

was expanded to include questions on the complex doctrines of the Sanron and Hossō schools.⁴²

SAICHŌ

The Heian period was dominated by two schools, Tendai and Shingon, the former established by Saichō and the latter by Kūkai, two of the most important figures in the history of Japanese Buddhism. Although both Tendai and Shingon were originally introduced from China, they were transformed by their Japanese protagonists into uniquely Japanese schools of Buddhism.

Saichō was born in 767 in Furuchi-gō (part of the present-day Ōtsu city) in Ōmi Province.⁴³ At the age of eleven he “left his family” (*shukke*) to enter the Ōmi Kokubunji, where he came under the tutelage of Gyōhyō, the provincial bishop of Ōmi. Two years later Saichō received his *tokudo* (initiation as a *shami*, “novice”). His full ordination (*jukai*, “accepting the [250] precepts”) raising him to the status of monk (*sō*) took place at Tōdaiji in 785. Immediately thereafter Saichō moved to Mount Hiei, where he devoted himself to meditation, worship, and especially the study of scripture. His abrupt move to Hiei was in keeping with the practice of many monks of the time, who sought to purify themselves and perhaps even acquire supernatural powers by undergoing austerities in the mountains. In Saichō’s case, as the five vows he made at the time suggest, the move to Hiei reflected disenchantment with the corruption that was infecting the great monasteries of Nara.

Saichō probably first heard of Tendai from his master Gyōhyō, who had been a disciple of Tào-hsüan (Japanese, Dōsen), a learned Chinese monk who was said to have been versed in the doctrines of

⁴² *Ruijū kokushi, kan* 187, edict dated Enryaku 20 (801)/4/15, *KT*, vol. 6, p. 314.

⁴³ The earliest and most reliable source for the biography of Saichō is the *Eizan Daishi den* compiled by his disciple Ninchū and included in *DDZ*, vol. 5, *furoku*, pp. 1–48. Another important primary source providing valuable information regarding Saichō’s date and place of birth, family background, service as a novice, and various ordinations is the collection of ordination certificates included in the same volume on pp. 101–5. For critical modern biographies of the life of Saichō, see Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School* (Berkeley, Calif.: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1984); Katsuno Ryūshin, *Hieizan to Kōyasan* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1959); Kiuchi Hiroshi, *Dengyō Daishi no shōgai to shisō, Regurusu bunko*, vol. 56 (Tokyo: Daisan bummeisha, 1976); Nakao Shumpaku, *Dengyō Daishi Saichō no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nagata bunshōdō, 1987); Saeki Arika, *Dengyō Daishi den no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1992); Shioiri Ryōdō and Kiuchi Gyōdō eds., *Saichō*, vol. 2 of *Nihon meisō ronshū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1982); Tamura Kōyū, *Saichō, Jimbutsu sōsho*, vol. 193 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1988).

the Kegon, Ritsu, and Zen schools, in addition to those of Tendai.⁴⁴ It was only after Saichō had settled on Hiei, however, that he was able to acquire a set of the major Tendai treatises, which he then studied with great enthusiasm. Gradually a small group of followers, which included monks such as Gishin and Enchō who were destined to become major disciples, gathered around him. Official recognition of his learning came twelve years after his move to Hiei, when, in 797, he was named one of the ten court chaplains (*naigubu jū zenji*) whose responsibility was to pray for the well-being of the emperor. This appointment entitled his small temple on Hiei to receive a subsidy paid from the Ōmi tax revenues.

The following year Saichō invited ten monks from Nara to hear a series of lectures on the *Hokekyō* and two related sutras, which together constitute the basic scriptures of Tendai. These lectures, designed by Saichō to commemorate the anniversary of the death of Chih-i, the Chinese systematizer of Tendai, provided him with an opportunity to expound to the scholar-monks of Nara Tendai doctrine, which had been only briefly introduced by the *Vinaya* master Chien-chen (Japanese, Ganjin), who had arrived in Japan in 754 carrying the major treatises of this school.⁴⁵ Known as the *Hokke jikkō* (The Ten Lectures on the Lotus), these memorial lectures held annually on Hiei in the eleventh month subsequently became a major event on the Tendai calendar.

In 802, Emperor Kammu, who was troubled by the frequent wrangling between the Nara schools, particularly between Hossō and Sanron, ordered Wake no Hiroyo, the head of the state Academy (*Daigaku*) and eldest son of the loyalist Kiyomaro, and Hiroyo's brother, the renowned scholar Matsuna, to arrange for lectures on Tendai at the Wake clan temple Takaosanji (the predecessor to present-day Jingoji in Kyoto). Kammu promoted Tendai, apparently hoping to provide some common ground for a resolution of the disputes between the Sanron and Hossō schools, since Tendai teachings included the concept of progressive revelation, according to which each of the major groups of scriptures had its own place in a grand design devised by Śākyamuni Buddha to lead his followers to accept

44 Gyōnen (1240–1321), *Sangoku Buppō denzū engi, kan 2*, BZ, vol. 101, p. 115a. In the same work Gyōnen quotes the now lost *Tendai fuhō engi*, which is attributed to Saichō, as saying that the Chinese monks Tao-hsüan, Chien-chen, and Fa-chin all disseminated the Tendai teachings in Japan (pp. 126b–27a).

45 Genkai, *Tō Daiwajō tōsei den* (779), BZ, vol. 113, p. 120a.

the *Hokekyō* as his final and highest teaching.⁴⁶ Kammu's plan to use Tendai as a unifying ideology for Japanese Buddhism was not unreasonable since Chi-tsang and Tz'u-en, the two most prominent scholar-monks of the Chinese Sanron and Hossō schools respectively, had written major commentaries on the *Hokekyō*.

In the course of the Takaosanji lecture, in which Saichō played the leading role, Kammu expressed his desire to see Tendai established as a full-fledged Buddhist school in Japan. Saichō immediately responded, in a message relayed to the emperor by Hiroyo, that this could be accomplished only if a mission was sent to China to create a formal link with the Chinese patriarchate in the T'ien-t'ai mountains, where the school originated and maintained its head monastery. Without such a formal transmission of doctrine, Saichō insisted, Tendai would carry little authority in Japan. He also made clear to Kammu his own conviction that Tendai was inherently superior to both Sanron and Hossō because the latter two schools were based on treatises written by Indian scholiasts, whereas Tendai was rooted in the *Hokekyō*, a scripture preached by Śākyamuni Buddha himself. Saichō's proposal to undertake a mission to China was promptly accepted, and he was granted permission to make a short visit to the T'ien-t'ai mountains accompanied by his disciple Gishin, who was to serve as his interpreter.

Sailing on one of the four ships that transported the Japanese embassy to the T'ang court, Saichō arrived at Ming-chou (the present-day Ning-p'o) in the ninth month of 804. En route to the T'ien-t'ai mountains he stopped briefly at T'ai-chou (present-day Lin-hai), where he met Tao-sui, the then patriarch of the Chinese Tendai school. By the tenth month Saichō had reached T'ien-t'ai, where he visited the holy sites and had a chance to study Tendai doctrine at its source. A totally unexpected reward from his visit to T'ien-t'ai was an encounter with a monk named Hsiao-jan, who initiated him into the Gozu (Chinese, Niu-t'ou, "Ox Head") lineage of Zen (Chinese, Ch'an).⁴⁷ The following month Saichō returned to T'ai-chou for further instruction in Tendai doctrine from Tao-sui, and, in the third month of 805, on the eve of his return to the embarkation point of

46 For a brief account of Chih-i's classification of the major groups of sutras, see my "Imperial Patronage in T'ang Buddhism," in *Perspectives on the T'ang*, ed. Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 284–87.

47 In addition to the Gozu lineage of Zen, Saichō claimed to have received the transmission of the Northern School (Hokushū) through both Gyōhyō and Tao-hsüan. The latter had been a pupil of P'u-chi, the Dharma-heir to the famous (Northern) Sixth Patriarch, Shen-hsiu. See Saichō, *Naishō Buppō sōjō kechimiyaku fu*, DDZ, vol. 1, pp. 210–15.

Ming-chou, received from Tao-sui the *endonkai* (perfect and immediate precepts), which was a Tendai ordination based on the fifty-eight bodhisattva precepts (*bosatsukai*) taught in the *Bommōkyō*.

Upon learning after his arrival in Ming-chou that the embassy's departure for Japan was to be delayed, Saichō decided to use the extra time allowed him in China to visit Yüeh-chou (present-day Shao-hsing), where he hoped to find additional Tendai manuscripts and, perhaps, also to acquire texts belonging to the Mikkyō (Esoteric Buddhist) tradition. During his stay in Yüeh-chou, which occupied most of the fourth month of 805, Saichō managed to receive an esoteric initiation (*kanjō*, "sprinkling of consecrated water on the head") from one Shun-hsiao, who also provided him with many esoteric texts and several implements for use in esoteric rituals. In all, Saichō collected 120 manuscripts in T'ai-chou and 102 manuscripts in Yüeh-chou, most of the latter being Mikkyō works.⁴⁸

Saichō sailed from Ming-chou on an embassy ship in the fifth month and reached Kyushu in the middle of the sixth month. He was immediately summoned to the court, where he personally presented Kammu with the manuscripts and ritual implements that he had acquired in China. Not surprisingly, the emperor ordered that copies of the Tendai texts be distributed to each of the seven great monasteries of Nara. But what impressed Kammu, whose health was now failing, even more than the precious Tendai manuscripts was Saichō's newly acquired status as a practitioner of Mikkyō, in which interest had been steadily growing since Nara times because of its practical value for curing illnesses, preventing misfortunes, and producing various benefits. It might well have struck Saichō as ironic that the first service that Kammu ordered him to perform after his return to Japan was not related to Tendai, which he had gone to China specifically to study, but rather to the Mikkyō, which was at best only of secondary interest to him. By imperial decree a platform-altar for esoteric initiations (*kanjōdan*) was constructed at Takaosanji, where, in the ninth month of 805, Saichō performed for eight monks from Nara the first esoteric initiation rites ever held in Japan. Later the same month Saichō was summoned to the palace to conduct an esoteric ritual that would bring about the recovery of the ailing emperor.⁴⁹

48 For a list of the titles of the manuscripts acquired in T'ai-chou and Yüeh-chou, see *Dengyō Daishi shōrai Taishū roku* and *Dengyō Daishi shōrai Esshū roku*, both compiled by Saichō (*T*, vol. 55, pp. 1055a–58a and pp. 1058b–60b).

49 *Eizan Daishi den*, *DDZ*, vol. 5, *furoku*, pp. 21–24. Kammu's faith in the esoteric Buddhism transmitted by Saichō is attested in a proclamation issued by Kammu included in Saichō's *Kenkairon engi* (821), *DDZ*, vol. 1, pp. 283–84.

In the first month of 806, Saichō sent a petition to Kammu requesting that Tendai be formally accorded status as one of the recognized Buddhist schools.⁵⁰ To accomplish this, Saichō proposed that the traditional system of ordaining ten monks at the beginning of the new year to pray for the well-being of the nation be restructured and expanded to include representatives of each of the officially recognized schools.⁵¹ The Kegon, Tendai, and Ritsu schools were to be allocated two novices each; the Sanron, to which the Hīnayānist Jōjitsu school was attached, and the Hossō, to which the Hīnayānist Kusha school was appended, were to be assigned three novices each, for a total of twelve annual ordinands (*nembun dosha*). The government promptly accepted Saichō's proposal, which had won immediate backing from the hierarchy (*sōgō*), but stipulated that of the two ordinands allotted annually to the Tendai school only one should devote himself solely to the study of classical Tendai doctrine. The other candidate was to study and become a specialist in Mikkyō. Thus from its inception the Japanese Tendai school, unlike its Chinese parent, had Mikkyō as one of its major components. The reconciliation of Mikkyō with classical Tendai thought was to become one of the principal tasks for future generations of Tendai scholars.

With the death of Kammu in the third month of 806 Saichō lost a strong supporter. The new emperor, Heizei (reigned 806–9), seeking to reduce government expenditures, placed restrictions on the construction of new temples and the use of state revenues for religious purposes. Because of this new policy no Tendai monks were ordained until 810, when Heizei's successor, Saga, allowed eight Tendai novices to be tonsured at the court, thus compensating for Heizei's failure to honor Kammu's promise to Saichō. Saga's decision to carry out the ordinations created practical difficulties for Saichō, since one of the two annual Tendai ordinands had to be trained in Mikkyō, which Saichō himself had not had the opportunity to study properly in China. Another problem was that Saichō's library on Hiei was lacking many important Mikkyō texts. To acquire copies of these texts and also to supplement his obviously deficient knowledge of Mikkyō, Saichō turned to Kūkai, a monk seven years his junior, whose understanding of Mikkyō was without equal in Japan.

⁵⁰ For Saichō's proposal, the statement by the hierarchs, and the official response by the government, see *Kenkairon engi*, DDZ, vol. 1, pp. 292–96.

⁵¹ The practice of ordaining ten monks at the court on the last day of the year or at the beginning of the new year was begun in 696. See *Nihon shoki*, *kan* 30, Jitō 10 (696)/12/1, NKBT, vol. 68, p. 532, and Saichō's *Kenkairon* (819), *kan* 3, DDZ, vol. 1, p. 150.

Unlike Saichō, who went to China to study Tendai but by chance happened to encounter Mikkyō adepts who conferred on him low-level initiations, Kūkai visited China with the specific objective of mastering the doctrines and rituals of Mikkyō and received its highest initiations. Although both men sailed in the same flotilla, they traveled on different ships and probably became acquainted with each other only after their return to Japan. Saichō's ship, as we have noted, landed in Ming-chou, whereas the ship carrying Kūkai entered the port of Fu-chou, whence Kūkai proceeded in the entourage of the Japanese ambassador directly to Ch'ang-an, where he intensively studied Mikkyō for more than a year. When Kūkai returned to Kyushu in the tenth month of 806, he had in his possession a priceless collection of esoteric texts, ritual implements, paintings, and mandalas (graphic representations of various divinities, often portrayed through mystical symbols and arranged according to a pattern that emanates outward from a central point).⁵²

In the eighth month of 809, Saichō sent a disciple to Kūkai, who had taken up residence at Takaosanji a month earlier, bearing a letter requesting the loan of twelve esoteric texts. Over the next six years Saichō wrote almost thirty such letters, often signing them "your disciple Saichō," even though Kūkai was seven years his junior.⁵³ Although Saichō himself had received several esoteric initiations while in China and had performed such an initiation at Takaosanji in 805, he openly acknowledged Kūkai's superior understanding of Mikkyō. Toward the end of 812 Saichō visited Kūkai at Takaosanji to request the initiation based on the *kongōkai* (diamond realm) and *taizōkai* (embryo realm) mandalas, which are the two principal mandalas of the line of Mikkyō transmitted by Kūkai that subsequently came to be known in Japan as Shingon Mikkyō. Kūkai readily assented, but conferred on Saichō only a *kechien kanjō* (an initiation establishing a link), which is the most elementary of the various levels of initiation.⁵⁴ Despite Saichō's eminence as a Tendai monk, his previous esoteric initiations in China, and his subsequent

⁵² Kūkai's catalogue, the *Go-shōrai mokuroku* (*T*, vol. 55, pp. 1060a–66a) lists the titles of 216 works that he brought back to Japan.

⁵³ Saichō's letters to Kūkai are included in the *Rankei yuionshū*, Mikkyō bunka kenkyūjo, ed., *Kōbō Daishi zenshū*, 3rd ed., revised and enlarged (*zōho*), 8 vols. (Kōyasan: Mikkyō bunka kenkyūjo, 1965–68), vol. 5, pp. 353–86.

⁵⁴ Although virtually all Shingon scholars hold that Saichō received only the introductory initiation, there is a tradition within the Tendai school, based on a letter Saichō's disciple Enchō wrote to Kūkai in 831, that Kūkai conferred an intermediate level ordination on Saichō. See my "Beginnings of Esoteric Buddhism in Japan: The Neglected Tendai Tradition," *Journal of Asian Studies* 34, 1 (1974): 188.

self-study of esoteric texts, he was in Kūkai's eyes still an amateur in Mikkyō, a point that was driven home when Kūkai granted Saichō only the lowest level of initiation at a ceremony in which laymen also participated.

Saichō and Kūkai each viewed Mikkyō differently. For Saichō, Mikkyō and classical Tendai formed the two wings of the newly established Tendai school, a unique amalgam not found in China.⁵⁵ To Kūkai, however, Mikkyō was the ultimate teaching of Buddhism and fully constituted a school in its own right. It is not surprising, therefore, that the two men would inevitably part company. The first indication of serious difficulty was Kūkai's refusal, in 814, to lend Saichō an esoteric manuscript that he had requested. Kūkai sharply rebuked Saichō for trying to understand Mikkyō through texts alone, which, Kūkai asserted in a letter to Saichō, were no more than the "dregs of Buddhism." Truth, in other words, Mikkyō, could be transmitted only "from mind to mind." To teach Mikkyō without having received a proper transmission, Kūkai warned, was tantamount to "stealing the doctrine."⁵⁶ The relationship between Saichō and Kūkai ended on a bitter note in 816, when Saichō's disciple, Taihan, who at Saichō's urging had gone to study Mikkyō with Kūkai four years earlier, refused Saichō's request that he return to Hiei.

The break with Kūkai marked the end of Saichō's period of docility, as was indicated by his decision to circulate publicly his *Ehyō Tendai shū*, a polemical work written in 813 that sought to document the superiority of Tendai over all other schools. Once the rupture became final in 816, Saichō embarked on a tour of the Kanto region, where he laid the basis for a future Tendai stronghold by lecturing on the *Hokekyō*, establishing pagodas enshrining this sutra and proclaiming before large groups of rural people the Tendai/*Hokekyō* doctrine of One Vehicle (*ichijō*), namely, that the three traditional divisions of Buddhism known as the Three Vehicles (*sanjō*) were no more than an expedient device created by Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha, to lead people of different intellectual and spiritual capacities to the One Vehicle that will ultimately carry each and every sentient being to Buddhahood.

By publicly proclaiming the Tendai doctrine of universal enlightenment, Saichō openly challenged the influential and aristocratic Hossō

⁵⁵ See, for example, Saichō's letter to Taihan (in *DDZ*, vol. 5, p. 469), written in 816, in which Saichō declares that the teachings of the *Hokekyō* and those of Shingon are equally true.

⁵⁶ The letter is included in the anthology of Kūkai's writings entitled *Henjō hakki Seirei shū*, in *Sangō shūiki*, *Seirei shū*, vol. 71 of *NKBT*, pp. 442–50. The passage cited occurs on p. 447.

school, which took the opposite view – namely, that the doctrine of One Vehicle taught in the *Hokekyō* was merely an expedient teaching intended to encourage simpleminded people to put their faith in Buddhism and uphold its basic moral code. For the Hossō school, the ultimate teaching of Buddhism was to be found in the *Gejimmikkyō* (Sutra Explaining the Profound Doctrine), its principal scripture, which not only accepted the concept of three real, distinct vehicles, but also held that sentient beings were inherently divided into five groups (*goshō*), the lowest consisting of the luckless *mushō* (those lacking the Buddha-nature), who, strive as they might, were destined to wander eternally through the cycle of birth and death. Saichō's popular gospel of universal salvation was immediately denounced by the well-known Hossō scholar Tokuitsu, who likewise was active in the Kanto area. Over the next five years the two men produced a total of eight works in an effort to refute each other's positions.

Having severed relations with Kūkai and having become involved in a protracted doctrinal dispute with Tokuitsu, Saichō was now ready to dissociate himself completely from the traditional Buddhism that centered around the six Nara schools. It was Saichō's view, but not that of Chinese Tendai, that the *Shibunritsu* – the disciplinary code used in both China and Japan to ordain monks and nuns – was essentially a Hīnayānist work and hence not suitable for Mahāyānist ordinations. In the third month of 818 Saichō took the unprecedented step of formally renouncing the 250 precepts of the *Shibunritsu* that he had taken at the time of his ordination at Tōdaiji. Two months later Saichō requested approval from the throne for a set of six regulations that he had formulated and wished to make binding on all future Tendai ordinands.

Formally known as the *Tendai Hokke-shū nembun gakushō shiki* (Bylaws for the Annual Ordinands of the Tendai Hokke School), the new regulations had far-reaching implications for the future course of Japanese Buddhism.⁵⁷ Particularly significant were the following proposals: (1) The names of candidates for ordination should not be removed from family registers, as was the custom, but retained with the added notation “son of the Buddha” (*Bussshi*). Under the prevailing law, when someone was accepted as a novice his name was deleted from the family register, which was under the control of the secular authorities, and entered into a clerical register (*sōseki*), which placed him directly under the supervision of the Nara hierarchs

57 The text is included in Saichō's *Sange gakushō shiki*, *T*, vol. 74, pp. 623c–24b.

(*sōgō*). (2) The *tokudo* (initiation as a novice) and *jukai* (full ordination as a monk) should take place in the same year. It had been the practice to receive the *tokudo* from a monk at one's "home temple" and the full ordination several years later from preceptors belonging to the Ritsu school at one of the three monasteries authorized to have ordination platforms (*kaidan*): Tōdaiji in Nara, Yakushiji in Shimotsuke, and Kanzeonji in Chikuzen. By linking the *jukai* with the *tokudo*, Saichō hoped to keep Tendai novices out of the hands of the Ritsu preceptors. (3) Ordinations should be based on the *Busshi kai* (precepts for sons of the Buddha), an ambiguous term coined by Saichō suggestive of the *bosatsukai* (bodhisattva precepts) in the *Bommōkyō*. (4) Newly ordained monks should be required to reside on Hiei for an uninterrupted period of twelve years. As Saichō was to point out later, only ten of the twenty-four annual ordinands selected between 807 and 818 remained on Hiei, the others having been "stolen" (his word) by the Hossō (six monks) and Shingon (one monk) schools or else having left for reasons of their own.⁵⁸ (5) Tendai monks, regardless of whether they specialized in esoteric rituals (*shanagō*) or traditional Chinese Tendai meditation (*shikangō*), should view the protection of the state (*gokoku*) as their primary concern. (6) Those monks who exhibit special talents after completing their twelve-year training period should be appointed to serve as proselytizers or provincial bishops. In addition to their religious tasks, these monks should also actively promote the public welfare by sponsoring the construction of irrigation ditches, the reclamation of farmland, the building of bridges, and other such projects.

The court forwarded Saichō's proposals to the Office of Hierarchs (*Sōgō-sho*), which did not comment on them, perhaps because Saichō's occasionally vague language left the hierarchs uncertain about how far he was prepared to go in establishing Tendai as a school completely independent of the established church. In the eighth month of 818, Saichō submitted to the court another document containing eight proposed bylaws regarding the administration of Hiei and the training of its monks.⁵⁹ Again, the Office of Hierarchs, to which the document was referred, remained silent.

Any doubts regarding Saichō's ultimate intentions were dispelled when, in the third month of 819, he presented a third set of bylaws

⁵⁸ For a list of the students, with notations indicating their reasons for leaving Hieizan and the names of the schools to which they defected, see Saichō, *Tendai Hokke-shū nembun tokudo gakushō myōchō*, *DDZ*, vol. 1, pp. 250–53.

⁵⁹ The document, entitled *Kanshō Tendai-shū nembun gakushō shiki*, is included in *Sange gakushō shiki*, p. 624b–c.

to the court for consideration. Reflecting his increasing impatience with the court's failure to act on his earlier proposals for a truly independent Tendai school that he believed had been sanctioned by his imperial patron Kammu, Saichō provocatively entitled his new set of regulations *Tendai Hokke-shū nembun dosha eshō kōdai shiki* (Bylaws for the Conversion of the Annual Ordinands of the Tendai Hokke School from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna).⁶⁰ The three chief points made in this final set of new regulations were: (1) There are three categories of monasteries: (a) those exclusively Mahāyānist, (b) those exclusively Hīnayānist, and (c) those in which Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna coexist. Tendai ordinands and “those who converted to Mahāyāna,” that is, monks originally belonging to one of the Nara schools who had subsequently joined Tendai, should be required to spend twelve years on Hiei, which in Saichō's view would become the only truly Mahāyānist monastery in Japan. (2) There are two types of precepts: (a) the fifty-eight Mahāyānist ones of the *Bommōkyō* and (b) the 250 Hīnayānist ones of the *Shibunritsu*. (3) There are two types of ordinations: (a) the Mahāyānist one based on the *Kanfugengyō*, in which the Buddha and two bodhisattvas act as preceptors and (b) the Hīnayānist one based on the *Shibunritsu*, in which three senior monks serve as the preceptors. Tendai novices should, of course, receive the Mahāyānist type of ordination using Mahāyānist precepts.

This last set of proposals signaled the beginning of a reform unprecedented in the history of East Asian Buddhism. First, Saichō's insistence that Tendai monks live in an “exclusively Mahāyānist monastery” marked the emergence in Japan of the sectarian monastery, which subsequently became one of the hallmarks of Japanese Buddhism. Hōryūji, Daianji, Gangōji, and other large Nara monasteries each accommodated groups of monks belonging to different schools. It was only after the time of Saichō that the idea of an exclusive sectarian monastery or temple took root and became the norm.

Second, Saichō broke completely with previous East Asian Buddhist practice when he replaced the *Shibunritsu* precepts with those of the *Bommōkyō*. This latter set of precepts, which lays particular stress on the social responsibility of the individual, had been traditionally viewed as precepts intended primarily for the bodhisattva (*bosatsukai*), that is, precepts for laymen, which monks might also voluntarily choose to accept, as Saichō himself had done in China. Monks had always been minutely regulated in their monastic life by

⁶⁰ *Sange gakushō shiki, T*, vol. 74, pp. 624c–25b.

the 250 precepts of the *Shibunritsu*, which were thought to transcend such relativistic categories as Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna. By labeling as Hīnayānist the *Shibunritsu* precepts, which had hitherto formed the basis of all ordinations, Saichō was implying that there were no true Mahāyāna monks in Japan.

Third, Saichō repudiated the ordination system prevailing in East Asia when he categorized as Hīnayānist the traditional ordination ceremony in which three monks administer the precepts to the ordinands, as prescribed in the *Shibunritsu*. By proposing to substitute the *Kanfugengyō*, a sutra linked to the *Hokekyō* and particularly esteemed in Tendai, for the *Shibunritsu*, Saichō was creating an entirely new ordination system peculiar to Tendai, the practical effect of which was to make Tendai a completely independent school, no longer dependent on the Ritsu monasteries for the ordination of its clergy. To accomplish this, Saichō sought permission to establish his own ordination platform on Hiei, beyond the jurisdiction of the Nara hierarchs, where he could perform his own ordinations.⁶¹

Outraged by Saichō's third set of proposed bylaws for Tendai ordinands, the Office of Hierarchs sent a sharply worded memorial to Saga in the fifth month of 819 denouncing Saichō's views on precepts, ordination, and the training of monks and urged the government to reject Saichō's proposals. Saichō responded some ten months later with his famous *Kenkairon* (Treatise on the Precepts), which refuted in fifty-eight articles the arguments against him put forward by the hierarchs. Along with the *Kenkairon* he submitted another important work, the *Naishō Buppō sōjō kechimiyaku fu*, in which he sought to demonstrate that he – and hence the Japanese Tendai school – was the legitimate heir to four distinct traditions: (1) Tendai proper through his study in China under Tao-sui and Hsing-man; (2) Zen through his master Gyōhyō and the transmission that he received later in China from Hsiao-jan; (3) the Bodhisattva (that is, Mahāyānist) Precepts through the ordination he received at T'ien-t'ai shan based on the *Bommōkyō*; and (4) Mikkyō through the initiations by Shun-hsiao and Wei-hsiang.

The *Kenkairon* was forwarded by the court to the hierarchs, who

61 The full text of Saichō's petition to the throne for permission to conduct ordinations is given in *Eizan Daishi den*, DDZ, vol. 5, *furoku*, pp. 33–34. Although ninth-century records do not specifically report that he sought the approval of the emperor to build a *kaidan*, it is likely that he did so, since it had been the custom for ordinations to be performed on a *kaidan*. Saichō's biography in Kokan Shiren, *Genkō Shakusho* (1322), states unambiguously that in the third month of 819, Saichō requested permission for the construction of a *kaidan* (*BZ*, vol. 101, p. 149b).

declined to respond. In 821 Saichō presented the court with yet another work, the *Kenkairon engi*, defending the principle of independent Tendai ordinations, but again was met with silence from the hierarchs and consequently from the throne. Frustrated by his failure to get permission from the government to conduct his own ordinations, Saichō spent the final year of his life quietly managing the affairs of Hiei. In response to a personal appeal from one of Saichō's disciples, Emperor Saga on his own authority promoted Saichō to the highest ecclesiastical rank, *dai hōshūi*, an honor that had already been granted to Saichō's junior, Kūkai, two years earlier. Less than four months later, on the fourth day of the sixth month of 822, Saichō died on Hiei, without having gained the permission he so fervently sought to construct a Tendai ordination hall. Seven days after Saichō's death, Saga, without consulting the hierarchs whose opposition was well known, agreed to a petition signed by four of Saichō's prominent lay supporters, including Fujiwara no Fuyutsugu, who was the Minister of the Right, and Yoshimine no Yasuyo, a son of Kammu and half brother of Saga, to allow ordinations on Hiei. The following year an imperial decree was issued granting the name Enryakuji to Saichō's monastery on Hiei in memory of Kammu whose reign was known as Enryaku. Two months later the first Tendai ordinands, fourteen in all, received the *Bommōkyō* precepts from Gishin, who had succeeded Saichō as abbot of Hiei. The long-awaited ordination hall (*kaidan'in*) was completed in 827 with a grant of 90,000 sheaves of rice to defray construction costs.⁶²

KŪKAI

Kūkai, the founder of the Japanese Shingon school, was born in 774 in Sanuki Province (present-day Kagawa Prefecture in Shikoku), where his family, surnamed Saeki, exercised considerable influence.⁶³ At the age of fourteen he was brought to the capital by his maternal uncle, Ato no Ōtari, who was the Confucian tutor to Prince Iyo, the third son of Emperor Kammu. After three years of intensive study of the Chinese classics under the tutelage of his uncle, Kūkai entered the state Academy with the intention of eventually establishing himself as a scholar of Chinese. Shortly thereafter, however,

62 *Denjutsu isshinkai mon, kan 2, DDZ*, vol. 1, pp. 588–90.

63 For critical modern biographies, see Katsuno, *Hieizan to Kōyasan*; Kushida Ryōkō, *Kūkai no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 1981), and Watanabe Shōkō and Miyasaka Yūshō, *Shamon Kūkai, Chikuma sōsho*, vol. 84 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1967).

he encountered a monk who taught him the esoteric ritual known as *Kokūzō gumonjihō*, the purpose of which is to increase the powers of memory through incessant repetition of a mystical incantation.⁶⁴ After beginning the *gumonjihō*, Kūkai had some sort of deep religious experience, which led him to withdraw from the Academy and retreat to the mountains where he undertook austerities.

According to the traditional accounts dating from late Heian times, Kūkai entered Makiosanji in Izumi at the age of nineteen to start his training as a novice under Gonzō, an influential Sanron monk, and was ordained two years later at Tōdaiji.⁶⁵ However, in his first book, the *Sangō shūiki*, written in 797 when he was twenty-three, Kūkai gives no indication of being an ordained monk. On the contrary, it is apparent from the *Sangō shūiki*, a semiautobiographical work that seeks to demonstrate the superiority of Buddhism over Taoism and Confucianism, that Kūkai had an aversion to the formalistic and often corrupt Buddhism of the great monasteries. His sympathies clearly lay with the itinerant holy man (*hijiri*) who, although often lacking a proper ordination, spends his life searching for truth while bringing the word of the Buddha to the common people. In all likelihood such was the life led by Kūkai between 791 when he retreated to the mountains and 804, when, according to the *Shoku Nihon kōki* (compiled in 869), a more reliable source than the late Heian biographies, he first became a novice, presumably in order to be eligible for study in China.⁶⁶ His full ordination took place at Tōdaiji in the fourth month of the same year.⁶⁷

Virtually nothing definite is known about Kūkai's study of Mikkyō before his visit to China. The traditional biographies claim that Kūkai first learned of the *Dainichikyō*, one of the basic Mikkyō scriptures, in a dream.⁶⁸ After locating a copy of this text beneath a

64 Most biographies of Kūkai, dating from the end of the Heian period or later, identify the unnamed monk as Gonzō, a respected cleric who stood in the Sanron lineage. This view has been challenged by some contemporary scholars. For a summary of their arguments, see Shimode Sekiyo, "Kūkai to Shingon-shū," in *Nihon hen*, vol. 2 of Nakamura Hajime, Kasahara Kazuo, and Kanaoka Shūyū, eds., *Ajia Bukkyō shi* (Tokyo: Kōsei shuppansha, 1974), pp. 134–38, and Watanabe and Miyasaka, *Shamon Kūkai*, pp. 34–39.

65 See, for example, Kyōhan, *Daishi on-gyōjō shūki* (1089), in *Zoku gunsho ruijū*, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Keizai zasshisha, 1904), pp. 495–96, and Ken'i, *Kōbō Daishi go-den* (first half of the 12th century) in *Zoku gunsho ruijū*, vol. 8, p. 526.

66 *Shoku Nihon kōki* (869), *kan 4*, Jōwa 2 (835)/3/25, *KT*, vol. 3, p. 38.

67 *Zō Daisōjō Kūkai Wajō denki* (895), *Kōbō Daishi zenshū*, *shukan*, p. 9.

68 The earliest reference to this well-known legend occurs in the *Go-yuigō* (*T*, vol. 77, p. 408c), which purports to have been written by Kūkai on his deathbed. Although it is no longer generally recognized as an authentic work of Kūkai's, it was accepted as such since Heian times and hence served as a source for many of the biographies of Kūkai.

pagoda at Kumedera in Yamato, these accounts relate, Kūkai resolved to travel to China, where he could receive proper instruction from Mikkyō masters regarding the meaning of this difficult scripture. Although the traditional biographies make Kūkai's encounter with the *Dainichikyō* appear miraculous, the simple fact is that esoteric texts were in use in Japan long before Kūkai's birth. By the end of the Nara period more than 130 such texts, including the *Dainichikyō* and the *Kongōchōkyō*, the other principal scripture of Shingon Mikkyō, had been brought to Japan.⁶⁹ More than one quarter of the 150 surviving images from the eighth century are representations of Mikkyō divinities, which is another indication of the inroads that Mikkyō had already made in Japan.⁷⁰ Although not yet recognized as an independent school in Nara times, iconographic and textual evidence shows that Mikkyō was widely known and practiced even before Kūkai undertook his journey to China.

We have no reliable information about how Kūkai managed to get permission from the Japanese government to study in China. Traveling in the company of the ambassador, Fujiwara no Kadonomaro, on whose behalf he drafted letters to the Chinese authorities, Kūkai reached Ch'ang-an at the end of 804. In the sixth month of 805 he was accepted as a disciple by Hui-kuo, who was recognized as the foremost master of esoteric Buddhism in China. According to Kūkai's account, Hui-kuo, who was then ailing, declared at their first encounter that he had been long awaiting the arrival of Kūkai, whom he formally designated as his successor.⁷¹ After receiving the initiations based on the *kongōkai* and *taizōkai* mandalas, Kūkai was granted the *dembō kanjō* (the initiation for transmitting the Dharma), which is the highest of the three levels of esoteric initiations and signifies that its recipient has become a *dembō ajari*, that is, an esoteric master (*ajari*) who is himself empowered to transmit the teachings. Before Hui-kuo's death in the twelfth month of 805 he passed on to Kūkai a reputed relic of the Buddha, various paintings, images, ritual implements, texts, and mandalas. Although Kūkai had originally planned to spend twenty years in China, he decided to return to Japan immediately after Hui-kuo's death so that he could disseminate the "orthodox" Mikkyō that he had learned from Hui-kuo.

Kūkai traveled back to Japan with the embassy of Takashina no

69 Ishida Mosaku, *Shakyō yori mitaru Nara-chō Bukkyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōyō bunko, 1930), p. 146.

70 Katsumata Shunkyō, *Mikkyō no Nihon-teki tenkai* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1970), p. 10.

71 *Go-shōrai mokuroku, T*, vol. 55, p. 1065b–c.

Tōnari, reaching Kyushu in the tenth month of 806. Through the ambassador he submitted to the court a catalogue of the precious esoteric manuscripts and religious objects that he had acquired in China, hoping to be summoned to the capital to transmit the Mikkyō teachings. Although later biographies claim that he moved to Makiosanji the following year, it is clear from earlier records that despite his unique training in China, no warm welcome awaited Kūkai in Kyoto.⁷² His exclusion from the capital was almost certainly due to political happenstance. In 807, one year after ascending the throne, Heizei sent his half-brother, Prince Iyo, into exile on suspicion of plotting mutiny, ultimately forcing him to commit suicide. Kūkai, through his uncle Ōtari, who had been Prince Iyo's tutor, had had a long-standing friendship with the Prince, which, no doubt tainted Kūkai in the eyes of Heizei.

Kūkai's fortunes abruptly changed when Saga became emperor in the fourth month of 809. The new emperor had a deep interest in Chinese culture, particularly literature, poetry, and calligraphy – areas in which Kūkai excelled. In the seventh month of 809, Saga invited Kūkai to take up residence in Takaosanji, where four years earlier Saichō had erected an altar for esoteric initiations (*kanjōdan*) at the behest of Saga's father, Kammu. A close relationship immediately developed between Saga and Kūkai through frequent exchanges of poetry and calligraphy. Saga, who was not especially concerned with religion, esteemed Kūkai primarily for his profound knowledge of Chinese culture. For Kūkai the strong personal bond with Saga provided entree to the court and aristocracy and gave him the opportunity to lay a solid foundation for Shingon Mikkyō.

Kūkai lost no time in trying to convince the court of the practical value of Shingon. In the wake of an unsuccessful coup to restore Retired Emperor Heizei to the throne in 810, Kūkai successfully petitioned Saga for permission to hold an esoteric rite at Takaosanji to ensure the tranquillity of the country, using the occasion to remind Saga of the prevailing Chinese custom of maintaining a permanent palace chapel (*naijōjō*) staffed by monks who were expert practitioners of esoteric ritual.⁷³ Kūkai's preeminence as a Mikkyō master

⁷² The three earliest biographies of Kūkai – the *Kūkai Sōzu den* attributed to his disciple Shinzei, the *Daisōzu Kūkai den* compiled by Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (804–72) et al., and the *Zō Daisōjō Kūkai Wajō denki* – make no mention of Kūkai's whereabouts between his arrival in Tsukushi in Kyushu in 806 and his move to Kyoto in 809.

⁷³ Kūkai's petition, entitled *Kokke no on-tame ni shuhō sen to kou hyō* (A Memorial Requesting Buddhist Services for the Benefit of the Nation), is contained in the *Seirei shū, kan 4, NKBT*, vol. 71, pp. 228–30.

was acknowledged by everyone, including his future rival Saichō. When Kūkai acceded to Saichō's request in 812 to conduct *kongōkai* and *taizōkai* initiations, close to two hundred people flocked to Takaosanji to take part.⁷⁴ Among those receiving initiations from Kūkai were not only Saichō and his disciples, but also twenty-two monks from the major Nara monasteries, thirty-eight novices, and more than forty laymen, including the influential Wake brothers, Matsuna and Nakayo, who effectively controlled Takaosanji. In recognition of Kūkai's status as a Mikkyō master, Saichō instructed five of his leading disciples to remain with Kūkai until the following year so that they might receive the highest level of initiation, the *dembō kanjō*, from him. After receiving their esoteric initiations from Kūkai in the twelfth month of 812, the Wake brothers entrusted the administration of Takaosanji to Kūkai, allowing him to appoint his own disciples as the ranking temple officers (*sangō*). In 829 the Wake brothers formally vested Kūkai and his successors with irrevocable authority to manage Takaosanji, which had been made an officially sanctioned Shingon temple five years earlier.

At the very time that Saichō had embarked on a course of confrontation with the older schools, Kūkai, following a conciliatory policy, was winning acceptance for Shingon at the court and among the Nara hierarchs. In 816 Saga approved a request from Kūkai that he be given exclusive proprietary rights to Mount Kōya, on which he sought to establish a retreat for meditation and a monastery for the training of Shingon monks. Two years later Kūkai moved to Kōya, where two of his disciples were already laying foundations for the future Kongō-buji monastic complex. Despite his strong desire to remain on Kōya, Kūkai was summoned back to Kyoto in 819, his presence in the capital being deemed indispensable. Kūkai strengthened his links with Nara by establishing in 822 a hall for esoteric initiations (*kanjō dōjō*) within the precincts of Tōdaiji. This hall, later known as Shingon'in, which remained under the control of Shingon monks, played a key role in the dissemination of Mikkyō among the Nara clergy.

In the first month of 823, three months before his abdication, Saga ordered that Kūkai be put in charge of Tōji, the chief state-supported temple in Kyoto. Saga's successor, Junna, stipulated later in the same year that henceforth only Shingon monks would be permitted to reside at Tōji, fixing their number at fifty. In 824, Junna further decreed that control of Tōji would be permanently vested in Kūkai and monks of his lineage. The conversion of Tōji into an exclusive Shin-

⁷⁴ For a list of participants, see Kūkai's *Takao kanjō ki*, *Kōbō Daishi zenshū*, vol. 3, pp. 620–29.

gon temple was a clear indication that Kūkai's Shingon Mikkyō had become the officially sanctioned religion of the court.

Unlike Saichō, who after 816 was continually at odds with the older schools, Kūkai always remained on good terms with the Nara clergy in the hope of persuading it to accept Shingon as a supersecular system of esoteric ritual that would bring an infinite variety of benefits to both the individual and the state. Thus, while Saichō encountered stiff opposition in his efforts to build an independent ordination platform on Hiei, Kūkai succeeded in establishing a hall for Shingon services in the very heart of Nara. Even the Hossō scholar Gomyō, who as the ranking hierarch had denounced Saichō's proposal for an independent ordination platform, felt no contradiction in accepting an administrative position at Tōji after it was designated a Shingon temple. Nor was it unusual for Shingon monks to be named to the superintendency (*bettō*) of Tōdaiji, which was nominally a Kegon monastery. So completely had Kūkai succeeded in winning acceptance from the hierarchs that when he submitted to the throne in 830 his *Fūjūshin ron*, a treatise in which he proclaimed the superiority of Shingon over all other schools of Buddhism as well as over the secular philosophies, not a word of protest was heard from Nara.

Kūkai finally received permission to return to Kōya in 832. Two years later the court granted his petition to establish within the palace precincts a Shingon'in (Shingon Chapel), where an annual esoteric rite known as *go-shichinichi mi-shiho* was to be performed from the eighth to the fourteenth day of the first month by Shingon monks from Tōji. The purpose of the rite was to ensure the well-being of the emperor and the prosperity of the nation. In the first month of 835, the Shingon school was officially admitted to the annual ordinand (*nembun dosha*) system and was allotted a yearly quota of three state-supported novices, which exceeded by one the number allowed the Tendai school. The following month Kongōbuji was accorded the status of a recognized temple (*jōgakuji*). Thus by the time of Kūkai's death in the third month of 835, Shingon was firmly established within the imperial court, a position it was to hold until the first years of Meiji.

THE TENDAI SCHOOL AFTER SAICHŌ

Although the Tendai school gained independence from the Nara hierarchy when it was granted the right to conduct its own ordinations

in 822, it nevertheless fared poorly in the first decades after Saichō's death. By the 820s the Japanese aristocracy had become intoxicated with Mikkyō rituals, which were performed to achieve specific material or spiritual ends. Saichō's disciples and followers on Hiei had been completely overshadowed by Kūkai, who had established himself in Tōji, where he performed various esoteric rites commissioned by the government. The plight of the monks on Hiei after the death of Saichō was graphically illustrated in a letter sent in 825 by its lay superintendent (*zoku bettō*), Tomo no Kunimichi, to an official who was an influential patron of Hōryūji, requesting the latter to use his good offices to find a place for the "foodless monks of Hiei" at Hōryūji and Shitennōji so that they could continue to transmit the teachings of Tendai.⁷⁵

It was clear to the Hiei community that in order to enhance its standing with the aristocracy, which was more interested in the material rewards accruing from esoteric rites than in the lofty but impractical philosophy of classical Tendai, it would have to prove its competence in Mikkyō, which, as we have seen, had been viewed by Saichō as one of the two wings of the Japanese Tendai school. This need to acquire additional training in Mikkyō forced Enchō, one of Saichō's disciples and a future abbot of Enryakuji, to swallow his pride and appeal, in 831, to Kūkai for further instruction in the doctrines of Mikkyō, for which, he frankly admitted, he had as yet not been able to find a suitable teacher.⁷⁶ Obviously, such appeals were humiliating and, worse still, tended to confirm the view that Kūkai's Shingon school was the ultimate authority in matters of Mikkyō.

Ennin, Enchin, and Annen

In 835, Ennin, a relatively obscure monk who had become a disciple of Saichō in 808 at the age of fourteen, was granted permission to travel to China with Fujiwara no Tsunetsugu, the newly appointed envoy to the T'ang court. Although the purpose of Ennin's mission was ostensibly to visit T'ien-t'ai shan in order to receive further training in Tendai doctrine, it is apparent that Ennin planned from the outset to take advantage of his stay in China to learn as much as possible about Mikkyō.

After several false starts, the ship carrying Ennin arrived at Yang-

⁷⁵ *Denjutsu isshinkai mon, kan 2, DDZ*, vol. 1, pp. 592–93.

⁷⁶ Enchō's letter, which was also signed by nine other monks from Hiei, is included in *Chōya gunsai, kan 16, KT*, vol. 29A, pp. 397–98.

chou in the seventh month of 838.⁷⁷ While awaiting permission from the Chinese authorities to travel to T'ien-t'ai shan, Ennin sought out two Mikkyō adepts in Yang-chou, who gave him instruction in *shittan*, the peculiar Indic script used to write esoteric formulas, and allowed him to make copies of manuals explaining esoteric rituals. Ennin lost no time in securing an initiation (*kanjō*) from one of these adepts, Ch'üan-ya, who was a third-generation disciple of Kūkai's master Hui-kuo.

In the second month of 839 Ennin was told by local officials that there was not sufficient time for him to visit T'ien-t'ai shan since he was, strictly speaking, not a student-monk (*rugakuō*) but a scholar attached to the embassy and hence had to leave China with the embassy, which was due to sail later that month. By the time Ennin's ship reached Wen-teng at the tip of the Shantung peninsula, the last anchorage before crossing the Yellow Sea, Ennin had resolved to remain behind in China even though he lacked permission from the authorities. After spending the winter at a monastery in Shantung run by Korean monks, Ennin set out in the second month of 840 for Wu-t'ai shan, a major place of pilgrimage in Shansi, in order to consult with Chih-yüan and several other learned Tendai monks who resided in one of the many temples dotting the mountain. While there is no reason to doubt that the opportunity to meet Tendai scholars was a principal factor in Ennin's decision to travel to Wu-t'ai, it should also be noted that Wu-t'ai was renowned as a center for popular Mikkyō cults, one of its most prominent temples, Chin-ko ssu, having been founded by the great esoteric master Pu-k'ung (Amoghavajra), who was the teacher of Kūkai's mentor, Hui-kuo. During his fifty-day stay on Wu-t'ai, Ennin spent about two weeks at the Chu-lin ssu, where he learned the *goe nembutsu*, a rhythmical chanting of the name of Amida Buddha using five different intonations. As we shall see, this *nembutsu* practice was later to have a profound influence on the development of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan.

In the eighth month of 840, Ennin arrived in Ch'ang-an, where he was to spend almost five years engaged in the study of Mikkyō while systematically acquiring esoteric texts, formulas written in the *shittan* script, and copies of mandalas. He received instruction and esoteric initiations from three Mikkyō masters, each a second-generation dis-

⁷⁷ The primary source for Ennin's stay in China is his very rich diary entitled *Nitō guhō junrai kōki*. For a critical edition with full annotation, see Ono Katsutoshi, *Nitō guhō junrai kōki no kenkyū*, 4 vols. (Tokyo: Suzuki gakujutsu zaidan, 1964–69). The diary has been translated into English by Edwin O. Reischauer under the title *Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (New York: Ronald Press, 1955).

ciple of the illustrious Hui-kuo, who had administered the *taizōkai* and *kongōkai* initiations to Kūkai. Not only did Ennin likewise receive both these initiations, but he was also granted a third type of initiation known as the *soshitsuji kanjō* (initiation according to the *Soshitsuji Sutra*), which symbolically integrated the *taizōkai* and *kongōkai* initiations. Ennin took particular pride in having been admitted to this third level of initiation, since it had not been offered to Kūkai even though it was evidently transmitted within Hui-kuo's lineage.

Life in Ch'ang-an became increasingly difficult for Ennin after the fanatically anti-Buddhist emperor Wu-tsung began the persecution of the clergy in 842. In the fifth month of 845, Ennin was defrocked and ordered to return to Japan. He immediately left Ch'ang-an for the port of Teng-chou in Shantung, which he reached three months later. After an agonizing delay of two years, he finally found passage on a Korean merchant ship bound for Japan. Ennin landed in Kyushu in the ninth month of 847 carrying 584 texts, mostly esoteric, in 802 fascicles, 21 ritual implements, and a collection of religious paintings, and mandalas.⁷⁸ Still more important, he had spent five years in Ch'ang-an studying with the leading esoteric masters of the day, whereas Kūkai had been under the tutelage of Hui-kuo for only half a year before the latter's death. Having received a total of thirteen different initiations in China,⁷⁹ Ennin was now in a position to challenge the Shingon monopoly of Mikkyō.

Ennin's extraordinary command of Mikkyō, which was promptly recognized by the court, was instrumental in reversing the decline of Hiei. In the sixth month of 848, a mere three months after his arrival in Kyoto, the court accepted Ennin's proposal that it sponsor annual esoteric initiation rites "for the enhancement of the imperial cause and the protection of the state."⁸⁰ These rites, popularly known as *Hiei kanjō*, were first performed at Enryakuji in 849, the government providing support for more than a thousand monks who participated in the ceremony.⁸¹ Until Ennin's return from China Shingon

78 Ennin, *Nitō shingu shōgyō mokuroku*, *T*, vol. 55, p. 1078c.

79 This figure appears in the *Jusan-jū kanjō hiroku*, a record claiming to have been compiled by Ennin and transmitted to his disciple Shōun. See *Tendai kahyō*, *kan* 5, part 1, *BZ*, vol. 126, pp. 526b–27b.

80 The text is included in *Ruijū sandai kyaku: zempen*, *kan* 2, *Kashō* 1 (848)/6/15, *KT*, vol. 25, pp. 69–71.

81 *Nihon sandai jitsuroku: zempen* (901), *kan* 8, *Jōgan* 6 (864)/1/14, *KT*, vol. 4, p. 126. For an early description of the *Hiei kanjō*, see Minamoto no Tamenori, *Sambō ekotoba*, written in 984, *kan* 3, *BZ*, vol. 111, pp. 469a–70a; English translation by Edward Kamens, *The Three Jewels: A Study and Translation of Minamoto Tamenori's Sambōe* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Center for Japanese Studies, 1988), pp. 349–52.

monks had complete responsibility for the various esoteric rites that were performed at the court. This exclusive control of Mikkyō ritual by Kūkai's disciples was brought to an end by Ennin, who easily forged close links with the imperial family and aristocracy thanks to the exceptional prestige that accrued to him as a result of his lengthy studies and religious training in Ch'ang-an. From 850 on Ennin was repeatedly invited to the imperial palace to conduct esoteric rites or administer lay precepts to members of the imperial family. His influence with the aristocracy reached its pinnacle in 856 when he performed the twofold initiation (*ryōbu kanjō*) for Emperor Montoku, the Crown Prince, Minister of the Right Fujiwara no Yoshifusa, the latter's adopted son Mototsune, and Major Counselor Fujiwara no Yoshisuke.

Ennin's standing at the court brought immediate gains to Hiei. In 850 Emperor Montoku, at the urging of Ennin, ordered the construction of Sōjiin, an imperially endowed cloister on Hiei accommodating fourteen monks, which was to serve as a *hommyō dōjō*, a chapel in which prayers for the tranquillity of the nation were offered to the star governing the year of the emperor's birth.⁸² During the same year the Tendai school was authorized two additional annual ordinands, one to specialize in the *Kongōchōkyō* and the other in the *Soshitsujikyō*, thereby giving formal recognition to the particular version of Mikkyō transmitted by Ennin from China. In 854 the court appointed Ennin abbot of Enryakuji, formally designating his office *zasu* (head of the community), a title subsequently held by all succeeding abbots, indicating that the incumbent was not under the jurisdiction of the Nara hierarchy.⁸³ Ennin's success in establishing Tendai Mikkyō as the predominant form of Buddhism at the court was clearly demonstrated in 866, two years after his death, when the government conferred the honorary posthumous names Dengyō Daishi and Jikaku Daishi on Saichō and Ennin respectively.⁸⁴ By contrast, Kūkai was not granted the posthumous name Kōbō Daishi until half a century later, in 921.⁸⁵

It was the good fortune of the Tendai school that Ennin was followed on Hiei by a line of eminent monks who could further consolidate the close relationship he had established with the imperial

82 *Nihon sandai jitsuroku: zempo*, kan 8, Jōgan 6/1/14, *KT*, vol. 4, p. 126.

83 The two abbots preceding Ennin, namely, Gishin and Enchō, were officially designated *Dembōshi*, "Master Who Transmit the Dharma." See Shibuya Ryōtai ed., *Kōtei zōho Tendai zasu ki* (Tokyo: Daiichi shobō, 1973), kan 1, p. 8.

84 *Chōya gūnsai*, kan 17, *KT*, vol. 29A, pp. 424–25.

85 *Nihon kiriyaku* (ca. 12th century): *kōhen*, kan 1, Engi 21 (921)/10/18, *KT*, vol. 11, p. 24.

family and Fujiwara. Four years after Ennin's death, the scholar-monk Enchin was installed as abbot of Enryakuji. Like Ennin, Enchin had spent five years in China studying Mikkyō in Ch'ang-an and Tendai doctrine at T'ien-t'ai shan, which Ennin had not been able to visit. In 859, the year after his return to Japan, Enchin accepted an invitation to become abbot (*chōri*, "head officer") of Onjōji (also called Miidera), in Ōtsu, a temple belonging to the Ōtomo clan. Enchin, who had not been a disciple of Ennin's, seemed to have thought it prudent to keep a respectable distance from Hiei during the incumbency of Ennin in order not to detract from this senior monk by appearing as a competitor.

Immediately after Ennin's death, Enchin was summoned to the imperial palace to administer esoteric initiations to Emperor Seiwa, Fujiwara no Yoshifusa, and other eminent figures. In 868, Enchin was named abbot of Enryakuji, succeeding Ennin's disciple Anne, who had died that year. In time of drought or illness, or when a new emperor ascended the throne, the court invariably turned to Enchin for the appropriate prayers and rituals. By the time of his death in 891, Enchin is said to have conferred the exalted esoteric rank of *ajari* on over 100 individuals, personally tonsured more than 500 monks and administered the precepts to some 3,000 persons.⁸⁶ Moreover, he had secured a decree guaranteeing that future abbots of Onjōji would be chosen exclusively from monks belonging to his own lineage.

Owing to the efforts of Ennin and Enchin, Japanese Tendai was transformed into a thoroughly esoteric school, with scant attention being given to the teachings of traditional Chinese Tendai doctrine. In addition to the frequent esoteric rituals and initiations they performed in the palace or on Hiei to enhance the standing of the Tendai school, Ennin and Enchin also sought to provide a solid theoretical foundation for Tendai Mikkyō (also known as Taimitsu, as opposed to Kūkai's Shingon Mikkyō, also called Tōmitsu) by writing a number of doctrinal works defining the relationship of the *Hokekyō* to the Mikkyō scriptures. Saichō, preoccupied with his struggle to win approval for an independent ordination platform and his polemics against his Hossō rival, Tokuitsu, never adequately addressed this question. His view, as indicated in a letter to his ex-disciple Taihan, was that the revealed teachings of the *Hokekyō* and the secret teachings of the Mikkyō scriptures were equally true since

86 Sontsū, *Chishō Daishi nempu* (1467), *BZ*, vol. 28, p. 1395b.

both these scriptures took the position that there was ultimately only the One Vehicle (*ichijō*) that would lead all beings to Buddhahood. Saichō believed that both the *Hokekyō* and the esoteric scriptures rejected the notion that the Hīnayāna constituted a separate vehicle for enlightenment and hence stood in opposition to Mahāyāna. Rather, Hīnayāna was seen as an expedient device established by Śākyamuni to lead the ignorant gradually to an appreciation of Mahāyāna and through that to the attainment of Buddhahood itself.

Contrary to the position of Saichō and Chinese Tendai, Ennin asserted that the *Hokekyō* was in fact an esoteric scripture.⁸⁷ He gave two reasons for this view. First, the *Hokekyō* teaches the doctrine of One Vehicle, which, according to Ennin's unique interpretation, was the principal criterion for defining Mikkyō. Second, the earthly Buddha Śākyamuni who preached the *Hokekyō* revealed himself in the second half of the sutra to be an eternal Buddha and therefore must be identified with Dainichi Nyorai, the Buddha who expounded the esoteric scriptures. Thus, with respect to doctrine, Ennin viewed the *Hokekyō* as being on par with the "pure" esoteric scriptures such as the *Dainichikyō* and *Kongōchōkyō*. But as Ennin admitted, Mikkyō also stresses various secret practices – incantations, hand signs, mandala initiations, and so on – which are not mentioned in the *Hokekyō* but figure prominently in esoteric scriptures. Ennin concluded, therefore, that although the *Hokekyō* could be characterized as "esoteric in doctrine" (*rimitsu*), it ranked below the "pure" Mikkyō scriptures, since the latter were esoteric in both the doctrines and rituals that they taught (*jiri gumitsu*).

Enchin saw an even wider gap between the *Hokekyō* and the "pure" Mikkyō scriptures. While recognizing in principle that the *Hokekyō* could be deemed an esoteric scripture, Enchin nevertheless included it among the exoteric scriptures on the grounds that it had been openly preached by the Buddha. Since the *Hokekyō* did not teach the secret practices of Mikkyō, Enchin held that it was inferior to the "pure" esoteric scriptures, which he collectively designated "the king of Mahāyāna, the most secret of the secret" (*Daijōchū no ō, hi-chū no saihi*).⁸⁸ This tendency to upgrade steadily the status of Mikkyō within the Tendai school culminated in the extra-

⁸⁷ For a succinct account of the teachings of Ennin, Enchin, and Annen, see Katsumata, *Mikkyō no Nihon-tekki tenkai*, pp. 275–91.

⁸⁸ *Daibirushanakyō shiki*, T, vol. 58, p. 19b.

ordinary ranking of the various Buddhist doctrines by the great scholar Annen (841–ca. 895), who devised an elaborate systematization of Tendai Mikkyō. According to Annen, who was a junior contemporary of Enchin, Mikkyō, as revealed in the “pure” esoteric scripture, represented the ultimate teachings of Buddhism. Despite his own Tendai affiliation – he actually belonged to the lineages of both Ennin and Enchin – Annen held that classical Tendai ranked below both Mikkyō and Zen, the latter, in his view, being a nonverbal – hence “secret” – transmission of the Buddha’s enlightenment. Taking the view that Mikkyō was the highest teaching within Buddhism to its logical conclusion, Annen referred to his school not as Tendai but as Eizan Shingonshū (the Shingon School of Hiei), as opposed to the Shingon school of Kūkai.

Hiei prospered as a result of the close contacts that Ennin, Enchin, and subsequent abbots of Enryakuji had established with the imperial family. Successive emperors founded cloisters on Hiei: Montoku built the Sōjiin and Shiōin; Suzaku, the Emmyōin; Kazan, the Jōryoin; and Go-Reizei, the Jissōin. Gifts of land by ex-emperors and princes for the general upkeep of Hiei or for the endowment of specific annual rituals became commonplace after the 860s. The first such major grant was made in 863 by Emperor Nimmyō’s sons, Saneyasu and Tsuneyasu, whose households together contributed 224 *chō* of tax-exempt land.⁸⁹ In addition, substantial amounts of tax-rice were allocated for the support of specific cloisters such as Shakadō, Jōshin’in, Sōjiin, and Shiōdō. By 972, Hiei controlled estates in Ōmi, Wakasa, and Yamashiro in central Honshu and Izumi in the west.⁹⁰ In the hope of expanding its influence in the countryside, Hiei persuaded the government to designate many of the recognized temples (*jōgakujī*) that were located in the provinces “Tendai *betsuin*” (Tendai branch temple), which signified that these temples would henceforth be administered only by monks ordained at Enryakuji. By the end of the ninth century Tendai *betsuin* were found in such diverse regions as Mutsu, Kōzuke, Harima, Shinano, and Kaga.⁹¹

89 *Nihon sandai jitsuroku: zempo, kan 7, Jōgan 5 (863)/4/10, KT, vol. 4, p. 110.*

90 For a list of the donations made by the imperial family and the aristocracy to Hiei in the ninth and tenth centuries, see Murayama Shūichi, “Heian Bukkyō no tenkai,” in Ienaga Saburō, ed., *Kodai hen, vol. 1 of Nihon Bukkyō-shi* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1967), pp. 244–45.

91 For a list of Tendai *betsuin*, see Sonoda Kōyū, “Saichō to Tendai-shū,” in *Ajia Bukkyō-shi: Nihon hen, vol. 2, p. 131.*

Ryōgen

The appointment of Ryōgen as abbot of Enryakuji ushered in a period of increased grandeur and power for Hiei.⁹² In 937, at the relatively young age of twenty-five, Ryōgen won acclaim for his skill in outwitting the learned monks of the Nara monasteries in the annual debate on the *Yuimagyō* (the so-called *Yuima-e*) held at Kōfukuji. Word of this extraordinary achievement soon reached the Chancellor, Fujiwara no Tadahira, who, together with his influential son, Morosuke, and grandsons, Koretada and Kaneie, subsequently became devoted patrons of Ryōgen. In 964 Ryōgen was named a court chaplain (*naigubu*) and the following year, at the age of fifty-three, became the youngest monk to be admitted to the hierarchy (*sōgō*) since its creation in the seventh century.

Three months after Ryōgen's appointment as abbot of Enryakuji in 966, Hiei was ravaged by a fire that destroyed thirty buildings, including such important structures as the Sōjiin, Lecture Hall (Kōdō), Shiōin, Emmyōin, and Jōgyōdō.⁹³ The devastation of Hiei was now almost complete, since Hiei had not yet fully recovered from an earlier fire that occurred in 935 and claimed many buildings, including Kompon Chūdō, the main hall of Enryakuji.⁹⁴ Undaunted by the magnitude of the task, Ryōgen vowed to rebuild Hiei during his own lifetime. Besides the support that he could count on from the imperial family, whose endowed cloisters such as Sōjiin, Shiōin, and Emmyōin had been lost in the conflagration, Ryōgen could also draw upon the income from eleven estates that Morosuke had bequeathed to his son, Jinzen,⁹⁵ who at Morosuke's urging had become Ryōgen's disciple in 958, two years before his father's death.

Ryōgen mobilized all the resources at his command to carry out the reconstruction of Hiei. In 967 the Hokkedō and Jōgyōdō were completed; in 972 ceremonies were held marking the reconstruction of the Lecture Hall and four other buildings; in 979 the Shakadō, the Sutra Repository for the Hōdōin, and the Jeweled Pagoda (Hōtō) were finished, and in 984 the ornate Hōdōin was completed, the gold for the temple fittings having been supplied by Fujiwara no Tame-

92 For critical studies of the life of Ryōgen and his contributions to the Tendai school, see Hirabayashi Moritoku, *Ryōgen, Jimbutsu sōsho*, vol. 173 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1976), and Eizan Gakuin, ed., *Ganzan Jie Daishi no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Dōbōsha, 1984).

93 *Nihon kiriyaku:kōhen*, kan 4, Kōhō 3 (966)/10/28, *KT*, vol. 11, p. 99.

94 Ryōgen, *Tengen sannen Chūdō kuyō gammon* (980), reprinted in *Koji ruien*, 51 vols. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1967–71), vol. 12 (*shūkyō bu* 4), p. 563.

95 Hirabayashi, *Ryōgen*, p. 58.

naga, governor of Mutsu. But the high point in the restoration of Hiei was reached in 980, when Kompon Chūdō was formally consecrated in a service conducted by Ryōgen in which Emperor En'yū, Regent Fujiwara no Yoritada, Minister of the Left Minamoto no Masanobu, and Minister of the Right Fujiwara no Kaneie participated.

During the rebuilding of Enryakuji, Ryōgen paid special attention to Yokawa, which together with Tōtō (Eastern Pagoda) and Saitō (Western Pagoda) comprise the Santō (Three Pagodas), that is, the geographical areas into which Hiei has been traditionally divided. The Tōtō area, in which Kompon Chūdō, the Lecture Hall, and the Ordination Hall are situated, was originally developed by Saichō. Saitō, which is to the west of Tōtō, centers around Shakadō built by Saichō's disciple Enchō. Yokawa, which lies to the north of Tōtō and Saitō, was first settled by Ennin, who withdrew to this desolate part of Hiei in 831 in order to undertake spiritual exercises in preparation for his death, which he believed to be imminent. After his recovery Ennin established Shuryōgon'in, which became the central cloister of Yokawa.

Following Ennin's appointment as abbot of Enryakuji, he moved to Zentōin in Tōtō, entrusting the management of Yokawa to his disciples. Although Yokawa continued to be administered by monks belonging to Ennin's lineage, its fortunes declined rapidly after Enchin assumed the abbotship of Enryakuji. When Ryōgen's patron, Tadahira, died in 949, Ryōgen, who stood in Ennin's lineage, retreated to Yokawa where he offered prayers for the repose of the deceased Tadahira. At Morosuke's request, he also beseeched the divinities to grant Morosuke's daughter, who was the consort of Emperor Murakami, a male child, which would put Morosuke in the position of being the grandfather of a potential successor to the throne. The birth of a boy, Prince Norihira (the future Emperor Reizei), in 950 convinced Morosuke of Ryōgen's supernatural powers. He immediately had Ryōgen appointed "protector-priest" (*gojisō*) for his grandson and announced his intention of restoring Yokawa, where the prayers had been offered. In 954 Morosuke, accompanied by his eldest son Koretada, visited Yokawa to dedicate the nearly completed Hokke zammai'in, which was to function primarily as a prayer cloister for Morosuke's branch of the Fujiwara clan. Morosuke felt a particular attachment to the Yokawa community, which he expressed in a vow promising support to the lineage of Ennin. Kaneie, the third son of Morosuke, continued to promote the expansion of Yokawa, building Yakushidō and Eshin'in in 983. The number of monks resi-

dent in Yokawa increased from the two or three that Ryōgen found there in 949 to more than two hundred by the time of his death.⁹⁶

Although Ryōgen, like his predecessors, regularly performed esoteric rituals for his imperial and aristocratic patrons and wrote several treatises on Mikkyō, he deplored the decline in classical Tendai learning on Hiei, which became particularly acute after the death of Enchin. As a way to stimulate Tendai scholarship, Ryōgen proposed, upon his appointment as abbot, that the annual services commemorating Saichō's death include a formal five-day debate on the Tendai interpretation of the *Hokekyō*. The format of the debate called for an examinee (*rissha*) to lecture on ten doctrinal problems (*dai*) put to him by five questioners (*monja*), who would then challenge his explanation. If the monk who acted as a judge (*tandai*) determined that the examinee had successfully withstood the challenges, the examinee would be accorded the much coveted academic rank of *tokugō* (scholar). These debates, formally known as *kōgaku ryūgi* (erudite disputations) or, more popularly, *yama no rongi* (the [Hiei] mountain debates), subsequently played an important role in reviving Tendai scholarship.

In addition to encouraging formal Tendai learning, Ryōgen sought to tighten discipline on Hiei. Four years after becoming abbot, he issued a code in twenty-six articles, called *Nijūrokka jō kishō*, which was intended to curb widespread abuses by the Hiei clergy.⁹⁷ Several articles prohibit offerings of food or gifts to priests officiating at services; monks are told that they should rehearse and be thoroughly familiar with the various rituals they are expected to perform, that they should attend all services, that they should not leave the mountain during their twelve-year period of training, that they must not wear elegant garb, and that they must not keep horses on Hiei. While some of these regulations restate proscriptions issued by Saichō in 818 and Ennin in 866, other articles in Ryōgen's code clearly bespeak the secularization of the clergy that was beginning to occur in the powerful monasteries. In this category are the regulations calling for the expulsion of monks who conceal their faces (*katō*), carry weapons, inflict corporal punishment, or violently disrupt religious services – behavior suggestive of the *akusō* (wicked monks), later

⁹⁶ Shimaji Daitō, *Tendai kyōgaku shi* (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1929), p. 353.

⁹⁷ The text of the *Nijūrokka jō kishō* has been published in Takeuchi Rizō, ed., *Heian ibun*, 15 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyō-dō, 1947–80), vol. 2, pp. 431a–440a. For a critical study of this important document, see Horii Daiji, “Ryōgen no *Nijūrokka jō kishō* seitei no igi,” *Shisō*, 25 (March 1967): 12–39.

popularly known as *sōhei* (monk warriors). During his nineteen-year incumbency Ryōgen ordered that the names of seven hundred wayward monks who did not participate in services be expunged from the Hiei registers.⁹⁸

Ryōgen was honored for the successful prayers that he offered for his imperial and aristocratic patrons and was eventually deified for his restoration of Enryakuji. In recognition of his having brought about the recovery of Emperor En'yū in 981, he was granted the privilege of being allowed to enter the palace grounds in a palanquin and was awarded the supreme ecclesiastical rank of *daisōjō* (archbishop), the first time that this rank had been conferred since the eighth century. In 987, two years after Ryōgen's death, the honorary posthumous name Jie Daishi was conferred on him.⁹⁹ By the end of the Heian period, Ryōgen, popularly known as Ganzan Daishi (The Great Master Who Passed Away on the Third Day of the New Year), was variously viewed as a reincarnation of Saichō, Ennin, or even Kannon. It was widely believed that Ryōgen, instead of departing for Pure Land on his death, remained on Hiei as its protector. Rubbings containing his likeness were widely used in Kamakura times as amulets to ward off malevolent spirits, cure illness, and avert natural disasters.¹⁰⁰

The Schism within the Tendai school

The origin of the conflict that ultimately split the Tendai school into opposing Sammon (Hiei) and Jimon (Onjōji) factions in the late tenth century can be traced back to successional disputes among Saichō's disciples. When Saichō fell ill in 812, he designated Enchō, his disciple of longest standing, to be his successor. On his deathbed ten years later, however, Saichō indicated that the leadership of the Hiei community should be entrusted to Gishin, who had traveled with Saichō to China, where he received ordinations identical to those of Saichō's. After their return from China in 805, Gishin did not remain on Hiei, but went back to his native Kanto to proselytize. It was only in 813, a year after Saichō's illness, that Gishin took up permanent residence on Hiei.

⁹⁸ Sonoda Kōyū, "Heian Bukkyō," in *Kodai*, vol. 4 of Ienaga Saburō, Ishimoda Shō, Inoue Kiyoshi et al., eds., *Iwanami kōza: Nihon rekishi* (23 vols.) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1962), p. 194.

⁹⁹ *Nihon kiriyaku: kōhen, kan 9*, Eien 1 (987)/2/16, *KT*, vol. 11, p. 161.

¹⁰⁰ Hazama Jikō, *Tendai shūshi gaisetsu* (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1969; rev. by Ōkubo Ryōjun), p. 124. For an up-to-date list of temples containing halls or chapels dedicated to the worship of Ryōgen, see *Ganzan Jie Daishi no kenkyū*, pp. 299–316.

Although regarded as something of an outsider by Saichō's immediate disciples, Gishin was nevertheless accepted by them as the first abbot of Enryakuji in accordance with Saichō's last request. However, when Gishin, on his deathbed, ordered in 833 that the abbotship be passed on to his own disciple Enshu, who had only recently moved to Hiei, Saichō's leading disciples protested to the lay superintendent of Hiei that Gishin was attempting to replace Saichō's lineage with his own. After eight months of wrangling the authorities finally agreed to dismiss Enshu from the office of abbot and appoint Enchō in his place.¹⁰¹

Gishin's lineage on Hiei, however, did not come to an end with Enshu's departure. On the contrary, the appointment of Enchin, a disciple of Gishin, as abbot of Enryakuji in 868 assured it a prominent position within the Tendai school. During Enchin's incumbency, which spanned twenty-three years, his followers came to overshadow those of the equally prestigious Ennin, who had been a direct disciple of Saichō. While Enchin himself had no quarrel with his predecessor Ennin – indeed, he held him in high regard – he was aware of the possibility of future trouble between their respective groups of followers and hence before his death specifically urged his own disciples to honor the memory of Ennin.¹⁰²

Monks of the two lineages – Ennin's and Enchin's – managed to avoid an open breach until 980 when Ryōgen, who belonged to the Ennin lineage, failed to invite a representative of the Enchin lineage to participate in the lavish ceremonies dedicating the newly rebuilt Kompon Chūdō.¹⁰³ The Enchin faction, taking this as a deliberate affront since representatives of other schools had been asked to take part in the services, appealed to the court, which ordered Ryōgen to include Yokei, who, as abbot of Onjōji, was the head of the Enchin faction.

The first violent confrontation between the two factions occurred the following year, when Yokei was named tenth abbot of Hosshōji, a temple founded in 925 by Ryōgen's future benefactor, Tadahira. The nomination of Yokei infuriated the Ennin faction, which petitioned the court to remove Yokei's name on the grounds that all previous abbots had been selected from their own faction. When the

101 The relevant documents are included in *Denjutsu isshinkai mon*, DDZ, vol. 1, pp. 640–45. See also *Kōtei zōho Tendai zasu ki*, p. 8.

102 Enchin, *Yuisei*, BZ, vol. 28, pp. 1349b–50b, and also his *Seikai mon*, cited in Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi: jōsei hen* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1944), p. 827.

103 For a discussion of the major events leading to the split between the Ennin and Enchin lineages, see Takagi Yutaka, "Tendai-shū no tenkai," in *Ajia Bukkyō-shi: Nihon hen*, vol. 2, pp. 182b–85a.

court refused to do so, asserting that spiritual attainment and high intellect were the only proper criteria for nominating an abbot, more than two hundred monks belonging to the Ennin lineage on Hiei, including several holding high office, carried out a violent demonstration at the residence of Fujiwara no Yoritada, the Chancellor and lay superintendent of Enryakuji. The willingness of the Ennin faction to resort to force was sufficient to intimidate Yokei and several hundred other monks of the Enchin faction, forcing them to quit Hiei and seek refuge in nearby temples. Meanwhile, a stalwart band of three hundred monks of the Enchin faction held fast at Senjuin atop Hiei, which had been Enchin's residence and was the repository for his manuscripts. It was so widely rumored that Ryōgen was planning to order an assault on all temples sympathetic to the Enchin faction, including Senjuin, that he was compelled to issue a denial.¹⁰⁴ Calm returned to Hiei only when Yokei yielded to his opponents and resigned the abbotship of Hosshōji.

After the Hosshōji incident the Ennin faction was even more determined to maintain its preeminent position on Hiei, which had been firmly established during the nineteen-year incumbency of Ryōgen. When word reached Hiei in 989 that Yokei had been nominated by the court to be the new abbot of Enryakuji, replacing Ryōgen's disciple Jinzen, who had just retired, the Ennin faction protested vigorously, declaring that they would seal the halls of Enryakuji rather than admit an abbot from the Enchin lineage. The imperial envoy carrying the official notification found his path blocked by irate clerics. When a second envoy was dispatched several days later accompanied by the police officials, angry monks snatched the court order from his hand as he attempted to read it. After an interval of several weeks the court made a third attempt, this time sending a ranking official, Fujiwara no Arikuni, backed by a large detachment of police, directly to Zentōin, where Ennin was enshrined, in the hope that the monks would refrain from violence at so holy a place. The court order was read aloud before Ennin's spirit tablet, along with an indictment of the Hiei monks for their unruly behavior. But all to no avail, for when Yokei arrived on Hiei, the monks refused to perform any services under his direction. Faced with such intransigence, Yokei had no choice but to resign as abbot, a mere three months after his appointment.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ *Fusō ryakki* (ca. 1150), *kan* 27, *KT*, vol. 12, pp. 250–51.

¹⁰⁵ *Nihon kiriyaku: kōhen*, *kan* 9, Eiso 1 (989)/9/29 and Eiso 1/12/27, *KT*, vol. 11, pp. 167–68.

In 993 Yokei's disciple Jōsan, smarting from the humiliation suffered by his mentor, who had died two years earlier, assembled a group of monks at Kannon'in in Kita Iwakura (in present-day Kyoto), a stronghold of the Enchin faction, from which he carried out a raid on Sekisan Zen'in, the cloister on Hiei where Ennin had lived, reportedly damaging many artifacts that had belonged to Ennin.¹⁰⁶ The Ennin faction retaliated by destroying more than forty buildings on Hiei affiliated with the Enchin faction and putting to flight more than a thousand of its monks, most of whom subsequently settled at Onjōji. This temple thus became the headquarters of the Enchin lineage, which subsequently was known as the Jimonha (Temple Branch) of the Tendai school, as opposed to the Sammonha (Mountain Branch), in other words, the temples of Hiei that were under the permanent control of monks in the Ennin lineage. Although the monks who had fled to Onjōji made no attempt to return en masse to Hiei – to do so would clearly have invited more violence – they asserted that members of their own faction should be considered eligible for appointment to the abbotship of Enryakuji since, in their view, the abbot of Enryakuji was the head of the entire Tendai school and not merely the chief administrator of the temples on Hiei.

This principle was first put to the test in 1038, when Myōson, the learned abbot of Onjōji, was nominated by his lay patron, Regent Fujiwara no Yorimichi, to fill the vacant abbotship of Enryakuji.¹⁰⁷ Hiei responded with an enormous show of force: three thousand monks descended on Yorimichi's residence demanding that he choose a monk from Hiei. When he refused, citing Myōson's great attainments, the outraged mob began dismantling the locked gates of Yorimichi's residence. Troops were summoned, and a bloody melee ensued. Several weeks later Yorimichi agreed to appoint Kyōen, the candidate of the Hiei monks. When Kyōen died in 1047, Yorimichi, ignoring the outcry from Hiei, managed to force through the appointment of Myōson as Kyōen's successor, but owing to the fierce opposition on Hiei the seventy-seven-year-old Myōson was compelled to resign after only three days in office. By the end of the twelfth century, seven other monks from Onjōji had succeeded in securing appointments to the abbotship of Enryakuji, but none was able to hold office for more than a few days.

¹⁰⁶ *Fusō ryakki, kan 27*, pp. 260–61.

¹⁰⁷ For a detailed account of this episode, see Shikō, *Jimon denki horoku* (1397), *kan 19, BZ*, vol. 127, pp. 426a–27b.

The militarization of the clergy

As their secular power and wealth grew, the larger monasteries – particularly Kōfukuji, Tōdaiji, Enryakuji, and Onjōji – increasingly resorted to force when they felt their interests threatened. Although some of their fighting men fell into the category of servitors who were recruited from monastic estates, the majority came from the large body of minimally educated monks and temple hangers-on, who seem to have been more at home with weapons than with Buddhist scripture. The employment of monks in a military capacity was striking proof of the debased character of large segments of the clergy, since the Mahāyānist disciplinary code used in China and Japan specifically forbade monks to carry weapons or engage in any form of belligerent activity.¹⁰⁸

The first major incident involving violence by clerics occurred in 949, when fifty-six monks from Tōdaiji gathered at the residence of an official in Kyoto to protest an appointment that displeased them.¹⁰⁹ A brawl ensued, claiming the lives of several of the participants. In 969 a dispute over conflicting claims to temple land resulted in the death of several Kōfukuji monks at the hands of monks from Tōdaiji.

While such violent clashes became commonplace in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, monasteries generally tried to achieve their objectives through intimidation rather than brute force. Typically, thousands of protesting monks would surround an important government building or the residence of a high official and refuse to disperse until their demands had been met. Because of their clerical status and the sanctity of the religious implements they carried, these monks were not often subjected to rough treatment by the secular authorities. After 968, Kōfukuji clerics repeatedly terrorized the Fujiwara by storming into Kyoto carrying branches of the sacred *sakaki* tree especially consecrated for the occasion by Kasuga Shrine, which was under the control of Kōfukuji. Since Kasuga was the clan shrine of the Fujiwara, the latter were compelled to seclude themselves in their residences (*rōkyō*) whenever such a demonstration took place. Another device used by Kōfukuji in dealing with ob-

¹⁰⁸ See *Bommōkyō, kan 2, T*, vol. 24, p. 1005c, which forbids the possession of “swords, clubs, bows, arrows, halberds, axes, and implements of combat.”

¹⁰⁹ For a detailed chronology of the major events involving warrior-monks, see Katsuno Ryūshin, *Sōhei* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1955), pp. 156–99, which provides a wealth of information on the use of warrior-monks in the conflicts between monasteries.

stinate Fujiwara was to threaten expulsion from the clan (*hōshi*), which was done by denouncing the offender at the Kasuga Shrine. The first instance of this occurred in 1163, when Shijō Takasue was ousted for criticizing Kōfukuji.

By the end of the eleventh century Hiei monks had developed their own unique method of intimidating recalcitrant officials. Protesting monks would descend upon Kyoto carrying sacred palanquins (*mikoshi*) from the seven major shrines on Hiei that were believed to protect the capital from natural disasters and epidemics. The simple act of transporting the sacred palanquins through the city streets was usually sufficient to strike terror in the hearts of the people, who feared that they might incur the wrath of the deities if the Hiei monks were mistreated. A favorite tactic employed by Hiei monks when their protests were ignored was to abandon the palanquin at a palace building, a residence of a high official, or the Kangakuin (the office overseeing Fujiwara affairs), which would create turmoil since laymen did not know how to dispose of so sacred an object.

The clerical violence that frequently erupted during the second half of the Heian period was generally provoked by conflicting claims to temple lands, attempts by a particular monastery to establish jurisdiction over lesser temples and shrines, real or imagined slights of one monastery by another, and dissatisfaction with ecclesiastical appointments. Doctrinal disputes between different schools, on the other hand, rarely led to armed confrontations. Thus Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji most often wrangled over land. Hiei and Kōfukuji clashed repeatedly because of Hiei's success in extending its influence and control over such previously Kōfukuji-dominated religious establishments as Gion and Tōnomine. Acts of great violence were often precipitated by trivial incidents. Hiei monks burned Kiyomizudera to the ground in 1165 because monks from Kōfukuji, with which Kiyomizudera was allied, had damaged a plaque bearing the name of Enryakuji during a memorial service for Emperor Rokujō at Ninnaji. The following day, Kōfukuji monks, bent on revenge, rampaged through Kyoto in an attempt to burn to the ground all temples and shrines connected with Hiei.

*Onjōji's request for permission to establish its own
ordination platform*

An extraordinary degree of enmity existed between Enryakuji and Onjōji, the two major Tendai monasteries after the expulsion from

Hiei of monks of the Enchin lineage in 993. Enryakuji was angered by Onjōji's persistent demand that it be accorded equal treatment with Enryakuji itself and not be viewed merely as a branch temple of Enryakuji. It suspected, not without reason, that Onjōji was scheming to reestablish the dominance of the Enchin lineage on Hiei by insisting that its leading monks be appointed to the abbotship of Enryakuji.

Hiei's distrust of Onjōji was further intensified in 1039 when Myōson, after having been denied appointment as abbot of Enryakuji because of the intense opposition of the Hiei monks, sought permission from the court for Onjōji to construct its own ordination platform.¹¹⁰ This was an understandable request since novices from Onjōji found it increasingly difficult to receive proper ordinations owing to the hostility between their temple and Hiei, which controlled the only Tendai ordination hall in Japan. Onjōji openly challenged the validity of the Hiei ordinations by asserting that the fifty-eight bodhisattva precepts constituting the core of a Tendai ordination had been transmitted properly only within its own lineage, which traced its origin back to Gishin, who had received these precepts directly from Tao-sui, the seventh Chinese patriarch of Tendai. Onjōji recognized, of course, that Saichō had also received these precepts along with Gishin in the same ceremony, but maintained with some justification that Saichō had never transmitted them to Ennin because Saichō had not been granted permission by the court to conduct ordinations. Since authorization to build an ordination hall on Hiei was given only after Saichō's death, the first true Tendai ordinations, Onjōji argued, were performed by Gishin, when he administered the precepts to his disciple Enchin.

Enryakuji vigorously opposed Myōson's petition, arguing that the existence of two separate ordination platforms within a single school would only create dissension. Enryakuji's real fear was that it would not be able to maintain its primacy within the Tendai school if Onjōji could carry out its own ordinations. Onjōji, not surprisingly, was supported in this dispute by the Nara temples, especially Kōfukuji, which saw this as a chance to weaken Enryakuji. In the face of Enryakuji's unwavering opposition, the court, after much deliberation,

¹¹⁰ *Jimon denki horoku, kan 19, BZ*, vol. 127, pp. 426a–27b; *Shunki* (the diary of Fujiwara no Sukefusa, covering the years 1038–52, with lacunae), *Tankaku sōsho* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1912), vol. 1, pp. 150–51; *Gempei seisuiiki, kan 10*, vol. 1, pp. 325–27, in Tsukamoto Tetsuzō, ed., *Yūhōdō bunko* (121 vols.) (Tokyo: Yūhōdō shoten, 1914–18). For the dispute regarding the establishment of an ordination platform at Onjōji, see Tsuji, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi: jōsei hen*, pp. 835–38, and Katsuno, *Sōhei*, pp. 92–95.

rejected Myōson's petition, but sought to mollify Onjōji by appointing him abbot of Enryakuji, a position, as we have already noted, that he was able to retain only for three days. The question of whether Onjōji should be allowed to have its own ordination platform was discussed again by the court in 1070, but still no decision was reached. The issue was raised once more in 1074 when Raigō, a monk of Onjōji who was asked by Emperor Shirakawa to offer prayers for the birth of a crown prince, declared that if the court wished to reward him for his services, it should grant Onjōji's long-standing petition for an ordination platform. This provoked a violent demonstration by Hiei partisans, who set fire to Onjōji.

Relations between the two Tendai monasteries had so deteriorated by 1081 that a minor altercation at a shrine festival between underlings from Onjōji and Hiei sparked a series of increasingly serious incidents, which finally culminated in an attack on Onjōji by a force of several thousand armed monks and laymen assembled by Hiei from its subordinate temples and shrines.¹¹¹ Although Onjōji, which at the time consisted of fifteen imperially sponsored temples, seventy-nine halls, fifteen sutra repositories, and dozens of other structures, was totally devastated by fire, its abbot, as an indication of the importance Onjōji attached to the right to conduct its own ordinations, did not seek any restitution from Hiei, but instead requested permission to establish an ordination hall once Onjōji was rebuilt. But fear of the *yama-hōshi* (monks from the mountain), as the Hiei clergy were known, was sufficient to deter the court from granting even this seemingly modest request.

Enryakuji continued to show profound hostility toward Onjōji after its reconstruction in 1092. On the flimsiest of pretexts monks from Enryakuji, in 1121 and again in 1140, put the torch to Onjōji, which consequently prohibited its novices from receiving ordinations on Hiei, thus further strengthening Onjōji's case for an independent ordination hall. In 1163, Enryakuji obtained an order from the court requiring that Onjōji novices henceforth be ordained on Hiei and not in the ordination hall of Tōdaiji, which, although denounced as Hīnayānist by Saichō, was the only ordination procedure available to them if they declined to go to Hiei.¹¹² Kōfujuki joined Onjōji in protesting the court ban on Nara ordinations for Tendai monks and, with support from Onjōji, proposed that Enryakuji be

¹¹¹ *Fusō ryakki*, *kan* 30, pp. 322–23; Tsuji, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, pp. 840–42.

¹¹² *Jinten ainōshō* (1532), *kan* 18, *BZ*, vol. 150, p. 443a. See also Katsuno, *Sōhei*, pp. 99–103, and Tsuji, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, pp. 888–91.

made a subsidiary temple of Kōfukuji on the grounds that Saichō, Gishin, Ennin, and Enchin had been ordained in Nara. Outraged at the audacity of Kōfukuji, Hiei vented its anger by burning down Onjōji for a fourth time in less than a century. By the end of the Heian period neither side could claim a victory: Onjōji failed to receive approval for its own ordination hall, but Hiei was unable to enforce the decree requiring Onjōji novices to be ordained on Hiei.

THE SHINGON SCHOOL AFTER KŪKAI

Unlike Tendai, which was temporarily eclipsed when Saichō passed from the scene, Shingon continued to enjoy unwavering support from the imperial family and aristocracy even after Kūkai's death.¹¹³ Shingon monks were regularly summoned to the court to pray for rain or to perform rites of exorcism. Shingon services likewise became an integral part of the annual imperial calendar, the two most important rituals being the previously mentioned *go-shichinichi mi-shiho* performed in the Shingon'in (Shingon Chapel) within the palace precincts, and the *taigenhō* held at the same time as the *mi-shiho* in the Jōneiden (Jōnei Hall), which was part of the imperial residence. Introduced from China by Kūkai's disciple Jōgyō, the *taigenhō*, which became an annual observance in 851, was a complex ritual in which various weapons were laid out at an elaborately appointed, multitiered altar in the expectation that these implements would vanquish all enemies of the emperor and protect his person.

Kūkai's disciples

The major institutional problem confronting Kūkai's successors in the ninth century was the lack of a universally recognized Shingon center comparable to Hiei. Before his death Kūkai entrusted the administration of each of the four major Shingon establishments to a different disciple: Jitsue, the most senior disciple, was appointed abbot of Tōji; Shinzei was given responsibility for Takaosanji; Shinga, Kūkai's younger brother and confidant, was put in charge of the Shingon'in at Tōdaiji, and Shinzen, Kūkai's nephew, was made abbot of Kongōbuji on Kōya, where Kūkai had chosen to be interred.

¹¹³ Three sources that were particularly helpful to me when I was writing this section are Shimode Sekiyo, "Shingon-shū no tenkai," in *Ajia Bukkyō-shi: Nihon hen*, vol. 2, pp. 205–22; Sonoda Kōyū, "Heian Bukkyō no seiritsu," in *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, vol. 1, pp. 226–33; Katsuno, *Hieizan to Kōyasan*, pp. 197–242.

Although there is no evidence to suggest that the disciples bore any personal animosity toward each other, this arrangement could not but create serious difficulties given their different personalities, interests, and family backgrounds.

Eager to secure the patronage of the powerful families, Kūkai's disciples sometimes found themselves on opposing sides in political conflicts. In 850, Shinzei, who was then abbot of both Takaosanji and Tōji, agreed to a request by Emperor Montoku to pray that the latter's eldest son, six-year-old Prince Koretaka, be chosen heir to the throne. Koretaka's mother was a member of the Ki clan, as was Shinzei.¹¹⁴ This attempt to secure the right of succession for a member of the Ki clan was strongly opposed by the Minister of the Right, Fujiwara no Yoshifusa, whose daughter, Meishi, also a consort of Montoku's, had likewise given birth to a son, Prince Korehito (the future Emperor Seiwa). To counter Shinzei's efforts on behalf of Koretaka, Yoshifusa turned to Shinga, whose prayers for Korehito's succession eventually proved successful. Shinga was rewarded with the abbotship of Tōji in 860, even though this necessitated bypassing the *dembō ajari* Shinshō, who was his senior with respect to ordination. So great was the esteem for Shinga that he became the first monk permitted to enter the palace grounds in a carriage.

Rivalry among the major Shingon temples

Even more divisive than the personal alliances between Shingon monks and opposing factions of the aristocracy was the rivalry between Tōji, which performed a vast array of esoteric rites for the court, and Kōyasan, where Shingon novices underwent rigorous training. In 853, Shinzei, then abbot of Tōji, persuaded the court to decree that in view of Kōya's remoteness the annual examination of candidates for ordination as Shingon monks, whose number had been increased from three to six that year, should no longer be conducted at Kōya, which had been the rule since 835, but at Tōji.¹¹⁵ Only three of the successful candidates would be permitted to proceed to Kōya for the actual ordination; the remaining three were to be ordained at Takaosanji. Several years later, however, it became the practice for all ordinations to be done at Tōji. Resentful of its loss of

¹¹⁴ Ōe no Masafusa, *Gōdanshō* (ca. 1107), *kan* 2, *Gunsho ruijū* (Tokyo: Keizai zasshisha, 1905), vol. 17, p. 568.

¹¹⁵ For the dispute regarding the proper site for Shingon ordinations, Katsuno, *Hieizan to Kōyasan*, pp. 209–12.

control over ordinations, Kōya was able to have the offending decree rescinded in 885, after its abbot, Shinzen, who a year earlier had been asked to serve concurrently as abbot of Tōji, protested vigorously. Shinzen's successor at Tōji, Yakushin, who belonged to the Tōji lineage proper emanating from Jitsue and who also enjoyed the strong support of Emperor Uda, succeeded in convincing the court in 897 to return to the arrangement of 853, arguing that Kōya, "a branch temple located in the mountains," had usurped the prerogatives of Tōji.¹¹⁶ The wrangling over the right to ordain continued for another ten years when the government forced a compromise. The number of annual ordinands was increased from six to ten, four to be examined at Tōji, three at Kōya, and three at Takaosanji.

The cause of Kōya was championed primarily by Shinzen, who as a nephew of Kūkai was determined not to permit Kōya, Kūkai's retreat and place of burial, to be overshadowed by Tōji, which was benefiting enormously from its proximity to the center of secular power. While Kūkai's other disciples were busily engaged in performing rituals for the aristocracy in the capital, Shinzen devoted himself single-mindedly to expanding Kongōbuji and codifying its basic rituals. When he moved to Kyoto to become abbot of Tōji in 884, Shinzen left the administration of Kongōbuji to his disciple Juchō, who had no ties to the rival Tōji. In 889, at the urging of Shinzen, the court awarded Juchō the prestigious title of *zasu*,¹¹⁷ to be passed on in perpetuity to succeeding abbots of Kongōbuji, who would now enjoy equal status with the abbots of Enryakuji. Shinzen entrusted to Juchō, as a token of the authority of the office of the Kongōbuji *zasu*, a highly treasured collection of manuscripts known as the *Sanjūjō sakushi*, mostly in Kūkai's hand, which Shinzen had borrowed from Tōji in 881, while Shinga, his master and uncle, was still its abbot.

Shinzen's efforts notwithstanding, Kōya was hard-pressed to maintain its independence from Tōji, especially after 901 when Retired Emperor Uda received the *dembō kanjō* from the Tōji abbot Yakushin. The relationship between the two Shingon centers became increasingly strained because of Kōya's persistent refusal to return the *Sanjūjō sakushi* to Tōji.¹¹⁸ In 915, Kangen, the powerful abbot of Tōji, obtained from Uda a decree instructing Mukū, the then abbot

¹¹⁶ Kōhō, *Tōbōki* (1352), *kan* 8, *Zokuzoku gunsho ruijū* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1907), vol. 12, p. 156.

¹¹⁷ Kaiei, *Kōya shunjū hennen shūroku* (1719), *kan* 3, *BZ*, vol. 131, p. 36.

¹¹⁸ For the dispute regarding the *Sanjūjō sakushi*, see Tsuji, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi: jōsei hen*, pp. 409–10.

of Kongōbuji, to surrender the manuscripts. Refusing to do so, Mukū resigned his office and accompanied by a few disciples fled with the *Sanjūjō sakushi* to Iga, where he died three years later. Only after being presented with yet another decree from Uda did Mukū's disciples agree to hand over the manuscripts to Kangen, who, after a triumphant display at the imperial palace, deposited them in the Tōji treasure-house. In 919, the year after the return of the *Sanjūjō sakushi*, the court formally recognized the primacy of Tōji by decreeing that its abbot (traditionally called *chōja*, "elder") would henceforth also serve concurrently as overseer (*kengyō*) of Kongōbuji.¹¹⁹ By combining the abbotships of the two major Shingon centers, the government was able to avoid the sort of schism that plagued the Tendai school and resulted in the almost continuous warfare between its Enryakuji and Onjōji factions. The Shingon school achieved full parity with Tendai in 921, when the court, acting on a petition by Kangen, gave Kūkai the posthumous name Kōbō Daishi, thereby according him the same honorary status that it had granted Saichō and Ennin in 866.

Ninnaji and Daigoji

Beginning with the reign of Uda (887–97) the imperial family developed a particularly warm relationship with the Shingon school, probably as a reaction to the domination of Enryakuji by tonsured members of the Fujiwara clan. Ninnaji and Daigoji were the two Shingon temples most directly linked with the imperial family. Situated to the west of the palace, Ninnaji was originally established in 888 as a Tendai temple by Emperor Uda in memory of his father, Kōkō, whose reign had been known as Ninna. In 899, two years after abdicating in favor of his son Daigo, Uda was tonsured at Ninnaji by Yakushin, the learned abbot of Tōji. The following year Uda appointed Kangen superintendent (*bettō*) of Ninnaji, thereby transforming it into a Shingon temple. In 904, Uda moved to the newly constructed Omuro (Imperial Chamber) adjacent to Ninnaji, to become its first *monzeki* (abbot of imperial or aristocratic lineage). Uda occupies a unique position in the history of Japanese Buddhism as the only emperor to have carried out, as a *dembō ajari*, the formal transmission of the Dharma to his successors. His major disciple and spiritual heir, Kangū, became abbot of Tōji in 949, and his

¹¹⁹ *Tōji chōja bunin* (ca. 1634), *kan* 1, *Zokuzoku gunsho ruijū*, vol. 2, p. 491a.

grandson, Kanchō, who had studied under both Uda and Kangū, was named abbot of Tōji in 981.

Throughout its history Ninnaji retained extremely close ties to the imperial family, no less than twenty-two of its abbots having been *hōshinnō* (ordained imperial princes of the first generation), eight of them in the Heian period alone. Ninnaji reached the pinnacle of its influence during the incumbency of its sixth *monzeki*, Shukaku, who was the second son of Emperor Go-Shirakawa. A learned monk with a reputation as a skilled practitioner of esoteric rites, Shukaku eventually became abbot of nine temples in the Kyoto area, bringing them under the sway of Ninnaji. So great had the prestige of Shukaku become that when he requested Tōji, in 1186, to “lend” Ninnaji the precious *Sanjūjō sakushi* and two mandalas attributed to Kūkai, Shunshō, the abbot of Tōji, was unable to refuse. The *Sanjūjō sakushi* has remained “on loan” at Ninnaji ever since.

The other Shingon temple to receive comparable support from the imperial family was Daigoji, located in the southeastern suburbs of Kyoto. Originally built in 874 as a hermitage for Shōbō, an eminent Shingon monk of imperial descent, Daigoji was richly supported by Shōbō’s devoted patron, Emperor Daigo, who sponsored the construction of the Shakadō, Yakushidō, and Godaidō, which are three major halls of Daigoji, between 904 and 907. Daigo decreed in 919, on the tenth anniversary of the death of Shōbō, that henceforth only monks belonging to Shōbō’s lineage could serve as abbot of Daigoji and that they would have the rank of *zasu*, the same title used for the abbots of Enryakuji and Kongōbuji. Kangen, who was Shōbō’s foremost disciple and successor, was named the first abbot of Daigoji. Since Kangen already held the abbotship of Tōji and Kongōbuji and was also superintendent of Ninnaji, the practical effect of Daigo’s decree of 919 was to bring all the principal Shingon centers in Japan under the nominal control of a single monk.

Daigo’s sons, the emperors Suzaku and Murakami, whose births were attributed to prayers offered at Daigoji by Kangen, further enlarged the temple by constructing new halls and making periodic donations of land and tax revenue. In 952 a five-storied pagoda, which still stands, was consecrated in memory of Daigo, whose grave was placed adjacent to the temple. Suzaku and Murakami were likewise buried at Daigoji, as were the consorts of emperors Shirakawa and Go-Toba, as well as numerous other women of the imperial family. Daigoji became a frequent place of pilgrimage for members of the imperial family, particularly if they were seeking offspring, since it

was widely believed that the bodhisattva Jundei Kannon, who was enshrined in Daigoji, would intercede in such matters.

Because of its extraordinarily close ties with the imperial family, Daigoji, like Ninnaji, was able to become a virtually autonomous Shingon temple. In 1018 it was decreed that henceforth only monks of Shōbō's lineage who had actually been trained at Daigoji could occupy the office of abbot. The specific intent of the decree was to exclude the appointment of monks from Tōdaiji, where Shōbō, who was also a Sanron scholar of note, had established in 904 Tōnan'in, a major subtemple for Sanron and Shingon studies. Since the monks at Tōnan'in constituted one branch of Shōbō's lineage, they had, on occasion, been selected by the court to serve as abbots at Tōji and Daigoji. Ever anxious to expand its influence, Tōdaiji used this as a pretext for asserting its supremacy over the Shingon temples in Kyoto by arguing that since abbots of both Tōji and Daigoji had come from Tōdaiji, Tōji should be regarded as a branch temple (*be-tsuin*) of Tōdaiji and Daigoji as a subordinate temple (*matsuji*). The decree of 1018 thus guaranteed the independence of Daigoji from Tōdaiji.

After the declaration that monks belonging to Shōbō's Tōdaiji lineage would no longer be eligible to occupy the highest office of Daigoji, its abbotship passed firmly into the hands of descendants of Emperor Daigo: the twelfth *zasu*, Kakugen, was the son of Emperor Kazan (Daigo's great-grandson); the thirteenth *zasu*, Jōken, was the son of Minamoto no Takakuni (another great-grandson of Daigo); the fourteenth *zasu*, Shōkaku, was the son of Minamoto no Toshifusa (a fourth-generation descendant of Daigo); the fifteenth *zasu*, Jōkai, was the son of Minamoto no Akifusa (another fourth-generation descendant of Daigo), and so on.

A new round of temple construction around Daigoji was begun in 1115, when Shōkaku built Sambōin, which was soon recognized as a major center of Shingon learning. Sambōin was the first of five subtemples erected in the vicinity of Daigoji during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries to be headed by abbots of imperial or aristocratic ancestry (*monzeki*). Toward the end of the Heian period it had become customary to choose the abbot of Daigoji from one of these five subtemples, collectively referred to as the Daigoji gomonzeki (The Five Aristocratic Temples of Daigoji). By 1155 the Daigoji complex consisted of 42 main halls (*dō*), 4 pagodas, 3 imperial villas (*goshō*), 4 sutra repositories, and 183 dormitories to accommodate monks.

The Ono and Hirosawa branches of Shingon

The growing complexity of Shingon rites led during the twelfth century to the emergence of twelve subschools (*ryū*), each based in a different temple. These subschools, which differed from one another not so much in matters of doctrine as in the minutiae of ritual, were divided into two groups, the Ono *ryū* and the Hirosawa *ryū*, each in turn consisting of six subschools.

The Ono *ryū*, which traced its lineage back to Shōbō, took its name from the Ono district of Kyoto, where the great Shingon scholar Ningai, who was a fourth-generation disciple of Shōbō and the de facto founder of the Ono *ryū*, established Zuishin'in in 991. The Ono *ryū* subsequently split into the two groups: (1) the Three Daigoji Subschoools (*Daigo sanryū*) based in the Sambōin, Rishōin, and Kongōōin, which were part of the Daigoji complex; and (2) the Three Kanjuji Subschoools (*Kanjuji sanryū*) located in Kanjuji, Anjōji, and Zuishin'in in Yamashina to the north of Daigoji.

The rival Hirosawa *ryū* traced its origins back to Yakushin, the seventh abbot of Tōji, through his disciple, the tonsured retired emperor Uda. Named after Hirosawa Pond in northwest Kyoto, where Kanchō, Yakushin's disciple in the third generation, founded Henjōji in 989, the Hirosawa *ryū* subdivided around the beginning of the twelfth century into six subschools, four of which were based in subtemples within the Ninnaji complex. The two remaining Hirosawa subschools, the Ninnikusen *ryū* and the very important Daidembōin *ryū*, evolved in temples in Yamato and Kii provinces respectively.

The restoration of Kōya

After it was decided in 919 to have the abbot of Tōji serve concurrently as abbot of Kongōbuji, it soon became apparent that the interests of the Kongōbuji could not be adequately represented in such an arrangement, since the abbot of Tōji was required to reside permanently in Kyoto. In 928, Saikō, the twelfth abbot of Tōji, sent an appeal to the court in which he deplored the impoverished condition of Kongōbuji and requested funds for its renovation.¹²⁰ In response to Saikō's petition the court agreed to the appointment of a resident "executor" (*shigyō*) on Kōya whose primary function would be to promote the restoration of Kongōbuji. The executor, while techni-

¹²⁰ For the rebuilding of Kōyasan, see Katsuno, *Hieizan to Kōyasan*, p. 216.

cally subordinate to the *zasu*, who resided in Kyoto, was the highest-ranking monk in Kōya and hence became its de facto abbot. In 983, with the renovation and expansion of Kongōbuji almost completed, the designation “executor” was changed to “overseer” (*kengyō*), a title that remained in use until 1875, when the original title *zasu* was reinstated to designate the head monk of Kōya.

The Kongōbuji was almost completely destroyed in 994 by a fire that started when lightning struck its main pagoda. Although Kanchō, the influential nineteenth abbot of Tōji, was immediately able to secure a decree ordering the reconstruction of Kongōbuji, the project made little headway because of a lack of funds. The situation was further aggravated when the governor of Kii, who had been charged with the responsibility for rebuilding the Kondō (Golden Hall), seized the Kōya estates after Kanchō’s death in 998, allegedly to meet construction costs. Deprived of their sole source of income, the few remaining monks on Kōya were compelled to quit the mountain completely.

The reconstruction of Kongōbuji and its subsequent popularity as a place of pilgrimage were ultimately brought about by the unflagging efforts of two monks, Kishin (also known as Jōyo) and Ningai. Kishin moved to Kōya in 1016 at the relatively advanced age of fifty-eight in response to a command received in a dream that he had after imploring the bodhisattva Kannon to inform him of the whereabouts of his deceased parents.¹²¹ When he reached Kōya, it is said, his spiritual eye was suddenly opened, enabling him to see that Kongōbuji was none other than the Inner Palace of Tosotsu (Tusita) Heaven, the celestial realm in which Miroku (Maitreya), the Future Buddha, is believed to reside until the time is ripe for his descent into this world. Here Kishin discovered his parents, transformed into bodhisattvas, seated on lotus thrones. After making his way to the tomb of Kūkai, which was almost inaccessible because of the dense overgrowth after years of neglect, Kishin made a solemn vow to devote the remainder of his life to the restoration of Kōya. Kishin’s efforts bore fruit, and by the time of his death in 1047 Kongōbuji enjoyed a greater degree of prosperity than ever before.

The perception of Kōya as a sacred mountain was also widely promoted by the prestigious monk Ningai, whose power to summon rain in times of drought assured him a large following at the court. Known popularly as the “Rain Bishop” (*Ame Sōjō*), this exception-

¹²¹ This story is recounted in Tsuji, *Nihon Bukkyō-shi*, pp. 413–14.

ally learned monk, who, as already noted, is regarded as the founder of the Ono branch of Shingon, felt a particular attachment to Kōya, where, in 957, at the age of six he had been tonsured by Gashin, who later became the first monk to hold the office of overseer of Kongōbuji.

In 1023, Ningai persuaded the former regent, Fujiwara no Michinaga, then fifty-seven years of age, to undertake the arduous journey to Kōya.¹²² Ningai convinced Michinaga that by making a pilgrimage to Kōya, he would not only be sure to escape an unpleasant rebirth but would also be present when Miroku makes his descent into this world from Tosotsu Heaven. Accompanied by an entourage of sixteen high-ranking monks and laymen, Michinaga spent some five days on the road before reaching the Inner Sanctum (Okunoin) of Kōya, where Kūkai was entombed. In an emotional declaration of his faith, he pledged the rebuilding of Kūkai's mausoleum and the donation of land for the upkeep of Kōya.

It subsequently became a regular practice for Fujiwara regents and retired emperors to undertake such a pilgrimage to Kōya.¹²³ In 1048 Yorimichi visited Kōya, followed by Morozane in 1081, Moromichi in 1108, Tadazane in 1144, and Yorinaga in 1148. The retired emperors Shirakawa and Toba made three visits each to Kōya (Shirakawa in 1088, 1091, and 1127; Toba in 1124, 1127, and 1132).¹²⁴ As might be expected, the pilgrimages by the retired emperors, like those by the Fujiwara regents, were lavish affairs, the entourage usually including ministers of state, leading clerics from the main Shingon monasteries in Kyoto, and a military escort, which accompanied the procession only as far as the Administrative Office (*mandokoro*) of Kongōbuji. These aristocratic and imperial pilgrims contributed generously to the reconstruction and expansion of Kongōbuji. On the occasion of his first visit, Shirakawa formally ordered the rebuilding of the Great Pagoda (Daitō), donating an estate in Bingo for its permanent upkeep. On his second visit, he presented Kōya with an estate located in Aki. In 1124, Toba sponsored the construction of the Western Pagoda, which he subsequently endowed. After the construction of Daidembōin in 1132, Toba donated seven estates specifically for the training of its monks.

¹²² *Fusō ryakki, kan 28, KT*, vol. 12, pp. 276–77; *Kōya shunjū hennen shūroku, kan 4, BZ*, vol. 131, p. 66.

¹²³ On the pilgrimages to Kōya by the Fujiwara, see Katsuno, *Hieizan to Kōyasan*, pp. 218–20.

¹²⁴ The imperial visits to Kōyasan at this time are chronicled in Kongōbuji, ed., *Kōyasan sen hyakunen shi* (Kōyasan: Kongōbuji, 1942), pp. 76–83.

The enormous popularity of Kōya as a pilgrimage site after the eleventh century indicates the profound esteem in which Kūkai was held.¹²⁵ By the end of the tenth century it was believed that Kūkai had not actually died at Kōya in 835 but rather had entered into a deep trance (*nyūjō*), from which he would emerge upon Miroku's descent from Tosotsu Heaven. According to a widely held belief, when Kangen opened Kūkai's tomb in 921 to read the court decree granting Kūkai the posthumous name Kōbō Daishi, he discovered that Kūkai's body was intact: his facial color was normal, his skin was warm, and his hair had grown longer – all indications that he was indeed still alive. Since Kūkai had been a devotee of Miroku, he soon was identified with him. If Kūkai was the earthly incarnation (*keshin*) of Miroku, it was only natural to view Kōya, Kūkai's abode, as a terrestrial manifestation of Tosotsu Heaven.

By the late eleventh century the deification of Kūkai had progressed to the point that he was being equated with the great cosmic Buddha Dainichi, the supreme deity of Shingon. When Shirakawa, in 1088, expressed a wish to visit Vultures' Peak in India where Śākya-muni was believed to have preached many of the Mahāyāna sutras, he was urged by the court scholar, Ōe no Masafusa, to make a pilgrimage to Kōya instead, since Kōya, Masafusa declared, was none other than the eternal Pure Land of Dainichi Nyorai (Mitsugon Jōdo) and hence vastly superior to Vultures' Peak in India.¹²⁶ So highly was Kūkai revered that when a lock of hair belonging to the deceased emperor Horikawa was discovered in 1108, the court decided to inter it alongside Kūkai's tomb in the hope of establishing a spiritual link (*kechien*) between the deceased emperor and the deified Kūkai. In 1165 a lock of hair belonging to the deceased emperor Nijō was sent to Kōya for the same purpose.

The first instance of the burial of a lay person on Kōya, which was to become a common practice – Kōya now has more than 100,000 graves – occurred in 1160, when Mifukumon-in, the consort of Emperor Toba, was interred there. A devout believer in Kūkai, Mifukumon-in had not been allowed to make the pilgrimage to Kōya in her lifetime because of the ban against visits to the mountain by women. In the final years of her life, she erected a hermitage at Arakawa, about twenty kilometers west of Kōya, from which she worshiped daily in the direction of Kūkai's tomb. In accordance with her will,

¹²⁵ The following account is largely based on Shimode, "Shingon-shū no tenkai," in *Ajia Bukkyō-shi: Nihon hen*, vol. 2, pp. 210b–14a.

¹²⁶ Washio Junkyō, *Kōshitsu to Bukkyō* (Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 1939), pp. 265–66.

her cremated remains were brought to Kōya for burial near the main hall of Kongōbuji, where her tomb still remains.

THE GROWTH OF PURE LAND BUDDHISM

Amida (Sanskrit, Amitābha or Amitāyus) Buddha, the central figure of the Pure Land faith, is one of the most popular divinities in the Buddhist pantheon, his name or that of his Pure Land appearing in more than 270 scriptures, roughly one out of every three works in the Mahāyānist canon.¹²⁷ At a very early stage in the development of Indian Mahāyāna there emerged a cult centering on Amida, that viewed him as a sort of savior who had, through his own boundless merit, created a Pure Land, or haven, offering shelter to all beings who demonstrated their faith in him by certain devotional acts. In China the Amida cult grew steadily after the year 402, when the monk Hui-yūan founded the first Pure Land association of lay and clerical devotees. Faith in Amida and his vow to deliver all beings to Pure Land became one of the dominant themes in Chinese Buddhism and was recognized as an ancillary teaching by the various Buddhist schools, whose masters often produced commentaries on the Pure Land scriptures and advocated the Pure Land faith, but always in such a way that it was subordinate to the principal tenets of their own school. In addition to these sectarian interpretations of Pure Land, however, an independent cult, which viewed Pure Land Buddhism as the only valid type of religious practice for the present age, began to take shape in the sixth century under the guiding hand of T'an-luan. This cult, known later in China and Japan as the Pure Land school, culminated in the work of Shan-tao, who, while recognizing the necessity of such traditional practices as sutra chanting, meditations, image worship, and the presentation of offerings, asserted that the vocal recitation of Amida's name was the primary devotional act leading to rebirth in Pure Land.

Although Pure Land scriptures had already been copied and studied in the Nara period and images of Amida could be found in Nara temples, it was only in Heian times that the Pure Land faith emerged as a major movement within Japanese Buddhism. In seventh- and eighth-century Japan, Amida was viewed primarily as a Buddha who could deliver the souls of the dead to his Pure Land, commonly

¹²⁷ Yabuki Keiki, *Amida Butsu no kenkyū*, rev. and enlarged ed. (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1937), p. 449.