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Chapter Twelve

The *Abhiṣeka* of the *Yogin*: Bodily Practices and the Interiorization of Ritual in Medieval Japan

On the 26th day of the 10th month of Gentoku 2 (1330), in a palace called Gosessho 御節所殿, Go-Daigo tennō received a new initiation from Monkan 文觀 (1278–1357), head abbot of Daigoji, recorded as “yogic *abhiṣeka*” (*yugi kanjō* 瑜祇灌頂).¹ A later portrait of Go-Daigo shows him holding the implements of Vajrasattva 金剛薩埵, an adamantine bell and a five-pronged vajra, sitting on a lotus-shaped mat and wearing a monastic *kesa* 袈裟 robe above his layman royal robes. According to a document handed down with the portrait, this image depicts Go-Daigo’s semblance after having been bestowed the initiation, his appearance mirroring that of the deity.² (Figure 12.1)

1 This is reported in *Yuga dentōshō*, Monkan’s biography completed in 1365 by his disciple Hōren, as well as in a temple document, *Shōjōkōji kiroku* 藤沢清浄光寺記録 (see below), section “Yugi kanjō no koto.” Cited in Uchida Keiichi, *Monkanbō Kōshin to bijutsu*, 146 and 149. The location of the palace is not clear.

2 Nara kokuritsu hakubutsukan (eds.), *Shinbutsu shūgō: kami to hotoke ga orinasu shinkō to bi*, 196 (no. 177). The painting is held at Shōjōkōji, better known as Yūgyōji 遊行寺, the head-temple of Jishū 時宗 in Fujisawa, Kanazawa prefecture. According to the temple records cited above the portrait was made by Monkan and transmitted to a Daigoji princely abbot; eventually it was inherited by the twelfth abbot of Yūgyōji, Sonshin. The image has been discussed for its political symbolism by Kuroda Hideo (*Ō noshintai, ō no shōzō*) and in English by Andrew Goble (“Visions of an Emperor”), but the significance of the initiation it purportedly represents has been downplayed (Kuroda doubted that there was any connection between the portrait and the sources documenting Go-Daigo’s initiation). On the contrary, Manabe Shunshō in his *Jakyō Tachikawaryū* and Uchida Keiichi in the above-mentioned study of Monkan have reassessed the image in the context of Monkan’s interest for the *yugi kanjō*.

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Figure 12.1: Portrait of Go-Daigo tennō (Detail). Colors on silk, 14th century. 30.9cm x 93.9cm. Shōjōkōji, Fujisawa. (Public domain)

Go-Daigo, following on the footsteps of his father, Go-Uda, had an extensive knowledge of Esoteric Buddhism and had already received the advanced initiation that qualifies for the title of *ajari* (*denbō kanjō* 傳法灌頂).³ The biography of Monkan does not supply details about the function of the yogic initiation or its ritual procedures. However, it informs us that in the 11th month of the same year, Monkan also conferred the yogic initiation to the empress dowager.⁴

Mentions of a “yogic *abhiṣeka*” abound in documents of the medieval period (11th–16th centuries). Much material that bears the name of this consecration, from liturgical procedures (*shidai* 次第) to certificates of transmission (*injin* 印信) and plans of ritual space (*danzu* 壇圖), has been preserved in temples archives, regardless of their affiliation to one or the other Esoteric lineage. Yet a yogic initiation does not appear among the types of advanced initiations presented by the monks who introduced Esoteric Buddhism to Japan in the ninth century, nor is it listed in early ritual collections compiled in the eleventh century. It seems to

³ I shall use here the designation of Tantric Buddhism and Esoteric Buddhism interchangeably, with a preference for the term Tantric to emphasize the pan-Asian elements of the tradition.

⁴ *Yuga dentōshō*, in Uchida, *Monkanbō Kōshin to bijutsu*, 153. The text records that the initiation followed the bestowal of the *denbō kanjō*.

have emerged suddenly in the ritual landscape of Japan in the medieval period, raising questions about its content and canonical basis, as well as the purpose it fulfilled. Was it one of the many accessory rituals that were devised in the medieval period to sanction the legitimacy of one or the other Esoteric sub-lineages? Or was it a new advanced initiation befitting the monastic elite, as Go-Daigo's case and the widespread documentation of the ritual within the Esoteric world intimate?⁵

Despite its material presence, the *yugi kanjō* has been little studied and both its performative elements and its underlining conception remain little understood. This study is a first attempt to reconstruct its history and its procedures and assess its significance in medieval Japan. Drawing on a range of sources, published and unpublished, from major temples and medieval archives, it explores the main features of the ritual and their connection to other initiatory practices of the Tantric tradition developed in Japan as well as on the Asian continent.

A Ritual without Action: Defining the *Yugi kanjō*

The typology of *abhiṣeka* rituals is complex for the variations and alternative designations that the Buddhist tradition put forward. *Asabashō* 阿婆縛抄, a comprehensive anthology of rituals compiled in the thirteenth century, in an entry titled “Types of *abhiṣeka*” (“*Kanjō shurui*” 灌頂種類) lists different classes of advanced initiations and presents three fundamental types. The first, defined as the most profound, is an initiation without ritual actions (*risagō* 離作業, lit., “separate from procedures”), which uses only mudras and is performed for a single person. The second is an initiation executed according to specific procedures (*sagō* 作業) and performed by both master and disciple. The third is called “secret *abhiṣeka*” (*himitsu kanjō* 祕密灌頂); it does not prescribe an appropriate time and space for its execution and is said to be performed mentally. In this initiation, master and disciple attain union (*yuga* 瑜伽) and transmission is said to take place “spontaneously” (*jinen* 自然).⁶ Other medieval sources name these three types of *abhiṣeka* “action initiation” (*jigō* 事業 *kanjō*), “initiation by mudra”

5 For an overview of the distinction between advanced and accessory initiations in Taimitsu, see Dolce, “Taimitsu Rituals in Medieval Japan.”

6 *Asabashō* fasc. 9 (“*Kanjō shiketsu*” 灌頂私決 n. 2), T. *zuzō* vol. 8: 788b. *Asabashō*, compiled by Shōchō 承澄 (1205–1282), is considered a representative compendium of Taimitsu rituals. *Sagō* generally means workings, actions; *sagō kanjō* is also called *gushi kanjō* 具支灌頂.

(*shuin* 手印 *kanjō*), and “mind initiation” (*ishin kanjō* 以心灌頂).⁷ The source of this taxonomy is a major Tantric scripture, the *Dari jing* 大日經.⁸ The taxonomy is significant because it highlights opposite performative modes. One, which basically corresponds to the ritual protocol used today to execute the *denbō kanjō*, involves sets of ritual actions: preparatory rites and the adornment of the altar, repentance, taking the precepts, recitations, presenting offerings on the altar and transmission of mudras.⁹ The other is an internalized execution focused on the practitioner’s body-mind. Of these classes of initiation, it is the latter that would receive further attention in medieval interpretations and occupy central place in later systematizations of initiatory rituals.¹⁰

The yogic *abhiṣeka* belongs to the category of “secret *abhiṣeka*,” although it also incorporates characteristics of the “initiation without action.” The medieval Shingon scholiast Yūkai 宥快 (1345–1416) explains that some lineages call it “mind initiation” (*isshin kanjō* 一心灌頂 or *shin kanjō* 心灌頂), others “initiation by inner ritual actions” (*nai sagō kanjō* 内作業灌頂) or “initiation by virtual actions” (*ri sagō kanjō* 理作業灌頂).” While in the *abhiṣeka* based on the Womb and Vajra mandalas (*ryōbu kanjō* 兩部灌頂) a mandala is erected “outside the mind,” Yūkai specifies, the yogic *abhiṣeka* is called “of inner actions because practitioners construct a mandala in their own mind.”¹¹ The understanding of the expressions “without ritual actions” and “inner actions” is key to define the nature of the yogic *abhiṣeka* and is underlined over and over again by medieval exegetes. A later Tendai interpreter, Jōchin 定珍 (1534–1603), who compiled another compendium of Taimitsu initiations, *Ōmushō* 鸚鵡抄, equates the initiation without ritual actions to one of the five types of *samaya* discussed in the *Dari jing*,

7 *Yūgi kaishinshō* 瑜祇開心抄, *Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho* 6: 199. This is a lengthy commentary to the *Yūgi jing* probably dating from the Kamakura period, by an unknown author and variously attributed from in-text quotations to figures of Tōmitsu lineages, from Shinkaku of Daigoji to Dōhan, Nakagawa Jichihan or Miwa-ryū Hōkyō 寶篋 (i.e., Rendō 蓮道). (See Manabe Shunshō in *Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho* 6, 291–292.) The passage, however, borrows from Annen’s exegesis of the *Yūgi jing*, *Yūgikyō gyōbōki* 瑜祇經行法記 (see below), T. vol. 61 n. 2228: 500a11–12.

8 *Dari jing*, Chapter Eleven, “The secret mandala,” T. vol. 18 n. 848: 33a. For an English translation, see Rolf Giebel (transl.), *The Vairocanābhisambodhi Sutra*, 132.

9 For a detailed description of the ritual of *denbō kanjō* based on Taimitsu documents, see Sadakata Akira, *Chōrakuji kanjō monjo no kenkyū*. Ryūichi Abé discusses the *abhiṣeka* as presented in the *Dari jing* and the *Jingangding jing* (*The Weaving of Mantra*, 133–149). See also Charles Orzech, “On the Subject of Abhiṣeka.”

10 On *himitsu kanjō*, see Satō Ryūgen, “Himitsu kanjō ni tsuite: Taimitsu no kakawari ni tsuite.”

11 “Yūgi kanjō no koto” 瑜祇灌頂事, in *Chūinryū no koto* 中院流事, T. vol. 78 n. 2505: 909c12–14. *Chūinryū no koto* was compiled by Yūkai’s disciple Seiō 成雄 (1381–1451) on the basis of the oral transmission received by Yūkai.

the fifth, called *himitsu sanmaya* 祕密三昧耶.¹² Jōchin construes the significance of the initiation in more expansive terms:

Risagō means to break free of a practice with marks (*usō no sagō* 有相ノ作業) and open up the deepest and ultimate meaning of that which is non-originated (*musa* 無作) by [performing] an *abhiṣeka* [based on] inner enlightenment (*naishō* 内證).¹³

Elaborating on the meaning of the character *ri* 理 Jōchin suggests that it may be understood as “identity” (*soku* 即) or “union” (*gō* 合).¹⁴ Such readings connote the yogic initiation as a secret rite-without-rite, the effects of which are to attain identity with a state of non-differentiation, innately present in the practitioner. Compared to other advanced initiations, the yogic *abhiṣeka* takes to the extreme the very idea of secrecy, for it is passed down with no material features to support it. It becomes the secret of secrets.

Textual Basis: The *Yuqi jing*

The secret dimension of the yogic initiation is also determined by its textual source. A later entry in the *Asabashō* compares the secret initiation discussed in the *Dari jing* with the yogic initiation and posits the latter as a superior type of initiation in virtue of the scripture in which it originates:

The *abhiṣeka* of the *Yogin sutra* (*Yugikyō kanjō* 瑜祇經灌頂) is the ultimate ritual of the Vajra mandala [lineage]. This sutra (i.e., the *Yuqi jing*) is considered a secret depository (*hizō* 祕藏) by both Tōji and Tendai [schools] and its name is not pronounced. It is just called “secret depository.” (. . .) The secret initiation is an uttermost [practice] [written] in pale ink (*usuzumi* 薄墨), the yogic initiation is the uttermost [initiation] transmitted on a blank paper (*hakushi* 白紙).¹⁵

12 *Ōmushō*, ZTZ *Mikkyō* vol. 4: 187a. Compiled in 1572, it presents initiatory rituals as upheld by the Renge lineages in Eastern Japan.

13 “Risagō kanjōki,” *Ōmushō*, ZTZ *Mikkyō* vol. 4: 187a. Jōchin attributes this definition to Ogawa sōjō 小川僧正, i.e., Shōchō, the compiler of the *Asabashō*.

14 *Ōmushō* seems to establish links with the combinatory (*gōgyō* 合行) initiation, an important category of consecration developed in the Taimitsu tradition. This link is also mentioned by Misaaki Ryōshū, *Taimitsu no riron to jissen*, 297.

15 “Tōryū shichijū jūhō” 當流七重受法, *Asabashō*, in T. *zuzō* vol. 8: 748a. On this entry, see n. 82. The two schools are unusually abbreviated as Tō 東 [mitsu]/Ten 天 [dai] (generally Tō/Tai 台). The term *hakushi* is found across Esoteric lineages to denote bestowal of the yogin initiation. For instance, it is used in an *injin* of the Tōmitsu Ikyō 意教 lineage. See *Mikkyō daijiten*, 1796b, entry on “Hakushi mikeshi makuchū” 白紙見消幕中. This title identifies the modes of transmission of

The scripture indicated in the passage is the *Yuqi jing* 瑜祇經 (Jp. *Yugikyō*), which gives the name to the yogic consecration and serves as its canonical basis.¹⁶ This scripture is often listed as one of the most important scriptures of Tantric Buddhism in East Asia, and one of the five basic texts of both schools of the Japanese tradition, Tendai and Shingon. Yet it is perhaps the least known of the Tantric scriptures influential in Japan. Traditionally regarded to have been translated by Vajrabodhi, scholars today agree that the *Yuqi jing* was most likely compiled in eighth-century China, sometime after the death of Amoghavajra in 774 and before Kūkai's arrival in China in 804.¹⁷ The *Yuqi jing* is a composite scripture, consisting of twelve chapters that are loosely connected with each other. The scripture is not centered on a single deity; rather, a number of important Tantric deities that would become object of individual worship in Japan appear in each chapter, from Aizen 愛染 to Daishōkongō 大勝金剛 and Butsugen 佛眼 (Bud-dhalocanā).¹⁸ This multiple focus might have confused modern interpreters, but medieval sources are unambiguous in grounding the yogic initiation on Chapter Eleven of the *Yuqi jing*, entitled “The Accomplishment of Vajrasattva's Awakened Mind through an Initiation [performed] by Inner Actions” (Kongōsatta bodaishin naisagō kanjō shitchi 金剛薩埵菩提心内作業灌頂悉地).¹⁹ This chapter is thus centered on Vajrasattva (alias Vajrapāṇi).²⁰ It begins with a strophe that explains how a practitioner of mantras “visualizes [his] body in the shape of the Buddha”

a “mudra-mantra of the secret union of disciple and master” as not written (i.e., on a paper that remains white), concealed (because painted over), and secluded (i.e., transmitted inside a tent).

16 T. vol. 18 n. 867: 253–269. Full title: *Jingangfeng louge yiqie yujia yuqi jing* 金剛峰樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經 (Scripture of the Yogin [Practicing] Total Union at the Adamantine Peak Pavilion).

17 Misaki Ryōshū, *Taimitsu no kenkyū*, 137–140. For more on the *Yuqi jing* and its interpretation in Japan see my article, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis: The *Yuqi jing* 瑜祇經 and the practices of the yogin.”

18 It is difficult to match a Sanskrit name to deities that appear in the scripture but do not have an exact counterpart in Indic sources, such as Aizen. For convenience' sake, I cite these in Japanese pronunciation. For other deities attested in Indic sources I have given the Sanskrit name, although this is at times does not match exactly. Titles of sutra chapters are also given in Japanese pronunciation.

19 T. vol. 18 n. 867: 266c–268c. There seem to have been some misunderstanding as to the scriptural basis of the initiation. Uchida Keiichi, for instance, claims that it is based on the first chapter of the *Yuqi jing*. (Uchida, *Monkanbō Kōshin to bijutsu*, 147–148.) David Quinter seems to relate it to Aizen (*From Outcasts to Emperors: Shingon Ritsu and the Mañjuśrī Cult in Medieval Japan*, 201).

20 Japanese commentaries of the *Yuqi jing* explain that Vajrasattva is an alternative name for Vajrapāṇi. For instance, *Yugikyō chōmonshō* clarifies that Vajrapāṇi abides in Mahāvairocana and, after being conferred the initiation, receives a five-pronged vajra. This is why he is called Vajrasattva. (ZTZ *Mikkyō* vol. 2: 344a.)

(*kanshin nyo butsugyō* 觀身如佛形). It associates fifteen deities to specific parts of the body:

Vajra[sattva], fundament of life, makes of Indra's wheel its seat /
 Tārā is the two eyes, Bhṛkuṭī is the ears /
 Śri/Lakṣmī is the tongue, Ratī is the top of the nose /
 Vajra [karma?] and Avalokiteśvara become the arms of meditation and wisdom /
 Trailokyavijaya and Acala are the knees and legs /
 The Venerable One who Shines Everywhere [Mahāvairocana] is the heart/
 Buddhhalocanā is the navel/
 Ākāśamālā is the crown, Vajratejas is the marks [of the Buddha].²¹

Taken together, the scripture states, “these fifteen deities become the single Buddha-body.”

The text then lists the secret and powerful mantras of these deities and instructs the practitioner to distribute their seed letters on the parts of his body to which the deities are matched. In this way, master and disciple are said to attain union. Blindfolded, the disciple throws a flower to identify his tutelary deity. Then the master transmits the fundamental mantra-mudra of the deity and attainment is said to be accomplished. This, the scripture tells us, is called “Vajrapāṇi's consecration by inner action” (*Kongōshu naisagō kanjō* 金剛手内作業灌頂), “the uttermost secret of [all] secrets.”²²

The fifteen deities of the *Yuqi jing* are an unusual combination of deities that do not appear as a set in any other textual tradition. Their installation onto the practitioner's body is a fundamental step of the yogic initiation. As expected, the scripture does not give many details for the performance of an initiation, for details are usually left to ritual manuals (*giki* 儀軌) and protocols (*shidai*). The chapter features a crucial moment of any advanced initiation, the casting of a flower onto a mandala spread on the floor, through which the practitioner receives his personal deity. There is, however, no description of such a mandala. Highlighted is also the transmission of the mudra-mantra of the fifteen deities.

We need to turn to medieval documents to determine how these indications from the scripture were staged in an *abhiṣeka* ritual. Medieval documents show that the visualization of the fifteen deities is integrated in a ritual format tested with other initiatory practices, albeit streamlined. The adept enters the room with the master; performs offerings, although these are mental offerings (*ri kuyō* 理供養); is transmitted the mantra of the thirty-seven deities of the Vajra mandala; blindfolded casts a flower and venerates the deity among the fifteen deities on which the

²¹ *Yuqi jing*, T. vol. 18 n. 867: 267a2–10.

²² T. vol. 18 n. 867: 267b11–12.

flower falls; receives the water unction; performs an “initiation without actions” by tying the mudras of the fifteen deities and reciting their mantras.²³ (Figure 12.2)

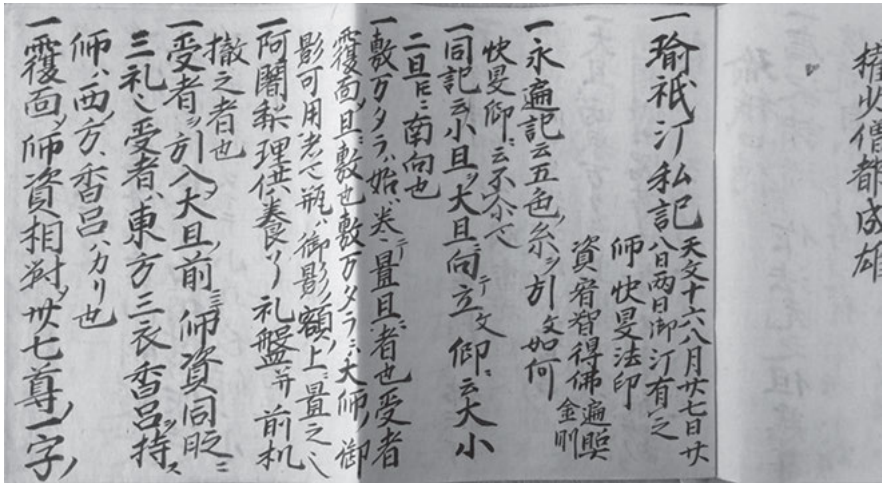


Figure 12.2: Page from a ritual manual entitled *Yugi kanjō*. Unpublished manuscript, Kōyasan University Library, Zōfukuin monjo 88–84–1. Reproduced with permission.

Liturgical segments might have been enriched in time, but in general the protocol unfolds through steps that reiterate the passage from Chapter Eleven and incorporate elements from other chapters of the *Yuqi jing*. A case in point is the secret mudra-mantra that is received at the moment of the initiation. The scripture’s exegetical literature attests that this mudra comes from the first chapter of the *Yuqi jing*. For instance, Chōgō’s 澄豪 *Yugikyō chōmonshō* 瑜祇經聽聞抄, in the exegesis of Chapter Eleven of the sutra, explains: “This *Inner Actions* chapter elucidates the principle of the *abhiṣeka*. The secret mudra [to use for] this *abhiṣeka* is the mudra-mantra of Mahāvairocana [explained] in the Introductory Chapter.”²⁴ This is usually identified with the so-called *katsuma in* 羯磨印 or *sotōba in* 卒塔婆印 and its correspondent mantra *Vaṃ*, but sources discuss its identi-

²³ See the protocol in *Yugi kanjō*, unpublished manuscript, Zōfukuin monjo 增福院文書 88–84–1, Kōyasan University Library. The manuscript includes a *Yugi kuden*, a *Yugi kanjō shiki* 瑜祇灌頂私記 (Figure 12.2) and a *Yugi kanjō kikigaki* 瑜祇灌頂聞書. See also Yūkai’s *Yugi kanjō shiki* 瑜祇 [sidham] 灌頂私記, manuscript, Kōyasan University Library 46–17–1 (Figure 12.14). I am grateful to Koyasan Library for graciously allowing me to reproduce these manuscripts.

²⁴ *Yugikyō chōmonshō*, in *ZTZ Mikkyō* vol. 2: 345a. Cf. *Yuqi jing*, T. vol. 18, p. 255b 6–20. On this mudra-mantra see also Dolce, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis.”

fication, suggesting that such detail might have been secret knowledge passed down within a lineage. Several temple archives include a one-folio document titled “secret mudra” (*mitsuin* 密印) in the set of *injin* used for the initiation. The example in Figure 12.3 is from the archives of Shōgakuin 正覺院, an important Shingon temple in the Noto peninsula. Dated Ryakuō 4 (1341) 10/17, the mudra here is the “five-pronged (vajra) mudra externally tied” (*gebaku gokō in* 外縛五股印). Compellingly, it is drawn on a loose piece of paper. The corresponding mantra is *Vam*.²⁵

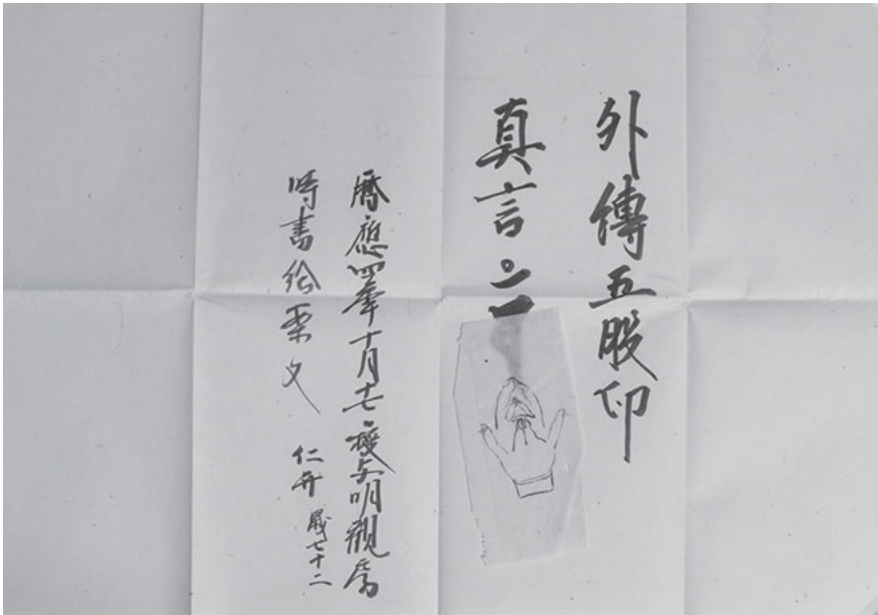


Figure 12.3: “Secret mudra” of the yogic *abhiṣeka*. *Shōgakuin komonjo* 242 (15) z. Reproduced with permission.

Let us explore further some of the elements of the ritual and consider their implications for the development of Tantric practice in medieval Japan.

²⁵ Unpublished manuscript, *Shōgakuin komonjo* 242 (15) z. The verso of the folio contains the title, *Yugi* (in *siddham*) and what presumably was the original location of the document (東 18 箱). The same mudra can be found in the *Kongōōinryū hiketsu* documents, Zentsuji archives, *Dozō* 23–249–13; and in a *injin* from the Shōmyōji archive titled “Initiation into the nondual rite of yoga and *yugi*” (*Yuga yugi funi tohō kanjō injin* 瑜伽瑜祇不二都法灌頂印信), dated Kōan 10, *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 9 (*Butsuji* 2), no. 6407. I discuss these archives below.

The Yogic Initiation Protocol: (1) Constructing a Body Mandala?

The first characteristic of the yogic initiation is the use of the fifteen deities listed in the scripture. The practice of installing deities onto the practitioner's body is not unique to the yogic initiation, but has a long history in Tantric contexts, also outside of Buddhism. In Hindu tantric practice, for instance, the practitioner visualizes deities on his body by inscribing their syllables. The procedure of “fixing mantras [on the body]” (*nyāsa*) is considered to be indispensable for the adept to become “equal to the God of Gods.”²⁶ Its purpose, in fact, is to purify the body so that the adept can be transformed into a divine being. In East Asian Tantric Buddhism this type of visualization (*fujikan* 布字觀) was an important segment of the principal initiatory rituals. The best known of these practice is perhaps the “visualization of the five syllables on the practitioner's body” (*goji gonshin kan* 五字嚴身觀), a practice based on the *Dari jing* 大日經 and described in detail in the *Commentary on the Dari jing*. It aimed at transforming the practitioner's body into “the adorned body of the Buddha” by visualizing the five elements or *cakras* and their five seed syllables *a* (earth), *va* (water), *ra* (fire), *ha* (wind) and *kha* (ether) on five parts of the practitioner's body: the lower part of the body, the navel, the heart, the top of the head, and between the eyebrows.²⁷ Known also as *gorinkan* 五輪觀, it was understood to be a ritual technique that could transfigure the body into a Womb mandala and recast the Tantric practitioner into the “stupa of the dharma world” (i.e., Mahāvairocana). For instance, the verses of Chapter Four of *Dari jing*, “Rules for recitation,” recite:

Transform the letter A into the honored one Vairocana
 On account of empowerment by the power of the Dharma, he is no different from your own person.
 Dwelling in the yoga of your own deity, apply the five letters [. . .]
 Manipulate their forms and establish them while in meditation.
 By dwelling in accordance with this method, you will be identical with the honored one [Śākya]muni.²⁸

²⁶ Flood, *The Tantric Body*, 188. See also Padoux, “Contributions à l'étude du *Mantraśāstra*. II. *nyāsa*: l'imposition rituelle des mantra.”

²⁷ See *Dari jing*, Chapter 11, T. vol. 18 n. 848: 31a and Chapter 16, *Ibid.*, 38 b–c (English translation in Giebel, trans., *The Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra*, 124 and 160–161). See also Nobumi Iyanaga, “Le cœur (en forme) de lotus: Une métaphore dans le *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* et sa tradition.”

²⁸ T. vol. 18 n. 848: 52b–c; English translation slightly adapted from Giebel (transl.), *The Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra*, 238–239. The verses continue: “The letter A, completely golden in color, is used to form a *vajra* circle:/ It empowers the lower part of the body and is called the yoga seat.

In the medieval period diverse diagrammatic illustrations of the transposition of the five elements on the practitioner's body were also produced, pointing to the importance of this practice.²⁹ Another relevant practice is the “visualization of twelve mantras,” based on the *Dari jing*'s Chapter “On the Secret Mandala,” but explicated in a set of ritual manuals compiled in China. These instruct the practitioner to visualize twelve seed letters on twelve parts of his body: the letters *Āṃ* on the crown of the head, *Khaṃ* and *Aṃ* on the left and right ears, *Aḥ* on the forehead, *Sam* and *Saḥ* on the two shoulders, *Haṃ* and *Haḥ* on the throat and heart, *Raṃ* and *Raḥ* on the navel and loins, and *Vaṃ* and *Vaḥ* on the thighs and feet. The aim of this visualization is to purify and empower the practitioner, who performs it prior to the commencement of the seven-day rite for the construction of a mandala.³⁰

Japanese exegetical works on the *Yuqi jing* attest that the yogic initiation shares the purpose of other practices of installation. Chōgō's *Yugikyō chōmonshō*, for instance, reiterates that the initiation is meant “to transform one's body into a purified body.”³¹ While techniques may be different, and the *Yuqi jing* might have modified an existent ritual framework in propounding a fifteen-deity visualization, one needs to take these other practices into account to contextualize the yogic *abhiṣeka*. Indeed, medieval sources, too, compare types of visualization aimed at creating mandalic bodies. One example comes from an entry of *Keiran*

/The letter *Vaṃ*, [the color of] white moonlight, is in the midst of a hazy mass: / It empowers your navel and is called water of great compassion. / The letter *Raṃ*, like the first light of day, is red and in a triangle: / It empowers the locus of your heart and is called light of the fire of wisdom. / The letter *Haṃ*, like the flames of the [fire] calamity [at the end] of an eon, is black in color and in a wind circle: / It empowers the place of the white tuft [between the eyebrows] and is called sovereign power. / The letter *Kha* with a dot of emptiness (i.e., *anusvāva*: *Khaṃ*) becomes all colors: / It empowers the top of the head and is therefore called great emptiness. [. . .] / Your body adorned with [these] five letters, potency is fully accomplished.”

29 One such example is a drawing of a human figure seated in meditation posture and inscribed within a five-element stupa. Transmitted as *Rinjū hiketsu*, is part of a larger work on the Womb maṇḍala, *Taizōkai shidai bunsho*. See Kanazawa Bunko's catalogue *Shōmyōji no sekitō: Chūsei risshū to sekitō*, 23 (exhibit no. 49). On medieval visual representations of the five-wheel body mandala see Dolce, “Nigenteki genri no gireika: Fudō, Aizen to chikara no hizō” and “The Embryonic Generation of the Perfect Body,” 271–276. The meditation on the five-element stupa inscribed in one's body may also be found in Indo-Tibetan Tantric literature. See Huntington and Bangdel, *The Circle of Bliss: Buddhist Meditational Art*, 231.

30 Harriet Hunter discusses the practice as presented in the *Jianli mantuluo humo yigui* 建立曼荼羅護摩議軌, a ritual manual composed by Faquan 法全 and brought to Japan by Shūei 宗叡 and Ennin 圓仁. Hunter, “A Transmission and Its Transformation,” 122–124.

31 *Yugikyō chōmonshō*, ZTZ *Mikkyō* vol. 2: 344.

shūyōshū, a fourteenth century Tendai anthology, compellingly entitled “On charting a human mandala” (Mandara ninzu no koto 曼荼羅人圖事).³²

Commentaries and initiatory documents illustrate the installation of the fifteen deities with diagrams that translated the sutra instructions graphically and foreground the logic of the ritual. I shall present here two examples. The first is a drawing included in the *Yugikyō hiketsu* 瑜祇經祕決, attributed to the Daigoji scholiast Jichiun 實運 (1105–1160), and often regarded as the oldest of the medieval exegeses of the sutra.³³ (Figure 12.4)

A second example comes from an unpublished document known as *Kongōōinryū hiketsu* 金剛王院流祕決, now in the archives of Zentsūji 善通寺, in Kagawa prefecture. (Figures 12.5 and 12.6). This document is not dated but the colophon included in one folio suggests that it was compiled in the middle of the twelfth century within the Sanbōin-ryū, one of the most important Daigoji lineage in medieval Japan.³⁴ It presents the document as a secret explanation written down by Shōkaku 勝覺 (1057–1159), the founder of the Sanbōin-ryū, who bestowed it on Shōken 聖賢 (1083–1149), founder of the Kongōōin-ryū. It consists of several folios that purport to transmit the secret meaning of each chapter of the *Yugikyō*. In fact, most of the folios focus on Chapter Eleven, attesting that the document was part of the initiatory ritual.

The two diagrams install the same deities as the sutra:

The All-shining deity, i.e. Mahāvairocana = heart
 Buddhalocanā (Butsugen) = navel
 Vajra (karma/pāṇi)³⁵ = left shoulder

³² T. vol. 76 n. 2410: 680a. The passage first presents a Womb mandala visualization, whereby a practitioner places the thirteen sections of this mandala on his body and these subsume the five elements. One of these sections, *godaiin* 五大, is also made to correspond to the five internal organs (*tainai gozō* 胎內五藏). Secondly, it outlines a practice to visualize a human body shaped by the Vajra mandala, by allocating each of the nine sections that constitute this mandala to parts of the body. To these practices it compares the visualization of the fifteen deities of the *Yuqi jing*, although it does not describe their distribution in detail.

³³ *Yugikyō hiketsu*, *Shingonshū zensho* vol. 5: 24.

³⁴ Zentsūji, *Dozō* 23–249. The colophon is at the end of the folio that contains the exegesis of the 12th chapter of the *Yuqi jing*. I am indebted to Unno Keisuke of the National Institute of Japanese Literature for alerting me to this material and sharing the photographs of the document, and to the Treasure Hall of Zentsūji for graciously allowing me to publish the images. Unno has recently published an introduction to the set of documents of which *Kongōōinryū hiketsu* is part. See Unno, “Kongōōinryū Jitsugengata yugi kanjō injin ni tsuite.”

³⁵ The *Yuqi jing* has “Kongō” only, but the commentaries gloss it as Kongōgō 金剛業 (Vajrakarma) or Kongōshu 金剛手 (Vajrapāṇi).



Figure 12.4: Diagram for the installation of the fifteen deities. From *Yugikyō hiketsu*, attributed to Jichiu, *Shingonshū zensho* vol. 5, 24.

- Avalokiteśvara (Kannon 觀音) = right shoulder
- Acala (Fudō 不動) = right leg
- Trailokyavijaya (Gōzanze 降三世) = left leg
- Tārā 多羅 = both eyes
- Bhṛkuṭī (Bigu[chi] 毘俱胝) = both ears
- Ratī (Kike 喜戲) = top of nose
- Mañjuśrī (Kichijō 吉祥) = tongue
- Ākāśamālā (Kokūhō 虚空寶) = crown
- Vajratejas (Kongōnichi 金剛日) = glitter from the body
- Vajrasattva = the entire body

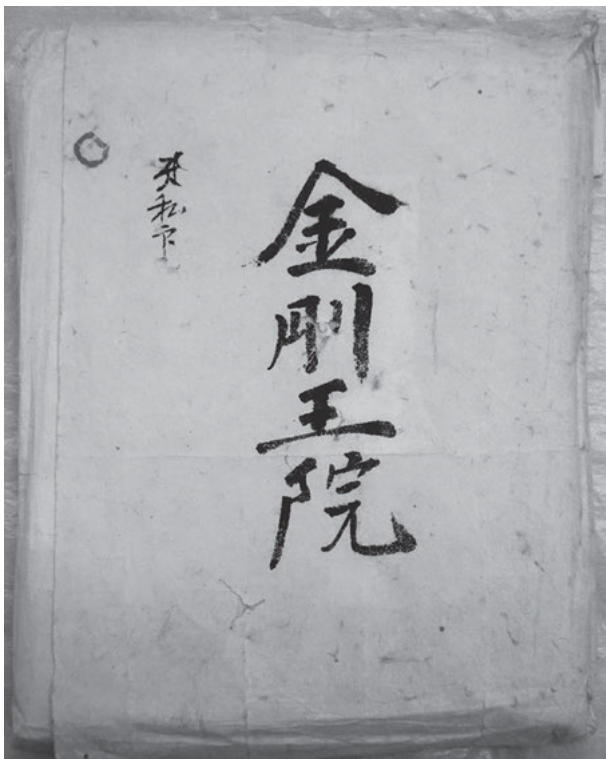


Figure 12.5: Bundle of the Kongōin-ryū transmission documents. Zentsūji Archives, Dozō 23–238–249. Reproduced with permission.



Figure 12.6A: Folio with the interpretation of Chapter Eleven of the *Yuqi jing*. *Kongōinryū hiketsu*. Zentsūji Archives, Dozō 23–249–4. Reproduced with permission.



Figure 12.6B: Diagram with the installation of the fifteen deities.

Kongōinryū hiketsu. Zentsūji Archives, *Dozō* 23–249–4. Reproduced with permission.

The only difference between the two diagrams is with the deities installed in the legs: the first inscribes Acala on the right leg and Trailokyavijaya on the left leg (Figure 12.4), while the second inverts the two (Figure 12.6B). This may be an error, perhaps due to the fact that scriptural instructions are not clear as to which deity is to be visualized on each limb. In general, the ritual manuals that

I have examined follow Annen's (841–889?) commentary to the *Yuqi jing*, which instructs to visualize Acala on the right and Trailokyavijaya on the left.³⁶ In fact, a second diagram from *Kongōōin hiketsu* (Figure 12.7B) allocates these deities in the standard position. The diagrams draw the body in a similar style, as an androgynous figure, standing with open legs and supinated arms and hands. This is a peculiar feature, which recalls the position of the human figure in Chinese acupuncture diagrams. However, other diagrams exist which inscribe the allocation of the fifteen deities on a figure with the appearance and position of a Buddha. Two such line drawings are preserved at Kanazawa Bunko: the drawings show a figure sitting in meditation, wearing the crown of Mahāvairocana and making the meditation mudra (*hokkai jōin*), which identifies it as the Buddha of the Womb mandala.³⁷

The first issue that emerges from these diagrams concerns the areas of the body on which the fifteen deities are installed. What is the significance of exactly these sites? At a first analysis, it appears that sensorial organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue) and limbs (arms and legs) are privileged, suggesting that the visualization might be directed to the practitioner's sense faculties: eyes – sight; nose – smell; ears – hearing; tongue – taste; hands and feet – touch. The installation of deities on these parts of the body would serve to purify as well as empower those areas. If the *Yuqi jing* intends to draw attention to the senses, this bears similarity to some traditions of body mandala, the ritual practices that imagine the human body as inhabited by deities and activate its power by locating and manipulating vital points. For instance, when analyzing Tibetan body mandala texts that map deities on the same parts of the body as the *Yuqi jing*, Dachille brings to focus the function of sensorial organs as the boundaries of the practitioner's body.³⁸

36 *Yugikyō shūgyōhō* 瑜祇經修行法, T. vol. 61 n. 2228: 500b09–10. See also Yūkai, *Yugi kanjō shiki*, Koyasan University Library 46–17–1. Annen's *Yugikyō shūgyōbō*, in three fascicles, was the first substantial commentary on the *Yuqi jing*, which set the stage for the combinatory, yogic, interpretation of the scripture which would prevail in Japan. On the Japanese commentarial production, see Dolce, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis.”

37 *Jūguson fuji isho* 十五尊布字位所, ink drawing on mulberry paper. Kamakura period. One drawing inscribes the names of the deities in Chinese characters, the other their seed letters. In Manabe Shunshō, “Mikkyō zuzō to jūguson zu” and *Jakyō Tachikawaryū*, 287–295. Manabe offers a creative reading of the drawings by referring them to the image of Go-Daigo I have discussed at the beginning of this study. It considers the installation as unveiling the feminine essence of Vajrasattva (because installed in a figure that embodies the Womb mandala) and argues that the robes Go-Daigo wore for the yogin initiation stand for the Vajra mandala. Manabe, *Jakyō Tachikawaryū*, 287–295.

38 Dachille, “Piercing to the Pith of the Body.” On body mandalas in Tibet see Bentor, “Interpreting the Body Maṇḍala” and “Tibetan Interpretations of the Opening Verses of Vajraghaṇṭa on the Body Maṇḍala.”

Japanese ritual material does not present a comprehensive system easily identifiable as one of the better-known Indian or Tibetan systems of body mandala, nor is a discourse on this notion clearly articulated. Yet to take into account the logic of body mandala as a ritual technology to realize one's divine identity may be helpful to put into focus and make sense of the yogic initiation. Mapping the body out and spotlighting the same points attests to shared concerns regarding the nature of the body and the transformation engendered by the initiation.

It should also be noted that the diagrams for the installation of the fifteen deities highlight a vertical sequence of crucial points on the body: the heart is marked at the center, as the all-shining Mahāvairocana; marked are also the head, the tongue and the navel. These points in the vertical axis correspond to the four *cakras*, navel, heart, throat and crown, which are central in the conception of the invisible body made of vital points and channels through which energy flows.³⁹ Channels (*nāḍī*) are not indicated in the Japanese diagrams, but the focus on *cakras* points to the perception of an “inner” body. The material on the yogic initiation makes explicit the concern of medieval Tantric ritualists with constructing an “inner mandala” (as opposed to the external mandalas visualized in other rituals), which takes the practitioner's own body as the place of performance and proper site of liberation. Indeed, the very name and the terminology related to the yogic consecration stresses that action takes place in the body interior.

Other levels of associations also operate in the exegesis of the ritual. The commentaries to the *Yugikyō* and the annotations inscribed in the diagrams of deity installation explain that the human body is divided into three sections: a lower part, from the feet to the navel; a middle part, from the navel to the heart; and an upper part, from the heart to the top of the head. Each of these sections is said to subsume one of the three bodies of the Buddha, respectively, from bottom to top, the manifested body, the wisdom body and the body of principle.⁴⁰ The diagram included in *Yugikyō hiketsu* (Figure 12.4) and a second drawing from the *Kongōōin hiketsu* (Figure 12.7B) gloss the three body sections with two verses from the beginning of Chapter Eleven of the *Yuqi jing*, which in the original recites: “The practitioner who holds [this] mantra sees [his] body as the Buddha's sem-

³⁹ This body is often called “subtle” in Indo-Tibetan Tantric literature. See Samuel and Johnston, (eds.), *Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West*.

⁴⁰ See, for instance, *Yugi kaishinshō*, in *Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho* 6: 200–201.

blance / Vajra[sattva], fundament of life / seat of Indra's wheel."⁴¹ The diagrams thus read:

head / to see the body as the Buddha's semblance / dharma body of principle (*rihosshin* 理法身)

heart / fundamental Vajra / dharma body of wisdom (*chi hosshin* 智法身) or body of reward (*hōjin* 報身)

lower body / site of the Indra's wheel (*shakurin* 釋輪, i.e. the earth) / manifested body (*keshin* 化身)

These correlations draw on the standard Mahāyana notion of the threefold embodiment of the Buddha and a more specific Esoteric taxonomy (body of principle and body of wisdom). Despite slight variations in the designation of the sections, the correspondences are quite unambiguous.⁴² The same division of one's physical body into three parts and the link to the Buddha-bodies is present in continental body mandala traditions: for instance, in the so-called generation stage of the *Cakrasaṃvara* cycle and in the *Guhyasamāja* the yogin is expected to attain the three bodies of the Buddha.⁴³ This association is significant because it highlights the role that the attainment of all three levels of buddhic embodiment plays in Tantric traditions.

The way in which deities and sentences from the scripture are matched to bodily parts proves that mapping the enlightened reality to a practitioner's body is not an arbitrary operation, but a process of transferring the canonical tradition onto that body according to specific principles. It entails "entextualising the body," as Gavin Flood has compellingly described the process speaking of Hindu Tantric practices.⁴⁴ This means that the ritual body is shaped in a text-specific way. The second diagram from *Kongōōin hiketsu* (Figure 12.7B) shows that this mode of embodying the canonical tradition is taken further in the Japanese ritual exegesis. Here the sections of the Womb and Vajra mandalas are allocated to each part of the body, thus inscribing in an abbreviated form all the deities that inhabit the two main mandalas, that is, the entire Tantric reality in the specific form articulated by Japanese interpretations.

⁴¹ T. vol. 18 n. 867: 267a2–3. The diagrams cite the last verse with the readings given as variant in the Taisho edition (輪 instead of 論 and 座 instead of 虛).

⁴² Buddhist traditions that highlight three *cakras*, located in the umbilical, cardiac and laryngeal regions, also consider these to be the sites of the three Buddha Bodies: manifested body in the umbilical *cakra*; dharma body in the heart *cakra*; and reward body in the throat *cakra*. See Snodgrass, *The Symbolism of the Stupa*, 318.

⁴³ Dachille, "Piercing to the Pith of the Body;" Sugiki, "Five Types of Internal Maṇḍala Described in the Cakrasaṃvara Buddhist Literature."

⁴⁴ Flood, *The Tantric Body*, 4–7, 27, 113 *passim*.

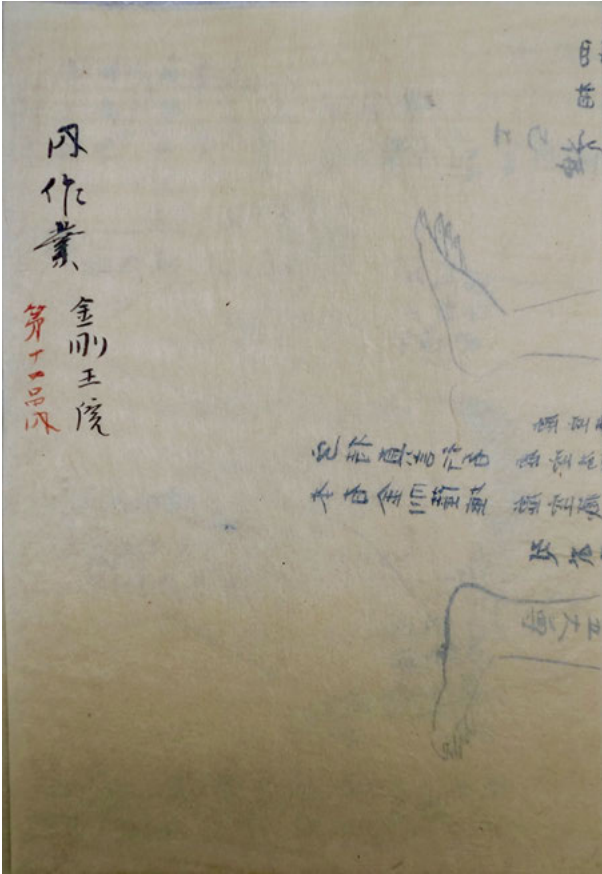


Figure 12.7A: Folio on “Internal Actions, part of Chapter Eleven [of the *Yuqi jing*], Kongōin” (External title). *Kongōinryū hiketsu*. Zentsūj Archives, *Dozō* 23–249–3. Reproduced with permission.

This is a complex diagram because it includes different sets of equivalences at once. If we consider the fifteen sites where the deities of the *Yuqi jing* are installed, we see that each is equated to one section of the Womb mandala and one of the Vajra mandalas. Thus, reflecting the structure of the Womb mandala (figure 12.8), Mahāvairocana becomes “the central section with the great venerable one, [that is,] the nine deities” (*chūtai daison kyūson* 中台大尊九尊); Avalokiteśvara becomes the Rengein 蓮華院; Vajrapāṇi is the Kongō[shu]jin 金剛院; Acala and Trailokyavijaya together stand for the Five Great Kings of Knowledge (Godaison), and thus correspond to the Godaiin 五大院 (aka Jimyōin 持明院); Tārā and Bhṛkuṭī are the Shakain 釋迦院; Ākāśamālā becomes the

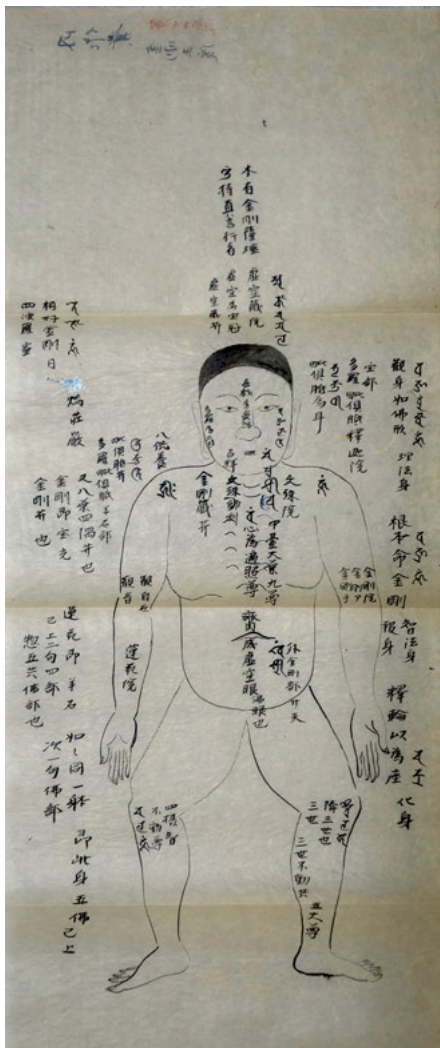


Figure 12.7B: Diagram of correspondences between the fifteen deities and the sections of the Vajra and Womb mandalas. *Kongōōinryū hiketsu*. Zentsūj Archives, *Dozō* 23–249–3. Reproduced with permission.

Kokūzōin 虚空藏院: Mañjuśrī, inscribed with its Tantric name (Jp. Kichijō 吉祥), corresponds to the Monjuin 文殊院; Buddhacalanā, inscribed with the alternative name of Kokūgen 虚空眼, becomes the twenty devas of the external sections (*ge kongōbu nijūten* 外金剛部二十天).⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Some of the sections of the Womb mandala are not inscribed in this diagram, but other commentaries identify them all. For instance, *Yūgi kaishinshō* records Kike as the tip of the nose (*bintan* 鼻端) and the Soshitsujiin 蘇悉地院; the navel is associated to Kokūgen and the Henchiin

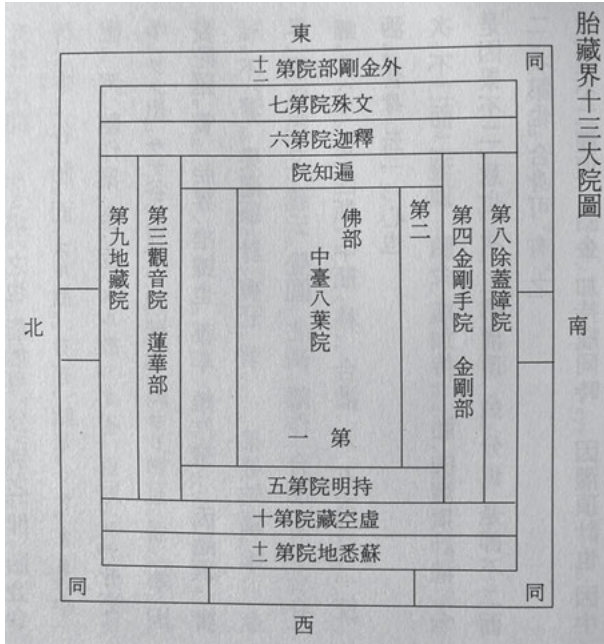


Figure 12.8: Diagram of the Womb mandala. From *Ōmushō*, *ZT Mikkyō* vol. 4: 203.

Inscribed are also the correspondences to the three divisions of the Womb mandala, encapsulated in the three “families,” Buddha, Lotus and Vajra.

Similarly, the diagrams present the correspondences to the Vajra mandala in two orders. One matches the deities to the five “families” in which this mandala is divided. The Buddha family (*nyoraibu* 如来部) is instantiated by the five Buddhas mentioned in a sentence from the scripture, which is inscribed on the right lower corner of the diagram (facing the drawing): “this body is the five buddhas” (*sunawachi kono shin gobutsu nari* 即此身五佛). Vajrapāṇi (left arm) embodies the Vajra family (*kongōbu* 金剛部); Avalokiteśvara (right arm) the Lotus family (*rengebu* 蓮華部); Ākāśagarbha the four bodhisattvas of the Jewel family (*hōbu* 寶部) and Tārā and Bhṛkuṭī are the Karma family (*katsumabu* 羯磨部). The correspondences with the five families of the Vajra mandala were already suggested in Chapter Eleven of the *Yuqi jing*, where the initiation based on inner actions is called “the source of the five families.”⁴⁶ This makes explicit that the textual lineage of the *Yuqi jing*

遍知院; the Jizōin is allocated on the right arm, together with the Kannon'in; the external sections of the mandala are allocated to the left arm, together with the Kongōshuin. *Yugi kaishinhō*, *Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho* 6: 202–203.

⁴⁶ Cf *Yuqi jing*, T. vol. 18 no. 867: 267b 11–20.

is the *Jingangding jing*, the canonical source of the Vajra mandala. A second order of equivalences is drawn to the thirty-seven principal deities of the *jōjinne*, the central section of the Vajra mandala, which is often taken as representative of the entire mandala. These correspondences follow the same scriptural passage and are glossed on or around the image in the diagram: five buddhas, as in the sentence recorded above; sixteen great bodhisattvas (four bodhisattvas each from the Vajra, Jewel, Lotus and Karma sections); the four perfection (*shi haramitsu* 四波羅蜜) bodhisattvas, identified with Vajratejas (Jp: Kongōnichi or Kongōkō 金剛光); the eight offering (*hachikuyō* 八供養) bodhisattvas, identified with Ratī; and the four all-embracing virtue bodhisattva (*shishō bosatsu* 四摂菩薩), associated to Acala.

Some of the correspondences inscribed in the diagrams may be self-evident to practitioners with an in-depth knowledge of mandalic structures, for they are made on the basis of a deity's identity or position within the mandala. For instance, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi are allocated respectively to right and left arm because that is the location that the two sections, *rengēin* and *kongōin*, have in the Womb mandala, facing each other at the two sides of its central hall. (Figure 12.8) Similarly, Ratī (Jp. Kike 喜戲 or Kongōkike 金剛喜戲) is the first of the four inner offering bodhisattvas in the *jōjinne* and thus stands for the group. In other cases, the allocation depends on the origin story of the deity, which is recorded in *Yuqi jing* commentaries. For instance, Tārā and Bhṛkuṭī are regarded as Avalokiteśvara's acolytes, and Tārā is allocated to the eyes because it is said to have been born from Avalokiteśvara's eyes.⁴⁷ The constraints of the present study do not allow to retrieve the sources of each identification, but these examples should suffice to give the sense of how the system is constructed and make clear that the mandalic installation maps out a combinatory system where the Vajra and Womb textual lineages are given equal space. This is an important feature of the yogic initiation in Japan. While the correspondence between the fifteen deities of the *Yuqi jing* and the sections of the Vajra mandala are suggested in the scripture itself, the association to sections of the Womb mandala appears to have been created in Japan, as a result, I suggest, of Annen's hermeneutical intervention.⁴⁸ This seals the interpretation of the *Yuqi jing* as a text that subsumes the two mandalic realities.

The strategy of dual mandala installation is depicted in a different pattern in another ritual exegesis of the *Yuqi jing*, *Yuga yugi hikanshō* 瑜伽瑜祇秘肝鈔. This

⁴⁷ Annen, *Yugikyō shugyōhō*, T. vol. 61 no. 2228: 500b2 (citing the *Commentary to the Dari jing*); *Yugi kaishinshō*, 201.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Yugikyō shugyōhō*, T. vol. 61 no. 2228: 500ff.

is a recently discovered work by Monkan, the monk who conferred the yogic initiation to Go-Daigo tennō.⁴⁹ Among the several colored illustrations that grace this manuscript are the images of two Buddhas, easily identifiable by their respective mudras as Mahāvairocana of the Womb mandala to the left, sitting on a lotus, and Mahāvairocana of the Vajra mandala to the right, sitting on a lotus that rests on a dharma wheel. (Figure 12.9)



Figure 12.9: Correspondence of body and mandala sections. *Yuga yugi hikanshō*. Unpublished manuscript, Ninnaji archives. Reproduced with permission.

The glosses in the scroll explain that the figure on the right presents “the arrangement of all the venerable ones of the five sections of the Vajra mandala” and that on the left “the allocation of the three sections of the Womb mandala comprehending all venerable ones of the thirteen great assemblies.” A closer look reveals red lines that indicate the parts of the body on which the fifteen deities are pro-

⁴⁹ *Yuga yugi hikanshō*, unpublished manuscript, Ninnaji archives. Undated, but probably compiled before 1344 (a colophon states that it was copied by Hōren 法蓮 from an original manuscript by Monkan in 1344). I am indebted to Abe Yasurō for introducing me to this document and providing me with photographs, and to Ninnaji for graciously allowing me to publish the image. Monkan wrote two other commentaries to the *Yuqi jing*.

jected and mark their mandalic correspondences. These, too, follow the pattern established by Annen, adopted across the material I have examined.

Thus, the installation of deities onto a human body transforms the practitioner as well as the mandalas. Through the initiatory process, the differences between the macrocosmic, universal body of the buddhas and the finite existence of the practitioner's body collapse. By internalizing the combination of the two mandalas predicated in the Japanese interpretation of Tantric reality the practitioner accomplishes it. The body of the practitioner is transformed into a dual mandala and in this way is made to encompass duality. It becomes the total body of the Buddha. According to some documents this is said to be the "originally existent" (*honnu* 本有) mandala." Ritual procedures explain that "the assembly of the two mandalas, all the venerable ones and the saintly beings [who abide] the three sections [of the Womb mandala] and the five sections [of the Vajra mandala], together become the fifteen venerable ones [abiding in] the single buddha-body."⁵⁰ Other commentaries pronounce the practitioner's body "a living mandala" (*shō mandara* 生曼荼羅).⁵¹

Note should also be taken of the syllable that the two diagrams of the *Kongōōin hiketsu* visualize on the top of the head, namely, the syllable *om*. The glosses in the second diagram identify it as the mantra that a Tantric practitioner utters when his identity as the original Vajrasattva is actualized. Contemporary commentaries of both Taimitsu and Tōmitsu origin connect the syllable to the notion of an "originally existent body." No doubt influenced by Annen's extensive theorization of *siddham*, they explain that *Om* is the seed letter of the threefold Buddha-body (because it is composed of the letter *A*, *U* and *Ma*). Accordingly, by uttering it the practitioner is endowed with all three bodies of the Buddha at once.⁵² *Om* is also regarded the syllable from which all fifteen deities are generated.⁵³ A parallel may be drawn here with the use of this syllable in continental practices of body mandala. In the meditation on deities of the *Guhyasamāja* cycle, for instance, the practitioner is instructed to visualize the essence of the form aggregates as a white *om* that appears in the area from the crown of his head up to the hair line. The complete transformation of the syllable generates Vairocana.⁵⁴ Such parallels intimate an understanding of the identity and power of the yogic practitioner that the practice informed by the *Yujijing* shares with other traditions of Yoga Tantra.

⁵⁰ *Naisagō kanjō shiki* 内作業灌頂私記, unpublished manuscript, dated Bun'an 5 (1449), Eizan Bunko, Mudōji archive, ka.

⁵¹ *Yugi kaishinshō*, Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho 6: 203.

⁵² *Yugikyō chōmonshō*, ZTZ Mikkyō vol. 2:346a; *Yugi kaishinshō*, Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho 6: 201.

⁵³ *Ōmushō*, ZTZ Mikkyō vol. 4: 247.

⁵⁴ Bentor, "Interpreting the Body Maṇḍala".

Yogin Initiation Protocol: (2) Venerating Oneself

The protocol of the yogic consecration also makes clear that the object of the ritual is the originally-existent body (*honnushin* 本有身) of the practitioner himself. In a sequence called “offerings to oneself” (or “venerating oneself,” *jikyū* 自供養) the disciple is instructed “to make oblations to himself according to procedure.”⁵⁵ The offerings include incense, flowers, food, lamps, clothes, sacred water, that is, the usual offerings made to a deity during a ritual. The practitioner visualizes each of these objects in a specific order and mentally present them to himself. It is at the end of this oblation that the practitioner is proclaimed “the new Buddha.”

Bringing inside what is outside, this step of the ritual consecration collapses the boundaries between subject and object. One might argue that the offerings of this inner oblation are for the deities that reside in the practitioner’s body, similar to what occurs in an inner fire ritual (*goma* 護摩), described in several tantric sources.⁵⁶ Sugiki Tsunehiko notes that in systems of psychosomatic fire offerings to deities are a form of self-oblation because these deities are subsumed in one’s body.⁵⁷ Yet, it may be suggested that the *yogin* who has inscribed the fifteen deities onto his bodily cakras has, by that action, already been transformed into a divine being, the Vajrasattva that gives the name to the initiation. The act of self-veneration thus reflects the attainment of a status and reinforces the privileges of such a status.⁵⁸

This brings to the fore the question of the identity of the practitioner. There seems to be a continuous shift between the ordinary condition of the practitioner,

55 *Yugi sanjū* 瑜祇三重, unpublished manuscript, Eizan Bunko, Shōgenji 生源寺 archive, Naiten 内典 6–404–507. Internal title: *Yugi naigō shiki* 瑜祇内業私記. This is a transmission of the Sanmai-ryū 三味流, copied in Kanbun 6 (1666). (See also Shibuya Ryōtai, *Shōwa genson Tendai shoseki sōgō mokuroku*, 530.) The original transmission must have been compiled in the fourteenth century, as the colophon lists multiple transcriptions from the fourteenth century: in Kōei 4 (1345) 10/1 at Nishiyama Bukkain 佛華院; in Ōan 7 (1374) 2/11 at Higashitani 東谷 Gachizōbō 月藏房; and in Ōei 16 (1409) 7/26, copied by a certain Shūchō (or Sōchō) 宗證.

56 The *Dari jing* is the oldest source to describe an inner *goma* as a meditative state (i.e., mental fire) that burns karmic defilements. See T. vol. 18 n. 848: 32c and 44a (Giebel, transl., *The Vairocanaābhisambodhi Sutra*, 130–131 and 194–195).

57 Sugiki Tsunehiko, “Oblation, Non-conception and Body: Systems of Psychosomatic Fire Oblation in Esoteric Buddhism in Medieval South Asia.” Sugiki calls “psychosomatic fire oblation” yogic fire offerings based on the notion of the subtle body.

58 Parallels may also be drawn to the “visionary consecration” that appears in fifth-century meditative texts, which Yamabe Nobuyoshi suggests influenced later Tantric texts. Here the mediator internalizes the experience of the Buddha and experiences it through actions occurring inside his body. See Yamabe, “Visionary Consecration: A Meditative Reenactment of the Buddha’s Birth.” I am grateful to Yamabe Nobuyoshi for alerting me to these texts.

who utters mantras with his mouth, ties mudras with his hands, and feels his physical body, and the absolute original status of being that his ritual actions aim to reproduce in his own body. The commentaries on the *Yuqi jing* articulate the role of the body, in both theoretical and performative terms, suggesting that knowledge of its psychophysical constitution is crucial: in order to “become” a Buddha one needs to understand the generative practices that make a human being. *Yugikyō kuketsu nukigaki*, transmitted by the Tendai scholiasts Kōshū 光宗 (1276–1350), exemplifies this point, albeit in elliptic manner: it first considers the six elements (*rokudai*), which constitute the human body as well as the universe; then it describes the chain of death and rebirth; finally, on these bases, it asserts the equivalence of the body of human beings and the dharma-body of the Buddha.⁵⁹ In other words, the attainment of the adamantine body is envisaged as an actual process of life creation. The six elements remind practitioners that ontologically the nature of one’s body is the same as that of the Tathāgata. Their original body has always been with them; yet, it becomes significant only through ritual consecration.⁶⁰ This transformation of the practitioner from an ordinary (i.e. determined) being to a total being is what the ritual asserts and makes real. Through the ritual consecration, the ordinary body and the originally existent body are present at once. In the consecration, the ambiguity of the body liminality is subsumed.

The characterization of the inner body as the “original” body is also significant. The term *honnu* has a double connotation in Buddhism, indicating both the present existence, that is, what takes place after birth, and the originally abiding being from which all things raise. The term itself, reiterated in the documents related to the yogic consecration, thus encapsulated the ambiguity and fluidity of the body. While the practitioner’s body is embedded in time, as a body that is born and dies, the projection of the ritual action is that that very body goes beyond time by recovering the “no-beginning no-end” (to say it with a classic Buddhist expression for eternity) condition of pre-differentiated origin. This is why medieval sources defines the yogic *abhiṣeka* as “entering the fruition of buddhahood (*bukka* 佛果),” “entering and abiding the mother’s womb of Butsugen.”⁶¹ The effects of the yogic initiation “go beyond the perfect achievements of the Pure Land (*jōdo shōgaku* 浄土正覚) and the enlightenment attained in a secular world (*edo jōdō* 穢土成道)” and serves to reveal the origin of being, an origin which is

59 *Yugikyō kuketsu nukigaki*, ZTZ *Mikkyō* vol. 2: 217.

60 Sugiki articulates a similar movement in the construction of a body mandala of the *Vajramālā-tantra*, which is made of aggregates causes and sense faculties and at the same time is *Vajrasattva*. The practitioner becomes aware of his own existence as a body mandala through the meditative practice. See “Oblation, Non-Conception and Body,” 178–181 and 206, n. 38.

61 *Yugikyō chōmonshō*, ZTZ *Mikkyō* vol. 2:343b.

conceived as non-differentiated and non-dualistic.⁶² In the same logic, the yogic initiation is often defined a ritual of “spontaneous realization” (*jinen jōdō* 自然成道).⁶³ It may be argued that in this context it might have been conceived as a sort of self-initiation for which a master was not even necessary.⁶⁴

Yogin Initiation Protocol: (3) A “Bodily” *shiki* Mandala

Among the peculiarities of the yogic *abhiṣeka* is also that of the ritual setting. The commentaries continuously repeat that it is not necessary to construct a ritual platform because the practitioner’s body is the place of practice. Texts speak of a *himitsudan*, a secret platform, whereby the practitioner visualizes the mandala in his own mind. Thus, contrary to other advanced initiatory rituals, the ritual space is not to be adorned with a mandala on which the practitioner can throw a flower in the act that identifies his tutelary deity. How can then this first, important step in the initiation be enacted? And once the practitioner takes the blindfold off, what will be their first vision, if it is not that of the mandala with all its deities?

Medieval records offer different prescriptions. Some state that the adept is to throw the flower on the master who bestowed the initiation. Disciple and master are instructed to face each other across the ritual platform and the body of the master himself is said to replace the mandala usually spread on the ritual platform (*shiki mandara* 敷曼荼羅). This position is documented in some maps of the ritual place (Figure 12.10).⁶⁵

⁶² *Yugikyō hiketsu*, attributed to Jichiun. *Shingonshū zensho* vol. 5: 13b.

⁶³ See *Ōmushō*, *ZTZ Mikkyō* vol. 4: 236–253. *Ōmushō* includes two sections related to the yogin initiation: a “Personal record of the *yugi kanjō*,” dated 1572, consisting in a drawing of the ritual space with a few glosses giving liturgical details (*ZTZ Mikkyō* vol. 4: 234–235), and the ensuing section, entitled “Personal records of spontaneous realisation (*jinen jōdō* 自然成道),” where the *yugi kanjō* is explained in details.

⁶⁴ Annen had already mentioned a “ritual of self-initiation” (*ji kanjōhō* 自灌頂法) as part of what he called “mudra initiation.” This is similar to the moment in which the adepts burns his body uttering the syllable *RA* and uses the five elements syllables to reconstruct it and empowers himself (*kaji jishin* 加持自身). *Yugikyō shugyōhō*, T. vol. 61 no. 2228: 500a11–12. See also *Yugi kaishinshō*, *Kanazawa Bunko shiryō zensho* 6: 199. It may be useful to compare this idea of self-initiation with Indian Tantric practices that use the same terminology. For an overview of the latter see, for instance, Sugiki Tsunehiko, “Indo mikkyō ni okeru kanjō no tenkai.”

⁶⁵ Hand copy of a drawing included in *Yugi sanjū*, Eizan Bunko, Shōgenji archive.

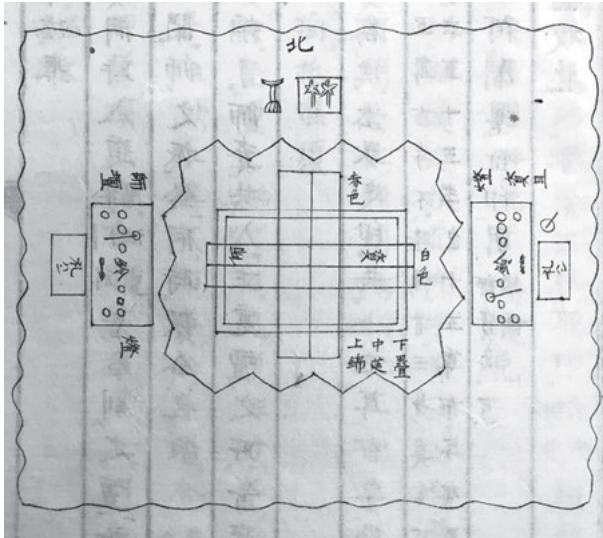


Figure 12.10: Chart of the ritual space for the yogic initiation. Hand copied from *Yugi sanjū*, unpublished manuscript, Eizan Bunko, Shōgenji archives, Naiten 6–404–507.

Alternatively, an image of the master can be used. Yūkai’s *Yugi kanjō shiki*, for instance, states: “The image of the master (*ajari* 阿闍梨) becomes the mandala to spread out. If no image of the master is available, a portrait of Kūkai (*Kōbō Daishi no mieidō* 弘法大師御影) can be spread out [as the mandala].”⁶⁶ Yūkai explains that because the master’s identity is that of Kūkai himself, either image may be used. This tradition is said to have been transmitted by Dōhan, who used Kūkai’s portrait housed in the Founder Hall (*mieidō* 御影堂) of Mt Kōya, an image drawn by cloistered prince Shinnyo 眞如親王.⁶⁷ There is, in fact, evidence of a specific iconography of Kūkai, known as *Yugi kanjō daishi* 瑜祇灌頂大師 (“Kūkai in the form [used for] the yogic initiation”). One such image is in the archives of Saizen’in 西禪院 on Mt Kōya. (Figure 12.11).⁶⁸ It depicts a frontal portrait of Kūkai inscribed in a circle, sitting with legs crossed, red skin, bear breast and slacks, holding a vajra in his right hand and making a fist mudra with his left hand.

⁶⁶ *Yugi kanjō shiki*, Kōyasan University Library 46–17–1. See also “Yugi kanjō no koto,” in *Chūinryū no koto*, T. 78: 909c15–27.

⁶⁷ “Yugi kanjō no koto,” in *Chūinryū no koto*, T. vol. 78 no. 2505: 909c26. Shinnyo, the third son of Emperor Heizei, was one of Kūkai’s disciples and founder of Shinnōin 親王院 on Mt. Kōya.

⁶⁸ Mizuhara Gyōei, *Kōbō Daishi mie kō narabini kaisetsu*, plate no. 12.



Figure 12.11: *Yugi kanjō daishi*. Reprinted from Mizuhara, *Kōbō Daishi miei kō narabini kaisetsu*, plate no. 12.

This is an unusual representation of Kūkai, both for the position and the hand gesture: Kūkai typically holds a rosary in his left hand and is not portrayed frontally.⁶⁹ The image recalls the figure of a yogic practitioner. Portraits of Kūkai, presumably similar to this, are listed in the catalogues of material related to the *yugi kanjō*, attesting that such images were part of the set of ritual documents used to perform the ritual.⁷⁰ The image might inscribe the seed letters and the names of the fifteen deities to install and fits an altar of four *shaku* (about 120 cm).⁷¹

⁶⁹ Images of Kūkai holding a stupa or a jewel in his left hand exist, but there are no portraits similar to that of the yogic initiation. Mizuhara noted that there exist very few images of Kūkai in a frontal position, the only one known at the time of his writing being a carving on a wooden plate held at Takao Jingoji 高雄神護寺. Mizuhara suggested that these images of Kūkai were created exactly because in the yogin initiation the Vajra mandala was not used. (*Kōbō Daishi miei kō narabini kaisetsu*, 73–77.)

⁷⁰ See, for instance, Ōyama Kōjun, *Himitsu bukkyō Kōyasan Chūinryū no kenkyū*, 590–592; Inaya Yūsen, *Yugi kanjō gaiyō*, 1–2.

⁷¹ This is the description of one image included in Inaya, *Yugikanjō gaiyō*, 4.

The use of a portrait of Kūkai is also confirmed by the charts of the ritual space. The two examples I include here mark it at the center of the ritual area. The first chart, *Yugi kanjō danzu* 瑜儀灌頂壇圖, inscribes the characters for “*shiki mandala*” in the middle and marks the master’s seat with a chair at the top of the chart (north) and the place where the disciple stands at the bottom of the chart (south).⁷² (Figure 12.12)

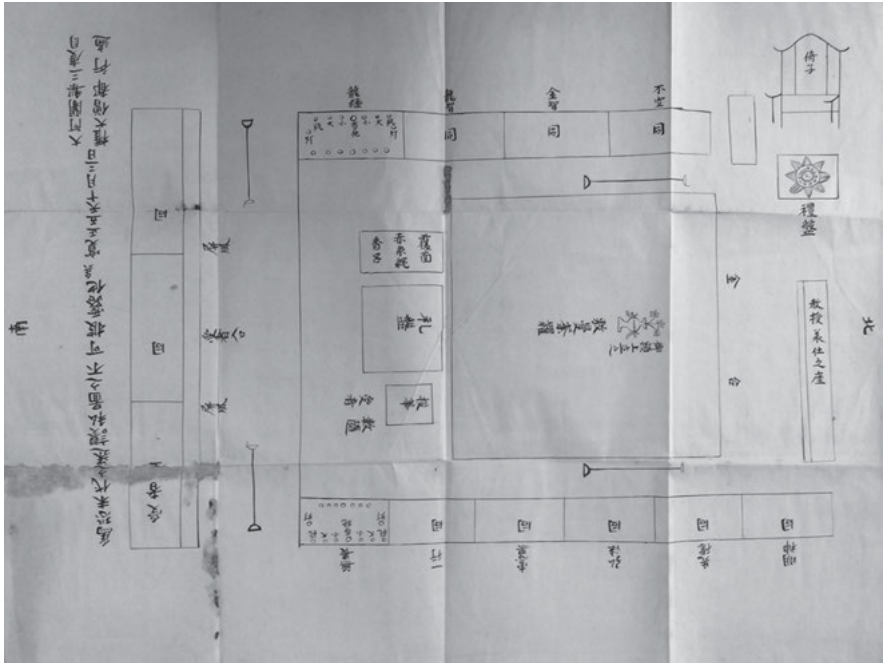


Figure 12.12: Charts of the ritual platform for the *yogic abhiṣeka*. Kanshō 5 (1465) 10/3. Unpublished manuscript, Kōyasan University Library. Reproduced with permission.

⁷² Eigon 榮嚴, *Yugi kanjō danzu* 瑜儀灌頂壇圖, unpublished manuscript, Kōyasan University Library 1-368 Yu ㄱ 35, dated Kanshō 5 (1465) 10/3. Signed by a certain Gyōhen 行遍, whose title is that of “great master, three times vice high prelate” (*dai ajari sandome gon daisōzu* 大阿闍梨三度目權大僧都). At the sides of the ritual space are hung the images of the eight Shingon patriarchs and of protective deities, but these are not part of the ritual proper.

The second chart, *Yugi kanjō dōjōzu* 瑜祇灌頂道場圖, is a more complex chart because it includes ritual instructions. At the center it inscribes the characters for Kukai's portrait (*daishi miei* 大師御影).⁷³ (Figure 12.13)

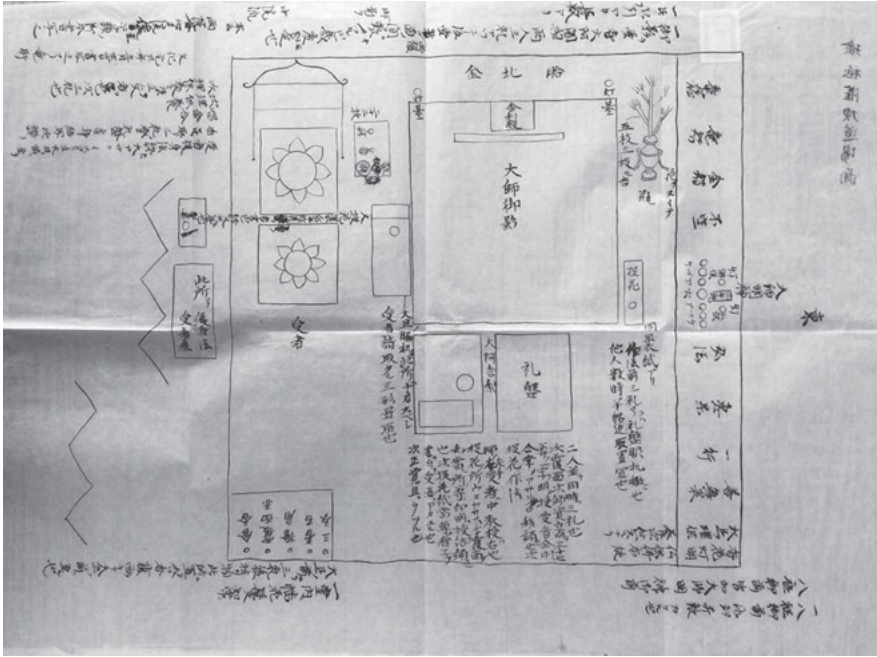


Figure 12.13: Charts of the ritual platform for the *yogic abhiṣeka*. Bunka 1 (1804), 5/24. Unpublished manuscript, Kōyasan University Library. Reproduced with permission.

Because there are no auxiliary platforms, the vase containing the water for the consecration is placed on the *shiki* mandala itself. In some transmissions, as the one by Yūkai cited above, it is to be placed on his forehead.⁷⁴ The instructions in the chart in Figure 12.12 suggests to place it above the head. The *aka* 闍伽

⁷³ Ryūsen 隆仙, *Yugi kanjō dōjōzu* 瑜祇灌頂道場圖, unpublished manuscript, Kōyasan University Library 487-2, San 三 58. Copied in Bunka 1 (1804), 5/24. This chart shows that the Womb and Vajra mandalas were also hang on the northern sides of the ritual space. Other instructions, such as those from Yūkai, state that the two mandalas may be hung together. However, the mandalas are not engaged ritually. Similarly, the patriarch portraits are listed at the side of the platform with the instruction of placing flowers and incense in front of the images worship after the ritual has been completed.

⁷⁴ The manuscripts I have surveyed in the archives of Shōgakuin suggest to put on the head.

(Sk. *arghya*) water in the vase is mixed with five types of medical herbs, five types of incense, five types of grains and so on, as a form of adornment of the vase. The vase contains one branch of *shikimi* 柾 (a type of star anise), either with three twigs each bearing five leaves or with five twigs bearing three leaves.⁷⁵ This clearly recalls the five family of the Vajra mandala and the three families of the Womb mandala.

The material analyzed so far thus identifies different “objects” to fulfill the function of a *shiki* mandala for the yogin initiation: the living body of the master, a portrait of the master and, in Tōmitsu lineages, a specific image of Kūkai (the latter does not seem to have been used by Taimitsu lineages). In addition, the practitioner’s body itself can be used. Some sources, in fact, instruct the disciple to throw the flower on himself. *Yugi himitsu kuketsuki* 瑜祇秘密口決記, a Taimitsu transmission from Mudōji 無動寺 on Mt Hiei summarizes the options as follows:

There are three ways [to execute the act] of throwing the flower:

1. Use the image of the actual master and having decided the fifteen sites project the fifteen venerable ones there.
2. The very body of the master becomes the mandala. The fifteen sites are decided as above.
3. The adept throws the flower over his back. This is the most secret meaning.⁷⁶

This latter option positions the adept as the master of himself and corroborates the possibility of performing the yogic *abhiṣeka* as a self-initiation.

Taken together, the medieval readings that replaced a *shiki* mandala with a body (of the master, of Kūkai, or of the adept himself) amplify the centrality of the body which underpins the yogic initiation. When the disciple takes off the blindfold that covers his face, what he sees is not a Buddha figure in a mandalic assembly, but a human body, perhaps his own body.

Taimitsu ritual procedures also hint to the possibility of using a regular mandala as *shiki* mandala. Another document from the Mudōji archive instructs “to spread the image of the master on the altar of enlightenment and to throw the

⁷⁵ *Yugi kanjō dōjōzu*, Kōyasan University Library 487–2, San 三 58; *Yugi kanjō shiki*, Kōyasan University Library 46–17–1; Inaya, *Yugi kanjō gaiyō*, 4.

⁷⁶ *Yugi himitsu kuketsuki* 瑜祇秘密口決記, Eizan Bunko, Mudōji archive, Naiten 18–20–396. The outer title also bears the name of the compiler, Enshun 圓俊, the lineage, Anō 穴太流 (in red) and the subtitles (also in red) *Yugi* (in *siddham* and in Chinese characters) *kanjō* and *Daigo* 第五 (“fifth [*samaya*] *kanjō*”). The colophon records that it was copied in Keichō 14 (1609), 5/5 at Tonomine 多武峯 Gyōkōbō 行光房 by a certain Ken’yū 賢祐 and is a secret treasure. A note on the verso informs us that the manuscript was copied again in Bunka 1 (1804) from the Gyōkōbō manuscript.

flower on his heart,” but allows “to spread a Vajra mandala on the main altar.”⁷⁷ This option is not taken up in the material I have examined, but it is not surprising given the textual lineage of the *Yuqi jing*. In fact, the thirty-seven deities of the *jōjinne* (the central section of the Vajra mandala) are described at the beginning of Chapter Eleventh. I have found only one example of a medieval mandala that reproduces the *jōjinne* and is described as a “Mandala of the *Yuqi jing*.” It is a small line drawing in the holdings of Kanazawa bunko, which inscribes the deities in their samaya form, glossed with their seed letters and some of their names in Chinese characters.⁷⁸ It is not clear, though, whether this was the model for a mandala to spread out on the ritual platform. Today Taimitsu lineages only use a Vajra mandala for the yogin initiation, which is still conferred as the culmination of the Tantric curriculum of the Tendai school.⁷⁹ This change suggests that the yogin initiation has been reframed within the standard parameters of other initiatory rituals, by adopting the mandala of its root textual source and dispensing with the use of a human figure, perhaps perceived as unorthodox. This has drifted the attention away from one of the most striking characteristics of the medieval conception of the yogic initiation.

A Short History of the Yogic Consecration

It is not clear when an *abhiṣeka* informed by the *Yuqi jing* was devised and in which context it began being performed. The scholar Ōyama Kōjun in his work on Chūin-ryū, the main lineage on Mt Kōya, suggested that the *yogic abhiṣeka* originated within Taimitsu lineages in the mid-Heian period (i.e., between the tenth and eleventh centuries). All Taimitsu lineages, he maintained, produced certificates of transmission (*injin*) for the *yogic* initiation. The Sanmai lineage 三昧流, for instance, transmitted *injin* together with a secret mudra in a consecration called “the third level” (*daisanjū* 第三重). Many lineage charts (*kechimyaku* 血脈), Ōyama noted, give Ennin 圓仁 as the link between the Chinese and the Japanese masters who disseminated the practice. Such line of transmission goes from Mahāvairocana through Vajrasattva, Nāgārjuna, Nāgabodhi, Vajrabodhi, Amoghavajra,

⁷⁷ *Naisagō kanjō shiki*, Eizan Bunko, Mudōji archive, *ka*.

⁷⁸ Kamakura period, 35.2cm x 35.2cm. In Uchida Keiichi, “Yugikyō shosetsu no sanmayagyō zu ni tsuite,” 8–9, plate 4 and Uchida Keiichi, *Monkan to bijutsu*, 147. Uchida suggests that it is constructed from the thirty-seven deities described in the Introductory Chapter of the *Yuqi jing*, but these, too, are the deities of the *jōjinne*.

⁷⁹ I am grateful to Mizukami Fumiyoshi for elucidations on contemporary practice.

Huiguo, Ennin's Chinese teachers Yicao 義操 and Quanya 全雅 and Ennin.⁸⁰ Extant material from different Tendai archives corroborates this. Alternatively, one finds Vajrasattva and Nāgārjuna replaced with Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī (the last enlisted with its tantric title of Myōkissō 妙吉祥), while Yicao and Quanya may be replaced by two other of Ennin's teachers, Huize 慧則 and Yuanzheng 元政.⁸¹ The fourteenth century anthology *Keiran shūyōshū*, too, attributes the secret initiation and the yogic initiation to Ennin.⁸² This, however, does not necessarily imply that the ritual was performed in Ennin's times. In fact, Ennin appears in most standard lineages of Taimitsu rituals created in Japan around the eleventh century, such as the combinatory *abhiṣeka* (*gōgyō* 合行 *kanjō*). It is unlikely that a practice based on the *Yuqi jing* was devised before Annen, as the *Yuqi jing* did not appear to be a particularly popular scripture before his extensive commentary. Annen played a crucial role in the exegesis of the *Yuqi jing* and shaped the Japanese understanding of the *Yuqi jing* as a scripture that combines the Womb and Vajra ritual lineages. I have contended elsewhere that he also influenced the ritual informed by the *Yuqi jing*.⁸³ His commentary is cited throughout the medieval material: scholiasts and ritualists across lineages relied on his interpretations and implemented the details that Annen had clarified in the ritual procedures. At the beginning of his exegesis of Chapter Eleven of the *Yuqi jing*, Annen postulates that the chapter propounds eight types of rituals, of which the yogic *abhiṣeka* is the first – the others are different types of *goma*. Annen lists the *abhiṣeka* as “the method for an internalized initiation [based on] Vajrasattva's one-character mind and fifteenth venerable ones (*Kongōsatta ichiji shin gu jūgōson naisagō kanjō hō* 金剛薩埵一字心具十五尊内作業灌頂法).”⁸⁴ When this method was staged as an independent initiation is however more difficult to document. Little ritual material on the yogic consecration has been published in Taimitsu collections. The earliest liturgical anthologies, such as the eleventh century *Shijūjōketsu* 四十帖決, do not include occurrences of the *yūgi kanjō* as a self-standing ritual.⁸⁵ An entry in

80 Ōyama Kōjun, *Chūinryū no kenkyū*, 593. This lineage is in fact recorded in Taimitsu documents. I have here listed the monks with their names, rather than titles (Ennin rather than Jikaku Daishi).

81 *Yūgi injin*, unpublished manuscript, Eizan Bunko, Shinnyo archive 20–132.

82 *Keiran shūyōshū*, T. vol. 76 n. 2410: 751c–752a (Section on “Shingon *kanjō*”).

83 On Annen's commentary see Dolce, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis.”

84 *Yūgikyō gyōbōki*, T. vol. 61 n. 2228: 499c12–500a04.

85 *Shijūjōketsu* 四十帖決 (T. vol. 75 n. 2480), often considered the first Taimitsu ritual anthology, was compiled by Chōen 長宴 (?–1081), to whom the creation of the combinatory consecration is ascribed. Although it does not seem to conceive of the *yūgi kanjō* as a self-standing ritual, it quotes from the *Yuqi jing*, drawing on Annen's interpretation, to explain the meaning of specific segments of advanced initiations.

the *Asabashō* attests to the institution of the *yugi kanjō* as one of the seven important types of *abhiṣeka* that were bestowed in Tendai lineages: permission (*koka* 許可), Womb and Vajra altars (*ryōdan* 兩壇), combinatory (*gōgyō* 合行), *soshitsuji* 蘇悉地, *yogic*, secret (*himitsu* 祕密 or *daigo himitsu* 第五祕密 [fifth secret]), and Separate Practice Sutra (*Betsugyō kyō* 別行經).⁸⁶ However, this is a typology added later to the *Asabashō*, and the anthology does not record instances of performance of the *yogic* initiation, suggesting that at the time of its composition the *yogic* initiation might have been still transmitted orally. A similar categorization of advanced *abhiṣeka* is given in *Ōmushō*, the sixteenth century compendium of Tamitsu initiations, by which time the *yogic* initiation was firmly positioned within the Tamitsu consecration program.⁸⁷

A wealth of manuscripts is preserved at Eizan Bunko, consisting of ritual prescriptions, transmission certificates and lineage charts, gathered from different Tendai lineages and temple archives.⁸⁸ This testifies to the wide circulation of the ritual and, when catalogued and cross-examined, will help understand its development – although many manuscripts in the Eizan archives are copies from the late medieval to the early modern period, a time when the ritual might have already been systematized.⁸⁹ The most substantial documentation of medieval Tamitsu initiations available in print comes from the archives of Serada Chōrakuji 世良田長樂寺 in Kōzuke Province 上野國 (present-day Gunma prefecture), which

86 “Tōryū shichijū juhō” 當流七重受法, *Asabashō*, T. *zuzō* vol. 8: 747c–748a. This entry is part of a short work titled *Tōryū daidai shoseki no koto* 當流代々書籍事, which *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* (8: 236) notes was attached to the seventh fascicles of the *Asabashō*, but written later than the compilation of the body of the anthology and not by the compiler of *Asabashō* himself, Shōchō. The colophon at the end of the entry in the Taishō edition records that this work was copied in 1537 (*Asabashō*, 748a). *Himitsu* here is understood to be the fifth type of *samaya* taught in the *Dari jing*. *Betsugyōkyō* is the abbreviated name (in Japanese pronunciation) of the *Qingjing fashen Piluzhena xindi famen chengjiu yiqie tuoluo ni sanzong xidi* 清淨法身毘盧遮那心地法門成就一切陀羅尼三種悉地 (T. vol. 18 n. 899), an important text for the Sanmai lineage.

87 *Ōmushō* presents six types of advanced *abhiṣeka*: Womb Mandala, Vajra Mandala, combinatory, without ritual actions (*risagō*, which here it is glossed to indicate the combinatory *abhiṣeka* as transmitted in the Kawa lineage), secret (*himitsu*) and *yogic* (ZT *Mikkyō* vol. 4). The space devoted to the last two is noticeable.

88 The sheer number of initiatory documents related to the *yogin abhiṣeka* can be glimpsed from Shibuya Ryōtai’s catalogue of Tendai writings, *Shōwa genzon Tendai shoseki sōgō mokuroku*, which lists titles according to the lineages in which they were produced. For an outline of the main Tendai lineages see Inada Soken, “Taimitsu shoryū shikō and, in English, Dolce, “Taimitsu Rituals in Medieval Japan.”

89 Not all the material kept at Eizan Bunko is easily accessible. I have been able to examine a selection of procedural manuals and personal instructions from Mudōji 無動寺, Shōgenji 生源寺 and Shinnyo 真如 archives.

was a major *abhīṣeka* center in the medieval period and preserves manuscripts copied throughout the early modern period.⁹⁰ Chōrakuji was founded in 1221 by Eichō 榮朝 (1165–1247), a disciple of Yōsai 榮西 and master of Enni Bennen 圓爾. In the thirteenth century it was regarded as the head temple of the Yōjō-ryū 葉上流, Yōsai's 榮西 Taimitsu lineage, later continued by Enni at Tōfukuji 東福寺, where the yogic initiation is also documented.⁹¹ Lineage charts in the Chōrakuji archive allow us to map out the trajectories of the ritual. One such document records Ennin's direct line (Jikaku Daishi-ryū) with Anne 安慧, Chōi 長意, Genshō 玄昭, Chien 智測, Myōjō 明靖 and Jōshin 靜真; then, the main figures of Tani-ryū, Kōgei 皇慶 (977–1049) and Chōen 長宴 (1016–1081), the author of the aforementioned *Shijūjōketsu*; Raishō 賴昭, the initiator of the Sōgonbō-ryū 雙嚴房流, and Yakunin Myōin 藥仁明印 – and in parallel, the initiator of the Renge-ryū 蓮華流, Yōi 永意 and his follower Ninben 仁辨, one of the teachers of Kiko 基好; Jiin 慈胤, Kakushin 覺心 and Kakushin 覺信; and then masters active at Chōrakuji: Eisō 榮宗, disciple of Chōrakuji's founder, Chinkai 琛海 (1231–1308), who had been a one-time disciple of Enni and would later be abbot of Tōfukuji and initiation master at Shoshazan 書写山; Ryōichi 了一 (?–1281, fourth abbot of Chōrakuji), and the successive abbots Ryōe 了慧, Ryōgi 了義 and Ryōen 了宴, Jōchi 定智, Ryōga 了嘉, Gitei 義禎, Gikō 義廣 and Giyū 義祐.⁹² This record leaves little doubt that the yogic initiation was conceived as an elite *abhīṣeka* received and conferred by authoritative institutional figures.

90 These documents have been collected in *Gunma kenshi, Shiryō 5 (Chūsei 1, Komonjo, kiroku)*, “Denbō kankei shōgyō.” For an inventory of *abhīṣeka*-related documents see pp. 347–354. For a short introduction to the transmissions documented in Chōrakuji ritual material, see Misaki Ryōshū, “Seradasan Chōrakuji shōgyōrui.” A selection of the material concerning the three main types of advanced initiation in Taimitsu (Womb mandala, Vajra mandala, and combinatory) has been republished in Sadakata Akira (ed.), *Chōrakuji kanjō monjo no kenkyū*, but this publication does not include the material on the yogin *abhīṣeka*. Chōrakuji was later known as a Rinzaï temple, part of the system of second tier of the *gozan* 五山 system. Its Tendai affiliation was restored by Tenkai 天海 in the Edo period.

91 Enni's interest in the *Yuqi jing* and the yogin initiation is explicit in the material collected in *Chūsei zenseki sōkan* 中世禪籍叢刊, vol. 4 and vol. 11, *Shōichūha* 聖一派, tomes 1 and 2. See Dolce, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis.”

92 *Yuqi kanjō kechimiyaku* 瑜祇灌頂血脈, in *Gunma kenshi, Shiryō 5*: 359. The document is presented as illustrating the Rengein 蓮華院 lineage. This lineage chart is also interesting because it has some of the names stamped with a syllable *Vam̐*, perhaps to identify the essential ancestry that needs to be included in any blood-line handed to a new disciple. In fact, the characters for “name of the receiver” (*jusha nanori* 受者名乘) are written at the end of the line, suggesting that the chart might have served as a template for further initiations. The names marked in this way are those of the Indian patriarchs, from Mahāvairocana to Amoghavajra, then Yuanzheng, Ennin, Kōgei, Kakushin, Ryōichi, Ryōen and the last name to be filled in.

If the yogic initiation was developed by Tendai ritualists, by the mid-Kamakura period (13th century) it had crossed sectarian boundaries. The scholiast Yūkai, whose prescriptions for the yogic initiation have been discussed above, provides an extensive survey of the Tōmitsu lineages that adopted this initiation. For each lineage Yūkai gives the names of the main figures who transmitted it and were associated to a particular style of performance.⁹³ Thus, we learn that the Hirosawa 廣澤 lineages did not embrace it, while among the Ono 小野 lineages some transmitted it, other did not. Kojima 小島, Kajūji 勧修寺, Chūin, Sanbōin 三寶院 – as represented by Jitsugen 實賢, Jōken 成賢 and Raiken 頼賢 (aka Ikyō shōnin 意教上人) – and Kongōōin 金剛王院 lineages perform the yogic *abhiṣeka*; Rishōin 理性院 and Anjōji 安祥寺 lineages did not perform it as a ritual, but transmitted the certification (*injin*) only.⁹⁴ Documents from Mt Kōya sub-temples, now held in Kōyasan University Library, suggest that from the end of the fourteenth century onward the protocol established by Yūkai was used as standard on the mountain. His *Yugi kanjō shiki* is indeed often indicated as the “canonical” source for the main lineage, Chūin-ryū. It is not clear how (and whether) the *yugi kanjō* was performed before that. A colophon in a later copy of Yūkai’s *Yugi kanjō shiki* records that a format of the ritual compiled by Dōhan 道範 existed, but since that was not held to be an orthodox transmission, it was not used.⁹⁵ (Figure 12.14)

Yūkai seems to have blamed Dōhan for inheriting the yogic *abhiṣeka* from the Tachikawa-ryū (which Yūkai labeled as heterodox). Yet, Dōhan’s exegesis of the *Yuqi jing* remained of great import, as one can surmise from the many times it was copied across lineages.⁹⁶ Certificates of transmission of the yogic *abhiṣeka* in his own hands have also recently been discovered, demonstrating that Dōhan’s instructions were transmitted in major Tōmitsu lineages, including the Chūin-ryū.⁹⁷ Other temples on Mt Kōya, such as Hōshōin 寶性院, adopted the protocol

⁹³ “Yugi kanjō no koto 瑜祇灌頂事, in *Chūinryū no koto*, T. vol. 78 n. 2505: 909c11–910a20. See also “Yugi kuden,” in *Yugi kanjō*, Zōfukuin monjo 88–84–1, Kōyasan University Library.

⁹⁴ Ōyama intriguingly suggests that those lineages that did not perform the ritual incorporated its meaning in the *denbō kanjō*. *Chūinryū no kenkyū*, 566.

⁹⁵ *Yugi kanjō shiki*, Chūin. Kōyasan Daigaku Library 46–17–1. The note records that the manuscript was transcribed by Yūkai in Ōei 10 (1414), 10/22. The extant copy is a transcription by a certain Dōga 道雅, done in the third month of Genbun 2 (1737) at a Nanshitsuin 南室院.

⁹⁶ See Dolce, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis.”

⁹⁷ A copy of a *Yugi kanjō injin* in Dōhan’s hand, transmitted to Kenkaku 劍覺 and dated Kenchō 3 (1251) 10/27, is preserved at Hōjuin 寶壽院 and a similar work, *Yugi nyūdan sensō* 入壇先相, transmitted by a later disciple in Shōan 2 (1300) has been discovered in the archives of Kongōōin 金剛王院, demonstrating that despite the accusation to lean towards unorthodox interpretations Dōhan’s instructions were passed on in the Chūin-ryū Shinnan’in 心南院 branch (a sub-branch of Muryōjuin), where transmission is attested up to the early Edo period. Kōda Yūun, “Chūinryū

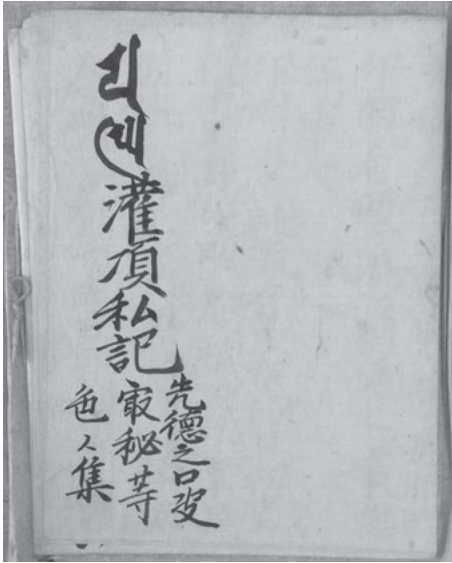


Figure 12.14A: *Yugi kanjō shiki* of the Chūin lineage. First page. Manuscript, Kōyasan University Library 46-17-1. Reproduced with permission.

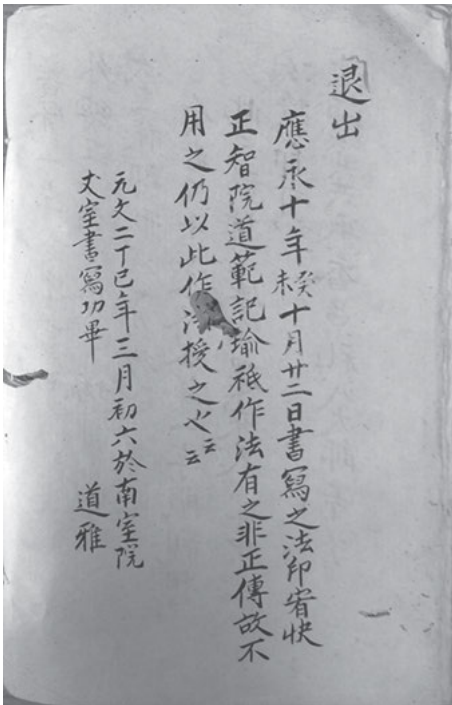


Figure 12.14B: *Yugi kanjō shiki* of the Chūin lineage. Note on the back cover. Manuscript, Kōyasan University Library 46-17-1. Reproduced with permission.

of the Ikyō branch 意教方 of Sanbōin.⁹⁸ Throughout Tōmitsu material, the names of Kōzen 興然 (1121–1204) of Kajūji, Gen'un 源運 (1112–1180) of Kongōōin, and Genkai 玄海 (1267–1347) of Hōshōin 寶性院 on Mt Kōya appear often to identify (slightly) different styles of performance of the *abhiṣeka*.

Temple archives also give evidence of the diffusion of the *yogic* initiation in the ritual centres of Eastern Japan and beyond. I have already mentioned the Taimitsu center at Serada Chōrakuji. As for Tōmitsu, material in the archives of Shōmyōji 稱名寺 (today know as Kanazawa Bunko) attests transmission in several lineages. Farther afield, I have recently discovered a remarkable collection of initiatory documents, mostly early modern period copies of Sanbōin-ryū transmissions, in the archives of Shōgakuin 正覺院, originally the *jingūji* 神宮寺 (shrine-temple) of Keta shrine 氣多大社 and an important Tōmitsu temple in Noto province (present-day Ishikawa prefecture) throughout the medieval and early modern periods.⁹⁹

Lineage charts are important to reconstruct the monastic circles in which a ritual circulated in the medieval period and served to give an orthodox pedigree to the ritual; thus, they start with standard lines of transmission in the tradition. While those of Tendai temples privileged Ennin, documents of Tōmitsu origin gave prominence to Kūkai and his disciples and then the founders of each medieval lineage and its branches. Let us consider two lineage charts held at Kanazawa Bunko. The first, titled *Yuga yugi ri kanjō kechimyaku* 瑜伽瑜祇理灌頂血脈 and dated Kenji 1 (1275) 7/27, must have been transmitted in a set with a *Yugi kanjō injin* and a *Yugi kanjō mitsuin* dated the same day. It records a lineage that goes from Mahāvairocana, Vajrasattva, Nāgārjuna, Nāgabodhi, Vajrabodhi, Amoghavajra, Huiguo, Kūkai, Shinga, Gennin 源仁; then Shōbō 聖宝, the founder of Daigoji, Kangen 觀賢, Junyū 淳祐, Gengō 元杲, Ningai 仁海, Seison 成尊, Hanjun 範俊, Shōkaku 勝覺, Rennin 蓮念, Kenren 見蓮, Kakuin 覺印, Shin'in, En'in 圓印, Chinkaku 珍覺, Chishin 智眞, Kan'yū 寬遊, Chizen 智漸, Ryōin 了印 and

no *yugi kanjō*,” 61, 65. On Dōhan as a heterodox figure see Kōda, “Dōhan ajari no jagi sōden ni tsuite.”

98 The Ikyō lineage, aka Gangyō Ikyō-ryū 願行意教流, represented by Raiken 賴賢 (1196–1273), whose title was Ikyō shōnin 意教上人, produced several manuals on the *yogin abhiṣeka*. See the entry “Gangyōgata” in *Mikkyō daijiten*: 387–389 and Kōda Yūun “Ikyō shōnin denkō.”

99 Research carried out at Shōgakuin in 2018 and 2019 unveiled a considerable amount of material on various types of initiatory rituals, including the *yogin abhiṣeka*. I am grateful to Mori Masahide of Kanazawa University for facilitating my visits and to the researchers of the Centre for Cultural Resource Studies at Kanazawa University, in particular Matsumura Eri 松村恵里 for introducing me to Shōgakuin, Toritani Takefumi 鳥谷武史 and Oguchi Ayumi 小口歩美 for documenting the archive and providing me with photos of the material.

Nyobutsu 女佛.¹⁰⁰ This lineage coincides with that of Tachikawa-ryū, a small Daigoji branch which Yūkai would consider heterodox—Rennen, aka Ninkan, was its founder, Kanren and Kakuin his successors.¹⁰¹ Of note is the last name mentioned in the lineage chart, a certain Nyobutsu, recorded in ritual documents as “Adamantine disciple” (Kongō deshi 金剛弟子) and in one as having the position of “dharma-teacher transmitter of the lamp” (*dentō hōshi i* 傳燈法師位).¹⁰² Judging from the name, Nyobutsu was a female practitioner, who appears to have been the recipient of several advanced initiations from a *denbō ajari* Ryōin: between Bun’ei 12 (1275), 15/1 and Kenji 1 (1275), 7/27 she was conferred the *himitsu kanjō*, the *denbō kanjō* and, last, the *yugi kanjō*. This she received together with a “relic initiation” (*shari kanjō* 舍利灌頂) otherwise not mentioned elsewhere, which reproduces in mudric sequences the sexual union of mother and father.¹⁰³ The name of Nyobutsu appears in more than a dozen ritual documents in the Kanazawa archives. These initiations seem to have been bestowed to her alone, as they differ from those documented for other Shōmyōji monks, such as Shinkai 審海 (1229–1304), founder of Shōmyōji, or Kenna 劍阿 (1261–1338), Shōmyōji’s second abbot.¹⁰⁴ The transmission certificates which bear the name of Nyobutsu seem to be from the same time of Shinkai, when the presence of resident nuns at Shōmyōji is documented by epistolary and ritual material.¹⁰⁵ If the piecemeal information thus gathered is reliable, the lineage charts and other ritual material related to Nyobutsu are important elements to demonstrate that the yogic initiation was also transmitted to female practitioners.

100 *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 9 (*Butsuji* 2) no. 6320. *Yugi kanjō injin* and *Yugi kanjō mitsuin*, *Ibid.*, ns. 6318 and 6319.

101 The heterodoxy of the Tachikawa lineage has been much debated. For a recent reassessment that consider this lineage the “true” Tachikawa-ryū see Iyanaga Nobumi, “Iwayuru “Tachikawaryū” narabini dokuro honzon girei” and, in English, “Tachikawa-ryū.” Sources mention a *Yugi kanjō konpon shidai* 瑜祇灌頂根本次第 attributed to Ningai, but it is not known whether this work has been preserved. See Kōda Yūun, “Chūinryū no yugi kanjō,” 59.

102 *Yugi nyūdan sensō*, *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 9 (*Butsuji* 2) no. 6317.

103 This “relic initiation” seems to have consisted in the transmission of the “all-reaching mudra” (*musho fushi in* 無所不至印) and the two syllables *Āḥṃ* and *Vāḥṃ*. The enclosed oral transmission explains its meaning with an embryological sequence: the fingers are made to correspond to the five-element stupa and their joining to the merging of the two semen, red and white, of Śuddhodana and Maya, father and mother of Śākyamuni. This becomes the body and bones of Śākyamuni, as well as of the practitioner. *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 9 (*Butsuji* 2) no. 6330.

104 Kushida Ryōkō, *Shingon mikkyō seiritsu katei no kenkyū*, 352–353. Kushida considers Nyobutsu’s lineage one of the four Tachikawa lineages. *Ibid.*, 353–357.

105 Kushida Ryōkō, *Shingon mikkyō seiritsu katei no kenkyū*, 350–351.

Kanazawa bunko material documents the transmission of the yogic initiation also in other Tōmitsu sub-lineages. One chart attests that the transmission that Shinkai conferred to Kenna originated in a standard Kajūji lineage: it lists the same masters as Nyobutsu's chart until Hanjun; then gives the names of Ryōga 良雅 / Kakushin 覺心 / Kijun 喜俊 / Kōzen 興然 / Eizen 榮然 / Kakushū 覺宗 / Shinkai / Kenna.¹⁰⁶ Yet another chart, transmitted in a set with the certificate, maps out the line that Genshun 源俊 inherited from Kakuzen 覺禪.¹⁰⁷ It goes through the same masters until Kakuin, after which it lists a Shōban ajari 證鑱 阿闍梨 / Chōen ajari 澄圓阿闍梨 / Myōen daihōshi 明圓大法師 and Kakuzen daihōshi 覺禪大法師.

The dramatic multiplication of yogic initiations took different turns after the medieval period. On Mt. Kōya it was interrupted at the beginning of the seventeenth century, perhaps under the influence of reformist movements. Reintroduced in 1673 thanks to a new transmission from Jison'in 慈尊院, a Kajūji sub-temple, there are only few records of performance in the Chuin-ryū throughout the early modern period. Today in Tōmitsu lineages the yogic *abhiṣeka* is only an occasional initiation. On Mt. Kōya it has been performed only three times since the beginning of the twentieth century. In the early Shōwa years, it was executed to celebrate the rebuilding of the Yugi *stūpa* at Ryūkōin 龍光院.¹⁰⁸ It took place again in the 2013 for a similar occasion.¹⁰⁹ On the contrary, in Taimitsu lineages the yogic *abhiṣeka* was continued and consolidated and is still conferred regularly, following the consecration into the two mandalas, Womb mandala and Vajra mandala, as the culmination of the training of an Esoteric practitioner. The consecration is understood as the necessary accomplishment of both mandalic realities, thus reaffirming the function that the *Yugi jing* had been assigned in Taimitsu interpretations of the Tantric system.

More work needs to be done to reconstruct the exact historical circumstances in which the yogic consecration was created. Temple archives hold a vast amount of material on the *abhiṣeka*, for all Tantric lineages produced volu-

106 Colophon of *Yuga yugi ri kuyō shiki*, *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 12, *Shikigo*, 77. Other material in the Kanazawa archives document the transmission of the yogin initiation to Shinkai, for instance a *Yugi kanjō mitsuin* 瑜祇灌頂密印, bestowed by Jimyō 慈猛. *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 9 (*Butsuji* 2) n. 6251. Dated Shōka 1 (1257) 7/25.

107 Dated Bun'ei 8 (1271), 1/8. *Yugi kanjō kechimyaku* 瑜祇灌頂血脈, *Kanazawa Bunko komonjo* 9 (*Butsuji* 2) n. 6, 429.) For the certificate see *Ibid.*, n. 6428.

108 Performed on Shōwa 8 (1933), 11/11 inside the stupa by *ajari* Katō Taiken 加藤諦見. (Ōyama, *Chūinryū no kenkyū*, 567.) It was performed again in Shōwa 60 (1985).

109 I am grateful to Fujita Kōkan 藤田光寛, head priest of Daien'in 大圓院 and former President of Kōyasan University, for this information.

minous collections of personal instructions in use at any one time. Accordingly, a comprehensive picture of the ritual may be drawn only after a cross examination of the liturgical collections of more than one lineage.¹¹⁰ On the basis of the available evidence and of the archives which I have been able to peruse, I suggest that the ritual emerged at the end of the twelfth century and flourished from the thirteenth century onwards, alimented by an explosion of interest in the *Yuqi jing*. The latter is attested by the commentaries that were produced and circulated from the twelve to the sixteenth century across the major Tantric lineages—as I have contended elsewhere, the relation between performative and exegetical material is crucial to unravel the meaning of the yogic initiation.¹¹¹ Once the imagery related to the *Yuqi jing* began being used ritually, it seems it went viral and permeated Esoteric circles, the urban elites of the central regions as well as practitioners in more peripheral areas. Despite some differences in the performative details of the *abhiṣeka*, the medieval material shows great consistency in the understanding of the nature of the ritual and the assumption of its achievement.

Conclusion: The Internalization of Ritual Consecration

The yogic initiation emerged as a new type of *abhiṣeka* which eschewed the complex liturgical protocol of advanced initiations and focused on the body, providing techniques to reproduce the total, non-differentiated being of a Buddha in the finite, single body of the practitioner. Any *abhiṣeka* is a rite of regeneration and is performed “to attain birth in the family of the Tathāgatas and succeed to the throne of the Buddhas,” to say it with the *Dari jing*.¹¹² The yogic *abhiṣeka* understood such attainment as taking place within the interior of the body.

The creation of the yogic initiation in medieval Japan may be considered part of a development in the formulation of Tantric practice which envisioned ritual transformation in psychosomatic terms and produced other body-centered

110 To get an idea of the task it suffices to consider the content of standard reference works: *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten* includes twenty pages of titles related to the yogic initiation. Equally, *Mikkyō daijiten* lists a plethora of documents, often with the same title, in various lineages, belonging to both Tōmitsu and Taimitsu. Needless to say, those included in these twentieth-century reference works are only one part of existent volumes, scrolls and loose folios held in archives.

111 On this point see Dolce, “A (Presumably) Chinese Tantric Scripture and Its Japanese Exegesis.”

112 T. vol. 18 n. 848: 667a.

practices, such as those that I have called embryogenetic.¹¹³ It is significant that the material on the yogic initiation incorporates embryological visions and ritual enactments whereby the making of a Buddha-like subject is presented as the biological creation of a new being. Charts as the one in Figure 12.15 were transmitted together with the ritual documents of the yogic initiation, and must have been considered part of the knowledge necessary to explicate the meaning of the yogic initiation.¹¹⁴ These associations seem to have been distinctive of the Japanese medieval interpretation of this advanced *abhiṣeka*.

However, when we consider the yogic initiation from a broader perspective of Tantric practice, its logic and purpose appear close to the consecrations that one finds in the Indo-Tibetan tradition of body mandala, albeit inscribed in the Sino-Japanese system of the Vajra and Womb mandalas. The language used to define the initiation and some of its ritual elements resonate with practices of internal yoga, in which the practitioner's body is conceived as an innately pure site of ritual performance and the practitioner envisioned himself as the deity. The installation of deities that makes of the practitioner's body the collective body of Buddhas, self-oblation and self-consecration are perhaps emblematic of this understanding. References to a ritual production of bodhicitta through the visualization of white and red fluids also surface in the exegeses of the yogic initiation, providing further links with body mandala practices.¹¹⁵ The material on the yogic initiation does not provide a full system of body mandala similar to its continental counterparts. The different patterns in which these instantiations are organized also make the comparison questionable. At the same time, parallels exist. I have hinted to shared elements because to place the yogic initiation within the larger context of Tantric yogic rituals helps put its characteristics into focus. Much remains to be explored.

The nature of the scripture on which the yogic initiation is based, the *Yuqi jing*, and its position in the history of the Tantras are also puzzling. If one were to read the *Yuqi jing* from the perspective of its Chapter Eleven, taking account of the exegeses developed through the ritual, the scope of the text as a Yoga Tantra

113 Dolce, "The Embryonic Generation of the Perfect Body." I have suggested in my previous study that the embryological notions advanced by Japanese scholiasts have an initiatory context. *Asabashō*, for instance, in a transmission dated Genkō 2 (1322), introduces the ritualization of embryonic growth in five phases, typical of the medieval discourse, in an entry on the yogic initiation. (T. *zuzō* vol. 9: 857a.)

114 *Shingonshū isshō jōbutsu zu*, one folio, part of *Kongōōinryū hiketsu*. Zentsūji archives, *Dozō* 23–249–16.

115 The visualisation of the bodhicitta also produced eloquent images in the medieval period. For examples, see Dolce, "Nigenteki genri no gireika: Fudō, Aizen to chikara no hizō."

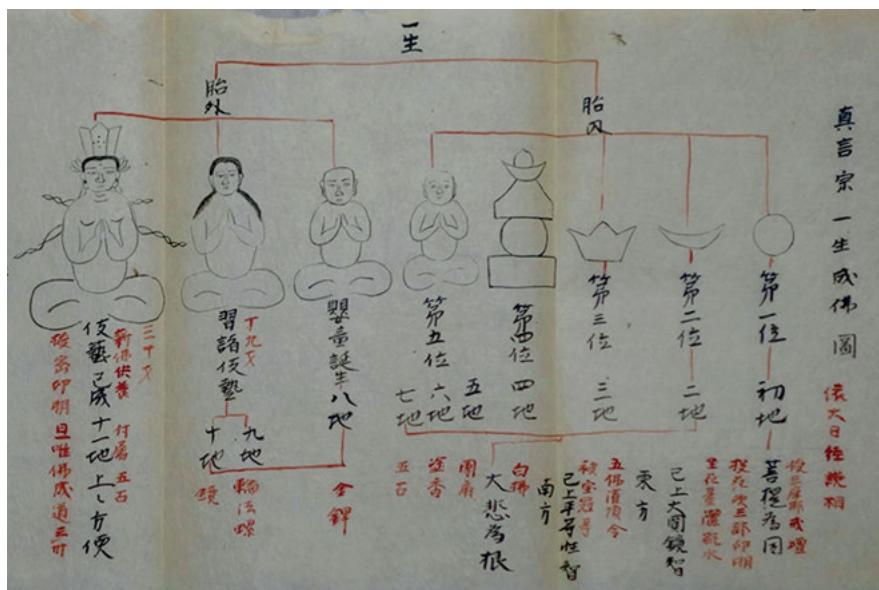


Figure 12.15: Map of how to become a Buddha in one lifetime according to the Tantric schools, *Kongōōinryū hiketsu*. Zentsūji Archives, *Dozō* 23–249–16. Reproduced with permission.

appears more conspicuous. Compiled in the eighth century, the *Yuqi jing* is contemporaneous of Tantras that are considered emblematic of internal yogic interpretation, such as the *Guhyasamaja*. Ronald Davidson has pointed out that these texts became understood as proposing the path of “highest yoga” (*anuttarayoga*), but not all contain the yogic associations of later instructions that specify internal psychophysical flows and the manipulation of winds.¹¹⁶ The *Yuqi jing* may possibly be placed in a similar textual category. This poses the question of why the method of consecration propounded by the scripture was developed into a specific ritual practice in Japan only in the medieval period. Was this the consequence of a new flux of knowledge from the continent, triggered by the translation of *anuttarayoga* texts in China during the Sung? These texts were known to Japanese monks who visited China in the eleventh century and must have been sent

¹¹⁶ Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism*, 198–199. Sugiki Tsunehiko also notes that not all the body mandalas of the *Cakrasamvara* cycle display a complete system. Sugiki, “Five Types of Internal Maṇḍala Described in the *Cakrasamvara* Buddhist Literature.”

to Japan.¹¹⁷ Further work on the link between the *Yuqi jing* and later Tantric translations is indispensable to untangled the web of signification that it engendered.

Among the new types of *abhiṣeka* created in the medieval period, the yogic initiation stands out as a ritual consecration that at the same time highlights exegetical innovations in Japanese Tantric Buddhism and ritual shifts in the wider medieval world. It has been suggested that the emergence of different types initiatory rituals in the medieval period was due to the division of the Esoteric world in branches and sub-branches.¹¹⁸ Yet the yogic *abhiṣeka* was shared across lineages as soon as it was established. Hence its significance should be sought in a more profound understanding of the transformation of the subject that Tantric practice affords.

117 For instance, the *Hevajratāntra* was translated in Chinese in the eleventh century (佛說大悲空智金剛大教王儀軌經, T. vol. 18 no. 892). Information on these translations comes from the diary of the Tendai monk Jōjin 成尋 (1011–1081), who is supposed to have sent a copy of the text to Japan. See Willemsen, *The Chinese Hevajratāntra*, 23–24, and Orzech, “Looking for Bhairava,” 151–153. Willemsen also notes that the Chinese *Hevajratāntra* does not explain the consecrations, but the terminology is there (*Ibid.*, 32).

118 See Abe Yasurō’s chapter in this volume.

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