Hori - (Ascetics and Ghosts)

CHAPTER

III

Nembutsu as Folk Religion

It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss Nembutsu belief and practices among the Japanese people from ancient times to the present day. We find in Nembutsu some of the main characteristics of popular Buddhism mixed with Japanese folk religion. Japanese Buddhism must be seen first of all as an integral part of the total dynamic movement which spread from India across Southeast Asia to the Far Eastern countries. There is a definite continuity in Buddhism which can be demonstrated not only historically but also phenomenologically. To be sure, the special social and cultural circumstances which it encountered on Japanese soil worked some remarkable transformations. Some scholars go so far as to say that Japanese Buddhism is not real Buddhism at all or is at best a deformed version.[1]

[1] Cf. Shōkō Watanabe, *Nihon no Bukkyō* (*Japanese Buddhism*) (Tokyo, 1958), especially pp. 64, 66–67. See also Eliot, *Japanese Buddhism*, pp. 179–96.

We shall speak here of the direction which Buddhism has taken in Japan and of the conditions which have made it unique among the many forms of Buddhism in the world. Two key phenomena serve to focus our discussion. They are the *samgha* (monastic order) and the *vinaya* (disciplinary system). These traditional Buddhist forms were transmitted by missionary efforts from India through China and Korea. They are important here because of their necessary relation to historical and sociological patterns. When these forms were first introduced into Japan, they were in conflict with the existing social patterns. The history of the inevitable modification which took place in Japanese Buddhism in the *samgha* and the *vinaya* may also be seen as a movement toward the popularization of the Buddhist religion.

The character of Japanese Buddhism may be traced to certain decisive events in the reign of Empress Suiko and Prince Regent Shōtoku. At the time of the official recognition of Buddhism in Japan in A.D. 593, the nation had been undergoing a great spiritual and cultural upheaval. China was rising to political and cultural eminence in the Far East under the Sui dynasty. Great numbers of immigrants were pouring into Japan from China and Korea, bringing scholarship, skills, and religion from the Asian mainland.[2] The ancient theocratic clan system was breaking down under the new forces that were assailing the nation, and the people were ready to look to an alien religion for their spiritual foundations.

[2] The great extent of this influence is indicated by an official record named *Shinsen-shōji roku* (*Newly Selected Records of Family Titles and Names*) which was compiled in A.D. 815 by imperial edict. Among 1,065 families around the capital and its neighboring areas, there were 326 powerful families of *banbetsu* class who were naturalized foreigners. All families were divided into three groups: *kōbetsu* (335 families), who were the cadet families of princely lines; *shinbetsu* (404 families), who were believed to be descended from the mythical gods or goddesses who founded the country; and the *banbetsu*.

Prince Shōtoku (574–621), statesman and religious thinker, played a significant role in shaping Japanese Buddhism. In fact, his influence extended far beyond the span of his own life. Under him Buddhism developed into a religion of the aristocracy with strong lay leadership. At the same time, Shōtoku's emphasis on the Lotus Sutra promoted a social consciousness that encompassed all classes. The Lotus Sutra's promise of salvation for all mankind was in sharp contrast with the pre-Buddhistic and shamanistic folk religion. The latter had two classes of deities, corresponding to the two social classes of ancient Japanese society, and offered life in the hereafter only to the ruling and shamanic families, which constituted the imperial, noble, and magico-religious class. The new Buddhist social concern was expressed in the building of temples which served as centers of philanthropic and cultural activities.[3]

Twenty-four years after Shōtoku's death, the Taika reformation (A.D. 645) put into effect some of his principles. The establishment of a unified empire meant that for the first time in the history of Japan one emperor completely ruled the whole nation. The political prin-

[3] One example was the building of Shiten'ō-ji Temple. This temple has had four centers of social services: a charity hospital, a charity dispensary, an orphanage, and an old people's home. These were the first public social services of a Buddhist temple in Japan. See *Jōgū Shōtoku-hōō teisetsu* (*Biography of Prince Shōtoku*), supposedly compiled in the seventh century immediately after the Taika reformation, published by Iwanami Bunko with annotations of Shinshō Hanayama and Saburō Iyenaga (Tokyo, 1941). Also see Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, I, 157–61, 165–70.

ciples of the empire were modeled after those of the T'ang dynasty. This reformation was prepared secretly, and was executed by several Buddhist monks together with some government scholars. Both these groups had been previously dispatched by Prince Shōtoku to Sui and T'ang China for study.

The principles of the Taika reformation included the prohibition of private ownership of land, the foundation of the ancient clan system, and the distribution of farmland to the peasants. At the beginning of this reformation a messenger was sent to the large temples near the capital to summon together Buddhist priests and nuns and to address them on behalf of the emperor. Thus Buddhism gained official recognition as a state religion.[4] The religious policy of the Taika government was to guard and promote Buddhism, and also to place under the sovereign's supervision a Buddhism completely subservient to state control.[5]

Thus, at the beginning, Japanese Buddhism was made a spiritual principle of the empire system, and also the spiritual foundation of the great family system of that time. Ancestor worship became one of its most significant functions. Buddhist magic, commingled with Shinto and Yin-yang magic, also flourished.

In the early days almost all Buddhist temples belonged either to the state or to some powerful family or clan. Formal Buddhism was maintained on the official and aristocratic level. Side by side with institutionalized forms of Buddhism, however, as early as the middle of the Nara period (eighth century) there arose movements among

[4] *Nihongi*, Vol. XXV; W. G. Aston, *Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (London, 1896), II, 202.

[5] *Nihongi*, Vol. XXV; Aston, *Nihongi*, II, 202–3.

laymen centering in such charismatic figures as Gyōgi[6] and En-no-Shōkaku.[7] The aim of these movements was to distribute the Buddha's gospel and his salvation among the common people, or to save people by superhuman power acquired through unusual religious austerities. This they did wholly outside the orthodox Buddhist priesthood. They opposed the ecclesiastical systems of state and clan Buddhism, which were already beginning

[6] Gyōgi (A.D. 670?–749) was an outstanding leader of popular Buddhism in the Nara period. He endeavored to popularize Buddhism for the common people through easily understandable teachings and public services done in the Buddhist spirit. The last included the founding of charity hospitals, orphanages, and old people's homes; excavation of canals for navigation and irrigation; the building of irrigation ponds; bridge construction; harbor construction in the Inland Sea near Osaka and Kobe; free clinics; free lodging houses. All of these projects were managed by disciples who lived in small seminaries named *dōjō* near the projects. According to the authentic biography in *Shoku nihongi* (*The Second Official Historical Records*, succeeding the *Nihongi* and edited from A.D. 697 to 791), he was called a *bosatsu* (Buddhist saint, bodhisattva) by the masses even while he lived. He was *upâsaka* (*ubasoku* in Japanese, profane believer) for a long time. Then in 745 Emperor Shōmu, applauding his virtue and religious personality as well as his enterprises, elevated him to the rank of *Dai-sōjō* (Archbishop). His death in 749 at the age of eighty was greatly lamented by the nation as well as by the emperor. It is said that he built forty-nine dōjō (seminaries) around the metropolitan areas for the purposes mentioned above. See *Shoku nihongi*, XXII, in *Kokushi taikei* (Tokyo, 1935), II, 196. Also see Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, I, 256–93.

[7] En-no-Shōkaku was a famous magician who lived in the middle of the seventh century. His family was believed to have had the priestly function of serving the god of Mount Katsuragi in Nara prefecture, whose name was Hitokoto-nushi (Deity of Divination by One Word). It is said that Shugen-dō in Japan was founded by him, but this is not yet an established historical fact. However, there is some reliable evidence to show that many shamans and magicians practiced and trained in the mountains, accepting the new-styled form of Buddhist Mantrayâna in that period.

to turn toward secularism, and concentrated instead on individual personal piety, and discipline in the common life. Thus the lay movement denied not only the *samgha* in its orthodox form but also the *vinaya*. Those who became priests were encouraged to marry and have families. This so-called household religion has persisted to the present over almost all Japan.

It should be evident from this discussion that Japanese Buddhism never had its own independent ecclesiastical order, as such other Buddhist countries as Ceylon, Burma, or the Indo-Chinese states, but has always flourished under the existing sociological and political structures.

Japanese Buddhism developed in three stages: the first was the Asuka and Nara periods (A.D. 593–793); the second was the Heian period (794–1185); and the third was the Kamakura period (1186–1333).

Roughly speaking, the Buddhism of the first stage was represented by the Hossō (*Fahsien* in Chinese), Kegon (*Avatansaka* in Sanskrit), and Ritsu (*Lü* in Chinese; *Vinaya* in Sanskrit) sects, and was characterized by direct transplantations from Chinese and Korean Buddhist sects. At the same time, it was actually influenced by the state religion, though these sects were mainly scholarly and philosophic, not essentially religious. The next stage, Heian Buddhism, shows a remarkable contrast to the Buddhist sects of Nara. Politically, the transfer of the capital from Nara to Kyoto brought about a new mood, one motive for the transfer having been to separate church and state. Religiously, two sects of Buddhism were predominant throughout the period—Tendai *T'ien-t'ai* in Chinese) and Shingon (*Chên-yen* in Chinese). Heian Buddhism was shaped by the transmission of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai and Chên-yen sects, though in

actual practice these sects became highly aristocratic and emphasized magical functions.

Kamakura Buddhism was represented by the Pure Land (Jōdo), Zen, and Nichiren sects, and was characterized by the indigenization and resystematization of former Buddhist sects and popular beliefs on the one hand, and on the other by the transplantation of Chinese Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism which had been mixed with the Taoistic philosophy and way of thinking.

The Pure Land (Jōdo) and the Nichiren sects became widespread among the common people, while Zen Buddhism became the spiritual foundation of the warriors (samurai) who had come into political power in the feudal age.[8]

[8] Monbu-shō (comp.); *Shūkyō nen-kan* (*Religious Year Book*) for the year 1956 (Tokyo), shows us as follows:

Sects	Number of Temples[a]	Number of Priests	Number of Adherents
Shin-shū (Jōdo)	21,578	38,821	8,838,179
Sōtō-shū (Zen)	15,021	15,224	1,574,311
Shingon-shū	12,381	21,060	7,720,236
Jōdo-shū (Jōdo)	8,233	9,130	8,303,785
Rinzai-shū (Zen)	5,854	5,951	3,007,405
Nichiren-shū	5,516	14,141	8,308,291
Tendai-shū	3,942	17,935	2,695,163
Ōbaku-shū (Zen)	523	520	148,861
Ji-shū (Jōdo)	426	398	40,099
Yūzū-Nembutsu-shū (Jōdo)	357	312	101,099
Hossō-shū	78	676	165,104
Kegon-shū	53	503	57,620
Ritsu-shū	24	56	10,300

[a] Some independent temples are omitted.

Taking an average for each sect of the total number of temples, priests, and adherents, we find that the Pure Land sects occupy the foremost position of all Buddhist influence with more than 30 per cent; second place is occupied by the Zen sects; third place by the Shingon sects; fourth place by the Nichiren sects; and fifth place by the Tendai sects. The Nara Buddhist sects barely maintain their existence, as shown by their figure of about 1 per cent of the total average.

These statistics do not necessarily indicate the real influence of Buddhism on the Japanese people, because some sects are conservative

Emergence of Nembutsu Belief and Practices

The Heian period of Japanese religious history was characterized by five factors: (1) the introduction of Mantrayāna or Esoteric Buddhism from China by Saichō and Kūkai in A.D. 805 and 806 and its ready reception by the people; (2) the *hijiri* (holy men), who established common or folk Buddhism outside the orthodox ecclesiastical system, became pioneers of Kamakura Buddhism, and took over the movements of Gyōgi and En-no-Shōkaku of the Nara period; (3) the appearance of the belief in goryō, which, as I have described in Chapter II, originally consisted of a belief in the malevolent or angry spirits of noble or charismatic persons who died in political tragedies or intrigues; (4) the emergence of a consciousness of the Latter Law age (*Mappō*), which I shall discuss later in detail; and (5) the commingling of various religious elements such as primitive shamanism, Shinto, Yin-yang magic, and Mantrayâna Buddhism. If the aristocrats and intelligentsia had an articulate notion of the relationship of Shinto and Buddhism, the masses had little sense of discrimination in such matters. The man in

and retrogressive, while others are progressive and aggressive; some sects' adherents and believers are pious, positive, or fanatic, while others are indifferent, negative, or passive. However, even though they are the results of long-established conventions and feudalistic politics, these statistics show some historical reality. In other words, the major stream of Japanese Buddhism has been represented by the Kamakura sects of Buddhism, which account for 70 per cent of all Japanese Buddhist temples, priests, adherents, and believers.

the street accepted all kinds of beliefs derived not only from Buddhism and Shinto but also from religious Taoism, Confucian ethics, and the more primitive, native Japanese animistic folk religion. This syncretism gradually penetrated upward, even to the imperial court. Such events as political change, civil war, epidemic, famine, drought, earthquakes, thunderstorms, typhoons, as well as difficult delivery, diseases, and death were believed to be the working of the spirits or deities.

The first commingling of primitive shamanism with Yin-yang magic and Mantrayâna Buddhism appeared in the latter part of the Nara period and developed rapidly in the Heian. Three major streams emerged in the religious world as a result of the historical cohesion of these five factors:

Nembutsu.—the Buddhist Pure Land school (Jōdo-kyō) mixed with animistic and shamanistic elements.

Shugen-dō.—the Buddhist Mantrayâna school (Mikkyō) mixed with Shinto animism and shamanism.

Onmyō-dō.—religious Taoism or the Yin-yang school mixed with Shinto animism and shamanism.

The term Nembutsu has philosophical and religious connotations in Buddhism. It is believed that the recitation of the sacred name Amitâbha or Amitâyus (Amida in Japanese: *Namu-Amida-Butsu*) enables human beings to reach the Western Paradise or Pure Land. This belief was originally founded by Hui-yüan in China about the fourth century, and the Amitâbha sutras[9] were intro-

[9] There are three sutras concerning the Amitâbha Buddha: the first is *Sukhâvatyamritavyûha-sûtra* (*Fo-shwo-ŏ-mi-tho-kin* in Chinese) translated into Chinese by Kumârajîva in A.D. 402; the second is the *Buddhabhâshitâmitâyurbuddha-dhyâna (?)-sûtra* (*Fo-shwo-kwân-wu-liân-*

duced into Japan by several Buddhist priests early in the Nara period. As early as A.D. 652, lectures about them were given at the imperial court. According to the historical documents,[10] there were then several priests who believed in Amida and practiced Nembutsu prayers for the purpose of their rebirth in *Sukhâvatî* (the Western Pure Land: *Saihō Jōdo* in Japanese) of Amitâbha Buddha.

The first Japanese sect to accept this belief officially was the Tendai. At first Saichō (Dengyō Daishi, A.D. 767–822), the Japanese founder of the Tendai sect, introduced practices of four kinds of *samâdhi* (*sammai* in Japanese: "meditation")[11] based on the teachings of the *Mo-hŏ-ki-kwân* (*Maka-shikan* in Japanese) written by Chih-kai, the founder of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai sect.[12] One of these four methods of *samâdhi* was called *Jōgyō-*

sheu-fo-kin in Chinese) which was translated into Chinese by Kâlayasas in A.D. 424; and the third is the so-called "Larger *Sukhâvati-vyûha-sûtra*" or "*Buddhabhâshita-mahâyânâmitâyur-vyûha-sûtra*." The original of this book was lost in A.D. 730. Nos. 200, 198, and 863 in Bunyū Nanjō, comp., *A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka* (Oxford, 1883), hereinafter cited as *Nanjō Catalogue*.

10 See, for example, *Nihon ryōi-ki*, the first Buddhist legendary literature, compiled in the early ninth century (Tokyo, 1950), annotations by Yūkichi Takeda; *Nihon ōjō-gokuraku ki* (*Biographies of Persons Who Went to the Amida's Pure Land after Death*), written by Jakushin in A.D. 985–986; see *Dai Nippon Bukkyō zensho*, Vol. CVII (Tokyo, 1912–22).

11 The other two kinds of meditation besides *jōgyō* and *jōza-zammai* are called *hangyō-hanza-zammai* and *higyō-hiza-zammai*. In the former, the devotee alternately recites some sacred text, for example, the Lotus, and sits down to meditate on it; in the latter, he concentrates all his mental efforts on realizing the truth, but follows his inclination as to sitting or walking. Cf. Eliot, *Japanese Buddhism*, pp. 330–31; Hori, "On the Concept of Hijiri (Holy-man)," 214–15.

12 *Taishō daizō kyō*, Vol. 46-1, No. 1911; *Nanjō Catalogue*: No. 1538.

jōza-zammai.[13] It was based upon the *Pratyutpanna-buddhasammukhâvashita-samâdhi*,[14] which teaches meditation by means of repeated chantings of the sacred name of Amida (*Namu-Amida-Butsu*) and ninety days of attentive and ceaseless contemplation of Amida and his Pure Land. This method of meditation had been introduced into the T'ien-t'ai sect by Chih-kai from the Chinese Pure Land school founded by Hui-yuän (A.D. 334–416) at Mount Lu-shan.

Later, Ennin (Jikaku Daishi: A.D. 793–864), the successor of Saichō, brought back this method of *samâdhi* from the Mount Wu-tai-shan seminary in China and built his own seminary at Mount Hiei.[15] The *Jōgyō-jōza-zammai* and its Nembutsu practices gradually influenced the temples and priests of the Tendai sect.[16] In the middle of the

13 *Jōgyō* means a practice done while incessantly moving around, and *jōza* means practice done while sitting immobile.

14 This should be translated "Sutra on the *samâdhi* called *pratyutpanna* (etc.)," *Pân-keu-sân-mêi-kin* in Chinese. *Nanjō Catalogue*: No. 73, translated into Chinese by K'leu-kiâ-khân of the Eastern Han dynasty.

15 This *samâdhi* method was also called *in-zei Nembutsu* after the repetition of Nembutsu in a singsong tone; or *fudan Nembutsu* after the incessant chanting of Nembutsu; or *yama-no-Nembutsu* (Nembutsu of the mountain) because this Nembutsu had originated at one of the seminaries of Enryaku-ji on Mount Hiei, near Kyoto. See Ennin, *Nittō guhō junrei-kō ki* (*Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law*). An English translation has been published with annotations by Edwin O. Reischauer (New York, 1955). See also Reischauer, *Ennin's Travels in T'ang China* (New York, 1955); Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, 253–54.

16 It is said that in A.D. 865 this Nembutsu practice became one of the annual rites of the Tendai sect and was observed unceasingly from the dawn of the eleventh to midnight of the seventeenth of the eighth month of the lunar calendar, thus centering on the harvest moon. See Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, Part II, "Shoji Jōgyō-dō

Heian period, the most popular daily practices of Tendai temples and priests were *samâdhi* based on the Lotus Sutra (*Hokke-zammai*) in the morning and the *Nembutsu-zammai* in the evening—that is, chanting the sacred title of the Lotus Sutra in the morning (*Asa-Daimoku*) and repeating the sacred name of Amida in the evening (*Yū-Nembutsu*).[17]

Although originally *Nembutsu-samâdhi* had as its object salvation in the future life, it gradually expanded its function to become a memorial service for spirits of the dead, with the expectation that Amida's helping hands would be extended to them. Thus, professional Nembutsu priests and Nembutsu prayers became connected with the funeral ceremony as well as with memorial services.[18]

As I have already pointed out in Chapter I, from the very beginning, one of the main social functions of Japanese Buddhism on the common level has been religious services for spirits of the dead as well as for divine favors in this world.[19] Even today there remain many statues of

no konryū to fudan-Nembutsu no seikō ("The Buildings of the Jōgyō-dō Seminaries at Buddhist Temples and the Popularizing of Continuous Nembutsu"), 255–56.

17 *Rozan-ji Engi* in *Dai Nippon Bukkyō zensho*, Vol. CXVII (Tokyo, 1912–22); *Hōnen Shōnin gyōjō ezu* (*The Diagram of the Biography of Hōnen Shōnin*) in *Jōdo-shū zensho*, Vol. XVI (Tokyo, 1911–14). See also Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, p. 256.

18 Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 255–56.

19 Immediately after Prince Shōtoku's death, his survivors made two mandala called Tenju-koku mandara (Mandala of the land of heavenly life), where they believed that Prince Shōtoku had been reborn. On the back of the halo of the bronze statue of the Sakya-muni Buddha dedicated to Prince Shōtoku, which is now standing in the main hall of

buddhas or bodhisattvas, dating from as early as A.D. 606, with inscriptions for spirits of the dead. There are also buddha halls and handwritten copies of Buddhist sutras dedicated to the spirits of the dead and offered as prayers for the salvation of the dead in the afterlife.[20] From the seventh century to the end of the Nara period several Pure Lands are mentioned.[21] However, under the influence of the Tendai sect, in the mid-Heian period Amida's Western Pure Land occupied the predominant position among both the nobility and the masses, even though belief in the other Buddhas' Pure Lands also survived.

There are many examples from the sources of that time.[22] At the funeral procession for Emperor Daigo in

Hōryū-ji Temple, we find an inscription (presumably engraved in A.D. 621) stating that the survivors prayed that the spirit of Prince Shōtoku might go to the Buddha's Pure Land. See *Jōgū-Shōtoku-hōō teisetsu*. Takurei Hirako interpreted Tenju-koku as being identical to the Amida's Pure Land—that is, Muryōju-koku (Land of Everlasting Life), cited by Hanayama and Iyenaga in their commentary of *Jyōgū-Shōtoku-hōō teisetsu*, p. 82.

20 Amida's Western Pure Land, Kannon or Avalokiteśvara's Southern Pure Land, Potalaka (Fudaraku in Japanese); Ashuku or Aksobhya's Eastern Pure Land, Abhirati, Yakushi; Bhaisajyaguru's Eastern Pure Land, Vaidûryaprabha (Ruri-kō in Japanese); as well as the future Buddha Maitreya or Miroku's Tusita Heaven (Tosotsu-ten in Japanese) and the Vairocana's Padma-garbha-loka-dhâtu (Renge-zō-sekai in Japanese)—all of which were believed to be abodes of pious spirits of the dead. Before Hōryū-ji Temple was destroyed by fire in 1951, the famous wall paintings of the main hall showed the so-called Ten Pure Lands of the ten directions, presided over by the Ten Buddhas or Bodhisattvas. See *Jōgū Shōtoku-hōō teisetsu*, p. 82.

21 Shinkō Mochizuki, *Bukkyō daijiten* (*Large Dictionary of Buddhism*) (Tokyo, 1933), III, 2699–702.

22 *Ibid.* In A.D. 952 at the funeral services for the Emperor Sujaku (20th Day of the Eighth Month); in 1101 for the minister Fujiwara-

A.D. 930, professional Nembutsu priests, selected from among the Tendai priests, lined both sides of the street at eighty-six places where the funeral procession passed, repeating Nembutsu prayers for the deceased emperor's spirit and ringing special bells and gongs.[23]

When a sick person was near death, Nembutsu priests entered the sick room in place of the *shugen-ja* magicians or medicine men and offered their prayers to make his last moments easier. Then after death they prayed for the protection of the corpse, which might be in danger of disturbance by evil spirits, and for early rebirth of the spirit into Amida's Pure Land. During the period of mourning, which lasted for seven weeks, there was incessant repeating of the name of Amida as a memorial service. From the tenth and eleventh centuries there remain many written supplications for these memorial services on the forty-ninth day after death[24] offering up prayers to the Lotus Sutra and Amida for the salvation of the spirits of the dead.[25]

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no-Morozane (described in *Denryaku* [*Diary of Fujiwara-no-Tadazane* (1078–1162)], twenty-two volumes of copies in Yōmei Bunko, presumably copied 1246–1268); in 1096 for Imperial Concubine Ikuhōmon-in (*Chūyū-ki* [*Diary of Fujiwara-no-Munetada:* 1062–1141], edited by *Shiryō taisei* [Tokyo, 1934–44]); in 1107 for the retired Emperor Horikawa. See Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 450–51.

23 *Rihōō-ki*, the diary of Prince Shigeaki (906–954), *Daigo-ji zōji-ki* (Tokyo, 1931), in the article of the Eleventh Day of the Ninth Month in A.D. 930.

24 Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 451–54.

25 According to the famous *Written Opinion* (*Iken-fūji*) presented to Emperor Daigo by the Confucian scholar Kiyotsura Miyoshi in the tenth century, the memorial services on the forty-ninth day and on the first anniversary day were overvalued by the nobles and government officials as well as by the common people, leading to several bad results. Kiyotsura

Awareness of the Arrival of the Latter Age of Buddha's Law (Mappō-tōrai) and a Pessimistic View of This Impure World (Onri-Edo)

In the Nara Period there was a sharp distinction between state Buddhism, which developed under the patronage and control of the government, and private or popular Buddhism. The attitude of the government toward private beliefs and practices was negative and suppressive. The popularization of Buddhism initiated by Gyōgi was frequently prohibited and suppressed, while En-no-Shōkaku was said to have been exiled. Both these men, as I have pointed out, endeavored to distribute Buddha's gospel and Buddhistic mystical power to the common people. Many tried to become government priests by taking the state examination for licensure or to broaden their education by studying abroad. The *biku* (*bhiksu* in Sanskrit), or othodox Buddhist priest, was treated as a government official. Many state temples established by the government or by the imperial family included lands and peasants as an economic endowment. The bureau for re-

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asked why it is necessary for the descendants to insure the rebirth of one's deceased father in Amida's Pure Land, even to the extent of incurring debts or of becoming bankrupt. We can realize from this how memorial services based on the worship of Amida and the Lotus Sutra flourished widely and presumably brought wealth to the Nembutsu practitioners. See Miyoshi-no-Kiyotsura (A.D. 847–918), *Iken jūnikajō* (*Written Opinion Consisting of Twelve Articles*) written in 914, published in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. XXVII (Tokyo, 1930).

ligious affairs in the government was called Sō-gō.[26] The headquarters for the state and large temples was called San-gō.[27] The government Buddhist priests acquired the religious and social status of their temple.[28]

Many state and clan temples were built for the sole benefit of their own supporting group, and gained political and economic independence. Their religious functions were never opened to the public. The interests of the priests in the state or clan temples, as well as those of the *gaku-sō* and *dai-shū* groups, likewise became more and more political and secularistic and less religious. The nobles of the Heian period were strongly superstitious. They feared revenge of the spirit of a dead enemy; they believed in necromancy and telepathy performed by female shamans and in divination based on astrology and the calendar as taught by professors of Yin-yang philosophy and magic (*Onmyō-hakase*).[29] Consequently, the reli-

[26] The *Sō-gō* consists of a *Sō-jō* (bishop), a *Sōzu* (sub-bishop) and a *Risshi* (head controller of disciplinary affairs). Afterward, these titles became only honorary ones given by the government to scholarly and outstanding Buddhist priests.

[27] The *San-gō* consists of three classes. The head of *San-gō* was called *Ji-shu* (head of the temple).

[28] Status could be improved by length of service after ordination as well as by study and merits. Among the government Buddhist priests, the so-called *gaku-sō* (literally, scholar monks) were many lower-class unordained priests who engaged in the practical affairs of managing the temples and buddha halls and serving the higher priests. One class, called the *dai-shū* or *shū-to* (literally, masses), sprang up in rivalry to the *gaku-sō* group. Afterward, this *dai-shū* or *shū-to* group seized power in certain temples and formed a great political and economic bloc against other politically powerful families. See Hori, "Wagakuni no gaku-sō kyōiku ni tsuite" ("On the Training of Scholarly Buddhist Monks in Japan"), *Nihon shūkyō-shi kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1963), II, 141–64.

[29] See Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, 76–78.

gious functions of the *gaku-sō* were limited largely to scholarly discussions of the mysterious world of phantoms and to the performance of magic for rain, defeat of the enemy, recovery from illness, or easy childbirth.[30] The *gaku-sō* were honored by awards, donations, and promotions in ecclesiastical status extended to them by the emperor, nobles, or supporters.

Institutional Buddhism nominally opened its doors to the common people. Nevertheless, with the lapse of time, the princes, princesses, and children of noble families who went into the religious world generally occupied the higher ranks in the sects as well as in the temples. As a result, the state and the larger temples inevitably became more and more aristocratic, formalistic, and secularistic. Consequently, a person awakening to a real religious need, who wanted to live a life in pursuit of Buddhist truth and enlightenment as well as to distribute the Buddha's gospel to the common people, rejected the official Buddhist order. In other words, one had to retire again from the religious world. Consequently, and because of a widespread awareness of the arrival of the Latter Age of the Buddha's Law (*Mappō*), as well as because of the social disturbances and anxiety cropping up simultaneously with this consciousness, new religious movements and groups of *hijiri* (holy men) appeared.

The idea of *Mappō*, according to Anesaki,[31] was based on a group of predictions offering a pessimistic view of fate long fashionable among Buddhists. There were to be

[30] *Ibid.*, 84–88.

[31] Masaharu Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (London, 1930, and Tokyo, 1963), pp. 131–33; See also Mitsusada Inouye, *Nihon Jōdo-kyō seiritsu-shi no kenkyū* (*A Study of the History of the Formation of Japanese Pure Land Sects*) (Tokyo, 1956).

three periods of deterioration in Buddhism after Sakyamuni's death. The first thousand years (or five hundred years, according to another tradition) constituted the period of the Perfect Law (in Japanese *Shō-bō*), in which monastic discipline would be perfectly observed. The second thousand years constituted the age of the Copied Law (in Japanese *Zō-bō*), in which true faith would decline but piety would be evidenced in the founding of numerous temples. Finally, the third period, that of the Latter Law (in Japanese, *Mappō*), to last another ten thousand years, would be an age of complete degeneration, full of vice and strife. This apocalyptic legend was almost universal in Buddhist countries. Since Chinese and Japanese Buddhists usually dated the Buddha's death as 949 B.C., they believed, either in apprehension or in hope, that the last period was to start in the year A.D. 1052.

It was Saichō who first awakened to the critical situation of Buddhism and society. He is credited with the book *Mappō tōmyō ki* (Light in the Latter Law Age),[32] though it is somewhat doubtful that it is really his work. The message of this book deeply influenced thoughtful persons, not only among the ecclesiastical monks,[33] but also among the intelligentsia and even the masses. The author gave warning of the arrival of the Age of the Lat-

[32] Saichō, *Mappō tōmyō ki* (*Light in the Latter Law Age*), in *Nihon daizō-kyō* (Tokyo, 1919–21), Vol. XL, Tendai Section No. 12.

[33] For example, see Genkū, *Wago tōroku*, a collection of Genkū's preachings, in *Taishō daizō kyō* (Tokyo, 1931), LXXXIII, No. 2611, 171–238; Yōsai (Eisai), *Kōzen gokoku ron* (*The Rise of Zen Buddhism as Guardian of the State*), in *Taishō daizō kyō*, LXXX, No. 2543, 6; Nichiren, *Shishin gohon shō* (*Four Kinds of Faith and Five Classes of Practitioners*), in *Taishō daizō kyō*, LXXXIV, No. 2696, 287; Shinran, *Kyōgyōshinshō* (*Doctrine, Practice, Faith, and Realization*), in *Taishō daizō kyō*, LXXXIII, No. 2646, 633.

ter Law in the near future and insisted on the necessity of accommodating the truths revealed in the Lotus Sutra to the character and needs of this degenerate age.

Thus the new *hijiri* movement stressed the essential importance of individual faith and unworldliness. This movement was from magico-religious and secular restriction to the spiritual freedom of individuals. It suddenly appeared in the latter part of the tenth and the early part of the eleventh centuries. Kōya, Jakushin, Genshin (known as Eshin-sōzu), and Ryōnin may be pointed out as representative *hijiri* among the Amidists. Zōga,[34] Shō-

[34] Zōga-hijiri was a famous scholar of the Tendai sect. However, he hated the secularism of the Tendai monasteries and escaped from Mount Hiei under pretense of madness, and at last settled in seclusion on Mount Tōno-mine. He never went down the mountain to Kyoto even when the emperor invited him. One day a concubine invited him so that she might receive the Buddhist initiation from him. He declined several times with thanks. The concubine, however, never gave up, having great respect for him. At last he made an exception and reluctantly consented. He went to her palace in Kyoto. However, he did not give her the commandments of Buddhism, but was eccentric in his conduct, indulged in remarks to induce her to leave him alone, and hurried home. Having completely abandoned all interest in this world, he died sitting in Buddhist contemplation and praying the Lotus Sutra. Many priests and laymen admired him for his personality and behavior, and contracted warm friendships with him. Among them were Shōkū, Genshin, and Jakushin. See *Hokke gen ki* (*Mysterious Legends Concerning Belief in the Lotus Sutra*), in *Zoku gunsho ruijū* (Tokyo, 1930), Vol. VIII, Upper Part, Chapter III; *Zoku ōjō den* (*Biographies of Persons Who Went to Amida's Pure Land after Death* [succeeding the *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki*]), in *Gunsho ruijū* (Tokyo, 1930), Vol. V; *Konjaku monogatari* (*Legends Old and New*), in *Kokushi taikei* (Tokyo, 1931), Vol. XVII, Chaps. XII–XXXIII; *Uji shūi monogatari*, a collection of Japanese legends, in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XVIII, Chap. XII; *Washū Tōnominedera Zōga Shōnin gyōjō ki* (*Biography of Zōga Shōnin in Mount Tōnomine Temple*), in *Zoku gunsho ruijū*, Vol. VIII, Lower Part; see also Hori, "On the Concept of Hijiri (Holy-man)," pp. 205–6.

kū,[35] and others were *hijiri* from the Lotus Sutra school, though some different attitudes should be recognized between the two groups. Those of the Lotus Sutra school

[35] According to the biographies and legends concerning Shōkū, he acquired faith in Buddhism in his early days. However, it was not until he was thirty-six years of age that he joined the Buddhist priesthood. Then he stayed on Mount Kirishima and Mount Seburi in Kyushu, where he assiduously practiced the austerities of the Lotus Sutra, received mysterious power, and attained enlightenment. He finally came to Mount Shosha in present Hyōgo prefecture and built a Buddhist temple on the top of the mountain. His personality and deeds were extremely unusual, and there are many anecdotes about him. He composed a poem entitled "Kantei go" ("Words about the Secluded Retreat"):

I, a hermit at a secluded retreat, am
Poor and also humble;
I am not ambitious for wealth and distinction,
But love my own life;
Though the four walls are crude,
The Eight Winds cannot trespass on them;
Though one gourd for wine is empty,
The *samâdhi* is full to the brim spontaneously;
I do not know anyone,
There is neither slander nor praise;
No one knows me,
There is neither hatred nor affection;
When I lie down with my head resting on my arm,
Delight and happiness exist in it;
For what purpose should I wish again for
Unstable luxury which is like a floating cloud!

Many priests and laymen loved him for his virtues and visited him in order to receive his teaching and salvation. Among them were the retired Emperor Kazan, Fujiwara-no-Michinaga, Genshin, Jakushin, and others. A famous poem composed by Izumi-shikibu dedicated to Shōkū is:

I who might pass from darkness to darkness
To the Moon which is now coming out from behind the mountain,
Oh! my Moon, please throw your light on me from afar!

See *Shōkū Shōnin den* (*Biography of Shōkū*) written in A.D. 1010, in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. V; *Shosha-zan Shōnin den* (*Biography of the Saint of Mount Shosha*), in *Chōya-gunsai*, which was said to have been written by the retired Emperor Kazan, in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XXIX, Upper Part; *Hokke gen ki*, Chap. II, 45; *Konjaku monogatari*, Chaps. XII–XXIV. See also Hori, "On the Concept of Hijiri (Holy-man)," pp. 206–7.

were characterized by strict seclusion from both the secular and the ecclesiastical worlds, while the *Amida-hijiri* were characterized by a desire to proclaim Amida's gospel among the masses. The Lotus school *hijiri* was individualistic or self-perfectionistic; the *Amida-hijiri*, evangelistic.

There were two important reactions to the consciousness of crisis induced by the *Mappō* teaching. Helpless anxiety and despair largely overwhelmed orthodox Buddhist priests and the sophisticated upper class.[36] The forerunners of the new movements endeavored to find ways of self-enlightenment to cope with this hopeless and depraved age as a given reality, and strove for the salvation of the common people in their everyday life.[37]

[36] For example, Jichin (1155–1225), *Gukanshō*, a historical view of Japan, Vol. VII, in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XIV, pp. 609–16; Kōen (d. 1169), *Fusō ryakki* (*Chronicles of Japanese History*), Vol. XXIX, in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XII, p. 796; Fujiwara-no-Sanesuke (957–1046), *Shōyūki* (1023), in *Shiryō taisei* (Tokyo, 1934–35), 3 vols.; Fujiwara-no-Sukefusa (1007–1057), *Shun-ki* (1052), in *Shiryō taisei*.

[37] These leaders included Genkū (known as Hōnen Shōnin; 1133–1212) and Shinran (1173–1262), both followers of the Amidist group and its organizers; Eisai (1141–1215) and Dōgen (1200–1253), the transmitters of Zen Buddhism from China; and Nichiren (1221–1281), the successor of the Lotus school *hijiri* and the founder of the Nichiren sect. These all appeared in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the direct influence of the new movement and a consciousness of the arrival of the Latter Age. (See note 33, above.)

Emergence of the Nembutsu-hijiri or Amida-hijiri

The character of the *hijiri* was originally private and arbitrary, and always exhibited a negative attitude toward society, especially toward authority or social status. However, because the religious needs of the common people were not necessarily confined within the limits of the present world, the *hijiri*, with an anti-secularistic character and supra-mundane behavior and attitude, gained high esteem among those who were dissatisfied with official Buddhism. The personalities and conduct of a small group of early *hijiri* infused a fresh spirit into the religious world. Though their behavior seems somewhat eccentric at first glance, they never departed in the least from their unshakable faith in strict practices.

The pioneer of the *Nembutsu-hijiri* or *Amida-hijiri* was Kōya (popularly known as Kūya). Kōya had been an *upâsaka*, and belonged to the Tendai sect. According to the biographies written by his friends and followers, Yoshishige-no-Yasutane (Jakushin) and Minamoto-no-Tamenori, Kōya hid himself among the citizens of Kyoto, urging them to practice the Nembutsu. It is said that he was a son of the emperor, but he never revealed his identity. One day he descended from Mount Hiei, the location of the central headquarters of the Tendai sect where he had studied. He had found the mountain annoying and noisy but Kyoto quiet and peaceful and more conducive to his work. He was therefore called *Ichi-no-hijiri* ("*hijiri* in the city"). He continued to pray unceasingly

to Amida; thus he was also called *Amida-no-hijiri*. One of Kōya's biographers wrote that before he appeared there were few who had specifically practiced the *Nembutsu-zammai* in any of the temples or communities; furthermore, the common people had avoided it. However, once Kōya appeared, praying the Nembutsu himself and strongly urging the people to pray to Amida, the whole nation was soon worshipping Amida. He also traveled through several provinces to distribute Amida's merciful gospel as well as to perform social welfare work. He died at the present Rokuhara-mitsu-ji temple in Kyoto in A.D. 972.[38]

In 984, twelve years after Kōya's death, Genshin was devoting himself to writing the famous work *Ōjō-yōshū* (*A Selection of Sacred Words Concerning Going to Amida's Western Pure Land.*)[39] Following the *Nembutsu-zammai* founded by Ennin in the Tendai sect, Genshin lived in seclusion at Yogawa on the inner Mount Hiei—he despised honor and reputation in this world; there he made up his mind to practice the life of a *hijiri*. His work, his personality, and his scholarship exerted as far-reaching an influence on the nobles and intelligentsia as Kōya had on the common people. He started the *Mukae-kō* service, in which was performed a drama of the coming down of Amida, accompanied by many Buddhist

[38] Minamoto-no-Tamenori, *Kōya rui* (*A Tribute to the Memory of Saint Kōya* [written immediately after Kōya's death]), in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. VIII, Lower Part; Yoshishige-no-Yasutane (Jakushin, d. 997), *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki*, in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. V.

[39] *Ōjō yōshū* consists of ten chapters, the first two being most famous because of the description of hell and paradise and which has been compared to Dante's *Divine Comedy* by some Japanese religious thinkers. It was published by Shinshō Hanayama with annotations (Tokyo, 1942). See also *Taishō daizō kyō*, Vol. LXXXIV, No. 2682.

saints and angels, to welcome the spirits of believers. It was enacted in the Pure Land Hall (*Gokuraku-dō* or *Amida-dō*), which is itself a symbolic model of Amida's paradise. Genshin also founded a religious association named *Nijūgo-zammai-kesshū*, the aim of which was to enable members to be reborn without fail into Amida's Pure Land as a result of the concentrated merit of Nembutsu said by like-minded persons.[40] In the preface to *Ōjō-yōshū*, he wrote that teachings and practices aimed at rebirth in Amida's paradise were best for the corrupt world of the Latter Age. Everyone—priest and layman, high and low—must be converted to faith in Amida's paradise; however, the Buddha's teachings were divided into apparent doctrines (in Japanese, *kengyō*) and secret doctrines (in Japanese, *mikkyō*), consisting of various theories and austerities. Although for the wise and diligent man it would not be difficult to understand and practice these several doctrines, the stupid and obstinate man, like Genshin, could be saved in the Latter Age only by invoking the name of Amida Buddha.[41]

These efforts of Genshin, together with Kōya's endeavors and Jakushin's movement to promote the virtues of Nembutsu among the common people as well as among the scholars and intelligentsia, had a deep influence on the Japanese people. As a result, there was an increase in the number of *hijiri* who practiced Nembutsu in the mountains around Mount Hiei as well as of lay *hijiri* (*zoku-hijiri*) in cities and rural communities.[42]

[40] *Nijūgo zammai kishō*, written by Genshin in 986 and 988. See Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, 284–88.

[41] Preface to *Ōjō yōshū*, Iwanami Bunko edition, p. 19.

[42] The legend of Kyōshin-hijiri or Kyōshin-shami was one of the models of such *zoku-hijiri* of the Nembutsu which had a far-reaching influence on Nembutsu practitioners in later ages. Kyōshin supported his wife and son by manual labor in a small farming village in present Hyōgo prefecture. He was converted to the Nembutsu belief and repeated the name of Amida incessantly day and night. Villagers nicknamed him Amida-maru (man of Amida). He died in a small hut repeating "Namu-Amida-Butsu." After he died, his corpse was fed to dogs, as he had willed. Several priests learned through dreams that the soul of Kyōshin had been welcomed into Amida's Pure Land. It was said that Shinran usually talked about the personality and behavior of Kyōshin as his model. Chishin visited the place of Kyōshin's death several times and wanted to die there. Afterward, the Noguchi Dai Nembutsu (Great Nembutsu Service at Noguchi) was dedicated to the memory of Kyōshin by Tan-amidabutsu, one of the Chishin's disciples, and it is practiced even today. See *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki; ōjō jūin* (*Ten Causes for Rebirth in Amida's Land*) by Yōkan (1103), in *Taishō daizō kyō*, LXXXIV, No. 2683; *Goshūi ōjō den*, one of the biographies of persons who went to Amida's Land after death, by Miyoshi-no-Tameyasu (1049–1139), in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. VIII, Upper Part. *Genkō shaku sho*, biographies of Buddhist monks and the history of Japanese Buddhism, by Shiren (1287–1346) [1322], in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XXXI, Chap. IX; *Ippen hijiri e* (*Diagram of the Biography of Ippen Hijiri*), Chaps. IX and XI, in *Zoku gunsho ruijū*, Vol. IX, and in *Dai Nippon bukkyō zensho*, Vol. LXIX; *Kaija-shō*, a book of a convert to the true teachings of Shinran, by Kakunyo (1270–1351), in *Shinshū seiten zensho* (Tokyo, 1907).

Yoshishige-no-Yasutane, who called himself Jakushin after he took holy orders in Buddhism, lived at the same time as Kōya and Genshin. He was also known as *Naiki-no-hijiri* because he had formerly been a court official in the department of the secretariat (*Naiki*). After his conversion he began *Kangaku-e* meetings. Their aim was to allow students and professors of the state university in Kyoto and awakened scholarly Tendai priests to assemble once a month to discuss the theories of the Lotus Sutra in the daytime, to pray the Nembutsu in the evening, and to express their religious feelings in Chinese and Japanese poetry. In A.D. 985–986 he wrote *Nihon Ōjō-gokuraku-ki* (*Compiled Biographies of Persons Who Went to Ami-*

da's Pure Land after Death). He recorded his intention in the preface:

> *I had already prayed to Amida in my youth; however, after I was forty years old, my belief in the Nembutsu became more and more ardent. Therefore I chant the name of Amida with my mouth, and meditate on Amida and his Pure Land in my mind. These practices I have never forgotten in any moment of my daily life, not even for an instant. Wherever there are temples and halls in which the statues of Amida are enshrined, or where there are mandala of the Pure Land, I have worshipped without exception. I have formed a pious connection with all those who have an intention to be reborn in Amida's Pure Land—whether laymen or priests, men or women, without exception.*[43]

Jakushin's legendary life was full of eccentricities. For example, he wandered about the country strongly urging people to embrace Nembutsu as well as to attend Buddhist masses. He always loved animals—even fat horses and bulls. When he saw temples, Buddha halls, pagodas, or stupas on his route, he never failed to get off his horse and worship at them piously. One day, the biographer says, he was invited to visit the home of one of his disciples, but he did not come until sunset. The host, wondering why he did not arrive, went to search for him. The disciple found him in a graveyard along the road. He was worshipping at each tomb, shedding tears and offering Nembutsu for the spirit of each of the dead.[44]

[43] Preface to *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki*, in *Gunsho ruijū*, V, 394.

[44] *Zoku honchō ōjō den* (*Succeeding Biographies of Persons Who Went to Amida's Land after Death*), by Ōe-no-Masafusa (1041–1111), in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. V; *Konjaku monogatari*, Vol. XIX; see Hori, "On the Concept of Hijiri," p. 204.

The Belief in Goryō

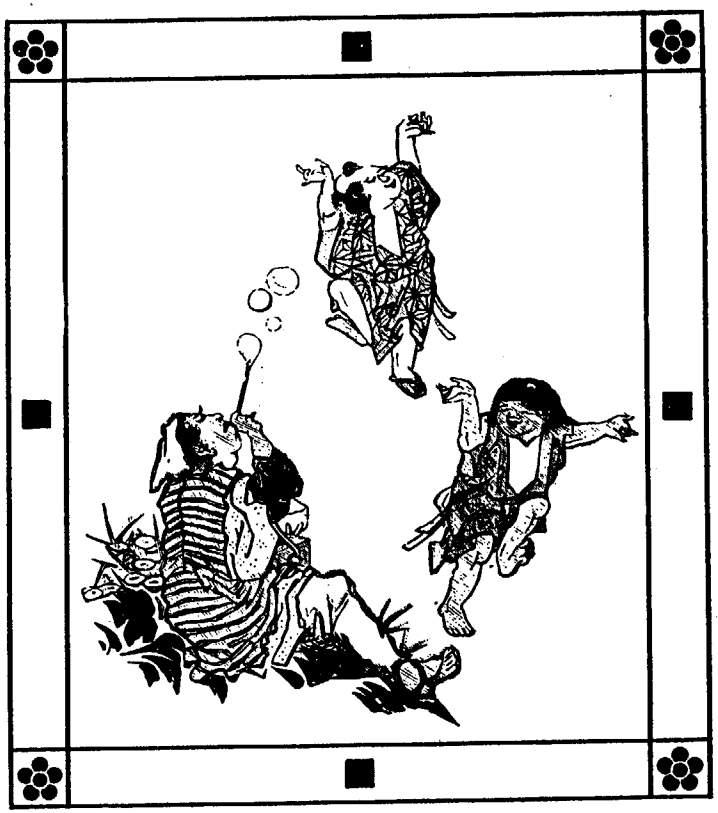
The belief in spirits of the dead which flourished in the Heian period seems to have had some connection with the ancient *hito-gami* type of belief already discussed in some detail in the previous chapters. Perhaps in the ancient theocratic ages it was permitted only for the spirits of persons of special political or magico-religious families to reappear in this world as powerful *hito-gami* (man gods). However, the ancient social order collapsed under the strong influence of Chinese and Korean immigrants and the Chinese civilization brought by them. Individual self-consciousness emerged under the influence of Buddhism, which taught both the equality of human beings regardless of social status and the innate existence of Buddha-ness (*Busshō* in Japanese) in every individual. As a result, the primitive concept of the human soul as well as the belief in *hito-gami* were gradually transformed in content and character. It may also be presumed that the consciousness of the shamans and priests who first revealed the *hito-gami* and served them was transformed in various ways.

By the end of the Nara period and throughout the Heian period superstitious and animistic beliefs were prevalent among the nobility as well as among the masses, and the magico-religious needs of the times made welcome the Mantrayâna magic brought by Saichō and Kūkai in a new and powerful form. As a result, the Tendai and the other sects were gradually "mantrayanized" by Saichō's successors, such as Ennin and Enchin (Chisō

Daishi: A.D. 814–891). The most significant of these superstitious and animistic beliefs was the belief in goryō. Found at the basis of popular beliefs in the early Heian period, this belief possibly originated in the ancient belief in *hito-gami* of the shamanic and charismatic folk religion, and under the influence of Buddhism and Yin-yang or religious Taoism was transformed into belief in individual evil spirits of the dead.

Though this belief may be only a survival or transformation of old folk religion, it seems to me that the flourishing belief in goryō at that time should be considered important in the history of Japanese religion, because many heterogeneous elements of foreign religions commingled around this belief, each taking a share in religious activities against the malevolent spirits of the dead. Usually the Tendai or Shingon Mantrayâna ascetics (*shugen-ja*) and shamanesses or their substitutes played the main roles. Shamanesses would announce the names and declare the will of the spirits of the dead in time of famine, epidemic, drought, flood, the falling of a thunderbolt, personal illness, evil dreams, and difficult childbirth. In order to soothe such revengeful and angry evil spirits, there was a reburial of their remains, a posthumous award of honorific name and court rank, and Shinto, Yin-yang, and Buddhist services. We must note that this belief provoked serious reflection on the part of those who achieved victory as well as consolation for the defeated, whose future vindication was assured.

By A.D. 863 there had already come into existence five major goryō-*shin* deities: the spirits of two disenthroned crown princes, the real mother of one of these princes, and two ministers who had suffered martyrdom. At this time epidemics were frequent, and many people died.



Public opinion attributed this to the anger of the goryō. Consequently, the Goryō-e festival was held under the auspices of the emperor at the imperial garden. This festival included music and dances, sumō wrestling, horse racing, archery, as well as Shinto, Buddhist, and Yin-yang services to soothe these angry spirits.[45] Afterward, two Shinto shrines—Upper and Lower Goryō-*jinja*—dedicated to the eight goryō-*shin* deities were erected in Kyoto.

After Sugawara-no-Michizane (845–903)[46] had died at his place of exile in Kyushu, a rumor arose to the effect that his angry spirit might retaliate against his enemies. The crown prince died suddenly in 923; in 930, the imperial palace was struck by lightning, and several of the court officials who had overthrown Sugawara died of shock; the emperor was indisposed, and soon died. Then in 942 a shamaness possessed by the deceased Sugawara's spirit announced that these disasters had been willed by him. In 955 an inspired young child of a Shinto priest also announced the same divine message and proclaimed that the spirit of Sugawara had become the deity of disasters and a chief deity of the thunder demons. The imperial court, surprised by these divine messages and the public rumor, enrolled his angry spirit among the deities and dedicated to him a shrine, named the Kitano-jinja, in Kyoto.[47]

[45] *Sandai jitsu-roku* (*Official record of the reigns of three emperors* [Seiwa, Yōzei and Kōkō, from A.D. 858 to 887]), Chap. VII, in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. IV.

[46] Sugawara-no-Michizane was a famous scholar and politician of that time. Emperor Uda promoted him to a responsible post in order to set him against the powerful Fujiwara family. After the emperor retired, his rivals slandered him before the new young Emperor Daigo and condemned him to exile in Kyushu.

[47] See Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, I, 414–18.

The appearance of Sugawara's goryō marked the climax of this belief, and ushered in the so-called Goryō age. We can realize from the diaries, essays, and novels written by the nobles and intellectuals at that time how the people were in constant fear and anxiety over rampages of goryō. As Lady Seishōnagon, the author of the famous essay *Makura no sōshi*, had wisely pointed out, these trends in the religious world were the result of abuses in an age which never manifested sound-minded belief. The magical Buddhist priests and *upâsaka*-magicians, as well as the shamans and Yin-yang priests, actively promoted this trend in collusion with each other and also possessed the confidence of the troubled persons by means of their magic. They threatened the nobles' minds freely, leading them by the nose, for they could also give them relief from their troubles.

The appearance of the Way of Yin-yang (*Onmyō-dō*), under the leadership of the Kamo and Abe families, is surely explained by this milieu. Old forms of magic still remained, but in an extremely passive state. The Kamo and Abe professors divined the causes of disasters and interpreted portents by astrology and the sacred book *Yi-king* (*The Book of Changes*). At their suggestion, nobles practiced purification ceremonies, abstinence, confinement to their houses on unlucky days, movement in lucky directions, and so on.[48] Nevertheless, after everything is considered, it may be said that the magic of the Mantrayâna priests and ascetics was more up-to-date and mysterious, more positive and aggressive, than either folk Shinto or Yin-yang magic. The Buddhist magicians held the public confidence, for by their magic and prayers the evil spirits

[48] See Bernard Frank, *Kata-imi et kata-tagae, Étude sur les interdits de direction à l'époque Heian* (Tokyo, 1958).

of the dead announced by shamans and Yin-yang diviners could not only be exorcised and driven away but also saved and sent off to Amida's Pure Land.

As the belief in goryō became more and more widespread, the possibility of becoming a goryō or a deified spirit was gradually extended to even the common people. The will of an individual, especially in the last moments of life, was believed to be most effective toward his becoming a goryō and taking revenge on his enemies. The belief in a future life gave a sense of freedom from danger and of calm resignation to fate. It was through the attractiveness of this hope that *shugen-ja* and *Nembutsu* practitioners achieved great prominence.[49]

The Rise of the Nembutsu Practices against the Goryō

On the popular level, belief in goryō seemed to effect a sudden rise in Nembutsu practices and prayers at the same time as the rise of the *shugen-ja* in the mountains. The cohesion of Nembutsu practice with practices based on the Lotus Sutra centering in the Tendai sect necessarily brought about the cohesion of Nembutsu practitioners with *shugen-ja* ascetics. Both together revolutionized the popular Japanese concept of the soul. It was then that the Nembutsu came to be one of the most powerful forms of protection against goryō, being able to send the spirits of the dead and evil spirits into Amida's merciful hands. The professional Nembutsu practitioners also gradually came to embrace some of the *shugen-ja* asceti-

[49] Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, 457–70.

cism. The fact that Nembutsu practitioners and mountain ascetics were both called *hijiri* (holy men) by the common people should, I believe, be attributed to this common characteristic.

As the movement of the early *Nembutsu-hijiri* group led by Kōya, Genshin, and Jakushin became more and more popular and widespread, esoteric characteristics such as mystery, symbolism, asceticism, and the merit of numerous repeated prayers were introduced into Nembutsu practice.[50] These devotions, all based on the Amida sutras,[51] have as their object firm faith in salvation in the future life by means of such religious sentiments as were evoked by the masked procession of angels and bodhisattvas of the Pure Land, sweet music and dances, and the mimic play of the coming down of Amida to welcome the spirits of his believers. The *Amida-dō* halls dedicated to Amida Butsu inspired people by creating an image of Amida's Paradise.[52]

[50] For example, we can find such mysterious and symbolic elements in the *Mukae-kō* or *Geisetsu-e* service of Genshin, as well as in the *Shijū-hachi-kō* for the repetition of "Namu-Amida-Butsu" and the recitation of the Forty-eight Vows of Amida described in the *Larger Sukhâvati Sûtra*, the *Ōjō-kō* for rebirth in the Pure Land after death, the *Amida-kō* for praying to Amida; see *Larger Sukhâvati Sûtra* or *Buddhabhâshita-mahâyânâmitâyur-vyûha-sûtra*, *Nanjō Catalogue*: No. 863. (See note 9, above.)

[51] Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, 304–7.

[52] For this purpose they were constructed and decorated in accordance with the descriptions in the sutras concerning Amida Butsu. They were usually called "Halls for the Coming Down of Amida" (*Geisetsu-dō*), "Illuminated Halls" (*Hikaru-dō*), "Golden-colored Halls" (*Konjiki-dō*), or "Paradise Halls" (*Gokuraku-dō*). Many paintings and scrolls represented the circumstances of the Pure Land and the figure of Amida and his accompanying angels and bodhisattvas appearing from the Western Heaven to welcome believers. The former were called *Jōdo-mandara* or *Jōdo-hensō-zu*; the latter, *Raigō-zu*. When a person fell into a critical

The Nembutsu ascetics engaged in fasting, flaying the skin of the palm of the hand or the side of the feet, touching a flame directly to the palm, writing the Buddhist scriptures with one's own blood as ink, and self-amputation of fingers and toes in order to offer austerity to Amida as well as to testify to firm belief. Sometimes they sought death at their own hands by drowning, burning, or hanging, so that they might go directly to Amida's Pure Land by virtue of unusually strong will power. Some announced their intention in advance. Many persons gathered at the appointed place to witness the event, weeping and worshipping with adoration. They often experienced the illusion of seeing the five-colored clouds which came down from the Western Heaven or heard the melodious music which announced the descent of Amida to welcome the suicide Nembutsu ascetic.[53]

The chanting of Nembutsu in extended repetitions was also typical. For instance, Yōkan (or Eikan) was said to have practiced repeating the name of Amida ten thousand times a day in his youth. In the prime of life, he said it sixty thousand times a day without missing a single day.[54] One nun named Anraku repeated the *Namu-Amida-Butsu* prayer fifty thousand times on each ordinary day and one hundred thousand times on each festi-

condition, the Nembutsu priest let him take hold of the five colored strings attached to the hands of a golden statue of Amida in order to assure him directly of the welcome and salvation of the Buddha. This custom, called *ito-hiki*, flourished in the Heian period. Fujiwara-no-Michinaga died holding the five colored strings tightly and repeating the name of Amida. See *ibid.*, II, 304–17.

[53] *Ibid.*, II, 307–10.

[54] *Shūi ōjō den*; *Genkō shakusho*; Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, p. 309.

val day.[55] Chōi of Kurama-dera temple counted the number of recitations of the Nembutsu with red beans from March, 1127, to August, 1141. His total number of repetitions during these thirteen years and five months reached 1,427.33 bushels (287 *koku* 6 *tō*). He also strongly urged the repeating of Nembutsu by worshippers and pilgrims, and counted their numbers by the fruits of the linden tree (Bodhendrum, the Tree of Enlightenment, which is sacred to Buddhists). The total count was said to be 17,653.053 bushels (3,557 *koku*).[56] Gansai, who lived near Asuka-dera temple in Nara prefecture, also counted the number of Nembutsu for fifteen years or more, and his total was 3,474 bushels (700 *koku*).[57] Again, Kyōshin repeated the Nembutsu prayer one hundred thousand times a day, and a million times a fortnight.[58]

On the other hand, it should be mentioned that there are several examples of brutal or impious persons who went to Amida's Western Paradise by virtue of only one saying of the name of the Buddha with a faithful mind at the moment of death.[59] Many legends tell us that even

[55] *Shūi ōjō den*; Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, p. 309.

[56] *Genkō shakusho*, Chap. XII; Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, p. 309.

[57] *Genkō shakusho*, Chap. XVII; Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, p. 309.

[58] *Sange ōjō den*, one of the biographies of persons who went to Amida's Land after death, by Zenren (about 1139), in *Gunsho ruijū*, Vol. VIII; Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, p. 309.

[59] Even brutal robbers or murderers could go to Amida's Paradise through only one utterance of "Namu-Amida-Butsu." See *Hosshin-shū*, a collection of legends of converts to the faith of Amida, by Kamo-no-

some professional Nembutsu priests who strived for numerous repetitions of the Buddha's name fell into evil after death because their attention had strayed just at the moment of death.[60] This idea, I am sure, indicates that the state of one's mind at the moment of death is paramount in determining one's destiny in the future life, just as the possibility of deification or of becoming a *goryō* was believed to have depended primarily upon a determined mind in the last moment of life. The common belief, and the foundation of the belief in *goryō*, was that nothing was impossible to a determined mind at the moment of death.

Even though the merit of quantity as over quality in Nembutsu practices has been discussed for a long time by scholars of the Pure Land sects,[61] this was not only a theological problem among professional priests but also a

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Chōmei (1154–1216), in *Dai Nippon Bukkyō zensho*, Vol. CXLVII; *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki*; *Konjaku monogatari*; and other legendary literature. Cf. Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 310–11; 316–37 notes.

[60] Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 310–11.

[61] The doctrine of "Once Calling" (*ichinen-gi*) and the doctrine of "Many Calling" (*tanen-gi*) were points of dispute among Genkū's disciples. Kōsai was a representative of the "Once Calling" school, while Ryūkan was of the "Many Calling" school. The former doctrine was based on the metaphysical concept of the identity of our soul with Buddha's as taught in Tendai and Avatansaka philosophies. Being adapted to the inclination of easygoing believers, it found a number of advocates and grew in influence but led to neglect of moral discipline. Others brought scrupulous formalism into the religion of piety and insisted on the necessity of "many" (i.e., constant) thoughts of Buddha. This doctrine also found some followers and was identified with the prevalent mechanical repetition of Buddha's name, especially in company with many fellow believers. See Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, pp. 179–80.

common problem among people of the workaday world. Especially the emphasis on the possibility of salvation in the afterlife for even a dissolute, uneducated, or pagan person by only one chant of Nembutsu, if he had a firm and pious belief at the very moment of his death, opened the door of the Pure Land to all human beings. On the other hand, this doctrine was attended by many evils.

The Pure Land school and Nembutsu practices originated in the Tendai sect, but were promoted and developed by early *hijiri* groups. They were later gradually transmitted through various sects such as Hossō, Sanron, Kegon, Ritsu, and Shingon. However, until Genkū founded the Jōdo sect after the teachings of Shan-tao in T'ang China, this movement was confined to an affiliated branch or to individual belief and practice within each sect.[62]

Concurrently with this movement, Nembutsu practices against the goryō were spreading among the masses. Famines, epidemics, civil wars, and fires were widely feared disasters among the people of the capital, Kyoto. Accord-

[62] The Nembutsu branch in the Tendai sect was founded by Ryōnin (1072–1132) in 1124 and afterward became the independent Yūzū-Nembutsu-shū sect. Integrating the Tendai and Kegon theologies with the teachings of the Chinese Pure Land school, Ryōnin systematized his own doctrine. He said that one person's faith and repetition of Amida's name included all other persons' merits, and all other persons' merits were transferable to one's own merits, so that all human beings could gain the benefit of rebirth into the Western Pure Land after death. This doctrine was based on the teachings of the Pure Land school, the "One-and-All" idea of the *Avatansaka-sûtra* and the "Salvation-for-All" idea of the Lotus Sutra. See *Goshūi ōjō den*, Chap. II; *Genkō shakusho*, Chap. XI; *Yūzū enmon-shō* (*Outlines of the Yūzū-Nembutsu Theology*) by Yūkan (1703), in *Dai Nippon Bukkyō zensho*, LXIV; see also Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 291–94.

ing to documents and diaries[63] from the middle to the end of the Heian period, when famine and plague attacked Kyoto, the streets and river banks were covered with bodies of victims and there was no room to walk. As belief in goryō became more and more popular, disaster demons or deities, such as the god of plague, the demon of colds, the demon of thunderstorms, as well as the noxious insects causing famine, were gradually considered to be variations of the goryō. There were frequent demonstrations by popular Nembutsu practitioners or *hijiri*. They performed Nembutsu rituals as preventives against goryō who had become gods of plague or noxious insects on the one hand, and on the other they offered Nembutsu prayers for innocent victims who were believed to have a fair chance to become new goryō.[64]

[63] *Shoku Nihon kōki*, official records of the reign of Emperor Ninmyō from A.D. 833 to 850, in "The Article of A.D. 842," *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. III; Entry for A.D. 994 in *Honchō seiki* (*Uncompleted historical records from A.D. 935 to 1153*) compiled by Fujiwara-no-Michinori, in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. IX; Entry for A.D. 1001 in *Nihon Kiryaku*, a historical record from Emperor Jimmu to Emperor Goichijō (compiled by an unknown author), in *Kokushi taikei*, Vols. X and XI, and *Gon-ki*, Fujiwara-no-Yukinari's diary: present written copies preserve the diaries from 991 to 1011 in complete form, in *Shiryō taisei* series; Entry for A.D. 1105 in *Chūyū-ki*, the diary of Fujiwara-no-Munetada; 1062–1141, in 7 vols., in *Shiryō taisei*; see Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, pp. 459–61.

[64] Sometimes Nembutsu-hijiri advanced in the midst of battlefields to offer Nembutsu to the spirits of those who had fallen as well as to give dying soldiers assurance of salvation by Amida Butsu, urging them to pray the Nembutsu. According to a letter sent by Ta-a, who lived in Kamamura, at the defeat of the Hōjō forces at Kamakura in 1333, the battlefield resounded with repeated Nembutsu cries and prayers uttered by the soldiers of both sides under the influence of Nembutsu-hijiri of the Ji sect. Ta-a was a chief abbot of Yugyō-ji Temple in Fujisawa near Kamakura, which is still one of the headquarters of the Ji sect in the Jōdo school

Fear of spirits of the dead brought many ancient shamanistic ritual forms and customs into the popular Nembutsu practices. For example, dancing was reintroduced as a particular Nembutsu ritual form as a preventive against gods of plague. Musical instruments also appeared in the rituals. This became one of the most significant characteristics of popular Nembutsu practice, though some Buddhist scholars have explained that this custom might have come from a conventional phrase at the end of many Buddhist sutras: "All attendants, rejoicing and

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founded by Chishin. This curious name—Ta-a—is an abbreviation of Ta-amidabutsu. The custom of this kind of ordained name—that is, "so-and-so-amidabutsu" was called *Ami-gō* or *A-gō* and was originated by Chōgen, one of the disciples of Genkū. He traveled about provinces soliciting contributions for the reconstruction of the Tōdai-ji Temple, which had been destroyed in the war. He also urged and favored Nembutsu practices among the masses. He struck on this idea which would force his followers to repeat Nembutsu: he called himself Namuamidabutsu. Then he began to give his disciples and followers the religious name of Amidabutsu, prefixing one word to it, such as Ta-amidabutsu, Kan-amidabutsu, Jō-amidabutsu. Later, these names were shortened to Ta-ami, Kan-ami, Jo-ami, or Ta-a Kan-a, Jō-a. Thereafter, these were called *Ami-gō* or *A-gō*, which were their title names as Amidabutsu. This idea rapidly came into fashion. There were already several priests named "so-and-so-amidabutsu," such as Ben-a and Nan-a, among the leading disciples of Genkū. Afterward, Chishin also accepted this idea and gave the name of Amidabutsu to his disciples. According to historical and ethnographical documents, we can find many such *A-gō*, not only among the Jōdo school's professional priests and popular Nembutsu-hijiri in villages, but also among retired village laymen, out-caste peoples, public entertainers, artists, and actors, as well as Yin-yang magicians and medical doctors. Even today there are several families whose names originated from this custom, such as Hon'ami, Tan'ami, Kōami. The name of Kanze, one of the master families of the Kanze school of the Nō play, also came from the names of their two great ancestors, Kan-ami and Ze-ami. The ancestor of the Tokugawas was said to be Toku-ami, who had been a priest of the Ji sect.

dancing at the teachings of Buddha, saluted him and went away." However, the form of dancing accompanied by music and songs sung in a circle around the central altar or symbol is thought to be a particular form of the ritual of ancient Shintoistic *Chin-ka-sai* or *Hana-shizume-no-matsuri* in such shrines as Ōmiwa, Sai, and Ima-miya —all of which were dedicated to deities of plague or great *hito-gami*.[65] It was believed that this ritual kept the blossoms from falling, and that the gods of plague would roam about and spread the epidemic with the falling of the blossoms. Hence, this ritual form originated in many of the shrines' own magic festivals connected with the gods of plague. Further, the *Michiae-no-matsuri* took place under the leadership of Shinto and Yin-yang priests, who entertained the gods of plague with dancing, singing, and music. They also offered several kinds of food on the public highways in order to check the advance of the gods of plague from the outside.[66]

These ancient and primitive ritual forms should not be thought unrelated to the customs surrounding ancient funeral rites.[67] Subsequently, these ritual forms were

[65] *Ryō no gige (Interpretation of Codes of Laws)*, Chap. VI: "Kishun" ("Later Spring") in the chapter, "Jingi Ryō," which describes the annual Shinto festivals held in the imperial court or under the auspices of the Department of Shinto Affairs (*Jingi-ryō*), which was published in the *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XXII. See Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, I, 696–99.

[66] *Ryō no gige*, Chap. II; *Engishiki* (*Code of the Engi Era* [a code of laws and minute legal regulations of 927]), Chap. III: "Rinji-sai" ("Occasional Shinto Festivals Held under the Auspices of the Imperial Court and Government"), in *Kokushi taikei*, Vol. XXVI; see also Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, I, 696–99.

[67] In the ancient Chinese ethnograpical documents such as *Wei-chih*, written in the third century A.D., the funeral customs in ancient Japan were described as follows: "When someone died, all family members

probably associated with the Buddhist ritual of walking in a circle around a central altar, sprinkling paper flowers, and chanting the sutras in order to exalt the Buddha's virtue (*sange-gyōdō* in Japanese). The new form of Nembutsu dancing (*Nembutsu-odori* or *odori-Nembutsu*)[68] came to flourish among the masses. *Odori-Nembutsu* was believed to have been created by Kōya, though there is no documentary evidence for this. However, Chishin, the founder of the Ji sect, introduced the popular *odori-Nembutsu* forms into his sect for the purpose of attaining religious ecstasy, bringing all his attention and energy to bear on the *odori-Nembutsu* prayer. He believed in the legend that *odori-Nembutsu* had been created by Kōya-*hijiri*.[69] In the early Kamakura period such magical Nembutsu arts became differentiated and transformed into various polite forms of music, singing, dancing, as well as sym-

observe mourning for about two weeks. During this period, the chief mourner cries and weeps, while the others sing and dance, eat and drink in the house of mourning. After this, the body is buried." According to the *Kojiki*, when Ama-no-Wakahito died suddenly by the Heavenly Arrow, the survivors and relatives gathered at the mortuary and held the *eragi* (crying, weeping, singing, and dancing). Moreover, in the *Nihongi*, when the creative goddess Izanami gave birth to the Fire kami, she was burned and died. She was, therefore, buried at the village of Arima in Kumano, in the province of Ki (Wakayama prefecture). The inhabitants worship this goddess by offerings of flowers. They also worship her with drums, flutes, flags, singing, and dancing. See Hori, *Minkan shinkō*, pp. 216–17.

[68] At first, Nembutsu-odori and odori-Nembutsu may have had the same meaning. Later, however, odori-Nembutsu meant professional dancing originally under the leadership of Nembutsu-hijiri. Nembutsu-odori meant dancing, dramas, music and so on, derived from odori-Nembutsu, but which had lost religious elements.

[69] *Ippen-hijiri-e*, Vol. IV; see Hori, *Wagakuni minkan-shinkō-shi no kenkyū*, II, 350–52.

bolic pantomimes and dramatic plays. According to the *Genkō-shaku-sho* (*Biographies of Buddhist Priests and History of Japanese Buddhism*) written by Shiren in 1321, many Nembutsu priests and priestesses of the lower class attended banquets to perform their Nembutsu singing and dancing, and thereby, together with the blind musicians and dancing girls, entertained the guests.[70]

Religious Reformation— Establishment of Pure Land Sects

The founders of the orthodox Pure Land sects rejected the animistic and magical Nembutsu which was flourishing among the masses, and insisted on a return to original forms, according to the teachings of the sutras and the theologies systematized by Chinese priests of these sects.

Genkū, known as Hōnen Shōnin, after having searched in the *Tripitaka* to find the best way to salvation in the latter age, discovered and was converted to the works of Shan-tao of the Chinese Pure Land school as well as to the works of Genshin and Yōgan (1032?–1111).[71] Genkū abandoned and criticized the way for the wise (*Shōdō-mon*) of severe training, intricate ritualism, methodic contemplation, and belief in salvation by one's own

[70] "Dancing girls" is used for convenience. At that time they were called *shirabyōshi* or *keisei*, which means professional female dancers in white robes or medieval courtesans.

[71] Yōgan (or Eikan; 1032–1111) was abbot of the Zenrin-ji monastery of Kyoto and wrote a work called *Ōjō-jūin* (*The Ten Conditions for Attaining Rebirth in Paradise*). Among the conditions he emphasized not only the protection of Amida but also meditation and good works. See Eliot, *Japanese Buddhism*, p. 253.