Beyond the Convent Walls: The Local and Japan-wide Activities of Daihongan’s Nuns in the Early Modern Period (c. 1550–1868)

by

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Duke University

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate Program in Religion in the Graduate School of Duke University

2016
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the social and financial activities of Buddhist nuns to demonstrate how and why they deployed Buddhist doctrines, rituals, legends, and material culture to interact with society outside the convent. By examining the activities of the nuns of the Daihongan convent (one of the two administrative heads of the popular pilgrimage temple, Zenkōji) in Japan’s early modern period (roughly 1550 to 1868) as documented in the convent’s rich archival sources, I shed further light on the oft-overlooked political and financial activities of nuns, illustrate how Buddhist institutions interacted with the laity, provide further nuance to the discussion of how Buddhist women navigated patriarchal sectarian and secular hierarchies, and, within the field of Japanese history, give voice to women who were active outside of the household unit around which early modern Japanese society was organized.

Zenkōji temple, surrounded by the mountains of Nagano, has been one of Japan’s most popular pilgrimage sites since the medieval period. The abbesses of Daihongan, one Zenkōji’s main sub-temples, traveled widely to maintain connections with elite and common laypeople, participated in frequent country-wide displays of Zenkōji’s icon, and oversaw the creation of branch temples in Edo (now Tokyo), Osaka, Echigo (now Niigata), and Shinano (now Nagano). The abbesses of Daihongan were one of only a few women to hold the imperially sanctioned title of eminent person (shōnin 上人) and to wear purple robes. While this means that this Pure Land convent was in some ways not
representative of all convents in early modern Japan, Daihongan’s position is particularly instructive because the existence of nuns and monks in a single temple complex allows us to see in detail how monastics of both genders interacted in close quarters.

This work draws heavily from the convent’s archival materials, which I used as a guide in framing my dissertation chapters. In the Introduction I discuss previous works on women in Buddhism. In Chapter 1, I briefly discuss the convent’s history and its place within the Zentōji temple complex. In Chapter 2, I examine the convent’s regular economic bases and its expenditures. In Chapter 3, I highlight Daihongan’s branch temples and discuss the ways that they acted as nodes in a network connecting people in various areas to Daihongan and Zentōji, thus demonstrating how a rural religious center extended its sphere of influence in urban settings. In Chapter 4, I discuss the nuns’ travels throughout the country to generate new and maintain old connections with the imperial court in Kyoto, confraternities in Osaka, influential women in the shogun’s castle, and commoners in Edo. In Chapter 5, I examine the convent’s reliance upon irregular means of income such as patronage, temple lotteries, loans, and displays of treasures, and how these were needed to balance irregular expenditures such as travel and the maintenance or reconstruction of temple buildings. Throughout the dissertation I describe Daihongan’s inner social structure comprised of abbesses, nuns, and administrators, and its local emplacement within Zentōji and Zentōji’s temple lands.

Exploring these themes sheds light on the lives of Japanese Buddhist nuns in this period. While the tensions between freedom and agency on the one hand and obligations to patrons, subordination to monks, or gender- and status-based restrictions on the other are important, and I discuss them in my work, my primary focus is on the nuns’ activities
and lives. Doing so demonstrates that nuns were central figures in ever-changing economic and social networks as they made and maintained connections with the outside world through Buddhist practices and through precedents set centuries before. This research contributes to our understanding of nuns in Japan’s early modern period and will participate in and shape debates on the roles of women in patriarchal religious hierarchies.
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All mistakes below are mine.
A note on naming conventions and units of measure

Names

Throughout this dissertation I follow Japanese naming conventions by stating the family name followed by the proper name in the first occurrence. For subsequent occurrences of that person, I refer to them by their family name. There are some exceptions to this. For famous historical figures, I follow convention by giving the full name in the first occurrence of the person, and in later instances I refer to him/her by given name. So, I write “Toyotomi Hideyoshi” in the first occurrence, but would later simply use “Hideyoshi.”

This is complicated by several matters. For example, I refer to both male and female Buddhist clerics by their ordination names for those alive prior to 1872 because before this time clergy renounced their familial names when they took vows. For those alive after the laicization of the Buddhist clergy (and their requirement to take family names), I list family name and ordination name in the first occurrence, and family name in subsequent occurrences.\(^1\) This means that I refer to Abbess Chishō (born and died prior to 1872) using only her title and ordination name, but I refer to the current abbess, Takatsukasa Seigyoku, as Abbess Takatsukasa. The exception to this is Abbess Seien, who was abbess from 1837 to 1910. I follow Daihongan’s conventions in using her ordination name.

Because of the multiple ways of reading Japanese characters, I have had to make educated guesses for the pronunciation of some names in the early modern period. I have

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\(^1\) For more on the laicization of Buddhist clergy in the 1870s, see Richard Jaffe, *Neither Monk nor Layman: Clerical Marriage in Modern Japanese Buddhism*, Paperback (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2011), chap. 4.
provided the Japanese characters for names, which should allow those interested to find information on these figures.

I have used diacritics in place names unless the names are commonly written in English without them. I talk about confraternities in “Osaka,” not “Ōsaka,” for instance.

I give most Buddhist terminology in Japanese, but list other languages where appropriate in parenthesis. Ex. Kannon (Skt. Avalokiteśvara). When I talk about larger divisions between Buddhist groups, I use the words “schools” or “sects.” Most schools I leave untranslated (ex. Shingon, Tendai, etc.) but I translate Jōdo as “Pure Land” and Jōdo Shinshū as “True Pure Land.”

Dates

Until 1873 Japan used a modified lunisolar calendar based on the Chinese system. Every few years there was an intercalary month (urūtsuki or jungetsu 閏月) that was added to keep seasons relatively consistent with months. Years were given as occurring within era names (nengō 年号), that were changed based on auspicious or inauspicious events. Some of these eras lasted less than a year, while others were decades long. This results in dates that were meaningless to anyone but specialists; even Japanese historians who study other periods frequently consult charts to see what nengō dates are in the Gregorian calendar. For example, the date of the Zenkōji earthquake that resulted in thousands of deaths and laid waste to the town at the temple gates occurred on the 24th day of the third month of the fourth year of Kōka (in Japanese, 弘化 4 年 3 月 24 日), or May 8, 1847 in Gregorian. In order to increase readability for non-specialists, I have
converted the years from era name and year to the Gregorian year.\textsuperscript{2} I only mention era names if they provide meaningful socio-political context. However, changing month and day to the Gregorian calendar would reduce the ability of specialists to understand how dates correspond to other important cyclical events (January 1 Gregorian is much less important than the first day of the first month in the lunisolar calendar, for instance!). To balance this, I have converted the years to Gregorian years, but have left the months and days unconverted. In some places I indicate this with “in the 24\textsuperscript{th} day of the third month of 1847.” However, this can be clunky with repeated use, so I often indicate dates before 1873 with “1847.3.24.” I indicate intercalary months with a lowercase “u” preceding the number of the month. When I talk about dates after the switch to the Gregorian calendar, I use “May 8, 1847” or “5/8/1847.”

\textit{Other units}

A number of Japanese historical units of measure appear in the pages that follow. I have made efforts to avoid this, however, in order to make this work more accessible. I have converted Japanese units of distance, weight, and volume into kilometers/meters, kilograms, or liters. There are a few exceptions to this, however.

A \textit{koku} 石 is a unit of volume used to measure rice. It was said to be the amount needed to feed one man for one year. This amounts to roughly 278 liters (or about 150 kilograms) of rice. Land was often listed in terms of \textit{koku}. For example, Zenkōji received a 1000-\textit{koku} land grant. In this case, it was the amount of land assessed to produce a koku of rice.

\footnote{I use the Tsuchihashi Tables that are digitally available in NengoCalc V4 \url{http://www.yukikurete.de/nengo_calc.htm}.}
certain amount of rice in taxes in a year. For Zenkōji, this meant that the temple received an amount of land that gave 1000 koku of rice in taxes to the temple each year.

People in early modern Japan used coins made from gold, silver, and copper. Gold was primarily used in eastern regions of Japan, while silver was used in Osaka, Kyoto, and other parts of western Japan. Zenkōji was a pilgrimage site with wide appeal, so people donated all types of coins. Daihongan’s nuns operated in areas across Japan as well, so they received and used a variety of coins as well. Complicating matters even further was that the exchange rate between these coins and their purchasing power fluctuated wildly throughout the period.

Common denominations of gold were the ryō 両 = Four bu 分 = 16 shu 朱. There were also hiki coins where 400 hiki = 1 ryō. Further complicating matters was that there were also gold ōban and koban; 1 ōban = 7 koban, and a koban was equal to 1 ryō but slowly became devalued throughout the period.

Silver was based on kan 貫, monme 両, and fun 分. 1 kan = 1000 monme = 10,000 fun. It was also measured in mai 枚 which were 43 monme.

For copper coins the units were kanmon 貫文 and mon 文. 1 kanmon = 1000 mon.

Exchange across the three types of currency varied considerably, but 1 ryō of gold equaled approximately 4000-6000 copper mon or 50-60 silver monme. Rather than give prices in this dizzying array of denominations of coins, I have converted them to gold ryō. In many cases I have been able to find out the conversion rates between gold, silver, and copper based on context from Daihongan’s documents. If I have not, I have used the average rates discussed in the Japanese Currency Museum: in the early seventeenth
century 1 ryō = 50 monme = 4000 mon; late seventeenth to early eighteenth century 1 ryō = 60 monme = 4000 mon; mid-eighteenth century to early nineteenth century 1 ryō = 60 monme = 4000 mon; early nineteenth century 1 ryō = 60 monme = 6500 mon.\(^3\)

\(^{3}\) http://www.imes.boj.or.jp/cm/history/
Introduction

In the end of the sixth month of 1790, Chikan 智観, the abbess of Zenkōji’s Daihongan convent and its Edo branch Aoyama Zenkōji passed away without leaving a successor. The convent’s two senior nuns and male administrators took control of Daihongan. Uncertain of how Chikan’s death would affect their convent, these nuns and administrators kept it a secret from all but the powerful women of the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle (Ōoku 大奥). The senior nuns negotiated with the Nakamikado family through one of Daihongan’s branch temples, Wakōji in Osaka City. They paid the Nakamikado a small dowry of thirteen gold ryō coins for their daughter.¹ One month later she traveled to Aoyama Zenkōji, accompanied by a couple of her handmaidens and Karasawa Hikodayū 柄沢彦太夫, an administrator from the convent.

Four months later Tora-hime took the tonsure at Aoyama Zenkōji to become Chishō (智昭 or 智沼, abbess from 1790–1838). After Chishō’s ordination, the convent’s senior nuns sent out a flood of announcements to the shogun’s castle, the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines (jisha bugyō 寺社奉行), various domainal lords, Daihongan’s branch temples, the head of Tendai temples in eastern Japan called Kan`eiji, and a powerful Pure Land temple named Zōjōji. Several weeks later Daihongan and Aoyama Zenkōji sent messages announcing the retirement of the still secretly deceased Abbess Chikan in favor of her child successor. These were followed shortly by announcements of

¹ Two and a half ryō went to Tora-hime and five went to some of her handmaidens. The rest went to members of her family.

The character used here for “dowry” is yuinō 結納.
Chikan’s death. In all, Chikan had been dead for almost six months before her convent could allow her to be officially dead.

While an excellent example of the “open secrets” that facilitated the social stability of the Tokugawa period, Chikan’s death and young Chishō’s rise to the position of abbess of Daihongan is also instructive for a number of other reasons that will be key elements of this dissertation. The transition from Chikan to Chishō was not the only difficulty the convent faced during Japan’s early modern period. As we will see, Daihongan’s nuns survived the vicissitudes of the Warring States Period, the destruction of Zenkōji temple (1555), the forced relocation of Zenkōji’s main image (1555–1598), the rebuilding of the main temple, and changes in the political scene, to name just a few from the early part of the period. That the convent was able to survive such tumultuous times points to one of the key questions driving this dissertation: how did Daihongan manage to survive in the early modern period? As Ushiyama Yoshiyuki points out, a great many convents in the medieval period closed within one generation of opening.

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3 A note on terminology: I am using “sub-temple” to translate the word inbō 院坊 or smaller temples that make up the Zenkōji temple complex. At other temples, this position might be indicated using the words tatchū 塔頭 or shiin 子院.

I am using “administrative sub-temple” to indicate the place Daihongan and Daikanjin have within the temple complex. They are smaller parts of the temple complex, indicated by the “sub-temple” portion of the translation. However, they are also the leaders of the temple complex, a position I indicate by adding “administrative” to the translation. Occasionally, Daikanjin and Daihongan are indicated by the term nidaiseiryoku 二大勢力, or “two great powers” of Zenkōji. Other times, they are simply indicated as “Daikanjin, Daihongan, and the 39 inbō” of Zenkōji.

Furthermore, as Helen Hardacre has shown, by the end of the early modern period, many Buddhist institutions facing similar difficulties failed or were operating in name only.\(^5\)

The answers to this question are, of course, multifaceted. And as with the question, the story of Chikan’s death also points to the answers I have found as I searched the archives. One answer I have found is that Daihongan had access to political, social, and Buddhist institutional connections that supported the convent financially and logistically. These connections were partially a result of the work of its abbesses, nuns, and administrators (or in some cases, almost detrimentally affected by them!). Additional connections came as a result of the convent’s place within the Zenkōji temple complex. While essential, these connections required work and funds to maintain, thus placing a large financial burden on the convent that it could only repay by drawing upon a number of means of fundraising open only to religious institutions with similar histories and connections. I am, of course, not suggesting that Daihongan was unique in this fashion. There were a number of other religious institutions in the early modern period with equal or greater connections and prestige.\(^6\) I am, however, arguing that the ability to establish and draw upon these connections, the rights and responsibilities (including the opportunities for fundraising) they enabled, and the work of temple/convent renunciants and administrators in maintaining those connections to insure the prestige of an institution, are key elements in the survival of any religious institution.

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\(^6\) For examples of the connections of the Inner Quarters of the Shogun’s Castle to various religious institutions in the early modern period, see Edo Tōkyō tatemono en 大奥東京たてもの園, ed., *Ōoku jochū to yukari no jiin 大奥女中とゆかりの寺院* (Tokyo: Edo Tōkyō Tatemono En, 2013).
In particular, in this dissertation I examine the economic and social activities of
the nuns of Zenkōji’s Daihongan Convent. This examination provides evidence
demonstrating how the convent was able to survive, even in periods of economic
difficulty, or when faced with legal challenges from the monks of the rival administrative
head of Zenkōji, Daikanjin. In particular, I will demonstrate that the nuns were able to
survive and even thrive in these periods because they drew upon benefits that came with
their social position, the history of their convent, and their connections. By examining the
activities of the nuns of the Daihongan convent in Japan’s early modern period as
documented in the convent’s rich archival sources, my analysis challenges several long-
held assumptions that nuns were mainly active only within their own convents, that they
were widows and unmarriageable daughters, that they were always subordinate to monks,
and that they were viewed as having a lower status than monks by outside society. This
work is significant because it sheds further light on the oft-overlooked political and
financial activities of nuns, illustrates how Buddhist institutions interacted with the laity,
provides further nuance to the discussion of how Buddhist women navigated patriarchal
sectarian and secular hierarchies, and, within the field of Japanese history, it gives voice
to women who were active outside of the household unit around which early modern
Japanese society was organized.

As we saw in the story of Chikan’s death, the nuns’ connections extended far
beyond the walls of their convent. They included connections with high-ranking members
of society, such as with the women of the inner quarters of the shogun’s castle and other
warrior and courtier households. They also included the convent’s connections with the
commoners living on Zenkōji’s lands or who visited Zenkōji or Daihongan’s branch
temples, as well. Daihongan turned to these connections in times of need. Connections with other Buddhist institutions were also important administratively and ritually. These included the Pure Land headquarters in eastern Japan, Zōjōji, the abbot of which performed advancement ceremonies for Daihongan’s nuns. Other connections were more ambivalent in nature. One of these ambivalent relationships existed between Daihongan and Kan’ei-ji, the headquarters of the Tendai sect. Though regulations issued by Kan’ei-ji were largely responsible for removing Daihongan from the ritual life of Zenkō-ji, Kan’ei-ji’s administrators also ably supported Daihongan once they had been made head temple over the convent in the 1740s. Both Kan’ei-ji and Zōjō-ji were mortuary temples for the Tokugawa clan, indicating the prestige of these institutions at that time. We will see the roles these connections played in supporting or hindering Daihongan throughout this dissertation.

Another ambivalent relationship existed between Daihongan and the monks of Daikanjin, one of the other major sub-temples within Zenkō-ji. Daihongan’s nuns and Daikanjin’s monks were frequently engaged in lawsuits throughout the first half of the Tokugawa Period (1603–1868) and again from 1868–1945. However, there were also a number of times when these two sub-temples worked together for the common good of Zenkō-ji. In Chapter 1, I will briefly discuss the history of Zenkō-ji and Daihongan’s place within that history. This history demonstrates the position of Daihongan in the early modern period as a part of and apart from Zenkō-ji, and will set the stage for the following four chapters. Particularly important to that history is the tumultuous relationship between Daihongan and the monks of Daikanjin. This relationship provides a unique opportunity to observe the interaction between male and female renunciants in Japan.
because Zenkōji was (and is) one of the only temples in Japan where monks and nuns share (to a certain degree, as we will see) administrative and ritual responsibilities. In the last half of Chapter 1, I briefly discuss how Daihongan’s nuns took advantage of the changes during the transition from the early modern period to the modern one. During this period, Daihongan’s nuns challenged the position of unchallenged ritual and administrative authority Daikanjin’s monks had developed at the Zenkōji temple complex during the early modern period. These developments, as I will discuss, resulted from changes in the legal atmosphere and the personality of Daihongan’s abbess at the time (Seien), but they were also dependent upon the work of Daihongan’s early modern nuns in maintaining the convent’s prestige and developing its connections.

Travel and money were both important elements in the story of Chishō’s succession, and they are also key elements in the story of Daihongan. By tracing the flow of income into and out of the convent, we can see what was important to the nuns as well as the connections the nuns had to people beyond their walls. In a similar vein, by examining travel, we can see what political and ritual connections helped maintain the convent’s prestige and how sustaining these connections and prestige also took its toll financially.

I examine Daihongan’s regular finances in Chapter 2, in which I present the convent’s income and expenditures recorded in a 1793 ledger. The image that appears there is of a religious institution that drew upon a variety of economic sources, including donations, fees for performing rituals, rent from convent lands, and so on. Conspicuously absent is income from performing funerary rituals, a source upon which many of the temples of the early modern period relied. This absence is for two reasons. First,
Daihongan was a so-called “prayer temple” (kitō dera 祈祷寺), one of a number of temples and convents that performed rites for this-worldly benefits and/or the protection of the country. Second, Daihongan is (and was) a convent, and as far as historians of early modern Japanese Buddhism have been able to tell, convents were not involved in mortuary practices. As a prayer temple, Daihongan’s expenses were not extraordinary. The nuns spent money on ritual implements, salary for their administrators, food, tea, and other things. One potential difference between Daihongan and male Buddhist institutions is the division between the “outer” portion of the convent, in which male administrators handled many of the external relations under the eyes of the abbess, and “inner” portions, where the nuns lived and performed rituals. The inner and outer portions were divided financially as well, though there was some flow of money between the two. This examination also highlights the convent’s reliance upon loans. During the period examined, the convent slipped further and further into debt. This debt was caused by “irregular” financial occurrences such as (re)construction projects and travels.

In Chapter 4, I examine the travels of Daihongan’s nuns. While many may think of wandering ascetics when they hear about religious travels, these nuns traveled with set destinations, were surrounded by large retinues, and stayed in the best inns on the road. Additionally, with a few notable exceptions, existing scholarship has focused on women’s travel for pleasure in the early modern period. However, some women traveled for work, just as some men did. Though the nuns’ travels also included elements of pleasure, such as side trips to areas associated with the famous eleventh-century female

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7 As I will discuss in Chapter 2, this division was also a part of other elite convents.
author Murasaki Shikibu (c. 978–c.1014) in Uji, almost all of their trips were for a specific purpose. These purposes had largely been established by precedent generations before. For example, when the sixteenth-century abbess Chikei revived the abbesses’ title of “eminent person” and being able to wear purple robes of office, this included the requirement that each abbess visit the Imperial Palace in Kyoto once in her lifetime. In another case, almost a hundred years later when Chizen established Wakōji Temple, the branch temple in Osaka, along with that came the requirement that the abbess visit that temple when she was in Kansai. Such visits were costly, as I show in Chapter 4, and yet the abbesses could not stop following precedent without losing the prestige that came with having the title and purple robes or without forfeiting the financial or administrative support of Wakōji, for instance. Furthermore, the abbess could not just travel somewhere without a retinue befitting her station and that of Daihongan. She and her cortege had to inspire awe in all those who encountered them. The necessity of travel to maintain prestige or support, combined with the obligation of traveling in an ostentatious manner, meant that the convent spent a small fortune every few years when the abbess had to travel.

In Chapter 5, I turn to the “irregular” methods of fundraising that the convent turned to from time to time in order to pay back its debts. In particular, I examine loans, financial confraternities, displays of temple treasures (kaichō 開帳), and lotteries (tomitsuki 富突). As I suggest, Daihongan’s nuns were allowed to use these types of fundraising because of their connections with everyone from the farmers on Zenkōji’s lands to the family of the Tokugawa shoguns. Many smaller Buddhist institutions could
not draw upon these connections for support, which is one reason why Daihongan was able to remain a viable institution despite its precarious financial situation. Early modern and modern notions about the relationship between religion, Buddhism, and economics come to the fore during the discussion of many of these types of fundraising. In both Chapters 2 and 5, I challenge several prevalent ideas about these relationships, especially the idea that involvement in the economy or fundraising in a particular way is a sign of the degeneracy of the Buddhist clergy.

Daihongan’s connection to its modest network of branch temples also proved vital to the convent’s survival. In the story of Chikan’s death a few of Daihongan’s branch temples—Aoyama Zenkōji and Osaka Wakōji—make appearances. As we will see, the convent’s branch temples also played a variety of vital roles in supporting Daihongan. For example, Wakōji, the convent’s Osaka branch, served in an administrative role connecting the convent to ties in western Japan, whether it be to the imperial household, courtiers, or the merchants of Osaka.

In Chapter 3, I introduce Daihongan’s small network of branch temples. These branches were located in Edo (what is now Tokyo), Echigo (what is now Niigata Prefecture), and Osaka. I demonstrate how in some cases Daihongan utilized its political connections and legends associated with the convent to establish these temples. Having branches was beneficial to Daihongan. These temples provided financial and administrative support for Daihongan’s nuns. However, being at the head of even a modest network such as this also brought responsibility. For example, the public authorities reprimanded Daihongan on a few occasions because of indiscretions at one of its branch temples. Of course, these temples did not simply exist to support the convent.
They were staffed by and served people with their own ideas, ambitions, and limitations. Because of this, Chapter 3 elucidates the interplay between Daihongan, its branches, and the local communities where the branches were located. Some previous scholarship has discussed the formation of the main temple-branch temple system and the general relationship between main temples and their branches. Other scholars have described moments of tension between specific main temples and their branches. However, few have discussed the relationship between main temples and branches over a long period of time.

I. Previous studies on Nuns:

Though there were individual studies on nuns earlier, a wave of scholarship on nuns began to appear by Japanese religious historians in the 1980s. At that time, Nishiguchi Junko and Ōsumi Kazuo founded the Research Group on Women and Buddhism in Japan, which promoted the exchange of ideas and the publication of scholarship. They were joined by scholars from the U.S., such as Barbara Ruch, who were interested in similar topics. Their efforts resulted in a proliferation of scholarship in Japanese beginning in the late 1980s and continuing to the present day in both English and Japanese.8 Of course, scholarship about Japanese Buddhist nuns had existed prior to this point, but the combined efforts of these international scholars resulted in an increase

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8 Some examples in Japanese are the works in the Series Women and Buddhism [Shiirizu josei to Bukkyo] published by Heibonsha in 1989. A number of these works have since been translated and joined by English-language scholarship in Barbara Ruch, ed., Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan, Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies; No. 43. (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002).
in the number and detail of scholarly works. The work by the members of the Research Group on Women and Buddhism in Japan and Ruch also inspired a younger generation of scholars to research the lives and activities of Japanese Buddhist nuns.

The materials these scholars examined and the questions they asked changed over the years. Early researchers either examined how Buddhist doctrine and sectarian founders treated the topic of women or focused on individual laywomen or nuns. Later works used a variety of sources to discuss women in Buddhism more broadly, focusing on such issues such as ordination, how nuns started the path to renunciation, and exemplary nuns in history. For example, Bernard Faure’s work *The Power of Denial*, draws on legends, journals, and sutras to discuss women in Heian and Kamakura Buddhism. Many early scholars also took one of two viewpoints regarding convents: they were either forlorn places where widows and divorcees struggled under androcentric/misogynistic doctrines or they were places of relative freedom where women could escape the harsh realities of outside life. Even Faure, who stresses that “Buddhism is paradoxically neither as sexist nor as egalitarian as is usually thought,” falls into this trap when he discusses convents. He sees them as entirely repressive places that propagate androcentric discourses and suggests that women should “simply

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9 Some of the notable works on Buddhist nuns included Suenaga Masao’s work on the Imperial Abbess Bunchi and the works of Takatsukasa Seigyoku, current abbess of Daihongan. As I argue elsewhere, Takatsukasa’s scholarship wrote Daihongan and its abbesses back into the history of Zenkōji and Japanese Buddhism. Forthcoming article in the *International Journal of Dharma Studies*.
bypass the whole structure as largely irrelevant and assert the right of women to appropriate the Buddhist teaching outside of a monastic framework.”

More recent scholarship in English has been inspired by the works of Dorothy Ko and Saba Mahmood, who present the ways that women pursue their own agendas within patriarchal institutions, whether that be by resisting, subverting, or by following the status quo. Drawing from these insights, scholars such as Lori Meeks, Jessica Starling, Gina Cogan, and Barbara Ambros have turned away from narrow discussions of patriarchy and resistance to it in order to focus on how lay and ordained women navigate Buddhism’s largely patriarchal institutions and ideologies to find their own places within the tradition. Meeks presents the ways that the nuns of Hokkeji worked with the Ritsu monks when it was in their interests, and either drew upon their own empowering figures (such as Hokkeji’s founder Kōmyō) or talked past androcentric doctrines when necessary. Similarly, Jessica Starling’s dissertation (and related journal articles) on women in the True Pure Land traditions, especially regarding the ambiguous yet essential place of temple wives (bōmori 坊守), sheds light on the ways that women have taken advantage of shifts in historical thinking to make spaces for themselves and their practices within largely patriarchal religious traditions, and the ways that other shifts have reduced women’s spaces and practices. Cogan highlights the agency of the imperial nun Bunchi.

13 Ibid., 54.
15 Meeks, *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan*.
She argues that Bunchi demonstrated her agency by placing herself under increasingly strict monastic precepts and through ardent devotion to the posthumous wellbeing of her family members, instead of through acts of resistance to or subversion of patriarchal authority aimed at reducing or removing constraints. Ambros, in her 2015 book on women in Japanese religions, foregrounds the ambivalent discourses about women in Japanese religious traditions, bypassing the seductive narrative of “mythical independence that is shattered by historical oppression and then, conversely, overturned by modern liberation.” This allows Ambros to discuss the ways that religious discourses by and about women “have not simply subordinated women but also given them religious resources to pursue their own interests and agendas.”

My dissertation builds upon the work of these scholars. I demonstrate, for instance, the ways that Daihongan’s nuns took advantage of historical shifts to increase their convent’s place in Zenkōji and the society at the time. For example, Abbess Chikei worked to bring Daihongan closer to the up-and-coming leaders of the Toyotomi and Tokugawa warrior clans in the sixteenth century, while Abbess Seien pushed to move Daihongan back to the center of Zenkōji’s ritual and administrative life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As in the above authors’ works, Daihongan’s tale balances these gains with other losses. As I will discuss in more detail below, throughout the early modern period, monks from the rival sub-temple, Daikanjin, gradually gained control over most of the ritual and

19 Ibid.
administrative functions of Zenkōji and its lands. In many cases, the nuns of Daihongan fought against these losses and sought to acquire more rights through lawsuits. In a few notable cases they were successful; in most they were not. While the primary aim of this dissertation is to come to an understanding of how Daihongan (and similar convents) was able to survive in the face of economic adversity, one of the ancillary contributions it makes is to illuminate the strategies of female religionists operating in the context of patriarchal institutions.

This dissertation differs from other scholarship on Buddhist nuns in Japan in several ways. For example, almost all previous research examines Japan’s classical (roughly 550–1182 CE) and medieval (1183–1550 CE) periods. Aside from a few notable instances, scholars researching gender and religions in Japan’s early modern period (1550–1868) have largely ignored women’s relationships with Buddhism, choosing instead to focus on female founders of new religious movements or Confucian-inspired views of women. The work that does exist focuses on imperial convents or temples that assisted women with divorces.

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Though important, these portrayals depict nuns as firmly ensconced within convent walls, bounded by societal and Buddhist hierarchical restrictions. Of course, nuns’ cloistered lives were important, but they were also involved in larger social networks. In order to understand these women’s roles and the ways they served as vital connections between Buddhism and the laity during a time when Buddhism touched the lives of the entire populace of Japan, we must also consider nuns’ lives outside their temples.

Furthermore, most of the above scholarship on Japanese nuns in the early modern period focuses on the work of individual nuns active in the seventeenth century. Scholarship on individual nuns can provide great insight into these women’s personalities and the ways their choices affected their convents and women’s roles in Buddhism more broadly. However, this work replicates Buddhist Studies’ earlier interest in the lives and writings of male founders and reformers, work that emphasizes sectarian identities when boundaries between Buddhist schools were still in flux. It can also be considered a form of “great person’s history” which ignores the lives of the non-elite Buddhist practitioners or the ways in which Buddhism interacted with a broad array of laypeople.\(^2\) Finally, these scholars’ focus on the seventeenth century highlights the ways a few elite nuns were affected by and affected new regulations created by the newly formed Tokugawa

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shogunate. However, this focus implies that these regulations remained in force, unchanged, throughout the almost three-hundred-year period the Tokugawa were in power, an implication that fails to consider the governmental reforms at various points in the period as well as the selective enforcement of law throughout the federation of domains that made up early modern Japan. Furthermore, as Amy Stanley points out, conceptions of women and women’s places in the status system (mibun seido 身分制度)—a social system that determined how groups of people interacted with each other and the duties they owed their domainal lords—were very much in flux until the late seventeenth century.23 Because of this, what these early seventeenth-century nuns were able to do and how they interacted with monks was very different from their later successors.

This study moves beyond these limitations in a number of key ways. First, because I examine administrative documents rather than doctrinal or artistic works, I am able to point to the ways that Daihongan’s nuns lived their day-to-day lives. Much work has been done on the relations of nuns to doctrine, the arts, and ritual. Of course, there are still many areas that remain to be clarified. And there are several scholars who have used administrative documents to examine convent life: Oka Yoshiko and Nishiguchi Junko’s work to catalog the documents of imperial convents, Oka’s articles and Cogan’s monograph that investigate the inner workings of an imperial convent, and the work on divorce temples are prominent examples.24 However, the focus of many previous studies

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24 Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, ed., Nihon no shūkyō to jenda- ni kansuru kokusai sōgō kenkyū: amadera chōsa no seika o kiso to shite. I. Honbunhen. 日本の宗教とジェンダーに関する国際総合研究：尼寺調
on art, doctrine, or ritual can give the impression that Buddhist nuns’ lives solely revolved around these issues, thus reinforcing the idea that these women were removed from the world. This is similar to the ways that the male Catholic hierarchy, commoners of the time, and some modern-day scholars have expected medieval and early modern cloistered Catholic nuns to be completely removed from non-devotional activities. For example, as Jo Ann Kay McNamara says,

Women religious have been torn between lay and clerical status, between episcopal and monastic jurisdictions, between active and contemplative vocations defined by male authorities. Thus, despite the variety of their activities, women's experience of the religious life, as it came to be called, had profoundly different lineaments from men’s and merits a separate history stressing the unity of that experience. No human institution is older than this sisterhood. Its impact has been felt throughout the world, but, against all reasonable evidence, monastic historians traditionally refused to see anything but their cloister walls and enveloping veils. Reasoning that women do not build institutions or conquer new worlds or make history, the scribes who shape the past have ignored their untidy existence or simply accorded it a hasty nod before pressing forward with the more readily accessible history of male institutions. Still, religious women have a past that has much to teach us, not only about female creativity and accomplishments but about the possibility that women and men may yet enjoy fuller humanity beyond the barriers of gender distinctions.


In recent years, much exciting work has turned from the imagined or prescriptive and instead focused on the broader activities of these women. Like Catholic nuns, Japanese Buddhist nuns were also faced with many of the same problems that confront everyone—how to eat, pay bills, navigate interpersonal relationships, and maintain their rights and privileges. By examining Buddhist nuns’ responses to these basic, seemingly trivial problems, we can learn answers to important questions including how these nuns spent their time, who they were connected with, and so on. In this dissertation, I do just that. For example, an examination of basic income and expenses tells us much about the connections these women had on a day-to-day basis. An examination of their branch temples demonstrates how their connections to people at various levels of society expanded and how they deployed their convent’s legends to make those connections. Travels demonstrate the ways that Daihongan’s nuns maintained those connections. Finally, the ways that they raised funds tell us much about the nuns’ ability to draw on their connections and their desire to keep their convent functioning while maintaining an image of prestige.

This dissertation will move beyond the “great person’s history” that has characterized some previous work on Japanese nuns. However, let there be no mistake: Daihongan is now (and has always been, according to its genealogy) populated by women from the highest ranks of Japanese society. For example, the current abbess,

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Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉 (b. 1929), can trace her family back to the imperial line on one side and the Tokugawa family on the other. Many of its former abbesses come from similarly prestigious families. In the archives, however, we do catch glimpses of the other nuns who lived at the convent. These women came, as I state below, from the ranks of the convent’s administrators or the abbesses’ handmaidens from their natal homes. I highlight the activities of these women wherever possible. The story of Daihongan is as much about them as it is about its abbesses, and many of them played vital roles in keeping the convent viable, as we will see. Additionally, by broadening our lens to focus on the connections of the convent beyond the highest ranking members of Japanese society at the time—the shogun and his family, the imperial household and courtiers, and the various domainal lords—I am able to show Daihongan’s nuns interacting with people on the road or listening to the petitions of Osakan merchants. Here, too, my dissertation departs from many earlier studies by including non-elite and non-monastic interactions.27

Finally, the longer historical scope of this study, which ranges from the late 1500s to the early 1900s, illuminates a number of fascinating changes in the broader society in which Daihongan was enmeshed. Particularly noteworthy are the ways that nuns’ responded to changing regulations, such as ones regarding building new temples and others that vacillated between restriction of and approval for fundraising methods that connected prayer and play. This long view also allows us to see how Daihongan’s nuns’ place in Zenkōji and society changed over time, as I discuss below and in the Conclusion.

27 Oka’s work on Hōkyōji and Cogan’s work on Enshōji are exceptions to this. Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, “Kinsei no bikuni gosho (jō) Hōkyōji wo chūshin ni 近世の比丘尼御所（上）宝鏡寺を中心に”; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, “Kinsei no bikuni gosho (ge) Hōkyōji wo chūshin ni 近世の比丘尼御所（下）宝鏡寺を中心に”; Cogan, The Princess Nun.
II. Scholarship on Daihongan

Despite the activities of Daihongan’s abbesses in the early modern period, there is a dearth of research concerning them. One early resource is the *Zenkōji shi kenkyū*, or History of Research into Zenkōji Temple, that was published in 1922. This is not to be confused with Kobayashi Keiichirō’s later work of the same name. The team that put together *Zenkōji shi kenkyū* were some of the first modern historians to include information about Daihongan. Their work also preserves some materials currently unavailable by other means, such as a transcription of the rafter tablet at Wakōji that was lost when the temple burnt down in the firebombing of Osaka in World War II. However, many of their interpretations must be taken with care. *Zenkōji shi kenkyū* appeared in the 1920s when Daikanjin and Daihongan were still involved in protracted legal battles, and these historians present documents and interpret evidence to strengthen Daihongan’s position in these battles.

Local historian Sakai Kōhei 坂井衡平 discusses Daihongan’s nuns in their efforts to rebuild Zenkōji’s main hall and their conflicts with Daikanjin’s monks.28 Another prolific local historian Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎 also discusses Daihongan’s nuns in these contexts in his works.29 One area of improvement, however, is that Kobayashi included a twenty-page section discussing the biographies of Daihongan’s nuns from the late sixteenth century up to the present in his book *Zenkōji shi kenkyū*,

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which was published in 2000.\footnote{Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 280–301.} Art historian Donald McCallum focuses on Zenkōji’s famed icon and the local history of the temple. He largely follows precedent in discussing Daihongan’s abbesses only in the context of rebuilding the temple and their disputes with the monks of the Tendai sub-temple Daikanjin.\footnote{Donald F. McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon: A Study in Medieval Japanese Religious Art (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Nagano shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjiminami no kenkyū 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究; Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū; Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjisan 善光寺さん.} While these disputes were a dramatic part of Zenkōji’s early modern history, they were just a portion of the lives of these nuns, as we will see.

On the other hand, the current head of Daihongan, Takatsukasa Seigyoku, provides an extensive analysis of the lives of the abbesses Chikan (abbess 1753–1790) and Chishō (abbess 1791–1836) based on information contained in temple journals.\footnote{Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Kinsei Aoyama Zenkōji ni okeru tomitsuki kōgō 近世青山善光寺における富突興行,” Bukkyō Daigaku kenkyū kiyō 佛教大學研究紀要 57 (March 1973): 21–38; Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, ed., Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, Daihongan Kyōkabu, 1976); Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 信光寺智昭上人の生涯,” Bukkyō Daigaku kenkyū kiyō 佛教大學研究紀要 62 (1978): 190–263.} I rely heavily on her work in places because of the high quality of her scholarship and because she has access to convent diaries and ledgers that are still (largely) closed to outsiders. Thus, her journal articles and book on Daihongan’s early modern nuns are an invaluable resource—she paraphrases or quotes at length from sources that are available nowhere else.

Of course, other scholars have written about Zenkōji over the years.\footnote{For example, see Barbara Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo,” Asian Cultural Studies 30 (Spring 2004): 1–26; Nam-lin. Hur,} however, do not discuss or only briefly mention Daihongan and its nuns.
III. Methods and Period of Study

This research is largely based on unpublished temple documents held in the Nagano City Public Archives (Nagano shi kōbunsho kan 長野市公文書館) and the archival holdings at the Nagano Prefectural History Museum (Nagano kenritsu rekishikan 長野県立歴史館). These archives house a wealth of documents from Daihongan and its branch temples from the early modern to the modern periods. These documents range from lengthy travel journals to three-line statements of donation to the temple. While much can be gleaned from them, they are sparse when it comes to personal information about the abbesses and nuns of Daihongan, or about their individual activities. Additional information about these topics may be available in the diaries and ledgers held privately by Daihongan; however, most of these materials are not available to the public.34

Though initially intended as a local history project, it quickly became clear that I had to expand the scope of my project to understand Daihongan’s nuns better in the interconnected world of early modern Japan. In particular, one major limitation, of local histories is that they can ignore what happened beyond current municipal borders and thus tend to downplay connections beyond those borders or ignore the activities of groups who were simultaneously emplaced in a locale and yet regularly traveled beyond its

34 The exception are the “Nyūin tokudo shōnin’i shō gansho no an,” “Jimu kōyō jō,” “Jimu kōyō ge,” and “Kanmu kiji” which are available as part of Takatsukasa Seigyoku, ed., Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin (Tokyo: Heibonsha, Daihongan Kyōkabu, 1976).
Of course, some local or regional histories skillfully avoid such pitfalls. Barbara Ambros’s work on Ōyama is one of these. In it, she provides a detailed analysis of the social and religious aspects of life at Ōyama, but she also follows its semi-lay proselytizers known as oshi 御師 as they walked their parishes, which spread throughout the Kantō region. Because of this, Ambros’s work demonstrates the possibility for a local history that transcends local boundaries. Following Ambros’s lead, I utilize a hybrid methodology of local history balanced with insights from network theory. This is necessary to illustrate the activities and connections of complex historical agents, such as Daihongan’s nuns. As I mentioned, the travels and connections of these nuns extended beyond Shinano (current day Nagano Prefecture), reaching Echigo (current day Niigata) on the Sea of Japan, Edo (current day Tokyo), Kyoto, and Osaka. For this reason, I also surveyed the archives, libraries, and branch temples in these areas.

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35 This problem is that much of this work was centered on contemporary municipalities. This type of view tended to reify the municipality and present a teleological view of its history. It is often seen both in the works of private local historians, such as Kobayashi’s 1969 publication, as well as publically funded official city histories and local museums. Furthermore, these works tended to smooth over the differences and characteristics of smaller areas in their efforts to present a comprehensive view of history within the city borders. This focus within contemporary municipal borders is additionally troubling in Shinano province because of the patch-work of territories that made up its geography in early modern Japan. For more on the problems of this from the perspective of Japanese Folklore Studies, see Scott Schnell and Hiroyuki Hashimoto, “Guest Editors’ Introduction: Revitalizing Japanese Folklore,” Asian Folklore Studies 62, no. 2 (2003): 185–94.

36 Some notable examples include work on the history of Izumi City. The books in this series are organized around historically independent areas rather than the contemporary municipality. Izumishishi hensan iinkai, ed., Matsuodani no rekishi to Matsuoji 松尾谷の歴史と松尾寺 (Izumi; Tokyo: Izumishi Gyosei (Hatsubai), 2008); Izumishishi Hensan Iinkai, ed., Yokoyama to Makio-san no rekishi 横山と槇尾山の歴史 (Izumi; Tokyo: Izumishi Gyosei (Hatsubai), 2005).

Another concern has been authorial identity in archival documents. In many documents, the actions of individuals are mostly obscured. The documents often refer to all people in an institution simply by saying “Daihongan did…” Though I have made many efforts to determine who has performed an action, there are instances where I follow the suit of these documents and refer to the activities of the abbesses, nuns, and administrators collectively using the name of their temples such as Aoyama Zenkōji, Wakōji, Daihongan, and so on. For many modern speakers of English, a temple performing actions such as petitioning officials may seem odd. However, despite the incongruity this produces, it is fitting because most of the documents I cite treat the temple as an entity—the documents are signed “Aoyama Zenkōji” or “Daihongan,” or were signed by a representative of the temple group, usually an administrator or the abbess.

Additionally, in this dissertation I examine some events that occurred as early as the latter half of the Warring States Period (c. 1467–c. 1603), and others which occurred as late as the Allied Occupation of Japan following World War II, a period of almost five hundred years. However, the main focus of my dissertation is on the period from the mid-seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries. There are several methodological and theoretical reasons behind my choice of the “long eighteenth century.”

First, I have chosen this period of time because it has, until recent years, been one of the most overlooked periods in English and Japanese language treatments of the Edo period. A number of works have, of course, broadly examined the period as a whole. Others have, however, chosen to focus on the social and cultural transformations from the rise of the so-called unifiers (Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa
Ieyasu) in the late 1500s until the death of the third Tokugawa shogun, Iemitsu, in 1651, describing this period as a “formative” one which set the tone for the whole of the early modern period. Focusing on this period as formative does highlight the continuities with the past and the changes—those actualized, those idealized but not completely implemented, and those only conceptualized—the ruling classes brought about. And yet this treatment of this early part of the period as formative has had the effect of reifying it, even though quite a few things remained in flux throughout the period, as we will see.

Others have chosen to focus on the last half of the nineteenth century, discussing the violent transformations that occurred during the transition from the end of Tokugawa Bakufu rule to the implementation of a modern state modeled in large part on western countries.

Second, and more practically, is the limitation of sources. Because of the fires and other disasters that plagued Zenkōji Town from the 1500s until the current main hall was completed in 1707, material culture and documentary evidence for the site is limited to vital materials, such as Ieyasu’s Land Grant (shuinjō 朱印状) to the temple from 1601, or copies of original documents cited in newer ones. This lacuna most severely restricts our understanding of events immediately following the return of the temple’s Amida icon.

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38 Zenkōji Town Zenkōji machi 善光寺町 was the trading and pilgrimage town that formed at the gates of Zenkōji temple. It was comprised of neighborhoods under different authorities, from Zenkōji itself, the bakufu, and the Matsushiro domain. For more on the history and development of Zenkōji Town, see Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究; Tawada Masayasu 多和田雅保, “Kinsei Zenkōji Machi no bunsetsu kōzō 近世善光寺町の分節構造,” Nenpō toshi shi kenkyū 8 toshi shakai no bunsetsu kōzō 年報都市史研究 8 都市社会の分節構造, 2000, 14–23; Tawada Masayasu 多和田雅保, “Shūkyō toshi Zenkōji 宗教都市・善光寺,” in Toshi shakai shi 都市社会史, Shin Taikei Nihonshi 新体系日本史 6 (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2001), 316–19.
to Shinano in 1598, with the situation becoming somewhat clearer by the 1640s. Of course, particular events were more likely to leave their marks on the historic record: the lawsuits between Daihongan and Daikanjin have, for the most part, remained etched upon the history of the site through conscientious preservation of the original suits and the rulings of the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the copious citation of the results of previous suits in later ones, and the focus of modern and contemporary historians on these suits.  

39 These suits remained fresh in the minds of Japanese in the 1950s. Even the 4/3/1955 Asahi Graph magazine article on Takatsukasa Seigyoku’s ordination included a discussion of them and questioned if the precarious balance between the two administrative sub-temples would last.
Chapter 1. Conflicts and Compromises: Daihongan and Daikanjin within Zenkōji

I joined the temple two years ago, in eleventh month of the Year of the Rat (1684). For this reason, I knew nothing about the way of receiving the vermilion seal [land grant] previously. I had heard about it from various places, but this was all hearsay and nothing that was based on reliable evidence. My predecessor argued that he should go alone to receive the vermilion seal [grant]. When he came into conflict with the current abbess of [Dai]hongan, they were both called before the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, it was said to be this way. I heard the details from [the abbess of Dai]hongan. Our monks have kept every vermilion seal [grant]. The original land grant by the Gongen [Tokugawa Ieyasu] has been addressed to [Daikanjin’s] monks alone. That is all.¹

In the 1680s, a fight erupted between the nuns of Daihongan and the monks of Daikanjin over the right to receive a new copy of the vermilion seal land grant from Tokugawa Tsunayoshi. Jūki 重僖, the head of Daikanjin from 1680–1684, claimed that monks from Daikanjin alone had the honor of receiving this since the early years of the period, while Seiden, the head of Daihongan, claimed that previously the nuns had received it with the monks. The Magistrate of Temples and Shrines sided with the monks. However, the exact details of the suit and the precedent for receiving the vermilion seal grant were lost by the time Gakkai 学海 (abbot 1684–1689), Jūki’s successor, took office in 1684. He had only heard rumors about the procedure and the conflict, so he approached Abbess Seiden for more information.

¹ Daikanjin 1 n.d., Nagano City Public Archives 長野市立公文書館 fuku 2 1165.008.
The 1680s fight between Daihongan and Daikanjin was not the first conflict of the early modern period, nor would it be the last. I chose to begin this short chapter on Daihongan’s place in Zenkōji for a few reasons with this example for a few reasons. First, is to demonstrate that even though the nuns had a tumultuous relationship with Daikanjin’s monks that extended over a three-hundred-year period from the middle of the seventeenth century to World War II, they were not always fighting. Even in the midst of arguments, the leaders of these two institutions could work together for the good of the Zenkōji temple complex. Additionally, conflict was not the default relationship between these two. They pursued legal action against each other when they felt that their rights were being impinged upon, as we see in this case and in the ones below, or when one felt it could gain an advantage over the other, as I will show at the end of this chapter. They sought legal adjudication when they could not reach an agreement on their own. They did not settle these conflicts through violent means, as other conflicting institutions had in earlier periods because the rulers of the Warring States Period had limited the settlement of conflicts between religious institutions to legal channels. Several scholars have focused on these conflicts, but in so doing, have created an image of the two always fighting, which was simply not the case, as I hope the above anecdote demonstrates.

In this brief informational chapter, I will briefly introduce the history of Zenkōji temple with an emphasis on the place of Daihongan’s nuns in the temple complex. This is accomplished, in part, by discussing the relationship between Daihongan and Daikanjin, the two administrative heads of the temple complex. I will show how Daihongan started out as a part of the temple complex, but as time passed the nuns’ administrative and ritual rights within the temple complex were slowly stripped away by Daikanjin’s monks and
their supporters at Kan’ei-ji. As a result of this, and because the nuns increasingly lived away from Shinano, the nuns gradually became a part of and yet apart from the Zenkō-ji temple complex. This condition continued until the end of the early modern period when Daihongan’s abbess at that time, Seien, took advantage of the changing political and legal climate to gain ritual and administrative rights within the complex again, something I will discuss in more detail below.

After discussing the history of Zenkō-ji and Daihongan, I introduce the key figures in Daihongan. These include the abbesses, senior nuns, nuns, administrators, and servants. Daihongan’s history and its personnel is important to understand the thematic chapters that follow.

I. The Legends and History of Zenkō-ji
The origins of Zenkō-ji are unclear. Legends trace the temple’s main icon, a triad with the Amida (Skt. Amitābha) Buddha flanked by the bodhisattvas Kannon (Skt. Avalokiteśvara) and Seishi (Skt. Mahāsthāmaprāpta), to India during the lifetime of the historical Buddha. These legends state that the icon traveled to the Korean Peninsula, and was eventually sent to Japan where it became the first Buddhist image in 552 CE.¹

Warring factions threw this Amida icon into a body of water near what is now Osaka. It flew out onto the back of a man named Honda Yoshimitsu 本田善光 who took it back to his house in southern Shinano Province (what is now Nagano Prefecture).

After this, Yoshimitsu’s son Yoshisuke died, so Yoshimitsu prayed to the icon to save his son. The icon traveled to hell and successfully negotiated Yoshisuke’s release

¹ This differs, of course, from the account in one of Japan’s early dynastic histories, the Nihon shoki, that states that the first Buddhist image was a Śākyamuni Buddha image.
with its ruler, King Emma. On the way out of hell, Yoshisuke saw a woman being
dragged down. He asked the icon to save the woman, who turned out to be Empress
Kōgyoku 皇極天皇 (594–661, r. 642–645, 655–661 as Saimei). After being rescued in
this way, Kōgyoku ordered that the Hondas be given land in northern Shinano province
on which they were to build a temple for the Amida icon. Additionally, she placed the
Hondas in charge of the temple. It was named Zenkōji, which is written using the same
Chinese characters to write “Yoshimitsu.” These legends thus place the founding of
Zenkōji in the seventh century.

It is harder to trace its origins historically, however. Tiles recovered from the area
indicate that there was some type of structure in the area in the sixth or seventh century.
The temple first appears in historical documents in 1114.² It had become prominent
enough that its destruction in 1179 was mentioned in the Tale of the Heike and its
rebuilding was sponsored by the Minamoto and Hōjō families who were the leaders of
the Kamakura Shogunate.³ Zenkōji retained this place of local, regional, and national
prominence throughout the ages, even when its icon was removed in the sixteenth century
by competing warlords (See Chapter 4). It has been, and continues to be, a major
pilgrimage destination associated with both this- and other-worldly benefits and Amida’s
Pure Land. It is also associated with an openness to both men and women, rich and poor,
and people of all sectarian affiliations. This stems, in part, from the salvific actions of its

² The Chūyūki diary of Fujiwara Munetada. McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 34.
³ Chapter 2, section 14, where its destruction is listed as a portent of the fall of the Taira clan: “In
all the more than five hundred and eighty years since [Zenkōji’s founding], there had never been a fire
there. We are told that the end of the secular law is preceded by the destruction of the Buddhist Law.
Perhaps that is why people said, ‘Might all this destruction of holy temples and sacred mountains portend
the fall of the Heike?’” Helen McCullough, trans., The Tale of the Heike (Stanford: Stanford University
icon who rescued both men and women, and in part from the fact that Zenkōji’s main hall has no sectarian affiliation. Within the temple complex there are temples affiliated with the Tendai and Pure Land sects that all share the temple complex’s ritual space. In the past the situation was even more complicated. In addition to the above Buddhist schools, there were also temples affiliated with the Ji and Shingon schools and legends associated with founders of others such as Shinran, the founder of the True Pure Land school.

II. The Legends and History of Daihongan
The origins of Daihongan are similarly shrouded in legends and cloaked by the mists of time. Convent legends trace its genealogy back to founding of Zenkōji itself. Historical documents mention Daihongan, or Hongan, as a part of Zenkōji only as far back as the sixteenth century, when nuns followed the Amida triad as it was taken to Kai Province (current day Yamanashi Prefecture) by Takeda Shingen. I mention this not to call into question Daihongan’s genealogy or its legends, but rather to indicate the difficulty in discussing the origins of the convent or even its history prior to the late sixteenth century.

A copy of Daihongan’s genealogy (yuisho 由緒) from 1733.6 links the founding of the convent to the origins of Zenkōji temple itself. According the genealogy, after Honda Yoshimitsu and Yoshisuke saved Empress Kōgyoku, the empress wished to take the tonsure, but she found it difficult to give up her office, so she made Soga no Umako’s daughter take the tonsure under the title of “hongan” and placed her as the founding shōnin of Zenkōji. Because of this, [her successors] are known as Daihongan’s shōnin. Because of the ancient precedent set by the founding shōnin, her various successors have visited the imperial palace, offered praise to the emperor, and received the imperial order (rinji 綸旨) declaring them...
to be “such-and-such shōnin,” and so have been abbesses (jūshoku 住職) [of Daihongan] with imperial permission.4

This origin story does several things. It links Daihongan’s origins to the founding of Zenkōji itself. It connects Daihongan and its abbesses to prominent supporters of Buddhism such as Empress Kōgyoku and Grand Minister Soga no Umako (551?–626), who fought the Mononobe clan in a civil war supposedly over the role of Buddhism in Japan. Umako also was supposedly behind the ordination of Japan’s first nuns.5 Furthermore, it sets the precedent for Daihongan’s abbesses visiting the imperial palace and receiving their title and robes of office at the time of the founding of the convent itself. Temple documents from the early Meiji period (1868–1912) claim that Daihongan’s abbesses continued to visit the imperial palace in person until the Onin War (1467–1477), and that this was only reinstated in 1598, when Abbess Chikei revived the tradition of receiving permission directly, as I describe in Chapter 4.6 From this we can see that Daihongan traces its origins to this founding abbess in the 640s who was given the ordination name Sonkō 尊光. According to the convent’s reckoning, the current abbess, Takatsukasa Seigyoku, is the 121st abbess of Daihongan.7

However, there are several reasons to doubt the auspicious origins detailed in Daihongan’s genealogy. For example, the first historical evidence for Daihongan and its

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5 For an excellent discussion of the ordination of Japan’s first nuns, see Ambros, Women in Japanese Religions, 40–45.
6 See for instance, the petition submitted to the Meiji government by the Matsushiro clan on behalf of Daihongan in the first year of the Meiji period. This can be found in Zenkōji kenkyūkai 善光寺史研究会, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究, 365–368.
7 Kai no kuni shi cited in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 280.
abbesses dates to the sixteenth century. Furthermore, the *Kai no kuni shi* 『甲斐国志』, written in the nineteenth century, which describes the period in which Zenkōji’s icon and personnel from Zenkōji lived in Kai province, states that Daihongan’s Warring States period abbesses, Chijō, Chisei, and Chikei, which are according to Daihongan’s current documents are the 107th, 108th, and 109th abbesses are the 37th, 38th, and 39th abbesses. If the genealogical numbers in *Kai no kuni shi* are correct, then Daihongan’s history would only extend back to around the tenth century. Of course, there is no indication that either of these are correct or incorrect. Throughout this study I will follow Daihongan’s contemporary numbering of abbesses for ease of comparison with Daihongan’s publications.

This dissertation clarifies the changing position of Daihongan’s nuns in the Zenkōji temple complex in the early modern (and to a limited extent, modern) period. We will also see their position within Japanese society during these periods as well. The case of Daihongan is particularly interesting from the standpoint of the history of Japanese Buddhist nuns. Zenkōji was the only temple in Japan where male and female Buddhist monastics shared ritual space and administrative duties. Zenkōji thus provides a prime opportunity to examine the interaction between male and female Buddhist monastics.

**III. Daihongan within Zenkōji**

The relationship between Daihongan and the other sub-temples of Zenkōji varied throughout history. In the middle of the sixteenth century, “Hongan” nuns and its abbess were in charge of fundraising for the temple complex when it was located in Kai Province for almost forty years (See Chapter 4), while a separate group of male monastics...
monastics were in charge of ritual activities in the temple’s main hall. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi ordered that the icon be returned to Shinano in 1598, Chikei, the abbess of Daihongan at the time accompanied it.

After returning to Shinano, Zenkōji’s monks and nuns began to rebuild Zenkōji. Both Toyotomi Hideyori (Hideyoshi’s son) and Tokugawa Ieyasu supported their rebuilding efforts. Hideyori is said to have awarded the temple a 1000 koku land grant in 1598, and Tokugawa Ieyasu reconfirmed this grant in 1601. We can understand the roles and positions of the various sub-temples within Zenkōji prior to the 1640s from a document outlining the division of the yearly tax rice from its temple lands. Of the 1000 koku of annual tax rice, the monks of Daikanjin received 490 per year, Daihongan received 236, and the remaining 274 koku was split unevenly amongst the smaller Tendai, Pure Land, and Ji school sub-temples. Daikanjin received 100 koku of their 490 koku directly, while another 240 koku was for votive candles and Buddhist offerings, suggesting that Daikanjin administered the day-to-day rituals within the Zenkōji temple complex. In contrast, Daihongan received 50 koku directly and an additional 36 koku each year for hiring carpenters. Both sub-temples split an additional 300 koku for temple maintenance, suggesting that both temples were to pay for such repairs equally. Donald McCallum has suggested that Daihongan’s smaller share of the temple complex’s yearly

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10 The other groups of sub-temples split the remaining 274 koku unevenly: the 21 Tendai temples called collectively Shūto received 168, the 15 Pure Land temples of the Nakashū received 75, and the 10 (at this point in time) Ji School temples of the Tsumado got just 31 koku.
tax rice is “a clear indication of lesser status” in comparison to Daikanjin. However, the roles and statuses of the two main sub-temples appear to have been vaguely delineated in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Daihongan and Daikanjin’s roles become more clearly defined in 1642 following a suit brought before the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. The two sub-temples had jointly decided to rebuild Zenkōji’s main hall, which had burnt down that year, but they had begun arguing about their respective roles. Daihongan stated that though “they had been in charge of the whole process of reconstructing the temple from the distant past, now Daikanjin was causing difficulties by unjustly asserting that they be allowed to help.” Daikanjin countered by stating that “though both temples had worked together to rebuild the main hall in the past, this time Daihongan was causing difficulties by arguing that they alone should be in charge of the construction.” The Magistrate of Temples and Shrines ruled in favor of Daikanjin, and decided in the eleventh month of 1642 that both temples should split building responsibilities because they both divided 300 koku yearly for building maintenance.

This was a simple solution to the issue, based largely upon the precedent set when the temple lands were divided. However, the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines did not stop here. They continued with two more points concerning administration of Zenkōji and the temple’s lands. They stated that first, “because Daihongan is a convent, the

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11 McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 168.
12 This document can be found in Nagano kenshi kankōkai, Nagano kenshi, 1971, 7-1:672; Nagano shishi hensan inkai, Nagano shishi 長野市誌 (Nagano: Nagano-shi, 1997), 175; Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenshū, 802–803.
13 Ibid.
various duties associated with the outside [running of the temple] will be handled by [the monks of] Daikanjin after consulting with [Daihongan].”\textsuperscript{14} Second, “because Daihongan is a convent, the rule of the townspeople and peasants living on Zenkōji’s 1000 \textit{koku} of temple lands will be handled by Daikanjin after consulting with [Daihongan].”\textsuperscript{15} These statements, which were used in most of the later lawsuits between the two sub-temples up until the first years of the Meiji Period, severely limited the role of Daihongan’s nuns in Zenkōji by removing the nuns from direct administrative roles in the temple complex and its lands.

The abbess at that time, Chiden 智伝 (abbess 1630–1672) was unhappy with the results of this suit. Furthermore, she became frustrated at the way that Daikanjin had come to handle things after they were given administrative control of Zenkōji’s temple complex. She sent another suit to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines in the second month of the following year (1643). In it she argues that since the Magistrate’s ruling the previous year Daikanjin had been “ignoring the Magistrate’s ruling, violating precedents, and causing difficulties by acting selfishly in all things.”\textsuperscript{16} Her statements are divided into administrative and ritual complaints. First, Daikanjin was not allowing Daihongan to be involved in the planning of the replacement main hall nor did it allow Daihongan to pay half of the construction costs. Furthermore, in contrast with the past, Daikanjin was not passing on Daihongan’s share of the yearly tax rice. Additionally, they “arrogantly” used the Magistrate’s ruling that control of the temple and its lands was to reside with

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.} The clause states 「万表役之義本願尼之事候間、相談之上大勧進可相勤事」.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}
Daikanjin to force the various sub-temples, including Daihongan, into agreeing to a list of rules, and to single-handedly make decisions when in the past they were made in consultation with Daihongan. Finally, in terms of rituals, Daihongan had been left out of various rituals within the temple complex such as the winter cleaning of the main hall or New Year’s festivities; furthermore, Daikanjin had begun performing rituals in front of Zenkōji’s icon without regard for the other sub-temples.\(^{17}\) While Chiden does not openly argue against the Magistrate’s reasoning that Daikanjin should take the lead within the temple complex “because [Daihongan] is a convent,” she does argue against the strong (“arrogant”) central position that Daikanjin had taken since the ruling and the loss of administrative and ritual involvement that meant for Daihongan. Unfortunately, the Magistrate’s response to this has not survived.

The results of the Magistrate’s ruling were further solidified in the seventh month of that year, when Zenkōji was made a branch temple of Kan’ejī (more on this in Chapter 3).\(^ {18}\) Kan’ejī and Daikanjin issued rules for the inside of Zenkōji’s temple complex. However, the nuns of Daihongan are not mentioned once in these rules. These regulated the day-to-day running of the temple, its ritual performances, and the interactions between the various sub-temples, so Daihongan’s absence in them could have effectively removed the nuns from Zenkōji’s administrative and ritual life.

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\(^{17}\) This reads: Nyorai mae kuyō usuku makarinari sōrō 如來前くくやうすく罷成候. Ibid., 7–1:674.

\(^{18}\) Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 803–804.
In 1740, Kan’ei, backed by the Tokugawa shogunate, issued a statement that placed Daihongan under its authority. The abbess of the time, Seikō (abbess from 1732–1752), fought against this change, arguing in a petition to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines that though Daihongan had been without a head temple, “many things were unclear because it was a convent,” so it had recently requested in secret that it be under the control of the powerful Pure Land temple Zōjōji. Because “sectarian identity (shūmon 宗門) is particularly important,” Seikō requested that if Daihongan was to be made into a branch of another temple, the shogunate allow it to be under the control of Zōjōji, a temple with which it already had some relations. Her request was ultimately denied, and Daihongan was placed under Kan’ei’s control, though it was to remain a Pure Land temple.

Becoming a branch of Kan’ei changed many things for Daihongan, which had until that point been “without a head temple” (muhonji 無本寺), as many convents of the time were. This altered Daihongan’s status administratively and within the larger temple hierarchy. Afterwards, the convent had to seek Kan’ei’s preapproval for many activities, including fundraising and lawsuits, before those requests could be forwarded to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines for final approval, for instance. This had the (perhaps intended) effect of cutting down the number of suits between Daihongan and

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19 The statements and petitions mentioned in this paragraph are quoted in full in Zenkōjishi kenkyūkai 善光寺史研究会, ed., Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究 (Nagano: Kōyūshinpōsha, 1922), 317–321.
20 This is apparent in documents such as the Bugen kakiage chō discussed above. Daihongan 1 n.d., Nagano City Public Archives 長野市立公文書館 fuku 2 1149.029.
21 This statement was made within a yuisho written by Chizen to protest Daikanjin’s attempts to reduce Daihongan’s place within Zenkōji. Cited in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究, 296.
Daikanjin. Since both of them became branches of Kan’ei-ji, the Tendai head temple could settle matters before they could be forwarded to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. This reduced the amount of work for the Magistrate, even if only by a little bit. Additionally, it meant that Daihongan and Daikanjin could return to their ritual duties to the shogunate since they were no longer busy pursuing litigation against each other.\(^\text{22}\)

The nuns of Daihongan fought against these incursions onto their perceived rights whenever possible. We would be remiss, however, in describing these acts as resistance to the patriarchy. Daikanjin’s monks were men, as were the Magistrates who handed down rulings. However, Daihongan’s suits and countersuits did not directly challenge the assumption that men would administer Zenkō-ji and its lands. In the example above, Chiden did not fight against the Magistrate’s ruling that “because Daihongan is a convent, administration of Zenkō-ji’s lands would be handled by Daikanjin.” Instead, she argued against Daikanjin’s continued incursion into what Daihongan’s nuns perceived as their rights. We can only speculate why she did not argue against statements such as these; perhaps she felt that it would not help Daihongan’s case to do so. In any case, participation in these suits and countersuits was not an unusual event. Buddhist clergy regularly turned to litigation to protect (or increase) their rights or property in the early

\(^{22}\) This is similar to the ways that retired emperor Fushimi ordered a reconciliation between rival lineages within the Tendai temple complex of Shōren’in because they had “neglected their ritual practices and, through their repeated suits, contributed to the decline of the doctrinal school (Tendai), the cloister itself, and the Buddha Dharma.” Brian Ruppert, “Buddhism and Law in Japan,” in Buddhism and Law: An Introduction, by Rebecca Redwood French and Mark A Nathan (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 283.
Indeed, Daihongan’s nuns were simply turning to the only means of resolving disputes available to the clergy in the early modern period.

Daihongan’s position within Zenkōji in the early modern period can thus be summed up as gradual stripping away of rights for its nuns. In the first half of the period, roughly from 1640 until 1740, Daihongan’s nuns faced an overall gradual reduction in rights within the temple complex. They did manage to keep some rights, such as the right to be involved with the construction of the main hall and certain temple structures. Other rights they lost, regained, and lost again, such as administrative control over the fifteen Pure Land sub-temples in the complex. Other rights were gradually stripped away, such as ritual rights within Zenkōji’s main hall, where they were relegated to what amounted to a visitor’s position during major rituals, and were not allowed to schedule their own independent rites. These reductions in administrative and ritual rights at Zenkōji were not reflected in the convent’s activities in its jointly held branch temple (kentaijō 兼帯所) of Yanaka/Aoyama Zenkōji (as we will see in Chapter 3), where the nuns had much more freedom. In fact, in the last half of the early modern period, Daihongan’s nuns spent much of their time at this branch in Edo instead of in Shinano. Daihongan was thus a part of and yet apart from the Zenkōji temple complex. The reductions in rights made during the first half of the period largely remained the status quo throughout the last half of the period, until Abbess Seien began challenging Daikanjin’s position once the nascent

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23 For example, Vesey highlights the conflicts over positioning within the head-branch temple system. Alexander Vesey, “The Buddhist Clergy and Village Society in Early Modern Japan” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 2003), 131–136.

24 This has caused some scholars to hypothesize that the nuns stayed in Aoyama Zenkōji because of the restrictions they faced at Zenkōji. More on this in Chapter 3.
Meiji Government introduced legal and social changes after 1868. I will take up these challenges and the changes at Zenkōji after 1868 in section V below.

IV. People affiliated with Daihongan and Edo Zenkōji
As with many other mid- to large-sized Buddhist institutions in the early modern period, Daihongan and its branch in Edo was comprised of different strata of people. Without these people—their roles and interactions—the convent could not have functioned on a day-to-day basis. Indeed, as we saw following Chikan’s death, the convent’s personnel played a vital role. These people were also key to its functioning when faced with difficult times. In some cases, as we will see in Chapter 5, the actions of one of these administrators caused difficulties for the convent. As many of these figures will appear throughout the pages of this study, I will introduce them briefly here.

A. Abbess
Daihongan’s abbess occupied the highest position within Daihongan and its Edo branch temple. Throughout this work I have most often referred to the women who held this post as “abbess,” focusing more upon the position they held than upon their actual title, which is shōnin 上人 in Japanese or “saint” or “eminent person” when translated into English. I also use the English translation (favoring eminent person over saint) or Japanese when they are important elements in a document I am discussing. This title was one of Japanese Buddhism’s highest appellations. An additional indication of their prestige was that these women were allowed to wear the imperially sanctioned purple robes. The heads of only two other convents were granted this title and the ability to wear
these robes. Though using the English word “abbess” throughout this dissertation obscures the prestige this title accorded these women and their convent, and it has the additional meanings in English associated with Christian women religious, the simplicity brought by using “abbess” outweighs any potential downfalls.

Table 1-1: Daihongan’s Early Modern and Modern Abbesses and Successors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Tonsure, Tenure as Abbess, Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Chijō 智浄</td>
<td>? (?–1564)</td>
<td>Abbess of Kai Zenkōji and Daihongan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Chisei 智誓</td>
<td>?, 1564–1588</td>
<td>Abbess of Kai Zenkōji and Daihongan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Chikei 智慶</td>
<td>?, 1588–1612</td>
<td>Abbess of Kai Zenkōji, Daihongan, and Yanaka Zenkōji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Seishin 誓信・清信</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Abbess of Daihongan and Yanaka Zenkōji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Chiden 智伝</td>
<td>?, 1630–1672</td>
<td>Abbess of Daihongan and Yanaka Zenkōji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Seiden 誓伝</td>
<td>?, 1672–1698</td>
<td>Abbess of Daihongan and Yanaka Zenkōji, 1698–1734 as retired abbess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Chizen 智善</td>
<td>Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu’s daughter (Debated)</td>
<td>Abbess of Daihongan and Yanaka/Aoyama Zenkōji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Seikō 誓興</td>
<td>Matsudaira Yorisada 平平貞 (1664–1744), head of the Moriyama Domain’s daughter?</td>
<td>Abbess of Daihongan and Aoyama Zenkōji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Chikan 智観</td>
<td>Daughter of Nagai Naozane 永井直季, second son of Nagai Naoen, head of the Yamatoshinjō domain</td>
<td>Abbess of Daihongan and Aoyama Zenkōji</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 The other convents were Keikōin in Ise and Seiganji in Owari Province. Ushiyama Yoshiyuki, “Buddhist Convents in Medieval Japan,” 151.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Courtier Family</th>
<th>Born/Died</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Chishō</td>
<td>Daughter of Nakamikado Muneyoshi</td>
<td>26th head of the Nakamikado (Matsuki) courtier family</td>
<td>1782? born, 1790.10.15 tonsure, 1790–1836 abbess of Daihongan and Aoyama Zenkōji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Chihō</td>
<td>Daughter of Nijō Harutaka</td>
<td>head of the Nijō courtier family</td>
<td>1804? born, 1811 entered temple, 1812 took tonsure, 1817 died (aged 13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Kajuji Jōgon</td>
<td>Daughter of Imperial Prince Fushimi no miya Kunie</td>
<td>伏見宮邦家, adopted into Koga Michiaki 久我通明’s household in 1875 after order that people from imperial family could not be priests or nuns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Ichijō Chikō</td>
<td>Daughter of Ogura Hidesue</td>
<td>head of the Ogura courtier family</td>
<td>10/27/1877 born, 1913 enter temple, 1933 became assistant abbess, 1961–1997 abbess of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 Seijun died on the 6th, but her death was not made public until the next day. It is recorded on her grave as the 7th. Takatsukasa Seigyoku, Shinshitō Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智觀上人, 99.
Not much is known about the family backgrounds of Daihongan’s earlier abbesses, but the origins of those following Chizen 智善, who was abbess from 1698–1727, are well documented. Although Chizen was supposedly the daughter of Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu, a domainal lord and one of the chief advisors to Shogun Tsunayoshi, there are no records of her in Yanagisawa family documents. One of Yoshiyasu’s daughters, Sachi さち (1693.10.21–1695.2.14), took the tonsure and ordination name of Ekisen 易仙 to become a student of Daihongan’s Abbess Seiden on 1694.5.16. Ekisen died shortly thereafter, however.27 The two abbesses following Chizen came from the families of domainal lords.28 From the 1770s, however, there was a shift in the origins of Daihongan’s abbess from warrior families to courtier ones, and abbesses (or successors who died early) came from the Asukai family and the Nakamikado family. It is debatable whether an abbess from a warrior or courtier household brought Daihongan more prestige; what is clear, however, is that warrior households were better able to provide financial and administrative support to Daihongan’s abbesses, as we will

27 Sachi’s mother was Iizuka Some. References to this can be found in the Yanagisawa genealogy in Ogimachi Machiko 正親町町子, Matsukage niki 松蔭日記 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004), 516–517. Thanks to Gaye Rowley for bringing this connection to my attention!

28 Seikō (1732-1752) was Matsudaira Yorisada’s (Head of Moriyama Han, 20000 koku) daughter and Chikan (1753-1790) came from the Nagai family (36000 koku).
see in the chapters that follow. The final abbess of the early modern period was Seien (abbess 1837–1910), who was the daughter of Imperial Prince Fushiminomiya Kuniie. All of the abbesses of the modern period have come from extremely high-ranking courtier families.

The typical career of an abbess was as follows. First, the current abbess or the senior nuns looked for a suitable young woman from amongst the courtier or warrior families in her/their networks. In some cases, this meant sending a request for a successor to the elders of Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle as we saw with Abbess Chishō in the Introduction. In other cases, the abbess put in requests from amongst her other contacts: Abbess Chikan found Seijun, who passed away before becoming abbess, through her own familial connections, while Chishō found Seien through connections she made while studying lute music. The temple then contacted these families, made a contract, and offered them monetary gifts if they accepted the temple’s request. After the successor entered the temple she took the tonsure, usually from the abbess, and received training by performing rituals with the abbess, accompanying her to Edo castle, and so on. Successors were usually chosen and entered the temple at a very young age: Chikan at ten, Seijun eight, Chishō eight, Chihō seven, and Seien five. If the successor lived long enough she could replace the current abbess when she retired or passed away.

29 In some cases these gifts were called yuinō 結納, which was also the term used for betrothal gifts. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 194–195.
30 Abbess Ichijō was the last abbess to enter the convent at a young age (16). The current abbess of Daihongan, Takatsukasa, entered when she was in her twenties. That a mature woman joined the convent in the 1950s caused a minor media frenzy, as I discuss in Matthew S. Mitchell, “Going with the Flow and yet Controlling the Flow: The Early Life, Education, and Scholarship of Takatsukasa Seigyoku, Current Abbess of Zenkōji’s Daihongan Convent,” International Journal of Dharma Studies 4, no. 1 (2016): 1–23.
When this happened, notification regarding the death or retirement of the previous abbess and the installation of her replacement was sent to the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle, bureaucratic offices within the shogunate, various domainal lords and courtier households, and other temples. Additionally, a temple administrator was sent to the imperial court to receive permission for the new abbess to be called an “eminent person” and wear imperially sanctioned purple robes indicating her high status. She was required to travel there personally at a later date to offer thanks (see Chapter 4). At some point this new abbess would begin looking for her own successor, thus repeating the cycle. From the abbesses’ lives, we can see the level of connection with both their previous families, and the ways that connections with other temples, the shogunate, the Inner Quarters, and the imperial court helped Daihongan develop and maintain a certain position in early modern society, topics which will be developed further throughout this dissertation.

B. Senior Nuns

In addition to the abbess, there were two senior nuns (rōni 老尼 or 藤尼) at Daihongan. Many of these nuns received permission to wear different colored robes, especially during rituals or processions, reflective of their higher status. For example, in 1844, the senior nun Bonjō 梵定 was given permission to wear ocher yellow robes (mokuranjiki 木蘭色). These nuns handled minor administrative affairs in the temple when there was an abbess who was of age. During times when there was no abbess—such as before Chikan was chosen to replace Seikō or before Chishō was chosen to replace Chikan—or before the abbess had come of age, these nuns would split control of

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31 Daihongan fuku 2 68.117.
temple affairs with the male temple administrators. For instance, Chishō was only in her ninth year when she became abbess. Until she came of age when she entered her fourteenth year, the senior nuns Hōzen and Gyokusen as well as the temple administrator Karasawa Hikotayū would administer the temple as indicated in this document:

Now, because the abbess is still young, we will handle many things around her.
Item: We stated\(^\text{32}\) that while [the abbess] is young and until she is able to give instructions on her own, administration of the various affairs of the convent would be handled according to the opinions of [Karasawa] Hikodayū since his family has been administrator to the convent for many generations. Because of this, [servants and other administrators,] please consult with Hikodayū on all matters and receive his instructions.
Item: The two of us [senior nuns] will consult with each other concerning the various inner workings of the temple. Aside from those, you [servants and administrators] should receive instruction regarding various financial matters from Hikodayū when he is here [in Aoyama] and from the replacement administrator (\(\text{rusuiyaku 留守居役}\)) when Hikodayū is in Shinano.
Item: Incoming finances will be stamped by both of us [senior nuns] before being given to the replacement administrator.
Item: Use of funds must be stamped by both of us, and then submitted to the replacement administrator to check the accounting.
Item: Control of the lower ranking nuns near the abbess (\(\text{sobani 側尼}\)) is to be done by both of us in consultation with each other.

The above was made in consultation with [the Nagai family, previous abbess Chikan’s natal family] in Kōjimachi.\(^\text{33}\)

Therefore, while Chishō was young, convent administration was jointly controlled by a convent administrator and the two senior nuns, in a similar way that a regent would handle affairs for a young sovereign. The convent administrators were to handle the outside running of the convent with the approval of Karasawa. These duties would have

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\(^{32}\) This refers to a statement that “because the abbess is young, Hōzen and Gyokusen will have control, while control over the temple itself will fall to the hereditary temple samurai Karasawa.” This was decided on 1790.11.17 by the senior nuns Hōzen and Gyokusen, along with the temple samurai Karasawa Hikotayū, Yoshimura, Kurata, Yano, and so on. Cited in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 203.

\(^{33}\) Cited in full in ibid.
included dealing with the affairs of the town at the temple gates (monzen machi or monzen chō 門前町), convent servants, and laborers or delivery people from outside the convent. They also handled finances, though these required approval by the senior nuns and checking by either Karasawa or the replacement administrator. On the other hand, the senior nuns took care of the inner workings of the convent, including its rituals, sending requests to various locations such as Edo castle, and being in charge of the lower ranking nuns of the convent. We can also assume that in Chikan and Chishō’s cases, where their predecessors had passed away prior to the young girls’ arrival to the temple, the senior nuns also imparted their knowledge of temple ritual and administration to their young wards.

C. Nuns

The term “nun” is used here as a translation of the Japanese word ama/ni 尼, bikuni 比丘尼, or nisō 尼僧. As seen in this excerpt from travel regulations from 1661, however, there were a number of words that could mean “nun,” and many of these also could be used to describe other types of women:

Item: If a woman is the widow or sister of a person of high rank and has her head shaven, this must be indicated [in her travel pass] by the term zenni 禪尼.
Item: If a commoner woman has a shaven head, this must be indicated by the term ama 尼.
Item: If a woman is an attendant of the abbesses at Ise or Zenkōji or a maid servant of a widow of high rank, or a Kumano bikuni, this must be indicated by the term bikuni 比丘尼.34

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34 This has appeared in a number of sources. In English, the item about bikuni has appeared mistranslated as “if a woman is an attendant of priests at Ise or Zenkō-ji” in Vaporis and the translation of Shiba Keiko’s work. If we examine the Japanese, however, it is clear that this is a discussion about the attendants of the female shōnin of these places, not the monks affiliated with them. I discuss this in further detail in Chapter 4. Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, Breaking Barriers: Travel and the State in Early Modern Japan, Harvard East Asian Monographs 163 (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1994), 155–156; Keiko Shiba, Literary creations on the road: women’s travel diaries in Early Modern Japan / Shiba Keiko ; translated with notes by Motoko Ezaki. (Lanham, MD: University
In the pages that follow, I attempt to keep some of this fluidity in the terminology by following the lead of my source materials. In most cases, though, when I write “nun” below, I am using it to indicate one of the ordained women affiliated with Daihongan or another convent. If it is clear from the source material that one of the terms above is being used to refer to a non-ordained woman, I indicate this.35

In any case, Daihongan’s “regular” nuns rarely appear by name in the archival records. They appear more frequently by name in the convent’s journals, of which only a few are available to the public, as I stated in the introduction. We can understand a few things about these women from these records. The first concerns some of their origins. In some cases, these nuns had been handmaidens of the abbess during her time in her natal house; they followed the future abbess to the convent and took the tonsure with her. In at least one other case, the young daughter of one of the convent’s administrators took the tonsure. We also know that these nuns regularly accompanied the abbesses when they traveled, even into the shogun’s castle or the imperial palace, though they were not invited to meet the shogun or the emperor.

D. Administrators or Temple Samurai
In the Edo period, Zenkōji employed a number of lay administrators like many other large temple complexes. The highest ranks of these administrators were known as temple samurai (terasamurai 寺侍). The men holding these posts were not born into

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35 For a much more thorough discussion about the translation of terms “monk,” “priest,” “nun” and so on, please see Meeks, Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan, 18–24.
warrior households. For example, Isōemon, the hereditary name for the intendent/head administrator of Zenkōji’s lands, came from a merchant family, for instance. However, when the heir took up his post, he acquired the hereditary name associated with the post, and also acquired samurai status (mibun 身分) for as long as he held the post.36 During a temple samurai’s tenure as administrator he had the right to wear two swords, which were markers of samurai status. As the case of Karasawa Hikōdayu, administrator of Daihongan demonstrates, the shogunate occasionally granted further privileges, such as the right to carry a spear in processions, as a reward for service or to accompany increased duties (such as escorting Tora-hime to the convent so she could become Abbess Chishō).

E. Servants
There were also a number of servants at the convent, yet we know little about them because they only appear in the convent’s documents a few times. They were usually referred to as genin 下人. They must have been mostly men because they were excluded from certain portions of the convent and were not allowed in the main hall and living quarters after dark. They differed from short-term contracted employees, known as deiri shokunin 出入り職人, who were only contracted by the convent to perform a specific task.

36 David Howell discusses context-specific status changes. He gives the example of Shōsuke, a peasant scribe sent to Mito domain on official business. “While on his mission, he was permitted to use a surname and carry two swords, and thereby present himself as a samurai. Shōsuke engaged in status transvestism, assuming a form appropriate to his task without the pretense of a more profound or lasting transformation. The artifice was necessary because his duties were of a sort suited to a village official, yet his role as an official representative of the Nanbu domain called for someone of samurai status.” David Luke Howell, Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 37–39, quote on 39.
V. Meiji Era Conflicts and Compromises

In this section I briefly discuss how Seien faced several changes that occurred during the modern period, changes that came about because of natural disasters and the legal atmosphere. Following this, I describe and analyze the fights between Daihongan and Daikanjin for ascendency over the Zenkōji temple complex beginning in the 1860s. Following this, I focus on four conflicts between the monks and nuns that occurred from the 1860s to the 1940s. The end result of these natural disasters, legal changes, and disputes was that Seien and her successors were able to bring Daihongan back to Zenkōji. These women made Daihongan a part of the temple complex again, with ritual and administrative duties shared with Daikanjin. In other words, this section describes how the convent went from the early modern arrangement (“a part of but apart from”) to the one at the temple complex today. The events of this section occur after what I discuss in most of the rest of this dissertation, yet they are important to understanding the relationship between Daikanjin and Daihongan and to an understanding of the contemporary situation at the temple complex. Furthermore, these events and the ways that the nuns responded to them demonstrate the peculiarities of the early modern legal system as it related to temple governance and how once this system had been removed Daihongan’s nuns were able to challenge Daikanjin’s authority at the Zenkōji temple complex.

Abbess Seien witnessed the destruction of Aoyama Zenkōji in an earthquake and fire, purportedly spending the night weathering the aftershocks in a nearby bamboo grove with the convent’s Amida triad rather than leave the icon behind and escape to safety.
She also weathered the tumultuous changes from the Tokugawa to the Meiji periods, and the forced laicization of monks and nuns who had come from the imperial family. She reportedly said that even if her body were forced to return to lay life, no one could force her mind to do so. Furthermore, she had given her body up to spread the Dharma, so it could handle any persecution:

You can take away the robes that are wrapped around my body, but there is no way to take those that wrap my heart/mind. The black hair that has been shaved [from my head] with a blade can grow long, but can the shaved hair in my mind ever grow? Once a body has taken vows before the Buddha, it can accept any form of persecution. For this reason, I cannot follow your orders [to laicize]. My body has been offered up for the spread of the recitation of Amida’s name, as a lifelong follower of the Buddha.

Another way she resisted was by leaving her natal family’s registry and being adopted into the Kuga family in 1875. This removed her from the “imperial family” and meant that she would no longer be affected by the new government’s order.

Seien is also responsible, in large part, for the administrative and ritual rights that Daihongan enjoys within Zenkōji currently. She did so by taking advantage of the political and religious changes that occurred in the aftermath of the Meiji Restoration.

Some of these changes concerned religious institutions, including Zenkōji, where the Toshigami shrine was disassociated from the temple complex and made an independent shrine. Other changes altered the entire system of governance that had been in existence in some form or another since Warring States Period. Perhaps sensing that the change in


atmosphere could also mean a chance for dominance within Zenkōji’s temple complex, Daihongan and Daikanjin again became caught in a series of disputes.

Just prior to the Meiji Restoration, when the Tokugawa shogunate seemed about to falter and a number of people began to push for the ascendency of the imperial house, Daikanjin sought to strengthen its ties to the emperor. When Emperor Kōmei passed away on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month of Keiō 3 (1/30/1867 of the Gregorian calendar), Daikanjin requested that it be allowed to house the emperor’s memorial tablets at Zenkōji.\textsuperscript{39} The imperial house seems to have accepted this request as it ordered the abbot of Daikanjin, Gijun 義順 (abbot from 1862–1873), to come to the imperial palace on the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month of the following year (11/20/1867). Gijun made the trip with a large number of temple administrators and samurai, announcing to the regent and court liaisons (densō 伝奏) that he arrived on the seventh day of the twelfth month (1/1/1868).\textsuperscript{40} However, two days later, on the ninth (1/3/1868), the Meiji Emperor announced that the shogun, Yoshinobu, had “returned” all powers of rule to the emperor. This seems to have laid waste to Gijun’s plans as he returned to Shinano empty handed on the fourth month of the following year (4/1868 or 5/1868). If Gijun had been successful, placing Kōmei’s memorial tablets within Zenkōji under Daikanjin’s ritual control would have strengthened ties between the imperial household and Daikanjin, and possibly strengthened Daikanjin’s position within the Zenkōji temple complex in the process.

\textsuperscript{39} Information for this paragraph comes from Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, \textit{Zenkōjishiki kenkyū}, 350.

\textsuperscript{40} Kobayashi states that Gijun returned to Shinano with at least two palanquins, twenty one samurai, and forty four of those of retainer (wakatō 若党) status and lower. Ibid.
The abbess of Daihongan also attempted to use the change in political atmosphere to improve her sub-temple’s standing within the temple complex. In addition to traveling to the court in the second month of 1868 (2/1868 or 3/1868), she began sending a series of requests to the nascent government first via the imperial temple Shōgo’in, and later via the Sanada clan who were in charge of the local Matsushiro domainal government which retained power in the northern Shinano area until 1871. In the requests Daihongan utilizes the rhetoric of the Meiji government in calling for a righting of the “wrongs of the past” (kyūhei 旧弊) and “a return to the status of old” (kikaku fukko 規格復古) all in an attempt to have the abbess granted administrative control over the Zenkōji temple complex.41 In these requests Daihongan argues that the imperial house had given power to protect Zenkōji’s icon and granted control over the complex to Daihongan’s abbesses from the time of Sonkō, but that in the 1620s and 30s the Tokugawa Bakufu and the monk Tenkai transferred that control to “[Dai]kanjin who were the administrative priests under the Daihongan’s control.”42 Furthermore, from the beginning of 1870 Daihongan petitioned to have the fifteen temples of the Nakashū, which had been affiliated with Daihongan and the Pure Land school in the past “returned to Daihongan control.” Eventually, Daihongan seems to have pressed for all of Zenkōji’s temples to be made into Pure Land ones, stating that Daihongan’s branch temples and Kai Zenkōji where the Zenkōji Amida triad resided (most of the time) from 1558 until 1598 were all Pure Land school. By extension Zenkōji itself had been Pure Land in the past until Kan’ei and Daikanjin forced the

41 Sanadake monjo 1 n.d., Nagano City Public Archives 長野市立公文書館 fuku 2 1912.1144.
42 In a request dated to 1868.12 sent via Matsushiro-han. Quoted in full in Zenkōjishi kenkyūkai 善光寺史研究会, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究, 365–368.
complex to change to Tendai. Abbess Seien therefore requested that the Meiji government, reverse “the wrongs of the past two hundred years” by “reinstating the Daihongan abbess as the head of all of Zenkōji as in the past and making [all temples] within Zenkōji’s complex affiliate with the Pure Land school from now on or [force them to] leave the complex.” The abbess’s plan was to release her temple and others within Zenkōji’s complex from Tendai control, thereby stripping the Daikanjin monks of their power in order to claim authority over Zenkōji for herself and her temple.

It appears that Daikanjin did not hear of these requests until the first month of 1870. In the end of the previous year Matsushiro had been put in charge of investigating Daihongan’s requests and offering an opinion to the Meiji government. Therefore, the domainal administrators sent requests to both Daihongan and Daikanjin asking for “detailed documents” to support their claims for control over the temple complex. While Daihongan offered the evidence stated above, Daikanjin countered by submitting as evidence snippets from the Kamakura bakufu’s official history (the Azuma kagami), the 1601 *Deed of Land Division* discussed earlier, and documents from Tenkai. In addition, it compiled a new genealogy for itself based on existing documents and temple histories.

In the end, Daihongan’s nearly three years of petition came to naught. In the second month of 1870 the imperial court stated (via the Matsushiro domainal officials)

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43 This section reads: *Kyōgo Jōdoshūmon ni aiaratame, shōnin e zujū itashi sōrō yō, matawa taisan itashi, shōnin (no) koto korai no gotoku Zenkōji issan no jimu shujishoku ōseidasare shikarubeki gi* 向後浄土宗門ニ相改、上人江随従致シ候様又者退山致シ、上人（之）事 如古来善光寺一山之事 務主事職被 仰出可然儀… Sanadake monjo 1 fuku 2 1912.1144.

that “it is difficult to fulfill [your] request, [and so you] should know that temple administration, rituals, and all other items are to be as they were in the past.”

These efforts by Daihongan were largely unsuccessful in that control over the temple complex did not come to reside solely with the abbess and the various sub-temples did not change to Pure Land (the fifteen Nakashū sub-temples, however, did revert to Daihongan affiliation in 1877). They are illustrative of the point that struggles between Daihongan and Daikanjin would flair up in times of transition. However, the modern conflicts between Daihongan and Daikanjin did not come to an end here. In fact, several of them seem to stem from the cryptic wording “as they were in the past” from the court’s rejection of Daihongan’s requests.

Other disputes from the 1860s to the 1940s can be divided into four types according to local historian Yano Tsuneo 矢野恒雄. These conflicts concerned “1) the question of who would be the chief abbot/abbess (jūshoku 住職) of Zenkōji, 2) the equal division of temple administrative duties, 3) the obstruction of rituals in Zenkōji’s main hall, and 4) the ownership of Zenkōji’s maedachi Amida triad.”

Though these conflicts are incredibly interesting, I only have space to briefly mention them here.
The question of who would be chief abbot or abbess of Zenkōji arose in the 1870s and again in the 1940s because of changes in legal regulations concerning Buddhist institutions. These laws required that there be one jūshoku at each temple or convent. Zenkōji was (and is) unusual in that no one has ever held such a title over the entire temple complex, so when these laws came into effect, they caused the heads of Daihongan and Daikanjin to fight over who would hold this title. These conflicts came about after the two had first confirmed with the government that Zenkōji was indeed required to have such a post and that the post could not be shared. The conflict between Daikanjin and Daihongan over this came to an end in the 1870s after the government changed the wording of the law to accommodate the unusual case of Zenkōji. In the 1940s Daihongan and Daikanjin pursued litigation for almost five years before entrusting the matter to Zenkōji’s chief administrator, Yamaguchi Kikujūrō 山口菊十郎. In July of 1945, Yamaguchi had a prophetic dream in which Zenkōji’s Amida triad appeared to him and stated that “Daihongan’s abbess should be the chief abbess (jūshoku) of Zenkōji while Daikanjin’s abbot should be its steward (bettō 別当). The abbess is to serve the Amida Icon, while the steward is to handle the teachings and rituals at the temple.” This arrangement was to last only one month, however, because Japan surrendered in World War II, and the Religious Organizations Law was replaced by the Religious Juridical Person Law (shūkyō hōjin hō). The temple reverted to Daikanjin and Daihongan sharing power.

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Of course, equally dividing temple administrative duties and fairly scheduling rituals in Zenkōji’s main hall were two key elements to these sub-temples sharing power. As I mentioned earlier, in the seventeenth century, the monks of Daikanjin and Kan’ei-ji promulgated a list of regulations for Zenkōji that largely excluded Daihongan’s nuns from administrative and ritual control. After the destruction of Aoyama Zenkōji, however, Daihongan’s nuns “returned” to Zenkōji. Furthermore, as discussed above, Seien sought to regain some ritual and administrative control within the Zenkōji temple complex in the wake of the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Political and legal changes forced Daikanjin and Daihongan to come to terms with the new situation at the temple complex. After the heads of both institutions lodged complaints about ritual and administrative rights with local and sectarian authorities in the mid-1870s, Nagano Prefecture ordered that both Daikanjin and Daihongan were to share ritual and administrative authority equally. This ruling did not end the conflicts, however, which continued until 1889. At that time, the heads of Daikanjin and Daihongan sought the mediation of Viscount Shinagawa Yajirō 品川弥二郎 (1843–1900). With his assistance, the leaders of these two institutions signed a twenty-one point agreement in 1893 that effectively divided ritual and administrative responsibilities for the Zenkōji temple complex and largely brought about an end to the open conflicts between the two institutions.48 Many of these divisions are followed at Zenkōji to this day. One interesting point that should be made is that even though the monks and nuns were openly pursuing litigation against each other during

48 The content of the twenty-one point agreement can be found at Yano Tsuneo 矢野恒雄, “Meijiki ni okeru Zenkōji Daikanjin - Daihongan keisō jiken no shiteki igi 明治期における善光寺大勧進・大本願係争事件の史的意義,” 627–629.
these twenty years, they also set aside these differences to jointly hold displays of Zenkōji’s treasures.

A final, yet vital, step to placing Daikanjin and Daihongan on equal footing in the Zenkōji temple complex was establishing who owned the temple’s “Icon That Stands Before” (*maedachi honzon* 前立本尊). At Zenkōji, the main Amida triad is never revealed. What is shown during displays of the temple’s treasures is a copy from the Kamakura Period called the Icon That Stands Before. In 1906 the Icon That Stands Before was listed as a National Treasure (*kokuhō* 国宝). At that time, when not on display, this icon was housed at Daikanjin and the official paperwork listing the Icon as a National Treasure stated that Daikanjin was its owner. This led to a protracted argument involving Daikanjin, Daihongan, local courts, and local residents that was only resolved in 1923 when the Icon was transferred to the ownership of the whole Zenkōji temple complex.50

As we can see from this, the current position of Daihongan within the Zenkōji temple complex is a result of the efforts of Abbesses Seien, Kajūji Jōgon, and Ōmiya Chiei from the 1860s to the 1940s. These changes were possible in large part because of the change in legal atmosphere brought about by the Meiji Restoration. And yet they could not have happened without connections established and maintained by abbesses in the early modern period, nor without the efforts of these early modern women to keep their convent afloat.

49 Since 1950 it has been listed as an important cultural property (*jūyō bunkazai* 重要文化財).
50 Yano Tsuneo 矢野恒雄, “Meijiki ni okeru Zenkōji Daikanjin - Daihongan keisō jiken no shiteki igi 明治期における善光寺大勧進・大本願係争事件の史的意義,” 630.
VI. Conclusion

Above I traced the legends and history of Zenkōji and Daihongan. I discussed the relationship between the nuns of Daihongan and the monks of Daikanjin. These two groups, as we saw from Gakkai’s request at the beginning of the chapter, were not always fighting with each other, despite the number and protracted time period over which these two pursued litigation against each other. Instead, these lawsuits can be seen as occasional events in the long relationship between the two sub-temples. Personnel from these two institutions regularly worked together to ensure that joint events proceeded without difficulty and that the temple complex and surrounding land was administered appropriately. And yet the potential for litigation reaching to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines was there, at least until Kan’ei ji became Daihongan’s head temple and placed an additional step in the legal process.

In the middle of the chapter, I introduced the personnel that lived and worked at Daihongan and its jointly held branch temple in Edo (Yanaka or Aoyama Zenkōji – more on this in Chapter 3). I showed the typical life of an abbess. I highlighted the roles of the senior nuns and the hereditary convent administrators/samurai. Along with the regular nuns and servants, these people ensured the smooth working of the convent. They will appear in a number of places in the pages that follow.

I concluded the chapter with a discussion of the nuns’ responses to the changes during Japan’s transition from the Tokugawa period to the Meiji period in the 1860, and the subsequent legal changes. These abbesses took advantage of this transition to change
the centuries-long status quo at the Zenkōji temple complex and bring themselves back into the ritual and administrative life of the temple. This is the way that the temple complex is now.
Chapter 2. Conventional Economics: Daihongan’s Finances in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

I. Introduction

In 1793, a petitioner visiting Zenkōji placed a small copper coin into an offertory box in the temple’s Main Hall. A farmer on the temple’s land gave a few scoops of rice from his harvest in taxes to the temple, while a merchant gave a few handfuls of coins as rent. Some people living in the temple’s gate town gave money for calendrical rites in the first, third, fifth, seventh, and eighth months. A wealthy farmer-merchant (gōnō 豪農) living nearby deposited money into a financial confraternity run by the temple. And, finally, five of Daihongan’s nuns gave a few hundred copper coins to sponsor a memorial ritual for another nun who had died seven years before. All of these people contributed in some way to Zenkōji, and by doing so, they also funded to Daihongan convent.

Understanding how these contributions made their way into the convent’s coffers, and how they were spent to fund the convent’s activities is one of the main goals of this chapter.

A discussion of money brings to light both temporary and long-term flows between the convent and various people acting from a number of motivations. This discussion highlights the diversity of Daihongan’s financial activities and income, raising questions about the roles of temples and convents as financial centers and why people might have entrusted their money to a convent. In this chapter and the final one, I
investigate these and other questions regarding Daihongan and its early modern finances. While a number of works have discussed issues of early modern religious institutions and economics, they have focused on funerary and memorial rites, land-ownership, large-scale donations, rites for this-worldly benefits, donations from pilgrims, and so on. A few have tackled economic issues on a macro-scale, examining the temples in a region or those of a single sect. Others have focused on single sources of income, funerary rites, for instance. Still others have examined individual temples or Buddhist-Shintō combinatory sites, turning their gaze to large regional or national pilgrimage sites such as Asakusa Sensōji, Konpira, or Ōyama. As I discuss below, only a couple of works touch upon convents and money; those that do only examine their reliance upon land grants and the largesse of the bakufu or imperial court. A discussion of Daihongan’s finances provides an interesting and complex counterpoint to these studies. It was a medium to small scale institution rather than a large one. It could act independently, especially in Edo, but was also a part of a larger institution. Although it was a convent with both income from a land grant and donations from the shogun, it relied upon a diverse array of financial activities, especially in the last half of the Edo period.

The question that drives this chapter and Chapter 5 is this: why when so many other Buddhist institutions were closed or operating in name only because of financial difficulties in the last half of the Edo period and when, as I will demonstrate, Daihongan’s financial situation worsened as time went on, was the convent able to remain open and active? Helen Hardacre has stated that temples with economic

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1 For more on the financial insolvency of smaller temples in the last half of the Edo period, see Hardacre, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, 156–159.
resources, such as land and parishioners, were more likely to have a Buddhist cleric in residence and be able to regularly perform rituals. As I will discuss in more detail below, Daihongan had no parishioners. Furthermore, its land, though helpful in providing a recurring if varied income, would not cover all of the convent’s expenses. Instead, the convent had to draw upon its connections with its own icon, the highest ranking domainal lords, the ladies of the inner quarters of the shogun’s castle, or the farmers working on Zenkōji’s lands to ensure the convent’s survival. I argue that these connections enabled Daihongan to obtain offerings from petitioners, receive assistance when repairing temple buildings, or acquire loans when the abbess needed to travel.

In this chapter, I focus on the conventional economic activities (and the connections they bring to light) of Daihongan. By “conventional” or “regular” I mean those sources of income and expenditures that the convent had to deal with on a daily or yearly basis. In the final chapter, which as I mentioned above is closely related to this one, I turn to the irregular or unconventional income and expenditures of the convent—those things that did not occur at set intervals or that were unexpected. In the sections that follow, I will discuss the unease with which many, both contemporary members of the public at large and scholars alike, have approached the economic aspects of Buddhism. Especially in its early modern Japanese form, many have taken Buddhist involvement in the cash economy as proof of the degeneracy of the Buddhist clergy. Following this, I briefly discuss the background of Buddhist involvement with financial activities in India, China, and pre-Tokugawa Japan. In these places and periods, the sangha relied not only upon day-to-day donations acquired during alms rounds (if the priests even performed
alms rounds in those times and places), but also upon large-scale donations of money, land, or goods; the income from farm or city properties that the temples managed or rented out; fundraising campaigns; and financial activities, such as money-lending. Many of these activities continued to be important for religious institutions into Japan’s early modern period, when they were joined by other sources of income, such as providing funerary and memorial rites for parishioners, new forms of fundraising, sales of temple goods, and so on. I briefly examine each of these in turn, giving examples from Zenkōji where possible. In Section III I turn to Daihongan’s finances, examining the only extant ledger of income and expenditures at the convent. This ledger demonstrates that the convent had a diverse income, but that as early as 1793, it had begun to rely heavily upon loans. By combining the different views of the convent that these activities provide, Daihongan’s diverse economic roles and the necessity of these activities for the convent to cover irregular expenses such as travel or repairs to temple buildings come into focus. These activities became especially important for the convent in the last half of the Edo period because although temples such as Zenkōji, Daihongan, and a number of other institutions that could demonstrate connections to the shogunate could rely upon the largesse of the bakufu in the first half of the Tokugawa period, by the middle portion of the period, the bakufu shifted responsibility for these repairs onto the temples themselves who then had to raise the funds through bakufu-approved methods such as displays, lotteries, and other means. In the conclusions I briefly discuss changes in income that occurred in the end of the Edo period and the beginning of the Meiji period, and suggest that the convent’s early modern income would have exceeded their ordinary expenditures
and allowed the nuns to live comfortably if it were not for the irregular expenditures to be discussed in the next chapters.

II. Background: Scholarship and Buddhist Financial Activities

Many people have criticized the connection of temples and money. In the beginning of this section I will briefly analyze the early modern and modern/contemporary critiques of early modern temple finances, posit some ideas about the sources of those criticisms, and highlight how scholars have begun to move beyond these criticisms. Despite criticisms, Buddhists have been financially active since the founding of the tradition in India. In the middle of the section I discuss the economic activities of Indian, Chinese, and pre-Tokugawa period Japanese Buddhist temples. Finally, in the last third of the section I describe a number of “typical” incomes and expenditures for temples in Japan’s early modern period. This discussion provides needed background for a discussion of Daihongan’s early modern finances in Section III.

A. Criticisms of Buddhism and Money

As Hillary Kaell has demonstrated with American Christian pilgrimages to the Middle East, discourses regarding money or materiality and religion are also about boundary making, either functioning to distinguish those within the tradition from each other, or to distinguish one tradition from different one. Furthermore, these discourses demonstrate how people think priests, temples, or even entire religious traditions should deal with money and the material world.² Both of these ideas operate in critiques surrounding Buddhism and money, which have occurred since at least the fifth century in

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China. In the interest of space, however, I will focus on those from Japan’s early modern, modern, and contemporary periods. Through this discussion, it becomes clear that these early criticisms influenced later scholarship, and that western ideas of religion and Buddhism influenced scholars’ approaches to the topics of Buddhism and money.

The anonymous samurai and social critic writing under the pseudonym Buyō Inshi (dates unknown) had a distaste for both money and the Buddhist clergy, so he was particularly passionate when the two were combined. Writing in 1816, he states that though priests in the past had been deserving of respect, contemporary clergy tricked laypeople into having “rites performed or prayers said and to make donations and offerings.”

Contemporary Buddhist clergy were, in Buyō’s mind, no better than greedy parasites who attempted to bilk money from an unwitting lay populace:

Lesser priests are all the more driven by greed. They organize Buddha viewings [kaichō], hold sermons, and perform rites for feeding the hungry spirits, but not to save the sentient beings; they do this only as a way to make a profit. For memorial services, funerals and prayer ceremonies they establish different grades and procedures, depending on the size of the donation. They organize lotteries, collect donations and offerings, and run confraternities with monthly fixed dues. They also plan credit associations and all other activities intended to further the circulation of money…. They may have shaved heads and wear dharma garments, but underneath, they are as greedy as any boor. All they think about is how to live off laypeople without putting themselves to any trouble.

Buyō was not early modern Buddhism’s only critic. Japanese historian Tsuji Zennosuke (1877–1955) compiled a large number of early modern critiques of Buddhism.

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5 Ibid., 147.
into his history of Japanese Buddhism, *Nihon Bukkyōshi*. He says that in general there were three main critiques of the connection between Buddhism and money in the early modern period. These were that 1) Buddhists were unproductive members of society, 2) they drained funds from the public coffers either directly or indirectly because temple lands depleted the amount of productive land available for the bakufu’s taxation, and 3) various means of gathering funds, such as temple lotteries or displays of temple treasures, degraded public morals.6

More recently, Orion Klautau has demonstrated that early modern critiques of Buddhism, including those surrounding money, influenced the ways that modern scholars viewed Tokugawa Buddhism.7 These critiques posited a time, either in Japan or India, when Buddhist priests were more pure, doctrinal debates occurred regularly, and new sects arose to meet the spiritual needs of the populace. In comparison, priests of the early modern period failed to live up to these ideals because they relied on rites for this-worldly or posthumous benefits, were a part of the governing structure through temple registration, did not (or could not) debate the finer points of doctrine, and had sectarian ties that had (it was supposed) been largely frozen by the head-branch temple system. These modern scholars assumed that early modern Buddhist priests were by and large degenerate. Tsuji is the most famous representative of these scholars; he has been

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Of course, the Japanese were not the first to criticize the connection of Buddhism and money; for examples of critiques from China, see Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*, 9–14.

credited with popularizing the discourse on the corruption of early modern Buddhist priests (Kinsei Bukkyō darakuron 近世仏教堕落論). According to Tsuji, two factors brought about the decline of Buddhism in the Edo period. First was the degeneracy of the priests, which stemmed from their secular interests, failure to maintain the Vinaya, homosexuality, sale of priestly status, and engagement in activities for financial gain. Second was the formalization of Buddhism, which stemmed from lack of doctrinal debate, the parishioner system which ensured a stable income for priests who performed funerary and memorial rites for temple members, and the head-branch temple system and status system that led to the gentrification of the priesthood. Though he states that other cultural phenomena also became formalized, in the case of Buddhism, this formalization meant that priests did not meet the needs of the laity.⁸

The discourse on the degeneracy of early modern Buddhist priests remained highly influential for years.⁹ For years, scholars furthered research into Buddhist degeneracy, proving it to be so by solely focusing on documents that demonstrated the corrupt nature of priests who were simply out to take advantage of the laity. Others ignored early modern Buddhism because they thought it lacked the vitality of earlier

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⁹ Even recent works on early modern Japanese Buddhism in both English and Japanese touch upon the subject. For instance, Sueki Fumihiko 末木文美士, Kinsei no Bukkyō: hana hiraku shisō to bunka 近世の仏教: 華ひらく思想と文化 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2010).
periods; it had been eclipsed, it was assumed, by Neo-Confucian and Nativist (*Kokugaku* 国学) thought. Other scholars attempted to show that Edo-period Buddhism was not in decline by examining temples for this-worldly benefits: if Tsuji said that Buddhism was in a decline in part because of its involvement in rites for the dead, then surely demonstrating how petitioners flocked to temples of their own accord for this-worldly benefits must demonstrate Buddhism’s vitality, they seem to say.¹⁰ Only in recent years have scholars of early modern Buddhism begun to move beyond degeneracy, presenting an even-handed approach to the study of Buddhism in local society, highlighting Buddhist art from the period, or parsing the ties between state authority and temples.¹¹

This dismissal of Buddhism and wealth, which extends to modern and (in some cases) contemporary scholars, also has to do with conceptions of what constitutes religion. Early scholars of religion, influenced by the Reformation, assumed religion to be an internal pursuit disconnected from the material realm (and in many cases, money). The separation of religion from the physical was furthered in studies by Durkheim, Weber, and Eliade, all of whom posited a division of the sacred from the profane.¹² Only

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¹⁰ For more on how one group of scholars attempted to counter the discourses of degeneracy, see Hitoshi Ōkuwa, *Nihon Bukkyō no kinsei* 日本仏敎の近世 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2003), 7–8.


¹² Weber occupies an interesting place in this trajectory. Although he discusses the disenchantment of the world and its division into the sacred (inner) and profane (outer) following the Reformation, he is not afraid to discuss the connections between religion and economics. In *The Protestant Ethic* he posits that financial success was one way that Protestants, especially Calvinists, could tell that they were predestined for salvation. However, enjoying the money one had earned instead of investing it, was frowned upon. According to Weber, while these Protestants worked hard in their various professions, and were engaged in
certain items thought to be imbued with sacred power—the totems or axes mundi—were worthy of study. As John Kieschnick states, for these scholars, the “hundreds of nearly identical icons packed into a temple, prayer beads fingered by crass patrons or pious peasants, the robes worn by monks and nuns all seem better left to archaeologists, historians of popular culture, or economists than to mainstream historians of religion.”

To this list of unworthy topics we might add the money given to or used by the institutions and the means by which those institutions raised said funds.

Definitions of religion have also led some Japanese scholars to avoid discussions of certain financial activities of early modern religious institutions. For example, when discussing forms of fundraising for temples and shrines, Hiruma Hisashi focuses on displays of temple treasures, but not on temple lotteries. This is because “although lotteries were a part of the assistance measures for temples and shrines permitted and controlled by the bakufu, they are different in character than displays and


Robert Bellah attempted to utilize Weber’s methods outside of Europe. Bellah attempted to unearth the early modern foundations of Japan’s rapid modernization in the late 1800s. Bellah states that religion, in particular the Neo-Confucian lay movement Shingaku, combined with the early modern Japanese orientation towards goal attainment and loyalty “played an important role in the process of political and economic rationalization in Japan through maintaining and intensifying commitment to the central values, supplying motivation and legitimation for certain necessary political innovations and reinforcing an ethic of inner-worldly asceticism which stressed diligence and economy.” Robert N Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion: The Values of Pre-Industrial Japan*. (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1957) quote from page 194.

However, since both of these scholars discuss the religious influences on the rational economic activities of individuals, not the economic activities of religious institutions, I will not discuss them in greater detail.


preaching/fundraising. Rather, they belong to non-religious money making activities, along with renting a part of the temple’s land.”

While it is clear that Hiruma was simply looking for a way to demarcate the limits of his study, he does show his hand in terms of his ideas concerning fundraising by temples and shrines. Even without providing a definition of religion, we can see that for Hiruma “religious” fundraising involves icons, some ritual action by viewers, or some form of sermonizing by priests, while activities that lack these elements are not religious even though they may have supported the institutions’ broader activities or may have been used to restore icons or temple buildings.

Ian Reader and George Tanabe discuss how definitions of religion, or in Japanese, shūkyō 宗教, have affected the work of Japanese scholars and reports by the media.

While some scholars have used a narrow definition based on western theological conceptions of religion which focus on creed, text, and doctrine, others have moved beyond it to discuss this worldly benefits, rituals, and economics.

If religion is thought to be concerned largely with the internal world of belief, formulated solely in doctrinal creeds or religious texts, then Buddhism, thought to be the religion of renunciation and internalization par excellence, was even more so. For many of the general public, Buddhism rejects all ties to the ever-changing physical world. This

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17 Reader and Tanabe suggest that such a distinction comes from a division of labor between Buddhist studies (which arose from western theology and as such are largely text-based and interested in doctrine) on the one hand, and anthropological studies of Japanese religions, which tend to be more open to examinations of lived religion, rituals, and the actions of people. Ian Reader and George J. Tanabe, Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998), 2–8.
is exemplified in the Buddha’s leaving his opulent life as a prince to become a mendicant. His enlightenment through internal, meditative means rather than physical actions provides further evidence, it is said, of Buddhism’s rejection of the material realm. Texts, such as the Pali Vinaya monastic code, further demonstrate early Buddhism’s denial of individual possession or use of wealth by monastics.

Indeed, as Gregory Schopen states, many ideas regarding Buddhism and money stem from the primacy of the text in Buddhist studies: western scholars of early Indian Buddhism explained away evidence of the possession of money by renunciants as signs of individual corruption, later developments, or demonstration of a decline in monastic morals because such evidence did not fit with the Vinaya Pitaka. This denial of the connections of Buddhism and money based on Vinaya evidence is particularly confusing since other versions of the Vinaya and their commentaries (Skt. Vibhaṅga) discuss monastics and their money. It is clear from this, Schopen states, that the Indian monastic legal scholars who commented on the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya, for example, expected monks to own and use money and other private property. He additionally suggests that our assumptions regarding the separation of monks from property stems from the influence of the rules of St. Benedict, which forbade individual possession of property by renunciants.

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18 For more on the primacy of the text over material culture or archeological evidence, see Schopen, Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks esp. “Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions.”
One aspect of Buddhist involvement with economics that has been the topic of (relatively) wide discussion is merit.\textsuperscript{20} Generally speaking, merit is tied into the notion of karma, in that merit is the fruit of one’s wholesome actions (karma). A number of actions can produce merit, but for the laity, one action that produced a lot of merit was giving to the Buddhist community, who in exchange would generate karmic merit for the donor or his/her designated recipient. The typical metaphor for this arrangement was agricultural. Buddhist renunciants were the fields of merit on which the donors (farmers) planted seeds (their actions or donations) that produced karmic fruits (merit) to balance out the results of unwholesome karma of the donors or their designated recipients. Though perhaps initially consisting of donations of food or small alms, as the sangha grew and its donors became more diverse so did the types of donations. Relatively early on we see donations of temple buildings, land, and monetary endowments that were used to extend the merit-producing process by ensuring continued rites in the donors’ names, for example. However, not all fields of merit were considered equal—since monks were considered to be more learned, ritually adept, and had better karma (since they were born male), donations to the monks’ order were thought to produce better or more merit than donations to nuns. This became a vicious cycle in which the lack of donations meant that

nuns did not have the opportunities to study to become more adept or learned thus ensuring that they were considered to be less worthy of donations.\textsuperscript{21}

While ideas of merit production have been shown to contribute to the economic stability of temples, the focus on merit and donations only goes so far in understanding the financial underpinnings of Buddhist institutions in more complex economic milieus. Many Buddhist institutions in India, China, and Japan had moved beyond a model of simple exchange of donations for merit to become centers of complex economic activities, many of which were done for monetary gain for both the sangha and lay investors, though the interest or income from these activities may have been used to support the temple/ convent’s broader “religious” activities.

Just as scholars have begun moving beyond discourses of the degeneracy of early modern Buddhist monks, Buddhist studies scholars have begun examining the broader material and economic aspects of Buddhism. A forerunner in this was Jacques Gernet’s 1956 work (translated into English in 1995) on the socioeconomic roles of Buddhist temples in the fifth to tenth centuries in China; he discusses various Vinaya sources for economic customs and how those practices changed and were changed by local Chinese practices.\textsuperscript{22} Schopen has also pushed for a closer examination of the intersections of early Indian Buddhist monasticism, the material world, and economic matters.\textsuperscript{23} John Kieschnick provides a social history of objects associated with Chinese Buddhism, and though money is not a specific object he focuses on, he does discuss how opulent objects

\textsuperscript{21} Gutschow, \textit{Being a Buddhist Nun}, chap. 3.


\textsuperscript{23} Schopen, \textit{Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks}; Schopen, \textit{Buddhist Monks and Business Matters}. 75
and buildings which were thought to lead to greater faith were contrasted with ideals of individual renunciation. Michael Walsh has highlighted the economic aspects of the exchange of land for merit and prestige in Song China (960–1279).

Western scholarship on Japanese Buddhism has recently taken up the discussion of Buddhism and money. These have included dissertations, monographs, and articles on fundraising, temples in local or regional contexts, pilgrimage temples, and Buddhist material culture. A number of works focusing on the contemporary period also discuss the conflicts between temples and tax offices over the religious or non-religious nature of rites or sightseeing revenues. I take cues from these works by starting with the assertion that an examination of Buddhist institutions and money can tell us a great deal about those institutions and their places in society—what they valued, how they were structured, what connections they had to laypeople, and how people saw them.

Conspicuously absent from this research on economics and Japanese Buddhism are extended discussions of the economic situations of convents in the early modern period. Though Lori Meeks, Hosokawa Ryōichi, and others have discussed medieval

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24 Kieschnick, The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture.
25 Michael J. Walsh, Sacred Economies Buddhist Monasticism & Territoriality in Medieval China (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
26 Janet R Goodwin, Alms and Vagabonds: Buddhist Temples and Popular Patronage in Medieval Japan (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994).
30 Covell, Japanese Temple Buddhism esp. chapters 7 and 8; Barbara Ambros, Bones of Contention: Animals and Religion in Contemporary Japan (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2012), chap. 3.
convents’ sources of revenue, financial management by the semi-ordained Sakai-shū, and involvement in the Ritsu sect’s fundraising campaigns, there has been little research done on the financial activities of early modern convents. Of course, this follows a larger pattern of a lack of scholarship on early modern convents in general. Gina Cogan states that the absence of convents from scholarship stems from two contrasting views: first, that convents were unusual and so studying them would not point to larger issues with Japanese Buddhism, and second, that convents were just like male monastic institutions, so we can learn all there is to know about early modern Japanese Buddhism by examining male institutions. By extension, an examination of economics and convents would either yield no new insights because convents were exactly like other institutions or they were so different that they were not involved in any economic activities. Whatever the source of this gap, we are left with a dearth of research into early modern convents and economics. What does exist focuses on imperial convents and highlights patronage, such as the support given by Tōfukumon’in, consort to Emperor Go-Mizunoo, or income from land grants. Though these represented significant amounts of income for these institutions, convents had income from a number of other sources: a glance at an index of documents from the imperial convents Reikanji 霊鑑寺, Jijuin 慈受院, and Chūgūji 中宮寺 shows that these convents hold a number of documents related to loans.

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and other investments, for instance. In this chapter I work to fill in this lacuna by examining Daihongan’s early modern financial activities.

B. Buddhism and Finances in India and China

Buddhist renunciants have always been involved in the economy. While in the beginning, the sangha may have functioned on alms and donations, early on in Buddhism’s development donors began to offer lands, the yearly fruits of which would be eaten by the sangha or sold and the cash used to sustain practices or maintain buildings. Later, donors offered endowments, the interest of which would be used by the sangha for rituals or buildings. Finally, the sangha began to offer loans from the money in its own coffers. These finances would be handled by administrators if the monks and nuns were not allowed to touch money, or the monks and nuns themselves if their monastic code allowed.

In China, Buddhism relied on a variety of economic activities. Income from land remained important, as did interest on loans of money and grain. Temples also operated mills and presses, and rented out commercial properties. As Gernet argues, Buddhist institutions were centers of economic activity that spurred on the development of new aspects of the Chinese economy through their employment of construction laborers, dyers, loggers, copyists, and sculptors.


36 Ibid., 14.
C. Classical and Medieval Financial Support for Temples

The earliest temples in Japan were supported by individual clans. As time went on, the state also began to sponsor temples. Though these large-scale donations remained important for Buddhist institutions, by the Classical and Medieval periods, temples also relied on more diverse forms of support, such as estates and fundraising campaigns.

1. Donations

In some cases courtier or warrior families patronized temples by giving gifts, sponsoring rituals, building halls, or financing the reconstruction of an entire temple. Such patronage existed for a mix of religious and political reasons. For instance, after Zenkōji was destroyed by fire in 1179, the first shogun of the Kamakura bakufu, Minamoto Yoritomo, ordered his retainers to gather funds to rebuild the temple. McCallum argues that Yoritomo was interested in rebuilding Zenkōji for political reasons—his patronage was designed to establish and demonstrate connections with one of the most important institutions in Shinano province, an area which had, until recently been under the control of one of Yoritomo’s rivals. This patronage continued to varying degrees through Hōjō Masako, Yoritomo’s wife, and her family following the shogun’s death. The Hōjō had not been a landowning family, but they came to control large portions of Shinano province. Supporting Zenkōji was a key element of their rule in the area, but, at the same time this patronage was an area where competition between rival branches of the Hōjō played out.

However, it was dangerous for temples to rely on patronage alone: while it could provide temples with great windfalls, it could disappear just as suddenly. As McCallum demonstrates, because of the presence of a strong central power in Shinano and the
patronage of the Kamakura bakufu and its Hōjō family regents, Zenkōji prospered throughout the Kamakura period. This led to the spread of the Zenkōji cult amongst the warriors in central and northern Japan. However, the collapse of the Kamakura bakufu and subsequent lack of a powerful central authority in northern Shinano province adversely affected Zenkōji. The small warrior families who controlled the patchwork of lands surrounding the temple in northern Shinano could not rally the same amount of support for it that Yoritomo and the Hōjō could, so when all the temple buildings were destroyed by fire in 1427, it was roughly forty years before Zenkōji could rebuild its main hall.

2. Estates
Temple estates were able to accumulate large tax-free landholdings (shōen 荘園) through a variety of means. The court granted some temples in the eighth century their own tax-free lands that were meant to cover their day-to-day expenses in exchange for protective rituals. Religious institutions expanded these lands through various means. For example, in 723 the court offered tax-free status for reclaimed lands, first for three generations but later in perpetuity. By clearing new lands for cultivation temples could thus increase their tax-free holdings. Additionally, estate proprietors could forge relationships with temples or shrines. Proprietors could escape taxation through these relationships: if a proprietor claimed that his or her holdings that should have been taxed were a part of a religious institution’s holdings, he or she could cultivate the lands tax-free. These relationships also offered protection to estate managers from having their

37 McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 64–74.
38 Ibid., 159.
landholdings challenged because powerful institutions such as temples could better defend their lands than individuals could. Finally, temples or individual monks could receive tax-free estates as payment for performing rituals for wealthy individuals or families.

Zenkōji was involved in the estate system as well. Scholars estimate that shōen-style land management made its way into central Japan in the ninth and tenth centuries, and was fully developed by the eleventh. Zenkōji came to hold six estates in Shinano province. Furthermore, as I discuss in Chapter 3, a precursor of the early modern head-branch temple system emerged in this milieu as a way to control distant land holdings. By the beginning of the twelfth century Zenkōji was a branch temple of Onjōji, the head of the Jimon branch of Tendai Buddhism. This relationship may have been forged to control Onjōji’s estates in Shinano province, or as a way for Onjōji to receive financial support from Zenkōji’s own estates.

Zenkōji and its estates later came to be connected with another Jimon Tendai temple called Shōgo’in 聖護院. How this happened is a bit of a mystery, but in the twelfth century, Zenkōji is listed as being a part of Onjōji’s estates. However, in a document from 1268, it is listed as being a part of Shōgo’in’s estates. Less than twenty

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40 McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 27.
41 Sakai Kōhei states that Zenkōji may have initially been a branch of the powerful Tendai temple Enryakuji (on Mt. Hiei, head of the Sanmon branch of the Tendai school), however it later became a branch of Onjōji (popularly known as Miidera), the headquarters for the rival Jimon branch of Tendai Buddhism. Sakai Kōhei 坂井衡平, Zenkōjishi 善光寺史, 667–671.
42 The administrative heads (bettō 別当) of Zenkōji at this time came from Onjōji. Furthermore, almost a century later Zenkōji is listed as a branch temple of Onjōji in an Azuma kagami entry for 1286.3.12. McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 36–37; Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 253–254.
years later, a 1286.3.12 entry in the official record of the Kamakura bakufu, the Azuma kagami, states that Zenkōji was again a part of Onjōji’s estates. This demonstrates the complex, overlapping layers of control of these estates in this period, and may perhaps be explained by the movement of personnel between Jimon temples. Shōgo’in drew a number of its administrators from Onjōji, such as Jōsei 靜成, a priest who served as both the chief administrator (bettō 别当) of Zenkōji and the steward (shitsuji 執事) of Shōgo’in in 1268. As Kobayashi Keiichirō states, Zenkōji’s chief administrator was a post (shiki 識) that came with a salary drawn from the estates. If this was the case, then perhaps various priests were assigned the post and it followed them as they moved within the Jimon network of temples. At some point in time, however, the post and estates connected with it settled at Shōgo’in.

The ties between Zenkōji and Shōgo’in lasted in one form or another until the start of the Meiji period. Shōgo’in was Zenkōji’s head temple for most of the medieval period. For example, when Hideyoshi wanted to move Zenkōji’s icon, he had the priest Dōchō and the head of Shōgo’in write letters to Ieyasu who had control of Kōfu Zenkōji, where Zenkōji’s icon, priests, and nuns were based at that time. Furthermore, these medieval ties to Shōgo’in continued in the case of Daihongan, even after Zenkōji was made a branch temple of Kan’eiji in 1643 and Daihongan was made Kan’eiji’s branch in 1740, for as I will demonstrate in Chapter 4, the abbesses submitted paperwork to Shōgo’in when they applied for their purple robes of office from the court.

43 The 1268 document is an entry from the diary of Tōgan Ean 東巌恵安 (1225 – 1277). This entry is cited in full in Doc. 17 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 758.
This style of tax-free estate began to decline throughout the country in the mid-fourteenth century. Warriors claimed more land, cultivators gained more financial independence through new techniques, managers lost control over their lands because of financial insolvency or distance, and the loss of central power meant managers lost the backing of that power to support their claims to holdings. As these ties weakened, Zenkōji’s estates and post of chief administrator came to rest in the hands of the local Kurita clan. The Kurita’s connection to the temple survived its move Kai in the latter part of the sixteenth century, but ceased when the Amida triad was moved back to Shinano in 1598.\footnote{Kobayashi includes a document from the Kurita to Daihongan in 1603 requesting Chikei’s help in once again taking up the role of bettō. Ibid., 792–793.}

The land surveys ordered by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the 1580s brought what remained of the shōen system to an end by redefining systems of measurement and placing the village as the central unit of taxation.\footnote{Segal, “The Shōen System,” 176.} Despite these changes, land remained an important part of temples’ incomes, as I discuss below.

3. **Fundraising Campaigns**

   Temples also used fundraising campaigns, usually paired with preaching, (both known as *kanjin* 勧進) when the income from patronage or temple lands could not fully cover building costs. Temples found it attractive because it also helped to advertise their temple and preach a Buddhist message to a larger segment of the population than they would normally interact with. Rulers found *kanjin* attractive because they could utilize it for political means—Emperor Shōmu used *kanjin* for the legitimation of his rule and the
Tōdaiji building project, while Emperor Go-Shirakawa used it four centuries later when rebuilding Tōdaiji to remind people of the glory days of the emperor in a time when his authority was being eclipsed by warrior families.46

In the late classical and first half of the medieval period monks who were not permanently affiliated with any temple (muen hijiri 無縁聖) carried out these campaigns. This worked to the benefit of both the temple and the hijiri; the temple received the donations without expending their own personnel while the hijiri could take a cut of the profits and still maintain their independence.47 Most of these campaigns were ad hoc, lasting only as long as fundraising was needed. Later campaigns became more organized, and in some cases, such as at Shitennōji and Tōdaiji, the office of kanjin priest (daikanjinshiki 大勧進職) become a permanent post with responsibility for temple administration in addition to fundraising. Another fundraising office, the hongan 本願, began appearing in temples and shrines in the last half of the medieval period. Hongan were permanent sub-temples within larger temples or shrines and whose members were tasked with collecting donations for construction and maintenance within the larger temple complex. They also provided organization for and legitimation of the hijiri under their control. The most well-known of the hongan are at the Kumano shrines, with their ranks of itinerant Kumano bikuni. Scholars have not agreed on the reason for the appearance of hongan—Nakanodō traces it to the creation of the post of Daikanjin priest, while Shimosaka Mamoru says that hongan appeared at temples that had lost their

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46 Goodwin, Alms and Vagabonds, chap. 4.
47 Ibid., 34.
estates, for example—however, they all agree that hongan appeared because of social and economic changes that occurred in the late medieval period. Zenkōji also relied on kanjin and hongan to collect funds at various times—their Zenkōji hijiri have been credited with the spread of Zenkōji faith throughout medieval Japan. The names of the two administrative heads of Zenkōji, Daikanjin and Daitōkan, both derived from the terms kanjin and hongan.

In the medieval period, temples devised a number of other means of garnering funds. A few sold amulets or charged admission to see an image or hear an etoki performance. Some offered their technical expertise to benefit local communities by building dams or bridges while others tended the sick or buried the dead, all with the hope of collecting donations. Other temples received permission from the court, bakufu, or local warlords to fundraise using coercive means: they could levy taxes on the residents in a certain area (munebechi sen 棟別銭), set up tolls on roads, or charge fees for the use ports.

D. Typical Sources of Revenue and Expenditures for Early Modern Temples

The turbulence of the Warring States Period and the religious and bureaucratic changes wrought by Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the successive Tokugawa shoguns affected the financial circumstances of temples and shrines in a number of ways. Some sources of

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49 McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 79–86.
Income remained the same or were slightly altered—many institutions could still count on the income from land grants and on the largesse of wealthy and powerful laypeople. New regulations placed restrictions on some forms of income, such as fundraising, while they opened new sources of income in others, such as the funerary and memorial rites many temples came to rely upon.

In the early part of the period, the country was largely an agricultural economy, reliant upon rice. As time passed, however, gold, silver, and copper currency became the mainstays of trade. As Helen Hardacre has convincingly argued, although grain in the form of land tax or funerary/memorial rites formed the economic foundations of many religious institutions in the beginning of the period, these institutions had to evolve to match the developing cash economy. Institutions that failed to do so were at the mercy of wildly fluctuating grain markets. Temples could make this shift in any number of ways. They could sell access to or items associated with the main deity of the temple. Many also sold medicines, dolls, *shichimi* pepper powder, tofu, and so on. Temple clerics were not, however, allowed to sell, pawn, or offer up as collateral temple treasures or other property. They could offer classes to village children. Or, they could become financial centers by offering loans or other investment opportunities.

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52 Jaffe discusses the *Nikujiki saitai ben* of Chikū, who lists the ways that non-True Pure Land temples sold items to survive. Jaffe, *Neither Monk nor Layman*, 44–45; Williams, *The Other Side of Zen*, chap. 5.


54 I will not discuss this here, but for more on temple finance and temple schools (*terakoya* 寺子屋), see Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 335–344.

55 Ibid., 300–306.
For many institutions expenses remained the same. They still needed food for the priest(s), salaries for the temple staff (if there was any), offerings such as candles or flowers, travel expenses (if any), and funds for the upkeep of the temple buildings and grounds. The cost of food varied greatly throughout the period, but one koku of rice (around 278 liters), or the equivalent in currency, which was supposed to be one gold ryō, was considered to be the amount of rice required to feed one man for one year; this of course assumes eating home-cooked meals and consuming non-ceremonial meals which would have involved more ingredients and cost more. Temple staff income varied depending upon institution and position within that institution: Daihongan’s administrative staff members received anywhere from half a ryō to 1.25 ryō a year in 1793, while Imai Isoemon, the intendant and chief administrator of Zenkōji’s lands received around 24 koku of rice in 1852.\(^{56}\) Offerings and small consumables used during rituals could also eat away at a temple’s finances—a box of candles could cost around 0.125 ryō, for instance.\(^{57}\) Larger costs, such as those associated with travel and temple repairs could come to much more than a temple, even a large temple such as Zenkōji, could pay on its own using its regular sources of income. For example, on the small end of things, temporary structures, such as a 3.6 m x 1.8 m teahouse built on Aoyama Zenkōji’s lands for a display of its treasures in 1755 cost 33 ryō, while larger, more

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\(^{56}\) For more information on the salaries paid to Zenkōji’s administrators, see Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū* 長野市史考—近世善光寺町の研究, 111–114.

\(^{57}\) Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 303.
complex structures, such as the complete rebuilding of Zenkōji’s main hall, one of the largest wooden structures in Japan, in 1704–1707 came to around 25,000 ryō.⁵⁸

1. Land

Land remained an important source of income for temples in the early modern period as well. However, the Toyotomi and Tokugawa rulers reconfigured the form of landholding by religious institutions and redistributed temple lands.⁵⁹ Land in early modern Japan was measured in terms of its potential productivity—how many koku of rice it could produce in a year. Of course, some temples had no land other than that which they were built upon. Others were granted land by the bakufu or domainal lords to feed clerics and staff or for the upkeep of the temple. Grants of land by the shogun were certified by a shuinjō, or a vermillion-seal land grant; these were renewed with each new shogun and were considered a mark of prestige. If granted by a domainal lord, they were called black-seal grants (kokuinjō). Other types of lands were new lands donated by patrons (kishinchi), tax-exempt lands (jochi), and gate town (monzen).⁶⁰ These grants often guaranteed the holder the right to profit from the “temple gate town, mountains, forests, bamboo, and wood” from the land in

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⁵⁸ Takatsukasa Seigyoku, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 60; McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon, 173.

⁵⁹ This configuration was not simply at the level of redefinition of the productivity of land. The Tokugawa reduced the landholdings of certain temples to constrain them—a number of imperial monasteries, temples that were seen as a threat to the bakufu because they had been powerful previously and had connections to the imperial family, were affected in this way. On the other hand, they increased the landholdings of other temples that they had an affinity for. Takano Toshihiko, Kinsei Nihon no kokka kenyoku to shūkyō 近世日本の国家権力と宗教, 132–136.

perpetuity.\(^{61}\) Though having a land grant provided some degree of stability to early modern religious institutions, most did not receive enough land to rely solely upon them. According to one estimate, in the beginning of the seventeenth century a temple would have to have an annual income of at least 10 koku of rice to support itself, something that most temples simply did not have.\(^{62}\)

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Zenkōji received a thousand koku vermilion-seal land grant from Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1601.\(^{63}\) This included a number of chō neighborhoods in Zenkōji Town and some farming villages nearby. This was one of the largest temple or shrine land grants in Shinano province, and one of the larger ones in Japan.\(^{64}\) This grant provided a large portion of the funds for both administrative heads of Zenkōji and its smaller sub-temples throughout the Edo period and first years of the Meiji period.

Holders of these grants were not given free rein over the people living on the lands, however. While temples extracted taxes from the residents on their land holdings,

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\(^{61}\) This language is used in the red-seal land grants for Daihongan’s Edo branch. Daihongan Fuku 2 61.001.

\(^{62}\) Of 2,838 temples listed in a Kan’ei era register, 15 percent received less than one koku from landholdings, 52 percent received between one and five koku, and 13 percent received between six and ten koku of rice. Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan*, 2.

\(^{63}\) Some have suggested that this was simply a renewal of a grant given to the temple by Toyotomi Hideyori. There is no record to corroborate this, however. McCallum, *Zenkōji and Its Icon*, 167–168;

\(^{64}\) There were 85 shrines and temples given red-seal grants in Shinano Province. Though most of these were under 100 koku (and most of those were from 10–30 koku), there were some larger grants. These included Mt. Togakushi (1000 koku plus 200 koku for Kurita Kennosuke), Suwa Shrine (1000 koku) and Shimo Suwa Shrine (500 koku), Yawata Shrine (now called Takemizuwake Shrine in what is now Chikuma City) (200 koku), Izuna Shrine (100 koku), Chōkokuji (the clan temple of the Sanada Family) (100 koku), Daieiji in Matsushiro (100 koku), and one shrine I have not been able to locate (100 koku). Nagano shiryō (Shinano no kuni goshuin jisharyō) “Shinkyō hakubutsukan 信教博物館” n.d., Nagano City Public Archives 長野市立公文書館 fuku 2 9.009.

To put Zenkōji’s land grant in outside perspective, Asakusa Sensōji received 500 koku.
they could not demand too much for fear of disturbances or lawsuits and subsequent reprisals. In Zenkōji’s case this came twice in the middle of the seventeenth century and once again in 1813. The first incident occurred in 1639 and 1640 when the residents of the Shimodaimonchō neighborhood and the villages of Hakoshimizu, Nanase, and Hirashiba brought a suit to the bakufu against Zenkōji’s intendant in charge of the temple lands (*daikan* 代官), Takahashi Enki 高橋円喜. They argued that he had been acting inappropriately by holding the regular market in front of his house, using his position to unfairly buy items at the market, not adjusting the townspeople’s post station duties to match changes in Zenkōji town’s population, using an unusually large measure to collect tax rice, and forcibly selling back the tax rice at inflated prices. 65 Enki came from Zenkōji’s Byakurenbō 白蓮坊 Pure Land sub-temple, so he had some support from Zenkōji itself; he also garnered the support of fellow administrators while pressuring the residents of several other neighborhoods to stand with him, so the suit came to naught. Enki and his family’s position was further cemented when his older brother Jūshō 重昌 became the abbot of Daikanjin (abbot from 1640–1666), and all three of Enki’s sons took up the post of head administrator. Enki’s sons did not have his luck, however. In 1678, villagers and townspeople alike brought suits against Enki’s son Shōemon 庄右衛門 and his relative Inoemon 伊之右衛門, both temple administrators. They accused the pair of

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65 Weights and measures varied throughout Japan at this time. Hideyoshi had attempted to make the *Kyōmasu* 京枡, consisting of 10 gō 合 or 1.74 liters, standard. In 1669 the Tokugawa bakufu again attempted to standardize volumetric measures by introducing the *New kyōmasu* (*shinkyōmasu* 新京枡), which was also 10 gō, but was 1.80 liters. This remained the standard in bakufu territories throughout the period. Takahashi was using a *masu* that held 13 gō to measure tax rice, meaning that residents on Zenkōji’s lands were potentially paying 30% more in taxes than people in other places. Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 132.
forcing villagers to take high-interest loans, using loans to gain an unfair amount of lands (they owned a quarter of the lands in Hakoshimizu village, for instance), holding people hostage until loans were repaid, diverting the village’s water supply so it only ran to their fields, and so on. Daikanjin’s abbot, Jūshin 重真 (abbot from 1666–1680) was forced to take action: he placed Shōemon and his older brother Zuikan 随閑, who was the previous head administrator, under house arrest. Though they appealed to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the Takahashis lost. They were banished from Zenkōji’s lands, their holdings were given to the villagers, and their possessions were passed on to the next head administrator, Yamazaki Tōhei 山崎藤兵衛.66

Though rulers and administrators came to understand that they could not exploit the people living on their lands, there was a further expectation that they show benevolence to those people in times of need. This became clear to Zenkōji’s administrators in 1813.10.13, when townspeople angry over the high cost of rice destroyed the homes of twenty-two rice merchants and one sake brewer, who were thought to have caused the increase in prices due to hoarding or using excessive amounts of the grain. Though other homes and temple structures were undamaged, the temple and wealthy townspeople became aware of the power of their poorer neighbors. Furthermore, though not directly affected by the disturbance, Zenkōji’s administrators and the abbot of Daikanjin could be held responsible for allowing such an incident to occur. While the investigation into the incident was still occurring Daikanjin’s abbot, Ryōkan 亮寛 (abbot

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from 1806–1814), retired. Though Ryōkan cited old age as the reason, Kobayashi posits that he did it to show contrition for the incident. In any case, in order to stave off more disorder, immediately following the riots Zenkōji took out a forced loan (goyōkin 御用金) of 370 gold ryō from wealthy merchants, which it used to purchase rice to distribute amongst the residents of its lands. Furthermore, it successfully avoided similar disturbances by adopting a policy of stockpiling rice to distribute when prices increased or there was a bad harvest.

The 1813 riots demonstrate that land holders such as temples were responsible for maintaining order on and administering the people on their lands. In spite of this responsibility, there were limitations placed on such institutions. First, temples were not guaranteed complete autonomy from the public authorities: although non-entry/non-interference clauses were an important part of institutions’ sovereignty over their lands in previous periods, only a few temples were accorded these in the early modern period. In Zenkōji’s case, the nearby Matsushiro Domain was named as an outside protector (gaigo 外護) of the temple and its lands. Kobayashi surmises that this relationship began with the founding of Zenkōji’s lands, but the first evidence of this is a document from Kan’ei to Matsushiro in 1682 that requests that the domain “treat the farmers and townspeople of Zenkōji’s lands in the same manner it treats those on its own lands.” The rights and

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67 These included Mantokuji and Tōkeiji, both so-called divorce temples. These non-entry clauses meant that officials could not enter the convents to retrieve women who had absconded as a way to divorce their husbands. Wright, “The Power of Religion/The Religion of Power: Religious Activities as Upaya for Women of the Edo Period -- The Case of Mantokuji --,” 171–173; Morrell and Morrell, Zen Sanctuary of Purple Robes Japan’s Tōkeiji Convent since 1285.

responsibilities resulting from this abstruse language would become the source of a conflict and lawsuit between Matsushiro and Zenkōji (Daikanjin) in the late 1840s and early 1850s.

Second, many temples had relative financial independence.69 Zenkōji largely retained control over its own income.70 One exceptions to this was when Keiun, the early eighteenth-century abbot of Daikanjin, placed funds gathered from a country-wide display of the temple’s Amida triad into an account held by Matsushiro domain for safe keeping.

Third, temples also had a large degree of administrative autonomy over this land. Zenkōji’s administrators promulgated the temple’s rules and those of the bakufu, while the temple’s police force (dōshin 同心) enforced those rules. However, while it could carry out smaller punishments such as imprisonment or the confiscation of a criminal’s property, the temple asked Matsushiro to handle executions.71 This was similar to the way that many smaller domainal lords or Tokugawa bannermen were limited in their ability to investigate and punish certain cases.72

69 Of course, financial mismanagement would be handled by the head temple.
70 This is in contrast to Asakusa Sensōji, which turned over a great deal of its income and budgetary powers to Kan’ei. Hur, Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan, 26.
71 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考近世善光寺町の研究, 64–67.
72 Daniel Botsman notes that though landholders were usually allowed to investigate crimes that occurred on their lands, these investigations were turned over to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines or the Magistrate of Accounts if the crimes involved persons from outside the landholder’s lands. Additionally, the ability to punish was tied to the status of the landholder. Bannermen could banish criminals, but they could not execute them. Though domainal lords were granted the authority to execute criminals using any means, smaller domains did not utilize more flamboyant means – crucifixion or burning at the stake. Larger domains occasionally made use of these punishments, but not as often as the bakufu did. Daniel Botsman, Punishment and Power in the Making of Modern Japan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 80–83.
2. 

**Funerary and Memorial rites**

Another major source of income for early modern temples was the parishioner system. It has been estimated that around 95% of Buddhist temples came to rely upon income generated through the performance of rites surrounding death and memorials for “parishioner” families affiliated with the temple.\(^{73}\) These relationships between parishioner (danka 檀家, danna 檀那, or dannotsu 壇越) and temple arose from the Tokugawa bakufu’s anti-Christian measures that were implemented beginning with surveys of Christians in 1614. These regulations eventually required that all members of the Japanese populace be affiliated with a temple; by 1671 temple inspection and certification of parishioners was nearly universal.\(^{74}\) The resident priest of that temple would verify that his parishioners were not Christian or members of an outlawed sect of Buddhism such as the *Fuju fuse* branch of Nichiren.\(^{75}\) This verification would be passed on to the village headman who would record it and pass it on until it reached a bakufu office charged with examining these registers. In addition to this certification, parishioners received funerary and memorial rites from the priests at their temple.\(^{76}\)

\(^{73}\) Williams, *The Other Side of Zen*, 23.


\(^{75}\) I say “his” in this sentence when referring to the temple priest because as of this point, we have not discovered any cases of convents being directly involved in the verification or certification of parishioners. Cogan, *The Princess Nun*, 97–98.

In exchange for this verification and rituals, parishioners were expected to financially support their parish temples. Parishioners were to have the temple priests and no one else perform death and memorial rites for deceased family members, for which they must provide adequate compensation and meals. They had to visit the temple during certain holidays or the anniversaries of the deaths of temple and sect founders. Furthermore, they were to make donations of money or labor to the temple when asked. Failure to do so resulted in being branded a Christian and/or taken off of the ledger of parishioners and placed in that of the “non-humans.”

Annual parishioner support of temples varied widely. Alexander Vesey has analyzed the documents of temple holdings and income (bungenchō 分限帳) for the networks of temples associated with the Tendai Jikōji temple 慈光寺 and its Rinzai sub-temple Ryōzen’in 霊山院 in the Kantō area to the west of Edo. He discovered that temple income from annual fees from parishioners varied from 6.5 copper mon (0.0016 gold ryō) per household to 225 mon (0.056 gold ryō) per household. The variation in these numbers could have to do with the wealth of the parishioner families or the status/rank of the head priest at the temple. Higher-ranking priests were more prestigious or their rituals

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77 This list of requirements for parishioners comes from a spurious law found widely in temples of all sects; this law claims to have been written by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1613, though it was more likely written after 1691. For quotes and analysis, see Williams, The Other Side of Zen, 24; Tamamuro Fumio 児室文雄, “Local Society and the Temple-Parishioner Relationship within the Bakufu’s Governance Structure,” 266–269; Tamamuro Fumio 児室文雄, Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsei 日本仏教史近世, 183–186; Tamamuro Fumio 児室文雄, Sōshiki to danka 葬式と檀家, 183–188.
78 Vesey groups together danka parishioners and kitō parishioners (parishioners who made annual donations for the performance of rites for this-worldly benefits), so it is unclear which amount is for what type of parishioner. Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 292–299.
were seen as more efficacious and they could thus earn more from the rituals they performed.\textsuperscript{79}

Priests also received “donations” when they assigned posthumous dharma names \((hōmyō \ 法名 or kaimyō \ 戒名)\) to their parishioners. While the names were meant to function as a precept name, thus bringing the deceased into the sangha, family members of the deceased saw them as an assurance of the posthumous wellbeing of their relative. For this reason, people with means attempted to pay for better names. While the most prestigious of these names supposedly reflected religious effort, the deceased person’s social standing and economic support of the temple were also factors. As with many other issues associated with temples and money, there were critics from within and without, and attempts by the bakufu to curb commoner spending on funerals, memorial rites, and receiving posthumous names above one’s social station, though because the bakufu regularly promulgated these regulations it is thought that they were largely ineffectual.\textsuperscript{80}

Scholars estimate that for a parish temple to survive, it needed to have between 100 and 150 households associated with it. This is based on the assumption that any group of that size would have at least one death in a year, and the income generated from performing the funeral along with other memorial rites for other households could insure


\textsuperscript{80} A small group of \Sōtō Zen priests attempted to reform the system of posthumous name granting. Williams, \textit{The Other Side of Zen}, 29.

The first bakufu regulations against flamboyant services were issued in 1665. For more on these, see \textit{Ibid.}, 34; Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, “Local Society and the Temple-Parishioner Relationship within the Bakufu’s Governance Structure,” 274.
the stability of that temple and its priest(s). In many areas, however, the average number of parishioners to Buddhist temple seems to have been much less, suggesting that many of these institutions were financially unstable or that they received other forms of income.\footnote{Hardacre cites Tamamuro for the estimate on the number of parishioners required, but she does not say which of his works this comes from. In her study of Edo period gazetteers from the Kōza and Western Tama counties of Musashi province (located to the west of Edo), Helen Hardacre demonstrates that there were only 36 parish households per temple in Western Tama and 50 per temple in Kōza. Hardacre, “Sources for the Study of Religion and Society in the Late Edo Period,” 244–247.}

However, a number of temples—including Daihongan—had no funerary parishioners. There are two possible, overlapping reasons for Daihongan’s lack of funerary parishioners. First, scholars have yet to find a convent that was involved in this system.\footnote{Cogan, \textit{The Princess Nun}, 97–98.} Second, there was a group of temples called “prayer temples” (\textit{kitō dera 祈祷寺}), which included a number of popular pilgrimage temples, such as Zenkōji, that tended not to have funerary parishioners.\footnote{There are, of course, notable exceptions to this. Many sub-temples of prayer temples had parishes; these include Asakusa Sensōji, Kan’eiji, Mt. Kōya, and so on.} As a convent and a sub-temple of a prayer temple, Daihongan also had no funerary parishioners. However, as we will see in Chapter 3, Daihongan was involved in the parishioner system in a way because it collected and passed on the registries of affiliation for the people living on its lands at Zenkōji Hama Town in what is now Jōetsu City, Niigata. Furthermore, as I discuss below, it performed memorial rites for people affiliated with it or its branch temples—such as its own nuns or the head of Wakōji—and certain members of the shogun’s family. It is unclear whether...
Daihongan had no regular funerary parishioners because it was affiliated with the prayer temple Zenkōji (Daikanjin also had no funerary parishioners) or because it was a convent.

3. Donations and fundraising

Of course, the practice of making offerings to temples and shrines continued throughout the early modern period. These included large scale offerings by the bakufu and domainal lords to institutions with which they had a connection, such as funerary temples (bodaiji 菩提寺) or large institutions in their domains or provinces. People farther down the social spectrum, such as wealthy farmers, merchants, and samurai, made regular offerings parish temples, those in their neighborhoods, or those with which they were affiliated in some way, if they were a member of a confraternity, for instance. Larger and more famous institutions could expect to garner some one-time offerings from pilgrims. For instance, Sensōji earned anywhere from 1000 to 2000 gold ryō a year from its offertory boxes, amounting to 45 to 60 percent of its total yearly income.\(^{84}\) Kobayashi estimates that in the end of the Edo period the total yearly offerings in the boxes of Zenkōji’s main hall could not have exceeded 700 ryō, though they would have increased dramatically during years when there was a display of the temple’s Amida triad.\(^{85}\)

Many larger regional or national sites continued kanjin methods of solicitation through the early modern period. Because of various social changes and legal requirements, such as the requirement that itinerant practitioners/solicitors be officially affiliated with a particular temple or shrine, these types of fundraising activities were no

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84 Hur, Prayer and Play, 14-19.
85 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 319.
longer carried out by the unaffiliated (mu-en) practitioners as they had in the Heian and early medieval periods. Instead, groups of practitioners called oshi, onshi, or hijiri who were affiliated with individual temples/shrines came to travel set circuits collecting offerings from “parish” households and distributing amulets from their temple or shrine. These practitioners were indispensable as intermediaries between the households in their parishes and religious institutions, even serving as innkeepers and tour guides at their temples. Fundraising by these groups came to form a regular portion of the income of their affiliated institutions.86

When temples and shrines needed funds to cover repairs or other irregular expenses they could still hold fundraising drives. In the Edo period these were called kange 勧化, which, like kanjin, had the dual meaning of proselytization and solicitation. Institutions could do these on their own, in which case they were called private fund drives (shikange 私勧化) or they could receive the approval of the bakufu (kōgi gomen kange 公儀御免勧化). In either case, priests would travel from village to village, neighborhood to neighborhood collecting donations. Bakufu approval helped facilitate the fundraising: an institution gained permission to fundraise unhindered on all lands privately held or bakufu managed within a set area, usually a province or a few provinces, but occasionally the whole country. The priests would show their certificate of approval to the administrator of those lands who would then give notice to the people there to expect the fundraisers. The bakufu only granted approval to large temples, and from the middle of the period it attempted to place restrictions on the types of temples to

86 Ambros, Emplacing a Pilgrimage, chap. 3.
which it would grant approval. In 1750.4 the bakufu stated that it would only give
approval to temples in special circumstances, in 1754.5 it said that there would be further
limits to approvals, in 1758.8 approved temples had to state how their repairs had gone,
and in 1790.12 it limited approval to temples or shrines with connections to the bakufu
while other institutions had to use displays or lotteries to garner funds.87

4. Rites and amulets

Temples and shrines could also expect income from the performance of rites and
the sale of amulets for this-worldly benefits (*genze riyaku* 現世利益). This included the
performance of rituals for health, wealth, rain, fire prevention, and so on. Payment for
rites and votive items make up a considerable portion of the income at large and popular
prayer temples: at Asakusa Sensōji, this amounted to 15 to 20 percent of its annual
income for the years 1790 to 1830.88

Though not located in the shogunal capital like Sensōji, Zenkōji received a large
portion of its income from the performance of rites and sales of votive items because it
was (and is) a popular nationally renowned pilgrimage site. Though it is unclear what
percentage of the temple complex’s income these rites and items comprised, Kobayashi
gives the prices for rites at Zenkōji’s main hall in 1692. It cost 6 copper mon to traverse
the pitch-dark passage under the main hall and make a karmic connection with the Amida

Tamamuro states that villagers and townspeople developed ways to deal with fundraising
campaigns. Villagers would set aside a certain amount of their harvest each year and place it in a communal
account. The village headman would then be in charge of administering that account, so when fundraisers
came to the village they could only get money from the headman. This reduced the amount of burden
individuals bore when these priests came to the village.

icon (kaidan meguri 戒壇巡り), 0.25 gold ryō to have the curtain in front of the box containing the Amida icon opened, 100 copper mon to add a name to the record of memorials to be performed for those deceased (kakochō 過去帳) or still alive (genzaichō 現在帳). Zenkōji also charged half a gold ryō for daily memorials and a quarter of a gold ryō for monthly memorials, demonstrating that although the temple had no mortuary parishioners, it was still involved in the performance of memorial rites as a result of its connection to Amida and the Pure Land.\(^89\) Income from these sales increased dramatically during displays of the temple’s treasures.

5. **Branch temples, shrine administration**

National and regional head temples could receive income from their branch temples. For instance, when a branch temple or priest at such a temple attempted to move up in rank, it was customary for that temple or priest to give a monetary gift. When temples higher up the pyramid needed funds for rebuilding or large memorial services such as those held on the anniversary of a founder’s death, they would often request contributions from their branches.\(^90\) However, the bakufu stated in 1665 that head temples were “not to impose unreasonable demands upon their branch temples.”\(^91\) The support of Wakōji for Daihongan (Chapter 3) is an example of this.

A further source of income for a number of temples was the administration of and performance of rituals at local shrines (i.e., shrines not located on temple grounds). Helen

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\(^89\) Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 319.
\(^91\) Cited in Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 149.
Hardacre has shown that in the Kōza and Western Tama Counties of Musashi Province, located to the west of Edo, over 48 percent and 18 percent of the shrines respectively were administered by clerics from nearby temples. These shrines thus became outposts for the clerics’ ritual and fundraising activities. It is important to note that temples administered all of the shrines with land grants in Kōza and more than three quarters of the shrines with land grants in Western Tama, thus adding a further boost to the income of the administering temples.\(^{92}\) While Daihongan was not in charge of any rituals at shrines outside of temple grounds, the nuns were in charge of maintaining and administering the Toshigami shrine on Zenkōji’s grounds, and thus earned some income from it as I discuss below.

6. **Loans**

Many temples offered loans, the interest of which would be used to support various activities. These ranged from those offered with official support of the bakufu or daimyo to simple loans offered by the local village temple. Here I will focus on the former and will discuss other loans briefly in Chapter 5 below.

One term for loans offered by temples was *shidōkin 祠堂金*; this is a term which would typically be applied to endowments begun from donations, the interest of which was used to fund memorial services for the departed, or for the building and maintenance of temple halls, in a manner similar to the practices in India and China outlined above.\(^{93}\)

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\(^{92}\) Hardacre, “Sources for the Study of Religion and Society in the Late Edo Period,” 252–255.

\(^{93}\) See, for example, Charles Muller’s entry in the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism for *shidōgin 祠堂金* [http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E7%A5%A0%E5%A0%82%E9%8A%80](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E7%A5%A0%E5%A0%82%E9%8A%80) .
In the early modern period many temples throughout Japan offered *shidōkin* loans, though they could only be explicitly called "*shidōkin*" if they had official approval of the bakufu. Tamamuro states that the building of halls or holding of services was in many cases merely a pretext for the temples’ financial activities. Temples would receive some money from the *bakufu*, daimyo, or wealthy commoners as a gift or an investment. They would then offer it as a loan to the temple’s parishioners, people living on temple lands, or those nearby. Interest rates varied, but the bakufu ordered that official rates of interest by approved temples could not exceed 15 percent in 1741 and 12 percent in 1842. A higher rate of interest meant that the temples could repay their initial investors and keep some of the funds as profits. Recipients of *shidōkin* loans ranged from wealthy entrepreneurs and farmers to townspeople who were just barely scraping by; the loans could be used to fund the building of brothels in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters, repay debts, or simply pay taxes. Because some of these recipients were not well off, they occasionally defaulted on their loans. If it had not protected its loan by demanding collateral or guarantors, the temple could pursue litigation against the borrower or lose its principle and interest income. If temple/lenders had required land as collateral, they could

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94 These could take a number of names besides *shidōkin*, including *meimokukin* or *myōmokukin* 名目金; the name of the hall they were supposed to fund (*Yakushidōkin* for a hall to Yakushi or *Kannonōdōkin* for a hall to Kannon); the name of the largest or most prestigious financier (*Mito goyōkōkin* for money offered by the head of the Mito domain); or the name of the priest who organized it. Tamamuro Fumio, *Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsen* 日本仏教史近世, 320.

Kobayashi states that only imperial temples, those with connections to the bakufu, or high-ranking temples could receive bakufu approval to offer *shidōkin* loans. Kobayashi Keiichirō, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 331.


96 Yokoyama Yuriko is currently investigating the use by Shin-Yoshiwara brothel owners of the imperial temple Bukkōji 仏光寺’s *myōmokukin* 名目金 (also called *meimokukin*) loans via its branch temple in Edo Saitokujī 西徳寺. Her work brings to light a complex financial network of wealthy farmers in the Shinano town of Suzaka who invested in the temple’s loans, the temple itself, and the brothel owners.
gain lands beyond what they initially possessed when the borrower defaulted; they could then rent out these lands to tenant farmers to earn extra income. However, gaining lands in this way was ostensibly outlawed by the bakufu in 1762.2.

Like other temples, Zenkōji offered shidōkin loans. Though the temple received lands and funds from wealthy courtiers or warriors to set up endowments for memorial rites starting at least by the thirteenth century, these rites and the endowments that supported them most likely came to an end due to the social and economic changes of the Warring States period. The temple’s early modern shidōkin loans started in the early eighteenth century. Daikanjin’s head Keiun (abbot from 1700–1714) supposedly provided the original assets for the shidōkin account: he offered 429 ō in leftover funds from the rebuilding of Zenkōji’s main hall in 1707.98 The account grew as petitioners made donations for permanent memorial services at the temple, so by the end of the early modern period, it had reached over 7000 ō. Daikanjin administered the account, and recipients were limited to those living on Zenkōji’s lands.99 Though it grew considerably over the period, it was difficult to maintain the funds in those accounts for a number of reasons. One reason was that temple never fully took advantage of its funds. They usually only loaned out around half of the funds in the account at one time. Furthermore, it

97 Tamamuro Fumio, Nihon Bukkyō shi: Kinsei, 320–322.
98 There were actually two shidōkin accounts at Zenkōji: the first was fund for various expenses (shoryōmotsukin 諸科物金), which was founded by Keiun and grew with donations from petitioners, and the second was the Sub-temples’ shidōkin (Sanjichū shidōkin 三寺中祠堂金), which was based on donations given to Zenkōji’s various sub-temples. However, in reality, Daikanjin administered both of these jointly. Kobayashi Keiichirō, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 334.
99 Or, rather, Daikanjin’s abbot was to oversee the operations while the temple’s administrators handled day-to-day running of the funds. However, in reality the administrators operated unchecked, according to Kobayashi.
occasionally had difficulties collecting money or collateral on loans that had been defaulted on. It attempted to counter this by only offering loans to people living on temple lands, however this was a double-edged sword. Though it meant that the temple did not have to cross jurisdictional boundaries to collect loans, at the same time the temple could not be too forceful in collecting payments. Administrators usually offered extensions on loans rather than enforce repayment and risk the ill will of the townspeople. Additionally, and particularly near the end of the period, these loans came to function as a form of assistance to those in need (kyūsai 救済)—the temple abolished or reduced interest payments on existing loans following disasters such as the Zenkōji Earthquake of 1847, and in the 1850s and 1860s it offered over a third of its loans interest free. The second reason that the shidōkin accounts were difficult to maintain has to do with Daikanjin’s accounts. The temple usually tried to keep its own accounts separate from the shidōkin accounts. For example, it attempted to pay for temple repairs through other means, such as traveling displays of temple treasures, and cover its debts in other ways. However, there were times in the end of the Edo period when it drew from the shidōkin accounts to cover these expenses.\(^{100}\)

### III. Daihongan’s finances

#### A. Financial history

Daihongan seems to have started out the period relatively well off. By the end of the period, however, Daihongan was deep in debt to townspeople in Zenkōji’s gate towns as well as the nearby Matsushiro domain. Kobayashi places the date of Daihongan’s

\(^{100}\) Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 330–349.
economic downturn in the Bunka years (1804–1818). His evidence for this is that when the Nativist scholar, Ise Shrine priest, and guide (oshi 御師) Arakida Hisaoyu 荒木田久老 (1747–1804) traveled to Shinano province in 1786, he visited both Daikanjin and Daihongan, and Arakida received a better meal and more sendoff gifts from the convent. While Kobayashi uses this as evidence for Daihongan being affluent in the late eighteenth century, we can question whether this was actually the case or whether the convent was providing such meals and gifts to maintain the appearance of being well off. Takatsukasa places the convent’s economic downturn earlier, to the years just prior to Chikan’s death in 1790. Given the information from Daihongan’s only financial ledger available, the 1793 Ledger of Income and Expenditures, I agree with Takatsukasa that the convent faced economic difficulties at least as early as the 1790s, though without further evidence it is unclear exactly when its financial hardship may have begun.

I will discuss the contents of the 1793 Ledger in more detail below, but here I would like to give a brief summary. First, the Ledger is for the outer portion of

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101 Kobayashi also says that Zenkōji’s and Daikanjin’s financial difficulties began in this period as well. He says that Daikanjin had to get a large loan from Iwashita Heisuke (Hirasuke?) 岩下平助 in 1811 and required a further “coerced loan” (goyōkin 御用金) in 1813 following the rice riots in Zenkōji’s gate town that I discussed earlier. Ibid., 327.

102 Arakida’s travelogue, the Itsukizon Shinano dankai Nikki 五樹園信濃檀会日記 is available on the Shinano Digikura (Digital Storehouse) website. He discusses his visits to Daikanjin and Daihongan on the 10th and 11th koma, or on the 12th, 13th, and 14th days of his trip. Arakida Hisaoyu 荒木田久老, “Itsukizon Shinano Dankaiki Nikki 五樹園信濃檀会日記,” accessed January 15, 2015, [http://digikura.pref.nagano.lg.jp/kura/id/02BK0104163332-jp; Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺智昭上人の生涯, 202–203.]


105 Of course, there is the possibility that the convent was never well off, that it was always relying upon loans and bakufu-approved fundraising.
Daihongan only. Though it mentions some of the finances of other institutions—including the concurrently held branch temple of Aoyama Zenkōji—and of the inner portion of the convent, this is largely administrative in nature, covering such things as the amount received for rituals or land rentals, but not for food for the nuns living at the convent. Though this may limit our understanding of how the temple functioned in some ways, it is also extremely illuminating as to the divide between the duties of the outer and inner portions of the convent. This divide was perhaps more clearly demarcated at this point because Chishō had just become abbess, and since she was still young the elder nuns and administrators had divided administration over the inner portion of the convent (the nuns) and outer portion (the administrators). Furthermore, it demonstrates that though Daihongan and Aoyama Zenkōji were jointly held, income and expenditures largely stayed within each institution, except in a few cases.

Second, without other ledgers for comparison, it is unclear just how representative 1793 was financially. I can say that the year was relatively unremarkable for the convent in that it did not have any irregular expenditures such as travel or repairs. One unusual element was that this was one of the few times that Abbess Chishō was in residence at Daihongan.

Finally, I would like to briefly summarize the convent’s finances as seen in this ledger. The first thing to note is that the convent carried only a small balance forward from 1792. It began 1793 with only around 5 gold ryō in its accounts. Next, because of the large amounts of loan payments the convent had in 1793 it began 1794 with an even

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106 It was 2 gold shu 20,864 copper mon.
smaller amount on the books. It had less than 0.4 gold ryō. The convent’s financial troubles in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had many repercussions, including multiple loans and austerity measures.

B. Income

In 1793, Daihongan received 766.625 gold ryō and 671 copper mon from all sources after it converted the various currencies to gold and copper (Table 2-1).\(^\text{107}\) However, a large portion of this income came from various types of loans. One type of loan was a “confraternity of boundless [compassion]” (mujin kō 無尽講) financial campaign; I will discuss this type of campaign in more detail in Chapter 5 below. In 1793, “investments” into this campaign amounted to over 271 gold ryō, or over 35 percent of Daihongan’s revenue for the year. Loans from commoners and the inner portion of the convent also constituted a large portion, at over 187 ryō, or over 24 percent of Daihongan’s income.\(^\text{108}\) That some loans came from the inner portion of the convent is further evidence that though there was a formal division between the inner and outer portions, they were not completely separate. Other income came from offerings and fees for rituals (a little more than 130 ryō, 17 percent), the convent’s lands (more than 142 ryō, 18.5 percent), and gifts from the shogun (16.25 ryō, 2 percent). The remaining roughly 5 percent came from various places such as interest on loans, celebratory gifts to

\(^{107}\) 1 ryō = 4 bu = 16 shu. Additionally, the exchange rate for gold to copper was supposed to be set at 1 gold ryō = 4000 copper mon. So, in 1793, the convent received 766.793 gold ryō. They would have lost some money to conversion fees. Nagano kenshi kankōkai, Nagano kenshi, 1971, 7–1:693–698 Document 416.

\(^{108}\) The language used in this ledger make it unclear sometimes whether something is a “loan” directly to the convent (okariiri or azukari) or an “investment” (moraikin, azukari, torikin or simply mujin) in the mujinkō. Unless the document explicitly stated “mujin” in the entry I have treated it as a loan.
mark the completion of the 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount (in gold ryō, silver monme, and copper mon)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money from offertory boxes</td>
<td>119 ryō 433 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations (oreisen 御礼錢) during festivals</td>
<td>3,765 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations (“candle fees” rōsokudai 蠟燭代)</td>
<td>3000 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly memorial (gappai 月牌)</td>
<td>3.5 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea offering (chatōryō 茶湯料)</td>
<td>0.25 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold exchange (a bullion from the shogun’s castle?)</td>
<td>16.25 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds from Wakōji</td>
<td>3 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial fees</td>
<td>0.75 ryō 500 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of unpolished rice</td>
<td>11 ryō 3.16 silver monme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty fees (yakudai 役代)</td>
<td>3,600 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindling fees (sodadai 鹿代)</td>
<td>11,000 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of salt</td>
<td>0.5 ryō 92 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribute (shūnōkin 収納金)</td>
<td>111.25 ryō 632 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent from longhouses and storefronts</td>
<td>15,625 ryō 742 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest from loans</td>
<td>1.75 ryō 12 silver monme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan from the “inner portion of the convent”</td>
<td>2.125 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans (okariiri 御借入り) from commoners</td>
<td>185,375 ryō 1.61 monme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mujin</td>
<td>271.5 ryō 3.68 monme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>42.5 ryō 14,836 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>784,375 ryō 20.45 monme 38600 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total after conversion to gold reported in ledger.109</td>
<td>766,625 ryō and 671 mon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

109 This is the total reported in the ledger. The convent probably lost some money when they exchanged their various currencies to gold.
4. **Conventional sources such as land**

Daihongan of course received part of its revenue through the sources mentioned above: annual rice tribute, large scale donations, and smaller scale offerings. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Zenkōji was given land valued at roughly 1000 *koku*. Of course funds from these lands went to Zenkōji in name only—in reality, they were divided between Daikanjin, Daihongan, and Zenkōji’s smaller sub-temples as outlined in a document called the *Shōwari shōmon* 小割証文. According to this document Daikanjin received 490 *koku* and Daihongan got 236 *koku* total, while Daikanjin distributed smaller amounts to the Shūto (168 *koku*), Nakashū (75 *koku*), and Tsumado (31 *koku*) sub-temples.

This 1000 *koku* of land included farming villages and *chō* neighborhoods that were a part of what was commonly called Zenkōji town. The villagers paid their tribute in rice. For example, in 1687, Daihongan received 282 bales (*tawara* 表) of rice while Daikanjin got 830 bales for itself and Zenkōji’s smaller sub-temples. On the other hand, the inhabitants of the *chō* neighborhoods paid in cash. Daihongan received over 111 *ryō* in monetary tribute in 1793.

Because Zenkōji had received a vermillion seal grant for these lands, the income from these lands was guaranteed throughout the period, providing a degree of stability to the temple complex. This income was variable, however, especially that derived from rice. The value of rice fluctuated greatly throughout the period; this would have

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111 It is unclear how much the convent received in rice in 1793. The Ledger records that they sold 42 bales of unpolished rice, though it does not state whether this was all or a portion of the amount they received.
influenced the income of the temple complex. So, even though in 1793, Daihongan sold 42 bales of unpolished rice (roughly 4546 liters) for a little more than 11 gold ryō, it was not guaranteed that amount of income from rice every year.\textsuperscript{112} Famines and poor climate may have also impacted Zenkōji’s income—the temple may have had to offer tax breaks to its residents during famines, for instance. This would have affected the portion of Daihongan’s income that came from rice tribute. Finally, demographic changes reduced the amount of actual income the temple complex received from its lands. The number of residents on Zenkōji’s lands tripled during the early modern period, from roughly 3000 in the beginning of the period to roughly 8000 later on. This meant the temples had to provide more administrators and staff for the increased population; however the amount that the temple received in tribute remained the same throughout the period.\textsuperscript{113}

In addition to tribute, there were a number of other ways that Daihongan profited from its lands. For instance, Daihongan and Daikanjin split control of Mt. Asahi (785 m. high, west of Zenkōji’s main hall) and Mt. Ōmine (828 m., just to the northwest of Zenkōji’s main hall). The townspeople of Zenkōji’s gate town could use these mountains to gather kindling, fertilizer and mushrooms, but there were limits on when they could enter the mountain and what they could take.\textsuperscript{114} Furthermore, they may have had to pay to enter or take things from the mountain because in 1793, Daihongan received 11 copper

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{112} Nagano kenshi kankōkai, \textit{Nagano kenshi}, 1971, 7-1:693–698 document 416.
\item\textsuperscript{113} Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, \textit{Zenkōjishi kenkyū}, 322.
\item\textsuperscript{114} Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, \textit{Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū} 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究, 302–306.
\end{itemize}
kanmon (around 2.75 gold ryō) from the people on Zenkōji’s lands for kindling fees from the mountains.\textsuperscript{115}

Rent from land in the neighborhoods at its gate added over 15 ryō to the convent’s coffers. Daihongan also received income as the landlord of areas where several of its branch temples were located. For example, Daihongan directly received 1724.5 liters (9.56 koku) of salt as tribute each year from the residents of Zenkōji Hama Town in Echigo province where the convent’s branch temple Jūnenji was located. In 1793 they sold two bales of this salt for a little more than half a gold ryō. Furthermore, although this would have gone into Aoyama Zenkōji’s coffers instead of Daihongan’s, the gate town and a portion of the convent’s lands in Aoyama provided its concurrently held branch temple with rent income of over 146 ryō.\textsuperscript{116}

5. \textit{Direct assistance and donations from the bakufu}

In addition to the largesse of granting lands to Zenkōji and to Daihongan, the shogun, women of the inner quarters, and various domainal lords offered monetary donations and assistance to Daihongan on regular and irregular occasions. One hint of this in the 1793 Ledger is that the convent had to exchange a gold bullion for 16.25 ryō of smaller coins for everyday use. This may have come from Chishō’s 1791 visit to the shogun’s castle. During the abbesses’ visits to the castle, it was common to receive money in bullion form from the shogun and his family members. It may not have been

\textsuperscript{115} Though other institutions engaged in silviculture on the mountainous areas under their control, occasionally engaging in suits to protect these lands, there are no records of Zenkōji intentionally selling or replanting the trees on Mt. Asahi and Ōmine. For more on the cultivation, sales, and suits surrounding trees on temple landholdings, see Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 292–295.

\textsuperscript{116} Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029.
safe for the convent to rely on this source of income too much, however, as it occurred every third year, and the amount given may have fluctuated depending upon the circumstances of the bakufu and the reasons for the abbesses’ visit.

On the other hand, the abbesses petitioned the ladies of the inner quarters for assistance in maintaining buildings connected with the shogunate. In 1770, the abbess petitioned to receive aid to repair the Kannon Hall which had been built with funds from Keishō-in, mother of Shogun Tsunayoshi; the elders of the Inner Quarters responded by sending 16 gold ryō, 507 silver monme, and 1,760 copper mon. Additionally, Daihongan occasionally received funds to repair the building which housed Tokugawa family memorial tablets and small bones called the Otamaya 御霊屋. This was built in 1645 to house a memorial tablet of Sūgen’in 崇源院 (1573–1626), who was the second Shogun Hidetada’s wife, and a tooth from Honri’in 本理院 (1602–1674), who was the third Shogun Iemitsu’s wife. Later, memorial tablets of other women connected with the shogunate were added. In 1773, for example those of Shinkan’in 心観院 (1738–1771) the wife of the tenth Shogun Ieharu, and their second daughter, Manjuhime 万寿姫 (posthumous name Jōdai’in 乘台院, 1761–1773) were added. When the Otamaya needed repairs in the late eighteenth century, Chikan contacted the shogunate, who gave 250 ryō in 1779 to finance repairs to it and the Toshigami Shrine 歳神堂 (also known as Otoshikoshi no miya 御年越宮), which had been built just north of Zenkōji’s main hall at the same time as the Otamaya. The abbess kept the shogun apprised of the repairs, and sent thanks when they were completed. Such assistance came with a price, however.
After the repairs were completed in 1779, the abess promised to send a portion of the Toshigami Shrine’s offerings and some amulets with Zenkōji’s seal on them to the shogun at the beginning of each year. Since the condition of the Kannon Hall, the Tamaya and the Toshigami Shrine were not only a display of the convent’s wealth, but also reflected upon the donors as well, it was in the shogun’s and the women of the Inner Quarters of Edo castle’s interest to keep them well maintained.

These requests were not simply about money, of course. They were about reaffirming or strengthening ties to the shogunate; this assistance could later be used when the convent made further requests, such as when Daihongan demonstrated its connections to the shogunate when it applied for approval to hold lottery drawings, as we will see in Chapter 5.

6. Offerings and Fees from Rituals
Daihongan also received a portion of its income from the offertory boxes in Zenkōji’s main hall and probably from smaller buildings on the Zenkōji complex such as the Sanmon gate, the sutra repository, and the Toshigami shrine as well. The method for dividing the income from these boxes changed several times throughout the period, and as Kobayashi notes, it was always an object of contention any time there was a conflict between Zenkōji’s sub-temples. The system for dividing the income from these offertory boxes amongst the various temples within the Zenkōji complex was rather complicated, but in 1692, in Daihongan’s case, it was relatively straightforward.

117 Takatsukasa Seigyoku 聡司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 36–43.
118 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 319.
119 According to Kobayashi, the income from the main hall was divided up in the following way in 1692. During the daytime, Daihongan received the offerings placed in the center box within the middle of...
convent received daytime\textsuperscript{120} offerings placed in one of the three offertory boxes within the middle section (\textit{chūjin} 中陣) of Zenkōji’s main hall. In 1793, the convent’s earnings from the offertory boxes was tallied twice a month. The offerings in the boxes were usually small denomination copper coins (i.e. \textit{mon}), though they did occasionally receive some small denomination gold or silver coins. In total they received almost 120 gold \textit{ryō} for the entire year, an average of 10 \textit{ryō} per month.\textsuperscript{121} For the sake of comparison, Kobayashi states that in 1853 Daikanjin received roughly 300 gold \textit{ryō} from the offertory boxes; from this he estimates that the total yearly offerings in the boxes of Zenkōji’s main hall in the last half of the Edo period could not have exceeded 700 \textit{ryō}.\textsuperscript{122}

Daihongan also received money more directly as offerings or payments for rituals. The convent received “thanks offerings” (\textit{oreisen} 御礼銭) of varying amounts five times throughout the year. Several of these corresponded to the five calendar holidays: following the various New Year’s celebrations on 1.29 (they received 1000 copper \textit{mon} total), the third month celebration of Jōshi (called Dolls’ Day in contemporary Japan, 732 copper \textit{mon}), the fifth month celebration of Tango (now called Children’s Day, 850 \textit{mon}),

\textsuperscript{120} Daytime meant \textit{akemutsu to kuremutsu}, roughly 6 AM to 6 PM, though this could differ based on the season.
\textsuperscript{122} Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, \textit{Zenkōjishi kenkyū}, 319.
Tanabata on 7.7 (445 mon), and the first fruits celebration on 8.1 (Hassaku 八朔, 738 mon). Unfortunately, the people who made these offerings are not listed in the Ledger.

Shop owners from Daihongan’s gate town gave 1500 copper mon for candles (rōsokudai 蜡燭代) in the second and eighth months; it is unclear whether this was obligatory or voluntarily given. The convent also received 0.25 gold ryō from unnamed donors for “tea water,” or offerings of tea to be made in front of the convent’s icons. Daihongan was given 3.5 gold ryō to perform monthly memorial rites (gappai 月牌). Since these are listed in increments of 0.25 ryō, it seems that that was the base fee for these memorial rites, which was the same amount charged for a similar ritual at Zenkōji’s main hall. If this was the case, then in 1793 the convent performed these rites for fourteen people.

Though the names of most of the sponsors of these rites are not listed in the ledger, in one case the sponsor was Gyokusen 玉泉, one of Daihongan’s elder nuns, though it is unclear for whom she sponsored the rite. Clerics from both Daihongan and Wakōji also sponsored memorials. The two elder nuns, Hōzen 法善 and Gyokusen, along with three other nuns (Teishin 貞信, Ekō 恵光, Shinkyō 真亮, and Teishin 諦心) offered 500 copper mon for the seventh anniversary of the death of Seijun 誓順, a young woman who was to be Chikan’s successor but who died when she was seventeen in 1787.9.6. Priests from Wakōji paid 3 gold bu for the one-year memorial rite for Ehaku, the seventh head of Daihongan’s Osaka branch temple. This demonstrates that these renunciants had at least some money, or access to money, if they could sponsor such rites.
It is unclear who performed these rites since Chishō was twelve years old and had been abbess for less than three years in 1793. Since Hōzen and Gyokusen were to handle the inner part of the temple until the abbess came of age at fifteen, perhaps their roles included performing these rituals as well. However, it is also possible that Chishō performed these rites with the help of the other nuns at the convent.

A further question is just how these rites would have been handled during the nuns’ absences from Daihongan. As I mentioned earlier, although Chishō was in residence at Daihongan in 1793, she spent most of her time in Edo. Perhaps Daihongan’s administrators forwarded a list of memorials to perform to Aoyama. Furthermore, without additional financial ledgers for Daihongan, it is unclear whether people would have continued to pay for these types of rituals at Daihongan if the abbesses were not around to perform them, though the convent would probably have continued to offer them.

C. Expenditures
In 1793, Daihongan spent 766.25 ryō 444 copper mon (Table 2-2). Of that, over 332 ryō (43 percent of expenditures) was paid to Koyama Yaemon; unfortunately, this entry does not have an explanation other than “this amount paid to Koyama Yaemon,” so it is unclear why it was paid or who Yaemon was. The entry’s placement after a

124 The name “Yaemon” appears in several entries in the ledger for interest payments or mujin investments; one of these Yaemon lived in Daimonchō and the other in Higashichō, yet it is unclear which one of these is Koyama (if either of them are). Furthermore, I have been unable to find further information on Koyama in other convent documents or in the city or prefectural archives.
subtotal of expenditures (over 433 ryō) in the ledger, along with the fact that this payment brought the convent’s expenditures to just under its income—a little more than a quarter of a ryō remained in its accounts—suggests that this may have been a repayment on a large loan, and that the convent needed to pay as much as possible on it. Other items on the ledger were explicitly marked as loan payments; both principal and interest paid came to more than 285 ryō, or 37 percent of expenses.\textsuperscript{125} Yearly installments paid to participants in the mujin confraternity came to more than 58 ryō (7.6 percent). The convent not only received loans, but it lent money as well; in 1793, it lent a small amount of money to a resident of Ganzeki chō, one of Zenkōji’s gate town neighborhoods.

Administrators received a small stipend for their labor. Sōkōji, the administrative priest, was paid 0.75 gold ryō, two-thirds was paid by the outer portion of Daihongan and one-third by the “inner part of the convent.” Yoshimura Tomiemon got 1 ryō, half of which was in compensation for his “troubles” (taigi 太義) caused by being made to live in Edo “for a long time” and the other half paid by the inner part of the convent. Daimonchō’s Kanzaemon received 1.25 ryō for his “troubles”; these troubles perhaps relate to another entry in the ledger that states that he was ordered by the public authorities to look after several neighborhoods in Zenkōji’s gate town.

Daihongan also gave a little more than 38 ryō to various elements of its temple network. The largest portion of this, 35 ryō, went to Aoyama Zenkōji to pay for temple repairs. Similarly, the convent loaned 3.25 ryō to its branch in Echigo, Jūnenji, for repairs.

\textsuperscript{125} For the sake of comparison, Daikanjin had roughly 1200 ryō per year of income in the 19th century, but by the 1810s and 1820s, it was operating at around 300 ryō in the red every year. Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 341.
to its halls. That Aoyama was given funds but Jūnenji was loaned them hints at these temple’s relationships with Daihongan. Aoyama Zenkōji was a jointly held temple, so there was a porous division between its finances and Daihongan’s, while Jūnenji was a branch temple, so it was connected to but financially independent of Daihongan.

Finally, the ledger provides further clues into the divided structure of Daihongan. There is an entry recording over 6 ryō of reimbursements to the inner portion of the convent for things it paid in the previous year. Furthermore, the inner portion of the convent also paid a portion of the administrators’ stipends, for instance. This is further evidence of the division between the inner and outer portion of the convent’s finances. However, while this division may have been important to keep when doing accounting, in actual practice they were often connected, as the ledger’s recording of the payment of stipends and fees for cloth indicates.

The ledger also indicates that the convent was caught in a cycle of borrowing. If the payment to Koyama Yazaemon was a loan payment, then the convent paid over 617 ryō to various lenders for principal and interest on past loans. However, in addition to these payments on existing loans, Daihongan borrowed 187 ryō in new loans in 1793 as well, which would add to the convent’s future loan payments. Furthermore, this ledger hints that there were other expenditures on the horizon in the form of payments to the mujin confraternity: Daihongan received 271 ryō from various investors but it only paid 58 ryō this year. It is unclear whether this was to one confraternity, or multiple ones. Regardless of how many confraternities it was involved in, as I will explain in more
detail below, that the convent received more money than it paid to the confraternity meant that it had already paid a large sum into it/them and was collecting returns on its investment, or that it was in the process of receiving a large sum from the confraternity/ies that it would have to repay in the future.

If Daihongan had not been involved in the mujin confraternity and had not taken out any loans, the convent’s income for the year would have been around 330 ryō from rituals, land, and so on. Without loan or mujin payments, the convent would only have around 69 ryō in expenses for this year. Of course, this leads us to wonder why if the convent had such a large yearly gross income did it need to take out loans or get involved in financial schemes like the mujin confraternity in the first place.

**Table 2-2: Daihongan's Expenditures for 1793**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Amount in gold ryō silver monme and copper mon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unexplained Payment to Koyama Yaemon</td>
<td>332.375 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan related payments (mostly principal, though some entries included interest)</td>
<td>243.125 ryō 0.78 monme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest on loans</td>
<td>41.875 ryō 36.65 monme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mujin payments</td>
<td>58.875 ryō 13.4 monme 270 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money lent</td>
<td>9.5 ryō 270 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators’ stipends</td>
<td>3 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money lent to Jūnenji</td>
<td>3.25 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money to Aoyama Ženkōji</td>
<td>35 ryō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money to the inner part of the temple</td>
<td>6.125 ryō 336 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>13.875 ryō 2.590 mon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>747 ryō 50.83 monme 3466 mon</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in ledger</strong></td>
<td><strong>766.25 ryō 444 copper mon</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Daihongan may have started to have difficulties making ends meet because of its various irregular expenditures. In budgeting terms, “irregular expenses” vary in cost from
year to year, occur intermittently (i.e. not monthly or yearly), or are unpredictable or unforeseen. This concept can be applied to Daihongan’s finances quite easily. The convent had a number of regular expenditures, such as salaries for its administrators, costs for food, and the replenishment of ritual items. It also had a number of irregular expenses. Though expected, both travels and the maintenance or rebuilding of the temple’s buildings would be classified as irregular expenses because they occurred infrequently. Costs associated with natural disasters would also fall into this category because they were unexpected.

As I will discuss further in Chapter 4, Daihongan’s abbesses had the privilege of meeting with the shogun, his family, and the women of the Inner Quarters of the castle once every three years, on the occasion of a new abbess taking over, or when a new shogun came into power. This meant that the abbess and her retinue had to travel from wherever they happened to be to Edo for this meeting. Furthermore, they were required to visit the Imperial Palace in Kyoto and Wakōji in Osaka at least once during their tenure as abbess. Since travel was a way to display power/wealth, and Daihongan had a reputation to uphold as a convent connected to the imperial palace, the shogunate, and various daimyo, the abbess had to travel with a relatively large number of administrators, attendants, and so on, and she had to stay at the finest inns along the way. When Chishō traveled from Edo to Shinano in 1832, it cost Daihongan at least 39.3 gold ryō. Trips to Kyoto were also costly because the trip was longer and the abbess had to provide gifts and payments for the services of Shōgo’ in and the Kajuji house in arranging her visit to the palace.
Temple buildings were also a source of irregular expenditures. Though occurring at irregular intervals, many of these expenses could be anticipated—buildings need upkeep in the face of weather or day-to-day use, especially wooden buildings with tatami mat flooring. Though it was a small to mid-sized institution, Daihongan was responsible for a large number of temple buildings. It had to handle building and repairs to halls at Daihongan and its Edo branch, since these were concurrently held institutions, though Aoyama Zenkōji could cover some of the funds for repairs to its own buildings. It also had to pay for building or maintenance costs of Zenkōji’s halls. It paid for the total cost of repairs or rebuilding the Sanmon gate, the Sutra repository, and the Toshigami Shrine, and split maintenance or rebuilding costs with Daikanjin for the main hall and various fences around the temple complex.\footnote{Daikanjin was responsible for maintaining the inner sanctum (naijin 内陣), decorations, tatami, and minor repairs to Zenkōji’s main hall, all repairs of the Niō gate, the bell tower, the offering area, the fundraising area, the Akiha Gongen hall, the Kashima Gongen Hall, the Rakan Hall, the metal or stone lanterns, the ossuary, the mound for people who died in disasters (ōshitsuka 横死塚), the Kumano Gongen hall, the Suwa Deities’ hall, Bronze Buddha statues, the Six Jizō statues, flower fields, and the Rusuijo. Kobayashi states that Daikanjin was responsible for more buildings because they earned more from Zenkōji’s lands. \textit{Ibid.}, 318.}

While regular upkeep could to some degree be accounted for, damage due to fire and other natural disasters could not be predicted. In the Edo period alone, fires destroyed Zenkōji’s main hall in 1615, 1642, and 1700, and they destroyed various halls in the temple in 1615, 1642, 1700, 1705, 1751, and 1848. Disasters destroyed all of Daihongan’s buildings in 1751 and 1848 and destroyed the Tamaya in 1705.\footnote{Ibid., 179.}

[126] [127]

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Daihongan’s Edo branch was luckier: it escaped most of the fires that regularly ravaged downtown Edo, only being destroyed in 1703 (Yanaka) and 1862 (Aoyama).

When faced with such irregular expenditures on top of the convent’s regular ones, Daihongan had a couple of options. It could attempt to curtail its spending. From 1808 Daihongan started 15-year austerity measures and 7-year ones at Aoyama Zenkōji from 1832. These included cutting meals to the temple employees from every day to only on special occasions, sending congratulatory (or consolatory) greetings instead of gifts whenever possible, and avoiding the expense of travel.128

Alternatively, it could turn to irregular means of gathering funds. It did this through gifts from the bakufu or the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle such as those I discussed above, loans from daimyo and commoners, confraternities that offered fundraising opportunities or loans, displays of temple treasures, and lotteries. I turn to these in Chapter 5.

IV. Conclusions

Many of the above sources of income came to an end at the close of the Tokugawa period and the years immediately following the Meiji Restoration. For example, control over the people on Zenkōji’s 1000 koku land grant was transferred to the Matsushiro Domain in late 1870, but the temple continued to receive the land taxes from the residents. This ended in 1871.1.29 when Zenkōji received the order that all temple and shrine land grants were to be dissolved and control of the land, except the

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temple precincts (*keidai* 境内), was to be given to the newly formed prefectures.\(^{129}\) In Zenkōji’s case, a prefectural surveyor determined in 1871.10.11 that the temple’s lands only extended to the Sanmon gate onwards. Of course, Zenkōji fought to keep control of at least some of its lands. Since the area from the Niōmon Gate to the Sanmon gate was where the main hall had stood in the seventeenth century, the temple argued that it should be allowed to keep control of it. It eventually purchased this area from Nakano Prefecture in 1872.5. This space was divided equally between Daikanjin and Daihongan, who rented it to merchants. Though in the Edo period these shops had been temporary, in the Meiji period they became permanent structures, and the store owners pay rent to Daihongan and Daikanjin even today.\(^{130}\) The shogunate no longer existed so it could not donate funds to the temple complex, but in its place the temple has gained new sources of income from ties to travel and rail companies, banks, and other manufacturers. In this way, even when Zenkōji lost some sources of income, it gained others. Expenditures also grew at the end of the Edo period as first Aoyama Zenkōji and then Daihongan were destroyed in fires and natural disasters and had to be rebuilt.

Returning to the larger points of discussion, as I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, Helen Hardacre has argued that for early modern temples to succeed, they needed to switch from land-based sources of income (agriculture, etc.) to monetary sources of income. In this chapter we saw that Daihongan managed to do just that, so by the end of the period, the convent was receiving income from diverse sources such as

\(^{129}\) This order was promulgated at the end of the previous year, but the temple did not receive it until the beginning of the next year.

\(^{130}\) For more on the Meiji changes to Zenkōji, see Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishiki kenkyū*, 350–359.
rent, rice taxes, large- and small-scale offerings, fees for rituals, direct assistance from the shogun, and so on. Despite this diversity Daihongan still had financial difficulties that Kobayashi and Takatsukasa suggest began in the last half of the eighteenth century. As we saw from the 1793 Ledger, the convent could have survived, and even thrived, based solely upon the regular or conventional forms of income that greatly exceeded the convent’s ordinary expenditures. So, what caused this financial distress in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century? As we will see in the next chapters, irregular expenses pushed the convent beyond its normal financial means; this led the nuns and administrators to engage in unconventional means to cover these expenditures.
Chapter 3. Branching Out: Daihongan’s Japan-wide Network of Branch Temples

I. Introduction
In the ninth month of 1699, two men traveled from Osaka to Zenkōji to hand deliver a letter to Abbess Chizen. These men, Matajirō and Yosuke, were members of a confraternity affiliated with a new branch temple that was to be built and administered by Daihongan. Their letter was full of suggestions regarding the new (and as of that time unbuilt!) temple, including construction style, administration, and rituals to be performed there by Chizen herself. This new branch temple, Wakōji, would play important administrative and financial roles for Daihongan’s abbesses. And yet as we can see from Matajirō and Yosuke’s letter, administering the branch temple would not be easy. It would require constant negotiations between the branch’s monks and the people affiliated with it through neighborhood confraternities.

The income and expenditures discussed in the previous chapter are one way to trace the connections of Daihongan’s nuns beyond their convent walls. Another way is more concrete: by examining their modest network of branch temples throughout Japan. This physical network was just as important for the survival of Daihongan as was the sectarian support of Zōjōji or the financial and political support of the bakufu, various daimyo, and the ladies in the Inner Quarter of the shogun’s castle. As Janet Goodwin has argued, classical and medieval “Japanese Buddhism was built on a physical framework of...
temples, pagodas, images, and sūtras,” and the construction of temple halls was also about building and spreading the Buddhist Law.¹ This was most certainly the case during the early modern period as well, as Duncan Williams demonstrated through his analysis of Sōtō Zen’s spread (and financial success) through its construction of thousands of parish temples throughout Japan.² Daihongan also benefited by constructing a much more modest network of four branch temples. These branches supported the convent administratively and financially, but they also enabled connections between the nuns and high-ranking priests of the Pure Land and Tendai sects, courtiers in Kyoto, commoners in the city and countryside, the shogun, the women of his castle, daimyo, and lower-ranking warrior/administrators.

In section II of this chapter, I discuss the structure, founding, and functions of the early modern main temple-branch temple system (honmatsu seido 本末制度, which I will also call the main-branch temple system). Specifically, I review the work of previous scholars, which has examined the main-branch temple and the announcement temples system (furegashira seido 触頭制度) in terms of bakufu administrative control, sectarian hierarchy, and financial support. These elements all had a place in Daihongan’s network of branch temples. In the subsequent sections of this chapter I focus on this network. In particular, I discuss the founding and roles of each of Daihongan’s branches—Sōkōji 懐光寺 in Shinano (current-day Nagano Prefecture), Jūnenji 十念寺 in Echigo (current-day Niigata Prefecture), Wakōji 和光寺 in Osaka, and Aoyama Zenkōji 青山善光寺 in Edo.

¹ Goodwin, Alms and Vagabonds, 142–143.
² Williams, The Other Side of Zen, 16–20.
(current-day Tokyo), (Figure 3-1). Through this, I highlight the ways that Daihongan’s abbesses were a part of the structures of temple control that were made to enforce bakufu rule and its regulations. This provides nuance to the work of Gina Cogan who, through an examination of imperial convents, has pointed out that fully ordained nuns were not involved in these structures and that bakufu regulations (*jiin hatto* 寺院法度) were largely centered on male monastics and itinerant women such as the Kumano *bikuni.* Her explanation of the differences between convents and male monastic institutions is highly valuable, but as the case of Daihongan and its branches illustrates, convents’ involvement in bakufu structures of power was more complex, and should be analyzed on a case by case basis.

Daihongan’s place at the head of a network of branch temples was a mixed bag of responsibilities and rewards for the convent. On the one hand, it meant that the abbesses were held accountable for the actions of priests at their branches, as happened at both Jūnenji and Wakōji. On the other, each of Daihongan’s branches served one or multiple functions for the convent, ranging from the rather unusual administrative duties of some branches to the more traditional role of providing economic support. As is also apparent in these later sections, hierarchy, authority, and financial or administrative

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support were not the only dimensions to Daihongan’s network. For example, there was also an element of ritual reciprocity: Daihongan’s abbesses participated in ceremonies at their branch temples, shared ritual implements such as statues and seals, and allowed their branches to hold displays at their jointly-administered temple in Edo.

It is also important to remember that though these temples were physical nodes in Daihongan’s network, they were staffed by people with their own interests. As Goodwin notes, constructing the physical framework for Buddhism required interaction between various groups, both monastic and lay, and these interactions involved often conflicting searches by those involved for religious, social, political, and economic power. This is apparent at various points in this chapter, from the first section where I discuss the powerful Tendai ritualist Tenkai’s construction of a “religious empire” that included Zenkōji, to the later sections where I speculate about some of the reasons that Daihongan’s abbesses had for constructing their own network of branch temples and how some of the locals (especially in Osaka) had their own ideas about how “their temple” should be run. Of course, not all support for temples and their priests was a struggle for gain, political, social, economic, or otherwise. In many cases, donors and temple founders alike often had religious motivations as well, and these should not be overlooked. These varied interactions provide a valuable window into how Daihongan’s abbesses interacted with laity and clergy.

5 This is not to say that “religious” motivations were always separate from other motivations – for instance, donors for the silk image of the Buddha’s birth at Wakōji gave money for its creation because they were members of a confraternity (social obligation), to demonstrate their wealth (their names were listed in several places), and for their or their family members’ posthumous wellbeing.
At the end of this chapter, I briefly discuss the fate of Daihongan’s network of branches from the Bakumatsu to the present. Furthermore, I return to the discussion of how Daihongan’s network of branch temples highlights the places of nuns in bakufu systems of control and the relationship of Daihongan’s nuns to a variety of people. However, there are several other benefits to examining Daihongan’s network of branch temples, which I will also discuss in the conclusions. These temples provide an example of how popular religious centers in rural areas extended their influence to urban areas in the early modern period. Additionally, these branches, particularly Aoyama Zenkōji and Wakōji, help us to see how medium- to small-scale urban temples functioned. Previous research into temples in the early modern period has focused either on rural temples or on large-scale urban temples such as Asakusa Sensōji. However, medium- and small-scale temples were a vital part of the urban landscape.

II. The Main Temple–Branch Temple System
Before discussing Daihongan’s system of branch temples, it is necessary to briefly describe the main temple-branch temple system. Simply stated, this system placed most of the temples in Japan within pyramid-shaped networks. At the top of each pyramid was a general main temple (honji 本寺 or honzan 本山, or, if based near Kyoto or Osaka, Kamigata honzan 上方本山), usually a large or famous temple with a long history. Each of these general main temples had branch temples (matsuji 末寺) connected to it; these first-level branches were called “direct branches” (jiki matsuji or choku matsuji 直末寺). In turn, each of these direct branch temples may have been a main temple with more branches under its authority; these second- and third-level branches were called “further
branches” (mata matsuji 又末寺), “grandchildren branches” (sonmatsu 孫末), “great-grandchildren branches” (sōsonmatsu 曾孫末) and so on. At the bottom of the pyramid were branch temples which had no branches of their own.6

This system had several precedents in the Classical and medieval periods. Main-branch relationships may have developed to control temple estates (shōen 荘園) in the Heian-period (794–1185). Large temples near the capital relied on temples in the provinces to control their estates in distant corners of Japan.7 Medieval (1185–1550) precedents included informal teacher-student networks, the organization of Zen temples into the so-called “Five Mountains” (gozan 五山) system, and the creation of temples for the safety of the country (ankokuji 安国寺). The latter two of these precedents were established by the Ashikaga Bakufu in the 14th century, and they placed temples within a hierarchy of head temples, direct branches, and so on.8

The early modern system, in contrast, was established over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the Tokugawa shogunate. The first step that led to the formalization of these hierarchies was the promulgation from 1600 to 1615 of the

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6 For more information concerning the “head-branch” system, see Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsei 日本仏教史近世, 40–51. Alex Vesey’s dissertation has the most detail on the subject in English: Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” chap. 2.

7 Of course, the network of provincial temples and convents – Kokubunji and Kokubunniji, respectively – was established in the late Nara period by Emperor Shōmu and his consort Kōmyō. At the center of this network were two temples in the capital, Tōdaiji and Hokkeji. However, it is unclear to what extent the temples were hierarchically arranged with the provincial temples placed beneath those in the capital in terms of power and financial obligations, which are key elements of the head-branch relationship. For more on these temples, see Bowring, The Religious Traditions of Japan, 500-1600, 79–85.

regulations for temples (jiin hatto 寺院法度) directed at the various Buddhist schools. Although contemporary scholars have debated the formation and intended outcome of these rules, several ordinances within the rules for all of the Buddhist schools regulated head-branch temple relations. These firmly subordinated branches to their main temples by stating that branches must obey the orders of their main temples, and that branch temples are not to appoint abbots without permission from their main temple. These regulations thus served to reify previously informal head-branch or teacher-student relations between temples in an effort to place all of the Buddhist clergy within a system of control managed at the top by the shogunal government. The system was further solidified through various means, including the requirement that temples submit paperwork documenting their main-branch relationships to the Tokugawa Bakufu several times beginning in 1632.

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9 Vesey and Tamamuro convincingly argue that these various acts of the Bakufu in the early 17th century caused many of the schools to finally coalesce. Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsei 日本仏教史近世, 3; Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 116.

10 Although Vesey and Tamamuro state that the jiin hatto were part of a reformulation of the relationship between the Buddhist clergy and the shogunate, Gina Cogan (in her dissertation) stresses that they were rather to express ideals for how Buddhist institutions were to act, but not to actually have any sort of prescriptive power. Duncan Williams, on the other hand, states that though these hatto did limit the Buddhist clergy, they were not simply promulgated by the shogunate: prominent members of the clergy were in fact involved with their creation. Gina Cogan, “Precepts and Power: Enshōji, Buddhism and the State in Seventeenth Century Japan” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2004), 107–110; Williams, “The Purple Robe Incident and the Formation of the Early Modern Sōtō Zen Institution,” 33.

11 In her dissertation Gina Cogan has discussed the gendered nature of the jiin hatto, pointing out that women appear only as relatives of monks or as prostitutes. Thus, none of the hatto discuss the appointing of abbesses. Cogan, “Precepts and Power,” 110–111.

12 Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsei 日本仏教史近世, 45–47.

13 Of course, the head-branch temple system was but one cog in the bakufu’s attempt to control the Buddhist establishments. Others included the system of petitions/suits arbitrated by the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the granting or revoking of temple lands, the Announcement Temple system, and the parishioner system.

14 This was the first time that an examination of the head-branch relationships of every Buddhist school was performed, and it thus theoretically documented the place on the head-branch pyramid of every temple within Japan. Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsei 日本仏教史近世, 47–52.
The codification of the main-branch temple system had several lasting effects. First, it and the rules established for each Buddhist school emphasized sectarian boundaries which had previously been vague. Head temples were not only administrative heads, but many were also training centers, which meant that monks who trained at those institutions learned rituals in a specific way, and were placed within the lineage of the head temple’s abbot. It also signaled the end of an era in which many temples had multiple sectarian affiliations and clerics had trained in various schools, though many imperial nuns continued to hold multiple sectarian affiliations.

Additionally, the main-branch temple system, combined with the announcement system (furegashira) and parishioner system (danka seido) placed each temple within the shogunate’s and sects’ systems of control that extended throughout the country. Administratively, head temples had many roles, including passing down documents to direct branches, settling intra-sectarian disputes, and providing referrals to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines when its branches were pursuing litigation. Conversely, branches provided financial support to their main temples for temple repairs, ceremonies, advancement in sectarian hierarchy, changes in robe color for greater prestige, and so on.

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15 Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 142.
16 Oka, Yoshiko, “Kinsei Bikuni Gosho No Soshiki,” in Nihon no shūkyō to jendaa ni kansuru kokusai sōgō kenkyū I honbun hen 日本の宗教とジェンダーに関する国際総合研究 I本文編 (Nishinomiya: Oka Yoshiko, 2009), (69).
17 Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, Nihon Bukkyō shi: kinsei 日本仏教史近世, 3.
18 Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 142–144.
A. Tenkai’s Religious Empire and Zenkōji

This system was not simply used by the nascent Tokugawa Bakufu to organize and control temples. Temples and priests also reorganized these networks to improve their situations within sectarian hierarchies. The Tendai priest Tenkai 天海 (1536–1643), who was one of the figures behind the apotheosis of Tokugawa Ieyasu, was quite adept at this. From 1599 until his death, he worked to position his temple, first Kita’in 喜多院 in Kawagoe and later Kan’eiji 寛永寺 in Edo, as the center of the Tendai school in eastern Japan. In a series of actions some have dubbed “religious empire building,” Tenkai used the head-branch temple system to bring large and popular Tendai temples under his purview, including Asakusa Sensōji in Edo, Makio-san 槙尾山 in Izumi Province, and, of particular importance for Daihongan’s nuns, Shinano Zenkōji. Tenkai’s empire was to last until the Meiji Restoration (1868).

Tenkai issued a statement the year he died “restoring” Zenkōji to the Tendai school as a branch of Kan’eiji because Zenkōji “had previously been a center of Tendai


but had recently accepted other Buddhist schools.”^21 His statement placed Zenkōji under the direct control of Kan’eiji, but did not change the sectarian affiliations of the forty-six small sub-temples in the Zenkōji temple complex. In 1686, however, Kan’eiji issued a set of rules to Zenkōji which forced all of the minor sub-temples of the Zenkōji temple complex aside from Daihongan to become Tendai, and placed them under the control of the Tendai administrative sub-temple, the monastery Daikanjin.^22 These sub-temples had previously been Pure Land (Jōdoshū, 15 sub-temples), Ji sect (10 sub-temples), and Tendai (21 sub-temples). Additionally, as I discussed in Chapter 1, Daihongan was also made into a direct branch of Kan’eiji, though the nuns could keep their Pure Land affiliation and continued to have a close relationship with Zōjōji. Though Daihongan and several of the sub-temples fought against these changes, they remained in effect until the Meiji Restoration.

B. Daihongan within the Head-Branch System
For the first half of the Edo period Daihongan was, like many other convents of the time, without a head temple. This meant that it reported directly to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines when it planned events or when it brought lawsuits against Daikanjin. Furthermore, the nuns were not obligated to pay respects to or offer “gifts” to abbots from a main temple because there was no one higher than the Daihongan’s abbess.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, this changed in 1740.2 when the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines placed Daihongan under the control of the head of Tendai temples

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^21 Tenkai’s statement can be found in Shinano shiryō (Nagano: Shinano shiryō kankōkai, n.d.), vols. 28, p. 585; Kobayashi Keiichirō, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 803–804.

in eastern Japan, Kan’ei. Although I discussed the effects of this in detail in Chapter 1, I would like to touch upon the highlights here. First, although Kan’ei is a Tendai temple and Daihongan a Pure Land one, the public authorities and Kan’ei did not force Daihongan to change sects. Second, following this move Daihongan had to receive approval from Kan’ei before submitting “lawsuits related to religious matters (shūshi 宗旨) and so on” to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines and had to include Kan’ei on all communications with the public authorities. Additionally, Daihongan’s abbess had to pay respect to the head of Kan’ei when there was a change in abbesses and at the beginning of every new year. Finally, Daihongan had to strive for harmonious relations between themselves and Daikanjin. Although money is not mentioned, it was presumably a part of the relationship in the form of actual money or gift exchange.

Although Zenkōji had no branch temples of its own, the nuns of Daihongan developed and maintained a modest network of branches throughout Japan. According to a 1745 “Ledger of Assets” (Bugen kakiage chō 分限書上帳) submitted to Kan’ei, the convent had four branch temples: Sōkōji in Nagano Village (current-day Nagano City), Jūnenji in Echigo, Wakōji in Osaka, and Aoyama Zenkōji in Edo. The first three of these temples were classified as “held” temples (kakae 抱), another word for branch temples, while Aoyama Zenkōji was classified as a “joint appointment” temple (kentaisho 兼帯所), meaning that the abbess of Daihongan was also the abbess of Aoyama Zenkōji.

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23 Document appears in full in Zenkōjishi kenkyūkai 善光寺史研究会, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究, 319.
24 Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029.
the sections that follow I will discuss the formation of these temples, their emplacement within local society, their relationships with Daihongan, and the roles they played in its network.

III. Sōkōji

Both Sōkōji and Osaka Wakōji served as administrative outposts for Daihongan. Sōkōji’s staff provided administrative assistance in Shinano, however because documentation regarding Sōkōji is scarce, their full role is unclear. Sōkōji was also called “Amida-in,” which was one of the Nakashū sub-temples in the Zenkōji temple complex. “Sōkōji” was also the title of Amida-in’s head priest when he served as a representative priest (daisō 代僧) for Daihongan’s abbesses. Amida-in held roughly 2 koku of land—perhaps limited to the temple grounds—however when the temple was destroyed in 1702, the land was used for other projects.25 Although Amida-in was not rebuilt, the title of Sōkōji continued to be passed amongst administrative priests from at least as early as the middle of the seventeenth century until the end of the Tokugawa period.

There are several hints about Sōkōji’s administrative duties. Sōkōji (the priest) is mentioned in several documents related to Daikanjin and Daihongan’s retrieval of Zenkōji’s land grant, which was renewed with each new shogun. According to two documents from 1686.8, Abbess Seiden (abbess from 1672–1698) had requested in the previous year that she be allowed to travel with Gakkai 学海 (head of Daikanjin from

25 The temple “ceased to exist in 1702” Genroku jūgonen yori taiten tsukamatsuri sōrō 元禄十五年より退転仕候. In the Bungen kakiage chō in both Ibid. fuku 2 1149.029; Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 19. That the temple was initially on 2 koku of land was recorded and then crossed out in the archival document.
1684–1689) to Edo Castle to receive the latest renewal of Zenkōji’s land grant. Seiden stated that during the reigns of Ieyasu and Hidetada, the heads of Daikanjin and Daihongan had received the document together. However, a representative monk, Sōkōji, had taken the place of Daihongan’s abbesses Seishin and Chiden during the reigns of Shoguns Iemitsu and Ietsuna. This had become established as precedent, so when Seiden’s request was denied by the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, she was told that Sōkōji would go, “as it had been done in the past.”

Sōkōji (the priest) also took the abbesses’ place in accompanying a retinue that traveled with country-wide displays of Zenkōji’s treasures. Sōkōji was also involved in checking at least some of Daihongan’s finances when the abbess was not in Shinano. However, because there are no documents related to Amida-in itself in the archives, and because the temple no longer exists, it is unclear what the priest’s other duties were, or how the temple’s relationship with Daihongan formed.

IV. Jūnenji

The case of Jūnenji demonstrates how branch temples supported their main temples, and also how trouble at the branch could have repercussions for the main temple.

Jūnenji is the oldest of Daihongan’s branch temples. A survey of temples in Niigata from 1883 states that the peripatetic priest Gyōki (668–749) founded

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26 Daikanjin 1, fuku 2 1165.008.
27 Takatsukasa Seigyoku, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 42.
Jūnenji in 739. However, this is highly unlikely, given the number of temples Gyōki is credited with founding. We can trace the temple back to at least the sixteenth century. Its connection to Zenkōji dates to the Battles of Kawanakajima (Kawanakajima gassen 川中島合戦), which took place in the plains south of Zenkōji in 1553, 1555, 1557, 1561, and 1564 between the two powerful warlords, Uesugi Kenshin (1530–1578) and Takeda Shingen (1521–1573). Several local warrior families asked the Uesugi to come down to protect them against the incursions of the Takeda. When the two warlords carried off various treasures from Zenkōji, which had been destroyed in the second battle in 1555, the Takeda carried off the temple’s main image, the Amida triad.

The Uesugi did not walk away empty handed, however. They took a Zenkōji-style Amida triad, several small reliquaries, and other treasures, back to their headquarters in Funai, Echigo (modern-day Jōetsu City, Niigata). Kenshin built a temple that he named Zenkōji near the ocean to house these treasures; that area and the town near its gates came to be called Zenkōji Hama, or “Zenkōji Beach.” This gate town seems to have developed rather quickly and was populated by people from Shinano who may not have been too pleased with Uesugi rule. In a memorandum from the third month of 1562 to several vassals remaining in Funai while he traveled to the Kantō region, Kenshin states that they should “take care to avoid fires in [the three towns of] Kasuga, Funai, and

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29 This is the Jiin meisaichō 寺院明細帳, cited in Jōetsushi, ed., Jisha shiryō: 2 寺社史料2 (Jōetsu: Jōetsushi, 2003), 38.
30 Information on the division of the Kurita clan along the Ōmidō – Komidō lines can be found in Chūsei hen v. 2 of the Jōetsu Shishi Hensan linkai 上越市史編纂委員会, ed., Jōetsu shishi. Tsūshi hen 上越市史通史編 (Jōetsu: Jōetsu-shi, 2002), 386.
Zenkōji’s gate” especially since “there are many people from Shinano Province in Zenkōji Town, [so] there could be a chance of arson.”

The Uesugi were transferred to Aizu and then Yonezawa by Hideyoshi and Ieyasu in 1598 and 1600; they took the treasures from Zenkōji with them.

Unfortunately, there are few documents related to this temple after the Uesugi left Echigo. In fact, the next documents I have been able to find are from the mid-eighteenth century. Thus, its seventeenth-century history remains unknown. At some point prior to the eighteenth century this temple came to be a branch of Daihongan. Additionally, though the village around the temple retained the name “Zenkōji beach,” the name of the temple itself was changed to Jūnenji.

Jūnenji was on roughly 103,470 m² of land on the Sea of Japan. There was a medium-sized (90.9 m x 54.5 m) Amida Hall on the grounds, though it is unclear whether this was the original hall that the Uesugi built or if it was a seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century reconstruction. In addition, there were twenty-two commoner houses

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31 Jōetsushi, ed., *Uesugi shi monjōshū: 1* (Jōetsu-shi: Jōetsushi, 2003), 156–157. From this we can gather that a number of people from northern Shinano were living in Echigo Zenkōji’s gate town; however, it is unclear whether they were ritualists from Zenkōji brought up to serve in Uesugi’s new temple, warriors such as the Kurita, or refugees who simply sought to escape the destruction of Zenkōji. In any case, it is clear that Kenshin was concerned that these people might intentionally set fires, showing that he distrusted them. Finally, he expresses his interest in protecting the treasures he had brought from Zenkōji: if “anything were to happen,” his vassals were to “fortify the Nyorai [Amida] Hall.”

32 The Toyotomi and Tokugawa transferred Kenshin’s adopted heir, Uesugi Kagekatsu to Aizu in 1598 and then to Yonezawa in 1600. Zenkōji’s treasures were initially housed in the main enclosure of Yonezawa Castle, from 1896 onwards they were placed in the Uesugi family temple, Hōonji 法音寺. The Zenkōji-style Amida triad is supposedly interred with Kenshin’s remains which Kagekatsu moved to Yonezawa as well. Jōetsushi, *Jisha shiryō 寺社史料*, 38–40.

33 It was roughly 209 ken (almost 380 meters) east-west by 150 ken (273 meters) north-south, and had an estimated production value of 5 koku 5 to 9 shō 9 gō (or 1010 L of rice). Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029; Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 20.
on the land. At the end of the Tokugawa period there were roughly 150 residents, with a
nearly even ratio of the sexes.\(^{34}\) The residents of Zenkōji Hama village were primarily
engaged in salt production. Although there was only one rice paddy and two dry fields on
the temple’s lands, there was a saltern (shiohama 塩浜 or enden 塩田) and fifteen huts
for drying the ocean water to make salt.\(^{35}\) This salt made up the bulk of the taxes the
villagers paid to the temple. They offered 1 \(\text{koku 5 shō} (270.6 \text{ L})\) of rice each year “to
Amida” (i.e. to Jūnenji), but they gave 4 \(\text{to 5 shō} (81.2 \text{ L})\) of salt to Jūnenji, 1 \(\text{koku} (180.4 \text{ L})\) to the village headman, and 9 \(\text{koku 5 to 6 shō} (1724.5 \text{ L})\) to Daihongan.\(^{36}\) Jūnenji
seems to have survived on these offerings and taxes from the villagers. The temple
received an average of one copper kannon (what a female servant could earn in 40–60
days of work) of donations from temple visitors each year.

Daihongan was the landlord of Zenkōji Hama village, which is why the residents
sent salt to the convent. This also brings to light the role of Daihongan in the parishioner
system. Daihongan’s branch temple, Jūnenji, did not have any parishioners, so the
residents of Zenkōji Hama village were parishioners of six other temples in the village—
three True Pure Land temples and one temple each of Shingon, Zen (unspecified lineage),

\(^{34}\) In 1866 there were 151 people (76 men and 75 women) and in 1870 there were 147 (ratio

\(^{35}\) The paddy and fields are mentioned in Daihongan’s copy of the Bungen kakiagechō and not the
version recorded in the Goyō nikki for 1745 to 1752. While the Bungen kakiage chō states that the
commoners gave 1 \(\text{koku 5 shō}\) of rice each year to Jūnenji as an offering, the Goyō nikki version states that
“the commoners are engaged in salt production in the saltern and there are no other farming areas.” I am
uncertain of what to make of this discrepancy.

\(^{36}\) Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029. The price of salt fluctuated throughout the period and it was also
dependent upon transportation costs, so its price increased as one traveled inland. In 1793 Daihongan sold 2
bales of rice for 2 gold \(\text{bu}\) and 92 copper \(\text{mon}\). The size of bales varied greatly from place to place from 63
liters to 90 liters, so the temple probably received anywhere from 11.6 to 16.6 \(\text{mon}\) per liter of salt. Of
course, they probably used some of this salt themselves, so they could not sell the whole amount they
received from Zenkōji Hama.
and Ji. According to documents from the early years of the Meiji period, before many temples’ lands were stripped away and before the temple parishioner system was dismantled, these six parish temples submitted to the village head certifications that their parishioners were not Christians nor members of other banned sects. The village head compiled these into one document that was then forwarded to Daihongan, which then, presumably, sent them on to Kan’ei-ji.\(^{37}\)

In addition to financial and landholding documents, the other extant documents related to Jūnenji reveal the abbesses’ involvement in certain rituals at Daihongan’s branch temples and the sharing of ritual implements between these temples, a topic I will discuss in more detail in the section on Wakōji. In 1742 Jūnenji held a display of treasures with the support of Daihongan. The convent loaned Jūnenji some of its own treasures, including their copy of the seal of Zenkōji’s Amida icon (hōin 宝印) that Jūnenji used to create amulets and to bless petitioners by touching them on the head with it (they cleaned the ink off of the seal before doing so, presumably!) Daihongan’s abbess, Seikō, may or may not have participated herself—she is mentioned in the signs that advertised the display.

However, this display is also an example of how events at branch temples could adversely affect their main temples. It turns out that this display was illicit. Although Jūnenji had presumably received permission for the display from its head temple,

\(^{37}\) The earliest extant documents come from 1869 and 1870, the first years of the Meiji Period. However, it can be assumed that this was a continuation of the Tokugawa practice because temple lands had not yet been stripped away and the parishioner system was still intact. Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 620–623.
Daihongan, the convent had not filed paperwork with either the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines or the temple that had become its head two years prior, Kan‘eiji. During the investigation it was revealed that Daihongan’s administrator, Miyazawa Tadaemon, claimed to have properly filed documents, yet neither institution had received them. He also claimed to have consulted with Daikanjin about moving some of Daihongan’s treasures—the convent and monastery were to discuss the administration of Zenkōji and jointly make decisions that might affect it, which could include events involving Daihongan’s treasures—but Daikanjin’s administrators denied that Miyazawa had done so.

The investigation also uncovered other violations that occurred in the course of the display. One involved the use of Daihongan’s copy of the seal of Amida. There had apparently been no precedent for distributing amulets of the seal or using it to bless petitioners outside of Zenkōji’s walls. The second was that Daihongan violated an understanding that there was to be no fundraising in places besides the main hall of Zenkōji unless there was a precedent for it. And third, the signs advertising the event had said “Zenkōji’s Abbess” (Zenkōji shōnin 善光寺上人), thus “giving the incorrect impression to people that [Dai]hongan’s abbess alone is the head of Zenkōji.”

Despite the seriousness of these accusations, Kan‘eiji’s two administrative sub-temples “took pity” on the convent and only reprimanded Abbess Seikō and the nuns of Daihongan, saying that their actions were “unthinking, unforgivable, and rude,” and that

38 Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.028.
they “should take care to follow the regulations from now on.” Miyazawa, the administrator who had lied during questioning was not so lucky, however. He was banished. Not being punished did not mean that the display had no repercussions for the convent, however. In 1742.11 Kan’ei jitsu issued another set of regulations to Daihongan. Some of these were a reiteration of those sent in 1740.2, such as the requirement that Daihongan’s abbess pay her respects to Kan’ei jitsu’s abbot at specific times. Others were more specific. In addition to inquiring with Kan’ei jitsu’s two administrative sub-temples before contacting the public authorities, the convent was also to do so “before carrying out public events … no matter how large or small.” Finally, others dealt with issues brought up in this incident. Daihongan was not to bless people with or distribute amulets made from their copy of Amida’s seal “in other locations or provinces—at Daihongan’s branch temples, for example”—and they were only to make as many amulets as could be given to the public authorities or others who had received them by precedent. The convent was also to cease fundraising at places besides the main hall.

On the one hand, these new regulations represented a tightening of control that Kan’ei jitsu held over Daihongan, as the authors of Zenkō jitsu kenkyū state. The convent now had to report to the administrative sub-temples of Kan’ei jitsu whenever it decided to perform any public events. They lost a degree of freedom in the use of ritual implements because they could no longer freely distribute amulets made from their copy of Amida’s

39 Ibid. fuku 2 1149.028.
40 Zenkō jitsu kenkyūkai, Zenkō jitsu kenkyū, 317.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid., 320.
seal nor bless people with it. Finally, they were restricted in their fundraising to their own main hall. On the other hand, however, an analysis of events following this incident demonstrates that Daihongan continued to do many of the same types of things as they had before, such as holding fundraising events in various locations, for instance. They were able to do so for two reasons, I think. First, they showed deference to Kan’ei-ji by asking permission. Second, they demonstrated precedence—whether actual or made up—when requesting permission; Kan’ei-ji had even included this loophole in its regulations when it said that “all things are to be done as they have been in the past.”

V. Osaka Wakōji
A. Founding
While extant documents do not enable us to determine how Jūnen-ji became a branch of Daihongan, Osaka Wakōji’s founding is extremely well documented. Additionally, the case of Wakōji demonstrates the financial and administrative support offered to Daihongan by its branch temples. It also points to the way that Wakōji facilitated connections between Daihongan’s nuns and powerful temples and the court in western Japan. Finally, it highlights Wakōji’s function as an intermediary between Daihongan and the masses of commoners in Osaka—and conversely, how those commoners could influence both Wakōji and Daihongan.

Wakōji is deeply connected with the origin story of Zenkō-ji. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Zenkō-ji’s main icon was supposedly brought to Japan in the sixth century. During a conflict over the role of Buddhism in Japan the icon was thrown into a body of

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44 Ibid., 320–321.
45 Zenkō-ji’s origin story changes the story of the introduction of Buddhism to Japan that is in the *Nihon Shoki.*
water near Naniwa bay in what was to become Osaka. There it stayed for several decades until it jumped out of the water onto the back of Honda Yoshimitsu 本田善光 as he passed by the pond on his return to Shinano from the capital. He carried it back to Shinano and established Zenkōji.

Almost a thousand years later, people had come to associate a pond in the Naniwa area with the body of water in the origin tale and had begun calling it Amidagaike 阿弥陀ヶ池 or Amidaike 阿弥陀池 (Amida Pond). The Ashiwakebune 芦分船, dated to 1675, depicts people visiting the pond—then surrounded by dry fields with only a few stores on the banks of the nearby river—to offer praise (Figure 3-2). Additionally, though written in the nineteenth century, the Abbreviated Origins of Amida Pond (Amidagaike ryakuengi 阿弥陀ヶ池略縁起) states that prior to Wakōji’s construction, petitioners came to the pond once a year to gather its waters, which were said to confer benefits. 47

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46 The Ashiwakebune can be found in Funakoshi Seiichirō 船越政一郎, ed., Naniwa Sōsho 浪速叢書, vol. 12 (Osaka: Naniwa sōsho kankōkai, 1927). The sections on Amidagaike are found in Vol. 3 of the Ashiwakebune (pages 94-96 of the Naniwa shōsho)—transliterations of this section can be found in Vol. 6 of Honjō Eijirō 本庄榮治郎 and Kuroha Hyōjirō 黒羽兵治郎, Osaka hennenshi 大阪編年史 (Osaka: Osaka Shiritu Chūō Toshokan, 1967), 433–434. Image used with permission of the Osaka Public Library.

47 The Ryakuengi was published in 1844. It is available in Inagaki Taiichi 稲垣泰一, Jisha ryakuengi ruijū 寺社略縁起類聚 (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1998), vol. 1 p. 44.
From 1692 to 1706 the monks of Daikanjin and nuns of Daihongan cooperated to collect money to rebuild the main hall of Zenkōji temple. As part of this, they traveled to Edo (1692), Kyoto, and Osaka (both in 1694) displaying a copy of the temple’s famed
main image. The display in Osaka, held at Shitennoji from 9.14 to 11.10, was a huge success. The temple received 9,124 gold ryō in donations.⁴⁸

The display also spurred on religious practices involving Amida Pond amongst the population of Osaka. Many of these were performed by confraternities that either formed prior to or because of the display. One of these, the Zenkōji Confraternity, set up a hut near the pond where they recited the name of Amida (nenbutsu 念仏).⁴⁹ Following the display, the 100,000-Person Confraternity—headed by “Itō Shinano of Dōtonbori,” a puppet performer who had a huge success with the puppet theater version of the *Origin of Zenkōji* during the display—donated a stone handwashing basin in 1696 which still stands on the temple grounds.

A few years later, in 1698.6.19, Seiden’s successor Chizen traveled to Kyoto to receive permission to wear her purple robes of office. According to Wakōji temple legend, she stopped by Osaka’s Amida Pond following her visit to the court.⁵⁰ Development in that area of Osaka had just begun that year with the digging of the Horiekawa 堀江川 Canal, and that area would be officially incorporated into Osaka City that year as well. However, during Chizen’s visit Amida Pond was being used as a

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⁴⁸ Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 203. After the Osaka display, Daihongan and Daikanjin gathered materials to rebuild Zenkōji’s main hall, this time roughly two hundred meters to the north of its previous location in order to prevent it from catching fire by separating it from dwellings. Unfortunately, the materials themselves caught fire in 1700.


⁵⁰ Takatsukasa Seig 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 70.
reservoir by the residents of Naniwa Village. There was only a small hut (an 庵) on its shores.

Perhaps Chizen met with confraternities in Osaka who suggested a temple be built there. Perhaps she heard word of the bakufu’s plans for new development in that area and saw in that lonely hut an opportunity for fundraising. Or, perhaps she thought a temple there would provide a chance to draw upon the people and practices that had supported Zenkōji’s display just a few years earlier. Whatever the case may be, Chizen wasted no time. Soon after she returned from Osaka she requested approval to build a temple at that site and for its land to be tax-free (jochi 除地). She argued “that because the pond had a long history (yuisho 由緒), from now it should be temple land,” and the officials at the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines agreed.51 It was necessary for Chizen to prove that the pond had a long affiliation with Zenkōji and Buddhism because the shogunate had severely restricted new temple building first in 1632 and again in 1692.52 The Magistrate initially granted approval for 800 tsubo of land (roughly 2645 m²), but Chizen countered, saying that it was too small.53 The Magistrate then added 1000 tsubo in the second month of 1699; this 1,800 tsubo (5,950.8 m²) was granted to the new temple project in perpetuity and would come to include the temple grounds as well as some of the developing town area in front of its gates.54 Soon after receiving permission, a single hall

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51 The Bakufu approval note is printed in the Nagano-ken, Nagano kenshi, 7:–1:721.
53 Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 70.
was built. Chizen supplied the temple’s main image. This was a Zenkōji-style icon consisting of an image in which Amida is flanked by the bodhisattvas Kannon and Seishi that was supposedly carved in 1221 and had been held by Zenkōji for hundreds of years.\(^5^5\) The majority of the temple halls were not completed until 1715.\(^5^6\) By 1745 the temple included a main hall, a lantern hall raised above the water of Amida Pond, and halls to Śākyamuni Buddha, Kannon, and Jizō. An image from the *Settsu meisho zue* guidebook demonstrates the atmosphere in 1796 (Figure 3-3).\(^5^7\)

Though founded by Abbess Chizen, who is listed in current temple documents as the first head of the temple, Wakōji’s early modern heads and resident monks were all

\(^{55}\) The icon was supposedly created by Sōtōsan Jōren 走湯山浄蓮 from Izu Province after he had a dream of the Zenkōji Amida. Kobayashi Keichirō, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 597. For more on Wakōji’s main icon and other treasures, see Ōsakashi kyōiku inkai 大阪市教育委員会, ed., *Ōsaka shinai shozai no butsuzō butsuga wakōji no butsuzō butsuga ni tsuite* 大阪市内所在の仏像・仏画和光寺の仏像・仏画について. (Osaka: Ōsakashi kyōiku inkai jimukyoku shōgaku shūbu bunkazai hogoka, 2003).

\(^{56}\) This is according to the temple’s ceiling placard (*munafuda* 棟札). A transcription of the placard is in Zenkōjishi kenkyūkai 善光寺史研究会, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū* 善光寺史研究, 228., while Kobayashi provides a modern Japanese translation in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, 295–296. The temple’s connection to Chizen is indicated by this placard, as well as by the name of the temple itself (Renchisan Chizen-in Wakōji).

\(^{57}\) From the *Bungen kakiagechō*, Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029; Also available in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edō Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 17–21. By 1798, the temple had added two more halls to Jizō, one each to Aizen Myōō, Fumon, Yakushi, Emi, and Konpira, and a bell tower. By 1855, they had added a pagoda, a shrine to Tenman, a “great compassion” hall, a hall to Kōbō Daishi Kūkai, and a shrine to the Yuga Daigongen. From the 1796-1798 *Settsu meisho zue* and the 1855 *Settsu meisho zue taisei* both cited in Honjō Eijirō 本庄榮治郎 and Kuroha Hyōjirō 黒羽兵治郎, *Ōsaka hennenshi* 大阪編年史, 436–437 Vol. 6.

The *Settsu meisho zue* is available on the National Diet Library website (http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2563463?tocOpened=1). The image below of Amidagaike Wakōji is in the 5th folio, koma 28. This image is listed as “free for use” on the NDL website.
The number of monks living at the temple surely fluctuated throughout the period, but during Chishō’s visit in 1808, six monks lived at Wakōji.59

B. Atmosphere of Wakōji

Wakōji is located in the Horie area of Osaka. In the early modern period, it was surrounded by the mixed entertainment, commercial, and residential areas of Miike dōri 4 and 5 chōme. As in many urban areas the area surrounding Wakōji was divided into units called chō 町. Chō were further divided into plots of land on which various structures were built. These structures were often rented out. The sides of these plots facing the

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58 Wakōji’s heads, some of whom are discussed in more detail later, are listed on a stone in the cemetery for Wakōji’s monks. It is interesting, but sometime in the modern period, the head of Wakōji shifted to nuns.

street were rented to shops. In the case of Miike dōri 4 and 5 chōme, these were used goods stores, fancy goods stores, and so on. The side away from the street was often divided into small tenements and rented to day laborers. Furthermore, the bakufu often granted permission for various entertainment venues to be built on newly developed land in order to provide an economic boost to the new areas. Horie was no different. In 1796, there were several jōruri puppet theaters built near Wakōji which drew large crowds, according to the text that accompanies the Settsu meisho zue guidebook image above. To add to this, the Shinmachi pleasure quarters, one of the largest pleasure districts in early modern Japan, was located to the north of the Horie Canal from Wakōji. These surroundings, and its location in the city, influenced the atmosphere at Wakōji: in addition to the permanent halls to Buddhist and combinatory Buddhist/Shintō deities, there were numerous temporary entertainment venues on its grounds. Guidebooks to the area from both 1796 and 1855 mention that “there is no end to those who come from near and far to offer their respects (sonshin 尊信). On the temple grounds are many stands for warrior tales, sermonizers (kōshaku 講釈), tales of times gone by, and various types of archery stalls, so at all times it is extremely lively.” Crowds increased “one-hundred fold” during special occasions as well. These included the Buddha’s birth celebration (Busshō-e 仏生会) in the fourth month, when plant sellers gathered in front of the temple

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60 Tsukada Takashi discusses the makeup of Miike dōri 5 chōme in Tsukada Takashi 塚田孝, Rekishi no naka no Ōsaka: toshi ni ikita hitotachi 歴史の中の大坂―都市に生きた人たち (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002), 109–122.

61 This is from the Settsu meisho zue and the Settsu meisho zue taisei cited in Honjō Eijirō 本庄栄治郎 and Kuroha Hyōjirō 黒羽兵治郎, Ōsaka hennenshi 大阪編年史, 436–437 Vol. 6.

62 Ibid.
gates; the Obon period in the seventh month, when people came to make offerings or light a lantern on the temple grounds; and during the ten nights of nenbutsu practices (Jūya nenbutsu 十夜念仏, Jūya-e 十夜会, or Jūyabutsu 十夜仏) held from the fifth day of the tenth month.\textsuperscript{63} Nam-Lin Hur has discussed the almost organic growth of both prayer and play at Asakusa Sensōji, and that the Tokugawa bakufu was opposed to this combination because it interfered with Buddhist temples’ duty to perform rituals for the state.\textsuperscript{64} However, at Wakōji and its surrounding neighborhoods the combination seems to have been planned by the shogunate and its representatives in Osaka, who granted land near the temple to entertainment venues in an effort to spur on economic development.

This did not mean that the public authorities turned a blind eye to everything that took place on Wakōji’s lands. Because of its location in an entertainment district, the events held on or near its grounds, and the multitudes of people coming to Wakōji, it is no surprise that there were occasionally disturbances.\textsuperscript{65} As heads of Wakōji’s main temple, Daihongan’s abbesses and administrators were responsible for ensuring that the bakufu’s regulations were followed. As in the case at Jūnenji, problems at Wakōji could

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid. The Ten nights of nenbutsu practice is inspired by a quote from the Larger Pure Land Sutra 無量寿経 concerning good done in this world versus that done in the Pure Lands of Amida and other Buddhas: “If in this world you do good for ten days and nights, the merit acquired will surpass that of practicing good in the buddha lands of other directions for a thousand years. The reason is that in the buddha lands of other directions many practice good and very few commit evil.” 於此修善十日十夜。勝於他方諸佛國中為善千歲。所以者何。他方佛國為善者多為惡者少。 (T0360.12.0277c6-c8) Translation from Hisao Inagaki and Harold Stewart, The Three Pure Land Sutras (Berkeley, CA: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1995), 55. The practice is done in gratitude to Amida. For more, see Mineshima Hideo 峯島旭雄, ed., Jōdokyō no jiten: Hōnen, Shinran, Ippen no sekai 浄土教の事典: 法然・親鸞・一遍の世界 (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 2011), 157.

\textsuperscript{64} Hur, Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan, 24–25.

\textsuperscript{65} In 1867 Wakōji was one of the areas patrolled by the Shin’eikumi 新衛組, presumably a special police force similar to the Shinsengumi. Honjō Eijirō 本庄榮治郎 and Kuroha Hyōjirō 黒羽兵治郎, Osaka hennenshi 大阪編年史, 89–90 vol. 25.
have repercussions that affected Daihongan. In the third month of 1747, Daihongan’s administrators had to send a list of rules to Wakōji and a copy to the Osaka Town Governor’s office. These rules provide a window into how the temple was supposed to be run and are helpful in determining, to a certain extent, the origins of some mid-eighteenth-century troubles at Wakōji:

1. You will without fail follow the rules handed down from times past by the public authority. Furthermore, you will take care not to be rude to those sent on official business.
2. Wakōji has been becoming more and more lawless (*furachi 不埒*) in recent years, so the two individuals [in charge of managing Wakōji] have recently come [here] for investigation. Because of this, things must always be handled as they were during Abbess Chizen’s time.
3. The temple has relied on Ryūten 龍天 since he retired last summer. Because those two have come in for questioning, Ryūten should take over the management of the temple from now.
4. Since Wakōji is a concurrently held temple, the representative of the abbess (*kansushiki 看司職*) should, manage [the temple] in an appropriate manner as he has in the past.
5. Temple property from old, along with various ledgers and documents, should be inspected and collected.
6. The various confraternities should get along, negotiating politely as was mentioned in previous regulations.
7. Although in the past there have been loans, they are not to be undertaken by the temple.
8. Sufficient care should be taken in the performance of Buddhist services so as to avoid disorder (*furachi*) amongst those gathered.
9. Teahouses on the temple grounds should take care not to cause disturbances.
10. Those without business [on the temple grounds] should not be allowed to linger, regardless of whether they are monks or laity.

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66 Though there were most likely rules at the temple prior to this, the 1747 copy is the only ones extant. Karasawa Kōzaemon and Yoshimura Tomiemon sent the rules, and monk Shunrei and Shimizu Onoemon were the recepients at Wakōji.

67 Wakōji is listed in the Bungenkakiagechō (Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029) from a few years earlier as a branch, but in the copy printed in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人. It is listed as a concurrently held temple. It is unclear why this discrepancy exists.

68 See the next section for more on the titles used by the head of Wakōji.

69 It is unclear from the wording 前々借銀等有之候とも寺江引請申間敷事 whether these were loans granted by or to the temple.
11. In new situations of any kind, you are not to proceed without consulting with the main temple.

12. Every month the heads of the confraternities should meet and prepare a record of the accounts, and, as has been done in the past, every year they should send it along with the leftover money to [the main temple in] Shinano Province.\(^\text{70}\)

The first rule can be found almost verbatim in other lists of temple rules throughout Japan at this time. The second and third hint at the perpetrators of the “lawlessness” at the temple: there were two unnamed people involved. Since the third rule suggests that Ryūten\(^\text{71}\) take over temple management while the two go for questioning, it is fair to assume that one of the two being investigated was the head of the temple. This is confirmed by the fourth rule reminding the abbesses’ representatives to act in an appropriate manner because their actions reflect upon Daihongan. It is harder to determine exactly what set off the investigation; rather than a single cause, it seems that there were perhaps several incidents “in recent years.” These probably included issues with financial mismanagement and misappropriation of property, which appear in rules five, seven, and twelve, and groups causing disorder on or near the temple grounds, as is hinted at in rules eight, nine, and ten.

Of course, financial mismanagement and disorder on temple grounds could have occurred at any temple. However, these rules can provide specific information about Wakōji. Sparse as these rules are, they provide information about how Wakōji was to be run, its connections to the area surrounding it, and its relationship with Daihongan. First, the temple was to be managed by a temple head, but he did not have limitless control. He

\(^\text{70}\) Nagano kenshi kankōkai, Nagano kenshi, 1971, 7–1:690–691.

\(^\text{71}\) It is unclear exactly who Ryūten was – he is not in the temple’s list of previous head. However, from the “ryū” character in his name, perhaps he was a dharma relative of Ryūzan, the second head of Wakōji.
had to follow precedent (in particular, that set during the time of Chizen) and receive instructions from Daihongan when new situations arose (rules two, four, and eleven). Furthermore, he did not control temple finances—they were checked by the confraternities during the monthly meeting of their heads (Rule twelve). The rules regarding confraternities (rules six and twelve) demonstrate the involvement of laypeople from nearby areas in Wakōji’s management—I discuss these confraternities in more detail later. Rule nine regarding teahouses on temple grounds also indicates the pairing of “prayer and play” at temples near entertainment areas, and how those temples could become entertainment venues in their own rights; in this case the rule also indicates that Wakōji was responsible for maintaining order at these teahouses. Finally, in addition to looking to Daihongan for guidance, Wakōji was to send financial records and money to its main temple every year.

Of course, this case differed in a significant way from that at Jūnenji a few years earlier. The abbess and her administrators were not directly involved in the disturbances at Wakōji. As a result, they were not reprimanded nor did they have further limits placed on their actions because of what happened at their branch. However, as these rules demonstrate, as Wakōji’s head temple, Daihongan had a responsibility to keep order at their branch. Furthermore, they had to show the public authorities that they were capable of exercising that responsibility: this is why Daihongan sent a copy of the rules to the Osaka City Magistrate.
C. Wakōji’s Support to the Abbesses

As in the case of many other branch temples, Wakōji provided financial support to Daihongan. This support came from Wakōji’s land, displays of temple treasures, and reimbursement for travels. First was the temple’s land. When the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines granted permission to build Wakōji, it stipulated the division of the income from the temple’s property: two thirds of the town property in front of the temple gates (monzen machi 門前町) was to be under the control of Daihongan, while the remaining third would go to Daikanjin.72 Additionally, the approval document states that there was to be a fund-raising hall on the grounds administered jointly by Daihongan and Daikanjin, and that the funds from this were to go to building projects for Zenkōji itself. This demonstrates that Daikanjin was also involved in some of Daihongan’s branch temple projects; unfortunately, there is no further documentation regarding this connection, and there is nothing in the surviving records to indicate whether the hall was actually built. If it was, it was no longer on the grounds in 1745. Another source of funding came from displays of the temple’s main image. These mainly occurred within the temple in Osaka when the abbesses visited. For example, during the 1808 display held on the occasion of Chishō’s visit, the display garnered 450 gold ryō of funds, 100 of which was earmarked for Daihongan.73 Wakōji’s image was also displayed at Daihongan’s branch temple in Edo three times during the early modern period in 1780, 1817, and 1848.74 While many of the donations received during displays of Wakōji’s

72 Nagano-ken, Nagano Kenshi, 7–1:721.
73 Daihongan took an addition 100 ryō from the total as a loan because it did not have enough for the return home. It is unclear how much other displays at Wakōji brought in because of a lack of records. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 239.
74 Ryakuengi 50.
image in Osaka remained in Osaka, a portion of the money received during displays in Edo would have been given to the host temple, Aoyama Zenkōji. During at least two of these trips to Edo, the image was also displayed in the women’s quarters of the shogun’s castle. During these visits the abbess accepted donations from the shogun and ladies of the inner chambers, and had further chances to connect with these powerful people. These displays were also a chance to further cement Wakōji’s head-branch relationship with Daihongan’s abbess. The final source of income from Wakōji was a travel reimbursement: when Chishō was abbess (1791–1836), Wakōji sent 60 gold ryō as traveling money on years that the abbess had a regularly scheduled visit to the shogun’s castle.

Wakōji was also perfectly situated to provide administrative support within western Japan for the Daihongan abbess. Administrators from Daihongan regularly stayed in Wakōji during trips to Osaka and Kyoto, the second and third largest cities in early modern Japan. Furthermore, the head of Wakōji relayed documents between the court in Kyoto and the abbess, especially for permission for new abbesses to wear their purple robes of office and in regards to her visits to the court (gosandai 御参内). I will discuss this in more detail in the following chapter.

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75 Ryakuengi 45
76 The treasures of Wakōji were not the only things to travel to the castle, however. The current abbess, along with fifty-four servants and appropriate accoutrements, all traveled with them. There were four amongst the list of attendants who were noticeably women, listed as “ama.” Daihongan fuku 2 63.051
77 Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo,” 16.
78 It is unclear when or why this practice began – it is not mentioned during Chikan’s time, for instance. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 215.
D. Connections with Laity

Wakōji also provided an opportunity to connect with laypeople in western Japan. The most direct, but also the rarest opportunity came during abbesses’ visits to Wakōji. These occurred following their visits to the court in Kyoto. These stays in Osaka lasted around one month. For example, Chikan stayed at Wakōji from 1764.4.7 until 5.20 while Chishō was there from 1808.3.28 until 5.15. During their visits the temple’s main image would be on display, usually for 30 days, though they often successfully petitioned the Osaka Town Magistrate for an extension of seven days. During this time people came to the temple to see the image and attend ceremonies performed by the abbesses. These included opening and closing ceremonies for the display, services for hungry ghosts, and daily opportunities to receive the ten recitations of Amida’s name from her.79

1. Wakōji’s Confraternities

However, as I mentioned above, opportunities to meet the abbesses at Wakōji were fleeting, few, and far between. Chizen visited Osaka in 1698 and perhaps during Wakōji’s construction and dedication, Seikō came in 1732 and 1751, Chikan in 1764, Seikō in 1784, and Chishō in 1808.

79 Ryakuengi. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 33; Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 238–239. The wording here is that the abbess would “confer the ten recitations of Amida’s name” (Jūnen wo juyo 十念を授与) on those who attended the ceremony. In this practice, a monk or nun would recite the nenbutsu ten times, and the person receiving the jūnen would either recite the nenbutsu along with or just after the monk or nun. This practice supposedly derives from Hōnen’s interpretation of the 18th vow (also called the primal vow or hongan 本願) of the Bodhisattva Dharmakara from the Larger Pure Land Sutra – the Bodhisattva who becomes the Buddha Amida. The vow states: “If, when I attain buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten directions who sincerely and joyfully entrust themselves to me, desire to be reborn in my land, and think of me even ten times should not be born there [i.e. in his Pure Land], may I not attain perfect enlightenment” (italics added) or 設我得佛。十方衆生至心信樂。欲生我國: 乃至十念。若不生者不取正覺。T0360.12.0268a26-a27. This “think of me even ten times” is often translated or interpreted to mean “recite my name even ten times” or “think of me [by reciting my name] ten times” under the influence of Japanese Pure Land thought. Inagaki and Stewart, The Three Pure Land Sutras, 14 and FN 6 on page 97; Mineshima Hideo 島光雄, Jōdokyō no jiten, 155–156.
Chishō in 1808, and Seien in 1844.\textsuperscript{80} While these opportunities to physically see the abbesses were limited, Wakōji’s existence as a branch temple of Daihongan meant that connecting to the convent and to Zenkōji was as simple as visiting the temple. Indeed, travel guides made these connections clear to their readers. After briefly paraphrasing the Zenkōji origin story and the central role of Amida Pond in it, the \textit{Settsu meisho zue} states that “in Genroku 11 [1698] Abbess Chizen developed this land and enshrined an exact copy of Zenkōji’s icon” at Wakōji.\textsuperscript{81} However, it is impossible to determine how many people came to the temple and how many made offerings, sponsored a ritual, or attended a ceremony there. While these types of temporary relationships may be difficult to trace, there were groups of people that established lasting and influential connections to Wakōji and Daihongan: confraternities.

Early modern Japanese confraternities (\textit{kō} 講, \textit{kōchū} 講中, \textit{kōsha} 講社) were quite diverse, though they were generally centered on a deity, place, occupation, and/or activity.\textsuperscript{82} Place could refer to either the location where the deity was located or the local area in which members were organized. Confraternities to Mt. Konpira in Shikoku are one example. While groups were organized around Konpira deity, they were also locally based, with members of a group coming from one village or region.\textsuperscript{83} Confraternities’

\textsuperscript{80} These opportunities probably increased during Seien’s time as she visited Kansai several times in the 1860s, and she actually lived at Wakōji from 1871–1895.
\textsuperscript{81} The \textit{Settsu meisho zue taisei} also has this quote in it, but it does not discuss Zenkōji’s origin story. Honjō Eijirō 本庄榮治郎 and Kuroha Hyōjirō 黒羽兵治郎, \textit{Osaka hennenshi} 大阪編年史, 436.
\textsuperscript{82} Lucy Itō traces the origins of confraternities in Japan to early Heian period lectures (\textit{kōgi} 講義) by prominent monks on various sutras, and that the learned nature of confraternities changed as Buddhism began to diffuse to the larger population. Lucy S. Ito, “Ko. Japanese Confraternities,” \textit{Monumenta Nipponica} 8, no. 1/2 (January 1, 1952): 412–15.
activities varied widely as well, though pilgrimage and donations were central to most. There were also economic confraternities, which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 5.

There were at least seven confraternities affiliated with Wakōji: the Zenkōji Confraternity, the 100,000-Person Confraternity, the 10th Day Confraternity, the Nyorai Confraternity, the Fumonbon Confraternity, the 18th Day Confraternity, and the 24th Day Confraternity, though the first three appear only in early documents so they may have ceased to exist after the temple’s founding. It is difficult to uncover details about group membership and internal organization, though extant documents and temple treasures from the early 19th century provide some clues. These confraternities were headed by “confraternity representatives” (kōsōdai) who signed off on documents and occasionally took charge of organizing fundraising for donations to the temple. In early 19th century documents the representatives were all male.

Further clues about the members of Wakōji’s confraternities can be gleaned from a vividly colorful silk image depicting the birth of the Buddha which the confraternities donated to the temple in 1817.85 On the mounting beneath the image is a list of donors.

84 The 10th day seems to refer to the Konpira deity’s ennichi, the 18th day to Kannon’s ennichi, and the 24th to the Bodhisattva Jizō’s.
85 The image is 315.7 cm x 257.3 cm. It was painted by Koshiba Rankei 小柴蘭渓 (dates unknown), a Buddhist artist living in Osaka’s Nakaderamachi. There are several scenes depicted in the image: Maya, the Buddha’s birth mother, dreaming of a white elephant when she miraculously conceives the Buddha is depicted in the upper right; the Buddha being born from her right side in Lumbini is on the right side of the image; in the center is the newly born Buddha who, after taking seven steps, declares to the heaven and earth that this is his last rebirth; directly above him are two dragons raining water down to wash the newborn Buddha; surrounding him are heavenly beings come to watch and sing his praises, and at his feet, to the bottom of the image, is a lotus pond, which was perhaps considered to represent Amida Pond itself. The image was perhaps used during the Buddha’s Birth celebrations in the fourth month. Ōsakashi kyōiku iinkai 大阪市教育委員会, Ōsaka shinai shozai no butsuzō butsuga wakōji no butsuzō butsuga ni tsuite 大阪市内所在の仏像・仏画和光寺の仏像・仏画について, 15.
and a note clarifying that Awaya Tasuke 阿波屋太助, a representative of the Nyorai confraternity at this time, organized the donation and that members of that confraternity spearheaded the fundraising efforts. On the back of the image are 114 records of donation made by 117 donors and the names of those for whom the donations were made (kechiensha 結縁者), usually current or deceased family members. Although confraternity membership is not indicated in these records, there are four people whose names appear in other documents as representatives of the Nyorai and 18th-Day Confraternities. Because of the involvement of these representatives and the members of the Nyorai Confraternity in fundraising, it is perhaps safe to say that at least a few of the other donors were also confraternity members or their families. If this is the case, then membership in these confraternities was largely male. Only thirteen of the donors were women, though it is unclear whether they were members themselves, related to members, or simply friends of members. Finally, it can be assumed that confraternity membership was concentrated near Wakōji. Ninety-two of the donors listed their addresses. Of those, seventy-three were close to Wakōji in areas such as Horie, Miike-dōri, Awaza, and Nagahori; sixteen were farther away but still within Osaka; and three were from outside Osaka but still within the Kansai area. Even if the donors were not confraternity members, the addresses provided demonstrate the areas where fundraising was concentrated, thus indicating a high likelihood that confraternity members from the

86 This list appears in Ibid., 15–18.
87 One of the records has the names of four donors. There were 4367 kechiensha listed. On average each donor listed 37 kechiensha; the lowest were two who did not name kechiensha, while the highest from a single donor was 114. The list of donors, their addresses, and the number of people in whose name the donation was made is listed in Ibid., 19–21.
Nyorai confraternity that headed the fundraising were concentrated in the areas closest to Wakōji.

Earlier I discussed how the 100,000-Person and Zenkōji confraternities sponsored activities at and donated goods to Amida Pond during the 1694 display of Zenkōji’s icon in Osaka. Other confraternities took an active interest in Wakōji’s founding. In the ninth month of 1699 Hyōguya Matajirō and Yamatoya Yosuke, acting as representatives of “the confraternities of Osaka Amidagaike Wakōji,” traveled to Shinano to hand deliver a letter full of suggestions to Chizen. She had received approval to build the temple only a few months earlier. They began the letter by expressing their gratitude:

At this time, concerning Amida Pond, the eight of us, not to mention all confraternity members, are grateful that our wish has been fulfilled and that because of Daihongan Chizen’s request, the temple Wakōji will be for all time a branch temple of the abbess’s. For that reason, we have come to visit [Zenkōji’s Amida] Nyorai.

They then turn to the administration of Wakōji:

Concerning Osaka Wakōji, it is a precious branch temple [of Daihongan’s]. The representative monk (rusui no sō 留守居之僧) should come from the ranks of monks affiliated with the abbess (fudaishūsō 譜代衆僧) as has been done up until now, and will be replaced in the third month of each year. For this reason, the public authorities down to the members of the confraternities will know he is the abbess’s representative monk (Odaisō 御代僧). If this is so, we think all things from beginning to end will be handled smoothly. Furthermore, in making this into a public temple (seken no tera 世間之寺), many different people will come and go, so we will follow the rules of the authorities. We understand that these things will be troublesome for the renunciants performing services there. At that time, we will follow whatever way you deem reasonable.

This paragraph is informative in a number of ways. It demonstrates that Chizen had been sending representative monks to Amidagaike on an alternating basis, though it
is unclear when this practice began. Furthermore, the representatives came from a group of monks affiliated with her; this presumably refers to monks from the Nakashū Pure Land temples at Zenkōji. It also tells us that the confraternities acknowledged that the temple may be busier than other “ordinary temples,” and that the bustle may cause difficulties for the priests living there.

They next turn to the construction of Wakōji:

When the abbess goes to Edo next spring for her visit to the castle, if she would ask permission to build Wakōji’s main hall, and if she receives permission to build it in the “Zenkōji” style, could she please have the plans drawn up by a carpenter in Edo and quickly sent to Wakōji? In any case, this is the desire of the members of the confraternities.

They also desired to have Chizen visit again as they began nenbutsu recitation:

Even if our desire for the abbess to come up [to Kansai] is not fulfilled, we will make an offering to [Zenkōji’s Amida] Nyorai and return home. Concerning the beginning of nenbutsu services, since Wakōji is Japan’s pond of continual light, we feel that beginning [these services] with a regular monk will [produce] different faith (shinjin 信心) in various people [than if the abbess were to do it]. It is our desire that next spring the abbess definitely come to Kansai after she visits Edo Castle. After she tells us her plans, the confraternities will pay her travel fees either from Shinano or Edo.

It is unclear from extant documentation whether Chizen traveled to Wakōji in 1700 to lead the nenbutsu ceremonies. However, this section indicates that the confraternities held the abbess in higher esteem than “a regular monk” and that they felt other people would be affected more deeply by her presence. Moreover, this request is the origin of Wakōji and its confraternities paying for the abbesses’ travel to and from Osaka.

In addition to Chizen’s request to begin building, it seems as though she discussed with the confraternities other requests she might make of the Tokugawa family. They say,
“If the abbess is successful in her request for mortuary tablets and a curtain with the [Tokugawa family] crest, they will forever be for the good of Wakōji.”

Chizen’s request for such donations was not without precedent. Warrior families from the Tokugawa down to the lowest ranking families often made donations to temples even though they were not required by law to do so like commoners were. In some cases, families acted as patrons because a particular temple was the mortuary temple (bodaiji 菩提寺) where that family’s ancestors received posthumous care. In others, donations were a way to display status. In either case, temples regularly displayed these signs of their connections with powerful patrons, and temples could maintain their connections with these patrons by requesting that the patron repair or replace the item when needed.88 Chizen’s request for items with the Tokugawa family crest was successful. In 1701 she visited the Inner Quarters of the castle and received a drape with the Tokugawa crest, a mat, and a decorative cord for Wakōji from Keishō-in, Shogun Tsunayoshi’s mother.89 If the temple had received Tokugawa family mortuary tablets, it would have been a great honor and would have been mentioned prominently in various documents. However, since they are not mentioned we can only assume that this request was not granted.

The confraternities then returned to temple administration:

Concerning the rule of Wakōji, we think it appropriate that [rules] pass from the abbess to her representative monk (rusui no sō 留守居之僧), and from her representative monk to the members of the confraternities. We think that if the monks living at the temple, no matter who is sent here, are ordered by the abbess to obey the rules of the representative monk, then various worldly affairs will go

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well from start to finish, various people’s faith will not dim and they will understand high and low, and Wakōji will develop well. We also think it is appropriate for a reasonable amount of seasonal clothing and spending money for the resident monks to come from Wakōji. We want these things to be handed [to them] on consultation with members of the confraternities.

Even though we understand that having the representative monk from the Nakashū come to Kansai will be troublesome in a number of ways, you should still request that they come here in rotating shifts as has been the case until now. In this situation, Wakōji will prosper [if our] desire [for the representative] to rely on the abbess’s monks (fudaishū) and ourselves is [followed].

We think confraternity members in Osaka should not sponsor/introduce (kimoiri 肝煎り) [people to become] resident monks. In any case, we think that it is appropriate if these monks always come from Shinano.

Concerning the administration of accounts, we think it is appropriate that you ask members of the tenth-day confraternity. Since there are many wealthy people in this confraternity, we think there will not be mishaps. Since [it is unknown] how it will be under the administration of only one or two people, we suggest [the above method].

Here the confraternities place themselves within the temple hierarchy that extends from Daihongan’s abbesses to her representatives, and then to the confraternities and other monks at the temple. However, they highlight again their desire for the representative to change every year. This would have meant a continuing connection with Daihongan and would have brought fresh priests to the temple. Furthermore, along with the suggestion that resident monks not be introduced by confraternity members, it would have made it difficult for confraternity members to interfere with temple administration by swaying a priest with whom they had formed deep connections. On the other hand, bringing in a new representative monk every year would have placed the confraternities in a position of greater power vis-à-vis a temporary representative priest who knew little about the area, the temple precedents, or its administration. I will discuss the

90 During Chishō’s 1808 visit there were six monks in residence at Wakōji. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 238.
representatives, issues surrounding their succession, and the balance of power between Wakōji’s head priests, Daihongan’s abbesses, and the confraternities in the next section.

The confraternities saw themselves as Wakōji’s financial overseers. In addition to managing the temple’s accounts, the confraternity members were to have a voice in the amounts of pocket money and clothing the resident monks received. As discussed earlier, rather than place one confraternity in charge of accounting at Wakōji, the heads of all the confraternities were to handle it at their monthly meetings.

Matajirō and Yosuke end with an apology:

Even though we realize that we are in error [in presenting this letter to you in this manner], we apologize, but at this time we give [this to you] in this way until we [make an offering as] proof of our visit to [Zenkōji’s Amida Nyorai]. [If] these suggestions are not taken up, there will certainly be no word of complaint [from us]. Furthermore, you will probably consider the fact that we do not have all our names stamped [on this document as an indication that] we are not of one mind. Just in case, the two of us have stamped our names and given this [to you]. That is all.91

Unfortunately, Chizen’s reply to their unusually direct request is not extant; perhaps she personally discussed these items with Matajirō and Yosuke during their visit to Zenkōji. In any case, this early letter indicates that the confraternities were actively involved in Wakōji’s construction and eager to have a role in its administration. However, while the confraternities had a degree of administrative control as the temple’s bookkeepers, they had greater or lesser roles in other areas of temple administration depending upon the situation at the temple and the power of (or lack thereof) the temple’s head, as I will demonstrate in the next section. While the hierarchy of control over

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Wakōji was supposed to place the abbesses at the top, her representatives in the middle, and the confraternities and residential monks at the bottom, in several situations the confraternities were able to exercise a surprising amount of power by taking control of temple repairs away from Wakōji’s head monk or by negotiating with the abbess to alter her orders to their liking.

1. Balance between Abbesses, Temple Heads, and Confraternities: Two Examples

The above letter to Chizen makes it clear that the confraternities wanted Daihongan’s abbess to choose her representative at Wakōji. However, evidence from the nineteenth century demonstrates clearly that Daihongan’s abbess did not have absolute control over who became the head of Wakōji. The retiring head could suggest a replacement, but his suggestion had to be approved by the confraternities and the abbess. However, if the previous head died before appointing a successor, the abbess could choose a new one, but the confraternities occasionally expressed their disapproval and attempted to negotiate in their favor. This balance between the abbess, the head of Wakōji, and its confraternities is demonstrated in two examples from 1824–1825 and 1852.

92 For the first part of the temple’s existence this person was officially called “a person in charge during the abbesses’ absence” (rusui 留守居), and later in the period, the more usual title of “overseer of the temple” (kansu 看主), or “head of the temple” (jūshoku 住職).
I will examine the latter example first because it demonstrates the style of succession in normal circumstances. This is drawn from a document written by the 12th head of Wakōji, Eshin, to the elder nuns Bonjō and Ryūsei and the temple administrator Karasawa on 1852.8.21. In it Eshin requested permission to retire because, he stated, when he became head in 1845, he had no difficulties with the work, but recently he was ill more often, so he could not give proper attention to various temple affairs. He suggested that his student, Ehon, who was training at Zōjōji, should be his successor. Since Ehon was still young, Eshin stated that he would watch over him. In addition to requesting permission from Daihongan, a note at the end of this document indicates that Eshin also received permission for his retirement and succession plans from Wakōji’s confraternities and “his brothers in the

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93 The death of Ehō and succession of Etsū is listed in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 35.
94 Ōsakashi kyōiku iinkai 大阪市教育委員会, Osaka shinai shozai no butsuzō butsuga wakōji no butsuzō butsuga ni tsuite 大阪市内所在の仏像・仏画和光寺の仏像・仏画について, 21.
For Wakōji’s heads, hōrui were monks from the same dharma lineage as their own who were the heads of temples in the Osaka area. This document demonstrates the various levels of approval needed for retirement and succession. In addition to Daihongan’s abbesses, heads of Wakōji needed permission from the confraternities and their dharma siblings. Permission from the hōrui was perhaps required because these monks would have likely had roles in large rituals at each other’s temples.

The next example comes from two documents written by Wakōji’s confraternities in 1824.3 and 1825.11 to Daihongan. These documents, which originated during a disruption in the normal way of determining succession, illustrate the shifting balance of power that could occur between the heads of Wakōji, Daihongan’s abbesses, and the confraternities. Although these documents concern who will become successor following the 10th head of the temple, Echō (d. 1823), they detail the conditions surrounding the succession of heads following Zuia Etsū (6th head). When Etsū retired, Ehaku became head of Wakōji. However, when Ehaku died before appointing a successor the confraternities thought that Emin should have succeeded as head because they considered

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96 This is document Daihongan fuku 2 69.134. During Chishō’s visit in 1808 there were at least six dharma brothers of Echō at Taihōji 大宝寺, Jōkokuji 浄国寺, Tennenji 天然寺, Anrakuji 安楽寺, Seianji 誓安寺, and Sōkeiji 宗慶寺 in the Osaka area.

Stephen Covell discusses hōrui, “dharma relatives,” in contemporary Tendai terms. These relationships are officially recognized by the sect; these relatives “form a support group for each other. Priests from related temples assist with ceremonies and provide advice for each other; they often sit on the board of directors of each other’s juridical person.” They also step in and provide assistance should the head priest die without an heir, or if the heir is too young to take over rituals at the temple. Covell, Japanese Temple Buddhism, 127.

97 These are documents Daihongan fuku 2 66.086 and fuku 2 66.090. 66.086 is addressed to “the temple administrators of our head temple” gohonji, oyakuninshichūsama, and is stamped by three representatives of the Nyorai confraternity. 66.090 is addressed to “the inside of Zenkōji” Zenkōji gonai and is stamped by six representatives of the Nyorai confraternity, two representatives of the Fumonbon Confraternity, two representants of the twenty-fourth day Confraternity, and four representatives of the eighteenth-day confraternity.
him to be Ehaku’s top student. Emin fell ill before he could take the reins, so the retired Etsū started campaigning amongst the confraternities for Echō (10th head, d. 1823) to become head. Though many were against Echō becoming head because of his youth, Etsū convinced them by stating that he would watch after him. (It is unclear why Ekyoku and Egaku, who are listed as the eighth and ninth heads on a stone marker in the cemetery for Wakōji’s renunciants, do not appear in these documents.)

However, during Echō’s time as head, “expenditures were great and furthermore he was sick for three or four years, so proper attention was not paid to repairs to damaged buildings and the funds for repairs were depleted.” Because Wakōji had reached this dilapidated condition, the confraternities planned to right the temple’s affairs when Echō died by placing Ejun, who they considered to be Echō’s top student, in charge of the temple. However, Daihongan decided to suggest Eyū be the next head. The confraternities, clearly unhappy with this turn of events, countered by saying that they would accept Eyū provisionally as the temple’s overseer (kansu 看主) instead of its head. Only if he repaired the temple buildings and pleased the confraternities would they request that Daihongan name him the head of the temple.

Eyū did not have to wait three years to become the head of Wakōji, however. A little more than a year and a half later, in 1825, Wakōji’s confraternities sent another request to Daihongan. In it they stated that Eyū was working wholeheartedly towards the repair of Wakōji’s buildings. While they were impressed by Eyū’s performance, their request also stemmed from administrative difficulties they faced when submitting documents to the local authorities because of his status as “overseer” and not “head of
“After apologizing for not being able to bring their petition to Daihongan in person as was the norm— they claimed that they were busy with temple repairs and there were many elderly confraternity members who could not make the journey—the confraternities gently reminded Daihongan of not only “the faith they have had in Zenkōji’s Amida since the time of their ancestors, but also the trifling amount of support” they have offered Daihongan and Zenkōji over the years. While they added this statement as a way to ask forgiveness for their rudeness in not coming to Daihongan and for their handling of the whole affair, it also served as a not so subtle encouragement to Daihongan to fulfill the confraternities’ request because of the financial and administrative efforts that they had provided over the years.

Although the focus of these documents is succession, much more can be gleaned from them about life at Wakōji in the early nineteenth century. First, Wakōji’s confraternities could take on greater or smaller roles in temple administration depending upon the circumstances. At a minimum they handled temple accounting, but if they felt the head priest was not handling such matters appropriately, they could become involved in the maintenance of the temple buildings, for instance. Their approval during moments of normal succession— i.e. when the previous head was still alive and had chosen a successor— could ensure the wellbeing of the temple. For instance, the confraternities could withhold approval of someone they felt was too young, as they almost did with Echō’s succession. The abbess had final say in these situations, however. She also appointed successors in unusual circumstances, if the previous head had been called in

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98 Ibid. fuku 2 66.090.
for investigation (as he had been in 1747) or died, for instance. In these cases, however, the confraternities felt that their financial and administrative assistance to Daihongan gave them the right to make requests regarding succession, and their assistance provided leverage to convince the abbess to take their requests seriously, as was the case when they negotiated to make Eyu the provisional temple overseer instead of temple head.

Second, these examples also provide information about Wakōji’s heads. They demonstrate that though the confraternities had initially requested that the head of the temple come from the ranks of the monks affiliated with the abbess, by the 19th century he was chosen from amongst the previous head’s students either in residence at Wakōji or at Zōjōji. Furthermore, these heads served until they died or retired, which was different from the initial request by the confraternities that he be replaced every year. While the heads came to occupy a more stable base at Wakōji than they would have had they changed every year, the fact that the confraternities’ approval was required for succession and they could step in when they felt things were being mismanaged highlights the degree to which the confraternities, which had a long-term, vested interest in Wakōji, could counter the heads’ authority.

2. Confraternities, Wakōji and Daihongan
   Not much work has analyzed the administrative roles of confraternities in temples, so it is difficult to determine how unusual the confraternities’ involvement at Wakōji was. However, it seems as though they occupied a position similar to that of groups of parishioners (danka 檀家) in local funerary temples. Hōzawa Naohide has demonstrated that while clergy maintained control over temple affairs, the parishioners
had a larger influence during abbatial succession or when the temple needed major repairs. This increased involvement could have stemmed from a sense of obligation to the temple, its role as a site for local gatherings, or parishioners’ own economic reasons if the temple was one which drew in a large number of worshippers and was therefore important for the local economy.VESey expands upon Hōzawa’s arguments and states that although there was a sense of obligation towards the temple and a legal need for the abbot’s seal in the villagers’ temple registry, parishioners also became involved in temple administration and succession because they were invested in the maintenance of the temple buildings and its furnishings that their money in the form of donations, fees, and so on had purchased. Furthermore, the temple was a site where they could achieve and display their cultural, social, and financial advancement to other locals. Finally, temples also served as vital sites of education and dispute mediation in rural areas. This demonstrates, Vesey argues, that temples were not simply clerical spaces, but “were in varying ways sites shared by overlapping yet distinct social geographies” in which “the relative weight of authority held by each constituency [i.e. the clergy and the local peasants] shifted back and forth.”100 Parishioner involvement in temples in unusual circumstances, such as the sudden loss of a head cleric with no successor, ensured the continued existence of the temples as clerical space, while guaranteeing that temples were not simply institutions located in the village, but ones integrated into village society as well.

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100 Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 387.
Hōzawa’s and Vesey’s observations regarding the relationship between village
temples and their parishioners can help us understand the relationships between Wakōji,
its confraternities, and Daihongan. They help us to see that the confraternities’
involvement in moments of clerical succession and interest in the maintenance of temple
buildings were similar to the ways parishioners were involved in their parish temples. It
also helps us to understand the confraternities’ motivations. Although they had no
obligation to Wakōji in the same way a parishioner had towards his or her parish temple,
some of these confraternities had existed prior to Wakōji’s founding, and, as their letter
of suggestions to Chizen demonstrates, were invested in the temple before the plans for
the halls had even been drawn up. This investment was not only emotional, but material,
as Vesey points out. The confraternities had donated many items to the temple throughout
the years, so they felt a need to maintain the temple buildings; in other words, the donors
would look bad if their donations were surrounded by dilapidated temple buildings. As
Hōzawa and Vesey both point out, the temple’s place in local society is also an important
reason for the confraternities’ support. Pilgrims had traveled to Amida pond before
Wakōji was built, and they continued to do so afterwards, especially, one can assume,
during displays of the temple’s treasures and visits by Daihongan’s abbess. This would
have brought income to the local businesses. However, confraternities’ economic
interests in Wakōji were not limited to maintaining its role as a religious pilgrimage
destination. The temple was also the landlord to businesses on the temple grounds or in
its gate town. Housed in the midst of an entertainment district, this meant that the temple
was the landlord to teahouses and other businesses directly connected to the
entertainment industry. Wakōji’s temple grounds also served as the venue for theater performances known as “shrine-land theater” (miyachi shibai 宮地芝居), which included both kabuki and puppet performances. Therefore, Wakōji served not only as the backdrop for local businesses and performances, but the venue for many of them as well. If these confraternities were made up of locals or those with local businesses, then it was in their interests to ensure that Wakōji flourished. This suggests that in at least some cases the supporters of “prayer culture” at Wakōji were the organizers of “play culture” that took place on its grounds or nearby. Finally, although a sense of obligation or material and economic connectedness to the temple are compelling, one cannot discount the power of belief as a motivating factor. The confraternities cite their continuing and longstanding belief in Zenkōji’s icon as a reason Daihongan should accede to their request, so it is not a stretch to say that it also motivated the members of the confraternities to support Wakōji.

Chizen built Wakōji from wood and plaster, but she also built it on a foundation of Zenkōji’s temple legends, popular support, and preexisting practices at Amida Pond. Because of her efforts, Daihongan’s abbesses gained a valuable branch temple in an ideal

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101 Kanda Yutsuki notes that from 1819 many of the kabuki-style “shrine-land” performances in Osaka came under the purview of the sermonizers’ Sango troupe (sekkyōsha Sangoza 説教者讃語座), which was affiliated with the Semimaru Shrine. Though the troupe attempted to bring all shrine-land performance, including jōruri chanting (the performers of which were affiliated with the Chinami Confraternity), under their control, the town magistrate rejected their claims. For more on shrine-land theaters, see Yutsuki Kanda, “The Traditional City of Osaka and Performers,” City, Culture and Society 3, no. 1 (March 2012): 51–57.

102 This suggests more overlap in prayer and play than that discussed by Hur, who discusses them as being supported by two different groups. Hur, Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan, 113.
location. Wakōji served as an administrative outpost and a source of funding, while also connecting the abbesses to the residents of one of the largest cities in early modern Japan.

**VI. Aoyama Zenkōji**

The 109th abess of Daihongan, Chikei 智慶 (abbess until 1612), founded Daihongan’s branch temple in Edo on land she had received in 1601. The temple presumably received tax-exempt status (shuinjō 朱印状) from the shogun’s government at that time, though the earliest extant certificate dates to 1648. The land itself was 7,500 tsubo, or 24,570 square meters in size; in terms of land possession it was a mid-sized temple in Edo. Though initially located in an area of northern Edo called Yanaka 谷中, it was moved to Aoyama 青山, in the western outskirts of Edo, following a fire in 1703 which destroyed the temple buildings. The temple took its name from its location, so it was initially called Yanaka Zenkōji, and after 1705 it was called Aoyama Zenkōji. Chikei may have had many reasons for wanting to build a temple in the shogun’s new capital, including to maintain her relationship with the Tokugawa family that was forged in the 1590s. Indeed, scholars speculate that the temple was to be used as a place where the abbess could stay during her visits to the shogun’s castle. However, many abbesses, particularly those later in the early modern period, spent most of their time in Aoyama.

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103 It is unknown when Chikei became abbess.
104 The shuinjō is for five koku of land, or the amount of land that would produce roughly 900 liters of rice in a year.
105 Unfortunately, few documents survive from the temple’s time in Yanaka. For information on the move, see for example, Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1164.121.
106 The abbess was supposed to travel to the castle once every three years. Kobayashi Keiichirō, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 556.
and only traveled to Daihongan in Shinano for major rituals. For instance, Chikan spent roughly eighteen and a half years out of her thirty-eight years as abbess at Aoyama, while her successor, Chishō, spent most of her time at Aoyama—thirty-nine years out of her forty-six as abbess.

Aoyama (and Yanaka before it) was on the outskirts of Edo—then one of the largest cities in the world. Yanaka Zenkōji was located less than five kilometers to the northeast of Edo Castle; it was in a cluster of mid-sized temples, and on the edge of the grounds of Kan’ei-ji. After the temple buildings were destroyed in a fire, Daihongan received permission to move its branch to Aoyama, only six kilometers from the city center, a distance easily walked in an hour. Both of these areas were much closer to the city than Daihongan and Zenkōji in Shinano Province, more than 200 kilometers away, which made it easier for the abbesses to visit Edo castle every third year.

Unlike the relatively clear divisions within the city, where warrior compounds were generally located closest to the castle, and commoner districts and temple lands were further afield, the areas on Edo’s edges were less clearly delineated. An examination of the Aoyama and Shibuya area of the Edo kiriezu (Figure 3-4) from the mid-nineteenth century demonstrates this. Though the area surrounding Aoyama Zenkōji was largely comprised of daimyo and warrior manors (white areas on the map),

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107 The only remaining indicator of Daihongan’s branch in Yanaka is the place name Zenkōji hill (Zenkōji zaka). Gyokurinji 玉林寺 was built on the location of Yanaka Zenkōji.

108 Yoshida Nobuyuki describes the “segmental structure” (bunsetsu kōzō 分節構造) of large cities, where each section has its own social structure and internal/external relationships.

109 The Edo kiriezu is available on the National Diet Library’s website (http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1286667?tocOpened=1). The image is in public domain and usable without special permission from NDL.
there were also significant numbers of fields (green), temples (red), and commoner areas (gray) that were either stand-alone areas or temple gate towns. Aoyama Zenkōji was bordered on three sides by samurai and daimyo manors and to the south was its gate town. Because of this, its grounds would have been much quieter than those of Wakōji, which was surrounded by commoner neighborhoods and entertainment venues.

Figure 3-4: Aoyama Shibuya Kiriezu. Aoyama Zenkōji is just above the center.

Both Yanaka and Aoyama Zenkōji had spacious grounds that were open to the public during the day, which could have offered commoners a change of pace from the
hectic and crowded urban settings of the city.\footnote{Yanaka Zenkōji was supposedly famous for its cherry trees. For more on temple grounds as an escape from the mundane, see Hur, \textit{Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan}, 97.} Like Yanaka before it, Aoyama Zenkōji had a main hall (5.4 m wide x 9 m deep, plus a veranda of 2.7 m, “B” in the map), bell tower (3.6 m x 3.6 m, “F”), Niōmon gate (9 m x 4.5 m, “H”), rear gate (2 m wide, “I”), “Kokuya” (3.6 m x 10.8 m, “A”), and small halls to Śākyamuni Buddha (3.6 x 2.7, “E”), Kannon (5.4 x 5.4, “D”), and Jizō (5.4 x 5.4, “C”).\footnote{Daihongan fuku 2 62.033; Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1164.121.} The convent’s gate town (“J” in the map) was to the southeast. In 1713 Chizen added a small (3.6 m x 3.6 m, “G”) protective shrine to the deity Inari after the temple had moved to Aoyama (Figure 3-5).\footnote{Chizen stated that the shrine was to be “rebuilt,” though there is no indication of the shrine in earlier documents. Daihongan fuku 2 61.023. Map based on Ibid. fuku 2 62.033; Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1164.121.} The nuns lived in the Kokuya. Although this term is often used for grain storehouses, in this case it was connected with Daihongan’s fundraising role. A “Kokuya” was often the name of the headquarters of fundraising mendicants called \textit{hongan hijiri} within temple and shrine complexes. It appears in places as varied as the

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3-5.png}
\caption{Aoyama Zenkōji’s grounds in the early 1700s}
\end{figure}
Nachi shrine complex (where there are seven kokuya or honganjo), Mt. Kōya’s Kongōbuji, Tōji, and Daigoji.¹¹³

In addition to the abbess, her successor (when there was one), two to four elder nuns (rōni 老尼), an unknown number of lower ranking nuns, male administrators, and servants lived in the convent or nearby. Like many other convents, Aoyama Zenkōji’s space was highly regulated along gender lines, especially at night. In response to an inquiry from the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines in 1807.7.11, temple administrator Kobayashi Tamiemon stated that

Since Aoyama Zenkōji is a convent, nighttime is regulated. There is an entrance between the outer and inner [portions of the temple] that is locked at seven in the evening. An administrator has the key; if there is some pressing errand, he will open the entrance to perform his errand.
- The male servants are made to retire to their rooms at night.
- Also, concerning the main hall, since there are nuns, from [the time that] the Niōmon gate is closed at dusk, those in the outer area of the temple from the administrators down to male servants are not to come and go [into the main hall]. If there are some unavoidable circumstances, administrators or male servants must arrange to enter.
The nuns mentioned above rest in the Kokuya, which is attached to the main hall. In the above manner, the main hall and the inner [portion of the temple] are closed at night. Aside from [urgent] errands, there is no entering or exiting [those areas] even by administrators. There are no monks [at this temple]. This is in response to your inquiry.¹¹⁴

A. Elite Connections
The nuns of Daihongan maintained a close connection with the influential women of the shogun’s inner quarters throughout the early modern period. This connection was

¹¹³ Toyoshima Osamu 豊島修 and Kiba Akeshi 木場明志, Jisha zōei kanjin, honganshoku no kenkyū, 6 and for individual temples, section 3.
not simply based on letters that were sent on a monthly basis, but on face-to-face contact that was enabled, in large part, through the proximity of Daihongan’s Edo branch. In particular, the abbess was required to meet the shogun and his family every third year, and she also often visited when the icons of Shinano Zenkōji, Aoyama Zenkōji, or Wakōji were on display in the capital. As I will show in more detail in the next chapter, these visits required a great deal of advanced planning, they lasted all day, and the abbesses visited other important people—the heads of Zōjōji and Kan’ei-ji, the magistrate of temples and shrines, several daimyo, and so on—in the days following their visit. This, combined with the frequency of their visits—Chikan went to the castle sixteen times in her thirty-eight years, while Chishō went seventeen times in forty-six years—meant that they would have to spend a great deal of time in the capital. This proximity also meant that others affiliated with Daihongan could easily access the castle. First, there were countless servants and administrators who delivered messages back and forth between the abbesses and the transaction agents, elder women of the inner quarters, and so on. Additionally, the elder nuns of Daihongan could visit when they needed advice. After Seikō (114th abbess) died in 1752 without choosing an heir, the elder nuns Chiben (d. 1783) and Chisatsu (d. 1775) visited the inner quarters to receive advice on who to select as a new abbess and how to proceed with the succession process.115 This process was repeated in 1790 following the death of Chikan.

Proximity to the capital also meant Daihongan’s nuns could visit Zōjōji and Kan’ei-ji, the eastern heads of the Pure Land and Tendai sects respectively. They maintained close connections with the eastern head of the Pure Land sect, Zōjōji. Chishō was ordained by Zōjōji’s abbot, even though most abbesses ordained their successors themselves—in Chishō’s case, she could not be ordained by her predecessor, Chikan, because she had died six months earlier, but it had been kept a secret from everyone except a few women in the castle. During Chishō’s ordination, she received the five important teachings of the Pure Land school (gojū denbō 五重伝法) and performed other Pure Land rites such as the Ten Recitations of Amida’s name (jūnen juyo 十念授与). Of course, Daihongan had other connections with Zōjōji. Both Chikan and Chishō received their dharma names from Zōjōji’s abbots, and many of Daihongan’s lower ranking nuns were ordained by or received dharma lineages (kechimyaku) from Zōjōji. The abbesses of Daihongan constantly maintained their connection with Zōjōji by sending its abbots greetings throughout the year.

As I mentioned earlier, Daihongan became a branch temple of Kan’ei-ji, the eastern head of the Tendai school. This meant that Daihongan’s abbesses had to travel to Kan’ei-ji on a number of occasions. They would go to introduce the young women who would be their successors and the successors would go when they took over as abess.

They would visit Kan’ei-ji after visits to Edo Castle or the Imperial Palace, and when new abbots took over the reins of the Kan’ei-ji/Rinnōji monzeki. The abbesses also sent out yearly greetings to the head of Kan’ei-ji. Furthermore, as I mentioned above, after Daihongan became a branch temple, the abbesses had to seek the approval of Kan’ei-ji’s two administrative offices (ryōshittō 両執當), before filing paperwork with the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. All of these connections were made much easier because Daihongan had a branch temple in the capital. Even when the abbesses and most of the temple personnel were away from Edo, they could still send administrators from Aoyama to perform various tasks throughout the city.

**B. Local Emplacement**

While elite connections were important, placing too much emphasis on them can obscure the ways in which Daihongan was emplaced locally. In other words, it can hide how the nuns sought connections with and patronage from people across a broad social and economic spectrum. In this section I highlight the ways that Daihongan’s nuns were involved in Aoyama through their temple lands and through large-scale rituals. In particular, I discuss how they maintained connections with both samurai and commoners in their roles as landlords, and I demonstrate how temple rituals such as displays of temple treasures drew in petitioners from the city, and placed Daihongan’s abbesses in a network of local temples.

1. **Aoyama Zenkō-ji as Landlord**

Aoyama Zenkō-ji was placed on a relatively spacious amount of land, yet the temple’s halls only took up a small portion of it. In 1707 Chizen and her administrators petitioned the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines to be able to rent 1950 tsubo (6452.5...
m²), roughly a quarter of its temple lands to samurai/administrator vassals of domainal lords for ten-year periods; contracts for these properties are extant until 1849. They are to the southwest of the main hall in Figure 3-5, above. For most of the eighteenth century five or six samurai rented these lands, and plots ranged in size from 292 m² to 1814 m²; from the 1790s to the 1850s, however, two to three samurai rented the land. Rent stayed relatively consistent throughout the period: in 1726, Shitara Mokuemon paid 5.5 ryō a year for a plot that was 1361 m², or roughly 0.004 ryō/m²; sixty years later, Shitara (or his heir) paid 8.75 ryō 8 mon for 2171 m², or roughly 0.004 ryō/m². These samurai/administrators built their own houses on the land and lived there until they were transferred to another post within their domainal government; in some cases generations of the same samurai family rented the lands. Since Aoyama Zenkōji was surrounded by the estates of these domainal lords and their retainers, it was perhaps an easy decision for the temple to decide to rent a portion of its land to a few of them.

The temple also had a “temple-gate town” (monzen machi 門前町) at both Yanaka and Aoyama. At least a few of the residents followed the temple when it moved. At Aoyama, the gate town was roughly 1264 tsubo (4178.7 m²), divided into twenty-two estates (yashiki 屋敷) that ranged in size from 49.5 m² to 990 m², and had a

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117 Many of these samurai were vassals of the Saijō han Matsudaira clan, which had an estate near Aoyama Zenkōji. Aoyama Zenkōji rented these estates to samurai for a much cheaper rate than the commoners in the temple gate town paid – roughly 0.013 ryō of gold per 3.3 m² versus an average of 0.108 ryō per 3.3 m² for the commoners. See rental agreements such as Daihongan fuku 2 62.025.

118 According to the Bunsei machikata kakiage 文政町方書上, four townspeople from Yanaka built huts in front of the temple in Aoyama, and in 1706, “the gate town was moved from its old location.” Cited in Heibonsha. Chihō Shiryō Sentā 平凡社地方資料センター, ed., Tōkyō-to no chimei 東京都の地名 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2002), 409.
total population of 267 (179 men and 88 women) in 1744. Although not considered a part of the temple’s lands, it received rent from the owners of estates in that town—in 1745 the rate was roughly 0.031 ryō/m². Though the gate town had its own internal administrative system, Aoyama Zenkōji was responsible for overseeing it. The temple served as an intermediary between the people of the gate town and the bureaucratic agency—in this case, the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines until 1745 and the town governors’ office after that—that was in charge of granting approval for changes to town buildings and so on. Furthermore, the temple received assistance from the town’s inhabitants during large rituals and festivals.

2. Displays of Temple Treasures
Aside from rental properties, temples also gathered funds and promoted themselves in the Edo period by displaying their treasures (kaichō 開帳). Shinano Zenkōji was famous throughout Japan for its displays, and Daihongan’s abbesses were involved in them; thus, it is not surprising that Aoyama Zenkōji also held its own displays. It did this eight times throughout the period—1724, 1755, 1761, 1767, 1777, 1783, 1839, and 1850, but only records related to the Kyōhō 9 (1724), Hōreki 5 (1755), Kyōhō 9 (1724), Hōreki 5 (1755),

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119 Daihongan fuku 2 71.173. It is unclear why the gate town had such an unbalanced gender distribution; however, it reflects the overall ratio of 171 men to 100 women in Edo in 1743. The city was unbalanced in such a way because of 1) the number of samurai administrators who traveled to Edo, leaving behind their spouses and children, and 2) the number of male servants who came to the city from the countryside. Ibid. Fuku 2 71.173; Osamu Saito, “The Changing Structure of Urban Employment and Its Effects on Migration Patterns in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Japan,” in Urbanization in History: A Process of Dynamic Interactions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 215.

120 In Enkyō 2 (1745), the temple received about 128.5 ryō in rent from 22 estates on 4171 m² of land for a rate of about 0.031 ryō/m². It is unclear why the warriors who rented a portion of Aoyama Zenkōji’s land were charged much less per square meter than the residents of the gate town were. Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1149.029.

121 The Magistrate of Temples and Shrines approved changes to buildings on temple- and shrine-lands.
and Bunsei 3 (1820) displays are extant. Because several documents from the 1724 display remain, I will focus on that display.

In the tenth month of 1723, Aoyama Zenkōji submitted a request to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines to be allowed to display the temple’s main image, the 45.45 cm tall statue of Amida triad supposedly carved by Chūjōhime (more on this image in Chapter 5). While the 1755 and 1820 displays were ostensibly held to garner funds to maintain temple buildings, for the 1723 display Aoyama Zenkōji stated that “it has been nearly 950 years since our image was created,” and the display was organized to mark this anniversary. The temple requested that it be allowed to display the image for sixty days during the fourth month and intercalary fourth month of 1723, and later extended the display for another thirty days under the pretext of “inclement weather.” Aoyama Zenkōji most certainly advertised its display using signboards in high-traffic areas such as crossroads, bridges, and so on, as many other temple displays were advertised. These signs detailed the location and dates of the display, the types of items to be displayed, and

122 Aoyama was also host to three of Wakōji’s displays, and held one of its own displays in Ekōin in downtown Edo. Takatsukasa Seigyoku, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai,” Bukkyō Daigaku kenkyū kiyō 62 (1978): 218.
123 This paragraph and the next are based on a series of requests and confirmations with the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. Daihongan fuku 62.036.
124 This style of image is called a “Zenkōji” Amida. For more on Zenkōji-style images, see McCallum, Zenkōji and Its Icon.
125 It is interesting that though this display was to celebrate the 950th anniversary of the carving of the Amida icon, there was no similar display 50 years later in 1774 to mark the 1000th anniversary. Perhaps the temple petitioned to have a display but was turned down.
126 Although it is unclear whether the weather actually was a real reason to extend the display, many temples used it as a pretext to extend successful displays past the original limit to gather more funds. There are several examples of this in Hiruma Hisashi, Edo no kaichō 江戸の開帳 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1980).
events held during the display, such as Aoyama Zenkōji’s sacred dance (kagura 神楽) performances.\textsuperscript{127}

In preparation for the event, the temple built several small temporary buildings on its grounds: a hut for security (ban’ya 番屋), a place to receive donations (hōga 奉加), and a small stage for kagura performances in front of the shrine to the temple’s protective deity, Inari. These were to be torn down immediately following the event.\textsuperscript{128} The construction of such buildings provides clues as to the relationships the residents of Aoyama Zenkōji expected to have with outside visitors to the display: they were to take part in the display by maintaining security or performing kagura, or they were to petition the icon and provide donations to the temple. Security was important for the success of the display—in two requests to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the temple promised to “ensure that there are no fights or arguments, and that people are careful with fire,” a promise necessary due to the expected volume of participants. To help ensure safety during the event, the nuns and administrators of the temple requested that the heads of five nearby commoner neighborhoods send people to patrol.\textsuperscript{129} Unfortunately

\textsuperscript{127} Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo,” 9.

\textsuperscript{128} In some cases, temples had relationships with carpenters who would come and do all of the temple’s work, including building new buildings and repairing old ones. These carpenters were called deiri daiku 出入大工. However, in at least one case, the 1755 display at Aoyama Zenkōji, the carpenters were selected by a bidding process. For more on the roles of city carpenters in Osaka – keeping in mind that there were differences between carpenters groups in Osaka and Edo – please see Naoki Tani, “Town Carpenters and Carpenters’ Groups in Osaka,” City, Culture and Society, The Urban Social History of Osaka: A Study Focusing on the Lifeworld of the Urban Masses, 3, no. 1 (March 2012): 35–41.

Information on the 1755 display at Aoyama Zenkōji comes from Takatsukasa Seigyou 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 60.

\textsuperscript{129} These neighborhoods were Kubocho 久保町, Imai 今井, Hasedera monchō 長谷寺門町, Hyakushōchō 百姓町, and Shibuya village 渋谷村. The document does not discuss remuneration for these duties.
there are no documents which further explain the *kagura* performance. However, it is perhaps safe to say that the abbess Chizen, the nuns, or administrators of Aoyama Zenkōji did not perform it but rather contracted it out.

Documents for the 1723 display do not tell us the total amount of assistance provided by laypeople, but during displays later in the eighteenth century, Aoyama Zenkōji relied on around one hundred organizers (*sewayaku* 世話役) and two hundred assistants from the nearby neighborhoods.\(^{130}\) It is unclear what financial compensation these laypeople received for their assistance. Records indicate that in some cases the temple treated the heads (*nanushi* 名主) and administrators (*kakarino yaku* 懸り之役) of these neighborhoods along with the householders to meals and occasionally saké before and after the display. Householders in Aoyama Zenkōji’s gate town received some financial compensation for their roles. Assistants from the town magistrate’s office (both *yoriki* 与力 and *dōshin* 同心) provided police patrols during later displays, so they were also thanked and treated to a meal. A document from the 1761 display suggests that each person involved received a letter of thanks, a printed image of Shinano Zenkōji’s Amida triad, a piece of the colored rope (*miteito* 御手糸) that had connected a pole (*ekōbashira* 回向柱) in the courtyard to the main image’s hand, and had received the ten recitations of Amida’s name from the abbess; assistants from Aoyama Zenkōji’s gate town also received a Buddhist deity’s name (*myōgō* 名号), most likely Amida’s name, written by

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\(^{130}\) See for instance Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 63.
the abbess. Meals at the convent and ritual goods by the abbess or from the display could have allowed these laypeople to remain connected with Aoyama Zenkōji long after the display had ended.

Displays of temple treasures and other large rituals also demonstrate that Aoyama Zenkōji and Daihongan’s abbess were a part of a local clerical network. Though not mentioned in extant documents for the 1724 display at Aoyama Zenkōji, in later displays, such as those during Chikan and Chishō’s abbacy, priests from Baisōin 梅窓院, Kōtokuji 高徳寺, and Chōanji 長安寺, all Pure Land temples in the Aoyama area came to assist with the ritual proceedings that opened and closed the display. Their presence would have enabled the proceedings to go smoothly, and larger numbers of supporting priests would have created a grander spectacle during rituals than Daihongan’s small number of clerics could.

Large-scale public rituals such as displays also enabled a great number of connections between the temple and the laity who came to the ritual as petitioners, patrons, or simply the curious. Displays are considered an auspicious time to petition deities because petitioners are able to directly view and make requests to an image which is normally obscured from view by curtains or enclosures. Although entering the temple grounds and seeing the image was ostensibly free, many temples charged an “incense fee” of several copper mon, roughly the cost of a bowl of noodles, to be able to see the

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131 Ibid., 64.
132 See, for example, Ibid., 60–90. Priests from Kōtokuji still participate in rituals at Aoyama Zenkoji. Ibid., 89, FN. 41.
main section of the display. Following the display, petitioners could also continue their relationships with the deity by purchasing amulets that offered the deity’s protection or wood-block printed images of the deity or other temple treasures. These amulets could be carried around by the petitioner, while the images could be hung in the petitioner’s home or small home altar. Aoyama Zenkōji sold these items during later displays, and these sales made up a large portion of profits from other temples’ displays, so the temple probably sold them during the 1724 display as well.

Although displays offered temples a way of acquiring donations, promoting themselves to the populace, and making connections with a wide variety of laypeople, Aoyama Zenkōji only displayed its image eight times in the early modern period, in contrast to larger temples like Sensōji, which held thirty-six displays throughout the period, and Shinano Zenkōji, which held seventeen displays in its main hall from 1730–1865. There were perhaps a few reasons for this. Unlike Shinano Zenkōji’s displays, when the nuns of Daihongan were but one part of the group responsible for carrying out the display (which also meant that they were but one of a number of groups to split the profits), they were the only group in charge of planning and carrying out the display at Aoyama. This meant that they were responsible for everything, financially and otherwise, which could be quite a burden on a temple with so few administrators. Furthermore, the

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133 This example is drawn from the 1808 display of Sengakuji’s treasures related to the 47 rōnin of Chūshingura fame. The record of Kōriki Tanenobu’s visit to the display can be found in Itō Mayumi, ed., “Sengakuji zō ‘Bunka go tatsu doshi Amidadera ni okeru Sengakuji kaichō zen’,” Minato-ku bunkazai chōsa shūroku 4 (n.d.): 23–36.
135 Hiruma Hisashi, Edo no kaichō, 97–98; Kobayashi Keiichirō, Zenkōjishiki kenkyū, 426.
nuns and abbesses of Daihongan/Aoyama Zenkōji may have been quite busy with other events—assisting in the frequent displays of Shinano Zenkōji’s image, visiting the shogun’s castle, and traveling to Shinano, Kyoto, and Osaka—which would have made it difficult for them to plan and participate in displays.

Another possibility is that the convent did not feel the pressure to fundraise through displays as frequently as other temples did. Most of the temple buildings were completed a few years before the display and thus would not have needed repairs. Aoyama Zenkōji was also fortunate to have avoided the fires that destroyed other temples, so maintenance would have been its primary hall-related expense. Indeed, it was for this very reason that it held the displays in 1755 and 1820. In any case, other methods of fundraising—donations, temple lotteries, and so on—may have proven to be more effective (See Chapter 5).

Additionally, it is possible that the temple petitioned to hold more displays, but did not receive permission from the bakufu. For example, Aoyama Zenkōji petitioned to have a display in Kansei 6 (1794) because it had just finished repairs to its halls and its young abbess, Chishō (abbess from 1791 to 1836), had just returned following a two-year stay at Daihongan in Shinano. This petition was turned down by the Magistrate of Daihongan’s branch in Edo only burnt down three times—once in 1703 which preceded its move from Yanaka to Aoyama, once in 1862, and once during the firebombing in May of 1945. In contrast, Shinano Zenkōji’s main hall burnt down four times in the 17th century.

Takatsukasa Seigyoku, the current abbot of Daihongan, notes that Daihongan fell into dire financial situation in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯.”

136 For more on temple lotteries sponsored by Aoyama Zenkōji, see Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Kinsei Aoyama Zenkōji ni okeru tomitsuki kōgyō 近世青山善光寺における富突興行.”

Temples and Shrines; this may be due to the fact that there were already a number of displays slotted for that year and they had a policy of only approving five displays per year.\textsuperscript{140}

Finally, it may have been the case that this was an average number of displays for medium- and small-scale temples such as Aoyama Zenkōji. These temples perhaps did not or could not hold displays as often as large temples such as Sensōji and Zenkōji did.

3. Economic Results
Unfortunately, there are no remaining records to tell us how much money Chizen and the nuns of Aoyama Zenkōji gathered from the 1724 display, which would help determine how many people visited the display. One clue as to their success is that in the years immediately following the display the temple was able to add two halls—one each to Kannon and Jizō, both 29.7 m\textsuperscript{2}—and move its Śākyamuni Hall to a new location. These new halls were both relatively small, and thus they might not have cost much for the temple to build, but they indicate that the temple had some extra funds to spend during this period, perhaps stemming from the display and other fundraising events.

During the 1767 display, which is the only one listing both expenditures and income, Aoyama Zenkōji earned 230.75 gold ryō and 600 copper mon from donations, goods, and rituals, while it spent 217.5 gold ryō and 167 copper mon on various expenses, including around 54 ryō that remained from the recent rebuilding of the Niōmon Gate. This meant that the temple netted a little more than 13 gold ryō.\textsuperscript{141} Other displays had a higher

\textsuperscript{140} Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo,” 9.

\textsuperscript{141} Takatsukasa Seigyoku, Shinshū Daibōgan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 67–68.
income—during the 1761 display, for instance, the convent received more than 415 gold ryō—though it is unclear what their expenditures were.142

VII. Bakumatsu to Today

At the end of the Tokugawa period the network of branch temples that Daihongan was a part of gradually changed. The most drastic change came at the end of the Tokugawa period with the collapse of the Buddhist “empire” that Tenkai had created. Most of Kan’eiji burnt to the ground in the battle between imperial and shogunal forces in Ueno in 1868.5.15. Furthermore, monks and nuns related to the emperor were laicized in 1870s, thus ending the line of heads of the Tendai school who had the combined imperial abbotship of Kan’eiji, Rinnōji, and Mt. Hiei. Because of these changes, Daihongan was no longer a branch temple of Kan’eiji, and it was thus released from the Tendai control it had been under since 1745. Daihongan returned to a “muhonji” status—that is, since then it has had no head temple. This would have repercussions for Daihongan and Daikanjin’s relationship, freeing the convent to contest Daikanjin’s authority in the Zenkōji temple complex, as I demonstrated in Chapter 1. Another effect of the dismantling of Kan’eiji’s authority over Daihongan is that it was able to take its place within the Pure Land hierarchy; it currently ranks as one of seven Great Main Temples (Daihonzan 大本山) of the Pure Land school.

Aside from Sōkōji, Daihongan’s administrative branch temple at Zenkōji which ceased to exist as a temple in the middle of the Tokugawa period, Daihongan’s other

142 Ibid., 63–64.
branches still exist. Jūnenji was destroyed in a fire in 1938. Its main hall was rebuilt in 1993, but for the longest time the location was only marked by a placard.

The fates of Osaka Wakōji and Aoyama Zenkōji intersected at the end of the Tokugawa period. Aoyama Zenkōji was caught in multiple fires in 1861, forcing Seien (117th, abbess from 1837–1910), the nuns, administrators, and so on, to move back to Shinano. Seien spent a few years in Shinano, but then lived at Osaka Wakōji from 1873 until 1895. Following this, she had a branch temple (betsuin 別院) called Tokujōmyō’in 得浄明院 built on the grounds of Chion’in in Kyoto where she lived from 1895 until her death in 1910. During this time she only returned to Shinano once every seventh year for the displays of Zenkōji’s icon. Seien was known as “Wakōji-sama” because of her time there. A further indication of her connection to the temple is that though she is buried in Chion’in, her hair and nails are also entombed in the cemetery for Wakōji’s clerics.

A temporary hall was built for Aoyama Zenkōji in 1920, but it was destroyed during the firebombing of Tokyo. Wakōji suffered a similar fate during the bombing of Osaka. Both temples were rebuilt after the war. The areas surrounding the temples have changed as well—most of Osaka’s canals have been covered over, while the trendy boutiques of Shibuya and the Omotesandō areas of Tokyo gradually took over the fields and daimyo estates that had once surrounded Aoyama Zenkōji. However, if you look carefully beyond the steel and concrete construction, you can still find evidence of these temples’ roles in Daihongan’s networks. At Wakōji, donations from confraternities have survived the centuries and the bombs, and, as evidenced by the numerous post-war stone lanterns and bridges scattered throughout the temple grounds, the confraternities survived
and their support continues to this day. At Aoyama Zenkōji, on the other hand, evidence remains of its past role in facilitating Daihongan’s connections with elite lay people. In front of the main hall is a tall memorial stone, the worn stone base of which tells in fading characters of the temple’s connection with the ladies of the shogun’s inner quarters. Behind the memorial, in the temple’s small cemetery, are graves of several of its early modern abbesses and their successors who died young; women who were from high-ranking warrior or court families.

VIII. Conclusions
In this chapter I have discussed Daihongan’s position within the main temple-branch temple system and its relationship with its four branches. However, I have largely left untouched the question of why, when so many other convents had no branches, did Daihongan create its own modest network?

In answer to this question, the authors of Zenkōjishi kenkyū suggested that Daihongan’s authority within Zenkōji was limited to religious matters and rituals after the Magistrate of Temple and Shrine’s decision in 1643 placed control of the temple largely in Daikanjin’s hands. However, the nuns lost control over these aspects bit by bit as well, because they had to get permission from Kan’ei-ji to perform even basic rituals after 1742, Daikanjin came to control the fifteen Nakashū Pure Land sub-temples in 1739, and the abbess was not allowed to perform rituals in the main hall of Zenkōji. The authors stated that “perhaps because of this the abbess was unable to stand having power in name only, so she moved to Aoyama Zenkōji, leaving behind only an administrative priest and an
Takatsukasa Seigyoku, Daihongan’s current abbess, suggested something similar in a 1969 publication where she said that Chizen founded Wakōji because the monks of Daikanjin exerted control within Zenkōji’s compound and over its temple lands, so she built a practice hall with the hope that she could avoid worldly fights and focus entirely on temple affairs. In other words, for both Takatsukasa (at least in 1969) and the authors of *Zenkōjishi kenkyū*, Daihongan’s branch temples offered the abbesses and nuns a chance to escape from worldly affairs, lawsuits, or their diminishing power at Zenkōji.

While interesting, without concrete proof these statements are nothing but speculation, unfortunately. It is true that the nuns could largely control their own affairs at Aoyama Zenkōji. However, life there did not mean an escape from conflict with Daikanjin. These continued off and on throughout the period, though they did taper off after Daihongan became a branch of Kan’eiji. Furthermore, the existence of Wakōji and other branches did not offer an escape from the troubles of the world. Instead, as we saw above, being the head of several branch temples meant that Daihongan and the abbess gained responsibilities. For example, they had to insure the proper conduct of temple personnel to the various public authorities on the one hand, while also responding to the requests of demanding confraternity members on the other.

However, it is clear that whatever limitations on their activities in Shinano Zenkōji and restrictions they faced because of their gender or as a result of official

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143 *Zenkōjishi kenkyū* 善光寺史研究会, *Zenkōjishi kenkyū* 善光寺史研究, 321.
regulations or unofficial practices, Daihongan’s nuns made Japan-wide connections with a broad range of monastics and laypeople by establishing and traveling to their network of branch temples. In some cases, such as between Daihongan and its branches Sōkōji and Jūnenji, it is unclear exactly how or why the main-branch connections were made. In other cases, such as at Daihongan’s Edo and Osaka branches, the abbesses at the time (Chikei and Chizen) drew on their political connections to receive land for their new temples. In the case of Chizen and Wakōji, it is also clear that they drew upon popular support and temple legends to create a new center of the Zenkōji cult which enabled them and their successors to engage with a broad section of Japan’s populace and receive financial and administrative support. In the end, it is unclear exactly why Daihongan came to form such a network. What is clear is how each of those temples functioned to provide financial and administrative support and foster connections between Daihongan’s nuns, lay donors, and powerful individuals.

Two of Daihongan’s branches also served another function as points of contact between the large urban populations of Edo (between 430,000 and 1,220,000 people) and Osaka (between 220,000 and 410,000) and the Zenkōji cult. Of course, elements of the cult had existed in both cities prior to these branches being built. In Edo the Zenkōji cult was popular amongst a number of warriors and the women related to Tokugawa Ieyasu, while in Osaka it existed amongst the commoners, as seen in their practices at Amida Pond and their support for Zenkōji’s 1694 display. Chikei and Chizen, living almost a hundred years apart, drew upon these preexisting threads of the Zenkōji cult to build their branch temples in Edo and Osaka. These connections between Shinano Zenkōji, Aoyama
Zenkōji, and Wakōji were reinforced in a number of ways. People could learn of it by word of mouth or from an area guide such as the *Edo meisho zue* or the *Settsu meisho zue*. They could stroll through the grounds of Aoyama Zenkōji and Wakōji on a regular day, since the temples were both open to the public, or they could be drawn because of a special event such as a display at Aoyama or a visit from Daihongan’s abbess to Wakōji. There they could make offerings to copies of Zenkōji’s Amida icon, hear Zenkōji’s origin tale and how it related to the urban temple, and purchase images and other paraphernalia related to Zenkōji. Donald McCallum has suggested that “the near-universal recognition of the name of Zenkōji throughout Japan is partially the result of the kaikoku kaichō [displays in various provinces] of the beginning of the eighteenth century.” I agree with his assessment. However, there is another element that was vital to the spread of Zenkōji’s recognition throughout Japan. That element was the Shin Zenkōji network of temples throughout Japan. As McCallum states, Shin Zenkōji temples enshrine copies of the Zenkōji Amida triad, and function as local representations of Shinano Zenkōji. Daihongan’s urban branches functioned in a way similar to these Shin Zenkōji temples, and were also essential parts in the spread of the Zenkōji cult (or simply knowledge about Zenkōji) during the early modern period, especially amongst the large urban population of Edo and Osaka.

Daihongan’s place within the head-branch temple system—as both a head temple and a branch after 1740—indicates that at least in part, nuns could be a part of the regulatory system created by the Tokugawa shogunate. As I mentioned in the

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145 McCallum, *Zenkōji and Its Icon*, 192.
146 Ibid., 86–99.
introduction, Gina Cogan has argued that nuns at convents were largely absent from bakufu regulations, systems of control, and discourses on monastic regulations.\footnote{Cogan, *The Princess Nun*, 109–112.} However, as the case of Daihongan demonstrates, absence from discourse did not mean absence in practice. Daihongan’s nuns were placed within bakufu structures for controlling temples and monastics, and were clearly responsible for enforcing the shogunate’s regulations at their branches as demonstrated by Jūnenji in 1742 and Wakōji in 1747. Furthermore, as the case of Jūnenji demonstrates, Daihongan played a part in the system of temple registration. In its role as a landlord, the convent was responsible for collecting information on the religious affiliations of people living on Jūnenji’s land. I have not found records of this from other its other branches, so it is unclear if Daihongan was also responsible for recording or collecting the religious affiliations of people living in the temple gate towns of its branches. However, much like the imperial convents that Cogan and Oka examine, neither Daihongan nor its branches were directly in charge of funerary rituals. Furthermore, while Daihongan acted as landlord over Zenkōji Hama Village and Aoyama Zenkōji’s temple gate town, it could not be directly involved in the administration of Zenkōji’s land holdings as a result of the 1643 suit. This suggests that while it would be helpful to make generalizations about convents in the early modern period, uncovering their roles in the various shogunal power structures and local social structures requires a close examination of individual convents and even close attention to the atmosphere and events of a particular time.
Of course, maintaining a network of branch temples in different corners of Japan meant that Daihongan’s abbesses and nuns had to travel regularly. I turn to the history of and practices involved in these travels, as well as the ways that they connected Daihongan’s abbesses to more people along the routes in the next chapter.
Chapter 4. On the Road

I. Introduction

In late April and early May of 2013, Zenkōji had the first traveling display of its treasures at the Tokyo temple Ekōin in over seventy years. Both the current abbess of Daihongan, Takatsukasa Seigyoku, and the abbot of Daikanjin, Komatsu Genchō 小松玄澄, performed rituals at the display, which was meant to memorialize those dead and missing following the triple disasters of March 11, 2011. Komatsu and Takatsukasa alternated days they performed rituals. While Takatsukasa most likely stayed somewhere in Tokyo, she had, for perhaps the first time during a traveling display, the possibility of traveling to and from Shinano Zenkōji every day. Bullet train and highway, both built and upgraded for the 1998 Winter Olympic Games in Nagano, made it possible for Takatsukasa to leave Nagano City and be at her destination in under three hours.

While the countryside and mountains fly by the windows of a contemporary bullet train, in the Edo period travel moved at the much slower pace of one’s own (or the palanquin bearers’) feet. The ninety-minute trip from Tokyo to Nagano City on the bullet train today took around five days in the Edo period. And although travel was much slower, it was still a vital method of establishing and maintaining connections in early modern Japan. The nuns of Daihongan regularly traveled to participate in rituals, maintain their prestige, and connect with patrons.
In this chapter, I discuss the travels of Daihongan’s nuns in the sixteenth through
the nineteenth centuries. In the first part of this chapter (Section I.A), I discuss women’s
travels in the Edo period. Following this, in Section I.B, I provide background on
Japanese nuns and travel. In this section, I discuss how previous scholarship has largely
divided nuns into peripatetic and the cloistered groups, and yet, as the case of Daihongan
demonstrates, this division is largely artificial. In the middle section (Section II), I discuss
the origins of Daihongan’s travels, highlighting the convent’s connections with high-
ranking warriors and courtiers along the way. As I will show in this section, many of
these were established in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These
precedents meant that Daihongan’s early modern nuns traveled in roughly three
established routes: within Edo, between Edo and Shinano, and to and from Kansai. I
discuss each of these in turn in Section III. Each of these provides insight into a different
aspect of Daihongan’s travels and connections. In the section on travel within Edo
(Section A), I discuss Daihongan’s visits to Edo Castle to pay respects to the shogun and
his family. This highlights the ways the connections established in the end of the
sixteenth century were maintained during the Edo period as well as the valuable role that
gift exchange played in the maintenance of those connections. However, as I discuss
there, these connections and visits to the castle were not unusual for temples of a certain
type and size in this period. In the next section (1), I discuss longer distance travel, in this
case, between Edo and Shinano. In this section I draw upon the record of the 1832 trip of
Abbess Chishō to Shinano. This case study establishes the cost and modes of long-
distance travel for Daihongan. It highlights the connections Chishō was able to make with
a variety of people along the route. Additionally, it demonstrates that though in the
nineteenth century travel was a burden for the financially strapped convent, the convent could not simply cease its travels or reduce the expensive displays of prestige that accompanied them. In the last section (2), I discuss travel to and from Kansai. This trip occurred (usually) once in an abbess’s lifetime, and mainly took place so an abbess could give thanks to the imperial court for allowing her to take the title of “eminent person” (shōnin 上人) and to wear dark purple robes. In this section I provide more detail about the purple robes and title, focusing on their history in China and Japan and the prestige they accorded Daihongan’s abbesses.

In addition to the above, this chapter brings the following three points to the fore. First, it suggests that many nuns in the early modern period lived somewhere between these two extremes of being cloistered and being itinerants. Second, although many scholars have focused on how travel in the early modern period was about crossing boundaries, breaking free from the mundane, or escaping the social order, we can see through Daihongan’s case that it was also about strengthening and creating those things. Third, women’s travels were not simply for leisure, but also for work and obligation, but of course, those were not mutually exclusive. I discuss each of these points in turn in the conclusion.

A. Women and travels

Early modern Japan was a country in motion; this included women as well as men, despite the many restrictions placed upon their travels. Women had to work within or navigate these restrictions if they wanted to travel. Some of these restrictions were bureaucratic. For example, in an effort to keep civil order and monitor domainal lords, whose wives and children were forced to live in Edo as hostages, the bakufu set up
barriers on major highways to check the travel of women and guns.¹ Women hoping to travel beyond these barriers had to present passports (ōrai tegata 往来手形 or sekisho tegata 関所手形) and undergo inspection. Alternatively, women could attempt to bypass them completely by going off the road. Other restrictions were due to familial obligations—many merchant women found it easier to travel after they had brought in a daughter-in-law to handle shop affairs, for instance.²

Despite these limiting factors, many women traveled during this period. Though commoner women perhaps had more freedom to travel, high-ranking warrior women did regularly travel as well. Shiba Keiko, author of *Women’s Travel Diaries in Early Modern Japan*, has said that although warriors made up around one-tenth of the population, travel diaries by women from warrior families made up one-third of the travel diaries that she had seen. Furthermore, even though domainal lords made up an even smaller percentage of the larger warrior population, travel diaries by women from the families of domainal lords made up one-third of the warrior women’s diaries she had seen.³ I mention this here not to suggest that these women traveled more than commoner women. There were clearly other reasons for the larger percentage of travel diaries from high-ranking women, such as higher rates of literacy amongst these women. Rather, I mention them because they indicate that though travel beyond the highway barriers for these women was highly

¹ The shogunate hoped to keep guns from entering the city of Edo in order to protect against potential uprisings.


³ Shiba, *Literary creations on the road*, 49.
restricted, they still managed to travel and write about their travels. For these women, travel beyond the barriers was only possible under the pretext of recuperation in hot springs or for familial duties such as travel to Edo upon marriage or paying respects at one’s family graves. On the other hand, high-ranking women from warrior families traveled regularly within the bounds of Edo—Nakayama Suzuki, wife of a retainer of the Mito domain, and Kuroda Tosako, wife of the Shimodate domainal lord, sometimes traveled four or five times a month within Edo or its environs to visit family, go sightseeing in Kamakura, or to see fireworks on the Sumida River. After their husbands’ deaths these “hostages” were freer to travel, as the bakufu no longer needed to restrict their movements in order to control their husbands.

Compared with the relatively restricted travels of high-ranking women, commoner women had more freedom of movement, though they still had to get passes for the barriers. Commoner women could travel for a wider variety of reasons, from cultural to family related. However, travel for religious reasons was one of the easiest ways to insure getting a travel pass. For this reason, there were a number of people who combined travel to a temple or shrine with trips to hot springs or other sites of cultural significance. There were a number of popular religious destinations, including the shrines at Ise, main temples associated with one’s parishioner temple such as Mt. Minobu, the 33-temple pilgrimage in Saikoku, or 88-site pilgrimage on the island of Shikoku.

5 Shiba, Literary creations on the road, 53–55; Yonemoto, “Outside the Inner Quarters.”
Zenkōji itself, with its emphasis on women’s salvation, was a major destination for women. In the medieval period, high-ranking women, such as Lady Nijō (b.1258) wrote about travels to Zenkōji. By the seventeenth century at the latest, this had spread to commoners as well. Local historian Tanaka Kaoru analyzed the records from a domainal barrier (banšo 番所) at Omiguchi 麻績口 on the road between Matsumoto and Zenkōji. He demonstrated that between 1684 and 1690, 298 women from the eleven villages of Nagao Kumi 長尾組 (a part of Matsumoto’s domain that is currently in the area of Azumino City) traveled to Zenkōji in groups of two to twenty-nine in size, and mostly from the same village. Records from the Shōshinbō sub-temple of Zenkōji from 1848 to 1872 demonstrate that roughly fifty percent of its lodgers were women.

B. Nuns and travel
A memo sent to the inspection barriers around Japan demonstrates that nuns also joined other women on the road.

Item: If a woman is the widow or sister of a person of high rank and has her head shaven, this must be indicated [in her travel pass] by the term zenni 禅尼.
Item: If a commoner woman has a shaven head, this must be indicated by the term ama 尼.
Item: If a woman is an attendant of the abbesses at Ise or Zenkōji or a maid servant of a widow of high rank, or a Kumano bikuni, this must be indicated by the term bikuni 比丘尼.

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7 See Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjisan 善光寺さん, 73–96. For more on Nijō’s travels as well as travel to Zenkōji in other literary works.
8 Tanaka Kaoru 田中薫, Nyōbōtachi no Zenkōji mairi -- Edo jidai Shinshū no machi to mura to inori no katachi -- 女房たちの善光寺詣り -- 江戸時代信州の町と村と祈りのかたち -- (Nagano: Issōsha shuppan, 2009), 126–130.
9 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishiki kenkyū, 382–390.
10 However, both Vaporis and Ezaki Motoko (the translator of Shiba’s work) mistakenly translate this regulation, as I mention in the introduction. Vaporis states that a bikuni is “an attendant of priests at Ise or Zenkō-ji” while Ezaki says that a bikuni is “a disciple nun of a holy priest of Ise Shrine or Zenkō-ji.” In the original Japanese of Shiba’s work, as well as the original regulations, it states “students of the Ise or Zenkōji abbesses” Ise shōnin ya Zenkōji nado no deshi 伊勢上人や善光寺などの弟子. The meaning of
As we can see from this, nuns and women who looked like nuns took up a large portion of the women described. It is unclear whether this was because nuns were frequently seen on the road or because the bakufu was simply trying to be thorough in its descriptions. In any case, we can see that nuns traveled with enough frequency to be described by the shogunate. If this was the case, what can be said about nuns and travel?

One of the hindrances to our study of nuns and travel is that the focus of previous scholarship on nuns in Japan has tended to divide them into itinerant and cloistered groups.

In some cases, this division has been made explicit. For example, Laura Nenzi focuses on women’s and nuns’ travels in her path-breaking work on travel in the Edo period. Drawing on the work of James Dobbins and Lori Meeks—who described the ways that nun-hood was a multivalent category comprised of women who had renounced the world to different degrees—Nenzi states that a nun’s propensity for travel lessened the more vows she took. In other words, she states that in the medieval and early modern periods, nuns who had taken more vows “frequently headed for the cloister” while “not a few of those renunciants” who had taken fewer or less stringent vows “chose to live a life of wandering” as an alternative to the cloister.¹¹ Nenzi provides examples of women who

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¹¹ Nenzi, *Excursions in Identity* Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan, 77.

Nenzi also discusses the ways that high-ranking women could become nuns or entertainers as a way to travel.

had become nuns later in life, usually after their husbands had died. For these women, these life-cycle changes did indeed mean more freedom to travel. One wonders if Nenzi’s connection of increased vows to lower rate of travel would change if she looked beyond this group of women.

Another example of scholars dividing nuns into cloistered and itinerant ones occurs in the work of Bernard Faure. In *The Power of Denial*, Faure has separate chapters on nuns and on itinerant women. In his chapter on nuns, Faure largely focuses on their activities inside the convent and in relation to the patriarchy in Buddhism. In his chapter on itinerant women, however, he highlights groups such as the Kumano nuns and discusses their roles in both supporting and breaking down the Buddhist patriarchy.¹²

Other scholars have unintentionally made this division between itinerant and cloistered nuns by ignoring either their travels or their activities within and attachments to religious institutions. This is the case for research on nuns within a convent as well as those who are more usually conceived of as being itinerant. For example, though Gina Cogan’s work on Bunchi discusses Bunchi’s activities in her convent and those at the imperial court, Cogan does not discuss travel between the two, which were separated by around forty kilometers. Diana Wright’s work on nuns in Mantokuji discusses travels that women had to undertake to come to the temple to get a divorce, but not the travels of the nuns who lived inside the convent. Sharon Yamamoto’s work on the material culture of the imperial convent Hōkyōji discusses interactions outside of the convent, but not travel by the nuns. On the other side of things, western scholars who discuss itinerant groups of nuns, such as the Kumano nuns, focus on defining who these nuns were or discuss their

proselytizing activities, but they do not mention their place within the hierarchy of the Kumano area or how these nuns were a part of a larger network of convents throughout central Japan which included Kumano nuns living at and administering these convents.

This dichotomy between itinerant and cloistered nuns may have developed from a number of sources. One could be the desire to see a correspondence between Buddhist nuns and the ideal of cloistered Christian nuns. Another potential source could be a simple division of labor between scholars who do institutional history, which would focus on nuns in a single location, and those who work on travel or “folk religion” who would be more interested in nuns’ travels and their interactions in the outside world. No matter how it developed, there are several implications of this false dichotomy between cloistered and itinerant nuns. The first is that it allows people to attribute characteristics to certain nuns that may not necessarily be true. These include characteristics such as support for the patriarchy, an interest in doctrine, and a desire to withdraw from the world for “cloistered” nuns and performance/proselytization, flexibility with regard to sexual restrictions, a desire to reach out to the world, and freedom from institutional affiliations for “itinerant” nuns. In some cases, a group may have gotten something out of self-labeling as cloistered or itinerant, even if they actually traveled a little or spent most of their time at their home institutions. It is worthwhile examining what these groups get out of this label, as Barbara Ambros discusses with regard to the oshi at the pilgrimage site Ōyama. Being “without fixed status or abode” was one key element in claiming the title of oshi even though, as Ambros discusses, these innkeepers/guides/ritualists traveled within set parishes only for a part of the year and spent the rest of the year at their inns.13

Another problem with discussing nuns as either itinerant or cloistered is that it occludes the activities of nuns that occur in the middle of this cloistered-itinerant spectrum, for example, nuns similar to those affiliated with Daihongan who traveled regularly and yet had a home convent.

On the other hand, some scholars have broken down this dichotomy. Lori Meeks does an excellent job of demonstrating the balance between nuns’ activities inside and outside of the convent, discussing the Hokkeji nuns’ fundraising activities alongside the cultural activities and doctrinal discussions they pursued inside their convent. On a more individual level, Gaye Rowley discusses the life of Shūhō, who was a former imperial concubine who became the head of the small aristocratic convent Hōji-in 宝慈院. Shūhō regularly visited other aristocratic temples and convents within Kyoto. These visits were sometimes social, so Shūhō could visit her relatives who were the heads of these temples, and sometimes they were so she could listen to lectures on Buddhist texts or participate in rituals.14

Though I am focused on the travels of Daihongan’s nuns in this chapter, I am pairing it with their activities inside the convent, thus following the lead of Meeks and Rowley. These studies and my own work in this chapter demonstrate that it is time to do away with this false dichotomy of cloistered and itinerant nuns, as well as the structuralist trope of stasis=support of status quo while travel=freedom and agency that occasionally accompanies it. Furthermore, we need more evidence to provide nuance to Nenzi’s idea that more vows equated to less travel. But if vows did not have an effect on a nun’s

propensity to travel, what did? As we shall see in this chapter, precedents, individual personalities, and the financial situation of the convent had a large effect on how much a nun traveled.

II. Daihongan’s Early Travels
   A. “Original Vow” Temples (Hongan) and Wandering Ascetics (hijiri)

Daihongan’s origins, both mythical and historical, have been linked to travel. Temple documents from the late Tokugawa period and early Meiji period state that the supposed founder of Daihongan, Sonkō, was granted the title of “eminent person” and was sanctioned to wear the purple robes of office by the emperor in the seventh century. These documents claim that all of Sonkō’s successors traveled from Shinano to receive such permission directly from the emperor. These travels stopped, the documents state, only because of the turmoil caused by the Ōnin War (1467–1477) and successive conflicts of the Warring states period.\footnote{See for instance, the petition submitted to the Meiji government by the Matsushiro clan on behalf of Daihongan in the first year of the Meiji period. This can be found in Zenkōjishiki kenkyūkai 善光寺史研究会, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究, 365–368.}

Scholars, on the other hand, have connected Daihongan’s travels to medieval fundraising campaigns. As I mentioned previously, because of the name, “hongan,” the convent seems to have been involved in fundraising for temple maintenance.\footnote{Ushiyama Yoshiyuki 牛山佳幸, “Ransei ni okeru Shinano Zenkōji to Zenkōji shinkō 乱世における信濃善光寺と善光寺信仰,” in Rennyo Shōnin kenkyū 蓮如上人研究 (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1998), 122.}

Furthermore, several scholars have suggested that until the early seventeenth century Daihongan was in charge of the famous Zenkōji hijiri 善光寺聖 who traveled the country
preaching and collecting donations. A few of these *hijiri* seem to have been women, and at least one also carried around a copy of the *Kumano Ten-worlds Mandala* (*Kumano kanshin jikkai mandara*) and collected funds for the temples at Kumano, suggesting some connections between Daihongan and Kumano. Because of these connections to fundraising and itinerant groups, the members of Daihongan would have been very familiar with travel, and many of the nuns and early abbesses may have even risen up from the ranks of these itinerants.

**B. Warring States Movements**

More concrete historical evidence can be gathered concerning the movements of the nuns of Daihongan in the period from 1555 to 1598. As I will describe below, the nuns followed Zenkōji’s icon as various powerful warlords of the time took it from one location to another. Of course, these movements required travel, and yet as we will see, they were also punctuated by periods as short as three months to as long as twenty-four years when the icon (and the nuns) remained in the same place. In other words, it was closer to moving house than itineracy. However limited it may seem, the movement of Daihongan’s sixteenth-century nuns established connections and set precedents that meant that their early modern successors had to spend a portion of their time (and money) on the road.

Donald McCallum has already thoroughly documented the movements of the temple’s famed Zenkōji Amida triad as it passed between the powerful warlords of the period. These movements began as a result of the Battles of Kawanakajima, fought

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between the forces of Takeda Shingen and those of Uesugi Kenshin on the plains to the south of Zenkōji between 1553 and 1564. First, Shingen took the icon to Netsu Village in Saku County of Shinano in 1555, and then to Itagaki Village (板垣村) of Kai Province in 1558 where he built a new Zenkōji (hereafter called Kai Zenkōji) near his headquarters. In 1582.3, Oda Nobunaga defeated the Takeda and moved the icon to Gifu, but following his death three months later, his son Nobukatsu took it to Jimokuji 甚目寺 in what is now a suburb of Nagoya. Soon after, Matsudaira (Tokugawa) Ieyasu moved it to Kamoedera 鴨江寺 in Hamamatsu before sending it back to Kai, which had recently come under his control, in 1583 following a dream. Finally Toyotomi Hideyoshi moved it to his Great Buddha Hall in Hōkōji in the summer of 1597 where it remained for a little more than a year before he ordered it be returned to Shinano in 1598.8.17, just one day before his death.\footnote{Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 97–115.}

   McCallum’s discussion highlights the ways in which Zenkōji’s icon was viewed as a powerful object to be fought for by the warlords of the Sengoku period, but his work does not mention the ways in which the people living on Zenkōji’s lands were affected by the actions of these warlords.\footnote{The warlords’ possession of Zenkōji’s Icon could also be viewed as a type of “spectacular accumulation,” in the same way that Morgan Pitelka discusses the possession of tea goods, swords, and so on, by the same warlords. Morgan Pitelka, Spectacular Accumulation: Material Culture, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and Samurai Sociability (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2016).} Following second battle of Kawanakajima in 1555, Zenkōji was left in ruins, and both Kenshin and Shingen took various treasures and people with them to their respective homelands. The Uesugi established a temple called Zenkōji, which was to become Jūnenji, the branch of Daihongan discussed in Chapter 3. As I mentioned there, its gate town seems to have been largely comprised of people from 19 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 97–115.
20 The warlords’ possession of Zenkōji’s Icon could also be viewed as a type of “spectacular accumulation,” in the same way that Morgan Pitelka discusses the possession of tea goods, swords, and so on, by the same warlords. Morgan Pitelka, Spectacular Accumulation: Material Culture, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and Samurai Sociability (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2016).
Zenkōji and its surrounding area. The Takeda built Kai Zenkōji (completed in 1564) where they housed the Amida triad. Several important figures from the temple complex, such as the administrative Kurita Family, accompanied the icon. While Shinano Zenkōji and its gate town lost their raison d’être when the icon and many of its people moved, Kobayashi and art historian Uehara Shōichi 上原昭一 suggest that there were local land administrators in the area and that both Daihongan and Daikanjin may have left some people in charge of their temples in their absence.21

Three abbesses were in charge of Daihongan during this tumultuous forty-four year period. Chijō (107th; ?–1564?) was abbess during the move to Kai and the initial phases of the building of the Zenkōji hall there; her name is listed on the rafter tablet (munefuda 棟札) of the hall. During this period it seems as though Daihongan was affiliated with Shingon but pursued multiple practices beyond that (Shingon kengaku 真言兼学). It is unclear when they switched to solely Pure Land practices. Furthermore, the nuns were in charge of fundraising and construction while monks under a priest named

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21 They base this on the fact that Daikanjin and Daihongan both have Buddhist images from the end of the Kamakura period up to the Muromachi period. Uehara states that these items seem not to have been brought into the sub-temples after the icon was returned to Zenkōji, but from before it left, and furthermore, that many of them seem to have gone through a traumatic event as would be the case if they had survived the fires of the battles of Kawanakajima. Kobayashi adds that Daikanjin’s temple gardens are said to date from the Muromachi period. Their argument is contradicted by that of Ushiyama, who convincingly argues that Daikanjin was not established until the end of the Warring States Period. If this was the case, then Daikanjin could have received the icons and garden from another sub-temple, or they could have dated from a period before Daikanjin came to assume such a powerful role in the running of the temple. Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōji shinkō kenkyū 善光寺信仰研究, 112–113; Ushiyama Yoshiyuki 牛山佳幸, “Zenkōji shinkō ni okeru honbō Daikanjin no rekishiteki yakuwari 善光寺信仰における本坊大勧進の歴史的役割,” in Zenkōji honbō Daikanjin hōmotshū 善光寺本坊大勧進宝物集 (Matsumoto: Kyōdo Shuppansha, 1999), 143–144; Uehara Shōichi 上原昭一, “Zenkōji shinkō to butsuzō bijutsu 善光寺信仰と仏像美術,” in Zenkōji: kokoro to katachi 善光寺一心とかたち, ed. Itō Nobuo 伊藤延男, Gorai Shigeru 五来重, and Shimohira Masaki 下平正樹 (Tokyo: Daiichi Hōki, 1991).
Gen’yu 源瑜 (n.d.) were in charge of rituals at Kai Zenkōji. Chisei (108th; 1564–1588) was the second abbess at Kai. During her tenure the title “Daihongan” seems to have been first applied to the sub-temple; prior to this it had been referred to as “Hongan” or “Honganji.”

During Chisei’s tenure as abbess, the icon was moved several times to Gifu, Jimokuji, Hamamatsu, and back to Kai. It is unclear what Chisei and Daihongan’s nuns did during this period. Kobayashi suggests that Chisei remained in Kai. He states that after the icon was moved from Kai to Gifu and later to Jimokuji, Chisei (somehow) took a nun from Jimokuji named Chikei (109th; 1588–1612) to be her student. In Kobayashi’s telling, Chikei acted as Chisei’s representative, following the icon from Jimokuji to Hamamatsu and Kai, and eventually succeeding Chisei as abbess of Daihongan. Other sources suggest that Chikei traveled with the icon to Jimokuji, where she revived the Shaka-in, which served as a convent while the icon was there.

Chikei and the icon only remained in Kai for another fourteen years before moving again. Hideyoshi began construction of the Great Buddha Hall at Hōkōji, in the Higashiyama area of Kyoto, in 1586. However, after an earthquake destroyed this image in 1596, Zenkōji’s icon supposedly appeared to Hideyoshi in a dream; Hideyoshi

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22 Kobayashi states that Gen’yu was in charge of Daikanjin, however, Ushiyama argues that Daikanjin did not come into existence until 1581. Ushiyama Yoshiyuki 牛山佳幸, “Zenkōji shinkō ni okeru honbō Daikanjin no rekishi-teki yakuwari 善光寺信仰における本坊大勧進の歴史的役割,” 143–144.

23 Kobayashi states that this first appearance of the name Daihongan was in a document from Shingen in 1568.11.10. Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺史研究, 281.

24 Ibid., 282.

25 Jimokuji Town, Jimoku chōshi 甚目寺町史 (Jimokuji: Jimokuji Town, 1975), 419.
ordered Ieyasu to move the icon to Kyoto soon after.\textsuperscript{26} Not content to simply move the icon, Hideyoshi ordered in 1597.6.15 that his vassal warlords along its route be responsible for deploying a retinue of five hundred porters and 236 horses to accompany it on its journey.\textsuperscript{27} Additionally, he had the Mt. Kōya monk Mokujiki Ōgo 木食応其 (1536–1608), who had assisted with the building of Hōkōji, assemble a Buddhist presence to greet the icon when it arrived in Ōtsu, on the outskirts of Kyoto. The order that Ōgo relayed to Mt. Kōya is instructive of the importance that Hideyoshi placed on this project: “all the priests of Mt. Kōya, excluding the blind and infirm, [are] to come and greet Zenkōji’s icon.”\textsuperscript{28} In all, there were supposedly 150 Shingon priests from Mt. Kōya, 150 Tendai priests, and a number of other high-ranking priests from imperial temples, all waiting in Ōtsu on 1598.7.18. Hideyoshi further added to the splendor of the occasion by donating 300 red parasols which lined the road.\textsuperscript{29} These priests joined the icon’s procession which was comprised of various warlords, 236 horses, 500 porters, the cart containing the icon, Abbess Chikei, and fifteen lantern bearers. This must have been quite a sight as it traveled through the city on its way to Hōkōji.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{26} McCallum states that Hideyoshi may have even gotten the idea for a “dream” appearance from Chikei, who he notes had connections with several of Hideyoshi’s trusted vassals. McCallum, \textit{Zenkōji and Its Icon}, 164.

\textsuperscript{27} A document in the Kai Zenkōji monjo copied in the early Meiji period and held at Tokyo University’s Historiographical institute lists the stages of the journey and the duties for each of Hideyoshi’s daimyo. \textit{Kai Zenkōji monjo} pages 1-6.


\textsuperscript{29} Various sources state that there were either 500 or 150 Shingon and Tendai priests. The \textit{Gokanza engi} lists 500, while the \textit{Rokuon nichiroku} 鹿苑日録, a diary kept by the head of the Rokuon’in sub-temple of the Rinzai Zen Shōkokuji in Kyoto, lists 150. Ibid., 108.

\textsuperscript{30} The \textit{Gokanza engi}, written by Daikanjin’s Jūei 重栄, states that Daikanjin’s Jūhan 重繁 accompanied the retinue, but a note in the \textit{Kai Zenkōji monjo} states that this is mistaken. The \textit{Gokanza engi} is in Ibid., 797–802. Udaka Yoshiaki 宇高良哲 and Yoshihara Hiroto 吉原浩人, eds., \textit{Kai Zenkōji monjo: Jōdoshū 甲斐善光寺文書-浄土宗} (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunka Shuppan, 1986).

Other documents related to the move include a letter from Hideyoshi to Ōgo, and one from Ōgo to the monks on Mt. Kōya. These can be found in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, \textit{Zenkōjishi kenkyū}, 788–791.
Convent documents state that the move to Kyoto afforded Chikei the opportunity to “revive” the process of receiving the title of “eminent person” directly from the emperor. As I mentioned earlier, the convent claimed this had stopped in the confusion following the Ōnin War. The imperial temple Shōgoin 聖護院, which acted as an intermediary for all of Daihongan’s abbesses’ interactions with the imperial court throughout the Edo period, submitted a request to the Kajūji family 勧修寺家 that the emperor grant Chikei the title of “eminent person.”\(^{31}\) That this request was submitted and approved on 1597.6.15, the same day that Hideyoshi ordered the deployment of a retinue to accompany the icon and abbess to Kyoto, is perhaps more than a coincidence. Indeed, Dōchō 道澄, the abbot of the Shōgoin imperial monastery at this time, was also the head of the Great Buddha Hall of Hōkōji, suggesting that his request for the abbess’s title could have come at Hideyoshi’s urging.\(^{32}\) In any case, having this approved at this time meant that Chikei had this prestigious title when she traveled to Kyoto, which was advantageous for her. Additionally, Chikei being called eminent person and wearing purple robes brought further prestige to Hideyoshi’s Hōkōji temple project.

While not much is known about the activities in Kyoto of Chikei and the other personnel from Zenkōji who followed the icon to Kyoto, there are some hints. Chikei developed or deepened connections with several of Hideyoshi’s close retainers, such as Fukushima Masanori 福島正則 (1561–1624), a warlord who served both Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, though it is unclear when these connections began. Though it would

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\(^{31}\) I discuss the relationship between Zenkōji, Shōgoin, and Onjōji, the temple which had been the head temple of Zenkōji in the Heian period, in Chapter 1. The text of the request and approval can be found in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 285–286.

\(^{32}\) Ibid., 105.
be instructive to know more about the activities of Chikei and the other Zenkōji clerics and administrators during their time in Kyoto, I have been unable to find other materials. Not all traveled to Kyoto, however; some remained in Kai during the move. One aging nun named Keiyū 慶祐, for instance, stayed in Kai because she could no longer travel. She moved into a hermitage where she offered “reverence to an image of Hōnen until she achieved rebirth in the Pure Land.”

Chikei and the icon’s time in Kyoto was short-lived. Hideyoshi became ill in the third month of 1598, dying five months later. Prior to his death Zenkōji’s icon again purportedly appeared to Hideyoshi in a dream and told the ruler, “I want to return to my homelands (honji 本地).” Hideyoshi promptly sent the icon and its people back, not to Kai, but to Shinano without the pomp of its trip to Kyoto. He died the next day.

The icon and the nuns returned to Shinano after an absence of more than forty years. While there were some people who lived in the area during their absence, the quiet of the once bustling gate town and the absence of the temple halls must have been quite a shock for those who remembered the temple complex prior to the Battles of Kawanakajima. Additionally, many of the items removed from Zenkōji by the Takeda and Uesugi remained at Kai Zenkōji or traveled with the Uesugi when they were sent to Dewa Province in northeastern Japan in the beginning of the Edo period. So, the clerics were faced with the formidable task of rebuilding the temple complex from the ground up.

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33 This story is found inscribed on the back of the Hōnen image mentioned by Kobayashi. Ibid., 281.
This is not to say that they returned completely empty-handed, however. The group had forged connections to some of the most powerful people of the time, and they supported the group’s efforts to rebuild the temple. Among these was Hideyoshi’s young heir, Hideyori, who supposedly donated funds to start the project. Furthermore, Chikei’s connections with the Toyotomi did not prevent Daihongan’s abbesses from maintaining their connections with the Tokugawa, even after Ieyasu fought with Hideyori and the Toyotomi supporters in Osaka in 1614 and 1615. Chikei presumably forged these connections with the Tokugawa when she was in Hamamatsu or Kōfu, both of which were under Ieyasu’s control. These connections had many benefits: for example, in addition to receiving a portion of Zenkōji’s 1000 koku in tax-free land in 1601, Daihongan was granted five koku of land in the outskirts of Edo (first in Yanaka and then in Aoyama) on which Chikei built a temple that she administered concurrently with Daihongan.

These connections were strengthened further under Chikei’s successors, Seishin and Chiden, who were abbesses from 1612 to 1672. Daihongan was tasked with performing rituals for the posthumous wellbeing of several members of the Tokugawa household, beginning when Iemitsu gave Daihongan the memorial tablets of Hidetada and of Iemitsu’s mother, Sūgen’in. Daihongan constructed an Otamaya 御霊屋 to house these—throughout the period several women from the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s

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34 Additionally, it seems that several Tokugawa women – Ieyasu’s birth mother Dentsūin, Hidetada’s daughter Tōfukumon’in, and so on – had Zenkōji Amida triads as their personal Buddha icons (nenjibutsu 念持仏), thus demonstrating the spread of Zenkōji faith amongst the Tokugawa in the early years of the period. Ibid., 289, 291.
castle had their memorial tablets placed there, and Daihongan always received financial support for rebuilding this from the ladies of the Inner Quarters.  

Finally, during this period Daihongan’s abbesses began to regularly visit Edo Castle and have face-to-face meetings (omemie 御目見え) with the shogun and his wife, mother, and children, in addition to meetings with the high-ranking women of the Inner Quarters of the castle. These visits occurred once every third year, or occasionally when there was a display of Zenkōji’s Amida triad, Aoyama Zenkōji’s icon, or the icon of Daihongan’s Osaka branch temple Wakōji in Edo. The nuns maintained a connection with the ladies of the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle, who regularly provided advice and assistance, through these visits. Furthermore, these visits were also chances to exchange gifts with the people of the castle and to receive financial offerings from the shogun and others within the Inner Quarters.

Travel was vital to the maintenance of these connections, which were spread throughout Japan. Although the abbesses could send representatives to the court to receive permission for the title of eminent person and to wear their purple robes, which they regularly did, they were also required to visit the court in person at some point following that. Additionally, though the abbess did maintain a regular correspondence with the women of the Inner Quarters—usually the elders (otoshiyori お年寄り) and the transaction agents (omote tsukai 表使)—these could not replace the face-to-face meetings and exchanges of gifts that occurred during their visits to the castle. Finally, these

35 For more on the Otamaya, see Chapter 2.
36 For instances when letters were exchanged, see Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 211–212.
travels were also chances to extend their networks. Trips to Kyoto allowed the nuns to visit other powerful Pure Land temples or to meet with merchants and Zenkōji confraternities in Osaka, for example.

III. Tokugawa-period travels
A. Travel within Edo
The abbesses and nuns of Daihongan occasionally had to travel within Edo. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, scholars have suggested that Chikei was granted land in Edo for Yanaka (and Aoyama afterwards) Zenkōji in order to be able to travel to Edo Castle easily. These visits appear to have been made routine by 1740, when the abbesses were required to visit the castle once every three years in a manner similar to the alternate attendance (sankin kōtai 参勤交代) of the various domainal lords.37 Rather than “alternate attendance,” however, this was called “offering respects at the castle every third year.”38 In addition to the set visits every third year, Daihongan’s abbesses also visited the castle when there was a change in shoguns, when there was a change in abbesses, or occasionally when there was a display of Zenkōji’s treasures, Aoyama Zenkōji’s treasures, or Wakōji’s treasures in Edo. The abbesses for whom there is concrete data, Chikan and Chishō, demonstrate the regularity of these visits: Chikan visited the castle and had an audience with the shogun and women of the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle sixteen times during her thirty-six years as abbess, while Chishō

37 Ibid., 205.
38 Sannen ni ichido no otojōhairai 三年に一度の御登城拝礼 or, alternatively, “the year of offering respects at the castle” oreinen tojō 御礼年登城. Ibid.

The abbesses of Ise’s Keikō’in and Atsuta’s Seiganji also visited the shogun, though I have been unable to determine how regularly this occurred. Kokushi daijiten 国史大辞典 cf. Ise no shōnin.
visited seventeen times in forty-six years.\textsuperscript{39} These visits, combined with monthly letters to the Inner Quarters, represent the regular connections of the abbesses with the shogun and the women of the Inner Quarters. In this section I will discuss two such visits. The first example is from Chishō’s first visit to the castle as abbess, which occurred in 1791. This example demonstrates the usual form of visits to pay respects to the shogun and his family every third year. The second example comes from a few years prior to this, when Chikan visited the castle with Aoyama Zenkōji’s icon following a display in 1783.

1. \textit{Chishō’s first visit to pay respects in 1791}

Planning for regular visits to the castle usually began months in advance. For example, a request was sent to the messengers (\textit{omote tsukaishū 表使集}) of the main enceinte in 1791.2.6 for Chishō’s first visit to the castle as abbess in 8.6 of that year.\textsuperscript{40} Convent administrators sent several lists to the messengers of the castle a few days before the abbesses’ visits; these included the people to enter the castle, smaller presents (\textit{miyage みやげ}) for the lower ranking women, as well as larger gifts (\textit{kenjōhin 献上品}) to the shogun and high-ranking women such as the shogun’s wife, daughters, and the senior ladies in waiting (\textit{rōjo 老女}).\textsuperscript{41}

On the day of her visit, the abbess, a handful of nuns, and a couple of administrators set out from Aoyama at six in the morning in palanquins. They arrived to the castle at seven. Chishō received congratulations on having become abbess. She was then allowed an audience with Ienari (eleventh shogun, 1773–1881, shogun from 1787–

\textsuperscript{39} For a list of the dates of these abbesses’ visits, see Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “\textit{Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯},” 205–206.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 206.
\textsuperscript{41} Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, \textit{Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺観音上人}, 15.
1837), his wife Kōdai’in 容院 (1773–1844), and his eldest daughter Hidehime 淑姫; they presented Chishō with dried kelp (konbu 昆布), seasonal clothing (jifuku 時服), a piece of craft work (osaikumono 御細工物), an illustrated book or print (esōshi 絵草紙), one large gold coin (ōgon ichimai 黄金一枚), and sixteen large silver coins (hakugin jūrokumai 白銀十六枚). After this, Chishō and her retinue ate. She was then given congratulations on having become the abbess by more than forty people, including the senior ladies in waiting, after which she was allowed audience (and snacks) with the elder ladies (otoshiyori 御年寄) of the Inner Quarters. After a long day, the abbess and her retinue left the castle at four in the afternoon.

There was of course, some variation in the numbers of people who traveled with the abbesses and the types of gifts they exchanged at the castle. For example, Chikan traveled with twenty-six people during her first visit to the castle in 1754. During this visit, Chikan brought along a votive amulet or tablet, fans, ten sheaves of sugiwara paper, and a box of refined soba. In return, the abbess received one bullion of gold and some seasonal clothing.  

The abbess’s travels did not end when she returned to Aoyama that day, however. The next day Chishō sent thank you notices via messenger to the elder ladies in waiting, the chamberlain (okyakuashirai 御客応答), messengers, and so on in the Inner Quarters, and sent news of her visit along with some sweets she had received during her visit to the castle to various domainal lords, the head of Zōjōji and other temples, doctors, and so on.

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42 These included the Abbess, 6 palanquin carriers for her palanquin, 6 bearers for the two smaller palanquins, 2 nuns who walked alongside her palanquin, 2 samurai, 2 bearers of hasamibako, 1 umbrella bearer, 1 shoe carrier, 1 sandal carrier, 2 assistant sandal carriers, one secondary hasamibako bearer, and one oshi. Ibid.
On the eighth and the ninth she personally traveled to thirty-five manors of various domainal lords or bakufu officials, including the bakufu elders (rōjū 老中), the magistrate of temples and shrines, the keepers of Edo Castle (orusuiyaku 御留守居役), and the Nagai family (abbess Chikan’s natal family), as well as the two administrative sub-temples of Kan’eiji. She traveled by palanquin to each, and was accompanied by elder nuns such as Gyokusen and Teishin, as well as temple administrators such as Kurata Saburōemon. The administrators presented a letter of greeting and a box containing a fan to each household.43

2. Chikan’s visit with Aoyama Zenkōji’s Icon in 1783
Visits to the castle with an image, such as the copy of Zenkōji’s Amida triad when it was displayed in Edo, Aoyama Zenkōji’s icon, or Wakōji’s icon, were in many ways similar to the regularly scheduled visits discussed above; however, there were also some differences, which I will highlight here. As I discuss in Chapter 5, high-ranking women in the Inner Quarters often sent representatives to displays of various temples’ treasures in Edo. While this often occurred, it could not take the place of actually seeing an icon with one’s own eyes and making an offering to it oneself. For this reason, many times the women of the Inner Quarters requested that many heads of temples and shrines bring their treasures and/or icons to the castle following a display.44 The first time this happened with one of Daihongan’s abbesses was during the 1692 display of the copy of Zenkōji’s Amida triad in Edo, when Keishō-in, mother to Shogun Tsunayoshi, requested

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44 For more on this, see Edo Tōkyō Tatemono en 江戸東京たてもの園, Ōoku jochū to yukari no jiin 大奥女中とゆかりの寺院.
that Zenkōji’s icon be brought into Edo Castle where members of the shogun’s household
could view it.\footnote{Keishōin personally donated 100 ryō for the rebuilding of the icon’s covering. McCallum, 
*Zenkōji and Its Icon*, 171.}

The women of the Inner Quarters invited Chikan to visit the castle with an icon
twice. One of these visits occurred after the display of Aoyama Zenkōji’s icon in the
fourth and fifth months of 1783. A few days after the display the front messenger of Edo
Castle delivered an unofficial message stating that the women of the Inner Quarters of the
castle “would like to view the Buddha [icon].”\footnote{Though Chikan visited the castle with Wakōji’s icon in 1780, and there are records related to
that, I am discussing the later display because it involves only Daihongan/Aoyama Zenkōji’s personnel and
should therefore be more representative of the abbesses’ visits to the castle. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉,
*Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人,
83.} This was followed a few days later (6.7)
by an official message from the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines in charge of displays
of temple treasures which stated that the convent’s icon and the abbess were to visit the
castle on 6.15. Convent administrators notified the Magistrate and the two administrative
sub-temples of Kan’eiji of their plans. On 6.10 the head of the Great Hall (*hiroshiki* 広敷) in the Inner Quarters sent two male servants (*genan* 下男) to examine the icon’s outer
case for transit and discuss with convent administrators how many porters would be
necessary.\footnote{The outer case measured around 1.52 m. high, 1.03 m. wide, and 0.94 m. deep.} In order to move the image, workers removed the roof decorations and base
from the icon’s case and attached carrying poles to its sides. The shogunate sent twelve
porters to carry the icon in its case, four replacement porters to accompany them, four
more porters to carry the case’s base, and eight more men in case of rain. These men all
arrived at the convent on the evening of 6.14.
The procession set out at around 6 AM on the morning of 6.15 and arrived at the castle at 8. The procession was made up of eighty-eight people including the abbess, nuns (including Seijun, the young nun who was to be Chikan’s successor but who died in 1787 at the age of 17), administrators, porters, foot soldiers, and others. The procession entered the castle through the Hirakawaguchi gate. The porters and a number of other members of the retinue were not allowed into the Inner Quarters, so some of the women from the Inner Quarters (the Jochūshū 女中衆 in particular) took the icon’s case, minus the carrying poles and temporary shrine, and placed it in the formal room (odono no goshō 御殿の御床). From there, the abbess met with the elders of the Inner Quarters before she performed a brief ceremony, unlocked and opened the icon’s case, and then left the room. Following this, she met with the tenth shogun, Ienari, and members of his family. She gave them a box of konbu seaweed; the convent also brought a hundred paper copies of its icon, reams of paper, steam baskets, saké, and so on for other people they met in the castle. Members of the convent ate in the castle.

The abbess performed the closing ceremony and locked the icon’s case at around 4 PM. Women of the Inner Quarters escorted Chikan to the entrance of the quarters. The members of the procession home were joined by eight more men from the castle who carried lanterns decorated with the Tokugawa family crest; these men were sent by the shogunate because “it had grown dark” by the time the procession left the castle. They arrived at Aoyama Zenkōji at around 6 PM.

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48 When Chikan visited the castle with Wakōji’s icon in 1780 the icon remained on display in the castle for two nights. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 74, 85.
Following the display at the castle, the convent administrator gave tips to the porters from the castle (0.5 gold ryō) and the two male servants (2000 copper mon each) who had helped prepare the icon for travel. The convent received over 24.75 gold ryō from gifts and offerings made at the castle. After removing various expenses, this came to more than 12.25 ryō.\textsuperscript{49} The following day the abbess sent a letter of thanks to the women of the Inner Quarters. The convent administrator Komamura Shichirōzaemon visited sixteen domainal lords and the administrative sub-temples of Kan’ei-ji to notify them of the previous day’s visit to the castle.

These travels, short as they were, were a chance to demonstrate the status of the abbess and Daihongan. The abbess and a number of her retinue traveled throughout the city in palanquins; this set them off from most people living in the city because this form of travel was banned for commoners within Edo from the middle of the seventeenth century on.\textsuperscript{50} Her retinue into the castle, as well as that which accompanied her to the various lords’ manors in the following days, was large and displayed signs of status such as swords and spears. When it had grown late in the afternoon, they were accompanied by lanterns with the Tokugawa crest, which would have provided another sign of prestige. Finally, at each stop, after she had emerged from her palanquin at the manor gates, she walked under a red umbrella, which was often used by high-ranking priests or courtiers.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 86–87.
\textsuperscript{50} Commoners heading into Edo on palanquins or sedans from Japan’s highways were forced to get out and walk from the post station on the edge of the city (Shinagawa, Senjū, Itabashi, Takaidō, or Nakagawa). Vaporis, \textit{Breaking Barriers}, 221.
Furthermore, gift exchange played an important role in these proceedings. These visits were a chance to renew relationships between Daihongan and these various high-ranking people. One way that was done in the Edo period was through gifts. While the nuns usually gave items such as food—konbu or soba noodles, for instance—it received more than it gave in gold and silver from the shogun and his family. As Morgan Pitelka notes, this was typical in gift exchanges with the shogun, even for high-ranking domainal lords.\textsuperscript{51} Though lower ranking members may have given a large number of gifts, they received more valuable items from the shogun and his family.\textsuperscript{52}

Of course, the nuns of Daihongan would travel within Edo on other occasions besides official visits to Edo Castle. These would include official visits to Zōjōji for initiations or to Zōjōji and Kan’ei-ji for New Year’s visits. The abbesses and nuns also traveled to perform various rituals at Ekōin or Sensōji when Zenkōji’s Amida triad was on display in the city (See Chapter 5). Finally, temple administrators and messengers would run errands all over the city.

**B. Longer Distance Travel**

Travel within Edo and its environs was relatively unrestricted. Travel to a distant location, however, was monitored. For this, travel permits were required, especially as travelers passed through bakufu and various domainal barriers (sekisho 関所 or bansho 番所) on major and minor highways, particularly as they traveled away from Edo.\textsuperscript{53} As

\textsuperscript{51} Pitelka, *Spectacular Accumulation*, chap. 3.

\textsuperscript{52} Morgan Pitelka also notes that this style of gift exchange was not limited to those of high status; commoners also engaged in exchanges of swords and other goods to maintain relationships. Personal communication.

\textsuperscript{53} There were fifty three official barriers set up by the bakufu at various points on major and minor highways. There were also any number of smaller barriers set up in various domains on domainal boundaries or along minor (i.e. non-bakufu controlled) roads. Officially, only the bakufu-controlled barriers could be called sekisho, while the daimyō, who were not allowed to build sekisho in their domains, controlled bansho, even if their functions were similar. Vaporis states that these may have initially had
Vaporis notes, the bakufu was interested in controlling the movements of women in an effort to prevent domainal lords from smuggling their wives out of the shogun’s capital where they were required to live essentially as hostages to ensure their husbands did not rebel against the Tokugawa.⁵⁴ Because of this, all women were required to have travel permits that were countersigned by bakufu officials and all women were checked by female inspectors at the barriers to ensure that they matched the description recorded in their permits. Women were categorized by their hair and clothing as we saw in the memo introduced earlier: “zeni” denoted widows or high-ranking women with shaved hair; “ama” indicated commoner women with shaved heads; “bikuni” were nuns affiliated with Ise’s Keikō-in or Zenkōji’s Daihongan, Kumano bikuni, or attendants of high-ranking widows; “kamikiri” indicated women with cut hair of any length or those who had lost hair from disease or old age; while “ko-onna” indicated usually young, unmarried women wearing long-sleeved kimono.⁵⁵ In contrast, although male travelers showed their documents to barrier officials, only certain types of men on the fringes of society (criminals, those with wounds, and the mentally unstable) were given more than a cursory inspection.⁵⁶ Furthermore, while men could apply for travel permits from a number of places, including temples, landlords, or bakufu authorities, women passing through bakufu barriers needed to have their permits issued by a limited number of strategic roles in the Warring States period and early Tokugawa period, but that they came to be used to channel or control the flow of goods and people. He states that these funneled people onto the major highways, thus ensuring for the bakufu that people used the post town system and it continued to remain economically viable. For the various daimyō, these barriers helped ensure domainal economic self-sufficiency through maintaining monopolies on domainal goods as well as the taxation on import and export goods. Vaporis, Breaking Barriers, 99–133, esp. 132–133.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 121–122.
⁵⁵ This list is in Ibid., 155–156; Shiba, Literary creations on the road, 71.
⁵⁶ Vaporis, Breaking Barriers, 146–159, 162–168.
bakufu-designated authorities: when traveling west from Edo this was the Keeper of Edo Castle (*orusui 御留守居*), when traveling from Kyoto, the Kyoto City Magistrate, and so on.\(^{57}\) In Daihongan’s case, requests for permits to pass through barriers were sent to the elder ladies in waiting of Edo castle if traveling from Edo; they presumably passed this on to the Keeper of Edo Castle. When traveling from Shinano to either Edo or Kansai, Daihongan’s nuns received permits from the head of the Matsumoto Domain; when leaving from Kansai, they contacted the Kyoto town magistrate or the Osaka castellan.\(^{58}\) These permits listed who was traveling as well as any special means of travel some or all of the party would take, for instance, “Seven high and low ranking nuns with three palanquins.”\(^{59}\) There is nothing mentioned in the documents about men’s permits, so men traveling with Daihongan either did not need permits or carried their own. While it could take two to three weeks for the proper authorities to process requests and issue travel permits for commoner women, Daihongan usually received the permits within a week of applying for them.\(^{60}\)

There were two typical long-distance routes that almost every one of Daihongan’s abbesses traversed. There were the routes between her branch temple in Edo and

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\(^{58}\) Daihongan was granted a *sekisho tegata* 関所手形, or a travel pass good for one-way travel once through designated barriers. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “*Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,*” 208. For an example of a request for this type of permit sent by Daihongan to the head of the Matsumoto domain, see Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人,* 30. For more on the difference between *sekisho tegata* and *ōrai tegata* 往来手形, which were travel passports good for travel through whatever barrier a traveler passed through on his or her way, see Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, 137.

\(^{59}\) The travel permit for Chishō to travel from Edo to Shinano *Zenkōji* in 1791.10.22. Then she traveled with the elder nuns Hōzen and Gyokusen (who, along with Chishō traveled in their own palanquins), and the lower-ranking nuns Shinryō 信亮, Teishin, Ekō, and Seigetsu’in. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “*Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,*” 208.

\(^{60}\) In 1791 it took eight days. Ibid.; Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, 159.
Daihongan in Shinano, and between either Edo or Shinano and the Kyoto/Osaka area. When traveling from Edo, they were accompanied as far as the Itabashi post station (about sixteen kilometers from Aoyama Zenkōji) by a large procession. In 1832, when Chishō returned to Shinano for the last time, the procession consisted of at least one hundred people including temple administrators, doctors, foot soldiers, members of Aoyama Zenkōji’s gate town, and some confraternity members as well. Much like the processions of domainal lords through Edo, the ranks of the abbesses’ group were filled out by accompanying foot soldiers. During Chikan and Chishō’s time as abbesses, these were dispatched by Chikan’s natal Nagai family. Chishō’s family, the courtier Nakamikado, did not have a manor in Edo nor did they have the resources to provide this type of support.62

At the head of the retinue were two men tasked with clearing the way and guiding the group (sairyō 宰領 or 才領). Next came porters carrying the vermillion seal land grant (goshuin 御朱印) and the imperial edict (rinji 綸旨). These would have been in boxes perhaps emblazoned with the sigils of the imperial household and the Tokugawa household, thus signaling the powerful connections of Daihongan to those who encountered the retinue. Next came a drummer and porters carrying boxes of gifts. Following the drummer were foot soldiers and administrators who surrounded the abbess’s palanquin (koshi 輿). Directly following the abbess were palanquin bearers (rokushaku 陸尺), sandal bearers, and a parasol. Next were tea accoutrements, which

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61 Travel Journal from Aoyama to Shinano, start date is 2/27, and end date is 3/5. Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1154.59.
only high ranking people were allowed to carry.63 Following this were elder nuns in smaller palanquins (kago 駕籠), carried by porters, surrounded by soldiers, and followed by sandal bearers. The doctor and other nuns rode in palanquins. Finally, more porters carrying luggage and foot soldiers brought up the rear. One of the foot soldiers near the end of the procession carried a spear (in this case a yari 鎗), which was another marker of the abbess’s status.64 Once the procession passed out of Edo and onto the highway at Itabashi, the retinue shrank to one hundred and six as confraternity members returned home. Furthermore, some of the porters were replaced by horses and their guides.65

Clearly the abbess and other heads of large temples and convents did not need to travel in such a large procession, and since the roads were relatively safe during Chikan and Chishō’s times as abbess, they did not need the protection of dozens of samurai and foot soldiers, at least when they were not traveling with temple treasures.66 So, how are we to understand these large processions? Constantine Vaporis has discussed the processions of domainal lords as a part of the system of alternate attendance (sankin kōtai 参勤交代) where the lords traveled between Edo and their domainal lands at set periods in order to perform various duties for the Tokugawa in Edo. He states that while on the

63 Within the domainal lords, for instance, only those lords with over 100,000 koku in land holdings (around thirty lords in all) were allowed to travel with portable tea kits. Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2008), 98.
64 Domainal lords related to the Tokugawa were allowed four spears (two before and two after the lord), high-ranking lords not related to the Tokugawa were allowed three (two before and one after), while lesser lords might be allowed only one or two spears in their processions. Ibid., 97.
65 I am drawing on the Ōkiji dōchū nikki for the descriptions here, but descriptions of the retinues of abbesses Chikan and Chishō have similar members (See works by Takatsukasa), though their number and order may have changed. Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1154.059.
66 Of course, when Seien traveled to Kyoto in the 1850s and 1860s, it was a different story. Then the city was the center of violent political actions, so foot soldiers would have offered protection to travelers.
one hand these movements of troops and materiel can be seen as practice for military campaigns, on the other, they were “theaters of power” where the authority of the domainal lords (as local leaders) and of the Tokugawa bakufu (as national ones) was performed by warriors in the retinue on the stage of the road for the audience of the people and other domainal lords.\textsuperscript{67} Temples and shrines adopted many of the motifs of these warrior processional performances, including foot soldiers, uniforms, and in some cases the ostentatious performances of the members of the vanguard.\textsuperscript{68} For traveling displays of temple treasures, the procession as performance was a way of advertising the splendor of the display to those along the road. In this, religious institutions were not competing with domainal lords in their ostentatious displays of wealth and power while traveling; rather, they were competing with other displays of temple treasures in a relatively flooded religious marketplace. As Barbara Ambros has discussed, the competition between displays caused some to become so unwieldy that they lost money once travel expenses were taken into account.\textsuperscript{69} In the case of simple travel (i.e. not as a part of a display) it came to be expected that the heads of high-ranking temple complexes or abbesses of convents such as Daihongan would travel with large retinues that included foot soldiers and the conspicuous markers of status such as the palanquins, spears, and tea equipment. That this was expected is demonstrated by the fact that some heads of

\textsuperscript{67} Vaporis, \textit{Tour of Duty}, chap. 3, especially pages 62-4.

\textsuperscript{68} The foot soldiers in the “vanguard” of processions of traveling displays performed in a manner similar to the \textit{yakko} foot soldiers described by Vaporis; one of these performances can be seen in a book detailing the traveling display of the treasures of Sengakuji. A local samurai-cum-bookseller named Kōriki Tanenobu (aka. Enkōan) depicted this procession as it passed through Nagoya on its way to Amidadera where the treasures were to be displayed. Akō Gishi Kinenkan., \textit{Sengakuji Akō Gishi Kinenkan Shūzōhin Mokuroku} (Tokyo: Banshōzan Sengakuji, 2002), 24–27; Vaporis, \textit{Tour of Duty}, 83–86.

\textsuperscript{69} Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo.”
temples/shrines had to hire foot soldiers for their travels from booking agents (hitoireya 人入れ屋 or kuchi ireya 口入れ屋). One of the head temples of the Sōtō Zen school, Eiheiji, even had established relationships with these agents in Edo, Kyoto, and Echizen, demonstrating how often the temple relied on their services.\textsuperscript{70} Thus, while these items (and people) in the processions of these temples and convents may have their origins in the processions of domainal lords, they came to be associated with high-status/high-ranking travel in general.

In what follows, I will discuss the two most common long-distant trips Daihongan’s abbesses made. In the first part, I focus on travel between Edo and Shinano, using the example of Chishō’s 1832 trip from Edo to Shinano. Both the expenses involved in travel and the ways that travel enabled the abbesses to make connections with various types of people become apparent from this trip. In the second part, I examine both Chikan and Chishō’s trips to the imperial palace in 1764 and 1808. Because the source material for these trips is incomplete in different aspects, I discuss both of them in tandem in an attempt to provide a fuller account of abbesses’ travels to the imperial court.

\textbf{1. Edo-Shinano}

In this section, I will draw from a record of Chishō’s 1832 trip from Edo to Shinano called \textit{Okiji dōchū niki} 御帰寺道中日記 (The Travel Journal of [Chishō’s] Return to [Zenkōji] Temple, hereafter called \textit{Dōchū niki}). This record was kept by Kaneko Yoemon 金子与右衛門 and Yajima Hirosaburō 矢嶋広三郎, temple

\textsuperscript{70} Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, \textit{Edo jidai no Sōtōshū no tenkai} 江戸時代の曹洞宗の展開 (Tokyo: Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 1999), 101–102, 106, 111, 121.
administrators and accountants for this trip. Kaneko and Yajima kept detailed records during this trip. While most other travel journals in Daihongan’s collection give barebones information such as dates, post towns where they ate or spent the night, and the weather, the Dōchū niki diagrams the procession that accompanied Chishō, letters sent and received while on the trip, and the amounts paid at each inn, rest stop, and to the porters.

Trips from Edo to Shinano typically took around six days for the abbess and her retinue, though they could take longer depending upon weather and road conditions such as flooding at river crossings such as the Tanbajima ferry crossing just south of Zenkōji’s gate town. They would take the Nakasendō, one of the bakufu’s main highways, as far as Oiwake (in modern day Karuizawa); from there they traveled north to their destination on the Northern Provinces Road (Hokkokukaidō 北国街道), which was also known as the Zenkōji Road. They would typically pass through several post towns or designated rest facilities (tateba 立場) in a day.

The group stopped for thirty-two short breaks (kokyū 小休) at inns, teahouses, and rest areas during the six days they were on the road. In the beginning of the trip, when the retinue had expanded to include confraternity members, neighborhood representatives, and Buddhist clerics from nearby temples, the cost was higher. They paid 2 gold ryō at Ginza and 2.75 at Itabashi, for instance. At other stops, the group paid a quarter to a half of a ryō; it is unclear why they paid more at some stops, but it is possible that they offered greater service or better food. For the majority of stops, however, the group paid 200 copper mon (0.03 ryō).
The group took longer breaks for lunch at inns along the route. They paid around 1 gold ryō at each stop for food and services. This amount only covered the highest ranking members of the group, however. Lower ranking members received some money they were to use to purchase a boxed lunch. On the second day of the trip (2.28), Yajima and Kaneko notified the two directors, the nine people carrying the convent’s seal, and the sixteen palanquin bearers and replacement bearers that from 2.29 on they would only provide ten copper mon (0.0015 ryō) each for their boxed lunches. It is unclear how much they paid these members on the first day or if these members joined in the regular meals that day.

One member of the party would be sent ahead to inform the manager of the post town (ton'ya 問屋) and manager of the inn of the party’s arrival. These officials often greeted the abbess’s retinue on the outskirts of the post town and escorted them to the inn for tea, lunch, or their lodging for the night. The higher ranking members of the party stayed in official inns (honjin 本陣) reserved for high-ranking guests, the mid-ranking members of the party stayed in the official inns or auxiliary inns depending upon space, and the lowest ranking members of the party stayed elsewhere (gaishuku 外宿). They paid around 1.5 gold ryō each night depending upon who used what type of lodging and the types and quality of food served. The group’s stay at Warabi post town on the first night of their travels is a good example of this. Thirty-six people stayed at the official inn there. The price per person for the twenty-two of the highest-ranking members was 200 copper mon (0.03 ryō). For the fourteen mid-ranked members it was 164 mon (0.025 ryō).

71 In 1832, roughly 14 members stayed in the official inn, 44 stayed in auxiliary inns, and 20 stayed in outside lodgings. Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1154.059.
each. An additional twenty-four members of the retinue, presumably the lowest ranking ones, stayed in outside accommodations; the group paid 164 mon for each of these members. After the first day, however, Kaneko and Yajima sent out a memo to the post town managers and inn keepers stating that the convent was trying to keep to a budget, so they should keep the price of lodging to 100 mon (0.015 ryō) per person. Perhaps because of the money received during stops or perhaps because post town workers desired to meet the abbess and her retinue, she received several letters during her travels from inn operators and post town officials requesting that she and her retinue stop for a break, lunch, or stay at their post town or rest stop. When possible the group honored these, but they also sent occasional notices that they would not be able to honor the request.

Kaneko and Yajima also gave some gratuities as part of their travel. For example, the Dōchū nikki states that the group paid 0.125 gold ryō to each post town leader (ton'ya 間屋). As I mentioned earlier, Kaneko and Yajima also paid some gratuities to members of their group after passing through difficult spots on the road. They paid these after two of the three river crossings and after the Usui Mountain Pass near the bakufu’s Usui barrier. After passing through the barrier and making it through the Usui Pass Yajima and Kaneko gave 0.125 ryō (each?) to the five carriers of the Vermillion Seal, 0.125 to the six porters, 0.125 to the eight replacement porters, 0.0625 ryō to three people (one named Sasage and two unnamed oshi), and 0.0625 to two other group directors. If

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72 It is unclear whether they paid the leaders of every post town the group passed through, or only the ones where they took a break, lunched, or spent the night. In the first case it would be around thirty stations, which would mean they paid 1500 hiki total. In the second, it would be slightly less, at 28 stations, or 1400 hiki. I have assumed the latter.
these amounts were to be divided amongst these members, it totaled 0.5 ryo; however, if it was given to each of these people, it totaled 2.69 ryo.

Travel along official highways meant going through the bakufu’s barriers. The stop at Usui’s barrier on the Nakasendō must have provided some variation in the monotony of their travels since one of the two administrators recorded the proceedings in great detail, even taking the time to draw an image of the gate in the Dōchū nikki. Prior to arriving at the barrier, the group paid 0.125 gold ryo to the head of a nearby inn for guidance. They also paid the administrators on duty at the barrier (0.5 ryo), the security guards (0.25 ryo), and the female inspectors who examined the women of the group (0.25 ryo). They gave this to the operator of the inn before the barrier, “as had been done in the past.” They gave their travel documents to the inspectors at the barrier—the documents state that there were fifty-four high and low ranking members of the group and two children (perhaps young nuns or children of member of the group); this number did not include porters, perhaps. The nuns were taken to the barrier in their palanquins with the doors open. The female inspectors approached and declared to the barrier officials that the occupants were “as reported in the documents” or that the occupants “are nuns (bikuni).”

One aspect of the abbesses’ early modern travels that comes to light from an examination of the Dōchū nikki is the degree to which Chishō was able to make connections with commoners at the inns, teahouses, and rest areas during her trip. Although she was most likely confined within her palanquin for most of the day, during breaks and at night she was able to interact with the inn operators and other officials from the post town. Kaneko and Yajima record that almost nightly she “gave” the ten
recitations of Amida’s name, a type of Pure Land chanting ritual, or empowerments (kaji 加持) to those who asked. She performed these rituals for both individuals and groups of local elites, including the innkeepers, post town managers, and law enforcement (dōshin 同心) who gathered in the large room (zashiki 座敷) of the inns. There is no record of whether she received offerings for performing these rites. Other times the retinue gave amulets with their icon’s name on it (nagō 名号) to people in the towns they passed through. They also state that she gave gifts (tesaikumono 手細工物) to children at several post towns and gifts to certain officials or local notables. In other cases, people at post towns gave her and her retinue snacks (kashi 菓子) or other items such as mountain potatoes (nagaimo 長芋). While these are just hints at some of the temporary, tenuous connections that the abbess was able to make with commoners during her travels, they do go a long way towards providing some much needed detail to the interactions she had in her life, especially since so many of the documents that remain only discuss her connections with monastics or high-ranking laity.

That is not to say that travel only meant meeting with commoners. When passing near a local domainal lord’s headquarters, a few officials from the domain would come to visit. This entailed a meal, though it is not noted in the Dōchū nikki whether the retinue paid for these meals, and if so, how much they cost.

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The group stopped more frequently in the last day of their trip to meet with locals and the representatives of domainal lords with whom the convent interacted on a regular basis. On 3.4 they traveled around 36 kilometers, which was average for their trip, yet they stopped eight times that day, while on previous days they had only stopped five or six times. That day they set out from Ueda in the morning, stopped at a tea house just north of Ueda, stopped at Sakaki town’s inn, stopped at tea houses at Kami and Shimo Togura, had lunch in Yashiro, stopped at Shinonoi village, and at a Buddhist hall in Kohara Village, all before stopping for the day at the post station at Tanbajima river crossing, just across the river from Zenkōji town. While there they entertained guests, paying for both tea and saké at the Tanbajima Inn, one of the only times they did so. The next morning representatives from Zenkōji town’s neighborhoods, clerics from Zenkōji’s sub-temples and temples on Zenkōji’s lands, and merchants from the gate town joined the abbess’s procession as it made its way to the Main Hall. Though only a distance of around five kilometers, the troop took its time, leaving Tanbajima at 8AM and resting at Nakanogosho’s Kannonji Temple before finally arriving at Zenkōji. Once there, the convent’s seal, imperial edict, and so on were taken to the convent’s office (yashiki 屋敷). However, the abbess proceeded directly to the Main Hall where there was a brief display of the copy of Zenkōji’s icon; she then offered her respects in front of the statue of the temple founder Honda Yoshimitsu. After she was done in the Main Hall, she went to the Otamaya and finally to Daihongan’s main hall where she performed a brief ritual. This ritual ended at 8PM.

74 Nakanogosho Kannonji temple is said to house the protective horsehead Kannon connected with Minamoto Yoritomo, who is said to have stayed in the area when he supposedly visited Zenkōji. The temple is located about 700 m. southwest of Nagano Station.
a. Costs of Travel

How much did this trip cost? Although the *Dōchū nikki* is a detailed document, its authors do assume some knowledge about travel and about the specific conditions of their trip that we do not have access to. For example, Kaneko and Yajima state that after several river crossings, 0.0625 ryō was given “to the directors (sairyō).” It is unclear, however, whether this means that they gave 0.0625 ryō to each director, or if the directors had to split the money amongst themselves. There are other instances where this occurs in the *Dōchū nikki*, or where it is unclear who is receiving which amounts. To keep things simple in these cases, I have calculated the amounts so they are the smallest possible unless it explicitly states which amounts were given to whom; in the case of the directors, this would mean that I have assumed that they received 0.0625 ryō to be split between themselves rather than receiving 0.0625 ryō each for a total of 0.125 ryō.

Given these assumptions, it seems that the trip cost at least 39.3 gold ryō (Table 4-1, below). Yajima and Kaneko used gold and copper to make payments. Furthermore, it is important to note that the administrators did not record the cost of several important expenses in the *Dōchū nikki*. For instance, they did not discuss the cost of the gifts given along the route. Nor did they mention the price of hiring personnel for the trip; though the Nakai family supplied the foot soldiers for many of her trips, it is unclear whether this was the case for Chishō’s 1832 trip, or whether their services were free. If they did have to pay for these services, they could have amounted to roughly 0.156 gold ryō per day for

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75 They regularly paid using gold ryō, *bu*, *shu*, and hiki and copper *mon* and hiki. Since they separated out gold hiki from copper ones, it seems safe to assume that a listing for 100 gold hiki is equivalent to 0.25 gold ryō, while 100 copper hiki equals 1000 copper mon.

From certain listings that give the total cost for the party and the cost for individuals, it is possible to estimate the exchange rate between gold and copper when the group was traveling. It was roughly 6600 copper mon per 1 gold ryō.
a porter (*rokushaku*), which Tamamuro Fumio has demonstrated was the average cost per person hired when the heads of the Sōtō school temple Eiheiji traveled. If this was the case for Daihongan’s travels as well, keeping in mind that I have found no records that it was, the personnel costs (not counting food, lodging, tea, and so on for the group) for the trip would have been an additional 35 gold *ryō*, which would have nearly doubled their cost of travel. With all of these things considered, Chishō’s 1832 trip from Edo to Shinano perhaps cost much more than the 39.3 *ryō* we can estimate from the *Dōchū Nikki*.

Another point to consider is that Kaneko and Yajima made a concerted effort to keep travel costs to a minimum. Chishō’s travels took place soon after the fifteen-year austerity measures enacted by Daihongan from 1808 and at the start of the seven-year ones at Aoyama Zenkōji from 1832. These measures included cutting meals to the temple employees from every day to only on special occasions, sending congratulatory (or consolatory) greetings instead of gifts whenever possible, and avoiding the expense of travel. These measures drastically reduced the abbesses’ long-distance trips. For example, while Abbess Chikan had traveled between Edo and Shinano nine times in thirty-eight years, Chishō only traveled to Shinano four times in her forty-six-year tenure as abbess.76

Kaneko and Yajima took specific measures in an attempt to keep the costs of this trip to a minimum. As noted above, at the beginning of the trip the administrators sent memos to the heads of the post towns they were going to pass through urging them to keep the per member cost of lodging to 100 copper *mon* a night. They also kept food costs to a minimum by giving the twenty-seven lowest ranking members of the retinue—

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76 Takatsukasa Seigyoku 延司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 255.
the directors, people carrying the convent’s seal, the palanquin bearers, and replacement bearers—10 copper mon each day for boxed lunches.

Of course, to the contemporary reader, it might seem that the easiest ways to cut travel costs would be to not travel at all, or to travel with the least number of people possible instead of with a fifty- or sixty-person retinue. It seems that during Chishō’s time as abbess there was an effort to travel as little as possible. Though I have found no documentation where the convent members state that they will cut back on travel, it seems clear that this was the case when we compare the number of travels of Chishō with her predecessor Chikan, as noted above. However, there were certain times when travel was unavoidable because of precedent, such as trips to the court, trips to Edo Castle every third year, and trips to Shinano Zenkōji to participate in rituals. As for traveling with a small number of people, as I mentioned earlier, the convent had a number of precedents to follow and had to maintain its prestigious image. In other words, though fifty or sixty people might seem an excessive procession when only ten or fifteen people (the abbess, the convent’s nuns, and some of its administrators) really had to travel, it may have been the minimum they could travel with when they included all of their luggage, palanquins, and status symbols such as the convent’s seal, spear, and tea accoutrement.
How did the convenant pay for travel when it was unavoidable? The only funds earmarked specifically for travel was 20 gold ￥ryō a year given to Daihongan from Osaka Wakōji’s confraternities. This did not preclude the abbesses from using other funds for travel if they were available, of course. However, it seems that 20 ￥ryō a year was clearly not enough to cover the abbesses’ travels in the nineteenth century, even with efforts such as Kaneko and Yajima’s to cut back on financial costs related to travel. To make up for this deficit, the convent was forced to take out loans to cover these costs. Daihongan took out nearly 7000 ￥ryō in loans to cover Chishō’s trip to Kansai in 1808, furthermore there are records of several loans from the Matsushiro domain dating to just before Chishō and her successor, Seien’s travels.

### Table 4-1: Travel expenses from the Dōchū nikkii

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rest Stops</td>
<td>8.052 ￥ryō</td>
<td>Includes short breaks (kokyū 小休), tea, sake, snacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>7.160 ￥ryō</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxed Lunches</td>
<td>1350 copper ￥mon (0.205 ￥ryō)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging (plus food)</td>
<td>16.278 ￥ryō</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tips</td>
<td>7.563 ￥ryō</td>
<td>To the post town managers (28 of them), to the various porters and members of their party, to the inspectors at the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.258 ￥ryō</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **To Kansai**
Daihongan’s abbesses traveled to the Kansai region at least once during their tenures as abess. They undertook this trip to receive permission to wear purple robes and use the title of eminent person from the imperial court in Kyoto (or to give thanks for
having received such permission) and to participate in a display at their branch temple in Osaka. In this section I discuss the background and meaning of the purple robes and the title of eminent person. Following this, I discuss the abbesses’ travels to and from Kansai, with a focus on the procedures they undertook to receive permission from the court and to give thanks there. These procedures differed slightly from those undertaken by male monastics; these differences can help illuminate the unusual position of Daihongan vis-à-vis male Buddhist institutions. At the end of this section, I discuss what having these robes meant for Daihongan’s abbesses. I show that although obtaining imperial permission for these things was a laborious and expensive process, it was worth the difficulties because of the respect the abbesses got by having these markers of prestige.

a. Purple Robes and Eminent Persons

Buddhist renunciants wear robes of a variety of colors. The various Vinaya regulations allow for green, black, tan, orange, brown, and so on.\(^77\) By the Tokugawa period in Japan, these various colors had come to indicate ranking within the Buddhist clergy. Though there were some variations between the different Buddhist schools, black or gray was usually worn by a novice while more brightly colored robes were worn by higher ranking renunciants. Vermillion, red, and purple were reserved for the highest ranking priests and nuns.\(^78\)

Purple robes are considered to be the most prestigious of the many colored robes worn by Buddhist clerics in East Asia.\(^79\) Purple was the color associated with the emperor

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\(^78\) Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 260–265.

\(^79\) Here I discuss the meaning and history behind purple robes in China and Japan. For more information on the symbolism of Buddhist monastic robes in general, see Kieschnick, *The Impact of*...
in China and Japan; these robes were awarded by the emperor to clerics who had demonstrated their erudition, worked selflessly to promote Buddhism, or had done some work for the throne. This tradition did not exist in India, but rather it was a Chinese invention. One source says that purple robes were a matter of court precedent as a priest named Huaiyi 懷義 (d. 695) was invited to be a counselor at court; he was permitted to wear his Buddhist vestments, but had to wear purple to match his new court rank.  

Another source, Chinese monastic histories, say that Empress Wu Zetian (624–705), also known as Empress Zhou, gave the first purple robes in 690 CE to a group of monks who had composed a commentary to the *Great Cloud Sutra*. Of course, the prestige accorded to the wearer of purple robes meant that at times there were a number cases of monks bribing officials so they could receive robes, people creating counterfeit purple robes, or that in times of financial distress such as in the eleventh century the imperial court used the demand for purple robes as a way to make money by giving permission to wear the robes to any cleric able to pay the fee rather than limit the robes to those of demonstrated ability or service. There were of course moments of reform when people tried to reassert imperial authority over the granting process and return to the original meaning of the robes.  

Though Daihongan’s genealogy states that the convent’s first abbess was awarded a purple robe in the seventh century, the first historical record of purple robes being

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82 Ibid., 102–103.
awarded in Japan was when Emperor Shōmu awarded them to the Hōsso school monk Genbō 玄昉 (d. 746) in 735 for bringing a number of sutras from China. Later records indicate that they were also used during specific rites at the imperial palace; in the Engi shiki, a record of procedures and rites written in 927, it is recorded that the priest performing the role of lecturer during the Gosaie rite each New Year would wear pale purple robes. Prior to the twelfth century use of these robes was restricted to either the length of a ceremony or the lifetime of the priest to whom they had been awarded.

However, after the head of Shōren’in 青蓮院 cured retired Emperor Toba (1103–1156), he was granted the right to wear purple robes, as were his successors. Over time the right to wear purple robes was connected to the position of head of certain temples and convents.83

By the Warring States Period, the court also came to confer the highest monastic titles of eminent person (shōnin, as I mentioned in the introduction this has also been translated as “saint”), national teacher (kokushi 国師), and Zen master (Zenshi or Zenji 禪師). The court benefited from this practice because it could extend its authority to temple appointments, essentially approving appointments to the highest positions within the various sects, while also gaining a new source of income from those paying to have their request approved. The recipients of these titles received the increased stature that came with imperial approval.84

84 Lee Butler, Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467–1680: Resilience and Renewal (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2002), 60–62.0
In the Muromachi period (1337–1573) the Ashikaga shogunate and the imperial court came to rely on the money earned by approving abbotships and the concurrent change in robe colors. Though purple robes were largely restricted to the abbots and abbesses of certain temples and convents, any cleric with the proper connections and modicum of training could become head of one of these temples even for a day. Those who had taken the post for even a short period could wear colored robes and receive the accolades that went along with them. Because of this, the practice of short-term abbotships arose; some of these were even as short as one night, and in some cases, priests did not even stay in the temple. Martin Collcutt estimates that if in each year there were one hundred appointments made just within the five mountains system of Rinzai Zen, at a minimum of 10 silver kanmon per appointment (though this increased to up to 30-50 kanmon for higher ranking temples), it would amount to at least 1000 kanmon per year of income for the Ashikaga shogunate. To put this in perspective, a lavish party for the shogun hosted by one of his governors could cost up to 400 kanmon. Though 1000 kanmon per year was small in comparison to the 5,000 to 10,000 kanmon the shogunate could make in a single trading venture with China, it represented a reliable source and predictable amount of income.85 With the decline of the Ashikaga shogunate’s authority and the rise of regional warlords, the system of approval became less well organized, but in many cases the ultimate arbiter of these monastic titles and vestments remained the imperial court.

In the early seventeenth century the Tokugawa bakufu attempted to gain some modicum of control over the Buddhist clergy and the imperial court (or to come between the clergy and the court).\(^{86}\) One of the ways it did so was by issuing regulations (hatto 法度) directed at the court and various Buddhist institutions. The regulations for Buddhist institutions were largely drafted by the Rinzai priest Ishin Sūden (1569–1633) with input from the priests of various sects. They laid out the approved activities of priests and the years of training required for them to be able to be abbot of a temple or the head of a sect. Tokugawa Ieyasu issued the first regulation concerning robes and titles in the summer of 1613:

Regulations Governing Court Approval of Purple Robes
Daitokuji, Myōshinji, Chionji, Chion’in, Jōke’in, Sennyūji, Ao Kōmyōji, Konkaiji. Before appointing an abbot at one of these temples, and prior to receiving the emperor’s approval for such an advancement, notify the bakufu. Choose men of talent. Furthermore, inform the bakufu when [the new abbot] enters the temple.\(^{87}\)

Through this regulation, Ieyasu inserted the bakufu into the process of approving abbots for these eight temples, which included a number of the head temples of the Rinzai Zen, Pure Land, and Shingon schools. Warrior involvement in the process was not new. In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the Ashikaga shoguns could nominate candidates for these positions to the emperor, who would then approve them, as I

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\(^{86}\) There has been some debate amongst scholars as to Ieyasu’s intent behind the hatto. Though it has been commonly understood that they were intended to bring these institutions to heel, Lee Butler has argued that Ieyasu also intended for these regulations to return the court and Buddhist institutions to a previous unsullied state, and thus was intended as a gift to these institutions. Butler, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680*, 204.

Ieyasu’s regulation was innovative in that it required bakufu approval of all candidates prior to imperial approval, limiting both Buddhist and imperial power. On the Buddhist side, it insured that only those who had been vetted (even minimally) by the bakufu would take top sectarian positions, thus insuring bakufu control over the abbots of these head temples. On the side of the imperial court, it restricted both court prerogative and income. By controlling who could be appointed to these positions, the bakufu could control the amount of money the court received.

The bakufu also attempted to control temple appointments and advancements in its regulations for the court. The two regulations concerning the granting of permission to wear purple robes and to use the title of eminent person, translated by Lee Butler in the passage below as “saint,” come after several others regarding the role of the court, seating arrangements at court functions, and so on.

16. The ancient regulations only rarely refer to cases in which abbots of temples were allowed the [privilege of a] purple robe, but in recent years the emperor has granted such permissions indiscriminately. As a result, the order of seniority has been confused, and the official temples have been corrupted. This is not at all as it should be. In future, you will select [candidates for the purple robe] on the basis of their talents and ability and the number of years they have kept the commandments (kairō). [Only those who] have a reputation for wisdom and knowledge may be proposed [to the emperor] for appointment as abbot of a temple.

17. Monks of broad learning (sekigaku) who have been selected by their own temple, with a distinction made between regular (shō) and provisional (gon), and are recommended [to the emperor] may, by imperial permission, be granted the title of “saint” (shōnin). However, those who have practiced Buddhism for twenty years or more should be appointed as regular [saint] and those whose years are insufficient, as provisional [saint]. [Those guilty] of disorderly competition and ambitions must be punished by banishment.

In these two regulations, the bakufu attempted to limit the recipients of both the purple robes and the title of eminent person to those who had studied for the appropriate number of years and had demonstrated appropriate knowledge for the position. Other regulations for individual Buddhist schools or temples placed further restrictions on who could and could not receive purple robes. The 1615 regulations for the Rinzai Zen school, for instance, enforced a hierarchy of the temples through the robes their abbots could wear; abbots at Nanzenji could wear deep purple, those at Tenryūji could wear pale purple, and other heads of five mountains temples could wear yellow. Furthermore, it banned abbots who had served in name only from wearing these robes.\(^9^0\)

However, the bakufu discovered in 1627 that the imperial court and temples had been awarding purple robes without bakufu permission. The bakufu’s actions and the responses by Emperor Go-Mizunoo and Rinzai priests is known as the “Purple Robe Incident” (shie jiken 柴衣事件). The bakufu revoked permission to wear purple robes from 154 priests from the Sōtō, Pure Land, and Rinzai schools who had been awarded them between 1615 and 1627. This incident did not affect the abbesses of Daihongan since Abbess Seishin received permission in 1612, just before the regulations, while her successor Chiden became abbess in 1630, three years after the mass recension of permissions.\(^9^1\)

\(^9^0\) Williams, “The Purple Robe Incident and the Formation of the Early Modern Sōtō Zen Institution,” 35.

From the regulations for the individual sects, it is possible to reconstruct the career of a Buddhist priest prior to receiving purple robes, at least as far as the bakufu envisioned it. In Sōtō Zen, for instance, a cleric could be ordained at thirteen, would train for twenty years before possibly becoming a head retreat leader. After five years in this position, he could be granted a higher clerical rank and a change in robe color. After being ordained for thirty years without incident, he could become the resident abbot of a Sōtō temple. This meant that the youngest a priest could become abbot of a temple was forty-three. Of course, this represented the ideal created by the bakufu in conjunction with leading priests from each sect; with so many temples in need of abbots, and the development of a number of loopholes in this system, there were a number of clerics who became abbot before this age.92

The procedure for becoming abbot of Eiheiji is instructive of how one was to become the head of a sect and to receive the purple robes. The retiring head would recommend a successor to the bakufu via the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. The candidate would then travel to Edo to receive a letter of recommendation from the bakufu to succeed to the abbotship. He would stay in Edo for almost two months while the paperwork was being drawn up. When it was completed, he entered the shogun’s castle with a large retinue and gave gifts to the shogun and other members of his household. After this, he traveled back to Eiheiji with a few priests and a large retinue. He would then travel to Kyoto with fifty attendants. There he stayed at Dōshōan, the Sōtō school

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92 Williams, “The Purple Robe Incident and the Formation of the Early Modern Sōtō Zen Institution,” 33. For more on the actual monastic careers and education of priests in a variety of sects, see Vesey, “Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 201–280; Zokuzoku gunsho ruijū 続々群書類聚, vol. 12, n.d.
temple that acted as a broker with the court. While there he and members of Dōshōan met with the Kajūji household, the imperial intermediary for several Buddhist schools, to draw up the paperwork and make the appropriate payments. He was in Kyoto for roughly a month and a half before he received the imperial edict. He returned to Eiheiji in an ox-drawn carriage. Total costs for these trips—which included food, lodging, hiring foot soldiers for the retinue, and payments to the shogun, Dōshōan, Kajūji household, and imperial court—exceeded 2,200 gold ryō each for two abbots in 1822 and 1848.

Women could also receive permission to wear colored robes, and as with male monastics, this honor was restricted to a limited number of nuns. For instance, the abbesses of only a handful of imperial convents (bikuni gosho 比丘尼御所) could wear purple robes, and simply being related to the emperor and being the head of an imperial convent did not automatically qualify a nun to wear the purple robes. Wearing these robes was tied to the genealogy of one’s convent within this system. Only the heads of the convents with the most prestigious histories had permission to wear these robes for successive generations of abbesses. This honor was limited to the convents Hōkyōji 宝鏡寺 and Daishōji 大聖寺 which traced their history to Keiaiji 景愛寺, a convent founded in 1277 by Mugai Nyodai 無外如代. This demonstrates the role that temple or convent histories played in internal ranking amongst similar institutions; however there were other means of ranking amongst the abbesses of these convents, including birth order, relatedness to the emperor, and so on. Furthermore, the heads of other imperial convents

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could petition the bakufu and court for permission to wear deep purple robes. However, the court seemed wary of disrupting the established order amongst these convents, and only granted permission for sartorial changes when abbesses could parlay their connections within the court and bakufu to intercede on their behalves. Still, on the rare occasions when permission was granted to abbesses of imperial convents without an established precedent for wearing deep purple robes, it was only granted for the lifetime of one abbess.94

Other nuns could also wear purple robes: the so-called three eminent nuns (sanshōnin 三上人) of Zenkōji Daihongan, Atsuta Shrine’s Seiganji 熱田社誓願寺 and Ise Keikō’in 伊勢慶光院. The heads of these convents received permission to wear these robes and use the title of eminent person for successive generations. I have already discussed how Chikei “revived” the title and usage of the purple robes for Daihongan’s abbesses in the 1590s, so I will not repeat that here. In the case of the nuns affiliated with Atsuta Shrine, Zenkō 善光 (dates unknown), was granted the title of eminent person in 1570. However, it does not seem that the title passed automatically to her successors at this point since a few of Zenkō’s immediate successors received the title as a result of

94 One example of this occurred in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when Shōan 聖安, the abbess of Dongei’in 曼華院, requested permission to wear deep purple robes. Her first petition was blocked by Emperor Reigen’en in part because his daughter was head of Daishōji while Shōan was the daughter of the previous emperor, Gosai. Shōan resubmitted her request fourteen years later (1707), this time requesting the assistance of her brother Kōben 公弁, who was the head of Rinnōji (the combined imperial temples of Kan’eiiji and Nikkō), a position close to the bakufu. Facing opposition from the heads of other convents, and yet fearing bakufu reprisal, Emperor Higashiyama 東山 approved Shōan’s request to wear purple robes, but restricted it to her lifetime only. Yamamoto, “Visual and Material Culture at Hōkyōji Imperial Convent: The Significance of ‘Women’s Art’ in Early Modern Japan,” 48–51; Kubo Takako 久保貴子, “Shinpojiumu: Kinsei Chōtei no joseitachi’ kinsei Tennōke no joseitachi <シンポジウム：近世朝鮮の女性たち＞近世天皇家の女性たち,” Kinsei no tennō/chōtei no kenkyū 近世の天皇・朝廷の研究, no. 2 (March 2009): 10–13.
intercessions by members of the Toyotomi or Tokugawa family. Though it is unclear how and when the second abbess, Keikō 慶光, received her title, Abbess Keikun 慶薰 (the third abbess) received it in 1614 at Toyotomi Hideyori’s urging, and the fourth abbess, Kikō 喜光, received it in 1622 on the order of Tenjū’ in (aka Princess Sen, Tokugawa Hidetada’s daughter and Toyotomi Hideyori’s widow). The abbesses of Ise’s Keikō’ in convent were actively involved in fundraising for and building bridges in the precincts of the Ise Shrines from at least the late fifteenth century. However, it was not until 1555 that Emperor Go-Nara granted the third abbess, Seijun 清順 (dates unknown) permission to wear the robes and use the title of eminent person because of her role in fundraising to rebuild the Ise’s Uji bridge. The abbesses and nuns of Keikō’ in continued fundraising throughout the early modern period. Many of these efforts were in support of the rebuilding of Ise’s Inner and Outer Shrine buildings (the Sengū 遷宮), which was to have occurred every twenty years but had fallen into a period of dormancy due to the languishing economic situation of the court in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Seijun’s efforts were recorded in the official diary of the emperor’s serving women (the Oyudonoue nikki 御湯殿上日記), and resulted in the rebuilding of the Outer Shrine in 1563 for the first time in over 130 years. Seijun’s successors continued her work. Shuyō

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96 According to Nei Kiyoshi there was a lot of intermingling between the nuns of Ise and the Kumano nuns. We have already seen one of Zenkōji’s nuns wearing both hats of being a Kumano bikuni and a Zenkōji hijiri. However, as Nei remarks, more work needs to be done on this topic. Nei Kiyoshi 根井浄, “Kaikoku no bikuni 廻国の比丘尼,” in Hijiri to minshū 聖と民衆, Bukkyō minzokugaku taikei 仏教民俗学大系 2 (Tokyo: Meicho Shuppan, 1986), 339.

97 This particular bridge is called the Mimosusobashi 御裳濯橋.
周養 (d. 1611) received financial support from Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi and was able to rebuild the Inner Shrine in 1585, the first time it had occurred in 123 years. In other words, the abbesses of these three convents received imperial permission (or had that permission renewed in the case of Chikei) in the late Warring States period because of their roles in fundraising campaigns or because of ritual support they gave to warlords or their families.

b. Daihongan and the Purple Robes

Daihongan’s abbesses traveled to the Kansai region at least once during their time as abbess to visit the imperial palace. From the early eighteenth century on, these visits included participation in a display in Osaka of Wakōji’s main image and meeting confraternity members affiliated with that branch temple. Initially, the visit to the imperial palace occurred either immediately after the abbess took the tonsure or after she took over her role as abbess. She would go to receive permission to wear purple robes and use the title of eminent person. As I discussed earlier, Abbess Chikei “revived” the tradition of visiting the palace when she received the title with the assistance of Toyotomi Hideyoshi and priests associated with him. Unfortunately, however, records prior to the Genroku era (1688–1704) were destroyed in a fire, so we do not know how this procedure took place before then or what its exact history was. One document written in...

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99 It is unclear from the documentation whether the records were destroyed in a fire at Daihongan itself which was partially destroyed in 1700 and 1705, or whether they were destroyed in 1703 at its branch temple in the Yanaka area of Edo. Takatsukasa Seigyou 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 212.
1795.2 in response to an inquiry from Kan’eiji regarding the history and procedures for granting the robes is instructive:

[In answer to your question] about whether [the abbess] has been receiving the imperial edict [to use the title of “eminent person” and wear the purple robes] a long time or not. Regarding this, the 113th abbess, Chizen, who was the daughter of Matsudaira [Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu] Lord of Kai Province, in 1698 she submitted her request to visit the palace to receive permission to use the title of eminent person and to wear the purple robes at all times. Her request was granted and she visited there on the nineteenth day of the sixth month of that year, receiving the imperial edict then.

[In answer to your question] about whether the new abbess receives the imperial edict when she takes office or not. Regarding this, when a new abbess takes office, a representative priest receives the edict in her stead. The abbess later visits the palace to offer thanks. Following this precedent, the current abbess [Chishō] sent a representative monk with her request in 1790.11; in the first month of the following year she received permission to use the title and wear the robes. On the fifteenth day of that month [Chishō] sent notice [of this] and thanks via messenger to the messengers of Edo Castle At that time, she also notified the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines on duty that month, Itakura [Katsumasa] Lord of Suō.100

This document tells us that the earliest extant document the convent has for the imperial visits dates to Chizen’s visit in 1698. Chizen’s visit occurred in the same year that she became abbess of Daihongan. However, we see in the second paragraph of this document that later abbesses would send a representative to receive the imperial edict soon after they took the office of abbess, and they would visit the palace to offer thanks in person sometime after that. Finally, following the conferral of permission, the abbesses would notify personnel within the shogun’s castle as well as the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, thus indicating the bakufu’s involvement in the process of receiving the robes and title. I will discuss each of these elements in turn in this section.

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100 Ibid., 212–213.
As I mentioned above, though early abbesses would receive the imperial edict in person soon after becoming abbesses, from the middle of the Edo period, or from Chikan’s tenure on, abbesses sent administrators to receive the edict and they would travel to the palace personally several years later (Table 4-2). In 1753.7.23, for instance, Chikan arrived at Aoyama Zenkōji, and on 8.14 she took the tonsure and became the abbess of Daihongan. However, in 1753.7.24, one day after her arrival at the convent and several weeks before her tonsure ceremony, the convent sent notice to Wakōji that a representative from that branch temple would have to travel to Kyoto to receive the edict in Chikan’s stead. Immediately following her tonsure ceremony the convent sent an express messenger carrying notification that the abbess had taken the tonsure, money, and some gifts to Wakōji for the representative monk to pass on to the abbot at Shōgo’in imperial temple and to the Kajūji household. Shōgo’in was the convent’s broker and the Kajūji was the imperial intermediary in arranging the edict and the abbesses’ visits to the palace. Replies arrived from Shōgo’in and Kajūji in the tenth month. After receiving these replies, Chikan sent more gifts and money to Shōgo’in and the Kajūji household. Along with this was an

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101 Ibid., 233.
102 The document lists 100 gold hiki, or roughly 0.25 ryō, given to each of the four elders and two stewards of Shōgo’in. Another set of 100 gold hiki and 1 ryō (in silver coinage) went to both of the heads of household affairs (zasshō 雑掌) of the Kajūji household. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Nyūin tokudo shōnin’i shogansho no an 入院得度上人位諸願書之案,” 45–46.
appeal that they submit a request to the palace for Chikan to receive the imperial edict even though she was unable to be present due to “illness.”\textsuperscript{103} The abbot of Wakōji also submitted a similar document; since he lists reasons why not receiving the edict would be inconvenient, I have translated it in full instead of the abbess’s request which only states that she is ill and cannot travel:

The nun Chikan was just named abbess of Zenkōji’s Daihongan convent, and she should travel soon to Kyoto to ask permission to use the title of eminent person. However, at this time, since she has taken ill, she cannot travel long distances. For this reason, she is sending this humble monk to act as her representative and submit her request, so I am submitting it in this way and respectfully ask that you give some response. The nun Chikan, who is in Kantō, took ill after she sent notice of becoming abbess and now she has the same affliction. Naturally, her original intention is to wait until she has recovered to travel to Kyoto and submit her request in person. However, being a nun of no rank for even a short time would mean that she would be unable to complete a number of convent duties, so it was unavoidable but she regretfully had to send a representative monk to make her request. The number one [difficulty of being a nun of no rank] is that every New Year, [the abbess] presides over a ritual and then sends an amulet from that ritual [to the palace]; on the amulet it says “The Eminent Person of Zenkōji.” [She would be unable to do so if she did not have rank and title.]

Furthermore, when visiting the shogun, she is called “the eminent person of Zenkōji” during visits to the castle. This is based on precedent, so [having neither rank nor title would] cause difficulties when visiting or offering gifts to the shogun. In addition, it would cause embarrassment since as a nun of no rank, the abbess would not be able to perform varied rituals or memorials in front of the main image of the temple. We wholeheartedly beseech that you compassionately hear the reasons listed above and deliver our request for permission for the title of eminent person [to the palace] in the manner we have requested. Naturally, when the abbess has recovered from her illness she will immediately travel to Kyoto to offer thanks. We request that you kindly act as an intermediary in this. That is all.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{103} These are available in Ibid., 55–58.
\textsuperscript{104} This document is cited in full in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 豹司誓玉, \textit{Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin} 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 12–13. The original appears in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 豹司誓玉, “Nyūin tokudo shōnin’i shogansho no an 入院得度上人位諸願書之案,” 61–64.
In this document we see that it was expected that the abbesses would declare in person to the abbot of Shōgo’in and the Kajūji household that they had taken the tonsure and become abbess of Daihongan. However, Chikan was unable to do so since she was ill. Furthermore, this same “illness” prevented her from traveling to Kyoto to receive the imperial edict as other clerics were expected to do. In an attachment to this document, the abbess provided previous examples of abbesses Chizen and Seikō who had received the edict via a representative monk instead of in person; this demonstrates that it there was a precedent for Chikan’s request. Finally, the abbot of Wakōji lists the difficulties Chikan would face as a “nun without rank” (*mui no ni* 無位之尼 or simply *mui* 無位): she would not be able to use the title of eminent person on amulets given to the imperial palace, she would not be able to be called by that title when visiting the castle as was the precedent, and she would not be able to perform various rituals at her own convent.

Similar documents were sent after Chishō took the tonsure and became abbess. These documents stated that these new abbesses were young and sickly, and therefore could not travel long distances, and they promised that the abbesses would go to Kyoto as soon as they recovered. However, there are no records in the convent journals that indicate that Chikan was ill, and furthermore, she traveled between Edo and Shinano five times before she went to Kyoto, while Chishō made the trip four times. The abbesses of Daihongan were not the only ones to employ illness as an excuse to hasten or delay travel. Domainal lords frequently submitted requests to alter travel plans to or from Edo due to sickness. Though in some cases these lords were actually ill, in other cases, the

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requests masked financial difficulties or other hardships (such as the destruction of a lord’s Edo manor, for instance). In some cases, bakufu advisors themselves instructed lords to use illness as an excuse. Thus, illness became an understood euphemism for difficulty in travel (or of the necessity to travel in some cases) in these requests. In the case of Daihongan’s abbesses, the exact reason for waiting to visit the palace in person is unclear, but Takatsukasa suggests that the convent may have desired to put off the expenses of travel and gifts, and that administrators of the convent may have wanted to postpone the cumbersome request process.

In any case, the imperial court was not bothered by Chikan’s (and the other abbesses’) request to postpone her visit and to allow a representative to accept the edict in her stead: on 1753.11.25, the convent received word that permission had been granted for the Chikan to use the title of eminent person. On 11.28 the abbot of Wakōji visited the Kajūji household where he met with the head of the household and the commissioner of civil affairs (minbu no taifu 民部大輔). There he received the imperial edict and some celebratory food. That same day he traveled to the palace to offer thanks and give gifts of ten sheaves of sugiwara paper, a folding fan, three bullions of silver (shirogane sanmai 白銀三枚, this would equal 129 monme, or a little more than 2 gold ryō). He sent thanks to the women’s quarters of the imperial palace, the imperial advisor (kanpaku 関白), the court-bakufu liaison (bukedensō 武家伝奏), the Kajūji household, the Shōgo’in imperial temple, and so on. On 11.29, the abbot of Shōgo’in invited the

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head of Wakōji to offer him a congratulatory meal and to give him a letter and gifts for
the abbess. Soon afterwards, the head of Wakōji traveled to Aoyama Zenkōji, arriving on
12.19. He presented Chikan with the edict, letters from various people in Kyoto, and a
five-paneled robe (*gojōgesa* 五条袈裟). Immediately after receiving it, Chikan notified
the Messengers of Edo Castle, the two administrative sub-temples of Kan’ei-ji, and the
Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. She sent thanks to the Kajūji and Shōgo’in temple
via Wakōji.

The edict was a simple, formulaic statement that read: “To Chikan, the eminent
person of Zenkōji, from the commissioner of civil affairs. By imperial order you are to
pray for the peace of the nation and the long life of the emperor.”

It did not mention purple robes or state that Chikan had permission to use the title of eminent person.
Rather, it simply addressed her as an eminent person, bringing about a change in her
status by addressing her with the title. The robes would have perhaps been understood to
be part in parcel with the position of eminent person. Furthermore, as we saw in the
section on travel between Edo and Shinano, this edict was taken with the abbesses on
their travels, proudly displaying from inside its locked box the prestige of the abbesses
and their connections between the abbess and the court.

c. Travel to Kansai to give thanks

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108 This was a stock phrase used in a great number of imperial edicts “宜奉祈国家安全 宝祚長
久者依 天気執達如件.” It appears almost word for word in the edict Chizen received. A quick internet
search reveals that similar phrasing appeared in a number of other edicts as well. Copies of Chizen’s and
Chikan’s edicts appear in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji
Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 14–15.
Setting up the visit to the palace was a time consuming process that required multiple levels of approval and drafting and redrafting request documents, even when there were records from previous abbesses’ visits on which to base a current draft. In Chishō’s case, planning began in 1804, four years before she traveled to Kyoto, when she began discussions with Wakōji about her visit. Wakōji relayed the results of these discussions to various people in Kyoto, and then back to Daihongan. After two years of discussions in this way, it was decided that the abbess could visit the palace in 1808.

Abbesses had a number of other preparations in the weeks prior to leaving for Kyoto. They would have to secure travel permits for the women in her retinue. They also reported their plans to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, Kan’eiji, and the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle; in Chikan’s case, she notified the shogun and women of the Inner Quarters in a note sent along with her annual New Year’s greetings to them. If leaving from Shinano, as Chikan did in 1764, abbesses also notified Daikanjin and other members of Zenkōji. Clerics and administrators from within Zenkōji as well as those from neighboring temples came to bid the abbess farewell and, in some cases, to give parting gifts. Furthermore, Chikan sent notification to the head of the Sanada clan in Matsushiro who would send administrators to the river crossings at Tanbajima and Yashiro to ensure safe passage for her retinue.109

The abbesses mainly took the Nakasendō for travel to Kansai. Some abbesses traveled to Kansai from Shinano, in which case, the Nakasendō was closer than the Tōkaidō. If leaving from Edo, even though the Tōkaidō highway was better developed,
had fewer steep mountain passes, and was almost thirty kilometers shorter than the
Nakasendō, they still traveled using the Nakasendō, which was attractive because it was
less crowded and had fewer treacherous river crossings than the Tōkaidō. Chikan left
from Zenkōji and arrived to Kyoto on the eleventh day of travel; Chishō left from Edo
and arrived on the seventeenth day of travel. An administrator traveled two days ahead of
the procession to arrange lodging and notify the managers of the post stations that the
abbess and her retinue would be passing through shortly. Chikan traveled with around
sixty people in her retinue, including the elder nuns Chisatsu and Chiben, the nuns
Hōzen, Shōzan, and Eirin, temple administrators Yoshimura Tomiemon, Miyashita
Hachirōemon, and Höya Kan’emon, temple samurai Karasawa Hikojirō, Sakaguchi
Moriemon, and Nishina Ihei, and the doctor Satō Bokuan. As with other travels, members
of their retinues were supplied by the Nakai, Chikan’s natal family. As was the case with
travel between Shinano and Edo, the higher ranking members of the party would stay in
the official inn (honjin), the mid-ranking in the auxiliary inn (wakihonjin), while the
lowest ranking members would stay in other lodgings.

Someone from Wakōji met the abbesses’ retinue in Ōtsu, where they spent the
night before traveling the remaining fifteen kilometers to their lodgings in Kyoto. During
Chikan’s visit, this person from Wakōji prepared the abbess’s lodgings before her arrival
and remained in Kyoto to act as a liaison between the abbess, the Shōgo’ín imperial
temple, and the Kajūji household. Wakōji’s monks also offered some undisclosed amount
of financial support for the abbess’s visit. However, though the branch temple did set up
things prior to the Chishō’s visit in 1808, they did not offer administrative and financial
support during the visit even though the representative from Wakōji did greet the retinue in Ōtsu.110

While in Kyoto the abbess would stay in small sub-temples within larger Pure Land school temple complexes such as Jōfukuji and Konkaikōmyōji. Even though Chishō’s natal family, the Nakamikado household, lived in Kyoto, she did not stay there; perhaps they did not have the room or resources to house the large group she traveled with. Instead, her family sent congratulatory messages to her on her arrival, and she also visited with them following her visit to the palace. In any case, the abbesses could make contacts with other renunciants from these Pure Land temples by staying on their lands. It is unclear how much the convent paid for lodging during the abbesses’ stay in Kyoto. However, we can get some hint at how much they may have spent from the head of Eiheiji’s trip to Kyoto. He gave a number of smaller tips and a 13 gold ryō parting gift to Dōshōan where he lodged during his forty-two-day stay in Kyoto.111

Immediately after arriving, the abbesses and their administrators got to work. They notified the City Magistrates, the shogunal deputy in Kyoto (shoshidai 所司代), Shōgo’in imperial temple, and the Kajūji household. Shōgo’in and the Kajūji household had important roles in the abbesses’ visits to the palace. As I discussed earlier, the abbot of Shōgo’in assisted Chikei in reviving the tradition of receiving imperial permission to use the title of eminent person and to wear purple robes and Shōgo’in had been Zenkōji’s

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110 Wakōji’s priests discussed this arrangement with Chishō prior to her visit: “Concerning the visit to the palace. Through inner discussions and talks, an understanding has been reached. However, it will prove difficult to provide support for you in the ways that we have in the past, so we will do so from Kyoto to Osaka. Following the visit to the palace, we will have a display of our main icon, and after taking out money for various expenses if there is any left we will give this to you.” Takatsukasa Seigyou 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 233.

111 Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, Edo jidai no Sōtōshū no tenkai 江戸時代の曹洞宗の展開, 135.
head temple for a period of time in the Kamakura period, as I discuss in Chapter 1. Successive abbots from that temple continued providing assistance to Daihongan during the abbesses’ visits to Kyoto. The Kajūji household acted as the official liaisons (densō 伝奏) between Daihongan and the court; they were also liaisons between the court and others such as the Sōtō Zen school and the Higashi Honganji branch of the True Pure Land school. During their time in Kyoto, the abbot and administrators from Shōgo’in and the head of the Kajūji household advised the abbesses of Daihongan on how to properly write documents to the court, what to do during their visit, and how to forward the documents through official channels. Soon after the abbess and her administrators arrived in Kyoto, they wrote a formal request to visit the palace under the direction of Shōgo’in’s administrators. Once it was completed they sent it and a list of gifts and accompanying personnel to the Kajūji household, who forwarded these documents to the court. The reply was sent back through the Kajūji family to Shōgo’in, and then to the abbesses or their administrators of the date and time of their visit to the palace.

At each step of the way, Daihongan gave gifts and money to various people. For instance, when the formal request was taken to the Kajūji, Daihongan’s administrators took gifts to administrators within the household. The convent also gave an undisclosed amount of money to the Kajūji for acting as their liaisons and to the palace. In the case of Sōtō priests receiving change in robe color, it was around 35-40 ryō given to the palace, the Kajūji, and Dōshōan throughout the process of applying for and receiving new robes.112

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On the day of her visit, the abbess and her retinue left their lodgings and traveled to the Kajūji household. They stayed there for roughly two hours, receiving further instructions on the visit, having a meal, and changing clothes. At the agreed-upon hour, the retinue set out again. This time the abbess rode on an ox-drawn cart (nagae 輪) instead of a palanquin. The retinue passed through the Kugemon and Hirakaramon gates. During Chishō’s visit the nuns, temple samurai, administrators, and so on who accompanied her went to the Shotayū no Ma room while Chishō proceeded to the Take no Ma room. There she met with relatives of the Emperor Kōkaku and Retired Empress Go-Sakuramachi. Chishō was not the only cleric visiting the palace that day: the heads of Myōshinji, Daigoji, and Kōshōji temples were also there. After being entertained in the Take no ma, this group of clerics visited the Chūgū, Shinnō, and Sentō portions of the palace where they met with the emperor, the retired empress, and the imperial princes. Afterwards, the abbess and her retinue returned to the Kajūji household to return the ox cart, change clothing, and eat. The whole process, from the time the retinue left their lodgings to when they returned that night, took roughly twelve hours in Chishō’s case.\footnote{The process of Chishō’s visit is recounted in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, ”Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 235–237. Unfortunately, there are scant records of Chikan’s visit Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 32.}

The following day, the abbess visited the Kajūji household, the Kyoto City Magistrates, the bakufu deputy in Kyoto, the Shōgo’in imperial priest, and various other people who had offered assistance during her visit. She offered thanks and told them that the visit to the palace had been successful. While Chikan left for Osaka two days after visiting the palace, Chishō stayed in Kyoto for almost a week, visiting her natal family.
(the Nakamikado), the Asukai household, and several temples including Chion’in, the head temple of the Pure Land school. She also met with Prince Fushiminomiya Sadayuki 伏見宮貞敬 (1776–1841), whose family had transmitted secret lute (biwa 琵琶) teachings for generations. There Chishō received permission to study the lute, presumably under Fushiminomiya-approved teachers. One day before leaving the abbesses sent notice to the Town Magistrate and the bakufu deputy to inform them of the abbesses’ plans to leave Kyoto for Osaka.114

When they had finished in Kyoto, the abbess and her retinue left their lodgings and headed for Fushimi, in the southern part of Kyoto. Chikan and her retinue spent the night in Fushimi on 4.5, boarded a boat bound for Osaka in the afternoon of 4.6, and arrived at Wakōji in the late morning of 4.7. Chishō and her retinue left their lodgings on 4.27, boarded a boat that day, spent that night at Daichōji, a temple just to the north of Osaka Castle, set out the morning of 4.28 at around 10 am, and arrived at Wakōji at around 4 pm that day. In each case, a group from Wakōji joined the group at the boat landing and the whole retinue processed from there to the temple.

Soon after arriving in Osaka, Wakōji and Daihongan’s abbess displayed Wakōji’s treasures. During Chikan and Chishō’s visits, these displays lasted for five weeks.115 They were a chance for the abbesses to meet with the confraternities affiliated with Wakōji, as I discussed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the abbesses’ stay in Osaka allowed them to further connect with Pure Land priests. This included those living at Wakōji and

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115 They initially received permission for a 30-day display, but were given permission for an extension of several days.
their Dharma siblings (hōrui 法類) in nearby Pure Land temples. During Chishō’s stay, for instance, priests from the Pure Land temple Jōkokuji 況谷寺 participated in the procession upon her arrival, and she was greeted by priests from Daihōji 大宝寺, Jōkokuji, Tennenji 天然寺, Anrakuji 安楽寺, and Sōkeiji 宗慶寺 upon arrival. She exchanged gifts with them, further cementing these relationships.116

After the display was finished, the abbesses sent notice of their plans to leave and a request for travel permits to the Osaka City Magistrate. In Chikan’s case, the display ended on 5.14, she sent notice to the Magistrate on 5.16, and they left for Edo on 5.20. Chishō and her retinue spent a week in Osaka: the display ended on 5.8, she saw Nō and Kyōgen theater performances on 5.11, visited famous temples and shrines around the city with her attending nuns on 5.12, drew up the accounts for the display on 5.14, and left Wakōji on 5.15 for Shinano. Because Wakōji had not provided travel assistance to Chishō before her travels, Daihongan received 100 gold ryō of the 450 ryō income from the display; she also borrowed 100 ryō from Wakōji to cover expenses for her return to Shinano.

The abbesses boarded boats heading back up the Yodogawa River from Osaka towards Kyoto. Chikan and her retinue alighted at Fushimi and spent the day visiting temples in Uji, an area famed for its tea and for being the setting for the final chapters of the Tale of Genji. In Chishō’s case, only an administrator, Karasawa Hikodayū left the boats in Kyoto; he visited the Nijō family about the possibility of receiving one of its

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116 The priests from these temples were from the same Dharma lineage as the head of Wakōji, and most of them had the character “e 恵” in their names.
young women to be Chishō’s successor. Both abbesses traveled to Ōtsu by boat; from that point on they traveled east on the Nakasendō highway. Chikan proceeded to Aoyama Zenkōji, taking fifteen days; she was to visit the shogun’s castle a few months later. Chishō turned off the highway and went to Shinano Zenkōji, taking thirteen days.

The abbesses’ travel-related work did not end when they reached their destinations, however. Chikan visited the bakufu elders (rōjū 老中), the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the keepers of Edo Castle (rusuishū 留守居衆), the two administrative sub-temples of Kan’ei-ji, and other domainal lords. Before settling in at Daihongan, Chishō stopped by Zenkōji’s Main Hall and the Tamaya, after which she was visited by various people from within Zenkōji’s temple complex to whom she gave gifts from her travels. Both abbesses sent notices of their travels and thank-you notes to people who had assisted them, such as the domainal lords of Matsumoto and Matsushiro who expedited travel documents or helped with river crossings, to the Matsuki and Asukai households in Kyoto, a number of courtier families with whom they had met, and to the clerics at Wakōji.

d. Were they worth it?

Daihongan secured more than 7000 ryō in loans prior to Chishō’s visit to the palace in 1808, so it is safe to assume that these trips were quite expensive. Given the

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117 These negotiations began in 1808 with Hikodayū’s visit. The convent gave the Nijō family 100 gold ryō as preparatory funds, and gave roughly 30 ryō to the Matsuki household who acted as intermediaries as the negotiations continued into 1809. The young woman who was to be brought into the convent was named Ito 純; she was the daughter of Nijō Harutaka (1754 – 1826) and was adopted by Sanjō Saneoki (1756 – 1823) right before she joined the convent. She left for Edo at the end of 1811, and took the tonsure in 1812, when she was 9 years old (in Japanese reckoning). Her Dharma name was Chihō 智宝. One of her attendants also took the tonsure at the same time. Unfortunately, Chihō became ill and passed away in 1817.6.18. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 241–242.
costs associated with this procedure, it is worth considering whether the benefits they received balanced out those costs.

On the one hand, these abbesses did not have much of a choice. The weight of precedent (re)established by Chikei was heavy. Once they had begun receiving the imperial edict to wear purple robes and use the title of eminent person through successive generations, it would be incredibly difficult for an abbess to break with that tradition without offending someone.

Precedent was not the only reason for continuing the tradition of wearing purple robes and receiving the title of eminent person, however. These robes and titles came with other benefits as well, such as prestige. In some cases this prestige elevated the abbess of Daihongan above the head of Daikanjin, even though the heads of Daikanjin had gathered more authority within Zenkōji’s lands and temple complex. This difference was starkly apparent to the head of Daikanjin who had to wear yellow robes. Given that Daihongan and Daikanjin performed rituals together during displays of Zenkōji’s treasures, and that Daikanjin and Daihongan regularly fought to assert control over the Zenkōji temple complex, it is not at all surprising that Daikanjin’s head attempted to change this. In 1806.8.11, the head of Daikanjin, Ryōkan 亮寛 (abbot from 1806–1814), submitted a request to the administrative sub-temples of Kan’eiji that he wanted to receive the first rank and permission to wear vermillion or purple robes and the ability to use a wickerwork palanquin:

Since the outside protector [of Zenkōji], the Sanada Clan, are warriors, they don’t pay attention to the meaning of ranking within the temple, and instead arrange various things based on one’s clothing. Since [Dai]hongan is in purple robes while Daikanjin is in yellow, when dealing [with us both] naturally [Dai]hongan is treated with more respect. The thoughts of those in the temple complex and the temple’s lands [towards Daikanjin] are not good either. These things are causing
difficulties for the current head of Daikanjin in his position governing the subtemples [of Zenkōji] and its lands, and difficulties for the successive abbots [of Daikanjin]…. I am wholeheartedly requesting that at this time you take special consideration and submit this request to Ryōzan’in [the current administrative sub-temple of Kan’ei ji to enable me to] wear the purple robes. As for the vermilion robes, they are used only for special occasions such as events in Zenkōji’s Main Hall or at displays of Zenkōji’s treasures in other provinces. On all other occasions, when I wear light yellow robes, [I am confused for] the head of Sōkōji who is a Pure Land monk and the administrative monk for [Dai]hongan who wears pale yellow robes; for this reason [although] I could wear many colors besides purple or vermilion, those other colors correspond to [those worn by other people] so it will be greatly regrettable, I think. Because this causes a number of obstacles and difficulties even in governance, the successive generations of abbots and temple administrators have from some time ago lamented [this situation].

In this request Ryōkan lists the difficulties faced by Daikanjin’s abbots because they have had to wear yellow robes, including that they are regularly mistaken for other priests in the temple complex. Furthermore, and perhaps more egregious to Ryōkan, is that he was not being afforded the level of respect he felt he should receive in his position as abbot of Daikanjin and de facto head of the Zenkōji temple complex. Instead, when he was with the abbess of Daihongan, she was treated with more respect because of the color of her robes. Although Ryōkan does not mention it here, surely it was a sore point as well that abbots had to work to earn their robe colors while the abbesses of Daihongan received them from the time they become abbess, whether that was after many years of being a nun or after only a few days. In the end Kan’ei ji refused Ryōkan’s request to wear purple robes, but allowed him to wear vermilion ones during rituals and to use the wicker palanquin. Unfortunately, Kan’ei ji’s administrators do not state why they denied Ryōkan’s request, though I can speculate that there was no precedent for Daikanjin’s

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118 Ibid., 214.
head to wear purple robes, and that acceding to the request would have elevated Daikanjin above other of Kan’eijī’s branches that were of similar stature as Daikanjin.

3. **Distance Travel for Daihongan’s Other Nuns**

Though I have largely focused on the activities of the abbesses during the discussion above, I would like to make a note here about the other nuns who traveled with her. When the abbess traveled to many of these locations, she was accompanied by at least the elder nuns. For longer distance travel, a larger number of nuns traveled with her, usually between five to ten nuns. The elder nuns traveled in the same type of palanquin as the abbess, while the lower ranking nuns traveled in smaller palanquins. From the *Dōchū nikki* it seems that these nuns were also among those who stayed in the best inns and ate the best meals with the abbess. The accompanying nuns also received some preparatory funds (*shitakuki* 支度金) before setting out, and upon arrival the elder nuns, attending nuns, temple samurai and others who accompanied the abbess were given some money (the most given was three *ryō*) in thanks.\(^{119}\) At important venues, such as the imperial palace or the shogun’s castle, unless they acted in the place of the abbess (*dairi* 代理) as the elder nuns occasionally did, these nuns typically waited in a room together for the abbess to return from her meeting with the emperor or the shogun and his family. Beyond this, it is difficult to tell what these nuns participated in during these travels with the materials available to us. For instance, we cannot tell if they helped out with the rituals that the abbess performed at many inns along the road.

\(^{119}\) On money given prior to leaving, see Ibid., 234.; on money offered in thanks after returning from Kansai, see Ibid., 240.
IV. Conclusions

Daihongan’s nuns and other Buddhist nuns in the Tokugawa period as well were neither fully cloistered nor fully itinerant. Instead, they alternated between these two modes when needed. Daihongan’s sixteenth-century abbess, Chikei, took advantage of her travels to make connections with high-ranking warlords and courtiers. Chikei’s work connected Daihongan to the high-ranking warlord families of the Toyotomi and the Tokugawa, and she reestablished the convent’s connections to the court. These became set as precedents for her successors, who in some cases, such as Chizen’s addition of Osaka Wakōji, added new precedents as well. While maintaining these connections through travel was vital, it was expensive for Daihongan’s financially pressed nineteenth-century abbesses, especially Chishō.

In the introduction I mentioned three overall points that this chapter makes. I would like to return to those here. First was that many early modern nuns had lifestyles somewhere between the regularly cloistered and the always itinerant. Although I have focused on travels in this chapter, Daihongan’s nuns fall almost exactly in the middle of this spectrum, as they also had periods without travels. I have highlighted the ways that scholarly predispositions towards examining some nuns’ activities in the convent and other nuns’ activities outside of it have gone into shaping these assumptions, and how these assumptions have led us to a narrow view of nuns’ lives. However, we should not be surprised by the combination of stasis and travels. The Edo period has been discussed as one of motion, of the movement of people, ideas, and goods. Scholars have traced this to a variety of sources, including the safety of travel and improved infrastructure brought about by the pax Tokugawa, the system of alternate attendance which brought the
hinterlands to Edo and Edo to the hinterlands, increased wealth and free time amongst the populace, and the wide availability of maps and travel guides. Given the expansion of travel in the period, we should not be surprised to find nuns traveling as well.

My second point was that travel can often be about strengthening social structures and building relations as much as it is about escaping them. Daihongan’s travels demonstrate both of these tendencies at the same time: for example, on the one hand Chishō could perform rituals for inn proprietors and give toys to their children, thus demonstrating what Victor Turner might call communitas wherein a high-ranking nun could interact with commoners because of the space of the road. On the other hand, however, social divisions within Chishō’s retinue were clearly demarcated. The lowest ranking members stayed in outside inns and were kept to a strict budget while high-ranking members ate and slept in the best inns. The tips that Yajima and Kaneko gave to the various participants also reinforced these divisions between ranks as they gave varying amounts to people based on their ranks.

My final point was that women could travel for work as well as for leisure, although scholarship on women’s travels has largely focused upon the latter. The travels of Daihongan’s abbesses, nuns, and apprentices for the most part were centered on work. Women took to the road for leisure in astounding numbers in the Edo period. Scholarship on this has attempted to point to the fact that women were active outside of the home. However, one could perhaps argue that scholars’ focus on women’s travels for leisure has

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120 For more on travel and associated literature, see Vapori, Tour of Duty; Nenzi, Excursions in Identity Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan; Marcia Yonemoto, Mapping Early Modern Japan: Space, Place, and Culture in the Tokugawa Period, 1603-1868 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Shiba, Literary creations on the road; Shiba Keiko 柿崎, Kinsei onna tabinikki 近世おんな旅日記; Mary Elizabeth Berry, Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).
reinforced the views that a woman’s place is within the home, that these travels were liminal, that they were a break from home life. In other words, by only examining women’s trips outside the home for leisure, we have confined their work lives (or their non-traveling time) to the home. Clearly women were traveling outside of the home for work, whether over short distances such as errands for the family shop within the city or long such as travel from the countryside to the city to seek employment. By shifting our focus away from women’s leisure travels even slightly, we can see that travel was essential for women’s professional lives or their lives as homemakers. They were also an essential aspect of being a nun at Daihongan, and it was one for which these nuns were paid in actual money and in symbolic capital such as prestige. By saying this, however, I do not mean to state that the abbesses and nuns only worked during their travels. Much like contemporary academics mix business and leisure while traveling to far-flung cities for conferences, the people associated with Daihongan mixed work and play in their travels. Chikan and Chishō’s travels to Kansai demonstrate this; Chikan visited temples in Uji, while Chishō took in Nō and Kyōgen performances, visited her natal family, and initiated study with lute masters.

Daihongan’s nuns have traveled to a certain degree since at least the Battles of Kawanakajima in the sixteenth century. The nature and frequency of these travels changed in the Tokugawa period as Chikei and Chizen established precedents connecting the convent to the Imperial Palace, powerful warlords, and merchant confraternities in Osaka. As Japanese social and political structures changed from the Tokugawa period to the Meiji period, and a number of the convent’s connections dissolved or were replaced, their travels changed as well. In the prewar period these connections and travels extended
beyond the boundaries of Japan (the so-called *naichi* 内地) to Japan’s colonies on the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. After the war, Daihongan’s nuns began to take part in contemporary international Buddhist organizations, traveling to India to take part in rituals, to China and Taiwan for conferences, and even hosting international monastics from abroad. This demonstrates that, as discussed in the opening to this chapter, the nuns’ travels have evolved to match changing social and technological changes.
Chapter 5. Unconventional Economics: Daihongan’s Finances in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

I. Introduction
In the summer of 1827 notes began to appear pasted on the walls and gates of Zenkōji town. The authors of these notes threatened to storm the Abbess’s compound at Daihongan, where the people would “do what they will” with the convent’s administrator, Yoshimura Tomiemon, and several managers of a failed financial confraternity run by the convent. These townspeople were angry because they had invested money in the confraternity, but had not received the planned return on their investment because of financial mismanagement. This caused a great deal of hardship for those involved, most of whom placed the blame squarely on the shoulders of Yoshimura and other managers. Luckily for Yoshimura, a settlement was peacefully reached with only threats of violence against his person.

This incident brings to light several important points. First, it reaffirms that Daihongan remained an active institution in Zenkōji town even though the abbess spent most of her time in Edo in the last half of the period. Second, it suggests that a discussion of money brings to light temporary or long-term flows between the convent and various people acting out of religious, economic, or other motivations. Third, it points to the diversity of Daihongan’s financial activities and income, raising questions about the roles of temples and convents as financial centers and why people might have entrusted their
money to a convent. Finally, because the townspeople considered Yoshimura guilty while they thought Abbess Chishō was free from blame, it suggests that an examination of the convent’s finances may provide some answers about not only the day-to-day running of the convent, but its internal structure and division of labor as well.

In Chapter 2 I discussed the convent’s regular financial activities and connections. I also suggested that the irregular expenditures exceeded the convent’s ability to pay using ordinary means. I have already discussed these irregular expenditures in the preceding chapters: they include temple structure building and maintenance, travels, and so on. In this chapter I turn to the extraordinary means that the nuns took to pay them and remain a viable institution. In Section II, I turn to Daihongan’s more complex economic activities: loans, financial confraternities, displays of temple treasures (kaichō 開帳), and lotteries (tomitsuki 富突). Each of these activities sheds light on a different aspect of Daihongan’s use of convent legends, connections with common and elite laypeople, and its administrative structure. By combining the different views of the convent that these activities provide, a single image comes into focus: the diverse nature of Daihongan’s financial activities and the necessity of these activities for the convent to cover irregular expenses. These activities became especially important for the convent in the last half of the Edo period because although temples such as Zenkōji, Daihongan, and a number of other institutions that could demonstrate connections to the shogunate could rely upon the largesse of the bakufu in the first half of the Tokugawa period, by the middle portion of the period, the bakufu shifted responsibility for these repairs onto the temples themselves who then had to raise the funds through bakufu-approved methods such as displays,
lotteries, and other means. In the conclusions I briefly discuss the connections between convent’s early modern financial activities and its networks. I also discuss how these finances help us understand the convent and its place in society, especially in terms of gender.

II. Daihongan’s fundraising plans
A. The Confraternity of Ten Thousand People
In 1717, someone from Aoyama Zenkōji wrote a draft for a promotional leaflet for a Confraternity of Ten-thousand People (manninkō 万人都). This draft stated that the convent finally completed many buildings on its grounds following the move to Aoyama. However, the convent was unable to complete some buildings on its own, so it was reaching out through this campaign to “people of resolve” (kokorozashi no aru hito 志の有る人) who were willing to provide donations to the temple. In exchange for 50 copper mon, or roughly what a female servant earned in two or three days, Aoyama Zenkōji would add the donor’s name (either current name or posthumous Buddhist name) to a memorial tablet for the confraternity (manninkō ihai 萬人都牌). There the donor (or designated recipient) would receive daily memorial services (nippai 日牌) and eternal transferences of merit (eidai ekō 永代回向) by the nuns of the convent. Additionally, donors’ names would be forwarded to Shinano Zenkōji where they would receive further ritual memorialization.

In addition to memorialization, the temple promoted the confraternity by pointing out connections past confraternities had with deities. Near the end of the document, the

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1 This section is largely based on the document Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1148.023. Because of the way it is written, this document appears to be a manuscript for a woodblock.
temple discussed how in other campaigns in China and within Japan, bodhisattvas and deities such as Bishamonten 毘沙門天 (Skt. Vaiśravaṇa) joined as sponsors.

However, the largest selling point was perhaps the temple’s connections with the Buddha Amida and Chūjōhime 中将姫, a legendary woman who supposedly lived in the eighth century. The advertisement began by discussing the boundless compassion of Amida who will come to meet “even those with the worst sins,” if they only have faith and chant his name. “In order to make his compassion known throughout the world,” he made his image appear in various places. One of those was Aoyama Zenkōji’s image, which was supposedly carved by Chūjōhime.

Chūjōhime (“Princess Chūjō”), who is sometimes referred to as Japan’s Cinderella because of the abuses she suffered at the hands of her stepmother, appears in the tale of the creation of the Taima Mandala 當麻曼荼羅. This Mandala is housed in Taima Temple in Nara, and it depicts Amida’s Pure Land as described in the Contemplation Sutra 佛説観無量寿佛経. After being exiled and nearly executed on false charges of adultery leveled at her by her stepmother, Chūjōhime prayed for the salvation of her deceased mother. The princess eventually became a nun at Taima Temple. She wished to see an image of the Pure Land, where her mother was, and one night two mysterious nuns came to her and wove the Taima Mandala using colored strands from lotus stems. Before they left, they explained the Mandala to Chūjōhime and then revealed that they were Amida and the bodhisattva Kannon, appearing as women.

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2 Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1148.023
3 Ibid.
4 There are many versions of this tale, I am recounting the basics that appear in many of them.
because Chūjōhime wished to worship the living Amida. Although initially this tale was about the creation of the Mandala, eventually Chūjōhime became the focus of these stories, and a cult to her developed.\(^5\)

Aoyama Zenkōji’s pamphlet did not need to recount stories of Chūjōhime in detail because audience of the pamphlet would have been familiar with their warp and woof. Instead, by simply stating that its icon had been created by Chūjōhime, Aoyama Zenkōji drew upon this rich tapestry of tales. However, Aoyama Zenkōji’s version of the story added a twist that further tied it to the princess: when Chūjōhime made a vow to worship the living Amida, the Buddha took the form of Shinano Zenkōji’s famous icon.\(^6\) After seeing it, the princess carved the image which was to become Aoyama Zenkōji’s icon, bowing three times after making each cut.

In this way, Aoyama Zenkōji combined the worship of Chūjōhime and her relics with the cult of Shinano Zenkōji’s icon. Both were cults with widespread belief, and both emphasized women’s salvation. Zenkōji’s triad, which was considered to be a living icon, has been worshipped throughout Japan because of its soteriological efficacy, and tales of the image saving women were a central part of its cult from the medieval period onwards.\(^7\) Additionally, although the Chūjōhime cult emphasized that anyone could be

\(^5\) For more on this, see Hank Glassman, “‘Show Me the Place Where My Mother Is!’: Chūjōhime Preaching and Relics in Late Medieval and Early Modern Japan,” in Approaching the Land of Bliss: Religious Praxis in the Cult of Amitābha, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 17 (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2004), 139–68.

\(^6\) It is unclear from the document how this fits in with the Taima Mandala creation story – i.e. whether Amitābha appeared as the Zenkōji icon before, during, after, or instead of appearing as a nun and weaving the Mandala.

\(^7\) See for instance, Ushiyama Yoshiyuki 牛山佳幸, “Zenkōji Shinkō to nyonin kyūsai 善光寺信仰と女人救済,” in Ronshū tōgoku Shinano no kodai chūsei shi 論集東国信濃の古代中世史 (Tokyo: Iwata shoin, 2008).
saved, the Chūjōhime stories are largely about women’s salvation: they describe the salvation of the Contemplation Sutra’s Queen Vaidehī as depicted in the Taima Mandala, Chūjōhime’s mother who is saved through the princess’s efforts, and the princess herself. Aoyama Zenkōji was thus drawing upon two Japan-wide popular religious cults, which would have had the potential to increase visitors to the convent. Furthermore, its icon could be seen as doubly effective in saving women, combining as it did these two cults.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence that the confraternity ever made it past the planning stage. If the fundraising drive had reached completion, it would have meant 500,000 copper mon, or around 125 gold ryō in income for the convent. Even if it never began, however, the confraternity of ten-thousand people demonstrates the convent’s use of convent legends to bring in donors and its ability to supply rites for them for a modest fee.

This type of confraternity, which gathered donations for a temple or shrine, and which required no obligation from its members, other than a single payment, occurred with some degree of regularity in the Edo period. Some of these were managed by the temple itself or run with their approval, as it seems Aoyama Zenkōji’s would have been because it offered memorial services in exchange for donations, something a lay donor would have difficulty arranging on his or her own. On the other hand, there were several that were started and run by individual laypeople: for example, in the 1750s a wealthy boat operator in Osaka started and managed a confraternity of 10,000 people to

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8 Glassman, “‘Show Me the Place Where My Mother Is!’: Chūjōhime Preaching and Relics in Late Medieval and Early Modern Japan,” 144.
commission and offering of a pair of bronze guardian dogs to the Konpira deity.\(^9\)

Although this was not true in Aoyama Zenkōji’s case, the name “10,000-person confraternity” or similar variations was also used to indicate lottery drawings, especially ones not sanctioned by the bakufu.\(^10\)

**B. Lotteries**

1. **Style of Lotteries**

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries lotteries or drawings of various kinds spread throughout Japan. These had a number of names; the most common were *tomitsuki* 富突, *tsukitomi* 突富, *sennin’e* 千人会, *manninkō* 万人講, *tomi* 富, *Daikoku tsuki* 大黒突, (name of a local product)-*irifuda* ○△□入札, or if it was officially sanctioned by the bakufu, *gomen tomi* 御免富. “Tomi” means luck or fortune while “tsuki” is from the verb “tsuku,” which means “to spear, skewer, or pierce.” These names are descriptive of how the lotteries were carried out. Participants would buy paper slips with a number or other signifier on them and wooden boards (*fuda* 札) with corresponding numbers would be placed in a box with a hole in the top. When it came time for the drawing, a lottery official would poke a sharpened implement into the box and pull out the wooden board that he had speared (*tsuku*).

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\(^10\) For example, one of the first places we find the term lottery (*tomitsuki*) mentioned is in a 1692.5 law that says “These days we have heard that in the *chō* neighborhoods large amounts of people are gathering to gamble in meetings called *tomitsuki* confraternities or hundred-person confraternities. From now on this is to cease.” *Kojiruien Database* 古事類苑データベース, n.d., 76, http://base1.nijl.ac.jp/~kojiruien/ hōritsu bu 3.
The size of these lotteries varied considerably, of course, but participants would pay from one to six silver _monme_ for a chance to play and the top prizes for larger drawings could be as much as a few hundred gold _ryō_ to a thousand _ryō_.\(^{11}\) Most winners did not keep the full amount of their earnings, however. Organizers usually claimed ten to thirty percent of the amount of a prize over a certain amount (such as 1 gold _ryō_ and above) for service fees, using such names as “donations (hōnōkin 奉納金),” “service fees for the _fuda_ drawers (fuda tori tesūryō 札取手数料),” or for buying a chance at the next drawing.\(^{12}\)

2. **History of Lotteries in Japan**

Aoki Shigeru states that the first record of the word _tomitsuki_ is from a 1692 regulation banning it.\(^{13}\) Takiguchi Masaya places the first record of a lottery being held, in this case called a Daikoku meeting, to another regulation in 1686.\(^{14}\) Both Aoki and Takiguchi are in agreement that gambling-style lotteries began some years before these regulations, placing their origins and spread in the last half of the seventeenth century.

_Tomi_ did not just appear fully formed, however. The earliest predecessors of financial lotteries had roots in temple and shrine events, in particular, the _fukutomi_ 福富

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\(^{12}\) Ibid., 33–34. The law reads “Memorandum. Item: We have recently heard that in neighborhoods large groups of people are gathering to take part in gambling-like activities called ‘tomitsukikō’ or ‘hyakuninkō.’ This is deplorable. From now on, all such activities are to cease. If there are any who disobey and participate in gambling-like activities, of course the person involved will be punished, but so will the householder as well as the neighborhood head.” “tomitsuki kakushitomi 富突隠富” *Kojiruien Database* 古事類苑データベース, 76 法律部第 3 巻.

\(^{13}\) Aoki Shigeru 青木茂, *Kinsei Nihon ni okeru tomikuji no shakai keizai shiteki kenkyū* 近世日本における富籤の社会経済史的研究, 3–4.

and omikuji 御神籤 fortune drawings held at temples and shrines on special events even today. A New Years’ event at Ryūanji 瀧安寺 in Minoo, to the northwest of Osaka, is regularly cited as an example of a primordial lottery. According to temple documents, in the beginning, they would hand out amulets to petitioners at the end of the Shushō-e 修正会 rite for peace and prosperity of the land. By the 1650s, the demand for amulets grew to be too much so the temple had petitioners write their names on wooden placards, which were placed in a box and skewered out during a drawing on the last evening of the event. Winners received amulets from the rite.\textsuperscript{15} This drawing has almost all of the elements of later temple lotteries, down to the wooden placards, boxes, and skewers. It is not difficult to see how these drawings could eventually come to include prizes or money in the place of amulets or fortunes.\textsuperscript{16} Though offering cash prizes, lotteries in the early eighteenth century retained some religious elements, at least in the form of their names or decorations at the drawings: lotteries at or held by Hōsenji 宝泉寺, Kannōji 感応寺, Ninnaji, Karamadera, and Kōfukuji were held as Bishamonten (Skt. Vaiśravaṇa) Lotteries, Maruyama An’yōji and others as Benzaiten (Skt. Saraswati) Lotteries, and still others as Daikokuten (Skt. Mahākāla, which is the Buddhist name for Shiva) Lotteries.\textsuperscript{17} These deities are members of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune (Shichifukujin 七福神) thought to bring good fortune and wealth to people.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 33–38; the document is quoted in full on 33–34.
\textsuperscript{16} Aoki Shigeru 青木茂, Kinsei Nihon ni okeru omikuji no shakai keizai shiteki kenkyū 近世日本における富籤の社会経済史的研究, 41–43.
\textsuperscript{17} Takiguchi Masaya 滝口正哉, Edo no shakai to gomentomi, 28–32, 47.
Tomi can be broadly divided into two types: privately run tomi (min’ei tomi 民営富) and bakufu-sanctioned gomen tomi. Private lotteries could take place anywhere, and though they technically needed the bakufu’s approval, they were usually held with or without it. Some of these were simply held by individuals for fundraising or entertainment purposes, however, in quite a few cases the nearby domainal lords held control over the lotteries indirectly by placing merchants or farmers who were closely connected to the domain in charge of the lottery. In these cases the funds garnered by the lottery would accrue directly to the domain. This often was a way to shore up domain finances with money from outside the domain while potentially encouraging trade in the domain. Other illicit drawings, called kagetomi 影富, or “shadow lotteries,” would be held in the shadow of a sanctioned drawing, with people placing bets on which numbers were drawn.

On the other hand, gomen tomi required bakufu approval, and could only be held on temple and shrine lands in the three bakufu-controlled cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo. Gomen tomi were one way that the bakufu shifted financial responsibilities for repairs to temple buildings back to the temples themselves. Though initially the bakufu had provided funds to many temples for these repairs, eventually its coffers began to deplete, so they began allowing/encouraging these temples to raise funds on their own through displays, lotteries, and so on. By providing approval to fundraise, the bakufu could still play the role of benevolent sponsor of temples without having to give its own money to the temples. Additionally, lotteries were a means of bringing in a large flow of
currency into the city, both directly involved in the lottery and indirectly through people spending on their ways to or in the vicinity of the lottery.

Bakufu policy towards these lotteries varied throughout the period. Takiguchi has identified seven phases of these policies. During the first phase, the bakufu banned lotteries as a form of gambling that was bad for public morals, this first occurred 1686 and 1692. Throughout most of the period, however, Hōsenji 宝泉寺 and Kannōji 感応寺, both in Edo, were exempt from bans on lotteries because they were considered to have held them from the past.\textsuperscript{18} The second phase began in the 1720s and 1730s when the bakufu began allowing certain temples and shrines to hold lotteries. These were institutions with a history of receiving funds from the bakufu and that needed funds again for repairs, mainly imperial temples such as Ninnaji and Kōfukuji, which received approval in 1730 and 1732 respectively. Though the bakufu’s regulations regarding lotteries varied throughout the period, they always showed preference to institutions with imperial connections. Phase three lasted from the Genbun to the Hōreki eras, or the late 1730s to the early 1760s. In this phase the bakufu cut back on permission for lotteries to only Kannōji and Hōsenji because of poor turnout to lotteries held by the imperial temples. Phase four was from the mid-1760s to the late 1780s, when various lotteries grew spurred on by the spread of a cash economy. Furthermore, the shogunate began widely approving lotteries (gomen tomi) as a means to fill in the gaps in their support for temple/shrine maintenance. During this period the bakufu’s policy was to give permission

\textsuperscript{18} Hōsenji is a Tendai temple in the Waseda area of Tokyo. Kannōji, which is located in Yanaka, changed its name to Tennōji in 1833. Kannōji had been a Fujufuse Nichiren temple until 1698. Takiguchi says that Kannōji probably began holding lotteries from the time it changed to Tendai.
for six lotteries: Hōsenji and Kannōji, one temple/shrine from Edo, one from other
provinces, and two imperial institutions. These were given fixed three-, five-, or ten-year
terms, with drawings permitted a few times a year or monthly. The Kansei-era reforms
brought about a change in the bakufu lottery policy that ushered in phase 5: the bakufu
did not issue new lottery permits, and those that had permits could continue to hold
drawings until the end of their term, but had to reduce their drawings to three times a
year. Only Kannōji was allowed to continue its lotteries unabated. Near the end of this
phase, however, Kan’ei ji and Rinnōji (both headed by the same imperial abbot), were
allowed to begin holding drawings. From the 1820s until the early 1840s (Phase six) the
bakufu loosened its restrictions on approved lotteries. This resulted a large number of
temples/shrines holding drawings, which flooded the market and reduced the
effectiveness of lotteries as a form of assistance to the temples. During this phase, there
was a restriction on the amount various institutions could offer as their grand prizes: large
institutions and imperial temples could offer 100 ryō, shrines of the Ichinomiya rank in
the various provinces and temples/shrines with a long history could offer 50 ryō, and
temples/shrines with a short history could offer 30.19 Phase Seven was the complete ban
on lotteries from 1842 as a part of the Tempō-era reforms.20

3. Views of Lotteries
Given that the shogunate changed tacks so drastically in its approach to lotteries it
is clear that they could be quite polarizing. Temples holding lotteries and the bakufu (at
least at certain times) saw the benefit of lotteries as a means of fundraising. Some

19 Takiguchi Masaya 滝口正哉, Edo no shakai to gomentomi, 39–40.
20 Ibid., sec. 2.
members of the public at large perhaps saw these as a form of entertainment or the potential to gain some money quickly with a little outlay of their own funds. Others, of course, saw the practice as deleterious to social mores. Aside from some bakufu policy makers, eminent thinkers of various stripes critiqued these lotteries. I have already mentioned Buyō Inshi’s thoughts on lotteries in the introduction. Asami Keisai 浅見綱斎 (1652–1711), an influential scholar of Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism and student of Itō Jinsai, wrote in his 1706 Kōshū yoroku (Miscellaneous thoughts from lectures) that “more so than with gambling, more so than with robbery, [people lose their money] by their shortsighted thinking; they don’t reflect on the consequences and just bring their money [to the lotteries].”21 Because they are blinded by hopes of winning a large prize, people bring their money to a lottery, but “if six thousand people buy tickets…. and there are seventy winners drawn, then it only benefits those seventy people. The remaining 5930 have lost five monme each in the cost of the ticket; they have thrown it away” to the winners and the lottery organizers.22 Jinsai-ō 塵哉翁, pseudonymous author of the Kōgai zeisetsu 巷街贅説, who flourished in the beginning of the nineteenth century says that “there were dozens of lotteries in Edo and Osaka during the Bunsei era (1818–1831). For the winner, they are called ‘fortunate events (tomi 富).’ However, for the unlucky tens of thousands, they should be called ‘poverty meetings (binbōkō 貧乏講).’ The impoverished waste their assets on them, and many abscond. It is deplorable.”23

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21 Kojiruien Database 古事類苑データベース, Hōritsu bu 2, p. 75.
22 Ibid.
23 Aoki states that this is from Kagetomi to iu koto ryūkō seshi koro 影富という事流行せし頃 Kokusho kankōkaiban “Kinsei Fuzoku kenbunshū” 4, 32, however, it is not there, nor have I been able to
While it is difficult to trace the impact of these statements, the direct influence of the statements by Nakai Chikuzan 中井竹山 (1730–1804), the head of the Kaitokudō merchants’ academy in Osaka, are easier to trace. In 1788, Matsudaira Sadanobu (1759–1829), who was soon to be the chief councilor of the bakufu, paid a visit to the Kaitokudō. There he listened to Nakai talk on a variety of topics, which he urged Nakai to record in a book. Nakai followed that advice, writing *Frank words of grasses and reeds* (Sōbō kigen 草茅危言),24 over the next few years. In Nakai’s five-volume work he outlines his solutions to a wide range of social, political, and economic issues of the day, from the system of alternate attendance to education reform. The Sōbō became one of the most widely consulted works political economy in the last half of the Tokugawa period.25

Like others in the Kaitokudō, Nakai felt that economic concerns were tied up with moral ones. In his opinion, lotteries tempted the weak of heart to squander their livelihoods and lose their sense of morals. He addressed temple lotteries specifically in the Sōbō kigen:

> Concerning lotteries. In other provinces I regularly hear of lotteries being held, but in Kyoto and Osaka they have been strictly outlawed from before. However, for some reason, in the past ten years or so one often sees [those who] have received official permission, operate in the name of a temple or shrine, publically open a location, and sell lottery tickets in the streets. Indeed, this is horrible. There are a great number of misguided people with empty hands who have gotten caught up in [lotteries] until now. Lotteries rile up and confuse the low-status poor with [promises of] great profit from luck. [They are the root of] a great deal of

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harm [including causing people] to lose their means of earning a living, young and old women to squander their meager savings, people’s hearts/minds to easily become rash and chaotic, [and other things.] all of which I cannot expound upon [here]. Furthermore, there are things like illicit lotteries (*daiichi kentoku* 第一謙徳), which make their rounds here and there in the provinces. These are spreading widely in the four directions; they become people’s means of making a living and are the downfall of the poor. It is my desire that these activities be strictly forbidden, and that they cease throughout the realm. Furthermore, I desire that these be banned for all time, to never again occur in a later age.\(^26\)

Nakai’s suggestions are said to have directly influenced Sadanobu as he formulated the social, political, and economic reforms known as the Kansei reforms. As I mentioned above, lotteries were banned as a part of these reforms.

**4. Daihongan and Lotteries**

Daihongan became involved in lotteries during the late eighteenth century. In 1780.7.9 the convent sent requests for permission hold a lottery; these went to Kan’eiiji for approval, and the request and Kan’eiiji’s accompanying letter were forwarded to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines several days later.\(^27\) The request lists the support Daihongan’s nuns have received from the Tokugawa family, the services they have provided in return, and that the convent could not handle the current state of disrepair on its own:

> In 1703 our convent in Yanaka burnt to the ground so in 1705 Shogun Tsunayoshi granted us permission to build on our current location in Aoyama. We built our main hall then. In the Kyōhō era (1716–1735) Ten’ei-in [Shogun Ienobu’s wife] gave us an image of Kannon, and so we could perform rites for the peace of the country we built a hall to enshrine that image. We have received memorial

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\(^27\) The convent had to submit paperwork twice because the official in charge of lotteries had changed in 1781 to Toda Tadatao 戸田忠寛 (1739–1801), head of the Utsunomiya domain.

For more on Daihongan’s process of receiving approval from contemporaneous sources, see the *Jimu kōyōki ge* section 9 in Takatsukasa Seigyou 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 309–312.
placards (sonpai 尊牌) of each generation of the Tokugawa house, and we have performed rites (kuyō 供養) for them in front of the image [of Zenkōji’s Amida in our temple]. However, our main hall and other halls have become damaged recently, and though we did minor repairs [on our own], this time the damages have become great. For this reason, we would like to request permission to hold lottery drawings over a period of ten years.28

When the convent had not heard back after almost a year of waiting, Abbess Chikan sent a letter of inquiry to the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle. In her inquiry, she largely follows the above list of reasons for wanting to hold the lottery. Though the reply from the Inner Quarters is not extant, it is apparent that the women of the Inner Quarters told Daihongan’s nuns to resubmit the paperwork because there had been a change in personnel at the Magistrate. In 1781.7.24, an administrator took the convent’s request and accompanying documentation from Kan’ei ji to the new Magistrate official in charge of lotteries, Toda Tadatao. Toda followed up by requesting more information; in 1781.11.7 the convent sent him a list of gifts they had received from the Tokugawa, information about their yearly trips to the shogun’s castle and their exchange of gifts with the shogun, information about the size and disrepair to their halls, and a further request to be allowed to hold a lottery. Chikan also sent copies of these documents to the Inner Quarters.29 Four months later (1782.3.18) Daihongan was given permission to hold a lottery with a five-year term once Myōhōin, an imperial monastery, finished its lottery term in 1788.4.29.30 That the convent had to wait six years after receiving approval before they could hold a

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29 Copies of the documents sent to the Inner Quarters are in Daihongan Fuku 2 70.152.
lottery suggests the popularity of lotteries as a means of fundraising and the limitations
the bakufu placed on them at this time.

Now that it had approval, the convent was unsure of how to hold a lottery, so they
contracted it out to professional lottery organizers (tomishi 富師) named Okui Sanroku
奧井三六 and Okui Rihei 奥井利兵衛. The contract is dated to 1784.3.23, signed by
Sanroku and two witnesses, and sent to three administrators at Aoyama Zenkōji.

We[,] the Okuis[,] have agreed to handle [the lottery] for you[,] Aoyama Zenkōji. Because of this[,] [all parties involved] have decided upon 275 gold ryō as proof
(meisekikin 明跡金) of this. Of that, we certify that we have given you 175 ryō
now. The remaining 100 ryō will be given once we begin making tickets. However, from the first drawing we will, without any omission, give you 27.5
gold ryō each month on the day before the drawing. If we do not sell all the
tickets and it is difficult to pull together that money, we will not make any
requests [for leniency] to you. If there is any delay in these payments, in prizes, or
anything else, you can take back control over the lottery and we cannot say
otherwise. In addition to leaving everything related to the lottery to us, we will
also handle other related expenses, no matter what they are. Regarding the
location [of the drawings], we will discuss it amongst ourselves and let you know.
We will handle everything in the lottery as you order, without fail.

The contract ends with a statement that the Okuis will follow the laws of the public
authorities, will work to ensure that there are no fights or arguments during their lotteries,
and that they will handle any difficulties without causing trouble for Aoyama Zenkōji.

Four years later the Okuis sent a letter to Aoyama Zenkōji regarding the location
of the lottery. Although Myōhōin’s lottery term would end in 1788.4.29 and the convent

31 Scholars only know of lottery organizers like the Okuis from Aoyama Zenkōji’s case, though there are certainly other examples from other temples’ lotteries that have yet to be examined.

Andō Yūichirō also discusses Okui Sanroku and Rihei, but he draws from Takatsukasa’s work. Andō Yūichirō 安藤優一郎, *Goraku toshi Edo no yūwaku 娨楽都市・江戸の誘惑* (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūjo, 2009), 118–121.

could begin selling tickets as early as 1788.5, Sanroku suggests that they wait because there is no good location available then. If they waited three months, however, Takada Mizuinari shrine’s lottery would be over and the convent could rent the land the shrine had been using. This would place Aoyama Zenkōji’s lottery in a prime location near Asakusa Sensōji, on land owned by Dairokuten Shrine 第六天神社. Administrators at the convent agreed, and sent requests to Kan’ei-ji and the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines for permission begin the convent’s lottery in 1788.8.26 and keep the five-year term. In this request, they stated that they had discussed the matter with Dairokuten’s shrine priest, and that they would not build new structures on the land. They also made several other requests to the Magistrate. They asked that the magistrate make announcements (ofure 御触) about the lottery in the chō neighborhoods throughout the city and to post signs advertising it. They requested the presence of Magistrate observers (okenshi 御検使) at each month’s lottery. The Magistrate approved the location and new start and end dates for the convent’s lottery in 1788.7.7.

The Okuis began selling tickets on 1788.5 for 3.75 silver monme each (or in gold, roughly 0.0625 gold ryō). They printed six thousand for each drawing, but realized that sales were not going so well. They sent a request to Aoyama Zenkōji in 1788.8.9 to

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33 This is most likely what is now known as Sakaki Shrine in Taitō-ku. Popular areas for lotteries included Yanaka (Kannōji), Meguro (Hōsenji), Yushima (Tenjin shrine); these were known as the three great lotteries. Additionally, areas around the Sumida River were popular: the various shrines and temples around Asakusa Sensōji, Ekōin, Fukakawa’s Reiganji, and so on. See the Kanten kenbunki 寛天見聞記 cited in “Tomitsuki kakushtomi” Kojiruien Database 古事類苑データベース, 83 法律部第三巻.

34 Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Kinsei Aoyama Zenkōji ni okeru tomitsuki kōgyō 近世青山善光寺における富突興行,” 29–30. The Okuis’ letter to the administrators is Daihongan fuku 2 64.059.

35 Takatsukasa says that it was approved in 1877.7.6, but the letter in the archives is dated to 7.7. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Kinsei Aoyama Zenkōji ni okeru tomitsuki kōgyō 近世青山善光寺における富突興行,” 32; Daihongan 1 fuku 2 1150.041.
reduce the amount they would pay the convent each month from 27.5 ryō to 25 ryō.\textsuperscript{36}

Though they had initially signed a contract stating this amount would not decrease, the convent’s administrators agreed to this, perhaps because they did not want to take over the lottery before the first drawing had even taken place.

On 1788.8.26 the convent’s first drawing took place. Prior to the drawing the convent offered 100 gold hiki (0.25 gold ryō) at the Dairokuten Shrine. They used special lottery tools borrowed from Hōzenji to draw the winning wooden placards out of their boxes. The proceedings were watched over by two inspectors from the Magistrate.

\textbf{Table 5-1: Prizes awarded at Aoyama Zenkōji’s Lotteries}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When Drawn</th>
<th>Main Prizes</th>
<th>Ryōsode Prizes</th>
<th>Magosode Prizes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th}, 5\textsuperscript{th}, 100\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10\textsuperscript{th}, 20\textsuperscript{th}, 30\textsuperscript{th}, 40\textsuperscript{th}, 50\textsuperscript{th}, 60\textsuperscript{th}, 70\textsuperscript{th}, 80\textsuperscript{th}, 90\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 “Common” placards (those not listed above)\textsuperscript{37}</td>
<td>0.25\textsuperscript{38}</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.0625\textsuperscript{39}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At this and each subsequent drawing, the lottery employees speared one hundred placards out of the boxes, calling out the number on the placard after each one was drawn. As at other lotteries, the prize varied depending upon when in the process a number was drawn (Table 5-1). Consolation prizes were also given to people whose numbers were directly adjacent to (ryōsode 両袖) or two away from (magosode 孫袖) the

\textsuperscript{36} Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Kinsei Aoyama Zenkōji ni okeru tomitsuki kōgyō 近世青山善光寺における富突興行,” 32.

\textsuperscript{37} I.e. 6\textsuperscript{th}, 7\textsuperscript{th}, 8\textsuperscript{th}, 9\textsuperscript{th}, 11\textsuperscript{th}, 12\textsuperscript{th}, 13\textsuperscript{th}, ….

\textsuperscript{38} Given as 100 gold hiki.

\textsuperscript{39} Given as 3 silver monme 7 bu 5 rin.
number drawn. So, say, for instance, that the first placard drawn has the number 27 on it. The holder of the ticket with that number would win one hundred ryō (minus various fees, probably). The holders of tickets with 26 and 28 would win 1 ryō each, while those with tickets 25 and 29 would win half a ryō each. At each of Aoyama Zenkōji’s lotteries there were a total of five hundred prizes given away: one hundred main prizes, two hundred ryōsode prizes, and two hundred magosode prizes. These varied from 100 ryō for the main prize of the first placard drawn to 0.0625 ryō, or the cost of a ticket, for a magosode number drawn during “common” (hira) drawings. Because of this, Aoyama Zenkōji’s lottery gave away 280.75 ryō in total prizes (231.25 for main prizes, 32.75 for ryōsode prizes, and 16.375 for magosode prizes) each time it was held. I have not been able to determine whether winners lost a percentage of their prizes to the various fees like they did at other drawings.

The convent held thirty-four drawings throughout the course of the convent’s approved lottery term. If the initial terms of the permit had been followed, Aoyama could have held drawings around sixty times, on the 26th of each month. However, there were two events that restricted the convent’s ability to hold drawings.

The first came in 1790 and 1791: following the death of Abbess Chikan the convent asked the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines if it would be allowed to continue holding drawings every month as they had been, even though the abbess had passed away and the convent was in mourning. In its reply, the Magistrate stated that there were already too many lotteries taking place, and that the bakufu’s new stance (as a part of what would be known as the Kansei reforms) was to not approve new lotteries.
Therefore, it would not allow Daihongan to continue its lottery. After some negotiations, the Magistrate relented. It initially allowed the convent to finish out that year, holding only drawings in the eleventh and twelfth months of 1790. However, in 1790.12.27, it stated that the convent could finish its initially approved term of five years, but that it would only be allowed to hold three drawings a year in the first, fifth, and ninth months. This reduction was applied to a number of other temples holding lotteries, and was a part of the Kansei reforms that reduced and eventually stopped official lotteries as we saw above.

A potentially more damaging setback came in 1792, however. In the fourth month of that year, it was discovered that someone had attempted to rig the upcoming drawing (1792.5), creating extras of certain numbers (jūsatsu 重札). Itakura Katsumasa 板倉勝正 (1759–1821), the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines on duty then, began to investigate. The convent’s lotteries were stopped during the investigation, and Itakura confiscated all the goods and ledgers used in the drawings. In 1792.9 he called in both the man in charge of that drawing, Okui Rihei, and the administrator in charge of the lottery from Aoyama Zenkōji’s side of things, Kurata Saburōemon. Rihei absconded before he could be questioned. During the course of Kurata’s questioning, it became clear that the convent temporarily took over control over the lottery from the Okuis following the

41 This cut in drawings from monthly to 3 times a year affected all temples/shrines holding lotteries at that time. Takiguchi Masaya 滝口正哉, Edo no shakai to gomento, 49.
42 They use the word fuda, which could have been either the tickets or placards. Additionally, it is unclear exactly what jūsatsu meant — it could either mean “overlapping tickets/placards” (i.e. extras of certain numbers) or “heavy tickets/placards.”
incident. Itakura asked Kurata if this was because he and Rihei were colluding in rigging the drawings. Kurata said that no, that was not the case, but rather that the convent thought it had more to gain financially if it directly controlled the lottery than if it commissioned a lottery organizer. Itakura seems to have believed that Kurata was not involved in fixing the drawings, but he said that this incident had occurred because “he had hired such a crook (furachi no mono 不埒之者),” and furthermore, “that Zenkōji’s name is not one that should be associated with such an ordeal as this.”

Kurata turned down further requests for questioning, claiming illness. However, it seems that he either chose to or was ordered to refrain from leaving his house (hissoku kinshin 逼塞謹慎), though at this point if he was ordered to do so, it was not from the public authorities, but from the convent itself. In 1792.12, Itakura found Rihei guilty and fined him five thousand copper mon (around 1.25 ryō), however, since he could not be found, the Magistrate made five others involved in the incident pay a fine of three thousand copper mon. Itakura ordered that Kurata be placed under house arrest (oshikome 押込), and the convent placed him on permanent leave. Kurata was pardoned a few months later (1793.2.16), but his duties at Aoyama Zenkōji were taken over by Takano Heizaemon.44

In 1793.2.25 the Magistrate returned items used in the drawings to the convent. This, along with the pardoning of Kurata, signaled to Aoyama Zenkōji that the investigation had come to an end. In 1793.3.9, Takano unofficially asked one of Itakura’s

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43 Quoted in Takatsukasa Seiyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Kinsei Aoyama Zenkōji ni okeru tomitsuki kōgyō 近世青山善光寺における富突興行,” 33.
44 Ibid., 33–34.
subordinates whether the Magistrate would be willing to allow the lottery to start up again. He must have received a favorable reply because few days later he asked the Magistrate on duty, Matsudaira Terayasu 松平輝和 (1750–1800), if they could restart the lottery since “there had been an investigation, and the temple administrator who had been placed under house arrest has been pardoned. Furthermore, we are having difficulties since we cannot proceed with repairs to our temple buildings.”45 Takano requested that the convent be allowed to hold the three remaining drawings it was supposed to hold prior to the incident, one each in 1793.5, 1793.9, and 1794.1. In 1793.3.21 Matsudaira responded: the convent could restart the lottery, but it could only hold one more drawing, on 1793.5. This final drawing was held in 5.26 without any troubles; Matsudaira attended the drawing as the official Magistrate observer rather than send a subordinate. Takano sent letters about the completion of the lottery’s term to the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the administrative sub-temples at Kan’ei-ji, and so on. Abbess Chishō sent similar letters to the members of the omote tsukai of Edo Castle’s inner quarters.46

5. Income from Lottery

So, how profitable were these lotteries for Aoyama Zenkō-ji? Assuming that the Okuis sold all six thousand tickets each time (even though we know that they did not in the beginning), they would bring in 375 ryō at each drawing. After giving out 280.75 ryō in prizes, they would have 94.25 ryō remaining, or 3204.5 ryō total for all thirty-four drawings, assuming that they collected no fees from the winners. Since tickets were sold

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45 Cited in Ibid., 34.
46 Ibid., 35.
in silver, they would have lost some money converting that to gold, which was what most of the prizes were. They also had miscellaneous fees for printing tickets, rent on the land at Dairokuten Shrine, and so on. Additionally, the Okuis paid Aoyama Zenkōji, as the holder of the lottery permit, more than a third of their income as well. After removing the money sent to Aoyama Zenkōji, which is the only expenditure we can know for certain, the Okuis may have come away with at most 2029.5 ryō for managing Aoyama Zenkōji’s lottery.

For Aoyama Zenkōji, the lottery would have been profitable as well. As I mentioned above, they received 275 ryō from the Okuis prior to the start of the lottery. Furthermore, the convent received 25 ryō each month for the first fourteen times the lottery was held, and the initially agreed upon 27.5 ryō after ticket sales took off. They held the lottery thirty-four times, so the convent would have received 900 ryō total in regular payments. This meant that over the course of the lottery, from the first contract with the Okuis in 1784 until the lottery ended in 1793, Aoyama Zenkōji would have received 1175 ryō. Though the convent also had miscellaneous expenses associated with the lottery, it seems to have been a success in that they were able to repair the main hall in 1792 and completely rebuild their aging hall to Kannon in 1796. Of course, the question remains of why the convent would have contracted its lotteries out to people like the Okuis and thus lost over 2000 ryō in potential income. They provide one potential answer in the contract with the Okuis, namely that there were so many things that they were unsure of when setting up and running a lottery. Rather than attempt to hold a lottery and potentially fail, the convent decided to contract out the lottery to people who
knew what they were doing, even if it meant giving up a portion of their income. In conjunction with this, the convent probably did not have the personnel to handle the lottery on its own. This would be similar to the *kanjin* campaigns of the Heian and Kamakura periods where temples contracted out fundraising to unaffiliated priests rather than expend their own personnel.

An examination of lotteries in the early modern period provides nuance to the bakufu’s policies towards prayer and play. Though Nam-lin Hur stated that the bakufu was continually attempting to restrict popular practices, entertainment, and business ventures on or near temple grounds, this discussion of lotteries demonstrates that the bakufu did not take a single stance when dealing with them. Rather, it enacted a variety of policies throughout the period based on a number of factors. The opinions of influential economic moralists such as Nakai Chikuzan, could sway bakufu policy makers to ban the practices. Conversely, the bakufu’s own need to limit its fiscal obligation to temples or shrines could cause it to reconsider previous policies, despite what moralists may have said. And, as with many things in the period, precedence trumped all: if a temple or shrine could demonstrate that it had a long history of performing lotteries, such as Hōsenji or Kannōji, it might be allowed to continue despite the current laws.

C. Displays

Many previous scholars have discussed Zenkōji’s early modern displays of temple treasures. I will briefly provide some background to these displays, but rather than

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simply recreate their work here, I will discuss how Daihongan was involved in Zenkōji’s displays.

Of course, as I mentioned in Chapter 3, Daihongan held several displays of its own or other temples’ treasures at Aoyama Zenkōji, and it was involved in a traveling display of its icon and displays of treasures at Wakōji in Osaka and Jūnenji in Echigo. These often proved to be boons for the convent as it could reap a large portion of the funds directly (Table 5-2).\textsuperscript{49}

**Table 5-2: Displays involving Aoyama Zenkōji**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates (Location if not Aoyama)</th>
<th>About (Aoyama Zenkōji display at Aoyama if blank)</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Net Income</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1724 (kaichō)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1755.4.1–6.1 (kaichō)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>530 ryō</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Main hall repairs, rebuilding of front gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761.4.15–5.15 (kaihi)</td>
<td>415 ryō</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767.4.1–5.21 (kaihi)</td>
<td>231 ryō</td>
<td>13.25 ryō</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Completion of Niōmon Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777.4.1–5.20 (kaihi)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Instillation of images in the Niōmon gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780.3.15–6.6</td>
<td>Wakōji display at Aoyama Zenkōji</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{49} Information for this table comes from Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, "Zenkōji No Kaikoku Kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” Bukkyō Daigaku kenkyū kiyō 佛教大學研究紀要 52 (March 1968): 171–239.


304
1. Displays at Zenkōji

Zenkōji was one of the most famous temples in early modern Japan for holding displays of its treasures. In fact, all of the large buildings on the temple complex—the main hall, mountain gate, sutra repository, and so on—were built with funds gathered from displays.\(^{51}\) The temple held displays at Zenkōji itself (igaichō 居開帳) on a number of occasions such as on the completion of a traveling display, the completion of repairs or construction to the temple buildings, or to celebrate the passage of 20000 days, 25000

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\(^{50}\) Paused because of the death of the shogun’s wife’s advisor, the Gonaishō. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 244–245.

\(^{51}\) Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考—近世善光寺町の研究, 575.
days, 30000 days, 35000 days and so on of continuous chanting of the name of Amida at the temple. On average these displays occurred every eight years. Though removed from large population centers, the temple could count on generous income from displays held in its main hall. Table 5-3 lists the income and expenditures from the displays held at Zenkōji’s main hall in the last half of the Edo period. A large portion of this income came from sales of votive items such as pictures of the temple’s Amida triad, amulets, and copies of the temple’s seal. Other income came from the offering boxes in the hall, entry fees, and so on. Daikanjin would receive half of the income from these displays because they organized the display and were responsible for maintaining a large number of buildings on the temple grounds; the remaining half would be split amongst the Nakashū, Tsumado, and Shūto temples that assisted with the display. Kobayashi states that in extant financial records for Zenkōji’s displays—that is, those for years 1772, 1799, 1811, 1821, 1832, and 1865—Daihongan did not directly receive any of the funds gathered during the displays. There is some evidence that this was not always the case—there is some mention in a document from the 1780s that Abbess Seikō received a portion of the funds from the 1742 display for Daihongan; however, it is unclear how much she received, and it is difficult to speculate why subsequent abbesses did not receive a portion of the proceeds from displays, especially when they were involved. Although Abbesses

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52 Displays were held at Zenkōji in 1730, 1742, 1745, 1759, 1762, 1773, 1785, 1791, 1799, 1804, 1811, 1821, 1832, 1840, 1847, and 1865.

53 The table is from Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoishi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究, 579, table 3.

54 For more detail, see Ibid., 579–581.
### Table 5-3: Displays Held at Zenkōji’s Main Hall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Income (in copper mon)</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>Gross Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>20,000 days chanting Amida’s name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1742</td>
<td>End of 3 cities display</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1745</td>
<td>Repairs to main hall completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>Sutra repository completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>30,000 days chanting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>35,000 days chanting</td>
<td>4,027,000</td>
<td>520,000</td>
<td>3,507,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>40,000 days chanting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Repairs to main hall, Sanmon gate, sutra repository, Niōmon gate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>45,000 days chanting, end of multi-province display</td>
<td>6,290,000</td>
<td>1,061,000</td>
<td>5,229,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>End of traveling display</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>50,000 days chanting, end of traveling display</td>
<td>4,513,000</td>
<td>681,000</td>
<td>3,832,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>55,000 days chanting, traveling display completed previous year</td>
<td>6,300,000?</td>
<td>1,100,000?</td>
<td>5,200,000?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>60,000 days chanting, repairs to roof</td>
<td>6,000,000?</td>
<td>900,000?</td>
<td>5,100,000?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Repairs to roof</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>65,000 days chanting, interrupted by Zenkōji Earthquake</td>
<td>2,140,000</td>
<td>256,000</td>
<td>1,684,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chikan, Chishō, and Seien most likely did not receive any funds directly from the displays, they may have received some travel fees or a stipend if they attended.\(^{55}\)

One thing that is clear is that the convent was involved administratively and ritually to some degree. For example, when applying for permission to hold a display, Daikanjin had to ask heads of the other sub-temples in the temple complex, including Daihongan.\(^{56}\) If the abbess was in Shinano during a display at the main hall, like Abbess

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\(^{55}\) Documents from 1780 related to the request to hold a lottery mention that Daihongan did not receive an appropriate travel advance or per diem for the display held in 1772, although they had in the past. Daihongan Fuku 2 70.152.

\(^{56}\) See, for example, Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, *Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin* 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 37.
Chikan was for the 1762 and 1772 displays, then she would attend the opening and closing rituals, and would go to Zenkōji’s main hall regularly. However it is unclear how involved she was in the rituals, especially since her role in the main hall had been limited, as I discussed in Chapter 1.

Of course, pilgrims not only spent money at Zenkōji’s main hall, they also stayed at inns or sub-temples in the temple complex, ate at restaurants, and visited and made offerings at other temples in Zenkōji Town, including Daihongan. During displays at Zenkōji’s main hall, the convent would organize displays of its own treasures as well in an attempt to collect some funds from pilgrims on their way to the main hall. Furthermore, Zenkōji and perhaps its sub-temples could count on income from renting stalls on temple grounds to small scale merchants, tea shops, and so on, though it is unclear how much this would have amounted to in Daihongan’s case.

2. Traveling Displays

Although most of Zenkōji’s displays in the modern and contemporary periods have been displays in its own main hall, it was more famous in the Edo period for traveling displays (degaichō 出開帳). These could take many forms: displays in a single

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57 Ibid., 27, 37, 57.
58 For example, Kobayashi cites an informal request (one that perhaps never made it beyond draft stage) from members of Zenkōji Town to “the lord’s administrators” that they hold a display in order to bring money into the town from outside provinces and thus aid in the economy that had been in a slump for the past few years. In addition to other difficulties, the authors mention the failed Abbess’s Bunka-Bunsei tanomoshi confraternity. Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究, 581–582.
59 Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, Shinshū Daihongan Edo Aoyama Zenkōji Chikan Shōnin 信州大本願・江戸青山善光寺智観上人, 57.
60 Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究, 582–586.
host temple, displays in the three large cities of Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto (santo kaichō 三都開帳), or multi-province displays (kaikoku kaichō 回国開帳). These occurred eight times in the Edo period (Table 5-4). 61

**Table 5-4: Dates, Locations, Income, and Reasons for Zenkōji’s Early Modern Traveling Displays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edo (Dates)</th>
<th>Kyoto</th>
<th>Osaka</th>
<th>Others 62</th>
<th>Income (including that gathered while on the road)</th>
<th>Net income</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1692.6.5–7.30)</td>
<td>(1694.6.24–8.30)</td>
<td>(1694.9.16–11.10)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>28,573 ryō</td>
<td>24,534 ryō</td>
<td>Rebuilding the main hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,210 ryō @Ekōin</td>
<td>7,452 ryō @Shinnyodō</td>
<td>9,924 ryō @Tennōji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1701.3.14–5.10)</td>
<td>(1701.9–1706.8.13)</td>
<td>All of Japan</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>More than 23,000 ryō</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3500 ryō @Kannōji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1740.5.1–u7.1)</td>
<td>(1741.3.21–5.27)</td>
<td>(1741.6.1–8.1)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>15,211 ryō (or more than 16,171 ryō) 63</td>
<td>9,814 ryō</td>
<td>Rebuilding the Sutra repository, and the Sanmon and Niōmon gates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,725 ryō @Ekōin</td>
<td>1424 ryō @Daibutsuden</td>
<td>2,062 @Tennōji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1747.3.13–1748.9.23)</td>
<td>More than 13,289 ryō 64</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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61 Unless otherwise indicated, information for this table came from Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū 善光寺研究, 400–416, especially 403.

62 For exact dates and locations the retinues stopped during these multi-province displays, see Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji No Kaikoku Kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” 197–198.

63 Takatsukasa lists 16,171 ryō. She also states that the net (the next column) was 9,814. Ibid., 205–206.

64 The cost to build the Sutra Repository, Sanmon and Niōmon gates combined. Ibid., 211.
The first traveling display of the early modern period was meant to rebuild Zenkōji’s “temporary” main hall. Abbess Seiden (abbess from 1672–1698) was involved in the planning of this display; she traveled to Edo with it and performed rituals while

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**Table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Jōruri</th>
<th>Cost (ryō)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1778.6.1–u7.17)</td>
<td>Northern Japan and Edo</td>
<td>@Rozanji</td>
<td>8,984</td>
<td>Peace in Japan, allowing disabled or aged people to make karmic connections, to build a 5-story pagoda⁶⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1780.4.1–4.30)</td>
<td></td>
<td>@Tennōji</td>
<td>747</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1780.5.12–6.12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,414</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1780.3.16–1782.6.27)</td>
<td>Northern and eastern Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td>12,139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1794.8.3–1798.6.22)</td>
<td>All of Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td>20,351</td>
<td>Finish previous display that ended when head of Daikanjin died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1803.6.1–8.21)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3,472</td>
<td>Loss of 1,336 ryō Build a 5-story pagoda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1820.6.1–8.12)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3,062</td>
<td>Loss of 757 ryō Reroofing various halls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1780.3.16–1782.6.27)</td>
<td>(or more than 4,757 ryō)⁶⁵</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,758</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1794.8.3–1798.6.22)</td>
<td>(1794.8.3–1798.6.22)</td>
<td>All of Japan</td>
<td>9,917</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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⁶⁵ Takatsukasa calculates 4757 based on the cost of repairs to the main hall, Sanmon gate, and sutra repository that occurred between 1782 and 1790. *Ibid.*, 214.

⁶⁶ The Five-story pagoda was not (re)built because although it had existed on the temple grounds in the medieval period.
there, but did not travel to Kyoto and Osaka. Though this initial three cities display was successful, the building materials burnt in 1700 and it was discovered that a large portion of the funds had been misappropriated.

Keiun took over as head of Daikanjin and head of the rebuilding project, and Daikanjin became the main temple in charge of fundraising at Zenkōji.\(^{67}\) He requested permission to hold another display in Edo followed by a multi-province display. While the new abbess, Chizen, participated in the Edo portion of the display, she did not follow the display through the provinces. In the request to hold a multi-province display, both Daihongan and Daikanjin state that “because she is a woman, the abbess of [Dai]hongan will not take part in the multi-province [display], rather she will return to Shinano where she will consult with Sanada [Yukimichi, head of the Matsushiro Domain] on the construction of Zenkōji’s main hall.”\(^{68}\) The stated reason for the abbess not traveling with the display, that she was a woman, was of course nothing more than a pretense—Daihongan’s abbesses had long traveled throughout country, as we saw in the previous chapter. Putting this aside, however, Keiun had other reasons for not including Chizen. As stated, he needed someone to oversee the construction of the main hall in Shinano. Not stated, but equally important, was that he wanted to keep the costs of travel to a minimum; for this reason he did not allow members of any of Zenkōji’s other sub-temples to travel with him, instead, he opted to take only a handful of his own students.\(^{69}\)

\(^{67}\) Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 407–409.

\(^{68}\) Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji No Kaikoku Kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” 193.

\(^{69}\) Though both Kobayashi and the Zenkōjishi kenkyūkai mention that Chizen brought a suit against Keiun in 1714 for failing to disclose the income and expenditures from his multi-province display, Sakai Kāhei does not include it in his extensive list of legal battles that occurred at Zenkōji in the early modern period, nor have I been able to find such a suit listed in the documents available at the Nagano
However, Keiun may have had other reasons for sending Chizen back to Shinano. Keiun and Chizen at times had a contentious relationship; sending her back may have been a way to avoid confrontations during the traveling display.\textsuperscript{70} Keiun could also have wanted Daikanjin to be the public face of Zenkōji that he presented to Japan.

As these two examples demonstrate, Daihongan was involved in Zenkōji’s traveling displays in the Edo period, but to a limited degree. To begin with, Daikanjin needed Daihongan’s approval to hold these displays.\textsuperscript{71} Indeed, Daikanjin’s failure to contact Daihongan resulted in a lawsuit in 1740.\textsuperscript{72} Furthermore, Daihongan’s abbesses had the important role of contacting high-ranking warriors and courtiers. At the same time that Daikanjin sought approval from the Magistrate of temples and shrines to hold a display, Daihongan’s abbesses contacted the women of the Inner Quarters with a similar request.\textsuperscript{73} When the abbess and head of Daikanjin took the main copy of Zenkōji’s Amida triad into the shogun’s castle during displays in Edo, the abbess initiated contact to do so. Seiden also used her contacts with the women of the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle while Daikanjin used its contacts at Kan’ei-ji to arrange multiple miniature displays of the copy of the triad in the Edo compounds of various domainal lords in 1692.\textsuperscript{74}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\textsuperscript{70} Nagano kenshi kankōkai, \textit{Nagano kenshi, tsūshi hen} 長野県史通史編, 324 Kinsei 2.  \\
\textsuperscript{71} See, for example, the document cited in Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji no kaikoku kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” 212.  \\
\textsuperscript{72} Nagano kenshi kankōkai, \textit{Nagano kenshi, Tsūshi Hen} 長野県史通史編, 324 Kinsei 2.  \\
\textsuperscript{73} Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji no kaikoku kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” 196.  \\
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 182–183.
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
Within Shinano and Edo, the abbess was involved with traveling displays. Though she would not travel with the retinue to and from Edo, she would meet and accompany the retinue to greet it or to see it off. If she was in Edo when one of Zenkōji’s displays was to be held there, she would greet the retinue in Itabashi and accompany it to the temple where the display was to be held; following the display she would see off the retinue as far as Itabashi. If she was in Shinano when a display was leaving or returning, she would see the retinue off or greet it at the outskirts of Zenkōji Town. When she was not in one of those locations to greet or see off the retinue, this task would fall to an administrator. If the abbess was in Edo during a traveling display there, she would participate in the display on set days, either traveling from Aoyama Zenkōji or staying in a sub-temple of the display’s host temple.

Despite this, in the same way that Seiden and Chizen did not travel with the three cities or multi-province displays of their times, other abbesses’ roles were limited once the displays traveled beyond Edo or Shinano. However, they and Daihongan were not fully excluded. By arrangement, one of Daihongan’s administrators traveled with the display to help oversee its finances while the convent’s administrative priest, the head of Sōkōji, participated ritually in the abbess’s stead. However, their roles also seem to have been limited to the cities of Osaka and Kyoto and some neighboring provinces; they returned home once the display traveled beyond those areas. While with the display, these administrators sent regular reports to the abbess; after they had returned, this role

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fell to either the head of Daikanjin or an administrator. The abbess received these reports because of the fear of mismanagement that had so hampered the 1692 display.\textsuperscript{76}

Initial traveling displays were quite lucrative for Zenkōji. However, as time passed, these displays garnered fewer and fewer donations. Kobayashi suggests that this was due to an increase in displays from a number of temples, which then overwhelmed the marketplace. Barbara Ambros points to the increased costs of travel and of setting up the displays which came about because temples had to stand out from other displays and events occurring, and they had to display their prestige through ostentatious decorations and extended retinues.\textsuperscript{77} In conjunction with decreased returns from traveling displays, Zenkōji also stopped traveling displays due to complaints from the merchants and innkeepers of Zenkōji Town and the smaller sub-temples of Zenkōji. These people lost money because pilgrims to the temple decreased when the temple’s treasures were not there, especially for extended periods of time during multi-province displays.\textsuperscript{78}

As I said above, from the last half of the eighteenth century on, Daihongan and its abbesses did not receive any (or many?) funds from Zenkōji’s displays, whether they were traveling displays or held at Zenkōji’s main hall. In spite of this, they may have benefited financially. This may have occurred directly, through people making donations

\textsuperscript{76} Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji no kaikoku kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” 201.
\textsuperscript{77} Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo.”
\textsuperscript{78} This was particularly the case for the traveling display planned for the Tempō era (1830–1843). Though Daikanjin and Daihongan had received approval for the display from the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, the townspeople objected. Temple administrators argued that with the combined effects of the recent famine, the loss of income might lead to riots, so the temple cancelled its plans. Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji no kaikoku kaichō 善光寺の回国開帳,” 228–232; Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 417–418; Ambros, “Religious Displays of Temple Collections During the Edo Period: Zenkōji’s Kaichō at Ekōin in Edo,” 8–9, 21.
at Daihongan on their ways to the main hall. Or, it may have been indirect: paying for temple repairs with displays, could have freed up a portion of Daihongan’s funds. As I discussed earlier, the convent was to receive 236 *koku* of rice a year from Zenkōji’s lands (or its equivalent in cash). Of this, 150 was for repairs to Zenkōji’s temple buildings and 36 was to hire carpenters for those repairs. Even if Daihongan saved these funds solely for construction and did not use them for its own expenses, it would have taken the convent over 132 years to save funds to pay the 24,577 *ryō* it cost to rebuild Zenkōji’s main hall in 1707 if it operated without Daikanjin’s assistance.\(^79\) Assisting with these displays freed up this income from rice taxes for the convent to use, which it is clear from the 1793 Ledger that they were doing.

Furthermore, assisting with these displays probably had additional, indirect benefits for Daihongan and its abbesses. For example, by ensuring that the temple buildings were built to begin with, and then that they were well maintained, the convent would have ensured its own income. As Schopen and Kieschnick have discussed, people expected temple buildings and Buddhist icons to be resplendent and as an extension of this, that well-endowed temples attracted more money.\(^80\) So, by ensuring that Zenkōji was well maintained, the participants in its displays ensured that pilgrims continued to travel to the temple, and that at least some of them would make donations at Daihongan and the other sub-temples as well. An additional benefit for Daihongan’s abbesses was

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\(^79\) It would have taken Daikanjin and Daihongan slightly less than 74 years assuming they combined their funds for rebuilding (a total of 300 *koku*) with Daihongan’s funds for carpenters (36 *koku*). This also assumes that 1 *koku* was equal to 1 *ryō*, a rather spurious assumption made simply for the sake of convenience.

that by participating in Zenkōji’s displays, the abbesses could gain recognition for themselves and their convent. The reverse of this was also true: Zenkōji’s displays gained prestige by having the abbess of Daihongan, decked out in her purple robes, participating. However, in the same way that direct assistance from the bakufu was about prestige and strengthening ties as much as it was about money, Daihongan’s involvement in Zenkōji’s displays was about more than simply fundraising for the temple. By participating in Zenkōji’s displays, and in some cases, demanding to be included even in a limited capacity, Daihongan was signaling its involvement in the larger temple complex. It was demonstrating its vital role in the complex, even though it was not in charge of the displays nor involved in many of the rituals in the main hall.

**D. Loans and Financial Confraternities**

1. **Loans**

   The financial ledger for 1793 discussed above demonstrates that Daihongan was both the granter and the recipient of loans. This is not surprising given temples’ roles as financial institutions, which dates back to Indian Buddhism. Unfortunately, only ten loan certificates involving Daihongan are extant in the archives; these cover the years 1843 to 1865. I will discuss these loans and other information available, such as that from the 1793 ledger, in this section, beginning with money lent and then turning to money borrowed by the convent.

   Daihongan did not set aside any funds especially for lending, nor did it receive investments from outside the convent so it could offer *shidōkin* loans; instead it offered regular loans out of its own coffers, even at times when it was surviving on loans itself.
The convent never seemed to loan large amounts of cash. In 1793, for instance, it loaned 9.5 gold ryō 270 copper mon to a man named Denpei from the Ganzeki neighborhood of Zenkōji Town and 3.25 ryō to its branch temple Jūnenji. As demonstrated in Chapter 2 (Table 2-1), in 1793 the convent only received slightly more than 1.75 gold ryō from interest on loans given, further indicating that it did not lend much money then.

Daihongan came to rely upon a variety of loans from wealthy commoners and domainal coffers, especially towards the end of the period. As mentioned above, in 1793 Daihongan received roughly 24 percent of its income from loans, while 37 percent of its expenditures were payments related to loans it had previously taken out.81 Many of these lenders were residents of Zenkōji’s lands. Since there were no large expenditures that year, it appears that these loans were used to pay off preexisting loans, perhaps ones that had come to term that year.

The convent’s reliance upon loans only grew over the next thirty years. In the period surrounding Chishō’s visit to the imperial palace in 1808, the convent had supposedly accrued over seven thousand gold ryō in loans.82 Later in the Tokugawa period, Daihongan seems to have functioned largely upon loans—as the above financial ledger demonstrates, even in periods where there were no large expenditures such as travel or maintenance to temple halls, the convent still had to take out a number of loans or be involved in mujin confraternities simply to make payments on preexisting loans. Periods of other unexpected calamities put a strain on the convent that it was only able to

81 If we count the large payment to Koyama Yaemon as a loan payment, then loan payments reach 80 percent of the convent’s expenditures for that year.
82 Takatsukasa Seigyoku 鷹司誓玉, “Zenkōji Chishō Shōnin no shōgai 善光寺智昭上人の生涯,” 239.
escape by taking out further loans: it received a loan of 500 gold ryō at 10 percent annual interest from the Matsushiro domain to rebuild the convent from the ashes of the 1847.3.24 Zenkōji Earthquake and provide loans to commoners on temple lands.\(^{83}\)

A few years later, Seien took out loans from the Matsushiro domain and 340 ryō in interest-free loans from two commoners in 1853 in order to travel to Kyoto to meet with the emperor in the years leading up to the Meiji Restoration.\(^{84}\) In the case of the loans from the commoners, though they were interest-free, the convent made payment plans with its lenders. Furthermore, though these loan documents were signed by the lender and Daihongan’s administrator Akamatsu Moku, they were also approved by the two elder nuns Bonjō 梵定 and Risshō 立成, suggesting again that the administrators of the convent did not have autonomous control over its finances.

The convent did its best to pay back its loans; however, there were times when they defaulted on a loan or a financial confraternity failed as I discuss in the next section. One option to escape mounting debts was to request that loans be cancelled, usually in return for a title or position with a small stipend within the domainal or temple hierarchy. Daikanjin made some of its lenders administrators, which carried with it a change in status from commoner to samurai and permission to carry swords when acting in an official capacity. There are no records of Daihongan having done this, but people from the convent did take out at least one loan from Zenkōji’s temple administrators, as we will see below.

\[^{83}\text{Sanadake monjo 3 n.d., Nagano City Public Archives 長野市立公文書館 Fuku 2 1548.481.}\]
\[^{84}\text{Though both documents date to 1859.11, they state that they are for the abbess’s travels from “the previous year of the cow,” which corresponds to 1853. Daihongan fuku 2 69.139 and 69.140.}\]
2. Financial Confraternities

Financial confraternities also offered a quick infusion of funds to cash-strapped temples. Scholars have traced Japanese financial confraternities back to the Kamakura period (1185–1333). Sakurai Tokutarō has argued that they developed as a means to provide financial assistance for community members in need. These were called tanomoshikō 頼母子講, “the confraternity [like the] reliance of a child upon his/her mother,” or mujinkō 無尽講, “the inexhaustible [compassion] confraternity.” The latter developed in Tang-period China where they were a major source of funding for the construction of Buddhist temples and monuments. They continued to be used in such a manner in Japan as well.

The most basic idea behind mujin confraternities was that a group of people put money into a pool and members of the group could receive some of that pool. By the eighteenth century, this had taken on a number of forms. One was a lottery where many people put money into a pool, but only a single person or a small group drawn at random could receive any of the pool. The members of lottery-type mujin changed from meeting to meeting. As with other lotteries, various contemporaneous intellectuals offered their

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85 In practice the tanomoshi and mujin confraternities did not differ. Furthermore the terms were used interchangeably in primary and secondary sources, sometimes even when referring to the same confraternity: the financial confraternity active at Daihongan from 1816 to 1826 that I will discuss in detail below was called the Abbess’s mujin Confraternity or the Abbess’s tanomoshi Confraternity in different documents, for example. Unless a document I am citing specifically uses one or the other, I will use mujin confraternity below for simplicity’s sake.


87 Najita, Ordinary Economies in Japan, 72.
opinions. For example, Kitamura Nobuyo 喜多村信節 (1783–1856), also known as Sesshin, wrote of how this type of mujin led to people losing their money by seeking greater wealth than they needed. He said that they should be called “contradiction confraternities,” mujun kō 矛盾講, rather than “unlimited compassion confraternities,” mujin kō 因縁講 because they caused people to seek more wealth than was natural, causing people to behave contradictory to how they should.88 On the other hand, Kaiho Seiryō 海保青陵 (1755–1817) suggested that mujin lotteries were harmless entertainments that should be used to fund the domains instead of rice taxes.89 As with the lotteries discussed above, the bakufu attempted to ban mujin lotteries several times throughout the period.90

Another type of mujin confraternity was for mutual aid. In this case, a group of people, sometimes whole villages, pooled their money to counteract the effects of famine or other natural disasters. Funds could be drawn from the group’s coffers when the group or some of its members faced hardship.91 Najita states that this type of confraternity was an inspiration for, and occasionally the direct ancestor of, modern-day health, life, and travel insurance companies.

One of the most basic forms for the mujin confraternities, and the one I will discuss in this section, was the contract cooperative/confraternity (keiyaku kō 契約講). In

88 Tetsuo Najita discusses Sesshin’s view of mujin confraternity. It seems from context that Sesshin was referring to the lottery-type confraternities rather than other financial ones, though Najita is not clear on this. See Ibid., 74–76.
89 Ibid., 76–77. For more on Seiryō’s life and thought, see de Bary, Sources of Japanese Tradition, 432–436.
90 Kojiruien Database 古事類苑データベース, 68–70 hōritsu bu 3.
91 An example of the contract from the mutual aid confraternity founded by Miura Baien (1723–1789) in the village of Tominaga appears in Najita, Ordinary Economies in Japan, 95–98.
this type, a set group of people gathered a set number of times, each putting a predetermined amount of money into the group’s money pool. One person received all the money in the pool at each meeting; this was either decided in advance or chosen by drawing, but this occurred in rotation so each person received money once. In this way, each person was both a borrower from and a lender to the group.

These groups were established and managed by a contract, but they were not normally backed by bakufu or domainal regulations. Tetsuo Najita argues that these confraternities worked because of their “inherent ethical values of trust, promise, and contract,” which he traces to the confraternities’ origins in “Buddhist and Shinto themes of compassion and mutual aid [that] established a basis of interpersonal trust within the kō that allowed for such cooperative action.”92 Despite the elements of “trust, promise, and contract” that Najita examines and these groups’ Buddhist and Shintō connections that he alludes to, there was still an element of risk involved in this type: the confraternity could fold or individual members might not be able to continue making their required payments at the meetings, for example. I will discuss the failure of one such financial confraternity in more detail below.

There were two organizational paradigms for contract confraternities: those with a “parent” (oyamujinkō 親無尽講) and those without (oyanashi mujinkō 親無無尽講). The former were organized to provide support for a single person or institution, here called the “parent.” This person acted as an organizer for the confraternity and was responsible

92 Though Najita states that there was a religious basis for these ethical ideas, he does not provide evidence other than stating that confraternities in general had their start in Buddhist prayer gatherings and sutra lectures in the Nara and Heian periods. Ibid., 17, 83.
for providing food, drinks, and a location for the confraternity’s meetings. Furthermore, the parent was the recipient of the money gathered at the confraternity’s initial meeting; latter recipients were called “children.” On the other hand, confraternities without a parent were organized to provide support for all the members of the group. In these types of confraternities, members would share responsibilities for hosting the meetings, either jointly or in a rotating fashion.

One example of a parent confraternity from the Minamimimaki Village in the Saku region of Shinano province in the 1820s and 1830s demonstrates one way contract confraternities could function. Matsuda Ōchinosuke, the organizer, needed 30 gold ryō. He looked for potential members and was able to bring together a group of people who could provide a total of 30 ryō. The members, including Matsuda, were divided up into ten slots, with individuals or in some cases two or three members working together to provide 3 ryō each for the first meeting. Because there were ten slots the confraternity would meet ten times total, with each slot receiving the 30 ryō pool at some point during the life of the confraternity at a time determined during the first meeting. Though all slots would receive 30 ryō at some point, the amount each slot paid was determined by when that slot received its payout. Matsuda, as the parent, received 30 ryō and paid 3 ryō during the first meeting, meaning he received 27 ryō from other people. However, at each subsequent meeting he paid 3.75 ryō, meaning he paid 36.75 ryō over the ten-year life of the confraternity. At the second meeting, Matsuda paid 3.75 ryō, but the money pool remained 30 ryō; this meant that the remaining nine slots were responsible for 26.25 ryō total, or 2.92 ryō each. At the third meeting, Matsuda and the recipient from the second
meeting paid 3.75 ryō each. Because the pool stayed 30 ryō, the remaining eight slots were responsible for 22.5 ryō, or 2.75 ryō each. This pattern, where the previous recipients paid 3.75 ryō each while those who had not yet received the pool were responsible for the diminished remaining portion, continued throughout the meetings: at the fourth meeting, the seven remaining slots paid 2.678 ryō each; the fifth meeting, the remaining 6 slots paid 2.5 ryō each; the sixth meeting, the remaining five slots paid 2.25 ryō each; the seventh, the remaining four slots paid 1.875 ryō each; the eighth, the remaining three slots paid 1.25 ryō each; and for the ninth and tenth meetings, the final two slots paid nothing. This meant that early recipients of the pool received only 30 ryō, but they paid more to the group as a type of interest for receiving the funds earlier. Later recipients, on the other hand, had to wait to receive the pool, but they paid less than 30 ryō. For example, the tenth slot in this confraternity received the 30 ryō pool, but paid roughly 19.25 ryō total. This could be seen as a form of interest received for this person’s investment over a ten-year period.93

As the 1793 Ledger demonstrates, Daihongan participated in *mujin* confraternities from at least the 1790s. Unfortunately, information regarding these is scarce—in the ledger from above, for instance, we can only determine the amounts received from and paid to certain people. There are no documents related to the formation, running, or closing of these confraternities. However, from 1816–1826 the administrator of Daihongan, Yoshimura Tomiemon, ran a *mujin* confraternity in Abbess Chishō’s name.

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93 Sakurai Tokutarō 桜井徳太郎, *Kōshūdan seiritsu katei no kenkyū* 講集団成立過程の研究 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1962), 396–402. Najita also discusses this confraternity, but there are a number of issues with the explanatory table he provides. Najita, *Ordinary Economies in Japan*, 80–82.
(Daihongan Shōninsama mujinkō 大本願上人様無尽講). Because this was a failed confraternity—as I will discuss in more detail below—there are a number of documents related to it. This can demonstrate how these confraternities could provide an important, quick source of income for the convent that were similar to loans in that they did not require preapproval from the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines like other forms of fundraising did. It also demonstrates how convent administration functioned, the convent’s connections with a diverse population within Zenkōji’s lands, and how for some people, these were more than simply financial meetings. Finally, it provides an example of what happens when a financial confraternity fails, something that Najita does not discuss. Since this confraternity spanned the Bunka and Bunsei eras, I will refer to this confraternity as the Bunka-Bunsei confraternity below.

In 1816 Daihongan started a Tanomoshi Confraternity, drawing investors from the householders and tenants of Zenkōji’s town.94 The convent received five hundred gold ryō at this first meeting. The convent used a large portion to pay back loans. Two hundred and fifty went to Imai Isoemon, the chief administrator of Zenkōji’s lands, and one hundred and fifty paid some loans from outside of Zenkōji’s lands. Administrators used the remaining one hundred ryō to cover various expenses from travel for the elder nuns, pay loans from 1808 when the abbess traveled to the imperial court in Kyoto, pay

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94 Miyazaki used the lawsuits against Daihongan, neighborhood registers, and registers of professions to determine that the investors came from a various economic strata in Zenkōji’s neighborhoods. Miyazaki Masaki 宮崎正規, “Kinsei kōki ni okeru Zenkōji machi no shin'yō jijō -- Daihongan Shōninsama mujinkō wo meguru shiron -- 近世後期における善光寺町の信用事情 — 大本願上人様無尽講をめぐる試論 ——,” Shishi Kenkyū Nagano 市誌研究ながの 18 (February 2011): 52–53.
expenses related to the running of the financial confraternity itself, and to replace the tatami mat flooring in Daihongan’s halls.\textsuperscript{95}

The confraternity was to be held over ten years, meeting in the spring and fall, for a total of twenty meetings. However, sometime in the middle of the meetings Yoshimura Tomiemon, an administrator from Daihongan who was in charge of the confraternity, decided to delay payouts to individual investors until the final meeting. When the time for the final meeting rolled around in the fall of 1826, he cancelled it without paying the investors. Instead, Yoshimura and Imai decided to bring in new members, something that was not done once a confraternity had started. This would essentially restart the confraternity without paying back money owed to the original members.\textsuperscript{96} The loss of money “caused great difficulty [for the members]: some went bankrupt or fell into poverty, and one person even hanged himself” as a result.\textsuperscript{97} The initial members brought a suit against Daihongan, Yoshimura, and two managers. The suit was passed from Daikanjin to Kan’eiji. Though the investigators ordered those involved to appear in Edo, Yoshimura declined claiming illness, so the suit could not proceed.

Tensions were high in Zenkōji town after months without a resolution. In the sixth month of 1827 notes began appearing pasted to walls around town. One of them said:

Concerning the Abbess’s mujin [confraternity]: the Yoshimuras and major managers have conspired to use the money and not give it to those who have yet to receive it. At this time, we have heard that there is an administrator being sent from Aoyama [Zenkōji]. If our money is not handed over [when he arrives], we will go to the Abbess’s compound and people will do what they will.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{96} Miyazaki Masaki 宮崎正規, “Daihongan Shōninsama mujinkō,” 50.
\textsuperscript{97} A quote from the suit to Daikanjin cited in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 328.
\end{flushleft}
Additionally, because we will submit many requests to the head of the Matsushiro domain, we will meet at Takadote to discuss this at the ringing of the six pm bell on the 28th day [of this month].

Another note said after “we meet at Takadote, then [we will] proceed to the Abbess’s compound where [we will say that] we want to get the Yoshimuras, Shima Ryōsuke, and others.” The anger of the townspeople was directed at Yoshimura and the upper managers of the confraternity, who they felt were responsible for mismanaging the funds for their own gain. Abbess Chishō, who had been in Aoyama throughout the entirety of the confraternity’s existence, was not thought to be responsible: “the abbess is elderly, so there is no way she had any knowledge of this.” Yoshimura and the others had reason to be frightened—the convent owed payouts to over one hundred confraternity members from the town; furthermore, the rice riots of 1813.10.13, mentioned above would have been fresh in their minds.

However, with the help of an intermediary an agreement was reached in 1830.2. The convent was to return 436 gold ryō total, 361 of which was to come from 32 managers, 50 from Aoyama Zenkōji, and 25 from offerings. The recipients of this payment were the 52 plaintiffs in the lawsuit who received 218 ryō total, 30 other plaintiffs would get 150 ryō, and 57 other investors not involved in the suit got 52 ryō.

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99 Ibid., 133.
100 Miyazaki speculates that the people who hung these posters/flyers throughout town were from the tenant class, especially those who were just making ends meet, and that they were venting their anger towards the managers of the confraternity. Miyazaki Masaki 宮崎正規, “Daihongan Shōninsama mujinkō,” 52.
101 Cited in Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考—近世善光寺町の研究, 133.
Though these 139 investors were owed 3374 ryō, according to Kobayashi’s calculations, they only received a small portion of it. The abbess was living in Edo at the time, and not considered responsible for the confraternity’s failure by its members, yet she had to pay a portion of the settlement because was held responsible for the actions of her convent’s administrators. Yoshimura did not receive any punishment. Instead, the largest burden of responsibility for the failure of the confraternity fell on the managers. These people also probably had some money tied up in investments in the confraternity, but they had to make payments to other investors, which means that they were doubly hit by the decision.\footnote{Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 328.}

Imai Isoemon, Daikanjin’s head administrator in charge of Zenkōji’s lands, was placed under house arrest for “mishandling the incident,” which perhaps meant that he was held responsible by Zenkōji’s administration for the townspeople forming groups and acting “conspiratorially.” He was quickly pardoned, however.\footnote{Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Naganoshi shikō -- kinsei Zenkōjimachi no kenkyū 長野市史考ー近世善光寺町の研究, 133.}

Not all of the members of the Bunka-Bunsei mujin confraternity took part in the suit, however. Some of these were members of local temples, such as Saihōji or Zenkōji’s Nakashū group of sub-temples, who may have had some connection to Daihongan and thus had no reason to sue. Others included shop owners such as Yahei, a clothing store owner. People such as Yahei may have been involved in a number of similar confraternities and thus saw them as an investment opportunity, some of which may not always pay out as one had anticipated. Furthermore, members like Yahei may have seen the loss as the price to pay for the chance to attend the various confraternity gatherings, to
eat and drink, and to participate in cultural circles that may have happened at those events.\(^{104}\) Daihongan’s Bunka-Bunsei mujin confraternity had elements of a cultural circle. In 1827, a year after the final meeting of the confraternity was to be held, the convent put together a collection of “wild poems” (\(kyōka\) 狂歌) that had been composed during the confraternity meetings.\(^{105}\)

Though Daihongan requested permission from Imai (and his successors) to start new tanomoshi confraternities following the failure of the Bunka-Bunsei one, they were repeatedly turned down. However, after the earthquake of 1847 that left most of Zenkōji’s temple complex and gate town in ruins and almost bankrupted both Daikanjin and Daihongan, the convent was allowed to start up another financial confraternity in 1853. In setting this one up, the convent relied on the work of neighborhood elders (\(machidoshiyori\) 町年寄) to persuade people to invest. Because of the involvement of the elders, it is difficult to determine whether people joined to invest money, to participate in a cultural group, or whether they felt coerced.\(^{106}\)

In his examination of mujin and tanomoshi confraternities, Tetsuo Najita rather optimistically states that they were based on “trust, promise, and contract.” The case of Daihongan’s Bunka-Bunsei confraternity demonstrates what happens when those are broken. This case further demonstrates that even confraternities managed by supposedly

\(^{104}\) Miyazaki Masaki 宮崎正規, “Daihongan Shōninsama mujinkō,” 53.

\(^{105}\) Wild poems and scribbles composed during Daihongan Abbess’s mujin confraternity (\(Daihongan Shōninsama gomujin no setsu rakugaki kyōka nari\) 大本願上人様御無尽之節落書狂歌也) Daihongan 1 Fuku 2 1153.056.

\(^{106}\) Kobayashi Keiichirō 小林計一郎, Zenkōjishi kenkyū, 328.
trustworthy and stable institutions such as large temples or shrines could fail, resulting in the loss of money or even the loss of lives for investors.

Najita argues that these confraternities did not have the legal backing of outside authorities, yet investors in Daihongan’s relied on several levels of outside authority when the confraternity’s contract was breached. When discussions with Daihongan’s administrators failed, the investors called upon Daikanjin as the local authority, Matsusiro as a neighboring domainal power, and Kan’eiji as Daihongan and Daikanjin’s main temple in an attempt to reach some form of agreeable conclusion to the situation. They turned to threats of violence when these means failed.

Furthermore, in Najita’s analysis, samurai, aristocrats, and others of the ruling classes were not involved in the running of these confraternities—he even goes so far as to say that “the kō is significant precisely because of the absence of aristocratic influence and participation.”\(^{107}\) However, as Daihongan’s Bunka-Bunsei confraternity demonstrates, these confraternities were not always controlled by commoners. These confraternities were sometimes organized and controlled by administrators in charge of the rulers’ coffers. That the Bunka-Bunsei confraternity’s funds were mismanaged or misappropriated perhaps from the start demonstrates that these administrators did not always have the financial knowhow to manage the group’s investments. Furthermore, the heavy-handed manner in which Yoshimura attempted to restart the confraternity without paying its current members demonstrates that these administrators did not always have the best interests of the investors in mind, rather they were concerned with wellbeing of

\(^{107}\) Najita, *Ordinary Economies in Japan*, 83.
the ruler’s coffers or their own pockets. Finally, that membership in the later 1853 confraternity may have been coerced, rather than voluntary, brings home the point that some of these “mutual” financing confraternities may have existed not for the benefit of the groups’ members, but for the rulers who organized them.

Finally, the Bunka-Bunsei tanomoshi confraternity incident brings to light a great deal about Daihongan. It demonstrates the convent’s worsening financial situation. The convent took out a large number of loans in the beginning of the nineteenth century, which it then began to pay back using various means, including the Bunka-Bunsei tanomoshi. With this in mind, the continued austerity measures put in place at the convent take on a new light of simply attempting to curtail expenses so the convent could pay back its loans.

The failed tanomoshi confraternity also demonstrates how control of the convent functioned. Financial decisions at Daihongan seem to have been made in this instance by Yoshimura, and not (at least on the face of it) by Chishō. This transfer of authority may have occurred because Chishō had been away from Shinano for almost nineteen years at this point, or, perhaps it was the way that decisions were made all the time while the abbess was away. However, as mentioned above, in extant loan documents from the 1850s administrators could not take out loans without the approval of the abbess or elder nuns; however, it is unclear whether this check on administrator’s authority occurred regularly, thus signaling a further connection between the inner and outer portions of the convent, or began as a result of the failure of the Bunka-Bunsei confraternity.
III. Conclusions

Despite the diversity of Daihongan’s regular and irregular finances, the convent still had financial difficulties largely stemming, I argued, from irregular expenditures such as travel and rebuilding. We might return to the question I posed at the beginning of this dissertation, that is, why was Daihongan able to survive the period despite these massive expenditures even though other, small to mid-sized temples in similar financial situations had closed or were being kept open in name only? I would argue that this examination of the convent’s finances demonstrates that Daihongan remained active, even when it was surviving largely on loans in the last half of the Edo period, because it could draw upon connections that these other institutions could not. First, being a part of a popular pilgrimage temple with an icon tied to the Pure Land and known for women’s salvation helped the convent get offerings and receive requests that they perform rites for this-worldly benefits or the posthumous wellbeing of petitioners’ family members. However, the convent’s ambiguous position as a part of but apart from Zenkōji also meant that its abbesses had to fight to be included in displays of the temple’s treasures, that their roles in the displays were limited, and that they stopped receiving funds for their participation. Second, the convent’s prestige and being a part of the ruling structure of Zenkōji’s lands meant it could get direct loans from merchants, farmers, and domainal lords, and that it could muster enough support from the townspeople as a whole to form tanomoshi confraternities when it needed income. Finally, connections to bakufu meant it could ask for assistance, either direct monetary assistance or indirectly through approval to start lotteries or hold displays.
In this chapter and Chapter 2, I have examined the flows of money to and from Daihongan convent, however, because of a dearth of sources such as the 1793 Ledger, I have only been able to trace the largest flows, the ones which occurred continuously, or those that caused disruptions. Money and resources to and from Daihongan affected a great number of people. The highest lords offered donations or loans to the convent, while nameless townsfolk suffered when the convent’s Bunka/Bunsei tanomoshi confraternity failed. The examination of even just one of these sources of income demonstrates this point: the convent’s lotteries, for instance, involved the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines and his vassals, the women of the Inner Quarters of the shogun’s castle, other religious institutions such as the Dairokuten Shrine where the lottery was held, the Okius who managed the lottery and their employees, the winners and losers at each drawing, and even the woodcutters and carpenters who repaired the temple buildings who were paid with money gathered from the lottery. This cursory examination has demonstrated that perhaps more so than rites, doctrine, or legends, finances are one area where religious institutions have the largest reach.

Finally, I must return to the question of gender, Buddhist institutions, and money. First, was Daihongan considered to be a lesser field of merit because it was a convent? This may be difficult to assess because I have not come across the term “field of merit” (fukuden 福田) in any of the documents I have examined, nor have any documents I have seen stated that “because you are women, we will only give you a small donation.” Perhaps it would be better to reword the question as, did Daihongan receive fewer funds, or was it limited in its fundraising because it was a convent? The answer is both yes and
no. In some ways, the convent did have limitations placed upon it because it was a convent. This was most noticeable in the abbesses’ restricted involvement in displays of Zenkōji’s treasures, especially in the multi-province displays, and the reduced income from their participation in Zenkōji’s displays. In other ways, being women, particularly women from high-ranking warrior or courtier families, was a boon: the abbesses could make direct requests of the women of the shogun’s inner quarters in a way that the head of Daikanjin could not (he most likely would have had to send his documents through the head of Kan’ei-ji). This helped to speed up requests or find out why they were stalled, as in the case with permission for Daihongan’s lottery.

Tied up with this question is a further question, this one prompted by Gina Cogan’s observation that scholars have not studied early modern convents on the assumption that they would provide no new insights into early modern Japanese Buddhism because they were either exactly like other institutions or because they were so different from male institutions. In terms of finances, was Daihongan similar to or different from male institutions? Daihongan does not seem so different compared with other similar elite male institutions. It received part of its income from a land grant. It could rely on bakufu assistance. It performed a variety of rituals to receive funds. It did not receive an income from performing funerals, but neither did a number of other prayer temples. It did, however, have some differences from other institutions. For example, there was an additional level of expense that a similarly sized male institution would not have—because it was a convent, it had to have male administrators to handle and deliver paperwork. In a male institution this would have been handled by the head priest or other
male personnel. Additionally, because of Daihongan’s connections to the shogunate and court, the abbess had the extra, required expense of travel that similarly sized male institutions perhaps did not have. In any case, these similarities and differences point to the need to study convents in more detail.

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108 As Cogan points out, one would assume that because large male institutions had male administrators, that female institutions would have female ones, but because convents have male administrators, it demonstrates that the post of temple administrator was a male one, something that would not have been known without examining convents. Cogan, *The Princess Nun*, 178–179.
Conclusion

The connections I have outlined in the earlier chapters are still apparent on the grounds of Daihongan and its extant branch temples today. At Daihongan, there are statues, graves, and other materials connected to the Tokugawa family and the women of the Inner Quarters. In the convent’s storehouse are gifts from Osakan confraternities. In the center of the grounds at Aoyama Zenkōji there is a tall stone stele that lists names of female donors from Edo Castle’s Inner Quarters. In its cemetery are grave markers for its abbesses-in-training, markers that record these young women’s high-ranking origins. Wakōji makes the relationship between itself and Zenkōji readily apparent throughout its grounds because its fame is based in large part upon these connections. In its cemetery, however, is evidence of a much more physical connection—there is a large gravestone containing the hair and nails of Daihongan’s Abbess Seien.1 These traces of early modern connections have survived the years, earthquakes, fires, and (in the case of Aoyama Zenkōji and Wakōji) the bombs of World War II only partially because they were made of stone or were carefully preserved. They also survived because these early modern materials remain important as evidence of past prestigious relationships that can be used to establish contemporary prestige (connections with women from the Inner Quarters, for

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1 Seien lived at Wakōji for a number of years, only returning to Shinano Zenkōji for displays of temples treasures. The majority of Seien’s remains are in Kyoto at Chion’in’s Isshin’in—she spent her last years in Chion’in. One of her teeth is in a grave at Shinano Zenkōji.
example) or as historical evidence of relationships that continue even today (Osakan confraternities are one example).

I have made Daihongan’s connections one of the foci of this dissertation because of their importance to the convent. In this, the nuns were not unusual. All religious institutions relied on their connections to survive, or they failed when their connections withered away (as happened at the end of the early modern period with a number of institutions, and is happening again in contemporary times in locations where the population is decreasing and aging). However, by focusing on Daihongan’s connections beyond the convent walls, I foregrounded the activities of these nuns beyond their convent walls. I demonstrated that nuns did not just focus on doctrine or the arts.

As I demonstrated in the rest of the dissertation, there was so much more to these women’s lives than doctrine or arts. I showed, for instance, how the nuns’ influence extended far beyond the walls of Daihongan or Aoyama Zenkōji. The most emblematic example is their travels, which connected them to high-ranking officials and important women in the shogun’s castle in Edo; courtiers and the emperor in Kyoto; merchants and monks at Wakōji in Osaka; farmers and townspeople at Shinano Zenkōji; and travelers, domainal lords, local officials, and innkeepers on the road. The convent’s branch temples in rural and urban areas helped facilitate these connections. The money the nuns earned and spent also demonstrates the everyday connections they had to people ranging from convent administrators, farmers, petitioners, local samurai, and others. The irregular fundraising techniques on which the convent relied connected these women to a large number of people seeking blessings by seeing the convent’s icon or fortune by winning its lottery; these latter connections were perhaps much more tenuous than the others
mentioned, but they also perhaps reached the largest amount of people and provided the largest boost to Daihongan’s finances.

Through these connections Daihongan was able to establish and maintain its prestige. One large source of the convent’s reputation came from being a part of the Zenkōji temple complex. Another source was the abbesses’ title and permission to wear purple robes that was granted by the emperor. However, as I demonstrated, maintaining these connections required effort, cost money, and meant compromise. Spending a month or two away from Aoyama or Shinano in order to give thanks at the imperial palace was a costly affair, and it also required a great deal of planning and effort for all involved. Receiving the support of branch temples meant compromising with the heads of those temples or headstrong confraternity members. Financially, it meant that the nuns had to rely on loans and other irregular fundraising methods available to them only because of their place within Zenkōji or because of their prestige. And yet from at least the 1790s, the convent operated in the red.

However, as I also indicated, without these efforts to maintain prestige, to raise funds, or to preserve connections, and because of the convent’s reputation, the convent was able to remain a viable institution when so many other Buddhist institutions of the time would have collapsed under the financial pressures. Though for most of the early modern period they had been a part of and yet apart from the rest of the Zenkōji temple complex, because of the efforts of Daihongan’s nuns in the early modern period to maintain their convent in the face of economic difficulties and legal challenges, and because of the work of Seien, Kajuji Jōgon, and Ōmiya Chiei, Daihongan is now integrated into Zenkōji again. In the remainder of the conclusions, I would like to step
back and examine what we can learn from a financial lens, what Daihongan can tell us about convents, and what Daihongan can tell us about other early modern Buddhist institutions.

I. What was essential and what was negotiable

As I stressed in the introduction, a discussion of finances and legal battles can highlight what was important and what was negotiable to the institutions’ personnel. In the case of Daihongan’s nuns there were a number of elements that they worked to maintain. These included but were not limited to the following. They worked to maintain and display their prestige and connections to high-ranking warriors and courtiers. They set about establishing new connections, even building new branches in in Edo and Osaka in order to do so. They fought to keep ritual and administrative rights until those rights, and even the right to directly petition the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines, were taken away. The struggled to keep up appearances to the outside world by maintaining shrine buildings and by providing food and money to those who assisted their large rituals such as displays of treasures. They worked to perform rites for the shogun and his family. Similarly, though perhaps on a more personal level, they performed rites for their deceased predecessors and friends from the convent. They traveled to maintain their connections and prestige, but these travels were also partially negotiable when the convent’s financial situation worsened.

We have also seen that there were a number of things that the abbesses and administrators were willing to compromise on in order to survive. These included their own personnel—letting some administrators go or curtailing perks and meals for convent
samurai and staff in order to save money is one example. They were willing to cut back on their time spent at Shinano Zenkōji when money (and perhaps limited rights at the temple complex) required it. Their level of involvement in Zenkōji’s rites was also partially negotiable. Chizen fought to be included in traveling displays of the temples Amida triad, but was unsuccessful. However, Daikanjin’s abbots could not keep the convent’s abbesses from being involved in its Edo and Shinano displays. They did, however, stop receiving payment for their involvement in these displays. Daihongan’s nuns also understood that they needed to be flexible when dealing with their branch temples (and related confraternities) in order to keep their relationship with them. Of course, this flexibility ended if the convent itself came under the watchful eye of the public authorities for misbehavior at the branches.

II. Nuns and Convents
Though, as I mentioned in the Introduction, Daihongan’s case was in some ways unique, in others it was just like other convents. One of the key ways this was so is that nuns in the early modern period were involved beyond their convent walls. Their lives were not simply focused on doctrine, art, and ritual. Cogan and Oka demonstrate this for the imperial convents Enshōji and Hōkyōji, and as becomes apparent from Oka and Nishiguchi Junko’s survey of the documents of imperial convents Chūgūji, Reikanji, and Jiun’in. The nuns of these convents maintained competitive and cooperative

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2 Cogan, The Princess Nun; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, “Kinsei no bikuni gosho (jō) Hōkyōji wo chūshin ni 近世の比丘尼御所（上）宝鏡寺を中心に”; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, “Kinsei no bikuni gosho (ge) Hōkyōji wo chūshin ni 近世の比丘尼御所（下）宝鏡寺を中心に”; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, 日本の宗教とジェンダーに関する国際総合研究, 2009; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, Nihon no shukyo to jenda ni kansuru
relationships with each other, and were involved in events at the imperial court. In the case of Enshōji, they maintained relationships with farmers on the land they held. Also, as I discussed in Chapter 5, even though scholars have focused on land and imperial largesse as the sources of income for these imperial convents, these institutions made money on loans and mujin as we can tell from Oka and Nishiguchi’s survey of documents. The nuns of the so-called divorce temples (enkiridera 結切寺) were involved outside their walls in a number of ways—the most obvious being the support for women who wished a divorce but whose husbands refused. Diane Wright demonstrates how the nuns of Mantokuji were also involved in struggles for power within the Inner Quarters of Edo Castle.³

For the first half of the Edo period, Daihongan was also “without a head temple” (muhonji 無本寺), as many other convents were. This suggests these convents’ relatively unique status in relation to other (male) Buddhist institutions. Daihongan had this status revoked in the second half of the period after frequent lawsuits and inappropriate behavior at a display of treasures in its branch Jūnenji.

Many imperial convents and divorce temples performed rituals or practices from multiple different Buddhist schools (kengaku 兼学). As we saw, Daihongan combined Shingon and Pure Land practices in the middle of the sixteenth century. At some point in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, however, it became solely affiliated with

³ Wright, “Buddhism, Women, and Power during the Tokugawa Period: The Case of the ‘Divorce Temple’ Mantokuji.”

 kokusai sogo kenkyu; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, 日本の宗教とジェンダーに関する国際総合研究, 2009; Oka Yoshiko 岡佳子, 日本の宗教とジェンダーに関する国際総合研究, 2009.
the Pure Land school, and its nuns looked to Zōjōji in particular for ritual and administrative support even though they had no formal head-branch relationship.

Like the nuns of the imperial convents examined by Cogan, Oka, and Nishiguchi, Daihongan’s nuns did not perform funerary or posthumous rites for parishioners. They did perform these rites for their own members. In its capacity as landlord, Daihongan was involved in forwarding lists of parishioners at Jūnenji to the proper authorities, but it remains to be seen if other convents were similarly involved.

The different situation of Daihongan—especially that it was a part of a temple complex with male monastics—led to some major differences between Daihongan and other convents. One of the first is that it had to share ritual and administrative responsibilities at the temple complex (during the first part of the seventeenth century) with monks, and that they lost ability to do so at Zenkōji from the 1640s until the 1880s. They did maintain ritual and administrative authority in their concurrently held branch temple in Edo. Their position within Zenkōji meant that they were involved in lawsuits against Daikanjin’s monks in ways that perhaps mirrored the imperial abbesses’ jockeying for prestige amongst each other, but that differed in its reliance upon the legal system of the time. Another difference was that Daihongan’s place as a part of the temple complex meant that its nuns had (at times) a rather more public role than that of nuns at other convents; they had to step into the limelight to perform rituals at displays of temple treasures in a way that imperial nuns did not have to do. Nuns at the divorce temples Mantokuji and Tōkeiji were in the public consciousness in a different way, often as elements within popular culture such as parody poems.
I have compared Daihongan to these high-ranking imperial convents, yet readers may wonder why I have not discussed how Daihongan is similar to or different from lower-ranking convents. This is because there is a dearth of research done on these institutions. More work needs to be done to discover these smaller convents and to reveal their place in early modern life.

III. Daihongan’s Nuns and the Question of Agency
As I said in the Introduction, one of the main questions driving this dissertation concerns how the nuns of Daihongan survived when many medieval convents did not last beyond the lifetimes of their founders and many early modern Buddhist institutions that faced similar financial difficulties closed or operated in name only. In the Introduction I said that it was due to the women’s connections that supported Daihongan financially, logistically, and ritually. Establishing and maintaining these networks required time, effort, and money, but in many cases paid off in prestige. While these connections opened up possibilities—or in some cases, limited them—it was up to the convent leaders to choose them. In this dissertation, we have seen the abbesses, elder nuns, and convent administrators make decisions that affected the fate of their convent. To a certain degree, they decided how to earn and spend money. They decided which connections to draw upon and when. They decided when to establish new connections (Wakōji), and when to let others grow cold (not visiting Zenkōji in a number of years because they needed to save money). And, in some cases, we saw the nuns not do anything at all (not fighting against the Magistrate of Temple and Shrine’s statement that nuns could not have administrative roles in the Zenkōji temple complex or its lands).
This brings me to a larger point concerning women’s agency in patriarchal traditions that I mentioned in the Introduction. As I mentioned, one of the points of contention in previous scholarship was about whether pre-modern convents were oppressive or freeing places, whether they limited or offered choices for women. In the case of Daihongan’s nuns in the early modern period, this is a relatively complex issue. Within Zenkōji’s temple complex, their roles were limited ritually and administratively by the monks of Daikanjin, the rules put in place by Kan’eiji, and the precedent set by the ruling of the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines. However, Daihongan’s nuns were not confined to this location; they also called the Edo branch temple home. At Aoyama Zenkōji, the abbesses had the same ritual and administrative autonomy that other heads of temples had. Yet they could not simply disassociate themselves from Zenkōji—the nuns received a large portion of their prestige by being affiliated with it. Ultimately, Daihongan was much like medieval Hokkeji as discussed by Lori Meeks in that it simultaneously placed restrictions on women and yet offered them ways to navigate those limitations.

What, then, can be said about female agency in Daihongan’s case? Daihongan’s abbesses and nuns could not exercise their agency in deciding to enter the convent. As we saw earlier, until Takatsukasa joined the convent in the mid-twentieth century, the abbesses of Daihongan did not have much choice in this matter. This was presumably the case with many of its other nuns as well, though evidence of their lives is limited. Once a woman had joined the convent, she could not leave.4

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4 This is similar to the “trafficking in young women” that Kim Gutschow describes in contemporary Zangskar. Gutschow, Being a Buddhist Nun, chap. 4.
Prior to Saba Mahmood or Dorothy Ko, scholars would perhaps have sought agency in Daihongan’s nuns’ lawsuits against Daikanjin’s monks, seeing it as a form of “resistance to the patriarchal system.” However, as we have seen, the desire and ability to pursue lawsuits varied from abbess to abbess and depended upon the placement of Daihongan in hierarchies. Many of Daihongan’s abbesses did not seek to pursue litigation against Daikanjin, or they were unable to do so after the 1740s when any such suit would have to pass through Kan’eiji, whose monks would have worked to prevent it from reaching the Magistrate of Temples and Shrines.

This is not to say, however, that the women of Daihongan who could not or did not pursue litigation were passive in the face of administrative difficulties or Daikanjin’s monks. For instance, I have described one instance where the nuns kept the death of an abbess secret rather than be seen by others without a leader. I have also discussed cases where the abbesses and elder nuns fought to keep control of the convent. In one case they unsuccessfully sought to be made a branch of Zōjōji instead of Kan’eiji, and in another successful one, they chose Chikan’s natal family instead of the monks of Daikanjin to act as overseers of the convent until Chishō came of age because Daikanjin’s monks “had made many mistakes in the past.” In moments such as these we can see the nuns exercising agency as they chose one type of institution which would provide favorable operating conditions for the convent (Zōjōji instead of Kan’eiji, Chikan’s family over Daikanjin) instead of another which might limit the nuns’ abilities or make administrative mistakes. Despite this, it would be difficult to describe these choices as “resistance to the

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patriarchy”; rather they were often choices based on the options available to them at that moment. In the examples above, the choice was between two (male) institutions.

As I said earlier, it was the connections Daihongan’s nuns established and the precedents that accompanied them that expanded (or restricted) the choices available to them. And it was these connections and choices that enabled Daihongan’s nuns to maintain their convent through the difficult times of the early modern period. It was in these choices—sometimes seemingly insignificant, sometimes between one form of patriarchy over another, and sometimes to do nothing at all—that Daihongan’s nuns demonstrated their agency.

**IV. Edo Buddhism**

Finally, what can we learn about Edo Buddhism from the case of Daihongan? First, and perhaps foremost is the amount of effort and money that was required to maintain a Buddhist institution in the period. A few examples from the dissertation will demonstrate this. First, clerics in any sort of prestigious position had to be excellent fundraisers, if only to find the money to pay for permission to wear their robes of office. It took the convent years to pay back the loans they nuns had taken out to send Chishō to Kyoto, for example. Second, the nuns could only pay for simple maintenance to small temple buildings at Aoyama Zenkōji after a display of temple treasures, the advance planning of which would begin in the previous year, and which required sixty to ninety days of ritual performances from the nuns, policing efforts from people in the neighborhood, administrative labor from the convent’s samurai, and so on. And despite the labor of all of these people, the displays were occasionally unsuccessful financially.
Finally, when labor and fundraising did not succeed, temples could turn to loans for quick infusion of cash. In this way, some Buddhist institutions during this period were similar to warriors in that they relied heavily on loans from the merchant classes.

We saw how Daihongan performed a variety of roles in Zenkōji Town and in the neighborhoods of Aoyama. It was a pilgrimage site that drew people from surrounding areas who were a source of income for locals. It was a landlord to whom the locals owed rent and who acted as an intermediary when the locals interacted with the bakufu. It controlled access to nearby mountains where locals could gather firewood or fertilizer. It was an employer for local elite who acted as administrators, for servants, and numerous carpenters, merchants, performers, and so on. And, it was a financial institution, offering loans and investment schemes to locals. Daihongan was not unique in this way; many other Buddhist temples performed similar functions.

Daihongan also demonstrates the connectedness of Buddhist institutions in early modern Japan. Of course there were administrative connections, such as the head-branch temple relationship that spread throughout the country and the notification temple network (ふれがし頭ふれかし頭 network that scholars such as Tamamuro Fumio and Alex Vesey have examined. There were also networks based on dharma lineages, as we saw in the case of Wakōji and its head’s “dharma siblings” (ほるい hōrui) in Osaka. Temples were also a part of reciprocal neighborhood ritual relationships, such as the one that existed between Aoyama Zenkōji and the other Pure Land temples in the Aoyama or Shibuya area of Edo. Others were based on precedent, such as Daihongan’s connection with Shōgo’in in Kyoto. These are just a few of the connections that existed between Buddhist temples in the early modern period.
Daihongan’s abbesses also changed with the times and with social pressures. Chizen built Wakōji when she realized the potential support that existed in Osaka in the 1690s. Chikan took a chance on lotteries when the bakufu legalized them in the 1780s and 1790s. Seien sought to return Daihongan to its place within Zenkōji in the years surrounding the Meiji Restoration. Many other heads of temples were remarkably innovative; they pioneered new ways of raising funds and of connecting with commoners. When earlier scholars discussed the stasis and stagnation of Buddhism in the early modern period, they were focused on doctrinal innovation. They saw Buddhism’s relationship with money (not given as a donation) to be proof of the degeneracy of the Buddhist clergy. By looking at money instead of writing it off as a source of evil, and by looking beyond doctrine, we can see that Buddhists were remarkably innovative in the early modern period.

I began this dissertation with a secret—the death of abbess Chikan and the ascension of the young Chishō. In many ways it was appropriate. For years, it seemed that nuns’ lives were meant to be kept a secret, judging from the lacuna in scholarship on them. When they were discussed, it was in prescriptive, not descriptive terms.

Looking behind the scenes of Chikan’s secret death brought to light much about the convent’s connections, what its personnel valued, and how the convent functioned. In the same way, examining the actual lives of nuns (instead of the lives of others thought they should live) demonstrated the numerous ways that these women were engaged in society. It showed that they spent and earned money in surprising ways, performed rituals for commoners and elite, gave gifts to children and shoguns, pursued litigation and
sought reconciliation. These women, in other words, were engaged in activities that reached far beyond their convent walls, activities that affected thousands in the early modern period, activities whose imprints can be seen even today.
Works Cited


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Biography

Matt grew up in rural Illinois. After finishing his BA in religious studies from Illinois Wesleyan University, he taught English at various junior high schools in the mountains of Nagano Prefecture while studying Japanese, touring temples, and reading books on Japanese history and religion. The first temple he visited in Japan was Zenkōji. He tested the waters of academia in a MA program at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s Department of Religion. While there he spent many more hours in the classroom, office, and library than he did on the beach (no, really.) His master’s thesis was on rain practices (rain making, rain stopping, and rain thanking) in northern Nagano Prefecture. It rained 90% of the time he presented his research, but it does rain a lot in the Mānoa Valley on Oahu. In 2008, he entered the PhD program in the Graduate Program in Religion at Duke University. Because of language training at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language (aka. Japanese boot camp), archival research, and other reasons he has spent as much time away from Duke’s campus as he has spent on it. In all he has spent more than nine years in Japan.

Matt’s research revolves around two interrelated questions. These are “how did religious institutions interact with the laity?” and “how did the laity incorporate, adapt, or ignore religious ideas and practices in their daily lives?” His next project is on vernacular religious practices as seen in the works of samurai-cum-author Kōriki Tanenobu.