Do *Kami* Ever Overlook Pollution?
Honji suijaku and the Problem of Death Defilement [1]

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Les XII*e et* XIII*e siècles ont vu la diffusion de la pensée du* honji suijaku*, qui maintient que les buddhas et les bodhisattvas s'étaient manifestés sous des formes appropriées au milieu local en tant que* kami *japonais. L'idée de considérer les* kami *comme des avatars des divinités bouddhiques a-t-elle mené à un affaiblissement dans la rigueur de l'action menée contre la pollution* (imi 忌み)*, et en particulier la pollution de la mort, traditionnellement observée dans le culte des sanctuaires? Telle est l'impression que l'on pourrait retirer des contes didactiques de l'époque Kamakura (1185-1333) qui présentent de manière récurrente le cas d'un moine qui encourt inopinément la souillure de la mort mais à qui on permet toujours de s'approcher du sanctuaire et d'en vénérer le* kami. *D'autres sources, cependant, suggèrent que l'on a continué à observer la prohibition concernant la pollution de la mort, non seulement dans les sanctuaires des* kami, *mais également dans bien des temples bouddhiques; et que l'on a adapté les idées du* honji suijaku *de façons diverses, soit pour affirmer la nécessité de continuer à observer les tabous sur la pollution, soit pour suggérer qu'ils sont inapplicables du point de vue sotériologique. Les histoires de* kami *ne tenant pas compte de la pollution, elles indiquent moins un relâchement des prohibitions concernant la souillure qu'une concurrence de définitions de la pureté soutenues par différentes écoles bouddhiques. Les clercs qui occupaient des postes officiels, responsables des prières visant à protéger la nation et les rites des* kami *durent maintenir la pureté rituelle, alors que les moines reclus ou ascétiques pratiquant en dehors de l'organisation officielle des temples n'étaient pas liés par de telles restrictions et considéraient que la pureté consistait non pas à éviter la souillure mais à abandonner tout attachement au monde. Les pratiquants de cette dernière tendance pouvaient ainsi avoir affaire à la pollution de la mort et ils en vinrent à se spécialiser dans les rites centrés sur le lit de mort et les rites funéraires.*

A recurring theme in Buddhist didactic literature of Japan's Kamakura period (1185-1333) is that of *kami* intervening to suspend the prohibitions on death defilement that would ordinarily surround their worship, in order to uphold Buddhist

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1. Some of the material in this essay has been taken from my "Dying Breath: Deathbed Rites and Death Pollution in Early Medieval Japan." I gratefully acknowledge Cambridge Scholars Publishing for permission to draw on this material. I also thank Michael Como, my discussant at the 2007 Symposium on Medieval Shintō held at Columbia University, as well as other participants for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

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ethical norms. A frequent topos for such stories is that of the Buddhist monk who unexpectedly comes into contact with death while en route to worship at a shrine. For example, the thirteenth-century tale collection *Shasekishū* 沙石集 of Mujū Dōgyō 無住道曉 (a.k.a. Ichien 一圓, 1226-1312) tells how the monk Jōkan-bō 常觀坊 of Miwa 三輪 in Yamato, on pilgrimage to Yoshino 吉野, presumably to Kinpusen 金峯山, comes upon some children weeping by the roadside. Their mother has died of illness, their father has gone away, and the neighbors "wish to have nothing to do with such nasty, unpleasant business," so there is no one to see to the dead woman's final rites. Moved to pity, Jōkan-bō carries the woman's body to a nearby field and chants *dhāraṇīs* over it — a common method among non-elites of disposing of the body and conducting a funeral.[2] Having thus incurred defilement through contact with death, Jōkan-bō decides he must abort his pilgrimage and return to his home in Miwa. Strangely, however, he finds himself physically unable to move in that direction, which he attributes to the *kami*'s anger at his violation of the ritual purity demanded by shrine worship. To his amazement, he is still able to proceed in the direction of Yoshino. When he nears the shrine, the *kami*, speaking through a medium, welcomes him and says, "I certainly do not abhor what you have done. On the contrary, I respect compassion."[3]

This story exists in several versions, which typically conclude with a short gloss reinterpreting avoidance of death pollution from a Buddhist soteriological perspective. "If only the heart is pure," says one, "the body likewise is not defiled."[4] In another, the *kami* reveals that "taboos are but temporary expedients (*hōben* 方便)", thus subsuming pollution prohibitions within the Buddhist discourse of skillful means, or the notion that buddhas and bodhisattvas accommodate their teaching methods to the receptivity of living beings.[5] All variants of the story take as their premise the unity of "origins and traces" (*honji suijaku* 本地垂迹) the idea that *kami* are the "traces" or local and more accessible manifestations of the universal buddhas and bodhisattvas, who are their hypostases. Thus these narratives also entail a relativizing or transcending of death defilement: because the *kami* in their original ground are really Buddhist holy beings, such tales suggest, the strict avoidances surrounding *kami* worship are not absolute and may at need be set aside in favor of Buddhist ethical values or soteriological goals.

Does this recurring theme in tale literature indeed reflect a weakening of shrine-associated death pollution avoidances as *kami* rites were increasingly subsumed within a Buddhist interpretive frame? Or is it a rhetorical device, and if so, what purpose(s) does it serve? Did *honji suijaku* ideas about *kami* as the local manifesta-

2. Katsuda Itaru, *Shishatachi no chūsei*, 21, 28-31.

3. Shasekishū I: 4, *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (hereafter *NKBT*), 85: 67-68; Robert E. Morrell, *Sand and Pebbles: The Tales of Mujū Ichien*, pp. 81-82.

4. *Shasekishū* I: 4, *NKBT* 85: 69-70; Morrell, *Sand and Pebbles*, pp. 83-84.

5. *Hosshinshū* 發心集 4: 10, in *Hōjōki, Hosshinshū*, ed. Miki Sumito, pp. 194-98. For other versions of the story, see *Hachiman gudōkun* 八幡愚童訓 (*otsu* 乙) 2, *Jisha engi*, *Nihon shisō taikei* (hereafter *NST*) 20: 242-43, and *Shijū hyaku innennshū* 私聚百因縁集 9: 22, *Dai Nihon bukkyō zensho* (hereafter *DNBZ*) no. 831, 92: 211-12.

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tions of buddhas and bodhisattvas in any way affect practices of avoidance or taboo (*imi* 忌) associated with *kami* worship? Pollution or defilement (*kegare* 穢れ) has yet to be fully investigated as a topic in the study of Japanese religion, and yet a greater knowledge of where defilement avoidances were deemed to be binding and where they were not might shed unexpected light on the contours of medieval religious thought and practice.[6] This paper will contribute in a modest way to such inquiry by considering how the prohibitions on death defilement (*shie* 死穢) associated with *kami* shrine worship were appropriated to Buddhist agendas in several narrative accounts from the latter Heian (794-1185) and Kamakura periods. First, however, let us take a brief historical overview of some intersections among Buddhism, *kami* worship, and pollution avoidance.

Buddhism, *kami*, and avoidance of death defilement

In 1027, the courtier Fujiwara no Sanesuke 藤原實資 recorded in his diary an exchange between himself and the chancellor, Fujiwara no Yorimichi 藤原頼通, in which they agreed — inaccurately, as we now know — that pollution was not shunned in India or China but represented a distinctively Japanese concern.[7] Modern scholars, too, once similarly assumed that pollution avoidance, especially of death defilement, was something essentially "Japanese," present before Buddhism's introduction as an innate feature of *kami* worship. Fears about pollution arising from contact with death have often been traced to the myth, found in eighth-century dynastic histories, of the flight of the deity Izanagi 伊邪那岐 from Yomi no kuni 黄泉の國, the land of the dead, and his subsequent act of purification by bathing in a river.[8] However, recent research has shown that no clear linear trajectory exists between Izanagi's simple act of lustration and the detailed codes of avoidance surrounding death and other forms of defilement that appear in the regulations of Heian court protocol and the diaries of court nobles.[9] As Takatori Masao has noted, death avoidance had not always been a feature of court life.[10] The dynastic history *Nihon shoki* 日本書記, for example, criticizes the strict death pollution taboos of the Korean aristocracy. It records that in 642, a Prince Gyōgi 翹岐 of Paekche 百濟, accompanied by his family, made a state visit to the Nara court. While in Japan, his child died, and the

6. Major studies on pollution in medieval Japan include Okada Shigekiyo, *Kodai no imi: Nihonjin no kisō shinkō*, and Yamamoto Kōji, *Kegare to ōharae*. On pollution avoidances among the Heian aristocracy, see also Yamamoto Kōji, "Kizoku shakai ni okeru kegare to chitsujo," and Kanō Shigefumi et al., "Shokue kō: Heian chūki no jōkyō." Jayne Sun Kim, "A History of Filth: Defilement Discourse in Medieval Japan," provides a useful overview of Japanese scholarship on pollution issues in Japan's medieval period.

7. *Shōyūki* 小右記, Manju 4 (1027), 8/25, *Dai Nihon kokiroku* (hereafter *DNK*), part 10, 8: 22.

8. See *Kojiki*, *Norito*, *NKBT* 1: 63-69; Donald L. Philippi, trans., *Kojiki*, 61-70; and also *Nihon shoki* 1, *NKBT* 67: 92-94; W. G. Aston, trans., *Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, 1: 24-27.

9. Mitsuhashi Tadashi, "*Engi shiki* kegare kitei to kegare ishiki," esp. pp. 45-47.

10. *Shintō no seiritsu*, pp. 240-42.

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prince and his wife were so fearful of defilement that they would not attend the funeral. The chronicle notes, "In general, the custom of [persons of] Paekche and Silla is that, when someone has died, even one's father or mother, brother, spouse, or sister, one never looks upon that person again. In such utter lack of affection, how do they differ from birds or beasts?"[11] By the mid-Heian period, however, very similar avoidances had been adopted among Japanese nobles and internalized to such an extent that they must indeed have appeared to be distinctively "Japanese."

Concerns about pollution avoidance played a vital role in state formation. Herman Ooms has traced how the sovereign Tenmu 天武天皇 (r. 673-86), who was instrumental in establishing the *ritsuryō* system, mobilized "purity" as a core value in legitimizing his rule.[12] Tenmu established the Jingikan (神祇官) or Office of Kami Affairs, which oversaw purification and abstention in the rites of the royal cult; commanded persons of pure conduct to take vows as Buddhist monastics and recite sūtras for nation protection; instituted the Great Purification or Ōharae 大祓 as a regularly scheduled event in the court liturgical calendar; and set up the Bureau of Yin and Yang (Onmyōryō 陰陽寮), staffed with diviners, astrologers, and *yin-yang* adepts able to read portents and counter malign influences. All such ritual measures were intended to remove pollution and transgressions that might threaten the court or the realm and served at the same time to establish purity as the ruler's defining attribute. In implementing them, Tenmu incorporated not only features of *kami* worship but also rites and discourses of purity found in Buddhism, Daoism, and other continental sources. Yin-yang exorcistic techniques, especially for warding off illness, and other purificatory rites to appease angry deities and baleful spirits thought to cause disasters had begun to enter Japan from China and the Korean kingdoms well before Tenmu's time, and Tenmu's ritual system both drew upon and reinforced these wider practices.

Court obsession with purity both for protection and legitimation intensified with the move of the capital to Heian-kyō (modern Kyōto). Early Heian ordinances sought to restrain former practices of burial beside homes or on the slopes of nearby hills, where they might pollute shrines sacred to the *kami*. Among the aristocracy, cremations and burials were restricted to the desolate and largely uninhabited areas in the empty fields and foothills outside the city.[13] From the early ninth century, formal codes of pollution avoidance were articulated in connection with court-sponsored *jingi* 神祇 ritual, or "worship of the deities of heaven and earth," crystallizing in the famous 927 *Engi shiki* 延喜式 or *Procedures of the Engi Era* (901-23). The *Engi shiki* stipulates that those who have come into contact with the death of human beings must observe an exorcistic avoidance period of thirty days, counting from the day of the disposal of the body, and refrain during that time from participating in *kami*-related affairs or entering the royal palace. Contact with disease and childbirth, or with the death of domestic animals, entailed shorter avoidance periods.[14] The idea

11. *Nihon shoki* 24, first year in the reign of Kōgyoku (642), 5/22, *NKBT* 68: 239-40.
12. *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan*. See esp. chap. 10 ("Purity"), pp. 253-66.
13. Takatori, *Shintō no seiritsu*, pp. 243-48.
14. Felicia G. Bock, *Engi-Shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era*, pp. 116-17. The *Engi shiki*

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that pollution could be transmitted in a manner similar to infection from the first person to incur defilement (*kō* 甲) through a second (*otsu* 乙), third (*hei* 丙), and even a fourth (*tei* 丁) also appears to date from this time. Formal codes of avoidance probably solidified with the development of the system of the twenty-two court sponsored shrines 二十二社.[15] All such measures were part of an effort to exclude defilement and the dangers it posed, insofar as possible, from the locus of royal authority — the palace, government bureaus, and Heian-kyō itself. How far aristocratic concerns about pollution, and death pollution in particular, may have extended to other social groups and to regions outside the capital remains an open question. In any event, they were by no means a purely "indigenous" matter but were also constituted by diverse elements of imported continental culture.

In addition to their function in protecting and legitimizing rulership, premodern Japanese discourses and practices involving purity and pollution became integral to the definition of both Buddhist institutions and *kami* rites. The role of Buddhism in shaping polarities of purity and pollution is especially complex. In formal Buddhist doctrine, pollution has little place, except, perhaps, as metaphor: an awakened mind is said to be "pure," while a deluded mind is "defiled." Similarly, the realm of a buddha or bodhisattva, being free of delusion and suffering, is called a pure land (*jōdo* 浄土), while a realm inhabited by ordinary deluded beings such as our present, Sahā world, full of greed, hatred, and ignorance, is called a defiled land (*edo* 穢土). In the sphere of ethical and ritual practice, however, monastic Buddhism in particular has its own standards of "pure conduct," such as refraining from killing living beings and abstaining from eating meat or pungent roots, drinking alcohol, and engaging in sexual activity. Early on, such norms were absorbed into and in turn helped shape the practices of abstinence (*imi*) observed before undertaking *kami* rites. Prohibitions framed in Buddhist language against killing animals (*sesshō kindan* 殺生禁斷) or forbidding meat-eating, *sake*-drinking or the taking of life during the six monthly precept days (*rokusainichi* 六齋日), when lay people observe extra rules of discipline, were often adopted as measures to quell or avert disasters attributed to the *kami*'s anger. *Shōjin* 精進 — the Buddhist virtue of unremitting effort in religious discipline — took on the meaning of observing ritual purity.[16] Similar processes of assimilation had occurred in China and the Korean kingdoms, and in Japan, as on the Asian continent, the Buddhist soteriological distinction of "pure" and "impure" was readily assimilated, and gave support, to the more concrete ritual and social dichotomies of pure and defiled, auspicious and inauspicious,

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synthesizes and develops codal regulations found in earlier sources, chiefly from the early Heian period. See Mitsuhashi, "*Engi shiki* kegare kitei to kegare ishiki," pp. 42-47, and Kim, "A History of Filth,"pp. 35-39.

15. On the twenty-two shrines, see Allan G. Grapard, "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology: The Twenty-Two Shrine-Temple Multiplexes of Heian Japan."

16. Okada, *Kodai no imi*, pp. 409-16 (the shift in meaning of *shōjin* appears on 414), and Taira Masayuki, "Sesshō kindan no rekishiteki tenkai."

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found in the specific taboos and interdictions of Confucian, Daoist, and other local religious practices.[17]

Just as Buddhist notions of *shōjin* were incorporated into *kami* worship, so formal avoidances associated with *kami* rites, especially court-centered *jingi* ritual, were adopted in certain Buddhist rites, especially those sponsored by the court, and Buddhist clerics performing rituals for protection of the ruler and the realm found it necessary to observe them.[18] For example, great care was taken to avoid all polluting elements in connection with the Ninnōe 仁王會, or ceremonial lecture on the *Sūtra of Humane Kings*, the only court-sponsored Buddhist ceremony to be accompanied by performance of the Great Purification. Closely linked to the royal cult and its authority, the Ninnōe was held twice annually in the Daigokuden 大極殿 or main ritual hall of the palace for the sake of nation protection, as well as following a new sovereign's accession and at times of perceived national urgency. As a court diarist responsible for recording and transmitting matters of protocol, Sanesuke made repeated note of the exclusion from the Ninnōe performance of monks who had recently taken part in funerals or who were in mourning;[19] persons who had incurred pollution were also prohibited from making offerings.[20] Unanticipated contact with death or other sources of defilement on the part of designated participants routinely caused state-sponsored *jingi* rites to be rescheduled, relocated, or assigned to other officiants; similar strictures were maintained with Buddhist rites sponsored by the court or involving high officials or royal family members. For example, in 1108, the *ajari* Senkaku 宣覺, who was to officiate at the annual Taigen no hō 大元法, an esoteric Buddhist rite for the protection of the realm, was replaced because he was still in mourning for his deceased mother.[21] In 1109, a Buddhist consecration to be held for the royal consort (*chūgū* 中宮) Tokushi 篤子 was cancelled because of contact with death pollution.[22] In 1116, the retired sovereign Shirakawa 白河 cancelled a retreat at Hosshōji 法勝寺, his royal vow temple (*goganji* 御願寺), because of the discovery of a corpse on the grounds of his residence, the

17. Takatori, *Shintō no seiritsu*, pp. 248-53; see also Ooms, *Imperial Politics and Symbolics*, 264-66.

18. On this point, see Yamamoto, *Kegare to ōharae*, pp. 258-60, and Nishiguchi Junko, *Onna no chikara: Kodai no josei to bukkyō*, pp. 53-57.

19. While both involved some restriction of social activity, mourning and death pollution were distinct categories: mourning was incumbent only on family members, whether or not they had had been present at the death or funeral, while pollution could be incurred by anyone who had contact with a dead person (see Kim, "A History of Filth," pp. 89-93). During the mourning period, both the deceased and surviving family members occupied a liminal state, and it was potentially dangerous for outsiders to have contact with them. When the mourning period had concluded, the deceased was deemed to have been definitively reestablished in the afterlife while the family returned to the social world of the living (Okada, *Kodai no imi*, pp. 300-307).

20. See *Shōyūki*, Chōwa 4 (1015), 5/6; Kannin 1 (1017), 10/2; and Kannin 4 (1020), 12/16 (*DNK*, part 10, 4: 20, 243; 5: 263). On the Ninnōe, see for example Taira, "Sesshō kindan," pp. 160-61.

21. *Chūyūki* 中右記, Tennin 1 (1108), 1/8, *Zōho shiryō taisei* (hereafter *ST*), 11: 311. See also the discussion in Nishiguchi, *Onna no chikara*, p. 27.

22. *Denryaku* 殿暦, Tennin 2 (1109), 4/8, *DNK*, part 12, 2: 18.

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Shirakawa *gosho* 白河御所.[23] In 1170, the regent Kujō Kanezane 九条兼實 absented himself from Buddhist rites held at the residence of the retired sovereign because of death pollution incurred under similar circumstances.[24] Many further examples could be adduced.

As Allan Grapard has noted, the twenty-two shrines sponsored by the court were in fact temple-shrine complexes (*jisha* 寺社), incorporating *kami* rites and Buddhist ritual at the same cultic site.[25] As *kami* shrines and Buddhist temples became amalgamated in this way, Buddhist monks needed to be increasingly scrupulous about pollution avoidance in connection with *kami* worship. In 973, Ryōgen 良源, chief abbot (*zasu* 座主) of the great Tendai monastery Enryakuji 延暦寺 on Mt. Hiei, submitted a written apology to the Sannō 山王 protector deity, worshipped at the Hie shrine complex 日吉社 located at the foot of Mt. Hiei. Ryōgen prayed that the deity would lift a curse (*tatari* 祟り) that he, Ryōgen, had incurred by an unintentional defilement of the shrine precincts. After having participated in the funeral of his patron, Fujiwara no Koremasa 藤原伊尹 (924-72), Ryōgen had carefully waited out a thirty-day avoidance period before joining in a seasonal sūtra recitation ceremony; after the funeral, however, before the thirty days had expired, he had left Mt. Hiei due to illness and, while headed for his residence at the foot of the mountain, he had unwittingly passed through the Hie shrine precincts during a period of *kami* rites while he was still in a polluted state. This example shows, not only that ranking Buddhist prelates such as Ryōgen needed to avoid death pollution in connection with the *kami* and their shrines, but also that important Buddhist ceremonies such as the sūtra recitation referred to in this episode had also incorporated avoidance requirements.[26]

Buddhist temples seem increasingly to have adopted defilement prohibitions during the Heian period. *Shōjin* or ritual purification became part of expected preparation for pilgrimage, not only to *kami* shrines, but also to major Buddhist temples. The diary of the courtier Fujiwara no Yorinaga 藤原頼長 (1120-56), for example, refers to his observance of *shōjin* prior to visiting a number of Buddhist sites, including the Konpon Chūdō 根本中堂 at Enryakuji, the Nan'endō 南圓堂 at Kōfukuji 興福寺, Tennōji 天王寺, and Mt. Kōya 高野山, suggesting that these temples too may have adopted pollution restrictions, at least with respect to certain designated areas.[27] Death defilement was of particular concern. The biography of the Tendai prelate Ennin (794-864), composed roughly a half-century after his

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23. *Denryaku*, Eikyū 4 (1116), 3/15, *DNK*, part 12: 4: 234. This was not a rare occurrence: the bodies of commoners, often disposed of simply by placement in an open field, were sometimes gnawed by dogs, who would then drag body parts onto the grounds of noble residences. See Katsuda, *Shishatachi no chūsei*, especially pp. 1-20 for discussion, and pp. 252-64 for a list of courtier diary entries concerning such incidents.

24. Kaō 2 (1170), 1/26, *Gyokuyō* 玉葉, 1: 78-79.

25. "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology," pp. 252-54.

26. Ryōgen's petition is reproduced in Nomoto Kakujō, "Kike bunken ni mirareru Jie Daishi Ryōgen," 248-49; see also Taira, "Sesshō kindan," p. 151.

27. *Taiki* 台記, Kyūan 2 (1146), 1/18, 3/2, 9/11; Kyūan 4 (1148), 3/5 (*ST* 23: 171, 175, 184, 248). See also Taira, "Sesshō kindan," p. 152.

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death, says that, as his life was about to end, Ennin announced to his disciples, “It is not proper that I die so close to this buddha hall, a site of purity and numinous manifestations,” and asked to be moved to different quarters — again suggesting that certain areas of the temple precincts needed to be kept pure.[28] Some temples seem to have adopted the thirty-day avoidance period following contact with the dead. In 1132, when a young boy was killed in a fight in a corridor of Kōfukuji, the Fujiwara family temple, the family head Tadamichi 藤原忠通 judged that “in accordance with temple custom,” the resulting death pollution affected only the main hall (*kondō* 金堂) and had not spread through the entire temple compound.[29] While this decision in effect worked around the defilement, enabling scheduled ceremonies to proceed as planned, the fact that Kōfukuji even had a “temple custom” in this regard suggests that avoidances related to death defilement had become part of Buddhist temple life. Enryakuji and Kōfukuji were major cultic centers for rites of state protection. But similar avoidance practices seem also to have been adopted at other temples, not necessarily connected with the royal cult or the system of the twenty-two shrines. This is suggested, for example, in two episodes from the twelfth-century tale collection *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集. In one story, a lowly warrior, without connections and at the end of his resources, begs for help from the bodhisattva Kannon 觀音 enshrined at Hasedera 長谷寺 in Nara and lies prostrate before the bodhisattva image. The monks say to him, “If you die here, our temple will be defiled.”[30] In another story, in an elaborate ruse staged to steal a bell from Koyadera 小屋寺 in Settsu 攝津 province, an elderly mendicant pretends to die beneath the temple’s bell tower; accomplices acting as his “sons” remove the “body” but, for thirty days thereafter, the bell tower is deemed polluted, and the monks will not approach it.[31] Such examples suggest that the formal protocols of death pollution avoidance mandated in court *jingi* rites were not confined to contexts of *kami* worship but, to a considerable extent, were also observed by Buddhist institutions and clerics. In short, the realm where defilement avoidances had to be observed was not demarcated by the distinction between *kami* and Buddhist deities.

Pollution avoidances and *honji suijaku* discourse

Of the various theories amalgamating *kami* and buddhas in premodern Japan, claims about *kami* as Dharma protectors or as deluded beings in need of Buddhist liberation appear early on, while *honji suijaku* notions of *kami* as the “traces” or local manifestations of buddhas and bodhisattvas began to emerge only around the

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28. Enshin Saitō, *Biography of Jikaku Daishi Ennin*, p. 65.

29. *Chūyūki*, Chōshō 1 (1132), 2/17, 19, 20 (*ST* 14: 285-86); see also the discussion in Nishiguchi, *Onna no chikara*, p. 28.

30. *Konjaku monogatari shū* 3, 16: 28, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (hereafter *SNKBT*) 35: 542-47 (the quotation is at p. 542).

31. *Konjaku monogatari shū* 5, p. 29: 17, *SNKBT* 37: 331-35.

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mid-tenth century, stabilizing over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth.[32] Were prohibitions on death defilement in connection with shrine worship relaxed in the latter Heian and Kamakura periods, in light of growing discourses about the *kami* as "traces" of buddhas and bodhisattvas and supporters of Buddhist liberative aims?

Certainly we can find some voices that dismissed such proscriptions. Need for pollution avoidance is often explicitly minimized or rejected, for example, in the formal discourse of the "single practice" Pure Land sectarian movements of Hōnen 法然 (1133-1212) and Shinran 親鸞 (1173-1262). Hōnen is said to have remarked, "In the Buddhist teachings, there is no such thing as avoidance, as it is commonly spoken of in the world," and "Those who chant the name [of Amida] need not avoid impurity in their daily *nenbutsu* practice."[33] Hōnen did acknowledge customs of ritual purity in certain contexts, such as practicing abstinence before visiting temples and shrines, and seems to have thought it desirable to cleanse the body before reciting sūtras. But his stance overall was to downplay the importance of purification and avoidances in contrast to the absolute power of the *nenbutsu*, the only practice that in his eyes conformed to Amida Buddha's compassionate vow and that no impurity could compromise. He denied, for example, the need to perform ablutions or don clean clothing prior to Buddhist observances on the six monthly precept days and even saw no objection to a woman reciting sūtras during her menstrual period. But tellingly, he added, "Before the *kami*, [she] should probably refrain. In the Buddha-Dharma, there is no avoidance. You should ask a yin-yang master (*onmyōji* 陰陽師) about this.[34] Even Hōnen seems to have regarded *kami* rites as constituting a distinct ritual sphere in which certain strictures, although doctrinally unrelated to Buddhism, were to be observed. This passage also reflects the authority often accorded at the time to *onmyōji* in determining what did or did not violate ritual purity.

From a strict soteriological perspective, because the exclusive *nenbutsu* 専修念佛 movements held birth in the Pure Land to be dependent solely on the single element of wholehearted reliance on Amida, *kami* worship was rendered superfluous; rather, the *kami* were said spontaneously to rejoice at and protect those who relied wholly upon the *nenbutsu*. Especially among Shinran's followers, a normative stance of not worshipping the *kami* (*jingi fuhai* 神祇不拜), and especially refusing to observe the purification rituals customary before entering shrines, served both as an identity marker for single-practice *nenbutsu* devotees and as a target of criticism by their opponents.[35] Ikemi Chōryū has traced how Shinran's later followers

32. Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli, eds., *Buddhas and Kami in Japan:* Honji Suijaku *as a Combinatory Paradigm*, pp. 16-18.

33. *Ippyaku shijū gokajō mondō* 百四十五箇条問答, no. 36, *Shōwa shinshū Hōnen Shōnin zenshū* (hereafter *HSZ*), 654; *Jūshichijō gohōgo* 十七条御法語, p. 469.

34. For Hōnen's responses to questions about purity issues, see *Ippyaku shijū gokajō mondō*, nos. 10, 14, 15, 36, 55, 75, 77, 78, 97, 113, 114, and 125 (*HSZ* 649, 650, 654, 656, 658-59, 663, and 665). The specific references to menstruation are in nos. 75 and 78 (658-59).

35. See for example James C. Dobbins, *Jōdo Shinshū: Shin Buddhism in Medieval Japan*, pp. 39-40, 57-58.

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repeatedly invoked the idea that *kami* support Buddhist soteriological goals in order to defend such unorthodox practices.[36] For example, according to the Jōdo Shinshū evangelist Zonkaku 存覺 (1290-1373), the deity Hachiman 八幡 had revealed in an oracle: "I do not shun an impure, defiled body, but I abhor a crooked, insincere mind." Zonkaku continues, "One should understand the deities of the other shrines in the same way. Thus we see that even if one's body should be pure, if he cherishes false views at heart, the *kami* will not accept [his prayers]. But even if one's body should be impure, the *kami* will protect him if he has a mind of compassion."[37] Another Shinshū preaching text states, "To abhor birth and death and to long for [salvation in] one's next life is the true meaning of avoidance....The death taboo means to witness the suffering of transmigration in the six paths, dying here and being born again there, and to detest and shun it."[38] Such statements deliberately conflate "birth and death" as occasions of ritual defilement, through contact with parturition or corpses, with "birth and death" as samsaric suffering, whose transcendence is Buddhism's ultimate aim. In other words, pollution taboos having actual force in ritual and social observance are rendered merely metaphorical by assimilation to Buddhist doctrinal concepts. A similar interpretation is reflected in medieval Shinshū texts in a recurring gloss on the character for *imi* 忌 (avoidance or taboo), which is written with the heart radical under the character for "self" or "one's own"; Shinshū exegetes interpreted it to mean that what must be "avoided" is not external pollution but the defilements of one's own mind.[39] Such readings no doubt served leaders of Shinshū congregations as a way of both deflecting external criticisms for their neglect of *kami* rites and also of persuading their own followers to conform to normative Shinshū practice.

But if the conflation of pollution avoidances with aversion to samsaric suffering could be used to rationalize non-participation in the customary purification rites accompanying *kami* worship, it could also be used to argue that such observances were in fact binding upon the Buddhist devotee. For example, the *Nomori no kagami* 野守鏡, a late thirteenth-century treatise on poetics attributed to Minamoto no Arifusa 源有房 (n.d.), criticizes Zen monks and *nenbutsu* practitioners who refused to honor traditional avoidances surrounding birth and death: "The deities' tabooing of these matters is no mere worldly custom. By prohibiting [the defilement of] birth and death, [the *kami*] seek to restrain permanently the acts of living beings that bind them to *saṃsāra*."[40] This assertion involves a contrasting rhetorical move, in which the abstract Buddhist existential problem of "birth and death" is concretized in specific prescriptions of ritual purity. Claims about *kami* endorsing Buddhist soteriological aims did not in fact produce any uniform attitude toward death pollution but were instead enlisted in support of varied and sometimes contradictory agendas.

36. *Chūsei no seishin sekai: Shi to kyūsai*, pp. 39-43.
37. *Shoshin honkai shū* 諸神本懐集, *Chūsei Shintō ron*, *NST* 19: 194.
38. *Kumano kyōkeshū* 熊野教化集, cited in Ikemi, *Chūsei no seishin sekai*, pp. 41-42.
39. Ikemi, *Chūsei no seishin sekai*, pp. 41-42.
40. *Gunsho ruijū* (hereafter *GR*), no. 484, 27: 513b.

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Apart from Buddhist didactic tales (*setsuwa* 說話) and preaching texts, we find substantial evidence that death pollution at *kami* shrine precincts, at least at major shrines, was still scrupulously avoided in the Kamakura period. For example, the last instructions of Jien 慈圓 (1155-1225), brother of the regent Kujō Kanezane and four times the chief abbot of Mt. Hiei, stipulate that, after his death, those disciples *not* involved in his cremation should go the following day to the Hie shrines to pray for his welfare in the next life, while those who handle his remains should use their own discretion but in any event need not hesitate to visit the shrines after a thirty-day purificatory period.[41] A biography of the Zen monk Shinshi Eison 神子榮尊 (1195-1272), an associate of the famous master Enni 圓爾, records that Eison fell ill while staying in a temple on the grounds of Usa Hachiman Shrine 宇佐八幡宮. When it became clear to him that he would not recover, he left for his home temple in a palanquin, because since ancient times, people were not permitted to die within the Usa precincts.[42] Such accounts suggest that the literary theme of *kami* suspending prohibitions on death pollution to further Buddhist soteriological aims is best understood as a rhetorical strategy for subordinating *kami* worship within a Buddhist ideological framework and did not necessarily mean that it was becoming acceptable for monks to visit shrines in a defiled state. On the contrary, such stories depend for their impact on the gap between their accounts of *kami* abrogating the death taboo and the very real, continuing force of such avoidances in actual practice. Yet there could be many ways of rhetorically asserting that *kami* endorse Buddhist aims. Why the specific topos of the monk who brings death defilement into a shrine and yet still gains the *kami*'s approval? What does this trope seek to legitimate?

Ōjō and death pollution

To begin to address this question, let us turn to another variant of this theme as it occurs in the hagiography of the itinerant Pure Land teacher Ippen 一遍 (1239-89). According to the *Ippen hijiri-e* 一遍聖繪, in the seventh month of 1282, Ippen and his company of mendicants were en route to Kyōto and had stopped at the Mishima shrine 三島神社 in Izu. On the day they reached the shrine, purple clouds trailed across the sky from morning to night, and seven or eight of Ippen's followers all at once achieved *ōjō* 往生, or birth in the Pure Land — that is to say, they died. While death occurring in a shrine precinct would ordinarily constitute a most serious defilement, the shrine priest, having been able to form an auspicious karmic connection (*kechien* 結縁) with Ippen's *nenbutsu* teaching, did not regard this as polluting, nor was the *kami* angered. This, we read, is because *kami*, as

41. *Jien jōjōan* 慈圓讓狀案, *Kamakura ibun*, no. 2792. See also Matsuo Kenji, "Chūsei ni okeru shi to bukkyō: Kansō, tonseisō taisei moderu no tachiba kara," p. 22. Jien's instruction illustrates that *kami* were not invoked solely in regard to this-worldly affairs but were also deemed capable of assisting one's afterlife, as Satō Hiroo has noted (*Amaterasu no henbō*, pp. 12-13).

42. *Eison Wajō nenpu* 榮尊和尚年譜, *Zoku gunsho ruijū* (hereafter *ZGR*), no. 226, 9A: 302b.

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manifestations of buddhas and bodhisattvas, desire only the "liberation of living beings."[43] Here again, *honji suijaku* notions are invoked to legitimate a grave breach of ritual purity.

Purple clouds rising in the west, mysterious music heard in the air, or inexplicable fragrance in the death chamber, dying on an auspicious day, etc. were all widely regarded as incontrovertible signs that a deceased person had achieved birth in the Pure Land.[44] As I have argued elsewhere, these signs of *ōjō* are sometimes deployed in *ōjōden* 往生傳, biographical accounts of those said to have achieved birth in the Pure Land, and other literary sources to beautify and thus render more acceptable those deaths including suicide while deranged by grief, fatal accidents, and the death of children that might otherwise have been considered unbearably tragic or pointless.[45] While survivors might still mourn their own loss, the death of an *ōjōnin* 往生人 had an irreducible soteriological value, in that such persons were thought to have escaped the realm of deluded rebirth once and for all and to be assured of buddhahood. Something similar, I would suggest, occurs in this *Ippen hijiri-e* episode. Without the narrative device of the purple clouds, we would have merely a half dozen ragged Jishū 時衆 mendicants, perhaps exhausted from illness or the hardships of the road, inconveniently dying in the Mishima Shrine precincts. Here it appears that the purple clouds, as an accepted sign of *ōjō*, serve to assert that deaths ordinarily seen as defiling are in this case not defiling at all — something even the *kami* and the *kami* priest are depicted as acknowledging.

We have limited evidence that some people did indeed believe that the death of those who go to the Pure Land is not polluting. A striking example occurs in a Kamakura-period document from Ise Shrine. According to this account, on the fourth day of the second month, 1279, one Kunihide 國秀, a servant, was inadvertently responsible for an act of pollution at the sacred premises during the rites of renewal. While in Iidaka 飯高 on business, Kunihide had sat for a time in company with a monk named Man'amida-butsu 萬阿彌陀佛, or simply Man'a, who had recently gone to nearby Niuyama 丹生山 to venerate the body of one Kawata Nyūdō 河田入道, a lay monk who had died on the fifteenth day of the first month.[46] Rumor spread that Kawata had achieved *ōjō*, and many people gathered to pay homage to his remains.[47] Man'a, while there, had sat down in the deceased man's house. Ordinarily, persons who sat in a house where a death had taken place, or who sat with other persons who had incurred defilement, were thought to incur defilement themselves; in this case, the pollution was transmitted from Man'a to Kunihide,

43. *Ippen hijiri-e* 一遍聖繪 6, *Ippen Shōnin zenshū*, pp. 49-50.

44. On the importance of such signs as indices to *ōjō*, see Nishiguchi Junko, "Jōdo ganshōsha no kunō: Ōjōden ni okeru kizui to mukoku," pp. 138-42.

45. "Beautiful Exit: Preparing for Death in Medieval Japan," presented at "The Aesthetics of Nirvana," Southern Japan Seminar, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2003.

46. The fifteenth was both the day of Śākyamuni Buddha's parinirvāṇa and Amida Buddha's *ennichi* 縁日, a day of the month held to be especially auspicious for forming karmic ties with a particular buddha or bodhisattva. Thus dying on this day was considered an indication of *ōjō*.

47. On the practice of venerating the remains of those believed to have achieved *ōjō* in order to form *kechien*, see my "Dying Breath," pp. 215-18.

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who then worshipped at Ise while unknowingly in a defiled state. Man'a had not informed Kunihide of his recent contact with defilement because he himself had been told that "the death of an *ōjōnin* is not polluting" (*ōjōnin ni kegare nashi* 往生人者無穢). Shrine officials, however, disagreed and judged that even in the case of an *ōjōnin*, there is pollution, and avoidance is to be observed."[48]

This episode has by now been discussed by several scholars. Nishigaki Seiji, who first drew attention to it, notes how it illustrates the existence of mutually incompatible, situationally grounded views about death pollution. Shrine personnel, Nishigaki suggests, were committed to an official position that deemed all contact with death to be defiling, yet local people believed as a matter of certainty that exposure to the body of someone who had achieved *ōjō* was not only not polluting but formed a karmic connection conducive to their own eventual birth in the Pure Land.[49] Chijiwa Itaru cites this episode to argue that ordinary death and *ōjō* were, at least among Pure Land aspirants, understood as distinct phenomena, one defiling and the other transcending defilement. The distinction, he argues, hinged on the presence of extraordinary signs, such as purple clouds, radiant light, or mysterious fragrance, which were widely accepted as "proofs" that the deceased person had reached the Pure Land. From this perspective, the purple clouds appearing over Mishima Shrine in Ippen's hagiography may have indicated that the demise of seven or eight of his followers in the shrine precincts was regarded, not as "death" but rather as *ōjō*, and was therefore not deemed defiling.[50] By the same logic, as suggested above, we could also imagine that the detail of the purple clouds was added by the hagiographer to provide an acceptable gloss for an episode that would otherwise have been seen as an appalling transgression. More recently, this episode has been discussed by Matsuo Kenji, who sees it as representing the stance of "Kamakura new Buddhism" 鎌倉新佛教 (represented in his reading by the monk Man'a), which had freed itself from pollution concerns, over and against a religious establishment still bound by them.[51] However, the dividing line between those concerned about honoring pollution avoidances and those indifferent to them did not always map out along such neat lines as official versus unofficial, or new Buddhism versus old — a point addressed below. Nor is it certain, as Chijiwa argues, that a clearcut distinction was widely drawn between "ordinary deaths," which were considered polluting and *ōjō*, which was not. On-the-ground ideas about pollution and *ōjō* may have varied considerably. This is suggested, for example, by a record of Hōnen's answers to various questions from his followers. "Is it true," someone asked, "that

48. *Kamakura ibun*, no. 13425, 18: 81-82. On the transmission of pollution by sitting with defiled persons, see for example Okada, *Kodai no imi*, p. 295, and Yamamoto, *Kegare to ōharae*, pp. 81-82.

49. "Minshū no seishin seikatsu: Kegare to michi," p. 106.

50. "Shigusa to sahō: Shi to ōjō o megutte," pp. 143-44. Chijiwa here argues in part against Ōhashi Shunnō, who suggested that these deaths were not considered polluting because the *kami* of the Mishima shrine was the clan deity of the Kōno 河野 family, to which Ippen belonged (*Ippen: Sono kōdō to shisō*, p. 109).

51. "Chūsei ni okeru shi to bukkyō," pp. 26-27.

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even though the Buddha [Amida] comes to welcome one at the time of death, he will turn back if that person is in a state of impurity?" Hōnen replied that "the Buddha takes no account of purity or impurity."[52] But this particular interlocutor seems to have understood Amida as being very like a *kami* in requiring a state of purity among his devotees; far from assuming that an ideal death resulting in *ōjō* would nullify the issue of pollution, this individual clearly worried that pollution could hinder *ōjō* from occurring.[53]

While the episode from Ippen's biography mentioned above serves most obviously to legitimate Ippen's *nenbutsu* teaching, it can also be seen as expressing a broader tension over issues of death pollution, evident since the latter Heian, that accompanied the rise of Pure Land thought and practice. One strand of discourse, exemplified by the rhetoric of "shunning this defiled realm and aspiring to the Pure Land" (*onri edo gongu jōdo* 厭離穢土欣求浄土), denies the importance of defilement avoidance. In Buddhist narrative literature such as *setsuwa* and *ōjōden*, this stance is typically represented by *hijiri* 聖 and other ascetics practicing in reclusion, outside formal temple hierarchies, and by lay monks and nuns or other devotees who have in spirit already left the world and may be described by the contemporaneous term *gosesha* 後世者, "those concerned for the afterlife." *Gosesha* do not simply hope, in the manner of ordinarily devout people, to be born in the Pure Land some day but rather cherish this aspiration as their overriding goal and the sole focus of their religious endeavors. For such individuals, concerns of auspicious and inauspicious, purity and pollution, belong to the defiled realm that they have cast aside. Not only do they deem death pollution irrelevant to Buddhist soteriological concerns, but for them, in the case of *ōjōnin,* contact with death — either by witnessing it or by reverencing the dead person's remains — actually becomes an occasion for forming an auspicious karmic connection conducive to their own birth in the Pure Land. Whoever informed the monk Man'a in the Ise document that "the death of an *ōjōnin* is not polluting" clearly belonged to this ideological camp. However, we also find an opposing stance in which Pure Land aspirations and the practices to achieve them, being unavoidably associated with death, had to be confined to their proper sphere. Tension between the two discourses occasionally appears in *ōjōden* and also *setsuwa*. For example, Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤 (d. 1002), compiler of the first Japanese *ōjōden* collection, writes in his biography of the itinerant holy man Kūya 空也 (a.k.a. Kōya, 903-72): "Prior to the Tengyō era (938-47), practice of the *nenbutsu samādhi* was rare in temple communities. It was even rarer among inferior persons and foolish women, who in many cases shunned it as a matter for avoidance. But after the holy man arrived, people chanted it themselves and taught

52. *Ippyaku shijū gokajō mondō*, no. 140, *HSZ* 667.

53. *Ōjōnin* are often depicted as bathing, donning fresh clothes, and cleaning their rooms just before death, and Koyama Satoko therefore suggests that many medieval Japanese thought pollution would obstruct their birth in the Pure Land ("Mappō no yo ni okeru kegare to sono kokufuku: Dōji shinkō no seiritsu," pp. 263-69). Alternatively, these acts may represent the sort of preparation that preceded any Buddhist ritual and thus may not necessarily have been linked specifically to pollution concerns.

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others to do so also."[54] The vocal *nenbutsu*, which was often chanted as a deathbed practice and at funerals, seems to have been a particular object of informal prohibition; even persons who were otherwise devout Buddhists appear to have objected to its invocation on auspicious days devoted to *kami* observance. The *Zoku honchō ōjōden* 續本朝往生傳 (early twelfth century) mentions one Otsuki no Kanetō 小槻兼任, a minor noble and Pure Land devotee, whose wife reproaches him for his habit of continually chanting the *nenbutsu* without regard for the occasion. "New Year's day is commonly a time of avoidance (*imi*)," she says. "You should refrain from chanting the *nenbutsu*." Kanetō smiles and replies, "That is children's foolishness. How could I accept it? Living in this fleeting world, what should there be to avoid?" And he makes a point of deliberately going about the house on that day ringing a bell and chanting the *nenbutsu*.[55] A similar story occurs in the *Shasekishū* and other sources, in which the lady Machi no Tsubone 町の局, who is stern and meticulous in observing the taboos and festive proprieties, upbraids a devout maidservant who unthinkingly utters the *nenbutsu* even as she is setting out trays of food offerings on New Year's Day. "How inauspicious," the lady exclaims, "to say the *nenbutsu* on today of all days, as though someone had died!"[56] For similar reasons, serious devotion to Buddhist practice on the part of young people, especially children and young women, often met with disapproval, an attitude also attested in *ōjōden* accounts. When the pious daughter of the Yamashiro 山城 governor Ono no Takaki 小野高木 (appointed 887) begins to study Pure Land texts and to practice prostrations, her parents admonish her, saying, "Such behavior is not appropriate for young people. You will exhaust your spirits and surely ruin your looks."[57] Similarly, the wife of one Fujiwara no Chikasuke 藤原親輔 (n.d.) deems it inauspicious when her young son takes to playing with a Buddhist rosary and uttering the name of Amida.[58] Child mortality was high, and young women were also at particular risk of death from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. Takatori Masao has suggested that reservations about children and young women engaging in serious Buddhist practice stemmed from an anxiety to restrain such already vulnerable persons from too deep an engagement with the next world.[59] From this perspective, Buddhist devotions aimed specifically at birth in the Pure Land were to be kept "in their place," that is, they were deemed the province chiefly of the aging, the dying, or the critically ill, or of persons who had renounced the world. In contexts emphasizing *kami* worship, celebration, youth, fecundity, or worldly success, they were often considered inappropriate. Where aspirations for *ōjō* encouraged an infiltration of

54. *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki* 日本往生極樂記 17, *Ōjōden, Hokke genki*, *Zoku Nihon bukkyō no shisō* (hereafter *ZNBS*) 1: 29.

55. *Zoku honchō ōjōden* 續本朝往生傳 37, *ZNBS* 1: 250-51.

56. *Shasekishū* II: 3, *NKBT* 85: 94-96; Morrrell, *Sand and Pebbles,*105-106, slightly modified. See also the discussion in Takatori, *Shintō no seiritsu*, pp. 13-18.

57. *Nihon ōjō gokuraku ki* 38, *ZNBS* 1: 39.

58. *Shūi ōjōden* 拾遺往生傳 III: 23, *ZNBS* 1: 377-78.

59. *Shintō no seiritsu*, 18-23. In a similar vein, see also Taira Masayuki, *Nihon chūsei no shakai to bukkyō*, 65-67.

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postmortem concerns into the present life, such informal taboos sought to maintain their separation.

Though *gosesha* probably represented only a social minority, their stance was celebrated in late Heian and Kamakura Buddhist didactic tales, which often represent concern with death pollution as reflecting ignorance of true Buddhist soteriological concerns. No literary device could illustrate this perspective more compellingly than the trope of *kami* overlooking the prohibition on death pollution at their own shrines, in the interests of Buddhist liberative aims. A similar message appears to underlie the episode from Ippen's biography of the seven or eight Jishū followers who achieved *ōjō* at Mishima Shrine. While a worldly view might find death on shrine precincts to be defiling, ordinary concerns about pollution and purity are transcended by implicit claims to a higher purity in the certainty of birth in the Pure Land. The *kami*, being manifestations of buddhas and desiring only the liberation of living beings, are represented as understanding this, and are not offended.

Pollution avoidance and "death managing" monks

Recent scholarship has shown how, in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the newly emergent Zen and Ritsu monastic orders, as well as certain Pure Land practitioners known as *nenbutsu* monks, began routinely to perform funerals for lay patrons, laying the basis for the near-universal Buddhist funerary culture of the late medieval and early modern periods.[60] Monks of these orders encountered criticism from the mainstream religious establishment for violating the prohibitions on death defilement in contexts of *kami* ritual. For example, the author of the *Nomori no kagami*, mentioned above, complains that "those Zen people, while living in the land of the *kami* (*shinkoku* 神國), do not observe the prohibitions regarding birth and death; thus the [protective] vow of the manifest traces has been lost, and the power of the *kami* has declined," leading to widespread epidemics and devastating typhoons.[61] A 1286 document of Yasaka Shrine 八坂神社 in Yamashiro similarly complains about the harm wrought by the polluting presence on shrine estates of

60. On the involvement of Zen, Ritsu, and *nenbutsu* monks in royal funerals, see Ōishi Masaaki, "Kenmitsu taiseinai ni okeru Zen, Ritsu, nenbutsu no ichi: Ōke no sōsō o tsūjite." ("*Nenbutsu* monks" broadly designates those monks, often reclusive or semi-reclusive and not holding official clerical positions, who were devoted primarily to practices for achieving birth in the Pure Land. Though the term later came to include Pure Land sectarians, it predates the Kamakura period and does not necessarily indicate followers of the Kamakura "new" Buddhist movements.) For Ritsu monks and the management of death, see Hosokawa Ryōichi, *Chūsei no Risshū jiin to minshū*, pp. 1-40; Janet R. Goodwin, *Alms and Vagabonds: Buddhist Temples and Popular Patronage in Medieval Japan*, pp. 120-27; and Matsuo Kenji, *Chūsei no toshi to hinin*, pp. 118-25. On the rise of Zen funerals, see William M. Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*, pp. 185-208; Harada Masatoshi, "Chūsei no Zenshū to sōsō girei"; and Duncan Ryūken Williams, *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan*, pp. 38-58.

61. *GR* 27: 506a.

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Zen and Ritsu monastics and *nenbutsu* practitioners, who do not fear the *kami*.[62] In this context, Matsuo Kenji has drawn attention to another, distinctively Risshū 律宗 version of the story of a monk who incurs death pollution while en route to a shrine. In this version, the monk in question is Kakujō 覺乘 (1275-1363), a monk in the lineage of the Saidaiji Ritsu master Eison 叡尊 (1201-90), who was based at a temple called Enmyōji 圓明寺 near Ise. On one occasion, Kakujō vows to visit and pray at Ise Shrine for a hundred successive days. On the hundredth day, en route to the shrine, he stops to perform a funeral for a traveler who has died on the road, because "not refusing [such requests] is a constant of the Way." In this version of the story, Kakujō does not even consider abandoning his pilgrimage. When he reaches the vicinity of the shrine precincts, an old man (presumably a divine manifestation) appears and challenges him for approaching the shrine in a defiled state. Kakujō responds by saying, "In [the case of one who upholds] the pure precepts, there is no defilement (*shōjōkai ni osen nashi* 清淨戒無汚染). But should I, in deference to [the requirements of] the last age, nonetheless go back to my temple?" Here Kakujō suggests an insider understanding shared between himself and the *kami*-as-*suijaku*, to the effect that avoidances are nothing more than expedients intended for the Final Dharma age, ultimately without binding force. Just at that moment, a white-robed boy mysteriously appears and announces that henceforth, any monks arriving from Enmyōji shall be deemed free of pollution.[63] Matsuo, in commenting on this story, argues that it was intended to counter criticisms of Ritsu monks' engagement with death pollution and to legitimize their performance of funerals. Ritsu monks, he suggests, considered their exemplary precept observance a "barrier" that protected them from defilement.[64]

In fact, though it purports to recount events of Kakujō's life, this story appears to be of much later vintage; it is embedded in a fundraising appeal to restore Enmyōji some fifty years after it was razed in military predations of the Tenshō era (1573-92) and thus may not tell us much about how Ritsu monks during the late Kamakura period deflected criticisms of their engagement with death pollution. In context, the narrative element of Kakujō's encounter with the divine messengers seems aimed less at legitimating Ritsu monks' conducting of funerals in general than at mobilizing *honji suijaku* discourse to argue a specific connection between Enmyōji and Ise Shrine.[65] Nonetheless, this episode suggests the continued rhetorical force of a trope beginning with Kamakura-period stories, such as the *Shasekishū* account of Jōkan-bō burying an indigent dead woman while on pilgrimage to Yoshino. And,

62. *Kamakura ibun*, no. 15887, 21: 99.

63. *Sanbōin kyūki* 三寶院舊記, *Dai Nihon shiryō*, part 6, 24: 868.

64. *Chūsei no toshi to hinin*, 122-24, and "Chūsei ni okeru shi to bukkyō," pp. 23-25. As Matsuo and others also note, not all elite Ritsu monks personally conducted funerals; disposal of corpses was handled by *saikaishū* 齋戒衆, groups of lower-class monks or in some cases lay persons serving Ritsu temples. See Hosokawa, *Chūsei no Risshū jiin to minshū*, pp. 9-20.

65. For example, Enmyōji is claimed to be the "clan temple" (*ujidera* 氏寺) of the deity Tenshō kōtai jingū 天照皇太神宮 of the Ise Inner Shrine. Kakujō's divine reception at the shrine following his funeral performance on the road is but one of several numinous encounters related in this text stressing a deep connection between Enmyōji, Kakujō, and Ise.

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in pointing to these antecedents, it reminds us that Zen and Ritsu clerics were not the first Buddhist monks to specialize in funerals and other death-related practices. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, increasing numbers of monks began to engage in deathbed and funerary rites as a religious specialty, across the lines of lineage or sectarian affiliation. Stories such as that of Jōkan-bō in the *Shasekishū* are clearly concerned with legitimizing the contact with pollution that such activities involved. But how did such specialization come about?

Among elites, since at least the ninth century, Buddhist ritual was already understood as the preeminent spiritual technology for memorializing, consoling, and pacifying the dead.[66] As a corollary to old assumptions that pollution avoidances were integral to Japanese religion "from the beginning," scholars have sometimes similarly assumed that Buddhist monks "stepped in" to handle affairs of death that were excluded in contexts of *kami* worship. Certainly Buddhism possessed a repertoire of rites and doctrinal teachings dealing specifically with the afterlife that had no parallel in *kami* traditions, and in that limited sense, a "natural" division of labor may have occurred between the two ritual systems. At the same time, however, Buddhist associations with death were reinforced by the exclusion of Buddhist elements, in the same manner as were death and other sources of pollution, from court-centered *jingi* ritual, a phenomenon known by scholars as the "isolation of *kami* from buddhas" (*shinbutsu kakuri* 神佛隔離).[67] A famous instance is the linguistic taboos of Ise Shrine, where code words were used to replace both forbidden Buddhist terms and names for sources of pollution ("long hairs" for monks, "colored paper" for sūtras, "getting well" for death, etc.), and where monks and nuns were forbidden close access.[68] More striking is the banning of Buddhist elements during the Daijōsai 大嘗祭 or royal enthronement ceremony. The *Engi shiki*, possibly drawing on earlier codes, prohibited both courtiers and officials of the home provinces from participating in Buddhist maigre feasts during the month of this rite. Such prohibitions were elaborated throughout the Heian period; by the twelfth century, those preparing to take part in the ceremony were instructed, from the time of their appointment, not only to refrain from participating in Buddhist

66. On the Heian aristocratic embrace of Buddhism as the preeminent ritual system for dealing with death, see Mitsuhashi Tadashi, *Heian jidai no shinkō to shūkyō girei*, pp. 597-668.

67. See Teeuwen and Rambelli, eds. *Buddhas and Kami in Japan*, pp. 22-23; Okada, *Kodai no imi*, pp. 417-29; and Nishiguchi, *Onna no chikara*, pp. 29-34. Teeuwen and Rambelli note that, while limited, the *shinbutsu kakuri* phenomenon worked to preserve a degree of separation between *jingi* and Buddhist ritual systems and helped stimulate the emergence in late medieval and early modern times of an independent Shintō tradition.

68. Taboos on Buddhist elements at Ise can be documented from at least the early ninth century and eventually spread to other court-sponsored shrines and rituals. On Ise's linguistic taboos, see for example the *Kōtai jingū gishiki chō* 皇太神宮儀式帳, *GR*, no. 1, 1: 3b, and also Bock, *Engi-Shiki*, 152-53. Lady Nijō records that, on a pilgrimage to Ise in 1291, having taken Buddhist vows and being dressed in her nun's habit, she was permitted to enter the Outer Shrine precincts through the second *torii*, only as far as the garden, and at the Inner Shrine, she had to worship at a distance, from the upper bank of the Mimosuso River (*Towazugatari* 4; trans. Karen Brazell, *The Confessions of Lady Nijō*, p. 211, 214).

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rites but to remove all Buddhist scriptures and ritual implements from their homes, avoid contact with monks and nuns, relocate to separate structures any Buddhist renunciates who were household members, and erect wooden placards warning that they were undergoing purification connected with *kami* ritual.[69] Avoidance of Buddhist clerics and other Buddhist elements was incorporated into the requirements for other court-sponsored *jingi* rites as well. Thus the *Engi shiki* stipulates, "At all times, during the days of partial abstinence before and after the [*kami*] festivals of *Toshigoi* 祈年祭, *Kamo* 賀茂祭, *Tsukinami* 月次祭, *Kanname* 神嘗祭 and *Niiname* 新嘗祭, monks, nuns and persons in mourning may not enter the Imperial Palace.[70]

As Bernhard Scheid has suggested, "The obvious intention of these examples [quoted from *Engi shiki*] is to establish a close connection between Buddhism, mourning, and death pollution."[71] While the conjunction of "monks, nuns and persons in mourning" might suggest that the excluding of Buddhist elements from court-sponsored *kami* festivals stemmed from a preexisting association of Buddhism with death and funerary rites, it may also reflect a deliberate effort to link Buddhist clerics to death defilement, thus limiting their political influence and protecting the prerogatives of the *jingi* ritual system in maintaining the legitimacy of rule.[72] How closely these formal prohibitions may or may not have been connected with the informal avoidance of Pure Land practices in contexts of *kami* worship and worldly prosperity mentioned above remains to be determined. In any event, associations of Buddhism with death were only partly "natural"; they were also constructed, and reinforced, by the formation of court *jingi* worship as a distinct ritual sphere. Such associations became fixed over the course of the Heian period.

The connection forged between Buddhism and death did not mean, however, that all monks routinely performed all forms of death-related ritual. Because of the mandatory thirty-day exorcistic period, clerics holding positions in the Office of Monastic Affairs (Sōgō 僧綱) or temple administration and responsible for nation-protecting prayers or *kami* rites could not routinely incur death defilement. They could perform the forty-nine-day postmortem rites (*chūin butsuji* 中陰佛事) and rites on subsequent death anniversaries, as these were commonly performed at

69. Satō Mahito, "Daijōsai ni okeru shinbutsu kakuri: Sono hensen no tsūshiteki kentō," pp. 365-71.

70. Bock, *Engi-Shiki*, p. 117.

71. "Overcoming Taboos on Death," p. 209.

72. Okada Shigekiyo has argued that the tabooing of Buddhism, along with death pollution and other forms of defilement, was one means by which the royal cult was deliberately constructed as a "native" ritual system legitimizing imperial rule, in contrast to Buddhism, a religion of foreign origins (*Kodai no imi*, pp. 427-29). Takatori Masao has suggested that taboos against Buddhism originated in part as a reaction against Buddhist monastic involvement in court politics, which had culminated in the unprecedented rise to power of the monk Dōkyō 道鏡 during the reign of Empress Shōtoku (r. 764-70) (see *Shintō no seiritsu,* esp. chaps. 2 and 3). Takatori futher notes that these associations drew on Confucian and Daoist elements in their exclusion of Buddhism from *kami* rites and may also have been influenced by the protocols of the Paekche court (pp. 248-49).

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temples, not gravesites, and did not involve contact with death pollution; in fact, these elite clerics continued to take charge of *chūin butsuji* for royal and aristocratic patrons throughout the Heian and Kamakura periods.[73] Other kinds of death ritual, however — such as deathbed practice (*rinjū gyōgi* 臨終行儀) to guide the mental focus of the dying and rites accompanying cremation or interment involved death defilement. Official monks (*kansō* 官僧) might sometimes attend a deathbed or perform a funeral when the individual concerned was a relative or close associate, and then observe the purificatory thirty-day period. But from the latter Heian period, deathbed and funerary rites were increasingly performed by a different category of monks, not bound by pollution restrictions, who specialized in such activities. These specialists emerged in conjunction with the growing popularity across social levels of Buddhist ritual aimed at birth in a pure land — including both deathbed practice and also funerary rites.

An important precedent in this regard was set by the Nijūgo zanmai-e 二十五三昧會, or Twenty-five Samādhi Society, formed in 986 by a group of monks based at Yokawa 横川 on Mt. Hiei for the purpose of assisting one another in practices aimed at achieving birth in Amida's Pure Land.[74] The group is especially famous because the noted Genshin 源信 (942-1017), author of the *Ōjō yōshū* 往生要集 — which contains the first formal instructions for deathbed practice compiled in Japan — played a key role in its activities. Society members vowed to assist one another at the time of death as "good friends" (*zenchishiki* 善智識), encouraging one another's dying reflections on the Buddha with the mutual aim of achieving *ōjō.* Toward this end, their regulations explicitly reject all concern with pollution avoidance, stating, "Even if you should suddenly be called upon [to attend the dying] when it is not your usual turn, you must still be willing to touch defilement, send him off at the end, and carry out all that may be needed."[75] Monks in attendance at the deathbed are referred to as "those incurring defilement and keeping watch" (*sokue banshu* 觸穢番衆); they are to dwell together with the dying person in the same hall, chanting the *nenbutsu* and reciting sūtras for his sake. Nijūgo zanmai-e members also pledged to establish a shared burial ground and conduct funeral rites for one another "without regard for whether the day is auspicious or inauspicious, and without concern for

73. Ōishi, "Kenmitsu taiseinai ni okeru Zen, Ritusu, nenbutsu no ichi," pp. 214-227.

74. On the Nijūgo zanmai-e, see for example Richard Bowring, "Preparing for the Pure Land in Late Tenth-Century Japan"; Robert F. Rhodes, "Seeking the Pure Land in Heian Japan: The Practices of the Monks of the Nijūgo Zanmai-e"; and Sarah Johanna Horton, "The Role of Genshin and Religious Associations in the Mid-Heian Spread of Pure Land Buddhism." It is not clear whether the group was so named because it had twenty-five members, or whether the number of members was set at twenty-five to correspond to the "twenty-five samādhis" (*nijūgo zanmai*), contemplations aimed at escaping the twenty-five realms of samsaric existence.

75. A critical edition of the Nijūgo zanmai-e regulations — the 986 *Kishō hachikajō* 起請八箇条 attributed to Yoshishige no Yasutane and the 988 *Yokawa Shuryōgon'in Nijūgo zanmai kishō* 横川首楞嚴院二十五三昧起請 attributed to Genshin — appears in Koyama Shōjun, "Tōdaiji Chūshōin shozō *Yokawa Shuryōgon'in Nijūgo zanmai Eshin Yasutane rinjū gyōgi* no saikentō: Sōshobon no goshoku ni yoru mondaiten." See *Kishō hachikajō*, article 5, 90, for the quoted passage.

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directional taboos."[76] Considerations of pollution avoidance or other interdictions are clearly subordinated to the aim of helping their dying fellows to achieve birth in the Pure Land.

Such practices may not have been altogether new; for example, early regulations for the monks of Mt. Hiei compiled by immediate disciples of the Tendai founder Saichō 最澄 (766/767-822) discuss the recompense owing to monks who attend their dying fellows, assist in their funerals, and conduct postmortem sūtra recitation for their sake.[77] The Yokawa Nijūgo zanmai-e is important because its specific deathbed practices aimed at birth in the Pure Land soon gained popularity: similar groups formed at a number of monasteries,[78] and by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, lay people, aristocrats at first but later persons of varying social locations, were also seeking to die in the ritualized manner that both Genshin's *Ōjō yōshū* and the Nijūgo zanmai-e regulations prescribe. By the thirteenth century, *nenbutsu* societies (*nenbutsu kessha* 念佛結社) of local monks, quite possibly inspired by the Yokawa precedent, had formed throughout the country, providing deathbed and, increasingly, funerary services not only for one another but also for lay followers and supporters.[79]

Clearly the monks who routinely served in the capacity of "good friends" to the dying, and who sometimes also arranged for the disposal of their bodies, were not, indeed could not be, overly troubled by concerns about death pollution. As already noted, mid- to late-Heian sources indicate that those monks most frequently summoned to assist aristocrats at the time of their death were in fact seldom career scholars or administrator monks, unless they were close relatives of the dying. Rather, deathbed attendants tended to be *nenbutsu* monks 念佛僧, or semi-reclusive practitioners referred to by such terms as *hijiri* 聖, *shōnin* 上人, or sometimes *ajari* 阿闍梨.[80] Often based at *bessho* 別所 retreats, they enjoyed a reputation for holiness or thaumaturgical power and also served their patrons as healers, ritualists, and preceptors. Several such individuals are mentioned, for example, in the diary of the regent Kujō Kanezane, such as as Ashō-bō Inzei 阿證房印西 (or Insai, n.d.), known as the "*shōnin* of Chōrakuji" 長樂寺, a temple in the area of Higashiyama, who conferred the precepts on the dying sovereign Takakura 高倉(d. 1181),[81] or Honjō-bō Tankyō 本成房湛教 (n.d.), of the Ōhara *bessho* 大原別所, who served as *zenchishiki* at the deathbed of Kanezane's elder sister, the royal consort Kōkamon'in 皇嘉門院

76. *Kishō hachikajō*, article 8, article 7, in Koyama, ibid., pp. 93, 91.

77. *Enryakuji kinzeishiki nijūnijō* 延歴寺禁制式二十二条, in *Tendai kahyō* 天台霞標, *DNBZ* no. 234, 42: 4-5. See articles 11-12. This is a prescriptive text, so it is difficult to say how far it represents actual practice on Mt. Hiei.

78. For example, on Mt. Kōya, see Matsunaga Yūken, "Kōyasan no Nijūgo zanmai shiki ni tsuite," and for more general instances, Tamamuro Taijō, *Sōshiki bukkyō*, p. 116.

79. Katsuda, *Shishatachi no chūsei*, pp. 178-86.

80. On the identity of monks serving as attendants at the deathbed, see Jacqueline I. Stone, "With the Help of 'Good Friends': Deathbed Ritual Practices in Early Medieval Japan," 83-87, and Uejima Susumu, "'Ō' no shi to sōsō: Kegare to gakuryō, hijiri, zensō," pp. 135-38.

81. *Gyokuyō,* Jishō 5 (1181), 1/12, 2: 464.

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(Fujiwara no Seishi 藤原聖子, d. 1181), and who performed the same service for the retired sovereign Goshirakawa 後白河 (d. 1192).[82]

Another category of monks involved in deathbed and funerary rites were those known as *zenryo* 禪呂 or *zensō* 禪僧, "meditation monks." According to his *ōjōden* biography, shortly before his death, the former governor of Shinano 信濃, Fujiwara no Nagakiyo 藤原永清 (d. 1096), spoke to his brother, the scholar-monk Gyōken 行賢, and announced his intention to die in the lodging temple of a *zensō* of Sōrinji 雙輪寺, who had agreed to serve as *zenchishiki* at his deathbed and also to handle his burial.[83] Significantly, Nagakiyo turned for help, not to his brother, a career scholar-monk appointed to the Office of Monastic Affairs, but to this unnamed *zensō*. Funaoka Makoto has identified such *zensō* appearing in *ōjōden* as monks committed primarily to practice or ascetic disciplines (including but by no means necessarily confined to "meditation"), as opposed to the elite *gakuryo* 學侶, or scholar-monks. *Zensō* stood outside the status system of official monastic posts and appear to have overlapped the category of *dōsō* 堂僧 ("hall monks") responsible for routine liturgical functions at monasteries and also *bessho hijiri* 別所聖. Sōrinji, where Nagakiyo went to die, is thought to have been a *bessho* of Mt. Hiei and was located in Higashiyama, near the charnel grounds on the eastern outskirts of the capital. Both *zensō* and *bessho hijiri* also appear to have performed deathbed and funerary rites for a range of clients. It was because of pollution issues, Funaoka argues, that monks such as these, outside the formal temple hierarchy, came to specialize in conducting death-related ritual services, including deathbed practice and funerals.[84] Around the eleventh century, memorial chapels known as Hokkedō 法華堂 (Lotus halls) or Sanmaidō 三昧堂 (Samādhi halls) began to be built near royal and aristocratic gravesites; in some cases, they housed the cremated remains of the deceased. Monks installed in these chapels to perform the *Lotus* repentance (*Hokke senbō* 法華懺法 or *Hokke zanmai*) or to chant the *nenbutsu* for the deceased's postmortem welfare thereby incurred death defilement, and these monks, too, tended to be *zensō* or other semi-reculsive monks outside the official clerical hierarchy.[85]

What enabled certain monks to specialize in attending the dying and the dead without fear of death pollution was precisely this "outside" status: they stood apart, not only from lay life, but also to some extent from the official clerical world of the major monasteries and its responsibilities for performing state-sponsored ritual and *kami* rites. Ordinary distinctions of "pure" and "polluted" pertained to those

82. Kōkamon'in's death is recorded in *Gyokuyō*, Yōwa 1 (1181), entries for 12/1-4, 2: 539-40. The following year, Tankyō also led a memorial service for Kōkamon'in; on that occasion, Kanezane referred to him as having acted as her *zenchishiki* (*Gyokuyō*, Juei 1 [1182], 11/18, 2: 581). Tankyō's attendance at Goshirakawa's deathbed is noted at Kenkyū 3 (1192), 3/13, 3: 798.

83. *Shūi ōjōden* II: 17, *ZNBS* 1: 337.

84. *Nihon Zenshū no seiritsu*, 90-94. In the twelfth century, not long after Nagakiyo's death, notices occur of monks providing burial for aristocratic patrons in cemeteries they had established at their own temples, located outside the city, for themselves and their fellow monks (Katsuda, *Shishatachi no chūsei*, pp. 166-68). The Sōrinji *zensō* who attended Nagakiyo may have represented an early example of this practice.

85. Uejima, "'Ō' no shi to sōsō: Kegare to gakuryō, hijiri, zensō."

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realms, both secular and clerical, that such adepts had left behind. Some took up the reclusive life from the outset, while others underwent what amounted to a second act of renunciation, abandoning monastic office or temple administrative positions to engage in semi-solitary ascetic practice. *Hijiri* and *zensō* of the latter Heian period came from a range of social backgrounds and helped spread Buddhist deathbed and funerary rites beyond aristocratic circles. In their readiness to engage the pollution of death and perform funerals as a religious specialty, they may be seen as precursors to the Zen and Ritsu monastics who began to conduct funerals during the Kamakura period. The activities of such "death-managing monks" are in part what stories about *kami* overlooking death pollution, as in the story of Jōkan-bō in the *Shasekishū*, seek to legitimate.

Satō Hiroo has warned that a tendency to bifurcate the medieval divine realm into a polarity of *kami* and Buddhist divinities may obscure other important tensions within the medieval cosmology.[86] One such tension lies between those contexts where defilement prohibitions were deemed important and those where they were not. This distinction does not map readily onto the divide between buddhas and *kami*: although pollution avoidances were observed at major *kami* shrines, some Buddhist institutions also clearly incorporated them independently of *kami* worship. Nor does it follow the divisions of "old Buddhism" versus "new Buddhism," or of the exo-esoteric Buddhist establishment (*kenmitsu taisei* 顯密體制) versus marginal heterodox movements (*itan* 異端): although monks of the new Zen and Ritsu movements clearly specialized in death rites, they had precursors in the *hijiri*, *zensō*, and *nenbutsu* monks of the Heian period, who — despite their semi-reclusive status — were very much part of the broader religious establishment. What we can say is that, from the latter Heian period, increasing numbers of renunciates, usually outside the formal hierarchy of temple appointments and the career monastic world, began to perform death rites as a religious specialization, and that narratives about such figures began to articulate doctrinal and ideological perspectives from which pollution avoidances were deemed soteriologically irrelevant. This stance was in diametric opposition to the ritual purity demanded by worship at major temples and *kami* shrines. In the stories considered here, the prohibition on death defilement becomes a foil over and against which to legitimize these developments.

At the same time, however, these stories also tell us something, if only obliquely, about the ultimately intractable nature of the *kami*, who in the end refused to be wholly domesticated or subsumed within a Buddhist soteriological framework. That is to say, prohibitions on defilement, especially in relation to *kami* worship, had become so deeply entrenched that they were all but impossible to dislodge, even where formal Buddhist doctrine would so warrant. In a well-known letter from the monk Nichiren 日蓮 (1222-82) to a female devotee, responding to her concerns about menstrual taboos, Nichiren writes, "I have read almost all the sacred [Buddhist] teachings, and although there are passages that clearly prohibit alcohol, meat, the five pungent roots, and sexual misconduct as impure, I have yet to find a sūtra or

86. "Wrathful Deities and Saving Deities," pp. 112-13.

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treatise prescribing similar avoidance in connection with menstruation." But after continuing in this vein for some sentences, Nichiren introduces a qualification: "However, Japan is the land of the *kami* (*shinkoku* 神國). And it is the way of this country that, in many cases, strangely enough, the manifest traces (*suijaku*) of the buddhas and bodhisattvas do not conform to the sūtras and treatises, and when ones goes against them [i.e., the *kami*], there is actual punishment....Those born in this country would do well to observe their prohibitions!"[87] This is strikingly like Hōnen's comment, cited above, that "before the *kami*, one should probably refrain [from reciting sūtras while menstruating]." The prohibition on death pollution, I would suggest, represented the paradigmatic example of how *kami* "do not conform to the sūtras and treatises." That is why, as we see in the stories considered here, *kami* themselves had to be depicted as abrogating the most essential requirement surrounding their worship, if they were to be convincingly depicted as *suijaku* in connection with new discourses of aspiration for the Pure Land and the growing specialization of some Buddhist monks in death-related rites.

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Abbreviations:

DNBZ *Dai Nihon bukkyō zensho* 大日本佛教全書. Edited by Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan 鈴木學術財團. 100 vols. Tōkyō: by the editor, 1970-73.

DNK *Dai Nihon kokiroku* 大日本古記録. Edited by Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, Yōmei Bunko 東京大學史料編纂所, 陽明文庫. Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1952-.

GR *Gunsho ruijū* 群書類從. Ed. Hanawa Hokinoichi 塙保己一, revised by Ōta Tōshirō 太田藤四郎. 29 vols. Tōkyō: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1939-43.

HSZ *Shōwa shinshū Hōnen Shōnin zenshū* 昭和新修法然上人全集. Ed. Ishii Kyōdō 石井教道. Kyōto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1955.

NKBT *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文學大系. Ed. Takagi Ichinosuke 高木市之助 et al. 102 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1957-1969.

NST *Nihon shisō taikei* 日本思想大系. Ed. Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎 et al. 67 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1970-1982.

SNKBT *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 新日本古典文學大系. Ed. Satake Akihiro 佐竹昭廣 et al., 105 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1989-2005.

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Keywords:

abstinence (*imi* 忌み) — Buddhist death ritual — death defilement (*shie* 死穢) — funerals — *gosesha* 後世者 — honji suijaku — *kami* shrines — official monks (*kansō* 官僧) — *ōjō* 往生 — pollution (*kegare* 穢れ) — purity — taboos.

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