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The Flower of Dharma Nature: Sexual Consecration and Amalgamation in Medieval
Japanese Buddhism

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Religious Studies

by

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The Flower of Dharma Nature: Sexual Consecration and Amalgamation
in Medieval Japanese Buddhism

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When I began my undergraduate studies at Tel-Aviv University, I knew that I was interested in Japanese studies in a broad sense, but it was the pedagogical fervor of Irit Averbuch that sparked my interest in Japanese religion. Trained as a historian at Tel-Aviv, I later chose to pursue a history major in the department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University. There, I was exposed to the brilliant mind of Gregory Pflugfelder. His pioneering study on male-male sexuality in Japan, and his bodhisattva-like compassion inspired me to pursue a doctoral degree in Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. At Columbia, I also had the privilege of studying with Bernard Faure, whose work continues to resonate in me and has significantly informed this dissertation. I am also indebted to Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki who taught me Classical Japanese; without their instruction it would have been impossible for me to read Muromachi-period tales.

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Abstract

The Flower of Dharma Nature:
Sexual Consecration and Amalgamation in Medieval Japanese Buddhism

Or Porath

This dissertation explores the construction of male-male sexual practices in medieval Japanese Buddhism (tenth to sixteenth centuries). In particular, it examines the ritual and doctrinal elements of the “Consecration of Acolytes” (*chigo kanjō*), a sexual rite of passage characteristic of the Tendai Buddhist school that was practiced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Hence, this dissertation provides new perspectives on the role of sexuality in temple environs, and on Buddhist discourses regarding male-male sexuality, the body, and childhood. I analyze heretofore neglected manuscripts that describe the ritual procedures and include exegetical commentaries in an effort to reconsider the ritual as an initiation that transforms acolytes into divinities—a process that empowers young acolytes (*chigo*) and, at the same time, allows monks to reach an awakened state. Additionally, my close analysis of the ritual and its discursive contexts shed light on the Buddho-Shinto amalgamation strategies of the medieval period. In showing how the ritual elevates the status of the kami above those of the Buddha, I demonstrate that the monastic formulators of *chigo kanjō* did not conceive of Buddhism as superior to Shinto.

Chapter 1 surveys the various understandings of childhood and the configurations of male-male sexuality from the tenth to fourteenth centuries. Reviewing the socio-historical context of monk/acolyte relationships, the male child emerges as a distinctive ontological

state, a social occupation, and a sacred being. Exploring multiple forms of exchanges between monks and *chigo*, the chapter shows that male-male sexual and romantic interactions were common, and were configured in accordance with specific social and cultural contexts – monastic or aristocratic. This was the case in the periods before, during, and after the ritualization of the *chigo kanjō*. In this manner, the establishment of the consecration ritual did not simply reconstruct the relations between monks and *chigo*. Rather, it provided a framework for institutionalizing and rationalizing male-male sexuality to fit with the broad constellation of significations invested in the *chigo*.

Chapter 2 introduces the seven *chigo kanjō* manuscripts, the context of their production, and the lineages of their authorship. In contrast to the conventional view that *chigo kanjō* originated in the Eshin School of Tendai exoteric Buddhism, I argue that the chief producers and practitioners of this ritual were Taimitsu lineages (Esoteric Tendai). I support this argument with evidence from ritual procedures and commentaries, and from the “real” and “imagined” lineages constructed through the *chigo kanjō* texts. Based on these sources, I am able to locate *dangisho* (seminaries) in the Serada area in the Nitta estate (present-day Gunma prefecture) as a central cultic hub where monks wrote *chigo kanjō* texts and put them into practice. Through these writings, practices, and the production of lineages, the *chigo kanjō* was rendered an orthodox practice with genealogical ties to Tendai lineages, and to the Sannō Shinto cult. Therefore, the *chigo kanjō* was not simply an Esoteric Buddhist ritual like many other *kanjō* at the time, but it was inextricably linked to the medieval Shinto discourse.

Chapter 3 delves into the specific ritual procedures of the *chigo kanjō*. I argue that the *chigo kanjō* ritual conforms to the pattern of *himitsu kanjō* (secret initiations), a type of

consecration that aims to collapse the distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal. In the *chigo kanjō*, practitioners strove to disrupt the dichotomy between the conventional and conditioned *chigo* and the three absolute and unconditioned divine beings with which the *chigo* becomes united: the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana (J. Dainichi), the bodhisattva Kannon, and the kami Sannō. The *chigo*'s identity as either Mahāvairocana or Kannon is enacted not only by ritual gestures and various embodied practices, but also through consecration and the absorption of special esoteric knowledge.

In Chapter 4, the seemingly incongruous array of doctrinal positions presented in the *chigo kanjō* documents integrate into a coherent force designed to legitimize sexual intercourse with *chigo*. The *chigo kanjō* connects a secret transmission, “Kannon’s secret teaching,” with a homoerotic set of tales known as The “Tale of the Compassionate Child” (*Jidō setsuwa*), original enlightenment thought (*hongaku*), Taimitsu (esoteric Tendai) teachings, and ideas and practices of Buddha-kami amalgamation. These elements come together to present the ritual as serving a pragmatic salvific goal: to sanctify the *chigo*, identifying him with one of the loftiest divinities of the Japanese pantheon. By the means of this initiation, *chigo* served as a mediator between this world and the other world, allowing monks to partake in divine powers.

I conclude the examination of *chigo kanjō* by reconsidering their social function, namely, to introduce and indoctrinate young novices to sexual practices outside of the initiatory context, and by highlighting potential avenues for future studies.

Introduction:
Male-Male Sexuality in
Medieval Japanese Monasteries

In medieval Japanese temples, adult monks often took in pre-adult youths (prepubescent as well as pubescent) to offer them instruction and guidance. While the youths served many roles—as servants, performers, and assistant ritualists—they also functioned as catamites. In this latter role, the junior is by definition a pre-adult male, an “acolyte” (*chigo* 稚児/*dōji* 童子) while the senior, an adult (*nenja* 念者).¹ This relationship was characterized by hierarchical asymmetry, and involved what is today termed “pederasty,”² but we have to be careful not to impose current-day, Western understandings of sexuality on the analysis of these relations. Though in medieval Japanese terminology such relations were often named *nyakudō* 若道 (“the way of youths”), indicating adult male reflecting on a youth’s beauty and appeal, a variety of terms were used depending on authorship and social context. Even though these youthful *chigo* have been previously studied in the fields of literature and, to some extent, religious studies, there is a

¹ For the historical genealogy of the discourse on male-male sexuality and its production as a discipline in Japanese history, see Gregory M. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

² Merriam-Webster defines “pederast” a term dating to 1638 as “a man who desires or engages in sexual activity with a boy.” The modern and most currently used term, “pedophilia,” is defined as “a psychiatric disorder in which an adult has sexual fantasies about or engages in sexual acts with a prepubescent child.” *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*, s.v. “Pederast,” accessed August 10, 2019. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pederast>. The term paedophilia was coined by the sexologist Richard von Krafft-Ebing in an article he wrote in 1886. See Jeffrey Weeks, *What is Sexual History?* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2016), 52. The latter is defined as a pathology, a nuance that was not familiar to medieval Japanese. For a discussion on how pederasty was understood in Ancient Greece before modern medicalization of sexuality, see David Halperin, “Sex Before Sexuality: Pederasty, Politics, and Power in Classical Athens,” in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey (New York: New American Library, 1989).

conspicuous element missing from existing scholarship, and that is the study I present here: the ritualization of male-male sexual acts involving *chigo*, and how that ritualization shaped the boundaries of sexual normativity in Japanese Buddhism. This dissertation explores how male-male sexual practices were configured and developed in the monastic context of medieval Japanese Buddhism—from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries.

In this study, I discuss the ritual consecration of acolytes (*chigo kanjō* 児灌頂)—a sexual initiation ritual formulated by the Tendai Buddhist school in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries—as a prism through which to examine Buddhist approaches to sexuality in general. I ask how priests devised this sexual initiation as a rite of passage that transformed the acolytes into manifestations of three divinities: the bodhisattva Kannon, the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana (Dainichi), and the Tendai tutelary god Sannō. I contend that this sanctification of the *chigo*, indeed accompanied by the sexual penetration of the youth, was devised for two purposes: to legitimize and exalt “pederasty,” and to institutionalize it as an ideal form of sexuality within monasteries by symbolically deifying and thus empowering youthful acolytes as Buddhas and bodhisattvas, but also as incarnate hypostases of Shinto gods (*kami* 神) from within the medieval Buddhist pantheon.

Several angles of this practice shed light on the intertwining of Buddhism and local forms of worship, including “Shinto.” The deification of the *chigo* did not serve merely to sublimate the sexual desires of monastics—although it did serve that purpose. More so, it also facilitated the convergence of Buddhism with local *kami* worship by promoting a trans-sectarian vision of supreme *kami*-ness. The sexual intercourse of the ritual involved a monk, signifying and embodying the Buddha and Dharma, and an acolyte, physically reconfigured as Sannō 山王, the local protective deity of Tendai at Mount Hiei. At the same time, this

kami-buddha interaction attributed a degree of power and authority to local Shinto gods such that they rivaled the Buddhist pantheon. By examining this ritualization of male-male sex, we can also gain understanding of Shinto's involvement in shaping medieval Buddhism. This is because the monks, by engaging in a Tantric sexual union with a deified *chigo*, were themselves drawn closer to the divine. As a result, when the acolytes were vested with sacred power, the Dharma was also empowered.

A full analysis of the ritual regimen in *chigo kanjō* provides a window into this period's sexual order or sexual normativity; as such, the *chigo kanjō* will be the focus of this dissertation. Indeed, religion scholar Bernard Faure has already recognized that medieval discussions concerning male acolytes stand as the definitive sexual discourse of Buddhism in Japan: "Ironically, the only full-fledged *discours amoureux* in Japanese Buddhism is concerned with male youths, not with women."³ Faure's scholarship examined many configurations of sexuality; I will build on his work, focusing on on male-male sex as the prominent discourse of monastic sexuality. This examination will offer key insights on how monastic sexuality was imagined in the Middle Ages. Male-male love in Japanese Buddhism developed and persisted for centuries, perhaps since the tenth century, during which time emerged an unparalleled sophistication in doctrinalization and ritualization of male-male sexual practices. I seek to flesh out the elusive body of the *chigo* as seen in *chigo kanjō*. In so doing, in addition to examining child-youth sexuality in the ritualized landscape of medieval Japan, I strive to comprehend sexual normativity in medieval Japanese Buddhism.

³ Bernard Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 10.

The figure of the acolyte is a conundrum for the scholars of medieval Japanese religion. He is often described in dictionaries as an infant, a young boy, an attendant or servant in the residences of nobles and monastics, a catamite, or a sacred child that dances in Shinto festivals and Buddhist ceremonies. The child known as *chigo*, in fact, condenses all of these functions into one being—and yet, most scholarship most commonly highlights, often to the exclusion of his other roles, his participation in male-male erotic and sexual liaisons in temples over the other qualifications. I wish to stress here that, although sexuality and sex is inherent to his identity and central to this study, I see the *chigo* as encompassing much more. For one thing, the *chigo*'s socio-occupational rank and status is underexamined. There is barely any English-language discussion on these aspects or his sexed and gendered features, and there is only scant treatment of his embeddedness in sacrality. This study will thus also discuss the complicated notion of childhood in medieval monasticism, as many of the social roles the *chigo* occupied also involved religious works, which served as the background for the ritualization of male-male love and his deification in ritual. I also aim to reshape our understanding of sexuality in medieval Japan through examining *chigo* ritualization and its contribution to medieval religiosity, including the role of local kami cults in the formation of Buddhist consecrations. My analysis centers on the ritualization of male-male love as found in the *chigo kanjō* ritual, the doctrinal apparatus that stood at the heart of this ritual complex, as well as the sexed and gendered nature of the *chigo* in Tendai metaphysics and Esoteric Buddhism.

In sharp contrast to the standard view, my research shows two main points: that *chigo kanjō* rituals were part of the Taimitsu corpus of Tendai (Esoteric Tendai), one of the most powerful institutions of medieval Buddhism; and that the rituals were numerous,

diffused on a wide geographical area from the capital region to Kantō and the northeast. In questioning the established assumptions, my study constitutes the first full-fledged attempt to describe an institutionalized sexual ritual that was doctrinally sanctioned in orthodox Buddhist teachings. Current scholarship in Japan understands male-male sexuality as a peripheral phenomenon in Buddhism, and reduces it to a mere sexual “outlet” for celibate priests. However, unlike Indian and Chinese canonical interpretations, dominant currents in Japanese Buddhism endowed male-male sexuality with the doctrinal weight and the ritual prestige of Tendai Buddhism, while at the same time generating new gender and sexual norms among males connected to a type of soteriology. These salvific operations took place within the *chigo kanjō* ritual. It is only recently that scholars have begun to question the predominant understanding of Buddhism as a religion of abstinence, asceticism, and sexual restraint.⁴

In my inquiry, I explore how medieval Buddho-Shinto texts envisioned and articulated sexual legitimacy based on an examination of the “non-normative.” I hold that non-normative sexuality can also shed light on what is considered normative, and that both polarities should be treated as integrated parts of the sexual order of medieval Japanese Buddhism. Even as the *chigo kanjō* practices were more prevalent than what was previously imagined, male-male sexual acts were still considered “non-normative” forms of sexuality in the very few canonical sources and their commentaries that do mention them (see

⁴ See José Ignacio Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2017), 40, 107, 19, 80, 94, 246. See also Oliver Freiberger, *Asceticism and its Critics: Historical Accounts and Comparative Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Gregory Schopen, “A Well Sanitized Shroud: Asceticism and Institutional Values in the Middle Period of Monastic Buddhism,” in *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*, ed. Patrick Olivelle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Kenneth G. Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India: Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Gavin D. Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

discussion below). Hence, I am fully aware that, in examining male-male sexual acts, I look at what are essentially antinomian practices, transgressions of established Buddhist rules that prohibit sexual acts. However, as José Cabezón notes, one can adduce what it means to be a normal male through the negation of deviance.⁵ “Sexual normativity” does not only include a given culture’s conceptualization and imposition of normative sexual norms, acts, and sexed subjectivities; it also includes the structure of gender, sexual differentiation, and “sexual deviance.” “Sexual deviants” are those individuals that deviate from the norms of the sexual order and are clearly labeled in the Buddhist canon. Through looking at them and other infringements of the Buddhist law, we can gain a better picture of the definitive norms that governed sexuality in the medieval Buddhist world of Japan.

Even though the acolyte embodied “non-normative” sexuality in terms of Buddhist canonical understandings, and perhaps may be viewed as “sexual deviants” in light of canonical formulations, they were nonetheless a significant population in Japanese temples and their sexuality forms a fascinating case study for the plasticity of gendered and sexual norms in medieval society. While the acolyte’s sexual behavior with monks is traditionally characterized in scripture as sexual misconduct (*ja’in* 邪姪, “wicked lust”), these sexual practices were eventually institutionalized and inscribed in the normative order in the *chigo kanjō* ritual. Moreover, interdictions of male-male love in Japan are fairly rare, as opposed to their prevalence in the Indian and Chinese contexts. As Bernard Faure has shown, male-male sex in Japan was considered a minor violation of the celibacy vows.⁶ In other words,

⁵ Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, 431–32.

⁶ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 81–82.

even though Japanese society was regulated by extremely rigid behavioral norms, certain cases were not static and were subject to negotiation.

An additional aspect addressed here is how Buddhist monks, who had supposedly renounced sex, could be persuaded to engage in the sexual relations through *chigo kanjō*. First, it was not uncommon in the Asian Buddhist cultural sphere for sexual profligacy to coexist side-by-side with its severe condemnations within the Buddhist monastic code. Perhaps the most famous example can be found in Tibetan Buddhism, as some of its schools condoned sex in a ritualistic context (the Higher Yoga Tantras).⁷ And though in Chinese Buddhism, there was no ritualized sexuality, some monks were reluctant to remain celibate. In his study on early Chinese Buddhism, John Kieschnick shows that Chinese Buddhists faced hardship in maintaining a celibate lifestyle; since Chinese society perceived sexuality as healthy and vital, the Buddhist contradistinction of sexual abstinence was seen as unwholesome. Chinese society also devalued celibacy, deeming it antithetical to worship of ancestors since its rejection of the means of reproduction broke the patrilineal line of descent.⁸ Indeed, wherever Buddhism went, it absorbed local traditions, which often prevailed. While the role of Confucianism in influencing sexuality in Japan has not been thoroughly studied, a life-affirming approach to sexuality was maintained in kami worship

⁷ For Tibetan Tantra, see Roger R Jackson, "Ambiguous Sexuality: Imagery and Interpretation in Tantric Buddhism," *Religion* 22, no. 1 (1992); Isabelle Onians, "Tantric Buddhist Apologetics or Antinomianism as a Norm" (PhD diss, University of Oxford 2002); Serinity Young, *Courtesans and Tantric Consorts: Sexualities in Buddhist Narrative, Iconography and Ritual* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Sarah Jacoby, *Love and Liberation: Autobiographical Writings of the Tibetan Buddhist Visionary Sera Khandro* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 188-248. And the introduction to Jeffrey Hopkins, *Sex, Orgasm, and the Mind of Clear Light: The Sixty-four Arts of Gay Male Love* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1998).

⁸ See John Kieschnick, "Celibacy in East Asian Buddhism," in *Celibacy and Religious Traditions*, ed. Carl Olson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). These objections are later overcome and celibacy did establish itself in China. However, it does not mean that it was always absent from the monastic context.

(“Shinto”), Japan’s autochthonous cults celebrating procreation and fertility,⁹ with mythological texts abundant with cosmological procreation, and nativist scholars who emphasized such aspects.¹⁰ Moreover, medieval Japanese Buddhism saw the emergence of a prolific discourse on embryology, which located in embryological processes the salvific unfolding of nirvana. Recent scholarship by Anna Andreeva, Lucia Dolce, Bernard Faure, Iyanaga Nobumi, and Gaynor Sekimori addresses this discourse and highlights that the embryonic models were informed by the same worldview that valorized sexuality.¹¹ While some of the embryonic structures may be metaphorical or symbolical, they still emphasized reproduction as positive or necessary to one’s being and awakening. Therefore, both kami worship and Buddhism espoused different discursive attitudes that undermined the notion of celibacy.

If celibacy was debased and reproduction valorized, would male-male love be seen as constructive to religious realization since it does not involve procreative intermingling? The short answer is no. Women, still perceived as physiologically impure, were deemed karmically unfit as vehicles via which monks could overcome their passions; since they also contributed to the maturation of sin, they were institutionally barred from mountain temples,

⁹ See Stephen R. Turnbull, *Japan’s Sexual Gods: Shrines, Roles, and Rituals of Procreation and Protection* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

¹⁰ For example, see Miyahiro Sadao’s writings, a student of the Nativist Hirata Atsutane who employed Shinto doctrine in stressing the importance of sexual acts as intimately tied to reproduction, population growth and productive labor. Harry D. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 296-98.

¹¹ Anna Andreeva, “‘Lost in the Womb’: Conception, Reproductive Imagery, and Gender,” 420–478; Lucia Dolce, “The Embryonic Generation of the Perfect Body: Ritual Embryology from Japanese Tantric Sources,” 294–95; Bernard Faure, “Buddhism Ab Ovo: Aspects of Embryological Discourse in Medieval Japanese Buddhism,” 311–44; Iyanaga Nobumi, “‘Human Yellow’ and Magical Power in Japanese Medieval Tantrism and Culture,” 344–419; and Gaynor Sekimori, “Foetal Buddhahood: From Theory to Practice—Embryological Symbolism in the Autumn Peak Ritual of Haguro Shugendō,” 522–558; all in *Transforming the Void: Embryological Discourse and Reproductive Imagery in East Asian Religions*, eds. Anna Andreeva and Dominic Steavu (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

which were known as *nyonin kekkai* 女人結果, “off-limits territory to women.”¹² Yet, male children were often seen as imbued with sanctity; indeed, as possessing the means by which monks could sublimate and rechannel sexual desire toward enlightenment. Moreover, the doctrine and semiotics of Tantrism (in our case, Tendai Esotericism or Taimitsu) permitted male-male sexuality by promoting the convergence of procreative concepts like yin-yang or the Diamond/Womb non-dualism; the allocation of this non-duality allowed the *chigo* to be the feminine partner in intercourse. In other words, this male-male sexuality was structured as mirroring the heterosexual cosmological structure of procreation. That is, this ritualization of male-male sex projected “sexual normativity” onto the sexual intercourse of monk and acolyte.

In the next section, I will provide a brief sketch of the existing literature on Buddhism and sexuality, discussing whether these ideas have come to dominate Japanese understandings. Lastly, I will also survey the literature about *chigo* and male-male love in medieval Japan.

Buddhism and Sexuality

The various scholars who have examined Buddhist traditional attitudes to sexuality present different opinions concerning the understanding of sexuality in Buddhist canonical texts.¹³ As Ann Gleig notes, there are two themes in the literature on Buddhism and

¹² See Lindsey Elizabeth DeWitt, “A Mountain Set Apart: Female Exclusion, Buddhism, and Tradition at Modern Ōminesan, Japan” (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2015).

¹³ José Ignacio Cabezón, *Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992); Michael J. Sweet and Leonard Zwilling, “The First Medicalization: The Taxonomy and Etiology of Queerness in Classical Indian Medicine,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 3, no. 4 (1993); Winston Leyland, ed. *Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1998); Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality; The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Zwilling Leonard and Michael J. Sweet, “The

sexuality, namely, “(i) the distinction between (celibate) monastic and (non-celibate) lay Buddhist sexual ethics and (ii) the distinction between “essential” and “cultural” Buddhist attitudes towards homosexuality.”¹⁴ As for the first theme, this dissertation focuses primarily on the monastic aspect rather than lay Buddhist practitioners—though we will later discuss male-male love of aristocrats, whose members included lay worshippers of Buddhism. As for the second theme, the distinction between ‘essential’ and ‘cultural’ Buddhist attitudes toward homosexuality, Gleig bases her distinction on José Cabezón’s early work (from 1998), in which he claims both that Buddhists held neutral views about sexuality, and that sometimes this neutrality was overturned by cultural specificities such as either the tolerance or intolerance of homosexuality.¹⁵ The basic assumption about this perceived tension is both valid and problematic.¹⁶ Cabezón’s subsequent research, conveyed in his 2017 book *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, brought him to reformulate his views. He now maintains that Buddhist attitudes are far from neutral, and that Buddhist authors have taken firm positions on the nature of sexualities, sexes, and gendered identities.

In any case, the essentialist view of Buddhism, as Gleig notes, is also accompanied by non-essentialist approaches that are grounded in Buddhist doctrines—specifically the

Evolution of Third-Sex Constructs in Ancient India: A Study in Ambiguity,” in *Invented Identities: The Interplay of Gender, Religion, and Politics in India*, ed. Julia Leslie and Mary McGee (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Arlene Swidler, ed. *Homosexuality and World Religions* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993).

¹⁴ Ann Gleig, “Queering Buddhism or Buddhist De-Queering?: Reflecting on Differences Amongst Western LGBTQI Buddhists and the Limits of Liberal Convert Buddhism,” *Theology & Sexuality* 18, no. 3 (2012).

¹⁵ José Ignacio Cabezón, “Buddhism and Homosexuality,” in *Queer Dharma: Voices of Gay Buddhists*, ed. Winston Leyland (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1998), 30.

¹⁶ Ann Gleig argues that this distinction was also apparent in her interviewees in American Buddhist temples when they tried to separate heteronormative interpretations from the Buddhist law. Gleig also warns about the peril of such interpretations since they can easily lead to “whiteness” if used unreflectively. For example, many end up creating a distinction between Buddhist converts (essential), who claim they are practicing a Buddhism that is devoid of cultural overlays through the practice of mindfulness, and heritage Buddhists (cultural) who purportedly do not conform to this “purist” view. See Ann Gleig, *American Dharma: Buddhism Beyond Modernity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), 1-49, 139-75.

theory of emptiness which assumes that all phenomena lack an inherent essence and exist in dependence on causes and conditions. Some scholars have leveraged this interpretation of Buddhist doctrine to promote inclusivity of women and tolerance for homosexuality. For example, as Rita Gross contends, the argument that Buddhist emptiness presupposes a non-essential substratum that inheres in all sentient beings may hold the potential to collapse the perceived intrinsic nature of gender and sex, leaving a fertile ground for questioning and challenging androcentrism and patriarchy.¹⁷ By the same logic, scholars argue that Buddhism should be “queered” and should welcome non-normative individuals and dissident sexualities.¹⁸ In medieval Japan, as we shall see, the *chigo* was constructed as a fluid identity that was invested by the non-dualism of Esoteric Buddhism long before the advent of modernism and post-structural theory. The main objective for monks who engendered the figure of the *chigo* was not to “queer” religion, but rather to create a non-binary being that would contain the sacrality of Buddhas and gods, and make sexual acts virtuous—thus becoming an ambivalent entity: an empowered yet still subordinate being that would be subject to sexual control.¹⁹

Another scholar who offers insight on past scholarship on Buddhism and sexuality is Amy Langenberg, who organizes her discussion of Buddhist sexuality around the *catuṣkoṭi* or *tetralemma*, the “four points” borrowed from the Buddhist logic of Madhyāmaka. In doing so, rather than taking one definitive stance concerning the Buddhist understanding of

¹⁷ Rita M. Gross, *Buddhism after Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis, and Reconstruction of Buddhism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993).

¹⁸ Jeffrey Hopkins, “The Compatibility of Reason and Orgasm in Tibetan Buddhism: Reflections on Sexual Violence and Homophobia,” in *Que(e)rying Religion: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gary David Comstock and Susan E. Henking (New York: Continuum, 1997).

¹⁹ As it happens, this conclusion could be said to justify the label of “queer,” at least in terms of those whose identities evade definition and, as such, challenge the prevailing sexual order.

sexuality, Langenberg demonstrates the multifarious terrain of Buddhist discussions on the subject by allowing for multiple possibilities within sexuality. Langenberg offers the following typology of Buddhist views concerning sexuality based on the *tetralemma*: Buddhism is Sex Positive, Buddhism is Sex Negative, Buddhism is both Sex Negative and Sex Positive, Buddhism is neither Sex Negative nor Sex Positive.²⁰ In this way, Langenberg shows that Buddhism is not a constant and stable phenomenon, but differs according to time, place, culture, and society. She argues the same for sexuality:

“Sexuality” translates into many diverse things in Buddhist contexts: a primordial source of suffering, a fiery lust for a corpse, an absence that is the defining characteristic of monasticism, something that can be fitted into monasticism, the physical charisma of a Buddhist adept, a manifestation of the bodhisattvas’ compassion, an aestheticized path of love between monastic men, a flash of insight, a means of harvesting sacramental offerings, a form of yoga, the union of emptiness and bliss, an arena of abuse, a door into the Dharma, an undoing of identity.²¹

That Langenberg shows these pluralities of understandings of both Buddhism and sexuality, while simultaneously demonstrating that Buddhist sexuality may be represented in any of the four *tetralemma* positions even when they contradict each other, suggests that there is something wrong about these concepts. According to the *tetralemma*, once each position is offered and recognized as tenable, the whole proposition is annulled because of internal contradiction between all of the positions. Therefore, Langenberg implies that discussing Buddhist sexuality perhaps obscures the social and conceptual complexities embedded in these two phenomena—Buddhism on the one hand and sexuality on the other—to the extent that the whole discussion deconstructs. Of course, Langenberg does not claim that

²⁰ Amy Paris Langenberg, “Sex and Sexuality in Buddhism: A Tetralemma,” *Religion Compass* 9, no. 9 (2015).

²¹ *Ibid.*, 285.

discussing Buddhist sexuality is ultimately futile. Rather, she argues that scholars should step back from these two terms—and, especially, from the attempt to join them together—and instead become more aware of the social and cultural context of their production.

Other scholars have pointed out that Buddhism has much to say about gender as well as about sexuality. Importantly, John Powers has highlighted that Buddhist texts portray monks as ultra-masculine. He specifically notes that the Buddha himself embodies a range of masculine traits as a veritable “bull of a man.”²² This includes the figure of a manly warrior, one whom women deem extremely attractive, with extra-ordinary beautiful physicality. Powers sees a pertinent example of this masculinity in one of the thirty-two marks of existence, his penis. The Buddha has a sheathed penis that resembles the male genitalia of an animal such as a horse, bull, or elephant. In one incident, in which the Buddha shows his might to some Jain practitioners who are reluctant to follow him, the Buddha’s penis is said to have wrapped around the cosmic Mount Sumeru and rise above to the skies. While Powers sees this image as an indication of the Buddha’s virility, one could argue that it only indicates the Buddha’s supernatural powers, or even that it is just a humorous statement. Nonetheless, since the Buddha is the most paradigmatic figure in Buddhism, there is a sense then, his masculinity was celebrated. Therefore, as Powers shows, a discourse on the masculine gender was part and parcel of Buddhism, and, as such, gender understandings can be extracted through close examination of Buddhist texts.

Bernard Faure conducted one of the most thorough and informative studies on Buddhist sexuality, with a particular devotion to East Asian cultural sphere, including China

²² John Powers, *A Bull of a Man: Images of Masculinity, Sex, and the Body in Indian Buddhism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 14.

and Japan. Faure examines the Vinaya monastic codes, the issue of transgression, the connection between madness and sexuality, and homosexuality in Buddhism—into which he incorporates a separate treatment of male-male sexuality in Japan. Faure deepens his examination of Vinaya prescriptions and proscriptions in the Buddhist canon by also delving into the Mahayana code of conduct of the *Fanwanjing* 梵網經 (Brahmā's Net Sutra).

Regarding the Vinaya as a whole, Faure claims that it serves a pragmatic purpose rather than a religious or soteriological one. The rules were formulated in order to maintain the harmony of the *sangha*, rather than to prohibit sexual practices on account of underlying sinfulness. Faure's basic assumption is that Buddhist monastics had leeway in their interpretation of scriptural prohibitions on sex. This room for interpretation was possible through the notion of "the two truths," the ultimate and conventional, which are prevalent in East Asian Mahayana Buddhism. Based on this understanding, one could argue that the prohibition of sexual acts is only provisionally valid, at least as representative of the conventional and limited perspective of reality—and that other interpretations allowing certain sexual acts could be seen as elated, and lofty understandings or enactments of the ultimate truth of Buddhism. These two truths, which characterize much of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism, become two sides of the same coin and are expressed in many different forms, including "samara is nirvana," non-duality (Sk. *advaita*), or "defilements are awakening" (*bonnō soku bodai* 煩惱即菩提).²³ According to Faure, there are also other prominent perspectives that invalidate the sin of sexual misconduct null and void. For example, regarding compassion, if one acts compassionately, then the sin is expurgated,

²³ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 39-40.

much like in *chigo kanjō*, as we shall see. Another example is that the immanence of Buddha-nature in the form of emptiness vitiates the negativity of the unenlightened. Within the notion of skillful means (Sk. *upāya*), even if the manner in which truth is revealed is provisional—as in the form of sexual acts—truth is prized above all, and overrides the means of its salvation. As Faure puts it, the transgressions somehow validate the law. They remind us that, though rules exist, those rule must conform to the transcendence inherent in the “Two Truths”: “traditional morality, as it is found in canonical scriptures, must therefore be transcended—or rather, transgressed, that is to say, both violated and preserved as law.”²⁴ However, it is fair to say that Faure’s account is largely influenced by medieval Japanese understandings and perhaps is not entirely befitting of other Asian contexts.

The most exhaustive account of Buddhism, sexuality, and gender has been offered by José Cabezón, who provides a panoramic and contextualized picture of sexuality and sexed and gender norms in premodern Buddhism from his meticulous examination of a diverse body of classical texts in South Asian Buddhism. Cabezón, one of the first few scholars to discuss sexuality in Buddhism, forged a path for all the scholarship discussed here thus far. Similar to Langenberg, Cabezón argues that, since in Buddhist literature there is no single source that deals extensively with sex, and therefore, there is no monolithic sexuality within Buddhism. In terms of methodology, Cabezón adopts a philological and critical approach in investigating the sources. He both explores the literal meaning of texts and incorporates a form of analytical criticism borrowed from both Buddhist theories and Western approaches. Cabezón posits that critique is a ubiquitous feature of South Asian traditions and, therefore, should not be discarded. As such, Cabezón employs Buddhist

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

theories to illuminate his material in a twofold manner: (1) using contemporary theories to challenge the assumptions about the human body, gender, and sex that are found within Buddhist texts, and (2) employing the Buddhist worldview to problematize our own understanding of sex/gender and sexuality by relying on Buddhist texts. In his review of Indian classical texts in Pāli and Sanskrit Cabezón examines a wide range of topics: Buddhist cosmology and cosmogony, the construction of sexed bodies/gender/sexual desire, celibacy and meditative techniques to curb desire, the Buddhist Vinaya code and its attitudes to sexuality and sexed subjectivities, and Buddhist sexual ethics.

Since Cabezón's monumental work cannot be satisfactorily summarized here, I will point out just one key aspect of this discussion: restrictions on non-normative sexualities found in Buddhist texts, especially prohibitions against, specifically, male-male sexuality. This exploration will enable us to better appreciate both the inventiveness of the *chigo kanjō* ritual and the traditions to which it reacted.

Of particular interest is Cabezón's discussion of the Buddhist Pali Vinaya—also examined by Bernard Faure and John Powers²⁵—which which were the monastic vows stemming from a lineage traced back to the earliest Buddhist community. The Vinaya includes the *prātimokṣa* (C. *boluotimucha* 波羅提木叉) list of 227 rules for monks and 311 rules for nuns that were ritually enacted in bimonthly recitations at Buddhist assemblies. These ethical rules went beyond the classical list of universal moral evils, the ten non-virtues,²⁶ and specified additional rules or vows that monks and nuns had to follow. For the

²⁵ Ibid., 65-89; Powers, *A Bull of a Man: Images of Masculinity, Sex, and the Body in Indian Buddhism*.

²⁶ Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, 180, 182. The Mahayana formulation of the ten non-virtues are as follows: killing 殺生, stealing 偷盜, sexual misconduct 邪淫, lying 妄語, ornate speech (flattery) 綺語, insult 惡口, slander 兩舌, coveting 貪欲, rage 瞋恚, and wrong views 邪見.

first vow, novices and fully ordained monks and nuns commit to lifelong celibacy (*brahmacarya*). Any breach of this vow constituted “defeat” (Skt. *pārājika*, C. *boluoyi* 波羅夷), resulting in excommunication.²⁷ Cabezón contends that the severity of the punishment for this most-serious sexual offense demonstrates what the Vinaya deems as “real sex.”²⁸ A defeat would result from a monk inserting his penis into a live or dead person’s orifice—vagina, anus, or mouth—and if he experiences pleasure.²⁹ Note that it is the act that is condemned, regardless of the gender of the partner.³⁰ Of particular significance is the fact that, though Cabezón reached this ground-breaking conclusion from his meticulous readings of the texts, the medieval Japanese monks who inherited a similar code in the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya did not share this interpretation. The Dharmaguptaka Vinaya does forbid sex with certain individuals, defining three types of impure conduct that result in a *pārājika*: sexual acts with a human, non-human or animal.³¹ The list includes women, female children, hermaphrodites, “queers” (Skt. *paṇḍaka*, C. *huangmen* 黃門) and others, but does not list male children. However, there is a prohibition on penetrating the anus and the mouth of “non-humans,” and since in medieval Japan male children were sometimes

²⁷ Shayne Clarke has questioned the prevailing view according to which a monk or a nun who commits “defeat” is irrevocably expelled from his or her monastic community. Clarke claims that this is only true to the Pali Vinaya, whereas other Vinaya codes, such as Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda include accommodations to monks who have committed “defeat” and wished to remain in the community. See Shayne Clarke, “Monks Who Have Sex: “Pārājika” Penance in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 37, no. 1 (2009).

²⁸ Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, 185.

²⁹ Powers, *A Bull of a Man: Images of Masculinity, Sex, and the Body in Indian Buddhism*, 69–100.

³⁰ Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, 187. There are different interpretations for what constitutes “defeat” for a nun, but we will not cover those here.

³¹ 《四分律》卷1：三種行不淨行，波羅夷：人、非人、畜生。復有五種行不淨行，波羅夷：人婦、童女、有二形、黃門、男子，於此五處行不淨行，波羅夷。T. 1428.22.571c10-13, and: 人黃門二處行不淨行，波羅夷：大便道及口。非人黃門、畜生黃門亦如是。人男、非人男、畜生男二處亦如是。T. 1428.22.571c20-22.

understood as such, this may have resonated. Nevertheless, Japanese monks ignored these injunctions and interpreted “sexual misconduct” as resulting from intercourse with a woman—a stance that allowed for a wholly different interpretation of engaging sexually with a boy.

John Powers comments that “the attitude toward sexual activity between male members of the *samgha* parallels [Michel] Foucault’s observation that prior to the ‘discovery’ of homosexuals as a ‘species’ in the nineteenth century, the sodomite was viewed as a man who engaged in temporary acts that were aberrations. The acts were condemned, but there was no notion that some men might be naturally inclined to prefer sex with other men.”³² In contrast, Cabezón’s study of how Buddhist classical sources define and treat “sexual deviants” leads him to conclude that Buddhism envisioned identities of people with particular sexual proclivities, preferences, and genders—and that Buddhist authors invested tremendous effort at cataloging the variations. He shows that the Buddhist tradition presumes three different sexes, three different genders, and manifold forms of sexual desire (some of which will be discussed below). Cabezón reaches these conclusions via application of the *tetralemma* logic of Buddhist philosophy.

Of course, this perspective resembles the ideological thrust of modern-day queer studies, which generally argues for a wide spectrum of genders and sexualities. Importantly, Cabezón also explores a figure he refers to as “queer” (*paṇḍaka/napuṃsaka*, following Michael J. Sweet and Leonard Zwilling), a category that includes different types of people with sexual preferences and “abnormalities,” including a man who is attracted to another man and who lacks “normal” characteristics of maleness (such as a properly functioning

³² Powers, *Bull of a Man*, 95.

penis). For example, *paṇḍaka* as a biological sex category may include both hermaphrodites (*ubhatovyañjanaka*), meaning those who have both male and female genitals (the third position of the *tetralemma*); and sexless beings (*ānimitta*), those who neither have male nor female genitals (the fourth position of the *tetralemma*).³³ As Powers puts it, the *paṇḍaka* are seen as the lowest human types, and being born as they are as a result of karmic retribution.³⁴ Cabezón shows that the taxonomy of queerness in Buddhist texts was formulated so as to exclude “individuals whose bodies, genders, and sexual tastes do not conform to the norm,”³⁵ demonstrating that those texts’ authors produced their own discourse on non-normative sexuality.

Taking the cue from Cabezón, I examine the *chigo* as an individual with a distinctive gender that, though included as holy entity in the monastic order, was nonetheless deemed non-normative in terms of scripture. We will see that *chigo* also belonged to a liminal category since, much like *paṇḍaka*, they were intermediate beings outside the conventional model of gender. However, it is clear that the *paṇḍaka* belonged to a much broader category, one that spans gender, sex, and sexual taste. Janet Gyatso argues that the *paṇḍaka* is not a stable category as a sexual and desiring subject; instead, its members possess a coherence in their “inbetweenness,” which is structured around the middle truth of *Madhyāmaka*. To this end Gyatso cites a Tibetan text, according to which the *paṇḍaka* is an ideal Buddhist practitioner because of its ontological balance between male and female.³⁶ At any rate, she locates doctrinal claims about this figure’s ontology; we will later discuss

³³ Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, 326–50.

³⁴ Powers, *A Bull of a Man: Images of Masculinity, Sex, and the Body in Indian Buddhism*, 83.

³⁵ Cabezón, *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, 350.

³⁶ Janet Gyatso, “One Plus One Makes Three: Buddhist Gender, Monasticism, and the Law of the Non-excluded Middle,” *History of Religions* 43, no. 2 (2003). 5

analogous treatments of the *chigo* in examining Taimitsu thought. In other words, the *chigo*'s own "muddled" gender generated similar doctrinal characterizations—and yet, the *chigo* nonetheless stands in sharp contrast to the *paṇḍaka* with regards to salvific capacity. While the *paṇḍaka* is seen as the result of negative karma, the *chigo*, as we shall see, is considered spiritually beneficial, his body's enlightened nature (*hongaku*) the antidote to defilement—a stance expressed quite explicitly in the *chigo kanjō* literature. Moreover, the *chigo* can engage in Buddhist practice, whereas the *paṇḍaka* are "hindered by defilement" and cannot "develop any meditation object."³⁷ In fact, the *chigo kanjō* literature mentions visualization practices that the *chigo* might have carried out himself, including the Ajikan Visualization ("visualization on the Sanskrit grapheme A"), in order to acquire insight into the supreme reality (*dharmadhātu*). In addition, although the *chigo* is empowered and deified as a god as part of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, he also belongs to the taxonomy of persons deemed lesser (non-people) in the Japanese Buddhist imagination by virtue of being a child, a servant, or not fully ordained. There is a much more conspicuous ambivalence about the ontology of the *chigo* than there is about the *paṇḍaka*. One might even argue that there was a constant fluctuation between inclusion and exclusion into sexual normativity—an uncertainty (or inconsistency) that will become clear in the examination of *chigo kanjō*.

To follow I will discuss the role in Japan of the Vinaya—rules that include prohibitions against certain sexual acts—especially whether Japanese monks treated male-male sexuality as a sin. In 751 (Tenpyō Shōhō 3), the Chinese monk Jianzhen (J. Ganjin 鑑真) formally introduced to Japan the *Dharmaguptaka vinaya* version of precepts (Ch.

³⁷ Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values, and Issues* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 417.

Sifenlu 四分律, J. *Shibunritsu*), which included the above-mentioned *prātimokṣa* precepts for monks and nuns. In addition, Japan adopted the so-called Mahayana precepts (*daijōkai* 大乘戒, also called the Bodhisattva Precepts or *bosatsu kai* 菩薩戒), which emerged in India around 100 BCE, along with the early development of the Mahayana movement.³⁸ Based on *Brahmā's Net Sutra* (Ch. *Fangwang jing* 梵網經, J. *Bonmōkyō*) of the fifth century, the Mahayana Bodhisattva Precepts were rules governing behavior that catered to lay worshippers. The observance of such precepts also encompassed ritual vows similar to earlier Indian monastic communities in which the clergy swore oaths to uphold the precepts (J. *jukai* 受戒). During the Nara period, monastic ordinations included the transmission of the *Dharmaguptaka* precepts, and took place at Tōdaiji temple in the capital Nara under the auspices of the Six Nara schools, with two other ordination platforms in Kyushu and Kantō.

Saichō (767–822), the founder of the Tendai school, rejected the *Dharmaguptaka vinaya* and instead promoted the Bodhisattva Precepts, as these were particularly relevant during the Final Age of the Dharma (*mappō*), during which salvation was no longer possible through conventional means. Within his argument that people can only be saved by following the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra*, Saichō envisioned the widespread practice of the Bodhisattva precepts to be intertwined with the One-Vehicle doctrine (Skt. *ekayana*, J. *ichijō*) of this scripture. As opposed to the doctrine of the Three Vehicles promoted by the Hossō school, this doctrine upheld that the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* represent the ultimate truth. Saichō requested that a new ordination platform be built on Mount Hiei, the headquarters of his Tendai sect, so as to avoid having his own disciples undergo ordination

³⁸ Matsuo Kenji 松尾剛次, *Hakai to nanshoku no Bukkyō shi* 破戒と男色の仏教史 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2008), 21.

at Tōdaiji. (Though aristocratic elites offered Saichō patronage for this task, it was not until after his death that an imperial certification was given to the Tendai school to carry out precept ordinations on Mount Hiei.)³⁹ Saichō believed that Buddha-Nature inheres in all sentient beings, and that lay people should also receive the precepts. Thus, Saichō’s legacy created an ordination system free of the influence of the Nara establishment. In addition, he advanced a more inclusive form of Buddhism.

Saichō opted to fuse ordination with the Bodhisattva precepts or Fanwang precepts together with the full Tendai perfect teachings (*en* 円). He combined the *Lotus Sutra* teaching with Zhiyi’s elaboration of a “perfect teaching.” Influenced by the teachings of Zhiyi on the perfect precepts—for example, his concept of “perfectly fused Bodhisattva precepts” (*yuanrong pusajie* 圓融菩薩戒)—Saichō preached that individuals possess this all-pervading perfection of bodhisattva precepts, which can only be fully revealed through the Fanwang Precepts. Saichō also claimed that all people possess the capacity to understand the perfect truth, which he called “Perfect Faculties” (*enki* 圓機). As Paul Groner notes, for Saichō, “the universal scope of the Fanwang precepts was due to the universality of the Buddha-Nature.”⁴⁰ However, since there was a significant space for interpretation of the precepts, they were not always followed as had been intended. As Paul Groner puts it, even in Saichō’s day “the penalties for infringements of the precepts and the administrative procedures for enforcing adherence were vague.”⁴¹

³⁹ Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School* (Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley: Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1984), 169–77.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁴¹ Paul Groner, “Training Through Debates in Medieval Tendai and Seizan-ha Temples,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38, no. 2 (2011): 235.

Another concept informed by the idea of universal Buddhahood was *kaitai* 戒体 (“the precept-substance”),⁴² which Saichō adopted from Zhiyi and reformulated. While Saichō did not claim that people were originally enlightened by their very own nature, the above-mentioned ideas paved the way for doctrinal developments that accorded a “substance” to the precepts; as such, a person endowed with such substance would not need to observe the precepts strictly. This view was espoused by other Tendai teachers as well, including Annen (安然, 841–889 or 901). Annen claimed that keeping the precepts was no longer necessary after ordination. Annen argued in *Futsū jubosatsukai kōshaku* that the precepts are inherent in the precept-substance: namely, that upon receiving a precept ordination one became Buddha in his very body (*sokushin jōbutsu*).⁴³ In the medieval period, this notion of inherent or formless precepts—sometimes known as “perfect and sudden precepts” (*endonkai* 円頓戒) or “Lotus One-vehicle precepts” (*Hokke ichijōkai* 法華一乘戒)—contributed to a decline in moral discipline. Moreover, since the time of Saichō, Japanese monks distinguished between “conventionally worded precepts” (*jikai* 事戒) and “principle precepts” (*rikai* 理戒), suggesting that one could either honor the content of the precepts as written or be endowed with an alternative absolute form.⁴⁴ Zen monks of the Sōtō lineage developed the “Zen Precepts” (*zenkai* 禪戒), an ordination that awarded the initiand with mind-to-mind transmission.⁴⁵ In addition, the Kamakura period eschatological

⁴² Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School*, 225-27, 32.

⁴³ Jacqueline Ilyse Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999), 19.

⁴⁴ Pei-Ying Lin, “Precepts and Lineage in Chan Tradition: Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Ninth Century East Asia” (PhD diss., University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2012), 167.

⁴⁵ William M. Bodiford, “Bodhidharma’s Precepts in Japan,” in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya*, ed. William M. Bodiford (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2005), 187. See also Lin, “Precepts and Lineage in Chan Tradition: Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Ninth Century East Asia,” n. 223, pp. 167-68.

discourse on *mappō* emphasized that the cultivation of morality and positive karma was not satisfactory for attaining awakening, rendering the adherence to precepts futile, and that devotion and insight were to be encouraged instead.⁴⁶

Thus, the notion that an ordination ceremony could confer the essential purity of the precepts was formulated in as early as the ninth century. By the medieval period, the faithful following of the precepts alone was considered sufficient for salvation, as seen in the concept *kaijō itchi* 戒乘一致, “the precepts and the single vehicle are one.”⁴⁷ Moreover, Annen’s views on precepts became the dominant stance throughout the remaining history of Tendai. As Paul Groner shows, Annen argued that holding the *Lotus Sutra* was equivalent to following the precepts. He supported the *Fanwang jing* passage claiming that an ordination results in the bestowal of the rank of a Buddha, and he adopted a phrase from the *Yingluo jing* 瑘珞經, according to which the precepts are never lost after ordination. This means that the precepts are retained regardless of one’s actions. All of these positions on Tendai doctrines prevailed for generations to come—even while the importance of the precepts declined.⁴⁸ As such, it is not surprising that some monks of the Tendai school ignored Vinaya prohibitions on sexual acts, and paid equally little attention to their definitions of “sexual deviants.” In this study, we will see that *chigo kanjō* adopted a similar stance on the precepts as an inherent quality in the body to be triggered through practice.

There seems to be only one major example of a clear and unapologetic denunciation of male-male sexuality and pederasty, but even this is subject to interpretation. The

⁴⁶ Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, 19.

⁴⁷ Bodiford, “Bodhidharma’s Precepts in Japan,” 187; Lin, “Precepts and Lineage in Chan Tradition: Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Ninth Century East Asia,” 170.

⁴⁸ Paul Groner, “Annen’s Futsūju bosatsukai kōshaku (Detailed commentary on the Universal Bodhisattva Precept Ordination): Its Background and Later Influence,” (Unpublished manuscript), 8.

influential Tendai scholar-monk Genshin (942–1017) wrote *Ōjōyōshū* (“The Essentials of Rebirth”), an indispensable source for early Pure Land beliefs that offer powerful descriptions of the Buddhist underworld, which are mostly based on the *Shōbōnenjo-kyō* 正法念處經 (Skt. *Saddharma-smṛty-upasthāna-sūtra*). The text describes what is called the Hell Where Beings Assemble Together (J. *shugō jigoku* 衆合地獄, Skt. *saṃghāta-narakāḥ*), whose people are forced to assemble where they will be crushed by the iron mountains surrounding them, as well as by another mountain that falls from the sky. This hell is the third of the Eight Burning Hells (J. *Hachinetsu jigoku* 八熱地獄, Skt. *aṣṭa-uṣaṇa-narakāḥ*). Surrounding this hell are sixteen smaller hells, one of which is the Place of Horrible Sights 惡見處. Genshin warns that those who have sex with boys will fall into this hell:

There is one place that is called The Place of Horrible Sights 惡見處. A person who takes another’s child and forces upon him evil deeds that would make him burst crying, will fall into this place and be subject to suffering. The sinner will see in this hell the demon wardens (J. *gokusotsu* 獄卒, Skt. *naraka-pāla*) piercing the genitals of his own child with iron staffs and iron drills, and impaling his genitals with iron hooks. The person who sees his own child in such state of suffering, will have his mind dominated by lust which will lead to endless sorrow. He will not be able to bear it. However, the suffering arising from lustful mind does not even amount to one-sixteenth of the suffering of burning in fire. [Therefore,] that person who has afflicted suffering [on another’s child] will endure physical suffering. That is, he will have his body turned upside down, and molten copper will be poured into his excrement orifice which will then permeate the organs of his body including the large and small intestines and burn them. The burning liquid will then emerge from below [his mouth]. [The person] will endure these two sufferings of mind and body which will continue uninterrupted for immeasurable hundreds of thousands of years.⁴⁹

⁴⁹謂有一處名惡見處。取他兒子強逼。邪行令號哭者。墮此受苦。謂罪人見自兒子在地獄中。獄卒若以鐵杖画像若以鐵錐刺其陰中。若以鐵鉤釘其陰中。既見自子如是苦事。愛心悲絕不可堪忍。此愛心苦於火燒苦。十六分中不及其一。彼人如是心苦逼已。復受身苦。謂頭面在下。盛熱銅汁灌其糞門。

The passage conveys that anyone who commits sexual act with a child will receive a twofold retribution: physical torture, and having to watch his own child be tortured. The passage's reference to forcing "inappropriate deeds" (*jagyō* 邪行) on another is perhaps the closest Buddhist concept to "rape" found in Sino-Japanese texts. Though *jagyō* can encompass a wide range of behaviors, it is distinctly used to denote deviant sexual behavior. Of significance, however, is the fact that the passage does not reference the monastic context; nor does it indicate whether relations with supposedly consenting young acolytes (*chigo*) in monasteries would be considered rape. I suggest that the offense being delineated here is the act of "forcing upon a child evil deeds that would make him burst crying"—for which a perpetrator would be punished for having caused tremendous suffering. This is attested by the fact that part of the sinner's punishment would be directed to his own child; as such, his crime in effect returns home in essentially an "eye-for-an-eye" retribution. Even the burning of the sinner's anus can be read as a magnified reflection of the pain the child would have likely felt when penetrated. In addition, the above-quoted passage in *Ōjōyōshū* is followed by another that similarly condemns inflicting sexual acts on another person's wife. Here, too, the salient term is "inflict" rather than "engage," or other terms that could connote the woman's consent. I consider this latter passage as referring to rape rather than adultery, just as I consider the earlier passage as referring to rape rather than pederasty per se. Each crime concerns the victimization of the vulnerable, of those least able to fend off or thwart assault.

入其身内燒其熟藏大小腸等。次第燒已在下而出。具受：身心二苦。無量百千年中不止。 T. 2682.84.34a28-T. 2682.84.34b8.

Ōjōyōshū continues its declarations with a reference to male-male sexual acts, which it clearly condemns. It describes another small hell dedicated to males who have sex with other males, the Place of Many Sufferings and Torments (*Takunōsho* 多苦惱處).

There is one place called Many Sufferings and Torments. If a man commits inappropriate deeds with another man, he shall fall down into this hell and endure suffering. That is, he will see the body of the same man [with whom he had intercourse with] burning and engulfed in flames. When the man tries to embrace his [lover's] body, his own body will be burned into small pieces and dispersed altogether. He will die but then [immediately] be resurrected, which will evoke great fear in him. He will then run off and try to escape this [ordeal], and fall from a steep cliff. Thereupon, fire breathing birds and jackals⁵⁰ will devour him.⁵¹

The passage clearly demonstrates that Buddhist belief deems sexual intercourse between two men a moral transgression. But the difficulty with this last passage, like many others in Genshin's work, is that there is no deeper explanation about the nature of the sin. Is it "just" the sexual act between men that is sinful? Does a man's desire for another man also constitute a sin, even without sexual engagement? Is there sin in even just feeling attachment to another? Genshin does not elaborate on these details.

However, another portion concerning the Hell Where Beings Assemble Together offers some illumination in conveying that "[t]he lifespan in this hell is two thousand years. The people that fall into this hell are those who take life, steal, and engage in improper sexual behavior."⁵² One can infer from the statement that it is the acts themselves that constitute immoral transgressions. This passage also specifies "evil lust" (*J. ja'in* 邪姪), a

⁵⁰ Hanayama Shōyū translates the word *yegan* 野干 as fox (*J. kitsune* 狐). Genshin 源信, *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集, ed. Hanayama Shōyū 花山勝友 (Tokyo: Tokuma shoten, 1972), 57.

⁵¹ 又有別處名多苦惱處。謂男於男行邪行者。墮此受苦。謂見本男子。一切身分皆悉熱炎。來抱其身。一切身分皆悉解散。死已復活。極生怖畏。走避而去墮於巖岸。有炎嘴鳥炎口野干而噉食之。T. 2682.84. 34b9-T2682.84.34b13

⁵² 其壽二千歲。殺生偷盜邪姪*之者墮此中。T. 2682.84.34a27-T. 2682.84.34a26.

translation of the Sanskrit word *kāma-mithyâcāra*, meaning an improper sexual conduct motivated by lust—and one of the ten non-virtues; alternatively, the term could refer to one of the five precepts (J. *gokai* 五戒, Sk. *pañca-śīla*) that must be observed by householders or lay Buddhists. While this term can refer to a wide range of sexual sins, and can simply be termed “sexual misconduct,” it shows that Genshin envisioned male-male sex between adults as both a sin motivated by lust and a transgression of the precepts. All the same, it cannot be specified that the sexual acts in *chigo kanjō* would be included in this assessment.

I wish to iterate that the above constitutes a rare admonition against male-male sexuality, be that concerning adults or boys. In general, there was no record of aversion to such practices in medieval Japanese Buddhism. Bernard Faure argues that “homosexuality was tolerated inasmuch as it clearly remained male and monastic, and did not call gender roles into doubt: like the ephebes of ancient Greece, the passive partners in Buddhist homosexuality were novices—children or adolescents—and not effeminate adults.”⁵³ I differ from Faure’s assertion on two specific counts: the role of gender and the effeminacy of the *chigo*. I see the gender roles in *chigo kanjō* as being distinctly challenged; *chigo* were brought in to the monastic environment precisely because monks wished to invest in them feminine-like nature, or an ambiguous one. I also consider the male and monastic homosexuality to have been more than the “tolerated” that Faure grants it; I see the practice of *chigo kanjō* as having been dictated by the norms of sexual normativity and formulated in accordance with an androcentric ideology. This was done by a class of people (monastics), utilizing a very lenient interpretation of the precepts described above, so as to unite multiple interests in one—in engaging sexually with deified acolytes, monks guaranteed their status

⁵³ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 280.

in both this world and the next: they reinforced social hierarchies within the temple, and they achieved salvation in the hereafter.

Scholarship on Chigo and Male-Male Love in Japan

Discussions on *chigo* in Japan have been mostly limited to the field of literature, the scant religious studies scholarship bested by only a few historical studies. I will elaborate in Chapter 1 on *chigo* and male-male sex in particular in Japanese and Western scholarship; here I will discuss some of the key cross-disciplinary male-male sexuality and *chigo* studies.

Previous scholarship has identified that identifying the sexual culture in medieval Japanese Buddhist monasteries greatly aids the understanding of sexuality in subsequent periods. Among such scholars stand historians Gary Leupp and Gregory Pflugfelder,⁵⁴ whose work is largely dedicated to the study of sexuality in the Tokugawa period (seventeenth to mid-nineteenth century), but they pay attention to the medieval context as well. Leupp's work introduced scholars to the active/passive dichotomy that characterized relationships of male-male love in as early as the medieval age. Leupp claims that a bisexual norm prevailed in Tokugawa Japan, but he has been criticized for this essentialist view, which presupposes that premodern Edoites shared a similar binary understanding of sexuality. Leupp informs my work in the sense that I have adopted his argument of the social and sexual asymmetry that has characterized premodern male-male love in Japan. Gregory Pflugfelder's work analyzes different permutations of male-male sex from the Edo period (1603–1868) to the early twentieth century. Pflugfelder argues that the discourse on

⁵⁴ See Gary P. Leupp, *Male Colors: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*.

male-male sexuality in different periods transforms in its thematic orientation—ranging from the commercial and legal spheres to the medical. He also argues that the configuration of male-male love at the Edo period, known as *shudō* 衆道 (the “way of youths”), was a structured discipline, a path to be cultivated both aesthetically and spiritually, and that the youths formed these social ties with adult males. Pflugfelder stresses that this was no egalitarian connection between two equals but rather a construction formed from the perspective of a “virile gaze,” the point of view of adult males admiring (and desiring) underlings.⁵⁵

To return to the topic of *shudō* as a path to be cultivated spiritually, I note in Chapter 4 how medieval Japanese texts also speak of a sacred path of male-male love, then conceptualized under the name *nyakudō* 若道 (also the “way of youths”), a precursor to *shudō* arranged along similar hierarchical lines but with stronger religious overtones. Moreover, the fact that the *chigo kanjō*’s ritualized male-male sex existed by the Muromachi period indicates that male-male sexuality was envisioned as religious and performed as such. My analysis of the *chigo kanjō* texts will also reaffirm that power relations between monk and *chigo* were very relevant in medieval Japan, and that the acolyte’s ambiguous ontological state was probably the product of symbolic and semiotic manipulations designed by adult males to assert dominance.

Despite the wide diffusion of literary and religious texts about medieval acolytes (*chigo/dōji*), the subject of male-male sex remains relatively understudied by scholars of medieval Japan, some of whom offered only unsystematic or sensational treatment.

⁵⁵ Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*, 35.

Regarding sensationalist studies, the work of the aesthete Inagaki Taruho and of the writer and Tendai priest Kon Tōkō come to mind.⁵⁶ The literary scholar Margaret Childs has focused on the *chigo*'s place in Muromachi literature and within literary genre. Childs translated and analyzed the fourteenth-century story *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* (A Long Tale for an Autumn Night, 1377), which forms part of a Muromachi corpus of monastic male-male erotic tales commonly grouped together as *chigo monogatari* 児物語 (Tales of Acolytes).⁵⁷ She also translated *Chigo Kannon engi* (The Origins of *Chigo* Kannon) and *Genmu monogatari* (The Tale of Genmu).⁵⁸

The *chigo monogatari* genre merits significant discussion. These stories, written during the Muromachi period (1336–1573), concern monks and their infatuation with young boys. These stories are now categorized as being part of the broader genre *otogizōshi* お伽草子 (companion tales), short anonymous stories that flourished around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that were enjoyed by men and women from all walks of life. Since many of these stories were conveyed by traveling storytellers, they catered to wide audiences.⁵⁹ The genre marked the coming together of classical tales and *setsuwa* (anecdotal

⁵⁶ Inagaki Taruho 稲垣足穂, *Shōnen'ai no bigaku* 少年愛の美学 (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1986); Kon Tōkō 今東光, "Chigo 稚児," in *Kon Tōkō daihyōsaku senshū* 今東光代表作選集 (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1973).

⁵⁷ For a fuller discussion and a full translation of *Aki no yo no naga monogatari*, see Margaret H. Childs, "Chigo Monogatari: Love Stories or Buddhist Sermons?," *Monumenta Nipponica* 35, no. 2 (1980). For the story in Japanese, see "Aki no yo no nagamonogatari 秋夜長物語," in *Otogi-zōshi* 御伽草子, ed. Ichiko Teiji 市古貞次, *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958).

⁵⁸ Margaret H. Childs, trans., "The Story of Kannon's Manifestation as a Youth (*Chigo* Kannon Engi)," in *Partings at Dawn: An Anthology of Japanese Gay Literature*, ed. Stephen D. Miller and Paul Gordon Schalow (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1996); Margaret H. Childs, "The Tale of Genmu," in *Rethinking Sorrow: Revelatory Tales of Late Medieval Japan* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1991). For the Japanese versions, see Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美, ed. *Taima mandara engi. Chigo kannon engi* 当麻曼荼羅縁起. 稚児観音縁起, *Zoku Nihon no emaki* 続日本の絵巻 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1992).

⁵⁹ Haruo Shirane, "Introduction to Medieval Literature," in *The Cambridge History of Japanese Literature*, ed. Haruo Shirane, Tomi Suzuki, and David Barnett Lurie (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 213.

literature) and were commonly depicted in illustrated scrolls to achieve a wider appeal.⁶⁰

While the authors of these *otogizōshi* works are unknown, they are often thought to have included monks, courtiers, *renga* poets, storytellers, and lay preachers.⁶¹ Given that this genre included many *chigo* tales, it is clear that the theme of male-male love was of interest to various audiences, and that they would have often encountered such tales in a religious setting—such as preaching and proselytizing.

An important strand of *otogizōshi* tales is the *chigo monogatari* genre, an anachronistic label for a collection of stories with *chigo* protagonists who often form erotic and sexual ties with their lover monks. Of particular note is the tale *Aki no yo no naga monogatari*, which is considered the epitome of Muromachi literature as well as the prototype for all other *chigo* stories. *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* tells the story of how the priest Sensai (more commonly known as Keikai) attained awakening through a sexual relationship with a boy. Keikai, a priest of the Enryakuji order on Mount Hiei who has lost his way spiritually, embarks on a pilgrimage to Ishiyama-dera, where he prays before the temple's Kannon image to free him from worldly thoughts and restore his bent toward enlightenment. The following night, a boy of the utmost beauty appears to him in a dream. Thinking that this vision indicated that his vow of dedication would be fulfilled, Keikai returned to Mount Hiei to await the restoration of his faith. But his thoughts were filled with the young boy in the dream, and he longed to see him again. Though an oracle from the god Sannō of Hie Shrine cautioned Keikai not to leave Mount Hiei, nonetheless, Keikai returned to Ishiyama-dera to reveal his heart before Kannon.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 214.

⁶¹ R. Keller Kimbrough, "Late Medieval Popular Fiction and Narrated Genres: *Otogizōshi*, *kōwakamai*, *sekkyō*, and *ko-jōruri*," Ibid., 355.

On his journey back home, Keikai meets a *chigo* of the Miidera order, located at the foot of Mount Hiei, with whom he becomes infatuated. The youth, whose name is Umewaka, is the son of Hanazono, the Minister of the Left. The monk pursues the boy through exchange of *waka* poetry (a common way of courting boys, as we shall see in Chapter 1) and thereby paves the way for a blossoming then passionate romance. But when one night the monk lures Umewaka to escape with him, the boy is kidnapped by *tengu* (mountain goblins), after which the Miidera clergy accuse the Enryakuji for the kidnapping. Ultimately, Miidera resorts to building their own *sanmaya* ordination platform (Esoteric Buddhist ordination), essentially declaring their institutional independence from Mount Hiei (the main ordination platform for Tendai monks, as we have seen.)⁶² This move infuriates the Enryakuji warrior monks, who lay siege upon and subsequently destroy Miidera—which prompts Umewaka to commit suicide. From this tragedy Keikai comes to understand the truth of impermanence, which elicits in him an awakened mind. He later realizes that the *chigo* was, all along, a manifestation of Ishiyama Kannon, a compassionate bodhisattva who revealed herself in the form of the youthful acolyte as skillful means (Skt. *upāya*, Jp. *hōben*) in order to spur Keikai’s enlightenment.

The story ends with the dream revelation experienced by the Miidera monks following these disastrous events. In this they bear witness to a large banquet held by Sannō and Shinra Myōjin, the protector gods of Enryakuji and Miidera, respectively. But given that

⁶² The Miidera (Onjōji) monks appealed for their own ordination platform multiple times during medieval times starting from 1040. This resulted in many armed conflicts between Miidera and Mount Hiei on which the tale *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* is based. See Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 65; Haruko Wakabayashi, “The Dharma for Sovereigns and Warriors: Onjō-ji’s Claim for Legitimacy in Tengu zōshi,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 29, no. 1/2 (2002). For a detailed account of the manifold conflicts between Miidera and Mount Hiei, see Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007), 21-56.

the representative temples of these two gods are archenemies, the Miidera monks are perplexed by the celebration. Shinra Myōjin explains that the gods rejoice because evil deeds and tragedies can often lead to enlightenment.⁶³ The gods reveal that the ravaging war and all its suffering—as well as the supposed suicide of Umewaka, Ishiyama Kannon manifested as a beautiful youth—inspired in Keikai a supreme enlightenment.

The theme of a monk falling in love with a boy who is in fact a manifestation of a divine being is common to many *chigo monogatari* stories. Indeed, in many *otogizōshi* tales the human protagonist himself is a god. In her analysis of the tale, Margaret Childs argues that the central theme of *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* is the idea of impermanence (*mujō*), not male-male sexual relations per se. (I will return to this point in a moment.) While she acknowledges that modern scholars tend to group the *chigo* stories as a self-conscious genre, she sees that as a projection of those scholars' antipathy toward male homosexuality—rather than an antipathy of such felt by the medieval world. She also observes that the *chigo monogatari* “genre” is heterogeneous; some stories also involve surprising renditions of “gender-bending” in the form of cross-dressing or gender-switching. Nevertheless, for the purposes of my discussion, it is less important to delineate the “correct” boundaries of a genre than to acknowledge that a range of medieval Japanese texts dealt with male-male sexuality, and that many were in conversation with one another.⁶⁴

The essential point is that the *chigo monogatari* genre, although fiction, is nonetheless characterized by religious underpinnings and speaks to the *chigo kanjō*

⁶³ This point emphasizes Bernard Faure's claim that transgressions have a way of reinforcing the laws.

⁶⁴ Childs represents a specific moment in Queer historiography, in which there was a trend of “de-sexualizing” various works that predated the modern era, claiming that their sexual connotation rose from obsessive, modernist and homophobic motives. The historical context has changed since Childs wrote her article. Childs, “*Chigo Monogatari*: Love Stories or Buddhist Sermons?”

phenomenon. In her examination, Childs offers extensive discussion of impermanence and salvation as the central themes of these tales. But missing from Childs's analysis is the religious *significance* of the divinities and, thus, their role in the story. Childs acknowledges that Kannon's manifestation as a boy was a recurring theme in *chigo* tales, but she does not point out the implication of Sannō's intervention. As seen above, Sannō is both puppeteer of the play and overseer of events. As we shall see in Chapter 4, both Kannon and Sannō are important divine forces in the *chigo kanjō* ritual; Kannon manifests herself in *chigo kanjō* ritual as *chigo*, and the *chigo* is also deified as Sannō. The importance of the two figures in both *chigo* narratives and in *chigo kanjō* has been acknowledged by Hirota Tetsumichi, who recognizes thematic and doctrinal continuity between the story and the ritual.⁶⁵ Moreover, because most scholars consider *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* to be the archetype of the entire *chigo monogatari* genre, there is a tendency to ignore two earlier stories that center on a *chigo*'s role as an avatar of a deity, namely *Kōzuke kimi no shōsoku* (Kamakura period) and *Chigo Kannon engi* (early fourteenth century), wherein Kokuzō and Kannon, respectively, are the prominent divinities. But the influence of these two stories on later *chigo* narratives should not be overlooked. As such, it is important to emphasize the scholarly legacy of the *chigo monogatari* genre in introducing the peculiar ontological state of the child as a hypostasis of a divine being—a feature that both predates *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* and contributes a pronounced characteristic to other text genres as well.

Of course, other scholars have commented on the religious and socio-historical context of the *chigo monogatari* genre as well. In his book *The Red Thread: Buddhist*

⁶⁵ Hirota Tetsumichi 廣田哲通, *Chūsei Hokkekyō chūshakusho no kenkyū* 中世法華經注釈書の研究 (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1993), 401-15.

Approaches to Sexuality, religious studies scholar Bernard Faure characterizes the *chigo monogatari* “genre” as a “rather crude ideological cover-up for a kind of institutional rape or prostitution.”⁶⁶ In my view this is a rather extreme reading of homoerotic interactions in monasteries. Since the definitions of “rape” are historically contingent, it is necessary to flesh out constructions of consent, or the lack thereof, in the specific context of the medieval Japanese cloister.⁶⁷ Another scholar who explores genre and the issue of abuse is Sachi Schmidt-Hori. Her translation and analysis of *Chigo imamairi* (The New Lady-in-Waiting is a *Chigo*) draws attention to the complexity of this Muromachi-era story, which, though considered part of the *chigo monogatari* genre, deviates from it in terms of both its plot and its focus on “gender-switching” (much like another *chigo monogatari* story, *Torikaebaya Monogatari*).⁶⁸ The story relates the exploits of a *chigo* who falls in love and takes on the role of a gendered female. Though in a relationship with an Enryakuji monk, the *chigo* finds himself smitten with a young noble woman named Himegimi. However, since the *chigo* comes from a relatively lowly background, he is unable to even approach her. In order to

⁶⁶ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 265.

⁶⁷ Margaret Childs has explored some of the problematics of the notion of “rape” in the context of premodern Japan. See Margaret H. Childs, “The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58, no. 4 (1999).

⁶⁸ For a discussion and a translation of the tale, see Sachi Schmidt-Hori, “The New Lady-in-Waiting Is a *Chigo*: Sexual Fluidity and Dual Transvestism in a Medieval Buddhist Acolyte Tale,” *Japanese Language and Literature* 43, no. 2 (2009). For the Japanese, see “*Chigo ima* ちごいま,” in *Mikan chūsei shōsetsu* 未刊中世小説, ed. Ichiko Teiji 市古貞次, Koten bunko 12 (Tokyo: Koten Bunko, 1947), and another version “*Chigo imamairi* 稚児今参り,” in *Muromachi jidai monogatari taisei* 室町時代物語大成, eds. Yokoyama Shigeru 横山重 and Matsumoto Ryūshin 松本隆信 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1981). For a new study on pictorial scrolls of the tale, and renditions of the story and of the scrolls’ dialogic inscriptions (*gachūshi*) in both classical and modern Japanese, see Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎 et al., eds., *Muromachi jidai no josō shōnen X hime (bōi mitsu gāru): “Chigo ima” monogatari emaki no sekai* 室町時代の女装少年×姫 : 『ちごいま』物語絵巻の世界 (Tokyo: Kasamashoin, 2019). For *Torikaebaya*, see Rosette F. Willig, trans., *The Changelings: A Classical Japanese Court Tale* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983); “*Torikaebaya monogatari* とりかえばや物語,” in *Sumiyoshi monogatari. Torikaebaya monogatari* 住吉物語. とりかえばや物語, eds. Misumi Yōichi 三角洋一 and Ishino Keiko 石埜敬子, *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 39 新編日本古典文学全集 (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2002).

capture her heart, he disguises himself as a lady-in-waiting (*imamairi*) newly arrived to her mansion, where he manages to draw her attention. When the *chigo*'s identity is ultimately revealed, Himegimi is sad she cannot give herself away due to the rank discrepancy and the fact she is already betrothed to the imperial heir. At this juncture the *chigo* is kidnapped by *tengu*—a recurrent theme in this genre, as seen in *Aki no yo no naga monogatari*—and Himegimi travels to the forest to save him from their female chief, a *tengu* nun (*ama tengu*). In the end the couple is given sanction to marry, and Himegimi is promised in a dream to attain salvation.

Schmidt-Hori characterizes this story as being of a “secular nature.”⁶⁹ I consider this debatable in a story so rich with religious elements—indeed, in a tale that ends with salvation. Art historian Melissa McCormick has highlighted in her work the tale's pronounced Shugendō (mountain asceticism) components.⁷⁰ We know from Haruko Wakabayashi how *tengu*, though related to Shugendō ascetics, have also been incorporated into Buddhist discourse as the dwellers of the Realm of Māra (*madō* 魔道), a path of transmigration.⁷¹ Undoubtedly, *Chigo imamairi* also benefits from being read as a religious story. Furthermore, considering *Chigo imamairi* as a religious narrative allows us to raise questions about the *chigo monogatari* genre as a whole.

Schmidt-Hori contends that there is nothing abusive in the relationship between the *chigo* and the monk in the story. I see the element of this monk-*chigo* romance as being

⁶⁹ Schmidt-Hori, “The New Lady-in-Waiting Is a *Chigo*: Sexual Fluidity and Dual Transvestism in a Medieval Buddhist Acolyte Tale,” 387.

⁷⁰ Melissa McCormick, “Mountains, Magic, and Mothers: Envisioning the Female Ascetic in a Medieval *Chigo* Tale,” in *Crossing the Sea: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Yoshiaki Shimizu* ed. Gregory Levine (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

⁷¹ Haruko Wakabayashi, “From Conqueror of Evil to Devil King: Ryōgen and Notions of Ma in Medieval Japanese Buddhism,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 54, no. 4 (1999).

included precisely so it can be overthrown and replaced with a male-female configuration. Also of note is the fact that this tale's focus on heterosexual love is an anomaly in the *chigo monogatari* genre; indeed, Melissa McCormick emphasizes how this story was reworked for a female audience and may in fact have been written by a woman. McCormick also acknowledges that the *chigo* is employed for the benefit of a heterosexual male-valued system: "The *chigo* seems ultimately in the service of the patriarchy, recast as the hero of a heteronormative romance, itself dressed up in the guise of female desire."⁷²

To reiterate: Schmidt-Hori claims that there is nothing abusive in the relationship between the *chigo* and the monk, while Faure speaks of the genre's "institutional rape or prostitution." I see Faure as too quick to criticize the agenda of monks; Schmidt-Hori is too lenient. Instead, I propose a middle ground between strict condemnation and romanticization of Japanese male-male sexuality. Given that we can know only so much about this practice, it is important to acknowledge that cases of abuse may have taken place—while also taking into account the sharply different cultural context, which may have allowed room for relationships premised on consent. In support of this theory I offer the following.

In addition to her scholarship on *Chigo imamai*, Schmidt-Hori published a brilliant analysis of the fifteenth-century story *Ashibiki*.⁷³ This tale concerns the *chigo* Wakagimi from the Kōfukuji temple in Tōnan'in and his romantic relationship with the young priest

⁷² McCormick, "Mountains, Magic, and Mothers: Envisioning the Female Ascetic in a Medieval *Chigo* Tale," 130.

⁷³ Sachi Schmidt-Hori, "The Boy Who Lived: The Transfigurations of *Chigo* in the Medieval Japanese Short Story *Ashibiki*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 75, no. 2 (2015). For *Ashibiki*, see "Ashibiki あしひき," in *Muromachi jidai monogatari taisei* 室町時代物語大成, eds. Yokoyama Shigeru 横山重 and Matsumoto Ryūshin 松本隆信 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1973). For an illustrated version, see "Ashibiki あしひき," in *Muromachi monogatari shū (jō)* 室町物語集 (上), ed. Ichiko Teiji 市古貞次, Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai 54 新日本古典文学大系 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1989)

Jijū from Mount Hiei. When the two plan to live together on Mount Hiei, Wakagimi's stepmother cuts his hair, an act that constitutes a rupture in the ontology of the *chigo* that deprives him of his feminine-like gender identity. Devastated, Wakagimi runs away. After several partings and reunions with Jijū, the tale ends with the two reuniting as recluses and achieving rebirth in the Pure Land.⁷⁴

Schmidt-Hori claims that, even though the story is inscribed within the *chigo monogatari* corpus, it can also be linked to a broader category of the “stepchild story.” To her mind, *Ashibiki* is really about the triumph of a stepchild who comes of age by undergoing different ordeals. Building on points made by scholar Hamanaka Osamu concerning the connection between *chigo* tales and the stepchild category,⁷⁵ Schmidt-Hori astutely portrays how the structure of *Ashibiki* actually follows the stepchild-tale model. She also emphasizes the idea that *chigo* were considered sacred beings. In addition, she discusses the cultural meaning of hair, arguing that the long hair of the *chigo* is a marker of sacrality, and that “the severance of the ponytail disrupted Wakagimi's status as a *chigo*.”⁷⁶ (We will also discuss the sacrality of the hair in *chigo kanjō* in Chapter 4.)

Other scholars have identified additional themes in *chigo* tales. In “*Chigo* in the Medieval Japanese Imagination,” Paul S. Atkins emphasizes the motif of suffering and argues that the *chigo* can be seen as a liminal figure belonging to the scapegoat category or

⁷⁴ Rebirth in the Pure Land is an element that was introduced in *Chigo Kannon engi*, as the monk at the end of this story experiences the vision of Kannon with the Pure Land imagery of purple clouds and Amida's retinue or *raigō*. Childs, “The Story of Kannon's Manifestation as a Youth (*Chigo Kannon Engi*).”; Komatsu, *Taima mandara engi. Chigo kannon engi* 当麻曼荼羅縁起. 稚児観音縁起.

⁷⁵ Hamanaka Osamu 濱中修, *Muromachi monogatari ronkō* 室町物語論攷 (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1996).

⁷⁶ Schmidt-Hori, “The Boy Who Lived: The Transfigurations of *Chigo* in the Medieval Japanese Short Story *Ashibiki*,” 315.

“surrogate sacrificial victim,” as theorized by the theorist René Girard.⁷⁷ Atkins argues that the *chigo* absorbed violence from their lover monks so that monastics would not direct their violent impulses toward society in general—thus following Girard’s argument that the violence is inflicted upon the scapegoat so as to cement the ties of society and maintain a harmonious balance. In his article Atkins mentions various types of suffering: kidnapping (*Aki no yo no naga monogatari, chigo imamai*), false accusation (*Hanamitsu*), cutting off of hair (*Ashibiki*), attempted or actual murder (*Genmu monogatari, Ashibiki*), death (*Toribeyama monogatari, Ben no sōshi, Chigo Kannon engi*) and suicide (*Aki no yo no naga monogatari, Hanamitsu*). (Note that these are also listed by Schmidt-Hori.)⁷⁸ Atkins also echoes some of the arguments made by Abe Yasurō regarding references to the suffering of *chigo* found in a wide array of medieval texts. Abe claims that this suffering and violence—found in *chigo monogatari* as well as in many stories about sacred children in medieval Japan—is a “reverse of fate” that allows sacred children to retrieve a lost sacredness.⁷⁹ Additionally, Richard Payne stresses the resemblance between the plot of the story *Aki no yo naga monogatari* to the psychological model of “midlife” as described by thinkers of analytic psychology such as Murray Stein and Joseph Anderson.⁸⁰

Religious studies scholar Bernard Faure has analyzed the *chigo*’s symbolic, social, and sexual roles in his book *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*. In particular Faure has considered the *chigo*’s connection to a manifestation of the god Sannō,

⁷⁷ Paul S. Atkins, “*Chigo* in the Medieval Japanese Imagination,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 3 (2008).

⁷⁸ Schmidt-Hori, “The New Lady-in-Waiting Is a *Chigo*: Sexual Fluidity and Dual Transvestism in a Medieval Buddhist Acolyte Tale,” 386.

⁷⁹ Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998), 207–23.

⁸⁰ Richard K. Payne, “At Midlife in Medieval Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 26, nos. 1/2 (1999): 135–36.

the youthful deity Jūzenji.⁸¹ Faure also discusses the *chigo kanjō* ritual, connecting it to the *Jidō setsuwa* legend, an important homoerotic story.⁸² My own analysis of *chigo kanjō* will further deepen our understanding of the intimate connection between *chigo* and Sannō/Jūzenji in Chapter 4, where I also discuss the ritualized deification of *chigo* as the supreme god Sannō. I will also analyze the *Jidō setsuwa*'s function as a myth to be reenacted in this ritual.

Finally, there is another ritual consecration (*kanjō*) involving young boys that is attached with sexual imagery, studied by Faure. This was an important aspect of medieval Tendai and includes a set of doctrines and rituals known as *Genshi kimyōdan* 玄旨婦命壇, practiced by the Danna-ryū lineage of Tendai. The ritual, dedicated to the god Matarajin, began around the medieval era and became in the early-modern period a target for criticism by the Anraku school for its symbolic sexual language, leading eventually to its demise. It even included a theatrical performance of two boys, Chōreita Dōji and Nishita Dōji,⁸³ who were given the names of vagina and penis each and were seen as representing sexual desire. *Genshi kimyōdan* shares a common ground with *chigo kanjō* since it was also heavily informed by doctrines about sex, celebrated sacred children, and its consecrations dealt with secret teachings about sexual intercourse and procreation. With all of its rich complexity, I decided not to deal with this ritual in this dissertation because *chigo kanjō* and its doctrinal apparatus seem to belong to a different conceptual thread within medieval Tendai. Still, it is

⁸¹ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Bernard Faure, *Gods of Medieval Japan: Volume 2, Protectors and Predators* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016), 299-329. See also William M. Bodiford, "Matarajin: A Dream King between Insight and Imagination," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 16 (2006), and Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, 130-135.

worth noting that Tendai, like Shingon and other denominations, was pervaded by a deep interest in matters of sex, procreation, and embryology. This interest was later extended to male-male sexuality, the subject of my dissertation.

Terminological Issues

I would like to discuss a few terminological and translation issues considering the usage of terms in this dissertation. I often use the term child/boy (*warawa* 童/*dōji* 童子), youth/boy (*shōjin* 少人), and lad (*dōnan* 童男) interchangeably. Let me clarify the reason for the overlapping of these categories. In Chapter 1, I discuss this issue more extensively, and show that whether the term *chigo*, *dōji*, or *warawa* are used, the child is a complex category that covers a broad range of ages and occupations, including junior males who are either “adolescent” or prepubescent, and can be sexual or romantic partners of Buddhist monks. It is important to highlight that even though some of these boys are considered children by today’s standards, sexual relations with people so young were a common practice throughout ancient and medieval Japanese society, regardless of gender and biological sex. Moreover, strangely enough, as we shall see in Chapter 1, some of these categories also encompassed adults.

When it come to the terms “love” and “sex,” there is indication in the texts that I examine that both are relevant. I pay attention to the context in which I use these terms. Love is a term that cannot be easily transplanted into the Japanese context, nor is it clearly detectable in medieval Japanese sources, since the premodern terminology that is used to convey romantic emotions could also have non-romantic connotations such as the case with

omou 想う (to think, to care, to be fond of) and *tashinamu* 嗜む (to like). The word for love can also be rendered for pure technical purposes, like the Buddhist reading of *ai* 愛 (“desire that arises from defilements,” not the modern equivalence of love), or could just be more nuanced and evocative of other emotions such as *itoshi* 愛し (“liking with a tinge of nostalgic sadness”). Buddhist terminology especially contributes to confusion – the word *ainen* 愛念 can be seen in the *chigo monogatari* genre, and it clearly means to be romantically attached to someone, but when you split the characters, both *ai* 愛 and *nen* 念 could have multiple meanings. The latter, for example, can be a thought-moment that arises in the mind, or recitation of a phrase. However, luckily there are some terms that we know for sure refer to loving someone, such as *nenja* 念者– “an adult person that loves another [youth].” We will see that in poetic exchanges there is an obvious discussion of romantic love. In the concluding remarks we will also establish that *chigo kanjō* provides some clues to the fact *chigo* and monks were romantically involved.

Moreover, there are many different terms that designate “male-male sexuality,” some of which are purely based on sexual attraction (*nanshoku* 男色, “the capacity of a male to elicit desire [in the male subject]”) or disciplined appreciations of male-male love such as *nyakudō* (“the way of [loving] youths”), which also elaborate on sentiments and emotions that need to be cultivated between adults priests and junior youths. Some terms are used for diatribe, the word *nyakuzoku* 若俗 (“young fellows”), for example, is used to criticize those who engage in male-male sexual practices, and who by doing so, disrepute the religious establishment. However, it has to be noted that these criticisms are extremely rare. The oath between two partners which promises a monogamous relationship between

the monk and *chigo* is called *chigiri* 契り, but it is often contravened as we shall see in Chapter 1. At any rate, the vocabulary about love and sex between males is heterogenous and changes depending on the philological and cultural context, and I intend to use these terms with the greatest nuance possible, but the reader should be aware that choosing one over the other may be inconclusive.

Finally, I must say a few words on the possible connotations of this study with sexual abuse scandals in the modern-day. Male-male sexual acts in a monastic environment bring to mind the all too frequent sexual abuse cases in Buddhist monasteries and Catholic institutions. I am not going to draw comparison with these cases because they are grounded in a different social and cultural context, and are far removed historically. In cases both past and present, we must recognize and be critical of sexual relations based in unbalanced and exploitative power relations. However, we must also remain conscious of the significant cultural differences that shape practices at different times and places, and refrain from judgments based on our twenty-first century perspectives. It is for this reason that I will not make comparisons to the modern-day period. I have made an effort to discuss the topic in an objective tone and to flesh out the perspectives in medieval Japan. But that is not to say that I approve of the practices being examined. It is my hope that scholarship will continue to shine a light on issues of sexuality and religion, and to help us to learn from their complexities and nuances. Broadly speaking, practices of sexual abuse in medieval Japan were sometimes disparaged by their contemporaries, but for the most part, they seem to have been prevalent and widely accepted. Most importantly, it is imperative to look at how these practices happened throughout history and how they are justified, in order to raise awareness and prevent future mistreatments.

Chapter Overview

This dissertation explores the construction of male-male sexual practices in medieval Japanese Buddhism by looking at the “ritual consecration of acolytes” (*chigo kanjō* 児灌頂), a sexual rite of passage of the Tendai Buddhist school. The figure of the *chigo*, the main protagonist of the ritual, will be examined with a focus on his distinctive ontology, as such is a vehicle through which to assess the sexual understandings of the period. I analyze herein manuscripts of the ritual procedures and doctrinal exegesis of the ritual in order to better understand an initiation that transforms acolytes into divinities—a process that empowers young *chigo* while also enabling monks to reach an awakened state. In addition, the ritual sheds light on the Buddho-Shinto amalgamation strategies of the medieval period. In showing how the ritual elevated the status of the kami above those of the Buddha, I demonstrate that the formulators of *chigo kanjō* strove to highlight the supremacy of kami worship.

In “Chapter 1: Child Acolytes (*Chigo*) and Male-Male Love in Medieval Japan,” I look at different configurations of male-male love in the Middle Ages (tenth to fourteenth centuries). I begin with an overview of the central figure in male-male sexual bonding: *chigo*, pre-adult youths/children living in Buddhist monasteries. Given that *chigo* were children, I survey the multiple understandings of childhood and youths in medieval Japanese Buddhist temples. Looking at the socio-historical context of monk/acolyte relations as they appear in written records, I examine the male child as an ontological state, as a social occupation, and as a sacred being. I show that in the monastic environment an extensive terminology was used for children—and that, in fact, this plurality of terms suggests a fluid

age-category that can be interpreted through multiple theoretical lenses. I elaborate on the children's several roles and functions within monastic communities, and emphasize that some of these were associated with forms of divinization. Thereafter, the bulk of the chapter involves male-male sexual liaisons that took place between older monks and pre-adult acolytes. I explore various such instances by looking at exchanges between monks and *chigo* found in poetry (*waka*), trysts between nobles as depicted in aristocratic diaries (*nikki*), and the genre of children dance (*warawa-mai*) as seen in multiple media. This discussion aims to show that before, during, and after the ritualization of *chigo kanjō*, male-male sexual relationships were not uncommon and had specific configurations in each social and cultural context. It just so happened that some monks saw the necessity of institutionalizing such relationships through the establishment of a dedicated consecration ritual. I conclude that a particular form of sexuality, specifically male-male sexuality, required this rationalization given the wider constellation of significations invested in the *chigo*.

In “Chapter 2: The Consecration of Acolytes (*chigo kanjō*): Introduction to Texts, Authors, Places, and Lineages in Medieval Tendai Seminaries,” I introduce the seven manuscripts of the *chigo kanjō* that I employ in this study and shed light on both the context of their production and the lineages of their authorship. Against the prevailing view that *chigo kanjō* originated in the Eshin school of Tendai exoteric Buddhism, I argue that the chief producers and practitioners of this ritual were Taimitsu lineages (Esoteric Tendai) located in the capital region and stretching all the way to the eastern provinces.⁸⁴ The

⁸⁴ Matsuoka Shinpei 松岡心平, *Utage noshintai: Basara kara Zeami e* 宴の身体：バサラから世阿弥へ (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991); Ibid.; Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, “Jidō setsuwa no keisei: Tendai sokui hō no seiritsu wo megutte (jō) 慈童説話の形成：天台即位法の成立をめぐりて (上),” *Kokugo kokubun*

commentarial literature on *chigo kanjō* includes Taimitsu doctrinal components that can be identified as will be discussed in Chapter 4. I maintain that a central cultic hub of *chigo kanjō* was the Serada area in the Nitta estate (present-day Gunma prefecture). I also elaborate on the history of the institutions where *chigo kanjō* developed, as well as their leading figures; the development of the *dangisho* (seminaries) in which these *chigo kanjō* texts were produced and the rituals performed; and the ways in which *chigo kanjō* texts created “imagined” lineages alongside “real” lineages. Indeed, the production of lineages rendered *chigo kanjō* an orthodox practice through its genealogical ties to Tendai lineages, as well as to kami cults such as Sannō Shinto.

In “Chapter 3: The Ritual Procedures of the Consecration of Acolytes,” I discuss the ritual procedures of the *chigo kanjō* and make an ontological-ritual claim with regards to its multifaceted ritual system. I argue that the *chigo kanjō* ritual conforms to the pattern of *himitsu kanjō* (“secret initiations”), a larger category of *kanjō* that aims to collapse the distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal. The *chigo kanjō* practitioners strove to disrupt the dichotomy between the *chigo* (conventional/conditioned) and the three beings with which the *chigo* becomes united: the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana, the bodhisattva Kannon, and the kami Sannō (absolute/unconditioned). As we shall see, the *chigo*’s identity as either Mahāvairocana (Dainichi) or Kannon is enacted not only by consecration and the absorption of special esoteric knowledge, but also through ritual gestures and various embodied practices. To shed light on these salvific processes, I will lay out the various

国語国文 53, no. 8 (1984); “Jidō setsuwa no keisei: Tendai sokui hō no seiritsu wo megutte (ge) 慈童説話の形成：天台即位法の成立をめぐりて（下）,” *Kokugo kokubun* 国語国文 53, no. 9 (1984); “Sokui-hō no girei to engi: Chūsei ōken shinwa ron no kōzō 即位法の儀礼と縁起：中世王権神話論の構想,” *Sōzō no sekai* 創造の世界 73 (1990).

stages of the ritual in detail: its structure and participants, the icons and mandalas, its preparatory practices, the adornment of the hall, the entrance into the hall, and finally the initiation itself.

In “Chapter 4: Doctrinal Foundations and Bodily Transformations in the Consecration of Acolytes,” I make an epistemological-doctrinal claim regarding both the sort of knowledge that constitutes the main doctrine of the *chigo kanjō* ritual and the doctrinal foundations that undergird the consecration. We shall see that, though the ritual offers an array of doctrinal positions that at first sight may seem disjunct, in fact they all integrate as a coherent legitimizing force for sexual intercourse with *chigo*. The main doctrine transmitted to the initiand is a secret transmission I call “Kannon’s secret teaching.” This secret transmission condenses the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* as presented in the “Universal Gateway Chapter” (Chapter 25). The creators of the *chigo kanjō* made concerted efforts to connect this teaching to a homoerotic set of legends known as *Jidō setsuwa* (the Tale of Jidō), which I examine in detail. Furthermore, I will discuss the doctrinal elements and their implications for the ontological and social status of both the *chigo* and the monks involved in the ritual. In addition to “Kannon’s secret teaching,” these doctrinal elements also include original enlightenment thought (*hongaku*), Taimitsu (Esoteric Tendai) teachings, and Buddha-kami amalgamation (*shinbutsu shūgō*) ideas and practices. That is, from a doctrinal point of view, the ritual served a pragmatic salvific goal: to sanctify the *chigo*, identifying him with one of the loftiest divinities of the Japanese pantheon. By the means of this initiation, *chigo* served as a mediator between this world and the other world, allowing monks to partake in divine powers.

I conclude the examination of *chigo kanjō* by reconsidering the social function of *chigo kanjō*. I discuss how future study might illuminate the social role of the ritual, which was the introduction and indoctrination to the young novices of routine sexual activity practiced outside the initiatory context. This is evident from the description of commonplace sexual acts and behavioral routines discussed in the two *Shōgyō hiden* manuscripts. I will then validate the claim made in Chapter 1 and demonstrated in Chapter 4: that the social construction of male-male sexual relations in *chigo kanjō* was intergenerational and asymmetrical in that the junior partner typically fulfilled the role of a recipient in anal intercourse. Moreover, I will point out that future studies should look at the acolytes' alleged feminine identity, and examine the contradiction whereby the *chigo*—though deified—was nonetheless the subordinate feminized counterpart in the relationship. *Chigo kanjō* functioned to legitimize not only sexual acts with youths as sacred activities, but also to ground the sexual and gendered ontology of the *chigo*. The ritualization of male-male love provided a distinctive textual discursive space that was devoid of women, and yet, it still included a “feminine” presence, embodied by the *chigo* himself through Tendai-Esoteric formulations. Both the androgyny of the *chigo* and the different doctrinal propositions that characterized him positioned the acolyte between the masculine and the feminine poles—the result of a wide spectrum of not explicitly articulated gendered subjectivities. The *chigo* may have been biologically male, but his gender was not so easily distinguishable, even for his contemporaries.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ A concrete example for this phenomenon can be seen in the *chigo* tale *Kōzuke no kimi no shōsoku*, where a monk sees a figure from a far and wonders “Is he a *chigo* or a woman?” This question or confusion is not uncommon in medieval Japanese texts. “Kōzuke no kimi no shōsoku 上野君消息,” in *Kokubun Tōhō Bukkyō sōsho. Dai 2-shū* 國文東方佛教叢書. 第2輯, ed. Washio Junkei 鷺尾順敬 (Tokyo: Tōhō Shoin, 1928), 5.

I hope it will be clear that the *chigo kanjō* ritual was not some aberration or an exception in the social landscape of medieval Japanese society. It was not an unorthodox practice that was created by a few degenerate or errant monks. It was a phenomenon that connected different aspects and threads of medieval Japanese society, both originating in lay and religious circles. In order to reify social hierarchies, the ritual brought together advanced doctrinal speculation, ritual action, performing arts, etiquette, and gender norms. Therefore, we can gain a better understanding of medieval Japanese society, and especially the dynamics of power, through the study of this ritual.

Chapter 1:

Child Acolytes (*Chigo*) and Male-Male Sexuality in Medieval Japan

This chapter combines two inquiries. The first is straight-forward: how male-male sexuality within the confines of medieval Buddhist monasteries was construed and envisioned in medieval Japan (tenth–sixteenth centuries). The second is more obscure: How can we make sense of “the child.” These two questions are inextricably embodied in the figure of the *chigo* or *dōji*, boys that lived in monasteries and became the object of sexual fascination for monks. The *chigo* has often defined by scholars as a young acolyte involved in sexual affairs with an older Buddhist priest. Yet, the notion of the child in medieval Japan was determined by cultural determinations, not biological age as would be the case beginning in the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, the child-category was fluid, with boundaries dictated by social, occupational, and religious factors. Accordingly, some of the young acolytes that populate the pages of my primary sources would not be considered children by today’s standards, in Japan or elsewhere.⁸⁶ Also, since records of Buddhist monasteries were almost exclusively confined to male-male social interactions, the focus of my study will be male children, rather than female.⁸⁷

Original sources that convey this history contain a varied vocabulary and conceptual constructions, and include a wide range of terms and meanings that refer to “male-male sexuality” or “pederasty,” phrases that allow us to discuss the subject, literally, in its own

⁸⁶ See Sabine Frühstück and Anne Walthall, eds., *Child’s Play: Multi-Sensory Histories of Children and Childhood in Japan* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), whose introduction and chapters problematize the various parameters of what has constituted a child throughout Japanese history.

⁸⁷ This leaves the treatment of female children to a future study.

terms. And so, hereafter, I will pay particular attention to a plurality of male-male sexual configurations, each grounded in a particular historical and social context.

Similar to the plurality of terms, there is also a diverse range of references to engagements in male-male love that are scattered throughout multiple discursive realms and genres. Three genres in particular are central to the male-male sexual culture that developed in Buddhist temples. These include textual poetic exchanges, written diaries of the aristocracy, and erotic encounters in performing arts settings. Poetry is key to the analysis because the poetic communication is both the first undisputable written evidence of male-male love in Buddhist temples, and the chief means for forming erotic ties between an elder monk and a young boy from the ancient period to the late medieval era. Next, aristocratic diaries are crucial for the current investigation since they uncover the kind of language that was used to describe these sexually charged meetings between males and the dynamics of secrecy and openness involved in describing them. Moreover, aristocrats were also closely engaged with monastics and recorded their own impressions on sexual matters at temples. Finally, children's dances performed in Japanese temples, is a central setting for the infatuation with boys and allowed to present them as sacred beings. The emergence of *chigo* on the theatrical stage drew the attraction of monks and it is probably safe to assume that it nurtured their fascination with *chigo*. Many people of noble birth, including monks, samurai, and courtiers, flocked en masse to behold the splendor and magnificence of the dance. Performances offered an opportunity to meet *chigo* in person and exchange poems with them in order to captivate their hearts. Poems are also significant in this context. The performative aspect reveals that the attraction to *chigo* on the part of monks was both, erotic and spiritual in the sense that the performing *chigo* were channeling the gods into their

bodies, and sometimes even appeared as gods themselves. All of these different instances of male-male love even are variably described, each projecting a distinctive configuration of male-male eroticism.

The first task involves, of course, examining the multiple ways to conceptualize of childhood and different categories of youths in medieval Japan. Focusing in particular on the socio-historical context of monk/acolyte relations as they appear in temple records, I examine different religious categories of the child: as an ontological state (*warawa*), as a social occupation (*chigo*, *ue-warawa*, *dai-dōji*, etc.), and as a sacred being (*dōji*, *chigo*). This analysis will subsequently allow me to illuminate male-male sexual liaisons that took place between “children” and older monks in monastic complexes.

Children in Medieval Japanese Monasticism

Temple society in medieval Japan employed broad terminology for children, and each child-category can be read using multiple theoretical lenses. Rather than a unified system of child taxonomy, scholarship generally points to an ontological state of the *chigo/dōji* that was fluctuating, intermediate, and negotiable.⁸⁸ This conceptual fluidity is evident in a wide corpus of sources ranging from medieval prose and temple records to ritual manuals and doctrinal treatises. The figure of the *chigo/dōji* was always in flux, and his image was contested based on various semiological considerations. But where did the category of the acolyte come from, and what are its conceptual boundaries?

⁸⁸ Irene Lin, “Traversing Boundaries: The Demonic Child in the Medieval Japanese Religious Imaginaire” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2001).

In the *Man'yōshū* (ca. 760s), Japan's oldest anthology of poems, the most commonly used terms for children are, perhaps unsurprisingly, *ko* 子/児 and *kodomo* 子等/児等. However, these terms are not used for their literal meaning, but rather as affectionate term for a female lover or a wife used from the perspective of an adult male.⁸⁹ Such usage is similar to the way the word “baby” is used in English as a term of endearment. Another usage of the word for child (*ko*) means “attendant” or a person inferior in rank (as in the obsolete American English “boy”),⁹⁰ but also a being fully dependent on his parents for sustenance.⁹¹ These two meanings, a lover and an inferior dependent person, would be associated with children from the ancient era and until well into the early-modern age. In fact, in the case of a female child, many words that denote juvenile family members are used until this day in a similar fashion. For example, *ko* (young girl) can also refer to a pretty woman, *musume* (daughter) to a girl more generally, and *onēsan* (sister) to a sex worker.

The etymological origin of *chigo* is *chichigo*, or “an infant who sucks from the breast.”⁹² Thus, the word “*chigo*” contains the original meaning of “newborn.” “*Chigo*” first appears in documents from the tenth century, such as *Taketori monogatari* (“Tale of the Woodcutter,” tenth century), *Utsuho monogatari* (“Tales of the Hollow Tree,” tenth century), and *Wamyōshō* (“The Dictionary for Japanese Names [and things] Classified and Annotated,” 938). In later medieval writings, the usage and structure shifted, and infants were clearly seen as preceding the *chigo* category. “*Chigo*” is written with two Chinese

⁸⁹ Katō Osamu 加藤理, “*Chigo*” to “*warawa*” no seikatsushi: *Nihon no chūko no kodomotachi* 「ちご」と「わらは」の生活史：日本の中古の子どもたち (Tokyo: Keiō Tsūshin, 1994), 1–5.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 7. Katō also notes the common usage of child and wife together, which suggests that children were seen as one fraction of a pair of individuals positioned within the household. See also pages 8–9.

⁹¹ Ibid., 10.

⁹² Moriyama Shigeki 森山茂樹 and Nakae Kazue 中江和恵, *Nihon kodomoshi* 日本子ども史 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2002), 13.

characters that denote child, yet the signification was not limited to young children. Instead, “*chigo*” became a monastic category designating pre-adult male attendants who performed various chores at temple. This category included both children and adolescents who attended their superiors. The *chigo* also partook in important religious activities and the performing arts, and these two fields were not often mutually exclusive. For example, *chigo* sometimes functioned as mediators between this world and the other world, a kind of a human replacement for the *yorimashi* (a “Shinto” receptacle into which kami descend). In the *warawa-mai*, the Children Dances at Daigoji temple in Kyoto, held as part of the *Sakura-e* ceremony, the *chigo* dancers were possessed by gods and delivered oracles. As noted previously, *chigo* also functioned as sexual partners for adult priests, a point I will discuss more in depth below. Thus, medieval texts attached occupational, religious, and social (including sexual) meanings to the denomination of *chigo*. Rather than simply being a biologically determined age-category, the monastic child became a social category and was recognized as a specific rank in the lower stratum of Buddhist society.

However, *chigo* was not the only term used to describe children. As Tsuchiya Megumi demonstrates in her research on social stratification in medieval monastic society, the acolytes were also called *dōji* (child) and *warawa* (child). Her extensive study on child categories in monastic cloisters (*in* and *bō*) using historical documents from temples such as Daigoji and Ninnaji in Kyoto, brought Tsuchiya to elaborate a typology of child monastics as follows: upper-child (*chigo* 児/*uwarawa* 上童), middle-child (*chūdōji* 中童子), and great-child (*daidōji* 大童子). Tanaka Takako also explains that the *chūdōji* and *uwarawa* were generally pre-adult males from the age of twelve to sixteen. With regards to *chigo*, the precise boundaries of age are underexplored, but Tanaka concludes (most likely based on

Kuroda Hideo's general discussion on the boundaries of childhood)⁹³ that *chigo* are young boys over the age of seven who correspond roughly to adolescents.⁹⁴ Tsuchiya shows that *chigo* were children of the *seigake* 清華家 ministers (officials who could be promoted to the highest position of chancellor). They were also children of administrators (*bōkan* 房官), bureaucrats who ran the *monzeki* 門跡 (temples governed by an imperial prince) and came from a noble rank. At the lower echelons, *chigo* were sons of the North Guards (*hokumen* 北面) that served the Retired Emperor (*In* 院), as well as children of the warrior elites or samurai. Tsuchiya argues that the *chigo* were roughly parallel to the upper-child rank. For example, according to one extant record from Ninnaji temple, although *chigo* of the Omuro (prince-abbot) of Ninnaji were children of administrators, they are also mentioned as performing the role of *uewarawa* in processions. Children who came from families with lower social rank such as North Guards or samurai were able to outrank their fathers as *chigo*, as seen by their relatively loftier position in processions.⁹⁵ *Chigo* carried out errands for higher officials, for example, for the Omuro of Ninnaji, but they were also skilled artists. They learned to play strings and winds instruments for gagaku (*kangen* 管弦), composed Japanese and Chinese poems and attended upon their poetry parties (*shikae* 詩歌会 and *wakae* 和歌会), respectively they also made ritual offerings at important Buddhist ceremonies such as the Nehan-e 涅槃会, Goeiku 御影供, and Kanbutsu-e 灌仏会.⁹⁶

⁹³ Tanaka Takako 田中貴子, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2004).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁵ Tsuchiya Megumi 土谷恵, *Chūsei jūin no shakai to geinō* 中世寺院の社会と芸能 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2001).

⁹⁶ Tsuchiya, *Chūsei jūin no shakai to geinō* 中世寺院の社会と芸能, 141–48.

The *chūdōji*'s role was similar, but much more limited in scope. The middle-child (also called *warabe* 童部) was a high servant, and his role was to embellish Buddhist processions with his lavish physical appearance and to set the table at meals and banquets (*baizen* 陪膳). *Chūdōji* also served as banner holders (*jibandō* 持幡童) in the ritual consecration of *denbō kanjō*.⁹⁷ Similar roles were also shared by the *chigo*. Both the *chigo* and *chūdōji* who participated in *denbō kanjō* as banner holders had to come from a social rank comparable to that of both the *ajari* (officiant priest and master of the ceremony) and the initiate.⁹⁸ In some cases, *chigo* and middle-child/*warabe* were grouped together under the rubric of *suihatsu* 垂髮 (“dangling hair”) based on their shared sartorial style perhaps because they share similar occupational functions.⁹⁹ It is important to remember that *chūdōji* were of humble birth in concrete terms, hence their limited functions in ceremonies.

The third category of *Daidōji* (great-children) composed of attendants and errands differed significantly from the previous two. The *Daidōji* refers to an adult male who wore the hairstyle and attire of a monastic child, so they were not properly children according to our modern understanding.¹⁰⁰ As for as their occupational roles, *daidōji* were lower servants. They worked as “offerers” who made offering in ritual halls, holders of the slip of paper (*kanpu* 官符) during *haidō* 拜堂 (inauguration of abbots ceremony), packhorse drivers, the “heads” of child troupes in Buddhist ceremonies (*kashira yaku* 頭役), and errand boys.¹⁰¹ The fact that they were adults meant that an acolyte could, theoretically, wear the hairstyle

⁹⁷ Hashidate Ayako 橋立亜矢子, “*Chigo no sei* 稚児の性,” *Tōkyō joshi daigaku kiyō* 東京女子大学紀要論集 60, no. 2 (2010): 58.

⁹⁸ Tsuchiya, *Chūsei jūin no shakai to geinō* 中世寺院の社会と芸能, 148–51.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁰⁰ Tanaka, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世, 9–10.

¹⁰¹ Hashidate, “*Chigo no sei* 稚児の性,” 58.

of a child and live in a state of perpetual childhood. The implication is that these individuals were outside of standard age progression. A broader category for adults who dressed themselves as a child was *dōji-sugata*, who are often depicted in medieval illustrated scrolls or *emaki*.¹⁰² Tsuchiya argues that the representative figure of the “adult-child” phenomenon was the *daidōji*, and contests Kuroda’s emphasis on the *dōdōji*.¹⁰³ The *dōdōji* also served as an attendant and, especially in Buddhist assemblies (*daihōe* 大法会) and consecrations (*kanjō* 灌頂), in the role of delivering flower baskets (*keko* 花籠) for flower-scattering. Scholars agree that it is more likely that an elder monk determined the acolyte’s fate as an eternal youth. By becoming a child forever, the *daidōji* could remain in a fixed ontological and social position, but also pay the price of occupying a low social status.¹⁰⁴

Social background, rank, and age determined an acolyte’s social designation in the monastery. For example, the *chigo/dōji* were normally students sent from noble families and warrior elites. The *chūdōji* and *daidōji* were sometimes similar to the attendants of low-ranking families or *sanjo* 散所. The *uwarawa* possessed the most social prestige and were allowed to both serve adult priests in general and study under an individual monk.¹⁰⁵ This situation granted easy access to erotic intimacy with the priest.¹⁰⁶ It goes without saying that the age of these different child groups determined their physical appearance. Normally, when acolytes reached a certain age (fifteen, seventeen, or eighteen) they underwent a rite of passage called *genbuku* 元服 through which they formally became adults. In this ceremony,

¹⁰² Kuroda Hideo 黒田日出男, *Kyōkai no chūsei, shōchō no chūsei* 境界の中世・象徴の中世 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1986).

¹⁰³ Tsuchiya, *Chūsei jūin no shakai to geinō* 中世寺院の社会と芸能.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 152-58.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Tanaka, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世.

they would replace their unlined robe (*hitoe*) or short-sleeved garment (*kosode*) with adult's outfit. Also, their juvenile haircut would be cut and braided, and they would usually be bestowed with a hat (*eboshi*). Following this rite of passage, the new adults would leave the monastic precincts and rejoin their aristocratic or samurai families. Alternatively, they could choose to stay in the monastery, shave their pates, and take the tonsure. According to Tanaka, until the *genbuku*, the acolytes embodied a cultural identity of childhood through their aesthetic appearance—putting on makeup, adorning themselves with exquisite attire, and wearing long hair. In artistic depictions, they are recognizable by their plump faces, groomed eyebrows, and lavish outfits, all reminiscent of women.¹⁰⁷ Although scholars have also noted the acolytes' alleged androgynous quality and their stylistic proximity to women in the arts,¹⁰⁸ they were still distinctive in appearance and cannot be simply aligned with femininity. In all of their different categories, then, monastic children had a set of embodied practices that differed from those of monks.

In addition to the embodiment of “quasi-feminine” characteristics, children also possessed a “non-human” quality. Intellectual historian Kuroda Hideo even claims that monastic children held a position outside the boundaries of the human hierarchy.¹⁰⁹ Through an analysis of various textual and pictorial sources, Kuroda posits that in medieval times children were primarily or even exclusively seen as an ontological category distinct from ordinary adult men (*hito*). According to Kuroda, medieval society can be divided into four categories: children (*warawa*), ordinary adults (*hito*), monks (*sōryo*), and outcasts (*hinin*),

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Abe, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの; Kuroda, *Kyōkai no chūsei, shōchō no chūsei* 境界の中世・象徴の中世.

¹⁰⁹ Kuroda, *Kyōkai no chūsei, shōchō no chūsei* 境界の中世・象徴の中世, 224.

each can be distinguished by visual markers. For example, the child usually sports dangling hair, whereas the “person” (adult man) has his hair in a topknot (*motodori*) and wears the *eboshi* hat or *kanmuri* crown common to bureaucrats and other state officials. As mentioned earlier, a male child could enter “adulthood” through a rite of passage, when his haircut was altered and the *eboshi* placed on top of his head. Indeed, a child would undergo several sartorial transformations before becoming an adult.

In some cases, children were even thought of as similar to “outcastes,” or defiled people, such as lepers. In the medieval encyclopedia *Chiribukuro*, the young child (*shōni*) was categorized among the “non-people” (*hito naranu mono*), but this does not necessarily mean that he was as inferior as the adults belonging to the “outcastes” category.¹¹⁰ Historian Amino Yoshiko notes that adults who used children’s names, such as *yase-dōji* (workers who carried palanquins and coffins of aristocrats in Northern Kyoto) were connected with *hinin* due to their association with impurity and alleged descent from demons¹¹¹ and that any adults who used the name or form of children, including cow-herders (*ushikai*), were believed to be possessed magical powers and to be related to the world of kami and buddhas.¹¹² Because of this confusion between the sacred and profane nature of various individuals labeled as a children (*warawa*), it is easy to understand why Kuroda Hideo sees them as “either lacking essence or as intermediary beings.”¹¹³ This also has to do with the fact that children were considered to precede gender differentiation. As Kuroda notes, they

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 187–88.

¹¹¹ Amino Yoshihiko, *Rethinking Japanese History*, trans. Alan S. Christy (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 2012), 190–94.

¹¹² Amino Yoshihiko 網野善彦, *Chūsei no hinin to yūjo* 中世の非人と遊女 (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2005), 94–117.

¹¹³ Kuroda, *Kyōkai no chūsei, shōchō no chūsei* 境界の中世・象徴の中世.

are not yet male or female. Abe Yasurō calls them “middle-sex” entities.¹¹⁴ The folklorist Sudō Yoshihito argues that since child mortality was very high in premodern times, the *chigo*’s soul was seen as able to freely roam from this-world to the next-world, and that the same liminality has characterized his gender identity. Sudō notes that the *chigo*’s gender straddles between the threshold of masculinity and femininity, and his identity may be typified as middle-sex or androgynous (*ryōsei guyū* 両性具有).¹¹⁵ In other words, one can see the *chigo/dōji* as intermediary beings, both in their gender and ontology, and who are continuous with the divine realm.

Kuroda argues that children, together with old men and women, were considered sacred precisely because they stood on the fringes of society and were never seen as fully adult (men). They belonged to the order of chaos, rather than that of *nómos* (“the norm”). Children in particular carried a significant symbolical weight as sacred entities. The word for children—*dōji*—has a religious origin and some non-Japanese etymological connotations that associate children with sacrality. The term is a translation of the Sanskrit word *kumāra*, which alludes means both prince and child. This term has a pre-Buddhist history, originally appearing in Hindu sources. The feminine equivalent is *kumāri*, which designates a virgin in the Indian Tantric tradition. Although an understanding of purity was maintained in the transition to Japanese culture, the Hindu tradition also speaks of *kumāra* as an epithet for Skandha/Vishakha, the god of war, representing violence, whose cult was also carried to Japan in the form of wrathful youths.

¹¹⁴ Abe, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの, 221.

¹¹⁵ Sudō Yoshihito 須藤義人, “‘Kodomo bunka’ no kisoteki kenkyū: Minzoku sairei no naka ni miru kodomo-zō no shosō 「子ども文化」の基礎的研究--民俗祭祀の中にみる〈子ども像〉の諸相,” *Okinawa daigaku jinbun gakubu kiyō* 沖縄大学人文学部紀要 8 (2006). Also cited in Hashidate, “*Chigo no sei* 稚児の性.”

In the Buddhist context, the term still carries a divine connotation. In Japan, the *kumāra* or *dōji* figure is identified with a cohort of boy attendants who accompany Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Buddhist wisdom kings (*myōō*). For instance, the Fudō Myōō (and sometimes the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī) is depicted in texts and iconography as being surrounded by eight attendant acolytes, and in many cases commonly flanked by the two *dōji* Kongara and Seitaka. Similarly, the goddess Benzaiten has fifteen or sixteen boy attendants as her retinue. Another type of *dōji* is an avatar in child form of buddhas and bodhisattvas, such as Vajra Kumāra (*Kongō dōji*) and Konpira (Sk., Kumbhīra, *konpira-dōji*). *Dōji* can also stand for child manifestations of kami and buddhas, such as Hachiman *dōji*, the young form of the important bodhisattva-god Hachiman. In addition, there are many cases in which *dōji* refers to divinities who exist solely as “children,” neither an attendant or a child-version of another being. These “standalone” children are suprahuman beings, for example, Shuten *dōji*, Sessen *dōji*, and Uhō *dōji* (although the latter is clearly a child and conceived as a Buddhist version of Amaterasu, the sun goddess). Other deities are known as children without the labeling of *dōji*, such as Jūzenji 十禪師, a sexual god and a placenta deity that is a manifestation of the god Sannō, the tutelary deity of Tendai Buddhism at Mount Hiei and Hie Shrine, as well as in the *chigo kanjō* ritual complex (as will be discussed in Chapter 4). There are also other terms for sacred children, for example *wakamiya* 若宮, the child mediums at Kasuga and Hachiman shrines. The “standalone” children form a pantheon of heavenly beings with close connection to the acolyte.

Kuroda Hideo presents additional labels for children in monastic settings such as *warawa* (“children”) and *dōji-sugata* (“adults who were forced to wear children’s clothes”). *Dōji-sugata* sometimes appears in sources as *dōgyō*. *Warawa* is the Japanese pronunciation

for the first Chinese character of the compound *dōji*, essentially meaning children. Unlike *dōji*, which has a Buddhist etymological background, *warawa* is a category devoid of any Buddhist meaning, denoting messiness or laughter. Nevertheless, *warawa* is still commonly used to refer to monastic children, as we have seen earlier with the term *uwarawa*. The monastic child was not only an attendant and an apprentice, but also ritual and performative functions in the performing arts. The dancing *chigo* were termed *dōbu* or *waramai* and, according to Kuroda and Tsuchiya, many became the love objects of monks. Some acolytes joined various thespian performances, such as Noh, Ennen, Fūryū, where they fulfilled religious roles as mediums that summon kami.

Although the categorization of children remains fluctuating, the sexual configuration of acolytes (and that of male-male love in Buddhist monasteries), is relatively stable in textual and artistic representations. The *chigo* is mostly known for its association with male-male love from the *chigo monogatari* genre, a corpus of tales that recounts love affairs between *chigo* and other males (and less often, females too). Many of these relations are described as taking place between adult monks and young acolytes, and end with the demise of the *chigo* or his separation from the loved monk, while monks enjoy the fruits of awakening resulting from a sexual encounter with the *chigo*-turned bodhisattva. Abe Yasurō noted that the trope of the suffering or dying *chigo* is a common thread running through the *chigo monogatari* and *setsuwa* genres.¹¹⁶ The sexual construction of male-male sexual relations can also be found outside of this genre, and is also asymmetrical. In sexual relations, the junior partner typically fulfilled the role of insertee in anal intercourse.¹¹⁷ The

¹¹⁶ Abe, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの.

¹¹⁷ Hosokawa Ryōichi 細川涼一, *Itsudatsu no Nihon chūsei* 逸脱の日本中世 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2000); Tanaka, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世.

structure is clear in several medieval sources, such as *Chigo no sōshi* (*The Scroll of Acolytes*, Muromachi period), and *Nyakudō no Kanjinch* (*The Solicitation Book of the Way of Youths*, 1482), and the sexual ritual *Chigo kanjō* and its commentaries. We will now examine other sources to determine whether this configuration of male-male love is uniform across various media.

Poetic Exchanges in Monastic Society

Even the deers
atop the autumn peaks in Takasuna,
distant as they are from
any concern of mine,
long to find their wives¹¹⁸

These are the words of the monk Nōin 能因 (1050–1058), whose inability to quell his erotic desire is further frustrated by gazing at wild deers, which unlike members of the monastic community, are able to freely act on their craving for mates. Buddhist monks were expected to renounce their sexual urges and lead a life devoid of carnal pleasure based on the assertion that sex would reinforce attachment and mental defilements, which constitute impediments to awakening. In reality, there was close communication between monks and women in monasteries and it probably offered opportunities for sexual mingling,¹¹⁹ but in general, male-female romantic ties were not welcomed warmly in a monastic environment,

¹¹⁸ 秋はなを
わが身ならねど
高砂の尾上の
鹿も妻ぞこふらし。

Kubota Jun 久保田淳 and Hirata Yoshinobu 平田喜信, eds., *Go shūi wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集, Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai 8 新日本古典文学大系 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994), 95.

¹¹⁹ Monks often interacted with female patrons who commissioned images and sutras, as well as with women who attended as audience in Buddhist sermons, ceremonies and other events. Women were also given the opportunity to be initiated as disciples. The great masters Myōe, Dōgen, and Eisō accepted noble women as disciples to their community, which ensured frequent interaction between male monks and women. Lori Meeks argues that women were offered greater inclusion under the tutelage of these three masters (however, with the compromise of annulling their noble status that allowed social superiority over monks), rather than Tendai and Shingon schools which espoused a less egalitarian stance towards women and allowed them to only act as lay worshippers. For female patrons in courtly society, see Lori Rachelle Meeks, *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 77–81, and for the inclusion of female disciples see 112–16. Also, in the Kamakura period monks tended to marry women and establish households. Nishiguchi Junko 西口順子, *Onna no chikara: Kodai no josei to Bukkyō* 女の力：古代の女性と仏教 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1987), 183–218.

and in mountainous temples women were even barred from entrance on theological grounds (*nyonin kekkai* 女人結界). If we take a look at the earliest sources for romantic poetry, it is evident that there was more lenient attitude toward male-male love than there was for heterosexuality. Imperially commissioned anthologies actively denounce monks who sexually mingle with women,¹²⁰ whereas poems that praise carnal relations with young boys are not treated with similar admonitions. Moreover, there is a wide spectrum of male intimacy exhibited in this period. The close relationships between males in this period did not only take on an erotic dimension; as suggested by literature scholars Paul Schalow, Gustav Heldt, and Jack Stoneman, courtly poets enunciated their affection in a *homosocial* manner, namely, same-sex relations were handled with friendly warmth and driven by an impetus for male companionship, and sometimes lacked a sexual component.¹²¹ As Martin Huang comments on late imperial China: “The very need to insist on the distinctions between friendship and male-male sexual relationship, however, should alert us to the possibility that male friendship and male sexual love sometimes did overlap or coincide.”¹²² In principle, we should not treat friendship and romantic love as mutually exclusive realms when there are some poems that show intersections between the two. However, in the

¹²⁰ Koyama Satoko 小山聡子, “*Jiin shakai ni okeru sōryo to chigo: ‘Ōjōyōshū’ rikai wo chūshin to shite* 寺院社会における僧侶と稚児：『往生要集』理解を中心として,” *Nishogakusha daigaku ronshū* 二松学舎大学論集 50 (2007).

¹²¹ Stoneman notes that the word *koi*, today used for love, had actually a wide-range of meanings and is closer in its meaning to “longing.” Many poems that use the word have been interpreted to be romantic, even when in some cases there is a clear homosocial character. Jack Stoneman, “Between Monks: Saigyō’s *Shukke*, Homosocial Desire, and Japanese Poetry,” *Japanese Language and Literature* 43, no. 2 (2009): 439. See also Paul Gordon Schalow, “Five Portraits of Male Friendship in the Ise monogatari,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 60, no. 2 (2000): 445-88; *A Poetics of Courtly Male Friendship in Heian Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007); Gustav Heldt, “Between Followers and Friends: Male Homosocial Desire in Heian Court Poetry,” *U.S.-Japan Women’s Journal* 33 (2007). For homosociality more broadly, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

¹²² Martin W. Huang, “Male-Male Sexual Bonding and Male Friendship in Late Imperial China,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22, no. 2 (2013): 317.

monastic context there are ample instances of poems of erotic and sexual nature. Therefore, the type of vague and ambiguous poetry in which there is no clear demarcation between companionship and eroticism will not be examined in this chapter; we will focus only on clear-cut cases of erotic and sexual intimacy.

During the middle Heian period, anthologies and *setsuwa* (didactic tales) contain poetic compositions which unmistakably describe male-male romances between a monk and a boy. While in some cases the poems' content is not disclosed to other people apart from the addressee, Tanaka Takako claims that male-male love poetry was also commonly exchanged in *uta-awase* 歌合 competitions that were public events, and therefore, poetry was not a private matter.¹²³ Moreover, Tanaka notes that there are many poems that are confined to male-male erotic bonding, and that the courting style they describe is similar to that of heterosexual love. For example, the trope of “peeking beyond the fence,” or perhaps in modern parlance “peeping Tom,” which is often seen in heterosexual contact, was also common in monk and *chigo* interactions.¹²⁴ Following similar arguments made by Kuroda Hideo, Tanaka points out that the *chigo* is molded in the image of a woman, and that in terms of poetry this is shown in certain themes as well as in the order of composition. For example, in some poems, at the conclusion of a night tryst when the monk is done with his affairs, he leaves in the middle of the night, which makes the *chigo* unhappy. This trope of mid-night separation (*yogare* 夜離れ) is very common in male-female poems, where it is constantly the woman who is dissatisfied with the early departure. Moreover, it is always the case that a male begins the poetic exchange; a woman must never dispatch a poem before a

¹²³ Tanaka, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世, 21.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

man addresses one to her. The same applies to *chigo*, Tanaka claims, who are never the initiator of the conversation.¹²⁵ We will see below that this is indeed the prevalent model for male-male poetry, but I will also show that there are exceptions to this norm.

As described by Tanaka, the terms of the relationship in a monk-*chigo* poetic interaction are unequal and structured by asymmetric power relations in which the male monk has the prerogative of making the first move, and of deciding to part ways. The power dynamics and complexities of male-male love is exhibited by early instances of male same-sex poetry that was composed in a monastic context. A typical setting for the first encounter is a religious ceremony or a dance performance. The *Shūi wakashū* 拾遺和歌集 (1004) includes the following preface and poem:

Seeing a child watching the purification at Daijōe, I sent him a poem the next day:¹²⁶

among the crowd that
came to see
the gorgeous purification
it was only you who
stole my heart¹²⁷

The poem, written by the monk Kan'yū 寛祐 (?-?),¹²⁸ relates how he is captivated by the looks of a *chigo* attending the purification ritual (*misogi* 禊) of the Daijōsai 大嘗祭, the

¹²⁵ Ibid., 22–23.

¹²⁶ 大嘗会の御禊に物見侍ける所にわらはの侍けるを見て、又の日遣はしける Komachiya Teruhiko 小町谷照彦, ed. *Shūi wakashū* 拾遺和歌集, Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai 7 新日本古典文学大系 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990), 195.

¹²⁷ あまた見し豊の禊の諸人の君しも物を思はする哉 Ibid.

¹²⁸ The monk Kanyū theorized the installation of a *goma* altar for holding a love ritual (*keiai-hō* 敬愛法) with Aizen-myō as the central icon. See Yamamoto Hiroko 山本ひろ子, “Chūsei ni okeru Aizen Myō-hō: sono poritikusu to erosu 中世における愛染明王法：そのポリテイクスとエロス,” *Nihon no bijutsu* 日本の美術 376 (1997): 91.

royal enthronement ceremony. Even though the monk is witnessing an event with such overwhelming religious and kingly grandeur, the boy steals the show. Notice that the monk catches a sight of the *chigo* during a ritual, in which the boy was probably one of rituals and the performers. Poetic sources reveal much about male-male love in the context of rituals and the performing arts, and vice-versa, as we will see in the Child Dance section below. The child is in a subservient position in the social ladder is approached by a monk of a higher clerical rank. There is status and age discrepancy, which characterizes many of the male-male poetic exchanges in medieval Japan.

In addition to poems that note the beauty of boys, there are also poems that lament separation. A later anthology, the *Go-shūi waka-shū* 後拾遺和歌集 (1086), includes twenty allusions to priestly male-female romance, and three that focus on male-male eros. One of those poems was written by a Tendai scholarly monk, Hengu 遍救 (962–1030), who studied at the Seiryō-in 静慮院 cloister of Mount Hiei and eventually was promoted to Senior Priest General (*daisōzu*):

Because the boy I cared for went to the Miidera and I heard not a word from him for so very long, I wrote a poem:¹²⁹

I wonder, are the pure waters at the Minezaka barrier muddied?
I do not see the figure of the person who entered them.¹³⁰

In this poem, Hengu reports that a child he fell in love with left for Miidera, most likely from Enryakuji on Mount Hiei given the affiliation of the author, and never came back again. Enryakuji and Miidera were centers of competing lineages of Tendai, Sanmon and

¹²⁹ 思ひけるわらはの三井寺にまかりて久しく音もし侍らざりければよみ侍ける Kubota and Hirata, *Go shūi wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集, 241.

¹³⁰ 峰坂の関の清水やにごるらん入りにし人のかげの見えぬは *ibid.*

Jimon respectively, and as bitter rivals, they had also historically engaged in fierce wars with one another. One war became the setting of the *chigo* tale *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* (“A Long Tale for an Autumn Night”), in which the infatuation of monk and *chigo* is described to be the cause of the conflict.¹³¹ In this context, a *chigo*’s departure from Enryakuji to Miidera could cause so serious lineal and personal disputes. In the poem, the monk’s love is likened to pure water, but when the boy vanishes from the temple grounds, these waters get muddy. This could be an allusion to the mind-heart of the monk, who used to be pure and now being obstructed by mental afflictions such as the feeling of longing and desire. Alternatively, this may relate to the heart of the *chigo*, perhaps implying that pure love for that monk is fading. According to Koyama Satoko, the story suggests that the child fell in love with another monk. Here we see again another trope that is quite similar to poems concerning male-female bonding that deal with unrequited love.¹³² Tanaka Takako comments about this poem, if one were to hide the name of the author, there would not be any difference between this male-male love poem and common poetic exchanges between men and women.¹³³ Gustav Heldt makes a similar assertion about Heian period poetic exchanges between men: “men expressed their desire for each other in a language that was indistinguishable from the one they used toward woman.”¹³⁴ At any rate, even though the relationship was unequal in terms of status, which implied that older monks had more power and authority, the *chigo* were able to withdraw and find a new lover in place of their elder.

¹³¹ *Aki no yo no nagamonogatari*, in Childs, “*Chigo Monogatari*: Love Stories or Buddhist Sermons?”

¹³² Koyama, “*Jiin shakai ni okeru sōryo to chigo*: ‘*Ōjōyōshū*’ rikai wo chūshin to shite 寺院社会における僧侶と稚児：『往生要集』理解を中心として,” 30.

¹³³ Tanaka, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世, 20.

¹³⁴ Heldt, “Between Followers and Friends: Male Homosocial Desire in Heian Court Poetry,” 3.

The theme of a love that remains unreciprocated or one-sided is also common between monks and *chigo*. Ei'en 永縁 (twelfth century) expresses a similar sentiment:

This is a poem I wrote on a moonlit night when I summoned
the boy Tazu, but he did not appear,

If this moon should pass above the head of he who waits,
How I wish to see his presence in my tear-soaked sleeve¹³⁵

Monks wept when their lovers departed and never showed up again. The poem by Ei'en communicates the anticipation that monks had to endure when they expected their *chigo* to arrive, and also the sense and awareness of false hope. Chūkan 仲寛, a monk at the rank of supernumerary junior priest (*gon shōsōzu* 権少僧都) writes a poem with similar sentimentality to his lover boy Miwakamaro 弥若まろ:

After you rose and departed
leaving me in that mournful bed,
I watch the moon listlessly¹³⁶

¹³⁵ たづ (田鶴) といふわらはを、よびにつかはしたりけるに見えざりければ、
月のあかりし夜によめる
権僧都永縁

待人の大空渡る月ならば
ぬるる袂に影は見てまし

See the *Kin'yō Wakashū* (1124/1127) compiled by Minamoto Toshiyori 源俊頼 (1055–1129). *Kin'yō wakashū. Shika wakashū* 金葉和歌集. 詞花和歌集, ed. Kawamura Teruo 川村晃生, Kashiwagi Yoshio 柏木由夫, and Kudō Shigenori 工藤重矩, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 9 新日本古典文学大系 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989), 129.

¹³⁶ 権少僧都仲寛

おき別れむなしき床にひとりみてつれもなくなく月を見る哉. In *Kōga* 興雅, “Ansen waka-shū 安撰和歌集,” in *Zoku gunsho ruiju. Wakabu* 續群書類従. 和歌部, ed. Hanawa Hokinoichi 塙保己一 and Oota Toshiro 太田 藤四郎 (Tokyo: Yagishoten, 2013), 199.

This poem reflects an unexpected scenario. A monk from a relatively high rank weeps in his bed because his *chigo* lover has departed, probably after sexual intercourse. Here, the monk is the one who is abandoned. Moreover, the exchange began with the boy sending a letter, and the poem above is in fact a response to a query sent by the boy. This is another break in the conventions outlined by Tanaka above, according to which a monk must initiate the conversation. There are other poems that deal with the momentary nature of love and the departure of the boy. One was written by Keisen 慶暹 (993–1064) who was appointed to the high rank of a Vinaya master (*gon no risshi*) and eventually became the abbot (*chōri* 長吏) of Onjōji 園城寺. In his poem, Keisen bewails the fact a boy did not contact him for a very long time, hinting that he had left him for another monk, and reflecting on his ongoing yearning to the child.¹³⁷ Another poem from the Kamakura period collection *Nara no ha wakashū* 檜葉和歌集, written by the monk Zōe 増恵, describes his disappointment upon hearing his loved child, who was also his disciple, had run away to another monk. In this case, Zōe sends a poem not only to the child, but directly to the man who had taken him away from him, Mon'ō 文王 of Tōhoku-in chapel. In the appeal to Mon'ō, Zōe expresses resentment over the fact the vow he had taken with the boy was in vain and had dissipated quickly just like “the dew on the grass.” It was not uncommon for a *chigo* to act on his own initiative and leave the monk who courted him if he was unsatisfied.

What can we learn from these poetic correspondences? First, romantic poetic exchanges between monk and *chigo* were a cross-sectarian phenomenon. Both Tendai and Shingon monks were engaged in poetic production and were equally active in

¹³⁷ Kubota and Hirata, *Go shūi wakashū* 後拾遺和歌集, 242.

communicating their feelings to young *chigo*. Some of the poetry above was created by Tendai-affiliated monks, and there are poems written by Shingon priests from Daigoji temple in the anthology *Zoku mon'yō wakashū* 続門葉和歌集 (early fourteenth century) and the *Ansen wakashū* 安撰和歌集 referenced above. Second, monks were eager to make the boys their long-term partners. There are even cases in which monk and boy lovers take vows (*chigiri* 契り) to solidify and formalize their romantic bonds, and when they are broken this could lead to emotional distress (usually on part of the monk). Third, while male-female poetic exchange may be seen as a simulacrum of male-female one, there are deviations from this model. This perhaps has to do with the fact the *chigo* is not entirely feminine¹³⁸ Finally, the themes of “parting” and the “transitory nature” of love is reiterated in many poems. Margaret Childs has emphasized that the theme of impermanence was a major trope in Muromachi fiction concerning *chigo* (*chigo monogatari*). We should note that the theme also finds a place in poetic exchanges and that it is perhaps reflective of a bitter-sweet historical reality, in which relationships with *chigo* were temporary and far from ideal for monks. That is, rather than exclusively reading out literary motifs about the suffering of *chigo*, it is also important to emphasize that historically, *chigo*-based relationship also brought despair to the elder monastic partners.

Poetry constitutes a creative license on the concerns of a particular moment. Poems also reflect the affective-force field of a given period. In medieval period Buddhist monasteries, such included monks' affectionate longings for the who had slipped away from their grasp and, thus, hurt their feelings. However, the anthologies that record these (grown-

¹³⁸ Tanaka Takako claims that the *chigo*'s gender is “neither male nor female, but a middle one.” Tanaka, *Seiai no Nihon chūsei* 性愛の日本中世, 39.

up men's) sentiments remain largely silent on the boys' feelings. What did they think about their likely subordinate roles in such relationships? Did they feel exploited, emotionally, sexually and possibly in other ways? Were they desperate to escape, or hopeful to find a kinder partner elsewhere? Were notions of freedom and self-determination utterly alien to them? Tanaka has alerted us to the fact the relationships between monk and *chigo* were hierarchically structured—between a superordinate and subordinate or a subject and object—much like men's relations to women.¹³⁹ Accordingly, the poems discussed above are authored by high-ranking monks. They are senior priests or teachers who fall in love with their own disciples, some are abbots of major monasteries, and others are even, quite ironically, Vinaya preceptors who are supposed to enforce adherence to the monastic precepts, the very rules that forbid sexual acts. At the same time, these various opportunities for *chigo* to depart or escape should remind us that *chigo* sometimes managed to free themselves and flee from their master. Yet, even this freedom was likely limited. It is probably safe to assume that most *chigo* who escaped found themselves trapped by another elder monk, who would yet again compel the *chigo* to do his bidding.

The poetic evidence for such instances of male-male sexual bonding we just discussed dates from a time that is relatively quiet about homoeroticism. Koyama posits that since other significant imperial anthologies such as *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 and *Gosen wakashū* 後選和歌集, do not include homoerotic poetry, the practice of male-male love did not flourish until the Kamakura period (thirteenth century), and during the preceding Heian period it was considered more of an “open-secret.”¹⁴⁰ The Noh essayist Shirasu Masako

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Koyama, “*Jiin shakai ni okeru sōryo to chigo: ‘Ōjōyōshū’ rikai wo chūshin to shite* 寺院社会における僧侶と稚児：『往生要集』理解を中心として,” 31.

takes a more romanticized approach in historicizing male-male love. Shirasu claims that the heyday of *chigo* is from the Insei period, up until the Muromachi period. After the Muromachi period, Shirasu claims, the interest in romantic male-male love begins to decline gradually until modern times and shifts to prostitution.¹⁴¹ Moreover, some scholars perceive the wealth of information about male-male love in the Muromachi period to be indicative of the corruption of Buddhism at the time. Tsuji Zennosuke argued that monks in the Muromachi period (fourteenth to sixteenth centuries) were depraved (*daraku* 墮落) and he lists several reasons for this, including drunkenness of monastics, increased violence and rebellions, and also *nanshoku* 男色 (“male-male eros”). Tsuji focuses on the figure of the *kasshiki*, a boy acolyte in Zen monasteries who announces the schedule of meals. Tsuji shows that the *kasshiki* was an object of infatuation and that the monks’ obsession with his figure resulted in several governmental legislations that regulated the capacity of monastics to apply the boy with cosmetics (it was assumed that boys were more attractive if they wore makeup).¹⁴² According to Shirasu, in the Edo period (seventeenth to mid-nineteenth century), the *chigo* was no longer a romantic partner, but became an apprentice that had to be educated and imparted with knowledge about etiquette and the performing arts as a young disciple. As she puts it, men no longer see in him an emotional or physical partner.¹⁴³ Taking into account the research of Gregory Pflugfelder concerning the increased literary engagement with male-male eros in the Edo period, its boosted popularity and

¹⁴¹ Shirasu Masako 白洲正子, *Ryōseiguyū no bi* 両性具有の美 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1997).

¹⁴² Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助, *Nihon bukkyōshi: Chūsei* 日本仏教史：中世, 10 vols., vol. 6 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1944), 310-72.

¹⁴³ Shirasu, *Ryōseiguyū no bi* 両性具有の美.

consumption, and the rise of consumer market for “the way of youths,”¹⁴⁴ the argument about a declining interest in these practices cannot be taken seriously. Quite on the contrary, during the Edo period male-male love shifted from the monastic and samurai spheres into the public space more than ever before. But an argument about moral decline may be accepted given the commercialization and commodification that took place as part of an urban culture of male-male sexual prostitution and the appearance of such figures as the *yarō* (male actor) and the *kagema* (male prostitute).¹⁴⁵ At any rate, *chigo* were already apprentices and they were also sold as commodities in medieval Japan, but human-trafficking and prostitution was probably not as common as in the subsequent Edo period. Debates about the “golden-age” of male-male love are highly subjective and romanticized; as they usually distort the historical evidence, they should be avoided.

Going back to Koyama’s assertion that male-male love was understood as an “open-secret” in the Heian period, we shall now see that this understanding is reflected in the accounts recorded in the diary of the regent Fujiwara no Yorinaga (1120–1156).¹⁴⁶

Diary Disclosures

¹⁴⁴ Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*; Paul Gordon Schalow, “Introduction,” in *The Great Mirror of Male Love* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

¹⁴⁵ What is more interesting, however, is the argument about “desexualizing” *chigo* in the Edo period. The male gaze does in fact shift more prominently to youthful male actors in the Edo period, and the *chigo* become less appealing for the popular reader. Yet, monks are still captivated by *chigo*, as the mid-nineteenth century *senryū* saying goes “beautiful women are disposed to castles, beautiful men to temples.” 美女は城 美男は寺を傾ける. *Senryū* dated from the 1830s.

¹⁴⁶ Minamoto Junko characterizes homosexuality in Japanese Buddhism as “a matter of *honne* and *tatema*, for the subculture openly permitted homosexuality.” Minamoto identifies parallels between dominant culture and *tatema* (public face/outward display/façade) on the one hand, and between subculture and *honne* (true intentions/underside) on the other. These dynamics may have played a role in Fujiwara no Yorinaga’s diary. See Minamoto Junko and Hank Glassman, trans., “Buddhism and the Historical Construction of Sexuality in Japan,” *U.S.-Japan Women’s Journal. English Supplement* 5 (1993): 109.

I shall now take a look at a different medium, diaries (*nikki*) and a different social context, male-male relations that took place outside the monastic communities, namely, courtly society. It has long been established by Kuroda Toshio, that in the medieval period the aristocracy and the monastic realms were closely connected. Ever since the decline of the centralized Ritsuryō state and the loosening of its control over private estates in the tenth century, Japanese rulership was exercised through a “power bloc system” (*kenmon taisei* 権門体制). The polity was structured around a coalition of blocs which included temple-shrine complexes (*jisha* 寺社), noble society (*kuge* 公家), and warriors (*buke* 武家) as separate ruling elites who had their own headquarters and relied on one another’s influence and authority in order to govern the state.¹⁴⁷ Also, the aristocracy used different terminology for their romantic encounters, which allow us to better flesh out the conceptualization of male-male love at the time.

The diary with the richest descriptions of male-male love belongs to Fujiwara no Yorinaga (1120–1156), who was born into the sub-lineage of the Fujiwara house, the Sekkanke, a collateral house of the imperial regents. Yorinaga climbed to the top of court hierarchy to become the Minister of the Left (*sadaijin* 左大臣) and is mostly remembered as the perpetrator of the Hōgen rebellion (1156) which broke out due to hereditary disputes over imperial accession, and eventually lead to the Genpei War (1180–1185).

Fujiwara Yorinaga wrote extensively on his sexual exploits, but these remain relatively understudied. Studies on Yorinaga have instigated deep discussions over the nature of male-male love and its influence on social structures. In a pioneering study, Tōno

¹⁴⁷ Kuroda Toshio 黒田俊雄, *Nihon chūsei no kokka to shūkyō* 日本中世の国家と宗教 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975).

Haruyuki highlighted that Yorinaga's sexual prowess won over the hearts of diverse groups of people, from noble elites (*kuge*) to lowly servants (*zōshiki* 雑色). Even though there did not seem to be any status-based regulations for these relationships, Tōno Haruyuki stresses that master-servant relations were prevalent in Yorinaga's affairs and courts society as a whole.¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, we cannot ignore that there were also relationships between people of equal status, a point on which I will expand below. Gomi Fumihiko claims that male-male erotic bonds were closely enmeshed in the cloistered emperor politics of the Insei period. For Gomi, many of the disputes that took place between Yorinaga and other men, including the rivalries that preceded the Hōgen rebellion (1156), originated in personal insults emerging from male-male romantic intrigues. Gomi also contends that while sexual affairs with female consorts and court ladies were "dispersed and unbound," those with males were concentrated and took place behind closed doors, and were limited to the confines of courtly society.¹⁴⁹ Fukutō Sanae takes issue with this assumption and maintains that male-male love spread beyond courtly society as seen from its prevalence in samurai culture during the latter medieval period.¹⁵⁰ Naturally, we can add here the monastic sphere as another important locus of male-male erotic liaisons, based on numerous instances seen in texts and a rich poetic discourse that predated Yorinaga's exploits.

¹⁴⁸ Tōno Haruyuki 東野治之, "Nikki ni miru Fujiwara Yōrinaga no nanshoku kankei 日記にみる藤原頼長の男色関係," *Hisutoria* ヒストリア 84 (1979).

¹⁴⁹ Gomi Fumihiko 五味文彦, *Inseiki shakai no kenkyū* 院政期社会の研究 (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1984), 438.

¹⁵⁰ Fukutō Sanae 服藤早苗, "Seiai no henyō: Chūsei seiritsuki wo chūshin ni 性愛の変容: 中世成立期を中心に," in *Onna to otoko no jikū: Onna to otoko no tanjō, kodai kara chūsei e* 女と男の時空: 女と男の誕生—古代から中世へ, ed. Kōno Nobuko 河野信子 and Tsurumi Kazuko 鶴見和子 (Tokyo: Fujiwara Shoten, 1998), 213.

The references to male-male love in Yorinaga's *Taiki* journal are numerous, and give away some of the contours of male-male sexuality at the time. Several entries also provide a glimpse of monastic society from Yorinaga's point of view, who was then a very powerful politician. In one entry, Yorinaga writes that in 1142 (Kōji 1) he visited the celebration of the Issai-kyō ceremony at the Byōdōin at Uji. Emperor Toba and his consort Kayanoin also attended the event. He notes that the Prince-monk Kakuho of Ninnaji temple (also known as Kōya Omuro) was present as well and that he had beautiful boys for romantic partners. Kakuho's two child dancers Jirō and Shichirō, with whom he was intimate, participated in *warawa-mai* (Children Dance) performance of Bugaku.¹⁵¹ Jirō, who swayed to the tunes of the Ryōō piece "was loved [by Kakuho] because of his beautiful features,"¹⁵² and Yorinaga reports that his "dancing moves were so elegant that they drew everybody's attention."¹⁵³ Jirō was a son of the Bugaku dancer Koma no Mitsutoki, and so he did not originate from the higher ranks of aristocracy. According to Komatsu Shigemi, this scene shows that while many *chigo* were of noble birth, some of them came from a lowly background, and yet, were still hired owing to their stunning beauty.¹⁵⁴

This episode is important for understanding another of Kakuho's love affairs, his infatuation with the brother of Jirō, Koma no Noriyasu (1122-?). According to the historical chronicle *Honchō seiki* 本朝世紀 (1150-1159), Kakuho loved Noriyasu so much that he made him the adopted son of a Minamoto samurai who worked as a Palace Guard

¹⁵¹ 仁和寺宮童二人、舞龍王二郎、納尊七郎。Fujiwara Yorinaga 藤原頼長, *Taiki* 台記, 3 vols., vol. 1, *Zōho Shiryō taisei* 23-25 増補史料大成 (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1965), 63. This passage is discussed by Tsuchiya, *Chūsei jūin no shakai to geinō* 中世寺院の社会と芸能, 248.

¹⁵² 以美貌有寵云々。Fujiwara, *Taiki* 台記, v. 1, p. 63.

¹⁵³ 今日舞、進退優美、万人属目。Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美, *Nihon emaki shūkō* 日本絵巻聚稿, 2 vols, vol. 1. (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989), 552-53.

(*hokumen*) of Retired Emperor Toba, essentially bestowing on him samurai status. Kakuho had then forced him to take the “coming-of-age” ceremony (*genbuku*), which made Noriyasu an adult and also freed him from the bondage of being a child dancer. The reasoning behind these initiatives was that Kakuho wanted to have his beloved child around him as an attendant.¹⁵⁵ However, as the *Honcho seiki* further shows, later on Noriyasu submitted a request to change his family name back to Koma, consciously demoting himself to the status of a performer. Tsuchiya Megumi suggests that this change of heart happened because of the alluring dancing scene at Byodo-in described in Yornaga’s diary, which led Kakuho to fall in love with another boy, Jiro, and pay no longer attention to Noriyasu.¹⁵⁶

The story of Noriyasu is a testament to how male-male love affairs can boost one’s social standing, but it is also suggestive of how *chigo* were at the mercy of their adult lovers regardless of their promotion in status. Diaries also show that in the worst cases, children were treated as property. This is attested by Hosokawa Ryochi¹⁵⁷ in his discussion on Jinson 尋尊 (1430–1508), the abbot of Daijo’in monzeki of the Kasuga-Kofukuji complex in Nara, and his peculiar relationship with a boy who ended up committing suicide (Hosokawa’s findings are based on the diary entries of Jinson in the *Daijo’in jisha zōjiki*). Jinson came from an aristocratic background; He was the son of the famous minister Ichijo Kaneyoshi (or Kanera, 1402–1481). According to Hosokawa, Jinson was able to secure the ownership of a child commoner (*senmin* 賤民) named Aimitsumarū by signing a *mibikijō* (payment slip) in 1467 that gave Jinson full ownership over the boy, who was offered for purchase by

¹⁵⁵ Fujiwara Michinori 藤原通憲, *Honcho seiki* 本朝世紀, Kokushi taiki (Tokyo: Kokushi Taiki Kankōkai, 1933), 445.

¹⁵⁶ Tsuchiya, *Chūsei jiin no shakai to geinō* 中世寺院の社会と芸能, 249–50.

¹⁵⁷ Hosokawa, *Itsudatsu no Nihon chūsei* 逸脱の日本中世, 75–79.

his own father at the age of twenty-one.¹⁵⁸ Aimitsumarū was the son of a Sarugaku performer and belonged to the rank of *sanjo* (low-rank wandering performers). Aimitsumarū became a monk at the age of twenty-six in 1472, which was quite late at the time. After succumbing to an illness, he eventually killed himself in 1474 at the age of twenty-eight. Based on this account and another passage written by Jinson, Hosokawa asserts that the old age of Aimitsumarū made Jinson become uninterested in him, and this may explain his suicide. Also, Hosokawa sees the position of the *chigo* in male-male erotic relationships on unequal footing and characterizes these as having the dynamics of a master-servant relationship. However, the situation might have been even worse than that. Muraishi Masayuki shows that children were incorporated as collateral/security in medieval human-trafficking contracts. That means that in some cases, children were considered even secondary to a commodity, and could become hostages to ensure the purchase of other “goods” (in this case people). Muraishi claims that the role of children as collateral is based on a general perception of children that conceptualized them as “non-people” (*hito naranu mono*),¹⁵⁹ a view that is supported by Kuroda Hideo as seen in our earlier discussion. Going back to the story of Aimitsumarū, this incident was not the only case in which a boy under the tutelage of Jinson abruptly put an end to his life. Aichiyo-maru, the son of a temple administrator, came to Jinson in 1475 when he was fourteen and lived with Jinson until the age of nineteen, when he took the “coming-of-age” ceremony (*genbuku*) and became a full-fledged adult. In 1481 he became the owner of an estate in Sakai and when he became

¹⁵⁸ Paul Atkins discusses the story of Jinson and Aimitsumarū in breadth. See, Atkins, “*Chigo* in the Medieval Japanese Imagination.”

¹⁵⁹ Muraishi Masayuki 村石正行, “‘Warawa’ ga urareru koto 「童」が売られること,” *Nenpō sanda chūsei shi kenkyū* 4 (1997).

thirty-seven, he killed himself for reasons that remain uncertain. It is possible that Aichiyo-maru put an end to his life also because he lost favor with Jinson due to his old age.

Much like Jirō and Noriyasu from Yorinaga’s diary, Aimitsumaru belonged to the world of performing arts; his father was a low-ranking drummer in Noh. Here, however, he is treated as a commodity that can be bought out to anyone who is interested, and he is indeed subjected to human-trafficking. An important difference from Noriyasu’s case is that Aimitsumaru was not forced to become an adult and immediately lose his “childhood.” Rather, he lived with the status of *ōchigo* 大児 (“Great *Chigo*,” another terms for *daidōji*) until the age of twenty-six and kept the “hanging-tufts” hairstyle (*suihatsu*) so intimately tied to *chigo*. That is, monks were also able to extend the “social longevity” of the child as long as they saw it fit. Moreover, monks were also able to get rid of *chigo* when they were beyond their age-group of acolytes. It is likely that a fair share of *chigo* theatrical performers came from humble beginnings. Forming an unequal class-based relationship did not skew the overall structure of male-male intimacy, which was already lopsided due to age discrepancy.

As established thus far, diaries can become a rich source for extrapolating the social reality and sexual construction of male-male love. From Yorinaga’s account, it seems that males from the same age-group formed relations with one another. In one entry, Yorinaga reports that deep at night of the seventh day of the second month in 1142, he had borrowed the robes of a lowly servant and went to see Fujiwara no Tadamasu of Kazan’in (1124–1193, he calls him Urin 羽林, a term for a guard of the Third rank¹⁶⁰), who was at the time

¹⁶⁰ 七日、丙申、先參本院見參、次參新院見參、謁或羽林深夜退出 Fujiwara, *Taiki* 台記, v. 1, p. 73.

nineteen years old, while Yoronaga was twenty-two. He reports that “they chatted outside the gates of the palace and played with one another,” and describes this as a thoughtless act on his part.¹⁶¹ On another night, they were finally able to consummate their love. Yoronaga comments that they met in the palace and had sexual intercourse. He adds: “I finally fulfilled the wish I have had for so many years.”¹⁶² While this may sound to us like a fulfillment of romantic love, since the phrase appears several times and upon the conclusion of sexual acts, the wish that Yoronaga refers to probably relates to a sexual consummation of their relationship, rather than romance. On a different occasion, Yoronaga met Tadamasu late at night and again had sex with him in a secret place that Yoronaga comments “nobody knew.” Yoronaga expresses his delight over this event. However, once he gets back home, he meets another Palace Guard (of the fourth rank) with whom he then slept.¹⁶³

As this suggests, life at the imperial palace could be very promiscuous, but it was also coated with secrecy. Trysts are often held late at night and in unknown places, and the names of individuals are not listed. Yoronaga instead uses the terms for the ranks of his lovers, and only through cross-examination with other entries can we glean the identity of some of the people with whom he sleeps. Furthermore, Yoronaga often writes that “nobody knew” about these affairs” or describes them in an ambiguous manner such as “strange affairs.” Jack Stoneman contends that this relationship between Tadamasu and Yoronaga was secretive for two reasons: “their proximity in age (Yoronaga was twenty-three and Tadamasu

¹⁶¹ 深更、借着下人狩衣、向或羽林、門外語、具遊放。Ibid., 62.

Tōno, “Nikki ni miru Fujiwara Yoronaga no nanshoku kankei 日記にみる藤原頼長の男色関係,” 16.

¹⁶² 今夜於、内辺会交或三品、伴三品兼衛府、年来本意遂了。Fujiwara, *Taiki* 台記, v. 1, p. 70. See Tōno, “Nikki ni miru Fujiwara Yoronaga no nanshoku kankei 日記にみる藤原頼長の男色関係,” 16–17.

¹⁶³ 次参新院見参後謁或人、彼三位衛府、遂本意、可喜々々、不知所為、更闌帰宅与或四品羽林会交。Happened on 康治元年（1142）11月23日。Fujiwara, *Taiki* 台記, v. 1, p. 78.

was nineteen) and the proximity and elevated nature of their ranks (Yorinaga was second-rank and Tadamasa third-rank).” According to Stoneman, the relative clandestineness and the critical language that is used suggest that “male-male sexuality was condoned when it coincided with existing power and/or age differentials, but was frowned upon when it extended horizontally among high-ranking aristocrats of similar position, rank, and age.”¹⁶⁴ The fact that Norinaga had sex with so many palace guards is not surprising given the historical evidence. *Sonpi bunmyaku*, a genealogical record of the fourteenth century, lists several members of the Northern guard as the “retired emperor’s Lover Boys” (*in no gochōdō*), which seems to suggest that this social group was not uncommonly found in affectionate relationship with other male patrons.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, while it is important to acknowledge the secretive nature of these sexual meetings, Yorinaga was open about his emotions as he wrote about his desires and their fulfillments in the numerous entries of his diary.

The second person that Yorinaga slept with on the previously mentioned night, was Minamoto no Narimasa. While the first lover Fujiwara no Tadamasa was a courtier, Narimasa was from a samurai family. Yorinaga writes about Narimasa in another entry in 1155 that they were involved in a “strange affair.” Tōno Haruyuki claims that this is another reference to sexual intercourse, as many other entries of a sexual nature are described similarly. Narimasa was a retainer (*kashin* 家臣) and, according to the historical record *Imakagami*, had also formed intimate relationship with his lord, Fujiwara no Tadazane,

¹⁶⁴ Stoneman, “Between Monks: Saigyō’s *Shukke*, Homosocial Desire, and Japanese Poetry.”

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 430.

when he worked as his attendant.¹⁶⁶ On the fifth day of the second month of 1143 (Kōji 2),¹⁶⁷ a palace guard came at around 10:00 p.m. and had a very long and enjoyable conversation with Yōrinaga. They then engaged in “excessive blowing” (*ransui* 濫吹). Tōno Haruyuki claims that the term *ransui* stands for “chaos,” and it is indeed used commonly by Yōrinaga when he writes about his male-male sexual escapades. But the actual meaning of this term is “feigning to blow [the flute]” and originates in the Hanfeizi.¹⁶⁸ The term refers to the notion of sexual excess, but also correlates the act of pretending to play the flute with the act of fellatio. Moreover, while Yōrinaga had sex several times with his lover Narimasa, he had also relied on him as a “go-between” to get intimate with other lovers. Narimasa was not an exclusive partner, nor were any other of the men Yōrinaga writes effusively about.

Therefore, it seems that male-male love in aristocratic society in the late Heian period was more fluid than in the monastic world. First, the notion of exclusivity of partners did not apply. Moreover, an ideal of romantic love did not seem to be the driving force behind the relationships, which mostly satisfied sexual urges. Yōrinaga may have fallen for certain men, but he quickly replaced them with others. In addition, Yōrinaga himself admits that he was not proficient in writing *waka*, which was the chief medium for sending love poems from one aristocrat to another (also in heterosexual relations). Rather, Yōrinaga

¹⁶⁶ Tōno, “Nikki ni miru Fujiwara Yōrinaga no nanshoku kankei 日記にみる藤原頼長の男色関係.” See Imakagami: 成雅の君とて、知足院入道大殿、寵し給ふ人に御座す Sekine Masanao 関根正直, ed. *Kōtei imakagami dokuhon* 校定今鏡読本, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Tokyo: Rokugōkan, 1896), 314.

¹⁶⁷ 二月、五日、癸亥或羽林、卿、来、亥終、良久言談、有濫吹、人不知。Fujiwara, *Taiki* 台記, vol. 1, p. 85.

¹⁶⁸ The term *ransui* 濫吹 has its origins in the *Hanfeizi* story about Nanguo who pretended to play the flute: 齊宣王使人吹竽，必三百人，南郭處士請為王吹竽，宣王說之，廩食以數百人。宣王死，湣王立，好一一聽之，處士逃。 See Huaichuan Mou, *Rediscovering Wen Tingyun: A Historical Key to a Poetic Labyrinth* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 156–57.

excelled in *kanshi*, Chinese poetry which was almost always written by men.¹⁶⁹ One wonders whether Yorinaga intentionally or unconsciously espoused a male-centered and a hyper-masculine identity because of his fascination with men. At any rate, he did not opt to use the common medium that was utilized for sending romantic poems at the time but chose the more straitlaced and classical style. Finally, in aristocratic male-male love there was no strict and rigid concern with age, nor were there limitations posed on partners based on rank differential.

By contrast, monastic male-male love was intergenerational, and overall asymmetrical, and generally posed status-based restrictions. Contact frequently took place between an adult male monk and a young boy, and probably more so often between a person from a superior class and an inferior one. The status superiority over the *chigo* had to be maintained. Also, relationships were ideally conceptualized as monogamous. Vows were taken to cement the ties between both parties and to ensure that monks or *chigo* would not commit infidelity. However, the social reality did not obey such norms. Both monks and *chigo* usually found other lovers, and their respective partners were extremely unsatisfied at that, which sometimes led to serious repercussions such as suicide on the part of *chigo*. Moreover, monks had complete control over the body and fate of the *chigo* (if *chigo* were purchased as a commodity then all the more so) as long as he stayed under the rooftop of the monk's monastery. This means that even when the *chigo* became an adult, the monk had the choice over whether to keep him or not. The monk could also extend the ontological and social state of the *chigo* as according to his liking.

¹⁶⁹ Uemura Hitomi 上村一実, "Chūsei nanshoku to hametsu he no michi: Sono hate ni mietekuru mono 中世男色と破滅への道：その果てに見えてくるもの," *Tamamo* 玉藻 44 (2009).

The question now remains as to where and when did monks find opportunities to court *chigo*. We know that they ingratiated them with poetry, but what was the right occasion to do so? As already in this chapter, many gatherings took place in the context of the performing arts. Yorinaga visited Buddhist ceremonies, and in his diary he reflected about male lovers in a high clerical position and their amorousness with boys as he was attending a large ceremony accompanied by dance and music performance. That performance was the *warawa-mai*.

Dances of Love

Was I born to play?
Was I born to frolic?
As I hear the children playing,
even my old body starts to sway.¹⁷⁰

Monks would use the opportunity of theatrical and musical performances to meet youthful lovers. Collections of anecdotal stories, such as the *Kokon chomonjū* (1254) and the *Jikkinshō*, report the excitement of encountering beautiful lads especially during dancing performances of children. In medieval times, the “Children Dance” (variously called *warawa-mai*, *warabe-mai*, *dōbu* 童舞) was the most popular venue for meeting young boys. One of the most common celebration that hosted Children Dance performances was the *Sakura-e* 桜会 ceremony held in Daigoji temple at Kyoto and dedicated to the Seiryōgū kami in the Shimo Daigo precinct. Originally launched in 1118 as the *Seiryō-e* 青龍会, the

¹⁷⁰ 遊びをせんとや生まれけむ
戯ぶれせんとや生まれけん
遊ぶ子供の声きけば
我が身さへこそ動がるれ

Translation by Yung-Hee Kim, *Songs to Make the Dust Dance: The Ryōjin hishō of Twelfth-Century Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 148.

Sakura-e was a Buddhist ceremony that was held in the middle of the third month from the mid-Heian period to the end of the Kamakura period. It was a Dharma assembly that gathered in the peak of cherry-blossom season, and incorporated the tradition of *warawa-mai*, a type of *bugaku* to which many important officials flocked. (The most famous *bugaku* pieces performed by children were *Karyōbin* 迦陵頻, *Goshōraku* 五常楽, and *Kochō* 胡蝶). *Sakura-e* was extremely popular during the Kamakura period, but the tradition came to an end in the Nabokuchō era.¹⁷¹ Tsuchiya Megumi shows that the *warawa-mai* in *Sakura-e* began as a *kuyō mai* 供養舞¹⁷² (offering dance, first part of Buddhist ceremony accompanied by *bugaku*) and evolved into a *nyūjō* 入定 performance (*bugaku*, usually performed at the end of Buddhist ceremonies after officiants leave), and finally developed into the form of *ennen* (longevity dance held at the closing of a ceremony). I will discuss *ennen* below, since it figured prominently in texts as an occasion for meeting between monks and *chigo*. The monks who attended the performance did not only relish in beholding the splendor of the dance, but also judged boys based on their looks. In this section I discuss how *warawa-mai* performances enabled male-male love to prosper and highlight the function of children in medieval Japan as both objects of sacrality and sexuality as they appear in these performances.

The *warawa-mai* of the *chigo* in the *Sakura-e* meant to appease the local protector god, Seiryō gongen and provide him with “Dharma Pleasure,” that is, placate the god

¹⁷¹ Nowadays, Daigoji is still held every year in April an event called *Sakura-e*, but it is based on a procession for viewing the cherry blossom that was held for Hideyoshi in 1598, and was systematized only in the early modern period.

¹⁷² The *kuyō mai* may include the *bosatsu* 菩薩, *karyōbin* 迦陵頻, and *kochō* 胡蝶 pieces of *bugaku*.

through teaching him Buddhism in the form of entertainment.¹⁷³ The religious component of *bugaku* was prevalent in medieval times. Itō Kiyoshi contends that the Bugaku dance at the imperial palace and shrine-temple complexes included the ritual performance of “summoning the gods” (*kami oroshi*), “pacifying spirits” (*chinkon*), “invoking the dead” (*shōkon*) and finally, “appeasing the gods” (*hōraku*).¹⁷⁴ Itō also illustrates that Bugaku had a salvific function; not only did it work to make the presence of the gods manifest, it also facilitated rebirth in Pure Land (*gokuraku* 極樂).¹⁷⁵ Moreover, in medieval Japan, children in general were considered the mouthpieces of the gods, and in Sakura-e they were also possessed by spirits. In both children dance and a seductive dance known as Shirabyōshi, as Abe Yasurō argues, the *chigo* was not only a skilled dancer, but he was also worshipped as a deity, for he was patterned after the gods and in many occasions possessed by their numinous presence.¹⁷⁶

Warawa-mai began in the ninth century during the Jōwa years (834–848) as a practice exclusive to court society. Fukutō Sanae shows that participants in *warawa-mai* were disciples of imperial princes (*shinnō* 親王) or mid-ranking aristocrats. In the late ninth century, it gradually spread to high-ranking noble households and to Buddhist temples. While in the beginning these dances were held only as part of imperial celebrations for the emperor (*gyoga* 御賀), by the end of the ninth century celebrations for retired emperors and

¹⁷³ On this god, See Gaétan Rappo, “The Dragon and the Ritual Master: Seiryō Gongen during the Times of the Daigoji Monk Manzei (1378-1435),” *Japanese Religions* 42, nos. 1/2 (2017).

¹⁷⁴ Itō Kiyoo 伊藤清郎, *Chūsei Nihon no kokka to jisha* 中世日本の国家と寺社 (Tokyo: Takashi Shoin, 2000), 182.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Abe, “*Sokui-hō no girei to engi: Chūsei ōken shinwa ron no kōzō* 即位法の儀礼と縁起：中世王権神話論の構想,” 23.

imperial consorts were also accompanied by children dance.¹⁷⁷ According to Fukutō, when a system in which children of high-ranking aristocrats could perform for the emperor (*warawa tenjō-sei* 童殿上制) was established, children performed ritual dance during the emperor's presence at his palace chamber. At the end of the performance, imperial garments were bestowed on children by the emperor. One particular point that is stressed by Fukutō was the severity of such practices. Children had to frantically rehearse dancing. The work as a Palace Child began at the age of seven. The apprenticeship for rituals at the palace was not a pleasant experience for them, but rather involved quite spartan training. The *warawa-mai* at the time was not a public event as in the case of annual festivals, but rather a private ritual held behind closed doors for the amusement of the palace. Fukutō challenges Yanagita Kunio's position that the imperial system of the Heian period utilized juvenile dancers or child Sumō wrestlers as a means for the emperor's self-assertion of authority. This claim was based on the idea that children were sacred beings, and this argument is not tenable when the palace dances are closely examined. Fukutō argues that rather than possessing a sacred aim, *warawa-mai* was held for the pleasure and amusement of the imperial household. She notes that this stands in contrast with the role of *warawa-mai* in Buddhist monasteries, where children were clearly identified as sacred beings.¹⁷⁸ However, Fukutō may be overlooking the fact that performance (*asobi*) and sacrality were interrelated throughout premodern Japanese history. Also, *asobi* or play was also the name given to prostitutes, and in many cases those who engaged in the performing arts had sex with their

¹⁷⁷ Fukutō, "Seiai no henyō: Chūsei seiritsuki wo chūshin ni 性愛の変容：中世成立期を中心に。"

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 11–12.

patrons.¹⁷⁹ Itō Kiyoshi argues that while *warawa-mai* of the ancient period centered on the palace and took on a ritual form, early medieval child dances moved to the temple-shrine complexes and took the form of banquets, and the late medieval period saw the emergence of a performative form, when it developed alongside the emergence of the professional lineages of entertainers and popular performing arts.¹⁸⁰

Warawa-mai at the monasteries, then, were considered especially as sacred activities. In medieval temples, it was conventional for children to enter priesthood (*tokudo* 得度) at the age of fifteen, and take the vow of the precepts at the age of twenty. Up until the age of fifteen, the *chigo* and other underlings labeled *warawa* 童 (children), could engaged in activities that were reserved to non-monastic individuals, such as *warawa-mai*.¹⁸¹ In the twelfth century, the temples that carried out the most important *warawa-mai* celebrations were Ninnaji, Daigoji, and Iwashimizu-dera. In the Kamakura period, *warawa-mai* is most often associated with the *Sakura-e* performance.

The *warawa-mai* acrobatics and choreography were carefully directed and managed, and it was important not to have any sort of interference with the ritual protocol of the ceremony. A famous story about Zōen 増円, a monk who was rudely playing Japanese soccer (*kemari* 蹴鞠) in the Shakadō during a *Sakura-e* performance demonstrates this tendency. Zōen was chased away by fellow monks and his behavior was reprimanded. The *Kokon chomonjū*, where the story is recorded, comments that because of on his interference

¹⁷⁹ See Janet R. Goodwin, *Selling Songs and Smiles: The Sex Trade in Heian and Kamakura Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007).

¹⁸⁰ Itō, *Chūsei Nihon no kokka to jisha* 中世日本の国家と寺社, 181–82.

¹⁸¹ Fukutō, “*Seiai no henyō: Chūsei seiritsuki wo chūshin ni* 性愛の変容：中世成立期を中心に,” 12.

with the *Sakura-e*, the monk was ever since nicknamed the “despised Zōen.”¹⁸² This event most likely happened at the beginning of the Kamakura era, since Zōen was a Tendai monk who was closely affiliated with the Tendai monk Jien (1155–1225). However, it really highlights the popularity and importance of the *Sakura-e*, since anyone who hinders its performance could gain a bad reputation.

The dancing moves of the boy, the beauty of his appearance, and importantly, his divine nature, may cause monks to become smitten with boys. During one *Sakura-e* event, the monk Sōjun 宗順 laid his eyes on the young boy Shōshō-gimi 少将公 and said that his beauty surpassed everyone else and his dancing excelled his peers.¹⁸³ Sōjun begins a correspondence of love poems with the boy as follows:¹⁸⁴

How am I to let you know
I cannot wring the water from my sleeve

¹⁸² Tachibana Narisue 橘成季, *Kokon chomonjū* 古今著聞集, ed. Nishio Kōichi 西尾光一 and Kobayashi Yasuharu 小林保治, 2 vols., vol. 1, *Shinchō Nihon koten shūsei* 新潮日本古典集成 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1986), 253–254.

¹⁸³ その時 少将公とて、みめもすぐれて舞もかたへにまさりて見えけるを、宇治の宗順阿国梨見て、思ひあまりけるにや. *Ibid.*, 252–254.

¹⁸⁴ It is very likely that this entry describes real historical figures. The *Jikkinshō* mentions that Shōshō-gimi’s monastic adult name was Genren 源蓮, while the *Kokon chomonjū* provides the name Gen’un 源運. Genren could be a copyist’s mistake for Gen’un, since both names contain very similar Chinese characters. Gen’un seems to be the more accurate name, since an identical appellation appears in the diary *Koki* 古記 and describes a Daigoji monk who was the son of Fujiwara Sukeaki. Also, the Ono current of Kongōōin-ryū 金剛王院流 lists under its lineage the name Hōgen Gen’un 法眼源運. Tsuchiya Megumi argues that the monk Gen’un here refers to a person who was involved in the reconstruction of the Seiryōgū by abbot Genkai 元界 that took place in 1150. The same Gen’un was an attendant monk of Seiryōgū. See Tsuchiya Megumi 土谷恵, “Chūsei Daigoji no sakura-e: Bidō no kūkan 中世醍醐寺の桜会：童舞の空間,” in *Chūsei jin to hōe* 中世寺院と法会, ed. Satō Michiko 佐藤道子 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1994), 80. The adult monk Sōjun might also refer to a real individual, a Hiei monk who appears in the *Senjūshō*. Thus, it seems both insider and outsider monks actively went to behold the beauty of boys in monastic celebrations. Saigyō 西行, *Senjūshō* 撰集抄, ed. Kojima Takayuki 小島孝之 and Asami Kazuhiko 浅見和彦 (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1985), 222; Yoshiko Kurata Dykstra, trans., *The Senjūshō: Buddhist Tales of Early Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: Kanji Press: Distributed by University of Hawai‘i Press, 2014), 189-90.

drenched at Sugata pond
where I saw you yesterday?¹⁸⁵

To which the boy answers:

You have seen so many figures
On the Sugata pond
How will you know whose sleeve
You wring dry?¹⁸⁶

The narrator comments that these two poems displayed outstanding elegance. Much like the poetry exchanges between courtiers in the Heian period novel *Tale of Genji*, in the Kamakura period monks cultivated poetic refinement as a way to cajole boys into intimate affairs. The polished rhyme that monks utilized to attract boys was not seen as exploitative, but as a sign of righteousness and a way of making merit, as a form of Buddhist practice par excellence. As is commented in the story, the “mastery of the “way of poetry” (waka no michi) 和歌の道, is unrelated to knowledge of the teachings of exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism, it constitutes a great virtue on its own. It’s a precious thing.”¹⁸⁷ The *Sakura-e*, then, provided an opportunity for monks to express their emotions to young underlings, and also to display poetic sophistication. For some, this was another way to accumulate positive karma.

In his younger days, the Dharma Seal master Suke (Suke no Hō’in 佐法印, late Heian period) went to attend the *Sakura-e*. He happened to notice two boys who were out on

¹⁸⁵ きのふ見しすがたの池に袖濡れ

しぼりかねぬといかで知らせむ Tachibana, *Kokon chomonjū* 古今著聞集, v. 1, p. 253.

¹⁸⁶ あまた見しすがたの池の影なれば

たれゆゑしぼる袂なるらむ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ Asami Kazuhiko 浅見和彦, ed. *Jikkishō* 十訓抄, Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū 51 新編日本古典文学全集 (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1997), 474.

a pilgrimage in the temple grounds, wearing bright golden garments, and enjoying the beauty of cherry-blossom. At the end of the *Sakura-e* celebration, it was common to hold a banquet for cherry-blossom viewing. Since both were exquisitely appealing, Suke was unable to endure their sight without making a move, and so he decided to read a poem out loud before them. He admires their beautiful outfits and becomes overwhelmed with emotions:

After I have seen
the yellow globeflowers on your robe,
I was weeping on my own,
like the frog of Ide.¹⁸⁸

The frog is a “seasonal word” for spring, and it is often used together with globeflowers. But the mention of the frog’s weeping is also a metaphor for composing poetry (*utayomi*), as Haruo Shirane argues.¹⁸⁹ This interpretation is based on the *kana* preface to the *Kokinshū* 古今集: “Listening to the voices of the warbler that sings in the flowers, or the frog that lives in the water, we ask, what of all living things does not create poetry?,” but also other Muromachi *renga* poems that clearly state this connection.¹⁹⁰ However, the above poem is primarily an allusion to a *Kōkinshū* poem (Spring II, no. 2) that specifically mentions frogs at Ide, as well as globeflowers:

At Ide, where the frogs cry
The yellow globeflowers
have already scattered

¹⁸⁸ 山吹の花色衣見てしより井手のかはづのねをのみぞなく Tachibana, *Kokon chomonjū* 古今著聞集, v. 1, p. 267-268.

¹⁸⁹ See Haruo Shirane, *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 14.

¹⁹⁰ Translations by Haruo Shirane. See the poems in *Traces of Dreams*, 14–15.

If only I had come when
they were in full bloom!¹⁹¹

Therefore, the monk, looking at the globeflowers' pattern on the children's robes, makes the astute observation that where there are globeflowers, there must also be a frog crying. In this case, the "frog" or monk, is not only "weeping" in the sense of crying as he was overtaken by their sheer beauty, but also creatively composing poetry for the boys. Unlike the original poem in the *Kokinshū*, which laments having missed the opportunity to see the flowers in their full bloom, the monk acknowledges that he has witnessed this beauty. Following this poem, the text reads:

The monk grabbed the sleeve of the boy who was trying to slip away, but reflecting deeply, the boy answered,

There are many who are wearing globeflowers robes
You say you are like the frog of Ide,
But who were you weeping about?¹⁹²

As we can see, the monk is entranced and entrapped by the boy's beauty and is actively pursuing him. Again, the role of courting was largely reserved to the elder monk, and the *chigo* is expected to reciprocate. Indicating some level of coercion, a physical intervention appears required in order to persuade the child to respond. While identifying the boy as a child, the author insinuates feelings and intentions on the part of the boy that cannot possibly be a child's but rather the adult author's wishful thinking about what the child is signaling. We cannot tell whether the boy is rejecting the monk or is seeking for more courting. More significantly, we note that it was important to master poetry and be familiar

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 14.

¹⁹² 山吹の花色衣あまたあれば井手のかはづはたれと鳴くらん Tachibana, *Kokon chomonjū* 古今著聞集, v. 1, p. 268.

with the poetic vocabulary and phraseology of the time in order to entice boys. Moreover, the interaction of courting and dating took place in broad daylight and in a public setting, rather than the late-night aristocratic trysts that we saw in Yorinaga's diary, and the occasion for such courting was the *warawa-mai* or in other performances that hosted this dance, such as the *Sakura-e*.

There were other festive opportunities to meet beautiful boys other than the *Sakura-e*; one example was the *ennen* 延年 celebration. As noted above, Tsuchiya Megumi argues that this was a development of the *warawa-mai*. The word *ennen* ("life prolongation") comes from the Buddhist scripture, it originally meant prayers for longevity, but as early as the beginning of the twelfth century this type of prayers was accompanied by dance, songs, and theatrical impersonations. *Ennen* came to designate festive pageants that were held by monastics at the end of a Buddhist ceremony. The performance of *ennen* was close in its form and had great influence over Sarugaku and Noh drama.¹⁹³ *Ennen* flourished in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods in many powerful Buddhist temples including Kōfukuji, Tōdaiji, Hōryūji, Enryakuji, Onjōji (Miidera). These temples no longer hold *ennen* celebrations today, but the tradition has been preserved at the Tendai temple Mōtsuji in Hiraizumi (Iwate prefecture) where the dance is still performed today on the twentieth of January and in honor of the god Matarajin.¹⁹⁴ According to scholar Matsuo Kōichi, *ennen*

¹⁹³ Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart: Japanese Literature from Earliest Times to the Late Sixteenth Century* (New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1993), 1003.

¹⁹⁴ Another tradition that is kept alive today and is closely related to *warawa mai* and *ennen*, is the *Chigo mai* ("Chigo dance") performance that takes place in the *Hatsuka-e sai* ("the assembly festival of the twentieth day") at Asama jinja shrine in Shizuoka city, Shizuoka prefecture. This performance, like the *ennen* of Mōtsuji in Hiraizumi, originally took place at the twentieth day, but Hiraizumi's occurs on the first month. The Hiraizumi celebration is often called the *hatsukayasai* ("the night festival of the twentieth day"). Other *chigo mai* are held in multiple festivals across Japan as short performative segments within a larger array of performances and obeisances. For example, in the *Hana matsuri* festivals of Oku-Mikawa, Aichi prefecture.

was held in temples at the conclusion of assemblies or at formal ceremonies (*hō'e* 法会), such as at the end of the *Yuima'e* (“Vimalakirti’s Assembly”) in Kōfukuji. At the end of the ritual, a banquet was held accompanied by an *ennen* performance.¹⁹⁵ *Ennen* were mainly held in residential halls, small chapels, but also at major worship halls. They were carried out by monk officials to entertain noble guests and royal envoys at temples, but also to celebrate the appointment of chief abbots and the promotion of temple officials. For instance, the *Kegon'e* (“Flower Garland Assembly”) at Tōdaiji’s cloister Sonshō-in was held in 1212 for the appointment of an abbot.¹⁹⁶ Most importantly, *ennen* were danced only by boys.¹⁹⁷

Ennen dances were known for their extravagant style (*fūryū*); the stage decorations were ornate and very colorful, and the performance used lavish clothings and accessories to create an ostentatious look. This type of beauty went hand in hand with the semiotics of sacred children, who had their face covered with white makeup and their lips rouged, and clothed in exuberant vestments. *Ennen* relied significantly on the beauty of young boys for its success and popularity. As Sujung Kim notes, a special *Ennen* celebration was held in 1210 by the abbot (*chōri*) Kōin 公胤 (1145–1216) of Myōō-in 明王院 chapel in Miidera, as part of the the annual festival of Shinra Myōjin (Jp. *Shinra Myōjin matsuri/sairei*).¹⁹⁸ On the first day, eight *chigo* disguised themselves as Princess Kushinada and Susanoo, the former wearing a sacred comb and the latter wearing black-lacquered dresses and carrying swords.

¹⁹⁵ Royall Tyler, *The Miracles of the Kasuga Deity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 79–80.

¹⁹⁶ William E. Deal and Brian Douglas Ruppert, *A Cultural History of Japanese Buddhism* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 100.

¹⁹⁷ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 252.

¹⁹⁸ Sujung Kim, “Transcending Locality, Creating Identity: Shinra Myōjin, a Korean Deity in Japan” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2014), 124–28. See also Matsuo Kōichi 松尾恒一, *Ennen no geinōshi teki kenkyū* 延年の芸能史的研究 (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 1997).

On the second day, *dōji* danced in front of the shrine of the Shinra Myōjin god. The sacred powers of the children provoked Shinra to deliver an oracle in return. According to the *Onjōji denki* (1343–?), an official record of Miidera temple, within the Shinra Myōjin festival “the most magnificent spectacle was that of the flashily decorated boys (*dōji*).”¹⁹⁹ As such, we can see that the physical elements embodied by the boys was the main attraction, and that the sacred component was conspicuous in such performances.

I would like now to turn into a detailed discussion of the monks who attended the *ennen* performances. The *ennen* was a distinctive event that was handled by a certain group of monks, known as the assembly (*shuto* 衆徒). The *shuto* were armed clergy that spearheaded, organized, and spectated the *ennen* and formed the constituents of the monastic assembly.²⁰⁰ The breathtaking sight of dancing boys that is part of *Ennen* is depicted in illustrated scrolls, where we can also take a glimpse at the role of the *shuto*. The Kamakura-period *Tengu zōshi* (“The Tengu Scroll,” 1296), and specifically the Kōfukuji scroll housed in the Tokyo National Museum, portrays a bustling scene of a boy at the center of the frame, surrounded by dozens of monks gazing at him. The *chigo* at the center wears a hat (*eboshi*) and dances, encircled by the *shuto*. Art historian Haruko Wakabayashi claims that “perhaps the author was critical of the monks’ relationships with *chigo* (which were often sexual) and the monks’ too-obvious enjoyment of dancing,” however, criticism of male-male love in medieval Japan is rare, and Wakabayashi does not provide a

¹⁹⁹ Kim, “Transcending Locality, Creating Identity: Shinra Myōjin, a Korean Deity in Japan.” See also “Onjōji denki 園城寺伝記,” in *Dai Nihon bukkyō zensho* 大日本仏教全書 (Tokyo: Daihōrinkaku, 2007), 95.

²⁰⁰ For more on terms that refer to a large group of monks gathering in unison and its equivalence to temple warriors, see Adolphson, *The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History*, 58-59.

compelling reason for this interpretation.²⁰¹ Rather, the fact that the *chigo* is encircled by so many monks creates a foreboding feeling given the association of *shuto* with war, chaos, and transgression. However, Wakabayashi's other claim, that the depiction here is a "critique of *shuto* who used violence (or the threat of it) to intervene during a religious service and a critique of inappropriate entertainment during a ritual performance such as *ennen*" is an astute one, and is the basis for the following discussion.²⁰²

The *shuto* were also "warrior monks" (scholarship later refers to this phenomenon as *sōhei* 僧兵) and are sometimes labeled as "evil gangs" (*akutō* 悪党) and their leaders were called "evil monks" (*akusō* 悪僧).²⁰³ The *shuto* carried spears and swords and would often participate in violent petitions and protests against the court. As David Bialock comments, "the most powerful among them transformed areas inside the temples into autonomous military enclaves and private holdings."²⁰⁴ The *shuto* would hold raucous assemblies (*sengi*) to debate matters of the temple, and in these deliberations they often decided whether to head out and make a violent appeal to the court or to lead an uprising. This appeal involved walking long distances from their temples to Kyoto late at night, while carrying with them the portable-shrine of the protector god of their temple, holding torches, and making loud voices as to threaten the nobility or the emperor. The *sengi* were "often dominated and provoked by the *akusō*, and their frequent descents to the capital throughout the late Heian

²⁰¹ Haruko Nishioka Wakabayashi, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls: Evil and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy in Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 100–101.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁰³ For an extensive discussion on temple warriors and other armed monastics, see Adolphson, *The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History*, 58–70.

²⁰⁴ David T. Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from the Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 240. For more on "forceful protests," see Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan*, 241–80.

period terrified the aristocratic populace.”²⁰⁵ The *shuto* would often roam in a movement of to and fro (*ōtan*) from the temple, usually for making threats and displaying their military might over the aristocracy. This movement is also suggestive of their “nomadic character that threatens the sedentary logic of the center, transgressive of all established boundaries.”²⁰⁶ Therefore, what is depicted in the image of the *Tengu zōshi* is the encounter between two transgressive personalities, the *chigo*, who represents playfulness, drama, and sexuality, and the *shuto*, who embodies violence and terror. The intimidating sight of the *shuto* is juxtaposed with the colorful and playful *chigo*. The spectator of the image would have been familiar with the sequence of events depicted in the scene: upon a *senji* there must also come a fierce and violent encounter. The scroll ends with the scene of militarized and armed monks who make a ferocious appeal to an imperial emissary.²⁰⁷

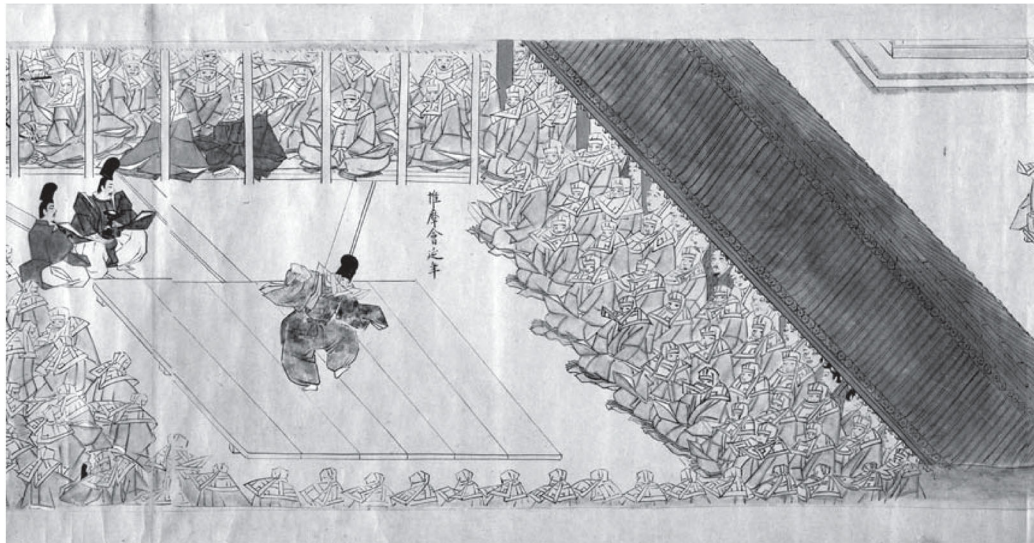


Illustration 1. *Tengu zōshi* (“The Tengu Scroll”), Kōfuku-ji, Tokyo National Museum

²⁰⁵ Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from the Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike*, 239.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 239–40.

²⁰⁷ Wakabayashi Haruko, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls: Evil and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy in Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2012), 100.

Another *ennen* performance is portrayed in the *Hōnen shōnin eden* (Illustrated Biography of Hōnen, 1307–1319),²⁰⁸ also discussed by Wakabayashi. The *ennen* dance in this work is part of an event that unfolded in 1188 in the courtyard of the Shuryōgon'in in Yokawa, Enryakuji. It was held to celebrate the copying and dedication of the *Lotus Sutra* by retired emperor Go-Shirakawa (1127–1192). Again, we have a similar scene of monks wearing a hood and encircling a *chigo* who is performing the dance. Beside the *chigo* are other *chigo* and child dancers sitting down. Quite similarly, the center of attention is the *chigo* and the *shuto* who engulf and look at him. Both images represent the tension between “fear” and “play.” For example, when *shuto* congregated for *senji* deliberations, they hid their face leaving only their eyes uncovered, wearing their distinctive hoods (“wrapped heads,” *katō* 裏頭), and talking through their noses in an ominous sound.²⁰⁹ The *Genpei jōsuiki* (composed between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries) describes such scenes as follows:

It is neither the sound of a voice chanting a poem, nor that of a voice expounding the sutras and their commentaries. It is also different from the manner of people holding mutual converse. It is as in the dancing of the “Dance of the Former King,” when the nose is wrinkled up under the mask.... Then, so that they won't be recognized by either their assistants or hall companions, pressing on their noses they alter their voices and say, “Monks of the whole mountain stand round.” In debating the intent of the protest, they express their accord by saying, “Yes, most reasonable”; and when the argument is without sense, they declare, “It is unreasonable.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Shunshō 舜昌, *Hōnen Shōnin eden* 法然上人絵伝, ed. Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美 and Kanzaki Mitsuharu 神崎充晴, 3 vols., vol. 1, *Zoku Nihon emaki taisei* 続日本絵巻大成 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1981).

²⁰⁹ Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from the Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike*, 240.

²¹⁰ For the original see, Ichiko Teiji 市古貞次, ed. *Genpei jōsuiki* 源平盛衰記, 4 vols., vol. 1, *Chūsei no bungaku* 中世の文学 (Tokyo: Miyai Shoten, 1991), 135–36. Quoted and translated by Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories*, 240–41. Also discussed in Matsuo Kōichi 松尾恒一, *Girei kara geinō e: Kyōsō, hyōi, dōke* 儀礼から芸能へ: 狂騒・憑依・道化 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2011), 21–22.



Illustration 2. *Hōnen shōnin eden* (Illustrated Biography of Hōnen, 1307)²¹¹

This frightening auditory experience can also be thought of as a form of play. Matsuo Kōichi explains that the pressing on a nose while speaking is a characteristic adopted from the performing arts (*geinō* 芸能). Matsuo notes that it was not limited to *senji* assemblies, but also executed in *ennen* performances. For example, according to the *Tōdaiji zoku yōroku* 東大寺続要録 (“Continued Essential Records of Tōdaiji,” mid-thirteenth century), an *Ennen* celebration was held at Tōdaiji on the tenth month of 1241 to accompany the promotion of the “Dharma administrator” (*hōmu* 法務) of Ima Kumano 新熊野 shrine, the monk Jōshin 定親 to the position of abbot (*chōkan* 長官) of Tōdaiji in Nara. The *Ennen* took place as part of the *haidō* 拜堂, a ritual celebrating a new abbot’s assumption of office.

²¹¹ Shunshō 舜昌, *Hōnen Shōnin eden* 法然上人絵伝, in *Zoku Nihon emaki taisei* 続日本絵巻大成, eds. Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美 and Kanzaki Mitsuharu 神崎充晴, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1981).

In the ritual, this appointment is announced to both the primary icon of the temple and the other buddhas. (This ritual is sometimes called *shinzan shiki* 晋山式.) For this occasion, many priests from multiple temples attended the installment of Jōshin, including Tōdaiji, Kōfukuji, Yakushiji, Gangōji, and Daianji. At the end of the ceremony, a banquet was held with a number of children (*warawa*) in attendance who danced *bugaku* for the *shuto*. As Matsuo notes, the *shuto* are described to have raised their voices in excitement and to have extolled the beautiful dance with flowery words. It is said that they could not contain their excitement. Interestingly, when the *shuto* called the dancers to rise on stage, they blocked their noses and emitted a loud voice.²¹²

What looms over in the images above then, is both the daunting and imposing power of the *shuto* as well as the playful nature of the *chigo*. The setting of the performing arts did not only include courting between monks and *chigo* and their poetic exchanges, but also the *chigo*'s performance, which was often surrounded by a ring of militant monks, the *shuto*, who subjected the *chigo* to their intimidating gaze, sometimes even forcing them to stay when they were not supposed to. The unnerving voice of the *shuto*, Matsuo tells us, is also related to the role of the *chigo* as a sacred entity in the performing arts.

Conclusion

In the Muromachi period, beautiful boys who danced in *ennen* celebrations became increasingly appealing in the eyes of monks. For example, according to the *Muromachi dono Nanto gekō no koto* 室町殿南都下向事 (“Concerning [Ashikaga Yoshimasa’s]

²¹² Matsuo, *Girei kara geinō e: Kyōsō, hyōi, dōke* 儀礼から芸能へ：狂騒・憑依・道化, 23.

Descent from the Muromachi Palace to the Southern Capital”), in 1465 (Kanshō 6) the Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–1490) visited Nara, where he attended an *ennen* pageant in his honor. In the pageant the *chigo* awaited their cues in their dressing rooms, called “mountain” (*yama* 山) and “phoenix” (*hōō* 鳳凰). A younger boy would beckon the *chigo* to join him on the stage with a variety of movements collectively called *okotsuri* フコツリ, dances such as a *fūryū* called *kachō sōron* 花鳥相論 (“Debate between Flowers and Birds”) and the *itoyori mai* 糸総舞, likely to the music of the *bugaku* piece *Batō* 抜頭. While it is not clear what this *okotsuri* entailed in its entirety, Matsuo Kōichi claims that it reveals the sacred nature of the *chigo*.²¹³

Matsuo’s view derives from a few points. First is the fact that the dressing room was referred to as “the mountain,” which was the abode of the kami. Also, the beckoning of the *chigo* was enacted in the same manner as was the summoning of deities into ritual space (*kami oroshi* 神降ろし) in kami rites (*shinji* 神事). Moreover, the person who summons the *chigo* with *okotsuri* is called “the deranged monk” (*kyōsō* 狂僧). (According to the *Rinjisai kisha* 臨時祭記写, this was the case in the *Kasuga rinjisai* festival held by the Kōfukuji *shuto* in Nara.) Derangement or craziness (*kurui* 狂い) is a label given to a person who is possessed, especially one engaged in an ecstatic dance that was often rather comic. (The most famous example is the *onna-gurui*, the so-called “deranged woman” of Noh drama.) Since the label *kurui* denoted someone who is a vehicle for the gods or who can access the other world, the deranged monk was the mediator for summoning the sacred *chigo*. Another point Matsuo offers concerns the etymology of *okotsuri*, which is composed of *oko*

²¹³ Ibid., 23-25.

(“dumb,” “foolish”) and *tsuri* (lit. “fishing,” but here meaning “inviting”). This categorization aligns with was the kind of laugh-inducing summoning that can also be seen in the *Kojiki* (702) and *Nihon shoki* (720), especially in the scene of Amaterasu’s Heavenly Grotto. In that scene, the goddess Ame-no-Uzume makes everyone laugh as she becomes possessed, beckoning the Sun Goddess (*kamigakari* 神憑り) and luring her outside the cave to bring light into the world. In addition, Matsuo contends that the magical capacity of *okotsuri* developed from the “pressing on one’s nose” custom of the Kamakura period *shuto*, since that beckoning is similarly playful.²¹⁴ But there is a yet more significant connection regarding the sacred: the fact that the *chigo* was not an adult male (in a world of adult males) made him a bit separate from the human, made him, in fact, a sacred being. During child dance performances, monks did not only gather to admire the aesthetics and beauty of the boy, but also to worship the boy as a god—or the god that the boy beckons.

These various instances of male-male love found in poetry, aristocratic diaries, and *warawa-mai* records all demonstrate, one, that in medieval Japan there was no fixed or clearly demarcated conception of male-male love and, two, that the particular contours of any incident of such love differed according to the social context and institution. Aristocrats of this period often engaged in sexual escapades, and in choosing their partners they paid little attention to rank or social standing. Also, their trysts were held secretly. This contrasts with the monastic context, which had its love affairs displayed publicly, and where the sexual norm involved power relations and social asymmetry wherein a masculine elder as the subject engaged with a feminized or androgynous boy as the object. These dominant

²¹⁴ Ibid.

social and gendered norms converged seamlessly to form the sexual normativity of medieval Japanese Buddhism.

The various instances of male-male love described here make another point most evident: male-male sexual relations took place *irrespective* of the *chigo kanjō* ritualization. The evidence shows that males shared sexual encounters long before the institutionalization of the ritual—as well as long after the ritual was regularly practiced. Indeed, it is possible that the *chigo kanjō* was formulated so as to codify male-male erotic relationships—as a means of limiting the temple disputes that resulted from infidelity—as well as just to regulate sexual behaviors more generally. The fact that the child was seen as a primary conduit for the gods—indeed, a divine being himself—was well-known to the creators of the ritual. They capitalized on this ontological state in order to legitimize male-male sexual acts in the sophisticated form of *chigo kanjō*. We shall now turn to a discussion of this ritual.

Chapter 2:

The Consecration of Acolytes (*Chigo Kanjō*): Introduction to Texts, Authors, Places, and Lineages in Medieval Tendai Seminaries

In 1936, the author and Tendai priest Kon Tōkō 今東光 (1898–1977), a member of the avant-garde literary movement known as New-Sensationalism (*shin kankakuka* 新感覺派), published the story “*Chigo*” in the magazine *Nihon hyōron* 日本評論. Printed separately as a short novel in 1946, *Chigo* captures the admiration and adoration that medieval monks felt towards temple acolytes (*chigo* 児), the young boy novices under their tutelage. The novel provides a glimpse into an imagined mentalité of passionate priests who gaze in wonder at the sight of attractive youths. Written in a literate and elegant form, and in a lyrical, semi-classical prose, the novel is a challenge to read for modern Japanese readers. Its stylistic approach, in fact, romanticizes male-male sexual desire; it provides a graceful depiction of the exuberance that monks gained from socializing with eye-catching boys, and its high literate form associates the tale with the realm of classical literature, especially evoking *The Tale of Genji*. This approach was apologetic; rather than denigrating homosexuality as lascivious or deviant, it celebrated it with flowery words. *Chigo* is not only unique in its treatment of homosexuality in modernity, but also in its narration, which is characterized by modernist stylistic aspects: the narrative is ornate, yet it is also realistic. Additionally, it does not focus on the single perspective of a main character; it instead assumes multiple points of view through describing the thoughts and emotions of impious monks.

However, *Chigo* is mostly noteworthy for its concise description of the Ritual Consecration of Acolytes (*chigo kanjō* 児灌頂). According to Kon, his portrayal is roughly based on the medieval manuscript *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝. Close inspection of the latter text reveals that Kon allowed himself extensive artistic license in crafting his tale, as he omitted a great deal of the medieval account he wove into his fictional creation. Moreover, this document mostly records daily practices of male-male sex, rather than the consecration ritual known as *chigo kanjō*. Kon's episode depicts the initiation of a young acolyte named Hanawaka 花若 into the Buddhist teachings in a ceremony that was carried out with his teacher Renshū 蓮秀. The ritual itself involves four steps: the *chigo* forming mantras and mudras; his being embellished with cosmetics; his transformation into the bodhisattva Kannon; and, the culminating act, sexual union between Renshū and Hanawaka. *Chigo* also describes the two participants swearing an oath to celebrate their (romantic) love. Since this detail is entirely missing from the original manuscript, it can hardly be taken to be true; clearly it expressed Kon's romanticization of male-male sexuality and his sensationalist sensibilities—not a strict fidelity to historical manuscripts.

Regardless of the novel's verisimilitude, upon its publication in 1946 the Japanese scholarly and intellectual worlds became aware of a “homosexual” ritual that had been practiced, unbeknownst to most, within Tendai monastic institutions in the Middle Ages. A few years after *Chigo* was published, famed author Mishima Yukio also contributed to the public awareness of *chigo kanjō*; his 1953 novel *Forbidden Colors* (*Kinjiki* 禁色) includes a

scene that briefly alludes to the ritual.²¹⁵ At the time, many scholars sought access to texts that describe the ritual, but few succeeded, as access was granted only seldom and haphazardly. The subject was thereafter forgotten until the late 1980s and 1990s—but even then, only two texts were analyzed by scholars: the *Chigo kanjō shiki* manuscript, which is a ritual manual; and *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden*, which is a ritual commentary and a doctrinal exegesis that includes elaborate instructions on how daily sexual practices should be performed. Even though these manuscripts were studied, scholars did not have permission to publish them in full; only portions relevant to their studies could be published, or alternatively, the ritual protocols could be rendered in *yomi-kudashi* (a breakdown and paraphrasing of the original Sino-Japanese script into Japanized reading). Since the 2000s, a small number of people have gained access to more texts; a few individuals have even accessed the entire extant collection, including myself. But most scholars, unfortunately, are granted only limited access, for reasons that remain obscure. Perhaps this is related to widespread desire to neglect those practices that are widely considered heterodox.

The ritual itself, which was practiced in secret by a group of Tendai monks, stands in sharp contrast to Japan's modern legacy of institutional censorship of [homo]sexual practices, which can be attributed to the monastic sentiments about sexuality within Buddhism. There is much anxiety (and humor) about monk's desire for women as well. This reflects that the anxiety is over giving in to desire rather than about male-male sexuality per se. Given that desire, and especially sexual desire, was considered to be fetters that tied beings to cyclic existence, the transgressive nature of the ritual did not conform to the social

²¹⁵ Literature and Noh drama scholar Matsuoka Shinpei states that Kon Tōkō was enraged at Mishima, claiming he had plagiarized Kon's work. Matsuoka, *Utage noshintai: Basara kara Zeami e* 宴の身体: バサラから世阿弥へ, 121-22.

mores of contemporary Tendai monks. Also, late Meiji and early twentieth century legal and medical discourses in Japan that were influenced by westernization had started to gain more ground²¹⁶ and propelled many people to view homosexuality as despicable. There is no doubt that Tendai priest Kon Tōkō's novel provoked his community of priests, who shunned him thereafter. In addition, the book's ritualized homosexuality was interpreted by many Tendai functionaries as an expression of the moral corruption and decline in medieval Tendai temples—a stance that was also taken up by scholars of religion when they described the sexual practices of the Muromachi period.²¹⁷ At any rate, given the scant access to the ritual texts, scholars themselves were unable to provide more than a minimal sketch of *chigo kanjō*'s contours.²¹⁸

Fortunately, since I was able to access all the currently known extant *chigo kanjō* manuscripts in central and Eastern Japan, I have been able to produce a comprehensive description and interpretation of the ritual's structure, praxis, and doxa—complexities that have been hidden from scholars for five hundred years. In order to make sense of the rituals described in these various unpublished manuscripts, we need to first ask a few questions. Who practiced the rituals (and in which occasions)? Where did the rituals take place? Who were the authors of these texts? Where were they written? (Note that the consideration of what exactly the rituals entailed is covered in the next chapter.) More specifically, I argue in

²¹⁶ Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*; Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

²¹⁷ See Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyōshi: Chūsei* 日本仏教史：中世, 6; Hattori Toshiro 服部敏良, *Muromachi Azuchi Momoyama jidai igakushi no kenkyū* 室町安土桃山時代医学史の研究 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1971); Ichiko Teiji 市古貞次, *Chūsei shōsetsu no kenkyū* 中世小説の研究 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1955).

²¹⁸ See Kon, “*Chigo* 稚児.”; Hattori, *Muromachi Azuchi Momoyama jidai igakushi no kenkyū* 室町安土桃山時代医学史の研究; Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 241-78.

this chapter that evidence suggests that *chigo kanjō*—far from being a ritual dominated by Eshin lineage monks, as previous scholarship has posited—instead involved people from different affiliations within the Tendai school, mostly emerging from the Esoteric lineages of Taimitsu.

Previous scholarship of *chigo kanjō*, by Abe Yasurō and Matsuoka Shinpei, emphasized the influence of the Eshin-ryū lineage, an exoteric Tendai lineage that dates back to its founder Genshin (942–1017) and promoted the doctrine of original enlightenment (*hongaku*). This lineage was highlighted because multiple doctrinal elements associated with the Eshin school are found in the texts.²¹⁹ Since in most cases legends about sexual relations between *chigo* and monks reference Mount Hiei and its lineages, and since Kon's story is also set northeast of Kyoto, it was customary for scholars to assume the ritual was indeed limited to Enryakuji temple, the headquarters of Tendai. However, while Eshin's legacy is noticeable in the doctrinal components of the ritual,²²⁰ there is no extant text written by Eshin monks; as such, we cannot say with certainty that *chigo kanjō* is specifically an Eshin ritual. Therefore, rather than accepting unsubstantiated truth-claims, we need to focus instead on the actual institutions that practiced *chigo kanjō*.

What can be learned from the context of production of these documents is useful for expanding our understanding of the *chigo kanjō* tradition. Not all *chigo kanjō* manuscripts detail the circumstances of their creation. Some offer concrete descriptions of their authors' monastic ranks and institutional affiliations. Other manuscripts only mention transmitters of

²¹⁹ See Abe, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの; Matsuoka, *Utage noshintai: Basara kara Zeami e* 宴の身体：バサラから世阿弥へ; Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*.

²²⁰ See Chapter 4 for an elaborate treatment on the doctrinal aspects of the ritual.

the ritual or those in possession of these manuals; and with still others we know only the names. It is therefore necessary to dig deeper into the historical and institutional background of these texts and their monastic personalities in order to fully answer the question of the context of production. Based on my research, I argue that the *chigo kanjō* ritual was practiced primarily in the Tendai seminaries (*dangisho* 談義所)—more specifically, within Tendai’s esoteric lineages of Taimitsu 台密 in the Kantō region and the northeast. Taimitsu began in the latter ninth century with the formulation of doctrine and ritual by the Tendai monk Annen (841–889). Annen compiled several teachings and rituals and passed down the tradition to his followers. These ideas were modeled on the commentaries of Śubhakarasiṃha’s (637–735 CE) *Mahāvairocana Sutra* and Vajrabodhi’s (671–741) *Vajraśekhara sutra*, written by Yixing (683–727) and Amoghavajra (705–774). Initiation in *kanjō* into the Womb Realm mandala was based on the former sutra, whereas to the Diamond Realm, on the latter. Kūkai was the first who devised initiation into the two mandalas on separate occasions, whereas the Tendai school added the *Susiddhi Tantra* (Sk. *Susiddhi-kara-mahā-tantra-sāadhanōpāyika-ṣaṣṭhā*) as a third element/realm of initiation. Taimitsu practice, however, had also introduced a combined initiatory practice of both mandalas. It is important to note that scholars of Japanese religion tend to overemphasize Shingon over the Tendai school when they treat Esoteric topics or religious phenomena, such as abhiseka. Moreover, when the Tendai school is explored, there is tendency to examine its exoteric aspects (the teaching of the *Lotus Sutra*, original enlightenment, and so on), rather than its esoteric components. Therefore, by pointing out the contribution of Taimitsu to the production of *chigo kanjō*, we are also stressing Taimitsu’s increased involvement in shaping medieval ritualization.

As to expanding that field of inquiry, literature scholar Tsuji Shōko has touched upon the role of Taimitsu lineages and *dangisho* in *chigo kanjō* in several articles she has published.²²¹ While her contribution to the scholarship on *chigo kanjō* is immense, her account fails to identify several key Taimitsu figures credited in the texts—figures I will return to. Also, although Tsuji emphasizes the fact that *chigo kanjō* texts were copied in *dangisho* temples, by not discussing the question of *whether chigo kanjō* was performed she inadvertently downplays the significance of the ritual. I contend that monks actually performed these rituals, in turn transmitting them to disciples—a process aided by the copying of the texts so as to instruct future acolytes to carry down the practice.

Therefore, in the following section I organize the manuscripts of *chigo kanjō* and attempt to shed light on both the context of their production and the Taimitsu historical lineages that led to their creation. I also elaborate on the history of the institutions and their leading figures; the development of *dangisho* in medieval Japan; and the ways in which the *chigo kanjō* texts created “imagined” lineages side-by-side their “real” lineages. This imaginary “genealogy of genealogy” was influenced by the historical affiliations and associations the ritual had with Taimitsu lineages, but it also reflects the willingness of the authors of *chigo kanjō* texts to render the ritual as an orthodox practice through its genealogical ties to other mainstream religious traditions, such as exoteric Tendai and Sannō Shinto.

²²¹ See the articles of Tsuji Shōkō 辻晶子, “Kon Tōkō, ‘Chigo’ to ‘kō chigo shōgyō hiden’ 今東光 『稚児』と『弘児聖教秘伝私』,” *Nara joshi daigaku Nihon Ajia gengo bunka gakkai* 奈良女子大学日本アジア言語文化学会 38 (2011); “*Chigo kanjō no kisoteki kōsatsu: Shohon no shōkai to seiri* 児灌頂の基礎的考察：諸本の紹介と整理,” *Jinbun bunka kenkyūka nenpyō* 人間文化研究科年報 26 (2010); “*Chigo kanjō no kisoteki kōsatsu: Giki no shōkai to seiri* 児灌頂の基礎的考察：儀軌の紹介と整理,” *ibid.* 27 (2011); “‘Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi’ saikō 『弘児聖教秘伝私』再考,” *Chūsei bungaku* 中世文学 58 (2013); “*Honkoku Ten’ōji-zō ‘Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō’* 翻刻 天王寺蔵『児灌頂口決相承』,” *Kodai gaku* 古代学 10 (2018).

Texts, Authors, Places, and Lineages

Manuscript A

<i>Reference name</i>	(A) <i>Kanjō shi</i>
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Chigo kanjō shi</i> 兎灌頂私
<i>Date</i>	1524
<i>Authorship</i>	Unknown. The postscript lists the following names of masters, who likely carried out the <i>kanjō</i> : Hakuō Shumyō 自翁守明, Kōkai 宏海 the Assistant preceptor (<i>gon-risshi</i> 権律師), and Ryōken 良賢 the Senior Assistant High Priest (<i>gon-daisōzu</i> 権大僧都). The manuscript includes two additional names—Son’ei 尊榮 and Ryūsen 隆仙—but their roles or occupations are unknown.
<i>Where created</i>	Unknown; possibly the Chōrakuji temple at Serada town, due to the affiliation of Shumyō and Kōkai.
<i>Current location</i>	Tenkaizō 天海蔵 archive of Eizan Bunko.
<i>Subsequent manuscript history</i>	The document, which is undated, is bound with (B) <i>Shōgyō hiden shi</i> , which is dated 1524.

Manuscript B

<i>Reference name</i>	(B) <i>Shōgyō hiden shi</i>
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi</i> 弘兎聖教秘伝私
<i>Date</i>	1524
<i>Authorship</i>	Enjō 円盛 transcribed the ritual, likely upon completion of his initiation.
<i>Where created</i>	Fumonji 普門寺 temple at Serada town
<i>Current location</i>	There remains only a copy in the Tenkaizō 天海蔵 archive of Eizan Bunko.
<i>Subsequent manuscript history</i>	Enkei 円慶 transcribed a copy of the 1450 original in 1524 at the Shugendō site of Mount Haguro 羽黒. This manuscript, which is bound with (A) <i>Kanjō shi</i> , is in the Tenkaizō 天海蔵 archive of Eizan Bunko.

Manuscript C

<i>Reference name</i>	(C) <i>Shōgyō hiden</i>
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Kō chigo shōgyō hiden</i> 弘児聖教秘伝
<i>Date</i>	1941
<i>Authorship</i>	Unknown
<i>Where created</i>	Unknown
<i>Current location</i>	There remains only a copy in Rikkyō University, Edogawa Ranpō archive 立教大学附属図書館江戸川乱歩旧蔵.
<i>Subsequent manuscript history</i>	<p>In 1478, an unknown monk copied the original manuscript, which has since been lost.</p> <p>In 1526, Son'yū 存祐 transcribed a copy of the 1478 manuscript in the Jōkyōbō 浄教房 chapel in the Southern Valley of the Eastern Pagoda at Mount Hiei. It was housed in the Shinyozō 真如蔵 archive; it is no longer extant.</p> <p>In 1571, an unknown monk added a poem to the 1526 text. This poem is written on the extant copy.</p> <p>In 1941, anthropologist Iwata Jun'ichi transcribed a copy of the 1526 copy +1571 poem. This 1941 copy is at Rikkyō University Library, Edogawa Ranpō archive 江戸川乱歩旧蔵.</p>

Manuscript D

<i>Reference name</i>	(D) <i>Kanjō shidai</i>
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Chigo kanjō shidai</i> 児灌頂次第
<i>Date</i>	1818
<i>Authorship</i>	Ryōchin 亮珍 (?-1558)
<i>Where created</i>	Unknown; kept for a time at the Myōhō'in 妙法院 archive in Kyoto.
<i>Current location</i>	There remains only a copy in Mount Hiei's Mudōji 無動寺蔵 repository of Eizan Bunko.
<i>Subsequent manuscript history</i>	Shinchō 真超, a Tendai monk of Mudōji 無道寺, transcribed a copy of the original in 1818. It is housed in Mount Hiei's Mudōji 無動寺蔵 repository.

Manuscript E

<i>Reference name</i>	(E) <i>Chigo kanjō shiki</i>
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Chigo kanjō shiki</i> 児灌頂私記
<i>Date</i>	Possibly late-Muromachi Period (sixteenth century) or Early-Edo Period (seventeenth century)
<i>Authorship</i>	Kōkei 幸慶 transcribed the ritual upon completion of his initiation, by Gikō Taishin 義広大進 his master, in the Shingon-in 真言院 cloister at Chōrakuji 長樂寺 in Serada, Ōta city.
<i>Where created</i>	Fudō'in 不動院 in Tōkōji 東光寺 temple at Shida no shō 信太莊.
<i>Current location</i>	Shinnyo-zō 真如藏 archive of Eizan Bunko.

Manuscript F

<i>Reference name</i>	(F) Jōbodai'in manuscript
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Chigo kanjō shiki</i> 児灌頂式
<i>Date</i>	1473
<i>Authorship</i>	Chōshin 澄心 (?-?)
<i>Where created</i>	Probably Jōbodai'in.
<i>Current location</i>	Jōbodai-in zō 成菩提院藏 archive, in Maibara 米原, Kashiwabara 柏原, Shiga Prefecture.
<i>Subsequent manuscript history</i>	The signature of a monk named Jisshun is found in the postscript. This Jisshun is from the Jōkyōbō 浄教房 on Mount Hiei. Since Jisshun's signature appears without any indication of copying, it is more likely that he simply stored the text in the archives, and that this is an original manuscript.

Manuscript G

<i>Reference name</i>	(G) <i>Kuketsu sōjō</i>
<i>Text name</i>	<i>Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō</i> 児灌頂口決相承.
<i>Date</i>	1442
<i>Authorship</i>	Kōkai 幸海 transcribed the ritual, likely upon completion of his initiation by Kōjun 光順.
<i>Where created</i>	Unknown; probably Gassanji 月山寺 temple. Both monks were affiliated with Gassanji, and their master-disciple interaction took place in Gassanji.
<i>Current location</i>	Fukuda Gyōei Archive 谷中天王寺内故福田堯穎大僧正蔵, Yanaka Tennōji temple, Tokyo.

I researched and obtained the *chigo kanjō* manuscripts while affiliated with Nagoya University in 2015–2016, and later at the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture (NIRC), in 2017–2018. During my research residency, I have visited a number of temple repositories and was granted access to many archives, including Eizan Bunko on Mount Hiei, Hikone Castle Museum in Shiga prefecture, the Fukuda Gyōei Archive of Tennōji temple in Tokyo, and the Edogawa Ranpo archive at Rikkyō University. To collect supplementary data, I have also visited the National Institute of Japanese Literature (*Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan* 国文学研究資料館), the Tokyo Historiographical Institute of the University of Tokyo (*Tōkyō daigaku shiryō hensan-jo* 東京大学史料編纂所), and Kanazawa Bunko archive at Shōmyōji temple in Kanagawa prefecture. I provide below an overview of the various variants of the *chigo kanjō* ritual procedures (manuscripts A, D, E, F, and G), and their ritual commentaries and exegetical treatises (B and C).

Manuscript A

The first text is a ritual protocol for *chigo kanjō* known as *Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私 and dated from the Muromachi period, which I will refer to as (A) *Kanjō shi*. This manual provides a comprehensive account of liturgical practices and their religious significance while offering doctrinal interpretations for ritual actions. The text is included in a combined book which is preserved in the Tenkaizō 天海蔵 archive of Eizan Bunko, the main repository of Enryakuji temple in the small town Sakamoto on the foothills of Mount Hiei, Shiga prefecture. The text is bound together with manuscript B, as we shall see below. Regarding the text's origins, its final page is particularly instructive, as it quotes information from a *gohon* 御本 (“Precious Book”), which introduces what might have been an incomplete colophon of the source text from which the manuscript was copied. Or, since other manuscripts refer to it, this “Precious Book” could also be a document that closely followed the original ritual. In any case, since an Urtext *chigo kanjō* ritual manual has not survived, it is crucial to look at the rituals as having descended from an initiatory tradition that predates the Muromachi period.

This *gohon* section provides some clue as to which individuals carried out the ritual. It specifies the names that are cited as part of the *gohon* itself. These include three masters (*ajari*) at the high level (*dai ajari-i no hito* 大阿闍梨位人), a rank of an officiating priest that was required in Esoteric Buddhism for carrying out initiations.²²² The record enumerates Jiō Shumyō 自翁守明, the Assistant preceptor (*gon-risshi* 権律師) Kōkai 宏海, and the Senior Assistant High Priest (*gon-daisōzu* 権大僧都) Ryōken 良賢.²²³ However, these

²²² Most notably the *denbō kanjō* but also other initiations.

²²³ Also read as “Yoshikata.”

masters are followed by two other individuals, All-Pervading Diamond Master (*Henjō kongō Son'ei* 遍照金剛) Son'ei 尊榮 and All-Pervading Diamond Master (*Henjō kongō* 遍照金剛) Ryūsen 隆仙, who have not been identified in current scholarship—and certainly are not counted among the category of high-ranking masters. Since their role remains unclear, it is necessary to examine other historical evidence to try to identify them.

We will begin with the first two of the three high-level masters: Shūmyō and Kōkai. These monks are unquestionably institutionally related; they had even lived in the same neighborhood—the Nitta no shō 新田莊 estate—and had taught at Chōrakuji 長樂寺 temple in Serada 世良田 (present Ōta city, Gunma prefecture). Chōrakuji, was an important seminary (*dangisho*) in the Kantō region for Taimitsu learning. Taimitsu scholar Misaki Ryōshū investigated the genealogies of Chōrakuji by examining a catalog of manuscripts outlining the transmission certificates of the Anō-ryū lineage (sub-lineage of Taimitsu).²²⁴ Two lineage texts *Injin sōmoku roku narabini shoryū koka* 印信惣目録#諸流許可 and *Kanjō injin tai narabini Hokke-in denbō* 灌頂印信#蓮華院 傳法 bear colophons that trace the lineage of Chōrakuji. From a cross-examination of the lineage and the ritual manual, I uncovered that the copyist of (A) *Kanjō shi* miswrote the name of Shūmyō as Jiō Shūmyō 自翁守明; The name was in fact an erroneous rendition of the monk's full name, Hakuō Shūmyō 白翁守明 (?–1323). According to the genealogies, the line of descent of Shūmyō and Kōkai goes all the way back to Chōen 長宴 (1016–1081) of the Taimitsu Ohara-ryū 大

²²⁴ Main catalogue: *Anō-ryū tō injin sōmoku* 穴太流等印信惣目, found in entries 281–285 in the Chōrakuji manuscript holdings. See Misaki Ryōshū 三崎良周, *Taimitsu no riron to jissen* 台密の理論と実践 (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1994), 325.

原流, and Raishō 頼昭 of the Shōgonbō-ryū 双巖房流, another Mount Hiei monk of the twelfth century. The pair are influential Taimitsu masters that resided in I-no-bō 井ノ坊 in the southern valley of the Eastern Pagoda (Tōtō 東塔) on Mount Hiei. Their lineage eventually became another Taimitsu strand, the Tani-ryū 谷流.²²⁵ Chōen is especially well-known because he founded the Ohara-ryū; his student, Ryōyu, continued to propagate its teachings under the new denomination of Sanmai-ryū.²²⁶ Shumyō and Kōkai, then, are recorded as followers of the same Taimitsu lineages. Now, most Taimitsu lineages attempted to trace their origin to eminent figures of Taimitsu—regardless of historical veracity—in order to claim legitimacy; However, scholars agree that Shumyō can be traced back to lineages that bifurcated from the Tani-ryū. Hence, according to Misaki Ryōshū’s chart, Shumyō and Kōkai belonged to the same line of from historical and renowned Taimitsu masters of Japan. The implication for our discussion is that *chigo kanjō* was practiced within an orthodox Taimitsu lineage.

Hakuō Shumyō, the thirty-third abbot of Chōrakuji, was originally a Zen monk of the Sōtō school who lived in Saikōji 最興寺 in modern-day Tomioka city 富岡市, Gunma prefecture. He was also the teacher of Kōkai, the second ajari mentioned in (A) *Kanjō shi*, and of another disciple, Kōgen 皇源. Chōrakuji was founded by Eichō 栄朝 (?-1247), a student of the famous Zen teacher Eisai 栄西 (1141–1215). Eichō was a Zen-Esoteric

²²⁵ Shimaji Daitō 島地大等, *Tendai kyōgakushi* 天台教學史 (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1929), 406.

²²⁶ Sanmai-ryū was also at the basis of Jien’s doctrine. Jien’s ideas also contributed to *chigo kanjō*. Taga Monju claims that Jien largely inherited his doctrinal ideas from Annen (his interpretation of mandalas, the relations between Buddhas and sentient beings, and the method of practice for lowly ignorants [*bonpu* 凡夫]). Jien learned about Annen’s doctrine primarily from Taimitsu teachers and the Sanmai-ryū lineage, including from priests such as Chōen, Ryōyu, and Kōgei. Taga Munchaya 多賀宗集, *Jien no kenkyū* 慈円の研究 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980), 409–13.

Buddhist monk who passed down the Tani-ryū's subbranches of Taimitsu—the Renge-ryū 蓮華流 and Yōjō-ryū 葉上流 lines—to Chōrakuji, with some influences from the Kawa-ryū 川流 and one branch of Tōmitsu 東密 (Shingon Esoteric Buddhism). Eichō's interest in Zen arose from his experience in Kamakura when he studied under Eisai. Eisai recognized in Eichō a Dharma successor, but Eichō continued to practice and teach Taimitsu in combination with the Rinzai Zen tradition. Eichō's Taimitsu lineage had also been disseminated to the nearby temple Fumonji 普門寺, located about 800 meters from Chōrakuji and where one of the *chigo kanjō* variants was transmitted. As mentioned, Shumyō had another disciple known as Kōgen in a line parallel to Kōkai. Kōkai, it appears, did not leave spiritual heirs. Crucial to our discussion, both Shumyō and Kōkai eventually became ajari of Chōrakuji 長樂寺, a *dangisho* temple which seems to have been central to the production of *chigo kanjō* knowledge.

If Shumyō and Kōkai can be traced back to Tani-ryū, it is pertinent to ask from which of its sub-lineages did they come? Historian Okonogi Teruyuki notes that Shumyō emerged from the Renge-ryū and Yōjō-ryū, and that he contributed to the spread of these lineages at Taimitsu temples in the eastern territories. He hailed from Kanra 甘樂 and Tomioka in Gunma prefecture, and also built and reconstructed many monasteries. Shūmyō originally received his initiation from the master Shihon 子本 of Daishōji 大聖寺 (present-day Daishōji 大正寺 in Isesaki, Gunma), who himself obtained the Dharma from the fifth abbot of Chōrakuji, Jukai 珠海. Shihon transmitted to Shumyō the teachings of Taimitsu, and the latter's disciple Kōgen succeeded this line in Kōmyō'in 光明院 at Gunma. As we

can see, Shumyō's lineage had an extended grasp on the Tendai temples in Gunma.²²⁷ But can we definitely conclude that Eichō lineage survived up until Shumyō's times?

It seems clear from a variety of sources—in particular the Dharma certificate collections of Chōrakuji—that Eichō's line persisted. Okonogi Teruyuki points out that there are 175 *injin* (Dharma certificates) from three Taimitsu lineages: Anō-ryū, Renge-in, and Yōjō-ryū. These certificates were obtained upon completion of a combined set of *kanjō* consecrations (*gōgyō* 合行) that is unique to Taimitsu. Within them, the lineage of Shihon and Shumyō—the Renge-ryū—includes fifty certificates, whereas the Yōjō-ryū line of Shungen 俊源 includes just twenty. Some of these transmissions specify that Kōgen 皇源, the disciple who continued Shumyō's line, had in 1377 received a *kanjō* at the Fukōan 普光庵, a hall that lodged the *kanjō* chamber of Chōrakuji. These various certificates clearly label these transmissions as part of Eichō's line (Eichō-ryū 栄朝流)—which shows that Eichō's Taimitsu line, passed down by monks such as Shumyō, was still active in the early Muromachi period; indeed, that it continued without interruption.²²⁸ As such, if *chigo kanjō* had actually been performed by Shumyō, it must have been carried out as early as the fourteenth century (one hundred years before the production of the oldest of our current manuscripts), and it was identified with the Taimitsu lineage. In addition, the *chigo kanjō* ritual might have been originally recorded in sources that did not survive.²²⁹

²²⁷ Other establishments that branched from Shumyō's lineage include Kōmyō'in 光明院, Jissōji 実相寺, Kangakuji 勧学寺, and Saikōji 西興寺 (today a Sōtō Zen temple). Okonogi Teruyuki 小此木輝之, *Chūsei jūin to Kantō bushi* 中世寺院と関東武士 (Tokyo: Seishi Shuppan, 2002), 24–25.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

²²⁹ Misaki Ryōshū, *Taimitsu no riron to jissen* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1994), 325.

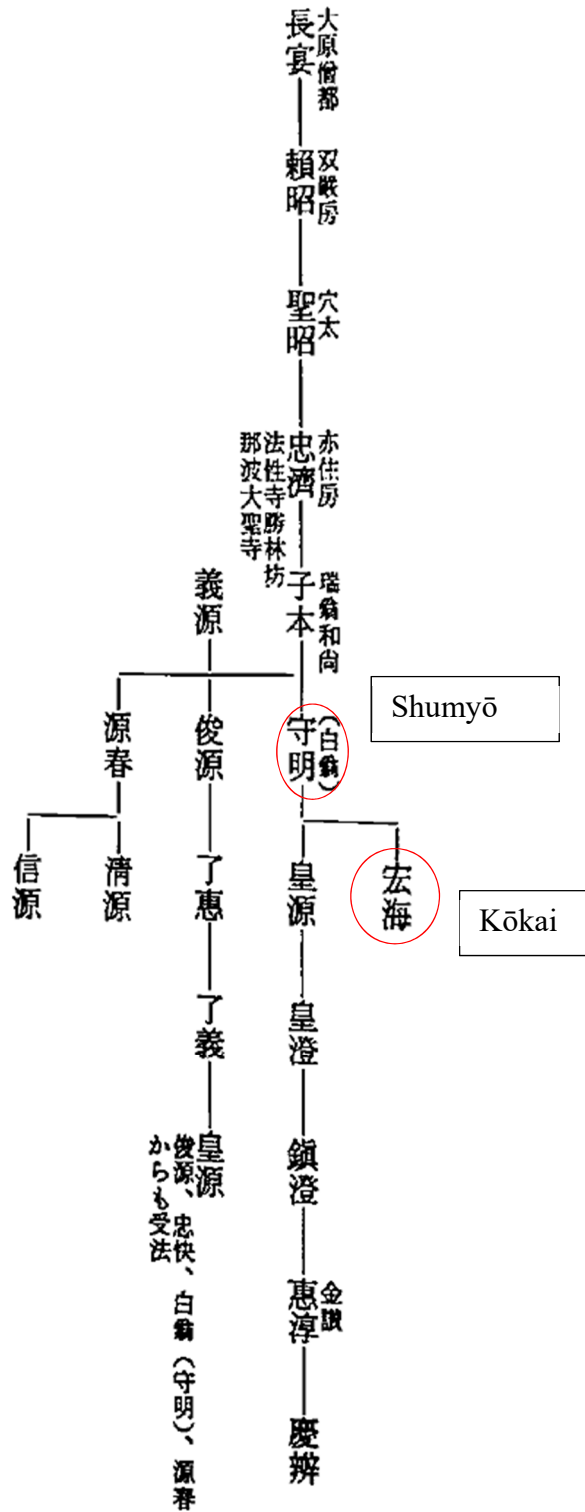


Illustration 3. Chōrakuji lineage, traced to Taimitsu.

Other *ajari* are more difficult to identify. Ryōken, the third *ajari* mentioned in (A) *Kanjō shi*, can be associated with a Shingon monk who lived in the vicinity of the two other Taimitsu masters, Shumyō and Kōkai. This Ryōken, a senior assistant high priest, lived in the fourteenth century. He founded the temple Kyōōji 教王寺 in the Nitta 新田莊 estate of Ōta-shi. According to recent research on *dangisho* in central Japan,²³⁰ Shingon monasteries also had close ties to Tendai *dangisho*, both of which promoted doctrinal and textual exchange regardless of sectarian affiliations. This geographic and temporal proximity are significant, since they match those of Shumyō and Kōkai.

Let us move on to the two mysterious names listed after the *ajari*, Son’ei and Ryūsen. According to scholarship by Watanabe Mariko,²³¹ Son’ei was a Hiei monk who reached the rank of Senior Assistant High Priest (*gon-daisōzu*). The fact that this rank matches the one listed in (A) *Kanjō shi* suggests that he is the same person who performed *chigo kanjō* on Mount Hiei. In addition, evidence suggests that he closely interacted with *dangisho* in the east, and even lived in eastern institutions.²³² Son’ei was appointed as the second abbot of Gassanji 月山寺 temple, another *dangisho* about eighty-five kilometers from Chōrakuji. There he taught his favorite disciple, Sonshun 尊舜 (1451–1514), who later became a leading figure in the world of Tendai doctrinal debates (*dangi* 談義).²³³ Son’ei

²³⁰ Jōbodaiin Shiryō Kenkyūkai 成菩提院史料研究会, *Tendai dangisho Jōbodai’in no rekishi* 天台談義所成菩提院の歴史 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2018), 57.

²³¹ Watanabe Mariko 渡辺麻里子, “Sonshun-dan ‘Tendai-den nangaku shinyō kenkai’ ni tsuite 尊舜談『天台伝南岳心要見聞』について,” in *Tendai, Shingon shoshū ronkō: Ōkubo Ryōshun Kyōju kanreki kinen ronshū* 天台・真言諸宗論攷：大久保良峻教授還暦記念論集, ed. Ōkubo Ryōshun 大久保良峻 (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 2015).

²³² See the below discussion on Gassanji.

²³³ Watanabe, “Sonshun-dan ‘Tendai-den nangaku shinyō kenkai’ ni tsuite,” 51.

was affiliated with the Shōgaku-in 正覚院 lineage of Tendai, which was famed for its *kanjō* rituals. There is one untitled text kept in Jōbodai'in temple—another prominent seminary of the time, one also where *chigo kanjō* took place—that includes a transmission chart elucidating the position of Son'ei within Tendai. Since the beginning of the text is missing, it is not explicitly stated which lineage the chart references, but it does name several key figures as masters preceding Son'ei. This is the genealogy: Genshin → Kakuchō → Shōhan → Chōge → Ejin → Shunpan → Jōmyō → Shinga → Ikkai → Chokken → Chokkai → Kōei → Son'ei...²³⁴ Most of these individuals are eminent monks from the Eshin-ryū lineage of Mount Hiei. Even though dates are not included, it is known that Son'ei copied the text *Shamon saichō ki* 沙門最澄記 in 1471, as well as another untitled text in 1479. From this we can infer that Son'ei lived toward the mid-fifteenth century.²³⁵ Again, it is difficult to verify either the accuracy of this lineage chart or the veracity of the connection to Eshin. Regardless, we can at least confirm that monks viewed Son'ei as a successor to the Eshin branch. Therefore, Sonei's involvement in *chigo kanjō* is a critical genealogical link to Eshin scholars, who in earlier centuries indeed developed the doctrinal elements of *chigo kanjō*. At any rate, unlike the scant evidence about the Eshin lineage with regards to practice, ample historical evidence points to Taimitsu lineages, as well as to their *dangisho* temples spread throughout the east.

²³⁴ “*Sonshun no gakukei ni tsuite* 尊舜の学系について,” *Tendai gakuhō* 天台学報 44 (2001): 126. For the full text see, Sonehara Satoshi 曾根原理, “*Tendai jiin ni okeru shisō no taikai: Jōbodaiin Jōshun wo megutte* 天台寺院における思想の体系-成菩提院貞舜をめぐって,” *Setsuwa bungaku kenkyū* 説話文学研究 36 (2001).

²³⁵ Watanabe, “*Sonshun no gakukei ni tsuite* 尊舜の学系について,” 123-24.

As for the other monk Ryūsen 隆仙, he is mentioned in the “Precious Book” (*gohon*) from which the (A) *Kanjō shi* was copied. The *Shibuya mokuroku*, the bibliography of Tendai texts, includes an entry concerning this ajari. Ryūsen transmitted a text to a monk named Sonkai 存海 who transcribed it in 1506 (Eishō 3). The text, *Manbō engi kuketsu* 萬法緣起口決 (Oral Instructions on the Origin of the Myriad Dharmas), was a Zen-Esoteric Buddhist treatise that included a discussion on discrimination between subjective and objective perspectives and between false and wrong views (*naige jashō bunbetsu* 内外邪正分別).²³⁶ Sonkai was a Tendai monk of the Muromachi period who sojourned in Mount Hiei’s Eastern Pagoda region, specifically in Jinzōji 神蔵寺, where he dedicated himself to Zen meditation. He had also practiced the *Ajikan* (“Visualization on the Syllable A”) at Gyōkōbō 行光房 in the Nishitani 西谷 area of the Western Pagoda region, a place where *kanjō* rituals were held. While there is no clear-cut evidence that (A) *Kanjō shi* referred to this particular Hiei monk, it is quite suggestive that this text elaborates on both the *Ajikan* meditation (mentioned in *chigo kanjō* ritual manuals and doctrinal commentaries) and Sonkai’s strong preference for Tendai and Zen teachings, since Zen was an important feature of Chōrakuji’s outlook. To reiterate, *chigo kanjō* personalities seem to have hailed from Taimitsu lineages, rather than Eshin, and some of them included Tendai monks with interest in Zen practice and teachings.

²³⁶ Another Ryūsen is mentioned in a different document kept at Daigoji temple in Kyoto and written in 1404 (Ōei 11). This document, titled *Ryūsen ajari juhō ki* 隆仙阿闍梨受法記, is a transmission from Ryūsen to another unnamed disciple. However, the affiliation and the date do not match our sources.

Manuscript B

The text previously discussed, (A) *Chigo kanjō shi*, was bound together with another important *chigo kanjō* text, *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私, which I will refer to as (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi*. This second text is a doctrinal exegesis combined with a ritual commentary of *chigo kanjō* that also elucidates a non-initiatory sexual practice between a *nenja* 念者 (lit. “the one who thinks about/loves [the *chigo*], the elder monk) and a *chigo*. (In Chapter 4 I will demonstrate that the *chigo kanjō* ritual inaugurated sexual activity between a *chigo* and a monk on a normal basis.) The text also describes the ritual measures conducted in secrecy by other monks to prepare the *chigo* for engaging in intercourse with the *nenja*. In addition, (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* extensively details the idealized behavior of a *chigo*, offering clear instructions on how to properly fulfill this role.

The authorship of (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* is unclear. The cover claims it is “taught by Eshin”; as such, it is attributed to Genshin 源信 (942–1017), the Tendai patriarch to which the Eshin lineage traces the transmission of its teachings. (“Eshin” is Genshin’s sobriquet.) However, new evidence has emerged that suggests otherwise. Unlike (A) *Chigo kanjō shi*, the other text with which it is bound, (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* has a colophon. And while this colophon ends with the phrase *gohon* 御本—as we saw in manuscript A—the information it presents is markedly different. Scholars before me have linked the colophon of Manuscript B to the two texts, and yet, they treat the two documents as completely separate texts because of their style and content. For the same reason, I do not think the colophon of manuscript B is part of manuscript A. Besides, both texts end with a colophon that was copied from a *gohon* (“Precious Book”) containing completely different information, which means that they came from different sources.

The text lists several names in relation to its production. The extant manuscript is a 1524 copy made in Mount Haguro near Aizu, of a 1450 (Hōtoku 2) manuscript written in the Nitta no shō 新田荘 estate located in Kōzuke province 上野州, by the monk Enjō 円盛, who is noted to have received a *denbō kanjō* initiation of the Diamond Realm variety. He composed the text at the Tendai *dangisho* Fumonji 普門寺 in Serada near Chōrakuji. As Okonogi Teruyuki claims, this indicates that *chigo kanjō* was practiced at Fumonji temple in 1450. Thus, both manuscript A and manuscript B provide information about the actors of the ritual and its scribes. The figures mentioned in manuscript A resided in the same area as the monks mentioned in the colophon of manuscript B. Further, the temple Fumonji, which is mentioned in manuscript B, is located in Serada, the same neighborhood as Chōrakuji temple of manuscript A. Moreover, In addition, Okonogi specifies there were close ties between Fumonji and Chōrakuji, noting that it is likely that Fumonji temple was constructed by monks from Chōrakuji.²³⁷ Fumonji became a branch temple of Chōrakuji during the Edo period, after serving as the *bettōji* of a local Hachimangū shrine since the end of the Kamakura period. In the end, both institutions were *dangisho* temples with deep bonds.²³⁸

The relationships do not end there. Enjō was a Taimitsu monk who also sojourned in Serada. He wrote another *kanjō* ritual text called *risagō kanjō shi* 離作業濯頂私 describing the procedures of a consecration performed at Chōrakuji. This document shows that Enjō was a disciple of Ryōka 了嘉 and that he recorded another ritual practice of *kanjō* in Chōrakuji temple. Moreover, the entry specifies that Enjō had copied the text in 1448

²³⁷ Okonogi, *Chūsei jūin to Kantō bushi* 中世寺院と関東武士, 107.

²³⁸ Tsuji, “*Chigo kanjō no kisoteki kōsatsu: Shohon no shōkai to seiri* 児灌頂の基礎的考察：諸本の紹介と整理,” 366.

(Bun'an 5) when he was twenty-five. Since (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* identifies that Enjō created it in 1450 (Hōtoku 2) when he was twenty-seven, the parallel of both date and age suggest that the two texts reference the same individual. This suggests that monks at both Chōrakuji and Fumonji were likely liturgists of *chigo kanjō* rituals. Therefore, the evidence so far overwhelmingly points to Serada, Kōzuke province (present-day Gunma prefecture), as being a cultic center of the ritual.

The other monks mentioned in manuscripts B's colophon are shrouded in mystery. Basara Chōben 縛日羅澄弁, "Vajra Chōben," is mentioned alongside Enjō, but his role is unclear. The text was copied by Enkei 円慶 of the Shugendō site of Mount Haguro 羽黒山. Enkei transcribed the text in Aizu, Mutsu province, in 1524 (Ōei 4). The question arises as to why a Shugendō establishment, a place of worship for ascetic mountain dwellers, would have sexual interests in *chigo*. A simple answer would be that Tendai schools had elaborate cultural and intellectual exchanges with Shugendō sites, so it should be no surprise that the *chigo kanjō* ritual made its way to these Tendai-affiliated regions. Also, mountains were exalted as sacred spaces that were traditionally reserved for men and barred to women (*nyonin kinsei* 女人禁制). Male-exclusive spaces tended to cultivate male-male sexual interactions. (This fact poses another sociological question of whether these historic practices were established by design or if they simply evolved over time.) Moreover, other Shugendō complexes, like Mount Hiko 彦山, transmitted Dharma certificates for rituals that expurgate the sin of "sexually violating men," as well as of other procedures related to the intercourse between monks and *chigo*.²³⁹ Therefore, since there is historical evidence for

²³⁹ For an example of Shugendō that attests for the sexual practices of male-male love, see "The method for expurgating the sin of violating men" (*danshi hanzai shōmetsu hō* 男子犯罪消滅法), in the second volume of

male-male sexual practices in this particular Shūgendō site, it would not be implausible to assume that similar activities took place at another Shūgendō complex, such as Mount Haguro.

Manuscript C

Our third text, *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden*, which I will refer to as (C) *Shōgyō hiden*, strongly resembles (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* in that it shares similar content with only slight variations in grammar, vocabulary, and style. (C) *Shōgyō hiden* also differs from B in that it includes a poem, dated to 1571, following the postscript:

The snow of winter, the moon of autumn, and the flowers of spring. Nothing can surpass their beauty.

Spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Who would ever want to choose between them?

雪月花何不勝劣歟
春夏秋冬誰云取捨耶²⁴⁰

(C) *Shōgyō hiden* was written sometime before 1478 in Michiwaki-dera 道脇寺 temple at Tōkōzan 東光山 (Chiba prefecture), another *dangisho* in eastern Japan. As was the case with manuscript B, the text is falsely attributed to the tenth-century Tendai master Genshin, who did not live in the fourteenth century, nor did he ever endorse male-male sexual

“Hikosan shugen saihi injin kuketsu shū 彦山修驗最秘印信口決,” in *Shugendō shōsho*. 4 修驗道章疏, Nihon daizōkyō 日本大藏經 (Tokyo: Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan, 1977), 56-57.

²⁴⁰ The phrase “snow, moon, and flowers” which I rendered as “The snow of winter, the moon of autumn, and the flowers of spring” is taken from a poem written by Bai Juyi, “[Poem] Sent to Chief Musician Yin: a Full Narration of Old Trips to the Southern Land” (*Ji yin xie lu: Dou xu Jiangnan jiu you* 寄殷協律: 多敘江南舊遊). The poem is composed of eight couplets, one of which reads: “My companions in zithers, poetry, and ale have abandoned me; / the seasons of snow, moon, and flowers is when I think most of you, milord! (琴詩酒伴皆拋我、雪月花時最憶君). This is a poem that Bai Juyi wrote to his good friend, Yin Yaofan. I thank Tom Mazanec for this reference and translation.

practices (see “Introduction”). We know from the postscript of the extant copy that the original was copied in 1478, and that that document was later copied in 1526 by Son’yū 存祐. Unfortunately, there is no further information on Son’yū. The extant document was transcribed from the original in 1941 by Iwata Jun’ichi (1900–1945), the famed ethnographer and historian of male-male love in Japan. Iwata installed this transcription in Rikkyō University at the special collection named after his good friend and well-known author, Edogawa Ranpo (1894–1965).

Manuscript D

The fourth text, *Chigo kanjō shidai* 兎灌頂次第—which I will refer to as **D) Kanjō shidai**—is housed in Mount Hiei’s Mudōji 無動寺藏 repository. Dating to the first half of the sixteenth century, this manuscript is completely devoid of either punctuation or reading guides (*kunten*). The extant copy of this manuscript was made by the Tendai monk Shinchō 真超 (with the title “the Varja Dharma Protector of [Ten]dai Peak,” *daishin gohō kongō* 台岑護法金剛). Shinchō transcribed the text in 1818 from a copy found in Myōhō-in 妙法院 in Kyoto. This copy probably dated to the medieval period based on the attributed authorship to Ryōchin.

(D) *Kanjō shidai* was written by Ryōchin 亮珍 (?–1558) of Senmyōji 千妙寺 temple. Ryōchin was born in Oda 小田 in Hitachi 常陸 province. Well-versed in exoteric and esoteric teachings, at the age of sixty-nine he entered the temple, where he worked in administrative duties for seven years; he died at the age of seventy-six.

Senmyōji has an old history and tradition that is associated with the cult of sacred children. In 834 (Shōwa 1), Emperor Junna 淳和天皇 (786–840) issued an imperial decree to build the Shōwaji 承和寺 temple (834–838) in Kōzuke 上野 on Mount Tsukuba 筑波山 (Present-day Gunma prefecture); Ennin 円仁 (794–864) fulfilled this decree. Unfortunately, the temple was destroyed by fire in 939 during the Taira no Masakado Rebellion. In 1351, following an imperial edict issued by Emperor Sukō 崇光天皇 (1334–1398) of the Northern court, it was rebuilt by Ryōshu 亮守. Today it is called Tōeizan Kongōju-in Senmyōji 東睿山金剛壽院千妙寺 temple, in Kuroko 黒子, Chikuse city, Ibaraki prefecture. It was renamed Senmyōji (“The One Thousand Wonderful [Dharma] Temple”) in tribute to a tale of divine child lore that I describe below.

Ryōshu, who belonged to the Taimitsu tradition, transformed the temple into a *dangisho* and a center of Taimitsu learning and practice. Indeed, Senmyōji’s *kanjō* hall initiated many disciples into the Sanmai-ryū 三昧流 lineage of Taimitsu. And while many students hailed from the Kantō region, the temple also recruited inductees from the Tōhoku region—from faraway places like Mutsu 陸奥 and Dewa 出羽 Provinces.²⁴¹ (This may explain why (C) *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* found its way to Aizu in Mutsu.)

Senmyōji was an influential, prestigious institution of Taimitsu. Throughout the Muromachi period it had more than seven hundred branch temples (*matsuji* 末寺) and temple-based confraternities (*monto ji'in* 門徒寺院). Senmyōji gradually introduced the

²⁴¹ Watanabe, “*Sonshun no gakukei ni tsuite* 尊舜の学系について,” 125.

important initiation ritual of *denbō kanjō*, a ceremony that gives an individual priest the status of a master.

For the Taimitsu lineage of Sanmai-ryū, see the following chart (from Ryōyū to Ryōshu of Senmyōji):²⁴²

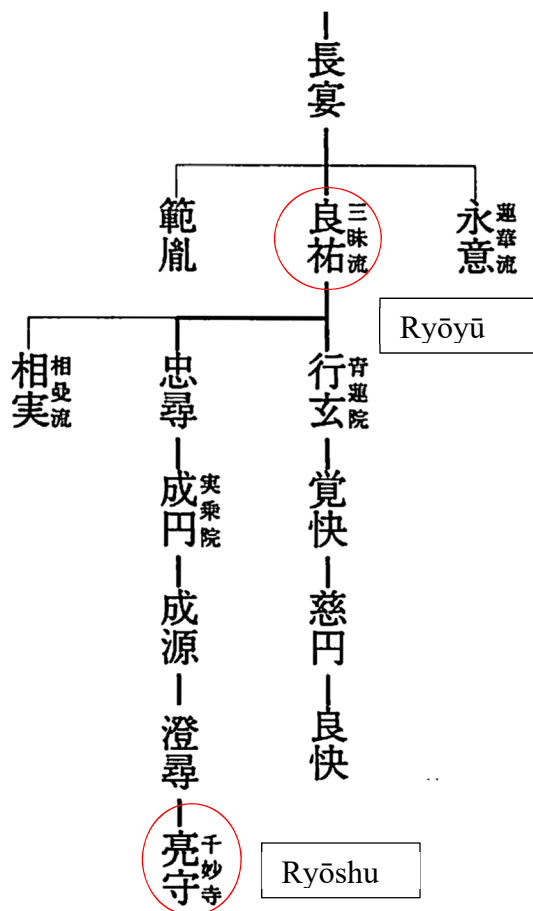


Illustration 4. Taimitsu lineages.

²⁴² Satoko Koyama, *Gohō Dōji shinkō no kenkyū* 護法童子信仰の研究 (Kyoto: Jishōsha Shuppan, 2003), 142.

Senmyōji was a doctrinally fertile ground for developing *chigo kanjō*. This was not only because it was a *dangisho* in good standing with the other Taimitsu establishments of the East, but also because the temple celebrated the cult of sacred children in combination with the worship of the *Lotus Sutra*, both of which were essential to the *chigo kanjō* tradition. Senmyōji houses cultural treasures that express devotion to sacred children, including images of *gohō dōji* 護法童子, *oto gohō* 乙護法, and other *dōji* icons, as well as prominent legends concerning abbots meeting children who performed wonders as the local deities of Senmyōji. More explicitly, one origin narrative of Senmyōji, *Senmyōji ryaku engi sōkō* 千妙寺略縁起草稿 (“A Rough Draft of the Abbreviated Origins of Senmyōji Temple”) is particularly pertinent. After praising the historical Buddhas, it briefly discusses Tendai masters such as Saichō and Ennin with regards to their virtuous dissemination of the *Lotus Sutra* in eastern Japan.²⁴⁴ It then describes the miraculous event when the apparition of the deity of the local mountain, a young boy (*dōji* 童子), appeared before Ryōshu, the abbot of Senmyōji. In tribute, Ryōshu engraved one thousand pebbles each with one character from the *Lotus Sutra*, and to each he made a vow and paid his respects. But overnight, the little stones scattered about. When Ryōshu went to look for the stones the next morning, he encountered a child alongside the Kokai river 小貝川. The child asked where he was going, so Ryōshu shared the events of the previous night. The child then led Ryōshu to a different location, where the two witnessed the stones multiplying into tens of thousands of stones, all

²⁴⁴ Saichō is said to have carved an icon of Shakyamuni for Saga Emperor. The text explains that because Saichō made a vow to disseminate the teachings of the Lotus sutra in the Kantō region, his disciple Ennin took the burden to fulfill his master’s desire and spread the teachings in Kantō. For the text, see the following text: 嵯峨ノ釈迦ノ像ヲ吾祖伝教大師之是模シテ刻サム、是レ衆生教化ノ為メニシテ、関東法華弘通ノ御誓願ナレバ、御弟子慈覚大師之ヲ背負フテ関東二弘教ス、不思議ナルカナ

engraved with characters from the *Lotus Sutra*. The child asked Ryōshu to quickly “move [the temple] to this place, since it has a karmic affinity to the dual exo-esoteric teachings of the Lotus and Nenbutsu.” Ryōshu agreed, and claimed that the temple was directly authorized by the Emperor (*chokugakuji* 勅額寺). As it happens, Emperor Sukō soon unexpectedly issued an official decree to move the temple to Kuroko and renamed it Senmyōji—a decision wrought from the magical workings of the child.²⁴⁵ For this reason, belief in sacred children and worship of the *Lotus Sutra*—both crucial elements in the *chigo kanjō* cultic tradition—lay at the heart of Senmyōji’s cult.

²⁴⁵ *Sekijō chōshi: Shiryō hen* 関城町史：史料編, 4 vols., vol. 1 (Ibaraki-ken Makabe-gun Sekijō-machi: Sekijō-machi, 1983).

Manuscript E

A fifth text, *Chigo kanjō shiki* 兎灌頂私記, can be found in the Shinnyo-zō 真如藏 storehouse of Mount. Hiei. I will refer to this text as E) *Shinyozō kanjō*. The monk (*wajō* 和尚) Gikō Taishin 義広大進 transmitted this text's teaching in the *kanjō* of the Shingon-in 真言院 cloister in Chōrakuji 長樂寺 at Serada. From the end of the Kamakura period (1185–1333), the Shingon-in was a branch temple (*betsuin*) attached to the Fukōan 普光庵, a pagoda-like structure. The fact that the Shingon-in was a hall designed for the *kanjō* initiation—and not just for copying manuscripts,²⁴⁶ as is the case with other buildings—strongly suggests that the ritual was performed here.

Though previous scholarship did not identify Gikō in the historical record,²⁴⁷ strong evidence matches him with another contemporaneous Gikō who received a *kanjō* initiation in the *kanjō* chamber at Chōrakuji. The Gikō of our text is probably the same Gikō, who can also be traced back to the Yōjō-ryū lineage of Taimitsu,²⁴⁸ the same lineage that the figures of manuscript A—Eichō, Kōkai, and Shumyō—were affiliated with.

Gikō Taishin transmitted the text to the monk Kōkei 幸慶 of the Fudō'in 不動院 at Tōkōji 東光寺 in Hitachi province 常陸国. The use of the word *den* 伝 ([oral] transmission) in the postscript of E) *Chigo kanjō shiki* suggests that they were master and disciple. The

²⁴⁶ Sadakata Akira 定方晟, *Chōrakuji kanjō monjo no kenkyū* 長樂寺灌頂文書の研究 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2009), 170; Gitetsu, *Chōrakuji Eiroku nikki* 長樂寺永祿日記, ed. Minegishi Sumio 峰岸純夫, *Shiryō sanshū. Kokiroku hen 135 史料纂集. 古記録編* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 2003), 323.

²⁴⁷ That this monk's name is Gikō and not Yoshihiro, is evident from many other monks of Chōrakuji who had their names begin with Gi 義, such as Gieki 義益, Gikai 義海, Gisen 義泉, and so on. 義哲 Gitetsu, *Chōrakuji Eiroku nikki* 長樂寺永祿日記, 320.

²⁴⁸ See the two lineage charts that Okonogi extracted from multiple sources, Okonogi, *Chūsei jiin to Kantō bushi* 中世寺院と関東武士, 58-59.

transmission took place at Shida estate 信太荘 (Today's Tsuchiura and Niihari in Ibaraki prefecture), in Ōtani village 大谷郷, Mount Iō-zan 医王山. Tōkōji temple was founded in 1607 by Shin'an Shunden 心庵春伝, which demonstrates that our text could have been an Edo period copy, although the dating of the temple could be wrong, since other scholars date the text as being late-Muromachi.

Manuscript F

Manuscript F does not have a title, but it is provisionally labeled *Chigo kanjō shiki* 児灌頂式 (1473) in the *Shibuya mokuroku* catalog. The text was taught by the monk (*hō'in* 法印) Chōshin 澄心 and signed by Jisshun 実俊 and was preserved at Jōbodai-in 成菩提院, in Maibara 米原, Kashiwabara city 柏原, Shiga Prefecture, where it is housed.²⁴⁹ This text will be referred to as F) Jōbodai'in manuscript.

Though we know very little information about Jisshun, we do know he was affiliated with the Jōkyōbō 浄教房 residence, where he was appointed supervisor (*tandai* 探題) in 1665.²⁵⁰ He collected many of the texts that are preserved at the Shinnyo-zō archive of Eizan Bunko; indeed, from 1673 to 1681, he dedicated himself to copying old texts.²⁵¹ He died at the age of eighty-five.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Photocopies of this manuscript were provided to me by Hikone Castle Museum.

²⁵⁰ Kon, "*Chigo* 稚児," 110.

²⁵¹ Tanaka Takako 田中貴子, "*Keiran shūyōshū*" *no sekai* 「溪嵐拾葉集」の世界 (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2003), 59.

²⁵² Kon, "*Chigo* 稚児," 100.

Jōbodai'in was a medieval temple originally known as Enjōji 円乗寺. According to extant medieval texts, it was considered one of the “three great temples” of doctrinal debates. It was established by the monk Jōshun 貞舜 (1349–1422); the Dharma heirs that soon followed him were Keishun 慶舜 (1372–1441) and Shunkai 春海 (1403–?). Together they were known as the “the three great masters of Kashiwabara.” During the tenure of Keishun, Jōbodai'in had a *kanjō* chapel (*kanshitsu* 灌室) where disciples were initiated into the Taimitsu lineage of Nishiyama-ryū 西山流. Both Keishun and Shunkai actively engaged in Taimitsu rituals, performed *kanjō* rites, and produced ritual manuals, all while contributing to the *dangisho* endeavor of copying doctrinal materials.²⁵³

The (F) Jōbodai'in manuscript includes central doctrinal components from the Sannō Shinto tradition regarding both the use of a Sannō mandala and the manifestation of the god Sannō in the *chigo kanjō* ritual. Additional doctrinal speculation about the non-duality between *chigo* and the Sannō deity was also transmitted in Jōbodai'in separate from the *kanjō* initiations. As we shall see later on, the discourse on Sannō Shinto and *chigo* had also formed the doctrinal basis of the sexual union between monks and acolytes.

Manuscript G

Finally, the seventh text, *Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō* 児灌頂口決相承, a copy of the earliest dated *chigo kanjō* text, will be referred to as (G) *Kuketsu sōjō*. It was transmitted from Kōjun 光順 to Kōkai 幸海 in 1442 (Kakitsu 2.8.11). Though literature scholar Tsuji

²⁵³ Jōbodai'in Shiryō Kenkyūkai, *Tendai dangisho Jōbodai'in no rekishi* 天台談義所成菩提院の歴史, 33-38.

Shōko suggests that the transmission involves just copying, the use of the character *den* strongly suggests an oral component in the transmission—likely as part of a ritual setting. The text ends with an oath (*kishōmon*) that Kōkai takes, which promises to hold the text in secrecy.

For many years, scholars have wondered who Kōkai was, and where he completed the manuscript. One possible candidate is a Kōkai from Mount Hiei, an amanuensis who copied the *Tendai jikizō* 天台直雜, a document that provides a wealth of information on doctrines and rituals of the Eshin-ryū lineage. For example, it describes rites such as the Hokke Hakkō (Eight Lectures on the Lotus Sutra), and includes various dialogues (*mondō*) between masters and disciples. It was compiled by Jikikai 直海 around the Ōei 応永 years (1394–1428). In 1478, fifty years after its compilation, the great Tendai priest Son’ei 尊栄 instructed Kōkai to copy the *Tendai jikizō* text at the Yokawa Kaodani 横川樺尾谷 on Mount Hiei.

This theory is challenged by the fact that, according to the first page of (G) *Kuketsu sōjō*, Kōkai was bestowed with these teachings and initiation by Kōjun 光順—third abbot of Gassanji 月山寺 in Kantō, a temple in eastern Japan that is not directly related to Mount Hiei. In addition, the Tendai *Shibuya mokuroku* catalog lists several works copied by a Kōkai of Gassanji around the mid-fifteenth century.

Religion scholar Nakano Maori 中野真麻理 solved the conundrum by examining multiple colophons and secondary literature. It appears that Son’ei was forced to leave Mount Hiei due to unavoidable circumstances. But in 1485 (Bunmei 17), he returned there to become a candidate for doctrinal debates (*ryūgi* 豎義). Upon his return he borrowed a

copy of the *Tendai jikizō* from Gassanji's Yūken 宥賢 and completed the copying enterprise begun by Kōkai. This means that he had close connections with Gassanji—which was likely the haven to which he escaped during his ordeal. This account leads Nakano to assume that, though Hieizan's Son'ei 尊栄 is written with different characters, nonetheless he is the same person as Gassanji's Son'ei 尊叡, the second abbot of the temple.²⁵⁴ Given the similar time-period and joint affiliation with Mount Hiei, this identified Son'ei 尊栄 is very likely also the Son'ei in our manuscript A. Consequently, there must have been only one Kōkai, a Mount Hiei monk who entered Gassanji during the same period as Son'ei. Thus, according to (A) *Kanjō shi*, Kōkai received the *chigo kanjō* directly from Kōjun, Gassanji's next in line for the abbacy of the Kenmyōsei Godō-in 見明星悟道院 chapel in Gassanji.

Gassanji is located in Yōkōzan 曜光山, in present-day Sakurakawa, in western Ibaraki prefecture—just about 24 kilometers from the previously mentioned Senmyōji and 120 kilometers from Michiwaki-dera in Tōkōzan. Gassanji was founded in Hitachi province as a Hossō temple by Tokuitsu 徳一 in 796 (Enryaku 15). In 1430 (Eikyō 2), the monastery changed its affiliation from Hossō to Tendai and became the branch temple of Shūkōji 宗光寺 at Naganuma 長沼, Shimotsuke province 下野 (modern-day Tochigi prefecture). In 1445 (Bun'an 2), it was moved to its current location.

Gassanji also had ties with Senmyōji, where D) *Kanjō shidai* was transcribed. For example, the *Senmyōji nenpu ki* 千妙寺年譜記抄 states that Sonshun 尊舜, the disciple of

²⁵⁴ Nakano Maori 中野真麻理, "Tendai dangisho no setsuwa: 'Ichijō shūgyokusho' to Suwa no shinmon 天台宗談義所の説話：『一乗拾玉抄』と諏訪の神文," *Kokubungaku kenkyū shiryōkan kiyō* 国文学研究資料館紀要 22 (1996), 179-184.

Son'ei, studied under his teacher in Gassanji at the age of ten, but when the seventh abbot of Senmyōji, Ryōzen 亮禪, passed away (1501), Sonshun was called upon to enter Senmyōji instead. Sonshun handled bureaucratic affairs in the temple for about a decade until his death in 1514 at the age of sixty-four. Another document, the *Hokekyō shūrin shūyōshō* 法華經鷲林拾葉鈔, similarly claims that Sonshun died in Senmyōji, but dates his death to 1512.²⁵⁵ Sonshun had even changed his name to Ryōson 亮尊 to match the first character of his name to the names of other abbots of Senmyōji.

It is pertinent to note that Gassanji, Senmyōji, Fumonji, Michiwaki-dera, and Jōbodai-in were all seminaries (*dangisho*), and, there was an ongoing exchange of people and texts between them. This fact suggests that the *dangisho* have played a crucial role in the development and dissemination of *chigo kanjō* in central and eastern Japan. It also means that *chigo kanjō* manuscripts were written in temples that had intimate ties to one another, which bolsters the idea that monks from the *dangisho* institutions mentioned above cooperated with each other in developing the *chigo kanjō* ritual complex. Learning about *chigo kanjō* also expands our understanding of the workings of the *dangisho* institutions. Therefore, it is fitting to say a few words about the development of *dangisho* temples in medieval Japan to better understand the development of *chigo kanjō*.

The Development of Dangisho: Seminal Seminaries in Medieval Japan

In the ancient era (800–1000), written knowledge was monopolized, in both its production and dissemination, by the aristocracy, especially in capital cities such as Nara

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 180.

and Kyoto and their Buddhist scholarly circles. In contrast, in the early-modern period (beginning in the 1600s), various configurations of written knowledge were consolidated and made widely accessible with the rise of the publishing industry. In between these two eras, intellectual historian Sonehara Satoshi claims, in the late middle ages (1400s–1500s) knowledge was transmitted primarily via the *dangisho* located throughout central Japan.²⁵⁶ What follows, is a brief history of the development of *dangisho*, noting that this portion of the history of Japanese religion is an academic *terra incognita*, especially outside Japan.

The transition of knowledge centers from the ancient period capital cities to the *dangisho* resulted in large part from both the vast geographic reach of the seminaries and their function as training grounds for educated scholastics. These institutions, which emerged from the late thirteenth-early fourteen centuries, were provincial temples affiliated with many religious sects: Tendai, Shingon, Nichiren, Pure Land, and others.²⁵⁷ They were typically located around central circuits, such as the environs of state-supported temples (*kokubunji* 国分寺) and provincial offices (*kokufu* 国府), as well as alongside great rivers.²⁵⁸ The *dangisho* were predominantly situated in eastern Japan, with the majority located in the Kantō area. As Tendai scholar Ogami Kanchū observes, Tendai *dangisho* temples spread from Ōmi province eastward, extending from the hub of Enryakuji temple and Hie shrine

²⁵⁶ Sonehara Satoshi 曾根原理, “Tendai *dangisho* ji’in no seiritsu to tenkai 天台談議所寺院の成立と展開,” in *Nihon ni okeru honkaku shisō no tenkai: Chūsei kōki no Tendaishū dangisho jiin o chūshin ni* 日本における本覚思想の展開：中世後期の天台宗談義所寺院を中心に, ed. Sonehara Satoshi 曾根原理 (Sendai: Sonehara Satoshi, 2012).

²⁵⁷ The first *dangisho* to be established was Tsuganeji 津金寺 in Shinano 信濃 province, which was built one hundred years before Jōbodai’in. See “Tendai jiin ni okeru shisō no taikai: Jōbodaiin Jōshun wo megutte 天台寺院における思想の体系--成菩提院貞舜をめぐる.”

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

into the Kantō region.²⁵⁹ The *dangisho* were generally situated near other seminaries—often just one kilometer apart, but sometimes one hundred kilometers—so as to enable cooperation.²⁶⁰ Indeed, we have seen the benefit of this collaborative environment in the relationships formed among the monks and texts of Chōrakuji, Fumonji, Senmyōji, and Gassanji, as I outlined in the previous section. Also, Ogami notes that, of the medieval era’s sixty-one *dangisho* situated all over Japan, nine of them were in the area of Kōzuke, the region of Chōrakuji.²⁶¹ Significantly, the cradle of *chigo kanjō* in the east lies in the most concentrated area of *dangisho* temples.

But what are *dangisho*, and what was their function? *Dangisho* (“places of *dangi*”) were temples in which *dangi* (doctrinal discussions) were held. Whereas *rongi* (doctrinal debates) were conducted for a relatively short time, such as a few hours, *dangi* were lengthy doctrinal deliberations.²⁶² Also, while *rongi* were formalized and held publicly in Buddhist ceremonies, *dangi* were more free-form,²⁶³ either performed in the format of lectures or written in the form of essays.²⁶⁴ *Dangi* were comprised of lectures on the meaning of sutras as well as dialogues (*mondō* 問答) between master and his student. In a standard *dangi* text,

²⁵⁹ Ogami Kanchū 尾上寛仲, “Chūko Tendai ni okeru dangisho 中古天台に於ける談義所,” *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度学仏教学研究 8, no. 1 (1960).

²⁶⁰ Sonehara, “Tendai jiin ni okeru shisō no taikai: Jōbodaiin Jōshun wo megutte 天台寺院における思想の体系--成菩提院貞舜をめぐって.”

²⁶¹ Ogami Kanchū 尾上寛仲, “Kantō no Tendai shū dangisho: Senba dangisho wo chūshin to shite (jō) 関東の天台宗談義所：仙波談義所を中心として（上）,” *Kanazawa bunko kenkyū* 金沢文庫研究 16, no. 3 (1970).

²⁶² Other names for *dangisho* included: *dansho* 談所, *dangisho* 談義処, *gakushitsu* 学室, *gakumonsho* 学問所, 学林 *gakurin*. See Watanabe Mariko 渡辺麻里子, “Chūsei ni okeru sōryo no gakumon: Dangisho to iu shiten kara 中世における僧侶の学問：談義書という視点から,” *Hirosaki daigaku kokugo kokubungaku* 弘前大学国語国文学 28 (2007): 31.

²⁶³ Uejima Susumu draws this distinction in his discussion on Shingon *dangi*. See Uejima Susumu 上島享, “Kamakura jidai no Bukkyō,” in *Iwanami koza Nihon rekishi: Chūsei 1* 岩波講座日本歴史：中世 1, ed. Ootsu Tooru 大津透, Sakurai Eiji 桜井英治, and Fujii Joji 藤井譲治 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2013).

²⁶⁴ Ogami, “Chūko Tendai ni okeru dangisho 中古天台に於ける談義所,” 255.

the role of the scholarly monk teacher was usually called *nōke* 能化 (“educator”) or *gakutō* 学頭 (“head of learning”); the student was known as *shoke* 所化 (“educand”). *Dangi* performances could host several teachers at the same time. Over time, the role of “educator” extended beyond the confines of the temple. Monks of the *dangisho* would also preach *dangi* material to the local population.²⁶⁵ It is also important to note that *dangi* discussions were not only performed inside temples and could be held at other venues.²⁶⁶

The chief role of *dangisho*, according to Ogami Kanchū, was as a rigorous preparatory school that trained students to pass the exams and receive the qualification of a doctrinal debate “answerer” (*rissha* 豎者) on Mount Hiei. Ogami also highlights that *dangisho* were centers for educating debaters in the performance of kami-centered ceremonies in Buddhist rituals (*hōe* 法会). Since many Tendai temples had their own Hie shrine, it was necessary to perform Buddhist rituals for the benefit of the kami (*hōraku* 法楽), which also incorporated Buddhist debates.²⁶⁷ The *dangisho* filled this void by training liturgical specialists in kami worship.

In order to understand how *chigo kanjō* was taught, we must examine the *dangisho*’s pedagogical *modus operandi*. *Dangisho* were institutions where students received the “debate” texts of the teacher as Dharma transmissions.²⁶⁸ As Tendai scholar Watanabe Mariko notes, a student would write down the entire *dangi* debate a teacher lectured to him; afterward the student would explain unclear passages, add his own points, incorporate new

²⁶⁵ Sonehara, “Tendai dangisho ji’in no seiritsu to tenkai 天台談議所寺院の成立と展開,” 74-75.

²⁶⁶ Watanabe, “Chūsei ni okeru sōryo no gakumon: Dangisho to iu shiten kara 中世における僧侶の学問：談義書という視点から,” 31.

²⁶⁷ Ogami, “Chūko Tendai ni okeru dangisho 中古天台に於ける談義所,” 258.

²⁶⁸ Sonehara, “Tendai dangisho ji’in no seiritsu to tenkai 天台談議所寺院の成立と展開,” 74.

citations, and, if necessary, organize the text anew.²⁶⁹ When or if the student later became teacher, the practice would begin all over again—the texts thus copiously transcribed, compiled, and transferred to the next person in the monastic line.²⁷⁰ This approach is, of course, very different from the *chigo kanjō* ritual—a secret initiation in a closed-off world.

Sonehara Satoshi has closely examined the dissemination of texts by the monk Jōshun 貞舜 (1349–1422)—one of the aforementioned three great masters of Kashiwabara—from Jōbodai’in temple in Shiga, an area neighboring Mount Hiei. This temple transmitted its teachings via the repeated process of compiling texts described above, which Sonehara refers to as an “open orientation” (*hirakareta hōkōsei* 開かれた方向性). Far from being a transmission that took place between a certain group of elites, this approach provided ambitious and qualified with people the opportunity to receive Buddhist teachings—for which reason these centers had a constant movement and influx of students and practitioners.²⁷¹

Sonehara’s treatment focuses mostly on the effort of producing commentaries, compilations, and copying texts, specifically *jikidan*. While Sonehara’s analysis is crucial for understanding the *modus operandi* of *dangisho*, it must be noted that his interpretation applies specifically to the newly emerging genre of *jikidan* 直談, which were textual simplifications of earlier doctrinal expositions. These simplifications were part of the process by which knowledge—which theretofore had been confined to a sacerdotal

²⁶⁹ Watanabe Mariko 渡辺麻里子, “‘Shūrin shūyō shō’ kiji taishōhyō (1): Chūsei ni okeru ‘Hōkkekyō’ dangisho no isō 『鷲林拾葉鈔』記事対照表(一) : 中世における『法華経』談義書の位相,” *Rōnso Ajia no bunka to shisō* 論叢アジアの文化と思想 9 (2000): 12.

²⁷⁰ Sonehara, “Tendai dangisho ji’in no seiritsu to tenkai 天台談議所寺院の成立と展開,” 74-75.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

lineages—transitioned to becoming a commodity available to the public sphere, a transformation that took place in the fifteenth century. *Jikidan* were the public medium of *dangisho*: commentaries on sutras preached to common people by missionary monks. *Jikidan* incorporated several textual genres, such as Japanese poetry (*waka* 和歌), didactic tales (*setsuwa* 説話), and parables (*tatoe banashi* たとえばなし), so as to appeal to a broader audience, one less attuned to the elusive meanings of scripture.

There is an extensive debate in current scholarship concerning what texts are *dangi* and what are *jikidan*. For example, Watanabe Mariko notes that the term “*dangi*” can also refer to a process whereby a student is permitted to study and transcribe a text not in the lecture setting.²⁷² Also, some scholars have different definitions for *dangisho* texts. While Sonehara sees the emergence of *jikidan* in the context of the transformation of knowledge propagation, Watanabe rejects the term “*jikidan*” altogether. To Watanabe, *dangi* texts should be called the evermore confusing term “*dangisho*” 談義書 (*dangi* texts)—a homonym for its institution. Terms such as “*jikidanshō*” 直談抄 or *jikidan* should be avoided, claims Watanabe, because they encompass a broad range of meanings.²⁷³ And while both Watanabe and Sonehara seem to argue that the genre of *dangi* texts is heterogenous, most of their discussion and other scholarly analysis concerns commentarial literature, especially of the *Lotus Sutra*. Ritual is rarely the object of *dangi*-related scholarly discussions,²⁷⁴ which leaves underexamined the role of *kanjō* rituals.

²⁷² Watanabe, “Chūsei ni okeru sōryo no gakumon: Dangisho to iu shiten kara 中世における僧侶の学問：談義書という視点から,” 30.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 31.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 32. Sonehara Satoshi and the recent study on Jobodai’in do acknowledge the immense transmission of ritual manuals in *dangisho* establishments, but there is no study or analysis of how these rituals can be integrated into the larger scholarly discussion on *dangi*, and whether these were actual “*dangi*” texts. Sonehara, “Tendai *dangisho* ji’in no seiritsu to tenkai 天台談議所寺院の成立と展開.”

In contrast, the *chigo kanjō* texts clearly belong to a different mode of transmission. The ritual was esoteric, both in terms of Buddhist esotericism and in the sense of secretive practices, whereby it was hidden from the laity and reserved to monastic lineages. The *chigo kanjō* manuals and commentaries were not included in grand lectures or debates and were not shown to people outside the monastery, not least on account of their transgressive and sexual subject matter. They are also difficult texts to decipher for people who have never received a *kanjō*—not to mention practiced Buddhist rituals in general—and they certainly do not utilize the popular literary themes that make other material more palatable. Even the conspicuous literary element that was integrated into *chigo kanjō*, the *Jidō setsuwa* (Tale of Jidō), was largely consumed as a literary medium by aristocratic and monastic ranks until it became a Noh play. Specifically, those who practiced and transmitted the *sokui-hō* cycle of initiatory knowledge, so intimately associated with kingship, courtiers, and literati. Besides, the *chigo kanjō* ritual involved antinomian practices and was not meant to be shared with uninitiated parishioners. As previously mentioned, Tsuji Shōko writes that *chigo kanjō* was produced as part of extensive *dangisho* copying. But, since she does not seem to acknowledge the *performance* of the ritual *chigo kanjō*, she inadvertently downplays the ritual's practice. Conversely, I propose that *chigo kanjō* was not, in essence, a *dangi text*; it was a ritual performed in *dangi* institutions that was later documented in texts according to conventional customs of record keeping. I posit that *chigo kanjō* was first and foremost performed.

I base my assertion in part on the fact that *dangisho* were not just places for copying texts; they were also centers for ritual practice. During the medieval period, the Tendai school was known for its Five *Kanjō* Halls of the Mountain: Shōgaku'in 正覺院, Gyōkō-bō

行光房, Sōjibō 総持房, Keisoku'in 鷄足院, and Hōman'in 法曼院. But lesser-known—indeed, largely unexamined—are peripheral *kanjō* halls, important for monks and disciples in the provinces. I will now provide an overview of these institutions.

Driven by the need to provide a practice hall that could accommodate *kanjō* rituals in the East, in 1221 Eichō founded the temple Chōrakuji on the Nitta estate in Kōzuke (present-day Gunma). This estate belonged in the Heian period (794–1185) to Minamoto house, but during the Muromachi era the land was passed down to the Ashikaga ruling family. And though the Nitta estate was far from Kyoto, it was still very important to the military rulers who were interested in ownership of land and control of people. By the 1200s, the Kamakura shogunate is pretty strong and its presence extends to the region, as the Nitta clan was a close supporter of Kamakura.

Eichō also established the Mitsuzō'in 密蔵院 temple in Owari province (near present-day Nagoya). Both temples thus provided abhiseka halls to the Yōjō-ryū lineage, the line of *chigo kanjō*. (Note that, though there were already *kanjō* halls affiliated with Taimitsu lineages in Shoshazan 書写山 at Harima 播磨 province, and also the Henjōin 遍照院 at Kinzanji 金山寺 in Bizen 備前, but they eventually joined the Anō-ryū and separated henceforth from the Yōjō-ryū branch.)²⁷⁵

As noted earlier, Fumonji and Senmyōji also had spaces in which to conduct initiations, and Jōbodai'in also had a *kanjō* room (*kanshitsu* 灌室) in its premises. As for the latter, since Jōbodai'in's founder, Jōshun, and the second abbot Keishun 慶舜 belonged to

²⁷⁵ Sadakata Akira 定方晟, *Chōrakuji kanjō monjo no kenkyū* 長樂寺灌頂文書の研究 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2009), 7.

the Taimitsu lineage of Nishiyama-ryū 西山流, it is stressed that the *kanjō* held at Jōbodai'in during their lifetimes (late-fourteenth to early-fifteenth century) belonged to the Nishiyama-ryū line.²⁷⁶ Scholars point out that Taimitsu texts and scriptures had been introduced to Jōbodai'in from the time of Keishun—demonstrating that Keishun and his followers were more supportive of Taimitsu principles than their founder had been.²⁷⁷ For instance, chapters from the comprehensive ritual encyclopedia the *Asabasho* were not just preserved in the temple, they were also copied seventy times. In fact, scholars argue that the reason so many *kanjō* scrolls were housed in Jōbodai'in was because it had a *kanjō* hall.²⁷⁸ That contention indicates there was a direct connection between copying and ritual space—and, by implication, ritual practice. Note too that the construction of the abhiseka hall and the enterprise of copymaking were tightly connected. One interesting example involves the opening of a *kanjō* initiation platform in Jōbodai'in in 1547. Gōnin 豪仁 copied one scroll of *Taikanki* 胎灌記, a Taimitsu *kanjō* ritual manual, and recorded that the copying took place in tandem with the launch of the new platform by Genshō Hō'in 源繼法印. That is, the construction of an initiation platform was accompanied by the copying of an abhiseka document. Altogether, it seems the practices of copying *kanjō* differed from those of copying conventional dangi texts. It is unlikely that the copying of *kanjō* manuals qualified on its own as a transmission per se; it is much more probable that the process of copying was tied to ritual implementation.

²⁷⁶ Jōbodaiin Shiryō Kenkyūkai, *Tendai dangisho Jōbodai'in no rekishi* 天台談義所成菩提院の歴史, 18-32.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

Though the previous example speaks of the development of initiation space and copying of *kanjō* documents occurring in tandem, I contend that historically, *chigo kanjō* was performed before it was copied. To substantiate this claim I will identify when other types of *kanjō* were practiced in Taimitsu lineages. For this purpose, since most of our *chigo kanjō* rituals are related to Chōrakuji, let us first consider this temple. From examining the transmission certificates (*injin* 印信) and lineages (*kechimiyaku* 血脈) of Chōrakuji, Okonogi Teruyuki has connected the Chōrakuji line to Taimitsu lineages. A *koka* 許可 (completion of initiation) certificate that Enni Ben'en 円爾弁円 (1202–1280)—himself a Zen-Taimitsu monk initiated by Eichō in Chōrakuji—gave to his disciple Egyō 恵暁 in Tofukuji 東福寺 shows that the Chōrakuji lineage goes back a long way: to the Tani-ryū 谷流 (Kōgei 皇慶), Sōgon-ryū 双巖流 (Raishō 賴昭), Bucchō-ryū 仏頂流 (Gyōgen 行巖), and Ano-ryū 穴太流 (Shōshō 聖昭)—finally ending with the Yōjō-ryū 葉上流 (Eisai), which we know is Chōrakuji's main lineage. Therefore, it seems undeniable that the *kanjō* rituals that took place in Chōrakuji were affiliated with the orthodox lineages of Taimitsu, a point that aligns with our earlier claim that *chigo kanjō* was practiced within a Taimitsu lineage, rather than an Eshin-ryū one.²⁷⁹

Let us next examine just how *kanjō* in Taimitsu were both practiced and copied. If we take Enni Ben'en's certificate and transmission lineage as an example, it is evident that the Taimitsu *denbō kanjō* would begin with *shido kegyō* (preparatory practices), the bestowal of *sanmaya* precepts, and then the initiation into the Womb or Diamond Realm—the *kanjō* consecration proper. After the ritual, a group of scholarly monks prepared and

²⁷⁹ Okonogi, *Chūsei jūin to Kantō bushi* 中世寺院と関東武士, 54.

copied transmission certificates for the various ritual procedures (*giki* 儀軌), including the construction of the altar, the *goma* fire ritual, and the forming of mudras, mantras, and magical spells. The names of the lineage would be added to the certificates, each of which attested to the initiation.²⁸⁰ This practice serves as further evidence that both the copying of *kanjō*-related documents and the performance of ritual took place at *dangisho*—and that the ritual preceded the copying.

The vast quantity of transmission certificates and *kanjō* ritual procedures found in both Chōrakuji and Jōbodai'in strongly indicate that large-scale performance of *kanjō* rituals took place at these *dangisho*. These certificates follow the template and format of other Dharma seals transmitted in Shingon rituals, meaning that a plethora of these certificates were issued in the context of *kanjō* ceremonies. Since the certificate, as a form of authorization, was given to the initiated, it is improbable that they were part of the large-scale copying of *dangisho* texts. As noted above, substantial evidence suggests *dangisho*'s *kanjō* halls were active during the time *chigo kanjō* was practiced. Also, in the manuscripts described in the previous section we have seen two significant points: that transmissions of *chigo kanjō* took place at specific *kanjō* halls (such as the Shingon-in), and that the direct references to transmissions between master and disciple (as in the (F) Jōbodai'in manuscript and (G) *Kuketsu sōjō*) undoubtedly concern only ritual initiations and not an extensive copymaking practice. In the final analysis, it seems that *dangisho* temples had a vested interest in performing *kanjō* (not to mention its economic benefits of pursuing *kanjō*), and that monks imparted the knowledge related to *kanjō* initiations so as to perform the consecration and initiate disciples to their respective lineages.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 55.

While there are no transmission certificates pertaining to *chigo kanjō* specifically, this should not dissuade us from concluding that the ritual was in fact performed. What is more significant is the fact that the format of the seven *chigo kanjō* texts is normative and prescriptive, written for ritual practitioners, and not just for recording purposes. Indeed, a close scrutiny of the prescriptive texts reveals a template structure commonly used when outlining ritual practices. Take, for example, various entries intended to be completed by practitioners, such as *nengō gappi* 年号月日 (“name of year and date”), as well as the fact that initiands were not specifically named but were simply referred to as “Mr. So-and-so” (*nanigashi* 某). During rituals, monks wrote this information on a separate piece of paper to be awarded to the initiate later. Unlike doctrinal commentaries of *dangisho*, which were read as-is and copied for posterity, these multipurpose forms were repeatedly used and designed to properly instruct ritual practitioners. For example, the (D) *Kanjō shidai* includes a long list of ritual manuals and oral transmissions bearing multiple titles and vague ritual descriptions that cannot be easily parsed without additional information or guidance. This manuscript also has an individuality about it compared to other *chigo kanjō* texts: it includes some information that others do not, and lacks information found in others. Indeed, its instructions were more prompts than recording of past consecrations; its authors assumed readers would be familiar with its contents because *chigo kanjō* was meant to be performed rather than read.

The fact that high-ranking masters, those who carried out *kanjō* consecration proper, are explicitly mentioned by name in the postscripts of the manuscripts also indicates that the ritual was performed and not just studied. To help explain this we can look at scholarship by

Abe Yasurō²⁸¹ and Dōmoto Masaki²⁸² who have uncovered a variety of both forged documents and parodic material related to the topic of male-male sexuality. These materials usually list pseudonyms, or otherwise omit names of monks. The monks who are named in the *chigo kanjō* manuscripts were well-known clerics in their time. The chances that a monk who lived in the same period as the manuscript's production would be identified as taking part in a ritual he did not attend are very slim, since doing so would be seen as a great offense. There is of course a slight possibility that one would forge names in order to claim legitimacy for the ritual. This is in fact explored in the next section when we discuss “imaginary lineages,” but such attributions and linkage is often made to patriarchs and great founders. The monks mentioned in the *chigo kanjō* manuscript may have been important in their respective regions, but they are still local, and their names would not be recognized in other provinces. Given the widespread production and dissemination of the text, it would not make sense to forge their creators' names. Moreover, some documents, such as the (F) Jōbodai'in manuscript and (G) *Kuketsu sōjō*, explicitly name the teacher and disciple of the transmission, thus constituting historical evidence that specific transmissions took place.

In addition, the *chigo kanjō* texts contain one element that is widely shared by *dangi* texts: repeated warnings to not transmit knowledge to “improper recipients,” namely, those *chigo* not yet qualified to be consecrated. Though this type of warning is common in other *kanjō* texts and Esoteric documents in general, the peculiarity of *dangisho* “warnings” is that they also caution disciples to not practice bribery—to not receive unethical payment for

²⁸¹ For other Shingon parodic material, such as *Shōjin koshiki*, see Abe, “Sokui-hō no girei to engi: Chūsei ōken shinwa ron no kōzō 即位法の儀礼と縁起：中世王権神話論の構想,” 23-24.

²⁸² For a discussion of *Chigo no sōshi*, see Dōmoto Masaki 堂本正樹, “*Chigo no sōshi*’: *Honbun shōkai* 『稚児之草子』 本文紹介,” *Yasō* 夜想 15 (1985).

transmitting initiatory documents to the uninitiated. That these warnings are reiterated in *chigo kanjō* manuscripts further demonstrates that this ritual originated in *dangisho* temples.²⁸³ The specific mention of the role of the teacher as transmitter and the function of the disciple as “receptient” speak to the necessity of certain qualifications, such as ritual training and preparation. These details would not be included if the transmissions were conveyed only through copying. At the same time, the warnings against forging texts imply that there was a demand for such forgeries, that some wished to claim initiation they had not received. *Chigo kanjō* represents a liminal stage between the conventional practice of *kanjō ritual* and the copying practice of *dangisho*. In other words, it was practiced—and also copied. Upon initiation, disciples copied the text of the ritual and then safeguarded it from unlawful copying.

Our discussion of *dangisho* illuminates the fact that the *chigo kanjō* ritual was not limited to the Eshin-ryū lineage of Tendai, as previous scholarship suggests. This *kanjō* was formulated and extensively practiced by scholar-monks and practitioners at Tendai temples near Kyoto and in Kantō, specifically in the *dangisho* institutions. It is likely that *chigo kanjō* originated in Mount Hiei and that many of its doctrinal propositions were formed in the scholarly circles there, specifically the Eshin-ryū. However, the extant texts on the ritual were created, practiced, copied, and transmitted as teachings in Taimitsu lineages of *dangisho* seminaries. And while there is no solid evidence to definitively confirm that *chigo kanjō* was first invented in the *dangisho* establishment, the contribution by these Taimitsu temples to the development and the spread of *chigo kanjō* cannot be overstated.

²⁸³ 可秘々々。児僧是為シテレ本ト。可振舞。穴賢々々、千金莫傳、可秘々々、雖モレ児不可見ナリト、是ヲ以テ只可授教、只相承一人、可有。自門他門可秘々々。此事肝心也。“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私,” in Tenkaizō 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

Dangisho temples were crucial institutions in the history of Tendai doctrine and practice. Scholars commonly associate the flourishing of the Tendai sect with Enryakuji on Mount Hiei near Kyoto—on account of not just its strong ties with the aristocracy and samurai, but also from wielding power as one of the leading temples in the monastic (*jike*) power bloc (*kenmon*) in medieval society. But the lasting influence of Tendai during the late medieval period resulted from the production and dissemination of religious knowledge via its seminaries (*dangisho*).

The Construction of Lineages

Many of the names found in extant *chigo kanjō* documents can be confirmed in the historical record as being legitimate authors and practitioners of the ritual. But additional figures cited in these texts cannot be so confirmed. In some cases the historical record is incomplete, and thus cannot substantiate people who indeed engaged in this ritual. But it is also true that, due to the sexual nature of the ritual, practitioners felt the need for the authority of historical figures and divinities, albeit the attributions may be fictitious, to legitimize *chigo kanjō* as an orthodox practice rather than as a heterodox one. And so the creators of *chigo kanjō* constructed fictional lineages to pass down the *chigo kanjō* tradition, through human and divine agents alike. In this final section, I will discuss the different figures in this imaginary web of relations and the role of lineages. I will show that the “imaginary” lineages to be found in the texts reveal two types of agents in the development

of the *chigo kanjō* tradition: Buddhist masters and divinities. To follow, I shall demonstrate how this lineage construction helped build for *chigo kanjō* an infrastructure for orthodoxy.

(C) *Shōgyō hiden* (1478) contains elaborate descriptions of the various human actors who created the tradition and bestowed it to subsequent generations. In the opening segment—as noted in the section discussing (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi*—the narrator and scribe claims to have therein documented the instructions of Eshin (Genshin 源信 (942–1017), the great Tendai master. But as Genshin had lived hundreds of years earlier, he could not have been the author of the text’s content. Moreover, it was Genshin who warned of the karmic repercussions of male-male sexual acts; indeed, he was one of the few priests monks in Japan. Genshin’s *Ōjōyōshū* (895) states that adults who coerce children into sexual affairs as well as those who engage in male-male love will end up in hell.²⁸⁴ Thus, by proclaiming Genshin to be the authoritative source of the ritual, the text effectively ignores theological condemnations of male-male sexual intercourse; instead, it smooths up the path for creating the precise opposite: an orthodox interpretation of male-male sexual intercourse.

The text does not share how Genshin formulated the *kanjō* or whether he had written an extensive commentary. But it does specify a body of scripture that represents the core teachings. (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* reads: “Here I received the order of Great Master Genshin, and I wrote it down for the purpose of seeking enlightenment in the final age. These sacred teachings are the essence of the abbot’s nineteen boxes.” The nineteen boxes of texts belong to a prominent Taimitsu lineage, the Sanmai-ryū. I have already claimed there is historical evidence that Taimitsu and Sanmai-ryū are linked to the production of the *chigo kanjō* texts;

²⁸⁴ See my discussion in the Introduction.

we can now confirm that the texts themselves speak directly to the sacred works of these lineages.

According to the *Kechō yōryaku* 華頂要略, written in the Muromachi period by monks of Sanmai-ryū and of Senmyōji temple in Hitachi province, the famous *monzeki* (imperial temple) of Shōren'in houses the secret treasure of the nineteen boxes. This treasure was passed down to the Tendai temple Senmyōji, where it was intimately tied to the figure of a sacred child, the Dharma protector child (*Gohō dōji* 護法童子). Religion scholar Koyama Satoko claims that the number nineteen is not incidental, as it is related to the nineteen stages of contemplation (*jūkyū-kan* 十九觀) articulated by the influential Taimitsu monk Annen (840–?). This practice involved the visualization of Fudō Myōō (the Immovable Wisdom King). In its fourth stage one is supposed to visualize Fudō “appearing in the form of a vulgar and fat-bodied child.” The nineteenth stage of visualization culminates with the form of Seitaka and Kongara, Fudō's two child attendants. This visualization practice had been common among Tendai and Shingon monks since the end of the ninth century, and many of Fudō's iconographic forms in medieval times were based on this particular stage.²⁸⁵

What did the nineteen boxes contain? These were sutras and secret transmissions (*hidensho* 秘伝書) written by the Taimitsu patriarch Kōgei (977–1041)—head of the Sanmai-ryū—and transmitted for generations to chief abbots of the *monzeki*. *Kenchō yōryaku* details that, when Kōgei left Shōren'in, he entrusted the nineteen boxes to Oto gohō

²⁸⁵ Koyama Satoko 小山聡子, “Chūsei zenki no Shōren'in monzeki ni okeru gohō dōji shinkō no juyō 中世前期の青蓮院門跡における護法童子信仰の受容,” *Nihon shūkyō bunka shi kenkyū* 日本宗教文化史研究 4, no. 1 (2000): 41.

乙護法, a form of a child Dharma Protector modeled after Fudō’s attendant Seitaka. The nineteen boxes carry the claw marks of this boy—a physical imprint of a deity that makes the boxes a miraculous relic. As Koyama explains, the nineteen boxes were passed down at Shōren-in as a treasure safeguarded by Kōgei’s Dharma Protector Child, and therefore contained magical powers.²⁸⁶ The boxes also had therapeutic qualities. In 1141, when the Shōren-in monk Gyōgen visited the ailing Emperor Toba, he had held the nineteen boxes and had cured him by chanting prayers (*kitō* 祈祷). Later on, the nineteen boxes and their connection to the Dharma Protector Child lore was used to argue for the superiority of Sanmai-ryū over competing lineages. In short, the mention of the nineteen boxes in (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* intentionally connects *chigo* to the broader conceptualization of divine children and their role as Dharma protectors—as well as to authority of Taimitsu lineages. As such, the mention also demonstrates that the teachings of *chigo kanjō* were part of a long line of transmission handed down by the Taimitsu school of Sanmai-ryū, which developed primarily at Senmyōji in Kantō and Shōren-in in Kyoto. Indeed, Senmyōji was one of the *dangisho* in which *chigo kanjō* was transmitted.

Even if (B) *Shōgyō hiden* legitimates the claim that its teachings follow the Sanmai-ryū example, the rest of the names in the genealogy belong to other traditions. It says that the teachings of *chigo kanjō* began with Dengyō Daishi (最澄, 767–822), known as Saichō. Saichō is described to have “created this [tradition], and called it ‘The Recorded Middle Discourse 記中論.’” But as there is no record of this text, it is unclear if the reference concerns Nāgārjuna’s *Mūla-madhyāmaka-kārikā* or another apocryphon that did not

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 44.

survive. Since the study of logic—or even a rudimentary discussion of emptiness—is not found in the *chigo kanjō* tradition (except the abstract contemplation on the threefold truth), the connection with Madhyāmaka is loose at best.

In any case, (B) *Shōgyō hiden* relays that Saichō left behind a text that served as a precedent for the *chigo kanjō* ritual and shares that “Kōbō Daishi devised a tenfold method of signaling with one’s fingers. This is an important treasure of the Final Age.” The statement refers to the final part of the ritual that includes elaborate instructions about how acolytes should interpret the signals of monks through established hand gestures. The claim that Kōbō Daishi devised this method attributes the authorship of at least the ritual finale to the Shingon monk Kūkai (空海 774–835). Of course, the attribution to Kūkai is obviously unfounded; many popular traditions have been attributed to Kūkai, regardless of historical veracity. In addition, the notion that Kūkai is the progenitor of male-male love in Japan has been widely circulated, especially in Edo period (1603–1868) texts—which doubtless take their cue from a few medieval sources that ascribe to him this pioneering status. One of those is *Nyake Kanjinchō* (The Solicitation Book of the Qi of Youths, 1482), which claims that male-male love has flourished since the age of Emperor Kanmu (桓武天皇, 781–806) and Kūkai. Also, a sexual treatise that emerged in the late-sixteenth century, *Kōbō Daishi ikkan no sho* (Kōbō Daishi’s Book of One Scroll, 1599), includes a similar manual that also explains suggested sex positions. This text was long considered to be the sole guideline for sexual practice between male priests and *chigo*—but now, given that (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* also dedicates a section to sexual practices and dates to 1450, it is clear that *Kōbō Daishi ikkan no sho* borrowed greatly from the medieval *abhiṣeka* of *chigo*.

To return to the question of just what prompted the creators of *chigo kanjō* to create these imagined lineages: Saichō and Kūkai are invoked because doing so lends the practice the approbation of the most eminent monks in Japan—which also helped to evoke a trans-sectarian conceptualization of male-male love.

The (C) *Shōgyō hiden* manuscript, a Buddhist text inscribed within the Esoteric/Tantric tradition of *abhiseka*, elucidates how *chigo kanjō* came about under the lineage of Esoteric Buddhism:

Afterwards, when Jikaku Daishi [Ennin] crossed the sea to Tang China, he received the *kanjō* transmission of teachings concerning *chigo*. When he came back to Japan, he said that Huiguo’s disciple, Master Faquan, told him that “the *kanjō* was handed down from Śubhakarasiṃha to Yixing, and then transmitted from Yixing to Huiguo, and from Huiguo I received it and now I transmit it to you, I entrust you with the teachings. This is the most valued treasure that pertains to Buddhism. These teachings can only be passed be transmitted to one person, others cannot receive it.” Ever since he had pronounced these words, the transmission can only take place upon permission from the *zasu*.

其後、慈覺大師渡唐時、付^テ_レ兒^ニ灌頂^ノ有^ル事^ヲ御相承有^テ、日本歸朝^ノ御時、惠果^ノ御弟子法全阿闍梨^ノ云^フ。是^レ灌頂^ノ、自^リ二善無畏^一、一行御相承。自^一一行^一、惠果御相承。自^一惠果^一、我相承^ス。我^レ亦、汝^ニ付囑^ス。是^レ佛法^ノクヒスヲツク重宝也。相承自^一一人^一外^ハ不^レ可^レ有。自^リ二言給^シ一後、座主計^リ御相承有^リ。²⁸⁷

According to this account, *chigo kanjō* was first formulated by the great translators and exponents of Esoteric Buddhism, or Zhenyan Buddhism, in China during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (712–756): Śubhakarasiṃha 善無畏 (637–735) and his disciple Yixing 一行 (683–727). (Yixing also studied under another important Esoteric master, Vajrabodhi 金剛智 [671–471], who is not mentioned here.) The teachings were devised by Śubhakarasiṃha and passed on to Yixing, then transmitted to Huiguo 惠果 and then to his disciple Faquan 法全 (800–870), who finally passed them on to the Tendai master Ennin 円仁. Therefore, the narrative argues that *chigo kanjō* was an Esoteric ritual tradition imported from China. Moreover, since *chigo kanjō* was created by a Tendai lineage, it was necessary for the authors who were affiliated with Tendai to emphasize that the priestly agents who carried the tradition to the Japanese homeland were unquestionably Tendai monks. It is also apparent from this discussion that the author favors the Ennin-line of transmission. Ennin’s rival, Enchin, who created his own schismatic Jimon lineage center on Onjōji and had a putative claim over Tendai monks, is altogether ignored; the next monk listed is Ryōgen, who restored the authority of Ennin’s lineage.²⁸⁸ Thus, the focus on Tendai monks suggests that *chigo kanjō* was imagined as a tradition dating back to India through China that was

²⁸⁷ “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私,” in Tenkaizō 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

²⁸⁸ This effort resulted in a schism between Enryakuji and Miidera temples, and the separation into two competing branches, Sanmon (based in Enryakuji, on top of Mount Hiei) and Jimon (located in Miidera/Onjoji temple, at the base of Mount Hiei).

developed by the Sanmon branch of Enryakuji temple complex and probably produced in its Japanese iteration within the headquarters of Mount Hiei, or at least by a group of monks affiliated with the Tendai scholarly center. This was also the line that bifurcated into Taimitsu lineages, as we have seen earlier.

The text establishes that the knowledge passed down by *chigo kanjō* is a secret between abbots (*zasu*) of Enryakuji controlling who can pass to only one person at a time. If this is true, then the *zasu* must have had to authorize and been present in all *kanjō* and might have participated in actual ceremonies. The manuscript also details the earlier life of Ryōgen, a very influential *zasu*. When Ryōgen was a young *chigo*, the Tendai *zasu* and a teacher (*kyōju* 教授) came down from Mount Hiei and initiated Ryōgen at the Chōmyōden 長明殿 hall of Daikichiji 大吉寺 temple. The document reads that Ryōgen’s monastic child name was Chōmyōmaru 長明丸, presumably based on the name of the cloister in which Ryōgen lived.²⁸⁹ We know that Ryōgen spent many of his younger days around Daikichiji on Mount Ibuki, his birthplace. He even returned there in 979 to perform a one-hundred-day *goma* service to commemorate the thirteenth anniversary of his mother’s death.²⁹⁰ Yet, this childhood name differs from the one given to Ryōgen in other texts. For example, Tsuji Shōko, having examined the biography of Ryōgen, the *Jie Daishi den* 慈惠大師伝, claims that his “real” childhood name was Kannon 観音. Tsuji surmises, therefore, that the name

²⁸⁹ 愛^ニ、先師慈惠大師^ハ、本^{マシタケセシ}近江国大吉寺 座 時^ハ、名^ニ長明丸^ト申。是天下第一兒^{ニテ}御座時、自^レ叡山^ニ座主一人、教授一人下^テ、長明殿^ト只三人^{シテ}、大吉寺^{ニテ}、此^ノ灌頂^ヲ行給也。自^レ夫此^ノ灌頂^ハ弘^ル天下ニ一也。是最秘密也。此灌頂^ヲ三密^ノ灌頂^トモ云^ヒ、又^ハ一丸二山王^ヲ相承^トモ云^ヒ也。^{口傳在別紙也}

See “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘兒聖教秘伝私,” in Tenkaizō 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

²⁹⁰ Paul Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei: Japanese Tendai in the Tenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002), 213.

Chōmyōmaru is a false attribution.²⁹¹ Quite ironically, if Ryōgen had indeed participated in a *chigo kanjō*, he would have been transformed into the bodhisattva Kannon; as such, it is possible that the omission was intentional so as to avoid confusion regarding the transformative process of the *kanjō*. Nonetheless, this is clearly an apocryphal story, and monks had many names throughout their lives.

The fashioning of Ryōgen’s childhood name with the ending “*maru*” has both a symbolic and a sacro-performative function for the ritual; upon initiating a child in *chigo kanjō*, he was awarded with the ending “*maru*,” so commonly associated with children. Maru means “round” and is equated in the ritual commentary with the notion of *en* 圓, the roundness and perfection of the Tendai teachings. Therefore, Ryōgen, like all the child initiates of the *chigo kanjō* ritual complex, embody the teachings of Tendai. Most fundamentally, the text argues that Ryōgen was initiated to the practice and thereupon transmitted it to all of Japan—and therefore, he was one of the pivotal proselytizers of the *chigo kanjō* tradition in Japan.

But the mere human agency described above did not suffice in establishing the authority of lineage, since the sanction of divine entities was equally important. The appeal of the gods and Buddhas in medieval Japan was so immense that their power and authority were manipulated by both rulers and subjects in order to advance their own interests—and monks were no exception. For example, at the end of the section in (C) *Shōgyō hiden* that explains the doctrinal teachings about the avatar Sannō, the reader is presented with an intratextual lineage that originates in medieval kami:

²⁹¹ Tsuji, “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi’ saikō* 『弘児聖教秘伝私』再考,” 86.

... the transmission the *chigo* received originally passed down from the kami Konpira 金毘羅神 to Shakyamuni Tathāgatha.²⁹² In Tang China, it was transmitted from the Holy Monk Bodhidharma to Tiantai Dashi [Zhiyi]. In Japan, Dengyō Daishi [Saichō] received it from Sannō. The transmission across the Three Countries 三国 happened in this way.²⁹³ This is an extremely secret matter. The teachings were handed down until Jie Daishi 慈惠大師 [Ryōgen] only in the form of oral transmission. Master Eshin [Genshin] 恵心先徳 wrote this exegesis in this manner because of the Final Age 末代.

見此相傳^ハ、天竺靈山^{ニテハ}自金毘羅神^ニ傳へ二尺迦如来^ニ、唐土^{ニテハ}天台大師、自^ニ神僧胡僧^ニ、御相傳^{アリ}。日本^{ニテハ}傳教大師、自^リ二山王^ニ傳^レ之^ヲ給。三国^ノ相承^ノ様、如^レ此。是、極大秘事也。是^ハ慈惠大師^{マテハ}口傳^{ナリ}。恵心先徳、為^ニ末代^ノ一、加様^ニ注^シ給也。²⁹⁴

The above presents story a mythical genealogy. The teachings originated from Konpira, a god of seafaring whose principal shrine is in Shikoku. However, in the medieval Tendai discourse on gods—known primarily as Sannō Shinto—Konpira was understood to be an emanation of Sannō, the primary deity of Hie Shrine and certainly the most celebrated god on Mount Hiei. The teachings and practice of *chigo kanjō* are thus said to have been bestowed by a specific kami that was a manifestation of Sannō. Of course, this concept is Buddhist par excellence, following as it does the trope of universal Buddhas who manifest out of compassion in the form of lowly gods in order to save sentient beings (*honji-suijaku* 本地垂跡). But here the theological ideology is reversed, instead giving precedence to gods as superior entities to Buddhas (*han-honji suijaku* 反本地垂跡), a tactic common to Mount Hiei theologians of the period. Moreover, this line of transmission diverges from the more prevalent pattern of the origin of Buddhist teachings centered on the Three Countries

²⁹² Sannō appears in India as Konpira. Konpira is a sea god, the deity Kubira, and was originally a dragon. The origin for the transmission is a kami, not Buddha.

²⁹³ This brings to mind *Nyake Kanjincho*'s “Three Countries” model (*sangoku*). See Chapter 4.

²⁹⁴ “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私,” in Tenkaizō 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

Thought (*sangoku shisō* 三国思想). Medieval Buddhist origin narratives commonly trace the beginning of a teaching to India, then to China, and finally to Japan—essentially, and perhaps intentionally, ignoring Korea’s role in the process of dissemination. In (C) *Shōgyō hiden*, however, the point of origin is Japan, which serves as the mythical originator of the tradition. Since the ritual was informed by the Sannō cult, Sannō was chosen as the originator of the tradition. The rest of the lines of descent follow the conventions of *sangoku* and return full circle to Japan. Therefore, the genealogy can be summarized as follows: Japan → India → China → Japan, a lineage quite different from the one exclusively occupied by human agents.

Konpira (or Sannō) transmitted the teachings to Shakyamuni (the original essence of Sannō according to Sannō Shinto doctrine) and then onto Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth patriarch of the Chan/Zen school. It is well-known that Chan theologians and exegetes of the Song era often engaged in the construction of fictional lines of descent, a practice that was common in the larger East Asian Buddhist discourse on lineages.²⁹⁵ Bodhidharma is also found in one of the earlier genealogical charts of Saichō. His mention could also be due to the era’s rising popularity of the Gozan Zen temples, in which, according to several sources, male-male love flourished. (Chōrakuji was considered a gozan temple of the second tier.)²⁹⁶ At any rate, Bodhidharma passed on the teachings to Zhiyi, the revered patriarch of Tiantai. The structure then shifts to a lineage wholly dominated by Tendai masters: Saichō, Ryōgen, and Genshin. Ryōgen received the instruction in an oral form, and Genshin wrote an exegesis on his teachings. As such, *chigo kanjō* had already gone through several

²⁹⁵ John R. McRae, *Seeing through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004).

²⁹⁶ See Tsuji, *Nihon bukkōshi: Chūsei* 日本仏教史：中世, 6.

transformations, and the current textual version is a commentarial treatise on one of its earliest iterations. As we can see, in this transmission the Esoteric line of descent is cut off completely, which lends authority to the Tendai school over other sectarian interpretations.

The (A) *Kanjō shi* manuscript supports the narrative deeming Ennin as the founder of the ritual. In Esoteric initiations—and certainly in the practice of *abhiṣeka*—the *ācārya* gives the disciple a genealogy chart so he can locate his position as a successor within the pedigree of the sect. The official chart is usually a separate piece of paper, since it often is not to be found in any of the *kanjō* documents. (A) *Kanjō shi* hints at its existence:

The transmission of teachings from master to disciple and the lineage chart of this *kanjō* and its procedures are in a different slip of paper. The first who initiated this [*chigo kanjō*] in Japan was Jikaku Daishi [Ennin]. The *kanjō* should be modeled on the great doctrine of the Womb and Diamond. There are personal notes about how to bestow [the Dharma] to *chigo* during consecration.

此灌頂師資相承血脈次第在別紙。日本最初慈覺大師初之給也。大綱^ノ台金^ノ灌頂可准。付兒有灌頂事^私²⁹⁷

Thus, the reader learns from this manuscript that, indeed, Ennin inaugurated the *chigo kanjō* ritual in Japan. However, this version omits Saichō, perhaps in order to convey that Ennin’s interpretation is the most accurate, as well as to further validate the Sanmon branch of Tendai as being the ultimate interpretive tradition. Also, there was no trace of an actual lineage chart for the recipients of *kanjō* after these various transmissions took place, nor does any other *chigo kanjō* manuscript provide further clue. Finally, the crucial implication of lineages does not stop at sacerdotal attempts to position eminent monks within a tradition.

²⁹⁷ “*Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私,” in Tenkaizō 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

Through crafting both real and imaginary lineage charts, the teaching of *chigo kanjō* was constructed as a Dharma transmission, a genuine Buddhist knowledge inherited from the greatest masters and loftiest divinities.

The formulators of *chigo kanjō* reflected back on their own tradition and selectively picked the deities and personalities that best fit their ideological claims and institutional bent. The obvious misattributions worked to produce a lineage that encompasses the great Esoteric masters, the founders of Tendai and Shingon, the Esoteric strand of Tendai or Taimitsu, and masterful theologians of Tendai such as Genshin and Ryōgen. Note, too, that it is not surprising to find lineage-making in a ritual manual. This was not an uncommon practice in medieval Japan, nor in any Buddhist school in East Asia at that time, and should not deter any historian or Buddhologist from taking these lineages seriously. The enumeration of great masters and their support of a continuous line of transmission served the larger purpose of the formulators of *chigo kanjō*: to render the sexual union between a monk and an acolyte as an orthodox practice, and to suffuse it in legitimate Buddhist traditions—be that Tendai’s Taimitsu or Sannō Shinto.

We have noted the prominent role of the Taimitsu lineages in carrying out *chigo kanjō* rituals. We have stressed that the temples in which the *kanjō* texts were produced were all *dangisho*, but since some texts provide evidence that they were performed rather than merely copied, it seems that some of these institutions also practiced the *chigo kanjō* initiations in their dedicated *kanjō* chambers. Whatever the case may be, we have been able to indicate that all of the *dangisho* institutions are affiliated within Taimitsu and are relatively close to one another, formed connections with one another, and that the historical figures listed in the *kanjō* manuscripts are real people located in time and space, having

hailed from these Taimitsu lineages and *dangisho* seminaries. Upon looking at this evidence of real genealogies, we also discussed the formulation of “imagined” genealogies, and added not just the legitimacy of Taimitsu, but also Esoteric Buddhist lineages in Tang China, the Sanmon branch of Mount Hiei, and divine sanction from Sannō Shinto. The goal of the authors was to create an aura of legitimacy and orthodoxy through stressing the ancestral link of *chigo kanjō* to these lofty lines. Since we have not understood the context of production of *chigo kanjō*, it is time to turn to a discussion of the ritual itself and its overall structure.

Chapter 3:

The Ritual Procedures of *Chigo Kanjō*

To summarize from the previous chapter: the *chigo kanjō* (the Ritual Consecration of Acolytes) was an initiation ritual containing doctrinal elements that can be traced back to the Eshin lineage. And yet, strong evidence within the ritual itself suggests that the ritual developed in the Taimitsu lineages (Esoteric Tendai) in both the Buddhist seminaries (*dangisho*) of the capital area and in eastern Japan—evidence we will explore in Chapter 4. But first, let us turn to the *chigo kanjō* ritual itself, beginning with the *kanjō* category of initiation rituals in the East Asian cultural sphere.

Kanjō is a Tantric initiation of the *abhiṣeka* variety. The Sanskrit term *abhiṣeka* originally refers to a consecration ritual performed as part of a new king's accession ceremony to the throne; in *abhiṣeka* itself, the king was anointed by “pouring water from above.” The Japanese term for this ritual is *kanjō*; the character *kan* 灌 means “to pour water” and *jō* 頂 “the top of the head.” However, the latter meaning is not found in the Sanskrit term *abhiṣeka*, which designates the “pouring [of water/liquid] from above.” From its origins in antiquity, *abhiṣeka* was practiced in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain ceremonies in India; it later spread to China, Tibet, and Japan. As such, scholar Mori Masahide notes that *abhiṣeka* “pervades the religious world of Asia, and constitutes a major pillar of its rituals.”²⁹⁸ Mori claims that *abhiṣeka*, broadly construed, is a “ritual of bestowing a specific person with special values.” The unction or pouring of water symbolizes such bestowal.

²⁹⁸ Mori Masahide 森雅秀, “Kanjō to wa nanika 灌頂とは何か” in *Ajia no kanjō girei: Sono seiritsu to denpa* アジアの灌頂儀礼：その成立と伝播, ed. Mori Masahide 森雅秀 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2014), 6.

From a religious studies perspective, Mori argues, this ritual “transforms something profane into something sacred”; from an anthropological viewpoint, it is a “rite of passage.” Mori contends that *abhiṣeka* in Indian Tantrism may have originated in the ritual *pratīṣṭa*, since it has a similar structure. The *pratīṣṭa*, a ritual of enshrining and consecrating icons, took shape during the first and second centuries BCE, when Hindu and Buddhist images were first produced in the Indian subcontinent.²⁹⁹ Whereas in *abhiṣeka* a person (usually a king) is consecrated, in *pratīṣṭa* an object is consecrated; regardless, both rituals transform a “profane thing” into the sacrality that is the Buddha or Hindu images.³⁰⁰

Specifics notwithstanding, the handling of the initiand in *abhiṣeka* echoes the handling of sacred objects in *pratīṣṭa*. Charles Orzech points out similarities with the enshrinement of icons arguing that the blindfolding and then uncovering of the fold in *abhiṣeka* resembles the ritual installation of images such as occurs with, for example, the “eye-opening” ceremony (*kaigen* 開眼) whereby painting eyes on an icon imbues it with life, rendering it a Buddha.³⁰¹ In his examination of *abhiṣeka*, Michel Strickmann and Bernard Faure situate the person and the object on the same ontological continuum, a process Strickmann calls the “iconisation” of the practitioner.³⁰² That the qualities of the icon are assumed to be impressed upon the initiand is an assumption maintained by the ritualists in *abhiṣeka*.

²⁹⁹ On *pratīṣṭa* see István Keul and *Consecration Rituals in South Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

³⁰⁰ Mori, “Kanjō to wa nanika 灌頂とは何か,” 6.

³⁰¹ Charles Orzech, “On the Subject of *Abhiṣeka*,” *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies* 3, no. 13 (2011).

³⁰² Michel Strickmann, *Mantras et Mandarins: Le Bouddhisme Tantrique en Chine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 204.

The *abhiṣeka* lineages were transmitted by the Buddhist monks Śubhākarasiṃha and Vajrabodhi to China during the Tang dynasty (618–907), where it was referred to as *guanding*. The Tang Emperor and nobility appropriated consecration rituals as a means of asserting authority over the country. And, indeed, under the rulership of Empress Wu the ritual texts translated by Bodhiruci (菩提流支, ?–727) feature *guanding* as a key element. As Orzech notes on *abhiṣeka* in China, “During the early eighth century, *abhiṣeka* [*guanding*] and *homa* were the defining features of the ritual programs of the Esoteric scriptures translated by Śubhākarasiṃha and by Vajrabodhi, and his disciple Amoghavajra.”³⁰³ The *guanding* was formally sponsored by the Chinese court; practiced in a designated hall in the palace, the ritual was thought to empower those in the ruling classes to become more effective rulers. This objective was retained when the ritual spread to Japan.

That transfer was affected by Kūkai (774–835), a Japanese monk who studied Esoteric Buddhism (Zhengyan, Jp. Shingon) in the Tang capital in Chang’an. He received the *kanjō* transmission from his master Huiguo (746–805): the Womb Mandala transmission of the *Mahavariocana Sutra* (*Dainichi-kyō* 大日經) cycle and the Diamond Mandala transmission of the *Vajraśekhara Sutra* (*Kongōchō-gyō* 金剛頂經) cycle. It is likely that Kūkai continued to transmit the two *kanjō* lineages of initiation together, as attested by the transmission he gave to the Sanron monk Gonzō 勤操 (754–827), labeled *ryōbu mandara* 兩部曼荼羅 (“the twofold mandala”).³⁰⁴ Kūkai also received from Huiguo the rank of an *ācāryā* (Esoteric master).

³⁰³ Orzech, “On the Subject of Abhiṣeka,” 117.

³⁰⁴ Takeuchi Kōzen 武内孝善, “Kūkai no tsutaeta kanjō 空海の伝えた灌頂,” in *Ajia no kanjō girei: Sono seiritsu to denpa* アジアの灌頂儀礼：その成立と伝播, ed. Mori Masahide 森雅秀 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2014).

Upon returning to Japan, Kūkai introduced what is now called Esoteric Buddhism (Mikkyō 密教). Kūkai first held the *kanjō* ritual for Emperor Saga (786–842), and then on many other members of aristocracy.³⁰⁵ He also established the *kechien kanjō* 結縁灌頂 initiation for lay worshippers, as well as the *denbō kanjō* 伝法灌頂 to endow monks with the status of *ācāryā* or master (a fully ordained officiating priest). Later, Kūkai developed the *Go-shichi nichi mishuhō* 後七日御修法, the highest form of *kanjō*, and thus to be offered only to the emperor.³⁰⁶ In the early medieval period (starting in the late-twelfth century), *Go-shichi nichi mishuhō* developed into a ritual enthronement ceremony (*sokui girei* 即位儀礼) for the emperor³⁰⁷—alongside other autochthonous modes of enthronement, such as *senso* 踐阼 and *daijōsai* 大嘗祭. As Mori Masahide puts it, given that the *kanjō* ritual joined the secular power of kingship with the sacred authority of Buddhism, *kanjō* amplified the prestige of the Japanese ruler—effectively applying the prominent governing strategy of medieval times, which has been termed by Kuroda Toshio as *ōbō buppō* (“Law of the King and the Buddha Dharma”).³⁰⁸

In the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, eras that were becoming increasingly secularized context, *kanjō* were held for non-religious purposes. As Mark Teeuwen and Bernhard Scheid put it, initiations “became a favoured medium for the transmission of

³⁰⁵ Mori, “Kanjō to wa nanika 灌頂とは何か。”

³⁰⁶ For more on the *Go-shichi nichi mishuhō*, See Ryuichi Abe, *The Weaving of Mantra: Kukai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Fabio Rambelli, “The Emperor’s New Robes: Processes of Resignification in Shingon Imperial Rituals,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* (2002); William E. Deal and Brian Douglas Ruppert, *A Cultural History of Japanese Buddhism* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015).

³⁰⁷ Mori, “Kanjō to wa nanika 灌頂とは何か,” 10.

³⁰⁸ Toshio Kuroda and Jacqueline I. Stone, trans. “The Imperial Law and the Buddhist Law,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996).

knowledge, not only among monks, but also among court poets, theatre actors, and even carpenters and blacksmiths.”³⁰⁹ Those who reached a certain mastery in an artistic discipline—such as Japanese poetry (*waka* 和歌), the *biwa* lute, and Gagaku’s *shō* 笙 instrument—were initiated in *kanjō* consecrations that were held in secret. This esoteric mode of transmission has been called by Teeuwen and Scheid as “the culture of secrecy,” and by Jacqueline Stone as the “culture of secret transmission.”³¹⁰ Mori contends that the Esoteric rhetoric found in these rituals are “mere decorations.”³¹¹ However, while there was a trend in the late Middle Ages of *kanjō* becoming secularized, these rites of passage nonetheless preserved a strong religious aspect; they actively adopted the religious discourse of Mikkyō—the underlying substratum of medieval Japanese religion. Thus, initiation played an important role in the establishment of sacerdotal lineages, and was a religious aspect that continued to inform both monastic and non-monastic contexts of the late medieval period.

Kanjō also spread to kami worship—the cult of autochthonous gods—and multiple Esoteric lineages outside the lineages of Shingon. Itō Satoshi notes, from the late Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō era, the three dominant traditions at the time—Ryōbu, Ise, and Sannō Shinto—were disseminated to Shingon, Tendai, and other Mikkyō lineages.³¹² This move lay the groundwork for an emergence of a distinctive kami consecration known as *Shintō kanjō* 神道灌頂 or *Jingi kanjō* 神祇灌頂. This category of kami-centered initiation includes

³⁰⁹ Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen, eds., *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion* (London: Routledge, 2006), 9.

³¹⁰ Jacqueline Ilyse Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999).

³¹¹ Mori, “*Kanjō to wa nanika* 灌頂とは何か,” 16.

³¹² Satoshi Itō, “‘Shintō’ in the Muromachi Period,” *Japanese Religions* 42, nos. 1–2 (2017): 12.

two main types. The first type, *Reiki kanjō*, which was held for the transmission of the fourteenth-century *Reikiki* 麗氣記 text, was performed both in 1353 at the Takahata Fudō in Musashi province and in 1424 by Ryōben. The second type includes the *Nihon shoki kanjō*, which centered on the mythology of the kami *Nihon shoki* (720), and was performed in 1513 at Ninnaji temple in a formula that also incorporated the *Reiki kanjō*.³¹³

Concomitant with the Muromachi flourishing of kami *kanjō* rituals, *chigo kanjō* developed in around this same period (1300s–1500s). Given that *chigo kanjō* has a pronounced focus on the god Sannō in its *chigo kanjō shidai* variant, as well as in commentarial texts, *chigo kanjō* can also be seen as related to *jingi kanjō*. But it is also closely related to the *sokui kanjō* 即位灌頂 (“enthronement consecration”), carried out first for Emperor Go-Sanjō (1032–1073); *chigo kanjō* includes enthronement-derived elements such as the placement of a *takamikura* (“throne”) and the royal vocabulary (utilized in other initiatory texts) that Shingon and Tendai monastics commonly used in order to claim they possessed secret knowledge about the imperial accession (*sokui-hō*). Other consecrations—such the *waka kanjō* (“poetry consecration”) of Fujiwara no Tameaki (1230s–1290s) lineage,³¹⁴ the *oyashiro kanjō* (“the father and mother consecration”) of the fifteenth century, and the *kai kanjō* (“consecration into the precepts”) of the Kurodani lineage³¹⁵—feature erotic elements (and also sexual elements, in the case of the *waka kanjō*) that have similarities with *chigo kanjō*. These include especially the cosmological assignment of

³¹³ Ibid., 13.

³¹⁴ On the Fujiwara no Tameaki’s creation of the *waka kanjō*, and his possible involvement in creating the *sokui kanjō* (enthronement rites), see Susan Blakeley Klein, *Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 165-210.

³¹⁵ See Paul Groner, “Kōen and the “Consecrated Ordination” within Japanese Tendai,” in *Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia: Places of Practice*, ed. James A. Benn, Lori Rachelle Meeks, and James Robson (New York: Routledge, 2010).

master and disciple with male-female aspects—in order to perpetuate a sexually normative order while applying it to a male-male sex interaction—as well as the intimate hand-holding of master and disciple, which triggers the transfusion of Mahāvairocana into each of them. However, the influence of these *kanjō* initiations on *chigo kanjō* is relatively minor when compared to kami initiations and other rituals with more evident sexual content.

It appears that the *chigo kanjō* is influenced by two kinds of consecrations. The first is *himitsu kanjō*. Fabio Rambelli argues that the category of *himitsu kanjō* (secret initiation), which is an umbrella term for three other *kanjō*—*jinen kanjō* 自然灌頂 (spontaneous initiation), *yugi kanjō* 瑜祇灌頂 (ordination into the Yugikyō 瑜祇經 teachings),³¹⁶ and also *jingi kanjō* 神祇灌頂³¹⁷ (consecration into kami-related matters)—“attempted to overcome

³¹⁶ In 830, Kūkai gave the nun Nyo'ini a *himitsu kanjō* consecration. See *Kanjō*, 77. The monk Monkan (1278-1357) is known for having performed the *Yugi-kanjō* consecration for Emperor Godaigo in 1330 in the Gosessho 御節所殿 palace. Monkan performed the “annointment of the sutra of all yogas and yogis of the Diamond Peak Pavillion” (*Kongōbu rōkaku issai yuga yugi-kyō* 金剛峯 樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經). This sutra is often abbreviated as *Yugi-kyō*, and the consecration in its name as *Yugi-kanjō*. For the sutra, see T. 867. The ritual procedures of this ritual are detailed in a text called *Jaryū fukakai* 邪流不可開 held at Mount Kōya and quoted partly in Mizuhara Gyōei 水原堯榮, *Jakyō tachikawaryū no kenkyū* 邪教立川流の研究 (Kyoto: Zenseisha Shosekibu, 1923), 43–44. See also the dissertation of Gaetan Rappo, “Un Ritualiste à la Cour Impériale: Itinéraire et Ouvre du Moine Monkan (1278–1357)” (PhD diss., Université de Genève, 2014), 84–85. According to the *Juhō yojin-shū* (1268), the Shingon monk Shinjō 心定 received the three abhisekas of the “secret yugi-kyō” from the acarya Ashō 阿聖. The Kōya-san monk Kaiken 快賢 received the *yugi-kanjō* initiation of “the Tachikawa-ryū” from the monk Dōhan 道範 (1184–1252). See Nobumi Iyanaga, “Secrecy, Sex and Apocrypha: Remarks on some Paradoxical Phenomena,” in *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006), 207-09. For an analysis of the medieval commentaries of the *Yugi-kyō* and for the argument that this sutra contributed to the formation of a Buddhist discourse on the body, see Lucia Dolce, “*Nigenteki genri no gireika: Fudō, Aizen to chikara no hizō* 二元的原理の儀礼化：不動・愛染と力の秘蔵,” in *Girei no chikara: Chūsei shūkyō no jissen sekai* 儀礼の力：中世宗教の実践世界, ed. Lucia Dolce and Matsumoto Ikuyo (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2010).

³¹⁷ The initiation for kami, *jingi kanjō*, was extensively discussed by Kushida Ryōkō. Kushida discusses a text called *Sokui kanjō* by Senkaku of Hōbodai' in chapel at Tōji dated from 1279. He also talks about *Rinnōji kanjō*, which involves procedures around the takamikura, throne of the Emperor. On *Reiki kanjō*, see Fabio Rambelli, “The Ritual World of Buddhist “Shinto”: The Reikiki and Initiations on Kami-Related Matters (*Jingi kanjō*) in Late Medieval and Early-Modern Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 29, no. 3-4 (2002). On *Ame no Iwato kanjō*, another variation of kami consecration focused on Amaterasu's cave myth, see Lucia Dolce, “Duality and the Kami: The Ritual Iconography and Visual Constructions of Medieval Shintō,” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 16 (2006). For Dharma certificates of the Shinto *kanjō*, see Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎 et al., eds., *Ninnaji shiryō (Shintō-hen) shintō kanjō injin* 仁和寺資料【神道篇】神道灌頂印信 (Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku bungakubu hikaku jinbungaku kenkyūshitsu, 2000).

the epistemological and ontological differences”³¹⁸ between the concrete and the abstract, the finite and the eternal. I propose that this logic is maintained in the *chigo kanjō* ritual, and that there are many doctrinal components borrowed from the sub-categories of *himitsu kanjō*. *Jinen kanjō* is a catch-all term for consecrations that enact the original enlightenment inherent in the practitioner. As we shall see, original enlightenment thought (*hongaku*) is at the root of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, including the principal oppositional concepts of “acquired enlightenment” (*shikaku*) and “original enlightenment” (*hongaku*) that make up its discourse. But it also features Shingon elements from the *jinen kanjō* that speak of a primordial and innate Buddhahood, such as the “signless consecration” (*musō kanjō*). Next, *Jingi kanjō* relates to both the formation of karmic ties with the kami and the place of the kami as central objects of devotion; in addition, there is also a strong element of *yugi kanjō* seen in the commentaries. For example, consider the visualization of a “Horse-Penis Samadhi” (*meonzō zanmai* 馬陰藏三昧) of Aizen-myō, whose main scriptural source is the *Yugi-kyō*, the sutra that is fundamental to the *yugi* consecration.³¹⁹ Indeed, since the *yugi-kanjō* is considered to be “a ritual practice of sexual yoga,”³²⁰ it stands to reason that it has ties with the sexual initiation of *chigo kanjō*. Even though many of the *Yugi-kyō*-related material has been thought to be exclusive to a sub-lineage of Tōmitsu (Shingon), the Sanbō’in-ryū, Religion scholar Lucia Dolce notes that these teachings can be found in competing lineages and schools. For example, they are included in the *Asabashō*, a Taimitsu

³¹⁸ Rambelli Fabio, “The Myth of the South Indian Iron Stupa (Nanten tettō) in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism,” *International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture* 27, no. 2 (2017): 84-85.

³¹⁹ Bernard Faure, *Gods of Medieval Japan: Volume 2, Protectors and Predators* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2016), 175; Roger Goepfer, *Aizen-Myōō: The Esoteric King of Lust, An Iconological Study* (Zurich: Artibus Asiae : Museum Rietberg Zurich, 1993), 103–13.

³²⁰ *Kanjo* 灌頂, (Tokyo: Chisan denpoin, 2001), 52.

ritual encyclopedia. They also can be found in the Yōjō-ryū lineage, which as we saw earlier was active in Chōrakuji temple—a de facto hub of *chigo kanjō*.³²¹

The second category of consecrations that may have influenced the formation of *chigo kanjō* is *denbō kanjō* 伝法灌頂 (“consecration ritual for the transmission of the Dharma”). Abe Yasurō claims that the structure of *chigo kanjō* is modeled on the *denbō kanjō*, an initiation ritual whereby one formally identifies with the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana.³²² Those who went through *denbō kanjō* were promoted to the role of *ācāryā*—master—an officiating priest who can perform consecrations and initiate others into his lineage. The influence of *denbō kanjō* on *chigo kanjō* can be seen especially in the practice of connecting with a Buddha via a flower and a mandala, which I will describe below. Given the *denbō kanjō*’s pervading influence in the larger field of *kanjō*, it is likely the prototype of most *kanjō* initiations.

Now that context and background of *kanjō* as a ritual category is understood and the specific types of *kanjō* that informed the *chigo kanjō* explained, I proceed to make an ontological-ritual claim regarding the *chigo kanjō* multifaceted ritual system. I argue that the *chigo kanjō* ritual resembles other *himitsu kanjō* by trying to disrupt the dichotomy between the *chigo* (phenomenal/conditioned) and any other three beings with which the *chigo* unites: the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana, the bodhisattva Kannon (an enlightened entity that strives to save all sentient beings), and the kami Sannō (absolute/unconditioned). As we shall see, the enactment of identity between *chigo* and Mahāvairocana or transformation of

³²¹ Lucia Dolce, “The Embryonic Generation of the Perfect Body: Ritual Embryology from Japanese Tantric Sources,” in *Transforming the Void: Embryological Discourse and Reproductive Imagery in East Asian Religions*, ed. Anna Andreeva and Dominic Steavu (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 294–95.

³²² Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, “Sokui-hō no girei to engi: Chūsei ōken shinwa ron no kōzō 即位法の儀礼と縁起：中世王権神話論の構想,” *Sōzō no sekai 創造の世界* 73 (1990): 24.

chigo into Kannon is effected through ritual gestures as well as through consecration and the absorption of Esoteric knowledge. These ritual moments are meant to collapse the distinction between the *chigo* and the other divinities in order to lay the groundwork for a tantric sexual union. Moreover, the structural logic of the ritual obeyed the need to make manifest the unconditioned in the ritual space. As such, I will detail the various stages of the ritual, describing its structure and participants, icons and mandalas, preparatory practices that precede the ritual consecration, adornment of the hall, the entrance into the hall, and the concluding initiation. We shall see that the ontological-ritual purpose of the ritual was to integrate the microcosmic “self” of the *chigo* with the larger cosmic structure.

The Ontological and Ritual Aspects of the Chigo Kanjō

Chigo kanjō was a Tendai ritual that has been argued by scholars as belonging to the Eshin-ryū lineage.³²³ Though it follows the conventions of Esoteric initiation—Mikkyō, albeit in its Tendai version of Taimitsu—it also combines various exoteric teachings of Tendai, as well as subsumes under its framework the local cults of kami worship. Structurally, the *chigo kanjō* ritual is a variation of *denbō kanjō* 伝法灌頂 (“initiation ritual of the transmission of the Dharma”), the most important form of *abhiṣeka* rituals; but, as noted earlier, there are other forms of *kanjō* embedded in its DNA. The *denbō kanjō* takes place once a disciple has fulfilled a course of study and has thus earned the status of master.

³²³ See Abe, “Jidō setsuwa no keisei: Tendai sokui hō no seiritsu wo megutte (jō) 慈童説話の形成：天台即位法の成立をめぐりて（上）,” *Kokugo kokubun* 国語国文 53, no. 8 (1984); “Jidō setsuwa no keisei: Tendai sokui hō no seiritsu wo megutte (ge) 慈童説話の形成：天台即位法の成立をめぐりて（下）,” *Kokugo kokubun* 国語国文 53, no. 9 (1984), and Matsuoka Shinpei 松岡心平, *Utage noshintai: basara kara Zeami e* 宴の身体：バサラから世阿弥へ (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991).

The *denbō kanjō* initiation usually begins with “preparatory practices” (*kegyō* 加行), which last from one week to one hundred days. These practices are then followed by the consecration ritual, which takes place in both the inner and outer areas of a hall. The inner areas contain the two altars of the Womb and Diamond mandalas; the initiate, whose face is covered, conducts a flower-tossing ceremony in front of one of the two mandalas (depending on the type of initiation taking place). Since the initiate cannot see anything, there is a secret and mysterious aura surrounding the ritual. The initiate enters the inner hall with his face covered, but at the end of the ritual this cover is removed to signal “the final separation from the delusory world of everyday reality.”³²⁴ The initiate will receive the consecration proper from an *ācāryā* (master), once he is seated on a mat shaped after an eight-petal flower, the throne of Mahāvairocana Buddha (Dainichi 大日) in the mandala. The master then gives sacred regalia to the initiate, and announces the new inductee to be Dainichi. The master also gives the newly consecrated master a lineage chart (*kechimiyaku* 血脈) that locates his position in the transmission of the lineage.

As discussed in Chapter 2, scholarship to make sense of the *chigo kanjō* ritual’s structure and organization had long been limited to just two texts: the ritual manual *Chigo kanjō shiki* 児灌頂私記 (Manuscript E), and the exegetical-commentary-based *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝 (Manuscript B). As Abe Yasurō describes,³²⁵ the ritual begins with “preparatory practices” performed in front of the primary object of worship, the image of Kannon. This is followed by a late-night consecration at the practice hall, during

³²⁴ Rambelli, “The Ritual World of Buddhist “Shinto”: The Reikiki and Initiations on Kami-Related Matters (*Jingi kanjō*) in Late Medieval and Early-Modern Japan,” 268-69.

³²⁵ Abe, “Sokui-hō no girei to engi: Chūsei ōken shinwa ron no kōzō 即位法の儀礼と縁起：中世王権神話論の構想,” 24.

which the *chigo* steps on the altar half naked, wearing only *ōguchi* (*hakama* pants). The master then bestows the *chigo* with mantric formulae and mudras. Then the *chigo* drinks “vow water” (*seigan* 誓水), which enacts karmic ties between him and the central divinity. Next, the monk applies cosmetics to the *chigo*’s face, including defining his eyebrows and painting his teeth black. The *chigo* is then donned with a robe, a crown placed on his head. Once the *chigo* is adorned, he is installed on a throne (*takamikura* 高御座); at that moment, the master is positioned below him. From this inverted hierarchy, with *chigo* on top and master (the highest ritual authority) on the bottom, the master empowers the *chigo* (*kaji* 加持), in other words, the *chigo*’s body becomes one with the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana. The master then performs the *kanjō* proper by pouring water on the *chigo*’s head, and gives him oral instructions, which are the verses from the *Lotus Sutra* that are related to the *Jidō setsuwa* cycle. In the final part of the ritual the master explain the consecration’s narrative (*kyōke* 教化) including its doctrinal significance, announcing that the *chigo* is Kannon, a bodhisattva manifested herself in this world in order to save all sentient beings. The ceremony ends with the *chigo*’s chanting of those verses, a liturgical performance that transmits merit (*ekō* 廻向) to all beings in the universe.³²⁶

This is the basic structure of the ritual—again, based on unavoidably limited scholarship. But other manuscripts give a more complex picture of the ritual, with many additional segments that rely on embodied practices and gestural acts to enact the *chigo*’s identity with the divinities that are worshipped in the ritual.

³²⁶ Ibid.

Ritual Structure and Ritual Participants

My cross-examination of the *chigo kanjō* manuscripts revealed several variations of the ritual. I will reconstruct the standard ritual procedures of *chigo kanjō* based on primary sources produced across a wide geographical area. Note, while it is likely that the rituals differed according to area, lineage, and even master, the commonalities among the variants allow us to come up with a general sense of the ritual's structure.³²⁷

First, let me provide a few basic details about the ritual and its actors. There are three main participants in the ritual: the *acāryā* or officiating priest/master (*ajari* 阿闍梨); the instructor (*kyōju* 教授); and the *chigo* 児. The master carries out most of the liturgical functions of the ritual, including initiating the *chigo* into his newly acquired ontological status. The instructor accompanies the *chigo* into the hall and transmits to him the teachings. And, of course, the *chigo* is the initiand around whom the ritual is organized. Contrary to more common *kanjō*, the *chigo* is also the icon of the ritual—due to his embodied state as Kannon as well as his carnal interfusion with and possession by the protector deity, Sannō. The above represents the ritual's standard *dramatis personae*.

According to Manuscript B—*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私, the doctrinal exegesis and ritual commentary—the format of three participants dates to the first *chigo kanjō* that was ever held in Japan, which involved the initiation of Ennin, or Jikaku Daishi 慈覺大師 (~794–864), and was carried out by the Enryakuji abbot (*zasu* 座主) and

³²⁷ It is fortunate that we can read these documents in the first place. Some secret initiations such as the *kai kanjō* were never revealed outside their monastic precincts, until scholars leaked them in modern times. In other cases, sexual rituals were completely wiped-out and the few remaining cases that we have evidence for are in the form of diatribes against these practices which frame them as heterodoxies, as seen in some Tachikawa-ryū texts.

by another instructor (*kyōju* 教授). While this story is probably unfounded, it serves as a precedent for the unusual number of participants. Moreover, the god Sannō is related to ternary structures because of its intimate association with the doctrinal notion of the Threefold Truth (*santai* 三諦), fully manifested in the *chigo kanjō* ritual. But Manuscript D (*Chigo kanjō shidai* 児灌頂次第) suggests other minor participants, such as hymn chanters (*sanshū* 讚衆), that may have been present in the ceremony—something never mentioned thus far in scholarship. In addition to the main three participants, there were other individuals that supported the ritual in chanting and attendance.

As for the usage of this procedures, it appears that the ritual manuals may have been used as a template text for carrying out *chigo kanjō* multiple times. The title of Manuscript A, *Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私, and of Manuscript E, *Chigo kanjō shiki* 児灌頂私記, implies this function: “*Chigo kanjō* for Personal Use/Personal Records” meaning that monks could perform the ritual for several people and perhaps as time went by catered to their own style, through copying the same document or filling out information in separate texts. However, it also seems that several documents were used only once, based on the markings that were left out purposefully to render the documents useless for posterity. For example, crossing out the main Dharma transmissions so that the uninitiated would not be able to read them or use the document as a certificate for one’s own transmission.

Icons and Mandalas

The material statues and hanging mandalas were the only icons in the initiation hall, and the main worship was carried out before the primary icon of Kannon (*honzon* 本尊, see the below “preparatory practices” discussion). But note that Manuscript G, *Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō* 児灌頂口決相承, refers to the icon as not a Kannon statue but a mandala, which literature scholar Tsuji Shōko considers this to be a definitive assessment.³²⁸ However, given a few variants among the manuscripts, I cannot agree with certainty; Manuscript D, for example, cites the use of the Sannō mandala. Plus, the fact that Kannon was worshipped as the central divinity, and that the aim of the ritual was to realize that the *chigo* was a manifestation of Kannon, suggests to me that Kannon images were likely used.

Several of the *chigo kanjō* documents reference the two Esoteric mandalas, the Womb Realm and the Diamond Realm; As such, it stands to reason that in addition to a Kannon statue or painting, these mandalas were present in some capacity, whether in abstract or in reality. And, indeed, Manuscript A proclaims its doctrinal basis to be the twofold mandala (*taikon* 台金). And yet, the Womb and Diamond mandalas are not used in any of the manuscripts’ flower-tossing segments—the climax of the ritual that unites the *chigo* and the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana or Sannō in one body. *Chigo kanjō shidai* (Manuscript D) makes it clear that this role is reserved for a Sannō 山王 mandala that enshrines the deity of the Hie Shrine. That Sannō mandala is accompanied by another spread-out mandala shaped as an eight-petaled Lotus and displays Nine Divinities (*kuson* 九

³²⁸ Tsuji Shōko 辻晶子, “*Chigo kanjō no kisoteki kōsatsu: Giki no shōkai to seiri* 児灌頂の基礎的考察：儀軌の紹介と整理,” *Jinbun bunka kenkyūka nenpyō* 人間文化研究科年報 27 (2011).

尊). The center, ninth icon represents the concentration of Sannō's numinous power. Given that several extant medieval-era mandalas of Sannō follows this template, it is safe to assume that the centerpiece mandala is a Sannō *zushi mandara* (Portable-Shrine mandala), a three-dimensional altar with a mandalic design.³²⁹ With all this in mind, it seems unlikely that the dual Womb and Diamond mandalas would be incorporated into an already intricate arrangement of Kannon and Sannō mandalas. (unless the mandalas were incorporated to the doors or walls of the *zushi*, but such mandala is not extant today).

To make matters more complicated, (A) *Kanjō shi* also establishes that *chigo kanjō* is the “*kanjō* of the Mandala of Great Compassion (*daihidan* 大悲壇) and the Mandala [Showing] the Outside of the Capital (*togedan* 都外壇).” The *daihidan* 大悲壇 usually refers to the Womb Realm Mandala—sometimes specifically to the Śākyamuni group of the Womb mandala—whereas the *togedan* is dedicated solely to one deity selected from the divinities in the outer rim of the Womb Mandala (or the totality of those outside those deities). While the reference might suggest that the Womb Mandala and another icon mandala based on the Womb Realm are installed in the ritual, I propose that this statement should be taken as metaphysical rather than literal.³³⁰ In this passage, a quote that explains that true meaning of the “mandala of great compassion” is introduced.” The quote, an oral transmission, refers to three mandalas (*sandan* 三壇), but only the part about the great compassion mandala is mentioned since it is the relevant portion to the discussion. One wonders whether the architects of *chigo kanjō* had originally planned to install three

³²⁹ I thank Abe Yasurō for this information.

³³⁰ “*Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私,” in *Tenkaizō* 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

mandalas, so that they would conform to the tripartite nature of the Sannō deity or the threefold pattern of Taimitsu.

To my mind, Buddhist exegetes reference the mandalas in order to invoke principle of compassion that is associated with the Womb mandala—and even more so with Kannon. The text in Manuscript A explicitly notes that the *daihidan* possesses the meaning of the “One Gateway” discussed in the “Universal Gateway” chapter of the Lotus Sutra, a chapter centered on the message of Kannon’s compassion and ceaseless effort to help suffering sentient beings. (This is also the main teaching of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, as we shall see.) The *daihidan* is called “One Gateway” because “entering through the Gateway of Great compassion constitutes the fulfillment of insight into the Universal Gateway. This is also the Entrance to the Mind from the letter SA to the Letter A.”³³¹ Manuscript A informs readers that the carrying out the ritual (probably referring specifically to sexual penetration, given the emphasis on “entrance”) parallels the visualization practice of the Syllable A. Namely, the movement from the particular to the universal, as represented by the transition from the root syllable of Kannon, the syllable SA, to the primordial nature and total embodiment of the cosmos, the syllable A, which encompasses Mahāvairocana of the Womb Mandala. The same kind of salvific process applies to the initiated *chigo*. (A) *Chigo kanjō shi* suggests that the Womb Mandala is the foundation of Kannon’s Universal Gateway, and assures that *chigo kanjō* will allow the recipient to embody the compassion and virtues of Kannon. Thus, I see the mandala discussion as concerning the ontological condition realized by the *chigo* in the ritual.

³³¹ 先大悲壇也。是普門一門意也。大悲門ヨリ入見普門叶故也。是又 𠄎 字門、 𠄎 字門入心也。委細在口傳^{云々}。Ibid.

Moreover, additional terms in Manuscript B suggest that two mandalas were used in the ritual so as to undergird the ritual with Esoteric metaphysics—that is, to signify non-dualism, or the joining together of the two opposite and irreducible aspects of reality, the Womb (female/compassion) and the Diamond (male/wisdom). For example, the use of the word *gōgyō* 合行 (joint practice) in Manuscript B, which denotes the simultaneous initiation into the two mandalas in Taimitsu consecrations,³³² does not indicate that the two mandalas were practically employed in the *chigo kanjō* ritual—in part because most of the imagery concerns the Womb Realm rather than the Diamond. Rather, I posit that these terms were used doctrinally to mobilize the twofold mandalas as hidden “tectonic plates” that bring about sexual union and the sanctification of the *chigo*’s body as Kannon, Sannō, and Dainichi.³³³ Therefore, rather than being materially present, the textual references to the Womb and Diamond mandalas instead functioned to remind practitioners that, underneath the exoteric façade represented by the *Lotus Sutra*’s teachings, there also lies an “Esoteric episteme,” intended to emphasize achieving absolute non-dualism through ritual activity.³³⁴ Essentially, just the concept of two mandalas, even when not present, express a semiotics of sexual activity—with the underlying meaning of unity between compassion and wisdom,

³³² The *gōgyō* 合行 is considered a Taimitsu development. Tendai master Annen 安然 (841 - ?) had developed a ritual based on the *Soshitsuji-hō* 蘇悉地法, which revealed the Sussidhi Realm as the third component/mandala. Annen continued to elaborate a threefold *kanjō* informed by these developments. However, combined consecrations (*gōgyō* 合行), which ignored the third element or mandala, were mostly performed, even when tripartite formulations became available. Annen diversified *kanjō* even more, as he formulated five types of *Kanjō* in his *Kyōji mondō dai ni* 教事問答第二 and *Senjō jigō kanjō gusoku shibun* 選定事業灌頂具足支分 (ca. tenth century). For a detailed discussion of Taimitsu’s threefold system, see Lucia Dolce, “Taimitsu: The Esoteric Buddhism of the Tendai School,” in *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*, ed. Charles D. Orzech, Henrik Hjort Sorensen, and Richard K. Payne (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 757–58.

³³³ See for example, (B) *Shōgyo hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私 and (F) *Jōbodai-in* 成菩提院.

³³⁴ For the concept of the “esoteric episteme,” see Fabio Rambelli, “True Words, Silence, and the Adamantine Dance: On Japanese Mikkyō and the Formation of the Shingon Discourse,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, no. 4 (1994).

and between female and male aspects. These semiotics empower the *chigo*, since collapsing the distinctions between the two mandalic realms triggers his inherent awakening. It is apparent then, that the mention of mandalas worked to collapse the distinction between the phenomenal (*chigo*) and noumenal (Mahāvairocana as one of the modalities of the cosmos and Kannon).

Preparatory Practices

Next let us discuss the actual ritual process, for which we will turn to Manuscript G, *Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō* 児灌頂口決相承, since it provides the most detailed account. (The initial portions are missing from the other manuscripts.) To start, before the ritual consecration proper, the *chigo* conducts three “preparatory practices” (*kegyō* 加行), for which the setup is as follows. The primary icon, Kannon, is positioned at the center of the main altar. It is flanked on both sides by a hanging scroll, that of Sannō on the left, and of the Great Master (Daishi) on the right. Though Sannō represents the Sannō deity, and Daishi represents the Tendai teacher Ennin 円仁 (noted earlier in relation to Manuscript B), it is interesting to note that the two words combined form the title *Sannō Daishi* 山王大師, which refers to the first Tiantai patriarch, Zhiyi 智顛 (538–597). Perhaps the learned monks who designed the ritual wanted to invoke the allure of orthodoxy that was closely associated with the founder of the Tendai tradition.

The practices themselves, all of which were done facing the image of the Kannon, were to be performed by the *chigo* during three set periods: the hour of the tiger (*tora* 寅), 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.; the hour of the horse (*uma* 午), 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM; and the hour of

the dog (*inu* 戌), from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.³³⁵ During the pre-dawn period, the hour of the tiger (*goya* 後夜), the *chigo* performs a repentance ritual (*sanpō* 懺法) by reading one scroll of a repentance text in front of the Kannon image.³³⁶ For the next practice, conducted during day-time, the hour of the horse (*nitchū* 日中), the *chigo* reads the Amida Sutras (Amida-kyō 阿弥陀經), that is, the three Pure Land Sutras. Then, during the first watch of the night (*shoya* 初夜, the hour of the dog), the *chigo* recites the Kannon Sutra. As noted earlier, the Kannon Sutra, is in fact another name for the Universal Gateway chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* when used as a standalone scripture. It describes Kannon’s compassionate acts in her effort to save all beings.

Next, the *chigo* recites the following dharani incantations:

- 1) The short Butsugen 仏眼 (The Buddha Mother, Sk. *Buddhalocanī*) Dhāraṇī: “*on hotaroshani sowaka,*” to be recited one hundred times.
- 2) The Shō-Kannon 聖観音 (Holy Kannon, Sk. *Āryāvalokiteśvara*) Dhāraṇī: “*on arorikiya sowaka,*” to be recited one thousand times.
- 3) The short Senju 千手 (One-Thousand Armed [Kannon], Sk. *Sahasra-bhuja*) Dhāraṇī: “*on hasarataru nikiri sowaka,*” to be recited one hundred times.
- 4) The Jūichimen 十一面 (Eleven-Faced [Kannon], Sk. *Ekādaśamukha*) short Dhāraṇī: “*on rokeishinhara kiri sowaka,*” to be recited one hundred times.
- 5) The Ichiji-kinrin 一字金輪 (The One-Syllable Golden Disk, Sk. *Ekākṣara-uṣṇīṣa-cakra*) Dhāraṇī: to be recited one hundred times.
- 6) To close, the *chigo* would bow thirty-three times.

³³⁵ Kuketsu sōjō. See also Tsuji Shōko who discusses some of these details, Tsuji, “*Chigo kanjō no kisoteki kōsatsu: Giki no shōkai to seiri* 児灌頂の基礎的考察：儀軌の紹介と整理,” 277. I have amended Tsuji’s transcription in several parts.

³³⁶ Tsuji Shōkō claims that since the main object of worship is Kannon, these procedures were perhaps what was known as the “Kannon repentance” rites. Ibid.

The *chigo*'s devotional acts prepare his body for the interfusion with Kannon. Apart from the first and the fifth recitations, all of the ritual actions embody one of Kannon's emanations. The different dharanis express the instantiations of one of Kannon's forms: Shō-Kannon, Senju Kannon, and Jūichimen Kannon. Also, the number of bows at the end of this ritual segment, thirty-three, is the number of Kannon's avatars. The first two preparatory practices, the Kannon repentance and the recitation of Amida Sutras, are also tied to Kannon. Throughout medieval times, Amida went hand-in-hand with Kannon, since both Buddha and bodhisattva were regarded as compassionate saviors that protect sentient beings during the troubling time of the Final Dharma (*mappō* 末法), when awakening could no longer be achieved through conventional means.³³⁷ Clearly the objective was to mold the *chigo* in the image of Kannon. Next, though the dharanis of Butsugen and Ichiji-kinrin are not directly related to Kannon, they call attention to the Womb-Diamond and the non-dualism of the consecration.³³⁸ The dharanis are meant to be visualized as the union of an oppositional pair of divinities often described in Tamitsu rituals, ever since the monk Jien popularized their usage in Taimitsu liturgies in his famous dream.³³⁹ The invocation allows to contemplate the mingling of male and female, the interpenetration of the Womb Realm and the Diamond Realm, which is seen as a procreative union. The two dharanis, and other binary pairings of Taimitsu, lay the groundwork for the gendered and non-dual sanctity that

³³⁷ On Buddhist theories of decline in the East Asian context, see Jan Nattier, *Once upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline* (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), 65–118.

³³⁸ Abe, *The Weaving of Mantra: Kukai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse*, 351; Bernard Faure, *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 160.

³³⁹ Abe, *The Weaving of Mantra: Kukai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse*, 363-67; Faure, *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender*, 206-07.

is achieved through the coitus between monk and *chigo*. Therefore, one can conclude that the obeisances in honor of the icon are logically organized around both Kannon's sacrality and the non-dual ontology of Esoteric Buddhism.

For the next portion of the ritual, the *chigo* performs the *kegyō* devotion in front of the Sannō scroll:

- 1) The Monk's Staff [Chant] (*Shakujō* 錫杖): recite one scroll.
- 2) The Heart Sutra (*Shingyō* 心經): recite twenty-one scrolls.
- 3) The Dhāraṇī of the One-Syllable [Expressing] Shakyamuni (*Shaka Ichiji ju* 釈迦一字呪). “*Nōmaku sanmanda bodanan baku*” (Skt, *namaḥ samanta buddhānāṃ bhaḥ*, Praise to all Buddhas!), to be recited one hundred times.
- 4) The Dhāraṇī of Aizen (*Aizen ju* 愛染呪). “*On chaku on,*” to be recited one hundred times.
- 5) The Precious Name (*hōgō* 宝号). “*Namu Sannō gongen*” 南無山王権現 (Praise the Sannō Avatar!).
- 6) Bow twenty-one times.

These observances are common in medieval Japanese Buddhism and in the East Asian Buddhist cultural sphere—especially, for example, the recitation of the Monk's Staff Chant and the Heart Sutra. Aizen is a deity of lust, the intonation of its name was a symbolic cue for sexuality—but usually in heterosexual contexts, which perhaps explains its relative few references throughout the *chigo kanjō* literature.³⁴⁰ The inclusion of Aizen here, and another mention of his visualization in Manuscript B, demonstrates that Taimitsu elements influenced by the *Yugi-kyō* were integrated to the *chigo kanjō* ritual. The rest of these

³⁴⁰ Aizen-myōō is also mentioned in B) *Kō chigo shōgyo hiden shi*.

procedures provides a glimpse into the presence of kami worship in the Esoteric Buddhist ritual. Śakyamuni fits within the framework of Tendai's Sannō Shinto tradition. Śakyamuni (or Shaka-nyorai 釈迦如来) was considered the original ground of the god Sannō, and his importance is in fact reiterated in the *chigo kanjō* ritual commentaries. Sannō is honored here with a "Precious Name," a title exclusively reserved to Buddhas and bodhisattvas, which is quite suggestive of the elevated status of this god. Finally, that the *chigo* bows twenty-one times corresponds to the number of principal shrines in the Hie shrine complex, the cultic headquarters of the Sannō deity.³⁴¹ Much like previously with Kannon, in this stage the various mantric intonations were employed to bolster the *chigo*'s subsequent bodily transformation into Sannō.³⁴²

The final part of *kegyō* involves the veneration of Ennin's image. This segment combines several ritual utterances and practices in Esoteric and exoteric liturgy. The *chigo* is expected to perform the following:

³⁴¹ The twenty-one Hie shrines were divided into three groups: the Upper Seven 上七社, Middle Seven 中七社 and Lower Seven 下七社.

³⁴² Paul Copp comments on dharanis that "Their most emblematic form of enactment was ritual chanting—sometimes as the culmination of a rite and sometimes as ancillary components of rites dedicated to the manifestation of other forms of Buddhist power, such as images or scriptures." See Paul F Copp, *The Body Incantatory: Spells and the Ritual Imagination in Medieval Chinese Buddhism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 4, 11.

- 1) The *jigage* 自我偈 passage: recite three scrolls.
- 2) *Dhāraṇī of Worthy Excellence (sonshō darani 尊勝陀羅尼)*: to be recited one hundred times.³⁴³
- 3) The Mañjuśrī Dhāraṇī (*Monju ju 文殊咒*, “*on a ra ha sha nau*”): to be recited one hundred times.
- 4) The “Treasured Name,” “Praise Master Ennin, the great brave Diamond!” (*namu Jikaku Daishi daiyū kongō 南無慈覺大師大勇金剛*):³⁴⁴ recite one hundred times.
- 5) The Essential Passages on the “Perfect-Sudden” [precepts] (*endon wa yōbun 円頓者要文*): recite.
- 6) Bow twenty-one times.³⁴⁵

These are well-known chants and passages intoned in varying ritual contexts. The *jigage* is a popular prayer found in “the Lifetime of the Tathagatha,” the chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* that extols the historical Buddha Śākyamuni as the cosmic Buddha who exists from time immemorial.³⁴⁶ It is followed by the Mañjuśrī Dhāraṇī—“*on a ra ha sha nau*” (Skt. *om a ra*

³⁴³ The (A) *Kanjō shi* enjoins to read it three times.

³⁴⁴ The (A) *Kanjō shi* reads “Praise the Great Master, the Diamond of the Great Realm!” (*namu daishi daikai kongō 南無大師大界金剛*).

³⁴⁵ The (A) *Kanjō shi* requires to bow seven times, the number is also associated with Sannō since the deity encompassed the Seven Shrines of Hie and the Seven Stars of the Big Dipper. Ff. 4.

³⁴⁶ See the *Jigage*:

自我得仏来 所經諸劫数 無量百千万 億載阿僧祇 常說法教化 無数億衆生 令入於仏道
 爾来無量劫 為衆生度故 方便現涅槃 而実不滅度 常住此說法 我常住於此 以諸神通力
 令顛倒衆生 雖近而不見 衆見我滅度 広供養舍利 咸皆懷恋慕 而生渴仰心 衆生既信伏
 質直意柔軟 一心欲見仏 不自惜身命 時我及衆僧 俱出靈鷲山 我時語衆生 常在此不滅
 以方便力故 現有滅不滅 余国有衆生 恭敬信樂者 我復於彼中 為說無上法 汝等不聞此
 但謂我滅度 我見諸衆生 没在於苦海 故不為身現 令其生渴仰 因其心恋慕 乃出為說法
 神通力如是 於阿僧祇劫 常在靈鷲山 及余諸住处 衆生見劫尽 大火所燒時 我此土安穩
 天人常充滿 園林諸堂閣 種種宝莊嚴 宝樹多華果 衆生所遊樂 諸天擊天鼓 常作衆妓樂
 雨曼陀羅華 散仏及大衆 我浄土不毀 而衆見燒尽 憂怖諸苦惱 如是悉充滿 是諸罪衆生

pa ca na)—an ancient mantra for the veneration of Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva of Wisdom who is often worshipped in a child form. The third dharani praises Ennin as a master endowed with an adamantine body. The fourth instruction refers to the Mahayana precepts, but may also indicate the Tendai teachings. As such, the above obeisances firmly situate *chigo kanjō* in a specific Tendai context, as they revolve around the cosmic Buddha of the Lotus Sutra, the Tendai patriarch Ennin, and the Tendai Precepts. The other chants are aimed at the attainment of worldly benefits and salvation. The *Dhāraṇī of Worthy Excellence* bestows great power on the practitioner, while the Mañjuśrī Dhāraṇī provides wisdom.

(G) *Kuketsu sōjō* instructs the *chigo* to closely follow the above preparatory practices and adhere to the example of the master. The text notes that devotions (*gongyō* 勤行) should take place during seven days. As one variant, Manuscript D references the same time frame but adds that the *chigo* should perform these practices to “purify his One Mind” (*isshin shōjō* 一心清淨).³⁴⁷ That is, the protocols of *chigo kanjō* stipulated elaborate ritual actions that not only refashioned the *chigo*’s body through gestural actions and chanting, effectively

以惡業因緣 過阿僧祇劫 不聞三宝名 諸有修功德 柔和質直者 則皆見我身 在此而說法
 或時為此衆 說仏寿無量 久乃見仏者 為說仏難值 我智力如是 慧光照無量 寿命無數劫
 久修業所得 汝等有智者 勿於此生疑 当断令永尽 仏語實不虛 如医善方便 為治狂子故
 實在而言死 無能說虛妄 我亦為世父 救諸苦患者 為凡夫顛倒 實在而言滅 以常見我故 而生憍
 恣心 放逸著五欲 墮於惡道中 我常知衆生 行道不行道 隨心所可度 為說種種法 每自作是念
 以何令衆生 得入無上道 速成就仏身

T 262.9.43b12-44a4; Kubo and Yuyama, *The Lotus Sutra*, 229-231.

³⁴⁷ The ritual commentary *Shōgyō hiden* also provides a detailed account of the *kegyō*, but it seems to combine various obeisance from the above mentioned steps while adding new information. The procedures consist of first, reciting mantric verses of the three scrolls of the “Fundamental Sutra,” that is, the Lotus sutra, 1000 times. Next, one should read the seven scrolls of the precious Sannō Heart Sutra 山王心經. This probably means that the *chigo* read the Heart Sutra while visualizing the Sannō deity. Next, one should read the *Jiga-ge* 自我偈, and one scroll of *Dhāraṇī of Worthy Excellence* (*sonshō darani* 尊勝陀羅尼), and finally recite the “Precious Name.” Since the *kegyō* differ from one text to another, one can infer that there were multiple ways to perform *chigo kanjō*, and that it was practiced more than once.

drawing the *chigo* closer to the ontology of the divinities and the cosmos, but also aimed to cleanse his mind and prepare the correct body-mind condition for the main initiatory event.

The Adornment of the Main Altar

The *kanjō* (*abhiṣeka*) rituals, and Mikkyō practice as a whole, were aimed at transforming the practitioner's body, speech, and mind in order to achieve Buddhahood in the present body (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成佛)—that is, to realize the co-substantiality between one's own body and the cosmic body of Mahāvairocana. The *chigo kanjō* ritual places the *chigo*'s body at the center of the cosmos. The ritual was designed and constructed as the enactment of a chain of embodied practices that impelled different modalities of the body personified by the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana, the bodhisattva Kannon, and the Sannō god. These bodily processes were meant to create a sacrosanct the status for the *chigo*. While divinization is primarily achieved through a transformation into the above divinities, as we have seen earlier with incantations and ritual action in general, there are procedures other than the final initiatory step—the consecration by water and sexual congress—that set deification in motion. The divine condition can also arise from the physical postures of the *chigo* and monk, of which the adornment of the ritual space is a telling example. The adornment allows to *chigo* to clothe his body as a mandala, which empowers him to take on various embodied states so as to create an equation between the ritual space and the practitioner.

Following the above ceremonial preparations, the practice hall and its altar must be newly constructed and decorated according to protocol. Therefore, the next task for the

chigo is adornment (*shōgōn* 莊嚴),³⁴⁸ as it is the *chigo* who is in charge of building and decorating the hall.³⁴⁹ First, folding screens should be brought in the four corners of the practice hall, and the primary icon should face the southern direction. Note it is again emphasized that a Kannon mandala must be installed as the primary icon. The main altar (*dan* 壇) should be set up in front of that mandala. And, as we saw with the first preparatory practice, on the left side there should be an image of Ennin, and on the right side, a hanging scroll of Sannō. The altar needs to be constructed in the same pattern as the *koka* initiation (or *koka kanjō* 許可灌頂, permission consecration),³⁵⁰—that is, the *chigo* should place a pitcher (*ichi byō* 一瓶) in the middle of the altar, pour into it the “vow water” (*seigan* 誓水), and place in it seasonal flowers (*tokibana* 時花). Next, scented water (*aka* 闍伽) and the handbell (*suzu* 鈴) should be placed on an offering table (*ichizen* 一前), which is a smaller table placed on the main altar.³⁵¹ This table is then covered with a cloth (*uchishiki* 打敷).³⁵² Next, the text instructs to place on the left table the *chigo*’s toiletry, those objects that are used for hygiene and cosmetics: sumac gallnut (*fushi*), tooth-blackener (*kane*), brush (*fude*), toothpicks (*yōji* 楊枝), and mirror (*kagami* 鏡). Next, the *chigo*’s outfit and crown are placed on the table on the right. (Note, *kanjō* ceremonies usually have a table on the left

³⁴⁸ I will use the *kanjō shi* manuscript to unpack the adornment procedure. It is important to note that the *kanjō shi* is not the prototype of the ritual nor its “vulgate” or “Ur-text.” The original has been lost and cannot be retrieved anymore, nor dated precisely. I use the text merely as a convenient basis on which to emphasize the commonalities and differences across the *chigo kanjō* liturgical and doctrinal literature.

³⁴⁹ 次、新造家卜者、受者兒也。“*Chigo kanjō shi* 兒灌頂私。”

³⁵⁰ *Koka kanjō* 許可灌頂, a ritual that upon its completion bestows disciples with the legitimacy to study the Esoteric teachings. Since they vary according to context, lineage, and time, it is unclear what sort of structure does the writer of *chigo kanjō* have in mind.

³⁵¹ The *chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō* also instructs to ring the bell.

³⁵² The *uchishiki* is a cloth usually placed on Buddhist implements or images. The type of fabrics often used is gold brocade (*kinran* 金襴) and silk damask (*donsu* 緞子).

and on the right of the smaller platform (礼盤 *raiban*), which suggests that the location of the *raiban* is probably between the two tables in front the main altar.)

Like with other Esoteric rites, the ritual space is envisioned as a mandala; as such, these *chigo kanjō* texts specify precisely what sacred functions the different objects and their positions fulfill. First, the (A) *Kanjō shi* manuscript clearly states that the adornment creates the Dharma Realm hall (*hōkai dōjō* 法界道場), namely, producing a microcosm of the *dharmadhātu* in the ritual space. The adornment is equated with the attainment of the path in “the land of dwelling together” (*dōgodo* 同居土), one of the Four Buddha Lands in Tendai thought. It marks the coming together of ordinary beings and enlightened sages. The text explains that the adornment denotes the “place of one thought-moment among the Four [Buddha] Lands” (*nendo ichinen sho* 四土一念所). The four lands designate four processes in the Buddhist life, and since the *dōgodo* is the first in this scheme, it is equated here with the initial moment of arising faith. This land was chosen, in my mind, because it represents the essence of the ritual - the union of the sacred and profane – and also because the adornment is an initial stage in the consecration, much like the temporal positioning of this land/life process.³⁵³ This leads the narrator to claim that by the virtue of decorating the hall, the *chigo* becomes the ritual space itself, and also the very act of adornment.³⁵⁴ This follows what Teuuwen and Scheid claim about the ability to sanctify objects as mandalas, “In medieval Japan, the notion of the “glory of the mandalas” as a physical presence was ubiquitous. By “mandalizing” places, objects, and even texts, they could be transformed into

³⁵³ Alan Grapard notes that Mount Hiko is divided into the Four Buddha Lands, and that the lowest zone was called *Bonshō dōgodo* 凡聖同居土 (“Land of Co-habitation of Anchorites and Commoners”). See Allan G. Grapard, *Mountain Mandalas: Shugendo in Kyushu* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 131-33.

³⁵⁴ 次、新造家卜者、受者兒也。受者兒、指道場云。又莊嚴云也。“*Chigo kanjō shi* 兒灌頂私。”

specimens of the non-dual power of the Dharma-body. Specific and not so specific sites were envisioned as mandalic power points, where the Dharma-body itself saves the sentient beings through objects, buildings, and landscapes that represent “True Reality.”³⁵⁵ Of course, people and their actions were also able to manifest this mandalic power. Therefore, the activities of building and ornamenting the hall inscribe on the *chigo*’s body the very mandala which he constructs.

Since the ritual space is now actualized as a sacred space, the physical elements in the hall are envisioned as mandalic entities that possess protective capacity and salvific importance. The phrase “folding screens” (*byōbū* 屏風) is doctrinally interpreted to be read as “blocking the wind” (*kaze wo fusegu* 風をフセグ) and the text adds that “The root of wind is the syllable *pha*, and its shape the half-moon.”³⁵⁶ In Esoteric Buddhism, *pha* is the Siddham syllable which connotes the meaning of the “causes of karma” (*ingō* 因業). The placement of the screen is meant to obstruct the operations of causation and specifically natural phenomena driven by karmic forces, such as the wind. The text elucidates the pragmatic intention behind setting the folding screens: they are meant to demarcate the site with protective boundaries that prevent the wind of negative karma from entering. The text also comments that the *chigo* expresses, *only temporarily* (that is, during the moment of setting up the folding screens), the “water of wisdom” (*chisui* 智水) of the *vaṃ* syllable. Thus, we can agree that all of the various ritual steps constitute a momentary enlightened state, whereas the final consecration produces a permanent result of Buddhahood.

³⁵⁵ Scheid and Teeuwen, *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, 15.

³⁵⁶ 次、四方に屏風立事。風ヲフセクトヨム也。風ノ種子PHA字也。形半月也。 “*Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私。”

The syllable *vaṃ* in Mikkyō embodies the Dainichi of the Diamond Realm, a meaning that also appears in the *kanjō*. The “water of wisdom” signifies the water that is poured on the head of the initiate during the consecration, an act that triggers the absorption of Dainichi’s wisdom in the newly initiated. The transmission of this newly gained gnosis is understood as “Conferring the Dharma Realm Wheel that is Perfectly Round” (*ju hōkai rin engan* 授法界輪圓丸).³⁵⁷ The *Chigo kanjō* 児灌頂 (Manuscript F) even notes that in this step the *chigo* is effectively rewarded with the “Wisdom-Fist Mudra (*chiken-in*) of the *vaṃ* syllable,” that is, a mudra that Dainichi of the Womb Realm forms at the center of the mandala,³⁵⁸ as a synthesis of the two realms, Diamond and Womb. This mudra also has important sexual significance, as Susan Klein notes “it is formed by wrapping the fingers of the right hand around the upright index finger of the left hand,”³⁵⁹ which may have denoted sexual penetration. Finally, once the hall is adorned, even the preliminary decorative actions that the *chigo* performs are seen as conducive to attaining the wisdom of Mahāvairocana’s ultimate reality, even if only for a short time.

The decoration of the hall is underlied by the logic of geomancy. “Establishing the practice hall so that [the primary icon] faces south” is done so because the northern direction, where the icon is situated, is the direction from which calamities and disasters

³⁵⁷ By using the word round, the text signals that the transmission also encompasses the teachings of Tendai, which are known to be Perfect and Round.

³⁵⁸ The *chiken-in* is also related to ceremonial procedures that took place before the enthronement ritual of the Emperor (*sokui kanjō* 即位灌頂). Matsumoto Ikuyo discusses a Shingon Kanju-ji text by the priest Fujiwara Nobutada 信忠 (1266-1322). This text functioned as an *in’myō denju* 印明伝授, the conferring of mudras and mantras before the enthronement, which included the *chiken-in* and also the *shikai ryōsho-in* mudras. See Matsumoto Ikuyo 松本郁代, *Chūsei ōken to sokui kanjō: Seikyō no naka no rekishi jojutsu* 中世王権と即位灌頂：聖教のなかの歴史叙述 (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2005), 52; Klein, *Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan*, n. 3.

³⁵⁹ *Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan*, 178.

come.³⁶⁰ The assertion is based on the geomantic knowledge according to which the ritual space should be sealed off from malevolent agents that emerge from the north. The text says that the icon faces the south (or is positioned in the north) also because this location is identified with both a “mind possessing a wisdom with unrestricted activity” (*jōsho sachi-shin* 成所作智心), one of the “Five Wisdoms” (*gochi* 五智),³⁶¹ and the quiescence of nirvana (*nehan jakujō* 涅槃寂靜), one of the “Three Marks of the Dharma” in the Lotus Sutra.³⁶² Manuscript A claims that this is also the unobtainable syllable of Śakyamuni, the letter *bhaḥ*. Indeed, in Esoteric teachings the “wisdom with unrestricted activity” corresponds to the wind element and to the Northern direction, as well as the letter *bhaḥ* of Śakyamuni. The text also comments that the root of the syllable *bhaḥ*, i.e., the syllable *bha*, signifies “all of us sentient beings to the point of nirvana,” perhaps because *bha* in Sanskrit recalls *bhava*, the existing world (and all of his living beings). The point may have referred to the siddham graphic element representing *-ḥ*, which together with *bha* forms *bhaḥ*. According to the text, “Shaka-nyorai,” whose essence is in the syllable *bha*, means the “mysterious unity of external reality and wisdom.” (*kyōchi myōgō* 境智冥合). Finally, the purpose of decorating and modeling the altar after *koka kanjō*, the text tells us, is for making non-duality (*funi* 不二) manifest.³⁶³ The implication is that the seat of the icon, its ritual

³⁶⁰ 北方息災方.

³⁶¹ The “mind possessing a wisdom with unrestricted activity” (*jōshōchishin* 成所作智心) is one of the Four Wisdoms (*shichi* 四智) of the Yogācāra school. This is the fourth stage of attainment in the Yogacara scheme. In Esoteric Buddhism, it is part of the Five Wisdoms (*gochi* 五智).

³⁶² Sanbō’ in 三法印, the “Three Marks of the Dharma,” are the three aspects that are unique to the Buddhist teachings and sets them apart from other teachings, as expounded in the Lotus sutra: 1) All conditioned things are impermanent (*shogyō mujō* 諸行無常), 2) All phenomena lack intrinsic essence (*shohō muga* 諸法無我), 3) nirvana is quiescence (*nehan jakujō* 涅槃寂靜). See Lotus, T 262.9.15b7; Kubo and Yuyama, *The Lotus Sutra*, 71-73.

³⁶³ 次壇様如許可—スルハ、不二ヲ顯サム為也。“Chigo kanjō shi 児灌頂私。”

altar, instantiates the perfect integration between the world of the buddhas and conventional reality, or in more familiar Tendai terms, the fusion of external reality and wisdom and the supreme knowledge of it, the perceived phenomena and the mental apparatus that perceives them in a correct and nondualistic way. As discussed above, the construction of the ritual space follows established East Asian geomancy, while also incorporating concepts and doctrines from exoteric Tendai teachings. The salvific operation is initiated by the virtue of the *chigo*'s own outward conduct, which in itself summons divine power.

The construction and arrangement of the ritual space also involves placing implements with mandalic significance. The *chigo* places a vase on the main altar because “Setting up the ‘pitcher of Kannon’ at the center of the altar constitutes the water within the Five Wisdoms (観音一甌中其臺立五智水成).”³⁶⁴ The *aka* water that is placed on the offerings table brings about “One Universal Gateway,” and therefore there should be single (“One”) portion offerings.”³⁶⁵ The text goes on to say: “Place all of the following on the [left] side-table. Mix sumac gallnut with incense, the tooth blackener with Wisdom Water, the brush with the white flowers, and for a toothpick use a wooden pick. A mirror should be arranged to reflect the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom (*daienkyōchi* 大圓鏡智). On the right side-table, place the outfit and the heavenly crown. They signify ‘an adorned body’ (*gonshin* 嚴身). In sum, the cosmetic implements represent the adorned body.”³⁶⁶ The text will state later that the *chigo* attains the “Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom” upon consecration, and will

³⁶⁴ This reading is based on conflating the sentences of *Kanjō shi* with *kuketsu sōjō*. The *kuketsu sōjō* writes: 一甌ア壇中ニ立事、衆音ノ一甌ヲ中臺立テ五智水ト成ス故ニ、一甌中ニ立ル也。I have replaced 衆音 with 観音, to conform with the *Kanjō shi* since the former seems to be a scribal mistake.

³⁶⁵ 次、闕伽一前、一門普門表也。故一面供用也。“*Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私。”

³⁶⁶ 惣シテケシヤウノ具足、嚴身義也。Ibid.

be wearing these outfits to take on the adorned body of Mahāvairocana. Moreover, the reflection of the ritual space and wisdom that is attained through gazing at the mirror will ultimately be emblazoned on his own body. The role of the mirror in the *chigo kanjō* initiation is akin to earlier Indian Buddhist *abhiṣeka* in that the mirror stands for emptiness, in this case, the round essence of the mirror which is understood in Tendai not just as emptiness but also the perfection/roundness of the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra*, and reveals to the disciple ultimate reality through its reflection (for the same reason the *chigo* has the word *maru* added to his name, meaning round, at the culmination of the consecration). Thus, the themes of adornment and wisdom are used in conjunction, precisely in order to show that the decoration of the body and the ritual stage result in the attainment of insight, and to stress that the *chigo* expresses the sacrality of the *dharmadhātu*, the supreme reality of the cosmos, in his own adorned body.

Entrance into the Hall

When the *chigo* finishes adorning the hall (and by extension, his own body), he presumably leaves it before the ritual proper takes place. Within (D) *Kanjō shidai*, there is an oral transmission called *Chigo kanjō shūki* 児灌頂修記, which provides details on the master and *chigo* before and during the entrance into the hall. In *kanjō* terminology, this procedure is usually called “entering the hall” or “entering the path [to enlightenment]” (*nyūdō* 入堂・入道). It states that before the entrance, the master performs Buddhist rites (*hōji* 法事) and uses the five-pronged vajra scepter to award the initiate with the “wisdom-fist mudra”

(*chiken-in* 智拳印) of the precept assembly (*sanmayae* 三摩耶會).³⁶⁷ The *chigo* also carries the parasol over the head of the master. We learn about the tonsorial and sartorial features of the *chigo*: the hair is tied down while standing, and he wears only *oguchi-bakama*, which means he is half-naked. The next steps open up the entrance into the hall. A “Hymn of the Four Wisdoms” (*chiken san* 四智讚) is performed during circumambulation (*gyōdō* 行道). In other *kanjō* consecration, this segment involves the master entering in procession with other disciple hymn chanters (*sanshū* 讚衆) and circumambulating the main altar. This is the case here since the leader of this group, the chief chanter (*santō* 讚頭), is explicitly mentioned. The hymn chanter is instructed to circumambulate the master in a counter-clockwise fashion without bowing³⁶⁸ while holding the handbell (*kane* 鐺). The *chigo* and “everyone else” (the hymn chanters) should do the same and bow before the master when they enter. Then, the *chigo* should stand behind the master. With the practicing of “correct faculties” (*shōki* 正機) three times, and additional circumambulation, the procedure of entering the hall is over.³⁶⁹

But when does the *chigo* enter the hall? According to *Kanjō shi*, the *chigo* enters when the master performs the “ritual of obeisance” (*gyōhō* 行法), which is described in other *kanjō* texts to be the initial stage of the ritual. This refers to a series of preliminary

³⁶⁷ One of the nine assemblies in the Diamond mandala.

³⁶⁸ This is probably a mistake. I do not see a reason for why the chief chanter would not bow before the master.

³⁶⁹ This version of the text also adds that the master proceeds to sit down on the small platform (*raiban*) on the west. The *chigo* sits down on the smaller platform on the east. The master coats himself with incense, and sprinkles water on his own body. He then practices the ritual of permission to give the Dharma once (*koka hō* 許可法). He subsequently provides it to the *chigo*, performing on him the same rites, bows three times and leaves the hall. Afterward, the *chigo* should do the same to himself, smearing the incense, sprinkling water, performing esoteric rites (*juhō* 修法), and sprinkling water while bowing three times.

rites performed by the master once he sits on the smaller platform (usually located in front of the main altar), which constitute prayers for the success of the ritual.³⁷⁰ According to *Chigo kanjō shi*, this coincides with the master intoning the “correct mindful chant” (*shōnen zū* 正念誦). This prayer is explained as an invocation for 1000 times in front of the primary icon, that is, the Kannon mandala.³⁷¹ As soon as the master repeats these 500 times and without error, the teacher (*kyōju* 教授) should bring in the *chigo*.

³⁷⁰ See Sadakata Akira 定方辰, *Chōrakuji kanjō monjo no kenkyū* 長樂寺灌頂文書の研究 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2009), 143.

³⁷¹ See *ibid.*, 78. However, in today’s Tendai monasteries the object of visualization differs according to the practice of *gyōhō*. In some cases, the object can be Fudō Myōō or Monju. In the *chigo kanjō*, the visualization might have involved Kannon or Sannō. I thank the Enryakuji priest Shibata Kenryō for this information.

The Initiation

The teacher leads the *chigo* into the main sanctuary of the ritual. At this point, the master sits on the smaller altar and faces westward. He then forms the mudra of “There is no Place it Does not Reach” (*musho fushi* 無所不至). When the *chigo* is brought in, he should respond with forming the mudras and chanting the mantras of “Original Sanmaya” (*honzanmaiya inmyō* 本三昧耶印明). The *chigo* lays out a mat, bows three times, and then sits on it. He is then coated with incense on his body (*zukō* 塗香) and raises the Great Five Vows (*godaigan* 五大願). He then forms the mudras and mantras of “The Sanmaya of Entering Buddhahood” (*nyūbutsu sanmaiya inmyō* 入仏三昧耶印明) seven times, the mudra of “The Production of the Dharma Realm” (*hokkaishō in* 法界生印) three times, the mudras and mantras of “The Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma” (*tenpō rinbō inmyō* 轉法輪印明) three times, and finally the mudras and mantras of “There is no Place it Does not Reach” three times.

The master uses the toothpick to remove dirt between the *chigo*'s teeth, and afterwards, since his mouth is purified, the *chigo* drinks the vow water. Next, the *chigo* takes the brush and drenches it in the teeth-blackener (*kane*) and paints his teeth three times. The teacher too should then smear the *kane* on the *chigo*'s teeth, wipe his mouth, apply makeup and uses sumac, pluck his eyebrows, dress him with a robe, and place the celestial crown on the *chigo*'s head. The master then descends from the main seat (*honza* 本座), sits down, and has the *chigo* move into the high seat (*kōza* 高座) from his lower position, a move that marks the inversion of hierarchy between master and disciple, and also mimics the social difference between a monarchic ruler and a subject (this element seems to be an

emulation of the *sokui kanjō*). Consequently, the master empowers the “central vase” (*chūbyō* 中瓶) and confers upon the *chigo* mudras and mantras. These are the hand gestures and mantric formulae that are most central to the ritual and should remain secret; They are part of a separate oral transmission. Right after giving them, the master carries out the *kanjō* proper, the pouring of water on the *chigo*’s head. Then, the master and *chigo* join hands together and both achieve the body of Mahāvairocana and a non-dual union. The *chigo* then recites the secret verse from the *Lotus Sutra* three times (“Kannon’s secret teaching, see Chapter 4), and then a long mantra.

In the *Kanjō shi* and *Kuketsu sōjō* manuscripts, this long recitation is crossed-out by black markings. This type of obscuration was intentional and was done right after the transmission was given to the *chigo* disciple. The purpose was to hide the teaching from the non-ordained and protect this exclusive secret transmission. The next stage involves the consecration’s narrative or edification, wherein the monk explains the central teachings of the ritual. Moreover, there are a few procedures concerning the god Sannō and the deification of *chigo* whose timing in the ritual is unclear, but I will present them in the next chapter. Also, the ritual most likely ends with the master giving a lineage chart to the *chigo*. We know from the first page of (A) *Kanjō shi*, that this chart was given during the last stages of the ritual. According to this text, a lineage chart (*kechimyaku* 血脈記) listing the past masters who received the initiation is presented, but it is missing from the text because it was written on a separate piece of paper that is no longer extant. After the complete bodily transformation into a Buddha and a bodhisattva, and at some point, into the god Sannō, and the awarding of initiatory knowledge and Dharma seals, a sexual intercourse with the youth was then permitted.

Conclusion

We have seen how multiple stages of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, even if they precede the consecration, still contribute to and bolster the *chigo*'s identification with one of the main deities of the ritual: the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana, the bodhisattva Kannon, and the god Sannō. The mandalas of the Womb and Diamond Realms, whether or not they are physically present, rely on their symbolism to collapse the distinction between the *chigo*'s worldliness and the other world to which he is absorbed. The different devotional acts of the preparatory practices employ the three mysteries of Esoteric Buddhism of the practitioner—the body, speech, and mind—enabling the *chigo* to transform from the solitary state of a human to an ultimate union with Mahāvairocana. Subsequently, the adornment in the ritual stage enacts multiple modalities of the sacred—essentially identifying the *chigo*'s body with the vast universe, the *dharmadhātu*. The entire design of the stage and the process of its construction is informed by geomancy and Esoteric cosmology, which imbues it with the divine so that every step the *chigo* makes will be saturated with the Mahāvairocana or Kannon. Every aspect is intended to allow the conditioned, changing state of the *chigo* into the unconditioned, eternal state of the cosmic Buddha and other divine beings. That is, the *chigo kanjō*'s gestural, embodied, and contemplative practices, in effect, empowered the *chigo* to transform into the object of his devotion.

As noted earlier, a separate section of the ritual's preparatory practices employs a different manner in which to effect the apotheosis of the *chigo* as the kami Sannō. As we shall see in the next chapter, after the *chigo* creates karmic bonds with the kami, he is possessed by or transformed into Sannō. This process is motivated by a distinct doctrinal

proposition that is not directly connected to Esoteric Buddhism—for which reason we now turn to doctrinal considerations.

Chapter 4:
Doctrinal Foundations and Bodily Transformation
in a Buddho-Shinto Sexual Initiation

Having conveyed the *chigo kanjō* ritual structure and its procedures, I move to make an epistemological-doctrinal claim about the ritual as a whole, a claim that concerns what knowledge constitutes the main transmission of the ritual as well as what doctrinal foundations undergird the consecration. My claim is as follows. The ritual offers an array of doctrinal positions. Though they may seem disjunct, they in fact integrate to a distinct end: to coherently legitimize the master engaging in sexual intercourse with a *chigo*. The main doctrine transmitted to the initiand is a secret transmission—which I call “Kannon’s secret teaching”—that condenses the truth of the *Lotus Sutra* (Skt. *Saddharma puṇḍarīka sūtra*) as presented in the sutra’s Universal Gateway chapter (Chapter 25). I posit that the creators of *chigo kanjō* deliberately connected this teaching to a homoerotic cycle of tales (*Jidō setsuwa* 慈童説話, “Tale of Jidō”) in order to legitimize the homoerotic *chigo kanjō* ritual. To follow I will discuss the various doctrinal elements, as well as their implications for the ontological status of *chigo* and monk. In addition to Kannon’s secret teaching, these include original enlightenment thought (*hongaku* 本覚), Taimitsu 台密 (Esoteric Tendai) knowledge, and Buddha-kami amalgamation (*shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合) ideas and practices.

The last element, Buddha-kami amalgamation, presents an intriguing synthesis between Buddhist ritual and kami worship. Given the importance kami plays in many Buddhist initiation rituals, the fact that its role is largely ignored in discussions of *chigo*

consecration deserves further attention. Religious studies scholar Fabio Rambelli has outlined major developments that took place in the world of Shinto during the Muromachi period (1336–1573). Two of these developments are significant for this discussion: the emergence of a Shinto discourse independent from Buddhism that incorporates Chinese elements; and the anomaly of elevating the kami to the primary form in the pantheon—exceeding the status of buddhas, who are instead deemed to be their manifestations.³⁷² These tendencies, which gained ground in medieval Sannō Shinto, are also manifest in the deification of the *chigo* as the local god Sannō. The *chigo kanjō* ritual combined the cult of sacred children (*dōji shinkō* 童子信仰)³⁷³ with the worship of Sannō, the tutelary god of Mount Hiei and the protector of Tendai Buddhism. These emerging cults connected to a larger cultural shift in medieval Japanese religion: that of deification of people, whose origins I trace to *chigo kanjō*. The *chigo kanjō* consecration is the first systematized treatment of all three elements—sacred children, Sannō, and deification—which helped to both coalesce a superior form of the Sannō divinity and strengthen the authority of Shinto vis-à-vis Buddhism.³⁷⁴

In some important respects, this combination of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, the doctrine of Mount Hiei’s Sannō Shinto, and the worship of child deities offers a deeper

³⁷² Fabio Rambelli, “Introduction: Facets of ‘Shinto,’” *Japanese Religions* 42, nos. 1–2 (2017): 3–5; see also “Before the First Buddha: Medieval Japanese Cosmogony and the Quest for the Primeval Kami,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 64, no. 2 (2009).

³⁷³ For more on the cult of “sacred children,” see See Carmen Blacker, “The Divine Boy in Japanese Buddhism,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 22 (1963); M. E. Guth Christine, “The Divine Boy in Japanese Art,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 42, no. 1 (1987). On Child Guardian Spirits (*gohō dōji*), see also Koyama Satoko 小山聡子, *Gohō Dōji shinkō no kenkyū* 護法童子信仰の研究 (Kyoto: Jishōsha Shuppan, 2003); Irene Hong-hong Lin, “Child Guardian Spirits (Gohō Dōji) in the Medieval Japanese Imaginaire,” *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies* 3rd series, no. 6 (2004).

³⁷⁴ In the Edo period the Sannō deity becomes part of a state cult under the Tokugawa government. For this tradition, see Shinkai 菅原信海 Sugahara, “The Distinctive Features of Sannō Ichijitsu Shinto,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, nos. 1–2 (1996).

understanding of both the cultural transformation of ritual and its deep roots in local cults in the late-medieval period. I have found that the *chigo kanjō* ritual, in addition to sanctifying sexual acts and grounding the apotheosis of acolytes in Tendai doctrinal concepts, sheds light on the Buddhist assimilation of local forms of worship, including Shinto. *Chigo kanjō*, I contend, should be seen as an early case study of human deification, as well as a sophisticated synthesis of Buddhism and kami ritualism that could be seen to value kamihood over Buddhahood. Of course, *chigo kanjō* follows earlier medieval tendencies to promote the gods over Buddhas,³⁷⁵ but the process of deification is a significant addition which strengthens this operation. The ritualized intercourse that is imagined during the apotheosis of *chigo* as Sannō, that is, between monk as Buddha and acolyte as god, and the deification of the *chigo*, did not serve merely to sanction sexual transgression and sublimate the sexual desires of monastics; it also facilitated an interweaving of the disparate conceptual and performative threads of Buddhism with those of local Shinto worship—the result of promoting a trans-sectarian vision of a supreme godhead. The *chigo* becomes an embodiment of the god Sannō, on which the Buddhist monk relies for his absorption of sanctity. This interaction elevated Sannō, the “mere” local Shinto god, to a level of power and authority that rivaled the Buddhist pantheon.

³⁷⁵ See Rambelli, “Before the First Buddha.”

Epistemological and Doctrinal Aspects of Chigo Kanjō

The Canon of Kannon: Doctrine in *Chigo Kanjō*

Let us now consider the doctrinal elements of the ritual. Below I will discuss the doctrinal apparatus behind the *chigo kanjō* ritual, considering both its liturgy as well as where its place within the multiple consecrations that developed and disseminated in the Middle Ages. That is, how the ritualists and officiating priests understood and interpreted the attainment of salvation that the *chigo* underwent during consecration. How were the authors of the rituals able to integrate *chigo* into Mahāvairocana’s cosmos and crown him as the Bodhisattva Kannon and the god Sannō simultaneously?

Upon consecration, the *chigo* is transmitted the essence of the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra*. This is the most important doctrinal focus in the ritual, and it was accordingly crossed-out in the *Kanjō shi* manuscript to prevent its exposure to the non-initiated. Fortunately, the content of this passage is visible in the *Kuketsu sōjō* manuscript. In this text, the passage is also crossed-out but thinly enough to make it out. The verse that constitutes the secret teaching is the following: “With compassionate eyes [Kannon] looks at all living beings, and gathers good merit, boundless like the sea.” (*jigen shi shujō fukujū kai muryō* 慈眼視衆生, 福聚海無量). This phrase, which I will refer to as the “Kannon’s secret teaching,” comes from the “Universal Gateway Chapter” of the *Lotus Sutra*, and was used primarily as a secret transmission in imperial consecrations (*sokui kanjō* 即位灌頂). In the medieval period, imperial consecrations, which were Buddhist *abhiṣeka* targeted at the Emperor upon its accession, were carried out (from 1288) sporadically, and then on a

regular basis from 1382 to 1847.³⁷⁶ This ritual enthroned the emperor as a Buddhist universal monarch (Skt. *cakravartin*) who could rule “the four seas” of the world with compassion; he was anointed with their water, which marked his monarchic status.³⁷⁷ The ritual also used the Three Regalia of the imperial house of Japan as legitimating implements of rule. The emperor received special mudras and mantras in a preceding ritual called *inmyō denju* 印明伝授 (“transmission of mudrās and mantras”), carried out by aristocratic regents.

Throughout the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, a large body of knowledge that claimed to be the ritual protocols and teachings surrounding the enthronement consecration began to spread. These different ritual endeavors were known as “enthronement rites” (*sokui hō* 即位法).³⁷⁸ Different groups of people produced them and claimed authority over their performance, such as the regents of the Nijō family, Shingon monks at Tōji, and the Tendai abbots. Kannon’s secret teaching was transmitted by monks and nobles as a magical incantation to be intoned in enthronement rites. By doing so, they hoped to establish a monopoly as exclusive transmitters of imperial knowledge. While the Tendai abbots were the most prominent carriers of Kannon’s secret teaching as chief upholders of the *Lotus*

³⁷⁶ See Herman Ooms, *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan: The Tenmu Dynasty, 650–800* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2009), 130.

³⁷⁷ Kamikawa Michio 上川通夫, *Nihon chūsei Bukkyō keisei shiron* 日本中世仏教形成史論 (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2007), 409.

³⁷⁸ There is a sizeable body of literature written about enthronement rites (*sokui-hō*). Relevant to our concerns are Kamikawa Michio and 上川通夫, “Accession Rituals and Buddhism in Medieval Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, nos. 2–3 (1990); Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, “Sokui-hō no girei to engi: Chūsei ōken shinwa ron no kōzō 即位法の儀礼と縁起：中世王権神話論の構想,” *Sōzō no sekai* 創造の世界 73 (1990); Matsumoto Ikuyo 松本郁代, *Chūsei ōken to sokui kanjō: Seikyō no naka no rekishi jojutsu* 中世王権と即位灌頂：聖教のなかの歴史叙述 (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2005).

Sutra, they were not the only ones who promoted it; it was also taught at the enthronement rites of the Nijō family.³⁷⁹

The Kannon's secret teaching was transmitted in enthronement rites that contained specific oral instructions (*kirikami* 切紙) praising the merits of the *Lotus Sutra*. These teachings were included in a cycle of legends that considered these verses as the absolute Buddha Dharma, and highlighted homoeroticism as an integral part of the plot. This legend is now known by scholars as *Tale of Jidō* (*Jidō setsuwa* 慈童説話). The *Tale of Jidō* recounts the story of a Chinese boy Jidō who formed intimate and sexual relations with a Chinese Emperor.³⁸⁰ As the story goes, the King Mu of the Zhou dynasty flew on eight heavenly horses in order to attend the *Lotus Sutra* sermon delivered by Śākyamuni on Vulture Peak. On that occasion, Śākyamuni transmitted to King Mu a secret teaching (*hihō* 秘法) called “ruling the country and benefiting the people” (*chikoku rimin* 治国利民). This secret teaching was none other than Kannon's secret teaching of the Universal Gateway chapter described above, and was subsequently known in texts as “the two *gathas*” (*ni kuge* 二句偈) or the “two letters” (*ni ji* 二字). This teaching was passed on from King Mu to successive generations of Chinese rulers, all the way to the Qin Emperor (Qin Shi Huangdi). The story tells us that the Qin emperor fell in love with the young boy Jidō, who lived in the imperial palace. The ministers that served under the emperor grew envious of the special

³⁷⁹ See Document 7 in “Additional Secret Preachings” (*Mata hisetsu* 又秘説) of the Nijō family, in Hashimoto Masanobu 橋本政宣, “*Sokui kanjō to Nijō-ke (jō)* 即位灌頂と二条家(上),” *Tōkyō daigaku shiryō hensanjo kenkyū kiyō* 東京大学史料編纂所研究紀要 8 (1998): 95–96.

³⁸⁰ On the argument that Jidō setsuwa serves as the origin tale of *chigo kanjō*, see Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998), 198–206; Bernard Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 256–65.

treatment Jidō received from the sovereign and resorted to punishing him for committing a sexual act, called the “transgression of the pillow”; Jidō was then exiled to a mountainous forest. Although the boy was expected to be eaten alive by the wild beasts in the mountains, he ended up attaining immortality and become Pengzu, a Daoist immortal, and achieved Buddhahood, all through chanting a verse from the Lotus Sutra, which the Emperor Qin had given him out of compassion when he left for exile.

The Tale of Jidō was circulated from the thirteenth century primarily by Tendai and Shingon monks who passed down oral transmissions containing this story as a secret knowledge of enthronement rites.³⁸¹ The tale had an enduring influence on religion and culture in Japan. Not only was it taught in monastic circles as a secret element of the enthronement ritual, but it was also a popular legend that was recited and circulated among commoners. The earliest iteration of the tale, dated from 1223, involves the first segment of the story centering on the King Mu’s visit to Vulture Peak in India, as he mounts eight flying horses. This type of story, lacking any mention to the boy Jidō, is called by scholars as “The Tale of King Mu” (*bokuō setsuwa* 穆王說話). The first instance of such a story is found in a Sannō Shinto text, *Yōtenki* (1223).³⁸² The story emerged in Eshin lineage texts and in the Sannō Shinto corpus whose authors sought to establish the god Sannō as a tutelary deity of Mount Hiei and the manifested trace of the Buddha Śākyamuni especially in connection with the *Lotus Sutra*. The initial full-fledged account of *Jidō setsuwa* appears in a text by the Shingon monk Raiyū (1226–1304), called *Shinzoku zakki mondō shō* (1260).

³⁸¹ Paul Atkins has extensively examined *Jidō setsuwa* and connected it to the Chinese Yang Guifei story. See Paul S. Atkins, “Chigo in the Medieval Japanese Imagination,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 3 (2008).

³⁸² “Yōtenki 耀天記,” in *Shintō taikai. Jinja hen, Hie* 神道大系. 神社編：日吉, ed. Kageyama Haruki 景山春樹 (Tokyo: Shintō Taikai Hensankai, 1983).

It was then developed mostly in the writings of Tendai's Eshin-ryū lineage and other Sannō Shinto texts. In 1319, the biography of Shōtoku Taishi entitled *Shōbōrinzō* 正法論藏 (1319), states that Kannon's secret teaching are the verses that the King Mu received from Śākyamuni upon his visit.³⁸³ While *Shōbōrinzō* contains no Jidō-related content, it became a precursor for incorporating the Kannon teaching in subsequent Jidō legends.

Later, the expansion of this legend continued; it moved from religion to the realm of literature and performative arts between the middle ages and the early-modern period. For example, this tale was mentioned in the great historical epic, the *Taiheiki* (late fourteenth century), and was also adapted into a famous Noh play that is still performed until this day (*Kiku jidō* 菊慈童, albeit without the legend's homoerotic undertones). There are debates as to why the monks in charge of enthronement rites would consider the story of Jidō as an appropriate element for legitimizing imperial rule. However, *Jidō setsuwa* is not really an anomaly in this regard. Both Tendai and Shingon schools promoted their own legend with sexual flavor within the enthronement rites repertoire. In parallel to Tendai's *Jidō setsuwa*, Shingon monks developed a discourse called *Setsuroku engi* 撰録縁起 that told the story of the initiation of the ancestor of the Fujiwara family, Nakatomi no Kamatari (614–669).³⁸⁴ According to this story, Kamatari allegedly received the enthronement teachings from the avatar of Sun goddess Tenshō Daijin, a fox (*kitsune*) that was also Dakini-ten, a *dākini* (an Indian demonic being) known for her sexual appetite and ability to devour the vitality of men. This wrathful vixen initiated Kamatari in what is assumed to be a sexual rite of

³⁸³ Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, “Jidō setsuwa no keisei: Tendai sokui hō no seiritsu wo megutte (jō) 慈童説話の形成：天台即位法の成立をめぐりて (上),” *Kokugo kokubun* 国語国文 53, no. 8 (1984).

³⁸⁴ Shingon monks transmitted a body of teaching concerning enthronement rituals that was closely tied to “The Tale of King Mu” (*bokuō setsuwa* 穆王説話), but not to the later iteration of *Jidō setsuwa* which includes homoeroticism.

passage. An actual consecration involving Dakini can be dated to 1288, an enthronement ritual (*sokui kanjō*) in which Emperor Fushimi was also given the dharanis of Dakini.³⁸⁵ In sum, while the Tendai *sokui-hō* tradition developed a body of legends surrounding male-male love, Shingon endorsed a lore concerning male-female erotics. It is fair to say that the development of the *Jidō setsuwa* legend among elite circles and its eventual ritualization serves to show that it was a product of social forces that saw (homo)sexuality, religiosity, and rulership going hand in hand.

Itō Masayoshi was the first scholar to pinpoint that the *Jidō setsuwa* was originally one of the teachings in enthronement rites (*sokui-hō*).³⁸⁶ He also claims that the story began as an oral transmission (*kuketsu*) and was probably created by a Tendai monk who believed in the unity between Buddhas and kami (*shinbutsu ittai* 神仏一体). Abe Yasurō, noting this fact, has shown that the *Jidō* legend originated in the Eshin-ryū lineage and was further developed by various generations of monks in this lineage. Abe has also identified multiple sources of the *Jidō setsuwa* lore that share the penchant for kami-buddha amalgamation, and significantly, elevate the god Sannō's status as a protector of Japan, claiming that he descends from Amaterasu, the sun goddess of Ise's Inner Shrine, and highlights his role as transmitter of the intricacies of enthronement ceremonies, as well as Kannon's secret teachings. For example, *Nihon shoki shi kenmon* 日本書紀私見聞 (1426) by Shun'yū 春喩,

³⁸⁵ As Mark Teeuwen notes, "a striking aspect of the Dakini mantra in this imperial ritual is its sexual connotation." Mark Teeuwen, "The Kami in Esoteric Buddhist Thought and Practice," in *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*, ed. John Breen and Mark Teeuwen (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 106. Mark Teeuwen, "The Kami in Esoteric Buddhist Thought and Practice," 106. Cited in Susan Blakeley Klein, *Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 178. See Klein's extensive discussion: 176-178. See also, Iyanaga Nobumi, "Dākinī et l'Empereur: Mystique Bouddhique de la Royauté dans le Japon Médiéval," *Versus: Quaderni di studi semiotici* 83-84 (1999).

³⁸⁶ Itō Masayoshi 伊藤正義, "Jidō setsuwa kō 慈童説話考," *Kokugo kokubun* 国語国文 49, no. 11 (1980).

states that the descendent of Susanoō, Ōtatara no Mikoto, that is, Sannō Ōmiya gongen, received the knowledge about how to rule the Japanese empire from Tenshō Daijin (the Sun Goddess), composed of the “Enthronement Teachings” (*sokui hōmon* 即位法門) and the “Great Matter of Compassion from One Section of the Lotus Sutra” (*hokke ichibu no jishi no diaji* 法花一部慈悲大事). For Abe, the innovation in such sources is that they make the enthronement ritual a sacred and uninterrupted transmission dating to the mythical Age of the Kami, and subsume it within Sannō Shinto discourse. Therefore, even though the *Jidō setsuwa* is primarily concerned with the teaching of the *Lotus Sutra*, it is important to remember that this body of legends promoted well-defined ideas of Buddho-Shinto amalgamation that prized kami-ness over Buddhahood and that such ideas have also survived in *chigo kanjō*, as we shall see below.³⁸⁷

It goes without saying that the *chigo kanjō* ritual and the *Jidō setsuwa* were made for each other. *Chigo kanjō* was probably the most faithful re-staging of the myth, since it involved the performance of an important aspect of the lore, homosexual intimacy. In *chigo kanjō*, the “Tale of Jidō” explicitly serves as a foundational myth. The sexual congress in the ritual is presented as the reenactment of the intercourse between the Qin Emperor and Jidō. The *kanjō* reiterated the sacred bonding between the two lovers, not through purely symbolic means, but through participating actors, the monk and *chigo* themselves. The two were physical embodiments of the mythological figures, who reignited the flames of passion that originated many centuries before. This is clear from the section dedicated to the explanation of the teachings (*kyōke* 教化). It is worth quoting this passage in full:

³⁸⁷ Abe, “*Jidō setsuwa no keisei: Tendai sokui hō no seiritsu wo megutte (jō)* 慈童説話の形成：天台即位法の成立をめぐるて（上）.”

The consecration described above is the consecration given to the emperor at the time of his enthronement. After receiving the consecration, you should call [the *chigo*] a “king” and add “maru” to its name. At this time, the primary icon is Kannon. The teachings of enthronement are the transmission of the Universal Gateway. Note that they are the Two Letters of compassion. King Mu of the Zhou Dynasty rode on eight small horses and travelled the Three Thousand Great Worlds, until he galloped to Vulture Peak where the Buddha was preaching the Lotus Sutra. Śakyamuni transmitted the Two Verses of the Universal Gateway Chapter [on this occasion], and the King received this transmission. Now, as for King Mu, his original ground was Kannon. There is a secret transmission concerning the Two Verses. Following this, the King transmitted [this teaching] to all subsequent generations of rulers. Later on, Emperor Ming of the Han Dynasty fell in love with the young child Pengzu the Immortal. This young child boasted about his imperial favors. When he committed the transgression of the pillow, the court ministers ordered him to be exiled. Because the Emperor was very saddened, he transmitted to the boy the Universal Gateway Chapter. Ever since, this teaching spread in the world. Having loved him, the Emperor violated the precepts through having sex with a man [Jidō]. Pengzu the Immortal also has his original ground as Kannon. He came [to our world] because of compassion.³⁸⁸

Chigo kanjō attempts to integrate the *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 (“original essence and manifested traces”) theory into the narrative aspect of the ritual. According to this pervasive theory in medieval Japanese religion, Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other Indian divinities are the original forms (*honji*) of Japanese deities, while the latter are seen as traces (*suijaku*) of translocal Buddhas, who appear in Japan to teach Buddhism to sentient beings.³⁸⁹ In the

³⁸⁸右此灌頂者、帝王ノ職位法ノ時儀式也。此灌頂ヲ受テ後、王トモ云又ハ丸トモ云也。其時ノ本尊モ觀音也。職位ノ法門ト者、普門品ノ相承也。是但、慈悲之二字也。此普門品相承ト者、周穆王ノ八疋ノ小馬ニ乗シテ三千大千世界ヲ廻ル時、靈山法花ノ座ニ馳詣ル時、尺迦如来、自リ全ク普門品ノ中ニ二句御相承アリ。是帝王ニ成給御相承有也。彼穆王ト者、本地觀音也。二句口傳別在其後、代々王位計傳給。其後、漢ノ明帝ノ御時、芳祖仙人、幼童ノ御時、是ノ御帝御思愛有也。彼幼童朝恩ニホコリ、御帝ノ御枕ヲ越シ時、公卿天上人之沙汰流罪被行時、帝王御悲アリテ、此普門品ノ相承ヲ授給也。自夫、天下ニ弘ル也。彼ノ帝王御思愛シ男犯起ル也。彼芳祖仙人モ本地觀音也。是又、以慈悲一來リ給也。“*Chigo kanjō shi* 兒灌頂私,” in *Tenkaizō* 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

³⁸⁹ On the *honji-suijaku* theory, see Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

passage above, the Emperor Ming transmits to Pengzu (the immortalized Jidō) the Universal Gateway Chapter. In this version of the tale, Kannon's secret teaching is encapsulated by the two letters of compassion, *jihī* 慈悲. It is highlighted that the King Mu was the traces of an original ground, the bodhisattva Kannon. Surprisingly, Pengzu is also given the same elated ontological state as the provisional expression of Kannon. The labeling of both parties as the emanations of *honji* has socio-religious implications: the *chigo* and monk's sacred status is echoed by their mythological counterparts, and therefore, the two ritual participants' discrepant identities are resolved; both are equally acknowledged as manifested forms of a bodhisattva. Since the sexual act is between divine beings or bodhisattvas, in a way, their intercourse is envisioned as a hierogamy. Implicit in this statement is that the *chigo kanjō* ritual also functions to sanctify the monk, not only the *chigo*. The monk does not only partake in the divine through having coitus with the *chigo*, but he also gets the full karmic rewards of the ritual by having his body affirmed as a projection of Kannon bodhisattva. However, rather than simply creating an egalitarian metaphysical relationship between the two, the real purpose was to enhance the monk's sacrality. The nature of this identity as Kannon and its role in the consecration is further elaborated:

Also, this consecration was transmitted by Jikaku Daishi [Ennin] who was an incarnation of Guze Kannon. Thereafter, he spread [this ritual] in the world, and Jie Daishi [Ryōgen] was also an incarnation of Jūichimen Kannon. In the Final Age, all of the lads who became *chigo* are incarnations of Kannon. Therefore, it is said in a sutra "In all the realms of the ten directions, there is no place where she will not manifest herself." The meaning of this passage is that [Kannon] appears in order to benefit all sentient beings. Also, it is said that "If there are sentient beings who are greatly prone to sensual desires, if they contemplate the Bodhisattva Kannon with respect, they will become free from these desires." This passage is clear. At one point, there is a 'ritual of obeisance' directed at Kannon. This ritual refers to the consecration (*kanjō*). The consecration contains the most important secret matters

related to Kannon. Based on this, the commentaries explain, “There is a Wonderful Dharma that is untold in this one chapter. Therefore, one should know that Kannon shares the same essence with the Wonderful Dharma.” The *Lotus Sutra* explains the fruits of the consecration. This is also the “signless consecration.” Therefore, it is also called “the consecration of Kannon that is also for a young Great Dharma King.” There are more details in oral transmissions.³⁹⁰

The real purpose of the consecration is to allow Kannon to spread the Buddha Dharma. The fact that this consecration is “also for a Great Dharma Prince” (*daihōōji* 大法王子), coupled with the statement that the consecration is similar to the one “given to the emperor at the time of his enthronement,” suggests that the devisors of *chigo kanjō* wished to attach royal authority to *chigo kanjō* much like in the early medieval enthronement rites held at temples. It is worth asking why the emperor, who during the Muromachi period was an insignificant and powerless political figure, was still cherished in these texts. The image of the emperor as a holy ruler who also oversees Buddhism had persisted since the early medieval period, and monks who created the enthronement rituals were able to deploy this symbolic capital and politicize the emperor’s figure notwithstanding his inability to govern. Moreover, as Matsuoka Shinpei argues, the ritual’s appropriation of imperial power is rooted in the image of the Child Emperor that dates back to the Insei period (“the rule of cloistered emperors,” eleventh century).³⁹¹ The emperor possessed secular power and sacrality when he ruled over the Ritsuryō system in mid-Heian period, but in the eleventh century the system of regency

³⁹⁰又此灌頂相承給慈覺大師、救世觀音ノ再来也。其後天下弘給慈惠大師十一面觀音再来也末代兒成童男皆觀音再来也。故經文云。十方諸国土無刹不現身。此ノ文ノ意現シテ一切衆生ノ利益給故也。又云。若有衆生、多於姪欲、常念恭敬、觀世音菩薩、便得離欲。加樣經文分明也。又於觀音一時禮拜ノ行法有也。是行法灌頂シテ義也。是灌頂、所詮、觀音極大秘事也。爰以、或尺云。一品之内不云妙法、故知觀音妙法躰同。故法華果灌頂説也。是又无相灌頂也。故、觀音灌頂大法王子ト申者也。委細在口傳。
“*Chigo kanjō shi* 児灌頂私。”

³⁹¹ Matsuoka Shinpei 松岡心平, *Utage noshintai: Basara kara Zeami e* 宴の身体：バサラから世阿弥へ (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 126-28.

rule (*sekkan*) was established. From that moment onward, the heads of aristocratic rule were the Sesshō (regent) and Kanpaku (chancellor), hereditary positions reserved only for the heads of the Fujiwara family. The Fujiwara family made sure the emperors would not stand in their way by appointing young children to that post. The child emperor was secluded behind closed doors, and lost his ability to exercise power formally, but his sacred authority was maintained in ritual practices, and his symbolic significance was preserved. The child emperor, Matsuoka claims, is the image that has been cast on the *chigo* in the *chigo kanjō* ritual; he also draws a comparison between the *chigo* and the cult of sacred children, including the worship of Shōtoku Taishi in the form of a child, who is according to Yamaori Tetsuo, “an incomplete emperor” (*mikan no tennō*).³⁹²

At the same time, I would like to point out that the metamorphosis that the boy undergoes, including the stage of becoming a Dharma Prince, is reminiscent of the last three stages of the bodhisattva path codified in the Mahayana scriptures. The path is important throughout East Asian Buddhism, but it gains special significance in Tendai doctrine, where it is classified within the “Distinct Teachings” (*bekkyō* 別教), which are considered the bodhisattva’s teachings in Zhiyi’s magnum opus, the *Makashikan* 摩訶止觀.³⁹³ According to this view, as a bodhisattva, one is expected to develop “ten abodes” 十住, which are meditative states that abide in emptiness. When the *chigo* begins his ritual activity, he starts out as a child, which conforms to the eighth abode of the bodhisattva path, a “true child” (*dōshin-jū* 童眞住). In this contemplative state, delusions do not form in the mind and

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Paul L. Swanson, *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight: T’ien-t’ai Chih-i’s Mo-ho chih-kuan*, 3 vols. (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2018).

awakening is maintained constantly. The next stage is the ninth abode of the “Dharma prince” (*hōōji-jū* 法王子住) where one acquires the wisdom of the Buddha. As the passage above suggests, the consecration is catered for a Dharma Prince, and the *chigo* is semiotically enthroned as such a prince in various stages of the ritual (for example, when he ascends to the “throne” and stands above the monk as to invert the rigid hierarchy between master and disciple, only to replace it with the subject-ruler hierarchy where the *chigo* occupies the former position). The final stage is called the abode of “consecration” (*kanjō-jū* 灌頂住). Mahayana doctrines define this meditative stage as the contemplation on emptiness and signlessness. Interestingly, in the *chigo kanjō* passage above, the consecration is also called “signless” (or perhaps, “no-marks”), which is a term often used in “spontaneous consecration” (*jinen kanjō*), discussed in the previous chapter. Also, the variant *Kuketsu sōjō* replaces the term “fruit of consecration” with the expression “the ascension into consecration.”³⁹⁴ The Tendai bodhisattva stages are not explicitly mentioned in the *chigo* ritual, but the progression of child → Dharma Prince → Consecration seems to take place in the initiation. *Shōgyō hiden* seems to confirm this idea: “Also, according to the great treatises, those who assume the form of young boys are the path of the bodhisattva itself, they carry out the pāramitā of gift through great mercy and great compassion.”³⁹⁵ There was then a conscious attempt to construct the *chigo kanjō* in a way that would conform to the Bodhisattva path.

³⁹⁴ The passage employs the verb *noboru* 昇, a Chinese character that signifies raising up in quality and character in a metaphorical or ontological sense (rather than climbing the social ladder). This implies that the *chigo* has ascended to a new rank called “consecration.”

³⁹⁵ “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝,” in *Edogawa Ranpō Archive* 立教大学附属図書館江戸川乱歩旧蔵 (Rikkyō University).

In addition to royal symbolism, we see a concerted effort to ground the ritual in the tenets of the Lotus Sutra’s “Universal Gateway Chapter,” with a focus on its protagonist Kannon and her inexhaustible ability for compassion. A passage from the Lotus says: “If there are any sentient beings who are greatly prone to sensual desires, if they contemplate Bodhisattva Kannon with respect, they will become free from these desires.”³⁹⁶ In accordance with the medieval eschatology of the “Final Age of the Dharma” (*mappō* 末法), it is understood that Buddhism could no longer be effectively practiced since the year 1052. During this degenerate age, the *chigo* text tells us, all of the lads who became *chigo* are incarnations of Kannon. The character used for lad (*dōnan* 童男) is the term denoting one of Kannon’s thirty-three manifestations (*sanjūsan shin* 三十三身) in the *Lotus Sutra*.³⁹⁷ According to the scripture, Kannon incarnates herself as a young boy, and indeed this view is accepted in many works of Japanese religious literature.

One illustrative example for the identification of young boys with the bodhisattva Kannon is *Kokawa dera engi* 粉河寺縁起 (“Origin Narrative of the Kokawadera temple”), whose setting is Naga-gun at Kii province (present-day Wakayama prefecture).³⁹⁸ The legend recounts the story of Ōtomo no Kushiko, a man who pursues the vocation of a farmer and a hunter. One day Ōtomo shoots a wild boar with an arrow. Then, a great light appears out of nowhere and leads him to a sacred land. There, he erects a hut and takes an oath that

³⁹⁶ 若有衆生、多於淫欲、常念恭敬觀世音菩薩、便得離欲 in T262, vol. 9, p. 57, a, l.2. Tsugunari Kubo and Akira Yuyama, trans., *The Lotus Sutra* (Berkeley, CA: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1993).

³⁹⁷ “Sometimes she has appeared in the body of a boy or a girl.” 或現童男童女身。See T262, vol. 9, p. 56, a, l.22–23. Ibid.

³⁹⁸ “Kokawadera engi 粉河寺縁起,” in *Jisha engi* 寺社縁起, ed. Sakurai Tokutarō 桜井徳太郎, Hagiwara Tatsuo 萩原龍夫, and Miyata Noboru 宮田登 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975).

he would build a temple and enshrine a Buddhist icon in its premises. A lad who was also a mountain ascetic (*dōnan gyōja* 童男行者)³⁹⁹ comes to visit Ōtomo's home and asks for shelter. In return for Ōtomo's kindness, he announces before him "I am a Buddha image-maker, I will most certainly fulfill your vow." The boy secludes himself in the hut for seven days, and on the dawn of the eighth day, Ōtomo comes to visit the site and sees that a golden life-size image of Senju Kannon stood in there, without any traces of the lad. Ōtomo tells his neighbors about these miraculous events, and upon hearing so, the people of the village go on a pilgrimage to the temple and worship the image of Kannon. Shortly after, the daughter of a wealthy man named Sadao who lives in Shibukawa-gun in Kawachi province, falls gravely ill. She is plagued by a skin disease that emits a fowl odor. The father prays for her many times, but years pass without any indication of recovery. The same lad appears at their house and chants the Senju dharani (In *chigo kanjō*, the Senju dharani is chanted during the preparatory stage). As a result, the girl recovers completely and gives the boy her red *hakama* (pants) and short sword. When Sadao goes to worship Senju Kannon at Kokawadera, he finds the image of Kannon equipped with the *hakama* and sword that his daughter gave away. He realizes that the young lad who healed his daughter's wounds was the earthly traces (*suijaku*) of Kannon.⁴⁰⁰

As we can see, already in the Heian period stories about a sacred child who is seen as an hypostasis of Kannon began to circulate, which use the specialized term "lad." There are also cases in which Kannon provides children that were sent from heaven to barren women and men as a response to their prayers (*mōshigo*); One such example is *Hasedera*

³⁹⁹ This is a very strange term since full-fledged mountain ascetics are adults.

⁴⁰⁰ "Kokawadera engi 粉河寺縁起."

genki.⁴⁰¹ It is clear from this identity of Kannon as a male child herself and a protector of children has become established in the early medieval period. From the early Kamakura period, a new idea is associated with Kannon: the notion that Kannon grants divine sanction to sexual misconduct. The sanctioning of sex is famously introduced by Shinran (1173–1263), who received a revelation from Kannon in a dream. Kannon (in the form of Shōtoku Taishi) promises Shinran that she will allow him to sexually violate her as a Jade Maiden and that she would annul the accompanying sin. This story becomes the basis for Shinran’s position that monks should be allowed to marry women.⁴⁰² Other stories build upon these foundations and connect Kannon’s legitimization of sex with the beautiful boy who is the manifestation of Kannon as an object of male-male love. This phenomenon has been already studied;⁴⁰³ here it is sufficient to say that the idea that Kannon is promoting male-male

⁴⁰¹ Yoshiko K. Dykstra, “Tales of the Compassionate Kannon: The Hasedera Kannon Genki,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 31, no. 2 (1976).

⁴⁰² In 1203, on the fifth day of the fourth month, Shinran (1173–1262) dreamt a dream. During his stay at Mount Hiei, Shinran spent one hundred days of retreat at the Rokkakudō 六角堂 (Chōhōji 頂法寺) located in the capital for the sake of prayer. As he descended the mountain every night, he spent the night praying at the presence of Nyōirin Kannon who was the *honzon* (main object of worship) of Shōtoku Taishi. At dawn on the ninety-fifth day, *Guze Daibosatsu* 救世大菩薩 or Kannon, manifested as a monk with beautiful features wearing a *kasaya* on his white garment. Sitting on a magnificent white lotus pedestal, she proclaimed to Shinran the following passage, in a structure of four verses in seven characters: “If you, practitioner, commit the offense of having sexual relations with women as maturation of karma, I will become a Jade Maiden and let you violate me. I will cherish and support you for a lifetime. At the time of your death, I will guide you to the world of the dead and lead you to rebirth in paradise. This is my vow. You should spread it to all living beings.” It is said that when Shinran was about to make the dream known to the myriad sentient beings, he woke up. The record has been handed down to Takadasenshū-ji under the title *Shinran muki* 親鸞夢記 (“Shinran’s Dream”), and transcribed by Shinbutsu 真仏 (?–1258). It was originally part of the sacred text *Kyōshakumon kikigaki* 經釈文聞書 that contained various descriptions written by Shinran. I thank Abe Yasurō for this information. For a discussion of other sources that retell the story of Shinran’s dream, see Bernard Faure, *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 205–08. For an analysis of the dream within the context of the Shōtoku Taishi cult, see Kenneth Doo Lee, *The Prince and the Monk: Shōtoku Worship in Shinran’s Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 11–28.

⁴⁰³ Margaret H. Childs, “*Chigo Monogatari*: Love Stories or Buddhist Sermons?,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 35, no. 2 (1980); Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*; Atkins, “*Chigo* in the Medieval Japanese Imagination.”; Sachi Schmidt-Hori, “The New Lady-in-Waiting Is a *Chigo*: Sexual Fluidity and Dual Transvestism in a Medieval Buddhist Acolyte Tale,” *Japanese Language and Literature* 43, no. 2 (2009); Melissa McCormick, “Mountains, Magic, and Mothers: Envisioning the Female Ascetic in a Medieval *Chigo*

sexuality emerged prior to the development of the *chigo kanjō* ritual. There are some representative stories about Kannon and male-male love, for example, in *Aki no yo no naga monogatari* (“A Long Tale of an Autumn Night,” 1377), a war occurs between Enryakuji and Miidera because of the love affair between a monk from the former and a youth from the latter. The youth is discovered to be an emanation of Kannon, who manifested herself in this form in order to teach the lover monk about the Buddhist truth of impermanence.⁴⁰⁴

In *Chigo Kannon engi* (“Origins of *Chigo* Kannon,” fourteenth century), a monk devotes himself earnestly to Kannon, and as a reward he is given a young acolyte.⁴⁰⁵ The acolyte is later revealed to be a manifestation body of Kannon. This story combines the theme of a “heavenly sent child,” Kannon’s manifestation as a boy, and male-male love romance. There are also doctrinal treatises that legitimize sexual acts with young boys as part of Kannon belief. For example, the text *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* 若道之勧進帳 (The Solicitation Book of the Way of Youths, hereafter, *Kanjinchō*) written in 1482 and credited to Ijiri Matakurō Tadasuke 井尻又九郎忠助, and has another variant text titled *Nyake kanjinchō* 若気勧進帳 dating from the Muromachi period. The treatise laments the decline of the “way of loving youths” (*nyakudō* 若道) and enjoins adepts of male-male love to follow the example of Kannon:

Have you not heard that a long time ago Mongaku took pity on Rokudai Gozen [Taira no Takakiyo], who survived at Senbon-no-Matsubara? Benkei served Kurō Hangan [Minamoto no Yoshitsune] and gave up his life for him at Kinugawa in

Tale,” in *Crossing the Sea: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Yoshiaki Shimuzu* ed. Gregory Levine (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

⁴⁰⁴ Childs, “*Chigo Monogatari*: Love Stories or Buddhist Sermons?”

⁴⁰⁵ Margaret H. Childs, trans., “The Story of Kannon’s Manifestation as a Youth (*Chigo Kannon Engi*),” in *Partings at Dawn: An Anthology of Japanese Gay Literature*, ed. Stephen D. Miller and Paul Gordon Schalow (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1996).

Michinoku. Did they not follow this way in a dignified spirit? Mahāsattva Kannon, who is the savior of this degenerated world, turned into a licentious woman and formed a conjugal bond with a man named Merō. In our country, Shōtoku Taishi of Uzumasa in Yamashiro appeared in the form of a young man and satisfied the desire of monks. That is because [Kannon and Shōtoku] have mercy on people and are completely devoted to the practice of compassion.⁴⁰⁶

The bodhisattva Kannon is depicted as the savior of the current degenerated world who, according to one legend, chose to marry a man named Merō 馬郎. The story of Merō (Merōfu Kannon 馬郎婦觀音) is a Japanese adaptation of the tale of *Malang fu* 馬郎婦 (The Wife of Mr. Ma) and its other version *Yulan Guanyin* 魚籃觀音 (Guanyin with a Fish Basket). It is about a beautiful woman who came to Shaanxi Province of China in 817 and drew the attention of many men due to her attractive looks. When she set up a competition to determine who was the wisest of the town, only Merō fulfilled the final task and had the option to marry her. At the end of the wedding ceremony, she unexpectedly died and her body instantly decayed. Merō is later told that she was the bodhisattva Kannon, and it is apparent that Kannon's transformation into a licentious woman was an act of expedient means (*hōben* 方便; Sk. *upāya*) in order to propagate the Buddhist teachings.⁴⁰⁷ The *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* invokes this legendary tale of Kannon specifically because it draws a connection between sexual acts and spiritual attainment.

⁴⁰⁶ Ijiri Matakurō Tadasuke 井尻又九郎忠助, "Nyakudō no kanjinchō 若道之勸進帳," in *Misonoya* 三十輻, ed. Ōta Nanpo 大田南畝 (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1917), 478.

⁴⁰⁷ Chün-fang Yü, *Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokitesvara* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 187. On the popularity of Merōfu Kannon, see Patricia Fister, "Merōfu Kannon and Her Veneration in Zen and Imperial Circles in Seventeenth-Century Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34, no. 2 (2007).

The *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* mobilizes another important figure that was considered to be a manifestation of Kannon in order to endow male-male love with a divine legitimacy and enhance its appeal. This figure was Shōtoku Taishi 聖徳太子(573?–622?). Prince Shōtoku was a regent of the Japanese state in 573, but he was also deemed a foundational Buddhist figure in Japan. He was envisioned as a legendary *cakravartin*, a universal monarch that disseminated Buddhism and contributed to its flourishing. In *Nyakudō no kanjinchō*, Shōtoku appears to satisfy the sexual desires (*nozomi* 望み) of monks. The text juxtaposes Kannon and Shōtoku because according to the *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹(original forms of deities and their local traces) combinatory paradigm prevalent at the time, the latter was considered to be a manifestation of the former in the medieval Buddhist *imaginaire*. The text suggests that Shōtoku’s male-male sexual acts were at the same level of compassion as Kannon’s bonding with Merō. Both divine figures function as a model for a proper consummation of male-male love.

Moreover, other doctrinal texts connect Kannon and male-male love. The *Innenshō* 因縁抄 (Muromachi Period), a collection of doctrinal teachings and commentaries that was produced in a Tendai seminary (*dangisho*), includes the item “Concerning the sexual violation of lads by Buddhist ascetics” (*Buppō gyōja dōnan wo okasu koto* 佛法行者童男ヲ犯ス事). This section quotes the apocryphal sutra *Kanjizai sanmaya kyō* 観自在三摩耶經 (“The Sutra of Avalokiteśvara’s Samādhi”). The text makes doctrinal claims about monastic pederasty: “If sexual lust shall arise and the Buddha Dharma obstructed, you should

sexually violate fifteen children, and pacify your evil mind!”⁴⁰⁸ The passage allegedly originates in a sutra dedicated to Kannon (Avalokiteśvara), and the word used for boys or lads (*dōnan*) comes from Kannon-related terminology.⁴⁰⁹ It seems, then, that in the medieval period there were different ways to endorse male-male love as part of Kannon worship, and *chigo kanjō* may be the most complex concretization of this shared discourse.

As such, by referring to a “young lad,” the *chigo kanjō* ritual manuals (A, F, and G) are in fact alluding to the *Lotus Sutra*’s passage concerning Kannon’s manifestations but also to a broader body of medieval texts that recount the projection of Kannon onto the body of a youth, and the salvific power of such a boy as an extension of Kannon. The boys who are initiated into the *chigo kanjō* ritual and who demonstrate the virtues of young lads (*dōnan*), will become true incarnations of Kannon. The ritual cannot be separated from the coinciding cult of sacred children.

Original Enlightenment (Hongaku 本覚) and Non-Dualism

The *chigo kanjō* ritual is based on the thought of original enlightenment (*hongaku*), according to which, all beings are inherently Buddhas without being aware of it. This idea derives from a combination of several doctrines of Mahayana Buddhism. One of them is non-dualism (Jp. *funi*, Sk. *advaita*), an important building-block of Mahayana thought, which on the basis of the theory of emptiness, claimed that all things that are normally considered oppositional are actually part of a complex entity, owing to their lack of essential

⁴⁰⁸ 若欲姪興盛ニシテ、妨佛法（犯脱カ）十五ノ童男ヲ、息ヨ姪心ヲ云云。Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, *Innenshō* 因縁抄, Koten bunko 495 (Tokyo: Koten Bunko, 1988), 107.

⁴⁰⁹ However, the number of boys here, fifteen, might be related to the number of attendants that accompany Benzaiten (Sarasvati), a female deva.

nature. The most crucial implication was the dissolution of difference between the cycle of rebirth (*samsāra*) and the extinction of suffering (*nirvāṇa*), which were no longer deemed as distinct phenomena. That is, awakening is ever-present in the world and only needs to be realized. While the notion of non-duality was dominant in many Mahayana schools such as Mādhyamaka, Avatamsaka, and Tiantai, its iteration in Japan under as part of Esoteric Buddhism (and its Tendai version, Taimitsu) deserves attention because of the inventive development it went through.

In medieval Japanese Mikkyō, ultimate reality was regarded to be non-separate from the conventional world. The cosmos was envisioned as a pantheistic universe that was pervaded by the Buddha Mahāvairocana (Dainichi) in its two modalities as the essence of the twofold mandalas (the Diamond and Womb Realms, respectively). Mikkyō's rituals and doctrines involved manipulation of dual patterns and symbols aimed at a soteriological goal and based on Tantric and Chinese correlative thinking.⁴¹⁰ From the end of the Heian period, Tendai Buddhism further elaborated the non-dualist paradigm, original enlightenment thought (*hongaku*), and the absolute affirmation of reality, by emphasizing the concept “worldly passions are inseparable from awakening” (*bonnō soku bodai* 煩惱即菩提). That is, both Tendai and Mikkyō-Taimitsu stressed the all-pervasive character of awakening and configured it as part of apparently unenlightened activities. In the *chigo kanjō* ritual, this idea was borrowed to sanction new forms of practice that were ostensibly antithetical to the Buddha Dharma, including male-male sexuality.

⁴¹⁰ Lucia Dolce demonstrates that nondualist imagery was used abundantly in Mikkyō and Shinto initiations for the purpose of visualization, and that such representations often relied on sexual imagery, particularly in Ryōbu Shinto and the Miwaryū lineage. See Lucia Dolce, “Duality and the Kami: The Ritual Iconography and Visual Constructions of Medieval Shintō,” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 16 (2006).

In Medieval Tendai, salvation was achieved, not by purifying one's mental impurities or through transmigration into another life-stage, but through "the insight, or even the faith, that one has been enlightened from the very beginning."⁴¹¹ Jacqueline Stone cogently shows that those who adopted original enlightenment thought did not dispense with practice altogether. Practice was complementary to attainment; It served as a confirmation of a state that was achieved from the inception, but such confirmation was necessary. As such, initiatory traditions also incorporated the *hongaku* paradigm, because it supported the validity of ritual. Consecrations were concrete ways to substantiate intrinsic sacrality. Medieval Tendai thought developed primarily through the transmission of oral instructions (*kuden hōmon* 口伝法門) in ritual. Stone argues that the medieval *hongaku* thought was not monolithic, but rather, constituted a complex and multifaceted discourse that intersected with many other doctrinal articulations. It was also embedded in particular practices and concerns of authority and legitimacy.⁴¹² One can see the same multifarious nature in the doctrinal knowledge behind *chigo kanjō*, and how original enlightenment thought interconnects with other ideas. The goal of this complex interlocking of many doctrinal ideas was to sanctify male-male sexual acts and provide it with legitimacy. That is why, as we shall see in the next section, *hongaku* was also intermixed with Taimitsu doctrinal propositions, and these were also further bolstered by Sannō Shinto.

Chigo kanjō commentaries (*Shōgyō hiden* and *Shōgyō hiden shi*) and related liturgical literature give prominence to *hongaku*/non-duality and argue that mental defilements, in particular sexual desire, were considered beneficial to enlightenment when

⁴¹¹ Jacqueline Ilyse Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 52.

combined with a numinous force, that is, the sacred power of the consecrated *chigo*. In the consecration ritual, the young acolyte was invested with various *hongaku* doctrinal themes in order to transform him and confirm that he was endowed with original enlightenment. The ritual allowed sexual transgression by transforming sex into a salvific activity. These ideas are in fact in keeping with other contemporaneous articulations of the theory. First, *Shōgyō hiden* endorses the prevalent view that original enlightenment is a primordial condition, and pays a great deal of attention to claiming the *chigo* and sexual acts in general, coincide with the primordial moment. Here we can see how sexual practices are characterized as the metaphysical beginnings of Buddhism:

Based on this, if you search for the origins of the cycle of birth and rebirth, it emerges from ignorance and passionate afflictions. The first savior Śākyamuni, was born from the way of intercourse between men and women. His son Rāhula was born out of the Buddha's body. Without the way of yin and yang, the Buddha and sentient beings cannot be born. How much more so, the Buddha Dharma and Sangha in our Final Age (*mappō*) are hard to achieve without this way [yin-yang]. Young boys, who take the Buddha, Dharma, and sangha lightly, and practice the way of sexual intercourse between men and women, and violate the precepts, will fall into the evil paths. Without this way [yin-yang] it would be difficult for monks.⁴¹³

The doctrinal exegesis of *chigo kanjō* speaks of a primeval moment in which ignorance and worldly passions are melded (*mumyō bonnō* 無明煩惱), their union engenders the cycle of rebirth. Like the creation of the universe, “the intercourse between man and woman” and the “way of yin-yang” (*inyō no michi* 陰陽道) are afflictive activities that result in sacred creation. The example given is the intercourse between the Buddha and his wife, which

⁴¹³夫以、尋^バ一切衆生生死ノ根源ヲ一、自リ二無明煩惱^ニ為生也。一代教主釈迦、既^ニ男女ノ自道生、佛子ヲ睨^ラハ、佛身出世也此無^シ陰陽ノ道^一、佛^キ衆生^キ難^シ在。何況^ヤ、末代ノ佛法僧、無クハ此道、難^ク叶ヒ、情^ヲ、末代ノ仏法僧^ヲ安^キ有^テ男女和合ノ道^一背^リ二戒律ヲ一、可^ク隨^フ惡道^ニ一。無^シ此道^一、僧難^ク叶。 “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私,” in *Tenkaizō* 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

generated in his son Rāhula. In the spirit of original enlightenment and non-dualism, fundamental ignorance and the cyclic existence that it produces were not seen as detrimental to awakening, but rather the vitality of awakening itself. While there is some indecisiveness considering the question whether heterosexual intercourse is a wholesome act from a Buddhist perspective, the overall message is that sex holds creative and generative power. Further down in the text it says that there are some problematic aspects with male-female sex, which male-male love does not share. The authorial voice seems to claim that male-male love is ultimately meritorious: having a sexual affair with a woman constitutes a heavy transgression that leads to inferior-rebirth, since women carry with them the seeds of afflictions, and, in effect, perpetuate defilements. By contrast, young boys, the text informs us, rid themselves of karmic seeds whenever sexually engaged, and as such, allow one to avoid karmic retribution.⁴¹⁴ The narrator, then, in the above passage is not really interested in mundane reproduction and birth, but *cosmic* procreation which males are able to replicate most successfully. In sum, the text asserts that in some fashion, the boys are originally enlightened and their awakened nature would make afflictions somehow go away.

Another medieval text even frames the forces of yin and yang exclusively around male-male love: the already mentioned *Nyakudō no kanjinchō*. The text envisions male-male love as possessing its own cosmological framework that includes a cosmogony, soteriology, pantheon and morality. Quite fittingly, *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* opens up with a cosmogonic narrative to establish its distinctive cosmology. Addressing young monks and youths, the text explicates that every phenomenon in the realm of existence has been created

⁴¹⁴ See *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden*: 女人の煩惱ノ種子ヲ次クナリ。児の煩惱ノ種子ヲ失フ也。 “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝。”

through the harmony of yin and yang. It further implies that the cosmic stability of yin and yang was once also reflected in the social context of the by-now lost golden age of male-male sexuality. The text reads:

I am a second-rank court noble of the Taira family, Ijiri Matakurō Tadasuke, speaking respectfully to you young monks, Zen acolytes, young men and youths. After heaven had already separated out of chaos, when the moon and sun had begun to brighten, thereafter came into being mountains and rivers, human beings, grasses and trees, birds and beasts. All of them were created through the harmonious intercourse of yin-yang. Here, in our world, there is Mount Sumeru. At the center lies a land. The land to the south is called Jambudvīpa. Within it are the three countries of India, China, and Japan. In these three countries there is a Sweet Way. Although it is practiced in the same manner, its name differs. In India, people speak of the Mistaken Way. In China, they call it Pushing a Brick. In Japan, it is called the Way of Youths. This way is common to the three countries. Both priesthood and the laity appreciate it.⁴¹⁵

The narrative evokes the conventional Buddhist cosmology through a spatial structure that consists of Mount Sumeru in the center and the human-inhabited Jambudvīpa in the South. The focus then changes to male-male sex to demonstrate that this type of sexual union has existed since time immemorial and throughout all great civilizations. Male-male sex is referred to as the “Sweet Way.” Japan, where the practice is labeled as “the Way of Youths” (*nyakudō*), is singled out as the center of such a Sweet Way.⁴¹⁶ The narrative shifts from the macrocosmic level (the cosmos in its primordial moment) into the microcosmic (Japan and its social landscape) in order to indicate that there is a corresponding sacrality between the higher cosmic plane and the worldly practice of male-male love.

⁴¹⁵ Ijiri, “Nyakudō no kanjinchō 若道之勸進帳.”

⁴¹⁶ A variety of medieval Japanese texts claim that, though Japan is marginal in terms of geographic location, it is nonetheless central—alongside other countries as India and China—in its application of Buddhist morality and practice. This type of discourse, called *sangoku shisō* 三国思想 (Three-Countries Thought), is discussed in detail in Mark Laurence Blum, *The Origins and Development of Pure Land Buddhism: A Study and Translation of Gyōnen's Jōdo Hōmon Genrushō* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Much like in *Shōgyō hiden*, the ontological foundation of the cosmos, as well as that of male-male sexuality, is elucidated through the important tradition of yin-yang thought informed by Esoteric Buddhism.⁴¹⁷ By the time *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* was written, yin-yang theory had already been assimilated into Esoteric Buddhist thought, which was the common epistemological substratum shared by the majority of Buddhist lineages of medieval Japan.⁴¹⁸ Indeed, the connection with esoteric Buddhism is apparent in the aforementioned variant *Nyake kanjinchō*, where male-male love is called the “Secret Way,” a concept that recalls the culture of secret transmissions within esoteric Buddhist schools. As such, informed by esotericism, the two complementary forces of yin-yang are aligned with contrasting generative aspects. Especially in the Japanese cosmogonic discourse, they are associated with procreation and reproduction, forming the binaries of biological sex on a cosmic and human level. At first glance, it seems paradoxical for *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* to employ yin-yang theory, which would seem to confine the understanding of sexuality to male-female sexual encounters and their connection to fertility. But since esoteric Buddhism possessed a unitary pantheistic vision of the cosmos, in which yin-yang are mutually implicated and interpenetrate one another, effectively allowing one principle to be fully submerged in the other, it was possible for *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* to emphasize the male aspect at the expense of the female.

It is apparent that *Nyakudō no kanjinchō*, similarly to *Shōgyō hiden*, invokes yin-yang to ascribe an ontological grounding to the “Way.” However, *Nyakudō no kanjinchō*

⁴¹⁷ The text invokes this theory at the very outset precisely because yin-yang thinking is prominent in a wide array of East Asian religious and philosophical schools, including Buddhism, Shintō, Confucianism, and Daoism. Moreover, there is a broader textual tradition of employing yin-yang theory in historical narratives as seen, for example, in the earliest chronicles of Japanese history, *Kojiki* 古事記 (712) and *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (720).

⁴¹⁸ Kuroda Toshio 黒田俊雄, *Nihon chūsei no kokka to shūkyō* 日本中世の国家と宗教 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), 537.

also sanctifies and affirms an existing asymmetry in male-male monastic relations in its cosmological discussion. While the majority of Buddhist cosmogonic texts feature heaven and earth as male and female, *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* only mentions heaven while disregarding earth, the female counterpart. One could argue that *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* presupposes two different types of manhood,⁴¹⁹ which were ostensibly widespread in monastic culture. Based on the choice of wording in the text, we may call one a “giver” and the other the “receiver.” One passage reads,

Observing this, the Arhats urge all young people of the present age to make their vows, to revive this “Way” anew, and manifest true compassion by giving to the karmically unattached (*muen* 無縁). In this world, those who give and those who receive will be sharing among themselves. The love and respect of everyone will attain the utmost glory of the floating world. In the next life, thanks to the protection of the Three Treasures, they will without fail receive rebirth in heaven as maturation of karma. How clever, how clever! Such is the solicitation of the path of virtue.⁴²⁰

Nyakudō no kanjinchō indicates that there was much less certainty about the structure of male-male love in medieval Japan than previous scholars had at first surmised. The prescriptive tone of the text suggests that male-male sexuality in monasteries was not part of an inevitable order whereby acolytes were always exploited by monks and subjected unconditionally to their desires. For example, *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* goes on to say that male-male love started to spread among children, women, and lowly people like

⁴¹⁹ According to Hiratsuka Yoshinobu, *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* argues that there are two paths of love: *nanshoku* 男色 (male colors) and *joshoku* 女色 (female colors), and that they are driven by the forces of yang and yin respectively. This interpretation seems incorrect, since the definition the speaker uses for male-male sexuality is not the familiar term *nanshoku* but *nyakudō* (the “Way of Youths”), which has no female equivalent. As far as I know, there is no terminology in medieval Japan for a spiritual appreciation of female youths, but only for women as seen in the construct *joshoku*. Further, females are rarely mentioned in the text. See Hiratsuka Ryōsen 平塚良宣, *Nihon ni okeru nanshoku no kenkyū* 日本における男色の研究 (Tokyo: Ningen no Kagakusha Shuppan Jigyōbu, 1983), 14.

⁴²⁰ Ijiri, “*Nyakudō no kanjinchō* 若道之勸進帳,” 477.

woodcutters, indicating that it went beyond the confines of an elite monastic context.⁴²¹ This reality was of concern to the author and propelled him to reinforce the traditional power structure by asking children to resurrect the way in its former monastic framework. Therefore, the text can be seen as a suggestion that the sexual order had begun to shift to patterns of non-conformist practices. Reflecting on the independence of acolytes to expand the rules of sexual intercourse, *Nyakudō no kanjinchō* epitomizes the hierarchical relationship between senior monk and the junior acolyte: yin-yang is evoked not in order to highlight a notion of complementarity, but to accentuate power relations. The two males engaging in sexual relations embody the yang and ying attributes of activity and passivity respectively. Thus, yin-yang theory was incorporated in order to sustain an asymmetrical sexual relation between the adult giver and the pre-adult receiver, which featured prevalently in a variety of medieval sources, such as *Chigo no sōshi* 稚児之草子 (The Scroll of Acolytes)⁴²² and the *setsuwa* genre of medieval legends, and ostensibly reflected the contemporaneous structure of monastic sexuality. At any rate, a similar power structure is discernable in the *chigo kanjō* texts, but *Kanjinchō*'s cosmological discussion has less of an ambiguous stance on male-female love than the above yin-yang passage in *Shōgyō hiden*. Moreover, while *Kanjinchō*'s explication of yin-yang is predicated on Esoteric Buddhist non-dualism, *Shōgyō hiden*'s passage contains more pronounced themes of original enlightenment, in stressing the sacrality of passionate afflictions and ignorance as a primordial source.

⁴²¹ Ijiri, “*Nyakudō no kanjinchō* 若道之勸進帳,” 477. The reference in this source regarding women engaging in “the Way” is surprising given the fact that “the Way of the youth” clearly referred to just male youth. The narrator probably means that women began to develop sexual interest in young boys.

⁴²² Dōmoto Masaki 堂本正樹, “*Chigo no sōshi*: *Honbun shōkai* 『稚児之草子』 本文紹介,” *Yasō* 夜想 15 (1985): 167–88.

Returning to the doctrinal components of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, since the its doctrinal gist of is associated with the *Lotus Sutra* (“Kannon’s secret teaching”), the creators of *chigo kanjō* had to make sure *hongaku* thought would be complementary to this scripture. Therefore, in *Shōgyō hiden*, original enlightenment thought is also used to re-interpret existing passages in the *Lotus sutra*. The following passage is a good example:

This [male-male love] is also preached in sutras and commentaries by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Also, it is found in the exegesis of our human masters. However, in the “Ease in Practice” Chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*, it is said “A bodhisattva should take no pleasure in nurturing young disciples or young boys.” This sentence is explained from the point of view of Trace Teachings and Acquired Enlightenment. When one attains the Inner Realization embedded in the Original Teachings of the “The Lifespan of the Tathāgata” chapter [of the *Lotus Sutra*], one is the original, non-produced, body of enlightenment. Also, in the *Mandoku enman-kyō* 功德圓滿經, it is said that [sex is]“committing transgressions for 700 lives.” The meaning of this passage is a provisional prohibition of the Lesser Vehicle. Further, the Great Treatise states: those who assume the form of young boys are the path of the bodhisattva itself, they practice the pāramitā of gift because of their great mercy and great compassion. This is quite clear. Also, according to the exegesis of our masters and the noble interpretation of Zhiyi, young children who possess a mind, will achieve merit and fortune in this lifetime and experience awakening in the next. Young boys who do not possess a mind will be destitute in this lifetime, and will suffer rebirth in the Path of the Devil in the next.⁴²³

In order to understand this interpretation of the *Lotus Sutra*, it is necessary to say a few words on the meaning of “Trace Teachings” (*shakumon* 迹門) and “Original Teachings”

(*honmon* 本門). Zhiyi 智顛 (538–597), the founder and great scholar of Tiantai Buddhism

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佛菩薩ノ經論ニ説テ。又、人師ノ在リレ尺ニキ。然ハ法華安樂行品云。不樂畜年小弟子小兒也。此文ハ迹門、始覺ノ分也。得ハニ本門壽量内證ヲ一、本来無作ノ覺躰也。又、万徳円満經文、非犯七百生ト此ノ文ノ意ハ、小乗一横ノ禁也。又、大論ノ中ニハ、若小兒形即菩薩道、大慈大悲且度行也。是又、分明也。又人師尺、天台御尺云。有心小童者、今生ニ成ニ祐福ニ一、来生ニ證菩提ヲ一、若無心幼童今世ニ為ニ貧窶ニ一後ニ受ニ魔道苦ヲ一也“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘兒聖教秘伝。”

in China, divided the *Lotus Sutra* (in Kumārajīva’s translation) into two parts of fourteen chapters each. The first half was labeled “trace teachings,” it includes an exposition and discussion of doctrine and is identified with the truth taught by the historical Buddha Śākyamuni. The second half was named “original teachings” and represents the core ideas of the sutra as expressed by the “The Lifespan of the Tathāgata” chapter.⁴²⁴ This chapter describes the lifetime of the Buddha as infinite, and reveals that the historical Buddha was a mere emanation of a cosmic being existing since time immemorial. This reading allowed for an absolute and immaterial interpretation of the Buddha and for the proposition that there are multiple Buddhas in regions called “Buddha-fields,” extending far beyond the finitude of the historical Buddha. With regards to the term “acquired enlightenment,” it refers to the gradualist approach according to which incremental practice leads to awakening and, in particular, one needs to eradicate mental defilements in order to become a Buddha. By contrast, “original enlightenment” regards awakening as an intrinsic quality to all beings, based on the idea that every single mental and physical activity (including the arising of defilements) is the same as liberation.⁴²⁵ Therefore, as Yagi Kōe observes, the passage presents two prominent teachings of Tendai doctrine, *honjaku nimon* 本迹二問 (“the two teachings, original and traces”) and *shihon nikaku* 始本二覚 (“the two types of awakenings, acquired and original”).⁴²⁶

⁴²⁴ See Paul L. Swanson, *Foundations of T’ien-T’ai Philosophy: The Flowering of the Two Truths Theory in Chinese Buddhism* (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1989), 9

⁴²⁵ Kuroda and Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, 215–16.

⁴²⁶ The prolific scholar of the Tendai Eshin lineage, Yagi Kōe, notes that the treatment of the trace-origin teaching in *shōgyō hiden* is indicative of the text’s dating; it was written in the period of medieval Tendai (*Tendai chūko*). See Yagi Kōe 八木晃恵, *Eshin kyōgakushi no sōgōteki kenkyū* 恵心教学史の総合的研究 (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1996), 1221–23.

Following this template, the author of *Shōgyō hiden* attempts to show that the ritualization of male-male love is conversant with a corpus of texts important to the Tendai tradition, such as the fundamental scripture of the *Lotus Sutra* and its greatest patriarch's (Zhiyi) hermeneutics. The passage from the *Lotus Sutra* is taken from the "Ease in Practice" chapter. The chapter deals with the type of qualifications that characterize a worthy bodhisattva, and that passage in particular describes one of the approaches that a bodhisattva should take. In the sutra, after declaring that "If a bodhisattva enters someone else's home he should not talk to young girls, maidens, and widows," and that he should "not approach the five kinds of impotent men nor be intimate with them,"⁴²⁷ a few sentences later the text writes that the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, should "take no pleasure in keeping young disciples, śrāmaṇeras, or young boys."⁴²⁸ The *Shōgyō hiden* (and perhaps the *Lotus Sutra* too) perceives the tutelage of young acolytes as necessarily entailing sexual gratification for monks. The passage is introduced as a counter-argument against prohibitions on male same-sex intimacy in the scriptures, but it is done so in so that these prohibitions will be rendered invalid. According to *Shōgyō hiden*, the passage prohibiting sex with acolytes only represents an aspect of "acquired enlightenment," that is, it designates the conviction of an ongoing practice of continence culminating in awakening. To accept this qualification as truth, would be to adhere to the Trace Teachings, in other words, the teachings associated with the historical Buddha, which is an inferior and incomplete understanding of the *Lotus Sutra*. *Shōgyō hiden* claims that the most accurate interpretation lies in the "The Lifespan of the Tathāgata" chapter since it is the one chapter compatible with original enlightenment.

⁴²⁷ Kubo and Yuyama, *Lotus Sutra*, 194.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*

Therefore, since the passage about keeping acolytes does not take a stance associated with original enlightenment, then its injunction is invalid. Needless to say, there is nothing in the “The Lifespan of the Tathāgata” chapter that relates to acolytes or male-male love per se. This is a calculated distraction to direct attention to the central message of the *Lotus Sutra*, namely, the notion of absolute Buddhahood transcending time and space, and it is only assumed that this ontological state can be activated by original enlightenment, which will be the fate of *chigo* undertaking the *chigo kanjō* consecration.

This passage also sheds light on the boy’s ethical role in the consecration. The text makes many doctrinal propositions on intercourse with young men. They are the closest humans to the idealized and immaculate rank of a bodhisattva, and should be preferred over women due to the youths’ intrinsic awakening. It is argued that the *chigo*’s activity during ritual embodies the bodhisattva practice of “gift” or “giving” or *dāna*, one of the six perfections (*pāramitā*) of wisdom, so important in the Mahayana tradition. In the quote, young children encapsulate in their actions the deeds of the bodhisattvas and they exhibit a compassion equivalent to Kannon’s. But this reference implies sexual activity, given the sexual subject matter of the ritual. The text interprets sex as an act in which the *chigo* gives himself up in an altruistic manner, only to *give* to monks. A quote from a supposedly Tendai scripture speaks of children who possess a mind and those who do not. All boys can ultimately be awakened but there are those who do not possess a potent mind. By implication, the text shows that awakened youngsters (those who cultivate *dāna*) who are initiated into *chigo kanjō* will entail safe rebirth and a lifetime of prosperity, whereas boys who lack a mind, will suffer misfortune in the life to come. The point of this warning was to ensure that monks would be having sexual intercourse with enlightened beings so as to be

awarded with their sacrality. Common to the discourse of original enlightenment, monks conceptualized certain beings who did not elicit awakening in their body as ultimately devoid of a mind. The passage sets the logic of the entire ritual as we have seen elsewhere: monks are able to retain and absorb original enlightenment by engaging in sexual acts with boys because the inherent sanctity in the boys' bodies cancels out the impurity of sex.

This stance about the *chigo* as awakened beings was not a position only held by Tendai, but it is in fact trans-sectarian. A discussion on *chigo*'s salvific capacities is found in another Muromachi text, *Shōnin kōshiki* 少人講式, housed in the archives of Daigoji 醍醐寺, a Shingon temple in Kyoto. The *Shōnin kōshiki* follows the template of a *kōshiki* ("Lecture ceremony"), a liturgical genre that flourished during the early medieval era and is in fact a parody of this genre. However, it also reveals contemporary understandings about *chigo* and sexuality. The *kōshiki* is performed in front of a primary icon, and its liturgical text would usually explain "the history, meaning, virtuous nature, and efficacious merit" of the object of devotion.⁴²⁹ *Shōnin kōshiki* takes youths (*shōnin* 少人) or *chigo* 児, as the fundamental object of worship, and extols their meritorious functions and beautiful features. Only one scroll is extant, but its introduction provides an outline of the various topics in the text, one of them is a "hymn about young men possessing a mind 贊有心少人," the other "[a hymn] about *chigo* without a mind 无心児."⁴³⁰ These sections, along with our previous discussion, reveals that the contrast between youngsters who were not endowed with intrinsic enlightenment and those who actually triggered their awakening - was not

⁴²⁹ Barbara R. Ambros, James L. Ford, and Michaela Mross, "Editors' Introduction: 'Kōshiki' in Japanese Buddhism," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 43, no. 1 (2016): 1–2.

⁴³⁰ This passage shows that *shōjin* and *chigo* were interchangeable terms.

uncommon. It also betrays the ontological inferiority of the *chigo* vis-à-vis the monk, should they not undergo consecration. By late medieval period, it was widely held that every entity is capable of sentience, even plants and trees (*sōmoku jōbutsu* 草木成仏).⁴³¹ By insisting that monastic children cannot possess a mind should they not undergo consecration, the medieval Buddhist discourse reduces certain *chigo* into beings incapable of sentience, even lesser than inanimate objects. Therefore, we should not overlook the empowering aspect of the *chigo kanjō* ritual, even though it might have given way to sexual exploitation and abuse.

In another section of *Shōgyō Hiden*, the above-mentioned Lotus Sutra passage is cited again and accorded additional phraseology that is part the common lexicon of original enlightenment thought:

The meaning of the Trace Teachings is that one thing progresses from cause to effect. If that is the case, the meaning in the “Ease of Practice” passage of the *Lotus Sutra* is that it is a provisional understanding of the Trace Teachings. The inner realization of the Original [Teachings] of “The Lifespan of the Tathāgata,” is the spontaneous, non-produced, body of enlightenment. Śrāmaṇeras and young boys refer to the meaning of the Trace Teaching. The meaning of the Original Teachings is that śrāmaṇeras and young boys are both the original ground and non-produced body of enlightenment. From the perspective of acquired enlightenment, they [*chigo*] have to be despised. From the perspective of original enlightenment, they are to be sought. They have to be despised when seeking enlightenment above. They have to be privileged, when teaching sentient beings below. This is the heart of the deep secret. According to a shallow interpretation of this meaning, if you commit sexual lust one time, 84,000 thousand bugs will creep in your hairy behind, and kill you. However, if you carry out purification by water, you will be enlivened.⁴³²

⁴³¹ See Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

⁴³² 迹門意^ハ從因至果也。サレハ安樂行品^ニ云不樂畜年小弟子沙弥小兒亦不樂興同師常好坐禪在於開處^ト文意^ハ迹門一往也。本壽量^ノ内證^ハ本有無作覺躰也。沙弥^ト云小兒^ト云^ハ迹門^ノ意也。本門^ノ意^ハ沙弥^モ小兒^モ皆本地無作^ノ覺躰也。始覺^ノ時^ハキライ、本覺^ノ時^ハネガウ也。上求菩提^ノ時^ハキライ下化衆生^ノ

The text claims that prohibiting monks from having sex with boys displays a “provisional understanding,” that is, it is not the final say on the matter. It is aligned with an awakening that “originates in cause and proceeds to effect” (*jūin shika* 從因至果) “acquired enlightenment,” the linear progression model of practice that is antithetical to a principle of innate enlightenment. The text reassures the reader that since the body of a young acolyte is enlightened, non-produced, and functions as original ground (primordially non-created and the foundation of the sacred), having sex with him would be an attainment of enlightenment from “effect and descending to cause (*jūka kōin* 從果降因),” namely, actualizing the condition that already inheres in all beings. Another stipulation made in the text is that acquired enlightenment, a stance that is identified with the denunciation of sex with acolytes (as in the passage from the *Lotus Sutra*), is reserved for those that selfishly aspire to be enlightened, while those who favor intimate ties with acolytes, reflect the mindset of a selfless mind striving towards the enlightenment of others.

In other passages, where the *chigo* is identified with the god Sannō, both are seen as an absolute mode of being. This absolute is described in *hongaku* terms to express unity in the form of “suchness” (*ichi nyo* 一如), but it can also be expressed in Tendai non-dual formulation such as “phenomena are in fact the true reality” (*sokuji nishin* 即事而真), or in a ternary arrangement as in the term “unproduced three bodies” (*musa no sanshin* 無作ノ三身) which refers to a primeval self-spontaneous beings, but also the three gods of the Sannō pantheon (Ōmiya 大宮, Ni-no-miya 二宮, and Shōshinji 聖真子).⁴³³ These are all common

時^レ以^レ是^ヲ為^レ先^ト也。是深秘心也。淺畧義分^ヲ見^ル。姪欲^ヲ一度犯^サ八万四千^ノ毛穴^ノ虫^シ死所也。又行水^ヲス^レハ活生也。“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘兒聖教秘伝。”

⁴³³ “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘兒聖教秘伝。”

terms in Tendai's *hongaku* discourse, and they are also employed to bring together the discursive threads of Buddhism and Shinto.

The idea of original enlightenment (*hongaku*) became the central paradigm of Tendai Buddhism throughout the medieval period. Original enlightenment transcended all dualistic conceptions such as samsara and nirvana, sentient beings and buddhas, and undercut the goal of spiritual progress. No longer was enlightenment a mere potential, some capacity that lies dormant in one's body-mind; it was now always already present. As I mentioned above, Esoteric Buddhism and Taimitsu held that enlightenment can be found in our very own bodies and practices through a ritual identification with the cosmic Buddha (*sokushin jōbutsu*), but when viewed from a *hongaku* perspective, this sacrality was no different from impurity. The implication, for our concerns, was that even sinful, impure, and unwholesome acts were sometimes cast as tantamount to the realization of awakening, including sex. Such doctrinal position is clearly present in *chigo kanjō* in its emphasis on male-male sex as an affirmation of his awakening state, simply because of the intrinsic Buddhahood that sacred children enjoy. However, let us not forget that the *chigo* will also undergo a transformative experience that will enhance this sacrality, as he becomes the manifestation of Kannon and the flesh-and-blood body of the god Sannō.

Taimitsu Doctrine

I have given much attention to the role of Taimitsu authors in creating *chigo kanjō* in Chapter 2. It is pertinent to demonstrate how Taimitsu doctrine is displayed in *chigo kanjō* texts and how they enrich its doctrinal thrust. Some of the discussions of Original enlightenment concepts has Taimitsu doctrinal underpinnings. Moreover, Taimitsu incorporates a discussion on visualization that the *chigo* may have carried out. Taimitsu thought is integrated into *chigo kanjō* through an elaboration on Esoteric visualization:

We sentient beings have an eight-petaled lotus flower in our chest. When good thoughts arise, the lotus flower opens up, when evil thoughts arise, it wilts. Inside this lotus abides the venerable Mahāvairocana as the Mind King. The Mental Factors are the 84,000 afflictions. This is also called mandala. When the flames of afflictions arise, it wilts, when they are extinguished [the flower] opens up. Even if you commit sexual transgression, after you do so, do not visit Buddhas and kami for twelve hours. The reasons for this is that one stenches of the 84,000 insects which the flames of afflictions are burning. The Buddhas loathe this stench. The Deva Māra delights in it and turns it into an obstruction. Therefore, the Buddha, Dharma, and monks must hold off on this [sexual transgression]. That is a limited, superficial understanding of the principle.⁴³⁴

The description here actually refers to an important Esoteric ritual, the visualization of the Sanskrit Grapheme A (*ajikan* 阿字觀).⁴³⁵ We already saw this visualization mentioned in our discussion of mandalas in the doctrinal section, and how in sexual intercourse the letter SA of Kannon is eventually transformed into the Letter A which is the primeval source of

⁴³⁴ 我等一切衆生ノ胸ノ間ニ八葉蓮花有リ。此蓮花善念起時ハ開、惡念起時ハシホム也。此蓮華ノ中ニハ心王大日尊住給也。心數ハ八方四千塵勞門也。是ヲ万タラトモ云也。炎ノ煩惱時ハシホミ炎消ヌレハ開ク也。犯テモ有レ犯シテ後ハ十二時ノ程ハ佛神ニハ不可レ詣ル。其ノ故ハ煩惱ノ炎焼ケ死スル處ノ八万四千虫ノ香クサシ。是ヲハ佛ハキライ給也。天魔ハ是ヲ悦テ成障碍ヲ一也。サレハ佛法僧ハ可堪忍一者ナリ是ハ浅畧一分道理也。Ibid.

⁴³⁵ For more on the Ajikan practice more generally, see Richard K. Payne, “Ajikan: Ritual and Meditation in the Shingon Tradition,” in *Re-Visioning “Kamakura” Buddhism*, ed. Richard K. Payne (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998).

all that exists. This passage describes an *ajikan* contemplation from the Taimitsu tradition. The process of opening up one's own heart into an eight-petaled flower is considered in Taimitsu to visualize one's own mind and the physical heart as the Buddha Mahāvairocana. In this visualization, by seeing oneself as Mahāvairocana, one becomes a buddha in the present body (*sokushin jōbutsu*). In the literature concerning this visualization, the pedestal of the lotus flower is likened to one's body, which renders the body itself an object of worship. We also see that the passage makes use of concepts that describe the Buddha Mahāvairocana: the “Mind King” (*shinnō* 心王) is the essence of the unconditioned mind and its basic cognitive function, whereas the “mental factors” (*shinju* 心數) are the multiple functions of the mind. However, in Esoteric Buddhism, while the Mind King stands for *Mahāvairocana*, the Mental Factors are his personified mental attributes. The text here equates the Mental Factors with 84,000 afflictions, and by claiming that both the Mind King and Mental Factors form a mandala (a perfectly integrated cosmos), it poses an identity between defilements and awakening, a position usually held by *hongaku* discourse.

The prolific Tendai scholar Yagi Kōe writes that the language used in the above passage is strongly suggestive of Taimitsu (Esoteric Tendai) ideas. The source for the *Ajikan* visualization on the heart-mind as an “eight-petaled flower” is the commentary on the Mahāvairocana Sutra, the *Darijing shu* 大日經疏 (before 727) by Yixing 一行 (683–727),⁴³⁶ This work presents the visualization of a lotus flower in one's heart as a way to become a buddha. Yagi proposes that the above passage in *Shōgyō hiden* borrows from the discourse on original enlightenment by utilizing concepts from the *Renge sanmai-kyō* 蓮華

⁴³⁶ T. 1796-39.

三昧經 (“The Lotus Samādhi Sūtra”).⁴³⁷ This sutra speaks of a “Dharma-body with an originally awakened mind” (*hongaku shinhōshin* 本覺心法身) that abides in the “lotus pedestal of the heart” (*shin rentai* 心蓮台).⁴³⁸ In other words, the body of the practitioner, which is also the cosmic body of Mahāvairocana (according to Taimitsu), is endowed with innate awakening (*hongaku*). There are other patterns of Taimitsu visualizations that we will discuss in the conclusion where we examine the construction of sexuality and the gender of the *chigo* in *chigo kanjō* texts. These patterns have to do with Esoteric Buddhist understanding of non-dualism and the cult of Rāgarāja (Aizen Myōō).

The question remains as to whose heart opens up into a blossoming lotus. Is it the monk or the *chigo*? In my view, the person in question is the *chigo*. The voice of the text acknowledges impurities and awakening to be one and the same. However, there is still a recognition of impurities to be dangerous and unwanted by the Buddha (perhaps because from a conventional perspective, they are still defiled). The text asks not to approach the Buddha for twelve hours after a person commits sexual transgression, because “one stench of the 84,000 insects which the flames of afflictions are burning. The Buddhas loathe this stench.” We saw earlier that when one commits male-male sex, “84,000 thousand bugs will creep” in one’s “hairy behind” and kill him. Because the focus is on the ass or the anus, it seems clear to me the text refers to *chigo*, since in the medieval construction of sexuality,

⁴³⁷ The full title of the *Rengesanmaikyō* 蓮華三昧經 is *Myōhōrengē sanmai himitsu sanmayakyō* 妙法蓮華三昧秘密三摩耶經. See “Myōhō rengē sanmai himitsu sanmayakyō 妙法蓮華三昧秘密三摩耶經,” in *Shinsan Dainihon zokuzōkyō* 新纂大日本統藏經, ed. Kawamura Kōshō 河村孝照 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1975), 882–86. The text is an apocryphon that includes excerpts from a much more comprehensive text. It is a visualization text of the Diamond Realm variety. For a detailed study on the *Sanmaya-kyō*, see Mizukami Fumiyoshi 水上文義, *Taimitsu shisō keisei no kenkyū* 台密思想形成の研究 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2008).

⁴³⁸ Yagi, *Eshin kyōgakushi no sōgōteki kenkyū* 恵心教学史の総合的研究, 1222.

the acolyte is usually on the receiving end of anal sex and this is unmistakably a reference to a sexual act.⁴³⁹ Based on my reading, the text suggests that there is a law of taboo over accessing a house of worship when *chigo* are penetrated, because the Buddha despises the stench of the *chigo*'s buttocks following intercourse. Another statement clearly made earlier in the text defines the ass as the abode of enlightenment, "While there are many different names for buttocks, there are three kinds. One of which is "the Flower of Dharma Nature" (*hōsshō no hana* 法性花). The Flower of Dharma Nature is the innate eight-petaled flower. Because the flower extinguishes afflictions, this flower opens."⁴⁴⁰ As such, the *chigo kanjō* tradition equates the anus with the heart-mind of the practitioner. In intercourse, the anus (as the heart-mind) extinguishes desire, which means that even as monks penetrate the ass of the *chigo*, the unconditioned form of reality is able to manifest.

Shōgyō hiden transforms the Ajikan visualization into a concrete act, sexual intercourse, and emplaces the mind in the organ that is the focus of admiration, the ass. Elsewhere the text says: "If you abide in the principle of the uncreated Grapheme A, you will see that all natural phenomena are afflictions. By using its skill to extinguish the flames

⁴³⁹ The *Dainichi-kyō-sho ennō-shō* 大日經疏演奧鈔, although a Shingon commentary, presents some relevant information. It describes a visualization in which the heart-mind is directed above in the man's case, and below in the woman's case. This perhaps explains why in the *chigo*'s case, who is often likened to a female, the heart-mind is found below, in the anus, which is the orifice used for sexual penetration: "Generally speaking, when practicing a visualization, one must first apply the Five Graphemes to his body, as taught in the ritual of worship. One must then visualize one's heart (*ji-shin* 自心) as forming an eight-petaled lotus flower. The master says: "Ordinary men have their heart (*urida-shin* 汚栗駄心, sk. *hr̥daya*) in the shape of a closed red lotus flower (*mifu* 未敷): it has muscles and vessels (*kin-myaku* 筋脈) and consists of eight parts; it is directed upward in the man and downward in the woman. The practitioner first visualizes this lotus flower and makes it open (*kaifu* 開敷); it will become the eight-petaled white lotus flower pedestal [of the Buddha] (*hachiyō byakurenge-za* 八葉白蓮花座). On this pedestal, one must place and visualize the Grapheme A, in the color of a *vajra*." Based on the French translation by Iyanaga Nobumi. See Nobumi Iyanaga, "Le cœur (en forme) de lotus: Une métaphore dans le Mahāvairocana-sūtra et sa tradition," (Unpublished manuscript). I thank Iyanaga Nobumi for his advice on this topic during our email correspondence from September 14 through 20, 2017.

⁴⁴⁰ "*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝."

of these afflictions, Sannō appears as *chigo*.⁴⁴¹ Performance of this “visualization,” which is now understood as accompanying a concrete sexual act, will allow the god Sannō to appear as *chigo*. This is an explicit call to worship the *chigo* not just as Kannon and Mahāvairocana, but also as the Tendai tutelary god Sannō, which will be the topic of our next section.

Kami-Buddha Amalgamation

The syncretic and combinatory theorization of local gods (*kami*) and universal Buddhas in medieval Japan (twelfth to sixteenth centuries), is known as *kami-buddha* amalgamation (*shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合). This refers to the incorporation of *kami* shrines into Buddhist complexes, and the rise of *kami* cults that were developed within Buddhism and articulated by Buddhist monks. Kuroda Toshio argued that categorizing Japanese religion in medieval Japan into two discrete traditions, Buddhism and Shinto, obscures the complexity of religious phenomena on the ground. Shinto was not an independent religion before the advent of the modern period, but rather, it was a multilayered cult that was domesticated and promoted by Buddhist authors.⁴⁴² Shinto, or *kami* worship, was fully integrated into state-sanctioned Buddhist orthodoxy, and obeyed its ceremonial and doctrinal logic. However, around the fourteenth century, Shinto takes on an idiosyncratic tint when various sub-lineages in Buddhism establish scholarly circles where they

⁴⁴¹ A字本不生ノ理ニ住シテ見ハ、森羅ノ万像ニ皆煩惱也。是ノ煩惱ノ炎ヲ可レ消ス巧ヲモ^(ツカ)ンテ山王、児ニテ現レ給也。Ibid.

⁴⁴² See Kuroda, *Nihon chūsei no kokka to shūkyō* 日本中世の国家と宗教; Kuroda Toshio, James C. Dobbins, and Suzanne Gay, trans., “Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 7, no. 1 (1981).

investigate kami worship and lionize their own kami as equal to Buddhas. This happens under Tendai Buddhism with the formation of so-called Sannō Shinto, a cultic system that developed around Tendai's headquarters on Mount Hiei, and celebrated the god Sannō, a kami that was imported from China and became a powerful and wrathful deity, the protector of Tendai Buddhism in Japan. Sannō was also intimately tied to another child deity, Jūzenji 十禪師, who was its local emanation. Interestingly, *chigo kanjō* provides a window into the process in which local gods (Sannō and Jūzenji) in Tendai Buddhism were grounded in Buddhist teachings and eventually came to ontologically surpass the divinities of the Buddhist pantheon. In this section, I point to the significance of human deification in *chigo kanjō*, and secondly, I stress the important role played by a divinity other than Kannon, the tutelary god of Tendai, Sannō/Jūzenji, the medium through which the child acolyte became deified. I will therefore discuss the ritual deification of the *chigo* as the incarnation of Sannō, and its implications.

To this end, I will focus on one doctrinal formulation, the Buddhist notion of the Threefold Truth (*santai* 三諦) as it was elaborated by Tendai scholasticism. We noted in the introduction the concept of the two truths, which all Mahayana schools espouse in one form or another. In Tiantai (Chinese Tendai), however, there is a threefold truth epistemology. The Threefold Truth was a concept first codified in China by the Tiantai monk Zhiyi (538–597); The Threefold Truth, that is, the provisional, the empty, and the middle,⁴⁴³ were epistemological-ontological dimensions that pointed directly to the nature of reality as the convergence of the ultimate and conventional aspects. These truths also possess the meaning

⁴⁴³ Swanson, *Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy: The Flowering of the Two Truths Theory in Chinese Buddhism*.

of “valid in the sense of conducive to behaviors that lead to the end of suffering.”⁴⁴⁴ That is, as Brook Ziporyn upholds, the epistemological component is often downplayed in favor of pragmatics: the threefold truth is used to diminish suffering and achieve salvation. The middle truth is the apex of the three and it affirms that reality is empty of independent substantiality with the acknowledgment that the provisional is fully real insofar as it is a temporary designation. According to Paul Swanson, even in Chinese context the concept accorded more importance to phenomenal reality than the noumena.⁴⁴⁵ In a similar way, Japanese Tendai monks promoted their view of an absolute affirmation of this world by using the concept of the threefold truth. Their refashioned version of Zhiyi’s theory confirmed the concept of original enlightenment (*hongaku* 本覺) which recognized an inherent sacrality in all phenomena. This led monks to value the worldly and the material aspects of existence, and in effect, to sanctify bodily activities such as sexual acts, providing that they were sporadic, ritually delimited, and served a higher cause such as the awakening of monks. In *chigo kanjō*, the acolyte was the physical instantiation of a divine body, that of Sannō, who embodied the threefold modes of truth, a doctrinal endeavor that would ultimately shape the *chigo* in its image.

Most modern accounts of the ritual detail the young boy’s physical manifestation as Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion. Indeed, the ritual space includes a hanging Kannon mandala which functions as the main icon (See Chapter 3). However, the climactic moment in all consecrations, which unites the acolyte with the cosmic Buddha in one body, appears

⁴⁴⁴ Brook Ziporyn, “The Three Truths in Tiantai Buddhism,” in *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*, ed. Steven M. Emmanuel (Chichester, West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 256-57.

⁴⁴⁵ Swanson, *Foundations of T’ien-T’ai Philosophy: The Flowering of the Two Truths Theory in Chinese Buddhism*.

to be centered not on Kannon but on the god Sannō, while also enthroning the *chigo*-Sannō entity as an absolute god. The *Chigo kanjō shidai* makes it clear that a Sannō mandala was used for flower-tossing. This Sannō mandala (*Sannō dan* 山王壇) was conceived as the physical seat of the god, and was shaped like an eight-petal Lotus (recall that the meaning of the Lotus in this ritual is distinctive).⁴⁴⁶ This object depicts the universal Buddhas (though unnamed) as original forms of local kami in the Sannō cult, eight of them positioned on the eight petals of the lotus and a ninth at the center of the flower. Spread out in front of the mandala is another mandala that functioned as its simulacrum, replicating the eight-petaled lotus and adorned with Nine Worthies (*kuson* 九尊).⁴⁴⁷ The flower-tossing segment of the ritual establishes karmic connection with Sannō. Once the *chigo* drops the flower on the mandala, he removes his blindfold and is shown where it fell among the Nine Worthies. The text claims that another monk records during *chigo kanjō* that the flower fell on the northeast or on the center of the mandala, that is, that it landed on either Kannon or Sannō (this means that the dropping of the flower is manipulated by the ritualists). In the *Shōgyō hiden*, *chigo* is said to be the original ground, the essence of all Buddhas, whereas Sannō a manifested trace, an emanation of the buddhas.⁴⁴⁸ This doctrinal proposition is made because of the deification that actualized through sexual intercourse in *chigo kanjō*, as we shall see below. The same text also claims that Sannō is the original wellspring of all Buddhas, a conglomerate of the Seven Stars of the Big Dipper, the coming together of the gods of heaven and earth, and an absolute god concretized in flesh,⁴⁴⁹ and in *Kuketsu sōjō* the *chigo*

⁴⁴⁶ “*Chigo kanjō shidai* 児灌頂次第,” in *Mudōjizō* 無動寺藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ 児^本地,山王^垂迹也。故一児二山王也可秘々々口傳 在之。“Kō chigo shōgyō hiden 弘児聖教秘伝。”

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

encompasses all of the Seven Shrines of Hie Sannō, the Seven Herbs, and the Seven Buddhas.⁴⁵⁰

The Origin of Sannō

Before we get into the *chigo* deification, I shall provide background about the god Sannō, and then on the cultic context of *chigo* in Sannō worship. Sannō (“the mountain king”) was worshipped in Japan within Hie Shrine ever since Saichō had arrived to Sakamoto in Ōmi province. The god Sannō was enshrined in Hie Taisha Shrine at the foot of Mount Hiei. Sannō received multiple appellations and was perhaps first understood as the condensation of various deities. The structure known today as Nishi-hongū (Western main shrine, formerly known as Ōmiya) was the abode of Ōbie myōjin (The Great Hie Bright Deity), who is called Ōnamuchi no kami; Higashi-hongū (Eastern main shrine, formerly Ni no miya) was the dwelling of Obie, the god Ōyamakui. During the medieval period, Ōmiya shrine and his god was ranked first among the enshrined deities on the site. Only from the Edo period, did the two shrines possess an identical status.⁴⁵¹ As a collective term to many gods, Sannō also encompassed three deities and was known as “Three Sages of Sannō” (*Sannō sanshō* 山王三聖), those are Ōmiya 大宮 (Ōnamuchi 大己貴神), Ni no miya (Ōyamakui no kami 大山咋神, “Great Mountain Tip”), and Shōshinji 聖真子 (Usa Hachiman 宇佐八幡). When Saichō established Enryakuji temple in 766 or 767–822, he

⁴⁵⁰ “*Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō* 児灌頂口決相承,” in *Fukuda Gyōei Archive* 谷中天王寺内故福田堯穎大僧正蔵 (Yanaka Tennōji 谷中天王寺).

⁴⁵¹ Satō Masato 佐藤真人, “Sannō Shintō no sekai 山王神道の世界,” in *Tendaigaku tanjin: Nihon no bunka, shisō no kakushin o saguru* 天台学探尋：日本の文化・思想の核心を探る, ed. Ōkubo Ryōshun 大久保良峻 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2014), 180.

enshrined those three as protective deities. Many accounts recount that ever since Saichō climbed Mount Hiei, it became a mountain inhabited by gods.⁴⁵² The *Kojiki* 古事記 relates that at the period of the primordial god Ōkuninushi 大国主神, Ōtoshi no kami 大年神 (one of the many sons of Susano'o 素戔鳴尊) had an offspring called Ōyamakui no kami, a phallic god whose other name was Yamasue no ōnushi no kami 山末之大主神 (“Great Master Mountain Peak”). It is said this kami bore a humming arrow (*narikabuchi* 鳴鏑) presumably used in battle,⁴⁵³ and was enshrined in Mount Hie 日枝 at Chikatsu Ōmi 近淡海, and that it was in fact the kami enshrined in Matsunoo 松尾 at Kadono 葛野.⁴⁵⁴ The account demonstrates that this kami was identical to the god at Matsuo-sha at the south of Kyoto-Arashiyama, the *ujigami* of the Hata clan, a community of Korean immigrants.

That the god Sannō had origins outside Japan has been argued by recent scholarship. Tsuji Zennosuke contends that the phenomena of kami-buddha amalgamation (*shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合) was unique to the Japanese experience. According to Tsuji, theological and practical amalgamations began in Japan, they were then internalized by Japanese people, and further developed locally. It follows the common nationalistic narrative of a pure Japanese religion (kami worship) that was then supplemented by Buddhism, a foreign

⁴⁵² Mizukami Fumiyoshi 水上文義, “Sannō Shintō no keisei 山王神道の形成,” in *Nihon Tendai kyōgakuron: Taimitsu, jingi, kokatsuji* 日本天台教学論：台密・神祇・古活字 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2017), 240.

⁴⁵³ According to Mark Teeuwen, Ōyamakui was a “threatening and violent force.” John Breen and Mark Teeuwen, *A New History of Shinto* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 69.

⁴⁵⁴ This description is not found in the other well-known chronicle of Japanese gods, the *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀. Teeuwen and Breen cite the passage from Donald Philippi’s translation of the *Kojiki*: “Ōyamakui, also named Yamasue-no-Ō nushi: this deity dwells on Mount Hie in the land of Chika-tsu-Ōmi, and also at Matsunoo in Kazuno. This is the deity who holds the humming arrow.” See Donald L. Philippi, trans., *Kojiki* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1968), 118; Breen and Teeuwen, *A New History of Shinto*, 70. The account showcases that the Hie kami is identical to the god enshrined in Matsuo-sha at the south of Kyoto-Arashiyama, the *ujigami* of the Hata clan, a community of Korean immigrants.

religion. Yoshida Kazuhiko disputes such argumentation which Tsuji called “the internalization development.” Through examining the origins of the Sannō deity in China, Yoshida hypothesizes that Chinese local cults have had their own systems of amalgamation and had directly influenced Japanese worship, and as such, Sannō was brought over to Japan as a highly complex and combinatory deity to begin with. Yoshida contends that Japan has inherited its tendencies of amalgamation from China through Saichō, and holds that the religious fusion of different traditions was a characteristic of the larger pan-Asian world at the ancient period.⁴⁵⁵

There are a few theories on the Sannō deity that have been challenged in recent years, both of which were made by the historian Tsuji Zennosuke. Tsuji argued that the original kami of Mount Hie, Ōyamakui, had been complemented by Ōnamuchi, the Miwa Deity of Yamato. This deity was conjured by Emperor Tenchi when he moved to the new capital Ōmi. Tsuji contends that this deity was then renamed Ōbie 大比叡 (“The Great Hie [deity]”) in Saichō’s times, and eventually Ōmiya. In turn, the earthly deity Ōyamakui became Obie 小比叡 (“The Lesser Hie [deity]”) and then Ni no miya. This assumption was perpetuated by the renowned scholar of Sannō Shinto, Sugawara Shinkai.⁴⁵⁶ However, recent scholars such as Fukui Kōjun and Satō Masato have cast doubt on the authorship of the document that claims Emperor Tenchi was in charge of this taxonomic and ontological separation.⁴⁵⁷ As Satō claims, the earliest that can attest to the Tenchi legend is the

⁴⁵⁵ For an article that pushes this argument forward, see Yoshida Kazuhiko 吉田 一彦, “Saichō no shinbutsu shūgō to Chūgoku bukkyō 最澄の神仏習合と中国仏教,” *Nihon Bukkyō sōgō kenkyū* 日本仏教総合研究 7 (2009): 1-2.

⁴⁵⁶ Sugahara, “The Distinctive Features of Sannō Ichijitsu Shinto.”

⁴⁵⁷ Satō points out that the so-called “contemporaneous” document *Hiyoshi sha negi kudenshō* 日吉社禰宜口伝抄 is a forgery dated from the Bakumatsu era that served the purpose of lauding the local deity of Hie and connecting it to the imperial line under the political ideology of *shinbutsu bunri*

document *hiesha gebumi* 日吉社解文 from 1081. Therefore, the legend of Tenchi, and specifically the separation into Ōbie and Obie can be traced back to the Heian period, but not earlier. Mizukami Fumiyoshi posits that the division into Great and Lesser deities has been devised by Enchin (814–891), but it is still far from clear whether Saichō himself had drawn the distinction.⁴⁵⁸ However, there were other divine extensions of the Sannō god that are more directly connected to the *chigo kanjō* ritual, such as Jūzenji.

Jūzenji, the Youthful Sannō

Sannō had a manifested form called Jūzenji, which assumed the form of a boy and facilitated the linkage between Sannō and *chigo*. Jūzenji (“The Master of Ten Dhyanas”) was a deity worshipped in Hie shrine, an avatar of Sannō. Bernard Faure has investigated many aspects of Jūzenji, ranging from its embryological role as a placenta deity, to its identity as an earthly god associated with snake-like fiends such as Ugajin, a companion deity worshipped in astral cults, and as a god of male-male sexuality.⁴⁵⁹ Jūzenji was venerated at the seventh sub-shrine in the Upper Seven Shrines of Hie. Kageyama Haruki has shown that the Seven Shrines were divided into two separate lineages tracing back to different lines of kami. The first was Nishi-hongū 西本宮 with its center in Ōmiya shrine; the second was Higashi-hongū 東本宮, which designated Ni no Miya as its center. Jūzenji

(separation of Buddhism and Shinto). Satō, “Sannō Shintō no sekai 山王神道の世界.” See also Mizukami, “Sannō Shintō no keisei 山王神道の形成,” 228.

⁴⁵⁸ “Sannō Shintō no keisei 山王神道の形成.”

⁴⁵⁹ See Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*; “The Cultic World of the Blind Monks: Benzaiten, Jūzenji, and Shukujin,” *Journal of Religion in Japan* 2 (2013); “Buddhism Ab Ovo: Aspects of Embryological Discourse in Medieval Japanese Buddhism,” in *Transforming the Void: Embryological Discourse and Reproductive Imagery in East Asian Religions*, ed. Anna Andreeva and Dominic Steavu (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

belonged to the second group of Higashi-hongū shrines and was worshipped at a sub-shrine (*sessha* 摂社) under the same name. Jūzenji was a god that possessed both young female priestesses and boy acolytes since they were culturally prefigured as mouthpieces of the gods, allowing them to communicate portents and oracles. However, ever since the Meiji period policy of “separation of Buddhas and kami” (*shinbutsu bunri* 神仏分離) enacted in 1871, the Hie shrine has been institutionally separated from Enryakuji temple and the Jūzenji sub-shrine has been renamed to Konomoto-no-Miya 樹下宮 (or Jūge jinja 樹下神社). Nowadays it enshrines the Kamo deity Tamayori-hime 玉依姫 instead of Jūzenji. It is possible that Jūzenji’s presence as a god was erased because his name meant and connoted Buddhist practices (Dhyāna or “Zen” meditation), and such erasure was in tandem with the Shinto purging of conspicuous Buddhist elements in shrines. But it is also possible that Shinto nationalists wished to remove any evidence of Jūzenji due to his sexually charged character, which may have been a source of concern for purists. Whatever the case may be, his banishment rose out of nationalist motives to valorize the imagined indigeneity of kami over their foreign counterparts, Buddhas and their pantheon. Since the kami Jūzenji is absent from the religious landscape of Hiesha, the only way to make sense of this complicated entity is through premodern sources.

Jūzenji, like many other mythological gods, appears in the world descending from heaven. The *Fusō meigetsushū* 扶桑明月集, attributed to the scholar Ōe no Masafusa (1041–1111), reports that during the imperial accession of Emperor Kanmu in 783, Jūzenji had “descended from heaven” (*tenkō* 天降).⁴⁶⁰ Jūzenji was linked with the Sun Goddess. The

⁴⁶⁰ Cited in *Keiran shūyōshū*. Scroll 8.

Jingi senryō 神祇宣令 and *Gonshinshō* 巖神抄 claim that Jūzenji was in fact the “manifested trace” (*suijaku* 垂迹) of Ninigi no Mikoto 瓊瓊杵尊, the grandson of Amaterasu Ōmikami 天照大御神, the great Sun Goddess and the main deity of Ise Shrine.

Sannō Shinto texts, the corpus of Shinto knowledge theorized by medieval Tendai chroniclers (*kike* 記家), reveal that from its inception Jūzenji was a god who manifested himself through human agents, often by possessing another person’s body.⁴⁶¹ Even Jūzenji’s etymological origin is based on real persons. The name derives from an ancient governmental position “court chaplain and meditation master” (*naigubu jūzenji* 内供奉十禪師).⁴⁶² The position was inaugurated in 772 by Emperor Kōnin to create a niche for ten monks who were to be institutionally independent from the Sōgō bureaucracy (the official priesthood of the state) and were chosen by the government to oversee the maintenance of Buddhist affairs at the court. One entry in the *Yōtenki* 耀天記, illuminates the human dimension of Jūzenji and how it received its appellation.

As [Priest] Narinaka explained: ‘In ancient times, there was among the ten court chaplains one person who stayed at Kōshakuji in Yokawa, who was rich in wisdom and its practices⁴⁶³ and was a man of high virtue. This person among the meditation masters conveyed the spoken words of Sannō through his body. He had become a

⁴⁶¹ See Yamamoto Hiroko 山本ひろ子, “Chūsei Hie-sha no Jūzenji shinkō to ninaite shudan: Eizan, reidō, fugeki no sansō kōzō o megutte 中世日吉社の十禪師信仰と担い手集団 – 叡山・靈童・巫覡の三層構造をめぐって,” *Terakoya gogaku bunka kenkyū to ronsō* 寺子屋語学文化研究所論叢 3 (1984).

⁴⁶² The Tendai school had expanded its influence on politics through appointing chaplain-meditation masters. While there is no established theory on why and how the deity of Mount Hiei was named after this courtly rank, it is safe to assume that because the post was regularly occupied by Tendai masters, Jūzenji who carried an identical title pointed to the figures who occupied this role, and as a result was often imagined in the form of a Tendai monk. This may be the most logical explanation to why the medieval god emanated in human form.

⁴⁶³ 智行 *chigyō*, the wisdom of the six *pāramitās* (Perfections of Wisdom) and their related practices.

“manifest deity” (*arahito-gami* 荒人神), and for the first time he was given the name “Jūzenji.”⁴⁶⁴

This fascinating passage is attributed to one Narinaka, that is, Hafuribe no Narinaka 祝部成仲 (1099–1191), a *negi* 禰宜⁴⁶⁵ who belonged to a lineage of Hie Shrine personnel (*shaji* 社司).⁴⁶⁶ Narinaka reports that one of the government-appointed meditation masters at Kōshakuji (located between the Jingūji path and Yokawa) had a remarkable capacity to channel the god Sannō to speak through his mouth; Narinaka explains that the god we know today as Jūzenji received its name from this medium’s occupation as a meditation master. The passage refers to a person⁴⁶⁷ from the ninth or tenth century who had been possessed by Sannō and his preaching displays an important aspect of Jūzenji belief, as it emphasizes the anthropomorphizing of this god as an *arahito-gami*, a category of kami that materializes in human form. Thus, we learn that the god Jūzenji was purportedly related to its etymological meaning of the “ten meditation masters,”⁴⁶⁸ and that a legend of early origin includes its medieval hallmarks –spiritual possession and the assumption of human form.

There are several instances of possession by Jūzenji that involve the body of a young boy. These were quite common and suggest that Jūzenji was a god of spiritual possession, and that *chigo* were seen as particularly receptive to possession, as we can see in a famous episode in the warrior saga, “The Tale of the Heike” (*Heike monogatari* 平家物語). It tells

⁴⁶⁴ 成仲説云、中古横川ノ香積寺十人供僧中ニ。一人智行兼備高德人在。十禪師中ノ其一人。現身ニ山王ト語言ヲ申通スル人、荒人神ト成給ヘリ。初十禪師ト申ス也。Yōtenki 耀天記,” 48.

⁴⁶⁵ *Negi* 禰宜 stands for a second-in-rank priest of a kami shrine.

⁴⁶⁶ Yamamoto, “Chūsei Hie-sha no Jūzenji shinkō to ninaite shudan: Eizan, reidō, fugeki no sansō kōzō o megutte 中世日吉社の十禪師信仰と担い手集団 –叡山・靈童・巫覡の三層構造をめぐる,” 27.

⁴⁶⁷ Yamamoto Hiroko argues that this individual was Enshū 延秀, described to be one of the governmental meditation masters in the *Shoku Nihongi*. Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

the story of an unprecedented decision to exile the abbot of Enryakuji Meiun/Myōun 明雲 to Izu province. The Enryakuji militant monks (*daishu* 大衆) held a council (*sengi*) to discuss this matter and decided to free Meiun by themselves. Before venturing out, they stopped by Jūzenji shrine to make an entreaty before Sannō, seeking an assurance that they will be able to rescue the abbot. This famous scene depicts Jūzenji's possession of an eighteen year old Tsurumaru 鶴丸, a boy servant of a Mudōji monk and Preceptor Jōen. As Jūzenji lodges itself into the body of Tsurumaru, it speaks through him and warns that if the abbot would be taken to another province, the god would be stricken by extreme grief, which will result in his decision to leave the foot of the mountain. This threat is quite intimidating, since it means there would be no tutelary deity on the foothill of Mount Hiei, and by implication only its peak would be protected. In spite of this remarkable speech, the monks are skeptical whether the oracle delivered by the boy is genuine. As a trial, each monk throws one of his rosaries to the veranda of the shrine (in total 500), and in turn, the boy Tsurumaru is asked to retrieve each rosary to its rightful owner. Tsurumaru dashes frantically from one corner to another, picks up the rosaries and restores each to its former holder. Tsurumaru's sprints are described as exhibiting a behavior of a possessed madness (*monogurui* 物狂い) that was characteristic at the time of women whose bodies were taken over by gods. This common ground shows that both women and boys were inclined to be receptive to possession. This episode was appropriated and enshrined in the collective memory of medieval Japanese monks, as can be seen from repeated references in the Sannō Shinto corpus and in the Tale of Heike cycle of stories.

Another possession episode involving Jūzenji can be seen in both the "Tale of Heike" and the *Genpei jōsuiki* (thirteenth-fourteenth centuries or late medieval era). When

the Regent Moromichi had fallen ill after being attacked by Sannō's humming arrow as an act of vengeance on the part of Enryakuji monks, his mother secluded herself in Hie shrine for seven days (a number identified with Sannō) in order to pray for her son's health. Then, a young person appeared possessed before her. The NKBT commentary notes that this was a young shrine maiden (and the English translation of McCullough follows closely), but the gender is not specified in the original text. The word that is used is *warawa miko* 童御子 which is gender-neutral but often used to denote a boy shaman. The Heike's narrative voice comments that the shaman was affiliated with Hachiōji and possessed by Sannō, whereas the *Genpei jōsuiki* notes that the boy stood before the Jūzenji shrine and his body was seized by its deity Jūzenji. The Sannō deity that shot the arrow was Hachiōji, but the humming arrow could be a reference to the ancient warrior god Ōyamakui, mentioned in the *Kojiki*.⁴⁶⁹ As we can see, Jūzenji often possessed young boys, and as was explored in Chapter 1, many of the boys that became possessed and participated in rituals were *chigo*.

The *Chigo* Adage

Sannō came to be associated with *chigo* through Jūzenji's connection to boy shamans and youths more generally, but also through the mediation of a particular story related to the sacred phrase “*ichi chigo, ni Sannō* 一兒二山王.” According to the medieval encyclopedia *Keiran shūyōshū*, when Saichō, the founder of Enryakuji, first climbed Mount

⁴⁶⁹ See for example the Hiesha shintō himitsu ki 日吉社神道秘密記, Shinto Taikai Hie, 368, and Genpei Jōsuiki, 161. “Hiesha shintō himitsu ki 日吉社神道秘密記,” in *Shintō taikai. Jinja hen, Hie* 神道大系. 神社編 : 日吉, ed. Kageyama Haruki 景山春樹 (Tokyo: Shintō Taikai Hensankai, 1983). For the Heike story, see Takagi Ichinosuke 高木市之助, ed. *Heike monogatari* 平家物語, 2 vols., vol. 1, Nihon koten bungaku taikai 32-33 日本古典文学大系 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959), 145-47; Ichiko Teiji 市古貞次, ed. *Genpei jōsuiki* 源平盛衰記, 4 vols., vol. 1, Chūsei no bungaku 中世の文学 (Tokyo: Miyai Shoten, 1991), 128.

Hiei, he saw two supernatural beings (*kenin* 化人). The first was a heavenly boy (*tendō* 天童); the second was the emanation of the local mountain god Sannō. The text remarks that this event explains why an image of a boy is installed in the hall of Jūzenji shrine; it is in fact the icon of Jūzenji. The implication is that the heavenly boy who appeared to Saichō was Jūzenji himself. Referring to this order of appearances, we are told, the Tendai priesthood coined a saying: “The *chigo* is foremost, Sannō comes second” (*ichi chigo, ni Sannō*). (Henceforth, I will refer to this phrase as “the *chigo* adage”).⁴⁷⁰ The *chigo* adage quickly began to denote not only that the young acolyte was the first to appear to Saichō, but also that the *chigo* was primary ontologically, a kind of a supreme god, an understanding that was transplanted to the *chigo kanjō* ritual. The adage also implies a non-duality between *chigo* and Sannō, even if there is a slight hierarchy. It cemented the identity of the *chigo* as coterminous with Sannō, as the flesh-and-blood concretization of its avatar, Jūzenji. So superior was the *chigo* in this medieval monastic discourse that in *chigo kanjō*, the theological significance of the *chigo* adage in combination with the threefold truth had the effect of elevating the *chigo* even above Sannō, making it an all-encompassing deity on its own.

The *Sanke yōryakki* 山家要略記, the late-thirteenth-century work on the origin, legends, and Tendai doctrines revolving around the god Sannō and authored by the Tendai chronicler Gigen 義源, provides an interesting interpretation of the *chigo* adage. In a sub-

⁴⁷⁰ 問。付山王ニ一兒二山王ト云事如何 答。山門ノ記録説曰。高祖大師最初御登山ノ之時。二人化人ニ値給フ。先ハ現天童。次山王影向シ給。故ニ一兒二山王ト云也。又云。十禪師ノ寶殿ノ内ニ童子形御座其義也云云因ミ物語ニ云。 See T. 2410.76.518b20-24.

section titled “Concerning the saying ‘the *chigo* is foremost, Sannō comes second’ in our mountain” (*Tōzan ichi chigo ni Sannō wo nazuku koto* 當山名一兒二山王一事):

The “Pure Precinct Boundary Chapter” says: “Noble commentary of of Enryakuji [masters]. The matter of “*Chigo* is foremost”: on the seventeenth day of the seventh month of the fourth year of Enryaku, after staying at the Jingūji-in, [Saichō] first climbed the high peak of Mount Hiei; perhaps it happened on the twenty-fourth day. As he wandered the Northern Falcon Forest, he encountered a boy [*warawa; chigo* in some versions of this text]. Saichō asked him: “Who are you, child?” and the child answered: “I am the numinous child who is the warp and woof of heaven and earth. I am a god born simultaneously with sentient beings, whose destiny I oversee. I have three names. My first name is Dōshōten,” [the deva who is born simultaneously [with other beings] “because I am a deva who is born simultaneously with all sentient beings. My second name is Yūgyōjin,” (wandering deity,) “because I am a wandering deity who oversees the destiny of beings. My third name is Jūzenji,” [Ten meditation masters], “because I enjoy the bliss of meditation along with sentient beings in the ten directions, and because I am the master who in the future makes sentient beings establish karmic ties and converts them. Therefore, one should recite my formula: If you recite my name even once, your merits will be as abundant as space. I shall make an inexhaustible vow to grant you all that you desire.”⁴⁷¹

Jūzenji is introduced here as a primordial deity that is responsible for weaving together the threads of heaven and earth and bestowing blessings on people. More remarkable is Jūzenji’s identification with a category of astral gods known as “companion gods” (*kushōjin* 俱生神)⁴⁷² who control the fate of human beings and report their deeds subsequently to the

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淨刹結界章曰、山家御釋。一兒事。延曆四年歲次乙丑夷則朔丙寅十七日壬午。忽於三神宮寺院始登觀山高峯 乃至二十四日。北嶽巒林行ハ、一童逢リ。最澄問曰。童子何人。童子答曰。我是天地經緯ノ靈童。衆生本命ノ同生神也。我則有三名。一名同生天ノ故。一切衆ノ同生天ノ故。二名遊行神。衆生本命ノ遊行神ナル故ニ。三名十禪師。十方衆生ニ與禪悦食。當來結縁能化師ナル故ニ。則唱一偈言。一稱名號者。功德如虛空。我誓無盡願。所願成圓滿。Sannō Shinto 山王神道. Zoku tendai shu zensho. Shinto天台宗典編纂所編. 神道 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1999), 63.

⁴⁷² For an extended discussion on *kushōjin*, see Bernard Faure, “The Elephant in the Room: The Cult of Secrecy in Japanese Tantrism,” in *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006); “Indic Influences on Chinese Mythology: King Yama and His Acolytes as Gods of Destiny,” in *India in the Chinese Imagination: Myth, Religion, and Thought*, ed. John Kieschnick

monarch of the nether realm, King Enma.⁴⁷³ In other words, Jūzenji was envisioned ambivalently as both protective god and wrathful. He could bring about worldly benefits by fulfilling the vows of his adepts (those who chant his name even only once), but as a “companion god” he could also hover in the shadows of people ensuring that their transgression will be meted with punishment. This aspect of Jūzenji is distinct from the Sannō/Jūzenji in the *chigo kanjō* ritual, who enables the purification of sexual sins under certain circumstances and who exacts retribution from those who commit wrongdoings. However, it was precisely this ambivalent nature and combination of apparently contradictory traits that prepared the ground for the attainment of non-duality through Jūzenji in the ritual.

Sannō Shinto texts also identify Jūzenji with the Threefold Truth. This development can be seen in the following passage, titled *Jūzenj gomei no koto* 十禪師御名事 (“Concerning the Revered Name of Jūzenji”) in *Sanke yōryakki*, a passage that explores the etymology of Jūzenji:

According to the “Collection on the Mutual Identity of Origin and Traces” (*Honjaku sōsokushū*), a commentary by Eshin that quotes the [*Hokke*] *gengi*, “‘origin’ refers to the ‘root of truth’; that is, the One Ultimate Path. ‘Trace’ refers to the remainder, that is, the fact that all dharmas [*shohō*] that are the true aspect of reality [*jissō*]. Other teachings are collectively called “traces.” If one wishes to know [the meaning of] Jizō (Skt. *Kṣitigarbha*, literally Ground-Repository), “ground” means the ground of

and Meir Shabar (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); “Buddhism Ab Ovo: Aspects of Embryological Discourse in Medieval Japanese Buddhism.”

⁴⁷³ Yamamoto Hiroko 山本ひろ子, *Ishin: Chūsei Nihon no hikyōteki sekai* 異神：中世日本の秘教的世界 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1998). Indeed, as can be seen in the doctrinal elaboration within medieval astral worship, there were amalgamative attempts to intertwine Hachioji (the small mountain where parts of Hie shrine are located, often associated with Jūzenji) with the astral deity Kōjin. This combinatory attempt probably resulted in Jūzenji being assigned the identity of a “companion god.” Another reason for this association of Jūzenji was the often connection made between the two acolytes that flank Jizō, considered the original ground of Jūzenji in Sannō faith, and the two companion gods that perch on a person’s shoulders. Needless to say, the imagery of childhood is quite conspicuous in this web of association and is undoubtedly informed by the cult of sacred children. Faure, *ibid.*

the One Real Wisdom [*ichijitsu-chi*]. “Repository” means the Repository of the Tathagatha’s secret principles. Since the most remote past, all of us always abide in this ground, always abide in this repository. Never have we even for a moment rejected the sublime practice of the Lotus. Therefore, the Medicinal Herbs Chapter says: ... One Should know that this is the One Ground of revealing and uniting the true aspect of reality and the Great Repository of the Tathagatha’s secret principles. Now, “Jū” (Ten) refers to the provisional truth [*ketai*]. “Zen” refers to the empty truth [*kūtai*]. [So] we name him Zen. “Ji” (Master) relates to the middle truth [*chūtai*]. Therefore, we call him Jūzenji.⁴⁷⁴

This passage invokes the notion of original enlightenment (*hongaku* 本覺) and *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 theory to make sense of the syncretic identification between Jizō and Jūzenji as original essence and manifested traces respectively. It interprets Jizō based on the etymology of the Chinese characters that form his name. The first character “ground” (*ji*) denotes, literally, the ultimate ground of transcendental wisdom. The second character (*zō*) “repository” stands for the secret teachings of the Buddha. Both characters designate an atemporal *topos* that is inhabited by all forms of lives, as in original enlightenment. The term “revealing and uniting” (*kai’e* 開會) is borrowed directly from the *Lotus Sutra* to refer to the unification of the Three Vehicles into One single Vehicle, a doctrine that was considered the epitome of that scripture. Finally, all of these ideas are brought to bear on Jūzenji, and his name is additionally divided into three parts that are analyzed. In this case, however, the three characters of his name are arbitrarily construed to signify each of the

⁴⁷⁴ 本迹相即集日 惠心御釋

引玄義曰。本者謂本即是一究竟道。迹者除其餘諸法実相。種種皆名爲迹文。知地藏者。地謂一実智地。藏謂如來祕要之藏也。是以吾等久遠已來。常住此地、常在此藏。未曾暫廢法華妙行。故藥草品曰：

貴賤上下 持戒毀戒 威儀具足 及不具足
 正見邪見 利根鈍根 等雨法雨 而無懈倦
 一切衆生 聞我法者 隨力所受 往於諸地

誠知。開會実相之一地。如來祕要之大藏也。開會実相之一地。如來祕要之大藏也。凡十謂假諦名之爲十。禪謂空諦名之爲禪。師者中道。名之爲師。故名十禪師。 *Sannō Shinto* 山王神道, 37-38.

Three Truths: the conventional dimension of reality, emptiness, and middle path. Each of the characters thus stands for one dimension of reality which, as we shall see, was synonymous with the god Sannō in Tendai scholasticism. In his own being, Jūzenji then, personifies the threefold modalities of reality and at the same time embodies all of them at once, as an Absolute (an unconditioned being). This secret is explained to be contained in the *chigo adage*.

Jūzenji/Sannō came to signify the embodiment of the Threefold Truth also through the apparition of a child. The prolific Tendai scholar-monk Sonshun 尊舜 (1451–1514) provides in his *Nichōshō kenmon* 二帖抄見聞 (1501) an elaborate treatment of the *chigo adage*. In Sonshun's work, one observes a mature articulation of the conflation of the *chigo adage* with the theory of the threefold truth based on a logic of similarity and correspondence. Sonshun's account is important for our purposes since he was affiliated with temples that carried out the *chigo kanjō* in Kantō (Gassanji 月山寺 and Senmyōji 千妙寺), and also because he wrote during the same period when *chigo kanjō* was practiced (early to mid-fifteenth century).

On his way back from Tang China, Saichō faced a violent storm that turned the rip tide against him and that put him in great danger. However, thanks to his attainment of *bodhicitta*, a child appeared on the bow of the boat. Saichō asked who he was, and the child replied “I am the tutelary deity of Mount Tiantai and the Shining god who protects the Perfect Sect [Tendai].⁴⁷⁵ I was dispatched to allow the Buddha Dharma's gradual dissemination in the East so that I could reach this land of sages [Japan].” Saichō asks

⁴⁷⁵ 天台山鎮守円宗擁護明神. *Tendaishū zensho* 天台宗全書, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Daiichi Shobō, 1973), 208-09.

“What is your name?” to which the boy replies: “I am three vertical strokes connected by a horizontal line, and three horizontal strokes connected by a vertical line,” Saichō recognized in that moment that what stood before him was the god Sannō, since what was described referred to the Chinese characters that formed this god’s name.⁴⁷⁶ This story is also recounted in the *Sanke yōryakki*, but here Sonshun conceives of Sannō’s three brush strokes joined by one stroke to be coextensive with the “Threefold Contemplation in One Mind,” (*Isshin sangan* 一心三觀), the Tendai method of visualization that secures insight into the threefold truths. The passage attributed to the text *Sanbō bugyōki* 三寶輔行記, adopts a famous variation of the *chigo* adage, wherein Saichō does not climb a mountain, but rather travels by a boat on his way back from Tang China. This version describes not only the supernatural apparition of Sannō as a divine child, but also Saichō’s encounter with the god as the embodied presence of the “Threefold truth.”

Another story written roughly in the same period and mentioned in the *Gonshinshō* 巖神鈔 (1414) elaborates the *chigo* adage. It explains that when Saichō climbed Mount Hiei he saw a *chigo* first and only subsequently Sannō. The text elaborates that the *chigo* whom Saichō saw was the god Jūzenji 十禪師, and that Sannō referred to Ōmiya Gongen 大宮權現, one of the main deities of the Sannō complex.⁴⁷⁷ The text adds that “This passage deals

⁴⁷⁶ The text adds that this designation of Sannō was the same as the one given to “the inherent Śākyamuni” that stood in the stupa of Many Jewels, the Buddha that achieved enlightenment since inconceivable time in the *Lotus sutra*. Saichō realized that Sannō was a manifested Buddha that appeared before him since he recites a vow that was borrowed from the twenty-first chapter of the Lotus Sutra recognizing this: “The buddhas, world-inspirers, Abiding in their great transcendent powers, Manifest this immeasurable power In order to gladden sentient beings.” 諸佛救世者 住於大神通 爲悅衆生故 現無量神力 See Kubo and Yuyama, *The Lotus Sutra*, 273.

⁴⁷⁷ “When the fundamental master [Saichō] climbed for the first time on the mountain, he first met a *chigo*, then Sannō. ‘First a *chigo*’ means Jūzenji, ‘then Sanno’ means Ōmiya Gongen. This passage deals with the ‘great event’ of the Chronicles, the arcana of the *kanjō*, and I cannot say more.” Translated by Bernard Faure. See Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 254.

with the ‘great event’ of the Chronicles, the *arcana of the kanjō*, and I cannot say more.” Similarly, the *Sho koku ichi chigo hijiri monogatari* 諸国一児聖物語, mentions “the body/essence of Sannō in its entirety lies in a *chigo*,” and explains that this statement originates in a deep secret. It is likely that these secret teachings to which the passages appear to refer are secret interpretations of the *chigo* adage in *chigo kanjō*, and its ritual enactment of Sannō. Late Muromachi legends enshrine the image of Jūzenji as an object of sexual desire not unlike *chigo*. For example, as Bernard Faure and Abe Yasurō have shown, the famous Tendai monk Jien was often described in late medieval text as having been infatuated with *chigo*,⁴⁷⁸ and as having had his way with Jūzenji. Jien, who lived much earlier, was apparently a devout worshipper of Jūzenji, devising and carrying out various important obeisance rituals (*kōshiki* and *raikō*) dedicated to Jūzenji in the thirteenth century. Moreover, various legends recount how Jūzenji satisfied the sexual urges of Jien whenever he could not hold his lust at bay.⁴⁷⁹ Jūzenji also fulfilled the role of saving monks from the tyranny of lust. A medieval scroll that survives at Jōbodai’in in Hikone, Shiga prefecture, where *chigo kanjō* was carried out, depicts a youthful Jūzenji with a superscript “Hail Jūzenji ... he will rid one of all passionate afflictions.”⁴⁸⁰ Moreover, medieval Sannō Shinto and Tendai cults constructed Jūzenji as an embodiment of the Three Pure Precepts.⁴⁸¹ The

根本大師、最初御登山時、一児二山王値玉フ。先ノ一児ト申スハ十禪師、後の二山王ト申スハ大宮権現ノ御事也。於此一段、記録最極大事、濯頂深秘ナルガ故一一、不能申述ルニ。See "Goshinshō 巖神鈔." in *Shintō taikai. Jinja hen, Hie* 神道大系。神社編：日吉, ed. Kageyama Haruki 景山春樹(Tokyo: Shintō Taikai Hensankai, 1983).

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., 255-58; Abe, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの, 228-32.

⁴⁷⁹ Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, 255-58; Abe, *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの, 228-32.

⁴⁸⁰ 婦命頂礼十禪師、此土清浄寂光土、行住座臥四威儀、断除一切煩惱焰 *Yuya no kōgō: Chūsei no sei to seinaru mono* 湯屋の皇后：中世の性と聖なるもの, 232.

⁴⁸¹ Funata Jun’ichi 船田淳一, *Shinbutsu to girei no chūsei* 神仏と儀礼の中世 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2011), 326-27.

notion of sacred sex was impossible without the assumption that sexual desire would ultimately be uprooted, an understanding echoed in *chigo kanjō*.

Sannō in the *Chigo Kanjō* Ritual

We return now to the *chigo kanjō* ritual, to examine to what degree the notion of a threefold truth developed as synonymous with Sannō/Jūzenji, and how it was incorporated into a sexual setting which contributed to the deification of *chigo*. The summoning of Sannō into the ritual did not begin with a metamorphosis, such as the case of Kannon, but in the form of adoricism, that is, a ritual scenario in which a god is invoked for initiatory purposes, in this case to seize the hair of the *chigo*. The *Chigo kanjō shidai* notes that in a certain segment of the ritual, when the spirit of Sannō is called upon, monks are required to “grab the hair” (*hatsusō* 髮抓) of the *chigo*, an expression that refers to a certain method of hair combing. According to the text, “Master Sannō rides on [the *chigo*’s] hair” (*Sannō daishi kami no ue ni noriutsuri tamau nari* 山王大師髮上乘移給也).⁴⁸² This possession relates to a broader tradition in the cult of sacred children that considers youths to be mounts of the gods. In the *Jōbodai*’in manuscript, when Sannō descends upon the *chigo*, his hair is envisioned as a microcosm of a Buddhist mandala filled with many bodhisattvas and sentient beings alike. Manjushri is also mentioned as part of this possession, perhaps because he is commonly represented in art and texts as a young boy wearing a topknot with five tufts of hair, which is seen as a cosmological structure that conforms to the Five Phases of Chinese correlative cosmology. With each pass of the comb through the hair of the *chigo*,

⁴⁸² “*Chigo kanjō shiki* 児灌頂式,” (*Jōbodai-in* 成菩提院).

a deity manifests itself. Divine possession allow the supreme god Sannō to enter the *chigo*'s body, and perhaps it is the boy's original enlightened nature that allows such transformation; the *chigo*'s head is readied for ritual unction by implicitly marking it as the *dharmadhātu*, and is thereby already imbued with the sacred before being consecrated. The possession by Sannō precedes the physical transformation into Sannō through sexual intercourse, which at that point accomplishes the human deification of not only the *chigo* but also the monk.

Upon consecration (the pouring of water on his head), the *chigo* attains the Dharma-body as Mahāvairocana, and his body refigured as Kannon, the main icon of the ritual, while also transforming into an embodiment of Sannō, an absolute god. In order for the monk to absorb the *chigo*'s newly acquired ontological state and initiatory wisdom, he has sexual intercourse with the sanctified *chigo*. This leads to a bodily enactment of the Threefold Truth.:

An oral transmission says: “What is the meaning of the adage “*ichi chigo, ni Sannō* 一見二山王” (‘the *chigo* is foremost, Sannō comes second’)?”

This issue is an important secret matter. “*Ichi chigo, ni Sannō*” stands for the *chigo* as the Three Truths of the External World 境ノ三諦, and Sannō is the Threefold Contemplation of Wisdom 智三觀. This is because the Threefold Contemplation of Wisdom originates from the Three Truths of the External World. It has been established that the *chigo* is foremost, and the Sannō deity comes second. Because the External World and Wisdom are interconnected, “*Ichi chigo, ni Sannō*” refers to the performance (*furumai* 振舞) of the concept that the two are non-dual.”

This is the Three-Thousand [Realms] and the Wisdom of the Threefold Contemplation eternally abiding, complete as they are. The scholar-monks and practicing monks of the Perfect Sect [Tendai] wear a thin black robe to model their shape after Sannō. This is what constitutes learning “*Ichi chigo, ni Sannō*.” That “the

Chigo is foremost, the monk (*hōshi*) comes second” designates the performance (*furumai*) of the Ten Realms interpenetrating.⁴⁸³

According to this passage, the *chigo* stands as the Threefold Truth that embodies the phenomenal world, whereas Sannō is the Threefold Contemplation of Wisdom, signifying a direct perception that realizes the three truths. These terms are interdependent, much like the *chigo* and Sannō themselves. The union between *chigo* and Sannō in this case does not only presuppose an identity between the acolyte and the god Sannō, but also conceives of the *chigo* and the *Tendai monk* as non-dual, referring here to the monks who engage with him in ritual sex. In fact, this identity between *chigo* and Sannō is further enacted by sexual penetration which elicits an interpenetration of all realms of transmigration. And given that the *chigo* is a divine figure which is superior to Sannō (based on the *chigo* adage), then what we really have here is an allegorization of the intermingling between kami (*chigo*) and Buddhas (monk).

As we have seen earlier, the *chigo* is an inherently awakened entity on top of which the god Sannō descends, and here we discover that this was no simple possession: the *chigo* underwent transubstantiation into the body of Sannō. Moreover, the Tendai monk is the *chigo*’s derivative counterpart (“the monk comes second” or “Sannō originates from *chigo*”), absorbing Sannō’s powers during sexual acts. The two are nonetheless mutually constitutive. They illuminate each other and cannot be separated, and according to this reasoning, sex allows them to instantiate not only their Buddhahood, but also their full

⁴⁸³ 口傳云此事最大事也。夫一兒二山王者兒^レ境^ノ三諦也。山王^ト者智三觀也。此境三境^{ヨリ}智三觀縁起^{スル}故。先一兒定二山王定也。境智互照一兒二山王故^ニ不二之振舞也。是境^ノ三千智三觀常住^{ニシ}テ宛然也。圓宗行学輩者準^テ山王形^ニ着^ニ薄黒衣^ニ也。是一兒二山王習事也。一兒与二法師云^ハ十界互具振舞也。Ibid.

potential as kami. The deification actualizes the co-mingling of all aspects of reality, allowing the monk to capitalize on the kami's divine power, that was channeled through the deified *chigo* and absorbed through him in a Tantric sexual union. Put simply, the monks were awarded with the essence of kami and Buddha awakening, and the gods were glorified through incarnation in flesh-and-blood, emanating in the innately awakened body of a child and in the world of phenomena which was valorized over the abstractions of ultimate reality. Both kami and humans were drawn closer to an elated absolute mode of being through ritual deification.

In the doctrinal commentary on the *chigo kanjō* ritual, *Shōgyō hiden*, one can see that Sannō is treated as a supreme godhead that encompasses all phenomena in the cosmos:

At that time, Saichō reincarnated three times and had sexual intercourse in a non-transgressive manner. Ever more so, when we ordinary people and prisoners of ignorance, cannot eliminate this path [of male-male love], there is the vow of Kannon expressing great mercy and compassion. Thus, among Sannō's different shrines there is *Chigo no miya*. Kannon is its original ground [...] Ōmiya is Śākyamuni, *Chigo no miya* is Kannon, they are one and the same. You must keep it absolutely secret. The two characters for Sannō stand for origins and traces, the absolute and provisional, for mercy and compassion. In the Esoteric lineages, they are all of the divinities of the two mandalas, the two graphemes of A and Vaṃ (earth and water, respectively). The two characters mother and father, the two characters for Kannon. They are also the two characters of afflictions (Sk. *Klēśas*).⁴⁸⁴

Saichō has practiced sexual intercourse three times, the number associated with Sannō.

However, they were considered to be non-transgressive due to a sacred power that ordinary beings can obtain through the vow of Kannon or the sanctity of Sannō. It is restated that

⁴⁸⁴其時大師〱非犯三ヶ度也。マシテ凡夫愚縛〱我等、無クムハ〱此道〱難キ叶ヒ間、観音大慈大悲〱願也。サレハ、山王〱御中〱モ兒宮トテ座ス。是本地観音也。。。大宮〱釈迦、兒宮〱観音也。之一躰也。可秘々。山王〱二字〱、本迹。又真俗。又〱慈悲〱二字也。又、密宗〱〱両部〱諸尊也。又、A,Vaṃ (地水)〱二字也。又〱父母〱二字也。又、観音〱二字也。是又煩惱二字也。“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝。”

when monks cannot resist lust, they resort to fulfilling the vow of Kannon, in this context interpreted as sex with a *chigo*. Only one shrine among the Sannō compound (Hie Shrine), *Chigo no miya*, is related to Kannon. Ōmiya, the great shrine of Sannō, is related to Śākyamuni. However, as we saw earlier, Kannon is an original ground, and here she is part of an equation that is subordinate to Sannō's all-encompassing presence. Sannō embraces not just the essential ground of being, but also the traces. He is the expression of Tantric union, the condensation of all dualities in the world, the sacred and the profane, and even the body of Kannon's secret teaching (the two letters). In a way, the text is attempting to say that Sannō is the *dharmakāya* (eternal, all-pervading Dharma-Body). It is also explained that Sannō is the convergence of the two mandalas and the assemblage of all of the Buddhas of the cosmos, that is, he is the *dharmadhātu* (the entire universe). However, in the closing lines of this passage, we are told that he is also Kannon, and the Sino-Japanese term for *klēśa*, afflictions. The text goes back full circle into the underlying non-dualisms that structure all forms of existence in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism.

The implication is that Sannō is a supreme deity with unrivaled power in the Tendai pantheon. It is important to remember that with all the supreme status of Sannō, there is still one being that surpasses it – *chigo*, as in the earlier declaration that the *chigo* comes first and Sannō is only second to him (the *chigo* adage). Taken together, the *chigo*, who is consecrated in the ritual, ineffably surpasses Sannō in his powers. *Shōgyō hiden* states that inside Sannō there is a *Chigo no miya* 児ノ宮. The implication is that the *Chigo* abides within the god Sannō as its kernel. The *chigo* is the seed from which Sannō's divinity sprouts. While *Shōgyō hiden* makes use of various identities of gods, all of them are at work to overcome differentiation, only to be dissolved into that oneness that is the body of the

chigo. Through summoning Sannō, then, there is no “final separation from the delusional world,” but rather, an absolute affirmation of the concrete—including “passionate afflictions.”

Conclusion

In our analysis of the various manuscripts, we have seen that the *chigo*'s body was the locus of doctrinal and ritual engagement; in addition, bodily transformations in the ritual were formulated in accordance with existing exo-Esoteric liturgical and doctrinal understandings so as to make manifest the divine power of the *chigo*. Paradoxically, the appropriate exo-Esoteric balance of the ritual is often ignored by scholars, who focus instead on its exoteric elements, sometimes to the exclusion of the Esoteric. But to do this is to discount a vital aspect of *chigo kanjō*. The ritual was not limited to one climactic union with the cosmos—the moment the flower is tossed on the mandala—but, rather, it constituted a Tantric (Esoteric) process of attaining manifold bodily states that triggered the union with Mahāvairocana. In turn, other bodies that were attained in the ritual, those of Kannon and Sannō, were reinforced by the Tendai exoteric knowledge. In the case of Kannon, the transformation was validated by the oral transmissions of the *Lotus Sutra* represented in the ritual by Kannon's secret teachings and its revelation that *chigo* is an avatar of Kannon. In the case of Sannō, the deification was grounded in Tendai's Threefold Truth (*santai*), which manifested through the transubstantiation of *chigo* as the kami Sannō. Overall, in this ritual the workings of the body tapped into the salvific power of Buddhism. In addition, the ritual-doctrinal apparatus—including its potency to transform the body—collapsed the distinction

between *chigo* and monk, dissolved the polarities between the concrete and the abstract, and provided an ontological realization enacted during sexual union.

We are now in a position to fully appreciate the significance of the *chigo kanjō* ritual. With the institutionalization of monk-*chigo* sexuality in the Tendai ritual of *chigo kanjō*, the veneration and adoration elder monks felt for young boys acquired unprecedented legitimization and status. *Chigo kanjō* exemplified how the *chigo* socio-occupational category was richly invested with various ontological and semiological aspects directly imposed by a monastic discourse on sexuality. This coerced romance, operating in both the field of discourse and ritual, was supported by religious authority—specifically, a libidinous cult that formed around Jūzenji in Sannō Shinto, the protagonist of sexual intercourse with humans. Doctrinally, Tendai scholastics inscribed the *chigo*'s body with the status of a libidinal god. The *chigo* was understood as originally awakened and modeled after Kannon and Sannō, both of which were sought for their powers to overcome “passionate afflictions” (sexual desire).

This discussion of the doctrine and deification that takes place in *chigo kanjō* allows us to appreciate larger religious trends in the development of Japanese Buddhism in the late medieval period, as well as how these trends contributed to the doctrinal formation of kami-buddha amalgamation. One trend is the centrality of kami worship in *chigo kanjō*, an aspect that has been almost entirely ignored when discussing the ritual even though it constitutes one of its most sophisticated achievements. A second trend within which *chigo kanjō* must be viewed is what is known today as the cult of sacred children (*dōji shinkō* 童子信仰). This cult emerged together with perceptions of the Final Age of the Dharma (*mappō*), which, motivated by eschatological distress, led to the creation of a new soteriological

platform for human beings too defiled to attain salvation. As the emissaries of the buddhas, sacred children functioned as liminal entities that could connect ordinary people to the other shore, a role shared with the *chigo* in the ritual. A third trend relates to what followed the spread of the worship of Sannō from the central region of Shiga into the Eastern territories of Gunma, Chiba, Ibaraki and Tochigi prefectures: that is, the ritualization of *chigo* in the Sannō cult both around the capital and in eastern Japan. The *chigo*'s incarnation as Sannō was indicative of how the belief in divine children and the worship of the Sannō deity reached maturity through the envisioning and acting out of human deification in their image. Put simply, *chigo kanjō* should be seen not only as a distinct case study of ritualized male-male sexuality, but also as an important Buddho-Shinto deification phenomenon that simultaneously appropriated the image of the sacred child (*dōji/chigo*), brought together the two conceptual threads of Buddhism and kami worship, and set the foundation for a Shinto deification phenomenon having a life of its own. As such, it is crucial to consider that medieval Buddhist ritualism was not just shaped by monastic contributions—it was also deeply informed by Shinto contributions.

Conclusion:

Deflowering Dharma Nature

In late medieval times, Japanese Tendai monks inaugurated the ritualization of male-male sexual acts. The ritual procedures and exegetical-doctrinal commentaries we examined reveal the structure and nature of these rituals of *chigo kanjō*. These rituals involved the participation of young acolytes (*chigo*) who were initiated into the Dharma and empowered threefold: by the revelation that they were bodhisattvas (Kannon); by their identification with the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana (Dainichi); and by their deification as the kami Sannō. The *chigo* thus became identified with the most popular bodhisattva in the east Asian world; the cosmic Buddha, which encompasses the entire universe; and the most powerful and revered kami in Tendai Buddhism. Considering that, in this process, Sannō was elevated above other divinities and buddhas—and if we add the argument that *chigo* even surpasses Sannō ontologically, while also embodying him in flesh—we could conclude, or at least suggest, that as a result the authority of kami worship rivaled that of Buddhism.

We have seen in Chapter 1 that the *chigo* was a complex figure endowed with ontological, social, and sacred qualities. While we might otherwise consider such acolytes as children of aristocratic families, we have seen that some *chigo* came from lower social classes. Indeed, their definition in medieval texts and scholarship as “inferior” was usually the case; many were sold as slaves—as also were, in truth, women and stigmatized adults. *Chigo* were subsumed under the category of “subservient,” even “non-people”; they could never be considered powerful males. We have seen too the unique aspect of male-male sexuality in aristocratic and monastic contexts. The different frames of these distinct social

contexts offered these relationships very different freedoms. Aristocratic trysts were hidden from public view but were still reported in detail in diaries; conversely, the monastic relations were open to display, either via poetic exchanges—in public and private events alike—or even in grandiose Buddhist ceremonies that hosted children dances. Importantly, there was a rich history of male-male sexual bonding between monks and *chigo* well before the advent of the *chigo kanjō* ritualization. And yet, clearly such was deemed insufficient, in part because not all partners respected their sacred vows. Therefore, the *chigo kanjō* was introduced so as to both facilitate ideal relations and regulate them more effectively.

Though the *chigo kanjō* ritual did not escape the notice of scholars, for most of modern history only two manuscripts were available for analysis—and even these could often be viewed only briefly. Here, I introduced the seven manuscripts of *chigo kanjō* and examined their authorship, the institutions that produced them, and the broader context of their production. We have seen that, even though it has been claimed that the Eshin school, dating back to Genshin, were the principal producers of *chigo kanjō*, manuscripts suggest otherwise. There is compelling textual evidence that monks belonging to Taimitsu lineages copied these texts; additional information clearly indicates that some Taimitsu monks actually performed them. Taken together, evidence points to the Serada area in present-day Gunma prefecture as a principal site of the ritual—although of course there may have been other hubs for which we do not have records. The texts also present both “real” and “imagined” lineages overseeing the ritual’s production, but we know these were added to further strengthen the institutional ties to the Tendai school and, especially, to its loftiest protector god, Sannō, as the initiators of the tradition. I have argued that this was done so as

to endow *chigo kanjō* with the aura of orthodoxy—a necessary step, since sexual practices did not align with Buddhist vows of celibacy.

Chapter 3 situated the ritual within the wider genre of *kanjō* rituals. I suggested that *chigo kanjō* follows the blueprint of *himitsu kanjō* (“secret initiations”), a broader category of *kanjō* that aimed to dismantle the discrepancy between the phenomenal and the noumenal. The *chigo*, a conditioned being, attains union with one of the main deities of the ritual, namely, the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana, the bodhisattva Kannon, or the kami Sannō. Naturally, this results in disruption of the dichotomy between the conventional and the ultimate. The sacrality of the *chigo* was manifested in the ritual space, and monks were able to partake in it. I highlighted in my treatment that the *chigo* could embody these modalities of sacrality, through gestures and bodily actions, even before the consecration proper. For example, adorning the ritual space was not simply an act of decoration, and nor were the steps of obeisance carried out in the preparatory section mere formal actions; rather, both acts situated the divinities in the body of the *chigo*. From its inception, *chigo kanjō* was a drama in which the *chigo* incrementally absorbed more and more divine powers—until the final climax of being anointed with the consecration water and receiving special Esoteric knowledge.

This Esoteric Buddhist knowledge, as shown in Chapter 4, was quite complex. In fact, the ritual was built upon a multitude of epistemological and doctrinal propositions, all of which served to coherently and convincingly ground sexual acts in Tendai doctrinal concepts while also legitimizing male-male sex as a hallowed activity—again, so as to render the practice orthodox. In addition, the *chigo* received one short text of doctrinal teachings, what I called “Kannon’s secret teachings,” which are enveloped in a cycle of

homoerotic tales known as *Jidō setsuwa* (“the Tale of the Compassionate Child”). These stories were seen as a mythological precedent for male-male love that ought to be reenacted in ritual form. This addition of a homoerotic religious component to the ritual—which existed separate from the ritual and was, in fact, already found in discourses on imperial enthronement rites—proved to be a powerful legitimizing mechanism. Moreover, *chigo kanjō* was invested with a broad array of concepts and practices that served pragmatically as its doctrinal basis, including original enlightenment thought (*hongaku*), Taimitsu (Esoteric Tendai) teachings, and Buddha-kami amalgamation (*shinbutsu shūgō*). It is here where we see the importance to the ritual of the Taimitsu influence, especially in providing the means of visualization. We have also indicated that the *chigo* was deified as the god Sannō and that this move was informed by Buddha-kami amalgamation of the Sannō Shinto tradition, a deification that took place as part of the sexual intercourse and that also awarded the monk with divine powers. Here, it seems, the *chigo* served as a receptacle not just for the monk’s sexual desire, but also for Buddhist monks’ quest to obtain further power and authority over their underlings. Moreover, *chigo kanjō* involved a rare medieval-era practice of human deification, one that bestowed upon its practitioner a godly ontological state envisioned to even supersede that of the Buddhas. This meant that kami worship was gradually transformed into a powerful discourse, one that would eventually claim superiority over Buddhism.

Thinking back on the previous chapters, how can we make sense of *chigo kanjō* in light of other historic medieval-era sexual practices? First, we would consider the Tachikawa-ryū, which was a heretical school of medieval Shingon active from around 1101.

Some of what we know of this school was written in the *Hōkyōshō* 宝鏡鈔,⁴⁸⁵ a tract denouncing this sect, by the Shingon monk Yūkai 有快 (1345–1416) in 1375. The sect’s founder, Ninkan, was exiled to Izu for practicing heresy; he later changed his name to Rennan and took as his disciple the historically significant monk Kenren—whom Yūkai wrongly describes as a yin-yang ritualist (*onmyōji*). The *Hōkyōshō* argues that Monkan (1278–1351),⁴⁸⁶—who, as I mentioned in Chapter 2—carried out *yugi kanjō* for Emperor Go-Daigo (1288–1339), was a leader of the Tachikawa sect and thus instrumental to its sexual heretic praxis. The most famous (or infamous, as James Sanford calls it) Tachikawa sexual practice was the so-called “Tachikawa Skull Ritual,”⁴⁸⁷ described by Shinjō 心定 (1215–?) in his *Juhō yōjinshū* 受法用心集 (1268). According to Shinjō, the goal of the ritual was to produce an oracular deity by initiating a gestation process in the skull that would make it come alive. To animate the skull, one needed to coat it with blood and semen discharges from a lengthy male-female sexual interaction. After repeating this process for eight years—the age of the Dragon Girl in the Lotus Sutra—the skull becomes enlivened, at which point it can both foretell the future and communicate the mysterious knowledge of the universe. The ritual also involved the offering of the bones of a man or a fox onto which

⁴⁸⁵ T. 2456.

⁴⁸⁶ For these insights, see the many studies carried out by Iyanaga Nobumi: Iyanaga Nobumi 彌永信美, “Tachikawa-ryū,” in *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*, ed. Charles D. Orzech, Henrik Hjort Sorensen, and Richard K. Payne (Leiden: Brill, 2011); “Medieval Shintō as a Form of ‘Japanese Hinduism’: An Attempt at Understanding Early Medieval Shintō,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 16 (2006); “Secrecy, Sex and Apocrypha: Remarks on some Paradoxical Phenomena,” in *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006); “‘Human Yellow’ and Magical Power in Japanese Medieval Tantrism and Culture,” in *Transforming the Void: Embryological Discourse and Reproductive Imagery in East Asian Religions*, ed. Anna Andreeva and Dominic Steavu (Leiden: Brill, 2015); “Iwayuru ‘Tachikawa-ryū’ narabi ni sarekōbe honzon girei wo megutte いわゆる「立川流」ならびに髑髏本尊儀礼をめぐる,” *Chizan gaku* 智山学報 67 (2018).

⁴⁸⁷ James H. Sanford, “The Abominable Tachikawa Skull Ritual,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 46, no. 1 (1991).

Dakiniten was summoned (as we noted in Chapter 3, Dakiniten is associated with sexual practices); this offering manifested miraculous events and great powers through the joining in the skull the souls of *hun* and *po* (the dual aspects of metempsychosis according to Chinese thought). Interestingly, though this sexual ritual description is rather explicit, we do not know if it was actually practiced.

Iyanaga Nobumi argues both that the Tachikawa-ryū was actually a marginal school among multiple lineages in Shingon and that it was not actually invested in sexual practices; he also claims that Monkan had nothing to do with this school, and certainly not with any sexual practices. As Iyanaga argues, court intrigues during the Northern and Southern court period led to the *Hōkyōshō* being used to disrepute and delegitimize Monkan by attaching to him the label of Tachikawa-ryū. Moreover, there was a trend of valorizing sexual practices in Esoteric Buddhism—which, according to Iyanaga, was not part of monasticism but was “para-religious,” associated with mountain ascetics and female shamans—and that it had died out in around the mid-thirteenth century. He argues that, despite the extensive use of sexual language in Buddhist rituals from the early fourteenth century onward, these were simply metaphors and were probably not acted upon.⁴⁸⁸

My own study has shown that, contrary to this, there were monastic lineages that supported both sexual practices and their ritualization. In fact, sexuality in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was an established aspect of monastic life—at least in many temples, if not all. And while what Iyanaga has claimed regarding ritualized male-female sexuality may be true, the same cannot be said of male-male sex. *Chigo*-monk relations were not relegated to marginal mountain cults or to shamanic worship; they were woven into the most powerful

⁴⁸⁸ See the first note of this chapter.

Buddhist schools at the time, including Tendai Buddhism, and especially the Taimitsu lineages at *dangisho* temples.

Moreover, detailed descriptions of actual sexual acts found in numerous passages in *chigo kanjō* texts strongly indicate that, far from being symbolic or metaphoric, ritual sex was in fact performed in monasteries. We have seen how doctrinal and ritual analysis shed light on the structure and the motives behind the ritual: the deification of the *chigo* so as to rationalize, legitimize, and sanctify sexual engagement of monks with acolytes. But there was an intriguing additional aspect to this as well. The *Shōgyō hiden* manuscripts and other *chigo kanjō* commentaries elaborate on commonplace sexual acts and behavioral routines after discussion of the *chigo kanjō* ritual itself. This fact suggests that a goal of the ritual was in fact to initiate novices engaging in regular, non-ritualistic sexual practices well beyond the consecration ceremony.

Commentarial literature on *chigo kanjō*, especially Manuscript C: *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* and Manuscript B: *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi*, describe the sacred origin of male-male intimacy and discuss the *chigo adage* (*ichi chigo, ni Sannō*, “The *chigo* comes first, the Sannō deity second”). The *chigo adage* includes a doctrinal commentary on *chigo kanjō* regarding two points: how the *chigo* encompasses in his body various modalities of the god Sannō; and how, once the *chigo* is identified as Kannon, his flesh-body is the realization of the Taimitsu idea of non-duality. Following this, the bulk of the text is dedicated to behavioral rules for the *chigo*, as well as everyday sexual practices between *chigo* and monk. This organizational logic offers additional indication that *chigo kanjō* was distinctly intended both to institutionalize sexual acts beyond the vows (*chigiri*) otherwise formed between lovers and to introduce *chigo* to the importance of “everyday” sexual practice.

These specifications were deemed necessary to address the fact that not all *chigo* remained enthusiastic, willing sexual partners—indeed, some even escaped the monasteries altogether, as we have seen in Chapter 1. The final sections of *Shōgyō hiden* and *Shōgyō hiden shi* include multiple instructions, ranging from general behavioral exhortations on how the monk should train his *chigo* and how the *chigo* should behave to finite terms for body parts and sexual postures, as well as vivid descriptions of penetrative acts—all intended to ensure that *chigo* remained dutiful after consecration. But, in addition to preventing discord within the monastic community, *chigo kanjō* also served to prevent disputes with other temples, establishing a guard against the intervention of the military and differentiating Tendai tradition from the regulations the Shogun imposed on Zen monasteries.⁴⁸⁹ Finally, the ritual gave full sanction to male-male sexuality—at least with a sacred *chigo*, and when confined to an asymmetrical relationship between the *nenja* 念者 monk and the *chigo*.

The regular, non-ritualistic sexual practices expected of the *chigo* are described in the *insho sahō* 陰所作法 portions of in the *Shōgyō hiden* manuscripts. This title translates to “procedures for a secret place” or, since *insho* also means private parts, “procedures for handling private parts.” These sections begin with a preparation segment that is perhaps intended to mimic that of the *chigo kanjō* ritual. Following that portion a series of passages document the sexual practice down to the most intimate detail, as noted in the following, one of the rarest such examples to be found in an historical document of any era:

⁴⁸⁹ Bernard Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助, *Nihon bukkyōshi: Chūsei* 日本仏教史：中世, 10 vols., vol. 6 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1944).

First, go to a place of privacy, and do not let people see you. Carry this out secretly away from the eyes of people. Make sure that one fellow monk who is a close friend is in attendance. Absolutely do not tell anybody else. Only one person should be in attendance. There is a way of doing this. You should sit three feet away from the *chigo*. When the *chigo* is getting ready, be at his side. The *chigo* should rub the sitting-paper to soften and flatten it out. Wrap the softened paper around the tip of your forefinger, wet it with your saliva, and insert it into the Flower of Dharma Nature [anus] and stimulate carefully. Next, wrap paper around your forefinger and middle-finger and stimulate carefully. Then, wrap paper around the three fingers of forefinger, middle-finger, and ring finger, and stimulate him carefully. If there are many people there who want to do it, they should grab the person [*chigo*] by both sides of the waist, and pull him close. You should do this many times according to how many people are there. Then, you should wrap the paper around the three fingers of forefinger, middle finger, and ring finger [and push them into the anus], so it can become a target [for the master's penis]. Afterwards, do as you wish. At this point, there is an oral transmission about this. Thereafter, wipe it carefully, collect all the paper used for stimulation, wrap it up with some more paper, and throw it away in a place where people cannot see it.⁴⁹⁰

The preparation for this private, secretly performed sexual act precedes the meeting of the *chigo* with the *nenja*. That it includes an “oral transmission” indicates that everyday sexual acts were seen as continuous with religious rituals. This passage describes a procedure for dilating the *chigo*'s anus so as to allow smooth penetration of the monk's penis. (This theme of dilating the anus also appears in the parodic work of Daigoji temple, *Chigo no sōshi*—though with a pronounced humorous tone.⁴⁹¹) While such details are surprising unto

⁴⁹⁰ 先づ陰所へ行テ身ヲ人ニ不可見ニ密ニ人ニ陰レテ可行只シ心易キ同行一人烈テ可行ニ努々他人ニモラスル事莫レ故ニサテ一人烈可夫モ有様ニ見居ル所ヨリ三尺ヲ隔テ可シレ居サテ作ル時、傍へ可行見能ク々居ヨ紙ヲサキモミテ能々可巾サキタル紙ヲ元ノ頭指ノサキニマキテ唾ヲ塗り法性花ニ入テ能々誘テ後ニ頭指中指ニ紙ヲマキテ能々誘テ次ニ頭指中指無名指三指ニ紙ヲマキテ能々誘テ後ニ又人多合ント思ハシ時々左右ノ腹ワタヲツカムテ身ヲヨルヘシ人ノ多クアル随テアマタ度ニ加様テ可シレ為サテ又頭指中指無明指三ニ紙ヲ巻キテナヲ可シレ作ル其後へ随テ可シレ作ル其後は意随ツクル是に口伝有之。其後能々巾ヒテ其ノ誘タル紙ヲ取リ集テ紙ニツツミテ人ノ不見所ニ可ニ陰捨

“Kō chigo shōgyō hiden 弘児聖教秘伝,” in *Edogawa Ranpō Archive* 立教大学附属図書館江戸川乱歩旧蔵 (Rikkyō University).

⁴⁹¹ Dōmoto Masaki 堂本正樹, “‘Chigo no sōshi’: *Honbun shōkai* 『稚児之草子』 本文紹介,” *Yasō* 夜想 15 (1985).

themselves, a few intriguing points stand out. One is the fact that the exhortation specifying that “only one person should be in attendance” is followed by references to “many people,” which may very well indicate group sex. Also, “if there are many people there who want to do it” suggests at-will participation, which contrasts with the more prescriptive “you should do this many times according to how many people are there.” But most significant is how, while it at first appears that the practice of fingering is intended to simply enlarge the anus for later senior-junior intercourse, the description of grabbing someone from the hips and pulling him closer belies that specification—even more within the permission granted to “do as you wish.” A possible explanation for these discrepancies could be that the lines in this passage were cobbled together from different sources. At any rate, this is the only mention of group sex in the *chigo kanjō* literature. If it is indicative of actual practices, one can only hope that the *chigo* involved were completely willing participants—otherwise, the unwilling *chigo* would have endured disturbing sexual abuse akin to gang rape.

Returning to the details of the passage: after these events the *chigo* has his hands washed. He then eats cloves and drinks water or, if cloves are unavailable, he eats seaweed and drinks hot water. He then cleans his teeth and rinses his mouth. He then proceeds to the location of a “fellow monk,” who warms his body, feet, hands, and “Flower of Dharma Nature” (anus). The “fellow monk” is required to “insert the Fire of Ignorance into the Flower of Dharma Nature, thrust two or three times, wipe it, and stimulate the body [anus].”⁴⁹² Of course, the “Fire of Ignorance” (*mumyō no hi* 無明ノ火) is a euphemism for the penis. The *chigo* then bathes thoroughly, after which he is dressed in a lined kimono and loosely tied *obi* belt—since it would be unsightly if the *chigo* later has difficulty untying it.

⁴⁹² “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝.”

The *chigo* then goes to the master's chamber, where he will putatively initiate intercourse with the master. I believe the specification that the *chigo* go to the master's chamber—and not the other way around—is intended both to emphasize the power differential between the two as well as to appear less exploitative, a move perhaps conceived by the monks to indicate these relations were neither forced nor coerced.

Next, I offer a few words on the role of gender and how it was shaped by soteriology in the *chigo kanjō* literature. Though both women and *chigo* were conceptualized as objects of sexual attraction for monks, the gender expectations were different for each. I have noted in Chapters 1 and 3 that for the *chigo kanjō* ritual the *chigo* adorns himself with makeup and dyes his teeth black (*ohaguro*), much as women did to preen themselves. However, such on its own does not entail that the *chigo* embodied femininity, since the male aristocrats of even the most elite families, like the Minamoto and the Hōjō, marked their status by blackening their teeth. Another segment in the ritual involves combing the hair of the *chigo* (Chapter 4). Unlike the tradition of *ohaguro*, since the combing of hair was traditionally only performed on aristocratic women, its role in the ritual is clearly intended to represent or cultivate the *chigo*'s femininity. Indeed, in the *chigo kanjō* literature there are several behavioral guidelines for the *chigo* that only women would normally perform. For example, when the *chigo* walks to the *nenja*'s quarters to engage in sexual intercourse, it is specified that his walk should be graceful and elegant, that he should “walk only using [his] legs.”⁴⁹³ — meaning he should take short, quiet steps, as women would walk. He is to project feminine body language.

⁴⁹³ 只々足計りニテ可歩. Ibid.

Thus, even though both women and *chigo* were subsumed as subservient sexual objects, there were a few differentiations to their gender identity. For example, regarding the *chigo* dressing before heading to the master, the *Shōgyō hiden* specifies that “there is a way for tying the knot of the belt. Women need to shift the knot to the right side of the waist. *Chigo* should shift the knot to the left side of the waist.”⁴⁹⁴ Such concerns mere appearances. As for deeper concerns, we saw in Chapter 4 how a sexual affair with a woman constituted a heavy transgression, since the seeds of afflictions that women were thought to carry perpetuate defilement. When we consider this against the premise that sexual engagement rids *chigo* of the seeds that could lead to karmic retribution, it is clear that, in soteriological terms, it is the maleness of the *chigo* that enables their monk partners to attain awakening.

However, there are cases where doctrine frames *chigo* as androgynous, possessing both feminine and masculine gender. The following passage from *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* offers illuminating insights if we consider the eight-petaled flower to be found in the *chigo*, or, more specifically, in the buttocks of the *chigo*, as shown in Chapter 4:

Such being the case, inside Sannō dwells *chigo no miya* [the hall of the *chigo*]. He is the original ground 本地 Kannon. He is also called Aizen Myōō. It is taught that Aizen and Kannon are one body. That is why, first Aizen Myōō enters the Horse-Penis Samadhi (*meonzō sanmaji* 馬隱藏三摩地). That is, the people of this world are the Lotus-samadhi. Even so, the oral transmissions say that much like guiding spontaneously a spring-horse of the syllable RA [of passions] to the desired destination, the awakening mind arises on its own and the self-mind enters the flower pedestal that is shaped like an eight-petaled lotus. This is what is called the *Horse-Penis Samadhi*. This is what it means to accurately know one’s mind 如實知自心. This is because when Dainichi Nyorai of the Upper Realms attained the way, he appeared in the form of fundamental ignorance 根本無明. He appeared as

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

Vajrasattva. What we call Aizen Myōō is that moment’s self-realization of [Vajra]sattva manifested in ritual. Accordingly, the body of ignorance is called Aizen Myōō. *Chigo* no miya is also called Aizen. It is also called Kannon. We are taught that Kannon and Śākyamuni are one body. Omiya is Śākyamuni, *Chigo* no miya is Kannon.⁴⁹⁵

Borrowing from meditative practices found in numerous Esoteric sutras,⁴⁹⁶ this passage details that, by guiding defilements to their destination—that is, by succumbing to one’s desire—one can spontaneously be awakened to one’s mind through directing one’s mind to the “eight-petaled flower,” which is simultaneously one’s heart as well as the lotus of the Womb mandala. As we saw above and in Chapter 4, the text explains that the *chigo*’s buttocks are also called “The Flower of Dharma Nature” 法性ノ花; the text refers to the “Dharma Nature that is the inherently endowed eight-petaled Lotus Flower.”⁴⁹⁷ Once the

⁴⁹⁵ サレハ、山王ノ御中ニモ児宮トテ座ス。是本地観音也。又ハ愛染明王トモ申也。愛染観音一躰ト習也。先、愛染明王ハ、馬隠蔵三摩地ニ入申ハ此故也。世間ノ人ハ蓮華三昧カト云也。サレトモ相承口傳ニハ、春ノ馬ノ羅ヲ又自本ニ引入ル、如レ此、菩提心ヲ自身発シテ、又、自躰ノ我心蓮八葉ノ華臺ニ帰入ル也。是ヲ為馬隠蔵三摩地ト一申也。如實知自心ノ意也。故ニ、大日如来上界成道時ニ、根本無明ノ形ヲ現ルニ、金剛サタ現也。愛染王ト申ハ、彼時ノサタノ内證ヲ、又事相ニ現ジ給也。然間、無明躰ヲ名ル愛染王ト也故ニ児宮ハ愛染トモ申シ、又、観音トモ申也。又、観音釈迦一躰ト習也。大宮ハ釈迦、児宮ハ観音也。“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi.*”

⁴⁹⁶ Some early Esoteric sutras contain similar elements in the description of visualization practices. For example the contemplation of one’s body as a living stupa and its various fivefold homologies, which later became an important practice for Kakuban. See *The Ritual of the Secret Dharanis of the Three Siddhis for the Destruction of Hell, the Transformation of Karmic Hindrances, and the Liberation from the Three Conditioned Worlds* (Ch. *Sanzhong xidi podiyu zhuan yezhang chu sanjie mimi tuoluonifa* 三種悉地破地獄轉業障出三界祕密陀羅尼法), attributed to Śubhakarasiṃha (Ch. Shanwuwei 善無畏, Jp. Zenmui, 637–735); T. 905, late Tang. For an English translation, see Fabio Rambelli, “Tantric Buddhism and Chinese Thought in East Asia,” in *Tantra in Practice*, ed. David Gordon White (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

⁴⁹⁷ This description of the ass or rather the anus as the absolute is inconsistent with other canonical interpretations of the role of the anal orifice. Buddhist texts use the term *hidō* 非道 (Ch. *feidao*) to describe transgressive acts such as the penetration of non-genital orifices, the anus and the mouth for example. The term is used in this fashion in the apocryphon *Fangwang jing* 梵網經 (*Bonmōkyō*, The Sūtra of Brahma’s Net). See Mizumaro 石田瑞麿 Ishida, ed. *Bonmōkyō* 梵網經 (Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan, 1971). However, the medieval discourse on male-male sexuality has shifted from these older canonical interpretations and instead used cosmogonic vocabulary and phraseology to describe the behind. The most common term was *nyake* (“the Qi of Youths”) which is found in the title of *Nyake kanjinchō* (circa. Muromachi). This term is also mentioned in *Shōgyō hiden*, but is glossed as *ki no gotoshi*, meaning, “same as Qi.” I interpret this as the envisioning of ritualized performance of anal sex to be a re-enactment of the primordial moment, characterized by Qi. This is

visualization of the *chigo kanjō* has taken place, the monk is ready to perform intercourse, which enacts the salvific process. *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* also adds that the buttocks area is the place that extinguishes the flame of afflictions, and that the process of penetrating the *chigo* ends with the “Lotus Flower opening.” The opening of a Lotus Flower is a common metaphor for the attainment of enlightenment that can be found in many Esoteric Buddhist (including Taimitsu) visualization practices. Therefore, the visualization practice is mirrored by the performance of the sexual act on the *chigo*. Additional references to visualizations also make use of numerous alloforms. At one point the text in (B) *Shōgyō hiden shi* discusses a process of purification of the body of the monk/*chigo* as if he was a cosmic reliquary (*gorintō*) corresponding to the Five Buddhas.⁴⁹⁸ The main icon in another passage has as its object the *shikan* 止觀, a Tendai meditation of cessation and contemplation. Many of these visualization practices, which could prepare for intercourse with the *chigo*, are structured around numerical homologies intended to defy differentiation into numbered entities so as to aim instead for oneness.

The reference to Aizen Myōō (“The Wisdom King of Lust”) in the above passage sheds even more light on the complex gender of the *chigo*. The association between Vajrasattva and Aizen Myōō and sexuality is already evident in canonical sources, such as the *Liqu jing* 理趣經 (Jp. *Rishukyō*),⁴⁹⁹ in which sexual relations are treated as nirvana. “The Horse Penis Samadhi” is established in Shingon oral transmissions as a reference to male-female sex, as do other medieval commentaries—although in truth the original canonical

consistent with the various mentions of the Siddham Grapheme A as the ontological climax reached during the ritual, and the equating of the buttocks with the Dharma Nature.

⁴⁹⁸ “*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘見聖教秘伝.”

⁴⁹⁹ T. 2456.

passage in the *Yujia yuqi jing* (Jp. *Yuga yugikyō* 瑜伽瑜祇經)⁵⁰⁰ is a bit ambiguous about whether this meditation actually concerns sex. Also, the passage's pairing of Aizen with the *chigo* both empowers his body and bestows it with gendered meaning. The allocation of gendered significations reaffirm the hierarchical structure of master-disciple relations. According to the passage, Aizen is identical to Vajrasattva; when the two are combined, Aizen is often the female aspect and Vajrasattva the male. This identification derives from the famous Tendai monk Jien (1155–1225), who described in his *Shijō hiketsu* 四帖秘決 how Aizen, the wife of Vajrasattva, is a woman equated with *samādhi* as delusions and defilements.⁵⁰¹ Whereas Vajrasattva as a man, and the husband of Aizen, represents *prajñā* and purity. In Shingon oral teachings, especially those that concern Aizen Myōō, there is a clear association of males with *prajñā* and females with *samādhi*.⁵⁰² In fact, in the Ono-ryū branch of Shingon and in Taimitsu lineages of Mount Hiei, it was customary to speak of Aizen as female and his other double, Zen'ai, as male, and of intermingling between the two as the “Horse Penis Samadhi.”⁵⁰³ The coupling here does not involve Zen'ai, but rather Vajrasattva.

Though *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* repurposes this interpretation, it reverses it to defy the direct gendered opposition normally established between *chigo* and monk as female and male, respectively. One portion of this manuscript strongly implies that sex between

⁵⁰⁰ T. 18.867.

⁵⁰¹ Yamamoto Hiroko 山本ひろ子, *Henjōfu: Chūsei shinbutsu shūgō no sekai* 変成譜：中世神仏習合の世界 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1993), 312.

⁵⁰² See for example, *Senju sengen gōyaku kyō* 千手千眼合薬経 in T. 1059; Yamamoto, “Chūsei ni okeru Aizen Myōō-hō: Sono poritikusu to erosu 中世における愛染明王法：そのポリテクスとエロス,” *Nihon no bijutsu* 日本の美術 376 (1997): 91.

⁵⁰³ Yamamoto, “Chūsei ni okeru Aizen Myōō-hō: Sono poritikusu to erosu 中世における愛染明王法：そのポリテクスとエロス,” *Nihon no bijutsu* 日本の美術 376 (1997): 94.

chigo and monk is envisioned as the intermixing of Aizen and Vajrasattva (or between Śākyamuni and Kannon). However, another passage includes an inverted Shingon template wherein “the Womb [woman] is *samādhi* 定, the Diamond [man] is *prajñā* 恵. That is, the monk is *samādhi* [woman], the *chigo* is *prajñā* [man]. When defilements are extinguished, they become wisdom 智恵 (knowing and effecting). It is simply compassion 慈悲 (compassion and mercy).”⁵⁰⁴ As such, the passage aligns *chigo* with the male sex, as Aizen/Kannon, and aligns the monk with the female counterpart of Vajrasattva/Shakyamuni. This goes against the many other propositions we have considered that clearly situate the *chigo* within a female gender. For example, earlier the *chigo*’s buttocks were referred to as the eight-petaled lotus as the mind *precisely* for two reasons: because such is located in the center of the Womb mandala, which was associated with the feminine aspect; and because it is located in the lower part of the body (anus), which corresponds to the direction in which the Lotus flower opens in a female body. This was the locus of the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana Dainichi in his feminine modality.

I was very fortunate to be able to so thoroughly examine the extant manuscripts that discuss the *chigo kanjō*. Since my study was only the first such exploration in English, I hope that future studies can address the discursive multiplicity described here. On the one hand, the *chigo* is envisioned as part of the continuum of the feminine; on the other, he is nonetheless notably different from women. Since many questions regarding both the *chigo*’s gender ambivalence and gendered instability remain unanswered, this conundrum merits further consideration. Was this ambivalence intended to obscure the subjectivity of the

⁵⁰⁴ 故^ニ胎定、金^ノ恵也。サレハ僧^ノ定、児^ノ恵也。煩惱^ノ炎^ヲ消間、智恵也。是只慈悲也。“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* 弘児聖教秘伝私,” in Tenkaizō 天海藏 (Eizan bunko 叡山文庫).

chigo, or to precisely “queer” them (in modern terms) so that the sexual pursuit would appear less offensive? Or did the monks themselves not know how to make sense of the identity they ascribed to the *chigo*? Medieval Buddhist literature commonly includes passages wherein a monk cannot determine whether a person he encounters is a woman or a *chigo*; as such, it is safe to assume that the muddled gender of the *chigo* confounded the monastics. (Indeed, the seeming femininity of the *chigo* in such literary passages could have been an intentional rhetorical strategy.) Moreover, considering that the sexual acts described here were doctrinally and ritually supported by the Tendai establishment, we must revisit the aforementioned connection between *chigo kanjō* literature and the texts of the Tachikawa school. Do they speak to the same sexual tradition? Are they mirror images of each other, the former centered on male-male relations and the latter male-female? Or could they be part of or intersect in broader, non-sectarian rituals and concepts about Buddhism and sexual practices? I hope future research will explore these questions.

Another angle to examine concerns if only certain *chigo* were chosen for sex or if in fact all *chigo* took part in a *chigo kanjō*. We have seen how the *chigo kanjō* texts claim that the physical engagement in sexual intercourse is equivalent to the transformation of the mind that occurs with enlightenment. If the flesh-body of the *chigo* is sacred, then having sex with him would result in an absorption of sacrality, which would awaken the mind as well. But just how did the ritual ensure that the *chigo* was sacred? A monk could not engage with just any *chigo*; he could partner only with a *chigo* consecrated by the *chigo kanjō*. Plus, the monk had to maintain sacrality himself. As *Shōgyō hiden* clarifies: “If you have a *chigo*, you will have sacrality. If you do not, you will not have sacrality. If you do not have sacrality, you must not have a *chigo*. Based on this, you must be aware of it when you have

a *chigo*. Those fellows who are not aware of it and have a *chigo*, will receive the punishment of Sannō daishi.”⁵⁰⁵ These lines immediately follow a lengthy explanation of *chigo* as Sannō’s embodiment. The text explains that *chigo* encompasses all of the Seven Sannō Shrines as well as all of the bodhisattvas and gods of Hie Shrine: “The *chigo* is the original ground, Sannō is his manifested traces. That is why we say ‘the *chigo* comes first, Sannō second.’”⁵⁰⁶ Establishing a clear hierarchy where *chigo* surpasses Sannō, as we have seen done in the Jōbodai’ in manuscript in Chapter 4, the authorial narrative still surmises the possibility of a *chigo* lacking sacrality—and stresses that the monk must also be aware of this possibility, and to by no means engage sexually with an unconsecrated acolyte. In order to understand this statement, we must consider the following passage in the *Kuketsu sōjō*:

How in the world would we be entrusted with the vow of great compassion? It is through intending to fulfill the inner realization of buddhas and bodhisattvas. This [inner realization] is the precepts themselves, the inherent precepts. It is interpreted that they “spontaneously flow into the oceans of the Sahā world.” We spontaneously realize the teachings of the precepts. All of us sentient beings who are entrusted with the great mercy and great compassion of Kannon put an end to ignorance and afflictions, and therefore there is no mistake about it. Therefore, we cannot have sex with the *chigo* just as we desire. If you relapse and are grabbed by delusion, and cause the flames of afflictions, then you can [still] have sex with the *chigo*. If you do, you should choose a *chigo* who has performed this *kanjō*. If you have sex with a *chigo* who was not consecrated, this will cause you to abide in the three evil paths. Truly, this is a valued treasure that is following in the footsteps of the Buddha. When you have sex, you need only to show affection to Kannon.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁵ 有ハ兒有聖也。無ハ兒聖不可有一無聖一兒不可有一爰本ヲ能々知テ可持兒ヲ一不シテ知兒持畫ハ山王大師ノ御罰ヲ可蒙一 “Kō chigo shōgyō hiden 弘兒聖教秘伝。”

⁵⁰⁶ 兒ハ本地、山王ハ垂迹也。故一兒二山王也可秘々々口傳在之 ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ 此大悲之願モ預者争カ。仏果菩提内証相叶サラム乎。是又戒也。本有ノ戒也。故ニ尺云自然流入薩般若海文。我等自然ニ戒門ニ叶ナリ故。我等一切衆生、觀音預大慈大悲ニ無明煩惱ヲ断ル間、無過カ者也。故自然戒処トハ云也。但我等恣ニ非可ニハ犯ス。若被引顛倒シテ妄想ニ、煩惱ノ炎起ヲハ可犯、縦ヒ若犯ストモ、加様ノ灌頂シタラム兒ヲハ可犯。若灌頂無ラン兒ヲ犯サハ、可成ル三惡

The passage explains how one might attain the sought-after sacrality that is Kannon's compassion. For the *chigo*, the state of sacrality is straight-forward: the *chigo* must undergo consecration in *chigo kanjō*. But for the monk the responsibility of ensuring sacrality was rife with danger, since engaging sexually with a *chigo* who was not consecrated would bring about rebirth in the three evil realms of transmigration. The text informs us that this sacrality and teachings are, in fact, original enlightenment—that is, the inner realization of bodhisattvas and buddhas in the form of precepts. The precepts that the texts refer to and that the monk is expected to embody are inherent precepts or precept-substance, the same type discussed in the Introduction. The precepts “spontaneously flow into the oceans of the Sahā world,” and the inner realization is a condition that is attained spontaneously. If one possesses this compassion—namely, original enlightenment and the essence of precepts—then the defilements associated with sex will be purged. Therefore, it is still possible to have sex with *chigo* even if one is caught up in the flames of desire. But how does one express these precepts? The monk maintains sacrality if he behaves compassionately and embodies Kannon in some form. He needs to “intend to realize awakening”—it is this that instills in him sacrality. Therefore, in order actualize awakening, the monk must remain intentional and contemplative. That contemplation is referred to in another text, *Shōgyō hiden*, as “contemplation on defilements” (*bonnō no kan* 煩惱'観):

If you meditate on defilements, you will realize that they are original awakening.... Our awakened mind, which is the six consciousnesses and delusions together, is the inner realization of the Ninth consciousness and original enlightenment. In Shingon, this is interpreted as the awakening that is becoming Buddha through ultimate

道ノ種因ト。此ノ灌頂ハ於観音ニ極大秘事也。實ニ佛ニ此ノクヒスヲ次ク重寶也。是犯サン時ノ観音ト者唯可

想。 “*Chigo kanjō kuketsu sōjō* 児灌頂口決相承,” in *Fukuda Gyōei Archive* 谷中天王寺内故福田堯穎大僧正藏 (Yanaka Tennōji 谷中天王寺).

meaning. In the Exoteric lineages, it is the body of enlightenment that is inherent and uncreated. This is also called the first arising of ignorance, the one wisdom that is the original ground. If we think about this, what benefit is there in committing the transgression of the passions? You will be abandoned by the Bodhisattvas, and forsaken by the miraculous kami. [Therefore] you should just meditate on impurities. All things are impure. Becoming pure through upholding the precepts is what makes one a practitioner. [Then,] if you get drawn to delusions and wrong ideas, and you cannot resist them, and if you should have sex, it should not be done forcefully. At this time, if you were to commit sexual acts, you should carry out visualization practice during the act.⁵⁰⁸

The narrator in this passage is aware of the two central religious traditions that inform the *chigo kanjō* ritual: Esoteric Buddhism (Shingon, which here could mean Taimitsu) and exoteric Buddhism. In Esotericism, the awakening experience is the act of becoming a Buddha through ultimate meaning, presumably in one’s body; whereas in exotericism, the awakening experienced is original enlightenment. Moreover, the six consciousnesses that apprehend objects and lead to delusions are the same as the ultimate and pure Ninth consciousness (Skt. *amalavijñāna*) of original awakening. Fundamentally, the text creates an equation between defilements and awakening, and recognizes inherent sacrality in the body of the monk should he meditate on defilements. Thus, a monk who “does not have sacrality” is a monk who was not intent on awakening and did not contemplate defilements. And yet, since it is also true that all things are nonetheless impure, what makes a monk a valid practitioner is that he is able to become pure throughout intercourse—and that

⁵⁰⁸ 煩惱ノ觀ヲコラシテ□□□菩提心也.... 煩惱ノ六識迷情ノ我等菩提心ノ九識本分ノ證也。爰本ヲ真言ニハ菩提ノ實義成佛解尺ト云也。又、顯宗ニハ本有無作ノ覺躰定也。是ヲ元初ノ一念トモ云。又一智本智トモ云也。爰ハ本ヲ条スルニ煩惱ヲ犯シテ何ノ益カ有ル佛菩薩ニ被レ捨レ神明ニハ被レ放故也。只不淨觀ヲコラスヘシ。一切皆不淨也。持戒情淨ニシテ勤行セム輩ヲ若妄想願倒ニ被レ引カ難忍時ノ可レ犯者也。強ニ非スレ可ニハレ
時分
 犯レ□□犯トモ觀念觀法ヲシテ可レ犯。“*Kō chigo shōgyō hiden* 弘児聖教秘伝。”

purification is effected by the act of visualizing impurities. Of course, it is essential to maintain a harmonious relationship of sacrality. As the *Kō chigo shōgyō hiden shi* shares:

Chigo purifies the shame of the monk's body, indeed they should have both of their hearts in concord. Without *chigo*, there can be no sacrality. If there is no sacrality, how could there ever be *chigo*?⁵⁰⁹

Note that this text indicates that the relationship between *chigo* and monk should be harmonious in their hearts as well as in their sacrality. This could refer to just spiritual mindset or general state of mind, but it might also concern the contemplation described above. In which case, should both parties contemplate impurities or defilements? This remains unclear. Another possibility is that this harmony in heart refers to romantic relationships, or at least to a sentimentality existing between the two. Interestingly, other passages that emphasize the caring aspect are to be found in the section concerning “regular” sexual acts taking place outside the context of ritual consecration: “Note that masters and fellow monks should cultivate a liking to *chigo*.”⁵¹⁰ The text adds that monks “should display thoughtfulness towards the hardships of the *chigo*,”⁵¹¹ and that “Master, fellow monks, and *chigo* too should behave like waterfowl.” I interpret “waterfowl” as a metaphor for monogamous relationships. Whatever the case may be, the *chigo kanjō* texts require harmonious and mindful relations between two sacred counterparts, *chigo* and monk.

As such, I conclude that (it was intended that) the *chigo* chosen for *chigo kanjō* was a romantic partner, or, at the very least, was an acolyte the monk cared for. This makes

⁵⁰⁹ 児僧ニ恥チ身ヲ淨シ身ヲ一淨シテ何ニモ和合ル心可有ー一児ナウ聖リアルベカラス聖ナクテハ無ンハ争カ児有ン *ibid.*

⁵¹⁰ 但師,同行、児ヲタシナムヘシ *Ibid.*

⁵¹¹ 辛苦ヲ思遣リ可振舞ー *Ibid.*

sense as well since the sexual consecration also initiated everyday sexual engagements—as minutely described in *Shōgyō hiden*. These engagements, too, were intended to be carried out with consideration; unfortunately, as the earlier discussion of what could have been group sex suggests, compassionate consideration may not have always been present.

Separate from that detail, it is clear that all such monastic sexual engagements, whether initiatory or non-initiatory, reaffirmed that the power relations between monk and *chigo*, as well as the acolyte's ambiguous ontological state, were the product of symbolic and semiotic manipulations by male adult writers who chose to impose a variety of significations on the youths of their realm.

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