

The Stupa in Shingon Buddhism: A Three-Dimensional Representation of the Ultimate Reality

Pol VANDEN BROUCKE

Ghent University

Introduction

The stupa is without doubt the most important Buddhist symbol. This religious structure is found throughout Asia. In East Asia the stupa developed into a multi-storied tower-like structure often called “pagoda.” While the stupa has undergone important transformations in most of the Buddhist countries, it preserved in many cases the basic features of the early Indian Buddhist stupa.¹

The Indian stupa was basically a huge hemispherically shaped monument erected over the relics of the Buddha. The hemispherical stupa-body (*aṇḍa*) carried the *harmikā*, a square fence-like construction. This enclosure was built around a central mast (*yaṣṭi*) holding single or triple discs (*chattra*). The best-preserved example of the early Indian stupa is found in the stupas of *Sāñcī* (3rd – 1st centuries BC).²

The stupa not only transformed in shape but also in function and meaning. Originally it served as a monumental building containing either corporeal relics (*śarīra*) associated with the Buddha or one of his personal belongings, e.g. a portion of his ashes remaining from his cremation or his alms bowl. The relics of the Buddha were not only associated with his physical body but also with his entering into *parinirvāṇa*, the ultimate *nirvāṇa*. This means that the sacred contents of the stupa represented both the bodily and the spiritual aspect of the Buddha. Consequently, the monument itself became identified with the historical Buddha and with his spiritual liberation. Since the stupa was considered as a symbol of Buddha’s enlightenment, the ultimate goal in Buddhism, it was at the same time the architectural embodiment of the Dharma (the Buddha’s teachings). The stupa became thus an important figure and place of the sacred. It functioned as an object and area of veneration and worship where the religious practiser performed ritual circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇā*) in clockwise direction or made ritual offerings. The building of a stupa became an important act to acquire merit. Constructing a stupa was considered as an important means to propagate the Buddhist teachings. Buddhist tradition says that the Indian Emperor Aśoka (BC ca. 274 - ca. 236) constructed 84,000 stupas throughout his

realm.³ Similar examples are also found in the East Asian Buddhist tradition. In 955, Ch'ien Hung-shu 錢弘俶, the Prince of Wu-yüeh 吳越, made 84,000 miniature bronze stupas (A-yü-wang T'a 阿育王塔 "Stupa of King Aśoka").⁴ In 764, the Japanese Empress Shōtoku 称徳 donated one million miniature wooden stupas (*hyakumantō* 百万塔) to the major Japanese temples.⁵ A more recent example is found in Korea where the hermit Yi Kapyong (born around 1860) erected a group of more than eighty stupas from piled-up stones at the T'ap-sa temple (North Chōlla province).⁶

The stupa underwent many complex stylistic and symbolic developments. It evolved into a symbolic representation of the Buddhist cosmos.⁷ It was correlated with Mt. Sumeru, the sacred mountain at the center of the Buddhist universe. The concept of the fivefold Buddhahood became an important element in the layout and the interpretation of the meaning of the stupa. The stupa became also identified with the mandala. In many regions in Asia, stupas have been constructed as a three-dimensional representation of a mandala. Single stupas were erected having five towers or multiple stupas were arranged in groups of five. A monumental combination of stupa and mandala is found in the great stupa of Borobudur. In esoteric Buddhism, the stupa came to symbolize Buddha Vairocana, also known as Mahāvairocana or Dainichi Nyorai 大日如来 in the Sino-Japanese tradition.

In this paper I shall focus on the different functions and the symbolic meanings of the so-called (Ta)hōtō (多)法塔, "(Abundantly) Jeweled Stupa," in Japanese esoteric Buddhism. In my analysis of the symbolism of the exterior and interior elements of this structure, I shall pay special attention to the close relationship between the stupa and the mandala. Here I would also like to point out the changing patterns of arrangement of the sacred figures and images in the inner sanctum of stupas erected at some representative Shingon temples. In this paper I shall be more concerned with the sacred realm of the ultimate embodied by the stupa than with its architectural or art-historical aspects.

Hōtō, Tahōtō

In Japan, the end of the northeast Asian line of Buddhist transmission, vast numbers of stupas have been produced in an extraordinary variety of sizes and forms.⁸ The simplest Japanese stupa type is the so-called *dotō* 土塔 ("earth stupa") of the Ōnodera 大野寺 (Sakai city, Osaka prefecture), a squarish grave-mound of heaped earth measuring 30 m at the base.⁹ The most complicated Japanese stupa type is found in

the multi-storied wooden structures, which are so typical a part of the scenery in Japan. Perhaps the best-known example is the gracious five-storied stupa of the Tōji in Kyoto measuring about 56 m high.

With the numerous Japanese stupa types in mind, I restrict my topic in this presentation to the *hōtō* and the *tahōtō*, two types of stupa that became associated with esoteric Buddhism (*mikkyō* 密教). These stupa forms play a central role in the Shingon school of Japanese esoteric Buddhism and are considered as the embodiment of the transcendental buddha, Hosshin Dainichi 法身大日, or the Dharmakāya Buddha Vairocana.

The term *hōtō* is the short form of *Tahōtō* 多宝塔, “Abundantly Jeweled Stupa”. The Sanskrit equivalent of *Tahō* is *Prabhūtaratna*. *Prabhūtaratna* refers to the buddha of the past who appears in the *Saddharmapundarikasūtra* (The Lotus Sutra, *Hokeyō* 法華經). According to chapter 11 of this text he appears in a mystical stupa adorned with precious jewels and invites the Buddha Śākyamuni to sit down beside him.¹⁰

The term *hōtō* also designates a particular type of stupa that is very common in Japan.¹¹ As far as we know no example of this type of monument is preserved as an actual building in China. This category of stupas is characterized by a circular ground plan.¹² The *hōtō* consists of a cylindrical body with a domed top carrying a short cylinder. A balustrade (*kōran* 勾欄, 高欄) sometimes surrounds this short cylinder. The *hōtō* usually has a pyramidal roof with one *sōrin* 相輪, a bronze spire with superimposed rings. The apex of this mast usually carries a *hōju* 宝珠 (“jewel”), a teardrop-shaped ornament that rests on a lotus-flower. Sometimes a flame-shaped open metal work ornament, *suien* 水煙 (“water-smoke”), is attached on the upper part of the *sōrin*.¹³

Among the stupa types in Japan, the *hōtō* is the most faithful representation of the early Indian Buddhist stupa. In spite of the differences, the *hōtō* has important features in common with the old dome-shaped stupas of *Sāñcī*.¹⁴ The Indian *aṇḍa* is still clearly visible in the hemispherical upper part of the main body of the *hōtō*. The *harmikā* may be represented in the short cylindrical component on top of the dome. The *chattra*-mast is reflected in the *sōrin*. In Japan, the *hōtō* is sometimes represented with five *sōrin*. As I shall show later, this five-spired structure has been the subject of highly speculative Shingon interpretations. The usually elegantly shaped roof of the *hōtō* is however alien to the Indian stupa and is probably an element adopted from the Chinese architectural tradition.

The *hōtō* usually contains sculptures of Buddhist deities surrounding a central

sculpture of Dainichi. Additional deities may be painted on the interior pillars. The arrangement of the sculptures and the painted deities around the central Dainichi represents a three-dimensional mandala.

The *hōtō* may also appear as a stone grave monument or as miniature stupa in metal functioning as a reliquary. The *hōtō* is also represented in iconographic drawings as the conventional symbol (Sk. *samaya*, Jp. *sanmaya* 三昧耶) of Dainichi Nyorai.

The *tahōtō* stupa type has a square lower part with a subsidiary roofed component (*mokoshi* 裳階) which gives the stupa a two-storied appearance.¹⁵ The most important example is the two-storied and nearly fifty meters tall Daitō 大塔 (“Great Stupa”) or Konpon Daitō 根本大塔 (“Fundamental Great Stupa”), the central structure of the temple complex of Kōyasan 高野山, the monastic center of the Shingon school.¹⁶

The Konpon Daitō

Kūkai 空海, 774-835, (posthumously called Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師)¹⁷, the founder of the Shingon school, started the construction of the Daitō in 819. The stupa was however not completed during his lifetime. His disciple Shinzen 真然, 804-891, completed the structure in 875 or 887. In the course of its long history, the Daitō has been repeatedly damaged or destroyed by fire or lightning. It was reconstructed for the last time in 1937 after it was destroyed by fire in 1843. The present Daitō is built of reinforced concrete. Inside the stupa, the four buddhas of the *kongōkai* are installed around Dainichi of the *taizō*.

According to the Shingon tradition, this arrangement of Buddhist deities symbolizes the notion of the “non-duality of the two sections” (*ryōbu funi* 兩部不二). The two sections (*ryōbu*) correspond with the *taizō* 胎藏 (Sk. *garbha*, “womb”) and *kongōkai* 金剛界 (Sk. *vajradhātu*, “vajra realm”). In Shingon Buddhism, these two realms are considered as the two complementary aspects of the sphere of perfect enlightenment. In this sphere the *taizō* is unthinkable without the *kongōkai*, and vice versa. The *taizō* is associated with compassion and is symbolized by the lotus. The *kongōkai* is correlated with knowledge. Its symbol is the *vajra* (“diamond,” “thunderbolt”) which eliminates ignorance.¹⁸ The *taizō* is also identified with the Shingon concept of principle 理 (*ri*), the *kongōkai* with the concept of wisdom 智 (*chi*). The *taizō* and the *kongōkai* are depicted in the *taizōmandara* and the *kongōkaimandara*, the two principal mandalas in Shingon Buddhism.¹⁹ These

mandalas are the graphical representation of the two basic Indian texts of Shingon, i.e. the *Vairocanābhīṣambodhi* (in Japan known as the *Dainichikyō* 大日經)²⁰ and the *Tattvasaṃgraha* (usually called *Kongōchōkyō* 金剛頂經).²¹ This pair of mandalas is considered as the visual representation of the two inseparable aspects of the ultimate reality. In other words, Shingon integrates the doctrines of two textual traditions that developed independently in India. Leaving aside the question where and when this integrating tendency started, the idea of combining these two teachings is clearly visible in the combination of the five central deities inside the present-day Daitō. It is however doubtful whether this arrangement corresponds with the original layout of the central buddhas. From historical sources it appears that the Daitō originally contained the five buddhas of the *taizō*.²² Records also indicate that the Daitō represented the *taizō* and that the Saitō 西塔 (“Western Stupa”), a small two-storied stupa (27 m high) to the west of the Daitō, represented the *kongōkai* and contained the five buddhas of the *kongōkai*.²³

Although Kūkai was a prolific writer of religious texts, there are surprisingly few explicit references to stupas in his writings.²⁴ We know very little about Kūkai’s views on the layout and the contents of the stupa in Shingon. One valuable reference is found in the *Shōryōshū* 性靈集 (or *Seireishū*), a collection of poems, letters and so forth allegedly written by Kūkai and compiled by Shinzei 真濟, a disciple of Kūkai. The *Shōryōshū* contains one letter in which Kūkai requests Emperor Ninmyō 仁明, 810-850, to make donations for constructing two stupas on Mt. Kōya:²⁵

Therefore, in recent years, I have been respectfully constructing two stupas (塔二基 *tō niki*) in the Kongōbuji 金剛峯寺²⁶ [that embody] Vairocana, the essential nature of the Dharma realm (毗盧舍那法界體性塔 Birushana Hokkai Taishōtō); and the mandalas of the two realms *garbha* and *vajradhātu*, in order to fulfill the four obligations²⁷ and to realize the two benefits.²⁸

Kūkai does not specify the identity of the “two stupas.” These stupas are traditionally considered to be the Daitō and the Saitō.²⁹ In this passage, Kūkai clearly associates the two stupas with Dainichi Nyorai. I already mentioned above that the stupa is the conventional symbol (Sk. *samaya*) of this principal deity. In mandalas and iconographic drawings, Vairocana of the *kongōkai* and the *taizō* can be replaced by respectively a single-storied stupa and the so-called *gorintō* 五輪塔, the “stupa of the five elements.”³⁰ The *gorintō* is very popular in Japan as a tombstone or as a small

reliquary made of precious metal or rock crystal. This geometrical structure consists of five components in different shapes: square, circle, triangle, semi-circle, and pearl. These shapes are correlated with the elements earth, water, fire, wind, and space.

Since Kūkai refers here at the same time to stupas and mandalas, he obviously sees a close relationship between these two items. Although he does not specify which stupa is supposed to correspond with which mandala, it may be assumed that he correlated the Saitō with the *kongōkaimandara* and the *Daitō* (= originally Tōtō 東塔 “Eastern Stupa”?) with the *taizōmandara*. However, we still do not understand fully how the *Daitō* (Tōtō?) became associated with both of the two realms. As I shall show later, this tendency to correlate one stupa building with the *taizō* and the *kongōkai* is also found in Shingon temples outside Kōyasan.

Whatever the reason, the *Daitō* became the central structure of the central temple complex (garan 伽藍) of Kōyasan. Moreover, the whole area came to be conceived as an enormous mandala of the *taizō* with the *Daitō* at the center. The eight mountain peaks surrounding the plateau with the monastic complex represent the eight petals of the lotus, the symbol of the *taizō*.³¹ This vision is reflected in the term Hachiyōmine 八葉峯 (“Eight Petals Peak”), another name for Kōyasan.³²

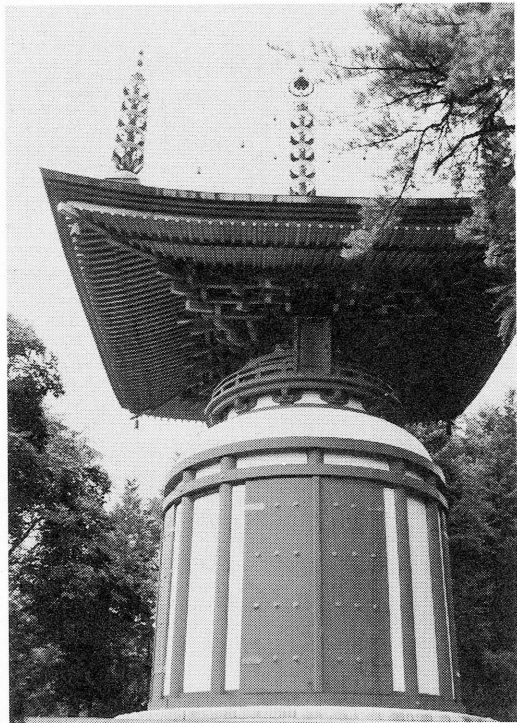
In the Shingon tradition, the *Daitō* is also said to be based on the so-called Iron Stupa of Southern India (Nanten Tettō 南天鉄塔).³³ This is a visionary stupa where Vajrasattva transmitted the hidden teachings of the *Kongōchōkyō* and the *Dainichikyō* to the Indian master *Nāgārjuna* (Jp. Ryūmyō 龍猛), one of the patriarchs of esoteric Buddhism. Tradition regards the Nanten Tettō as an ideal stupa that symbolizes the *dharmakāya* of Vairocana. In Japan this legendary stupa has been depicted in idealized drawings and paintings, the so-called Nanten Tettō-zu 南天鉄塔図.³⁴ In these graphical representations, the stupa is represented as a typical Japanese (*ta*)*hōtō*.

In Shingon, the *Daitō* is also considered to embody the essence of a scripture called *Chin-kang-feng lou-ke i-ch'ieh yu-chia yū-ch'i ching* 金剛峯樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經 (Jp. *Kongōbu rōkaku issai yugayugi kyō*), in Japan better known by its abbreviated Japanese title *Yugikyō* 瑜祇經.³⁵ This is one of the five canonical texts in the Shingon school.³⁶ According to the Shingon tradition this scripture combines the teachings of the *Dainichikyō* and the *Kongōchōkyō*, and contains the deep meaning of the “non-duality of the two sections.”³⁷ I shall comment more on this interpretation in my discussion of the *Yugitō* 瑜祇塔, another stupa at Kōyasan (figure 1).³⁸

The Yugitō

A particular type of *hōtō* has been built behind the Ryūkōin 龍光院 (original name Chūin 中院), a temple to the north of the *garan* of Kōyasan. This twenty meter high structure is known as the Yugitō 瑜祇塔 or the Shōtō 小塔 (“Small Stupa”)³⁹. An interesting feature of this stupa is that it bears five spires on its roof. Apart from the recently constructed replicas of this stupa in the Yakuōji 薬王寺 (1963, Tokushima prefecture) and the Hachijōji 八浄寺 (1999, Awaji island, Hyōgo prefecture), there is no other example of this building in Japan.

The name Yugitō refers to the abbreviated Japanese title *Yugikyō*. The term *yugi* is a Sino-Japanese phonetic translation of the Sanskrit *yogin* (“the practitioner of *yoga*”).⁴⁰ In the Shingon school this structure also symbolizes the profound meaning of the *Yugikyō*. By tradition, Shinzen built this stupa in 870 in pursuance of Kūkai’s will.⁴¹ There exists, however, no text in which Kūkai mentions the Yugitō. According to some Japanese scholars, the Yugitō and the Daitō are the “two stupas” mentioned in the passage from Kūkai’s text quoted above.⁴² However, they do not give any evidence for their claim.



Yugitō, Kōyasan. (photo by the author)

Since there are no extant documents dating from the founding of the temple complex of Kōyasan, the original plan and the early history of the Yugitō are still problematical. In the *Kōya shunjū hennen shūroku* 高野春秋編年輯録 (“The Spring and Autumn Chronological Compilation of Kōya”), the annals of Kōyasan compiled by Kaiei 懷英, 1642-1727, and the *Kii zoku fudoki* 紀伊続風土記 (“The Continued Records of Customs and Land of Kii,” compiled in 1839) we read that the Yugitō was ravaged by fires several times.⁴³ After the fire of 1864, the Yugitō was reconstructed in 1931. The present-day Yugitō carries five bronze masts, one on each corner and one in the center. Each mast consists of five rings. Eight pillars are

erected in the wall of the cylindrical stupa body. As I shall show later, these five *sōrin* and eight pillars have been the subject of Shingon speculation. Through the centuries, Shingon monks formulated numerous esoteric interpretations of the exterior and interior elements of the *Yugitō*.

As far as I know, there are no extant documents with the original interior layout of the *Yugitō*. Short descriptions of the identity and the placement of the figures installed inside the stupa are found in two compilations of the Edo period⁴⁴. According to these texts, the five buddhas of the *vajra* realm were installed in the center of the *Yugitō*. Additional deities were painted on the pillars surrounding the five buddhas. It is, however, not explicitly stated to which realm these surrounding deities belong. A different arrangement of the five central images is found in the *Kōyasan Chūin Shōtō-zu* 高野山中院小塔図 (“Plan of the Small Stupa of the Chūin in Kōyasan”), a document quoted in Amanuma’s study of the *Yugitō*.⁴⁵ Here the central arrangement of deities included three buddhas and two bodhisattvas of the central assembly of the *taizōmandara*. This document further mentions that fifty-two buddhas and bodhisattvas, all belonging to the *kongōkai*, were around the central five images. Here we see an eclectic tendency in the choice of the central and surrounding deities. Unfortunately it is not clear when and by whom this interesting document was written. According to the *Kōyasan kanpatsu shinjinshū* 高野山勧發信心集, a short description of Kōyasan by the monk Shinken 信堅, 1259-1322, the three buddhas of the central fivefold assembly of deities in the *Yugitō* are Dainichi of the *taizō*, Ashuku and Hōshō, two buddhas of the *vajra* realm.⁴⁶ Here, the tendency to represent deities from both of the two realms is even found in the central group of deities.

The present-day *Yugitō* still combines images of the two realms.⁴⁷ Here Dainichi of the *vajra* realm is installed in the center. The surrounding images are Ashuku Nyorai, Hōshō Nyorai, Kanzeon Bosatsu 觀世音菩薩, Kokūzō Bosatsu 虛空藏菩薩 and Aizen Myōō 愛染明王. The first three deities belong to the *vajra* realm. The bodhisattvas Kanzeon and Kokūzō, however, belong to the *taizō*. A new feature here is the inclusion of Aizen Myōō, a deity described in detail in the *Yugikyō*.⁴⁸

Although the interior plan of the *Yugitō* differs considerably from source to source, there is clearly a tendency to combine figures of both realms. This tendency is also found in major Shingon temples outside the monastic center of Kōyasan.

The Tōji 東寺 (“Eastern Temple”) or Kyōō Gokokuji 教王護国寺 (“The Temple Protecting the Nation by means of the Kings of the Doctrine”) in Kyoto is

another great temple which became a center of esoteric Buddhism. This temple was founded in 794 by imperial order to protect the capital Heian. In 823, Kūkai was put in charge of the management of the Tōji. In the southeast corner of the present temple compound rises the well-known five-storied stupa (*gojū no tō* 五重の塔) of the Tōji. This structure was originally completed in the second half of the ninth century. It has been destroyed by fire three times and was rebuilt in 1644 by Tokugawa Iemitsu, the third Tokugawa *shōgun*. From a description of the interior of the stupa in the *Tōhōki* 東宝記, a historical record of the Tōji compiled by Gōhō 杲宝, 1306-1362, it appears that also in this stupa buddhas and bodhisattvas belonging to both the *taizō* and the *kongōkai* were combined.⁴⁹ According to this description, four buddhas of the *vajra* realm surrounded the square central pillar. Whereas the two pillars to the west of the central pillar bore paintings of buddhas and bodhisattvas of the *kongōkai*, the two east pillars were decorated with deities of the *taizō*. Since there are no extant original plans of the Tōji stupa, it is unclear in which degree the description in the *Tōhōki* reflects the contents of the stupa built in the ninth century.

Representations of buddhas and bodhisattvas of both realms are still found in the five-storied stupa (37 m high) of the Daigoji 醍醐寺, another important Shingon temple in Kyoto. The Daigoji was founded by the monk Shōbō 聖宝, 832-909, in 874. The stupa was completed in 952. This structure also contains a square central pillar. This pillar and other parts of the interior of the stupa are decorated with buddhas and bodhisattvas of the two realms.⁵⁰ More examples of stupas containing elements of both realms are described by Tomishima Yoshiyuki.⁵¹

It is unclear whether this tendency to combine figures of both realms in one stupa or in one pair of stupas, is purely a Japanese phenomenon. As far as I know, there are no extant stupas in China that contain statues or paintings of deities of both the *garbha* and *vajra* realm. Further studies are needed on the history and the origin of the central Shingon notion of *ryōbu funi* in order to trace back the origins of the association of the stupa with the mandalas of the two realms. We do not know exactly whether the idea of the non-duality of the two spheres is the result of Shingon speculation traceable to Kūkai, or a notion originating outside Japan (China or India).

As I noted earlier, the Shingon tradition regards the Yūgitō as a symbolization of the deep meaning of the *Yugikyō*. For centuries, the five *sōrin* and the eight pillars of the Yūgitō have been the subject of Shingon speculation. Esoteric interpretations of these components of the stupa are found in the Japanese commentaries on the text. The standard commentaries are contained in vol. 5 of the *Shingon-shū zensho* 真言宗全書 (“The Collected Works of the Shingon School”) and vol. 7 of the *Zoku*

Shingon-shū zensho 続真言宗全書 (“The Continued Collected Works of the Shingon School”). Among these commentaries, the oldest text that correlates the stupa with the *Yugikyō* dates back to the twelfth century.⁵² In these texts the roof of the *Yugitō* symbolizes the *kongōkai*, the stupa body with the eight pillars stands for the *taizō*. The five peaks on the roof and the five rings of the *sōrin* are regarded as the five buddhas of the *kongōkai*. The eight pillars represent the four buddhas and bodhisattvas who emanate from the central *Dainichi* in the *taizō*.⁵³ In the commentaries, the *Yugitō* is referred to as the *hosshō funitō* 法性不二塔 (“stupa of the non-duality of the Dharma-nature”), *gobu hōrōkaku* 五峯宝楼阁 (“jeweled pavilion with five peaks”), *gobu hatchū rōkaku* 五峯八柱楼阁 (“pavilion with five peaks and eight pillars”). The appellation *gobu hatchū rōkaku* is correlated with the first five characters of the full title of the *Yugikyō*: 金剛峯楼阁: *Kongōbu rōkaku* (“*vajra* peak pavilion”). It can now be seen that also the exterior of the *Yugitō* is associated with the mandalas of the two realms.

According to some commentaries, the pavilion with five peaks and eight pillars, the dwelling place of *Dainichi*, should be realized within the mind.⁵⁴ As a matter of fact, in Shingon there are ritual texts in which the practitioner visualizes the *Yugitō*. An example is found in a ritual for *Aizen Myōō*.⁵⁵ In the so-called “visualization of the place of practice” (道場觀 *dōjōkan*), the practitioner has to invoke this deity inside a stupa with five peaks and eight pillars. This visionary structure is reminiscent of the *hōrōkaku* (“jeweled pavilion”) where *Dainichi Nyorai* expounds the mandala of the *vajra* realm. In texts of the *Kongōchōkyō* lineage this pavilion is described as a structure with five masts and eight columns erected on the summit of Mt. Sumeru.⁵⁶ This cosmic mountain is supported on a lotus carried by the cosmic turtle, which floats in the sea of *amṛta* (Jp. *kanro* 甘露), the nectar of immortality. In Japan there still exist drawings of the *Yugitō* (*Yugitō-zu* 瑜祇塔図) as a *hōtō* with five prongs erected on top of an enormous rock supported by a turtle.⁵⁷ Here the *Yugitō* is apparently conceived as a heavenly realm above Mt. Meru symbolizing the totality of the universe. With this mental stupa we reach now the ultimate stage of Shingon speculation with regard to the *Yugitō*.

From the above we see that the *Yugitō* is not only an existing concrete architectural form which embodies the central Shingon idea of *ryōbu funi*. But at the same time this special *hōtō* should be regarded as a structure that should be created in the mind of the practitioner in a process of mental visualization.

Yugi Shichifuku Hōtō

As I have outlined above, the description of the interior of the Yugitō is by no means uniform and differs considerably from source to source. These variations in the interior layout are without doubt the product of profound Japanese *mikkyō* speculation over a number of centuries.

Here I would like to illustrate that the Yugitō is even today a source of inspiration for religious speculation in Japan. This is clearly represented by the inauguration of a *hōtō* with five prongs on 11 November 1999 in the Hachijōji, a Shingon temple on the Awaji island. This stupa is called Yugi Shichifuku Hōtō 瑜祇七福宝塔, the “Yugi Seven Wealth (Deities) Jeweled Stupa.”⁵⁸ The interior of this version of the Yugitō represents the personal vision of the superior of the Hachijōji. The main icon of this stupa is a sculpture of Dainichi Nyorai forming the *chiken'in* 智拳印, the hand-gesture associated with Dainichi of the *kongōkai*.⁵⁹ This central deity is flanked by smaller sculptures of the well-known Seven Deities of Good Fortune (Shichifukujin 七福神). These seven gods include deities and mythic figures of Japan, China and India.⁶⁰ In front of the central assembly of deities a stupa-shaped reliquary from Sri Lanka (Kālaniya) is installed in the center of a fire-ceremony altar (*gomadan* 護摩壇). The walls inside the stupa are decorated with paintings called Mitsugon Jōdo-zu 密嚴淨土図. The Mitsugon Jōdo (“The Pure Land Adorned with the Mysteries”) is the Pure Land of Dainichi, which is adorned with the virtues of the so-called three mysteries (*sanmitsu* 三密).⁶¹ Below these paintings the whole text of the *Yugikyō* is reproduced. The arrangement of the scenes of the Mitsugon Jōdo is as follows:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| northwest | Bukkyō Denrai Jōdo (“The Pure Land of the Transmission of Buddhism”) 仏教伝来淨土 |
| northeast | Yakushi Nyorai Jizō Bosatsu Jōdo 薬師如来、地蔵菩薩淨土 |
| southeast | Kannon Bosatsu Jōdo 観音菩薩淨土 |
| southwest | Amida Nyorai Jōdo 阿弥陀如来淨土 |

It is impossible here to comment on all the details of these paintings. I shall confine myself to the scene painted on the northwest side of the interior wall.⁶² In the center of this painting, Dainichi Nyorai is depicted sitting inside the Nanten Tettō. On the interior of the open doors of this stupa, Aizen Myōō and Fudō Myōō are painted. Below this visionary stupa, the four pāramitābodhisattvas (shiharamitsubosatsu 四波羅蜜菩薩) of the *kongōkaimandara* and the four buddhas of the *taizōmandara* are represented. Here again we can see the tendency to combine elements of both realms and the association of the Yugitō with the Nanten Tettō and Aizen Myōō.

A remarkable feature of the Yugi Shichifuku Hōtō is the combination of Shingon tradition with high-tech. At the base of the central *sōrin*, a computer-controlled system called “Himawari” (“Sunflower”) is installed to collect as much sunlight as possible. After removing the ultraviolet and infrared rays from the collected sunbeams, the pure light is passed through fiber into the stupa-body. From a canopy in the shape of a lotus with eight petals, the light illuminates the walls in the eight directions. A central light-beam shines on a crystal ball (30 cm in diameter) installed in a meditation space below floor level. The light is associated with the all-permeating power of Dainichi Nyorai. The opening ceremony of the Yugi Shichifuku Hōtō was held on the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the eleventh year of Heisei (1999) at 11:11 am. At the beginning of this ceremony seven grains of poppy seeds were thrown against the doors of the stupa. This act refers to Nāgārjuna who entered the legendary Iron Stupa after scattering seven poppy seeds (*byakugaishi shichiryū* 白芥子七粒).⁶³

References

Abe 1999

Abe Ryūichi. *The Weaving of Mantra: Kūkai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse*. Columbia University Press, 1999.

Abe 1982

Abe Yasuo 阿部泰郎. *Chūsei Kōyasan engi no kenkyū* 中世高野山縁起の研究. Nara: Gankōji Bunkazai Kenkyujo, 1982.

Amanuma 1934

Amanuma Shun'ichi 天沼俊一. “Yugitō” 瑜祇塔. *Shiseki to bijutsu* 史迹と美術 45 (1934), pp. 191-240.

Atobe 1970

Atobe Naoji 跡部直治. “Hōtō (Tahōtō)” 宝塔(多宝塔). In vol. 2 of *Bukkyō kōkogaku kōza* 仏教考古学講座, ed. Yūzankaku Henshūbu 雄山閣編集部. Yūzankaku, 1970.

Chūgai Nippō 1999

Chūgai Nippō (Kyoto) 中外日報. "Hachijōji Yugi Shichifuku Hōtō Rakkei" 八淨寺瑜祇七福宝塔落慶. 25 November 1999.

Chūgai Nippō 1999

Chūgai Nippō (Kyoto). "Shingon mikkyō no genryū, Nanten no Tettō yomigaeru" 真言密教の源流、南天の鉄塔甦る. 25 November 1999.

Gardiner 1996

David L. Gardiner. "Maṇḍala, Maṇḍala on the Wall: Variations of Usage in the Shingon School." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19:2 (1996), pp. 245-79.

Glauche 1995

Johannes W. Glauche. *Der Stupa: Kultbau des Buddhismus*. Cologne: DuMont, 1995.

Goepper 1993

Roger Goepper. *Aizen Myōdō: The Esoteric King of Lust. An Iconological Study*. Artibus Asiae Supplementum 39. Zurich: Artibus Asiae, 1993.

Hakeda 1972

Hakeda Yoshito. *Kūkai: Major Works*. Columbia University Press, 1972.

Hinonishi 1979

Hinonishi Shinjō 日野西真定, ed. *Yasan myōreishū* 野山名霊集. Meicho Shuppan, 1979.

Hinonishi 1991

Hinonishi Shinjō, ed. *Shinkō Kōya shunjū hennen shōroku* 新校高野春秋編年輯録. Meicho Shuppan, 1991.

Hurvitz 1976

Leon Hurvitz, trans. *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (The Lotus Sūtra)*. Columbia University Press, 1976.

Ihara 1984a

Ihara Shōren 井原照蓮. "Ryōbu funi to Yugikyō" 両部不二と瑜祇経. In *Kōbō Daishi to gendai* 弘法大師と現代, ed. Go-onki Kinen Shuppan Hensan linkai 御遠忌記念出版編纂委員会. Chikuma Shobō, 1984.

Ihara 1984b

Ihara Shōren. "Yugitō to buttō" 瑜祇塔と仏塔. In *Bukkyō shisō ronshū* 仏教思想論集, ed. Taishō Daigaku Shingongaku Chizan Kenkyūshitsu 大正大学真言学智山研究室. Narita: Naritasan Shinshōji, 1984.

Ishida 1969

Ishida Mosaku 石田茂作. *Nihon buttō no Kenkyū* 日本仏塔の研究. 2 vols. (=text, plates). Kōdansha, 1969.

Kanagawa-kenritsu Kanazawa Bunko 1991

Kanagawa-kenritsu Kanazawa Bunko 神奈川県立金沢文庫, ed. *Tokubetsuten: mikkyō bijutsu* 特別展 密教美術 (English title: *Special Exhibition: Art of Esoteric Buddhism in Kanagawa Prefectural Kanazawa Bunko Museum*). Yokohama: Kanagawa-kenritsu Kanazawa Bunko, 1991.

Kidder 1972

Edward J. Kidder. *Early Buddhist Japan*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1972.

Kiyota 1978

Kiyota Minoru. *Shingon Buddhism: Theory and Practice*. Los Angeles and Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1978.

Kōno and Trautz 1934

Kōno Seikō and Friedrich Max Trautz. *De Große Stupa auf dem Kōyasan*. Kōyasan: Kōyasan Kongōbuji, 1934.

Kornicki 1998

Peter Kornicki. *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century*. Leiden, Boston, Cologne: E.J. Brill, 1998.

Kottkamp 1992

Heino Kottkamp. "Der Stupa als Repräsentation des buddhistischen Heilsweges: Untersuchungen zur Entstehung und Entwicklung architektonischer Symbolik." *Studies in Oriental religions*, vol. 25. Wiesbaden:

Otto Harrassowitz, 1992.

Lamotte 1967

Étienne Lamotte. "Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien des origines à l'ère Śāka." *Bibliothèque du Muséon*, no. 43. Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1967 (reprint of 1958 edition).

Manabe 1983

Manabe Shunshō 真鍋俊照. "Nanten Tettō-zu ni tsuite" 南天鉄塔図について. *Mikkyō bunka* 密教文化 141(1983), pp. 8-13.

Manabe 1988

Manabe Shunshō. "Yugitō-zu no seiritsu" 瑜祇塔図の成立. *Naritasan Bukkyō Kenkyūjo kiyō* 成田山仏教研究所紀要 (English title: *Journal of Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies*) 11 (1988), pp. 549-67.

Mashiba 1969

Mashiba Hiromune 真柴弘宗. "Yugitō ni tsuite" 瑜祇塔について. *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度学仏教学研究 18:1 (1969), pp. 148-49.

Matsunaga 1985

Matsunaga Yūkei 松長有慶. "'Kongōbu rōkaku issai yugayugi kyō': kaisetsu" 金剛峯楼閣一切瑜伽瑜祇経解説. Kōyasan: Kōyasan Shuppan, 1985 (with a reproduction of a manuscript of the *Yugikyō* in a separate vol. in box).

Michihata 1969

Michihata Ryōshū 道端良秀. *Chūgoku bukkyōshi* 中国仏教史. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1969 (reprint of 1939 edition).

Mikkyō daijiten

Mikkyō daijiten 密教大辞典. Mikkyō Jiten Hensankai 密教辞典編纂会, ed. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1983 (originally publ. in 3 vols., 1931; rev. and enlarged ed. in 6 vols., 1970; photographically reduced ed. in 1 vol., 1983).

Nakamura 1992

Nakamura Hajime 中村元 et al. *Iwanami bukkyō jiten* 岩波仏教辞典. Iwanami Shoten, 1992.

Nakano 1983

Nakano Genzō 中野玄三. *Bukkyō bijutsu yōgo-shū* 仏教美術用語集. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1983.

Nihon daizōkyō

Nihon daizōkyō 日本大蔵経, vol. 33. Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan 鈴木学術財団, ed. Kōdansha, 1974.

Nilsen 1988

Robert Nilsen. *South Korea Handbook*. Chico: Moon Publications, 1988.

Orzech 1995

Charles Orzech. "The Legend of the Iron Stūpa." In *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald Lopez. Princeton University Press, 1995.

Saunders 1985

E. Dale Saunders. *A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture*. Bollingen Series 58. Princeton University Press, 1985 (reprint of 1960 edition).

Sawa 1964

Sawa Ryūken 佐和隆研. *Mikkyō no bijutsu* 密教の美術. Heibonsha, 1964.

Sawa 1974

Sawa Ryūken. *Mikkyō no tera: sono rekishi to bijutsu* 密教の寺：その歴史と美術. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1974.

Sawa 1976

Sawa Ryūken. *Art in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, trans. Richard L. Gage. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill/Heibonsha, 1976 (reprint of 1972 edition).

Sawa 1985

Sawa Ryūken. *Mikkyō jiten* 密教辞典. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1985 (reprint of 1975 edition).

Seckel 1980

Dietrich Seckel. "Stūpa Elements Surviving in East Asian Pagodas." In *The Stūpa: Its Religious, Historical and Architectural Significance*, ed. Anna Libera Dallapiccola. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1980.

Shimomatsu 1991

Shimomatsu Tōru 下松徹. “Kōyasan Daitō no gobutsuzō ni tsuite: Toku ni sono hensen o chūshin to shite” 高野山大塔の五仏像について：特にその変遷を中心として. *Mikkyōgaku kenkyū* 密教学研究 23(1991), pp. 85-104.

Shingon-shū zensho

Shingon-shū zensho 真言宗全書. 44 vols. Zoku Shingon-shū Zensho Kankōkai 続真言宗全書刊行会, ed. Kōyasan: Zoku Shingon-shū Zensho Kankōkai, 1977 (reprint of 1935 edition).

Snodgrass 1988

Adrian Snodgrass. *The Matrix and Diamond World Mandalas in Shingon Buddhism*. 2 vols. New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1988.

Snodgrass 1991

Adrian Snodgrass. *The Symbolism of the Stupa*. Ithaca and New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1991 (reprint of 1985 edition).

Tomishima 1998

Tomishima Yoshiyuki 富島義幸. “Tō ni okeru ryōkaimandara kūkan no tenkai: Heian jidai no sōtō o chūshin ni” 塔における両界曼荼羅空間の展開：平安時代の層塔を中心に. *Bukkyō geijutsu* 仏教芸術 238(1998), pp. 54-97.

Vanden Broucke 1994

Pol Vanden Broucke. “On the Title and the Translator of the Yugikyō (T. XVIII no. 867).” *Kōyasan Daigaku Mikkyō Bunka Kenkyūjo kiyō* 高野山大学密教文化研究所紀要 (English title: *Bulletin of the Research Institute of Esoteric Buddhist Culture*) 7 (1994), pp. 184-212.

Yamasaki 1988

Yamasaki Taikō. *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, trans. Richard and Cynthia Peterson. Boston and London: Shambala, 1988.

Yasuhara 1932a

Yasuhara Kendō 安原賢道. “Yugikyō no kenkyū I” 瑜祇經の研究 (I). *Mikkyō kenkyū* 密教研究 45(1932), pp. 59-81.

Yasuhara 1932b

Yasuhara Kendō. “Yugikyō no kenkyū II” 瑜祇經の研究 (II). *Mikkyō kenkyū* 密教研究 46(1932), pp. 84-108.

Yoritomi 1997

Yoritomi Motohiro 頼富本宏. “Kōbō Daishi Kūkai no buttō shinkō” 弘法大師空海の仏塔信仰. In *Bukkyō shisō bunkashi ronsō* 仏教思想文化史論叢, ed. Watanabe Ryūshō Kyōju Kanreki Kinen Ronshū Kankōkai 渡邊隆生教授還暦記念論集刊行会. Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1997.

Zoku Shingon-shū zensho

Zoku Shingon-shū zensho 続真言宗全書. 42 vols. Zoku Shingon-shū Zensho Kankōkai 続真言宗全書刊行会, ed. Kōyasan: Zoku Shingon-shū Zensho Kankōkai, 1977 (reprint of 1933-1937 edition).

Notes

- ¹ For an excellent introductory book on stupa, see Glauche 1995.
- ² See the drawing of stupa no. 1 of Sāruñchī, in Nakamura 1992, p. 861.
- ³ Lamotte 1967, pp. 262-63.
- ⁴ Michibata 1969, pp. 164-65.
- ⁵ See Kornicki 1998, pp. 114-17.
- ⁶ Nilsen 1988, pp. 509-10.
- ⁷ For the symbolism of the stupa, see Snodgrass 1991 and Kottkamp 1992.

- ⁸ For an exhaustive study of the variety of Japanese stupa types, see Ishida 1969.
- ⁹ See Kidder 1972, p. 146; and Ishida 1969, p. 277.
- ¹⁰ See Hurvitz 1976, pp. 183-94.
- ¹¹ This stupa type is treated in detail in Ishida 1969, pp. 88-93.
- ¹² See figure with the Japanese terms for the components of this type of stupa in Nakano 1983, p. 192.
- ¹³ More details on the components of the *sōrin* can be found in Ishida 1969, pp. 82-84, 89. For the symbolism of the spire, see Snodgrass 1991, pp. 320-52.
- ¹⁴ For the survival of the features of the early Indian stupa in East Asian stupas, see Seckel 1980.
- ¹⁵ The *tahōtō* type is treated in detail in Ishida 1969, pp. 94-96. See also illustration in Nakamura 1992, p. 865.
- ¹⁶ On the Daitō, see Kōno and Trautz 1934; and Gardiner 1996.
- ¹⁷ On Kūkai, see Hakeda 1972 and Abe 1999.
- ¹⁸ For this important esoteric Buddhist symbol and attribute, see Saunders, 1985 pp. 184-91.
- ¹⁹ For the “non-duality of the two sections” and the two mandalas, see Snodgrass 1988, vol. 1, pp. 124-30; Yamasaki 1988, pp. 128-40, 147-49; Kiyota 1978: 83-104; Hakeda 1972: 85-86.
- ²⁰ T 18, no. 848. See Kiyota 1978, pp. 19-22.
- ²¹ Three Chinese versions: T 18 nos. 865, 866 and 882. See Kiyota 1978, pp. 22-24.
- ²² The history of the five buddhas of the Daitō is discussed in detail by Shimomatsu 1991.

The five buddhas of the *taizō* are:

| | |
|------------|--|
| Dainichi | (center, Sk. Vairocana) |
| Hōdō | 宝幢 (east, Sk. Ratnaketu) |
| Kaifukeō | 開敷華王 (south, Sk. Saṃkusumitārāja) |
| Muryōju | 無量寿 (west, Sk. Amitāyus) |
| Tenkuraion | 天鼓雷音 (north, Sk. Divyadundubhimeghanirghoṣa) |

- ²³ I.e. *Kongōbuji konryū shugyōengi* 金剛峯寺建立修行緣起, dated 968. See Shimomatsu 1991, p. 85.

The five buddhas of the *kongōkai*:

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| Dainichi | (center, Sk. Vairocana) |
| Ashuku | 阿閼 (east, Sk. Akṣobhya) |
| Hōshō | 宝生 (south, Sk. Ratnasambhava) |
| Amida | 阿弥陀 (west, Sk. Amitābha) |
| Fukūjōju | 不空成就 (north, Sk. Amoghasiddhi) |

- ²⁴ For references to stupas in Kūkai’s writings, see Yoritomi 1997.
- ²⁵ See NKBT 71, pp. 382-83. This passage is discussed in Gardiner 1996, pp. 255ff.
- ²⁶ “Vajra Peak Temple”, The temple complex on Mt. Kōya.
- ²⁷ 四恩 *shion*, the obligations towards one’s parents, the sentient beings, the ruler and the three treasures, i.e. Buddha, Dharma and Saṃgha.
- ²⁸ 二利 *niri*, benefitting oneself and others.
- ²⁹ See Sawa 1974, p. 19.
- ³⁰ See Snodgrass 1991, pp. 372-77.
- ³¹ See Hakeda 1972, p. 50; Gardiner 1996, p. 266.
- ³² *Mikkyō daijiten*, 1818 s.v. Hachiyōmine.
- ³³ On the Nanten Tettō, see Orzech 1995; Gardiner 1996, pp. 268-69.
- ³⁴ See Manabe 1983.
- ³⁵ See Ihara 1984b.
- ³⁶ On this text see Matsunaga 1985; Yasuhara 1932 a-b; Vanden Broucke 1994.
- ³⁷ See Ihara 1984a.
- ³⁸ I have examined the Yugitō in an article which will appear in the forthcoming volume of *Oriens Extremus* (no. 42). This study deals with the history, the architecture and the esoteric interpretations of the Yugitō. I have also paid attention to representations of stupas with five-fold spires in the Japanese art of the Asuka and Nara periods, and to stupas with multiple spires in China and India.

- ³⁹ In contrast to the Daitō (“Great Stūpa”).
- ⁴⁰ For the esoteric interpretation of the title of the *Yugikyō*, see Vanden Broucke 1994.
- ⁴¹ See Sawa 1985, p. 690 s.v. Yugitō.
- ⁴² See Mashiba 1969, p. 148; and Atobe 1970, p. 17.
- ⁴³ See Hinonishi 1991, pp. 257, 311; *Zoku Shingon-shū zensho*, vol. 37, p. 636.
- ⁴⁴ *Yasan meireishū* 野山名霊集 (Hininishi 1979, p. 36) and *Kii zoku fudoki* 紀伊続風土記 (*Zoku Shingon-shū zensho*, vol. 37, p. 634).
- ⁴⁵ Amanuma 1934, pp. 198-201.
- ⁴⁶ Abe 1982, p. 98.
- ⁴⁷ For a description of the figures inside the present Yugitō, see Matsunaga 1985, pp. 9-10.
- ⁴⁸ See Goepper 1993, the most comprehensive study on Aizen Myōō in any language.
- ⁴⁹ See Sawa 1964, p. 64; Sawa 1976, pp. 63-75; Tomishima 1998, pp. 62-65.
- ⁵⁰ See Sawa 1964: 140; Sawa 1976, p. 134; Tomishima 1998, pp. 85-89.
- ⁵¹ I.e. Enshōji, Ninnaji, Hōkongōin, Tōnomine, Ennyūji, Hosshōji, Hōjōji and Rengeōin. See Tomishima 1998.
- ⁵² *The Yugikyō hiketsu* 瑜祇經秘決 of the Shingon monk Jichūn 実運 (or Jitsuun, 1105-1160). See *Shingon-shū zensho*, vol. 5, p. 12.
- ⁵³ For the four buddhas of the taizō, see above note 22.
- The four bodhisattvas:
- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Fugen 普賢 | (Sk. Samantabhadra) |
| Monjushiri 文殊師利 | (Sk. Mañjuśrī) |
| Kanjizai 觀自在 | (Sk. Avalokiteśvara) |
| Miroku 弥勒 | (Sk. Maitreya) |
- ⁵⁴ E.g. *Yugikyō shōkoshō*, in *Nihon daizōkyō*, vol. 33, p. 1.
- ⁵⁵ See Goepper 1993, p. 139.
- ⁵⁶ See Snodgrass 1988, vol. 2, pp. 570-75; Snodgrass 1991, pp. 340-41.
- ⁵⁷ A beautiful drawing is stored in the Shōmyōji 称名寺 (Yokohama). See Kanagawa-kenritsu Kanazawa Bunko 1991, p. 115, plate 158. On the Yugitō-zu, see Manabe 1988.
- ⁵⁸ For the description of this stupa I rely on *Chūgai nippō* 1999, pp. 8-10.
- ⁵⁹ For this hand-gesture, see Saunders 1985, pp. 102-107.
- ⁶⁰ Daikokuten 大黒天, Benzaiten 弁財天, Jurōjin 寿老人, Ebisu 恵比酒, Bishamonten 毘沙門天, Fukurokuju 福祿寿, and Hotei 布袋.
- ⁶¹ See Sawa 1985, p. 657 s.v. Mitsugon Bukkoku. The three mysteries are the functions of body 身 (*shin*), voice 口 (*ku*), and mind 意 (*i*) of Dainichi Nyorai. See Kiyota 1978, p. 69-71.
- ⁶² See *Chūgai nippō* 1999, p. 10.
- ⁶³ See *Mikkyō daijiten*, p. 1877 s.v. *byakugaishi*.

【要旨】

真言宗における仏塔
——最高の実在の三次元表現として——

ポル・バンデンブルック
ゲント大学日本学研究所

初期インド仏教のストゥーパ(仏塔)は、仏の遺骨の上に建てられた、半球状に形作られたモニュメントであった。何世紀にもわたって、ストゥーパはアジアの至る所に、様々な大きさや形状で建てられてきた。その後、ストゥーパは形状のみならず、機能や意味までも変化させた。この聖なる建造物は、最高のさとのシンボルとなった。おそらくそれは、言表できない絶対性にかたちを与える素晴らしい仏教の聖なる場所と見なされよう。

東アジア(中国・韓国・日本)では、ストゥーパは多層塔のような建造物として展開し、しばしばパゴダと呼ばれた。仏教伝播の北東アジアルート の終点である日本では、膨大な数のストゥーパが、大きさと形状の並はずれた多様性のもとに生み出された。おそらく最も良く知られた例は、約56メートルもの高さのある、京都・東寺の優雅な五重塔である。

ストゥーパは、日本密教の代表である真言宗において、中心的な役割を果たす。最も印象的な例は、真言宗寺院の中央である高野山の伽藍の中でも中心的な建造物である、二層で高さ46.5メートルの大塔もしくは根本大塔である。真言宗では、これらの洗練された建造物を、超越した仏(法身)であるヴァイローチャナ(大日如来)の具現と見なしている。

このペーパーでは、私は日本密教において宝塔と呼ばれるものの、種々の機能と象徴的な意味を論じる。これらの建造物の外的・内的な要素の象徴的意義に対する私の分析においては、私はストゥーパとマンダラとの緊密な関係に特別な注意を払う。ここでは私は、いくつかの代表的な真言寺院に建てられたストゥーパの内部の聖なる場所における、聖像や図像の配置パターンの変化も指摘する。