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# *Death and the Afterlife in Japanese Buddhism*

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# *With the Help of "Good Friends"*

Deathbed Ritual Practices in Early Medieval Japan

JACQUELINE I. STONE

Child of the Buddha, do you realize that now is your last thought? This single reflection [on the Buddha] at death outweighs the karmic acts of a hundred years. If this instant should pass you by, rebirth [in *samsāra*] will be unavoidable. Now is precisely the time. Reflect on the Buddha single-mindedly, and you will surely be born on a seven-jewelled lotus pedestal in the pond of eight virtues in the subtle and wondrous Pure Land of Utmost Bliss in the west.

—Genshin

WITH SUCH WORDS as these, suggests the monk Genshin (942–1017), the dying should be exhorted to focus their minds on the Buddha Amida (Skt. Amitābha, Amitāyus), in order to escape the round of rebirth and instead achieve birth in the Pure Land (*ōjō*). Genshin's treatise *Ōjō yōshū* (Essentials of Pure Land birth), completed in 985, has already been introduced in Chapter 1 by Sarah Horton. In addition to its role in popularizing Pure Land devotion, it is famous for its detailed instructions—the first ever compiled in Japan—on Buddhist deathbed practice (*rinjū gyōgi*). The form of deathbed practice described in *Ōjō yōshū* soon gained popularity in monastic circles and spread to lay elites and also commoners.

Genshin's recommendations for deathbed practice marked the entry into Japanese Buddhist discourse of a concern with dying in a state of right-mindedness and belief in the power of one's last thoughts, ritually focused, to determine one's postmortem fate. In the logic of deathbed contemplation, the moment of death was constructed as a liminal realm, transcending ordinary moral calculus of sin and merit, when a lifetime of wrongdoing could potentially be reversed and even

sinful men and women could achieve liberation. Horton's chapter has already suggested the immense hope conveyed by belief in this possibility of deathbed salvation. This hope was linked to broader arguments extending the possibility of birth in the Pure Land to "evil persons" (*akunin ôjô*) and gave promise of liberation even in an age widely thought to be degenerate and sinful. However, birth in the Pure Land was by no means a certain thing, and the discourse surrounding deathbed practices had its dark side, for the last moment was seen as pregnant, not only with immense salvific potential, but also with grave danger. If even a sinful individual who properly focused his mind on the Buddha at death might thereby reach the Pure Land, by the same token, it was thought that even a virtuous person, by a single distracted thought at the last moment, could negate the merit of a lifetime's devotion and fall into the evil realms. To die while unconscious, delirious, or wracked by pain thus came to be greatly feared, and the importance of ritual control over one's last moments was increasingly emphasized.<sup>1</sup> This essay will trace the development of written instructions for deathbed practice from Genshin's *Ôjô yôshû* on, focusing on the latter Heian (794–1185) and Kamakura (1185–1333) periods; their appropriation across sectarian lines and by an expanding range of social groups; their increasing emphasis on the difficulties of achieving right concentration at the last moment and consequent promotion of the role of the *zenchishiki* or "good friend," the person presiding over the deathbed ritual scene; and the eventual routinization of deathbed practices with their assimilation to the standardized funeral observances that began to emerge in late medieval and early modern times.

### Deathbed Practices in *Ôjô yôshû* and the Samādhi Society of Twenty-five

Genshin's instructions for deathbed practice in *Ôjô yôshû* consist of two parts. The first part draws on the work of Chinese predecessors to explain how the dying should be cared for and encouraged in their final meditations.<sup>2</sup> Here Genshin quotes a passage from a "Chinese tradition" appearing in a Vinaya commentary by Daoxuan (596–667) in a section on "Attending to the Sick and Sending off the Dead," which purports to describe how the terminally ill were treated at the Jetavana monastery in India in Śākyamuni Buddha's time. According to its prescriptions, a dying person is to be removed to a "chapel of impermanence" (*mujōin*), so that the sight of his familiar surroundings and robe, bowl, and other possessions will not generate thoughts of attachment. A standing buddha image should be installed facing west; the sick person should be placed behind the image and made to grasp a

five-colored pennant tied to the image's hand to help him generate thoughts of following the Buddha to his pure realm. Those in attendance are to burn incense, scatter flowers, and promptly remove any vomit or excrement.<sup>3</sup> Alternatively, Genshin cites the recommendation of Daoshi (d. 668?) that the buddha image should face east, and the sick person should be placed facing the image.<sup>4</sup> If no separate hall is available, Genshin says, one should simply have the sick person face west, burn incense, scatter flowers, and offer various encouragements. Or one may have the dying person face a fully adorned buddha image.

Genshin also cites the instructions for deathbed practice given by the Pure Land master Shandao (613–681), who advises that dying persons should be made to face west, visualize the coming of the Buddha Amida to escort them to the Pure Land, and continually recite Amida's name. If the dying see visions of Amida and his holy retinue, they should describe this, and those in attendance should write down what they report. If, on the other hand, they see images of painful punishment, their companions should chant the *nenbutsu* with them and help them to perform repentance so that their sins may be eradicated. Relatives and other visitors who have recently consumed meat, alcohol, or the five pungent roots should be refused access, lest the dying lose correct concentration, thus falling prey to demons who will cause them to fall into the evil paths.<sup>5</sup> Genshin also draws upon the words of Daochuo (562–645), who comments on the difficulty, in one's last moments, of sustaining ten reflections on Amida, deemed the minimum necessary to achieve *ôjô*:

To have ten uninterrupted reflections in succession would not seem difficult. But most unenlightened individuals have a mind as untamed as a wild horse, a consciousness as restless as a monkey. . . . Once the winds of dissolution arise [at the moment of death], a hundred pains will gather in the body. If you have not trained prior to this time, how can you assume that you will be able to contemplate the Buddha on that occasion? Each person should thus make a pact in advance with three to five people of like conviction. Whenever the time of death approaches [for any of them], they should offer each other encouragement. They should chant the name of Amida for the dying person, desire that person's birth in the Pure Land, and continue chanting to induce [in him] the ten moments of reflection.<sup>6</sup>

The "ten moments of reflection" here refers, on one hand, to the famous eighteenth vow of Amida, which promises birth in his Pure Land to all who aspire to this goal with sincerity and call him to mind "even ten times";<sup>7</sup> it also refers to the *Contemplation Sûtra*'s claims that even

an evil person, if he encounters a good friend (*zenchishiki*) who instructs him at the hour of death so that he is able to sustain ten thoughts of Amida, shall, with each thought, erase the sins of eight billion kalpas and be born in Amida's Pure Land.<sup>8</sup> Exactly how these ten thoughts should be understood was a matter of considerable debate and was embedded in a larger controversy over the respective merits of the contemplative visualization of Amida or the chanting of his name. Genshin took "ten continuous *nenbutsu*" to mean reflecting upon Amida, aided by the invocation of his name in the formula "*Namu Amida butsu*." While Genshin's approach to Pure Land practice focuses on visualization and contemplation, he also held that, under the liminal influence of approaching death, the chanted *nenbutsu* becomes vastly more powerful than it is at ordinary times.<sup>9</sup> After citing his Chinese predecessors, Genshin then proceeds to offer his own recommendations for encouragement to the dying. These comprise the second part of the *rinjū gyōgi* section of *Ōjō yōshū* and consist of ten exhortations, centering upon visualization of Amida's physical marks, his radiant light, and his descent, together with his holy retinue, to escort the practitioner to the Pure Land.

Genshin's interest in ritualized deathbed practice leading to birth in the Pure Land had Japanese as well as continental antecedents. For example, Senkan (919–984), a Tendai monk of the Onjōji line and an earlier Japanese Pure Land thinker, had expressed in a written prayer his hope that

[a]t the time of death, may I be at ease in body and mind, receive Amida's welcoming descent, and achieve the highest level of birth on a lotus pedestal in the Pure Land. And how could I wish this for myself alone? May all beings throughout the dharma realm, in their last hours, having known the approach of death seven days in advance, distance their minds from perversions and dwell in right-mindfulness, encounter the teachings of a good friend, chant ten *nenbutsu*, and, freed from all bodily and mental pain, alike be born in Amida's Pure Land.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to prayers for a good death, such as Senkan's, we also find notices of individuals prior to Genshin's time dying in a ritualized fashion that expressed their aspirations for *ōjō*. Early tenth-century sources record, for example, that Emperor Seiwa (d. 880) had monks attend him at the end and chant the Diamond Wheel (*kongōrin*) dhāraṇī, while he himself sat upright, facing west with his hands forming the meditation mudrā (*jōin*).<sup>11</sup> The former minister of the right, Fujiwara no Yoshimi (d. 867), is said to have died "seated upright, facing west and forming the fundamental mudrā of the Buddha Amida," and the

councilor Fujiwara no Yasunori (d. 895) is similarly said to have died with undisturbed mind, facing west and contemplating Amida Buddha.<sup>12</sup> The biography of the great Tendai master Ennin (Jikaku Daishi, d. 793–864) says that, at the time of his death, he washed his face and donned a clean robe, burnt incense, placed his palms together, and faced west; he also had his disciple Enchō chant, "I take refuge in and worship Amida of complete awakening" (*kimyō chōrai Mida shukaku*) while other disciples recited the names of various buddhas and bodhisattvas.<sup>13</sup> While the biography certainly postdates Ennin, it would nonetheless appear to precede *Ōjō yōshū*. And Enshō (d. 959 or 963), chief abbot of Enryakuji, also mentioned in Horton's essay, is said to have died holding a cord tied to the hand of an image of the Buddha Amida, as Genshin had recommended.<sup>14</sup> Such notices suggest that embryonic forms of deathbed ritual practice were being practiced in Japan even before *Ōjō yōshū* was compiled. Genshin's text, then, did not initiate deathbed practice so much as it helped to systematize, elaborate, and promote a practice that had already begun to emerge.

As Horton has explained in Chapter 1, the deathbed practices described in *Ōjō yōshū* were first formally adopted by the Nijūgo zanmai-e or Samādhi Society of Twenty-five, a *nenbutsu* association based at the Yokawa retreat on Mt. Hiei, with which Genshin was closely associated. The Society's founding oath reads in part:

We pledge together to be "good friends" to one another and, at life's last moment, to help one other contemplate the Buddha [Amida]. We hereby set the number of our Society at twenty-five. If one among us should fall ill, then by the power of the vow uniting us, without concern for whether the day be auspicious or not, we shall go to him and inquire after him and encourage [his deathbed contemplation]. And if he happens to achieve birth in [the Pure Land of] Utmost Bliss, then—whether by the power of his own vow or by relying on the Buddha's supernatural powers, whether in a dream or in waking reality—he shall so communicate this to the Society. Or, if he has fallen into the evil paths, he shall communicate this as well. Our society shall at regular times perform together with like mind those practices leading to the Pure Land. In particular, on the evening of the fifteenth day of each month, we shall cultivate the samādhi of mindfulness of the Buddha (*nenbutsu zanmai*) and pray that we may be able to complete ten reflections [on Amida] in our last moments.<sup>15</sup>

Two extant sets of regulations for the Society stipulate that the members should devote the fifteenth of each month to *nenbutsu* practice

with the aim of achieving birth in the Pure Land; recite the mantra of radiant light (*kōmyō shingon*) for empowering sand to be sprinkled on the corpses of deceased members; nurse any members of the society who fall sick, removing them to a separate chapel called the Ōjōin (hall for birth in the Pure Land), to be established for this purpose; and establish a gravesite for members and perform funerals, centering around *nenbutsu* practice.<sup>16</sup> The observances of the Nijūgo zanmai-e thus spanned a continuum from ordinary practice to funerary rites, within which practice at the moment of death played a pivotal role.

Deathbed protocols of the sort described in Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* and practiced by the Nijūgo zanmai-e represent the earliest formal articulation in Japan of much older, similar practices attested on the East Asian mainland; they also have resonances, if not direct historical connections, with the traditional role of Buddhist monks and nuns in nursing the sick among them.<sup>17</sup> Genshin's instructions in *Ōjō yōshū* in particular quickly became a model for conducting deathbed practices in Heian Japan. In a very early reference to the text, Genshin's disciple Kakuchō (d. 1034), who was active in the Nijūgo zanmai-e, recommends using its section on deathbed ritual to encourage and instruct practitioners during their final illness.<sup>18</sup> This *rinjū gyōgi* section of the *Ōjō yōshū* circulated in a somewhat modified, *kana* version as an independent text.<sup>19</sup> It also seems to have been read aloud on occasion to the dying. For example, when one member of the Society, Shōkin (a.k.a. Shōnen, d. 1015), fell ill, he reportedly "requested that worldly matters not be discussed in his presence but solely had the *rinjū gyōgi* section of the *Ōjō yōshū* read to him, learning its admonitions." On the night of his death, he again had his attendants read it to him, along with the "Fathoming the Lifespan of the Tathāgata" chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*, and also had them chant the *nenbutsu*.<sup>20</sup> Within twenty years of the *Ōjō yōshū*'s appearance, hagiographies, literary sources, and court diaries begin to report individuals dying in accord with its prescriptions. The famous account of the death of the courtier Fujiwara no Michinaga depicted in *Eiga monogatari* is clearly based on *Ōjō yōshū*.<sup>21</sup> As Horton has noted in her chapter, *ōjōden* or biographical accounts of those said to have achieved birth in the Pure Land frequently describe the ritually correct death of devout persons who die in the posture of meditation, facing toward the west, or who hold cords tied to the hand of a buddha image. Similar references occur in diaries of the court nobility. Prince Sukehito (d. 1119) is said to have passed away chanting the *nenbutsu* while holding a five-colored cord attached to an image of Amida; Nishi no Okata (d. 1120), adoptive mother of the courtier Fujiwara no Munetada, also died with the colored cords in her

hand.<sup>22</sup> Some later examples from literature include the former imperial consort Kenreimon'in, whose exemplary death is described at the end of *Tale of the Heike*, or the defeated commander Taira no Shige-hira, in the same epic, who is allowed to hold a cord tied to the hand of a buddha image and chant ten *nenbutsu* before the executioner lops off his head.<sup>23</sup> In addition to explicitly Buddhist soteriological rationales for deathbed practice, among the Heian nobility, the removal of dying persons to the *mujōin*—in aristocratic practice, often a private chapel or room at a temple or monastery where the dying individual might have patronage connections—also served the pragmatic purpose of isolating and confining the defilement of death, which had to be rigorously avoided by those involved in court ceremonials.<sup>24</sup>

The historicity of accounts of exemplary deaths is not always easy to evaluate. For example, the diary of the courtier Fujiwara no Sanesuke (957–1046), a contemporary of Michinaga, describes him as dying in acute discomfort, plagued by painful boils, occasional delirium, and loss of bowel control—thus suggesting that the account given in *Eiga monogatari* may be somewhat idealized.<sup>25</sup> What we can say, however, is that the prescriptions in the "deathbed practices" section of Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* quickly became normative in elite circles for what an ideal death, one leading to liberation, was *supposed* to look like. At the same time, they formed the prototype for a number of subsequent *rinjū gyōgisho*, texts of deathbed ritual instruction or "deathbed manuals," as they might be termed. Such works were compiled in considerable numbers from the latter Heian period through early modern times; however, the eleventh through thirteenth centuries seem to have witnessed the greatest innovation in instructions for deathbed practice. Early modern *rinjū gyōgisho* in large measure represent reworkings of this earlier material, and the present essay will focus on developments in the Heian and Kamakura periods. The majority of these texts adopt the basic features of Genshin's instructions: the removal of the dying to a separate place; the enshrinement of a buddha image with a cord fastened to its hand for the dying person to hold; the offerings of flowers and incense; the shielding of the dying person from talk of worldly affairs or the intrusion of those likely to arouse strong feelings, either of love or aversion; and the need above all to create a quiet and dignified atmosphere conducive to contemplation in one's last hours. Genshin's exhortation to the dying person is frequently quoted: "You should not visualize any form except the features of the Buddha. You should not hear any sounds except the Buddha's words of dharma. You should not speak of anything except the true teachings of the Buddha. You should not think of anything except birth in the Pure

Land."<sup>26</sup> However, instructions for deathbed practice after *Ōjō yōshū* also reflect new developments, which will be summarized in the next three sections.

### Appropriation across Traditions

Because of the popularity of *Ōjō yōshū* in later ages, Genshin has often been remembered primarily as a Pure Land teacher, and the sort of deathbed rituals he introduced have been assumed to be something peculiar to Pure Land Buddhism. However, scholarship has sometimes been too quick to read back into medieval times the clear-cut sectarian divisions of the early modern period and beyond. Aspiration for *ōjō* was a generic Buddhist goal, and the basic features of Genshin's instructions for deathbed practice were soon assimilated across institutional and sectarian divides, becoming adapted to the specific practices, iconography, and teachings of multiple Buddhist traditions. An early example is the *Rinjū gyōgi chūki* (Notes on deathbed practice) of Tanshū (1066–1120?), a monk learned in Hossō doctrine and with close ties to the Nara temples Kōfukuji and Saidaiji. Tanshū explicitly cites the instructions of the "bishop of Yokawa" (Yokawa Sōzu, that is, Genshin), assimilating them within a Nara Buddhist framework. Like a number of texts on deathbed ritual compiled subsequently to *Ōjō yōshū*, *Rinjū gyōgi chūki* takes the form of a series of articles of instruction (thirteen, in this case). Tanshū allows for aspiration to realms other than Amida's western Pure Land: if the dying person seeks birth in the Tūṣita heaven, he says, then an image of Maitreya should be substituted for that of Amida, and the dying person should visualize being born there. If death is not imminent, Tanshū suggests that a devotee of the *Lotus Sūtra* (*jikyōsha*) may expound its meaning for the dying person, or a companion in practice may read the *rishubun* section of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. Reading the *rishubun* to the dying person would form a major component of deathbed ritual instructions with an esoteric orientation.<sup>27</sup> The dying person should also be encouraged to recite the bodhisattva precepts, or they may be recited for him, as an unrivalled source of merit. Tanshū further recommends performing the repentance rite of the bodhisattva Fugen (Skt. Samantabhadra) to remove karmic hindrances that manifest at the time of death. His list of buddhas and bodhisattvas on whom the dying may rely for help in achieving right-mindfulness at the end include Śākyamuni, Maitreya, Yakushi, Fugen, Monju, Jizō, Kokūzō, Kannon, and Fudō.<sup>28</sup> Tanshū appears to have consulted Genshin's Chinese sources and added excerpts from them to his *Chūki* that are not found in *Ōjō yōshū*. For example, he quotes Daoxuan to the effect that all the good practices that the dy-

ing person has performed—such as doctrinal study, meditation, sūtra recitation, teaching others, or commissioning buddha images and stūpas—should be enumerated and praised by those attending at the deathbed, in order to inspire that person's joy and confidence. Later deathbed ritual instructions sometimes mandate that lists of the dying person's prior good deeds should be written out and read, and *ōjōden* accounts include examples of people who died holding in their hands such lists of their virtuous achievements.<sup>29</sup>

An important group of medieval deathbed ritual texts was produced within the Shingon *mikkyō* or esoteric tradition and represent that strand of thought retrospectively termed *himitsu nenbutsu*, or Pure Land esotericism. These texts assimilate Genshin's instructions to a *mikkyō* standpoint, typically identifying the deathbed *nenbutsu* with some form of ritual empowerment, and birth in a pure land, with realization of the nonduality of Amida and the *shingon* practitioner.<sup>30</sup> The earliest of these is the eight-article *Byōchū shugyōki* (Notes on practice during illness) by Jichihan (also Jitsuhan or Jippan, c. 1089–1144), who for a time was Tanshū's teacher.<sup>31</sup> Jichihan interprets Genshin's instructions for deathbed visualization from an esoteric perspective. As noted above, in his own articles of exhortation to the dying, Genshin had stressed contemplation of Amida Buddha's radiant light; this light, emitted from the curl of white hair between Amida's brows, Genshin asserted, will envelop the dying practitioner in the Buddha's compassion, eradicate his sins, focus his contemplation, and thus enable him to achieve birth in the Pure Land. Jichihan for his part recommends that the white curl be visualized as a transformation of the letter *hūm*, endowed with Amida's four inseparable mandalas. He also equates the name "Amida" with the three fundamental meanings of the letter "A": *A* indicating the originally unborn; *mi*, the non-self that is the great self; and *da*, moment-to-moment accordance with suchness. Jichihan may have been the first to present the deathbed *nenbutsu* as a form of empowerment or ritual union with the three secrets of the cosmic Buddha (*sanmitsu kaji*): the practitioner's reverent posture corresponds to the secret of the Buddha's body; the chanting of his name, to the secret of his speech; and the contemplation of the name's meaning, to the secret of his mind. Jichihan also recommended reliance on the esoteric deity Fudō Myōō to protect the practitioner and thwart the obstructions of both karmic hindrances and demonic influences at the moment of death. This role of Fudō as protector in the hour of death would become a standard feature of esoteric *rinjū gyōgi* texts. Like Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* and Tanshū's *Rinjū gyōgi chūki*, Jichihan's text urges repentance to remove karmic hindrances; as specific forms of repentance, he suggests giving away one's

clothing and other possessions or chanting mantras such as the Superlative Dhāraṇī of the Buddha's Crown (Skt. *uṣṇāṣavijayā dhāraṇī*, Jpn. Sonshō *darani*), the *kōmyō shingon*, or the name of Amida. The monk Kakuban (1095–1143), later revered as the founder of “new doctrine” (*shingi*) Shingon, drew explicitly on Jichihan's *Byōchū shugyōki* in developing his own recommendations for deathbed practice. His nine-article *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū* (Collection of secret essentials for life's end) also equates the *nenbutsu* with esoteric three secrets practice for union with the cosmic Buddha. He writes:

Amida is Dainichi's function as wisdom. Dainichi is Amida's essence as principle. . . . When one contemplates in this way, then, without leaving the Saha world, one is immediately born in [the pure land of] Utmost Bliss. One's own person enters Amida and, without transformation of Amida, becomes Dainichi. One's own person emerges from Dainichi; this is the subtle contemplation for realizing buddhahood with this very body.<sup>32</sup>

Both Jichihan and Kakuban stress union with the Buddha as the focus of the *shingon* practitioner's deathbed contemplation; in other words, the deathbed rite is recast in the model of an esoteric empowerment rite for realizing buddhahood through union with a deity. The deathbed scene in Kakuban's instructions is even arranged in a mandalic structure: four *zenchishiki* who assist the dying person's *nenbutsu* take up their positions around him so that together they reproduce the configuration of the five wisdom buddhas, the dying person occupying the central position of Dainichi.<sup>33</sup>

An esoteric approach to deathbed practice is also seen in the *Rinjū yōjin no koto* (Admonitions for the time of death) by the Shingon master Dōhan (1184–1252), dated 1234. Dōhan, too, emphasizes deathbed contemplation of the letter A: “The syllable A as existence arising through conditions corresponds to birth. The syllable A as the emptiness of nonarising corresponds to death. Thus dying in one place and being born in another is nothing other than the syllable A. . . . This is why Vairocana takes this single syllable as his mantra.”<sup>34</sup> As deathbed invocations, Dōhan recommends reciting essential passages of the *Amida sūtra* or a range of esoteric mantras. One intriguing aspect of his ritual suggestions is that the practitioner face an image of the Shingon patriarch Kūkai (774–835) and invoke his compassionate aid in achieving birth in a pure land.<sup>35</sup>

With the passage of time, instructions for deathbed practice also appear within the so-called “single practice” schools. Ryōchū (1199–1287), third patriarch of the Chinzei lineage of Hōnen's Jōdo sect, em-

phasizes in his *Kanbyō yōjinshō* (Admonitions in caring for the sick) the efficacy of simply chanting the *nenbutsu* at the last moment with faith in Amida's vow.<sup>36</sup> And in the early modern period, works appear in the Nichiren tradition stressing the unique deathbed efficacy of chanting the title or *daimoku* of the *Lotus Sūtra*.<sup>37</sup> The specific *honzon* to be enshrined at the deathbed scene, the texts to be read aloud to encourage the dying, and the incantations to be performed differ from one Buddhist tradition to another; so do understandings of the nature of the postmortem liberation being sought, which is variously represented as the realization of buddhahood or birth in a particular pure land or other superior realm. But the notion that a person's last hours should be ritually managed, as well as the basic techniques for so doing, cut across all divisions of “old” and “new,” “exoteric” and “esoteric,” in which we are accustomed to thinking of medieval Japanese Buddhism.

#### Elaboration, Interpretation, and the Production of Specialized Knowledge

Another characteristic of medieval deathbed manuals is an increasing elaboration, over time, of elements mentioned only briefly in Gen-shin's instructions. This reflects both an increased mining of Chinese Buddhist canonical sources for relevant passages and also, it would appear, an accumulation of both practical knowledge and specialized interpretation. For example, citing Chinese precedents, *Ōjō yōshū* says simply that the dying should be removed to a separate chapel (*mujōin*) or room to avoid the feelings of attachment aroused by the sight of familiar possessions and surroundings and be encouraged to hold five-colored cords affixed to the hand of a buddha image, which—depending on the source—may face either west or east. Later deathbed ritual instructions, however, discuss at length the arrangement of this separate room or chapel; how one should determine when the move is to be made and what advance preparations are necessary; the categories of attachment, whether two or three, from which the dying must strive to separate themselves by this relocation; how this transition to a liminal space should be understood; and how the dying should be cared for.

Tanshū already goes well beyond *Ōjō yōshū* in discussing advance preparations. From the time one becomes ill, he says, one should concentrate on accumulating merit. One should offer food, drink, and clothing to the three treasures and to the poor and ill; one should offer pure flax oil for lamps to the Buddha and to temples and stūpas. Sounding a note that would be echoed in several subsequent *rinjū gyōgi* texts, Tanshū warns against the use of *kitō* or prayer rituals to



extend life as a form of delusive self-attachment. "The span of this lifetime is fixed for everyone. If such prayers were efficacious, then why would anyone die?"<sup>38</sup> Jichihan and Kakuban, on the other hand, both recommend that if it is possible to prolong one's life, one should seek medical help for illness—not out of self-love, but to extend one's opportunity for Buddhist practice. However, once it becomes clear that death is inevitable, one should immediately cease all such efforts and single-mindedly practice for one's last moments.<sup>39</sup> In contrast to the idealized accounts in *ōjōden* of devotees who foresee their death to the day and hour, some medieval *rinjū gyōgi* texts, beginning with Kakuban's *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, frankly acknowledge that the approach of death may not be quite so obvious and recommend astrology or other forms of divination to determine whether one's illness will indeed prove fatal.<sup>40</sup>

As for the removal to the separate chapel, Kakuban says it expresses the intention to "abandon this impure, Saha world and achieve the Pure Land of Utmost Bliss." It is also time to part from one's relations; one's last wishes should already have been communicated. One's only associates should now be three to five *zenchishiki*—presumably following Daochuo's instructions, cited by Genshin in his *Ōjō yōshū*, that anyone intent on achieving the Pure Land should "make a pact in advance with three to five people of like conviction." One should leave wealth, reputation, and family behind, just as Śākyamuni Buddha left his father's palace, or as Kūkai entered into perpetual meditation, becoming truly "homeless" (*shukke*) in both mind and body.<sup>41</sup> Kakuban identifies the dying person's move to the *mujōin* with both the literal departure from this world that is death and the spirit of world renunciation inherent in the act of taking monastic vows. This homologizing of death to departure from the household life was also echoed in the practice, fairly widespread among Heian aristocrats, of deathbed tonsure (*rinjū jukai*, *rinjū shukke*), which was thought to aid one in the postmortem state.<sup>42</sup> A set of deathbed instructions contained in *Kōyōshū* (Collection of filial piety), attributed to Kakuban but probably a Kamakura-period text, recommends that the dying look upon the move to the *mujōin* as leaving the burning house of the threefold world. If death is not imminent, the transition should be made at an auspicious day and time, and on arriving, the sick should wash their hands, rinse their mouth, and invoke the aid of all buddhas and bodhisattvas in escaping birth and death.<sup>43</sup>

Virtually all of these texts follow *Ōjō yōshū* in recommending the burning of incense and scattering of flowers to create a dignified atmosphere, as well as the need to screen visitors, especially those who have recently consumed alcohol or any of the "five pungent roots," and to

protect the dying person from the sight of objects or persons liable to arouse strong emotions. According to Genshin's text, the purpose of moving the dying to a separate place was to forestall the delusive feelings of attachment that may be provoked by the sight of familiar possessions and surroundings. This theme, too, undergoes considerable elaboration in later *rinjū gyōgisho*. Tanshū warns against the use of ornate clothes or bedding in the sickroom, lest they give rise to attachment. Two kinds of attachment, he says, bind people to the samsaric world: attachment to objects—such as possessions, wife, and children—and attachments to self; the dying should reflect on the impurity of the body and evanescence of worldly treasures.<sup>44</sup> The Pure Land teacher Ryōchū advises that, should no appropriate place be available, the dying person may remain in his own lodging cell, but it should be arranged in a manner different from usual, and he should be made to lie down before a buddha image.<sup>45</sup> *Kōyōshū* recommends for the death chamber a room that receives the light of the setting sun; if such is not available, a monastic cell or room in a lay household will suffice, but it should be purified and refurbished.<sup>46</sup> To the two categories of attachment warned against in Tanshū's deathbed instructions, the *Kōyōshū*'s compiler adds a third: that of attachment to rebirth in one or another of the various samsaric realms that may appear in visions to the dying.<sup>47</sup> This text is particularly graphic in warning against the dangers of thoughts of attachment in one's last moments. "In the past, there have been cases of flies or ants appearing in a dead person's face. These insects were produced from the person's body because of lingering self-attachment. There have also been persons who turned into white worms that emerge from a woman's nose; these are men who died with lingering attachment to their wives." Even sacred objects can become the focus of delusive clinging; a case in point is "people who wander through samsāra because of their heedless love of ritual implements (*butsugu*) or objects of worship (*honzon*), thinking that by the power of these things they shall reach [the Pure Land of] Utmost Bliss. No matter what roots of great good you may have planted, never let your mind adhere [in your last hours to the objects of attachment]!"<sup>48</sup>

Once established in the chapel or room where he is to die, the sick person is to face west, either sitting up, if he prefers, or lying down with his head to the north, as the historical Buddha Śākyamuni is said to have done. As noted above, Genshin had cited variant opinions as to whether the buddha image should be installed facing west with the dying person placed behind it, as though following the Buddha to the Pure Land, or whether the image should face east, with the dying person directly facing it. Kakuban takes this to be a matter of personal



choice; the buddha image facing west represents the dying person being embraced and drawn up (*injō*) into the Pure Land, while the image facing east symbolizes the coming of the Buddha to receive him (*raigō*).<sup>49</sup> Ryōchū stresses that the image should be of a height such that the dying person can readily gaze at it while lying down.<sup>50</sup> *Kōyōshū* recommends positioning the buddha image five to six *shaku* from the dying person as an appropriate distance.<sup>51</sup> Use of the five-colored cords also elicits considerable discussion in these texts. Kakuban says they should be prepared in advance and should measure one *jō* and two *shaku* in length each, totaling nine *shaku*. There is a method of preparing them, he notes, which should be conducted by someone who has received esoteric initiation (*kanjō*).<sup>52</sup> The unknown compiler of *Kōyōshū* specifies that their threads should be spun in a purified room by a woman approaching eighty (and thus, presumably, free from sexual impurity),<sup>53</sup> dyed the five colors by a holy man (*hijiri*), and woven under the supervision of someone who has received esoteric initiation; this method is not to be disseminated to people at large.<sup>54</sup> Such injunctions suggest that these five-colored cords were the same as those sometimes employed in esoteric rites (*mikkyō shuhō*) of the same period, to demarcate the altar space or for other ritual purposes.<sup>55</sup> According to esoteric ritual instructions, such cords were to be woven of the finest threads, purified in perfumed water, and woven by a prepubescent boy or girl, or alternatively, by an aged nun, while the ritualist was to empower the threads of each color with the corresponding mantras of the five buddhas.<sup>56</sup>

By reading medieval Japanese deathbed ritual texts chronologically, we can see in such elaborations the gradual production and accumulation of a body of specialized knowledge, both theoretical and practical, concerning deathbed practice. This development is closely related to another major characteristic of post-Genshin medieval *rinjū gyōgi* texts: the emergence of the individual known as the *kanbyō* ("one who attends the sick") or more commonly the *zenchishiki* as a deathbed ritual specialist.

### The Role of the *zenchishiki*

In general Buddhist usage, a *zenchishiki* (Skt. *kalyāṇamitra*, "good friend") is simply a dharma teacher, one who leads another on the path of practice. But in medieval *rinjū gyōgi* texts, the *zenchishiki* (or simply *chishiki*) is specifically the one in charge of the deathbed scene, and the need for his presence and expertise is continually underscored by an emphasis on how difficult it is to maintain right thoughts at the crucial last moment, as well as the fearful consequences of not doing

so. This emphasis can already be seen emerging in Tanshū's eleventh-century *Rinjū gyōgi chūki*:

When one falls ill and approaches death, everything escapes one's control.... The winds of dissolution move through one like sharp swords, wracking one's body and mind.... The eyes no longer discern color and shape, the ears do not hear sound; one cannot move hands or feet or exercise the organs of sense. Even someone who is expecting this will find it hard to maintain right-mindedness; all the more so, those of feeble attainments!... Good or evil recompense [in the life to come] depends on one's single thought at the last moment.... Those who lose the advantage of this moment are very close to hell.<sup>57</sup>

Read chronologically, medieval *rinjū gyōgi* texts suggest that, at least by their compilers, the correct performance of the *zenchishiki* as a deathbed ritual specialist gradually came to be seen as equally and in fact even more important than that of the dying person in ensuring that individual's successful negotiation of the final moment and achievement of birth in the Pure Land. Following Daochuo's recommendation, cited in *Ōjō yōshū*, that the practitioner should "make a pact in advance with three to five people of like conviction," several medieval *rinjū gyōgisho* recommend the presence of three to five *zenchishiki*; some, such as Kakuban's *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū* or Ryōchū's *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, indicate a specific division of ritual and nursing tasks among several such individuals. In general, the *zenchishiki* was responsible for the physical requirements of nursing and for exhorting the dying in a proper attitude, such as "loathing this defiled world and aspiring to the Pure Land" (*onri edo gongu jōdo*) or maintaining their mental focus in the face of physical pain. He—the *zenchishiki* was usually a "he," a point addressed below—was responsible for reading religious texts to instruct the dying; for leading and maintaining the pitch and rhythm of the chanting that, regardless of its content, was central to virtually all deathbed practice; for interpreting the visions of the dying and warding off malevolent influences, including possessing spirits; for reading corporeal signs presaging the dying person's postmortem fate, and, if necessary, intervening ritually; and sometimes for conducting postmortem rites. Let us touch here on a few of these aspects.

Later Heian- and Kamakura-period deathbed ritual texts suggest a cumulative hands-on experience with nursing the sick and dying, not seen in *Ōjō yōshū*. Ryōchū's *Kanbyō yōjinshō* is especially detailed on the subject of nursing. Ryōchū recommends that a schedule of watches be set up and measured by burning incense, so that the *chishiki* may relieve one another. They should not relax vigilance because the illness

seems to improve; death can occur at any time. Thus until the very end, a *chishiki* must not remove his eyes from the sick person even for a moment. Even when off duty, he should rest in a place where he can hear the patient's breathing. At night, lamps should be lit so that the dying person can see the Buddha image and so that the *chishiki* can clearly observe the dying person's countenance, for illness often worsens at night. The dying should not be forced to get up to urinate or defecate if unable to do so. In such cases, screens should be set up between the dying person and the Buddha image while the bedding is being changed. However, if death is imminent, such concerns should be set aside. In addition, the dying person's mouth should continually be moistened with paper soaked in water, to facilitate his continued *nenbutsu* chanting.<sup>58</sup> Ryōchū also advises on how to deal with fractious and recalcitrant patients and with demands for inappropriate food, such as fish. One should never ask the dying, "Would you like anything?" as such questions can arouse desire and distract their thoughts from the Buddha. Conversation should be strictly curtailed and concern only liberation from the cycle of birth and death.<sup>59</sup>

But the *chishiki* was far more than a nurse. His chief responsibility lay in helping the dying person to focus his or her thoughts so as to be able achieve right-mindedness at the end and thus birth in the Pure Land. Texts after Genshin increasingly stress the gravity of this responsibility. Tanshū says:

As death approaches, one must depart from evil companions and seek out a good friend (*zenchishiki*). Master Daoxuan says, "The attendant (*kanbyōnin*) must never turn his back upon the sick person. Were he to do so, then deluded thoughts would arise furiously and in most cases destroy that person's right concentration." Moreover, the holy teachings expound, with regard to those persons [whose birth in the Pure Land is not yet settled] that by following a sage one enters into wisdom, and that by following a heretic, one enters into error. This is true throughout the course of life; how much more so at its end!<sup>60</sup>

Kakuban specifies that at least one of the *chishiki* in attendance should "by all means be a person of wisdom, with aspiration for the way"; the sick person should think of the *chishiki* as the bodhisattva Kannon, who will lead him to the Pure Land, while the *chishiki* "should sit close by while observing his face and protect him by dwelling in the mind of compassion."<sup>61</sup> Ryōchū writes, "Were it not for the power of the *chishiki*'s compassionate encouragement, how could the sole great matter [of birth in the Pure Land] be fulfilled? Thus the sick person should

think of the *chishiki* as the Buddha, while the *chishiki* should extend to the sick person the compassion one has for one's only child."<sup>62</sup>

Among the *chishiki*'s chief tasks was to lead the deathbed chanting, to encourage right thoughts on the part of the dying person. Tanshū is among the first to recommend repeatedly striking the "chimes of impermanence" (*mujō no kei*) to maintain rhythm. Kakuban recommends chanting in harmony with the dying person; Ryōchū urges that the *nenbutsu* be chanted at a pitch neither too high nor too low but audible to the dying person and in rhythm with his breathing, an admonition often echoed in later deathbed ritual instructions.<sup>63</sup>

Yet however desirable it may have been thought to die with the *nenbutsu* or other holy mantras on one's lips, the harsh physiological reality is that many people lapse into unconsciousness before they die. What of dying persons who fall unconscious or become disoriented and are thus unable to chant? To my knowledge, the first deathbed ritual text explicitly to address this problem is Kakuban's *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*. In such instances, Kakuban says, the *chishiki* are to observe the dying person's breathing carefully and match their breathing to his, chanting the *nenbutsu* in unison on the outbreath, for a day, two days, a week, or as long as necessary until death transpires. "The rite for persons on their deathbed always ends with the outbreath," he warns. "You should be ready for the last breath and chant [the *nenbutsu*] together in unison." In this way the dying person can be freed of sins and achieve the Pure Land, because the power of Amida's original vow must inevitably respond to the invocation of his name. Moreover, the *chishiki* are to visualize their *nenbutsu*, chanted on the outbreath, as the six syllables *Na-mo-A-mi-ta-buḥ* in Sanskrit (Siddham) letters, entering the dying person's mouth with the inbreath, transforming into six sun disks, and dispelling with their brilliance the darkness of the obstructions of sins associated with the six sense faculties.<sup>64</sup>

Here we see for the first time an explicit statement that, when the dying person can no longer mentally focus or falls unconscious, responsibility for both chanting and visualization practice immediately shifts to the *chishiki*, whose own actions at the deathbed then become determinative of the dying person's *ōjō*. Kakuban reflects that the *Contemplation Sūtra*'s statement about sinful persons achieving the Pure Land by meeting a "good friend" at the time of death must refer to just such cases. "If one could maintain right thoughts [at the last moment]," he says, "what need would there be for a *chishiki*? But when wrong or [even merely] neutral thoughts appear, the *chishiki* can [help the dying person and] save him from the suffering [that would otherwise confront him] at that time."<sup>65</sup>

Kakuban's emphasis on chanting on behalf of the dying until the last breath would become a standard feature of subsequent instructions for deathbed practice.<sup>66</sup> Similar admonitions occur in Ryōchū's *Kanbyō yōjinshō*. Ryōchū places immense responsibility on the *chishiki* to encourage the dying person's chanting of the *nenbutsu* as the "foremost essential"; should that person become disoriented or lose consciousness, the *chishiki* should make every effort to rouse him by reciting gāthās in a loud voice and admonishing, "Don't you realize that these are your last moments?" But if the dying person can no longer chant, the *chishiki* must chant for him; so long as the aural faculty is still operative, simply hearing the *nenbutsu* alone will enable the dying to reach the Pure Land. Ryōchū urges that the *kanbyō* continue chanting for two to four hours after the breath has ceased, all the while transferring the merit of their *nenbutsu* to the deceased person. "By its virtue," he says, "he will achieve *ōjō*, even from the interim state (*antarābhava*, *chūu*)."<sup>67</sup> In such passages, the beneficial influence of the *chishiki*'s chanting is said to extend beyond the final moment into interim existence. At this point, deathbed practice begins to shade off into the realm of postmortem rites.

Another important function of the *chishiki* was to ward off evil influences. On this subject, *Ōjō yōshū* cites Shandao, who says only that if the dying see images of painful punishment, those caring for them should aid them in performing repentance until their sin is eradicated and visions of Amida and his retinue instead appear. Later Japanese deathbed ritual texts, however, greatly expand the *chishiki*'s responsibilities in this area. For example, he may have to interpret deathbed visions, which the dying themselves may not always recognize as inauspicious. This role of the *chishiki* is dramatized in an account from the tale collection *Hosshinshū* (Tales of religious awakening), attributed to Kamo no Chōmei (1155–1216), in which a *hijiri* or holy man serving as *zenchishiki* to a dying court lady guides her through a series of delusive deathbed visions. While he is encouraging her to chant the *nenbutsu*, she suddenly turns pale and appears terrified. "What are you seeing?" he asks. "Frightful persons are arriving with a fiery carriage," she replies. This of course is a clear omen of descent into the hells. The *hijiri* admonishes: "Firmly contemplate Amida Buddha's original vow and chant his name without slackening. By encountering a 'good friend' and saying the *nenbutsu* ten times [at the moment of death], even someone who has committed the five perverse offenses can reach the Pure Land. How much more is this true of someone [like yourself] who has never committed such a serious sin!" Prompted by his instruction, the lady resumes her chanting. After a time, she regains her composure and appears delighted. Now she reports seeing a splendid

carriage approaching, adorned with jewels and filled with heavenly maidens playing music. The scripturally informed reader knows this, too, for a disguise in which the guardians of hell approach dying evil-doers, but the woman herself does not know it.<sup>68</sup> "You must not ride that carriage," warns the *hijiri*. "Just continue to contemplate Amida Buddha and believe that he will come welcome you." Later the woman reports a vision of a dignified, black-robed monk who approaches her and says, "Let's go now. You don't know the way, so I will guide you." "Don't even think of following him," says the *hijiri*. "On the way to [the land of] Utmost Bliss, one has no need of a guide. By entrusting yourself to the Buddha's compassionate vow, you will spontaneously arrive in that realm." Eventually, thanks to her *zenchishiki*'s guidance, the woman is able to die chanting the *nenbutsu*, her mind calmly fixed on the Buddha.<sup>69</sup>

Such delusive visions could be due not only to the dying person's own past evil deeds, but to external malevolent influences. Kakuban recommends that one *chishiki*, a person with long training and experience, should stand at the dying person's head and continuously recite the mantra of Fudō Myōō, to ward off demonic attacks.<sup>70</sup> From stories in *setsuwa* or medieval tales, we know that the dying were thought sometimes to fall victim to possessing spirits (*mononoke*), and the *chishiki* then had to double as exorcist.<sup>71</sup> The *Kōyōshū* advises that while such spirits may deceive human eyes, they can readily be exposed by the simple expedient of hanging up a mirror, because *mononoke* are unaware of their own shadow.<sup>72</sup> By the late Kamakura period, we find clear evidence of a belief that malevolent influences can even mimic the appearance of Amida Buddha himself, and detailed instructions are provided for distinguishing genuine manifestations of the *raigō* from deceptive ones. For example, unlike the Buddha in a true *raigō* vision, a demonic apparition will not arrive riding on purple clouds. The golden hue of its body will resemble the gilt of a painted image, rather than the pellucid, all-pervading light emanating from Amida himself. And a vision of the "real" Amida will be visible with the eyes open or shut, while a demonic apparition will not, and so on.<sup>73</sup> One can imagine that the content of a person's deathbed visions, if known, might easily prompt others to draw conclusions about that individual's postmortem fate. Perhaps for this reason, in a version of what today we might call patient confidentiality, Ryōchū warns: "Whether they are good or evil, a *chishiki* should never reveal these [deathbed visions] to others."<sup>74</sup>

Karmic hindrances indicative of an unfortunate rebirth could manifest at the time of death, not only as ominous visions but also as corporeal signs. Kakuban's instructions specify which esoteric rites the

*chishiki* should perform and what mantras he should chant immediately after the person's death, should that person have manifested some physical sign presaging a descent into the lower realms. For example, should the newly deceased have evinced any signs of falling into the hells, Kakuban recommends that the *zenchishiki* act at once to save that person by performing the Buddha Eye, Golden Wheel, Shō Kannon, or Jizō rites; or by reciting the *Rishukyō*, the names of the fifty-three buddhas, or the Jeweled Casket or Superlative dhāraṇī, or the Mantra of Light; or by performing the Jeweled Pavilion (*hōrō*) rite or reciting the "Bodhisattva Preaching Verses" chapter of the *Flower Ornament Sūtra* or the *Lotus Sūtra*, and so forth. Here Kakuban cites from the esoteric Chinese scripture *Shouhu guojiezhu tuoluoni jing* (Sūtra of dhāraṇīs for protecting the nation and the ruler), which gives fifteen signs that the dying will fall into the hells (such as crying aloud with grief or choking with tears, urinating or defecating without awareness, refusing to open the eyes, foul breath, lying face down, or refusing to follow the *zenchishiki*'s instructions [!]); eight signs of falling into the realm of hungry ghosts (such as burning with fever or suffering from continuous hunger or thirst); and five signs presaging a descent into the bestial realm (such as contorting of the hands and feet, foaming at the mouth, or sweating from the entire body)—all requiring the *chishiki*'s immediate ritual intervention.<sup>75</sup>

As noted above, the protocols of the Nijūgo zanmai-e, which was formed as an association of monks dedicated to helping one another carry out disciplines leading to birth in the Pure Land, emphasize both encouraging the deathbed practice of fellow members and, after their death, performing on their behalf the ritual of the *kōmyō shingon*, sprinkling the corpse with mantrically empowered sand.<sup>76</sup> Kakuban's recommendations for ritual intervention to rescue the dying from the lower realms—like Ryōchū's directive that attendants should continue chanting after the individual's death to redirect that person's wandering spirit from the interim state to the Pure Land—similarly extended the *chishiki*'s role past the moment of death into the postmortem realm.

The thrust of medieval deathbed ritual instructions was increasingly to construct the *zenchishiki* as a sort of deathbed specialist. With him rested the ritual control of the final moment, with its brief window onto the possibility of escape from samsaric suffering. Soteriological control of one's last moments could thus be safely entrusted to an expert who knew what he was doing. Over time, it is he, even more than the dying person, who comes to be represented as ultimately responsible for that person's success or failure in reaching the Pure Land. Thus by the later Kamakura period, the compiler of *Kōyōshū* writes: "In most

cases, the fact that people achieve their aspiration for the Pure Land is due solely to the ability of the *zenchishiki*."<sup>77</sup>

### Criticism of Deathbed Rites

Despite a growing interest during the medieval period in deathbed ritual, not all Buddhists endorsed such practices. Occasionally, criticism was raised, usually on doctrinal grounds. For example, the Shingon monk Kakukai (1142–1223) suggests that, for Buddhists, who should understand the emptiness and nonduality of all things, there is something improperly self-obsessed about fixing one's aspirations on a particular postmortem destination:

When we calmly contemplate the arising and perishing of the dharmas, we cannot be attached to [Maitreya's] Heaven of Satisfaction, nor to [Amida's Pure Land of] Utmost Bliss. . . . If we simply purify the mind, we shall feel no distress, even if we should assume the forms of such [lowly] creatures as dragons and *yakṣas*. . . . Our partiality for the human form and our bias against the strange forms of other creatures are due to our lack of understanding. Regardless of transmigration, we shall suffer no discomfort. . . .<sup>78</sup>

This position leads Kakukai to criticize the practice of relying on a *zenchishiki* in one's last moments:

The circumstances of our final moments are by no means known to others, and even good friends (*zenchishiki*) will be of no assistance. Since one's own and others' minds are separate, even if they perform the same contemplation, another's thinking is likely to differ from one's own. And as for those whose thought differs from one's own, it would be better not to have them around [in one's last moments]. . . . I think it is quite splendid to die as did the likes of [the recluse] Gochibō, abiding in a correct state of mind with his final moments unknown to any others.<sup>79</sup>

In his later years, Hōnen (1133–1212), founder of the exclusive *nenbutsu* movement, also minimized the need for the presence of a *zenchishiki*. Where Kakukai had objected to the false discrimination and lingering self-attachment implicit in attempts to control one's last moments to soteric advantage, Hōnen saw reliance on the *zenchishiki*'s assistance as potentially undermining the devotee's trust in the vow of Amida and in the power of the *nenbutsu* that he or she had been chanting even in ordinary times. In a letter to a daughter of the retired

emperor Go-Shirakawa, declining to act as *zenchishiki* at her deathbed, Hōnen admonished, "You should abandon the thought of an ordinary person (*bonbu*) as your good friend, and instead rely on the Buddha as your *zenchishiki*. . . . Who would [be so foolish as to] relax one's reliance on the Buddha and turn [instead] to a worthless, ordinary *zenchishiki*, thinking slightly of the *nenbutsu* one has chanted all along and praying only for right thoughts at the last moment? It would be a grave error!"<sup>80</sup> Hōnen did not reject the *zenchishiki*'s presence at the deathbed, and at times even encouraged it, but did not see it as indispensable. "Because of the *nenbutsu* that you have chanted all along, even without a *zenchishiki* in your last hours, the Buddha will come to welcome you."<sup>81</sup> Such statements are consistent with Hōnen's position that birth in the Pure Land comes about through wholehearted reliance on the "other power" (*tariki*) of the Buddha Amida, rather than the virtue of one's own efforts (*jiriki*), and that only the *nenbutsu* is the practice according with Amida's original vow. Thus for Hōnen, while the chanting of *nenbutsu* in one's last moments remained vital, it was understood as an extension of one's ordinary practice and did not necessarily require a *zenchishiki*'s ritual assistance. A more radical view was taken by Hōnen's disciple Shinran (1173–1262), who is often said to have carried Hōnen's emphasis on salvation solely through reliance on Amida to its ultimate conclusion. Shinran understood the certainty of salvation as occurring, not at the moment of death, when one would achieve birth in the Pure Land, but at the moment when, casting off all egoistic reliance on one's own virtues and entrusting oneself wholly to Amida, one is seized by the Buddha's compassion, never to be let go, and faith arises in one's heart. This led him to reject the need for deathbed practices altogether. "When faith is established, one's attainment of the Pure Land is also established; there is no need for deathbed rituals to prepare one for Amida's coming," Shinran wrote. He also said, "Those whose faith is not yet established are the ones who await Amida's coming at the time of death."<sup>82</sup>

Criticism of deathbed ritual, like deathbed ritual itself, crossed sectarian lines; critics were to be found both among established traditions and new movements. These remained largely isolated objections and did not harden into sectarian positions. For example, despite Hōnen's own admonitions against relying on a *zenchishiki* rather than Amida, some of Hōnen's immediate and second-generation disciples understood the presence of a *zenchishiki* at the deathbed as absolutely essential. Benchō (a.k.a. Ben'a or Shōkō, 1162–1238), the second patriarch of the Pure Land sect, even wrote, "At the time of death, practitioners of the exclusive *nenbutsu* (*ikkō*) should make use of a *zenchishiki*. This is what Hōnen Shōnin instructed."<sup>83</sup> And Benchō's disciple Ryōchū,

as we have seen, was the author of the detailed deathbed instruction manual *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, emphasizing the importance of the *zenchishiki* in one's last hours. Despite occasional criticism from individuals in the Kamakura period and later, formal deathbed practices, including the employment of *zenchishiki* as ritual specialists, spread beyond monastic and aristocratic circles to reach a wider social range.

### Who Were the *zenchishiki*? Some Preliminary Findings

Genshin's instructions for deathbed contemplation in *Ōjō yōshū* assume a monastic context; as we have seen, the sort of practices he recommends were first formally instituted within the Nijūgo zanmai-e, a society of renunciates. By the eleventh century, however, such practices were being adopted in aristocratic circles, and court diaries sometimes record the name of the cleric or adept summoned to act as *zenchishiki* for a particular noble. Who were these monks who served as deathbed attendants? Can we generalize in any way about their position in the monastic world, or about the social location of those who sought their services? While further research is needed, some tentative conclusions may nonetheless be proposed.

Court diaries suggest that, while monks who held temple administrative positions or high rank in the Bureau of Monastic Affairs (Sōgō) might occasionally perform deathbed rites for family members or aristocratic patrons, those monks summoned repeatedly to perform this service for court nobles tended not to be part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy but were rather ascetics or semi-reclusive monks, sometimes based at *bessho*, literally "places apart," retreats often affiliated with leading monasteries but on their outskirts or in other locations altogether. Referred to variously by such titles as *hijiri* ("holy man"), *shōnin* ("holy man"), or *ajari* (esoteric master), these monks were often *nenbutsu* practitioners and also skilled in esoteric rites; frequently they seem to have enjoyed a reputation for exceptional ascetic practice, spiritual attainments, or thaumaturgical powers.<sup>84</sup> Several such adepts find mention, for example, in *Gyokuyō*, the diary of the regent Kujō Kanezane (1149–1207). These include Honjō-bō Tankyō (or Honshō-bō Tangō, n.d.), of the Ōhara *bessho*, who served as *zenchishiki* at the deathbed of Kanezane's elder sister, the former imperial consort Kōkamon'in.<sup>85</sup> In 1185, when the Taira were defeated by the Minamoto, Tankyō acted as *zenchishiki* to both Taira no Munemori and his son Kiyomune, preaching to them before they were beheaded, an episode poignantly related in *Tale of the Heike*.<sup>86</sup> According to the historical record *Azuma kagami* (Mirror of the East), it was reported that "both took refuge in [Tankyō] Shōnin's preaching and gave up all



thought of resentment, dwelling in aspiration for the Pure Land."<sup>87</sup> In this case, Tankyō as *zenchishiki* would have been responsible for ensuring that these defeated Taira leaders did not depart this life bearing grudges that could transform them into dangerous vengeful ghosts. Tankyō also provided his ritual services at the death of retired emperor Go-Shirakawa in 1192.<sup>88</sup> Another example is the adept Chizen, a *Lotus Sūtra* devotee (*jikyōsha*) also versed in the esoteric rites of Fudō Myōō, who served as a ritualist for Kanezane and his family.<sup>89</sup> In 1186, for example, he prayed for Kanezane's consort to recover from illness, using the *senju darani* (dhāraṇī of the thousand-armed Kannon).<sup>90</sup> An accomplished mountain ascetic, he also made the Kumano pilgrimage on Kanezane's behalf on multiple occasions.<sup>91</sup> Chizen served in 1176 as *zenchishiki* at the death of Kanezane's father and was also summoned at the death of his son.<sup>92</sup> Still other examples include Ashō-bō Inzei (or Insai, n.d.), known as the "*hijiri* of Chōrakuji," a temple in the Higashiyama area, who attended the deathbed of the retired emperor Takakura (d. 1181),<sup>93</sup> and the esoteric adept and *nenbutsu* monk Butsugon, who, like Chizen, served as preceptor, ritualist, and healer to Kanezane's family. Butsugon acted as *zenchishiki* at the deathbed of Kanezane's former wet-nurse, Mikushige-dono (d. 1171), and was among the monks summoned when Kanezane's son died suddenly, administering the precepts to him posthumously.<sup>94</sup>

As these examples suggest, monks who served the nobility as deathbed *zenchishiki* tended to be the same individuals who also provided them with prayers for safe childbirth and recovery from illness, who conducted exorcisms, conferred the precepts, and carried out memorial rites. In short, in court circles, by the end of the twelfth century, attendance as *zenchishiki* at the deathbed had joined the many ritual services that such monks typically performed for their highborn clients.

In another pattern, also datable to around the twelfth century, we find monks living in *bessho* or other mountain temples outside the capital who received dying patrons into their chapels, assisting their deathbed rites and sometimes also performing their funeral and seeing to the disposal of the body.<sup>95</sup> In one *ōjōden* account, shortly before his death, the former governor of Shinano, Fujiwara no Nagakiyo (1031–1096), speaks to his brother, the scholar-monk Gyōken, and announces his intention to die in the lodging temple of a "meditation monk" (*zensō*) of Sōrinji, with whom he had made a prior arrangement to this effect. This monk, he says, has also agreed to handle his burial.<sup>96</sup> Significantly, Nagakiyo turns for this purpose, not to his brother, a scholar-monk following the clerical career track culminating in appointment to the Bureau of Monastic Affairs, but to a *zensō* or "medita-

tion monk." Funaoka Makoto has identified such *zensō* as monks committed primarily to practice or ascetic disciplines (including but not necessarily confined to "meditation"), as opposed to the elite *gakuryō*, or scholar-monks. They were outside the status system of official monastic posts and appear to have overlapped the category of *bessho hijiri*, or monks practicing at retreats affiliated with but outside the major temples. Sōrinji, where Nagakiyo went to die, is said to have been a *bessho* belonging to the Tendai school and was located in Higashiyama, near the charnel grounds on the eastern edge of the capital. Both *zensō* and *bessho hijiri* also appear to have performed deathbed and funerary rites for a range of clients. It was because of pollution issues, Funaoka argues, that monks such as these, rather than career-track scholar-monks holding official clerical appointments, came to specialize in death-related ritual services, including deathbed practices and funerals.<sup>97</sup> Among those monks with aristocratic ties, the categories of *hijiri* and scholar-monk occasionally overlapped; for example, the adept Butsugon, mentioned above, was at one point the head of instruction (*gakutō*) for the Daidenbōin cloister at the Shingon monastery at Mt. Kōya.<sup>98</sup> Nonetheless, Funaoka's distinction is a helpful one. Monks engaged in rites for nation protection had to observe the same strictures of pollution avoidance observed in worship of the *kami* or local deities, including an exorcistic period of purification (*imi*), usually thirty days, following the performance of funerals or other contact with death. Thus it was often monks outside the system of official temple posts or the scholastic career track culminating in Sōgō appointments who assumed the major responsibility for deathbed and funerary ritual.<sup>99</sup>

Outside monastic settings, deathbed practices spread first among the nobility. In particular, the more elaborate forms of deathbed rites, involving multiple ritual specialists, were probably confined to elite circles. To have had three or four *zenchishiki* in attendance—as Kaku-ban recommends—for "a day, two days, a week, or as long as necessary until death transpires" would have required considerable financial outlay. *Kōyōshū* addresses the economics of such arrangements, where it says, "The presence of appropriate persons should be arranged in advance, and they should always be given donations and treated courteously, in recompense for their assistance at the time of death."<sup>100</sup> Clearly, this would have been beyond the means of many people. Nonetheless, if we go by the evidence of *ōjōden* and *setsuwa*, even persons of very low status occasionally appear to have engaged in simple forms of ritualized deathbed practice, assisted by a *zenchishiki*. The early Kamakura-period tale collection *Senjūshō*, for example, tells of a lowly monk of Sagami who tends to a destitute widow when she falls

ill. He begs for money and food for her care and teaches her to chant the *nenbutsu*, thus presumably enabling her to achieve *ōjō*.<sup>101</sup>

As Imai Masaharu has noted, by the mid-Kakamura period, high-ranking warriors had begun to adopt formal deathbed ritual as part of a broader appropriation of aristocratic culture.<sup>102</sup> Yoshitoki (d. 1224), the second Hōjō regent, had at his deathbed the assistance of a *zenchishiki* identified as Tango Risshi, who encouraged him in chanting the *nenbutsu*.<sup>103</sup> However, warrior appropriation of deathbed practices and the rhetoric surrounding them also exacerbated fears about the karmic hindrances of warriors as “evil men” (*akunin*). Jonathan Todd Brown has shed light on how Ta’amidabutsu Shinkyō (1237–1319), successor to Ippen as leader of the Jishū, skillfully secured this fledgling movement an institutional base among the *bushi* of the eastern provinces by emphasizing how hard it is for those professionally engaged in the sin of killing to reach the Pure Land, and thus the immense benefits to be gained by any warrior who supported a local Jishū practice hall, thus ensuring himself the presence of a *chishiki* in his last hours.<sup>104</sup> In time of armed conflict, warriors also had to be concerned about the dangers of being struck down on the battlefield by swords or arrows with no chance to think of the Buddha or to invoke his name. This led, in later medieval times, to the institution of “camp priests” (*jinsō*), who accompanied their warrior patrons to the battlefield and, in advance of the fighting, literally “conferred [on them] the ten *nenbutsu*.” This meant chanting “*Namu Amida butsu*” ten times on a single outbreath—that is, a performance of an ideal death that was ritually conferred by the monk on his patron in a truncated but nonetheless obvious extension of the *zenchishiki*’s deathbed role.<sup>105</sup>

Was the *zenchishiki* necessarily a monk? Most commonly, yes, and especially where specialized prayer rites were sought, such as those stipulated by Kakuban to save a dying or newly deceased person from the evil realms, the services of a learned cleric or adept would have been required. But lay people may in some cases have played a role. *Kōyōshū* observes that “it is undesirable to have a lot of people around [at the deathbed] who are without understanding. Even if those present are monks, if they lack understanding and mill about, it will not be good. But even lay people should not be excluded if they understand what to do.”<sup>106</sup> Outside monastic communities, where the dying person was a well-to-do lay patron, it seems probable that other lay persons may have assisted the *zenchishiki* in a nursing capacity, even if they did not have major ritual responsibilities. It is also possible that, within medieval *nenbutsu* associations (*kessha*) that included lay followers, lay people may have encouraged one another’s *nenbutsu* chanting in their last hours, although determining this would require further research. To

what extent women may have served as *zenchishiki* at the deathbed also requires further investigation. Medieval *rinjū gyōgi* texts do not address this issue explicitly but often presume a male viewpoint, such as Ryōchū’s *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, which admonishes, “Apart from two or three *chishiki* and nurses (*kanbyō*), others should not be permitted access [to the dying person], whether they are intimates or strangers. Above all, his wife and children should not be allowed to approach.”<sup>107</sup> Here the issue is not the fitness of women to serve as *zenchishiki* but the need to avoid arousing thoughts of attachment in the dying person. In literary sources it is almost always women who are represented as hindering the deathbed contemplations of men, and not the other way around.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, a few scattered references in premodern sources show that women occasionally assisted ritually at the deathbed. Following the death of his consort in 1009, the courtier Fujiwara no Yamanari recorded in his diary that she had been attended in her last hours by himself and by the nun Shakuin, with whom she had a prior engagement.<sup>109</sup> Nishiguchi Junko has noted an instance in which two Jishū nuns in Kyoto, Kyōbutsu-bō and Gyōichi-bō, served in 1345 as *zenchishiki* at the deathbed of Zenni Kenshin, the widow of Nakabara Morosuke; these nuns may originally have been members of the Nakabara house, which would suggest that nuns may have assisted female family members in this capacity.<sup>110</sup> By the early modern period, however, we find explicit prescriptions against women serving in the *zenchishiki* role. A manual for deathbed practice by the eighteenth-century monk Jikū (a.k.a. Shōken, 1646–1719), reads, “If he has the *bodhi* mind, anyone who can be of aid to the sick person should be permitted and employed [to serve as *zenchishiki*], even a man’s own son. But a woman, even if she has faith, should never be so employed. This is because she is the source of the impurity of birth.”<sup>111</sup> Such admonitions are not uncommon in *rinjū gyōgi* texts of Jikū’s time and would seem to reflect increased fears about the polluting nature of female biological processes that emerged in the late medieval and early modern periods, as discussed in Hank Glassman’s essay, Chapter 5 in this volume.<sup>112</sup>

*Ōjō yōshū* and other Heian-period instructions for deathbed practice are written in Sino-Japanese (*kanbun*). But beginning with Ryōchū’s *Kanbyō yōjinshō* in the latter Kamakura period, such deathbed manuals tend increasingly to be written in the more accessible Japanese *kana majiri bun*. *Kōyōshū* cites passages from Chinese scripture and then immediately explains their meaning in Japanese, suggesting that its instructions were addressed to less highly educated ritualists than were earlier manuals of this kind. In the Tokugawa or early modern period (1603–1868), as described in Chapter 6, by Duncan

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Williams, Buddhist temples were incorporated into the shogunal apparatus of social control, and families were required to affiliate with a local Buddhist temple that performed their funerals and memorial rites and also often housed their family graves. At this time, deathbed practices seem to have joined the standard repertoire of death-related practices that came to constitute the major social role, and economic base, of Buddhist temples. For example, a diary kept by the priest Ankokuin Nichikō (1626–1698) of the Nichiren sect contains such entries as: “Having heard that [our parishioner] Kinmaro’s present illness had suddenly worsened, I sent my disciple Heiroke Mon’ya to encourage him in the essentials for practice at the time of death, and at the earnest request [of his family], I inscribed a *honzon* [object of worship; in this case, the calligraphic mandala of the Nichiren sect] to be placed in the coffin.”<sup>113</sup> Early modern *ōjōden*, revived as a genre following the publication in printed editions of their Heian precursors, also suggest that deathbed ritual, along with funerals and mortuary rites, may have become one of the standard ritual services provided by local temples. The devout men and women of these early modern hagiographies are frequently depicted as having the assistance of a priest or spiritual adviser in their last hours.<sup>114</sup> By this point, however, the *zenchishiki*’s role was no longer performed chiefly by *hijiri* or other semi-reclusive adepts but had become a routine religious activity of village priests.

#### In Conclusion: A Note on Early Modern Instructions for Deathbed Practice

As deathbed practices joined the standard repertoire of ritual services offered by local priests to their parishioners in the Tokugawa period, one notes also a corresponding routinization in the performance of these practices. Early modern *rinjū gyōgi* texts cite extensively from their medieval precursors but contain few innovations in the treatment of the dying *per se*; on the whole, they seem much less concerned than earlier works of this kind with the details of how to fend off demonic influences, interpret deathbed visions, or accurately gauge the moment of the last breath. This may hint indirectly at shifts in the funerary practice of this era, whose development in Sōtō Zen is discussed by Williams in Chapter 6 in this volume. The early modern Buddhist funeral was understood not merely as transferring merit to the deceased to aid that person in the next life, but as actually effecting his or her enlightenment or birth in the Pure Land. Since the funeral proper had assumed such overriding soteriological importance and would in most cases be performed by the same priest who acted as *zenchishiki* at

the time of death, there may no longer have been the same perceived need to assess continually the portents manifested during the deathbed rite.

What does stand out as new in these early modern *rinjū gyōgisho* is a heightened attention to the treatment of the body after death and its preparation for burial, something rarely addressed in medieval deathbed ritual texts. This too may reflect shifts in Tokugawa Buddhist funerary practice. Premodern funerary rites—except for rituals accompanying cremation or the installation of remains—were usually conducted without the body of the deceased being present, but in the early modern funeral, the corpse held a position of central ritual focus.<sup>115</sup> Tokugawa-period *rinjū gyōgi* texts often warn, for example, against touching the body while it is still warm (considered a sign that consciousness is still present), which is said to cause intolerable pain. To place a corpse while still warm in the coffin is equivalent to murder. *Chiyo migusa*, a seventeenth-century text of deathbed instructions in the Nichiren sect, strictly admonishes against touching the body for ten to twelve hours after death. “After twelve hours, you may wash [the body] and place it in the coffin.”<sup>116</sup> The Shingon monk Jōkū (1693–1775) recommends forty-eight hours as the proper period to wait before encoffining. Like the authors of other Tokugawa-period deathbed instructions, Jōkū strictly enjoins against bending the limbs of a newly dead person to facilitate burial; instead, pouring a small amount of mantrically empowered sand into the mouth or on the chest of the corpse will prevent rigor mortis.<sup>117</sup> These admonitions are echoed by the Pure Land monk Jikū, mentioned above, who also comments on the sin of preparing a body for burial while it is still warm. “If the body’s warmth has not yet dissipated, that means the *ālaya* consciousness has not departed. When you hurt the body [before consciousness has departed,] that becomes the karma of taking life. And if it is your parent, you commit the sin of killing a parent. This is absolutely to be avoided.”<sup>118</sup> Jikū additionally voices opposition to a number of mortuary practices current in his day, such as use of the *kyō katabira*, a robe for wrapping the body on which sūtras, mantras, or other holy texts have been inscribed, or placing the body before the Buddhist altar prior to burial as though it were an offering. The corpse should be screened from the altar because of its impurity.<sup>119</sup> Kaen (1693–1780), also of the Pure Land sect, additionally criticizes the contemporary practice of arranging the corpse in a formal pose to suggest an ideal death: “What value is there in placing the body [in the *nirvāṇa* position] with the head to the north and facing west? Some people have the hands of the deceased hold a cord or banner [tied to the hand of the buddha image], even after the spirit has departed.

This is like closing the gates after the robbers have left. And as for making the deceased hold a rosary: a rosary is a Buddhist implement for counting the *nenbutsu* [recited by living practitioners]. What merit is there in having a corpse hold one?"<sup>120</sup> Kaen's criticisms not only reflect the attention paid to the body in Tokugawa-period *rinjū gyōgi* texts but also suggest that specific bodily postures originally recommended as proper conduct for the dying (such as facing west or holding a rosary) were being transposed to the postmortem arrangement of the corpse.

As described in *Ōjō yōshū*, deathbed practice is a contemplation performed by dying persons to focus their last thoughts and thus achieve birth in the Pure Land, forever escaping the cycle of samsaric rebirth. For Genshin, the dying are the primary agents of their own liberation: the attendants' responsibility is merely one of encouragement. Sustaining "right thoughts at the last moment," however, is an extremely demanding goal, even for those trained in meditation; proper mental focus at the time of death could all too easily be subverted by physical pain; by fears, regrets, and emotional attachments; or by loss of consciousness. Especially as deathbed rites spread outside monastic circles and began to be performed as a religious service for lay persons, the role of the *zenchishiki* began to shift from an ancillary one to that of primary ritualist, a shift that, over time, increasingly strengthened the continuity between deathbed practice and funerary rites. In the development of instructions for deathbed practice from *Ōjō yōshū* in the late tenth century up through early modern times, one can trace a gradual process in which attempts to positively affect one's postmortem state by ritual means shifted first from the dying individual's own practice to the actions of the *zenchishiki*, and then from the salvific power of deathbed practice to increasing emphasis on that of funerary and mortuary rites. Although not all monks of the Heian and Kamakura periods routinely engaged in such activities, the emergence of the *zenchishiki* as a deathbed specialist represents a significant step in the larger process by which Buddhist monks came to dominate the performance of death-related practices.

#### Notes

*Epigraph:* *Ōjō yōshū*, in *Genshin, Nihon shisō taikei* (hereafter *NST*) 6, ed. Ishida Mizumaro (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970), 214; trans. from James C. Dobbins, "Genshin's Deathbed Nembutsu Ritual in Pure Land Buddhism," *Religions of Japan in Practice*, ed. George J. Tanabe, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 174, slightly modified.

1. On the moment of death as embodying both hope and anxiety, see Jacqueline I. Stone, "By the Power of One's Last Nenbutsu: Deathbed Practices in Early Medieval Japan," in *Approaching the Land of Bliss: Religious Praxis in the Cult of Amitābha*, ed. Richard K. Payne and Kenneth K. Tanaka (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 77–119.

2. As Alan Cole has demonstrated, Genshin's sources were embedded in a larger, general body of Chinese Buddhist deathbed and funerary prescriptions that "was heavily dependent on Pure Land ideology and techniques of buddha-name recitation, even though it was not identified as Pure Land Buddhism" ("Upside Down/Right Side Up: A Revisionist History of Buddhist Funerals in China," *History of Religions* 35, no. 4 [1996]: 307–338 [329]).

3. *Sifenlū shanfan buque xingshi chao*, T no. 1804, 40:144a, cited in *Ōjō yōshū*, *NST* 6:206.

4. *Fayuan zhulin*, T no. 2122, 53:987a, cited in *Ōjō yōshū*, *NST* 6:206, though Genshin does not mention Daoshi by name. Daoshi's work contains a description of purported deathbed practices at the Jetavana monastery very similar to that quoted in Daoxuan's commentary. Daoxuan refers to his source as a "Chinese tradition" (*Zhongguo benzhuān*), while Daoshi terms his a "Diagram of the Jetavana monastery in the western region" (*Xiyu Zhihuānsi tu*), but they appear to have worked from a single source.

5. *Guānniān fāmēn*, T no. 1959, 47:24b–c, cited in *Ōjō yōshū*, *NST* 6:207.

6. *Anle jī*, T no. 1958, 47:11b, cited in *Ōjō yōshū*, *NST* 6:208; trans. from Dobbins, "Genshin's Deathbed Nembutsu Ritual," 170, slightly modified.

7. *Wuliangshou jīng*, T no. 360, 12:268a.

8. *Guan Wuliangshou jīng*, T no. 365, 12:346a.

9. *Ōjō yōshū*, *NST* 6:296.

10. *Jūgan hosshinkī*, reproduced in Satō Tetsuei, *Eizan Jōdokyō no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hyakkaen, 1979), Part II: *Shiryō*, 195. On Senkan, see Robert F. Rhodes, "Bodhisattva Practice and Pure Land Practice: Senkan and the Construction of Pure Land Discourse in Heian Japan," *Japanese Religions* 24, no. 1 (1999): 1–28.

11. *Sandai jitsuroku* (commissioned in 901), Genkei 4, 12/4, *Shintei zōho kokushi taikei* (hereafter *KT*), 66 vols., ed. Kuroita Katsumi (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1929–1966), 4:486.

12. *Sandai jitsuroku*, Jōgan 9, 10/10, *KT* 4:223; "Fujiwara Yasunori den," in *Kodai seiji shakai shisō*, *NST* 8, ed. Yamagishi Tokuhei et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1979), 72.

13. *Jikaku Daishi den*, in *Zoku Tendaishū zensho* (hereafter *ZTZ*, ed. Tendai Shūten Hensanjo (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1987–), *Shiden* 2:71–72. On the provenance of the text, see the accompanying *ZTZ Shiden* 2, *Kaidai*, 2–3, and Enshin Saitō, *Jikaku Daishi den: The Biography of Jikaku Daishi Ennin, Translation and Explanatory Notes* (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 1992), 16–19. Saitō estimates that this version of Ennin's biography was compiled "around 970."

14. *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki* 16, *Ōjōden, Hokke genki, Zoku Nihon bukkyō no shisō* (hereafter ZNBS) 1, ed. Inoue Mitsusada and Ōsone Shōsuke (rpt. of the 1974 NST 7; Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), 27–28. *Gokurakuki* was compiled by Genshin's close associate Yoshishige no Yasutane (monastic name Jakushin, d. 1002) around 985, the year *Ōjō yōshū* was completed. Yasutane gives the date of Enshō's death as Tentoku 3 (959). However, both *Hokke genki* and *Fusō ryakki* give it as Ōwa 3 (963). It is not clear, of course, whether the detail of Enshō holding a cord tied to a buddha image is historically accurate or was added retrospectively.

15. *Ryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai konpon kesshū nijūgonin rensho hotsuganmon*, in *Nijūgo zanmai shiki, Dai Nihon bukkyō zensho* (hereafter DNBZ), 100 vols. (Tokyo: Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan, 1970–1973), 49:31b. Though this text has been attributed to Genshin, his name does not appear on the list of founding members; thus this attribution may have been made retrospectively.

16. The two sets of regulations are an original set of eight regulations written in 986, attributed to Yoshishige no Yasutane (*Kishō hachikajō*, DNBZ 49:28c–30b; T no. 2724, 84:878b–880b), and the 988 twelve-article *Yokawa Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai kishō* (a.k.a. *Jūnikajō*), attributed to Genshin (DNBZ 49:27–30; T no. 2723, 84:876b–878b). The printed versions of these texts are all ultimately derived from a manuscript, possibly dating to the Kamakura period, held at the Chūshōin at Tōdaiji, but contain numerous discrepancies in titles, misprints, and other errors. These have been detailed in Koyama Masazumi, "Tōdaiji Chūshōin shozō 'Yokawa Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai Eshin Yasutane rinjū gyōgi' no saikentō: Sōshobon no goshoku ni yoru mondaiten," *Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 53 (1997): 56–95. Koyama also provides a critical edition of both sets of regulations.

On the *Nijūgo zanmai*-e, see, for example, Richard Bowring, "Preparing for the Pure Land in Late Tenth-Century Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25, nos. 3–4 (1998): 221–257; Robert F. Rhodes, "Seeking the Pure Land in Heian Japan: The Practices of the Monks of the *Nijūgo Zanmai*-e," *The Eastern Buddhist* 33, no. 1 (2000): 56–79; and Sarah Johanna Horton, "The Role of Genshin and Religious Associations in the mid-Heian Spread of Pure Land Buddhism (Japan)" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2001).

17. On traditions of nursing in the monastery, see Paul Demiéville, "Byō," *Hōbōgirin: Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises* (Paris: Hōbōgirin, 1974), III:236–240 (translated by Mark Tatz as *Buddhism and Healing: Demiéville's Article "Byō" from Hōbōgirin* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985]; see esp. 31–35), and "Kangogaku," in Fukunaga Katsumi, *Bukkyō igaku jiten* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1990), 292–298.

18. *Ōjō gokuraku mondō*, DNBZ 41:148b–c.

19. *Rinjū gyōgi, Eshin Sōzu zenshū*, ed. Hieizan Senshūin and Eizan Gakuin, 5 vols. (Sakamoto-mura, Shiga-ken: Hieizan Tosho Kankōjo, 1927–1928), 1:589–600.

20. See *Ryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai kakochō*, ZTZ, Shiden 2:285.

21. *Eiga monogatari* 18, ed. Matsumura Hiroji and Yamanaka Yutaka (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965; rev. 1993), 2:326–328; *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, trans. William H. and Helen Craig McCullough (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 2:762–764.

22. *Chōshūki*, Gen'ei 2, 12/4, *Zōho shiryō taisei* (hereafter ST), ed. Zōho Shiryō Taisei Kankōkai, 45 vols. (Kyoto: Rinsen Shobō, 1965), 16:184; *Chūyūki*, Hōan 1, 9/19, ST 12:253.

23. *Heike monogatari*, vol. 2, *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (hereafter NKBT) 33, ed. Takagi Ichinosuke et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 440–442, 376–377; *Tale of the Heike*, trans. Helen Craig McCullough (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 436–438, 399–400. A list of individuals appearing in Heian- and Kamakura-period accounts who are said to have died holding the five-colored cords appears in Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon bukkyōshi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1944), 1:631–635. Tsuji regards this practice as reflecting an unfortunate trend toward increasing formalism in medieval Pure Land practice, an evaluation that reveals more about scholarly assumptions in Tsuji's time than about premodern understandings.

24. Nishiguchi Junko, "Where the Bones Go: Death and Burial of Women of the Heian High Aristocracy," in *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*, ed. Barbara Ruch (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002), 417–439 (422). For a detailed discussion of pollution in its relation to deathbed practices, see Jacqueline I. Stone, "Dying Breath: Deathbed Rites and Death Pollution in Early Medieval Japan," in *Heroes and Saints: The Moment of Death in Cross-cultural Perspectives*, ed. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 173–246.

25. *Shōyūki* VIII, entries for Manju 4 (1027), 11/10–12/4, *Dai Nihon koki-roku*, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), 37–46. See also G. Cameron Hurst III, "Michinaga's Maladies: A Medical Report on Fujiwara no Michinaga," *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 1 (Spring 1979): 101–112; and Hayami Tasuku, *Jigoku to Gokuraku: Ōjō yōshū to kizoku shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1998), 141–145.

26. *Ōjō yōshū*, NST 6:209; trans. from Dobbins, "Genshin's Deathbed Nembutsu Ritual," 170.

27. The *Rishubun* is one of several versions of the esoteric scripture *Liqu jing* (Jpn. *Rishukyō*, Sūtra of the guiding principle) and here appears to indicate fascicle 578 of the 600-fascicle *Dabore jing*, T no. 220. Reciting the *Rishukyō* was said to remove sins and karmic hindrances and to protect the practitioner from falling into the hells.

28. *Rinjū gyōgi chūki*, DNBZ 49:48–49. This work was discovered at the Chūshōin of Tōdaiji as part of a composite text, a transcription possibly dating to the Kamakura period, with the outer title *Yokawa Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai*

*Eshin Yasutane rinjū gyōgi*, consisting of Tanshū's instructions and the two sets of regulations for the Nijūgo zanmai-e given in note 16 above (Koyama, "Tōdaiji Chūshōin shōzō 'Yokawa Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai Eshin Yasutane rinjū gyōgi' no saikentō," 56–57). Its existence suggests a close connection between Tanshū's work and the deathbed protocols of the Nijūgo zanmai-e. Tanshū's authorship was determined by Ishii Kyōdō ("Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai kisho ni tsuite," *Busho kenkyū* 48 [1918]: 1–5).

29. For examples, see Ishida Mizumaro, *Ōjō no shisō* (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1968), 249–252. Closely linked was the practice, chiefly attested in hagiographical literature, of holding in one's hand at the time of death a written vow to achieve the Pure Land (247–249).

30. For a more detailed discussion of esoteric versions of deathbed practice, see Jacqueline I. Stone, "The Secret Art of Dying: Esoteric Deathbed Practices in Heian Japan," in *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses, Representations*, ed. Bryan J. Cuevas and Jacqueline I. Stone (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 134–174.

31. *Byōchū shugyōki*, *Shingonshū anjin zensho* (hereafter SAZ), ed. Hase Hōshū (Kyoto: Rokudaishinbōsha, 1913–1914), 2:781–785. On Jichihan, see Marc Bunjisters, "Jichihan and the Restoration and Innovation of Buddhist Practice," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 26, nos. 1–2 (1999): 39–82. I have followed Bunjisters in using the pronunciation "Jichihan."

32. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, *Kōgyō Daishi zenshū* (hereafter KDZ), ed. Tomita Kōjun (1935; rpt. Tokyo: Hōsenji, 1977), 2:1197–1220. The quoted passage appears at 2:1214.

33. KDZ 2:1215–1216.

34. *Rinjū yōjin no koto*, SAZ 2:792–795. The quotation is at 793.

35. *Ibid.*, 792.

36. The *Kanbyō yōjinshō* (a.k.a. *Kanbyō goyōjin*, *Kanbyō yōjin*) is reproduced in Itō Shintetsu, *Nihon Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ryūbunkan, 1975), 447–461.

37. To my knowledge, the earliest Nichiren Buddhist *rinjū gyōgi* text is the *Chiyo migusa* traditionally attributed to Shinjōin Nichion (1572–1642) but possibly a slightly later composition. See also Jacqueline I. Stone, "The Moment of Death in Nichiren's Thought," in *Hokke bukkyō bunkashi ronso*, ed. Watanabe Hōyō Sensei Koki Kinen Ronbunshū Kankōkai (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 2003), 19–56.

38. *Rinjū gyōki chūki*, DNBZ 49:48b.

39. *Byōchū shugyōki*, SAZ 781; *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ, 2:1198.

40. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ, 2:1199.

41. *Ibid.*, 2:1199–2000.

42. On the practice of deathbed tonsure, see Takagi Yutaka, "Ōjōden ni okeru Hokke shinkō," in *Hokke shinkō no shokeitai*, ed. Nomura Yōshō (Kyoto:

Heirakuji Shoten, 1976), 451–484 (478–483), and Mitsuhashi Tadashi, *Heian jidai no shinkō to shūkyō giro* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 2000), 597–668.

43. *Kōyōshū*, DNBZ 43:26c.

44. *Rinjū gyōki chūki*, DNBZ 49:48c–49a.

45. *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Nihon Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 447.

46. *Kōyōshū*, DNBZ 43:26a.

47. This specific formulation of the "three categories of attachment" (*san'ai*) that obstruct one at the time of death are first enumerated in Senkan's *Jūgan hosshinki* (Satō, *Eizan Jōdokyō no kenkyū*, 198–199). See also Kamii Monshō, "Rinjū ni okeru san'ai no mondai," *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 41, no. 2 (1993): 318–321.

48. *Kōyōshū*, DNBZ 43:25b–26a.

49. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1200. The distinction arises from variances in different Chinese accounts of deathbed practice at the Jetavana monastery. See ns. 3 and 4 above.

50. *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Nihon Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 447.

51. *Kōyōshū*, DNBZ 43:26b.

52. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1200.

53. Presumably for the same reason, Hōnen admonishes that the cords should be woven by a child (*Ippyaku shijū gokajō mondō*, no. 71, *Shōwa shinshū Hōnen Shōnin zenshū* [hereafter HSZ], ed. Ishii Kyōdō [Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1955; rpt. 1974], 658). It appears that the cords were sometimes cut up afterwards and the pieces distributed to establish karmic connections (*hechien*) conducive to *ōjō*. Hōnen, however, explicitly rejects this practice (*ibid.*, no. 103, 662).

54. DNBZ 43:26b.

55. One striking instance involves their use in a ritual directed toward the healing Buddha, Yakushi Nyorai (Bhaiṣajyaguru Tathāgata) and his six manifestations (*shichibutsu Yakushi*), to ensure safe childbirth or protect the dangerously ill. Revived by Genshin's teacher Ryōgen, this became one of the four major esoteric rites of Mt. Hiei (Paul Groner, *Ryōgen and Mt. Hiei: Japanese Tendai in the Tenth Century* [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002], 87–88). In this ritual, forty-nine mantra-empowered knots are tied in the cord, which is then fastened to the head, hands, feet, or body of the person for whom the ritual is being performed (see *Kakuzenshō*, DNBZ 53:60b–c). The symbolism in this case was presumably to draw the person, not up into the Pure Land, but back from proximity to death into the world of the living.

One also finds scattered references to the use of cords in personal prayers not connected to the moment of death. The ninth-century *Nihon ryōiki* includes two such episodes: the ascetic Konsu prays for permission to receive Buddhist ordination while holding a rope fastened to the legs of a clay statue

of the deity Shūkongōjin (Vajradhara), an esoteric form of Kannon (II:21), and an orphan girl prays for relief from poverty while holding a rope tied to an image of Kannon (II:34) (*Nihon ryōiki*, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 30, ed. Izumoji Osamu [Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996], 94, 113; trans. Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon ryōiki of the Monk Kyōkai* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973], 189, 207).

56. See, for example, the *Suxidi jieluo jing*, T no. 893c, 18:689a; *Dapiluzhena chengfo jing su*, T no. 1796, 39:627a; and *Asabashō*, T (zusō) 9:563a.

57. DNBZ 49:48a. The idea that inappropriate thoughts at the last moment can negatively affect one's rebirth can of course be found much earlier and is common to Indian religious traditions. See, for example, Franklin Edgerton, "The Hour of Death: Its Importance for Man's Fate in Hindu and Western Religions," *Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute* 8, part 3 (1926–1927): 219–249. Genshin paraphrases Tanluan (476–542) to the effect that one perverse thought at the last moment can lead to rebirth in the Avīci hell (*Ōjō yōshū*, NST 6:289). See also Tanluan's *Jingtu shiyi lun*, T no. 1961, 47:80a. In Japan, however, concerns about delusory thoughts obstructing one's attainment of the Pure Land do not seem to have become widespread until slightly after Genshin's time.

58. This suggests itself as an early precedent for what would later become the practice of offering *matsugo no mizu* or *shinimizu* ("last water" or "death water"), water used to moisten the mouth of a dying or deceased person as a parting service by friends and relatives; see Fujii Masao, *Bukkyō girei jiten* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1977), 164–165. For some historically recent accounts of this custom, see Kimura Hiroshi, *Shi: Bukkyō to minzoku* (Tokyo: Meicho Shuppan, 1989), 2–29.

59. *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 447–451.

60. DNBZ 49:48a. The citation from Daoxuan appears to be a paraphrase.

61. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1215.

62. *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 447.

63. *Rinjū gyōki chūki*, DNBZ 49:49b; *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1215; *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 448.

64. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1216–1217. This represents Kakuban's esoteric reading of the *nissōkan* or contemplation of the [setting] sun, first of sixteen meditations leading to birth in Amida's Pure Land set forth in the *Guan Wuliangshou jing* (T 12:341c–342a). On esoteric understandings of the *nenbutsu* more generally, see James H. Sanford, "Breath of Life: The Esoteric Nenbutsu" (1994), rpt. in *Tantric Buddhism in East Asia*, ed. Richard K. Payne (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2006), 161–189, and "Amida's Secret Life: Kakuban's *Amida hishaku*," in Payne and Tanaka, *Approaching the Land of Bliss*, 120–138, as well as Stone, "Secret Art of Dying."

65. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1217.

66. See Ikemi Chōryū, "Rinjū nenbutsu kō: Kiku, kikaseru," *Nihongaku* 10 (1987): 199–208.

67. *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 454–456. The text has "one or two hours," an "hour" corresponding to one of the twelve divisions of the day. A similar admonition occurs in the *Rinjū no yōi*, traditionally attributed to Jōkei (1155–1213), which also stresses that the *zenchishiki* should chant in rhythm with the dying person's breathing and even continue to chant into his ear for at least two hours after the breath has ceased. "Although he may to outward appearances be dead, consciousness may remain, or the spirit may not have departed but be lingering near the dead person. Even if he should be destined for the evil paths, because he hears the name, he may be born in the Pure Land from the interim state" (*Nihon daizōkyō* 64:26b). If authentic, this text would predate Ryōchū's by several decades. However, some scholars question Jōkei's authorship.

68. See the *Guanfo sanmeihai jing* (T no. 643, 15:669a), which describes how the illusory gold carriage with its beautiful maidens (actually hell flames in disguise) lures evildoers to their retribution. Genshin quotes this passage in the last part of the *rinjū gyōgi* section of his *Ōjō yōshū* (NST 6:214–215), as does Ryōchū in his *Jōdo taii shō* (*Jōdoshū zensho* [hereafter JZ], 23 vols., ed. Jōdoshū Kaishū Happyakunen Kinen Keisan Junbikyoku [Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 1970–1972], 10:722).

69. *Hosshinshū* IV:7, in *Hōjōki*, *Hosshinshū*, ed. Miki Sumito (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1976), 182–184. This story also appears in *Sangoku denki* IX:15 (DNBZ 92:317a–b). In that version, auspicious signs accompanying the woman's death—purple clouds, fragrance, radiant light, and music—are described, indicating that she has undoubtedly achieved *ōjō*.

70. *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 2:1215.

71. See, for example, *Goshūi ōjōden* I:8, ZNBS 1:647, and the death of Yoshida no Saikū in *Hosshinshū* VII:5, Miki, *Hōjōki*, *Hosshinshū*, 314–315.

72. *Kōyōshū*, DNBZ 43:19b–c.

73. These and other distinctions are appended to a transcription of Ryōchū's text made by the Jōdo monk Ryūgyō (1369–1449), who gives them as citations from a work called *Nōsenshō* by one Rengedani Sōzu of Mt. Kōya and from another, unidentified account (*ichigi*). See Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 445–446.

74. *Kanbyō yōjinshō*, in Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 452.

75. T no. 997, 19:574a, cited in *Ichigo taiyō himitsu shū*, KDZ 1:1217–1219. The sūtra itself merely lists these signs, while Kakuban prescribes specific ritual interventions. This sūtra passage seems to have been a popular medieval text for knowing about deathbed signs. A copy of it accompanies one extant transcription of Jichihan's *Byōchū shugyōki* (see Ōtani, "Jichihan *Byōchū shugyōki* ni suite," 44). It is also cited by Nichiren (1222–1282) in a passage dealing with the interpretation of corporeal signs at the time of death ("Myōhō-ama

gozen gohenji," *Shōwa teihon Nichiren Shōnin ibun*, ed. Risshō Daigaku Nichiren Kyōgaku Kenkyūjo [Minobu, Yamanashi prefecture: Minobusan Kuonji, 1952–1959; rev. 1988], 2:1535), and by Ryōchū, in his *Jōdo tai shō*, JZ 10:720–721.

76. This is specified in both sets of extant regulations for the Society, the 986 *Kishō hachikajō* (article 2), and the 988 *Yokawa Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai kishō* (article 4). See Koyama, "Tōdaiji Chūshōin shōzō 'Yokawa Shuryōgon'in nijūgo zanmai Eshin Yasutane rinjū gyōgi' no saikentō," 86–87 and 76. The use in Japan of mantrically empowered sand in funerary practices dates back at least to the ninth century and, as described in Mariko Walter's Chapter 7 in this volume, still figures in Tendai and Shingon funerals today.

77. *DNBZ* 43:28a.

78. *Kakukai Hōkyō hōgo*, *Kana hōgoshū*, *NKBT* 83, ed. Miyasaka Yūshō (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1964), 57; trans. from Robert E. Morrell, *Early Kamakura Buddhism: A Minority Report* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1987), 99–100, slightly modified.

79. *Kakukai Hōkyō hōgo*, *NKBT* 83:57; trans. from Morrell, *Early Kamakura Buddhism*, 100, slightly modified. The ascetic Gochi-bō Yūgen was a relative and disciple of Kakuban. He practiced in reclusion on Mt. Kōya, and there is indeed no record of his final moments.

80. "Shōnyo-bō e tsukawasu onfumi," *HSZ* 545–546.

81. *Ōjō jōdo yōjin*, *HSZ* 562. See also the discussion of Hōnen's views of the last moment in his biography *Enkō Daishi gyōjō ezu yokusan*, JZ 16:372–376; in English, see Harper Havelock Coates and Ryugaku Ishizuka, *Hōnen the Buddhist Saint: His Life and Teaching* (Kyoto: Chionin, 1925), 438–441.

82. *Mattōshō* 1 and 18, *Shinran chosaku zenshū*, ed. Kaneko Daiei (Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan, 1964), 580, 608.

83. *Shōkō-bō ni shimesarekeru onkotoba* 17, *HSZ* 747.

84. On the importance to the nobility of practitioners of this kind, see, for example, Hayami Tasuku, *Heian kizoku shakai to bukkyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1975), 147–154.

85. *Gyokuyō*, Yōwa 1 (1181), 12/1–4. Kanezane records that he and Tankyō chanted the *nenbutsu* with her, while an unidentified "repentance rite monk" (*senbōsō*) was summoned to chant from the other side of a screen. Sonchū Sōzu, Kōkamon'in's half-brother, was also present at her side, reciting the Fudō mantra (12/4). The following year, Tankyō led a memorial service for Kōkamon'in; on that occasion, Kanezane referred to him as having acted as her *zenchishiki* (*Gyokuyō*, Juei 1 [1182], 11/18). See *Gyokuyō*, ed., Imaizumi Teisuke, 3 vols. [Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1906–1907], 2:539–540, 581).

86. *Heike monogatari*, vol. 2, *NKBT* 33:368–371; McCullough, *Tale of the Heike*, 395–397.

87. *Genryaku* 2 (1185), 6/21, *KT* 32:161.1.

88. *Gyokuyō*, *Kenkyū* 3 (1192), 3/13, 3:798. Kanezane records that Tankyō acted as *zenchishiki*, together with Ninnaji-no-miya Shōken Sōjō (Shukaku,

1150–1202), who was Go-Shirakawa's second son. *Azuma kagami* mentions only Tankyō, who is referred to as Ōhara Honjō-bō Shōnin (*Kenkyū* 3, 3/16, *KT* 32:461–462).

89. See Kikuchi Hiroki, "Go-Shirakawa inseiki no ōken to jikyōsha," *Meigetsuki kenkyū* 4 (1999): 165–184 (172–177).

90. *Gyokuyō*, *Bunji* 2, 4/19, 3:188.

91. Kikuchi, "Go-Shirakawa inseiki no ōken to jikyōsha," 174–176.

92. *Gyokuyō*, *Angen* 2 (1176), 3/23, 1:564, and *Bunji* 4 (1188), 2/19–20, 3:499.

93. *Gyokuyō*, *Jishō* 5, 1/12, 2:464. On Inzei, see Ōtsuka Ayako, "Kenreimon'in Tokushi no kaishi Inzei ni tsuite," *Bukkyō bungaku* 15 (1991): 65–78, and Muramatsu Kiyomichi, "Ashō-bō Inzei ni tsuite," *Taishō Daigaku Sōgō Bukkyō Kenkyūjo nenpō* (1993): 61–79.

94. *Gyokuyō*, *Shōan* 1, 7/20, 1:157, and *Bunji* 4, 2/19–20, 3:499–500. On Butsugon, see also Sakagami Masao, "Butsugon-bō Shōshin ni tsuite," *Bukkyō ronso* 26 (1982): 145–149.

95. On monks ritually "opening" cemeteries and making them accessible to aristocratic patrons, see Katsuda Itaru, *Shishatachi no chūsei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003), 166–168.

96. *Shūi ōjōden* II:17, *ZNBS* 1:337.

97. *Nihon Zenshū no seiritsu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1987), esp. 90–94.

98. *Kōyasan ōjōden* 13, *ZNBS* 1:700. See also "Kaisetsu," 758.

99. On pollution taboos at major Buddhist temples and ceremonies, see, for example, Taira Masayuki, "Sesshō kindan no rekishiteki tenkai," in *Nihon shakai no shiteki kōzō: Kodai, chūsei*, ed. Ōyama Kyōhei Kyōju Taikan Kinenkai (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1997), 149–171 (151–153). On monks without formal clerical appointments as the primary purveyors of death-related practices in the Heian period, see Stone, "The Dying Breath," esp. 203–206; and Uejima Susumu, "'Ō' no shi to sōsō: Kegare to gakuryō, hijiri, zenshū," *Kōkagaku to chūseishi kenkyū* 4: *Chūsei jūin: Bōryoku to keikan*, ed. Ono Masatoshi, Gomi Fumihiko, and Hagiwara Mitsuo (Tokyo: Kōshi Shoin, 2007), 127–163.

100. *DNBZ* 43:27b. This represents a rare reference in *rinjū gyōgi* texts to the financing of deathbed rites.

101. *Senjūshō* VII:3, *Senjūshō zenchūshaku*, ed. Senjūshō Kankōkai, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 2003), 204–210.

102. *Chūsei shakai to jishū no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1985), 357–358. Imai suggests in this regard that in *Tale of the Heike* one sign of aristocratic influence on the Taira clan is their desire to employ *zenchishiki* at the end. The most famous instance is of course that of Taira no Koremori, who in his determination to escape the realm of rebirth, drowns himself in the sea off Kumano. He has the novice Takiguchi Nyūdō accompany him in the boat and preach to him on the futility of worldly attachments and the certainty of



Amida's salvation (*Heike monogatari*, vol. 2, *NKBT* 33:280–284; McCullough, *Tale of the Heike*, 348–350).

103. *Azuma kagami*, Gennin 1, 6/13, *KT* 33:18.

104. Jonathan Todd Brown, "Warrior Patronage, Institutional Change, and Doctrinal Innovation in the Early Jishū" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1999), esp. 198–210, 401–407.

105. On the battlefield practice of Jishū clerics, see Imai Masaharu, *Chūsei shakai to Jishū no kenkyū*, 365–378; Ōhashi Shunnō, *Ippen to Jishū kyōdan* (Tokyo: Kyōikusha, 1978), 143–151; Sybil Anne Thorton, "Propaganda Traditions of the Yūgyō Ha: The Campaign to Establish the Jishū as an Independent School of Japanese Buddhism (1300–1700)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1988), 76–111; and Brown, "Warrior Patronage, Institutional Change, and Doctrinal Innovation in the Early Jishū," 444–450.

106. *DNBZ* 43:27b–c.

107. In Itō, *Jōdokyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 448.

108. See, for example, *Hosshinshū* IV:5, Miki, *Hōjōki*, *Hosshinshū*, 176–179, and *Shasekishū*, IV:5 and IV:6, *NKBT* 85, ed. Watanabe Tsunaya (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966), 188–190; trans. Robert E. Morrell, *Sand and Pebbles* (*Shasekishū*): *The Tales of Mujū Ichien, A Voice for Pluralism in Kamakura Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 146–147.

~~109. *Genki* 1, *Chōhō* 4, 10/16, *ST* 4:274.~~

110. *Shishukū*, cited in Nichiguchi Junko, "Josei to mōja kinichi kuyō," in *Hotoke to onna*, ed. Nichiguchi Junko (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1997), 219–246 (234–236).

111. *Rinjū setsuyō*, in *Rinjū gyōgi: Nihonteki taminaru kea no genten*, ed. Kamii Monshō et al. (Tokyo: Hokushindō, 1993; rpt. 1995), 168–169.

112. However, some instances from early modern *ōjōden* suggest that such injunctions were not always observed. For example, the pious Kintarō (d. 1860), third son of Fujiya Jūemon of Okazaki in Nukada village, Mikawa province, who died at age seventeen, requested that his grandmother, the nun Jōryō, act as his *zenchishiki* (*Mikawa ōjō kenki* 1, in *Kinsei ōjōden shūsei*, ed. Kasahara Kazuo, 3 vols. [Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppan, 1978–1980], 1:359–360). It is not clear whether elderly women, especially nuns, would have been considered free from female pollution or whether such cases simply illustrate a gap between prescriptive standards and on-the-ground practice.

113. *Setsumoku nikka*, Jōkyō 3 (1686), 4/8, *Nichirenshū shūgaku zensho*, ed. Risshō Daigaku Nichiren Kyōgaku Kenkyūjo, 23 vols. (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 1968–1978), 12:389.

114. For deathbed practice as reflected in early modern *ōjōden* and other sources, see, for example, *Nihon bukkyō* 39 (1976): *Tokushū: Kinsei ōjōden*; Hasegawa Masatoshi, *Kinsei nenbutsusha shūdan no kōdō to shisō: Jōdoshū no baai* (Tokyo: Hyōronsha, 1981), 186–198; and Kamii et al., *Rinjū gyōgi*, 435–463.

115. William M. Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 185–186.

116. *Kinsei bukkyō no shisō*, *NST* 57, ed. Kashiwabara Yūsen and Fujii Manabu (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973), 449. The text has "five or six hours," one "hour" corresponding to one of the twelve divisions of the day. The *Rinjū no yōi*, attributed to Jōkei, also gives this same warning as "an admonition of people of old" (*Nihon daizōkyō* 64:26b). See n. 67 above.

117. *Jōbutsu jishin*, *SAZ* 2:828–829.

118. *Rinjū setsuyō*, in Kamii et al., *Rinjū gyōgi*, 170.

119. Ibid., 166, 170.

120. *Rinjū yōjin*, in Kamii et al., *Rinjū gyōgi*, 211–212.