

## The *Lotus Sūtra* and the Rhetoric of Legitimization in Eleventh-Century Japanese Buddhism

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THIS PAPER EXPLORES the “rhetoric of legitimation,” that is, the use of religious discourse based on an authoritative text in order to legitimate political and social agendas. Specifically, I will examine two eleventh-century Japanese works, the *Hokke genki* 法華驗記 of the Buddhist monastic ascetics known as *hokke hijiri* 法華聖, and the *Eiga monogatari* 栄花物語 of lay Buddhist aristocrats (*kizoku* 貴族). Both the ascetics and aristocrats articulated and legitimated different self-identities and conceptions of the world—and therefore different claims to human power and authority—on the basis of the same authoritative text, the *Lotus Sūtra*. Both groups asserted that they were living in accord with the sūtra’s sacred teachings.

This paper will consider the means by which these two groups interpreted the *Lotus Sūtra* to legitimate their different worldviews. Authoritative texts are often treated by the community that prizes them as the benchmark against which human activity, whether religious, social, or political, can be conceived, examined, and judged. Such texts authenticate the cosmology by which a community defines itself as valid and true. In turn, a community’s discourse about the nature of the universe and the behaviors that accord with that view is legitimated when it can be shown to conform to the dictates of the authoritative text. Such legitimations, then, are not only about claims to religious authority or knowledge about the universe, but also, and just as importantly, assertions about the way people should behave in the world, the kinds of social and political institutions they should have, how people should act in the ideal, or the correctness of the existing social order. Both ascetics and aristocrats understood the *Lotus Sūtra* to be an authoritative measure of the correctness of their religious, social, and political activity. Both ascetics and aristocrats saw their worldview as valid and true because, they could argue, they were living in accordance with the sacred dictates of the *Lotus Sūtra*.

One important way in which the rhetoric of legitimation is constructed is by means of analogy: the human world is likened to the sacred world. Analogies assert similarity and resemblance between sacred realities and human ones. Postmodern critics argue that discourse constitutes reality to the extent that systems of thought create objects about which statements can be made and then judged to be true or false.<sup>1</sup> In the Buddhist discourse of the Heian period (794–1185), ascetics and aristocrats, bodhisattvas and Buddhas are objects about which transcendent functions and characteristics are predicated. Analogy draws explicit likenesses between the latter, sacred figures (“objects”) and certain human beings. Through analogy, what is predicated about these salvific beings can now also be predicated about their human counterparts. The *Hokke genki* likens certain ascetics to bodhisattvas from the *Lotus Sūtra*, and the *Eiga monogatari* likens Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原鞠長, the most powerful courtier of his day, to the *Lotus Sūtra* Buddha. These analogies legitimate ascetics and aristocrats by claiming that their worldviews and life-styles are substantial and meaningful, and not simply temporary and arbitrary.

The act of legitimation through the rhetorical use of analogy has ideological implications. Ideology is defined here as discourse that articulates meaning which is necessarily bound up with particular social and cultural contexts. The conceptual frameworks that discourses express are implicated in language, and language always privileges the point of reference from which it is expressed. Ideology is discourse that uses proofs and arguments for the purpose of articulating and legitimating the power and authority claimed by specific social entities. The legitimations claimed by Heian ascetics and aristocrats are ideological because they are connected to these groups’ particular contexts, aspirations, and notions of power and authority.

#### *Interpretive Issues*

In order to treat a culture’s potentially diverse social groups as fundamentally different in self-identity, these groups can be conceived of as “institutions.” By institution is meant, following Mary DOUGLAS, a “legitimized social grouping” (1986, p. 46).

The institution in question may be a family, a game, or a ceremony. The legitimating authority may be personal, such as a father, doctor, judge, referee, or maitre d’hôtel. Or it may be diffused, for example, based by common assent on some general

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Paul A. Bové 1990, pp. 50–65.

founding principle. What is excluded from the idea of institution...is any purely instrumental or provisional practical arrangement that is recognized as such. Here, it is assumed that most established institutions, if challenged, are able to rest their claims to legitimacy on their fit with the nature of the universe. A convention is institutionalized when, in reply to the question, "Why do you do it like this?" although the first answer may be framed in terms of mutual convenience, in response to further questioning the final answer refers to the way the planets are fixed in the sky or the way that plants or humans naturally behave. (DOUGLAS 1986, pp. 46–47)

By verbalizing their versions of the world through discourse, these institutions assert their identity as legitimate groups and set the boundaries by which they are to be defined and recognized. Institutions are distinctive interpretive communities with a shared cultural background. Thus a culture may comprise many such discrete institutions or interpretive communities. An institution's particular interpretation of the universe, however, is not based upon a view of the world as a *tabula rasa* that can be etched anew with each institution. Rather, each institution is subject to a general cultural framework, a set of concepts, symbols, and rules through which the world can be conceived and innovated upon.

An institution's assertions about "the way things in sheer actuality are" (GEERTZ 1973, p. 89) legitimate its existence and life-style by demonstrating that the institution is behaving in accordance with the fundamental order of the universe. Institutions are concerned with cosmological order and significance, and, at the same time, they express basic concerns about the social order, constructing specific notions of, and dictates for, how to be in the world. Peter L. Berger, in his study of religious legitimation, argues that this kind of activity is central to religions:

The historically crucial part of religion in the process of legitimation is explicable in terms of the unique capacity of religion to "locate" human phenomena within a cosmic frame of reference. All legitimation serves to maintain reality—reality, that is, as defined in a particular human collectivity. Religious legitimation purports to relate the humanly defined reality to ultimate, universal and sacred reality. The inherently precarious and transitory constructions of human activity are thus given the semblance of ultimate security and permanence. Put differently, the humanly constructed *nomoi* are given a cosmic status. (BERGER 1969, pp. 35–36)

DOUGLAS further discusses the means by which social groups ground their claims to legitimacy: "To acquire legitimacy, every kind of institution needs a formula that founds its rightness in reason and in nature" (1986, p. 45). Institutions survive and grow through their foundation in nature and in reason. "Being naturalized, they are part of the order of the universe and so are ready to stand as the grounds of argument" (1986, p. 52). She states further:

Any institution that is going to keep its shape needs to gain legitimacy by distinctive grounding in nature and in reason: then it affords to its members a set of analogies with which to explore the world and with which to justify the naturalness and reasonableness of the instituted rules, and it can keep its identifiable continuing form. (DOUGLAS 1986, p. 112)

One of the devices that serves to ground claims of legitimacy, situating the human within a larger universe, is that of analogy. According to Douglas, it is through analogy that human concerns are viewed as substantial and meaningful:

There needs to be an analogy by which the formal structure of a crucial set of social relations is found in the physical world, or in the supernatural world, or in eternity, anywhere, so long as it is not seen as a socially contrived arrangement. When the analogy is applied back and forth from one set of social relations to another and from these back to nature, its recurring formal structure becomes easily recognized and endowed with self-validating truth. (DOUGLAS 1986, p. 48)

In this analogical mode, legitimation results when human actions and ideas are shown to be analogous to counterparts situated in what is perceived to be the reality of the universe. Berger states:

Religion legitimates social institutions by bestowing upon them an ultimately valid ontological status, that is, by *locating* them within a sacred and cosmic frame of reference. The historical constructions of human activity are viewed from a vantage point that, in its own self-definition, transcends both history and man. This can be done in different ways. Probably the most ancient form of this legitimation is the conception of the institutional order as directly reflecting or manifesting the divine structure of the cosmos, that is, the conception of the relationship between society and cosmos as one between microcosm and macrocosm. Everything "here below" has its analogue "up above." By participating in the institutional

order men, *ipso facto*, participate in the divine cosmos (BERGER 1969, pp. 33–34).

Analogies ground claims to legitimacy in the reality of the universe, and set the boundaries by which institutions are, at least in the ideal, to be defined. Analogies make clear the connection between the institution and the power of the universe. This power is seen as cohering to most, if not all, aspects of the institutions' activities.

### *The Lotus Sūtra in Mid-Heian Period Japan*

Significant segments of Heian society, especially the aristocrats and monastics who lived in and around Kyoto, centered their religious discourse around the *Lotus Sūtra*. The well-known court woman, Sei Shōnagon 清少納言, in her early eleventh-century reflection on Heian aristocratic society, *Makura no sōshi* 枕草子, states: “As for sūtras, it goes without saying the *Lotus Sūtra* [is superior].”<sup>2</sup> Her testimonial to the power and authority of the *Lotus Sūtra* undoubtedly reflects more than just her personal, lay aristocratic opinion. Authors and artisans contemporaneous with her made frequent verbal and visual reference to the *Lotus Sūtra* in their works. The Tendai school of Buddhist thought, central to the lives of many Heian-period Japanese Buddhists, focused especially on the words, images, and ritual practice of the *Lotus Sūtra*. It is evident from these sources that the Heian Japanese regularly read and disseminated this sūtra and used it to direct much of their intellectual and ritual activity.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the vast number of sūtras disseminated in Japanese Buddhism and the diverse and complex ideas that reflection upon these texts gave rise to in the Heian period, it was the *Lotus Sūtra* that served as the general Buddhist “handbook” containing many of the major concepts of the Heian “map of the cosmos.” This map charted a conceptual framework that included abstract ideas, modes of religious praxis, imagery, and metaphor that animated poetry, fiction, and other cultural expressions. The *Lotus Sūtra* served as a handbook because of the accessibility and popularity of its ideas and images, and because it was commonly held to contain the ultimate truth and revelation of the Buddha. Many accepted the *Lotus Sūtra* as defining the given reality of the universe.

<sup>2</sup> “Kyō wa hokekyō saranari” (IKEDA, KISHIGAMI, and AKIYAMA 1958, p. 248).

<sup>3</sup> Takagi Yutaka, for instance, discusses some of the important ways the *Lotus Sūtra* was understood and utilized in the Heian period (TAKAGI 1973). See also TANABE and TANABE 1989 for a discussion of the importance of the *Lotus Sūtra* throughout Japanese history.

A map must be read and interpreted if it is to serve as a guide. In the Heian period, the *Lotus Sūtra* provided the foundation for different interpretations and different cosmologies. *Lotus Sūtra* ideas and images, though fixed in the written word, were susceptible to a variety of interpretations made by its Japanese readership. Religious discourse based on the *Lotus Sūtra* shared vocabulary, images, metaphors, and common concepts, but often interpreted them in light of different, competing religious and social concerns. Specific social groups, with distinctive cosmologies and particular interests, utilized the *Lotus Sūtra* to argue their own view of reality. While these worldviews were often similar, there are also important examples of widely variant understandings of the sūtra's message and meaning. The passages chosen for exegesis, the meaning attributed to the same passages, and the concepts that were emphasized differed from interpretation to interpretation. In short, many Heian-period Buddhists thought about the world through the conceptual foundation of the *Lotus Sūtra*, but understood this basic framework and its ramifications in quite different ways.

These variant worldviews<sup>4</sup> are recorded in the many texts available to us from the Heian period. In the process of delineating a cosmology, these various texts utilize the *Lotus Sūtra* not only as a framework for their worldview but also as a basis for asserting that their worldview is most in accord with the ultimate reality of the universe. The *Lotus Sūtra*, like everything that is created and utilized by humans, is subject to multiple interpretations, and thus the "meaning" of the *Lotus Sūtra* is fixed only in the hands of a particular social group at a particular historical time.

Two mid-eleventh-century literary texts, *Eiga monogatari* [A tale of flowering fortunes] and *Hokke genki* [Miraculous tales of the *Lotus Sūtra*], are examples of different cosmologies based on the *Lotus Sūtra* that are contemporaneous and yet basically at odds with one another. They both convey Heian expressions of Buddhist faith firmly grounded in the sūtra's concepts and images, yet their readings of the text are very different in outlook and attitude. Both rely on the *Lotus Sūtra* to authenticate and legitimate their cosmology and the life-style it engenders, particularly by seeing their own activities as analogous to personages and events depicted in the sūtra. They thus identify their Japanese world with the world it describes.

<sup>4</sup> See GOODMAN's discussion of "versions" of the world (1978, pp. 2–5).

Hokke genki: *Miraculous Tales of the Lotus Sūtra*

The *Hokke genki*,<sup>5</sup> a collection of tales (*setsuwa* 説話) compiled around 1044<sup>6</sup> by the monk Chingen 鎮源, depicts the lives and miracles of monks devoted to the *Lotus Sūtra*. Chingen praises the sūtra and its spiritual power, and sees in it a set of religious practices that liberates its practitioners from the delusion and pain of human existence. This religiosity is expressed also as a radical response to the perceived corruption and worldliness of the traditional monastic institutions associated with the imperial court. The monks portrayed in this text utilize the *Lotus Sūtra* to legitimate their ascetic life-style in remote mountains, away from the corrupting influence of officially sanctioned religion.

The Buddhist tales from the *Hokke genki* depict the emerging ideal of the *hokke hijiri* or *jikyōsha* 持経者.<sup>7</sup> These were ascetic monks who cultivated the spiritual life in secluded mountains and forests through extreme ascetic practice based on the *Lotus Sūtra* and Tendai thought. They combined Tendai spiritual practices with the fervent desire for perfect enlightenment or birth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. Although usually identified as part of the budding popular Buddhist (*minshū bukkyō* 民衆仏教) movements,<sup>8</sup> these ascetics were nevertheless often well-educated, monastically trained monks who found the large Buddhist enclaves, such as the great Tendai monastery on Mt. Hiei, to be more concerned with worldly gain and court intrigue than spiritual growth and salvation.<sup>9</sup> These people were conspicuous for the extent

<sup>5</sup> The editions of the *Hokke genki* used in this paper are INOUE and ŌSONE 1982 (hereafter abbreviated OHG) and, in English translation, DYKSTRA 1983 (hereafter abbreviated MTLs). Where the first or only listing in a footnote cites MTLs, the translation is Dykstra's; where the first or only listing is OHG, the translation is mine. Bracketed material in the translations represents my revision of the Dykstra translation, or editorial clarification.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the compilation date of the *Hokke genki* see TAKAGI 1973, pp. 392–93.

<sup>7</sup> The *Hokke genki* portrays in numerous brief tales the lives and miracles of both monks and laity devoted to the *Lotus Sūtra*. Of the 129 tales that comprise the *Hokke genki*, ninety-eight are devoted explicitly to ascetics. Hence the text is an important source for understanding the *hokke hijiri*. The term *hijiri* is usually translated as “holy man,” while *jikyōsha* refers to an “upholder of the [*Lotus*] sūtra.” *Jikyōsha* has the alternate readings of *jigyōsha* and *jikyōja*. The related term *shonin* is also used to refer to *hijiri*. For a discussion of the etymology of the term *hijiri*, see MARUYAMA 1985, pp. 99–119.

<sup>8</sup> The *Shugendō jiten* defines *hijiri* as monks and *ubasoku* 優婆塞 (unordained Buddhists who conducted religious activity in the villages and mountains) outside of the already established religious groups who were concerned with the evangelization of the masses. See MIYAKE 1986, p. 318.

<sup>9</sup> The *hokke hijiri* defined themselves in opposition to the formal, hierarchical structure of Heian society. One of the many ways in which they expressed their rejection of traditional structures and norms, of the “community,” was by valuing the ideal of the solitary ascetic

of their asceticism and for their open antipathy toward traditional Buddhist institutions, closely tied with state rituals, aristocratic court families, and the ruling elite.

The *hokke hijiri*, by their retreat into the recesses of the mountains, were responding to and symbolically expressing criticism of the existing institutions of Heian Buddhism. In so doing, they implicitly defined themselves in opposition to these institutions. The act of retiring to the mountains was a means of setting themselves apart from more traditional and conventional monks. For these ascetics, being in society, or “the world,” came to include life not only in the bustling capital and austere rural areas, but also at monastic institutions like Mt. Hiei. They thus put themselves outside the mainstream of Heian-period Buddhist life; they were social protesters who lived out their protest through their alternative life-style. The *Hokke genki* is in part a set of proofs for the legitimation of the *hokke hijiri* as an institution whose claims to the truth are valid. One of the central ways in which these claims are legitimated is by asserting that ascetics are analogous to bodhisattvas depicted in the *Lotus Sūtra*.

#### Eiga monogatari: *Tales of Flowering Fortunes*

In contrast, the *Eiga monogatari*,<sup>10</sup> an eleventh-century<sup>11</sup> historical tale

assiduously practicing in the remote mountains. The recluse’s very life-style was destructive of the mechanisms of control inherent in the social hierarchy. The *hokke hijiri*, as depicted in the *Hokke genki*, were especially contemptuous of the traditional institutional centers of Heian religious life, and of the social hierarchy they promoted. Tale 44 in the *Hokke genki* relates the story of a former Mt. Hiei monk who states that he shunned Hiei in favor of a remote hermitage because “Mount Hiei is filled with the hot fire of bribery by donors and believers and I can not bear the vulgar smell of the various priests in the mountain” (MTLS, p. 71). The ultimate success of the *hijiris*’ protest is perhaps best measured by the fact that they laid important foundations for the development of Kamakura Buddhist traditions, and, ironically, for their own institutionalization in the religious form known as *shugendō* 修験道.

<sup>10</sup> The editions of the *Eiga monogatari* used in this paper are MATSUMURA and YAMANAKA (1964–1965; hereafter abbreviated EM 1 [vol. 75] and EM 2 [vol. 76]), and, in English translation, by McCULLOUGH and McCULLOUGH (1980; hereafter abbreviated TFF 1 [vol. 1] and TFF 2 [vol. 2]). Where the first or only listing in a footnote cites TFF 1 or 2, the translation is McCullough and McCullough; where the first or only listing is EM 1 or 2, the translation is mine. Bracketed material in the translations represents my revision of the McCullough and McCullough translation, or editorial clarification.

<sup>11</sup> The *Eiga monogatari* is variously dated from as early as ca. 1040 to as late as ca. 1092. It consists of forty chapters, of which the first thirty, covering the years 887–1027, are considered central; the last ten chapters are a later addition and are not treated in this paper. The first thirty chapters include all of those that concern Michinaga. They reflect the original author’s intention of modeling the *Eiga monogatari* on what have traditionally been seen as the thirty chapters of the *Threefold Lotus Sūtra* (*hokke sanbukyō* 法華三部經), consisting of the twenty-eight chapters of the sūtra proper plus the so-called opening and closing (*kaikeitsu*



(*rekishi monogatari* 歴史物語) composed by an unknown woman,<sup>12</sup> narrates the life and times of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), the most powerful courtier of his day and a devout, if hedonistic, Buddhist. It was under Michinaga that “the Fujiwara regency and the court reached its cultural and political pinnacle” (MINER, ODAGIRI, AND MORRELL 1985, p. 146). The *Eiga monogatari* itself concurs with this modern interpretation of Michinaga’s importance: “On the Eleventh of the Fifth Month [994 C.E.], soon after Michikane’s death, the Emperor entrusted the supervision of the nation and all its officials to Michinaga” (TFF 1, p. 177).

Part of the goal of the *Eiga monogatari* was to legitimate Michinaga’s unprecedented control of the imperial family and the affairs of state specifically, and, by extension, Fujiwara hegemony generally. The *Eiga monogatari* portrays Michinaga as an exemplary figure. It is perhaps fitting that the text deals with one person as exemplary of the aristocratic ideal because the life-style of the aristocrat was, after all, open only to an elite few. As in most such cases, we are presented with an idealized version of who Michinaga was and what he did. He is variously described as magnanimous (TFF 1, p. 222), as “the most fortunate of mortals” (TFF 1, p. 306), as “the unrivaled protector of the state” (TFF 2, p. 493), and as “amazingly sensitive to the feelings of others” (TFF 1, p. 334). Michinaga is depicted as properly sorrowful on sad occasions and extremely pious during times of religious ritual.

It is in the descriptions of Michinaga’s Buddhist activities that the *Eiga monogatari* makes its strongest argument for his singular greatness. Part of the reason for this connection between Buddhism and Michinaga’s greatness lies in the fact that the conceptual framework through which the *Eiga monogatari* legitimates Michinaga is fundamentally Buddhist. As great as his secular works might be, Michinaga’s religious works are greater, especially his personal temple project, the Hōjō-ji 法成寺.

The first half of the text relates Michinaga’s secular career, while the second half chronicles his life as a monk. There is, however, a fine

開結) sūtras: the *Muryōgikyō* 無量義經 [Sūtra of innumerable meanings] and *Kanfugengyō* 觀普賢經 [Sūtra of meditation of the Bodhisattva Fugen]. For a discussion of the thirty-chapter counting see TAMURA 1975, pp. xiii–xviii. It is often conjectured that the author of the first thirty chapters of the *Eiga monogatari*, the so-called *seihen* 正篇 (principle chapters) was Akazome Emon 赤染衛門, a noted poet and Buddhist nun. If so, then the earlier dating for the *Eiga monogatari* given above, 1040, may refer to the *seihen*; the 1092 dating takes into account the later additions. For a further discussion of the *seihen* see EM 1, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> See footnote 11. For a detailed discussion of possible authorship, see McCULLOUGH and McCULLOUGH’s introduction in TFF 1, pp. 37–50.

line between the secular and the religious in the *Eiga monogatari*. As a government official, Michinaga is portrayed as carrying out Buddhist rituals. As a monk, Michinaga maintains a firm hold on political developments. The extent to which Michinaga actually retired from the world is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that during one week-long Buddhist service he “never emerg[ed] from seclusion except to attend to public and private business” (TFF 2, p. 511).

The *Eiga monogatari* utilizes the *Lotus Sūtra* and other Buddhist works to justify and support the opulent life-style and the spiritual, social, and political ideals of Michinaga and his Fujiwara coterie. To a large extent this was done by drawing analogies between Michinaga and the Buddha, and by suggesting that the Pure Land was manifest in the world of the aristocrats. These and other legitimating strategies were intimately connected with the *Eiga monogatari*'s interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra*.

#### *Aspects of the Heian Map of the Cosmos*

While it is not the purpose of this paper to detail the many varieties of Heian Buddhist faith and practice, there are some fundamental cosmological assumptions shared by both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* that constitute shared aspects of the Heian Buddhist map of the cosmos. In the first place, they both make clear the superiority of the *Lotus Sūtra*. While both acknowledge other sūtras and rituals, in the end the *Lotus Sūtra* is conceived, unequivocally, as the ultimate power of the universe. Chingen, for instance, takes great pains in the *Hokke genki* to assert the primacy of the *Lotus Sūtra* and its doctrine and to set it apart from other scriptures. He does this through a variety of contrasts and illustrations that in the end are meant to leave no room for doubt that the *Lotus Sūtra* is indeed superior. In the *Eiga monogatari* a variety of Buddhist religious practices are performed, including esoteric rituals, the *nenbutsu* 念仏, and rituals based on the *Lotus Sūtra*. This diversity notwithstanding, the *Eiga monogatari* repeatedly illustrates the greater salvific and curative efficacy of *Lotus Sūtra* ritual practices.

Both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* assert that the *Lotus Sūtra* mediates the power of the universe for sentient beings. Humans can activate this mediating power through a variety of rituals. Especially important in this regard are the five practices (*goshu hosshi* 五種法師) of upholding (*juji* 受持), reading (*doku* 読), recitation (*ju* 誦), preaching (*gesetsu* 解説) and copying (*shosha* 書写) the *Lotus Sūtra*. The sūtra itself asserts that if one engages in these practices, then the salvific power of the text, now accessed, can be directed to the peti-

tioner's request, whether that be salvation or more immediate human needs. In both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari*, performing *Lotus Sūtra* rituals was thought to bring miraculous benefits (*ryōyaku* 靈益). For instance, when Michinaga's son Yorimichi 頼通 fell ill, it was Michinaga's recitation of the *Lotus Sūtra* that cured him:

May the *Lotus Sūtra*, the object of my devotion for all these years, come to my assistance now!" prayed Michinaga. "It is I, above all others, who worked for the diffusion of the *Lotus* teachings in Japan. If you do nothing for me now, when may I expect your help?" He began a tearful recitation of the "Eternal Life" chapter [of the *Lotus Sūtra*].

Yorimichi stirred and uttered a scornful laugh. Michinaga prayed with frantic energy, the tears streaming from his eyes, and the possessing spirit fled....

After a short nap, Yorimichi awoke in perfect health and spirits.... (TFF 2, pp. 436–37)

Here performance of one of the five *Lotus Sūtra* practices—recitation—is depicted as mediating the power of the universe and thus ritually controlling the immediate world.

Both texts also discern a crucial relationship between *Lotus Sūtra* practice and birth in the Pure Land. In this regard they reveal the explicit influence of Tendai thought, which in the Heian period included a rather eclectic array of Pure Land, esoteric, and other Buddhist practices. The association of Pure Land eschatology with *Lotus Sūtra* ritual practice was promoted by the Tendai monk Genshin 源信 (942–1017), whose famous *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集 [The teachings essential for birth (in the Pure Land)] vividly depicts the vicissitudes of hell and the pleasures of the Pure Land. Both Genshin and the *Ōjōyōshū* figure prominently in the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari*. Because of these factors, one of the primary ways that salvation was conceived by the mid-Heian period was as birth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. The means to that goal involved recitation of the *nen-butsu* or the five practices of upholding, reading, reciting, preaching, and copying the *Lotus Sūtra*, or some combination of the two approaches.

This desire to reach the Pure Land is expressed time and again by characters in the *Eiga monogatari*. The text includes especially concise and evocative expression of the connection between the *Lotus Sūtra* and the quest for birth in the Pure Land:

I ask that in all the lives to come  
I may forever share the blessings of the *Lotus Sūtra*,

And that sermons may be preached for the benefit of all sentient beings,  
 And that I may be received into the Western Paradise [= Pure Land]. (TFF 2, p. 578)

Chingen's fundamental cosmology also orbits around the claim that Buddhahood is achieved by the five *Lotus Sūtra* practices. Through their performance one attains miraculous benefits and can participate in the salvific power of the *Lotus Sūtra*, most frequently conceived as birth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha.

*The Hokke genki and the Eiga monogatari as "Institutions"*

Though roughly contemporaneous, the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* represent different segments of Heian period society: the *Hokke genki* depicts the worldview and life-style of the *hokke hijiri*, world renouncers who sought to live at the margins of society in remote mountain hermitages, while the *Eiga monogatari* depicts the court life of Michinaga and the Fujiwara family, emphasizing a religious life conducted predominantly within the structure of aristocratic society. Both texts portray the particular social group that they represent as ideal, as a paradigmatic model for a life lived in accordance with the fundamental structure of reality. Despite the different ideals that the two texts promote, the *Lotus Sūtra* lies at the core of their thinking about reality, power, and religious activity. Both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* utilize the *Lotus Sūtra* to argue their particular view of reality. Yet the passages they choose to interpret and the concepts they choose to emphasize often differ from one another. How are we to understand the different self-identities that the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* articulate on the basis of the same legitimating text?

In order to treat these differences, I have conceived of the texts as representing the discourses of "institutions" in Douglas's sense of "legitimized social groupings." The two texts verbalize the ideal cosmologies of the specific groups of people they depict: ascetics in the *Hokke genki* and aristocrats in the *Eiga monogatari*. These two institutions assert their identities as legitimate groups with distinctive interpretations of the *Lotus Sūtra*, thereby setting the boundaries by which they are to be identified. Their assertions of "the way things in sheer actuality are" legitimate their actions in the world because they are claimed to be in accordance with the reality of the universe. These texts delineate an ideal social order that has an analogue in the cosmological order. They are thus institutional discourses, constructing specific notions of, and dictates for, how to best act in the world.

The *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* can be viewed as representing institutions that take fundamental parts of the Heian map of the cosmos as a priori, a map based largely on *Lotus Sūtra* concepts and images. Yet the texts also present their own distinctive interpretations of these fundamental concepts, applying them in support of a life-style expressing the world as they perceive it. In legitimating their respective institutions, the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* make constant analogizing references to concepts and images from the *Lotus Sūtra*. In so doing, they unfold their interpretations of the sūtra and craft worlds that are at the same time grounded in the historical realities of mid-Heian Japan and legitimated to the cosmic reality symbolized by the sacred text.

*Analogy in the Hokke genki: Ascetics as Bodhisattvas*

The depiction of bodhisattvas in the *Hokke genki* is central to Chingen's image of the *hijiri*. The *Hokke genki* asserts that *hijiri* are in fact bodhisattvas, either in imitation of those portrayed in the *Lotus Sūtra* or as actual manifestations of these compassionate beings (many of the *hijiri* are, indeed, represented as indigenous Japanese bodhisattvas). The idea and ideal of the bodhisattva are not remote, nor is the attainment of bodhisattva status something beyond human grasp—sustained ascetic practice, performed with purity of mind and body, makes such attainment an immediate, present reality.

In the *Hokke genki*, Chingen uses analogies to the bodhisattva ideal and actual bodhisattvas set forth in the *Lotus Sūtra* to present his case for the ascetics' cosmology and for the reclusive life-style that is perceived to arise naturally out of this worldview. We need to keep in mind that Chingen draws analogies not because what he relates in the tales is "like" what occurs in the *Lotus Sūtra*, but because he perceives the power of the sūtra—that is, the power of the Buddha's Dharma—to be actively present in Japan. These analogies not only suggest, abstractly, that the salvific power of the sūtra operates in the world, but also that this power is indeed present, concretely. Further, the analogies in the *Hokke genki* are an expression of reality, not of mere resemblance, and thus prove that this power, in its many guises, is manifest in the world. The slightest hint that an ascetic is analogous to a bodhisattva is intended to assert that the ascetic is indeed the manifestation of the figure in question.

In Chingen's mind, the *hokke hijiri* were contemporary bodhisattvas whose ideal is expressed in the *Anrakugyō hon* [Peaceful practices], chapter 14 of the *Lotus Sūtra*. In this chapter, prominent in the *Hokke*

*genki*, the Buddha describes a bodhisattva as one who retires from the world: “[a bodhisattva] ever loves to sit in *dhyaṇa*, improving and collecting his thoughts in a quiet place.”<sup>13</sup> This reclusive ground for religious action is especially appropriate for those living in what the *Lotus Sūtra* calls the “latter evil age,” that is, the period after the extinction of the Buddha when it is difficult to understand and practice the Dharma. It is evident that Chingen viewed this age to be that in which the *hokke hijiri* lived. Tale 8, for example, describes the monk Myōtatsu as “the guardian of the Correct Law (*shōbō* 正法) in these degenerate times (*jokuse* 濁世)” (MTLS, p. 38; OHG, p. 63/517).

The idea that the *hijiri* are analogous to bodhisattvas is stated on numerous occasions. For instance, there are tales in which ascetics are depicted as performing good deeds not normally possible for humans. Tale 66 relates the exemplary behavior of the ascetic Eijitsu:

A sick person was lying on the street, soiled by his excrement which had a terrible odor. The passers-by ran away, closing their eyes and holding their noses. [The *hijiri* Eijitsu approached with familiarity to the sick person’s side], covered him with a robe, held him and lay beside while reciting the *Hokekyō*. Thanks to the power of the sutra and Eijitsu’s influence, the sick person recovered.... [In this way, the ascetic’s compassion (*jihī* 慈悲) cured the illness and relieved his suffering. This was not the deed of a common mortal (*bonbu* 凡夫).] (MTLS, pp. 88–89; OHG, pp. 133–35/540–41)

The opposite of a *bonbu* is a *shōnin* 聖人, or holy person, that is, one who is enlightened. If Eijitsu is not an ordinary person, then he is clearly holy, or in this case, a bodhisattva. Compassion, one of the agents of the cure, is also the paramount characteristic of a bodhisattva. Eijitsu is thus depicted as possessing the personality of a bodhisattva, and as therefore able to perform deeds beyond the pale of the common mortal. Similarly, tale 74 provides one with a litmus test for knowing who a bodhisattva is, proclaiming Genjō a *gonja* 權者 (an incarnation of a Buddha or bodhisattva), in contrast to a *bonbu*:

<sup>13</sup> Leon HURVITZ 1976, pp. 209–10. Hereafter, Hurvitz’s translation is abbreviated LS. Bracketed material in the translations represents my revisions or editorial clarifications based on the *Myōhō renga kyō* [*Lotus Sūtra*] in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, vol. 9 (hereafter abbreviated as MRK). See TAMURA 1983, pp. 32–33, for a discussion of chapter 14’s call for the bodhisattva to retire from the world. Tamura also takes up the interpretation of chapter 14 in Shōtoku Taishi’s *Hokke gisho* 法華義疏, in which Shōtoku Taishi dismisses the idea of retirement from the world and instead stresses the necessity for action in the world of human affairs, an expression of the Japanese propensity to emphasize the mundane world as the appropriate ground for religious practice. The *hokke hijiri* were reacting against the practice of religion in its profane setting because they view such practice as corrupt.

Genjō was not corrupted by worldly affairs, which he carefully avoided....He never wore silk nor cotton clothes but only those of paper or bark....He observed strict precepts all his life and hardly took food after noon....[Genjō was able to know the minds of people and to preach in accord with their thoughts. At the same time, he perceived the world and expressed its auspicious and inauspicious aspects. He was surely a *gonja*, not a *bonbu*.] (MTLS, pp. 95–96; OHG, p. 145/544)

A bodhisattva, as suggested by the *Hokke genki* tales, is one who lives an ascetic life-style and performs bodhisattva practices (*bosatsu gyō* 菩薩行), such as the recitation of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Thus, the aspiring ascetic views himself as a bodhisattva-in-training. Tale 80 relates the spiritual goal of Myōren:

I hope that I will see various Buddhas in my successive lives, listen to the *Hokekyō* for generation after generation, always engage in the devout practices of the bodhisattvas, and finally attain the supreme Buddhahood. (MTLS, p. 100)

One of the pivotal ways Chingen links the ascetics to bodhisattvas is by demonstrating that the *hokke hijiri* are acting in imitation of the *Lotus Sūtra* bodhisattvas. This act of imitation is also an act of living out the teachings of the sutra in the contemporary context of Heian Japan. This is especially clear from tale 51, in which the priest Kyōmyō is described as both performing specific practices described in the *Lotus Sūtra* and acting with the overall demeanor of a bodhisattva.

In order to attain the merits of the five [*Lotus Sūtra*] practices, he [Kyōmyō] copied the *Lotus Sūtra* and diligently performed the Thirty Lectures at the Gyōgan-ji temple. During his concluding lecture, he appropriated the rituals of the Pure Land tradition, calling them the ten offerings [*jusshu kuyō* 十種供養, the ten kinds of offerings made out of reverence to a Buddha<sup>14</sup>]. In this way, he paid homage and made offerings to the *Lotus Sūtra* in the dignified manner of the bodhisattva. Thus he increased his own good deeds and caused others to plant Buddha-causes (*butsuin* 仏因)<sup>15</sup> in themselves. (OHG, p. 118/536)

<sup>14</sup> OHG, headnote, p. 119: “In later periods, the ten offerings were always utilized at such rituals as the copying and offering of the *Hokekyō* and during a *daihō-e* 大法会 (a great assembly).”

<sup>15</sup> A *Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* defines *butsuin* as follows: “Buddha-cause, that which leads to Buddhahood, i.e. the merit of planting roots of goodness” (SOOTHILL and HODOUS 1937, p. 226).

Tale 51 is directly connected to the *Hosshi hon* [Preachers of Dharma], chapter 10 of the *Lotus Sūtra*, in which the Buddha addresses the 80,000 bodhisattvas in the assembly and describes the practices of a preacher of the Dharma, that is, anyone who practices and expounds the *Lotus Sūtra*. In this chapter we find the description of such a preacher and the importance of his actions. It is evident that the description of Kyōmyō is meant to reflect this description:

If a person shall ask which living beings in an age yet to come shall succeed in becoming Buddhas, you must show him that these very men in an age yet to come shall without fail contrive to become Buddhas. For what reason? The reason is this: if a good man or good woman shall receive and [uphold] (*juji*), read (*doku*) and [chant] (*ju*), [expound] (*gesetsu*), or copy in writing (*shosha*) a single phrase of the [*Lotus Sūtra*], or otherwise and in a variety of ways make offerings to the scriptural roll with flower perfume, necklaces, powdered incense, perfumed paste, burnt incense, silk banners and canopies, garments, or music, or join palms in reverent worship, that person is to be looked up to and exalted by all the worlds, showered with offerings fit for a Thus Come One. Let it be known that that person is a great bodhisattva who, having achieved *anuttarasamyaksambodhi* [Supreme and Perfect Enlightenment], taken pity on the living beings, and vowed to be reborn here, is preaching the *Lotus Sūtra* with breadth and discrimination. How much the more may this be said of one who, receiving and keeping this scripture in its entirety, makes sundry offerings to it! O Medicine King, be it known that this person, rejecting the reward due his own pure deeds, out of pity for living beings after my passage into extinction shall have been reborn in the evil world, where he shall broadly preach this scripture. If this good man or good woman, after my passage into extinction, can secretly for a single person preach so much as a single phrase of the *Lotus Sūtra*, be it known that that person is an emissary of the Thus Come One, doing the Thus Come One's business. How much the more may this be said of one who in the midst of a great multitude broadly preaches it for men in general! (LS, pp. 174–175; MRK, p. 30c)

The five practices and the ten offerings described in this *Lotus Sūtra* passage and depicted in the rituals performed by Kyōmyō serve to connect the life of the ascetic with the practice of bodhisattvas in the *sūtra*.

Similarly, tale 82 makes reference to *bongyō* 梵行 (religious life): “Having excellently perfected the religious life in accord with the



teachings, and practiced well the holy path (*shōdō* 聖道), one truly knows that when one's life is at an end, one will experience joy, just as if one had discarded all sickness" (OHG, p. 158/549). Chapter 15 of the *Lotus Sūtra* describes *bongyō* as one of the many acts that characterize a bodhisattva's religious praxis:

Now the bodhisattvas in this great multitude for incalculable thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas, for the sake of the Buddha Path, have already striven to practice with vigorous perseverance; have skillfully entered, or left, or remained in incalculable hundreds of thousands of myriads of millions of samadhis; have attained great supernatural penetration; have long perfected [the religious life (*bongyō*)].... (LS, p. 234; MRK, p. 41c)

Among the bodhisattvas from the *Lotus Sūtra* mentioned in the *Hokke genki* as models for ascetics are Fugen 普賢, Yakuō 藥王, Miroku 弥勒 and Kannon 觀音. Of these, Yakuō (Medicine King) plays an especially prominent role as one imitated by *hijiri*. In the *Yakuō bosatsu honji hon* [The former affairs of the Bodhisattva Medicine King], chapter 23 of the *Lotus Sūtra*, the Buddha explains the pious behavior of Yakuō, known in a previous incarnation as Issai-shujō-kiken bosatsu (Seen with Joy by All Living Beings Bodhisattava), or, in the *Hokke genki*, as Kiken:

This bodhisattva Seen with Joy by All Living Beings, desiring to cultivate painful practices, within the dharma of the Buddha Pure and Bright Excellence of Sun and Moon went about persevering with vigor and single-mindedly seeking Buddhahood for full twelve thousand years. He then obtained the samādhi that displays all manner of physical bodies. After he had obtained this samādhi, he was overjoyed at heart. Straightway he had this thought, saying to himself, "My ability to obtain the samādhi that displays all manner of physical bodies is entirely due to my having contrived to hear the Scripture of the Dharma Blossom. I will now make offerings to the Buddha Pure and Bright Excellence of Sun and Moon and to the Scripture of the Dharma Blossom."

After he had made this offering, he arose from samādhi and thought to himself, "Though by resort to supernatural power I have made an offering to the Buddha, it is not as if I had made an offering of my own body."

[H]e painted his body with fragrant oil and, in the presence of the Buddha..., wrapped his body in a garment adorned with divine jewels, anointed himself with fragrant oils, with the

force of supernatural penetration took a vow, and then burnt his own body....[T]he Buddhas all at once praised him, saying, "Excellent! Excellent! Good man, this is true perseverance in vigor! This is called a true Dharma-offering to the Thus Come One....Good man, this is called the prime gift. Among the various gifts, it is the most honorable, the supreme. For it constitutes an offering of Dharma to the Thus Come Ones." (LS, pp. 294–95)

Having made this greatest of offerings, Seen with Joy by All Living Beings was born into the realm of the Buddha Pure and Bright Excellence of Sun and Moon. Seen with Joy vowed to continue his offerings to this Buddha. The Buddha entrusted the Dharma to the bodhisattva and charged him with propagating the faith after the Buddha's extinction. The Buddha then entered nirvāṇa. Out of grief, the bodhisattva made an offering to the Buddha's relics (Jpn. *shari* 舍利; Skt. *śarīra*) by burning his forearm. This action served as a catalyst for other beings to resolve to attain *anokutara sanmyaku sanbodai* 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提 [Skt. *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*]. It is then revealed that Seen with Joy by All Living Beings Bodhisattva is the same as the present Yakuō. From this story, the Buddha then preached the following message:

If there is one who, opening up his thought, wishes to attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*, if he can burn a finger or even a toe as an offering to a Buddha stūpa, he shall exceed one who uses realm or walled city, wife or children, or even all the lands, mountains, forests, rivers, ponds, and sundry precious objects in the whole thousand-millionfold world as offerings. (LS, p. 298)

Yakuō has made the greatest sacrifice possible, his own life, and is thus rewarded with birth in a Buddha realm and the responsibility to propagate the Dharma. From the perspective of ascetic practice, there is no greater pain to endure than self-immolation. At the same time, though, such an act promises the greatest of rewards, immediate birth in a Buddha realm.

There are four tales in the *Hokke genki* that make explicit reference to the bodhisattva Kiken/Yakuō, including tale 9, which relates the story of the ascetic Ōshō's self-immolation (*nenshin* 燃身), apparently the first case recorded in Japan.<sup>16</sup> Like Kiken, he is an example of profound, if extreme, faith:

<sup>16</sup> OHG, p. 64. The headnote under *mi o yaki hiji o yaku* (p. 64) states that the practice of *nenshin* became rather widespread from the mid-Heian period.

Every time he recited the Chapter of Yakuō of the *sūtra*, Ōshō was so much impressed with the Bodhisattva Kiken's act of self-immolation that he finally wished to burn himself as an offering to the Buddhas, just as Bodhisattva Kiken had done.

He abstained from cereals, salts, and sweets. In preparation, he purified his interior and exterior self by eating only pine needles and drinking rainwater. Before igniting his funeral pyre, Ōshō donned a new paper robe, held a censer in his hand, sat on the firewood in the posture of meditation facing the west, called upon various Buddhas, and vowed, "I offer my body and soul to venerate the *Hokekyō*. My head shall be offered to the Buddhas in the upper direction, and my legs to those in the lower direction. My back shall be given to those in the east, and my front to those in the west. My chest shall be received by Great Master Shaka 釈迦, my right and left sides by Tahō 多宝 Buddha, and my throat by Amida Buddha. My intestines shall be offered to Five Wisdom Buddhas, and my other organs to the dwellers of the samsaric cycle (*rokudō* 六菊)." While burning his body, Ōshō made the proper *mudrā* hand signs, and recited the *Hokekyō* with firm faith in the Three Treasures. (MTLS, pp. 38–39; OHG, p. 64/518)

Ōshō's offering is complete, encompassing all other offerings. His self-immolation symbolically represents the entire universe, including and linking both the enlightened and samsaric realms. His body, representing his entire being, is offered to the world: both Buddhas and the unenlightened partake of it. The association of certain parts of the body with certain beings is not arbitrary. His chest, the physical center of the body and the domain of the heart, stands for Śākyamuni, the center of Buddhist faith and the source of Buddhist teachings. Tahō Buddha, who sits by Śākyamuni's side in the *Lotus Sūtra*, is thus the recipient of Ōshō's left and right side. The throat, from which comes the utterance of the *nenbutsu* in praise of Amida, is promised to Amida. Other organs, which are an integral part of the entire functioning of the body, are offered to the unenlightened beings, an integral component of the Buddhist cosmos.

The imitation of the acts of bodhisattvas in the *Lotus Sūtra* not only indicates that these bodhisattvas are paradigmatic figures for the *hokke hijiri*, but that these ascetics are themselves bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvahood, after all, is a state of being that all can strive for and eventually attain. If the message of the *Lotus Sūtra* is valid, then it is reasonable to expect that bodhisattvas will also be found amongst Japan's holy ascetics. The discovery of bodhisattvas in Japan proves that the power of the *Lotus Sūtra* is active and manifest in the lives of these people.

The fact that these ascetics are analogous to bodhisattvas proves that the worldview of the *hokke hijiri* is legitimate, and one to which adherence then becomes paramount.

*Analogy in the Eiga monogatari: Michinaga as Buddha*

In the introductory material to their translation of the *Eiga monogatari*, MCCULLOUGH and MCCULLOUGH describe Michinaga as “not only the dominant Court figure of his age, but the Fujiwara regent par excellence, the very archetype of the Heian noble” (TFF 1, p. 13). With great rhetorical skill, the *Eiga monogatari* weaves a narrative that affirms this evaluation of Michinaga as the greatest of aristocrats, and at the same time identifies Michinaga with the archetype of the Buddhist tradition itself, the Buddha. It is this latter identification that the *Eiga monogatari* takes great pains to establish. The author of the *Eiga monogatari* never states explicitly that Michinaga is the Buddha, but the analogy is nevertheless clearly and repeatedly drawn and the *Eiga monogatari* surely intends to leave this impression in the mind of the reader.

Like the *Hokke genki*, the *Eiga monogatari* turns to the *Lotus Sūtra* for its rhetoric of legitimation. In order to validate Michinaga’s place in the world (and thereby the Fujiwara aristocrats’ position in Heian society generally), the author of the *Eiga monogatari* conceives of Michinaga as analogous to the Buddha in the *Lotus Sūtra*. To illustrate:

When there were to be sūtra-recitations [*dokukyō* 読経] for a dedication or offering, Michinaga would summon monks with reputations for proficiency in the sacred words [*shingon* 真言], regardless of whether they happened to be prominent in society or had retired to mountains and temples....When a group of them were summoned, Michinaga tested their mastery of the sacred words with his own ears. He also instructed monks to judge them, and if one proved deeply learned in his specialty and well versed in both the exoteric and esoteric doctrines [*kenmitsu* 顕密], Michinaga saw to it that the man was recommended for an appointment as Master of Discipline, whether he aspired to the title or not. Such men were put to work as official and private prayer-monks, or were ordered to recite sūtras and prayers for Imperial personages; and they vied with one another in the performance of their duties, feeling that anyone born in the present age ought not to lead an idle life. So the lamp of the dharma [*nori no tomoshi* 法の灯] was raised aloft, the life of the doctrines [*buppō no inochi* 仏法の命] was

preserved, and a joyous, bright era dawned. The living beings going from darkness into darkness [*kuraki yori kuraki ni ireru shujō*] also found happiness in the illumination from that radiance. (TFF 2, p. 508; EM 1, p. 451, and p. 544, note 593)

This passage is revealing for two reasons. In the first place, it presents Michinaga as the purveyor of the true Dharma and the judge of a person's ability to understand and express the Dharma, much as the Buddha was the one able to judge the profundity of the Dharma understanding of others. Michinaga, in this instance, stands in judgment of the Buddhist clergy and is thus portrayed as superior to them. This is one of many examples in the *Eiga monogatari* of the careers of monks being dependent upon the secular aristocracy. Michinaga's ability to judge others is not based upon some arbitrary division of power and responsibility, but rather because he is like the Buddha, which gives him the authority and responsibility to do so.

The crux of this previous passage, however, lies in its allusion to the Parable of the Conjured City (*Lotus Sūtra*, chapter 7) in the line "The living beings going from darkness into darkness also found happiness in the illumination from that radiance." The *Lotus Sūtra* passage states:

The living beings, ever tormented by pain,  
 Blind and without a guide,  
 Do not recognize the Path wherein pain is terminated,  
 Nor do they know enough to seek deliverance.  
 Throughout the long night of time they gain in evil destinies  
 And reduce the ranks of the gods.  
 From darkness proceeding to darkness,  
 They never hear the Buddha's name.  
 Now that the Buddha has gained the supremely  
 Serene Dharma free of outflows,  
 We and the gods and men,  
 In order to gain the greatest advantage,  
 For this purpose, all bowing our heads,  
 Submit to the Supremely Venerable One. (LS, pp. 133–134)

The image of proceeding from darkness to darkness describes the samsaric cycle to which deluded beings are subject. In the passage from the *Lotus Sūtra*, it is the Buddha who leads beings out of the darkness of delusion. In the *Eiga monogatari* passage, it is clearly Michinaga who is radiant, thus illuminating "the living beings going from darkness into darkness." The analogy is apparent: just as the Buddha leads sentient beings to the clarity of enlightenment, so does Michinaga, who has inaugurated "a joyous, bright era" through his religious activities.

The metaphoric contrast between light and dark is central to the image of Michinaga. Michinaga is described in terms of light and brightness, in contradistinction to the darkness that marks the unenlightened world. This fundamental contrast is basic to such scriptures as the *Lotus Sūtra*, which align the Buddha with light and delusion with darkness.<sup>17</sup> In the case of Michinaga, we find the image that he brings “brilliance” wherever he goes (TFF 2, p. 504) or the description of the “ever-increasing radiance of Michinaga’s face” (TFF 2, p. 507). The explanation for this radiance comes from the fact that Michinaga “had repeatedly received the commandments, and bore the Jewel of the One Vehicle on the sleeve of his robe” (TFF 2, p. 507). In short, Michinaga had achieved enlightenment. The Jewel of the One Vehicle is a reference to the Parable of the Hidden Jewel from the *Lotus Sūtra*, chapter 8, “Receipt of Prophecy by Five Hundred Disciples.” In this parable, a friend sews a precious jewel into a man’s coat lining. The man, drunk, does not realize what his friend has done. Later the friend encounters the man, who is expending all his energy on acquiring the basic needs of food and clothing. The friend tells the suffering man about the jewel that is still in the lining. With the discovery of the jewel that was there all along, the man no longer suffers and has all that he needs. The Buddha, we are told, is like the friend. The jewel is the Dharma that leads the man, symbolic of all suffering sentient beings, away from delusion toward the nonsuffering of enlightenment. Michinaga, who bears this jewel in his sleeve, and presumably knows it, has thus awakened to the Buddha’s enlightenment.

The description of Michinaga’s death is also intended to demonstrate his Buddha-like nature. Chapter 30 of the *Eiga monogatari*, “Crane Grove,” provides details of Michinaga’s final illness and death. Since “Crane Grove” is the name of the site in India where the Buddha entered nirvāṇa, the chapter title obviously suggests the connection between Michinaga and the Buddha.

<sup>17</sup> One of the classic statements contrasting the darkness of illusion with the brightness of enlightenment is the famous *Shūishū* 拾遺集 poem of Izumi Shikibu 和泉式部, reportedly written as she was dying:

Kuraki yori	From darkness
Kuraki michi ni zo	I will surely enter into
Irinu beki	the dark path.
Haruka ni terase	Illuminate the way ahead,
Yama no ha no tsuki	moon at the mountain’s rim.

(My translation of *Shūishū* poem no. 1342, quoted in TFF 2, p. 508, footnote 52)

In this poem, the moon represents the enlightenment of the Buddha. This common juxtaposition of light and dark, when considered in terms of the above *Eiga monogatari* passage, makes the connection of Michinaga with light further suggestive of the analogy of Michinaga as Buddha.

With death imminent, Michinaga retires to the Amida Hall of the Hōjō-ji to concentrate on the *nenbutsu*:

Altogether detached, it seemed, from worldly concerns, Michinaga fixed his gaze on the nine Amitābha images, which were visible through an opening in the west side of the encircling wall of screens. Even the wisest men are said to feel the three attachments at the time of death, but there was no more room in his mind for worldly splendor—a clear indication of his future state. (TFF 2, pp. 762–63)

Michinaga is once again portrayed as more than a mere mortal. The suggestion, of course, is that Michinaga is himself a Buddha, an impression that is confirmed a few lines later when the author states explicitly that Michinaga “looked the very image of a buddha or bodhisattva in human form” (TFF 2, p. 763).

The monks who assemble to perform rituals in hopes of saving Michinaga further assert the connection between him and the Buddha:

“Those buddhas of the ten worlds in the ten directions who have manifested themselves on earth always enter a state of absolute extinction when the condition for expounding the holy teachings to mankind has come to an end,” one of them reflected. “The most recent example was the Tathāgata Śākyamuni, who attained the way of buddhahood at the age of thirty-five and entered nirvāṇa at eighty. Once our buddha-sun [Michinaga] has set behind the mountains of nirvāṇa, we shall be lost in the darkness of birth and death. But how happy we should be if, like the buddha, who manifested birth in non-birth and extinction in non-extinction, His Lordship were not to experience true extinction!” (TFF 2, pp. 763–64)

Once again, we have the metaphorical brightness associated with Michinaga. Also important to note is that, Buddhologically speaking, there is every reason that Michinaga might be a Buddha: sūtras such as the *Lotus Sūtra* reveal that there are a myriad of Buddhas residing in a myriad of Buddha realms, and expressed in the above passage is the hope that Michinaga is one of these. After his death, when the aristocratic world has been cast into grief and despair, there comes the suggestion that Michinaga is indeed a Buddha:

Michinaga’s sons and ladies had masked their misery during the days before his death, but now they wept aloud with no attempt at self-control. Common monks belonging to the temple’s lower orders—men who had showed no outward sign of sensi-

tivity—fell down in the courtyards and thrashed about in a harrowing display of grief; and the holy nuns wept pathetically as they talked among themselves. “The buddha who had appeared in the world as a savior for mankind has concealed himself in the mountains of nirvāṇa,” one of them said. “How lost we nuns shall feel without him!” (TFF 2, p. 765)

The funeral procession provides yet another opportunity to compare Michinaga with the Buddha: “The carriage went out through the side entrance at the Muryōju-in south gate. It was a moving scene, exactly like Śākyamuni’s departure through the east gate at Kuśinagara when he entered absolute extinction” (TFF 2, p. 765). There is yet another example of the death of Michinaga compared to the death of the Buddha: “All the world was dark after Śākyamuni entered nirvāṇa. And now that the lamp of this world had been extinguished, many indeed were those who groped in the long night’s blackness!” (TFF 2, p. 775).

There is a certain cumulative effect to the many analogies and allusions drawn between Michinaga and the Buddha. The strongest association, however, comes in the form of a Buddhological argument, very much along Tendai lines, of the place of Michinaga’s religious activities in the universe. After an extended discussion of Michinaga’s meritorious religious deeds, the author makes the following observation:

In these melancholy latter days [*awarenaru sue no yo* あわれなる末の世], Michinaga did his utmost by commissioning statues, building halls, and rewarding monks. He raised the lamp of the doctrine high [*buppō no tomoshibi* 仏法の灯], brought joy to mankind, and acted as a universal parent [*yo no oya* 世の親]! As sole guardian of three Emperors, he forbade people in the sixty provinces to kill living things on the Six Days of Fasting [*rokusai no nichi* 六齋の日], encouraged virtue [*yoki koto*], and put a stop to wrongdoing [*ashiki koto*]. The ascendancy of such a man, it seemed, could end only with the end of the world of living beings, and of the vast infinity of space. (TFF 2, pp. 514–15; EM 1, p. 456)

The idea that Michinaga is the “universal parent” is another symbol which serves to suggest the connection between him and the Buddha. The *Lotus Sūtra*, for instance, uses the idea of the Buddha as parent in the Parable of the Prodigal Son and in the Parable of the Burning House. The Buddha is also described as the “Father of the World”:

So I, too, Father of the World that I am,  
Savior from woe and suffering,



Because ordinary fellows are set on their heads,  
     Though I really live, say I am in extinction.  
 Otherwise, because they constantly see me,  
     They would conceive thoughts of pride and arrogance,  
 Recklessly clinging to the objects of the five desires  
     And falling into evil destinies.  
 I, ever knowing the living beings  
     Who tread the Path and those who do not,  
 In response to those who may be saved  
     Preach to them a variety of dharmas,  
 Each time having this thought:  
     “How may I cause the beings  
 To contrive to enter the Unexcelled Path  
     And quickly to perfect the Buddha-body?” (LS, p. 244)

This passage from the *Lotus Sūtra* occurs in chapter 16, in which the eternal nature of the Buddha is described symbolically as the Father of the World. Michinaga as world parent strikes a similar symbolic pose. Further, Michinaga is likened to one who in the latter evil ages is able to preach and promote the *Lotus Sūtra*, in effect presenting him as a latter-day Buddha. The above *Eiga monogatari* passage describes the world situation predicted in the *Lotus Sūtra* itself. Thus, Michinaga is not only analogous to the Buddha, but the time and place in which he lives is analogous to the time and place described in the *sūtra*.

The *Eiga monogatari* then proceeds to explain how and why it is able to make such claims about Michinaga:

It is probably inevitable that my description of Michinaga's many religious activities during those years will give rise to doubts like the ones expressed in the “Gushing Forth” chapter [of the *Lotus Sūtra*]. In the short period after his renunciation of the world [*shukke* 出家], his pious deeds [*butsuji* 仏事] were too numerous to reckon—a situation exactly like the one in the chapter, which tells of the emergence on the earth of vast multitudes of bodhisattvas, all saved by Śākyamuni in the slightly more than forty years after his enlightenment, and of how it was said that people could no more believe in them than in a young father with old sons.

Such doubts are only to be expected when we record Michinaga's many Buddhist works during the period following his assumption of power. There is a difference between fact and aspiration for people in this world, regardless of their status. Though a tree may wish to remain motionless, winds never cease to blow; though a son may intend to be filial, parents do

not live forever. Whatever lives dies. A life span may be immeasurably long, but there is always a limit. Those who prosper must decline; where there is meeting, parting will follow. All is cause and effect; nothing is eternal [*kahō toshite tsune naru koto nashi*]. Fortunes that prospered yesterday may decline today. Even spring blossoms and autumn leaves are spoiled and lose their beauty when they are enshrouded by spring haze and autumn mist. And after a gust of wind scatters them, they are nothing but debris in a garden or froth on the water. It is only the flowering fortunes [*eiga* 栄花] of this lord that, now having begun to bloom, will not be hidden from sight during a thousand years of spring hazes and autumn mists. No wind disturbs their branches, which grow ever more redolent with scent—rare and splendid as udumbara blossoms, peerlessly fragrant as the blue lotus, fairest of water flowers. (TFF 2, pp. 515–16; EM 1, pp. 456–57)

Like the Buddha, Michinaga is depicted as transcending the usual impermanence of life. This description, at the end of chapter 15 of the *Eiga monogatari*, is parallel to chapter 15 of the *Lotus Sūtra*, which foreshadows the revelation in chapter 16 of the eternal nature of the Buddha.<sup>18</sup> The flowering fortunes of Michinaga have a permanence not normally accorded to human affairs. He is regarded, analogously, as the Buddha, one not subject to the impermanence that is the mark of human existence and the entire conditioned world. The *Eiga monogatari* interprets the term *eiga*, which usually indicates secular fortune, as referring to the eternal aspect of Michinaga and his world. Michinaga's eternal *eiga* stands in contrast to *mujō* 無常, the Buddhist law of impermanence. This Buddhist idea, prevalent by the mid-Heian period, is apparent in such works as the *Genji monogatari*. By contrast, the *Eiga monogatari* conspicuously lacks the ambiance of *mujō* that so often sets the emotional and aesthetic tone of literary works of this era. Its view-

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 11. Chinese and Japanese interpreters of the *Lotus Sūtra* have typically divided the scripture into two sections. The first half—the first fourteen chapters—has been termed the *shakumon* 迹門 and the second half—the last fourteen chapters—has been termed the *honmon* 本門. The *shakumon* chapters are concerned with the historical Śākyamuni and the intent of his teaching. The *honmon* chapters reveal that the historical Śākyamuni is none other than the eternal Buddha. The author of the *Eiga monogatari* was fully aware of this structure and utilized it in presenting her image of Michinaga. The first fourteen chapters depict Michinaga's secular life before he took the tonsure, while the remaining chapters are devoted to his explicitly Buddhist life. Just as the *shakumon* section of the *Lotus Sūtra* presages the revelation of the eternal Buddha, so the first half of the *Eiga monogatari*, dealing with Michinaga's secular glory, presages his spiritual glory. This is one of the strategies that the *Eiga monogatari* uses to identify Michinaga with the Buddha, and to identify Michinaga's secular deeds with his religious deeds.

point is thus conspicuously counter to the dominant sense of the world's ephemerality (*mujōkan* 無常觀) characteristically expressed by the Japanese of the Heian Court and Buddhist institutions.<sup>19</sup>

The *Eiga monogatari* calls upon the power of the *Lotus Sūtra* to validate the portrayal of Michinaga and his life's work—it is part of the rhetoric through which the author validates her view of Michinaga. The act of legitimation plays off the “Gushing Forth” chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*, which reveals that things are not always as they seem. Here, as well, what we think we know about Michinaga is but a part of the full truth about the man. This also glosses the pivotal *Lotus Sūtra* idea of *hōben* 方便, the concept that the Dharma is preached according to the ability of any given hearer to understand. We find a similar idea expressed in the *Eiga monogatari* passage about the eternity of Michinaga's flowering fortunes: the secular works of Michinaga are but part of his earthly work, and they are just as eternal as religious deeds. The activities of Michinaga that stand in historical time and place are, it turns out, also eternal. Just as the historical Buddha is in fact none other than the eternal Buddha, so Michinaga's seemingly secular political life is in fact none other than a part of his eternal religious activity.

The author of the *Eiga monogatari* also utilizes the *Lotus Sūtra*'s rhetorical argumentation in providing us with an expedient device (*hōben*) with which to understand Michinaga. Michinaga is always extravagant, whether he is building palaces or temples, but, as chapter 15 reveals, his secular opulence is simply a *hōben* for his eternal religious opulence. Material wealth and riches are often metaphors for spiritual attainment in the *Lotus Sūtra*. Whatever we might think of Michinaga's apparently worldly religion, it obviously played an important role in his life and in the lives of those around him. It is this connection between the *Lotus Sūtra* and Michinaga with which this chapter of the *Eiga monogatari* is concerned.

The term *eiga*, which McCullough and McCullough have translated as “flowering fortunes,” might also be translated as “prospering flowers,” its literal meaning. The flower, as we have seen in the pivotal *Eiga monogatari* passage above, is a metaphor for Michinaga's life and activity. Michinaga's flowers blossom even when the flowers of normal mortals

<sup>19</sup> Nishio Yōtarō suggests the contrary view that *mujōkan* lurks beneath the surface of even the greatest glories of the Fujiwaras. He further observes that the term *sue no yo* 末の世 (transience) that appears in the *Eiga monogatari* refers both to the Buddhist ideas of *masse* 末世 (the end of the world) and *mappō* 末法 (the end of the Buddhist Dharma), which were gaining importance by this period, and to the historical observation that imperial fortunes had declined in comparison to their earlier glory (NISHIO 1965, pp. 83–84).

have scattered in the wind. The author is not making a distinction between earthly and spiritual fortunes, but is rather asserting that all of Michinaga's deeds reflect the profundity of his Buddhist faith, comparable only to that of the Buddha himself.

*Conclusion: Analogy and Ideology*

I have argued that the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* articulate religious discourses that base their notions of power and authority on the *Lotus Sūtra*. The sūtra serves to legitimate the *hokke hijiri* and Michinaga because, it is asserted, these two institutions are in accordance with the sūtra's sacred teachings. One of the main ways this "rhetoric of legitimation" is constructed is by means of analogy. Furthermore, the act of legitimation through the rhetorical use of analogy has ideological implications. This concluding section will elaborate on the relationship between analogy and the rhetoric of legitimation, and thus on the ideological nature of legitimations.

As we have seen, analogies to the *Lotus Sūtra* were utilized by both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* to ground their claims to legitimacy in the reality of the universe, and to set the boundaries by which they, as institutions, were to be defined. Analogies establish the connection between the institution and the power of the universe, represented by agents of that power, the Buddha and bodhisattvas. Their power is seen as cohering in most, if not all, aspects of the lives of the ascetics and Michinaga. Why, though, are analogies such an effective component of the legitimating discourse of the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari*?

By definition, analogies state similarities between things. Besides these stated likenesses, analogies can also have extended references. In this way, analogies are able to draw comparisons that cannot be made explicitly. The statement, for instance, that Michinaga is the Buddha is much less supportable than the oft-repeated suggestion that Michinaga is like the Buddha. The analogy, once made, is preferably forgotten. Thus the relation that analogically pertains between Michinaga and Buddha—Michinaga is *like* the Buddha—is forgotten in favor of the rhetorical equation, Michinaga *is* the Buddha. The line between analogy and equation is purposely blurred in both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* in order to assert the fit between the ascetics and their bodhisattva-like nature and Michinaga and his Buddha-like nature. It may be that no one really thought Michinaga was the Buddha, but certainly all were meant to see that the relationship between the Buddha and the unenlightened was analogous to

the relationship between Michinaga and the rest of Heian society.

As already argued, analogies are critical for the creation and maintenance of the institution as a legitimized social grouping. The analogies to power and authority that the institution chooses from ultimate reality have a direct structural parallel to human reality. Social hierarchy, the organization of society, access to power, the right to assert authority, and other human matters are all suggested and in varying degrees delineated by the choice of analogy. In short, analogies foreground certain qualities and comparisons at the expense of backgrounding others.

The selection of fundamental analogies, such as ascetics/bodhisattvas and Michinaga/Buddha, suggests any number of shared characteristics. Thus, analogies have extended meanings that are crucial to institutional identity. If the key analogy is to bodhisattvas, then many aspects of the institution's understanding of what constitutes bodhisattvas, their characteristics and modes of activity, are part of the cluster of values central to the conceptual framework of the institution. Analogies limit and define the conceptual framework, which limits and defines all else. Analogies create parallel worlds: the human is structurally similar to the ultimate. For instance, just as the Buddha is the paramount power and authority of the universe, so Michinaga is paramount on earth. Michinaga's secular world is analogous to the Buddha's sacred world. Thus the sacred is located, at least in the case of Michinaga, in the secular splendor of his many social, political, and other activities. What constitutes the sacred is Michinaga's world. This explains in part why the *Eiga monogatari* can assert that Michinaga's activities are eternal, as opposed to the temporal and profane activities of the rest of Heian society. The validity of Fujiwara hegemony over the Heian world, both aristocratic and plebeian, and the necessity for maintaining this structure of power and authority, are affirmed by the fundamental assertion that Michinaga is analogous to the eternal Buddha described in the *Lotus Sūtra*. Thus the cosmology expressed in the *Eiga monogatari* is essentially world-affirming in reference to Michinaga's Buddhist world; it condones and promotes the aristocratic worldview of Michinaga and the Fujiwaras.

In similar fashion, the linking of the ascetics with bodhisattvas promotes the idea that bodhisattvas and ascetics represent multiple sources of power and authority in the universe. If the ascetics' world is analogous to the world of the bodhisattvas, then the sacred is located in the remote mountains where ascetics are said to dwell and the profane is the social world of attachment to mundane things. The *Hokke genki* is thus essentially world-negating in reference to the ideal of the

ascetic. The need to renounce the profane world and lead the ascetic life in remote mountains and forests is promoted by the text's interpretation of the bodhisattva ideal as one involving withdrawal from society. The corruption understood to be an inherent aspect of the secular life of political and social interaction can be reformed by engaging in the ascetic life.

The basic analogies asserted by the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* not only serve to authenticate the validity of the institution, arguing its fit with structures located in reality, but also legitimate the life-style and activities of the institution. Analogies assist in the rendering of meaning that is perceived to be authoritative and long-lasting, rather than arbitrary and temporary. In stating relationships that are recognized as part of the fabric of ultimate reality, analogies collapse the temporal and spatial distance between the human and the ultimate. The ascetics and Michinaga are not remote in time and place from the bodhisattvas and the Buddha of the *Lotus Sūtra*, but rather these *Lotus Sūtra* figures are present now in the lives of these institutional exemplars.

Mary Douglas, in a discussion of the relationship between individuals and society, states, "Classifications, logical operations, and guiding metaphors are given to the individual by society. Above all, the sense of a priori rightness of some ideas and the nonsensicality of others are handed out as part of the social environment" (DOUGLAS 1986, p. 10). The *Lotus Sūtra* had the sense of a priori rightness to it for many Heian-period Japanese Buddhists: it was accepted as the given reality of the universe. But that which is given as real and fundamental in the universe is not sustained without the continuing perception of humans that the universe is truly that way. Thus there has to be a mechanism whereby the conception of power is maintained. A mechanism of this type existed in the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari*, whereby the a priori rightness of the *Lotus Sūtra* as the uncontested power of the universe was asserted. In proving, through analogies, that the *Lotus Sūtra*'s power is present and manifest in Japan, these texts also validated the *Lotus Sūtra* as the real and fundamental power of the universe. These analogies have their source in the *Lotus Sūtra*, which maintains the sense that the *Lotus Sūtra* has an "a priori rightness" to it. Thus, at the same time that the *Lotus Sūtra* legitimates the institution, the institution also makes important claims about the potency of the legitimating symbol.

In demarcating the parameters of their relationship to the *Lotus Sūtra*, and especially to the Buddha and bodhisattvas, the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* also demarcate the place of the ascetics and of

Michinaga in the human world. The *Lotus Sūtra* forms the basis for their claims to institutional legitimacy because it is perceived as the source of the universe's power, thus showing these claims to be neither arbitrary nor capricious. As a consequence of their proven legitimacy as institutions, the special place of ascetics and of Michinaga in the world of human affairs is also propounded. There are, however, ideological implications.

The term "ideology" has numerous complex uses and meanings, some negative and some positive.<sup>20</sup> The term has negative connotations when, for instance, ideology is understood to mean rhetoric that obscures the truth or otherwise distorts reality, whether knowingly or not, in order to privilege some specific social or political group. However, if human discourse is understood as the articulation of meaning that is necessarily bound up with particular social and cultural contexts, then ideology has positive, or at least neutral, connotations. Language always privileges one interest over another, one cosmology over another. This notion of neutrality stands in opposition to the idea that there must be one correct and absolute referent against which discourse can be judged right or wrong, real or unreal, ideological or nonideological. In this sense, ideology need not be perceived as the negative rhetorical strategy of an "other" (we do not usually use the term ideology negatively in reference to our own rhetorical strategies), but rather as an institution-legitimizing activity engaged in by all social groups. Thus I am using the term "ideology" to refer to the idea that human discourse has a self- or group-defining function to it.

Ideology is discourse that uses proofs and arguments in order to articulate and legitimate institutional cosmologies. Ideology, from a Weberian perspective, legitimates the power and authority claimed by specific institutions.<sup>21</sup> While ideology has typically been used in reference to explicitly political forms of discourse and argumentation, religious discourse is similar to political ideology in its attempts to legitimate perspectives on authority. Religious discourse usually bases its legitimating arguments on transcendental absolutes, but political rhetoric also often appeals to such absolutes. For the ascetics and Michinaga, political and religious authority are largely undifferentiated because both forms of authority are legitimated to a great extent by the same *Lotus Sūtra*-based analogies.

Authority in eleventh-century Japan is divine authority, that is, authority that comes primarily from the *Lotus Sūtra* and other Bud-

<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, the detailed analyses of ideology and ideological theory in THOMPSON 1984 and RICOEUR 1986.

<sup>21</sup> See RICOEUR's discussion (1986) of Weber's views of ideology.

dhist sources of power. The notion that the religious discourses of the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* are “ideological” is not antithetical to what religion is or should be. To label religious discourse as ideological is not to pervert some pure, spiritual religion, but rather to place religion within a human, social context. The cosmologies of the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* were not created in order to control others through falsely manufactured legitimations. Rather, they were firmly believed to express, accurately, the truth of the universe as revealed in the *Lotus Sūtra*, both institutions being convinced of the veracity of their perception of the cosmic and human structures inherent in the ultimate reality of this sūtra. Legitimation, which requires the perception of such structures, is an important and integral aspect of religious activity. Thus religious discourse has an ideological function to it, and I would argue that this is a necessary use of such rhetoric. Religious discourse cannot avoid being ideological in the definition of ideology used here and still be effective, convincing rhetoric.

Both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* appropriate those parts of the *Lotus Sūtra* that assist in their own self-definition. In this sense, they historicize the message of the *Lotus Sūtra* to suit their particular set of requirements and circumstances. Nevertheless, the idea that the *Lotus Sūtra* is universal is not compromised. If these texts viewed the *Lotus Sūtra* as only perttainable to discreet situations, it would lose its universal nature and no longer be of any value in arguing for institutional legitimacy. In applying the *Lotus Sūtra* to their particular institutions, neither the *Hokke genki* nor the *Eiga monogatari* discredits the power of this sacred scripture. Rather, by discussing its analogies, miracles, and ritual efficacy, they were able to demonstrate its manifest power in Japan. Just as the power and truth of the *Lotus Sūtra* was manifested through the particular cultural contexts of India and China, it was now studied, practiced, and experienced through the political, social, and religious reality peculiar to Heian Japan. The *Lotus Sūtra* is the ultimate truth and its power is universally present, something that both the *Hokke genki* and the *Eiga monogatari* bear witness to. Those who partake of the *Lotus Sūtra* experience this truth and power through its manifestation in a specific time and place. Thus the truth of the *Lotus Sūtra* is explicated in the world through the worldviews and life-styles of specific institutions.



## ABBREVIATIONS

- EM 1 and 2: *Eiga monogatari*, MATSUMURA and YAMANAKA 1964–1965, volumes 75–76.
- LS: *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*. HURVITZ 1976.
- MRK: *Myōhō renga kyō* 1925.
- MTLS: *Miraculous Tales of the Lotus Sūtra from Ancient Japan*, DYKSTRA 1983.
- OHG: *Ōjōden—Hokke genki*, INOUE and ŌSONE 1982.
- TFF 1 and 2: *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, MCCULLOUGH and MCCULLOUGH 1980, volumes 1 and 2.

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