

## Interpenetration and Shingon Ritual Practice

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My monograph in the previous issue of *Religious Traditions* outlined the Shingon Buddhist doctrine of interpenetration (*muge*)<sup>a.1</sup> This article develops the same theme as it relates to Shingon ritual practice.

It was shown that Kūkai reformulated the Kegon teachings concerning interpenetration to rectify what he perceived as an incongruity between theory and method: in theory Kegon posits the unobstructed interpenetration of all phenomena, but in practice it distinguishes mind and body; its method proceeds by way of meditations that do not involve the body but withdraw the mind from the objects of bodily sense; and it seeks an Enlightenment that pertains exclusively to consciousness and in which the body, and all physical phenomena, are transcended. For Kegon Buddhahood is attained solely in the mind.<sup>2</sup>

By contrast, Kūkai says, Shingon practice is wholly congruent with its doctrine of the mutual interpenetration of mind and body. Shingon method proceeds by way of rituals that involve the body as well as the mind; it employs meditation techniques which do not withdraw the mind from the objects of bodily sense; and it seeks an Enlightenment that is simultaneously psychic and somatic, an "attainment of Buddhahood in the body" (*sokushin-jōbutsu*)<sup>b</sup>.

There are three stages in the attainment of Buddhahood in the body:<sup>3</sup> it is firstly "possessed in Principle" (*rigu-jōbutsu*)<sup>c</sup>; then it is "attained in *kaji*" (*kaji-jōbutsu*)<sup>d</sup>; and finally it is fully actualized (*kentoku-jōbutsu*)<sup>3</sup>. "Principially possessed Buddhahood"<sup>4</sup> is the Enlightenment lying innate but unrealized within the body and mind of each being. Every person presently possesses Buddhahood and abides in non-dual conjunction with the Dharma Body of the Tathāgata (*nyorai-hosshin*)<sup>e</sup>; he dwells perpetually in "the wondrous realm of the Three Universals" (*sandai-myōshu*)<sup>g</sup>, the "majestic abode of Spontaneity" (*hōnen*)<sup>h,5</sup> the eternal, immutable and placeless realm that is "not to be found anywhere in the ten worlds of men and sages" (*bonshō-jikkai*)<sup>1,6</sup>. Blinded by ignorance, however, he is unable to perceive this immanent and all-permeating presence of Enlightenment, and believes Buddhahood to be remote.<sup>7</sup>

In the second stage, the "attainment of Buddhahood in *kaji*" (*kaji-jōbutsu*), the innate but unrealized Buddhahood is quickened by practice. Entering the pathway of Shingon method, the practitioner (*sādhaka*, *shugyōja*)<sup>k</sup> perseveres in the performance of rituals until he at last attains the "samādhi of union" (*yoga-samādhi*, *yuga-sammāi*)<sup>l</sup> with the *honzon*<sup>m</sup>.<sup>8</sup> A momentary entry into this samādhi "originates" or awakens the principally possessed Buddhahood. In the instant of entering the samādhi of union the *sādhaka*'s Eye of the Mind (*shingen*)<sup>n9</sup> is opened and he sees the True Form (*jissō*)<sup>o</sup> of all the dharmas. Thus awakened, he is established on the Throne of Identity (*sokuza*)<sup>p</sup>.

Entry into the samādhi of union is the attainment of *kaji*<sup>q</sup>. In its usual Buddhist usage this term translates Sanskrit *adhiṣṭhāna*, "basis", "seat" or "power"<sup>10</sup>, but in Shingon it has a more specific significance, one that can be viewed at two levels. Firstly, viewed at the level of relative truth (*saṃvṛti-satya*, *zokutai*)<sup>r</sup>, that is, as perceived by the unenlightened, those who see the mind of man and the Light of the Buddha as separate, *ka*, the first character in the compound, means "to add", "to increase"; the second character, *ji*, means "to sustain" or "to support"; and taken together the two characters indicate a reciprocal relationship of the Buddha and the performer of the ritual. When a ritual is correctly performed the Buddha's power (*butsu-riki*)<sup>s</sup> is added to or increases that of the ritualist, while for his part the ritualist sustains or supports the Buddha power, in the manner of a seat or base. Kūkai compares the relation of *ka* and *ji* to that of light shining on water: "(*Kaji*) refers to the Great Compassion of the Tathāgata and the mind of faith (*shinjin*)<sup>t</sup> of sentient beings. *Ka* means the reflection of the Buddha Sun in the water of the minds of sentient beings and *ji* means the *sādhaka*'s mind that 'retains' the Buddha Sun".<sup>11</sup> That is, the Light of the Buddha Sun, Dainichi, is *ka*; the mind of the *sādhaka*, reflecting the Buddha Light in the manner of a body of still water, is *ji*.

Secondly, when viewed at the level of higher truth (*paramārtha-satya*, *shintai*)<sup>u</sup>, that is, at the level of perception of the Buddhas, who see that the mind and the body of the sentient being are wholly merged with the Mind and Body of Dainichi, *ka* and *ji* are not distinct but interfused, so that the light and the water on which it shines are mutually pervading. At this higher level of understanding, *kaji* is a two-way interfusion of the Buddha and man, and thus the term *kaji* is used almost synonymously with *yuga*<sup>v</sup>, from the Sanskrit *yoga*, "union". The attainment of this union with the Tathāgata's Dharma Body is a realization of the total interpenetration of all things: it is a *kaji* of the sentient being and the Buddha (*shōbutsu-kaji*)<sup>w</sup>, of the Buddha and all other Buddhas (*butsu-bukkaji*)<sup>k</sup>, of the being and all phenomenal dharmas (*shōhō-kaji*)<sup>y</sup>, and of each dharma with every other dharma (*hōhō-kaji*)<sup>z</sup>.<sup>12</sup>

The "attainment of Buddhahood in *kaji*" lasts only so long as the ritualist remains in the samādhi of union. While in the state of *kaji* his body and mind are those of the Buddha, but when he returns

from that state he is once more an ordinary man "whose mind swarms with distracting thoughts". By an assiduous repetition of the rituals the *sādhaka* nurtures the samādhi of union and extends its duration until it finally becomes permanent, and he is in union with the *honzon* at all times, while "walking, sitting, standing and lying down": his every action is an action of the Tathāgata's Body and his every thought is the functioning of the Tathāgata's Mind. This is the attainment of the third and final stage, the "actualized attainment of Buddhahood" (*kentoku-jōbutsu*)<sup>3</sup>. In this stage the body and mind of the ritualist are wholly merged with the Body and Mind of the Buddha and with the Form and Consciousness of the total Dharma World (*dharmadhātu*, *hokkai*)<sup>aa</sup>; he has attained Buddhahood while still in the body (*sokushin-jōbutsu*)<sup>b</sup>.<sup>13</sup>

The attainment of *kaji* is an interpenetration of the body and mind of the *sādhaka* with the Body and Consciousness of the Tathāgata; it is attained in the body as well as the mind; and it involves no withdrawal of the senses from their objects. The "Sūtra of the Diamond Peak" (*Vajra-śekhara-sūtra*, *Kongōchōgyō*)<sup>ab</sup><sup>14</sup> indicates the manner of this simultaneously mental and somatic merging. Having described the rituals for laying out the "Perfected Body Assembly" (*jōshinne*)<sup>ac</sup>,<sup>15</sup> the sūtra goes on to describe how the *ācārya* (*ajari*)<sup>ad</sup> is to enter it and effect *kaji* with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who have been depicted there.

When he enters the mandala laid out on the ground the *ācārya* also enters a mandala that he has laid out in the field of his mind: the eternal, physical mandala has an interior, mental counterpart. The aim of the rite is the simultaneous realization of the external mandala perceived by the eyes of sense and the interior mandala perceived by the Eye of the Mind (*shingen*)<sup>n</sup>, the contemplative Eye that by the power of meditation (*jōriki*)<sup>ae</sup> sees through the external appearances of phenomena to their True Form (*jissō*)<sup>o</sup>, their immutable and eternal Suchness.

Blindfolded so that he cannot see the images, the *ācārya* enters the mandala and recites dhāraṇīs requesting the Bodhisattva "Diamond Being" (*Vajrasattva*, *Kongōsatta*)<sup>af</sup>, who personifies the indwelling Mind of Awakening (*bodhicitta*, *bodai shin*)<sup>ag</sup>, to open his Eye of the Mind, "the Supreme Diamond Eye, the Eye of All".<sup>16</sup> If, says the sūtra, the faith of the *ācārya* is firm and unwavering and his powers of meditation are sufficiently developed his Eye of the Mind will open. Removing the blindfold so that he can view the images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas depicted in the mandala, the *ācārya* now proceeds to contemplate each of them in turn. Making its hand gesture (*mudrā*, *ingei*)<sup>ah</sup> and reciting its dhāraṇī (*darani*)<sup>ai</sup>, he gazes at the image and at the same time inwardly visualizes its True Form (*jissō*)<sup>o</sup> with the Eye of the Mind. His bodily eyes view the mutable and impermanent form and his Eye of the Mind simultaneously views

the form's immutable and permanent Suchness: the sensible form of the image and its True Body are merged. Proceeding in this manner the ācārya enters into *kaji* with each of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; he merges the mandala with his body and mind and thus realizes the innate Dharma Body of Knowledge (*chi-hosshin*)<sup>aj</sup>.

The sūtra says that to realize the interior mandala is to satisfy all desires, mundane and supra-mundane:

... when the ācārya who is in the mandala contemplates (the form of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas) he instantaneously attains *kaji* with the sublime power of all the Tathāgatas, and with "Diamond Being" (Vajrasattva, Kongōsatta), who dwells in his heart. Entering the wondrous essence of *kaji* with all the Tathāgatas he instantly sees the circles of light<sup>17</sup> and the rites of all supernatural powers.<sup>18</sup> Having seen "Great Holder of the Vajra" (Daijīkongō<sup>ak</sup>, that is, Vajrasattva), possessor of virtue, appear in his original body (*honshin*)<sup>al</sup>, and seen the Tathāgatas, (the ācārya) receives all meanings and benefits (*giri*)<sup>am</sup>,<sup>19</sup> fulfils all aims, satisfies all desires, and attains the perfection of "Vajra-Holder" and all the Tathāgatas.<sup>20</sup>

To perform such a ritual successfully is to realize the Shingon doctrine of the Three Universals (*sandai*)<sup>an</sup>.<sup>21</sup> Firstly, the merging of the sensible forms and True Forms of the images in the mandala is a realization of the identity of the six Elements and Universal Essence (*rokudai-taidai*)<sup>ao</sup>: the colours (*shiki*)<sup>ap</sup> = "forms" of the image are the Elements that compose it,<sup>22</sup> and its True Form is its Universal Essence. The simultaneous visualization of the coloured form and the True Form merges the six Elements with Universal Essence. Again, the mandala is the Dharma Body of Dainichi Nyorai, and the realization of the inward, mental mandala is a merging of the six Elements that make up the body and mind of the ritualist with the six Elements that constitute the Body and Consciousness of the Tathāgata. This is a realization of the unobstructed interpenetration of the six Elements (*rokudai-muge*)<sup>aq</sup>.

Secondly, the incorporation of the mandala into the sādha's body and mind is a realization of the identity of the four types of mandala (*shishu-mandara*)<sup>ar</sup> and Universal Form (*shiman-sōdai*)<sup>as</sup>. The *dōjō*<sup>at</sup>, the area in which the mandala is set up, equates the "Place of Awakening" (*bodhimāṇḍa*), the site occupied by every Buddha and Bodhisattva on the day of his Great Awakening. It locates the Diamond Throne (*vajrāsana*, *kongōza*)<sup>au</sup>, the centre of the three thousand great chiliocosms (*sansen-daisen-sekai*)<sup>av</sup>, the mid-point of the universe, wherein all forms are focussed.<sup>23</sup> The *dōjō* is coterminous with the worlds; it contains all forms; and it thus equates Universal Form, which likewise subsumes all forms. The *dōjō*, like Universal Form, is the repository of forms in their fourfold ordering, the four types

of mandala. When the sādha realizes the mandala laid out in the *dōjō* of his mind he realizes the interpenetration of the four mandalas and identifies his body and mind with Universal Form.

Thirdly, the ritual realizes the identity of the Three Mysteries and the Universal Functioning (*sammitsu-yūdai*)<sup>aw</sup>. The "Three Mysteries of the being" (*shujō-sammitsu*)<sup>ax</sup> — his actions of making hand gestures (*mudrās*), chanting sacred invocations (*dhāraṇīs*), and visualizing images — merge with the Three Mysteries of the Tathāgata (*nyorai-sammitsu*)<sup>ay</sup>, which are identified with Universal Functioning (*yūdai*)<sup>az</sup>. By unifying the actions of his body, speech and mind with the actions of the Body, Speech and Mind of the Tathāgata the sādha realizes that his actions are in no way distinct from Universal Functioning, the actions of all dharmas in the universe.

In summary, when he correctly performs the rite the ritualist fully realizes the doctrine of the interpenetration of the Three Universals: he sees that the six Elements of his body and mind are unobstructedly interfused with the six Elements that constitute the cosmos and the Dharma Body of the Tathāgata and are thus interfused with Universal Essence; he attains the Knowledge that his body and mind are unified with the mandala of the worlds and thus with Universal Form; and he realizes that all his actions are in no way distinct from Universal Functioning. This threefold realization is Enlightenment, the attainment of the Highest Perfect Awakening (*anokutara-sammyaku-sambodai*)<sup>ba</sup>.

The hand gestures, invocations and visualizations — the actions of body, speech and mind — used in the esoteric rituals are called the "Three Mysteries of Method" (*hōben-sammitsu*)<sup>bb</sup>. They are the three forms of ritual action revealed by Dainichi Nyorai and recorded in the esoteric sūtras to aid unenlightened beings to attain Awakening. Viewed by the Enlightened, all physical, verbal and mental activities without exception are the Mysteries of the Body, Speech and Mind of the Dharma Body: all bodily movements are aspects of the Tathāgata's Body Mystery (*shimmitsu*)<sup>bc</sup>, all sounds and utterances are aspects of his Mystery of Speech (*kamitsu*)<sup>bd</sup>, and the thoughts and mental activities of all beings in the universe are so many aspects of his Mystery of Mind (*imitsu*)<sup>be</sup>: "all hand gestures are secret signs (that is, *mudrās*); all sounds uttered by the mouth are True Words (*shingon*)<sup>bf</sup> (that is, *dhāraṇīs*); and all mental activities and contemplative practices are meditations (*dhyaṇa*, *jō*)<sup>bg</sup>".<sup>24</sup>

The unenlightened, however, do not perceive the non-dual identity of the Three Mysteries of the Buddha and their own everyday actions of body, mind and speech, so the Tathāgata reveals paradigmatic bodily, verbal and mental actions whose performance is conducive to a realization of the truth of the doctrine of interpenetration. These actions are the means whereby the innate Three Mysteries (*honnu-sammitsu*)<sup>bh</sup> of the being and the cultivated Three Mysteries

(*shushō-sammitsu*)<sup>bi</sup> of the Buddha are fused in union. They are the links that connect the being to the Buddha.

The unenlightened, who view things in their differentiation (*shabetsu*)<sup>bj</sup>, distinguish the Three Mysteries of Method, which are the "Three Mysteries with form" (*yūshō-sammitsu*)<sup>bk</sup>, and the Three Mysteries of the Dharma Body (*hosshin-sammitsu*)<sup>bl</sup>, which are the "Three Mysteries without form" (*musō-sammitsu*)<sup>bm</sup>: they view the former as produced and the latter as unproduced. The Enlightened, who view things in their simultaneous differentiation and identity, see that the formal and formless Three Mysteries are non-dual: they are "unproduced and yet produced" (*fushō-jishō*)<sup>bn</sup>.<sup>25</sup> For them identity and differentiation are fused.

In the ignorant view of the unawakened there appear to be three levels of the Three Mysteries: firstly, there are the "innate Three Mysteries" (*honmu-sammitsu*)<sup>bh</sup>, the actions of the Tathāgata's Body, Speech and Mind that are possessed in an unrealized state by every sentient being; secondly, there are the "Three Mysteries of Method", revealed in the sūtras as paradigms for ritual performance; and, thirdly, there are the "cultivated Three Mysteries" (*shushō-sammitsu*)<sup>bi</sup>, which are the innate Three Mysteries that have been realized by the practice of rituals. By employing the Three Mysteries of Method — the revealed *mudrās*, *dhāraṇīs* and visualizations prescribed in the sūtras — the *sādhaka* "borrows power" from the *honzon* and achieves the "*kaji* of the Three Mysteries" (*sammitsu-kaji*)<sup>bo</sup>, in which he sees that the innate and cultivated Three Mysteries and the Three Mysteries of Method mutually penetrate.<sup>26</sup>

The Three Mysteries of Method are, firstly, hand gestures or *mudrās* (*ingei*)<sup>bp</sup>, which are the Mystery of the Body; secondly, invocations or *dhāraṇīs* (*darani*)<sup>bi</sup>, which are the Mystery of Speech; and thirdly, mental concentration or *dhyāna* (*jō*)<sup>bg</sup>, the Mystery of the Mind, attained by visualizing symbols. The Three Mysteries of Method are described in greater detail in the following under these heads:

- 1). Mystery of the Body: Hand Gestures
- 2). Mystery of Speech: Invocations
- 3). Mystery of the Mind: Visualizations

#### 1). The Mystery of the Body: Hand Gestures

Hand signs (*mudrā*, *ingei*)<sup>bp</sup> correspond to the Body Mystery among the Three Mysteries of Dainichi Nyorai. The making of a hand gesture in the rite is the sign of an interpenetration of the *sādhaka*'s body with all phenomena and with the Dharma Body of the Tathāgata.

In *kaji* the Buddha power (*butsu-riki*)<sup>s</sup> is "added to" (*ka*) the performer of the rite, who in turn "receives" (*ji*) that power. This

transfer of Buddha power is in fulfilment of the Tathāgata's Original Vow (*pūrva-praṇidhāna*, *honsei*)<sup>bq</sup><sup>27</sup> to "add power" to those who correctly perform the prescribed rituals. The "binding of the fingers" in a hand gesture attests the binding nature of the Vow. The gesture is a "seal" (*mudrā*), the mark or sign that affirms the Vow. In the manner of a seal affixed to a document, it certifies a pledge; it confirms — makes firm or "fixes" — a compact. The *mudrā* is invested with the power and authority of the Tathāgata: "Just as no man dares to disobey an imperial decree to which the king has affixed his seal, no man, sage, *nāga*, god or demon can disobey the sign of the vows, teaching and Law of the Tathāgata".<sup>28</sup> *Mudrās* authenticate the covenant that guarantees the unobstructed interpenetration of the three actions of the ritualist with the Three Mysteries of the Tathāgata.

These concepts are conveyed by the several meanings of the term *ingei*<sup>bp</sup>, the usual Japanese kenning for "mudrā".<sup>29</sup> In, the first character of the compound, is the "seal" (*inshō*)<sup>br</sup> impressed on a document as a mark of its authority and authenticity. In is also "an immutable and irreversible decision or resolution" (*kettei-fukai*)<sup>bs</sup>. Again, it is a "seal of good faith" (*inshin*)<sup>bt</sup>, the seal of the transmission of the Dharma affixed to a priest's certificate of ordination. *Gei*, the second character in the compound, is "vow", "pledge", or "covenant" (*keiyaku*)<sup>bu</sup>: the compound *ingei* thus reads as "sign or seal of a vow".<sup>30</sup>

The *mudrā* is the external sign of the virtue and power of the "inner Realization" (*naishō*)<sup>bv</sup> of a World-honoured One (*bhagavat*, *seson*)<sup>bw</sup><sup>31</sup> and of the Original Vow that expresses that Realization by specifying the expedient means (*upāya*, *hōben*)<sup>bx</sup> whereby it functions to aid beings to Awakening. For the unawakened the *mudrā*-sign and what it signifies are separate: the hand gesture merely represents a wholly remote referent. For the Enlightened, by contrast, the *mudrā* fully interpenetrates the Realization that it signifies, so that the virtue, power and Original Vow of the World-honoured One are entirely present in the sign. The *mudrā*, while retaining its ontological distinction as a sign, wholly subsumes what it signifies. The symbol and the signified are discrete, and yet merged in identity (*byōdō*)<sup>by</sup>.

Hand signs are significant. The positions of the hands and fingers form part of a "calculus" of correspondences.<sup>32</sup> The right hand is the Diamond World (*vajradhātu*, *kongōkai*)<sup>bz</sup> and the left is the Matrix World (*garbhadhātu*, *taizōkai*)<sup>ca</sup>, the worlds of adamant Suchness (*bhūtatathatā*, *shinnyo*)<sup>cb</sup> and of phenomena fused with Principle (*ri*)<sup>cc</sup>; the fingers of the right hand are the five elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space) that compose the Dharma Body of Knowledge (*chi-hosshin*)<sup>cd</sup>, the Dharma Body of Dainichi in the Diamond World, and the fingers of the left hand are the five Elements that compose the Dharma Body of Principle (*ri-hosshin*)<sup>ce</sup>, the Tathāgata's Dharma Body in the matrix World; and each of the fingers corresponds

to various virtues and qualities associated with the two worlds.<sup>33</sup> The manner of joining the two hands and the ten fingers in each mudrā is a variant version of the perennial theme of the interpenetration of the immutable world of the Buddhas and the ephemeral world of beings and the phenomenal dharmas.

The mudrās associated with Dainichi Nyorai in the two mandalas of the Diamond and Matrix Worlds exemplify these considerations. In the Matrix World Mandala (*garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*, *taizōkai-maṇḍara*)<sup>cf</sup> Dainichi holds his hands in the Dharma World Meditation Seal (*dharmadhātu-dhyāna-mudrā*, *hokkai-jō-in*)<sup>cg</sup>.<sup>34</sup> In the One Sign Assembly (*ichi-inne*)<sup>ch</sup><sup>35</sup> of the Diamond World Mandala (*vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, *kongōkai-maṇḍara*)<sup>ci</sup> he makes the Knowledge Fist Seal (*chi-ken-in*)<sup>cj</sup>.

The Dharma World Meditation Seal is formed by placing the open right hand on the lap, palm upward, then placing the open left hand upon it, also palm upward, and touching the tips of the two thumbs (see fig.1).

The Dharma World Meditation Seal is the outward sign of Dainichi's inner Realization, gained in Meditation (*dhyāna*, *jō*)<sup>pg</sup>, that the Dharma World, the world of the phenomenal dharmas, interpenetrates the Void (*śūnyatā*, *ku*)<sup>ck</sup>; it is the seal of the Realization of the interpenetration of ontological entities and their Principle (*riji-muge*)<sup>cl</sup>. The two hands, lying horizontally, symbolize the "horizontal identity" (*ō-byōdō*)<sup>cm</sup><sup>36</sup> of Principle and phenomena. The thumbs correspond to the Element Space or the Void (*kū*) and their touching indicates the unobstructed interpenetration of the Voidness of the world of the Buddhas with the Voidness of the world of sentient beings.<sup>37</sup>

The Knowledge Fist Seal is made by holding the right hand as a "diamond fist", that is, as a fist with the thumb turned down into the palm. The left hand is also held as a fist but with the index finger extended and inserted into the right fist so that the two upper phalanges are concealed and the tip touches the tip of the right thumb. The left fist is held at the level of the navel, palm facing to the right, and the right fist is held at the level of the heart, palm facing to the left (see fig.2).<sup>38</sup>

This seal is the sign of the Dharma Body of the six Elements (*rokudai-hosshin*)<sup>cn</sup>, the "one and only Dharma Body" (*dokuichi-hosshin*)<sup>co</sup>, the single essence of all the innumerable Dharma Bodies. The two hands, placed one above the other, symbolize the "vertical differentiation" (*ju-shabetsu*)<sup>cp</sup><sup>39</sup> of the two worlds of phenomena and Suchness; but their joining simultaneously indicates the non-duality of beings and the Buddhas (*busshō-funi*)<sup>cq</sup>, of the worlds of Principle and of Knowledge (*richi-funi*)<sup>cr</sup>, and "the one flavour identity of delusion and satori" (*meigo-ichitai*)<sup>cs</sup>. The fingers of the left hand are the five Elements (*godai*)<sup>ct</sup> and the five Knowledges

(*gochi*)<sup>cu</sup> of the Matrix World, innate (*honnu*)<sup>cv</sup> within all beings and phenomena; and the fingers of the right hand are the five Elements and the five Knowledges of the Diamond World, where they have been "cultivated" — brought to fruition — by practice. The two hands together represent the singleness of essence, the non-duality and profound union of the five Elements and the five Knowledges of the Matrix World with the five Elements and the five Knowledges of the Diamond World.

The right fist is the world of the Buddhas and the left fist is the world of sentient beings. The extended left index finger, which corresponds to the Element Air, represents the vital breath of the sentient being, and the right thumb, which corresponds to the Element Space or the Void, is the Knowledge of the Great Void (*daikū-chi*)<sup>cw</sup> of the world of the Buddhas. The tip of the left index finger touches the right thumb to represent the vital breath of the deluded and karma-conditioned being receiving the Buddha's Knowledge of the Great Void: the touching of the two fingers thus signifies the attainment of Buddhahood in the body (*sokushin-jōbutsu*)<sup>d</sup>, in which the "three paths" (*sandō*)<sup>cx</sup> of delusion, karma and suffering, which cause the wheel of Saṃsāra to turn, are made Void.

The schema of correspondences positions each of the Elements within a "circle" (*cakra*, *rin*)<sup>cy</sup> in the body: in this schema the Element Air is located in the region of the head. Accordingly, the extended left index finger, the finger of the Element Air, represents the head of the being, and the right fist is the "jewel crown of the five Knowledge-Buddhas" (*gochi-gobutsu-hōkan*)<sup>cz</sup>. The mudrā indicates that when the ignorant and unenlightened sādḥaka enters *kaji* with the Tathāgata, he attains Buddhahood and is therefore crowned with the "jewel crown of the Tathāgata initiation" (*nyorai-kanjō-hōkan*)<sup>da</sup>.

Next, the mudrā is a likeness of the *Samaya*-Body (*samaya-shin*)<sup>db</sup> of Dainichi Nyorai, namely, the Stūpa of the Five Elements (*godai-tōba*)<sup>dc</sup>, in which the forms associated with the five Elements (the cube of Earth, the sphere of Water, the pyramid of Fire, the hemisphere of Air and the jewel-form of Ether) are adorsed to form a stūpa (see fig.3). The five fingers of the left hand are the five Elements of the physical world (*shiki-godai*)<sup>dd</sup> and the right fist is the sixth Element, Consciousness. Another tradition makes a more direct comparison, in which the right fist is the rounded form of the Element Space; the left index finger is the semi-circular form of Air; the left thumb and middle finger form the triangle of Fire; the ring and little fingers form the sphere of Water; and the lower part of the hand is the square of the Element Earth.

Finally, the mudrā is a likeness of the seed syllable (*bīja*, *shuji*)<sup>de</sup> *varṇ* (*banji*)<sup>df</sup>, that of Dainichi in the Diamond World. The shape of this syllable is made up of the forms associated with the five Elements (see Fig.4).

## 2. The Mystery of Speech: Invocations

Invocations (*dhāraṇī*, *darani*)<sup>ai</sup> correspond to the Mystery of Speech among the Three Mysteries of the Tathāgata. When the sādharma chants *dhāraṇīs* his speech interpenetrates the Speech Mystery of Dainichi Nyorai.

A *dhāraṇī* is a verbal formula recited to invoke a Buddha, Bodhisattva, or other World-honoured One. In the rituals *dhāraṇīs* are recited at the same time as the hands form the mudras. For every hand sign there is an accompanying invocation and the sūtras usually described the two together.<sup>40</sup>

The Sanskrit term *dhāraṇī* means "a support, that which sustains": it is a support for meditation; and it sustains the practice of the sādharma. It also means "container": it contains the essence of the total Doctrine preached by the various Dharma Bodies,<sup>41</sup> so that the *Hizōki*<sup>dē</sup> says, "It is called a 'dhāraṇī' because it is all-containing. One syllable contains and stores within itself all the words of the Dharma. It is like the earth that contains all things".<sup>42</sup> According to Esotericism the Dharma is preached in five modes<sup>43</sup> in accordance with the understanding of the hearers: it is preached by Tathāgatas; by Bodhisattvas who possess adamant Wisdom (*bosatsu-kongō*)<sup>dh</sup>; by *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*, the followers of the Two Vehicles (*niṣō*)<sup>di</sup>,<sup>44</sup> by Gods (*shōten*)<sup>dj</sup>; and by Earth-Dwelling Gods (*jikoten*)<sup>dk</sup>, such as *nāgas*, *asuras*, birds, etc.<sup>45</sup> The totality of each of these five modes of revealing the Dharma is concentrated in, or is contained by, a corresponding type of *dhāraṇī*:<sup>46</sup> there are *dhāraṇīs* that contain the essential meaning of the Dharma preached by the Tathāgatas, others that subsume the teachings of the Bodhisattvas, and so on for each of the five types of preaching.

The word "*dhāraṇī*" is synonymous with "*shingon*", "True Word".<sup>47</sup> which translates Sanskrit "*mantra*", interpreted either as meaning "the thought (*man*) that liberates (*tra*)" or as "a receptacle, a container (*tra*) of thought (*man*)": as does the *dhāraṇī*, the mantra contains the thought of the Tathāgata's Dharma. But "*shingon*" means much more than "*mantra*": the "True Word" is the Dharma preached by the Dharma Body of Dainichi Nyorai;<sup>48</sup> it wholly contains this doctrine within itself. The True Word is Dainichi's Dharma, and this Dharma equates the Vow made by the Tathāgata to aid all beings: the efficacy of the *dhāraṇī* derives from this equation; the Tathāgata cannot fail to aid the sādharma who recites a True Word.

Nāgārjuna (Ryūju)<sup>49</sup> says that words with form, illusory words, false words and "beginningless" (*mushi*)<sup>dm</sup> words are unable to convey the Dharma because they are limited and conditioned.<sup>50</sup> Only the Word of Suchness, which lies beyond all limitations of space, time and causality, is able to convey the essential meaning of the True Dharma (*shinbō*)<sup>dn</sup>. Esoteric Buddhism equates the True Word or *dhāraṇī* with this Word of Suchness.

*Dhāraṇī* is also translated as *myōdo*, "light", the cognate of Sanskrit *vidyā*, at once "knowledge" and "spell". *Myō* refers to the

Light of Wisdom that shines within the Mind and from the Body of a World-honoured One. It has a twofold function: it dispels the darkness of ignorance and it reveals the Dharma. The Tathāgata's radiation of light and his preaching of the Dharma are his two ways of revealing the Truth they are essentially equivalent. Since the *dhāraṇī* is the essence and totality of the Dharma preached by the Tathāgata it identifies with light, and by its recitation the sādharma illumines the dark obscurities of his ignorance and becomes irradiated with light in both body and mind. The *Hizōki*<sup>dē</sup> says, "*Dhāraṇī* is the light emitted by the Buddha, the light within which he preaches. This is why *myō*, 'light', has the same meaning as '*dhāraṇī*'".<sup>51</sup>

Another synonym for "*dhāraṇī*" is *jinju*<sup>dp</sup> (or simply *ju*), meaning a ritual incantation or magic formula by which supra-terrestrial beings and forces are compelled to intervene in events of the natural order, being controlled to aid the ritualist to gain worldly benefits; prevent natural calamities and disease, perform miracles, make oracular predictions or to acquire supernatural powers. The ritual texts say that *dhāraṇīs* have the power to effect these purposes, but emphasise that the true aim of the recitation of *dhāraṇīs* is the attainment of Liberation and not the acquiring of worldly powers and benefits. The *Hizōki*<sup>dē</sup> for example, says that the *dhāraṇī* is to be thought of as analogous to, but not the same as a *jinju*.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, the use of *dhāraṇīs* for the acquisition of supernormal powers or worldly gain does not necessarily run counter to the dictates of Shingon Buddhism, which views such usage as one of the expedient means (*hōben*)<sup>dx</sup> whereby the worldly-minded are led by degrees to an awareness of underlying verities.

The *dhāraṇī* is also called a "secret Word" (*mitsugon*)<sup>dq</sup>, since it equates the Word of Wisdom (*chigon*)<sup>dr</sup> uttered by the Tathāgata to express the Enlightenment of the Dharma Body (*hosshin-bodai*)<sup>ds</sup>. This Word is secret because it is only heard and understood by the Tathāgata's immediate attendants, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who are no longer subject to the conditions of contingent existence.

Finally, the *dhāraṇī* is the *honzon*'s "secret Name" (*mitsugo*)<sup>dt</sup>, the Name that contains the *honzon*'s total virtue; it is known only by the Enlightened.<sup>53</sup>

## 3. The Mystery of Mind: Visualizations

Hand signs and invocations are the means whereby the sādharma identifies his bodily actions and speech with the Mysteries of the Body and Speech of the Tathāgata; he identifies his mind with the Buddha's Mind Mystery by practices of visualization.

The Mind Mystery lies in the formless Void (*musō-kokū*)<sup>du</sup>; it can only be contemplated directly in the most advanced stages of meditation, so that Śubhakarasiṃha (*Zemmui*)<sup>dv</sup> says, "... in the early stages of the cultivation of the mind all attempts at voiding the mind are in vain".<sup>54</sup> Esoteric rituals, however, aim not at a contemplation of the formless Void in itself, but as it interpenetrates

forms. The Esoteric Buddhist texts, therefore, prescribe various symbolic forms to be used as objects for visualization (*vicāra*, *kan*)<sup>dw</sup> in rituals where they are seen to merge with Voidness.

These practices involve gazing at the symbol with one-pointed concentration until its image can be held steady in the mind. Then with the hands forming the "seal of entry" (*nyū-in*)<sup>dx,55</sup> the image is drawn into the mind(heart) and visualized in that location within the body. Entering into *kaji* with the symbol, the *sādhaka*'s Eye of the Mind perceives its True Form (*jissō*)<sup>o</sup>, concealed within but coincident with the perceptible form.<sup>56</sup> In this manner the symbol merges with the body and mind of the *sādhaka*: the ephemeral form of the symbol is fused with its adamant True Body, which is Voidness.

The aim of rituals of visualization is a union of the sensible form of the symbol and its True Body (*shin-shin*)<sup>dy</sup>. The aim is not to cut away the illusory in order to reveal the Real, but rather to see that phenomenal forms simultaneously are and are not, are both existent and non-existent. In this perception there is neither grasping of existence nor of non-existence; it is what Śubhākarashimha calls "the contemplation of the inconceivable illusion" (*fushigi-gen-kanbō*)<sup>dz</sup>. The aim, to repeat, is not simply to see the True Body underlying the illusory body of the symbol or to see the Real by cutting away the unreal, but rather to perceive the "inconceivable illusion", in which the True Body and the illusory body as seen in their non-dual identity.

The *Kongōchogyō*<sup>ab</sup> says that the formless Void (*musō-kokū*)<sup>du</sup> can be embodied in four types of symbol, the "Four Knowledge Seals" (*shi-chi-in*)<sup>ea</sup>: Great Knowledge Seals (*dai-chi-in*)<sup>eb</sup>, Samaya Knowledge Seals (*samaya-chi-in*)<sup>ec</sup>, Dharma Knowledge Seals (*hō-chi-in*)<sup>ed</sup>, and Karma Knowledge Seals (*kamma-chi-in*)<sup>ef</sup>.<sup>57</sup> The Four Knowledge Seals correspond to the Four Mandalas (*shi-mandara*)<sup>eg</sup>: Great Mandalas (*dai-mandara*)<sup>eh</sup> are mandalas showing Great Knowledge Seals, that is, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in anthropomorphic form painted in the five colours to represent the five physical Elements; Samaya Mandalas (*samaya-mandara*)<sup>ei</sup> depict Samaya Knowledge Seals, the *honzon*'s attributes and mudras; Dharma Mandalas (*hō-mandara*)<sup>ej</sup> show Dharma Knowledge Seals, which are seed syllables (*shuji*)<sup>de</sup>; and Karma Mandalas (*kamma-mandara*)<sup>ek</sup> show the *honzons* as Karma Knowledge Seals, that is, as three dimensional, uncoloured images.<sup>58</sup> Taking the Four Knowledge Seals in turn:

#### a). Great Knowledge Seals

Firstly, Great Knowledge Seals are anthropomorphic images, painted in the five colours that represent the five Elements that constitute the physical world. The *Hizōki*<sup>dg</sup> says that Great Knowledge Seals are called "great" firstly because they are composed of the Five Elements (*godai*)<sup>ct</sup>, literally the five "greats", and secondly because the subjects they depict are "great".

Great Seals are revealed symbols and the Esoteric sūtras give

descriptions of their colours, sitting postures, attributes, hand signs, clothing and every other detail of their iconography. These details have meanings, forming part of a cohesive complex of symbolic interrelationships with the Original Vows, virtues and powers, hand gestures, invocations, samaya-forms and other symbols associated with the *honzon*.

#### b). Samaya Knowledge Seals

The Sanskrit word "*samaya*" (*samaya*)<sup>el</sup> is "a coming together, an agreement; a contract or compact; a convention". It is a symbol in the sense of an "ad-equation".<sup>59</sup> A Samaya Knowledge Seal is a "conventional sign" of a Buddha or Bodhisattva; it is also an adequate symbol that contains the focused virtues, powers and qualities of that Buddha or Bodhisattva. "Samaya" is synonymous with "mudrā", which has two meanings: as above, it is a "hand seal" (*shu-in*)<sup>em</sup>, a hand gesture that seals an Original Vow; or else it is a "vow seal" (*gei-in*)<sup>en</sup>, an attribute, such as a sword, a lotus or a jewel, held by an image. The hand seal and the vow seal have the same significance and are interchangeable: they both embody the essential virtue of a World-honoured One.

In the traditional exegesis the word "*samaya*" has four meanings: "identity" (*byōdō*)<sup>by</sup>, "Original Vow" (*honsei*)<sup>bq</sup>, "removal of hindrances" (*jōshō*)<sup>eo</sup>, and "surprise Awakening" (*kyōkaku*)<sup>ep</sup>. Firstly, "*samaya*" signifies "identity" in that it is identical with the virtue of Buddhahood it represents. The samaya-symbol interpenetrates and is in every respect equal to the referent, which is some aspect of the inner Realization of the Tathāgata. The outward form and the inner essence are coincident.

Secondly, "*samaya*" equates the Original Vow taken by a Buddha or Bodhisattva to define the means he employs to aid beings to attain Enlightenment. The samaya and the Vow of a World-honoured One are equivalent expressions of the nature of his inner Realization. For example, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Kannon Bosatsu)<sup>ee</sup> embodies the virtue of Great Compassion, which is the nature of his inner Realization. His Original Vow is to use his Great Compassion to open the heart-minds of sentient beings so as to reveal the innate Awakening Mind. His Samaya Knowledge Seal is the lotus, which is like the heart-mind in the way it opens to reveal its hidden beauty. Avalokiteśvara's samaya, the lotus, and his Original Vow are cognate signs of the functioning of his Great Compassion. There is an interpenetration of the Bodhisattva's inner Realization of Great Compassion, his Original Vow and the lotus, the seal of his samaya-knowledge.

Thirdly, "*samaya*" signifies "removal of hindrances". It functions to destroy obstructions to the attainment of Enlightenment and in this equates the virtue of Buddhahood embodied in a *honzon*, which similarly functions as Method (*upāya*, *hōben*)<sup>bx</sup> to destroy the three hindrances (*sanshō*)<sup>eq60</sup> of passion, karma and suffering that obstruct



the Way. The Samaya Knowledge Seal interpenetrates the *honzon's* power to remove hindrances.

Fourthly, "samaya" signifies "surprise Awakening" (*kyōkaku*)<sup>el</sup>, the *honzon's* power to awaken beings from their sleep of ignorance.<sup>61</sup>

The sword, the Samaya Knowledge Seal of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Monju Bosatsu)<sup>er</sup>, shows how a samaya incorporates these four meanings: the sword equates Mañjuśrī's virtue of Wisdom which, sword-like, cuts away ignorance, defilements and delusions; it embodies Mañjuśrī's Original Vow to use the Wisdom-sword to aid all beings to Enlightenment; it removes hindrances, cutting away all that obstructs the attainment of Buddhahood; and it is the means Mañjuśrī uses to shock the unenlightened from their sleep of nescience. The samaya-sword and the Bodhisattva it represents are homologous representations of Wisdom; the sword interpenetrates Mañjuśrī's virtue, his Original Vow, and the Method whereby he removes hindrances and awakens sentient beings.

### c). Dharma Knowledge Seals

The third type of visual symbol used for meditation in the esoteric rituals is the Dharma Knowledge Seal.

The term "Dharma" here means "Doctrine",<sup>62</sup> the Word preached in various modes by the forms adopted by the four types of Dharma Body of Dainichi Nyorai.<sup>63</sup> Each of these modes or aspects of the Dharma can be compressed within a single sound: a dhāraṇī contains the essential meanings of a Dharma; a single syllable further concentrates the meanings contained in the dhāraṇī. Since it contains the essence of a Dharma, this syllable-sound is called a "seed syllable" (*bīja*, *shuji*)<sup>de</sup>.<sup>64</sup> A Dharma Knowledge Seal is the written Sanskrit form (*bonji*)<sup>es</sup> of the seed syllable, used as an object for ritual practices or visualization.

The syllable is a "seed" in two senses: it contains all Knowledge (*chi*)<sup>et</sup> in the way that a seed contains the leaves, flowers and fruits of a plant; and it is the cause, both "productive" (*shō-in*)<sup>eu</sup> and "revealing" (*ryō-in*)<sup>ev</sup> of the manifestation of Knowledge, in the way that the seed reveals its hidden content and produces leaves, flowers and fruits when exposed to activating causes such as sunlight and rain.<sup>65</sup>

Every *honzon* has a seed syllable, which contains the sum of the Dharma he preaches and focuses the virtues and qualities he personifies.<sup>66</sup> The form, sound, position in the Sanskrit alphabet and component parts of the syllable accord with a strict logic of symbolic correspondences, connecting it to the *honzon's* iconography, *mudrā*, *samaya*-form and *dhāraṇī*.

The seed syllable, being the essence of a dhāraṇī, is often the first word in mantras connected with the Matrix World, since this is the World of initiation into the path to Enlightenment; and it is usually the last word in mantras belonging to the World-honoured Ones of the Diamond World, since this is the World of the fulfilment

of Buddhahood. In the former case the dhāraṇī is an unfolding of the potentiality of Buddhahood contained in the seed; in the latter it is the completion of that unfolding. For example, the seed syllable "a", that of Dainichi Nyorai in the Matrix World, is the initial syllable of his Matrix World dhāraṇī: "a vi ra hūm kham".<sup>67</sup> The last four syllables of this dhāraṇī, which represent forms of purification and liberation, all arise from the first syllable "a", as from the Matrix of Principle. Dainichi's seed syllable in the Diamond World, on the other hand, is "vaṁ", and in this World his dhāraṇī is "vajra-dhātu vaṁ", ("Diamond World, vaṁ"), with the seed syllable coming at the last, as the consummation of what lies before.

By the same principle, the seed syllable of a *honzon* is often the first syllable of his Sanskrit name. The name contains the essence of the *honzon's* virtue,<sup>68</sup> and in turn, the initial contains the essence of the name. For example, "va", the seed syllable of Suiten<sup>ew</sup>, the god of Water, is the initial syllable of his Sanskrit name, Varuṇa, which contains the essence of the qualities of the Element Water.

As does a *mudrā*, a seed syllable incorporates an Original Vow. "Hrīḥ", the seed syllable of Amitābha Tathāgata (Amida Nyorai)<sup>ex</sup> in the Diamond World, demonstrates this principle. The syllable "hrīḥ" comprises the syllables "ha", "ra", "ī" and "ḥ". The final syllable, "ḥ", is the syllable of Nirvāṇa: it is an unvoiced aspirate, formed by an expiration of the breath, just as Nirvāṇa is a "blowing out" or an "expiration"; and, being unvoiced, expresses the "serene and eternal Silence" of Nirvāṇa. The syllable "ḥ" is indicated by adding "Nirvāṇa points" (*nehan-den*)<sup>ey</sup>, two superimposed dots, to the right of the syllable. These dots are called the "visarga" in Sanskrit, which word means "liberation" or "extinction": the verbal preposition "vi" expresses separation, dispersion or privation, as in "asunder, apart, off, away, without", and *sarga*, from *śrig*, means "to discharge, utter, let go, release"; "visarga" is thus practically synonymous with "Nirvāṇa", which is likewise "liberation, extinction, a blowing out or an expiration". The addition of the syllable "ḥ" — the Nirvāṇa points — after the syllables "ha", "ra" and "ī" indicate that the notions they symbolize are transposed to the level of Nirvāṇa. "Ha" is the initial syllable of the Sanskrit word *hetu*, "cause";<sup>69</sup> "ra" is that of *rajas*, the "brilliant", and thus of the Element Fire; and "ī" is the initial of *īśa*, "spontaneity, freedom" (*jizai*)<sup>ez</sup> with the addition of "ḥ" the syllable "ha" becomes the syllable of the state of Nirvāṇa in which causality has been transcended; "ra", the syllable of Fire, is here the Fire of Knowledge that burns away ignorance; and "ī", "spontaneity", is "ungraspable Spontaneity" (*jizai-fukatoku*)<sup>fa</sup>, that is, the freedom or spontaneity of the Void. Taken as a whole the syllable "hrīḥ" represents the attainment of Nirvāṇa, which is a transcendence of causality and ignorance, and the attainment of the Freedom of the Void (*koku-jizai*)<sup>fb</sup>.<sup>70</sup> In this way the syllable "hrīḥ" is a concise summation



of Amitābha's Original Vow to bring all beings to Nirvāṇa by freeing them from the causal net of karma and from delusions and ignorance.

To say that "ṛ" in this context means "ungraspable Spontaneity" is to use the term "ungraspable" (*anupalambha*, *fukatoku*)<sup>fc</sup> in a technical sense. In Buddhist writings generally the term "ungraspable" is a synonym of "Voidness" (*śūnyatā*, *ku*)<sup>ck</sup> and refers to the "true essence of the Middle Way" (*chūdō-jissō*)<sup>fd</sup>, which is non-perceptible and unknowable by the discursive mind. In Esoteric Buddhism, however, it specifically refers to the essential meaning of a seed syllable, the meaning that pertains to the Void and therefore cannot be grasped by the senses or by thought. Every seed syllable has two meanings: the apparent (*jisō*)<sup>fe</sup> meaning, which is "graspable"; and its profound (*jigi*)<sup>ff</sup> meaning,<sup>71</sup> which is "ungraspable". The apparent meaning pertains to phenomena; and the profound meaning pertains to the Void. The apparent meaning of the syllable "ha", for example, is "causation", but its profound meaning is the "ungraspable Cause" (*in-fukatoku*)<sup>fg</sup> lying in the Void.<sup>72</sup>

The nature of the seed syllable is further demonstrated by the example of the five seed syllables in the "mantra which perfects the Knowledge of all Knowledges" (*manzoku-issai-chichi-myo*)<sup>fh</sup>, a dhāraṇī of Dainichi Nyorai in the Matrix World: "Namaḥ samanta buddhānām aḥ vi ra hūm kham".<sup>73</sup> The first part of the dhāraṇī, "namaḥ samanta buddhānām", is "I take refuge in the Buddhas everywhere". The five seed syllables, "aḥ vi ra hūm kham", derive from the seed syllables of the five Elements that make up Dainichi's Dharma Body of Form (*shiki-hosshin*)<sup>fi</sup>: "a va ra ha kha". Taking the five syllables of the mantra in turn, the syllable "aḥ" derives from the syllable "a" (*aji*)<sup>fj</sup>.<sup>74</sup> This is the sound produced by the organs of speech in their most relaxed position and the sounds of all other syllables are produced by modifying the sound "a": it is the matrix sound that gives birth to words and speech. For this reason "a" is the syllable of the Matrix Body (*taizō-shin*)<sup>fk</sup> of Dainichi Nyorai: just as the Matrix contains and gives birth to all dharmas, so "a" contains and produces all the words that designate the dharmas.

Further, "a" is the seed syllable of the Awakening Mind (*bodhicitta*, *bodaishin*)<sup>ag</sup>: just as the innately possessed seed of the Buddha Nature (*bushō*)<sup>fl</sup> grows to Buddhahood when cultivated by practice, so the syllable "a" is the seed sound that contains the plenitude of the Buddha Dharma, which similarly reaches fruition when nurtured by the performance of rituals.

Each seed syllable encapsulates a concept; it is the compressed container of a Sanskrit word expressive of a doctrine. Thus the syllable "a" subsumes the meanings of the terms it initializes: it concentrates the significances conveyed by the negative prefix "a-", as in *anutpāda*, "uncreated" (*honfushō*)<sup>ft</sup>, *advaita*, "non-dual" (*muni*)<sup>fm</sup>, and other negative terms descriptive of the nature of the Void (*ku*)<sup>ck</sup>, and it

contains the meaning of terms such as *anitya*, "impermanence" (*mujo*)<sup>fn</sup>, indicative of the nature of existence (*yū*)<sup>fo</sup>. By reference to the same principle of reductive concentration of the terms it initializes, it is also *Ādi*, "the Supreme", an epithet of Dainichi, the Supreme Buddha (*Ādi-Buddha*, *adai-butsuda*)<sup>fp</sup>. By way of correspondence it is also the syllable of the Earth, which, like the Matrix, is the uncreated (*anutpada*, *fushō*)<sup>fq</sup> support and source of all things. As explained above, the addition of the Nirvāṇa points to "a" to give "aḥ" indicates that these meanings pertain to their aspect of Voidness.

The second syllable of the mantra, "vi", derives from "va". This, in one of its meanings, is the syllable of Water, being the initial of Varuṇa, the god of Water, and of *varṣaṇa*, "raining", with reference to the "rain of the Great Dharma" (*daihō-u*)<sup>fr</sup>, which rains down like life-giving and purifying water. In its associated apparent meaning (*jisō*)<sup>fe</sup>, it is the Dharma, the "Word of the Preaching" (*gonzetsu*)<sup>fs</sup>, being the initial of the Sanskrit word *vāc*, "the Word"; and in its profound meaning (*jigi*)<sup>ff</sup> it is the "ungraspable Word of Preaching" (*gonzetsu-fukatoku*)<sup>ft</sup>. The syllable is also "bonds", the meaning of *baku*<sup>fu</sup>, the character used to represent the syllable "va" in Sino-Japanese transliterations of Sanskrit. The seed syllable "vi" incorporates these meanings: it is the syllable of the "bondless samādhi" (*mubaku-sammai*)<sup>fv</sup>, attained when the rain of the Great Dharma washes away all defilements.

The apparent meaning (*jisō*)<sup>fe</sup> of the syllable "ra" is "dust", being the initial of *raja*, "dust, pollen", a technical term referring to the defilements of the passions that obscure the Mind as dust covers a mirror. It is also the initial of *rati*, "pleasure", and of *rāga*, "passion" whence its association with the Element Fire. In its profound meaning (*jigi*)<sup>ff</sup> it is the wiping away of the defiling dust, that is, the attainment of Buddhahood by release from the passions; and it is the Fire of Wisdom (*chieka*)<sup>fw</sup> that burns away defilements.<sup>75</sup>

The fourth syllable, "hūm", is made up of the three syllables "ha", "ū" and "m".<sup>76</sup> The apparent meaning (*jisō*)<sup>fe</sup> of the syllable "ha" is "causation", being the initial syllable of the Sanskrit word *hetu*, "cause",<sup>77</sup> while its profound meaning (*jigi*)<sup>ff</sup> is "ungraspable Cause" (*in-fukatoku*)<sup>fx</sup>, the realization that phenomena do not arise from any of the four classifications of causality: self-caused, caused by another, caused by both, caused by neither.<sup>78</sup> The apparent meaning of the second component of "hūm", the syllable "ū", is "curtailment", being the initial syllable of the Sanskrit *ūna*, "incomplete, curtailed", and its profound meaning is "ungraspable Curtailment" (*songen-fukatoku*)<sup>fy</sup>, which the *Dainichikyō*<sup>fz</sup> defines as "... the curtailment of all the dharmas: seeing the syllable "ū" one understands that all dharmas are non-eternal, suffering, Void, and without self".

The third component of "hūm", the syllable "m" is represented by a "Void point" (*kūden*)<sup>ga</sup>, a dot or semicircle and dot, written above a syllable.<sup>79</sup> In Sanskrit this is called the *anusvāra*, literally "the following sound", and indicates that this syllable loses itself in a final

"m" sound, never being suppressed altogether but prolonging itself indefinitely even when it has become indistinct and imperceptible. It signifies that the concept symbolized by the syllable is absorbed into the Void.<sup>80</sup> In the present case the addition of the Void point signifies that the three syllables of "hūm" correspond to the Three Liberation Gates, entering which the sādḥaka perceives the non-distinction of existence and Voidness, the identity (byōdō)<sup>81</sup> of all dharmas, and the non-duality of Nirvāṇa and Samsāra: "ha" is the Gate of Formlessness, which is an awakening to the Voidness of all dharmas; "ū" is the Liberation Gate of Desirelessness, entering which all desires are renounced, since all dharmas are recognized as unproduced; and "m" is the Gate of Voidness, which is an awakening to the Voidness of the Void.<sup>81</sup>

The fifth syllable, "kham", is a modification of the syllable "kha" by the addition of a Void point. The syllable "kha" is the Void,<sup>82</sup> and the addition of the Void point to "kha" indicates the negation of a negation, the Voidness of the Void (kū-kokū)<sup>83</sup>, affirming the ultimate station of Buddhahood.

The seed syllables of the mantra thus represent aspects of the functioning of Dainichi Nyorai: his "adamantine play of vanquishing the four demons of the passions", his purification of the six roots, his attainment of the three Liberation Gates, and so on.

Again, each of the seed syllables refers to a destruction of hindrances and a consequent attainment of Buddhahood. The syllable "ah" is Entry into Nirvana (nyū-nehan)<sup>84</sup>, being the Awakening Mind ("a") actualized and fulfilled in the attainment of Nirvāṇa through an "expiration" and cessation indicated by the addition of the Nirvāṇa points ("h"). The syllable "vi" is that of the "bondless samādhi" (mabaku-sammāi)<sup>85</sup>, which unties all the bonds of the six realms. The syllable "ra" is the attainment of Buddhahood by wiping away the dust of defilement and by burning away ignorance with the Fire of Wisdom (chieka)<sup>86</sup>. The syllable "hūm" is the conquest of causation; and "kham" is the attainment of the Void.

In summary, the five syllables are the concentrated essence of the Knowledge of All Knowledges, which the *Dainichikyō*<sup>87</sup> likens to the five Elements: Like Space ("kha") it is non-discriminating; like Earth ("a") it supports all beings; like Fire ("ra") it burns away all the false ascriptions and delusions that arise from ignorance; like Air ("ha") it blows away the dust of the passions; and like Water ("va") it flows down to benefit all beings.<sup>84</sup>

#### d). Karma Knowledge Seals

Karma Knowledge Seals are the fourth type of symbol used in meditational practices. The term "Karma Knowledge Seal" is synonymous with "Karma Mandala" (*kamma-mandara*)<sup>88</sup>: Karma Seals are uncoloured anthropomorphic images, as contrasted with Great Knowledge Seals, which are anthropomorphic images painted in the colours of the five Elements.<sup>85</sup> "Karma" means "action" and the Karma

Seals depict "actions of awe-inspiring deportment" (*igi-jigyō*)<sup>89</sup>, the dignified and decorous actions of "walking, standing, sitting and lying down", of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and also of the sādḥaka who has realized that all his movements are ritual gestures, all his utterances are dhāraṇīs, and all his thoughts are meditation: awe-inspiring deportment belongs both to the World-honoured Ones and to those who have achieved union with them in all the actions of body, speech and mind.

A brief description of the ritual of the "visualization of the body composed of the five forms" (*gosō-jōshin-kan*)<sup>90</sup> shows how Knowledge Seals are used in ritual practice. The ritual, one of the most important in Esoteric Buddhism, is "the secret technique for (attaining) Awakening by the essential way of the sudden realization of the perfection of Buddhahood in the body".<sup>86</sup> It has five stages:

1. Penetration of the Original Mind (*tsūdatsu-honshin*)<sup>91</sup> or the Awakening Mind (*bodhicitta*, *bodaiishin*)<sup>92</sup>;
2. Cultivation of the Awakening Mind (*shu-bodaiishin*)<sup>93</sup>;
3. Perfection of the Diamond Mind (*jō-kongō-shin*)<sup>94</sup>;
4. Realization of the Diamond Body (*shō-kongō-shin*)<sup>95</sup>;
5. Perfection of the Buddha Body (*busshin-emman*)<sup>96</sup>.

The ritual begins with a technique of counting the breaths, practised with the aim of entering the *āspḥānaka-samādhi* (*anahanaka-sammaji*)<sup>97</sup>.<sup>88</sup> Sitting in the lotus (*padmāsana*, *kekka-fuza*)<sup>98</sup> or half-lotus (*hanka-fuza*)<sup>99</sup> position, the sādḥaka mentally counts his incoming and outgoing breaths, counting from one to ten, and then back to one, and so on. While counting, the sādḥaka visualizes the syllable "a" as he exhales and the syllable "hūm" as he inhales. The outgoing breath flows from the body and mind of the sādḥaka to the Mind of the honzon, and the incoming breath flows from the Mind of the honzon into the sādḥaka's mind and body. The breath that flows back and forth between the honzon and the sādḥaka is the Breath of Mind (*sokaushin*)<sup>100</sup>. Breathing reflects a state of mind, so that when the mind is relaxed the breathing is calm and when the mind races the breath is rapid: the breath is the sign (*in*)<sup>101</sup> of the mind and signifies its essence (*tai*)<sup>102</sup>. The syllables "a" and "hūm" are both signs of the Essence of the Buddha's Mind. The expulsion of the breath corresponds to the production of all dharmas, the Universal Dharma World arising from the syllable "a", which, as the Originally Unproduced (*nonfushō*)<sup>103</sup>, is the origin and source of all dharmas; and the inhalation of the breath is the return of all the dharmas into the syllable "hūm", which is the Voidness of both causal action and its effects (*ingōkahō*)<sup>104</sup>,<sup>89</sup> the Void to which all dharmas return. In this way the two syllables "a" and "hūm" correspond to the Matrix and Diamond Worlds.

By practising this ritual the sādḥaka enters the *āspḥānaka-samādhi*, wherein mental defilements, distractions and hindrances are destroyed and Serenity (*jakumetsu*)<sup>g</sup>, Formlessness (*musō*)<sup>u</sup>, Identity (*byōdō*)<sup>y</sup> and the Supreme Truth (*kyūkyō-shinjitsu*)<sup>v</sup> are attained. He now performs the five meditation rituals.

### 1. The Penetration of the Awakening Mind<sup>90</sup>

The aim of this meditation is to enter the "samādhi of the contemplation of one's own mind" (*kansatsu-jishin-sammaji*)<sup>g</sup>, the samādhi in which the sādḥaka's mind penetrates — or interpenetrates — his innate Awakening Mind. Reciting the "mantra of the penetration of Mind" (*tetsushin-myō*)<sup>g</sup>,<sup>91</sup> "Om citta prativedham karomi", which refers to the penetration of the Mind (*citta*, *shin*)<sup>g</sup>, the sādḥaka visualizes his mind(-heart) in the form of a full moon, on which appears a black syllable "a", the syllable of the innately possessed, but hidden, Awakening Mind. A slight mist, representing obscuring ignorance, surrounds the moon circle.

### 2. The Cultivation of the Awakening Mind

The sādḥaka recites the dhāraṇī "Om bodhicittam utpādayāmi", referring to the production of his Awakening Mind, and at the same time visualizes a golden syllable "a" within the moon of his mind(-heart), which now shines in its full brilliance, unobscured by any impurity. This meditation wipes away the "guest dust" (*āgantuka*, *kakujin*)<sup>g</sup> of the defiling passions, which obscures the pure and shining Awakening Mind; the differentiation of subject and object disappears and the sādḥaka's mind becomes one with the Mind of the Tathāgata. His innate Mind of Awakening having been revealed, the sādḥaka gains Buddha Knowledge.

### 3. The Perfection of the Diamond Mind

The sādḥaka visualizes the golden syllable "a" changing into the samaya-body (*samaya-shin*)<sup>ha</sup> — sword, lotus, vajra, or other — of the *honzon*. In rituals where Dainichi Nyorai is the *honzon*,<sup>92</sup> for example, the ritualist changes the golden "a" into a five-prong vajra, which he visualizes within the moon circle as he makes the "five-prong vajra seal" (*goko-kongō-in*)<sup>hb</sup> and recites the mantra "*tiṣṭha vajra*", "revealing vajra". Next, while chanting "*sphara vajra*", "(all)-pervading vajra",<sup>93</sup> the sādḥaka imagines that the vajra expands until it fills the entire Dharma World. Then, as he recites "Om *saṃghara vajra*", "contracting vajra",<sup>94</sup> he gradually contracts the vajra and withdraws it back into his heart-mind. This meditation is termed "me entering and entering me" (*nyūgaganyū*)<sup>hc</sup>: the expansion of the vajra is "me entering", the expansion of the mind to fill the universe; and the contraction of the vajra is "entering me", the concentration of the universe within the mind.

The successful completion of this meditation reveals the "ten thousand virtues lying innate within one's own mind"

(*jishin-honnu-mantoku*)<sup>hd</sup>; it is the attainment of the Diamond Mind (*kongō-shin*)<sup>he</sup>, that is, the Mind of Awakening, which is as indestructible and firm as diamond.

### 4. Realization of the Diamond Body

In the previous meditation the samaya-body of the *honzon* was realized in the mind. Now it is realized in the body. Reciting "Om *vajrātma kō ham*", "my self is Diamond",<sup>95</sup> he imagines that the vajra merges with his body. In this way his body acquires the qualities of adamant.

### 5. The Perfection of the Buddha Body.

The samaya-body is now visualized as changing into the anthropomorphic image, the "Karma Body" (*kamma-shin*)<sup>hf</sup>, of the *honzon*.<sup>96</sup> The sādḥaka recites, "Om *yathā sarva tathāgatas tathā ham*", "as are all the Tathāgatas so am I",<sup>97</sup> which announces that the perfection of the Buddha Body is the attainment of *kaji* with all the Buddhas (*shōbutsu-kaji*)<sup>w</sup>: when the sādḥaka interpenetrates the Karma Body of the *honzon* he simultaneously interpenetrates Universal Form (*sōdai*)<sup>hg</sup> and thereby attains *kaji* with all the Buddhas throughout the universe and with all their retinues; he realizes the mandala of the total universe within himself.

When he successfully performs the visualizations of the Body composed of the five Forms, the sādḥaka sees that all dharmas are Void and realizes that he abides in the "Void Principle (*kūri*)<sup>hi</sup> of the Realm of Suchness" (*shinnyo-jissai*)<sup>hj</sup>.<sup>98</sup> With this realization he is "shock Awakened" (*kyōgaku*)<sup>el</sup> by the Hidden Buddha (*hibutsu*)<sup>hk</sup> who pervades the Void;<sup>99</sup> he realizes the Highest Awakening and attains the "body of adamant firmness" (*kongō-kengo-shin*)<sup>hi</sup>,<sup>100</sup> he perfects Buddhahood while still in the body (*sokushin-jōbutsu*)<sup>b</sup>.

The visualization of the body composed of the five forms is practised as a means to realize the interpenetration of all things (*jigi-muge*)<sup>hm</sup> and of all things with their Principle (*riji-muge*)<sup>hn</sup>. The "five forms" are all aspects of interpenetration: the ritual of penetrating the Original Mind affords the ritualist an obscure vision of the interpenetration of his own mind and the Awakening Mind; the ritual of cultivating the Awakening Mind clarifies this vision; the ritual of perfecting the Diamond Mind shows the interpenetration of his mind with the world of the phenomenal dharmas; the ritual of perfecting the Diamond Body realizes the interpenetration of his body and the world of phenomena; and the ritual of perfecting the Buddha Body merges his body and mind with the Body and Mind of the *honzon* and with the total world of the physical and mental dharmas.

As a meditational technique for the realization of interpenetration the ritual of visualizing the body composed of the five forms is typical of all Esoteric rituals. Whatever the contingent and occasional purpose of a ritual, its primary concern is always the attainment of Buddhahood in the body by an immediate perception of the unobstructed interpenetration of all dharmas.

In conclusion, when it is said that the forms employed in Shingon rituals — mandalas, anthropomorphic images, mudrās, dhāraṇīs, seed syllables and samaya-signs — are "symbols", the term is to be understood in a special sense. It has a connotation quite other than that given it in contemporary linguistics-based thinking, where the symbol or sign signifies a referent that belongs exclusively to the sensible and cognitive realms. Nor, on the other hand, should it be interpreted in the manner of those writers for whom, following the Platonic tradition, the symbol has a referent that stands in supra-sensible and supra-cognitive realms.

The former view locates the symbol and what it signifies at the same horizontal (*ō-byōdō*)<sup>CM</sup> level of reality; in the latter view they are vertically differentiated (*ju-shabetsu*)<sup>CP</sup>. The Shingon symbol, by contrast, does not signify a sensible or conceivable referent, but the Void; and it does not signify a transcendent referent since the Void is not separate from sensible and cognizable forms: "Form is Emptiness and the very Emptiness is form; Emptiness does not differ from form, nor does form differ from Emptiness; whatever is Emptiness, that is form".<sup>101</sup> The Shingon symbol embodies paradox:<sup>102</sup> the symbol and the signified are both horizontally identified (*ō-byōdō*)<sup>CM</sup> and vertically differentiated (*ju-shabetsu*)<sup>CP</sup>; the symbol both is and is not separate from what it signifies; it signifies the Void but is itself Void; it signifies itself, since its form is Voidness. The symbol and Suchness are simultaneously separate and the same, dual and non-dual (*nijifuni*)<sup>HO</sup>. The signifier and the signified are at once separated and collapsed, structured and deconstructed, conjunct and disjunct. Between the Shingon symbol and its referent there is neither exclusive similitude nor exclusive assimilation: similitude presupposes distinction and assimilation implies identity; and interpenetration subsumes both distinction and identity. Symbols emerge in space and time but at the same time merge in Suchness: they are simultaneously specific and Void. In the symbol Nothingness and existence are distinct and yet coincident.

The Esoteric symbol is not, as in Platonic thought, an imitation (*mimesis*) of a transcendent Principle, as a mirror reflecting a universal Form, but is a reflection of all particular forms, each simultaneously an accidental event and Voidness, as a mirror reflecting a multitude of inter-reflecting and ever-moving mirrors. Nor is the Shingon symbol significant by a fragmentary participation (*methexis*) in an immutable and eternal Reality, but by a total interpenetration with all phenomena and the Void.<sup>103</sup>

The Esoteric symbol is not an illusory form giving intimations of the Real. Esoteric Buddhism teaches that forms are not illusory, but real, just as they are (*sono mama*), in their flux and ephemeral becoming: the symbol, as all dharmas, is "unproduced and yet produced, produced and yet unproduced" (*fushō-jishō shōji-fushō*)<sup>HP</sup>.<sup>104</sup>

The non-dual nature of the Esoteric symbol indicates the nature of Esoteric ritual: the ritual is a manipulation of physical, mental and verbal symbols, in which ephemeral appearances interpenetrate adamant Suchness. Identifying himself with the symbols, the ritualist, just as he is in his conditioned and corruptible body, takes on the Diamond Body and Diamond Mind of the Tathāgata: the ritualist who uses the symbols, the symbols themselves, and what the symbols signify, are fused — and yet remain distinct.

### Notes

1. Adrian Snodgrass, "The Shingon Buddhist Doctrine of Interpenetration", *Religious Traditions*, vols 7-9, 1984-1986, pp.53-81.
2. Idem, pp.56-57.
3. These three stages are called the "three types of perfection of Buddhahood in the body" (*sanshu-sokushin-jōbutsu*)<sup>H9</sup>. Their names are given in the *Ihonsokushingi*<sup>HR</sup>, but derive from much older texts.
4. "Rigu", literally "contained in Principal" is a technical term referring to whatever is noumenal or belongs to Suchness, as opposed to *jizō*<sup>HS</sup>, "produced things", which are all the phenomenal entities in a great chiliocosm (*sansen-daisen-sekai*)<sup>AV</sup>. When contrasted, the initial characters of the term *jizō* and *rigu*, namely *ji* and *ri* have the sense of "relative and absolute", "phenomenal and principal", "things and their Suchness".
5. Here "Spontaneity" (*hōnen*) is to be taken as synonymous with "Suchness" (*shinnyo*)<sup>CB</sup>.
6. In this first stage of the perfection of the Buddhahood in the body the "ten thousand virtues of the Two Mandalas are perfected as Suchness in the bodies and minds of all beings", their bodies being the Five Elements as Innate Principle (*honnuri*)<sup>HT</sup> and their minds being the Sixth Element (Consciousness) as the Knowledge of Fundamental Awakening (*hongaku-chi*)<sup>HU</sup> (*Mikkyō-daijiten* ["A Dictionary of Esoteric Buddhism"], 6 vols, Kyōto, Hōzōkan, repr. 1971, p.1403, s.v., *Sokushin-jōbutsu*)<sup>B</sup>.
7. "Principally possessed" Buddhahood is the Shingon equivalent of what non-esoteric Buddhism terms "original" or "fundamental" Awakening (*hongaku*)<sup>HV</sup>, the Buddha Nature immanent in all sentient beings. When quickened by practice, original Awakening is termed "originated" Awakening (*shikaku*)<sup>HW</sup>. — Principally possessed Buddhahood is the cause (*in*)<sup>HX</sup> of the attainment of the following stage, the "manifest perfection of Buddhahood" (*kentoku-jōbutsu*)<sup>3</sup>, which is its "fruit" (*ka*)<sup>HY</sup> or effect.

8. The word *honzon* is literally "fundamental Honoured One", referring to the divinity enshrined in the central place in the ritual and to whom the ritual is directed.
9. The Eye of the Mind is identified with the Eye of the Buddha (*butsugen*)<sup>h2</sup>; it is distinguished from the fleshly eye (*nikugen*)<sup>ia</sup>, which perceives gross forms, and the divine eye (*tengen*)<sup>ib</sup>, which perceives subtle forms and the formless. Cf., Snodgrass, op. cit., p.73, note 6. — References to the Eye of the Mind (or heart) also appear in the exoteric literature. The *Kammuryōjūkyō*<sup>ic</sup> says: "Whether the eyes are closed or open he sees the single jewel image, the colour of Jambudvīpa gold, seated on a lotus. When he has seen that seated image he will gain the Eye of the Mind and will clearly and distinctly see the adornments of seven jewels of the country of highest happiness (*sukhāvatī*, *jōdo*)<sup>id</sup>, the jewel ground, the jewel ponds, the avenues of jewel trees, all the celestial jewel curtains that cover them and the many jeweled nets of silk that float in the sky". (Mochizuki Shinkuo, *Bukkyō-daijiten* ["A Dictionary of Buddhism"], 10 vols, Tōkyō, Sekai seitō kankō kyōkai, 1968, p.2023, s.v., *Shingen*)<sup>n</sup>. Again, the *Kanfugenbosatsugyōkyō*<sup>ie</sup> says: "According to the teaching of Fugen when there is right mind and right thought the Buddha of the east, with the yellow-gold coloured body of strict propriety and extreme beauty, is seen with the Eye of the Mind. When this single Buddha has been seen then another Buddha is seen, and in this way all the Buddhas everywhere in the east are seen successively and, because they are conceived in the mind(-heart), all the Buddhas of all the ten directions are seen". (Idem.) Thus for exoteric Buddhism the Eye of the Mind is the name given to the eye that functions "independently of the fleshly and divine eyes" and sees all the Buddhas of all the adornments of all the remote Buddha Lands in all the directions.
10. The term *kaji* corresponds to the Skt. *adhiṣṭhāna*, meaning "a station, seat, place, abode; sovereignty, power, dependence; a base". In non-esoteric Buddhism it refers to dependence on the Buddha or, from another point of view, the protection he affords beings. It is the power of the Buddha that protects and "recollects" beings. In Esoteric Buddhism, however, the term has the special technical sense as here defined. To give a detailed account of the Esoteric Buddhist doctrine of *kaji* would require a separate study of considerable length. Since the connotations of the term are so wide it has been left untranslated throughout this article.
11. Kūkai's *Sokushinjōbutsugī*<sup>if</sup>, quoted in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.234, s.v., *Kaji*<sup>9</sup>.
12. In terms of the concepts to be developed in the following, the Three Mysteries of the Being (*shujō-sammitsu*)<sup>ax</sup>, his actions of body, speech and mind, totally interpenetrate the Three

Mysteries of the Dharma Body (*hosshin-sammitsu*)<sup>bl</sup>. — The concept of *kaji* is the theoretical basis for the rituals for controlling natural phenomena or investing them with power. Shingon ritual satisfies practical and occasional exigencies pertaining to the world of physical phenomena as well as the perennial exigencies pertaining to the adamant world of spiritual realities. Its efficacy in the realm of physical phenomena is deemed to derive from the merging of this world of temporal succession with the world of simultaneity in Suchness. When the *sādhaka* enters into the *samādhi* of union with the *honzon* his body and mind interpenetrate the dharmas of the total cosmos: he is one with the world. The efficacy of the ritual in effecting changes in the causal chain derives from this interpenetration, in which the causal relations connecting phenomena are dissolved: all causation is simultaneous; cause and effect are fused. — In later esoteric writings *kaji* becomes synonymous with the performance of ritual actions, such as forming *mudrās* or reciting *dhāraṇīs*.

13. The phrase *sokushin-jōbutsu*, here translated as "attainment (or perfection) of Buddhahood in the body", has a number of different meanings depending on the kenning of the character *soku*. In its general Buddhist acceptance *soku* is used synonymously with *funi*<sup>ik</sup>, "non-duality", and *furi*<sup>ik</sup>, "not separate". It is used in this sense in sentences that convey identity, as in *bonnō-soku-bodai*<sup>il</sup>, "the identity (or inseparability) of illusion and Awakening". According to this meaning of *soku* the phrase *sokushin-jōbutsu* is "the (non-dual) identity of the body and perfected Buddhahood". In the Shingon exegesis, however, *soku* is interpreted in four ways, three of which correspond to the three stages in the attainment of Buddhahood summarized in the preceding:— 1. *Soku* equates *sunawa(chi)*, "precisely", and *sokushin-jōbutsu* is taken to mean "Perfected Buddhahood is precisely the body", that is, Buddhahood is nothing other than the Essence of each sentient being. This relates the formula to Universal Essence (*taidai*)<sup>im</sup> among the Three Universals (*sandai*)<sup>in</sup> and to the "principally possessed" stage of the Attainment of Buddhahood (*rigu-jōbutsu*)<sup>c</sup>. 2. *Soku* is read as the verb *sokusuru*, "to be based or founded on, conform to". The phrase then reads as "the perfection of Buddhahood based on the body". This is the attainment of Buddhahood in the body of the ordinary unenlightened man; it relates to Universal Form (*sōdai*)<sup>hg</sup> and to the second stage of the attainment of Buddhahood, namely, the attainment of Buddhahood in *kaji* (*kaji-jōbutsu*)<sup>d</sup>. 3. *Soku* reads as *sumiyaka* (*ni*), "rapidly, immediately", so that *sokushin-jōbutsu* means "the immediate perfection of the Buddha Body", which expresses the Shingon doctrine of the present and immediate attainment of Awakening as contrasted with the exoteric doctrines of its attainment through long *kalpas*

of laborious effort. This reading relates to Universal Function (*yūdai*)<sup>82</sup> and to the third stage in the attainment of Buddhahood in the body, the "manifest perfection of Buddhahood" (*kentoku-jōbutsu*)<sup>e</sup>. 4. *Soku* is "as it is", and *sokushin-jōbutsu* is "the perfection of Buddhahood in the body, just as it is". This is the general reading that includes the other three.

14. *Dānapāla* (Segan) translation, Taishō, vol.18, no.882.
15. The Perfected Body Assembly is the central mandala of the nine that make up the Diamond World Mandala (*vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, *kongōkai-mandara*)<sup>c1</sup>. The eight mandalas that surround the Perfected Body Assembly are its variant versions, emphasising one or other of its qualities.
16. Typical of these dhāraṇīs is that which says, "*Om, vajrasattvaḥ svayaṁ te adya cakṣuḥśaṭaṇaḥ, tadpura, udghaṭaya te sarvacakṣuḥ, vajra-cakṣur-anuttaraṁ*", which roughly paraphrases as, "*Om, now Diamond Being (Vajrasattva) opens the eye for you; for you alone he opens the Supreme Diamond Eye, the Eye of All*".
17. Each image sits within a "moon circle" (*gatsurin*)<sup>jw</sup> or body nimbus.
18. The Tibetan version, translated into Japanese in Toganoo Shoun, *Mandara no Kenkyū* ("Studies of the Mandala"), Kōya-san, Kōya-san Daigaku, 1932, p.257, says, "Then, as a result of effecting *adhiṣṭhāna* with all the Tathāgatas he sees the various circles of light and also gains a vision of the supernormal powers".
19. *Giri*<sup>am</sup> is literally "meanings and benefits". *Gi*, "meanings", refers to the meanings of the Doctrine, that is, to *dōri*<sup>io</sup>, "the Principle of the Way"; and *ri*, "benefit", is the aid given to beings by the Buddha. Alternately, *gi* can mean the aid given at the present time and *ri* means the benefits given in the past and yet to be given in the future.
20. *Kongōchōgyō*<sup>ab</sup>, op. cit., p.354, b; quoted in Toganoo, op. cit., p.257.
21. See Snodgrass, op. cit., passim.
22. *Ibid.*, p.63.
23. *Dōjō*<sup>at</sup>, "the Place of the Way", translates the Skt. *bodhimāṇḍala*, "the mandala of Awakening", that is, the sacred area within which Right Awakening (*shōgaku*)<sup>ip</sup> is attained. Originally the term meant the place where Śākyamuni attained Enlightenment, namely, the Adamantine Throne (*kongōza*)<sup>au</sup> beneath the Bodhi Tree. By association it came to be applied to the temple or to any "place where the Buddha is worshipped" or "a holy place of learning and practising the way" (*Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary*, Tōkyō, Daitō Shuppansha, 1965, p.47, s.v., *Dōjō*). In later times in Esoteric Buddhism it came to have the more specific meaning of the sacred enclosure, the mandala or "altar", in or on which the *honzon* is installed, the rituals performed, *kaji* with the *honzon* effected, and Buddhahood attained. — See

my *The Symbolism of the Stupa*, New York, Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1985, pp.153-160, for a discussion of the symbolism of the *bodhimāṇḍa* and the Diamond Throne; and *ibid.*, pp.21-3, on the symbolism of the centre as the container of the worlds.

24. *Dainichikyō-kaidai*<sup>iq</sup>, quoted in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.839, s.v., *Sammitsu-yūdai*<sup>aw</sup>.
25. The doctrines concerning the syllable "a" state that all actions that make up the Three Mysteries without form are unproduced and lie in the identity (*byōdō*)<sup>by</sup> of the syllable "a" (*aji*)<sup>tj</sup>, while the Three Mysteries with form are the differentiated (*shabetsu*)<sup>dj</sup> forms produced from the syllable "a". Identity and differentiation are nevertheless complementary aspects of a single transcendent dharma so that once again both the formal and formless Three Mysteries are "unproduced and yet produced" (*fushō-jishō*)<sup>bn</sup>.
26. Cf., Snodgrass, "Shingon . . .", op. cit., pp.67-68.
27. The more usual reading of the characters is *hongan*, but in the Shingon sect *honsei* or *honzei* are the accepted readings.
28. The *Jishiki*<sup>ir</sup>, quoted in *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.105, s.v., *Ingei*<sup>bp</sup>. Cf., Jeannine Auboyer, "Moudrā et hasta ou le langage par signes", *Oriental Art* (London) 3 (1951), pp.153-161, p.153b. The Skt. *mudrā* is related to Pali *muddikā*, from *muddā*, "authority". Cf., E. Dale Saunders, *Mudrā, A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960, p.6., quoting Jean Przyluski, "Mudrā", *Indian Culture* (Calcutta), 2, 4 (April, 1936), pp.715-19, p.719.
29. *Mudrā* is also translated *mitsu-ini*<sup>is</sup>, "secret seal", or as *kei-ini*<sup>it</sup>, "pact seal"; otherwise it is transliterated as *mudara*<sup>iu</sup> or *modara*<sup>iv</sup> (Soothill and Hodous, p.157b and 193b). Cf., Saunders, op. cit., pp.7 and 202-3, note 25, for other renderings.
30. The compound *ingei* is used in Esoteric Buddhism in a general (*kō*)<sup>iw</sup> sense and in a specific or restricted (*kyō*)<sup>ix</sup> sense. In its general sense it means a symbol of the Dharma World (*hokkai*)<sup>ja</sup> and refers to the Four Mandalas (Great, Samaya, Dharma and Karma). Each of these, in the broad meaning of *ingei*, is a *mudrā*. The *Sankenkyōōkyō*<sup>jb</sup> uses the term in this sense, but the usage is comparatively rare. Most Esoteric Buddhist texts, including Śubhākarasimha's (Zemmui)<sup>dv</sup> "Commentary on the Dainichi Sūtra" (*Dainichikyōsho*)<sup>jc</sup>, Taishō vol.39, no.1796), use it in its restricted sense and to refer only to forms in the Samaya Mandala among the Four Mandalas, to the Body Mystery among the Three Mysteries and to the signs of the "samaya bodies" (*sammaya-shin*) of the various *honrons*. These forms are of two types, "hand signs" (*shu-in*)<sup>eo</sup> and "vow signs" (*sei-in*)<sup>jd</sup>. The latter are described below.
31. In exoteric Buddhism the term *seson*<sup>bw</sup> (*bhagavat*), "world-honoured one", is usually used as an epithet of a Buddha, but in Shingon it also refers to Bodhisattvas, Mantra-Kings,

- Buddha-Mothers, Gods, guardians, or any other of the figures shown in the mandalas, each of whom is an aspect of the Dharma Body of Dainichi Nyorai.
32. The numerous hand signs are all variations of the "mother signs" (*in-mo*)<sup>je</sup>, namely, the twelve hand clasps (*jūni-gasshō*)<sup>ji</sup> and the six fists (*roku-ken*)<sup>ig</sup>. They are described and illustrated in Saunders, op. cit., pp.38-42.
  33. Some of these are given in *ibid.*, pp.32-34.
  34. Commonly abbreviated as the "meditation seal" (*dhyāna-mudrā, jō-in*)<sup>jh</sup>.
  35. The One Sign Assembly is the top central mandala of the nine mandalas that make up the Diamond World Mandala. It shows a single figure, that of Dainichi Nyorai, as the summation of all the divinities appearing in the other eight mandalas.
  36. For this term and its complement, "vertical differentiation" (*ju-shabetsu*)<sup>cp</sup>, see Snodgrass, "Shingon . . .", op. cit., p.76, note 25.
  37. For other considerations concerning this *mudrā*, see Saunders, op. cit., pp.85-93.
  38. These are several other traditions concerning the manner of making this *mudrā*, but this is the most common. See *ibid.*, pp.102-107.
  39. See note 36 above.
  40. Frequently the associated *mudrā* and *dhāraṇī* are together referred to as *ingon*<sup>ji</sup>, a contraction of the two Japanese terms *ingei* and *shingon*.
  41. On the Dharma Bodies, see Snodgrass, "Shingon . . .", op. cit., pp.73-74, note 7.
  42. *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.1262, s.v., *Shingon*.
  43. Each of these five types of preaching divinity is a form taken on by one or other of the four types of Dharma Body (*catur-dharma-kāyah, shi-hosshin*)<sup>jj</sup>, for which see Snodgrass, "Shingon . . ." op.cit., pp.73-74, note 7.
  44. Namely, the *śrāvaka-yāna* (*shōmon*)<sup>my</sup> and *pratyekabuddha-yāna* (*engaku*)<sup>jk</sup>.
  45. The term *jikoten* usually refers to the celestial messengers who communicate between the gods and men, but in his *Dainichikyōshō*<sup>jc</sup> Śubhākarasīmha specifically lists gods, *nāgas*, *asuras*, birds, etc., among the divinities who preach the Dharma.
  46. These are usually called "the five types of true word" (*goshu-shingon*)<sup>jl</sup>, namely, the "true word of the Tathāgata's preaching" (*nyorai-zetsu-shingon*)<sup>jm</sup>; the "true word of the (Bodhisattva-)vajras' preaching" (*kongōzetsu-shingon*)<sup>jn</sup>; the "true word of the preaching of the Two Vehicles" (*nijō-zetsu-shingon*)<sup>jo</sup>; the "true word of the preaching of all the gods" (*shōten-zetsu-shingon*)<sup>jp</sup>; and the "true word of the preaching of the Earth Dwelling Gods" (*jikoten-zetsu-shingon*)<sup>jq</sup>.
  47. This is the term used by the adherents of Esoteric Buddhism

- in Japan to designate their sect. — In some contexts "*dhāraṇī*" is used to refer to a long invocation and *shingon* is reserved for short invocations. The distinction, however, is arbitrary and corresponds to no difference of meaning in the two terms. Each *dhāraṇī* has three versions: the *dhāraṇī* in full, which is called the "basic mantra" (*komponju*)<sup>jr</sup> or the "great mantra" (*daiju*)<sup>js</sup>; an abbreviated version of this, which is called the "middle mantra" (*chūju*)<sup>jt</sup> or the "heart mantra" (*shinju*)<sup>ju</sup>, in which "heart" is synonymous with "essence" so that the term also translates as "essential mantra"; and thirdly, a still further condensed version, which is called the "small mantra" (*shōju*)<sup>jv</sup> or the "heart within the heart mantra" (*shinchūshinju*)<sup>jw</sup>, that is, "the essence of the essential mantra".
48. Therefore when the Japanese Esoteric Buddhist sect calls itself the Shingon sect (*shingonshu*)<sup>jx</sup> this should not be taken so much to mean "Mantra sect" but rather "the sect of the True Word (preached by the Dharma Body)".
  49. In his *Shakumakaenron*<sup>jy</sup>, Taishō, vol.32, no.1668. The *Shakumakaenron* is a commentary on the *Daijōkishinron*<sup>z</sup>, "The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna", of Āśvaghōṣa (Taishō, 32, 1666). It is attributed to Nāgārjuna and was translated into Chinese by Fa-t'i-mo-to. The authenticity of this work has been questioned but Kūkai accepted it as a work by Nāgārjuna and quoted it on several occasions. It is held in high esteem in the Shingon sect.
  50. These are four of the "five types of word" (*goshu-gonzetsu*)<sup>ka</sup>: the Word of Suchness (*nyogi-gonzetsu*)<sup>kb</sup>, words with form (*sō-gonzetsu*)<sup>kc</sup>, illusory words (*mu-gonzetsu*)<sup>kd</sup>, false words (*mōshu-gonzetsu*)<sup>ke</sup>, and "beginningless" words (*mushi-gonzetsu*)<sup>kf</sup>. The term "beginningless" (*mushi*)<sup>dm</sup> has a technical sense and means "non-substantial", lacking in any abiding reality. From the standpoint of the law of causality all forms of existence are without origin and "beginningless".
  51. *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.1262, s.v., *Shingon*.
  52. *Idem*.
  53. The term "secret name" has another meaning: it is also the "diamond name" (*kongōgo*) or "initiativ name" (*kanjōgo*)<sup>kh</sup>.
  54. *Dainichikyōshō*<sup>jc</sup>, quoted in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.1025, s.v., *Shimansōdai*<sup>ki</sup>.
  55. The "seal of entry" (*nyū-in*)<sup>dx</sup> draws the Tathāgata's "Knowledge without impure outflows" (*murōchi*)<sup>kj</sup> into the Storehouse Consciousness of the *sādhaka*'s mind. The two hands are clasped with fingers intertwined and the thumbs entered into the palms (see fig.5). To summon the Knowledge of the Tathāgata the two index fingers are opened and slightly hooked, and make a beckoning motion three times. The seal represents an eight petal lotus surmounted by a moon circle containing a white syllable "*aḥ*", the syllable of "serene and pure Knowledge"



(*jakujōchi*)<sup>kk</sup>. The reference is to a meditation ritual in which the syllable "ah" is visualized in front of the face and then drawn into the mind(-heart). The eight fingers are the eight petals of the lotus, the space between the two palms is the moon circle in the mind, the two thumbs (= Space/Void) bent into the palms are the Knowledge without outflows, that is, the Knowledge of the Great Void and the Formless (*daikū-musō-chi*)<sup>kl</sup>, entering the mind(-heart). The two index (= Air) fingers make the gesture of summons because the syllable of Air is "ha", which is also the syllable of "cause" (*ingō*)<sup>km</sup>: the gesture causes the entry of Knowledge into the heart. The dhāraṇī that accompanies this mudrā is "Vajra aveśya ah", in which aveśya is "bringing in" and "ah" is the seed syllable of "serene and pure Knowledge": the dhāraṇī refers to causing that Knowledge to be brought into the mind-heart by the command of the syllable "ah".

56. Cf., p.7 above.
57. The names of the Four Knowledge Signs are also listed in the *Gohōmitsugiki*<sup>kn</sup>, the *Daranimonshōbuyōmoku*<sup>ko</sup>, etc.
58. See Snodgrass, "Shingon . . ." op.cit., pp.64-65.
59. "Samaya" is usually rendered into English as "convention" but, as will be seen in the following, when used as a Buddhist technical term it has a wide range of meanings that cannot be conveyed by any single English term. The word is therefore left untranslated, which follows the Sino-Japanese practice of using the transliterated form, *samaya*. "Samaya-form" is *samaya-gyō*<sup>kp</sup> in Japanese, but this is often abbreviated to *sangyō*.
60. The three hindrances (*trīṇy āvaraṇāni*, *sanshō*)<sup>eq</sup> are the obstructions to the attainment of Enlightenment: passion, which includes defilements such as lust, anger and ignorance; karma or past action; and suffering, the retribution of being reborn in this world of pain.
61. There are several types of surprise Awakening. In one type the *sādhaka* in the rituals surprise awakens the "holy multitudes" (*shōshu*)<sup>kr</sup> — the *horizon* and the "ocean assembly" (*kai-e*)<sup>ks</sup> of attendants — from their *saṁādhi* in order to invite them to descend into the places prepared for them in the mandala. In another type, the one referred to here, the surprise Awakening is that which shocks the Bodhisattva into Buddhahood. The Hīnayāna and exoteric Mahāyāna claim that the Bodhisattva attains Enlightenment when he enters the Diamond *Samādhi* (*vajra-samādhi*, *kongō-sammai*)<sup>kt</sup>, but Esoteric Buddhism teaches that Awakening is not attained in this *saṁādhi* unless the Bodhisattva is surprised into Enlightenment by the hidden Buddhas (*himitsu-butsu*)<sup>ku</sup>. The *Rengebushinkū*<sup>kv</sup>, for example, says, "In meditation he analyses the nature of the dharmas and recognizes that they are all in his own mind, and that all the passion-evolved regions of the worlds of the aggregates of passion

are like the flames in a dream . . . (but) when this analysis in meditation has been completed he (still) does not see that the Knowledge of the Supreme Truth, of Identity and of Tranquility abides in (his own) body and mind . . . (and therefore) all the Tathāgatas in the Void snap their fingers and surprise him into Awakening, saying, 'O son of a good family, the station you have realized, the station of the Purity of the One Way (*ichidō-shōjō*)<sup>kw</sup>, of the Diamond-like *Samādhi* and of complete Knowledge (*sarva-jñāna*, *sabanya-chi*)<sup>kx</sup>, has not enabled you (to attain) Realization, which (in this station) is not complete'. Thus they completed (the Realization) of *Samantabhadra* (*Fugen*)<sup>ky</sup>, so that he attained the Highest Perfect Awakening". Similarly, the *Sesshinjikyō*<sup>kz</sup> says that the attainment of Buddhahood by the Bodhisattva Śākyamuni (*Shakamuni Bosatsu*)<sup>la</sup> is the surprise Awakening of the Transformation Buddha (*henge-butsu*)<sup>lb</sup>, the manifestation of *Vairocana Buddha* (*Birushana Butsu*)<sup>lc</sup>. Also, the *Shugōkyō*<sup>ld</sup> says that "All-Fulfilled" (*Issaigijō*)<sup>le</sup>, that is, Śākyamuni before his attainment of Buddhahood, having practised austerities for six weeks without gaining Right Awakening (*shōgaku*)<sup>lp</sup>, sat himself in the Place of Enlightenment and "sank into silence", whereupon "an infinitude of Transformation Buddhas appeared in the sky and surprised the Bodhisattva". As a result of this surprise Awakening he meditated on the syllable "om" and thereby attained complete Buddhahood. Several sūtras (such as the *Kongochōgyō*<sup>ab</sup>, the *Ryakushutsunenjukyō*<sup>lf</sup>, the *Shugōkyō*<sup>ld</sup>, etc.) relate how Śākyamuni, the Buddha who appeared in a factitious body in India to preach the Dharma, was unable to attain full Awakening until he practised the meditation on the body composed of the five forms and as a result was surprise Awakened by the Hidden Buddha in the Palace of the Heaven of the Highest Limit of Form (*akanita-ten-gū*)<sup>lg</sup>. Having received the Highest Perfect Awakening in this way, he possessed the five Knowledges and became the Buddha "Shining" (*Vairocana*, *Birushana*)<sup>lc</sup> and revealed the Diamond World Mandala for the sake of the Bodhisattvas of the Ten Stations. He then descended from the Heaven of the Highest Limit of Form to the summit of Mount Meru, where he revealed the Mandala a second time for the Bodhisattvas and beings of the lower levels. This twofold manifestation of the Diamond World Mandala, firstly in the Heaven of the Highest Limit of Form and then on the summit of Mount Meru, constitutes the Diamond World Mandala. *Dainichi Nyorai* at the centre of the mandala is shown in the form he was in at the time of his perfection of Right Awakening in the Palace of the Heaven of the Final Limit of Form.

62. For the different meanings of "dharma" see my "Shingon . . ." op.cit., pp.72-73, note 5.
63. These are listed in *ibid.*, pp.73-74, note 7.

64. This is distinguished from the term *shūji*, written with the same Sino-Japanese characters but pronounced with a lengthened "ū". This also renders Skt. *bīja* but in the sense of the "seed" contained in the Storehouse Consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*, *ariya-shiki*)<sup>lh</sup>. It is beyond the scope of this study to trace the relationship of *shūji* and *shuji*, nor that of their respective containers, the Storehouse Consciousness and the Matrix (*taizō*)<sup>li</sup>.
65. The "productive cause" (*shō-in*)<sup>eu</sup> is the direct cause of an effect, as the seed is the cause that produced a plant; and the "revealing cause" (*ryō-in*)<sup>ev</sup>, also termed the "illuminating cause", is one that reveals what is otherwise hidden, as when a light illuminates an object. These are referred to as the "two causes" (*ni-in*)<sup>lj</sup>.
66. Since mandalas are representations of the Dharma Body, they also have corresponding seed syllables, as do sections of mandalas representing some aspect of Dainichi's Dharma, such as the Three Sections (*sanbu*)<sup>lk</sup> of the Lotus, the Diamond and the Buddha in the Matrix Mandala. A seed syllable can also indicate the occult power (*tsū-shuji*)<sup>ll</sup> of the *honzon*. This is the case, for example, with the seed syllable of the Twenty Eight Lunar Mansions, "ro", which has a direct symbolic connection with the influence the Mansions exert on beings.
67. This is analysed in greater detail in the following.
68. This concept is one of the bases of the practice of the *nembutsu*<sup>lm</sup>, the repetition of the name of Amitābha Buddha (Amida Butsu)<sup>ex</sup> in the Jōdo sect.
69. "He" is the syllable "ha" with a stroke at the top left corner to indicate "e".
70. In a complementary interpretation, the syllable "ha" is greed, "ra" is anger, and "ī" is ignorance, so that the first three syllables represent the three poisons of covetousness, anger and delusion. The syllable "h" is once again Nirvāṇa, so that the seed syllable as a whole represents the identity of the three poisons and Nirvāṇa.
71. *Jisō* is literally "syllable appearance" or "syllable form" (= *lakṣaṇa*), and *jigi* is "syllable meaning".
72. Every seed syllable has these two levels of meaning. The term "ungraspable" or "unattainable" (*fukatoku*)<sup>fc</sup> has four levels of meaning and its exegesis would require a separate study.
73. *Dainichikyō*<sup>fz</sup> (*Mahā-vairocana-bhisaṃbodhi-sūtra*, Taishō, vol.18, no. 484). The *shingon* is called "the mantra that perfects the Knowledge of All Knowledges" because by reciting it the chanter gains Dainichi's Knowledge of all Knowledges, "the supreme and most exalted Knowledge". Śubhākarasimha explains this term in the *Dainichikyōsho*<sup>jc</sup>, where he says, "the Mind of the Knowledge of All Knowledges (*issai-chichi-shin*)<sup>ln</sup> is like the Void, undefiled, infinite, unobstructed, impartite . . . it is the dharma of the realization of the Great Void (*daikū*)<sup>lo</sup> (attained by) all Buddhas . . . Because the Great Void is

- uncreated (*asaṃskṛta*, *mui*)<sup>lp</sup> and without self-nature (*mujishō*)<sup>lq</sup> it is able to give birth to the Knowledge of All Knowledges" (*Dainichikyōsho*, 11, quoted in *Mikkyō-Daijiten*, op. cit., p.77, s.v., *Issaichichi*)<sup>lr</sup>. That is, Knowledge of All Knowledges is the Knowledge of the Great Void acquired by Tathāgatas when they achieve Realization. Śubhākarasimha adds that the Knowledge of All Knowledges is not distinct from the mind of the sentient being, who acquires the Knowledge of All Knowledges when he realizes that the fundamental nature (*honshō*)<sup>ls</sup> of his own mind is the Truth itself. This indicates that the Knowledge of All Knowledges is the Mind of Awakening (*bodhicitta*, *bodaishin*)<sup>ag</sup>, the Enlightenment that is innate within all sentient beings; it is the Dharma World of the syllable "a" (*aji-hokkai*)<sup>lt</sup> and of the unoriginated six Elements (*fushō-rokudai*)<sup>lu</sup>; and is no other than Dainichi Nyorai in the Matrix World.
74. The doctrines concerning the syllable "a" are of fundamental importance in Shingon theory; and the ritual of visualizing the syllable "a" (*ajikan*)<sup>lv</sup> is the main practice of the Shingon lay practitioner. In this ritual the sādḥaka concentrates on an image of the syllable "a" drawn in gold within a "moon circle" (*gatsu-rin*)<sup>lw</sup> or nimbus until he is able to visualize the syllable steadily in his mind and can "project" its eidetic image onto a blank moon circle. It is then imagined to expand to fill the whole universe. By this practice the sādḥaka realizes that all the dharmas of the cosmos are contained within the syllable "a", and are fundamentally unoriginated (*honfushō*)<sup>gr</sup>.
75. The wiping away of dust is a purification of the six roots (*roppon*)<sup>lx</sup>, the organs of sense: the *Dainichikyō*<sup>fz</sup> says that when the syllable "ra" is seen it is understood that all dharmas, that is, all the objects of apperception by the six roots, have the form of dust. (*Dainichikyō*, 1, quoted *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.2221, s.v., *Ra*)<sup>ly</sup>. In this context, therefore, "ra" is the purification of the organs of perception in which all phenomena are realized to be the Pure Dharma World (*jō-hokkai*)<sup>lz</sup>.
76. That is, the syllable "hūm" is made up of the syllable "ha" with a stroke added to the bottom to make it "hū" and the void point above to give "hūm".
77. See above, note 69.
78. That is, the "four types of non-origin" (*shi-fushō*)<sup>ma</sup>, the negation of each of the *shiku-suiken*<sup>mb</sup>, the four phrases that classify the ways in which phenomena are caused: self caused (*ji-in*)<sup>mc</sup>, caused by factors external to themselves (*ta-in*)<sup>md</sup>, both self-caused and caused by external factors (*gū-in*)<sup>me</sup>, and neither self-caused nor caused by external factors (*mu-in*)<sup>mf</sup>.
79. In Sanskrit the *anunāsika*, that is, the *nāda* and *bindu*; in Japanese the *gyōgatsuten*<sup>mg</sup>, the "upturned moon and point".
80. The syllable "am", for example, represents Enlightenment, being

the absorption into Silence of the potentialities contained in the Matrix World Dainichi's seed syllable "a": Enlightenment is the Great Void. In this connection Śubhākarasīnha says, "The sound "aṁ" is the seed syllable of the perfection of Bodhi. The first syllable in this ("a") is the Mind of Bodhi (*bodhicitta*, *bodaishin*)<sup>85</sup> and the Void point added above is the Great Void. Enlightenment is the Great Void, and this is the perfection of Bodhi" (*Dainichikyōsho* 10, quoted in *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.326, s.v., *Kūden*<sup>86</sup>). — The syllable "n" replaces "m" in the Japanese transliterations of Sanskrit, so that the Void point does not strictly equate the *anusvāra*. Further, since Japanese "n" also replaces the Sanskrit syllables "ñ", "ṇ", "ṅ", "ṇ" and "m", the syllables "ña", "ṇa", "ṇa" and "ma" are also called "Void points" in the Taimitsu tradition; and since the syllable "kha" means "the Void", the Tōmitsu tradition adds this to give a total of seven Void points: "m", "ña", "ṇa", "ṇa", "ṇa", "ma" and "kha".

81. The three Liberation Gates (*san-gedatsu-mon*)<sup>mh</sup> are: the Liberation Gate of Voidness (*kū-gedatsu-mon*)<sup>mi</sup>; the Liberation Gate of Formlessness (*musō-gedatsu-mon*)<sup>mj</sup>; and the Liberation Gate of Desirelessness (*mugan-gedatsu-mon*)<sup>mk</sup>, alternately known as the Liberation Gate of the Unproduced (*musaku-gedatsu-mon*)<sup>ml</sup>. The three Liberation Gates are also called the Gates of the Three Voids (*san-kū-mon*)<sup>mm</sup>.
82. "Kha" is the syllable of both the Void and the element Space (since *kokū* has both these meanings). In Sanskrit *kha* is "the nave of a wheel, a cavity", and by this is associated with a series of symbolic correspondences: the centre of the Wheel of the Dharma, Zero, Space, the Void, the Buddha as the Wheel-Turner (*cakravartin*, *tenrinnō*)<sup>mn</sup>. See A.K. Coomaraswamy, "Kha and Other Words Denoting Zero" *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* (London), 7 (1934), repr. in Roger Lipsey (ed.), *Coomaraswamy Selected Papers*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1977, vol.2, pp.220-230.
83. The character *bakufu*, "bonds", is also that used to represent the syllable "va" in Sino-Japanese transliterations of Sanskrit.
84. *Dainichikyōfz*, quoted in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.77, s.v., *Issaichichir*.
85. Snodgrass, "Shingon . . ." op.cit., pp.64-65.
86. *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.613, s.v., *Gosō-jōshin-kangf*.
87. These are the five Forms listed by Amoghavajra (Fukū)<sup>mo</sup> in the *Juhachieshiki*<sup>mp</sup>, where he terms the ritual the "perfect revelation of the five Forms". The *Bodaishinron*<sup>mq</sup> (quoted in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.613, s.v., *Gosō-jōshin-kangf*), lists them as: 1. Penetration of Mind (*tsūdatsu-shin*)<sup>mr</sup>; 2. the Mind of Awakening; 3. the Diamond Mind; 4. The Diamond Body; and 5. Realization of the Highest Awakening (*shō-mujō-bodai*)<sup>ms</sup>, which is the attainment of the Body of Adamantine Firmness (*kongō-kengo-shin*)<sup>mt</sup>.

88. The etymology and literal meaning of the term "āsphānaka" are obscure. See Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, New Haven, Yale University Press, repr. New Delhi, 1970, vol.2, p.111.
89. The compound *ingō*<sup>km</sup> is literally "cause and action", that is, karma as direct and indirect cause respectively. The compound *kahō*<sup>mu</sup> is "fruit and reward". See above for the relation of the syllable "hūm" to "ha" as the syllable of "causation".
90. In its technical sense, the compound *tsūdatsu*<sup>mv</sup>, "penetration", is synonymous with *muge*<sup>a</sup>, "interpenetration".
91. This dhāraṇī is also called the "shingon of the perfection of Self-Nature" (*jishō-jōju-shingon*)<sup>mw</sup>.
92. Described in the *Ryakushutsunenjukyō*<sup>cf</sup> and summarized in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.613, s.v., *Gosō-jōshin-kangf*.
93. *Sphara* is the same as *spharati*, "suffused, pervaded".
94. *Samghara* is from the same root as *samgha*, "Assembly", and literally means "brought together".
95. *Vajrātma* means "Diamond-self" and "ham" is an emphatic.
96. In Shingon Buddhism the Karma Body is the anthropomorphic image of the *honzon*, as contrasted with its representation as a seed syllable or as a mudrā. Together these are the "three types of body" (*sanshushin*)<sup>mx</sup>: the Karma Body, that is, the Action Body; the Syllable Body (*ji-shin*)<sup>iy</sup>; and the Seal Body (*in-shin*)<sup>iz</sup>. These are to be distinguished from the three types of Body in the Tendai, which are: the Body of Form (*shikishin*)<sup>ig</sup>, which is the Body that shows the distinguishing marks and characteristics of a Buddha; the Dharma Gate Body (*hōmonshin*)<sup>ih</sup>, which is the aggregation of the virtues of the Dharma Gate (*dharma-paryāya*), that is, the teachings of the Buddha, called a "gate" because beings pass through it to Enlightenment; and the True Form Body (*jissō-shin*)<sup>ii</sup>, which is the Dharma Body.
97. "Yathā . . . tathā" is "as . . . therefore; as surely as . . . so truly".
98. *Shinnyo* is "Suchness"; *jissai* is "region of Truth"; and together these two compounds refer to the *bhūta-tathatā*, the "Realm of Suchness". *Kūri*, the "Principle of Voidness", is the voidness of self and of phenomena.
99. Cf., note 61, above.
100. *Bodaishinron*<sup>mq</sup>, quoted in the *Mikkyō-daijiten*, op. cit., p.613, s.v., *Gosō-jōshin-kangf*.
101. *Prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* ("The Sūtra of the Heart of Perfect Wisdom"), Short Form, II.1-3, in Conze, *The Shorter Prajñāpāramitā Texts*, London, 1973, p.142.
102. Shingon Buddhism is no place to seek Aristotle's logic of the excluded middle.
103. The pre-modern Western language of correspondences and the syntax of similitudes have no parallel in Shingon: things relate to each other not by a similarity of "signatures" or formulae

impressed upon them as the seals of a transcendent Form, but by a total causal interdependence and unobstructed interpenetration. — For a development of the Mediaeval and Renaissance European doctrines of correspondences and symbolism, see my unpublished doctoral thesis, "Stellar and Temporal Symbolism in Traditional Architecture", University of Sydney, 1985.

104. In the Shingon outlook, the symbol, as every other phenomenal entity, is not negated in the face of the Principle it represents: the form and the Principle are wholly interdependent and interpenetrating.



Fig. 1:  
The Dharma World  
Meditation Seal  
(hokkai-jō-in)

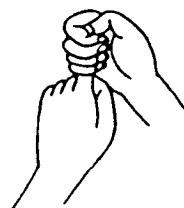


Fig. 2:  
The Knowledge Fist  
Seal (chiken-in)



Fig. 3:  
The Stupa of the Five  
Elements (gorin-tōba)

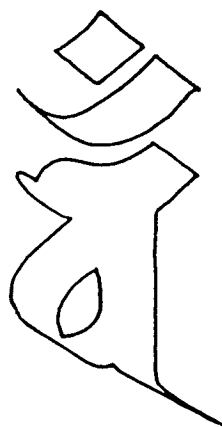


Fig. 4:  
The Seed Syllable  
vām (banji)

## Glossary

a	無碍	x	佛佛加持
b	即身成佛	y	生法加持
c	理具成佛	z	法法加持
d	加持成佛	aa	法界
e	顯得成佛	ab	金剛頂經
f	如來法身	ac	成身會
g	三大妙趣	ad	阿闍梨
h	法然	ae	定力
i	凡聖十界	af	金剛薩埵
j	加持成佛	ag	菩提心
k	修行者	ah	印契
l	瑜伽三昧	ai	陀羅尼
m	本尊	aj	智法身
n	心眼	ak	大持金剛
o	實相	al	本身
p	即座	am	義利
q	加持	an	三大
r	俗諦	ao	六大體大
s	佛力	ap	色
t	信心	aq	六大無碍
u	真諦	ar	四種曼荼羅
v	瑜伽	as	四曼相大
w	生佛加持	at	道場

au	金	剛	座		
av	三	千	大	千	世界
aw	三	密	用	大	
ax	象	生	三	密	
ay	如	來	三	密	
az	用	大			
ba	阿	耨	多	羅	三藐三菩提
bb	方	便	三	密	
bc	身	密			
bd	口	密			
be	意	密			
bf	真	言			
bg	定				
bh	本	有	三	密	
bi	修	生	三	密	
bj	差	別			
bk	有	相	三	密	
bl	法	身	三	密	
bm	無	相	三	密	
bn	不	生	三	密	
bo	三	密	而	加	
bp	印	契			
bq	本	願			

br	印	章		cp	豎	差	別	
bs	決	定	不	cq	佛	生	不	二
bt	印	信	改	cr	理	智	不	二
bu	契	約		cs	迷	悟	一	體
bv	內	證		ct	五	大		
bw	世	尊		cu	五	智		
bx	方	便		cv	本	有		
by	平	等		cw	大	空	智	
bz	金	剛	界	cx	三	道		
ca	胎	藏	界	cy	輪			
cb	真	如		cz	五	智	五	佛
cc	理			da	如	來	灌	頂
cd	智	法	身	db	三	昧	耶	身
ce	理	法	身	dc	五	大	塔	婆
cf	胎	藏	界	dd	色	五	大	
cg	法	界	定	de	種	子		
ch	一	印	會	df	鑲	子		
ci	金	剛	界	dg	祕	藏	記	
cj	智	拳	印	dh	菩	薩	金	剛
ck	空			di	二	乘		
cl	理	事	無	dj	諸	天		
cm	橫	平	等	dk	地	居	天	
cn	六	大	法	dl	龍	樹		
co	獨	一	法	dm	無	始		

dn	眞	法	el	三	昧	耶
do	明		em	手	印	
dp	神	咒	en	契	印	
dq	密	言	eo	除	障	
dr	智	言	ep	驚	覺	
ds	法	身	eq	三	障	
dt	密	語	er	文	殊	菩 薩
du	無	相	es	梵	字	
dv	善	無	et	智		
dw	觀		eu	生	因	
dx	入	印	ev	了	因	
dy	眞	身	ew	水	天	
dz	不	思	ex	阿	彌	陀 佛
ea	四	智	ey	涅	槃	點
eb	大	智	ez	自	在	
ec	三	昧	fa	自	在	可 得
ed	法	智	fb	虛	不	在
ee	觀	音	fc	不	可	得
ef	羯	磨	fd	中	道	眞 相
eg	四	曼	fe	字	義	
eh	大	曼	ff	字	因	可 得
ei	三	昧	fg	因	滿	智 智 明
ej	法	磨	fh	色		
ek			fi			

fj	阿	字	gh	修	菩	提	心
fk	胎	藏	gi	成	金	剛	心
fl	佛	性	gj	證	金	剛	身
fm	無	二	gk	佛	身	圓	滿
fn	無	常	gl	阿	婆	頗	娜 伽 三 摩 地
fo	有		gm	結	跏	趺	坐
fp	阿	提	gn	半	跏	趺	坐
fq	不	生	go	息	心		
fr	大	法	gp	印			
fs	言	說	gq	體			
ft	言	說	gr	本	不	生	
fu	縛		gs	因	業	果	報
fv	無	縛	gt	寂	滅		
fw	智	慧	gu	無	相		
fx	因	不	gv	究	竟	眞 實	
fy	損	減	gw	觀	察	自 心	三 摩 地
fz	大	日	gx	徹	心	明	
ga	空	點	gy	心			
gb	虛	空	gz	客	塵		
gc	入	涅	ha	三	昧	耶 身	
gd	智	慧	hb	五	股	金 剛	印
ge	威	儀	hc	入	我	我 入	
gf	五	相	hd	自	心	本 具	萬 德
gg	通	達	he	金	剛	心	

hf	羯磨身
hg	相大
hh	
hi	空理
hj	眞如實際
hk	祕佛
hl	金剛堅固心
hm	事無碍
hn	理事無碍
ho	二而不二
hp	不生而生
hq	三種種即身成
hr	異本造理義
hs	事事有智
ht	本覺
hu	本覺
hv	本覺
hw	始覺
hx	因果
hy	果佛眼
hz	肉眼
ia	天眼
ib	觀無量壽經
ic	

[illegible]



jw 心 中 心 咒  
 jx 真 言 宗  
 jy 釋 摩 訶 衍 論  
 jz 大 乘 起 信 論  
 ka 五 種 言 說  
 kb 如 義 言 說  
 kc 相 言 說  
 kd 夢 言 說  
 ke 妄 執 言 說  
 kf 無 如 言 說  
 kg 金 剛 語  
 kh 灌 頂 語  
 ki 四 曼 相 大  
 kj 無 漏 智  
 kk 寂 淨 智  
 kl 大 空 無 相 智  
 km 因 業  
 kn 五 祕 密 儀 軌  
 ko 陀 羅 尼 門 諸 部 要 目  
 kp 三 昧 耶 形  
 kq 三 形  
 kr 聖 象 會  
 ks 海 三  
 kt 金 剛 三 昧

ku 祕 密 佛  
 kv 蓮 華 部 心 軌  
 kw 一 道 清 淨  
 kx 薩 般 若 智  
 ky 普 賢 實 經  
 kz 說 真 迦 牟 尼 菩 薩  
 la 釋 迦 化 佛 舍 那 佛  
 lb 變 毘 盧 護 經  
 lc 毘 守 一 切 義 成  
 ld 守 一 略 出 念 誦 經 天 宮  
 le 阿 迦 嚩 耶 識  
 lf 阿 梨 藏 耶  
 lg 阿 胎 二 部  
 lh 阿 三 通  
 li 子  
 lj  
 lk  
 ll

lm 念 佛  
 ln 一 切 智 智 心  
 lo 大 空  
 lp 無 為  
 lq 無 自 性  
 lr 一 切 智 智  
 ls 本 證 法 界  
 lt 阿 字 生 六 大  
 lu 不 阿 字 觀  
 lv 阿 月 輪 本  
 lw 六 囉  
 lx 淨 法 界  
 ly 四 不 生  
 lz 四 句 推 檢  
 ma 自 因  
 mb 他 因  
 mc 共 因  
 md 無 因  
 me 仰 月 點  
 mf 三 解 脫 門  
 mg 空 解 脫 門  
 mh 無 相 解 脫 門  
 mi  
 mj

mk 無 願 解 脫 門  
 ml 無 作 解 脫 門  
 mm 三 空 門  
 mn 轉 輪 王  
 mo 不 空  
 mp 十 八 會 指 歸  
 mq 菩 提 心 論  
 mr 通 達 心  
 ms 證 無 上 菩 提  
 mt 金 剛 堅 身  
 mu 果 報  
 mv 通 達 性 成 就 真 言  
 mw 自 三 種 身  
 mx 聲 聞  
 my