

THE CONQUEST OF MAPPŌ
JIEN AND KITABATAKE CHIKAFUSA

Michele MARRA

In an earlier article on Semi-Recluses during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Japan, I described the escapist approach to the problem of *mappō* and exemplified it by Kamo no Chōmei 鴨長明 (1153-1216) and other authors of the literature of seclusion (隠者の文学 *inga no bungaku*) (Marra 1984). But escapism was not the only answer provided to the problem of *mappō*, the last, degenerate age of the Buddhist Doctrine. The escapist answer came from those who were at a distance from the center of aristocratic power, now in its declining stage. By contrast, those closely connected to the Imperial House did their best to delay as much as possible the process of the fall of the nobility. They tried to preserve the *status quo* or even, when they were able, to improve conditions. They struggled to find a way out of the pessimism surrounding their age, thus overcoming the fear caused by the consciousness of living at the end of the Buddhist Doctrine.

This paper will deal with two representatives of this tendency, the historians Jien 慈円 (1155-1225) and Kitabatake Chikafusa 北畠親房 (1293-1354), and will try to analyze their common attempt to find practical solutions to the degeneration of their age and their different approaches to the problem. The present analysis confirms the conclusions of my previous paper dealing with Kamo no Chōmei and Urabe Kenkō, i.e. the shifting of values towards a practical, worldly approach shown by people of the Muromachi period in judging history (Kenkō and Chikafusa) away from the religious, magical stand of the Kamakura intelligentsia (Chōmei and Jien). At the same time it shows that, within the same Kama-

kura period, Jien's position is still different from that of his contemporary Kamo no Chōmei inasmuch as, although bound to the same religious fear of his age, he did his best to find an effective cure for such fear. While Jien found it inside the theory of *mappō*, which itself contained germinal anti-*mappō* elements, Chikafusa solved the question through the complete rejection of the *mappō* theory as alien to the Japanese world. We will let the protagonists speak for themselves.

JIEN

The close relationship between Jien and the Imperial House is immediately clear when we recall that he was a direct descendant of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1027), being the son of Tadamichi (1097-1164) who held the office of Regent under the reigns of Retired Emperors Shirakawa and Toba.¹ His brothers Motozane, Motofusa, and Kanezane all became Regents, while another brother, Kanefusa, held the office of Prime Minister (*dajō daijin*). His sister Seishin became known as the consort of Emperor Sutoku, another sister Ikushi became the consort of Emperor Nijō, and a third was married to Emperor Konoe. Jien had a prestigious career, having been appointed for four times Abbot of the Enryakuji, the main temple of the Tendai sect.²

Jien, as a scion of the nobility, experienced the fragmentation of power between a weak Emperor, a fading Fujiwara family, the institution of the Retired Emperor system (*insei*), and a growing military class. He shared the sense of instability characteristic of his time. He witnessed the progressive decline of his own family, and the rise of completely alien values brought by the ascendance of the military. It is no wonder, then, that he considered history as a process of deterioration and the present time as the peak of such deterioration. History is seen by Jien as something in continuous flux, the changing nature of which is regulated by laws created in the sphere of the invisible which operate in the realm of the visible. Such laws, divine imperatives drawing events along a single course, always changing, affecting all phenomena, are

called Principles (道理 *dōri*), and are given large space in Jien's historical work, the *Gukanshō* 愚管抄 (1219), in which he divides Japanese history into seven periods.

1) In the first period invisible and visible Principles were still in harmony and the emperor was succeeded by his own sons. In this case invisible and visible Principles (冥顯 *myōken*) indicate the Buddhist Doctrine (佛法 *buppō*) and the Imperial Law (王法 *ōhō*) which, at the beginning of Japanese history, were identical, thus bringing about the blissful nature of ancient times. This period goes from the reign of Emperor Jinmu (r. 660-585 B.C.) to that of Seimu (r. 131-190).

2) In the second period visible and invisible Principles started to separate, but people were still unable to consider historical change as the working out of Principles. During this time, the imperial succession was not limited to the emperor's sons but began to include other members of the Imperial family, such as the emperor's grandchildren. Ability played a great role in choosing political leaders who were not discriminated according to sex. It was the time of the entrance of Buddhism in Japan, a period extending from the reign of Emperor Chūai (r. 192-200) to the end of the Kinmei reign (r. 539-571).

3) In the third period, from the reign of Bidatsu (r. 572-585) to the time of Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1027) and Emperor Go-Ichijō (r. 1016-1936), people lacked the capacity to again unify visible and invisible Principles, thus losing the chance to restore the blissful ancient age. People of the visible world did not conform to the will of invisible beings (冥衆 *myōshū* = Buddhist and Shinto deities). This was a long age which witnessed the rise of the Fujiwara family and its cooperation with the emperor but which, at the same time, showed that such cooperation was far from perfect.

4) The period of the Retired Emperor system (院政 *insei*), from the time of Fujiwara no Yorimichi (992-1074) to Retired Emperor Toba's administration until 1156, which witnessed the decadence of the Imperial law, is characterized by the fact that only a wise man (Michinaga) could understand the meaning of Principles otherwise ignored or misunderstood by the majority of

people. Jien tells us that the beginning of the fourth period corresponds to the time of the Final Age (末の世 *sue no yo*), thus showing that he followed the belief according to which *mappō* started in 1052.

5) The fifth period, corresponding to the time of the ascent of the military class and lasting until the time of Minamoto no Yoritomo's death (1199), witnessed the Genpei war which was brought to an end by a leader of prestige and virtue (=Yoritomo), who was able to understand the right Principle of his time. In this fifth period the skillful leader takes the place of the wise man of the fourth period.

6) The sixth period corresponds roughly to the same years as the fifth period, from the beginning of Go-Shirakawa's administration as a Retired Emperor (1158) to the end of Go-Toba's tenure in the same office (1198). Nevertheless it is classified as another period since Jien focuses here upon the increasing ruin of the country after Yoritomo's death in consequence of the worsening relationship between the regental house—now the Konoe house, not Jien's Kujō house—and the emperor, and the emperor's hostile attitude toward the military rulers. This was a period in which neglect of the path (無道 *mudō*) and wrongdoing (僻事 *higagoto*) were considered as Principles.

7) In this final period, the twenty years following Yoritomo's death, no wise men nor virtuous leaders were left, for the simple reason that there was no one who knew anything at all about Principles (Okami 1967, *Gukanshō*, pp. 325-26; Brown 1979, pp. 206-08).

Jien's interpretation of Japanese history as a process of continuous decline because of the increasing disagreement between Buddhist Doctrine and Imperial Law, and between the centers of power which can be efficient only when mutually cooperating (Imperial and Regental House, aristocratic and military class), easily leads to the conclusion that the *Gukanshō* is a product of *mappō* thought.³ As a matter of fact it is hard to deny the influence of the Three Ages and Five Periods doctrine on the *Gukanshō*. If we overlap Jien's seven periods scheme on the chronological table of the True (正法 *shōhō*, 1000 years after

Buddha's death), Imitation (像法 *zōhō*, the next 1000 years) and Final Doctrine (末法 *mappō*), we realize that Jien's True Doctrine ends after the death of Emperor Seimu, an age immediately preceding the time when "the spirit of the age of *kami*" had been lost. In the same way, the beginning of the Final Doctrine corresponds to Jien's fourth period which starts with the ruinous politics of Go-Sanjō as a Retired Emperor.⁴ Moreover, Jien clearly regards himself as already living in the age of Final Doctrine, an age afflicted by the rising of the military class, in the description of which occurs the only passage where the word *mappō* appears (*Gukanshō*, p. 230; Brown 1979, p. 222). But to overemphasize these elements in the attempt to demonstrate the *Gukanshō*'s commitment to *mappō* thought would lead us to forget that in thirteenth century Japan *mappō* ideas were the only world view available for explaining history and human existence. Jien was interested more in political issues than in religion, as his stated purpose for writing the *Gukanshō* amply demonstrates. The frequent use of the words *masse* 末世 (Final Age), *matsudai* 末代 (Final Reigns), *ransei* 乱世 (Disturbed Age), *akusei* 惡世 (Evil Age), all of which have a political connotation, simply confirms Jien's intention of persuading Retired Emperor Go-Toba to desist from making plans against the military rulers, since this would have meant opposing the will of the *kami* and the course of history which necessitated cooperation under Kujō leadership between the court and *bakufu*. Not to understand such a Principle would have been a crime on Go-Toba's part. Jien was trying to keep unchanged the old pattern Imperial House-Regental House (=Fujiwara), while not ignoring the increasing power of the military. Therefore he stressed the necessity of keeping things as they were at the end of the twelfth century, when an alliance between Kanezane (Kujō house) and Yoritomo (Minamoto house) had enabled government to function smoothly. Jien wrote the *Gukanshō* to show the course of Japanese events as the result of the will of *kami* and buddhas who first caused the pattern of Emperor-Regent and then that of Emperor-Shōgun to be a historical necessity. The Fujiwara family stood in the past as a guardian of the Imperial House in the same way that now the

Minamoto family was guarding both the emperor and the aristocracy. In these terms Jien explains and justifies the existence of a class, the military, which at that time was despised by the aristocracy. Jien, who was essentially a practical man, knew quite well that a clash with the military would have brought the aristocracy to complete ruin. With this conviction, he tried to explain to Go-Toba that his hostility to the *bakufu* after Sanetomo's assassination was a great mistake, and that the result would have been a political crisis, such as actually occurred a few years later, after the Jōkyū war of 1221. Jien warned the Retired Emperor, suggesting concrete actions to be taken in order to counter this looming crisis. First of all, Sovereign and Regent should be of one mind, making proper selections of officials. These officials should have some understanding of the Principles regulating history (*Gukanshō*, p. 356; Brown 1979, p. 239). Moreover Jien suggested the combination of the office of Regent with that of Shōgun in the hands of the same person, Yoritsune (1218-56), now that this Kujō boy had been chosen by the Minamoto as the heir of Sanetomo, who had died without producing any son. After all, Jien was repeating the same cunning policy started by Yoritomo's widow, Masako, who had supported Yoritsune's candidacy as the next Minamoto head, so as to add legitimacy to the weakened military government. Jien followed the same strategy, planning to use his nephew Yoritsune as next regent in order to bring the Minamoto military might to support the aristocracy and, particularly, the Kujō house. In Jien's mind military strength and aristocratic values would have supported and maintained the Imperial House. Therefore, all Jien's hopes were placed in this two year-old Kujō boy, and in Crown Prince Chūkyō (r.1221), son of emperor Juntoku and Kujō Yoshitsune's daughter, Risshi. According to Jien, these two boys would bring some improvement in state affairs, checking the process of historical decline (*Gukanshō*, p. 342; Brown 1979, p. 223).

Jien's plans were spoiled by the war, but what is interesting to notice here is that he believed in the possibility of improving history, for otherwise he would not have written the *Gukanshō* in the first place. This belief is in open contradiction with the

philosophy of the Three Ages and Five Periods theory on which his division of Japanese history was based. Such a contradiction is explained by the fact that the *Gukanshō* was inevitably influenced by *mappō* thought without, however, being caught in *mappō*'s net. The very structure of *mappō* thought provided Jien with a framework in which to cast an interpretation of Japanese history much wider and more serviceable than the restrictive theory of the Three Ages and Five Periods. This was a consequence of his study of the *Abhidharma-kośa* (阿毘達磨俱舍論 *Abidatsumakusharon*), which presents the theory of the Rotation of the Four Kalpas (T. 29, pp. 62-63). This theory, already mentioned in the *Ōkagami* 大鏡, was subsequently given particular attention by the author of *Mizu kagami* 水鏡 (second half of the 12th century), where history is considered as the product of the eternal rotation of four immensely long periods of time called medium kalpas (中劫 *chūgō*): 1) the kalpa of becoming (成劫 *jōgō*), 2) the kalpa of existing (住劫 *jūgō*), 3) the kalpa of destruction (壞劫 *egō*), and 4) the kalpa of emptiness (空劫 *kūgō*). Each of these periods is subsequently divided into twenty small kalpas (小劫 *shōgō*), each of which is characterized by an increasing first half and a decreasing second half. At the beginning of a small kalpa, a person is expected to live 80,000 years. Every 100 years people's life expectancy decreases by one year until it drops to 10 years. In the second half of a small kalpa the opposite process occurs until human age is restored to 80,000 years. Twenty of these double transformations mark the passage from one medium kalpa to the following one. At the beginning of the kalpa of becoming, mountains and rivers appear, and during its 19th small kalpa celestial beings, the hells, men and all sentient beings are born. The kalpa of existing unfolds the process of the increase and decrease in human life span. During the kalpa of destruction everything is destined to fall into ruin under the destroying power of fire and wind. At the end only void is left in the kalpa of emptiness, waiting for the time of regeneration to start over again in an eternal process. In the first eight small kalpas of the kalpa of existing no Buddha appears, but in the ninth, seven Buddhas made their appearance. Among them was the historical Buddha whose

activity coincided with the time in which people's life expectancy was 100 years, the first half of the ninth small kalpa. The declining half of the tenth small kalpa is the time of the appearance of Maitreya (Jap. Miroku), the Buddha of the future, and in the declining half of the fifteenth, when things will become even more deteriorated, 994 Buddhas will come. People at present stand near the end of the first half of the ninth small kalpa in the kalpa of existence.⁵

Therefore time, according to this theory, is eternal, not limited to the sphere of the past, present, and future as in the case of time in the Three Ages, and simultaneously ushers in both improvement and deterioration. This explains why Jien, who had to admit that deterioration was "destined to continue from the beginning to the end of the first half of the present kalpa" (*Gukanshō*, p. 156; Brown 1979, pp. 43-44), and that the destiny of man and the time flow (時運 *jūun*) of past, present, and future moved "in a spontaneous and natural fashion (法爾自然 *hōni jinen*) toward deterioration," yet could argue that "although there is deterioration, there is also improvement" (*Gukanshō*, p. 147; Brown 1979, p. 36). Improvement is possible when we understand the course of history and the development of Principles, of which temporal history is a product, so as to be able to avoid the slightest mistake (= further deterioration) and to predict the future, as in the case of the wise man of the fourth period and the leader of prestige of the fifth. The important Principle to be kept in mind is that "deterioration is periodically followed by improvement, and improvement by deterioration" (*Gukanshō*, p. 147; Brown 1979, p. 36). In the light of the theory of the rotation of the four kalpas, Jien can deny the mappōistic idea, widespread in the thirteenth century, that of the 100 reigns allotted to Japan only 16 were left. He does it with the analogy of the man who continuously builds up a supply of the paper he gradually uses to the point that, at the end, the supply exceeds the original amount of paper, thus showing that, as a matter of fact, the reigns allotted to Japan are numberless. This is so because "appropriate improvement occurs before the deterioration has been excessive

and before there is a sharp turn for the worse" (*Gukanshō*, pp. 147-48; Brown 1979, p. 36).⁶

History - all human action - is a process of necessity dictated by the combination of karmic action and the established pattern of kalpic transformation. Now, if history is not an accidental process but the result of inevitable laws, so that it cannot be other from what it is, men of wisdom can foresee the inevitability of history and check the process of deterioration. As a matter of fact, Jien acknowledges the existence of Principles which have the power of counteracting deterioration. They are of a Buddhist nature and are based on religious and moral stands: 1) the Principle of "destroying evil and creating good" (滅罪生善 *metsuzai shōzen*); 2) the Principle of "hindering evil and maintaining good" (遮惡持善 *shaaku jizen*), 3) the Buddhist commandments: "Do no evil! Do only good" (諸惡莫作 *shoaku makusa* and 諸善奉行 *shozen bugyō*), and 4) the expedient blessings received from buddhas and bodhisattvas (利生方便 *rishō hōben*) (*Gukanshō*, p.327; Brown 1979, p. 209).

A wise man can avoid further deterioration, bringing into the world a temporal peace and tranquility, through the Buddhist teachings and his personal will to follow a moral path. Jien's world is no longer the inhuman world of the *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記 (Miraculous Stories of Karmic Retribution in Japan, ca. 821), where nobody can escape the severe laws of karma, no matter how wonderfully he behaves in the present world. In the *Gukanshō* human will plays an important role, since it can lengthen the process of historical improvement, and momentarily stop the opposite process of decline, which, being a historical necessity, cannot be considered evil. The *Gukanshō* is addressed to such a wise man, who has the ability of sensing the course of history through his personal intuition and of choosing the right Principles according to his Buddhist knowledge and moral purity.

What is important to notice here is that man has the possibility, or better, the duty, of choosing, and that his choice is related to and can momentarily change the course of history. In order to stress human capability Jien divided Principles into two types: 1) common principles (*Ōkata no dōri* 大方の道理) and 2)

principles made in order to match the realities of a particular time, place, and human ability. Common principles are simply common sense, things dictated by learning and established through customs (定 *sadame*) and conventions. These principles, according to Jien, cannot always be taken as models, since history is in a continuous flux and new things intervene at any moment. Therefore people must make adjustments to the present situation, following what they think to be best for that particular time. Although Jien does not explain the criteria by which objective judgments are to be made, he gives the example of Shōtoku Taishi who refused to punish the Imperial Chieftain Soga no Umako for having assassinated Emperor Sushun (r. 587-592). Common sense would suggest that Umako must be punished for his crime against the divine nature of the emperor, according to a quite common Principle. But Shōtoku Taishi left Umako unpunished since Emperor Sushun was plotting against Umako and the Buddhist doctrine, forgetting the high Principle that the existence of the Imperial Law is inseparable from the protection coming from the Buddhist doctrine. The assassination of Emperor Sushun was a historical necessity of the end of the sixth century, and Shōtoku was simply following the most important Principle for that particular time and place (*Gukanshō*, pp. 137-38; Brown 1979, pp. 27-28; also see Sagara 1983, pp. 157-214).

However, the idea of the existence of Principles effective for particular times was not Jien's discovery, being quite widespread in thirteenth century Japan. The *Zuimonki* 隨聞記 (1235), for example, presents Dōgen (1200-1253) telling the story of the monk who abandoned his dying master in order to go to China and learn the Buddhist Way. Here Dōgen supports the monk's behavior since he acted according to the high Principle of achieving something of great value for the future, although this implied disobedience to the common Principle binding pupil and master (*Zuimonki* 6.3; Yamazaki 1982, pp. 292-300). In Mujū's 無住 (1226-1312) case, common Principles not only can be broken, but must be broken when they lack benevolence or compassion, so to be replaced by new, more benevolent Principles suitable to the present situation.

Both Dōgen's monk and Shōtoku Taishi were wise men able to see the necessity of history, and strong enough to make a choice on which depended the destiny of both Buddhist and Imperial Law. To argue that even in the thirteenth century, in the midst of *mappō* ideas, people still had the possibility of checking the process of historical decline through their personal ability to understand the celestial will was Jien's great achievement in his effort to withstand the inevitability of *mappō*. Stressing the existence of Principles suitable to the present time which must be understood and chosen by wise men in order to stop the deterioration of history, he showed the great role that human beings can and must play in this world, without abandoning themselves to foolish despair. The easy *nenbutsu* practice in order to reach the blissful land of Amida is unserviceable (See *Gukan-shō*, pp. 294-95; Brown 1979, pp. 171-173), since an answer to the problem of human existence can be found within this world.

Jien is, however, still bound to his times by the consciousness that such a great human role is limited to an extremely small number of people, who are often represented as incarnations of deities, as in the case of Prince Shōtoku, considered by Jien to be the avatar of Avalokitēśvara. The tie between deity and man is very strong in Jien who is often caught in the difficulty of compromising his view of history as the inevitable product of cause and effect (因果 *inga*) through the role that human beings are allowed to play in this world. He partially solved the problem by stressing the existence of human activity and choice (= freedom of the will) inside the framework of the theory of the Four Kalpas (= historical necessity). But such freedom of the will was nothing but the human ability to sense the will of invisible (= celestial) beings, and the commitment made by men of ability to use their acquired knowledge for the good of history. On this ground Jien's use of the theory of the Four Kalpas was different from that of those people living at the end of the Heian period who had incorporated this theory into their thought as one more proof of their belief that history was a process of inevitable decline. In Jien's particular use of this theory, he demonstrated that within the structure of *mappō* thought there was still space for human activ-

ity and hope, thus showing that not all of the people living in thirteenth century Japan were prey to despair.⁷ A different approach to the theory of the Four Kalpas remained still unattempted: its rejection. Such an approach was taken only a century later, with the arrival on the scene of Kitabatake Chikafusa (1293-1354).

KITABATAKE CHIKAFUSA

The end of the thirteenth century witnessed a moment of increasing optimism as a consequence of the two failed Mongolian invasions of 1274 and 1281. The Mongolian ships, unable to withstand the fury of the storms, were scattered and sunk before reaching the Japanese coasts, thus leading the Japanese to confuse the simple result of natural laws with a presumed divine protection especially bestowed upon their country. These events were taken as a further evidence for belief in the divine nature of the Japanese land, thus confirming the continuity of the Shinto deities' protective activity (神国 *shinkoku* = divine land). It is not surprising then that Kitabatake Chikafusa in 1339 opened his historical work, the *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (Chronicle of the Direct Descent of Gods and Sovereigns), with the famous statement, "Great Japan is the land of the gods" (*Ōyamato wa kami no kuni nari*) (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 41; Varley 1980, p. 49). To argue that, since the deities live in the dimension of eternity, Japan is subsumed under this dimension brings to the finite world a sense of infinity. The eternal time in which the sun-goddess Amaterasu lives is the same kind of time in which the imperial lineage develops, the emperor being a direct descendant from Amaterasu. The imperial regalia (mirror, sword and jewels), which legitimate the reign of those who possess them, bring the otherworldly eternity into this world. These regalia are transmitted from Amaterasu Ō-mikami to all Japanese emperors along a legitimate line of succession (正統 *shōtō*) regulated by a right Principle (正理 *seiri*) which is established by Amaterasu's will and which must be maintained by the right understanding of the

emperors. In the same way the legitimate line descending from the deity Ame-no-Koyane (= the Fujiwaras) is also mandated to assist the sovereign in his administration of affairs. Given these premises, Chikafusa can safely conclude that "the imperial institution shall prosper eternally with heaven and earth themselves" (see Ōsumi 1984, pp. 133-165; *Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, pp. 134-35; Varley 1980, pp. 188-90 and p. 218). That the emperor was a direct descendant of Amaterasu and that all the people of the country belonged to Shinto deities (*kami*) was well known to Japanese readers. What Chikafusa added to widespread Shinto ideas was his peculiar interpretation based on his knowledge of Confucianism. For a member of the imperial family it was not enough to be related to Amaterasu in order to become emperor, since only the fulfillment of a heavenly mandate (= Amaterasu's will, 天命 *tenmei*) will guarantee his own and his successors' prosperity. An emperor is expected to be human and just, to bring peace and happiness to his people so as become one with Amaterasu's will, discarding selfish cravings. When a sovereign does not follow moral behavior, his reign will be brief and his line will soon end, so that the succession invariably returns to its correct course (正路 *shōro*) (*Jinnō shōtōki*, 1965, pp. 124-125; Varley 1980, pp. 173-74). Retired Emperor Go-Toba (r. 1183-1198) is criticized by Chikafusa for having tried with the Jōkyū war (1221) to overthrow the *bakufu*, thus subverting the social order established by Minamoto no Yoritomo. Go-Toba's behavior was not virtuous inasmuch as he wanted to rule all by himself, disregarding the function of the *bakufu* and the good of the people. Go-Toba's failure is motivated by the fact that he could not guarantee a truly virtuous government (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, pp. 159-160; Varley 1980, pp. 224-46). Emperor Go-Daigo (r. 1318-1339), for whom Chikafusa himself fought very hard during the first part of the Kenmu restoration, and to whom he owes the swiftness of his prestigious career, is condemned on the same charge of concentration of power.⁸ Expected to become the restorer of the benevolent rule of old, he was unable to avoid the great disorder of the time in which Chikafusa was living. Moreover he committed the crime of malfeasance in making improper appointments. Bestowing excessive

rewards upon Ashikaga Takauji (1305-1358), he brought the country to the utmost despair (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, pp. 176-77; Varley 1980, pp. 149-50).

Chikafusa added in the list of the traditionally evil emperors like Buretsu (r. 498-506) and Yōzei (r. 876-884), known for their violent dispositions and terrible crimes, who did not follow Mencius' ideal of humanity and justice (仁義 *jingi*) towards the people. Here he showed his deep indebtedness to the Sung Confucians, particularly Chu-Hsi. The Confucian interpretation of Shinto ideas led Chikafusa to justify the removal or even the assassination of an evil emperor on the ground that, disrespectful of Amaterasu's will and of the safety of his people, he had gone against the mandate of heaven. A moral standard concerning good government has here taken the place held by the protection of the Buddhist Doctrine in Jien's justification of the removal or assassination of a bad emperor. Punishment visited upon an emperor is incurred by his own faulty behavior and is planned by Amaterasu who, in so doing, can guarantee the virtuous nature of the direct line of imperial succession.

If compassion is the sovereign's virtue, loyalty is the virtue expected from the subject. Throughout the *Jinnō shōtōki* Chikafusa is trying to slow down the speed with which the military class is developing, thus threatening more and more the privileges of the nobility. Whereas malfeasance is a crime on the emperor's part, misprision (*shiroku*), or improper acceptance of offices, is the main fault of the subject (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 178; Varley 1980, pp. 251-52). A loyal subject must sacrifice his life for his master, without any expectation of fame or reward for his loyalty. The disorder of the country has its roots in the unappeasable thirst for reward by warriors who do not hesitate to ask the entire land of Japan for having suffered losses in a single battle (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, pp. 184-85; Varley 1980, pp. 260-61). Chikafusa gives as the extreme example of selfish behavior Ashikaga Takauji, "a thief without merit or virtue," who from the position of simple retainer had risen to high rank and office, causing the ruin of Japan and Emperor Go-Daigo's death (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 193; Varley 1980, p. 269). On the

contrary, Minamoto no Yoritomo and Hōjō Yoshitoki (1163-1224) are praised for having declined promotions to high court positions in order to avoid social disorders (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 180; Varley 1980, p. 225).

Although Japan is the land of the gods, a worldly incarnation of Amaterasu's plan, Chikafusa cannot ignore the evil of this world, being himself a protagonist of one of the most troubled times in Japanese history. Therefore, in describing the world which he is experiencing, he makes frequent use of words stressing such an evil character, like "final age," "disturbed age," "degenerate age" (末世 *masse*). But whereas in Jien and in Heian thinkers, *masse* had a political meaning, denoting the crisis of political institutions, with Chikafusa it takes on a moral connotation, indicating an age which is morally corrupt. This is clearly shown in his statement that the decline of conditions in the world does not depend on changes occurring in the temporal dimension but only on "the gradual nurturing of evil within people's hearts" (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 185; Varley 1980, p. 261). It must not be very difficult to overcome the worsening of history, since it is not an inevitable law but the simple product of human evil, a temporary misfortune soon corrected by divine intervention. For a ruler it is enough to keep in mind the ideals of the ancient age (上古 *jōko*, 上代 *jōdai*, 昔 *mukashi*) when people's behavior was honest and just, as in the case of Shōtoku Taishi. Since evil is a product of human behavior and, therefore, can be overcome by human will, Chikafusa can speak of the past, particularly the Engi (901-923) and Tenryaku (947-957) eras, as the golden age to which rulers and subjects must return. This would have been impossible with Jien, who still accepted the idea of the temporal process of inevitable decline based on the passing of huge spans of time.

On the premises that Japan is located in the sphere of eternity and that evil is the product of human activity, Chikafusa can reject completely the theory of historical decline (*mappō*). Without even mentioning the theory of the Three Ages and the Five Periods, Chikafusa, at the very beginning of his book, denies the validity of the theory of the Four Kalpas when applied to Japan. Using as a source material the *Bussotōki* 仏祖統記 (A

Chronicle of the Succession of Buddhist Patriarchs, 1269) by the Chinese monk Chih-p'an 志磐, he presented the Buddhist world view which places at the center of the world Mt. Sumeru surrounded by seven chains of golden mountains, beyond which are the four great oceans. Within the oceans are four great continents, of which the southern is called Jambu, where Persia, India and China lie. Japan's position as a peripheral land located in the ocean off the continent of Jambu gives Chikafusa the opportunity to stress the particular character of Japan independently ruled by sovereigns descended from gods. Since the Japanese cosmogonic process is different from that either of India or China, Chikafusa concludes that there is no reason to apply to Japan an alien concept like the theory of the Four kalpas (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, pp. 44-48; Varley 1980, pp. 55-60). Quoting the myth according to which the gods became mortal as a consequence of Ninigi's rejection of the ugly Iwanagahime, the deity who gives eternal life, and of his marriage with the beautiful Iwanagahime's younger sister, Konohana no Sakuyabime, the deity who gives a life as long as the blossom of a tree (Nishiyama 1979, pp. 93-96; Philippi 1968, pp. 144-47), Chikafusa could end up saying that there was no reason to believe in the Indian theory of a gradual decline in life spans based on the passing of time (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 66; Varley 1980, p. 84).

Given the peculiarity of Japanese history and the eternal character of Amaterasu's mandate, it does not make any sense to accept the theory of the One Hundred Kings (百王 *hyakuō*) which stresses the extinction of the imperial line. This term, according to Chikafusa, does not have the numerical meaning of one hundred, but should be interpreted as in the word indicating peasants (百姓 *hyakushō*) which, in spite of its literal meaning (hundred names), stands for "myriad names" (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 66; Varley 1980, p. 84). Therefore Chikafusa rejects once for all a pillar of *mappō* thought which had already been questioned by Jien.⁹ In order to support his argument Chikafusa devoted himself to proving that the imperial regalia, symbolic of the eternity of the imperial system, had never been lost. The *Gukanshō* informs us that the Sacred Mirror had been the victim of four fires which

broke out during the reigns of Emperors Murakami and En'yū in 960, 976, 980 and 982, and that, as a consequence, it had melted down (*Gukanshō*, p. 91 and p. 93; Brown 1979, p. 297 and p. 300). The Sacred Jewels and the Imperial Sword had sunk into the sea at the time of the battle of Dan no Ura (1185) and only the box containing the jewels was rescued by a soldier (*Gukanshō*, pp. 264-65; Brown 1979, pp. 142-43). Chikafusa rebuts Jien's argument, explaining that the damaged mirror was only a copy of the original Sacred Mirror, known as Yata no kagami 八咫ノ鏡, safely kept at the Imperial Shrine of Ise. In the same way the lost sword was a simple substitute for the original Imperial Sword, the Ame no murakumo sword 天ノ聚雲ノ劍, worshipped at the Atsuta Shrine (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, pp. 153-54; Varley 1980, pp. 217-18). This, in Chikafusa's words, explains the continuity of the imperial system to which the regalia are vital. Through them, in fact, the ruler receives Amaterasu's mandate, so that they become the source of legitimate power and the symbols of the three virtues which guarantee the emperor's success. From the mirror the emperor absorbs the virtue of honesty (正直 *shōjiki*); the jewels are the source of compassion (慈悲 *jīhi*); while the sword is the font of wisdom (智慧 *chie*). Here we can see again the Confucian interpretation of Shinto elements (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 61; Varley 1980, p. 77).

With the complete rejection of *mappō* thought Chikafusa moves from an eschatological to a more worldly interpretation of history. Since this world is granted the dimension of eternity, nothing can be found outside of this world, since even Amaterasu's will is embodied in the emperor's behavior. Whereas in Jien human success was bound to the ability of understanding mysterious Principles dictated by heavenly beings, with Chikafusa human destiny is in the hands of all men who are responsible for their virtuous or unvirtuous behavior. Jien compromised with *mappō*, Chikafusa simply rejects it. Being concerned with this human world, Chikafusa shows a great interest in all the Worldly Ways (*yorozu no michi*), even the most humble crafts. He stresses the social importance of farmers providing people with food, weavers who keep people warm, artisans and dealers, thus giving a detailed

description of a class until then vaguely known under the general term of commoners (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, p. 116; Varley 1980, p. 160). Common people are finally given wider attention as a fifth class. For centuries they had been regarded as an appendix of the four classes of the emperor, the 撰関家 *sekkanke* family from which Regents and Chancellors were chosen, the other noble families, and the families of minor officials and warriors. Such a broadened awareness of the common people was shared by Chikafusa's contemporaries, as we can see from Urabe Kenkō's 卜部兼好 (ca.1280 - ca.1352) statement that the four essentials of life are food, clothing, shelter, and medicine (*Tzurezuregusa*, Kidō 1977, p. 140; Keene 1981, p. 105). With Kenkō, Chikafusa shares the idea that all the myriad ways have the common potentiality to bring people to enlightenment. All human activities have a deep value inasmuch as they can provide people with peace and tranquility in this world, although Kenkō stressed more the mental aspect while Chikafusa meant the tranquility of the social order (*Jinnō shōtōki*, Iwasa 1965, 117; Varley 1979, p. 163; on Kenkō, see Marra 1984). Both Kenkō and Chikafusa agreed on the fact that human destiny is in human hands and that human problems must be solved in this world, without waiting for external intervention. On this point the *Jinnō Shōtōki* has gone very far from the *Gukanshō*'s position, where history in its many aspects is moved by an army of invisible beings. In Chikafusa Amaterasu is still present but she functions as the director of a play whose actors, all taken as protagonists, are only human beings.

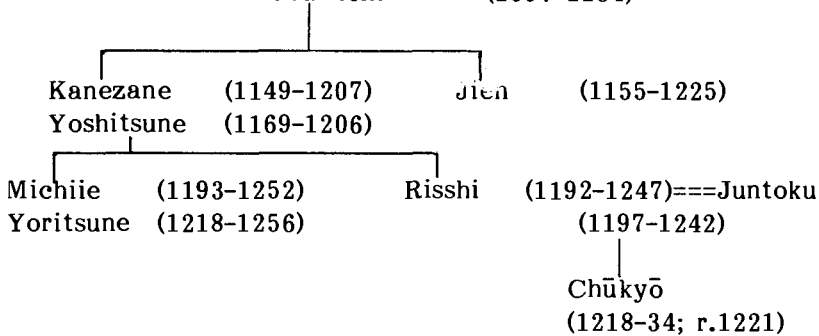
CONCLUSION

More than a century had passed from the compilation of the *Gukanshō* to the writing of the *Jinnō shōtōki*, a century which had witnessed both destruction and reconstruction, justifying both Jien's resort to the world of the invisible and Chikafusa's attempt to build a moral framework in which to cast the new emerging society. In spite of their different approaches, each with its own

inevitable biases, both Jien and Chikafusa shared the same conviction that history was much more in the hands of human beings than subject to any overarching necessity, as the supporters of *mappō* thought had vigorously maintained.

NOTES

1. Kujō Morosuke (908-960)
 - Kaneie (929-990)
 - Michinaga (966-1027)
 - Yorimichi (992-1074)
 - Morozane (1042-1101)
 - Moromichi (1062-1099)
 - Tadazane (1078-1162)
 - Tadamichi (1097-1164)



2. Jien received such appointments in 1192, 1201, 1202, 1213.
3. The leader of this current is Muraoka Tsunetsugu. Muraoka 1957, pp. 111-209.
4. For a chart clearly showing the relationship between Jien's seven periods and the doctrine of the Three Ages see Ishida lehirō 1979, pp. 430-431.
5. *Mizu kagami*, in Kokumin Bunko Kankōkai 1910, pp.4-6; Nishio 1965, pp.75-79. The theory of the expectancy of human life appears in *Gukanshō*, p. 148; Brown 1979, p. 36.
6. For the influence of the rotation of the four kalpas on *Gukanshō*'s concept of time see Ōmori 1972, pp. 81-101; Ozawa 1974, pp. 130-144; Harada 1965, pp. 101-129.
7. There is a tendency among Japanese scholars to ignore the consequences of this different use of the theory of the Four

Kalpas, thus presenting Jien as the typical Kamakura intellectual who, unable to oppose the inevitability of historical decline, renounces any kind of action and puts himself into the hands of god. But, although this may be the case of Jien's contemporary Kamo no Chōmei, it does not seem always applicable to Jien. For this tendency see Muraoka 1957, pp. 111-209; Ishida Ichirō 1976, pp. 3-30; Agatsuma 1981, pp. 304-308 and 330-340. The tendency to stress Jien's "hopeless despair" is also indiscriminately followed by Western scholars like Varley 1980, pp. 26-27. For the rejection of this tendency see the articles quoted in note 7.

8. Kitabatake Chikafusa, a descendant of Emperor Murakami (r. 946-967), became Major Counselor (*dainagon*) in 1325 and was entrusted with the education of Go-Daigo's second son, Prince Yoyoshi, at whose death Chikafusa took the tonsure (1330). The *Jinnō shōtōki* was written when Chikafusa was at Oda castle, at the foot of Mt. Tsukuba, trying to recruit military allies for the Southern court. It seems that the book was addressed to the Eastern warriors, particularly to Yūki Chikatomo, with the intent of showing them that Go-Daigo's son, Emperor Go-Murakami (r.1339-1368) of the Southern court, was the legitimate descendant of the imperial line. Nagahara 1983, pp. 37-50.
9. Jien's interpretation of the theory of the One Hundred Reigns is a controversial matter, since those who see the *Gukanshō* as a work of *mappō* thinking maintain that Jien accepted this theory, thus believing that only 16 of the reigns allotted to Japan were left. But this seems to contradict the parable of the supply of paper previously analyzed.

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