sound of “Mon” in Monkan's name.⁹⁵ The calligraphy is Monkan's (Fujikake 1935), and the date for this third seventh-day memorial rite is consistent with the dedication two weeks later of the former-Tōji painting, for the fifth seventh-day rite. While the Nara National Museum painting was composed as part of these rites, helping requite Monkan's debt to his mother, the debt to sentient beings is also implicitly invoked: four lines on the top right and left sides of the image indicate the unique virtue of the rites of Mañjuśrī, the dharma-king, and include a prayer that sentient beings will escape from the cycle of birth and death.⁹⁶

We again see a mix of personal and broader purposes in the former-Tōji painting of an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī. In this painting, Mañjuśrī is surrounded

94 See T 1175 for the *Kongōchōgyō yuga Monjushiri Bosatsu kuyō giki* 金剛頂經瑜伽文殊師利菩薩供養儀軌 (Ch. *Jingangdingjing yuqie Wenshushili pusa gongyang yigui*) and T 1176 for the *Manjushiri Dōji Bosatsu goji yuga hō* 曼殊室利童子菩薩五字瑜伽法 (Ch. *Manshushili tongzi pusa wuzi yuqie fa*).

95 See Moriyama 1997, 442–43, Uchida 2000, 91, and Uchida 2012, 120n. 22.

96 The image's dedications are printed in Moriyama 1997, 442–43, and Uchida 1987, 54–55n. 37. See also Cunningham 1998, 109–10, for a color print of the image and a description.

by the eight great child acolytes and Zenzai-dōji. This painting on silk has a two-stage colophon on its reverse. The first gives the date as 1334/6/23 and dedicates the image to the repose of the monk's compassionate mother, Myōhō 妙法, for her fifth seventh-day memorial rite. This colophon also notes that silk from one of the departed's own robes was used for the image, and that “the brush was applied by the bodhisattva-bhikṣu, Daigoji Abbot, Senior Monastic Officer Kōshin.” The second part of the colophon states that the painting was donated to Tōji's Western Cloister Portrait Hall (Sai'in Miedō 西院御影堂) and that it should not be removed. It further indicates that the purpose of this donation is to pray for the longevity of the dharma and for the state. This part is dated 1335/10/7 and signed as “Dharma-administrator, Senior Monastic Officer,” and Monkan again affixes his seal.⁹⁷

There are various unusual features to this painting. Fujikake calls it one of the most complex Mañjuśrī paintings extant in Japan (1919, 113b). The eight great child acolytes were an iconographical motif in images of both Mañjuśrī and the bodhisattva Fugen. However, this painting also features Zenzai-dōji, who was a standard member of the Mañjuśrī pentad configuration. Mañjuśrī rides a lion, and the nine child acolytes (including Zenzai) surround the lion, looking up at Mañjuśrī. Around the circumference of Mañjuśrī's halo are five wish-fulfilling jewels, represented in their proper shapes, as in the Hakutsuru Museum painting. In addition, seed-syllable mandalas for the Diamond and Womb Realms are painted in the upper left and right corners. This painting shares various characteristics with a famous Kamakura-period eight-syllable Mañjuśrī painting held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, but the closest iconographical fit is with an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī painting held by Saidaiji (see Figure 11).

Both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Saidaiji paintings similarly incorporate wish-fulfilling jewels. However, among other differences with the Metropolitan Museum of Art painting, the former-Tōji and Saidaiji paintings each add Zenzai-dōji to the eight dōji and depict Mañjuśrī on a lion.⁹⁸ Art

97 The full two-part colophon can be found in Fujikake 1919, 108a–b. This donation is also recorded in Gōhō's *Tōbōki*, and the passage is quoted on p. 114b of Fujikake's study. The *Tōbōki* reference is significant because it supports Monkan's testimony and again shows Gōhō referring to Monkan without a hint of the condemnation suggested in reports that he later burned Monkan's writings.

98 Uchida 1987, 39–40; Kaneko 1992, 76. See Kaneko 1992, plates 114 and 115, for the former-Tōji and the Metropolitan Museum of Art eight-syllable Mañjuśrī paintings and plate 26 for the Saidaiji painting. See also Uchida's chart of the differing attributes of various Japanese eight-syllable Mañjuśrī paintings, including these three (1987, 58).



FIGURE 11 Painting of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva (*Kamakura period*), held by Saidaiji. *Important Cultural Property.*

COURTESY OF SAIDAIJI, NARA. IMAGE REPRODUCED FROM NARA KOKURITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN, *SAIDAIJI TEN* (1990). THE PAINTING DEPICTS THE EIGHT-SYLLABLE MAÑJUŚRĪ WITH ZENZAI-DŌJI (SK. SUDHANA) AND EIGHT OTHER CHILD ACOLYTES AS ATTENDANTS.

historians date the Saidaiji painting to the mid-Kamakura period, and there are two explanations for its origin. One is that the painting belongs to a group of twenty-one—including Mañjuśrī, the sixteen arhats, and others—that Eison had Gyōson 堯尊 (d.u.) paint from 1250 to 1251 “to ensure the longevity of the dharma and benefit sentient beings.”⁹⁹ The other explanation is that the painting was composed in connection with the Mongol invasions in 1274 or 1281.¹⁰⁰ If the latter explanation is accurate, the connection between the Saidaiji painting and state protection would, like in Monkan’s former-Tōji painting, be particularly close. In any event, scholars agree that the Saidaiji painting dates to Eison’s lifetime, and the similarities with the Monkan painting are noteworthy. These similarities again suggest influence from Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī faith on Monkan long after his entrance into separate Shingon establishments.

Wish-Fulfilling Jewels, the Three-Deity Combinatory Rites, and Mañjuśrī

The depictions of wish-fulfilling jewels in the eight-syllable Saidaiji and former-Tōji Mañjuśrī paintings, as well as in the five-syllable Hakutsuru Museum painting, are significant: Monkan’s career shows great emphasis on relics, much as Eison’s had before him, and the cults of relics and wish-fulfilling jewels (which incorporated relics) were closely connected in Japanese esoteric Buddhism.¹⁰¹ Given Monkan’s emphasis on wish-fulfilling jewels, and the devotion to Kannon evident in his use of the names Monkan and Shuon, it is natural that his cultic activities also show much devotion to the Wish-Fulfilling Kannon, and our final extant painting linked to the memorial rites for his mother is of the Wish-Fulfilling Kannon. This painting, held by Jōdoji 浄土寺 in the port city Onomichi 尾道, in modern-day Hiroshima, is dated 1334/7/28 and dedicated to the sponsor’s “compassionate mother.” Although there is no clear signature for the sponsor or artist, the calligraphy of the date and dedication match those of the Nara National Museum five-syllable Mañjuśrī painting dedicated by Monkan. As Uchida explains, the date of the painting corresponds to the seventieth day after the death of Monkan’s mother and thus might be

99 See the *Gakushōki* entries for 1250/12/7 and 1251/1–2 (NKBK 1977, 23–24). See Fujisawa 2006, 64–65, for an intriguing analysis of the significance of these paintings.

100 On the two explanations, see Ōishi 1987, 168, and Kaneko 1992, 76.

101 On the connection between relics and wish-fulfilling jewels in general, see Ruppert 2000, chapter 5. For many examples of Monkan’s activities in connection with the cult of relics and wish-fulfilling jewels, see Hosokawa 1998, 134–36, and Abe 2011. On Eison and wish-fulfilling jewels, see Naitō 2004 and 2010.

considered the tenth seventh-day rite, even though this is not part of the standard sequences of memorial rites.¹⁰²

It is thus clear that Mañjuśrī was not the only deity through which Monkan repaid his debt to his mother. But Mañjuśrī was the deity he depicted the most often for that purpose, thus showing strong continuity with the motivation behind the images for the first Mañjuśrī assemblies led by Ninshō and Eison. And most intriguing for understanding the esoteric evolution of Monkan's Mañjuśrī faith is that the emphasis on wish-fulfilling jewels unites the varying focus on Mañjuśrī or Kannon in the paintings dedicated to his mother. This is expressive of a larger and very flexible use of wish-fulfilling jewels in the cultic practices of Monkan and the Daigoji Sanbōin lineage more broadly. Such use of wish-fulfilling jewels took distinctive shape for Monkan in his systemization of the three-deity combinatory rites.

In a series of studies, Abe Yasurō and fellow researchers have shown Monkan's emphasis on wish-fulfilling jewels in recently published ritual and iconographic texts.¹⁰³ These texts, all composed or compiled by Monkan, center on the Sanbōin-lineage three-deity combinatory rites. In this ritual genre, three forms of a deity are venerated as one to transcend duality and subsume even non-duality in a higher synthesis. Iconographically, this is expressed through the three-dimensionality of a central deity or object of veneration flanked by two attendant deities. The two attendant deities represent apparently polarized dimensions that are fused as a combined (i.e., non-dual) body in the form of the central deity, thereby uniting the three as one. Thus the term *honzon* (main deity) in these rites and their descriptions has two senses, referring to the central deity in the iconographic configuration but also to all three deities as the combined main object of veneration, as Gaétan Rappo suggests (Abe 2010, 180). Most commonly, the attendant deities were Fudō and Aizen, and the main deity was synonymous with or represented by wish-fulfilling jewels, which could transform into any deity. Our earliest dated text of Monkan's on these rites, his 1327 *Go-Yuigō daiji* (Great Matter of [Kūkai's] *Testament*), centers on a deified Kūkai, or "the Daishi," as the main figure. In

102 See Uchida 2000, 88–91, for his analysis and images of the painting.

103 The summary that follows is based on the primary texts by Monkan and the analyses of Abe as well as Dolce and Rappo—who were provided newly discovered texts by Abe—in *Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan* 2006; Abe 2008 (with chapters by Dolce and Rappo); Abe 2010 (with chapters by Rappo); Dolce 2010; and Abe 2011. See also Monkan's *Go-yuigō daiji* 御遺告大事 in Makino and Fujimaki 2002; an alternative, partial version of this text has been published as *Tōchō daiji* 東長大事 in Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 2001, 165–70, plate 68. Both versions are black-and-white photographic reprints of their respective illustrated manuscripts, with Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 2001 reproducing part as a color print on p. 95.

light of the close links between the cults of wish-fulfilling jewels and the Wish-Fulfilling Kannon, as well as Monkan’s understanding that the Daishi was a transformation-body of the Wish-Fulfilling Kannon,¹⁰⁴ this form of Kannon also often served as the main deity in ritual and iconographic expressions of the rites. Most significant here, however, is the flexibility of both the basic blueprint of the “three deities as one” and esoteric understandings of wish-fulfilling jewels.

Given this flexibility, almost any deity could be used or viewed as the main deity in the rites, and it is noteworthy that the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī is also strongly connected to wish-fulfilling jewels in various scriptures.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, as we have seen, both the five-syllable and eight-syllable forms of Mañjuśrī are associated with wish-fulfilling jewels in images linked to the Saidaiji order and Monkan. The full extent to which Monkan’s participation in the Mañjuśrī cult was connected to the three-deity combinatory rites is a matter for future research, as many of Monkan’s texts remain unpublished or unstudied. We can, however, offer a few preliminary suggestions here based on icons commissioned or composed by Monkan and the texts made public to date.

Abe has already offered one such suggestion, pointing to the Hakutsuru Museum five-syllable Mañjuśrī painting as a possible expression of the three-deity combinatory motif. He suggests this due to the depiction of five wish-fulfilling jewels in the clouds above Mañjuśrī’s head, with moon and sun disks to the facing left and right containing, respectively, an upright “jewel sword” (*hōken* 宝劍) and Mañjuśrī’s seed-syllable *maṃ*.¹⁰⁶ These disks are used to represent the Diamond and Womb realms and other non-dual pairs, including Aizen and Fudō, in the three-deity combinatory rites. A vivid example of such an alignment can be found in Monkan’s diagrammatic explanation in the *Sanzon gōgyō hiketsu* 三尊合行秘訣 (Secret Transmission of the Three-Deity Combinatory Rites). There, the central deity is represented by the Siddham syllables for *cintāmaṇi*, or wish-fulfilling jewel, with the names of Aizen and Fudō on the left and right. Below their names are inscriptions identifying Aizen with the sun disk and the Diamond Realm and Fudō with the moon disk and the Womb Realm. Rappo thus suggests that one level of interpretation in this diagram is the sun disk, moon disk, and wish-fulfilling jewel as the three deities (Abe 2010, 176).¹⁰⁷ Viewed in this light, the placing of Mañjuśrī’s emblems

104 See the *Go-Yuiō daiji*, in Makino and Fujimaki 2002, 11.

105 On these connections, see Uchida 1987, 51–52, and Hirata 2003, 91.

106 Abe 2011, 91. See Uchida 2006b, 139, plate 34, and Uchida 2000, 84, for black-and-white prints of the image.

107 For images of the diagram, see Dolce 2010, 191, plate 17, or Abe 2010, 176, *zukai* 図解 1. For a printed rendering by Rappo, see Abe 2010, 189b. The first two characters of the text’s

within the disks in the Hakutsuru Museum painting could indeed indicate a similar “three deities as one” alignment, with the main deity or central aspect again identified with wish-fulfilling jewels.

I suggest, however, that among Monkan’s Mañjuśrī images, a clearer indication of his later systematic engagement with the three-deity combinatory rites is his inscription in the 1324 Hannyaji eight-syllable Mañjuśrī statue. In the brushwork on the interior of the knees, on the side facing out toward viewers (the “trunk” portion, or *dōtai* 胴体), there are relatively large seed syllables for Fudō and Aizen on the facing right and left edges (see Figure 9). These syllables frame the rest of the inscription, which includes in the center seed-syllables for the five-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra, the five great elements, the Womb Realm Dainichi mantra, and the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra (in that order, from facing right to left). In the center of the adjoining section is the *maṃ* seed-syllable for Mañjuśrī, also relatively large and positioned in such a way that it would overlap with the central seed-syllable sets in the interior piece when joined together.¹⁰⁸ The textual-visual arrangement of the inscription suggests a three-deity arrangement of Mañjuśrī as the central deity with Fudō and Aizen as paired attendants.

The parallels between this inscription and the three-deity combinatory rites go further than that, however. Extending the correlative logic, Mañjuśrī’s five-syllable and eight-syllable forms are identified in the inscription with the five great elements (space, wind, fire, water, earth) composing the material universe and with the Womb Realm Dainichi, thereby also invoking the enlightened consciousness that permeates that universe. The seed syllables for the five great elements are commonly used in medieval Shingon to represent five-wheeled stupas or reliquaries (*gorintō* 五輪塔). More specifically, in his 1339 *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu* Monkan assimilates five-wheeled stupas and their

title from the Shinpukuji archives are rendered in Siddham syllables representing the term *sanzon*; for convenience, I have used the Japanese form also often used by Abe and Rappo. The colophon indicates that this text was copied from the version in Monkan’s “own hand” in 1349, but the date of Monkan’s original text is unclear.

108 Sugiura et al. 1979, 131, transcribes the Sanskrit syllables into phonetic Japanese, while Moriyama 1997, 279–80, renders most in Sanskrit. Moriyama’s transcription, however, is missing several significant characters and seed syllables, such as Mañjuśrī’s *maṃ* syllable and the Fudō syllable, that are transcribed in Sugiura et al. 1979 and visible (however dimly) in the black-and-white plates of both halves of the inscription (130). For the five-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra, however, the transcription in the latter volume is mistaken. The fourth syllable should be rendered *sha* (Sk. *ca*) as it is in Moriyama’s printed Sanskrit syllable and standard renderings of the mantra (*a ra ha sha na*; Sk. *arapacana*). The mantra for the five great elements in the inscription refers to space, wind, fire, water, and earth, from top to bottom (see Nakamura 1981, 371c–d, s.v. “godai no jigi”).

corresponding seed syllables both with the *vaṃ* (Jp. *ban*) seed-syllable, commonly used to represent the Diamond Realm Dainichi, and with wish-fulfilling jewels.¹⁰⁹ This is one of Monkan's central texts on the three-deity combinatory rites in that it outlines the logic of non-duality informing the rites.¹¹⁰ Thus it is significant that he concludes the main text with an innovative application of the same *maṃ* seed-syllable used in the 1324 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue. His focus on the *maṃ* syllable in the conclusion suggests the significance he attached to this particular phonetic-visual representation of Mañjuśrī and reinforces the continuity between his conception of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī and the three-deity rites.

Attributed to an oral transmission, the final section of the *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu* details a syllable-disk contemplation (*jirinkan* 字輪觀) that Monkan suggests is “the Tōji Shingon school's great matter (*daiji*), ultimate-stage syllable-disk contemplation” (Abe 2010, 154a). The practice described is a version of the Shingon moon-disk contemplation (*gachirinkan* 月輪觀), in which one contemplates one's own mind or heart (*shin* 心) as a luminous full-moon disk and applies the five seed-syllables for the five great elements within. The full-moon disk is usually understood to represent the pure bodhi-mind; this is an important context for Monkan's depiction of the syllable-disk contemplation and his use of the *maṃ* seed-syllable. He begins by indicating that one applies the five syllables to a full-moon disk. He then calls the full-moon disk “the six elements' mysterious fusion of form and mind, the non-dual as the ten-[realms]-producing original wheel.”¹¹¹ Next, he suggests that the meaning of the contemplated interior syllables expresses the bodily nature of the six elements. In concrete terms, the five syllables are first to be applied without the “emptiness dot,” which is placed over various Siddham syllables and usually indicates in Japanese pronunciation a final *n* sound (for example, the syllable *ma* becomes *man* [Sk. *maṃ*] when written with the emptiness dot above it).¹¹² Then, Monkan elaborates, when the emptiness dot is placed—in this case over the syllable for space, *kha* (Jp. *kyā*), in the center of the disk—it

109 See Rappo's transcription of this Shinpukuji-held text in Abe 2010, 150–60, especially 150–52.

110 On this point, see Abe's comments in *Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan* 2006, 609, and Rappo's in Abe 2010, 149.

111 “Realm” (*kai* 界) is supplied by Rappo in Abe 2010, 154a. The phrase I have translated here as “the non-dual as the ten-[realms]-producing original wheel” (不二即十[界]能生本輪) could alternatively be translated as “the non-dual immediate ten-[realms]-producing original wheel” (emphasis mine).

112 On the “emptiness dot” (*kūten* 空点 or *kūden*; also known as *bodai ten* 菩提点, the “enlightenment dot”), see Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 326b–327a, s.v. “kūden.” The mark is referred to in Sanskrit as *anusvāra*, but the Japanese terms are not direct translations.

becomes the consciousness element.¹¹³ We now have the full “six elements” (*rokudai* 六大) according to Shingon teachings, in which consciousness, or the mind of Dainichi, is itself an element and all six elements interpenetrate.

Most significant for us here is Monkan’s suggestion that the placing of the emptiness dot also results in the “*maṃ* syllable amid the great emptiness five-element wheel,” which “expresses the original wheel.” Monkan then elaborates on the oral transmission for this syllable-disk contemplation, giving particular attention to the following passage from the *Rishukyō* 理趣經 (Sutra That Transcends Principle): “All sentient beings are the storehouse of the Thus Come Ones, because they are all the self of the bodhisattva Fugen.”¹¹⁴ The gist of Monkan’s passages on the phrase “the bodhisattva Fugen” is that this points to the all-permeating six elements replete with great compassion, which generates the various virtues. Monkan then returns to the *maṃ* syllable in the last few lines of the main text. Monkan first breaks down the reference to “because they are all the self” (*issai ga yue* 一切我故) in the *Rishukyō* passage. He writes, “As for ‘because they are all the self,’¹¹⁵ truly this points to the six-element-producing original wheel.” He then immediately assimilates the *maṃ* syllable to the “self” referred to in the passage, which, in the context of his text as a whole, is simultaneously assimilated to the “great self” of Dainichi. In this case, it is that self as the “roundness” (*dan’en* 圓圓) of “the *maṃ*-syllable great-emptiness dharma-realm, meditation-wheel six-elements’ mysterious fusion.” Preceding and supplementary passages in Monkan’s text clarify that the “roundness” here—which is suggestive of both fullness and perfection—is manifested in the very shapes of the wish-fulfilling jewels, the moon disk, the five-wheeled stupa, and the *maṃ* syllable itself. Monkan then indicates that this is called the “pure bodhi-mind wish-fulfilling jewel.” This succinct move effectively synthesizes broader Mahayana associations of Mañjuśrī (invoked here by the *maṃ* syllable) with the bodhi-mind, Shingon understandings of the moon disk as the essence of the pure bodhi-mind, and Monkan’s own

113 For the comment by Monkan, see the main text in Abe 2010, 154a. For the placing of the dot over the sky syllable in the center of the moon disk, see the diagram of the disk in the text’s supplementary notes (*uragaki* 裏書), Abe 2010, 156a.

114 The passage is based on Amoghavajra’s translation of the *Rishukyō*; see T 243 8:785c11–12. My translation has benefited from the rendering of the original *Rishukyō* passage in Astley-Kristensen 1991, 157. Here, however, I have opted for the singular “self,” rather than “selves,” based on the context of the quote within Monkan’s text.

115 Here, I emend the character *gi* 義 in the rendering in Abe 2010, 154b, which would suggest “all meanings” (一切義) to *ga* 我, or “self.” Based on the context, it is clear that Monkan is directly addressing the phrase 一切我故 from the previously quoted *Rishukyō* passage (154a), thus *gi* 義 is likely a copyist error.

emphasis on wish-fulfilling jewels. Finally, Monkan closes the main text by indicating that “because all sentient beings’ very bodies are generated by the six elements, and this *maṃ* syllable is constructed by great emptiness,” it is said “because they are all the self” in the *Rishukyō* passage (Abe 2010, 154a–b).

A diagram in the text’s supplementary notes (*uragaki*) shows in graphic terms the fusion of the *maṃ* syllable with the seed-syllables for the five great elements, a fusion earlier suggested by the main text’s assimilation of the *maṃ* syllable to the contemplated moon disk and its five syllables. The diagram shows the *maṃ* syllable at the top, followed in descending order by the syllables for earth, water, fire, wind, and space. Above the *maṃ* syllable is the notation “the horizontal five wheels,” and below the five-element seed-syllables is the notation “the produced five wheels.”¹¹⁶ “Horizontal” in Buddhist terminology often represents the spatial, or timeless, dimension as opposed to the “vertical” dimension of change over time. These notations thus suggest that the *maṃ* syllable represents the five-wheels in the former dimension and the vertically aligned five-element syllables represent the latter. Such an understanding also tallies with the main text’s association of the *maṃ* syllable and the “great emptiness five-element wheel” that “expresses the original wheel.” Simultaneously, however, the intimate joining of the two dimensions, or two wheels, and a linking of these six syllables with the “mysterious fusion” of the six elements is clear.

The cluster of associations in this text is complex, even focusing just on those related to Mañjuśrī, and this is only a partial unpacking.¹¹⁷ Monkan also makes related associative moves in earlier sections of the text explaining other kinds of wish-fulfilling jewels. Notably, these include one on a wish-fulfilling jewel linked to the collective Kannon seed-syllable *sa* and the interfusion of the six elements manifested therein. Thus I do not claim that Mañjuśrī is the central deity venerated in this text, nor that Mañjuśrī is necessarily central to Monkan’s three-deity combinatory rites in other contexts. At least based on the texts that have been made public to date, the aforementioned Kōbō Daishi (or Kūkai), Wish-Fulfilling Kannon, Fudō, and Aizen figure more prominently.

116 For a printed version of the diagram, along with the surrounding notations, see Abe 2010, 156. For a photographic rendering of the diagram from the original text, see Dolce 2010, 192, plate 18. Rappo (in Abe 2010, 149n. 6) disagrees with Dolce’s reading of the notation immediately below the five-element seed syllables as *shoshō gozō* 所生五臟, or the “produced five organs,” rendering it instead as *shoshō gorin* 所生五輪, or the “produced five elements.” I agree with Rappo’s reading.

117 For further elaborations on the *maṃ* syllable in the text’s supplementary notes (*uragaki*), see the printed text in Abe 2010, 155b, 156b, and 157a.

The connections to Mañjuśrī are there, however, and they again suggest the significance of Mañjuśrī as a source for esoteric teachings and practices more broadly. For example, in the *Sanzon gōgyō hiketsu*, Monkan breaks down a quote attributed to Kūkai in the *Yuiō* stating that “My Chinese name is Henjō Kongō 遍照金剛; know it and practice it.” Monkan indicates that the “my” (*ware* 吾 or *go*)—or Kōbō Daishi’s “self”—refers to “the *maṃ*-syllable *original source* of the great-emptiness three-mysteries combined body.”¹¹⁸ Monkan makes an implicit identification of Kōbō Daishi with Mañjuśrī, who, in the supplementary notes to the *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu*, is said to have given birth to the pure bodhi-mind during his practice “in the ten-realms-producing *original wheel*.”¹¹⁹

Most salient for us here is the fusion in the *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu* of the *maṃ* syllable with the five element seed-syllables—a fusion also spatially and (in)visibly expressed when the *maṃ* syllable and the five-element seed-syllables brushed in the two halves of the inscription in the 1324 Hannyajī Mañjuśrī are joined. The match of the central part of the inscription with the use of the *maṃ* syllable in the *Tōryū saigoku hiketsu* is conspicuous. When considered alongside the inscription’s framing use of the seed-syllables for Fudō and Aizen—who so often are identified with Kōbō Daishi or the Wish-Fulfilling Kannon in the rites—this match becomes even more conspicuous, reinforcing the connections between the inscription and the three-deity combinatory rites.

Conclusions

Monkan’s creative adaptations of the cultic traditions around various deities, and the multiplicity of purposes for any given representation of them in his textual and iconographic activities, is significant for our broader analysis of Monkan and the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult. Both the Hakutsuru Museum Mañjuśrī painting and the former-Tōji Mañjuśrī painting by Monkan are skillful interweavings of the Saidaiji order emphasis on Mañjuśrī in debt-repaying memorial rites and the combined cult of relics and wish-fulfilling jewels emphasized in both Saidaiji order practices and the Daigoji-lineage three-

118 For the quote attributed to Kūkai in the *Yuiō*, see T 2431 77:410b4. For Monkan’s connection of the “my” to the *maṃ* syllable in the *Sanzon gōgyō hiketsu*, see Abe 2010, 189c (emphasis mine). My reading of the passage here differs from Rappo’s in his introduction to the text, where he instead links the reference to “Henjō” to the *maṃ* syllable (181a).

119 Abe 2010, 155b; emphasis mine.

deity combinatory rites. Moreover, both relics and wish-fulfilling jewels were considered symbols of the protection of imperial law. In this regard too, the depiction of the wish-fulfilling jewels in the Hakutsuru Museum painting was appropriate, as the favor of the ruler was one of the four debts the painting was dedicated to repaying. It was also fitting for a monk who signed his name here as “Jūzenji 十禪師 Shuon,” indicating that Monkan was one of the “ten meditation teachers” who served the emperor at the palace. Simultaneously, he included his self-designation as a “bodhisattva-precepts bhikṣu,” again signaling his identification with Eison’s Ritsu lineage.¹²⁰

This multiplicity of purposes in Monkan’s images of Mañjuśrī highlight several key issues for our understanding of the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult, and even “Kamakura Buddhism,” more broadly. First, as Wu has suggested (2002, 274–75), there is little reason to expect such medieval images, or religious activities more broadly, to express an either/or relationship between private and public goals. Rather, as the participation of Eison, Ninshō, Shinkū, Monkan, and colleagues in the Mañjuśrī cult clearly attest, such activities often were directed simultaneously toward many ends, including individual salvation (for example, for one’s mother), the benefit of outcasts or sentient beings more broadly, temple restoration, continuity of transmission, religious legitimization, and state protection. Recognizing multiple purposes even in a single expression of the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult is important because, as we will see in this book’s Epilogue, scholars have often chosen one purpose and labeled that the true meaning of the cult.

In addition, recognizing the overlap between individual and collective aims even in specific religious acts is important for the study of Japanese Buddhism more broadly. Vast claims are made on such individual versus collective distinctions—most tellingly here the frequent claim that emphasis on individual salvation is a hallmark of “Kamakura New Buddhism” versus the collective aims of “Old Buddhism.” Subscribing to this claim, one then need only emphasize either the focus on individual salvation or the state-protecting aspects to justify grouping Shingon Ritsu with the lauded New Buddhism or the disparaged Old Buddhism. However, the lines between individual salvation and state protection, new and old, heterodox and orthodox, continue to blur—in Shingon Ritsu, the Mañjuśrī cult, and Kamakura Buddhism in general. I suggest that a double vision of these broader issues, much as we employed for Monkan’s biography, is actually our sharpest vision.

120 The dedication and signature on this painting is photographed and transcribed in Uchida 2000, 85.

Epilogue

This book addresses three main themes. The first, and most specific theme, is that of the development of the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult over the Kamakura period, from the introduction of the cult after Eison's initial meeting with Ninshō in 1239 to Monkan's activities at the end of the period. Closely related to this theme is that of the broader development of Eison's Shingon Ritsu movement, otherwise known as the Saidaiji order. During the Kamakura period, the order progressed from humble beginnings at the dilapidated Nara temple Saidaiji to a wide-ranging monastic network that encompassed temples from Kantō to Kyūshū and supporters from outcasts to emperors. Both themes help us reconsider modern scholarship on medieval Japanese Buddhism, which has long emphasized the newer Zen, Pure Land, and Nichiren movements and the doctrinal and cultic concerns central to those groups. Thus the third and broadest theme here is the need to reconstruct our current models for "Kamakura Buddhism." Below, I will first address together the two more specifically Shingon Ritsu themes, before closing with reflections on models of medieval Buddhism.

Early Saidaiji Order Activities and Outcasts as "Supporters"

It may seem odd to cast outcasts (*hinin*) as "supporters" of the Saidaiji order, as I do in the title of this section. Our image of *hinin* in early medieval Japan—reinforced by Saidaiji order texts themselves and the Mañjuśrī cult—is primarily one of beggars, lepers, or others somehow displaced within Japanese society, people more likely to be cast as objects of social scorn, recipients of charitable relief, or simultaneously as both. However, whether intentionally or not, outcasts did, I suggest, serve as significant supporters of the order, especially in the thirteenth century. Even amid the outcast communities with which Eison and his colleagues interacted, there was a range of people, including leaders who were gradually developing into guild heads over the medieval period and "beggar-*hinin*," who were only one stratum of such communities. Many *hinin* were employed in the purification (*kiyome*) of temple and shrine grounds by removing animal carcasses and other debris, or for manual labor, as we saw in Eison's preparations for the 1269 non-discriminatory assembly. As we also saw in those preparations, as well as via later vows Eison elicited from *hinin* groups, he interacted directly with *hinin* leaders to incorporate lower members of the *hinin* hierarchies in the framework of Saidaiji order relief activities. Although

we do not have as much evidence of wealthy hinin for the early medieval period as we do for later periods, hinin leaders did support Eison's movement through their ability to mobilize their human "resources." Even focusing, however, on the early activities of the Saidaiji order and the beggar-hinin that were the targets of the relief activities, outcasts can be considered supporters in other ways.

In the preceding chapters, we have at least glimpsed many factors spurring the rise of Eison's movement. These include the intellectual and ritual inspiration—and institutional connections—of such Kōfukuji monks as Jōkei, Kakujō, and Ryōhen; the support of such Hokkeji and Chūgūji nuns as Jizen and Shinnyo from the 1240s on; and, from 1259 to 1261, invitations to perform services by such elites as the Iwashimizu Hachimangū administrator Miyakiyo and the courtier-turned-monk Hamuro Sadatsugu (Jōnen). The most dramatic turning point in the Saidaiji order's development was the 1261 invitation by the Kamakura warrior government leaders to Eison and his six-month trip to the Kantō region in 1262. This trip led to the establishment of a firm Saidaiji order base in the eastern capital and helped spur the imperial court's patronage of Eison as well. The twofold support of the warrior government and the court in turn bolstered, and was bolstered by, the many rites Eison led against the Mongols from 1268 into the 1280s, including during his three pilgrimages to the Ise shrines. As momentous a turning point as the warrior government patronage may have been, however, that patronage itself built on all the aforementioned earlier forms of support. Amid those earlier forms of support, we cannot neglect the seminal role played by outcasts—and the Mañjuśrī cult as the stage on which their roles were cast—in the combined activities of Eison and his disciple Ninshō.

The Mañjuśrī offering services that Eison and Ninshō led at outcast communities in the 1240s may not have been as public as the rites by "pure precepts-keeping monks" that Eison led at various shrines, starting with Hachimangū in 1259. But the conferral of precepts during the Mañjuśrī assemblies and evidence of spectators at these events—including people inspired to take the tonsure or make financial or other contributions—suggest that the assemblies also served as public opportunities to solicit support. Such public opportunities need not suggest any contradiction with the simultaneous "private" goals of Ninshō and Eison to use the Mañjuśrī assemblies to pray for the salvation of their mothers. As we saw in the example of Monkan's Mañjuśrī paintings, medieval monastics often combined public and private goals in their ritual and material offerings. The lines between "individual" and "public" goals, here and elsewhere in early medieval Buddhism, were rarely hard and fast.

Even if some of the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī assemblies in the 1240s were small gatherings, and even if none were directly attended by courtier or warrior elites, Ninshō and Eison led such assemblies for the better half of the decade, and they involved many different outcast communities from Yamato and Kawachi provinces. Moreover, in the early thirteenth century, warrior government leaders themselves had sponsored offering services for outcasts and Mañjuśrī assemblies. It is therefore difficult to imagine that such leaders were unaware of the Saidaiji order assemblies. In this regard, Ninshō and Eison's assemblies at outcast communities played a significant role in setting the stage for patronage by the warrior government and other elites. We can even see such stage-setting at work in the development of the order's links with Miwa Shinto from the late thirteenth century, which showed many parallels with the order's contributions to Ise kami traditions; Eison's first connections to Miwa institutions appear in the assemblies at the Miwa outcast community in 1241 and 1243.¹

If the metaphors here—of Eison and Ninshō casting hinin in specific roles, of the outcast communities performing on or setting stages—are problematic, they should be. For even as I frame my analysis within the language of drama and play, we must remember that the outcasts of medieval Japan, just like the monastics who are the main subject of this book, were real people. Eison and Ninshō's relief activities for hinin centered on those suffering from poverty, abandonment, grave illnesses, or disabilities. We are thus talking about people whose suffering was real, and not likely to have been eased much on a daily level by Buddhist invocations that all sentient beings suffer. I suggest, however, that no realistic assessment of the Saidaiji order involvement with outcasts—or of Japanese Buddhist involvement with marginalized people more broadly—can escape such problematic juxtapositions. I will return to the question of how to assess the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult and its relations with outcasts below. For contextualizing that discussion, however, we must first recognize that despite the significance of charitable relief for outcasts, there were many other aspects to the cult throughout the early medieval period. A brief review of the main arguments from the various chapters and how they fit together will bring those multiple aspects into clearer focus.

1 On the Saidaiji order's connections to Ise kami traditions, see Kondō 1985 and Itō 2011, 607–55. On links between the order's involvement in Miwa and Ise kami traditions, see especially Kubota 1973, 348–67, and Andreeva 2006 and 2010.

Continuity and Change in the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī Cult: From Eison to Monkan

The structure of this book is informed by both continuities and contrasts between the involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult of Eison and his leading first-generation disciples, Ninshō and Shinkū, and that of his prominent second-generation disciple Monkan. The Mañjuśrī assemblies led by Eison and Ninshō in the 1240s, and the dedication of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī main icon and attendant statues by Eison and Shinkū from 1267 to 1287, all show explicit concern for lepers, the disabled, and other outcasts. However, although there are many parallels with earlier Saidaiji order activities, in examining Monkan's vigorous involvement in the cult in the first half of the fourteenth century we find no explicit references to outcasts or charitable activities. My main tools in grappling with these continuities and contrasts in the cult from Eison to Monkan have been an emphasis on the multiplicity of the cult's practices and ideas and on the interplay of the esoteric and the exoteric in the Saidaiji order from its beginnings.

I suggested that the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult was characterized by diverse activities and notions from the start, involving not just charitable relief but precepts propagation, memorial rites, exoteric and esoteric conceptions of Mañjuśrī, and the medieval discourse on filial piety to mothers within the discourse of the four debts. I sought to reinforce this plurality of practices and views by comparing and contrasting even the closely connected involvement of Eison and Ninshō in the cult in the 1240s (Chapters 1 and 2). In Chapter 3, we saw both hierarchical and egalitarian conceptions of outcasts in the texts and contexts of Eison's rites for the Hannyaji "Living Mañjuśrī" in the late 1260s, including likely influence from views of icchantikas and universal enlightenment among such Hossō monks as Jōkei and Ryōhen. That case study enabled us to extend our view of the interweaving of the exoteric and the esoteric in Eison's soteriology, which cuts across—even while maintaining—hierarchical distinctions among social groups and categories of Buddhist practitioners. In sum, Eison framed his views of outcasts within conceptions of "the high to the low" that grouped hinin with icchantikas, or those without "the seeds of buddhahood," at the low rungs of social and Buddhist categories. But his narrative and ritual activities simultaneously suggested that outcasts and icchantikas, like all other people, could overcome past transgressions and be led to Buddhist practice and buddhahood through the power of Mañjuśrī and the exoteric and esoteric practices that the Saidaiji order promoted. In doing so, Eison denied the permanence of the low position of outcasts and icchantikas in Buddhist hierarchies.

In both Chapters 4 and 5 I took different approaches to illuminating the range of concerns that Saidaiji order monks expressed through the Mañjuśrī cult. Chapter 4 explored fundraising issues linked to the Mañjuśrī cult and the rhetoric of reluctance within which Eison and his disciples expressed their views on fundraising and patronage from elites. Their rhetoric of reluctance portrays Eison as repeatedly refusing patronage from high-ranking elites but ultimately attaining compromise within his group that enables him to accept such patronage. The very need for this rhetoric was exacerbated by a tension between his dual status as a reclusive, “pure precepts-keeping” monk and as an esoteric master gaining ever-increasing elite patronage for his ritual expertise, which was most conspicuous from 1259 through the 1280s. In Chapter 5, I argued that *Eison’s Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*—which portrays a dream-vision and direct, precepts-based esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Eison to Shinkū—strives to legitimize not only the transition of Saidaiji from Eison to Shinkū and later elders but the very relationship between Shingon and Ritsu in the Saidaiji order. But it does so in a manner that privileges esotericism. In examining the provenance of the reputed 1269 document, I suggested that we need to consider an increasing esotericization of the order after Eison’s death in 1290 as well as fourteenth-century and subsequent accounts of a similar dream-vision and esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe to later disciples. The particular formulations of exoteric-esoteric lineages in both sets of transmissions likely reflect the direct hands of later disciples rather than those of the lineage founders. Scholars’ implicit or explicit acceptance of the attributions to the founders in turn obscures the creativity of these later disciples.

In these varying ways, my task has been to provide a more nuanced picture of both the Mañjuśrī cult and the relationship between Shingon and Ritsu in the Saidaiji order, to show the synthesis but also the persistent tensions in this relationship. Simply put, the Shingon and Ritsu elements of the Saidaiji order do not always fit together comfortably. The tensions are both individual and institutional. Eison may have striven to develop a monastic order in which the Shingon and Ritsu elements were interdependent and mutually supportive, but in actual practice individual monastics—like the scholars who write about them—often favored one or the other. Institutionally, the combination of the distinguishable Shingon and Ritsu lineages within the order ran into interlinked internal and external conflicts. As we saw in Chapter 5, different principles governed Eison’s Ritsu-based views of collective monastic decision-making—including for the succession of Saidaiji elders—and the privileging of direct master-to-disciple transmission in exclusive esoteric initiations used in both the Saidaiji order and medieval Buddhism more broadly. Saidaiji, moreover, was institutionally separate from the network of leading

Shingon temples, including Tōji, Daigoji, and Kōyasan among others. Thus while Eison and subsequent monks receiving esoteric transmission in his lineage could trace their Shingon roots to the Daigoji Matsuhashi lineage transmitted to Eison, his Saidaiji esoteric lineage came to be viewed as “separately established” from the major Shingon lineages.² In combination, both the Ritsu elements within Eison’s movement and views of his esoteric lineage as separately established meant that the Shingon credentials of his disciples could be downplayed by rivals. This critique came to the fore in negative portrayals of Monkan in the mid to late fourteenth century.

The examination in Chapter 6 of Monkan’s participation in the Mañjuśrī cult and his broader activities further underscored varying emphases on Shingon and Ritsu. Although Monkan studied both Ritsu and Shingon under Shinkū at Saidaiji and was active in the Mañjuśrī cult throughout his career, his involvement in the cult shows little evidence of the social welfare aspects or the precepts conferrals associated with the Ritsu side of the Saidaiji order. I attempted to blunt the contrast between his activities and those of earlier Saidaiji order monks by highlighting many other continuities. Yet a contrast remains, however much one strives to show the continuity in the Mañjuśrī cult from Eison to Monkan—whether by emphasizing the diversity within the cult, as I have done, or by insisting that the cult was always *really* about something common to Eison’s and Monkan’s participation, such as state protection or memorial rites. This contrast begets the question of whether Monkan’s participation reflects broader shifts in the cult over the Kamakura period. Here, a closer look at the artifacts placed inside the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue, coupled with contrasting theories on the primary concerns of the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult, is instructive.

The Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī Cult and Outcasts Reconsidered

As with Monkan’s involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult, the objects deposited in the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue tell a different story from that suggested by the evidence for the participation of Eison, Ninshō, and Shinkū in the social welfare aspects of the cult. Eison’s involvement in social welfare activities was not as broad as Ninshō’s; sources on Eison show less evidence of the public works side that Ninshō emphasized as part of his linked faith in Mañjuśrī and Gyōki (Chapter 1). However, there is ample evidence for both Saidaiji order leaders’ charitable relief efforts on behalf of outcasts and for their linking of

2 See Yūkai’s characterization of Eison’s “Saidaiji-ryū” in the *Hōkyōshō* (Broucke 1992, 16).

that charitable relief with the Mañjuśrī cult. In turn, considering Shinkū's successive positions as elder of Hannyaji (whose main deity was Mañjuśrī) and Saidaiji, I find surprisingly little testimony to his participation in either the Mañjuśrī cult or charitable relief for outcasts, apart from the 1287 votive text he authored. But this 1287 testimony to Shinkū's Mañjuśrī faith does blend the boundaries between the deity and outcasts, with Mañjuśrī portrayed there manifesting as a hinin and as a leper (Chapter 4). There is thus a clear thread of continuity in the cultic activities of Eison and his two leading disciples in connecting the Mañjuśrī cult to outcasts. Yet the deposits inside the Saidaiji statue show only slight evidence of the relief activities for the poor and outcast that were so strongly linked to the Mañjuśrī cult and Saidaiji order activities more broadly, including the order's participation in the related Gyōki cult.

Many votive texts inserted in the 1302 Mañjuśrī image do pray for the salvation of all sentient beings or that all sentient beings will generate the aspiration for enlightenment; Mañjuśrī was celebrated as the Mother of Awakening precisely for his ability to induce such aspiration. As part of "all sentient beings," outcasts are implicitly included in the general prayers. Examining the votive texts printed in Kobayashi 1954 and the two largest concentrations of these texts in the *Kamakura ibun* (Extant Documents of the Kamakura Period),³ however, I have found only one explicit reference to "hinin" and little evidence of the poor, abandoned, or physically afflicted as a separate category, such as we find in the primary texts for Eison's, Ninshō's, and Shinkū's participation in the Mañjuśrī cult. In contrast, I have found many other aspects of the cult consistent with such primary texts and highlighted earlier in this book: frequent invocation of the famous *Shinji kangyō* verse on Mañjuśrī as mother of the buddhas of the three times, prayers to repay the debt to one's parents or the four debts more broadly, Mañjuśrī as a teacher for the time between Śākyamuni and Maitreya, the significance of the aspiration for enlightenment, and references to icchantikas or the icchantika vow.

Notably—and problematically—the one explicit reference to hinin is in connection with this last category, icchantikas. The reference appears in the main votive text dedicating the Mañjuśrī statue itself. Here, the authors pray to dispel the suffering of, and provide comfort to, "such sentient beings as hinin-beggars and icchantikas who have cut off good [roots]."⁴ In this association of

3 For the two largest concentrations of these votive texts in the *Kamakura ibun*, see the records for 1293/8–11, at the start of the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī project, and 1301/7–1302/8, or approximately the final year before the 1302/8/25 dedication (Takeuchi 1971–97, 24:29–77, and 27:310–400 to 28:3–53, respectively).

4 Takeuchi 1971–97, 28:51 (doc. 21217).

hinin with icchantikas, the authors make explicit the implicit association in Eison's 1269 votive text dedicating the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī image (Chapter 3). Yet whether implicitly or explicitly, the comparison to icchantikas, particularly "those who have cut off good roots," as in this passage, is troubling. Granted, Eison sees salvation for all as possible through faith in Mañjuśrī, and he makes special mention of both icchantikas and hinin. At the same time, in the comparison of hinin with the icchantikas so often scorned in Buddhist literature, Eison and his followers spread discrimination toward those same hinin. Such discrimination is only partially relieved through the more positive spin they put on the term *icchantika* in their invocations of Mañjuśrī as an "icchantika bodhisattva" and their own "icchantika vows."

From modern perspectives, some of the Saidaiji order's efforts to help hinin may seem misguided. But the order was a forerunner among Buddhist groups in their direct soteriological and material engagement with hinin. Moreover, if their *doctrine* of salvation for "even" icchantikas and hinin was only progressive in the context of the conservative five-nature thought permeating Hossō—and thus influencing Kakujō and Eison's new Ritsu movement—the *ritualized* veneration of hinin as Mañjuśrī in the 1269 Hannyaji ceremony was pioneering. Finally, however much one focuses on other aspects of the Mañjuśrī cult, the connection with charitable and soteriological relief efforts for hinin was a significant aspect of Eison and Ninshō's involvement in the cult (and at least narratively, for Shinkū as well). Thus it is intriguing that we do not find more evidence in the 1302 Mañjuśrī statue of explicit concern for hinin, or for the category of beggars, the solitary, and the ill or disabled, which was clearly associated with hinin in Eison's writings. It is intriguing that we do not find evidence for Shinkū's Mañjuśrī faith, or his hinin relief efforts based on that faith, after Eison's death and his entrance into Saidaiji (Oishio 1998, 390). And for all the evidence of Monkan's involvement in the Mañjuśrī cult found to date, none points directly to involvement with or explicit concern for hinin.

Indirectly, we might assume, as Oishio does (390–91), that Shinkū's Mañjuśrī faith remained consistent throughout his life. We might assume, as Amino does, that Monkan also was involved with hinin because he had connections with both Hannyaji and the Mañjuśrī cult, each of which was strongly associated with hinin by his time. We might even assume along with Amino that Monkan incorporated hinin among the military retainers that the *Taiheiki* claims he kept (Amino 1986, 176–78). Between our evidence and our assumptions, however, remain enticing gaps—gaps that could merely be absences in the available records, obscuring the continuity we would assume, or gaps that instead represent disjunctures in the Mañjuśrī cult and the order's Nara-area activities more broadly from Eison to Shinkū to Monkan.

We can try to ease the sense of disjuncture created by the gaps in the continuity of hinin relief by focusing on something else as the hallmark of the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult. Indeed, if the apparently minor role of explicit concern for hinin in the votive texts inside the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue, in Shinkū's activities after Eison's death, and in Monkan's activities tells us anything, it is that we should not assume hinin relief was that hallmark. It is thus understandable when, for example, Uchida Keiichi focuses on memorial rites or Ōishi Masaaki focuses on state protection as the defining characteristic of the cult, and each cites his focus as one that Eison and Monkan had in common. Certainly, there is strong evidence for both these elements in Eison's and Monkan's uses of the cult. Yet the very fact that there is strong evidence for *both* undermines the case for one or the other being *the* most important.

Uchida emphasizes the prayers for the dead in Eison's 1269 votive text for the Hanniyaji non-discriminatory assembly and in many other texts and images connected to the Mañjuśrī cult (1988). He argues pointedly that "the purpose [of the 1269 rite], predictably, was to send merit to the dead (*tsuizen* 追善)" (50), and as support he cites the passage on Hanniyaji's location between a graveyard and dwellings for lepers (although he does acknowledge the practice of providing relief in the current life through repentance of past-life transgressions). Uchida further argues that, despite the various Mañjuśrī paintings linked to the Saidaiji order that are designated by their esoteric five-syllable and eight-syllable names, "based on Eison's Mañjuśrī faith," it must be denied that they were used in esoteric rituals (59).

There were many connections between the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult and memorial rites, as we have seen throughout this book, and Uchida's study is laudable in highlighting such connections. However, the broader narratives and ritual contexts for the Hanniyaji Mañjuśrī image suggest a more variegated picture of Eison's Mañjuśrī faith, and we cannot dismiss the esoteric aspects so readily. For example, the 1267 rites for the eye-opening ceremony—from the construction of an esoteric altar through the three days and nights' chanting of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī mantra—show pervasive esoteric influence. Among the various transmissions portrayed in both texts dedicating the Mañjuśrī image, the first one mentioned each time is a Shingon transmission, reinforcing the great importance Eison placed on the esoteric teachings and Mañjuśrī as a source for those teachings, emphases that Monkan also shared. Moreover, many of the images and texts inserted or inscribed in the Hanniyaji image, as well as the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī image modeled after the Hanniyaji one, have an esoteric basis.

The intentions behind the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī assemblies were clearly diverse, embracing both the exoteric and the esoteric. In keeping with these

diverse intentions, the iconography of the Hannyaaji statue—as far as we can reconstruct it—and the Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue cannot be identified directly with either the five-syllable or eight-syllable iconographies prescribed in sutras and iconographic compendia. Yet the multiple intentions, representations, and identities invoked in and by the constructions should not lead us to reject the esoteric basis of Eison and his disciples' Mañjuśrī faith. Much more apt is Wu's conclusion, based largely on the objects inside the Hannyaaji and Saidaiji images, that Eison and his disciples "hoped to create Monju [Mañjuśrī] statues that assembled the totality of the power associated with various types of Monju," including both esoteric and exoteric conceptions (2002, 202). The texts and the iconography of the Hannyaaji image reinforce each other in this regard: in the 1267 votive text, for example, evidence for the "totality of the power" associated with Mañjuśrī that Eison sought to portray can be seen in his examples of Shingon, Hossō, Tendai, Kegon, Sanron, and Zen transmissions (see Chapter 3 here).

In contrast to Uchida's emphasis on the exoteric nature of the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult, Ōishi emphasizes the primacy of esoteric, state-protecting texts and rituals. In support of this emphasis, Ōishi cites—much as I have done in Chapter 6—various examples of the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī being invoked for state protection in Chinese scriptures and Japanese texts, including Monkan's use of the 1324 Hannyaaji statue in the subjugation rites against the warrior government (Ōishi 1987, 166–69). As we saw in the Introduction, Eison also led subjugation rites against the Mongols at the Ise imperial shrine from 1273 to 1280, and he performed particularly large-scale rites at Iwashimizu Hachimangū in 1281, invoking both Buddhist deities and kami. Although Aizen is the Buddhist deity most strongly associated with these rites (particularly the 1281 ones), Mañjuśrī is also linked to them. On 1275/7/27, to ward off the Mongols, Eison led one hundred recitations of a Mañjuśrī spell at Wakamiya 若宮 Shrine (a subsidiary shrine of Hiraoka 平岡 Shrine in Kawachi Province). On 1279/3/25, with the nun Nen'a 念阿 as the sponsor, he offered to Hiraoka Shrine a copy of the *Great Wisdom Sutra* that included a printed image of the lion-riding Mañjuśrī on the endpaper (*mikaeshi* 見返し).⁵ Hokkeji nuns may also have invoked Mañjuśrī in such state-protecting rites, based on the timing of the construction of an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī statue held by the convent.⁶

5 On the 1275 Mañjuśrī spell recitation, see the entry in the *Gakushōki* for 1275/7/27 (NKBK 1977, 39). On the 1275 and 1279 connections of Mañjuśrī with the prayers against the Mongols, see Kobayashi 1962, 8–9, 11; and Ōishi 1987, 165–66.

6 Little is known about the circumstances for the Hokkeji statue's construction, but it has been dated to the mid or late Kamakura period, and its status as an eight-syllable Mañjuśrī is con-

Finally, as discussed in Chapter 4 here, Eison's "relief" for hinin is also connected to court and warrior efforts to exert control over hinin. Ōishi explicitly argues that hinin relief and state protection are two sides of the same coin for Eison. This is because Eison sees both as contributing to "peace and tranquility in the current imperial reign" (*seichō annon* 聖朝安穩), a phrase that he often uses. Accordingly, Ōishi emphasizes state protection as the purpose of the Saidaiji order Mañjuśrī cult and hinin relief activities.⁷

A few caveats are warranted, however, in treating the eight-syllable Mañjuśrī and the state-protecting aspects of the cult as primary. First, there is as much evidence for Saidaiji order activities related to the five-syllable Mañjuśrī, which in Japan has not been as strongly associated with state protection. Ninshō's emphasis on the five-syllable Mañjuśrī in his early career, and Eison's and other Saidaiji order monks' repeated chanting rites for the five-syllable Mañjuśrī spell, highlight this. It is also significant that Jōkei, who served as a precedent for Eison in varying ways, emphasized the five-syllable Mañjuśrī (Chapter 2). So too did Shinnyo when she dedicated a remarkably preserved papier-mâché statue of the five-syllable Mañjuśrī for Chūgūji, shortly after the 1269 Hannyaji non-discriminatory assembly.⁸ Moreover, for consistency with the Mañjuśrī cult activities of Monkan—or those of Ninshō or many monastics contributing to the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue for Eison's thirteenth-year memorial—we could equally well choose prayers for the dead as the unifying thread, as Uchida does, or the emphasis on generating the aspiration for enlightenment. Thus even if we accept Ōishi's argument that state protection and hinin relief are two sides of the same coin, it remains significant that one side of that coin, hinin relief, is not evident in Monkan's activities—and in decreasing evidence in the order's activities in the Nara area generally after Eison's death. Again, this may simply be a gap in our records. The decrease in such evidence over time, however, may reflect neither that state protection was actually the key element all along nor simply that Monkan was an exceptional figure in the Saidaiji order. It may instead reflect broader changes in the Nara-area development of the order, including the very relationship between the esoteric and the exoteric.

spicuous. See Ōta et al. 1976–78, 5:67–68, for a black-and-white image (plate 51) and a detailed description; see Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 1990, 126, plate 68, for a color image and p. 182 for a description.

7 On these points, see Ōishi 1987, particularly 169–73.

8 On this statue, which includes a dedicatory text dated 1269/7/12 with a signature that appears to be Shinnyo's, see Ōta et al. 1976–78, 1:67a–69b, and Chūsei Nihon Kenkyūjo et al. 2009, 40–43, 47.

The Esoteric and the Exoteric in the Saidaiji Order

Most discussions on the relative weight of the esoteric and the exoteric in the Saidaiji order center on Eison's activities. I suggest, however, that efforts to posit either the esoteric or the exoteric as primary for Eison are undermined by the fact that most esoteric texts attributed to him remain unpublished in temple archives and their actual provenance is difficult to ascertain. Based on the available evidence, however, I agree with Oishio Chihiro's argument that Eison emphasized penetrating the depths of the esoteric teachings via the precepts and the vinaya (1995, 1998). I am more cautious about Oishio's assessment that such an emphasis means that Eison understood the esoteric to be primary.⁹ Much as in the thorough mixing of esoteric and exoteric texts and imagery in the Hanniyaji and Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statues, it was the *totality* of the synthesis of the exoteric and esoteric that Eison emphasized rather than an either/or proposition. Among exoteric teachings, while we cannot ignore the influence of Hossō and other exoteric schools that he studied, Ritsu was Eison's adopted area of specialization after his encounters with Jōkei's disciples in the mid-1230s.

Eison saw the strict adherence to the precepts advocated in Ritsu as a necessary protection for esoteric practitioners, to prevent them from falling into the evil realms.¹⁰ The power of esoteric Buddhism also represented danger, as power so often does. Yet neither his insistence on the necessity of grounding in the precepts for the thorough penetration of the esoteric, nor the stipulation (according to Monkan's *Saigyokushō*) that members in his lineage should only proceed to esoteric training after five years of study of the precepts, indicates that Eison thought one could abandon the Ritsu aspects as one progressed. Much as the "sun and the moon" analogy in *Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū* suggests (whoever actually wrote the text), Ritsu and the esoteric teachings were so thoroughly interdependent in Eison's understanding, that the one should not exist without the other. In Matsuo's fitting comparison of the sun and the moon reference, they were like the yang and the yin (1998b, 9). But to take one half of this totality and emphasize that as primary—as Matsuo does in taking Ritsu as the sun and hence primary, or as others do in taking the

9 It is true that Monkan took the esoteric as primary when, by his own account in the *Saigyokushō*, he abbreviated his training in the precepts and the vinaya to specialize in esotericism but still considered himself in Eison's lineage (see Chapter 5 here and Oishio 1998). However, whether or not we can trace such privileging of esotericism to Eison is another issue.

10 See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1234 (NKBK 1977, 6–7), and Abé 2002–03, 112, 125.

esoteric as primary (Chapter 5 here)—is to understate the *ideal* of complementarity in the analogy.

That said, while the yin and yang symbol conveys unity within duality, it also conveys duality within unity. This dual signification reminds us of the power of opposing tendencies and the potential for hierarchical arrangements within any twofold pairing. Ideally, yin and yang are equally paired. In actual practice in East Asia, however, the yang component—generally understood to represent the “sunny” and male aspects—has tended to be privileged. Shingon and Ritsu are not so plainly opposing as black and white, and their opposition was not what Eison emphasized in his movement. But we must again recognize tensions within the mix.

First, in doctrinal and ritual terms, while the sun and moon analogy in *Eison’s Statement* conveys a rhetorical interdependence of Shingon and Ritsu, the text as a whole relativizes the exoteric precepts in light of the samaya precepts and other esoteric teachings. We see this relativizing also in the attribution of a similar precepts-based esoteric transmission from Mañjuśrī to Myōe to later disciples in the *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* (Chapter 5). Relativizing is not the same as dismissing. However, if the influence of Annen’s similar relativizing move on the development of precepts traditions in Tendai is any indication (Groner 1990), relativizing the exoteric can be a strong step in the direction of dismissing it.

Second, in practical terms, there is a push and pull in the attraction of elites to Eison and his disciples that highlights both the interplay and the tensions in the Saidaiji order’s Shingon and Ritsu mix. The attraction of lay authorities is to both Ritsu monks’ fundraising and managerial skills and the ritual efficacy of Shingon expertise—and to a perception of the spiritual power of the ordinations the monks perform that reflects both their Ritsu and Shingon areas of expertise.¹¹ Eison distinguished himself from many other esoteric practitioners of his time through his emphasis on Ritsu; when he was invited to perform esoteric subjugation rites against the Mongols at Iwashimizu Hachimangū in 1281, it was specifically as a leader of “pure precepts-keeping monks.”¹² Eison’s esoteric prayers were seen as all the more efficacious due to the abstinence and

11 On perceptions of the spiritual or “magical” power of the ordinations performed by Eison and his Ritsu colleagues, see Wajima 1959, 185–86; Matsuo 1995, 4; Minowa 1999, 450; Quinter 2001; and Meeks 2010b. On similar perceptions of the power of the precepts and ordinations in medieval Zen, see Bodiford 1993, 173–79, and Faure 1996, 64, 75, 103–4, 220–21. For an earlier example from the Tendai esoteric tradition, see Paul Groner’s analysis of Annen and ordination ceremonies (1990, 268–69).

12 See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1281/7/22 (NKBK 1977, 49).

purity associated with his status as a Ritsu monk. As evidenced by the rhetoric of reluctance in the *Gakushōki* and other writings of Eison's, however, this very attraction also threatened the professed unattached (*muen*) status that was central to his own and his disciples' identities as precepts-keeping reclusive monks and hence much of what distinguished them from other esoteric practitioners.

Suggestions of tensions in the Shingon and Ritsu mix are also evident in Monkan's activities. His abbreviation of the Ritsu part of his training and his rise within separate Shingon hierarchies do make him an exceptional case in Eison's order, even though many continuities remain long after his initial affiliation with separate Shingon lineages. Moreover, as Oishio reminds us (1998, 392–93), we cannot skip Shinkū in assessing the transition from Eison to Monkan, whether in regard to the Mañjuśrī cult or other aspects of Saidaiji order activities. Yet it is revealing that the succession of transmissions from Eison to Shinkū to Monkan culminated in Monkan's abbreviated Ritsu training and his much greater emphasis on the Shingon part of the synthesis. Also revealing is that the transitions in the Shingon Ritsu Mañjuśrī cult in the Kamakura period eventually found expression in Monkan's participation in the cult, but with little evidence of charitable relief activities and precepts conferrals. For both hint at a shift away from the Ritsu that made Saidaiji's Shingon distinctive. Both reinforce the sense of a shift suggested by the 1298 implementation of a Saidaiji network of state-protecting, esoteric-prayer-offering temples (*kitōji*); the broader activities of Shinkū as Saidaiji elder (Oishio 1998); and the increasing proportion of esoteric texts among the sacred works (*shōgyō*) held by Saidaiji, from the medieval into the early modern period (see Inagi 2002 and Chapter 5 here).

How sudden or gradual any shifting emphasis from Ritsu to Shingon may have been remains an area for future research. Here, questions about the provenance of such esoteric texts as *Eison's Statement* loom large. Is this text's story one that we can reliably attribute to Eison? To Shinkū, Senyu, or another fourteenth-century Saidaiji elder? Or, rather, to the early modern monks who copied and spread it? If we cannot yet answer these questions decisively, our exploration in Chapter 5 of the text and the related *Mudra and Spell of the Purity of Keeping the Precepts* suggests that the questions themselves can lead to new and potentially richer stories, stories that will take into greater account the creativity of later followers of such founding figures as Eison and Myōe and early modern adaptations of exoteric-esoteric Buddhism. Also a matter for future research is how much any shifting emphasis from Ritsu to Shingon centered on Saidaiji, or the greater Nara area, and how transitions may have differed in other areas, particularly the eastern Shingon Ritsu center embracing

Gokurakuji and Shōmyōji. Such research will require greater attention to the provenance of documents by and about the order, developments from Eison's death through the Shingon Ritsu revival movement in the Tokugawa period, as well as regional variations. But it will also require continued re-visioning of our models for understanding "Kamakura Buddhism" and medieval Japanese Buddhism more broadly. I would thus like to conclude with a few reflections on these latter issues.

The Nara Schools and Medieval Buddhism: Models, Maps, and Directions

Despite the prevalence of scholarly accounts suggesting otherwise, Nara Buddhism was thriving in the Kamakura period. The focus here has been on one particular Nara movement, Eison's Saidaiji order of Shingon Ritsu monks and nuns. But we have also seen evidence of Nara Buddhism's vitality in the activities of the Hossō scholar-monk Jōkei, the Shingon and Kegon monk Myōe, later followers of Jōkei and Myōe, and Monkan both before and after his affiliation with separate Shingon lineages. The activities of a great many more Nara Buddhist practitioners could be added to those examined here. And while our principal focus has been on the Nara area itself, we have also seen the influence of Nara Buddhism as Eison and his followers branched out into other areas, especially the eastern capital of Kamakura, and in the connections to such temples on the fringes of Kyoto as Daigoji (Eison and Monkan) and Kōzanji (Myōe). Finally, we have seen examples of the diversity of the Saidaiji order itself in our comparisons and contrasts among the activities of Eison, Ninshō, Shinkū, Monkan, and, briefly, Tan'ei and Kōe in Kamakura. Such diversity within even the Saidaiji order itself further highlights the continued vitality of Nara Buddhism during this time. In light of such vitality, any overarching model of Kamakura Buddhism that ignores or dismisses developments in the Nara schools during this time is flawed.

Certainly, leading models of Kamakura or medieval Buddhism attempt to account for the Nara schools. All, however, are colored by related historiographical biases that have proven remarkably stubborn. The traditional (as opposed to Matsuo's) model of the "Old Buddhism" of Tendai, Shingon, and the Nara schools versus the "New Buddhism" of the Pure Land, Zen, and Nichiren schools has been under critique for a few decades. The critiques are justified, as this model largely reflects sectarian biases of the schools that are strongest in modern Japan (the New Buddhist schools). The Marxist historiographical model of Kuroda Toshio and his successors—which emphasizes the

prevailing religious and political system supported by the exoteric-esoteric Buddhism of those schools formerly dubbed Old Buddhist—was supposed to replace such a sectarian model. But Kuroda's model of the "exoteric-esoteric system" (*kenmitsu taisei*) ended up reinforcing many aspects of the former Old Buddhism versus New Buddhism model. Most salient here is the tendency of scholars adopting Kuroda's model to portray the exoteric-esoteric schools as reactionary or oppressive forces. Such a portrayal contrasts the scholarly emphasis on the more revolutionary or liberating orientations of the "heterodox" movements of those schools formerly dubbed New Buddhist. That said, in many ways Kuroda's model *is* more nuanced than the earlier model of Old Buddhism versus New Buddhism and it did succeed in drawing more attention to the Nara schools and movements, even though they were often characterized in negative terms reminiscent of the earlier model. I stand with James Ford (2006), however, in suggesting that a tendency to focus on the great "individuals" of the Pure Land, Zen, and Nichiren schools versus the "institutions" of the Tendai, Shingon, and Nara schools during the medieval period has been unwittingly strengthened by the influence of Kuroda's model.

Questions of who gets cast with a personal face and who doesn't, and lingering (if unintentional) influence from rejected former models, also affect our evaluation of Matsuo's model of the New Kamakura Buddhism of "reclusive monks" versus the Old Kamakura Buddhism of "official monks." Similar to my adoption here of the "exoteric-esoteric" designation from Kuroda's model even while not accepting the entirety of the model, I have adopted Matsuo's use of the designation reclusive monks (*tonseisō*) for characterizing Eison's and such related movements as Jōkei's and Myōe's. I have found both the "exoteric-esoteric" and "reclusive monk" designations helpful because they are attested in medieval sources themselves. Less well-attested in Matsuo's case, however, is the use of official monks (*kansō*) as a broad, countervailing category to that of reclusive monks in the Kamakura period. One can find some examples, but they are much fewer than the self-designation of *tonsei* used by Eison and others in his milieu. This alone does not dismiss the value of Matsuo's model, as scholars are of course free to use hermeneutical categories that the subjects of their study may not have used themselves. Moreover, the distinctions between "black-robed" (reclusive) and "white-robed" (official) monks in medieval texts and imagery do lend support to Matsuo's model.

My hesitations concerning Matsuo's model, however, are twofold. First, largely positive evaluations of New Kamakura Buddhism versus negative evaluations of Old Kamakura Buddhism in previous scholarship have made these terms so value-laden that their usefulness as scholarly categories in non-sectarian scholarship is greatly impaired. Second is a broader issue affecting

scholars' work across disciplines, including the present study: we frequently sympathize with the main subjects of our research. I do not see a sectarian bias in Matsuo's model, but it is hard to escape the impression that he sympathizes more with the "reclusive monks" he studies than with their "official monk" counterparts. Greater in-depth focus on individual practitioners represented by the category of official monks may help bring Matsuo's model to fuller life—or point to a more variegated model of practitioners in medieval Japan than any twofold model can support. Similarly, however, the present study does not attempt to bring to life the traditionally designated New Buddhist figures that are the more frequent target of studies of medieval Buddhism. We all choose our spots.

It is easier to critique previous grand models than to create a new one. I have benefited much from the previous work of scholars employing any of the three models highlighted above. But for now I am content to close this study by illuminating the gaps in our current models of Kamakura or medieval Buddhism. The problem with all such grand models is that they inevitably come to obscure as much as they reveal. Nevertheless, we do need both those who create maps of the forest and those who call attention to trees not clearly seen in those maps, trees that may lead to the discovery of still unmapped forests. I suggest that the broader landscape of medieval Japanese Buddhism—one that will truly account for the vitality and diversity of the Nara schools and the multiple identities of exoteric-esoteric monks and nuns—remains largely unmapped. We have much work, and play, ahead of us.

Documents: Annotated Translations

828 Council of State Directive Establishing Mañjuśrī Assemblies

This directive established public support in Japan for holding official Mañjuśrī assemblies in conjunction with charitable offering ceremonies.¹ The directive quotes from a petition for such support by the Gangōji monk Taizen (d.u.), which itself quoted the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*, a Chinese Buddhist scripture likely compiled in the fifth century.² Along with the Daianji monk Gonzō (754–827), Taizen is credited with the private inauguration of the practice in Japan (see Chapter 2 here).

Translation

Council of State Directive

Item: Mañjuśrī assemblies should be held

Regarding the aforementioned, [the Council of State] has obtained a petition from the Office of Monastic Affairs, which declares:

“The posthumously promoted senior monastic officer, transmitter of the torch, great dharma-bridge Gonzō and the transmitter of the torch, great dharma-bridge Taizen of Gangōji instituted the aforementioned assembly throughout the districts and villages of Kinai, preparing rice and other provisions and offering them to the poor. This was based on the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*, which states, ‘If there are sentient beings who hear Mañjuśrī’s name, their transgressions from birth-and-death through twelve hundred million kalpas will be removed. Those who pay reverence and make offerings will always be reborn, lifetime after lifetime, in the households of the buddhas and will be protected by the might of Mañjuśrī. [. . .].’³ If they wish to make offerings and cultivate meritorious deeds, then [Mañjuśrī] will transform himself, turning

1 The original directive can be found in the *Ruiju* (or *Ruijū*) *sandaikyaku* (Kuroita et al. 1929–, 25:53–54) and Horiike 1982, 483, which quotes it in full from the *Ruiju sandaikyaku*.

2 For a complete annotated translation of the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* (Ch. *Wenshushili banniepan jing*; T 463) and analysis of its provenance, including connections with the fifth-century genre of Chinese “visualization” or “contemplation” sutras (Ch. *guan jing* 觀經; Jp. *kangyō*), see Quinter 2010.

3 “Households of the buddhas” 諸仏家 refers to being born where the buddhas reside—in other words, in their buddha-fields or pure lands (Nakamura 1981, 690b, s.v. “shobutsu no ie”). The bracketed ellipsis at the end of this sentence marks the directive’s ellipsis from the text of the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*.

into an impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being, and appear before practitioners.⁴

However, now Gonzō has passed away, and Taizen has been left on his own. Taizen wanted to continue the practice, and his longing to do so has only increased. He thus pleads that ‘a directive to hold the aforementioned assembly be issued to the capital, Kinai, and the provinces of the seven regions. The provincial officials, lecturers, and readers should direct the district officials as well as the three administrators of the officially designated temples (*jōgakuji* 定額寺) in their jurisdictions as follows: At one village per district, pure and diligent dharma-masters should be invited to serve as ceremony leaders.⁵ The rite should be performed every year on the eighth day of the seventh month. In addition, repairs to the halls and stupas and to damaged scriptures should be offered on the day of the assembly. On the three days before, during, and after the assembly, killing sentient beings shall be prohibited. The men and women gathered for the assembly should first be granted the three refuges and the five precepts.⁶ Then they should chant the treasured names of Yakushi and Mañjuśrī one hundred times each.⁷ I pray that widely under the heavens, meritorious deeds will similarly be performed and that throughout the land, all may look forward to the pleasures.’”

Kiyohara-Mahito no Natsuno 清原真人夏野, the Middle Counselor-Captain of the Left Guards, Junior Third-Rank Minister of Popular Affairs, has received an imperial edict to accord with the petition.⁸ As for the provisions for the assemblies, emergency-relief rice earnings should be allocated and distributed appropriately. There are no restrictions to the provincial and district

4 The “solitary” (*kodoku* 孤独) refers to orphans and elderly people without living children; in other words, those left on their own, with no relatives to depend on for support. The quote is from the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*, T 463 14:481a15–17, a29–b1.

5 “Ceremony leaders” here translates *kyōshu* 教主. The term literally means “leader of the teachings,” thus it often refers to the Buddha himself.

6 The “three refuges” is an expression of faith in the buddha, dharma, and sangha. The five precepts refer to the first five of the eight precepts for lay people: refraining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and drinking alcohol.

7 “Chant” translates *shōsan* 称赞; literally, “chant and praise.” This practice, however, is best understood as one activity, not two—the chanting of the names itself is the method of praise.

8 Kiyohara no Natsuno (782–837) was a member of the high nobility (*kugyō* 公卿) attending the emperor in the early Heian period. In 804, he was granted the surname Kiyohara-Mahito. Four years after this directive, in 832, he was promoted to Great Minister of the Right (*udaijin* 右大臣), Junior Second Rank (Asao et al. 1996, 288, s.v. “Kiyohara no Natsuno”).

officials making additional offerings in accordance with the capacities of local cultivators (*hyakusei* 百姓 or *hyakushō*). 828 (Tenchō 天長 5)/2/25.

1239–1240 *Gakushōki* Entries Introducing Ninshō

Passages for the ninth month of 1239 and the first, third, and fourth months of 1240 in Eison's autobiography describe several significant events for the Saidaiji order and the introduction of the Mañjuśrī cult to the order's activities.⁹ Here, Eison details his initial meeting with Ninshō, their dialogue on Ninshō's "leaving the household" (ordination), and Ninshō's plans to compose Mañjuśrī images and enshrine them at outcast (*hinin*) communities for his mother's thirteenth-year memorial service. He also records his conferral of the precepts upon Ninshō, who went on to lead the order's development in the eastern region and become Eison's most renowned disciple.

Translation

1239 (En'ō 延応 1)/9/8

I [Eison] conferred the ten major precepts (*onju* 飲酒) on Ninshō (Ryōkanbō).¹⁰ In connection with this, when I recommended that he leave the household,¹¹ he shed tears and responded: "Because I am my parents' only son, together they cherished me like nothing else. In particular, my mother's sorrows were extraordinary. Beset by illness and her time drawing near, she longed to see me in the guise of a śramaṇa. Thus I quickly took the tonsure and put on the dharma-robos. However, she grew increasingly despondent about the future. Summer or winter, she asked for nothing; nor did she hate this defiled world and long for the pure land. Grieving only over Ninshō's hardships in the future, she breathed her last and her spirit left.

9 My translation is based on the Chinese text of the *Gakushōki* printed in NKBK 1977, 14–15, with reference to the annotated *yomikudashi* version in Hosokawa 1999, 103–4, 110.

10 The ten major precepts (*jūjū* 十重 here, short for *jūjūkinkai* 十重禁戒) in Eison's order were based on the *Brahmā Net Sutra* (T 1484): not to kill; not to steal; not to engage in sexual misconduct; not to lie; not to sell alcohol; not to speak of the transgressions of bodhisattvas, monks, or nuns; not to praise oneself and criticize others; not to begrudge property or the teachings to others; not to vent anger; and not to slander the three jewels. See Matsuo 1996, 52–53, and Hosokawa 1999, 106n. 7. The interlinear reference in the *Gakushōki* passage to *onju* (or *onshu*) likely refers to *onjukai* 飲酒戒, the stricter precept against drinking alcohol as opposed to just not selling it.

11 "Leave the household" here translates *shukke*, referring to renouncing lay status and, in this case, becoming fully ordained as a monk.

I was sixteen then, and I had no power with which to repay her kindness and express my gratitude for her virtue. I lacked the techniques to dispel suffering and provide comfort. I could only turn to the majestic power of the main deity Mañjuśrī. Thus for the thirteenth anniversary of my mother's death, I will compose seven images of Mañjuśrī and enshrine them at seven communities in this province,¹² and on the twenty-fifth day of each month have his treasured name chanted incessantly throughout the day and night. I shall send the generated merit to the place where my departed mother has been reborn and effect the supreme cause for her liberation. I only wish to fulfill this long-dwelling vow; [only then] should I leave the household and study the Way."

I then told Ninshō, "Since the merit of leaving the household is vast and limitless, nothing surpasses leaving the household. Receive and keep the Buddha's precepts, then send that generated merit to the place where she has been reborn and effect the cause for dispelling suffering and providing comfort. Material resources are unreliable and human lives, plundered by the five lords, are impermanent.¹³ Thus why should you wait until the thirteenth-year [memorial] instead?" At that time, Ninshō gave no clear consent and withdrew.

1240 (Ninji 仁治 1)

1st Month: Ninshō came again and said, "What I told you last fall was a vow I made in my youth. This spring, I will compose one image of Mañjuśrī's revered form and enshrine it at the [hinin] community on Gakuanji's west side. I will have the members of this community receive and keep the pure precepts for one day and night and have the procedures for the eye-opening ceremony carried out.¹⁴ In this way, I plan to fulfill my original vow to repay my mother's

12 This refers to seven outcast communities (*hinin shuku* 非人宿) in Yamato Province.

13 The "material resources" (*zaibutsu* 財物) most likely refer to the resources necessary for making the Mañjuśrī images. As Hosokawa suggests, Eison is cautioning Ninshō on the instability of merit that depends on such resources (1999, 109n. 24). The "five lords" (*goshu* 五主) refers to the five organs (110n. 25).

14 The "pure precepts" (*saikai*) here indicate the eight pure precepts for lay people. Traditionally, these were maintained only for specific days and included refraining from 1) killing; 2) stealing; 3) sexual intercourse (or, for longer periods of time, sexual misconduct); 4) lying; 5) drinking alcohol; 6) adorning one's body or indulging in dancing or music; 7) sleeping in a fine raised bed; and 8) eating after noon. Alternatively, the sixth precept was sometimes divided into two and the list would actually include nine precepts. In Eison's order, however, the eight precepts were variously administered and kept for different lengths of time by distinct groups of lay and quasi-lay followers. See the detailed analyses in Minowa 1999, chapter 8 and 435–64. In English, see Groner 2005, 230–32.

kindness and express my gratitude for her virtue. After that, I will leave the household. However, ordinary assembly leaders have great obstacles [to performing the rites].¹⁵ Would you please come and formally perform the rites and confer the eight pure precepts?”

3/6: [I] carried out the rites, and it was reported that as many as four hundred people and hinin kept the precepts.¹⁶ Thirty people received the bodhisattva precepts.¹⁷ At the end of the third month, Ninshō left the household.

4/3: [Ninshō] received the ten precepts.

4/11: He received the full precepts.

15 This phrase could be alternatively translated as referring to Ninshō specifically (“As an ordinary ceremony leader, [I] have great obstacles to performing the rite”), which is how Hosokawa appears to interpret the passage (1999, 113n. 6). In either case, the “obstacles” or “reservations” (*habakari* 憚) mentioned here likely refer to the administration of precepts as part of the ceremony and, perhaps, administering them to hinin in particular.

16 There is considerable variation in how scholars have read this sentence (致其作法、是人非人持齋及四百人云云; NKBC 1977, 15). As Hosokawa (1999, 113n. 6) points out (referring to the characters 是人, which he reads as *kono hito*, or “this person”), Wajima (1959, 104) assumes that Eison administered the precepts while Yoshida suggests that Ninshō carried them out. But Yoshida also argues that Ninshō would not have been qualified to confer the precepts at this time. Thus based on a *Daitokufu* passage indicating that Ninshō was motivated to abandon his worldly goods and compose buddha images after hearing a lecture by Kakujiō that same year, he suggests that Kakujiō may have administered the precepts (see Yoshida Fumio 1977, 73–74, and the *Daitokufu* entry for 1240, in Tanaka 1973, 45). I concur with Hosokawa and Wajima; given that Ninshō specifically invited Eison to perform the rites because of the obstacles to ordinary assembly leaders, it is more likely Eison conferred the precepts. The discrepancies in interpretations of this sentence, however, run even deeper. Wajima (1959, 104) and Hosokawa (1999, 110) both interpret it as indicating that four hundred hinin received the precepts. I suggest instead that Matsuo’s interpretation of the sentence as referring to “people and hinin [lit. ‘non-people’]” combined receiving the precepts is more likely (Matsuo 1998a, 168; see also Minowa 1999, 437, 465). In this interpretation, the phrase “是人” does not refer to who administered the precepts—based on the rest of the *Gakushōki*, this would be an unusual way for Eison to refer to himself, Ninshō, or Kakujiō. Rather, the phrase is better understood in conjunction with the reference to *hinin* 非人 that immediately follows, indicating instead who received the precepts.

17 The distinction above regarding who “kept the precepts” (referring to the eight pure precepts) is significant for our understanding of this sentence as well. As Sawa Hirokatsu

Eison's *Monju Kōshiki* in Three Parts (ca. 1246)

The *Saidai chokushi Kōshō Bosatsu gyōjitsu nenpu* (*Nenpu*), a chronological record of Eison's activities compiled between 1688 and 1704, records that he composed a *Monju kōshiki* (Mañjuśrī Ceremonial) in one fascicle in 1246/2, although the text itself is not included there (NKBK 1977, 129). The translation here is based on a handwritten Chinese manuscript held by Kōyasan University, as published in a facsimile version in the *Kōyasan kōshiki shū* CD-ROM.¹⁸ The colophon to the manuscript indicates that it was copied by the bhikṣu Ryōin 良印 on 1550/7/6 at Myōgakuji 妙樂寺 in Kii Province, Ito-gun, Ōga no shō 紀州伊都郡相賀莊. I have also referred to a composite transcription in Niels Guelberg's *Kōshiki Database*.¹⁹ Guelberg's transcription is collated from this 1550 Kōyasan copy, a Tōji Kanchi'in 觀智院 copy (manuscript 132/17) believed to date to the late Muromachi period, a 1648 copy held by Gakushūin 學習院 University (manuscript 186.2/5023), and a 1704 copy held by Tōji's Hōbodai'in 宝菩提院 (manuscript 48/65).

The Tōji Kanchi'in, Gakushūin, and Hōbodai'in manuscripts include colophons from an earlier copy, dated 1442/9/7, which explains the discovery of the text and attributes it to Eison. That colophon is included in Guelberg's composite rendering. In addition to these versions, Saidaiji holds an 1853 copy with a colophon attributing it to Eison.²⁰ Nishiyama Atsushi has recently noted the existence of a three-part *Monju kōshiki* copied by the nun Shōin 正因 and

indicates (1990, 57n. 16), scholars have cited this 1240/3/6 entry as an example of Eison's administering the bodhisattva precepts to hinin, a viewpoint he opposes. Although I disagree with Sawa's interpretation that “是人” in the previous sentence refers to *Ninshō* administering the precepts, I concur that the “people” who received the bodhisattva precepts in this sentence are referred to “in contrast to” (Sawa's emphasis) the “hinin” in the previous sentence. When we understand “是人非人” as referring to “people and hinin” combined constituting the four hundred who received the eight precepts, Sawa's argument on the contrast—and hence who received the bodhisattva precepts in the second sentence—is actually strengthened.

18 See the *Monju kōshiki* copy dated Tenbun 19 (1550) in Kōyasan Daigaku Toshokan 2001. I have added the subtitles for the three parts based on Eison's indication of the topics. I am indebted to Niels Guelberg for guidance on the different manuscript versions and to Ōtsuka Norihiro for help deciphering the handwritten characters in the Kōyasan manuscript facsimile. For a comparative study of Eison's three-part *Monju kōshiki* and Jōkei's five-part *Monju kōshiki*, see Quinter 2011. See Guelberg 1993 for an English-language introduction to *kōshiki* as a genre.

19 See Guelberg 2006, *kōshiki* no. 170.

20 On the colophon to the 1853 Saidaiji copy, see Inagi 2002, 42. Fujisawa Takako points out that Saidaiji holds six other texts titled *Monju kōshiki*; however, they lack the colophon

donated to Hokkeji in 1293, which seems to be the oldest copy of Eison's *kōshiki* found to date.²¹ Based on the aforementioned references and copies, and the overall content of the text translated here—including its correspondences with Eison's thought and Mañjuśrī faith in other writings reliably attributed to him—I consider the attribution of the *kōshiki* to Eison to be accurate.

Translation

Monju kōshiki 文殊講式 (Mañjuśrī Ceremonial)

First, we perform the communal obeisance (*sōrai* 総礼):

We in this place of practice are like the jewels in Indra's net
amid the manifestation of the three jewels in the ten directions.
Our bodies manifest before the three jewels;
lowering our heads to our feet, we take refuge and pay reverence.²²

Homage to the Mother of Awakening for the three times, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī: in this life, may we attain the awakening of the bodhi-mind without fail.²³

Next, take your seats. Next, perform the essential dharma rites.²⁴ Next, perform the pronouncement.

attributing the text to Eison. That said, she indicates that the contents are similar, and the earliest dates to 1671 (Fujisawa 2004, 309n. 2).

- 21 See Nishiyama 2008, 96. The manuscript is now held by Yakushiji in Nara and includes Shōin's colophon. I have not had access to the manuscript, but Nishiyama's brief remarks and the facsimile reproduction of the end of the manuscript (p. 96, plate 25) do suggest that Shōin's copy is a version of the *Monju kōshiki* attributed to Eison. Note too that Hokkeji's 1322 liturgical calendar *Hokke metsuzaiji nenjū gyōji* 法華滅罪寺年中行事 lists a *Monju kōshiki* among the convent's annual rites; see Ōta et al. 1976–78, 5:86a.
- 22 Following these verses (four phrases on two lines in the original), Guelberg's composite transcription includes the following verses, not found in the Kōyasan manuscript: "The various buddhas of the three times take the Honored Great Sage Mañjuśrī as their mother. The initial awakening of the [bodhi] mind for all the Thus Come Ones of the ten directions is due to the power of Mañjuśrī's guidance" (Guelberg 2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, lines 5 and 6). These two lines are a direct quote from the *Shinji kangyō*, T 159 3:305c25–26.
- 23 Guelberg's composite transcription includes a parenthetical instruction here to "repeat three times." This instruction follows this prayer each time it appears in Guelberg's version (2006, *kōshiki* no. 170), but not in the Kōyasan text.
- 24 "Essential dharma rites" translates *hōyō* 法用 (also 法要). *Hōyō* here abbreviates *shika hōyō* 四箇法用, or the four essential dharma rites: verses of praise (*bonbai* 梵唄), the flower-scattering rite (*sange* 散華), verses offered to the three jewels (*bon'on* 梵音 or *bonnon*), and the staff-wielding rite (*shakujō* 錫杖); see Ford 2006, 259n. 1. These four

To the Thus Come Ones of the three bodies, dharma, reward, and response-transformation; to the sacred teachings of the three times, on existence, emptiness, and the middle way; to all the sacred multitudes, who harmonize principle and harmonize practice;²⁵ to the past and future, the manifest and unmanifest; to all the three jewels, reflecting each other [like those] in Indra's net, we declare:

Born by chance into a body in the eastern regions, we are fortunate to encounter the teachings of the Western Heavens.²⁶ Fastening our hopes on the unsurpassed, superior mind [that seeks enlightenment], we extend our thoughts to the sentient beings of the dharma-realm. If not now, when will there be another chance? However, the four snakes have differing strengths, and the five aggregates of the temporary castle are easily disordered.²⁷ The six thieves seek their opportunities, and the seven kinds of sacred treasures are difficult to accumulate.²⁸

If it were not for the Great Sage's empowerment (*kabi* 加被), how could we succeed in arousing the single thought of enlightenment (*ichinen no hosshin* 一念の發心)? Accordingly, when we search the three worlds for precedents, Mañjuśrī alone has obtained the supreme title of "Mother of Awakening."

"rites" are typically performed in *kōshiki* as four different *shōmyō* 声明 (Buddhist chant) melodies.

- 25 *Riwa jīwa* 理和事和; *riwa* refers to cutting off sight-sensations and thought-sensations and verifying noumenal principle, while *jīwa* refers to harmonizing the three phenomenal acts of body, speech, and mind (Nakamura 1981, 1413a, s.v. "riji sōji").
- 26 The "Western Heavens" (*saiten* 西天) usually refers to India in general. Note, though, that in this *kōshiki*, Eison also uses the terms *nantenjiku* 南天竺 (Southern Heavens) and *chūten* 中天 (Central Heavens), which can refer to India generally or to the southern and central portions specifically.
- 27 The "four snakes" (*shija* 四蛇) refer to the four elements composing the body: earth, water, fire, and wind. The reference to their "differing strengths" here suggests that these elements are out of balance, which disrupts the "temporary castles" of our bodies and leads to sickness and death. The "five aggregates" (*goun* 五蘊 or *goon*; Sk. *pañca-skandha*) refer to the five elements composing existence, especially what is ordinarily considered a "self": form (*shiki* 色; Sk. *rūpa*), feelings (*ju* 受; Sk. *vedanā*), perceptions (*sō* 想; Sk. *saṃjñā*), volition or "karmic constituents" (*gyō* 行; Sk. *saṃskāra*), and consciousness (*shiki* 識; Sk. *vijñāna*).
- 28 The "six thieves" (*rokuzoku* 六賊) refers to the six sense organs (*rokkon* 六根): eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The "seven sacred treasures" (*shichishu no shōzai* 七種の聖財) or "seven sacred virtues" considered necessary for Buddhist training are faith (*shin* 信), the precepts or moral discipline (*kai* 戒), conscience (*zan* 慚), shame (*gi* 愧), hearing the dharma (*mon* 聞), being unattached (*sha* 捨), and wisdom (*e* 慧).

When we search the ten directions for antecedents, Myōkichi has already been the guide for the various buddhas.²⁹ The Honored Śākyamuni is the king of the dharma for the present; gratefully, he reveres his ninth-generation teacher.³⁰ Maitreya is the lord of the teachings for the future; in the past, he numbered among [Mañjuśrī's] eight hundred disciples.³¹ After hundreds of thousands of ten-thousand kalpas, we have chanced to encounter the Honored Śākyamuni's bequeathed teachings. Who, scooping from the stream, would not try to trace the source? After five billion six hundred million years, we will surely journey to the dharma assembly of the Compassionate Master.³² Why, breaking off a branch, would we not try to return to the roots?³³

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- 29 Myōkichi (or Myōkichijō 妙吉祥 in unabbreviated form) is an alternate rendering of Mañjuśrī's name, literally meaning "wondrous and auspicious."
- 30 The reference to Mañjuśrī as Śākyamuni's "ninth-generation" teacher is ultimately based on a passage in the introduction to the *Lotus Sutra*. There, Mañjuśrī is depicted as having been the bodhisattva Wonderfully Bright (*Myōkō* 妙光; Ch. *Miaoguang*) in a previous life, when he taught the eight sons of the final Buddha Sun Moon Bright. This passage thus led to an interpretive tradition in which the final son, known as Buddha Burning Torch, was said to have been Śākyamuni's teacher and Mañjuśrī was understood as the ninth-generation ancestral teacher of Śākyamuni. For the *Lotus Sutra* passage, see T 262 9:4a22–b16, and Watson 1993, 16–17, for an English translation. For examples of the interpretive tradition based on this passage that refer to Mañjuśrī as Śākyamuni's ninth-generation teacher, see the *Hokke gisho* 法華義疏 (Ch. *Fahua yishu*; T 1721 34:481b2–3) by the Sanlun (Jp. Sanron) patriarch Jizang 吉藏 (549–623) as well as the *Hokke genji shakusen* 法華玄義釈籤 (Ch. *Fahua xuanyi shiqian*; T 1717 33:922c23–26) and the *Hokke mongu ki* 法華文句記 (Ch. *Fahua wenju ji*; T 1719 34:207c27–208a3), both by the Tiantai (Jp. Tendai) patriarch Zhanran 湛然 (711–82).
- 31 The reference to Maitreya as one of Mañjuśrī's "eight hundred disciples" is based on the same section of the introduction to the *Lotus Sutra* as in the previous note. Immediately following the reference to the final son of Buddha Sun Moon Bright becoming Buddha Burning Torch, the *Lotus Sutra* notes that Mañjuśrī's eight hundred disciples during his life as Bodhisattva Wonderfully Bright included a bodhisattva called Seeker of Fame. Seeker of Fame is then revealed to have been Maitreya in a previous life. See T 262 9:4b11–16 and Watson 1993, 16–17.
- 32 "Compassionate Master" (*jishi* 慈氏) is another name for Maitreya. Maitreya is supposed to appear after 5,670,000,000 years and convert people in three dharma assemblies under the dragon-flower tree.
- 33 A similar metaphorical combination as in this passage appears in the *Bosatsukai kōyōshō* 菩薩戒綱要鈔. Here, in recounting the "three country transmission," the text indicates that "breaking off a branch and scooping from the stream, [we shall] certainly return to the source" (T 2358B 74:98b4–5). The author and date of composition are unclear, but the text was based on Eison's lineage and composed after his death; see, for example, the reference in the introductory section to transmission of the teachings "bequeathed by

That being the case, even those with slight faith in the law of cause and effect should repay that debt—how much more so for those who retreat from the world (*tonsei*) and seclude themselves? Even those who rarely accumulate a single good deed should possess the merit [from that deed]—how much more so for those who leave the household and study the Way? Nothing surpasses turning to the Mother of Awakening’s divine protection; [doing so] may we finally abandon the grudges we bear. Appealing to Mañjuśrī’s authority, may we quickly fulfill the compassionate, egalitarian vow.

Therefore, the present virtuous ones shall designate this day each month to pronounce this three-part eulogy in one sitting;³⁴ harmonize the differing voices into a single sound; and chant the divine spell of five syllables in one thousand repetitions.

We humbly pray to the Great Sage Mañjuśrī: may you accept our sincere intentions and enable us to fulfill our vows.

First, we eulogize the merits of his name. Second, we eulogize the benefits [he administers] adapted to varying capacities. Third, we declare the awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment and the dedication of merit.

[Part 1: Eulogizing the Merits of His Name]

First, as for eulogizing the merits of his name, in Sanskrit, he is called Mañjuśrī (Manjushiri 曼殊師利). This name means “wondrous and auspicious” (Myōkichijō). In sum, because this bodhisattva widely possesses the wisdom of all the buddhas, he is extremely “wondrous” (*myō* 妙), and because he is equally equipped with the virtues of a Thus Come One, he is called “auspicious” (*kichijō* 吉祥). His inner realization is already wondrous and auspicious, why shouldn’t his outer activity also be auspicious? Thus when he was born in a country in the Southern Heavens, he immediately manifested the ten kinds of auspicious signs.³⁵ Among the worlds of the ten directions where he manifests

Kōshō Bosatsu,” using Eison’s posthumous title (74:98a28). Minowa Kenryō (1999, 328–29) suggests that the text may have been composed shortly before the 1338 *Bosatsukai senteishō* 菩薩戒潛底鈔 compiled by Dōki 道基. For another use of these metaphors in early medieval Nara, see the *Kusharon hongishō* 俱舍論本義抄 (T 2249 63:739c14–15) by the Tōdaiji monk Sōshō 宗性 (1202–78), who also had connections to Jōkei’s movement and was influenced by his Maitreya faith. (I am grateful to Niels Guelberg for these references.)

34 “Present virtuous ones” here translates *genzen shotoku* 現前諸德, likely referring to the monastics gathered for the performance of the Mañjuśrī rite.

35 There are two variant traditions of Mañjuśrī’s ten auspicious signs at birth. The first can be found in the *Amidakyō tsūsansho* 阿彌陀經通贊疏 (Ch. *Amituo jing tongzanshu*), attributed to Cien; see T 1758 37:337a15–18. The second can be found in the *Extended Records of Mt. Clear-and-Cool* (Ch. *Guang qingliang zhuan*); see T 2099 51:1102b17–22.

his traces, he always provides unlimited comfort. Among times, there are none which are not the most wondrous; among places, there are none which are not auspicious [when he manifests]. To express the merits of his inner realization and outer activity, we pronounce Mañjuśrī's name.

Moreover, the *Parinirvāṇa Sutra* states:³⁶

“The Buddha proclaimed to Bhadrāpāla: ‘This Mañjuśrī has innumerable spiritual powers and innumerable manifestations, which cannot be fully explained. I will now briefly explain them for the blind sentient beings of future generations. If there are sentient beings who merely hear Mañjuśrī's name, their transgressions from birth-and-death through twelve hundred million kalpas will be removed. [...]’³⁷ After the Buddha's nirvana, all the sentient beings who have been able to hear Mañjuśrī's name or see his image will not fall into the evil paths for one hundred thousand kalpas. Those who have received, retained, read, and recited Mañjuśrī's name, even if they have grave obstacles, will not fall into the horrible and vicious fires of Avīci Hell. Constantly reborn in the pure lands of other directions, they will encounter buddhas, hear the dharma, and attain the receptivity to [the dharma of] non-arising.’”³⁸

Thus, though we may have been born in the latter days of the dharma (*mappō*), we frequently hear the name of Mañjuśrī—why shouldn't the evil deeds we committed in the past be erased? Though we may make our homes in a peripheral land, we repeatedly pay reverence to the image of the Mother of Awakening for the three times—why should we doubt that we will attain the benefit of encountering the buddha and hearing the dharma? How much more so for each month's unfailing, diligent practice [of this Mañjuśrī rite]? How much more so for the majestic power of chanting the divine spell? In our present lives, though we may lament our scattered and secondary lowly practice, in the future, we will surely delight in the attainment of the receptivity to [the dharma of] non-arising. Our ensuing joy deepens all the more,

36 The “*Parinirvāṇa Sutra*” here refers to the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra* (T 463). The passage that follows can be found in T 463 14:481a12–16, b6–10.

37 The ellipsis marks in brackets indicate the text's ellipsis from the *Mañjuśrī Parinirvāṇa Sutra*, rather than my own.

38 The “receptivity to the dharma of non-arising” (Sk. *anutpattikadharmakṣānti*) refers to a state of realization in which one recognizes and accepts that all phenomena are unproduced.

and our grateful tears are hard to stifle.³⁹ We therefore chant the *gāthā* and pay reverence.⁴⁰

When people are able to hear
Mañjuśrī's name,
their countless sins are erased,
thanks to the Mother of Awakening.⁴¹

Homage to the Mother of Awakening for the three times, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī: in this life, may we attain the awakening of the bodhi-mind without fail.

[Part 2: *Eulogizing His Benefits Adapted to Varying Capacities*]

Second, as for eulogizing his benefits adapted to varying capacities, the light of his wisdom-virtue shines brightly and completely fills the emptiness of dharma-nature. The blessings of his great compassion are rich and are offered widely throughout the realm of deluded passions. Therefore, proclaiming his perfect enlightenment throughout the three times, he benefits those with faculties.⁴² Extending his provisional traces throughout the ten directions,⁴³ he guides those without karmic bonds. At times, he manifests in the shape of Indra-Brahma or a wheel-king and uses the expedient means of charitable offerings and loving words.⁴⁴ At other times, he manifests in the form of an

39 “Ensuing joy” (*zuiki* 隨喜) refers to the “joy which follows” from hearing or seeing something positive, such as a particular teaching or the welfare of others. The term is often used in cases like this, in which one expresses gratitude for a Buddhist teaching or blessing, thus it might alternatively be translated as “grateful joy.”

40 A *gāthā* (Jp. *kada* 伽陀) is a verse phrase or section in Buddhist scripture, often used to express praise for a particular teaching or deity.

41 Again, following these initial verses, Guelberg’s composite transcription includes two verse lines not in the Kōyasan manuscript: “When sentient beings chant and contemplate the single name of Mañjuśrī, this is equivalent to chanting the names of all the buddhas, because he is the Mother of Awakening for the three times” (Guelberg 2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, lines 57–58).

42 The term I have translated here as “faculties,” *kon* 根 (literally, “root”), has many meanings in Buddhist usage, including the ability to understand and practice the dharma, the five positive roots conducive to enlightenment (*gokon*: faith, vigor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom), and the five sense organs or senses (also *gokon*).

43 “Provisional traces” (*gonjaku* 權迹) refers to manifestations of a buddha or bodhisattva in human form.

44 “Charitable offerings” (*fuse* 布施) and “loving words” (*aigo* 愛語) in this sentence, together with “beneficial acts” (*rigyō* 利行) and “cooperative deeds” (*dōji* 同事) in the next, constitute the “four methods of winning over” (*shishōbō* 四摂法 or *shishōhō*)

auditor or *pratyeka*[buddha] and offers the transformative workings of beneficial acts and cooperative deeds.⁴⁵ At times, he dwells amid the Five-Terraced Peaks in *Cīnasthāna* [China] and instructs multitudinous sentient beings, thereby leading them to the *bodhisattva* path.⁴⁶ At other times, he travels to countries with and without the Buddha and spreads the Mahayana, thereby making known the principle of cause and effect.

Those who pay reverence and make offerings will be protected in life after life by Mañjuśrī's majestic power. Those who make offerings and cultivate meritorious deeds will see in the present the transformation body of the Mother of Awakening for the three times. Among the benefits for the present life and future ones, for those in the world and those having left the world [i.e., lay and monastic], there are none he does not offer. Among prayers for spreading the dharma and benefiting sentient beings, for erasing transgressions and producing good, there are none he does not fulfill. Although his beneficial activity does not distinguish between the noble and the base, he widely mixes with the likes of beggars and *hinin*. Although his great compassion does not separate the high and the low, he especially pities those who are abandoned or afflicted.

In that *Cīnasthāna*'s Dai Province, he appeared as the likes of a poor woman and began the non-discriminatory grand assemblies at Mt. Clear-and-Cool.⁴⁷ In this Land of the Sun's (*nichiiki* 日域) Yamato Province, he manifested in the

sentient beings to the Buddhist way or to emancipation. "Charitable offerings" can be either material or non-material, such as preaching the dharma. "Loving words" refers to using kind words to guide people.

Due to the parallelism with "auditors" and "pratyekabuddhas" in the next sentence, I have treated "Indra-Brahma" (*Shaku-Bon* 釈梵; referring to the Indian gods Indra and Brahma) as a single unit and "wheel-king" (*rinnō* 輪王) as another. "Wheel-king" is short for "Wheel-Turning Sage King" (Jp. *tenrinjōō*; Sk. *cakravartin*), the ideal king in Indian mythology, who rules the world using a wheel he obtains when he ascends the throne.

45 "Transformative workings" (*keyū* 化用) refers to the activities, or functions, of *bodhisattvas* and buddhas in changing their forms and guiding sentient beings. "Beneficial acts" indicates benefiting sentient beings through one's acts of body, speech, and mind. "Cooperative deeds" refers to putting oneself on the same level as others and joining them in activities; for a *bodhisattva*, therefore, it can mean assuming the same form as the sentient beings to be saved.

46 The "Five-Terraced Peaks" (*godai no mine* 五台の峰) refers to Mt. Wutai. The term used for China here, *shintan* 震旦, is a transliteration of the Sanskrit term *Cīnasthāna*.

47 "Dai Province" translates the Japanese *dai-shū* 代州 (Ch. *Dai zhou*), an ancient name for the area in which Mt. Wutai is located. For an account of the origins of Mt. Wutai's "non-discriminatory grand assemblies," including the reference to Mañjuśrī manifesting as a poor woman, see the record of the Tendai monk Ennin's pilgrimage to China (*Nittō guhō junrei gyōki*); Reischauer 1955, 257–59.

form of a starving man and assisted in the transforming methods of the Prince of the Upper Palace.⁴⁸ Such traces [of Mañjuśrī]—some appearing in dreams, others while awake—are innumerable in ancient and recent records.

That being the case, such expedient means as these widely manifesting material forms and inconceivable transformative workings are indispensable for us. This is because the thirty-two marks of flower-adornment of the Honored Śākyamuni were quickly dispersed in the wind of the Śāla-Tree Grove.⁴⁹ The eighty auspicious signs of the moon-figure of the Thus Come One were soon hidden by the smoke of cremation.⁵⁰ The [bodhi]sattvas of the ten directions returned to their original buddha lands, and the auditors of [Śākyamuni's] own world quickly entered nirvana without remainder.⁵¹ Afterward, the children playing in the burning house were immediately separated from their compassionate father's beautiful face, and the weary travelers crossing the steep path suddenly lost the inducements of their guide.⁵² How regrettable for the

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- 48 “Yamato Province” translates *wa-shū* 和州. “Transforming methods” (*kegi* 化儀) refer to the methods or format of Buddhist teachings. “Prince of the Upper Palace” (Jōgū-taishi 上宮太子) is an alternate name for Shōtoku Taishi. The story of Mañjuśrī manifesting as a starving man before Shōtoku Taishi can be found in the *Shunpishō* 俊秘抄, composed ca. 1115 by Minamoto Toshiyori 源俊頼 (1055–1129); see Muromatsu and Motoori 1910–13, 2:2. As Oishio points out (1995, 232), the rendering of the starving man as truly being Mañjuśrī, rather than Bodhidharma, was a change in the tale from such popular Shōtoku hagiographies as the eighth-century *Shichidaiki* 七代記 and the tenth-century *Shōtoku Taishi denryaku* 聖德太子伝暦. However, the *Fukuro zōshi* 袋草子, composed by Fujiwara Kiyosuke 藤原清輔 (1104–1177) circa 1157–58, ultimately combined the two accounts by reporting that Bodhidharma, in the form of a starving man, delivered a reply poem (*henka* 返歌) to Shōtoku Taishi and that Bodhidharma was a manifestation of Mañjuśrī (Fujioka 1995, 151; Oishio 1995, 257, supplementary n. 1).
- 49 The “Śāla-Tree Grove” translates *sōrin* 双林 (literally, “Twin Trees” or “Twin Grove”), and refers to the grove of *sāla* trees near the site of Śākyamuni’s death. Four pairs of such trees were said to have surrounded Śākyamuni’s deathbed, with one tree from each pair soon withering in mourning over his passing.
- 50 A buddha’s body is said to possess eighty auspicious signs (also often referred to as “eighty lesser signs”).
- 51 “Nirvana without remainder” (*mujo no enjaku* 無余の円寂) refers to complete nirvana, free from all mental and physical conditions. The term is used in contrast to “nirvana with remainder,” in which the body still exists.
- 52 The reference to the children playing in “the burning house” (*kataku* 火宅) and their compassionate father is based on one of the *Lotus Sutra*’s most famous parables, in which the children of a wealthy man remain playing in their large house, even as it begins to burn down around them. Their father thus lures them out using various contrivances, or “expedient means” (*hōben*). The children in the burning house are a metaphor for sentient beings trapped in the realm of transmigration, and their father represents the Buddha.

Central Heavens—how much more so for peripheral lands! How lamentable for the periods of the true and the semblance [dharma]—how much more so for the latter-day dharma!

Moreover, we only hear the names of Yuezhi's and Cīnasthāna's masters of the four reliances who spread the teachings;⁵³ we read in vain the records of this country's ancient great avatars and manifest traces (*daigon suijaku* 大権垂迹).⁵⁴ If it were not for Mañjuśrī's dimming his radiance,⁵⁵ who would serve

See Watson 1993, 56–79, for an English translation of the parable and T 262 9:21b13–16b6 for the original. The reference to the weary travelers on the “steep path,” who are lured onward by their guide, is also drawn from the *Lotus Sutra*. In the parable of the Phantom City, the guide motivates weary travelers seeking rare treasures to finish crossing a steep and dangerous path. He does so by conjuring a phantom city and assuring them that they can rest there before proceeding on the path to the place where the treasures can be found. In this parable, the guide is the Buddha and the weary travelers are sentient beings on the treacherous road of birth and death. The “place of treasures” refers to the true nirvana attained by followers of the “one Buddha vehicle.” For the parable, see Watson 1993, 135–37, in prose and 140–42 in verse; or T 262 9:25c26–26a24 for the original in prose and 26c29–27b8 in verse.

53 Yuezhi 月氏 (Jp. *gesshi*) is the name given by the Chinese to a “Western country” people (probably Central Asian), first mentioned in Chinese sources in the early second century BCE. The Yuezhi played a prominent role in the transmission of Buddhist scriptures and teachings to China; for example, the great sutra translator Dharmarakṣa (ca. 230–316) was said to have been born into a Yuezhi family based at Dunhuang.

The phrase I have translated here as “masters of the four reliances who spread the teachings” (*shie gukyō* 四依弘經) might alternatively be translated as: “the four masters on whom one can rely and who spread the teachings.” There are varying lists of the “four reliances” (*shie*) in Buddhist scriptures; a standard version is: 1) relying on the Buddhist teachings rather than the teacher; 2) relying on the meaning rather than the letter of the teachings; 3) relying on true wisdom rather than common delusions and passions; and 4) relying on the ultimate sutras rather than the provisional ones. However, the term can also refer to the four masters “on whom one can rely” after the Buddha entered nirvana (Nakamura 1981, 508c, s.v. “shie”). Those who “spread the teachings” (*gukyō*) refers to the great masters, such as Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu, who authored treatises and commentaries on Buddhist scriptures and spread the scriptures (Nakamura 1981, 273c, s.v. “gukyō no daishi”).

54 I interpret this clause to mean that, in Eison's time, Buddhist disciples could only read the biographical accounts of the ancient Japanese masters who incarnated buddhas or bodhisattvas but could no longer meet those masters in person.

55 “Dimming the radiance” (*wakō* 和光) refers to buddhas and bodhisattvas, or a deity that represents one of their transformation bodies, altering their natural appearance so that they can “mingle with the dust” (*dōjin* 同塵) of the profane world and save sentient beings. In medieval Japan, the term was often used in *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 (“original

as the compassionate father for those in the burning house? If it were not for the transformative workings of his great compassion, who would serve as the guide to save those on the treacherous path? Even people who slander or direct anger [at Mañjuśrī] form karmic bonds⁵⁶—how much more so for [those who perform] the meritorious deeds of eulogizing and rejoicing in gratitude? Even those who are haughty [toward] or debase [Mañjuśrī] will arouse the aspiration for enlightenment⁵⁷—how much more so for [those who possess] the merit from paying reverence and making offerings?

Exclusively, we pray to the Mother of Awakening for the three times, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī: may you ready your compassionate expedient means and, without fail, hitch up the jeweled carriage of the white ox,⁵⁸ manifest a transformation body that accords with the types [of sentient beings to be saved] and resolutely lead us to the unsurpassed place of treasures.⁵⁹ We pray to Mañjuśrī, in accord with your producing the compassionate icchantika vow; we pray to Mañjuśrī, in accord with your serving as the Mother of Awakening for the various buddhas: may you take pity on our sincere hearts and enable

ground and manifest trace”) thought to refer to buddhas or bodhisattvas manifesting as kami. Here, however, the term is clearly not limited to kami manifestations.

- 56 “Slander” (*kibō* 毀謗) in the context of Eison’s writings on Mañjuśrī generally refers to slandering the Mahayana and is considered one of the root causes (a transgression from previous lives) for the present miseries of hinin. “Anger” or “ill will” (*shin’i* 瞋恚 or *shinni*) is traditionally considered one of the six “obstacles” or “covers” (*rokuhei* 六蔽) that obscure a pure mind or pure deeds. Here, however, the references are most likely to those who slander or direct anger at Mañjuśrī specifically. According to the *Sutra of the Mañjuśrī of a Thousand Arms and a Thousand Bowls* (T 1177A 20:726b25–27), Mañjuśrī vows that those who slander or direct anger at him will form karmic bonds with him and be induced to arouse the bodhi-mind. The passage in question belongs to the second of Mañjuśrī’s ten great vows in this sutra; for the full text of the ten vows, see 726b10–727a28.
- 57 The reference to those who are haughty or debasing here is also likely tied to Mañjuśrī and ultimately based on the *Sutra of the Mañjuśrī of a Thousand Arms and a Thousand Bowls*. In the fourth and fifth vows, respectively, Mañjuśrī indicates that those who are arrogant toward him or who debase him will be led to arouse the bodhi-mind (T 1177A 20:726c3–10). Notably, Jōkei’s *Monju kōshiki* (Taishō Daigaku 2000, 150) includes an abbreviated quotation from the same passages suggested in Eison’s *kōshiki*.
- 58 The “jeweled carriage of the white ox” (*byakugo no hōsha* 白牛の宝車) is a metaphor for the highest vehicle, also often referred to as the one-vehicle (that of buddhas or bodhisattvas), used in the *Lotus Sutra*’s parable of the Burning House. References to the jeweled carriages drawn by white oxen begin on p. 58 in Watson’s translation (1993) and T 262 9:12c22 in the original.
- 59 The “place of treasures” (*hōsho* 宝所) is a metaphor for true nirvana found in the *Lotus Sutra*’s parable of the Phantom City.

us to spread the dharma and benefit sentient beings. We therefore chant the *gāthā* and pay reverence:

The sentient beings of the ten directions
 who hear the name, see the body, or bathe in its light
 and those who see the various manifestations
 will all attain the inconceivable buddha-way.⁶⁰

Homage to the Mother of Awakening for the three times, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī: in this life, may we attain the awakening of the bodhi-mind without fail.

[Part 3: Declaring the Awakening of the Aspiration for Enlightenment
 and the Dedication of Merit]

Third, as for declaring the awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment and the dedication of merit, the bodhi of the three bodies and ten thousand virtues takes the true vow and makes it the foundation.⁶¹ The perfect quietude replete with the four virtues takes the thought of rejecting and abandoning and makes it the start.⁶² However, the great fruit of unsurpassed bodhi is immense and cannot be borne by those with shallow capacities. The causational practice of three great innumerable kalpas is endless and cannot be hoped for by those with inferior aspirations.⁶³ Thus, when the World-Honored One was in the

60 This *gāthā* is a near-exact quote from the *Shinji kangyō*, T 159 3:305c27–28. The differences are merely that the *Shinji kangyō* refers to “all sentient beings” rather than “the sentient beings of the ten directions” and renders Mañjuśrī’s “light” as *kōsō* 光相 rather than *kōmyō* 光明. Again, this *gāthā* is followed in Guelberg’s version by two lines of verse not found in the Kōyasan manuscript: “Amid the worlds of the ten directions, in countries with and without the buddha, the proliferation of the Mahayana is entirely due to the power of Mañjuśrī” (Guelberg 2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, lines 96–97).

61 Perfect bodhi (enlightenment) is said to be equipped with the three buddha bodies; see Nakamura 1981, 477b, s.v. “sanshin enman bodai.” The “ten thousand virtues” (*mandoku* 万德) refers to all the virtues of the buddhas. The “true vow” (*shōgan* 正願) refers to the bodhisattva vow to attain supreme enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.

62 The “perfect quietude” (*enjaku*) is an alternative name for nirvana, which is said to possess the four virtues (*shitoku* 四德) of permanence (*jō* 常), bliss (*raku* 樂), selfhood (*ga* 我), and purity (*jō* 淨). “Reject and abandon” (*enri* 厭離 or *onri*) usually refers to rejecting the phenomenal world.

63 “The causational practice of three great innumerable kalpas” (*san daisōgi no shuin* 三大僧祇の修因) refers to the three great kalpas a bodhisattva must spend practicing (i.e., the cause) before attaining buddhahood (i.e., the effect).

world in the past, he preached on the three capacities (*sankon* 三根) through the months of more than forty years,⁶⁴ and at the time of Śāriputra's three requests, he let the arrogant withdraw from the sermon on Vulture Peak.⁶⁵

How much more [difficult] is it in the latter ages? How much more [difficult] is it in a peripheral land? Yet Nanda, as a poor beggar woman, has already generated the vow to benefit others and received the proclamation of a Great One.⁶⁶ Citong 慈童, in a body from an evil destiny, has also made the pledge to take on all the sufferings [of sentient beings] and experienced birth in Contentment Heaven.⁶⁷ Though the past and the present may be different times, why should we not set our hopes on bodhi? Though the center and the periphery may be distant places, why should we not generate the vow to benefit sentient beings?

64 Based on the preceding sentences, *sankon* (literally, “three roots”) here likely refers to the three capacities of people (superior, average, and inferior). However, the term can also refer to the three roots of evil (desire, hatred, and ignorance).

65 This sentence is based on a passage in the *Lotus Sutra*, in which the Buddha at first refuses to preach further because arrogant monks and others will not have faith. Śāriputra thus pleads with the Buddha three times to continue his sermon, and the Buddha finally agrees. When he does, however, five thousand of the arrogant monastics and laypeople immediately withdraw from the assembly, falsely convinced of their own attainment and realization. For the specific reference to Śāriputra's “three requests,” see T 262 9:7a5 and Watson 1993, 30; for the entire passage, see 6c7–7a11 and Watson 1993, 28–30.

66 Nanda was an old beggar woman who donated a single lamp to the Buddha and received a prophecy of her enlightenment; see the *Kengukyō* 賢愚經 (Ch. *Xianyu jing*), T 202 4:370c22–371c26. “Great One” (*daijin* 大人) refers to one who has attained enlightenment.

67 Citong (Jp. Jidō), which literally means “compassionate child,” refers to a character in a parable in the *Zappōzōkyō* 雜寶藏經 (Ch. *Za bao zang jing*; T 203). In this parable, an originally compassionate and obedient son commits an unfilial act. After initially being rewarded with a series of jeweled cities, wish-fulfilling gems, and beautiful girls for his good deeds on behalf of his mother, the son ends up imprisoned in an iron city with a burning wheel fastened to his head for the offense against his mother. Told by the jailer that there are countless others imprisoned in this same city, he prays to take on all the suffering of others. Immediately, the iron wheel falls off his head. When the son questions the jailer about this, the jailer kills him, but the son is reborn in Tuṣita Heaven. See fascicle 1, record 7, of the *Zappōzōkyō* (T 203 4:450c18–451c8) for the original parable and Willemen 1994, 21–25, for an English translation.

“Contentment Heaven” (*chisoku* or *chisokuten* 知足天) refers to the Tuṣita Heaven (also often rendered as *tosotsuten* 都率天 in Japanese), the fourth of the six heavens in the desire realm, where Maitreya is said to dwell.

However, the *Shinji kangyō* states: “The subtle fruit of bodhi is not hard to attain. Yet a true good spiritual friend is actually hard to meet.”⁶⁸ If we generate the great mind that seeks [enlightenment] above and transforms [sentient beings] below (*jōgu geke* 上求下化), we will surely be rewarded with the guidance of a good spiritual friend. Moreover, [the *Shinji kangyō*] also states, “The initial awakening of the [bodhi] mind for all the Thus Come Ones of the ten directions is due to the power of Mañjuśrī’s guidance.”⁶⁹ We have already paid reverence to Mañjuśrī’s image; he will certainly offer the expedient means of taking us in (*injō* 引撰).

In addition, the *Mañjuśrī [Parinirvāṇa] Sutra* states:

“The Buddha proclaimed to Bhadrupāla: ‘The Dharma-Prince Mañjuśrī [...]’⁷⁰ turns into an impoverished, solitary, or afflicted sentient being and appears before practitioners. When people call to mind Mañjuśrī, they should practice compassion. Those who practice compassion will thereby be able to see Mañjuśrī.’”⁷¹

You should know that Mañjuśrī is none other than compassion. To promote compassion, Mañjuśrī manifests in the form of a suffering being.⁷² For example, when we see the form of a suffering, ordinary being, if we arouse our compassion, we will see Mañjuśrī afresh.⁷³ We often see various types of suffering beings; happening to arouse compassionate minds, we will surely see Mañjuśrī. That being the case, we have already been able to encounter invisible and

68 “Good spiritual friend” here translates *zenchishiki* 善知識 (or *zenjishiki*; Sk. *kalyāṇamitra*), a friend or teacher who helps one along the Buddhist path. The quote here is from the *Shinji kangyō*, T 159 3:305a16.

69 This sentence also comes from the *Shinji kangyō*, T 159 3:305c26.

70 The brackets here indicate Eison’s ellipsis from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* passage. The omitted passage reads: “When people call to mind [Mañjuśrī], when they wish to make offerings and cultivate meritorious deeds, then [Mañjuśrī] will transform himself” (T 14:481a29–b1). The quoted portion of the Buddha’s proclamation as well as the ellipsis here are consistent with the rendering of this passage in the *Gakushōki* entry for 1268/9 (NKBK 1977, 34).

71 This passage is from the *Mañjuśrī Sutra*, T 14:481a28–29, b1–3.

72 These two sentences are also very close to the *Gakushōki* passage interpreting the Buddha’s proclamation on Mañjuśrī in the *Mañjuśrī Sutra* referred to above; see NKBK 1977, 34.

73 Guelberg’s composite version has *shin* 親 (intimate, familiar) here (2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, line 119), instead of *shin* 新 (new, anew) as in the Kōyasan version. Guelberg’s rendering may be more plausible, changing the meaning of the final clause to one of seeing Mañjuśrī “up close” or “right before our eyes” (親見文殊) rather than “afresh” or “anew.”

visible good spiritual friends. We should quickly generate the three kinds of superior mind; namely, loathing and separating from the phenomenal world, joyfully seeking bodhi, and deeply contemplating sentient beings.⁷⁴

First, regarding the mind that loathes and separates from the phenomenal world, all phenomena are impermanent. Impermanence inevitably leads to distress. Because it leads to distress, we should separate from it. Because we should separate from it, we should loathe it. If we wish to separate from distress, we should certainly abandon self-indulgence.⁷⁵ If we wish to abandon self-indulgence, we should certainly receive the strict precepts. That is why the World-Honored One preached the precepts of regulating behavior (*ritsugikai* 律儀戒) first.

Next, regarding the mind that joyfully seeks bodhi, all bodhi are constant. Constancy inevitably leads to comfort. Because it leads to comfort, we should certainly realize it. Because we should realize it, we should take joy in it. If we wish to realize it, we should certainly accumulate the provisions [i.e., good roots and merit]. If we wish to accumulate the provisions, we should certainly practice all good deeds. That is why the Thus Come One preached the precepts of cultivating all good deeds (*shōzenhōkai* 撰善法戒) second.

Next, regarding the mind that deeply contemplates sentient beings, all sentient beings are our fathers and mothers. Inevitably, we are heavily indebted to our fathers and mothers. Because we are heavily indebted, we should certainly repay them. Because we should repay them, we should certainly save them. If we wish to repay our heavy debts, we should certainly generate the impartial mind. If we wish to generate the impartial mind, we should certainly benefit sentient beings. That is why the Original Teacher preached the precepts of benefiting all sentient beings (*shōshujōkai* 撰衆生戒) third.

These three bodhi-minds, these threefold pure precepts, are the constant teachings of the various buddhas and the direct cause for ensuring the

74 Eison's "three kinds of superior mind" also appear in Hossō texts as the "three wondrous contemplations" (*sanmyōkan* 三妙觀). Jōkei refers to them in his *Monju kōshiki*, but with numbers two and three reversed; see Taishō Daigaku 2000, 144. Jōkei's *Hosshin kōshiki* 発心講式 (Taishō Daigaku 2000, 46) and two texts by Cien refer to them in the same order as Eison's text. For Cien's texts, see *Kongō hannyakyō sanjutsu* 金剛般若經贊述 (Ch. *Jingang banruo jing zanshu*), T 1700 33:130b28–c8, and *Hannya haramitta shingyō yūsan* 般若波羅蜜多心經幽贊 (Ch. *Banruo boluomiduo xinjing youzan*), T 1710 33:525c22–526a2.

75 "Self-indulgence" (*hōitsu* 放逸) generally refers to giving oneself over to secular pleasures, such as singing, dancing, or watching entertaining performances.

wondrous fruit of the three bodies [of a buddha]. We pray that we will attain it in this life without fail and assuredly not regress in the next.

Homage to the various buddhas and bodhisattvas of the dharma-realm in the ten directions: turning your contemplations back to your ancient vows of great compassion, may you extend your divine protection in life after life. Homage to the bodhisattva Myōtoku 妙徳 [Mañjuśrī], Mother of Awakening for the three times: not shunning the expedient means of “mingling with the dust and working together [with sentient beings],”⁷⁶ may you personally induce the awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment.

In addition, we take the good roots cultivated on this day, and the merit of our practice through the three times, and dedicate them to all classes of beings in the six destinies and the four births.⁷⁷ May our fathers and mothers transmigrating without beginning quickly abandon the three paths, separate from the eight difficulties, and together generate the unsurpassed great mind [that seeks enlightenment] (*mujō no daishin* 無上の大心).⁷⁸ May they soon complete the six *pāramitās*, perfect the four reliances, and realize the wondrous

76 “Mingling with the dust and working together” (*dōjin dōji* 同塵同事) refers to a buddha or bodhisattva manifesting in the profane world in an accessible form and joining the activities of sentient beings to benefit them.

77 The “six destinies” (*rokushu* 六趣) indicates the six realms of existence through which beings pass in transmigration (also commonly referred to as the “six paths,” or *rokudō* 六道): those of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts (beings with insatiable desires), animals, warring titans (Sk. *asuras*), humans, and gods. The “four births” (*shishō* 四生) refers to the four methods through which all sentient beings amid the six destinies are believed to be born: 1) from the womb (humans and other mammals); 2) from eggs (e.g., birds, fish, and reptiles); 3) from moisture (or the combination of heat and cold; generally refers to insects and other small life forms whose eggs are tiny or undetectable); and 4) from transformation, or metamorphosis (e.g., gods and hell-dwellers, who are born spontaneously based on their karmic conditions).

78 The “three paths” here (*sanzu* 三途) are the three lowest realms of existence, those of fire (*kazu* 火途), where demons and sinners dwell; blood (*ketsuzu* 血途), where animals dwell; and the sword (*tōzu* 刀途), where hungry ghosts dwell. The “eight difficulties” refer to the eight conditions of birth in which it is difficult to see a buddha or hear the dharma. These conditions include those of 1) hell-dwellers; 2) hungry ghosts; 3) animals; 4) dwellers in long-life heavens, where it is easy to simply enjoy one’s long life and thus not be motivated to pursue the Buddhist path; 5) residents of Uttarakuru, the continent to the north of Mt. Sumeru, which is similarly too pleasant; 6) the blind, deaf, and dumb; 7) the worldly-wise; and 8) beings born in the time between buddhas.

fruit of transforming the basis.⁷⁹ We entrust their direction to the guide,⁸⁰ the Mother of Awakening for the three times, and leave their instruction to the dharma-assemblies of the Thus Come Ones of the ten directions. We pray exclusively that you will regard each of our sincere intentions with compassion and, without fail, enable our great vow of merit-transfer to be fulfilled. The great assembly therefore chants the *gāthā* and pays reverence:⁸¹

We vow to take this merit (and so on).⁸²

Homage to the Mother of Awakening for the three times, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī: may you benefit all sentient beings of the dharma-realm equally.⁸³

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- 79 The six *pāramitās*, or “six perfections” (*rokudo* 六度), are the six practices perfected by a bodhisattva on the way to buddhahood: 1) charity (*fuse* 布施; Sk. *dāna-pāramitā*); 2) keeping the precepts (*jikai* 持戒; Sk. *śīla-pāramitā*); 3) perseverance (*ninniku* 忍辱; Sk. *kṣānti-pāramitā*); 4) vigor (*shōjin* 精進; Sk. *vīrya-pāramitā*); 5) meditation (*zenjō* 禪定; Sk. *dhyāna-pāramitā*); and 6) wisdom (*chie* 智慧; Sk. *prajñā-pāramitā*). “Transforming the basis” (*ten'e* 転依 or *tenne*; literally, “turning the basis”) refers to transforming the basis for one’s existence from delusions to enlightenment and nirvana.
- 80 “Direction” here translates *injō*, which is used to refer to a buddha or bodhisattva guiding and “taking in” or “welcoming” sentient beings, often at the moment of death.
- 81 After this sentence, Guelberg’s composite version includes the following verse not included in the Kōyasan manuscript: “[Generating] the great bodhi-mind and preserving the true dharma, practicing in accordance with the teachings with a tranquil mind, the intention to benefit oneself and to benefit others equal—this is called truly offering to the Buddha” (Guelberg 2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, lines 147–48). This verse can be found in the six-hundred fascicle *Great Wisdom Sutra* (T 220 7:957b8–9), following a passage in which the Buddha explains that one who wants to make offerings should cultivate the three dharmas of generating the aspiration for enlightenment (the bodhi-mind), preserving the true law, and practicing in accordance with the teachings. The Buddha goes on to teach that the “dharma offering” is called the true offering and is foremost among all forms of offering (a22–b2).
- 82 In place of “and so on” (*nado* 等 or *tō*) in the Kōyasan manuscript, Guelberg’s transcription completes the verse: “and extend it widely to all, so that we and all sentient beings can together attain the buddha-way” (2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, lines 150–51).
- 83 In Guelberg’s composite version, this final homage to Mañjuśrī precedes the verse dedicating the merit (2006, *kōshiki* no. 170, lines 149–151). In addition, the homage there (line 149) is followed by “Respectfully stated” (*keibyaku* 敬白); however, this phrase is not found in the Kōyasan manuscript.

1247 *Collective Vow by Eison and Others*

This vow (*ganmon*), dated 1247/5/25, expresses the intent of Eison, Ninshō, and nine fellow monks to pattern their conduct after Mañjuśrī and emulate the traces of Śākyamuni's five hundred vows. It was collectively signed by Eison, Ninshō, and nine other monks. My translation is based on the copy included among the documents deposited in the 1280 Saidaiji Eison statue.⁸⁴

Translation

We vow that, during the time from the present body until attaining buddhahood, we shall abandon the mindset of benefiting ourselves. Being born in the same land, we will unite our minds and link our efforts, causing the three jewels to prosper and benefiting sentient beings. Patterning our conduct after Mañjuśrī, we will take pity on all impoverished, solitary, and afflicted sentient beings. As far as our influence extends, we will prohibit the killing of living beings. In the land in which we are born, may we long be free from adverse conditions (*gyakuen* 逆縁). May we have long lifespans, be free from illness and be strong, and never grow weary of practice. Benefiting and comforting sentient beings, we will not amass impure resources for our own benefit. May we long be free from attachment to the five dust-objects.⁸⁵ Based on the benefits to sentient beings, whether we are born to high or to low status, we will leave the household in accordance with the dharma and save those with karmic affinities. In life after life, we will assist each other; in age after age, we will practice together. Moreover, may it be like milk and water, altogether with nothing disagreeable left.⁸⁶ May we cause all

84 See NKBK 1977, 341–42. I have also consulted a version included in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 133–34) and a vow by the junior bhikṣu Son'e 尊惠 (alternatively read Sonne or Sonkei) included among the documents inside the 1302 Saidaiji Mañjuśrī statue (Takeuchi 1971–97, 24:33–35 [doc. 18306]). Son'e's vow incorporates most of the 1247 vow with a few differences. In various cases, the renderings of characters in the *Nenpu* and Son'e's version are more suitable, and I have adjusted my translation accordingly.

85 The five polluting objects of sensation and perception, which correspond to the five senses: visual objects (i.e., colors and forms), sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects.

86 The “milk and water” (*nyūsui* 乳水) reference is likely based on a Buddhist metaphor about a goose that, when milk and water are poured in the same jar, drinks only the milk and leaves behind the water. In the same manner, the skilled Buddhist practitioner can distinguish the orthodox from the heterodox. More simply, “milk and water” is used as a metaphor for unity, since they mix. See Nakamura 1981, 1057c, s.v. “nyūsugen,” and 805b, s.v. “suinyū.”

sentient beings to attain perfect awakening; together, may they then affirm the unsurpassed bodhi.⁸⁷

Recording the items, we should make our vows [which are numerous]. Accordingly, we have aimed for the gist of each one, recording the details in abbreviated fashion. These vows are wideranging. Reverently, we emulate the traces of the Original Teacher's [Śākyamuni's] five hundred great vows; it is difficult to exhaust [our] intentions.⁸⁸ Respectfully, we accord with the vows of Mañjuśrī, Mother of Awakening for the three times. Benefiting sentient beings necessarily depends on the three jewels. The two jewels of the buddha and the dharma necessarily depend on the jewel of the sangha. Moreover, the flourishing of the sangha-jewel cannot be established without the precepts. We vow to devote ourselves to the vinaya and gradually learn all the provisional and ultimate sacred teachings, the comprehensive and the separate [precepts], the Great and the Small [vehicles], and the deepest meanings of the various schools.⁸⁹ Together, they all surpass the manifold views outside the Way.⁹⁰ We shall benefit and comfort all sentient beings according to their needs.

87 "Perfect awakening" translates *shōgaku* 正覺, one of various Sino-Japanese terms used to translate Sk. *samyaksambodhi*, the "perfect and full enlightenment" of a buddha. This sentence, four verses of four characters each, is missing from the *Nenpu* version of the vow in NKBK 1977, 133.

88 I interpret this to mean that the "intentions" or "aspirations" (*igyō* 意樂) expressed in the vows of the various monks here are numerous, like those in Śākyamuni's five hundred vows. Alternatively, however, the intentions could be those of Śākyamuni in the vows. The reference to Śākyamuni's five hundred great vows is based on an adaptation of the *Hikekyō* 悲華經 (Ch. *Beihua jing*; T 157; Sk. *Karuṇā-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*) in a late Heian-period apocryphal sutra, the *Shaka nyorai gohyaku daigankyō* 釈迦如来五百大願經 (Sutra on Śākyamuni Tathāgata's Five Hundred Great Vows). Here, Śākyamuni vows to manifest in numerous forms, or "traces," to benefit sentient beings in this defiled world. For the importance of these texts to the Saidaiji order, see Matsuo 1996, 82–95; 1998b, 9–14.

89 "Comprehensive" and "separate" here translate *tsū* 通 and *betsu* 別, as in the *Nenpu* version of the vow (NKBK 1977, 133). This pairing makes more sense here than *tsū* and *ri* 利, as in the 1280 version (342). The "Great and the Small" refers to the teachings, or perhaps more specifically the precepts, of the Mahayana and Hinayana. For "deepest meanings," the rendering of the compound as *ōshi* 奧旨 in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 134) and Son'e's vow (Takeuchi 1971–97, 24:34) is more appropriate than 奧昔, as it is rendered in the 1280 version (NKBK 1977, 342), and I have adjusted my translation accordingly.

90 My translation here is based on the reading of these characters as *gedō* 外道, referring to non-Buddhist teachings, in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 133) and Son'e's vow (Takeuchi 1971–97, 24:34), which is more appropriate than 外遣 in the 1280 version (NKBK 1977, 342).

Exclusively, we pray to the Mother of Awakening, the Great Sage Mañjuśrī, that you will mingle with the dust and join us (*dōjin dōji*), giving us the power to benefit sentient beings. We will naturally chant your five-syllable spell to perfection; we will remember and uphold it,⁹¹ never forgetting it. We will ourselves attain the power to teach without hindrance (*muge benzetsu* 無礙辨説). For the assemblages, we will explicate well the true dharma; may all the listeners attain wisdom, may they all attain understanding and realization and be led to practice. Completely abandoning self-benefit, we will put benefiting others first.⁹² Born to the rising and drowning [amid the sea of transmigration], [we] shall turn entirely to the guidance of the Mother of Awakening. Through your great mercy and great compassion, please long separate [us] from birth in places without benefit.⁹³ Accordingly, our vow is stated thus.

Reverently declared, 1247 (Hōji 宝治 1)/5/25.

1267 *Hannyaji Monju Engi*

The *Hannyaji Monju engi* (Origin Account of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī) comprises a votive text by Eison celebrating Mañjuśrī's virtues and detailing the process and purpose of constructing the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue. The votive text is dated 1267/7/23, one day after the Mañjuśrī figure was set on the lion and sutras and other items were inserted into the statue and two days before the eye-opening ceremony, according to the chronology in Eison's autobiography. Thus the text was clearly composed as part of the rites dedicating the statue. Although longer and more revealing of Eison's understanding of Mañjuśrī, this text has received much less attention from previous scholars than the 1269/3/25 votive text for a non-discriminatory assembly held before the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī (translated next in this section).⁹⁴

91 "Remember and uphold" translates *okuji* 憶持 as in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 133) and Son's vow (Takeuchi 1971–97, 24:34) rather than 憶恃 as in the 1280 version (NKBK 1977, 342).

92 "First" translates *saki* 先 as in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 133) and Son's vow (Takeuchi 1971–97, 24:34), which is more apt than *hikari* 光 in the 1280 version (NKBK 1977, 342).

93 I have put "we" and "us" in these two sentences in brackets because those who turn to Mañjuśrī's guidance and receive the benefits of compassion here could refer to the sentient beings whose benefit the authors are putting first, rather than the authors themselves.

94 My translation of the *Hannyaji Monju engi* is based on the printed Chinese text in the *Yamato koji taikan*, vol. 3 (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a–136a). The manuscript, now held by Hannyaji, includes seven lines of closing verse and a colophon by the copyist. The printed

Translation

Hannyaji Monju engi 般若寺文殊緣起

(Origin Account of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī)

Inserted into the figure: One 600-fascicle set of the *Great Wisdom Sutra*;⁹⁵ 1,000 copies of the *Heart of the Wisdom Sutra*;⁹⁶ 1,000 copies of the *Treasure Casket Seal Dhāraṇī*;⁹⁷ 1,000 copies of various mantras; one eight-fascicle set of the *Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Law* (one-letter, three bows);⁹⁸ the *Sutra of Immeasurable Meanings* and the *Fugen Contemplation Sutra*;⁹⁹ the *Amida Sutra*;¹⁰⁰ one ten-fascicle set of the *Golden Light Sutra of Supreme Kings* (for each, one letter, three bows);¹⁰¹ buddha relics

Respectfully recorded by Eison, a disciple and śramaṇa following the teachings bequeathed by Śākyamuni

Constructed: One statue of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, sixteen-feet tall¹⁰²

version includes the colophon, but omits the closing verse. According to the colophon, the monk Ezen 惠禪 (d.u.) copied the text at Saidaiji on 1379/12/2.

- 95 *Daihannyakyō*, short for *Daihannya haramittakyō* (Ch. *Da bore boluomiduo jing*; T 220; Sk. *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*).
- 96 *Hannya shingyō*, short for the *Hannya haramitta shingyō* 般若波羅蜜多心經 (Ch. *Bore boluomiduo xin jing*; Sk. *Prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra*). There are many versions of this text in the *Taishō* canon, and according to the *Gakushōki* entry for 1267/7/20 (NKBK 1977, 31), these one thousand copies were written in Sanskrit syllables. However, for a standard Chinese version, see T 251.
- 97 *Hōkyōin darani* 宝篋印陀羅尼. This dhāraṇī originates in the *Treasure Casket Seal Dhāraṇī Sutra* (Ch. *Baoqieyin tuoluoni jing*; T 1022).
- 98 *Myōhōrengkyō* 妙法蓮華經 (Ch. *Miaofa lianhua jing*; T 262; Sk. *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*). “One letter, three bows” (*ichiji sanrai*) is a ritual method of copying scriptures while bowing three times with every letter copied.
- 99 The *Sutra of Immeasurable Meanings* (*Muryōgikyō*; Ch. *Wuliangyi jing*; T 276) and the *Fugen Contemplation Sutra* (*Kan Fugengyō*; Ch. *Guan puxian jing*; T 277) are often grouped with the *Lotus Sutra* and referred to as a set as the *Threefold Lotus Sutra* (*Hokke sanbukyō* 法華三部經).
- 100 *Amidakyō* 阿彌陀經 (Ch. *Amituo* [or *Emituo*] *jing*; T 366).
- 101 *Konkōmyō saishōōkyō* 金光明最勝王經 (Ch. *Jingguangming zuishengwang jing*; T 665).
- 102 The statue’s size is described as *jōroku* 丈六, an abbreviation of *ichijō rokushaku* 一丈六尺, or about sixteen feet. This figure is a convention and does not necessarily indicate the actual size of the statue. It is clear, however, from the few surviving fragments that the statue was very large indeed, likely larger even than the renowned Abedera (Abe no Monju’in) Mañjuśrī statue. Asanuma Takeshi estimates that the Hannyaji seated Mañjuśrī figure may have stood about 220 centimeters tall, versus the 197-centimeter height of the Abe no Monju’in figure (Asanuma 2008, 34–35).

The aforementioned bodhisattva is the birth-mother of equal-and-perfect awakening, the guide for the three existences and the three vehicles.¹⁰³ From the past, this buddha who truly attained enlightenment eons ago has long illuminated the emptiness of dharma-nature. Into the future, this bodhisattva who manifests for an eternal kalpa shall widely blow the winds of compassion. That the Honored Śākyamuni's perfect awakening is due to the benevolent virtue of Mañjuśrī, that Maitreya's attaining buddhahood is due to the guidance of this deity [Mañjuśrī], is truly and clearly attested in scriptural precedents. Indeed, you should know that this is the very fountainhead for the dharma-water that flows in a remote country, that there is no other root for the dragon-flower tree awaiting an auspicious era. While [Śākyamuni] lived in the world, many of his teachings concerned Mañjuśrī; after he passed into nirvana, the proliferation of the transmission was again due to [Mañjuśrī's] wondrous virtue.

In particular, the spread of the various Mahayana schools was entirely due to [Mañjuśrī's] power. For example, when Nāgārjuna prayed for the inner realization of a buddha, [Mañjuśrī] bestowed upon him Vairocana's secret language and thus enabled him to open the Iron Stupa.¹⁰⁴ When Śīlabhadra wanted to abandon his life, [Mañjuśrī] informed him that Xuanzang was coming to seek the teachings and thus enabled him to transmit the Middle Sect.¹⁰⁵ On another

103 "Equal-and-perfect awakening" translates *shōtō shōgaku* 正等正覺, another Sino-Japanese term used to translate Sk. *samyaksambodhi*. The "three existences" (*san'u* 三有 or *sannu*) generally refers to the three kinds of transmigratory existences in the three realms (*sangai* 三界): the realm of desire (*yokkai* 欲界; Sk. *kāma-dhātu*); the realm of form (*shikikai* 色界; Sk. *rūpa-dhātu*), in which beings have material form but no desires; and the realm of no-form (*mushikikai* 無色界; Sk. *ārūpya-dhātu*), the highest of the three, in which beings have neither desire nor material form. Alternatively, *san'u* can refer to the present life (*hon'u* 本有 or *honnu*), the intermediate state between death and rebirth (*chūu* 中有), and the next life (*tōu* 当有) or to the three evil states of existence as a hell-dweller, hungry ghost, or animal.

104 "Secret language" (*mitsugo* 密語) refers to mantra and dhāraṇī. The reference here to Nāgārjuna (Jp. Ryūmyō 龍猛) invokes his opening of the Iron Stupa in India and reception of the Shingon transmission. Nāgārjuna, traditionally identified as the founder of the Madhyamaka teachings, is considered the third patriarch in the Shingon tradition. According to the account of the transmission given by Kūkai in fascicle 2 of his *Himitsu mandarakyō fuhōden* 秘密曼荼羅教付法伝, Nāgārjuna opened the Iron Stupa in southern India, where the esoteric teachings had been hidden away by Vajrasattva (Jp. Kongōsatta 金剛薩埵), the second patriarch. Inside, he found Samantabhadra (Jp. Fugen), Mañjuśrī, and the other great bodhisattvas and buddhas of the three times. For an annotated, yomikudashi rendering of Kūkai's account, see Katsumata 1968–73, 2:91; for an English translation, see Abé 1999, 225.

105 The "Middle Sect" refers to the Hossō school; Xuanzang (600–664) is said to have received the Yogācāra teachings from Śīlabhadra (Jp. Kaigen 戒賢 or Kaiken; ca. 529–645) and to

occasion, he met with the Meditation Master Huisi and affirmed the succession of the Tendai teachings.¹⁰⁶ On another occasion, he created the dharma-world contemplation and clarified the meaning of the Kegon teachings.¹⁰⁷ And as for the Emptiness School, it is based on prajñā, and Mañjuśrī was the one who revealed this.¹⁰⁸ Bodhidharma demonstrated the buddha-mind; the Ancient Patriarch was none other than that deity [Mañjuśrī].¹⁰⁹

have transmitted them to China, thereby forming the basis for the school there. According to the *Datang daciensi sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳 (T 2053), when Xuanzang first met Śīlabhadra, he learned that three years earlier Śīlabhadra had suffered an illness so severe that he wanted to commit suicide. At that point, Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and Maitreya appeared to him in a dream, urging him not to abandon his life. Explaining that in a former life he had been a king who oppressed his subjects and that his current illness was karmic retribution, they counseled him that if he contemplated his former misdeeds, sincerely repented, bore the pain, and continued teaching, his pain would disappear. Mañjuśrī explained further that a Chinese monk would come to study under Śīlabhadra and that he should teach the monk. From that time, Śīlabhadra's illness was cured—timing that coincided precisely with Xuanzang's departure from China three years earlier. This confirmed to Śīlabhadra that Xuanzang was indeed the Chinese monk foretold by Mañjuśrī. For the full account of Xuanzang's first meeting with Śīlabhadra, see T 2053 50:236c13–237a19; for an English translation, see Li 1959, 102–5. The story depicted here dovetails with the themes of karmic retribution and liberation found in both the 1267 and 1269 votive texts.

- 106 Huisi (515–77) is considered the second patriarch of Tiantai and is reported in Shōtoku Taishi legends to have been an earlier incarnation of the prince. Elaborating on this account, various Kamakura-period texts suggest that Mañjuśrī and Shōtoku Taishi were linked as teacher and disciple. For example, Eison's 1254 *Shōtoku Taishi kōshiki* 聖德太子講式 indicates that when Shōtoku Taishi was in China at Mt. Heng 衡 in his previous life as Huisi, Mañjuśrī manifested to him as Bodhidharma and encouraged him to spread the dharma in Japan. See Ishida 1943, 74, for the passage. An account similar to Eison's appears in the *Shasekishū* 沙石集 a few decades later (Watanabe 1966, 253–54). See also Oishio 1995, 190 and 239.
- 107 In “Entering the Dharma World,” the final chapter of the *Flower Garland Sutra* (*Kegongyō*), Mañjuśrī, with the help of fifty-three teachers, guides the youth Sudhana (Jp. Zenzai-dōji) to the highest stage of the Buddhist path.
- 108 The “Emptiness School” (*kūshū* 空宗) refers to Sanron, which emphasizes the Madhyamaka teachings on the emptiness of all phenomena. It is prajñā, or transcendental wisdom, that enables one to recognize this. Mañjuśrī is traditionally venerated as the embodiment of prajñā and is said to have preached the *Prajñāpāramitā* (Perfection of Wisdom) literature.
- 109 “Ancient Patriarch” (*nōso* 曩祖) here is another name for Bodhidharma, the reputed transmitter of the Chan (Jp. Zen) teachings to China.

And thus one clarifies the mind through the fivefold [contemplation];¹¹⁰ dispels all delusions through the three thousand[-existences-in-a-single-thought contemplation];¹¹¹ affirms the truth by abolishing verbal explanation;¹¹² removes the hindrances through perfect interfusion;¹¹³ eradicates folly through [realizing] true emptiness;¹¹⁴ and attains the dharma by stopping thought.¹¹⁵ Among such practitioners, among such virtuous monks, who would not receive his favors, who would not be entrusted with his blessings?

In addition, on one occasion he manifested as an old man and lamented the evil deeds of monastics and laypeople in the Land of the Han [China]. He thus ordered a Western Country śramaṇa to transmit the *Supreme* [*Dhāraṇī*

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- 110 In Shingon, the “fivefold contemplation for attaining the body” of a buddha (*gosō jōshingan* 五相成身觀, also referred to as *gosō yuga* 五相瑜伽) is a method for realizing the attainment of buddhahood in one’s own body. The practice consists of the following five contemplations: 1) contemplating one’s mind as a moon disk and thereby penetrating one’s inherent bodhi-mind (*tsūdatsu bodaishin* 通達菩提心); 2) further contemplating one’s mind as a pure, full-moon disk, free from defilements, and thereby cultivating the bodhi-mind (*shu* [or *shū*] *bodaishin* 修菩提心); 3) contemplating the samaya body (the distinctive attributes) of the main deity for the rite and thereby attaining the diamond bodhi-mind (*jō kongōshin* 成金剛心); 4) contemplating the union of that deity’s samaya body with one’s own and thereby verifying the diamond body (*shō kongōshin* 証金剛身); and 5) contemplating the transformation of that samaya body into the karma body (*katsumashin* 羯磨身) of the deity, one equipped with all its marks, and thereby attaining the perfect buddha body (*busshin enman* 仏身圓滿). See Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 613a–c, s.v. “gosō jōshingan.”
- 111 *Sanzen* 三千, or “three-thousand,” is likely an abbreviation for the Tendai teaching of *ichinen sanzen* 一念三千, or “three-thousand [existences] in a single thought.” According to this teaching, the universe comprises three thousand modes of existence, all of which are contained in a single thought.
- 112 “Affirming the true by abolishing verbal explanation” (*haisen shōshin* 廢詮証真) refers to the Hossō concept of “abolishing verbal explanation and thereby conveying the essential” (*haisen danji* 廢詮談旨), in which the ultimate truth is considered to defy verbal explanation and cannot be said to exist or not exist. See Nakamura 1981, 1099d, s.vv. “haisen,” “haisen danji.” Cien uses the four-character phrase 廢詮談旨 often; see in particular the second fascicle of the *Dasheng fayuan yilin zhang* (T 1861).
- 113 “Perfect interfusion” is primarily associated with Kegon teachings.
- 114 As Eison used the term “Emptiness School” for Sanron in the previous paragraph, his reference here to “eradicating folly through true emptiness” suggests the practices of this school.
- 115 Eison likely intended “stopping thought” to suggest Zen practices, such as those passed down through Bodhidharma’s “demonstration of the buddha-mind.” The six practices in this paragraph can therefore largely be correlated with the six schools indicated in the previous paragraph, but with a reversal in the order of Hossō and Tendai.

Sutra] to Cīnasthāna [China].¹¹⁶ On another occasion, he manifested himself as an Indian monk and grieved over the sentient beings of the ten directions who lacked the dharma. He thus urged the Meditation Master of Mt. Heng [Huisi] to entrust his rebirth to the Country of the Sun [Japan]. Another time, he manifested as a starving man and revealed the inner attainment of the Prince of the Upper Palace [Shōtoku Taishi].¹¹⁷ On still another occasion, he manifested as Gyōki and assisted Emperor Shōmu's external activity.¹¹⁸ Such transformations are countless; they were undertaken to extinguish the transgressions of sentient beings and induce the initial awakening of the aspiration for enlightenment.

As a rule, the forms of sentient beings transmigrate among the six destinies, like a wheel, with no beginning. They race aimlessly among the four births, resembling a ring, with no end.¹¹⁹ From darkness into darkness, they cannot reach the wisdom-sun's light.¹²⁰ From delusion into delusion, they do not know the way to the true-aspect path.¹²¹ Some mingle with the eight scorching hells; others are confined to the eight freezing hells. Some are intimate with the pangs of hunger; others bear the miseries of terrible deaths. Among each type [of misery], they suffer one hundred thousand kinds of bodies. Among each [kind of] body, they spend one billion kalpas. Birth as a human or heavenly being is extremely rare. Even when they do attain the reward of [birth as] a human or heavenly being, they are engrossed in the objects of the five desires. They never loathe them and awaken the aspiration for enlightenment.

116 On the transmission of the *Sutra of the Supreme Dhāraṇī of the Buddha's Crown* (*Butchō sonshō daranikyō*; Ch. *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*) to China and Mañjuśrī's involvement, see Chapter 2 here and T 967 19:349b2–c5 (translated in Lamotte 1960, 86–88).

117 On the story of Mañjuśrī manifesting as a starving man before Shōtoku Taishi, see n. 48, to Eison's *Monju kōshiki*, above.

118 This sentence refers to Gyōki's aid in the construction of Tōdaiji, a project sponsored by Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–49). On the relationship between the monk and the emperor in this Nara-period project, as well as Kamakura-period accounts of their collaboration, see Goodwin 1994, 23–26, 78–80.

119 On the “six destinies” (*rokushu*) and the “four births” (*shishō*), see n. 77, to Eison's *Monju kōshiki*, above.

120 The phrase “from darkness into darkness” is likely drawn from the *Lotus Sutra*; see the Phantom City parable, T 262 9:22c24. “The wisdom-sun” (*e'nichi* 惠日) refers to the wisdom of a buddha, which is said to illuminate sentient beings like the rays of the sun.

121 “True-aspect path” translates *jissō no michi* 実相道; *jissō* refers to the true aspect of phenomena, the ultimate reality. The metaphor in this sentence works better in the original, as the term I have translated as “delusion” (*mei* 迷) can simply mean “lost,” as in a lost child (*maigo* 迷子).

Coveting temporary fame and profit, they forget about eternal suffering and brutality.

Noblemen take possession of the mountains and seas and brazenly kill many living beings. Their inferiors lean on their authority and brazenly commit the same deeds. Mountain men [hunters] eat creatures with fur, and fishermen covet those with scales. With each passing day, they want all the more; night after night, more and more, with no end. Such is the way of those whose occupation is taking life; the same holds true for thieves and courtesans. Don't they know that for momentary nobility and success, they will endure one hundred thousand kalpas of hell-retribution? That for temporary pleasure and mirth, they will reap one hundred billion kinds of suffering-vessels [i.e., bodies]? This is because they never encountered the Buddha when he appeared in the world and never heard the Buddha's true dharma. However, although this is a time after the Buddha's passing, they have widely received human bodies, and although this is a peripheral land, they can encounter the sacred teachings as they please.

Hurry, turn away from the burning house of the phenomenal world! How can you remain children and sit around idly? Quickly, seek the entrance gate of bodhi! How can you be unaware and stand by silently? Moreover, impressed practices have long accumulated and manifest activities occur repeatedly.¹²² Deluded activities remain in motion easily, while the mind that loathes is difficult to arouse.¹²³ "Do not stay enjoying yourselves in the burning house of the three realms";¹²⁴ these are the golden words of the compassionate father of

122 In this context, "impressed practices" (*kunju* 薰修) and "manifest activities" (*gengyō* 現行) should be taken negatively. "Impressed practices" (often rendered as *kunjū* 薰習) refers to the impressions that acts leave in one's mind, thereby conditioning the mind or other acts; literally, "infusing them with an odor" like clothes by perfume. "Manifest activities" refers to the actual workings of dormant tendencies or, in Yogācāra teachings, of "seeds" in one's consciousness. Thus, for example, the two hindrances of the passions and impediments to knowledge, emerging from various seeds, can manifest as actual negative deeds. See Muller 2014, s.v. "kunjū," and s.v. "gengyō" (entry by Charles Muller and Stephen Hodge).

123 The "mind that loathes" (*enshin* 厭心) refers here to a mind that turns away from such deluded activities, the phenomenal world, or the objects of the five desires. By implication, this is also the mind that turns toward enlightenment.

124 The quote "Do not stay enjoying yourselves in the burning house of the three realms," as well as the quote beginning "Do not covet" that soon follows, are again taken from the Burning House parable in the *Lotus Sutra*.

the ten directions.¹²⁵ Yet even hearing this, you just stay and enjoy yourselves all the more. “Do not covet coarse and shabby forms, sounds, smells, tastes, or tactile objects;”¹²⁶ this is the admonition of the medicine-king of the eight truths.¹²⁷ Yet even knowing this, you just covet more and more.

How truly lamentable! How utterly deplorable! How much more so for those who recite passages to gain the fees for clothing and food, or for those who interpret the principles to gain stratagems for victory over others! Moreover, people who [truly] renounce the world are rare; though they may choose a mountain-forest dwelling, their minds are disturbed by delusive objects. Though they may adopt a Mahayana name, their acts are stained by self-interest. Some break the true precepts and destroy correct views, merely begrudging those with the true precepts and views. Others reveal false rituals and devote themselves to wrongful livelihoods,¹²⁸ willfully disdaining those with correct rituals and livelihoods. Regarding highly the impermanent flesh, they belittle the long-dwelling dharma-body. Turning sweet nectar into bitter poison, they use clarified butter to spread [rather than cure] grave illnesses.¹²⁹ Do they not know that if they separate from the ranks of the Buddha’s disciples in this life, they will reap the retribution of the three paths in the next?¹³⁰ Ahh, how pitiable! Ahh, how lamentable!

125 The term I have translated as “ten directions” is rendered as 十為 in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b, with an emendation by the editors suggesting 方 instead of 為. I have translated the sentence in accordance with this emendation.

126 The character I have translated as “coarse,” based on the character 麤 (Jp. *so*) from the original *Lotus Sutra* passage (T 262 9:13b11), is rendered as 廉 (Jp. *ren*) in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b. The character used in Ōta et al. 1976–78 does not fit here and is likely a copyist or transcription error.

127 The “medicine-king” (*iō* 医王) often refers to the buddha Yakushi (Sk. *Bhaiṣajya-guru*). Here, however, as the term is paired with the “eight truths” (*hachitai* 八諦) and the quote from the *Lotus Sutra*, it should be understood as an epithet for Śākyamuni. The “eight truths” can refer to the four created noble truths, said to be the noble truths as understood by the “two vehicles” of *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*, and the four uncreated noble truths, said to be those as understood by bodhisattvas. See Muller 2014, s.v. “hachitai.”

128 “Wrongful livelihoods” (*jamyō* 邪命) refers to monks or nuns who make their living through heterodox or otherwise improper means, such as astrology, divination, magic, or using keen wit or flattery.

129 “Clarified butter,” or ghee (*daigo* 醍醐), is considered the most refined of five kinds of milk and milk products, and the term is used in Shingon as a metaphor for the Buddha’s ultimate, esoteric teachings.

130 In other words, they will be reborn in one of the three lowest realms of existence.

Then there are the deaf, blind, and mute, or those with leprosy and boils. They have impediments to hearing the dharma and no means of speech;¹³¹ or their limbs are rotting and falling off, and they have no one to treat their ills. The eyes of others are dark and shut tight, and they have no companions to show them the way.¹³² When they beg for food and drink from the high and the low, they are despised and arouse feelings of disgust. When they search for scraps of cloth in the wilds, their bodies tire and they cannot go on. The walls of their small shacks are torn, and the mountain storms pierce their skin. The roofs of their grass huts are in disarray, and the evening frost splits their flesh. Never reflecting on the severe workings of past karma, they resent in vain the heartlessness of humanity. Never considering their extreme suffering in the future, they long only for food and clothing in the present. Do they not realize that due to the grave sin of slandering the Mahayana, they incur the torment of the ten directions' Avīci Hell? That because of the gravest, incessant residual karma, they catch the serious disease of humans' leprosy? If they do not repent in this life, the future will surely be the same. What could be more lamentable than this?

Disciples, when we consider carefully—from the sort below who have never heard and lack the teachings, to the masters above who turn nectar into poison—all have been our parents life after life, all have been our benefactors time after time. Through what expedient means can we ensure that their hands do not leave the treasure-mountain empty? Through what stratagem can we immerse their minds in the buddha-sea?

Accordingly, we have copied the revered features of the Mother of Awakening for the three times, to bring forth the guide who will awaken their aspiration for enlightenment. We inserted the true-texts of the Assembly of Sixteen and others to effect the secret technique for eliminating delusory attachments.¹³³ We took the fundamental vow to benefit sentient beings and entrusted the statue to the faithful. We conferred the pure precepts on the

131 The characters I have translated as “speech” here are rendered as *hasshin* 発信 in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135b; in modern Japanese this term generally refers to a dispatch, but that meaning does not fit here. The compound is likely a mistake for *hatsugen* 発言, or “speech,” and I have translated it accordingly.

132 “The way” (*dō* 道) here has the double meaning of a physical route and the Buddhist path.

133 The phrase “true-texts (*shinmon* 真文) of the Assembly of Sixteen” refers to the mantras of the Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas (*jūroku daibosatsu* 十六大菩薩) of the Attainment Body Assembly (*jōjinne* 成身会) in the center of the Diamond Realm Mandala. See the *Gakushōki* entry for 1267/7/20 (NKBK 1977, 31); and Hosokawa 1999, 282n. 5. For the Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas, see Mikkyō Gakkai 1983, 900b–c, s.v. “jūroku daibosatsu.”

artisans and hoped for spontaneous pure resources.¹³⁴ The various craftsmen devoted themselves to their work, and the sutra-makers were inspired in their efforts. Gathering all that merit together, we formed the body. Accumulating good roots, we completed the adornments. Finally, we chose a location along the route from south to north and reverently enshrined [the statue] at the fitting site of Hannya Temple.¹³⁵

This temple was founded by Emperor Shōmu and is a remnant of Kangen-sōjō.¹³⁶ However, after the successive passage of years, the temple buildings disappeared, leaving only the cornerstone. After the repeated change of seasons, the buddha images were quickly reduced to ashes. Wild foxes made the site their home, and only lines of old graves remained. A temple in the strict sense existed in name only, with no substance. At this point, a great artisan appeared, and he was filled with longing for former days. He then made a vow to restore the temple and set out to build a thirteen-story pagoda. With difficulty, he managed to place the first great stone layer on the foundation stone, but he passed away before his vow could be fulfilled.

Subsequently, however, a meditation-monk decided to settle there.¹³⁷ He again promoted [the restoration of] the remnants, and the great construction was finally completed. Even so, there was only a stone pagoda and still no buddha hall. The shōnin [eminent monk] grieved repeatedly over this and thus vowed to discover the former icon and rebuild the buddha hall. But the records had been lost, and the main deity from former times was unknown. Still, the temple is called Hannyajī, and it is said in the explications on the *Hannyakyo* that [the difference between] this sutra and Mañjuśrī is just the distinction

134 “Spontaneous” or “pure” resources in Saidaiji order texts generally refers to contributions offered freely by the faithful. The term here could thus refer to the contributions of the artisans making the statue or to the material resources necessary to construct the statue.

135 Hannyajī is situated along the route leading from Nara (the Southern Capital) to Kyoto (the Northern Capital). Eison uses the term “*Hannya garan*” 般若伽藍 here rather than the more familiar Hannyajī, and I have accordingly varied my rendering of the temple name.

136 There is no firm evidence for the attribution of the founding to Emperor Shōmu or the association with the eminent Shingon monk Kangen (854–925), who actually founded a Hannyajī in Yamashiro Province. See Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:79b.

137 The “meditation-monk” (*zenryo* 禅侶) referred to here is Ryōe of Tōdaiji. See the record for 1267/8/28 in the *Gakushōki* (NKBK 1977, 33), in which Eison summarizes the process of Hannyajī’s restoration. For the limited biographical details on Ryōe, see Chapter 3 here; Hosokawa 1999, 287n. 31; Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:80a; and Sugiura et al. 1979, 95–96.

between the person and the dharma; they are one and the same, not-two.¹³⁸ This can be seen in both exoteric and esoteric teachings. The temple's main icon must be this deity; they already fit like box and cover. You should know that this is in keeping with the sacred plan.¹³⁹

In addition, there is a "cold grove" for disposing corpses,¹⁴⁰ which provides an opportunity to illuminate departed spirits. To the north, there are crude huts for housing lepers, which affords a means to repent residual evils. And thus, above, it is a temple for protecting the state; below, it is a numinous place for relieving misfortune. The benefits extend to the invisible and the visible; the prayers are linked to the high and the low.

Taking this merit, we pray for the sacred court: may the Jewel Body be free from harm and lawful rule long be just.¹⁴¹ Taking this dharma-flavor, we make offerings to the kami of heaven and earth: may your awesome light shine widely and the dharma-water moisten far.¹⁴² May the high and the low who look up to [Mañjuśrī] have their grave sins extinguished and advance toward bodhi. May the monastics and laypeople with karmic bonds generate the great [bodhi] mind in the present and encounter this deity in the future. Without discrimination between those who rejoice in the good of others and those who slander, without distinction between the hostile and the amicable, may they all have their hindering transgressions removed and together generate the great mind.¹⁴³

In particular, may those with grave illnesses cleanse the stains of their transgressions in the dharma-water of praññā, and may their seeds of buddhahood bask in the wisdom-light of Mañjuśrī. As for those people who compete over

138 A similar passage regarding Mañjuśrī as the person and the *Hannyakyo* as the dharma is found in fascicle 7 of Kūkai's *Himitsu mandara jūjūshinron* 秘密曼荼羅十住心論, Katsumata 1968–73, 1:501. This explanation is also found in Jōkei's writings; see Kōshiki Kenkyūkai 1994, 122.

139 Alternatively, the last part of this sentence could be read as "in keeping with the hijiri's plan," perhaps in reference to Ryōe, the "meditation-monk" and "shōnin" referred to earlier. The sentence in the original reads: 可知聖計会矣。

140 "Cold grove" (*kanrin* 寒林) refers to funerary grounds.

141 "Jewel Body" (*gyokutai* 玉躰) refers to the emperor.

142 "Moisten" translates *uruo*(*su*) 潤, which means both to moisten and to benefit. I have translated the term literally to maintain the metaphor with "dharma-water" (*hōsui* 法水).

143 This passage is likely adapted from the second of Mañjuśrī's vows in the *Sutra of the Mañjuśrī of a Thousand Arms and a Thousand Bowls*. Here, Mañjuśrī is said to vow that even those who slander or direct anger at him will form karmic bonds and be induced to arouse the bodhi-mind (T 1177A 20:726b25–27). Eison's *Monju kōshiki* also refers to this vow.

fame and profit, may they naturally dwell in the mind that puts others first and themselves last. And as for the sort that battles for dominance, may they dwell in thoughts of compassion and forbearance.

May the scholar-monks of the various schools naturally attain sagacity and memorize the words and meanings of all scriptures. Ultimately, may they generate the resolve to reject and abandon [the phenomenal world] and seek the unsurpassed, supreme stage.¹⁴⁴ May the five groups of the various temples deeply study the vinaya and the monastic dharma never lapse.¹⁴⁵ May the three learnings be all the more vigorous and the seeds of buddhahood long endure.¹⁴⁶

From those with karmic bonds to those without, from the trichiliocosm to the dharma-realm, extending horizontally [i.e., spatially] throughout the ten directions and vertically [i.e., temporally] throughout the three times, I ask all the sages to verify that this vow is not for selfish reasons. Accordingly, the details have been recorded thus.

Originally declared, 1267 (Bun'ei 4), seventh month, twenty-third day
Great-vow sponsor, śramaṇa Eison

1269 *Hannyaji Monju Bosatsu Zō Zōryū Ganmon*

This votive text was composed by Eison on 1269/3/25 for the most celebrated Mañjuśrī offering ceremony held by the Saidaiji order. In this “non-discriminatory assembly” (*musha dai-e*), offerings of food and other provisions were made to two or three thousand *hinin* (outcasts), according to varying contemporary accounts, and both the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī statue and the gathered *hinin* were venerated as living manifestations of the deity.¹⁴⁷

144 The “superior” or “supreme” stage (*shōi* 勝位) can simply refer to a higher stage of Buddhist practice but here appears to indicate enlightenment or nirvana.

145 The “five groups” (*goshu*) refers to the five classifications of Buddhist monks and nuns; see n. 6 in the Introduction for the full list of the five and the seven groups (which adds lay practitioners).

146 “The three learnings” (*sangaku* 三学) are the precepts, meditation, and wisdom.

147 The Japanese title of the text used here, *Hannyaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon*, is supplied by the editors of the *Saidaiji Eison denki shūsei*, which prints the text as it appears in the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 155–58). Although I have retained the title for convenience, my translation is based on the Chinese text in the *Kamakura ibun* version (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:24–26 [doc. 10404]), which is more faithful than the *Nenpu* version to the original manuscript. A color reproduction of the manuscript, held by Hannyaji, is available in Sugiura et al. 1979, plate 33. Apart from the date for the text (1269 in the *Kamakura ibun* and the

Translation

Hannyaji Monju Bosatsu zō zōryū ganmon 般若寺文殊菩薩像
造立願文

(Votive Text for the Construction of the Hannyaji Mañjuśrī
Bodhisattva Statue)

Constructed: One sixteen-foot sandalwood statue of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva

Drawn on the interior of the figure: Five-Syllable Mañjuśrī Mandala, Eight-Syllable Mañjuśrī Mandala, Diamond Realm Mandala, Womb Realm Mandala¹⁴⁸

Inserted into the figure:¹⁴⁹ Fifty-three grains of buddha relics; one 600-fascicle set of the *Great Wisdom Sutra*; 1,000 copies of the *Heart of the Wisdom Sutra*; 1,000 copies of the *Treasure Casket Seal Dhāraṇī*; 10,000 copies each of the main deity's mantras;¹⁵⁰ 1,000 copies each of the other deities' mantras;¹⁵¹ one eight-fascicle set of a "one-letter, three bows" *Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Law*; in the same fashion, the Opening and Concluding Sutras in one fascicle each,¹⁵² the *Amida Sutra*, and the *Heart of the Wisdom Sutra*;¹⁵³ in the same fashion, one ten-fascicle set of the *Supreme Kings Sutra*;¹⁵⁴ seventy-five bodhi-mind vows by monks and nuns;¹⁵⁵ one donations list

manuscript and 1268 in the *Nenpu*), however, most of the differences are minor. Another printed version of the text, which concurs with the *Kamakura ibun* rendering, can be found in the *Yamato komonjo shūei* (Nagashima 1943, 58–60 [doc. 76]). I have benefited in places from the Japanese grammatical indicators (*kunten* 訓点) to the *kanbun* text in the *Nenpu* version, which the other two printed versions lack. None of the aforementioned versions are annotated.

- 148 Eison notes in the *Gakushōki* entry for 1267/7/22 that he drew the Sanskrit syllables (*shuji* 種子 or *shūji*; literally, "seeds") for these mandalas himself, while bowing three times with every letter written (NKBK 1977, 32). The inside surface of the famous 1280 Eison statue also features a seed-syllable mandala; see Brinker 1997–98, 49 (figure 9). On the same page are reproductions of Diamond and Womb seed mandalas deposited inside the statue (figure 10).
- 149 See the preceding annotations for the 1267 *Hannyaji Monju engi* for the items in this list not annotated here.
- 150 "The main deity's mantras" (*honzon shingon* 本尊真言) refers to the Mañjuśrī mantras. The *Gakushōki* (1267/7/20) indicates that "ten thousand copies each of the five-syllable and eight-syllable [Mañjuśrī] mantras" were inserted into the statue (NKBK 1977, 31).
- 151 "The other deities' mantras" (*yoson shingon* 余尊真言) refers to the mantras of the Diamond Realm's Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas.
- 152 *Kaiketsu nikyō* 開結二經; this term refers to the *Muryōgikyō* (T 276) and the *Kan Fugen Bosatsu gyōbōkyō* (T 277), which serve as opening and concluding texts to the *Lotus Sutra*.
- 153 *Hannya shingyō* 般若心經 (Ch. *Bore xin jing*; T 251).
- 154 *Saishōōkyō*, short for the *Konkōmyō saishōōkyō* (T 665).
- 155 "Bodhi-mind vows" translates *bodaishin ganmon* 菩提心願文, referring to vows by monks and nuns expressing their aspiration to attain enlightenment.

Inserted into the lotus seat: Name list of 30,158 people in the seven groups [of monastic and lay practitioners] who received the bodhisattva precepts; fifty-six pledges from various places prohibiting the killing of sentient beings¹⁵⁶

Regarding the aforementioned: The buddhas of the three times and ten directions are incomparable in number even to the grains of sand on a beach. The *mahāsattvas* of the six perfections (Sk. *pāramitā*) and the four reliances are unmatched in number by the countless dust particles.¹⁵⁷ Without fail, they all draw on their unattached great compassion and manifest their transformative activity adapted to varying capacities.¹⁵⁸ Among them, Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva in particular dispenses milk as the Mother of Awakening and saves the infants of the three realms. Far and wide, he shines his impartial, compassionate light and illuminates the lost followers on the five paths.¹⁵⁹ Even those who commit the ten evil acts are welcomed, because those who hear his name will have the grave sins [condemning them to] Avīci Hell erased. Even icchantikas are not abandoned, because those who pay reverence to his statue will arouse the great mind of a bodhisattva (*satta no daishin* 薩埵大心).¹⁶⁰ Having sentience, who would not take refuge in and revere him?

Since the Buddha breathed his last in the Crane Forest, more than two thousand years have passed in vain. The assemblies under the dragon-flower tree when Maitreya will descend are far ahead in the wind and smoke of five billion six hundred million years. During the time between the previous buddha and the next buddha, in the present “defilement of time period” and “defilement of views,”¹⁶¹ we encounter the exoteric and esoteric teachings as we please and have slight faith in the principle of cause and effect. If we consider the matter

156 These are pledges establishing no-hunting and no-fishing zones.

157 *Mahāsattva* literally means “great being” and often refers to bodhisattvas.

158 “Transformative activity” (*keyū* 化用) refers to the activities of buddhas and bodhisattvas in changing their forms and guiding sentient beings.

159 *Godō* 五道, five realms of existence through which beings pass in transmigration; those of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, and gods. The cycle of transmigration is also commonly known as the “six paths,” which includes warring titans (Sk. *asuras*) as a separate category.

160 On icchantikas (Jp. *sendai* 闍提 or *issendai* 一闍提), traditionally considered a class of beings lacking the potential to attain buddhahood, see Chapter 3 here.

161 *Kōjoku* 劫濁 and *kenjoku* 見濁 (Sk. *kalpa-kaṣāya* and *dṛṣṭi-kaṣāya*), generally the first two in the list of the “five defilements” (*gojoku* 五濁; Sk. *pañca kaṣāyāḥ*) characteristic of the cosmic eon when the human life span is less than twenty thousand years. The “defilement of time period” is when war, plague, and famine appear; the “defilement of views” is when wrong views abound.

carefully, this opportunity to encounter the great dharma¹⁶² is due entirely to the wide-streaming power of the Great Sage.¹⁶³ Why should it only be that the bodhisattva Nāgārjuna received the empowerment (*kabi*) and immediately threw open the bolts to the Superior Vehicle's secret treasury, that the treatise master Śīlabhadra perceived the dream oracle and ultimately found the vessel for the Middle Sect transmission,¹⁶⁴ and that is all?

In the worldly realm, people are simply attached to temporary fame and profit, and they do not think about drowning forever [in the sea of karma]. As they race east and race west, their bad karma piles up into mountains. As they work away in the morning, work away in the evening, their good roots do not amount to a drop of water or a mote of dust.¹⁶⁵ How much more is this so for those who make their living by hunting and fishing and always kill the beings of mountains and rivers?¹⁶⁶ Or for those who flaunt their beauty and constantly delude the minds of common people? In addition, there are those who receive

162 The original manuscript appears to have *mon* 文 (or *bun*, text) instead of *dai* 大 (great) before dharma. However, the editors of both the *Nenpu* (NKBK 1977, 156) and the *Kamakura ibun* (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25) versions more aptly suggest *dai*, and I have translated the term accordingly.

163 “Great Sage” (*daishō* 大聖) is an epithet for a buddha or bodhisattva; in this case, Mañjuśrī. In Eison’s conception, the Great Sage’s “wide-streaming power” (*ruen no chikara* 流演の力) permeates all the various “streams,” or lineages, of Mahayana schools—including those of Shingon and Hossō, which are singled out in the following sentences of the text. Mañjuśrī’s role in the proliferation of the various Mahayana schools is spelled out more clearly in Eison’s *Hannyaji Monju engi*. In that text, the Shingon and Hossō transmissions suggested here are extended by references to Tendai, Kegon, Sanron, and Zen transmissions (see the *Hannyaji Monju engi*, in Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a, and my translation of that text above).

164 The “vessel” here clearly refers to Xuanzang, which is made more explicit in the *Hannyaji Monju engi* (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a). In *Shasekishū*, book 8, chapter 23, Mujū also refers to Śīlabhadra’s dream; for an English summary, see Morrell 1985, 233. Various scholars suggest that Mujū may have studied under Eison or Ninshō. See Morrell 1985, 16–17, 29–33; Oishio 1995, 277–82; and Matsuo 2004c, 61, 67. The phrase I have translated as “Middle Sect transmission” (referring to the Hossō teachings) is rendered as “middle window transmission” (*chūsō denji* 中窓伝持) in the *Nenpu* version (NKBK 1977, 156). However, both the *Kamakura ibun* version (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25) and Nagashima 1943, 59, have correctly rendered the phrase as *chūshū denji* (中宗伝持); see the facsimile reproduction of the original manuscript in Sugiura et al. 1979, plate 33, as well as the *Hannyaji Monju engi* (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135a).

165 “Good roots” (*zengon* 善根) refers to karmic causes leading to positive results.

166 “Make their living” in this sentence translates *gō* 業 (or *gyō*), the same character as for “karma” earlier in the paragraph. In medieval Japanese Buddhism, the twofold meaning of the character as “occupation” and “karma” (or action) lent itself to usages such as this,

the [karmic] retribution of blindness and deafness and those afflicted with the disease of leprosy. To speak of their past karma, it is none other than the sin of slandering the Mahayana; even spending time in hell has not exhausted it. To see the present retribution, it is the suffering of beggars and the solitary; they long only for food and clothing and think of nothing else. When can they be liberated? The bonds of transmigration ensnare them all the more. They have no hope of emancipation. The locks of the prison are firmly shut. How lamentable, how lamentable! What can they do, what can they do?

Nothing surpasses turning entirely to the majestic power of Mañjuśrī and taking him as the guide for salvation. Accordingly, we made a sincere, peerless vow and built this sixteen-foot sandalwood statue. The rites for this construction were extraordinary. From the lowering of the wondrous arm's axe to the placing of the painter's brush, every one of the artisans received and kept the eight precepts.¹⁶⁷ All their help arose from spontaneous faith. How much more [extraordinary] are the Buddha's remains we inlaid to represent the white curl between the eyebrows and illuminate dark ignorance?¹⁶⁸ Or the prajñā we inserted to endow the statue with spirit and eliminate our attached, deluded selves?¹⁶⁹ In addition, as for the exoteric and esoteric dharma texts [inserted into the statue], there is no room to list them all. In sum, gathering that merit, we formed the body—who would call this a mere wooden image of a deity? Accumulating good roots, we completed the adornments—how could it not possess the majesty of a “living body”?¹⁷⁰

Here, there is a numinous place, named Hannyaaji. To its south is a graveyard, which serves as an intermediary for the salvation of departed spirits. To its north are homes for lepers, which affords a means for repenting residual

in which certain occupations—including those of hunters and fishers or courtesans—are identified with negative karma.

167 “Wondrous arm” here translates *kikō* 奇肱. I interpret this as a reference to the woodcutters who initially gathered the wood. See the account of the statue's construction in Shinkū's 1287 *Hannyaaji Utenō Zenzai-dōji zō zōryū ganmon* (Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256 [doc. 16245]), translated below, which explicitly refers to the woodcutters' keeping the precepts.

168 The “white curl between the eyebrows” (*byakugō* 白毫) refers to the *ūrnā* spot, one of the thirty-two distinguishing marks of a buddha or a *cakravartin* (“wheel-turning king”). See Brinker 1997–98, 53–56, for a striking iconic use of this spot for the 1280 Saidaiji statue of Eison.

169 In invoking prajñā (*hannya*) here, Eison signals the insertion into the statue of the *Great Wisdom Sutra* (*Daihannyakyō*) and perhaps the *Heart Sutra* (*Hannya shingyō*).

170 *Shōjin* 生身 (or *shōshin*). The term was used in medieval Japan for statues such as this that were believed to be living icons. *Shōjin* can also refer to the human body of a buddha or bodhisattva as opposed to the dharma-body.

sins. Thus we have chosen this fitting site and enshrined the statue here. Although previously, in the fall of the fourth year of Bun'ei [1267], we opened the lotus-eye of great compassion,¹⁷¹ now it is a day at the end of the month in late spring [i.e., the third month] and we have additionally provided charitable offerings without discrimination (*musha no danse*). Then, we adhered to the rules of Yoga, and it was the deepest secret dharma of inner realization that we practiced. Now, we emulate the precedents of “response and transformation” bodies,¹⁷² and it is the hunger of lepers and the solitary that we seek to appease. Truly, this accords with the Great Sage's original vow. How can we dare doubt the manifestation of this living body?

Thus, following this feast, we shall long prepare daily offerings and give these to the beggars, hoping to quell their respective cravings. But the pity in our hearts is too piercing—though we utter prayers for endless generations, alas, our noon bowls are always empty!¹⁷³ How can this suffice for a single day's provisions? We can only turn to the unseen aid of the three jewels and leave it entirely to the sponsors of the ten directions. Thus those who arouse good prayers and offer a single dust mote, those who receive donations and accept a single meal, shall leave behind the attachment of covetousness and finally savor the delights of meditation (*zen'etsu* 禅悦).

Ahh! Just as when the sun gallops [across the sky] and it is difficult to tether the rays of this white horse, the “evening platform” is not far away, and we draw ever closer to it like sheep to slaughter.¹⁷⁴ If our breath is cut off in vain, what

171 This refers to the eye-opening ceremony (*kaigen* or *kaigan kuyō* 開眼供養) for the Mañjuśrī statue held on 1267/7/25; see the *Gakushōki* entry for that date (NKBK 1977, 32–33) and Chapter 3 here.

172 *Ōke* 応化 (or *ōge*) refers to various manifestations of buddhas and bodhisattvas in response to people's needs. Here, as Kudō Ryōnin points out in Sugiura et al. 1979, 103, Eison may be referring to such virtuous monks as Shōtoku Taishi, Gyōki, Gonzō, and Taizen, whose social welfare activities were precedents for those of the Saidaiji order. Various Heian- and Kamakura-period texts make links among Shōtoku Taishi, Gyōki, and Mañjuśrī based on their promotion of charitable relief activities (see Oishio 1995, 189–92, 230–34). Gonzō and Taizen are generally credited with starting the practice of providing charitable offerings in conjunction with Mañjuśrī assemblies in Japan (see Chapter 2 here, Horiike 1982, and Yoshida Yasuo 1977).

173 The *Nenpu* version has “hand” 手 instead of “noon” 午. However, the versions in both the *Kamakura ibun* (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:26) and the *Yamato komonjo shūei* (Nagashima 1943, 60 [doc. 76]) have “noon,” and the Hannyaaji manuscript reproduction in Sugiura et al. 1979, plate 33, confirms this reading.

174 The references here to the sun galloping and its rays indicate sunset; I have added “across the sky” to help clarify the metaphor. The “evening platform” (*yadai* 夜台) is a metaphor for the grave.

is the use of a thousand regrets? Even if we are hurrying, we must hurry all the more. Even if we are striving, we must strive harder.

First, offering up this merit, we respectfully pray for the sacred court.¹⁷⁵ Then, dividing up our great fortune, we widely benefit the dharma-realm. In sum, may those who bind even small causes to this Great Sage, in favorable or adverse conditions, together obtain the supreme wisdom of prajñā. May those with and without the [buddha] nature alike generate the good faith in enlightenment (*bodai no zenshin* 菩提の善信). And for temples near and far, may the foundations of their structures be firm. For scholar-monks of the exoteric and esoteric [teachings], may the light of the dharma torch be bright. Reverently declared,

1269 (Bun'ei 6), third month, twenty-fifth day¹⁷⁶

Reverently declared by the śramaṇa Eison

The 1269/3/25 Hannyaji Mañjuśrī Offering Ceremony, Recorded by Nakatomi no Sukekata

This text is the entry for 1269/3/25 in the *Nakatomi no Sukekata ki* (Record of Nakatomi no Sukekata).¹⁷⁷ Nakatomi no Sukekata was the head priest of Kasuga's Wakamiya Shrine and one of the chroniclers for the *Kasugasha kiroku* (Records of the Kasuga Shrine). This text summarizes the rites and the offerings to hinin for the famous 1269 Mañjuśrī assembly at Hannyaji. It is a particularly valuable account, as Eison did not detail the procedures in his autobiography, deferring instead to a disciple's now-lost record of the event.

Translation

[1269] 3/25: Procedures of the Mañjuśrī Offering Ceremony at Hannyaji

Two thousand hinin were gathered in the western field, lined up from south to north, and seated in ten rows. In the hour of the horse [11 a.m.–1 p.m.] (perhaps

175 *Seichō* 聖朝, refers to the current imperial court or reign.

176 The *Nenpu* version lists the date as Bun'ei 5 (1268), but the Hannyaji manuscript (Sugiura et al. 1979, plate 33) and various *Gakushōki* passages show this to be a mistake.

177 See *Kasugasha kiroku: Nikki 2* (Takeuchi 1979, 77), on which this translation is based. This mixed Chinese and *kana* text is also printed in Yoshida 1983, 406, and Hosokawa 1999, 302n. 5. In addition, Hosokawa has provided a helpful annotated literary Japanese rendering, alongside the original, in Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo 1988, 170–72.

the snake [9 a.m.–11 a.m.]), each was given a measure of rice placed in a sack,¹⁷⁸ as well as a straw hat, a six-foot straw mat, a fan, a shallow pan, needle and thread, two nested bowls,¹⁷⁹ a rice cake, a partitioned lunch box made from a piece of plain wood (inscribed with a lotus flower), a head-covering cloth wrapped in paper,¹⁸⁰ two [scoops of] broth, [a] mandarin orange,¹⁸¹ and water. These items were offered to the head of each row on the northern side, then passed in turn from hand to hand. The hinin all took the pure precepts, and an offering lamp was presented before each one.¹⁸² During the offering ceremony, music was played, and afterward the monks (said to have numbered a thousand) made a grand ceremonial procession.¹⁸³ In addition, the number of supplementary offerings is unknown. This was planned by Shienbō [Eison] and Kanryōbō [Ryōe].¹⁸⁴ What a rare and shocking event!¹⁸⁵

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- 178 Hosokawa points out that the sack was not merely useful for the rice in the present ceremony but could be an important tool for beggars afterward (Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo 1988, 176). The *Daitokufu* similarly notes that Ninshō gave sacks to hinin, among other charitable acts, after moving into Gokurakuji in 1267/8 (see Tanaka 1973, 47, for the original passage).
- 179 “Nested bowls” (*hikire* ヒキレ [引入] in the original) refers to a set of two bowls or dishes, a smaller and a larger one, that fit together.
- 180 This cloth was used by lepers to cover their faces when they begged.
- 181 *Kōshi* コウシ (柑子) or *kōji*; a type of *mikan*, or mandarin orange, long cultivated in Japan. The text does not specify how many pieces of fruit were given to each hinin, unlike with the previous items.
- 182 Offering-lamps (*mi-akashi* 御灯) were generally presented to buddhas, bodhisattvas, or kami. As Hosokawa indicates (Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo 1988, 177), the offering of these lamps to the hinin is evidence of the monks’ treatment of them as incarnations of Mañjuśrī.
- 183 The term I have rendered as “monks” here is *shōnin* 聖人; literally, “holy people.” “Grand ceremonial procession” (*daigyōdō* 大行道) usually refers to the circumambulation of a Buddhist image or hall, accompanied by sutra recitation. Here, again in keeping with the view of the hinin as Mañjuśrī, the term refers to the monks’ circumambulation of the hinin.
- 184 As Yoshida Fumio points out (1983, 407), although the editors of the *Kasugasha kiroku* suggested that “Kanryōbō” was perhaps a mistake in the original for “Ryōkanbō,” or Ninshō, it is more likely that the original is correct. The reference is surely to Kanryōbō Ryōe, who started the Hannyaji restoration and recruited Eison to help (see Chapter 3 here). At the time of this ceremony, Ninshō was based at Gokurakuji in Kamakura, and there is no record of his having returned to Nara then. See also Kobayashi 1966, 15–16, and Hosokawa 1999, 286–87n. 31.
- 185 *Kidai shōji* 希代勝事. *Shōji*, literally a “surpassing event,” can express either admiration or criticism of an extraordinary occurrence. However, Matsuo has argued that in the *Nakatomi no Sukekata ki* the expression is used more than ten times, in each case

1287 *Hannyaji Uten'ō Zenzai-Dōji Zō Zōryū Ganmon*

The occasion for this votive text of Shinkū's, dated 1287/4/24, was a ceremony dedicating statues of the Buddhist king Uten'ō and the youth Zenzai-dōji, from the *Flower Garland Sutra*, at Hannyaji.¹⁸⁶ These statues were built as attendant figures to the Mañjuśrī image commissioned by Eison and dedicated in his 1267 and 1269 votive texts. The text is known particularly for its depiction of Mañjuśrī manifesting three times after the Mañjuśrī image was built: as a hinin appearing at a birthing hut, in his actual form applying moxa to a sick person, and as a giant leper thrashing the temple's lazy monks.

Translation

Hannyaji Uten'ō Zenzai-dōji zō zōryū ganmon

般若寺宇填王善哉童子像造立願文

(Votive Text for the Construction of the Hannyaji Uten'ō and Zenzai-dōji Statues)

Hannyaji, the Southern Capital [Nara]

Item: The construction of the Uten'ō and Zenzai-dōji statues

The intentions behind the aforementioned constructions are as follows. The Mañjuśrī statue [was commissioned by] the Saidaiji elder (Eison), who made a peerless great vow entirely to benefit wicked sentient beings and to revive the buddha-dharma of various temples. Monastic and lay, men and women, spontaneously awakened faith and donated a single cloth or bowl, contributed a piece of paper or half a penny. After many years gathering such pure resources, the statue was constructed. Artisans of various disciplines, from the woodcutters who gathered the wood to the Buddhist craftsmen who applied the paint, all kept the eight precepts for several hundred days and purified body and mind. Additionally, various sutras, spells, and other items were placed inside the figure, as recorded elsewhere.¹⁸⁷

negatively. See Matsuo 1998a, 172 and 221n. 64, where he presents two other examples of such negative use in the record, as well his gloss in Matsuo 1996, 29.

186 My translation is based on the Chinese text in Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256–57 (doc. 16245), with reference to Shindō 1971, 40–42; NKBK 1977, 406–8; and Hosokawa 1987, 58–59. The version in Hosokawa 1987 is the most helpful of the four, as it provides grammatical indicators not found in the other three and suggestions for lacunae not found in the NKBK 1977 version (but consistent with those in Shindō 1971 and Takeuchi 1971–97). I have adapted the title used here from Hosokawa 1987, 78n. 52.

187 The list of items inserted into the original Mañjuśrī statue was variously represented in Eison's 1267 (Ōta et al. 1976–78, 3:135) and 1269 votive texts (Takeuchi 1971–97, 14:25

In accordance with such sincere intentions, much merit was gathered and thus the Mañjuśrī statue is not just a wooden image. Rather, we should call it the “living body” [of the bodhisattva]. This being the case, there was more than one miraculous and wondrous occurrence. One time, Mañjuśrī appeared as a hinin and came to a birthing hut. Another time, he manifested in his actual form and applied moxa to a sick person. On another occasion, he turned into a giant leper and thrashed the temple’s lazy monks. Moreover, the number of times he manifested in dreams and the like was countless.

Nonetheless, the lion-riding figure sat alone in the shrine hall, without a single member of his retinue. The buddhas and bodhisattvas extend down their forms, benefiting sentient beings and manifesting in myriad ways. It is the same among worldly customs, yet the world’s nobility, especially when riding horse-drawn carriages, are never found [] alone.¹⁸⁸ How much more true is this for the Mother of Awakening for the three times, the teacher of the buddhas? Accordingly, the ten thousand bodhisattvas of Mt. Clear-and-Cool are his retinue.¹⁸⁹ And yet, whenever disciples visited his hall, there was [] not a single attendant.¹⁹⁰ Although many years passed, nothing could be done.

When Rin’ei-tokugō 琳英得業 and Eishun-sōzu 英春僧都 of Kōfukuji were told of this, they both made vows.¹⁹¹ In the 9th year of Kōan 弘安 [1286], 11th month, 16th day, Eishun constructed the Uten’ō statue. On the 17th day of the same month, Rin’ei started constructing the Zenzai-dōji figure. When these two plain wood figures were brought together, there was more than one dream oracle. Delightfully, they must have met the Great Sage’s expectations. Thus, at last, the merit reached fruition.

[doc. 10404] as well as the *Gakushōki* (NKVK 1977, 31–32). Thus here, Shinkū could be referring to any of these writings by Eison.

188 A character is illegible in the original here; a verb such as “traveling” seems likely based on the context. In any case, it is clear that Shinkū is establishing a contrast between the solitary Mañjuśrī figure and nobles with their retinues. Thus Mañjuśrī, riding a lion, should have attendants, just as nobles riding horse-drawn carriages would.

189 Shinkū’s text (Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256) uses 清冷山 for “Mt. Clear-and-Cool” here, but the three-character compound is usually rendered 清涼山 (*Seiryōzan* or *Shōryōzan*). *Seiryōzan* (Ch. Qingliang shan) is an alternative name for Mt. Wutai in China. The name is derived from the *Flower Garland Sutra*’s association of Mañjuśrī with a mountain called “Clear-and-Cool.”

190 Before the “not” there is another illegible character.

191 Rin’ei’s title, *tokugō*, is a monastic scholarly rank; in Nara, this refers to having served as a respondent at Kōfukuji’s *Yūima-e* and *Hokke-e* and Yakushiji’s *Saishō-e*, the three principal lecture-meetings. Eishun’s title, *sōzu*, is the second main rank in the Office of Monastic Affairs.

To extend the benefits, sixteen resident monks of this temple, [acting] with one mind, copied sixteen scrolls of the “Entering the Dharma World” chapter of the sixty [fascicle] *Flower Garland Sutra*.¹⁹² We also solicited the help of the Kegon scholar Gyōnen-daitoku, of the Kaidan’in, and on Kōan 10 [1287], 4th month, 23rd day, he performed the sutra explication and eulogy, and [the sixteen fascicles] were placed inside the Zenzai-dōji figure.¹⁹³ The name list of those present on this day, the monastic assembly from this temple and the Kaidan’in, was also inserted to establish karmic bonds for the future.¹⁹⁴

1287 (Kōan 10), fourth month, twenty-fourth day

Recorded by Shinkū, a bhikṣu following the teachings bequeathed by Śākyamuni

Nenpu Passages Recording *Eison’s Statement of Transmission to Shinkū*

The copy of this document included in the *Saidai chokushi Kōshō Bosatsu gyōjitsu nenpu* (*Nenpu*), compiled by the monk Jikō between 1688 and 1704, is our earliest dated published version.¹⁹⁵ This transmission document recounts

192 *Kegon nyūhokkai hon* 華嚴入法界品; I have emended *hachi* 八 (eight) in Takeuchi 1971–97, 21:256, to *nyū* 入 (enter), as in Hosokawa 1987, 58. Although the number of “scrolls” (*kan* 卷) indicated by Shinkū do not quite correspond to the number of fascicles (also *kan*) in the *Taishō* versions, the “Entering the Dharma World” chapter is the final one in both the sixty-fascicle version of the *Flower Garland Sutra* (T 278 9:676a–788b; chapter 34, in seventeen fascicles) and the eighty-fascicle version (T 279 10:319a–444c; chapter 39, in twenty-one fascicles). The third main Chinese translation referred to as the *Flower Garland Sutra*, in forty fascicles (T 293), is actually an expanded version of this final chapter alone.

193 Gyōnen is well-known for authoring *Hasshū kōyō* 八宗綱要 (Essentials of the Eight Schools) in 1268, and he was a prolific scholar of not only Kegon but Ritsu, Pure Land, and other traditions (see Pruden 1994, Bielefeldt 1997, and Blum 2002). The Kaidan’in houses the Tōdaiji ordination platform and was the center for Tōdaiji Ritsu specialists in the medieval period.

194 This name list is appended to the votive text.

195 See NKBK 1977, 125, on which this translation is based. The *Nenpu* version is in Chinese and unannotated (NKBK 1977, 125). The Japanese title I use for this document, *Eison fuzoku Shinkū shi* 叡尊付嘱信空詞 (which also can be read *Eison fushoku Shinkū shi* or *Eison fuzoku Shinkū no kotoba*), is supplied by the editors of NKBK 1977. The document—minus the introductory and concluding comments by the *Nenpu* compiler translated here—is also found in the collected writings of Jiun Sonja (1718–1804), within a text called *Samaya kanjō* (see Hase 1974, 16:348–51, for a printed version). For an alternative English transla-

Eison's reception of the consecration (or initiation) for the esoteric samaya precepts directly from Mañjuśrī in a vision. Equally significant for analyzing the document, it proceeds to report Eison's transmission of the rite to Shinkū. The *Nenpu* account dates Eison's composition of the transmission document to 1269/8/25 and his visionary experience to 1245/8/25. Previous scholars of Eison's movement, although sometimes acknowledging questions surrounding its provenance, have widely treated the attribution to Eison and the dating of the events as accurate. However, questions of the text's provenance merit closer investigation, as do parallels with fourteenth-century and later accounts of a similarly precepts-based, esoteric transmission directly from Mañjuśrī to Myōe to disciples (see Chapter 5).

Translation

Nenpu account of the *Eison fuzoku Shinkū shi* 叡尊付嘱信空詞
(Eison's Statement of Transmission to Shinkū)

1245/8/25

During the night, Mañjuśrī suddenly appeared and personally granted [Eison] the consecration for the buddha-nature samaya wondrous precepts. This rite was extremely profound and was not to be recorded by brushstroke. Later, in 1269, it was transmitted for the first time, to Shinkū-daitoku. In his words of entrustment (*fuzoku no kotoba*), [Eison] stated:

"I, Eison, was residing in Saidaiji on 1245/8/25. In the hour of the tiger (3–5 a.m.), in accordance with my usual custom, I was engaged in my last-watch-of-the-night practices. After the fivefold contemplation for attaining the body [of a buddha],¹⁹⁶ suddenly my mind-spirit (*shinjin* 心神) became deep and still, just like when entering a state of concentration, neither dreaming nor awake. In the air, a large disk of light appeared. The Great Sage Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva manifested in the air, seated on a jeweled lotus and riding a golden lion-king. Faith filled my heart; I arose and placed my palms together. At that time, the bodhisattva instructed me:

'I shall grant you—as a disciple in the latter ages practicing the esoteric dharma, transmitting the precepts, and maintaining Ritsu—the

tion of the document as found in the *Nenpu*, but without the compiler's comments, see Wu 2002, 242–45.

196 On the "fivefold contemplation for attaining the body" of a buddha (*gosō jōshingan*), see n. 110 above, to Eison's *Hannyaji Monju Engi*.

mudras and spells of the consecration for the buddha-nature precepts.¹⁹⁷
 Transmit this, and do not let it be lost.’

He then completed the conferral and disappeared into the air. Afterward, I finished my practices and carefully recollected the proceedings of the mysterious conferral.¹⁹⁸ Inscribing them only in my mind, I recorded [the proceedings]. As for my, Eison’s, restoration of the precepts, entirely for the sake of the samaya precepts, I have been able to unveil the *Yuga* proceedings and receive the full precepts through self-ordination (both the comprehensive and the separate ordinations).¹⁹⁹ Here, the Great Sage, through the procedures for receiving ordination from another (*jūta*), [enabled me to] receive the transmission of the consecration for the precepts-dharma attainment of buddhahood. My faith was extremely deep and truly permeated with the power of the unseen (*myōtsū* 冥通).

Throughout all future generations, the masters who transmit the precepts should inherit this in succession, from teacher to disciple, and never let it be cut off. If this seal of transmission (*inka*) is allowed to be cut off, my restoration of the Ritsu-dharma will also be cut off. The Ritsu-dharma and the esoteric teachings, within the One Mind,²⁰⁰ are just like the sun and the moon. At this time, 1269/8/25, I confer this to Shinkū-daitoku. This should be granted to one person only, not to two. Saidaiji Eison (entrusted and recorded the above).”

The Bodhisattva [Eison] kept this rite secret and treasured it, as described above—how could his disciple not receive and honor it?

197 “Mudras and spells of the consecration for the buddha-nature precepts” translates *bushhōkai kanjō inmyō* 仏性戒灌頂印明.

198 The term I have translated as “mysterious,” *myō* 冥, has many meanings, including dark, deep, divine, and unseen or invisible (as in the “unseen” aid of buddhas, bodhisattvas, or other deities). I generally translate the term as “unseen,” but here I have opted for “mysterious” since Eison is clearly describing a vision.

199 The “*Yuga* proceedings” (*yuga konma* 瑜伽羯磨) here refers to the practice of self-ordination based on the *Yugashijiron* (Ch. *Yuqie shidi lun*; T 1579). In the *Gakushōki* entry for fall 1235, Eison writes that he had “decided to use the *Yugaron*’s self-ordination proceedings (*jūju konma* 自受羯磨) to attain the great precepts of a bhikṣu” (NKBK 1977, 9). His reception of the separate precepts is recorded in the *Gakushōki* as taking place on 1245/9/13 (NKBK 1977, 20), or a few weeks after the vision of Mañjuśrī depicted here, thus the interlinear comment here is anachronistic.

200 The “One Mind” (*isshin* 一心) has many meanings in exoteric and esoteric Buddhism. Here, the term seems to refer to the all-pervading buddha-mind, but it is also possible, as Kaneda suggests (2006, 70–71), that it refers to *bodaishin*, or the aspiration for enlightenment.

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