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The Materiality of a Promise

Interworldly Contracts in Medieval Buddhist Promotional Campaign Imagery

Narratives in the fourteenth-century didactic paintings *Shidoji engi e* 志度寺縁起絵 and *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* 融通念佛縁起 preach that supernatural entities are actively involved in Buddhist devotional projects. Vows and other commitments to engage in *nenbutsu* practice, or to restore a temple, initiate exchanges with the heavens and the netherworld that support their fulfillment. Interworldly networks thereby convey to audiences the rewards of participation in a promotional or fundraising campaign and back that up with the threat of hell. Both image contexts portray documents as a medium for transcending worlds, emphasizing writing in ways that empower campaign documents.

KEYWORDS: King Enma—netherworld—*Shidoji engi e*—*Yūzū nenbutsu engi*—revival narratives (*soseitai*)—fundraising—promotion (*kanjin*)—oaths (*kishōmon*)

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MEDIEVAL PROMOTIONAL saints (*kanjin hijiri* 勧進聖) encouraged people to make connections with deities and divinities (*kechien* 結縁) and preached salvation. The term *kanjin* 勧進 indicates the “encouraging” of faith or religious practice, but is also frequently associated with building temples and shrines or with soliciting contributions for their maintenance.¹

Political and economic developments contributed to an increase in promotional activity in the late twelfth through the fourteenth centuries. Under the Chinese-influenced *ritsuryō* 律令 legal codes, adopted beginning in the seventh and eighth centuries, the central government controlled and sustained important temples and shrines. During the mid-Heian period, religious institutions gradually came to own and hold rights over estates thanks to the gifts and protection of wealthy patrons. The destructive conflicts involving the military class during the late twelfth century, which notoriously resulted in the burning of Nara’s venerable temples by Heike armies in 1180, were followed by a period of relative calm during the Kamakura period (1185–1333). However, power struggles and civil war again emerged in the years leading up to the Nanbokuchō period (1336–1392). These conflicts and other disruptions of classical political structures left numerous temples in need of funds for routine repairs and reconstruction. Many institutions stabilized their support channels by cultivating additional sources of income from military-class patrons and other commoners.

The unrest of the times was seen as symptomatic of the end of the Buddhist law (*mappō* 末法), thought by many to have begun in 1052. This added urgency to concerns about salvation. Pure Land advocates such as Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212)

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1. This translation of the term *kanjin hijiri* is borrowed from QUINTER (2015, 5).

and Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262), and later Ippen 一遍 (1239–1289), promoted relatively easy methods for achieving rebirth in the paradise of the Buddha Amida 阿弥陀, bringing salvation within the reach of all classes of people.

The precept-revival movement also addressed the troubled times by working to restore monastic values. Some members of this movement, such as the Shingon Ritsu 真言律 monks Eison 叡尊 (1201–1290), Ninshō 忍性 (1217–1303), and their followers, were involved in rebuilding temples; building bridges; creating or reinforcing irrigation systems and waterways; establishing and managing hospices; and looking after the well-being of low-status, ill, and impoverished members of society, including promoting their *kechien* and salvation.² Such activities were inspired by famous predecessors such as Gyōki 行基 (668–749), who was known for his good works, although he increasingly became the stuff of legend. A more recent model for many was Chōgen 重源 (1121–1206), who was influenced by Gyōki's reputation and worked to restore Tōdaiji 東大寺 and other temples.

Monks who raised funds for various constructions accomplished a great deal, but not all fundraising was equal. While large-scale campaigns such as those for Tōdaiji were initiated by or depended upon the cooperation of major political players, small-scale or regional campaigns might rely on more local contributions and participation. There were other distinctions as well. An 1155 petition by Tōshōdaiji 唐招提寺 asking Kōfukuji 興福寺 for permission to use relics to campaign near Kōfukuji, for example, describes promotional campaigns being conducted all over Japan and argues that this makes it difficult for people to distinguish between campaigns that are not true, or empty (*kyo* 虚), and those that are true (*jitsu* 実; KI 11: 88, no. 7886).³ Although this document does not specify the meaning of untrue or empty campaigning, other sources suggest that it refers to coercive fundraising or to collection methods that do not foster devotion.

Stories in the late thirteenth-century *Shasekishū* 沙石集, compiled by the Shingon Ritsu-influenced monk Mujū 無住 (1226–1312), suggest that making offerings or collecting donations under pressure or impiously can be harmful. One example tells of a nun who constructs a pagoda at Kenninji 建仁寺 for her deceased husband's repose, using personal resources and not relying on the contributions of others. The endurance of this pagoda is contrasted with the repeated destruction by fire of other buildings at the temple, since they were built with

2. There is a great deal of research on medieval *kanjin* campaigns, the people who promoted them, and their influences or approaches. See, for example, the early findings of MURAYAMA (1953, 202–91), and NAKANODŌ (2012; articles largely written in the 1970s), as well as more recent studies by GOODWIN (1994); ITŌ (2012, 325–64); MATSUO (1995); ŌTA (2008); QUINTER (2008; 2015, 127–50); TOKUDA (1988, 130–200); and TSUJI (2002).

3. The petition argues that showing relics will help to make that distinction clear. See also HOSOKAWA (1987, 25–26).

thoughtless contributions (*Shasekishū* 8: 5, 429–31; translated in MORRELL 1985, 230–32). In another story, which appears twice in the compilation, a monk warns Fujiwara no Yorimichi 藤原頼通 (992–1074) that he risks falling into hell for the way that people under his control labored to build the Amida Hall at Byōdōin 平等院; Yorimichi then pays these people for their work (*Shasekishū* 6: 9, 334; 8: 5, 428–29; MORRELL 1985, 191 and 230).⁴ In a time of widespread fundraising and construction, Mujū was highly critical of abuses.

It was, therefore, all the more important to emphasize the veracity of miracles connected to an institution, its deities, or its founding monks and to assert the sincerity of solicitors. Promotional saints often told stories about the legendary origins of temples and shrines as well as other miracle tales (*engi* 縁起 or *reigen tan* 靈驗譚). Stories of people who die and revive (*sosei tan* 蘇生譚) also evidenced the other world's support of campaigns, in some cases adding the fear of hell to a campaigner's motivations (TOKUDA 1988, 146–59). Additionally, promotional activities often included the display of material evidence of these stories; in exchange for donations, people could worship saints' remains or items with miraculous origins, or could purchase sacred charms with ostensible connections to legends.⁵ Many promotional saints reinforced these messages by employing images.

In the didactic paintings we will examine below, fourteenth-century works entitled *Shidoji engi e* and *Yūzū nenbutsu engi*, miraculous events are confirmed in a complicated relationship to materiality. Documents are read, written, passed back and forth, or simultaneously appear in different worlds. Vows and commitments to sacred projects, in particular, create a paper trail that elicits supernatural participation. The pictorialization of double-entry bookkeeping among worlds ensured audiences of the accountability of promotional saints. It also empowered the documents essential to managing and sustaining a promotional campaign.

The Revival-Fundraising Tales of Shidoji engi e

The *Shidoji engi e* consists of six large hanging scrolls (surviving from an original set of seven) held by the Shingon temple Shidoji located on the Inland Sea. Shidoji is described alongside sites of *shugen* 修驗 practice in *Ryōjin hishō* 梁塵秘抄 (SNKBT 56: 88), edited by Go Shirakawa 後白河 (1127–1192), and is the eighty-sixth temple on the eighty-eight-temple Shikoku pilgrimage route. The paintings, created sometime between the 1320s and 1340s, correspond closely

4. On coercive campaigns, see also GOODWIN (1994, 109–17).

5. Examples of such items include scraps of cloth or wood supposedly from clothing and architecture that are described in the twelfth-century *Shigisan engi emaki* 信貴山縁起絵巻 (153; translated in BROCK 1992, 66).

to the content of legends recorded in seven manuscripts, also held by Shidoji. This correspondence, however, is not evenly matched; one legend occupies two scrolls, and two legends share one scroll. The oldest manuscripts are written in different styles and by different hands, but they have been mounted with matching brocade to form a set.⁶ The first three legends (illustrated in three and a half scrolls) describe the miraculous origins of Shidoji's main icon and architecture, and two tales involving precious jewels (or relics). The last four legends, three of which are illustrated in three of the extant paintings, concern people who die, visit the netherworld palace of King Enma 閻魔 (the guardian at the threshold to the afterlife), and revive to conduct campaigns to restore Shidoji.

Overall, *Shidoji engi e* describes objects that pass from one protagonist to another, forming or tracing relationships and exchanges among human and supernatural actors. A sacred tree drives one tale as it travels along waterways to Shidoji. Jewels are given, stolen, and retrieved over wide geographical expanses, including the Tang palace and the undersea dragon kingdom. After protagonists complete a narrative function, the stories often leave them behind to continue following these objects on new adventures. The circulation of objects and people through the images establishes overlapping, parallel, and escalating networks of debt and debt requital. Although immobile, the temple itself serves a similar function in these stories, uniting generations of humans with deities in the common objective of its maintenance.

Repetitions in Shidoji's structurally similar revival-fundraising narratives and imagery rhythmically encompass a range of possibilities. Main and minor characters come from and are active in different locations and engage with patrons from different social strata. There are stories about couples, friends, parents and children, clerics and laypeople, and rich and poor. Protagonists are also distinguished by a hierarchy of devotional aspirations or attainments, which determine whether their efforts for the temple are voluntary or require otherworldly compulsion.

6. On the dating of these paintings and legends, see UMEZU 1968, 158–68, TOMOHISA 1967, and ŌNISHI 1991. The hanging scrolls are on silk; measurements range between height 166.2–168 and width 120.9–127.6 cm (KAGAWA KEN REKISHI HAKUBUTSUKAN 2001, 118). Originally there were seven paintings, all intact in 1617 (TOMOHISA 1967, 211–12). Reproductions of the six extant paintings are at KAGAWA KEN REKISHI HAKUBUTSUKAN 2001, 38–49, and in KOKURITSU GEKIJŌ NŌGAKUDŌ CHŌSA YŌSEIKA 1991. My discussions of *Shidoji engi* are based on a transcription of the oldest surviving manuscripts compared against photographic reproductions (*Shidoji engi*, 200–22; WADA et al. 1967, 45–138). I have also consulted a book-bound copy from 1704–1711 (transcribed in WADA et al. 1967, 45–138) and an English translation of the first five legends (TYLER 2007). All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted. There is a great deal of research on these legends and images as well as comparative approaches. See, for example, TOMOHISA 1967; SHIDO CHŌSHI HENSAN IINKAI 1986; ABE 1986; 1989; 1991; TSUJI 1991; ŌHASHI 2001a; 2001b; ŌNISHI 1991; 1994; TANIHARA 1998, 35–96, 185–202; TREDE 2003; KOMINE 2010; 2013; SANO 2010; and MATSUOKA 2010.

Among the saintliest fundraisers in these legends is Zenzai 善哉 (also referred to as Zen'a 善阿), who has a dream oracle, becomes pregnant, and goes to Hasedera 長谷寺 to pray about her predicament. Encouraged by Kannon 観音, she gives birth to a boy, Shōchiku dōji 松竹童子 (also Shōchiku maru 松竹丸 and Rengeju 蓮花寿), who dies in his twenty-fifth year, leaving Zenzai grief-stricken. A monk sent by Kannon reveals that her son has gone to the nether-world to obtain a message from Jizō 地藏, according to a plan by Taka okami 高大神.⁷ Shōchiku dōji revives to report that he was escorted to Enma's palace by the monk and Jizō, and that Enma, who was wearing a crown resembling that of Eleven-headed Kannon (Jūichimen Kannon 十一面観音), asked him to make a great vow as a condition for returning to the world. Shōchiku dōji happily agreed and Enma told him to restore his tutelary temple (*ujidera* 氏寺) Shidoji in Sanuki 讃岐 Province.

Zenzai is overjoyed at her son's revival, but worries that they are too poor and unconnected to carry out a great vow and that Shidoji is far away and across the sea. Shōchiku dōji tells her not to worry since this is a command by Kannon and Enma. Together they take the tonsure, promote the restoration project to people in the capital, and assemble contributions of wealth and treasure from everyone: aristocrats and commoners, high and low. When they bring these resources to Shidoji, they find a small hall and hear a monk relate a legend about the first construction of the temple. Confirming Shōchiku dōji's experience, they learn that Eleven-headed Kannon is the main object of worship and that Shidoji is the tutelary temple of the Dharma King Enma. With the assistance of the temple's many patrons (*sho danna* 諸檀那), the mother and son build a five-bay worship hall in three years, concluding their work with a dedication rite. When they die there are signs of their rebirth in paradise.

The painting depicts promotional activities in two places. First, the protagonists stand outside of a home wearing dark robes and surplices, accompanied by assistants cradling stacks of documents (FIGURE 1). One extends a hand to receive offerings from a household while the other reads from a scroll, perhaps a formal description of the aims of the campaign. In the second scene the mother and son manage the restoration campaign from their residence near Shidoji (FIGURE 2). Local supporters visit as one of the saints holds an open scroll, surrounded by documents.

Double identities bring together Shōchiku dōji, Jizō, Zenzai, Kannon, and Enma. At the end of the story, the mother and Shōchiku dōji are

7. This reading is based on notations in the book-bound manuscript of *Shidoji engi* (WADA et al. 1967, 88). Abe Yasurō remarks that this kami is not identifiable, but suggests that it might refer to Taga daimyōjin 多賀大明神 (ABE 1991, 66). There are various explanations about the name of the kami of Taga Taisha 多賀大社. On its denoting a kami in a high place, such as a mountain, and on other appearances of the term, see for example KAGEYAMA (1973).

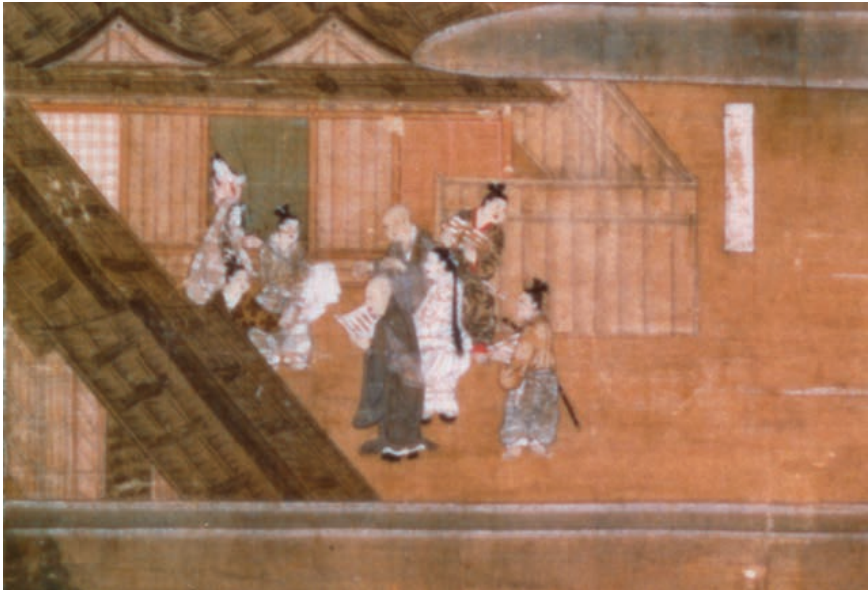


FIGURE 1. *Shidoji engi e*, Shōchiku dōji scroll, detail of promotion. Courtesy of Shidoji. Photograph used with permission.



FIGURE 2. *Shidoji engi e*, Shōchiku dōji scroll, detail of managing the fundraising campaign at Shidoji. Courtesy of Shidoji. Photograph used with permission.



FIGURE 3. *Shidoji engi e*, scroll illustrating the first foundation legend, detail of Shidoji's construction. Courtesy of Shidoji. Photograph used with permission.

revealed to have been manifestations of the two bodhisattvas who helped them through their travails: Kannon and Jizō, respectively. Kannon's eleven-headed crown reconfigures Enma as united with the main object of worship at the temple, a rarely shown sculpture of Kannon thought to have been carved during the first half of the Heian period (KAGAWA KEN KYŌIKU IINKAI 1961, 50). In the painting, Kannon is represented only by the temple structure that contains the main icon, by Zenzai, and by Enma's crown. Although each of Shidoji's revival-fundraising legends and the surviving illustrations give Enma this iconographic attribute, in other images he wears a crown or cap labeled with the character for king (ō 王), or a flat-topped cap surmounted by white and red spheres. The eleven heads of the Shidoji Enma are unusual.

This conflation of Enma with Kannon can partly be explained by the first Shidoji legend and painting about the origins of the temple (FIGURE 3). This legend also indicates the importance and power of sacred vows and prayers. A nun named Sonogo 園子, who turns out to be a manifestation of the bodhisattva Monjushiri 文殊師利, made a vow in a previous lifetime that enables her to safely retrieve a sacred tree from Shido Bay. The tree had floated along waterways from Ōmi to Shido Bay, as if of its own accord, causing misfortune to people who came into contact with it along the way and who may have impeded its progress. When it finally reaches its destination, it submits to Sonoko's will, allowing her to handle and transform it into sculpture. When Sonogo wishes

for a Buddhist sculptor to carve the wood, a sculptor arrives and creates an image of Eleven-headed Kannon. He turns out to be a manifestation of Kannon from that bodhisattva's Pure Land, Fudaraku 補陀落. When the nun prays for a hall to install the image, a young carpenter appears, multiplies, and builds a one-bay hall in seven days. He turns out to be a manifestation of the Dharma King Enma. Although this legend does not suggest the union of Kannon and Enma, it describes their cooperation in establishing the temple.

Enma is more commonly linked to the bodhisattva Jizō who, according to *Dacheng daji Dizang shilun jing* 大乘大集地藏十輪經, can save beings in the six realms and can take forty-two forms, ranging from heavenly devas to various beings in hell. This list includes both the heavenly and regal forms of Enma, Yamaten 夜摩天 (Enmaten) and Enmaō 剎魔王 (T 411, 13.725c–26a; HIRASAWA 2008, 19). Jizō later joins Enma in images associated with the cult of the ten kings, and the relationship of these two figures further developed in Japan. An early Japanese example of their conflation appears in the ninth-century *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記; in one tale King Enma tells a human visitor that he is “called Bodhisattva Jizō in your country” (SNKBT 30: 268–69; NAKAMURA 1973, 233–35). Medieval Japanese images of the ten kings include buddha and bodhisattva correspondences above each king. Initial variations in these pairings settled into standardized patterns, but Jizō's association with Enma is stable from the beginning and Kannon is usually associated with King Byōdō 平等.

In the Shidoji legend, Jizō's intervention for Shōchiku dōji acknowledges the well-known Jizō-Enma relationship, while at the same time shifting Enma's bodhisattva identity to the temple's main icon Kannon, by combining them into one figure. Enma and, by association, hell are thereby grafted onto the essential identity of Shidoji.

Another illustrated revival-fundraising story introduces a devout, impoverished packhorse driver named Shiratsue dōji 白杖童子 from the port of Yodo 淀 who initiates something more ambitious than he anticipated when he secretly makes a great vow to build a modest three-bay hall with a thatched roof. He is summoned to Enma's court where there is a plaque-record of his vow to build a hall. King Enma gives concrete direction to that vow: restoration of his tutelary temple Shidoji. As Shiratsue dōji leaves Enma's court to return to this world, he encounters a young woman destined for hell.⁸ He pities her and petitions Enma for her release, arguing that she can help him to fulfill his vow. The woman turns out to be a provincial governor's daughter, from the wealthiest family in Sanshū 讃州. Both revive, reunite in three years, marry, and, presumably with the blessing

8. We can tell she is bound for hell from her rough handling by demonic wardens. A story in *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集 (SNKBT 36: 46–49) describes a similar encounter with a young woman (ABE 1991, 66).



FIGURE 4. *Shidoji engi e*, Aichi scroll. Courtesy of Shidoji. Photograph used with permission.



FIGURE 5. *Shidoji engi e*, A'ichi scroll, detail of A'ichi writing his first oath. Courtesy of Shidoji. Photograph used with permission.

and resources of the woman's father, restore the temple. At the rites celebrating completion of their work, the temple is decorated so beautifully that it resembles Tōriten 忉利天, the heaven on top of the mountain Shumisen 須弥山. The couple then leaves the world and ultimately achieves rebirth in paradise. The painting portrays the revived woman telling her father that she owes her life to Shiratsue dōji and will help him to fulfill his vow.

The lost hanging scroll of the *Shidoji engi e* probably illustrated a legend about Senzai dōji 千歳童子 (also Senzai maru 千歳丸) from Yamashiro 山城. His journey to the afterlife, also arranged by Taka okami, occasions more detail about Enma, his bureaucrats, and his palace. Since the description of punishment in the afterlife in this legend is the most detailed in the cycle of legends, it is possible that the corresponding lost illustration contained imagery of hell beyond Enma's courtyard. Notable in this legend is a description of a tall *torii* that is shaped like iron pliers used for removing nails, a detail that is not illustrated in any of the surviving paintings. In this context, the unusual gateway refers to a hell where liars' tongues are torn out with pliers (*Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集, T 2682, 84.34c). Senzai dōji is only permitted to return to his family and master, a high priest, if he agrees to make a great vow to restore Shidoji. After reviving, he swears that his experience of the netherworld was genuine, invoking deities who should punish him otherwise. Notwithstanding the vow and oath, Senzai dōji forgets his commitment until reminded by Jizō in a dream two years later. Pondering the terrible afterlife punishment for lying if he breaks the promise, Senzai dōji leaves

his position and his beloved home, shaves his head, and dyes his clothing. With a collections record (*hōgachō* 奉加帳) in hand, he then urges many people to contribute to Shidoji's restoration.

If the first two protagonists we have examined are bodhisattva manifestations or voluntarily vow to build a small hall, those of the last two revival tales are at the other end of a hierarchy of pious attainment, needing reminders and prodding to restore Shidoji. Moreover, these less-exceptional men make formal oaths swearing that their journeys to the other world really happened, as if they would be less reliable narrators without doing so, and both express concern with the afterlife fate of liars should they not keep their promises.

Events described in the first of the Shidoji legends are set in the seventh century, and the last legend about a fifty-eight-year-old Buddhist novice from Sanuki Province named A'ichi 阿一 brings the course of legends and images into the era of production (FIGURE 4). A'ichi revives in the middle of the night on the eighteenth day of the twelfth month of 1317 and learns from his mourning wife and children that he had died early that morning. He then relates his experience of the netherworld. First he walked to Shidoji where he met a monk named Shōkaku 性覚, who instructed him to ask his widow for the amount of *jikkanmon* 十貫文 (strings of ten thousand Chinese coins) and then to restore Shidoji's main hall. When A'ichi wonders how it would be possible to accomplish that task with only *jikkanmon*, Shōkaku responds that this is a basis for launching a campaign and that A'ichi should collect funds from many people. Then an elderly monk wearing lightly ink-dyed clothing tells A'ichi to leave the *jikkanmon* with Shidoji's Akanbō 阿観房 (also referred to as Akan shōnin 阿観上人), and insists that A'ichi write an oath (*kishōmon* 起精[請]文) to accept the punishment of Kannon if he does not restore the hall within three years. The monk hands him an inkstone, brush, and paper. A'ichi writes the oath, returns the document to the monk, and revives. The scene of A'ichi writing this *kishōmon* in front of Shidoji figures prominently at the top of the hanging scroll (FIGURE 5).

On the night of the nineteenth day of the same month, A'ichi intones Kannon's name, dies, and again revives in the morning of the twenty-first to find his wife and children in tears. This time, too, he recounts his experiences. He headed toward Shidoji and again met Shōkaku who inquired about the funds. A'ichi is once more advised to leave them with the monk Akanbō, and once more inquires how such small donations will rebuild Shidoji's hall. Shōkaku restates the explanation that if A'ichi appeals to many people, he should be able to raise what he needs. They walk a long distance and A'ichi wants to return home, but Shōkaku tells him that he is affiliated with King Enma's palace in order to fulfill a vow that he made during his life, and that he is escorting A'ichi to Enma's court. With this, A'ichi sadly realizes that he has died.



FIGURE 6. *Shidoji engi e*, A'ichi scroll, detail of Enma's court. Courtesy of Shidoji. Photograph used with permission.

The men finally arrive at Enma's palace. As they pass through the courtyard where sinners endure punishment, A'ichi has regrets about how he lived his life. They enter the palace and see Enma wearing a crown of buddhas resembling that of eleven-headed Kannon. Enma is surrounded by bureaucrats. One asks if A'ichi has been to Shidoji and holds up a large plaque that records monthly visits over a period of three years when A'ichi was in his early twenties. Shōkaku verifies the inscription and A'ichi recalls visiting on the seventeenth day of each month. A bureaucrat then unfurls a scroll with documentation that confirms these events. A'ichi's youthful visits explain his connection to Shidoji as well as Enma's interest in him.

A'ichi is then told that he wrote an oath to restore Shidoji within three years, referring to the document he brushed on his first visit to the netherworld, and he is shown the record of this event. The buddhas on Enma's crown nod three times and Enma pronounces that if A'ichi takes on this charge to restore his tutelary temple Shidoji within three years by making a great vow, he will be returned to the world. A'ichi worries that poverty may prevent his carrying out this task and that he will then be punished for having lied. Enma responds by ordering him to restore the temple, recommending people he can approach, and telling him to appeal to people everywhere.

As A'ichi starts to leave, Enma calls him back to convey his gratitude, stroking A'ichi's head three times while shedding tears, and predicting that in three years Akanbō will be welcomed in the netherworld.⁹ In the painting there are two scenes of Enma's court, one on top of the other (FIGURE 6). In the lower scene, a bureaucrat holds out a scroll before A'ichi and Shōkaku who kneel on the steps to the palace. In the upper scene, A'ichi's return to Enma's court interrupts other trials in progress. After an emotional parting from Shōkaku, A'ichi makes his way back to life, encountering Akanbō on the way. The legend ends with another oath by A'ichi, swearing that his experience was genuine.

This last legend reprises the themes of vowing, death, revival, and a promotional campaign seen in the previous three legends, while also containing a remarkable amount of repetition. A'ichi twice dies and revives, repeatedly doubts that he can restore the temple, and is given numerous instructions for starting a campaign. He is pressed to sign an oath in the netherworld that appears in the records of Enma's court, and he is urged to confirm and reiterate that promise. The legend then culminates in a lengthy affidavit. We will return to these oaths below, after first examining how these legends and paintings adapt traditional conceptions of afterlife judgment and documentation.

The Netherworld Documentation of Sin and Virtue

King Enma and his court appear four times in *Shidoji engi e* and it is likely that a fifth depiction was included in the now lost seventh painting. We cannot understand these portrayals and the place of vows, oaths, and afterlife documentation within them apart from well-established iconographic conventions for illustrating the trials of the dead. As the dead face Enma, they confront the scripts of their lives; a scrupulous assembly of evidence is the basis for condemning them to hell or sending them elsewhere within the six realms of transmigration.¹⁰ The Shidoji paintings are especially informed by previously established pictorial motifs that contrast the accountability for sin with the effects of virtue.

Enma's complex origins in Indo-Iranian mythology are evident in Chinese translations of canonical texts that describe him as a heavenly deva residing above the mountain Shumisen in the third of six heavens in the world of desire. The texts classify him alongside Taishakuten 帝釈天, Bonten 梵天, and other entities as one of twelve heavenly deities and assign him the task of impartially

9. The meaning of Enma stroking A'ichi's head is not explained in the legend. The term *machō* 摩頂 indicates the way a buddha predicts that a bodhisattva will become a buddha. In *Nihon ryōiki*, Enma strokes the head of a visitor about to revive, saying that this sign (*inten* 印点) will protect him from disaster (SNKBT 30: 268–69; NAKAMURA 1973, 233–35).

10. On the development of texts and images about hell in East Asia, see HIRASAWA (2008).

lording over or judging the dead.¹¹ The second-century compendium *Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經, for example, contains extensive passages on hell, including mentions of Enma, his domain and assistants, and variations on a refrain about sinners' responsibility for their own karma, uttered either by Enma or his wardens (T 721, 17.27a–91a).

During the Sui (581–619) and Tang (618–907) dynasties Enma was drawn into association with an afterlife cult connected to the mountain Taishan 泰山 and a deity called Taishan fujun 泰山府君 (hereafter referred to by the Japanese transliteration, Taizan fukun). Taizan fukun evaluates reports on the virtuous and evil deeds of living humans and determines their lifespans. Enma and Taizan fukun later came to serve as two of ten afterlife kings or judges, described in Tang-dynasty apocryphal scriptures referred to as *Shiwang jing* 十王經.¹² In tenth-century manuscripts discovered at Dunhuang, the ten kings conduct trials for the dead on a schedule that coincides with mortuary rites and offerings over three years.

Enma is foremost among the ten kings in *Shiwang jing* recensions, receiving a prophecy from the Buddha that he will attain buddhahood and narrating long passages of the text. In illustrated manuscripts, he is distinguished from the other kings by central positioning (as the fifth king), a flat-topped crown, and a mirror in his court. Such renderings are spare compared to the hanging scrolls of the ten kings produced in workshops in the Ningbo 寧波 area during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which more clearly indicate a hierarchy of officers and scribes who assist the kings. They read, write, and otherwise handle scrolls, books, and piles of paper. Among these bureaucrats are an ancient Chinese deity called Shimei 司命, who is in charge of lifespans, and Shiroku 司錄, a scribe (x 150: 777a, 779b; TEISER 1994, 198, 210). In images, they hold a tall, narrow wooden tablet or plaque, a brush, and a partially unfurled scroll.¹³ They also escort the dead through the netherworld and announce their arrival in the courts. The portrayals of the bureaucrats encountered by Aichi and other protagonists of Shidoji legend follow these templates.

Documents on the kings' desks or held by their assistants in illustrated versions of the *Shiwang jing* are either rolled up, blank, or contain indecipherable indications of writing (TEISER 1994, 193). Ningbo paintings of the ten kings, too,

11. The third-century *Apidamo dapiposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, for example, contains scattered references to Enma's heavenly palace, Enma as king of the world of ghosts, and Enma as king of hell (T 1545, 27.692B, 867A, 866B).

12. All of my citations of *Shiwang jing* refer to the *Foshuo yuxiu shiwang shengqi jing* 仏説預修十王生七經 recension in the Taiwanese reprint of the *Wan xuzangjing* 讖藏經. For an English translation, see TEISER (1994, 196–219).

13. WAKABAYASHI Haruko (2004, 299–300) has noted a description of a plaque in *Konjaku monogatari shū* (SNKBT 34: 249) as containing information about the trespasses of five people.

depict many blank or concealed documents as well as open scrolls or other writing surfaces marked with dots or wavy lines. There are, however, some examples of legible writing on small title papers affixed to books or ledgers held by bureaucrats. These titles—*Shōzen'aku shi* 掌善惡司, *Shōakugō shi* 掌惡業司, *Shōkudoku shi* 掌功德司, *Gogyakubo* 五逆簿, and *Fubyōzai shi* 不平罪司—indicate records of, or offices handling, both good and bad deeds, one or the other, and particular categories of sin.¹⁴

Ningbo workshop paintings of the ten kings streamed into Japan and transformed medieval imagery of the afterlife. There is no documentation indicating that illustrated *Shiwang jing* manuscripts of the type discovered at Dunhuang entered Japan before the medieval period, but a recension referred to as *Jizō jūō kyō* 地藏十王經, which may have been compiled in Japan incorporating continental elements, circulated widely by the thirteenth century.

Influences from such continental imagery are evident in the *Rokudō e* 六道絵, a set of fifteen hanging scrolls belonging to Shōjuraigōji 聖衆來迎寺 that was produced at the Tendai temple Enryakuji 延暦寺 during the thirteenth century (IZUMI et al. 2007). The *Rokudō e* primarily illustrates passages from the influential 985 compilation *Ōjōyōshū* by the Tendai monk Genshin 源信 (942–1017), cited in colophons at the top of most of the scrolls. Genshin frequently quotes *Zhengfa nianchu jing*, including passages of Enma censuring sinners (T 2682, 84.35b), but he does not mention Taizan fukun or other Chinese afterlife figures. Nevertheless, one of the *Rokudō e* scrolls brings together traditional conceptions of Enma with Ningbo ten-king iconography to illustrate Enma's court, and the inscription cites not *Ōjōyōshū*, but *Jizō jūō kyō*, *Shiwang jing*, and passages from Japanese esoteric manuals such as *Besson zakki* 別尊雜記 (TZ 3: 504a–10b; YAMAMOTO 2015). Resting on Enma's desk are three scrolls—one open and faintly marked, an inkstone with a puddle of freshly ground ink, and two brushes in a stand ready for use. Bureaucrats hold scrolls beside Enma, and in front of his desk Shimei and Shiroku hold brushes, an open blank scroll, and a large blank plaque. In the courtyard below, two additional scribes record testimony about the dead.

Japanese ten-king paintings also contain a few examples of legible writing among the mostly blank, dotted, or scribbled documents, such as the characters for numbers, kings, and fish that appear on registers illustrated in fifteenth-century scroll sets at Jōfukuji 浄福寺 and Nison'in 二尊院. This writing does not form

14. These titles appear in Ningbo ten-king scroll sets belonging to Shōmyōji Kanazawa Bunko 称名寺金沢文庫; the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan; Hōnenji 法然寺; and Sairenji 西蓮寺. They do not appear in ten-king or canonical Buddhist texts. Two additional titles, *Zenbo* 善簿 (virtue roster) and *Akubo* 惡簿 (evil roster), appear on documents held by assistants flanking Jizō in a ten-king scroll set at Eigenji 永源寺. The term *zenbo* appears in Chinese sources such as *Fozu tongji* 仏祖統紀 (T 2035, 49.284b). On early Chinese literary descriptions of afterlife rosters, see also YASUDA (2015).

coherent narratives about the dead. Rather, it shows the use of human writing in the afterlife courts. The more common indecipherable marks are a pictorial convenience, but illegibility also makes room for spontaneous narration and audience projection, and further suggests that the kings have information beyond ordinary human comprehension.

Three objects help us to ascertain the imagined contents of these documents: a *dandadō* 檀拏幢 (*danḍa* stanchion), a mirror, and a scale. All three appear in the Shidoji Aichi scroll. A *danḍa* seal and buffalo mount are among Enma's attributes in iconographic instructions for mandalas in *Dari jing* 大日經 (T 848, 18.7c–8a). Its commentary, *Dari jing shu* 大日經疏, explains that the *danḍa* seal is shaped like a staff topped by a human head, which has an extremely angry aspect (T 1796, 39.634ab).¹⁵ The *dandadō* is not mentioned or illustrated in early extant *Shiwang jing* recensions and does not appear in Ningbo paintings of the ten kings, but *Jizō jūō kyō* gives it prominence, describing four iron gates to Enma's palace, each equipped on either side with a stanchion on which rests an entity shaped like a human head that watches humans. The one on the right is Kokuan tennyō 黒闇天女 and the one on the left is Taizan fukun. There are also two deities born with human beings, called Manujaya 魔奴闍耶 or Dōshōjin 同生神, that stay by humans throughout their lives. The one on the left records even the smallest act of evil and resembles a demon, and the one on the right records even the smallest act of good and resembles a goddess. The Manujaya report everything they see to Enma, who questions the dead, tabulates wickedness and virtue, and passes judgment based on evil and good. Enma also consults the human heads (x 150: 771b–72a). The Shōjuraigōji *Rokudō e* painting of Enma's court accords with this description: on the right side of the courtyard, one stanchion supports a gentle female head that vouches for the virtuous dead; on the left, another stanchion supports a fierce red-faced male head that delivers damning testimony, illustrated as red lines directed at a sinner facing a mirror that reflects him killing a monk while he was alive.

Illustrations of this karma mirror (*gōkyō* 業鏡) bring the past into Enma's timeless court, giving shape to the notion of seeing one's life pass before one's eyes at the moment of death. The mirror is described in the mid-seventh century *Jushelun ji* 俱舍論記 as knowing all things and making it impossible to dissemble in hell (T 1821, 41.269c). *Shiwang jing* relates that it records acts such as the slaughtering of chickens or pigs, and that sinners reluctant to face their pasts are forced to see their former deeds clearly replayed therein (x 150: 778a, 780a; TEISER 1994, 203, 214). *Jizō jūō kyō* adds more information and more mirrors. It describes a tremendous platform that supports the light-king mirror (*kōmyōō kyō* 光明王鏡), which is also called the pristine crystal mirror (*jōharikyō* 淨頗梨鏡). The crystal

15. Enma carries a *dandadō* and is seated on a buffalo in thirteenth-century *Enmaten mandara*, used in rites to produce this-worldly results. On the *danḍa*, see SEIDEL (2003).



FIGURE 7. Tracing of the karma mirror from the tenki scroll set held by Eigenji (all tracings by author).

mirror (*harikyō* 頗梨鏡) appears as a metaphor for purity and beauty in descriptions of paradise in the *Foshuo guan wuliangshou jing* 仏説觀無量壽經 (T 365, 12.341b). The pristine crystal mirror reflects whatever Enma has in his heart-mind from the past, present, or future. There are also karma mirrors on eight sides. When Enma turns the heads of the dead to the right, these mirrors reveal their good and evil actions (x 150: 771b–72a).¹⁶

Illustrated mirrors in *Shiwang jing* and Ningbo paintings adhere to the text, often depicting sinners striking, skinning, or gutting large animals.¹⁷ In a Ninbo-

16. Some later texts refer to all nine mirrors, such as a passage on hell-sundering practices in *Keiran shūyōshū* 溪嵐拾葉集 (T 2410, 76.558c–59a; HIRASAWA 2008, 29–30). Some texts only refer to one mirror, often called the *jōhari* mirror; when the two types are conflated, the *jōhari* mirror functions as the karma mirror.

17. Examples can be seen in manuscripts no. 2003 and no. 4523 from the Pelliot Collection at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (reproduced in TEISER 1994, 188). On this mirror motif, see TAKASU (2002, 9–10).

produced set at Eigenji 永源寺, the mirror reveals a sinner slaughtering a duck, while a white duck and a rooster appear in the court accusatorily reviewing these events in the mirror (FIGURE 7).

In this and other renderings, the animals clasp scrolled petitions for justice in their mouths or beaks, a pictorial touch not derived from the source texts. This detail is also adapted to a motif of a mother trailed by an infant for whose death she is held responsible; in some examples the child holds a small petition.¹⁸ These tiny documents give mute animals and infants a voice at the tribunals of their butchers or abusers. There is no indication of how the petitions would be written or read, but they illustrate a connection between the mirrors and trial documentation. They are part of an imagination that actions in this world are reflected and inscribed in the other world.

Although the mirrors usually reveal negative acts, when they reflect nothing, like blank documents, they can be filled with narratives in interactive performance. Alternately, they may indicate unfinished karma or an absence of sin. The mirror appears three times in Shidoji's paintings, each indicating a different response to different people: a sinner in the Shiratsue dōji scroll sees himself attacking a man on a boat; the virtuous Shōchiku dōji faces what seems to be a blank mirror; and, as A'ichi is embraced by Enma, the mirror is set aside.

The karma scale developed in the court of the fourth king Gokan 五官 based on *Shiwang jing*. It is most frequently portrayed as weighing sinners, scripture or other documents, large rocks, or measures. When only Enma's court is portrayed in Japanese imagery, the scale often joins the mirror and other furnishings, as seen in the A'ichi scroll.

These three devices witness, verify, and contribute to the assembly of information about the dead, rendering the afterlife bureaucracy as systematic and fair. Pictorially, the mirror best shows the conveyance of information about this world to the netherworld, but its reflections, along with witness testimonies and other ways of weighing evidence, are all converted into writing. All evil acts performed by the dead are abstracted and reflected in documents. Everything that sinners left behind in this world has consequences that first manifest in these records and then re-manifest as corresponding punishments to be endured in hell.

The point of this imagery was not, however, solely to deter bad behavior. Texts and images about hell also assure their audiences that Buddhist material production accumulates merit, a kind of spiritual currency that outweighs sinful acts, tips the scales in one's favor, and rewrites destiny. As much as the wicked dead

18. Examples can be found in the thirteenth-century Nara National Museum scrolls (bearing the signature of Lu Xinzong 陸信忠) and in the Shōjuraigōji *Rokudō e*. On this motif, see TAKASU (1993) and HIRASAWA (2013, 116–17).

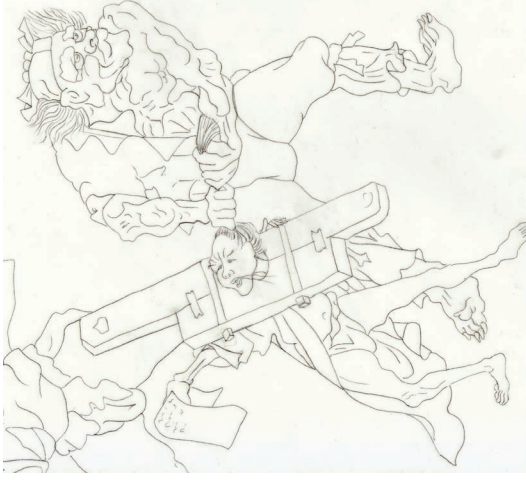
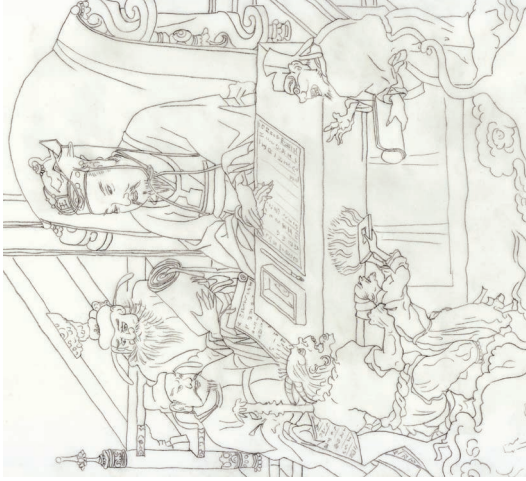
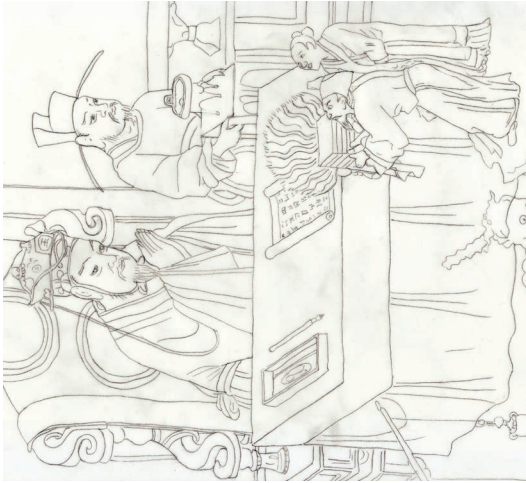


FIGURE 8. Tracing of three details of the dead presenting documents in the netherworld, from the ten-king scroll set held at Jōfukuji.



FIGURE 9. Tracing of a detail of the *dandadō*, scribe, and virtuous man from the scroll of Enma's court, from the *Rokudō e* held at Shōjuraigōji.

are caught in a web of irrefutable documentation, the virtuous (or pragmatic) dead are constituted by acts of compassion or devotion: releasing animals; living piously; and sponsoring or contributing to the perpetuation of Buddhist teachings, rites, scripture, images, and architecture. Even humble contributions transform into abundant rewards in the afterlife, allowing the dead not only to avoid hell, but to claim outsized trade-ins due to an exponential amplification of the value and effects of sacred production.

In images, merit often appears as objects that accompany the dead through the portal of death. In *Shiwang jing*, for example, some of the dead carry sculptures they commissioned during their lifetimes. The accompanying text advocates commissioning and copying scripture (including reproducing *Shiwang jing*) as well as producing images as ways of erasing sin and securing a comfortable afterlife (x 150: 777b–78a; TEISER 1994, 202–203). It is not clear whether the people depicted carrying devotional works were major patrons or if the objects they hold symbolize their contribution to a project, but the Jōfukuji and Nison'in ten-king scroll sets suggest that quantity matters. In the court of King Gokan, an unrestrained, fully-clothed man holds a stack of books emitting golden light.

The king responds to this man by pressing his palms together. In the court of King Henjō 變成 another man bows ingratiatingly while holding a single book also emitting golden light. The king calmly folds his hands over a scroll on his desk, but a demonic warden clutches the back of his robe and a lower-ranking bureaucrat registers surprise that this sinner will be pardoned. A man in the court of King Shokō 初江 is not as fortunate. He desperately holds out a piece of paper with writing scribbled on it, but this is not enough to save him. The king shouts angrily and the sinner is dragged by his hair toward punishment, wearing disheveled clothing and a neck restraint (FIGURE 8).

Although some of the dead arrive in Enma's court holding nothing, we can tell by the various witnessing devices and the reactions of netherworld officers that they have performed good deeds. In the Shōjuraigōji *Rokudō e* scroll of Enma's court, for example, opposite the glowering *dandadō* behind the mirror on the left, a virtuous fully clothed layman kneels in front of the *dandadō* on the right. Lotus petals fall from its lips toward the layman as a kindly scribe takes dictation. We cannot read the scribe's report, but we know that the man will be rewarded in his next life (FIGURE 9).

Shidoji's fundraising saints also arrive empty-handed in Enma's courtyard. While freedom to affect the afterlife record is past for the dead in ten-king imagery, the *Shidoji engi e* protagonists get another chance in this world based on promises—including vows and an oath made under pressure in the afterlife. The illustration of A'ichi's experience adapts the pictorial codes we have examined to indicate his exceptional karmic connection with Enma. First, the records in Enma's court contain information about his visits to Shidoji and the oath he was compelled to write in the netherworld, bringing a decidedly Japanese-style contract into the proceedings. Then, when A'ichi returns, the upper portrayal of Enma's court illustrates this as an unexpected interruption. The karma scale was just in use for another trial; as a warden and an officer point in astonishment, its weighing bowl bounces up from the sudden removal of an object or person. Another officer scratches his head in confusion at A'ichi's unusual reception within Enma's palace. Vows flip the script, creating surprises made visible by the netherworld functionaries who strain to comprehend karmic justice that does not follow the letter of the law.¹⁹

Cosmological Contracts and Transcendent Ledgers

We have seen that netherworld records, vows, and oaths are at the heart of the Shidoji revival-fundraising narratives and paintings. They also prominently

19. Similar puzzlement by Enma's functionaries appears in another fourteenth-century painting, *Kasuga gongen genki e* 春日権現験記絵. In the sixth scroll, after the Kasuga kami intervenes on behalf of a young devotee, two low-ranking officers incredulously reexamine their documents, a detail not described in the handscroll's text (ZN 13: 39).

feature campaign documents, historically referred to as *kanjinchō* 勸進帳, *hōgachō*, and other terms. Such documents usually included the goals of a campaign; the legends and treasures of a temple or shrine; notes on travel itineraries; or the names and commitments of participants. Some also contained oaths.

A'ichi's first written pledge to restore Shidoji is described as an oath (*kishōmon*), a type of document that invokes the punishment of deities should the oath-taker be proven false. The full texts of two other oaths appear in Shidoji legend as well, asserting that the protagonists' experience of the netherworld was genuine. With these oaths, the returnees themselves became evidence of the miracle of revival and of Enma-Kannon's support of their campaigns.

The first oath by Senzai maru is relatively concise:

I hereby claim, so that the faith of people might arise: if for my own sake I have spoken falsely, [I should incur the punishment] from above of Bonten, Taishaku, and the Four Great Heavenly Kings, and [I should incur the punishment] from below of Enma's world, Godō daijin 五道大神, Taizan fukun, the protectors of the palace, the many great deities, and all of the kami and deities of the more than sixty provinces of Japan. Their punishment should be incurred on Senzai maru's body, from [his] head to the bottom of [his] feet.

(*Shidoji engi*, 215)

The final oath by A'ichi contains a far more comprehensive list of deities.

I hereby claim that, if for my own sake I have spoken falsely, so that the faith of people might arise, [I should incur the punishment] from above of the heavenly entities Bonten, Taishaku, the Four Great Heavenly Kings, the sun, the moon, the five planets, the twenty-eight constellations, the Kūgo 空居 heavens of the three worlds, and the eight heavens of the fourth Dhyāna; [and I should incur the punishment] from below of the Dharma King Enma, Godō daijin, Taizan fukun, Shimei, Shiroku, the netherworld bureaucrats, and other netherworld beings, together with the dragon deities of the inner and outer seas [around Shumisen], and the eight classes of beings [who protect Buddhism]. Altogether, beginning with Japan's protector Amaterasu ōmikami (Ise), the twelve avatars of the Kumano mountains, princes, and their retainers; Kinpusen's Zaō 蔵王 avatar and the thirty-eight places; the protective deity of Enshū 円宗, the seven shrines of Sannō 山王; the protectors of the palace, the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman triad, the Upper and Lower Kamo 賀茂 (Shrines), Matsu no o 松尾, Ume no miya 梅宮, Inari 稲荷, Gion 祇園, Kitano 北野, Hirano 平野, Ōhara 大原, Sumiyoshi 住吉, Kasuga 春日, among the eighteen great deities; to the protectors of this province (Sanuki), beginning with its Ichi no miya and Ni no miya shrines, the forty-three shrines, and the more than five-hundred great and small deities, especially this temple's Kanjizai bosatsu 観自在菩薩, along with the celestial guardians of the temple precincts and their messengers, retainers, and the earth deity Kenrō 堅牢. Altogether I should incur



FIGURE 10. *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* (Shōwa manuscript), scene of Ryōnin's promotion to commoners. Detail courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago and Art Resource.

divine punishment from the kami and deities of the more than sixty provinces of Japan, all of the great and small deities from the heavens to this world, and the two types [of kami]—*gon* 権 and *jitsu* 実—in this world and on the other side. [Their punishment should be incurred] by A'ichi's entire body's five components, from the top of [his] head down to the bottom of [his] feet, and [his] eighty-four thousand pores. Thus is my written oath on the twelfth month of Bunpo 文保 1 (1317).

Reverently written by the novice A'ichi (*Shidoji engi*, 222)

These oaths are representative of the genre in their listing of deities “above” and “below.” By the twelfth century this overall structure had become increasingly standardized, and throughout the medieval period oaths were used by people of all classes and occupations for a wide range of purposes (SATŌ 2003; 2006). A'ichi's oath starts with the heavens directly above the earth and works up to the highest heavens. Then it describes the deities below the surface of the earth, including the underwater dragons. Next it mentions important shrines of Japan, ending with the deities of Sanuki and Shidoji, including Shidoji's main Buddhist divinity, Kannon (Kanjizai bosatsu). It thereby introduces to the legends an expansive hierarchical cosmology and places Enma, Shidoji's Kannon, and other local deities within that framework.



FIGURE 11. *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* (Shōwa manuscript), scene of Bishamon tennō's promotion in the heavens. Detail courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago and Art Resource.

These two oaths also take readers out of the narratives in order to validate them. Although we do not know the content of A'ichi's first oath to restore Shidoji, it is indispensable to the story and to the cycle of revival legends. It gives the other two oaths a narrative framework by demonstrating how Enma and other deities bind fundraisers by contract and promise to their restoration projects; Enma keeps track of such commitments and ensures that Shidoji's promotional saints are honest.

The interworldly contractual configurations in *Shidoji engi e* are elucidated by another fourteenth-century painting context: *Yūzū nenbutsu engi*. These images, mostly in a handscroll format, and the texts that accompany them are categorically complicated; they were tools for promotion, the results of acts of devotion, proof of miracles, vehicles for salvation, and commitment records.²⁰ A full discussion of their history and content is beyond the scope of this article, but they share revealing preconceptions and innovations with *Shidoji engi e*, including dramatic depictions of documents transcending worlds that demonstrate the wondrous power of commitments to devotional campaigns.

Yūzū nenbutsu engi promulgate the origins and miraculous effects of *yūzū nenbutsu* 融通念仏 (mutually melding or reinforcing *nenbutsu*), a practice initiated by the Tendai monk Ryōnin 良忍 (1073–1132) by which participants commit to daily recitations of *nenbutsu*. The oldest extant example is referred to as the Shōwa 正和 manuscript, two handscrolls currently divided between the Art Institute of Chicago and the Cleveland Museum of Art. This manuscript is thought to be a copy of a no-longer extant work produced in the third year of Shōwa (1314), nearly two hundred years after Ryōnin's death.²¹ The first sections tell how in 1117, in response to fervent prayers for rebirth in the Pure Land, Ryōnin dreams of Amida instructing him to employ a quicker, more efficacious method: *en'yū nenbutsu* 円融念仏 or *yūzū nenbutsu*, "taking one person's practice as collective practice, and collective practice as one person's practice" (ZN 21: 108). Individual, isolated *nenbutsu* practices combine to exponentially multiply the efficacy obtained by each enlistee. In 1124 Ryōnin starts promoting *yūzū nenbutsu* practice to the emperor on high (*kami ichinin* 上一人) and to commoners below (*shimo banmin* 下万民), to cleric and lay, male and female, highborn and lowborn, and old and young. He assembles a roster of pledges for daily *nenbutsu*,

20. There is a great deal of research on the development of *yūzū nenbutsu* origin narratives, other related legends, and imagery. See, for example, UMEZU (1968, 337–73); TASHIRO (1976); KOMATSU (1992); YOSHIDA (1980); YŪZŪ NENBUTSUSHŪ KYŪGAKU KENKYŪJO (2000); TAKAGISHI (2004; 2008; 2015); HASHIMOTO (2008, 111–60); UCHIDA (2011); and ABE (2012; 2013a; 2013b; 2015). Tashiro Shōkō introduced twenty-eight manuscripts, including copies and incomplete versions (TASHIRO 1976, 107–248).

21. Ryōnin's lineage was revived by the monk Ryōson 良尊 (1279–1349), who may have been behind the creation of the original Shōwa scrolls (KOMATSU 1992, 100–103).

usually for cycles of one hundred or one thousand. Since the list of names is long, the text explains, Ryōnin transferred most to a main record.

In the illustration of his promotion to commoners (see FIGURE 10), Ryōnin is surrounded by a small group of men and women. He holds a roster marked with illegible writing. We cannot read the document, but the painting projects its contents onto the gathered people by identifying each name and pledge number in black ink, writing that transforms them into a collective of mutually reinforcing *nenbutsu* practitioners.

Ryōnin's *nenbutsu* promotion soon summons supernatural participation. A young monk approaches him at his residence in Ōhara, asking to be included in the *nenbutsu* roster with a commitment for one hundred daily recitations. The monk inscribes his name in the roster and vanishes. In the painting, this mysterious visitor holds a rolled-up scroll and a brush. An ink-grinding stone rests on the mat. The monk is revealed to be the celestial protector of the Buddhist law, Bishamon tennō 毘沙門天王 (referred to in the story as Tamon tennō 多聞天王) of Kuramadera 鞍馬寺, who came to look after the people who had made karmic ties through the *nenbutsu*. Bishamon tennō was known as a guardian of clerics during the Heian period, and this extended to laymen during the Kamakura period. He further developed into a protector of traveling *nenbutsu* promotional saints (HASHIMOTO 2008, 111–60; FAURE 2016, 18–45). Since Bishamon tennō's name follows the names of 512 people in the roster, presumably all are under his protection.

The following year, while performing overnight *nenbutsu* practice at Kuramadera, Bishamon tennō appears to Ryōnin in a dream, saying that he guards Ryōnin closely, that he previously accepted a one hundred *nenbutsu* cycle, and that the deities of the other world who also protect Buddhism have accepted this practice as well. Bishamon tennō collected their names in a roster of *yūzū nenbutsu kechien* and tells Ryōnin to add this list to the main roster. When Ryōnin awakens, he is in possession of Bishamon tennō's roster.

In the illustration, Bishamon tennō appears in the heavens surrounded by deities (FIGURE 11). He holds a partly-unfurled scroll with scribbled writing and there are labels identifying the deities around him. Bishamon tennō's pose, the document he holds, and the deities gathered around him mirror the earlier scene of Ryōnin's promotion. The text of the second Shōwa scroll describes Bishamon tennō acting as a promotional saint.

Yūzū nenbutsu engi thus visually and conceptually open a window to the heavens. Where the first section of the narrative described mutually reinforcing *nenbutsu* among humans, here heavenly beings have also become *nenbutsu* constituents, securing for themselves rebirth in paradise and contributing to the efficacy of the expanding network. These images establish a sense of harmonious human society uniting around a Buddhist project with the support of invisible

supernatural actors.²² The lofty Bishamon tennō's enthusiastic promotional campaign is all the more extraordinary because his activity was familiar to audiences. It also elevates and extends perceptions of Ryōnin's influence.

Although Bishamon tennō's roster is illegible in the painting, the handscroll text provides us with its full content: a long list of supernatural *nenbutsu* constituents, each deity leading or representing a group with commitments for one hundred *nenbutsu* cycles. In the painting, only a few figures are illustrated. For instance, five generic kings stand in for all ten, labeled with the name of the first, King Shinkō 秦広. As the scroll unfurls, we also see a handful of famous shrines represented by their *torii* in a misty landscape, their names brushed in ink.

The list, however, comprises a broad and detailed cosmology that is structurally similar to a standard oath (SATŌ 2006, 124–27). It leads with Bontennō, Taishaku tennō 帝釈天王, and three of the four Heavenly Kings. Enmaten appears among other celestial deities and this section of the list ends with the ten kings (represented by King Shinkō), Shimei, and Shiroku. The roster continues with Japanese shrines and kami, headed by the Upper and Lower Kamo Shrines, the inner and outer shrines of Ise, Usa 宇佐 Hachiman, the seven shrines of Hie, the four shrines of Kasuga, and Gion. It mentions numerous other shrines as well and ends with a statement that the divine *nenbutsu* constituents comprise all celestial beings and deities in all worlds of the universe.²³ Considered alongside oaths, the array of celestial and other deities handling a roster of promises to perform *nenbutsu* cycles can be seen as an indirect threat. Since these deities also have the power to punish, they ensure that humans included in the roster follow through on their commitments.

The postscript to the Shōwa scrolls claims that this very *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* was copied by Ryōnin from the original roster, which contained 3,282 names, and that sixty-eight of those people quickly achieved rebirth in the Pure Land. It also states that the scrolls are proof of the benefits of *yūzū nenbutsu* practice, and that the images were created in order to increase the faith of laymen and laywomen.

This claim about proof suggests a connection to fundraising. Kuramadera was destroyed by fire in 1238 and a successful restoration campaign was celebrated with the consecration of a new structure in 1248.²⁴ *Kokonchomonjū* 古今著聞集,

22. On this sense of community and the incorporation of different social classes in promotional campaigns, see, for example, GOODWIN (1994, 4–5, 142–48); and QUINTER (2015, 86–126).

23. The list is often referred to as a roster of kami names (*jinmyōchō* 神名帳). Generally, the term refers to the list of kami in the ninth and tenth chapters of the Engi-era *shiki* (procedural codes or regulations) issued in 927 (*Engishiki* 延喜式, 506–723).

24. An entry in *Hyakurenshō* 百練抄 for the sixteenth day of the second intercalary month of 1238 records the temple's loss to fire, and that the sacred image of Bishamon[tennō] was saved. The fire on this day is also mentioned in *Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡 33: 222. An entry for the twenty-



FIGURE 12. *Yüzū nenbutsu engi* (Shōwa manuscript), detail of the wife of the low-ranking monk of Kita Shirakawa in Enma's court. Photography courtesy of © The Cleveland Museum of Art. Accession no. 1956.87.



FIGURE 13. *Yüzū nenbutsu engi* (Shōwa manuscript), detail of the wife of the low-ranking monk of Kita Shirakawa reviving. Photography courtesy of © The Cleveland Museum of Art. Accession no. 1956.87.

a collection of didactic tales compiled in 1254 by Tachibana no Narisue 橘成季 (d. u.), contains a biography of Ryōnin that closely resembles passages in *Yüzū nenbutsu engi*, including descriptions of Ryōnin's protection by Kuramadera's Bishamon tennō (*Kokonchomonjū* 89–91).²⁵ *Kōgizuketsushū* 広疑瑞決集,

fourth day of the second month of 1248 mentions a dedication following the campaign to restore it (*Hyakurenshō*, 183, 225; HASHIMOTO 2008, 152–53).

25. Textual components of the Shōwa and other scrolls may also derive from a woodblock

a Pure Land work on kami by Shinzui 信瑞 (d. 1279) from 1256 contains both that story and a shorter version of Bishamon tennō's roster (*Kōgizuiketsushū* 82–85). The timing of the compilation of these *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* components, just six and eight years after Kuramadera's restoration, may indicate that a *yūzū nenbutsu* group was involved in fundraising for Kuramadera, and the roster of deities' names may have been presented in this campaign as evidence of Ryōnin's special connection to Bishamon tennō (HASHIMOTO 2008, 153). It is compelling for our purposes here to think of the origins of the *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* in this light.

The Shōwa scrolls have been classified as belonging to the first development of *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* imagery. Perhaps partly because of the emphasis on written commitments in *yūzū nenbutsu* practice, later handscroll manuscripts include the names of painters, calligraphers, and patrons in dedications, postscripts, and other notations. This information has enabled scholars to piece together the nature of specific promotional campaigns. Through comparing extant manuscripts, we can also track alterations, corrections, and additions to the text and images, including clear attempts to reinforce the motivations of potential donors and promotional saints.²⁶ Such efforts are evident in changes to the presentation of the netherworld and hell, to be discussed shortly.

The next stage of production comprises numerous works created between 1381 and 1386 due to the activities of a monk named Ryōchin 良鎮 (d. u.). Postscripts describe his great vow to produce more than one hundred images to promote *yūzū nenbutsu* and to distribute one or more handscrolls in each province (ABE 2013a, 77). Ryōchin collected the names of participants in separate rosters and deposited them beneath the jeweled altar of Taimadera 当麻寺. He was also behind the creation of woodblock-printed handscrolls published in Meitoku 明德 2 (1391) and hand-painted scrolls that are generally based on the Meitoku prints (UCHIDA 2011; TAKAGISHI 2008, 51–56). The most spectacular version was created around 1414 and is held at Seiryōji 清涼寺. The retired emperor Go Komatsu 後小松 (1377–1433) wrote the forward for the first Seiryōji scroll in his own hand, and it is thought that he also wrote a no-longer extant promotional statement to accompany the scroll set.²⁷ Ashikaga Yoshimochi 足利義持 (1386–1428) wrote the forward for the second Seiryōji scroll and Sūkenmon'in 崇賢門院

printed work, *Yūzū nenbutsu kanjin jō* 融通念仏勸進狀, by Ryōnin's ninth-generation disciple Yūsen 遊仙, which only survives as a copy by the Hieizan monk Rien 理門. On the possibility that this was one source for *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* versions, see TASHIRO (1976, 93–106); and ABE (2015, 257–63).

26. For a useful chart of the additions and omissions at each stage, see ABE (2015, 245).

27. Evidence for this a promotional statement is a similar document written in his hand, held at Dainenbutsuji 大念仏寺 (YŪZŪ NENBUTSUSHŪ KYŪGAKU KENKYŪJO 2000, 87–89), and a promotional statement brushed by the retired emperor Go Hanazono 後花園 (1419–1470) that accompanies a later copy of the Seiryōji version (ABE 2013a, 84).



FIGURE 14. *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* (Shōwa manuscript), detail of plague deities marking a schedule of *nenbutsu* practice. Photography courtesy of © The Cleveland Museum of Art. Accession no. 1956.87.

(1339–1427) wrote a postscript (ABE 2013a, 82–84; TAKAGISHI 2004; 2008; 2015; MATSUBARA 1991).

These later *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* add a final scene of *yūzū nenbutsu* rites at Seiryōji that were initiated in 1279 by a precept monk named Dōgyo 導御 (1223–1311). Dōgyo was affiliated with Tōshōdaiji 唐招提寺, raised funds for temple and sculpture construction, and promoted *yūzū nenbutsu* rosters (HOSOKAWA 1987, 169–234; 1989a, 199–216; INOUE 2004; ABE 2013b, 147–49). He wrote about a firsthand experience of the netherworld and about his release upon showing a roster and calling on Jizō’s protection (*Jisai nenbutsu ninzu mokuroku* 持齋念仏人数目録). Although Ryōchin does not describe this revival experience in his *Yūzū nenbutsu engi*, he mentions Dōgyo and may have known of the claim.

Indeed, a few decisive changes in these manuscripts indicate an increased emphasis on hell. Where the roster in the Shōwa scrolls only mentions the first of the ten kings by name, for example, the Meitoku print provides the names of all ten. Changes to a story in the second scroll are particularly telling. The Shōwa scroll tersely relates, “Because the wife of a low-ranking monk of Kita Shirakawa accepted a [cycle of] three thousand *nenbutsu*, she was able to return from Enma’s court” (ZN 21: 111). If the textual description is brief, the illustration takes up considerable space to show her arrival in Enma’s court and her return to the world (FIGURES 12 and 13). Upon arrival, her escort rests his plaque on the ground, and Enma and his bureaucrats descend the palace steps to greet her, the bureaucrats bowing low.²⁸

The Meitoku and Seiryōji handscrolls add to this revival tale an explanation of the benefits of *yūzū nenbutsu*, including a claim that putting names of the dead in the roster and reciting the *nenbutsu* for them will cause lotus flowers to bloom in hell. The effects for the dead—rebirth in the human or heavenly realm, and ultimately in heavenly paradise—are the same as those for the living. These later handscrolls then cite *Longshu zengguang jingtu wen* 龍舒增廣淨土文 to explain that promoting *nenbutsu* to “only two, more than ten, one hundred or one thousand, or ten thousand people” results in increasingly wondrous benefits, and further cite a story about a pious man named Bōsho 房翥 (T 1970, 47. 261a, 268a). Bōsho, the handscroll texts explain, is able to revive because he recommended *nenbutsu* practice to an old man who, presumably as a result of following this advice, was reborn in the Pure Land. Bōsho too, therefore, should be born in the Pure Land. Instead, he returns to this world to resume his life (TASHIRO 1976, 284–85).²⁹

28. This portrayal closely resembles a scene in *Fudō riyaku engi* 不動利益緣起 held at the Tokyo National Museum (ABE 2015, 249–50).

29. In the *Longshu zengguang jingtu wen*, Bōsho prefers to postpone his rebirth in the Pure Land in order to copy a sutra and visit Wutaishan 五台山; the king lets him revive to do these good works. See also TOKUDA (1988, 181–88). It is likely that Ryōchin took this story from Yūsen’s

In the Meitoku and Seiryōji paintings, Bōsho appears beside the Kita Shirakawa monk's wife, as if they had died at the same time. Moreover, although hell was not illustrated in the Shōwa scrolls, the later manuscripts render the description of lotus flowers blooming in hell as occurring within a cracked cauldron that spills cooled waters onto hell's flames.³⁰ This scene appears directly before Enma's court, suggesting that the woman and Bōsho have just been released from hell. The imagery transforms *yūzū nenbutsu* practice into a hell-sundering spell.

Such modifications strengthen the threat behind divine oversight of *nenbutsu* practice while also dramatically illustrating release from hell as a reward for this practice. These fourteenth-century experiments with traditional hell imagery communicate how important preaching about hell had become to promotional campaigns.

In the Shōwa and later scrolls, the documentation of *Yūzū nenbutsu* activity draws responses from other menacing entities as well. A vignette toward the end of the second Shōwa scroll tells of an owner or manager of land rights (*myōshu* 名主) who organizes extraordinary *nenbutsu* sessions in order to protect his household from an epidemic. That night he dreams that strangely shaped beings try to enter the gate of his residence, asking to see the schedule for the household's *nenbutsu* practice (*banchō* 番帳) that has been placed before the Buddha. When the man produces the document, these plague deities (*ekishin* 疫神) seem overjoyed and add a seal (*hangyō* 判形) beneath each name. In the illustration, the *myōshu* greets a crowd of demons at his gate, one holding a brush to the roster (FIGURE 14).

The man wants to add the name of a daughter living elsewhere, but the plague deities refuse to recognize her as a practitioner. He awakens to see illegible marks resembling seared stamps or brands (*yaki e* 焼絵) under each name in the roster, as if the plague deities had unsuccessfully attempted to write in the *kana* syllabary. The household remains unscathed, but the daughter succumbs to illness and dies. The monstrous plague deities too are *yūzū nenbutsu* constituents, since they are under the auspices of Gion's deity Gozu tennō 牛頭天王 who lords over plague deities; Gion is listed in Bishamon tennō's roster. Unlike Bishamon tennō's benevolent protection and active participation, these dangerous entities seal a commitment to do no harm, but ultimately this functions protectively as well. Or rather, all of the deities we have examined can be ambivalent, an aspect made especially clear in relationship to oaths. The story closes with the Shogun's

Yūzū nenbutsu kanjin jō, one possible source for the Shōwa scrolls. Yūsen's text does not mention the wife's revival, but other passages are the same as those cited in the Meitoku scroll. Abe Mika posits that Ryōchin may have combined Yūsen's text with the Shōwa scrolls to produce the Meitoku version (ABE 2015, 260–61). The pictorial combination of the two revival tales does exactly that.

30. On the development of this motif, see HIRASAWA (2012).

household asking to see this roster marked by plague deities, proof of the efficacy of extraordinary *nenbutsu* sessions.

The way that the plague deities seal the roster resembles marks made on oaths by people who could not write: they drew circles or crosses, or they made impressions with the back ends of brushes, called *fude jiku in* 筆軸印 (SATŌ 2006, 19–20). Oaths must have been familiar even to illiterate viewers for the Shidoji legends to feature them so prominently. If Bishamon tennō's roster was read aloud, its format and cosmology would also have been recognizable in relationship to oaths, especially in the context of assembling commitments and recording names. If the low-ranking hell wardens and plague deities in the images we have examined have less comprehension of texts than their superiors, even as they value them, corresponding to illiterate or semi-literate humans, then we can also see the way that high-level heavenly and netherworld entities handle documents in these images as reflecting the management of texts in this world by literate elites.

The sheer number of rosters referred to and illustrated in *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* stresses the authority of writing and reading. The handscrolls were in themselves rosters and campaign documents. They were also used in conjunction with supplementary rosters. In these legends, writing has magical power to save; it is simultaneously a tool for cataloging and controlling people.

Both *Shidoji engi e* and *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* presume supernatural oversight and involvement in human affairs, especially in promotional projects. Otherworldly documentation may be invisible and unreadable to viewers, but expert narration of these paintings and texts takes audiences behind the scenes to see (and not necessarily to read) the workings of karma. In both illustrated narratives, important events turn on the transcendent act of making a promise, which activates networks of people and deities around sacred production and construction. In both, devotional commitments travel to and from other worlds through documentation, and karmic effects are inscribed on either side of the divide. Finally, in both cases, the reception of promotional documents in other worlds authorizes the people who use them in this world.

From a Vow to a Restored Temple to Paradise

All of the protagonists of Shidoji legend are poor and fret that they have no means to restore the temple. Shōchiku dōji's mother Zenzai says, for example, "how is someone poor and weak with no connections to fulfill a great vow?" (*Shidoji engi* 211). The unequal capacities of the Shidoji legend's four returnees and the different circumstances of their vow-making provide opportunities to introduce variations on themes. Given Shōchiku dōji and Zenzai's ultimate identities as the bodhisattvas Jizō and Kannon, that they are able to complete a substantial architectural project can perhaps be seen as predestined, but their

achievement depends on the intervention and instructions of Enma and other supernatural entities.³¹ After Enma harnesses Shiratsue dōji's vow to restore Shidoji, the pious packhorse driver's encounter with the local governor's daughter provides him with the wealth he will need, making the match less serendipitous than it seems at first. The more ordinary worldlings Senzai dōji and A'ichi are essentially abducted and held hostage until they vow (and vow again) to restore the temple. A'ichi's final oath, closing the cycle of legends, certifies the authenticity of his own story, and verifies the three preceding revival tales; the repetition in four successive revival legends (and in what were originally four paintings) divulges that Enma periodically enlists or forces people to attend to his tutelary temple, while providing different models of promotion.

Once the fundraisers are ready to get to work, the narratives do not dwell on the process of restoring Shidoji, but often jump to their conclusions: dedications of the restored temple. The illustrations generally follow this lead; there are no carpenters cutting and planing lumber, and no workmen bustling around an emerging structure, as seen in many medieval illustrated handscrolls, such as the fourteenth-century *Ishiyamadera engi* 石山寺縁起. The only construction scene in the extant Shidoji scrolls appears in the painting of the founding legend, which is not technically about fundraising (FIGURE 3). That first legend, however, establishes for successive legends the pattern of a difficult task initiated by a vow that summons the assistance of supernatural entities. And these deities continue to support the temple's maintenance.

Instead of focusing on construction or even on fundraising, the A'ichi scroll expands the border between life and death (FIGURE 4). Shidoji's precincts crown the image, Enma's court is on the left side, and events in this world occupy the right-hand margin; A'ichi's story straddles these different worlds. In between this world and Enma's court is the landscape of his afterlife wanderings. He and his guide, the monk Shōkaku, who is also bound by a vow made while he was alive, appear together about a dozen times in this intermediate landscape, according to a pictorial convention commonly used to illustrate sequential action called *iji dōzu* 異時同図. Both men have shaved heads and wear the grey-and-black robes of mendicants as they walk through large swaths of the image, suggesting the disciplining of A'ichi's will for his fundraising task ahead. In the two scenes of Enma's court and palace, A'ichi and Shōkaku first kneel on the steps before the king and his officers, and then A'ichi enters Enma's private space, as if in service to his lord.

31. It is worth noting that a bodhisattva's vows to save living beings can be structured as conditions. The forty-eight vows of Hōzō bosatsu 法藏菩薩 in *Foshuo wuliangshou jing* 仏説無量壽經, for example, can be relied upon for salvation because they were conditions for his becoming the Buddha Amida (T 360, 12.267c–69b).

The main protagonists of the revival-fundraising legends are all of low status, making it difficult to confirm their existence, and it is likely that many were invented. Efforts to learn more about the historical Shidoji campaigns and the people involved in them are further hampered by the fact that Shidoji has few surviving documents; there was a fire on the eighteenth day of the tenth month of 1479 and there is said to have been another during a battle that took place in 1582 (SHIDO CHŌSHI HENSAN IINKAI 1986, 1: 133, 2: 572).

Enma's prediction of the death of Akanbō within three years refers to the only person in the legends connected to Shidoji whose historical existence can be verified. Akan was the resident monk of Shidoji who died on the fifth day of the eleventh month of 1319 (TOMOHISA 1967, 221–23). The fabricated prediction would only have been effective as evidence of A'ichi's account relatively soon after Akan's death, within local memory. Although the remains of A'ichi's residence and his grave were said to be near Shidoji, we have no way of corroborating that he was an actual figure who labored on behalf of the temple.

A Shingon Ritsu monk and man of letters also named A'ichi 阿一 (d.u.), active in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, skillfully managed promotional campaigns (HOSOKAWA 1987, 89–90; 1989b, 218–20; OISHIO 1995, 367–70; 2006, 286–90). He lived at Kyōkōji 教興寺, a subtemple of Saidaiji 西大寺, that had been restored by Eison in 1269–1270. Shingon Ritsu monks were campaigning for temples around Japan at the time, including for those along the Inland Sea and in Sanuki (MATSUO 1995; KA'AI 1968; HOSOKAWA 1997, 176–81; ŌHASHI 2001a; 2001b; ŌISHI 2001; OISHIO 1995). We cannot directly connect the accomplished Kyōkōji A'ichi to Shidoji, but he was alive when the Shidoji's scrolls were created, and the Shidoji narratives contain various Shingon Ritsu elements (MATSUOKA 2010; ŌHASHI 2001a). Unlike the historical A'ichi, however, the A'ichi of legend has little initiative without otherworldly pressure and is instructed to provide the legwork of soliciting donations and depositing collections with Shidoji's resident monk, rather than himself managing a campaign. It is possible that the name of the Kyōkōji A'ichi was borrowed to enhance Shidoji legend, but they are not the same individual.

So what do we know about the logistics of Shidoji's fourteenth-century promotional campaign? As we have seen, many of the temple's records have not survived, but among the extant papers is a fragment of a trial-related document from 1369 that contains a short list of documents. The title of one suggests that a large-scale fundraising campaign was conducted in nearby provinces and in Kyushu during the Shōchū 正中 years (1324–1325) (SHIDO CHŌSHI HENSAN IINKAI 1986, 1: 121–23; ŌNISHI 1991, 36 and 39). This is within the estimated date range of the creation of Shidoji's paintings.

The scrolls of the oldest set of foundation legends were remounted to include an eighth scroll that starts with the words *Kanjin shamon nanigashi* 勧進沙門某

(promotional priest x). This document refers to the origin legends, to fires at the temple, and to the need for repairs. It then appeals to great patrons for donations (*Shidoji engi*, 223). With the placeholder *nanigashi*, it appears to be a template that could easily be copied and adapted by successive promotional priests. The document, however, is undated and seems not to have been regarded as part of the set during the early eighteenth century. We cannot connect it with a specific campaign.³²

The last Shidoji fundraising-related document I will mention here, *Sanshū Shidoji Higashi Enmadō kan'en no sho narabini jo* 讚州志度寺東閻魔堂幹縁疏並序 (dated 1482), was written by the resident priest Chōun 朝咩 in his efforts to rebuild Shidoji's Higashi Enmadō, which was lost to fire in 1479. It refers to Shidoji legend and contains a revival tale about a nun named Mia 弥阿. Long ago, the story relates, she encountered Enma who asked her to build a hall and to have a sculpture carved of him to accurate dimensions; Enma then measured his own height. Mia revived and went door to door raising funds. The inclusion of this legend about the original Higashi Enmadō and its image tells us that Shidoji continued to find revival tales effective for fundraising.

Taking a different approach to this problem of logistics, the Shidoji legend contains phrases that echo promotional vocabulary employed elsewhere. Senzai dōji, for example, preaches that through donating even one sheet of paper or one blade of grass (*isshi issō* 一紙一草) people can establish a karmic connection (with the deities and divinities at the temple) that will benefit them in their next lives. There was a tradition of saying that even tiny contributions would be accepted. A famous example is Chōgen's appeal, in his twelfth-century campaign to restore Tōdaiji, for even "one grain [of rice], half a penny" (*ichiryū hansen* 一粒半錢), or even "a small tool, a short piece of wood" (*suntetsu shakuboku* 寸鉄尺木) (*Tōdaiji zoku yōroku* 東大寺統要録, 199; translation adapted from GOODWIN 1994, 77–78). As the Senzai dōji legend indicates, nominal donations were seen to have soteriological effects. They also helped unite communities around Buddhist projects, and certain materials were useful, even if collected in small amounts. From the middle of the thirteenth century, however, an increase in calls for half a penny, a piece of paper, a piece of wood, or a blade of grass may also have been a way to distinguish solicitations of voluntary contributions from coercive collection methods (GOODWIN 1994, 114).

We have seen how imagery of afterlife judgment encourages the commissioning of sacred production by indicating a hierarchy based on virtue, and by promoting the possibility of compensating for insufficient virtue with generous donations. Other imagery focuses more on the detrimental effects of stinginess.

32. There are also a few surviving documents indicating support of the temple by the Hosokawa family from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (KAGAWA KEN 1986, 1105).

In the twelfth-century *Shigisan engi emaki*, for instance, a wealthy layman forfeits his storehouse for neglecting to fill the magical begging bowl of a mid-Heian period monk named Myōren 命蓮 (d.u.; *Shigisan engi emaki*, 2–33). And scroll fifteen of the fourteenth-century *Kasuga gongen genki e* illustrates a manager of repairs at Kōfukuji who arranges for a store of rice to be hidden during a famine, instead of offering it to a starving scholar-monk and his acolytes. In a dream, an old man scatters the rice, convincing the manager immediately to bring large amounts to the monk (ZN 14: 11–13). In these illustrated narratives, not contributing support to Buddhist priests can result in the disastrous loss of all.

The Shidoji scroll set is not as heavy-handed in terms of this-worldly repercussions. It illustrates models of aristocratic patronage (in scrolls we have not discussed here), describes promotional activities to people “high and low” (a common refrain), and instructs fundraisers to approach people who can help. While the afterlife risks of not contributing might be severe, by having Enma and his officers voice the aims and urgency of promotional campaigns, protagonists and audiences are offered an opportunity to steer their destiny away from hell through donation.

One obvious measure of a successful campaign is the completion of a project. Shidoji’s architecture was shown in the images to record the contributions of deities and donors over time. It appears five times in the six extant scrolls, growing in size from legend to legend and image to image. Viewing the legends and illustrations in the chronological order of each story, we find construction of the initial one-bay hall in the first painting taking up more space in the third, as a veritable forest of stone pagodas extends behind the structure and to the shore. Although the Senzai dōji painting does not survive, the legend describes him arriving at Shidoji to see a five-bay main hall, a small hall, and a five-bay worship hall. The painting of Shiratsue dōji’s story shows the temple nearly doubled in scale with many structures around it, including a gate, a bell tower, a pagoda, and small shrines. Shōchiku dōji and his mother arrive to find the main hall and a smaller hall. The layout of the precincts in the painting resembles that of the previous hanging scroll, but the buildings are spread out to take up more space and the pagoda is much larger. In the culminating A’ichi scroll, the buildings are proportionally smaller, but the main hall appears to have been enlarged by a portico and the temple precincts stretch across the top of the image.

Each of these pictorializations indicates a different aspect of the temple, giving it a multiplicity of meanings. In the first image, Shidoji is a place created by deities. In the second and third it is associated with the dragon kingdom and mortuary rites. The third painting illustrates a *gigaku*-style performance and the Shiratsue dōji painting illustrates a dedication rite performed by monks. The people attending dedications extend out into audiences of the paintings, potential contributors and participants. In the Shōchiku dōji scroll, Shidoji is a quiet setting for recitation of the foundation legend.

Finally, in the A'ichi scroll, the temple is a portal to the other world. There are tiny human figures here and there in the background, but not many within the precincts. The main protagonists—A'ichi, Shōkaku, and the old monk—are clearly depicted in front of the temple, near the shore. They are all dreaming, dreamt, or dead.³³ We view Shidoji across water from a bird's-eye view of the netherworld, a composition that Ōnishi Shōko compares to that of the fourteenth-century *Jigoku gokuraku zu byōbu* 地獄極楽図屏風, a painted screen held at Konkaikōmyōji 金戒光明寺, in which the Pure Land is situated above a contiguous hell and this world, and separated from them by an ocean (ŌNISHI 1991, 37–39). Following Ōnishi's lead, if we see this representation of Shidoji as paradise, then passages in the Shiratsue dōji legend describing the temple during dedication rites as resembling a celestial heaven seem more than merely rhetorical.

Other contemporary paintings presume a similar opposition of paradise and hell. A reworking of the horizontal *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* handscrolls, for example, in a hanging scroll held at Anrakuji 安楽寺 from the end of the Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō periods, vertically rearranges the imagery of the Shōwa scrolls. In the foreground, the Kita Shirakawa woman walks from Enma's court on the left to revive in her home on the right. Directly above her are two scenes of the origins of *yūzū nenbutsu*; on the right is Ryōnin's dream of Amida, and on the left is Bishamon tennō's visit in the shape of a monk. The deity floats up toward the center of the image in his true form as he departs. This painting omits a scene of Ryōnin's promotion in favor of a centered depiction of Bishamon tennō's heavenly promotion. The stars, kami, and other entities face him on all sides. The ten kings float up toward him on a cloud, King Enma prominent among them. To the upper left of that scene, Bishamon tennō appears to Ryōnin at Kuramadera, and on a diagonal across the top of the painting, Amida and his entourage approach the dying Ryōnin to escort him to the Pure Land. Other scenes are edited out to focus on a streamlined indication of paradise at the top and hell at the bottom, with deities from above and below meeting in the center of the painting around Bishamon tennō. The human realm is at the edges of the other world in this composition, as it is in the A'ichi scroll.

Another instructive comparison is to paintings that conflate shrine-temple complexes with paradise. Many Miya mandara 宮曼荼羅 (and Shaji mandara 社寺曼荼羅, more broadly) produced in the second half of the thirteenth century were influenced by the notion that making a pilgrimage to a shrine creates

33. On the overlap or conflation between the netherworld and Shidoji, see also KOMINE (2010). Other Japanese sacred sites were seen as gateways to the other world, as well. For instance, there is a hell at Kasuga (*Shasekishū* 1: 6, 40–41; MORRELL 1985, 85–86) and there were Enma halls at shrines around Japan (such as at Ise). Additionally, the caldera of Tateyama 立山 and other volcanic landscapes were seen as actual hells. See, for example, tale 3: 124 in the eleventh-century compilation *Dai Nihonkoku Hokekyō genki* 大日本国法華経験記, 565–66.

the karma for rebirth in paradise, and that shrines were perceived as pure lands (MATSUMOTO 1995). Portrayals of the Kasuga-Kōfukuji complex, for example, illustrate these ideas.³⁴ Some place Kōfukuji in the foreground, but most focus exclusively on Kasuga, the mountain Mikasayama 三笠山 behind it, and the Buddhist identities (*honji* 本地) of the kami enshrined there, lined up in front of or above the mountain. The upper halves of two thirteenth-century paintings of the shrine explicitly illustrate paradise. *Kasuga Fudarakusen mandara* 春日補陀落山曼荼羅, held at the Nezu Museum, illustrates Kannon's Pure Land, Fudaraku, thought to be in this world, rising majestically above the shrine and mountain. Kannon emits golden light from the summit of his paradisiacal mountain, surrounded by water. The other painting is *Kasuga jōdo mandara* 春日淨土曼荼羅, held by Nōman'in 能満院. This work reenvisioned the divinities associated with the kami at the shrine—Shakamuni and his attendants, Miroku, the eleven-headed Kannon, Yakushi, and a buddha thought to be Amida—as presiding over a paradisiacal lake in which devotees are reborn. The Pure Lands of each of these divinities are visually combined above Kasuga.

Hell is not depicted in Kasuga Miya mandara, but it is important to imaginations of Kasuga because the bodhisattva Jizō was seen as the Buddhist identity of the third shrine. Scrolls six and nine of *Kasuga gongen genki e* contain scenes of devotees being saved from hell by the Kasuga kami (ZN 13: 37–40, 60–62), and *Shasekishū* (1: 6, 40–41; MORRELL 1985, 85–86) describes a hell for devotees located under Kasuga meadows. In the Nōman'in painting, Jizō leads a monk up toward paradise from the left side of the image. The golden clouds that they ride upon emerge from an area behind the four main shrine buildings, representing Jizō's connection to the shrine. Other monks have already arrived on the shore of paradise. It is thought that Jizō has saved this monk from hell.

Considered together, these medieval paintings represent a universe composed of three or four vertically stacked worlds. Hell is at the bottom, our world occupies the center or the margins, there is often intermediate or transitional space (the netherworld, the heavens, clouds, an ocean or lake), and paradise is indicated at the top. Each work is predicated on the entire cosmology. We can view the Kasuga paintings as emphasizing the upper two thirds of this universe and Shidoji's Aichi scroll as emphasizing the lower two thirds.

Furthermore, the combination of Enma and Kannon gives Shidoji a double identity. It is Enma's tutelary temple and an entryway to the netherworld. At the same time, if we recall that Fudaraku Kannon sculpted its main icon which is grafted onto Enma, Shidoji is conflated with Kannon's Pure Land. Through these

34. My choice of imagery related to the Kasuga-Kōfukuji complex is not random; the second Shidoji legend is a type of Kōfukuji legend. On these legends, see ABE (1986) and ŌHASHI (2001a).

overlays, A'ichi's efforts to restore Shidoji, to avoid hell, to save others, and to build a future in paradise (depicted as Shidoji) are one and the same project.

These paintings encourage material production, but the site of that generation (of documents, painted handscrolls, and temples) was not presented as confined to this world. While these campaign materials inform us about the marketing of expensive medieval construction projects in an age of widespread fundraising, we do not do them justice if we solely focus on their physical goals or accomplishments.

The Shidoji revival-fundraising legends are structured as a series of (documented) exchanges. Shidoji's exhausted architecture prompts Enma to summon promotional saints to the netherworld. Their lives are extended under the condition that they restore the temple. When they die, they leave behind them the regenerated structure as they depart for Shidoji's eternal, paradisiacal form. It is possible that donors to Shidoji were included in these exchanges through the issuance of paper amulets or *kechien* certificates, receipts for the benefits they could hope for as a result of their contributions.

The back-and-forth among worlds illustrated in the paintings and legends we have examined relies heavily on documents as a medium. Japanese medieval paintings are valuable and perhaps understudied resources on the historical production, handling, and storage of texts. The painted documents studied here, including those that are imagined in other worlds, reveal a great deal about the perception of writing, record-keeping, and vowing.

In both *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* and *Shidoji engi e*, vows, oaths, rosters, and other promotional records transcend worlds. Audiences could imagine that the inscription of their names in campaign rosters would be conducted to the other world for magnified effect and entry into Enma's registers. Mapping contractual relationships across the universe and conflating this-worldly and otherworldly documents lent numinous authority, divine threats, and vibrancy to rosters and other documents that were essential to promotional campaigns. These images consecrate and elevate promotional rosters from ephemera to indelible karmic records with everlasting beneficial effects.

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