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# Kūkai's Heritage: The Images of Fugen Enmei Bosatsu in Shingon Context

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In my previous publications, I have proposed that the presence of two distinct iconographies depicting Fugen Enmei Bosatsu 普賢延命菩薩<sup>1</sup> indicates variations in the rituals, particularly in their platforms, between the two Japanese esoteric traditions: Taimitsu (Tendai) and Tōmitsu (Shingon).<sup>2</sup> These rituals, however, emerged as later developments, formulated by Japanese monks in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with disparities originating from the preceding transmission of images. Therefore, to understand these iconographies' origins, we need to examine the images brought to Japan by significant Japanese Buddhist monks during the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

I have previously analyzed the Taimitsu type of the two iconographies.<sup>3</sup> This depiction, featuring a two-armed bodhisattva seated atop a three-headed elephant (or three elephants), is documented in the *Fo shuo yiqie zhurulai xin guangming jiachi Puxian Pusa yanming jingang zuisheng tuoluoni jing* 佛說一切諸如來心光明加持普賢菩薩延命金剛最勝陀羅尼經 (hereafter cited as the *Fugen Enmei Sūtra*<sup>4</sup>). Both this image and scripture were brought

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<sup>1</sup> I use the names of Buddhist deities in Japanese and show the original Sanskrit or Chinese version in parenthesis, if there is one. In the case of Fugen Enmei Bosatsu, however, we cannot know for sure its Sanskrit or Chinese name, because it only survives today in Japan. In some encyclopedias, such as the *Mikkyō daijiten* 密教大辭典, the Sanskrit name Samantabhadrāyus is given. It is the name of a later scholastic invention; it was never mentioned in any written Buddhist sources previously and is the translation of the Japanese version.

<sup>2</sup> See Kiss 2020, Kiss 2021, and Kiss 2023.

<sup>3</sup> See Kiss 2022.

<sup>4</sup> T 1136, vol. 20: 579–580. No Sanskrit or any other language version survives, not in Amoghavajra's list (T 2120, vol. 52), not part of any other Chinese canon or the Korean Tripiṭaka (*Kōrai Hachiman Daizōkyō* 高麗八万大藏經).

to Japan by the Tendai monk Ennin 円仁 (794–864) upon his return from Tang 唐 China (618-907) in 847.<sup>5</sup> The iconography combines elements of Kongōsatta 金剛薩埵 (Vajrasattva) and Fugen Bosatsu 普賢菩薩 (Samantabhadra) to the extent that distinguishing Fugen Enmei images from Kongōsatta images relies solely on the presence of white elephants.

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<sup>5</sup> Ennin described the encounter with the Fugen Enmei image – although he refers to it as Fugen – in his travel journal (*Nittō guhō junrei kōki* 入唐求法巡礼行記) that recollects the eight years (from 840 to 848) he spent in Tang China to study the Buddhist *dharmā*. The passage about this encounter is as follows: 「開成五年七月二日 (...) 開普賢堂。礼普賢菩薩像。三象並立。背上安置一菩薩。堂内外莊嚴、綵畫鏤刻、不可具言。」 (Ono 1967: 95). "On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Kaicheng [840] (...) we opened the Fugen Hall and worshipped the image of the Bodhisattva Fugen. Three elephants stand side by side, and on their backs is placed a single image of the Bodhisattva. The hall both inside and outside is very impressive, and its colored paintings and carvings cannot be described in detail." (English translation is by Edwin O. Reischauer, see Reischauer 1955: 254).

One of Ennin's three lists of imported scriptures and images can further attest to this. In the *Nittō shingyū shōgyō mokuroku* 入唐新求聖經目錄 (T 2167, vol. 55), he lists the Fugen Enmei image as well: 「普賢延命像一鋪 三幅苗」 (T 2167, vol. 55: 1084c02). "Fugen Enmei image, drawn on one spread of three stripes of cloth". The journal entry and the listed image together are proof enough that Ennin did import one of the images, and to be sure that this image corresponds with the two-armed image we have further written and visual evidence. His image became known as the 'Zentōin image' (Zentōin-bon 前唐院本), referring to the building he commissioned in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to store his treasure imported from China. Furthermore, there is an inscription on one of the two surviving mandala drawings, included in the *Shoson zuzō* 諸尊圖像 (probably compiled by Shingaku 心覺 [1117-1180] or one of his disciples; TZ vol. 3: 699), saying that it is the Zentōin version (the image is the same as the one in the *Besson zakki* 別尊雜記 [TZ vol. 3: 330], which we know was compiled by Shingaku, however, the inscription is missing from this mandala drawing).



Figure 1. (left) Fugen Enmei Bodhisattva in the *Zuzōshō* 図像抄 (Mt. Kōya). (Source: TZ vol. 3: 18/19, no. 32.)

Figure 2. (right) Daianraku Bodhisattva in the *Daihi taizō dai mandara* 大悲胎藏大曼荼羅 (Ninnaji temple). (Source: TZ vol. 1: 649.)

The other type has been previously discussed in my Ph.D. dissertation and another paper.<sup>6</sup> This variant features a twenty-armed bodhisattva image (Figure 1), typically seated on a lotus throne supported by three or four elephants. In Japanese Buddhist sources, it is commonly referred to as “Vajrabodhi’s oral tradition” (Kongōchi *kuketsu* 金剛智口決[訣]), with Kongōchi representing Vajrabodhi’s name in Chinese characters. It is given in this oral tradition that this twenty-armed deity is in other names known as Daianraku Fukū Kongō Sanmaya Shinjitsu Bosatsu 大安樂不空金剛三昧

<sup>6</sup> See Kiss 2018 and Kiss 2020.

耶真実菩薩 (in Sanskrit Vajrāmoghasamayāsattva; hereafter cited as Daianraku, Figure 2),<sup>7</sup> the only distinctive features are the elephants.<sup>8</sup>

In this paper, I first introduce this oral tradition proposing some potential textual explanations for the basis of twenty arms. Then I investigate the Shingon context of the transmission of the twenty-armed image. For this examination, I draw from various Chinese Buddhist and Japanese Shingon written sources, as well as depictions spanning the 8th through the 13th centuries.

### 1. Vajrabodhi's Oral Tradition

In the sources concerning either the image or the ritual of Fugen Enmei Bosatsu, numerous mentions of an oral tradition (referred to as *kuden* 口伝 [傳] or *kuketsu* 口決) are found, often associated with Vajrabodhi, who was the teacher of Amoghavajra. Vajrabodhi was one of the most influential Buddhist monks during the Tang dynasty in China, particularly in the Middle or High Tang period (8th century). This oral tradition likely earned its name to differentiate it from the written Taimitsu tradition, which traces the origin of their Fugen Enmei image to the Fugen Enmei scripture, believed to be translated – or more likely, authored – by Amoghavajra.<sup>9</sup>

This oral tradition serves as the foundation for the Fugen Enmei ritual and its central deity in the Shingon tradition. It is noteworthy that the earliest reference to this tradition appears in a Tendai text, the *Shijū* (or *Yonjū*) *jōketsu* 四十帖決, authored by Chōen (or Jōen) 長宴 (1016–1081). Within this text,

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<sup>7</sup> Daianraku Bosatsu resides in the Henchiin 遍智院 (Universal Knowledge Mansion) section in the Mandala of the Womb Realm (Taizōkai mandara 胎藏界曼荼羅). The name refers to the 'Seal of Universal Knowledge' (*henchi'in* 遍智印), a flaming triangle in the middle of this section of the mandala. (Snodgrass 1988: 251.) There are altogether seven figures in this section, and one of them is Daianraku.

<sup>8</sup> Similarly to the case of the two-armed image and Kongōsatta.

<sup>9</sup> For more about this sutra and its origins, see Kiss 2021.

the oral tradition is attributed to Vajrabodhi (金剛智三藏云 and 金剛智ノ口決) in two sections – both written in 1045 – about the twenty arms.<sup>10</sup>

The lineage of transmission for this oral tradition is documented in various Taimitsu and Tōmitsu sources. Typically, it is discussed in regard to the twenty-armed depiction, particularly focusing on details such as the number of elephants or elephant heads. Its initial appearance is traced back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with subsequent references found throughout later centuries. The earliest surviving record of this lineage is found in the *Shoson yōshō* 諸尊要抄 (Essential Annotations of the Various Divinities),<sup>11</sup> penned by the Japanese Shingon monk Jitsu'un 実運 (1105–1160). The lineage traces back to Huiguo and extends to the early 11th century, culminating with the Shingon monk Saishin (954–1030). While it remains unclear why the lineage abruptly concludes there, we do know that Jitsu'un was a successor of Saishin through one of his teachers, Kanjin (1084–1153).<sup>12</sup>

其相承者。惠果。大師。眞雅。源仁。益信。亭子院法帝。  
寬空。寬朝。濟信。<sup>13</sup>

The inheritors of this [the oral tradition]: Huiguo; Kūkai [referred as the Great Master 大師]; Shinga 眞雅 (801–879); Gennin 源仁 (818–887); Yakushin 益信 (827–906); Emperor Uda 宇多天皇 (867–931; referred to as Teiji'in no mikado 亭子院帝); Kangū 寬空 (884–972); Kanchō 寬朝 (916–998); Saishin.

<sup>10</sup> T 2408, vol. 75: 895a09–10. The date is given as the 6<sup>th</sup> month of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Kantoku 寬德 era: 「寬德二年六月說」 (T 2408, vol. 75: 895a04).

<sup>11</sup> T 2484, vol. 78: 289–338.

<sup>12</sup> Three masters are recorded who initiated Jitsu'un into teachings of different branches of the Shingon school. Kanjin was one of the disciples of Genkaku 嚴覺 (1056–1121), who was the disciple of Shinkaku 信覺 (1011–1084), whose master was Saishin.

<sup>13</sup> T 2484, vol. 78: 291a15–16.

In chronological order, the following Shingon commentaries record this lineage:<sup>14</sup>

- *Shoson yōshō* 諸尊要抄;
- *Besson zakki* 別尊雜記 (Miscellaneous Record of Classified Sacred Images), Shingaku 心覺 (1117-1180);<sup>15</sup>
- *Hishō* 秘鈔 (Secret Compendium), Shōken 勝賢 (1138-1196);<sup>16</sup>
- *Kakuzenshō* 覺禪鈔 (Compendium of Kakuzen), Kakuzen 覺禪 (1143-1213);<sup>17</sup>
- *Henkushō* 遍口鈔 (Compendium of Teachings Told by Hen[chi-in Sōjō]<sup>18</sup>), Seigen 成賢 (1162-1231);<sup>19</sup>
- *Hishō mondō* 秘鈔問答 (Secret Compendium of questions and answers), Raiyu 賴瑜 (1226-1304).<sup>20</sup>

The *Kakuzenshō* at the Enmei section mentions that the oral tradition is can be called Huiguo's or Kūkai's invention:

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<sup>14</sup> The lineage also appears in one of the major ritual compendia of the Taimitsu tradition, the *Asabashō* 阿娑縛抄 (*Compendium of [the Seed Letters] A [of the Matrix Mandala's Buddha Family] Sa [of the Padma Family and] Va [of the Vajra Family]*), compiled by the Tendai monk Shōchō 承澄 (1205-1282).

<sup>15</sup> TZ vol. 3: 57-674.

<sup>16</sup> T 2489, vol. 78: 530c10-11. 「其相承者。惠果大師眞雅源仁益信亭子院法帝寬空寬朝濟信已上」. As we can see, the text is identical to that of the *Shoson yōshō*'s.

<sup>17</sup> TZ vol. 4: 387-932 and TZ vol. 5: 1-692.

<sup>18</sup> The "hen" here refers to one of the other names of Seigen, Henchi'in Sōjō ("High Priest of the Henchi'in temple"). Henchi'in is the name of one of the historical temples of the Daigoji temple complex. The text was written down by one of Seigen's disciples, a monk called Dōkyō 道教 (1200-1236).

<sup>19</sup> T 2496, vol. 78: 691-702.

<sup>20</sup> T 2536, vol. 79: 434b06-07. 「其相承者。惠果大師眞雅源仁益信亭子院法帝寬空寬朝濟信已上」. The text here is again identical to that of the *Shoson yōshō*'s, and the *Henkushō*'s.



金智口決 唐書云云 惠果云。大師御作云云 小野僧正用之給。或仁和寺秘書云云<sup>21</sup>

Kon[gō]chi oral transmission, a writing from the Tang. Huiguō says that it was created by Kūkai (referred to as Daishi here). Ningai<sup>22</sup> (referred to as Ono Sōjō here) used this. Or it is the secret writing at the Ninnaji temple.

The Fugen Enmei Sutra and other scriptures related to it speak about another deity, Kongō Jumyō Bosatsu 金剛壽命菩薩 (Adamantine Life-Span Bodhisattva). This bodhisattva is not mentioned in and of Amoghavajra's known biographies, we only find one short passage about it in Vajrabodhi's biography.<sup>23</sup>

The problem is that there is no description of the Kongō Jumyō Bosatsu in any of its scriptures but it is equated with Fugen Enmei. Although the Japanese monks voice their reassurance that the twenty-armed image is equal to this bodhisattva, all of its depictions are called Fugen Enmei, not once is it called Kongō Jumyō Bosatsu.

## 2. The Xuanchao Lineage

The foundation of this study lies in the differentiation of two distinct iconographies associated with Fugen Enmei Bosatsu, utilized within slightly differing ritual contexts, according to the Taimitsu and Tōmitsu traditions. The former employs a two-armed depiction, while the latter features a twenty-armed bodhisattva figure as its principal object of worship, known as the *honzon* 本尊. This disparity is further manifested in the arrangement of the altars during the Fugen Enmei ritual (Fugen Enmei hō 普賢延命法),

<sup>21</sup> TZ vol. 4: 101.

<sup>22</sup> Ningai 仁海 (951–1046). Shingon monk, his master was Gashin 雅真 (? - 999) who was trained at the Ishiyamadera 石山寺 temple and Mt. Kōya.

<sup>23</sup> Chou 1945: 279–280. See also, Kiss 2020: 128.

where the Taimitsu variant incorporates four additional altars. This augmentation is necessitated by the absence of the Four Heavenly Kings in the two-armed images, unlike their presence in the twenty-armed depiction. Consequently, these deities are accommodated on each of the supplementary altars. Conversely, in the Tōmitsu *honzon*, the Four Heavenly Kings are depicted atop the heads of elephants, obviating the need for separate altars during the ritual proceedings.

The depiction of the twenty-armed image is commonly referenced in Shingon and Tendai ritual and iconographic manuals as Vajrabodhi's oral tradition and its transmission to Japan is often attributed to the Japanese monk Kūkai 空海 (774–835), the founding figure of the Shingon school. When discussing Kūkai and the doctrinal origins of his Shingon esoteric school, Amoghavajra (704–774)<sup>24</sup> typically emerges as a central figure, being one of the three renowned Indian masters<sup>25</sup> of the 8th century during the Tang Period. Huiguo 惠果 (746–805), a direct disciple of Amoghavajra, imparted numerous doctrines to the Japanese monk, which he subsequently introduced to Japan. Hence, the association of this particular iconography with Amoghavajra's master, Vajrabodhi (671–741), holds considerable significance. This distinction prompts consideration that the transmission of

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<sup>24</sup> His name is transliterated or translated to Chinese as Amuqubazheluo 阿目佉跋折羅, Bukong jin'gang 不空金剛 or shortly Bukong 不空. He is named one of the eight patriarchs of the Shingon school. He was probably born in Samarkand and taken to China as a child. Because of his early arrival in China, many scholars suspect that some of his translations were more likely written by him in Chinese. This might be the case with the texts that I am examining for another paper as scriptural bases of the unity of Kongōsatta and Fugen Bosatsu (e.g. the *Puxian Jingang Saduo lüe yujia niansong yigui* 普賢金剛薩埵略瑜伽念誦儀軌, T 1124, vol. 20; K 1317). For more about the monk and his life, see for example Chou 1945, Lehnert 2010, Yang 2018, or Goble 2019.

<sup>25</sup> The other two are his master, Vajrabodhi, and Śubhakarasiṃha. All three were active and translated many of the esoteric texts in the then capital Chang'an 長安 (now Xi'an 西安).

this image may have occurred independently from the dissemination of Amoghavajra's teachings.

As a result, delving into the origins of this tradition necessitates an examination of Kūkai's experiences and mentors during his sojourn in China. Historical records indicate that Kūkai's studies did not take him to Mt. Wutai 五台山 or the Daxingshansi 大興善寺 monastery; rather, he received instruction at the Qinglongsi 青龍寺 monastery, a prominent esoteric center in the Tang capital, under the guidance of Huiguo. This Chinese master was one of the many disciples of Amoghavajra, but it is recorded that he had another mentor named Xuanchao 玄超 (?-?). Although details about Xuanchao's life are scant, it is believed he may have been born in the kingdom of Silla. Notably, he was the direct disciple of the third eminent Indian master, Śubhakarasiṃha (637–735). According to contemporary sources, such as the *Da Tang shendou Qinglongsi Dongtayuan guanding guoshi Huiguo aduli xingzhuang* 大唐神都青龍寺東塔院灌頂國師惠果阿闍梨行狀,<sup>26</sup> or the *Da Tang Qinglongsi sanchao gongfeng dade xingzhuang* 大唐青龍寺三朝供奉大德行狀, including the epitaph of Huiguo,<sup>27</sup> Xuanchao initiated Huiguo into the Womb World Realm (Taizōkai 胎藏界) and the doctrines of the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*.<sup>28</sup> Additional sources, such as

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<sup>26</sup> Written by Wu Yin 吳殷 (?-?). The English title is *Biography of Ācārya, Abhiṣeka and National Master Huiguo of the Eastern Pagoda Center of the Qinglongsi in the Divine Capital [Chang'an] of the Great Tang Dynasty* (Green-Mun 2015: 141). It is included in Kūkai's *Himitsu mandara kyō fuhō den* 秘密曼荼羅教付法傳 (*Dharma Transmission of the Secret Maṇḍala Teachings*), see TKDZ vol. 1.

<sup>27</sup> T 2057, vol. 50: 294–296. The English title is *Biography of the Great Virtuous Master Huiguo, a Resident Master of Qinglongsi, and the Imperial Chaplain of Three Courts of the Great Tang Dynasty* (Green-Mun 2015: 141). It is thought to have been brought to Japan by Engyō 圓(圓)行 (1128-?). T 2453, vol. 77: 801b01: 「圓行請來惠果行狀」.

<sup>28</sup> T 2057, vol. 50: 295a08–10. 「又於無畏三藏和上弟子玄超和上邊求授大悲胎藏毘盧遮那大瑜伽大教。」. “Moreover, the venerable master

the *Liangbu dafa xiangcheng shizi fufa ji* 兩部大法相承師資付法記,<sup>29</sup> trace Xuanchao's lineage through Huiguo to various Korean and Japanese monks, among whom Kūkai is included:<sup>30</sup>

次沙門玄超阿闍梨復將大毘盧遮那大教王及蘇悉地教傳付青龍寺東塔院惠果阿闍梨。阿闍梨又傳付 [大興善寺傳灌頂教同學惠應阿闍梨惠則阿闍梨] 成都府僧惟尚 (又云惟明) 汴州辨弘。新羅國僧惠日。悟真。日本國空海。當(=青龍寺東塔)院僧義滿。義明。義證。義照。義操。義愍。法潤 付法 (=已上所付法) 傳阿闍梨灌頂位者數百十二人<sup>31</sup>

Next, the śrāmana Xuanchao *ācārya* transmitted the teachings of the Great Mahāvairocana Great teachings [sutras] and the Susiddhi teachings to the *ācārya* Huiguo of the East Pagoda Hall of the Qinglongsi monastery. The *ācārya* then passed them on to the monk [Huiying and Huize *ācāryas* studying and receiving initiation together at the Daxingshansi monastery.] Weishang (also known as Weiming) of the superior prefecture of Chengdu, and Bianhong<sup>32</sup> of Bianzhou Province. There were also monks from

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Śubhakarasiṃha conferred the teaching of the Great Compassion Garbhadhātu Mahāvairocana Great Yoga on his disciple Xuanchao and others.”

<sup>29</sup> T 2081, vol. 51: 783–787. Written by the Chinese monk Haiyun 海雲 (?–?) in 834. The English title is *Transmission Record of the Two Sets of the Great Esoteric Buddhist Teaching from Master to Disciple* (Green-Mun 2015: 141).

<sup>30</sup> For more about these sources about Huiguo and Kūkai, see Green-Mun 2015.

<sup>31</sup> T 2081, vol. 51: 786c24–0787a04.

<sup>32</sup> Buddhist monastic from Java who travelled to China and compiled texts included in the Chinese Buddhist canon, known as a fellow student Kūkai (Sinclair 2016: 29; T 959). <https://ntireader.org/words/7001686.htm> Indonesian monk “(辯弘/ \*Ājñāgarbha), who arrived from the kingdom of Kāliṅ on northern Java around 780 and remained in China until 806.” (Gray 2023: 111. / Sinclair 2016: 33–38.)

the Kingdom of Silla, Hye-il<sup>33</sup>, and Ojin<sup>34</sup>. Kūkai from Japan. And monks from the (East Pagoda Hall of the Qinglongsi) monastery, Yiman, Yiming, Yizheng, Yizhao, Yicao, Yimin, and Farun. The *ācārya* [Huiguo] conferred empowerment upon a total of one hundred and twelve individuals.

Shingon monks had consistently upheld the Xuanchao lineage in the Shingon school as a potential branch of Kūkai's esoteric lineage. Seigen provides three different versions of this lineage in his *Henkushō* (Figure 3):

其三箇度者。第一惠果付玄超(原本傍註曰胎藏)・不空(原本傍註曰金剛) 兩師令傳受給兩界初胎後金是也 印明有之 第二惠果奉不空三藏二遇兩界同時御相承是也 印明有之 第三惠果奉遇不空三藏開(/閉)眼之時無作法之灌頂相承之兩界是也 印明有之<sup>35</sup>

These three occurrences are [as follows]: in the first Huiguo entrusted Xuanchao (in the original version a comment is added saying Womb [Realm] and Amoghavajra (in the original version a comment is added saying Diamond [Realm]), the two masters initiated him into [the teachings of the] Two Realms, first into the Womb [Realm] then the Diamond [Realm]. (The mudras and mantras.) In the second, Huiguo was the disciple of Amoghavajra the *tripitaka* master, who initiated him into the Two Realms at the same time and he handed it down [like this]. (The mudras and mantras.) In the third, Huiguo was the disciple of Amoghavajra the *tripitaka* master, and upon opening (/closing) [Huiguo's] eyes, he

<sup>33</sup> Arrived to Chang'an in 781 to study from Huiguo.

<sup>34</sup> One of the ten disciples of Ūisang 義湘 (625–702), from Koramsa 鶴岳寺 temple on Mt. Haga 下柯山.

<sup>35</sup> T 2496, vol. 78: 701a14–19.

received the [teachings of the] Two Realms through the initiation of non-practice [or without effort]. (The mudras and mantras.)

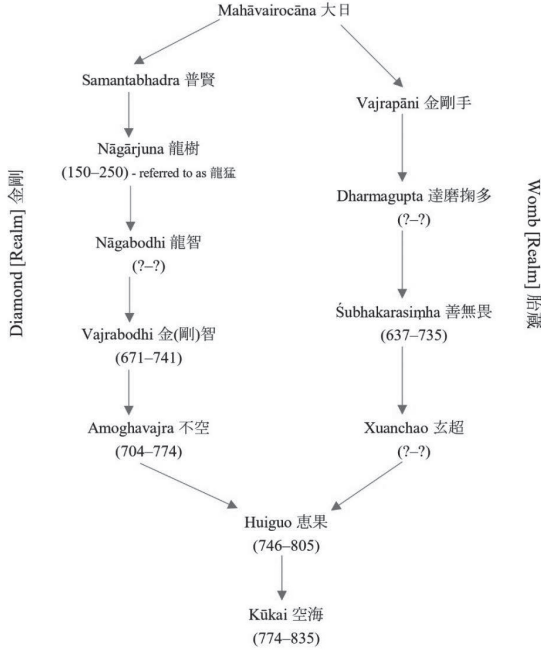


Figure 3. Master-disciple relationships in sources concerning the lineage of Kūkai (with the Indian masters' names with Chinese characters) according to the *Henkushō*

The issue of transmission holds significance in elucidating the origins of the oral tradition, especially given that the representation in both image and text appears to have survived exclusively in Japan, to the best of our knowledge. Understanding this transmission is pivotal in addressing why the twenty-armed bodhisattva was solely introduced to Japan by Kūkai.

### 3. Textual Evidence for Kūkai's Transmission

Japanese sources suggest that the images arrived in Japan not just in two, but three forms: the conventional two-armed depiction brought by Ennin, followed by a variation introduced by another Tendai monk, Enchin 円珍 (814-891), and finally, the twenty-armed image by Kūkai. However, it's worth noting that these accounts were recorded centuries after the respective masters' passings. To establish Kūkai's transmission of the Fugen Enmei image, we need to seek evidence contemporaneous with his era, consulting first and foremost his *oeuvre*.

As for literary evidence, we can refer to one of his commentaries known as *Shinjitsukyō monku* 真実經文句 (*Textual Explanation of the Truth Scripture*).<sup>36</sup> This commentary delves into a fundamental esoteric scripture, the *Dale jingang bukong zhenshi sanmeiye jing banruo boluomiduo liqushi* 大樂金剛不空眞實三昧耶經般若波羅蜜多理趣釋 (Analysis of the Principle and Intention toward Prajñāpāramitā and the Sūtra on the Samaya of Great Bliss, Vajra Nonemptiness and True Reality, hereafter cited as *Liqushi text*),<sup>37</sup> which was translated by Amoghavajra. In his text, Kūkai identifies the principal bodhisattva of this scripture as the Great Bliss Adamantine Samantabhadra of Long Life Vajrasattva Bodhisattva (Dairaku Kongō Fugen Enmei Kongōsatta Bosatsu 大樂金剛普賢延命金剛薩埵菩薩):

<sup>36</sup> T 2237, vol. 61: 612–615.

<sup>37</sup> T 1003, vol. 19: 607-617; K 1333. There is another text which is a shorter version, called *Dale jingang bukong zhenshi sanmeiye jing* 大樂金剛不空眞實三昧耶經 (T 243, vol. 8: 784–786; K 1275, in the Korean Tripitaka the Sanskrit name is [*Adhy*]ardhaśatikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra, the other Amoghavajra text [1003] has no Sanskrit title). According to Jinhua Chen, the former is a commentary on the latter (Chen 1997: 54, n. 60) which is attested by the style of the text, in which Amoghavajra first uses the phrase 「經云」 “the scripture says”, then explains the cited part.

初句明大樂金剛普賢延命金剛薩埵菩薩位<sup>38</sup>

The first section elucidates the position [or seat] of the Great Bliss Adamantine Samantabhadra of Long Life Vajrasattva Bodhisattva.

In this context, Kūkai establishes a connection between three deities, all of whom are associated with Fugen Enmei Bodhisattva: Daianraku, Kongōsatta, and Fugen Bosatsu.<sup>39</sup>

Despite continuous assertions by Shingon monks that the bodhisattva of the oral tradition is not elucidated in any scriptures, various sections of texts attributed to Amoghavajra can offer insights into this relationship. Both Daianraku and Kongōsatta are linked to Fugen Bosatsu by Amoghavajra and his translations.<sup>40</sup> The scriptural basis for the twenty-armed Daianraku Bosatsu is in the fourteenth assembly called *Yoga of the Truth of the Samādhi of the Tathāgatas* (如來三昧耶真實瑜伽) in Amoghavajra's *Jingangding jing yuqie shibahui zhigui* 金剛頂經瑜伽十八會指歸 (Synopsis of the Yoga of Eighteen Assemblies of the Diamond Pinnacle Sutra, hereafter cited as *Shibahui text*),<sup>41</sup> where the following is remarked:

此經中普賢菩薩十六大菩薩四攝成一身<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> T 2237, vol. 61: 613b06–07. 「初句明大樂金剛普賢延命金剛薩埵菩薩位」.

<sup>39</sup> The association of these three is first presented in Kūkai's writing, however, the connection between Kongōsatta and Fugen Bosatsu also appears in some scriptures that were again translated by Amoghavajra, texts that are connected through the relationship of Fugen and Kongōsatta. See, for example, texts T 1124, T 1125, and T 1126 in vol. 20. The Hungarian and English translations of some of these texts are upcoming.

<sup>40</sup> For the two-armed image and its link to Amoghavajra through the Fugen Enmei scripture, see Kiss 2021 and Kiss 2022.

<sup>41</sup> T 869, vol. 18: 284–287.

<sup>42</sup> T 869, vol. 18: 287a21–22.



In this sūtra<sup>43</sup> Fugen Bodhisattva, the Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas and the Four Gatekeepers become one body.

Rolf Giebel observes that among the eighteen assemblies, this particular one remains elusive within the existing canon. Consequently, the concept of Fugen merging with the Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas and the Four Gatekeeper Bodhisattvas lacks a definitive origin. Giebel proceeds to analyze all commentaries addressing this scripture. It is noteworthy that three of them also mention the connection here to Fugen Enmei,<sup>44</sup> although none of them provides any answer to our questions.

Significantly, all deities concerned here are part of a group called the thirty-seven honored ones (*sanjūshichi son* 三十七尊) of the Diamond Realm Mandala (Kongōkai mandara 金剛界曼荼羅).<sup>45</sup> Although these thirty-seven deities are described in many esoteric Buddhist scriptures, there are three texts, one each translated by the three Indian masters referenced in this paper:

- T 906, *Foding zunsheng xin po diyu zhuanyezhang chu sanjie mimi sanshen fogue sanzong xidi zhenyan yigui* 佛頂尊勝心破地獄轉業障出三界祕密三身佛果三種悉地真言儀軌 (Ritual Manual of Mantras of the Usnisavijaya Mind Breaking Open the Gates of Hell and Transferring [Bad] Karma and Hindrances Coming Forth from the

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<sup>43</sup> The scripture this refers to is the *Vajrasekhara Sūtra* (*Kongōchō kyō* 金剛頂經).

<sup>44</sup> *Jūhatte shiki shō* 十八会指帰鈔 (*Annotations to the Indications of the Goals of the Eighteen Assemblies*) by Raiyu (ZSZ vol. 7); *Kongōchō kyō kaidai shō* 金剛頂經開題鈔 (*Annotations on the Commentary on the Sūtra of the Adamantine Pinnacle*) by Yūkai 宥快 (1345-1416, ND vol. 32: 37); *Kongōchō daikyōō kyō shiki* 金剛頂大教王經私記 (*Private Records to the Adamantine Pinnacle Sūtra*) by Donjaku 曇寂 (1674–1742, T 2225, vol. 61: 132).

<sup>45</sup> The thirty-seven deities are in the Misai-e 微細会 section of the mandala.

Three Realms to Attain the Three Secret Bodies of the Three Kinds of Buddhahood, hereafter cited as *Zhenyan yigui text*), by Śubhakarasiṃha;<sup>46</sup>

- T 867, *Jingangfeng louge yiqie yuqie yuqi jing* 金剛峯樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經 (Pavilion of Vajra Peak and all its Yogas and Yogins, hereafter cited as *Yuqie yuqi text*), by Vajrabodhi;<sup>47</sup>
- T 878, *Jingangding jing jingangjie dadaochang Piluzhena Rulai zishouyong shennei zhengzhi juanshu fashen yiming fo zuishang cheng mimi sanmodi li chan wen* 金剛頂經金剛界大道場毘盧遮那如來自受用身內證智眷屬法身異名佛最上乘祕密三摩地禮懺文 (Liturgical Confession Text of the Diamond Peak Sūtra Diamond Realm Grand Assembly of Vairocana Tathāgata's Self-Enjoyment Body, and Inner Realization of Wisdom and Retinue of the Dharma Body, in Other Names Known as the Buddha's Supreme Secret Samādhi, hereafter cited as *Chan wen text*) by Amoghavajra.<sup>48</sup>

The first text lists all thirty-seven deities by their groups (four buddhas, sixteen great bodhisattvas, etc.), and the third gives the individual praises of each deity. The second, however, Vajrabodhi's text places the sixteen great bodhisattvas as the protagonists and links together the thirty-seven deities with Fugen and Kongōsatta, highlighting that the thirty-seven culminate in Fugen's body:

爾時金剛界如來復告金剛手言：「若有善男子(善)女人受持此深密瑜伽金剛一切如來大勝金剛心瑜伽成就三十七尊自覺聖智者應用金剛界中三十七羯磨印成就常當持普賢菩薩一字心明與(此)出入息隨氣相應，身語意金剛(智)當速獲之速證

<sup>46</sup> T 906, vol. 18: 912–914. Not included in the Korean Tripitaka.

<sup>47</sup> T 867, vol. 18: 253–269. Not included in the Korean Tripitaka.

<sup>48</sup> T 878, vol. 18: 335–337; K 1332.

普賢菩薩之身此名普賢(菩)薩金剛薩埵三昧耶三十七智深密相應，大阿闍梨應作此法。若諸阿闍梨曾入金剛界大灌頂，及受金剛界阿闍梨位，應修此法，常以一字齊運三業，當獲得大普賢薩埵之身。」<sup>49</sup>

At that time the Diamond Realm Buddha again said to Kongōshu (Bodhisattva): “If there are men and women of good families who accept and uphold this profoundly deep yoga of the Diamond Buddhas Most Victorious Diamond Mind Yoga which is accomplished by the thirty-seven honored ones self-realizing holy cognition, they should utilize the Diamond Realm thirty-seven karma *mudrā* accomplishment, they should always uphold Fugen Bosatsu’s one letter clear mind, and because of this the accordance with their respiration is associated, they should swiftly attain the body, speech, and mind diamond wisdom and swiftly realize the body of Fugen Bosatsu. This is called the Fugen Bosatsu Kongōsatta Samādhi Thirty-Seven Wisdom Profound Secret accordance. The great *ācārya* should enact this *dharma*. If the *ācāryas* and monks enter the Diamond Realm Great Consecration and obtain the rank of Diamond Realm *ācārya*, they should practice this *dharma*, and incessantly with [upholding] the one letter [clear mind] equally convey the three activities [e.g. body, speech, and mind], they should attain the body of Fugen Great Bodhisattva.”

The cited passage can be recognized as an indirect textual basis for the twenty-arms, hence the name Vajrabodhi’s oral tradition may be proven to be well-established.

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<sup>49</sup> T 867, vol. 18: 255b10–20.

Additionally, there is a passage in another short text attributed to Amoghavajra, the *Bore boluomiduo liqu jing Da'anle Bukong Sanmei Zhenshi Jingang (Saduo) Pusa deng yishi qi sheng da manchaluo yishu* 般若波羅蜜多理趣經大安樂不空三昧真實金剛薩埵菩薩等一十七聖大曼荼羅義述 (The Explanation of the Meaning of the Seventeen Holy Great Mandalas Including the Great Bliss Never-Empty Samādhi Truth Vajrasattva Bodhisattva from the Prajñāpāramitā Principal of Wisdom Sūtra, hereafter cited as *Da'anle text*),<sup>50</sup> which concerns Daianraku Bodhisattva:

爾時毘盧遮那如來於他化自在天<sup>51</sup>王宮為諸大菩薩等說此般若波羅蜜[多]甚深理趣十七清淨句門蓋是十七大菩薩三摩地之句義也為令能住持者疾至菩提故遂演此十七聖位大曼荼羅如來與諸大士等所說密語依此修行速疾成就何者為一十七聖其一所謂大[安]樂不空三昧真實金剛菩薩蓋表諸佛普賢之身周遍器世間及有情世間以其無邊自在理常體寂不妄不壞故有是名也左持金剛鈴是適悅義置腰之左表大我焉右持五股金剛[杵]是五智義轉拳向外示眾生也於曼荼羅據其(有)中位而總其眾相除是而有一十六位焉蓋正覺之徑路<sup>52</sup>

At one time, the Birushana Buddha, in the palace of the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, expounded to the great bodhisattvas and others the profound meaning of the Prajñāpāramitā in Seventeen Pure sentences. These are the meanings of the verses on the *samādhi* of the Seventeen Great Bodhisattvas, expounded to enable those who live in and uphold them to swiftly attain enlightenment, and therefore to reach and expound these

<sup>50</sup> T 1004, vol. 19: 617–618; K 1334.

<sup>51</sup> It is one of the six heavens of affliction, the last one, in which one enjoys the pleasures created by others. It is also where the gods Daijizaiten 大自在天 (Maheśvara) and Mara 魔羅 (Māra) reside.

<sup>52</sup> T 1004, vol. 19: 617b17–29.

seventeen holy places of the great mandala. To expedite their realization, the Tathāgata imparted secret teachings to the great beings (who) swiftly accomplish (enlightenment) by relying on this practice. What are these Seventeen Saints? First, there is the Vajra Bodhisattva Great Blissful Never-Empty Samādhi Truth, representing the universally good (i.e. Fugen) body of all Buddhas, embracing both worlds of insentient and sentient beings. (He has) boundless autonomy and the principle continuously embodies tranquility (in him), (he) is not false and is indestructible, hence this name. In his left (hand) he holds a *vajra* bell that signifies the meaning of pleasing adaptability, placed on the left side of the waist symbolizing the great self. In his right (hand) he holds a five-pronged *vajra* which signifies the meaning of the Five Wisdoms, and by turning his fist outward, (he) shows it to the sentient beings. He occupies the central position of the mandala, and he encompasses all characteristics. Besides him, there are sixteen other positions, covering the direct road to enlightenment.

In this passage, we observe that Daianraku Bodhisattva embodies the universal compassion (Fugen) aspect of all buddhas, sharing similarities with Kongōsatta with the *vajra* bell and five-pronged *vajra* in each hand.

Referring to Kūkai's inventory of imported treasures (*Goshōrai mokuroku* 御請來目錄),<sup>53</sup> we locate three of the texts previously mentioned (the *Liqushi text*, *Shibahui text*, and *Yuqie yuqi text*), but the *Da'anle text* is notably absent. However, another text titled *Jingangding bore yujia liqu jing* 金剛頂瑜伽般若理趣經 is present on the list, containing references to the *Liqushi text*.<sup>54</sup> It wasn't uncommon for titles to be abbreviated or altered in Buddhist text catalogs. While the term *prajñāpāramitā* (般若波羅蜜多) is

<sup>53</sup> T 2161, vol. 55: 1060–1066.

<sup>54</sup> T 2161, vol. 55: 1061a07.

abbreviated (leaving only the first two characters, 般若), the inclusion of “Adamantine Pinnacle yoga” (金剛頂瑜伽) at the start raises doubts about whether this title is merely a shortened form of the *Da'anle text*.<sup>55</sup>

Further insight into Kūkai's transmission can be found in his *Sanjūjō sasshi* 三十帖策[冊]子, a compilation of imported texts.<sup>56</sup> Comparing his list with the *Sanjūjō sasshi*, it seems that only two of the previously mentioned six texts – the *Da'anle text* and *Zhenyan yigui text* – are absent from both. Consequently, it can be inferred that Kūkai must have been acquainted with most of Amoghavajra's and Vajrabodhi's scriptures related to Fugen, Kongōsatta, and Daianraku, but not Śubhakarasiṃha's or the highlighted section of the *Da'anle text*.

#### 4. Pictorial Evidence for Kūkai's Transmission

Now, let us shift our focus to visual proof. A significant piece of evidence directly associated with the Shingon founder is the iconography collection titled *Shishu goma honzon narabini kenzoiku zuzō* 四種護摩本尊及眷属図像 (hereafter cited as *Shishu goma zuzō*), which remains preserved at Daigoji temple to this day. This collection is a copy, crafted in 1213 by Shūjitsu 宗実 (?-?), a monk from Zenrinji 禅林寺 temple. The postscript (*okugaki* 奥書) indicates that it was originally transcribed and illustrated in 821:

惣廿七帳 就中二張半 (虫損)  
弘仁十二年四月十六日記 僧□

<sup>55</sup> The text, however, is listed with its full title in the subsequent 9<sup>th</sup>-century lists of Ennin and the Shingon monk, Shūei 宗叡 (809–884). Ennin returned from China in 847, Shūei in 866. For Ennin's list, see T 2167, vol. 55: 1079c10–12; and for Shūei's, see T 2174A, vol. 55: 1110b12–14. It is noteworthy that both monks give Amoghavajra's name as Amuqia 阿目佉 or Amuqia Jingang 阿目佉金剛.

<sup>56</sup> These are the texts that Kūkai had copied in China. Now in the collection of the Ninnaji temple in Kyoto. It is designated as a national treasure (*kokuhō* 国宝).

写本云（虫損）

天養二年初秋六月以恵什闍梨□

書於禪林寺經藏 {云／々} 以（本力）（写力）

建曆三年五月十七日少輔法眼□□□ 宗実<sup>57</sup>

Twenty-seven books in all, two and a half stretch in the middle  
(insect damage)

Written on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Kōnin  
by the priest [...]

Copied book (insect damage)

Started in the fall, 6<sup>th</sup> month in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Ten'yō, Ejū ācār(ya)

Housed at the scripture treasury of the Zenrinji temple (Original?)

(Copy?)

On the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Kenryaku, the  
*shō*<sup>58</sup> and *hōgan*<sup>59</sup> [...] Shūjitsu

While this postscript does not explicitly name the creator, tradition attributes it to Chisen 智泉 (789 ?–825), Kūkai's disciple, whose name is linked to some of the drawings. According to the postscript, the version at Daigoji temple was initially reproduced by Ejū 恵什 (?–?) in 1145 before Shūjitsu created his copy. The Fugen Enmei image is featured among the Buddhist deities in this collection, it portrays the twenty-armed variant atop three elephants (Figure 4). This particular depiction is also found in subsequent Shingon iconography collections, such as the *Besson zakki* (Figure 5) of

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<sup>57</sup> The postscript is cited on the website of the Tōkyō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo 東京文化財研究所 (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties). URL: <http://www.tobunken.go.jp/materials/nenki/13140.html>.

<sup>58</sup> “Junior Assistant Minister”. Official rank in the *ritsuryō* system 律令制度.

<sup>59</sup> “Dharma Eye”. The second highest rank in the ranks of Buddhist monks in Japan.

Shingaku 心覚 (1117–1180), or the *Sho Monju zuzō* 諸文殊図像 (Various Iconographies of Monju [Mañjuśrī], TZ vol. 6: 95–114; Figure 6).



Figure 4. Fugen Enmei bosatsu. *Shishu goma honzon narabini kenzoku zuzō*.  
(Source: TZ vol. 1: 833.)



Figure 5. (left) Fugen Enmei bosatsu drawing in the *Besson zakki*.  
(Source: TZ vol. 3: 108.)

Figure 6. (right) Fugen Enmei bosatsu drawing in the *Sho Monju zuzō*.  
(Source: TZ vol. 6: 101.)



Another connection to Kūkai can be observed through the iconographic arrangement of the seven statues situated on the main altar of the Kongōbuji temple 金剛峯寺 atop Mt. Kōya 高野山.<sup>60</sup> Numerous articles, studies, and books recount the tragic events of the night of December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1926. During the vigil held for the recently departed Emperor Taishō 大正天皇 (1879-1926, reigned from 1912 to 1926), a devastating fire engulfed the main hall of the Kongōbuji temple, consuming all its treasures. Fortunately, the lost icons had been designated as national treasures in 1921, preserving their images in photographs.<sup>61</sup> Among these, one depicts a twenty-armed Fugen Enmei Bodhisattva. The central object of veneration is Ashuku Buddha 阿闍如来 (Akṣobhya), a concealed buddha image (hibutsu 秘仏), while the remaining six statues represent Kongōsatta, Fugen Enmei Bodhisattva, Kongō Bodhisattva 金剛王菩薩 (Vajrarāja), Kokūzō Bodhisattva 虚空蔵菩薩 (Ākāśagarbha), Fudō Myōō 不動明王 (Acalanātha vidyārāja), and Gōzanze Myōō 降三世明王 (Trailokyavijaya vidyārāja). The *Kongōbuji konryū shugyō engi* 金剛峯寺建立修行緣起 (The Origin History of the Buildings and Ritual Practices of the Kongōbuji Temple)<sup>62</sup> mentions four bodhisattvas, albeit not explicitly by name:

三間四面講堂一字、柱長一丈六尺<sup>63</sup>、奉安置一丈六尺阿闍  
如来、八尺五寸<sup>64</sup>四菩薩、七尺二寸不動、降三世、并七軀

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<sup>60</sup> This temple and the many other temples on Mt. Kōya are the center of the Shingon school, founded by Kūkai in 822.

<sup>61</sup> The photos can be viewed at the Kōyasan Reihōkan's 高野山靈宝館 website. URL: <https://www.reihokan.or.jp/bunkazai/nenpyo/kondo-s.html>.

<sup>62</sup> According to the postscript of the most widely known copy of this text, it was written by Ningai in 968.

<sup>63</sup> One *jō* 丈 is approximately 3.3 meters, one *shaku* 尺 is approximately 30.3 centimeters long.

<sup>64</sup> One *sun* 寸 is approximately 3 centimeters long.

<sup>65</sup> From the *Kongōbuji konryū shugyō engi*, cited in Fujii 1986: 4.

Lecture hall, three gen [wide], four sides, one eave, the columns one *jō* and six *shakus* (app. 5.2 m) long, there is a one *jō* and six *shakus* [tall statue of] Ashuku Buddha placed [inside], four eight *shakus* and five *suns* (app. 2.6 m) [tall statues of] bodhisattvas, and a seven *shakus* and two *suns* (app. 2.1 m) [tall statue of] Fudō and Gōzanze, altogether seven pieces.<sup>66</sup>

Thus far, there has been a lack of identification of this arrangement, but it appears that the central element is the primary deity. Ashuku Buddha, one of the five wisdom buddhas (*gochi nyorai* 五智如来), resides in a pure land in the East and embodies the essence of “great round mirror wisdom” (*daien kyōchi* 大円鏡智). Kongōsatta and Kongōō Bodhisattva serve as two of Ashuku’s four attendant bodhisattvas (*shishingon* 四親近) in the Diamond Realm Mandala.<sup>67</sup> Kokūzō Bodhisattva, in his five manifestations (Godai Kokūzō Bosatsu 五大虚空蔵菩薩), symbolizes the five wisdom buddhas, including Ashuku.<sup>68</sup> Fugen Bodhisattva also represents the East; as explained in the *Fo shuo guan Puxian pusa xingfa jing* 佛說觀普賢菩薩行

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<sup>66</sup> The references to the sizes of the statues include the pedestals (*daiza* 台座) and halos (*kōhai* 光背).

<sup>67</sup> The other two attendant bodhisattvas are Kongōai Bodhisattva 金剛愛菩薩 (*Vajrarāga*), and Kongōki Bodhisattva 金剛喜菩薩 (*Vajrasadhu*).

<sup>68</sup> Kūkai had a special connection with Kokūzō Bodhisattva, which further explains his place on the main altar. Before he traveled to China he was already taught the *Gumonji hō* 求聞持法, a ritual for memory retention. By reciting its mantra enough time the practitioner can reach enlightenment and Kokūzō appears to them as the morning star. According to legends about Kūkai, he recited the mantra for seven years and acquired superhuman faculties in memory retention and learning. (This is one of the explanations of how he received initiation into all secret teachings in China in a miraculously short time.) He also highlights in his *Sangō shi'iki* 三教指帰 (Guide to the Three Teachings, 797) that he saw this morning star, meaning he achieved enlightenment. (Ōmoto 2021: 25) For more about Kūkai and his time on Shikoku as written in the *Sangō shi'iki*, see Ōmoto 2021.

法經 (The Samantabhadra Contemplation Sūtra), he is said to be born in the pure land to the East.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, Fugen is situated in the East on the central panel of the Womb World Mandala (Taizōkai Mandara 胎藏界曼荼羅) alongside Hōtō Buddha 宝幢如来 (Ratnaketu), who is also linked to Ashuku due to their alignment. The two wisdom kings, Fudō and Gōzanze, both manifest the wrathful form of Ashuku. Gōzanze is positioned in the East within the group of the Five Great Wisdom Kings (Godai Myōō 五大明王), while Ashuku's Sanskrit name, meaning "immovable", sometimes renders him as the "immovable buddha" (不動佛), further connecting him to Fudō.<sup>70</sup>

A lingering question arises: why include Fugen Enmei instead of Fugen? It seems reasonable to argue that the iconographic scheme revolves around the central deity, Ashuku Buddha. However, there's no apparent connection between Fugen Enmei and this particular buddha as far as current knowledge goes. While this question remains unresolved, the placement of Fugen Enmei on the main altar of this temple indicates the significance of this deity within Kūkai's esoteric philosophy.

### Conclusion

The Shingon context of Fugen Enmei and Kūkai's role in transmitting the twenty-armed image has yet to receive extensive scholarly attention. Many inquiries linger, indicating a need for further research. Nevertheless, it's evident that this deity held a unique significance for the founder. Additionally, numerous paintings found in Shingon temples provide evidence of its continued ritual utilization over the centuries following Kūkai's era.

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<sup>69</sup> T 277, vol. 9. K 380. 「普賢菩薩乃生東方淨妙國土」 (T 277, vol. 9: 389c15). For more about this text and other textual analysis of Fugen Bodhisattva, see Stevenson 1987, Hamar 2019, or Hamar 2020.

<sup>70</sup> The name appears in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra* (*Bore boluomiduo jing* 般若波羅蜜多經, T 220, vol. 5, K 1) text, translated by the famous Chinese monk, Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664), where the East is called the „Land of the Immovable Buddha" (東方不動佛國), see T 220, vol. 5: 50b03.

Both sides of the debate regarding the Chinese origins of the twenty-armed image of Fugen Enmei Bodhisattva present compelling arguments. The presence of the Xuanchao lineage and Kūkai's unique position as the sole Japanese disciple of Huiguo, coupled with his exclusive importation of the twenty-armed image, alongside Daianraku's association with the Womb Realm, naturally raise questions about the link between the oral tradition and Vajrabodhi. Furthermore, the Japanese lineage traces back only to Huiguo, prompting further inquiries as to why Japanese monks did not begin their lineage with Vajrabodhi if indeed it was his tradition.

However, as a counterargument, all surviving scriptures related to Daianraku have consistently been credited to Vajrabodhi and/or Amoghavajra. Additionally, the theory of Kongō Jumyō Bosatsu serving as an alternative to Fugen Enmei, as suggested in the Adamantine Life-span texts associated with these Indian masters from early on – found not only in Amoghavajra's list of translated works but also in numerous contemporary Chinese catalogs – supports this tradition. Nevertheless, the attribution of the oral tradition surrounding the twenty-armed bodhisattva image has been supported by a lineage of Shingon and Tendai monks since the early 9<sup>th</sup> century.

After examining the diverse textual and visual evidence, along with the inclusion of the oral tradition in this transmission lineage, it is reasonable to conclude that Kūkai likely introduced Fugen Enmei Bosatsu to Japan before the arrival of the *Fugen Enmei sūtra* and the well-documented two-armed image, which were imported by Ennin in 847.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Citations of and references to Chinese translations are done according to the following model: T 2408, vol. 75: 895a04 stands for the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, text number 2408 in volume 75, page 895, segment a (upper segment), column 04.

- K: *Kōrai Hachiman Daizōkyō* 高麗八王大藏經; numbers and description from Lancaster, Lewis R. 1979. *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. Online edition: [http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive\\_catalogue/index.html](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/index.html)
- ND: *Nihon daizōkyō* 日本大藏經. (1914-1921). Edited by the Nihon Daizōkyō Hensankai 日本大藏經編纂会. 48 volumes. Tokyo: Nihon Daizōkyō Hensankai.
- T: *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 - Fukyūban 普及版. (1924-1932). Edited by Takakusu, Junjirō 高楠順次郎 – Watanabe, Kaigyoku 渡辺海旭 – Ono, Genmyō 小野玄妙. 88 volumes. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan.
- TKDZ: *Teihon Kōbō daishi zenshū* 定本弘法大師全集. (1991-1997). Edited by the Mikkyō Bunka Kenkyūjo 密教文化研究所. Kōyasan: Mikkyō Bunka Kenkyūjo.
- TZ: *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Zuzō* 大正新脩大藏經図像 - Fukyūban 普及版. (1932-1934). Edited by Takakusu, Junjirō 高楠順次郎 – Watanabe, Kaigyoku 渡辺海旭 – Ono, Genmyō 小野玄妙. 12 volumes. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan.
- ZSZ: *Zoku shingonshū zensho* 続真言宗全書. (1975-1988). Edited by the Zoku Shingonshū Zensho Kankōkai 続真言宗全書刊行会. 42 volumes. Kōyasan: Zoku Shingonshū Zensho Kankōkai.

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- Bore boluomiduo liqu jing Da'anle Bukong Sanmei Zhenshi Jingang (Saduo)*  
*Pusa deng yishi qi sheng da manchaluo yishu* 般若波羅蜜多理趣經大

- 安樂不空三昧真實金剛薩埵菩薩等一十七聖大曼荼羅義述 [trans. Amoghavajra] T 1004, vol. 19.
- Dale jingang bukong zhenshi sanmeiye jing banruo boluomiduo liqushi* 大樂金剛不空真實三昧耶經般若波羅蜜多理趣釋 [trans. Amoghavajra] T 1003, vol. 19.
- Da Tang Qinglongsi sanchao gongfeng dade xingzhuang* 大唐青龍寺三朝供奉大德行狀 [no author] T 2057, vol. 50.
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- Goshōrai mokuroku* 御請來目錄 [Kūkai 空海] T 2161, vol. 55.
- Henkushō* 遍口鈔 [Seigen 成賢] T 2496, vol. 78.
- Himitsu mandara kyō fuhō den* 祕密曼荼羅教付法傳 (*Dharma Transmission of the Secret Maṇḍala Teachings*) [Kūkai 空海] TKDZ vol. 1.
- Hishō* 祕鈔 [Shōken 勝賢] T 2489, vol. 78.
- Hishō mondō* 祕鈔問答 [Raiyu 賴瑜] T 2536, vol. 79.
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- Jingangding jing yuqie shibahui zhigui* 金剛頂經瑜伽十八會指歸 [trans. Amoghavajra] T 869, vol. 18.

- Jingangfeng louge yiqie yuqi yuqi jing* 金剛峯樓閣一切瑜伽瑜祇經 [trans. Vajrabodhi] T 867, vol. 18.
- Kakuzenshō* 覺禪鈔 [Kakuzen 覺禪] TZ vols. 4–5.
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