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The Robe of Leaves

A Nineteenth-Century Text of Shugendo Apologetics

The *Robe of Leaves* is an early modern text written by Gyōchi (1778–1841), a priest and head scholar of the Tōzan Shugendo organization. It presents the erudite face of a tradition that is usually associated with folklore and practice, rather than scholasticism. Along with a rise in government control and sectarianism, Shugendo in the Edo period witnessed significant textual production as doctrine and practice were interpreted and recorded. In his work, Gyōchi portrays Shugendo as sitting squarely within the confines of Japanese Buddhism as well as connected to the history of continental Buddhism. A competent Sanskritist, equally at ease with native and continental Asian sources, he quotes collections of imperial poetry and sources from continental Buddhism, connecting to the roots of Buddhism in India and China, as well as early Buddhist ascetic practice in Japan. Gyōchi also devotes considerable space to eulogizing En no Gyōja, the founder of his tradition, and defending him from charges of heterodoxy. The *Robe of Leaves* is considered an important record of early modern Shugendo and offers us a glimpse into the concerns of a tradition that was persecuted a few decades after the text was written.

KEYWORDS: Shugendo—Edo period—*Konohagoromo*—Esoteric Buddhism—Gyōchi—apologetics

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SHUGENDO IS A Japanese religious tradition that exists on the margins of the study of Japanese Buddhism. Gyōchi 行智 (1778–1841), the subject of this article, was active at a time of significant social and economic change in general, with pressure on Shugendo in particular. The *Robe of Leaves* (*Konohagoromo* 木葉衣) represents the scholarly side of a tradition whose texts have been, to say the least, understudied. Shugendo, or “the way of acquiring supernatural powers through practice,” is a tradition of mountain asceticism, organized from around the eleventh century and active up to the present day. Its adherents, known as *yamabushi* 山伏¹ or *shugenja* 修験者, performed solitary or group austerities in sacred mountains, with the purpose of acquiring supernatural powers or attaining enlightenment. A few practitioners retreated from society permanently, although until the Edo period most lived an itinerant life performing exorcisms and divination, or providing talismans and medicines with the authority of their mountain-gained powers.

From as early as the Nara period, “unauthorized” entry into the mountains for the purpose of ascetic practice was proscribed, a regulation aimed at lay ascetics or monks who did not have the explicit permission of the Buddhist institutions of Nara. These ascetics were the progenitors of Shugendo.² At the other end of history, the 1880 Meiji Criminal Code (*Chizaihō* 治罪法) punished shamans, diviners, and other religious specialists, criminalizing the giving of talismans, healing through amulets, and the use of spells and incantations (FIGAL 1999, 199–200; JOSEPHSON 2012). This also directly affected the *yamabushi*, especially those outside the purview of Shugendo organizations.

During the Edo period the government exercised an increasing amount of control over religious groups and practices, and Shugendo in particular. We need not exaggerate the authorities’ power and extent of actual control on the ground in order to note their efforts to restrict the tradition. In 1613 the authorities issued a decree, the *Shugendō Hatto* 修験道法度 (Shugendo Regulations), ordering the affiliation of all Shugendo groups with either the *Tōzan* 当山 (Shin-gon) or *Honzan* 本山 (Tendai) groups.³ This was preceded by decades of terri-

1. Translated as “those who lay down in the mountains.” Also written as *yamabushi* 山臥.

2. On the relationship between Nara’s *Kōfukuji* 興福寺 and *Ōmine Shugendo*, see TYLER (1990) and TOKUNAGA (1998).

3. Suzuki Takako notes that under the influence of Neo-Confucianism such regulation of religious activity was by no means limited to Shugendo but extended to Buddhist temples in general and sects such as the *Fukeshū* 普化宗 (SUZUKI 2009).

torial disputes between the two groups, which often resorted to legal avenues of resolution and provided the excuse for the *bakufu* 幕府 to intercede through regulation (MIYAKE 1986, 197).

Scholarly research on early modern Shugendo has been hampered by two factors. The first is not exclusive to the tradition, as the study of Japanese Buddhism has tended to focus on the medieval period. The other is the pronouncement of Shugendo as “folk religion.” This trend continues despite the work of scholars such as Wakamori Tarō who clearly trace the origins of Shugendo as an organized tradition to what he terms “mountain Buddhism” (*sangaku Bukkyō* 山岳仏教) (WAKAMORI 2000, 32). Most scholarship on Edo-period Shugendo focuses on what Miyamoto Kesao refers to as *sato shugen* 里修験—the activities of *yamabushi* in rural areas as sedentary healers, ritual specialists, and mountain guides—or on the institutional activities of the Honzan and Tōzan organizations.⁴

Among the general characteristics of Shugendo in the Edo period directly linked to government pressure, it is often remarked that individual asceticism declined, as the authorities pressured the Tōzan and Honzan groups to concentrate more on study rather than practice. The early modern period is therefore viewed as a period of decline for Shugendo, on par with the general pronouncement of the decline of Buddhism in the early modern period (*Bukkyō darakuron* 仏教墮落論).⁵ This criticism is exercised by authors from within the tradition itself, as Sōgyū 僧牛 (c. 1799), a Honzan priest and Gyōchi’s contemporary, does so in his *Shugen gakusoku*, along with Gyōchi in his *Robe of Leaves*.⁶ However, one could also argue that the large number of texts composed at this time is evidence of systematization, compilation, and reflection on doctrine and practice. The value of writing in the propagation of a tradition is undeniable, as is its effectiveness in spreading local knowledge and practice to a much wider milieu. Texts also offer insight into the concerns of a tradition’s chroniclers. Thus, to deny the tradition its textual voice betrays a desire to preserve, in some sense, something

4. Miyamoto also notes the existence of urban *yamabushi*, or what he terms *machi shugen* 町修験 (MIYAMOTO 1984, 46–47).

5. Gaynor Sekimori has noted the influence of scholars such as Anesaki Masaharu and Tsuji Zenosuke on the study of early modern Shugendo (SEKIMORI 2009, 32).

6. Sōgyū writes in the *Shugen gakusoku*:

One cannot aid the principle of the Dharma by studying other schools.... Each must study their own way.... Naturally, there are many people who do not know the difference between their own school and other schools. It is lamentable.... They do not distinguish between the principles of their own school and the study of other schools. They just think that studying other schools is like studying their own. On the contrary, they are losing the principles of their own school. (SSH 3: 87b).

Gyōchi’s criticism is mentioned below, in the section on “competitions of power.” Myōson 明存 (c. 1792) of the Tōzan group, in his *Kyakudō myōbuku setsu*, refers to the *yamabushi* of his time with the colorful term “nuisance *yamabushi*” (*jamabushi* 邪魔伏士) (SSH 3: 85b).

that is experienced as a loss of “pure practice,” which in this case implies a state before becoming systematized and more widely available.

Edo-period Shugendo and its Discontents: Folklore, Orality, and Practice

The pronouncement of the decline of Shugendo in the early modern period is linked to its categorization as a folk, oral, and practice-based tradition. The tradition is either viewed as losing its authenticity by undergoing a Buddhist overhaul and adopting a “Buddhist way of doing things,” or is criticized for a decline in practice. This image is disrupted by the significant production of texts during this era, many of them by *yamabushi* scholar-monks. If we were conversely to claim that such texts were not representative of Shugendo as they were written in the temple headquarters of Shōgoin or Sambōin and thus far removed from the practice sites of the mountains, then we would be left with little publicly available literature to study in terms of history. Alternatively, we could make a distinction between institutional Shugendo, which was the tradition of mountain practice organized and codified by the Shingon and Tendai Esoteric school branches, and the local traditions of mountain beliefs and festivals that existed countrywide with which local *yamabushi* were intimately involved. The latter would be what scholars such as Gorai Shigeru and anthropologist Suzuki Masataka refer to in their work, while the former includes the corpus of texts referred to in this study.

The terms “folk” or “popular” religion usually denote indigenous beliefs or practices not exclusive to a particular tradition or school, but common to many areas in Japan. Horii Ichirō characterizes folk religion as “unsystematized theoretically and ecclesiastically” with “vague magico-religious beliefs, many of which are survivors or successors of archaic and primitive elements” (HORI 1968, 1). Horii drew a very strong line between folk and institutional religion, as taking the side of the latter as folk religion in his view impeded progress and Japan’s modernization. A more sympathetic view developed later through the term *minzoku shūkyō* 民族宗教 as an alternative to the above categorization of “folk beliefs” (*minkan shinkō* 民間信仰), reflecting a less oppositional and more mutually influencing relationship (SHINNO 1993). Yet, as Suzuki Masataka notes, fieldwork on the subject tends to focus on oral rather than literary sources (SUZUKI 2001, 71).

The association of Shugendo with folklore, and thus the emphasis on anthropological fieldwork and orality rather than philology and texts, dates to the project of early folklorists such as Yanagita Kunio and Origuchi Shinobu—and those influenced by them such as Shugendo scholars like Gorai Shigeru—to find in Shugendo the pre-Buddhist beliefs of the Japanese.⁷ However, by the

7. See for instance WAKAMORI (1972, 4–8) and GORAI (1993, 23). Gorai, for example, sees a pre-Buddhist Shugendo in the doctrine of becoming a buddha in this very body (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成仏), reflected in the belief of mountains as places of purification and rebirth.

late Kamakura period Shugendo had developed a set of specific practices and doctrine drawn from Esoteric Buddhism and centered on particular mountain sites, with the major centers near the capital controlled by sub-branches of the Tendai and Shingon schools. According to the above definition of folk religion, then, Shugendo does not fit the category. Of course, there are folk elements in Shugendo, just as can be said of Buddhism or Shinto. Usually, the view of Shugendo from the perspective of folk religion or Esoteric Buddhism depends on the sources relied upon.⁸ Thus the image of Shugendo that arises out of this brief study is also circumscribed by the sources examined, namely, the main collections of Shugendo texts presently available. Whether these texts are representative of the tradition's history overall or present a skewed image is hard to ascertain, as access to privately held texts is difficult.

A polemological model of folk or local tradition competing with a doctrinally superior and ritually more complex Buddhism is, at least in the case of Shugendo, not interpretively useful, as it assumes there were two distinct competing parties with different beliefs. Yet, the ways in which orality and text, doctrine and legend are tightly interwoven makes them impossible to separate. In fact, the utility of the term “oral tradition,” with respect to Shugendo, is problematic in itself. What happens when an orally transmitted legend or “secret song” (*hika* 秘歌) comes to be written down and subsequently propagated through text? The same holds for *kirigami* 切り紙, the shorthand notes of practitioners on a variety of subjects, which were eventually compiled into texts that became more widely circulated. In this case again, what was locally produced and private at some point became public and regional, if not national.⁹

The labeling of Shugendo as a folk religion, rather than a tradition heavily influenced by Esoteric Buddhism—indeed, organized in the early modern period under the Tendai and Shingon temples of the Shōgoin and Daigoji Sambōin—has greatly affected the way in which Shugendo is studied. There are scholars such as Miyake Hitoshi who look to Shugendo texts as important doctrinal documents in their own right. Yet, in the past scholars have relied on images of the *yamabushi* through folklore or legendary accounts, ignoring the wealth of texts

Murakami Toshio considers Shugendo “the national spirit of the Japanese people” (MURAKAMI 1978, 5). Even Miyake Hitoshi 宮家 準, a singular force in Shugendo studies who routinely refers to texts belonging to the tradition, characterizes it as “folk religion” in an edited volume of his work in English (MIYAKE 2007).

8. The subject of the relationship between official and popular religion was reexamined early on by Rolf Stein (STEIN 1979), whose observations on the overlap of popular and official Daoism in China also generally hold for Buddhism in Japan.

9. Examples of *kirigami*-based texts include the *Shugen shinkanshō*, the *Shugen shūyō hiketsu shū*, the *Shugen jōyō hihōshū*, and the *Shugen jōyōshū*. With the exception of Sokuden's 即伝 *Shugen shūyō hiketsu shū* (SSH 2), these collections are published in SSH 1 along with the older *kirigami*-based *Shugen hiokushō*. On Sokuden see GRAPARD (2016, 143–48).

readily available through the various Shugendo text collections consulted in this study due to their late (that is, early modern) authorship.¹⁰ One reason for this is that many studies concentrate on the history of Shugendo prior to the thirteenth century, from which period there are significantly fewer texts available. Alternatively, researchers attempt to reconstruct the tradition by extrapolating from the present or relying on legend and myth, again to the exclusion of early modern material. The result is that Edo-period Shugendo texts are not studied for their Esoteric Buddhist content, and in the past were almost ignored. Texts rich in Esoteric Buddhist doctrine remain under the radar due to their association with what is seen as a folk religion. They simply do not register in the field of what is considered Japanese Esoteric Buddhism.

Contrary to the study of Buddhism, where in the past doctrine and textual study have been emphasized over practice and anthropological fieldwork (the current trend), in Shugendo, practice has been the focus, and the philological study of texts in their own right has been sidelined. The trend in Buddhist studies leaning towards studies of famous monks and texts at the expense of popular Buddhism a few decades ago is reversed in the study of Shugendo, where focus on practice has been paramount and authors and texts relatively invisible. This is related to a false dichotomy: that of whether to consider Shugendo as a form of Esoteric Buddhism or as a folk religion. If viewed as merely restating doctrine from (Tendai or Shingon) esoteric doctrine, we are not studying Shugendo texts in their own right; they are merely used as information on existing rituals and practices. This is one reason why few book-length monographs exist that are devoted to a single Shugendo text.¹¹ On the other hand, the label “folk religion” carries the stigma of not having a complex doctrine, and the texts are left aside for the study of practices, rituals, and festivals through fieldwork. The alternative is to examine Shugendo texts in their own right, as singular works, with the appropriate philological rigor. This carries its own difficulties, as many of the texts in the *Shugendō shōso* (SSH) collection, for example, are of unknown date and authorship.¹²

10. Consider for instance the following statement by Gorai: “Most of what we know of Shugendo belongs to the realm of *denshō* 伝承, that is, ‘tradition’ or miscellaneous lore. That is because Shugendo was a religion of practice rather than of theory, and one of mysteries as well” (GORAI 1989, 117). On the methodological differences between Gorai and Miyake, see BOUCHY (2000).

11. Gorai’s annotated volume of Gyōchi’s texts is a valuable exception, containing a substantial introduction and extensive footnotes (GORAI 1975).

12. The *Shugendo shōso* is a three-volume collection of primary texts. The first volume was published in 1917 and focused mainly on texts of the Tōzan group. The second and third, printed in 1920, featured mainly Honzan works and miscellaneous texts on various mountain sites from both traditions, respectively. Out of the 162 texts in this collection, approximately seventy-two were dated as written or edited in the Edo period. The remaining ninety, out of which a large number are not dated, were written between approximately 800 and 1600. Also, a large number

Treating Shugendo as folk religion and focusing on practice to the exclusion of doctrine (and texts) only serves to exoticize the tradition. Whereas Buddhism in Japan was initially a foreign tradition that gradually became part of Japanese religious life, in the case of Shugendo, an indigenous tradition co-opted by the esoteric schools was sanitized of foreign elements (that is, Buddhist) and fetishized as the depository of a uniquely Japanese religiosity. This position needs to be addressed in order to allow for a better understanding of the tradition.¹³

The group with which Gyōchi was affiliated, the Tōzan group, posited Shōbō 聖宝 (832–909) as its founder. A priest of Nara's Tōdaiji 東大寺, a second generation disciple of Kūkai 空海 and the founder of Daigoji 醍醐寺 outside Kyoto, legend has it that he restored practice on Mount Ōmine 大峯山 by driving off a serpent that had appeared and terrorized ascetics after En no Gyōja's 役行者 departure. In 1707, the posthumous title Rigen Daishi 理源大師 was bestowed on Shōbō by the reigning Emperor Higashiyama.

The term *sendatsu* 先達 was generally used to describe local guides to temples in medieval Japan, but came to represent a number of ranks and titles in the Shugendo tradition. In the Muromachi period, through the *shōdai sendatsu* 正大先達 system of organization, the Tōzan group expanded beyond the Kii Peninsula to other mountains on the main island. It remained centered in the Yamato region, where Ōmine was located, and was organized around thirty-six temples represented by the thirty-six *shōdai sendatsu*.¹⁴ The overwhelming majority of these temples were located either north of Ōmine between Kyoto and Yoshino, or west of Ōmine and closer to Katsuragi 葛城, another Shugendo practice site, in the province of Izumi. Originally under Kōfukuji's 興福寺 control, the *shōdai sendatsu* was later affiliated with Daigoji Sambōin, which was appointed the head temple of the Tōzan group in the early Edo period, and led by the *shōdai sendatsu* who from 1673 to 1681 were reduced to twelve, as opposed to the previous thirty-six. The *shōdai sendatsu* held their annual meeting at Ozasa 小笹 on Ōmine, to make decisions on ordinations, promotions, and other matters.

were written in the sixteenth century. The early modern period is thus disproportionately represented, compared to the eight hundred or so years before it.

13. Luis Gómez has made this point regarding the study of Buddhism, writing that “in a society dominated by Western models of truth and authority, an exaggerated inflation of the ‘field’ approach to Buddhism that excludes the textual tradition and the canons that guided that tradition may work in support of the exoticization of Buddhism” (GÓMEZ 1995, 205).

14. The term *shōdai sendatsu* originally referred to those who had received the *shōkanjō* 正灌頂 consecration. In the Honzan group, it came to refer to *yamabushi* who had performed twenty-one mountain entries (MIYAKE 1986, 207). To give a sense of the numbers involved, from his examination of Tōzan texts Suzuki Shōei mentions that in 1571, four hundred and ninety-one *yamabushi* became *sendatsu* in the organization, with one thousand three hundred and fifty-three persons promoted to *sendatsu* status in a period of one hundred and thirty-eight years (SUZUKI 2003, 168–69).

The Sambōin gradually strengthened its hold on the Tōzan community. In 1700, under the abbot Kōken 好堅, the headships of Kaijōin 皆成院 (in Edo) and Hōkakuji 鳳閣寺 (in Yoshino) were merged. Kaijōin was renamed Edo Hōkakuji 宝覚寺, and became head of all Tōzan *yamabushi*. The Tōzan group thus ruled from Edo, which translated into increased *bakufu* control, despite the protestations of the regionally based *shōdai sendatsu*. In 1872, with the ban on Shugendo, Tōzan merged with the Daigo group of Shingon.

In his groundbreaking work on the Tōzan organization, Suzuki Shōei writes that in the early Edo period, Daigoji Sambōin became the head temple not only of the Shingon sect, but also of Shugendo (SUZUKI 2003).¹⁵ In the eighteenth century it controlled the ordination of *yamabushi*, thus effectively directly controlling all of them. The *shōdai sendatsu*, who had thus far controlled the Kii Peninsula, resisted Daigoji's rule. However, the head temple managed to bypass their authority with powers bestowed by the Tokugawa government. The lateness of Daigoji's role as head of the organization is indicated by the first time the Sambōin performed a mountain-entry into Ōmine as head of the Tōzan, which was in 1668.

Unlike the Tōzan group, which was formed later, the Kumano *sendatsu* were connected to the Shōgoin as early as the eleventh century, when the priest Zōyo 増誉 (1032–1116) of Onjōji 園城寺 acted as *sendatsu* to retired Emperor Shirakawa 白河天皇 (1053–1129) in 1090 and organized the Kumano *yamabushi* based on the “wards of the three mountains of Kumano” (*Kumano sanzan kengyō* 熊野三山検校).¹⁶ Zōyo subsequently became abbot of the Shōgoin. In 1287 Chōtokuji 長徳寺 became the main leader of Shugendo in the Kumano area. The Honzan group was formed in the Muromachi period, under the Shōgoin head temple. In 1553, nineteen powerful *yamabushi* from both the Tendai and Shingon sides formed a group under the jurisdiction of the Shōgoin. From around the late sixteenth century the head temple, represented by the Kumano *sanzan kengyō*, went on teaching tours around the country establishing its position.

One might wonder then whether practice on Ōmine was controlled by locally-based individuals or the institutions based in Kyoto. On paper, powerful temples such as Nara's Kōfukuji and Kyoto's Sambōin attempted to control the Okugake 奥駈 route and the significant earnings generated by group practice and pilgrimage from Yoshino to Kumano.¹⁷ Yet, in effect, it seems that local *sendatsu*

15. Suzuki cites the influence of Daigoji head monk Gien's 義演 (1558–1626) close ties to both Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 and Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 in securing such stature (SUZUKI 2003, 88).

16. Onjōji, also known as Miidera 三井寺, served as the headquarters of the Jimon 寺門 branch of the Tendai school.

17. The Okugake was the ascetic route that connected Yoshino to Kumano and was organized into seventy-five stations (*nabiki* 靡き) by the main Shugendo organizations. Its practice became the main criterion for advancement within the Honzan and Tōzan ranks. See SWANSON (1981); KLONOS (2013).

were in charge of most mountain entries. The tension between head and local branch temples (*matsuji* 末寺) never abated, as is evident from the following conflict pointed out by Suzuki Shōei. In the Meiji period, Daigoji Sambōin wanted to remove the images of central deities from its headquarters in Ozasa as well as other artifacts and send them back to Kyoto. The *yamabushi* from the villages of Yoshino and Dorogawa protested, but, in the end, with the intervention of the state in the summer of 1876 they were brought back to Kyoto (SUZUKI 2003, 234). This example illustrates the chasm between institutional centers and mountain peripheries in Shugendo, as well as how the Meiji government went about dismantling Shugendo on Ōmine, in this case through the Tōzan group itself.

A Shingon priest born in Tokyo, Gyōchi was initiated in Shugendo by his father as resident of the Kakuun'in 覚畔院. Well-read in Sanskrit, he taught the language to nativist scholar Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤. At the command of the Daigoji Sambōin head temple, he became head scholar of the Tōzan group. According to Gorai, the *Robe of Leaves* was written as a reply to the Honzan group's *Nichiyō kenbunsho*, written in 1832, which contained slanderous remarks against the Tōzan group (GORAI 1975, 38).

Apart from the *Robe of Leaves*, Gyōchi wrote two other influential texts: the *Record of Stepping Amongst the Clouds* and the *Robes of Shugendo*, both much shorter in length than the *Robe of Leaves*.¹⁸ The *Record of Stepping Amongst the Clouds* is divided into eight chapters. The first four deal with En no Gyōja, the terms Shugendo and *yamabushi*, and Shōbō and the Tōzan group. The latter four deal with the Honzan group, and the customs of carrying a sword or fighting staff, tonsure, eating meat, and marriage. The *Robes of Shugendo* has thirteen chapters. It concerns the Honzan and Tōzan groups, and Haguro 羽黒 Shugendo, which remained independent of the two groups. In contrast to the *Robe of Leaves*, therefore, both texts are less concerned with Shugendo material objects and the figure of En no Gyōja, and more on the state of institutional or sectarian Shugendo in the Edo period. They are both considered pioneering works on the tradition's organization.

Gyōchi and Edo-period Shugendo

The *Robe of Leaves* is important for the student of Shugendo and Edo-period religions in general, for several reasons. First of all, Gyōchi was the head scholar of one of the two main branches of Shugendo, the Tōzan group, with headquarters at the Daigoji Sambōin in Kyoto. As such, the text represents the official position of this group at the time. Written a few decades

18. Other works of his include the *Kōhon shittan jiki* (printed in 1669), based on the *Shittan jiki* (T 2132, 54), and the *Shittan jiki shinshaku*.

before the outright ban of Shugendo in 1880, it portrays the final attempts of a tradition increasingly under pressure from the government to justify itself.

As Gyōchi was a scholar-priest, the *Robe of Leaves* offers a glimpse into Shugendo scholasticism, reflecting an author well versed in Sanskrit, Buddhist, and Chinese texts, as well as Japanese poetry and literature. Indeed, judging from the number of poems included from imperial anthologies of poetry, Gyōchi puts forth an image of Shugendo that excludes its reality on the ground. Given the delicate position of his school, it is his style of writing and choice of textual sources that often provide clues to his intentions in creating this work. The vast majority of Shugendo texts were written for *yamabushi*, were esoteric in content, and produced for internal consumption. The *Robe of Leaves* was not, which is why it does not contain esoteric interpretations or ritual descriptions already circulating at the time. The *Robe of Leaves*' peculiarity is that it is an exoteric text whose purpose is not to conceal but to reveal, according to its author, an orthodox Esoteric Buddhist tradition. Judging from its content, and compared to other texts from the early modern period, it was written with the political and religious authorities in mind, signaling that Shugendo was a legitimate form of Buddhism and connected to the imperial court from its inception.

The latter is displayed in his preference for verses from imperial anthologies of poetry with *yamabushi* as their subject matter. Gyōchi quotes from the *Shūi wakashū*, the *Senzai wakashū*, the Kamakura-period *Fuboku wakashō*, the *Fūga wakashū*, and various other collections of Japanese poetry. The rationale for their selection appears to be multiple. Apart from lending legitimacy to his argument and imbuing the text with an aura of courtly prestige, the main target is the reader's imagination. Verses presenting a romantic image of ascetics practicing on snow-covered peaks indicate an author less intent on presenting facts than offering a particular vision of the *yamabushi*. This is corroborated by his overall reliance throughout the *Robe of Leaves* on literary texts rather than sutras or Shugendo doctrinal works.

If we roughly divide scholarship on Shugendo into the categories of sectarian Buddhist and folklore studies, the *Robe of Leaves* undoubtedly belongs to the former. Indeed, the text's choice of subject matter predates postwar scholarship on En no Gyōja and the institutional side of Shugendo, as does Gyōchi's use of literary sources (such as the *Nihon ryōiki*, *Genkō shakusho*, and *Shoku nihongi*) to the exclusion of the numerous texts on doctrine and practice written from within the tradition and dating mostly from the Muromachi and Edo periods. In his official position within the Tōzan group, Gyōchi's chief aim in writing the *Robe of Leaves* was certainly not to present a complete picture of Shugendo, but a very particular, Buddhist one motivated by political reasons, that is, the survival of his tradition.

Establishing the Founder

As scholar Gorai Shigeru mentions in his introduction to the text, the title comes from a song verse that appears at the very beginning of the *Robe of Leaves* (GORAI 1993, 41). It also alludes to the *hagoromo* 羽衣, the feathered cloak worn by heavenly beings (*tennin* 天人) and also the title of a Noh play. The text is divided into two sections comprised of eighteen and fourteen chapters respectively. The size of each chapter varies from a few lines to several pages in length. The first eight chapters deal with aspects of En no Gyōja's hagiography. Chapters nine to thirteen address different terms for practitioners of Shugendo. Chapters fourteen to eighteen present various practices and customs. Chapters nineteen to twenty-seven are on implements and attire, and twenty-eight to thirty-two may be grouped as miscellaneous.

No less than thirteen chapters of the *Robe of Leaves* are devoted to the re-mythologizing of the post-facto founder of Shugendo, En no Gyōja.¹⁹ The most important hagiographical sources such as the *Nihon ryōiki* or *Genkō shakusho* are often quoted in full. The main aim of Gyōchi's commentary to these sources is to establish En's noble background and sanctity, but more importantly, to present him as an orthodox Buddhist figure, defending his name against various allegations of heresy or subversive activity.

Chapters 1 and 3 relate En's family origins to the Takagamo 高加茂 clan, establishing an aristocratic background to his family. Gyōchi dwells on the pronunciation of the founder's names, emphasizing that the characters 君 and 公 following En's name are to be read "Kimi," and that 小角, commonly pronounced Ozunu, should be read "Ozumi." Gyōchi also mentions his relation to the Iwainokuni 磐井君 family, who immigrated to northern Kyushu from Korea.

Chapter 4 addresses the ascetic's use of spells to control the deity Hitokoto nushi 一言主 in order to build a bridge connecting Kinpusen to Katsuragi. Seeking to downplay this aspect of En no Gyōja's hagiography, Gyōchi claims that Hitokotonushi was a deity of no importance, who hid his real form. The founder's reputation is subsequently defended against charges of being an anti-establishment, non-Buddhist ascetic who employs sorcery towards devious ends. Acting as a legal scholar, Gyōchi quotes passages from various texts that mention the Hitokotonushi or the incident, including the *Engishiki jinmyōchō*, *Shoku nihongi*, and *Jinnō shōtōki*.²⁰

19. I say post-facto as En no Gyōja is dated to the seventh or eighth centuries, whereas according to Wakamori Tarō, the first mention of the term "Shugendo" in print appears six centuries later in the fourteenth-century *Gogumaiki*, the diary of courtier Sanjō Kintada 三条公忠 (1324–1383) (WAKAMORI 1972, 13).

20. The *Jinnō shōtōki*, an imperial history of Japan, was written by Kitabatake Chikafusa 北畠親房 (1293–1354). The *Engishiki jinmyōchō* was a registry of shrines in Japan based on data compiled in 927.

Two additional chapters, 5 and 7, further address this issue by commenting on the defamatory attack by Karakuni no Muraji Hirotsu 韩国連広足 on En's use of sorcery in the form of the Peacock King spell (*Kujaku myōō juhō* 孔雀明王咒法).²¹ Gyōchi asserts that the particular method is a Buddhist one, pointing back to its origins in India and its usage by Śrīmitra (fourth century). He also mentions a passage in the Heian-period regulatory rules for monks and nuns (*sōniryō* 僧尼令) allowing the employment of *dhāraṇī* and other spells to accomplish certain goals. Beneath Gyōchi's concerns for orthodoxy lies a common situation regarding such matters, namely that what confers legitimacy is often not what particular ritual one practices, but who performs the action.

Chapter 8, entitled *The Five Hundred Tigers*, involves an incident in En no Gyōja's hagiography as mentioned in the accounts of the *Genkō shakusho* and the *Fusō ryakki*. As the monk Dōshō 道昭 (629–700), who introduced the Hossō 法相 school to Japan, was delivering a lecture on the *Lotus Sutra* in a monastery in the Korean kingdom of Silla, En no Gyōja appeared, flying over from Japan, and lectured in the Japanese language. The source of Gyōchi's concern regarding this incident is the use of the word "tigers" to describe the assembly. He devotes considerable space arguing that the hagiographies confused the character 虎 (*ko*) with that of 虎 (*ko*), suggesting that the image of the founder transforming into a tiger had negative connotations.

It is perhaps apposite that En no Gyōja was officially sanctified at an age when, according to Gyōchi and later scholars of Shugendō, his legacy of austere and solitary practice was largely neutralized. Chapter 30 quotes an imperial decree of 1799, in which En is eulogized and bestowed the title *Jinben Daibosatsu* 神變大菩薩 and described as a transformation (*henge* 變化) of Mahāvairocana and an avatar (*junjin* 分身) of Fudō Myōō.²² Coming not long before the outright ban of Shugendō in the Meiji period, and after two hundred years of Edo containment and restriction of Shugendō practices and organization, his eulogy is a fitting epilogue to the story of Shugendō as recounted in the *Robe of Leaves*.

Designations

Prior to Gyōchi, texts such as Sokuden's *Shugen shūyō hiketsu shū* (SSH 2: 384a–b) and the *Shugendō shogaku bendan* by Kōtan Takuei 恒端卓盈 (c. 1737) attempted a typology of Shugendō practitioners with the four categories of *yamabushi* (written 山伏), *yamabushi* (written 山臥), *shugen*, and *kyakusō* 客層 (SSH 3: 100a).

21. According to the *Shoku nihongi*, Karakuni, a student of En no Gyōja, was employed by the court with the rank of outer junior fifth rank lower grade. On the Peacock King spell, see also STRICKMANN (2002, 108) and SØRENSEN (2006).

22. In the *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 scheme, this makes him a local manifestation of a continental Buddhist deity.

Chapters 9 to 13 of the *Robe of Leaves* are devoted to various appellations of practitioners of Shugendo, namely, *yamabushi*, *shugen*, *ubasoku* 優婆塞 (*upasaka*), *kyakusō*, and *somikakuda* 曾美加久堂.²³ In accordance with the intent of the *Robe of Leaves* as a whole, these sections are aimed at convincing the reader of the origins of Shugendo practice in its Indian Buddhist antecedents and its alignment with mainstream or acceptable Buddhist practice. Gyōchi was defending the religion from charges of heterodoxy against those who viewed it as lying outside standard Buddhism. Although never stated overtly, the presentation of Shugendo practices as harmonious with those of early Buddhism resembles the familiar strategy of looking toward India in order to claim the primacy of a school's practices.²⁴ Another plausible point of view, which Gyōchi himself never overtly states but follows from his writings, is that of Shugendo as an outlet for practices in Japan that, for various reasons, remained outside the mainstream of institutional Buddhism.

Chapter 9, on the meaning of the term *yamabushi*, includes the anecdote of Taichō 泰澄, an eighth-century monk known for “opening” Mount Hakusan 白山 in Fukui Prefecture. A wandering monk once reprimanded him, saying that “to lay down 臥 is a mark of idleness. This is why they call you a *fushigyōja* 臥行者” (GORAI 1975, 78). Taichō replied that the monk was referring to the practice of the body, whereas he trained body and mind simultaneously. He concluded by indicating the salvific value of mountain austerities: “If enduring the coldness of the eight austerities one lies in the snowdrift of one’s sins, looking up at the great emptiness of the character *a* 阿, they will see the light of Vairocana” (GORAI 1975, 78).

Continuing, Gyōchi suggests that the term *yamabushi* refers to all those monks (*shukke* 出家) who, seeking enlightenment on a mountain, perform such practices as drawing water, gathering firewood, and picking fruit.²⁵ The chapter ends with five poems from the *Fuboku wakashō* which conjure a romantic, austere image of the term *yamabushi* and its referents, such as the following: “Year after year in the rocky cave sleeves stained black by the accumulating moss” (GORAI 1975, 79).

Chapter 10, on the term *shugen*, returns to the matter of power gained through the incantation of *dhāraṇī* in conjunction with the practice of austerities. Seeking support from Buddhist scriptures, he quotes passages that expound the

23. The term *somikakuda*, also written 曾美加久太 or 曾未学院, most likely originated in the Kyōkakudō 經書堂 in Kyoto, near Kiyomizudera, where itinerant ascetics would gather (MIYAKE 1986, 234).

24. Parenthetically, in his assessment of early Buddhism as ascetic and thaumaturgical in its practices and goals, Gyōchi is echoed by modern scholars such as Paul HARRISON (1995a; 1995b) in their reassessment of early Mahayana in India.

25. These were known as the four standard tasks of the ascetic (the fourth being preparing meals), as quoted in the “Devadatta” chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*.

causal relation between *dhāraṇī* and power. Gyōchi refers to the *Bussetsu binaya kyō* for instance, which states that “possessing spells, one obtains efficacy” (*jiju tokuken* 持呪得驗) (T 898, 18.774b29).²⁶ Another quotation comes from the eleventh section of the *Darani jikkyō* (T 901, 18), the “Marishiten kyō” 摩利支天經, which emphasizes the efficacy of spells. He then lists renowned Buddhist ascetics from around the country, such as Taichō 泰澄 (682–767), Nichizō 日藏 (tenth century), and Gyōson 行尊 (1055–1135), who all followed in En no Gyōja’s ascetic footsteps (GORAI 1975, 87). In this chapter, Gyōchi is clearly using the term *shugen* not in any sectarian sense but in reference to Buddhist asceticism in general. One cannot generalize, however, as *shugen* appears in many early modern titles as an abbreviation of “Shugendo.”

In the chapter entitled *Ubasoku* 優婆塞, Gyōchi harkens back to the Indian tradition of forest-dwelling monks (*āraṇyaka*), once again embellishing the *yamabushi* image with a poetic reference from the *Fuboku wakashō*. Gyōchi writes of the *yamabushi*: “Training in the wild, they practiced at *arannya* 阿蘭若 places,” referring to a forest or a place of solitude (GORAI 1975, 94).²⁷ Furthermore, Gyōchi quotes twice from the *Susiddhikara Sutra* (T 893, 18.638b5), in the chapters on tonsure and the surplice. The author must have been aware therefore of the section in the same text dealing with suitable places for ascetic practice, and its discussion on mountains specifically (GIEBEL 2001, 143–44).²⁸ Apart then from the ritual technology and doctrine of Esoteric Buddhism, Gyōchi connected his tradition’s ascetic practice to the continent through his knowledge of canonical passages concerned with the geography of practice. Overall, Gyōchi’s expertise in the Sanskrit language meant that he was all the more inclined to draw from Indian sources or quote Sanskrit terminology in his works, drawing parallels between Shugendo and early Buddhist practice in India.

26. The *Bussetsu binaya kyō* was authored by Jōgon 淨嚴 (1639–1702), a Shingon priest of the Shingon Rishū school and a Sanskritist.

27. The *arannya gyō* 阿蘭若行 was considered one of twelve forms of ascetic practice: that of living in a forest. Buddhist scholars Karashima Seishi, Reginald Ray, and more recently Daniel Boucher have stressed the importance of the “wilderness dwelling” monks in the early Mahayana movement (KARASHIMA 2001; RAY 1994; BOUCHER 2008).

28. The *Susiddhikara Sutra* is one of three basic scriptures in Tendai esotericism, along with the *Vairocana abhisambodhi Sutra* and *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha*. No Sanskrit original has been found, but the text was translated into Tibetan (Peking no. 431) and Chinese (T 893, 18). The Chinese translation was undertaken by Śubhakarasiṃha in 726. Chapter 6 of the *Susiddhikara Sutra*, entitled “Selecting the Site,” includes the following recommendations:

Famous mountains with many trees, abundant fruit, and flowing springs: such places are described as excellent sites; or there may be an [a]ranya with many deer that are not hunted by people and without any beasts of prey such as bears, tigers, and wolves... or beside a mountain, on top of a mountain peak, on a solitary eminence, or on a mountainside that also has water: such places are described as excellent sites.

(GIEBEL 2001, 143–44)

The following chapter, on the term *kyakusō* 客僧, or itinerant monks, finds precedent in the ascetics who followed the peripatetic lifestyle of founder En no Gyōja, renouncing the relative stability of a temple appointment. Gyōchi mentions the chapter on the Kumano *bikuni* 熊野比丘尼 from the fourteenth-century *Genpei jōsuiki*, which refers to “*kyakusō no yamabushi*.” Gyōchi is keen to reassure his readers that not all *yamabushi* live such a life, a fact all the more resonant by the Edo period, when the authorities restricted movement in favor of control. Through his choice of medieval sources, Gyōchi pushes the itinerant nature of the *yamabushi* into the distant past. However, even in the Edo period—and despite the government’s desire for immobility and hence control—it was practically impossible to enforce in sparsely populated mountain areas.

A Genealogy of Implements

The various implements that Shugendo practitioners carried or used, as well as the attire that they wore, played an important part in their self-definition. Regarding the substantial section (chapters 19 to 27) on Shugendo attire and ritual implements, it is important to make a few remarks concerning Gyōchi’s inclusion of these chapters in accordance with the aim of the *Robe of Leaves* to present its subject in terms of legitimacy and Buddhist orthodoxy. That the material objects particular to Shugendo were important to the *yamabushi* in their self-definition as practitioners and ritual specialists is evident in the following incident on Mount Fuji in the eighteenth century. The Tōzan group on that mountain, facing unwanted competition from the local religious fraternities (*kō* 講), sent a petition to the authorities in 1797. Among other things, they requested that the Fuji fraternity members discontinue their use of the *suzu* 鈴 bell, *shakujō* 錫杖 staff, and other implements associated with Shugendo.²⁹

Apart from describing their usage perfunctorily, Gyōchi’s aim is to emphasize the long genealogy and Buddhist nature of various ritual implements of Shugendo, from the *horagai* 法螺貝, the sea conch carried by practitioners and blown to announce their approach, to the *shakujō*, quoting passages from canonical sutras in order to establish the objects’ Buddhist pedigree. Writing in the *tokin* 頭巾 chapter, he mentions that the cap worn by *yamabushi* in his time is identical to the one presented by Emperor Monmu 文武 (683–707) to En no Gyōja himself at the advent of Shugendo. On the subject of the ax carried by *yamabushi*, he states that it is an old custom, quoting passages on axes from the *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 and a poem from the fourteenth-century *Shoku gosūi wakashū* collection of *waka* poetry.

29. On the competition between Shugendo organizations and the emerging new religions in the nineteenth century, see HARDACRE (1994).

On the *horagai*, Gyōchi quotes passages from the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Vairocana Abhisambodhi Sutra* that mention the sound of the sea conch announcing the Dharma. He also lists a few of the *yamabushi* calls on the *horagai*, such as when visiting a mountain temple, or when entering a mountain lodge. He ends this section with a poem from the *Fuboku wakushō*:

horagai fastened on *yamabushi*'s hip
waiting for it to sound
the autumn's night moon (GORAI 1975, 229)

On the surplice, or *yuigesa* 結袈裟, not surprisingly, Gyōchi mentions Shōbō as the oldest instance of its usage, a garment that is displayed, he notes, in Yoshino's Hōkakuji (GORAI 1975, 208). In the section on the prayer beads used by *yamabushi* (*irataka no juzu* 伊良太加数珠), Gyōchi once again alludes to India, explaining that the name *irataka* originates from the Sanskrit *aristaka* (*aritaka* 阿唎吒迦).³⁰ He also refers to practitioners of Esoteric Buddhism as “gentlemen of the secret practices” (*mitsugyō no shi* 密行の士), a vague, non-sectarian characterization considering the age in which he was writing (GORAI 1975, 224).³¹

Section twenty-nine on Kinpusen 金峯山, an alternative name for Mount Ōmine, departs from the content on attire and implements in the previous sections.³² It includes a map of the pilgrimage route on Sanjōgatake 山上ヶ岳, the top of Ōmine. This was one of the most popular Shugendo routes in Gyōchi's time, forming part of the Okugake route as well as the “mountain headquarters” of the Tōzan and Honzan groups, which were south of Sanjōgatake. Located sixty kilometers south of Nara, fifty kilometers east of Koyasan, one hundred and twenty-five kilometers west of Ise, and eighty kilometers north of Kumano, Ōmine was at the center of religious activity. The entire section otherwise consists of a quote from the *Yichu liutie*, a Buddhist encyclopedia written by the Five-dynasties monk Yichu 義楚 (907–960), as evidence of the mountain's fame reaching the mainland as early as the tenth century:

30. The Sanskrit word *aristaka* refers to the soapberry tree, a material used in the construction of prayer beads.

31. GORAI devotes considerable space to the attire and implements of the *yamabushi* (1980, 258–377).

32. Definitions of the geographical area that the designation “Ōmine” comprises have varied throughout history. Sometimes it refers to the area of Sanjōgatake, and more often it encompasses the mountains from Yoshino to Sanjōgatake, also referred to as Kinpusen. Nagano Tadashi offers the following distinction: “Kinpusen” refers to the area around the south bank of Yoshino River's Yanagi no Shuku 柳の宿 (Okugake station no. 75) up to Ozasa (station no. 66); “Ōminesan” is from Ozasa up to Tamakiyama 玉置山 (station no. 10) (NAGANO 1987, 98–99). Depending on the context, “Kinpusen” referred to Yoshino, Sanjōgatake, or the area encompassing the two. The whole range, from Yoshino to Kumano, covers a distance of around one hundred and seventy kilometers. On Kinpusen in the Heian period, see BLAIR (2015).

Kinpusen is located more than 1,220 miles south of Japan's capital. The Bodhisattva Kongō Zaō resides at the summit of the mountain. Being the most spiritually powerful place, there are pine and cypress trees, famous flowers, and strange plants. There are several hundred small and large temples in which dwell ascetics of a high level. It is a place forbidden to women. Even today, men who desire to go up there must abstain from alcohol, meat, and sexual activity for three months without exception. The Bodhisattva [Kongō Zaō] is a transformation-body of Maitreya; he is identical to Mount Wutai's 五台山 Mañjuśrī.

(GORAI 1975, 244)

Gyōchi concludes that it is a powerful and exceptional place, without adding any other information (GORAI 1975, 244). Quoting a mainland reference to this Japanese site was apparently a sufficient commentary on its importance.

The Three Kingdoms

The *Yichu liutie* reference alludes to the westward facing impulse of Japanese Buddhism, toward China and India, seen as the sources of Japanese Buddhism and part of what was referred to as the “three kingdoms” (*sangoku* 三国) scheme. Another example is the *Shugen sangoku bukei*, a Tōzan text that dates most probably from the Edo period (*Shugen sangoku bukei*, 787–96). Writing of eighteen peaks in the three kingdoms of Japan, India, and China, the author presents a lineage of eighteen figures that does not however correspond directly to the standard Tōzan or Honzan groups.³³ Not every patriarch is attached to a particular mountain—Śākyamuni's practice on Mount Dandaloka 檀特山 is mentioned, and in Japan the main practice site listed is Ōmine—but the connection between patriarchs and peaks is significant, reflecting the Tōzan Shugendō organization's positioning within a continental Buddhist tradition in terms of mountain practice.³⁴

Another early modern text, the *Shugendō shogaku bendan*, also looks back to the early days of Buddhism in India, writing that the Buddha Śākyamuni and his disciple Kāśyapa, among others, practiced austerities in the mountains (*nyūbu tosō* 入峰抖擻) and attained enlightenment (SSH 3: 98a).³⁵ The forests of India

33. The succession of names is as follows: Mahāvairocana, Vajrasattva, Śākyamuni, Mahākāśyapa, Aśvagoṣa, Nāgārjuna, Hōki Zaō Nyōrai 寶喜藏王如來 (more commonly known as the Bodhisattva Hōki 法起菩薩), and En no Gyōja (*Shugen sangoku bukei*, 787–91).

34. Looking toward the Asian continent was not just an early modern phenomenon; older texts on the subject include Kōfukuji priest Kakuken's 覺憲 twelfth-century *Sangoku dentōki* and the *Sangoku denki*, a fifteenth-century work written by Gentō 玄棟 (BLUM 2006, 38–39). Mount Ōmine itself was imagined to have flown over from China from the early tenth century, as mentioned in an entry dated 932 in the *Rihō ōki*. This changed from China to India in the *Shozan engi*, a text with sections dating from the ninth to the thirteenth century (SHUDŌ 1995, 42).

35. This text is also significant for its mention of Ge Hong's 葛洪 (283–343) *Baopuzi*, an important source of early Daoism, in the section on amulets. The *Baopuzi* seems to have been known

substituted for the mountains of Japan, as the main focus in this case was the wilderness in general, rather than the availability of mountains. Thus, Ōmine's titular deity Zaō Gongen 蔵王権現 is mentioned as a manifestation of Śākyamuni Buddha himself, having resided on India's Vulture Peak in the past (SSH 3: 107b).

As we have seen, if the purpose of the *Robe of Leaves* was to inform the reader about Shugendo doctrine or practice, then it should be considered a failure. The only chapter in the *Robe of Leaves* that relates to actual Shugendo practice in Gyōchi's time is chapter 18, entitled "A Brief Account Amidst the Mountains" (*Buchū ryakki* 峰中略記). Even in this section, Gyōchi intersperses basic information on the stations along the Okugake with over thirty-five poems from imperial anthologies.³⁶

Conclusion

The modern historical view and sectarian identity of many Japanese religious groups was influenced by developments in the Edo period, and thus is relatively recent. Sectarian writers have played an important role in this reconstruction of the past, and Shugendo is no exception. Though we cannot tell how influential the *Robe of Leaves* was in shaping the perception of the tradition as a form of Buddhism that dates to the Nara period, the text's contents and tone lead us to the following conclusion. Judging from Gyōchi's efforts to defend Shugendo against perceptions of heterodoxy and to establish it as a tradition sitting squarely within Buddhism, it is safe to say that for centuries it was not perceived as such. Furthermore, by the early modern period, writers from within the tradition display a clear sense of belonging to a specific tradition with a lineage, rituals, practices, attire, and organization.

Finally, we return to the widespread pronouncement of Shugendo in the Edo period as being in decline, reduced to a "formalized," pale image of its past glory of austere practice. Gyōchi himself, in chapter 16 entitled "competitions of power" (*genkurabe* 験競), laments the absence of powerful practitioners in his times.³⁷ He cites older displays of ability—walking on coals using the *kashō zanmai* 火生三妹

in Shugendo circles, especially the inner chapters (*neipian* 内篇) and their advice on entering the mountains. For instance, the second fascicle, section 23 of the *Shugen koji benran* by Nichiei 日榮 (c. 1730) entitled "Kuji" 九字, quotes from chapter 42 of the inner chapters on spells used in the mountains (SSH 3: 563a). The late-Muromachi *En no gyōja honki* also contains two well-known lines on entering the mountains from the same text (*En no gyōja honki*, 63).

36. These include the Heian-period *Shūi wakashū*, *Shoku shūi wakashū*, *Shin senzai wakashū*, and *Kinyō wakashū*, and the Kamakura-period *Shin shūi wakashū*, *Shoku senzai wakashū*, *Fūga wakashū*, *Fuboku wakashō*, *Shoku gosen wakashū*, *Gyokuyō wakashū*, and *Senzai wakashū*.

37. In this chapter Gyōchi refers to a story from the *Kokon chomonjū* involving the ascetics Jōzō 淨藏 and Shūnyū 修入, wherein the former challenged the latter to move a rock that he had bound to the ground with his powers (GORAI 1975, 125–26).

(a meditative state centered on Fudō Myōō 不動明王 that gave the *yamabushi* the power to control heat and fire), climbing a ladder of swords, or standing in boiling water—as gradually disappearing by the nineteenth century. Judging from similar reevaluations of periods of alleged decline in practice (such as the older schools of Buddhism in the Kamakura period), historians are wary of such normative judgments. For instance, the decline in public displays of power does not necessarily reflect a commensurate neglect of practice. The need for displays of power as a way of attracting clients or eliminating competition from other religious specialists in all probability gave way to new structures of healer-client relationships as Japanese society itself changed. As long as *yamabushi* led an itinerant life, they needed to establish their credentials as healers to a new clientele as they wandered from village to village. Once they became settled in a certain place, the need for such displays lessened. Further research into Shugendo of the Edo period and its placement within broader historical transformations, is necessary before we pronounce its decline. Whether it fits our narrative or not, the fact remains that the early modern period saw the prolific production of Shugendo literature as representatives of the tradition sought to codify and define it for their age.

APPENDIX. *Robe of Leaves* chapter titles.

VOLUME 1	VOLUME 2
En no Kimi 役君	Token 頭巾
Ozunu 小角	Kitokin 折頭巾
Zokushū 族種	Suzukake Koromo 鈴懸衣
Kugome no Iwashashi 久米岩橋	Yuigesa 結袈裟
Karakuni no Muraji no Yokoshima 公足の譏	Irataka Juzu 伊良太加数珠
Ryōiki En no Kimiden 靈異記役君伝	Horagai 法螺貝
Kujaku Myōō Juhō 孔雀明王咒法	Ono, Oi 斧, 笈
Gohyakko 五百虎	Enkun no Suzu 役君の鈴
Yamabushi 山伏	Rigen Daishi no Shakujō 理源大師の錫杖
Shugen, tsukeru Jugen 修験、附咒験	Ōmine Engi 大峰縁起
Ubasoku 優婆塞	Kinpusen Haishōzu 金峰山拝所図
Kyakusō 客僧	Kansei Seishō 寛政聖詔
Somikakuda 曾美加久堂	Dainihonshi Enkōden 大日本史役公伝
Uhatsu Teihatsu 有髮剃髮	En no Atae 役直
Mitake Sōjin 御獄精進	
Genkurabe 験競	
Ozasa no Ishibumi 小篠の碑	
Buchū Ryakki 峰中略記	

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- SSH *Shugendō shōso* 修験道章疏. 3 vols. Ed. Miyake Hitoshi 宮家 準. Tokyo: Kokusho, 2000.

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- Darani jikkō* 陀羅尼集經. Trans. Atikūta (c. 652). T 901, 18.
- Engishiki jinmyōchō* 延喜式神名帳. By Fujiwara no Tokihira 藤原時平 (871–909) and Fujiwara no Tadahira 藤原忠平 (880–949). In *Shintei zōho kokushi taikai* 新訂増補国史大系, vol. 26. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1964–1967.
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