

Continental Origins and Culture of Copying:  
An Examination of the Prototypes and Textualized  
Community of the Japanese Jeweled-Stūpa Mandalas

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**Introduction**

**R**ADIANT gold and traces of oxidized silver contrast dramatically against a deep blue background in the Japanese jeweled-stūpa mandalas (*Kinji hōtō mandara* 金字宝塔曼荼羅) of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Tall and narrow, the format complements the structure of the central, golden stūpa. Rooted in the earthly realm, yet existing in an otherworldly space, the stūpa is surrounded by graphic vignettes adapted from the tales of the sūtras. Rather than straight and measured architectural lines, diminutive sūtra characters build and fill the body of the stūpa. Painstakingly constructed from one of two popular and potent scriptures, the *Lotus Sūtra*<sup>1</sup> or the *Golden Light Sūtra*,<sup>2</sup> each mandala set produces a particular and complete scripture in the form of textual reliquaries. Examples of jeweled-stūpa mandalas are few. Surviving sets exist from Chūsonji 中尊寺 in Hiraizumi, Danzan Shrine 談山神社 in Nara prefecture, and Ryūhonji 立本寺 in Kyoto. Chūsonji's set of ten mandalas are visual translations of the *Golden Light Sūtra* and were likely commissioned around 1170 by Fujiwara Hidehira 藤原秀衡 (1122–1187). The Danzan Shrine version translates the beloved *Lotus Sūtra* into the jeweled-stūpa mandala format, but with the addition of two bracketing scriptures—the *Innumerable Meanings Sūtra*<sup>3</sup> as the prologue and *Sūtra of Meditation on the Bodhisattva Universal Worthy*<sup>4</sup> as the epilogue—to form a set of ten mandalas dating from the twelfth century. Ryūhonji's jeweled-stūpa mandalas of the early thirteenth century also capture the twenty-eight chapters of the *Lotus Sūtra*, both textually and narratively, in eight mandalas.

In service of a larger research project analyzing the jeweled-stūpa mandalas themselves, this talk situates the paintings within their historical and religious context through an exploration of some of the practical matters concerning the mandalas, such as issues of stylistic origins and the culture of copying at the time of their production.<sup>5</sup> I draw on the continental origins as well as the Japanese circumstances that produced

the rare jeweled-stūpa mandalas to reveal that rather than paintings that emerged *sui generis* for a brief time in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a closer look at the continent and contemporary Japanese copying practices reveals the mandalas as situated in a system of sūtra copying with some precedence. Therefore, the paper begins with an examination of the continental prototypes, followed by an exploration of the culture of sūtra transcription of the eleventh through thirteenth centuries, which exposes the trend toward innovative and intensive copying practices. In this way, I locate the continental source of this unusual style of transcription as well as provide a contextual study of significant trends in sūtra copying around the time of the mandalas' first production in Japan, revealing that, although highly original, the jeweled-stūpa mandalas are nevertheless intimately associated with the broader system of eleventh- through thirteenth-centuries' sūtra transcription.

### Continental Prototypes

Though novel at the time of their first production in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Japan, a proto-version of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas existed in China as early as the tenth century. The British Museum houses three such examples, each a small, black inked stūpa built of characters from the concise *Heart Sūtra*.<sup>6</sup> A closer look at the oldest example<sup>7</sup> from the tenth century reveals the complex pattern of character arrangement building the *wenzi ta* 文字塔 or textual stūpa. The title of the sūtra crowns the stūpa like a canopy: the floating center line begins with the characters *foshuo* 佛說 (sermon of the Buddha), while the rest of the title is split into two lines. The dangling line to the right of the stūpa continues with *bore boluo* 般若波羅 and the left side line concludes the title with *miduo xinjing* 蜜多心經, together forming *Bore boluomiduo xinjing* 般若波羅蜜多心經 (*Heart Sūtra*). The sūtra begins its seemingly erratic and meandering course with the first character of the scripture, *guan* 觀 (meditative insight), located to the center right of the top line of the foundation. From there the sūtra continues in a straight, diagonal line down to the left-most character, *shen* 深 (profound), on the bottom foundational line. Zigzags, abrupt directional switches, and paths that crisscross over themselves construct the rest of the visual puzzle. Tracing the outwardly haphazard assembly of sacred characters reveals a complex pattern of diamonds and triangles. Connecting the dots as it were, even with the assistance of faint red lines occasionally exposing the trail, is not an easy task. An intimate knowledge of the scripture

would be necessary, and given the brevity of the *Heart Sūtra*, complete memorization would have been common. But even with the scripture internalized, the path is elusive. Indeed, it is not until well past the halfway point of the sūtra that the appearance of a random collage of characters arranged without meaning or order is broken and the interior order, once assumed structure-less, is revealed to be a patterned system of semantically connected lines of text symmetrical along the vertical axis.<sup>8</sup> This process would thus require that the puzzle be carefully devised beforehand.

As the earliest example of the textual stūpa format, this tenth-century manifestation is markedly different from the Japanese versions analyzed in this project. In terms of the character configuration, whereas the text of the Japanese jeweled-stūpa mandalas continues in an easily observable order as it constructs the stūpa, the order of the characters in the proto-versions is intentionally complicated. The puzzle-solving aspect of the textual stūpa was thus largely abandoned before arriving in Japan. Additionally, while the tenth-century textual stūpa did require careful pre-planning before its execution, it is hardly on the scale of the elaborate sets commissioned in medieval Japan. The Japanese mandalas transcribe long sūtras resulting in sets composed of eight to ten large scrolls. The tenth-century Chinese versions are made of less expensive materials such as paper and black ink, while the Japanese mandalas use costly resources like large and numerous sheets of dyed blue paper and inks of gold and silver. In light of these fundamental differences, I do not believe that the earliest examples of the textual stūpa format were the direct model for the later Japanese mandalas. The textual stūpa developed further on the continent—and likely in Korea, though no early examples remain—before arriving in Japan, where the idea was greatly transformed into expensive and involved icons of elaborate visual beauty and pious intent.

Later on, the imperial records of the Qianlong Emperor 乾隆帝 (1711–99) of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) entitled, *Pearl Forest in the Secret Hall*,<sup>9</sup> document fifty-one textual stūpas composed from the Song dynasty (960–1279) to the Qing.<sup>10</sup> These crucial records offer insights into the mysterious production of these rather rare and intricately composed images; sadly, such a resource is unavailable for the Japanese mandalas studied here. The brief entries give vital information such as the copyist (including the name when possible), the dynastic date, the chosen sūtra, and the number of scrolls produced. From this, it is revealed that while not popularly pursued, persons of elevated rank such as literati and even emperors created textual stūpas. The most commonly

selected sūtras are the *Diamond Sūtra*<sup>11</sup> with fifteen scrolls and the *Lotus Sūtra* with nine scrolls; although the *Heart Sūtra* is only selected twice, an enthusiastic Manchu emperor, Shengzu Ren huangdi 聖祖仁皇帝 (1654–1722), also known as the Kangxi Emperor 康熙帝, configured the scripture into a textual stūpa fifteen times. Other scriptures used are the *Amida Sūtra*<sup>12</sup> with three scrolls, the *Scripture of the Original Vows of the Medicine Master Tathōgata of Lapis Light* otherwise known as the *Medicine Buddha Sūtra*<sup>13</sup> with three scrolls, and the *Golden Light Sūtra* with one scroll. As mentioned above, the entries are brief in the *Pearl Forest in the Secret Hall*, providing valuable but scant information. However, as best as can be ascertained given the brevity of the passages, seventeen of the textual stūpas recorded in the Qing text are now housed in Taipei's National Palace Museum.<sup>14</sup>

The only Korean example I am aware of is in the collection of Tōji 東寺 in Kyoto.<sup>15</sup> And while the dating and precise provenance of the textual stūpa is uncertain, by calculating the reign year mentioned in the vow (願文 *gammon*) located at the very bottom of the scroll, the date of 1369 is believed to be the corresponding year.<sup>16</sup> If so, this places it nearly two centuries beyond the earliest examples of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas of Japan. However, it seems likely that other examples simply have not survived or are currently unknown. Precisely how the painting came to be in the collection of Tōji is also unclear. *Tōbōki* 東宝記, the historical record of Tōji from its founding to the Muromachi period (1333–1573), documents its place in the collection by the fourteenth century with a brief citation recording the existence of an image of a stūpa made from the text of the *Lotus Sūtra* of Korean provenance.<sup>17</sup>

In contrast to the Japanese versions which portion out the sūtra transcription into the conventional volume divisions thus making large sets of eight or ten scrolls, this seven-story Korean stūpa contains the entire *Lotus Sūtra*.<sup>18</sup> And rather than paper, silk dyed a deep blue is used. Bright, golden characters shine against the blue background. The area enclosing the textual reliquary is gracefully decorated with bosatsu, flying paradisiacal deities (飛天 Jpn. *hiten*, Ch. *feitian*; Skt. *apsarases*), worshipers (perhaps portraits of the donors), and flowers that rain down from heaven, all rendered using fine, gold line. On the first floor two identical Buddhas sit side-by-side, their iconography indicative of Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna (多宝 Jpn. *Tahō*, Ch. Duobao). On each successive story, a Buddha is depicted emanating rays of light. At the bottom of the painting, a vow is written and flanked by standing, haloed figures; unfortunately, the text of the inscription has sustained damage over the years, making it difficult to read. But importantly, a passage

praising the combinatory practice marrying sūtra and stūpa is legible; it says that if an image of a stūpa is made with sūtra text, happiness and great merit will be returned to the practitioner.<sup>19</sup> This rare direct explanation of the patron's ambition in commissioning the textual stūpa illuminates a fourteenth-century understanding of the vast rewards engendered by the imbrications of sūtra and stūpa.<sup>20</sup> Conspicuously absent from the textual stūpas of China and Korea are the narrative vignettes (経意絵 *kyōie*) that prominently surround the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Japanese mandalas. The narrative vignettes seem to be a distinctly Japanese addition but not a consistent feature after the production of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas of this study, since many later Japanese textual stūpas lack vignettes. It appears that the Japanese method of textual stūpas enclosed by sūtra pictorializations was never adopted in China and Korea. Indeed this stark difference leads Miya Tsugio 宮次男 to assert that simply referring to the jeweled-stūpa mandalas as *mojitō* 文字塔 or textual stūpas is too limiting. Because of the inclusion of graphically-narrativized sūtra passages rendered in a style similar to that of transformation tableaux, Miya concludes that much like the broad application of “mandara” to these paintings, the title should also be applied in the case of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas because to simply classify them as textual stūpas would be to neglect the pictorializations of the sūtra.<sup>21</sup>

At this point, it is impossible to know the precise origin or developmental path of the jeweled-stūpa mandala format. From what can be gathered from the simplified proto-versions discussed above, the textual stūpa style originally possessed strong indications of a visual puzzle for the pious and erudite. From the imperial records, it is clear that learned persons, such as literati and monks, and even emperors copied the scriptures into the form of a stūpa, demonstrating that this curious style was known and practiced by the educated and elite. But given that the very process of creating a textual stūpa requires the copyist to be literate, intimately familiar with the scriptures, and in possession of the texts, the association of the textual stūpa with the highly ranked levels of society comes as little surprise. This same connection with the upper echelons continues in the Japanese twelfth- and thirteenth-centuries' jeweled-stūpa mandalas, the Chūsonji set being a particularly applicable case. The difference is that their immense scale and sumptuous artistry necessitates a transfer of brush from elites to professional copyists and artists.

## Culture of Copying

The jeweled-stūpa mandalas, although the product of an elaborate commission requiring great skill, time, and resources, were nonetheless in both function and intention sūtra transcription projects. The mandalas served no other ritualistic function, were likely never the main icon (本尊 Jpn. *honzon*, Ch. *benzun*) of veneration, and indeed were probably only displayed on rare circumstances. However, despite this lack of function beyond the ritual of transcription and the intention of garnering the consequent merit, the mandalas like many other copying projects were embedded in a system of meaning where the semiotic expression of sacred word carried its own contextually specific connotations and the visual combinations of text and image manifested different and fascinating Buddhist philosophies. I discuss here the culture of copying during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries—a time of burgeoning and tremendous innovation in sūtra transcription—so as to place the mandalas amongst other inventive projects in a time that trended toward finding the more extreme and extraordinary forms of sūtra copying.

### Artistic Innovation in Decorated Sūtras (裝飾經 *sōshokukyō*)

The decorated sūtras of the late tenth through thirteenth centuries experienced a dramatic increase from the Nara period (710–794) not only in quantity but also in the variegated manners of production and visual formatting. Examples like the twelfth-century *Kunōjikyō* 久能寺經 and *Heike nōkyō* 平家納經, dated 1164, offer tantalizing glimpses of the extravagant projects of this time. Slivered, squared, and sprinkled gold and silver generously decorate the frontispieces and background of the *Kunōjikyō* sacred transcription. Washes of gold and silver lend the scrolls a hazy softness. The preponderance of precious materials ornamenting the *Kunōjikyō* reveals its royal associations, for the scrolls are the product of Emperor Toba 鳥羽天皇 (1103–56), Empress Dowager Taikenmon'in 待賢門院 (1101–45), Empress Bifukumon'in 美福門院 (1117–60), and other aristocrats, and were dedicated in the twelfth month of 1141.<sup>22</sup> Also lavish are the *ipponkyō* of the *Heike nōkyō*. Commissioned in 1164 by Taira no Kiyomori 平清盛 (1118–81) for dedication at Itsukushima Shrine 嚴島神社 on Miyajima, this elaborate project boasts thirty-three scrolls transcribing multiple sūtras.<sup>23</sup> Kiyomori, writing the petition scroll with his own brush, enlisted thirty-two members of his family and important retainers to compose a scroll each, resulting in one of the most celebrated sūtra transcription

projects.<sup>24</sup> Packed with opulent decoration, the *Heike nōkyō* layers gold upon gold with infusions of silver and bright colors. While these two sets are among the finest of their kind, numerous other examples of scrolls of vibrant colors paired with precious materials survive.<sup>25</sup>

Compared with these scriptures, most decorative sūtra copies were not quite as sumptuous and elaborate, although they were radiant in their own right. The conventional design took the form of deep indigo dyed paper with gold and/or silver ink for the transcription of the sūtra, a format known as *konshi kinginji kyō* 紺紙金銀字經 (blue paper, gold and silver script sūtra), which was often accompanied by frontispiece paintings (見返絵 *mikaeshie*). This particular type of decorative transcription gained popularity by the tenth century and continued undiminished throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. One of the more celebrated blue-and-gold projects is surely the early eleventh-century *Lotus Sūtra* copy at Enryakuji 延暦寺. This eight-volume set offers a rare view of an early transcription whose lines of scripture are composed of alternating gold and silver. Because of the great popularity and high regard of this format, many examples remain from this time of abundant hand-copied scriptures.<sup>26</sup> Of course, decorative paper was not used exclusively for sūtra transcriptions but often served as the ground for such productions as ornamental collections of literary tales (物語 *monogatari*) and poetry (和歌 *waka*).<sup>27</sup>

The jeweled-stūpa mandalas are rare in their particular design but not necessarily in their expression of inventiveness because the time surrounding their production saw great momentum in innovative sūtra art. As shown above, trends toward the decorative in sūtra transcription had a firm hold by the tenth century. By the eleventh century, copying saw a burst of innovation in text and image collaboration and a few examples are discussed here in order to establish the fashions in copying during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries that reveal the mandalas as an iteration of a transcription system trending toward more and more inventive designs and at times extremely intensive practices. Rather than retain the structural chasm between graphic illustration and scriptural text of conventional sūtra copies, word and picture began to mingle, as evident in the *Ichiji butsu hokekyō* (one character, Buddha *Lotus Sūtra* scroll; 一字仏法華經) at Zentsūji 善通寺 in Kagawa prefecture.<sup>28</sup> In this scroll, a small drawing of a Buddha seated upon a lotus pedestal is sketched beside each character of the sūtra, creating alternating lines of ten characters followed by ten Buddhas. The Buddhas are drawn in black ink with red robes and a seat of green lotus petals, and each figure's face and countenance are depicted differently. The style of the

scriptural characters suggests an eleventh-century date.<sup>29</sup>

Scrolls such as the *Ichiji hōtō hokekyō* (one character, jeweled-stūpa *Lotus Sūtra* scroll; 一字宝塔法華經) which adorn each textual character with a stūpa demonstrate another manifestation of the expansion of sūtra art at this time. Several of the scrolls made in this style modify the conventional blue-and-gold transcription type by retaining the pictorial frontispiece and color scheme while incorporating an enshrining stūpa for the scriptural characters. Beautifully preserved, the nine scrolls at Honmanji 本満寺, Kyoto produced in the twelfth century are an excellent example. Against a deep blue, individual stūpas vividly expressed with luminescent silver for the body and pedestal and fine gold detail for the finial (相輪 *sōrin*) enthrone the sacred characters composed in generous gold. The stūpas of the *Ichiji hōtō hokekyō* format range from highly individualized and detailed, like those of the Honmanji scrolls,<sup>30</sup> to the cursory and abbreviated, like the scrolls dated to 1163 and commissioned by the monk, Shinsai 心西.<sup>31</sup> This format also employed decorative paper like the twelfth-century scroll of Togakushi Shrine 戸隠神社 in Nagano prefecture, using light grey paper adorned with mica powdered stūpas enshrining individual characters of black ink thought to have been written by Fujiwara Sadanobu 藤原定信 (1088–1156) because of the slanted style of calligraphy.<sup>32</sup> And in the typical style of the *Heike nōkyō* scrolls at Itsukushima Shrine, the *Lotus Sūtra*'s "Apparition of the Jeweled-Stūpa"<sup>33</sup> chapter (c. 1164) is composed on ornamented paper embellished with gold and silver and each character drawn within a stūpa.<sup>34</sup>

Another format corresponding to this type of inventive copying is the *Ichiji rendai hokekyō* 一字蓮台法華經 (one character, lotus pedestal *Lotus Sūtra* scroll) in which each character rests upon a lotus pedestal. The two scrolls of the eleventh or twelfth century in Kyoto National Museum<sup>35</sup> and the nine in the collection of Ryōkōji 竜光寺 in Fukushima, believed to be from the same original set, depict a complex pattern of coordinated lotus pedestal colors.<sup>36</sup> For instance, the lotus pedestals of chapter twenty-one of the *Lotus Sūtra* in the collection of the Kyoto National Museum are arranged in rotating colors along the horizontal lines of text beginning with pale blue and followed by red, green, and silver<sup>37</sup> moving from left to right. Chapter twenty-two, also in the Kyoto National Museum, further complicates the color arrangement, producing a pattern of interwoven color in the form of a diamond.<sup>38</sup> The twelfth-century *Ichiji rendai hokekyō* in the collection of Nara's Yamato Bunkakan 大和文華館 is a highly ornamented scroll making use of large amounts of gold and silver and a full-color frontispiece illustration.<sup>39</sup>



The lotus pedestals, colored white, cinnabar, and blue-green, enthrone each character of the scripture. The handwriting is thought to be that of Go-Shirakawa 後白河天皇 (1127–92), and correspondingly the central aristocratic figure in the frontispiece is believed to represent the emperor with his consort seated slightly behind him and at an angle in a scene of gathered monks and aristocrats chanting the *Lotus Sūtra*.<sup>40</sup> The scrolls of the *Ichiji butsu hokekyō*, *Ichiji hōtō hokekyō*, and *Ichiji rendai hokekyō* all demonstrate an elaboration on conventional sūtra transcription formats and represent the contemporary trend of seeking increasingly inventive ways of copying the scriptures.

The *Lotus Sūtra* fans (扇面法華經冊子 *senmen hokekyō sasshi*),<sup>41</sup> the *Lotus Sūtra* booklets (法華經冊子 *hokekyō sasshi*),<sup>42</sup> and the *Menashikyō* 目無經 (literally, the “eyeless sūtra”),<sup>43</sup> all of the twelfth century, reveal an increased interaction between scripture and picture, embodying the fashion in sūtra art which sought new and elaborate designs. While the formats take the shape of fans, booklets, and scrolls, the layering of sacred script atop images of the secular world is a feature consistent throughout all the productions and one utterly novel to the world of sūtra art at the time. Visible beneath the tidy characters are pictures of a world far less orderly and in need of the redeeming power of sūtras. As such, they stand as inventive elaborations upon the conventional design of the transcription of scriptures.

### Extreme Practices in Sūtra Transcription

Sūtra transcription practices in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries also demonstrate a heightened complexity reflecting the general trends in copying at this time. Whether evinced in terms of sheer quantity, pace, genuflection, interment, or alternative media, the religious practice of copying became increasingly imaginative and complicated, much like the above discussion of sūtra art. Although I cannot comprehensively survey all forms of intensive copying here, I have chosen emblematic manifestations of extreme exercises to reveal the parallel between religious practice and the visual inventiveness seen in art of the time. By doing this, I expose the context of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas’ creation as one of novelty in artistic manipulations and religious practices of transcription, which suggests the mandalas to be a unique manifestation of these phenomena.

## Quantity

While the practice of copying the entire Buddhist canon dates back to the seventh century, the exercise increased in popularity and prevalence during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries.<sup>44</sup> Another notable difference in Buddhist canon productions at this later time was that more individual people and small groups of family and friends undertook to copy by hand such enormous projects, likely upheld by the belief that vast quantity and effort are rewarded by great merit,<sup>45</sup> although, aristocrats and imperial family members also continued the commission of the Buddhist canon, even producing several copies in the expensive blue-gold technique.<sup>46</sup>

One of the earliest examples of lay individuals engaging in the Buddhist canon production at this time comes from an 1106 entry in *Chūyūki* 中右記, the diary of Fujiwara Munetada 藤原宗忠 (1062–1141). According to the record, an unnamed holy person from Tōji walked Kyoto encouraging residents to copy the entire Buddhist canon, eventually copying a set and conducting the dedication service at a hall of Emperor Shirakawa 白河天皇 (1053–1129).<sup>47</sup> A similarly vague entry can be found in *Hyakurenshō* 百鍊抄, a thirteenth-century anthology of various records and tales by an unknown compiler.<sup>48</sup> On the first day of the sixth month in 1115, another unnamed holy person at Kitano 北野 copied and performed the dedication of a Buddhist canon. *Honchōseki* 本朝世紀, a mid-twelfth-century text compiled by Fujiwara Shinzei 藤原信西 (1106–60), also records that in 1143 the monk, Kaku'a 覺阿, copied the Buddhist canon.<sup>49</sup> Many other such examples exist, but probably the most renowned instance of the transcription of the Buddhist canon by an individual is that of Fujiwara Sadanobu.<sup>50</sup> Vowing at the age of forty-two to copy by hand the entire Buddhist canon, Sadanobu finally finished the massive project twenty-three years later at the age of sixty-four. Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助 estimates that the endeavor thus required Sadanobu to copy around two volumes every three days.<sup>51</sup> So celebrated and astonishing was this undertaking that it is recorded with great amazement and praise in multiple medieval texts. For instance, the twelfth-century text of disputable authorship, *Imakagami* 今鏡, extolled Sadanobu's dedication for copying the Buddhist canon with his own brush, remarking that he does not seem to be an ordinary person and that one never hears of another quite like him. Fujiwara Yorinaga 藤原頼長 (1120–56) commended Sadanobu in his diary, *Taiki* 台記, writing that the enormity of the project will ensure Sadanobu's name in history.<sup>52</sup> He also effused that in the past, present, and even the future no one will be

able to accomplish an equivalent feat.<sup>53</sup> As a gesture of his respect for such efforts, Yōrinaga donned new robes and washed his mouth before meeting with Sadanobu.<sup>54</sup>

Tales remain of others in less financially and well-connected circumstances vowing to copy the Buddhist canon. The mendicant monk known commonly as Shikijō 色定 enlisted the aid of his fellow monks, Saikan 西観 and Shinshō 心昭, in begging for paper, brush, and ink during their travels in order to fulfill the ambitious vow.<sup>55</sup> Having bathed himself in incense, Shikijō set himself to the task of copying the canon. The project began in 1187 when he was twenty-nine years old and was not completed until 1228 when Shikijō was seventy years of age, taking a total of forty-one years. Tsuji again provides calculations for the labor, estimating that in the span of one month Shikijō copied around ten volumes and so averaged one volume every three days. Based on the inscriptions, it is possible to see the circumstances under which the diligent group toiled. Shikijō records that in their journeys all over the country, even while standing, walking, or on a boat, he copied the sūtras. Of the original 5048 volumes, over four thousand survive in the collection of Kōshōji 興聖寺 in Tajima, Fukuoka prefecture, despite 448 which were spoiled by insects and a severe flood in 1702 that damaged 1200 volumes, 230 of them fatally.

### *Pace*

Another hallmark of the intensification of ritualistic copying was the extreme pace set by some performances. It was not uncommon for large groups of people to assemble so that they might collectively copy substantial quantities of scriptures all together in just one day. On the fifth day of the fifth month in 1135, Emperor Toba commissioned all 600 fascicles of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*<sup>56</sup> to be copied in just one day at Hosshōji 法勝寺, Kyoto.<sup>57</sup> Not content with this massive effort, devotees attempted even more astonishing copying feats.

Probably one of the most daunting and logistically challenging types of sūtra transcription is copying the entire Buddhist canon of over 5000 volumes in a single day, known as *ichinichi issaikyō* 一日一切経. But just such an event occurred on the eighteenth day of the third month in 1096 when ten thousand people from all literate strata of society gathered in Kyoto to copy the canon.<sup>58</sup> In 1211, on the twenty-third day of the fourth month, an *ichinichi issaikyō* event was organized by Emperor Go-Toba 後鳥羽天皇 (1180–1239) at his recently constructed temple, Saishō Shitennō'in 最勝四天王院.<sup>59</sup> Monks from all around the country, totaling

13,215, congregated in Kyoto for the massive service, all under the sponsorship of the emperor. According to multiple sources, the result was an unparalleled event.<sup>60</sup> These performances of extreme sūtra transcription practices once again reflect the drive to reach new heights in copying typical of the eleventh through thirteenth centuries.

### *Genuflection*

The laborious practice of *ichiji sanrei* 一字三礼 (one character, three bows), in which the copyist writes one character and then pays obeisance three times, usually understood to be performed as bows, before moving on to the next character,<sup>61</sup> is another manifestation. Two notable examples of this practice, including the related *ichigyō sanrei* 一行三礼 (one line, three bows) in which obeisance is paid to each line of characters copied, were carried out by the Buddhist sculptor from the Kei school 慶派, Unkei 運慶 (1151–1223), and the courtier, Madenokōji Nobufusa 万里小路宣房 (1258–1326).<sup>61</sup> In 1183, Unkei made a vow to copy the *Lotus Sūtra* according to very strict procedures.<sup>63</sup> Fortunately, the inscriptions on the scrolls illuminate much about the nature of the mission. Elaborate efforts were made to guarantee the purity of the process. According to the inscription on the eighth volume, participants ensured the cleanliness of their bodies and clothes; the paper was specially made; the scroll rollers were crafted from the wood remaining after Taira no Shigehira 平重衡 (1158–1185) razed Tōdaiji 東大寺 in Nara; and water for the ink was drawn from three different sacred places: Miidera 三井寺, Yokawa 横川 on Mt. Hiei 比叡, and Kiyomizudera 清水寺. Fifty men and women, including another celebrated sculptor from the Kei school, Kaikei 快慶 (late twelfth or early thirteenth century), participated in the project. And on top of the extraordinary lengths Unkei took to guarantee the sacredness of the scrolls (also an indication of the overall trends in copying in that Unkei was thinking not only of ways to intensify the practice of the copying and the exterior appearance of the scrolls, but also of the interior composition), after each line of text was copied, three bows were made to the recently finished characters. Unkei tabulated the number of bows, *nenbutsu* 念佛 chants (calling on the name of Amida Buddha [阿弥陀 Ch. Amituo; Skt. Amitābha]), and chanting of the august title of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*daimoku* 題目) that the project required: 50,000 bows, 100,000 *nenbutsu* chants, and 100,000 chants of the title of the *Lotus Sūtra*. And in order to prevent an invasion of demons, every day services were performed and ten parts of the *Lotus Sūtra* were read.

A later example is that of Nobufusa, who copied two-hundred volumes of the five great Mahāyāna sūtras (五部大乘經 Jpn. *gobu daijō kyō*, Ch. *wubu dasheng jing*) using the ‘one character, three bows’ technique.<sup>64</sup> In several of the inscriptions, it becomes clear that Nobufusa undertook this challenging mission not only to generate merit for himself, but also for his parents. In the seventh volume of the *Lotus Sūtra*, he writes that this volume was dedicated as a memorial to a deceased family member. Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美 identifies this person to be Nobufusa’s father, who retired from public life to join the Buddhist ranks in 1284 due to illness, but was fortunate enough to live for an additional twenty years. The inscription coordinates with the seventh anniversary of his father’s death; and the third volume of the *Great Collection Sūtra*<sup>65</sup> he dedicated to his deceased mother.<sup>66</sup> Such laborious genuflection corresponds to the search for more inventive and challenging ways of creating sūtra copies.

### *Alternative Media*

The move toward innovation was also reflected in the incorporation of alternative media. Although there were many other types of media employed, I want to highlight here the cases of stone sūtras, tile sūtras, and blood copying. The practice of copying sūtra text onto stone is known as *sekkyō* 石經. This term refers to the broad practice of copying scripture onto the durable surface of stone and is more commonly ascribed to the longstanding tradition of copying sūtras onto stone tablets.<sup>67</sup> However, it also includes the more uncommon practice of inscribing a single character onto each stone, known as *isseki ichijikyō* 一石一字經, or of inscribing several characters per stone, referred to as *taji issekikyō* 多字一石經.<sup>68</sup> The small stones often measure between three to ten centimeters in diameter. The text of the sūtra is frequently written in black or red ink.<sup>69</sup> Because of the nature of the small stone transcription, even though the stones might all be completed and stored together, which often meant burial, the sūtra could not be reconstructed without a superhuman feat of will and copious amounts of time, thus reconstruction was never the point.<sup>70</sup> Tile sūtras, or *kawaragyō* 瓦經, present a similar situation.<sup>71</sup> Typically measuring thirty centimeters, the ceramic tiles are scored with a sharp implement to carve the lines for the sūtra text—much like the lines of conventional sūtras—and then the scriptural lines are copied, often on both surfaces of the tile, while the sūtra title and volume number are inscribed on the sides. After their firing in a kiln, the tile sūtras were often buried standing up in the ground with a

stūpa sometimes marking the site.<sup>72</sup> Occasionally, rather than sūtra text on both sides of the tile, one side might have rows of Buddha images, resembling the *Ichiji butsu kyō*.<sup>73</sup> In 1142, the Shingon monk, Zen'ne 禅惠, began copying sūtras onto tile, producing five hundred by the following year.<sup>74</sup> Zen'ne began this project with a rather long list of vows he hoped to fulfill with the merit generated from the tile sūtras and sculptures: grand prayers for the nation's and emperor's peace as well as more intimate appeals for his own peace in this realm, a long and healthy life of good quality, and to be reborn into paradise.<sup>75</sup> Together with the Amida and Jizō 地藏 (Ch. Dizang; Skt. Kṣitigarbha) sculptures he made, the tiles were buried at his family's mountain temple.<sup>76</sup> Tanaka Kaidō explains that the burial of sacred text purifies the land, and as the land is the source of all including the nation, the purified land and its inhabitants are united.<sup>77</sup>

Copying scriptures in blood, while not that common, represents one of the more intimate and extreme forms of sūtra transcription.<sup>78</sup> Fujiwara Yorinaga famously copied sūtras in blood, although not wanting to use his own, he asked Fujiwara Atsuto to make a sanguinary donation for the project.<sup>79</sup> According to the *Tale of the Hōgen Disturbance* (保元物語 *Hōgen monogatari*), the exiled Retired Emperor Sutoku'in 崇徳院 (1119–1164) wrote scriptures in ink mixed with his own blood for three years in hopes of securing a paradisiacal birth after death.<sup>80</sup> Practitioners of scriptural blood writing seek to transform what is illusory into something adamantine, hence blood into dharma.<sup>81</sup> But blood was not the only substance capable of establishing a karmic bond; Fujiwara Munetada in 1136 enshrined votive copies of sūtras that he and his children transcribed on paper containing strands of his deceased wife's hair. There are even those tales of the Buddha's former lives (闇多伽 Jpn. *jataka*, Ch. *sheduoqie*; Skt. *jātaka*) that describe the self-flaying of skin for paper, liquefying of marrow and pulverizing of flesh for ink, and the breaking of bones for brushes, all so that sacred word can be copied.

Not content with mere paper and ink, alternative media such as small stone sūtras, tile sūtras, and blood copying represent the search for new and inventive means to transcribe scripture. As with the other examples provided in this section, while the trend encouraged copying in novel and innovative ways, the drive was often to establish more personal connections with the sūtra and its salvific and restorative power by undergoing extreme measures and even by merging the materially intimate with the numinous nature of scripture. Certainly, these are but a few of the examples and possible categories of extreme copying. But in selecting these samplings of intensified scripture transcription practices,

strong parallels can be seen with the art of sūtra copies, revealing the overall trend toward the extreme that, importantly, also typifies the production of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas.

### Fundamental Functions of Sūtra Transcription

The examples of sūtra transcriptions examined above represent a type of copying known as *kechienkyō* 結縁經 or sūtras that establish *kechien* 結縁, a connection between the copyists and patrons with the Buddha, thus bequeathing great karmic merit for the hope of future salvation.<sup>82</sup> The earliest mention of the term *kechienkyō* comes from the diary of the Heian-period courtier, Fujiwara Sanesuke 藤原実資 (957–1046), known as *Shōyūki* 小右記<sup>83</sup> and occurred in the ninth month and tenth day of 1021.<sup>84</sup> The term occurs with frequency after this point, and another example merging Buddhist canon copies and *kechien* ceremonies comes from *Hyakurenshō*. On the fourth day of the third month in 1142, a ceremony utilizing a copy of the Buddhist canon was held at the Byōdōin 平等院 in Uji in order to establish *kechien* for the benefit of Emperor Toba.<sup>85</sup> In transcription performances reminiscent of the *Heike nōkyō*, the typical arrangement began with a rather large group of people in which each person prepared a single scroll and concluded with the dedicatory ritual of the sūtras as a completed set.<sup>86</sup> However, if the projects lacked participants, then a person was assigned more than one scroll.<sup>87</sup> The sūtra dedication ceremony imbued recently copied sūtras with the essence of the Buddha, thereby in a sense activating them and solidifying the connection between the participants and the Buddha. Fabio Rambelli notes that “texts were endowed with all the characteristics of sacred objects and were not essentially different from relics, icons, and talismans”<sup>88</sup> and that “[a]s soteriological tools...[t]hey acquired a magical and mystical dimension as sorts of ‘relics’ of past masters (and ultimately, of the Buddha).”<sup>89</sup> Much as icons and stūpas doubled for the Buddha in the illusory realm, sūtras were not merely symbols of the Buddha’s presence, but rather embodiments of the Buddha.<sup>90</sup> The same karmic connection is possible in the more intimate and personal copying rituals described. The ornamentation of scriptures, the inclusion of bodily material, and the labors of the hand to copy sacred word all establish personal and lasting connections with the numinosity of the dharma through tactile transference.

As with the jeweled-stūpa mandalas, the primary function of these sūtra transcriptions is fulfilled in the act of copying itself. The merit from the reverential treatment of the scriptures and the karmic

connection established through the textual contact and labor exerted is earned in the moments of the practice of copying, in that direct connection with the scripture in the case of a personal, hand-copied sūtra, and in the commission and facilitation of copying in the case of patrons. This is the case even with projects that clearly exhibit a puzzle-like component to their transcription, such as the tenth-century Chinese textual stūpa. This is not to negate or diminish the further lives of the sūtra copies, or even the merit they continued to generate, but to emphasize that the very act of transcription was the religious goal, although a certain level of social prestige and love of beauty must have factored into the creation of sūtra art as well. But as in cases such as the jeweled-stūpa mandalas where the scrolls were stored away and rarely presented in any ritualistic context, the production of the sūtra transcription itself embodied the fundamental function of the project.

## Conclusion

This paper excavated some practical aspects of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas concerning their origins, both in terms of stylistic precedence as well as the culture of copying in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries out of which the mandalas emerged. By locating the foundations of the paintings in early Chinese transcriptions and by situating the mandalas amongst other inventive and novel sūtra art and copying practices at the time of the mandalas' first production in Japan, the paintings become intelligible less as having materialized mysteriously and without precedence for a brief time and more as a particular aspect of a system of sūtra transcription that trended toward the innovative and extreme. This examination is not to diminish the mandalas' inventiveness but to reveal the context of their creation—they represent an apotheosis of general efforts to creatively and laboriously transcribe sūtras, especially given their high levels of artistic achievement. However, within the culture of copying at the close of the Heian period, the jeweled-stūpa mandalas were indeed highly original in one particular aspect: their utter imbrication of text with image was unprecedented in previous sūtra transcription projects.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Jpn. *Myōhō renga kyō*; Ch. *Miaofa lianhua jing*; Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra*; 妙法蓮華經; *Taishō daizōkyō* 大正大藏經, ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭 (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–32) no. 262, 9: 1c15–62b1. Hereafter abbreviated as *T*. Texts are indicated by the text number followed by the



volume, page, register, and line numbers, where appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> Jpn. *Konkōmyō saishō kyō*; Ch. *Jinguangming zuisheng wang jing*; Skt. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama rāja sūtra*; 金光明最勝王經; T. no. 665, 16: 403a04–456c25.

<sup>3</sup> Jpn. *Muryōgi kyō*; Ch. *Wuliangyi jing*; Skt. *Amitārtha sūtra*; 無量義經; T. no. 276, 9: 383b15–389b22.

<sup>4</sup> Jpn. *Kan fugen bosatsu gyōhō kyō*; Ch. *Guan puxian pusa xingfa jing*; 觀普賢菩薩行法經; T. no. 277, 9: 389b26–394b11.

<sup>5</sup> For a more thorough analysis of the jeweled-stūpa mandalas, please see my doctoral dissertation, Halle O’Neal, “Written Stūpa, Painted Sūtra: Relationships of Text and Image in the Construction of Meaning in the Japanese Jeweled-Stūpa Mandalas” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Jpn. *Hannya haramita shingyō*; Ch. *Bore boluomiduo xinjing*; Skt. *Prajñāpāramitā hrdaya sūtra*; 般若波羅蜜多心經; T. no. 251, 8: 848c5–23.

<sup>7</sup> For an image of the oldest example, see Miya Tsugio 宮次男, *Kinji hōtō mandara* 金字宝塔曼荼羅 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1976), 4. The description of the image from Lionel Giles reads, “—佛說 [sermon of the Buddha; Ch. *foshuo*] prefixed to title. Written in a fanciful shape, and with dotted red lines joining the characters so as to present the outline of a pagoda. Mounted as a kakemono scroll. 22 cm × 1½ ft. S.5410.” See Lionel Giles, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1957), 35 entry 1470.

<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, I have not viewed the other early examples and so am unable to compare the patterns made by the accurate connection of the characters. It would be a point of interest to know whether a similar arrangement of text was used or if new patterns were affected and thus creating new visual games. Giles includes a description of another example in the British Museum: “*Pan jo po lo mi to hsin ching*. Written with dotted lines connecting the characters so as to form an image of Avalokiteśvara. *Verso*: Begin. of the same as r° [recto]. Fairly good MS [manuscript]. Mounted on a scroll. 47 cm × 22 cm. S.4289.” See Giles, *Descriptive Catalogue*, 35.

<sup>9</sup> Guoli gugong bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院, ed. *Midian Zhulin* 秘殿珠林 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 1971).

<sup>10</sup> For a list of the fifty-one images compiled from the multiple volumes, see Miya, *Kinji hōtō mandara*, 8–9, n 16.

<sup>11</sup> Jpn. *Kongō hannya haramitsu kyō*; Ch. *Jingang bore boluomi jing*; Skt. *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra*; 金剛般若波羅蜜經; T. no. 235, 8: 748c18–752c7.

<sup>12</sup> Jpn. *Amidakyō*; Ch. *Amituo jing*; Skt. *Amitābha sūtra*; 阿彌陀經; T. no. 366, 12: 346b26–348b18.

<sup>13</sup> Jpn. *Yakushi rurikō nyorai hongan kōtoku kyō*; Ch. *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing*; Skt. *Bhagavato bhaisajyaguruvaiddūryaprabhasya pūrvaprañidhānaviśeṣavistāra*; 藥師琉璃光如來本願功德經; T. no. 450, 14: 404c13–408b28.

<sup>14</sup> For a compiled list of the textual stūpas in the collection of the museum, see Miya, *Kinji hōtō mandara*, 9 n 17. Also, National Palace Museum 國立故宮博物院, *Gugong shuhuaiji* 故宮書畫錄, vol. 8 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1965).

<sup>15</sup> For an image with accompanying detail, see Tōji 東寺, ed., *Tōji no bijutsu: kaiga to kōgei* 東寺の美術: 絵画と工芸 (Kyoto: Tōji, 1976), fig. 34.

<sup>16</sup> Miya, *Kinji hōtō mandara*, 7. Although in a later publication, Miya suggests an earlier date of 1249. See Miya, “Kenrantarū kyōten 絢爛たる經典,” in *Kenrantarū kyōten* 絢爛たる經典, ed. Sato Shinji (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1983), 96–7.

<sup>17</sup> Fujita Tsuneyo 藤田経世, ed., “Tōbōki 東宝記,” *Kōkan bijutsu shiryō* 校刊美術史料,

vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1975), 447. I warmly thank Michael Jamentz for bringing this source to my attention.

<sup>18</sup> Miya, *Kinji hōtō mandara*, 6.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>20</sup> For more on the topic of the meritorious practice of combining sūtra and stūpa, please see chapter four of my dissertation.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Komatsu Shigemi 小松茂美, *Heike nōkyō no kenkyū* 平家納経の研究, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1976), 810.

<sup>23</sup> Egami Yasushi 江上綏, “Sōshokukyō 裝飾経,” *Nihon no bijutsu* 日本の美術 278 (1989): 28–29.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> For example, see the scrolls at Hōgonji 宝厳寺 on Chikubushima (eleventh century), Taisanji 太山寺 in Hyōgō prefecture (twelfth century), Jikōji 慈光寺 in Saitama prefecture (thirteenth century), and Hasedera 長谷寺 in Nara (thirteenth century) to note a few celebrated sets.

<sup>26</sup> For other notable examples see the decorative scrolls at Honkōji 本興寺 in Shizuoka prefecture (eleventh- and twelfth-centuries sets), Kongōbuji 金剛峯寺 in Wakayama prefecture (several sets), Rinnōji 輪王寺 in Tochigi (dated 1129), Itsukushima Shrine 厳島神社 on Miyajima (multiple sets), and Hyakusaiji 百濟寺 in Shiga, to name just a few. For images of these scrolls and many more, see Nara National Museum, ed., *Hokekyō: shakyō to sōgon* 法華経: 写経と荘嚴 (Tokyo: Tokyo Bijutsu, 1988), 42–45 plates 47–93.

<sup>27</sup> See Kyoto National Museum 京都国立博物館, ed., *Kana no bi* かなの美 (Tokyo: Ōtsuka Kōgeisha, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> For an image, see Nara National Museum, *Hokekyō*, 283 plate 118.

<sup>29</sup> Egami, “Sōshokukyō,” 37.

<sup>30</sup> Others of this type include the scroll at Rinnōji (twelfth century). For images of these scrolls, see Nara National Museum, *Hokekyō*, 280 plates 114 and 115.

<sup>31</sup> Nara National Museum, ed., *Seichi Ninpō (Ninpō): Nihon bukkyō 1300-nen no genryū* 聖地寧波 (ニンポー): 日本仏教一三〇〇年の源流 (Nara: Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2009), 299.

<sup>32</sup> Egami, “Sōshokukyō,” 40. For an image, see Nara National Museum, *Hokekyō*, 281 plate 116.

<sup>33</sup> Jpn. *Ken hōtō bon*; Ch. *Jian baota pin*; 見宝塔品.

<sup>34</sup> For an image, see Egami, “Sōshokukyō,” 40 fig. 48.

<sup>35</sup> For images of the scrolls in the collection of Kyoto National Museum, see “Ichiji rendai hokekyō,” Kyoto National Museum, accessed August 7, 2011, <http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/jp/syuzou/index.html>.

<sup>36</sup> For an image of the Ryūkōji scrolls, see Nara National Museum, *Hokekyō*, 282 plate 117.

<sup>37</sup> And as a twist, each line of silver is alternating white; see Kyoto National Museum, *Koshakyō: seinaru moji no sekai* 古写経: 聖なる文字の世界 (Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum, 2004), 313–14.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> For an image, see Nara National Museum, *Hokekyō*, 47 plate 102.

<sup>40</sup> Kyoto National Museum, *Koshakyō*, 315.

<sup>41</sup> *Lotus Sūtra* fans are held in the collections of Tokyo National Museum; Idemitsu Museum of Arts 出光美術館 in Tokyo; Saikyōji 西教寺 in Shiga prefecture; Fujita Muse-

um of Art 藤田美術館 in Osaka; Hōryūji 法隆寺; two private collections; and the largest amassment in the collection of Shitenōji 四天王寺 in Osaka. For images of these fans, see Nara National Museum, *Hokekyō*, 261–74 plates 112イ, 112ロ, 112ハ, 112ニ, 112ホ, 112ヘ, and 112ト.

<sup>42</sup> Examples of this type can be found in the Gotō Museum of Art and in the private collection of Ueno Jun'ichi 上野淳一. For images of these booklets, see *Ibid.*, 257–60 plates 110 and 111.

<sup>43</sup> The remains of the *Golden Light Sūtra* are in the collections of the Tokyo National Museum which owns a fragment and the Kyoto National Museum which owns volumes two, three, and four. For the scrolls in Tokyo, see “Konkōmyōkyō Volume Four Menashikyō,” Tokyo National Museum, accessed August 7, 2011, [http://www.tnm.jp/modules/r\\_collection/index.php?controller=dtl&colid=B2400&t=type\\_s&id=24&lang=j](http://www.tnm.jp/modules/r_collection/index.php?controller=dtl&colid=B2400&t=type_s&id=24&lang=j) a. For the scrolls in Kyoto, see “Konkōmyōkyō,” Kyoto National Museum, accessed August 7, 2011, <http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/jp/syuzou/index.html>. The *Scripture that Transcends the Principle* version is in the Dai Tōkyū Memorial Library 大東急記念文庫 in Tokyo. For images of this version, see Marsha Weidner, ed., *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 168–69 figs. 1–3.

<sup>44</sup> Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助, *Nihon bukkyō shi* 日本佛教史, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 659. Because Tsuji analyzed and amassed a tremendous quantity of information about Japanese Buddhist religious practices from a host of primary documents, this publication is of great value for researchers, despite the absence of broader analysis, occasional errors in primary source citations, and miscalculations in the translation of Japanese reign dates to the Gregorian calendrical system.

<sup>45</sup> Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyō shi*, 659.

<sup>46</sup> For instance, Fujiwara Kiyohira 藤原清衡 (1056–1128) commissioned a blue paper, gold and silver script copy of the Buddhist canon in ca. 1117 known as the *Kiyohirakyō* 清衡經; Emperor Toba commissioned in the mid-twelfth century a blue-gold copy of the Buddhist canon now known as the *Jingojikyō* 神護寺經 for Go-Shirakawa; Bifukumon'in commissioned the set known as the *Arakawakyō* 荒川經 in 1150 for the repose of Emperor Toba's soul; and Fujiwara Hidehira completed in ca. 1176 a blue-gold copy of the Buddhist canon.

<sup>47</sup> Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyō shi*, 659.

<sup>48</sup> Kuroita Katsumi, ed., “Hyakurenshō 百鍊抄,” in *Shintei zōho, Kokushi taikai*, vol. 11 (Tokyo: Kokushi Taikai Kankōkai, 1929), 50. Tsuji makes the mistake of saying the event occurred in 1117. See Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyō shi*, 659.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 659.

<sup>50</sup> The following information about Sadanobu's project is based on Tsuji's research unless otherwise noted. See *Ibid.*, 660–61.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 660.

<sup>52</sup> Komatsu Shigemi, “Ichiji sanrei no shakyō 一字三礼の写經,” *Museum* 186 (1966): 3.

<sup>53</sup> Tanaka Kaidō 田中塊堂, *Nihon shakyō sōkan* 日本寫經綜覽 (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1974), 24.

<sup>54</sup> Komatsu, “Ichiji sanrei no shakyō,” 3.

<sup>55</sup> The following information about Shikijō's project is based on Tsuji's research. Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyō shi*, 661–62.

<sup>56</sup> Jpn. *Dai hannya haramitta kyō*; Ch. *Da bore boluomiduo jing*; Skt. *Mahaprajñā-*

*pāramitā sūtras*; 大般若波羅蜜多經; *T. no. 220, 5: 1a4–7: 1110b3.*

<sup>57</sup> Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyō shi*, 663.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 664.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Nakamura Hajime 中村元, *Iwanami bukkyō jiten* 岩波仏教辞典 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989), 30.

<sup>62</sup> Tanabe offers a parallel example: Emperor Reizei 冷泉 (950–1011), while copying several sūtras, prayed after writing each character as recorded in the *Honchō bunshū* 本朝文集. Willa J. Tanabe, *Paintings of the Lotus Sutra* (New York, Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1988), 46. See Kuroita Katsumi 黒板勝美, ed., “Honchō bunshū 本朝文集,” in *Shintei zōho, Kokushi taikai* 新訂増補, 國史大系, vol. 30 (Tokyo: Kokushi Taikai Kankōkai, 1929), 205.

<sup>63</sup> The following information concerning Unkei’s project comes from Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyō shi*, 672–73. See also Komatsu, “Ichiji sanrei no shakyō,” 4–8.

<sup>64</sup> The following information concerning Nobufusa’s efforts comes from *Ibid.*, 3–8.

<sup>65</sup> Jpn. *Daijikkō*; Ch. *Dajijing*; Skt. *Mahāsaṃnipata sūtra*; 大集經; *T. no. 397, 13: 1a4–407a17.*

<sup>66</sup> For more examples of this phenomenon, see Komatsu, “Ichiji sanrei no shakyō,” 4.

<sup>67</sup> For more on this topic, see Kuno Takeshi 久野健 and Nakamura Hajime, eds., *Bukkyō bijutsu jiten* 仏教美術事典 (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2002), 499–500.

<sup>68</sup> These terms come from Ikemi Sumitaka 池見澄隆, “Tsumi to sono kaiketsu 罪とその解決,” in *Hokekyō no shinri: sukui o motomete* 法華經の真理: 救いをもとめて, ed. Miya Tsugio (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1989), 129. An image of the small stone sūtras can also be found on this same page.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> For more on this topic, see Seki Hideo 関秀夫, “Kyōzuka to sonno ibutsu 経塚とその遺物,” *Nihon no bijutsu* 日本の美術 292 (1990), 70–79.

<sup>71</sup> For an image of a title sūtra, see *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>72</sup> Tanaka, *Nihon shakyō sōkan*, 27.

<sup>73</sup> Ikemi, “Tsumi to sono kaiketsu,” 128.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Tanaka, *Nihon shakyō sōkan*, 27.

<sup>78</sup> For more on this practice, see John Kieschnick, “Blood Writing in Chinese Buddhism,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 23 (2000): 177–94.

<sup>79</sup> Tanabe, *Paintings of the Lotus Sutra*, 56.

<sup>80</sup> Nagazumi Yasuaki 永積安明 and Shimada Isao 島田勇雄, eds., *Hōgen monogatari; Heiji monogatari* 保元物語; 平治物語, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 日本古典文學大系, vol. 31 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961), 179.

<sup>81</sup> Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 119.

<sup>82</sup> Nakamura, *Iwanami bukkyō jiten*, 226.

<sup>83</sup> Fujiwara Sanesuke 藤原実資, *Shōyūki* 小右記, in *Dai nihon kokiroku* 大日本古記録, vol. 6 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971).

<sup>84</sup> Egami, “Sōshokukyō,” 19. This occurs in reference to the transcription and dedica-

tion service of the *Lotus Sūtra* at Muryōju'in 無量壽院 sponsored by the Empress Fujiwara Kenshi 藤原妍子 (994–1027). See Fujiwara, *Shōyūki*, 46.

<sup>85</sup> Kuroita, “Hyakurenshō,” 65.

<sup>86</sup> Egami, “Sōshokukyō,” 19.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, 90.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>90</sup> For a discussion of embodied Buddhist visual and material culture, see Robert H. Sharf, “On the Allure of Buddhist Relics,” *Representations* 66 (1999): 75–99.