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The cherries bloomed late in 1984, because winter had been unusually long and severe in Japan. When I visited Kegonji, the thirty-third and last temple of the pilgrimage route with which this study is concerned, at the end of April that year, the dozens of cherry trees which line the long street leading to the temple were just past full bloom, and I walked through clouds of falling petals. It seemed a fitting end to a pilgrimage which had begun amidst snow drifts and on icy mountain trails four months earlier.

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VITA

May 23, 1945 ............................... Born - Fresno, California

1967 ........................................... B.A., Philosophy, University of Redlands, Redlands, California

1970 ........................................... M.A., Philosophy, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

1974 ........................................... M.A., East Asian Studies, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

1978-79, 1982 ......................... Teaching Associate, Department of History of Art, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

PUBLICATIONS


FIELDS OF STUDY

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Studies in the Arts of Japan. Professor John C. Huntington


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JAPANESE BUDDHIST ART IN CONTEXT:

THE SAIKOKU KANNON PILGRIMAGE ROUTE
VOLUME II

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Patricia Frame Rugola, B.A., M.A., M.A.

****

The Ohio State University
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Dissertation Committee:
John C. Huntington
Howard Crane
Susan L. Huntington
James R. Morita

Approved By

Adviser
Department of History of Art
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E. Summaries of Main Image Legends and Beliefs Discussed in Chapter 4 .............. 323
In 951, as a plague swept through the capital of Heian kyō, a solitary monk named Kūya (空也, 903-972) strode along the streets of the city. Kūya pulled a cart in which he stored the ingredients of a healing tea, and on which he had enshrined an image of Kannon (観音, in Sanskrit Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion). He ministered tirelessly to the ill and dying, dancing and chanting to calm their troubled spirits, praying to Kannon on their behalf, and brewing his healing tea. After the plague had run its course, he received Imperial permission to establish a temple at which to hold memorial services for those who had died during the epidemic. In this temple, later renamed Rokuharamitsuji, Kūya enshrined his image of Kannon, which by this time had come to be seen as endowed with great healing powers.¹

Today Rokuharamitsuji is a small temple on a quiet residential street in eastern Kyōto. In the temple's museum there is a portrait of the temple's founder Kūya, carved some 300 years after Kūya's death (pl. I). The portrait
shows a thin, stooped monk, leaning on a staff, on his face an expression of rapt intensity. A stylistic analysis of the statue would note its heightened naturalism, its three-dimensionality and its interplay of solid and void, all characteristic features of the sculpture of the Kamakura period. But a discussion of the portrait limited to its style alone would fail to explain the abiding popularity of this statue. Even today, visitors to Rokuharamitsuji leave offerings before the portrait of Kūya. Because of his charismatic preaching, his joyous chants and dances in praise of the Buddha Amida (阿弥陀佛, Amitābha), and his many charitable activities, Kūya was much loved by the common people of his day, and the story of his life was soon incorporated into the vast body of legends and beliefs which lies at the foundation of popular Japanese Buddhism.

A full understanding of the portrait of Kūya -- or rather, the fullest understanding possible for viewers remote in time from the creation of the work -- cannot be achieved through an analysis of its formal qualities alone. Even a knowledge of the historical development of style in Japanese Buddhist sculpture, and a concomitant ability to place the object within its historical context stylistically, is insufficient. The portrait of Kuya is more than a point on a line of stylistic development. It is a monument to a specific man, an eccentric and compassionate
man who converted the impious, cured the sick, and prayed for the souls of the dead. The sculptor who carved this portrait never knew Kūya, except through the stories and legends told of him. But through his skill, and his understanding of the essence of this very peculiar priest as revealed in the story of his life, the sculptor has created a testament to the intensity of Kūya's devotion to his faith and to the common people whom he served.

In an essay titled "The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline," Erwin Panofsky has described two activities which he sees as central to the art historian's task. One he calls "re-creative synthesis;" this is the intuitive act of experiencing a work of art aesthetically, and experiencing it, moreover, as the product of a certain time and place. The other, archaeological investigation, is the rational examination of all the relevant historical data which bear on the production of the work; here, as is his wont, Panofsky casts his net very wide indeed. These two activities are not separate and distinct, but are, rather, organically related, so that as archaeological investigation proceeds, recreative synthesis is sharpened and refined. Both are necessary, says Panofsky: "...archaeological research is blind and empty without aesthetic re-creation, and aesthetic re-creation is irrational and often misguided without archaeological research."
There is re-creative synthesis in abundance in studies of Japanese art history. Students of Japanese art have analyzed form, have traced the origins of motifs, have outlined the development of style. Lip service is paid to the importance of historical context; short biographies of Kūya accompany discussions of his portrait, and brief accounts of the popularity of the Kannon cult are included in descriptions of Kannon images. But there is something perfunctory about these inclusions. Rarely are attempts made to integrate the study of Japanese art with new developments in other fields. This is particularly true in the case of Buddhist art. Historians of art investigate style and iconography; historians of religion discuss changing beliefs and practices. But changes in religious belief effect the development of religious art. New forms arise; old forms are modified or reinterpreted. As beliefs spread, new groups of patrons emerge and place their stamp on objects they commission.

There is another way in which developments in religious beliefs influence art. Just as some works of art take on a physical patina with age -- paint flakes away, wood becomes weathered, bronze takes on a luster -- so too do certain especially revered objects take on what might be called an emotional patina as beliefs cluster around them. A certain image, for example, may become the focus of a popular cult
as word of its miracle working power spreads. For the pious viewer, the image calls to mind a whole body of legends which tell of its miraculous efficacy. To view an image like this without at least some knowledge of the miracles it is believed to have worked is to strip it of much of its emotive force. Beliefs which accrue to an object after it is made are as legitimate an object of study as the conditions which led to its creation.

The benefits deriving from the study of Japanese Buddhist art within its human context are two-fold. First, as knowledge increases regarding the conditions under which a work was created and used — who commissioned it, who made it, who prayed to it, what people believed about it — our understanding and appreciation of the work increase commensurately. This is the study of history for the sake of a work of art. Second, because works of art are historical documents as well as aesthetic objects, their presence and meaning enliven our understanding of their time. This is the study of art for the sake of history.

The two art historical tasks which Panofsky calls re-creative synthesis and archaeological investigation interpenetrate; each informs the other.

The study of Japanese Buddhist art, then, is incomplete without some attempt to examine objects within their human context. Questions of patronage, of worship, and of
evolving religious beliefs are relevant here, as are legends relating to specific religious images, and the biographies of holy men portrayed in portrait statues and picture scrolls. The Thirty-three Sacred Places of Kannon in western Japan, a pilgrimage route which includes Kūya's temple Rokuharamitsuji, is an ideal corpus for such an attempt. This route, called in Japanese Saikoku sanjūsanšo (西国三十三番, the thirty-three places of the west country), is centered roughly in the city of Kyōto and winds through the ancient heartland of Japan. Art historically, the Saikoku pilgrimage route is a gold mine. The temples of the route, with founding dates from the late 6th through the 11th centuries, contain numerous splendid objects, many of which have not been adequately published or discussed. The temples are tied together by a pilgrimage tradition which is nearly one thousand years old. Associated with the individual temples and with the route as a whole is a rich store of legend, literature and pilgrimage practice, which serves to illuminate many aspects of Japanese Buddhist art.

THE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE SAIKOKU ROUTE

In an article on the Saikoku pilgrimage route, James H. Foard recounts what he calls the sacred histories and the critical histories of the route. The sacred histories tell of legendary holy men. The firsts legend relates the
story of Tokudō (德道), an 8th century priest of Hasedera. Tokudō fell gravely ill and his spirit descended into Hell. There Emma (阎魔, Yama), the Lord of Hell, told Tokudō of the thirty-three stations which had been established by Kannon, and explained to the priest that those who made the pilgrimage would gain the merit needed to escape the many hells of the Buddhist cosmology. When he returned to the material world, Tokudō brought with him the seal which was to become the prototype for the seals issued at the Saikoku temples and still collected by pilgrims today. Because it was said to be the first temple in Japan dedicated to Kannon, Nakayamadera (now temple number 24) became the first temple on the Kannon pilgrimage, and the seal which Tokudō brought back from Hell was enshrined there.7

The second legend in the sacred history of the route revolves around Emperor Kazan (r. 984-986). Sacred and critical histories agree in ascribing great piety to this Emperor, who abdicated and entered the Buddhist priesthood upon the death of his beloved consort, after reigning for only two years. Kazan assumed the life of a wayfaring ascetic, studying under famous priests, visiting holy mountains, and travelling in search of a suitable spot to perform his own devotions.8 He visited Mount Kumano, a mountain at the southern tip on the Kii peninsula in present
Wakayama prefecture which had long been considered an especially sacred spot. On one of his many journeys there he encountered Kumano Gongen, the tutelary deity of Mount Kumano, who told the Emperor of the Kannon pilgrimage route which had been taught by Tokudō. Kumano Gongen instructed Emperor Kazan to seek out the priest Shōkū of Enkyōji (or, according to some sources, Butsugan of Hasedera), who would help the Emperor reestablish the long forgotten route. Kazan performed the Saikoku pilgrimage himself, beginning at Mount Kumano and ending at Kegonji in present Gifu prefecture, the order which is still followed today. For each temple he composed an eika (的歌), a thirty-one syllable pilgrims' chant. 20th century pilgrims still chant Kazan's eika as they visit the Saikoku temples.

The critical histories agree in attributing the origins of the Saikoku pilgrimage route to holy men like Tokudō and Shōkū, but are much less specific. The founding legends of the Saikoku temples, discussed in Chapter 3, show that many of the temples were founded by ascetic holy men. They were early practitioners of Shugendō (修験道), a peculiarly Japanese amalgam of esoteric Buddhism and Shintō, the Japanese native religion, with additional elements of Daoism and Confucianism. Beginning as early as the Nara period, shugenja (修験者), practitioners of Shugendō) withdrew from the world and retreated into the mountains.
Like practitioners of the more orthodox branches of Buddhism, shugenja performed meditations and rituals aimed at extinguishing the self and achieving reunion with the universal. Combined with ascetic practice, these exercises also served to nurture within the shugenja a wide variety of physical and spiritual powers. The many miracles attributed to the founders of the Saikoku temples and to other shugenja demonstrate that these holy men were widely believed to possess remarkable abilities, including the power to heal, to bring rain, to move inanimate objects, and to call forth and subdue all manner of spirits.

In addition to retreat, shugenja also practiced wayfaring, travelling through deep mountains, practicing austerities along the way, in order to strengthen their own powers and to induce encounter with the sacred. In the Nara and early Heian periods, individual holy men undertook their journeys more or less at random, searching for places in which to practice their austerities. But as the reputations of certain holy sites grew, more and more ascetics visited them. Around the end of the Heian period, groups of these sites had come to be linked together. Two of these, the Yoshino-Kumano pilgrimage, through Mount Ōmine between Mount Yoshino and Mount Kumano, and the Katsuragi pilgrimage, in the same region but to the west, are related historically to the Saikoku route. They have remained important centers
of Shugendō practice and are traversed by large numbers of shugenja even today.11

Another was the Saikoku pilgrimage route, a group of thirty-three temples dedicated to Kannon. The earliest credible account of this route is of the priest Kakuchū (覚忠) of Miidera, who is said to have made the pilgrimage in 1161.12 The names of the temples Kakuchū visited are recorded in his biography, included in the Jimon denki horoku (寺門伝記補録). Although the list of temples corresponds very closely with the temples which are now included, the order in which they were visited is quite different.13

For several hundred years after its inception, the Saikoku pilgrimage route remained the almost exclusive province of ascetic holy men. But late in the 15th century ordinary common people began to make the pilgrimage as well. Their number remained small during the devastation of the Ōnin War and the century of civil strife which followed. But when peace was restored at the end of the 16th century, the trickle of pilgrims turned into a flood. As the Saikoku pilgrimage route was transformed from a type of ascetic wayfaring to a popular pilgrimage, the order in which the temples were visited became standardized. Customs were established -- staffs, pilgrims' garb, scrolls to receive the seals which were inscribed at each temple --
which have continued to the present day. The name, for Saikoku, means West Country, was almost certainly applied to this route by pilgrims travelling from Edo and other parts of eastern Japan, and the order was chosen for the convenience of travellers from the east.

The route begins at Seigantoji, located near Nachi Falls at the southernmost tip of the Kii peninsula (see map, fig. 1). From there it heads north, passing near Wakayama City, then east into Nara prefecture and north into Nara City. It continues north from Nara, and then turns east again to a cluster of temples near the mouth of Lake Biwa. From there it turns west into Kyōto, to six temples located within the boundaries of the modern city. From Kyōto the route heads west, through Ōsaka and as far west as Himeji, then north to the Japan Sea coast. The next temple is on an island at the northern end of Lake Biwa, and from there the route heads south, and then east across the border into Gifu prefecture, where it ends. From the first temple to the last, the route covers approximately 1200 kilometers or 750 miles; the area it covers extends some 200 kilometers or 125 miles from north to south and from east to west.

One might be forgiven for supposing that this route was chosen especially for its scenic beauties and famous historical sites, for it includes some of the most spectacular scenery and many of the most important
historical places in Japan. On this journey, pilgrims can see Nachi Falls from Seigantoji, and Amanohashidate from Nariaiji. They travel through the Yamato heartland and the old capitals of Nara and Kyōto. They can pray to the Great Buddha at Tōdaiji, cross the Uji Bridge, and visit Himeji Castle and the battlefield at Sekigahara. Some of the most illustrious temples in Japanese Buddhism are included in this route: Hasedera, Kōfukuji, Ishiyamadera, Miidera, Kiyomizudera. And some of the most exquisite objects ever made in Japan are included in these temples' collections.

It is little wonder, then, that the Saikoku pilgrimage route should have become so popular. For the deeply pious, there was the lure of mountains and temples sanctified by the activities of holy men, and the images of Kannon whose great efficacy had been proven by the miracles they had worked. For the less devout, there were innumerable famous places to see. In all faiths, tourism and pilgrimage have always been closely intertwined. The desire to see faraway places is strong in people of all cultures in which there is a knowledge of a world beyond the village; a trip to holy places offers a socially acceptable way to fulfill this desire. The unabashed tourism present in the Saikoku route is revealed in the souvenir shops which have surrounded the gates of many of the temples for centuries. Many of the priests now serving at the Saikoku
temples cheerfully admit that the element of tourism in the Saikoku pilgrimage is strong. They see it as a blessing that their route is so richly endowed with scenic beauties and historical spots: it brings more pilgrims. And, they say, such is the power of Kannon that those who begin as tourists often end as believers.

PILGRIMAGE IN JAPAN

Journeying to sacred places forms an important part of the practice of many religions. In Japan there is a long tradition of pilgrimage, encompassing many different routes and many different types of pilgrimage; and comparison of the Saikoku route with representative examples of other types is illuminating. Joseph Kitagawa has examined pilgrimage in Japan and has classified Japanese pilgrimages into three broad categories. One is sites or routes linked to particular divinities, like the Saikoku route. A second is routes associated with charismatic figures from the past. Pilgrimages to sacred mountains or groups of mountains form Kitagawa's third category.

Alone among the three types of Japanese pilgrimage, mountain pilgrimage has remained largely the province of shugenja. It was these wandering ascetics who were the first Buddhist pilgrims in Japan; and shugenja have continued to practice their own singular form of mountain asceticism for over a thousand years. The only lapse
occurred in modern times, with the Meiji government's forced separation of Buddhism and Shintō. As an amalgam of Buddhism and Shintō, and, further, as a creed which was regarded as a body of superstition inappropriate to an enlightened new age, Shugendō was outlawed, and the traditional practices of Shugendō were proscribed. With the freedom of religion granted by the new constitution of 1947, however, Shugendō has revived. Holy mountains are being reopened, and mountain pilgrimage is being practiced once again.

One example of a mountain pilgrimage is the Yoshino-Kumano route, which leads through the Ōmine mountains from Mount Yoshino in Nara prefecture to Mount Kumano. Like most mountain pilgrimages performed by shugenja, the pilgrimage from Yoshino to Kumano is highly institutionalized. Shugenja traverse the route in groups, with leaders who explain the significance of each holy site along the way and conduct the rites appropriate to each stage. Practices intending to evoke specific types of experiences within the practitioner have become ritualized. At one point along the route, for example, pilgrims are suspended by ropes, face down over the edge of a steep cliff. Thus suspended, with a fellow pilgrim grasping his feet, the pilgrim confesses his sins while gazing down into the precipice. Before he is pulled up again, the ropes
which secure the pilgrim are loosened for a split second, so that he begins to fall. This highly contrived encounter with death is intended to bring the pilgrim face to face with his own mortality.  

Superimposed on the Yoshino-Kumano route is a complex and many-layered sacred geography. As he traverses the route, the practitioner is believed to pass through the ten Buddhist worlds, and emerges from the pilgrimage having attained Buddhahood. There is, moreover, an identification of the route with Dainichi (大日, Vairocana Buddha). The Yoshino side represents the Kongōkai mandara (金剛界曼荼羅, the Vajradhātu mandala) and the Kumano side, the Taizōkai mandara (胎蔵界曼荼羅, the Garbhadhātu mandala). Further, the theme of death and rebirth is emphasized throughout the pilgrimage. At the beginning, pilgrims immerse themselves in the Yoshino River in a ceremony intended to purify and cleanse, but also symbolizing death. Other death symbolism is seen in the four gates through which pilgrims pass from Mount Yoshino to Mount Ōmine, representing the four gates through which one passes at the time of a funeral. At the peak of Mount Ōmine, at a spot called the Buddha's Womb, pilgrims pass through a long, narrow tunnel called tainai kūguri (胎内潜) through the inner womb.
Another important aspect of Japanese mountain pilgrimage is the abundance of ascetic exercises integrated into the practice of the route. Shugendo making the Yoshino-Kumano pilgrimage engage in perilous climbs, seclusion in caves and other darkened enclosures, and immersion in cold water.24

The best known pilgrimage in Japan dedicated to a charismatic individual is the Eighty-eight Stations of Shikoku (四国八十八所). This route celebrates the life and exploits of Kūkai (空海, 774-835, also known by his posthumous name Kōbō Daishi,弘法大師, and referred to familiarly by many Japanese as o-Daishi-san or o-Daishi-sama). Kūkai, the founder of the esoteric Shingon sect, was born in Shikoku and is said by tradition to have visited the island of his birth many times in the course of his illustrious life. In the Shikoku pilgrimage the focus is on spiritual growth and the granting of prayers through devotion to Kūkai. Kūkai is believed to travel with pilgrims who make the Shikoku pilgrimage, giving them strength when they weaken, steadying them when they stumble, helping to deepen their faith as they progress from one station to the next.25 The staff carried by pilgrims represents Kūkai himself and is treated with the greatest reverence: cleaning the base of the staff -- washing the dust from Kūkai's feet -- is the pilgrim's first act upon
stopping for the night, and the staff is put in the place of honor in the room where the pilgrim sleeps. Written on the staff, and also on the pilgrim's hat and album, are the words **dōgyō ninin** (同行二人, two fellow pilgrims), indicating that Kūkai accompanies the pilgrim throughout his journey.26

Like mountain pilgrimages, the Shikoku route encompasses a symbolic space: each of the four provinces of the island is seen as a stage of spiritual awareness. In travelling through Awa province, the pilgrim passes through the stage called in Japanese **hosshin** (誓心, an abbreviation of **hotsu bodaishin**, 誓菩提心, the resolve to attain enlightenment). Tosa province represents **shugyō** (修行, ascetic practice); Iyo province, **bodai** (菩提, enlightenment) and Sanuki province, **nehan** (涅槃, nirvāṇa).27 These are fully Japanized versions of the first four of the five wisdoms (gochi, pañcajñāna) manifested by the five Buddhas in the eight petalled lotus at the center of the **Taizōkai mandara**. Thus the Shikoku pilgrimage includes an explicit sacred geography, and the Shikoku pilgrim, like the **shugenja** who travel the Yoshino-Kumano route, is said to emerge from his voyage a fully enlightened Buddha.

A comparison of the **Saikoku** pilgrimage route with those of Shikoku and Yoshino-Kumano yields illuminating
similarities and differences. Unlike these others, the Saikoku has no sacred geography superimposed on its mundane space; the Saikoku pilgrim does not travel from one level of enlightenment to another as he or she traverses the route. While Saikoku pilgrims and priests associated with the Saikoku temples report that the accumulation of experiences deriving from visits to so many temples results in a state of heightened spiritual awareness, there is no explicit attempt to institutionalize this spiritual growth by assigning hierarchical stages to the stations of the route. Like the Yoshino-Kumano route and other mountain pilgrimages, the Saikoku route is made up of inherently holy places whose sanctity has been revealed through omens and miracles.\textsuperscript{28} The Shikoku pilgrimage is composed of spots made sacred through their association with one revered saint.\textsuperscript{29} In this way, the Saikoku route still bears the unmistakable stamp of the ascetic holy men who established it. Just as Shikoku pilgrims believe that Kūkai accompanies them, Saikoku pilgrims believe that Kannon travels with them along the route. To the number of persons making the Saikoku pilgrimage as a group is always added one, the extra member of the group being Kannon.\textsuperscript{30}

Both the Saikoku and the Shikoku routes are more informal, less organized than most mountain pilgrimages. There are no elaborate rites associated with the various
stages of the routes, no rigidly adhered to itineraries. While Saikoku and Shikoku pilgrims often travel in groups, this is done for companionship and convenience; it is possible to make these two pilgrimages alone. Aside from the obvious physical demands of walking both routes, rendered unnecessary in modern times by Japan's superb public transportation system and by the scores of travel companies offering packaged tours of the routes in air conditioned busses, there are no ascetic practices associated with the Saikoku and Shikoku pilgrimages as they are popularly practiced. In noting this fact, Kitagawa observes that practitioners of mountain pilgrimage are seeking enlightenment through their own efforts (jiriki, 自力, literally, self-power), while those engaged in pilgrimages dedicated to deities or charismatic persons hope for enlightenment through the power of another (tariki, 他力). Ascesis and ritual are two of the tools the mountain ascetic uses in his quest for enlightenment. Saikoku and Shikoku pilgrims, dependent on the saving grace of Kannon or Kūkai, do not need these tools.

The Saikoku pilgrimage route shares with mountain pilgrimages an origin in the practices of mountain ascetics and a concomitant belief in the inherent sanctity of certain spots. However, the Saikoku pilgrimage was incorporated into popular Buddhist practice centuries ago and has none of
the rituals and ascetic practices associated with mountain pilgrimage. Like the Shikoku route and other pilgrimages dedicated to divinities and to charismatic holy men, the Saikoku pilgrimage provides a way in which ordinary lay men and women can act out their devotion, and gives them access to the saving grace of a powerful other.

THE SAIKOKU MAIN IMAGES

Thirty of the Thirty-three Saikoku temples are associated with either the Tendai (天台), or the Shingon (真言) sect. These are the two Japanese sects of esoteric Buddhism, called Japanese mikkō (密教, the secret teaching), in Sanskrit Vajrayāna or Tantrayāna. Esoteric Buddhism first reached Japan during the Nara period; some elements were brought by the Chinese priest Ganjin (鍾 賢, died 763), who arrived in Japan in 754. During the Heian period esotericism became the most important and influential form of Buddhism in Japan. The Tendai sect was founded in Japan in 805 by Saichō (最澄, 767-822, also known by his posthumous name Dengyō Daishi, 傳教大師. In 816 Kūkai established a monastery on Kōyasan (高野山, Mount Kōya); this date is usually accepted as marking the founding of the Shingon sect in Japan.

One of the most important Buddhist deities in Japan, at both the popular level and the technical level practiced by initiated monks of the esoteric sects, is the bodhisattva
called in Japanese Kanzeon (観世音) or, more commonly today, Kannon (観音), in Sanskrit Avalokitesvara. There has been considerable scholarly dispute over the true meaning of the Sanskrit name Avalokitesvara; it is usually interpreted as suggesting that this bodhisattva hears and responds to the cries of suffering beings. For example, in his translation of the Lotus Sutra (in Japanese Myôhôrenge-kyô,妙法蓮華経, or, more commonly, Hoke-kyô,法華経, in Sanskrit Saddharma puññarîka sūtra) Leon Hurvitz gives "He Who Observes the Sounds of the World." This is the interpretation implied by the Sino-Japanese translation of the name; kan (観) means view or contemplate; ze (世) means world; on (音) means sound.

As the manifestation of compassion, Kannon is an important figure in esoteric Buddhism; rites centering on him have as their aim the union of the practitioner with Kannon and the materialization within the practitioner of the compassion of Kannon. Because of his pity for the sufferings of all sentient beings and his limitless power to relieve suffering, Kannon became one of the most revered deities in popular Japanese Buddhism as well. The most important text for the worship of Kannon at both the popular and the technical level is commonly called in Japanese the Kannon-kyô (観音経, the Kannon sūtra) or the Fumon
bon (善門門口). This is not, in fact, a separate sūtra; it is the twenty-fifth chapter of the Lotus sūtra as translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva (Chapter 24 in Sanskrit versions). In East Asian Buddhism, it is traditionally asserted that in this text, Kannon takes thirty-three forms in order to preach the Law of the Buddha and rescue sentient beings from all manner of perils, thus the ubiquity of the number thirty-three in association with this bodhisattva.

All except three of the Saikoku temples are dedicated to Kannon, that is, the central object of worship in the temple's Main Hall is an image of Kannon. Many of these images of Kannon are believed to possess extraordinary powers — to heal, to ward off disaster, to ensure safe childbirth — and popular cults grew up around them. As it evolved as a popular pilgrimage beginning late in the 15th century, the Saikoku route as a whole became a focus of the Kannon cult at the popular level, and a principal way in which the common people could express their devotion to Kannon.

One of the attributes of Buddhas and bodhisattvas is their ability to take on a various forms in order to aid sentient beings. Throughout the Buddhist world, it is Kannon who makes the most frequent use of this ability, transforming himself time and time again as he manifests his
compassion to all sentient beings. Of the countless forms taken by Kannon, certain groups have become standardized. One set of thirty-three -- only the number derives from the Kannon kyō -- includes such forms as the White Robed Kannon (Byakue, 白衣), the Kannon of the Grotto (Iwatoku, 岩戸) and the Kannon with the Willow Branch (Yoryū, 楊柳), all popular subjects in Japanese ink painting from the Muromachi period onwards. In Japanese Buddhist sculpture, there are seven forms which appear with some frequency, and all seven are included among the main images of the Saikoku temples.

Among these, the simplest and most straightforward form is Shō Kannon (聖観音, Ārya Avalokiteśvara) (see pl. XLIV). This is thought to be the original form of Kannon, shown with one head and two arms, usually holding either the lotus or the water jar, the two principal attributes of Kannon. It is in this form that Kannon serves as one of the two attendants to Amida (the other attendant is Daiseishi, 大勢至, or Seishi, Mahāsthāmaprāpta), and with Amida and Seishi welcomes believers into Amida's Pure Land. In this guise Shō Kannon is an important figure in the popular cults centering on Amida and Amida's Pure Land.

Shō Kannon appears at the technical level as well. Perhaps his most important role is as one of the four bodhisattvas in the eight petaled lotus at the center of
the Taizōgai mandara, where he is shown seated in the northwest (the viewer's lower left), accompanying Amida. Here he personifies the compassion which is the special virtue peculiar to this gate of the mandara.40

Forms of Kannon other than Shō are usually referred to as henge (変化, transformation). Of these, the form most commonly represented at the Saikoku temples and throughout Japan is Senju Kannon (千手, Sahasrabhujāvalokiteśvara, Thousand-armed Kannon) (see pls. IV and V). Although later representations of Senju Kannon in Japan have only forty-two or forty-four arms (pl. V), early images show the bodhisattva with a full thousand arms, with forty-two arms somewhat larger than the rest (pl. IV). Forty of the larger arms hold attributes, and the other two are joined together in front in the gesture called in Japanese gasshō(合掌, añjali mudrā, the mudrā of reverence or salutation). Included among the forty attributes are lotuses, a conch shell, a rosary, a noose, a wheel, and other Buddhist symbols. Each attribute has its own prayers and its own benefits.41 Sixteen of the Saikoku main images are representations of Senju Kannon. The most beautiful of these, the main image at Fujiidera (5)42, is discussed in Chapter 2.

The next most common form on the Saikoku route, with six representations, is Jūichimen (十一面, Ekadasāmukha,
Eleven-headed) (see pl. XXXVII). A popular legend explains that Kannon, having vowed to have compassion for all sentient beings, was so overcome by the suffering he saw that his head split into thousands of pieces. In his compassion Amida repaired Kannon and gave him only eleven heads. Another interpretation is that with eleven heads Kannon can look in all directions and thus perceive the suffering which he has vowed to end.

At the technical level, the eleven heads represent the ten stages of a bodhisattva (jūji, 地地地地地, daśabhūmika), that is, the ten stages of developing wisdom, with the eleventh head representing the full enlightenment of Buddhahood. At the popular level, each head is associated with a particular mudrā (sign; in Japanese in, 印, or inō, 印相) and with a particular protective power. Jūichimen Kannon will protect the devotee who makes these mudrā from all manner of earthly perils and bring about the devotee's rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. Most representations of Jūichimen Kannon have twelve heads; the main head, of normal size in proportion to the body, and eleven smaller heads, arranged in two or three tiers atop the main head. The top head is of Amida Buddha.

Bato Kannon (馬頭, Hayagrīva) is the horse headed form of Kannon (see pl. XLVI). This is an angry form, usually shown with a furious face and a small horse's head
atop the main head. The anger of Batō is directed toward those who are difficult to convert. In Japan the Batō form is relatively rare in metropolitan areas but more common in the countryside, particularly in mountainous regions. It is thought that Batō was a popular form of Kannon among mountain ascetics. In Japan, Batō is usually shown seated, with three faces and eight arms, although there are many other forms.

The most graceful and elegant of the forms of Kannon found among the Saikoku main images is the one called Nyoirin (如意輪, Cintāmañicakra). The standard representation of Nyoirin Kannon is the type found in the Taizōkai mandara, brought from China by Kūkai: a six armed figure seated in the posture of royal ease, with one knee raised (see pl. XX). Two of the six hands hold the attributes which give this form its name, the gem of satisfaction (nvoishu,如意珠, cintāmani) and the wheel of the law (hōrin,法輪, dharma cakra). Through these attributes, this Kannon possesses the power to grant the wishes of all who pray to him. To lay devotees he grants wealth, long life and safety; to ordained monks he grants the unsurpassed wisdom of the Buddha. It is therefore not surprising that this form of Kannon should have become very popular in Japan. There are six images of Nyoirin Kannon among the Saikoku main images. The main
image at Okadera (7), whose identification as Nyoirin is problematical, is discussed in Chapter 2.

A sixth form of Kannon found among the Saikoku main images is Fukūkenjaku (不空羂索, also pronounced Fukūkensaku, Amoghapāśa) (see pl. IX). The Sanskrit name means immutable noose, but the Sino-Japanese name translates literally to not-empty snare or fishline. The principle attribute of this form of Kannon is the noose, which he uses to catch suffering humanity. As a fisherman casts his line into the water, so Fukūkenjaku casts his net, composed of the four means of a bodhisattva,\(^\text{48}\) into the suffering world of sentient beings. Although a fishline is often drawn up empty, Fukūkenjaku's net is never empty, thus his name.\(^\text{49}\) Fukūkenjaku is usually depicted with one head and eight arms.

Juntei (准 裔, Cundi) is a female form of Kannon (see Pl. XIV). Juntei is said to make no distinctions among those who pray to her; she hears the prayers of monks and lay persons, the virtuous and the evil alike. She is believed to grant long life and children out of her boundless compassion.\(^\text{50}\) At the technical level, Juntei is the focus of several meditations which are used especially in Zen. A monk who is meditating on the teaching of non-duality (ふんいほもん, 不二法門) contemplates Juntei in her two armed form; one meditating the four
infinite virtues (shimuryō shin, 四無量心) contemplates her in her four armed form; one meditating on the eight fold noble path (hasshōdo, 八正道) contemplates her in her eight armed form, and so on. Juntei is usually represented with one head and eight arms.

These seven forms of Kannon are the ones depicted most frequently in Japanese Buddhist sculpture, and all are important in Japanese esoteric Buddhism. Tendai and Shingon each have a standard set of six Kannon, and the two sets differ only slightly. Five forms of Kannon are common to both: Shō, Senju, Jūichimen, Batō and Nyoirin. The Tendai version includes Fukūkenjaku, while Shingon has Juntei. Each sect has a mandara of six Kannon, emanated by Rokuji Kannon (六字, Sadakṣarī, Six Syllables) at the center. Since all seven of the forms of Kannon which make up these two mandara are included among the main images of the Saikoku pilgrimage route, it is possible that the route was intended to form a mandara, or rather two mandara, of Kannon. As we have seen, other types of pilgrimage in Japan are linked to mandara: both the mountain pilgrimage of Yoshino-Kumano and the Shikoku pilgrimage dedicated to Kūkai are interpreted as representing at least part of the Taizōkai mandara. It seems likely, then, that the Saikoku route was at one time considered to be a representation of the two esoteric Kannon mandara. If this meaning were
ever present in the Saikoku route, however, it has been forgotten or kept secret. 52

There are a few very interesting problems relating to the main images of the Saikoku temples which are of interest to the student of Japanese Buddhist art. These problems deal not with the beliefs and practices associated with specific images, but with more general technical and practical questions.

Of these, one of the most interesting — and certainly the most vexing for the art historian who is interested in the main images as objects of art historical importance — is the fact that twenty-eight of these thirty-three main images are secret images (in Japanese hibutsu, 秘仏). 53 Secret images are kept in zushi (廻子, tabernacle) and shown only at certain times. In front of the zushi, publicly displayed, stands a surrogate image called a maedachi (前立, literally, standing in front). The maedachi is always in the same form as the main image (i.e., a Senju maedachi for a Senju main image), and is sometimes a copy of the main image. Showings of secret images are scheduled with varying degrees of frequency at the Saikoku temples. At nine temples, showings, called kaihi (開扉, literally door opening), are held fairly often, once a month or once or twice a year. Ten others are shown rarely; not surprisingly, once every thirty-three
years is the most common schedule. The other nine have no regularly scheduled showings.54

At some temples secrecy is adhered to absolutely; at others it is much more lax. The main image at Kiyomizudera (16) is shown once every thirty-three years. Even priests at the temple who have come into service there since the last scheduled showing have not seen the image, and to my knowledge no photographs of the image have even been published. The lovely Senju at Fujiidera (5) is shown once a month (pl. IV); this work is widely published in Japan and photographs are sold at the temple. The availability of photographs provides a fairly accurate measure of the degree to which secrecy is enforced. The late Sawa Ryūken, a well known scholar of Japanese Buddhist art and the author of the best of the small guidebooks to the Saikoku pilgrimage route, enjoyed cordial relations with the priests of the Saikoku temples. His guidebook was sponsored by the Pilgrimage Route Association,55 and he was allowed to publish photographs of all but seven of the Saikoku main images. Maruyama Iwane is an artist who in 1984 was working on a book of paintings of the Saikoku main images; his project also had the support of the Pilgrimage Route Association. In his preparations for the book, Mr. Maruyama was allowed to see, photograph and sketch all but ten of the main images, the same seven which were not shown to
The reasons for the secrecy of certain Buddhist images are buried in the remote past and are poorly understood today. I was told by a priest at one Saikoku temple that in the past all images were secret and only recently have some begun to be displayed, and by another priest at another temple that secrecy is a recent development, instituted to protect valuable art objects. At least one Saikoku main image was kept secret from the beginning. The Chinese priest Ikō who founded Kimiidera (2) brought with him a Senju Kannon and, once established at Kimiidera, carved a Jūichimen Kannon. He worshipped the Jūichimen as his personal devotional image and kept the Senju as a secret image. The main image at Rokuharamitsuji (17) must have been enclosed in a zushi at a fairly early date, despite its very public debut as a healing image, for the showing of the image held in 1507 to raise money for the reconstruction of the temple is described as the first ever.

The secrecy of so many of the Saikoku main images is almost certainly related to other secret practices found in the esoteric sects. Just as certain rites are closed to all but the initiated, whose training has prepared them for the mysteries revealed in the rites, so certain images are kept secret from those whose level of spiritual development renders them unable to approach the image properly.
It was probably also considered imprudent to display openly an image which was believed to have extraordinary power, for the power which radiates from the image might do harm. This may be a Japanese expression of a belief which is still current in Indian religion. E. Valentine Daniel, an anthropologist studying Tamil culture in southern India, notes that worshippers do not stand directly in front of a holy image in a Hindu temple because "... the power ... of the deity taken directly from a frontal view would be too much for the devotee to bear." Daniel also observes that in south Indian cities a bare street extends for some distance in front of a temple, because no houses should be built in the path of a deity's power.

Secrecy is probably also related to the notion, discussed in Chapter 3, that sacred power contained in a vessel will grow. Sacred power is believed to swell when it is contained in an enclosed space. Shut inside its zushi, the main image will become even more potent.

Whatever the original reasons, the fact remains that many of the Saikoku main images are today kept secret. One effect of this policy, cited often by the priests of the Saikoku temples, is to raise the esteem in which the image is held by priests and laity alike. To show an image publicly is to devalue it, to make it common. To hide it away in secret makes it more valuable, more worthy of
respect. When showings are scheduled, visitors flock to the temples.

There is also the problem of multiple images. The most straightforward case is the one at Kiyomizudera (16). The temple has a single, secret main image, kept inside its zuushi, with a maedachi in front. There are also eight other images at the temple, all like the main image and the maedachi in the form peculiar to Kiyomizudera, a Senju, Juichiment Kannon with two of the hands raised over the head, palms up, holding a small seated representation of Amida (pl. XXIII).61

At Ichijōji (26), the existence of multiple images creates some difficulty: four images are placed inside the zuushi, and no one is sure which is the "real" main image.62 When new images were donated to the temple, they were placed inside the zuushi along with older ones, and eventually the identity of the original image was forgotten.

When Toyotomi Hideyori, the son of Hideyoshi, rebuilt the Main Hall at Katsūōji (23), a new Senju Kannon (pl. XXXIV) was carved to enshrine within the hall and the old main image (pl. XXXIII) was shunted aside.63 The older Senju is a far finer work than its rather fussy replacement; it is carved from a single block of wood and is datable on stylistic grounds to the early Heian period. The older main image was kept in the Main Hall alongside the newer one for
centuries, but was recently moved to the temple Treasure Hall.

While vexing to the art historian, the questions of secrecy and multiple images are an indication of the strength of tradition at the Saikoku temples. The reasons for secrecy may be poorly understood today, but temples continue to keep their main images secret because this is the way it has been done for hundreds of years. The existence of multiple images at certain temples shows the temples' continuing popularity and the generosity of patrons over the centuries.

LEGENDS AND PATRONS AS CONTEXT FOR BUDDHIST ART

Many of the Saikoku main images figure in popular legends which illustrate the vast power and limitless compassion of Kannon. These legends, along with other beliefs and practices associated with the Saikoku images, offer significant insights into the development of the Kannon cult in Japan. Equally illuminating are the legends relating to the lives and exploits of the founders of the temples. Many of the most famous men in Japanese Buddhist history figure in these legends, along with many other fascinating but less well known holy men. These founding legends shed considerable light on beliefs and practices prevailing in early Japanese Buddhism, and on the process by which Buddhism in Japan was transformed from a religion
limited to the aristocracy to a truly popular faith.

It must be noted here that the straightforward way in which legends relating to founders and main images are recounted in the following two chapters should not be taken to imply any credence in their historical accuracy. Whether or not the events related in the legends actually occurred, or whether they occurred in precisely the way they are said to have done, is only marginally relevant to our purposes here. The legends are illuminating because they were believed. The stories are told here in the same direct manner found in the records and publications of the Saikoku temples. Traditional attributions of images to Kūkai, for example, are presented unchallenged. The founding of one temple by an Indian priest who came to Japan by boat in the 4th century, and the carving of a Buddhist-flavored invocation in Chinese characters by a first-century Japanese nobleman -- to name two of the more blatant anachronisms -- occasion only the faintest demur. Flying begging bowls, purple clouds, sudden cures, and other wonders arouse no skepticism. These legends are historical documents, not history, and as such they are important data for the study of Japanese Buddhism and Japanese Buddhist art.

In addition to the legends and beliefs connected with their founders and main images, the histories of the Saikoku temples offer a corpus for examining changes in
patronage. The spread of Buddhism outward from the narrow confines of the Imperial court, and the transfers of political and economic power which took place in Japan beginning at the end of the Heian period, were accompanied by parallel shifts in patronage. It is not surprising that these shifts occurred: they are exactly what might be predicted from the upheavals of the times. What is surprising is that the Saikoku temples, nearly all of them associated with the esoteric sects, have continued to benefit from generous patronage into modern times. Even when the power and influence of the esoteric sects waned, as the ruling elite embraced Zen and the common people turned to the Pure Land sects, many esoteric temples continued to flourish, albeit at a less ostentatious level. Changes in patronage seen at the Saikoku temples are evidence of the vigor and adaptability of the esoteric tradition in Japan.

For centuries, the temples of the Saikoku pilgrimage route have served as favorite centers of popular belief and practice. The stories of the holy men who founded the temples and the miracles they worked are important and often diverting documents for the study of early Japanese Buddhism. The cults which formed around the main images of the Saikoku temples, and the legends which fueled these cults, offer valuable insights into one aspect of popular Buddhist belief and practice. An examination of the
temples' histories reveals changing patterns of patronage which demonstrate the surprising persistence of the esoteric tradition in Japan. These three areas of inquiry are fertile ground for the art historian interested in studying objects of Buddhist art within a historical context.

When a work of religious art is viewed with a sympathetic understanding of its past -- why it was made, what prayers were offered to it, what powers it was believed to possess -- it ceases to be a fossilized museum piece and comes alive. The rich and varied histories of the Saikoku temples can provide the understanding needed to enliven the works of art in the temples' collections, and other work of Buddhist art as well. The temples' founding legends, main images, and patronage histories all offer fresh angles from which to view Buddhist art in Japan. This study is an attempt to examine Japanese Buddhist art within its human context, and to show how one particular body of lively and illuminating materials can be used to animate our understanding and appreciation of that art.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1


4. There are several works in Japanese which treat the Saikoku pilgrimage route in some detail. Of these the most useful for the art historian is Sawa Ryūken, Saikoku junrei: Sanjūsansho Kannon meguri (Tokyo, 1970), a small guidebook to the route, cited hereafter as R. Sawa. Another guidebook is Hirahata Ryōyū, Saikoku sanjūsansankasho: Kannon reiho meguri (Chiba, 1980). See also Nakao Takashi, Koji junrei jiten (Tokyo, 1973), 90-100; Shimizutani Zenshō, Kannon no fudasho to densetsu, Vol. 6 of Kannon zenshū (Tokyo, 1976), 8-139.

5. There are, in fact, thirty-six temples on the Saikoku route, thirty-three numbered temples and three called bangai (抜外, outside the order, i.e., unnumbered). The bangai temples are Hokkiin, a small temple near Hasedera (number 8 on the Saikoku route); Gankeiji in eastern Kyōto; and Kazan'in in Hyōgo prefecture. Only the thirty-three numbered temples are discussed in this dissertation.


7. Foard, 234.


11. For a discussion of the history of the Yoshino-Kumano pilgrimage and an account of present day practice of Shugendo on this route, see Paul L. Swanson, "Shugendo and the Yoshino-Kumano Pilgrimage: An Example of Mountain Pilgrimage," Monumenta Nipponica, XXXVI, 1 (Spring, 1982).


13. This list and several others from the Heian, Kamakura and Muromachi periods are given in R. Sawa, 16-20.

14. No attempt is made in this dissertation to analyze the Saikoku pilgrimage route with reference to a particular theory of pilgrimage. For a summary of various theories of pilgrimage, see E. Alan Morinis, Pilgrimage in the Hindu Tradition: A Case Study of West Bengal (Delhi, 1980). A brief, insightful cross-cultural examination of pilgrimage by a leading student of the subject is Victor Turner, "The Center Out There: Pilgrim's Goal," History of Religions, 12, 3 (February, 1973). In his article on the Saikoku route, Foard uses Turner's theories in his analysis of the pilgrimage; see Foard, 238-48.


16. The article by Swanson, cited above, contains a first-hand account of the Yoshino-Kumano pilgrimage.

17. Swanson, 70.

18. The ten Buddhist worlds (jikkai, 十界) are:
   2. Hungry demons, gaki, 饕鬼, preta.
   3. Animals, chikusho, 畏生, tiryanc.
   4. Demons, ashura, 阿修羅, asura.
   5. Humanity, ningen, 人界.
   7. Disciples, shōmon, 声聞, sravakas.

One interpretation of the doctrine of the two worlds as taught by one school of Shugendo can be found in Swanson, 59.

19. Swanson, 59.
20. Swanson, 59.
21. Swanson, 63.
22. Swanson, 64.
23. Swanson, 72.
24. These practices are discussed in Swanson, 70 and 72; 64-5, 73 and 75; and 63, respectively.


26. Statler, 32.
27. Kitagawa, 162.
28. This aspect of the *Saikoku* route is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

29. This is a generalization with many exceptions. There are many sites on the Shikoku route which are believed to be inherently sacred, just as there are numerous stations on the *Saikoku* route and on mountain pilgrimage routes whose sanctity derives from their traditional association with certain holy men.

30. Shimizutani, 3.
31. Kitagawa, 164. In this same passage, Kitagawa makes some insightful observations on the differences between the *tariki* of deities and the *tariki* of charismatic men.


35. See, for example, a meditation on the Khasarpana form of Avalokiteśvara described in Guiseppe Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala* (London, 1961), 94-5.

36. Fumon literally means wide gate, but it also refers to the fact that Buddhas and bodhisattvas are believed to take various forms in order to aid sentient beings. The Kannon Kyō is translated in Hurvitz, 311-19.

37. A careful count of the forms taken by Avalokiteśvara in this text, however, gives not thirty-three but thirty-five forms.

38. The three exceptions are Makinōdera (temple number 4), Kōfukji (9), and Miidera (14). At Makinōdera the main image is a representation of Miroku (弥勒, Maitreya). Here the Saikoku main image is a Kannon which stands to the viewer's left of the central Miroku. At Kōfukiji and Miidera, the Saikoku image is enshrined as the main image of a subsidiary hall, at Kōfukiji the Nan'endo and at Miidera the Kannondō.

39. For a complete list of this set of thirty-three Kannons, accompanied by line drawings of each form, see Henmi Baiei, *Kannonzō kōwa*, Vol. 4 of Kannon zenshu (Tokyo, 1976), 265-73. This little volume contains a wealth of information on all aspects of the various forms of Kannon.

40. Each of the five Buddhas on the eight petalled lotus at the center of the Taizōkai mandara is an incarnation of one of the five wisdoms (gochi, 五 聰, pañcaśīla); each of the four bodhisattvas represents a virtue corresponding to the wisdom incarnate in the Buddha he accompanies. For the names of these Buddhas and bodhisattvas and their accompanying wisdoms and virtues, see Henmi, 39.

41. Henmi, 67. The symbolism and prayers associated with the attributes are discussed on pp. 76-86.

42. In an attempt to help the reader distinguish among the Saikoku temples, a temple's number on the route has been added in parentheses each time the temple's name is mentioned.

43. Henmi, 116. The mūdra associated with each head and the accompanying protective powers are given on pp. 114-16.

44. Henmi, 133-34.
45. R. Sawa, 245.

46. Henmi, 164.

47. Henmi, 164.

48. The four means of a bodhisattva (shishōbō, 四 撅 法, catvāri samgraha vastūni) are fuse 布施 (dana, almsgiving); aigo (愛 語, loving speech); rigvō (利 行, benefitting others with good conduct); and dōji (同事, to become one with or assume the same form as those who need help).

49. Henmi, 183-84.


51. Henmi, 219. Other meditations are listed here as well.

52. Guidebooks to the route and standard references dealing with it make no mention of the possibility that the Saikoku route may form a mandara, although they do note that all of the forms in the Shingon and Tendai sets of six Kannons are included on the route. I asked several priests associated with Saikoku temples about this conjecture; they said they thought it was possible but unlikely.

53. This is an unusually high percentage for Japanese temples, even for esoteric temples. For example, of the 160 temples in the city of Kameoka, northwest of Kyōto, only Anaoji, the Saikoku temple located there, has a secret main image. Interview with the Rev. Anaho Gyōkō, head priest of Anaoji, March 2, 1984.

54. Detailed information regarding showings of secret main images can be found in Appendix A.

55. This organization, in Japanese Saikoku fudasho kai (西 国 杜 所 会) is composed of the head priests of the Saikoku temples or their designated representatives. It meets annually.

56. Interview with Mr. Maruyama, April 14, 1984.

57. R. Sawa, 65.


60. Daniel, 136.


62. Interview with Maruyama Iwane, April 14, 1984.

63. R. Sawa, 202-3.
CHAPTER 2
THE TEMPLES OF THE SAIKOKU PILGRIMAGE ROUTE

Although they are bound together by a pilgrimage tradition which stretches back nearly a thousand years, the temples of the Saikoku pilgrimage route remain separate, distinct places of worship and practice. Each temple is different. A few are large and famous, visited each year by thousands of sightseers in addition to the growing throngs of Saikoku pilgrims. Some are small and obscure, given prominence only by their inclusion in Japan's most famous pilgrimage route. There are urban temples, village temples, rural temples and mountain temples. Some have images famous for their power to heal disease, ward off disaster, or confer other benefits; some continue a long and illustrious tradition of Buddhist learning; some are noted for their fine collections of art treasures. The summary which follows, with temples discussed in the order in which they are traditionally visited, can give only a hint of the rich variety to be found among the temples of the Saikoku pilgrimage route.

44
1. Seigantoji

Seigantoji is a small gem of a temple, located amidst some of Japan's most spectacular mountain scenery. The temple is only a few minutes walk from the famous waterfall at Nachi. The waterfall is visible from the temple's Main Hall; and the temple's pagoda, with the falls in the distance, is a favorite photographic subject of visitors to the temple.

Seigantoji was not included in the original Saikoku pilgrimage, but was only added around the Muromachi period. There were two reasons for its inclusion. The first was the growing popularity of the Kumano cult, worship and ascetic practice on Mount Kumano, which is near Seigantoji. Toward the end of the Heian period, members of the Imperial court, led by the retired Emperor Go Shirakawa (r. 1155-1158), began to make frequent pilgrimages to Mount Kumano. A second reason for the temple's increasing popularity and its eventual inclusion in the Saikoku pilgrimage route was the belief that the paradise of Kannon was located in the south. Seigantoji's location, at the southernmost tip of the Kii peninsula, made the temple a natural center for the increasingly popular Kannon cult (See map, fig. 1). As early as the Nara period, members of the court made pilgrimages to Seigantoji in a search for Fudaraku (补陀洛, in Sanskrit Potolaka, Kannon's paradise).
The temple and its environs also served as a launching point for fervent believers who sailed south from the Kii peninsula, hoping to reach Fudaraku. They loaded their tiny boats with provisions for the journey and boarded up the cabins so that they could not see out; they believed that the winds and currents, guided by Kannon, would carry them to Fudaraku, and their attempts at navigation could only be a hindrance. Countless of the faithful set sail from the environs of Seigantoji, never to be seen again. Others were not so fortunate: the cemetery at Seigantoji has numerous tombstones engraved only with "A saint who crossed the sea." The temple's eika makes reference to the area's identification with Kannon:

Fudaraku ya kishi utsu nami wo mikumano no
Nachi no oyama ni bibiku taki tsuse.

In the thunder of the waterfall
depth in the mountains of Nachi,
one hears
the crashing of the waves of Fudaraku.

Today Seigantoji is a fitting beginning for the Saikoku pilgrimage route. Here the visitor finds the same mix of ancient and modern, of intense spirituality and crass commercialism, which characterizes the route as a whole. The bus from Katsuura village, the nearest train station, stops at Nachi Falls and then at the foot of the long stone stairway which leads up to the temple. At the falls, the beauty of the scenery jars with the commercial photographers
and their bleachers for group photographs which are ubiquitous at famous Japanese beauty spots. The trail from the waterfall to the temple winds through a peaceful forest, but the stone steps leading up to the temple from the bus stop are lined with souvenir shops selling famous products of the region. The temple's modern pagoda -- carefully placed so that its verticality forms an echo of the waterfall beyond when viewed from the Main Hall -- has an elevator running through its center, in place of the more traditional symbolic pillar. But all these contradictions are rendered insignificant by the charm of the temple and the loveliness of its surroundings.

2. Kimiidera

Kimiidera is perched on the side of a hill overlooking the Pacific Ocean. According to temple tradition, the temple was founded in 770 by a Chinese priest named Ikō (伊奘). Ikō brought with him a Senju Kannon, which he kept as a secret image, and after his arrival he himself made a Jūichimen Kannon.³ The present main images of the temple's Kannondō are said to be the images provided by the temple's founder. Both have been designated Important Cultural Properties.⁴ They are no longer kept in the Kannondō, but have been moved to a more modern museum building within the temple compound for reasons of preservation and security.⁵
Aficionados of Japanese trivia will be happy to learn that Kimiidera is the harbinger of cherry blossoms for the entire Kinki area. Its numerous cherry trees are the first to bloom in the region; and the temple appears on television every year on the spring cherry blossom forecasts, broadcast nightly in Japan throughout the cherry blossom season. When the cherries are in bloom the temple compound is filled with visitors.

3. Kokawadera

Unlike many of the other rural Saikoku temples, Kokawadera is easily accessible, located in a broad valley only a few minutes' walk from the nearest train station. The temple was founded by a hunter named Otomo Kujiko, who in 770 came to the Kokawa region in search of game. Out hunting one night, Kujiko saw a bright light emanating from Mount Kazaraki, and gazing at the light he repented of the killing he had done. He began to perform religious austerities in a hut he built on Mount Kazaraki, and soon thereafter, a temple was established on the site of Kujiko's hermitage. The Kokawadera engi emaki (pl. XLVII and XLVIII), which illustrates the exploits of Kujiko and other episodes of the temple's founding legend, is a very fine early example of painting in the style known as yamato-e. The scroll dates from the late Heian or early Kamakura period and has been designated a National
Treasure.

Kokawadera boasts the largest Main Hall on the Saikoku route, an imposing structure with a two story iirimoya (hipped and gabled) roof (pl. II). In front of the Main Hall is a fine Momoyama period garden, designated an Important Art Object (pl. III). In characteristic Momoyama style, the garden is highly contrived, built up of the contrasting shapes of jagged boulders, clipped azaleas and cycads. As in other Momoyama gardens, great care has been taken to display each of the dozens of rocks used in the garden to best advantage, and to arrange them in pleasing combinations. The intricate artificiality of the garden makes a splendid contrast to the broad, sweeping lines of the Main Hall and the mountain landscape beyond.

4. Makinōdera

Makinōdera is most famous for its connection with Kūkai, who is said by temple tradition to have taken the tonsure there and to have stayed at the temple for two years between his return from China and his founding of Shingon headquarters on Kōyasan.7

Even as late as the mid 19th century, Makinōdera was a large temple, with over forty buildings.8 But in 1845 a fire destroyed the entire compound, and only a few of the temple's halls have been rebuilt. Among them is the small thatched roofed hut where Kūkai took the tonsure; visitors
to the temple invariably pay their respects there.

Nearly all the sculpture at the temple dates from after the 1845 fire. The main image is a modern Miroku triad, in which Miroku is flanked by Senju Kannon and Monju (文殊 Mañjuśrī). The Kannon to the left of the central Miroku, an eleven headed, thousand armed, thousand eyed Kannon, functions as the Saikoku main image; it is to this image that Saikoku pilgrims pray. A second, much venerated image of Kannon is enshrined at the rear of the Main Hall. It is a Bato Kannon, a form which appears fairly frequently in mountain temples, and is almost certainly one of the few temple images to have survived the 1845 fire.9

Even today, Makinōdera remains one of the most remote and difficult to reach of the Saikoku temples. The modern day pilgrim travelling by public transportation from Kyōto must take three trains and two buses to reach the temple gate. Leading from the gate to the Main Hall is a steep, twisting mountain trail which climbs through a deep forest of maple and cryptomeria. The annual showing of the temple's triad of secret main images is held on May 15, and pilgrims who visit the temple then climb through a forest gay with the blossoms of wild wisteria, azalea and iris. The temple, located at the top of Mount Makinō, affords a splendid view of the surrounding mountain range, but the peace of the mountain top is disturbed by the noise which
drifts up from a rock quarry in the valley below.

5. Fujiidera

In sharp contrast to Makinōdera, Fujiidera is a bustling urban temple, located only a few minutes' walk from the nearest train station. To reach the temple one walks, not up a steep mountain trail, but along a busy shopping street of the sort which is a standard feature of all urban neighborhoods in Japan. The temple grounds function as a neighborhood park, with a playground in one corner and a large wisteria covered arbor with benches beneath for picnics in another. (An alternate writing for the temple name uses a character for fuji which means wisteria.) Neighborhood people come and go, some paying their respects at the Main Hall, some playing with their children in the playground, some simply resting in the temple's broad, spacious grounds. The temple has an active Assistance Association (Sewa Ninkai, 世話人会) of about thirty-five members, who assist at the temple's many festivals and generally look after the temple.10

The main image at Fujiidera (pl. IV) is one of the great treasures of the Saikoku pilgrimage route. It is a Jūichimen Senju Kannon of hollow dry lacquer; its style and the medium in which it was executed lend credence to the temple tradition which states that the image was made at the time of the temple's founding in 725. The temple was
founded as a chokuganji (勅願寺), an imperially vowed temple established to pray for national peace and the health of the emperor, upon the order of Emperor Shōmu (r. 724-749). Temple records state that the image was made by Keibun'e (稽文会) and Keishukun (稽首熱), a father and son team of image makers. The image was dedicated with great pomp in the third month of 725 with Gyōki officiating. Gyōki (行基, also pronounced Gyōgi, 668-749) was a famous priest of the Hossō sect, and an early example of a type of holy man which was of great importance for the spread of Buddhism in Japan. Men like Gyōki travelled throughout Japan, preaching the precepts of Buddhism to vast crowds of common people, and building roads, bridges and irrigation ponds.

In the Nara period manner, the Fujiidera main image has one thousand arms (actually 1,042), rather than the forty, forty-two or forty-four arms common in post-Nara images. The two largest arms are together in front in añjali mudrā (in Japanese gasshō, 拷手). The forty medium sized hands hold attributes, and the one thousand smaller hands are arrayed around the seated figure. This is one of only two remaining Nara period images showing the combination of large and small hands; the other is the standing Senju Kannon in the Tōshōdaiji Kondō. In the fullness and naturalism of the torso the Fujiidera image is
close to the great Yakushi Nyorai at Yakushiji. But the slender arms are more stylized, reduced to tapering tubes, and the gentle face is reminiscent of the soft Hakuhō period style. At 1.5 meters, the image is only a little over life size and is seated on a low pedestal, making it an approachable object of worship. The sense of intimacy is heightened by the downcast eyes, which gaze at the worshipper with great compassion, and by the central hands, which point forward in a gesture of invitation. The hands of the Tōshōdaiji Senju are held perfectly vertical in a stiffer, less welcoming pose. The ornaments are small in scale: the necklace, wristlets and armbands are delicately wrought, and the scarves which flutter down from the crown are narrow and graceful. The ornamentation serves to emphasize the broad, smooth planes of the torso rather than to obscure them. The image's relatively small size, the delicacy and refinement of the ornaments, the graceful, inviting pose of the central hands, and the compassion and serenity of the face, all combine to create an inviting and elegant work. The Fujiidera Senju Kannon has been designated a National Treasure. It is one of only two Saikoku main images so designated; the other is the Fukūkenjaku Kannon in the Kōfukuji Nan'endō.
6. Tsubosakadera

Tsubosakadera's unusual name, literally Jar Hill Temple, derives from a miraculous vision which is said to underlie its founding. In 703 a priest named Benki (弁基) came from Genkōji and built a hermitage on the hill (saka) where the temple now stands. The priest had a quartz water jar (tsubo) of which he was particularly fond. One day he saw a vision of Kannon in the water of the jar, whereupon he made an image of Kannon and enshrined it and the jar in his hut. His neighbors began to call his Tsubosaka Shōnin (上人, saint). All this came to the attention of Empress Genshō, who in 717 built a raidō (礼堂, porch), a pagoda, and various other buildings on the hill, and gave the new temple the name Minami Hokkeji. This is the temple's formal name even today, but the formal name is never used, even by the temple itself; it is invariably called Tsubosakadera.

The main image at Tsubosakadera (pl. V) is famous throughout Japan for its power to cure blindness and eye disease. This belief dates back at least to the Heian period, when several emperors are recorded as having prayed to the image for cures for eye diseases. Tsubosakadera has built numerous facilities for the blind pilgrims who visit the temple in large numbers; it has become famous throughout Japan, not only for the healing power of its main image but
also for its compassionate response to those who come there to pray.14

7. Okadera.

Okadera is a lovely little temple nestled in the hills of the Asuka region south of Nara. Unlike Tsubosakadera and Hasedera, its Asuka neighbors on the Saikoku route, Okadera does not sprawl over hills and across valleys. It is small and compact. The temple's few buildings -- the Main Hall, a Bell Tower, a Daishi Hall dedicated to Kūkai, and one or two subsidiary halls -- are set within beautifully landscaped grounds, with the lush green hills of Asuka as a backdrop.

The main image at Okadera (pl. VI) is a problematical work. Temple tradition aserts that the image was made by Kūkai himself, of Indian and Chinese clay which he had brought from China and mixed with Japanese clay, so that the image is made from the earth of the three great Buddhist nations.15 Kūkai is also said to have placed within the main image a small gilt bronze statue seated in the single pendant legged pose called in Japanese hanka (한가). Both the main image and the small gilt bronze are said to represent Nyoirin Kannon, an identification which is extremely dubious in both cases.16

Although there is considerable variation in the depiction of Nyoirin Kannon, in most of his aspects he is
shown holding the two attributes which give this form its name, the jewel (nyoishu) and the wheel (rin). This form of Kannon is most commonly depicted with the legs in an asymmetric pose, with one leg either pendant, or raised at the knee in the posture of royal ease. Elaborate ornamentation is standard for this form; he often wears an ornate crown and intricate jewelry.17

The Okadera main image is extremely austere. The legs are crossed in the posture of meditation. Except for two small armbands on the upper arms, he wears no jewelry. He holds no attributes. Many scholars argue that this image was originally made as a representation of Yakushi (薬師, Baiṣajyaguru) or Miroku as a Buddha.18 The image has been much altered and has suffered considerably at the hands of less than skillful restorers; only the head remains unaltered.19 If it were in fact originally made as a representation of a Buddha, the torso, which would have been covered by the monk's robe customarily worn by Buddhas, may have been bared during a restoration. The small arm bands may have been added as well. This hypothesis would explain the clumsy proportions of the torso, so much at variance with the beautifully modelled face.

Okadera's main image is not at all photogenic. In black and white photographs, flaking paint and cracking clay are clearly visible; and the incongruities of proportion --
which may be the result of clumsy restoration -- are quite glaring. The image looks squat, awkward and ponderous. Even visitors who have done their homework are thus unprepared for the splendor of the image in the flesh, as it were. It is massive; at over fifteen feet, it is the largest clay image in Japan. In sharp contrast to the interiors of most other Buddhist temple halls in Japan, the Main Hall at Okadera is brightly lit. The entire front (south) side is open, and the light comes flooding in, washing over the main image. The image, too, is lighter in color than the dark wood or faded gilt seen in most other Buddhist images. When it is seen in the flesh, the image's flakes and cracks are less noticeable and the mottling which is so distracting in photographs is transformed into a not displeasing play of light and dark. The massive size and lightness, combined with the serenity of the face and the grace of the hands, make for an imposing and very moving image.

8. Hasedera

Hasedera is of interest to students of Japanese Buddhist architecture because it was one of the first temples in Japan to depart from the strict axial layout which had been imported from China. Regular plans had been preferred throughout the earlier periods of Japanese Buddhism, but the hilly site chosen for Hasedera made
regularity impossible. A continuing preference for mountaintop and hilly locations meant that many later temples followed Hasedera's lead and scattered buildings irregularly over mountainous sites. At Hasedera the results are particularly pleasing (pl. VII). The temple's vast precincts extend across numerous hills and are surrounded by higher mountains covered with trees. The vistas change constantly as one walks through the temple: a pagoda on a distant hill comes into view; the Main Hall appears, jutting out over a hillside; a small and elegant subsidiary hall emerges. There have been seven major fires at the temple since the Heian period, but each time it has been rebuilt along the lines laid out by the original planners. Very little remains of the original temple complex; nearly all the buildings date from the 17th century or later.

Hasedera's main image (pl. VIII) is a particularly sacred one, and has long been the focus of a cult of its own. The present main image was completed in 1538, and incorporates the head of an earlier main image, which was almost completely destroyed by fire. It is a colossal Jūichimen Kannon, 7.88 meters tall, made of camphor wood. Although it is not a particularly attractive work, but it is quite impressive by virtue of its size alone. Visitors to the temple traditionally rub the feet of the
image (they are about sixty centimeters across), an act which is believed to ensure the granting of all wishes. The feet are rubbed black.

9. Kōfukuji Nan'endo

Kōfukuji is one of the great treasures of Japanese Buddhism. Historically it is of great importance because of the role it played in the growth and development of Buddhism during the Nara period; at its height the temple had 175 buildings scattered over an area of fifty square kilometers and was counted among the seven great temples of Nara. Art historically Kōfukuji is a gold mine; its collection of Buddhist sculpture is among the finest in Japan. The temple is located in the southwest corner Nara Park, and its neighbors include Tōdaiji, Kasuga Shrine, and Gangōji. the Nan'endo, the subhall which serves as the Saikoku pilgrimage site, is a small octagonal hall just inside the South Gate. Kōfukuji's famous five storey pagoda, directly to the north, is visible from the Nan'endo; the park's equally famous deer nibble the grass near the hall and beg pilgrims for food.

Kōfukuji was the ujidera (氏寺, family temple) of the Fujiwara and as such it prospered greatly during the Nara and Heian periods. After Fujiwara power waned at the end of the Heian period, however, the temple's prosperity diminished. Numerous fires laid waste the once magnificent
compound, and despite frequent rebuildings the temple never regained its former glory.28

The original main image of the Nan'endō was destroyed in 1180 in the first and most devastating fire at Kōfukuji; the present main image (pl. IX) was made in 1188 during the early Kamakura period reconstruction of the temple. It is the only Fukūkenjaku Kannon on the Saikoku pilgrimage route, and is a secret image, with no showings scheduled. Published photographs show a beautiful example of the late Heian style, with a full, fleshy body and an austere, stylized face. Along with the Fujiidera Senju Kannon, it is one of the two Saikoku main images to have been designated National Treasures.

The Treasure Hall at Kōfukiji is a glorious place, filled with exquisite objects which are mute testimony to the bravery of generations of monks who raced into burning buildings, during the temple's many fires, to rescue the sacred images. In the Treasure Hall are two sets of statues formerly in the Nan'endō. One is a group of portraits of six famous priests of the Hossō sect, which were originally placed in a circle around the main image (pl. X). The six priests are all seated, each in a different pose, each highly individualized.29 Also from the Nan'endō is a set of Shitenno (四天王, the Four Guardian Kings) which once guarded the altar platform on which the main image stands
Like the main image of the Nan'endo, the priest portraits and the Shitennō images date from the early Kamakura rebuilding of Kōfuku-ji. All ten statues have been designated National Treasures.

10. Mimuro-ōdoji

Mimuro-ōdoji is set in rolling hills south of Kyōto, just outside the city of Uji. It is a small, out of the way temple, but its Treasure Hall contains five very interesting statues, all dating from the Heian period, all designated Important Cultural properties. There is a wooden Shaka in the style of the Seiryō-ji (清涼寺) Shaka. This latter image is said to be a copy of the "original" Udayana image, said by some traditions to be the first statue made of the historical Buddha. In another corner of the Treasure Hall, a grimacing Bishamonten (毘沙門天, Vaiśravana) stands astride a crouching demon. In the center of the hall is an Amida triad, a seated Amida flanked by Kannon and Seishi (pl. XII and XIII). It is probable that the three images were not made as a set but were combined at a later date. The Amida is somewhat smaller than the flanking bodhisattvas, and is quite different in style, very close to the famous Amida by Jōchō at the nearby Byōdō-ji in Uji. The bodhisattvas are in a lighter, softer style, and are particularly lovely. They are seated in the pose called yamato-zuwari (Japanese sitting, i.e., kneeling), a rather
unusual feature seen in a few other Heian period images. Echoes of the Tang style can be seen in the full, rounded faced, the soft, fleshy bodies, the exquisite grace of the hands, and the delicacy of the ornamentation. Objects like these, beautiful and virtually unknown, tucked away in small temples, are one of the happy surprises of the Saikoku pilgrimage route.

11. Kami Daigoji

Kami Daigoji has the dubious distinction of being for the modern pilgrim the most difficult to reach of all the Saikoku temples. It is located atop a 450 meter mountain which rises steeply behind its more famous sister temple, Daigoji (map, fig. 2). To reach Kami (Upper) Daigoji, one walks through the spacious precincts of Shimo (Lower) Daigoji, past Sanbōin, with its splendidly fussy garden designed in part by Hideyoshi and its magnificent paintings, and past the five storey pagoda, designated a National Treasure and the oldest building in Kyōto prefecture. The mountain trail which begins as one leaves Shimmo Daigoji is three kilometers long; it winds tortuously up the mountain, through deep forests and along steep ravines. Pilgrims greet one another cheerfully along the trail; those coming down exhort and encourage those going up. Shimo and Kami Daigoji were originally united as a single temple. Today, however, they are separate, each with its own staff and
administration, although relations between them are still close.

The temple's unusual name derives from its founding legend. Daigoji was founded in 874 by Shōbō (聖 宝, 832-909, also known by his posthumous name Rigen Daishi, 理源大師). When Shōbō first came to the mountain where Kami Daigoji now stands, an old man, an incarnation of the tutelary deity of the mountain, showed him a spring gushing forth. Shōbō scooped up water, drank it, and exclaimed "Ah! The taste of daigo!" and decided to build a temple there. Daigo (醍醐) is the Japanese translation of the Sanskrit word sarpir-manda; this is one of the five flavors and is said to be the most delicious of the five. The spring which Shōbō found still gushes, and pilgrims carry flasks to the temple, which they fill at the spring and carry home. The water is said to be particularly delicious mixed with whiskey.

The main hall at Kami Daigoji is the Junteidō, in which is enshrined an image of Juntei Kannon; this is the only Juntei on the Saikoku route. The original main image at Kami Daigoji is said to have been made at the order of Emperor Daigo (r. 897-930), to bring about the birth of an heir and the perpetuation of the Imperial line. Even today, the Kami Daigoji Juntei is thought to grant fertility and easy childbirth. The present main image (pl. XIV) dates
from the Edo period. Its history is unclear, but because it is much blackened it is thought by priests at the temple to have once been enshrined in a Gomadō (護摩堂, a hall where a goma, a fire ceremony, is performed). The image itself, of wood, is rather severe, but it is elaborately decorated with a gold necklace and crown, and backed by an elaborately carved mandorla. It is a secret image, shown once each year on May 18 and 19.

The Junteidō is a recent structure, built in 1968 after a fire in 1939 destroyed the earlier hall. There are, however, several much older buildings remaining at Kami Daigoji, many of them quite splendid. One of the most magnificent is the Yakushidō, built in 1121, enshrining a Yakushi triad (pl. XV and XVI). The seated Yakushi is in the full, pyramidal style seen in so many Heian period Buddha images. The flanking bodhisattvas are elegant and graceful, with flowing scarves and elaborate jewelry. The slight curve of the long stem of the lotus held by each bodhisattva serves to accentuate the intricate curves and folds of the figures. These three images and the hall where they are enshrined have been designed National Treasures.

12. Iwamadera

Iwamadera was founded in the 8th century upon the order of Empress Genshō (r. 715-724), and enjoyed Imperial patronage throughout the Heian and Kamakura periods.
Today, however, it is a small, remote temple, served by a single family of priests and with only three halls in the temple compound.

Next to the Main Hall is a small garden with a pond in the center. According to temple tradition, this is the pond\textsuperscript{38} which inspired one of the most famous haiku in Japanese literature:

\begin{verbatim}
Furu ike ya
kawazu tobikomu
mizu no oto
\end{verbatim}

An old pond
a frog jumps in.
The water's sound.

The haiku is, of course, by Matsuo Bashō (1643-94), Japan's best known haiku poet. Bashō was a devotee of Kannon who often visited Kannon temples on his journeys. Temple tradition at Iwamadera asserts that after a period of seclusion at nearby Ishiyamadera (13), Bashō visited Iwamadera, greatly troubled in spirit, and found comfort there, whereupon he composed this poem.\textsuperscript{39}

13. Ishiyamadera

Ishiyamadera has long been famous for its close connections with the aristocrats of the Heian court, and for its many beautiful buildings. Of these latter, among the most important is the Tahōtō (多宝塔), built by Minamoto no Yoritomo and dating from 1194 (pl. XVIII). The Tahōtō style of pagoda first appeared in Japan during the Heian period, but the one at Ishiyamadera is the oldest surviving
example. Pagodas such as these were built for the Buddha Tahō (妙宝, Prabhūtaratna), as he appears in the Hōtō (宝塔) chapter (Stūpa-samārāṇa-parivarta) of the Lotus Sūtra. In this text the Buddha Tahō appears before Shaka (釈迦, Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha) as Shaka is expounding the first ten chapters of the Lotus Sūtra and praises him. The style of pagodas in the Tahōtō form is said to be modelled after the pagoda described in this text. The rounded form in the center of the building is a visual reference to the hemispherical stūpas of India, and buildings of this type are often called "Indian style" pagodas. This is a form which is associated almost exclusively with Shingon. The Tahōtō at Ishiyamadera has been designated a National Treasure.

The most charming of the many fine buildings at Ishiyamadera is the rustic Tsukimitei (月見亭, Moon Viewing Pavilion), perched over a hill at the eastern edge of the temple (pl. XVIII). It is a tiny building, open on all four sides and topped with a thatched roof. When Emperor Go Shirakawa (r. 1155-58) viewed the moon here, the landscape must have been spectacular, with the Seta River below and Lake Biwa and Mt. Hiei visible to the north. Today the view is cluttered with high rise apartment buildings across the river, a steel and concrete bridge at the mouth of Lake Biwa, and resort hotels on the lake shore.
There is a strong tradition at Ishiyamadera asserting that Murasaki Shikibu wrote at least part of *Genji Monogatari* while staying at the temple. In August of 1004, the story goes, she secluded herself at the temple to pray. One evening, while gazing at the August moon reflected in the waters of Lake Biwa, she was struck by inspiration. She snatched the nearest paper -- which happened to be a copy of the *Daihannyako*41 -- and on its back began to write the chapter telling of Genji's exile to Suma.42 The visitor to the temple is reminded of the *Genji* connection at every turn. Paintings of Lady Murasaki grace the covers of temple pamphlets given out at the ticket booth. One room of the Main Hall, the room where Murasaki is said to have begun writing her novel, contains a life size statue of the author, poised over her writing table, with Heian period implements said to have been used by her scattered about. The temple has a large collection of portraits of Lady Murasaki, many of them showing her at work in the temple, and of illustrations of *Genji Monogatari*.

14. Miidera

Miidera has the most violent history of any of the Saikoku temples. According to temple tradition, Miidera was founded by Imperial order in 687, and the temple's first two centuries seem to have passed peacefully enough. In
873, Enchin (円仁, died 891), an eminent priest of Enryakuji, the Tendai headquarters temple on Hieizan (Mount Hiei), was made abbot of Miidera. Enchin maintained close relations with Hieizan until his death; but the establishment of a separate branch of Tendai, named Jimon-ha and now headquartered at Miidera, is usually dated from Enchin's arrival at that temple. The dispute which ensued between Enryakuji and Miidera seems to have been grounded more in political rivalry than in doctrinal disagreement; in his discussion of the sour relations between the two branches of Tendai, Sir Charles Eliot notes plaintively, "After careful inquiry, I have been unable to find that there was any difference of doctrine between them." Relations between Enchin's followers and the priests of Enrayakuji grew steadily worse over the two centuries following Enchin's death. The bitterest wrangle came when Emperor Go Suzaku (r. 1036-1045) appointed a priest from Miidera a chief Abbot of Tendai. The Hieizan monks found this insupportable, and with 3,000 sōhei (僧兵, monk warriors) stormed the capital. Faced with this show of force the Emperor backed down and appointed the Enryakuji candidate. In 1081 open warfare finally erupted between the two temples; enraged by a minor discourtesy, Hieizan monks attacked and completely destroyed Miidera. The two temples clashed repeatedly over the next several centuries, with
Miidera invariably the loser. There were **sōhei** at Miidera -- virtually all temples with any pretensions to political power maintained standing armies -- but the 800 warrior monks there were no match for Hieizan's army of 3,000.\(^45\) Miidera was destroyed, partly or completely, more than thirty times by the warrior monks of Enryakuji.\(^46\)

One scholar asserts that the frequent destruction of Miidera by the Enryakuji **sōhei** was an important factor in deciding which temples would be included in the *Saikoku* pilgrimage route. Each time the warrior monks from Enryakuji attacked Miidera, the Miidera monks would scatter for shelter to other temples with which their temple had close relations. They would visit one another as they waited for Miidera to be rebuilt. In this way temples with close connections to Miidera were drawn together in a network which was eventually incorporated into the *Saikoku* pilgrimage.\(^47\)

During the wars of unification at the end of the 16th century, Enryakuji made the mistake of siding against Oda Nobunaga and paid dearly for its error: in 1571 Nobunaga had the entire temple complex, which by this time numbered nearly 3,000 buildings, burned to the ground. And then Miidera made the same mistake with Toyotomi Hideyoshi. But Hideyoshi, it is said, took a rather less destructive revenge. He had the Main Hall at Miidera dismantled, rather
than burned, and then -- according to temple tradition at Miidera -- gave the wood to a Hieizan monk, who used it to rebuild one of the halls at Enryakuji. Soper says, in his cautious way, that he can find no hard evidence to substantiate this oft-repeated tale, but that the beams and other materials of the building which Hideyoshi dismantled at Miidera would have been about the right size for the hall in question at Enryakuji. It is one of the many stories in Japanese history which ought to be true, even if it isn't, for it has a wonderful ring of poetic justice. There is one last twist to the story: Hideyoshi later rebuilt Miidera. He was dying, and he thought that perhaps his illness was retribution for having destroyed the temple. So he arranged for its reconstruction.

Today it is difficult to believe that Miidera was ever the site of so much violence, for the temple is an oasis of calm. Nestled in the foothills just west of Lake Biwa, the compound is lush with towering trees and is a famous spot for cherry blossom viewing.

Despite the frequent burnings, Miidera is a treasure trove. At the center of the compound stands the massive Kondō (Golden Hall, a frequently used name for a temple's main hall). With its elegant woodwork and heavy irimoya roof, it is one of the most beautiful buildings in Japanese Buddhist architecture; it dates from 1599 and has
been designated a National Treasure (pl. XIX). The Sūtra Repository, typically Muromachi in its lightness and grace, has been designated an Important Cultural Property. The Kangakuin, in the domestic architectural style, has fusuma paintings by Kanō Mitsunobu. The temple's Heian period hanging scroll known as the Yellow Fudō is one of the most famous paintings in Japanese art. Temple publications list ten objects designated National Treasures and forty-eight designated Important Cultural Properties in the temple's collection.  

The Saikoku pilgrimage station at Miidera is not the Kondō but the Kannondō, located at the southern end of the temple compound (map, fig. 3). Enshrined as main image of the Kannondō is a Heian period Nyoirin Kannon, a particularly graceful example of that most graceful of all the forms of Kannon (pl. XX). It is a secret image, shown once every thirty-three years; it has been designated an Important Cultural Property.

The history of the Kannondō reveals much about the growing popularity of the Saikoku pilgrimage route. Originally the hall was located atop a mountain near Miidera; it was moved down into the main temple complex at the end of the 19th century to make it easier to reach. For some time there after, the Kannondō was separated from the rest of the temple; then, as now, large numbers of Saikoku
pilgrims were women, and females were not allowed inside the precincts of Miidera. Today there is a path from the main part of the temple to the Kannondō, but many pilgrims still prefer to use the old path that goes directly up the hill to the hall. Those few pilgrims who are not on hurry-up bus tours often exit through the main part of the temple, taking time to visit other halls.

15. Kannonji

Kannonji is one of the innumerable Japanese temples which trace their founding back to Kūkai. The temple's founding legend states that when Kūkai was at Tōji practicing austerities, he saw an auspicious cloud drifting over Higashiyama, the mountains east of Kyōto. He went to the mountains, where he met a white haired old man who gave him a tiny image of Juichimen Kannon. The old man told Kūkai that the area where they stood was sacred to Kannon, and that Kannon should be worshipped there in order to secure the salvation of all sentient beings in the last days. Kūkai asked the old man who he was, and he replied, "I am Kumano Gongen," and pointed toward the south. Upon the order of Emperor Saga (r. 809-823), Kūkai founded a temple on the spot where he had encountered Kumano Gongen, and enshrined within the temple a triad of Juichimen Kannon flanked by Fudō (不動, Acala) and Bishamonten. Although there seems to be no textual basis for this grouping, it is
a popular one in Japan. Kūkai also struck a rock within the temple compound with his staff, and a spring of pure water gushed forth, a spring which still flows today.

The area near the temple has several Imperial tombs and a cemetery, so one of the temple's main functions during the Heian period was to hold memorial services for the souls of the dead and to comfort mourners who came to visit the graves of relatives. From the mid-Kamakura period onward, fifteen emperors were buried in this region, including Emperor Kōmei, Emperor Meiji's immediate predecessor. Emperor Go Horikawa was a devotee of the Kannonji main image; when he died in 1234, he was buried in the temple's cemetery facing toward the main image, so that he could worship in perpetuity.

16. Kiyomizudera

Kiyomizudera is among the brightest gems of Kyōto, a city filled with gems. It is the first stop on any tour of Kyōto, and some two to three million people visit the temple each year. The compound is always thronged with visitors. Not the least of Kiyomizudera's many charms is the narrow, winding street which twists up the hill to the temple. It is jammed with souvenir shops, many selling the elegant local were called Kiyomizu-yaki.

The buildings at Kiyomizudera are beautiful, and the temple's splendid location, in wooded hills east of Kyōto
and overlooking the city, does full justice to the architecture (pl. XXI). The Hondō (本堂, Main Hall) has been designated a National Treasure, and fifteen other buildings within the compound, nearly all the buildings of the temple, have been designated Important Cultural Properties. These buildings are in a variety of styles, and include examples of rare types. One of the most famous is the Uma Todome (馬駐, stable), just outside the gate at the western edge of the compound. Here noble visitors to the temple could shelter their horses while they visited the sacred precincts.

The splendid Hondō (fig. 4; pl. XXII) dominates the temple complex. Over the central core of the Hondō, containing the innermost and inner sanctuaries and the raidō, is an enormous hipped roof of cypress bark. To the east and west are wings which run the entire depth of the building. In front of the raidō is a large platform called a butai (舞台). The raidō, butai and wings extend some forty feet over the side of the hill and are supported by pilings.

Interestingly enough, the Main Hall's most conspicuous feature -- the wings, raidō and butai and the pilings which support them -- were something of an afterthought. Soper notes that the chancel section (the innermost and inner sanctuaries) stands on solid ground and is similar in
form to that of other 9th century temples. He believes that the raidō, butai and wings were added later. The additions must have been completed by early in the 16th century; the Kiyomizudera Engi Emaki, painted by Tosa Mitsunobu (1434-1525) shows a structure very similar to the present Hondō. Thus the entire jerry-rigged structure, with its early chancel and later extensions, must have been recreated, in time honored Japanese fashion, when the Hondō was rebuilt after the great fire of 1629. The combination which results from all these addings on is described even by temple officials as ungainly. But somehow the disparate elements — the truncated hipped roof over the chancel, the gabled roofs over the wings, the projecting butai, and the massive supporting pillars — are combined to form a whole which, while perhaps not graceful, is still magnificent.

The temple's main image is a Senju Jūichimen Kannon with two arms over the head, palms up, holding a small seated Amida. Not surprisingly, this is called the Kiyomizu type; it is said to include within one image all seven of the major forms of Kannon. The temple owns about ten images of this type, in various sizes, including the maedachi (pl. XXIII). The main image is secret and is shown once every thirty-three years. At Kiyomizudera this secrecy is adhered to absolutely. Young priests at the temple who came
into service there since the last showing have never seen
the image, and there are no photographs available.

17. Rokuharamitsuji

Rokuharamitsuji is famous as the temple founded by Kūya. Kūya was an eccentric and much-loved priest who was
one of the earliest Japanese practitioners of the nembutsu
（念佛）, the practice of invoking the name of the Buddha
Amida in order to attain rebirth in Amida’s Pure Land. In
his youth Kūya travelled in rural areas, building roads and
bridges, burying abandoned corpses and performing memorial
services for them, and engaging in other charitable acts.
Later he preached belief in Amida’s Pure Land in his own
inimitable way: he danced through the streets of Kyōto,
beating on a gong and chanting the nembutsu. Everywhere
Kūya went, ordinary people embraced the simple message of
salvation he preached, and he is revered even today for his
charity, his compassion, and his joyous faith. A portrait
of Kūya, one of the most remarkable statues in Japanese art
(pl. I), is housed the temple museum at Rokuharamitsuji.61

In the late 1960s the temple’s Main Hall (pl. XXIV) was
renovated in conjunction with the celebration of the
thousandth anniversary of the renaming of the temple. The
hall was dismantled down to the ground, refurbished, and
then rebuilt, a process which took four years.62 After it
was restored the hall was painted red, with polychrome
floral, dragon and geometric designs added to the bracketing and posts. The result, while a bit garish to modern eyes, is a faithful recreation of the hall's original Heian period appearance, in spirit if not in exact detail.

Today Rokuharamitsuji is a small, exquisite temple on a quiet side street in central Kyōto. During the temple's heyday, its precincts stretched from the foot of Higashiyama to the Kamo River, and area of nearly one square kilometer. Little remains of its former glory except the brightly colored Main Hall, the splendid sculpture in the temple museum, and an air of quiet elegance which pervades the whole compound.

18. Rokkakudō

Rokkakudō has two faces. The temple is located near the intersection of Rokkakudōri, a quiet side street, and Karasumadōri, the broad avenue which leads to the Old Imperial Palace and on which are located the Kyōto headquarters of many national banks (fig. 5). A visitor approaching from the side street sees the traditional face: one passes through a small gate, enters a narrow courtyard, and faces the six sided Main Hall which gives the temple its name (pl. XXV). The approach from Karasumadōri, however, affords an entirely different view: an eleven story skyscraper rises directly from the street (pl. XXVI). While somewhat more ostentatiously artistic than its neighbors,
this modern building -- the tallest in Kyōto -- looks quite at home in this neighborhood of banks. It is the home of Ikenobō, the largest of the many schools of Ikebana. Rokkakudō is the headquarters of Ikenobō, and the temple's head priest is also the hereditary head master of Ikenobō. The current head priest, Ikenobō Sen'ei, is the forty-fifth in the line.

The name Ikenobō comes from a pond (ike,池) located within the temple compound, and from the priests' quarters (bon,方) which were built near the pond after the temple's founding. The Ikenobō school, with head masters of the same name, seems to have originated during the Muromachi period. Records state that flower arrangements by Ikenobō Sengyō (専慶) were exhibited in the mid 15th century and drew large crowds. Early in the 17th century, Ikenobō Senkō (専 女) taught Ikebana at the Imperial Palace. The museum in the Ikenobō headquarters displays a book of paintings by Senkō of his own flower arrangements; it has been designated an Important Cultural Property. These paintings show vertical arrangements in the formal, elegant, but rather stiff style today called rikka (立花).

Ikenobō today is a thriving industry. About five million people worldwide study Ikenobō under 15,000 teachers. There are societies in Hawaii, California, Brazil, Taiwan and Korea. The school's skyscraper
headquarters building bustles as some eighty employees keep track of the school's activities. Ikenobō teachers come for classes to improve their skills; would-be teachers come to acquire the all important license. The museum displays objects associated with Ikenobō, including two exquisite Song celadons. But at the temple proper, plastic flowers are offered to images.

19. Gyōganji

The history of Gyōganji is filled with melancholy and gloom. The temple was founded in 1004 by a priest named Gyōen (行円), upon the order of Emperor Ichijō (r. 986-1011). Before becoming a priest Gyōen had been a hunter in Kyūshū. One day he killed a female deer, and found within the deer an unborn but still living fawn. Understandably enough, this experience filled him with revulsion and remorse for all the killing he had done, and Gyōen immediately entered the Buddhist priesthood. As a reminder of his past sins, he wore a leather thong made of deerskin around his neck. Soon he became known as Saint Leather (Kaku shōnin, 革上人). The nickname stuck, and the temple he founded is popularly known as Leather Hall (Kōdō, 革堂) even today.

A popular legend connected with the temple heightens the sense of gloom. In the 19th century a young woman was murdered near Gyōganji, and her spirit appeared to her
parents when they came to the temple to pray for news of their daughter. The girl's spirit told them what had happened to her, and gave her mother a mirror which had been a gift from her parents. They imbedded the mirror in a wooden panel which had incised within it a picture of a young girl's ghost. This they donated to the temple. In keeping with the melancholy spirit which pervades Gyōganji's history, the temple displays the leather thong which Gyōen wore and the ghost panel which the girl's parents donated.

Until recently Gyōganji was a gloomy place. Temple buildings had fallen into disrepair and the compound had an air of decay. In 1969 a new and energetic head priest was appointed, who repaired and refurbished existing buildings and constructed the temple museum. Today Gyōganji is cheerful and tidy. It is a tiny temple (pl. XXVII), tucked in among antique dealers and other shops on a busy shopping street just south of the Old Imperial Palace. Because it is an urban temple, Gyōganji has long served as a focus of popular belief; even today, believers who live near the temple visit frequently.

20. Yoshiminedera

Yoshiminedera takes its nickname, Matsu no Tera (松の寺, Pine Temple), from an unusual five needle pine which grows within its precincts. Although only about two meters high,
the tree has two enormously long branches, one extending twenty-two meters to the north, the other twenty-three meters to the west. It is called the Playing Dragon Pine because of its long snaking branches.

The temple is located in the mountains west of Kyōto and is famous for the beauty of its natural surroundings. There are cherry trees, maples and azaleas within the temple compound and in the surrounding woods. To reach the temple one passes through one of the most important bamboo growing regions in Japan. There are large and carefully cultivated forests of bamboo; thick bamboo poles are propped to dry along the road leading to the temple; and the souvenir shops outside the temple gate sell baskets and other items made of bamboo in addition to the usual gaudy array.

Enshrined in the temple's Shakadō, northwest of the Main Hall, is a stone image of Shaka said to have been made by Gensan, the temple's founder. The image was formerly enshrined in a hall atop Mount Shaka, a 630 meter mountain about two kilometers from the temple's Main Hall. The hall burned, and at the beginning of the Meiji period it was decided to move the image down from the mountain and enshrine it within the temple compound. This was done for the convenience of the increasing number of pilgrims visiting the temple. The image has long been thought to have mysterious powers.
Related to this image are the medicated baths which are offered at the temple once a month, near the Shakadō. Originally offered on the fourteenth of each month, the anniversary of Shaka's death, the baths are now open the second Sunday of each month, again for the convenience of visitors. Medicinal herbs which grow near the temple are gathered during the rainy season, in June, and dried, then added to the waters of the bath. Herbs used include angelica, mugwort, elderberry, and silvervine. The baths are said to be paticularly effective in easing the pain of neuralgia and lumbago. From 200 to 500 people come each month. The Rev. Kamon Kōchō, the head priest of Yoshiminedera, himself harvested and prepared the healing herbs for many years and continues to oversee the operation. He teaches that the baths promote spiritual as well as physical healing. The baths, he says, are a gift from Shaka, given to bring about spiritual peach through the unity of body, speech and mind.

21. Anaoji

Anaoji is one of the few rural temples on the Saikoku pilgrimage route (pl. XXVIII). It is a small temple located outside Kameoka, northwest of Kyotō. The route from Kyōto to Kameoka passes through a wild and spectacular river gorge, but the area around Anaoji is pastoral. The temple is in a small hamlet, surrounded by rice paddies.
According to temple tradition, Anaoji was founded upon the request of Emperor Monmu (r. 679-707). In 704 a plague struck Kyōto, and Anaoji was built to enshrine an image of Yakushi, in order that Yakushi's healing power might halt the spread of the plague. In 962 a second image, a Sho Kannon, was donated to the temple by a local family. The many miracles worked by this Kannon eventually led to Anaoji's inclusion in the Saikoku pilgrimage route.

Enshrined in the temple's Main Hall, in an alcove to the right of the main image, is a famous wooden Shaka Nehanzō (pl. XXIX). Nehan (浄槃) is the Japanese transliteration of nirvāṇa; a nehanzō is a statue or painting depicting the death of the Buddha. In these statues and paintings, the Buddha is depicted lying on his right side. The Anaoji image probably dates from the late Kamakura period. The curative powers of this image are widely known, and people come from all over Japan to touch it. The pilgrim rubs the part of shaka's body where he himself is in pain, then touches his own body in the same spot. The power of Shaka is thereby transferred to the diseased or injured part of the body, and effects a cure. The image is smooth and shiny from having been rubbed by generations of visitors. Pilgrims cured by the image have traditionally donated futon, mattresses, and kakebuton, blankets, to the temple for the comfort of the image. By
the Meiji period so many grateful pilgrims had made donations that the image and the bedclothes over it and under it reached to the ceiling of the Main Hall. The practice of donating futon and kakebuton continues even today, but now only one set is used at a time.

Anaoji boasts two very fine early Edo gardens, one to the south and one to the west of the Honbō, which have recently been restored. The southern garden (pl.XXX) is said to represent the paradise of Amida. The tall rock directly below the pagoda is the central focus of the garden; it and the smaller stones to either side represent Amida flanked by Kannon and Seishi. The other stones in the garden may represent the thirty-three temples of the Saikoku pilgrimage route. The garden is planted with mosses, pine trees, azaleas and iris; it is particularly famous for the lotuses which bloom in its pond in mid summer. The western garden is smaller but is also very lovely, with a borrowed landscape of distant hills in the background.

22. Sōjiji

Sōjiji is an immaculately maintained urban temple. The practice of making offerings — of flowers, food, incense or light — to the Buddha and other holy beings is an ancient one and is found throughout the Buddhist world; at few Japanese temples is the custom followed so scrupulously or
so elegantly as at Sōjiji. Before the major images at Sōjiji are matching holders for flowers, rice, incense and candles, all clean, all freshly filled. Here and at other Shingon and Tendai temple shikimi branches and leaves are much in evidence. Shikimi is a small evergreen tree with shiny oblong leaves native to Japan and China; it is used as an offering to images in temples and to the dead in cemeteries. It is thought to be particularly appropriate for use as a Buddhist offering because its Chinese character, incorporates and character , secrecy, which is the first character in mikkyō, the Japanese word for esoteric Buddhism. At Sōjiji, small plaster shikimi leaves are used as offerings to the paintings of the twelve patriarchs of Shingon which hang in the Main Hall; live branches are used, along with fresh flowers, in vases placed before many of the temple's images.

Sōjiji was founded in 890 by San'in Chunagon Masatomo, a Fujiwara noble. The temple's founding legend is a wonderfully complicated mixture of miracles, coincidences, and no fewer than four interventions by the Hase Kannon, the main image of Hasedera. Among other things, the legend recounts the miraculous origins of the temple's main image (pl. XXXI), a Senju Kannon whose sanctity was enhanced when a battle fire devastated the temple in 1570. Although it was in the middle of the worst of the fire, only its lower
half was blackened.\textsuperscript{81}

Also included in the legend is an explanation for the fact that Masatomo is revered as the originator of Japanese cooking and the patron deity of professional chefs in Japan. In a ceremony which is said to have originated with the founding of the temple and which was revived after World War II after a long lapse, chefs come once each year to pay their respects to Masatomo, who is buried at the temple. A few chefs from the Ōsaka area are chosen to display to their patron deity the level of skill which they have achieved. (pl. XXXII). It is a spectacular ceremony, complete with lavish traditional costumes, classical background music (on tape), and theatrical gestures. The ceremony is held on April 18 of each year and coincides with the annual showing of the temple's main image.

Sōjiji serves as a center for faith in Kūkai. The temple's Daishidō, a hall dedicated to Kūkai which is a standard feature of Shingon temples, is surrounded by miniature replicas of the main images of the eighty-eight stations of the Shikoku pilgrimage route. Groupings of images like these serve as surrogate pilgrimages for those who wish to practice their devotion to Kūkai but are unable to travel to Shikoku.
23. Katsuōji

In the late 16th century, Katsuōji faced a dilemma familiar to all institutions dependent upon the generosity of patrons: someone wanted to donate a new main image to the temple. But Katsuōji already had a main image. A very fine main image (pl. XXXIII). Predictably, the temple took the diplomatic way out; it accepted the new main image, and enshrined it along with the old one. The new main image (pl. XXXIV) dates from Toyotomi Hideyori's rebuilding of the Main Hall. A reasonable conjecture seems to be that Hideyori, having spent a great deal of money to rebuild the Main Hall, decided to spend a little more and acquire the great merit which accrues to those who donate Buddhist images. Today the original main image, an impressive example of the early Heian style invariably described by Japanese scholars as dōdōtaru (荘厳, stately, majestic), is enshrined in Katsuōji's museum; the newer main image is enshrined in the Main Hall.

In 1963 a group of very interesting objects was excavated at Katsuōji. Working from temple records which hinted at their existence, excavators found eight small images, each about thirty centimeters high. The images are easily identifiable as Shitennō (pl. XXXV) and Shidai Myōō (四大月王, the four Great Wrathful Ones, in Sanskrit Vidyārāja). Each had been placed within a lidded
earthenware container and buried in the center of a three-tiered square platform made of piled up stones. They had been buried along the boundary of the temple and their placement corroborated Kamakura period records which stated that Katsuōji extended over 200 chō (町; one chō is 2.45 acres or .99 hectares). The Shitenno were placed in their iconographically correct locations, that is, Tamonten (多聞天, Vaiśravaṇa), the guardian of the north, was in the north, and so on; the Shidai Myōō were placed at the intermediate points of the compass. They had been buried in 1228, to demarcate the boundaries of Katsuōji and to protect the sacred space of the temple precinct. They are displayed in the temple's museum; the images and the platforms where they were buried have been designated Important Historical Landmarks.

24. Nakayamadera

Temple tradition at Nakayamadera traces the temple's founding to Shōtoku Taishi. It is said that Shōtoku founded the temple in order to calm the spirits of adversaries whom the Prince had recently defeated in battle. It is said that Shōtoku also founded Nakayamadera in order to assure perpetual memorial services for Ō Naka Hime, the first wife of Emperor Chūai, and her family. Ō Naka Hime's two sons died during a succession struggle with their half brother, the future Emperor Ōjin. Ō Naka Hime was
without descendents and thus, in Buddhist terms, in need of the prayers of others. A tomb said to be Naka Hime's (pl. XXXVI) is located within the precincts of Nakayamadera. This tomb has a horizontal entrance to the burial chamber, a characteristic of late Kofun tombs. The stone sarcophagus within, made of the same yellowish stone as the chamber itself but much more finely dressed, is unusual: more common in late Kofun tombs are stone coffins modelled after wooden coffins of the split log type. The horizontal entrance passage has been excavated, and visitors can walk along this passage to the entrance of the burial chamber. This combination of a Kofun period tumulus within the precincts of a Buddhist temple is an unusual one.

The temple's main image (pl. XXXVII) is a Jūichimen Kannon said by the temple to date from the reign of Emperor Saga (r. 809-823). It is said to represent Śrīmālā, daughter of King Prasenajit of Śrāvasti, wife of the King of Ayodhyā, and a great patroness of Buddhism. It is to her that the Shōmansyō (勝鬘経, Śrīmālā-devī-Simhanāda-sūtra) is dedicated; Shōtoku Taishi wrote a commentary on this sūtra. The decidedly foreign flavor of the image -- the high, smooth arch of the brows, the almond eyes, the body twisting in space, the elaborate headdress -- may be related to its purported subject. The image is flanked by two other Jūichimens, identical to each other but different
in style and pose from the central image (pl. XXXVIII). An inscription dating these two images to 1244 was discovered during the course of investigations recently carried out at Nakayamadera.89 Considered as a group, the three images have thirty-three heads. For those whose circumstances make it impossible for them to complete the entire Saikoku pilgrimage, praying to these three statues is considered to bring the same merit as visiting the thirty-three temples of the Saikoku route.90

25. Kiyomizudera

Kiyomizudera traces its origins back to an Indian hermit named Hōdō (法道) who came to Japan via China and Korea. After a period of itinerant preaching, Hōdō reached the mountain where Kiyomizudera now stands. Because mountaintop locations often lack a reliable water supply, Hōdō prayed to a water god, and suddenly a spring of pure water gushed forth.91 There is a well within the precincts of Kiyomizudera which is said to be located at the site of Hōdō's spring. It is a delightful spot, with a roof of miscanthus thatch over the well. The well is of course the origin of the temple's name, and the head priest of Kiyomizudera bears the name Shimizutani (清水谷, valley of pure water).92

Kiyomizudera is exceedingly remote (pl. XXXIX), located deep in the mountains about equidistant from Osaka and
Himeji. Despite its remote location the temple has been the beneficiary of lavish patronage from the nobles of Kyōto. The Tahōtō was first built by the mother of Taira Kiyomori, in order to ensure her son's victory in battle. And Minamoto Yoritomo built the temple's Amidado. The 20th century has brought disaster to Kiyomizudera: a fire destroyed the temple completely in 1913, and typhoons struck in the mid 1960s. Rebuilding is still going on.\textsuperscript{93}

26. Ichijōji

Like its neighbor Kiyomizudera, Ichijōji was founded by the Indian hermit Hōdō. At Hokkezan, the mountain where Ichijōji now stands, Hōdō practiced austerities and worked many miracles. In 649 he went to the capital to pray for the recovery of Emperor Kōtoku, who had fallen ill. When his prayers restored the Emperor to health, Kōtoku founded Ichijōji on Hokkezan.\textsuperscript{94} The temple owns a wonderful Kamakura period portrait of Hōdō, formerly enshrined in the temple's Founder's Hall but now in the temple museum (pl. XL). It shows Hōdō dressed in ascetic's garb, a look of fierce concentration on his face, the foreign features greatly exaggerated.

The temple has been lavishly patronized by the Imperial family and by others throughout its history, and boasts many fine objects of art historical significance. Within the zushi in the Main Hall are four images;\textsuperscript{95} the Main
Image, designated an Important Cultural Property, is a Hakuhō period gilt bronze Shō Kannon. It is a secret image and is rarely shown. The former maedachi, also Hakuhō period, also an Important Cultural Property, is now in the temple museum (pl. XLI). It is a charming little thing. The straight, columnar figure is lavished with ornamentation, which is not quite symmetrical: the necklace falls lower off the left shoulder than off the right, and the roundel at the waist is off center. The face bears a trace of a smile. It is large for a Hakuhō period gilt bronze, about eighty centimeters high. The ornamentation plays over the surface of the figure, obscuring the form beneath. The figure is stiff and highly abstracted, a tube broadening slightly at the shoulders, with narrower tubes for arms. The hands and feet are stiff and awkward, and the head is over-large. But the sweetness of the face and the delicacy of the ornamentation make for a very winning statue.

27. Enkyōji

In 966 an ascetic named Shōkū (性空) followed a purple cloud to Mount Shosha, built himself a thatched roofed hermitage, and began a program of austerities. In 970 he saw a vision of a heavenly maiden worshipping at a cherry tree; he understood from his vision that the tree was a dwelling place for Kannon. He carved a Nyoirin Kannon
from the living trunk of the tree and worshipped it. It was this same Shōkū who helped retired Emperor Kazan reestablish the Saikoku pilgrimage route, upon instructions given to the Emperor by Kumanō Gongen. Shōkū's fame spread rapidly, and Mount Shosha became a popular pilgrimage site for commoners and members of the Kyōto nobility alike. The temple was renowned as a center of religious training and came to be known as the Hieizan of the west. Later Enkyōji benefitted from patronage by the Honda family, lords of Himeji Castle; the Honda family cemetery is located within the temple precincts.

The temple's main hall, in which is enshrined a modern Nyoirin Kannon, is said to be built on the spot where Shōkū carved his Nyoirin Kannon from the cherry tree. It is a most inconvenient spot for building: the hall is perched on the side of a steep hill, the front supported by pilings. The main hall is always rebuilt there after fires, despite the spot's inconvenience, because it is sacred ground, the place where the founder worshipped Kannon. Emperor Go Shirakawa (r. 1155-1158) gave the hall its name, Maniden (摩尼殿). Mani is the Japanese transliteration of the Sanskrit work mani, gem, which in turn is part of Cintāmani cakra, whose Japanese name is Nyoirin Kannon, the Kannon enshrined in the Maniden. The present Maniden dates from 1932; the former hall was destroyed by a fire in 1921.
Within Enkyōji's vast mountaintop precincts are many much older buildings, seven of which have been designated Important Cultural Properties. The temple is divided by topography into two main areas (map, fig. 6). The Eastern Valley is the focus for popular Buddhism at Enkyōji; there are located the Maniden, the temple's offices, and a few other buildings. In the Western Valley are several buildings which relate to the practice of esoteric Buddhism at the temple. Of these, among the most beautiful are three buildings known collectively as the Three Halls (pl. XLII, XLIII, XLIV). These are the Daikōdō (大講堂), a lecture hall; the Jikido (食堂), perhaps originally used as a training center or dormitory and now the temple museum; and the Jogyōdō (常行堂), dedicated to Amida. The three buildings are arranged in a U shape, all facing a central courtyard. The more elaborate Daikōdō on the north and Jogyōdō on the south are united by the long, simple Jikido on the west. The Daikōdō (pl. XLII) is a tall, two story, double roofed building, the top roof hipped and gabled, with elaborate bracketing. It was first built in 986 at the request of Emperor Kazan. The present building dates from the 15th century; it was dismantled and restored in 1956.

The Jogyōdō (pl. XLIII) is an interesting example of the combination of functions and forms sometimes found in Japanese Buddhist halls. As its name suggests, the Jogyōdō
at its core is an eastward facing Amida Hall built to house the practice of jogyō (常行), one of Tendai's four kinds of meditation (shishuzanmai 四種三昧; sanmai is a transliteration of the Sanskrit samādhi, meditation or concentration of the mind). In jogyō the practitioner intones the name of Amida, meditates on Amida's form, and visualizes Amida appearing in the four directions.99 Added to the Jogyōdō on the north side is a stage (butai), on which dances and gagaku are performed as offerings to the Shaka Nyorai enshrined in the Daikōdō across the courtyard. Strangely enough, this curious architectural mixture is not at all disharmonious. The curving entrance to the butai acts as a foil to the triangular gable over the Jogyōdō's core hall. The date of the Jogyōdō is unclear, but the present building was probably rebuilt after a great fire destroyed most of Enkyōji during the Genroku era (1329-31).100

The Jikidō (pl. XLIV) is more of a mystery. Construction began in 1174, but the building was left unfinished for several hundred years. In 1963 it was dismantled, restored, and finally completed. Its original function is unclear; it may have served as a priests' residence or a training center.101 Enshrined as a main image of the Jikidō is an unusual image showing Monju in the form of a priest.
Enkyōji is set amidst natural surroundings of great beauty. The mountain forests have been left largely undisturbed, and there are enormous sugi trees throughout the compound. The temple stresses the importance of nature: many of the native plants bear botanical labels. The temple is reached by a ropeway which climbs across a steep mountain valley. (Pilgrims with a fear of heights encounter frequent difficulties along the Saikoku route.) The ropeway is operated by the city of Himeji, not by the temple, and features the inevitable young women guides, complete with starched uniforms and memorized spiel. American rock and roll music from the 1960s is piped into the ropeway's waiting rooms.

28. Nariai ji

Nariai ji is a clear example of the mixture of travel and religious faith found in the Saikoku pilgrimage route. The temple stands on Mount Nariai, which overlooks Amanohashidate, a long, pine covered spit on the Japan Sea coast. Amanohashidate is one of the sankei, the three most scenic spots in Japan. Each year about 1,500,000 people visit Kasamatsu, the hill below Nariai ji which affords the best view of Amanohashidate; of these about 500,000 take the terrifying bus ride up the winding, narrow road that leads to Nariai ji and visit the temple.
According to temple tradition, Nariai-ji was founded in 704 by Shinnō (真 忍). The early history of the temple is unclear, but a charming legend regarding Nariai-ji's main image is included in the Heian period anthology, the *Konjaku Monogatari Shū*. The temple has suffered numerous losses: a mudslide engulfed the temple early in the 15th century, and it was burned by the Isshiki army during the Sengoku period.

Despite these losses, however, objects remaining at Nariai-ji demonstrate that Buddhist art can be found outside the great metropolitan centers. Nariai-ji and its Japan Sea neighbor Matsunōdera are among the most distant of all the Saikoku temples from Kyōto; only Seigantoji at the beginning of the route and Kegonji at the end are farther from the capital. All these temples contain many fine objects, showing that Buddhist art was appreciated even at great distances from the cultural centers. Most surveys of Japanese Buddhist art concentrate on the riches to be found in the great metropolitan temples and pay scant attention to objects in the provinces. It is all too easy to forget that Buddhism and Buddhist art flourished throughout Japan, and that there are some very lovely works of art to be found at great distances from Nara and Kyōto. The main image (pl. XLV) and maedachi at Nariai-ji, for example, both date from the Heian period and have survived the many disasters which
have befallen the temple. Both are standing Shō Kannons, in the elegant, graceful style of the mid Heian period. Guarding the shumidan is a set of very fine Heian period Shitenno.

29. Matsunōdera

Matsunōdera is the only temple on the Saikoku route to house as a main image Batō Kannon (pl. XL). This form of Kannon is quite rare in Kyōto and Nara and rather common in the countryside, especially in mountainous regions. It is thought that Batō Kannon was a popular protective deity in Shugendō, guarding believers from the perils of travel on mountain roads.

Temple tradition traces the founding of Matsunōdera to a Chinese priest named Ikō (威光), who came to Japan during the reign of Empress Genmei (r. 707–715). After travelling through much of Japan, he settled at Mount Aoba, where the temple now stands. He found a large pine tree there, sat beneath it, and began to recite the Lotus Sūtra. Suddenly a dazzling golden image of Batō Kannon appeared in his hands; he built a hermitage and enshrined the image within it. Ikō worked many miracles, and his fame soon spread to Kyōto, where the Empress heard of him. He converted her to Buddhism and in gratitude she established Matsunōdera on the site of Ikō's hermitage.
Like its neighbor Nariai-Ji, Matsunōdera owns a number of very fine objects, including several important hanging scrolls. One showing Fugen (仏眼, Samantabhadra) riding his white elephant has been designated a National Treasure and is now in the Tokyo National Museum. Still at the temple is a lovely Lotus Sūtra scroll, from the Kamakura period, designated an Important Cultural Property (pl. XLVII). The scroll illustrates the Hōtō chapter of the Lotus Sūtra. It shows the Buddhas Shaka and Tahō, seated within a pagoda, surrounded by the eight great bodhisattvas. The figures and the floral ornaments are delicately and elegantly drawn. The Hōtō chapter of the Lotus Sūtra is the same text which inspired the construction of innumerable Tahōtō, "Indian style" pagodas like the famous one at Ishiyamadera, at Shingon temples all over Japan. The pagoda in the Matsunōdera scroll is of this form.

30. Hōgonji

Hōgonji is located on an island at the northern end of Lake Biwa, the large freshwater lake northeast of Kyōto (pl. XLVIII). The island, called Chikubushima, is a small one, rising steeply from the lake in a series of three rounded, tree covered hills.

The island's history provides fascinating glimpses of the complex mingling of Buddhism and Shintō. Long before
the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, Chikubushima was thought to be a sacred place. Records at the shrine adjacent to Hōgonji state that the island was formed by the creator goddess Asaihime during the reign of Emperor Korei (r. 290-215 B.C., according to the traditional chronology). Shrine records also state that a Shrine was founded on the island during the reign of Emperor Yūryaku (r. 456-479), dedicated to Asaihime. When Emperor Tenchi (r. 668-671) established his court at Shiga, the goddess Ichikishima no mikoto, daughter of Amaterasu, was enshrined to Chikubushima shrine as guardian goddess of the Imperial court.\textsuperscript{110}

The island has also long been connected with the Buddhist goddess Benzaiten, (弁才天, Sarasvatī), goddess of eloquence, wisdom, longevity and victory in war. Benzaiten (see pl. XLIX) is associated with water and with music; her attribute is, appropriately enough, a biwa. A legend found in the Hōgonji temple records shows the antiquity of the island's connection with Benzaiten. At about the same time that Emperor Tenchi was enshrining Ichikishima no mikoto at Chikubushima shrine, En no Gyōja came to the island. En no Gyōja ( 役の行者, born 634) is one of the pivotal figures in Japanese Buddhism, revered as the founder of Shugendō and the central figure in countless legends. It is said that he lived in a rocky crag on the island and practiced austerities. During his meditations he
came to understand that the island was sacred to Benzaiten. Praying for a sign to confirm his belief, he drove his bamboo staff into the ground, whereupon the top of the staff split into two branches and grew leaves. Much impressed with this sign, he left the island and solicited donations to build a temple there, telling people of the miracle which Benzaiten had worked. It is said that Chikubushima's name (竹生岛, Living Bamboo Island) derives from this event.

En no Gyōja's solicitations must have proved inadequate (this is one of the few failures ever recorded of this charismatic man, however implicitly) for the temple was founded, not by the great shugenja but by the priest Gyōki. In 724 Emperor Shōmu received an oracle from Amaterasu. The goddess told Shōmu, "There is an island in Lake Biwa which is sacred to Benzaiten. If you establish a temple there, the nation will be at peace, the five grains will grow in abundance, and the people will prosper." The Emperor sent the famous priest Gyōki to Chikubushima, and there the priest built a temple. Gyōki himself carved a large image of Benzaiten and enshrined it in the temple he had built. Two years later, he built a second hall and enshrined within it a thousand armed, thousand eyed Kannon which he had carved.111

At some point -- exactly when is unclear -- a relationship was discerned between these two deities, such
that the Shintō goddess Ichikishima no mikoto came to be seen as a manifestation of the Buddhist goddess Benzaiten. For centuries, a Shintō shrine and a Buddhist temple existed side by side on Chikubushima, both visited by emperors and nobility, the Shintō shrine having as its central object of worship an image of Benzaiten/Ichikishima no mikoto (pl. XLIX). In 1871, however, the Meiji government issued an edict calling for the separation of Shintō and Buddhism. The image of Benzaiten was removed from the Shintō shrine, and a new Benzaitendō was built within the precincts of Hōgonji to house the image. It was completed in 1942.

The mixture of Buddhism and Shintō is apparent throughout the Saikoku pilgrimage route. Many of the temples have shrines within their precincts. The shrine is usually a small one, dedicated to the tutelary deity of the region. The shrines at Mimurodoji (10) and Kiyomizudera (16) in Kyōto are particularly lovely. But nowhere is the close connection between Buddhism and Shintō demonstrated more graphically than at Chikubushima, where large temple and large shrine exist side by side, both associated with the same amalgamated Buddhist/Shintō deity. The Gate and Main Hall of Hōgonji (pl. L and LI) and the main building of Chikubushima shrine were even given by the same donor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and are connected by a covered
passageway. These lovely Momoyama buildings, set within the beauty of the island's scenery, are a vivid reminder of the complexity of Japan's religious history.

31. Chōmeiji

Chōmeiji has the loveliest compound of any temple on the Saikoku pilgrimage route (pl. LII). There are more beautiful individual buildings at other temples -- the Hondō at Kiyomizudera (pl. XXII), the Hondō at Miidera (pl. XIX), and the Yakushidō at Kami Daigoji (11) come to mind -- but nowhere on the route is there such harmony among all the buildings of a temple. At Chōmeiji the main structures are placed in a line running east to west, perched on the side of a steep mountain (map, fig. 7). All are roofed with cypress bark; nearly all have a particularly graceful version of the irimoya roof. These lovely buildings, with dark red painted walls and elegant curving roofs, are set amidst the spectacular mountain scenery which is almost a commonplace along the Saikoku route. Much of the temple was destroyed by Oda Nobunaga in 1573, and most of the present structures date from the subsequent rebuilding, which took place in the 1590s. Four of the buildings have been designated Important Cultural Properties: the Hondō and the Shōrō (鐘楼, Bell Tower), built in 1524, and the three storey pagoda and the gomadō, dating from 1597.
Chōmeiji is reached, not by the steep twisting mountain trail found at other mountaintop Saikoku temples, but by a stone stairway of 808 steps. In recent years a road leading nearly to the top of the mountain was constructed, so pilgrims travelling by car or tour bus are spared the agony of those 808 steps. Public busses, however, still stop at the foot of the mountain. Even those travelling by public transportation find the climb well worthwhile when they reach the temple and contemplate the beauty of its compound.

32. Kannonshōji

Each of the Saikoku temples has an ambience all its own, and the ambience at Kannonshōji is eerie. The mountain on which Kannonshōji is located abounds with boulders and caves. The boulders are enormous, up to seven meters across, and their looming presence casts an uncanny spell over the mountain. The site has been an important center of Shugendō activity since the Muromachi period, and Shugenja come to the mountain even today, though in much smaller numbers than previously. Early Shugenja left records of their presence in the form of buddhist images which they carved in relief in the faces of several of the boulders; some of these date back to the Heian period.

The temple's Okunoin (奥の院), located a few hundred meters southeast of the Main Hall, is a small building
tucked in among a cluster of boulders (pl. LIII). The nearest boulder bears relief-carved Buddhist images. Near the Okunoin is a tiny shrine, less than a meter high, dedicated to the tutelary deity of the mountain, the Thunder God. This miniature building sits in a cleft in a group of enormous boulders which look as though they had been piled there haphazardly by some giant. The boulders and the two buildings give this part of Mount Kinugasa a decidedly spooky atmosphere. The diminutive image of the Thunder God originally kept in the shrine has been moved to the Main Hall for safekeeping. Although paintings of the Thunder God are not uncommon in Japanese art, sculpted representations like the one at Kannonshōji are rather rare.

The main image at Kannonshōji is a secret Senju Jūichimen Kannon, shown once every thirty-three years (the last showing was in 1979). Those who have seen it describe it as a lovely example of the Nambokuchō style;\(^{116}\) the head priest at the temple refers to it affectionately as a bijin.\(^{117}\) The image has been designated an Important Cultural Property.

33. Kegonji

Kegonji has long been the focus of an active local cult. It is located at some distance from the great Buddhist centers of Nara and Kyōto, far enough that the more famous temples of these cities offer little real
competition. And, unlike most other Saikoku temples which are remote from Nara and Kyōto, Kegonji is located in a populous region: the large city of Gifu is less than thirty kilometers away. The temple is always thronged with visitors, most of them local people.

The main image at Kegonji, a Jūichimen Kannon, is a secret image, and here the tradition of secrecy is adhered to absolutely. No photographs are available, and even the younger priests in residence at the temple have never seen it. There is a Jūichimen Kannon (pl. LIV) in a hall adjacent to the Main Hall which some scholars believe may have been the temple's original main image. This statue is in the characteristic heavy, imposing style of the early Heian period. Its present situation bears mute witness to the difficulty of maintaining an aristocrats' religion on commoners' donations: this majestic image, sadly in need of dusting, is shunted off to one side of a decrepit hall piled with boxes. Faring better is a Bishamonten in the Main Hall; it is in a similar style and is almost certainly contemporary with the abandoned Kannon. It has been designated an Important Cultural Property.

Kegonji boasts the largest monmaemachi (門前町, temple town) of any temple on the Saikoku route, and for good reason. In earlier times, when travelling was arduous, the inns there offered comfortable lodging where travellers
could rest after rigors of a long and exhausting pilgrimage. But today, with speedier modern transportation having obviated the need for one last resting place before the long journey home, the monmaemachi at Kegonji is now mostly souvenir shops and lunchrooms.

Within the temple complex there is further evidence that Kegonji serves as the terminus of the Saikoku pilgrimage route. The Gizuridō (pl. LV), a small building adjacent to the Main Hall, is filled to overflowing with sedge hats, pilgrims' jackets, and staffs, offered by pilgrims in thanksgiving for a safe pilgrimage.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. Temple names used here and throughout this dissertation are the ones by which the temples are most commonly known. Full formal names are given in the appendix.

2. R. Sawa, 62–63; Statler, 145–47.


4. Works of art considered valuable for an understanding of Japan's cultural heritage are designated Important Cultural Properties by the Minister of Education, under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, administered by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Education. From within this group, particularly valuable objects are further designated National Treasures. It may give some perspective to these designations to note that as of 1972, about 10,000 works of art in all media had been designated Important Cultural Properties, and about 1,000 had been designated National Treasures. Kurata Bunsaku, "Country Report (Japan)," Conference on Co-operation among Museums in the Asian and Pacific Region (1972) (Tokyo: Agency for Cultural Affairs). (Mimeoographed).

5. Security is a very real concern at the Saikoku temples. At several temples I saw closed circuit television cameras, and at one temple the head priest received me in a room filled with closed circuit monitors, which he watched while we spoke. When he was called away to the telephone, his wife came in and scanned the monitors. The theft of the main image at Anaoji in 1968, discussed in Chapter 4, indicates that the concern is well founded.

6. The founding legend of Kokawadera is recounted in Chapter 4; the Kokawadera engi emaki is discussed in Chapter 3.

7. Makinōdera's connection with Kūkai is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

8. R. Sawa, 80–81.

9. R. Sawa, 81.

11. "Fujiidera," black and white pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. See also Shimizutani, 33. The history of Fujiidera is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.


13. Hirahata, 43-45. Some versions of the legend (e.g. R. Sawa, 89) omit the patronage of the Empress; the version told at the temple asserts that Benki's image cured the Empress of any eye disease.

14. The healing powers attributed to Tsubosakadera's main image are discussed further in Chapter 4, the temple's work on behalf of the blind in Chapter 6.

15. In this case, temple tradition takes the form of a recorded announcement summarizing the history and special features of Okadera, played over loudspeakers at the Main Hall. The assertion can also be found in temple publications, for example in the booklet "Okadera," published by the temple in 1972, p. 20. See also Nakao, 95.

16. For a thorough discussion of the original identity of images in the hanka form, the reasons for their later identification as Nyoirin Kannon, and a summary of scholarship related to these questions, see Inoue Tadashi, "Chūgūji hanka shiizō ni tsuite," Kokka, Number 19 (June, 1960).

17. Many of the aspects of Nyoirin Kannon found in Japan are discussed and illustrated in Henmi, 160-82.


19. R. Sawa, 95.


21. R. Sawa, 104.


23. This cult is discussed in Chapter 4.

24. R. Sawa, 104.
25. In the traditional Japanese measuring system in use when the image was made, it is 33 shaku tall; one shaku is approximately one foot or 30 centimeters. Thirty three shaku is, of course, an appropriate height for an image of Kannon.

26. I was told when I visited Hasedera that if I rubbed the feet of the main image my research would proceed well.


28. The founding of the Nan'endō is recounted in Chapter 3; the main image is discussed in Chapter 4; and the general history of Kofukuji is related in more detail in Chapter 5.

29. The portraits are published in Itō Nobuo and Kobayashi Takeshi, Chūsei jiin to Kamakura chōkoku, Vol 9, Genshoku Nihon no bijutsu (Tokyo, 1968), Plates 25, 28, and 88-93.

30. For more on the Kamakura period rebuilding of Kōfukuji, see Chapter 5.

31. R. Sawa, 119.

32. Another example of an image in the yamato zuwari pose is the Amida at Ōhara Sanzen'in in Kyoto.

33. "Daigosan shōshi" (Kyoto, 1980), booklet available at the temple in 1982, p. 3. See also R. Sawa, 123.

34. Overheard at Kami Daigoji, May 18, 1984.


37. The founding of Iwamadera is related in Chapter 3; the temple's main image is discussed in Chapter 4.

38. There are, of course, other ponds, scattered all over Japan, where the same claim is made.


41. 大般若経, the *Mahāprajāpāramitā sūtra*.

42. "Shikibu to Ishiyamadera," booklet available at the temple in 1984. See also Hirahata, 87.


44. Eliot, p. 246, n. 1.


46. R. Sawa, 141.

47. Interview with Professor Hoshimiya Chikō, May 4, 1984.


49. Soper, p. 170, n. 289.

50. *Miidera hibutsu tokubetsu kaihi*.


52. Interview with Mr. Umemura.

53. This account of the founding of Kannonji is summarized from "Ima Gumano Kannonji," color pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. See also Shimizutani, 64-65. The legend states that the image given to Kūkai was one *sun*, eight *bu*, or about two inches tall.

54. R. Sawa, 152.

55. R. Sawa, 153.

56. Hirahata, 98.

57. "Ima Gumano Kannonji."

59. This word is used to describe the Hondo's roof in the English language booklet "Kiyomizudera," available at the temple in 1984.

60. Nishida, Nishimura and Doi, 115.

61. Kuya's life and work and the portrait of him at Rokuharamitsuji are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

62. Interview with the Rev. Kawasaki Junshō, priest of Rokuharamitsuji, March 21, 1984. Mr. Kawasaki said that the refurbishing cost 100,000,000 yen, about $280,000 at the rate of 360 yen to the dollar then in effect.

63. Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 98.

64. My host at Rokkakudō, Takaoku Yoshio, a lay employee of Ikenobō, scolded me gently when I used the word "school" (ryū) in connection with Ikenobō. It seems that -- at least according to Ikenobō -- the other branches of Ikebana are schools, but Ikenobō is not.


66. Interview with Mr. Takaoku, February 27, 1984.

67. Not surprisingly, most of the students in these classes are women; nearly all the teachers are men.

68. R. Sawa, 176-77.

69. R. Sawa, 180-81; Hirahata, 121-22. This legend is recounted in more detail in Chapter 4.

70. The head priest of Gyōganji, Nakajima Tankai, also serves as head priest of two other temples. Interview with Nakajima Shūkai, nun of Gyōganji, April 16, 1984.

71. For more on Gensan, see Chapter 3. Patronage at Yoshiminedera is discussed in Chapter 5.

72. Interview with the Rev. Kamon Kōchō, head priest of Yoshiminedera, March 23, 1984. Mr. Kamon has dreams about this image, which he interprets as signs of its great powers.

73. Japanese and scientific names of these plants are tōki, Angelica acutiloba; yomogi, Artemisia
princeps; niwatoko, sambucus sieboldiana; and mata tabi, actinidia polygama. Kuro moji, lindera umbellata, is also used.

74. Interview with Mr. Kamon, March 23, 1984.


76. Interview with the Rev. Anaho Gyôkô, head priest of A n a o j i, March 2, 1984. For more on the history of this image, see Chapter 4.

77. Hirahata, 132.

78. With refreshing candor, Mr. Anaho told me that although temple tradition asserts that the gardens are Momoyama, specialists in garden history say that they date from the Edo period.

79. This interpretation of the garden is from Mr. Anaho.

80. Illicium religiosum. The plant's connection with Buddhism was obviously well established by the time the taxonomists got to it.

81. R. Sawa, 196. The legend is related in Chapter 3.

82. R. Sawa, 202-3.


84. This legend is related in more detail in Chapter 3.

85. Traditional reign dates for Chuai are A.D. 192-200.


88. For more on this image and the cult related to it, see Chapters 4 and 6.


92. There are other Saikoku temples where the family name of the head priest (a hereditary position) is related to the temple's name. At Anaoji (安明天寺), the head priest's name is Anaho Gyōkō (安穂行弘). The family name of the head priest of Matsunōdera (松尾寺) is Matsuo (松尾).

93. The 20th century rebuilding of Kiyomizudera is discussed in Chapter 6.


95. Interview with Maruyama Iwane, April 14, 1984.

96. Shōkū's life is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.


100. "Shoshazan," 64.


102. The other two are Miyajima, a small island near Hiroshima with its beautiful Heian period Itsukushima Shrine, built by Taira Kiyomori, and Matsushima, a cluster of picturesquely shaped, pine topped islands near Sendai in northern Japan.


104. This legend is related in Chapter 4.

106. These two images are published in R. Sawa, 239.

107. R. Sawa, 244-45.

108. Hirahata, 176.


111. "Chikubushima shi" (Osaka, 1975), booklet available at the temple in 1984, pp. 11-12. See also Shimizutani, 114-16.

112. This relationship is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

113. These buildings and the circumstances surrounding their donation are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

114. Other mountaintop Saikoku temples with relatively new roads include Kiyomizudera (25) and Narai-ji (28). The Saikoku priests I talked with were ambivalent about the increasing ease of travel in the 20th century. Easy access brings more visitors, which is viewed as a good thing, both spiritually and financially. But several priests I talked with bemoaned the laziness of the modern pilgrim and lavishly praised those hardy few who still make the entire pilgrimage on foot.


116. R. Sawa, 262-63.

117. 美人 ; the word literally means beautiful person, but is usually used to refer to a beautiful woman. Interview with the Rev. Okamura Junno, head priest of Kannonshōji, March 28, 1984.

118. R. Sawa, 270.
CHAPTER 3
FOUNDERS AND FOUNDING LEGENDS

Virtually all of the Saikoku temples trace their origins to miraculous -- or at least wondrous -- events. This is hardly surprising, for particular sanctity, as evidenced by miracles, was an important criterion for inclusion in the route. Some of the most remarkable men in Japanese history figure in these legends; the tales are filled with emperors and nobles, eminent priests, and ascetic holy men. The legends are marvelously entertaining in and of themselves. In addition, taken as a body the founding legends illuminate many aspects of Buddhist practice and belief in Japan.¹

The legends recounted in this and the following chapter are part of a vast body of Japanese literature called setsuwa (説話 , tales). Tales like these were handed down orally and transmitted by itinerant story tellers.² Some were preachers, who used simple, dramatic stories which vividly portrayed the power of Buddhism and the benefits to be derived from the practice of the faith. Some were professional entertainers. Others were engaged in the solicitation of funds for temples, called kanjin (勧進).
When Imperial and noble patronage of Buddhist temples began to decline toward the end of the Heian period, there arose a group of wandering monks who travelled widely, soliciting funds; these monks told stories of the miracles associated with the temples for which they solicited.

From the end of the Heian period onward, setsuwa were collected into anthologies, of which the early 12th century Konjaku monogatari shū is the largest and best known. Many stories appear in more than one anthology, set in different locations and with the miraculous powers which are the focus of the story attributed to different holy men or images. It is thought that monks engaged in kanjū had a repertoire of tales which they used in their work, changing the location of the story and the name of the miracle working statue or holy man as they solicited for first one temple and then another.

Included among the legends associated with the Saikoku temples are several which appear in different forms in different setsuwa anthologies. These are discussed in this and the following chapter.

The discussion which follows focuses on the founding legends of the Saikoku temples, and on the remarkable men who figure in them. The discussion includes a representative sampling of founding legends and anecdotes relating to the founders, chosen both for their
entertainment value and for the insights they offer. Legends are arranged into groups according to the type of founder, and each group is followed by reflections and comments. The chapter ends with a discussion of art objects associated with founders, which form an important category of Japanese Buddhist art.

SHÔTOKU TAISHI AND KUKAI

Two of the most important figures in early Japanese Buddhism, Shōtoku Taishi and Kūkai, appear with some frequency in the history of the Saikoku temples. Their presence in these and other Japanese Buddhist legends is a measure of the esteem in which they have been held throughout Japan's history.

Shōtoku Taishi (聖徳太子, Prince Shōtoku, a posthumous name, 574-622) is credited with the establishment of Buddhism in Japan. A son of Emperor Yōmei (r. 585-587), Shōtoku served as regent during the reign of his aunt, Empress Suiko (r. 592-628), who became a Buddhist nun soon after ascending the throne. Shōtoku was a great scholar, well versed in the Chinese classics and a serious student of Buddhism. He was also a wise and humane ruler, drawn to Buddhism as much by the humanity he found in its doctrines as by its intellectual achievements. Seven volumes of commentaries on various Buddhist texts are attributed to Shōtoku, although this attribution has been
questioned by some Japanese scholars. Four commentaries on the *Lotus Sūtra*, two on the *Yuima kyō* (維摩経, *Vimalakīrti nirdeśa sūtra*) and one on the *Shōman kyō* (勝鬘経, *Śrīmālā devī simhanāda sūtra*) are said to be by Shōtoku.

Temples all over Japan, from Fukushima prefecture in northern Honshū to Hiroshima prefecture in the south, trace their origins to Shōtoku Taishi. Four such temples are included in the *Saikoku* route. Temple tradition at Nakayamadera (24) asserts that after the defeat of Mononobe no Moriya and his anti-Buddhist faction in 587, the Prince was told in an oracle to establish a temple in order to calm the spirits of the rebels killed in the battle. He followed a purple cloud, traditionally a good omen in Buddhist legends, to Oshibadani, near present day Ōsaka, and there he saw three towering mountains. He chose the central mountain of the three for his temple and gave it the name Shiunzan Nakayamadera (紫雲山 中山寺, Purple Cloud Mountain, Central Mountain Temple).

It is said that Shōtoku also founded Rokkakudō (18) as the result of an oracle. In 587 the Prince went to the area that is now the city of Kyōto in search of materials for Shitennoji, which he was building in fulfillment of a vow. He decided to bathe in the clear water of a pond he found there, and hung his clothes and his Buddhist amulet on a
nearby branch. When he tried to recover them, the amulet stuck to the branch and he could not remove it. He wondered about this, and that night an oracle was given to him in a dream: he was to return to the spot and build a hexagonal temple from a large *sugi* tree he would find there.⁸

Prince Shōtoku is said to have established Chōmeiji (31) because of an inscription he found carved in a willow tree on the mountain where the temple now stands. During the reign of Emperor Keikō (whose traditional reign dates are A.D. 71-130), a high government official, one Takeuchi no Sukune (武内宿祢), came to the mountain. There he carved a prayer for long life and the granting of many wishes into the trunk of a large willow tree. Five centuries later, Shōtoku Taishi came upon the tree, with the inscription still visible. The Prince saw the shadow of Kannon in the tree, and suddenly a white haired old man appeared from a cave. He instructed the Prince to carve three images of Kannon, a triad of Senju, Jūichimen, and Shō Kannon, from wood taken from the sacred willow tree which bore Sukune's inscription. This, said the old man, would make the spirit of Sukune very happy, and the temple would be revered by all the people of the nation. The Prince immediately carved the images and built the temple, which was named Chōmeiji as a reminder of the carved invocation (chōmei, 長命, means longevity).⁹
The founding legend of Kannonshōji (32) states that during a trip to Ōmi (present day Shiga prefecture), Shōtoku heard a voice coming from a field of bullrushes. He investigated and found among the reeds a creature that was "like a human but not a human, like a fish but not a fish," as the temple histories put it. The creature told the Prince that its present form was retribution for having taken life in a previous existence. If the Prince would build a temple on the site and enshrine within it a grieving image, the creature would be freed from the torments of its existence and would be able to dwell in the heavens.¹⁰ The temple still displays a strange object which it calls the mummy of a mermaid (or merman; the Japanese word ningyo, 人魚, is neutral).

The Saikoku founding legends which relate to Shōtoku Taishi are both an indication of the great spirituality attributed to the Prince and a revealing remnant of the early history of Buddhism in Japan. Shōtoku is shown acting alone. Signs and oracles are given to him: an immovable amulet, an invocation carved in a tree, a strange creature. Because of his great spirituality, the Prince is open to these signs and is thus able to discern the sanctity of certain places.¹¹ But he also has the resources at his disposal to act on these intimations of holiness: he proceeds to build temples on the spots whose sanctity has
been revealed to him. In these legends spiritual power (the power to recognize holy places) and political power (the means to order to construction of temples) are combined in one man. In later legends, these two powers are separated, so that in most of the Saikoku founding legends it is an ascetic holy man who first recognizes the sanctity of a spot, and an emperor or nobleman who establishes a temple there. The Saikoku legends relating to Shōtoku Taishi show a time when sacred and political power were combined in one man; they may hark back to an era before the introduction of Buddhism, when the emperor was both secular ruler and high priest of the native cult.

Kūkai (空海, 774-835), also known by his posthumous name Kōbō Daishi (弘法大師) was the founder of the Japanese sect of esoteric Buddhism called Shingon (真言). He was born on the island of Shikoku, and at 15 went to Nara to study the Chinese classics under the tutelage of his maternal uncle. Three years later he entered the college in the capital and continued his study of the classics, but he became dissatisfied with his course of study and turned increasingly to Buddhist writings. He withdrew from the college shortly after he had entered -- exactly when is unclear -- and spent several years meditating and performing ascetic practices in remote mountain regions. He took the tonsure and became a Buddhist
priest. In 804 Kūkai traveled to China, where he remained for two years and studied with the master Hui Kuo (惠果, 746-805, in Japanese pronounced Keika). Hui Kuo was the seventh patriarch of esoteric Buddhism, disciple and successor to the Indian master Amoghavajra (704-71). Hui Kuo appointed Kūkai his successor in the esoteric tradition. After his return from China Kūkai performed esoteric ceremonies for the court, and continued to study and write. In 816 Kūkai's request to the throne for land on which to establish a temple was granted, and he began construction of Kongōbuji on Mount Kōya, south of Nara. In 823 Emperor Saga (r. 809-823) presented Kūkai with Tōji, a large temple in the southern part of Kyōto, to be used as metropolitan headquarters of Shingon. Kūkai spent ten years at Tōji, supervising further construction there, writing, and administering his rapidly growing new sect. In 831 Kūkai fell ill and shortly thereafter he retired to Mount Kōya, where he died in 835. In addition to his religious activities, Kūkai was famous for his public works and charitable actions. He was known as a fine calligrapher, and the invention of the Japanese syllabaries, called kana, is often attributed to him, an attribution which is almost certainly apocryphal. He is also credited with great skill as a sculptor.
Only one Saikoku temple claims Kūkai as founder. The founding legend at Kannonji (15) states that Kūkai followed an auspicious cloud eastward from Tōji. In the mountains east of Kyōto he met an old man who identified himself as Kumano Gongen and told Kūkai that the region where they stood was sacred to Kannon. Kūkai founded a temple on the spot.13

Sir Charles Eliot remarks of Kūkai that he is "... the reputed author...of more works of art than any one man could have executed..."14 and images in temples throughout Japan are attributed to him. A few examples will suffice to illustrate the extraordinarily wide range of Kūkai's purported sculptural activities. The main images at Kōfukuji, in Date gun, Fukushima prefecture,15 at Daifukuji, in Minami Uonuma gun, Niigata prefecture, on the Japan Sea coast in northern Honshū16, and at Shōhōji, in Mihara City, Hiroshima prefecture,17 are said to have been made by Kūkai. Two Saikoku main images are attributed to him. Kūkai is said to have sculpted the image of Fukūkenjaku Kannon, now lost, which originally served as the main image of the Nan'endō of Kōfukuji (9), upon the request of Fujiwara Takamaro. It was upon Kūkai's advice that Takamaro's son Fuyutsugu built the Nan'endō, within which he enshrined his father's image.18 Temple tradition at Okadera (7) claims that Kūkai made the temple's main
image (pl. VI) of clay from India and China, which he had himself brought from China, mixed with clay from Japan. He also, it is said, placed within the large clay image a small gilt bronze hanka image.

Whether or not Kūkai actually made any of the statues attributed to him, there is no doubt that he was possessed of a clear and distinctive artistic vision. Surviving objects executed upon his commission and under his supervision are in an easily distinguished style. The largest group is enshrined in the lecture hall at Tōji and consists of some twenty-one images. The style is smooth and fleshy, showing clear Indian influence in the gently tapering torsos and limbs and in the connecting nose and eyebrows.¹⁹

The connection of Makinōdera (4) with Kūkai is very strong. Kūkai is said to have taken the tonsure there, and to have stayed at Makinōdera for two years between his return from China and his founding of Kongōbuji. Most scholars accept these assertions as highly probable although unproved.²⁰ Tradition at Makinōdera holds that many of the doctrines of Japanese Shingon were formulated during Kūkai's stay at the temple after he returned from China, a tradition supported by drafts of Kūkai's writings in the temple's collection.²¹
Kūkai, even more than Shōtoku Taishi, captured the popular imagination. There are as many Tendai as Shingon temples on the Saikoku route, but it is Kūkai who figures repeatedly in Saikoku legends, and not Saichō, the founder of the Tendai Sect. Kūkai's undeniable abilities and achievements, among which must be counted the profundity and originality of his teachings, his charismatic preaching, and his distinctive aesthetic sensibility, were magnified until he became a paragon of all human activities. Many of his best known talents and abilities are exhibited in the legends and historical anecdotes linking him to the Saikoku temples, including his purported genius for sculpture, seen in the statues attributed to him at Okadera (7) and Kōfukuji Nan'endō (9), and his calligraphic skill seen in the drafts of his writings which survive at Makinōdera (4).22

In some ways Kūkai was the inverse of Shōtoku Taishi. Shōtoku was a secular ruler with great spiritual power; Kūkai was a priest with political power. In his study of Kūkai's life and thought, Yoshito Hakeda notes that Kūkai's life is a synthesis of two patterns of action, participation in the world of human activity, and withdrawal from the world for meditation and ascetic practice.23 Beginning with his withdrawal from the college in Nara, Kūkai alternated between mountain asceticism and return to the world, a pattern which he continued later in his activities.
at Mount Kōya and Tōji. His priestly qualities are demonstrated in the founding legend of Kannonji (15). The purple cloud which he followed and the incarnation of Kumano Gongen whom he encountered are evidence of his great spirituality, for such omens are given only to holy men who have built up a store of sacred power. But Kūkai also had the political means at his disposal to ensure that a temple would be built on the site whose sanctity had been revealed to him. In one version of the legend, he reported his encounter with Kumano Gongen to Emperor Saga and received from the Emperor an order to build a temple there. The founding legend at Kōfukuji Nan'endō reveals the same kind of access to the sources of political power. Kūkai was on intimate terms with Fujiwara Takamaro and his son Fuyutsugu, two of the most important court ministers of the time. The two men came to Kūkai for advice; in response, he sculpted an image of Kannon for the father, and later encouraged the son to construct a hall in which to enshrine the image.

In the long history of Japanese Buddhism, Shōtoku Taishi and Kūkai are the two men in whom the synthesis of spiritual and political power is most widely recognized. The combination is not unique to these two men; in the Saikoku founding legends recounted in the remainder of this chapter can be found many other spiritually powerful rulers and politically powerful priests. But in Japanese
Buddhist legends, Shōtoku Taishi and Kūkai function as archetypes of the two categories of holy prince and political priest. In legends associated with temples throughout Japan, they appear as true national heroes who follow successfully the twin imperatives to seek the spiritual and to serve the state.

IMPERIAL AND NOBLE FOUNDERS

Although emperors, empresses and nobles figure prominently in the Saikoku founding legends, in most of the legends members of the aristocracy are subordinate to the holy men who are considered to be the real founders of the temples. Usually men and women with political power serve as enablers, who recognize the sanctity of a place as perceived and revealed by a holy man, and then proceed to establish a temple as witness to the holiness of the site and to the miracles worked there. But in a few of the most interesting and entertaining of the Saikoku legends, members of the aristocracy act alone.

Emperor Kōnin of Mimurodoji

At Mimurodoji (10), it was Emperor Kōnin (R. 770-781) who saw the vision which resulted in the founding of the temple. In 770 the Emperor began to see a bright light every evening, a light which was discovered to emanate from a large Senju Kannon which stood at the base of a steep cliff.
The large Kannon disappeared when an Imperial messenger was sent to retrieve it; in its place was a tiny golden image, which the emperor enshrined in a temple he ordered built near the spot where the image had been discovered.25

Gien of Okadera

The Imperial connection at Okadera (7) is less beneficent; here the founding legend is at once miraculous and sad. In the Yamato region there lived a couple who for many years remained childless. They prayed to Kannon unceasingly for a baby, and one night their prayers were answered. They heard a baby's cries outside their house, and went out to find an infant lying on their fence. They treasured this child, this gift from Kannon, but the good omen of the child's miraculous appearance reached the ears of Emperor Tenchi (r. 668-671). In a move that seems remarkably callous under the circumstances, the Emperor took the infant from his adoptive parents, installed him in his villa, and had him educated there. When the infant who had appeared so miraculously grew up, he entered the Buddhist priesthood upon the order of the Emperor, and founded a temple on the site of the Imperial villa where he had been educated.26
Hasatomo of Sōjiji

At Sōjiji (22) the patron was noble, not Imperial. Many of the Saikoku founding legends turn on a single miraculous event, but the complex founding legend of Sōjiji is densely packed with coincidences, revelations, and miracles. The tale begins with the appointment to government headquarters in Kyūshū of one San'in Chūnagon Takafusa (山陰中納言常房; an alternate reading for San'in, and one frequently used, is Yamakage). Takafusa was a Fujiwara noble, a seventh generation descendent of Kamatari, and a fervent devotee of the Hase Kannon, the main image at Hasedera. On his way to the port where he and his family were to embark for Kyūshū, Takafusa encountered a fisherman who had caught a large turtle and was about to kill it. Takafusa bought the turtle from the fisherman and released it into the river. The next day, as the family was boarding the ship, the wet nurse dropped Masatomo, Takafusa's favorite son, into the sea. (In some versions of the legend, it was Masatomo's stepmother who dropped the child into the sea; she was jealous of him and wanted to do away with him.) Takafusa prayed to the Hase Kannon for his beloved son's deliverance; suddenly the turtle which Takafusa had released appeared and carried the child to safety on its back. Takafusa vowed to establish a temple as a measure of his gratitude for the miraculous rescue of his
son. When he reached Kyūshū, he commissioned a Chinese sculptor to carve an image of Kannon from fragrant wood to enshrine within the temple he had promised to build. The sculptor travelled to China and, after a long search, found a suitable piece of wood. But then he learned that the Chinese government had issued an edict forbidding the export of fragrant wood; not knowing what else to do, the sculptor threw the log into the sea.

Many years later, Masatomo (正朝) succeeded to his father's post upon Takafusa's death. One day, on an inspection tour at the beach, he found a piece of fragrant wood which had washed ashore -- the same one his father had ordered. Determined to fulfill his father's vow to establish a temple, Masatomo ordered the wood to be taken to Kyōto so that he could have it carved into an image of Kannon. When he reached the spot where Sōjiji now stands, the wood suddenly became so heavy that he could not move it. He prayed, inquiring the reason for the wood's strange behavior, and the Hase Kannon told him that the wood's refusal to move meant that he was to establish the temple there. Masatomo searched for a sculptor to fashion the wood into an image of Kannon, but could find no one who would accept his commission. Once again he prayed to the Hase Kannon, and was told that he was to ask the first person he encountered the next day. As it happened, the first person
he saw was a child of about 14 or 15. Masatomo was dubious, but, mindful of the Hase Kannon's instructions, he asked the child to carve him an image of Kannon. To his surprise, the child agreed, but with conditions. It would take him, the child said, a thousand days to complete the work. During that time he would need lodging and food, and he requested that the food brought to him be different each day. Masatomo duly prepared a different food each day while the child was making the image; for this reason, he is revered as the founder of Japanese cooking and the patron deity of professional chefs in Japan. The child who carved the main image (pl. XXXI) which was to be enshrined in Sōjiji was, of course, a keshin (化身, incarnation) of the Hase Kannon. 27

An examination of these three legends reveals some of the ways in which Japanese Buddhist legends developed and transformed. A more prosaic version of the legend of Gien of Okadera (7) states that he was found abandoned as an infant. 28 This bald fact could easily have been interpreted as the bestowal by Kannon of an infant upon a couple who had prayed to him for a child. (Of course, the reverse is true as well: it would be quite easy for literal-minded people to dismiss as abandoned a child who really had been a gift from Kannon.)
The story of Emperor Kōnin of Mimurodoji (10) involves a more fundamental change. The central event of many of the Saikoku founding legends is the incident in which the founder perceives, usually through an omen, the sanctity of the spot on which the temple is later founded. We shall see in the following section that receiving an omen which announces the sanctity of a particular place is a role more commonly played by an ascetic holy man. As Vladimir Propp points out in his structural analysis of the folk tale, however, it is the function, by which he means the action performed, which is important within the context of the tale. Functions are frequently transferred from one character or type of character to another. What gives the tale its life is the function, and not the identity or class of the person who performs the function. In the Mimurodoji founding legend the function of recognizing the holiness of a place is transferred from an ascetic holy man to an emperor. In the context of Japanese history, this is not a radical transference: the holy prince, an archetype represented most clearly by Shōtoku Taishi, is a frequently appearing figure. As rulers of an enthusiastically Buddhist nation, lavish patrons of Buddhism, and, in many cases, deeply pious men, emperors were competent to perform many of the same actions as ascetic holy men.
The founding legend of Sōji (22) is much more complex, and shows how disparate elements were sometimes brought together in *setsuwa*. The central core of the story appears to be the incident in which the turtle saves the son Masatomo from drowning, after being rescued from a fisherman by the father Takafusa. This is the part of the legend which is recounted in the Heian period anthology the *Konjaku monogatari shū*. In the *Konjaku* version of the Sōji legend, stress is laid upon the turtle's feelings of obligation, and its joy at being able to discharge that obligation by saving the son of its benefactor. Much is made too of the wickedness of the child's stepmother, for in this version she deliberately throws the boy into the sea because she is jealous of him. In the *Konjaku* account, no mention is made of the subsequent events found in the version told at Sōji: Masatomo's succession to his father's post, his discovery of the piece of fragrant wood which his father had commissioned, his search for a sculptor to carve the wood into an image of Kannon, or the appearance of the child who created the image. The *Konjaku* version is a simple but dramatically told tale of virtue rewarded and vice avenged. At the end of the tale Masatomo is said to have entered the Buddhist priesthood and to have enjoyed an illustrious career in the service of Emperor Uda (r. 887-897); it is the father Takafusa and not the son who is
credited with the founding of Sōji.31

Many of the details which have accrued to the Sōji story are of a kind found frequently in Japanese Buddhist legends. The object which grows so heavy that it cannot be lifted appears in the founding legend of Rokkakudō (18), where Prince Shōtoku's immovable amulet serves as an omen telling the Prince to establish a temple there. A closer parallel is found in the founding legend of Kegonji (33), discussed below; here it is a wooden statue which refuses to move. The child who appears as if from nowhere to create a longed-for image and who later proves to be a keshin of Kannon is also a central character of the founding legend of Kokawadera (3), recounted in the following chapter.

The attribution of certain pivotal events in the story to the beneficent intervention of the Hase Kannon may be later superimpositions on an already elaborate tale. The Konjaku version makes no mention of the Hase Kannon, for example. The Sōji founding legend seems to be an example of a tale which was tailored to fit the needs of itinerant temple fund raisers. This tale also appears in the Hasedera Kannon Genki (長谷寺觀音駿記), also called Hasedera Reigenki, 精駿記 and Hasedera Genki), an anthology of tales illustrating the miraculous powers of the main image at Hasedera (8). It may be that monks soliciting funds for Hasedera took an already popular tale
and embellished it further by ascribing its miracles to the Hase Kannon, and then used it in their solicitation campaigns.

Thus these three tales, all very different, illuminate a few of the processes by which Japanese Buddhist legends may have developed. The Okadera and Mimurodoji legends illustrate pious interpretation of mundane fact and transfer of function, respectively. The Sōji Temple founding legend seems to have developed through several layers of accretion: upon the story of the rescue of a drowning boy by a turtle were piled numerous embroidered details, many of them of a kind common to Buddhist legends. This fantastic concoction was perhaps then further elaborated by monks associated with Hasedera, who reinterpreted it as a fable illustrating the power of the Hase Kannon.

ASCETIC HOLY MEN

Although emperors, nobles, and famous historical personages figure prominently in the Saikoku founding legends, the majority of these legends have as their central character an ascetic holy man. Many of the legends are variations on a single theme. An ascetic holy man withdraws from the world and seeks a place to carry out his devotions. Often led by some miraculous occurrence, he finds a suitable mountaintop, builds a thatched roofed hermitage, and begins a program of religious austerities. His spiritual power
grows; he works miracles; his fame spreads. Word of his power reaches the Emperor, and a temple is established on the site of the holy man's hermitage.

The founding legends are often elaborately embroidered, but their bare outlines are based on undisputed historical fact. Beginning as early as the Nara period, Buddhist priests and laymen had begun retreating into mountains and rural areas to practice austerities and to propagate Buddhism. Various names have been given to these wandering ascetics; among the most commonly used is hijiri (神里), which means saint or holy man. At first the hijiri were highly idiosyncratic in their approach to the practice of the faith, but with the passage of time, they gradually came to be organized into groups with specific aims. Some groups practiced wayfaring and asceticism at a defined set of holy spots in the Ōmine mountains between Mount Yoshino and Mount Kumano, in present day Wakayama and Nara prefectures. Other groups were centered at the Shingon sect headquarters on Mount Kōya; these Kōya hijiri, as they were called, travelled throughout Japan, preaching and soliciting funds for the sect. Still others, called nembutsu hijiri (念仏聖), preached faith in the Buddha Amida and the practice of the nembutsu, the invocation of Amida's name to bring about rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. These and other groups of ascetic holy men are
given considerable credit for spreading Buddhism in Japan beyond the narrow confines of the Imperial court, and for transforming Buddhism from a narrowly based, aristocratic religion into a truly popular faith.36

Shōkū of Enkyōji

The life of Shōkū (空), founder of Enkyōji (27), is representative.37 Shōkū was born in Kyōto in 910. His birth was a joyous event, for his parents had wanted a child for many years. It was also miraculous: the baby was born with his left hand tightly closed in a fist, and when his father pried the fist open he found a needle inside. The infant's parents interpreted this remarkable circumstance as an omen prophesying an exceptional future for their son.

Shōkū was a quiet, serious child who sat by himself and did not play with other children. When he was 10, he read the Hokekyō and understood the entire sutra at his first reading. He announced his wish to enter the Buddhist priesthood, but his father refused his request, saying that he wanted his son to enter government service. Shōkū was a dutiful son, but when his father died he finally achieved his desire to enter the Buddhist priesthood. He made an intensive study of the Hokekyō; so that he could continue his study without interruption, cakes of mochi came out of the sutra to feed him.
Shortly after he entered the priesthood, Shōkū became disillusioned with the atmosphere of gloom and fear which pervaded the capital. In the mid 10th century the doctrine of mappō (未法), the final days of the law, spread through Kyōto, and believers worked frantically to accumulate enough good karma to carry them through the terrors they believed to be imminent. Shōkū left the capital and went to Kyūshū to study under Shugendō masters there. Eventually he decided to return to Kyōto to preach. As he travelled eastward, he noticed that a purple cloud proceeded him. Shōkū was bewildered when the cloud stopped at Mount Shosha, 75 miles short of the capital. Finally, though, he decided to accept the cloud as an omen; he went to Shosha and built a thatched roofed hermitage. Temple tradition at Enkyōji holds that Shōkū chose the pleasantest spot on the mountain for his hermitage (the site of the temple's present Kongōdō). Most mountaintop locations are cold, damp, miserable places, but the spot to which the purple cloud led Shōkū is dry and airy, sheltered in a shallow valley.

At Mount Shosha, Shōkū continued his austerities and his study of the Hokekyō. One day he saw a vision of a celestial maiden worshipping at a gnarled old cherry tree which grew out of the side of a hill near his hermitage. He knew from the vision that the tree was a dwelling place of
Kannon, and so he carved an image of Nyoirin Kannon into the living wood of the tree's trunk. The Harima Shoshazan engi emaki shows Shōkū perched on scaffolding as he carves his statue of Kannon because the hill is so steep. Shōkū was not the only mountain ascetic to carve an image into a living tree; it was a widespread and not uncommon practice. The image which Shōkū carved at Enkyōji is now lost; but surviving examples include a Senju Kannon at Chūzenji in Tochigi prefecture and Fudō Myōō (不動 明王, Acala) at Fukuōji in Hiroshima prefecture.39

Shōkū's fame soon spread to the capital, and pilgrimage to Mount Shosha became popular among members of the nobility. It was Shōkū who, according to some accounts, helped Emperor Kazan reestablish the Saikoku pilgrimage route upon instructions from Kumano Gongen. Shōkū's propagation of the faith was not limited to the aristocracy; he taught Emperor Kazan and expounded the sūtras to the nobility, but he also preached to the common people. He was much loved by the ordinary people who lived in the region around Enkyōji, and even today the temple remains an important center of local faith and practice.

Throughout Shōkū's life, two hideous beings named Wakaten (苦 天) and Ototen (乙 天) followed him and served him. Their ugliness frightened away evil and thus protected Shōkū. They are said to have been keshin, incarnations,
of Bishamonten and Fudō, respectively, who are traditionally connected with Monju. Wakaten and Ototen's constant attendance on Shōkū was further evidence to his contemporaries that he himself was an incarnation of Monju.40

The biography of Shōkū as it is recounted in the Enkyōji temple record the Harima Shoshazan engi contains many elements which recur frequently in the Saikoku founding legends. A wondrous event associated with the conception or birth of a future saint -- in this case the needle clutched tightly in the newborn Shōkū's fist -- is an ancient tradition in Buddhism. Several such events are said to have occurred at the conception and birth of the historical Buddha. Also familiar from the life of the historical Buddha are the obstacles placed in Shōkū's way when he announced his intention of becoming a priest, his study under several different teachers, and his period of wandering. Echoes like these of the life of the historical Buddha are a common feature of the lives of Japanese Buddhist saints. They are reasonable and even predictable stages in the career of one who is seeking Buddhist enlightenment. At the same time, however, it is clear that Japanese hagiographers emphasized -- at the very least -- those events in their subjects' lives which most closely paralleled events in the life of the faith's paradigmatic
practitioner.

Shōkū's unremitting study of the *Lotus Sūtra* is, as we shall see, an important element. Meditation on the *Lotus Sūtra* played an important role in the ascetic practices carried out by men like Shōkū, and veneration of the *sūtra* was widely practiced in Japanese popular Buddhism.

Omens announcing the holiness of a particular place and its suitability as a site for ascetic practice appear in nearly all the *Saikoku* founding legends. Two such omens were given to Shōkū: a purple cloud led him to Mount Shosha, and a vision of a celestial maiden told him of the special sanctity of an old cherry tree.

The fame which came to Shōkū late in his life is also a common element in many of the *Saikoku* founding legends. Men who withdrew into the mountains to practice austerities were believed by the people of the time to accumulate vast stores of sacred power, and commoners and members of the nobility alike came to their mountains to ask favors and to learn from these holy men.

The founding legends recounted below have many elements in common with the story of Shōkū: retreat into the mountains, omens portending the sanctity of a particular place, and ascetic practice. Many also feature miraculous or wondrous events. Despite the similarity of their basic
structure, however, the legends also show a wonderful and entertaining variety.

Zenchu and Zensan of Katsuōji

Like the story of Shōkū, the founding legend of Katsuōji (23) tells of an omen associated with the birth of the founder. The temple was founded by an Imperial prince who studied under twin ascetics at Mount Ōchō, the site of the present temple. The twins were Zenchū (善雑) and Zensan (善山), sons of a Fujiwara lady who before their birth dreamed of two lotus blossoms falling from heaven into her mouth. The twins entered the priesthood at Shitennoji, where they studied for several years. They were dissatisfied with their training there and wished to withdraw into the mountains, but their master refused to grant them permission. In 717, when they turned 20, they sneaked away from the temple and went to Mount Ōchō, where they practiced austerities. After nearly forty years on the mountain, they encountered a stranger seated in meditation on a stone behind their hermitage. He introduced himself as Prince Kaijō, a son of Emperor Kōnin, who had come to the mountain to carry out ascetic practice. He had been sitting on that rock for a month, he said. The puzzled twins asked what he did about food, and the Prince responded that two crows brought him food of surpassing sweetness three times a day. The Prince became a disciple of the twins, and after
their death, he established a temple on the site of their hermitage.41

Enchin of Kiyomizudera

Kiyomizudera (16) was founded by a priest named Enchin (延鎮), who in 780 dreamed of a fountain of pure water and left Kojimadera in Nara to seek its source. At the foot of Mount Otowa, in the mountains east of the valley where Kyōto is now located, he found a waterfall and there he built a hermitage. From a recluse named Gyōei Koji (行薀居士), who practiced austerities on Mount Otowa, Enchin received a block of sacred wood. He carved it into an image of Jūichimen Kannon, which he enshrined in his hut. One day the general Sakanoue no Tamuramaro (坂上田村麻呂, 758-81), came to Mount Otowa to kill a deer. Tamuramaro's wife was pregnant, and it was believed that deer's blood would ensure an easy childbirth. On the mountain, Tamuramaro met Enchin, who reproached him for taking the life of the deer, and preached to him the compassion and mercy of Kannon. Filled with remorse and devotion, Tamuramaro built a temple on the site of Enchin's hermitage.42

Other Omens of Place

During the reign of Emperor Kammu (r. 781-806), an ascetic named Bunen (豊然) went to the mountain where
Kegonji (33) now stands, built a hermitage, and began to perform mountain austerities. At about the same time, a nobleman named Ōkuchi Tairyō (大口 大領), who lived in northern Japan, longed for an image of Kannon. He prayed at a temple near his home for sacred wood from which to have an image carved, and the inspiration he received while praying led him to a large celtis tree. He took the wood to a carver of Buddhist images in Kyōto and commissioned the image he wanted so desperately. But on his way back home, the image suddenly became so heavy that he could not move it. He prayed to the image, asking the reason for this strange event. The image told him that it was unnecessary for him to return to the north, that there was a good spot nearby, and that it, the image, wished to go there in order to work the redemption of all sentient beings. In accordance with the statue's expressed wishes, Tairyō went to Bunen's hut and together the two men, nobleman and ascetic, founded a temple on the site of Bunen's hut and enshrined Tairyō's image within it.43

According to temple tradition at Seigantoji (1), the temple was founded by an Indian priest named Ragyō (裸形) who came to Japan by boat during the reign of Emperor Nintoku (traditional reign dates 313-399). Ragyō saw a vision of Kannon in the famous waterfall at Nachi, which is near the present temple, and built a thatched roofed
Even En no Gyōja (役の行者, En the ascetic), considered the founder of Shugendō and the archetypal ascetic, appears as the recipient of an oracle in a Saikoku founding legend. Little is known for certain about the details of En no Gyōja's life, and the few known facts have been thickly overlaid with pious legend. But it seems fairly certain that such a person actually existed, that he was active in the second half of the 7th century, and that he became the most famous of the early practitioners of mountain asceticism.

Although En no Gyōja did not found Hōgonji (30), temple tradition asserts that he spent several years on the island of Chikubushima, living in a cave and practicing austerities. He believed that the island was sacred to Buddhism and prayed for a sign to confirm his belief; and when he subsequently drove his bamboo staff into the ground, the top half split into two branches and both branches grew leaves. He took this wondrous occurrence as verification of the island's sanctity.

Gensan of Yoshiminedera

Several of the Saikoku founding legends have as one of their themes the establishment of a temple by an emperor or empress out of gratitude for a miracle worked by a holy
Two such incidents occur in the founding legend of Yoshiminedera (20). Early in the 11th century a priest named Gensan (源 眞) withdrew into the mountains west of Kyōto. There he met a white haired old man who was a manifestation of Achizaka Myōjin (阿智坂 明神), the tutelary deity of the mountain. The god told Gensan that the mountain was a Buddhist holy place, and that if Gensan were to establish a temple on the mountain, he, the god, would protect it. Gensan searched for a suitable place, but the mountaintop was covered with crags and boulders, and there was no place to build a temple. He sat atop one of the crags and meditated for seventeen days and nights, and while he was meditating a herd of wild boars appeared and stomped the ground with their feet until they had made a level spot. In 1042, Japan was stricken by a terrible drought, and Emperor Go Suzaku requested Gensan's aid. The priest practiced austerities and prayed for rain, after which a dragon king appeared to him. Suddenly there was a downpour, for which the Emperor and all the people were profoundly grateful. In 1053, when the consort of the future Emperor Go Sanjō became pregnant, Gensan prayed for an easy delivery. In gratitude for the safe birth of a prince -- the future Emperor Shirakawa -- the Imperial family added a Main Hall, an Amida Hall, and several other buildings to Gensan's temple.47
Other Legends in which Imperial Gratitude is Incurred

Matsunōdera (29) was founded by a Chinese priest named Ikō (光明) who travelled throughout Japan before settling on Mount Aoba. One day during his recitation of the Hokekyō a golden image of Batō Kannon suddenly appeared in his hands. Empress Genmei (r. 701-715) established a temple on Mount Aoba after Ikō converted her to Buddhism.

In 722 the Empress Genshō (r. 715-724) suddenly became gravely ill. She was 33 years old, considered in Japan to be a critical or unlucky age for a woman. Although many priests prayed for her recovery, she remained ill. She called in a priest named Taicho (澄) and requested his prayers; he prayed, and she recovered immediately. In gratitude she told Taicho that she would establish a temple for him on the site of his choice. He searched for a suitable place, and when he came to the mountain where Iwamadera (12) now stands, he saw a purple cloud hovering over the mountain. When he climbed the mountain, he heard the voice of Senju Kannon coming from a large katsura tree growing on the mountain and knew that he had found the right spot. The Empress gave Taicho her personal devotional image of Senju Kannon, which he enshrined in his new temple.
When the Imperial court ran out of gold for the gilding of the Great Buddha of Tōdaiji in 749, an eminent priest named Rōben (良弁) was led to Ishiyama by a vision. Rōben, active in the construction of Tōdaiji and later its first abbot, built a small hermitage on the mountain and prayed for gold. Immediately gold was discovered in Mutsu (present day Aomori prefecture), more than enough gold to complete the gilding of the great Buddha. In gratitude for the efficacy of the prayers which had been offered there, Emperor Shōmu established Ishiyamadera (13) on the site of Rōben's hermitage.52

Benki, the founder of Tsubosakadera (6), also had a vision: he saw an apparition of Kannon in a quartz water jar which he had brought with him to the mountain. He carved an image of Kannon and enshrined it, along with his miraculous water jar, in his hut.53 When Empress Genshō, who suffered from eye disease, prayed to Benki's image, she was cured of her illness, and in gratitude she established a temple on Benki's mountain.54

Hōdō of Kiyomizudera and Ichijōji

Kiyomizudera (25) and Ichijōji (26) both trace their foundings to an Indian hermit, a legendary figure named Hōdō (法道) who came to Japan via China and Korea. Hōdō's dates are unclear. Temple tradition at Kiyomizudera asserts that he arrived in Japan during the reign of Emperor Keikō
(traditional reign dates A.D. 71-130) and lived for several hundred years, for it was not until the reign of Emperor Kinmei (r. 539-571) that he established Kiyomizudera. But a Kamakura period record states that Hōdō reached Japan during the reign of Emperor Kōtoku (r. 645-654). It is likely that there is a core of historical truth beneath all the legends associated with Hōdō, for temples which trace their origins to Hōdō are dotted all over the Harima area of Hyōgo prefecture. At Kiyomizudera, the spring of pure water which gives the temple its name gushed forth after Hōdō prayed to a water god. The miracle he worked at Ichijōji is more spectacular. It is said that Hōdō came to Mount Hokke, where the temple is now located, bringing with him only an image of Senju Kannon, some ashes of the Buddha, and a begging bowl. Through the chanting of the Lotus Sūtra and the practice of many austerities, Hōdō made his begging bowl fly. One day the bowl flew to a ship laden with rice taken as tax, and requested the rice as an offering. The ship's captain refused, not surprisingly, whereupon the bales of rice flew through the air -- "like wild geese in formation," says the Ichijōji engi -- to Hōdō's mountain. Faced with such irrefutable evidence of the proper destination of the rice, the ship's captain repented of his error and gave all the rice to Hōdō. (The explanation he gave to his superiors in the taxation office
is unrecorded.) After this, the hermit's fame spread to the capital. He was summoned there in 649, when Emperor Kōtoku fell ill. His prayers restored the Emperor to health, and in gratitude the Emperor established Ichijōji on Mount Hokke.57

Kūya of Rokuharamitsuji

Even amidst all the extraordinary men who founded the Saikoku temples, Kūya, the founder of Rokuharamitsuji (17), stands out. In some ways, Kūya was the opposite of Shōkū and the other mountain ascetics who founded most of the Saikoku temples. Shōkū and his spiritual brothers withdrew from the world into a life of contemplation and spiritual exercise. These holy men did not shun human contact: they preached, they took disciples, they used their spiritual powers to aid others. But the central focus of their lives was ascetic withdrawal. Legends and anecdotes relating to Kūya show him engaged in the world of human action, building bridges and roads, giving money to the poor, ministering to the sick and burying the dead, chanting and dancing ecstatically through the streets of Kyoto.

Kūya was born an Imperial prince in 903.58 Of his Imperial lineage there seems to be little doubt: several Heian period records state that he was the fifth son of Emperor Daigo; according to others, he was the eighth son of
Emperor Ninmyō. Temple tradition at Rokuharamitsuji holds that he was the second son of Emperor Daigo. From Kūya himself there was no clue, for he never spoke of his parents or his home.

Kūya began an intense study of Buddhist doctrines at an early age. He spent a peripatetic youth, travelling through the home provinces and visiting sacred mountains and caves. Along the way, he built bridges and levelled roads. When he found corpses which had been abandoned, he gathered them together, burned them, and conducted Buddhist memorial services for the souls of the dead.

At the age of twenty one he took the tonsure at the kokubunji in Owari province. After his ordination he continued his wanderings and his charitable acts, and studied under the Tendai master Enshō at Hieizan. Kūya became a fervent Amidist, with the nembutsu always on his lips.

In 938 Kūya came to Kyōto, where he continued the combination of spiritual quest and charitable action which was his hallmark. His great joy in living was expressed in his ceaseless repetition of the nembutsu and in the estatic dances he performed. He begged for alms, which he gave to the poor and the sick. As he had done in his youth, he built bridges, levelled roads, and dug wells where water was scarce. The common people of the capital loved him for
his kindness, and they called him Amida hijiri and ichi no hijiri (市の聖, saint of the town).

Legends concerning Kūya abound. He once heard of a copy of the Issaikyō (一切経, all the sūtras) at a temple in Harima. He went to the temple and spent several years studying the sūtras. When he encountered passages which were unclear or difficult to understand, a golden apparition would appear to him in a dream and clarify them for him. When he awoke, he would question learned men about the passages; invariably their explanations were exactly the same as the ones which had appeared to him in his dreams.

Another time Kūya heard of an image of Kannon on a small island near Shikoku which had miraculous powers. Kūya went to the island and worshipped before the image for many months, but the image did not reveal itself to him. Kūya was determined, and for seventeen days he ate nothing, not even so much as a single grain of rice. He burned incense on his arm; he poured oil into the palm of his hand and lit it as an offering of light to the image. And finally one night, his efforts were rewarded: he saw a light emanating from the image. It is said the Kūya carried the scars from the burning incense the rest of his life.

One anecdote reveals Kūya's eccentricities in a particularly striking way. Once he retired into the mountains with a group of his disciples. Even deep in the
mountains he often complained about noise, and his disciples were careful to be very quiet. One day Kūya disappeared. His disciples looked everywhere for him but they could not find him, and after several months passed they dispersed. Meanwhile Kūya entered the capital in secret. He spread out a mat and begged for food with a broken bowl. One day one of the disciples who had been with him in the mountains chanced to see him there. The disciple was overjoyed to see his master again, but astonished to see him in the middle of the city. "You complained about noise in the mountains; what on earth are you doing here?" he asked. Kūya replied that when he was in the mountains he was always being pestered by disciples who wanted him to teach them, and he could find no peace. Here in the city he was left alone. One begging bowl sufficed and he was without want. The city was a perfect place for him to seek tranquility.

Kūya transmitted his singular brand of charitable action to three of his young disciples. One picked up bits of straw rope which had been dropped along the road. These he mixed with mud, which he used to repair the broken down walls of old temples. Another gathered discarded melon rinds and pickled them, and gave the pickles to prisoners. The third collected scraps of waste paper, which he recycled into new paper for copying the sūtras.
During the great epidemic of 951, Emperor Murakami asked Kūya to do what he could to help. Kūya carved images of Kannon, Bonten and Taishakuten (梵天, Brahma, and 境界天, Indra) and the Four Guardian Kings, and enshrined them on a cart which he pulled through the city. He brewed a special tea, to which he added ginger, pickled plums, and bamboo cut to resemble an eight-petalled lotus. This delicious sounding brew he gave to the sick and the dying. It is said that many were cured by his ministrations.

In August of 963 he invited six hundred eminent priests to a ceremony at which prayers were offered for the repose of the souls of those who had died in the epidemic. (That six hundred famous priests would accept an invitation from such an eccentric character as Kūya says a great deal about the esteem in which he was held, not only by the common people, but by the religious establishment as well, especially when one considers the rigid standards of propriety and conformity which prevailed during the Heian period.) The same year Kūya received sanction from Emperor Murakami to establish a temple in the Rokuhara district of Kyōto in which to enshrine the images he had made, and at which to hold memorial services for the victims of the epidemic. The temple was originally named Saikōji, but in 977, five years after Kūya's death, it was renamed Rokuharamitsuji.
Aside from the national figures of Shōtoku Taishi and Kūkai, Kūya is the only one of the Saikoku founders whose personality is revealed in legends and anecdotes. Stories relating to most of the other founders are anonymous and interchangeable. The mochi cakes which appeared out of the Lotus Sūtra to feed Shōkū as he studied could with equal plausibility have fed Ikō or Hōdō. The staff of any mountain ascetic could have sprouted leaves when driven into the ground; it happened that it was En no Gyōja's that did. But only Kūya danced through the streets of Kyōto; only Kūya could have had a disciple who pickled discarded melon rinds to feed to prisoners. The tales told of Kūya reveal a fully three-dimensional personality, a man filled with the joy of living, overflowing with compassion, and utterly heedless of any conventions which interfered with his vocation.

THE POWERS OF THE FOUNDERS AND THEIR SOURCES

It is clear from these varied legends that the men, and particularly the mountain ascetics, who founded the Saikoku temples were believed by their contemporaries to possess extraordinary powers: to cure the sick, to bring rain, to make inanimate objects move, to call forth and subdue all manner of deities. Where did they get these powers?

Unfortunately the Saikoku founding legends are less specific on the sources of the holy men's powers than on the powers themselves; it would seem that results were of more
interest to the tellers of these tales and their audiences than were causes. The word used in most of the legends to refer to the activities of the founders is _shugyō_ (修行), which means variously study, training, and ascetic practice. In the context of Japanese Buddhism and in the absence of more specific terms, _shugyō_ refers to a variety of ascetic practices, including abstinence from sexual intercourse; fasting or abstinence from certain foods; seclusion, particularly in a darkened enclosure; travel through steep and perilous mountain ranges; immersion in cold water; and meditation on and repetition of holy texts.

Some of these practices are mentioned specifically in the _Saikoku_ founding legends. In worshipping before a sacred image of Kannon, Kūya of Rokuharamitsuji (17) abstained from all food; he also burned oil on his hand and incense on his arm.

As they searched for a suitable spot, several of the founders are said to have wandered for long periods before settling on certain holy mountains. These men built up a store of holy power through their arduous travels. They include Taichō of Iwamadera (12), Iko of Matsunōdera (29), and Hōdō of Kiyomizudera (25) and Ichijōji (26).

Both En no Gyōja and Kūya practiced ascesis in caves. En no Gyōja's austerities on Chikubushima (30) included seclusion in one of the island's many caves; and Kūya
visited both caves and holy mountains in his youth. Seclusion within a cave is a manifestation of the Japanese belief that sacred power is contained within a vessel. Inside the vessel the power swells until it can no longer be contained and bursts out.\textsuperscript{59} The notion that power is contained in vessels is an ancient one. The \textit{Kojiki} tells of two sons of Emperor Kōrei (traditional reign dates 290-215 B.C.), who "placed ceremonial jars before the Pi River in Parima; and making Parima their starting point they subdued and pacified the land of Kibi."\textsuperscript{60} And from the \textit{Nihon Shoki}: Two men were sent by Emperor Sujin (traditional reign dates 97-30 B.C.) to stop a rebellion. After they had quelled one revolt, "they took sacred jars and planted them at the top of the acclivity of Takasaki in Wani," as an offering to the deities, praying for success in their next encounter.\textsuperscript{61} It is thought that the \textit{haniwa} which decorated the tombs of the Kofun period were derived from sacred vessels such as these, and that the \textit{haniwa} were thus intended to serve as a sacred fence to separate the world of the dead from the world of the living.\textsuperscript{62}

The ascetic who secludes himself in a cave is acting on this same principle. During his seclusion, his store of holy power will gestate and grow. The very act of containing the power within an enclosed space, forcing it back in upon itself, causes it to increase. Seclusion in a
cave or other darkened enclosure remains an important part of Shugendō practice even today, and can be found in numerous forms.

Another form of practice found in these legends is the recitation of a holy text. In esoteric Buddhism, magical power is believed to inhere in certain texts, spells, and words. The magical power of these texts is activated by reciting them, but this recitation must be accompanied by ascetic practice if the full power of the text is to be achieved. In Japan, the Lotus Sūtra was the text most commonly used in conjunction with ascetic practice. Studying, meditating on and reciting the sūtra were all believed to confer spiritual power on the practitioner. Japanese Buddhist tale literature abounds in stories of priests who had the power of telekinesis, who cured the sick and raised the dead, who subdued demons, and who were served by animals and various deities. At the popular level, copying or commissioning copies and venerating the sūtra were believed to be meritorious acts. Stories are told of pious laymen and women who venerated the Lotus Sūtra and who were rescued from certain death or delivered from demons. Among the Saikoku founders, Shōkū of Enkyō-ji (27) made a life-long study of this sūtra and was miraculously provided with food so that he could continue his study without interruption. Ikō of Matsunōdera (29)
chanted the **Lotus Sūtra** and a Batō Kannon suddenly appeared in his hands. Through the recitation of the **Lotus Sūtra** and the practice of austerities, Hōdō of Ichijōji (26) made his begging bowl fly.

Through ascetic practices such as these the founders of the **Saikoku** temples built up a store of holy power which enabled them to perform miraculous and wondrous acts. Of all the powers the holy men possessed, the one given most emphasis is the ability to recognize the sacred qualities inherent in the mountains they chose for their austerities. The word used in temple histories to refer to the holy man who founded the temple is *kaisan* (山界山, [he who] opens a mountain). The ascetic has the power to open the mountain by virtue of the austerities he has practiced. He recognizes the latent power of the mountain, power which until his arrival had gone unnoticed. He activates its power through ascetic practice and meditation, opening it as a worship site for others.\(^{66}\)

Many of the visions and other omens given to the **Saikoku** founders attested to the sanctity of a particular place. Shōkū of Enkyōji (27) saw a celestial maiden worshipping a cherry tree. Ragyō of Seigantoji (1) saw a vision of Kannon in Nachi Falls. Emperor Kōnin of Mimurodoji (10) saw a bright light emanating from the base of a cliff. Purple clouds led Shōkū to Mount Shosha, Kūkai
to the site where he founded Kannonji (15), Taichō to Mount Iwama (12), and Shōtoku Taishi to the hill where he founded Nakayamadera (24). En no Gyōja's staff grew leaves when it was driven into the ground on Chikubushima. Immovable statues (or, in one case, a statue-to-be) indicated holy spots on which Sōjiji (22) and Kegonji (33) were founded.

The omens vouchsafed to the Saikoku founders, indicating the sanctity of certain mountains and their suitability as sites of ascetic practice, are confirmation of the ascetics' own spiritual powers. The capacity to see these visions, to discern the sacred in certain mountains, comes only to those who have through asceticism built up a store of holy power.

It is no coincidence that the places whose sanctity was revealed by these omens are nearly all on top of mountains. The belief that mountains are holy places has a long history in Japan. In the Kojiki, the gods alight on mountains when they descend to earth. When the August Grandchild Ninigi, grandson of Amaterasu and great-great-grandfather of the first human emperor, Jimmu, descended to earth to assume sovereignty over Japan, he landed on a mountaintop in Kyūshū.67 Gods also dwell in mountains. In rural regions throughout Japan it is believed that gods come down from their homes in the mountains in the spring to watch over the paddy fields through the growing season, and then return to
their mountain homes after they have seen the harvest gathered in.68

Archaeological finds confirm the evidence presented in ancient myths and enduring folk beliefs. At sites near the bases of several mountains long thought to have sacred properties have been found groups of ritual objects. These objects -- stone swords, round mirrors, and jewels, particularly the comma shaped jewels called magatama -- are forms which from ancient times have been thought to have the power to entice a deity to take up temporary residence. Ritual objects like these must have been used to call a mountain god down from his home.69

Travelling into mountains in order to encounter the divine began as early as Jimmu, the first emperor. The Nihongi records Amaterasu's bestowal of magical powers on Jimmu on Mt. Yoshino, and Jimmu's use of those powers to conquer tribes that dwelled on the mountain.70 Also on Mt. Yoshino, Emperor Temmu prayed to Amaterasu before battle and was given a favorable oracle by the goddess.71

Mountains are sacred in Buddhist thought as well. Mt. Meru is the holy mountain at the center of the universe; its complex sacred geography is reproduced in stūpas, altar platforms and mandalas. Worship at holy mountains played an important role in Chinese Buddhism.
Mountains, then, provide a place for encounter with the sacred, both in native Japanese thought and in Buddhist teachings. The ascetics who retreated into the mountains were withdrawing from one world, the world of human activity, and into another world, one which offered heightened opportunity for divine encounter. *Saikoku* founding legends tell of meetings between ascetics and divine beings in mountains. Kūkai encountered Kumano Gongen on the mountain where he founded Kannonji (15). Taichō heard the voice of Senju Kannon and converted the Thunder God on Mount Iwama (12). Gensan encountered both a mountain god and a dragon king at Yoshiminedera (20).

The Saikoku founders were credited with a wide variety of other powers in addition to their ability to discern the latent sanctity of holy mountains and to open the mountains for worship. The prayers of Rōben of Ishiyamadera (13) brought about the discovery of sufficient gold to complete the gilding of the Great Buddha of Tōdaiji. Kūya of Rokuharamitsuji (17) was told the meaning of obscure passages of the sutras in dreams. Among the most intriguing of the powers ascribed to the founders is telekinesis, seen in the legend of Hōdō of Ichijōji (26). This is an ability not uncommonly attributed to ascetic holy men. The best known example is that of Myōren, the founder of Chōgosonshiji on Mount Shigi. Myōren's flying begging
bowl is illustrated in a famous late Heian period painted handscroll, the *Shigisan engi emaki*. The story of a priest who made his water jar move is told in the *Dainihonkoku Rōkekyō Kenki*.72

Other powers attributed to the founders are related to fecundity, of the earth and of humans. Through his prayers, Gensan of Yoshiminedera (20) brought rain to end a devastating drought. Gensan's prayers also brought about an easy delivery for the consort of the future Emperor Go Sanjō. The Saikoku founders, and other holy men, were believed to have access to the source of procreative power by virtue of their ascetic practice; they were able to draw on this power to bring about fertility.

Among the most frequently mentioned of the founders' powers is the ability to cure sickness. Taichō of Iwamadera (12) cured Empress Genshō; Benki of Tsubosakadera (6) cured the same Empress of an eye disease. Hōdō of Ichijōji (26) cured Emperor Kōtoku, and Kūya of Rokuharamitsuji (17) cured many who were stricken in the great Kyōto epidemic of 951.

These powers are a manifestation of an often overlooked aspect of esoteric Buddhism. Histories of Japan and of Japanese Buddhism often refer disparagingly to the magical elements which pervade esotericism.73 It is true that many of the rituals performed in the orthodox esoteric sects, and the additional austerities performed by the
ascetics -- whose modes of practice derive in large part from the orthodox sects -- have as one goal the generation of holy power and the channelling of that power into magical acts. In Japan, esoteric Buddhism attracted numerous of the faithful eager to use this great power to gain their own, often less than spiritual, goals. Esotericism also attracted large numbers of spurious holy men who preyed on a credulous populace eager to acquire the benefits of a holy man's powers. But despite this frequent corruption, one central imperative of esoteric doctrine has continued to be the use of power engendered by esoteric rites for the benefit of others, and not for one's own worldly gain. Priests in the esoteric sects point out that this is one of the features which distinguish the Mahāyāna and esoteric traditions from Hīnayāna Buddhism: Hīnayāna Buddhists seek only their own salvation, but in Mahāyāna, merit accrued and power obtained can be used for others. The holy men who founded the Saikoku temples used the vast powers they had built up, through fasting, recitation of the Lotus Sūtra, and other ascetic practices, to aid others.

The Saikoku legends contain one further category of wondrous events, which might be termed spontaneous miracles. These are miracles which are not worked directly by the founder, but which occur spontaneously, bearing witness to his holiness. Some occur at or around the birth of the
future saint. Before their birth, the mother of Zenchū and Zensan of Katsuōji (23) dreamed of two lotus blossoms falling from heaven into her mouth. Shōkū of Enkyōji (27) was born with a needle clutched in his fist. The infant Gien of Okadera (7) gave off an odor of incense.

Other founders were paid homage by animals. Prince Kaijō of Katsuōji (23) was brought delicious food by two crows as he sat on a rock atop Mount Ōchō practicing austerities. Wild boars levelled a spot for Gensan of Yoshiminedera (20) so that he could build a temple there.

These two categories of miracles appear frequently in legends throughout the Buddhist world, and in the legends of other religions as well. Miraculous birth, or omens occurring at conception or during infancy, are a common element of hagiography throughout the world. Omens like these are seen to prophesy a remarkable and holy life for the saint. Homage by animals indicates that the saint's great holiness is so conspicuous as to be evident even to beasts.

The continuing popularity of the legends told of the Saikoku founders is an indication of the esteem in which these men were held by the common people of their day and by succeeding generations. The ascetic holy men who founded most of the Saikoku temples turned away from the orthodox and aristocratic Buddhism of the capital and travelled into
remote areas, seeking spots, whose sanctity only they could discern and activate, in which to carry out their own forms of Buddhist practice. In doing so, they brought the teachings of Buddhism to the common people. They came as representatives of a powerful faith. And, although proselytizing was for most of them secondary to their main goal of ascetic practice, they won many converts; the temples they founded served the inhabitants of the remote regions in which the holy men practiced no less than they served other ascetics. It is little wonder that stories of the wondrous exploits of men like Shōkū, Gensan, and Kūya have been retold for centuries, for it was these men and hundreds of others like them who first demonstrated the powers of Buddhism to the ordinary people of Japan.

ART ASSOCIATED WITH FOUNDERS

Works of art associated with founders and founding legends form an important category of Buddhist art in Japan. Included in this category are painted handscrolls depicting a temple's founding legend; sculpted (or less frequently painted) portraits of the founder; and Founder's Halls, which enshrine the founder's portrait or his cremated remains. A few examples drawn from the collections of the Saikoku temples will serve to illustrate both the significance of the objects included in this category and the importance of the Saikoku temples as repositories of
Japanese Buddhist art.

Painted Handscrolls

Engi emaki (縁起絵巻), painted handscrolls illustrating the founding legend or the exploits of the founder of a temple, form an important group of paintings in the style called *yamato-e* (大和絵). Translated literally, *yamato-e* means simply "Japanese painting," but the term is used to refer to a broad range of stylistic features which are characteristic of medieval Japanese painting, particularly painting on handscrolls.

Engi emaki are included in the collections of many of the *Saikoku* temples. Among these the undisputed gem is the *Kokawadera engi emaki* (pl. LVI, LVII), which illustrates the founding legend of Kokawadera (3). This legend tells of a hunter's conversion to Buddhism, the miraculous creation of an image for him to worship, and the image's cure of a dying girl.76 The handscroll dates from the late Heian or early Kamakura period, and is thus roughly contemporary with its more famous cousin, the *Shigisan engi emaki* (pl. LVIII), which provides a useful basis for comparison. Although little known outside Japan, the Kokawadera scroll is an important work which represents a stage in the development of the *yamato-e* style.

Stylistic similarities with the *Shigisan engi emaki* and other early *yamato-e* works are immediately obvious.
Like the Shigisan engi emaki, the Kokawadera scroll shows continuous narrative movement, rather than the series of vignettes separated by text seen in the Genji monogatari emaki. The Kokawadera scroll has caricatured faces filled with emotion, and rapidly and sketchily delineated bodies conveying a strong sense of movement. The brushwork in the Kokawadera scroll is even freer and looser, however, with a quality which has been described as "rustic." Fewer, thicker lines are used to define the bodies and garments, for example, and the faces are somewhat awkwardly drawn. Particularly in its depiction of human figures, the Kokawadera scroll is a provincial version of a more elegant and polished metropolitan style.

Another feature seen in both scrolls is the almost musical quality which is so characteristic a feature of yamato-e scroll painting, the alternation of crescendo and diminuendo as the action rises to a climax and then falls away.

In both scrolls, landscape is used to provide a space which the human figures occupy quite convincingly. Landscape elements separate the episodes in the story, and keep the viewer's eye moving continuously across the scroll. However, the landscape elements in the Kokawadera engi emaki are more incidental, rendered in less detail than in the Shigisan scroll. Hills are mere curved outlines;
evergreen trees are reduced to green triangles atop straight brown trunks; the same stylized deciduous tree is repeated throughout the scroll.

The Kokawadera scroll makes greater use of color. The colors in the Shigisan scroll are soft and muted; bright color is used only sparingly. Line is everything. The Kokawadera Engi Emaki is filled with patches of intense color, making it closer stylistically to the great historical emaki of the Kamakura period.

The pace is different as well. The most famous scene from the Shigisan scroll shows a tumultuous crowd milling frantically as the warehouse is borne away by Myōren's begging bowl. Subsequent scenes show the rapid progress of the bewildered rich man as he follows his storehouse to the monk's hermitage. The progress in the Kokawadera Engi Emaki is slower, more stately. A characteristic passage shows the father of the girl who had been cured by the image of Kannon searching for his daughter's benefactor. He rides slowly through an abbreviated landscape, asking the people he meets for directions. Even at the climactic moment, when he sees the hunter's statue and realizes that it was Kannon who cured his daughter, there is little of the frenzy which is seen so frequently in the Shigisan scroll.

The Kokawadera scroll differs from the Shigisan engi emaki in its less masterful use of landscape and in a
generally slower pace. The use of more vivid color seen in the Kokawadera scroll, still bright and well preserved despite the extensive fire damage the scroll has suffered, provides a link between the Shigisan scroll, with its dependence on vital line, and the later, more colorful works of the mid Kamakura period and beyond.

Although somewhat more provincial than other surviving early emaki, the Kokawadera engi emaki is an important document for the study of early yamato-e and a charming and entertaining work of art. It has been designated a National Treasure and is now in the Kyoto National Museum.

Portrait Statues

Throughout the Buddhist world, portraits are believed to embody the virtue of the subject, so that this virtue can be manifested to the viewer. Portraiture is extremely important in Japanese Buddhism, and the variety and quality of the portrait statues in the collections of the Saikoku temples reflect the vital role this art form has played in Japanese Buddhist art.

One of the earliest and finest of the Saikoku portrait statues is the one of Gien, founder of Okadera (7) (pl. LIX). It shows Gien as an old man, seated in the posture of meditation; his body forms a pyramid, with the uncompromising horizontal of the legs as its base. The legs are quite broad in proportion to the torso, giving the
figure a sense of solidity and stability. The folds of his priest's robe are shallowly cut in the rolling wave pattern characteristic of mid-Heian period sculpture, and the smooth, even sweep of the curves contributes to the statue's sense of relaxed calm. The symmetrical pose, the stability of the broadly based pyramidal shape, and the spare carving of the draperies draw the viewer's eye toward the finely detailed face. The lines of the face are deeply carved, and the features are exaggeratedly individualized. The skin sags on the face, revealing the bones beneath -- high cheekbones, a jutting nose, and brows knit together in concentration. The statue dates from the Heian period and has been designated a National Treasure; it is now in the Nara National Museum.

The Kamakura period portrait of Hōdō (pl. XL), the Indian mystic who founded Kiyomizudera (25) and Ichijōji (26), is very different. This statue is typical of shugendō portraits: Hōdō wears ascetic's garb and carries a staff. The foreignness of the face is exaggerated: the eyebrows are heavy, the eyes round and bulging. Hōdō is stooped and thin, with furrows on his face and deep wrinkles on his neck. The wide, staring eyes, together with the downturned mouth, create an expression of almost manic intensity. The anger which characterizes most portraits of ascetics is related to that seen in the faces of the angry
deities of Buddhism: the fury is directed against evil and the enemies of the faith. It also represents the intensity with which the ascetic practices his austerities, and with which the angry deities perform their role as guardian. Hōdō's hair is long because he was a layman who never took the Buddhist tonsure. Many of the early mountain ascetics were laymen, and their portraits show them with long hair, disheveled from asceticism.

The Hōdō portrait is representative of the manner used to depict ascetics. En no Gyōja, the 7th century ascetic revered as the founder of Shugendō, is invariable depicted with this same intensity, the wildness usually emphasized by a beard and unkempt hair. Portraits of En no Gyōja are not uncommon at esoteric temples. Gyōei Kōji, the recluse who helped Enchin establish Kiyomizudera (16), is also shown as a shugenja, with a beard and an ascetic's headpiece and sash, though with a less frenzied face.

The portraits of Gien the priest and Hōdō the ascetic define the parameters within which most founder's portraits fall: the founder is shown either as a priest, usually seated in meditation, or as an ascetic, with wild hair and scowling face. As might be expected, the portrait of Kūya of Rokuharamitsuji (17) is quite different (pl. I). The portrait is by Kōshō (康勝, fl. ca. 1230), the fourth son of the great Kamakura sculptor Unkei (1148-1223). It
shows Kūya walking along, holding his deer antler staff in one hand and the hammer for the gong around his neck in the other. He is thin and stooped, and his face has an expression of rapt intensity, heightened by the use of crystal eyes, a Kamakura feature. Also characteristic of Kamakura sculpture is the convincing way the figure occupies space. Earlier portrait statues rarely broke free of the block of wood from which they were carved. Much greater freedom was permitted the sculptor, however, by the method called *vosegi* (*composed block*), which was developed toward the end of the Heian period and exploited fully in Kamakura. In this method, a statue is carved from several pieces of wood, which are then joined together. Among its other advantages, the *vosegi* method allowed for much greater extension of a figure into space. In the Kūya portrait, the priest's body is bent; his legs are placed far apart; his hands extend outward from his body. The left foot is placed in front of the right, and this, together with the bend of the priest's body, creates the sense that Kūya has just taken a step and has been caught by the sculptor on one of his familiar journeys through Kyōto. Complex rhythms are created by the hands, the staff, the swooping draperies, the gong around Kūya's neck, and the gong's hammer. The elaborate, symmetrical curves of the gong's holder are contrasted with the simple, irregular
curves of the deer antlers and the straight lines of the gong's hammer. The rhythms and contrasts change as the viewer moves from one vantage point to another. This is not a frontal statue, but one whose complicated alternations of solid and void shift as the viewer moves around it. From Kūya's mouth emerge six tiny Buddhas on lotuses, a wonderful translation into visual imagery of Kūya's ceaseless repetition of the nembutsu. The six Buddhas represent the six characters of the nembutsu, 南無阿弥陀仏, namu Amida butsu, Homage to Amida Buddha. In a discussion of this portrait, the Rev. Kawasaki Junshō of Rokuharamitsuji remarked to me that it is rare for a work of visual art to incorporate the sense of sound so successfully in its composition. The portrait of Kūya is now in the Rokuharamitsuji temple museum; it has been designated an Important Cultural Property.

Founder's Halls

Portraits of founders are traditionally enshrined in buildings called Kaisandō (開山堂, Founder's Hall). A detailed discussion of the Founder's Halls of the Saikoku temples is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but one such hall deserves special mention. When Shōkū, the founder of Enkyōji (27) died in 1007, his disciples erected a Kaisandō (p. LX) within the temple precincts. Near this hall were erected twin Gohōdō (護法堂) in the form of
two tiny shrines (pl. LXI) dedicated to the two beings who had attended Shōkū throughout his life, one to Wakaten and one to Ototen, so that they could continue to serve him even after death. The original Founder's Hall complex was destroyed by fire in 1286; the present Kaisando dates from 1671, the twin Gohōdō, from 1559. The charming little shrines to Wakaten and Ototen have been designated Important Cultural Properties.

The founding legends of the Saikoku temples are not merely remnants of a remote past; they continue to play a central role in the lives of the temples. The pamphlets which the temples make available to visitors invariably begin with a summary of the temple's founding legend, a summary which emphasizes the miraculous elements of the story and the holiness of the founder. Objects related to the founder are reverently displayed. Kannonshōji (32) has the mummified remains of the merman whose plaintive speech moved Shōtoku Taishi to found the temple. The thatched roof over the spring which Hōdō called forth at Kiyomizudera (25) is kept in perfect repair. A katsura tree at the spot on Mount Iwama (12) where Taichō heard the voice of Senju Kannon bears a shimenawa.

Festivals which commemorate the founder provide another link with the past. Masatomo, the founder of Sōji (22) and the originator of Japanese cooking, is honored annually
at the temple in a ceremony in which professional chefs from the region display their skill to their patron deity (pl. XXXII). The demon chasing dance at Enkyōji (27) features two men in colorful costumes and grotesque masks; they are dressed as Wakaten and Ototen, the two beings who attended Shoku.

In their constant recollections of their origins, these temples are calling forth and revitalizing the power which was animated at the time of their founding. They are also emphasizing antiquity and continuity, two qualities which are held in high esteem by the Japanese. A standard phrase in temple pamphlets, following upon the recounting of the founding legend, is "Since that time, the light of Buddhism has burned here continually, without being extinguished, for 1,000 (or 1,250 or 900) years." The founding legends and the painted handscrolls illustrating them, the founders' portraits and Founder's Halls, are all reminders of the temples' miraculous origins and continuing service to the faith.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Legends discussed in this chapter are summarized in Appendix D.

2. For a discussion of two types of wandering story tellers in medieval Japan, see Barbara Ruch, "Medieval Jongleurs and the Making of a National Literature," in John W. Hall and Toyoda Takeshi, eds., Japan in the Muromachi Age (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977).


5. This brief biography of Shōtoku Taishi is drawn from Sir Charles Eliot, Japanese Buddhism (London, 1969), 202-5.

6. Two examples are Tennōji in Fukushima City, Fukushima prefecture, and Jōdoji in Onomichi City, Hiroshima prefecture. Nakao, 188 and 299, respectively.


8. R. Sawa, 170.


11. The ability to recognize the sanctity of a particular place as an attribute of holy men is discussed below, in the section on ascetic founders.

12. For a fuller account of Kūkai's life, see Yoshito S. Hakeda, Kūkai: His Major Works Translated, With an Account of his Life and a Study of his Thought (New York and London, 1972), 13-60, from which this brief biography is drawn.

13. This legend is recounted in greater detail in Chapter 2, in the section on Kannonji.


17. Nakao, 300.

18. Hirahata, 66. This episode is recounted in greater detail in Chapter 5.


20. See Hakeda, 16 and 38, and p. 38, n. 7.


22. Kūkai's hold on the Japanese imagination continues. The anniversary of his death is celebrated with great pomp every fifty years at Kōyasan. The celebration held in 1984 was attended by tremendous media hoopla: footage of the rites at Kōyasan appeared on the evening news, and an epic movie biography of Kūkai, filmed partly on location in China, was released that year. Posters advertising the film were displayed at all the Shingon temples of the Gaikoku route.


25. "Mimurodoji," black and white pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. This legend can also be found in Shimizutani, 46-47.

26. "Okadera," booklet available at the temple in 1984, p. 7. This legend is also given in Nakao, 94-95.

27. "Sōjiji," color pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. Some details were supplied by the Rev. Nakanishi Ryuei, priest of Sōjiji, in an interview on March 5, 1984. Abbreviated versions of the legend can be found in Nakao, 102, and Hirahata, 136-37.


32. A comprehensive discussion of the hijiri, including historical and religious background and later development, can be found in Ichiro Hori, "On the Concept of Hijiri (Holy-Man)," Numen, V. (1958).

33. See Swanson, 56-58.

34. For a history of the Kōya hijiri and a fictionalized account of their activities, see Statler, Section II, especially pp. 88-96.

35. For an account of early nembutsu hijiri, see Hori (1968), 106-22.


37. I am indebted to the Rev. Ōki Kōbun, priest of Enkyoji, for this account of Shōkū's life. Shoku's biography is given in the Harima Shoshazan engi, a copy of which, translated into modern Japanese, is available at Enkyōji. An early biography of Shōkū, written in 1010, is Shōkū shonin den, in Gunshō ruijū (Tokyo, 1930), Vol. V. Legends regarding Shōkū are also recounted in the Konjaku
monogatari shū 12:34. See also Shimizutani, 104-6, and Hirahata, 165-66. Shōkū's life is illustrated in the Harima Shoshazan engi emaki, an Edo period painted handscroll at Enkyoji, a facsimile of which Mr. Oki was kind enough to show me.

38. Mappo (末法, last law or end of the law) is the third of the three periods after the death of the historical Buddha. These three periods are collectively called in Japanese shōgōmatsu (正像末). The first is the period of the shōbō (正法, righteous law) when Buddhist doctrines, practices and enlightenment all exist. The second, zōbō (仏法, imitative law), is a time when doctrines and practices exist, but enlightenment does not. In the third period, mappo, only doctrine survives. The first two periods are said to last either 500 or 1,000 years each; the final period is thought to last 10,000 years.

39. T. Sawa, 120.

40. Pairs of supernatural attendants are a not infrequent feature of Japanese Buddhist hagiography. See for example Dainihonkoku Hokekyōkenki (cited hereafter as Hokkegenki), I:5 and II:79. The Hokkegenki is translated in full in Yoshiko Kurata Dykstra, Miraculous Tales of the Lotus Sūtra from Ancient Japan: The Dainihonkoku Hokekyōkenki of Priest Chingen (Osaka, 1983). The two tales cited here are on pp. 35 and 98-99.


42. Nishida, Nishimura and Doi, 144.

43. R. Sawa, 267.

44. "Nachisan," black and white pamphlet available at the temple in 1982. The legend is also given in Hirahata, 18.


47. "Yoshiminedera sōritsu," black and white pamphlet available at the temple in 1982. A similar version can be found in Shimizutani, 77-79, but this account omits the
encounter with the dragon king.


49. R. Sawa, 242.

50. Katsura (桂) is Cercidiphyllum japonicum, a large deciduous tree. The family is native only to East Asia.


52. R. Sawa, 134.

53. Shimizutani, 36-37.

54. Interview with the Rev. Tokiwa Shōken, head priest of Tsubosakadera, February 6, 1984.

55. Shimizutani, 93-94.

56. R. Sawa, 218-19.

57. Ichijōji engi, translated into modern Japanese and available at the temple as a single sheet in 1984. Similar versions of the legend can be found in Nakao, 103; Shimizutani, 102-3.

58. The account which follows of Küya's life and work is summarized from Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 86-91.


63. Blacker, 93.

64. For these and other tales which tell of the many benefits which come to those who venerate the Lotus Sūtra, see Dykstra's translation of the Hokkegenki, cited above, note 40. The stories referred to here are, respectively, I:11; II:66; III:87, II:70; III:100; and I:33.


69. Blacker, 80.


74. For a lively and entertaining fictional account of some of these spurious holy men, see Statler, 130-40, 172-5.

75. This point was made with particular eloquence by the Rev. Sasaki Jōkai, priest of Kami Daigoji (11), in an interview on May 18, 1984.

76. This legend is related in more detail in the following chapter.


78. There is a portrait of En no Gyōja in the Main Hall of Okadera (7), for example.

79. The portrait of Gyōei Kōji is published in Nishida, Nishimur and Doi, fig. 57.

80. Lee, Cunningham and Ulak, 96.

81. Interview with Mr. Kawasaki, March 21, 1984.

82. The power of recalling origins is discussed in Blacker, 150.
CHAPTER 4
KANNON AS SACRIFICE AND PROTECTOR:
MAIN IMAGES OF THE SAIKOKU TEMPLES

Legends, beliefs, and practices relating to the main images of the Saikoku temples provide fascinating insights into the history of the Kannon cult in Japan and its continuing vitality. These images are worshipped for their power to heal, to ward off disaster of all kinds, and to grant fertility and easy childbirth. They are revered for the compassion they have shown, as recounted in legends. And they are celebrated in a variety of festivals. Although esoteric rites associated with Kannon continue to play an important role in Japanese Buddhism at the technical level, only legends and beliefs included in the popular Kannon cult are discussed here.

MIGAWARI KANNONS

Two of the Saikoku main images, those at Naraij (28) and Anaoji (21) are revered as migawari (self sacrificing) Kannons. Each of the legends told of these two images shows the statue sacrificing itself in order to save the life of a pious man.
The first legend tells of monk who lived in a hermitage on the mountain where Nariaiji now stands. One winter there was exceptionally heavy snow, so that the villagers who usually supplied the monk with food could not get to his hermitage. When the monk had exhausted his supplies of food and was near starvation, he prayed to the wooden image of Sho Kannon (pl. XLV) enshrined in his hut, asking for enough food for just one more day. Immediately the monk saw outside his door a wild boar (or a deer, according to some accounts) which had been killed by a wolf. Because of his Buddhist vow to abstain from eating flesh, the monk was reluctant to eat the food which had appeared so providentially, but he finally decided that the animal was, in fact, the answer to his prayer. He cut some flesh off the animal's thighs and cooked it in his cooking pot; this food restored his strength completely. When the snow finally melted the villagers, worried about their friend the monk, climbed the mountain to visit him. In his cooking pot they saw some wood chips, and they also noticed that his image of Kannon showed signs of damage around its thighs. They called the monk's attention to these curious facts, and he realized what Kannon had done for him. He repaired the image with the chips from the cooking pot, so skillfully that no damage could been seen. This, it is said, is the origin of the temple's name, for nariai (成相) means
nicely finished.⁴

The former main image at Anaoji is also a *migawari* Kannon. The image was commissioned during the Heian period by the wife of Uji no Miyanari, a nobleman of the Tamba region. Miyanari was an evil and faithless man, and his wife hoped that her pious act would bring him to repentance and faith. She engaged a priest sculptor from Kyōto named Kansei, who came to live at their home while he carved the image of Kannon. Kansei was a pious man who read the *Kannonkyō* daily. When he finished the image and showed it to Miyanari and his wife, they were so delighted with its beauty that they gave him numerous gifts, including Miyanari's favorite horse. The happy monk packed his gifts, loaded them onto the horse, and began the long ride back to Kyoto. However, Miyanari soon came to regret his unwonted generosity; he rode out and lay in ambush for the priest. When Kansei appeared, Miyanari shot him in the chest with an arrow. The priest fell dead, and Miyanari recovered his horse and the other gifts he had given Kansei and returned home. There he found, to his great surprise, that the Kannon which Kansei had carved had Miyanari's own arrow impaled in its chest. There was blood dripping from the arrow. When Miyanari turned around he discovered that his horse had disappeared. He left immediately for Kansei's home in Kyōto to try to discover the meaning of these
strange events. When he arrived, he found Kansei, in
perfect health, and his horse as well. He asked Kansei
about his voyage home; the priest replied that it had been
safe and uneventful. Suddenly Miyanari realized that the
statue of Kannon had sacrificed itself in order to save the
life of the devout priest, whereupon Miyanari repented of
his evil ways. His wife's pious deed had had its intended
effect, though in a way she could never have anticipated.
Miyanari and his wife both took the tonsure and entered the
religious life.  

The Rev. Anaho GyoÔkô, the head priest of Anaoji,
explains that this story illustrates the power of Kannon at
work in human lives. In her love and concern for her
husband, Miyanari's wife became like Kannon as she acted to
bring about her husband's deliverance from a life of evil.
Miyanari's repentance shows the power of Kannon to change
human hearts. Kannon is absolute love; he is present, says
Mr. Anaho, whenever people help one another.

The image which Kansei made for Miyanari and his wife
was eventually donated to Anaoji. According to some
versions of the legend, the image appeared to Miyanari in a
dream, telling him that it desired to be healed by Yakushi,
and so Miyanari enshrined it next to the healing image of
Yakushi at Anaoji. It is said, however, that the image
continued to carry the scar from Miyanari's arrow. It
worked many miracles and was revered by emperors, famous priests, and commoners alike.

Sadly, this lovely image, designated an Important Cultural Property, was stolen in 1968 and has never been recovered. It was the first theft in Japan of an art object so designated.

These two legends illustrate one very interesting aspect of popular Buddhism in Japan: in these legends, it is the statue of Kannon which performs these acts of compassion. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Kannon acts, not in his formless aspect, but rather in his aspect as a particular image. When a Buddhist image is completed, it is enshrined with a ceremony called kaigen, (開眼, eye opening). This ceremony is held to invoke the deity represented and to infuse the image with the deity's presence. A statue of Kannon thus becomes Kannon. Certain specific images of Kannon come to be seen as being endowed with mysterious powers. Sometimes, as in the case of the image at Tsubosakadera (6), discussed below, the powers attributed to the image are related by text to the form of the image; certain forms of Kannon are said in the texts to be efficacious in certain ways. At other times, the capacities of the image to bring about specific kinds of beneficent changes do not seem to have textual basis; they are attributed to the image on the basis of legend or
custom.

The legends associated with the main images of Nariai ji and Anaoji show the compassionate work of the bodhisattva being performed by Kannon qua image in a most graphic way: in each story, the statue itself becomes damaged because Kannon has sacrificed himself to save the life of a pious man. Many other traditions related to the Saikoku main images show the statues carrying out the work of Kannon, but nowhere is this belief illustrated so vividly as in these two legends.

ANZAN KANNONS

There are several anzan (安産, easy childbirth) Kannons on the Saikoku route. This aspect of the Kannon cult is purely popular; it has no connection with the practice of Buddhism at the technical level. The power to grant easy delivery is often, though not invariably, allied with the power to grant fertility (certainly a reasonable connection). There is a textual basis for this belief: one of the attributes of Kannon described in the Kannonkyō is the power to bestow healthy children upon those women who worship him.9 This power is not connected with any specific form of Kannon. Among the Saikoku images believed to grant easy childbirth are the Shō Kannon at Anaoji (21), the Jūichimen at Nakayamadera (24) and the Juntei at Kami Daigoji (11).
The original main image at Kami Daigoji (11) was made upon the order of Emperor Daigo (r. 897-930) to bring about the birth of an heir and the perpetuation of the Imperial line. Apparently the prayers recited before the newly made image were successful, for the Empress, Fujiwara no Onshi, was safely delivered of two sons. The two sons later became Emperors Suzaku (r. 930-946) and Murakami (r. 946-967). The present main image (pl. XIV) dates from the Edo period; even today it is worshipped as a bestower of fertility and easy childbirth.

Temple tradition at Kiyomizudera (16) asserts that Kōmyō Kōgō, consort of Emperor Shōmu, prayed to an image of Kannon at the temple and was subsequently delivered safely of a daughter who later became Empress Kōken (r. 749-758). The image to which Kōmyō Kōgō prayed is now enshrined in the Koyasu no tō (Easy Childbirth Pagoda), the lovely three storey pagoda across the valley to the south of the Hondo. This image has become confused with the main image enshrined in the Hondo, and many pilgrims to Kiyomizudera pray to the temple's main image for an easy delivery. Priests at Kiyomizudera maintain that the main image is not an anzan Kannon and that the temple's real anzan Kannon is the one in the Koyasu no tō, the one to which Kōmyō Kōgō prayed. But the popular misunderstanding persists.
The main image at Ishiyamadera (12) is worshipped as a Kannon of marriage and easy childbirth. The beautiful Senju Kannon at Fujiidera (pl. IV) is thought to grant safe delivery and to ward off evil. The former main image at Anaoji (21) was also considered an anzan Kannon; in the temple's possession is a prayer for easy delivery written by one of the forty-seven rōnin.13

But the most famous anzan Kannon on the Saikoku route -- and, perhaps, in all Japan -- is the main image at Nakayamadera (24). This is, in fact, a triad of images, all Jūichimen Kannon. The central image (pl. XXXVII) is said to date from the reign of Emperor Saga (r. 809-823); the two flanking images (pl. XXXVIII) were added in 1244.

The reasons for the extraordinarily vital cult which has grown up around these images are somewhat obscure. During the mid-Heian period, Nakayamadera came under the protection of a branch of the Minamoto, when Tadagenji Mitsunaka (多賀源氏満仲, 912-997) became lord of Settsu.14 In the late Heian period, Settsu was ruled by Mitsunaka's descendent Yukitsuna, whose wife was a cruel and faithless woman. The main image at Nakayamadera admonished her for her cruelty by twining her hair in the temple's bell rope, and effected her repentance and conversion to Buddhism. This seems to have established the image's reputation as a miracle worker. Later, Emperor Go Daigo
prayed to the image for a safe delivery for his consort. The consort of Emperor Kōmei (r. 1847-1866) also prayed to the image when she was pregnant with the future Emperor Meiji. Today pregnant women come from all over Japan to pray at Nakayamadera for an easy delivery and a healthy baby.

HEALING KANNONS

In popular Japanese Buddhism, Kannon is widely believed to have the power to cure disease, and certain specific images of Kannon are thought to be efficacious against certain specific illnesses or types of illness. The main image at Rokuharamitsuji (17) is said to be the image made by Kūya, the temple's founder, in his efforts to combat an epidemic which swept through Kyōto in 951. Kūya enshrined the Jūichimen Kannon he had made on a cart; this he pulled through the city, brewing a special tea which he offered to the sick. Temple tradition holds that this image worked many cures during the epidemic.

The main image at Kannonji (15) has long been a focus of popular belief. Emperor Go Shirakawa (r. 1155-1158) suffered from debilitating chronic headaches, which ended when the main image of Kannonji appeared to him in a dream. Even today the image is believed to have the power to cure headaches and paralysis.
The main image at Tsubosakadera (6) has long been thought to have the power to restore sight to the sightless (pl. V). Temple tradition asserts that this power was evident from the time of the temple's founding: Empress Genshō (r. 715-724) was cured of an eye disease after praying to the main image carved by Benki, the temple's founder. Heian period documents record that Emperors Kammu (r. 781-806) and Ichijō (r. 986-1011) prayed to the Tsubosakadera Kannon and were subsequently cured of eye diseases.¹⁹

A legend recounted in the Korōden (古老伝), a Tsubosakadera temple record from the Kamakura period, tells of a man named Sawaichi and his beautiful wife O-Sato who lived near Tsubosakadera. Sawaichi was suddenly struck blind; soon thereafter, O-Sato began leaving the house very quietly late at night. Sawaichi became aware of what she was doing; thinking she was going to meet a lover, he went after her one night. He followed O-Sato to Tsubosakadera, where he found her praying to the temple's main image for the restoration of her beloved husband's sight. Bitterly ashamed of his suspicions, and thinking that if he were dead O-Sato could find a better husband, Sawaichi threw himself over a cliff. When she learned what he had done, O-Sato followed her husband. But Kannon saved them both from certain death, and restored Sawaichi's sight.²⁰
This charming and very Japanese legend (double suicides are, after all, a Japanese specialty) illustrates Kannon's power to heal both physically and spiritually. Some say that it was the shock of the fall that restored Sawaichi's sight; but The Rev. Tokiwa Shoken, head priest of Tsubosakadera, adheres to a literal interpretation of the legend. He teaches that Kannon cured Sawaichi. Every night for a thousand nights, O-Sato prayed that Kannon would cure Sawaichi. Her devotion to her husband throughout his ordeal and her fervent prayers to Kannon on his behalf are an example of the Japanese ideal of married love. Sawaichi's willingness to sacrifice himself so that his wife might find a happier life with another, less flawed man also shows this love in its highest form. Kannon was at work not only when he saved Sawaichi and O-Sato from certain death, and not only when he restored Sawaichi's sight, but also in the abiding love of the couple.

The story of O-Sato and Sawaichi was made into a joruri play during the Meiji period. Frequent performances of this popular drama spread the fame of the Tsubosakadera Kannon throughout Japan. About 35,000 blind pilgrims visit Tsubosakadera each year, to pray to the main image and to avail themselves of the numerous facilities for the blind which the temple has built. A small modern statue of O-Sato and Sawaichi (pl. LXII) stands
in the courtyard in front of Tsubosakadera's Main Hall. A
crouching Sawaichi holds a staff in one hand and a rosary in
the other. O-Sato kneels behind him, guiding him gently.
Blind visitors to the temple run their hands over the two
figures.

The founding legend of Kokawadera (3), illustrated in
the Kokawadera_Engi_Emaki, discussed above, also
demonstrates the curative powers thought to reside in
Kannon. The legend begins with a hunter named Otomo Kujiko
(大伴 孔子古 ), who in 770 came to the Kokawa region
in search of game. One night while he was out hunting he
saw a brilliant light shining on Mount Kazuragi, where
Kokawadera now stands. The light filled him with remorse
for the killing he had done. He built a thatched roofed
hermitage on the spot from which the light had emanated, but
he had no image to enshrine within it. One day he was
visited by an ascetic in the form of a child. The ascetic
requested shelter for the night, which Kujiko granted. The
next morning the ascetic asked Kujiko if there were anything
he desired, and Kujiko answered that he longed for an image
to worship. In just seven days, the ascetic carved for
Kujiko a wooden image of Senju Kannon, and then vanished.

At about the same time, the daughter of Satafu, a
wealthy man of Kawachi,24 fell gravely ill. Although the
family tried every means to bring about her recovery, she
remained so ill that they resigned themselves to her impending death. Suddenly an ascetic in the form of a child appeared, and the girl recovered. In gratitude Satafu showered gifts on the ascetic, but he refused all of them. He would take only the crimson hakama which the weeping girl offered to him. Saying only, "I live in Kokawa in the district of Nachi," he disappeared. The following year Satafu went to Nachi with his daughter in search of Kokawa and the ascetic who had cured the girl, but no one they asked knew of a place called Kokawa. Then they noticed a small river; and deciding that this must be the place the ascetic had told them of, they began to go upstream. Soon they came upon Kujiko's hut. Looking inside, they saw the Senju Kannon; hanging from the hand in abhaya mudra was the hakama which the girl had given the ascetic. Suddenly they realized that the ascetic who had cured the girl was in fact a keshin of Kannon. Satafu entered the Buddhist priesthood and established a temple on the site of Kujiko's hermitage. That temple was, of course, Kokawadera; the temple's present main image is said to be the one carved for Kujiko by the ascetic who was an incarnation of Kannon. Even today Kokawadera's main image is thought to have the power to heal; its power is also invoked to ward off evil and to bring good fortune, to ensure safety at home and when travelling, and to grant the prayers of the
PROTECTIVE KANNONS

Kannon is also believed to have various protective powers. Many of the *Saikoku* main images are worshipped as *vaku yoke* (願除, protecting against evil) Kannons. Among the best known of these is the imposing main image at Okadera (pl. VI). This image is believed to be particularly effective in warding off the evil accruing to certain critical years of one's life (願年, *vakudoshi*). Preserved at the temple is a *fuda* (符, talisman) said to have been written by Empress Kōken herself (r. 749-758 and again 764-770 as Empress Shōtoku), recording a prayer to the Okadera main image for lifelong protection against evil. Even today young people from all over the Yamato region gather at the temple in February and March; young men of twenty-five and young women of nineteen pray that they will be protected from evil during the coming critical year of their lives.

The main image at Iwamadera (12), a diminutive Senju Kannon (pl. LXIII), is considered a *vakuyoke* Kannon and is the focus of a number of other popular beliefs. It is said that the image was originally the personal devotional image of Empress Genshō (r. 715-724). The empress gave the image to the priest Taichō, who founded Iwamadera, in gratitude
for the efficacy of Taichō's prayers when she was ill. After Taichō founded Iwamadera and enshrined the empress' image within it, he preached the Law of the Buddha to the Thunder God (Raijin, 雷 神, known familiarly as Kaminarisan, 雷 さん). The Thunder God became a disciple of Taichō's and a devout Buddhist.31 Because the location which the priest had chosen for his temple was atop a mountain, there was no water there.32 But Kaminari-san dug a well with his fingernails, and pure water came forth from this well unendingly, as the god's gift to Kannon. The well from which the temple draws its water today is said to be the one dug by the Thunder God; even in times of drought in Western Japan, the well still supplies the temple with an abundant supply of fresh, pure water.33

Because Taichō converted the Thunder God to Buddhism, the main image brought to the temple by the founder is believed to protect against lightning. The ema (絵 馬, votive plaque)34 sold at Iwamadera shows the Thunder God, surrounded by his drums, bowing down in worship before the temple's main image (pl. LXIV). Two of Iwamadera's most important annual celebrations are lightning festivals held in the spring and fall. At these, shugendo come from Osaka to perform a goma. The image is also thought to avert disasters of all kinds.
This tiny statue is also known as asekake no Kannon (汗かけの観音, the sweating Kannon). The image is kept in three zushi, one within another, and all are locked. But at night the image leaves the zushi and visits people who are ill, stroking their bodies where they are in pain and curing them. These errands of compassion are hard work, and so the image sweats.35

The main image at Iwamadera also provides comfort and assurance to those mourning the loss of a loved one. In the Main Hall of the temple, near the zushi in which the main image is kept, is a mirror. Here images appear of recently deceased people in the first forty-nine days following their death, the period during which it is believed that the soul hovers between the world of the living and the world of the dead. If relatives of the deceased come to the temple and pray with pure and devout hearts for the union of their loved one's spirit with Kannon, the image of the deceased shows itself in the mirror as a symbol of union with Kannon at the end of the forty-nine days.36

Another Kannon with the power to comfort the bereaved and secure the repose of the souls of the dead is the main image at Gyōganji (19). Early in the 19th century a young woman named O-Fumi served as nursemaid to the children of a pawnbroker who lived near the temple. Her employer was an evil, faithless man without human warmth, and concerned only
with money. On an outing with the children one day, O-Fumi happened into the Gyōganji compound, where she heard pilgrims chanting, and returned home singing the pilgrims' songs she had heard. The sound of the holy songs so enraged the pawnbroker that he beat O-Fumi to death and hid her body in a warehouse behind his pawnshop. Hearing nothing from their daughter, O-Fumi's parents began to worry. They came to Gyōganji to pray to the Kannon there for help in finding her, and O-Fumi's spirit appeared to them at the temple. She told her parents the story of her death, and the horrified parents immediately had the pawnbroker arrested. To secure the repose of their daughter's soul, O-Fumi's parents made the Saikoku pilgrimage and held a memorial service for her at the temple.

MIZUGO KANNONS

One form of Kannon which has been extremely popular in Japan is called mizugo (氷雫) Kannon. This Kannon is believed to protect the souls of babies who were aborted, miscarried or stillborn, or who died in infancy. Once their parents have died, these infants have no one to hold memorial services for them to help bring about their salvation. But Kannon in his infinite compassion takes pity on them and saves them.

Mizugo Kannon are subsidiary images, usually placed in the open air within a temple's precincts rather than
enshrined in a hall. One of the most famous is a large modern image (pl. LXV) near the Main Hall at Katsuōji (23). This Kannon holds an infant in one hand and a vase in the other; several tiny children are clustered at the base, clutching at Kannon's skirt and lifting their hands in supplication. Infants are brought to Katsuōji from all over Japan to be buried at the temple, and daily memorial services are offered for them. Offerings of toys are customarily made to mizugo Kannon. At Katsuōji there are hundreds of them, lined up in a colorful jumble on shelves in a roofed enclosure in front of the image.

OTHER POWERS OF KANNON

Today the Saikoku temples emphasize legends which show the compassion of Kannon at work in human lives. But other legends, in which Kannon is shown pandering to less noble human motives, reveal a less beneficent side of the Kannon cult.

Some of these stories are included in the Hasedera Kannon Genki (長谷寺観音経記), a collection of stories which tell of the miraculous powers of the main image of Hasedera (8) thought to have been compiled early in the 13th century. Included in the collection are tales which relate cures worked by the Hase Kannon (pl. VIII) and tells of the statue's power to save its devotees from danger. But in many of the stories the miracle worked by
the Hase Kannon is not a miraculous cure or a reformation of character, but the bestowal of wealth and social status. One story tells of a poor woman, orphaned at an early age, who dedicated a poem to the Hase Kannon. The governor of Ise province saw the poem when he visited the temple and took the young woman into his service.\textsuperscript{41} In another, a girl who was born after her parents prayed to the Hase Kannon for a child sold herself into slavery to alleviate her parents' poverty. Her slave ship was sunk in a storm, and after a frantic search for her body her parents found her, alive and clinging to the \textit{sūtra} box they had given her. Inside the box they found not only the copy of the Kannonkyō they had presented to her for protection, but also a fortune in gold.\textsuperscript{42} Yet another tale concerns three orphaned sisters who visited Hasedera to pray to the main image about their future. The two younger sisters were noticed by the maid of a court lady who had confined herself at the temple, and were taken into the lady's service. The eldest sister, left behind, sank into despair, although she received assistance from her two younger sisters. Some years later, despite her increasingly shrill whining (recounted in detail in the \textit{Hasedera Kannon Genki}), Kannon took pity on her and she too joined the court lady's household.\textsuperscript{43}
Stories like these show that Kannon was worshipped for his power to bestow material benefits as well as for his ability to transform human lives with compassion and love. The existence of these stories -- and the belief they reveal in Kannon's material generosity -- is not surprising. The desire for prosperity, even vast wealth, is universal. Nor do the stories indicate a vulgarization of the Kannon cult attendant upon its spread to the commoner class. The Hasedera Kannon Genki was compiled early in the 13th century, and its stories concern people who lived during the Heian period. Further, the characters who benefit materially from their devotion to Kannon are not commoners but lower and middle level aristocrats. Kannon's devotees -- aristocrat or commoner -- do not always pray to him with the purest motives; he is believed to answer the prayers of those who desire wealth and rank as well as prayers which spring from nobler desires.

KANNON AS SOURCE FOR SHINTŌ DEITIES

A few of the Saikoku main images serve to illustrate one of the most intriguing developments in Japanese Buddhism, the identification of certain Shintō deities as manifestations of specific Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The incorporation of native gods into the Buddhist pantheon is not unique to Japan. In India, Vedic and other gods were enlisted in the Buddhist cause. In China, the early
Buddhists, in their endless disputes with entrenched native doctrines, asserted that Confucius and Lao Zi were but manifestations of the Buddha's disciples, sent by the Buddha to propagate the faith.44

In Japan, the process of amalgamation began quite early. Emperor Yōmei (r. 585-587) was the first emperor to convert to Buddhism; in noting this fact, the compiler of the Nihon Shoki remarks, "The Emperor Yōmei believed in the Law of Buddha and reverenced the Way of the Gods.45

An item in the Zoku Nihongi for the year 698 refers to the moving of Taki Dainjingūji; a jingūji (神宮寺) was a combination of a Shintō shrine and a Buddhist temple.46 It is clear from this reference that the native faith and the foreign religion began their alliance at an early date.

During the late Heian period a theory was formulated regarding the exact nature of the relationship between native gods and Buddhist deities. The native gods were not merely added to the Buddhist pantheon. Rather, certain gods were identified with certain Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and were said to be manifestations (in Japanese suitedaku, 垂迹) of their corresponding Buddhist sources (honji, 本地). The theory which developed in Japan was grounded in the teachings of the Mahāyāna and esoteric sects regarding the distinction between the absolute (Sanskrit paramārtha, Japanese honmon, 本門) and the relative
(Sanskrit samvriti, Japanese shakumon, 日本 "仏形"). 47

This distinction permeates Mahāyāna and esoteric teachings. One concomitant is that the relative is often seen as a manifestation or emanation of the absolute. In the doctrine of the trikāya, for example, the dharma-makāya, the absolute form, manifests itself to sentient beings as the nirmānakāya, the historical Buddha.

While the philosophical groundwork for the theory had been laid by the early 9th century, with the introduction of esoteric texts and the establishment of Tendai and Shingon, the final, explicit formulation was to take several more generations. One of the earliest concrete references is in a 10th century record called the Iwashimizu Hachimangū Shozomonji. Here it is recorded that in 957 a priest requested permission to use lumber which had been intended for Mirokuji for Hakozaki Jingūji. When the governing board granted this request, it justified permission by stating that the gongen sui jaku (i.e., the native deity enshrined in the jingūji) and the bodhisattva (Miroku) were identical. 48

Once the theory was formulated, applications multiplied rapidly. Virtually every major figure in the Buddhist pantheon was considered to be the honji of a number of different native gods. 49 The theory does not seem to have been applied in any systematic manner; rather,
identifications were made based on local circumstances, and were changed as local cults waxed and waned.

The examples of honji-suigak relationships found at Saikoku temples illustrate some of the ways in which the theory was applied. One concerns the Fūkūkenjaku Kannon (pl. IX) which serves as the main image of the Nan'endo at Kōfukuji (9). Both Kōfukuji and its Shinto neighbor, Kasuga Taisha, were founded by the Fujiwara, with Kōfukuji serving as ujidera (氏寺, family temple) and Kasuga Taisha as ujigami (氏神, family shrine). Relations between the two establishments have always been close. Toward the end of the Heian period the Fūkūkenjaku at the Nan'endo came to be seen as honji of the principal deity enshrined at Kasuga Taisha.50 One reason for the identification is, of course, the Fujiwara connection, which must have made it seem natural that the two deities should be related. Another reason is related to the iconography of the two figures. The principal deity of Kasuga Taisha, known variously as Takemikazuchi no mikoto, Kashima Takemikazuchi no kami, and Kashima Daimyōjin, is said to have appeared riding on a deer. Depictions of Takemikazuchi in various versions of the Kasuga mandara invariably show him seated upon a deer. In the Fūkūkenjaku shinpen shingon kyō,51 Fūkūkenjaku is described as wearing a deerskin mantle.
The identification between Fukūkenjaku and Takemikazuchi is a natural one, arising as it does from the connection with the Fujiwara shared by the two figures and from iconographical similarities. The reasons for other honji-suijaku relationships are less obvious. The identification of the main image at Kannonji (15) as honji of Kumano Gongen is a case in point.

This identification was the result of a complex set of related developments which occurred during the late Heian period. The first of these was the growing popularity of the cult of Kumano Gongen, the tutelary deity of Mount Kumano. Emperor Go Shirakawa (r. 1155-1158), a pivotal figure in the history of Kannonji, was a fervent believer in Kumano Gongen; for nearly twenty years after his abdication, the emperor made annual or semi-annual pilgrimages to Mount Kumano.52 A second development was the connection which grew up between Kumano Gongen and Kannon. Kannon's paradise of Fudaraku is located in the south. Mount Kumano's location, near the southernmost tip of the Kii peninsula, made this identification a natural one.

Finally, Emperor Go Shirakawa perceived a connection between Mount Kumano and Kannonji's environs and compound.53 He gave the name Ima Gumano to the area around Kannonji: the temple itself he renamed Shin (new) Nachisan Kannonji.54 The connection between Mount Kumano
and Kannonji is seen also in the temple's (possibly anachronistic) founding legend, in which Kūkai encounters an old man at the site where Kannonji now stands. The old man tells Kūkai that the area is sacred to Kannon and identifies himself as Kumano Gongen.

Because of the relationship he perceived between Mount Kumano and the area around Kannonji, and because of Mount Kumano's great distance from the capital, Go Shirakawa established a shrine to Kumano Gongen at Ima Gumano. Ima Gumano's proximity to the capital meant that prayers could more easily be offered to Kumano Gongen for his divine protection. During the period of the Genpei Wars, for example, when violent disturbances made travel dangerous, Go Shirakawa suspended his pilgrimages to Mount Kumano but continued to visit Ima Gumano. Since the connection between Kumano Gongen and Kannon was already well established by the time the shrine was built, it was natural that the connection should be extended to the Jūichimen Kannon which served as the main image of Kannonji. But here, the relationship is taken one step further; it is not merely Kannon, or even one form of Kannon, which serves as honji; it is a specific image of Kannon. Of course, the identification arises out a more general one, that of Kumano Gongen with Kannon in all his forms and manifestations. But the specificity of the connection seen at Kannonji makes
this case a particularly interesting one.

Yet another example of identification between a Buddhist and a Shintō deity is found at Hōgonji (30), the Saikoku temple located on Chikubushima in Lake Biwa. Here the honji is not Kannon but Benzaiten (see pl. XLIX). From very early times the island has been considered sacred to the native goddess Asaihime, who is said to have created the island; a shrine to her was established on the island during the reign of Emperor Yūryaku (r. 456-479). The goddess Ichikishima no mikoto, daughter of Amaterasu, was enshrined there as guardian of the Imperial court during the reign of Emperor Tenchi (r. 668-671). Hōgonji's founding legend demonstrates that the island was also considered sacred to the Buddhist goddess Benzaiten. When the priest Gyōki founded the temple upon the order of Emperor Shōmu, he is said to have carved two images. The first was an image of Benzaiten, the second, a thousand armed, thousand eyed Kannon.

The shrine dedicated to Asaihime and Ichikishima no mikoto and the temple dedicated to Kannon and Benzaiten stand side by side on the island. Benzaiten eventually came to be regarded as the honji of Ichikishima no mikoto. So close was the connection that for hundreds of years the main image of Chikubushima Shrine was a statue of Benzaiten (pl. XLIX). If the two goddesses were identical, as the
honji-sujiaku doctrine asserted, then an image of one would serve as well as an image of the other. At Chikubushima, the boundaries separating the two religions dissolve almost completely. The promulgation of the Meiji period edict mandating the separation of Buddhism and Shintō required that the Buddhist image be removed from the Shintō shrine, and so the image of Benzaiten was given to Hōgonji. The temple built a new Benzaiten Hondō to house the image; this was completed in 1942.

CONCLUSIONS

The legends and beliefs associated with the Saikoku main images show the deeply ingrained Japanese preference for the particular and the specific over the general and the abstract. In these legends, Kannon acts, not as a disembodied spirit, but in the form of a particular statue. Specific images of Kannon, located in specific places, are believed to be endowed with the power to aid suffering beings in specific ways.

One reason for the enormous early popularity of esoteric Buddhism in Japan, and for the current revival of interest in esotericism, is that it offers not abstract speculation — although of course abstract speculation is present in abundance in esoteric teaching — but a body of specific rites and practices which enable the practitioner to overcome his own hindrances and develop his own spiritual
powers. At its core esoteric Buddhism is practical, not speculative. Its innermost secrets are not general theories about the nature of being, but specific, detailed rituals designed to aid particular individual human beings in their quest for enlightenment.

The lay community has always posed something of a problem for esoteric Buddhism. Spiritual power and eventual Buddhahood are attainable only by those who are free to devote themselves to a lifetime of meditation and ritual practice. In this scheme, the laity become an appendage, necessary for the financial support of the monastic community, but unable in this life to partake of the rewards offered by the faith. Their only hope is that pious devotion in this life will generate enough good karma to enable them to be reborn, in the next life, to circumstances which will allow them to become monks.

Devotion to Kannon cleaves through the distinction between monk and lay person, and gives ordinary lay men and women access to the spiritual powers normally available only to the monk. In his infinite compassion, Kannon takes pity on all suffering sentient beings, monk and lay person alike, and uses his vast powers on their behalf.

As Carmen Blacker has noted in another context, there are places where the barrier which separates the human plane from the spiritual plane is "thin." On holy mountains,
filled with numinous presence, it is easier to break through this separating barrier and achieve an encounter with the sacred. Kannon also works to constrict and pierce through this barrier. Devotion to Kannon on the human plane and the bodhisattva's compassion on the spiritual plane combine to create a rupture through which the infinite power of Kannon can pour to relieve suffering and transform lives.

It is revealing that when Kannon manifests himself in human form he often does so as an ascetic. In the legend of Kokawadera (3), it was an ascetic who created the image of Kannon for Kujiko and cured Satafu's daughter. It was an ascetic who appeared to Masatomo and carved his father's block of fragrant wood into the image which was later enshrined at Sōjiji (22). No form of human endeavor is more empowering than ascetic practice. No one has closer proximity to the sources of sacred power than the ascetic. In manifesting himself as an ascetic, Kannon is revealing his own store of sacred power and offering it to those who need it.

In legends and beliefs associated with the Saikoku main images, Kannon uses his power in a variety of ways. In the forms of the main images of Iwamadera (12), Rokuharamitsuji (17), Kannonji (15), Kokawadera (3), and Tsubosakadera (6), Kannon heals the sick. At Nariaiji (28) and Anaoji (21), Kannon sacrificed himself to save the life
of a pious man. In the Sōji-ji (22) founding legend and in the story of O-Sato and Sawaichi, Kannon interceded to prevent death. At Iwamadera and Gyōganji (19), and in his mizugo form, he comforts the bereaved and secures the repose of the souls of the dead. In the Okadera (7) founding legend and as anzan Kannon, he grants easy childbirth and bestows healthy children. At Iwamadera (12), Okadera, and Fujiidera (5), he protects the faithful from all forms of evil.

Through these legends runs a single theme: bountiful, compassionate love, manifested in human relationships and in the bond between Kannon and his devotees. Kannon is present whenever people love one another. He intercedes, out of his boundless compassion, to heal, to save, and to transform. It is no coincidence that many of these legends show men and women acting on behalf of another. O-Sato prayed to Kannon for the recovery of her husband's sight. Takafusa prayed to the Hase Kannon for the delivery of his infant son from drowning. Miyanari's wife commissioned an image of Kannon in the hope that her pious deed would bring about her husband's repentance. O-Fumi's parents made the Saikoku pilgrimage to secure the repose of their murdered daughter's soul. Satatue established Kokawadera out of gratitude for the cure Kannon had worked on his dying daughter. To act out of love is to become Kannon, and to have access to the
saving power of the compassionate bodhisattva. Just as the monk practitioner becomes Kannon through the secret rituals he performs, and is thereby endowed with the absolute compassion of the bodhisattva, so the lay believer becomes Kannon in the acts of loving kindness he or she performs. Thus the Kannon cult grants to lay men and women access to the sacred power exercised by monks and holy men. In his myriad forms, Kannon breaks through the barrier between the human and the sacred and endows his believers with his own transforming power.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Legends and beliefs discussed in this chapter are summarized in Appendix E.

2. The theme of self sacrifice is a popular one in setsuwa literature. In addition to the legends related here, see Konjaku monogatari shū 16:3, which features the Kannon at Miidera (14), and 17:40, in which the sacrifice is performed by Jizō (±० Kṣitigarbha).

3. Some accounts say that the monk prayed to Kannon and the image repaired itself. R. Sawa, 237-38.

4. "Nariaisan Nariai ji," color pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. See also Shimizutani, 108-9. This legend is included in the Konjaku monogatari shū, 16:4. The same story, set in a different locale and with a different priest as the central character, is also included in the Hokkegenki, 2:75.

5. "Anaoji," color pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. Some details not included in the pamphlet's version are from an interview with the Rev. Anaho Gyokō, head priest of Anaoji, March 2, 1984. See also Shimizutani, 80-82. The legend also appears in the Konjaku monogatari shū, 16:5; a slightly different version is included in the Hokkegenki, 3:85.

6. Interview with Mr. Anaho, March 2, 1984. I heard this theme — Kannon's presence in loving human relationships — repeated often in my interviews with the priests of the Saikoku temples.


8. I am indebted to Maruyama Iwane for information regarding the theft of the Anaoji main image. Temple publications and Saikoku guidebooks do not mention the theft; in fact, they refer to the image as though it were still in worship at the temple (inside its zushi; it was a secret image). When I asked Mr. Anaho on my second visit to the temple, on June 15, 1984, he confirmed the theft.


11. This formidable woman retired in 758, only to grow impatient with her successor and reascend the throne in 764; she reigned turbulently for seven more years as Empress Shotoku.


13. Interview with Mr. Anaho, March 2, 1984.

14. In present day Hyōgo prefecture.

15. "Nakayamadera no shiori." See also R. Sawa, 211; Hirahata, 145. The cult centering on these images is discussed further in Chapter 6.

16. Belief in the curative powers of certain images is not, of course, limited to Kannon. There are two famous images of Shaka on the Saikoku route which are believed to have the power to heal, at Yoshiminedera (20) and Anaoji (21). See Chapter 2.

17. Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 89.


20. This legend is related in Hirahata, 45-46.

21. Interview with Mr. Tokiwa. I also heard Mr. Tokiwa express this belief in an impromptu sermon on the compassion of Kannon delivered to temple visitors in the Main Hall of Tsubosadadera on April 30, 1984.

22. Nakao, 94.

23. Interview with Mr. Tokiwa, April 30, 1984. Tsubosakadera's activities on behalf of the blind are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

24. Kawachi is northwest of Kokawa and south of Ōsaka.

25. 綾 , here, a woman's formal pleated skirt.

26. There is a pun here. Small river is kogawa, 小川 ; kokawa, 河川 , means hidden river.

28. One list gives the ages of 2, 7, 9, 13, 17, 25, 33, 37, 42, 47, 49, 57, 61, 73, and 85 as containing the possibility for serious evil. The ages of 1, 15, 19, 22, 27, 29, 39 and 63 are less serious. "Okadera," booklet available at the temple in 1982, pp. 2-3.


31. The Thunder God is also the tutelary deity of Mount Kinugasa, where Kannonshōji (30) is located; there too he is believed to protect the temple and its surroundings from lightning.

32. The search for a reliable water supply in mountaintop locations, and the miraculous appearance thereof, is a recurring theme in the legends of the Saikoku temples. The founding legends of the two Kiyomizuderas (16 and 25) are other examples.

33. Interview with Mrs. Tai, wife of the head priest of Iwamadera, May 2, 1984. For these beliefs, see Nakao, 97; Shimizutani, 53-57.

34. The literal meaning of ema is horse picture; the name derives from the fact that the first ema were paintings of horses offered in place of real horses, which were a traditional offering to temples and shrines in early times. Ema began as offerings to temples, but today they are kept as souvenirs as often as they are donated back to the temple which sold them. Ema usually show some characteristic feature of the temple.

35. Interview with Mrs. Tai. See Nakao, 97.

36. Interview with Mrs. Tai, who told me that this is not a densetsu (伝説, a legend); it still happens today.

37. Hirahata, 121-22.

38. There is also a mizugo form of Jizō which is equally popular in Japan.


41. Hasedera Kannon Genki 2:32; Dykstra, 140-1.


46. Cited in Matsunaga, 151.
47. Matsunaga, 211-14.
48. Cited in Matsunaga, 228.
49. For extensive lists, see Matsunaga, Chapter 4.

50. There are, in fact, four deities enshrined at Kasuga Taisha, each in a separate shrine building. Two of these, Takemikazuchi no mikoto and Futsunushi no mikoto, aided in the foundation of the Japanese nation. The other two, Ame no koyane no mikoto and his consort Hime o kami, are worshipped as the divine ancestors of the Fujiwara. We are concerned here only with Takemikazuchi, who is worshipped in the First Shrine (Ichi no miya, 一の宮). "Kasuga Taisha," black and white pamphlet available at the shrine in 1984.

51. Amoghapāśa dhāraṇī sūtra, a translation of the Amoghapāśa dhāraṇī sūtra made by Bodhiruci early in the 8th century.

53. Izumoji, 80.
54. R. Sawa, 153.
55. Izumoji, 26-27.
56. R. Sawa, 248-49.
Patronage is the lifeblood of art. Art costs money, and monumental art costs a great deal of money. The enormous temple complexes which were the rule in Japan from the Nara period on were expensive to build, to furnish, and to maintain. Further, the wooden buildings traditionally preferred by the Japanese were vulnerable to fire. Tall pagodas attracted lightning; mountain temples were destroyed by forest fires; urban temples were swept away in the conflagrations which devastated the cities with terrifying frequency. Temples meddled in politics and were burned, along with their allies' holdings, by victorious enemies. Frequent rebuildings were necessary.

Where did the money come from? In Japan, Buddhist patronage began with emperors and empresses: Imperial largess established and maintained great numbers of temples, establishing a precedent which was followed for centuries. As political and economic power passed from emperors to a succession of powerful families, so too did the burdens and rewards of patronizing Buddhist establishments. As local daimyo increased their power, at the expense of central authority, they began to patronize temples within their
domains. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the Tokugawa reunified the nation at the end of the 16th century, they followed the example set by their predecessors and patronized Buddhist temples. Commoner patronage began as early as the 10th century and continued throughout the middle ages as temples solicited funds; and when the Tokugawa peace brought greater wealth to the peasant and merchant classes, commoner patronage became increasingly important.

The transfers of political and economic power which took place in Japan from the Heian period through the Edo period are one factor in the changes seen in patronage at the Saikoku temples. The other is the dissemination of Buddhism, restricted at first to the Imperial family and the court nobility, and then spreading outward, socially and geographically, until it encompassed the entire nation. As new groups of believers were brought into the fold, their expressions of devotion naturally included donations to the temples which sustained and propagated the faith. As Buddhism spread, so too did patronage.

Donations to the Saikoku temples offer a particularly interesting body of examples because thirty of the thirty-three are associated with the esoteric sects. Histories of the spread of Buddhism in Japan are usually organized along sectarian lines: esoteric Buddhism for the nobility, Zen for the warriors, Pure Land for the common
people. But as the history of the *Saikoku* temples shows, this is an over simplification: *samurai* and commoners also worshipped at and patronized esoteric temples. It is certainly true that members of the warrior class patronized Zen establishments far more lavishly than they did esoteric temples — the behavior of the Ashikaga, discussed below, is only the most striking example — and that the greatest numbers of commoners reserved their devotion, and their donations, for the Pure Land sects. But the enormous popularity of the Kannon cult, embracing as it did all classes of people, meant that even esoteric and Nara sect temples with famous images of Kannon benefitted from the popularization of Buddhism.

The succession of patrons found in the history of Fujiidera (5) is representative of the changes which took place in patronage at the *Saikoku* temples.¹ The temple was founded by Emperor Shōmu as a *chokuganji* (勅願寺), an Imperially vowed temple established to pray for the peace of the nation. Imperial patronage continued in the 9th century with the activities of Emperor Heizei's consort and her descendants. This empress was a member of the Fujii family (藤井), descendants of the ruler of the Korean kingdom of Kudara who had settled in Kochi (now Ōsaka prefecture) and become very powerful in the region. In 806 the empress' son Prince Abō (阿保親王, 792-842)
ordered repairs to the temple. Later, Prince Abō's son Arihara no Narihira (在原業平, 825-880) added several buildings to the compound. Narihira was one of the most famous figures of his age, the grandson of two emperors (Heizei on his father's side, Kammu on his mother's), a renowned waka poet, and a distinguished government official. One of his waka is included in the Hyakunin Isshū, and the Ise Monogatari is said to be his autobiography.

Another famous patron at Fujiidera was the great Sugawara no Michizane, later apotheosized at Kitano Shrine as the patron deity of learning. Michizane studied under Fujiidera's head priest and parted from him with great sadness when he was exiled to Dazaifu in 901.

At the end of the 11th century a second Fujii family (this one written藤井) came on the scene. In 1096 Fujii Yasumoto (藤井安基), grieved by the desolation he saw at the temple, repaired the compound; from that time on Yasumoto's name has been used as an alternate writing for Fujiidera's name. Today the name of the temple uses the character for the earlier Fujii family (藤井寺), but the name of the city in which it is located uses Yasumoto's name (藤井寺市). Both these noble families continued their patronage of the temple for many years.
Emperor Go Daigo (r. 1318-1339) was an ardent devotee of Fujiidera's beautiful main image (pl. IV) and he and his successor Go Murakami (r. 1339-1368) visited the temple often. Not surprisingly, the temple sided with the Southern forces during the Nambokuchō period. In 1347, Kusunoki Masatsura (楠正行), a general of the Southern forces whose family had connections with Fujiidera, encamped near the temple. His 700 men faced 7,000 men of the opposing Hosokawa forces. In the face of such overwhelming odds, Masatsura prayed for victory at Fujiidera; he and his officers copied out the six hundred fascicles of the Daihannyaikyo and donated them to the temple.

Battle fires raged through the temple at the end of the 15th century, and a great earthquake in August of 1511 caused further damage. In November of the same year the monks of the temple began soliciting donations throughout the Kinki region, and the temple was rebuilt with these donations, gathered from all classes of people. Toyotomi Hideyori added the temple's four gates in 1602 (these have been designated Important Cultural Properties) and the Tokugawa made donations to the temple as well.

Today Fujiidera is a bustling, prosperous urban temple, receiving donations not only from Saikoku pilgrims but also from nearby merchants and families living around the temple. With its playground and its full calendar of
festivals, the temple serves as a center of community activities.

Very few individual temples show as clear and complete a progression as the one seen at Fujiidera: Imperial, noble, daimyō, commoner, and shogunal patronage, with active community support continuing to the present. But taken as a group the Saikoku temples provide a fascinating range of examples showing the shifts which occurred in patronage of Buddhist establishments in Japan.

**IMPERIAL PATRONAGE**

The early periods of Japanese Buddhism are marked by a blaze of munificent Imperial patronage. In the first centuries after the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, the new faith was practiced only by the court. Buddhism was considered to be a state protecting religion; this function of the faith provided impetus to its acceptance by the ruling elite. Textual basis for the state protecting power of Buddhism is found in the *Konkōmyōkyō* (金光明経, Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra), where the Four Guardian Kings vow to protect and defend those nations where the Law of the Buddha is expounded. Patronage of Buddhism motivated by the faith's power to protect the state is most explicit in the network of *kokubunji* (国分寺) decreed by Emperor Shōmu in 741 and in the construction of the Tōdaiji as headquarters of the *kokubunji* and great national temple,
also in 741. **Chokuganji** like Fujiidera were also established as protectors of the state: prayers were to be said at **chokuganji** for the peace of the nation and the health of the emperor.

Imperial patronage was directed toward more specific requests as well. When an epidemic swept through Kyōto in 704, Emperor Monmu ordered the establishment of Anaoji (21). An image of Yakushi was enshrined in the temple, and prayers were offered there for the halt of the epidemic. Emperor Dai go donated a **Juntei Kannon** to Kami Daigoji (11) and requested prayers before the image for a safe childbirth for his empress.

Temples were also established out of gratitude. When Taichō's prayers cured Empress Genshō, the Empress established Iwamadera (12) on a site Taichō had chosen and gave the priest her personal devotional image of Senju Kannon (pl. LXIII) to enshrine within the new temple. Emperor Shōmu established Ishiyamadera (13) after Rōben's prayers on Ishiyama had led to the discovery of gold with which to complete the gilding of the Tōdaiji Daibutsu. When the Chinese priest Ikō converted Empress Genmei to Buddhism, the Empress founded Matsunōdera (29) on the site of the priest's hermitage. The Indian ascetic Hōdō restored the ailing Emperor Kōtoku to health with his prayers, and the Emperor established Ichijōji (26) on Hokkezan, were Hōdō
practiced austerities.

This blaze of glory could not last forever. After the removal of the capital to Heian kyō, Imperial patronage declined. It did not, however, end altogether: until the court's financial condition became perilous during the Sengoku period, emperors continued to establish new temples, and to refurbish and enlarge existing temples.

When a drought struck the nation, Emperor Go Suzaku (r. 1036-1045) requested the prayers of Gensan of Yoshiminedera (20). The priest's prayers brought a downpour, and in gratitude the Emperor transferred a Senju Kannon from Washiodera to serve as Yoshiminedera's main image. Gensan also prayed for a safe delivery for the consort of the future Emperor Go Sanjō. When the consort was safely delivered of a prince, who was to become Emperor Go Shirakawa, the Imperial family added several halls to Yoshiminedera.

Emperor Toba (r. 1107-1123) was a devotee of Matsunōdera (29) and made the long journey to the temple several times. In 1119 he built several worship halls and priests' residences at the temple and donated temple estates worth 4,000 koku.²

Emperor Go Shirakawa was a fervent believer in Kannon and rebuilt many of the Saikoku temples which had fallen into disrepair.³
A custom which continues even today at Ishiyamadera (12) shows the persistence of the connection between the Imperial house and the Buddhist faith. The temple was founded by Emperor Shōmu in gratitude for the efficacy of prayers offered by Rōben for gold to complete the gilding of the Tōdaiji Daibutsu. The main image at Ishiyamadera is a secret image of Nyoirin Kannon. This image is kept in a zushi which has large golden representations of the Imperial chrysanthemum crest emblazoned on its doors. The zushi is locked, and the key is kept in the Imperial Household Agency in Tokyo. The main image is shown only upon Imperial order. When a showing is scheduled -- once every thirty-three years and upon the enthronement of a new emperor -- a representative of the Agency comes down from Tokyo with the key and himself unlocks the doors of the zushi, while the priests of the temple look on.4

NOBLE PATRONAGE

The Imperial munificence of the Nara period and the Imperial family's continuing patronage of Buddhism throughout the succeeding centuries established a precedent which was followed by nearly all the families who rose to power in Japan from the Heian period on. The Fujiwara, who usurped so many other Imperial prerogatives, founded and patronized several temples. Most important among the temples which benefitted from Fujiwara patronage was
Kōfukuji (9), which served as ujidera of the Fujiwara. According the Kōfukuji engi, written in 900, the temple was first founded in 633 by Fujiwara no Kamatari, and moved to its present site when the Nara capital was established. Although no buildings remain from the Nara period, the history of the temple is of great interest for the development of Buddhist architecture because it illustrates the heights of complexity attained by monastic temples in the 8th century. Like nearly all other Nara period temples, Kōfukuji was originally laid out with strict axial symmetry (fig. 9). A southern facing central Kondō stood near the northern end of the compound, fronted by an east and a west Kondō, each facing inward. Apparently a twin pagoda scheme, seen first at Shitennōji and used also at Kōfukuji's neighbor Tōdaiji, was planned but never completed. The spot where a western pagoda would have been built to balance the famous eastern pagoda was used in 813 for the Nan'endo, the octagonal hall which serves as the Saikoku pilgrimage site. All these and other halls were built during the Nara and early Heian periods by members of the Fujiwara and Imperial families, the central Kondō in 710 by Fujiwara no Fumito, then Prime Minister; the eastern Kondō in 726 by Emperor Shōmu on behalf of the retired Empress Genshō, who was ill; the eastern pagoda and the western Kondō in 730 and 734, respectively, by Empress Kōmyō, consort of Emperor
Shōmu and daughter of Fujiwara no Fubito; the Hokuendo in 721 on behalf of Fubito, who had died recently; the Nan'endo in 813 by Fujiwara no Fuyutsugu.5

The story of the Nan'endo is of great interest for the light it sheds on Fujiwara patronage. According to temple tradition, Fujiwara no Takamaro enquired of Kūkai the way to ensure the continued prosperity of his family. Kūkai told him to believe in Kannon, and himself made an image of Fukūkenjaku Kannon, which Takamaro enshrined in a hall in his own home. After Takamaro died, his son went to Kūkai with a question of his own. Apparently he was a more large-spirited man than his father, for he asked Kūkai how he could propagate the Buddhist faith and ensure the happiness and welfare of all classes of people. Kūkai told him that if he built a hall and enshrined within it his father's image of Fukūkenjaku Kannon, and had the people worship there, his desires would inevitably be fulfilled. Fuyutsugu followed Kūkai's advice. As part of the ground breaking ceremony he buried one thousand silver images of Kannon deep in the earth beneath the spot where the hall was to be built.6

Fujiwara patronage was not limited to Kōfukuji. Masatomo, the founder of Sōjiji (22), was a Fujiwara, an eighth generation descendent of Kamatari. Fujiwara no Toyonari, a mid-Nara period minister, donated three
buildings from his mansion to Ishiyamadera (12); these were dismantled, moved to the temple, and re-erected there.7

Other Nara period nobles patronized Buddhism and founded temples. Kiyomizudera (16) was founded by Sakanoue Tamuramaro, the first recipient of the title Seiitai Shogun. And a nobleman from northern Japan founded Kegonji (33) when the image he was taking home from Kyōto indicated to him that it preferred to be enshrined at Tanigumisan.

During their brief ascendency the Taira both built and destroyed. Taira holdings in Kyōto were contiguous with Rokuharamitsuji (17), and that temple benefitted greatly from Taira patronage. Kiyomori's mother Gion Nyōgo built a Tahōtō at Kiyomizudera (25) in order to secure her son's fortunes in war.8 But the act for which the Taira are best remembered is one of destruction. In 1180 the Minamoto, aided by warrior monks from Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji, rose up against the Taira. The Taira forces crushed this first rebellion, and Taira no Shigehara, leader of the Taira army and son of Kiyomori, marched toward Nara bent on revenge. He killed the Imperial prince who had served as figurehead in the Minamoto conspiracy and burned Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji to the ground. This wanton destruction, especially of Tōdaiji -- a great symbol of national unity under the protection of the Buddhist faith -- ranks in Japanese memory with Oda Nobunaga's destruction of Enryakuji as an act of
rampant desecration.

In a pattern which was to be repeated over and over throughout Japanese history, the Minamoto rebuilt Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji after they finally defeated the Taira in 1185. The reconstruction of Kōfukuji was begun by the temple's long time patrons the Fujiwara immediately after its destruction in 1180, and completed under Minamoto patronage. Only two of the buildings from the massive Minamoto reconstruction still survive, the Hokuendō and the three story pagoda behind the Nan'endō. But the reconstruction lives on in the revival of interest in the Nara style which it generated, and in the consequent development of Kamakura style, particularly in sculpture. The Fukūkenjaku Kannon (pl. IX) which serves as the main image of the Nan'endō, and the portraits of the six famous priests of the Hossō sect (pl. X), formerly in the Nan'endō and now in the Kōfukuji temple museum, are but two examples. These date from the time of the Minamoto reconstruction, and, like virtually all other Kamakura period portrait sculpture, show the influence of the Nara style.

Although the rebuilding of Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji was the greatest single act of patronage by the Minamoto, other Saikoku temples also benefitted from shogunal generosity. Yoritomo built the Sanmon, Shōrō and Tahōtō at Ishiyamadera (13),9 and added an Amidadō to Kiyomizu-dera (25).10
Nakayamadera had close connections with the Minamoto from the time that Mitsunaka (満仲, 912-997) first settled in Settsu; a descendant of Mitsunaka's served as head priest of the temple. In 1185, Nakayamadera was burned by an ally of the Taira and subsequently rebuilt by Minamoto no Yoritomo.11

In 1195, the Minamoto donated a set of the Issaikyō to Kami Daigoji, along with a Sūtra Repository in which to house it.12 This magnificent building survived the many fires which raged through the temple during the Sengoku period, only to be burned in 1639. It had been designated a National Treasure.

PATRONAGE IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

After the brief interlude of Minamoto patronage with which the Kamakura period began, the Saikoku temples fell on increasingly hard times. Their former patrons, with a few notable exceptions, were no longer able to provide support; with the removal of the political capital to Kamakura, the Imperial court began a slow but inexorable decline. Imperial fortunes reached their nadir during the last years of the Ashikaga shogunate. Emperor Go Tsuchimikado (r.1465-1500) lay unburied for six weeks after his death because there was no money in the Imperial coffers to pay for a funeral. His successor Go Kashiwabara ascended in 1500 but was not formally enthroned until 1521, again
because there were no funds to mount the elaborate public ceremony which was customary. Go Kashiwabara's successor Go Nara waited ten years. A glance at a reign table shows much longer reigns for Muromachi and Sengoku emperors than for their Heian predecessors; only seven emperors reigned during the years between 1392 and 1582; between 897 and 1087, fourteen emperors ascended to the throne. The custom of abdication died out in part because the court could not afford to maintain both a reigning emperor and his retired, but still very expensive, predecessor.

Those families who had power and wealth, the Hōjō regents and the Ashikaga shōgun, showed little interest in patronizing esoteric temples. The Minamoto had deliberately isolated themselves in Kamakura, away from the potentially enervating influence of court life. The Hōjō, who soon eclipsed the Minamoto, were concerned with little more than factional squabbles and the problems of military government. Matters relating to the cultural side of national life they left to Kyōto, without, however, making sure that the court had sufficient income to deal with them.

The Ashikaga too remained almost completely indifferent. Those Saikoku temples which were inclined to take sides had for the most part allied themselves with Emperor Go Daigo and the Southern forces during the Nambokuchō period, in part out of gratitude for this
Emperor's favors. Unlike the Minamoto, then, the Ashikaga did not come to power beholden to temples for their support and eager to repay their debts with patronage. Further, the Ashikaga were far more interested in establishing Zen temples than in rebuilding decaying Tendai and Shingon temples.

Meanwhile temple buildings burned or fell into disrepair. Enkyōji (27) is typical; the temple suffered six major fires between 1286 and 1492, losing eleven halls.

There were, however, a few bright spots amidst all this gloom. Until land grabbing became rampant during the complete breakdown of central authority which occurred during the Sengoku period, temples retained most of the estates which had been donated to them in happier days. Income from these estates kept the temples from falling into abject poverty. A few emperors continued to patronize Buddhist establishments, although on a much smaller scale than before. Emperor Go Saga (r. 1242-1246) rebuilt the Jikodō at Enkyōji in 1245, and Emperor Go Uda (r. 1274-1287) rebuilt that temple's Nyoirindō in 1279. Emperor Go Hanazono (r. 1429-1464) was a devotee of the main image at Yoshiminedera (20) and rebuilt the temple in 1453. Just fourteen years later, the entire temple was destroyed in the Ōnin War.
The one emperor of the medieval period whose name appears with some frequency in the histories of the *Saikoku* temples is Go Daigo (r. 1318-1339). Go Daigo's restorationist tendencies did not stop with Imperial rule; he was the first emperor in centuries -- and the last emperor ever -- to attempt large scale patronage of esoteric temples. Go Daigo had particular reverence for the *Saikoku* temples. He visited many of the temples on the route, and in 1335 he ordered *sūtras* read at all the *Saikoku* temples in order to ensure an easy delivery for his consort. Go Daigo's patronage was not, however, motivated solely by piety. He was shrewd enough to benefit from the hard lessons learned by the Taira, who lost the support of the great monasteries through their destruction of Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji. Even in the comparatively lean years of the 14th century, many esoteric temples remained military strongholds, and Go Daigo hoped through his patronage to enlist their aid in his struggle to restore Imperial rule. Unfortunately for the temples, the Emperor and his forces also found the esoteric temples convenient places to encamp before major battles. Northern and Southern forces encamped at Miidera (14) in 1335 and at Fujiidera (5) in 1347.
DAIMYÔ PATRONAGE

Daimyô patronage was vital to the Saikoku temples during the Sengoku period, and continued to be important well into the Edo period. The Ōnin War, beginning in 1467, brought terrible destruction. Central authority broke down almost completely. Temple estates disappeared in the struggles for land and power which raged through the 15th and 16th centuries. In such dark times, the temples turned for protection and help to the only authority there was, to the local daimyô in whose domains they were located. The Saikoku temples fared better than most, for by this time even the most obscure among them were well known. Allowing famous temples within his domain to fall into decay would reflect no credit on a daimyô, and so most lords did what they could to help keep temples in good repair. An early example of daimyô patronage can be seen at Chômeiji (31), where the Sasaki, lords of Ōmi, (of whom more later) enlarged the temple at the end of the 12th century. They added a Gomadô, a pagoda, and a number of priests' residences.21

At the end of the 16th century, Kokawadera (3) had fallen into decay. The Asano, lords of Wakayama castle, donated temple estates worth forty koku and restored to it some ninety priests' residences, but the decay continued.22
After Oda Nobunaga's armies destroyed Matsunōdera (29), it was rebuilt in 1581 by Hosokawa Yūsai (23). Yūsai was a man of great erudition and culture; a political confidante of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, he advised Hideyoshi on court etiquette and the construction of Jurakutei.24

The Honda, lords of Himeji Castle, patronized the two Saikoku temples in their domain. Honda Tadamasa repaired the Kondō at Ichijōji (26) in 1628,25 and rebuilt a Kōdō at Enkyōji (27) in 1622.26 Honda family members are buried at Enkyōji.

The relationship between the Sasaki and Kannonshōji (32) shows that daimyō patronage was not always an unmixed blessing. The Sasaki, a branch of the Minamoto, rose to power in Ōmi (present Shiga prefecture) toward the end of the Heian period, and maintained their power for nearly four hundred years, an astonishing duration considering the vicissitudes of medieval politics.

The Sasaki patronized both Chōmeiji (31) and Kannonshōji, the two Saikoku temples within their domain. But Mount Kinugasa, on which Kannonshōji stood, was the highest mountain in Ōmi, and the Sasaki soon came to covet it. At some time -- exactly when is not clear -- the Sasaki moved Kannonshōji down from the mountain, to a small valley on the southeast slope of Mount Kinugasa, and began erecting
fortifications atop the mountain.

Considering that a temple and shrine were built within the Sasaki compound, this seems a puzzling act. But by the time of the move, which probably took place around the beginning of the Kamakura period, Kannonshōji was a large and famous temple. It is included in two 12th century lists of temples of the Saikoku pilgrimage route,\(^27\) and would have attracted large numbers of pilgrims. In addition, Mount Kinugasa is scattered with enormous boulders and caves. On a boulder fronting on Kannonshōji's small Okunoin are carved seven Buddhist images which date from the Heian period;\(^28\) these mark the site of mountain ascesis and are evidence of a mountain cult at Mount Kinugasa at least as early as the 12th century. The holiness of both Mount Kinugasa and Kannonshōji meant that as long as the temple remained on the mountain the castle built by the Sasaki was vulnerable to espionage. Spies could easily disguise themselves as pilgrims or ascetics and steal in to examine the castle.\(^29\) Thus the temple may have been moved in part for reasons of security.\(^30\)

For over four hundred years the Sasaki occupied the top of Mount Kinugasa. At its height during the Sengoku period the castle -- called, with what must have been unintended irony, Kannonjijō,観音寺城 -- contained homes for eight hundred families. It sprawled over the
entire summit of the mountain and spilled down the sides. It was the largest castle in Japan.\textsuperscript{31}

In a series of agile maneuvers which demonstrated their eye for the main chance, the Sasaki sided first with the Minamoto, then with the Ashikaga, and finally with Oda Nobunaga. It was this last alliance which proved their undoing. When Akechi Mitsuhide assassinated Nobunaga in 1582, his troops captured Azuchi Castle and destroyed Kannonjijō as well.\textsuperscript{32}

Only fifteen years later, in 1597, Kannonshōji requested permission of the central authorities to move again to the top of Mount Kinugasa. Permission was granted, and temple officials began soliciting funds. Three years later a temporary hall was erected; the move was completed in 1605.\textsuperscript{33} Today Kannonshōji shares the summit of Mount Kinugasa with the picturesque ruins of Kannonji Castle (pl. LXVI; map, fig. 8). Very little of the castle can be seen from the main temple compound, but considerable excavation has been carried out at the site of the castle's inner citadel, northeast of the Main Hall. A trail leads back through thick underbrush. Although the history of Mount Kinugasa and the castle ruins are mentioned in Saikoku guidebooks and temple officials cheerfully point out the trail when asked, very few visitors to Kannonshōji are aware that the spot where they pray to the compassionate Kannon
was once the site of a vast mountaintop fortification.

HIDEYOSHI'S PATRONAGE

Of all the Saikoku patrons, Toyotomi Hideyoshi was the most lavish. Hideyoshi's extraordinary generosity was in part a response to an extraordinary need; as a result of Imperial poverty and Ashikaga neglect, and the appalling destruction of the Ōnin War and the Sengoku period, much of Japan's Buddhist heritage lay in ruins. In part, however, Hideyoshi's generous patronage of Saikoku temples and other religious and secular establishments was a carefully calculated policy designed to consolidate his position.

The need was indeed great. When Hideyoshi came to power, nearly all the Saikoku temples had been greatly reduced in size by fires and battles; many had been almost completely destroyed. Daigoji (11) had been the site of major Sengoku battles and almost nothing remained except the magnificent pagoda. Nakayamadera (24) had been destroyed during Nobunaga's time. Battlefires set during Hideyoshi's campaign in Kii had reduced Kokawadera (3) to ashes. Yoshiminedera (20) had been destroyed during the Ōnin War and had never been rebuilt.

Hideyoshi responded generously. He rebuilt the Main Hall at Seigantoji and the raidō of the Main Hall at Ishiyamadera. He restored mountain and forest lands to
Yoshiminedera. He donated temple estates in Sakamoto worth five hundred koku to Enkyōji, and estates worth one hundred koku to Chōmeiji. In 1591, as part of his rebuilding of Kyōto, he donated materials for rebuilding the temple and temple estates worth seventy koku to Rokuhamitsuji.

In 1598, Hideyoshi began one of his grandest projects, the rebuilding of Daigoji. Reconstruction was begun in preparation for the great cherry blossom viewing which Hideyoshi held at Daigoji in the spring of that year. Among the few survivors still standing amidst the ruins of Daigoji was a famous group of weeping cherry trees. To these Hideyoshi added other groves of cherries, and when they came into bloom he invited hundreds of his retainers to Daigoji to enjoy the sight. Only parts of the Sanbōin and its famous garden, the garden designed by Hideyoshi himself, were completed in time for the party. Work continued at the temple for many years and was finally completed under the supervision of Hideyoshi's son Hideyori. The Godaidō, the Nyoirindō and the Kaisandō at Kami Daigoji, less accessible than the buildings at Shimo Daigoji and therefore less satisfactory as public monuments to Hideyoshi's generosity, were not completed until 1608. The Godaidō, which had been designated a National Treasure, was destroyed by fire in 1931; the Nyoirindō and the Kaisandō have been designated
Important Cultural Properties.

Several other projects planned by Hideyoshi were completed after his death by Hideyori. Before Hideyori's birth, Hideyoshi had prayed to the famous anzan Kannon at Nakayamadera (24) for an heir; in gratitude, Hideyori rebuilt the temple in 1603-5. He rebuilt Makinōdera (4) in 1603 and the Main Hall at Sōji (22) the same year. Among the most spectacular of his father's projects carried out by Hideyori was the construction on Chikubushima. Buildings from Hōkoku Shrine in Kyōto, the shrine dedicated to Hideyoshi (or, according to some sources, from Fushimi Castle) were dismantled, moved to the island, and reconstructed there. These included a Karamon ("Chinese" gate) and two other buildings, one dedicated as Hōgonji's Kannondō, the other as the main building of Chikubushima Shrine (pl. L, LI). These magnificent buildings, replete with the intricately carved and painted woodwork which is the hallmark of the Momoyama style, are connected by a covered passageway said to have been made from Hideyoshi's boat. The buildings have been designated National Treasures.

Why was Hideyoshi so generous? In her recent biography of Hideyoshi, Mary Elizabeth Berry has probed some of the motives for Hideyoshi's patronage, not only of Buddhist establishments but of the Imperial court and the city of
Kyōto as well. She notes that he was moved in part by a genuine desire for reconciliation, after the divisive battles of the Sengoku period and Nobunaga's reign of terror. Behind the traditional concept of unity, represented by the central authority of the Imperial house designating power to a military government, lay a deeply divided nation. Hideyoshi restored the Imperial court to solvency and a measure of its former dignity; he rebuilt Kyōto, parts of which had been ravaged by Nobunaga; he reconstructed temples which had been destroyed during the long period of war. In all these acts Hideyoshi hoped to promote reconciliation among the nation's disparate elements, and to restore unity to the nation he ruled.

Hideyoshi was also moved by political considerations. Despite their decrepitude, many Buddhist establishments still held considerable power. Several temples still kept standing armies of sōhei. Imperial princes served as abbots of some large temples, including Daigoji. Other temples commanded the allegiance of large numbers of danka (檀家, parishioners). In rebuilding halls and donating temple estates, Hideyoshi hoped to ensure the alliance of these temples, thus adding to his own power.

Further, Hideyoshi hoped to legitimize his own rule. He was a parvenu of low birth who wished, in Professor
Berry's felicitous phrase, to "enhance his alliances by grounding them in larger traditions of law and institutional authority." He accepted -- and apparently even lobbied for -- high court rank and titles; he took lessons in court etiquette; he entertained the court on a lavish scale. He wished to rule, not merely as shōgun -- a title which implied military power only -- but as a member of the Imperial court, with all the tradition and authority which that carried. Hideyoshi understood the importance of style, and knew that to be accepted as a legitimate ruler he had to behave as a legitimate ruler. In Japan, as elsewhere, one privilege and responsibility of the ruler is artistic patronage. In rebuilding temples, as in his other acts of patronage, Hideyoshi was following the example set by a long line of powerful families in Japan, and was taking up the mantle of cultural leadership which all of his predecessors had worn.

Finally, in some of his patronage, Hideyoshi was giving rein to his love of ostentatious display. The beautiful buildings which were moved to Chikubushima were one example. More striking is Hideyoshi's Daigoji blossom viewing party, and the reconstruction of the temple which it generated. Even if the motives were less than purely benevolent, several temples have reason to be grateful for the streak of ostentation in Hideyoshi's character.
TOKUGAWA PATRONAGE

The Tokugawa too followed the precedent set by the Imperial family and centuries of shogunal administrators, although far less enthusiastically than Hideyoshi. They began with vigor, rebuilding Kokawadera (3), in 161956 and Kiyomizudera (16) -- which in 1629 had been almost completely destroyed by fire -- in 1631.57 They gave other gifts as well: temple estates worth seventy koku to Rokuharamitsuji (17) in 1615,58 and a pagoda and gate to Miidera (14) in 1601.59 But their interest soon waned. After the mid-17th century, there is little evidence of Tokugawa patronage at the Saikoku temples. Secure in Edo, and concerned with the more important business of creating an enduring political system, they had little interest to spare for the temples of far off Kinki.

COMMONER PATRONAGE

The history of commoners' patronage at the Saikoku temples began as early as the 10th century, with the founding of Rokuharamitsuji (17) by Kūya. He had spent most of his life ministering and preaching to the common people of Kyōto, and so when he came to build a temple Kūya turned to them for donations. He did not, of course, refuse gifts from the nobility, and the names of several wealthy donors are included in temple records.60 But small donations
from townsmen provided a large part of the money, and it took Kūya ten years to build the Main Hall.\textsuperscript{61}

As Imperial and noble patronage declined around the end of the Heian period, temples turned increasingly to solicitation, called \textit{kanjin} (観進) for funds. Two separate \textit{kanjin} were carried out at Ichijōji (26) to build the beautiful three storey pagoda which still stands at the temple (pl. LXVII). The first, in 1171, provided funds for the erection of the pagoda. The second, three years later, was to pay for the pagoda's roof tiles.\textsuperscript{62}

Kannonji (15) and the entire Ima Gumano area suffered considerable damage during the Ōnin War and the battles which followed. In 1494 the Ashikaga \textit{bakufu} ordered its daimyō to respond to \textit{kanjin} by the priests of the temples of Ima Gumano, and forbade them to hinder the progress of the soliciting priests through their domains. Such orders were necessary because ascetics and priests engaged in \textit{kanjin} sometimes abused their freedom of movement by spying, and so were often denied entry into certain domains.\textsuperscript{63}

The unusual measures used by Rokuharamitsuji (17) indicate the desperate straits in which many temples found themselves during the \textit{Sengoku} period. Rokuharamitsuji too had been ravaged during the Ōnin War. In 1507, for the first time in its history, the temple held a showing of its
hitherto secret main image. A secret image of Jizō was also shown, and sermons were delivered daily for twelve days. Crowds of people gathered at the temple for these unprecedented events, and temple priests moved among them soliciting funds.64

In 1507 two vassals of the Sasaki, lords of Ōmi, rebelled against their masters. The resulting battlefires spread to Chōmeiji(31) and the temple was reduced to ashes. Chōmeiji's head priest was determined to rebuild the temple, and led the temple's monks in a program of temple solicitation which lasted for fourteen years.65

During Hideyoshi's conquest of the Kii peninsula, in 1585, the entire region around Kokawadera (3) was set ablaze and the temple was completely destroyed. Temple priests travelled throughout neighboring districts soliciting contributions and finally rebuilt the temple.66

A few temple solicitation programs even found their way into temple legends. An example is the legend which purports to explain why the bell at Naraijii (28) is never rung. Early in the 17th century, the temple's head priest wished to have a new bell cast for the temple. As he travelled about the countryside soliciting donations for the new bell, he came to a prosperous looking farmhouse. When the priest asked her for a donation, the mistress of the house snapped at him that she had no money to give because
she had so many children to feed. On the day the bell was to be cast, the priest saw the same woman at the temple, carrying an infant in her arms. When the bronze became molten, she accidentally dropped the baby into the melting pot. When the bell was first struck, its tone sounded so much like the cry of a baby that it was never struck again. The bell still hangs in Nariaiji's Bell Tower; it is called tsukazu no kane (撞かずの鐘, the bell [which is] never struck).67

Two of the Saikoku temples possess important visual documents attesting to the patronage of ordinary people. Hanging under the eaves of the Main Hall of Kiyomizudera (16) are four large, splendid ema depicting trading ships (Pl. LXVIII). These were donated to the temple by two wealthy merchant families, three ema by the Sueyoshi and one by the Suminokura, who were devotees of Kiyomizudera's main image. The ema, donated in the early 1630's, were expressions of gratitude for the safe return of the families' ships from overseas trading ventures.68 Stylistically the ema are similar to the fūzokuga of the Momoyama and early Edo periods. People are crowded together on the decks of the ships, engaged in all manner of amusements; they play go and card games, dance and play musical instrumants. They are fashionably dressed, in brightly colored and beautifully patterned garments; there
are even a few Europeans in western dress. The figures are rather crudely drawn and their poses are often unconvincing. But the bright colors and intricate patterns of their garments, set against the bold, simple lines of the ships and the stylized flourishes of the waves, give these very decorative paintings a great deal of spontaneous charm.

Even more remarkable is the Ishizuki no zu, a large ema in the Kannondō at Miidera (14) which depicts that hall's reconstruction after a fire in 1686 (pl. LXIX, LXX). The Kannondō originally stood atop a mountain at the southern edge of the Miidera precincts. But the mountain was difficult to climb, and, like the rest of the temple, was closed to women. In 1481 the hall was moved to a level spot to the south of the main temple compound (fig. 3); it was provided with a separate gate so that women could enter.69 The newly accessible Kannondō and its main image, a Nyoirin Kannon (pl. XX), became the focus of a large popular cult, for the Nyoirin form of Kannon is believed to grant happiness and prosperity to those who pray to him.70 The Kannondō was also a popular site for pleasure outings; nestled in lush foothills near the shore of Lake Biwa, Miidera has long been famous for the scenic beauty of its surroundings.

The Kannondō was destroyed by fire in 1686 and rebuilt only three years later, largely through donations from
commoners. The *Ishizuki no zu* records this last rebuilding, in the lively and decorative style of the Momoyama and early Edo genre screens. Like the *ema* at Kiyomizudera (p. LXVIII) the one at Miidera is filled with color and pattern. Dozens of ordinary people are crowded into the painting, engaged in the pleasurable pastimes of the emerging middle class: singing and dancing, eating and drinking, viewing the temple's famous cherry blossoms, and watching dramatic performances. Scattered throughout all this play are builders hard at work on the new Kannondō. The names of the *ema*’s donors appear in the lower left corner; all are commoners. This *ema* provides vivid pictorial evidence for commoner patronage of Buddhism during the Edo period.71

**PATRONAGE TODAY**

Today the *Saikoku* temples continue to receive funds from a variety of sources. About one third charge admission.72 Many are actively supported by local merchants and residents, and by devotees in more distant locations. Some successfully petitioned the government for the restoration of lands which were confiscated during the Meiji period and receive income from those lands. The rebuilding of the Main Hall at Kiyomizudera (25), completed in 1917, was financed by the sale of trees from temple lands which were recovered by the temple at the end of the Meiji
Saikoku pilgrims and other visitors give generously, and donations come from all over Japan. At Yoshiminedera (20) there is a new concrete stairway zigzagging up the hill to the temple; its railing pillars are inscribed with the names and addresses of donors. Kinki locations are naturally the most numerous, but virtually all regions of Japan are represented.

There are also fees for funerals and related rites, a major source of income for many Japanese temples. Buddhism and funerals are so closely related in the popular Japanese imagination that Buddhist priests are often called osōshikiyasan (お葬式屋さん, funeral director).

Lost halls continue to be rebuilt through donations. The Junteidō at Kami Daigoji (11) was destroyed by fire in 1939; the present hall was dedicated in 1968. The rebuilding was financed by gifts from more than 100,000 donors. In 1921 a fire destroyed the Maniden at Enkyōji (27); work was begun on a new hall just eight years later, and the present Maniden was completed in 1932. In the spring of 1984 Okadera (7) began soliciting funds for the construction of a new pagoda. An offering box and an architect's drawing of the proposed structure occupy a prominent position in the temple's Main Hall.
Both national and local governments serve as patrons of Buddhist art in 20th century Japan. Under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, administered by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Education, the Minister of Education designates National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. The Agency pays subsidies to the owners of objects so designated for their conservation, repair, and restoration. Prefectural governments also designate important objects within their boundaries and provide funds for their protection. When the Main Hall at Rokuharamitsuji (17) was dismantled and refurbished in 1969, the Kyōto prefectural government supervised the work and contributed part of the necessary funds.76

Despite generous donations from a variety of patrons, however, many of the Saikoku temples have shrunk to a tiny remnant of their former glory. At only a few temples is there the abundance of halls which once characterized all. Temple records tell of numerous subsidiary halls scattered over vast compounds.77 Picture maps show worship halls, lecture halls, and priests' quarters crowded together and thronged with priests and visitors. A mandara in the form of a picture map (pl. LXXI), dating from the Momoyama period, shows a bustling Makinōdera (4). Dozens of buildings are spread over the entire mountain. White robed pilgrims cross an arched bridge leading to the temple gate,
priests chant in the Main Hall, and warriors watch a dance performance on a stage. At its height Makinōdera boasted residences for 970 priests and temple estates worth 20,000 koku.\textsuperscript{78} It was completely destroyed by Oda Nobunaga in 1581; today there are only a few halls perched atop the mountain.

The \textit{Nariaisan Sankei Mandara}, a picture map of Nariai-ji (28), also shows a mountain crowded with buildings (pl. LXXII); included are two lavish gates, a five storey pagoda, and three Tahōtō. Today the Main Hall, rebuilt early in the 17th century after two disastrous fires destroyed the temple, sits nearly alone atop Mount Nariai.

Modern patronage, coming as it does from mostly middle class believers, is simply not adequate to maintain temples at the levels established by Imperial largess. With a few important exceptions -- among the \textit{Saikoku} temples Hasedera (8), Kiyomizudera (16) and Nakayamadera (24) are the most obvious -- esoteric temples have had to learn to content themselves with less. Although a plaintive note occasionally creeps into temple publications in descriptions of temples' past glories, most temples have adapted well to the realities of the 20th century. There are far fewer priests in residence now than there were even as recently as before World War II. Ten of the \textit{Saikoku} temples are served by a single priest or a single family of priests; at
fourteen others there are five or fewer priests in residence. With so few priests, vast priests' quarters are superfluous; large numbers of worship halls, requiring rituals and maintenance, are a burden. Today's smaller compounds can be beautifully landscaped and immaculately maintained by small staffs. Speedy modern transportation means that fewer pilgrims require lodging after an arduous journey before proceeding on to the next temple on the route. Changing needs and changing circumstances have made for smaller temple compounds and smaller staffs. But continuing devotion occasions continuing vitality.

THE INFLUENCE OF PATRONS

The relationship between changes in patronage and developments in style is a complex one. Japanese Buddhist art is inherently conservative. In the esoteric tradition, iconographic correctness takes precedence over matters of style; once the style for a certain type of image has been established, it tends to be repeated over and over again. Architecture too is conservative: halls are often rebuilt in the style of their lost predecessors, regardless of the identity or class of the patron.

There are, however, several changes which can be tied, if not to specific patrons, to more general changes in the class and interests of patrons. An early example is the development of the raidō, a forward extension of the icon
hall in esoteric temples. Because esoteric Buddhism is practiced by monks but in Japan was patronized by the entire Imperial court, the need arose for a space to accommodate the nobility when they attended esoteric ceremonies. Because esoteric rites are closed to all but the initiated, the area for lay worshippers needed to be screened off from the ritual space. The Chinese preference, taken over by the Japanese, for a strictly regular plan conflicted with the need for additional space in or near the icon hall, and it was several generations before a satisfactory solution to this problem was reached. An early form, seen in a later reconstruction, is the complex at Tsubosakadera (fig. 10). Here the raidō is a separate building, a long, shallow hall with an irimoya roof, fronting the small octagonal hall which houses the temple's main image and connected to it by a short roofed but unwalled passageway.

There are two important and very beautiful examples of developed raidō among the Saikoku temples, those of the Main Halls at Ishiyamadera (fig. 11) and Kiyomizudera (pl. XXII; fig. 4). In both cases the existing structures are rebuildings; the entire Main Hall at Kiyomizudera (16) dates from 1633, and the raidō at Ishiyamadera (13) was reconstructed during Hideyoshi's time. Literary and pictorial evidence confirms that the present buildings were reconstructed along the lines of the originals. In both
cases the **raidō** seem to have been later additions to an originally simple chancel, although in neither case is the date of the original construction of the **raidō** clear. Both are impressive buildings, with the chancel section built on solid ground and the **raidō** jutting out over a steep hillside, supported by massive pilings. The Main Hall at Kiyomizudera is the more spectacular, because the view of the Ishiyamadera **Kondō** is obscured by thickly growing trees. The plan of the Ishiyamadera hall is the more interesting. Soper notes that the Ishiyamadera **raidō** is unique in being identical in plan to the hall which it fronts: like the Main Hall, it consists of a central space with aisles on all four sides. **Raidō** from the Kamakura period are clearly appendages to their halls, not complete buildings, with no aisles or with aisles on the front and sides only. Soper conjectures that the form seen at Ishiyamadera may be a transitional stage, from separate and separately roofed **raidō** and chancel during the Heian period, whose existence he infers from literary evidence and remaining temple structures, to the standardized combination, represented by Kiyomizudera, seen from the Kamakura period on. The **raidō** at Ishiyamadera betrays its aristocratic origins in two blocks of the side aisles, those nearest the chancel, which have been screened off to provide privacy for noble worshippers.
Later, the spread of Buddhism to the common people and the rise of the Pure Land sects led to the erection of very large worship halls to accommodate great numbers of believers. Large halls were not new to Japanese Buddhism; but in the early examples, monumentality, not function, was the goal. Because of the great popularity of the Kannon cult, the vogue for large worship halls spread to the Saikoku temples. Many of the Saikoku Main Halls rebuilt during the Edo period are quite large. The Kondō at Ichijōji (26), nine bays by eight, is particularly impressive because of the size of the spacious chancel. It was rebuilt in 1628 by Honda Tadamasa, lord of Himeji Castle.

The Main Hall at Kokawadera (pl. II) is the largest on the Saikoku route, rebuilt in 1720 by Yoshimune, the eighth Tokugawa shōgun. Like many other late monumental buildings, this hall seems to owe its great size in part to the desire of the patron to demonstrate his munificence, and in part to a genuine need for a spacious hall. Yoshimune had become a devotee of Kokawadera during his tenure as lord of Kii early in the 18th century, and patronized the temple lavishly thereafter. During the Edo period, Kokawadera was the focus of a large popular cult, and a large hall was necessary to accommodate the great numbers of visitors who flocked to the temple.
In two cases, certain stylistic developments can be traced directly to the activities of a single patron. Minamoto no Yoritomo's reconstruction of Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji after their destruction by the Taira led to a revival of the Nara style, particularly in Buddhist sculpture. The dynamic naturalism which characterizes so much Kamakura sculpture is clearly related to Nara prototypes. After the soft, idealized style of the Heian period, the crisp, lifelike images they encountered in Nara came as a revelation to sculptors who worked on the reconstruction. The beautiful works associated with the Nan'endō -- the main image (pl. IX) still enshrined in the hall, and the priest portraits (pl. X) and the Guardian Kings images (pl. XI), now in the Kōfukuji museum -- are only a part of the legacy which remains from Yoritomo's generosity. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of Yoritomo's patronage for the development of the Kamakura style: Kōkei, Unkei and Kaikei were all involved in the work of rebuilding Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji.

Although he did not personally originate the Momoyama style, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's lavish patronage undoubtedly led to its spread and further development. The monumental building projects he undertook, both in the capital and as far afield as Seigantoji (l) -- where Hideyoshi rebuilt the
Main Hall — gave impetus to the development of an elaborate and highly decorative style of architecture which was well suited to Hideyoshi's penchant for ostentatious display. Many of his most grandiose projects have long since been destroyed. The daibutsu which Hideyoshi built in Kyōto to rival the colossal Buddha at Tōdaiji (whose hall had burned in a battle in 1567 and which stood in the open air for 150 years) was destroyed in an earthquake only seven years after its dedication. Jurakutei, Hideyoshi's grand palace in Kyōto and later the residence of his nephew and heir Hidetsugu, was levelled by Hideyoshi himself shortly after he exiled Hidetsugu on a charge of treason and ordered him to commit suicide. Fushimi Castle, Hideyoshi's residence in his last years, was destroyed by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1622.

There are, however, remnants of these and other projects scattered throughout Kansai. The exquisite karamon at Sanbōin is said to have been moved from Jurakutei when Hideyoshi embarked on the rebuilding of Daigoji. In 1601 the Tokugawa moved a Sakuramon from Fushimi Castle to Miidera. The splendid buildings which comprise the temple/shrine complex on Chikubushima (pl. L, LI) were moved from Hōkoku Shrine by Hideyori in accordance with his father's decree. Because the elaborate and highly decorative style which began to develop early in the Momoyama period was so much in accord with Hideyoshi's own
taste, he fostered the style and encouraged its use in the construction projects he undertook. Hideyoshi is sometimes stigmatized as vulgar. While there was an undeniable streak of ostentatious vulgarity in his character -- seen at its height in the Kitano tea party and the Daigoji cherry blossom viewing -- he also bent himself assiduously to the pursuit of elegance and refinement. He studied the tea ceremony under Sen no Rikyū and the performance of no under the leading masters of his day. That he was successful in his cultivation of elegance can be seen in a comparison of buildings constructed under his supervision with those created by the Tokugawa. Showy though they may be, the Karamon at Sanbōin and Chikubushima (pl. L) stand as masterpieces of restraint next to the Tōshōgū at Nikkō. Under Hideyoshi, the characteristically Japanese love for sumptuous elegance was allowed full rein, and manifested itself in a series of gloriously decorative buildings. If this passion for splendor sometimes crossed the fine line which separates sumptuousness from vulgarity, and leapt exuberantly across the line under the Tokugawa, no one who contemplates the magnificent buildings at Chikubushima can begrudge Hideyoshi his occasional excesses.

The style of painting seen in the Ishizuki no zu in the Miidera Kannondō (pl. LXIX, LXX) and the Sueyoshi and Suminokura ema at Kiyomizudera (pl. LXVIII) is directly
related to a newly emerging class of artistic patrons. Like nouveaux riches everywhere, the increasingly wealthy merchants of the Momoyama period sought to legitimize their wealth through patronage of the arts. The most enduring legacy of their patronage is the large number of genre screens painted for their enjoyment. These paintings reflect the tastes of their patrons in both style and subject matter. They show the amusements of the merchant class in a lively and very decorative style derived from the Yamato-e tradition. The ema at Miidera and Kiyomizudera are fine examples of the Momoyama genre style.

Emperors and nobles, daimyō and a parvenu ruler, wealthy merchants and commoners, all gave to the Saikoku temples, out of gratitude for blessings bestowed or in hope of future benefit. Thousands of donors built and rebuilt scores of halls and commissioned dozens of images. Through their generosity, the Saikoku temples rose repeatedly from the ashes of forest fires and battles. Today these temples are maintained, though on a much smaller scale, by gifts from ordinary Japanese people, who are today making the Saikoku pilgrimage in ever increasing numbers. The continuing prosperity of the Saikoku temples stands in striking confutation of the commonly held belief that Japanese Buddhism is enfeebled and degenerate.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. The account which follows of patronage at Fujiidera is summarized from "Fujiidera," black and white pamphlet available at the temple in 1984. See also Shimizutani, 33-36; Nakao, 93-94.

2. R. Sawa, 242-43. Koku (石) is a measure of capacity, equal to about 5.5 bushels or 180 liters. In Japan, land was customarily evaluated in terms of its rice producing ability; one tan (反 or 反, about .25 acre) was reckoned capable of producing 1.5 koku of rice, on the average. Land worth 4,000 koku would therefore be about 670 acres.


4. I am indebted to Maruyama Iwane for this information. It was confirmed by the Rev. Miyake Jinzo, priest of Ishiyamadera, in an interview on May 2, 1984.

5. Soper, 50-51 and p. 50, n. 86.

6. "Kōfukuji Nan'endo." See also Hirahata, 66-67. This image was destroyed in 1180; the present main image dates from 1188. R. Sawa, 111.

7. Soper, 52.

8. "Kiyomizudera."


13. Emperor Go Daigo's patronage of the Saikoku temples is discussed below. One significant exception was Rokuharamitsuji, which sided with the Ashikaga and whose temple records used the era names of the Northern Dynasty. Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 103.


20. Miidera hibutsu tokubetsu kaihi.


23. R. Sawa, 244.

24. Mary Elizabeth Berry, Hideyoshi (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1982), 180, 199.


27. R. Sawa, 14-15.


29. Earhart notes that ascetics sometimes abused the right to free travel granted them by successive medieval governments by acting as military spies. Earhart, 25.


31. Tanaka, Vol. I, p. 5. A map of Kannonjiō is included in the illustrations at the front of this volume.


34. Perry, 191.
38. Soper, 258.
39. "Yoshiminedera sōritsu."
41. "Ikiyasan Chōmeiji."
42. Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 105.
43. Perry, 191-92.
47. Hirahata, 137.
49. Berry, Chapter 7, especially pp. 187-89.
50. Berry, 187.
51. Interview with Hoshimiya Chikō, professor at Seibo Gakuin University, May 4, 1984.
52. Berry, 169.
53. Berry, 180.
54. Berry, 180.
55. This aspect of Hideyoshi's character is discussed in Berry, 183-87 and 189-93.
57. Nishida, Nishimura and Doi, 132.

59. *Miidera hibutsu tokubetsu kaihi.*

60. Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 154.


62. "Hokkezan Ichijōji."

63. Izumoji, 81-82.

64. Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 104.

65. "Ikiyasan Chōmeiji."


68. Nishida, Nishimura and Doi, 128-30.

69. Similar motives — the convenience of growing numbers of pilgrims and accessibility to female visitors — prompted the removal of the Shakadō at Yoshiminedera (20), with its miraculous stone image of Shaka, from its original mountaintop location to a site within the Yoshiminedera compound. See Chapter 2, under Yoshiminedera.

70. R. Sawa, 143.


72. Admission fees in 1984 ranged from 30 yen at Kimiidera (3) (upped to 50 yen during the cherry blossom season) to 400 yen at Hasedera (80).

73. Interview with the Rev. Shimizutani Zen'ei, head priest of Kiyomizudera, June 5, 1984.


76. Interview with Mr. Kawasaki, March 21, 1984.
77. See for example the chronology in Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 15-54. This chronology, drawn from temple records at Rokuharamitsuji, includes information about the construction of numerous subsidiary halls at the temple, most of which are no longer extant.


79. In his account of Heian period Buddhist architecture, Soper devotes considerable space to a discussion of the evolution of the raidō; 161-79.


81. Soper, 258-59.

82. Soper, 259.


84. Miidera hibutsu tokubetsu kaihi.
CHAPTER 6
THE SAIKOKU TEMPLES TODAY

The Saikoku pilgrimage route retains its vigor and prosperity even today. Individual temples continue to thrive: at nearly every temple there is at least one new building, erected within the last ten years, and at many temples the sounds of construction mingle with pilgrims' chants. The number of people making the Saikoku pilgrimage is once again on the increase. Groups of white-robed pilgrims can be seen all along the route, especially in the springs, the traditional pilgrimage season in Japan.

Victor Turner, a leading student of religious pilgrimage throughout the world, reports that numbers of pilgrims are increasing at pilgrimage sites worldwide.¹ He also notes that other kinds of religious practice are resurfacing.² His tentative explanation for these phenomena is proposed in the vocabulary of his own theories about certain modes of social interaction. For Turner, the word communitas denotes an experience of brotherhood and fellowship.³ "Existential communitas" is that experience which arises spontaneously in the course of certain types of

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human interaction. "Normative communitas" refers to forms of social organization which attempt to preserve and perpetuate, through religious and ethical codes, the original experience of fellowship. Turner conjectures that the social changes now taking place throughout the world are giving rise to "...a reactivation of many cultural forms associated traditionally with normative communitas." That is to say, the disruptions brought by rapid social change cause people to turn to traditional sources of human bonding grounded in religion, for a sense of connection with other human beings and with a collective past -- which often seems to be disappearing rapidly under the onslaught of modernization -- and for spiritual reassurance.

The past fifty years have brought vast changes in Japan: the widespread disruptions of the Pacific War were followed immediately by the profound transformations of Japanese society introduced by the postwar Occupation and embraced by the Japanese themselves. One aspect of current social change in Japan is increasing affluence. The postwar Japanese economic miracle is too well known to require elaboration here. Individual Japanese have more money to spend and more leisure time in which to spend it.

In Japan, as in the rest of the world, there is a perceptible movement toward greater interest in religion.
The phenomenal growth of the "new religions" in the postwar period is but the most striking manifestation of this trend. There is also a reviving interest in more traditional forms of Japanese religious practice. For the first time in many decades, for example, significant numbers of young men not born to priestly families are entering the Buddhist priesthood, particularly in Zen and the esoteric sects. This increasing interest in religion is fueled in part by Japan's increasing affluence. One paradoxical consequence of greater wealth, noted by social scientists and religious leaders alike, is growing sense that material goods alone are not sufficient. As a priest at one of the Saikoku temples put it, people want color televisions and washing machines, but when they get them they find that their lives are still empty.

In Japan today there is a related and wider trend, a growing interest in many forms of traditional Japanese culture. As Japan modernizes, there are conscious and determined efforts to maintain and perpetuate those aspects of the traditional culture which the Japanese themselves see as unique to Japan. At the national and official level, the Minister of Education designates art objects as National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties, under the Law for Protection of Cultural Properties, administered by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of
Education. The Law also includes provisions for the designation of certain manners and customs as Important Folk Culture, and of artists and artisans possessing a high level of skill in traditional arts as Important Intangible Cultural Properties, popularly called Ningen Kokuhō, 人間国宝, Living (literally, human) National Treasures. The Law also provides for funds for the maintenance of art objects so designated, and for subsidies to Living National Treasures. The Agency's budget also includes a subsidy to the National Theater in Tokyo, which presents Kabuki and other traditional dramatic forms.

At the private level there are numerous signs of a reviving interest in traditional Japanese culture. Kabuki performances are sold out. Sumō is giving baseball a run for its money as Japan's national sport. Folk craft shops do a booming business, and not just among foreign tourists. Young women are still expected to cultivate a traditional art -- flower arranging, the tea ceremony, and the Japanese harp called the koto are the most popular -- and young men's hobbies often include a traditional pursuit, like kendo or bonsai, perhaps, along with more modern ones like skiing and playing the guitar. Special exhibits of Japanese art are as crowded as rush hour commuter trains.

Another factor in the increase in the number of pilgrims along pilgrimage routes in Japan is the Japanese
love for travel, which sometimes seems to the incredulous western observer to be a Japanese genetic trait. This passion is encouraged by school trips, which begin in kindergarten with outings in the neighborhood and grow longer and more ambitious as children grow older. As Japan has grown more affluent, foreign travel has increased, but famous places in Japan are reporting record numbers of visitors.

To all these factors — a growing interest in spiritual development and in the multitudinous aspects of traditional Japanese culture, a love of travel, and increasing affluence which allows for travel — must be added yet another element, one which may be uniquely Japanese. By their own admission, the Japanese do not know how to relax. Generations of hard, unremitting work, combined with the regimentation of a tightly organized society, have produced a people ill prepared to cope with the leisure time granted them by their economic miracle. When they do relax, many Japanese prefer highly structured vacations. (The honeymoon tours to Hawaii, crammed with scheduled activities, are the most extreme — and to westerners, the most incomprehensible — example of this phenomenon.) Pilgrimage routes like Saikoku provide an ideal solution to the problem of how to fill the ominously empty hours of a vacation. The itinerary is set: one begins with temple number one and
proceeds through the route in a prescribed order. The only decisions facing the pilgrim — whether to see Himeji castle after a visit to Enkyōji (27), for example, or to walk through Nara Park after going to the Nan'endo (9) — are simple and non-threatening.

There are, then, several different but related reasons for the current pilgrimage boom in Japan: a strengthened interest in the traditional culture and a determination to sustain and participate in traditional cultural pursuits; a renewed interest in religion; and a passion for travel and the financial resources to indulge this passion, combined with a desire for structure even in leisure activities. Priests at the Saikoku temples report increasing numbers of visitors over the past ten years, and estimate that approximately 100,000 people make the pilgrimage each year.12

Pilgrims still wear the white jackets and carry the staffs which have been traditional for centuries. Some also wear the sedge hats familiar from 18th and 19th century woodcuts. The eika said to have been composed for each temple by Emperor Kazan in the 10th century are still chanted. Pilgrims still carry albums and hanging scrolls on which are inscribed the seals (shuin, 印 , or more colloquially hanko, 印子), names and numbers of the temples. The shuin were originally given to pilgrims as
receipts for *sūtras* they had donated to the temple and were considered lucky or powerful.\(^{13}\) Today collecting the *shuin* of all the *Saikoku* temples in an album or especially on a hanging scroll is one motivation for many people making the *Saikoku* pilgrimage, and *Saikoku* priests speak of a "hanko boom."\(^{14}\)

But for all the continuity, pilgrimage has changed. Only a tiny number of pilgrims still make the pilgrimage on foot. Some travel by public transportation or in private cars, but by far the greatest number of 20th century pilgrims travel in tour busses. Some travel the route in one excursion; and most of these call for rapid and rather cursory visits to the temples of the route. One contemporary guidebook to the *Saikoku* pilgrimage insists that the entire route, including the three unnumbered temples, can be covered by car or bus in just nine days;\(^{15}\) this must be almost as great a test of endurance and stamina as walking the entire pilgrimage. Other tours go one weekend a month, or some similar schedule, until the entire pilgrimage has been covered. A few tours are led by priests who serve as *sendatsu* (*先達*), in this context, a religious guide or leader; a few of the priests associated with the *Saikoku* temples occasionally lead pilgrimages. Others are herded about by harried tour guides, one of whose most important tasks is to take charge of the mountains of
albums and scrolls brought along by members of the tour. Most pilgrims who travel by tour bus are older people, with women predominating. But increasing numbers of young people are making the pilgrimage as well, often in their own cars.

Visitors to the Saikoku temples are confronted with often jarring contrasts between the ancient and the modern. As they have done for centuries, pilgrims present albums and scrolls at each temple to be inscribed with the shuin of the temple. Once their scrolls have been inscribed, pilgrims dry the still-wet ink with portable electric hair dryers, thoughtfully provided by the temples. Some temples have recorded tapes recounting the history of the temple and the powers of the main image; the tape can be activated by pushing a button in the Main Hall. At other temples, tape recorded Buddhist chants fill the air.\footnote{16} Many temples have photocopy machines in their offices, and at some temples staff members will cheerfully make copies of ancient temple records for the inquiring visitor. After a day spent among the beautiful centuries-old buildings at Enkyōji (27), one is jolted back into the 20th century by the American rock and roll music from the 1960s which is piped into the waiting room of the ropeway leading to the temple.

Tourism is as strong an element in the Saikoku pilgrimage today as it has been for centuries. For many pilgrims, piety is only one of many factors motivating them
to make the pilgrimage. Some go to see famous places; some go to collect *shuin*; some go because the *Saikoku* pilgrimage is an ideal Japanese vacation: structured, traditional, and filled with historical associations. But the tourist value of the pilgrimage route is only part of the reason that the individual temples and the route as a whole have continued to prosper. They survive and prosper not only because they are interesting places for tourists to visit, but also because they are holy places whose sanctity has been proven by countless miracles, and because they provide ordinary Japanese with a link to their spiritual past. The line which separates tourist from pilgrim is thin: on the *Saikoku* route, even tourists pray and even pilgrims gawk.

One remarkable feature of the *Saikoku* route today is that the special characteristics which differentiate the temples have not disappeared, despite modern pressures toward homogeneity. Even today, each temple has its own atmosphere, its own quirks; each temple has responded in a different way to the demands of existence in 20th century Japan. A few examples will suffice to demonstrate the extraordinary diversity still to be found along the *Saikoku* route.
KÔFU KUJI

Events which occurred at Kôfukuji (9) early in the Meiji period give some perspective to the activities of Japanese Buddhist temples today. The Meiji government was not favorably disposed toward Buddhism. In 1868, the government ordered the separation of Buddhism and Shintô. This policy, called shinbutsu bunri (神仏分離), was intended to purify Shintô of its polluting foreign elements, so that the Emperor could be restored to his rightful position as head of a revitalized national faith. In 1871, the government confiscated temple and shrine estates, and the administration of these lands was brought under government control. Hardest hit by this move were temples of the older sects, and especially the esoteric sects, which had derived a significant portion of their income from temple estates.17

Kofûkuji was separated from Kasuga Shrine, and its priests were returned to lay status, leaving the temple empty. This vast treasure house of Buddhist history and art was stripped: sutras and ritual implements were sold, and images were burned for firewood. The temple's magnificent five storey pagoda was auctioned off for 250 yen, which was then about one half of a cabinet minister's monthly salary. The fortunate high bidder knew that it would be expensive to dismantle the pagoda, so he decided to burn it and recover
his expenses through the sale of the remaining scrap metal. This disaster was averted, not by a conservationist group, but by neighbors who opposed the scheme because they feared the fire might spread to their homes. Events similar to these occurred at temples throughout Japan. It is astonishing that any works of Buddhist art at all survived into the 20th century, and little short of miraculous that Kōfukuji has a whole museum full.

Kiyomizudera

Kiyomizudera (25) is a small temple, served by a single priest, located deep in the mountains of Hyōgo prefecture about halfway between Ōsaka and Himeji (pl. XXXIX). The remote location which served only to exacerbate the temple's difficulties early in this century has, in the post war period, come to be a benefit.

Along with other Japanese temples and shrines, Kiyomizudera lost its lands when in 1871 the Meiji government confiscated all temple and shrine estates. The blow fell hardest on remote temples like Kiyomizudera, where there were few parishioners and visitors whose donations might compensate for a portion of the lost revenue. Kiyomizudera fought back. In 1901 the temple filed suit in administrative court (gyōsei saibansho, 行政裁判所) for the recovery of its lost lands. In 1904 the suit was decided in favor of Kiyomizudera, and approximately 1,000
hectares (about 2,500 acres) of land was returned to the temple.

The success of the suit brought by Kiyomizudera was due in large part to the efforts of Asano Sōichirō (浅井 一郎, 1848-1930), founder of the Asano group of companies and a leading figure in Meiji and Taishō era financial circles. Asano's connection with Kiyomizudera had begun in an unusual way: when Shimizutani Zenshō, grandfather of the temple's present head priest, was a student at Tetsugakukan (now Tōyō University), he had boarded at Asano's home and worked there as a domestic. Later, after Zenshō became head priest of Kiyomizudera, Asano helped his former employee in his suit against the government by paying the attorneys' fees and by exerting his considerable influence on the temple's behalf.

In 1913 a fire struck Kiyomizudera. Its remote mountaintop location made it impossible for firefighting equipment to reach the temple, and the compound was completely destroyed. Using revenues from the temple's lands which had recently been restored, Shimizutani Zenshō began immediately to rebuild the temple. Wood for the new halls came from the temple's forests. The Main Hall, Konponchūdō, and several smaller building were completed in 1917, the Bell Tower and Gate in 1920, and the pagoda in 1923. The new buildings were designed by Takeda Goichi (武田 繁).
H H, 1872-1938), a well known architect and professor of architecture at Kyōto Imperial University.

Then in the 1960's disaster struck again. In 1964 a typhoon hit the temple and did considerable damage to the pagoda. A second typhoon a year later destroyed the temple gate completely and damaged the pagoda still further. The pagoda was deemed irreparable and was torn down a few years later.

Recent construction at Kiyomizudera has proceeded under the energetic leadership of the present head priest, the Rev. Shimizutani Zen'ei, who has found innovative solutions to the perennial financial difficulties faced by many Buddhist temples. It has been during his incumbancy that Kiyomizudera's remote location has been transformed into an advantage for the temple. The scenic region in which Kiyomizudera is located has been designated a prefectural park, and is being developed as a recreation area. About thirty elegant vacation homes have been built near the temple, along with a swimming pool, an ice skating rink, and a members only hotel. Also near the temple is Tachikui, a tiny village famous among connoisseurs of Japanese folk ceramics for its dark brown ware, usually ornamented with a drip glaze. Tachikui too draws many visitors.

In 1972 Mr. Shimizutani seized the advantage offered by all this recreational activity taking place in the temple's
back yard and leased out approximately 500 hectares (about 1,200 acres) of temple land for two golf courses. The golf courses, which mercifully are not contiguous with the temple proper, bear the improbable names of Sun East (written サンイースト) Country Club and Zen Country Club. It was income from the lease of this land which financed the construction of the new paved road which leads to the temple, completed in 1975.

Another recent addition to the Kiyomizudera compound is the new Gate which was begun in July of 1979 and completed in December of 1980. Funds for the construction of the gate came from entrance fees charged by Kiyomizudera, a source of revenue which increased with the completion of the road to the temple. The selection of the architect for the gate is an example of the complex network of interpersonal relationships which plays such an important role in Japanese society. The Gate was designed by Tabuchi Toshiki (多治見敏樹) of Kōbe University; he was chosen in part because he is a mago deshi (孫弟子, literally a grandchild disciple, that is, a disciple of a disciple) of Professor Takeda, who designed the buildings for the temple's early 20th century reconstruction.

In his brisk leadership Mr. Shimizutani exemplifies a new generation of Japanese priests. Like many other Saikokū priests, he is a member of a local service
organization -- the Yashiro Lions Club -- and is active in local concerns. He is a deeply pious man, and he often serves as sendatsu for groups of the faithful making the Saikoku pilgrimage. At the same time, however, he has accepted with grace the limitations imposed on Japanese Buddhism by the realities of 20th century life, and has directed his considerable energies toward realistic solutions to the problems his temple has faced. Among the most pressing of these is ensuring sufficient revenue to maintain the temple and to continue the work of rebuilding begun by his grandfather and his father, and here his unusual approach has served his temple well. But financial solvency is a means to an end: the purpose of the temple is the propagation of the faith, and to spread belief in Kannon, Kiyomizudera must attract visitors. To that end Mr. Shimizutani has completed the road leading to the temple planned during his father's incumbancy, and to that end he has embarked on an ambitious but relatively low key public relations campaign. The entirely modern approach taken by Kiyomizudera in its struggle to survive and rebuild is one manifestation of the resilience of Japanese Buddhism.

TSUBOSAKADERA

Since the time of the temple's founding, the main image at Tsubosakadera (pl. V) has been thought to have the power to cure blindness and eye disease. According to temple
tradition, Tsubosakadera (6) was founded upon the order of Empress Genshō after Benki, the temple's founder, cured her of an eye disease. Two Heian period emperors, Kammu (r. 781-806) and Ichijō (r. 986-1011), were similarly cured after praying to the temple's main image.20

Belief in the image's miraculous powers was spread throughout Japan in the 19th century, when the temple legend of the blind Sawaichi and his faithful wife O-Sato, related in Chapter 4, was made into a jōruri play and performed nationwide. But it was not until the Rev. Tokiwa Shōken became head priest in the mid 1950s that the temple began the social welfare work on behalf of the blind for which it has subsequently become famous.

Before becoming head priest, Mr. Tokiwa had worked with lepers in India. About thirty percent of lepers are also blind, and Mr. Tokiwa was filled with compassion for the dual affliction they suffered. When he assumed the leadership of Tsubosakadera, he resolved to continue his efforts on behalf of the victims of leprosy, and to expand the temple's ministry to the blind people of Japan.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Tokiwa saw a newspaper article about a park at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden specially designed for the blind. His interest aroused, he wrote to Brooklyn for details, and in 1958 Tsubosakadera dedicated its own Fragrance Garden. At the time of its dedication,
Tsubosakadera's was only the second such garden in the world. It featured aromatic plants, piped in music, signs in Braille, and a walkway which could be navigated by touch.21

In 1961 the Welfare Institution for the Blind was formed. This organization, with a staff of about 120, administers the temple's many activities for the blind. These include three homes for the aged blind, housing a total of 150 people; the first home, built in 1961, was the first of its kind in Japan. There are also a Braille library and a music library.

About 35,000 blind visitors come to Tsubosakadera each year. Some come to pray to the temple's main image, others, to take advantage of the facilities offered by the temple. Tsubosakadera has a large staff of about thirty people (most of the Saikoku temples have fewer than ten lay employees); and one of their primary responsibilities is to look after the temple's blind visitors.

Mr. Tokiwa's continuing interest in the plight of lepers has resulted in support from Tsubosakadera for two leprosaria in India. One is in Tapovan, in Maharastra; the other, in Jalma, near Agra, was constructed with money sent by Japan and Korea.

The money for all these charitable activities comes mostly from private donations. The newest of the temple's
homes for the aged blind, for example, cost 1.77 million dollars, of which only about thirty percent came from the Japanese government. Mr. Tokiwa travels widely in Japan, speaking to various groups about the temple's activities and asking for donations. He says that most of the temple's welfare funds come from small donations of perhaps one thousand yen, or about five dollars, from ordinary Japanese people. On national holidays, when Tsubosakadera can expect large numbers of visitors, a small booth is set up within the temple precincts to solicit donations.22

In part because of its support of Indian leprosaria, Tsubosakadera maintains close ties with India. Evidence of these ties is on view at the temple: two 6th century Buddha heads from India are displayed in the Main Hall, and in a small building near the Main Hall are four modern sets of footprints of the Buddha (in Japanese bussoku, in Sanskrit Buddha pada) from various parts of India. In 1982 a dedication ceremony was held for a colossal stone image of Shō Kannon (pl. LXXIII). This image, 110 meters high, was carved of separate blocks of stone in Karnataka state and then shipped to Japan, where it was assembled within the precincts of Tsubosakadera. The project was made possible through donations of money, materials and labor from the people of India and the people of Japan. An exchange of letters between Indian Prime Minister Indira
Ghandi and Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro accompanied the dedication. The image is seen as a monument to the friendship between the peoples of the two nations.

Mr. Tokiwa, the driving force behind all these efforts, is a man of intense idealism and deep compassion. He speaks of Tsubosakadera's efforts on behalf of lepers in India and the blind in Japan as the work of Kannon ("Kannon sama no shigoto"), as Kannon's compassion made manifest in a suffering world. He is also a skilled fund raiser and administrator who oversees his temple's many activities cheerfully and with a dash of humor. In a time when many Japanese Buddhist temples seem to have forgotten the faith's exhortation to practice compassion, Tsubosakadera stands as an exemplar of Kannon's mercy.

NAKAYAMADERA

Of all the popular cults relating to the Saikoku main images, none is more famous or more vital than the one centering on the main image at Nakayamadera (24). The temple is always thronged with pilgrims; among the Saikoku temples only Kiyomizudera in Kyōto (16) welcomes more visitors than Nakayamadera.

The temple's main images (pl. XXXVII, XXXVIII), a triad of Jūichimen Kannons, are believed to have the power to grant fertility and easy childbirth. Images with this power, called anzan Kannons, are found at temples all over
Japan, but the ones at Nakayamadera are the best known. Belief in the images' powers seems to date from the time of the Emperor Go Daigo (r. 1318-1339); this Emperor prayed to the Nakayamadera images for an easy delivery for his consort. During her pregnancy Go Daigo's empress wore a **haraobi** (腹帯, belly band) from the temple. Later the consort of Emperor Kōmei (r. 1847-1866) prayed to the Nakayamadera images when she was pregnant with the future Emperor Meiji; Meiji subsequently became a devotee of the temple. Since Emperor Meiji's time, whenever an Empress or Crown Princess becomes pregnant, the abbot of Nakayamadera takes a **haraobi** to Tokyo and presents it to the Imperial family for the use of the pregnant woman.

The Imperial connection has given impetus to the spread of the Nakayamadera Kannon cult throughout Japan in the 20th century. **Haraobi** are still available at the temple today, as they were in the time of Emperor Go Daigo, and women come from all over Japan to acquire them. The temple distributes about 9,000 **haraobi** per month, which equates to a lot of babies.

But the temple's concern does not end with safe childbirth. Many of the babies whose mothers wore Nakayamadera **haraobi** during pregnancy are brought to the temple for **miya mairi**, an infant's ceremonial first visit to a shrine or temple. The temple boasts a large
new Believers' Hall, built in 1974 through donations from lay devotees, where visitors may rest and where various temple programs are held. Behind the Main Hall is a large Kannon Garden with flowering trees and a stream; adjacent to the garden is a park with a baseball diamond, picnic tables and a playground.

Nakayamadera is a lively, cheerful temple, ringing with the laughter of children. The temple is a favorite place for family outings. Young women come for haraobì, and young couples write prayers for a healthy baby on pieces of cloth, which they leave at the Main Hall. Parents and grandparents bring infants to other halls for miya mairî ceremonies, and pose proudly for family photographs after the ceremony. Parents and their young children pray at the temple's halls, stroll through the Kannon Garden, and picnic and play in the park. At many Japanese temples, the souvenir shops clustered at the temple Gate provide a clue to the distinguishing characteristics of the temple; the shops outside Nakayamadera overflow with brightly colored toys.

KAMI DAIKOJI

The enduring vigor of certain aspects of popular Japanese Buddhism is obvious: even the most inattentive visitor cannot fail to be impressed by the crowds of pregnant women at Nakayamadera, for example, or the blind
pilgrims running their hands over the statues at Tsubosakadera. Less conspicuous is the quiet resurgence taking place in esoteric Buddhism at the technical level, exemplified by Kami Daigoji(11).

Shimo Daigoji, sister temple to Kami Daigoji at the foot of the mountain on which Kami Daigoji stands (map, fig. 2), has long been an important esoteric center. Shimo Daigoji is the headquarters temple for the Daigo branch of Shingon, with some nine hundred temples under its aegis. Since the 12th century Shimo Daigoji has also served as the headquarters of the Tōzan branch of Shugendō (Tozan ha, 山派). Although the two temples are now separate, each with its own administration and staff, Shimo and Kami Daigoji enjoy a close and cordial relationship, and there is considerable cooperation between the two temples. Informational pamphlets and booklets are published jointly and contain the histories of both temples. Priests in training in the seminary at Shimo Daigoji take part in ceremonies performed at Kami Daigoji, and several important festivals are celebrated together at both temples.

As headquarters temple, Shimo Daigoji operates a seminary for future priests of the Daigo branch of Shingon. Priestly training, which includes the reading of sūtras and the study of meditative techniques, lasts for one year.27 The Buddhist priesthood in Japan is a hereditary
occupation, and during the first half of the 20th century very few men who were not born into priestly families entered the priesthood. During that time, nearly all the students at the Shimo Daigoji seminary were sons of priests. But today, men from lay families are once again entering the priesthood, particularly in Zen and the esoteric sects; of the twenty or so young men who go through the priests' training at Shimo Daigoji each year, about half are from outside. Their options are limited: priests' sons will inherit their fathers' positions, but the sons of laymen have no positions to inherit. Some are adopted by priests who have no sons, and then inherit their adoptive fathers' positions. Others become pupils of priestly artisans, like sculptors of Buddhist images. Positions like these are rare, however, and despite the limited opportunities available to them more young men are becoming priests. Their numbers are relatively small (in comparison to the number of salarymen, for example), but the trend is nevertheless a significant one.

The hereditary priesthood is regarded, even by men who are themselves hereditary priests, as a necessary evil. Many of the hereditary priests in service at the Saikoku temples with whom I spoke bemoaned the complacency and torpor of Japanese Buddhism today and pointed to the custom of hereditary priesthood as one basic cause of the
difficulties facing their religion. Many of these men are deeply committed both to their own spiritual growth and to the propagation of the faith they serve. But they welcome the infusion of new blood and fresh energy which non-hereditary priests bring to the practice of Buddhism. Of the ten priests now serving at Kami Daigoji, three are from unorthodox backgrounds. One is descended from leaders of the Tendai sect of Shugendō practiced at Tamaki Shrine at Mount Kumano. Another is the son of a kyōkai leader. (A kyōkai, 教会, is a Buddhist center of belief which is not a temple; kyōkai are usually smaller, less formally organized, and newer than temples. The same Japanese word is used to refer to a Christian church.) Another is the son of a businessman. Men like these have difficulties in entering a way of life which for generations has been followed only by those born to it. Some change their minds and decide not to practice as priests. But those who continue in the priesthood are bringing new vitality to the practice of Buddhism in Japan.

Striking evidence of the vitality of esoteric practice at Kami Daigoji is provided by the recent rebuilding of the temple's Godaidō. In 1932 a forest fire spread to Kami Daigoji and destroyed the Godaidō, a Momoyama style building donated by Toyotomi Hideyori which had been designated a National Treasure. In 1939 the temple suffered another fire
which destroyed the Junteidō which served as the temple's Main Hall, and the Sūtra Repository, built in the 12th century and designated a National Treasure. The Junteidō was not rebuilt until 1968; the temple's main image, which had been saved from the 1939 fire, was enshrined in the Founder's Hall during the almost thirty years between the Junteidō's destruction and its rebuilding. The Sūtra Repository has not been rebuilt. But construction of a new Godaidō began just two years after the earlier hall had been destroyed; the hall was completed and in worship by 1940.

In the Godaidō are enshrined images of the Godai myōō, with Fudō in the center. The Godai myōō are angry manifestations of the five Buddhas of the Taizōkai mandara. Angry deities play a vital role in esoteric meditations. The anger of these wrathful figures is directed at enemies of the faith and particularly at the passions which hinder the practitioner in his pursuit of enlightenment. The practitioner takes on the anger of the wrathful deities and uses it to overcome his own passions. The images in the Kami Daigoji Godaidō are large, well over life size; with their wrathful faces and contorted bodies, they cast an eerie spell over the hall's dimly lit interior. The hall is pervaded with an aura of esotericism which is almost palpable. In the spacious courtyard in
front of the Godaidō there is a raised enclosure for the performance of the goma (護摩) a fire ritual which plays a central role both in orthodox esoteric practice and in Shugendō. The fact that the Godaidō was rebuilt so quickly after its destruction in 1932, while the temple's Main Hall was not rebuilt for nearly thirty years, indicates the important role the Godaidō has played in the life of the temple. It was rebuilt almost immediately because it was used.

Another important building at Kami Daigoji is the Kaisandō. The first Founder's Hall was built shortly after the temple's founding, but three fires at the temple destroyed it and two subsequent rebuildings. The present hall was built by Toyotomi Hideyori in fulfillment of a vow made by his father to rebuild all of Daigoji. Enshrined within the hall are three portraits, one of Rigen, the temple's founder, in the center, with Kūkai on the right and Kangan on the left. Kangan (観賢) was a disciple of Kūkai and the first head priest of Daigoji. Because the secret teachings are transmitted orally from master to disciple, great teachers, including the founder of a sect or of a temple, are pivotal figures in esoteric Buddhism. Priests in service at a temple revere the founder as their spiritual ancestor, for it was he who brought the secret teachings to the holy site where the temple is located and
began the spiritual lineage which links each priest at the temple to the origins of the faith. The Kaisandō at Kami Daigoji remains a center of esoteric practice; many of the temple's most important rituals are performed there.

Kami Daigoji has continued to serve as a center for the practice of esoteric Buddhism at the technical level. The immediate rebuilding of the Godaidō demonstrates the emphasis placed by the temple itself on the rituals and meditations performed in that hall. The rites performed in the Kaisandō have continued without interruption for centuries and are still a prominent feature of the temple's ceremonial life. Because esoteric practices have continued vital and active at Kami Daigoji, the temple acts as a magnet for young priests, some of them from lay families, who are drawn to esotericism. These men in turn bring fresh enthusiasm to the rituals which have been performed on the mountain for a thousand years.

Very little of this is perceptible to the casual visitor. Most pilgrims to Kami Daigoji visit only the Junteidō, and even those few who climb further up the mountain to the Godaidō and the Kaisandō are usually content to view the buildings from the outside. Further, few pilgrims have the time, the curiosity or the entree to engage temple priests in conversation. But the visitor fortunate enough to be conducted through these remarkable
buildings by a knowledgeable guide, and to talk with priests serving at the temple, comes away from Kami Daigoji convinced that the ancient practices of esoteric Buddhism endure and prosper in Japan.

**MUSUBI**

The temples of the *Saikoku* pilgrimage route have for a thousand years served as vital centers of worship at both the popular and the technical level. The temples are located on holy sites, sites whose sanctity was revealed through miracles and visions given to holy men made receptive to intimations of the special holiness of certain places by their ascetic training. Empowered by ascesis, these holy men then opened the mountains to others for worship. The temples are repositories of holy objects, images of Kannon which are worshipped today, as they have been for centuries, for their power to protect, to heal, to comfort, and to save. The inherent sanctity of their locations, the holy power of their founders, and the miraculous efficacy of their main images have made the *Saikoku* temples natural, even inevitable centers of popular belief.

Included in the temples' collections are works of art which rank among the finest ever produced in Japan. The elegant Senju Kannon at Fujiidera (pl. IV) is one of the loveliest and most approachable images of Nara period art.
Despite its awkward proportions and its problematic identification, the imposing main image at Okadera (pl. VI) is a dazzling, awe inspiring work. The Kokawadera engi emaki (pl. LVI, LVII) is painted in a fresh and lively style which perfectly expresses the charm and wonder of the legend it illustrates. The portrait of Kūya at Rokuharamitsuji (pl. I) captures the essence of its subject's eccentricity and devotion. The magnificent Hondō at Kiyomizudera (pl. XXII), jutting out over the side of its mountain, is one of the most memorable buildings in Japan.

The abundance spills over into the less exalted ranks. The Saikoku temples abound in beautiful objects. Some, like the purported Amida triad at Mimurodoji (pl. XII, XIII), are exquisite but little known treasures hidden away at small temples. Others are part of the vast hoards of riches owned by large and powerful temples. The collections of Kōfukuji (9), Miidera (14) and Kionizudera (16) are astonishing in their depth and variety. The Lotus Sūtra scroll at Matsunōdera (pl. XLVII) and the maedachi at Ichijōji (pl. XLI) demonstrate that fine Buddhist art is not the exclusive property of the great metropolitan centers. The entire compound of Chōmeiji (pl. LII) is a model of understated harmony, in the consonance of the buildings and in the relationship between the buildings and their natural surroundings.
Despite their great artistic riches, however, the Saikoku temples are not museums. Many of the works of art associated with these temples remain in active worship. The temples' main images function primarily as objects of devotion and only secondarily as works of art historical importance. Pilgrims visit the Saikoku temples to pray for the compassionate intervention of Kannon in their lives, not to view examples of Nara or Heian period sculpture. The transforming power of these images is demonstrated clearly by the belief that the efficacy inherent in an image is transferable. If a main image is lost -- and many of them have been destroyed by fire -- the newly created replacement is believed to be endowed with the same powers as its predecessor. The present Edo period main image at Tsubosakadera (6) is believed to cure blindness as effectively as the original Nara period main image, lost in one of the fires which destroyed the temple. The main image at Hasedera (8), famous for its power to grant even the most mundane wishes of its devotees, was destroyed in a fire in the 16th century. The replacement, completed in 1538, incorporated the head of the earlier image, the only part to have escaped destruction. This image, new by Japanese standards, is believed to have the same wish granting powers as the original.
Founders' portraits provide significant links with the past. Some of Kami Daigoji's most important esoteric rituals are performed in the temple's Kaisandō, before portraits of the founders of the temple and the sect and of the temple's first abbot. The cooks' ceremony (pl. XXXII) at Sōjiji (22) is performed before a portrait of the temple's founder, who is also revered as the founder of Japanese cooking and the patron deity of chefs.

Even those objects which are enshrined (not installed) in temple Treasure Halls (Hōmotsukan) are considered to be in worship. Offerings of fresh flowers are placed before the images in the Kōfukuji Treasure Hall. In the Rokuharamitsuji Museum, the offering bowls in front of the statues, including the portrait of Kūya, are filled to overflowing with coins.

The holy mountains which house the Saikoku temples are places where the barrier which separates the human plane from the sacred plane is "thin," to use Carmen Blacker's word again.36 When the founders came to these mountains, and opened them for ascetic practice and worship, they made the holy power of the sites available to all who came after them. The images of Kannon which the founders enshrined in their hermitages and temples are another wellspring of holy power. In his great compassion, Kannon transforms himself time and time again, piercing through the barrier separating
the human and the sacred to offer his grace and mercy to all who pray to him. The works of art associated with the Saikoku temples are but a single thread in this intricate network of belief and practice. Removed from their context -- of holy mountains and ascetic holy men, of miracle-filled legends and popular belief, of esoteric rituals and meditations -- these works become barren and lifeless artifacts. Works of religious art are inextricably bound to the religion which gave rise to them, and are dependent for their meaning upon the circumstances under which they were created and worshipped. A true understanding of such works can be achieved only by examining them within the context of beliefs and practices which make them meaningful to their devotees. The works of art associated with the Saikoku temples are a testament to faith in the saving power of the compassion of Kannon.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 6


2. Turner, 196.

3. Turner, 194.


5. Turner, 195.


8. Interview with the Rev. Itsuki Seishu, head priest of Kokawadera, February 1, 1984.


10. One example of a custom designated Important Folk Culture is a dance performed at Rokuharamitsuji, said to have originated with the temple's founder Kūya. See Sugimoto and Kawasaki, 109-14.

11. I am indebted to the Rev. Kashii Kaiei, priest of Okadera, for this insight. Interview with Mr. Kashii, February 8, 1984.

12. In his article on Japanese pilgrimage, published in 1967, Kitagawa estimates that 25,000 to 35,000 pilgrims annually make all or part of the Shikoku pilgrimage dedicated to Kūkai. Kitagawa, p. 163, n. 9. The figure would probably be higher today, although still considerably below the numbers for the Saikoku route.

13. Hirahata, 8. This is the origin of the commonly used name for the Saikoku temples, *fudasho* (本仏所, amulet issuing place); *fuda* refers to the receipts given to pilgrims.
14. At one temple I watched as two young men unloaded albums, pilgrims' jackets and hanging scrolls from a small car and carried them to the Main Hall to have seals inscribed. There were nearly five hundred items in all.

15. This gruelling itinerary can be found in Hirahata, 12-14.

16. The Rev. Okamura Junnō, the ebullient head priest of Kannonshōji, told me that he plays recordings of his own chanting to encourage pilgrims. The trail leading to Kannonshōji is long and arduous, and he believes that when they come within the sound of his chanting they are cheered by the knowledge that they are almost there. Interview with Mr. Okamura, June 13, 1984.


19. The information in this discussion of Kiyomizudera is from interviews with the Rev. Shimizutani Zen'ei, head priest of the temple, on March 21 and June 5, 1984, and from personal communications from Mr. Shimizutani of October and November, 1985.

20. Information in this discussion is from interviews with the Rev. Tokiwa Shōken, head priest of Tsubosakadera, on February 6 and April 30, 1984.

21. The Fragrance Garden was razed in 1982 to make room for the installation of the colossal Kannon, discussed below. The temple plans to rebuild the garden.

22. When I visited Tsubosakadera during Golden Week (a week in late April and early May which includes three national holidays and a time when everyone in Japan travels) of 1984, I talked with the woman staffing the collection booth. She had taken about $160 in donations in two days, which was less than she had hoped for.

23. This information regarding the history of the Nakayamadera Kannon cult is taken from "Goharaobi no shikata to goninshinchū no kokoro." This small booklet is included with the hōraobi available at the temple. It contains a brief summary of the history of the temple and its main images, instructions for the use of the hōraobi, and gentle Buddhist admonitions for prenatal care ("Your baby's education begins in the womb so remain calm and peaceful."

"Do not listen to gossip or slander." "Eat regularly and be thankful for your food.")


25. Interview with Mr. Tsugawa. On its face, the distribution of haraobi at Nakayamadera seems a straight-forward commercial transaction. They are dispensed from a booth in the Main Hall, and a price (3,000 yen, about $14.00 in 1984) is posted prominently at the booth. But one does not "buy" a haraobi; one "receives" it (itadaku, receive [respectfully]).

26. The miya mairi was originally a Shinto ceremony, as its name suggests, but it has made its way into Buddhism.

27. I am indebted to the Rev. Sasaki Jōkai, priest of Kami Daigoji and himself a layman's son, for this information regarding training at the Shimo Daigoji seminary, the increase in persons entering the priesthood from non-priestly families and the careers of such priests. Interviews with Mr. Sasaki, May 19 and May 28, 1984.

28. Adoption has long been a common practice in Japan among those who follow hereditary occupations, as anyone knows who has tried to make sense of a Kano school lineage chart. I know of two cases among the Saikoku temples where young priests were adopted by head priests who had no sons. In each case, the young man married a daughter of the head priest.

29. Interview with Mr. Sasaki, May 28, 1984.


31. The Godai myōō are Fudo (不動, Acala), Kosanze or Gosanze (降三世, Trailokyavijaya), Gundari (卍喜利, Kundalī), Daitoku (大威徳, Yamāntaka), and Kongōyasha (金剛夜叉, Vajrayakṣa). Fudo is placed in the center, and the other four are sometimes placed in the four directions: Kosanze in the east, Daitoku in the south, Gundari in the west, and Kongōyasha in the north.

33. T. Sawa, 148-49.

34. The link at Kami Daigoji is provided by Kangan, who was a disciple of Kūkai. In Shingon, the lineage extends back from Kūkai to Keika (Hui Kuo), Kūkai's teacher in China, to Keika's teacher Amoghavajra (Fukū, 705-744), through
two other Indian masters to Nagārjuna (Ryūju, 龍樹) and thence to Vairocana.

35. Interview with Mr. Sasaki, May 19, 1984.

APPENDIX A

THE TEMPLES OF THE SAIKOKU PILGRIMAGE ROUTE

A Note on Temple Names

Most Japanese temples have two names. The first is a place name, usually ending with the character 山, mountain, pronounced san (or its phonetic variant zan) or yama; this is the name of the mountain on which the temple stands. Sometimes the inclusion of a mountain name is purely conventional, as in the case of Fudarakusan Rokuharamitsuji (17), which is located on perfectly flat ground near the center of Kyōto. The only Saikoku temple with a place name which does not include the character for mountain is Hōgonji (30), whose full name is Chikubushima (Chikubu Island) Hōgonji. The second name is the temple name, usually ending with the character 庙, temple, pronounced ji or dera. Some temples are most often called by their temple names; others, by their place names. There is also a hybrid form. Temple number 4, Makinōsan Seifukujī, is popularly called Makinōsan, Makinōdera, or even Makinōsanji. The same pattern is seen at the last temple on the Saikoku route, Tanigumisan Kegonji, which is called Tanigumisan, Tanigumidera, and Tanigumisanji.

Several Saikoku temples have nicknames, usually deriving or said to derive from some aspect of the temple's history, by which they are popularly known. These include number 7, Ryūgaijī, called Okadera; 14, Onjōji, called Miidera; and 19, Gyōganji, called Kōdō.

As if this were not already complicated enough, there is considerable variation in the pronunciation of the Sino-Japanese characters with which the temples' names are written. For example, number 23, written 鶴沼寺, is given as Kachiodera in several sources (R. Sawa, 200; Hirahata, 138), but priests at the temple pronounce it Katsuōji. For number 21, 高野寺, Sawa gives Anōdera (p. 188); Hirahata gives Anaoji (p. 128).

In the following list I have given the pronunciations which I heard most frequently in the six months I spent visiting the Saikoku temples. I have also given temple nicknames, including variations on place names; where no nickname is listed the temple is usually called by its temple name.
Also included are the temple's sect affiliation and the form of Kannon represented by the temple's main image. If the main image is secret, that fact is noted, along with its showing schedule. Location is also included. Here and in subsequent appendices, temples are listed in the order in which they are traditionally visited.

1. Nachisan Seigantoji 那智山青岸渡寺
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Nyoirin Kannon (Secret image, shown once each year on February 3)
Nachi Katsuura, Wakayama Prefecture.

2. Kimiisan Kongôji Gogokuin 紀三井山金剛寺護国院
(Kimiidera 紀三井寺)
Guze Kannon sect of Shingon
Jûichimen Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 50 years)
Wakayama City

3. Kazarakisan Kokawadera 風塚山粉河寺
Kokawa Kannon sect of Tendai
Senju Kannon (Secret image)
Naya gun, Wakayama prefecture

4. Makinosan Sefukuji 槇尾山施福寺
(Makinôdera)
Tendai
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown once each year on May 15)
Izumi City, Osaka Prefecture

5. Shiunzan Fujiiadera 紫雲山薗井寺
Omuro sect of Shingon
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown on the 18th of each month)
Fujii City, Osaka Prefecture

6. Tsubosakasan Minami Hokkeji 壺阪山南法華寺
(Tsubosakadera)
Buzan sect of Shingon
Senju Kannon
Takaichi gun, Nara Prefecture

7. Tôkôsan Ryûgaiji 東光山龍蓋寺
(Okadera 岡寺)
Buzan sect of Shingon
Nyoirin Kannon
Takaichi gun, Nara Prefecture
8. Buzan Hasedera 豊山長谷寺
Buzan sect of Shingon
Senju Kannon
Sakurai City, Nara Prefecture

9. Kōfukuji Nan'endo 興福寺南円堂
Hossō
Fukūkenjaku Kannon (Secret image)
Nara City

10. Myōjōzan Mimurodoji 明星山三室戸寺
Honzan shugen sect
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years)
Uji City, Kyoto Prefecture

11. Shinsetsuzan Kami Daigoji 深雲山上醍醐寺
Daigo sect of Shingon
Juntei Kannon (Secret image, shown once each year on May 18)
Kyoto City

12. Iwamazan Shōhōji 岩間山正法寺
(Iwamadera)
Daigo sect of Shingon
Senju Kannon (Secret image)
Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture

13. Sekkōzan Ishiyamadera 石光山石山寺
Toji sect of Shingon
Nyoirin Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years and upon the enthronement of a new emperor)
Otsu City

14. Nagarasan Onjōji 長等山圓城寺
(Miidera 三井寺)
Jimon sect of Tendai
Nyoirin Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years; last shown in 1978)
Otsu City

15. Shin Nachizan Kannonji 新那智山観音寺
(Also called Ima Gumano 熊野)
Sen'yuji sect of Shingon
Jūichimen Kannon (Secret image)
Kyoto City

16. Otowazan Kiyomizudera 音羽山清水寺
Northern Hossō
Jūichimen Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years)
Kyoto City
17. Fudarakusan Rokuharamitsuji 補陀洛山大波羅蜜寺
Chizan sect of Shingon
Jūichimen Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years; last shown in 1970)
Kyōto City

18. Shiunzan Chōhōji 紫雲山頂法寺
(Rokkakudō 六角堂)
Tendai
Nyoirin Kannon (Secret image)
Kyōto City

19. Reirokusun Gyōganji 銀鹿山行願寺
(Kōdō 剃堂)
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown once each year on January 17 and 18)
Kyōto City

20. Nishiyama Yoshiminedera 西山善峯寺
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Senju Kannon
Kyōto City

21. Bodaizan Anaoji 堆提山兜太寺
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Shō Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years)
Kameoka City, Kyōto Prefecture

22. Fudarakusan Sōjiji 補陀洛山経持寺
Kōyasan sect of Shingon
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown once each year on April 18)
Ibaraki City, Ōsaka prefecture

23. Ōchōzan Katsuōji 応頂山勝尾寺
Kōyasan sect of Shingon
Jūichimen Kannon
Minō City, Ōsaka prefecture

24. Shiunzan Nakayamadera 紫雲山中山寺
Nakayamadera sect of Shingon
Jūichimen Kannon (Secret image, shown on the 18th of each month)
Takarazuka City, Hyōgo Prefecture
25. Mitakezan Kiyomizudera 御嶽山清水寺
Tendai
Jūichimen Kannon (Secret image, shown twice each year, on
the third Sunday in April and on July 26 of the old
calendar)
Katō gun, Hyōgo Prefecture

26. Hokkezan Ichijōji 法華山一乗寺
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Shō Kannon (Secret Image)
Kasai City, Hyōgo Prefecture

27. Shoshazan Enkyōji 著可山円教寺
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Nyoirin Kannon (Secret image, shown once each year on
January 18)
Himeji City

28. Nariaisan Nariaijī 成相山成相寺
Sanmon sect of Tendai
Shō Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years)
Miyazu City, Kyoto Prefecture

29. Aobasan Matsunōdera 青葉山松尾寺
Daigo sect of Shingon
Bato Kannon (Secret image)
Maizuru City, Kyoto Prefecture

30. Chikubushima Hōgonji 竹生島宗厳寺
(Often called Chikubushima)
Buzan sect of Shingon
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 50 years)
Chikubu Island, Lake Biwa, Shiga Prefecture

31. Ikiyasan Chōmeiji 姫綺耶山長命寺
Tendai
Senju Kannon (Secret image)
Omi Hachiman City, Shiga Prefecture

32. Kinugasayama Kanonshōji 緑ヶ山観音正寺
Tendai
Senju Kannon (Secret image, shown once every 33 years; last
shown 1979)
Azuchi cho, Shiga Prefecture
33. Tanigumisan Kegonji 谷汲山華厳寺
(often called Tanigumisan)
Tendai
Jūichimen Kannon (Secret image; next scheduled showing
April-May, 1988)
Kai gun, Gifu Prefecture
APPENDIX B

PERSONS INTERVIEWED AT THE SAIKOKU TEMPLES

The gracious men and women whose names are listed below gave generously of their time and expertise and made my research in Japan much more productive and enjoyable; I am most grateful to them all for their assistance.


27. Enkyoji: The Rev. Ōki Kōbun, priest; March 15 and June 6; the Rev. Ōki Konkei, priest; June 6, 1984.

29. Matsunō-dera: Matsuō Chikara, son of the temple's head priest, not yet ordained to the priesthood; also the Rev. Matsuō Shinkū, head priest; April 5, 1984.


APPENDIX C

IMPORTANT ART OBJECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SAIKOKU TEMPLES

The objects noted here do not comprise a complete list of all the important works of art in the collections of the Saikoku temples; such a list would run to dozens of pages and is beyond the scope of this study. For the largest and richest temples, only a few representative objects are listed.

1. Seigantoji
   Main Hall. 1587. Important Cultural Property.

2. Kimiidera
   Senju Kannon (main image). Wood. Said to have been brought to Japan by Ikō. Important Cultural Property.
   Tahōtō. 1449. Important Cultural Property.
   Shōrō (Bell Tower). 1588. Important Cultural Property.

3. Kokawadera
   Kokawadera engi emaki. Late Heian or early Kamakura period. National Treasure. Now in the Kyōto National Museum. (pl. LVI, LVII)
   Main Hall. 1720. (pl. II)
   Garden. Momoyama period. Important Art Object. (pl. III)

4. Makinodera
   Sefukūji sankei mandara. Momoyama period.
   (pl. LXXXI)

5. Fujiidera
   The four gates to the temple compound. Momoyama period. Important Cultural Property.
6. Tsubosakadera
Senju Kannon (main image). Wood. Edo period. (pl. V)

7. Okadera

8. Hasedera
Jûichimen Kannon (main image). Wood. 1538. Important Cultural Property. (pl. VIII)
Main Hall. 1690. Important Cultural Property.

9. Kôfukuji Nan'endô
Fukûkenjaku Kannon (main image of Nan'endô). Wood. 1188. National Treasure. (pl. IX)

10. Himurodoji
Amida triad. Wood. Heian period. Important Cultural Properties. (pl. XII, XIII)
11. Kami Daigoji
Juntei Kannon (main image). Wood. Edo period. (pl. XIV)
(pl. XV, XVI)
Yakushidō. 1121. National Treasure.
Seiryugongendō. 1434. National Treasure.
Nyoirindō. 1608. Important Cultural Property.
Kaisandō. 1608. Important Cultural Property.

12. Iwamadera
Senju Kannon (main image). Gilt bronze. Traditionally said
to have been the devotional image of Empress Genshō
(r. 715-724). (pl. LXIII)

13. Ishiyamadera
Tahōtō. 1194. National Treasure. (pl. XVII)
Main Hall, 1096, and Raidō, 1602. National Treasure.
Shorō. 1190. Important Cultural Property.

14. Miidera
Nyoirin Kannon (main image of Kannondō). Wood. Heian
period. Important Cultural Property. (pl. XX)
Ema called Ishizushi no zu. About 1690.
(pl. LXXIX, LXX)
Painting of Fudo Myōō called Yellow Fudo. Second half
of 9th century. National Treasure.
Kondō. 1599. National Treasure. (pl. XIX)
Kangakuin. 1600. National Treasure.
Fusuma paintings, by Kanō Mitsunobu. Kangakuin. Momoyama
period. Important Cultural Properties.
Issaikyōzō (Sutra Repository). Muromachi period.
Important Cultural Property.

15. Kannonji

16. Kiyommizudera
Hondō. 1633. National Treasure. (pl. XXII)
Uma todome (Stable). Muromachi period. Important Cultural
Property.
Four ema called Tokaisen. Three showing trading ships
of the Sueyoshi family, by Kimura Kaheimon. 1633.
Important Cultural Properties. (pl. LXVIII) One
showing trading ship of the Suminokura family. 1634.
Important Cultural Property.
Kiyomizudera engi emaki, by Tosa Mitsunobu. Late 15th
century. Important Cultural Property. Now in the Tokyo
National Museum.
17. Rokuharamitsuji


Main Hall. 1363. Important Cultural Property. (pl. XXIV)

18. Rokkakudō


19. Gyōganji
Stone pagoda. Muromachi period.

20. Yoshiminedera
Tahōtō. 1621. Important Cultural Property.


21. Anaoji
Southern Garden. Early Edo period. (pl. XXX)

Western Garden. Early Edo period.

Shaka Nehanzō. Wood. Kamakura period. (pl. XXIX)

22. Sōji.ji

23. Katsuōji
Senju Kannon (former main image). Wood. Early Heian period. (pl. XXXIII)


Shitenno and Shidai myōō. Early Kamakura period. Excavated at the boundaries of the temple in 1963. (pl. XXXV)
24. Nakayamadera
Juichimen Kannon (pair, flanking central main image). Wood. 1244. (pl. XXXVIII)

25. Kiyomizudera

26. Ichijōji
Shō Kannon. Gilt bronze. Hakuhō period. Important Cultural Property. Formerly maedachi of the Main Hall, now in the temple museum. (pl. XLI)
Three Storey Pagoda. 1170-74. National Treasure. (pl. LXVII)

27. Enkijōji
Gohō. 1559. Important Cultural Property. (pl. LXI)
Daikōdō. Muromachi period. Important Cultural Property. (pl. XLII)
Jikidō. Begun 1174. Important Cultural Property. (pl. XLIII)
Jogyōdō. Muromachi period. Important Cultural Property. (pl. XLIV)

28. Nariai-ji
Nariaisan sankei mandara. Muromachi period. (pl. LXXII)
Shō Kannon (main image). Wood. Heian period. (pl. XLV)
29. Matsunōdera
Lotus Sūtra Scroll. Kamakura period. Important Cultural Property. (pl. XLVII)

30. Hōgonji
Kannondō. Momoyama period. National Treasure. (pl. LI)
Watarirō (Passage). Momoyama period. Important Cultural Property. (pl. LI)

31. Chōmeiji
Hondō. 1524. Important Cultural Property. (see pl. LII)
Three Storey Pagoda. 1597. Important Cultural Property. (see pl. LII)
Shōrō. 1524. Important Cultural Property.
Gomadō. 1597. Important Cultural Property (see pl. LII)

32. Kannonshōji

33. Kegonji
Jūichimen Kannon. Wood. Early Heian period. (pl. LIV)
APPENDIX D

SUMMARIES OF FOUNDING LEGENDS DISCUSSED IN CHAPTER 3

1. Seigantoji
   The Indian priest Ragyō comes to Japan by boat. He sees a vision of Kannon in Nachi Falls and settles near the falls to practice austerities.

2. Okadera
   A childless couple pray to Kannon for a baby, and one night they discover an infant outside their house. Word of the baby's miraculous appearance reaches the ears of Emperor Tenchi, who has the child raised in an Imperial villa. When he grows up, the child, now named Gien, enters the priesthood and establishes a temple on the site of the villa which had been his childhood home.

10. Mimurodoji
    Emperor Konin sees a bright light every evening, which is discovered to emanate from a large Senju Kannon standing at the base of a cliff. When an Imperial messenger goes to retrieve the Senju Kannon, it disappears; and in its place is found a tiny golden image. The Emperor establishes a temple in which to enshrine the image.

12. Iwamadera
    The priest Taichō cures Empress Genshō, and the Empress promises to establish a temple for him. A purple cloud leads Taichō to Mount Iwama, where he hears the voice of Senju Kannon, and there he founds Iwamadera.

13. Ishiyamadera
    Rōber practices austerities and prays for gold to complete the gilding of the Tōdaiji Great Buddha. When gold is discovered in northern Japan, Emperor Shōmu establishes Ishiyamadera on the site of Rōben's hermitage out of gratitude.

15. Kannonji
    Kūkai follows an auspicious cloud eastward from Tōji. In the hills southeast of Kyōto he meets an old man who identifies himself as Kumano Gongen and tells Kūkai that the region is sacred to Kannon. Kūkai receives Imperial permission to establish a temple there.
16. Kiyomizudera
Enchin dreams of a fountain of pure water and finds its source in the mountains east of present day Kyōto. He receives a block of sacred wood from a recluse living on the mountain, from which he carves an image of Kannon. He reproaches Sakanoue no Tamuramaro for killing a deer, and Tamuramaro repents and builds a temple on the site of Enchin's hermitage.

17. Rokuharamitsuji
During a plague, Kūya brews a healing tea which he gives to the sick. He prays to an image of Kannon which he has made to halt the plague, and dances and chants to calm the dying. He establishes Rokuharamitsuji to hold memorial services for the souls of those who have died in the plague.

19. Rokkakudō
Shōtoku Taishi comes to the area where Kyōto now stands in search of materials to build Shitennoji. When he tries to recover his clothes after bathing in a pond, his Buddhist amulet refuses to move from the branch where he had hung it. That night the Prince is told in a dream to build a temple on the spot.

20. Yoshiminedera
Gensan withdraws into the mountains west of Kyōto, where he meets the tutelary deity of the region in the form of an old man. The old man tells Gensan to establish a temple there, but the mountain has no level places. A herd of wild boars stomp the ground with their feet to level a spot for the temple. Later Gensan brings rain to end a drought through his prayers.

22. Sōjiji.
San' in Chūnagon Takafusa rescues a turtle from a fisherman and frees it; the turtle subsequently saves Takafusa's infant son from drowning. Takafusa promises to establish a temple in gratitude, but he dies before he can fulfill his vow. The son, Masatomo, succeeds to his father's position at government headquarters in Kyūshū. On the beach one day he finds a piece of fragrant wood which his father had ordered brought from China, and searches for a sculptor to carve the wood into an image of Kannon. Finally a child appears who carves the desired image, and Masatomo establishes a temple in which to enshrine it, thus fulfilling his father's vow.
23. Katsuōji

Twin ascetic Zenchū and Zensan practice asceticism on Mount Ochō. After many years there they encounter Prince Kaijō, son of Emperor Kōnin, who is also carrying out ascetic practice on the mountain, having been fed by two crows. The Prince establishes Katsuōji after the death of the twins.

24. Nakayamadera

Shōtoku Taishi is told in an oracle to establish a temple in order to calm the spirits of Mononobe no Moriya and his allies, whom the Prince had defeated in battle. A purple cloud leads him to the spot where Nakayamadera now stands, and there he founds his temple.

25. Kiyomizudera

The Indian hermit Hōdō comes to Mount Mitake and prays for a source of pure water, whereupon a spring gushes forth.

26. Ichijōji

The Indian hermit Hōdō comes to Hokkezan, where he practices austerities and recites the Lotus Sutra. He makes his begging bowl fly; and one day, having been refused rice by a ship's captain, the bowl carries the entire shipload of rice to Hōdō's hermitage. Later Hōdō cures Emperor Kōtoku, who establishes Ichijōji in gratitude.

27. Enkyōji

After a period of study and itinerant asceticism, Shōkū is led to Mount Shosha by a purple cloud. There he sees a vision of a celestial maiden worshipping an old cherry tree; he carves an image of Kannon in the living trunk of the tree. Later Shōkū helps Emperor Kazan re-establish the Saikoku pilgrimage.

29. Matsunōdera

A Chinese priest named Ikō practices austerities on Mount Aoba. He recites the Lotus Sūtra and a golden image of Batō Kannon appears in his hands. He converts Empress Genmei to Buddhism.

30. Hōgonji

En no Gyōja practices austerities in a cave on Chikubushima. Seeking confirmation of his belief that the island is sacred to Buddhism, he drives his bamboo staff into the ground. The staff splits into two branches and both branches grow leaves.
31. Chōmeiji
A first century nobleman carves an invocation for long life in Chinese in the trunk of a willow tree. Five centuries later Shōtoku Taishi finds the invocation and encounters an old man, who tells Shotoku to carve images from the wood of the tree bearing the inscription and to establish a temple on the spot in which to enshrine them.

32. Kannonshōji
Shōtoku Taishi encounters a strange creature, half fish and half human, who begs the Prince to establish a temple so that it can be freed from the torments of its present existence.

33. Kegonji
Bunen practices austerities on Mount Tanigumi. At the same time, a nobleman from the north brings a block of sacred wood to Kyōto to have it carved into an image of Kannon. On his way back home, the nobleman's image becomes so heavy it cannot be moved, and it tells the nobleman it wishes to stay in that region. The nobleman and the ascetic Bunen together establish Kegonji.
3. Kokawadera
A hunter is converted by a bright light on Mount Kazaragi, and later an ascetic in the form of a child creates an image of Kannon for the hunter. The same ascetic cures a rich man's dying daughter. The former hunter and the rich man come to understand that the ascetic was an incarnation of Kannon. The main image of the temple, said to be the one created by the ascetic, is believed to have healing powers.

6. Tsubosakadera
The main image is believed to have the power to restore sight to the sightless and to cure eye diseases. A temple legend tells of a blind man named Sawaichi and his beautiful wife O-Sato, who prayed to the temple's main image for the restoration of her husband's sight. The image granted her prayers.

7. Okadera.
The main image is a yaku yoke Kannon, believed to have the power to ward off evil. Young men of 25 and young women of 19 pray to this image for protection during the coming critical year of their lives.

8. Hasedera
Numerous legends tell of this Kannon's power to grant the wishes of his devotees, including prayers for earthly benefits. In one, a poor woman dedicates a poem to the image and is taken into service by the governor of Ise province after he sees her poem. In another, a young girl sold into slavery is saved from shipwreck, and Kannon miraculously bestows a fortune in gold upon her and her impoverished parents.
9. Kōfukuji Nan'endo
During the Nara and Heian periods, Kōfukuji was the family temple of the Fujiwara. The main image of the Nan'endo was believed to be the honji of the principal Shintō deity enshrined at Kasuga Taisha, the Fujiwara family shrine near Kōfukuji in Nara.

11. Kami Daigoji
The original main image of the Junteidō at Kami Daigoji was commissioned by Emperor Daigo in order to bring about the birth of an heir. Daigo's Empress subsequently gave birth to two sons, who became Emperors Suzaku and Murakami. The present main image is still worshipped as an anzan Kannon, believed to grant easy childbirth.

12. Iwamadera
Taichō, the temple's founder, converts the Thunder God to Buddhism, and the god promises to protect the temple from lightning. The main image is believed to protect against lightning and to ward off all manner of evil. It is also known as Asekake no Kannon, the Sweating Kannon, because it sweats when it comes out of its zushi at night to relieve the suffering of those who are ill. The image also provides comfort to those who have lost a loved one, by causing the image of the recently deceased to appear in a mirror in the temple's Main Hall as a symbol of the deceased's union with Kanon.

15. Kannonji
The main image was believed to be the honji of Kumano Gongen, the tutelary deity of Mount Kumano, because of a connection which Emperor Go Shirakawa perceived between the Kumano region and the temple's environs. This image is also believed to have healing powers, especially the power to cure headaches and paralysis.

16. Kiyomizu-dera
The image of Kannon enshrined in the temple's Koyasu no tō is believed to grant easy delivery. Emperor Shōmu's consort, Kōmyō Kōgo, prayed to this image and was safely delivered of a daughter who became Empress Köken.

17. Rokuharamitsuji
The temple's founder Kūya is said to have carved this image as part of his efforts to halt the spread of a plague in Kyōto. It is still believed to have healing powers.
19. Gyōganji
A young woman living near the temple is murdered by her employer, and her parents come to the temple to pray for word of their daughter. The girl's spirit appears to them and tells them of her fate.

21. Anaoji
An image of Kannon substitutes itself for its monk creator and is struck by an arrow in his place. When the man who had tried to kill the monk realizes what has happened, he repents of his evil ways and enters the religious life.

23. Katsuōji
A subsidiary image, placed in the open air near the Main Hall, is revered as a mizugo Kannon, who secures the repose of the souls of those who died in infancy.

24. Nakayamadera
The main image is widely worshipped as an anzan Kannon. Emperor Go Daigo and the consort of Emperor Kōmei, mother of Emperor Meiji, prayed to this image for a safe childbirth.

28. Naraiji
A wooden image of Kannon transforms itself into a dead deer to provide food for a starving monk. When the monk realizes what he has done, he repairs the damage he unwittingly inflicted on his statue.

30. Hōgonji
Chikubushima, on which Hōgonji is located, has long been considered sacred to the Buddhist goddess Benzaiten. Benzaiten was believed to the honji of the Shintō goddess Ickikishima no mikoto, daughter of the sun goddess Amaterasu and guardian of the Imperial court, who is worshipped at Chikubushima Shrine, the Shintō shrine adjacent to Hōgonji. A statue of the amalgamated goddess in the form of Benzaiten served as the main image of the Shintō shrine until the Meiji period.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. PUBLISHED SOURCES


Tanaka Seizo. Ōmi Genji. 3 vols. Ōtsu, 1979-82.


2. UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

The temple materials included below are printed privately by individual temples, and most are available only at or through the temples. Pamphlets give very general background: the temple's founding legend, a brief history of the temple, major works of art in its collection, and its annual festivals. Many of the booklets listed here contain a wealth of information, much of it available nowhere else except in temple records, with chronologies, patronage, and detailed histories. These materials are listed by temple. All are in Japanese unless otherwise noted.

A. Temple Materials

1. Seigantoji

2. Kimiidera
   "Kimiidera." Color pamphlet.
   "Kimiidera ryakushi." Booklet.

3. Kokawadera
   "Kokawadera." Color pamphlet.

4. Makinōdera
   "Makinōsan shōshi." Booklet.
5. Fujiidera
"Fujiidera." Black and white pamphlet.

6. Tsubosakadera
"Tsubosakadera." Black and white pamphlet.
"Tsubosakadera shutokukai." Booklet describing the activities of the Welfare Institute for the Blind, headquartered at Tsubosakadera.

7. Okadera

8. Hasedera
"Hasedera: Sanpai no shiori." Color pamphlet.

9. Kōfukuji Nan'endo
"Kōfuku-ji." Black and white pamphlet. In English.
"Kōfukuji Nan'endo." Black and white pamphlet.
"Kōfukuji." Booklet available at the Kōfukuji Museum.

10. Mimurodoji
"Mimurodoji." Black and white pamphlet.

11. Kami Daigoji
"Daigoji and Sanbōin." Booklet. In English.

12. Iwamadera
"Iwamasan Shōhōji." Color pamphlet.

13. Ishiyamadera
"Ishiyama Temple." Color pamphlet. In English.
"Shikibu to Ishiyamadera." Booklet.

14. Miidera
"Miidera." Color pamphlet.
"Miidera Temple (Onjō-ji)." Booklet. In English.

15. Kannonji
"Ima Gumano Kannonji." Color pamphlet.

16. Kiyomizudera
"Kiyomizudera." Booklet. In English.

17. Rokuharamitsuji
"Rokuhraramitsuji." Color pamphlet. Mimeographed English translation also available.
18. Rokkakudō
"Rokkakudō to Ikenobō." Black and white pamphlet.
"Ikenobō." Booklet. In English.

20. Yoshiminedera
"Yoshiminedera." Black and white pamphlet. Mimeographed
English translation also available.
"Yoshiminedera sōritsu." Black and white pamphlet.

21. Anaoji
"Anaoji." Color pamphlet.

22. Sōji ji
"Sōji ji." Color pamphlet.

23. Katsuōji
"Katsuōji." Color pamphlet.
"Katsuōji." Booklet.
"Minō Katsuōji." Color pamphlet.

24. Nakayamadera
"Goharaobi no shikata to goninshinchū no kokoroe." Booklet
included with the temple's haraobi.

25. Kiyomizudera
"Kiyomizudera shi." 1947. This booklet recounts the early
20th century rebuilding of the temple.

26. Ichijōji
"Hokkezan Ichijōji." Black and white pamphlet.
"Ichijōji engi." Large single sheet.

27. Enkyōji
"Guid (sic) to Enkyōji Temple." Booklet. In English.
"Harima Shoshazan engi." Booklet.
"Shoshazan." Booklet.

28. Nariai ji
"Nariai san Nariai ji." Color pamphlet.

30. Hōgonji
31. Chōmei ji
"Ikiyasan Chōmei ji." Black and white pamphlet.
"Ikiyasan Chōmei ji." Small booklet.

32. Kannonshōji
"Kannonshōji." Color pamphlet.
"Kinugasasan Kannonshōji." Color pamphlet.

B. Miscellaneous Materials


"Kasuga Taisha." Black and white pamphlet. Available at Kasuga Taisha Shrine in Nara. In English.


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This is not a complete temple index. Major discussions of the temples are included here, but most passing references are omitted. Temples are listed in alphabetical order.

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