

**Spirit Possession Rituals in India, China and Japan:
An Invitation into the Study of Texts of “Mixed Esotericism”**

Nobumi Iyanaga

The present essay is an attempt to construct a bridge across two (or three) fields of scholarship, namely the study of spirit possession in ancient India, medieval and modern Japan, and medieval China. It posits that a certain type of spirit possession practice in these cultures was historically related through the transmission of Buddhism. The essay begins with definitions of two terms used in its title: “spirit possession” and “*zōmitsu*” 雜密 (“mixed esotericism”). The author prefers to use “spirit possession” rather than “shamanism,” because the latter term denotes a particular type of spirit possession practiced in Siberia. Concerning the term “*zōmitsu*,” as opposed to “*junmitsu*” 純密 (“pure esotericism”), the essay points out that this opposition itself is based on a rather arbitrary value judgement, and the division of esoteric works into these two categories cannot be objective. However, the category “*zōmitsu*” may be useful in so far as it can designate a group of texts dealing with magical methods which aimed to satisfy the daily and worldly wishes and needs of believers.

After surveying recent studies related to Indian lore on spirit possession as well as religious and medical practices in Japan’s medieval period, this essay contends that the Japanese practices were influenced by the Indian techniques of spiritual possession which were imported from the Continent through Buddhist esotericism. It then analyzes a Chinese text from the fifth century. Comparing it with later Tantric texts, the author demonstrates that this text describes a ritual of prophecy through a kind of spirit possession that became widely known after the eighth century through Tantric texts. This is a very early example of such practices, which suggests that its origins trace back to Indian popular religion rather than Tantric religiosity. The author then presents several cases of spirit possession rituals in Song-period China. The essay ends with remarks on Japanese developments of spirit possession rituals of Indian origin.

**On the old *kunten* glossing method found in the *Kōsōden*
(Memoirs of Eminent Monks): An example of Japanese renderings seen
in Chinese biographical materials**

Naoki Nakano

The *Kōsōden* (Memoirs of Eminent Monks) has received attention in the fields of Buddhist studies, Chinese studies and philology, and research on this text has accumulated accordingly. Scrolls from the *Kōsōden* that feature added *kunten* (glosses) have been used as linguistic material in Japanese historical linguistics.

The *kunten* found in some of the *Kōsōden* scrolls are estimated to have been added in the Insei period (1086–1185) or the early Kamakura period (1185–) based on postscripts and the shapes of the kana used, as well as other features. However, a definite date has not yet been offered with regard to the style in which the original Chinese text is rendered and interpreted into Japanese in the scrolls. Other aspects about the Japanese rendering of the text also remain unclear, such as the process of how this rendering came to be.

This study surveys scrolls from the *Kōsōden* that feature added *kunten*, and discusses the characteristics of how the text is rendered into Japanese. The results of this survey indicate that readings of the *Kōsōden* varied between different schools of thought. In addition, the *kunten* were found to feature a mixture of contemporary-style renderings together with renderings in a style that predates the time that they were written. Moreover, it was noted that each school of thought rarely seemed to refer to the rendering styles of any other schools, if at all.

**The Relations among the Three Kinds of the Old Buddhist Manuscripts in the
Japanese Collection and Woodblock Print Canons: With Reference to the
*Puchao Sanmei Jing***

Tensho Miyazaki

This paper mainly aims to explore how Chinese Buddhist canons are transmitted and related to each other by investigating variant readings shared among the available extant materials of one specific Buddhist text, the *Puchao Sanmei Jing* (PSJ), which is one of the extant Chinese versions of the **Ajātaśatrukaukṛtya(prati)vinodana*, translated by Dharmarakṣa in the third century.

This paper directly examines the following eight kinds of Chinese Buddhist canons and materials:

- Three kinds of old Buddhist manuscripts in the Japanese collection: Shogozo scrolls, Nanatsu-dera canon, Kosho-ji canon.
- Four kinds of woodblock print canons: First Koryo canon, Second Koryo canon, Fuzhou canon preserved in the Imperial Household Agency, and Qisha canon.
- Fangshan stone sutra, which seems to be based on the Qidan (Khitan) canon.

In addition, for the sake of convenience, I will consult the variant readings of the Sixi (Song), Puningshi (Yuang) and Jiaxing (Ming) canons recorded in the footnotes of the Taisho canon.

The Jingnan canons, that is, the Fuzhou, Qisha, Sixi, Puningshi, and Jiaxing canons, include the four-volume version of the PSJ. They also share so many variant readings that they seem to form a group independent of the three-volume version of the PSJ in the other canons and materials. According to the accounts on the PSJ in the traditional translation catalogs, the three-volume version of the PSJ and the four-volume version of the PSJ seem to have been separated at latest before the sixth century, and its four-volume version has been circulated around the Jingnan region since the sixth century. Therefore, the four-volume version of the PSJ in the Jingnan canons could be based on such a version of the PSJ circulated in the Jingnan area.

The investigations of variant readings shared among the three kinds of old Buddhist manuscripts in the Japanese collection and shared between the two versions of Koryo canons confirm that they form two different groups: one is the old Buddhist

manuscripts in the Japanese collection group, and the other is the Koryo family. In the former, the Shogozo scroll seems to be the ancestor of the other two because of its history and its few unique variants. For the Koryo family, the two versions are siblings whose parent is the Kaibao canon, the first woodblock print canon, because they have apparent differences in line breaks and paragraphs.

It is remarkable that the first Koryo canon and the three kinds of Japanese manuscript canons share a significant number of variant readings, especially in Volumes II and III. In contrast, the first volume includes only one meaningful variant shared by the above materials. As far as Volumes II and III are concerned, I can assume that the first Koryo canon is quite close to the old Buddhist manuscripts in the Japanese collection, especially the Shogozo scrolls. On the other hand, the first volume is not so close. At this point, I suggest the possibility that the first volume of the First Koryo canon or its ancestor was revised by consulting with the other material(s), which might be quite close to the Khitan canon.