texts are extant only in Chinese, and generations of Japanese scholars have profitably used P'u-kuang's and Fa-pao's Chinese commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. All of these sources were available to Jaini only through fragmentary quotations in the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* and in the articles of de la Vallée Poussin and the notes to his translation of the *Abhidharmakośa*. Thus, Jaini was never able to apply his intellect and comprehensive knowledge of the *abhidharma* system to a study of such texts as the *Vibhāṣā* and the **Nyāyānusāra*. Even so, his studies on *abhidharma* are of the highest quality and are the most important in the English language. And while many people may associate Jaini's name exclusively with *abhidharma*, *Collected Papers on Buddhist Studies* displays his mastery of several other areas of Buddhism as well.

JEWEL IN THE ASHES: Buddha Relics and Power in Early Medieval Japan by Brian D. Ruppert. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000. pp. xviii + 505, with bibliographical references and index.

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Relics, except perhaps those of Zen patriarchs, have not figured prominently in the study of Japanese Buddhism. Perhaps they have been taken for granted, so much for granted that no one questioned their role or significance any more than their very existence. However, Brian Ruppert's investigation into the role of relics in imperial accession rites, esoteric ritual, and lineage formation, religious and secular, has remedied this oversight and filled an enormous gap in our understanding of the role in Japan of what could almost be considered the fourth treasure of Buddhism. Whether granulated ashes, a tooth, or a component of a manufactured object known as a "wish-fulfilling jewel," the relic retained considerable integrity of concept throughout the centuries: it afforded access to the Buddha as an inexhaustible source of blessings, spiritual and material; at the same time, veneration of the relic–offerings to the relic–provided a principal means of requiting a theoretically unrequitable debt incurred by the conferral of blessings.

Indeed, the theme of blessing and indebtedness runs throughout this work on the relationship between relic veneration and power. It has its source in early Indian religion. The sacrifices sponsored by Vedic kings to ensure their power and prosperity modelled the relationship between Buddhist and Buddha: during his innumerable

previous lives (*jātaka*), the Buddha made sacrifices even of his own body on behalf of sentient beings; by venerating relics, especially by constructing stūpas to house relics, believers can earn merit and, thus, blessings. Aśoka attempted to requite his debt in part by enshrining relics of the Buddha in 84,000 ornamented stūpas sent to all parts of the world.

His example was followed in China: where offering to relics was characterized in popular practice by extremes of sacrifice, including self-mutilation, and by the transfer to ancestors of merit earned by offerings, rulers continued to present themselves as indebted to the Buddha—indeed so indebted as to give up family and themselves to monasteries, only to be ransomed at a high price. As a political strategy, relics, their enshrinement, and distribution were used to establish rulers as principal patrons of rituals that benefited the country and of the monastic community, which continued to provide the Buddha's blessings and to which the Buddha had bequeathed the right to collect the debt owed himself.

In Japan, relics were used to create a nexus of gift and indebtedness between ruler and country, clergy and ruler, and clan and ancestors. In the ninth century, as Ruppert demonstrates, new rituals were devised to celebrate the accession of an emperor. The Great Treasures Offering (*ichidai ichido daijinpō hōbei* 一代一度大神宝奉幣, 888–1269), based on earlier forms of offerings to shrines which implied the submission of the recipients, entailed the despatch of emissaries bearing treasures associated with the person of the emperor—gold, silver, mirror, sash, jewelled and lacquered weapons, and the like—to twenty-two shrines throughout the country. Moreover, Ise and Usa, the two great shrines closely associated with the imperial line, received additional offerings. The Buddha Relics Offering (*ichidai ichido busshari* [*hōken*] 一代一度仏舎利 [奉献], 889–1253?) involved the despatch to the same shrines of emissaries bearing reliquaries enshrining Buddha relics of one grain each. Through these parallel offerings upon accession, native and continental ideologies were syncretized to reinforce the position of the emperor as legitimate ruler: the emperor was identified as descendant both of a native imperial line and of a bodhisattva, the emperor Ōjin enshrined at Usa Shrine; the relics were identified as imperial treasures, i.e, regalia symbolizing the authority of the emperor (and thus changed in their status from recipient of offerings to offerings); and the relics and the treasures implicated the recipient shrines in a relationship of indebtedness to the emperor. Indeed, readers will deduce, the relics of the Buddha sent to the deities of the shrines implicated the native cults in a position of submission to the "descendant and virtual equivalent of a bodhisattva, if not, indeed, a Buddha" (p.53).

The power of the relics of the Buddha was considered to require activation by monks of the esoteric schools in rites such as the Latter Seven-Day Rite (*go-*

shichi-nichi mishiho 後七日御修法), first proposed by Kūkai in 835 and performed annually for the emperor and the state by the monks of the Shingon temple Tōji in the Shingon chapel of the imperial palace. Through the monopolization of this rite and the distribution of its relics to the emperor and others, the Tōji was able to aggrandize its position both within Shingon and *vis à vis* the court. In conjunction with this rite, Tōji also engaged in the production of wish-fulfilling jewels, Buddha relics mixed with other precious substances and placed in precious containers. The most famous was the one Kūkai buried at Mt. Murō 室生山 and identified with the Tōji relics. The guardianship of the wish- fulfilling jewel helped establish the orthodoxy and primacy of the Tōji lineage in Shingon.

Possession of relics, like the possession of regalia, helped to clarify the authority of the emperor and his lineage within his own clan. Possession of relics in the Fujiwara house and their use in memorial services for family members also clarified lineage and its membership. Moreover, rituals of relic veneration within the Fujiwara house were often carried out as services by and for Fujiwara women, especially for those who had married into the imperial house. For Ruppert, relic veneration, in conjunction with other contemporary mortuary practices, defined women as members of their natal family.

Warrior government was established over half of Japan in 1185, recognized in 1192 by the appointment of Minamoto Yoritomo to the office of *seiitaishōgun*, and extended over the rest of Japan after the revolt of the retired emperor Go-Toba in 1221. The leaders imitated the imperial court in establishing authority and legitimacy both by possession of the relics themselves, also from Tōji, and by the opportunity to imitate native, continental, and legendary patterns of kingship through relic veneration and the construction of stūpas. Temples were built, relics (including those of Zen patriarchs) distributed and enshrined, and ceremonies conducted. Yoritomo himself in 1197 had the traditional number of 84,000 reliquaries offered to the clan shrine at Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine, enshrining the same deity as that in Usa, as a pacification rite for those who had died in the wars since 1159. Indeed, pacification of the country and its angry dead, rather than requiting indebtedness to the Buddha or creating political nexus of indebtedness, seems to have been the principal goal of the warrior governments.

Ruppert's study is critical to explaining the perdurability of Shingon into the medieval period, supposedly dominated by the sects of "new Buddhism," as well as the source of the preoccupation with Śākyamuni Buddha during that same period (for example, the Time Sect worshipped Amida and Śākyamuni both, if not quite equally). However, he raises as many questions as he seeks to answer. This is due, perhaps, to his emphasis on setting his topic against the background of theory rather

than the historical context. Upon considering his argument concerning the role of relics (and treasures) in forming relationships with shrines, for example, one really wants to know much more about the shrines themselves. As Ruppert himself observes, Usa Shrine was credited with assisting the imperial line at least twice in the eighth century alone. In how many cases, then, were offerings made in recognition of and perpetuation of protection of the emperor? For example, in 819 Saga promised to send his daughter to the god of Kamo Shrine in return for help against his brother, who was attempting to dethrone him. He won and a princess was sent to take over the traditional office of the high priestess. If the gods of other shrines across the country were protective deities and their function was to protect the emperor, then the emperor was in debt to them and his offerings a requital of his debt. It may be that these rites were implemented in order to revise the relationship; it is not clear that this was unequivocally accepted by the shrines.

In addition, while Ruppert sees the "degendering" of relic veneration as creating the opportunity for women to assume the guardianship and veneration of relics of the Buddha, if such guardianship and veneration were connected with rites for family members, then one needs to know much more about the role of women in family cults. If, as Ruppert notes (citing Hosokawa Ryōichi[1]), imperial concubines and empresses were the guardians of the imperial collection of relics, "which were conceived as regalia-like symbols of imperial authority," (p. 227) then perhaps one needs to know something about the role of imperial women in the guardianship of imperial regalia, a subject discussed by Okano Haruko in her 1975 study of women in Shintō.[2] Certainly, one would like to know more about the relationship between Fujiwara [Kujō] Kanezane 藤原 [九条] 兼実 (1149–1207) and his sister Kōkamon'in 皇嘉門院 (1121–1181).

This is not to disparage the singular contributions of Ruppert's work; his research of the evidence of relic worship in esoteric texts, diaries, and other works is enough to make this required reading of every student of Japanese religion and history.

[1] Hosokawa Ryōichi 細川涼一, "Ōken to amadera: Chūsei josei to shari shinkō 王権と尼寺:中世女性と舎利信仰" in *Rettō no bunka shi* 列島の文化史 vol. 5 (1988), pp. 95–142. According to Ruppert's note, "Hosokawa's groundbreaking work was the first to examine closely the role of women in relic veneration as well as the symbolic connection between relics and imperial power." (p. 450, note 105)

[2] Okano, Haruko 岡野治子, *Die Stellung der Frau im Shintoh: Eine Religionsphaenomenologishe und -soziologische Untersuchung*. Bonn, Germany: Rheinische Friederich-Wilhelms-Universitaet, 1975.