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# A TRANSMISSION AND ITS TRANSFORMATION: THE *LIQUJING SHIBAHUI MANTULUO* IN DAIGOJI

## INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a study of an iconographic type of mandala called the *Liqujing shibahui mantuluo* 理趣經十八會曼荼羅 (Mandalas of the Eighteen Assemblies of the Guiding Principle Scripture).<sup>1</sup> They were originally prescribed by the Tang Dynasty master (*ācārya*) Amoghavajra 不空 (705–774) in his *Liqushi* (Explanation on the Guiding Principle Scripture).<sup>2</sup> Amoghavajra recorded the *Liqujing* in his list of newly translated materials and compositions that he submitted to the Tang Dynasty emperor in 771 for inclusion in the Imperial canon. He also listed in this memorial the *Liqushi*, as well as a second commentary on the scripture's opening section, the *Shiqisheng damantuluo yishu* (Explanation of the Great Mandala of the Seventeen Holy Ones), and four ritual handbooks for the practice of the scripture's teachings.<sup>3</sup>

The *Liqushi* elucidates each line of the scripture, explaining terminology and teachings, and it provides instructions, albeit most often very briefly, for mandala-making, visualization practices and ritual performances. The iconography of the existing mandalas, which do not survive in China but are found today only in the Japanese Shingon school, differ markedly from Amoghavajra's directives. The transmission of these mandalas from India to China, and from China to Japan and the ways in which the iconography evolved and changed have not been fully documented. The iconographic type of the *Liqujing shibahui mantuluo* deserves study because of its special position in the doctrinal and ritual traditions of Chinese and Japanese Esoteric Buddhism, but until now it has not been systematically investigated by East Asian or Western scholars.

An essential ritual act in Esoteric Buddhism is the practitioner's invocation of deities and merger with them (Skt. *ahamkāra*). Mandalas, whether actual or visualized constructions, are required elements, serving as a mental support or chart for these often complex practices. In this merger, the practitioner seeks union with the deities enshrined in the mandala by correlating his body, speech and mind with those of the deities. The result of this self-transformation is the practitioner's incorporation of the extraordinary insights, qualities and powers of the deities within himself. This process of union, which involves precise hand gestures 印 (Skt. *mudrā*), recitation of sound sequences 眞言 (Skt. *mantra*) and meditative concentrations 三摩地 (Skt. *samādhi*), termed the three mysteries 三密 (Skt. *triguhya*) of body, speech and mind, requires guidance, that is, special instructions 儀軌 (Skt. *kalpa, vidhi*) that deal specifically with the practical aspects that fix the performance of the rite and the creation of the mandalas and so ensure the promised spiritual and material attainments 悉地 (Skt. *siddhi*).

The teaching of the *Liqujing* is the affirmation of passions 煩惱 (Skt. *kleśa*), which are regarded as the materials of enlightenment. Enlightenment is understood as a realm of great bliss 大樂 (Skt. *mahāsukha*) whose entry does not require strenuous practices made over eons of rebirths but can be accessed instantaneously by means of yogic practices.<sup>4</sup> The scripture presents its teachings in sets of doctrinal propositions in each of its sections. In his *Liqushi*, Amoghavajra assigns specific deities to these doctrinal propositions, and installs them in mandalas in a particular order. Further, he explicates in this commentary the practice of mandala and the practitioner's

union 瑜伽 (Skt. *yoga*) with the mandala's deities by means of the four wisdom seals 四智印 (Skt. *catur-jñāna-mudrā*), a development of the three mysteries of body, speech and mind,<sup>5</sup> the fundamentals of Esoteric Buddhist practice mentioned above.

While Amoghavajra's instructions in the *Liqushi* for the mandalas and their ritual employment are not given in detail, they are precise. There are distinct correspondences between the deities and their iconography and the doctrinal propositions that they represent. Further, Amoghavajra situates his translation of the *Liqujing*, *Liqushi* and its mandalas within a system of scriptures and ritual practices that he called the "Yoga of the Adamantine Crown" 金剛頂瑜伽.<sup>6</sup> He championed this system throughout his religious career in China because it asserted a new, radical doctrine of immediate enlightenment in this lifetime.<sup>7</sup> The Japanese monk Kūkai 空海 (774–835), revered by the Shingon school as its founder, also taught that this scripture and its ritual and mandalic practices were fundamental for the practice of "becoming a buddha in this very body" 即身成佛.<sup>8</sup> His use of the *Liqujing* and its related materials to develop his own hermeneutics of the esoteric doctrine and praxis resulted in this scripture and commentary becoming canonical works in the post-Kūkai Shingon school.<sup>9</sup>

In this study, I will focus on the inception of the tradition of the iconographic type of the *Liqujing shibahui mantuluo* in China and Japan, and, more in particular, on one example of a transmission and its transformation. In Japan, this is the type represented by a thirteenth-century (1228) copy of a Tang Dynasty set of images that the early Heian pilgrim-monk Shūei 宗叡 (809–884) is said to have brought back from his journey to China (862–865).<sup>10</sup> This set is in the possession of Daigo Temple 醍醐寺 in Kyoto. The established claim of the Shingon school is that the set of mandalas introduced by Shūei (hereafter, the Daigoji exemplar) is based upon Amoghavajra's *Liqushi*. Divergences from Amoghavajra's directives in his *Liqushi* resulted, however, in a qualitatively different iconographic interpretation, which is apparent in the Daigoji exemplar.

## STATE OF THE FIELD: ESOTERIC BUDDHISM IN EIGHTH- AND NINTH-CENTURY CHINA AND JAPAN

My study of the *Liqujing* and its associated ritual and iconographic materials addresses crucial topics in the field of Esoteric Buddhism in China and Japan, in particular its history, ritual traditions and icons. I have, in researching the significance of the teachings and practices expounded in the *Liqujing* materials and depicted in its mandalas, explored problems in the received view of the transmissions of certain of the Chinese Esoteric Buddhist masters active in the mid and late Tang Dynasty (618–907) and the understanding of these transmissions in the context of Esoteric Buddhism in Heian Japan (794–1185) and later.

### The Received View of Chinese Esoteric Buddhism

The study of Chinese Esoteric Buddhism of the eighth and ninth centuries has been dominated by the interpretations and assumptions of Japanese scholars of Shingon Buddhism, both past and present, who have tended to view Chinese Esoteric Buddhism through their own sectarian lens.<sup>11</sup> Such scholars have claimed Amoghavajra as the founder of an Esoteric Buddhist system that defines the Japanese Shingon school to this day. This is because, they say, he translated and authored scriptures and ritual manuals wherein the practices and iconographies of the independent

Indian traditions of the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* (Compendium of the Truth of All the Tathāgatas) and the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra* (Scripture of the Perfect Enlightenment of Vairocana) have been amalgamated into an interrelated system.<sup>12</sup> One problem I have reconsidered is the Shingon scholars' definition of the components of Amoghavajra's transmission and their interpretation of the *Liqujing*'s teachings within his transmission. I have analyzed the *Liqujing*, *Liquishi* and the ritual manuals related to these works, as well as a number of other ritual manuals that Shingon scholars claim to represent this interrelated esoteric system, and I have arrived at a different conclusion, a proposition which I develop and put forth in this dissertation (Appendix B, An Examination of Shingon Scholars' Method of Critical Analysis of Amoghavajra's Transmission).

### A Reconstruction of Amoghavajra's Transmission

The sectarian agenda of the post-Kūkai Shingon school and of contemporary Japanese Buddhist scholars and art historians present an image of Amoghavajra's transmission that agrees with their own understanding of Esoteric Buddhism in China as described above.<sup>13</sup> My research therefore also required a reconstruction of Amoghavajra's transmission. This reconstruction I undertook by the examination of four sources. These were: (a) Amoghavajra's translations and such compositions as commentaries and ritual manuals concerning the *Liqujing* and its reference system, the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* (his translation, the *Jingangding yuqie zhenshi dajiaowang jing* 金剛頂瑜伽真實大教王經) that he listed in a memorial to the Chinese emperor in 771; (b) his own writings which consist of memorials that he wrote to three Chinese emperors and Chinese officials upon return from his journey to India in 746 until his death in 774, as well as his last testament; (c) visual materials that are based on his doctrinal concerns;<sup>14</sup> and (d) Amoghavajra's transmission as recorded by his immediate disciples.

In this way, I address and expand upon the findings of earlier scholars in Chapter Four of this study. For instance, Charles Orzech's work on Chinese Esoteric Buddhism, and on Amoghavajra's transmission in particular, as well as Robert Sharf's essay "On Esoteric Buddhism in China" in his *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise* were instrumental in helping me define my questions about and investigation of Amoghavajra's transmission and his place in the Chinese religious landscape of the eighth century.<sup>15</sup>

I offer further substantiation of Orzech's conclusion that "Amoghavajra privileged the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*," the scripture that Amoghavajra regarded as the First Assembly in the system of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown. I also address Sharf's controversial statement (op. cit., p. 277–278) that "there is little evidence that the South Asian Buddhist masters who made their way to China regarded their teachings as constituting a conceptual break with prevailing forms of Buddhist doctrine or ritual, or that they had any intentions of founding a new sect." My research objectives are to show that, while Amoghavajra and his master Vajrabodhi did not found a new school, the documents I examined, many of which overlap with those that Orzech consulted, attest Amoghavajra's awareness of practicing and propagating a new and distinct form of Buddhism.<sup>16</sup>

Another problem in Japanese Buddhist scholarship has been to identify Amoghavajra's references in the *Liquishi* to "extended" works, that is, to an "extended yoga scripture" 廣瑜伽經, an "extended yoga" 廣瑜伽, and an "extended scripture" 廣經, for example. Scholars have

debated whether the citations indicate a single extended text, or a number of different works, and whether these extended works belong to the textual lineage of the *Liqujing* or that of the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*.<sup>17</sup> In this study I endeavor to place Amoghavajra's transmission into a broader context that includes the works of Indian masters who were active from the second half of the eighth century onwards, as well as the translations of Indian materials in the Chinese canon that date to the Northern Song (960–1127) and in Tibetan canons that date after the ninth century. This is because the contents of certain texts in the Chinese and Tibetan canons corroborate Amoghavajra's brief descriptions of the contents of a number of the assemblies of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown in his *Jingangding yuqie shibahui zhigui* 金剛頂瑜伽十八會指歸 (Guide to the Eighteen Assemblies of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown), an outline of an Indian Esoteric Buddhist yoga system consisting of the latest of mandala, mantra and ritual technology that he also listed in his 771 memorial to the Chinese emperor. Significantly, similar contents and iconography appear in his *Liqushi*, *Shiqisheng damantuluo yishu* and their associated ritual manuals.<sup>18</sup> Clearly, this evidence indicates that Amoghavajra's *Jingangding yuqie shibahui zhigui*, based upon materials circulating in written or oral form during the time of his sojourn in India from 741–746, was not fabricated. Rather, this work serves as an important source when reconsidering the Esoteric Buddhist teachings of his time in China, as I demonstrate in this study.

### A Reevaluation of Ninth-Century Chinese Esoteric Buddhism

Additionally, I have explored ninth-century Chinese Esoteric Buddhism, a topic that has received little attention to date. The received account among Japanese Buddhist scholars has been that after Amoghavajra and his disciple Huiguo 惠果 (746–805), Esoteric Buddhism in China became stagnant and declined. The studies of Misaki Ryōshū 三崎良周, Charles Orzech and Jinhua Chen, for example, signal the importance of an investigation of Esoteric Buddhism after Amoghavajra.<sup>19</sup>

I chart the origins of a new system of Esoteric Buddhist teachings in Tang China of the ninth century, documenting how the Chinese master Faquan 法全 formulated the contents of this system,<sup>20</sup> an articulation of the Esoteric Buddhist teachings that differed markedly from the descriptions of late eighth-century Esoteric Buddhism. The latter, that is the system developed by Amoghavajra's immediate disciples, continued to be transmitted as a parallel system in the ninth century. For evidence of the practices in the system that Faquan transmitted, however, we must investigate certain ritual lineages of the Shingon school, as well as the Japanese Tendai school and its incorporation of this new esoteric system into its *Lotus scripture*-based doctrine. While I take note of this evidence in Japan, I do not develop an in-depth analysis of this topic, which is beyond the scope of this study.

### FOCUS OF THIS STUDY

Scholars have written much about the *Liqujing*, but the mandalas prescribed in the *Liqushi*, which are indispensable ritual instruments for the practitioner's journey through the teachings of this scripture, have not been a focus in this research. Specifically, I have sought the source and the significance of the changes seen in the Daigoji exemplar. There has not been a systematic investigation of the *Liqushi*, the mandalas that it prescribes and the iconography of the Daigoji exemplar. Comparative textual, historical and interpretative studies characterize the research of the *Liqujing*. Toganoo Shōun's 桐尾祥雲 main concern is to locate the *Liqujing* within the teachings

of the broader Buddhist tradition.<sup>21</sup> He collates the ten versions of the *Liqujing*, which survive in Sanskrit and in Tibetan and Chinese translations, seeking to elucidate the historical sources and developments of the texts. Toganoo includes a section on mandalas at the end of each chapter wherein he compares the Tibetan prescriptions for mandalas with that of Amoghavajra's *Liquishi*. He notes the discrepancies between Amoghavajra's commentary and the Daigoji exemplar, but this issue is not his concern.

Further, despite acknowledgement of discrepancies between the *Liquishi* and the Daigoji exemplar in Mochizuki Shinkō's 望月信享 *Bukkyō daijiten* 佛教大辭典 (1933–36, vol. 5, p. 4964a), Ōmura Chōkaku 大村澄覺 and the other compilers of the *Mikkyō daijiten* 密教大辭典 (1931, 1975, vol. 5, pp. 2263–2264), and Sawa Ryūken's 佐和隆研 edition of the *Mikkyō jiten* 密教辞典 (1975, pp. 703–704), these works do not elaborate on this problem.

Hatta Yukio 八田幸雄 states in his *Himitsu kyōten: Rishukyō* 秘密經典 — 理趣經<sup>22</sup> that the set of the *Liqujing mantuluo* was from a different tradition than the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* 金剛頂經 (Amoghavajra's translation, T.18.865) and was forcibly made to conform to its Mandala of the Adamantine Realm. Inconsistencies and discrepancies arose, but Hatta does not explain further.<sup>23</sup>

Ian Astley-Kristensen's English translation of the scripture, *The Rishukyō: the Sino-Japanese Tantric Prajñāpāramitā in 150 Verses (Amoghavajra's Version)*<sup>24</sup> presents modern Shingon exegetes' understanding and analysis of the scripture's contents. His section on the mandalas, however, is brief and is merely a restatement of the information given in the studies of Toganoo and Hatta.

In short, Buddhist scholars have noted the discrepancies between Amoghavajra's *Liquishi* and the Daigoji exemplar, but to date no attempt has been made to uncover the source of the iconographical and iconological changes. This is what I propose to do in this study.

## Research Problem

Amoghavajra's version of the *Liqujing* introduced to his Chinese patrons and disciples an esoteric reworking of earlier Mahāyāna scriptures of the *Prajñāpāramitā* (Perfection of Wisdom) lineage. A major change was the adaptation of this scripture to a new system that provided a fast path to enlightenment in this lifetime by means of ritual and yogic practices, or more exactly, ritualized yogic practices. Amoghavajra outlined this system in his *Jingangding yuqie shibahui zhigui* and he regarded the *Liqujing* as the Sixth Assembly in this corpus.<sup>25</sup>

The system of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown constituted the core of Amoghavajra's teachings and it was this system that he propagated at the court of three Chinese emperors, as he himself documented in the memorials that he wrote to the Court. This system underlies his *Liqujing*, as well as its accompanying commentaries and ritual manuals. For instance, the *Liqujing* promises enlightenment in this lifetime, that is, the attainment of the stage of the Tathāgata and the Holder of the Vajra, by passing through the lives of the Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas.<sup>26</sup> These are the main deities in the Great Mandala of the Adamantine Realm that is revealed in the First Chapter of the First Assembly (*Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*) of the Eighteen Assemblies of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown. The iconography of the mandalas that Amoghavajra stipulates in his *Liquishi* thus belong to the system of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown.

Changes have occurred in the representation of the deities in the Daigoji exemplar. Because the mandalas graphically present distinctive aspects of the scripture's teaching and each

deity embodies a different perspective of that teaching, it is significant that changes have taken place. Moreover, the mandala serves as a focus in a sequential cycle of ritual and symbolic meanings that enable the practitioner to access and effectuate the scripture's promised goals. Placement of the figures, as well as their prescribed appearances, poses and attributes are important and, in this case, fixed, symbolizing the scripture's doctrinal propositions and the desired spiritual and material attainments of the practices. A change in position would imply a change in the meaning of the deity. The significance of the positions of deities, who symbolize special constructs of a mandalic reality, is seen also in Amoghavajra's reference system, that is the First Assembly's Great Mandala of the Adamantine Realm.<sup>27</sup> In short, Amoghavajra's instructions for the construction of mandalas conform to the system of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown, but the iconography of the Daigoji exemplar does not agree at all with his *Liqushi* and its reference system. This indicates the interpretation of another master, active during a different phase in the development of the Esoteric Buddhist teachings and practices in China.

The research hypothesis of this study seeks to demonstrate that the iconographical and iconological changes evident in the Daigoji exemplar reflect the transmission of the ninth-century Chinese master Faquan, whose transmission has yet to be studied. In order to do this, I investigate the transmissions of Amoghavajra and the Chinese Esoteric Buddhist masters who followed him, especially Faquan. Such an investigation reveals the concerns of these masters and the Chinese assimilation and transformation of Indian Esoteric Buddhist materials. The Sinification of Indian Esoteric Buddhist teachings and practices that occurred *after* Amoghavajra's lifetime included the deliberate mixing of differing scriptural and ritual traditions; the reinterpretation of scriptural and ritual traditions that had been introduced by earlier Indian and Chinese masters; the reclassification of the Chinese Esoteric Buddhist teachings; and the revival of earlier iconographic traditions. I contend that the Daigoji exemplar is the result of this process of Sinification, to which Faquan's transmission also belongs.

## STRUCTURE AND PRIMARY SOURCES

Historical records suggest that Shūei introduced to Japan two differing Tang Dynasty exemplars of the *Liqujing shibahui mantuluo*. In Chapter One, I undertake a comparative study of Amoghavajra's *Liqushi* and these two sets of mandalas. One is represented by the set in the collection of Ishiyama Temple 石山寺, which is dated to the Tang Dynasty (864). Contemporary Japanese scholars have not yet thoroughly examined this Ishiyamadera set. The second set of mandalas is the Daigoji exemplar, a medieval Japanese copy of a Tang Dynasty set of images. The comparison given in Chapter One of this dissertation is the first systematic investigation of text and image ever carried out. My comparison of text and images reveals that the iconography of the Ishiyamadera exemplar better conforms to Amoghavajra's explanations and prescriptions than that of the Daigoji exemplar. Where Amoghavajra refers to his reference system or to an iconographic source for certain of the eighteen mandalas, the iconography of the Daigoji set of mandalas does not agree. In short, I dispel the Shingon school's claim that the Daigoji exemplar is based upon Amoghavajra's transmission.

In Chapter Two I examine late Heian, Kamakura, and Edo period versions of the *Liqujing shibahui mantuluo*, as well as specific treatises related to it, in order to address the problems of the provenance and ascription of the Ishiyamadera and Daigoji exemplars. The Daigoji exemplar is a thirteenth-century copy of a copy said to have been introduced by Shūei. Shingon scholar-monks



active after Shūei's time corrected the iconography of the Daigoji exemplar to make it conform more faithfully to the *Liqushi*. Further, Shingon masters also created their own mandalic interpretations of this scripture's teachings, which were based on the development of Shingon doctrine. My examination of these aspects reinforces the fact that the Daigoji exemplar is not based on Amoghavajra's commentary, and also supplies information about certain characteristics of the iconography of this exemplar. Moreover, it shows that the Daigoji exemplar introduced by Shūei served as an authoritative reference for these revisions and reinterpretations made from the early twelfth to the eighteenth centuries. The Ishiyamadera exemplar, dated with certainty as a Tang Dynasty production, is never mentioned in the ritual compilations of the Shingon scholar-monks because this set of mandalas lay unnoticed in the temple archives until its discovery in the early twentieth century.

Visual traditions that date from after Amoghavajra's time, rather than his *Liqushi* and its references, are the iconographical sources for the Daigoji exemplar. In Chapter Three, first, I document the matches between the iconography of the Daigoji exemplar and the Shingon school's Mandalas of the Adamantine Realm and the Matrix Realm (*Genzu kongōkai* 現圖金剛界曼荼羅 and *taizōkai mandara* 胎藏界曼荼羅), with whose Chinese prototype the pilgrim-monk Kūkai returned to Japan. These mandalas are said to be graphic reproductions of the teachings of the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* and the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, scriptures from variant Indian Esoteric Buddhist systems. Secondly, I clarify the historical context of the visual and textual traditions upon which these iconographic changes are based. Specifically, I examine the transmissions of Amoghavajra, his disciple Huiguo, who was Kūkai's Chinese master, and Faquan, a second-generation disciple of Huiguo.

As I stated above, the iconographic alterations evident in the Daigoji exemplar do not chronologically coincide with Amoghavajra's *Liqushi*. The ideology of the nonduality of the two transmissions of the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra* and the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* and their accompanying mandalas postdates Amoghavajra. Furthermore, explanations and mandala directives in the *Liqushi* cannot explain the conspicuous presence of iconographic elements from the Matrix Realm Mandala (*Genzu taizōkai mandara*) in the Daigoji exemplar. This mixing of disparate systems of Esoteric Buddhist iconographies points to the influence of a later master.

Amoghavajra's transmission is the focus of Chapter Four. First, I reconstruct the iconography of Amoghavajra's version of the *Liqijing shibahui mantuluo* by investigating the sources, both identified and unidentified, he uses in his commentaries on the *Liqijing*. Amoghavajra is doctrinally consistent in the mandala prescriptions he gives in his *Liqushi*. His sources confirm his use of materials from a corpus that he called the *Jingangding yuqie shibahui*. Secondly, I argue that, despite the presence of elements from the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra* and other scriptural traditions, the doctrines and practices expounded in a number of assemblies in the system of the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown comprised the fundamental component of his transmission. There is, however, a reformulation of the contents of Amoghavajra's transmission in his disciples' biographies, which I also briefly examine. One significant change they made to their master's transmission was the inclusion of the teachings from earlier Indian Esoteric Buddhist scriptures, specifically the *Susiddhikara sūtra* (Scripture on Effectuating the Accomplishment of Special Powers) and the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*.

The claim that Shūei introduced the Daigoji exemplar is problematic, for the set is not listed in his official inventories of imported religious articles. The inventories of the Heian pilgrim-monks recorded the scriptures, icons and religious paraphernalia that they copied and

collected during their sojourns in Tang China. These they presented to the Court and religious authorities upon their return to Japan.

The pilgrim-monks also brought back personal souvenirs, that is, for example, scriptures, ritual manuals and images that they did not register in their official inventories, but did transmit within their respective schools and lineages. In Chapter Five, I examine the reliability of the historical sources that record the importation of the iconography of the Daigoji exemplar from China to Japan. Examples of these sources are the Tendai monk Annen's 安然 (841–915?) *Shoajari shingon mikkyō burui sōroku* 諸阿闍梨真言密教部類總錄 (General Inventory of the Categories of the [Esoteric Buddhist] Masters' Secret Teachings on Mantras),<sup>28</sup> the inventories of pilgrim-monks who went to Tang China, as well as later ritual compilations composed by such scholar-monks as Ejū 慧什 (active 1125–after 1144), Kōzen 興然 (1121–1203) and Kakuzen 覺禪 (1143–after 1213) of the Shingon school and Shōchō 承澄 (1205–1282) of the Tendai esoteric school. There is evidence in these sources that links Shūei to the iconography of the mandalas of the Daigoji exemplar.

In Chinese Esoteric Buddhism of the mid-ninth century there was a renewed focus on ritual practices that display an eclectic mixing of Esoteric Buddhist systems. As examples of this trend, I examine the textual sources for the mandalas that were appended to the Daigoji exemplar. The focus of Chapter Six is the *Jingangjixiang dachengjiu pin* 金剛吉祥大成就品 (Chapter on the Great Accomplishments of Vajraśrī), a chapter of the *Jingangfeng louke yiqieyuqie yuqi jing* 金剛峰樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經, and the *Zunsheng foding xiuyuqiefa guiyi* 尊勝佛頂修瑜伽法軌儀 (Ritual Manual of Prescriptions for the Practice of the Yoga of Vikīrṇoṣṇīṣa), which are the sources for the Mandalas of Buddhlocaṇā and Vikīrṇoṣṇīṣa, two of the four mandalas appended to the Daigoji exemplar.<sup>29</sup> Although attributed to Vajrabodhi (671–741) and Śubhākarasiṃha (637–735), respectively, they are apocryphal works that were first recorded in the inventories of mid-ninth-century Japanese pilgrim-monks. Further, I examine two manuals attributed to Faquan. These are the *Gongyang hushi batian fa* 供養護世八天法 (Offering Rite for the Eight World-Protecting Gods) and the *Jianli mantuluo humo yigui* 建立曼荼羅護摩議軌 (Ritual Manual for Construction of the Mandala for [the Performance] of Fire Oblation).

My reason for presenting the contents and mandalas in these works is to reconstruct some of the particular features of ninth-century Chinese Esoteric Buddhism in whose reinterpretation and dissemination Faquan played a major role.

In Chapter Seven I reconstruct Faquan's transmission. It is my contention that, because the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi* and *Susiddhikara sūtras* were important to Faquan, he gave them special roles within the Esoteric Buddhist system of three interrelated categories 三部 of the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* and the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi* and *Susiddhikara sūtras* that he transmitted to his disciples. This tripartite system signifies a reclassification of the Chinese Esoteric Buddhist teachings, one that occurred after Amoghavajra and Huiguo. Because Faquan left no writings on the category of “accomplishments” 蘇悉地 (Skt. *susiddhi*), first I investigate the writings of his Chinese contemporary, Haiyun 海雲, and his Japanese disciples Ennin 圓仁 (794–864) and Enchin 圓珍 (814–891), as well as disciples' inventories, to determine the form and content of Faquan's teachings. The late Tang reinterpretation of the *Susiddhikara sūtra* culminated in a special mantra whose power effectuated the felicitous outcome of all ritual practices, regardless of textual tradition. The source of this mantra was the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, a text that was important to Faquan, as I demonstrate in this chapter. Significantly, my

research on sources that document Faquan's transmission reveals his continued use of the prototype of the set of mandalas known in the Shingon school as the *Genzu mandara*.

In conclusion, I establish that, based upon the research presented in this study, the prototype of the iconography of the Daigoji exemplar was a product of mid-ninth-century Tang China, and represented Faquan's religious contributions to the further Sinification of Indian Esoteric Buddhism.

## CONVENTIONS

In this dissertation, I have made the decision to present my arguments in the chapters of the text and often to put the evidence in the endnotes, especially when I provide a number of reasons and/or detailed explanations to support my arguments. I have also used the endnotes to provide the reader with additional information which I considered necessary for an understanding of such topics as Esoteric Buddhist concepts, the iconography of deities and mandalas, ritual procedures, as well as the contents of texts and of scholarly debates concerning authorship and dating of texts, for example.

Titles of Buddhist works are given in Sanskrit, Chinese and Japanese. Scriptures that have Sanskrit originals are in Sanskrit. Examples are the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra* and *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*. Works composed in China, as well as those whose Sanskrit originals remain unknown, have been given in the Chinese *Pinyin* system of transcription. The *Jingangfeng louke yiqieyue yuqi jing* 金剛峰樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經 and *Zunsheng foding xiuyuqiefa guiyi* 尊勝佛頂脩瑜伽法軌儀 are two examples. Amoghavajra returned to China from India with Sanskrit originals of a number of scriptures and ritual manuals. Two of his works, the scripture and its commentary that are central to this study, posed a problem. The scripture is of Indian origin and scholars have reconstructed its title as *Adhyardhaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā sūtra* and as *Prajñāpāramitā-naya sūtra*. The commentary is thought to be Amoghavajra's own composition and hence its title would have to be given in Chinese. I have decided to present all of Amoghavajra's works that I have examined in Chinese, except his translation of a portion of the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*, because its original exists.<sup>30</sup>

The names of Buddhist deities are given in Sanskrit with diacritical marks. Buddhist terms that have entered into English usage, like *mandala*, are without diacritical marks and are not in italics, except when in a Sanskrit compound, for example the technical term *mahā-maṇḍala*. Such specialized but still commonly used Buddhist terms as *mudrā* and *stūpa* retain their diacritical marks but are not in italics. Buddhist terminology is presented in English and accompanied with Chinese characters and a Sanskrit equivalent, whenever appropriate. An example is realm of desire 欲界 (*kāma-dhātu*).

An English translation with capital letters is used when referring to Esoteric Buddhist systems, for example, the Yoga of the Adamantine Crown, to the mandalas prescribed in the Esoteric Buddhist scriptures and ritual manuals, for example, the Matrix Mandala in the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi sūtra*, the Great Mandala of the Adamantine Realm in the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha* and the Mandala of Vikīrṇoṣṇīṣa in the *Zunsheng foding xiuyuqiefa guiyi*, and to the titles of the Shingon school's set of mandalas, the Matrix Realm Mandala (*Genzu taizōkai mandara*) and Adamantine Realm Mandala (*Genzu kongōkai mandara*). Capitals are not used when referring to generic mandalas, for example matrix mandalas or tradition of the adamantine realm mandala. Because the Japanese pilgrim-monks introduced to Japan iconographic materials

that were made in China, these materials are referred to with their Chinese titles and, at first mention, are accompanied with English translations in capital letters between parentheses. Thereafter, they are referred to in Chinese. Examples are the *Liqujing mantuluo* (Mandalas of the Guiding Principle Scripture) and the *Jingangjie jiuwei mantuluo* (Mandala of the Nine Assemblies of the Adamantine Realm). However, in Chapter Two, which focuses on the *Liqujing mantuluo* in the Shingon school of the Late Heian, Kamakura and Edo periods, Japanese titles are used, accompanied with English translations in capital letters between parentheses. An example is *Gobugue* 五部具會 (Assembly of the Five Families).

Below I have included a Comparative Chart of Materials for reference when reading Chapter One of this study.<sup>31</sup> The character for “chapter” 品 (*C. pin*) appears in the notes in small characters that conclude many sections of the *Liqushi*. However, the ritual works that I examine in Chapter Two, as well as the Japanese commentarial tradition on the *Liqujing* and *Liqushi*, present the contents of these works in “stages” 段, a word that refers to the spiritual journey that the practitioner experiences when performing the ritual materials expounded in the scripture and explained in the commentary. This is a special word that is not seen in the scripture or its commentary but is used exclusively in the Japanese ritual and commentarial traditions. I have throughout my work referred to the Stages of the *Liqujing* and *Liqushi*, or simply to *Liqujing* 3 and *Liqushi* 3, for example.

Comparative Chart of Materials for Chapter One

<i>Liqujing</i> , T.8.243	<i>Liqushi</i> , T.19.1003	Daigoji exemplar, T. <i>Zuzō</i> , vol. 5 3044	Ishiyamadera exemplar, T. <i>Zuzō</i> vol. 12, 3239
Opening: 784a14-b1	Opening: 607a16-608b18	No. 1 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Venerable Mahāvairocana 大日尊理趣會, p. 776	No. 1[Mandala of the Five Mysteries] 五祕密壇, p. 954 (reordered No. 18)
Stage 1: 784b1-24	First Assembly on Vajrasattva Who Is Infallible and [generates] Great Bliss 大樂不空金剛薩埵初集品, 608b18-610b2	No. 2 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Vajrasattva 金剛薩埵理趣會, p. 777	No. 2 [Mandala of Vajrapāṇi] 金剛手壇, p. 955

Stage 2: 784b25-c7	610b3-611a22	No. 3 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Venerable Mahāvairocana 大日尊理趣會, p. 778	No. 3 Mandala of Vairocana 毘盧遮那壇, p. 956 (reordered No. 1)
Stage 3: 784c8-c18	Trailokyavijaya 降三世品, 611b9-612a9	No. 4 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Trailokyavijaya 降三世理趣會, p. 779	No. 4 [Mandala of Vajrasatta] 金剛薩埵壇, p. 957 (reordered No. 2)
Stage 4: 784c19-785a2	Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara 觀自在菩薩般若理趣會品, 612a10-c3	No. 5 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Avalokiteśvara 觀自在理趣會, p. 780	No. 5 Mandala of Śākya-Trailokyavijaya (No. 4) 釋迦降三世壇第四, p. 958
Stage 5: 785a3-10	Ākāśagarbha 虛空藏品, 612c4-613a10	No. 6 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Ākāśagarbha 虛空藏理趣會, p. 781	No. 6 Mandala of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (No. 5) 觀自在菩薩壇第五, p. 959
Stage 6: 785a11-23	Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Vajramuṣṭi 金剛拳理趣會品, 613a11-b20	No. 7 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Vajramuṣṭi 金剛拳理趣會, p. 782	No. 7 Mandala of Ratnaśaṃbhava (No. 6) 寶生壇第六, p. 960
Stage 7: 785a24-b2	Guiding Principle of Mañjuśrī 文殊師利理趣品, 613b21-c27	No. 8 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Mañjuśrī 文殊師利理趣會, p. 783	No. 8 Mandala of Vajra-sarva-tathāgata (No. 7) 金剛一切如來第七, p. 961
Stage 8: 785b3-10	Guiding Principle of Bodhisattva Sahacittotpāḍita-dharma-cakra-pravartin 纔發意菩薩理趣品, 613c28-614b3	No. 9 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Bodhisattva Vajracakra 金剛輪菩薩理趣會, p. 784	No. 9 Mandala of Kumāra Vajra-Mañjuśrī (No. 8) 金剛文殊師利童真壇第八, p. 962

Stage 9: 785b11-20	Guiding Principle Bodhisattva Gaganagañja 虛空庫 菩薩理趣品, 614b4- c18	No. 10 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Bodhisattva Gaganagañja 虛空庫 菩薩理趣會, p. 785	No. 10 Mandala of Great Being Sahacittotpādita- dharma-cakra-pravartin (No. 9) 纔發心轉法輪 大薩壇第九, p. 963
Stage 10: 785b21-29	Guiding Principle of Bosdhisattva Sarva- māra-pramardin 摧一 切魔菩薩理趣品, 614c19-615b5	No. 11 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Bodhisattva Sarva- māra-pramardin 摧一 切魔菩薩理趣會, p. 786	No. 11 Mandala of Bodhisattva Gaganagañja (No. 10) 虛空庫菩薩壇第十, p. 964
Stage 11: 785c1-9	Wheel of Instruction and Command of Trailokyavijaya 降三 世教令輪品, 615b6- c9	No. 12 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi 金剛手菩薩 理趣會, p. 787	No. 12 Mandala of Vajra-sarvamāra- pramardin (No. 11) 金 剛摧一切魔壇第十一, p. 965
Stage 12: 785c10-17	Assembly of the Outer Vajras 外金剛 會品, 615c10-616a10	No. 13. Assembly of the Guiding Principle of God Maheśvara 摩 醯首羅天理趣會, p. 788	No. 13 Mandala of Vajrapāṇi (No. 12) 金 剛手壇第十二, p. 966
Stage 13: 785c18-20	Assembly of the Seven Mother Goddesses 七母天集 會品, 616a11-28	No. 14 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of the Seven Mother Goddesses 七母女天 理趣會, p. 789	No. 14 [Mandala of Maheśvara-rāja] 魔醯 首羅王壇, p. 967 (No. 13)
Stage 14: 785c21-23	Assembly of the Three Brothers 三兄 弟集會品, 615a29-b9	No. 15 Assembly of the Four Sister Goddesses 四姊妹女 天理趣會, p. 790	No. 15 Assembly of Mahākāla-deva and the Sisters (No. 14) 摩訶迦 羅天神姊妹集會聚第 十四, p. 968

Stage 15: 785c24-25	Assembly of the Four Sisters 四姊妹集會品, 616b10-22	No. 16 Assembly of the Guiding Principle of the Three Brothers 三兄弟天理趣會, p. 791	No. 16 [Assembly] of Nārāyaṇa Three Brothers (No. 15) 那羅延三兄弟第十五, p. 969
Stage 16: 785c26-786a4	616b23-c11	No. 17 Assembly of the Five Families 五部具會, p. 792	No. 17 “Not One Not Different (No. 16) True Teachings of the Four Sisters of the Outer Vajra Family” 不一不異外金剛部四姊妹真教, p. 970
Stage 17: 786a5-b4	616c12-617a26	No. 18 Assembly of the Five Mysteries 五祕密會, p. 793	No. 18 “This is the third [mandala] expounded in the Scripture of the path [of guiding principles]” 此是第三道經中說, p. 971 (reordered No. 3)

Amoghavajra uses the names Mahāvairocana and Vairocana (see the opening and closing Stages, *T.243:784a20*, Mahāvairocana, 786a5, Vairocana) when referring to the Buddha who expounds the teachings in this scripture. In the *Liqushi* (*T.1003:607c6-7, c10, c21, c23, c27, 608a2, 610b3, c24*, for example) he almost always refers to this Buddha as Vairocana.

Amoghavajra’s disciples also use these two names for this Buddha. For consistency, I have used Mahāvairocana throughout this study despite the fact that the Japanese Esoteric Buddhist tradition holds that there is difference in the significance of these two names. They say the former refers to the *dharmakāya* 法身, the absolute, unmanifested form of Buddha-nature, and the latter to the *sambhogakāya* 報身, the body of a buddha manifested as a result of vows and practices to attain buddhahood and who preaches in his buddha-field.<sup>32</sup>

Lastly, I consulted eight sets of the *Liqujing mantuluo* and, although most consist of eighteen individual mandalas, I do not include in this study my examination of every mandala in the eight sets. I present this material chronologically in a section of illustrations (figs. 1–34), wherein I number the mandalas of the eight sets, beginning with the Tang Dynasty Daigoji and Ishiyamadera exemplars and ending with the Edo period monk Shinkai’s 眞海 set.

