

**THE SOCIO-POLITICAL FUNCTIONS
OF JAPANESE “VENGEFUL SPIRIT” HANDSCROLLS, 1150-1230**

by

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The second half of the twelfth century witnessed a curious boom at the Heian Court in Japan—the production of illustrated handscrolls whose narratives centered on a specific type of historical figure. Within a span of fifty years or less, three such handscroll sets were produced: the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*. In each story, the protagonist is an aristocrat who had lived three-to-four-hundred years previous to the production of the handscroll set. Each of the men in question had died in exile, and each was—at one point or another—believed to have become a vengeful spirit. Moreover, in each case, the narrative presented in the handscroll differs from, or elides, the historical record. The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* presents an entirely fictional tale based only loosely on the lives of its protagonists; the *Ban Dainagon emaki* records a highly embellished version of a well-documented political scandal; and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* constructs a mythology from the details of the life and death of one of the period’s most accomplished bureaucrats.

This dissertation explores the production of these three handscrolls—which I refer to as “vengeful spirit scrolls”—and focuses on the role of the re-imagining and redeployment of historical figures in these scrolls to processes of power consolidation in the late-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries. Taking a thematic approach, I examine these handscrolls from the perspective of their role in early literary movements to reinvent historical figures, in contemporaneous perceptions of supernatural creatures, and in ritual practices such as spirit

pacification rites. I also consider the scrolls from within the social context of the collapse of the traditional courtly power base at the end of the Heian period (794-1185) and beginning of the Kamakura period (1185-1333). In so doing, my project explores two main research questions: how handscrolls from this period reflect the sociopolitical changes that were ongoing during their production and how they might have been used by members of the courtier class to negotiate the intersection of temporal and non-temporal power.

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A NOTE ON THE TEXT

This dissertation follows the standard convention for referring to Japanese historical figures by their personal rather than family names. Historical figures from the Heian period are referred to using the aristocratic form (e.g. Sugawara no Michizane), while historical figures from the Kamakura period and later are largely referred to without using an aristocratic marker (e.g. Kujō Kanezane). Japanese authors—whether writing in English or Japanese—are cited family name first to avoid confusion. Translated terms are used except in cases where there is no appropriate English equivalent; a glossary of terms may be found in Appendix A. Though illustrated handscrolls have been variously referred to as *e* (pictures), *ekotoba* (picture texts), and *emaki* (picture scrolls), this study follows the modern convention of referring to handscrolls solely as *emaki*. Finally, a majority of primary sources used for this study are collected in the *Shintei zōho kokushi taikō* (A New and Revised Compendium of Japanese History) series. In the interest of brevity, citations of these materials will employ the acronym SZKT.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The second half of the twelfth century witnessed a curious boom at the Heian Court in Japan—the production of illustrated handscrolls whose narratives centered on a specific type of historical figure. Within a span of fifty years or less, at least three such handscroll sets were produced: the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* (Illustrated Adventures of Minister Kibi in China) (see Appendix E, no. 1), the *Ban Dainagon emaki* (Illustrated Tale of Major Counselor Tomo) (see Appendix E, no. 2), and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* (Illustrated Legends of the Kitano Tenjin Shrine) (see Appendix E, no. 3). In each story, the protagonist is an aristocrat who had lived three-to-four-hundred years previous to the production of the handscroll set. Each of the men in question had died in exile, and each was—at one point or another—believed to have become a vengeful spirit. Moreover, in each case, the narrative presented in the handscroll differs from, or elides, the historical record. The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* presents an entirely fictional tale based only loosely on the lives of its protagonists; the *Ban Dainagon emaki* records a highly embellished version of a well-documented political scandal; and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* constructs a mythology from the details of the life and death of one of the period’s most accomplished bureaucrats.

This dissertation explores the production of these three handscrolls—which I categorize as belonging to a subgenre of narrative handscrolls that was produced only during this period and that I refer to as “vengeful spirit scrolls”—and focuses on the role of the re-imagining and

redployment of historical figures in these scrolls to processes of power consolidation in the late-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries. Taking a thematic approach, I examine these handscrolls from the perspective of their role in early literary movements to reinvent historical figures, in contemporaneous perceptions of supernatural creatures, and in ritual practices such as spirit pacification rites. I also consider the scrolls from within the social context of the collapse of the traditional courtly power base at the end of the Heian period (794-1185) and beginning of the Kamakura period (1185-1333). In so doing, my project explores two main research questions: how handscrolls from this period reflect the sociopolitical changes that were ongoing during their production and how they might have been used by members of the courtier class to negotiate the intersection of temporal and non-temporal power.

1.1 THE *KIBI DAIJIN NITTŌ EMAKI*

Of the three handscrolls, the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* has been the least studied. Dated to the latter half of the twelfth-century, many scholars believe it to have been created in the painting atelier of the retired emperor Go-Shirakawa (1127-1192; r. 1155-1158). This hypothesis is based on the fact that the scroll was found in the repository of the New Hachiman Shrine in Wakasa (present-day Fukui Prefecture), along with two other scroll sets—the *Hikohohodemi no Mikoto emaki* (Illustrated Legend of Hikohohodemi no Mikoto) and the *Ban Dainagon emaki*—in the mid-fifteenth century.¹ This attribution has been challenged, however, on the basis of stylistic differences between the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, which is

¹ The discovery of these scrolls is detailed in *Kanmon gyoki* (A Record of Things Seen and Heard), the diary Prince Fushimi no Miya Sadafusa (1372-1456), in the entry for the twenty-sixth day of the fourth month of 1441. *Kanmon gyoki*, vol. 2, *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū: Hoi* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1976-1988), 617.

universally accepted as having been commissioned by Go-Shirakawa.² Originally collected in a single continuous scroll, today the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, which is in the collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, has been remounted as four individual scrolls. The scroll tells the story of how the Japanese envoy to China, Kibi no Makibi (695-775), was imprisoned by his hosts, forced to compete in a series of contests designed to test his intelligence and skill, and assisted in his endeavors by the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro (698-770),³ who in the tale is Kibi no Makibi's predecessor.

The relative paucity of scholarship related to this scroll is likely due to the fact that it resides in an American collection. It is, in fact, one of the few major Japanese handscrolls to reside in a non-Japanese collection, and its sale in the early 1930s to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts resulted in the passing of laws that largely prohibited the overseas sale of objects that were deemed historically valuable.⁴ The location of this scroll outside the Japanese cultural sphere has resulted in its being comparatively overlooked by Japanese scholars, a consequence that has impacted its scholarship in the west.⁵ An article detailing the narrative, source material, and

² See Peter Otto Glum, "The 'Ban Dainagon Ekotoba,' the 'Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki,' and the 'Nenjū Gyōji Emaki': A Reassessment of the Evidence for the Work of Tokiwa Mitsunaga Embodied in Two Japanese Narrative Scroll Paintings of the Twelfth Century and One Presumably Close Copy" (PhD diss., New York University, 1981); and Kanda Fusae, "*Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* saikō," *Bukkyō geijutsu* 311 (July 2010): 9-39.

³ Sources differ on the year of Nakamaro's birth. Scholars such as Jan Fontein and Charlotte von Verschuer give the year as 698 while Joshua S. Mostow, following the attribution in the *Kokin wakashū mokuroku*—a commentary on the poetry collection *Kokinshū* written by Fujiwara no Nakazane (1057-1118)—has identified it as 701. Given that Nakamaro was old enough to travel to China in 717, I have followed Fontein and von Verschuer's attribution, which is the more generally accepted birth date.

⁴ Umezu Jirō, "*Kibi Daijin nittō e*," *Kokawadera engi e, Kibi Daijin nittō e*, ed. Umezu Jirō, vol. 6, *Shinshū Nihon emakimono zenshū*, ed. Tanaka Ichimasu (Tokyo, Kadokawa Shoten, 1977), 10. This is a reprint of the original, out-of-print *Nihon emakimono zenshū* series, which was edited by Hibino Takeo and published in 1962.

⁵ To date there have only been a handful of English-language studies on the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*; these include the aforementioned dissertation by Peter Otto Glum, as well as Robert T. Paine's "The Scroll of Kibi's Adventures in China: A Japanese Painting of the Late Twelfth Century, Attributed to Mitsunaga," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 31, no. 183 (February 1933): 2-12; Jan Fontein's "Kibi's Adventures in China: Facts, Fiction, and Their Meaning," *Boston Museum Bulletin* 66, no. 344 (1968): 49-68; and Edward J. Sullivan's "The Kibi and Ban Dainagon Scrolls: Two Masterpieces of Emakimono by Mitsunaga," *Marsyas* 17 (1976), 67.

formal characteristics of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* appeared in 1933,⁶ followed by a full-color spread with a brief descriptive blurb in 1956.⁷

The 1960s saw new approaches to the study of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* with a collection of essays published in the *Nihon emakimono zenshū* (The Complete Collection of Japanese Illustrated Handscrolls) series. In this volume, scholars Umezu Jirō and Mori Katsumi suggested that the Chinese setting of the handscroll was a significant component of the handscrolls' function, with Umezu proposing that the story served as a metaphor for Japanese feelings of cultural inadequacy vis-à-vis China⁸ and Mori proposing that it served to highlight the dangers of foreign travel during a period of social and political insularity.⁹ In this new interpretation, the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* functioned as a reflection of late-Heian-period attitudes toward China and foreign lands. This interpretation was partially challenged by Kawabara Masahiko, who argued that the handscroll—rather than acting as a mere reflection of Japanese/Chinese foreign relations in the twelfth century—must be seen as a propagandist tool whose intent was to curb the growing power of a single family of Onmyōdō masters.¹⁰ While these essays opened up vital new avenues for research, their analyses all stopped short of anything more than a cursory exploration of the handscrolls' production context.

In the early twenty-first century, some scholars turned their attention once more to the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*. Working largely within the framework of close formal analysis, historian Kuroda Hideo argued that the transportation of the scroll to and from Wakasa, as well

⁶ Yashiro Yukio, “*Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba*,” *Bijutsu kenkyū* 21 (October 1933): 1-21.

⁷ Matsushita Takaaki, “Zuhan yōkō: *Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba* (Beikoku Boston Bijutsukan),” *Bijutsu kenkyū* 183 (February 1956): 35-37.

⁸ Umezu, 10-16.

⁹ Mori Katsumi, “*Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba no yozai nitsuite*,” *Kokawadera engi e, Kibi Daijin nittō e*, ed. Umezu Jirō, vol. 6, *Shinshū Nihon emakimono zenshū*, ed. Tanaka Ichimasu (Tokyo, Kadokawa Shoten, 1977), 31-34.

¹⁰ Kawabara Masahiko, “*Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba no seiritsu to Onmyōdō*,” *Bunkashi kenkyū* 14 (1963): 15-28. The practice of Onmyōdō (lit. ‘the way of yin and yang’) and its relationship to the content and production context of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* will be discussed in Chapter Three.

as the unknown circumstances of its storage and display during the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries may have resulted in a mis-ordering of the episodes.¹¹ Disagreeing with Kuroda's assessment of the order of episodes, Kanda Fusae has argued for an entirely new assessment of when, and by whom, the handscroll set was produced, placing its production in the early Kamakura period and outside the court atelier of Go-Shirakawa.¹² These studies have contributed significantly to our understanding of the handscroll set's historical narrative, original provenance, and Heian-period production context. Nevertheless, they do not proceed from formal analysis into the broader examination of what the handscroll might reveal about the social, political, and religious trends of the period that is the main objective of this project.

1.2 THE *BAN DAINAGON EMAKI*

In contrast to the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the *Ban Dainagon emaki* has been well researched in Japan. The *Ban Dainagon emaki*, like the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, is one of three handscroll sets mentioned as being found in the New Hachiman Shrine of Wakasa in the first half of the fifteenth century. Once mounted as a single handscroll, it has since been remounted as three scrolls and resides in the collection of the Idemitsu Museum of Art. It relates the history of how the Major Counselor Tomo no Yoshio (811-866),¹³ consumed with jealousy for his rival

¹¹ Kuroda Hideo, '*Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*' *no nazo* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2005).

¹² Kanda's assessment is in contrast to the generally accepted theory of the handscrolls production. Kanda, 24-32.

¹³ Major Counselor Tomo no Yoshio and Ban Dainagon refer to the same person. The character 伴 can be read as either *tomo* or *ban*.

Minamoto no Makoto (810-868), set fire to the Ōtenmon in 866¹⁴ in an attempt to frame Makoto and have him banished, but was caught for the crime and exiled himself.

As is typical of Japanese art historiography, the earliest surveys of the *Ban Dainagon emaki*—which date to the 1930s—were largely focused on visual analysis and questions of attribution and provenance. One notable example of this was an article published in 1939 by Minamoto Toyomune, one of the foremost Japanese art historians of the twentieth century. Examining the images and calligraphy of the handscroll, Minamoto estimated its probable date of production and connected it—by means of its pictorial and calligraphic style—to other illustrated handscrolls of the period—most notably the *Hikohohodemi no Mikoto emaki*, which featured both images and text that Minamoto determined were painted and written by the same set of individuals.¹⁵ Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, articles on the *Ban Dainagon emaki* appeared steadily. Many of these articles focused on the use of the scroll as a means of deriving information about Heian-period customs and manners, clothing and uniform conventions, and uses of weapons and armor. This information was used to ascertain the scrolls' date and probable commissioners. In his 1952 article, Suzuki Keizō argued that the uniforms worn by the firefighters in the scroll place the date of the scroll after 1165,¹⁶ an assessment that has been universally accepted by scholars who largely attribute the creation of the scroll, like the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, to the painting atelier of Go-Shirakawa.

In 1962, Kondo Yoshihiro linked the production of the handscroll to a fire that devastated the capital in 1177, arguing that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* was commissioned and created after

¹⁴ The Ōtenmon was the gate in the Imperial Palace Complex (*daidairi*) in Heian-kyō (present-day Kyoto). It was the entrance into the Administrative Complex (*chōdō-in*), which housed the Great Audience Hall (*daigokuden*), and lay directly north of the Suzakumon—the gate into the Imperial Palace Complex itself.

¹⁵ Minamoto Toyomune, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba nitsuite*,” *Shirin* 24, no. 2 (Spring 1939): 334-353.

¹⁶ Suzuki Keizō, “Fuzoku kara mita *Ban Dainagon ekotoba sakusha* to hissha,” *Bijutsushi* 7 (December 1952). Quoted in Komatsu Shigemi, *Nihon emaki shūkō*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989), 125-126.

this fire as an act of spirit pacification.¹⁷ In this interpretation, the scroll functioned as a means of placating the vengeful spirit of Tomo no Yoshio through the portrayal of his story in a sympathetic light. This argument was expanded in 1991 by Komine Kazuaki, who articulated a number of narrative and visual elements in support of the theory.¹⁸ One primary component of Komine's argument was the identification of key figures in the scroll who had been a point of contention since the 1930s.¹⁹ This line of inquiry would remain a core component of scholarly investigations of the *Ban Dainagon emaki*²⁰ and a crucial piece of evidence for proponents of the spirit pacification theory like Matsuo Kenji.²¹

Though the spirit pacification theory has been a popular hypothesis for the intended function of the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, it has recently been reevaluated in favor of other interpretations. Yamamoto Yōko has argued against such a conclusion, instead asserting that the handscroll set is better understood in company with such twelfth-century scrolls as the *Genji monogatari emaki* (Illustrated Tale of Genji) and the *Chōjū jinbutsu giga* (Scroll of Frolicking Animals and People), which she asserts were produced largely for the purposes of viewer appreciation.²² By contrast, Yamamoto Satomi, who also rejects the spirit pacification theory, has suggested that the scroll functions as a Buddhist parable—showing the comingling of

¹⁷ Kondo Yoshihiro, “Ōtenmon no hi—*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* no seikaku,” *Bijutsushi* 44 (March 1962). Quoted in Yamamoto Satomi, “*Ban Dainagon emaki* ni okeru keisetsu no riyō—Tomo no Yoshio tei ni egakareta hakai no mochifu,” *Chūsei kaiga no matorikkusu* 2, ed. Sano Midori et al. (Tokyo: Seikansha, 2014), 362-363.

¹⁸ Komine Kazuaki, *Setsuwa no mori: tengu, tōzoku, ikei no dōke* (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1991).

¹⁹ Yamane Yūzo, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* oboegaki: sono enshutsu to nazo no jinbutsu nitsuite,” *Kakuhō Ban Dainagon emaki* (Tokyo: Idemitsu Bijutsukan, 1986): 7-10.

²⁰ See, for example, Takemura Shinji, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba*: ‘nazo no jinbutsu’ wo megutte,” *Nihon bungaku* 43, no. 1 (January 1994): 60-65; Kuroda Hideo, *Nazotoki Ban Dainagon emaki* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2002); and Kuroda Taizō, “Arata na hakken, fukumarū nazo: *Ban Dainagon emaki*,” *Kokuhō Ban Dainagon emaki* (Tokyo: Idemitsu Bijutsukan, 2006), 98-100. (This is a later edition of the 1986 volume referenced above that includes new research.)

²¹ Matsuo Kenji, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* no ‘nazo’ wo toku—mō hitotsu no goryō shinkō,” *Nihon no bukkyō* 3 (Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1995), 93-108. For an English translation of this essay, see “Explaining the ‘Mystery’ of the Ban Dainagon ekotoba,” trans. Kevin Gray Carr, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, no. 1-2 (2001): 106-131.

²² Yamamoto Yōko, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu no saikentō: wakiyaku no kaokatachi hyōgen wo chūshin ni,” *Meisei Daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, *Nihon bunka gakubu, gengo bunka gakubu* 13 (March 2005): 41-55.

Buddhist law and royal law that makes for good government.²³ Of these theories, I consider the first too reductive. While it is highly likely that handscrolls were produced for the purpose of simple entertainment, and that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* may have been appreciated in that way, viewer enjoyment and ulterior motives are not mutually exclusive. Yamamoto Satomi's contention that the handscroll contained didactic qualities tied to newly emergent Buddhist beliefs is far more persuasive. At the same time, her examination of the scroll does not consider the intersection of spiritual and political authority that is implied in the handscroll, and this dissertation will expand upon the significance of representing the human actors in this handscroll in varying positions of spiritual power.

1.3 THE KITANO TENJIN ENGI EMAKI

Given that the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* is a popular and frequently-copied handscroll, studies of it are complicated by the presence of more than thirty extant copies—ranging in date from the early thirteenth century to the nineteenth century. The scroll sets narrate the tale of the life, death, and posthumous revenge of the ninth-century bureaucrat Sugawara no Michizane (845-903), who was framed as a traitor and exiled to Kyushu and who was believed to have later returned to the capital, Heian-kyō, in the form of a vengeful spirit to punish his adversaries. Though each set of *Tenjin* scrolls generally follows the same narrative chronology, they differ in terms of their selection of episodes and use of codified imagery. The genealogical relationship between each of the scrolls has been thoroughly mapped. Murase Miyeko has categorized the

²³ Yamamoto Satomi, 361-382.

various scrolls as belonging to one of three categories, which she has designated Group A, Group B, and Group C.²⁴ More recently, Suga Miho conducted a survey of the handscrolls belonging to group A. These include the Kenkyū (ca. 1194), Jōkyū (ca. 1200-1219), and Metropolitan Museum of Art (ca. mid-13th century) versions, which constitute some of the most consistently studied versions of the handscroll.²⁵

Art historical examinations of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* have been almost exclusively focused on formal analysis, often to explore the genealogical relationships between scrolls in different groups²⁶ or for the purposes of adducing the scroll's religious imagery as an example of the development of medieval iconography and religious practices.²⁷ Consideration of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* within the context of the socio-political contexts of the period has generally been presented through the lens of literary criticism or historical inquiry.²⁸ The definitive biography in English of the handscroll's protagonist, Sugawara no Michizane, is Robert Borgen's *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court*, the final chapter of which explores the development of Tenjin worship and includes a brief reference to the role of

²⁴ Murase Miyeko, "The *Tenjin Engi* Scrolls—A Study of Their Genealogical Relationship," (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1962).

²⁵ Suga Miho, *Kitano Tenjin no keifu*, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2004). See also: Yoshida Yūji, "Tenjin engi e shoki no mondai: Metropolitan Bijutsukan bon Dōken junreki no dan wo megutte," MUSEUM 284 (November 1974): 14-21; Shinbo Tōru, "Jōkyūbon *Kitano Tenjin engi* no hakubyō shitaie nitsuite," MUSEUM 464 (November 1989): 4-11; Tamamushi Reiko, "*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* ni miru jigoku e no kenkyū: Jōkyūbon, Metropolitan bon wo chūshin ni," *Shikashima bijutsu zaidan nenpō* 10 (1993): 179-184.

²⁶ Wakasugi Junji, "Shōkabon *Kitano Tenjin engi* e nitsuite: shinshutsu dankan no shōkai to Kōanbon to no kankei no kōsatsu," *Gakusō: Kyoto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan* 9 (1987): 105-152; Suga Miho, "Kōanbon 'Kitano Tenjin engi emaki' saikō: keitō shohon no kōsatsu kara," *Bijutsushi* 146 (March 1999): 243-267.

²⁷ Nakano Genzō, "Tendaishū no rokudō e," *Bukkyō geijutsu* 172 (May 1987): 91-116; Shinbo Tōru, *Emaki 'Kitano Tenjin engi,' Nihon no bijutsu* 299 (Tokyo: Shinbundō, 1991); Kajitani Ryōji, "Rokudō e no tasai na sekai: yutaka na sōzōryoku de rinne wo egaku," *Nihon no kokuhō* 41 (November 18, 1997): 24-26; Sara L. Sumpter, "The Shōkyū Version of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*: A Brief Introduction to its Content and Function," *Eras Journal* 11 (2009): <http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/eras/files/2014/02/ssumpter.pdf> (accessed October 10, 2015).

²⁸ See, for example, Michele Marra, "The Michizane Legend as Seen in the Nō Drama, *Raiden*," *Osaka Gaikokugo Daigaku gakuhō* 64 (1984): 437-446.

illustrated handscrolls in the proliferation of this cult.²⁹ Herbert Plutschow has argued that the development of Tenjin worship coincided with the consolidation of Northern Fujiwara power in the tenth century.³⁰ More recently, art historian Ikumi Kaminishi has begun to explore the political culture of the period in which the earliest extant version of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—the Jōkyū version—was produced, arguing that visual components in the scroll reveal the political motivations of the people involved in its creation.³¹ This dissertation will expand upon this new approach to interpretation.

1.4 METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* have been the subject of a variety of scholarly investigations that have explored questions regarding the scrolls' source material, content, date and milieu of production, history of ownership, and possible functions. They have not yet, however, been considered in connection with one another on the basis of their narrative similarities or from the perspective of the specific historical context surrounding the period in which they were produced. Moreover, though scholars of Japanese art history have often noted the connection between the presence of social discord and the appearance of the supernatural in cultural products, analyses of this phenomenon have been

²⁹ Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994). Originally published in 1986.

³⁰ Herbert Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion – Goryō Cult and the *Kitano Tenjin Engi* and *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*," *Florilegium Japonicum: Studies Presented to Olof G. Lidin on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1996), 215-228; see also, "Tragic Victims in Japanese Religion, Politics, and the Arts," *Anthropoetics* 6, no. 2 (Fall 2000/Winter 2001): <http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap0602/japan.htm> (accessed September 22, 2015).

³¹ Kaminishi Ikumi, "The Political Culture of a Scroll: Jien's Appropriation of Kitano Tenjin," *Ars Orientalis* 44 (2014): 111-133.

confined to the early-modern and modern periods.³² As of yet, an exploration of the relationship between sociopolitical strife and supernatural imagery in the late Heian period has not been attempted. My dissertation addresses these gaps in the scholarship.

This study involves not just close visual analysis that is the cornerstone of art historical practice, but also a literary analysis of the narrative tropes at work in the handscrolls that complements my examination of the iconography depicted. Additionally, I triangulate between a wide range of textual sources—including historical records (including diaries, court documents, and official and unofficial histories), examples of classical literature (*setsuwa*,³³ poetry, and plays), and secondary source studies of ritual practice on the Japanese archipelago and the Asian continent—in order to situate the objects under discussion within the period of production. Finally, where appropriate, I further contextualize these objects by considering them from the perspective of such theoretical frameworks as secrecy theory and monster theory, the latter of which is of particular concern to this study.

The Japanese of the Heian period were highly superstitious; one prominent belief was that social disharmony was caused by spirits who had been angered by the careless actions of mankind. The noted Japanese folklorist, Komatsu Kazuhiko, has developed a theory of

³² See Melinda Takeuchi, “Kuniyoshi’s ‘Minamoto Raikō’ and ‘The Earth Spider’: Demons and Protest in Late Tokugawa Japan,” *Ars Orientalis* 17 (1987): 5-38; Noriko T. Reider, *Tales of the Supernatural in Early Modern Japan: Kaidan, Akinari, Ugetsu Monogatari, Japanese Studies* 16 (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002); and Michael Dylan Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

³³ *Setsuwa* refers to the genre of Japanese tales that were widely collected in the Heian and Kamakura periods. The term *setsuwa* was not used to describe the classical and early medieval story collections until the late-nineteenth century. For a comprehensive overview of the both the term and the story collections it ultimately came to refer to see Marian Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past: Sixty-Two Stories from a Medieval Japanese Collection* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 1-23; Michelle Osterfeld Li, *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setsuwa Tales* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 15-30; and Burton Watson and Shirane Haruo, *The Demon of Agi Bridge and Other Japanese Tales* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 1-9.

pacification that accounts for this superstition.³⁴ In his view, spirits are neither inherently benevolent nor inherently malevolent; instead, their character is liminal and capable of shifting in response to human actions. As Komatsu has argued, the only difference between a spirit that becomes a *kami* (god) and one that becomes a *yōkai* (specter; monster; goblin) is whether or not ritual pacification has been undertaken on its behalf. This liminal quality is equally recognized in contemporary monster theory, which holds that the supernatural, the monstrous, and the strange are always symbolic of the volatile cultural body itself.³⁵ The traditional view of socio-political power is one where the exercise of said power is strictly separated along temporal and divine lines. However, the prevailing superstitions of the Heian period about the interaction of spirits with everyday life and the sudden, late-Heian boom in “vengeful spirit scrolls” suggest that this view must give way to a new framework where power and authority are connected to both the realm of men and the realm of spirits.

My examination of these objects was complicated by a number of factors. First, there are underlying discrepancies between the three primary objects under discussion. In contrast to the protagonists of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* (Abe no Nakamaro) and the *Ban Dainagon emaki* (Tomo no Yoshio), the protagonist of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* (Sugawara no Michizane) was a hugely popular cult figure. As a result, the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* enjoyed a completely different historical afterlife than either the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* or the *Ban Dainagon emaki*. Furthermore, there were differences in the period of production—short, but significant—that serve to complicate a comparative study of them. The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Ban Dainagon emaki* were made in the late-1170s or early-1180s, while the first copies of the *Kitano*

³⁴ Komatsu Kazuhiko, “Kibutsu no yōkai—tsukumogami wo megutte,” *Zusetsu hyakki yagyō emaki wo yomu* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1999), 87-96; and *Kami ni natta hitobito* (Tokyo: Tankōsha, 2001), 5-17.

³⁵ Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Monster Culture (Seven Theses),” *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 3-25.

Tenjin engi emaki were made no earlier than the mid-1190s. I ultimately determined that the narrative points of commonality were sufficient to allow the grouping together of these handscrolls for the purposes of this study, but it is an issue that I never resolved and would benefit from future study. Another challenge presented itself in the numerous gaps existing in the historical record. The lack of conclusive evidence made certain conclusions absolutely impossible beyond conjecture, and, as a result, I was occasionally forced into the position of disproving previously posited conclusions without having anything to put in their place.

Nevertheless, the value of this study does not so much depend upon the impregnability of any one interpretation that is presented—convincing though I hope mine are. Instead, the value lies in the mechanics of the approach. Scholars of Japanese art history have examined the historical records related to the protagonists of these handscrolls. As of yet, however, no one has thought to ask why the stories that are depicted in the scrolls are so different from the historical record or what those differences might tell us about the society in which they were made. That focus is what enables a reading of these objects beyond a purely connoisseurial perspective. These handscrolls were not made in a vacuum, and they operated on multiple levels.

Heian-period handscrolls are currently underserved, particularly in English-language studies and from a social-history perspective. While it is almost certain that handscrolls were made throughout the Heian period, we only have examples from the twelfth century. Most of those are dated to the second-half of the twelfth century, when the Heian period was bleeding into the Kamakura period. As such, these objects occupy their own individual niche in time and space, and consequently their value as historical evidence has been somewhat misunderstood. It is the project of this dissertation to rectify this misunderstanding and present a methodological framework for the future study of these fascinating and historically valuable objects.

1.5 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This introduction is followed by three thematic chapters. Chapter 2, “The Reinvention of Historical Figures as a Legitimation of Political Agendas,” considers how the narratives of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* engage in the appropriation of the past. Working with each scroll as a case study, I begin with an overview of the biographies of the scrolls' main protagonists—Abe no Nakamaro, Tomo no Yoshio, and Sugawara no Michizane, respectively—analyzing the extant historical documents that were written about them and the periods in which they lived. I then contrast the recorded “facts” with their subsequent fictionalizations and the visual representation of those fictions in the illustrated handscroll format, examining how the deployment of long-dead historical figures in each of the handscrolls reflects the evolving perspectives of the people who commissioned them.

Through comparisons of official records with the narrativized accounts of them written centuries after the fact, I explore how differing agendas—both broad and narrow—impacted the commissioning and creation of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*. In each case, I argue that the reinvention of each story's protagonist functioned to support specific social or political agendas in the late-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries. The retelling of historical tales in these scrolls functioned as a stratagem for expressing ideas about Japan's relationship to its neighbors and peripheries, for reminding rivals of the dangers inherent in fomenting dissent, and for legitimating political authority.

In Chapter 3, “Supernatural Sight as an Emblem of Authority,” I turn my attention to the phenomenon of supernatural creatures and their depiction in illustrated handscrolls, exploring how the ability to see the unseen or compel the visual materialization of supernatural creatures functioned as a marker of social and political authority in early Japanese literature and art. For

this chapter, I focus on the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, examining how both scrolls utilize similar forms of iconographic imagery to convey targeted messages about the spiritual and political power of specific aristocratic families and suggesting that the handscrolls may have been produced in response to the contemporaneous arbitration of aristocratic lineage disputes.

In the first section, I trace a motif known as the “magic competition” from its development on the East Asian mainland to its transmission to Japan by means of early Buddhist texts and art objects and explore how this motif was used in both the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* to illustrate pivotal confrontations in the stories. I then examine the origins and development of the conceptualization and iconography of *oni* (ogre; demon)—a common iconographic figure used to depict vengeful spirits or their avatars—and how the use of said iconography relates to theories of secrecy and cultural capital, arguing that the representation of supernatural sight in both *setsuwa* tales and illustrated handscrolls of this period served as a symbol of temporal power that could be deployed in a propagandistic manner to assist in the achievement of worldly goals.

In Chapter 4, the final thematic chapter, titled “Spirit Pacification as a Tool of Political Control,” I explore the phenomenon of spirit pacification and how illustrated handscrolls produced in the late-Heian and early-Kamakura periods functioned both as propagandistic tools of this endeavor and ritualistic embodiments of it. I begin with an examination of how certain members of the early Heian court used spirit pacification practices to consolidate and legitimate their socio-political power over commoners and aristocrats from rival families. Taking the deification of Sugawara no Michizane as my focus, I consider the process by which the Heian court moved systematically to adopt and therefore control populist spiritual practices in the tenth

century and present notable examples of this process—including the uprising of Taira no Masakado (d. 940) in 939 and the spirit pacification gatherings of folk practitioners outside the capital in 945—before demonstrating how the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—produced centuries later—was utilized to further solidify this kind of elite social control in the early-thirteenth century.

I then consider the evolution of spirit pacification rituals over time. Through a close visual analysis of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, I explore how illustrated scrolls functioned as ritual objects, arguing that such objects were seen as possessing the power to placate dangerous spirits through their simulacrated recreation of pacification rites in pictorial form and were produced in part to perform such an act of placation. In the final section of the chapter, I critique the application of spirit pacification theories to the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, considering the scroll from the perspective of shifting spiritual beliefs and showing how the growing importance of the Pure Land Buddhist sect resulted in a use of illustrated handscrolls as tools for the dissemination of newly popular religious philosophies.

2.0 THE REINVENTION OF HISTORICAL FIGURES AS A LEGITIMATION OF POLITICAL AGENDAS

An oft-quoted idiomatic expression holds that history is written by the victors. This statement is especially apt when considering the illustrated handscrolls that were produced by early Japanese aristocrats in the late-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries. In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, *Ban Dainagon emaki*, and *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the histories of the scrolls' protagonists are by turns invented, embellished, and mythologized by people who lived long after they were dead and could no longer speak for themselves. The development of each of these imagined histories was not a haphazard occurrence but rather a deliberate act on the part of political parties at the late-Heian and early-Kamakura period court, undertaken to serve multiple purposes—including the promotion of a sense of pride in native Japanese cultural traditions, the legitimization of imperial political clout, and the reiteration of aristocratic power in the midst of hierarchical upheaval.

2.1 ABE NO NAKAMARO AND THE *KIBI DAIJIN NITTŌ EMAKI*

In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro appears on a viciously wind-swept night in the form of an *oni* (see Appendix E, no. 1.4).³⁶ Despite his ominous guise, Nakamaro does not kill the main character—Kibi no Makibi, a Japanese envoy who has been sent to the Chinese court—and instead agrees to help him escape his Chinese captors and return home to Japan. The subject matter of the handscroll set is quite unique. For though the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* takes actual historical figures as its protagonists, much as the *Ban Dainagon emaki* and *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* do, it places them at the center of a patently fictional tale—a historical fantasy whose narrative elements differ almost entirely from the historical facts that have been recorded.

To date only a handful of scholars have studied the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*. Of the theories that surround the reasons for the handscroll's creation, the most developed of them is the idea introduced by Kawabara Masahiko and championed by Jan Fontein, that the scrolls serve as a metaphorical representation of the comparative efficacy of two rival Onmyōdō clans—the Kamo and the Abe. In this interpretation, the story becomes a parable of magical competition between Kibi³⁷ and the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro, who helps Kibi circumvent the plots of the Chinese court. The two protagonists, Kibi and Nakamaro, represent the rival Kamo and Abe clans, respectively, and the Kamo clan is shown as ascendant over the Abe clan through the

³⁶ The term *oni* and its complex meaning, as well as its visual and literary significance, is discussed in Chapter 3.

³⁷ Kibi no Makibi's original name was Shimotsumichi no Makibi. Although this dissertation follows the standard convention to refer to pre-modern historical figures by their personal names rather than family names, in the case of Minister Kibi no Makibi, he will be referred to as Kibi—rather than by his personal name Makibi—in order to maintain parity with the title he is given in the handscroll: “Minister Kibi.”

depiction of Kibi as the more powerful of the two characters.³⁸

However, this evaluation assumes that Abe no Nakamaro is merely the tool of Kibi no Makibi, ignoring the possibility that Nakamaro is actually a powerful figure in his own right, whose assistance is integral to Kibi's success, and that his depiction actually stems from heretofore unconsidered social factors. Abe no Nakamaro is not subordinate to Kibi no Makibi in this tale but is, instead, Kibi's equal—a collaborator rather than a servant. As the star of his own narrative, a narrative crafted by court poets in the tenth century to account for his failure to return home from China, Nakamaro's role becomes a far more complex aspect of the story than has been previously noted. This reassessment of his character in the light of literary history enables a new interpretation of why this handscroll was created and a new framework for the analysis of early-medieval handscrolls from a socio-political perspective.

2.1.1 Abe no Nakamaro in Fact and Fiction

Abe no Nakamaro has come down in history as a noted poet and scholar. Nevertheless, the actual details of his life are scant. His trip to China for study in 717 is recorded in the *Shoku Nihongi* (Continuing Chronicles of Japan, ca. 797).³⁹ However, though he traveled to China as a student, Nakamaro did not return to Japan in 735 with his fellow students, who included Kibi no Makibi.

³⁸ Onmyōdō (the way of yin and yang), how the practice functioned at the Heian court, and an in-depth exploration of Kawabara and Fontein's argument of how the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* functioned as an illustration of a lineage dispute between two separate clans of practitioners is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

³⁹ *Shoku Nihongi*, vol. 2, SZKT, 19. The events of Nakamaro's life are summarized in the *Nihon kodai jinmei jiten*, vol. 1, ed. Takeuchi Rizō et al (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1958-1977), 30. For English-language summaries of Nakamaro's life see Jan Fontein, "Kibi's Adventures in China: Facts, Fiction, and Their Meaning," *Boston Museum Bulletin* 66, no. 344 (1968): 52-53; Peter Otto Glum, "The 'Ban Dainagon Emaki,' the 'Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki,' and the 'Nenjū Gyōji Emaki': A Reassessment of the Evidence for the Work of Tokiwa Mitsunaga Embodied in Two Japanese Narrative Scroll Paintings of the Twelfth Century and One Presumably Close Copy" (PhD diss., New York University, 1981), 272-274; and Joshua S. Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart: The Hyakunin Isshu in Word and Image* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 161.

Instead he remained at the court of the Tang emperor and built a life for himself there. The circumstances of Nakamaro's life in Tang China are corroborated by the mid-eleventh century text *Yangwengong tanyuan* (Gentleman Yang's Commentary on the Court), which was written by the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127) statesman Yang Yi (940-1020). That text relates that Nakamaro took a position in the Tang government after passing the civil service examinations, and that he only tried to return to his native country in 753, more than thirty-five years later, when the participants in a new mission to China—which once again included Kibi, who had become an envoy—were preparing for the voyage back to Japan. Nakamaro's return to Japan was prevented when foul weather drove his ship away from the convoy and shipwrecked it on the coast of Annam (present-day Vietnam).⁴⁰ After this unsuccessful attempt, Nakamaro appears to have made no further efforts to return to Japan, but instead resumed his service in the Tang government and lived out his days in the company of such well-respected literary figures as the poets Wang Wei (699-759) and Li Bai (701-762).⁴¹ He died on the continent in 770.

In contrast to this, the Abe no Nakamaro of the late-twelfth-century handscroll *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and its source material, the *Kibi nittō no kan no koto* (Kibi's Adventures in China) entry in the *Gōdanshō* (The Ōe Conversations, ca. 1110),⁴² is a nearly fictional character.⁴³ In order to understand the differences between the factual and fictional Nakamaro, it is first necessary to provide a narration of the story as it appears in the *Gōdanshō*—thought to be

⁴⁰ The *Yangwengong tanyuan* is quoted in Charlotte von Verschuer, "Japan's Foreign Relations 600 to 1200 A.D.: A Translation from *Zenrin Kokuhōki*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 54.1 (Spring 1999): 30.

⁴¹ von Verschuer, 30n63.

⁴² Although the *Gōdanshō* has been attributed to the eleventh-century statesmen Ōe no Masafusa (1041-1111), it was not compiled by him but by a student of Masafusa's from his [the student's] recollection of the stories that Masafusa told him. For more on the history of the text, see Marian Ury, "The Ōe Conversations," *Monumenta Nipponica* 48, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 359-380.

⁴³ For a complete translation of the text of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* as well as the sections of the *Gōdanshō* that it draws from see Robert T. Paine, "The Scroll of Kibi's Adventures in China (Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki): A Japanese Painting of the Late Twelfth Century, Attributed to Mitsunaga," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 31, no. 183 (February 1933): 2-10. For translations of additional selected episodes from the *Gōdanshō*, see Ury.

the earliest source for the story.⁴⁴ The story begins with Kibi no Makibi's arrival on the continent (see Appendix E, no. 1.1). He is greeted by the Chinese emissaries, who are immediately taken aback by his great learning and erudition. Fearing that Kibi will make fools of them if he is presented at court, they take him to an isolated tower and imprison him there in the hopes that the *oni* that haunts the tower will kill and eat him (see Appendix E, no. 1.2). The *oni* does, indeed, come to the tower, but Kibi is able to subdue it. He casts a protective incantation that makes him invisible to the *oni*, compels it to appear before him in formal Japanese court attire (see Appendix E, no. 1.4), and learns its story. The *oni* turns out to be the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro, once an envoy to China, who had traveled to the continent in the years before Kibi's arrival. During that time, he was imprisoned in the same manner and location as Kibi, and after starving to death his vengeful spirit lingered in the tower and ultimately began to haunt the place.

As Kibi and Nakamaro talk, Kibi learns of Nakamaro's concern for his family back in Japan and is able to ease the spirit's mind by telling him that the members of the Abe clan are alive and flourishing. After telling Nakamaro this news, Kibi explains his situation to the spirit. Nakamaro immediately offers to help Kibi survive the confrontation with the Chinese. When the Chinese return to the tower the following morning, they find Kibi alive—much to their consternation and surprise (see Appendix E, no. 1.5). Having failed to eliminate Kibi, the Chinese proceed to attempt the next best thing—they seek to shame him with a series of intellectual tasks that he is expected to fail. From this point on, the story narrates a series of

⁴⁴ Paine, 2. The text of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the story from the *Gōdānshō* do not match exactly. The *Gōdānshō* text is written in *kanbun* (Japanese-stylized Chinese) while the text of the illustrated handscroll is written in classical Japanese. Additionally, an intermediary text, known as the *Kibi Daijin monogatari*, is thought to have bridged the gap between the *Gōdānshō* and the handscroll set. See Umezu Jirō, “*Kibi Daijin nittō e*,” *Kokawadera engi e, Kibi Daijin nittō e*, ed. Umezu Jirō, vol. 6, *Shinshū Nihon emakimono zenshū*, ed. Tanaka Ichimasu (Tokyo, Kadokawa Shoten, 1977), 10-11.

contests between Kibi and the Chinese, each of which he able to overcome with assistance from the spirit of Nakamaro, who throughout the rest of the story, acts as a guide—both of terrain and of culture—and works to collect items—such as food, writing supplies, and, ultimately, a *sugoroku* (double-sixes)⁴⁵ board and game pieces—necessary to Kibi’s success.⁴⁶

From this it is clear that the character of Abe no Nakamaro in the fictional tale differs quite strikingly from the historical counterpart upon whom he was presumably modeled.⁴⁷ No longer just a student who traveled to China as part of a group of scholars, the Nakamaro of the tale has been elevated to the role of an envoy to China—one who traveled to the continent in the years before Kibi no Makibi’s trip, rather than alongside him, and was treated brutally there. The Nakamaro of the story does not become an eminent expat statesman and poet who enjoys the company of some of the most celebrated members of the Tang dynasty intelligentsia; he dies pitifully and in great regret, far from his loved ones, and is condemned to linger on in a torturous half-life as a vengeful spirit. Thus, a survey of the historical records and the fictional story reveals only meager points of commonality between the two Nakamaros. In fact, the historical and the fictional Abe no Nakamaro are alike in just two ways: they both traveled to China from Japan and they both failed to return home after their sojourns. This dissimilarity has been the subject of inquiry by scholars, who have seen in these disjunctions between “fact” and “fiction” a

⁴⁵ *Sugoroku* is a game similar to backgammon. It is thought to have brought to Japan from the continent and was present on the archipelago as early as the seventh century. It was sometimes associated with divination practices as in an anecdote from the *Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror), a late-eleventh or early-twelfth-century document that chronicles the life and times of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1027), in which Fujiwara no Morosuke uses the game to divine the gender of his daughter’s unborn child. Helen Craig McCullough, *Ōkagami, the Great Mirror, Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1027) and His Times: A Study and Translation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 137. See also Suzuki Yui, “Twanging Bows and Throwing Rice: Warding Off Evil in Medieval Japanese Birth Scenes,” *Artibus Asiae* 74, no. 1 (2014): 17-41.

⁴⁶ *Gōdanshō*, in *Gōdanshō, Chūdaishō, Fukego*, vol. 32, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, ed. Gōtō Akio et al (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 63-69.

⁴⁷ Kawabara has argued that the “Abe” of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* refers to an unnamed figure that is meant to represent the Abe clan as a whole. Kawabara’s theories are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

method for divining the handscrolls' purpose, and two main theories have emerged: 1) that the handscroll alludes to a lineage dispute between Onmyōdō clans and 2) that the handscroll symbolizes late-Heian period Japanese attitudes toward the foreign.

2.1.2 Abe no Nakamaro in the *Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki*

As noted in Chapter 1, the primary proponent of the theory that the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* is meant to represent a lineage dispute between the Kamo and Abe clans was Kawabara Masahiko. In his 1963 article, Kawabara argued that the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* was intended to be an origin story that cast Kibi no Makibi as the progenitor of Onmyōdō practitioners in Japan.⁴⁸ In Kawabara's interpretation of the story, Nakamaro is in a subservient position to Kibi—who is represented as the magically superior, and therefore ultimately more successful, of the two characters, and this subservient position is intended to indicate the lesser position of the Abe clan in relationship to the Kamo clan. Jan Fontein subsequently extended Kawabara's argument with an extensive analysis of the key episodes in the handscroll and came to the same conclusion.⁴⁹ However, while the narrative elements of the handscroll support the argument that the story is intended to denote a lineage dispute, the story itself and the illustrations that accompany it do not entirely support this argument.⁵⁰ In the tale, and its illustrated handscroll, Abe no Nakamaro is an integral character. He is not magically powerful in the way that Kibi is, but he is certainly presented as capable. Furthermore, throughout the story it is clear that, powerful or not, Kibi

⁴⁸ Kawabara Masahiko, "Kibi Daijin nittō emaki no seiritsu to on'yōdō," *Bunkashi Kenkyū* 14 (1963): 15-28.

⁴⁹ Fontein, 49-68.

⁵⁰ The lineage dispute theory will be discussed in Chapter 3.

would never have escaped the clutches of the Chinese court without the assistance of Abe no Nakamaro.

In the first episode of the tale, where the two characters meet for the first time, Nakamaro graciously offers his help in exchange for Kibi's kindness to him in relating the fate of his relatives. In the second episode, Nakamaro leads Kibi to the Chinese palace so that he can learn about the text he will be expected to recite (see Appendix E, no. 1.6)—Kibi only knows of the Chinese plan because of Nakamaro's reconnoitering activities—and provides him with the materials he needs to outwit his captors in this venture (see Appendix E, no. 1.8). In the third episode, Nakamaro explains the rules of *go* (Chinese chess) to Kibi (see Appendix E, no. 1.12) so that he may successfully compete with a Chinese master (see Appendix E, no. 1.11).⁵¹ In the fifth episode, Nakamaro provides Kibi with the *sugoroku* board, dice, and shaker that he needs to cast a spell that causes an eclipse of the sun and the moon—the action that finally induces the Chinese to let him return to Japan.⁵² Nakamaro's assistance is missing only from the fourth episode,⁵³ when Kibi must read the “Wild Horse Terrace Poem” (*yaba taishi*),⁵⁴ and while Nakamaro is missing because of his capture by Chinese magicians, the fact that he returns to aid Kibi in the end demonstrates—in contrast to Kawabara and Fontein's claims about Nakamaro's inferior abilities—that he is strong enough and clever enough to escape his Chinese captors and

⁵¹ Though Kibi ultimately must resort to magic to defeat the far superior Chinese *go* player, it is obvious from the text that he would not have been able to play the game at all without Nakamaro's assistance.

⁵² The final episodes of the tale are not part of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*; they are thought to have been lost at some point during the handscroll's history.

⁵³ One might argue that Nakamaro disappears from the fourth episode in order to allow the Japanese *kami* of Sumiyoshi to make an appearance in the tale. The significance of this inclusion is discussed below.

⁵⁴ The “Wild Horse Terrace Poem” is a riddle poem that was used for prognostication during the Heian period. The characters for each word are laid out in haphazard order and can only be read correctly by someone who already knows the verse or who has received divine guidance. See Kazuaki Komine, ‘*Yaba taishi*’ *no nazo: rekishi jujutsu toshite no miraiki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003).

fulfill his commitment to Kibi.⁵⁵

Certain visual elements in the illustrated handscroll also hint at Nakamaro's importance to the narrative. One notable example is the scene where Nakamaro and Kibi travel to the Chinese imperial palace to learn about the text that Kibi will be expected to recite (see Appendix E, no. 1.6). In that sequence Kibi is led by Nakamaro, who flies ahead in a clear demonstration of superior knowledge about Chinese geography. Rather than acting as a subordinate, Nakamaro takes a central role. If this is indeed a narrative in which Kibi no Makibi is recast as the founder of Japanese Onmyōdō, Abe no Nakamaro might then be said to have been portrayed in the role of a guide—an artistic choice that complicates the lineage dispute theory and whose implications will be discussed in Chapter 3. Such a sympathetic rendering of Nakamaro is compatible with the literary representation of Abe no Nakamaro that was developed in the poetry compilations and discourses of the tenth-century—a representation that sought to recast Nakamaro as a man who lived and died abroad in China with a constant longing for his native land in his heart.

2.1.3 The Literary Reclamation of Abe no Nakamaro as a Reflection of Japanese Foreign Policy

It is unclear exactly when the movement to recast Abe no Nakamaro as a tragic figure began. However, it is likely to have begun in the late-ninth or early-tenth centuries. One of the earliest major proponents of this concept was Ki no Tsurayuki (872-945), the famed poet and chief compiler of the *Kokinshū* (Collection of Early and Modern Poetry, ca. 905).⁵⁶ Nakamaro has

⁵⁵ Fontein, 64.

⁵⁶ For a brief sketch of Ki no Tsurayuki's life see Helen Craig McCullough, *Classical Japanese Prose: An Anthology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 70-71.

only one poem included in the collection, but it has the honor of being placed as the first poem in the section on travel:

As I gaze out, far
across the plain of heaven,
ah, at Kasuga,
from behind Mount Mikasa,
it's the same moon that came out then!⁵⁷

Legend has it that this poem was composed in 753, on the eve of Nakamaro's attempted return to Japan. A note in the *Kokinshū* explains its provenance largely without comment, but Ki no Tsurayuki returned to the tale, with significant embellishments, in his *Tosa nikki* (Tosa Diary, ca. 935).⁵⁸ In the entry for the twentieth day, Tsurayuki writes: "The Twentieth-night moon appeared. With no mountain rim from which to emerge, it seemed to rise out of the sea. Just such a sight must have greeted the eyes of Abe no Nakamaro when he prepared to return home from China long ago."⁵⁹ He then goes on to describe how Nakamaro, upon seeing the moon rise during a going-away banquet held for him by his Chinese friends, composed his famous poem to the Kasuga moon. Tsurayuki further asserts that Nakamaro's poem was highly esteemed by his Chinese friends, who appreciated its poignancy. He concludes his comments on the poem with a

⁵⁷ *Ama no hara*
furisake mireba
Kasuga naru
Mikasa no yama ni
ideshi tsuki kamo

Quoted in Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart*, 129. Original translation by Helen Craig McCullough.

⁵⁸ The *Tosa nikki* is a fictionalized diary account of a return trip from Tosa Province (present-day Kōchi Prefecture, Shikoku), where Tsurayuki served as governor from 930 to 935. It is the earliest example of a diary written in Japanese *kana* rather than Chinese characters. Helen Craig McCullough, *Classical Japanese Prose*, 71.

⁵⁹ Translation by Helen Craig McCullough, in *Classical Japanese Prose*, 87.

statement about its ability to convey a sense of longing that is a universal trait of all people.⁶⁰

Joshua S. Mostow has noted that this poem of Abe no Nakamaro's remained famous as an example of peerless emotional resonance captured in verse, and further that the poem's power has always been largely associated with the story that surrounds it—a story that may or may not be apocryphal.⁶¹ The conception of Nakamaro as a figure of hopeless longing, marooned in China and separated from his home and family, continued well into the Edo (1615-1868) and Meiji periods (1868-1912) when artists such as Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861), and Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839-1892), as well as other less well-known figures, took up the subject matter for illustration.⁶² The story of Kibi and Nakamaro's adventures in China even became the subject of an 1852 *kabuki* play—*Kin'u gyokuto wakoku no irifune* (The Golden Crow, the Jade Rabbit, and the Ship that Arrived from Japan)—which emphasized the tragedy of Nakamaro's having been trapped in China and was reproduced in a number of *ukiyo e* prints. The continuing popularity of this theme, and the imagery related to it, indicates that the reinvention of Abe no Nakamaro in the tenth century remained successful throughout successive generations of Japanese history. It also suggests that the perception of travel in the peripheries and foreign lands was increasingly perceived as a dangerous pursuit as the Heian period wore on.

The literary representation of Abe no Nakamaro could therefore be said to embody the vanguard movement in the shifting perception of travel outside the capital city. This is a theme that would be echoed throughout the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries in such works as the *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, ca. 1000) and the *Konjaku monogatari shū* (Tales of

⁶⁰ Helen Craig McCullough, *Classical Japanese Prose*, 87.

⁶¹ Mostow, 162.

⁶² Mostow, 129.

Times Now Past, ca. early-twelfth century)—where exile from the capital is depicted as anathema and travelers routinely run the risk of molestation by volatile supernatural forces—as well as in the vengeful spirit legends that surrounded such historical figures as Prince Sawara (d. 785) and Sugawara no Michizane—men who died in transit or in exile and subsequently transformed into monstrous supernatural creatures.⁶³ The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* can thus be seen as complementing and expanding the narrative of Nakamaro’s life that was constructed in the tenth century. In the tale, he not only longs for his native home but is deliberately kept from it by nefarious forces. In this rendering, all of the blame for never having returned to Japan is removed from Nakamaro and placed on the Chinese court, which represents the terrible “other” that was perceived to lie just outside of the Japanese capital.

One of the most prominent theories surrounding the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* is that the handscroll set serves as a mirror of Japanese foreign relations in the latter part of the Heian period. In 1962, scholars Umezu Jirō and Mori Katsumi both forwarded the assertion that the story’s theme—the mistreatment of a Japanese envoy by his Chinese hosts because of their embarrassment at his greater wisdom—was tied to late-Heian period Japanese perceptions of China and the foreign. For Umezu, the themes present in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* derived from the fundamental sense of inferiority that the ruling class of the early Japanese court had always felt in comparison with China. In this context, the motif of the Japanese envoy competing against Chinese adversaries and winning is the key to an understanding of the cultural milieu in which it was produced—a milieu in which contact with China and a desire for that contact had significantly diminished.⁶⁴ Similarly, Mori viewed the motifs in the handscroll set to be

⁶³ The life and death of Prince Sawara is discussed in Ooe Atsushi, “Sawara shinnō no rei: ‘tatari’ ninshiki no tenkai,” *Shien* 1 (Mar 2000): 1-28. The life and death of Sugawara no Michizane is addressed below.

⁶⁴ Umezu, 11-12.

indicative of the sense of superiority vis-à-vis China that increased throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁶⁵

Both the narrative and visual elements of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* bear out this thesis. A close analysis of the individual episodes of the tale reveal that though Kibi wins each of the contests devised by his Chinese captors, he does not win them on Chinese terms. Instead, Kibi uses his native knowledge, wits, cunning, and magical abilities to triumph. Thus, he wins on his own—Japanese—terms. The championing of native Japanese tradition and knowledge is perhaps clearest in the fourth episode of the tale, when Kibi is deprived of Abe no Nakamaro's assistance and forced to read the "Wild Horse Terrace Poem"—a poem whose text is mixed up and out of order. Given that the poem can only be read by a master, and that Kibi has been forcibly separated from his assistant, Nakamaro, the Chinese expect that Kibi will be unable to read it. However, Kibi prays to the *kami* of Sumiyoshi for aid, whereupon a spider descends from the ceiling and crawls across the poem's text—revealing its correct reading order and helping Kibi to achieve yet another victory. Umezu has suggested that this episode indicates a Buddhist source,⁶⁶ however, the inclusion of divine assistance from a "native" *kami* of Japan seems to indicate an agenda more in line with a desire to portray the superiority of Japan and Japanese knowledge—regardless of the original source of the narrative trope.

The visual articulation of this view of Japanese superiority is subtler, for while the story lauds the virtues of native Japanese wisdom and traditions it is still set in China, and the handscrolls' illustration of space does attempt to convey that fact. Nevertheless, as Kuroda Hideo has pointed out, though the setting and characters are depicted with the trappings of a symbolic

⁶⁵ Mori Katsumi, "Kibi Daijin nittō emaki no yozai nitsuite," in *Kokawadera engi e • Kibi Daijin nittō e*, ed. Umezu Jirō, vol. 6 of *Nihon emakimono zenshū*, ed. Tanaka Ichimatsu (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1977), 33.

⁶⁶ Umezu, 12.

“China,” the space in which the narrative unfolds is unquestionably Japanese.⁶⁷ In comparison to the somberly attired Kibi and Nakamaro, Chinese characters dress elaborately, in heavy brocades and outfits trimmed with animal pelts, with a variety of types of hats perched atop their heads (see Appendix E, no. 1.1). They ride horses whose saddles are likewise adorned with tiger and leopard skins (1.2) and carry Chinese-style fans (see Appendix E, no. 1.9). Their imperial palace features several prominent seats, both indoors and out (see Appendix E, no. 1.3). Yet the majority of characters sits upon the ground (see Appendix E, no. 1.7)—in the Japanese manner—rather than upon the chairs—in the Chinese fashion—and their attire, though sumptuous, only vaguely represents a structured social hierarchy.

For Kuroda, this visual ambiguity is indicative of the late Heian court’s lack of knowledge about what China was really like at this time.⁶⁸ However, it might more properly be termed a lack of interest in what China was really like at this time. While earlier scholars like Umezu and Mori Katsumi have argued that the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* reflects late-Heian period views of China and the foreign, the literary movement to recast Abe no Nakamaro as a figure who died with an unending desire to return to his homeland, the trend of seeing Japanese knowledge and traditions as superior to Chinese knowledge and traditions actually began much earlier. Indeed, as Robert Borgen has noted, the Heian court’s desire to distance itself from China began as early as the mid-ninth century, when the benefits of Chinese-style government began to be strongly critiqued by members of the aristocracy.⁶⁹ By the beginning of the tenth century, when Ki no Tsurayuki began the reinvention of Abe no Nakamaro, the Heian court had already

⁶⁷ Kuroda Hideo, “Oni to gaikō—*Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* 1,” in *Kaiga shiryō de rekishi wo yomu* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2004), 27.

⁶⁸ Kuroda Hideo, “Oni to gaikō,” 27.

⁶⁹ The wisdom of promoting bureaucrats through the Chinese system of merit-based appointments was strongly criticized in the aftermath of the Ōtenmon Incident of 866, a plot whose convicted conspirators included a number of lower-level bureaucrats who had advanced due to literary skills in the Chinese manner. See Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994), 63.

made a decided turn toward native sources of cultural inspiration—having ended its policy of sending diplomatic missions to China in 893 and criminalizing and exiling the most powerful man to ever benefit from the Chinese system of merit-based advancement, Sugawara no Michizane, in 901.⁷⁰ Thus, the reinvention of Abe no Nakamaro in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* can be said to embody the generalized political outlook of the period in which it was produced. However, illustrated handscrolls could—and did—fulfill specific political aims as well.

2.2 TOMO NO YOSHIO AND THE *BAN DAINAGON EMAKI*

In the fourth month of 1177, the Ōtenmon—a major gate in the imperial palace at Heian-kyō—burned down in a fire that devastated the palace.⁷¹ Shortly after the event, the *Ban Dainagon emaki* was commissioned, most likely under the patronage of the retired emperor Go-Shirakawa (1127-92; r.1155-58). The handscroll narrates the tale of Major Counselor Tomo no Yoshio and his involvement in the Ōtenmon Incident of 866, in which the gate was allegedly burned down by the counselor in an attempt to frame a political rival. Scholars have argued that the handscroll set was produced in order to placate the vengeful spirit of Tomo no Yoshio, who was perceived to have been responsible for the 1177 destruction of the Ōtenmon.⁷² Widely held spirit pacification beliefs during this period lend a certain credence to this hypothesis. However, in an

⁷⁰ Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 253; 288-289.

⁷¹ *Hyakurenshō*, vol.11, SZKT, 94.

⁷² Proponents of this theory include Kondo Yoshihiro, Komine Kazuaki, Gomi Fumihiko, Matsuo Kenji, Kevin Gray Carr, and Sotome Harue. For comprehensive summaries of the theory see Carr, “Introduction to ‘Explaining the ‘Mystery’ of *Ban Dainagon ekotoba*’ by Matsuo Kenji,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, no. 1-2 (2001): 103-106; Matsuo Kenji, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* no ‘nazo’ wo toku—mō hitotsu no goryō shinkō,” *Nihon no bukkyō* 3 (Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1995), 93-108; and Yamamoto Yoko, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu no saikentō: wakiyaku no kaokatachi hyōgen wo chūshin ni,” *Meisei Daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, *Nihon bunka gakubu, gengo bunka gakubu* 13 (March 2005): 41-55.

era when fires were common the question immediately arises: was the 1177 fire really associated with the spirit of Tomo no Yoshio and the *Ban Dainagon emaki* commissioned solely in response to this event? An analysis of both the narrative of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* and contemporary textual references to the 866 Ōtenmon Incident, as well as an exploration of the specific political battles that took place in 1177, reveal a far more complex motivation at work for the creation of the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, suggesting that the handscroll set was commissioned not only to placate the spirit of Tomo no Yoshio but also to make a subtle reference to the socio-political situation at the time of its creation.

2.2.1 Tomo no Yoshio in Fact and Fiction

Most of what is known about Tomo no Yoshio comes from stories written about him centuries after his death. The story of the Ōtenmon Incident, and Yoshio's role in it, was collected in two major sources—the text of the late-twelfth-century *Ban Dainagon emaki* and a tale from the *Uji shūi monogatari* (A Collection of Tales from Uji), which was compiled in the early-thirteenth century by an unknown author but is thought to be an attempt to reconstruct and expand an eleventh-century collection of tales recorded by Minamoto no Takakuni (1004-1077).⁷³ At the time of the Ōtenmon's destruction, Yoshio was a major counsellor (*dainagon*) in the Council of

⁷³ The existence of a textual source that predates the handscroll is borne out by the fact that the images in the handscroll sometimes contain visual elements that are not described in the accompanying text. See Yamamoto Satomi, “*Ban Dainagon emaki* ni okeru keisetsu no riyō—Tomo no Yoshio tei ni egakareta hakai no mochifu,” *Chūsei kaiga no matorikkusu* 2, ed. Sano Midori et al. (Tokyo: Seikansha, 2014), 365-367. Whether this source was the lost text by Takakuni or some other collection of stories is unclear. The text of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* has been fully transcribed in Idemitsu Bijutsukan, *Kokuhō Ban Dainagon emaki* (Tokyo: Idemitsu Bijutsukan, 2006), 42; 51-55; 70; and 78. An English translation appears in Peter Otto Glum, “The ‘Ban Dainagon Ekotoba,’ the ‘Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki,’ and the ‘Nenjū Gyōji Emaki’: A Reassessment of the Evidence for the Work of Tokiwa Mitsunaga Embodied in Two Japanese Narrative Scroll Paintings of the Twelfth Century and One Presumably Close Copy,” (PhD diss., New York University, 1981), 208-211.

State (*daijōkan*) who held the senior third rank,⁷⁴ and as such he was a powerful man.⁷⁵ According to the story, after the Ōtenmon is deliberately burned down (see Appendix E, no. 2.3), Tomo no Yoshio accuses his rival, Minamoto no Makoto (810-868), the minister of the left, of having set the blaze.⁷⁶ Upon receiving word of the accusation, Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (804-872), the chancellor, rushes to the palace to advocate on behalf of Makoto. Yoshifusa urges the young emperor, Seiwa (850-878; r. 858-876), not to take action until an investigation has definitively proved Makoto's guilt (see Appendix E, no. 2.5). When the resultant investigation fails to establish any evidence to substantiate Yoshio's claims, Makoto is acquitted.

In the following autumn, the son of Tomo no Yoshio's steward gets into a fight with the son of a palace attendant who, by chance, had seen Yoshio and a companion surreptitiously leaving the Ōtenmon shortly before it burned down. When the steward intercedes on behalf of his child and physically attacks the attendant's son (see Appendix E, no. 2.8), the attendant gets into a verbal altercation with the steward that quickly escalates. Finally, the palace attendant—in a fury—blurts out that he had seen the steward's master, Tomo no Yoshio, engaged in nefarious acts of an undisclosed nature and that the steward and his master should both be grateful for his silence on the matter. Not long after, the gossip about the altercation and the attendant's strange statements make their way to the court (see Appendix E, no. 2.9), and the man is ordered to tell his tale, whereupon the true facts of the incident are finally made known. Tomo no Yoshio is then summoned for questioning and the full extent of the conspiracy is revealed, leading to Yoshio's being exiled to Izu Province (present-day Shizuoka Prefecture, Honshu) for his crime

⁷⁴ The Heian period system of rank is discussed in detail below.

⁷⁵ A major counselor was subordinate only to the minister of the center (*naidaijin*), the minister of the right (*sadaijin*), minister of the left (*udaijin*), and the chancellor of the realm (*daijō daijin*). During the ninth century, the position of minister of the center was consistently left vacant.

⁷⁶ According to notes found on the back of the manuscript of the *Ōkagami*, Yoshio was supported in his assertion by Fujiwara no Yoshimi (813-867), the minister of the right. Cited in Matsuo, "Explaining the 'Mystery,'" 109n7.

(see Appendix E, no. 2.11).⁷⁷ He dies in exile two years later in 868.

It is important to note that, in this version of the story, the fire is always assumed to be an act of arson and the court is left looking for the culprit. Furthermore, when the culprit is apprehended, he confesses, thus providing a logical motive for his actions, and expresses regret for his crime. This account of the 866 incident and its aftermath, while dramatic and entertaining, does not correspond to the historical record of the event. The *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* (An Authentic Account of Three Generations in Japan, ca. 901) mentions the fire several times.⁷⁸ The first reference comes in the entry for the tenth day of the intercalary third month of 866. It is noted that the gate burned down at night and that a purification ceremony was held to halt any evil forces at work. A month later, on the fourteenth day of the fourth month, the incident is referred to again, but the cause of the fire has not been determined. An entry for the twenty-sixth day of that month, however, states very generally that the fire occurred as retribution for unspecified offenses committed in past lives.

Mentions of the Ōtenmon follow in the sixth and seventh months. The Council of State decides to rebuild the gate, and a report on the situation is subsequently sent to the sun goddess Amaterasu at Ise. A divination is performed then to find out whether the fire was a natural occurrence or an act of arson, and the divination makes it clear that the fire was the result of disease in the sovereign's body. However, on the third day of the eighth month, the record states that the fire was at last revealed, by a low-ranking shrine messenger, to be the work of Tomo no Yoshio and an accomplice. It is not stated how the shrine messenger came by this information.

⁷⁷ In the eleventh tale in the twenty-first chapter of the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, the vengeful spirit of Yoshio identifies the local of his exile as Iyo Province (present-day Ehime Prefecture, Shikoku). See Royall Tyler, *Japanese Tales* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 38.

⁷⁸ References to the incident were made in the intercalary third month, fourth month, sixth month, seventh month, eighth month, ninth month, and eleventh month of 866. See *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, vol. 4, SZKT, 180-182, 187, 190, 192-193, 195-199, and 202.

Subsequent entries for the month record that Yoshio was brought to the court and questioned and that the daughter of the man who laid the charges against him was beaten to death by one of Tomo no Yoshio's servants. Finally, an entry for the twenty-second day of the ninth month states that Tomo no Yoshio and his accomplices were sentenced to death for their crime, but that the sentence was commuted to exile. Significantly, the history also records that Yoshio consistently denied the crime and that his supposed accomplices also denied his involvement in the plot in spite of admitting their own—information that was extracted via torture.⁷⁹

When this account of the Ōtenmon incident is compared to the account in the texts of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* and the *Uji shūi monogatari* a considerable number of differences are immediately apparent. Most significant, perhaps, is the introduction of a rival for Tomo no Yoshio—Minamoto no Makoto, the minister of the left, whose position Yoshio hopes to win for himself, and who, according to the handscroll text, is initially in danger of being charged with the crime of burning down the Ōtenmon before the intercession of Fujiwara no Yoshifusa allows him to go free until the true facts of the case are revealed through a karmic quirk of fate. As the records in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* make clear, no one was charged with any crime for five months—during which time the court considered the incident to have been the result of a natural disaster that was sent as a punishment. The fire was not considered to be arson at first, and Minamoto no Makoto's name was never mentioned in connection with the event. Also noteworthy is the fact that the history records that Tomo no Yoshio never admitted to the crime, but denied it vehemently throughout the proceedings. In fact, Yoshio seems never to have discussed the incident at court before he was accused of arson and brought in for questioning. Where in the *Ban Dainagon emaki* Yoshio ultimately admits to setting fire to the gate in order to

⁷⁹ Yoshio's protestations of innocence and his servants' confessions under torture are referred to in the entry for the twenty-second day of the ninth month of 866. See *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, 195-199.

remove a rival and advance his position in the Council of State, in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* Yoshio seems to have no discernible motive for the crime and continues to proclaim his innocence throughout.

The only incident in the records that has a parallel in the story—aside from the destruction of the gate, of course—is that of the attack by one of Tomo no Yoshio’s men upon his accuser’s child, but the chronology of events is markedly different. In the handscroll, the attack upon the child causes the facts of the case to be made known. In the history, the attack upon the child appears to be an act of retaliation.⁸⁰ This disjunction suggests that the story was reinvented and heavily embellished at some point between 901 and 1177, and quite possibly in the latter half of the twelfth century when the handscroll was being made. In a story from the early-twelfth-century collection *Konjaku monogatari shū*, the spirit of Tomo no Yoshio appears to a lowly cook and announces that he has become a pestilence deity and used his power to commute a serious illness to a harmless cough.⁸¹ In the *Konjaku* tale, Yoshio’s spirit acknowledges his past crime against the sovereign and expresses regret for his actions, but he does not mention the Ōtenmon, Minamoto no Makoto, or his motives. This suggests that when the *Konjaku monogatari shū* was compiled, the story of Tomo no Yoshio’s involvement in the Ōtenmon Incident was still evolving⁸²—from a threadbare narrative with gaping plot holes into an eloquent morality tale with a complex conspiracy at its heart.

⁸⁰ Additionally, while in the *Nihon Sandai jitsuroku* the child who is attacked is a daughter, in the handscroll the child who is attacked is a son. This change may have been made to enable the plot device of a street fight.

⁸¹ Tyler, 38.

⁸² This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the *Ōkagami* contained elements of the story that were not recorded in the historical account—most notably the inclusion of the conspiracy between Yoshio and Fujiwara no Yoshimi. See Matsuo, “Explaining the ‘Mystery,’” 109n7.

2.2.2 Tomo no Yoshio in the *Ban Dainagon Emaki*

While the differences between the historical record pertaining to the Ōtenmon Incident and the story as recorded in the *Ban Dainagon emaki* are readily apparent, an analysis of the depiction of Tomo no Yoshio in the handscroll is far less straightforward. Throughout the history of its study, scholars have strongly debated the identities of several “mystery characters” who appear in the handscroll, and even today there is little consensus.⁸³ The depiction, or lack thereof, of Tomo no Yoshio in the handscroll has been the basis of several theories about its function and is a cornerstone of the theory that it was produced for the purpose of pacifying the soul of Tomo no Yoshio.⁸⁴ Thus, before exploring the functional aspects of the handscroll, it is necessary to first explain the major arguments regarding the two “mystery characters” whose identities are ambiguous. For the purposes of clarity these figures will be referred to as character A and character B.⁸⁵

The opening handscroll of the *Ban Dainagon emaki*⁸⁶ begins with a flurry of activity, as a variety of men—police, courtiers, attendants—rush to the Suzakumon, the gate into the Imperial Palace (see Appendix E, no. 2.1), and past it to the scene of a great conflagration (see Appendix E, no. 2.2): the Ōtenmon—the gate into the Administrative Complex that housed the Great Audience Hall—almost entirely lost to sight in a swath of roiling fire and billowing smoke (see

⁸³ Scholars who have examined the *Ban Dainagon emaki* and offered a theory as to who the various mystery characters are include: Fukui Rikichirō (1933), Tanaka Toyozō (1940), Sakurai Seika (1969), Suzuki Keizō (1960), Fujita Tsuneyo (1971), Kuroda Taizō (1980), Peter Glum (1981), Komatsu Shigemi (1989), Takemura Shinji (1994), Gomi Fumihiko (1994), Matsuo Kenji (1995), and Kuroda Hideo (2002). Please see the bibliography for full citations. Both Takemura Shinji and Matsuo Kenji provide extensive summaries of the history of theories on this topic.

⁸⁴ Multiple scholars have suggested that the handscroll was produced to fulfill a spirit pacification function. This argument, and the criticisms of it, will be examined in Chapter Four.

⁸⁵ The monikers “character A” and “character B” are taken from Kevin Gray Carr’s translation of Matsuo Kenji’s 1995 article, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* no ‘nazo’ wo toku—mo hitotsu no goryō.”

⁸⁶ The *Ban Dainagon emaki* is comprised of three scrolls, an opening, middle, and concluding scroll.

Appendix E, no. 2.3). As the illustration moves beyond the gathered crowds, character A appears (see Appendix E, no. 2.4)—standing alone in the complex of the Inner Palace (*dairi*) and gazing off into the distance as if trying to work out what the commotion is. Character A (see Appendix E, no. 2.4a) wears traditional court attire with a pattern of water oats on his robe and stands in three-quarter profile, pressing an ivory *shaku* (ceremonial baton) to his face. He appears to wear only a pair of white socks on his feet.

The next scene depicts a conversation between Emperor Seiwa and his close advisor, the chancellor Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (see Appendix E, no. 2.5).⁸⁷ Having heard that the Minister of the Left, Minamoto no Makoto, has been accused of the setting fire to the Ōtenmon and is in danger of being arrested for the crime, Yoshifusa has rushed to the emperor's residence to advise the young Seiwa to forestall his judgment until all the facts of the case are known. Seiwa and Yoshifusa sit together in a sparsely decorated room, distinguished only by the presence of painted *fusuma* (sliding doors) that show pictures of seasonal landscapes. In the hallway to the right, eavesdropping on their conversation, sits character B (see Appendix E, no. 2.5a). Like character A, character B wears formal court attire with a robe patterned with water oats. He kneels in the hallway, clutching an ivory *shaku* in his sleeve-covered hands, and his feet are clad only in white socks. Over the years, different scholars have assigned a plethora of identities to these two figures. Prominent theories include that both figures are Tomo no Yoshio, that both figures are Minamoto no Makoto, and that both figures are Fujiwara no Mototsune (836-891)—Yoshifusa's adopted son.⁸⁸ Several scholars have also argued that the two figures are a variety of configurations of two different people: including Yoshio, Makoto, and Mototsune, as well as

⁸⁷ For a complete assessment of the relationship between Seiwa and Yoshifusa, see Kon Masahide, *Sekkan seiji to Sugawara no Michizane* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2013), 78-97.

⁸⁸ Mototsune was a prominent player in Sugawara no Michizane's rise to power, as will be discussed below.

Fujiwara no Yoshimi—said to have been a co-conspirator of Yoshio’s⁸⁹—and an unnamed middle captain (*tō no chūjō*). Many scholars believe that at least one of the two figures is Tomo no Yoshio.⁹⁰

Given that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* supposedly illustrates an event in the life of Tomo no Yoshio, and is even named after him,⁹¹ it makes sense that a majority of scholars would look to find him frequently depicted in that handscroll. However, of the many theories that have been put forward, the suggestion—championed by Sakurai Seika, Komatsu Shigemi, and Matsuo Kenji—that these two figures are meant to be Minamoto no Makoto is the most persuasive. Minamoto no Makoto is represented in the middle scroll, when he is depicted praying for clemency in the garden of his home (see Appendix E, no. 2.6). In this scene, Makoto wears the same clothing that characters A and B do, the court robes with the water oats pattern, and he carries the same ivory *shaku*. Though it has been pointed out that more than one character can be, and in fact is, depicted wearing the same type of patterned robes,⁹² the presence of the white scroll—an obvious marker of similarity—in each illustration of these characters strongly suggests that they are meant to be understood as the same person. If characters A and B are Minamoto no Makoto, that means that Tomo no Yoshio appears only once (see Appendix E, no.

⁸⁹ Kuroda Taizō, “Arata na hakken, fukumarū nazo: *Ban Dainagon emaki*,” *Kokuhō Ban Dainagon emaki* (Tokyo: Idemitsu Bijutsukan, 2006), 98.

⁹⁰ For a breakdown of the theories involving the identities of these two figures, see Appendix D.

⁹¹ Given that the text from the first scroll is missing, it is unclear whether the handscroll originally had this title, or if the title was appended later. The chapter of the thirteenth-century *Uji shūi monogatari* that deals with the story of the gate is titled *Ban Dainagon Ōtenmon wo yaku koto* and translated as “How the Ban Major Counsellor set fire to the Ōten Gate” in D.E. Mills, *A Collection of Tales from Uji: A Study and Translation of Uji Shūi Monogatari* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1970). Additionally, the *Kanmon gyōki*, which references the rediscovery of the scroll in the fifteenth century, refers to it as a *Ban Dainagon e*. See vol. 2, *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū: Hōi* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1976-1988), 617.

⁹² Fujita Tsuneyo, ‘*Ban Dainagon ekotoba*’ (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1971).

2.11), or perhaps twice (see Appendix E, no. 2.1),⁹³ in the course of an illustrated narrative that is ostensibly about him. However, though he appears infrequently in the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, the depiction of Tomo no Yoshio is not the only cue from which an analysis of contemporaneous attitudes toward him may be formed. As Yamamoto Yoko and Yamamoto Satomi have recently argued, illustrations of the family, servants, and homes of Tomo no Yoshio and Minamoto no Makoto also provide significant clues to understanding how Yoshio was perceived at the time of the handscroll set's production.

Yamamoto Yōko has argued that the attitude of the handscroll commissioner toward Tomo no Yoshio can be read from the depiction of several scenes—most notably the children's fight (see Appendix E, no. 2.8) and a later scene depicting the lamentation of Yoshio's family upon learning his fate (see Appendix E, no. 2.10).⁹⁴ In each of the instances, the people associated with Yoshio are presented in a largely unsympathetic manner. In the first scene, his steward is depicted with the physical characteristics of a barbarian or even an *oni*⁹⁵—with a muscular build revealed by sliding robes, a lumpy, almost animalistic, face dominated by bulging nose and cheeks, and twin tufts of hair that stick up on either side of his bald head. Flares of pink, dotted on his arms, cheeks, and forehead give him a flushed, uncouth appearance that is in stark contrast to the depiction of those around him. Though Yoshio's steward stands in a crowd of commoners, he—in spite of the fact that he is the attendant of a wealthy, powerful man—is

⁹³ Matsuo Kenji has argued that Tomo no Yoshio is in fact depicted twice in the *Ban Dainagon emaki*—at the end of the story when he is transported into exile and also at the beginning in a crowd of people who rush to the scene of the fire.

⁹⁴ Yamamoto Yōko, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba chinkon setsu*,” 41-55.

⁹⁵ Yamamoto Yōko notes that it has been suggested that these features are meant to suggest the appearance of Fudō or other guardian king figures from Buddhist art, but she considers such an allusion unsuited to the depiction of a man who is shown beating a child. See “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba chinkon setsu*,” 44. I agree that this depiction is probably not meant to allude to a positive Buddhist iconographic figure and think it is more likely that the representation of the steward is meant to suggest a fearful figure like an *oni*, whose iconographic characteristics are quite similar to those of Buddhist guardian king figures but who have a far more negative connotation.

the one who looks the least civilized.

In the second scene, Tomo no Yoshio's family, though not depicted in an outright negative fashion, are treated with a fair degree of censure. The lamentations of his women are portrayed in a far more chaotic manner than those of Minamoto no Makoto's women. Where Yoshio's women cover their heads in despair or fling themselves onto their backs to howl at the sky when they learn the news that he has been exiled (see Appendix E, no. 2.10), every woman in Makoto's household sits upright as they bemoan the unjust fate that has befallen him (see Appendix E, no. 2.7). One woman even prays while another delicately brushes away tears as a child comes to her to be comforted, and as the scene progresses from left to right, the expressions of fear change to relief as the women learn that Makoto has been granted clemency until the complete facts of the case are known.⁹⁶ The contrast between the two scenes is striking; once again, the people associated with Tomo no Yoshio are portrayed as behaving inappropriately or indecently in comparison with other examples of appropriate, civilized responses.

Yamamoto Satomi has taken the analysis of the contrast between Tomo no Yoshio and Minamoto no Makoto's families even further, focusing on the depiction of the space itself.⁹⁷ As she has noted, the depiction of Yoshio's mansion differs subtly from that of Makoto's. Though both mansions are represented as typical Heian-period aristocratic residences and shown via the traditional illustrative blown-off roof (*fukinuki yatai*) technique, their interior decorations are strikingly different. Where the room in Makoto's mansion is sparsely decorated, with plain, papered *fusuma* and a distinct lack of personal objects (see Appendix E, no. 2.7a), the room in Yoshio's mansion boasts a plethora of objects (see Appendix E, no. 2.10a) and sumptuous painted *fusuma* (see Appendix E, no. 2.10b) that suggest a life of wealth and leisure. For

⁹⁶ Yamamoto Yōko, "*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu," 46-47.

⁹⁷ Yamamoto Satomi, 361-382.

Yamamoto Satomi, the lack of objects in Makoto's home is meant to indicate an obeisance to the Buddhist precepts that discourage an attachment to worldly possessions, while the profusion of costly goods in Yoshio's house—many of which are deployed to suggest adherence to a bad path in Buddhist paintings such as the *Nigabyakudō zu* (Painting of the White Road Between Two Rivers) (see Appendix E, no. 4)—implies the opposite: that he is a man who ignores the Buddhist precepts and lives only for his personal gratification and advancement.⁹⁸

Taken together, these various elements indicate that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* neither emphasizes, nor empathizes with, the supposedly titular character of the tale. Those men and women associated with Tomo no Yoshio are depicted in a negative manner—with degrees of subtlety ranging from the openly ugly representation of Yoshio's steward to the more understatedly negative portrayal of Yoshio's family—while those associated with his rival, Minamoto no Makoto, are depicted sympathetically. Moreover, in contrast to the written text, which regularly mentions Yoshio, the illustrations of it emphasize elements of the narrative that he was not present for, leaving him out of the visual program for the majority of the scroll and focusing instead on his rival—an artistic choice that indicates that Yoshio's personal story was not meant to be the focus of the handscroll. But if the handscroll is not truly about Tomo no Yoshio—if its function was not to tell his story—what then is it about, and why was it made?

⁹⁸ Yamamoto Satomi, 367-373. The contrasting representation of room space supports this interpretation. Where the women's quarters of Tomo no Yoshio's home are depicted with a breezy spaciousness that suggests indulgent comfort, the women's quarters of Minamoto no Makoto's home are depicted with a cramped, almost claustrophobic narrowness that suggests a more Spartan lifestyle.

2.2.3 The Reimagining of Tomo no Yoshio as an Emblem of Failed Political Dissent

While it is tempting to read the production of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* at least somewhat in the context of spirit pacification—as multiple scholars have done—the unsympathetic portrayal of the character of Tomo no Yoshio suggests that the handscroll was made to fulfill another function altogether. However, the characters of the handscroll are not the only means of determining its meaning. By looking not at the characters who appear in the handscroll set, but instead at the commissioner of it, a new interpretation of its intended purpose emerges.

The *Ban Dainagon emaki* has generally been attributed to the painting atelier of the retired emperor Go-Shirakawa and is thought to have been produced at his behest sometime during or just prior to the Jishō (1177-1180) era.⁹⁹ In the 1170s, the *insei* political system of government by retired emperors that had dominated the Heian court since the late eleventh century¹⁰⁰ was fracturing as Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa came more and more into conflict with Taira no Kiyomori (1118-1181), the leader of the warrior clan that Go-Shirakawa had for so long relied upon to enforce his political authority. The Taira clan had been promoted to high status for their roles in the Hōgen (1156) and Heiji disturbances (1160) that had initially solidified Go-Shirakawa's power. Their elevation in status and subsequent increased authority in court politics ultimately led to strong feelings of jealousy and mistrust—the latter felt strongly by

⁹⁹ Komatsu Shigemi has argued that no other commissioner for the *Ban Dainagon emaki* is possible, and almost all other scholars who have studied the scroll have pronounced it a work from Go-Shirakawa's atelier. Komatsu has dated the scroll to the 1160s or 1170s, based upon his evaluation of its depiction of the clothing and armor, while most proponents of the theory that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* was produced for the purposes of spirit pacification argue that it was most likely made sometime after the first year of Jishō (1177) when the Ōtenmon burned down during a city-wide fire. See Komatsu, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba*—seiritsu no shūhen to haikai,” vol.1, *Nihon emaki shūkō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989), 125-131.

¹⁰⁰ The *insei* period of rule by retired emperors lasted from 1086-1192 and reached its zenith under Retired Emperor Toba (1103-1156; r.1107-1123). See G. Cameron Hurst, *Insei: Abdicated Sovereigns in the Politics of Late Heian Japan, 1086-1185* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

Go-Shirakawa himself.

Beginning in the year 1175, major problems surfaced between Kiyomori and Go-Shirakawa, and these problems exploded into the public sphere in the sixth month of 1177 with the exposure of the Shishigatani Plot (*Shishigatani no inbō*). This was a plot led by members of the Sueshigi branch of the Northern Fujiwara clan¹⁰¹ to kill Kiyomori and remove the Taira from power. The plot, which was carried out with the tacit approval of, and support from, Go-Shirakawa, was formulated under the cover of an ongoing quarrel between members of the Sueshigi branch and monks from Enryakuji. When one of the conspirators, Minamoto no Yukitsuna (unknown, ca. twelfth century), brought word of the plot to Kiyomori on the first day of the sixth month, Kiyomori used the event as an opportunity to execute and exile enemies who had been involved and to install members of his own family in the newly-vacated court positions.¹⁰² Fujiwara no Narichika (1138-1177), the leader of the conspiracy was executed, along with his adopted brother, Fujiwara no Moromitsu (d. 1177), and Moromitsu's three sons. Other participants in the conspiracy, including Narichika's son, Naritsune (1156?-1202), and the monk Shunkan (1143-1179), were exiled. Kiyomori also took the opportunity to confiscate a considerable number of Go-Shirakawa's property holdings in order to punish the retired sovereign for his knowledge of the conspiracy. This was just three years from the onset of the Genpei War in 1180, and it marked the start of repeated, open clashes between the Taira clan and Go-Shirakawa, who grew increasingly belligerent in his challenges to Kiyomori's primacy.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ The Sueshigi Fujiwara had long had close ties to Go-Shirakawa and served as his personal attendants.

¹⁰² The events of the Shishigatani Plot are narrated in *The Tale of the Heike*, trans. Helen Craig McCullough (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 45-47; and *Hyakureنشō*, 95. See also, Akagi Shizuko, *Go-Shirakawa tennō* (Tokyo: Akita Shoten, 1974), 87-92.

¹⁰³ The rivalry between the two men came to a boiling point in the tenth month of 1179, when the retired emperor prevented Kiyomori from receiving his eldest son, Shigemori's (1138-1179), government appointments—and associated property holdings—upon his death. Kiyomori retaliated the following month, staging a major coup d'état. Kiyomori dismissed thirty-nine bureaucrats loyal to Go-Shirakawa from their posts—including the chief adviser to

Due to the scant documentation available, the exact circumstances surrounding the production of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* remain uncertain. Consequently, a connection between its commissioning and the socio-political situation of the period can only be inferred. Nevertheless, the fact that it was most likely commissioned at a time when such volatile political intrigues were ongoing suggests that its narrative may indeed have been intended to subtly refer to events affecting Go-Shirakawa at this time. The content of the illustrations further supports this hypothesis.

As has been previously noted, Yamamoto Yoko and Yamamoto Satomi have both argued convincingly that the depictions of Tomo no Yoshio's associates imply a degree of censure for Yoshio's actions, while by contrast his rival Minamoto no Makoto is portrayed in a sympathetic fashion. However, Makoto and his family are not the only ones who benefit from a sympathetic portrayal—Emperor Seiwa is also portrayed in a highly positive fashion. Seiwa appears in a single scene in the handscroll, depicted in consultation with his chancellor Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (see Appendix E, no. 2.5). The two discuss the case together in a private audience hall, while character B (possibly Minamoto no Makoto) waits outside. As with the representation of Minamoto no Makoto's mansion as a humble residence, uncluttered with the costly markers of personal wealth, the receiving hall of the emperor is portrayed in an equally, if not more, austere fashion. The room is depicted with an economy of objects—empty but for the simple floor mat that Seiwa sits upon. Behind him, *fusuma* painted with landscape designs—Confucian subject matter that symbolizes the emperor's commitment to just governance—enclose the room and

the emperor (*kanpaku*), Fujiwara no Motofusa (1144-1231), who was exiled to Bizen (present-day Okayama Prefecture) at this time. Kiyomori then had Go-Shirakawa confined to house arrest, and launched an attack on Enryakuji to depose the abbot of the Tendai sect, Prince Kakukai (1134-1181), the younger half-brother of Go-Shirakawa—actions that prompted the retired sovereign to solicit help from the Minamoto clan and thus ignite the flames of war. Hurst, 209-213; Akagi, 88.

disguise its potential expansiveness. Moreover, as has been noted, Seiwa's very act of consulting with Yoshifusa indicates a commitment to collaborative, rather than totalitarian rule.¹⁰⁴ The situation, as well as the visual markers that attend it, symbolize the just and proper role of imperial rule.

By contrast, the actions of Tomo no Yoshio are easily read as an attack upon this just imperial rule. As P. Richard Stanley-Baker has noted, attacks upon the palace complex were thought to constitute direct attacks upon the emperor—and through him the state—with the gate, as a traditional site of ritual space, symbolizing the body of the emperor himself.¹⁰⁵ Considered from this perspective, it is not so much necessary to show the movements of Tomo no Yoshio as it is to show the outcome of those movements—the symbolic attack upon imperial rule through the visceral depiction of the burning Ōtenmon—and the subsequent fall from grace that said movements precipitated. The story of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* is one of an ambitious man, who seeks through unscrupulous means to advance at court. However, this man is not successful; the emperor, with the aid of his Fujiwara allies, discovers the truth of the matter when the unscrupulous man is undone by his affiliation with other unscrupulous men. For a Go-Shirakawa persistently under political siege by a man who was once an ally of his rule, just as Tomo no Yoshio had been a high-ranking official within the government of Emperor Seiwa, the story of the ancient arson, the emperor's reasoned response to the crime amidst a storm of misinformation, and the swift justice that was ultimately meted out to the man who dared oppose the emperor and his allies would likely have resonated strongly.

¹⁰⁴ Yamamoto Satomi, 364.

¹⁰⁵ P. Richard Stanley-Baker, "Mythic and Sacred Gardens in Medieval Japan: Sacral Mediation in the Rokuonji and the Saihōji Gardens," *Sacred Gardens and Landscapes: Ritual and Agency*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Trustees for Harvard University, 2007), 116. Kuroda Taizō makes the same argument, 98.

In the latter half of the 1170s, Go-Shirakawa was deeply involved in a power struggle with the man he had once depended on to enforce his rule. In the midst of souring relations, the fire at the palace in the fourth month of 1177 had probably revived an interest in the old story of Tomo no Yoshio and his involvement in the Ōtenmon Incident of 866—an interest that Go-Shirakawa subsequently put to use in the commissioning of an illustrated handscroll that presented a story of the dangers of opposing imperial rule. Through the commissioning of the *Ban Dainagon emaki*, Go-Shirakawa was able to present to the court a story of the dangers of opposing imperial rule—perhaps as an intended message to those around him that alliance against his interests would be met with severe penalties. The contemporaneous burning of the gate may have put the old story into the retired emperor’s mind, but the scroll itself was made as a reflection not of that old story or in deference to its players, but as a reflection of late-Heian politics and political players. In this respect the *Ban Dainagon emaki* has much in common with the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, a handscroll set produced a decade or two later and that was created in order to serve a specific contemporary political agenda. However, where the *Ban Dainagon emaki* appears to have been made largely without concern for the memory of Tomo no Yoshio, the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* is an entirely deferential work that exalts its main character, Sugawara no Michizane, at the same time that it rewrites much of his personal history.

2.3 SUGAWARA NO MICHIZANE AND THE *KITANO TENJIN EMAKI*

The legend of the life, death, and posthumous revenge of the ninth-century Japanese courtier Sugawara no Michizane has had as significant an afterlife as Michizane himself did.¹⁰⁶ The belief that Michizane, who was condemned as a traitor in 901 and subsequently exiled to Kyushu, had become a vengeful spirit was widespread in the Heian capital by the mid-tenth century; however, this belief was quickly curtailed by the actions of the court aristocracy—who moved decisively to both quell Michizane’s anger and recast him as a benign *kami* of erudition, literary, and poetry. By the eleventh century, Michizane’s reputation as a dangerous vengeful spirit had begun to wane in favor of the new designation. The characterization of Michizane as a benevolent *kami* of wisdom appears to have been prevalent among the Heian court’s intelligentsia until the end of the twelfth century, when the memory of Michizane as a vengeance-seeking revenant was resurrected in the *Kitano Tenjin engi* (Legends of the Founding of the Kitano Tenjin Shrine) and the handscroll sets that were made to illustrate it.

Yet just what is it that imbued the Michizane legend with such staying power? Michizane’s removal from power was not extraordinary. He was accused of a crime and exiled in the way that many hapless political victims before him had been, and yet in death—as he had in life—he climbed to unprecedented heights of power. Tracking the story’s permutations through the literature and art of the period allows a close examination of the development of and multiple alterations to the Michizane legend over the course of the Heian period. An evaluation of those developments and alterations in light of concurrent socio-political trends suggests a plurality of factors—most prominently that the successful afterlife of the Michizane legend was due to the

¹⁰⁶ Unless otherwise specified, details about Michizane’s life and lineage have been drawn from Borgen’s, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court*.

political machinations of the high aristocratic Northern Fujiwara clan in the tenth and twelfth centuries.

2.3.1 Sugawara no Michizane in Fact and Fiction

In comparison with Abe no Nakamaro and Tomo no Yoshio, whose actual life histories have been obscured by the passage of time, historians know a relatively large amount about the life of Sugawara no Michizane. Michizane was the son of Sugawara no Koreyoshi (812-880) and an unknown woman of the Tomo family lineage.¹⁰⁷ Contrary to popular legend, Michizane was neither Koreyoshi's eldest nor his only son, but he was the only one of Koreyoshi's sons to survive into adulthood, and his extant writings reveal that he took his responsibilities as the only surviving male heir very seriously. Like his father and grandfather before him, he sought entry into the Heian court by means of the family business: scholarship. Though, as a young man, he enjoyed academic success, Michizane's early bureaucratic career was not unusual for a man of his lineage. He held an assortment of positions in the Ministry of Civil Affairs (Jibushō), the Ministry of Central Affairs (Nakatsukasashō), the Ministry of War (Hyōbushō), and the Ministry of Popular Affairs (Minbushō). He taught as a professor of literature (*bunshō hakase*) in the court university (Daigakuryō),¹⁰⁸ and he even held a provincial post, as governor of Sanuki Province (present-day Kagawa Prefecture, Shikoku).

In 888, during his term of office in Sanuki, Michizane came to the attention of the newly enthroned Emperor Uda (867-931; r. 887-897) when he wrote a letter to Fujiwara no Mototsune

¹⁰⁷ Michizane's mother may have been a close relative of Tomo no Yoshio, but little is known about her other than her family name. Borgen attributes this dearth of information to the repercussions of the Ōtenmon Incident, 62-63.

¹⁰⁸ The development of the early Heian university system is discussed in Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 71-80.

chastising him for his disloyal treatment of Uda in the Akō Debate (*Akō mondai*).¹⁰⁹ Though this letter is not thought to have majorly impacted the incident in question, it did reveal Michizane as a man willing to oppose Fujiwara interests at court. Following his tour of duty in Sanuki, Michizane played an instrumental role in the administration of Uda's government, holding a variety of significant posts and rising quickly through the ranks of the court aristocracy. On the final day of Uda's reign, Michizane was promoted to the senior third rank—a rank that conferred true aristocratic status and far outstripped the honors any of Michizane's ancestors had garnered. However, after Uda's abdication in 897, Michizane's position became precarious.

Though he ultimately achieved the position of minister of the right and married off one of his daughters to an imperial prince, Michizane also attracted the enmity of a powerful political rival: Fujiwara no Tokihira (871-909), the minister of the left with whom Michizane shared administrative power. In 901, Michizane was accused of plotting an overthrow of Uda's successor, Emperor Daigo (885-930; r. 897-930), demoted to the position of supernumerary governor general of Dazaifu, and sent to Kyushu to face house arrest. His sons were likewise sent from the capital, as were a number of his associates—including his imperial son-in-law, who was forced to become a monk. Michizane's downfall, like his rise to power, occurred with exceptional swiftness.

¹⁰⁹ The Akō Debate was a political standoff between the newly enthroned Emperor Uda and Fujiwara no Mototsune, the chancellor and de facto head of the government. At the start of his reign, Uda issued an edict inviting Mototsune to serve him as adviser using the term *kanpaku*. In keeping with the protocols of the period, Mototsune declined the position. Uda then issued a second edict inviting Mototsune to serve him as adviser, this time using the term *akō*—a Chinese title that described an honorary position without power. In response, Mototsune declared that as *akō* there was no need for him to perform any of his duties, and he refrained from partaking in political responsibilities from the second month of 888 until to the tenth month when the two men finally came to terms. Over the course of the standoff, court scholars from rival university factions took sides and debated the precedents of the term; Michizane's letter to Mototsune constituted an argument on behalf of the faction that supported Uda against Fujiwara power. Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 169-181. Kon Masahide considers the Akō Debate to be one of the major turning points in Fujiwara fortunes and a cornerstone of the development of the system of regents and advisers (*sekkon seiji*) that the Fujiwara would use throughout the eleventh century to control the court. Kon, 97.

Sugawara no Michizane died in exile on the twenty-fifth day of the second month of 903. In the decades that followed his demise, a series of calamities repeatedly struck the capital,¹¹⁰ and there are signs that the court may have become uneasy about its handling of the Michizane affair in the wake of these misfortunes. In 906, Michizane's eldest son, Takami (876-913)—who had been exiled at the same time as his father—was summoned back to court, promoted one rank, and reinstated as head of the university. Two years later, his younger son, Atsumochi (d. 926), passed the civil service examination and was immediately made professor of literature.¹¹¹ These two acts coincided with the sudden deaths of two minor conspirators in the plot against Michizane¹¹² and may have been intended to offer redress to Michizane's spirit at the same time that they served to keep the Sugawara clan firmly in the scholarly realm of government service.

These acts, however, were unable to prevent Michizane's purported wrath—if that is what they were intended to do. In 909, Fujiwara no Tokihira—Michizane's primary rival at court and the man who most benefited from his downfall—died during an outbreak of smallpox at the relatively young age of 38. In 913, Minamoto no Hikaru (845-913)¹¹³—the man who was rewarded with Michizane's position as minister of the right in the aftermath of the uproar—died on a hunting trip when he was unseated from his horse and dragged into a bog. During these years, the capital was also plagued by repeated fires, floods, and epidemics that claimed the lives of numerous denizens of the city—both high and low. Nevertheless, it was not until 923, when

¹¹⁰ The *Nihon kiryaku* lists a drought, famine, fire, flood, violent storm, untimely death, or epidemic for almost every year following the report of Michizane's death to the court at the end of 903 until 923. *Nihon kiryaku*, vol. 11, SZKT, 8-26.

¹¹¹ *Kitano Tenjin goden*, in *Kitano*, vol. 11, *Shintō taikai: jinja hen*, ed. Makabe Toshinobu (Tokyo: Shintō Taikai Hensankai, 1978), 5.

¹¹² The conspirators were Fujiwara no Sadakuni (d. 906), whose exact role is not known but who received a number of promotions in the aftermath of the plot; and Fujiwara no Sugane (d. 908), who prevented Retired Emperor Uda from entering the palace and pleading Michizane's case. Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 285. On their deaths see *Kitano Tenjin goden*, 5.

¹¹³ Minamoto no Hikaru was a son of Emperor Nimmyō (808-850; r. 833-850).

Tokihira's nephew—the crown prince (*kōtaishi*)—died suddenly, that the court began to take documented steps to deal with the problem. In the wake of this death, Michizane was summarily pardoned, reinstated to his former offices, and promoted to the senior second rank—still to no avail.

Two years later, in 925, the new crown prince—Tokihira's five-year-old grandson—also died suddenly. In 930, an unexpected thunderstorm erupted, striking the palace with lightning and igniting a fire that killed four courtiers, including another co-conspirator, Fujiwara no Kiyotsura (867-930). Not long after this, Emperor Daigo—the man who had actually ordered Michizane's exile—fell gravely ill, took the tonsure, and passed away. He had never managed to recover from the shock of the fire.¹¹⁴ It was thus Daigo's successor—Emperor Suzaku (922-952; r. 930-946)—who had the responsibility of dealing with the assorted uprisings, oracles, and unsanctioned ritual gatherings that came to be associated with Michizane's unquiet spirit in the 940s.¹¹⁵

With posthumous promotions ineffective, the court aristocracy appears to have turned to more ambitious means of pacifying Michizane's vengeful spirit. In the year 947, the Kitano

¹¹⁴ The events following Michizane's death are recorded in the *Nihon kiryaku* and the *Fusō ryakki* (An Abbreviated Account of Japan). See *Nihon kiryaku*, 8-26; *Fusō ryakki*, vol. 12, SZKT, 173-182; 191-205; and Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 308-309.

¹¹⁵ The most significant incidents that were associated with Michizane's unquiet spirit were the rebellion of Taira no Masakado in 939-940, the report made to the court by the priest Nichizō (905-985), also known as Dōken, regarding his out-of-body journey through the underworld in 941, and the public gatherings of commoners in Yamashiro to worship a deity known as Ayae Jizai Tenjin in 945. The incidents, and their relationship to the deification of Michizane, are discussed in Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 308-325. See also *Shōmonki*, in *Shōmonki, Mutsu waki, Hōgen monogatari, Heiji monogatari*, vol. 41 of *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū*, ed. Yanase Kiyoshi (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2002), 19-94; Giuliana Stramigioli, "Preliminary Notes on the *Masakadoki* and the Taira no Masakado Story," *Monumenta Nipponica* 28, no. 3 (Autumn 1973): 261-293. On Nichizō: *Nichizō muki* (An Account of Nichizō's Dream) and *Dōken shōnin meidoki* (An Account of Priest Dōken in the Underworld), in *Kitano*, 61-75, 77-80; Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*, 2nd ed. (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1986), 191, 194-196. On Ayako: *Kitano Tenman Daijizai Tenjingū Yamashiro no kuni Kadono no kōri Uwabayashi no gō ni sōken engi* (Legends of the Founding of the Kitano Tenman Daijizai Tenjin Shrine in the Uwabayashi Area of the Kadono District of Yamashiro Province), in *Kitano*, 8-10; Sakurai Yoshirō, *Kamigami no henbō: shaji engi no sekai kara* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1976), 79-85. These incidents are discussed in Chapter Four.

Shrine was founded to venerate a deified Michizane—known as Tenman Daijizai Tenjin (Heaven-Fulfilling Great Self-Sufficient Heavenly Deity)—and in 959, the shrine was expanded through the patronage of Minister of the Left Fujiwara no Morosuke (908-960), a nephew of Tokihira. In 976, management of the entire complex was officially awarded to the Sugawara clan, who placed the shrine under the control of the Buddhist Tendai sect. Over the course of the following three decades, the perception of the deified Michizane seems to have gradually transitioned from a dangerous vengeful spirit into a far more benign figure who was worshiped as a protective *kami*. During this time he was presented with additional promotions, ultimately achieving the position of chancellor and the senior first rank, his shrine was added to the list of officially recognized shrines, and members of the court began to offer poems to him in exchange for academic patronage.¹¹⁶ When Emperor Ichijō (980-1011; r. 986-1011) made a pilgrimage to Kitano to offer his respects in 1004, Michizane had gone from exiled criminal, to feared antagonist, to revered *kami*—whose patronage was particularly efficacious in regards to scholarly pursuits—in a span of one-hundred years.¹¹⁷

Examples of the veneration of Michizane as a *kami* of poetry and erudition are found in a variety of sources. The first recorded instance of Michizane being venerated in this capacity is a poem from 986. Written by Yoshishige no Yasutane (933-1002) and offered to Michizane at Kitano during a gathering of like-minded scholars who had made a pilgrimage there to venerate

¹¹⁶ Kitano was officially recognized in 987 and added to list the official shrines in 991; Michizane received his additional promotions in 993. These steps were taken after the coronation of Emperor Ichijō, who was six at the time of his enthronement and fourteen in the year of his pilgrimage to Kitano. As a child emperor, Ichijō would have been guided by his closest advisors—his grandfather, Kaneie (929-990), and uncles Michitaka (953-995) and Michinaga. The steps in the process of Michizane's deification can therefore be interpreted as being due to the efforts of the Northern Fujiwara family.

¹¹⁷ Court documents regarding the pilgrimage by Emperor Ichijō are collected in *Dai Nihon shiryō*. See the entries for the thirteenth day of the intercalary ninth month, and first and eleventh days of the tenth month of 1004. *Dai Nihon Shiryō* Unified Database, Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo: <http://wwwap.hi.u-tokyo.ac.jp/shiryō/db-e.html> (accessed October 13, 2015).

the *kami*, the poem describes how Yasutane had once prayed to Michizane in order to pass his civil service examinations—an action that resulted in a favorable outcome.¹¹⁸ The writings of Ōe no Masafusa, which date from roughly one hundred years after this gathering, reveal that the perception of Michizane as a benevolent spirit had endured. During his term as governor of Dazaifu from 1097-1102, Masafusa himself made pilgrimages to Michizane's grave at Anrakuji in Dazaifu to offer poetic prayers in praise of the spirit. The poem offerings attributed Masafusa's success as governor to the patronage and protection of the deified Michizane, emphasizing his peaceful nature as a protective deity and not mentioning the darker repercussions of his downfall and demise.¹¹⁹ Additionally, the *Gōdānshō*, the eleventh-century collection of Ōe family stories, is rife with tales about Michizane's life and afterlife, many of which focus on his status as a famed poet and arbiter of taste while ignoring his history as a vengeful spirit.¹²⁰ In one notable example of this, Michizane appears to Ōe no Koretoki (886-963) in a dream to praise his composition skill rather than to chastise or frighten him.¹²¹ From this, and other stories like it, it is clear that the tenth-century transformation of Michizane from a dangerous to a benevolent figure had endured. However, in the second-half of the twelfth century, the perception of Michizane once more began to admit hints of his more threatening nature, when illustrated handscrolls depicting his life, death, and ultimate deification began to be made.

¹¹⁸ Twentieth day of the fourth month of 986. *Honchō monzui*, SZKT, vol. 29, 322. For a discussion of poetry composition as a form of spirit pacification, see Herbert Plutschow, *Chaos and Cosmos: Ritual in Early Medieval Japanese Literature* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990).

¹¹⁹ An examination of Masafusa's practice of "literary Tenjin worship" and his experiences in Dazaifu, as well as translations of the poems offered to Michizane are found in Robert Borgen, "Ōe no Masafusa and the Spirit of Michizane," *Monumenta Nipponica* 50, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 357-384.

¹²⁰ Anecdotes in the *Gōdānshō* that refer to Michizane include nos. 9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 32, and 89, which have been translated into English by Marian Ury, as well as in at least a dozen more that have not been translated. See Marian Ury, "The Ōe Conversations," *Monumenta Nipponica* 18, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 359-380.

¹²¹ Ury, "The Ōe Conversations," 379.

2.3.2 Sugawara no Michizane in the *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*

First produced sometime in the late-twelfth or early-thirteenth century, handscroll sets of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* were copied regularly throughout the medieval and early modern periods. Today, more than thirty examples remain extant, ranging in date from the early thirteenth century to the nineteenth century.¹²² Versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* are typically divided into thirty-one vignettes that tell the story of the life and death of Sugawara no Michizane. Those thirty-one vignettes are further understood to fall into three chronological categories. The first thirteen episodes cover his life, from his miraculous appearance in the household of Sugawara no Koreyoshi as a child of six to his death in exile at the age of fifty-nine. The next nine episodes deal with his posthumous revenge and the revelations stemming from the trip of the priest Nichizō through the afterworld. The final nine episodes illustrate the placation of Michizane with the building of the Kitano shrine and explore his role as a guardian deity after the placation is successful. In contrast to the historical accounts, which indicate that Michizane was understood to have been a human man who became a powerful *kami* after death, the handscroll sets clearly portray him as a divine figure who took on a human form to achieve a specific salvific goal, with each of the three stages of his legend reinforcing this interpretation of Michizane.

The first stage of Michizane's legend, which concerns his life, political ascendancy, and ultimate downfall, is patterned on the stories about the life of the historical Buddha that have been used throughout the history of Japanese art to signify supernatural abilities associated with

¹²² For a complete discussion of the scrolls' genealogical relationship to one another, see Murase Miyeko, "The *Tenjin Engi* Scrolls—A Study of Their Genealogical Relationship," (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1962).

divinity and greatness.¹²³ First and foremost, Michizane is shown to have a divine origin—appearing on his “father’s” doorstep at the age of six (see Appendix E, no. 3.1.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.1.2)—in an episode that makes explicit use of divine-child (*sei naru kodomo*) imagery that is often used to portray Buddhist patriarchs (see Appendix E, no. 19).¹²⁴ Subsequent episodes from Michizane’s early life depict him as possessing extraordinary physical and mental abilities. His early life is shown in the scrolls to be a series of high points—the composition of his first Chinese poem at the tender age of eleven (see Appendix E, no. 3.2.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.2.2), presentations of sutra commentary to esteemed Tendai priests during his youth (see Appendix E, no. 3.3), and the display of supreme athletic ability in physical contests as a young man (see Appendix E, no. 3.4.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.4.2).¹²⁵ Michizane’s middle age, which is historically largely devoid of distinction, is artfully omitted.

In the handscroll sequences that portray the second stage of the Michizane legend—his afterlife—Michizane’s wrath is depicted as a powerful and almost unstoppable force of nature. In two key scenes, his anger is depicted as a manifestation of the thunder god (*raijin*) (see Appendix E, no. 3.6.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.6.2) (see Appendix E, no. 3.8.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.8.2)—a staple in medieval Japanese Buddhist iconography who ordinarily appears in the company of the bodhisattva Kannon (see Appendix E, no. 5)¹²⁶ and an association with a

¹²³ This narrative trope is used in the pictorial biographies of political leaders like Prince Shōtoku (573-621), who ultimately came to be revered as an avatar of the bodhisattva Kannon, and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), who was deified as Tōshōgu Daigongen and enshrined at Nikkō, and in the pictorial biographies of holy men like Kūkai (774-835), the Shingon patriarch who was posthumously known as Kōbō Daishi. See Alexander C. Soper, “A Pictorial Biography of Prince Shotoku,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 25, no. 5 (Jan 1967): 197-215; Karen M. Gerhart, *The Eyes of Power: Art and Early Tokugawa Authority* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 107-140; Christine M.E. Guth, “The Divine Boy in Japanese Art,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 1-23.

¹²⁴ For an assortment of examples of divine child iconography, see *Bijutsu no naka kodomotachi* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum, 2001).

¹²⁵ These episodes represent the combination of apocryphal tales from Michizane’s life—such as his composition of Chinese poetry at the age of eleven—with entirely new stories—like the tale of his prowess as an archer.

¹²⁶ Numerous examples of thunder god iconography are found alongside images of Kannon, dating from the late Heian period—including the Thunder God statue in the Sanjūsangendō (see Appendix E, no. 6) and the *Besson zakki*

significant meaning that functions to visually reify the divinity of Michizane and the justness of his retributive actions. In a series of episodes detailing his revenge upon those men who conspired against him, Michizane is shown to have the right to dispense lethal justice to those who have maligned him—a right that cannot be checked by either the intercession of a priest (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.2) or the imperial authority of the emperor (see Appendix E, no. 3.9.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.9.2).

In the final stage of the legend, Michizane does not appear at all. Rather, his actions are revealed through the responses of those men and women who heed his wishes and rely upon him for salvation. This disappearance of Michizane is in keeping with the traditional depiction of *kami* in medieval handscrolls, which obscures the faces of *kami* or absents them from narratives of which they are a part,¹²⁷ and it symbolizes both his apotheosis and the long overdue recognition of his divine status by the human actors in the tale. In each of these stages, Michizane's divinity is tacitly affirmed through iconographic markers that would become commonplace visual devices in the medieval period. The tale of Michizane's life and death presents a very clear narrative message: those who believe in Michizane will prosper (see Appendix E, no. 3.19); those who oppose him will fall (see Appendix E, no. 3.20). While on the one hand, the depiction of Michizane as an inherently divine figure is in keeping with the development of the worship of him as a benevolent deity, the emphasis on the second stage of the story—and the graphically violent nature of how that second stage was depicted—represents

(Miscellaneous Record of Classified Sacred Names) (see Appendix E, no. 7). For more on the development and deployment of thunder god imagery in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, see Sumpter, "The Shōkyū Version of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*." Thunder god iconography is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

¹²⁷ The tendency of *kami* to be portrayed with their faces obscured is discussed at length in Yamamoto Yōko, "Kasuga Gongen genki e ni miru 'kami no kao wo egaku koto wo habakaru hyōgen,'" *Bijutsushi* 45, no. 2 (March 1996): 186-206. In the context of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, however, Yamamoto Yōko has noted that the obscuration of the face only applies to Michizane after his revenge has been completed and the process of deification begun. See "Ban Dainagon ekotoba chinkon setsu," 43-44.

a surprising resurgence of an element of the story that had for some centuries been generally downplayed. In order to understand this resurgence, it is important to consider the shifting motivations of the earliest, and longest running, players in Michizane's deification process—the Northern Fujiwara clan.

2.3.3 The Reinvention of Sugawara no Michizane as a Patron of Northern Fujiwara

Objectives

The friction existing between Michizane and the Northern Fujiwara clan—in the mid-ninth century the most powerful aristocratic family at the Heian court—was likely due to a combination of Michizane's personal status and his political role as Emperor Uda's foil against the Fujiwara. The Sugawara family name was less than seventy years old when Michizane was born into the clan in 845. In 781, Michizane's great-grandfather Haji no Furuhiro (d. 785?) had petitioned the newly-enthroned Emperor Kanmu (737-806; r. 781-806), asking permission for himself and members of his familial branch to change their family name to Sugawara.¹²⁸ The Haji family, whose differing branches filled various positions within the Nara court bureaucracy, had their origins in the Izumo area (present-day Shimane Prefecture) of Honshu and are thought to have migrated to the Yamato plain sometime in the fifth century. At the court, they took on a variety of jobs—including diplomatic service, record keeping and compilation, and sutra copying—to name but a few.¹²⁹ In 728, the Haji were among the families singled out for promotion into a newly-created class of ranks, known as “outer ranks” (*ge'i* 外位). Furuhiro was

¹²⁸ Entry for the first and sixteenth days of the sixth month of 781. *Shoku Nihongi*, vol. 2, SZKT, 472-474.

¹²⁹ For a detailed examination of the history of Haji family, see Robert Borgen, “The Origins of the Sugawara: A History of the Haji Family,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 30, no. 4 (Winter 1975): 405-422

given the outer junior lower fifth rank—a rank that was indistinguishable from the regular junior lower fifth rank in terms of its bureaucratic responsibilities but made upward social mobility almost impossible.¹³⁰ It was most likely this stigma that Furuhiro hoped to escape in changing his clan's family name.

In the Heian period, court rank was divided into thirty grades that ranged from the senior first to the junior initial lower.¹³¹ Different levels of rank carried different privileges. Men who held the at least the junior third rank were considered full aristocrats, while those who held at least the junior lower fifth rank were considered lesser aristocrats. Though the largest stipends were reserved for men of full aristocratic status, promotion to at least the regular junior lower fifth rank carried considerable advantages. Men who held that rank were considered members of the aristocracy, albeit mid-level ones, and their attainment of that rank level guaranteed their sons the right of hereditary rank upon reaching their majority—a tremendous starting advantage. Meanwhile, those holding the one of the outer ranks were classed as lower officials and could not advance past the outer senior upper fifth rank. They earned meager salaries, their sons were not guaranteed hereditary rank, and advancement at court was exceedingly difficult.

¹³⁰ According to Borgen, the Haji family was one of the most liberal adoptees of continental culture, and it is likely that they intermarried with the families of Korean immigrants living in the Izumo area. "The Origins of the Sugawara," 412. It is unclear whether this association with Korean immigrants was a factor in the Haji's selection for relegation to the outer junior fifth lower rank.

¹³¹ Borgen discusses the Nara and early Heian period court ranking system in *Sugawara no Michizane*, 12-15. William H. and Helen Craig McCullough discuss the later Heian period court ranking system in "Some Notes on Rank and Office," in *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 789-831. For a breakdown of Heian court ranks, see Appendix B.

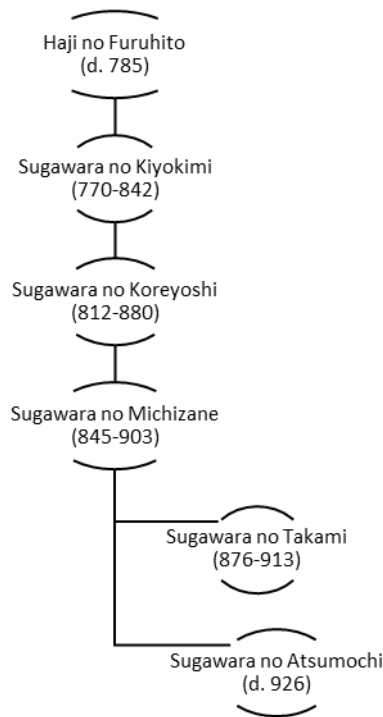


Figure 1. The Sugawara Clan, 9th-10th Centuries

Thus, Furuhto’s request was one of singular importance to his family’s fortunes, and Kanmu’s decision to grant the request constituted a major turning point for the clan. Shortly after he and his family members were granted the new name of Sugawara, Furuhto was promoted to the regular junior lower fifth rank, a crucial achievement given that it granted his descendants the right to receive hereditary rank and ascend to aristocratic status. The fortunes of the Sugawara family were further improved by the efforts of Michizane’s grandfather, Kiyokimi (770-842), and father, Koreyoshi—who, over the course of their lives, worked their way up through the ranks to the junior third rank and full aristocratic status. However, though Michizane’s grandfather and father had technically been full aristocrats at the time of their deaths, they were clearly considered “new” aristocracy, and evidence suggests that the Sugawara were—despite their tremendous scholarly and bureaucratic successes—effectively barred from entry into the ranks of the “old” aristocracy and resented as upstarts.

At several points during his career, Michizane suffered because of his outsider status.

When he passed the civil service examination in 870, he was awarded the senior sixth rank upper—a promotion of only one grade. This was in contrast to the codes, which stipulated that upon the successful completion of civil service examinations, a man should be awarded a promotion of three grades if he already held rank or the bestowal of the senior initial rank lower if he did not. The decision to promote Michizane only one grade was made due to the fact that he, at that time, already held the senior sixth rank lower through hereditary privilege.¹³² A three-grade promotion would therefore have established him as a lesser aristocrat at the age of twenty-five—an unprecedented honor for a man of his lineage. In this case, the court acted, in defiance of actual law, to maintain its entrenched power-base against someone who was perceived to be an outsider.

Sixteen years later, Michizane's status as a politically expendable outsider was once again made clear with his posting to the position of Governor of Sanuki Province. Though governorships were not uncommon positions for men of Michizane's lineage—his grandfather had held a similar position early in his career—there is little doubt that the position was foisted upon him in the wake of the sudden ascension of Emperor Kōkō (830-887; r. 884-887), who removed Michizane from several desirable postings in the capital in order to make room for himself to reward supporters with those same posts.¹³³ Moreover, the 898 boycott of Michizane's administration by the high officials of the Council of State suggests that even at the height of his career, and even with the support of Imperial patronage, Michizane was not considered a

¹³² The entry regarding Michizane's successful examination and subsequent promotion explicitly states this as the reason for his meager promotion. *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, 277-278. The entry, dated the eleventh day of the ninth month of 870, is translated in Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 114.

¹³³ In the year 884, the growing mental instability of Emperor Yōzei (869-949; r. 876-884) led to his being deposed in favor of Emperor Kōkō, who was took the throne at fifty-five. An experienced bureaucrat with minor ties to the Fujiwara family, Kōkō was in a position to create a support network for himself from among his friends and allies in the bureaucracy. He did this by removing men of little consequence—like Michizane—from choice positions in order to promote men from his own circle of supporters. Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 154-157.

member of the inner circle of the court aristocracy.¹³⁴

As these situations suggest, though the success of the Sugawara was well within the bounds of law as established by the *ritsuryō* codes, it was quite a bit outside the bounds of Heian social norms. The ancestors of the Sugawara—the Haji—were not, and had never been, members of the Yamato elite. The men of the Sugawara family did well in elevating their clan's level of prestige through merit-based advancement into the aristocracy, but they were not considered true aristocrats. They were outsiders who were tolerated when they remembered their place and vehemently guarded against when they did not. Beginning in 891, when Michizane commenced his astronomical rise to power under the patronage of Emperor Uda, it became steadily clearer to the Northern Fujiwara that Michizane was not remembering his place. In 899, an intricate conspiracy between Michizane's chief political rival, Fujiwara no Tokihira, and an assortment of allies¹³⁵ succeeded in bringing Michizane, and through him the now-retired Emperor Uda, down.¹³⁶ It was this political coup that was to pave the way for the Northern Fujiwara political dominance of the tenth century, and yet—despite this obvious triumph over Michizane—it was the Northern Fujiwara who were most closely involved in his initial deification.

Fujiwara no Tokihira was the eldest son of Fujiwara no Mototsune and, after his father's death, the head of the Northern Fujiwara family.¹³⁷ Had he lived longer, he and his descendants

¹³⁴ Upon his abdication, Emperor Uda, Michizane's strongest patron and ally, had instructed his son and successor Daigo to defer to the advice of Michizane and Fujiwara no Tokihira—effectively making them de facto regents. In protest, all other members of the Council of State stopped appearing at court in the ninth month of 898 and Uda had to order them to return before they would accept their subordinate positions. Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 270.

¹³⁵ This assortment of allies included Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki (847-918), a member of a university faction that had opposed Sugawara dominance of the court university. Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 137; 255-256.

¹³⁶ Jonathan Stockdale has argued that exile functioned to affirm hierarchies of insider and outsider at the Heian court, both in the case of Michizane and in the case of other prominent vengeful spirits. See *Imagining Exile in Heian Japan: Banishment in Law, Literature, and Cult* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 63-84. The exile and ultimate pacification of these vengeful spirits is discussed in Chapter 4.

¹³⁷ For a genealogical chart showing the relationships between prominent members of the Northern Fujiwara clan and the Imperial family during the eighth through eleventh centuries, please see Appendix C.

might have founded a powerful political dynasty, but his premature death cleared the path for a younger brother—Tadahira (880-949)—to rise to prominence and found an enduring lineage. Tadahira profited enormously by his brother's death and the perception of Michizane's wrath. Stepping in to take his dead brother's place as head of the Northern Fujiwara clan, he was promoted to the position of minister of the right upon Minamoto no Hikaru's untimely death in 913, and when Michizane was posthumously reinstated to that position in 923, Tadahira was promoted to the superior position of minister of the left.¹³⁸ By that time, Tadahira had already established himself as a supporter of Michizane. In 919, he had ordered his older brother Nakahira (875-945) to establish a permanent structure at Michizane's burial site in Dazaifu so that his spirit might be properly venerated there.¹³⁹

Tadahira's descendants continued this practice. Kitano was rebuilt and expanded by Tadahira's son, Morosuke, added to the official list of imperially recognized shrines by Tadahira's grandson, Kaneie, and visited by the emperor through the auspices of Tadahira's great-grandson, Michinaga. Interestingly, the patronizing of Kitano and veneration of Michizane coincided with the final—and perhaps most crucial—stage of the consolidation of Northern Fujiwara power. During this period, Northern Fujiwara patriarchs strengthened their hold on the imperial clan by means of extensive intermarriage and ultimately managed to have the regency established as a hereditary privilege of their family.¹⁴⁰ The establishment of the Northern Fujiwara as the House of Regents and Advisors (*sekkanke*) paved the way for the Northern Fujiwara political dominance of the eleventh century. Having succeeded in removing Michizane

¹³⁸ Herbert Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion – *Goryō* Cult and the *Kitano Tenjin Engi* and *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*," in *Florilegium Japonicum: Studies Presented to Olof G. Lidin on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Bjarke Frellesvig et al. (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1996), 223.

¹³⁹ The primary source for this statement is unknown. Both Borgen and Plutschow refer to this event, but neither provide a citation. See Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 310; and Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion," 220.

¹⁴⁰ Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion," 221. See also Appendix C.

from power during his lifetime, the Northern Fujiwara subsequently made use of his deified spirit to bolster their spiritual, and therefore political, clout. In a sense, by taming Michizane's unruly spirit, they effectively beat him twice.

In the twelfth century, however, with the rise of the *insei* government of retired emperors and the warrior clans, the power of the Fujiwara regents began to wane. By the end of the century, things had come to a desperate pass. Though Michizane had lived on peacefully as a benevolent deity of learning and literature, it was time to resurrect him as a revenge-bent spirit whose all-consuming rage at his enemies was a thing to be feared and whose pacification was a thing to be respected. This resurrection was accomplished with the creation of the *Kitano Tenjin engi*.

The *Kitano Tenjin engi* and the earliest illustrated version of it are thought to have been created or commissioned by someone in the Kujō family, one of five branches of the Northern Fujiwara house of regents. The Kujō traced their ancestry directly to such luminaries as Michinaga, Kaneie, Morosuke, and Tadahira¹⁴¹—all of whom had been involved in the tenth-century deification of Michizane. Many scholars believe that the earliest text of the *Kitano Tenjin engi*—the Kenkyū version (*Kenkyūbon*)—was written by Jien,¹⁴² a member of the Kujō clan and the four-time Tendai abbot of Enryakuji. The Kenkyū version is thought to have been

¹⁴¹ For information about the Kujō family, see Delmer M. Brown, "Jien and His Troubled Times," *The Future and the Past: A Translation and Study of the Gukanshō, an Interpretive History of Japan Written in 1219*, ed. Delmer M. Brown et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 402-418. For theories about the involvement of the Kujō in the production of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, see Minamoto Toyomune, "*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*," *Kitano Tenjin engi* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, Shōwa 52 [1977]), 1-2; Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion," 225-226; and Shinbo Tōru, *Emaki Kitano Tenjin engi, Nihon no bijutsu* 299 (Tokyo: Shinbundō, 1991), 36-37.

¹⁴² Kaminishi Ikumi has posited that Jien's involvement in the production of the story is particularly evident in the choice of Tendai priests included in the story. Kaminishi, letter to author, March 22, 2013. Tanaka Norisada has come to a similar conclusion. See "*Tenjin Kitano engi ni okeru Son'i no setsuwa nitsuite*," *Komazawa Kokubun* 27 (1990): 46-47. There are dissenting opinions, however. Takei Akio has suggested that Sugawara Tamenaka (1158-1246), a descendent of Michizane, was the actual author of the text. See "*Kitano Tenjin engi to sono jidai*," in *Kitano Tenjin engi o yomu*, ed. Takei Akio (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2008), 23.

written in the year 1194 during Jien's first appointment as abbot of Enryakuji.¹⁴³ The earliest extant version of an illustrated *Kitano Tenjin engi* handscroll is the Jōkyū version (*Jōkyūbon*), which has not been dated precisely. Though some scholars consider the Jōkyū handscroll set to be the earliest version,¹⁴⁴ the general consensus is that at least one earlier version of the handscrolls—an archetype for the thirty-plus versions that remain—existed and is now lost.¹⁴⁵

An inscription in the preface of the Jōkyū version suggests that the handscroll set was created in the first year of the Jōkyū era—1219—however, it is now believed to have been produced between 1200 and 1219.¹⁴⁶ This means that the production of the Jōkyū version of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, and by inference the now-lost archetype version, were produced during a period in which Jien and his brother Kanezane (1149-1207) were probably attempting to salvage the fortunes of the Kujō clan after their fall from favor in 1196. Though the Kujō had weathered the turmoil of the Genpei war and its aftermath in the 1180s, the 1190s saw Jien and his brother Kanezane on the losing side of a struggle for dominance of the court. In the early years of the Kamakura shogunate (*bakufu*), the military government's founder, Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147-1199), strongly favored the Kujō family and helped secure lofty positions for Jien and his brothers. Ultimately, however, Yoritomo sold the Kujō out in an unsuccessful bid to ally himself with aristocratic forces that had their power bases in the remnants of the retired

¹⁴³ Jien held the position of abbot of Enryakuji four times: in 1192-1196, 1201-1202, 1211-1212, and 1212-1213. See Brown, 338-342. For dating of the assorted versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* see Murase Miyeko, "The *Tenjin Engi* Scrolls—A Study of Their Genealogical Relationship," PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 1962.

¹⁴⁴ Minamoto, "*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*," 2.

¹⁴⁵ This is suggested both by the fact that the Jōkyū version features Six Realms (*rokudō*) imagery that is not found in other versions of the handscroll set and by the fact that it was not completed. Murase discusses this debate in detail. See Murase, 172-179. Recently Kaminishi Ikumi has suggested that the ending of the Jōkyū version was originally intended to follow the typical narrative pattern but was deliberately changed to incorporate scenes of the Eight Hells and Six Realms in order to send a specific message to the then-retired emperor Go-Toba (1180-1239; r. 1183-1198), with whose politics Jien strongly disagreed. Kaminishi, "The Political Culture of a Scroll: Jien's Appropriation of *Kitano Tenjin*," *Ars Orientalis* 44 (2014): 111-133.

¹⁴⁶ Kaminishi, "The Political Culture of a Scroll," 127. See also, Suga Miho, "Chūsei ni okeru *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* no seisaku—Jōkyūbon kara Kōshinbon he," in *Kitano Tenjin engi o yomu*, ed. Takei Akio (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2008), 196.

emperor Go-Shirakawa's administrative bureau.¹⁴⁷

The *Kitano Tenjin engi* and its first illustrated iterations had their origins in this period. Consequently, it is not difficult to imagine that their production was intended to once more support the agenda of an aristocratic family that was attempting to solidify its political standing. Through their depiction of Michizane's tale, the handscrolls' function to legitimate the cultural and political authority of the Kujō lineage, and they do this through the consistent emphasizing of the presence and agency of men important to the Kujō family lineage. In the scenes that show the construction of the Kitano Shrine itself, members of the courtier class are given center stage throughout the progression from founding to completion of the shrine to Michizane's spirit. They are represented in positions of authority—issuing orders to lower class workman and directing the early stages of construction, as well as offering Michizane the veneration he requires to be at rest within the completed shrine. Members of the lower classes appear in this sequence as well, but their roles are significantly reduced. It is easy to surmise, therefore, that these scenes were intended to emphasize the Kujō clan's ancestral involvement in the pacification of Michizane's spirit. After all, it was the patronage of Fujiwara no Morosuke that led to the expansion of the shrine in the mid-tenth century and the patronage of Fujiwara no Michinaga that led to Emperor Ichijō's pilgrimage to Kitano in the early eleventh century. Furthermore, given that the text of the *Kitano Tenjin engi* makes explicit mention of both Morosuke's and his son, Kaneie's, contributions to the founding of the shrine in 959,¹⁴⁸ it is not unreasonable to suppose that these scenes were most likely intended to depict specific men in the Kujō lineage. During the years of political decline, the Kujō may have offered a set of these scrolls to Michizane's spirit—an act that would have served the dual purpose of both seeking the support of a powerful deity and

¹⁴⁷ Brown, 338n89; and 402-419. The political struggles of the Kujō family are discussed in Chapter 3.

¹⁴⁸ *Tenjinki*, in *Kitano*, 23-124.

reminding competitor families of the ritual power possessed by the Kujō through such a spiritual alliance. Where once support of the Kitano Shrine worked to support the founding of a clan legacy, in the simulacrum of handscroll representation they functioned to bolster that legacy in a new era.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The process of reinventing historical figures served a variety of purposes. As a means of legitimizing political agendas both general and specific, the retelling of tales about such famous and infamous men as Abe no Nakamaro, Tomo no Yoshio, and Sugawara no Michizane proved to be an elegant tool for the navigation of both cultural and political disputes. Simple narrative reinvention was not the only method by which illustrated handscrolls of the late Heian period functioned to legitimate specific cultural, political, and even spiritual goals, however. In the next chapter, I will examine an even more subtle form of reifying social power and authority—one that operated via the depiction of supernatural power as a metaphor for mundane authority.

3.0 SUPERNATURAL SIGHT AS AN EMBLEM OF POLITICAL AUTHORITY

In one of its more peculiar passages, the late-eleventh-century text *Ōkagami* narrates an encounter between the minister of the right, Fujiwara no Morosuke, and the *hyakki yagyō*—a phantom parade of dangerous spirits.¹⁴⁹ Though his attendants remain blind to the phenomenon, Morosuke recognizes the impending arrival of the perilous cavalcade and prepares a magical defense against it—secluding himself in his carriage to recite the *Sonshō dhāranī*—a mnemonic chant on the defensive virtues of the deity Sonshō Butchō that was used to ward off evil.¹⁵⁰ In this anecdote the ability to see that which cannot be seen by his companions sets Morosuke apart from the men who serve under him, operating as an emblem of his political and spiritual authority. This vision-based power dynamic is echoed in two illustrated representations of supernatural confrontations between the living and the dead: the introductory meeting between the Japanese envoy Kibi no Makibi and the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro in the late-twelfth-century *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the magical confrontation between the Tendai abbot Son'i (866-940; r. 926-940) and the deceased courtier Sugawara no Michizane in the early-thirteenth-century *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*.

¹⁴⁹ Helen Craig McCullough, *Ōkagami, the Great Mirror, Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1027) and His Times: A Study and Translation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 136.

¹⁵⁰ Sonshō Butchō was a personified manifestation of the *ushnisha*—the fleshy protuberance on the crown of the Buddha's head—and the recitation of the *Sonshō dhāranī* (Superlative Spell) had many protective applications in life and death. See Jacqueline I. Stone, "The Secret Art of Dying: Esoteric Deathbed Practices in Heian Japan," in *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses, Representations*, ed. Bryan J. Cuevas et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 164-165; 165n17. Morosuke's use of the *Sonshō dhāranī* is discussed in Elizabeth Lillehoj, "Transfiguration: Man-Made Objects as Demons in Japanese Scrolls," *Asian Folklore Studies* 54 (1995): 16-18.

In each of these cases, the line between visible and invisible is blurred at the edges of spiritual power, and where ordinary men might see nothing the spiritually gifted perceive the presence of the supernatural. This chapter will explore how these narratives and their visual depiction in handscroll format represent social, political, and religious authority. Using the framework of secrecy to consider the subtleties of how authority is articulated through the expression of vision, and relying upon literary and visual analysis of primary source materials, this examination will shed light on the intricacies of how power was constructed and negotiated in the late classical and early medieval periods. In doing so, this chapter will provide an expanded view of the potential functions of the illustrated handscroll in the late Heian and early Kamakura periods.

3.1 THE MAGIC COMPETITION MOTIF

In the scenes of confrontation in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, both pairs of opponents—Kibi no Makibi/Abe no Nakamaro (see Appendix E, no. 1.4) and Son'i/Sugawara no Michizane (see Appendix E, no. 3.5)—are depicted in similar fashion. The rivals face off against each other while in a seated position; the protagonists sit to the left of the composition and the antagonists sit to the right. In the case of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, evidence of the supernatural battle between Son'i and Michizane is apparent in the presence of flaring flames to the right of the figures. This arrangement of antagonistic pairs seems to be modeled after a much older iconographic motif that developed in China and is called the “magic

competition” motif by Sarah Fraser and “oppositional composition” by Wu Hung.¹⁵¹ The motif was a common theme at from the sixth through tenth centuries and can be found in the Mogao Caves, the Western Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, and the Yulin Caves that are located in and around Dunhuang, Gansu Province. It was most likely transported to Japan sometime during the eighth century.

3.1.1 The Magic Competition Motif in China

The tale “Sudatta Erects a Temple” from the fifth-century sutra, *Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish* (*Kengukyō*), is generally considered the textual source of the magic competition motif.¹⁵² The story involves two separate sections. In the first half of the tale, a minister named Sudatta is converted to Buddhism while on a journey to Rājagṛha, and decides to build a temple in his home kingdom of Śrāvastī so that the Buddha may come there to preach. In order to help him in this endeavor, the Buddha sends his disciple Śāriputra to assist Sudatta in his quest to find land suitable for the complex. Eventually, Sudatta buys Jetavana Garden from the Crown Prince of Śrāvastī and prepares to build his temple there. In the second half of the tale, heretics have learned of Sudatta’s plan to build a Buddhist temple in Jetavana Garden. They demand that the Buddhists prove their right to establish the temple by means of a magical competition. The king agrees to this demand and witnesses six magical competitions between the leader of the heretics, Raudrākṣa, and the holy man Śāriputra. After Śāriputra is victorious in the six contests,

¹⁵¹ The development of this motif, its literary precedents and transmission to various parts of the Chinese empire, is discussed at length in Wu Hung, “What is *Bianxiang*? On the Relationship between Dunhuang Art and Dunhuang Literature,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 52, no. 1 (June 1992): 138-169; and Sarah E. Fraser, *Performing the Visual: The Practice of Buddhist Wall Painting in China and Central Asia, 618-960* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 79-83; 160-183.

¹⁵² Fraser, 161.

Raudrākṣa and his followers are forced to convert to Buddhism and the temple building site is secured for Sudatta.¹⁵³

The story, as it is collected in the fifth-century *Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish*, probably represents only a snapshot of an otherwise orally transmitted story as it existed at that moment in time. The tale itself is thought to have continued to evolve and incorporate elements of various oral permutations into its narrative structure up to its prominent appearance in the caves of Dunhuang in the ninth and tenth centuries.¹⁵⁴ By that time the story had been retold in the popular *bianwen*¹⁵⁵ known as “The Subjugation of Demons,” which was written three centuries after the sutra,¹⁵⁶ and also served to further disseminate the pictorial motif of the magic competition.

Oppositional composition was deployed throughout the Tang (618-907) dynasty to depict illustrations of the magic competition between Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa at Dunhuang.¹⁵⁷ Depictions of the tale are found in wall murals, banners, and ink paintings. The earliest depiction of the story to make use of oppositional composition appeared in the Buddha niche of the west wall of Cave 335 (ca. 686) (see Appendix E, no. 8) and scholars have suggested that the Cave 335 mural composition was based on the “Debate Between Vimilakīrti and Mañjuśrī” motif. In contrast to the “Sudatta” tale, which was rarely depicted in the pre-Tang period, the “Debate

¹⁵³ A more extensive summary of “Sudatta Erects a Temple” is narrated in Wu, 139-140 and Fraser, 79-83.

¹⁵⁴ Sarah Fraser has argued that the “Sudatta Erects a Temple” tale was not a translation of an earlier Indian story but instead was a Chinese composition written to imitate the literary style of the sutras that had previously been imported. Wu Hung, on the other hand, has suggested that the tale was recorded by Chinese monks in Turfan and then transported to Gansu in the year 435. See Fraser, 167-168 and Wu, 140.

¹⁵⁵ A *bianwen* was a text used in oral storytelling practices. An extensive analysis of the etymology of the term appears in Eugene Eoyang, “Word of Mouth: Oral Storytelling the Pien-wen,” (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1971), 28-36. Scholars disagree as to whether *bianwen* should apply only to popular texts or include didactic texts, such as those that supported sūtra lectures, as well. See Wu, 111n1.

¹⁵⁶ For a complete translation of the “Subjugation of Demons” text, see Victor Mair, *Tun-huang Popular Narratives*, Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature and Institutions, ed. Patrick Hanan and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 31-84.

¹⁵⁷ Wu, 138.

Between Vimilakīrti and Mañjuśrī” story was regularly represented in the oppositional composition format displayed in Cave 335 and by the Sui Dynasty (581-618) could regularly be found incorporated into image niches.¹⁵⁸ Depictions of Vimilakīrti and Mañjuśrī were particularly widespread at Dunhuang during the sixth and seventh centuries, when the story of Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa was beginning to become more well-known, and by the ninth century was often placed opposite scenes of the magic competition—as in Cave 146 where Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa were depicted on the west wall (see Appendix E, no. 9) and Vimilakīrti and Mañjuśrī were depicted on the east (see Appendix E, no. 10).¹⁵⁹

At the same time that murals were being commissioned, oppositional composition was being employed in illustrated handscrolls of the *bianwen* version of the story, “The Subjugation of Demons.” These illustrations often featured repetitious images of Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa engaged in one magical contest after another on one side and text excerpts on the other (see Appendix E, no. 11), leading a number of scholars to suggest that they served as aids to *bianwen* storytelling performances.¹⁶⁰ This suggestion is an important clue to understanding how the magic competition motif was transmitted to the Japanese archipelago after its development on the continent.

3.1.2 Transmission of the Magic Competition Motif from China to Japan

Though only one illustrated handscroll (ca. mid-eighth century, collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) that depicts the competition between Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa remains today, it

¹⁵⁸ Wu, 149-50.

¹⁵⁹ Fraser, 52-53; 121.

¹⁶⁰ Eoyang, 154-63; Wu, 153.

is not unreasonable to suppose that other, no longer extant, scrolls were made.¹⁶¹ Large numbers of handscrolls that illustrated other *bianwen* stories were made during this period for use in oral storytelling. The scrolls featured images on one side and text on the other. Eugene Eoyang has suggested that these excerpts of text served as a visual aid to the storyteller as he was unraveling the illustration for his audience, letting the performer know where the corresponding images were.¹⁶² Such objects—smaller, lighter, and infinitely more portable than wall murals—are likely to have traveled from Dunhuang throughout the Tang Empire with the storytellers who used them. Debates and their associated stories and depictions, which relied heavily on the oppositional composition format established at Dunhuang, were immensely popular during the Tang Dynasty¹⁶³ and for centuries after that empire fell. Handscrolls that depicted the “Debate Between Vimilakīrti and Mañjuśrī” story were made well into the Jin (1115-1234) and Yuan dynasties (1271-1368), while Chan Buddhist (J. Zen) educational texts, which began to be produced in the tenth century, often employed an “encounter dialogue” format in which Chan masters had protracted debates with their skilled disciples that served to illuminate Chan Buddhist teachings.¹⁶⁴

Just as it is easy to surmise that illustrated handscrolls depicting the magic competition of Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa circulated on the Chinese continent it is also easy to surmise that they may have circulated on the Japanese archipelago as well. The story of the competition was certainly known to the Japanese court as early as the eighth century, when a copy of the *Sutra of*

¹⁶¹ Fraser, 176.

¹⁶² Eoyang, 45-49.

¹⁶³ Fraser, 170.

¹⁶⁴ For more on the phenomenon of “encounter dialogues” see John R. McRae, “Encounter Dialogue and the Transformation of the Spiritual Path in Chinese Ch’an,” in *Paths to Liberation: The Marga and Its Transformation in Buddhist Thought*, Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism 7, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. and Robert M. Gimello (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1992), 339-370.

the Wise and Foolish was made.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, though this version of the sutra was not illustrated, other sutra illustrations—copied from continental examples—were made around the same time.¹⁶⁶ The existence of these two types of objects, though not conclusive, is suggestive of the fact that illustrated versions of the sutra, containing elements of oppositional composition in their portrayal of the magic competition between Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa, were known in Japan as early as the Nara period (710-794). Furthermore, that the Japanese knew of the visual motif associated with the story is strongly suggested by the compositional similarities between it and the illustrations in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*.

3.1.3 The Magic Competition Motif in the *Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*

Both the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* are about, or extensively incorporate elements of, magic competitions. In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the handscroll's main protagonist Kibi no Makibi is captured and imprisoned by Chinese adversaries, who force him to survive a series of challenges that—though not magical in origin—are met with magic by Kibi. In the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the vengeful spirit of Sugawara no Michizane likewise resorts to displays of magical acumen in his encounters with various characters who would seek to thwart his plans for retribution. Though both handscroll sets make use of the compositional elements of the magic competition motif, it is perhaps the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* that most obviously reflects the imported iconography.

¹⁶⁵ This text, now in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum, is a national treasure attributed to the hand of Emperor Shōmu (701-756; r.724-749). It was originally housed in the Tōdaiji at Nara.

¹⁶⁶ The mid-eighth-century *Illustrated Sutra of Cause and Effect* (J. *E Inga kyō*) is a prime example of this.

As previously mentioned, the scenes that depict Kibi's trials at the hands of the Chinese—most particularly his first meeting with the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro in the form of an *oni* who haunts the tower in which he has been imprisoned—make liberal use of the magic competition motif. In each scene of confrontation—Kibi's meeting with Nakamaro (see Appendix E, no. 1.4), Kibi's meeting with the Chinese official sent to test his knowledge of the *Wenxuan* text (see Appendix E, no. 1.8), Kibi's meeting with the chess master (see Appendix E, no. 1.11)—Kibi and his opponents are posed opposite one another, with Kibi on the left and his adversary on the right.¹⁶⁷ However, a more telling indication of the adoption of elements from handscroll versions of the story is perhaps the general layout of the handscroll itself.

Much has been made of the episodic and repetitious nature of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, and some scholars have even gone so far as to label its alternating representation of tower-palace-tower-palace boring, particularly in contrast to more dynamic examples of narrative development in contemporaneous handscrolls such as the *Shigisan engi emaki* (Illustrated Legends of Mount Shigi, ca. late twelfth century) (see Appendix E, no. 17).¹⁶⁸ This dismissive attitude to the compositional elements of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* ignores the possibility that its layout may be derived from a copy of the tale of Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa brought to Japan from the continent. As has been noted, the sole surviving copy of an illustrated scroll of the “Subjugation of Demons” *bianwen* features a similarly repetitious and episodic layout (see Appendix E, no. 11). In the scroll, the six contests between Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa are laid out

¹⁶⁷ This is in contrast to a majority of cave murals and the illustrated handscroll that depict the magic competition. In these images, the Buddhists (protagonists) typically appear on the right while the heretics (antagonists) appear on the left. However, some versions of the motif—notably in Cave 9 at Dunhuang (see Appendix E, no. 12)—reverse the positioning of protagonist and antagonist from right to left, indicating that such positioning was not absolutely integral to the composition of the motif. By the time of the production of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* in the twelfth century and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* in the thirteenth century, the symbolism of such positioning was likely lost and therefore open to reinterpretation.

¹⁶⁸ Wakasugi Junji, “*Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*,” *Boston Bijutsukan no butsuga to emaki, Bukkyō bijutsu kenkyū Ueno kinen zaidan jōsei kenkyūkai hōkokusho* 12 (June 1983), 12-13.

in succession with no additional narrative elements to break up the linear trajectory of one iconic representation of a battle followed by another, and another, and another. The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* follows this linear narrative trajectory as well. Outside of the scenes where Kibi arrives in China by boat (see Appendix E, no. 1.1), the handscroll features only two locations: the tower (see Appendix E, no. 1.2) where Kibi is imprisoned and where his contests take place, and the imperial palace (see Appendix E, no. 1.3) where the Chinese emperor lives and where his subjects' defeats at the hands of Kibi are reported.¹⁶⁹ In each of these places, the narrative advancement is conveyed through the symmetry of confrontational pairs. Kibi always sits across from his foes, who are likewise are often portrayed in oppositional composition with the Chinese emperor in the scenes where they describe their failures.

The same oppositional composition is utilized in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* to illustrate scenes of confrontation between the vengeful spirit of Sugawara no Michizane and an assortment of rivals—including Fujiwara no Tokihira (see Appendix E, no. 3.6.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.6.2) and the Tendai priest Jōzō (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.2), in addition to the Tendai abbot Son'i—although the placement of the competitors shifts from one scene to the next and there is not the same kind of repetition. In the first example, Michizane sends his servant, the *oni*-like¹⁷⁰ thunder god, to attack the palace. Tokihira stands to the left brandishing a sword, confronting the thunder god who has appeared at the right. In the second example, Michizane causes a pair of snakes to crawl out of Tokihira's ears. These snakes order Jōzō (891-964), who is seated at the right, to cease his attempts to perform an exorcism.

¹⁶⁹ This emphasis on Kibi's struggle with the Chinese is integral to understanding the function of the handscroll. Where some scholars have been tempted to see the handscroll as a denouncement of the Abe family through Kibi's vanquishing of their ancestor Nakamaro, it is clear that the "magic competition" in the scroll is conducted a) between Kibi and the Chinese and b) with Nakamaro's aid. As I will argue in Chapter 4, Kibi's interaction with Nakamaro in this scroll is more akin to an act of pacification than a contest of magical prowess.

¹⁷⁰ *Oni* are discussed extensively below.

Though the above-mentioned examples only hint at the impact of the magic competition motif on the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the confrontation between Michizane and the Tendai abbot Son'i makes the connection between the two clear (see Appendix E, no. 3.5). The scene incorporates both the visual characteristics of the motif and narrative characteristics of the original story. Michizane and Son'i sit opposite one another, with Michizane to the right and Son'i to the left. Michizane spits a flaming pomegranate seed—an explicit act of magical conjuration—at a nearby door, causing it to catch fire. Son'i makes a sign with his hands to perform a counter-charm and shoot a stream of water to extinguish the flames. In terms of both visual and narrative elements, this episode closely resembles the magic competition of Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa. In that story, each of the magical contests consisted of Raudrākṣa invoking his magic and Śāriputra performing a counter-charm to negate it. In the scene of confrontation between Son'i and Michizane, the same type of tit-for-tat actions play out, with the same implicit suggestion of Buddhism's ability to triumph over other forms of supernatural power.

As Sarah Fraser has noted, Śāriputra and Raudrākṣa represent a stark contrast, and their battle represents a clear-cut confrontation between the forces of good and the forces of evil. However, the volatile forces encountered in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—Abe no Nakamaro and Sugawara no Michizane—do not occupy as strict a dichotomy. Instead, they are essentially liminal. They are dangerous because of their posthumous anger but, at the same time, capable of performing miraculous as well as monstrous feats depending on their treatment. The fundamental liminality of these characters is equally a function of the iconography that is used to depict them, for though the *oni* is depicted with a terrifying visage its developmental history reveals a fluidity of purpose that is perfectly suited to the dualism of these vengeful spirits. Moreover, the *oni*'s core characteristics of transformation

and invisibility provide the standard against which the supernatural powers of great men are judged.

3.2 SUPERNATURAL CREATURES SEEN AND UNSEEN

In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the story's supernatural protagonists—Abe no Nakamaro and Sugawara no Michizane—are both depicted in the guise of *oni*, a term that is often translated as “demon” but whose origins and functions are far more complex than such a translation makes clear. In fact, *oni* is a multifaceted term, used to refer to a plethora of natural and supernatural phenomena, whose origins and history have been extensively explored by Japanese and western scholars alike.¹⁷¹ In this section, I will explore the various developmental origins of *oni*, considering etymology, iconography, and traditional characteristics in order to understand the nature of *oni* and their role in the construction of power in the stories and illustrated handscrolls that feature them.

¹⁷¹ Notable examples include Mori Masato, “*Konjaku Monogatari-shū*: Supernatural Creatures and Order,” *Journal of Japanese Religious Studies* 9, no. 2-3 (June-September 1982): 147-170; Ōnishi Hiroshi, “The Iconography of Demons in Japanese Art: A Few Modest Proposals,” *Asian Cultural Studies* 17 (March 1989): 45-57; Sasama Yoshihiko, *Oni to mononoke no bunka shi: e de mite fushigi!* (Tokyo: Yūshikan, 2005); Kuroda Hideo, “Oni to gaikō—*Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* 1,” in *Kaiga shiryō de rekishi wo yomu* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2007), 17-35; and Noriko T. Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni from Ancient Times to the Present* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2010).

3.2.1 The Origins and Development of *Oni*

While a number of different developmental lines for the concept of *oni* in ancient Japan have been suggested,¹⁷² one of the most commonly proposed explanations for the unique qualities of *oni* is that those qualities derive from the etymology of the word itself and its Chinese character—鬼. The first appearances of the character 鬼 are found in the earliest extant collections of Japanese history and literature,¹⁷³ including the *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720 CE) and the *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten-Thousand Leaves, 749 CE), where it is notably given the reading of *mono* (thing) rather than *oni*.¹⁷⁴ Japanese art historian Ōnishi Hiroshi has suggested that this unconventional reading of the character is attributable 1) to the fact that the creatures described by the character 鬼 had not been conquered by man and therefore could not be subjected to human control through categorization, and 2) to the fact that these creatures were not visible to human beings and therefore could not be precisely identified.¹⁷⁵ The characteristic of invisibility is a significant aspect of *oni* as they came to be later described, and it is thought to be implicitly embedded in both the word *oni* and the character 鬼. The original Chinese meaning for the 鬼 character is “an invisible soul/spirit of the dead,”¹⁷⁶ and the word *oni* is thought to be related to the character 隱, which means “hidden” or “shadowy” and is pronounced *in* or *on*.¹⁷⁷ Thus, in terms of both ideographic meaning and phonetic pronunciation, the idea of some “thing”

¹⁷² Reider identifies four separate developmental lines for the concept of *oni* in ancient Japan: the Japanese line, the Chinese line, the Buddhist line, and the Onmyōdō line, see *Japanese Demon Lore*, 2-14.

¹⁷³ The character 鬼 does not appear in the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712 CE). See Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 5n5.

¹⁷⁴ Sasama discusses the appearance of the character in the *Nihon shoki* on p. 153; Ōnishi and Reider discuss the appearance of the character in the *Man'yōshū* on pp. 48 (Ōnishi) and 6 (Reider), respectively.

¹⁷⁵ Ōnishi, 48.

¹⁷⁶ Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 4.

¹⁷⁷ The earliest extant Japanese dictionary, *Wamyō ruijushō* (A Collection of Japanese Names, ca. 930s), describes the word *oni* as being a modified reading of this character. See Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 5; and Ōnishi, 48.

that is vague, indistinct, and hidden from the sight of man is intrinsically linked to the concept of *oni*.

The implicit vagueness conveyed by the 鬼 character is also a property of *mononoke*—a category of supernatural creatures to which the *oni* is sometimes thought to belong. Today, *mononoke* is written as 物の怪 (lit. the mystery of things). In the Nara and Heian periods, however, it was most often written as 鬼の気 (lit. the spirit of “things”).¹⁷⁸ This fluidity of terminology is perhaps what enabled the *mononoke* to take on such a vast quantity of physical characteristics. In ancient Japan, *mononoke* included humanoid and serpentine creatures, as well as the beastly, the bird-like, the water-dwelling, and the intangible. In addition to *oni*, *goryō* (vengeful spirits),¹⁷⁹ *tsukumogami* (tool specters), *tengu* (long-nosed goblins), *kappa* (water sprites), and *kitsune* (fox spirits) were all classified under the moniker of *mononoke*,¹⁸⁰ and they were distinguished by their ability to cause illness and disorder in society.¹⁸¹

While *oni* were sometimes thought to be at the root of tremendous social disorder, they were also understood to be capable of enforcing social order. This fundamental duality is a key characteristic of *oni*—and indeed of many supernatural creatures in the Japanese pantheon—and was inherent to both the archipelagic precursors onto which the imported term *oni* was grafted and the Buddhist demons whose visual iconography would come to define the figurative *oni*. Pre-Buddhist religious practices on the Japanese archipelago were largely centered on the pacification of such supernatural creatures as vengeful ancestors, pestilence deities, and

¹⁷⁸ Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 6-7.

¹⁷⁹ Another word for vengeful spirit is *onryō*. Though this term appeared in records related to the Heike dead as early as the late-twelfth century, it was not commonly used in the historical records of the Heian court. Consequently, I will use the term *goryō*, rather than *onryō*, to describe vengeful spirits in this study.

¹⁸⁰ Sasama, 152-57.

¹⁸¹ Wakabayashi Haruko, *The Seven Tengu Scrolls: Evil and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy in Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 4-8.

crossroad spirits whose origins lay on the Asian continent.¹⁸² Each of these entities possessed the ability to either penalize or reward their human worshipers, and fear of their displeasure and retribution underlay much of early Japanese cultic practice.

The “demonic” creatures brought to the archipelago as part of the Buddhist mythological framework possessed similarly dualistic attributes; guardian kings like the *shitennō* (Four Heavenly Kings), whose role was to defend the Buddhist law, could both protect the faithful from malicious spirits and harshly castigate those men and women who fell prey to the temptations of evil.¹⁸³ Moreover, these creatures shared iconographic characteristics with the malicious spirits they were tasked to vanquish. Such images of demonic figures were brought to the archipelago from the continent after a centuries-long process of contact with and incorporation of native Indian and Chinese spirits and deities into a Buddhist cosmological context.¹⁸⁴ In some of these cases preexisting indigenous imagery was adopted wholesale while in others it was adapted to reflect Buddhist iconography.¹⁸⁵

In China, a number of pernicious spirits—particularly those associated with the souls of the dead—who were propitiated out of fear and ultimately incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon were described with terms that incorporated the 鬼 character, read as *gui*: e.g. *guishen* (ghost-spirits), *gui* (demons), and *xiagui* (petty demons).¹⁸⁶ The character for *oni* was therefore transmitted to the Japanese archipelago with a concomitant association to Buddhist “demonic” deities, thus laying the groundwork for literary descriptions of *oni* to incorporate the Buddhist

¹⁸² Michael Como, *Weaving and Binding: Immigrant Gods and Female Immortals in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009). The phenomenon of spirit pacification is discussed in Chapter 4.

¹⁸³ Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 10; Ōnishi, 49-50.

¹⁸⁴ Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 9; Ōnishi, 50; Sasama, 18-21.

¹⁸⁵ Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 11-12. A notable example of this process is the adoption and adaptation of the Chinese thunder deity, which was explored at length in Junghee Han, “The Origin of Wind and Thunder God Iconography and Its Representation in Korean Painting,” *Korea Journal* 40, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 68-89.

¹⁸⁶ Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 9. See also Richard von Glahn, *The Sinister Way: The Divine and the Demonic in Chinese Religious Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 45-77.

iconography displayed in painted and sculptural images. The first use of the character 鬼 with the reading *oni* occurred early in its adoption in the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* (A Record of the Natural Features of Izumo Province, 733 CE)¹⁸⁷—the term is employed more than once in the text, most notably to describe a one-eyed creature that eats a man from the village of Ayo¹⁸⁸—however, this pronunciation did not become widespread until the tenth century when the visual characteristics of *oni* had already become deeply entrenched in Japanese art.

The earliest extant representation of an *oni* in Japanese art appears on the lower right panel of the *Tamamushi no zushi* (Tamamushi Shrine) (see Appendix E, no. 13).¹⁸⁹ The panel depicts the “Sacrifice for Knowledge” story from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* (J. *Nehankyō*), which relates how, in a past existence, the Buddha offered his life to the deity Indra (J. Taishakuten)—who was disguised as a demon—in exchange for knowledge of sacred scriptures.¹⁹⁰ At the bottom right, the demon—depicted with the bulging muscles, cavernous jaws, and pointed horn of traditional *oni* iconography—offers knowledge of the scriptures to the Buddha, who stands to the left dressed in a frayed robe and trousers of blue and red. Directly above this, the Buddha writes the scriptures he has received on the rock walls of the surrounding mountain so that all may share in the teachings. He then throws himself from the mountain’s summit at the top left-hand side of the panel, only to be caught by the demon, who is at last revealed to be Indra.

In this tale the dualistic nature of Buddhist “demons” is a key element in the story’s narrative thrust. For Indra, in the form of a demon, plays a double-role in the earlier life of the

¹⁸⁷ Ōnishi, 48. *Fudoki* (lit. “records of wind and earth”) were documents containing information on the topography, geography, history, and culture of, as well as myths and legends indigenous to, specific locales that began to be collected by the Japanese court in the eighth century. The *Izumo no kuni fudoki* was one of the first of such documents to be collected and one of five early *fudoki* that remain extant. Michiko Y. Aoki, *Records of Wind and Earth: A Translation of Fudoki with Introduction and Commentaries*, Monograph and Occasional Paper Series, Number 53 (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, Inc., 1997), x-xi.

¹⁸⁸ Aoki, 151.

¹⁸⁹ Ōnishi, 47.

¹⁹⁰ Mizuno Seiichi, *Asuka Buddhist Art: Hōryūji* (New York: Weatherhill, 1974), 40-52.

Buddha. On the one hand the demon works to drive the Buddha to an untimely death. On the other hand, however, it facilitates his escape from death—both in the previous existence related in this tale and in the Buddha’s ultimate incarnation where he achieves release from the cycles of death and rebirth. The comingling of cruelty and kindness inherent in this story is equally evident in the function fulfilled by the *oni* in the *Jigoku zōshi* (Illustrated Scroll of Hell) who torture the damned in hell in order to expurgate the sin that impedes a soul’s journey to enlightenment (see Appendix E, no. 24). Given the dualistic nature of *oni*—in their pre-and-post-Buddhist incarnations—it is easy to see how they were ideally suited to be imbedded into representational motifs for vengeful spirits in literary texts and their accompanying illustrations. For the vengeful spirit was itself a volatile and dualistic entity, which shifted fluidly between helpful and harmful attitudes depending on the actions of those who worshiped or ignored them.

3.2.2 The Iconography and Characteristics of *Oni*

Japanese *oni*, therefore, have an intricate developmental history. The influx of an amalgam of continental sources, reaching the archipelago at different stages of societal progress, has resulted in a category of supernatural beings whose parameters are not set in stone. Consequently, the term *oni* can be used to describe any number of phenomenological occurrences—either natural or supernatural. In contrast to the multiplicity of functions an *oni* could perform, the iconography used to depict *oni*—and other supernatural creatures conflated with them—has remained steadily uniform since its introduction to Japan in the seventh century. A cursory survey of art objects that feature *oni*—including the aforementioned *Tamamushi no zushi* (see Appendix E, no. 13), the twelfth-century *Jigoku zōshi* (see Appendix E, no. 14), the fifteenth-century *Haseo kyō zōshi* (Illustrated Tale of Lord Haseo) (see Appendix E, no. 15), and the sixteenth-century *Bukkigun*

emaki (Illustrated Battle of the Buddha and Demons) (see Appendix E, no. 16)—make the iconographic qualities of *oni* plain.¹⁹¹ They typically have oxen-like horns on the head, either one horn on each side of their forehead or a single horn in the middle. They also possess large, almost comical snouts and gaping mouths with tiger-like fangs. *Oni* are invariably clad in a loin-cloth; occasionally they wear tiger pelts.

The inclusion of ox and tiger elements in the *oni*'s visual iconography may be related to ideas associated with the Chinese zodiac. *Oni* are said to dwell in the northeast—the unlucky direction that is known as the *kimon*, or “*oni*'s gate,” a direction that is also known as *ushitora* (ox-tiger) in the Chinese zodiac.¹⁹² This suggests that these animalistic elements of the *oni*'s visual representation were adapted from Chinese cosmological concepts. The bodies of *oni* are densely muscular and often depicted as having a blue or red tint to the skin and stringy, wire-like hair that is sometimes described as being black as midnight or a flaming red. In the tenth tale from the eleventh scroll of the *Uji shūi monogatari*, the Tendai priest Nichizō encounters an *oni* who has “dark-blue skin and fiery-red hair.”¹⁹³ These colors, which recall flames, soot, and ash, suggest the *oni*'s association with hellfire and brimstone.¹⁹⁴

In addition to these visual elements, *oni* have common behavioral characteristics that

¹⁹¹ The iconographic characteristics are summarized in Sasama, 16; Mori Masato, 157; and Juliann Wolfgram, “*Oni: The Japanese Demon*,” in *Japanese Ghosts and Demons: Art of the Supernatural*, ed. Stephen Addiss et al (New York: George Braziller, 1985), 91-101.

¹⁹² Sasama, 16.

¹⁹³ This story appears in D. E. Mills, *A Collection of Tales from Uji: A Study and Translation of Uji Shūi Monogatari* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 352. Additionally, a number of stories from the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, *Jikkinshō*, and other story collections have been translated into English and appear—along with tales from the *Uji shūi monogatari*—in the following collections: Susan Wilbur Jones, *Ages Ago: Thirty-Seven Tales from the Konjaku Monogatari Collection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Marian Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past: Sixty-Two Stories from a Medieval Japanese Collection* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Helen Craig McCullough, *Classical Japanese Prose: An Anthology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); Royall Tyler, *Japanese Tales* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987); and Burton Watson and Haruo Shriane, *The Demon of Agi Bridge and Other Japanese Tales* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011). Original texts of the tales are collected in *Konjaku monogatari shū*, vol. 16 & 17, SZKT. Where possible, I cite English translations.

¹⁹⁴ Sasama, 17.

might be said to be similarly iconic.¹⁹⁵ *Oni* are conceptualized as border-dwellers who most commonly reside in in-between spaces like gates, bridges, crossroads, and abandoned buildings and frequently appear not just in the dead of night, but during the transitional times of dawn and dusk as well.¹⁹⁶ Additionally, *oni* possess the power of transformation, and they often assume an innocuous shape in order to deceive and entrap their prey. Finally, *oni*—particularly *oni* of unknown origin¹⁹⁷—frequently eat their victims, leaving only bloodstained clothes and fragmented body-parts behind. The thirteenth tale from the twenty-seventh scroll of the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, which narrates the story of a man who encounters, escapes, and is ultimately tricked and eaten by an *oni*, incorporates each of these three characteristics.¹⁹⁸

Taken together, these traits are perhaps best described as indicative of the *oni*'s overarching characteristics of transgressiveness and dualism.¹⁹⁹ Through predatory acts, and other anti-establishment behavior like theft, kidnapping, and rape, *oni* transgress the boundaries of the acceptable, thus challenging one's understanding of and faith in the ordinary and violating one's sense of reality. *Oni* straddle the line between known and unknown, normal and abnormal, self and other, and this dichotomy is symbolized by their proximity to places that visually embody such a stark dichotomy, for example, gates and bridges—places that clearly mark the borders between inside and outside, familiar and uncertain. Their ability to appear at will in threatening or non-threatening form is also indicative of their transgressive, dichotomous nature, a characteristic that is shared by other Japanese supernatural creatures—and indeed by many

¹⁹⁵ For a summary of some of these behavioral characteristics see Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 14-29.

¹⁹⁶ Mori Masato, 48-56.

¹⁹⁷ In most stories that feature *oni*, their origins are not made clear. However, in a number of tales, *oni* are explicitly stated to be human beings who became *oni* through their inability to let go of excessive emotions. The significance of the distinction between these two types of *oni* will be discussed below.

¹⁹⁸ Tyler, 19-22; Watson and Shirane, 74-78.

¹⁹⁹ The dualism of *oni* is likewise seen in their periodic tendency to act as purveyors of wealth and prosperity, as they do in *Konjaku* 12.47 and *Uji* 1.3. See Tyler, 242-44; and Mills, 137-40.

monsters of the world—who are seen as polymorphic, liminal, and fundamentally alteric. Their ability to change—to reject “either/or” categorization in favor of “and/or”—lies at the heart of their role as guardians of social order. Supernatural creatures function simultaneously as scapegoat and as straw man, at once emblems of difference and tools that reinforce conformity to social norms.²⁰⁰

One of the most vital elements of the *oni*’s ability to reify the social order and bolster constructions of political power and authority is its characteristic of invisibility—a specific type of transformative power. While there are many stories in which *oni* are seen and their visual qualities described, there are also a number of stories in which the *oni* is not seen or is only seen in fragmentary form.²⁰¹ Instead, the *oni* are only known by their actions—by their displays of transgressive behavior. Several stories from the *Konjaku monogatari shū* illustrate this phenomenon. In the seventh story from the twenty-seventh scroll of *Konjaku monogatari shū*, Ariwara no Narihira (825-880) takes shelter from a storm with his lover, and sometime during the night the girl is consumed by an *oni* that Narihira neither sees nor hears. In the ninth story from the same scroll, a young official arrives late for a meeting to discover that his superior has been killed, and presumably eaten, by an *oni* that no one saw arrive or depart. In the twenty-fourth story from the twenty-fourth scroll, Minamoto no Hiromasa (918-980) discovers that the famous lute, Genjō, has been stolen by the *oni* of the Rashōmon.²⁰² He demands its return,

²⁰⁰ This characteristic of supernatural creatures is discussed by many scholars of monsters and the monstrous. See, for example, Jerome Jeffrey Cohen, “Monster Culture (Seven Theses),” in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 3-25; Michael Dylan Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); and Michelle Osterfeld Li, *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setsuwa Tales* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

²⁰¹ Mori Masato, 157-58.

²⁰² The Rashōmon was the southern-most gate in Heian-kyō and marked the entrance into the city.

whereupon it is lowered from the gate on a string. The *oni* is never seen.²⁰³

In these stories the word *oni* becomes a catchphrase for something that is not, or cannot, be seen by the protagonists—something that is unsurprising when one recalls that the *oni* is a categorical term, similar to and encompassed by the word *mononoke*, whose ideographic and etymological origins incorporate concepts of hiddenness and invisibility. It is this characteristic of invisibility that was so vital to constructions of political power at the Heian court. In a multitude of *setsuwa* tales, certain protagonists encounter spirits—including *oni*—who cannot be seen, or detected, by most other people. The ability to see such spirits, and subsequently control their behavior because of this supernatural sight, functions as a marker of spiritual authority that goes hand-in-hand with social and political authority.

3.2.3 Supernatural Sight and the Construction of Political Power in *Setsuwa*

In order to understand the interconnectedness of spiritual and political authority, it is first necessary to offer a brief survey of representative examples of *setsuwa* that feature protagonists who can see invisible, or disguised, supernatural creatures. In the twelfth story from the second scroll of *Uji shūi monogatari*, Minamoto no Hikaru, the minister of the right,²⁰⁴ hears that an image of the Buddha has appeared in a persimmon tree near the Kitano Tenjin Shrine but believes this to be highly unlikely. He goes to the spot and engages in a staring context with the creature, who eventually falls from the tree—revealed to be nothing more than a kestrel who had

²⁰³ Tyler, 17-18; 16-17; and 87-88. For an alternate version of the tale see Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 146-49.

²⁰⁴ In the version of this story that appears in the *Uji shūi monogatari*, the minister is unnamed. In the version of the story that appears in the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, the minister is said to be Minamoto no Hikaru, who held the position of Minister of the Right from 901-913 after Sugawara no Michizane was exiled. See Mills, 189n1.

altered its appearance to fool the credulous populace.²⁰⁵ In the thirty-first story of the twenty-seventh scroll of *Konjaku monogatari shū*, Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki,²⁰⁶ a major counselor, is able to rid a well-known haunted house of its spectral inhabitants by staring them down during a night of repeated visitations.²⁰⁷ In the nineteenth story of the same scroll, Fujiwara no Sanesuke (957-1046), who became minister of the right in 1021, sees a small oil jar skipping along the road one day on his way to the palace and—suspecting some mischief—decides to follow it. He observes it sneaking into a mansion through the keyhole of the gate and later learns that the daughter of the house died shortly around the time he saw the apparition enter the mansion. The inhabitants of the house obviously did not possess Sanesuke’s gift of supernatural sight.²⁰⁸

In each of these stories, the control of the supernatural creature hinges on the protagonist’s ability to see them. Minamoto no Hikaru is the only person able to see through the sorcerous disguise adopted by the kestrel to dupe the people of the capital; Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki is the only person willing to stare down the specters that control the abandoned mansion and thus claim it for his own. Fujiwara no Sanesuke is the only person capable of seeing the physical form of the malicious *mononoke* that claims the life of a young woman. Furthermore, the stories themselves make much of this ability—often concluding that the people who heard about the incidents were very impressed by the protagonist’s exploits and by what said exploits indicate about their personal quality. That the protagonists of these stories are typically high-ranking court officials is no accident. People from all walks of life encounter supernatural creatures in the *setsuwa* tales, but often they do not have the ability to either see the creatures that attack them or

²⁰⁵ Mills, 188-89; and Tyler, 172.

²⁰⁶ Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki was a prominent conspirator against Sugawara no Michizane. He died in the palace fire of 930 that was said to have been caused by Michizane’s wrath. His importance to the Michizane story, and the handscrolls that illustrate it, is discussed below.

²⁰⁷ Tyler, 122-24.

²⁰⁸ Tyler, 75.

ameliorate the effects of those attacks. The above-mentioned stories of Ariwara no Narihira and the unnamed low-ranking official who finds his superior dead—and many other tales where guardsmen, maidservants, priests, and common men meet with and fail to recognize or defend themselves from the supernatural²⁰⁹—clearly demonstrate how thoroughly entwined were the parallel assets of supernatural and mundane power.

Just as the ability to see and command the supernatural may be considered indicative of political authority, the inability to do so may be considered indicative of political impotence. Conflicting versions of stories—written at different times and from different perspectives—illustrate the ways that supernatural authority, or the lack of it, could be used to demonstrate parallel mundane power, or the lack of it. A comparison of two stories detailing the confrontation between Retired Emperor Uda and the spirit of Minamoto no Tōru (822-895)²¹⁰ makes this clear. In the second story from the twenty-seventh scroll of the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, Uda encounters the spirit of Tōru in the Kawara-no-in mansion. Tōru tells the retired emperor that when he was alive the mansion had belonged to him, and that he does not want Uda to live there. Uda responds by reprimanding Tōru for his presumption; he states that he was legally given the house by Tōru's descendants and that Tōru should have nothing to say about the situation as a result. Thoroughly chastened, the spirit of Tōru disappears, and the story of Emperor Uda's boldness is much talked of by the residents of the capital.²¹¹ By contrast, a story in the *Kojidan* (Anecdotes of the Past, early thirteenth century) relates how the Retired Emperor once traveled to the Kawara-no-in for a romantic tryst with a favored consort. While there, the spirit of

²⁰⁹ See, for example, *Nihon ryōiki* (Watson and Shirane, 13-16); *Uji* 1.17 (Mills, 154-55), *Uji* 12.22 (Mills, 375-76; Tyler, 283-84); *Konjaku* 16.32 (Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 110-13; Tyler, 99-101); *Konjaku* 27.15 (Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 161-63); *Konjaku* 27.21 (Jones, 93-95; Tyler, 18-19; Watson and Shirane, 79-81).

²¹⁰ Minamoto no Tōru was the grandson of Emperor Saga (785-842; r. 806-809). As was common in the imperial family during the Heian period, Tōru's father—as a lesser son—was made a commoner to simplify the succession.

²¹¹ Tyler, 282. A nearly identical version of this story also appears in the *Uji shūi monogatari*. See Mills, 368-69.

Minamoto no Tōru appeared and demanded access to Uda's consort. When Uda refused, the spirit of Tōru attacked him physically, causing the emperor and his consort to flee in terror and demand that an exorcist be sent to deal with Tōru's spirit.²¹²

As Wakabayashi Haruko has noted in her study of the *setsuwa* tales that relate the varying legends surrounding the Somedono Empress (829-900), the political context in which such stories are composed is crucial to understanding their content,²¹³ and the political context in which the two stories of Retired Emperor Uda were written demonstrably colors their content. The first story is recorded in the *Konjaku monogatari shū*, a collection that was compiled in the first half of the twelfth century, when the *insei* era of rule by retired emperors was at its height. The second story, however, is recorded in the *Kojidan*, a collection that dates from after the fall of the Heian court, when the power of the imperial family had been significantly destabilized. While the unknown author of the *Konjaku* tale is likely to have had a vested interest in, if not lionizing the retired emperors outright, at least avoiding stories that made them appear silly, Minamoto no Akikane—the author of the *Kojidan*—lived through the era in which the power of the emperors was significantly reduced by the warrior families who had once served them. His tale about Uda's encounter with Minamoto no Tōru thus reflects the reality of the imperial family's impotency in the aftermath of war and usurpation.

²¹² *Kojidan* 2.24. The *Kojidan* was compiled ca. 1212-1215 by Minamoto no Akikane (1160-1215). See Tyler, 283.

²¹³ The Somedono Empress was the sobriquet given to Fujiwara no Akirako, the daughter of Fujiwara no Yoshifusa and the mother of Emperor Seiwa, whose official court position was Dowager Empress (*kōtaigō*). The death of Emperor Montoku (826-858; r. 850-858) in 858 and ascension of his son, Seiwa, the same year at the age of eight gave Yoshifusa, as Seiwa's grandfather, unprecedented control of the Heian court. A story from the early-twelfth-century collection *Shūi ōjōden* (Gleanings of Stories about Rebirth in the Pure Land) relates how Somedono was possessed by a *tengu*. A similar story in the *Konjaku monogatari shū* (20.7) relates her possession by an *oni*. Wakabayashi, 8-11; Tyler, 178-80.

3.3 SUPERNATURAL SIGHT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF POLITICAL POWER IN *EMAKI*

The invisibility of *oni* moves them beyond their standard performative functions to encompass a wide variety of supernatural creatures against which constructions of political power and authority can be rendered. Furthermore, the ability to become invisible and to transform one's physical appearance is a hallmark of Japanese supernatural creatures who, when given figural representation, nevertheless often take on the iconography established by Buddhist “demon” figures. The representation of this transformative power of supernatural creatures, and the control of that power, lies at the heart of the supernatural confrontations that are depicted in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*. In each case, the human protagonists who come into conflict with supernatural creatures are shown to have the ability to control the shapes that those creatures assume and—by extension—have control over the creatures themselves. In order to understand how the representation of supernatural control functions as an emblem of mundane authority, it is necessary to unpack the textual and visual elements of each handscroll.

3.3.1 Confrontation and Vision in the *Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki*

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the text of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* is based on an episode from the *Gōdanshō* that expands upon the historical record to a high degree.²¹⁴ In the tale, Kibi no Makibi is an envoy on an official diplomatic mission, who has been sent to China for the first time. Upon meeting him, the Chinese are intimidated by Kibi's great erudition and

²¹⁴ *Gōdanshō*, in *Gōdanshō, Chūdaishō, Fukego*, vol. 32, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, ed. Gōtō Akio et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 63-69.

learning, which they fear will put them to shame. They elect not to receive him at the imperial palace, and instead lock him up in a tower in the hopes that the *oni* who haunts the place will devour him and thus rid them of their problem. The *oni* appears in the dead of night, during a wind-swept rainstorm. Kibi sees the *oni* looking in the windows, and so he makes a magic sign that causes him to become invisible to the malevolent creature.²¹⁵ Then, on the basis of his authority as an official Japanese envoy, he demands that the *oni* identify itself, which it does—claiming to have been, at one time, a Japanese envoy just like Kibi and requesting an audience with him. Kibi grants this audience on the condition that the *oni*, who is in reality the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro, make itself presentable. Nakamaro then enters the tower wearing formal court attire, and the two discuss their respective situations. Nakamaro explains that he, too, was imprisoned by the Chinese in the tower and left to starve to death. Unable to let go of his wrath over having been forced to abandon his family, about whom he continues to worry, Nakamaro was transformed into a vengeful spirit whose uncontrollable anger leads him to kill and devour anyone he finds in the tower. Upon hearing this, Kibi assures Nakamaro that his family has prospered and is well, and in gratitude for this news Nakamaro agrees to assist Kibi in his attempts to thwart the machinations of the Chinese and return safely to Japan. He departs just before daybreak, promising to come back and help Kibi in his quest.

In the illustrated handscroll, this episode is presented with an economy of representation (see Appendix E, no. 1.4). To the right of the scene, Abe no Nakamaro approaches in his *oni* form. Clad only in a loincloth, his swarthy, muscular build is plainly revealed. His skin is bright red; his scraggly, iron-grey hair whips around a single horn growing out of the top of his head.

²¹⁵ In the text, this act is described as “*inshin no fū wo nashi*,” literally “made a [magic] sign to conceal his body.” It is not clear from this description exactly what this entails. *Gōdanshō*, in *Gōdanshō, Chūdaishō, Fukego*, 63.

His hands and feet are clawed, and his mouth is a gaping maw in his animalistic face.²¹⁶ Behind him, the many branches of a stand of trees are mercilessly bent under the wrath of a heavy wind that has seemingly blown up from the same direction—approaching Kibi’s tower with the same implacable menace as Nakamaro. In the center of the scene, Kibi and Nakamaro—now appropriately attired and having assumed a more human aspect—sit together in the tower and converse. However, the fact of their inherent difference is expressed by means of two key visual points.

First, though Nakamaro has taken on a more human-like form, he is not completely free of his *oni* characteristics. Nakamaro’s most startling features are now muted, but they remain visually apparent: his skin retains a reddish hue, his hands remain clawlike, his face has kept its lumpy shape, and his mouth persists in gaping, though not as widely as before.²¹⁷ Furthermore, the spatial positioning of Kibi and Nakamaro further reinforces their separateness from one another: Kibi sits inside the tower while Nakamaro sits outside of it, suggesting the uncrossable divide that death has placed between them. Meanwhile, to the left of the scene, a single tree enjoys a peaceful, wind-free evening—perhaps symbolizing the cessation of hostilities between the Japanese envoy and his supernatural guest—bringing the episode to a close.

Unsurprisingly, the issue of vision is treated somewhat differently in the written and visual texts. In the written text, an emphatic statement is made about the *oni*’s inability to see Kibi once he—Kibi—has employed his magic to make himself invisible: “While [Kibi] was in the tower, in the dead of night, as the wind blew and the rain poured down, an *oni* came calling.

²¹⁶ This visual depiction adheres to the standard iconography for *oni*, which can represent a variety of beings—including Buddhist deities, destructive natural phenomena, and vengeful spirits—as discussed above.

²¹⁷ Jan Fontein has argued that this depiction of Nakamaro as unable to make a complete transformation is indicative of his inferiority in comparison with Kibi’s greater powers. See Fontein, 64.

Kibi made a [magic] sign to conceal his body and could not be seen by the *oni*...”²¹⁸ On the other hand, the transformation of the *oni* into a figure who wears appropriate court dress is addressed vaguely: “The *oni* returned and entered, appearing for his audience in formal court dress.”²¹⁹ Through the rest of the narrative, the appearance of Abe no Nakamaro in any given scene goes entirely unremarked. From the perspective of the text, Nakamaro might not have changed his physical form at all.

By comparison, the handscroll illustrations gloss over the issue of vision entirely by completely cutting out the exchange in which Kibi makes himself invisible to Nakamaro. However, the scrolls clearly represent two aspects of the tale that the text addresses ambiguously. First, Nakamaro conforms to Kibi’s specifications about appearance throughout the rest of the story; he appears in formal court attire in every subsequent scene of the handscroll. Second, Nakamaro and Kibi are separated from one another on an existential level through the experience of death. In the tower scenes (see Appendix E, no. 1.4) (see Appendix E, no. 1.10), and at the Imperial Palace (see Appendix E, no. 1.7), Kibi is always depicted inside, while Nakamaro is shown outside, and in the scene where Nakamaro leads Kibi to the palace (see Appendix E, no. 1.6), Nakamaro is portrayed as the smaller, less substantial figure. Thus, it is clear in both the written and visual texts that Kibi possesses an ability to see and control the vengeful spirit of Nakamaro in a way that other men cannot.

²¹⁸ “Rō ni ishimuru aida, shinkō ni oyobite, kaze fuki ame furite, oni ukagaikitareri. Kibi inshin no fū wo naishi, oni ni miezu...” *Gōdanshō*, in *Gōdanshō, Chūdaishō, Fukego*, 63. Translation by the author.

²¹⁹ “Oni kaeriirite, ikan wo tsukete idekitaru ni sōestsu suru ni.” *Gōdanshō*, in *Gōdanshō, Chūdaishō, Fukego*, 64. Translation by the author.

3.3.2 Confrontation and Vision in the *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*

In comparison to how the concept is dealt with in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the issue of vision and the ability to see is not made as explicit in the language of the text of the *Kitano Tenjin engi*, which tells the story of the life, death, and posthumous revenge of the ninth-century courtier, Sugawara no Michizane—a man who, according to legend, was wrongfully accused of treason and condemned to an ignominious death in exile.²²⁰ Having taken extreme exception to his fate, Michizane returns to the capital to take his vengeance supernaturally. Before he does so, however, he visits the thirteenth abbot of Enryakuji, Son'i, in order to extract a promise of non-interference from the powerful Tendai priest.²²¹ At no time in the narrative of the confrontation between Son'i and the vengeful spirit of Michizane is the ability to see Michizane specifically mentioned. However, that Son'i possesses a rare ability to see, and therefore contend with, Michizane is made implicit by the language that is used to describe the vengeful spirit.

In the text of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the spirit of Michizane is referred to in five episodes that detail his posthumous revenge: the aforementioned confrontation with Son'i, the first attack on the palace, the flooding of the capital, the death of Michizane's main rival, Fujiwara no Tokihira, and the final attack on the palace. The terminology used to describe Michizane and the manifestations of his wrath run the gamut from general weather terminology, “the thunder thundered” (*hekireki shite*), to the specific honorifics of the proper title Tenman Daijizai Tenjin²²²—the full name of Michizane's deified spirit, whose abbreviation is Tenjin. It is only during the scene of the magical competition between Son'i and Michizane that the phrase

²²⁰ Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994).

²²¹ “*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—Jōkyūbon,” in *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, vol. 15, *Zoku Nihon no emaki*, ed. Komatsu Shigemi (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1995), 104-109.

²²² This translation of Tenjin's title is Borgen's. *Sugawara no Michizane*, 2.

“the honored dead Sugawara minister” (*kan jōshō no kōgyo*) is used.²²³ In the scenes where Tokihira confronts, and ultimately fails to withstand, Michizane’s wrath, his foils are the natural phenomenon of a thunderstorm and the supernatural phenomenon of a pair of snakes protruding from his own ears.²²⁴ This contrast indicates, quite clearly, that Tokihira is neither capable of matching Michizane’s supernatural ability, nor the recipient of Michizane’s respect, the way Son’i is.

This distinction carries over into the visual depiction of the tale in the handscrolls. The scene in which Son’i and Michizane confront one another begins with Michizane’s arrival at the right (see Appendix E, no. 3.5). Michizane appears in human form and clothed in formal court robes—such a benign entrance that one might take his arrival for that of any living man. Unlike Abe no Nakamaro in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, there are no overt indications that Michizane is a spirit, although Michizane does stand with his back to the viewer in a pose that obscures his face from view.²²⁵ A centrally placed lotus pond divides the scene of Michizane’s arrival from that of his confrontation with Son’i, allowing for two scenes to appear in the same narrative space by means of the *iji dōzu* (different time same scene) technique. Michizane’s arrival is depicted on the right, while on the left the scene continues with Michizane’s angry response to Son’i’s refusal to keep out of the way of his vengeance captured in explicit detail. Upon hearing that Son’i will not ignore an imperial summons, if one is repeatedly sent, Michizane responds by

²²³ “*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—Jōkyūbon,” in *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, 108.

²²⁴ “*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—Jōkyūbon,” in *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, 108-109.

²²⁵ This pose is reminiscent of how some *kami*-in-human-form are depicted in the *Kasuga gongen genki e* (Illustrated Miracles of the Kasuga Deity), however, as Yamamoto Yōko has argued Michizane does not truly disappear from view in the handscroll until his apotheosis begins. See Yamamoto Yoko, “*Kasuga Gongen genki e ni miru* ‘kami no kao wo egaku koto wo habakaru hyōgen’ nitsuite,” *Bijutsushi* 45.2 (March 1996): 189-206; and “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu no saikentō: wakiyaku no kaokatachi hyōgen wo chūshin ni,” *Meisei Daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, *Nihon bunka gakubu*, *gengo bunka gakubu* 13 (March 2005),” 43-44. The fact that Michizane’s face is subsequently presented to the viewer without obstruction suggests that the decision to depict Michizane with his back to the audience in this scene was made in deference to the compositional requirements of the illustration.

spitting a flaming pomegranate seed at a nearby door.²²⁶ Michizane, still in human form, sits facing the viewer with his mouth pursed. In front of him are a bowl of pomegranates. To his left, and the viewer's right, the surface of a sliding door has been set alight by the flaming pomegranate seed. In the foreground of the room, Son'i—seated in three-quarter profile—moves to perform a counter-charm that will extinguish the fire.

Significantly, even in the grip of a powerful rage, Michizane remains in human form. He does not morph into the *oni*-apparition that appears during the scenes where his thunder-god minion attacks the Imperial Palace (see Appendix E, no. 3.6.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.6.2) (see Appendix E, no. 3.8.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.8.2); he does not make himself invisible; he does not protrude from Son'i's ears as the twin snakes that bedevil Tokihira's last moments (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.2). Indeed, in this scene, though his mouth is pursed to spit the seed at the door, his face is otherwise placid and devoid of wrath. His ill-will—though potent—is relatively contained. Son'i has a power over him, or—at the very least—a power equal to him that no other depicted characters, not even other priests of the Tendai sect, have. But what is this power? And what is this power's source? For the answers to these questions, it is helpful to turn to theories of secrecy.

²²⁶ “Zakuro wo tsumado ni hakikakete...” “*Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*—Jōkyūbon,” in *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, 108.

3.4 LINEAGE DISPUTES IN THE *KIBI DAIJIN NITTŌ EMAKI* AND *KITANO TENJIN ENGI EMAKI*

Highly ranked officials at the Heian court were often portrayed in *setsuwa* and historical records like the *Ōkagami* as having specialized, and rare, abilities to both see and command supernatural creatures, such as *goryō* and *oni*. That these depictions of men confronting the supernatural were intended to express some kind of religio-political authority has been shown above, but a reconstruction of why such expressions were undertaken during this period involves a more complicated analysis. One powerful tool of analysis is that of theories of secrecy. However, before such theories can be used a clear explanation of what is meant by secrecy in this context is needed.

3.4.1 The Role of Secrecy in the Representation of Supernatural Sight

Secrecy as I am defining it here excludes the form that functions merely to protect sacred or valuable knowledge. Such secrecy involves the making exclusive of specific texts or ritual procedures in order to increase their usability by one person or group of people and is perhaps best understood as a type of “copyright protection,” to use Bernhard Scheid’s terminology.²²⁷ Instead, the type of secrecy that operates in the examples I have given is better understood as a form of “symbolic capital”—a commodity whose value depends upon the perception that it has value and around which discourses designed to assure others of its value naturally tend to spring

²²⁷ Bernhard Scheid, “Two Modes of Secrecy in the *Nihon Shoki* Transmission,” *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006), 284.

up.²²⁸ The term “symbolic capital” was coined by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to describe one of four types of cultural capital: embodied, objectified, institutional, and symbolic.²²⁹

Symbolic cultural capital is a subset of embodied cultural capital—education or personal cultivation—that is treated like objectified cultural capital—tangible cultural goods—by means of its scarcity value. In this way secret knowledge functions like an objectified, tangible cultural product by virtue of its usage in the society in question. Like objectified cultural capital its value is determined by the institutionalized framework in operation: it has value (or not) because everyone agrees that it does (or does not). For this to work, the secret knowledge must be known to others but “owned” by one group of people, who then use that knowledge as leverage in the acquisition of social or economic capital. This type of secrecy, like the type that functions as a form of “copyright protection,” involves sacred or valuable knowledge, but its treatment is entirely different. In its position as a form of “symbolic capital” this secrecy functions as a means by which power and authority are constructed through the propagation of information about secret knowledge and its value.²³⁰

In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the depiction of Kibi and Son’i’s respective abilities to see, and therefore confront, supernatural creatures, can be read as a form of secret knowledge, while the handscrolls themselves belong to a lineage of discourses that increase, and possibly reinforce, their value to others. In this manner, the relationship between Kibi’s and Son’i’s supernatural ability and the representation of that ability is similar to

²²⁸ Mark Teeuwen, “Introduction: Japan’s Culture of Secrecy from a Comparative Perspective,” *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006): 5.

²²⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” in *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J.E. Richardson, trans. Richard Nice (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 46-58.

²³⁰ For more on this process in the context of religion, see Hugh B. Urban, “The Torment of Secrecy: Ethical and Epistemological Problems in the Study of Esoteric Traditions,” *History of Religions* 37, no. 3 (Feb 1998): 212-223.

the relationship between hidden Buddhas (*hibutsu*) and the “paratext” that often surrounds them—the rituals, fanfares, origin myths, miracle tales, descriptions, and history that serve to publicize the power and affectivity of the objects to a wider audience, thereby increasing their value to the agents who control their display.²³¹ Through this discourse, the knowledge is no longer protected through exclusivity. Instead, it is protected through legitimacy—something Mark Teeuwen has described as the difference between “knowing” a secret and “owning” a secret.²³²

As Albert de Jong has argued, secrecy must involve both intentionality and a social context—in other words, secrets must be deliberately kept between at least two players and from a third.²³³ While this is a view of secrecy that complicates theological conceptualizations of divine secrecy, in which some kind of supernatural creature is capable of exercising its own power to make itself secret from human agents—thus making itself an unknown unknown²³⁴—it is imperative to understanding how the secrecy in these handscrolls function to represent and legitimate social, religious, and political authority. Secrecy as it is expressed in the handscrolls under examination here does not depend upon the existence of the supernatural creatures that are depicted in them; it depends upon the human agents, who claim to be able to converse with and thus control the unknown unknowns like Abe no Nakamaro and Sugawara no Michizane,

²³¹ Fabio Rambelli, “Secret Buddhas: The Limits of Buddhist Representation,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 57.3 (Autumn 2002): 295-297.

²³² Mark Teeuwen, “Knowing vs. Owning a Secret: Secrecy in Medieval Japan, as Seen Through the *Sokui Kanjō* Enthronement Unction,” *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006), 172-203.

²³³ Albert de Jong, “Secrets and Secrecy in the Study of Religion: Comparative Views from the Ancient World,” *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006), 39-40.

²³⁴ The “unknown unknown” may be thought of as mysteries that are known only to a “god”; in Buddhism it is often described as the wisdom of the Buddha that lies beyond human comprehension. See Teeuwen, “Introduction,” 3-4, for a general description, and Fabio Rambelli, “Secrecy in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism,” *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (London: Routledge, 2006), 107-129, for an in-depth analysis of the many levels of secrecy in the wisdom of the Buddhas.

publicizing that information about themselves. Fascinating as they are, supernatural creatures like the spirits of Nakamaro and Michizane only have social value as known unknowns; they may be secret in and of themselves, but in order to function as valuable commodities their secrecy can never been complete. Others must know of, and respect, their existence in order for them to be made profitable.

3.4.2 Profiting from the Exposure of ‘Secret’ Knowledge via Handscrolls

So who profits from the stories about the efficacy of Kibi no Makibi and Son’i’s magical powers? One can only make an educated guess, but it seems likely that in each case a specific clan or group was seeking to assert itself as the rightful inheritor of particular powers. In the case of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the likely beneficiary of the handscrolls’ narrative was one or the other of two rival Onmyōdō²³⁵ clans: the Kamo or the Abe. Given the scarcity of historical sources detailing the creation of the handscroll, it is difficult—if not impossible—to determine whether either clan might have been involved in the production of the handscroll, and if so which clan that was. There is no doubt, however, that the scroll was produced during a period when a) Kibi no Makibi was being recast as the founder of Onmyōdō, and b) relations between the Kamo and Abe had deteriorated to a significant degree.

According to the Kamo genealogy collected in the *Sonpi bunmyaku* (Genealogical

²³⁵ Onmyōdō, which literally means “the way of yin and yang,” is a catchall phrase for the various arts of divination, astrology, and the calendar that were practiced throughout the Heian period. For more on the subject see Donald H. Shively and William H. McCullough, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan*, Volume 2: Heian Japan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 547-564; and Masuo Shin’ichirō, “Chinese Religion and the Formation of Onmyōdō and Japanese History,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 40-1 (2013): 19-43.

Branches of the High and the Low, late fourteenth century),²³⁶ Onmyōdō responsibilities—which had at that time been the exclusive domain of the Kamo clan—were divided up by the clan leader, Kamo no Yasunori (919-977).²³⁷ His own son, Mitsuyoshi (939-1015), and consequently the Kamo clan, took responsibility for devising the calendar (*rekijutsu*), while Abe no Seimei (921-1005), and consequently the Abe clan, took responsibility for astrology (*tenmon no jutsu*) and divination practices (*onmyō*).²³⁸ This division does not appear to have been a source of strain at the time, nor in subsequent periods.²³⁹ In fact, it was not until the late eleventh or early twelfth century that the tensions became palpable.²⁴⁰ While Abe no Yasuchika (1110-1183)—a direct descendant of Seimei—was privileged to serve in the government of retired emperors Toba and Go-Shirakawa, members of the Kamo family found themselves falling out of favor.²⁴¹ Additionally, *setsuwa* stories from this period portrayed historic members of the two clans in wildly different fashions. Stories about Seimei invariably highlighted his abilities to spot omens that signaled the presence of maledictions and see through supernatural disguises, as well as his connection to the powerful Fujiwara patriarch Michinaga,²⁴² while stories about members of the

²³⁶ The *Sonpi bunmyaku* has been attributed to Tōin Kinsada (unknown, ca. fourteenth century). It is also called the *Shoke Ōkezu* (Great Genealogical Record of the Various Houses). Collected in *Sonpi bunmyaku*, vols. 58-60, SZKT.

²³⁷ Yoshio Mikami places this division around the year 960, most likely because it corresponds to the year of Yasunori's father, Tadayuki's death. See *The Development of Mathematics in China and Japan* (New York: G. E. Strechert and Co., 1912), 179.

²³⁸ Sources disagree as to the relationship between Kamo no Yasunori and Abe no Seimei. According to Mikami, Seimei was the disciple of Yasunori's father, Tadayuki (d. 960). However, Shigeta Shin'ichi has asserted that Seimei was actually Yasunori's own disciple. It is possible that Seimei initially trained alongside Yasunori before becoming his disciple after the death of Tadayuki. For more on the life of Abe no Seimei and his relationship to the Kamo family, see Shigeta Shin'ichi, "A Portrait of Abe no Seimei," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 40-1 (2013): 77-97.

²³⁹ The sons of Seimei and Yasunori seem to have enjoyed an equal level of prestige in the decades immediately following the deaths of their fathers. Following his death in 1005, Seimei was succeeded by Yasunori's son, Mitsuyoshi as highest-ranked *onmyōji* at court. Seimei's son, Yoshihira (d. 1027), likewise succeeded Mitsuyoshi after his death in 1015. See Shigeta, "A Portrait of Abe no Seimei," 95.

²⁴⁰ Shigeta places the deterioration of the relationship between the Abe and Kamo clans after the eleventh century and has suggested that the anecdote in the *Sonpi bunmyaku* about the division of the Onmyōdō duties by Yasunori was in fact a fabrication that reflects this deterioration. "A Portrait of Abe no Seimei," 86.

²⁴¹ Kawabara Masahiko, "*Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba* no seiritsu to onmyōdō," *Bunkashi kenkyū* 14 (1963): 25.

²⁴² See, for example, *Uji* 2.8; 11.3; 14.10 (Mills, 175-76; 339-41; 411-12; and Tyler, 82-86.)

Kamo clan—like the hapless Tadayuki (d. 960), father of Yasunori—occasionally focused on their incompetence.²⁴³

It was also during the twelfth-century that Kibi no Makibi began to be described as the founder of Onmyōdō. Earlier records had focused on Kibi's scholarly accomplishments and contributions. The entry for the twenty-sixth day of the fourth month of 735 in the *Shoku Nihongi*, lists an extensive number of objects brought back from China and presented to the court by Kibi but makes no mention of materials related to Onmyōdō.²⁴⁴ Similarly, Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki's *Iken fūji jūni kajō* (Statement of Opinion on Twelve Matters, 914), written roughly a century later, notes that Kibi learned about the Confucian classics and the Chinese histories, and gained knowledge of the arts of arithmetic, music, poetry, and calligraphy but does not refer to his learning about Onmyōdō.²⁴⁵ By contrast, twelfth-century texts emphasized Kibi's knowledge of Onmyōdō. The *Fusō ryakki*, compiled in the mid-to-late-twelfth century, adds the knowledge of divination, astrology, and the calendar to Kibi's more mundane scholarly accomplishments,²⁴⁶ and stories from such collections as the *Konjaku monogatari shū* made explicit reference to Kibi's "Onmyōdō skills."²⁴⁷ The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*—a document that completely rewrote Kibi's history to privilege his supernatural powers over his scholarly prowess—is contemporaneous with this development. Clearly, someone intended to make use of the commodity of Kibi's secret powers and the propagandist tool of narratives about those powers—possibly to settle a lineage dispute between the rival Onmyōdō clans.

Kawabara Masahiko has argued that the representation of Kibi no Makibi as an all-

²⁴³ *Konjaku* 24.15; 29.5. (Tyler, 230-31; 233-35.)

²⁴⁴ *Shoku Nihongi*, vol. 2, SZKT, 137.

²⁴⁵ *Iken fūji jūni kajō* is part of the *Seiji yōryaku* (A Summary of Political Matters, ca. 1002). *Seiji yōryaku*, vol. 28., SZKT, 294. For an English-language summary of the contents of the *Iken fūji jūni kajō*, see George Sansom, *A History of Japan to 1334* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958): 147-148.

²⁴⁶ *Fusō ryakki*, vol. 12. SZKT, 91-92.

²⁴⁷ *Konjaku* 11.6. Quoted in Kawabara, 22.

powerful practitioner of magical arts in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* story was part of an attempt to revitalize the Kamo clan, who were by that time in the midst of a lineage dispute with the Abe clan.²⁴⁸ Though the argument that the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* was intended to settle a lineage dispute between the Kamo and the Abe clans is compelling, the contention that the handscroll was meant to support the claims of the Kamo clan over those of the Abe is not as easily accepted. Kawabara has argued that the Kamo clan traced their ancestral lineage to Kibi by means of family genealogies now collected in the *Sonpi bunmyaku* and the *Gunsho ruijū* (Collection of Assorted Writings, ca. 1819).²⁴⁹ However, the fact that these genealogies were compiled centuries after the period in which the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* was produced makes them unreliable sources—particularly given the that the Kamo clan’s connection to Kibi no Makibi may have been due to an error of transcription.²⁵⁰ Furthermore, the connection between Ōe no Masafusa—the author of the earliest extant version of the story—and the Kamo clan is not entirely clear, although there are indications that the members of the Ōe and Kamo families, who both held minor positions in the court aristocracy, were familiar with one another and in some cases perhaps even close. Ōe no Masahira (952-1012), an ancestor of Masafusa, was the chief eulogizer at the funeral of Yoshishige no Yasutane, who was the brother of Kamo no Yasunori, and Kawabara has suggested that the Kibi story may have made its way into the oral traditions of

²⁴⁸ Kawabara, “*Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* no seiritsu,” 15-28. Viewed from this perspective, the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* becomes a story in which Kibi is shown to dominate and control the subordinate vengeful spirit of Nakamaro, who Kawabara has argued represents not Nakamaro himself but the Abe clan as a whole. Jan Fontein, while agreeing with this narrative interpretation, has rejected the notion that Nakamaro is meant to symbolize the Abe clan as a whole. See Kawabara, 20 and 26; and Fontein, 66. Kuroda Hideo has come to a similar conclusion as Kawabara about Nakamaro’s status in the tale and handscroll, noting that Nakamaro’s vengeful spirit behaves much like a *gōhō*—a divine boy who can be summoned to do the bidding of Buddhist priests. See “Oni to gaikō,” 28-29. However, another entry in the *Gōdanshō*, *Abe no Nakamaro no uta wo yomu koto* (Reading a Poem by Abe no Nakamaro), which explicitly refers to Nakamaro’s role in the episode that formed the basis for the handscroll, strongly implies that the Nakamaro of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* is intended to depict the actual Abe no Nakamaro—regardless of his relative status in comparison with Kibi. *Gōdanshō*, in *Gōdanshō, Chūdaishō, Fukego*, 71.

²⁴⁹ Kawabara, 20-23.

²⁵⁰ Kawabara admits that Kibi no Makibi may have been mixed up with a man named Kamo no Kibimaro (unknown, ca. eighth century), a contemporary of Kibi’s who also traveled to China at the same time. Kawabara, 21.

the Ōe clan through this connection.²⁵¹

Although this suggestion might explain how the Ōe family came to know the story of Kibi no Makibi and Abe no Nakamaro, it does not explain how the story came to be produced in handscroll format in the late-twelfth century. The aforementioned ascendancy of Abe no Yasuchika at this time makes it difficult to imagine that a handscroll traditionally attributed to the painting atelier of Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa²⁵² would have incorporated elements that demeaned the Abe clan. Additionally, the story itself, as well as its visual representation, does not support the conjecture that it was meant to curb the growing power of the Abe clan. In the tale, which makes no mention whatever of Kibi no Makibi's clan affiliation, Abe no Nakamaro is an instrumental figure—a foil who serves to both signal Kibi's spiritual authority, and by extension his political authority, and to assist Kibi in the quest to outwit his Chinese captors. Taken together these factors seem to suggest that, while the Kamo might have been connected to the production of the handscrolls, as Kawabara has suggested, the narrative was most likely not intended to disparage the Abe family, who were highly favored by the most probable commissioner of the handscroll set—retired emperor Go-Shirakawa.

The motivation at work in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* is more straightforward. The predominant theory about the production of the handscroll is that it was most likely commissioned by someone in the Kujō family—a powerful branch of the Northern Fujiwara clan, who were closely affiliated with the Tendai sect. Most scholars assert that the earliest text of the *Kitano Tenjin engi* was written by Jien. That the text was written by someone with Tendai affiliations is almost a foregone conclusion: the narrative refers not just to the Enryakuji abbot,

²⁵¹ Kawabara, 25.

²⁵² See Komatsu Shigemi, *Nihon emaki shūkō*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989), 188-189; and Kuroda Hideo, *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki no nazo* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2005), 39-41.

Son'i, but also to other Tendai monks—most particularly Jōzō and Nichizō—who figure prominently in the story of Michizane's revenge. Furthermore, the Kitano Shrine (the focal point of the tale) was itself affiliated with the Tendai sect.²⁵³

Nevertheless, the depiction of Son'i in the scroll indicates a far more definite agenda than a mere desire to portray Tendai Buddhism in a positive light. Son'i's abilities—as the abbot of Enryakuji—are consistently shown to be of a higher caliber than those of any other single character in the handscroll. The aforementioned Jōzō, for example, though a powerful practitioner of Tendai, was ultimately unable to prevent Tokihira's death at Michizane's hands²⁵⁴—something that Son'i might arguably have been able to avert. Furthermore, as has been discussed above, Son'i's ability to compel Michizane to appear in human form is one that does not extend to any of the other priests in the tale who have dealings with the vengeful spirit. When taken together, the sequences in the narrative of Michizane's revenge seem to indicate that the author of the *Kitano Tenjin engi*, whoever that was, was laying claim to a particular kind of secret knowledge, not for Tendai as a whole, but on behalf of people who could trace their lineage directly to Son'i.

One possibility that springs immediately to mind is that the author, in crafting his narrative, was intending to draw a distinction between the powers of ordinary monks like Jōzō and abbots like Son'i. However, it is difficult to do more than speculate about these kinds of authorial intentions given the paucity of textual evidence to support such a supposition. Another possibility was put forward by Tanaka Norisada, who has argued that the group of people who profited from the prominence of Son'i in this narrative was not just the monks or the abbots of

²⁵³ Neil McMullin, "The *Lotus Sutra* and Politics in the Mid-Heian Period," in *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture*, ed. George J. Tanabe, Jr. et al (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 119-141.

²⁵⁴ "Kitano Tenjin engi emaki—Jōkyūbon," in *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, 109.

Enryakuji, but the Kujō family itself—who could trace a lineage to Son'i through their ancestral ties to Fujiwara no Tadahira, a friend and patron of Son'i, Enryakuji, and the Kitano Shrine itself.²⁵⁵ This suggestion is highly convincing when the dating of the scrolls discussed in the previous chapter, which places the production of the earliest versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* during the early-thirteenth century, is taken into account. This was a period when Kujō political power was in flux.

The Kujō branch of the Northern Fujiwara clan was formed in the aftermath of the Hōgen Disturbance in 1156, when the sons of Emperor Go-Shirakawa's ally, Fujiwara no Tadamichi (1097-1164), were allowed to create individual family branches for themselves. Of these, it was the Kujō and the Konoe who would become the most dominant court factions during and after the Genpei War. The Kujō clan rose to prominence by forming an alliance with Minamoto Yoritomo in 1186—an alliance that enabled the Kujō to dominate court politics for a decade. During this time, Kujō Kanezane, the clan head, held the position of regent, while the brothers who supported him held similarly important posts—Jien held the post of abbot of Enryakuji, and Fujiwara no Kanefusa (1153-1217) held the post of chancellor. In 1192, however, the alliance

between Kanezane and Yoritomo began to fracture after the death of their mutual enemy, Go-Shirakawa. Four years later, in a political coup that historian Michael McCarty has called "The Great Shuffle of 1196," the Konoe were able to regain control of the court by undermining that weakening alliance. The position of regent went to Kanezane's nephew, Konoe Motomichi (1160-1233), and his brothers, Jien and Kanefusa, were likewise removed from their important political positions.²⁵⁶ Over the course of the next twenty-five years, the Kujō and Konoe vied

²⁵⁵ Tanaka Norisada, "*Tenjin Kitano engi* ni okeru Son'i no setsuwa nitsuite," *Komazawa Kokubun* 27 (1990): 47-48.

²⁵⁶ Michael Barrett McCarty, "Divided Loyalties and Shifting Perceptions: The Jōkyū Disturbance and Courtier-Warrior Relations in Medieval Japan" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013), 82-84.

with one another for political dominance, taking turns at the top of the political heap over the years. In 1219, following the assassination of the third Kamakura shogun Minamoto no Sanetomo (1192-1219; r. 1203-1219), Kujō Yoritsune (1218-1256; r. 1226-1244)—the great-grandson of Kanezane—was selected to succeed Sanetomo as the fourth shogun. The formation of this new alliance between the Kujō and the Kamakura bakufu constituted both an attempt to calm the growing tensions between the bakufu and the retired emperor Go-Toba and an opportunity for the Kujō to cement their power base in the capital.²⁵⁷

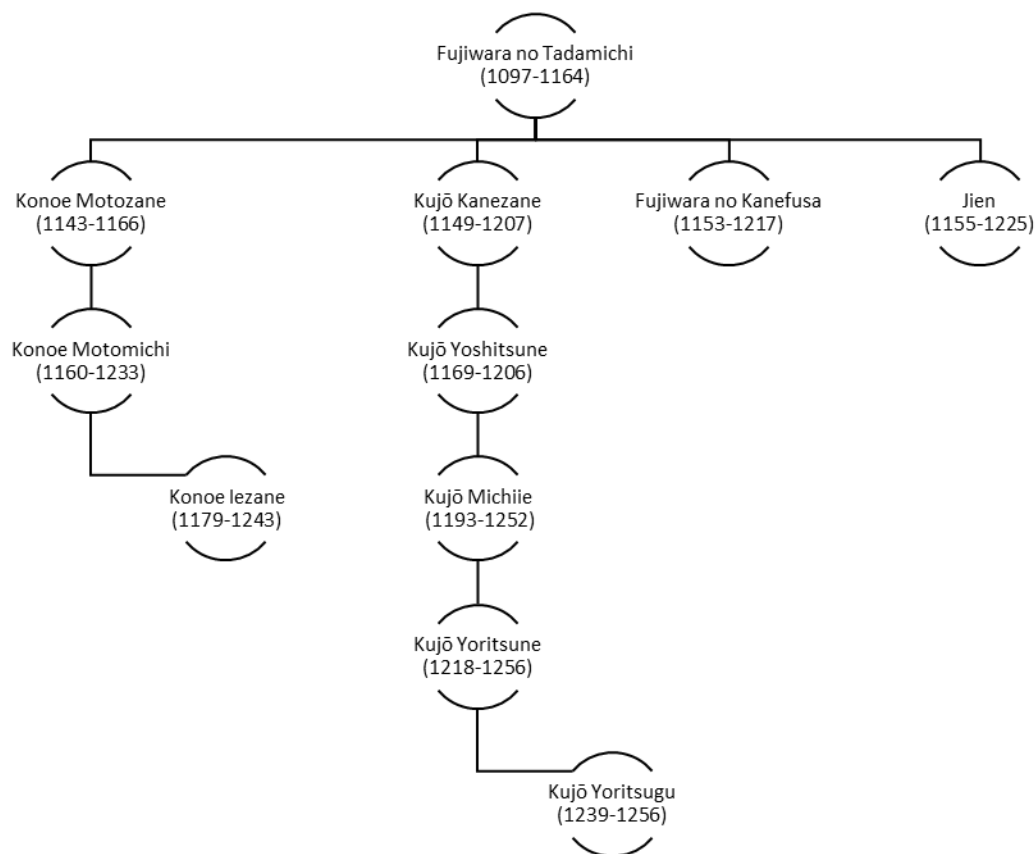


Figure 2. The Kujō and Konoe Clans, 12th-13th Centuries

It is against this backdrop that the *Kitano Tenjin engi*, thought to have been written in or around 1196, and the commissioning of illustrated versions of it in the first decades of the

²⁵⁷ The attempt at peaceful relations was not successful. Two years later, in 1221, Go-Toba would instigate the Jōkyū Disturbance, a short-lived rebellion in which Go-Toba tried to reclaim political autonomy.

thirteenth century may be read. It is generally accepted that Jien's history of Japan, *Gukanshō* (Foolish and Narrow Notes), was composed from 1219 to 1221 in an attempt to deter the anti-*bakufu* machinations of Retired Emperor Go-Toba;²⁵⁸ it is reasonable to assume that the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, which was created during the same period, was created for an equally political purpose. When considered from this perspective, the depiction of Son'i—a noted beneficiary of the Kujō's Fujiwara ancestors—in a position of authority not shared by other monks in the story seems to imply a secular lineage dispute and almost certainly one that the Kujō had been attempting to win since the end of the Genpei War.

The emphasis on the role of the Kujō clan is strongly implied by the actions of various characters in the tale. In addition to Son'i and Jōzō, another Buddhist priest who appears in a prominent role in the story is Nichizō, also known as Dōken, a Tendai priest who was responsible for making Michizane's grievances known to the court in 941. According to legend, Nichizō traveled to the underworld after meditating in a cave for twenty-one days and there met with a number of deities—including Michizane in the guise of a lesser Buddhist deity. He then reported his experiences to the Heian court, thus enabling the court to appropriately placate Michizane and end his hostile acts of vengeance.²⁵⁹ Nichizō's travels, like the escapades of Son'i and Jōzō, are illustrated in most versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* (see Appendix E, no. 3.10.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.10.2). Nevertheless, he is not depicted as having special powers over Michizane in the way that Son'i is.

²⁵⁸ For an overview of the function of the *Gukanshō* see Paul Varley, "The Place of *Gukanshō* in Japanese Intellectual History: A Review of *The Future and the Past: A Translation and Study of the Gukanshō, an Interpretive History of Japan Written in 1219*, by Delmer Brown and Ichirō Ishida," *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 4 (Winter 1979): 479-488.

²⁵⁹ Nichizō's report to the court survives in two records: *Nichizō muki* (An Account of Nichizō's Dream) and *Dōken shōnin meidoki* (An Account of Priest Dōken in the Underworld) both of which appear in *Kitano*, vol. 11, *Shintō taikei. Jinja hen*, ed. Makabe Toshinobu. (Tokyo: Shintō Taikei Hensankai, 1978), 61-75; 77-80. See also Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 373n8.

Though Nichizō and Jōzō have much in common with one another, they have little in common with Son'i, and their differences are highly telling. First of all, both Nichizō and Jōzō are ordinary priests, not abbots. Secondly, in their interactions with Michizane in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, they are depicted as either confronting the vengeful spirit's supernatural force in its non-human form (fig 3.7.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.7.2) or not encountering it at all. Finally, and most significantly, both men were sons of Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki, a man who had conspired with Tokihira against Michizane and played a key role in his downfall.²⁶⁰ The sons of Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki undoubtedly would have wished to avoid a fate like their father's, and Nichizō's 941 report to the court is indicative of a conciliatory attitude. Nevertheless, the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* is not told from their point of view, nor does it privilege their contribution.²⁶¹ Thus, it appears likely that the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* was written to highlight the commodity of Son'i's secret powers, rather than those of the sons of Kiyoyuki. The purpose of this was probably to reaffirm the power and authority of the Kujō clan—who could trace their affiliation with Son'i through their ancestor Tadahira's patronage of him and through their ally Jien, who held the same position in the Tendai hierarchy—during a period when their political aspirations were constantly in danger of being thwarted by powerful rivals.

²⁶⁰ Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 270-289. See also, Plutschow, "Tragic Victims."

²⁶¹ As has already been noted, Jōzō is depicted as unable to counter Michizane's power in the episode depicting Tokihira's death, and Nichizō's report to the court is included as one of three nearly simultaneous oracles that reveal Michizane's intentions and requirements. While it is clear that the depiction of Nichizō's story is given more space in the handscroll than those of other, non-Buddhist, oracles, this is most likely due to the author's desire to emphasize the contribution of Tendai rather than a desire to emphasize the contribution of Nichizō.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The use of these episodes and their illustrations to convey a sense of, and thus to propagandize, lineage-based ownership of secret knowledge about the ability to see and therefore control the supernatural was a common strategy in the classical and early medieval periods. The same strategy was at work in a variety of texts from the period—including the *setsuwa* collections of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and historical texts like the *Ōkagami*, which was mentioned in this chapter’s introduction. Although some texts were more blatant about this strategy—the stated goal of the *Ōkagami*’s currently unknown author was to narrate the story of Fujiwara no Michinaga’s rise to, and maintenance of, power in the eleventh century, thereby explaining how it was that such a man was able to wield such power²⁶²—each text relied upon it to varying degrees depending on the historical figures that were the focus of the stories in question. In the case of the *Ōkagami*, the author includes many stories about Michinaga’s ancestors that describe the characteristics that made him fit to hold the tremendous authority that he ultimately came to possess, making sure to include a number of examples of the supernatural vision that was a notable characteristic of political authority. Not just Michinaga, but the men in his lineage as well, are shown to have been adepts at meeting, and defending against, supernatural forces. His father, Kaneie, and his grandfather, Morosuke, both possessed the ability to see, and therefore control, dangerous forces that were invisible to other mere mortals.²⁶³ For Morosuke, Kaneie, and Michinaga—just as for Kibi and Son’i—their claim to power rested, in part, on their claim to secret knowledge of how to handle the supernatural.

²⁶² Helen Craig McCullough, *Ōkagami*, 68.

²⁶³ Helen Craig McCullough, *Ōkagami*, 136 (Morosuke), 146 (Michinaga), 163 (Kaneie). The clan’s founding ancestor, Tadahira, is also described as having this ability. *Ōkagami*, 106.

4.0 ILLUSTRATED HANDSCROLLS AS TOOLS OF POLITICAL CONTROL

In 945, large crowds of commoners began congregating in Yamashiro Province, a territory on the outskirts of the Heian-period capital, Heian-kyō. The crowds had gathered to worship a group of *shidara* deities,²⁶⁴ the greatest of whom was known as Ayae Jizai Tenjin (Self-Fulfilling Heavenly Deity Ayae)—a figure who appears to have been a conflation of a lowly woman named Tajihi no Ayako (unknown, ca. tenth century) and Sugawara no Michizane.²⁶⁵ In response to this unsanctioned ritual activity among the commoner classes, the Heian court undertook a series of steps over the course of the tenth century to bring the cult under official control. Michizane was incorporated into an elite ritual context, while Ayako was largely effaced from the narrative of the legend. Consequently, the social disorder indicated by this outbreak of worship was quelled through the establishment of authorized ritual practice.

The court's handling of the Ayae Jizai Tenjin cult could be said to serve as a representative example of how classical Japan's ruling elite systematically and consistently moved to repress folk religious expression. Indeed, many scholars have noted the Nara and Heian courts' practice of monitoring, regulating, and adopting commoner ritual traditions that

²⁶⁴ *Shidara kami* take their name from the term *shidara*, which refers to a form of rhythmic clapping. The name is thus both descriptive of the deities themselves and the ritual practices employed during worship of them. See Morita Tei, *Ōchō seiji* (Tokyo: (Tokyo: Kyōikusha, 1979), 182-190; and Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 319-320.

²⁶⁵ Reference to these ritual gatherings are reported in the *Honchō seiki*. An entry for the twenty-eighth day of the seventh month of 945 describes the ritual celebration, the crowds associated with it, and the concerns of the local government about the situation. *Honchō seiki*, vol. 9, SZKT, 109. See also, Sakurai Yoshirō, *Kamigami no henbō: shaji engi no sekai kara* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1976), 79-85.

were considered disruptive to the social order.²⁶⁶ By contrast, the ability of illustrated handscrolls to both record and subtly reinforce this process of social control has been less considered—perhaps because the privileged nature of handscroll production makes them seem ill-suited to such functions. In this chapter, I will examine how the incorporation of commoner spiritual practices into the court’s regular ritual observances served to control the population at large. I will also examine how the subsequent illustration of said rituals in handscroll format served to legitimate the exercise of power by the ruling elite in the eyes of competing aristocratic clans through their depiction of commoner religious practices adapted to, and in service of, elite political objectives.

4.1 SPIRIT PACIFICATION, SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTROL, AND ILLUSTRATED HANDSCROLLS

It is not entirely clear at what point in Japanese prehistory spirit pacification developed, although the similarity between the beliefs and practices of the Japanese archipelago and those of the Shang, Zhou, and Han dynasties suggests that knowledge of continental practices may have been brought in successive waves by various immigrant groups and incorporated into existing belief structures. Neil McMullin has argued that the first demonstrations of spirit pacification practices were part of early cultic activities related to the prevention and cessation of plagues and natural

²⁶⁶ The court’s interest in the ritual practices of commoners is discussed in the following sources: Hori Ichirō, *Folk Religion in Japan*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Sakurai Yoshirō (1976); Morita Tei (1979); Neil McMullin, “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace: The Case of the Gion Goryō Cult,” *History of Religions* 27, no. 3 (Feb 1988): 270-293; and Kuroda Toshio, “The World of Spirit Pacification: Issues of State and Religion,” trans. Allan Grapard, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 321-351.

disasters that were being practiced as early as the Nara period.²⁶⁷ In these early spirit pacification rituals, which ultimately came to be known as *goryō e* (ceremonies for the august spirits), the populace attempted to placate dangerous pestilence deities (*ekijin*) and vengeful spirits of the dead—both of whom were capable of causing such calamities as droughts, floods, and epidemics—through ritual song and dance, animal sacrifice, and various offerings of food, wine, and other agricultural products, practices that greatly resembled those undertaken by continental inhabitants in response to maladies attributed to discontented ancestors.²⁶⁸

Whether spirit pacification activities first appeared among the upper or lower classes of early Japanese society is a matter of debate. McMullin has asserted that spirit pacification activities first appeared among the upper classes and then trickled down to the lower classes over the course of the early Nara period.²⁶⁹ Kuroda Toshio, on the other hand, has argued that the earliest spirit pacification rituals had a distinctly “folkish character” that indicates they originated among the lower classes and were then adopted by the upper classes afterward.²⁷⁰ Folklorist Hori Ichirō, in contrast to both McMullin and Kuroda, declined to assign the origins of spirit pacification to either upper or lower class citizens, though he did note references to spirit pacification beliefs in Heian-period aristocratic literature.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ McMullin suggests that such practices were the result of beliefs held commonly by both the native Japanese populace and members of the continental immigrant populace that began traveling to Japan in the fourth century. See “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace,” 271-273.

²⁶⁸ The development of spirit pacification practices on the continent is discussed in Richard von Glahn, *The Sinister Way: The Divine and the Demonic in Chinese Religious Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). For explorations of how these practices evolved over time, see Stephen F. Teiser, “Ghosts and Ancestors in Medieval Chinese Religion: The Yü-lan-p’ên Festival as Mortuary Ritual,” *History of Religions* 26, no. 1 (August 1986): 47-67; and Otake Emiko, “Two Categories of Chinese Ancestors as Determined by Their Malevolence,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 39, no. 1 (1980): 21-31. For spirit pacification practices in Japan, see Shibata Minoru, *Goryō shinkō* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1984).

²⁶⁹ McMullin, “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace,” 273.

²⁷⁰ Kuroda Toshio, “The World of Spirit Pacification,” 327.

²⁷¹ Hori, 72. For Hori’s full analysis of spirit pacification beliefs, see 111-117.

Recently, Michael Como has suggested that early Japanese cultic practices were brought to the archipelago inexorably intertwined with technological advances. The new technologies of metalworking, sericulture, and medicine all had spiritual counterparts in the practices of spirit pacification and silkworm goddess worship and in ideas about the *yin* and *yang* of bodily harmony. In Como's view, these spiritual practices were not disseminated into the country under the auspices of a central elite body, but instead were incorporated into rural cultic centers along the coasts and in the south where contact with the continent was more frequent. From there, the practices were transmitted to the court through lineage members who served at the early courts and used their ancestral legends to bolster the earliest records of Japan's history. Thus, in contrast to McMullin's suggestion that these practices were first adopted at the court and then spread to commoner populations, Como has argued against a center-to-periphery transmission dynamic and instead postulates a system where trends in the periphery led to the embedding of continental traditions throughout the archipelago and eventually at the locus of the centralized body of state power encapsulated in the eighth-century capital city of Heijō-kyō (present-day Nara).²⁷²

4.1.1 Spirit Pacification as a Tool of Political Control

The first recorded concerted effort to place spirit pacification exclusively under official control took place in 863, with the *goryō* ceremony that was held at the Shinsen'en—an imperial garden located immediately south of the Imperial Palace Complex in Heian-kyō—on the twentieth day of the fifth month.²⁷³ On that day, six sanctuaries were established at the Shinsen'en—each

²⁷² Michael Como, *Weaving and Binding: Immigrant Gods and Female Immortals in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 1-27.

²⁷³ Other official spirit pacification ceremonies had been held in 770, 839, 853, and 856. However, it is unclear whether these ceremonies were referred to as *goryō* ceremonies or not. Most scholars assert that the term *goryō*

dedicated to the spirit of one of six aristocratic victims of political intrigue²⁷⁴—and offerings of food and flowers were made there. Buddhist lectures for the protection of the realm and the preservation of the imperial family line were delivered and festival-style dances were performed. Additionally, in contrast to many official court ceremonies, the *goryō* ceremony at the Shinsen'en was opened to the public,²⁷⁵ a move that would have enabled the court to display its power and munificence to subjects who may have had cause, at that time, to doubt both.

In 863, the court and its populace were facing extreme difficulties. A devastating tuberculosis epidemic had run rampant, resulting in the deaths of numerous peasants and the subsequent decimation of crops due to a lack of manpower necessary to cultivate them. The court held, or authorized, a multitudinous variety of activities in the first, third, and fourth months of the year in an attempt to halt the calamity—including a cessation of banquets, the carrying out of purification rituals, distribution of alms, presentation of offerings to shrines, and the ordering of lectures, prayers, and sutra copies at assorted temples—all to no avail.²⁷⁶ At the same time, provincial and urban commoner populations were probably holding spirit pacification rituals of their own in a desperate bid to stem the tide of the crisis.

Commoner ritual practice of this nature would likely have been viewed as a significant political problem by the court aristocracy, for in contrast to official spirit pacification rituals that

ceremony was first used in the entry for the 20th day of the 5th month of 863 of the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, vol. 4, SZKT, 112-113

²⁷⁴ The six spirits were Prince Sawara, Prince Iyo (d. 807), Fujiwara no Yoshiko (d. 807), Fujiwara no Nakanari (764-810), Tachibana no Hayanari (d. 842?), and Bunya no Miyatamaro (d. 843?). Their role in the establishment of the *goryō* ceremony as a political apparatus is discussed below.

²⁷⁵ The *goryō* ceremony of 863 is discussed at length in McMullin, "On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace," 288-290; Kuroda Toshio, "The World of Spirit Pacification," 323-325; and two articles by Herbert Plutschow—"Fujiwara Politics and Religion – *Goryō* Cult and the *Kitano Tenjin Engi* and *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*," in *Florilegium Japonicum: Studies Presented to Olof G. Lidin on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1996), 216; and "Tragic Victims in Japanese Religion, Politics, and the Arts," *Anthropoetics* 6.2 (Fall 2000/Winter 2001): <http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap0602/japan.htm>.

²⁷⁶ *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, 112-113.

served to focus public attention on the legitimation of aristocratic rule, unofficial spirit pacification rituals could be seen as implicit critiques of that rule. The tendency of commoners to take the propitiation of vengeful spirits and pestilence deities into their own hands suggests that the public sometimes saw the elite as responsible for their hardships, or at the very least incapable of mediating them.²⁷⁷ This interpretation echoes Mikail Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque, in which folk festivals function as an inversion of the official hegemony by creating a folk culture space where the dominant social hierarchy is suspended and the everyday is subverted.²⁷⁸ However, while Bakhtin's construction of the carnivalesque is helpful to understanding how unofficial Heian-period spirit pacification festivals may have served to invert, and therefore subtly criticize, the status quo, his theory fails to explore the inevitable, and often highly politicized, responses of the ruling elite to displays of the carnivalesque in society.

As western scholars have argued, carnivalesque gatherings—seen by Bakhtin as a utopic expression of joy freed from the constraints of mundane social structures—had the tendency to turn political when the powers-that-be attempted to restrict or dismantle them²⁷⁹—a conclusion echoed by Michelle Osterfeld Li in her contention that early Japanese festivals did not suspend social norms in the Bakhtinian sense so much as they destabilized them.²⁸⁰ At the Heian court, the performance of ritual constituted a form of symbolic capital capable of elucidating the boundaries of social, spiritual, and political authority.²⁸¹ As such, it could not be left in the hands

²⁷⁷ This view is generally agreed upon by scholars who have studied spirit pacification practices of the Nara and Heian periods, including Hori Ichirō, Kuroda Toshio, Neil McMullin, Morita Tei, and Sakurai Yoshirō.

²⁷⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 5-12, 109.

²⁷⁹ A thorough evaluation of scholarly responses to Bakhtin's argument can be found in Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd, 1986), 6-26.

²⁸⁰ Michelle Osterfeld Li, *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setsuwa Tales* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 42-51.

²⁸¹ Thomas Donald Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol: An Age of Ritual Determinism in Fourteenth-Century Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 18-21. For more on symbolic capital, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of

of non-elite practitioners. After having established the precedent of the *goryō* ceremonies as an official state-controlled festival, the court repeatedly acted to prohibit the practice of private *goryō* ceremonies. In 865, unsanctioned *goryō* ceremonies were forbidden by imperial edict, and court records show that official action had to be taken against illicit *goryō* ceremonies by highly placed court officials again in the tenth and twelfth centuries²⁸²—suggesting that prohibition was an ineffective method of curing the malcontent suggested by the performance of such propitiating rituals.

It is for this reason, perhaps, that consistent, yearly public *goryō* ceremonies were initiated. The main site for *goryō* ceremonies, from the Heian period down to the present day, is the cultic center of the Gion Shrine. Gion was most likely founded in or around the year 876. It is thought to have been established by a Buddhist priest at the behest of Fujiwara no Mototsune, who had by that time succeeded his father Yoshifusa as regent (*sesshō*) and was one of the most powerful men at the court.²⁸³ By the mid-tenth century, Gion had been recognized as one of the now twenty-two principle shrines in the country, and from the second half of the tenth century *goryō* festivals were held there on a yearly basis²⁸⁴—ultimately coming to be incorporated into

Capital,” in *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J.E. Richardson, trans. Richard Nice (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 46-58.

²⁸² Entry for the fourteenth day of the sixth month of 865. *Seiji yōryaku*, vol. 28, SZKT, 6. The prohibitions in the tenth and twelfth centuries are discussed by Kubota Osamu, *Yasaka Jinja no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Shintōshi Gakkai, 1974), 66 & 72-77; and Shibata, *Goryō shinkō*, 243.

²⁸³ Mototsune was regent to Emperor Yōzei from 876 until the emperor was forced to abdicate in 884. For more on the history of the Gion festival, see Kubota, *Yasaka Jinja no kenkyū*; and Taka Yoshitada, *Yasaka Jinja* (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1972). The development of the Gion complex is also discussed in McMullin, “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace,” 282.

²⁸⁴ References to the Gion *goryō* ceremony are made often in such Heian period diaries as *Shōyuki*, the diary of Fujiwara no Sanesuke (957-1056), *Chūyuki*, the diary of Fujiwara no Munetada (1062-1141), and *Denryaku*, the diary of Fujiwara no Tadazane (1078-1162). See vols. 10 (*Shōyuki*), 21 (*Chūyuki*), and 12 (*Denryaku*) of *Dai Nihon kokiroku*, ed. Tokyo Daigaku Shiryōhensanjo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1952-2008). The diaries are also searchable via the Full-Text Database of Old Japanese Diaries, Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo: <http://wwwap.hi.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ships/db-e.html> (accessed October 13, 2015).

the *nenjū gyōji* (annual ritual observances of the court).²⁸⁵ In this way, folk religious practice was ultimately controlled by the ruling elite. By allowing the general populace to express symptoms of fear, anxiety, and discontent in a controlled environment, the court was able to contain the spread of contagious religious mania and its dangerous effects on the structure of society while reserving the political authority inherent in ritual practice for itself.

The adoption and management of commoner spirit pacification practices was a useful tool for the containment of potential social discord or political upheaval, but the practice of coopting such folk practices was not merely about the containment of peasant riots. As many scholars have argued, official *goryō* ceremonies also served to direct public fear at specific political figures who had threatened the sovereignty of the court.²⁸⁶ At the *goryō* ceremony of 863, which was freely open to all members of the public, six aristocratic victims of political intrigue were enshrined in the palace gardens of the Shinsen'en. These six spirits, who had each died in exile after falling prey to political scandal years before, ultimately came to be seen—as Michizane later would be—as instigators of life-threatening calamities by the inhabitants of the capital. Thus, by holding an official, public festival for the veneration of these spirits, the court sent a double-pronged message to its populace, both high and low—that the enemies of the court were the enemies of all, and that only the rulers of the court had the authority to mollify such enemies. The pacification of the vengeful spirits involved in the conspiracies thus served both to alleviate bouts of popular hysteria and to reify the hegemony of those in power.

The selection of vengeful spirits for veneration at the Shinsen'en in 863 was undoubtedly

²⁸⁵ The Gion festival is depicted in the ninth scroll of the *Nenjū gyōji emaki* (Illustrated Annual Ritual Observances of the Court), an Edo period (1615-1868) copy of a Heian period handscroll set. See *Nenjū gyōji emaki*, vol. 8 of *Nihon emaki taisei*, ed. Komatsu Shigemi, (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1987).

²⁸⁶ McMullin, "On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace," 288-291; Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion," 216, and "Tragic Victims."

a highly calculated choice, designed to send a specific message about the hierarchical positions of various members of the court. This is made all the more significant by the fact that the *goryō* ceremony of 863 was hosted by Fujiwara no Mototsune, the son of Fujiwara no Yoshifusa—who was at that time the regent for the young Emperor Seiwa—rather than by the emperor himself. The six men and woman who were venerated during the *goryō* ceremony were Prince Sawara, Prince Iyo, Iyo’s mother—Fujiwara no Yoshiko—Fujiwara no Nakanari, Tachibana no Hayanari, and Bunya no Miyatamaro.²⁸⁷

Prince Sawara was accused of conspiring in the plot to assassinate Fujiwara no Tanetsugu (d.785) and was exiled to Awaji (present-day Awaji Island), though he died in transit.²⁸⁸ Prince Iyo and his mother Fujiwara no Yoshiko, members of the southern branch (*nanke*) of the Fujiwara family, were accused of conspiring against the northern branch (*hokke*) and sent into exile, where they committed suicide. Fujiwara no Nakanari, a member of the ceremonial branch (*shikike*)²⁸⁹ of the Fujiwara family, was convicted of treason and executed for his role in the Kusuko Incident (*Kusuko no hen*).²⁹⁰ Tachibana no Hayanari and Bunya no Miyatamaro were

²⁸⁷ Neil McMullin substitutes Fujiwara no Hirotsugu (d. 740) for Fujiwara no Nakanari, see “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace,” 288-289. Herbert Plutschow argues for Nakanari, see “Fujiwara Politics and Religion,” 216, and “Tragic Victims.” Plutschow has suggested that the six spirits were all people who had fallen from power prior to or after the changing of the capital city from Heijō-kyō to Nagaoka-kyō (784) to Heian-kyō (794). Kuroda Toshio concurs with Plutschow on the identities of the six spirits but offers no suggestion as to why they were chosen, 324. Morita Tei has noted that the spirit in question (Nakanari/Hirotsugu) is identified not by name but by the term administrative inspector (*kansatsushi*). This position was not created until after Hirotsugu’s death but was held by Nakanari in the year before his death, which suggests that it was in fact Nakanari and not Hirotsugu who was enshrined at the Shinsen’en, see Morita, 188. In the informational pamphlet published and sold at the present-day Shinsen’en, the sixth enshrined spirit is identified as Nakanari.

²⁸⁸ The circumstances of Sawara’s life and political downfall are explored in Ooe Atsushi, “Sawara shinnō no rei: ‘tatari’ ninshiki no tenkai,” *Shien* 1 (Mar 2000): 1-28.

²⁸⁹ So named for the founder of the line, Fujiwara no Umakai (694-737), who held the position of minister of the ceremonial (*shikibu kyō*). See William McCullough, “The Capital and its Society,” in *Heian Japan*, vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of Japan*, ed. William McCullough et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 98.

²⁹⁰ Entry for the eleventh day of the ninth month of 810. *Nihon kōki*, vol. 3, SZKT, 87-88.

involved in the Jōwa Incident (*Jōwa no hen*) of 842.²⁹¹ Hayanari died on the way to exile; Miyatamaro died sometime after he was exiled.²⁹² Each of these people was therefore a member of the aristocratic class who had died after being caught up in political intrigue, and as a group they may have been chosen specifically for the purposes of advancing the political goals of the family staging the ceremony—the Northern Fujiwara clan.

Herbert Plutschow has noted that the institution of the *goryō* ceremony in 863 coincided with the ninth-century establishment of the system of regents and advisers by the Northern Fujiwara family and argued that prohibition of unofficial *goryō* ceremonies formed part of a plan to consolidate power in their hands.²⁹³ Indeed, of the six chosen, most were victims of political machinations that advanced the political power of the Northern Fujiwara family in one way or the other. Prince Iyo and his mother Fujiwara no Yoshiko were prominent members of the Southern Fujiwara clan, whose downfall in 807 lessened the power of that family considerably. Similarly, Fujiwara no Nakanari's execution in 810 marked the end of the Ceremonial Fujiwara family's political relevance. The successful cessation of the Jōwa plot and the exiling of Tachibana no Hayanari and Bunya no Miyatamaro enabled the Northern Fujiwara to remove other prominent political rivals. It also let them lay the groundwork for the system of regents and advisers by having Prince Michiyasu (the future Emperor Montoku), a nephew of Fujiwara no

²⁹¹ The Jōwa Incident was a succession dispute between Emperor Nimmyō and Crown Prince Tsunesada (825-884). Prior to the Jōwa Incident, the imperial succession had passed from older brother to younger brother and uncle to nephew. Emperor Saga, was succeeded by his brother Emperor Junna (785-840; r. 823-833), who was succeeded by Saga's son, Nimmyō. According to the wishes of his father and uncle, Nimmyō had selected Junna's son, Tsunesada, as his crown prince, but with the death of Junna in 840 and Saga in 842, the Northern Fujiwara clan launched a plot to implicate the crown prince in a conspiracy to overthrow Nimmyō. As a result of this supposed conspiracy, Tsunesada was demoted, his co-conspirators were demoted and exiled, and Nimmyō's son by the daughter of Fujiwara no Yoshifusa was made crown prince in Tsunesada's place.

²⁹² Miyatamaro's involvement in the Jōwa Incident is inferred on the basis on his having been denounced for treason and exiled the following year in 843. References to the incident are found in *Shoku Nihon kōki*, vol. 3, SZKT, 136-141. For more on Miyatamaro's involvement, see Sakamoto Tarō and Hirano Kunio, *Nihon kodai shizoku jinmei jiten* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1990), 568.

²⁹³ Plutschow, "Fujiwara Politics and Religion," 216-217.

Yoshifusa, made crown prince.²⁹⁴ Only Prince Sawara—the oldest and perhaps the most notorious of the six spirits venerated at the Shinsen'en—was unrelated to Northern Fujiwara political advancement.

Nevertheless, though most of the figures venerated at the Shinsen'en in 863 were related in one way or another to Northern Fujiwara political advancement, their inclusion in the ceremony may have indicated a kind of cult hero status, as they were only some of the many victims of such political plots. The potential role that popular cult hero status may have played in the selection of spirits for the 863 *goryō* ceremony is exemplified by the inclusion of Prince Sawara. Sawara was a younger son of Emperor Kōnin (709-782; r. 770-781). He was made crown prince after the enthronement of his older brother, Emperor Kanmu, but in 785—after the move of the capital from the city of Heijō-kyō to Nagaoka the previous year—Sawara was implicated in the assassination of Fujiwara no Tanetsugu, a rival courtier. Shortly after the death of Tanetsugu, Sawara was banished from the capital and mysteriously died on his journey into exile,²⁹⁵ thus paving the way for Kanmu's sons—Emperor Heizei (773-824; r. 806-809), Emperor Saga, and Emperor Junna—to take the throne. After Sawara's death, the deaths of farmers in Awaji and the deaths of two of Emperor Kanmu's wives—including his empress—were attributed to Sawara's restless spirit, as was the death of Kanmu and Sawara's mother. In 800, in response to the threat posed by his spirit, Sawara was posthumously promoted to the status of emperor and henceforth known as Emperor Sudō.²⁹⁶ Sixty years after that concession, he was still feared enough by the populace to require enshrinement at the Shinsen'en. This

²⁹⁴ See Appendix C.

²⁹⁵ Ooe, 2-3.

²⁹⁶ Ooe, 13-18. See also McMullin, "On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace," 288. For the story of the death of the empress, see Herbert Plutschow, *Chaos and Cosmos: Ritual in Early and Medieval Japanese Literature* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990), 208.

combination of Northern Fujiwara political goals and popular cult hero status was to play a similar role in the veneration of Sugawara no Michizane.

4.1.2 The Pacification of Sugawara no Michizane as a Tool of Political Control

The legend of Sugawara no Michizane's life, death, and posthumous revenge are closely tied to the spirit pacification practices that were commonplace during the Heian period. In the decades following Michizane's death in 903, a number of uncanny and inauspicious events occurred in the capital city, and over time those calamities were attributed to Michizane's lingering wrath. It is unclear just how quickly Michizane was blamed for the ominous occurrences that beset the capital over the years, but there is no question that the public perception of Michizane's spirit had come to represent a threat to court authority as early as the 940s—when two prominent public movements associated with Michizane occurred.

The first incident, the Taira no Masakado uprising of 939, presented a clear example of how Michizane's spirit had come to function as a dangerous populist and anti-court symbol. The Masakado uprising began as an interfamilial dispute between Masakado and his paternal uncles that was periodically adjudicated by the central court at Heian-kyō. However, in the twelfth month of 939—after years of clan conflict—Masakado overthrew and occupied government offices in the capital of Hitachi Province (present day Ibaraki Prefecture). This constituted an act of treason, which Masakado compounded by declaring himself the new emperor. In the first month of 940, the Council of State issued an edict calling for the suppression of Masakado's rebellion. Given the court's stability and wealth at the time, many regional warriors—including Masakado's familial rivals—answered the call to arms. Masakado was defeated and executed in

the second month.²⁹⁷ According to the *Shōmonki* (The Chronicle of Masakado, ca. 940s),²⁹⁸ Masakado claimed the title of emperor on the basis of an oracle from the god Hachiman that proclaimed him fit to rule. This oracle was said to have been conveyed by the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane. Thus, by roughly 940, Michizane's spirit had been identified as having a decidedly anti-court attitude, and the Masakado uprising was not the only event of the 940s to demonstrate the ways in which Michizane's spirit had become associated with people and movements outside the sphere of court control or sanction.

The second troublesome incident involving the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane was the aforementioned development of the cult of Ayae Jizai Tenjin in the mid-tenth century. Although the precise details of the formation of the cult are unclear, it is possible to reconstruct some of the events leading to its establishment through the various historical accounts that describe the founding of the Kitano Tenjin Shrine—a shrine dedicated to the spirit of Michizane. In the records related to the founding of the shrine, Michizane's posthumous desire to be enshrined as a *kami* at Kitano was communicated to three people—the Buddhist priest Nichizō, Tajihi no Ayako, a young woman of the commoner class, and Taromaru (tenth century, possibly apocryphal), the seven-year-old son of a Shinto priest named Yoshitane (tenth century, possibly apocryphal)—all of whom received oracles from the spirit of Michizane.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ References to Masakado's rebellion remain extant in several sources, including the eleventh-century *Honchō monzui* and *Teishin kōki*, the tenth-century diary of Fujiwara no Tadahira, who held the position of chancellor during the incident. See entry for the eleventh day of the first month of 940, *Honchō monzui*, vol. 29, SZKT, 39; and entries for the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth days of the second month of 940, *Teishin kōki*, Full-Text Database of Old Japanese Diaries, Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo.

²⁹⁸ *Shōmonki*, in *Shōmonki, Mutsu waki, Hōgen monogatari, Heiji monogatari*, vol. 41 of *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū*, ed. Yanase Kiyoshi (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2002), 19-94. For an analysis and summary of the chronicle in English, see Guilian Stramigioli, "Preliminary Notes on the *Masakado* and the Taira no Masakado Story," *Monumenta Nipponica* 28, no. 3 (Autumn 1973): 261-293; and Judith N. Rabinovitch, *Shōmon ki: The Story of Masakado's Rebellion*, *Monumenta Nipponica Monographs* no. 58 (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1986).

²⁹⁹ The first oracle was received in the year 941 by Nichizō; the second oracle was received in 942 by Ayako; the third oracle was received in 946 by Taromaru. See "Kitano Tenjin engi emaki—Kōanbon," *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, vol. 15, *Zoku Nihon no emaki*, ed. Komatsu Shigemi (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1995), 115.

The earliest extant document to describe Tajihi no Ayako's role in the Michizane story is the *Kitano Tenman Daijizai Tenjingū Yamashiro no kuni Kadono no kōri Uwabayashi no gō ni sōken engi* (hereafter the *Yamashiro no kuni* text), dated to the year 960.³⁰⁰ In this brief document it is described how Ayako, who lived in the vicinity of Shichijō,³⁰¹ received an oracle from Michizane in the year 942 in which he asked her to build him a shrine near Kitano (called Ukon no Baba in the text), and how she was unable to do so for five years because of her poverty. Though this text claims that Ayako was unable to build a shrine to Michizane at Kitano for five years, by 945—just three years after receiving Michizane's oracle—Ayako seems to have attracted enough attention to warrant official intervention. Records tell of religious practices, centered on the deity called Ayae Jizai Tenjin, that took place in the vicinity of Yamashiro—the reported location of the smaller shrine that Ayako built in lieu of a shrine at Kitano, which was located in what is now the southern-most section of present-day Kyoto. These religious rituals were carried out by masses of commoners who traveled from great distances in order to pay homage.³⁰²

It is not entirely evident whether Ayae Jizai Tenjin refers to a deity who was a combination of Ayako and Michizane or to Ayako as a female shaman (*miko*) capable of channeling Michizane. However, what is evident is that the growing mobs of provincials who gathered to venerate this unofficial figurehead, who was potentially a commoner elevated to a god-like status and most certainly related to an unsanctioned incidence of spirit pacification, were regarded as an alarming development by the ruling elite, who moved to assert control over

³⁰⁰ *Kitano*, vol. 11 of *Shintō taikēi. Jinja hen*, ed. Makabe Toshinobu. (Tokyo: Shintō Taikēi Hensankai, 1978), 8-10. The story of Ayako is also recorded in the following texts: *Kanke godenki* (Biography of the Sugawara Clan, ca. 1106), and *Kanke zuiō roku* (Auspicious Record of the Sugawara Clan, Edo period). See *Kitano*, 87; 603-605. These texts are discussed below.

³⁰¹ Shichijō was an area located in the southern, and therefore poorer, portion of Heian-kyō.

³⁰² Entry for the twenty-eighth day of the seventh month of 945, *Honchō seiki*, vol. 9, SZKT, 109. See also Sakurai Yoshiro, 79-80.

the gatherings. Extant records related to the founding of the Kitano shrine suggest, however, that control was difficult to maintain for several decades. In 947, the Kitano shrine—tasked with the veneration of Michizane’s deified spirit, Tenman Daijizai Tenjin—was founded, and a Buddhist priest with a noble background was put in charge.³⁰³ From that time until the first decade of the eleventh century, the Kitano Shrine was transformed into a center of aristocratic control. Over the years, expansion of the property and buildings was effected through the patronage of powerful court officials, while management of the complex was given over to Michizane’s aristocratic descendants.³⁰⁴ By 987, Kitano had been formally recognized as one of nineteen principle shrines in the country, and in 1004 the first imperial visit to the shrine to make offerings to Michizane took place.³⁰⁵ Through this process, Ayako and those affiliated with her were resolutely removed from power.

4.1.3 The *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki* as a Tool of Political Control

The need to efface populist elements from the Michizane legend and the Tenjin worship that was built upon that legend appears to have remained a concern in the late twelfth century when the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* began to be produced. In the various handscroll sets that illustrate the legend, Ayako appears in a form quite different from the way she is described in the historical documents that record her involvement in the early stages of the Tenjin worship movement. Moreover, the general involvement of commoners in the building of the shrine is presented in a

³⁰³ In the text of the *Kitano Tenjin engi*, he is identified as Saichin, and his involvement in the founding and administration of the Kitano Shrine comes about when the Shinto priest Yoshitane conveys his son, Taromaru’s, oracle from Michizane requesting that he be enshrined.

³⁰⁴ The founding and management of the Kitano Shrine are discussed in Chapter Two.

³⁰⁵ Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 321-324. See also *Kitano*, 29-30.

strictly hierarchical fashion, with high ranking courtiers depicted in positions of authority and socially inferior men and women occupying subordinate roles.

As has been noted, the earliest extant document to describe Tajihi no Ayako's role in the Michizane story is the *Yamashiro no kuni* text, which is attributed to the Shinto priest Tajihi (*negi Tajihi*), who may or may not have been related to Ayako.³⁰⁶ Though this document is dated to the year 960, it survives only in compilations of records that date from the thirteenth century.³⁰⁷ In this document Ayako is clearly described as a woman of meager social status. Despite being called upon to build a shrine to Michizane at Kitano, she is directly prevented from doing so because of her extreme poverty. Moreover, the text refers to her as a "lowly woman" (*senjō*) and makes a point of emphasizing that her descendants were expected to have the care of the shrine forever in spite of their modest origins.

Ayako is similarly described in the *Kanke godenki*, written in 1106 by Sugawara no Nobutsune (twelfth century). In that document she is called a servant girl (*hashitame*) and impoverished woman (*josen*) and text reiterates the claim, first made in the *Yamashiro no kuni* text, that her poverty prevented her from carrying out Michizane's wishes directly after receiving them.³⁰⁸ This theme of poverty is carried on in the various copies of the *Kitano Tenjin engi*, most of which were illustrated. In them Ayako's extreme poverty is explicitly cited as a reason why she cannot immediately complete the task of erecting a shrine at Kitano and why the Shinto priest's son, Taromaru, ultimately receives an additional oracle from Michizane.³⁰⁹

While the issue of Ayako's social position is a key factor in her legend, the question of

³⁰⁶ Borgen suggests that the author of this text is related to Ayako. However, if this is true it throws Ayako's status as a commoner into question. Presumably, if she were as poverty-stricken as the text implies, she and her family would probably not have been literate.

³⁰⁷ *Kitano*, 8-10; 30-32.

³⁰⁸ *Kitano*, 87.

³⁰⁹ In some versions of the story, Ayako and Yoshitane work together to found the shrine. In other versions, Yoshitane undertakes the mission alone. In the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, Yoshitane is always depicted acting alone.

her age is not specifically addressed in these texts. Nevertheless, a couple of things suggest that she was considered to be an adult. In the first place, in comparing the descriptions of her with those of the Shinto priest's son, Taromaru, who was also said to have received an oracle from Michizane, it becomes very likely that Ayako was perceived to have been an adult by those writing the texts. This is because the son's age—seven years—is always noted.³¹⁰ Secondly, *Kanke zuiō roku*, which dates from the early Edo period (although the author and exact date are unknown) and which significantly expands the Ayako story, devotes much of its time to describing her life and gives her age at the time of the oracle as twenty-eight.³¹¹ It is difficult to know precisely where this expanded interpretation originated, but it does show that by the early Edo period the perception of Ayako was that she had been an adult woman at the time of her experiences with Michizane's spirit. Modern-day scholars have followed this interpretation: they generally refer to Ayako as a female shaman—a categorization that the visual representation of her also supports to a certain extent.³¹²

In spite of the suggestion that Ayako was an adult woman of meager status, artists in the early Kamakura period—from which the first versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* date—chose, or were instructed, not to portray her as such.³¹³ Instead, they relied on a mode of visual representation that was associated most strongly with elite, masculine, and religious iconography. Two of the earliest extant versions of the scrolls that depict Ayako are those held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, dated to the second half of the thirteenth century,

³¹⁰ Children under the age of seven were believed to possess supernatural powers; if Ayako had been considered to be a child, her age would almost certainly have been noted in the same manner. See Iwasa Mitsuhiro, “Sei naru kodomo: shindō,” in *Bijutsu no naka no kodomotachi* (Tokyo: Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2001), 95-101.

³¹¹ *Kitano*, 603-605.

³¹² Scholars who refer to Ayako as a female shaman or *miko* include Borgen, Plutschow, and Sakurai Yoshiro. See also, Goshima Kuniharu, “Kitano miko ‘Ayako’ to Tajihi no Ayako—Tenmangū sōken kōrosha no keifu,” *Geinōshi kenkyū* 196 (January 2012): 20-35.

³¹³ Ayako does not appear in the earliest extant version of the handscrolls—the Jōkyū version that is dated to the year 1219—which ends representations of the six existential realms and eight hells of Buddhist doctrine.

and in the Tsuda Tenjin Shrine, dated to 1298 (see Appendix E, no. 3.13.1) (3.13.2). In both of these versions of the handscrolls Ayako is portrayed twice—once inside a house where she receives the oracle by means of a divination ritual that uses a bowl of rice and once before a small outdoor shrine that she has erected near her home in lieu of the larger affair that will one day be built at Kitano. She wears a non-descript white robe, and her hair hangs to her shoulders in a flat, middle-part hairstyle reminiscent of a young court page. Inside the house she is surrounded by people, while at the outdoor shrine she is flanked by a single male attendant. It is this second depiction of Ayako that I will focus on.

In each of these two versions she sits in an obvious attitude of prayer before the shrine with her feet tucked under her and a *gohei*—a ritual wand used for purification or pacification rites—clasped in her pressed-together hands. In later versions of the scrolls, many elements of the illustration changed—Ayako’s clothing became more vibrantly colored (see Appendix E, no. 3.13.3), her attendant shifted from male to female (see Appendix E, no. 3.13.4), and the articulation of her surrounding space grew steadily more urban and luxurious (see Appendix E, no. 3.13.5)—but the image of Ayako sitting on her knees before a sacred space, engaged in a sacred ritual, remained the same. This depicted behavior seems to mark her as a shamaness, but the visual representation of her is by no means explicitly female and certainly not adult.

In fact, the manner of depiction used to represent Ayako most closely resembles the visual representation used in the same period to describe a number of divine boys. The image of the divine boy is one that had many applications in Japanese religion and art.³¹⁴ Two main types of divine boys were ubiquitous: the supernatural boy, known as a *gōhō dōji*, who was a defender

³¹⁴ For a complete history of divine boys in Buddhism and Japanese art see Carmen Blacker, “The Divine Boy in Japanese Buddhism,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 22 (1963): 77-88; and Christine M. E. Guth, “The Divine Boy in Japanese Art,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 1-23. See also, Iwasa, 95-101.

of the Buddhist law and often acted as an attendant to Buddhist holy men (see Appendix E, no. 17); and the holy boy, known as *chigo*, *dōji*, or *wakamiya*, who was a great man or god appearing in the form of a child. The bodhisattvas Monjū and Kannon, and the god of Kasuga were often depicted as children, as were great men like the historical Buddha and Prince Shōtoku. A reliance on this divine boy imagery may have originated in the belief that children occupied a liminal space between this world and the supernatural.³¹⁵ Additionally, the performance of impressive feats during childhood was a signal of greatness, which probably led to an emphasis on those episodes being depicted in illustrated biographies.³¹⁶

Given this variety of applications for the divine boy image, it is not surprising that the iconography for it also varied.³¹⁷ Nevertheless, distinct parallels exist between the visual representation of Ayako in various versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* and a form of divine boy imagery that was popular by the fourteenth century: the Chigo Daishi figure used to depict the founder of Shingon Buddhism, Kūkai—posthumously known as Kōbō Daishi—as a young boy. Representations of Kūkai as Chigo Daishi appear in both handscroll (see Appendix E, no. 18) and hanging scroll format (see Appendix E, no. 19) and were widely produced from the fourteenth century. Today, more than a dozen examples remain extant.³¹⁸ In these images, Kūkai is typically shown much as Ayako is: sitting on his knees, usually with hands clasped in prayer, and with his hair parted in the middle and hanging flat to his shoulders. This hairstyle is of particular note, as it connotes a young court page,³¹⁹ and is quite different from the hairstyles of

³¹⁵ Iwasa, 99.

³¹⁶ For more on the representation of Prince Shōtoku, see Alexander Soper, “The Pictorial Biography of Prince Shotoku,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series 25, no. 5 (Jan 1967): 197-215. For the representation of Tokugawa Ieyasu, see Karen Gerhart, *The Eyes of Power: Art and Early Tokugawa Authority* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 107-140.

³¹⁷ Guth, 1.

³¹⁸ Guth, 2-6.

³¹⁹ Guth, 2.

ordinary boys such as those depicted in the *Ban Dainagon emaki* (see Appendix E, no. 2.8).

Ayako also resembles the visual representation of the young Michizane in the scene where he is shown being found one day on the family estate by his father, having appeared there miraculously—so says the legend—at the age of six (see Appendix E, no. 3.1.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.1.2). From these comparisons it is obvious that the depiction of Ayako drew from this mode of representing great men or gods as children. In fact, it drew from these modes of representation even though the accompanying text did not support such an interpretation and even though the purpose in doing so was clearly not the same. The question, then, is why was the decision made to represent her in such a fashion?

It might be tempting to answer this question by citing the Buddhist belief that women were defiled, defiling creatures who were incapable of achieving enlightenment without first reincarnating as a man.³²⁰ However, scholars have demonstrated that popular belief at this time actually supported the notion that women could and did achieve enlightenment after death.³²¹ Both personal journals and images from handscrolls of the Heian and Kamakura periods demonstrate amply that this belief in women's inferiority was, in many cases, only a doctrinal formality. In a number of handscrolls, dating from the fourteenth century and on, nuns are shown praying to the Amida Buddha before death with the clear implication that they will be offered salvation in exchange for their piety. The depiction of Princess Chūjō (*Chūjōhime*) in the *Taima Mandara engi emaki* (Illustrated Legend of the Taima Mandala) as a noblewoman and not as a child further suggests that the visual representation of women was perfectly permissible in

³²⁰ This inability of women to achieve enlightenment is highlighted in the famous story of the Dragon King's daughter in the *Lotus Sūtra*. For a complete translation see *The Lotus Sutra*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

³²¹ Obara Hiroshi, "The Rebirth of Women into Paradise: Women in Fujiwara no Munetada's Dairy *Chūyūki* (1087-1138)," trans. Burton Watson, in *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*, ed. Barbara Ruch (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 441-462.

connection with holy or sacred texts (see Appendix E, no. 20). Given that Ayako was depicted as a little girl whose visual attributes stem more from depictions of elite, divine children than from that of commoners, and given that Buddhist doctrine regarding women seems to have played no role in that depiction, it seems more likely that the ultimate goal of the decision to depict Ayako as a little girl was to leave her lowly status out of the visual record while accentuating her divinity as an oracle of Michizane.

By means of such documents as the *Yamashiro no kuni* text and the *Kanke godenki*, it is possible to surmise how the court—and most particularly the dominant Northern Fujiwara clan—staged a protracted battle for control of the cultic practices associated with the worship of Michizane in the tenth century. Likewise, they seem to have continued that battle on an iconographic stage in the twelfth century. In the tenth century, Ayako and her followers were ultimately expelled from Kitano in favor of the Sugawara family.³²² In order to control the course of popular religion, however, it was probably not enough to simply cut Ayako out of the daily workings of the shrine at Kitano. The text written by the person claiming to be Priest Tajihi in 960, which was still being copied in the thirteenth century, suggests that someone was attempting to lay claim to both the Michizane legend and the furor surrounding Ayako, regardless of their actual relationship to her. Her role in the Michizane legend therefore needed to be incorporated into the stories in a way that would neutralize its power with the commoner classes. Hence, her relegation to the role of a minor character: one of three people who received an oracle. Over time, her story was merged with that of the Shinto priest's son and the agency of the shrine building was completely taken from her. In the images produced in the Kamakura period she appears in an even more altered form. In the guise of a divine child, she is subsumed

³²² Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 321-324.

into an iconographic framework that admits no hint of her commoner background.

This lack of commoner agency in religious practices is echoed in the scroll's depiction of the building of the Kitano Shrine itself. In the scenes that show the construction of Kitano, members of the courtier class are given center stage throughout the progression from founding to completion of Tenman Daijizai Tenjin's shrine. They are shown participating in the building project (see Appendix E, no. 3.16), receiving messages from Michizane that express his continuing need for revenge (see Appendix E, no. 3.17), and finally offering him the veneration he requires to be at rest (see Appendix E, no. 3.18). Members of the lower classes appear in this sequence as well, but their roles are significantly reduced. Thus, these scenes emphasize aristocratic involvement in the pacification of Michizane's spirit while minimizing commoner involvement.

The Heian period was a time of diverse spiritual traditions, each with practitioners from both high and low social classes who sought to control the significant political capital attendant upon those traditions. Though many ritual practices seem to have been imported from the continent and disseminated first among elite practitioners, the manifestation of those ritual practices among commoner populations elicited swift action on the part of the aristocratic families that controlled the early Japanese court to control the spread of potentially infectious subversive tendencies. As the Heian period drew to a close, illustrated handscrolls that depicted these folk spiritual practices as forms of elite privilege began to be produced by noble families as a means of legitimizing their ascendant position over competitive aristocratic clans. In the Kamakura period, copies of these handscrolls produced by Buddhist temple painting ateliers were used for didactic purposes and, through their effacement of the lower classes, served to remind the masses that spiritual and political authority was a prerogative only of the elite.

Nevertheless, illustrated handscrolls had far-reaching uses beyond socio-political control; they also functioned both ritually and reflectively within a diverse range of Heian-period beliefs.

4.2 SPIRIT PACIFICATION IN THE SIMULACRUM OF HANDSCROLL REPRODUCTION

Spirit pacification practices encompassed a wide variety of activities, including rituals performed at temples and shrines, and—as some scholars have argued—artistic and literary pursuits like poetry composition, *noh* performances, storytelling acts by such figures as *biwa hōshi* (lute priests) and *etoki* (picture explaining) performers.³²³ Famous works like the *Heike monogatari* (Tale of the Heike), which was regularly performed by *biwa hōshi* and often reproduced in narrative-handscroll and folding-screen formats, are often associated with spirit pacification.³²⁴ By contrast, the ritual functions of illustrated handscrolls within the context of spirit pacification practices are less well understood. Though “vengeful spirit” handscrolls of the late Heian period share certain characteristics with the stories that are commonly understood to operate within a spirit pacification framework, the visual depiction of spirit pacification rituals in these illustrated handscrolls adds a placatory dimension that is missing from stories like *Heike monogatari* where

³²³ For an in-depth exploration of how these various practices may functioned in a placatory manner, see Plutschow, *Chaos and Cosmos*. For an in-depth study of *etoki* practices, see Kaminishi Ikumi, *Explaining Pictures: Buddhist Propaganda and Etoki Storytelling in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006).

³²⁴ The suggestion that *biwa hōshi* and *etoki* performances of *Heike monogatari* functioned to pacify the spirits of the warriors who died during the battles of the Genpei War (1180-1185) has endured into the modern era. A notable example of this persistent idea is the tale “Hōichi the Earless,” a story about a blind *biwa hōshi* whose recitation of the *Heike monogatari* for the spirits of the Heike warriors serves to ameliorate their volatile anger and thereby protect the living from their vengeful wrath. The tale, which was collected by the folklorist Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) in the collection *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*, was adapted for the cinema in 1965. See *Kwaidan*, dir. Kobayashi Masayuki (New York: The Criterion Collection, 1965).

the narrative is recited in an effort to calm the vengeful spirit without enacting a pacification through a visual depiction of that narrative.

4.2.1 The Spirit Pacification Theory as Applied to the *Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki*

The cultural perception of Abe no Nakamaro as a tragic hero in the history of Japanese poetry and the production of the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* both reflect a multiplicity of late-Heian period socio-political ideals and aspirations. On the one hand, the literary movements that rewrote the story of Nakamaro's political and cultural life and the illustrated handscrolls that narrated the tale of Nakamaro's tortured afterlife in foreign lands served to reiterate the idea of native Japanese cultural supremacy over an inferior foreign other. On the other hand, they served to position Nakamaro within an origin story of Onmyōdō practices whose ramifications may have had a strong impact on the political advantages of rival clans in the final decades of the Heian period. However, the representation of Abe no Nakamaro and his appearance in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* do not merely reveal contemporaneous attitudes toward the foreign and or shed light on the ways in which socio-political standing was reified at the late Heian court. They also illuminate continuing perceptions of spirits of the dead and the spirit pacification practices necessary to keep said beings quiescent.

Spirit pacification theories have rarely been applied to the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*. When they have been, it has generally been supposed that the handscroll set was created to appease the vengeful spirit of Kibi no Makibi.³²⁵ The idea that the handscroll set might have been produced for this purpose seems to derive on the one hand from studies about other handscrolls, most

³²⁵ Kevin Gray Carr, Introduction to "Explaining the 'Mystery of *Ban Dainagon ekotoba*' by Matsuo Kenji," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28.1-2 (2001): 105. Herbert Plutschow, "Tragic Victims," n4.

particularly the *Ban Dainagon emaki* and the *Kitano Tenjin Engi emaki*, that suggest they were made for purposes of placation,³²⁶ and on the other hand from the assumption that Kibi no Makibi had become a well-known vengeful spirit. Unlike the hypothesis that the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* reflects late-Heian period attitudes toward the foreign and was produced in part to settle a lineage dispute between two rival families, the suggestion that the handscroll was created to placate the restless spirit of Kibi no Makibi is hard to accept without more information about when and how Kibi came to be viewed as a vengeful spirit. While it is true that Kibi ultimately became one of thirteen vengeful spirits pacified at the Kami Goryō Shrine, the circumstances under which this pacification ritual took place are unclear. Indeed, there seems to be considerable confusion about the apotheosis of Kibi no Makibi.

According to Herbert Plutschow, Kibi no Makibi—like Sugawara no Michizane—was enshrined not at the Kami Goryō Shrine, but at the Shinsen'en gardens sometime after the six original vengeful spirits who were pacified there in 863. This pacification is supposed to have taken place at some undefined time after the 863 *goryō* ceremony for a now unknown reason.³²⁷ However, there are no extant records that refer to this.³²⁸ Present-day pamphlets printed and distributed by the site administrators of the Shinsen'en and the Kami Goryō Shrine indicate that certain prominent vengeful spirits are, and have been, venerated at both spaces. The Shinsen'en and the Kami Goryō Shrine are both home to the Six August Spirits (*rokusho goryō*)—the six men and women who were originally pacified at the Shinsen'en in 863. The Kami Goryō Shrine

³²⁶ The relationship of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* to spirit pacification practices is discussed below.

³²⁷ Plutschow refers to Kibi no Makibi as having been enshrined at the Shinsen'en sometime after the original six spirits were enshrined there but does not provide a reference or dates. "Fujiwara Politics and Religion," 216.

³²⁸ A search for instances of the phrases "*goryō e*," "Shinsen'en," "Kibi no Makibi," and "Sugawara no Michizane" in Heian period chronicles and diaries shows no overlap between them, suggesting that no ceremonies to enshrine Kibi and Michizane were ever held at the Shinsen'en. Moreover, the short history sold by the present-day administration of the Shinsen'en garden makes no reference to these two men ever having been enshrined there, though the 863 *goryō* ceremony is prominently discussed.

reveres an additional seven spirits—who include Kibi no Makibi and Sugawara no Michizane, as well as Prince Osabe (761?-775), his mother Princess Inoue (717-775), Emperor Sutoku (1119-1164; r.1123-1142), and two other unidentified figures,³²⁹ and it is likely that the confusion regarding the enshrinement of Kibi no Makibi stems from the overlap existing between these two sites of placation.

Moreover, though it is clear that Kibi no Makibi's spirit became a figure of veneration at some unspecified point in time, he is not a typical candidate for becoming a vengeful spirit.³³⁰ Despite having been involved in a succession dispute during the later portion of his career and suffering a minor demotion because of it, Kibi was a universally praised statesman, both during and after his time, who died a celebrated cultural figure in the capital.³³¹ The fact that he is now venerated alongside men and women who were once famed vengeful spirits is suggestive of the notion that he was thought to have become a vengeful spirit himself, but it is not wholly conclusive. Kibi may have been elevated to their stature on the basis of other merits. In contrast to the celebrated Kibi no Makibi, Abe no Nakamaro fits the profile for a person likely to become a vengeful spirit after death. Nakamaro—who died alone in China, who left many descendants behind him in Japan, and who was not given funeral rites in his native land—was far more likely

³²⁹ The Six August Spirits were at some point expanded to be the Eight August Spirits (*hassho goryō*) with the inclusion of Kibi and Michizane. In some configurations, Prince Osabe and Princess Inoue are substituted in place of Prince Iyo and Fujiwara no Nakanari. See Morita, 173-174.

³³⁰ The typical vengeful spirit of the Nara (710-794) and Heian periods was the victim of a political plot who had died in exile. See Kuroda Toshio, "The World of Spirit Pacification," 323-330.

³³¹ Kibi's death was recorded in *Shoku Nihongi* in the entry for the second day of the tenth month of 775. *Shoku Nihongi*, SZKT, vol. 2, 133. See also, *Nihon kodai jinmei jiten*, vol. 4, ed. Takeuchi Rizō et al (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1958-1977), 904-908; Jan Fontein, "Kibi's Adventures in China: Facts, Fiction, and Their Meaning," *Boston Museum Bulletin* 66, no. 344 (1968): 52-53; and Peter Otto Glum, "The 'Ban Dainagon Ekotoba,' the 'Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki,' and the 'Nenjū Gyōji Emaki': A Reassessment of the Evidence for the Work of Tokiwa Mitsunaga Embodied in Two Japanese Narrative Scroll Paintings of the Twelfth Century and One Presumably Close Copy" (PhD diss., New York University, 1981), 272-274.

than Kibi to have been in need of pacification rites.³³² Consequently, it is Abe no Nakamaro who appears to be the better candidate for a target of placation—if indeed this handscroll was created with that purpose in mind.

It is not outside the realm of possibility that the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* was commissioned with such a placatory function in mind. In the Heian period, Abe no Nakamaro came to be seen as a highly esteemed culture hero. Furthermore, Nakamaro was known to have died abroad—in de facto exile—and was regarded as a tragic figure as a result. The representation of him as a vengeful spirit who appears in the guise of an *oni* further supports the notion that he was regarded as a spirit in need of placation. Nevertheless, given that the narrative of the handscroll strongly emphasizes the establishment of Kibi no Makibi as the progenitor of Onmyōdō practices, it is probable that the pacification of the spirit of Abe no Nakamaro represents at most a secondary function in line with the project of reclaiming Nakamaro as a grand and tragic literary hero that was discussed in Chapter Two.

4.2.2 The Simulacrum of Spirit Pacification in *Kibi Daijin Nittō Emaki*

Regardless of whether or not the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* was intended to pacify the vengeful spirit of Abe no Nakamaro, it nevertheless provides important insights into spirit pacification culture during the late Heian period. While no other surviving documentation refers specifically to either Abe no Nakamaro's having become a vengeful spirit or to any pacification rituals that were undertaken for him, it is clear from his transformation into an *oni* in the tale that he was

³³² The lack of funeral rituals is noted in a *Shoku Nihongi* entry for the twenty-sixth day of the fifth month of 779. *Shoku Nihongi*, 449. See also, Mori Katsumi, “*Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba* no yozai nitsuite,” in *Kokawadera engi e • Kibi Daijin nittō e*, vol. 6 of *Nihon emakimono zenshū*, ed. Umezu Jirō, (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1977), 31-34; and Fontein, 53.

considered to have become a vengeful spirit, or to have been capable of becoming a vengeful spirit. This transformation and Nakamaro's lamentation of it demonstrates two interesting characteristics of belief regarding vengeful spirits: first, that the condition was seen to be related to Buddhist beliefs about passion and the role of *oni* in the punishment of those passions and second, that the condition was seen as being involuntary, perceptions that are borne out by many *setsuwa* tales of the same period.³³³ This dual view of the ability and lack of ability to control human emotion is a central issue at the heart of spirit pacification practices.

Even more interesting to the study of vengeful spirits and spirit pacification culture is the depiction in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* of an actual act of placation by Kibi no Makibi on behalf of the spirit of Abe no Nakamaro. This act, though narrated and illustrated only in brief, is crucial to the succeeding story—for while many scholars have argued that Nakamaro represents a controlled force in the story,³³⁴ he is, in fact, not controlled but pacified. It is this pacified state that renders him helpful to Kibi. As a vengeful spirit, Nakamaro cannot be controlled, but he can be altered from a volatile state to a directed one, and it is the act of pacification that facilitates this transition. As the Japanese folklorist Komatsu Kazuhiko has argued, spirits are neither good nor bad; instead, their character is neutral and it changes in response to human actions.³³⁵ In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the first step in Kibi's quest for freedom is the placation of Abe no Nakamaro and the conversion of him from foe to friend.

³³³ The trope of people turning into *oni* because of a great rage or anguish is a fixture in such collections as the *Konjaku monogatari*. Additionally, the idea that rage, jealousy, and the passionate attachment to worldly things leads people to become dangerous vengeful spirits is a recurrent theme in *The Tale of Genji*, whose secondary character Lady Rokujō transforms into a murderous spirit at multiple points in the narrative due to her contentious relationship with Genji and her rage over his callous treatment of her.

³³⁴ See, for example, Kawabara Masahiko "Kibi Daijin nittō ekotoba no seiritsu to on'yōdō," *Bunkashi Kenkyū* 14 (1963): 15-28; Fontein (1968); Mori Katsumi, (1977); and Kuroda Hideo, "Oni to gaikō—Kibi Daijin nittō emaki" 1," in *Kaiga shiryō de rekishi wo yomu* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2004), 26-34.

³³⁵ Komatsu Kazuhiko, "Kibutsu no yōkai—tsukumogami wo megutte," in *Zusetsu hyakki yagyō emaki wo yomu* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1999), 87-96.

The pacification of Abe no Nakamaro in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* closely follows the ritual process of pacification that was undertaken with the *goryō* ceremony of 863 and during the deification of Sugawara no Michizane. Kibi first identifies the source of danger in the tower where he is imprisoned as Nakamaro's spirit. He then determines what it is that Nakamaro wants—reassurance that his family in Japan are comfortable and prospering—and gives it to him. It is this sequence—identification, determination, provision—that forms the basis of the spirit pacification ritual.³³⁶

The sequence is simply illustrated in the handscroll through an almost-stop-motion sequence of events (see Appendix E, no. 1.4): Nakamaro appears in the typical form of an *oni*—horned and with a red, muscular body, tousled hair, and clawed hands and feet. He is then shown in a semi-human form, with a discolored face and claw-like hands to mark his otherness for the audience, conversing with Kibi in a civilized manner. Though the sequence is represented with brevity, the pacification of Nakamaro remains implicit in several of the illustration's visual cues. Nakamaro as *oni* is a brawny figure and fully twice the size of Nakamaro as humanoid. While the former is clad only in a loincloth, the latter wears the civilized attire of a courtier. The flaming red skin of the *oni* becomes a muted pale orange tone in the spirit, and—perhaps most significantly—Nakamaro's mouth, which glints with razor sharp teeth in his *oni* form, is toothless in his humanlike incarnation. Furthermore, the pacified Nakamaro is constricted by the confines of the tower balcony, hemmed in on all sides by walls and balustrades. No longer does he flow with the violent forces of the wind, ready to destroy that which lies in his path. Instead, he has fit himself to the contours of Kibi's human world, ready to assist in the support of that

³³⁶ In most cases, the spirits who are causing harm want to be propitiated with prayers and offerings. Nakamaro's desire, by contrast, is for reassurance about loved ones. His spirit's focus on others rather than on himself is unusual, and is most likely tied to the tragic narrative that was created for him in the early tenth century.

world. Through Kibi's act of pacification, Nakamaro's unpredictable wrath has been appeased and his malevolent spirit has been transformed, and though several visual elements continue to identify Nakamaro as not human, he is no longer the overwhelmingly threatening figure that he was prior to Kibi's ministrations. Nakamaro's smallness of size and conformation to the structure of the world around him continues throughout the handscroll where he is consistently portrayed as a figure in concert with his surroundings rather than one at odds with them (see Appendix E, no. 1.7).

This depiction of the pacifier-pacified relationship between Kibi and Nakamaro in this story eloquently illustrates the late-Heian-period perception of vengeful spirits and how to handle them. Moreover, this visual representation of spirit pacification, where a lengthy process is transmuted into a highly staccato yet nevertheless legible iconography, might be said to constitute a ritualistic reenactment of pacification practices, where the commission, creation, and retelling of the story functions to provide a placatory balm to the spirit of Abe no Nakamaro, wherever he might be.

4.2.3 The Simulacrum of Spirit Pacification in the *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki*

A clearer example of the ritualistic reenactment of pacification in the simulacrum of handscroll representation can be found in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*. Whereas the pacification of Abe no Nakamaro was most likely a secondary by-product of the narrative itself, the pacification of Sugawara no Michizane was undoubtedly a conscious directive of those who commissioned the earliest versions of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* and possibly a directive of those who commissioned the numerous copies that followed as well. In contrast to Nakamaro, who was a supporting character in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, Michizane was the primary focus of the

narrative of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*. Furthermore, those who commissioned the earliest extant examples of the handscroll had close ties to centers of ritual practice that were instrumental in the promulgation of the Michizane legend—the Kitano Shrine itself and its parent temple, Enryakuji.

As with Abe no Nakamaro, the liminal quality of vengeful spirits—their ability to transform from threatening to supportive entities—is easily recognizable in the story of Michizane’s deification. Michizane was believed to have become a vengeful spirit after his death in exile and was pacified through enshrinement at the Kitano Shrine in Heian-kyō in a multifaceted process that took the better part of a century to accomplish. The *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* illustrates his process of transformation from a negative to a positive force in an expansive sequence of episodes that is the primary focus of the handscrolls’ story. Unlike the abbreviated pacification sequence that is presented in the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the handscrolls that tell the story of Michizane’s deification give free reign to the depiction of that narrative—offering a series of succinct episodes that serve to echo the decades-long process of posthumous apotheosis that took place in the tenth century.³³⁷

The deification of Michizane took about one-hundred years. From the time of his death, in 903, to the imperial pilgrimage to his shrine at Kitano, in 1004, a number of events—not all of which were immediately attributed to Michizane’s wrath—transpired. These included the calamities that struck the capital in the first decades of the tenth century and the uprisings and religious movements of the mid-century, and were followed by an assortment of concerted steps directed toward the establishment and control of an official shrine. In the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, these posthumous events leading up to the identification of Michizane’s wrath as the

³³⁷ The division of episodes in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* varies by copy. See Murase (1962).

source of the calamities are lingered over. Indeed, the posthumous portion of Michizane's narrative constitute two thirds of the handscroll's content. The final two thirds of the handscroll set are divided cleanly into two sections—the first of which details the vengeance taken by Michizane's spirit and the second of which presents his pacification. It is this final third of the handscroll set that I will focus on now.

Michizane's spirit is identified as the source of the problems in the capital by means of three prophetic experiences, and the story of each of these prophetic experiences is illustrated. The first episode depicts the visit of the priest Nichizō to the underworld in a fast-induced dream (see Appendix E, no. 3.10.1) (see Appendix E, no. 3.10.2). He meets an assortment of Buddhist deities, as well as Emma Ō, the king of hell, and various denizens of that domain—one of whom is the former Emperor Daigo, now languishing in torment (see Appendix E, no. 3.11). Daigo informs Nichizō that Michizane is the cause of the calamities in the capital and tells him that Michizane must be venerated as a *kami* in order to stop the violence. The second and third episodes depict the reception of oracles from Michizane by Tajihi no Ayako (see Appendix E, no. 3.13) and Taromaru, the son of the Shinto priest Yoshitane (see Appendix E, no. 3.14). In a follow up episode, Yoshitane conveys the content of the oracle to Buddhist priests (see Appendix E, no. 3.15), who—together with courtiers and commoners—begin the building of the Kitano Shrine (see Appendix E, no. 3.16). During the building process, a message from Michizane's spirit is found on a plank of wood (see Appendix E, no. 3.17). The message reaffirms Michizane's intention to persist in attacking the capital until he is properly enshrined. However, in the following episode, high-ranking members of the Heian aristocracy humble themselves before the now-completed Kitano Shrine (see Appendix E, no. 3.18). They confer the posthumous promotions upon the deified Michizane that allow his wrathful spirit to be at peace.

The final episodes of the handscroll explore the salvific powers of Michizane as Tenjin. Those who believe in him are aided (see Appendix E, no. 3.19), while those who do not are shamed (see Appendix E, no. 3.20).

As with the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the scenes in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* present a standard ritual pacification in compacted form. The pacification begins with the identification of Michizane as the source of the threat, continues with the determination of his spirit's wishes, and concludes with the provisions made by the pacifying party to fulfill those wishes. In the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, the narrative presentation of that process is a logical step in the advancement of the plot. However, in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, that process represents the culmination of the commissioner and artists' ritual intentions. The portion of the narrative that covers the life of Michizane is a small fraction of the handscrolls' story, while that which addresses his posthumous vengeance and pacification dominates the tale. From this it seems clear that the purpose of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* was not to tell a story about Michizane's life so much as it was to participate in the story of Michizane's afterlife. Ending as it does with a series of vignettes about the benefits of making offerings to the deified Michizane as Tenjin, the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* educates as it enacts—reflecting the spiritual trends of the late Heian period and engaging them on a performative level.

4.3 SPIRIT PACIFICATION IN TRANSITION

As the Heian period drew to a close, the representation of spirit pacification beliefs—always intertwined with Shinto and Buddhist practices—in “vengeful spirit” handscrolls began to give way to other developing religious philosophies. The most notable example of this is the *Ban*

Dainagon emaki, whose protagonist Tomo no Yoshio has long been argued to be the beneficiary of a ritualistic reenactment of placation through the creation of the handscroll, but whose story may more properly be understood from the perspective of the newly popular doctrine of karmic retribution, in which reincarnation within the six realms of existence was determined by the laws of karma.

4.3.1 The Spirit Pacification Theory as Applied to the *Ban Dainagon Emaki*

Unlike the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki*, which has not been examined via the framework of spirit pacification theory, and the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, which has only been considered within the context of the Tenjin worship branch of spirit pacification practices, the *Ban Dainagon emaki* has often been evaluated as a possible example of a handscroll that was produced largely for the purposes of pacifying the spirit of its main character. The illustrated handscroll set focuses on the destruction, by arson, of the Ōtenmon, which took place in 866 and the eventual exile of Major Counselor Tomo no Yoshio for the crime. The first scholar to suggest that the handscroll was produced for placatory purposes was Kondo Yoshihiro, who in 1962 drew a connection between the 1177 fire that once more caused the destruction of the Ōtenmon and the production around the same time of an illustrated handscroll that focused on the story of its burning in 866. Kondo argued that the fire was likely to have been attributed to Tomo no Yoshio's malice and the *Ban Dainagon emaki* commissioned and created in an attempt to quell his vengeful spirit. In the

following decades, Komine Kazuaki, Gomi Fumihiko, Matsuo Kenji, and Sotome Harue all reaffirmed this hypothesis.³³⁸

The argument that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* was produced for the purposes of spirit pacification hinges on three main points:³³⁹ that the concluding line of the handscrolls' text communicates a sense of regret on the part of Tomo no Yoshio, that Yoshio's face is not depicted out of fear of his vengeful wrath, and that Yoshio was known to have become a pestilence deity by the period in which the handscroll was produced. The first point is a main tenet of most arguments for the spirit pacification theory. After narrating the events of the story in a straightforward manner, the text of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* concludes with a comment upon the moral of the story—summarizing Tomo no Yoshio's dastardly plot and how it backfired on him and concluding that Yoshio must have regretted the outcome—"Oh, how he regretted it!"³⁴⁰ The concluding statement has been interpreted by some scholars as an attempt to convey Tomo no Yoshio's contrition for his crime and present him in a sympathetic light, thereby appeasing his restless spirit.³⁴¹ In this interpretation, the phrase does not function as a criticism of Yoshio but as a sympathetic acceptance of his remorse. However, as a general survey of *setsuwa* stories from the period reveals, many tales in the *setsuwa* genre end with a

³³⁸ Kondo Yoshihiro, "Ōtenmon no hi—*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* no seikaku," *Bijutsushi* 44 (1962). Quoted in Yamamoto Satomi, "*Ban Dainagon emaki* ni okeru keisetsu no riyō—Tomo no Yoshio tei ni egakareta hakai no mochifu," *Chūsei kaiga no matorikkusu* 2, ed. Sano Midori et al. (Tokyo: Seikansha, 2014), 362-363; Komine Kazuaki, "Honō wo miru otoko—emaki no setsuwa," *Setsuwa no mori: tengu, tōzoku, ikei no dōke* (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1991), 196-222; Goto Fumihiko, "Emaki no utae—*Ban Dainagon emaki*," *Emaki de yomu chūsei* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shinsho, 1994), 69-88; Matsuo Kenji, "*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* no 'nazo' wo toku—mō hitotsu no goryō shinkō," *Nihon no bukkyō* 3 (Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1995), 93-108; Sotome Harue, "Tokiwa Genji Mitsunaga shūhen seisaku emakimono gun no kenkyū—*Ban Dainagon emaki* no seisaku mokuteki nitsuite," *Kajima bijutsu kenkyū* 20 (2002). 128-141.

³³⁹ I follow Yamamoto Yōko's organization for my summary of the three primary points of the spirit pacification theory. See "*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu no saikentō: wakiyaku no kaokatachi hyōgen wo chūshin ni," *Meisei Daigaku kenkyū kiyō*, *Nihon bunka gakubu*, *genko bunka gakubu* 13 (March 2005): 41-55.

³⁴⁰ The phrase "ika ni kuyashi kari kamu" has most commonly been translated as "Oh, how he regretted it!" (Carr) or "How much he may have regretted it!" (Glum). The phrase also appears in the *Uji shūi monogatari* episode that narrates the tale of the Ōtenmon Incident. D.E. Mills has translated it as "How bitterly he must have regretted it!"

³⁴¹ These include Komine Kazuaki, Gomi Fumihiko, and Matsuo Kenji.

final summary that conveys a moral lesson to the reader. Thus, the inclusion of such a statement here is in keeping with the *setsuwa* tradition and not necessarily indicative of a sympathetic portrayal of Tomo no Yoshio.³⁴²

The second point is less commonly accepted than the first. Asserting that Tomo no Yoshio only appears at one point during the illustration of the narrative—during the final scene where he is transported into exile—and at no time is his face visible, Komine Kazuaki has argued that the failure to show Yoshio’s facial features is indicative of the fear and awe with which his vengeful spirit was viewed.³⁴³ However, as Yamamoto Yōko has pointed out, even in the case of *kami* who were once human the tradition of hiding the faces of those *kami* and *goryō* only applies once the person in question has experienced their apotheosis.³⁴⁴ In the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, for example, Michizane’s face is repeatedly depicted—even during scenes that illustrate his posthumous revenge. It is only during the final third of the handscroll, when the process by which he was deified is illustrated, that his physical presence ceases to be represented. As the *Ban Dainagon emaki* illustrates a period of Tomo no Yoshio’s life and not his afterlife, the depiction of his face—or lack thereof—is unlikely to have any bearing on whether or not the scrolls were intended to pacify his spirit.³⁴⁵

The third point—that Tomo no Yoshio was known to have become a vengeful spirit after

³⁴² A fact that has been pointed out by Sotome, who supports the spirit pacification theory, as well as by scholars who disagree with it. See Yamamoto Yōko, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu,” 41-55; and Tsutao Kazuhiro, “Goryō toshite no Ban Dainagon—*Konjaku*, emaki, *Uji shūi*,” *Bungaku* 10, no. 4 (October 2009): 150-168.

³⁴³ Komine Kazuaki, “Honō wo miru otoko,” 216-219. Matsuo Kenji has offered a slightly different interpretation. Matsuo believes that Yoshio is shown only twice in the handscroll, at the beginning of the illustration—when he rushes to the burning gate—and at the end—when he is transported into exile. Matsuo has argued that the contrast between the two scenes, one in which Yoshio leads the imperial police and the other in which he is led by them, serves as a framing device that echoes the text’s communication of his remorse. The majority of scholars working on the *Ban Dainagon emaki* believe that Tomo no Yoshio is represented elsewhere in the handscroll. See Appendix D.

³⁴⁴ Furthermore, it is not universally applied even in cases where apotheosis has already taken place. See Yamamoto Yōko, “*Kasuga Gongen genki e ni miru* ‘kami no kao wo egaku koto wo habakaru hyōgen,’” *Bijutsushi* 45, no. 2 (March 1996): 186-206.

³⁴⁵ Yamamoto Yōko, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu,” 43-44.

his death—is universally accepted by scholars who support the spirit pacification theory. Some circumstantial cultural and textual evidence supports this assertion. People who died outside of the capital’s boundaries, as Yoshio did, were thought to be particularly at risk to become vengeful spirits, and those who might conceivably have a grudge against the state—most notably those prosecuted for treason (whether fairly or unfairly)—were considered to be unable to escape such a fate.³⁴⁶ Moreover, a tale that appears in the early-twelfth-century collection *Konjaku monogatari shū* recounts how the spirit of Tomo no Yoshio one day manifested in front of a lowly cook to inform him that he (Yoshio) had become a pestilence deity. Yoshio tells the cook that he had used his power to commute a debilitating illness into a harmless cough.³⁴⁷ In the *Konjaku* tale, Yoshio’s spirit acknowledges his past crime against the emperor and expresses regret for his actions. This story has been taken as evidence that Yoshio had come to be perceived as a vengeful spirit by the time of the collection’s compilation and that it therefore makes sense that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* would be commissioned to pacify his spirit.³⁴⁸

While it seems clear that by the time of the 1177 fire Tomo no Yoshio had become classified as some kind of supernatural being, a benevolent pestilence deity is not necessarily a malevolent vengeful spirit, and Yoshio’s appearance in the *Konjaku monogatari* is not frightening. As a contrite pestilence deity with the power to both blight and bless, Yoshio constitutes a relatively mild threat. Moreover, his clear desire to be of use to the realm, indicated by his proactive decision to transmute a dangerous illness into a mild ailment out of penance for his past crimes, suggests a perception of him as an already pacified and therefore non-threatening

³⁴⁶ Kuroda Toshio, “The World of Spirit Pacification,” 321-351.

³⁴⁷ The story, the eleventh tale in the twenty-first chapter, is translated in Royall Tyler, *Japanese Tales* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 38.

³⁴⁸ Kondo, Komine, Goto, Matsuo, and Sotome all cite the *Konjaku monogatari* episode as evidence for the theory that the *Ban Dainagon emaki* was created for spirit pacification purposes.

force. Not only was he considered a pestilence deity; he seems also to have been considered a thoroughly domesticated one.

Assessments undertaken by Yamamoto Yōko and Yamamoto Satomi of the representation of representation of Tomo no Yoshio's family and associates in comparison of those of his rival, Minamoto no Makoto³⁴⁹ show that the portrayal of Tomo no Yoshio in the *Ban Dainagon emaki* is consistent with this perception. As Yamamoto Yōko and Satomi have noted, not just the people associated with Yoshio and Makoto, but the very objects in their homes indicate a far more sympathetic depiction of Makoto than of Yoshio,³⁵⁰ a factor that is at odds with the suggestion that the handscroll was produced to pacify the spirit of Tomo no Yoshio. Furthermore, while it seems highly likely that the 1177 fire would have served to bring Tomo no Yoshio and the Ōtenmon Incident of 866 to mind, no explicit mention of Yoshio is made in the historical records that document the 1177 fire or the events of the succeeding months. The *Hyakurenshō*, a Kamakura-period compilation of earlier documents, notes a performance of spirit pacification rituals in the seventh month of 1177, but these rituals were held for the thirteenth-year memorial for Emperor Sutoku—not for Tomo no Yoshio.³⁵¹ It therefore appears that an alternate explanation for the production of the *Ban Dainagon emaki* is required.

4.3.2 The Impact of Pure Land Buddhism on Late-Twelfth-Century Handscrolls

An alternate theory for the *Ban Dainagon emaki* is that it reflects the effect of teachings related to the philosophy of karmic retribution, a central premise of the newly evolved Pure Land

³⁴⁹ Discussed at length in Chapter Two.

³⁵⁰ Yamamoto Yōko, “*Ban Dainagon ekotoba* chinkon setsu,” 44-48; Yamamoto Satomi, 361-382. See also, Chapter Two of this dissertation.

³⁵¹ *Hyakurenshō*, vol. 11, SZKT, 95-96.

Buddhist sect (Jōdo shū). As Yamamoto Satomi has observed, the depiction of the household goods belonging to Tomo no Yoshio (see Appendix E, no. 2.10a) and Minamoto no Makoto (see Appendix E, no. 2.7a) convey a contrastive meaning about the two men. There are more (and more types of) objects in Yoshio's house than there are in Makoto's, and the deliberate difference in the quantity and luxuriousness of the objects function as iconographic hints at the Buddhist view.³⁵² Many of the objects found in Yoshio's home symbolize a person on the bad path that leads to karmic retribution and rebirth in realms of punishment, and they are often found in other Buddhist paintings from the same period.³⁵³ Most notably, the utensils for eating and drinking in Yoshio's home indicate a person who has failed to uphold the Buddhist law. The five Buddhist commandments are not to kill, steal, lust, lie, or drink alcohol. The belief that a failure to uphold these commandments resulted in reincarnation into a terrible life was widespread in late twelfth century Heian Japan, as can be seen from the contemporaneous production of *jigoku e* (hell paintings) (see Appendix E, no. 24).³⁵⁴

Moreover, in the thirteenth century, fire often symbolized the human realm in *rokudō e* (Six Realms paintings) (see Appendix E, no. 3.12). Thus, as Yamamoto Satomi has argued, the depiction of the fire at the Ōtenmon might have been meant to function as a similar metaphor. In that interpretation, the people frantically running to the Ōtenmon (see Appendix E, no. 2.1) (see Appendix E, no. 2.2)—in spite of the danger and the chaos—represent those ignorant of the way, while Fujiwara no Yoshifusa—who, as chancellor and advisor to Emperor Seiwa, cautions restraint in dealing with Minamoto no Makoto (see Appendix E, no. 2.5)—fulfills the role of a

³⁵² Yamamoto Satomi, 367-372.

³⁵³ These include the *Gaki zōshi* (The Scroll of Hungry Ghosts, twelfth century) (see Appendix E, no. 21) and various versions of the *Nigabyakudō zu* (see Appendix E, no. 4).

³⁵⁴ Yamamoto Satomi, 368-369.

Buddha guiding the ignorant toward the way of truth.³⁵⁵ The *Ban Dainagon emaki* thus reflects a profound spiritual and societal change. As a parable about an upstart who got his comeuppance at the hands of the rightful government, the handscroll continues to function as a tool of political agendas. However, the means by which the intersection of temporal and non-temporal power is negotiated is no longer one of spirit pacification, but rather one of Buddhist beliefs about the nature of karmic retribution.

Similar arguments have been suggested about the production of the Jōkyū version of the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, which famously replaces the traditional final third of the narrative with an extended exploration of Nichizō's trip to the underworld that evolves into a series of *rokudō e*.³⁵⁶ Recently, Kaminishi Ikumi has suggested that this earliest extant version of the handscroll represents a coopting of spirit pacification beliefs into a Buddhist framework that emphasizes the living, and their choices, rather than on the dead, and their choices. Within this framework, the vengeful Michizane is pitted against Buddhist heroes like Son'i and Nichizō who are able to negotiate his wrath by means of their spiritual authority, thereby controlling him and making his desires known to the mundane world.³⁵⁷ However, unlike in the *Ban Dainagon emaki* where the teachings of Buddhism seem to have eroded the elements of spirit pacification, in the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* those elements are presented in tandem with the Buddhist doctrinal framework. Thus, with the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki*, the negotiation of temporal and non-temporal power is shown in a transitional state—with spirit pacification practices and the magical abilities of Buddhist patriarchs being given equal practical weight—that reflects the late

³⁵⁵ Yamamoto Satomi, 378.

³⁵⁶ Shinbo Tōru and Keizō Kaneko, *Rokudō e* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1977); and Shinbo Tōru, *Emaki Kitano Tenjin engi, Nihon no bijutsu* 299 (Tokyo: Shinbundō, 1991).

³⁵⁷ Kaminishi Ikumi, "Taming Kitano Tenjin as Buddhist Skillful Means," *Death in Art* panel of 2012 AAS conference, March 2012. Paper provided by the author. See also "The Political Culture of a Scroll: Jien's Appropriation of Kitano Tenjin," *Ars Orientalis* 44 (2014): 111-133.

Heian period transitional state of spiritual practice that existed as the twelfth century gave way to the thirteenth.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Spirit pacification rituals were practiced by a diverse array of social classes during the Heian period, and they served multiple functions. When enacted by members of the commoner classes, they could imply a critique of the social order that privileged the Heian court's minority elite and signal the development of potentially disruptive outbreaks of public dissent and disorder. When undertaken by the nobility, however, they served to bolster the social and political hegemony of the ruling class through the control of ritual processes that symbolized a marriage of mundane and divine authority available only to a select few. Just as spirit pacification fulfilled a wide range of social, political, and spiritual objectives, the representation of spirit pacification practices in handscroll format did the same. Illustrated handscrolls depicting the lives and afterlives of vengeful spirits both reflected placatory rituals of the Heian period and reenacted those rituals through a visual performance whose currency was subsequently maintained through the reading, explaining, and copying of handscrolls that depicted pacifying acts. In this manner, “vengeful spirit” handscrolls of the late Heian and early Kamakura period accomplished a twin goal, carrying on the legacy of their long-dead heroes for future generations while ensuring that those legacies would remain peaceful.

5.0 EPILOGUE

From late-2014 to early-2015, the Shōtō Museum of Art in Shibuya, Tokyo, held an exhibition of artworks showcasing the many guises of Sugawara no Michizane. The exhibition featured illustrated handscrolls, portraits, Zen paintings, woodblock printed books, and *ukiyo e* prints produced from the Nambokuchō period (1334-1392) to the Meiji era.³⁵⁸ The exhibition was one of the many Tenjin-centric shows that have been staged in Japan—both at the national and regional level—since 2000.³⁵⁹ Along with the numerous Tenjin shrines that are today found throughout the country—and that are always busy during the week of college entrance exams in the spring—these exhibitions speak to the continuing legacy of Sugawara no Michizane’s life and afterlife. Following the end of the Heian period, sets of handscrolls illustrating the *Kitano Tenjin engi* were copied at an extraordinary rate. As many as thirty versions remain extant today—a number that suggests widespread copying during the medieval and early modern periods and stands as a testament to the story’s capacity to endure. Over time, the Michizane legend, and imagery associated with it, came to function didactically in *etoki* performances,³⁶⁰ as

³⁵⁸ *Tenjin mangekyō: Tokiwayama Bunko shozō Tenjin korekushon yori* (Tokyo: Shōtō Museum of Art, 2014).

³⁵⁹ These include *Sugawara no Michizane botsugo senhyakunen, Tenjin-sama no bijutsu* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum of Art, 2001); *Tenjin-sama: Tokiwayama Bunko meihinsen soritsu rokujisshūnen kinen* (Tokyo: Nezu Museum of Art, 2003); *Kokuhō Tenjin-sama: Sugawara no Michizane no jidai to Tenmangū no shihō* (Fukuoka: Kyushu National Museum, 2008); *Nihon saisho no Tenjin-sama: Matsuzaki Tenjin engi emaki nanahyakunen kinen* (Yamaguchi: Yamaguchi Prefecture Museum of Art, 2011).

³⁶⁰ For more on *etoki* and the use of illustrated handscrolls in the practice, see Barbara Ruch, “Medieval Jongleurs and the Making of a National Literature,” in *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, ed. John Hall et al. (Berkeley: University

a significant component in the legitimation of Zen teachings, and as an emblem of the superiority of Confucian ideals.³⁶¹ Michizane even went on to become the protagonist of a *bunraku* play that is still performed to this day³⁶²—another powerful example of how well Michizane’s posthumous legacy has stood the test of time, outliving all those would-be narrators who had once sought to use him and his story for their own purposes.

By contrast, the legacies of Abe no Nakamaro and Tomo no Yoshio fared less spectacularly. Missing from the historical record for nearly two centuries—between their creation in the late-twelfth century painting atelier of retired emperor Go-Shirakawa and their rediscovery at a Hachiman Shrine in Wakasa Province (present-day Fukui Prefecture) in the mid-fourteenth by Prince Sadafusa,³⁶³—the *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* and *Ban Dainagon emaki* consequently suffered relative obscurity during the medieval period, largely missing the copying and *etoki* booms of the Kamakura and Muromachi periods (1392-1573). Nevertheless, by the Edo period, the story of Kibi’s adventure in China with the tragic spirit of Abe no Nakamaro had returned to enough popularity to be converted into a kabuki play and reproduced in a variety of *ukiyo e* prints, which suggests that the stories of Nakamaro—and possibly Yoshio as well—continued to be passed on through the years until reemerging as popular entertainment fare in the early-modern period. Still, they did not enter the popular imagination in the manner of Michizane and do not possess his ubiquity in modern-day Japanese culture.

of California Press, 1977), 279-309; and Kaminishi Ikumi, *Explaining Pictures: Buddhist Propaganda and Etoki Storytelling in Japan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006).

³⁶¹ Borgen discusses the later evolutions of the worship of Michizane in *Sugawara no Michizane* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994), 325-336.

³⁶² *Sugawara denju tenarai kagami* (The Sugawara Secrets of Calligraphy). This play was written by Takeda Izumo, Namiki Senryū, Miyoshi Shōraku, and Takeda Koizumo. It was first performed in 1746 and most recently staged in 2014 at the National Bunraku Theater of Japan. See Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane*, 382.

³⁶³ The history of Prince Sadafusa’s life as a connoisseur and procurer of illustrated handscrolls is detailed in Karen L. Brock, “The Shogun’s ‘Painting Match,’” *Monumenta Nipponica* 50, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 433-484.

Part of Sugawara no Michizane's enduring appeal may stem from his inherent outsider status. The end of the Heian period marked the beginning of the court aristocracy's long slide into political impotence. In this climate of ever-shifting centers of cultural production, it makes sense that an oftentimes populist figure like Michizane, who had symbolized rebellion about as often as he symbolized conformity, would survive the medieval period with his fame intact. Abe no Nakamaro and Tomo no Yoshio, as emblems of traditional culture—one a devoted champion in exile, the other a reformed threat—were unlikely to resonate with the growing commoner populations of the castle-towns that developed during the Sengoku period (1467-1590) or the metropolises that grew out of the Tokugawa peace of the Edo period. Michizane's conflation with deities who formed the bedrock of the *honji suijaku* doctrine that dictated much of medieval religious practice was undoubtedly another factor in the continuance of his legacy.³⁶⁴ Nakamaro and Yoshio, as largely secular figures—despite the ways in which their narratives could be, and were, put in service to religious and spiritual practices and beliefs—would not have enjoyed the benefits of the proselytizing that helped to keep the Michizane story safely lodged in the Japanese consciousness for centuries.

Though the rich history of Sugawara no Michizane and Tenjin worship are more than enough for any study (or seven), the purpose of this dissertation was to explore a period in history when Michizane was merely one example out of several in the development and deployment of vengeful spirit beliefs. Chapter Two explored the mechanism of historical

³⁶⁴ The *honji suijaku* (lit. "true form manifested form") doctrine is the belief that Buddhist deities would appear in the form of native *kami* in order to better spread the truth of the Buddha's teachings. The legend of Michizane, which casts him as *kami* who was later cast as a manifestation of the bodhisattva Kannon, is an example of this belief system at work. Michele Marra discusses the *honji suijaku* phenomenon, touching on examples very similar to the Michizane case in his book *Representation of Power: The Literary Politics of Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 115-135. For an overview of the religious currents that led to the development of this doctrine, see Kuroda Toshio, "The Development of the *Kenmitsu* System as Japan's Medieval Orthodoxy," trans. James C. Dobbins, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3-4 (1996): 233-269.

reinvention, positing the ability of these scrolls to function at the social, political, and proto-national level by fostering dominant narratives about cultural heritage, imperial (dis)loyalty, and the soft power of aristocratic connections. Chapter Three expanded on the exploration of how social and political authority could be, and was, legitimated by capitalizing on connections not just between aristocratic factions but between the temporal and non-temporal realms. Chapter Four examined the ritual dynamics of these scrolls—both as objects that communicate specific spiritual concepts and as actions that enact ceremonial practices that reflect said concepts—thereby showing their multi-dimensional roles. The *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* was not merely a reflection of Sino-Japanese relations, nor was it merely a reenactment of placation on behalf of a long-lost statesman; the *Ban Dainagon emaki* was not just a morality tale about the dangers of undermining state authority, nor was it just an expression of developing religious doctrines; the *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* was not only a tool that could be used to maintain a socio-religious status quo, nor was it only a means for a politically-motivated court family to assert their authority. As this study has attempted to show, these handscrolls were all of these things and more.

In looking at these scrolls from a multivalent interpretative perspective, the malleability of these men's life stories—and their suitability to the task of generating propaganda—becomes clear. Today, the stories of Abe no Nakamaro, Tomo no Yoshio, Sugawara no Michizane, and other luminaries of early Japanese history are as ripe for a retelling as they were in the late-twelfth century. Through a diverse array of media—including historical television dramas, video games, and manga—to name but a few, contemporary Japanese citizens are in the process of making and remaking the stories of their ancient heroes, and these ancient tales are not the only narratives in danger of coopting. An oft-quoted idiomatic expression holds that history is written

by the victors, but what the stories of Abe no Nakamaro, Tomo no Yoshio, and Sugawara no Michizane teach us is that in the long march of time there are no victors. In the end, we all of us lose control of our narratives, ceding the right of history-making to the successive generations who will shape the contours of our stories to fit the dimensions of their realities. The Japanese people have been shaping the contours of these histories for centuries, and they will likely continue for centuries more.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Notes:

- Imperial titles—like emperor (*tennō*), empress (*kisaki*), prince (*shinnō*), and princess (*naishinnō*)—though not included in the text are included here to distinguish imperial figures from aristocrats and commoners.
- Primary sources, including illustrated handscrolls, are listed in the Bibliography.

Abe	阿倍 / 安倍
——no Ariyuki	有行 (unknown, ca. 11th century)
——no Nakamaro	仲麻呂 (698-770)
——no Seimei	晴明 (921-1005)
——no Tokichika	時親 (unknown, ca. 11th century)
——no Yasuchika	泰親 (1110-1183)
——no Yasunaga	泰長 (unknown, ca. 11th century)
——no Yoshihira	吉平 (954-1026)
——no Yoshimasa	吉昌 (955-1019)
<i>Abe no Nakamaro no uta wo yomu koto</i>	阿倍仲麻呂歌を読む事
<i>akō</i>	阿衡
<i>Akō mondai</i>	阿衡問題
Anrakuji	安樂時
Ariwara no Narihira	在原業平 (825-880)
Awaji Province	淡路国
Ayae Jizai Tendai	文江自在天神
<i>bakufu</i>	幕府
bianwen	變文
Bizen Province	備前国
<i>biwa hōshi</i>	琵琶法師

<i>bunshō hakase</i>	文章博士
Bunya no Miyatamaro	文室宮田麻呂 (d. 843?)
<i>Chigo</i>	稚児
Chigo Daishi	稚児大師
<i>chōdō-in</i>	朝堂院
Chūjōhime	中将姫 (legendary)
<i>daidairi</i>	大内裏
Daigakuryō	大学寮
Daigo tennō	醍醐天皇 (885-930; r. 897-930)
<i>daigokuden</i>	大極殿
<i>daijō daijin</i>	太政大臣
<i>daijōkan</i>	太政官
<i>dainagon</i>	大納言
<i>dairi</i>	内裏
<i>dōji</i>	童子
Dunhuang	敦煌
<i>E Ingyō</i>	繪因果經
Edo Period	江戸時代 (1615-1868)
<i>ekijin</i>	疫神
Emma-Ō	閻魔王
Enryakuji	延暦寺
Enyū tennō	円融天皇 (959-991; r. 969-984)
<i>etoki</i>	絵解き
Fujiwara	藤原
——no Akihira	明衡 (989-1066)
——no Akiko	詮子 (962-1002)
——no Akirako	明子 (Somedono no kisaki 染殿后, 829-900)
——no Fuyutsugu	冬嗣 (775-826)
——no Kanefusa	兼房 (1153-1217)
——no Kaneie	兼家 (929-990)
——no Kiyotsura	清貫 (867-930)
——no Michinaga	道長 (966-1028)
——no Michinori	道憲 (Shinzei 信西, 1106-1160)
——no Michitaka	道隆 (953-995)
——no Moromitsu	師光 (d. 1177)
——no Morosuke	師輔 (908-960)
——no Motofusa	基房 (1144-1231)
——no Mototsune	基経 (836-891)

——no Munetada	宗忠 (1062-1141)
——no Nakahira	仲平 (875-945)
——no Nakanari	仲成 (764-810)
——no Narichika	成親 (1138-1177)
——no Naritsune	成経 (1156?-1202)
——no Nobuko	順子 (809-971)
——no Sanesuke	実資 (957-1046)
——no Tadahira	忠平 (880-949)
——no Tadamichi	忠通 (1097-1164)
——no Tadazane	忠実 (1078-1162)
——no Tanetsugu	種継 (d. 785)
——no Tokihira	時平 (871-909)
——no Umakai	宇合 (694-737)
——no Yasuko	穩子 (885-954)
——no Yoshifusa	良房 (804-872)
——no Yoshiko	吉子 (d. 807)
——no Yoshimi	良相 (813-867)
<i>fukinuki yatai</i>	吹抜屋台
Fushimi-no-miya Sadafusa	伏見宮貞成親王 (1372-1456)
<i>Fusuma</i>	襖
<i>ge'i</i>	外位
<i>Genji monogatari</i>	源氏物語
Genjō	玄象
Gion	祇園
<i>go</i>	碁
<i>gohei</i>	御幣
<i>gohō dōji</i>	御法童子
<i>goryō</i>	御霊
<i>goryō e</i>	御霊会
Go-Shirakawa tennō	後白河天皇 (1127-1192; r. 1155-1158)
<i>gui</i>	鬼
<i>guishen</i>	鬼神
<i>Gunsho ruijū</i>	群書類従
Haji no Furuhito	土師古人 (d. 785?)
<i>hashitame</i>	端女
<i>hasho goryō</i>	八所御霊
Heian-kyō	平安京
Heian Period	平安時代 (794-1185)

Heijō-kyō	平城京
<i>Heike monogatari</i>	平家物語
Heizei tennō	平城天皇 (773-824; r. 806-809)
<i>Hibutsu</i>	秘仏
<i>Hikohohodemi no Mikoto emaki</i>	彦火々出見尊絵巻
Hitachi Province	常陸国
<i>hokke</i>	北家
<i>honji suiaku</i>	本地垂迹
<i>hyakki yagyō</i>	百鬼夜行
Hyōbushō	兵部省
Ichijō tennō	一条天皇 (980-1011; r. 986-1011)
<i>iji dōzu</i>	異時同図
Inoue naishinnō	井上内親王 (717-775)
<i>insei</i>	院政
Iyo Province	伊国
Iyo shinnō	伊予親王 (d. 807)
Izumo Province	出雲国
<i>Izumo no kuni fudoki</i>	出雲国風土記
Jibushō	治部省
Jien	慈円
<i>jigoku e</i>	地獄絵
<i>Jigoku zōshi</i>	地獄草子
Jishō Era	治承 (1177-1180)
Jōdo shū	浄土宗
Jōkyū Era	承久 (1219-1221)
<i>josen</i>	女賤
<i>Jōwa no hen</i>	承和の変
Jōzō	浄蔵
<i>Jūkaizu</i>	十界図
Junna tennō	淳和天皇 (785-840; r. 823-833)
Kakukai hosshinnō	覺快法親王 (1134-1181)
Kamakura Period	鎌倉時代 (1185-1333)
<i>kami</i>	神
Kami Goryō Shrine	上御霊神社
Kamo	賀茂
——no Kibimaro	吉備麻呂 (unknown, ca. eighth century)
——no Mitsuyoshi	光榮 (939-1015)
——no Tadayuki	忠行 (d. 960)

——no Yasunori	保憲 (919-977)
Kanmu tennō	桓武天皇 (737-806; r. 781-806)
Kannon	觀音
<i>kanpaku</i>	関白
<i>kansatsushi</i>	觀察使
<i>kappa</i>	河童
Kasuga	春日
Katsushika Hokusai	葛飾北斎 (1760-1849)
Kawara-no-in	河原院
<i>Kengukyō</i>	賢愚經
Kenkyū Era	建久 (1190-1198)
<i>kimon</i>	鬼門
Ki no Tsurayuki	紀貫之 (872-945)
<i>Kibi nittō no kan no koto</i>	吉備入唐の間の事
Kibi no Makibi	吉備真備 (695-775)
<i>Kin'u gyokuto wakoku no irifune</i>	金烏玉兔倭国入船
Kitano Shrine	北野天満宮
<i>kitsune</i>	狐
Kōen	皇円 (d. 1196)
<i>Kojiki</i>	古事記
<i>Kojidan</i>	古事談
<i>Kokinshū</i>	古今集
Kōkō tennō	光孝天皇 (830-887; r. 884-887)
Kōnin tennō	光仁天皇 (709-782; r. 770-781)
Konoe	近衛
——Iezane	家実 (1179-1243)
——Motomichi	基通 (1160-1233)
——Motozane	基実 (1143-1166)
<i>kōtaigō</i>	皇太后
<i>kōtaishi</i>	皇太子
Kujō	九条
——Kanezane	兼実 (1149-1207)
——Michiie	道家 (1193-1252)
——Yoritsugu	頼嗣 (1239-1256)
——Yoritsune	頼経 (1218-1256)
——Yoshimichi	良通 (1239-1256)
——Yoshitsune	良経 (1169-1206)
Kūkai	空海 (Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師, 774-835)
<i>Kusuko no hen</i>	薬子の变
Li Bai	李白 (701-762)

<i>Man'yōshū</i>	万葉集
Mara	魔羅
Meiji Period	明治時代 (1868-1912)
<i>miko</i>	巫女
Minamoto	源
——no Akikane	顯兼 (1160-1215)
——no Hikaru	光 (845-913)
——no Hiromasa	縛雅 (918-980)
——no Makoto	信 (810-868)
——no Sanetomo	実朝 (1192-1219)
——no Takakuni	忠国 (1004-1077)
——no Tōru	融 (822-895)
——no Yukitsuna	行綱 (unknown, ca. twelfth century)
——no Yoritomo	頼朝 (1147-1199)
Minbushō	民武将
Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki	三善清行 (847-918)
Momoyama Period	桃山時代 (1573-1615)
Monjū	文殊
<i>mono</i>	物
<i>mononoke</i>	物の怪
Montoku tennō	文徳天皇 (Michiyasu shinnō 道康親王, 826-858; r. 850-858)
Murakami tennō	村上天皇 (924-967; r. 946-967)
Muromachi Period	室町時代 (1392-1573)
Nagaoka-kyō	長岡京
<i>naidaijin</i>	内大臣
Nakatsukasashō	中務省
Nambokuchō Period	南北朝時代 (1333-1392)
<i>nanke</i>	南家
<i>negi Tajih</i>	禰宜多治比
<i>Nehankyō</i>	涅槃經
<i>nenjū gyōji</i>	年中行事
Nichizō	日藏 (Dōken 道賢, 905-985)
Nimmyō tennō	仁明天皇 (808-858; r. 823-833)
<i>Nihon ryōiki</i>	日本靈異記
<i>Nihon shoki</i>	日本書紀
Ōe	大江
——no Koretoki	維時 (886-963)
——no Masafusa	匡房 (1041-1111)
<i>Ōkagami</i>	大鏡

<i>oni</i>	鬼
<i>onmyō</i>	陰陽
Onmyōdō	陰陽道
<i>onryō</i>	怨靈
Osabe shinnō	他戸親王 (761?-775)
Ōtenmon	応天門
<i>raijin</i>	雷神
<i>rekijutsu</i>	曆術
<i>Rikkokushi</i>	六国史
<i>ritsuryō</i>	律令
<i>rokudō e</i>	六道絵
<i>rokusho goryō</i>	六所御靈
<i>sadaijin</i>	左大臣
Saga tennō	嵯峨天皇 (785-842; r. 806-809)
Saichin	最鎮
Sanuki no kuni	讃岐国
Sawara shinnō	早良親王 (Sudō tennō 崇道天皇, d. 785)
<i>sei naru kodomo</i>	聖なる子供
Seiwa tennō	清和天皇 (850-878; r. 858-876)
<i>Sekkanke</i>	摂関家
<i>senjō</i>	賤女
<i>sesshō</i>	摂政
<i>setsuwa</i>	説話
<i>shichijō</i>	七条
<i>shidara</i>	志多良
<i>Shigisan engi emaki</i>	信貴山縁起絵巻
<i>shikibu kyō</i>	式部卿
<i>shikike</i>	式家
Shinsen'en	神泉苑
<i>Shishigatani no inbō</i>	鹿ヶ谷の陰謀
<i>shitennō</i>	四天王
<i>shogun</i>	将軍
<i>Shoke ōkezu</i>	諸家大系図
Shōmu tennō	聖武天皇 (701-756; r. 724-749)
Shōtoku taishi	聖徳太子 (573-621)
<i>Shūi ōjōden</i>	拾遺往生伝
Shunkan	俊寛 (1143-1179)
Son'i	尊意 (866-940)
<i>Sonpi bunmyaku</i>	尊卑文脈

Sonshō Butchō	尊勝仏頂
<i>Sonshō dhārāni</i>	尊勝陀羅尼
Sugawara	菅原
——no Atsumochi	淳茂 (d. 926)
——no Kiyokimi	清公 (770-842)
——no Koreyoshi	是善 (812-880)
——no Michizane	道真 (845-903)
——no Takami	高視 (876-913)
<i>sugoroku</i>	双六
Sutoku tennō	崇徳天皇 (1119-1164; r. 1126-1142)
Suzaku tennō	朱雀天皇 (922-952; r. 930-946)
Suzakumon	朱雀門
Tachibana no Hayanari	橘逸勢
<i>Taima mandara engi emaki</i>	大摩曼荼羅縁起絵巻
Taira	平
——no Masakado	将門 (d. 940)
——no Kiyomori	清盛 (1118-1181)
Taishakuten	帝釈天
Tajihi no Ayako	多治比文子 (unknown, ca. tenth century)
<i>Tamamushi no zushi</i>	玉虫厨子
Taromaru	太郎丸 (legendary)
Tendai shū	天台宗
<i>tengu</i>	天狗
Tenman Daijizai Tenjin	天満大自在天神
<i>tenmon no jutsu</i>	天文術
Toba tennō	鳥羽天皇 (1103-1156; r. 1107-1123)
Tōin Kinsada	洞院公定 (unknown, ca. fourteenth century)
Tokugawa Ieyasu	徳川家康 (1543-1616)
Tomo no Yoshio	伴善男 (811-866)
<i>tō no chūjō</i>	頭中将
<i>Tosa nikki</i>	土佐日記
<i>tsukumogami</i>	付喪神
Tsukioka Yoshitoshi	月岡義人氏 (1839-1892)
Uda tennō	宇多天皇 (867-931; r. 887-897)
<i>udaijin</i>	右大臣
<i>Uji shūi monogatari</i>	宇治周圀物語
<i>ukiyo e</i>	浮世手
Ukon no baba	右近馬場
<i>ushitora</i>	丑寅

<i>wakamiya</i>	若宮
<i>Wamyō ruijushō</i>	和名類聚抄
Wang Wei	王維 (699-759)
<i>Wenxuan</i>	文選
<i>xiagui</i>	下鬼
<i>yaba taishi</i>	野馬台詩
Yamashiro Province	山城国
Yamato	大和
<i>Yangwengong tanyuan</i>	楊文公談苑
Yang Yi	楊億 (940-1020)
<i>yōkai</i>	妖怪
Yoshishige no Yasutane	慶滋保胤 (933-1002)
Yoshitane	良種 (legendary)
Yōzei tennō	陽成天皇 (869-949; r. 876-884)

APPENDIX B

HEIAN PERIOD COURT RANKS AND PRIVILEGES

Table 1. Heian Period Court Ranks and Privileges

Regular Rank	Privileges
Senior First Rank	True aristocrat (<i>ki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior First Rank	True aristocrat (<i>ki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Second Rank	True aristocrat (<i>ki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior Second Rank	True aristocrat (<i>ki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Third Rank	True aristocrat (<i>ki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior Third Rank	True aristocrat (<i>ki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Upper Fourth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Lower Fourth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior Upper Fourth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior Lower Fourth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Upper Fifth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Lower Fifth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior Upper Fifth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Junior Lower Fifth Rank	Lesser aristocrat (<i>tsūki</i>)—hereditary rank conveyed on sons
Senior Upper Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Senior Lower Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Junior Upper Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Junior Lower Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Senior Upper Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Senior Lower Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Junior Upper Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Junior Lower Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed

Senior Upper Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Senior Lower Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Junior Upper Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Junior Lower Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Senior Upper Initial Rank	Lower official—not necessarily distinguished from menials
Senior Lower Initial Rank	Lower official—not necessarily distinguished from menials
Junior Upper Initial Rank	Lower official—not necessarily distinguished from menials
Junior Lower Initial Rank	Lower official—not necessarily distinguished from menials
Menials	

Outer Rank (Created in 728)	Privileges
Outer Senior Upper Fifth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Lower Fifth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Upper Fifth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Lower Fifth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Upper Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Lower Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Upper Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Lower Sixth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Upper Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Lower Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Upper Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Lower Seventh Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Upper Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Lower Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Upper Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Junior Lower Eighth Rank	Lower official—hereditary rank not conveyed
Outer Senior Upper Initial Rank	Lower official —not necessarily distinguished from menials
Outer Senior Lower Initial Rank	Lower official —not necessarily distinguished from menials
Outer Junior Upper Initial Rank	Lower official —not necessarily distinguished from menials
Outer Junior Lower Initial Rank	Lower official —not necessarily distinguished from menials
Menials	

APPENDIX C

THE NORTHERN FUJIWARA CLAN AND IMPERIAL FAMILY, 8TH-11TH CENTURIES

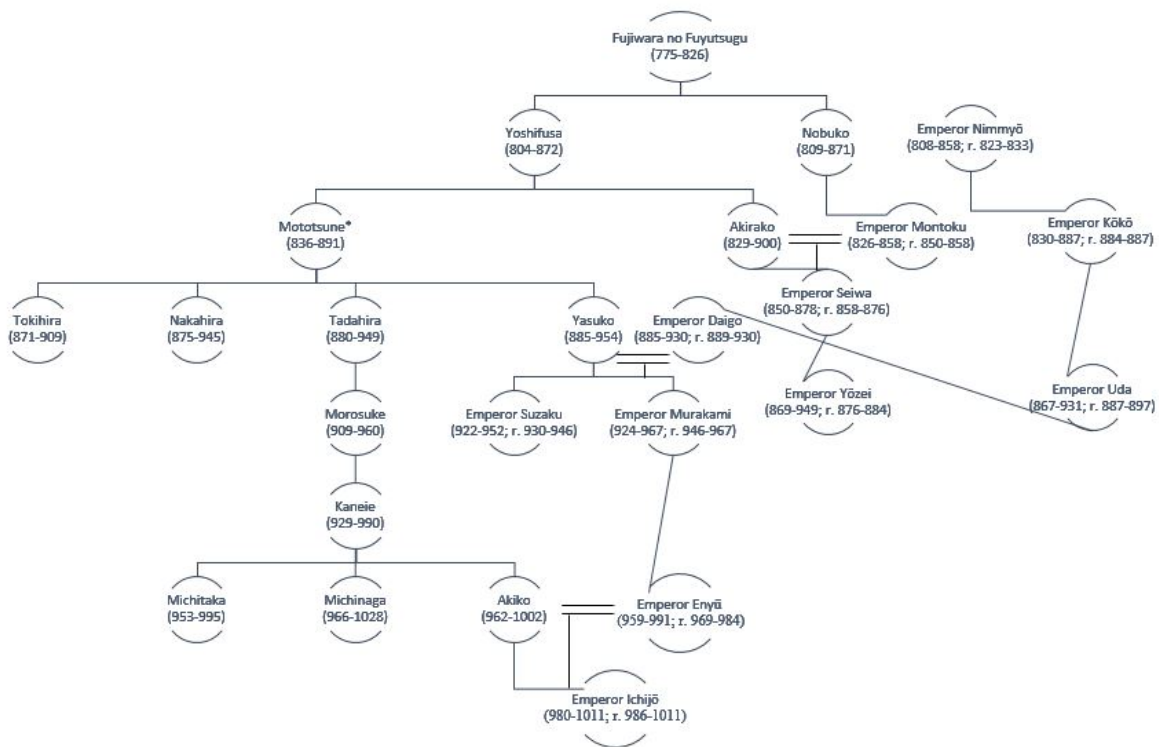
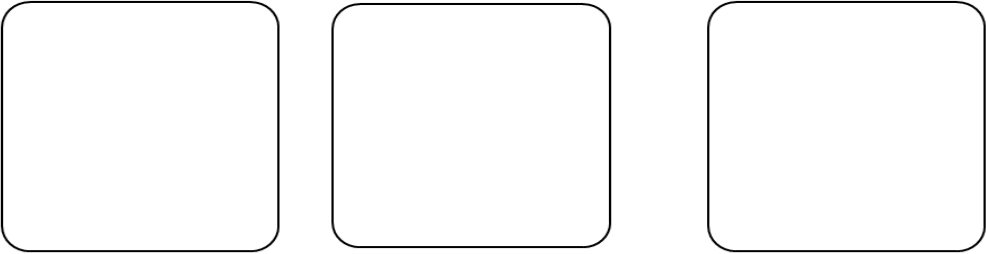


Figure 3. The Northern Fujiwara Clan and Imperial Family, 8th-11th Centuries

APPENDIX D

THE “MYSTERY CHARACTER” OF THE *BAN DAINAGON EMAKI*

Table 2. Hypotheses Regarding the “Mystery Character” of the *Ban Dainagon Emaki*

		
Scholar	Character A Hypothesis	Character B Hypothesis
Tanaka Toyozō Suzuki Keizō Komine Kazuaki	Fujiwara no Mototsune	Fujiwara no Mototsune
Fukui Rikichirō Gomi Fumihiko	Tomo no Yoshio	Tomo no Yoshio
Sakurai Seika Komatsu Shigemi Fujita Tsuneo Matsuo Kenji	Minamoto no Makoto	Minamoto no Makoto
Ueno Kenji Yamane Yuzō	Tomo no Yoshio	unspecified middle captain
Kuroda Taizō	Tomo no Yoshio	Fujiwara no Yoshimi
Takemura Shinji	Yoshio/Yoshimi	Fujiwara no Mototsune

APPENDIX E

LIST OF IMAGES

- No. 1** *Kibi Daijin nittō emaki* (Illustrated Adventures of Minister Kibi in China), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 12th century, Boston Museum of Fine Arts
- No. 2** *Ban Dainagon emaki* (Illustrated Tale of Major Counselor Tomo), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 12th century, Idemitsu Museum of Arts
- No. 3** *Kitano Tenjin engi emaki* (Illustrated Legends of the Kitano Tenjin Shrine), handscroll, ink and color on paper
- Jōkyū Version, early-13th century, Kitano Tenjin Shrine, Kyoto
 - Met Version, late-13th century, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
 - Tsuda Version, ca. 1298, Tsuda Tenman Shrine
 - Egara Shrine Version, ca. 1319, Maeda Ikutokutai Foundation, Tokyo
 - Mitsunobu Version, ca. 1503, Kitano Tenmangū, Kyoto
 - Ōta Version, 17th century, Ōta Shrine, Toyama
- No. 4** *Nigabyakudō zu* (Painting of the White Road Between Two Rivers) (detail), hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 13th century, Kosetsu Museum of Arts
- No. 5** *Thousand-Armed Kannon and Attendants*, gilt wooden sculpture and painted shrine, 14th century, Tōdaiji, Nara
- No. 6** *Raijin*, wood sculpture, mid-13th century, Sanjūsangendō, Kyoto
- No. 7** *Besson zakki* (Miscellaneous Record of Classified Sacred Names) (detail), handscroll, ink on paper, ca. 1171-1175, Kyoto National Museum

- No. 8** “The Subjugation of Demons,” drawing by Wu Hung, Cave 335, Dunhuang, ca. 686
- No. 9** “The Subjugation of Demons,” west wall of Cave 146, Dunhuang, 9th century
- No. 10** “The Debate Between Vimilakīrti and Mañjuśrī,” east wall of Cave 146, Dunhuang, 9th century
- No. 11** *The Subjugation of Demons* (detail), drawing by Wu Hung, handscroll, middle-to-late Tang Dynasty (618-907), Collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
- No. 12** “The Subjugation of Demons,” drawing by Wu Hung, Cave 9, Dunhuang, late Tang Dynasty (619-907)
- No. 13** “The Sacrifice for Knowledge,” *Tamamushi no zushi*, color on lacquer, mid-7th century, Hōryūji, Ikaruga, Nara Prefecture
- No. 14** *Jigoku zōshi* (Illustrated Scroll of Hell) (detail), handscroll, ink and color on paper, late-12th century, Nara National Museum
- No. 15** *Haseo kyō zōshi* (Illustrated Tale of Lord Haseo) (detail), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 14th century, Eisei Bunko Museum, Tokyo
- No. 16** *Bukigun emaki* (Illustrated Battle of the Buddha and Demons) (detail), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 16th century, Jūnenji, Kyoto
- No. 17** *Shigisan engi emaki* (Illustrated Legends of Mount Shigi) (detail), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 12th century, Shigisan Chōgonsonchiji, Nara
- No. 18** *Kōbō Daishi gyōjō emaki* (Illustrated Events in the Life of Kōbō Daishi) (detail), handscroll, ink and color on paper, late-13th/early-14th century, Honolulu Academy of Arts
- No. 19** *Chigo Daishi*, hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 15th century, Art Institute of Chicago
- No. 20** *Taima mandara engi emaki* (Illustrated Legend of the Taima Mandala) (detail), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 13th century, Kōmōji, Kamakura

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