

# *Shugendō* and the Yoshino-Kumano Pilgrimage

## An Example of Mountain Pilgrimage

by PAUL L. SWANSON

*There are in Ozaka very great and high and stiepe rockes, which have prickes or poynts on them, about two hundred fadome high. Amongest these rockes there is one of these pikes or poyntes so terribly high, that when the Yamabushi (which be pilgrimes) doe but looke up unto it, they tremble, and their haire stares, so fearfull and horrible is the place. Upon the toppe of this poynt there is a great rod of yron of three fadome long, placed there by a strange devise, at the end of this rodde is a ballance tied, whereof the scales are so bigge, as a man may sit in one of them. . . .*

*Then presently hee beginneth to confesse, whilest some of the standers by do laugh at the sinnes they doe heare; and others sigh, and at every sinne they confesse, the other scale of the ballance falles a little, untill that having tolde all his sinnes, it remains equall with the other, wherein the sorrowful penitent sits: then the Goki turnes the wheele, and draws the rodde and ballance unto him, and the Pilgrime comes forth, then enters another, until all have passed.<sup>1</sup>*

THE rite described by the Jesuit Luis Frois in his 1583 letter used to take place in the mountainous Yoshino region, southeast of Osaka, and although the quaintly worded account may appear somewhat farfetched, it is in fact quite accurate as regards its main points. The region is the northern entrance of the *nyūbu* 入峰, the Yoshino-Kumano mountain pilgrimage, and here traditional *shugendō* 修験道 austerities are still practiced, although they are less severe than in the past.

*Shugendō* is the religion of the ascetic, and its followers are popularly known as *yamabushi* 山伏, 'those who lie down in the mountain', or *shugenja* 修験者, 'those who accumulate power or experience' through ascetic practices in the mountains. Its origins remain obscure. What can be said for certain is that *shugendō* is a blend

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Cooper, ed., *They Came to Japan*, University of California Press, 1965, pp. 324-25.

of at least three different religious streams. (1) The indigenous pre-Buddhist folk religion of Japan, which can be loosely called Shinto; this includes elements such as shamanistic practices and *kannabi shinkō* 神奈備信仰 (the belief that mountains are the residence of the dead and of agricultural spirits). (2) Tantric Buddhism, with spells and rituals, and some aspects of Buddhist ethics and cosmology. (3) Ying-yang and Taoistic magic.<sup>2</sup> *Shugendō* has been described as 'a specific religious practice which took the form of an organized religion about the end of the Heian period when Japan's ancient religious practices in the mountains came under the influence of various foreign religions.'<sup>3</sup> This loosely organized sect includes many types of ascetics—'unofficial' monks (*ubasoku* 優婆塞), peripatetic holy men (*hijiri* 聖), pilgrimage guides (*sendatsu* 先達), blind musicians, exorcists, hermits, and others.

### *Origin and Development of Shugendō*

MUCH attention is given to the development of scholastic Buddhism, or the so-called six Nara sects, after its introduction from Korea in the sixth century, but the religious movements among the common people are often overlooked. There is good reason to believe that ascetics were entering mountainous areas for the practice of austerities as early as the Nara period or even before. These ascetics were generally known as *shugyōsha* 修行者, *keza* 験者, or *shugenja*, that is, those who accumulate power or experience through severe ascetic practices such as fasting, seclusion, meditations, spells, sutra recitation, magical exercises, sitting under waterfalls, etc. Such people were not necessarily Buddhist monks, but included various hermits, diviners, exorcists, and wandering religious figures. The most famous of these *shugenja* was En-no-Gyōja 役行者, revered as the founder of the *shugendō* sects, who operated mainly in the Katsuragi-Yoshino and Kumano regions. He is said to have entered this region early in his life, studied the secret magic formulae of esoteric Buddhism and Taoism, and eventually attained miraculous powers. There is little doubt that we are dealing here with a historical personage, for *Shoku Nihongi* records that a man named En-no-Ozunu 役小角 was banished in 699 on trumped-up charges of misusing his powers to control and mislead the people.

By the early Heian period many full-fledged Buddhist monks, especially those belonging to the esoteric schools, were entering not only Mt Hiei and Mt Kōya but also other mountains, particularly in the Yoshino region, such as Mt Kimbu. Fujiwara Michizane made many pilgrimages to this area and soon the Mitake pilgrimage (*Mitake mōde* 御嶽詣) became a popular pastime for members of the aristocratic class. The pilgrimage to Kumano was later popularized by Emperor Shirakawa. In the Ōmine mountain range between Kumano and Yoshino a number

<sup>2</sup> Kasahara Kazuo 笠原一男, ed., *Nihon Shūkyō Shi* [NSS] 日本宗教史, Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1977, pp., 158–59.

<sup>3</sup> Miyake Hitoshi 宮家準, *Shugendō Girei no Kenkyū* 修験道儀礼の研究, Shunjūsha, 1970, p. 1 (at the end of the book).

of places, such as Ozasa, the rock cavern of Shō, the Zenki valley, and Mt Tamaki, had become important centers for seclusion and ascetic practices. By the late Heian or early Kamakura period these centers had all been connected by a path leading through Ōmine from Yoshino to Kumano, and they had become the leading center of *shugendō* practice.

But this development of mountain pilgrimage was by no means limited to the Yoshino region. In central Japan the monk Taichō 泰澄 opened Hakusan in 717 and enshrined Myōri Bodhisattva there. A hunter named Saeki Ariyori 佐伯有頼 followed a white hawk into Tateyama, where the mountain *kami* appeared as Amida Buddha. A monk called Shōdō 勝道 opened the mountains of Nikkō, while in the Tōhoku region Prince Hachiko 蜂子, second son of Emperor Sushun, is credited with opening the mountains in the Haguro region. Daisen in western Honshu, Mt Ishizuchi in Shikoku, and Mt Hiko in Kyushu, are all famous mountain centers. These examples indicate a prolific growth of mountain pilgrimage and cult in Heian times, and by the Kamakura period organized centers for ascetic practices had been established throughout the country.<sup>4</sup>

The *shugenja* began to show an increasing tendency to organize by the middle of the Heian period, usually in connection with the pilgrimages of retired emperors and aristocrats. In 1090 a high-ranking priest acted as *sendatsu* 先達<sup>5</sup> to the retired Emperor Shirakawa in his pilgrimage to Kumano. The monk Zōyo was later given authority over the Kumano *sanzan* by being named *kengyō* 檢校 (temple supervisor) in 1100 and presented with Shōgo-in 聖護院 in Kyoto.<sup>6</sup> The *shugenja* leaders and their followers of the Kumano region were gradually organized under the banner of Shōgo-in and came to wield considerable authority. By the Muromachi period *shugenja* connected with Shōgo-in had spread this system throughout Japan

<sup>4</sup> There is a wealth of material and legends concerning the religious figure known variously as En-no-Gyōja, En-no-Ozunu, and En-no-Ubasoku in early tale collections such as *Nihon Ryōiki* 日本靈異記, *Konjaku Monogatari* 今昔物語, and *Fusō Ryakki* 扶桑略記.

Regarding the origin and development of *shugendō*, the following books have been used: Gorai Shigeru 五来重, ed., *Yoshino-Kumano Shinkō no Kenkyū* 吉野熊野信仰の研究, Meicho Shuppan, 1975; Nikko Ryōei 二河良英, *Shugendō to Kumano* 修験道と熊野, Sangaku, 1971; Wakamori Tarō 和歌森太郎, *Shugendō-shi Kenkyū* 修験道史研究 (*Tōyō Bunko* 211), Heibonsha, 1973; Murakami Toshio 村上俊雄, *Shugendō no Hattatsu* 修験道の発達, Meicho Shuppan, 1977; Murayama Shūichi 村山修一, *Yamabushi no Rekishi* 山伏の歴史, Hanawa Shobō, 1975; Miyake Hitoshi, *Yamabushi, Sono Kōdō to Shisō* 山伏, その行動と思想, Hyōronsha, 1973. A valuable addition to the growing literature on the subject is the Meicho

Shuppan series on mountain religion in Japan, *Sangaku Shūkyōshi Kenkyū Sōsho* 山岳宗教史研究叢書, 14 vols.

For an account in English and a comprehensive bibliography, see H. Byron Earhart, *A Religious Study of the Mount Haguro Sect of Shugendō*, MN Monograph 39, 1970. See also Hartmut O. Rotermund, *Die Yamabushi*, Cram de Cruyter, Hamburg, 1968; Gaston Renondeau, *Le Shugendō: Histoire, doctrine et rites des anachorètes dits Yamabushi* (*Cahiers de la Société Asiatique*, xviii), Paris, 1965.

<sup>5</sup> This term has various meanings, such as "leader" or "guide" for pilgrims from a local area to a Shugendō headquarters; as higher-ranking officials permanently residing at the mountain; as the highest-ranking officials on the mountain (with exclusive ritual prerogatives). Earhart, p. 169.

<sup>6</sup> Earhart, pp. 21–23.

and branch temples, such as Jūshin-in 住心院, Sekizen-in 積善院, and Kadai-in 華台院 in Kyoto and Gaya-in 伽耶院 in present-day Hyōgo prefecture, had been established. For example, the fifteenth-century monk Dōkō 道光 of Shōgo-in first practiced in Nachi and Ōmine, visited the thirty-three sacred places in western Japan, and then traveled to the holy mountains in the Kinki, Chūgoku, Shikoku, Kyushu, Hokuriku, Kantō, Tōkai, and other regions all over the country. It is possible that *En-no-Gyōja Hongi* 役行者本記, which was compiled about this time and which attributes to En-no-Gyōja visits to all the mountain centers of the country, is based on the travels of Dōkō or others like him.<sup>7</sup> The organization which grew out of this system is known as the Honzan-ha 本山派.

The Honzan-ha considers En-no-Gyōja as the founder of the sect (with lineage starting from Mahavairocana Buddha and including Shakamuni, Ananda, and Nagarjuna), and Zōyo as the restorer who revived *shugendō* and thus laid claim to orthodoxy.<sup>8</sup> The legends concerning the ascetic practices of Enchin 円珍, founder of Miidera, in the Ōmine and Kumano mountain ranges, are also emphasized. In the Shōhei period (1346–69), the Shōgo-in monk Ryōyu 良瑜 organized the various practices connected with the Ōmine range and set up altars at Jinzen in Ōmine and the River Nakatsu in Katsuragi for the *abhisheka* (*kanjō* 灌頂), or initiation ceremony.

In the Yamato region during the Nara and Heian periods there was a group of thirty-six shrines and temples on which the *shugenja* who practiced in the Yoshino-Kimbu area depended for their support. These temples and shrines are known as the 'Thirty-Six True *Sendatsu*' by the *shugenja*. Most of these establishments were under the influence of the tantric Shingon sect, and in the course of time Ozasa in Ōmine and Kōfukuji became the centers of practice and developed into the Tōzan-ha 当山派 of *shugendō*. This school considers Shōbō 聖宝, the founder of Daigoji, as the restorer of *shugendō* and the counterpart of Zōyo of the Honzan-ha. Shōbō is believed to have received the imperial seal of Emperor Yōmei and the spiritual seal of En-no-Gyōja. He then led the *shugenja* of the thirty-six shrines and temples into the Ōmine mountains from Yoshino. As a result of this legend, a man wishing to enter the ranks of the Tōzan-ha must attach himself to one of the Thirty-Six True *Sendatsu*. If his request for entrance or advancement is confirmed, he receives a certificate of appointment. On one side of this document is written the endorsement of the *sendatsu* to which the supplicant is attached, and on the other side is printed the imperial seal and the spiritual seal received by Shōbō from En-no-Gyōja. In the late Muromachi period the Tōzan-ha gradually came to prefer Sanbō-in of Daigoji to Kōfukuji. Through the close *sendatsu*-disciple relationship a strong organization was built up and reached its peak in the Tokugawa period.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Miyake, in NSS, p. 385.

<sup>8</sup> Gorai Shigeru, ed., *Konohagoromo, Tōun-rokuji*, Hoka 木葉衣, 踏雲録事, 他 (*Tōyō Bunko*

273), Heibonsha, 1975, pp. 354–62.

<sup>9</sup> Miyake, in NSS, pp. 385–86.

The purpose of *shugendō* is to attain supernatural, magical, or at least supernatural powers through ascetic practice in the mountains. The route along the Ōmine mountains between Yoshino and Kumano early became a center for such practice. By the Kamakura period practices in the mountains were more or less organized and included confession (*zange* 懺悔), sutra recitation for the extinction of sin (*metsuzai* 滅罪), fasting (*danjiki* 断食), abstinence from water (*mizu-dachi* 水断), firewood gathering (*kogi* 小木), sitting under waterfalls, meditation, hanging over cliffs and 'weighing sins' (*gōbyō* 業秤), and others. By the Muromachi period these practices had been further developed according to the Buddhist doctrine of the ten worlds. As a man practices these austerities in the mountains, he passes through the ten successive stages and emerges from the mountains having obtained buddhahood within this life. There are various interpretations of this doctrine, and different traditions ascribe different practices to each stage.<sup>10</sup> The interpretation recognized by Shōgo-in today is predominately ethical and reflects the modern shift away from severe ascetic practices.

- 1 *jigoku* 地獄 (hell): patiently enduring suffering.
- 2 *gaki* 餓鬼 (hungry demons): to know how little is necessary for survival.
- 3 *chikushō* 畜生 (beasts): hard physical labor.
- 4 *shura* 修羅: effort or devotion.
- 5 *ningen* 人間 (people): walking and confession.
- 6 *ten* 天 (heaven): welcoming goodness.
- 7 *shōmon* 声聞: listening to the law of the Buddha.
- 8 *engaku* 円覚: contemplation.
- 9 *bosatsu* 菩薩 (bodhisattva): service, six virtues (*pāramitā*: *haramitsu* 波羅蜜).
- 10 *butsu* 仏 (Buddha): thanksgiving and prayer.<sup>11</sup>

Another important doctrinal view is the identification of the Yoshino-Kumano route with Mahavairocana himself, with the Yoshino-Ōmine side representing the Diamond Mandala (*kongō-kai* 金剛界) and the Kumano side the Womb Mandala (*taizō-kai* 胎藏界).<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the Yoshino-Kumano region, the nearby Katsuragi area emphasizes the Lotus Sutra. The twenty-eight places of worship along the Katsuragi route correspond to the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra, and a stupa to house a copy of the sutra was erected on each site.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Miyake, in NSS, p. 390; Earhart, pp. 29–31; Carmen Blacker, 'Initiation in the Shugendō: The Passage Through the Ten Stages of Existence', in C. J. Bleeker, ed., *Initiation*, Brill, Leiden, 1965, pp. 96–111.

Miyake, in NSS, p. 390, provides another list of the ten stages which is called *tokokatame* 床堅, or the rite showing the identification of the *shugenja* with Mahavairocana.

<sup>11</sup> From a pamphlet distributed by Shōgo-in to participants in *nyūbu*.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of this theory and the

actual placement of various buddhas and bodhisattvas in the mountains, see Miyake Hitoshi, 'Ōmine Engi Kō' 大峰縁起考, in Kasa-hara Kazuo, ed., *Nihon Shūkyō-shi Ronshū* 日本宗教史論集, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1976, pp. 475–504; see also Earhart, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> For a recent attempt to locate the precise location of these sites and their stupas, see Miyagi Tainen, *Katsuragi no Kyōzuka wo Tazunete* 葛城の経塚をたずねて, in *Shugen* 修験, #21–29, May 1959–August 1960 (the official publication of Shōgo-in).

Buddhist ethics are also incorporated into *shugendō* doctrine, particularly the six virtues (*pāramitā*). But this venerable doctrine has been uniquely interpreted and adapted to mountain ascetic practice. The Shōgō-in interpretation today is as follows:

1 *Fuse* 布施 (alms, charity): the *sendatsu* sharing his information on the history and doctrine of *shugendō*; sharing his food with another who is hungry or sharing water with one who is thirsty; carrying another's luggage when he is tired.

2 *Jikai* 持戒 (observance of the precepts): following the *sendatsu*, participating in the religious ceremonies, proper training, abstinence from improper food, drink, and conduct.

3 *Ninniku* 忍辱 (patience): not complaining when hot, cold, hungry or thirsty, unrelentingly continuing austerities with patience.

4 *Shōjin* 精進 (effort, devotion): steady will and heart, to put forth one's best effort.

5 *Zenjō* 禪定 (meditation): fixing one's heart and mind on one purpose, remaining unmoved by distractions; as a man cannot think of money or sex while negotiating a dangerous climb, so must he be single-minded and pure.

6 *Chie* 智慧 (wisdom): knowledge of the truth of the interrelatedness of all things and attaining the enlightenment of the Buddha.<sup>14</sup>

These doctrines and teachings are symbolically represented in the robes and equipment of a *shugenja*. The staff (*shakujō* 錫杖), skull cap (*token* 頭巾), and robe (*suzukake* 鈴掛) all symbolize various aspects of Mahavairocana, the Diamond and Womb mandalas, and other Buddhist doctrines.<sup>15</sup> With this costume the *shugenja* symbolizes his potential to attain buddhahood and the ultimate non-duality of the sacred and profane. Thus the *shugenja* is in a sense identified with Mahavairocana and even the universe itself. These doctrines are expressed in the mountains in various ways—in the death and rebirth theme, in statues of buddhas and bodhisattvas along the Yoshino-Kumano route, in the names of the places of worship, and in the various ascetic practices and their interpretations during the *nyūbu* itself.

### The Yoshino-Kumano Nyūbu

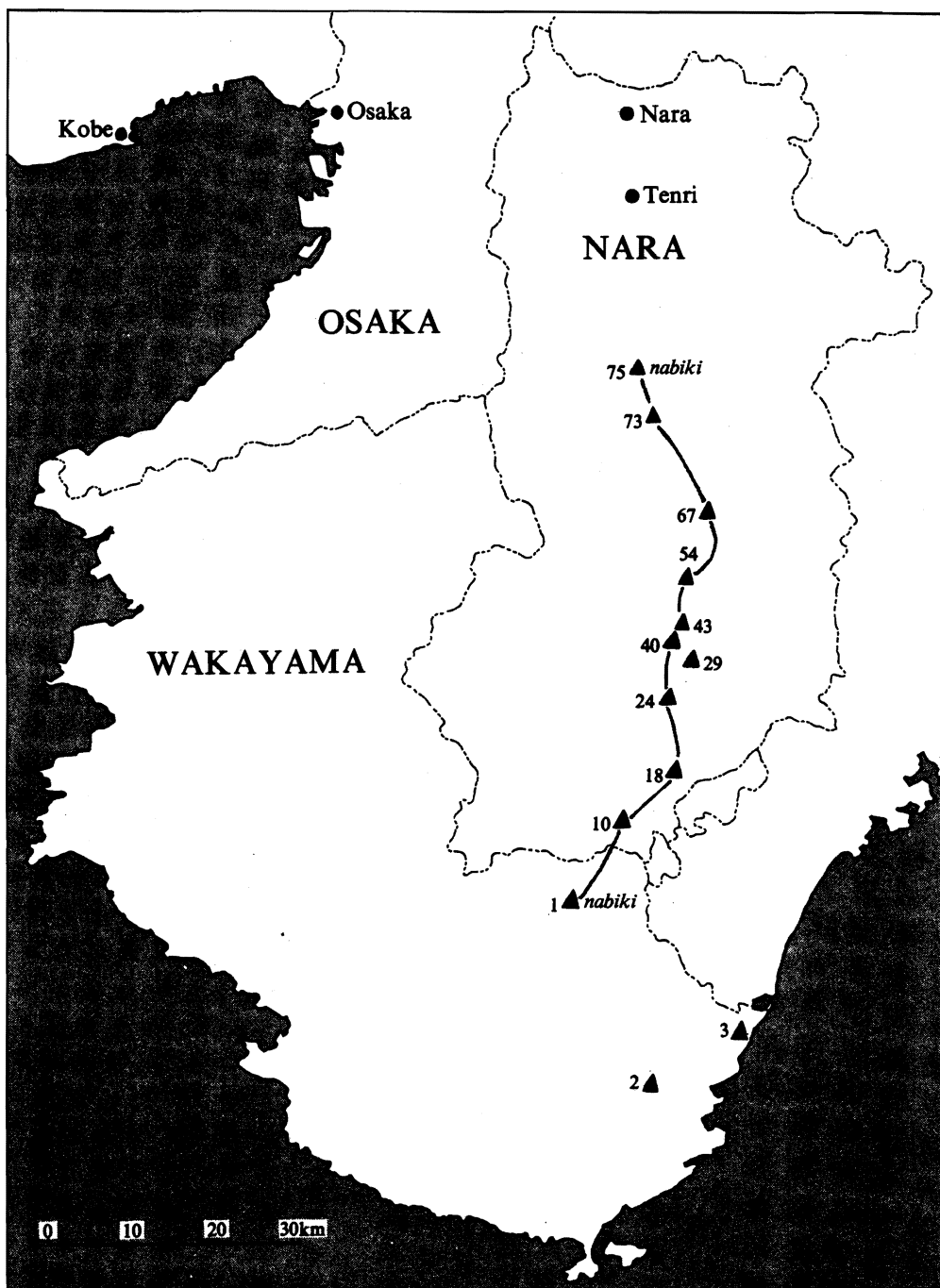
THE main Shōgo-in *nyūbu* today is held around the end of July or the beginning of August, and starts from within the precincts of Shōgo-in itself.<sup>16</sup> After all the *shugenja* have assembled, the departure ceremony (*kakedashi gongyō* 駆出勤行) is

<sup>14</sup> From Shōgo-in's pamphlet (see n. 11, above).

<sup>15</sup> For a detailed explanation of *shugendō* costume, see Earhart, pp. 25–27; Miyake, *Yamabushi*, pp. 141–52; Murakami, *Hattatsu*, pp. 232–57.

<sup>16</sup> For a more detailed analysis of this

pilgrimage, see Gorai Shigeru, *Yama no Shūkyō* 山の宗教, Tankōsha, Kyoto, 1970, pp. 154–221. But this account covers only Yoshino through Zenki; the rest of the route, from Zenki to the Kumano region, was not reopened until summer 1977.



The Kii Peninsula, showing the route of the Yoshino-Kumano Pilgrimage

performed. This consists of chanting various sutras, usually including the *Hannya-shin-gyō*, and the invocation *Namu Jimben Dai-bosatsu*<sup>17</sup> in honor of En-no-Gyōja. The pilgrims are welcomed, given instructions, and lined up according to rank before departure. The Ōshuku and Ninoshuku *sendatsu* lead the line, followed from highest to lowest with the *shinkyaku* 新客, or novices on their first pilgrimage, at the end. One or two *sendatsu* stay at the very end of the line to ensure that no one straggles too far behind.

There is a saying in *shugendō* that pilgrims in the mountains, whether laymen or priests, are all on equal footing; anyone, whether businessman, farmer, priest or whatever, may join and rise in the ranks. The following ranking is a general pattern for all *shugendō* sects:

1 *Nyūi* 入位: a novice who has just entered *shugendō*; as soon as he enters, he is considered a *yamabushi*.

2 *Issōgi* 一僧祇: a man can advance to this rank within a year of becoming a *yamabushi*. He must have practiced in the mountains at least three times, in the spring, summer, and autumn. From this rank on he may wear the *suzukake*, or *yamabushi* robe.

3 *Nisōgi* 二僧祇: this rank is attained after two years and six pilgrimages into the mountains.

4 *Sansōgi* 三僧祇: after three years and nine pilgrimages.

5 *Dai-otsuke* (or *Daiokke*) 大越家: after at least five years of three pilgrimages per year.

6 *Shō-sendatsu* 小先達

7 *Sendatsu* 先達

8 *Dai-sendatsu* 大先達

9 *Shō-sendatsu* 正先達: the man who attains this rank is called a true follower of *shugendō*, or a true ascetic, and he is considered the leader of all the *sendatsu* and the highest master of *shugendō*. In order to reach this rank, he must show knowledge of and skill in the following ceremonies: the secret meanings of certain *goma* 護摩 ceremonies; proficiency in the *saitō goma* 柴灯護摩; *hi-watari* 火渡り, or fire-walking; fire ceremony for personal protection; and prayers for the curing of sickness. He must also be acquainted with various secret formulae, such as the *hikime* 蟾目 (Toad's Eye), *kuji* 九字 (Nine Letters), and the *go-shin hō* 護身法 purification rite.

There was once a rank called *tandaishoku* 探題職, passed down directly from En-no-Gyōja through the families of Zenki, who were the possessors of certain esoteric knowledge, but this rank has recently been abolished. The man possessing this rank had the responsibility of questioning *yamabushi* on various teachings to test whether or not they deserved their ranking.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> This honorific title was bestowed on En- | p. 165.  
no-Gyōja in 1800. Wakamori, p. 128; Earhart, | <sup>18</sup> Nikko, pp. 103-04.



The ranking used by the Honzan-ha today is as follows:

- 1 *Jun-sendatsu* 准先達: minimum of three Ōmine pilgrimages.
- 2 *Sendatsu* 先達: minimum of seven Ōmine pilgrimages.
- 3 *Jun-daisendatsu* 准大先達: thirteen Ōmine pilgrimages.
- 4 *Daisendatsu* 大先達: twenty-five Ōmine pilgrimages.
- 5 *Hōshi-daisendatsu* 奉仕大先達: minimum of thirty-three Ōmine pilgrimages.
- 6 *Dōhō-daisendatsu* 道奉大先達: minimum of thirty-three Ōmine pilgrimages.
- 7 *Buchū Shusse Daisendatsu* 峰中出世大先達: minimum of fifty Ōmine pilgrimages.<sup>19</sup>

After leaving Shōgo-in the line proceeds to the nearby Kumano Shrine for another short *gongyō*, and then is transported to Kyoto Station by bus or taxi; from there an express train is taken to the foot of the Yoshino mountains.<sup>20</sup> In the *nyūbu* of July 1977, the *shugenja* left the train at Muta by the River Yoshino and walked in order to Yanagi no Shuku 柳の宿, which is *nabiki* 靡 #75. This term is derived from the verb *nabiku*, 'to yield or submit', and refers to the places where En-no-Gyōja forced the *kami* and other spiritual beings to submit to his authority. There are seventy-five of these *nabiki* along the Yoshino-Kumano route and Yanagi no Shuku is the last. Starting the pilgrimage from Yoshino is thus called *gyaku no mineiri* 逆の峰入, or entering the peak from the opposite end, while beginning from the Kumano end is called *jun no mineiri* 順の峰入, or entering the peak from the proper side. Traditionally the Honzan-ha have entered from Kumano and the Tōzan-ha from Yoshino, although historically this custom was not necessarily followed. In the present case the *shugenja* were affiliated with Shōgo-in and the Honzan-ha, but our pilgrimage was *gyaku no mineiri*.

Yanagi no Shuku, which contains a statue of En-no-Gyōja, is located on the banks of the River Yoshino. All the participants strip to their *fundoshi* and enter the river for a purification ceremony; this cleanses the pilgrim and allows him to enter the holy precincts of the mountain. All the participants sink into the flowing water up to their necks while the *gongyō* is performed. In addition to its purification qualities, this immersion can also signify death. Fortunately this rite was performed in summer and the pilgrims soon dried out while lunch was being eaten. From there the first foothills were entered. There is nothing left of *nabiki* #74, Mt Jōroku 丈六山, where a temple enshrining Yakushi Nyorai used to stand. Further along the route up the mountain is the Kane no Torii of Yoshino. This *torii* is said to have been made with the metal left over from the construction of the Daibutsu at Tōdaiji. At this *torii* the *shinkyaku* place their right hands on one of the pillars and chant as they walk around it:

<sup>19</sup> Personal letter from Miyagi Tainen of Shōgo-in. See also the list of rankings, based largely on the number of *nyūbu* accomplished, in Earhart, pp. 31–32.

<sup>20</sup> It was explained to me that it was pointless to cover this distance on foot as there are no places of worship for the *shugenja* between Kyoto and the foot of the Yoshino mountains.

<i>Yoshino naru</i>	Placing our hands
<i>Kane no torii ni</i>	On the metal <i>torii</i> of Yoshino
<i>Te o kakete</i>	Joyfully we anticipate
<i>Mida no jōdo ni</i>	Entering the Pure Land
<i>Iruzo ureshiki.</i> <sup>21</sup>	Of Amida.

This verse is called a *hika* 秘歌, or secret poem. At one time there were individual *hika* for each *nabiki*, but today only a few of them are retained.

This particular *torii* is also called the Hosshin-mon (The Gate of Aspiration to Enlightenment) and is the first of the four gates of Ōmine. The other three, further up the mountain, are the Shugyō-mon (The Gate of Ascetic Practice), Bodai-mon or Tōgaku-mon (Buddha Gate), and Nehan-mon or Myōgaku-mon (The Nirvana Gate). These symbolize the four gates through which a person passes at the time of a funeral (*shimon kuguri* 四門くぐり—a play on words, for *shi* can mean both 'death' and 'four'). Thus the passage through the gates on the way into the mountains symbolizes the death of the *shugenja*.<sup>22</sup> But there is also a more orthodox Buddhist interpretation. At the Hosshin-mon at the foot of the mountain a person aspires to attain enlightenment, while at the Shugyō-mon he begins the practices of the ten stages; at the Tōgaku-mon he approaches the land or mind of the Buddha and his enlightenment, and at the Myōgaku-mon (just before the peak of Ōmine) he enters the realm of the Buddha.<sup>23</sup>

After passing through the Ninnō Gate the pilgrim enters the compound of Zaō Gongendō, said to be the largest wooden building in Japan after Tōdaiji. The three central statues represent Shakamuni (the past), Kannon (the present), and Maitreya (the future), all of whom are manifestations of Zaō Gongen. This triad reflects the legend of En-no-Gyōja and his search for a suitable guide for his mountain austerities. In a vision, first Shakamuni and then Maitreya manifested themselves to him but were rejected as too weak and unsuitable. Then the fierce form of Zaō appeared and was readily accepted and enshrined here as the proper guide for severe ascetic practice.<sup>24</sup>

All of the above-mentioned locations, from Kane no Torii to Zaō Gongendō, including various temples, shrines, memorials, and lodges are considered part of *nabiki* #73, or Mt Yoshino 吉野山. At the next *nabiki*, Mikumari Jinja 水分神社, the *shinkyaku* participate in the Shinto purification ceremony, or *oharai* 御祓, before entering deeper into the mountain. The site is also called Komori Jingū, or the Shrine for Protection of Children. *Oharai* is also performed at *nabiki* #71, Kimbu Shrine 金峰神社. This shrine is located on Mt Kimbu, the traditional spot where En-no-Gyōja built his famous bridge from Mt Katsuragi, and on clear days the Katsuragi area can be seen to the east. A special ceremony is performed here for *shinkyaku* at the Kenuki no Tō, or Pagoda for Removing Stumbling. All the novices are herded into a small hut, which is closed tightly against the outside

<sup>21</sup> Gorai, *Yama*, p. 157.

<sup>22</sup> Gorai, *Yama*, pp. 157–58.

<sup>23</sup> From the Shōgo-in pamphlet.

<sup>24</sup> Gorai, *Yama*, pp. 163 ff.

light. The priest chants a *hika*, which the novices repeat while they slowly walk around the central pillar in the complete darkness:

<i>Yoshino naru</i>	The hidden tower
<i>Miyama no oku no kakuredō</i>	Deep in the Yoshino mountains,
<i>Honrai kū no, sumika narikere.</i>	The dwelling of <i>sunyata</i> .
<i>On abiraunken soaka</i>	<i>On abiraunken soaka</i>
<i>Namu Jimben Daibosatsu.</i>	<i>Namu Jimben Daibosatsu.</i>

Suddenly the priest clangs a gong, which reverberates deafeningly in the hut. At this sound the hearts of the novices 'turn over' and the impurities of the heart are thus released. The novices are now ready to enter into the heart of the mountain.

The real mountain path begins just past *nabiki* #70, or Aizen no Shuku 愛染の宿. Until May 1970 this was the furthest point women were allowed to climb, but today nothing of importance remains on this site. A long distance separates this place from *nabiki* #69, or Nizō no Shuku 二蔵の宿, which is now the furthest point that women are allowed. From here the women descend to Dorogawa village while the *shugenja* proceed to the Jōshin Mon, or Gate of the Pure Heart. In the *nyūbu* of July–August 1975, the Shōgo-in *shugenja* traveled by bus to Dorogawa village and Ōmine Bridge at the foot of Mt Ōmine. Here, in preparation for the pilgrimage, a *goma* ceremony was performed. This is a tantric Buddhist rite involving a symbolic and ritual fire and is of great significance and importance in *shugendō*. There are many kinds of *goma* of varying complexity and efficacy, but perhaps the most important of them all is the *saitō goma*, which consists of four introductory rituals and the burning of the central fire. The four rituals are *yamabushi mondō* 山伏問答 (catechism), *hōkyū no sahō* 法弓の作法 (Sacred Bow ceremony), *hōken no sahō* 法剣の作法 (Sacred Sword ceremony), and *ono no sahō* 斧の作法 (Sacred Ax ceremony). Many of the spells and symbolic meanings are so secret that I can report only the outward activity.<sup>25</sup>

At Mt Ōmine the *shugenja* progress in order of rank over Ōmine Bridge to the precincts of a shrine where a *dōjō* 道場, or sacred area, has been prepared. The whole area is encircled by *shimenawa* 標縄, or sacred rope, identifying it as a sacred place, and most of the pilgrims sit around the pile of wood in the center. A select few remain outside for the *yamabushi mondō*; these men play the role of *shugenja* and, having heard about the *goma*, have come to participate. They are duly questioned to see whether they are true *shugenja* of the Honzan-ha.

*Question:* As a *yamabushi*, a disciple of the Shōgo-in Monzeki 門跡,<sup>26</sup> you are expected to be aware of the proper significance of *shugendō*. We will now test you, as is our custom.

*Answer:* I will answer.

<sup>25</sup> A certain amount of information was obtained from the Shōgo-in pamphlet. An example of *yamabushi mondō* may be seen in the kabuki play *Kanjincho* 勧進帳.

<sup>26</sup> Formerly an abbot of imperial descent, but in this case denoting merely an abbot or head priest.

*Q.* What is the meaning of the two characters *yama bushi*? What is the meaning of *shugendō*?

*A.* *Yamabushi* are those who enter the mountains [which symbolize] the absolute nature of the Law, where they conquer the enemy, blind desire. *Shugendō* is the Way which shows how to perform ascetic practices and reap the benefits from these austerities.

*Q.* Who was the founder of *shugendō*?

*A.* The founder of *shugendō* was En-no-Gyōja, Jimben Daibosatsu. Born on the first day of the sixth year of the reign of Emperor Jomei [634] in the village of Kayahara in the land of Yamato, he entered the mountains near Katsuragi when he was seventeen, and opened up the peaks of Ōmine for esoteric practices when he was nineteen. In the fourth year of the reign of Emperor Saimei [658], he was inspired to practice in a crevice behind a waterfall on Mt Minoo, where he worshipped the Peacock Bodhisattva<sup>27</sup> and received the deepest secrets of the law. He traveled up and down Ōmine thirty-three times in all, and when he was sixty-eight years old he rose up to heaven from the peak of Mt Minoo.

*Q.* What is the principal object of worship of *shugendō*?

*A.* In general, the mandalas of the Diamond and Womb Realms; the focus of ascetic practices is Fudō Myōo, the fierce-looking manifestation of the teachings of Dainichi Buddha.

*Q.* What is the meaning of the *token* 頭巾 [skull cap] on your head?

*A.* This *token* symbolizes Dainichi's crown of full and complete wisdom. The twelve sections symbolize the twelve-linked chain of dependent origination. The six on the right represent the six paths of destruction and return; the six on the left, the six paths of transmigration. Therefore this skull cap also signifies the unity of the common and the holy, the sacred and the profane.

*Q.* What about the *suzukake* 鈴掛 [robe] you are wearing?

*A.* This is the lawful wear for practicing asceticism in the mountains. The bell [on the side] is a five-pronged *vājra*, symbolizing the perfect state of meditation of Dainichi, and the sound of its ringing is a sermon on his Body as the manifestation of the law. . . .

*Q.* What is the meaning of the *yuigesa* 結袈裟 [cloak] on your shoulders?

*A.* This is the special monk's robe worn by followers of *shugendō*. It has nine folds, representing the nine worlds and the interpenetration of all worlds in the world of buddhahood. The three sections at the back represent the unity of the three bodies of the Buddha,<sup>28</sup> the six folds in front represent the six virtues.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The Peacock Bodhisattva (*Kujaku bosatsu* 孔雀菩薩), or Peacock King (*Kujaku myōō* 孔雀明王) is an Indian deity in the form of a peacock which eats poisonous snakes; hence the deity protects from and destroys all poisons, and was later incorporated into

Buddhism as one of the guardian deities of the Buddha and his teachings. The Peacock King Sutra and its *darani* were popular in Japan as magical formulae to ward off evil. Sawa Ryūken 佐和隆研, ed., *Mikkyō Jiten* 密教辞典, Hōzōkan, Kyoto, 1975, pp. 142-43.



*Q.* What about the cord around your waist?

*A.* This is called the *kai-no-o* 螺緒, and is a tool for use in maneuvering on steep cliffs or in times of danger or emergency. It symbolizes the Diamond Realm, the absoluteness of the Law.

*Q.* What is the significance of the *shakujō* 錫杖 [staff] in your hand?

*A.* The staff represents the Cosmic Law; it is the staff of wisdom showing all sentient beings the way to enlightenment. Through the sound of the rattling [of the metal rings at the top of the staff], sentient beings are awakened from their dream of illusion in which they bear the sufferings of the three worlds and the six ways.<sup>30</sup>

*Q.* If all this is true, then answer this: why do you, a Buddhist, wear the skin of an animal?

*A.* This is called a *hisshiki* 引敷. It is patterned after Monju Bodhisattva, who rides on the back of a lion. It symbolizes the courage and speed necessary to practice austerities in the mountains. It represents the unilluminated, completely merged, unobstructed nature of the Law. As for its practical use, it serves as a blanket to sit on sharp tree trunks or rocks.

<sup>28</sup> That is, *nirmana-kāya* (the body of transformation), *sambhoga-kāya* (the body of bliss), and *dharma-kāya* (the body of Law).

<sup>29</sup> Charity, precepts, patience, effort, meditation, and wisdom.

<sup>30</sup> The worlds of desire (*yokkai* 欲界), form

(*shikikai* 色界), and formlessness (*mushikikai* 無色界).

The six ways represent the six worlds through which living beings transmigrate: hell; the worlds of hungry spirits, beasts, *asuras*, and people; and heaven.

Q. What is that sword<sup>31</sup> attached to your waist?

A. This is Fudō's sword of wisdom. Its cuts off hindrances, demons, and the passions and attachments of this world.

Q. What about the straw sandals which are called *yatsume no waraji* 八つ目の草鞋 [eight-eyed sandals]?

A. They represent walking on the eight-petalled lotus.

Q. What is the meaning of the burnt offering of the Great *Saitō Goma*?

A. The burnt offering of the Great *Saitō Goma* is the secret offering of *shugen-dō*. It is comparable to the Buddha's wisdom which, like fire, completely burns away and consumes all the passions and attachments of this world. The ceremony clearly expresses the rational aspect of the Law.<sup>32</sup> It burns away the polluted accumulations [karma] of life and death, and it leads us to rely on the foundation represented by the letter 𑖀.<sup>33</sup> [It encourages us] to make our residence in the land of the five Buddhas, [and teaches us] to enter the six great concepts; it also signifies the non-duality of ourselves and the Buddha. The ritual, activity, and appearance of the *goma* all have varying significance.

Q. Your replies leave no doubt that you are a true *yamabushi*. If that is the truth, again I say, if that is the truth, then you may pass.<sup>34</sup>

Once the above *mondō* is completed, attention shifts back to the center *dōjō* for the *hōkyū no sahō*. After some sutra chanting, a *shugenja* called the *hōkyū-shi* 法[宝]弓師 picks up a special bow and with much ceremony and special spells shoots off six arrows, each a different color. The arrows are shot to the east, south, west, north, and northeast (the last being the *kimon* 鬼門 direction from which great evil and danger come and thus is the most feared) and into the *goma*. This rite drives away any evil spirits from the *dōjō* and attracts the power of Fudō and other protecting deities.<sup>35</sup> Next a senior *shugenja* called the *hōken-shi* 法[宝]剣師 steps up to the *goma*, draws a short sword, and recites certain formulae. As he chants he slices the character for light 光 in the air with his sword. This symbolizes the cutting away of passions and attachments by the sword of Fudō so that participants can become one with the deity.

The final introductory ceremony is the *ono no sahō*, similar to the one described above except that a large ceremonial ax is used instead of a sword. The *shugenja* slices the ax through the air three times each in the center and to the right and left

<sup>31</sup> *Hōken* 法劍 (lit. Dharma Sword) can also be written 宝劍 (Treasure Sword). This 'sword' has a short blade and is closer to a large knife. In the past it probably had a practical use as a tool or defensive weapon against wild animals, but now it is basically symbolic. It is used, as mentioned below, in ceremonies such as the *saitō goma*.

<sup>32</sup> *Rihō* 理法 of the Womb Realm, in contrast to *chitai* 智体, the body of wisdom of the Diamond Realm.

<sup>33</sup> The first letter of the sanskrit alphabet, signifying the fundamental origin of all being.

<sup>34</sup> Nikko, pp. 104-05.

<sup>35</sup> A remnant of the Indian worship of the six directions. See Alicia Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, MN Monograph 31, 1969, pp. 20-34. The origin and explanation of many of the names appearing in the account below may be found in this book.

of the *goma* while shouting '*Ei-ei-aban!*', a tantric spell. The purpose of the exercise is to purify the wood for the *goma* burning; all the wood used for the ceremony is gathered in the mountain, hence the symbolic use of the ax. The main *goma* ceremony now takes place. The *horagai* 螺法貝, or conch shell, is blown and the leader (*saitō-shi* 柴[探]灯師) steps forward to read a prayer and announce the beginning of the *nyūbu*. Sutra chanting is then begun in earnest and continues uninterruptedly until the end of the *goma*. Various sutras are chanted, the most important being the *Hannya-shin-gyō* 般若心經 and the *Kannon-gyō* 觀音經, along with various *darani* 陀羅尼<sup>36</sup> and prayers. The *goma* is lit from the front and back, and soon smoke billows out and envelops the *shugenja*. Water is sprinkled periodically to prevent the fire from burning too quickly and to increase the purifying smoke.



Most of the symbolic meaning of the actions and implements from here on are secret, revealed only to the initiated, and thus a complete understanding of the *goma* ceremony, its symbolism and significance, is beyond the grasp of the outsider. As the *goma* fire burns, the *saitō-shi* stands up from time to time and with a long

<sup>36</sup> Magical formula, associated particularly with Shingon.

forked pole traces over the fire the letter 𑖀, symbolic of Mahavairocana Buddha. To his left are piled 108 sticks in twelve bundles, and these are handed to him one by one by an attendant. The *saitō-shi* uses his *hōken* to make a cut on each side of these bundles before casting them into the fire. This symbolizes the cutting away and burning of the 108 passions and attachments. All the participants then stand for a final round of *horagai* blowing and sutra chanting. The *shugenja* are now ready to enter the mountain.

The path from Ōmine Bridge stretches up the mountains until it intersects the route from Yoshino at Jōshin no Mon (*nabiki* #68). Here there is a statue called Mukai Fudō, or the Fudō of greeting, and here the pilgrim can rest and buy food and drink at a small hut. A short way up the path is the Kanekake Ishi, the first rock used for ascetic practices. The rock is about eight meters in height and all the *shugenja* must scale it. Further along the path one comes to the Okame Ishi, about five meters in length, and it is said that since women are forbidden from entering this mountain, En-no-Gyōja's mother transformed herself into a turtle in order to visit her son here. To protect the mystique associated with the rock, various taboos are observed as revealed in its *hika*:

*Okame Ishi*  
*Fumuna tatakuna*  
*Tsue tsukuna.*  
*Yokete tōreyo*  
*Tabi no shinkyaku.*<sup>37</sup>

Pass along the side,  
 You who are novice climbers.  
 Do not step on, do not knock,  
 Do not strike it with your staff,  
 The Turtle Rock.

It is not far from here to the Nishi no Nozoki, a steep cliff over which the pilgrim is suspended to gaze into the face of death, one of the 'practices of throwing away the body'.<sup>38</sup> Ropes are tied across both shoulders and a *yamabushi* holds the pilgrim's legs while he is slowly lowered over the edge of the cliff. The man thus suspended has to confess his sins and the *yamabushi* will ask questions such as, 'Will you respect your parents?', 'Do you promise to study hard?', and 'Have you confessed all your sins?' After the dangling man has answered suitably, he is hauled up again. There is one instant when the *yamabushi* will loosen their hold so for a split second you begin to fall, but you are caught very quickly. That one fraction of a second, however, is quite unforgettable and heart-stopping, a moment of truth. Meanwhile *gongyō* is performed and all the participants are taught the *hika* assigned to this spot. The verse reflects the joy of rebirth after the close encounter with death.

*Arigataya*  
*Nishi no nozoki ni*  
*Zange shite*  
*Mida no jōdo ni*  
*Iruzo ureshiki.*<sup>39</sup>

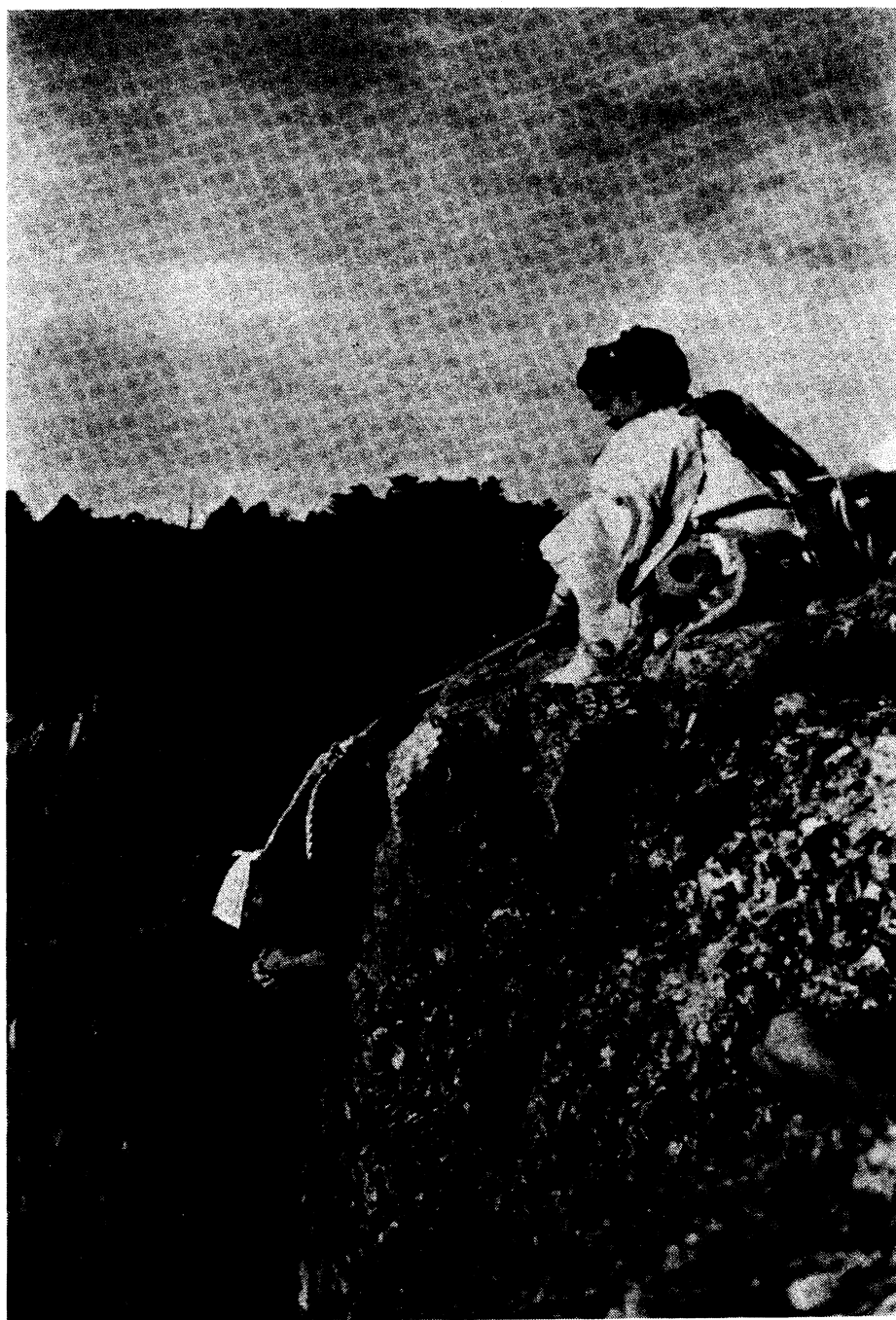
Thanks to the Western Nozoki  
 We have confessed  
 And can joyfully enter  
 The Pure Land of Amida.

<sup>37</sup> Gorai, *Yama*, p. 179.

<sup>38</sup> *shashingyō* 捨身行

<sup>39</sup> Gorai, *Yama*, p. 181.





To one side of the Western Nozoki is the Nihon Iwa, a cliff which is not visited these days but was once used for the disposal of dead bodies. It was believed that a man's inability to walk any further on account of sickness or fatigue was the result of his past sins. Rather than obstruct the practice of other ascetics, the 'dead' would be thrown over this cliff and would, it was believed, be reborn in the valley below. This practice, admittedly cruel, at least illustrates the determination of the mountain ascetics, who faced this very real possibility of death in the event of their strength failing along the route.

Sanjōgatake 山上ヶ岳, *nabiki* #67 and the peak of Mt Ōmine, is the next stop. Its front gate is the Myōgaku-mon mentioned above and is the last of the four gates before the pilgrim enters the realm of the Buddha. There are a number of large lodges here for the *shugenja* to spend the night. Behind the precincts is the *ura no gyōba*, a challenging route over, around, and through rocks and cliffs. The first spot is called Buddha's Womb and includes a narrow tunnel, ten meters long, through the rocks called *tainai kuguri* ('through the inner womb'). The symbolism of death and rebirth here is obvious. One of the most striking sights was the Eastern Nozoki, originally used for the same practice as the Western Nozoki, but closed off by law since a man fell to his death there during the Meiji period. Close by is the Ari no Towatari, or 'Ant's Crossing', a cliff where, in order to scale the final distance, a short jump is necessary. The jump itself is not very long, but the result of failure would be fatal. The final test comes at the Byōdō no Iwa, or 'Rock of Equality'. The position of this protruding rock on the side of the cliff obliges the pilgrim to pass cautiously, with his back to the cliff and facing outward looking directly down at the beautiful green valley far, far below. Grasping the ledge with his right hand, he must swing his body round with his left leg dangling over empty space before catching a foothold on the other side of the rock.

Once we were safely gathered on the other side, the head *yamabushi* explained the purpose of these dangerous maneuvers. 'While you are concentrating on getting past these dangerous places', he said, 'your mind is clear. You do not think of money, sex, drink, or any other distraction. Perhaps for only a second you think of no-thing [*mu* 無]. For a moment you are in the world of no-thing-ness [*mu no sekai* 無の世界]. This is the state of mind you must cultivate. The purpose of *shugendō* is to realize this state of mind and cultivate it in everyday life.'

On the summit of Mt Ōmine is located the large Ōmine temple, with a fenced compound for *goma* ceremonies. While this place is an especially important site for the Honzan-ha, the Tōzan-ha regard the next *nabiki*, #66, Ozasa no Shuku 小篠の宿, as particularly sacred. This is 2.6 kilometers from Sanjōgatake and it is here that the Tōzan-ha hold initiation ceremonies similar to the Honza-ha's rites described above.

From here the emphasis shifts to the walking itself as the terrain becomes rougher, and specific *nabiki* can be mentioned briefly.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Descriptions taken from the Shōgo-in pamphlet.

- #65 Amida's Forest (Amida Mori 阿弥陀森): two kilometers from Ozasa.
- #64 Waki Shelter (Waki no Shuku 脇の宿): one kilometer from #65. From here the path becomes narrower and more difficult.
- #63 Fugen Peak (Fugengatake 普賢岳): five kilometers from Ozasa. Off the main path to the left and down a cliff is a hole in the rocks (*kyō bako ishi*) where En-no-Gyōja is said to have stored some sutras.
- #62 Shō Cavern (Shō no Iwaya 筍の窟): 2.5 kilometers to the left of the main path from Fugen Peak. This cavern was often used for long periods of seclusion and is called the Place for Winter Seclusion (Fuyu Gomori no Ba 冬籠りの場). Nearby are the Eagle Cavern (Washi no Iwaya 鷲の窟) and Morning Sun Cavern (Asahi no Iwaya 朝日の窟), also used for similar austerities. This area is still used by members of Shōgo-in for short periods of seclusion.
- #61 Maitreya Peak (Mirokugatake 弥勒岳): 1.4 kilometers from Fugen Peak on the main path.
- #60 Children's Rest (Chigo Domari 稚児泊): En-no-Gyōja is said to have subjugated a large snake in this area.
- #59 Peak of Seven Days (Shichiyōgatake 七曜ヶ岳): also called Country-Beholding Peak (Kunimigatake 国見ヶ岳).
- #58 Return of the Ascetic (Gyōja Gaeri 行者還): a cliff so steep that even En-no-Gyōja had to turn back and advance along the valley to find an easier route. Nowadays there is a small hut near one of the few spots along the path that has running water.
- #57 First Tawa (Ichi no Tawa 一の多和). A *tawa* is a low spot between peaks along the ridge of the mountains.
- #56 Stone of Rest (Ishi Yasu no Shuku 石休宿).
- #55 Shōbō's Shelter (Shōbō no Shuku 聖宝の宿; also known as Kōbase no Shuku 講婆世宿 or 香橋宿). 11 kilometers from #58. Here there is a metal statue of Shōbō Rigen Daishi 聖宝理原大師, founder of the Tōzan-ha. It is said that if anyone touches this statue, rain will be sure to fall.
- #54 Mt Misen (Misen 弥山). There are lodges for the night here. Nearby is a small shrine dedicated to Benzai-ten, the deity of water.
- #53 Wizard Peak (Chōsengatake 頂仙ヶ岳). To the west of the path and worshipped from afar.
- #52 Then and Now Shelter (Kokon Shuku 古今宿). To the west of the path and worshipped from afar.
- #51 Peak of Eight Sutras (Hakkyōgatake 八経ヶ岳). The highest peak (1,915 meters) in the Kansai region. Eight copies of the Lotus Sutra were buried there by En-no-Gyōja.
- #50 Peak of the Morning Star (Myōjōgatake 明星ヶ岳).
- #49 Chrysanthemum Cavern (Kiku no Iwaya 菊の窟). In the valley to the west of the main path. The cavern is believed to a center of demonic power and anybody entering it will never find his way out again. Worshipped from afar.
- #48 Forest of the Zen Master (Zenji no Mori 禅師の森). Four kilometers from

#51 and with striking views on both sides of the path. To the left are large jagged rocks worshipped as images of Fudō, while to the right can be seen #45, one of the steepest and highest cliffs in the Kansai region.

#47 Five-Pronged *Vājra* Peak (Goko no Mine 五鈷の嶺). The sacred site of the Five Buddhas of Wisdom.

#46 Boat Tawa (Fune no Tawa 船の多和). A *tawa* shaped like a boat. Unfortunately there is no water here.

#45 Seven Faces Mountain (Shichimen-zan 七面山; also called Nanaomote 七面). A number of devils (*oni* 鬼) are said to live in the caverns at the top of this high cliff.

#44 Yōji Shelter (Yōji no Shuku 楊子の宿). 12 kilometers from #54. Water available for purification ceremony.

#43 Peak of Buddha's Nature [Birth] (Busshōgatake 仏性[生]岳).

#42 Peacock Peak (Kujakugatake 孔雀ヶ岳). The route between this *nabiki* and the next is the most treacherous stretch of the entire pilgrimage.

#41 Empty Bowl Peak (Kūhachigatake 空鉢ヶ岳). Between here and the next *nabiki* is the dividing line between the Diamond Realm mandala to the north and the Womb Realm mandala to the south. The eastern gate to Amida's Pure Land is located here.

#40 Shakamuni Peak (Shakagatake 釈迦ヶ岳). The summit is crowned by a large metal statue of Shakamuni set up in 1922 by two devout *yamabushi*. Here, as in other steep climbs, the *shugenja* begin chanting, '*Zange, zange* [confess, confess]', while other *shugenja* answer, '*Rokkon shōjō* [purify the six senses]', and this is repeated back and forth by way of encouragement.

#39 Totsu Gate (Totsu-mon 都津門). Another large cliff used for ascetic practices. *Shugenja* crawl through a hole in the rock called, again, the *tai-nai kuguri* ('through the inner womb') and back around the outside of the cliff. This place also is believed by some to be the Eastern Gate of the Pure Land.

#38 Jinzen Shelter (Jinzen no Shuku 深仙宿). One of the most sacred spots for the Ōmine *shugenja*, and considered the central eight-petalled lotus of the Womb Realm mandala, that is, the seat on which Mahavairocana sits. Holy water (*kōshōsui* 香精水) drips slowly out of a large rock nearby and is used for the tantric Buddhist initiation ceremony called *jinzen daikanjō* 深仙大灌頂.<sup>41</sup> The ceremony and its symbolic meaning and content are kept secret from outsiders. The general pattern, which can be discussed, consists of confession and other preparatory rituals, after which the initiate receives baptism (sprinkling) of holy water on his head (*kanjō*) and the secret seal of initiation from Shōgo-in. After all the initiates have undergone this ceremony, a *goma* is performed to celebrate the completed *kanjō*. These initiation ceremonies are supposed to be held about once every decade. They were last performed in 1886, 1920, 1950, and 1975.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> For a first-hand account of this ceremony, see Miyake Hitoshi, *Henshin* 変身, Kōbundō, 1975, pp. 212-16; a general analysis

is given in Miyake, *Girei*, pp. 91-108.

<sup>42</sup> Miyake, *Henshin*, p. 212.

In front of the *goma* area is a wooden shelter called Mt Ōmine Central Eight-Petalled Pedestal Jinzen Great Initiation Temple (Ōmine Chūdai Hachiyō Jinzen Daikanjō Dō 大峰中台八葉深仙大灌頂堂), a name which captures very concisely the role and importance of this location. The holy water of Jinzen is believed to heal any and all kinds of sickness and ailment. On my first visit there in 1975 there was no water available, but in 1977 enough was gathered to distribute three small cups to each participant.

#37 Shōten Forest (Shōten no Mori 聖天の森). To the left of the main path.

#36 Gokaku Wizard (Gokaku Sen 五角仙). The site of many rocks used for ascetic purposes.

#35 Mahavairocana Peak (Dainichigatake 大日岳). A large rock formation which is climbed for 20 meters or so with the aid of a chain; steep cliffs are seen on both sides. On the peak itself is a statue of Mahavairocana; although located physically in the Womb Realm, its mudra (hand gesture) is that of the Diamond Realm.

#34 Senju Peak (Senjugatake 千手岳). Not climbed today.

#33 Two Stones (Futatsu Ishi ニツ石). Off the main path and on the way down to Zenki (#29). Two stone figures thrust up about seven meters out of their surroundings; they are climbed around in a figure-of-eight pattern as an ascetic practice.

#32 Sobaku Peak (Sobakudake 蘇莫岳).

#31 Small Pond Shelter (Koike no Shuku 小池宿).

#30 Chigusa Peak (Chigusadake 千草岳). #32-30 are bypassed on the way to Zenki.

#29 Mt Zenki (Zenki-zan 前鬼山). According to legend, En-no-Gyōja, after initiating his disciples at Jinzen, came down the mountain to Mt Zenki. Here Zenki and Goki, husband and wife, descendants of *oni* and followers of En-no-Gyōja, were ordered to 'live in this area to serve Ōmine ascetics, guard the mountains, and guide the *shugenja*.'<sup>43</sup> This was the origin of the five Goki families who founded Zenki village and in the past presided over five lodges for *shugenja*. Today only one lodge remains to maintain this tradition which goes back 1,300 years. All *shugenja* now stay at the lodge of the Goki Suke family; of this family, only Goki Gisuke 五鬼義价, affectionately known as Goro-san, remains to take care of the material needs of the *shugenja*. In the Zenki area, as on Sanjōgatake, there is a place of ascetic practice (*ura no gyōba*). Included in this area is the following *nabiki*.

#28 Three-Tiered Falls (Sanjū-Taki, or Mikasane-Taki 三重滝). Still used for sitting under in meditation. The three levels of waterfalls are called Horse-Headed Kannon (Batō-Kannon 馬頭観音), Thousand-Hand Kannon (Senju Kannon 千手観音), and Fudō. There are also two large rock caves, the Womb Realm *iwaya* and the Diamond Realm *iwaya*, used for long periods of seclusion. Many other rugged natural formations make this area very suitable for ascetic practices.

<sup>43</sup> Gorai, *Yama*, p. 209, and Shōgo-in pamphlet.

In the early Meiji period the government adopted a policy calling for the separation of Shinto and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri* 神仏分離).<sup>44</sup> Since it was neither, or rather both, Shinto and Buddhist, *shugendō* was officially proscribed in 1872. Members of *shugendō* were obliged either to become Shinto or Buddhist priests or return to lay life. The two branches of *shugendō* officially became part of the Tendai (Honzan-ha) sect or the Shingon (Tōzan-ha) sect, and the Yoshino-Kumano route fell into disuse. Even after World War II and the re-establishment of the independent *shugendō* sects, the path between Zenki and Kumano Hongū remained untraveled until recently. A few years ago a lay organization called the Hagaromo Association decided to restore this section of the route and thus re-open the entire Yoshino-Kumano path. Thus it was that in July 1977 members of this association (including myself) and a large group of *shugenja* from Shōgo-in assembled at Zenki for the historic pilgrimage. The five-day hike was filmed by NHK and the report appeared on television in the following month. The rest of this travel account will deal with this walk and the completion of the Yoshino-Kumano *nyūbu*.

#27 Interior Peak of Protection (Okumoridake 奥守岳). Fudō Myōō is enshrined here.

#26 Peak of Child Protection (Komoridake 子守岳). Also called Jizōdake. Between this *nabiki* and the previous one lies Bridal Pass (Yomekoshitōge 嫁越峠), where brides from one side of the mountain would pass on their way to be married on the other side.

#25 Wisdom Peak (Hannyadake 般若岳). Also called the Western Gate (Nishi no Mon 西の門).

#24 Nirvana Peak (Nehandake 涅槃岳).

#23 Kenkō Gate (Kengkō Mon 乾光門).

#22 Jikyō Shelter (Jikyō no Shuku 持経宿). A road now cuts the path at this place so for convenience sake the third night was spent here (the first night at Zenki, the second at Jinzen). In the past the *shugenja* spent the night at the next *nabiki*.

#21 Peaceful Shelter (Heiji no Shuku 平地宿). Only a small shelter now remains here, along with the following poem by the poet-monk Saigyō:

Written while gazing at the moon from the peaceful shelter of Heiji and dew from the treetops wets my sleeves:

*Kozue naru  
Tasuki mo aware o  
Omoubeshi  
Hikari ni gushite  
Tsuyu no koboruru.*

The moon  
Through the treetops  
Is poignant  
As the moonlight  
Drips with the dew.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Earhart, pp. 35-37.

<sup>45</sup> The poem is found in Kazamaki Keijirō 風巻景次郎, ed., *Sankashū*, *Kinkaiwakashū* 山家集, 金槐和歌集 (NKBT 29), Iwanami

Shoten, 1961, p. 195. An English translation can be found in William LaFleur, *Mirror for the Moon—Saigyō*, New Directions, 1977, p. 53.

#20 Shelter of Bitter Fields (Nuta no Shuku 怒田宿). En-no-Gyōja is believed to have buried some sutras in this area.

#19 Peak of the Practicing Wizard (Gyōsendake 行仙岳).

#18 Mount of the Discarded Bamboo Hat (Kasasuteyama 笠捨山). The longest continuous climb in the *gyaku no mine* direction.

#17 Spear Peak (Yarigatake 槍ヶ岳).

#16 Arbor Shelter (Shiaya no Shuku 四阿屋宿). Many sacred rocks here are dedicated to Fudō, Aizen, and others.

#15 Chrysanthemum Pond (Kikugaike 菊ヶ池).

#14 Worship of Return (Ogami Kaeshi 拜返し). For those entering from the Kumano side, this is the place for turning around to worship in the direction of Kumano before proceeding.

#13 Fragrant Spirits Mountain (Kōshōsan 香精山).

#12 Old Hut Shelter (Koya no Shuku 古屋宿). The fourth night was spent here in a village located in the valley called Kamikuzukawa. The descent from the regular mountain path is made a short distance past this *nabiki*.

#11 Nyoi Hōju Peak (Nyoihōjudake 如意宝珠岳). The aborigines who resisted Jimmu Tennō in his drive through these mountains to Yamato are said to have lived in this area.

#10 Mt Tamaki (Tamakisan 玉置山). The Kumano Tamaki Shrine (Tamaki Gongen 玉置権現) is located here. Nearby is the famous Jewel Rock (Tama-ishi 玉石), a perfect sphere three-quarters buried in the ground; this is a spot of great spiritual intensity. According to the *kannushi* of the shrine, mediums and people with spiritual sensitivity bypass the main Tamaki Shrine and come directly to this rock to experience its spiritual power. The trees in this area, many of which must be hundreds of years old, add to the intense atmosphere of mystery and power that surrounds this mountain like the morning mist.

There is a legend that the lost tribe of Israel opened this mountain and buried the Ark of the Covenant here.<sup>46</sup>

#9 Drinking Water Shelter (Mizunomi Shuku 水呑宿).

#8 Cliff Shelter (Kishi no Shuku 岸の宿). A rock formation nearby is called Ari no Towatari, as also at #67.

#7 Five Buddhas Peak (Godaisondake 五大尊岳).

#6 Diamond Tawa (Kongō Tawa 金剛多和).

#5 Daikoku Peak (Daikokudake 大黒岳).

#4 Fukikoshi Mountain (Fukikoshisan 吹越山). A *saitō goma* ceremony was performed here before the party crossed the river to Hongū. Somewhat like the Styx in Greek mythology, the River Kumano is the last barrier to be crossed before

<sup>46</sup> This legend was discussed by the *shugenja* while we were staying overnight at Tamaki Shrine, but I do not know its origin.

The abundance of what appear to be Stars of David at Ise Shrine has given rise to similar speculations.

entering the land of the dead, Kumano Hongū. In July 1977 the river was shallow enough to allow us to wade across, but in the past a small boat was used to ferry the tired *shugenja* across.

- |              |                       |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| #3 Shingū 新宮 | } Kumano Sanzan 熊野三山. |
| #2 Nachi 那智  |                       |
| #1 Hongū 本宮  |                       |

THE purpose of this article has been to provide a fairly straightforward account of a *shugendō* pilgrimage through the Yoshino-Kumano mountains. This ascetic exercise has been practiced throughout most of Japan's recorded history and, despite the country's modernity and industrialization, is still practiced today. I do not intend to offer any profound conclusions at this point, but perhaps a few observations may be made in the light of my research and practical experience.

1 One of the most prominent and important themes in the *nyūbu* is that of death and rebirth. The symbolic death of the *shugenja* as he enters the mountain is seen in the four gates of Ōmine and the purification ceremony in the River Yoshino, while the consequent rebirth is symbolized by practices such as climbing through the Buddha's Womb and actualized in the return to everyday life after leaving the mountains. These are undoubtedly the most striking features of the pilgrimage.

2 The pilgrimage, whether it be 'a journey . . . made to some sacred place, as an act of religious devotion', or 'a journey which is made to a shrine or sacred place in performance of a vow or for the sake of obtaining some form of divine blessing',<sup>47</sup> includes the experience of what Victor Turner calls liminality and existential or spontaneous communitas.<sup>48</sup> Elsewhere Turner adds, 'I tend to see pilgrimage as that form of institutionalized or symbolic anti-structure (or perhaps meta-structure) which . . . breeds new types of secular liminality and communitas.'<sup>49</sup> The *nyūbu* satisfies all these requirements to be called a mountain pilgrimage. It is a journey to a sacred place and includes the desire of obtaining some form of divine (or at least supernatural) blessing. The dominant theme of death and rebirth in the mountains emphasizes the experience of liminality, that period of transition between stages of social structure. Anyone who has tramped in the mountains with the *yamabushi* will vouch for the 'generalized social bond' of communitas which ignores or transcends usual structural relationships and social conventions.<sup>50</sup> Social divisions according to vocation, race, and position are transcended during the pilgrimage. Inasmuch as no women are allowed to participate in the exercise, one can also say that there is no division according to sex.

<sup>47</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vii, p. 859; *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1964, x, p. 25.

<sup>48</sup> Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, Cornell U.P., 1977, pp. 94-165.

<sup>49</sup> Victor Turner, *Drama, Fields, and Metaphors*, Cornell U.P., 1974, p. 182.

<sup>50</sup> Turner, *The Ritual Process*, p. 96.



3 Buddhist cosmology is borrowed by *shugendō*, but it is borrowed selectively and is considered neither final nor authoritative. The statue of Dainichi, located in the area considered the Womb Realm, makes the mudra of the Diamond Realm. When the cosmology does not fit the natural formations of the mountains, so much the worse for cosmology. In the final analysis, the mountains themselves are the most important.

4 *Shugendō*, as a religion, emphasizes the present rather than the past or the future. Importance is attached to this-worldly benefits such as good health, happy family life, good fortune, protection from accidents, etc., as may be seen in the prayers recited; self-improvement and a better life for everyone are also prominent objectives. This emphasis on the here and now is symbolized by Zaō Gongen, the patron bodhisattva of *shugendō*, who represents the present, as compared to Shakamuni (the past) and Maitreya (the future). This may seem to run contrary to the theme of death and rebirth, but in fact this is not so—the purpose and goal of the symbolic death in the mountains are not death itself and the future world, but rather the subsequent rebirth and its accompanying purification. The goal is salvation in this life, through this life, and for this life.

5 The concentration of temples, traditions, and locations for ascetic practices in certain areas lends credence to the theory that various places became religious centers independently and only later were linked together to form the Yoshino-Kumano pilgrimage path. From my own observations, I would guess that at least the following locations were once individual centers of ascetic practice: Yoshino, Ōmine (including Ozasa and Shō no Iwaya), Zenki-Jinzen, Mt Tamaki, Kumano Sanzan, and perhaps Mt Kasasute and Heiji.

6 The completion of the Yoshino-Kumano route by the *nyūbu* in the summer of 1977 bodes well for the revival of *shugendō* practices and is one more indication of the underlying vitality and tenacity of traditional religious beliefs and customs in modern Japan.

## Appendix

In February 1583 Luis Frois wrote at Kuchinotsu, in Kyushu, a hearsay account of the *yamabushi* and their pilgrimages, and a translation of this letter is given below. The original Portuguese text may be found in *Cartas que os padres e irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreverão dos reynos de Iapão e China . . .*, Evora, 1598, II, ff. 85v-88.

THERE are thirteen different sects in Japan and, in addition to these, there are other subordinate ones, among which there is one called the sect of the *yamabushi* [*Yamabuxis*] 山伏, which means 'Soldiers of the Mountains'. Nearly all of them are married and are no different from lay people except that they wear a small black leather hat, about the size of a tonsure, tied below the beard. They also wear white tassels around their neck, some hanging behind and others in front. They originate from two twin brothers, natives of the kingdom of Yamato; one was called En-no-Gyōja [*Yenno Guioja*] 役の行者 and the other Hōshi-no-Gyōja [*Foxino Guioja*] 法師[?]の行者. The cult and worship of these men consist entirely in dedicating themselves to the service of the devil and regarding themselves as his servants. They are divided into two kinds of sects. One is called Tōzan 当山 and it has twenty-four leaders; these men are the most noble and esteemed, and they live between Kyoto [*Miaco* 京] and the Kantō [*Bandou* 坂東] area. The other is called Honzan [*Fonzan*] 本山, and they inhabit the regions below Kyoto. According to their own account, their usual tasks are expelling devils from people's bodies, foretelling future events, praying over the sick, making divination about thefts that have been committed, reading palms like gypsies, invoking devils for evil to befall a person when they are paid for this, selling written amulets for health, long life, wealth, and prosperity in this world, and, finally, making use of many other magic arts and spells by which they earn their living.

They have the privilege of not paying road tolls where other people pay them. As they go along the road before reaching places, cities, or towns, they blow large conches, which they carry in their belt, so that their arrival may be known. Their followers help them in their work, and in their faces they show themselves to be fearsome men and immediate disciples of the devil. Some learned men and some very noble lords or *kuge* [*Cugues*] 公家 (they serve the *dairi* [*Dayri*] 内裏, who is the king of all Japan) belong to this sect, and for this reason they are esteemed by the princes of Japan.

We learned these and all the other details related below from a bonze named Nishu [*Nixu*], who became a Christian. He was in Arima and was held in great esteem and veneration.

These *yamabushi* are wont to make a pilgrimage twice a year and this is called *Ōmine-iri* [*Vomineiri*] 大峰入り, which means 'Entering the Great Mountains'. For this purpose they come from all the sixty-six kingdoms of Japan, and more than

two thousand of them assemble in the kingdom of Yamato, which is a day's journey from Kyoto. The sect's twenty-four leaders, called *sendachi* [*Xēdachi*] 先達 also go there, each bringing his own disciples. Then all these *yamabushi* begin to make their pilgrimage from the kingdom of Yamato, traversing some very high mountain ranges and going to a temple called Kumano Gongen [*Cumanono Gonguem*] 熊野権現. In these mountains there are not any animals, birds, or insects, and there is snow all year round. The length of the pilgrimage from start to finish is seventy-five leagues, and they cover this in seventy-five days for they are forbidden to walk more than one league a day. The penance they practice on the way consists of not eating more than a handful of cooked rice twice a day, once in the morning and again in the afternoon. If anyone of them weakens on the way, he has to remain there suffering from much neglect until he dies or gets better. They stay eight days in an area without water and this causes them great hardship as each one has to carry what he is to drink during those days.

There are two kinds of inhabitants in those mountains—that is, five leaders called *goki* [*Guoqui*] 後鬼, which means 'The Devils Behind',<sup>51</sup> and a large number of their disciples called *zenki* [*Iêquis*] 前鬼, meaning 'The Devils in Front'. The *yamabushi* set out from a city called Nara in the kingdom of Yamato, each one carrying on his back his luggage and provisions for the journey. When they reach a place called Yoshino [*Yoxino*], a large crowd of these *zenki* comes there from eight leagues away in order to guide them and carry their luggage on their backs. These *zenki* are like possessed men, with their hair disheveled, and wherever they go, thunder and wind storms always seem to precede them. And if they learn that any of these pilgrims have forgotten something in their houses or back in their kingdoms (which are sometimes more than two-hundred leagues away), in less than half-an-hour these *zenki* go to look for it and immediately bring it there.

They walk deeper into the mountains, and when they reach another place, which is called Ozasa 小篠, eight leagues from Yoshino, those five leaders called *goki* come to greet them. Everyone truly believes that they are devils in human form because they have the following characteristics. First of all, they are very ghostly, fearsome, proud, and do not speak even five words in one day. Their hair is very disheveled, and they have a horn on their forehead about a finger and a half in length. They try very much to cover this up, and so they wear a very long cap fixed to the forehead and this covers the horn. Nobody in the mountains knows where their dwellings are or where they live. For about fifty leagues they guide all these people along the roughest and most difficult paths imaginable. Sometimes they have to cross steep rocks by holding on with their hands and feet because they cannot traverse them on foot, but these *goki* skip over them with ease as if they

<sup>51</sup> Alternatively, *goki* can be written 五鬼. 'Goqi. *Içutçuno voni*. Five devils who were overcome by a *yamabushi* called En-no-Gyōja, and now in the place of these, there appear in the mountains called Onmine five men,

dressed in five colors, who go out to meet the *yamabushi* who go to the mountains in pilgrimage.' *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam*, Nagasaki, 1603, f. 121v.

were walking through a flat field. They order the *yamabushi* to observe chastity throughout these seventy-five days of walking, to be devout and desist from evil, and in their penances and works to imitate Shaka [*Xaca*], one of the two principal deities worshipped by the Japanese. And if on the way one of the pilgrims by chance does something which displeases the *goki*, the delinquent is immediately lifted into the air and suspended by the hands from the branch of a tree jutting out of the mountain—merely to gaze down from there is enough to make one swoon. The poor man remains there hanging until he drops from exhaustion and is smashed to smithereens. The other pilgrims are obliged to proceed on their way, and even though they may be his father, son, or brother, they have to dissimulate and not show any emotion lest the same thing happen to them as well.

After the pilgrims have bedded down for the night, the five *goki* disappear and nothing is known of them until they return the next morning to lead the day's march. The dwellings of even the *zenki*, who number more than a thousand, are not known, nor has any *yamabushi* ever gone there and been shown their houses. The *goki* do not go with the *yamabushi* to the end of the seventy-five leagues but leave them some leagues before reaching the last temple, called Kumano Gongen, in the kingdom of Kinokuni [*Quinocuni*]. The pilgrims number more than two thousand and each makes the pilgrimage twice a year. Each donates to the *goki* an alms of three taels, which is 1,836 *reais*. During the journey they are always afraid of them because of the eerie look on their faces and the fear they have for them, and because if they displease them, they are hurled into space and smashed to pieces.

In imitation of Shaka they make an oblation to the devil twice along the route. This is called *goma no taku* [*Gomanotacu*] 護摩の焚く, and they collect many different seeds and other material and throw them into a fire; they light candles and pray from books. The *goki* oblige them to perform another penance, as follows. In a flat place in the mountains where all can gather, they have to pass a day and a night squatting on the ground with their knees near their mouth, their right hand placed on the left shoulder, the left hand on the right shoulder, and thus with their arms crossed and staying in that position, they must remain there all that day and night, meditating on the beginning and origin of a man when he is within the womb of his mother. And if in their weariness they stretch their knees apart a little beyond the fixed limit laid down by the *goki*, the men going around invigilating them beat their knees with sticks, which they carry in their hands for this very purpose, and make them draw their knees in again.

In this place at Ozasa there is a very high and steep rock more than a hundred fathoms from top to bottom, and from this rock a point extends outward. It is a fearsome place, and merely arriving there, the *yamabushi* get gooseflesh and their hair stands on end. Here on this rock they place a contrivance consisting of an iron beam three fathoms or more in length, and at the end of it a pair of large scales, in which a man can sit, is fixed. The *goki* oblige each of these *yamabushi* to enter one side of the balance, and with a contrivance which is turned like a

wheel, they swing the beam with the scales out from that point jutting out of the rock so that it remains there suspended in the air. And as there is no counter-weight in the scales, the side in which the man is seated sinks down while the empty part rises up to the beam. Then from that rocky crag the *goki* tell him to confess and to declare all the sins he has committed that he can remember, all in front of that multitude of people. Then he begins to confess, and some of the bystanders laugh at his sins while others show astonishment. At each sin that he confesses, one side of the scales sinks a little until, when he has said all his sins, the empty part is level with the other in which the sad penitent is seated. When the scales reach this position, the *goki* again swing the beam in and put in another man until they have got through all of them. This João who told us about this went there seven times and entered the scales seven times and confessed there in public. If by chance somebody does not confess a sin as it really happened or he covers it up, the empty part of the scales does not sink. They warn him, and if he is still determined not to manifest his sins, the *goki* hurl the scales down and he is dashed to pieces. But he said that the fear and terror of that place are so great and so great is the danger in which each man sees himself if he falls from the scales or is thrown down that it seldom happens that somebody does not confess all his sins. This place has another name, Sange-no-tokoro [*Sangueno tocoro*] 懺悔の所, meaning 'The Place of Confession'.

After the confessions have been completed, the *goki* take them to a place in the mountains through very dangerous and inaccessible regions and there in the interior is a large and spacious temple called Shakagatake [*Xacano Daque*] 釈迦ヶ岳. Inside there is a big statue of solid gold on an altar, and it is the figure of Shaka. Around the interior of the temple there is a large number of small gold statues which the lords and nobles of Japan send there as offerings through these *yamabushi* when they go there, because nobody belonging to another sect may enter there nor accompany them. No live person is in this temple nor does anybody dwell therein, nor is it used save when these pilgrimages pass there twice a year. Thus nobody steals these gold idols or lays hands on them. . . .

At the end of the seventy-five days of this journey there is a temple of much pilgrimage which, as stated above, is called Kumano Gongen. Here the pilgrims relax, and put on plays and dances as a sign of the joy they show each other for the success of their pilgrimage and for the merits they have gained therefrom, and from there each one returns to his kingdom and home.

Before they arrive here, there is another very big temple in the mountains, dedicated, as they all are there, to the devil. This one is called Sanjō [*Sanio*] 山上 and the pilgrims worship three things which are deposited there like relics and held in deep veneration. The first is a statue or image of En-no-Gyōja, who, as we said above, was the first founder of the *yamabushi* and the inaugurator of this pilgrimage through the pact which he made with the devil. The second is a kind of very ancient rusty sword called in Japan *Ama no Sakahoko* [*Ama no Sacafoco*] 天の逆鉾, meaning 'The Trident of Heaven'.

According to the sects of the *kami*, it is written that while the first man and woman in the heavens, Izanami [*Yzanami*] 伊弉冊 and Izanagi [*Yzanangui*] 伊弉諾, were in the heavens, this lower world was still in the form of chaos and the waters had not withdrawn from the land. As I said, it is written that Izanami and Izanagi divided the land from the water from there in the heavens with this trident, and the drops falling from the trident became islands, and the first thing that formed in the world was the kingdom of Awaji, near Sakai. Those who worship the *kami* believe this, but the educated people and those who venerate the *hotoke* [*Fottoques*] 仏 do not. The third thing in the Sanjō temple is a large iron club which they say belonged to Benkei [*Benquei*] 弁慶, the Hercules of Japan. Their storybooks recount heroic deeds of great strength and chivalry about him.

He also said that these *yamabushi* reported there in the mountains to these five devils that there was a new religion spreading in Japan. It was totally opposed to the sects of Shaka and was called the Religion of Deus. The *goki* answered that they were not at all surprised by that because Shaka had foretold more than two-thousand years ago that in these times a religion contrary to his own would arise and that it would greatly flourish. It therefore grieved them that there should be such an odious and harmful thing in Japan as this religion, which they called the Religion of Deus. But in spite of their feelings and anguish, our holy religion continues to spread with much increase, as may be seen in the general letters.