

Mountains and Hells: Religious Geography in Japanese *mandara* Paintings

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In the middle of the Heian period (eleventh century), a monk named Enkō was practising austerities on the sacred mountain of Tateyama in the province of Etchū. At the hour of the cow, before daybreak, he found himself on the high plain of Murodō, which is ringed by snowy peaks, even in summer. He entered the desolate region of volcanic geysers and walked among its pools of boiling mud and its bottomless icy ponds, in a grey desert cut by foul-smelling rivulets ferrying uncanny liquids discoloured by minerals, all of it wrapped in sulphurous fumes and lit up by pillars of darting fire. Even before the Law of the Buddha came to Japan, it had been rumoured that this mountain concealed a gateway to the world of the dead. The intrepid monk Enkō knew that he was in a region of hell where the dead suffer for their sins. He was prepared to hear their mournful wails from below the hissing and bubbling pits, but when suddenly a beautiful woman stood before him, he was struck dumb with terror. Such fair disguise could only hide a particularly evil spirit, maybe even one of these abominable *rākṣasī* demons. But the woman was weeping bitterly, and spoke to him,

I am from Kyoto, my parents still live in Nichi no Tōin ward near Seventh Avenue. During my lifetime, I did nothing to improve my karma, and so now I have to suffer in this hell. Only once or twice in my life did I participate in the devotions practised by the association venerating the Bodhisattva Jizō at Gidarin Temple. For that reason, Jizō now comes regularly into hell to suffer tortures in my stead [—therefore I can escape and come to appeal to you]. Please, I want you to go and tell all this to my family. For whatever they can do to improve my karma and save me from hell, I shall be eternally grateful!

* This article was read by the author at various gatherings, among them the 1990 SBS seminar on “Japanese Religion on the Ground”, held at Aarhus University in September of that year. Since it was not possible for the author to revise the typescript before her sad passing barely a year later (see our Obituary in Vol. 4, pp. 3–11), we are publishing it now as a modest contribution to the various efforts now under way to make as much as possible of her unpublished work available to the audience for which it was intended. The typescript has been edited slightly, mainly in order to bring the conventions used in line with those of this Journal. (1A)

After these words, suddenly, she vanished.

The Tateyama mountains are many days on foot to the northwest of Kyoto, but Enkō went and found the house in Nishi no Tōin. When the family heard the sad tale, they wept and immediately commissioned a statue of the Bodhisattva Jizō, sponsored the writing of three copies of the *Lotus Sūtra*, and offered all this for the benefit of their daughter in a soul mass (*kuyō*).¹

Stories of this kind must have been very popular in the late Heian period, since we find them in several collections of miraculous tales.² They always involve a woman suffering in the Tateyama hells, who manifests herself and appeals for help to a mountain ascetic during the time that the Bodhisattva Jizō—in earlier tales it is Kannon—undergoes punishment in her stead.³ The Bodhisattva does that because of some minute practice of piety performed by the soul during an otherwise sinful life. The ascetic then finds the address which she invariably provides, and the family of the deceased sponsors copies of the *Lotus Sūtra*, has statues made, and holds soul masses, the merit of which actions benefits the poor sinner. The happy end is often couched in terms of a dream in which the saved woman announces that she can now ascend to the Trāyatrimśa Heaven (Tōriten) or, in the later legends, to the Pure Land (Jōdo) of the Buddha Amida.

The sacrality of mountains and the Japanese brand of “mountain religion” (*sangaku shūkyō*) have been extensively studied. Various Japanese scholars have established categories such as the archaic perception of the awe-inspiring wilderness of mountains inhabited by gods (*yama no kami*) as opposed to the settled “human space” of the agricultural plains; or, the mountain as the provider of water (*mikumari*), fertility and, hence, good harvests; or, the mountain as the destination of the soul after death and the entrance to the netherworld, etc.⁴ Without going into all these theories, let us note that, in the case of most mountains, several such categories overlap. I would like to focus on the one relevant to our topic, the perception of mountains as the realm of death, the “other world” (*takai*), symbolized by the hell valleys (*jigoku dani*) on the high plains or in ravines, and in the paradises at the summits.

Tateyama is a particularly rich example of this type since it combines all the major features of a “hell mountain”. There is, firstly, the physical landscape: at its centre lies the high plain of Murodō with a large region of vol-

¹ *Konjaku monogatari* 17.7, in: *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, Vol. 24, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965, pp. 541–2.

² *Konjaku monogatari* 14.7, 14.8, pp. 287–92; *Honchō Hokke genki* C.24, in: *Nihon shisō taikei*, Vol. 9, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980, pp. 208–10, 565–6.

³ On the Buddhist belief in vicarious suffering, see Hubert Durt, “Daijuku”, in: *Hōbōgirin: Dictionnaire encyclopédique d’après les sources chinoises et japonaises*, Vol. VII, Paris and Tokyo [in press].

⁴ See Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow. A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1975, pp. 79–84; Ichirō Hori, *Folk Religion in Japan*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968, Chapter IV.

canic activity—which is where Enkō met the woman from Kyoto. Secondly, the belief that this volcanic wasteland of Tateyama belonged to the “other world” of the dead probably goes back to pre-Buddhist times. Thirdly, early on, this wasteland was identified with the Buddhist hells. In the eleventh century, the author of the *Honchō Hokke genki* identified one of the peaks (Bessan) above the Tateyama hells as the Peak of the Indian god, Indra (Taishakudake), and adds: “This is the place where Indra assembles his officials of the netherworld (*minkan*), who decide the fate of all beings depending on their good or bad deeds ...” Then he reports what for him, in 1040 C.E., was already an ancient saying: “Anyone in the land of Japan who has committed sins will fall into the Tateyama hells.”⁵

The early Buddhist legends of Tateyama feature the god Indra as the judge of the dead (possibly under the influence of the Korean cults), the Bodhisattva Kannon as the saviour from the tortures of hell, the *Lotus Sūtra* as the sacred text to be offered for redemption of the souls, and Indra’s Heaven of the Thirty-three (Trāyatrimśa) as the paradise to which the souls ascend. This pattern changes with the propagation of Pure Land Buddhism and the cult of the Bodhisattva Jizō in the late Heian period (eleventh–twelfth century). The court of the netherworld judge Yama (Emma-ō) replaces Indra. Jizō becomes the saviour from hell, and another peak of the range, the Jōdosan, is identified with the Pure Land (Jōdo) paradise whence the Buddha Amida descends with his retinue of twenty-five Bodhisattvas to welcome the saved souls and waft them to the Western Paradise.

The fourth feature of Tateyama is its mountain ascetics (*shugensha*)⁶ who propagated the cult throughout the Middle Ages and turned it into a major pilgrimage. The region of Etchū was very poor, and snowbound during the long winters. From the tenth month until the fifth month of the following year, the local practitioners went on far-ranging tours to sell their products, mainly hemp cloth, used for graveclothes (*kyō katabira*), medicinal herbs, sacred texts, and talismans. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they also carried paintings of Tateyama with them and preached the cult by staging “pictorial explanations” (*etoki*) of these scrolls and invited their audiences on a pilgrimage to Tateyama. There the pilgrims would be able to participate in the two kinds of ritual represented in the pictures: those designed to save their ancestors from the hells in which they were suffering (“Feeding the Hungry Ghosts”, *Daise gaki hōyō*,⁷ and “Offerings to the Bowl of Blood”, *Ketsubonkyō kuyō*), and those by which they could improve their own fate after death by performing [penance] in advance” (*gyakashu*), devotions to

⁵ *Honchō Hokke genki* C.24, pp. 209, 565.

⁶ See G. Renondeau, “Le *Shugendō*: Histoire, doctrine et rites des anachorètes dits *yamabushi*”, *Cahiers de la Société asiatique*, Vol. XVIII, Paris, 1965, pp. 1–150.

⁷ For information on the rites for the hungry ghosts, see the contribution by Charles Orzech to *The Esoteric Buddhist Tradition*, ed. H. H. Sørensen, Copenhagen and Aarhus: SBS, 1993. [—Ed.]

saviour gods, and propitiation of their future tormentors in hell (*Nunohashi Daikanjōe*).

Everywhere in Japan the Tateyama ascetics had outposts (*dannaba*) where they staged these performances and deposited their sacred merchandise. On their yearly visits to all these villages and towns, they collected the money for the cloth or the remedies used since their last passage and replenished the stock. This system was so successful that the budding pharmaceutical industry of Toyama (near Tateyama) adopted it for its sales. Older Japanese still remember the yearly passage of the Toyama drug pedlars (*baiyaku gyōshōnin*), who replenished the household's medicine chest deposited earlier and accepted pay only for what had been used since their last passing. They had no beautifully painted scrolls of Tateyama for the entertainment of their clients, but they distributed coloured prints of the sacred mountain together with their merchandise.⁸

The fifth and most fascinating aspect of the Tateyama cult is the painted scrolls which the monks used for the grass root propagation of their faith and as advertisements for the pilgrimage (which provided their livelihood during the summer months). The name of these pictures, Tateyama *mandara*, places them in a category of Japanese landscape paintings which at first sight do not have the slightest resemblance to the Indian, Tibetan or Chinese symbolic configurations designated by the Sanskrit term, *maṇḍala* (of which *mandara* is the Japanese transcription).

A short digression will be in order, to comment on the connection between these two types and on the specific character of Japanese *mandara* paintings. A *maṇḍala* is, first of all, a circle. In the classic sense, it is, as we all know, a concentric configuration of the universe, expressed in symbols or personified in deities, arranged to show the position of each force or deity in the universe and in relation to all the others.⁹ The most famous examples in Japan are the Womb and Thunderbolt *maṇḍala* (*Taizōkai* and *Kongōkai*) of esoteric Buddhism. This school of Buddhism, which came to Japan in the ninth century, lent a deeper meaning and a framework of visual expression to the Japanese perception of sacred mountains. I will spare the reader the complexities of the esoteric teachings about the phenomenal and the numinous worlds, their expression in ritual, and the ultimate identity of the natural mountainscape with the “mindscape” of transcendental realms.¹⁰

⁸ Today the city of Toyama is a centre of the Japanese pharmaceutical industry. The economic aspects of the Tateyama cult have been studied by Niwa Yūjo, “Tateyama shinkō to kanjin” [The Tateyama Cult and its Fund-raising System], in: Takase Shigeo (ed.), *Hakusan, Tateyama to Hokuriku shugendō* Tokyo, 1977, pp. 235–62.

⁹ See Haruki Kageyama, *The Arts of Shintō*, tr. Christine Guth, Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1973, p. 23.

¹⁰ These theories are explained by the creator of the useful term, “mindscape”, Allan G. Grapard, in: “Nature and Culture in Japan”, p. 24. [Ed. note: We have been unable to locate this item; see also footnote 12] Carmen Blacker has described an initiatory pilgrimage to Mount Haguro through the “Ten Realms of Existence”, see *The Catalpa Bow*, pp. 208–34.

For our purpose it is sufficient to keep in mind that the esoteric rituals of the Tendai or Shingon variety practised by the mountain priests, led them to an identification of the Buddhist realms of the mind with the natural site of their religious practice. The “pure” secluded scenery of the mountain became metaphysical space. This double vision led to one of the most remarkable phenomena of medieval Japanese religion, which Allan Grapard has called the “mandalization of space”.¹¹ In Shingon Buddhism, the Womb and the Thunderbolt *maṇḍala* were projected onto the mountain areas of Kumano and of Yoshino respectively, like enormous slides projected by the sun onto the physical geography of the mountains.¹² This double vision is also the reason why, in the Japanese mountain cults, *mandara* paintings of the divinities of a particular site often include depictions of the shrine buildings or even the whole natural landscape of the site. In the case of Tateyama and of many other mountains, we see the same phenomenon on a more popular level. Here it is not a pre-existing abstract *maṇḍala* that is projected onto the mountainscape, but the otherworldly realms of the hells and paradises of popular Buddhism. Seen through the eyes of the enlightened holy man, the rust-coloured water of a pond in the volcanic wasteland became the putrid blood of the infernal lake where beings suffer the unfortunate consequences of their incarnation as women, the racing spurts of volcanic fire became the flaming tumbrel on which the condemned are carted to their tortures, and from the serene Peak of the Pure Land he saw the Buddha Amida descend with Kannon at his side, proffering the lotus seat to the suffering soul. It is this enlightened vision of both this and the other world combined which the Tateyama *mandara* show. As far as I know, only the Tateyama cult developed a *mandara* tradition which depicts these otherworldly realms of suffering or bliss—as they were known from popular iconography—by painting them into the natural scenery of the mountain, side by side with the landmarks visible to profane eyes.¹³

It is impossible here to go into all the details of the scenes depicted on the Tateyama *mandara*.¹⁴ Suffice it to enumerate and comment briefly on

¹¹ Allan G. Grapard, “Flying Mountains and Walkers of Emptiness: Toward a Definition of Sacred Space in Japanese Religions”, *History of Religions*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1982), p. 207.

¹² Grapard, “Nature and Culture in Japan”, p. 254 [*Ed. note*: See footnote 10]; see also Renondeau, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–11.

¹³ Mount Kasuga also has a Pure Land and a Valley of Hell, but the kasuga *mandara* are of a different type. They depict the shrine deities, either arranged in a hierarchy or floating in space above the scenery of the shrine, cf. Haruki Kageyama, *op. cit.*, p. 92. A certain type of Kumano *mandara* depicts the transcendental realms of the “Ten Existences” (*jikkaizu*) and marks the different shrines of the area only by painting their red *torii* gates into the supernatural scenery, cf. Hayashi Masahiko, *Nihon to etoki—shiryō to kenkyū*, Tokyo: Miyai Shoten, 1982, plate 3.

¹⁴ The most intelligent of the numerous Japanese studies on the Tateyama *mandara* is the one by Hayashi Masahiko (see preceding note), pp. 202–59. Hayashi has also published an update of this 1982 study and a transcript of the *etoki* performance of one of the last *shugensha* priests, Saeki Yukinaga (1909–87), in: Hayashi Masahiko *et al.* (eds.), *Etoki—shiryō to kenkyū*, Tokyo: Miyai Shoten, 1989, pp. 327–42

the five main topics which the itinerant monks, standing with their pointing sticks in front of the scrolls, explained to their audiences in the Muromachi and Edo periods (fifteenth to nineteenth century).

1. *The “Opening Legend” (kaisan engi)*

The *mandara* not only disregards frontiers between the worlds but also distances in time. Two scenes show the meeting between the first holy man and the Tateyama mountain god who invited the Buddhist ascetics into his territory (legend dated 720 C.E.). In the case of Tateyama, the “opening legend” is the tale of a conversion (*hosshin gata*) involving an already buddhisized mountain god (Amida gongen) and a young hunter—a kind of St. Hubertus legend. The hunter sees the bear he has shot with his arrow turn into a golden Amida Buddha transfixed by the same arrow.¹⁵ This founder of the Tateyama cult, Saeki Ariyori, who became a saint, Jikō shōnin, is also venerated as the ancestor of most of the *shugensha* priestly families in the village at the foot of the mountain, where even today almost everybody is called Saeki.

2. *The Pilgrim’s Map*

A second topic was the geographic description of other legendary sites on the mountain. At this bridgehead the Sōtō Zen patriarch Dōgen meditated, in that rock cave the Shingon patriarch Kōbō Daishi performed a fire ritual (*goma*), these two cedars are really two pretty young nuns who were turned into trees for having encroached upon the forbidden mountain. This is the roaring cascade, Shōmyō no taki, in the sounds of which the Pure Land patriarch Honen discerned the recitation of the Buddha’s name (*shōmyō*).

3. *The Valley of Hell*

Then the monk would take his listeners on a tour of hell. Pointing to the volcanic *jigoku dani*, he would explain one by one the gruesome features already familiar to his audience from the very popular “Tableaux of the Ten Realms of Existence” (*jikkaizu*) unrolled and explained in the temples during the feast of the dead (*o-bon*) in mid-summer. There was the tribunal of Yama, with mirror and scales to determine the karmic burden of the sinners, the Sword Mountain (Tsurugi-dake), which lechers are condemned to climb and which tears their flesh as they try to reach the ever-retreating mirage of a beautiful woman. There is the Blood Lake and you can see monks throwing sacred texts into it in order to free the drowning women (in the rite of the *Ketsubonkyō kuyō*). Here you see the innocent souls of dead children clinging to the robes of the Bodhisattva Jizō at the dry riverbed of Sai no kawara and the desperate hungry ghosts trying to eat rice that merely bursts into flames in their mouths. There is the man tortured by two loathsome snakes

¹⁵ These legends are beautifully analysed in: Carmen Blacker, “The Figure of *yama-no-kami* in the ‘Opening Legends’ of Holy Mountains (*Kaisan engi*)”, unpublished MS.

who are the wife and the mistress he deceived, one with the other.¹⁶ One unique feature in the Tateyama hells seems to be a local legend about a wicked monk: among the sinners being transformed into animals, we see a pompous looking cow clad in the flowing robes of an ecclesiastical dignitary.

One important actor in the infernal drama is missing in the Valley of Hell; the old hag (*datsueba*) who usually sits at a river marking the entrance to the netherworld (Sanzu no kawa) and rips the clothes off the newly arriving dead. She is painted at an unlikely place outside the sacred mountain, sitting next to a temple in the village down below. Her story leads us to the fourth topic of the *etoki* performance.

4. *The Rite for the Salvation of Women*

The mountain was off limits to women until 1869, the beginning of the Meiji era. They could approach only as far as the village, where the temples of the *shugensha* priests developed into a vast pilgrimage centre for them. In the Edo period (1615–1867), there were thirty-three temple inns, each for the pilgrims of two of the sixty-six provinces of Japan. The main sanctuary was the “Temple of the Old Women” (Ubadō), which housed a trinity of statues of the Uba, or Onba, as she was locally called, surrounded by sixty-six smaller statues, one Onba for each province. A five-minute walk away, across a river, was the Enmadō, the Temple of Yama, where three huge netherworld judges were enthroned. On the *mandara* one can see a procession winding its way from one temple to the other, on a path covered with white cloth. This is the rite called, “The Great Ordination Assembly of the Cloth-covered Bridge” (*Nunohashi daikanjōe*), celebrated each autumn on the equinox day (*higan*), the day of the “Other Shore” beyond the stream of transmigration.

Here again, the natural landscape is complemented by a supernatural scenery, because the women we see in the procession, clad in the white mortuary garments of the pilgrim, enact in anticipation their future journey after death. First they confess their sins in front of the Tribunal of Yama in the Enmadō. Then they wend their way across the river that marks the entrance to the netherworld (Sanzu no kawa), careful not to harbour any evil thought that would hurl them down into the foul waters. Beyond the river, as everyone knew, sits the frightful old harridan who will rip off your clothes or even your skin and push you onward, naked, into the frightening courts of judgement. But the veneration in her Tateyama temple sought to flatter the old shrew into being as benign as represented there. Inside the Ubadō she is enthroned as a smiling trinity of compassionate mothers, saviour goddesses, whom the pilgrims propitiated with long prayer recitations in the dark interior of the hall. After half a day of deafening

¹⁶ A comprehensive study of the early tradition (eighth to thirteenth cent.) of Japanese hell paintings is to be found in the following thesis: Erika Peschard-Erlh, “Les mondes infernaux et les peintures des six voies dans le Japon bouddhique”, Ph.D. thesis, University of Paris III, 1989.

psalms, the priests would throw open the doors toward the mountain and the dazed pilgrim would behold the Summit of the Pure Land in a blinding light.

5. *The Western Paradise of the Buddha Amida*

This was the fifth topic of the pictorial explanation, the descent of Amida and his twenty-five Bodhisattvas, also well known to pilgrims because a painting of “Amida coming to welcome [the soul]” (*Amida raigōzu*) was on hand in every Amidist household, to be unrolled in front of the eyes of a dying believer in order to instill in the departing soul saving devotion towards the Buddha of the Western Paradise.¹⁷

With this beatific vision I should conclude, but let us return briefly to the strange, ambivalent figure of the Onba and the terrifying double who sits outside her temple.¹⁸ Her devotees expected four benefits from her: health and good luck in this life were benefits which accrued from every ritual of purification. This is an indication of the Onba’s role as an agricultural fertility god (*Ta no kami*) and her Shintōist identification with three heavenly mothers who brought mankind the seeds of plants for food and cloth.¹⁹ Secondly, the women expected to be spared the ignominy of being stripped of their clothes after death. This clearly identifies the Onba as the infernal hag and ripper of clothes (*datsueba*). The hemp cloth spread over the bridge for the procession had been produced in the region and was donated by the women pilgrims. After the rite, this cloth was washed, inscribed with the *Lotus Sūtra*, and resold to the pilgrims as graveclothes (*kyō katabira*), so that they would appear in front of the Datsueba in clothes they had already donated to her in Tateyama—a commendable way of selling one’s product twice and giving peace of soul into the bargain.

The women also counted on the Onba’s help to preserve them from the Hell of the Blood Pond (*chi no ike jigoku*). Because of the polluting nature of menstrual blood, all women, and especially those who had died in child-

¹⁷ Besides Hayashi (cf. notes 13, 14), several other articles on the Tateyama *mandara* contain explanations of various features of the paintings not treated by the others, while repeating many facts already known from previous studies: Numa Kenryō, “Tateyama shinkō to Tateyama mandara”, *Bukkyō geijutsu*, No. 68 (1968), pp. 31–49; Takase Shigeo, *Kodai sangaku shinkō no shiteki kōsatsu*, Tokyo 1969, pp. 332–60; Kawaguchi Hisao, “Tateyama mandara to Ubagami shinkō”, *Nihon kaiiki kenkyūsho hōkoku*, No. 5 (1973), pp. 148–78; *idem.*, “Hakusan, Tateyama mandara ni tsuite”, in: Gorai Shigeru (ed.), *Shugendō no bijutsu, geinō, bungaku*, Vol. I, Tokyo: Meicho Shuppan, 1980, pp. 491–528; Toyamaken Kyōdo shikai, “Tateyama mandara no gaisetsu”, in: *Kyōdo no bunka*, 1982, pp. 22–37; and the studies by Takase Shigeo, Gorai Shigeru and Hirose Makato in: Takase Shigeo (ed.), *Hakusan, Tateyama to Hokuriku shugendō*, q.v. (note 8). This book also contains the above mentioned material by Saeki Yukinaga, one of the last *etoki* performers in Tateyama (cf. note 14).

¹⁸ I have prepared a more detailed study on the old woman who rips off the clothes of the dead, the *datsueba*, to be published in the *Hōbōgin*, Fasc. VII (forthcoming, 1994).

¹⁹ According to the local shrine legend, *Etchū Tateyama ryakuengi*, reprod. in: Hayashi Masahiko, *Nihon no etoki* (cf. note 13), pp. 228–9.

birth, were destined for this torture. To escape from it, one could sponsor the copying of *The Sūtra of the Blood Bowl (Ketsubonkyō)*²⁰ and participate in the above mentioned “Ordination of the Cloth-covered Bridge”. Having completed these meritorious deeds, the women receive a potent talisman which certified that thereby “this woman has been transformed into a man” (*henjo tendan*)! To assume that this advantageous metamorphosis opened the mountain to these “ordained” women, would be grossly underestimating the staunch misogyny of the monk ascetics. What it did mean was that the frightful Onba would preserve these women from falling into the nauseous pool of blood and that she would open for them a direct path to the Pure Land paradise. This path is normally closed to women. The Pure Land is accessible only after an incarnation as a man and an ordained monk. The meaning of the term “ordination” (*kanjō*, Skt. *abhiṣeka*) in the name of the rite is precisely that the woman pilgrim is spiritually endowed with both these requirements for entering the Pure Land.

The Onba deity of Tateyama is like an onion which Japanese scholars have peeled and peeled, revealing more and more of the different aspects of her nature: the archaic mountain ogress (Yama uba), a Shintō trinity of bountiful mothers, the agricultural fertility god (Ta no kami), the gods of the crossroads (Seki no kami, Dōsojin), the old Baba of the infernal River (Shōzuka no baba) who cures childhood diseases,²¹ the Lady Ripper (Datsueba) who takes away your clothes, etc. I wonder if, at the core of the onion, we might not find the ancient Lady of the Mountain of Tateyama (Yama no kami). After having surrendered her wild domain to Amida Gongen and his Buddhist ascetics, she was tamed and subdued enough to forget her archaic jealousy of women. Relegated from the mountain of death to the frontier of the human world, she became the guide of women through the dark passageways of the netherworld to the Western Paradise.

If we compare her fate to that of a Germanic nature goddess in the same eighth century (the date of the Tateyama “opening legend”), when missionary monks from Ireland were converting the Saxons to Christianity, I think she can consider herself lucky. The Christian monks would have built a chapel to St. Mary, Our Lady of Tateyama, and that would have been the end of the heathen ogress. In the vast Buddhist scheme of things, there was space for the indigenous gods. They might receive new names, new faces, and new tasks, but their ancient numinous essence remained in people’s consciousness. In the case of the Tateyama goddess, this essence was the awe-inspiring *numen* of the Other World of the mountain which Buddhism respected as sacred space and preserved for another thousand years.

²⁰ On the history of this text, see Michel Soymié, “Ketsubonkyō no shiryōteki kenkyū”, *Dōkyō kenkyū*, Vol. 1 (1965), pp. 109–66; on its role in Japan, see Takemi Momoko, “Menstruation Sūtra Belief in Japan”, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 10 (1983), pp. 229–46.

²¹ See the notes on these popular deities by the pioneer of Japanese ethnology, Yanagida Kunio, in his collected works, *Yanagida Kunio shū*, Vol. 9, re-issued Tokyo, 1973, pp. 164–6.

In March 1869 the Tateyama pilgrimage fell victim to the disastrous persecution of Buddhism (*hai-Butsu ki-Shaku*) which raged for three years at the beginning of the Meiji era. The cult was forbidden, the temples razed, most of the statues destroyed, and the priests defrocked and deprived of their livelihood. One Saeki family maintained a tenuous link with the past by agreeing to act as the Shintō priests (*guji*) of the new, artificial shrine system of this pseudo-ancient Japanese religion. Most of the others today commute to the pharmaceutical factories in Toyama City. Tateyama is now a booming ski resort area with a cable railway, tourist buses, lodges, and ski lifts. In the buses a taped voice informs you about the purely this-worldly scenery and you can even see it on a television screen mounted next to the driver's seat—no need to look out of the window.

Above these glorious modern achievements, on the high summit of Oyama, there is a little shrine which, even today, can only be reached after an arduous climb. The Shintō priest who greets the persevering climbers has reached the peak by helicopter, but he lives there all summer like his ancestor, Saeki Ariyori.

List of Characters

Amida	阿彌陀
Amida gongen	阿彌陀權現
Amida raigōzu	阿彌陀來迎圖
<i>baiyaku gyōshōnin</i>	売薬行商人
Bessan	別山
<i>chi no ike jigoku</i>	血の池地獄
<i>daijuku</i>	代受苦
<i>daisei gaki hōyō</i>	代施餓鬼法要
<i>dannaba</i>	檀那場
<i>datsueba</i>	奪衣婆
Dōgen	道元
Dōsojin (Seki no kami)	道祖神
Edo	江戸
Enkō	延好
Emma-ō	閻魔王
Emmadō	閻魔堂
Etchū	越中

<i>Etchū Tateyama ryakuengi</i>	越中立山略縁起
<i>etoki</i>	絵解き
Gidarin Temple	祇陀林寺
<i>goma</i>	護摩
<i>guji</i>	宮司
<i>gyakushu</i>	逆修
Haguro, Mount	羽黒
<i>hai-Butsu ki-Shaku</i>	排佛毀釋
Heian	平安
<i>henjo tendan</i>	變女轉男
<i>higan</i>	彼岸
Honchō Hokke <i>genki</i>	本朝法華驗記
Hōnen	法然
<i>hosshin gata</i>	發心型
<i>jigoku dani</i>	地獄谷
<i>jikkai</i>	十界
<i>jikkaizu</i>	十界圓
Jikō shōnin (Saeki Ariyori, q.v.)	慈興上人
Jizō (-bosatsu)	地藏 [菩薩]
Jōdo	淨土
Jōdosan	淨土山
<i>kaisen engi</i>	開山縁起
<i>kanjō</i>	灌頂
Kannon	觀音
<i>Ketsubonkyō</i>	血盆經
<i>Ketsubonkyō kuyō</i>	血盆經供養
Kōbō Daishi	弘法大師
<i>Kongōkai</i>	金剛界
<i>Konjaku monogatari</i>	今昔物語
Kumano	熊野
<i>kuyō</i>	供養
<i>kyō katabira</i>	經帷子

<i>mandara mikumari</i>		曼荼羅水分	
<i>minkan</i>		冥官	
Murodō		室堂	
Muromachi		室町	
Nishi no Tōnin		西の洞院	
<i>Nunohashi daikanjōe</i>		布橋大灌頂會	
<i>o-bon</i>		お盆	
Onba		陰婆	
Oyama		雄山	
<i>rākṣasī (rasatsu nyo)</i>		羅刹女	
Saeki Ariyori		佐伯有頼	
Sai no kawara		賽の河原	
<i>sangaku shūkyō</i>		山岳宗教	
Sanzu no kawa		三途の川	
Seki no kami (cf. Dōshōjin)		関の神	
Shingon		眞言	
Shintō		神道	
<i>shōmyō</i>		称名	
Shōmyō no taki		称名の滝	
Shōmyō no baba		葬頭河の婆	
<i>shugensha</i>		修験者	
Ta no kami		田の神	
Taishakudake		帝釋岳	
Taizōkai	胎藏界	Uba (cf. Onba)	姥
taki	他界	Ubadō	姥堂
Tateyama	立山	<i>yama no kami</i>	山の神
Tateyama <i>mandara</i>	立山曼荼羅	Yama uba	山姥
Tendai	天台	Yoshino	吉野
<i>torii</i>	鳥居		
Tōriten	[?] 利天		
Toyama	富山		
Tsurugi-dake	劍岳		