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## Bridging the Realms of Underworld and Pure Land

### An Examination of Datsueba's Roles in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala

This article examines the representation of the Buddhist folk deity Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, which depicts the temple precinct of Zenkōji located in Nagano City. In the popular imagination of hell in Japan, she is known as a terrifying old woman who robs the deceased of their clothes by the Sanzu River, which people are supposed to cross after death. In the mandala, however, Datsueba is not represented in the scene of hell; she appears on either side of the middle gate leading to the main worship hall, where pilgrims expect to experience ritual death and rebirth and establish karmic connection with Amida Buddha. I argue that Datsueba's association with death and hell shifts to indicate the salvation that is possible at Zenkōji. Moreover, she signals certain customs and ritual practices which are important at Zenkōji but unable to be directly illustrated in the mandala.

KEYWORDS: pilgrimage—Datsueba—Zenkōji—Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala—hell—Sanzu River

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THE OLD HAG known as Datsueba 奪衣婆 figures prominently in the popular imagination of Buddhist hell in Japan. She is known as a terrifying old woman who robs the clothes of deceased people by the Sanzu River (*sanzu no kawa* 三途の川; River of Three Crossings), which they are supposed to cross after death. Although her origins are obscure, textual references started to appear in Japanese scriptures and religious stories dating to the eleventh century. For example, *Dai Nippon koku hokekyō genki* 大日本国法華經驗記 (“An account of the wonders worked by the Lotus Sutra in Japan”; often abbreviated as *Hokke genki* 法華驗記) relates that an old woman residing by the Sanzu River strips the deceased.<sup>1</sup> Another text, *Bussetsu Jizō bosatsu hosshin innen jūō kyō* 仏説地藏菩薩發心因緣十王經 (The sutra on the Bodhisattva Jizō’s aspiration for enlightenment and the Ten Kings; often abbreviated as *Jizō jūō kyō*) describes Datsueba taking part in the judicial process administered by the Ten Kings of Hell. Those who have committed bad deeds are supposed to cross at a deeper, more difficult to navigate point of the Sanzu River. After they reach the other shore, their clothes are taken by Datsueba and then passed to her male counterpart Kenē-ō 懸衣翁, who hangs the wet clothing on tree branches to determine how much moisture they have absorbed.<sup>2</sup>

Since Datsueba emerged and was promoted as part of the landscape of hell, a large number of hell paintings after the thirteenth century include depictions of her. For example, in the Mizuo Mirokudō version of the *Painting of the Six Realms and the Ten Kings* (*Mizuo Mirokudō bon Rokudō jūō zu* 水尾弥勒堂本六道十王図), she is represented by the bridge leading the deceased to the court of

1. The *Hokke genki* was written by the Tendai monk Chingen 鎮源 sometime between 1040 and 1044. It includes the story of the monk Renshū who was brought back to life after death because of his devotion to Kannon. When he first died, he encountered an old hag by the Sanzu River who attempted to take his clothes. However, four divine youths appeared and interrupted her, claiming that Renshū was a reciter of the *Lotus Sutra* and thus protected by Kannon. The divine youths then escorted him back to the world of the living. Similar tales are included in the *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集 and the *Kannon riyaku shū* 觀音利益集.

2. *Jizō jūō kyō* is considered to have been composed by an anonymous Japanese monk by the twelfth century, based on the Chinese scripture *Yuxiu shiwang shengai jing* 仏説預修十王生七經 (Scripture on the Ten Kings). It describes the experiences of the deceased during a purgatorial period between death and rebirth in bureaucratic terms. During that period, the deceased pass through a series of courts administered by the Ten Kings. Datsueba does not appear in the *Scripture on the Ten Kings*, but in the *Jizō jūō kyō*, she is associated with the second court, where she takes the clothes of the deceased by the Sanzu River and passes them to Kenē-ō, who hangs the wet clothing on branches of an *eryōju* tree.

the second king.<sup>3</sup> The Idemitsu Museum version of the *Painting of the Ten Kings and Hell* (*Idemitsu Bijutsukan bon Jūō jigoku zu* 出光美術館本十王地獄図) shows Datsueba taking the clothes of the deceased at the bottom left corner.<sup>4</sup> However, in addition to hell paintings, she sometimes appears in a different genre of painting called *sankei mandara* 参詣曼荼羅 (pilgrimage mandalas) which depict shrine/temple precincts and visiting pilgrims. Since these mandalas were aimed at encouraging viewers to physically visit temples and shrines, and at providing them with virtual experiences of sacred sites, the stories and messages embedded in them are different from hell paintings (ŌTAKA 2012, 24–25; SHIMOSAKA 1993, 6–8). Images of Datsueba are incorporated into pilgrimage mandalas representing four different sites: Ise, Nariaiji, Tateyama, and Zenkōji.<sup>5</sup> The manner of her representation in these mandalas is not uniform, and different aspects of her character are emphasized according to the worship practices and symbolism associated with each of these sacred landscapes. This article will focus exclusively on the representation of twin images of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, which depicts the temple precinct of Shinano Zenkōji 信濃善光寺 in Nagano City, Nagano Prefecture. The mandala is believed to date to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries and is preserved at Zenkōji's branch temple, Koyama Zenkōji 小山善光寺, in Fujiidera City, Osaka.<sup>6</sup> Although there are earlier paintings that include illustrations of the temple precinct of Shinano Zenkōji such as the *Ippen hijiri e* 一遍聖絵 (Illustrated hagiography of the itinerant monk Ippen) and the *Zenkōji eden* 善光寺絵伝 (Illustrated origin story of Zenkōji), this is the only recognized example of a pilgrimage mandala for Shinano Zenkōji.

The mandala is framed on both sides by scenes from the Zenkōji origin story,

3. For an illustration of the Mizuo Mirokudō version of the *Painting of the Six Realms and the Ten Kings*, see Plate 9 in *Jigoku yūran*. TOYAMA-KEN TATEYAMA HAKUBUTSUKAN 2001, 36–37.

4. For an illustration of the Idemitsu Museum version of the *Painting of the Ten Kings and Hell*, see Plate 10 in *Jigoku yūran*. TOYAMA-KEN TATEYAMA HAKUBUTSUKAN (2001, 38–39).

5. The Ise Pilgrimage Mandalas (*Ise sankei mandara* 伊勢参詣曼荼羅), the Nariaiji Pilgrimage Mandala (*Nariaijisankei mandara* 成相寺参詣曼荼羅), the Tateyama Mandalas (*Tateyama mandara* 立山曼荼羅), and the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala (*Zenkōji sankei mandara* 善光寺参詣曼荼羅).

6. Takahashi Hira'aki believes that the mandala was made around 1596, considering that Koyama Zenkōji was reconstructed by the monk Shūchin 宗珍 and the depicted images are similar to ones in the Nachi Pilgrimage Mandala dated 1596 (TAKAHASHI 1987, 32); Nishiyama Masaru speculates that the mandala was made a few years later, sometime around 1598, arguing that its production was motivated by the reconstruction of Shinano Zenkōji by Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the increasing popularity of the belief in Zenkōji in western Japan (NISHIYAMA 1998, 138–39). Iwahana Michiaki proposes 1600 as the year of the mandala's creation (IWAHANA 1997, 121). Examining images depicted in the mandala together with the historical circumstances, Terasawa Shingo suggests the possibility that the date of the production of the mandala could be traced back even earlier, between 1571 and 1582 or even a few years later than 1582 (TERASAWA 2011, 114–15).

arranged to be read from top to bottom, beginning on the right-hand side.<sup>7</sup> An episode taking place in hell is among those depicted in the lower left of the mandala. The scene represented does not exactly follow what is written in the temple's origin story, but rather is based on a popular conception of hell which includes the Blood Pond Hell and the Limbo for Children. Although Datsueba is generally considered as part of such a popular conception, she is not pictured in the scene of hell here. Instead, away from hell, she appears on either side of the middle gate (*chūmon* 中門) leading to the main hall within the temple precinct. The inclusion of twin images of Datsueba is unusual and cannot be found in other pilgrimage mandalas, though she is paired with King of Hell Enma in at least one Ise Pilgrimage Mandala, and some Tateyama Mandalas depict Datsueba appearing beside an *uba* hall in which statues of Ubason, the principal deity of Ashikuraji, are enshrined.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, while Datsueba often functions to mark the border between the profane and the sacred, here she marks the entrance leading to a higher level of sacredness in the precinct, that is, the main hall (*hondō* 本堂). Considering her positioning and the stories and worship practices connected with Zenkōji, I intend to demonstrate that Datsueba's association with hell in this case is indicative of salvation. After giving an overview of the history and worship practices at Zenkōji, I will explore the functions and signs embedded in the twin images of Datsueba and examine related imagery in this pilgrimage mandala.

### *Historical Overview of Zenkōji and Its Worship Practices*

According to temple tradition, Shinano Zenkōji was built in the seventh century and named after its legendary founder Honda Yoshimitsu 本田善光. Though it is affiliated with the Tendai temple Daikanjin 大勧進 and the Jōdo (Pure Land) convent Daihongan 大本願, Zenkōji temple itself originally did not belong to any particular Buddhist sect.<sup>9</sup> The principal icon at the temple is a cast bronze triad of Amida Buddha with his attendants, the bodhisattvas Seishi and Kannon,

7. Several versions of the Zenkōji origin story are included in *Zenkōji engi shūsei*. See KURATA and KURATA (2001).

8. For an illustration of the Powers version of the Ise Pilgrimage Mandala, which includes an image of a hall enshrining both Datsueba and Enma, see Plate 45 in *Shaji sankei mandara*. (ŌSAKA SHIRITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN 1987). Various versions of Tateyama Mandalas that depict Datsueba with Ubason can be found in *Sōran Tateyama mandara* (TOYAMA-KEN TATEYAMA HAKUBUTSUKAN 2001).

9. While the present affiliation with the Tendai and Jōdo sects was established in the Meiji period, practices and rituals associated with various religious groups, including the Shingon sect and the Ji sect, were conducted at Zenkōji throughout history. The early religious affiliation of Zenkōji and its connection with heterogeneous sects are discussed in *Zenkōji shi*; see SAKAI (1969, 410–65).

backed by a leaf-shaped mandorla. This statue has been kept absolutely secret and no one has been allowed to see it; instead, a replica based on the original is displayed to the public every seventh year.<sup>10</sup> The replication of the Zenkōji Amida triad became a trend in the Kamakura period (1185–1333), when many Amida triads modeled after the original were produced, and branch temples called Shin-Zenkōji (New Zenkōji) enshrining these replicated icons were established across Japan.<sup>11</sup>

Although the historical details surrounding the origin of Shinano Zenkōji temple are obscure, the name “Zenkōji” first appears in the *Sō Myōtatsu sosei chūki* 僧妙達蘇生注記 (Notes on the revival of the monk Myōtatsu)<sup>12</sup> written by the Tendai monk Myōtatsu 妙達 in the mid-tenth century. It informs us that a temple called “Minouchi-gun Zenkōji” 水内郡善光寺 (Zenkōji of Minouchi district) was located in Shinano, but does not provide any further details.<sup>13</sup> Though archaeological evidence suggests the possibility that a temple structure existed in the Asuka period (593–694), it is uncertain whether that temple was Zenkōji.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the origin story of Zenkōji is still significant because numerous versions of the tale convey how Zenkōji worship practices developed throughout history.

The earliest reference to the Zenkōji origin story is found in the *Fusō ryakuki* 扶桑略記 (Abbreviated records of Japan), a collection of historical records with an emphasis on Buddhism, composed sometime between the end of the eleventh century and the early twelfth century. According to the *Fusō ryakuki*, the Zenkōji Amida triad was commissioned by a wealthy man named Gakkai 月蓋 (Sk. Somachatra) who had witnessed the appearance of an Amida triad at the entrance of his mansion in Vaishali, India. After his death, the cast-bronze Amida triad flew

10. The replica was made in the Kamakura period and is referred to as *maedachi honzon* 前立本尊. In the Edo period, special viewings were held irregularly, but in the Meiji period, the temple agreed to make the replica Amida triad open for public viewing every seventh year. For further information on public viewings of the replica, see SAKAI (1969, 117–27); WAKAOMI (2009).

11. For further information on the replication of the Zenkōji Amida triad, see MCCALLUM (1994, 100–54).

12. The *Sō Myōtatsu sosei chūki* recounts Myōtatsu’s experiences in hell. After dying, he visited the palace of Enma and saw his deceased friends there. On the seventh day after Myōtatsu’s death, he was allowed to return to life and Enma encouraged him to work for the salvation of sentient beings. This story of Myōtatsu visiting the palace of Enma is included in both the *Konjaku monogatari shū* and the *Hokke gengi*.

13. Scholars such as Kurata Hiroo and Kurata Haruo as well as Fukushima Masaki note the *Sō Myōtatsu sosei chūki* as the earliest existing reference mentioning the name “Zenkōji”; KURATA and KURATA (2001, 11); FUKUSHIMA (2009, 57).

14. Approximately three thousand tiles were excavated from the former temple precinct of Zenkōji. Although no ancient structural remnants have been discovered there, these tiles confirm that a temple roofed with tiles once was built near the former temple precinct of Zenkōji (see NAGANO SHIRITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN 2015, 16).

to Paekche and then arrived in Japan in the tenth month of 552 (Kinmei 13), the year Buddhism was officially introduced to Japan from Paekche.<sup>15</sup> Eventually, by the command of Emperor Suiko in 602, the Amida triad was relocated to Shinano Province by Hata Konose no Taifu 秦巨勢大夫,<sup>16</sup> and a temple called Zenkōji was established. After the *Fusō ryakuki*, a number of versions of the Zenkōji origin story were produced in which the content was changed and episodes were appended.<sup>17</sup>

Zenkōji suffered from a series of fires throughout its long history, and solicitation activities were repeatedly conducted for reconstruction of the temple structures. *Heike monogatari* relates that the fire occurring in 1179 gutted major buildings, including the main hall.<sup>18</sup> Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝 (1147–1197), the founder of the Kamakura Shogunate, was governor of Shinano Province at that time, and he issued orders for the rebuilding of the temple in 1187. Though temple reconstruction was usually carried out under a provincial government by requisitioning resources and labor power, Yoritomo granted the authority of soliciting contributions to monks at Zenkōji temple called *kanjin shōnin* 勧進上人.<sup>19</sup> Making donations to a temple is supposed to be a voluntary action. However, under the command of Yoritomo, it was set forth as an obligation with penalties for those who refused. Landowners had to make contributions, regardless of their faith; otherwise their property would be confiscated. Low-ranking religious practitioners working under *kanjin shōnin* also helped to solicit donations from the masses. As a result, contributions were successfully obtained from farmers in addition to aristocrats and warriors.<sup>20</sup>

15. This section was probably composed by borrowing an episode from a Buddhist scripture and adapting an event recorded in *Nihon shoki*, which relates that a gilt-bronze statue of Shakyamuni Buddha was presented by the King of Paekche to Emperor Kinmei at that time along with Buddhist scriptures and banners; see FUKUSHIMA (2009, 58).

16. In later versions of the Zenkōji origin story, Honda Yoshimitsu is recorded as bringing the Amida triad to Shinano.

17. For example, an account of Prince Shōtoku fighting for the protection of Buddhism is incorporated into the story, and Honda Yoshimitsu is cast as the legendary founder and described as having a karmic connection with the Zenkōji Buddha in his previous lives. See MCCALLUM (1994, 46–49).

18. The main hall of Zenkōji temple in Shinano was burned down eight times in total including the first fire in 1179. During the sixth fire in 1464, the Zenkōji Amida triad was badly damaged, and only the head survived. See ICHIKAWA (2009, 164–65) and IHARA (2009).

19. Ushiyama Yoshiyuki examines how expenses for reconstruction were handled after each fire in the medieval period, including the directives given by Yoritomo at the time of the 1187 fire, which are recorded in *Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡. See USHIYAMA (2009, 47).

20. Focusing on the popularity of Zenkōji among the commoners, IHARA (2009, 69–70) discusses their contribution to the reconstruction of the temple structures. Although expenses for reconstruction were financed by solicitation activities authorized by the shogunate during the Kamakura period (1185–1333), government support was not forthcoming in the

During the late medieval period, which was marked by repeated rebellions and power struggles among local warriors, the principal statue of Zenkōji temple was moved from one place to another.<sup>21</sup> After forty-four years of constant relocation, eventually in 1598 the ruling warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536–1598) decreed that the Amida triad was to be returned to Shinano. Because Zenkōji temple in Shinano had been devastated during the absence of its principal icon, the buildings were reconstructed and its operating institutions were revitalized in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Koyama Zenkōji temple, which had been destroyed by warfare, was reconstructed at its present location sometime between 1596 and 1615. The Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Koyama Zenkōji is considered to have been produced around this time (TAKAHASHI 1987, 32; NISHIYAMA 1998, 138–39; IWAHANA 1997, 121; TERASAWA 2011, 114–15).

### *General Composition of the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala*

The Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala is the only known example of a pilgrimage mandala depicting the precinct of Shinano Zenkōji (FIGURE 1).<sup>23</sup> It was painted

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following Muromachi period (1336–1573) due to the weakened authority of the Ashikaga leaders. Instead, networks of monks from Shinano were utilized for collecting contributions, and this, together with profits from trade with Ming dynasty China, covered the reconstruction expenses. See USHIYAMA (2009, 45–56).

21. The repeated translocation was triggered by the battles of Kawanakajima (Kawanakajima no tatakai 川中島の戦い) fought between Takeda Shingen 武田信玄 (1521–1573) of Kai 甲斐 Province and Uesugi Kenshin 上杉謙信 (1530–1578) of Echigo 越後 Province. Between 1553 and 1564, five major battles took place in the northern part of Shinano Province. Though the quarrel between the two powerful feudal lords was not entirely settled, Takeda Shingen gained an advantage over Shinano Province at the end. During the battles, the Amida triad at Shinano Zenkōji temple was transferred to Kai Zenkōji temple in Kai Province by Takeda Shingen for safe keeping. However, when the Takeda clan was defeated in 1528 by the Oda clan, the Amida triad was relocated to Gifu. After the clan's leader Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1538–1582) was killed, the Amida triad was moved several more times, then returned to Kai Zenkōji temple.

22. HARADA Kazuhiko (2009) examines the relationship between Zenkōji and powerful warlords in the medieval period. He also discusses how control over Zenkōji was passed from the *bettō* (head of an institution) of the Kurita clan to Daihongan and Daikanjin at Zenkōji.

23. The Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala was rediscovered in 1986, and remains in the collection of Zenkōji's branch temple, Koyama Zenkōji in Fujiidera city, Osaka Prefecture. Since its discovery, the composition and imagery have been analyzed by several scholars. A brief survey of some of their findings follows. Takahashi Hiraaki identifies many of the buildings depicted in the scroll, focusing in particular on Iizuna Gongen appearing in the distant view of a mountain in the upper portion of the mandala (TAKAHASHI 1987, 31–38). Regarding the significance of the mountains in the distance, IWAHANA (1997) examines the relationship of Zenkōji *shinkō* with Shugendō, especially with the mountain religious sects Iizuna *shugen* 飯網修験 and Togakushi *shugen* 戸隠修験. Focusing on the motifs of an old woman and a cow in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, TOKUDA Kazuo (1990, 90–111) investigates the development of



FIGURE 1. Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala. Courtesy of Koyama Zenkōji. Image reproduced with permission from positive film preserved at Osaka Museum of History.

with ink and vivid colors on paper consisting of square pieces that have been patched together to form a large sheet approximately 175 centimeters square. Although presently mounted in the form of a hanging scroll, the painting is thought to have been originally folded like many other pilgrimage mandalas (ŌSAKA SHIRITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN 1987, 32). The exact circumstances of how the mandala was transmitted to Koyama Zenkōji are unknown, though a temple record dated 1838 mentions an old map of Zenkōji temple in Shinano, which may be this scroll.<sup>24</sup>

Unlike other pilgrimage mandalas, which often integrate one or more scenes from the origin story into the picture of the temple compound and the surrounding landscape, the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala separates the origin story from the temple precinct and arranges the episodes in chronological order along both sides of the mandala. Among the numerous episodes usually included in

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narrative stories that eventually evolved into the famous legend of an old woman chasing a cow to Zenkōji temple. NISHIYAMA (1998, 103–46) demonstrates how the theme of women's salvation is embedded in the mandala. Comparing it with other pilgrimage mandalas, TERASAWA (2011, 103–13) examines the imagery and attempts to identify the atelier in which the mandala was produced.

24. For a discussion of this temple record, see TERASAWA (2011, 82) and NISHIYAMA (1998, 104–105).





FIGURE 2. The Amida triad enshrined at the main hall. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.

the *Zenkōji eden*, the mandala only depicts the episodes occurring after the Amida triad arrived in Japan. These are divided into nine sections by clouds, with the narrative flowing from the upper right-hand portion of the scroll to the bottom right, then continuing from the upper left-hand side down to the bottom left. On the right side, starting with the arrival of the Amida triad in Japan, the story of Prince Shōtoku is illustrated. The left side focuses on the episodes of Honda Yoshimitsu and his son Yoshisuke, ending with their appointments as governors.

The middle part of the mandala depicts the precinct of Zenkōji surrounded by the natural landscape. Two rivers flow at the bottom,<sup>25</sup> and in the upper part of the mandala, a distant view of mountains is depicted. The temple compound

25. One river is believed to be the Sai River (*Sai-gawa*) and the other the Susobana River (*Susobana-gawa*). A boat carrying men and women sails on the Sai River. A bridge crosses over the Susobana River, where a group of men and women transport a log for the reconstruction of temple structures, and more logs are piled up in the cottage erected temporarily next to the main hall. Two stupas standing between the rivers are believed to refer to the story of a disowned father and a disowned son who were unable to confess their parent-child relationship to each other.



FIGURE 3. People surrounding the main hall. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.

is divided into two sections: an outer area with a five-story pagoda in the center and an inner area dominated by the main hall (*hondō*). Both areas are filled with buildings and figures that are featured in narrative stories associated with worship practices at Zenkōji. In the main hall in the inner area, a group of chanting monks are facing an altar. An Amida triad is visible in the left side of the hall, indicating that it is the time of the special showing of the replica which happens every seventh year (FIGURE 2). Various people surround the main hall (FIGURE 3), including pilgrims and a monk holding a lock which is thought to have been used on the small shrine housing the replica.<sup>26</sup> Despite Zenkōji's reputation for being popular among women, not many female pilgrims are depicted. However, female characters such as the noblewoman falling into hell, the old women approaching the main hall from the gates (east, west), and the twin Datsueba images prominently placed by the middle gate, play important roles in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, which I will discuss below.<sup>27</sup>

### *Noblewoman's Fall into Hell*

Compared to other scenes of the origin story, a large part of the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala is devoted to illustrating the episode taking place in hell in the lower left (FIGURE 4), and figures that are usually not mentioned in Zenkōji's origin story can be observed. The story of a noblewoman falling into hell came to be incorporated into the narrative of Zenkōji from the thirteenth century, and it is one of the episodes included in later versions of the Zenkōji origin story in which female characters play significant roles. The identity of the noblewoman and the reason for her fall are not always consistent among versions of the story. She is variously described as an imperial princess, a wife of Emperor Yōmei, or Empress Kōgyoku (594–661). She falls into hell due to her unfaithfulness, her femaleness, and/or her enthronement, which goes against the theory of the five obstacles asserting that a woman cannot be reborn as any of five sacred figures including a king and a buddha.<sup>28</sup> However, according to Taira Masayuki, this tale originally had nothing to do with the inferior nature of femaleness. He posits that the fall of a beautiful noblewoman into hell was a suitable motif to make a dramatic contrast between pleasure in the human realm and suffering

26. For further details and analysis of the imagery depicted in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, see NISHIYAMA (1998, 113–22); TERASAWA (2011, 97–103); TAKAHASHI (1987, 32–36); ŌSAKA SHIRITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN (1987, 134–37); and IWAHANA (1997, 121–22).

27. There is another gate in the north. According to Nishiyama Masaru, this gate was supposed to be used when pilgrims exit the precinct (NISHIYAMA 1998, 118).

28. The Buddhist theory of the five obstacles postulates a woman's inability to be reborn as any of five sacred figures: a brahma, a shakra, a devil king, an ideal king, or a buddha. Women have to be reborn as men first in order to become these sacred figures, thus it implies women's spiritual inferiority to men; see TAIRA (1990, 90–91; 2014, 25); NISHIYAMA (1998, 130–34).



FIGURE 4. A noblewoman's fall into hell. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.



FIGURE 5. Women praying to Nyoirin Kannon in the Blood Pond Hell. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.

in hell (TAIRA 2014, 28). The efficacy of Zenkōji temple is underscored when the contrast is more extreme, and the episode also enabled Zenkōji to claim a relationship with the imperial court. However, references to the theory of the five obstacles, as well as female inferiority, became conventional by the fifteenth century. As the episode was disseminated as a part of the origin story, the noblewoman came to symbolize female “inferiority,” and Zenkōji came to be recognized as a temple saving women from hell.<sup>29</sup>

Among the scenes that are not ordinarily represented in the Zenkōji origin story is the Blood Pond Hell.<sup>30</sup> In the bottom of the hell scene, one woman on a lotus flower is being saved from the Blood Pond Hell, and two women drowning in the pond pray to Nyoirin Kannon, who is often considered as the savior from this hell (FIGURE 5). A sharp contrast may also be made here by using ambivalent narratives associated with the *Blood Pond Sutra* (*Ketsubon kyō* 血盆経). For example, while the *Blood Pond Sutra* condemns women, it also focuses on their salvation. In other words, the defiled nature of women becomes the prerequisite to lead them to salvation. The more the inferiority of women was emphasized, the more dramatic their eventual salvation became. Motivated by misogyny or not, the narrative of the *Blood Pond Sutra* is highly gendered, and the gendered narrative embedded in the popular imagination of hell is expressed in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala.

Another unusual image depicted in this mandala is the Limbo for Children (*Sai no kawara* 賽の河原) which appears adjacent to the scene of hell (FIGURE 6). While it is another well-established motif in the popular imagination of hell, it is likewise absent in written and illustrated narratives of the Zenkōji origin story. Though Jizō was popular as a savior of all sentient beings in the Six Realms, especially in hell, he further gained popularity among the populace in the late medieval period when he also became recognized as the savior as well as the

29. Focusing on one version of the Zenkōji origin story—the *Manabon Zenkōji engi* 真名本善光寺縁起 (The origin story of Zenkōji written in Chinese characters) dated 1668—TAIRA (2014, 28) examines the relationship between Zenkōji and the negative perception of women. According to him, this particular version of the origin story contributed to associating Zenkōji with the idea of female inferiority. However, he also argues that such a negative perception of women is less evident in other versions, even in the texts contemporary with the *Manabon Zenkōji engi*. Yoshihara Hiroto examines meanings embedded in the episode of Empress Kōgyoku falling into hell in the Zenkōji origin story. In particular, he points out that Yoshisuke’s encounter with her in hell is a foreshadowing of the construction of the large temple structure of Zenkōji (YOSHIHARA 1990).

30. The Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala borrows images from both the illustrated origin story of Zenkōji and the illustrated hagiography of the founder of the True Pure Land sect, Shinran. Although scenes of hell are depicted in these paintings, neither the Blood Pond Hell nor Jizō in the Limbo for Children are represented.

protector of children.<sup>31</sup> In the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, Jizō's appearance in the Limbo for Children marks the border between hell and the world of the living. Moreover, the Sai River (*Sai gawa* 犀川) located in the south of Zenkōji can be seen here flowing from the Limbo for Children (*Sai no kawara*). It may be likened to the Limbo for Children because of the river's name "Sai" and its function as a liminal space between the sacred and the profane. In hell paintings, Datsueba was sometimes depicted together with Jizō since the Limbo for Children is said to be located by the Sanzu River.<sup>32</sup> However, in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, Datsueba is not depicted in hell or with Jizō in the Limbo for Children.

### *Three Gates Leading to the Main Hall*

In the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, the pair of Datsueba images are placed at one of three gates (the middle gate) leading to the main hall. In addition to Datsueba, there are two other female figures positioned by gates that I believe are associated with the notion of salvation: specifically, the old woman chasing a divine cow at the west gate (FIGURE 7) and the old woman being led from the east gate to the hall by a young boy (FIGURE 8). Although the image of an old woman led by a young boy is a common motif observed in other pilgrimage mandalas and related paintings,<sup>33</sup> the depiction of an old woman chasing a cow is a unique feature of the *Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala*. It illustrates the famous legend at Zenkōji in which the Zenkōji Buddha assumes the form of a cow and leads an unfaithful woman to the temple in order to encourage her to become a Bud-

31. KURODA Hideo (1989, 112) has done extensive research on the association of Jizō with children in visual imagery. For further information on Jizō and worship practices dedicated to this bodhisattva, see GLASSMAN (2012) and WATARI (2011).

32. For example, in the Pure Land Mandala (*Jōdo mandara*) at Jōrakuji temple in Kawasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, Datsueba under a tree is depicted beside Jizō in the Limbo for Children in the bottom right. Also in the Hell painting preserved at Daiseiji temple in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, a scene of Jizō together with children on a floating cloud is depicted above Datsueba in the upper right. These visual images can be found in the exhibition catalog *Enma tōjō*. See KAWASAKI-SHI SHIMIN MYŪJIAMU (1989, 22–23).

33. Tokuda Kazuo points out that the image of an old woman being led by a young child is a common motif in medieval and early modern Japanese paintings. He introduces various examples, including several illustrated temple origin stories, the illustrated hagiography of Hōnen, and the *Rakuchū rakugai zu* (Scenes in and around the capital). This image also appears in other pilgrimage mandalas such as the Kiyomizudera Pilgrimage Mandala (*Kiyomizudera sankei mandara*), the Senkōji Pilgrimage Mandala (*Senkōji sankei mandara*), the Painting of Gionsha Ōmandokoro (*Gionsha Ōmandokoro ezu*), and in the Kumano Heart Contemplation Ten Worlds Mandalas (*Kumano kanjin jikkai mandara*) (TOKUDA 1990, 93–95). Illustrations of these pilgrimage mandalas and one Kumano Heart Contemplation Ten Worlds Mandala can be found in *Shaji sankei mandara*.





FIGURE 6. Jizō in the Limbo for Children. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.



FIGURE 7. An old woman chasing a cow at the west gate. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.

dhist devotee.<sup>34</sup> With the aid of others (cow and child), these two old women are about to reach the main hall where they will encounter Amida Buddha and ensure their rebirth in his Pure Land. Akin to the cow and the child leading the old women, I believe that a salvic role can also be observed in the twin images of Datsueba placed at either side of the middle gate (the south) that the majority of pilgrims pass through before reaching the main hall where the sacred Amida triad is enshrined. Below I will discuss some possible functions and narratives embedded in the twin images of Datsueba by referring to stories and worship practices associated with Zenkōji.

### *The Twin Images of Datsueba*

Since Zenkōji has been rebuilt many times throughout history, there is a possibility that a pair of *uba* halls enshrining Datsueba images once existed. However, there are no *uba* halls in the present-day Zenkōji temple compound, and they cannot be found in other paintings or maps depicting former structures

34. According to the legend, an old woman indifferent toward Buddhism lived near Shinano Zenkōji. One day when she was soaking clothes she had woven in a river, a black cow appeared and snatched a piece of white cloth on its horn. The woman started chasing the cow, and she eventually reached the main hall of Zenkōji. Upon seeing the dignified temple structure she did not even know existed, she became deeply devoted to Buddhism. The story ends with disclosing the identity of the black cow; that is, the cow was a manifestation of Amida who was concerned about the old woman's lack of faith (TOKUDA 1990, 97–98). Gorai Shigeru argues for the religious significance of the white cloth, speculating that the word “*oshi*” (a guide leading pilgrims to sacred sites) became corrupted into the word “*ushi*” (cow) in the saying “*ushi ni hikarete Zenkōji*” (visiting Zenkōji while being led by a cow). He proposes that the saying originally derived from the practice of *oshi* aiding pilgrims as they traversed difficult paths by leading them with a white rope called *zen no tsuna* (rope of virtue) (GORAI 2007, 257–60). In this sense, the white cloth is a symbolically important religious item because it facilitates pilgrims in their journey. On the other hand, Tokuda considers conversion of the unfaithful woman to be the main theme of the story and that the motif of a white cloth was later incorporated in order to evoke the everyday life of an old woman. Pointing out that the white cloth on the horn of the black cow is not visible in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, he posits that the image in the mandala derived from an earlier version or perhaps the story in the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, which features an Indian woman chasing a cow to a temple (TOKUDA 1990, 99–109). As these scholars suggest, the white cloth may have a religious significance, or it may merely be indicative of everyday life; the mandala may not depict a white cloth on the horn of the cow, since it is hard to ascertain the details of the image due to the disintegration of pigments. However, the narrative of a cow snatching a white cloth can be intimated from what can be seen. The image of a cow snatching the white cloth was widely known among the populace in the Edo period due to the circulation of woodblock printed pictures. Viewers presumably would have associated the image in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala with the popular tale. Since in oral literature, narrative stories are often geared toward the knowledge and understanding of the audience, the white cloth could still function as a means to lead the woman to Zenkōji and mend her impious ways regardless of the depiction or intended religious significance of the white cloth.



of Zenkōji.<sup>35</sup> As a result, the twin images of Datsueba (FIGURE 9) in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala have been variously interpreted as women selling burial shrouds or white cloths used at the *raigō-e* 来迎会 ritual,<sup>36</sup> or soliciting contributions.<sup>37</sup> Such women may have sold clothes or collected offerings by the middle gate; however, the manner of depicting these figures is identical with other Datsueba imagery. For example, like many representations of Datsueba in hell paintings, in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala the pair of old hags sit with one knee up and hold a white cloth and a black rod. Their hair is loose and manner of dressing is sloppy, exposing their breasts, and a tree hung with white clothes stands beside each of what appear to be *uba* halls. All of these features point to the womens' identification as Datsueba, not merchant women or nuns.

Regarding Datsueba's role in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, whereas she sometimes marks the entrance to the otherworld, this function is assigned to other images (scene of the real landscape Sai River flowing from the otherworldly Limbo for Children) as discussed above. Rather she is positioned at a gate marking one of the different levels of sacredness in the temple precinct of Zenkōji, part of a symbolic "map" which could be described as follows. The Sai River at the bottom of the scroll marks the border between the sacred and the profane; above the river, the southern gate with guardian Niō statues (Niō gate) is the main entrance for pilgrims coming to Zenkōji. Finally, between the Niō gate and the main worship hall with the principal icon, the middle gate is attended by the twin Datsueba images pointing pilgrims to the most sacred area of the temple precinct. Therefore, although Datsueba's appearance in hell is linked with bad deeds and punishment, I believe that the twin images of Datsueba here are more likely associated with the notion of salvation, considering that they are positioned at the middle gate leading to the main hall where Amida is enshrined. Below, I will demonstrate how the Datsueba images in the mandala possibly relate to a salvic notion at Zenkōji.

First of all, the twin images of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala may serve to connect the temple precinct with the world of the dead as well as with

35. I visited Daihongan and Daikanjin at Zenkōji on 8 February 2015 and was told that a large number of works and documents still remain uncatalogued. Therefore, while at present there is no documentation or other material evidence of *uba* halls at the former precinct of Zenkōji in Nagano, there is still a possibility that such halls once existed.

36. This was a ritual re-enacting the descent of Amida Buddha from his western Pure Land to earth.

37. Takahashi Hira'aki presumes that these women are selling clothes used in a *raigō-e* ritual, though it is unknown whether such a ceremony was ever held at Zenkōji. He also introduces interpretations that consider them as nuns soliciting contributions (TAKAHASHI 1987, 34). In the comment on the twin images of Datsueba in *Shaji sankei mandara*, Fukuhara Masaki suggests that the twin images of Datsueba may allude to ordinary women who are selling burial shrouds (ŌSAKA SHIRITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN 1987, 137).



FIGURE 8. An old woman led by a young boy at the east gate. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.



FIGURE 9. Twin images of Datsueba by the middle gate. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.



FIGURE 10. A man bringing a five-elements stupa to a hall. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.



FIGURE 11. Five-elements stupas placed along the walls surrounding the temple precinct. Detail from Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala preserved at Osaka City Museum. Photograph by author with permission.

Amida's Pure Land, considering the custom of interring ashes at Zenkōji. Ashes of a deceased person are usually placed in an urn and buried in a grave, but urns or portions of ashes are sometimes deposited at temples. According to Terasawa Shingo, there is historical evidence of the practice of interring ashes at Zenkōji. Episodes in which ashes of the deceased are deposited here can be found in stories composed in the Kamakura period, and a number of five-elements stupas (*gorintō* 五輪塔) that used to hold ashes have been discovered around Zenkōji temple, some of which date to the Muromachi period.<sup>38</sup> In the upper left of the temple precinct in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, a man is shown bringing a five-elements stupa to a hall enshrining another Amida triad (FIGURE 10). This stupa presumably holds the ashes of a deceased person, and a number of similar five-elements stupas are placed along the walls surrounding the temple precinct (FIGURE 11).

Regarding the stone stupas depicted within the temple precinct in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, Nishiyama Masaru proposes that Zenkōji was conceptualized as a burial ground or the otherworld. According to him, the twin images of Datsueba further allude to this perception by comparing the temple precinct with hell and suggesting that eventual salvation can be attained through worshiping Amida in the main hall (NISHIYAMA 1998, 122). Terasawa Shingo compares the practice of depositing ashes at Zenkōji with a similar custom at Mt. Kōya. One of the reasons for the popularity of interring ashes at Mt. Kōya was the belief that Mt. Kōya represents the Pure Land on earth. By bringing ashes of a deceased person to Mt. Kōya, his or her attainment of rebirth in the Pure Land could be actualized. Terasawa believes that the same idea underlay the practice at Zenkōji. That is, in order to ensure salvation of the deceased, their ashes were brought to Zenkōji which was similarly believed to correspond to the Pure Land on earth (TERASAWA 2011, 95).

Another interpretation supporting the notion of a salvific aspect of the Datsueba images is hinted at by the white cloths they are holding. While white cloths are often symbolic items associated with Datsueba, in ritual practices such as *raigō-e* rituals they also symbolize devotion to Amida Buddha, which is an essential condition for rebirth in the Pure Land. *Raigō-e* is a ritual performance acting out the descent of Amida Buddha with his attending bodhisattvas, which is conducted at many temples across Japan.<sup>39</sup> Takahashi Hiraaki speculates that

38. Terasawa Shingo argues for the practice of interring ashes at Zenkōji, citing as evidence episodes in the *Shasekishū* 沙石集 and the *Soga monogatari* 曾我物語 as well as excavated five-elements stupas. In the story of a woman who died from lovesickness and was transformed into a snake in the *Shasekishū*, her parents were planning to deposit her ashes at Zenkōji. In the *Soga monogatari*, Toragozen 虎御前, a lover of the older Soga brother, visited Zenkōji to deposit the ashes of both Soga brothers who died in battle. Several five-elements stupas dating between 1383 and 1543 have been discovered at Zenkōji (see TERASAWA 2011, 94–95).

39. The *raigō-e* ritual is a Pure Land Buddhist ceremony in which performers reenact the scene of Amida Buddha and his attending bodhisattvas descending to earth to take the deceased

the Datsueba-like women sitting in the two *uba* halls in the mandala are selling white cloths for pilgrims to lay on the ground for *raigō-e*, although he acknowledges that it is unknown if such a ritual was actually held at Shinano Zenkōji (TAKAHASHI 1987, 34). If one accepts Takahashi's interpretation that the white cloth signifies the path to salvation represented by *raigō-e*, the twin images of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala may indeed be related to the theme of *Niga byakudō* 二河白道 (Two rivers and a white path), and they may recall the story of the founder of the Ji sect of Pure Land Buddhism, Ippen (1239–1289), who was reportedly religiously motivated by the image of *Niga byakudō* he saw at Zenkōji in Shinano.<sup>40</sup>

*Niga byakudō* is a metaphor to explain the significance of the single-minded pursuit of rebirth in the Pure Land,<sup>41</sup> comparing this quest with crossing the two rivers connected with earthly desires: the river of giant waves symbolizing wrath and the river of roaring flames symbolizing greed. Only those who contemplate on Amida Buddha with complete devotion are able to reach the Pure Land represented on the other shore by walking across the thread-like white path set in the middle of the two rivers. This metaphor came to be visualized in illustrations referred to as *Niga byakudō zu* 二河白道図 (Picture of two rivers and a white path) to disseminate Shandao's teaching after it was introduced to Japan by Hōnen and Shinran.<sup>42</sup> According to the *Ippen hijiri e* 一遍聖絵, which illustrates the religious

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back to the Pure Land. In a variation of this ritual held at Taimadera temple in Nara Prefecture, a statue of Princess Chūjō (Chūjō hime 中将姫) is escorted by Amida's attending bodhisattvas. She is first placed in the *shabadō* 娑婆堂 (hall of this world) representing the living world of humans, and the bodhisattvas come to welcome her from the *gokurakudō* 極樂堂 (hall of paradise) representing the western Pure Land of Amida Buddha. Escorted by the bodhisattvas, a statue of Princess Chūjō is carried across the bridge called *raigō bashi* 来迎橋 to reach the *gokurakudō* (GORAI 2007, 501–502).

40. According to Gorai, this pilgrimage to Zenkōji was one of three important events in Ippen's religious career along with his encounters with Kumano *gongen* and Hōnen. Seeing the *Niga byakudō* came first among these encounters, and upon being inspired by the metaphorical image, Ippen determined to live the life of an itinerant monk. See GORAI (2007, 491–97).

41. The significance of devotion to Amida Buddha, the essential teaching in the metaphor of *Niga byakudō*, is also expressed by the depiction of Tsumado-shū monks chanting in front of an altar in the main hall. According to Gorai Shigeru, Tsumado-shū monks at Zenkōji were responsible for attending the Zenkōji Buddha and continuously reciting the *nenbutsu* 念仏 (calling of the name of Amida). Although Tsumado-shū monks at Zenkōji were originally not affiliated with any sect, because their practice of reciting *nenbutsu* was shared with the Pure Land sect, they came to be associated with the Ji sect (GORAI 2007, 491–93). In the mandala, the scene of chanting Tsumado-shū monks is supposed to be witnessed by pilgrims after they enter the inner precinct via the middle gate attended by twin Datsueba holding white cloths.

42. The metaphor of *Niga byakudō* is introduced in *Kanmuryōjūkyō sho* 觀無量壽經疏 (Commentaries on the *Sutra on the Contemplation of Buddha Amitabha*) written by the Chinese Pure Land patriarch Shandao 善導 (Jp. Zendō, 613–681). For examples of *Niga byakudō zu*, see ISHIGAMI (1990, 142–46). Considering that paintings of *Niga byakudō* were narrated to an

journey of Ippen between 1239 and 1289, Ippen visited Zenkōji when he renewed his religious vows in 1271. There he encountered the renowned Amida triad, and he made a copy of the *Niga byakudō* picture enshrined in Zenkōji's main hall. Upon relocating to Iyo (Ehime Prefecture), Ippen meditated on and recited in front of the image of *Niga byakudō*, which he enshrined as the principal object of worship. If the white cloths portrayed in the mandala are to be used in a *raigō-e* ritual as posited by Takahashi, they may epitomize devotion as indicated by the white path in *Niga byakudō*, serving as symbolic markers directing the attention of worshippers to the main hall where they can secure rebirth in the Pure Land.

Gorai Shigeru compares the teaching embodied in *Niga byakudō* with the *Nunohashi kanjōe* 布橋灌頂会 (Cloth bridge consecration) ritual conducted by Ashikuraji priests at Tateyama in Toyama prefecture,<sup>43</sup> in which participants experience ritual rebirth by walking across a bridge which is overlaid with strips of white cloth (GORAI 2007, 500–502). This ceremony is regarded as *gishi saisei* 擬死再生, the ritual enactment of death and rebirth which is believed to expiate bad karma, ensure health and happiness in life, and guarantee rebirth in the Pure Land. Gorai also suggests the possibility that a quasi-cloth bridge consecration ritual used to be held at Zenkōji.<sup>44</sup>

Although its appearance is quite different from the Cloth Bridge Consecration ritual described above, such a *gishi saisei* ritual does exist at Zenkōji in the form of *kaidan meguri* 戒壇巡り (lit. traversing the ordination platform).<sup>45</sup> Instead of

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audience, Ishigami discusses the teaching expressed in the paintings and examines the development of images and possible interpretations.

43. The Cloth Bridge Consecration ritual is depicted in some Tateyama mandalas. Led by monks, women dressed in white walk from the hall of Enma to the *uba* hall enshrining the principal deity of Ashikuraji, Ubason. Between the two halls is a bridge called Nunobashi (cloth bridge) that was built over the Uba Hall River (*Ubadōgawa* 姥堂川), and strips of white cloth are laid down on it to form a path between the halls (see AVERBUCH 2011).

44. Gorai considers that at popular temples like Zenkōji, teachings must have been understood by followers through physical enactment rather than theoretical contemplation. Therefore, he speculates that a quasi-Cloth Bridge Consecration might have been conducted at Zenkōji in order to convey the teaching of *Niga byakudō*. According to his supposition, the main hall was compared with Amida's Pure Land, and a hall representing the world of humans was built somewhere between the main hall and the main gate. A bridge connected the two halls, and the teaching of *Niga byakudō* was performed by walking on white cloth forming a path on the bridge (GORAI 2007, 498).

45. According to temple tradition, Saichō 最澄 (767–822), the founder of the Tendai sect, established the ordination platform (*kaidan*) in the basement underneath the main altar (*ruridan* 瑠璃壇) in 815. As the term “*kaidan*” demonstrates, it is considered to have originally been a place where monks performed *kaidan meguri* to be officially ordained. In the *Zenkōji kikō* 善光寺紀行 (Account of a journey to Zenkōji), the Tendai monk Gyōe 堯惠 (1430–?) reports that he spent one night in front of the altar in the main hall and then performed *ruridan meguri* (lit. traversing the altar) at Zenkōji in 1465 (PLUTSCHOW and FUKUDA 1981, 82). Although he does not give a descriptive account of this *ruridan meguri*, it is thought that he performed *kaidan meguri*. See SAKAI (1969, 495); PLUTSCHOW and FUKUDA (1981, 115).

crossing a bridge, worshippers pass through complete darkness to ritually be reborn. During *kaidan meguri* at Zenkōji, pilgrims walk down into the basement of the main hall, grope their way along the dark passage while feeling for the iron lock which will enable them to establish a karmic connection with the principal Buddha of Zenkōji, and eventually come back to the ground level. By walking through the pitch black underground passage, they experience a kind of ritual death and rebirth (GORAI 2007, 293–144, 497–98). Since this practice takes place in the basement of the main hall, the scene itself is not visible in the mandala. This underground tunnel is often compared with hell and worshippers ritually experience “death.” Since Datsueba is closely associated with hell and frequently marks the border with the otherworld, the presence of the twin images of her here may be a device pointing to the practice of *kaidan meguri* as discussed by Nishiyama.<sup>46</sup>

Since several Edo-period diary entries report that it cost six *mon* to perform *kaidan meguri* at Zenkōji,<sup>47</sup> a possible connection between Datsueba and *kaidan meguri* could be suggested, presuming that the fee refers to *rokudō-sen* 六道銭 (lit. “money of the Six Realms”). *Rokudō-sen*, also called *rokumon-sen* 六文銭 (lit. “six one-*mon* coins”), refers to a set of six coins often interred with a deceased person. This custom originally emerged from a folk belief that the coins ensure the safety and peace of a person after death, but it came to be associated with the Buddhist concept of the Six Realms. In the medieval period, *rokudō-sen* were considered to be an offering for Jizō bodhisattva who appears in each of the Six Realms. Yet, by the Edo period the six coins came to be understood as the ferriage for crossing the Sanzu River. According to an early modern folk belief, there was a miserly ferryman who would refuse to embark if the deceased had no money, and they would be stuck at the riverbank.<sup>48</sup> Considering that *kaidan meguri* at one point in history cost six *mon*, the equivalent to the ferry passage

46. Nishiyama Masaru argues that the number of five-ringed stupas placed around the temple precinct in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala indicate that Zenkōji was characterized as the otherworld or a burial ground. To enter the main hall, pilgrims have to pass between the images of Datsueba in *uba* halls located beside trees hung with white burial shrouds. Because Datsueba resides at the entrance to hell and because those whose clothes were stripped off by her must go to hell, the images of Datsueba in the *uba* halls hinted to pilgrims that they were now in hell and must wait for salvation by Amida Buddha. According to NISHIYAMA (1998, 121–22), therefore, pilgrims would be informed that salvation could be attained through the ritual of *kaidan meguri*.

47. In his diary entry dated the eleventh day of the second month, 1883, Suzuki Gengorō 鈴木源五郎 wrote that he spent six *mon* to perform *kaidan meguri* at Zenkōji (*Ise sangū dōchūki* 伊勢參宮道中記 [Travel diary of a pilgrimage to Ise Shrine], 446). Also, a diary entry by Shimizu Genjō 清水源之丞 reports that he made an offering of six *mon* when he performed *kaidan meguri* at Zenkōji on the twentieth day of the third month, 1859 (*Dōchū nikki tebikaesho* 1982, 1075).

48. For further information on *rokudō-sen*, see SUZUKI (1994, 16–21); SHINTANI and SEKIZAWA (2005, 122–23).

fare to cross the Sanzu River by which Datsueba resides, it is possible to interpret the placement of Datsueba images at the middle gate in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala as evoking the rite of *kaidan meguri*, during which worshippers experience death and pass through hell.

Furthermore, if one accepts the interpretation that the white cloths held by Datsueba and hung on the trees beside the *uba* halls are burial shrouds,<sup>49</sup> they may serve as evidence pointing to the custom of dressing in a costume for *kaidan meguri*. In the Edo period, pilgrims often wore a shroud and a pair of sandals, and held a plain wooden rosary when they performed the *kaidan meguri* ritual.<sup>50</sup> This custom was reported in a diary entry dated the eleventh day of the second month, 1857, in the *Ise sangū dōchūki* written by Suzuki Gengorō.<sup>51</sup> It cannot be confirmed if Zenkōji pilgrims changed their clothes at *uba* halls as occurred at Risshakuji 立石寺 in Yamagata Prefecture, where worshippers offered their old clothing to Datsueba upon entering the temple compound compared with the otherworld.<sup>52</sup> However, Datsueba is indeed very connected with clothing after death, and I believe that the twin images of Datsueba enshrined in *uba* halls in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala may be connected to the ritual of *kaidan meguri* and the custom of changing into a costume before participating in this rite.

Finally, the meaning of “pairing” needs to be examined. I will attempt to explain this issue in relation to *kaidan meguri* while exploring other possible interpretations. The depiction of twin images of Datsueba, as well as two *uba* halls, is rare, and I believe is unique to this mandala. It is not unusual for Datsueba to be paired with another figure associated with hell. As described in the *Jizō jūō kyō*, Ken’ō is said to be Datsueba’s male counterpart and they cooperate in carrying out the tasks of estimating deeds of the deceased. Datsueba’s association with this scripture resulted in her being pictured with Enma or one of the other Ten Kings of Hell in illustrations.<sup>53</sup> Folk beliefs in Aomori Prefecture

49. The white clothes pictured with Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala are thought to be burial shrouds by Fukuhara Toshio and by Nishiyama Masaru. See ŌSAKA SHIRITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN (1987, 137) and NISHIYAMA (1998, 122).

50. Until a few decades ago, this custom was observed in Zenkōji. See ZENKŌJI JIMUKYOKU (2009, 90–91).

51. In 1857, a group of seven men including Suzuki Gengorō travelled from Niigata Prefecture to the Ise Shrine in Mie Prefecture. During their journey, they stopped at various places including Zenkōji. See *Tokorozawa-shi shi kinsei shiryō* 2, in *Ise sangū dōchūki* (1983, 446).

52. A panel placed by the *uba* hall at Risshakuji explains that the *uba* hall enshrining statues of Datsueba marks the border between paradise and hell. The area above the *uba* hall is conceptualized as a paradise, and the area below the *uba* hall, hell. Pilgrims were supposed to change their clothes at the *uba* hall and offer their old clothing to Datsueba. For Datsueba’s function to mark the border at Risshakuji, see SEKIGUCHI (2009, 74).

53. Although Datsueba appears in the passages devoted to the second king Shokō-ō, she is sometimes depicted with other Ten Kings of Hell. For example, she is pictured with the first king



pair Datsueba with Enma, believing them to be a couple or a mother and a son.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, since the Limbo for Children is said to be located by the Sanzu River where Datsueba resides,<sup>55</sup> Jizō is sometimes pictured together with Datsueba. In some hell paintings, the bridge over the Sanzu River merges into the concept of a bridge leading to salvation, and Jizō is often seen leading a couple on the bridge located behind Datsueba who are taking the clothes of the deceased.<sup>56</sup> However, different from these paired associations with another figure, the two images of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala are identical twins and symmetrically face one another. Although it is difficult to confirm the meaning of this unique pairing in the mandala, I would like to suggest some possible interpretations below.

To begin with, I would like to consider Datsueba's traditional role as a "gate-keeper." She is often positioned as a point of passage or transition, usually to the world of the dead. In the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, the placement of twin images of her near the middle gate suggests that she may have served as a gate-keeper marking the entrance to areas in the temple precinct conceptualized as Amida's Pure Land as well as the world of the dead.

As gatekeepers who monitor pilgrims visiting temples, pairs of ferocious guardian figures called Niō 仁王 (Benevolent Kings; Sk. Vajrapani) are often placed at the main gate of Buddhist temples. In Pali sutras, Vajrapani (Vajrapani) is a *yaksa* guardian deity who offered the historical Buddha protection during his journey preaching Buddhism throughout India. Although in the tantric tradition Vajrapani is worshiped individually as a protector of both tantras and tantra reciters, in East Asia he appears as a pair of masculine angry guardian

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Shinkō-ō in the *Nison-in bon Jūō zu* (Nison'in version of the painting of the Ten Kings) and the *Jōfukuji bon Jūō zu* (Jōfukuji version of the painting of the Ten Kings), and with the fourth king Gokan-ō in the *Dairakuji bon Jizō Jūō zu* (Dairakuji version of the painting of Jizō and the Ten Kings). Illustrations can be found in *Jigoku yūran* (TOYAMA-KEN TATEYAMA HAKUBUTSUKAN 2001, 48, 50). In the hell painting preserved at Jufukuji temple in Kawasaki City, Kanagawa Prefecture, Datsueba can be seen sitting in front of Enma. This illustration can be found in *Enma tōjō* (KAWASAKI-SHI SHIMIN MYŪJIAMU 1989, 3).

54. KŌDATE Naomi (2006, 56) introduces folk beliefs regarding the relationship between Enma and Datsueba she witnessed during her fieldwork in Aomori prefecture.

55. The *Fuji no hitoana no sōshi* written in the Muromachi period is thought to contain the earliest reference to the Limbo for Children. According to a version of this text dated 1603, the Sanzu River is said to be located west of the Limbo for Children, and Datsueba, a manifestation of Dainichi Buddha, takes the clothes of evil-doers. For pertinent passages, see *Fuji no hitoana no sōshi*, 436.

56. Examining the image of Jizō leading a couple on a bridge over the Sanzu River, Takasu Jun argues that this bridge is not directed to hell or the lesser realms but to salvation. For his discussion on how a bridge leading one to the lesser realms was transformed into a bridge leading one to salvation, see TAKASU (2000, 9–10).

deities.<sup>57</sup> It is possible that the pair of Datsueba figures in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala may be related to this custom of enshrining dual images of one guardian deity on either side of the main gate.

Finally, there is another possible interpretation of the pairing of Datsueba images related to the practice of *kaidan meguri*. As described above, during this ritual enactment of death and rebirth, worshipers ritually enter hell and then come back to the human realm to start the next life. The two images of Datsueba, therefore, may represent death and rebirth by marking the entrances leading to the world of the dead and to the next life. On one hand, as described in the *Jizō jūō kyō*, Datsueba is assigned to the task of taking the clothes of the deceased and sending them to hell or the underworld. On the other hand, as argued by scholars who have examined the relationship between Datsueba and *uba-gami*, such as Yanagita Kunio and Kawamura Kunimitsu,<sup>58</sup> she also possesses characteristics of a fertility deity. Moreover, Hara Chisato has pointed out that while this aspect is not apparent in medieval texts, examples of Datsueba assuming the role of life-giving can be observed first in writing in a version of *Tengu no dairi*, an *oto-gizōshi* tale written in the eighteenth century.<sup>59</sup> In the tale, when an evildoer begs Enma for pity at his court, Datsueba interrupts them, saying that the clothes of the evildoer need to be offered to her. She claims that she is responsible for lending people *enakin* 胞衣布 (lit. placenta cloth; baby clothes) at childbirth and thus the evildoer must return his clothes to her after death.<sup>60</sup> It should be acknowledged that this story is not related to Zenkōji; however, since it was widely circulated among the populace, Datsueba's aspect as a life-giving deity might have been recognized by the time the tale was written. Therefore, I believe that it is possible to interpret the twin images of Datsueba as gatekeepers of the death

57. Among diverse manifestations of Vajrapani, Vajradhana, another important figure in the Tantric tradition, is closely related to Vajrapani, for their names may be derived from the same deity. For a brief survey of Vajrapani, see *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (KEOWN and PREBISH 2007). Also, for an overview of Niō, see ICHISAKA (1995, 2–14).

58. Considering their shared characteristics as fertility deities, YANAGITA (1962) discusses the connection between Datsueba and a wide range of goddesses, including *uba-gami*. He argues that these female deities came to be perceived as Datsueba due to the popularity of Buddhism. Kawamura agrees with Yanagita that fertility deities are interchangeable with Datsueba. However, criticizing Yanagita's interpretation of Datsueba as a mere manifestation of *uba-gami*, he emphasizes the significance of various beliefs and folk images in the development of Datsueba's character. Kawamura also argues that her ugly, terrifying appearance reflected the unfavorable attitude toward women and femaleness in the social and religious spheres. For further details, see KAWAMURA (1994; 1996; 2010).

59. Examining the representations of Datsueba in written texts, Hara Chisato has organized written narratives on Datsueba and demonstrated diversity among them. See HARA (2011, 85–94, 98–99).

60. For pertinent passages, see *Fuji no hitoana no sōshi* in vol. 9 of *Muromachi jidai mono gatari taisei*, 612.

and rebirth experienced by worshippers during *kaidan meguri*: in one Datsueba prepares them for death and hell, and the other for the next life.

Although pilgrims ritually experienced hell during *kaidan meguri*, in the context of the pilgrimage mandala, what Datsueba signifies is not retribution or lower levels of rebirth. She instead alludes to eventual salvation because the focus of *kaidan meguri* is on the efficacy of the Zenkōji Buddha rather than torture in hell. While the meaning of pairing is difficult to confirm, in any case, this unique depiction of twin Datsueba images would get twice as much attention from viewers of the mandala, and therefore I believe that her twofold presence could serve to direct their attention to an important aspect of Zenkōji *shinkō*: salvation. In sum, the pair of Datsueba images function to signal the ritual practice which is taking place, but invisible in the mandala, hinting at the salvation that pilgrims eventually attain at Zenkōji.

### Summary

This article has examined the depiction of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, focusing first on the landscape of hell and images of old women in order to explore Datsueba's significance and symbolic roles. As demonstrated, the gendered hell depicted in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala is not necessarily based on written versions of the temple's founding. Although it borrows many motifs from illustrated origin stories, it also includes subjects that are not usually mentioned in connection with Zenkōji, for example, the Blood Pond Hell and the Limbo for Children. This aspect seems to reflect the influence of the popular imagination of hell of the period in which the mandala was made. Although Datsueba is commonly positioned in the landscape of such hell, here she appears within the precinct of Zenkōji, seated on both sides of the middle gate leading to the main hall. Datsueba often appears in a liminal space between this world and the otherworld in hell paintings, where she marks the border between the sacred and the profane. At first glance, however, such a role is not evident in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala because instead of Datsueba, the Limbo for Children functions as a liminal space between the world of the living and hell, and the Sai River serves as the border between the sacred and the profane. Instead, the twin images of Datsueba mark the entrance to a higher level of sacredness in the precinct and appear to be linked with the notion of salvation. That is, her association with death and hell shifts to indicate the salvation that is possible at Zenkōji.

The prominent presence of Datsueba within the precinct could also function to support conceptualizing the temple precinct as embracing the world of the dead as well as the Pure Land. A man is depicted bringing a five-elements stupa to one of the halls and a number of nearly identical stupas containing ashes of the deceased are placed along the temple walls. These images confirm the prac-

tice of interring ashes at Zenkōji, and thus the temple precinct can be conceptualized as the underground and a burial ground. At the same time, it could also be perceived as a Pure Land on earth, and by interring ashes the salvation of deceased men and women could be actualized.

I have also examined the metaphor associated with white cloth at Zenkōji, since white cloth is a symbolic item associated with Datsueba. It is difficult to confirm if the old women in the *uba* halls are selling cloth to be used in a *raigō-e* ritual. However, if the white cloths held by Datsueba signify the *raigō-e* ritual and/or the teaching of *niga byakudō*, the cloths may allude to the devotion that is essential for rebirth in Amida's Pure Land.

The notion of *niga byakudō* permeates the ritual enactment of death and rebirth, and such a ritual actually takes place at Zenkōji in the form of *kaidan meguri*. Because the practice of *kaidan meguri* is conducted underground, below the main worship hall, it is not visualized in the mandala. However, the inclusion of the twin images of Datsueba may signify the ritual enactment of death and rebirth happening in the underground passage, considering her association with hell and the world of the dead, the folk belief in *rokudō-sen*, and the custom of wearing ritual garb for *kaidan meguri*. The absolute darkness experienced during *kaidan meguri* is compared with hell, and pilgrims' salvation is ensured by establishing a karmic connection with the principal Amida triad in the pitch black corridor. Making offerings of six *mon* for *kaidan meguri* alludes to a folk belief in *rokudō-sen*, which is believed to be the ferriage to be paid when the deceased cross the River of Three Crossings. Moreover, if one considers the white cloths pictured with Datsueba to be burial shrouds, they may indicate the custom of dressing in a costume for *kaidan meguri*.

Finally, the meaning of the pairing, the most unique feature of the images of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala, may also be able to be explained in relation to *kaidan meguri*. The paired Datsueba may merely follow the manner of placing two gatekeepers at one gate, for example, the paired statues of Niō at the Niō gate. However, considering Datsueba's dual aspects as a deity closely associated with hell as well as the fertility of a life-giving deity, it is possible to interpret the twin Datsueba images as representing the death and rebirth to be experienced by worshippers during *kaidan meguri*. Identical images are enshrined in order to convey the following message: while one Datsueba takes the clothes of worshippers to prepare them for hell, the other prepares them for the next life by giving *enakin*, or baby clothes. Datsueba's role of taking the clothes of the deceased in the *Scripture of Jizō and the Ten Kings of Hell* takes on a new dimension here, for by taking old clothes and giving new ones, she aids in the process of salvation. This unique representation would seem to promote the significance of Datsueba in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala.

In sum, my examination of the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala has demonstrated that the twin images of Datsueba function to signal the ritual practices which are taking place, but are invisible in the mandala. The presence of Datsueba in the temple precinct in the Zenkōji Pilgrimage Mandala highlights the dual aspects of the temple precinct as the world of the dead and a burial ground as well as Amida's Pure Land and the place to experience rebirth. Thus, the mandala informs us of another aspect of Datsueba—while she is traditionally associated with hell, she can also be indicative of salvation.

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