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# BUDDHIST IMAGES

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BY

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“Pagodas in Sunrise-land”

“Sights of Old Capital”

“Gion Festival”

Etc., Etc.

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## PREFACE

It may be unmistakably stated that no spot of scenic beauty in Japan lacks a Buddhist temple of more or less importance, thereby affording us a pleasant chance of enjoying the nature, the architecture and the works of art at the same time. Since there stands a temple, we never fail to find a Buddhist image, often of rare artistic merit, therein installed as the chief object of worship. Therefore those who intend to visit temples should be provided with some knowledge on Buddhist images; otherwise, the sightseeing is usually deprived of interest in no little degree and sometimes ends in total failure. From such point of view, the aim of the present work is to give a summary account on those principal Buddhist images specially popular in this country. The illustrations have been chosen from our representative Buddhist sculptures and paintings, all of "National Treasures," so that the reader may study the fine arts while visiting temples.

AUTHOR.

Tokyo : February, 1922.







## BUDDHIST IMAGES

The first and foremost Buddhist image which appeared on the Shinto soil of the Sunrise-land was apparently no other than the historic bronze image of Shaka Nyorai (Sâkyamuni) which was presented to the Emperor Kimmei by the King Shômyô of Kudara (Korea) in October of 552 A.D., when Buddhism was publicly introduced into Japan. There is, however, a strong reason to believe that, prior to this, Buddhism and Buddhist images might have been privately known among some of our people through frequent intercourse with the peninsula kingdom, especially because records tell us that, already in the 16th year of the Emperor Keitai (522 A.D.), Shiba-Tattô, a Chinese saddler of the Liang dynasty, happened to settle in Takaichi of Yamato Province and built an insignificant chapel, placing therein an image of Buddha which was ignored by the natives as a heathen-god. Be that as it may, the Emperor Kimmei was highly pleased with the introduction of the new religion and immediately held a council with his ministers in order to discuss whether or not to worship the image of Buddha. After much

dispute, the Emperor could not solve the pending problem, so that he finally gave the image to Soga-no-Iname, a powerful minister and pro-Buddhist, who turned his residence into a temple in which he installed the precious gift with utmost reverence. This event certainly marked a memorable epoch in the Japanese history.

The origin of making Buddhist images in Japan is recorded to date back to May of 553 A.D. when the Emperor Kimmei despatched Kawabe-no-Ataye to the sea of Chinu (near Osaka) to let him pick up a large camphor-tree floating on the waters, ordering him to have two images carved out of it. According to another account, the foremost Buddhist image was produced in 577, at the command of the Emperor Bidatsu, by a Korean sculptor who was expressly sent over here for the purpose. The carving of stone images started in 584 when the Imperial envoy Sayegi and suite brought back a stone image of Miroku (Maitreya) from Kudara and had it reproduced in this country. In 587, the Emperor Yômei contracted small-pocks and was just on the verge of succumbing to the disease. Thereupon, the saddler Tasuna, a son of Shiba-Tattô, became a priest and earnestly prayed to Buddha for the recovery of the Emperor's illness; moreover, he carved a wooden image, 16 feet high, and erected a temple

for it. This was the first example of making a Buddhist image of comparatively big size. In the same year, Prince Shôtoku Taishi, perhaps the mightiest advocate of and ardent believer in Buddhism, carved himself the tiny images of Shitennô (Four Mahârâjas) and wore them on his head, which was believed to have made him succeed in conquering his enemy Monobenno-Moriya. This shows how the Prince was adept in sculpture. The making of bronze and embroidered Buddhist images originated in April of 605 when the Empress Suiko, under the joint prayer of her Regent Shôtoku Taishi and ministers, had a pair of images made of bronze and in embroidery. They respectively measured 16 feet in height, and Tori, a son of Tasuna, was the superintendent of the work. He was the master-hand at that time and was later known as "Tori Busshi." His relics, few in number, are still found in the Hôryûji temple near Nara. Henceforth, the descendants of Tori and naturalized Korean priests had produced quite a quantity of Buddhist images. Judging from the modern critical standpoint, however, these works were not perfectly executed, being rather rudimentary in both pose and expression. Those who were skilled in the art, irrespective of priests or laymen, went under the appellation of "Bukkô" or Buddhist artists. In 650, the Emperor Kôtoku ordered a Chinese sculptor

in his employ to carve one thousand images of Buddha. This was the beginning of making the so-called "Sentai-Butsu" or One Thousand Buddhas. In 751, the far-famed gigantic bronze Daibutsu, or an image of Vairocana, with a height of 53 feet, was cast in accordance to a special wish of the Emperor Shômu. It still remains in the Tôdaiji temple, Nara, being counted as a priceless relic of the Nara Period. Its chief artist was Kuninaka-no-Muraji-Kimimaro, a naturalized Korean who was then the only person capable to accomplish such a huge work, while its casters were Takechi-no-Sanemaro and Kakinomoto-no-Odama. On its successful completion, Kimimaro was honored with the "Junior Fourth Rank" of the Imperial Court. This was the inception of making Daibutsu or Great Buddha. Many representative sculptures of this period, mostly consisting of bronze and wooden Buddhist images, are now kept in the Tôdaiji temples. In 1022, the Prime Minister Fujiwara-no-Michinaga had a large Buddha carved; its sculptor was Jôchô, a native of Kyoto. He was the most prominent in his days. It was he who carved nearly all the images supplied to the temples built by the Premier. The Emperor Ichijô was highly gracious to pay a visit to the new Buddha executed by Jôchô and intensely praised its workmanship. As its result, he was given



the honorific priestly rank "Hôkyô," an unprecedented honor ever conferred upon a Buddhist sculptor. Indeed, the construction of the Hôjôji temple by the Premier and of some other temples by the Emperor vividly served as a drastic stimulus, giving birth to many more temples and Buddhist images. Previous to this, there were not well-known specialists in sculpture, at least among the natives, most of the works having been done by either naturalized Koreans or priests. Their technique, however, lacked somewhat refinement and was more or less defective in details. In fact, Jôchô was extremely clever in wooden sculpture unrivaled in minute finish. A noteworthy epoch of sculpture was undoubtedly marked by his appearance, bringing forth a radical progress of this art. Therefore, he may be justly titled the Father of Buddhist sculpture in Japan. Jôchô had a son named Kakusuke whose son was Yorisuke. Yorisuke's son was Kôsuke whose son was Kôkei. Kôkei's son was our proud Unkei whose brilliant name is familiarly known even to a sucking child. Unkei and his laudable pupil Kwaikei, who was afterward called Annami, started a realistic school on the method of their matchless predecessor Jôchô, winning an immense success as it exactly suited the warriors' taste of the Kamakura Period on account of its bold style of chiselling. The

admirable works by Unkei, though in limited numbers, are existent in temples and private homes, drawing a keenest attention from modern art-critics. The son of Unkei, Tankei, was also an expert sculptor. Yenkaku, a son of Kakusuke and younger brother of Yorisuke, was another eminent craftsman and established the so-called Nara School. It was at this epoch that the Buddhist sculpture had reached the climax of its development. In 1186, the Shogun Yoritomo entertained an intention of having a Daibutsu produced in his military capital Kamakura and summoned the noted sculptor Seichô from Nara. Seichô was a member of the hereditary family of sculpture specially attached to the Kôfukuji temple, Nara. His father Kôchô was as skilful artist as he was. In 1180, the Daibutsu in Nara was burned down and a new image was recast in March of 1195. Its artists included Kôkei, Unkei, Jôkei and Kwaikei. In June of 1243, a wooden image of Daibutsu, representing Amida Nyorai (Amitabha), was completed in Kamakura, while it was changed in August of 1252 into the present bronze one, measuring 49 feet and 7 inches in height. Its artist was Tanji Hisatomo and its caster was Ono-Goroemon, a native of Kazusa Province. In spite of the fact that the art of Buddhist sculpture began to show a symptom of decline in the Ashikaga Period

(1334-1573), yet there were produced many notable works if not so excellent as in the preceding Kamakura Period (1186-1334). Buddhist sculptors of this epoch were divided, roughly speaking, into two principal schools, namely, the Nakano-Busshi and the Nishi-no-Busshi, both of which flourished at Shichijô, Kyoto, hence the name of "Shichijô Busshi." The former was represented by the descendants of Jôchô; among others, Kôi, the 14th successor of the reputable line, stood pre-eminent. The latter was represented by the sculptors belonging to the Tôji temple, the fountain headquarters of the Shingon sect, Kyoto. In 1586, Toyotomi Hideyoshi had the Hôkôji temple built at Higashiyama, Kyoto, and installed in it a colossal wooden image of Vairocana as high as 63 feet. Its chief sculptor was Munesada, a famous Nara sculptor, who was regarded as the greatest expert at that time. In 1610, Hideyori, heir to Hideyoshi, had a Daibutsu made in order to replace the former image which was destroyed by an earthquake in 1596. He encountered, nevertheless, many difficulties in finding skilled artists who were able to carve such a monstrous image in wood. Eventually, he had to give up the plan of getting the image made of wood and gave orders to casters to make it of bronze. The height of this image measured 58 feet and 5 inches, while even the pedestal of lotus-

flowers was as tall as 20 feet and the halo was 18 feet high. In the same year, Hidetada, the second Shogun of the Tokugawa dynasty, issued a special decree throughout the country to keep an image of Buddha in each family, so that the Buddhist sculpture presented outwardly a flourishing aspect at least for the time being. But there had appeared no artist experienced enough to produce an image of larger size. Even in making small images, the workmanship was far below the superiority of ancient artists, lacking both life and gracefulness. In short, it may be admittedly stated that the Buddhist sculpture, a most important branch of our fine arts, had been in the stage of prosperity from the Nara Period until the early part of the Ashikaga Period. Henceforth, the art had been at the slow paces of gradual decadence, and regretful to say, the same tendency still continues even at the present day.

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SHAKA NYORAI

Gilt Wood: 3 ft. 5  $\frac{3}{4}$  in height.

Attributed to Jōchō (died 1053).

Owned by Kōfukuji Temple, Nara.



## SHAKA NYORAI

(Tathâgata Sâkyamuni)

There are people, high or low, whose minds are confused. Being confused, they can scarcely see even the present life and are utterly unable to perceive the future. They are called the unenlightened. There are people, rich or poor, whose minds are enlightened. Being enlightened, they can understand the present life and the future as well. They are called Buddhas. Buddha Sâkyamuni graciously leads those who are not yet enlightened. Although he teaches different doctrines to different classes of human beings, his ultimate object is only one, that is, to let the unenlightened perceive the truth and become the enlightened or Buddhas.

Now, "Shaka" is a Japanese rendering of "Sâkyamuni" in Sanskrit. The term "Sâkyâ" denotes the Sâkyâ tribe and "Muni" means a wise man; hence "Sâkyamuni" signifies the wise man of the Sâkyâ tribe. "Nyorai," literally meaning "One who has thus come forth" written in Chinese characters, is identical with the Sanskrit "Tathâgata" which is the

manifestation in the form of a personality of the Ultimate Reality of the Universe. The honorific titles "Nyorai" and "Buddha," which is equal to the enlightened, are alternately used according to one's choice. In the strict sense, however, "Nyorai" refers to mercy and love and "Buddha" to wisdom.

Shaka Nyorai or Tathâgata Sâkyamuni, the distinguished founder of Buddhism, made his appearance in the world on the eighth day of the fourth month of 558 B.C. His father was Suddhodana Mahârâja, king of the Sâkya tribe in Kapilavastu, Central India. Queen Mahâ-Mâyâ gave birth to a boy under the Asoka tree while she was taking a stroll in the garden of the Lumbini Detached Palace. Seven days after delivery, she expired all of sudden, so that the infant was brought up fostered by her elder sister prajapati. This very boy turned out in the future to be none but our most holy Buddha Sâkyamuni, whose youthful name was Guatama or Siddharta.

According to religious tradition, at the moment of his birth, Buddha Sâkyamuni, with his right hand raised upward and the left pointing downward, declared :—"I alone, of all beings in the Universe, am worthy of honor." Subsequently, he grew up to be a marvelously intelligent boy. When he was only seven years old, he was already well versed in literature and science,



being immeasurably endowed with talents. At fifteen, he was formally recognized as heir-apparent. It was when he was at the age of seventeen that he was married to Yasodharâ, a daughter of Suprabuddha, king of a neighboring kingdom. Shortly, the new couple got a son who was known as Râhula. In his eighteen years, Buddha Sâkyamuni began to think of leaving home, because he keenly felt the transitoriness of worldly affairs, vividly perceiving the sufferings of Old Age, Sickness and Death. Eventually, at midnight of the seventh day of the second month of his nineteenth year, his pessimistic viewpoint on human life was brought to the sad culmination in abandoning his family and all and entered a forest in the Himalayan mountains in order to study the right way in attaining the truth, for which he endured hardships of every description. Before many years slid by, he came to a thought that what he had been hitherto practising was not the key to the truth which he had been seeking and he arrived at the conclusion that nothing could be achieved unless body and soul be in perfect condition. Therefore, he gave up the religious practices and left the hermitage. Then he took a bath in a river and drank cow's milk so as to recover his waning health. After having thoroughly invigorated himself, he sat down on the so-called Vajra-pedestal

ſpecially laid out for him at the foot of a Bodhi tree in Buddhagaya, completely absorbed in Dhyana or ſilent meditation. He remained there for months and years, having taken a vow that until he could realize the truth he would never get up from his ſeat. During this interval, all ſorts of temptation were tried upon him by Mara, the tempter, but they were all too ineffective againſt his firm and manly determination. At length, on the ſeventh day of the ſecond month of his thirtieth year as he was looking up at the morning ſtars ſhining on the eaſtern ſky, he ſuddenly awoke to Bodhi or the higheſt perfection of knowledge; in other words, he became the enlightened or a Buddha. Having attained the omnſcience, he calmly ſmiled on his heart-felt enjoyment of intellectual ſucceſs and he ſtayed for ſeven days under the Bodhi tree, feeling the infinite pleaſure of the Great Law. Henceforth, for fifty years until he paſſed away in his eightieth year he had been inceſſantly engaged in the ſalvation work of all beings, preaching his doctrine which is ſaid to be claſſified into eighty-four thouſand branches and ramifications, namely, greater and leſſer, apparent and hidden, temporary and true, and ſo forth.

At laſt when Buddha Sâkyamuni became cognizant of his final moment approaching he laid himſelf down on his dying bed prepared in an avenue of Sala trees

in the suburb of Kusinagara in Vaisali, Central India. It was indeed at midnight of the fifteenth day of the second month of 479 B.C. that he breathed his last or entered into Nirvana, being surrounded by his disciples. All the Buddhas, Devas, human beings and even animals bitterly cried for many days and nights over the mournful departure from the Earth of their Great Teacher. A Buddhist tradition tells us that Mahâ-Mâyâ, who was then up Tôriten (Trayastrima), on becoming aware of this sorrowful tidings, sighed profoundly and began to grieve sorely, finally coming down with her attendants to the Sala avenue. No sooner than she caught a glimpse of the coffin in which her illustrious son was lying in peaceful sleep she burst into tears. Then on lifting up the lid of the coffin, Buddha Sâkyamuni showed himself within, his hands formed in a posture of prayer, when innumerable rays of light flowed forth from the waves of his lustrous hair. Recognizing his mother buried in sorrow and tears, he consoled her with a heavenly voice:—"Oh, mother, mourn no more. Both transiency and permanency hold in themselves the same nature. Though I now enter into Nirvana, yet I leave behind the two immortal treasures, Law and Order. Lament no longer, mother dear."

Life is subject to decay; meeting needs ends in

parting. It is of common occurrence that yesterday's rosy cheek turns into today's skeleton. No one can escape the natural law of destiny. Nevertheless, Buddha Sâkyamuni's eternal farewell to the world made it all the more dismal and gloomy.

## **DAINICHI NYORAI**

(Mahâ-Vairocana)

Dainichi Nyorai (Tathâgata Mahâ-Vairocana in Sanskrit) is the most important Buddha to the Esoteric Buddhism and is supremely revered as its chief object of worship. He is worshipped by the Shingon sect with the highest honor and reverence, being regarded to be the head of all Buddhas. According to the Esoteric Buddhism, Dainichi Nyorai represents the Dharma-Kâya or Spiritual-body, which should be colorless and formless, yet he has forms and the light and preaches as well. There are two kinds of Dainichi Nyorai, namely, the Kongôkai (Vajra-dhâtu) and the Taizôkai (Garbha-dhâtu). The former signifies the "Function of Practical Knowledge" and the latter "Reality of Pure Reason," and either of them is considered to be far beyond the reach of human apprehension. Both the Taizôkai and the Kongôkai are represented in symbols or pictures called "Mandala."



DAINICHI NYORAI (KONGŌKAI)

Wood: 9 ft. high, Tenpyō Period (710-794)

Attributed to Chinese Priest Unsei.

Owned by Tōshōdaiji Temple, Nara.





DAINICHI NYORAI (TAIZÔKAI)

Colored Painting on Central Pillar of  
Five-storied Pagoda of Daigoji Temple near Kyot  
Executed in 825.





BIRUSHANA BUTSU (Buddha Vairocana) is taken for the spiritual-body of Shaka Nyorai by the Kegon and Tendai sects, but the Shingon sect strictly recognizes him to be the one and same body as Dainichi Nyorai, being distinctly different from either Shaka Nyorai or Amida Nyorai. In short, it may be stated that no satisfactory explanation on the clear distinction between Birushana Butsu and Dainichi Nyorai has been given us even by good authorities on Buddhism, so that nothing definite can be remarked with regard to this Buddha.

## AMIDA NYORAI

(Amitâyus or Amitâbha)

Amida Nyorai is the Lord or chief Buddha of the Jôdo (Pure Land of Bliss or Paradise) which he founded in the western quarter of Heaven. With the invaluable assistances of his two most trusty retinues, Kwanzon and Dai-Seishi, he is engaged day and night in his merciful work of salving all beings. In Sanskrit, Amida is called "Amitâyus" or "Amitâbha"; the former means "Immeasurable Longevity" and the latter "Immeasurable Lights."

Amida Nyorai, an unsurpassably popular Buddha

in Japan, is worshipped with paramount reverence and faith by all the sects with the only exception of the Nichiren sect. No wonder he is the chief object of worship of the two most powerful sects, the Jôdo and Shin sects. According to Sûtras, he was of royal descent and was an Indian king in the beginning of his life. Subsequently, taking the Buddhist name of Hôzô, he entered the priesthood under the gracious guidance of Sejizai-O-Butsu or Lokesvara-Râja. At length, he was promoted to the rank of Buddhahood as the result of his assiduous study for a period of five kalpas. A kalpa is supposed to denote an incredible long interval in which a rock of some forty miles square gets worn away by the light touch of an angel's feathery robes once in three years. Be that as it may, Amida Nyorai, after having become a Buddha, made the famous forty-eight vows with an earnest desire to save all beings and established the Jôdo or his own Paradise in accordance to his cherished wish. The most important of these vows is considered to be No. 18th which reads as follows:—"If anyone wants to be born in my Jôdo, repeat" *Namu-Amida-Butsu*" once or tens of thousand times a day with deep faith in me. If one shall not be answered to the prayer, I shall never be a Buddha." Now, "*Namu-Amida-Butsu*" is the prayer-formula specially recited in adoration of Amida



AMIDA NYORAI

"Daibutsu at Kamakura"

Bronze: 49 ft. 7 high. Completed August, 1252.

Caster, Ôno Goroemon: Artist, Hisatomo.



Nyorai. It is the most familiar prayer-formula ceaselessly repeated in all temples in which Amida Nyorai is installed as the chief object of worship. The term "Namu" is the corruption of "Namo" in Sanskrit, meaning "obedience"; hence "Namu-Amida-Butsu" signifies "O, Amida Buddha, I am obedient to your command."

The ultimate aim of the believers in Amida is to be born in his Jôdo after death, for which they have to repeat "Namu-Amida-Butsu" as many times as they can every day, laying a firm faith in him. If they are found faithful to the teachings of Amida Nyorai, they shall be entitled to enter the Jôdo, which is divided into nine different classes and they shall be respectively admitted into a certain class according to one's merit in the former existence. Accordingly, when coming to welcome the departed soul into the Jôdo at the moment of death, Amida Nyorai manifests himself in nine different forms, being escorted by a train of his holy retinues consisting of twenty-five Bosatsu or Bodhisattvas.

Amida Nyorai is generally represented as a being of golden skin and of a benevolent countenance in profound meditation, sitting up or down on a pedestal of lotus-flowers. The image of Amida Nyorai worshipped by the Shin sect, for example, that of the

Hongwanji temples, Kyoto, is sitting up with the right arm raised upward or toward Heaven, while the left arm pointing downward or toward Earth. This posture indicates his salvation of the upper and lower beings, signifying at the same time to lead the dead into Nirvana on Heaven and to teach the mortals on Earth.

## YAKUSHI NYORAI

(Bhaisajyaguru)

Yakushi Nyorai, or Yakushi Rurikô Nyorai in full, is the Lord or chief Buddha of the Jôdo (Pure Land of Bliss) in the eastern quarter of Heaven, where he is constantly occupied with the work of salvation in just the same way as Amida Nyorai is in the western Jôdo. He is assisted by his two most trusted retainers, namely, Nikkô (Sûrya-prabha) and Gakkô (Candra-prabha) who correspond to Kwanzeon and Dai-Seishi in the case of Amida Nyorai. Besides, he is attended by twelve divine generals (Jûnishôjin) who represent his twelve great vows which were made in order to salve all beings. These twelve vows are believed to have been made in allusion to the twelve numbers of the Zodiac. Each of these generals controls seven hundred Yaksas or demigods who are always prepared to protect the



**YAKUSHI NYORAI**

Gold Bronze: 9 ft. 1 1/2 in height.  
Pedestal 5 ft. 2 high. Executed in 697.

Owned by Yakushiji Temple, Nara.





teachings and devotees of Yakushi Nyorai from danger. One of the Yakushi's twelve vows runs as under:—"If my name be called for, I will cure any sick person, whose body and soul shall instantly feel tranquil and free from a sickly feeling." His name "Yakushi", literally meaning "Medicine Professor", was possibly derived from this fact and is probably the very reason why he is worshipped particularly by sick people.

There is found no mention about a definite form of Yakushi Nyorai, because he is variously said to be an incarnation of Ashiku Nyorai, or Dainichi Nyorai or Shaka Nyorai and so forth. However, he is usually represented as having a peaceful look of profound meditation, holding a Cintamani (Wishing-gem) in his left hand and raising the right upward.

## **KWANZEON BOSATSU**

(Avalokitesvara)

Kwanzeon Bosatsu or Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is likewise called Kwan-on or Kwannon in a familiar abbreviation. He is a Bosatsu or Bodhisattva in the Dharma-Kāya (Spiritual-body) and is said to be an incarnation of mercy and love. His main object is to save all beings from their miserable plight of ex-

istence and to bring them to the state of peace and happiness. He is an ideal Bodhisattva of the Mahâ-yana School and is revered with an unrivaled reverence and faith in this country. In fact, he is worshipped so popularly that a temple containing his image is found, without much exaggeration, at every nook and corner. An immense popularity gained by Kwanzeon Bosatsu for his unsurpassable compassion\*shown toward all beings may be learned from one of his vows as follows:—“If a sufferer, who calls my name three times, happens to be not saved by me, I shall never become a Buddha.” Both Kwanzeon and Dai-Seishi are the most valued retinues of Amida Nyorai to whom they render indispensable assistances all the year round. These three holy beings constitute the Trinity of the so-called “Amida Sanzon”, in which Kwanzeon takes charge of the department of mercy and Dai-Seishi that of Wisdom. In the Trinity, Kwanzeon occupies his seat at the right-hand of Amida Nyorai and Dai-Seishi at the left. The twenty-eight faithful retainers of Kwanzeon Bosatsu are believed to be constantly waiting upon him and are known under the appellation of “Nijû-hachi-bushû” or Twenty-eight Followers.

The manifestation of Kwanzeon Bosatsu is unlimited: he can transform himself, according to circumstances required, into a Buddha, a Bodhisattva, an



KWANZEON BOSATSU

Wood: 7 ft. 1/2 high.

Suiko Period (552-645)

Owned by Hōryūji Temple near Nara.



angel, an Asura and so forth. There are two groups of Kwanzeon Bosatsu manifested in six and thirty-three different forms and he makes his appearance in one form taken from among these on an occasion of necessity.

The description of Kwanzeon's bodily construction is wellnigh beyond the limit of human imagination : he is mentioned as having a height of almost countless feet, a skin of purple-gold color, a skin-tuft on the head possessed of numberless rays of light, each of these crowned with 500 miniature figures of Buddha exactly resembling Sâkyamuni and every one of these Buddhas is attended by 500 Bodhisattvas who are also guarded by Devas; besides, he is described as being endowed with several other features too mysterious to be perceived with mortal eyes.

The group of Six Kwannon is based upon the salvation of the six existences as briefly explained below :—

(1) Senju Kwannon or One-Thousand-Handed Kwannon (Sahasrapana Avalokitesvara) is an incarnation of Kwanzeon Bosatsu as the saviour of the Jigokudô or Deepest Hell. His full name is Senju-Sengan Kwanzeon or One-Thousand-Handed and Eyed Kwannon. Despite his title of "One-Thousand-Handed," he is furnished with

only forty hands, because each hand indicates twenty-five different classes of human beings with confused or ignorant minds. These forty hands are equipped with some particular utensils, which are omitted here, respectively expressing a certain meaning of its own.

- (2) Shô Kwannon (Arya Avalokitesvara) is an incarnation of Kwanzeon Bosatsu as the saviour of the Gakidô or Hell of Hunger. In his left hand is held a lotus-flower partially blooming, while his right hand assumes a posture of the Mûdra "Abhayanda" in the shape of a lotus-flower, symbolizing his will of letting the ignorant beings bloom as fine as this flower.
- (3) Batô Kwannon or Horse-Headed Kwannon (Haya-griva Avalokitesvara) is an incarnation of Kwanzeon Bosatsu as the saviour of the Chikushôdô (Animals' existence) or Hell of Torture for Immoral Conducts. He wears a horse-headed crown, signifying his boundless vigor and effort in showing benevolence to all beings just as intent as an unbridled horse runs about in order to search for something to eat.
- (4) Jûichimen Kwannon or Eleven-Faced Kwannon (Ekadasamukha Avalokitesvara) is an incarnation of Kwanzeon Bosatsu as the saviour of the Ashu-



SENJU KWANNON

Dry Lacquer : about 12 ft. high.

Tenpyō Period (710-794)

Owned by Tōshōdaiji Temple, Nara.







SHŌ KWANNON

Colored Wood: 4 ft. 11 3/4 high.  
With the date corresponding to 1069.  
Owned by Yūnenji Temple near Nara.





JŪICHIMEN KWANNON

Wood: 2 ft. 9 high.

Artist unknown. Carved in 1316.

Owned by Hōkongōin Temple near Kyoto.





NYOIRIN KWANNON

Wood: 3 ft. high.

Hakuô Period (646-709)

Owned by Kôryûji Temple, Kyoto.





YORYŪ KWANNON

Colored Painting on Silk: 7 ft. 9 by 4 ft. 1/2

Attributed to Wu Tao-tzu (fl. 720-750)

Owned by Daitokuji Temple, Kyoto.





radô (Asura's existence) or Hell of Torment for Hypocrisy. He has eleven faces and four arms. The three front faces express mercy; the three faces on the left side signify anger; the three faces on the right symbolize joy, scorn and smile; the central face of his main body shows an attitude of neither smile nor anger and again of neither goodness nor badness. The face on the top of his head represents that of "Kakyo-Shôhomyô Nyorai."

- (5) Juntei Kwannon (Cundi Avalokitesvara) is an incarnation of Kwanzon Bosatsu as the saviour of the Ningendô or Life of Human Beings. "Juntei" means purity, expressing his noble heart of purity. He has eighteen arms and three eyes. Those who worship him with fervent faith in him shall be rewarded with benefits immeasurable.
- (6) Nyoirin Kwannon (Cakravarti Cintamani Avalokitesvara) is an incarnation of Kwanzon Bosatsu as the saviour of the Tennindô or Life of Heavenly Beings. Although it does not conform with the illustration in the present book, he is usually mentioned as having six arms; the first arm on the right side touches his cheek in pondering attitude; the second holds a Cintamani (wishing-gem) and the third a rosary. The first arm on the left side

presses an Acala or a mountain of light; the second holds a lotus, and the third a Cakra or a wheel. His posture is believed to satisfy desires of all beings and to lead them to enlightenment.

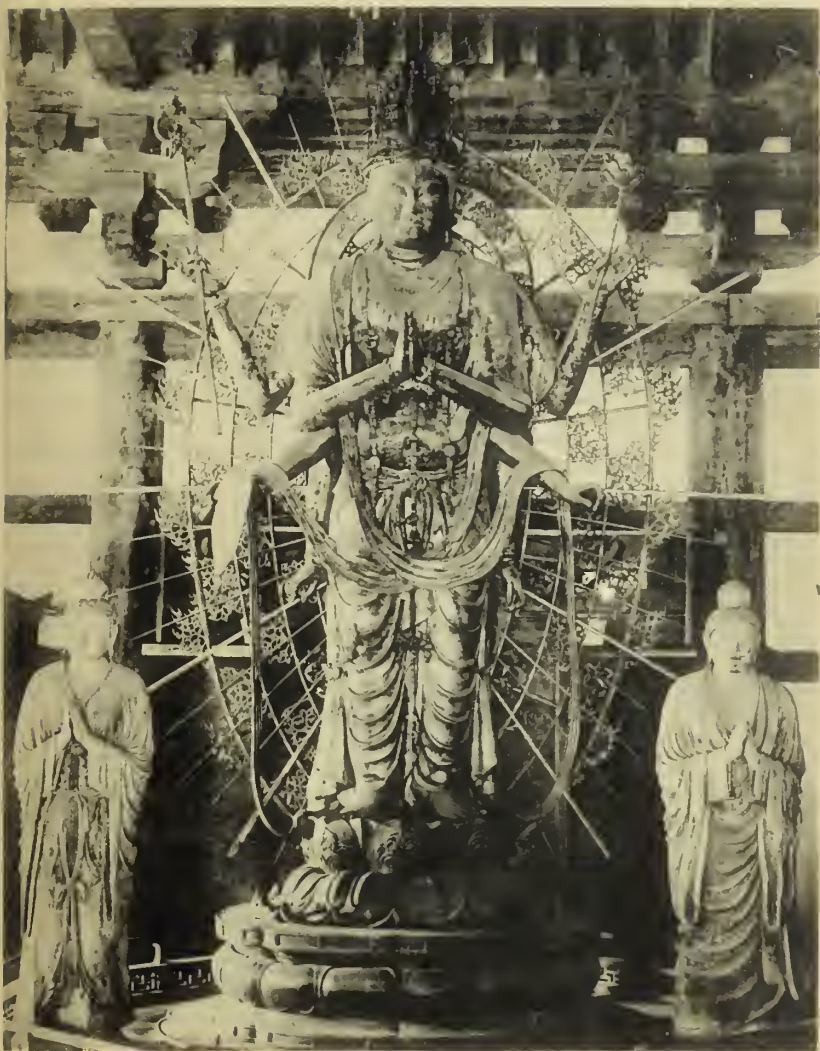
The following is a list of the names of Thirty-three Kwannon :—

(1) Yôryû (2) Ryûzu (3) Jikyo (4) Enkô (5) Yûgi (6) Byakui (7) Renga (8) Takimi (9) Seyaku (10) Gyoran (11) Tokuô (12) Suigetsu (13) Ichiyô (14) Seitô (15) Itoku (16) Enmei (17) Shuhô (18) Iwato (19) Nôsei (20) Ajoku (21) Amatei (22) Hagoromo (23) Ruri (24) Tarason (25) Hamaguri (26) Rokuji (27) Fuji (28) Merôfu (29) Gasshô (30) Ichijo (31) Funi (32) Jiren (33) Reisui.

## FUKÛKENSAKU KWANNON

(Amoghapasa)

Fukûkensaku Kwannon is a Bodhisattva who is kindly engaged in saving all beings suffering with some trouble throughout the whole year. Being an incarnation of Kwanzeon Bosatsu, he sometimes takes the place of Juntei in the group of Six Kwannon. It was in the beginning of the ninth century that the first homage for this Bosatsu was offered by Fujiwara-no-Fuyutsugu at the Nanyendô temple, Nara, which he specially erect-



FUKUKENSAKU KWANNON

Dry Lacquer: 12 ft. high, Tenpyō Period (710-794)

Executed by Priest Ryōben.

Installed in Hokkedō, Nara.





DAI-SEISHI BOSATSU

Gilt Dry Lacquer: 3 ft. 11 1/2 high.

Tenpyō Period (710-794)

Owned by Hōryūji Temple near Nara.



ed for the purpose. Ever since, the belief for him had grown in a considerable extent.

Fukûkensaku Kwannon is usually represented as having a white flesh skin, three faces with three eyes, four or eight arms, each holding a lotus-stalk, a string or cord, a jar and a rosary. His hands are joined on the breast and he carries a miniature figure of Amida Nyorai on his diadem. His body is decked handsomely with jewels, garlands and rings, while his shoulders are covered with a priestly scarf made of deer-skin.

The name "Fukûkensaku" signifies that he catches with his string or cord the fishes of ignorant beings swimming in the turbid waters of the world and sends them away into the other side of a happy land.

## **DAI-SEISHI BOSATSU**

(Mahâsthâma)

Dai-Seishi Bosatsu is one of the two most distinguished retinues of Amida Nyorai. He presides over the department of wisdom while Kwanzeon Bosatsu that of mercy, continually helping his lord in the salvation work of all beings. He is familiarly known under the joint designation of "Amida Sanzon" or the Trinity of Amida. In the group, Amida is installed in the center and Dai-Seishi at the left side and Kwan-

zeon at the right. It is said that the light of incalculable wisdom possessed by Dai-Seishi is capable not only to salve all beings but to simultaneously impart to them a great strength. This is presumably the origin of his name "Dai-Seishi" which means "Possessor of Great Strength." According to the Surangama Sûtra, he could attain the rank of Bosatsu in recognition of the merit of his supreme faith and devotion paid to Amida Nyorai. This is the very reason why he is now working as a special guardian of the believers in Amida Nyorai. It is mentioned in the Amitâyur-dhyana Sûtra that the bodily size of Dai-Seishi is equal to that of Kwanzeon Bosatsu who stands, however, much higher in popularity than the former.

## **MIROKU BOSATSU**

(Maitreya)

Miroku Bosatsu is a Bodhisattva who is said to have been spiritually entrusted by Shaka Nyorai (Sâkyamuni) to be his successor in the far future so as to salve and teach all beings in the Universe. He is supposed to make his manifestation in this world after the lapse of a tremendous interval of 5,670,000,000 Sanskrit years counting from the death of his predecessor. Forty-two Kalpas ago previous to the appearance of





MIROKU BOSATSU

Wood: 1 ft. 3 1/2 high.

Jōgwan Period (794-888)

Owned by Tōdaiji Temple, Nara.



Shaka Nyorai, Miroku entered the priesthood under the guidance of Zenshi Butsu. Having been appointed Shaka's heir, he went up to Tosotsuten (Tusita) where he is thought to be awaiting now for his coming great function. Tosotsuten is situated in the fourth heaven of Rokuyokuten (Six Khandas) where every spirit is enjoying a happy and lovely life. Miroku's Palace in Tusita is called the Mani Palace consisting of the Inner Hall and the Outer Hall. Those who reside in the Outer Hall can live as long as 4,000 years, while those in the Inner Hall for an unlimited age. It is told that in the Inner Hall where Miroku is believed to be living at present happens never a fire, or a flood, or a storm. There are found forty-nine temples inhabited by minor Bosatsu under the control of Miroku, the Lord of the sacred region.

## MONJU BOSATSU

(Manjusri)

Monju Bosatsu was born as the third son of Amida Nyorai who was then a layman and had not yet attained Buddhahood. He presides over the department of wisdom and his younger brother Fugen Bosatsu that of mercy. Being a Bodhisattva in the spiritual body and a personification of the power of apprehension,

he can manifest himself in any form whenever he wants. He is generally represented as a being of handsome look and of the body of golden color and with no covering on his head. In his right hand, he holds a sword which is a sign of having overcome ignorance, while in the left a scroll of the Prajnâ-pâramitâ Sûtra. He is riding on a lion, signifying that he is absolutely fearless and qualified to subdue evil passions and demons as furiously as this wild beast. Sometimes, he is seated on a pedestal of lotus-flowers with his right hand raised up, indicating that he is about to preach the Law, and he holds in his left hand a baton, a sign of his infinite power. He is popularly worshipped by the Buddhists of the Mahâyana School on account of his ten great vows in which are declared his earnest wishes of saving all beings who come into contact with him. When these vows were fulfilled, he created five symbols which stand for the five different teachings of Dainichi Nyorai (Mahâ-Vairocana), Ashiku Nyorai (Aksopya), Hôshô Nyorai (Ratnasambhava), Amida Nyorai (Amitâbha) and Fukûjôju (Amoghasiddhi, a pseudonym of Sâkyamuni). On reciting these symbols, one can get, it is believed, exactly the same merit obtained in meditating on the above-mentioned five Buddhas of the Dharma-Kâya (Spiritual-body) and can attain the state of Mahâ-



MONJU BOSATSU

Colored Wood: 1 ft. 1/2 high.

Jōgwan Period (794-888)

Owned by Gakuanji Temple near Nara.





FUGEN BOSATSU

Wood: 1 ft. 10 high.

Early Fujiwara Period (888-1068)

Owned by Yenshōji Temple, Nara.





Prajna-pâramitâ or perfection of the highest wisdom. The five tufts which Monju possesses on his head indicate these five symbols, so that each tuft has a miniature Buddha on it.

## FUGEN BOSATSU

(Samantabhadra)

Fugen Bosatsu, the eighth son of Amida Nyorai, takes charge of the department of mercy, while his elder brother Monju that of wisdom. He is a Bodhisattva in the spiritual body and can manifest himself in thirty-three different forms like Kwanzeon Bosatsu on an occasion necessary in saving all beings. Consequently, he has no particular form fixed, but he is usually represented as having an appearance of a beautiful lady riding on a white elephant with six tusks. According to the Esoteric Buddhism, those six tusks are meant for the six elements constituting the Universe, while the Exoteric Buddhism attributes them to the six Pâramitâs (perfection). His riding on the elephant indicates his brave yet generous heart to accept everything as mildly and steadily as this animal. In his left hand, he holds the sacred text of the Saddharma-pundarika Sûtra (Hokekyô), signifying that he is a great patron of the Mahâyana School of Buddhism.

## KOKÛZÔ BOSATSU

(Akasagarbha)

Kokûzô Bosatsu is a Bodhisattva who is the owner of boundless wisdom. It is believed that there is nothing, either on Heaven or on Earth, that he can not understand. In fact, his immeasurable wisdom is thought to combine all the wisdoms jointly possessed by the five great Buddhas, namely, Dainichi Nyorai (Mahâ-Vairocana), Ashiku Nyorai (Aksopya), 'Hôshô Nyorai (Ratna-sambhava), Amida Nyorai (Amitâbha) and Fukûjôju (Amoghasiddhis, a pseudonym of Sâkyamuni). Accordingly, he is revered exceedingly high by those who want to be imparted with a portion of his inexhaustible wisdom. It is said that Sun, Moon and all stars are his incarnations and that his supernatural attribute of wisdom and benevolence is in no wise measurable.

Kokûzô Bosatsu is represented as a being of flesh-color skin and of a body beautifully decorated with numerous jewels and garlands. He wears a diadem of five virtues indicating the above-stated five Buddhas. This diadem is also furnished with thirty-five miniature Buddhas. Sitting on a pedestal of lotus-flowers, he holds in his left hand a blooming-lotus of happiness



KOKUJŌ BOSATSU

Colored Painting on Silk: 5 ft. 1/2 by 3 ft

Late Fujiwara Period (1068-1185)

Owned by Daigoji Temple near Kyoto.



on which is fixed a Cîntamani (wishing-gem) while in the right a sword of wisdom.

## **JIZÔ BOSATSU**

(Ksitigarbha)

Jizô Bosatsu is an extremely popular Bodhisattva who works hard at all times, imparting his limitless benevolence to anyone who needs it. According to Sûtras, he was spiritually entrusted by Buddha Sâkyamuni in Tôriten Trâyastimsa) to salve and teach all beings on Heaven and Earth and even in Hell during the interval between his death and the appearance of Miroku (Maitreya). His manifestation in coming into contact with mortals is made in various manners like Kwanzeon Bosatsu, sometimes as a Sravaka and at other times as a Bodhisattva and so on, but usually in six different forms. In fact, his principal function is the salvation of the six existences, namely, the Jigokudô or Deepest Hell, the Gakidô or Hell of Hunger, the Chikushôdô or Hell of Eternal Torment for Immoral Conducts, the Ashuradô or Hell of Torture for Hypocrisy, the Ningendô or Life of Human Beings and the Tennindô or Life of Heavenly Beings. Taking the following six different names and forms, Jizô Bosatsu manifests himself in the six existences:—

- (1) Kōngōgwan Jizō (Jigokudō) holding a Yamā-Deva flag in his left hand and assuming the Mûdra "Apprehension" in the right.
- (2) Kōngōhō Jizō (Gakidō) holding a Cintamani (wishing-gem) in his left hand and assuming the Mûdra "Amṛta or Sweet Liquid" in the right.
- (3) Kōngōhi Jizō (Chikushōdō) holding a stick in his left hand and assuming the Mûdra "Welcome" in the right.
- (4) Kōngōto Jizō (Ashuradō) holding a Vajra flag in his left hand and assuming the Mûdra "Abhayanda" in the right.
- (5) Hōkō-ō Jizō (Ningendō) holding a walking-stick in his left hand and assuming the Mûdra "True Wish" in the right.
- (6) Yotenga Jizō (Tennindō) holding a Cintamani (wishing-gem) in his left hand and assuming the Mûdra "Preaching" in the right.

Besides the above-named Jizō Bosatsu strictly mentioned in the Sûtras, there are found many other Jizō of private nomination and forms created in later days.

Jizō Bosatsu is almost always represented in the form of a fine and mild looking priest of shaven head and attired in black robes, sitting up or down upon a pedestal of lotus-flowers. His doctrine is extensively



JIZÔ BOSATSU

Colored Wood: 2 ft. 11 1/2 high.

Sculptor, Kwaikai (died 1253)

Owned by Tôdaiji Temple, Nara.





studied and believed in Esoteric as well as Exoteric Buddhism. His images of stone are very frequently met with by the roadside all over the country and are sometimes covered with pebbles and bibs, the offerings from children. Strange and interesting to say, Jizô Bosatsu and Yemma Dai-O (King of Hell) are respectively an incarnation of Amida Nyorai, indicating two entirely opposite instincts; Jizô represents mercy and generosity while Yemma anger and severity.

## **YEMMA-DAI-Ô**

(Yama Deva)

Yemma Dai-ô is the venerable great King of Hell (Naraka in Sanskrit) where nothing but uprightness is accepted. The Hell is said to be divided into three classes; each class has eight divisions; each division is subdivided into sixteen sections. All of these are appropriately organized to punish bad spirits in accordance to the lighter or heavier sins committed in their previous existences. The Hell or Jigoku is believed to be located underground at a distance of 500 Yojanas (an immense Sanskrit measure) beneath Jambudvipa in the south of Meru or the southern continent.

The King Yemma presides over the Court of Hell as its chief judge, being strongly assisted by eighteen juries and eighty thousand jailers. He gives sentences to all departed souls who have to appear in his presence, whether they will or not, at the immediate moment of their last breath. The sentences are solemnly read by Citragupta, one of Yemma's trusty secretaries. On its conclusion, good spirits are led into the Paradise where they are made happy, possibly meeting their parents, or brothers, or sisters or friends who might have been already admitted therein. On the contrary, bad spirits get a terrible sentence "Go to Hell." As soon as it is announced, they are willy-nilly dragged into the Hell of burning heat or of freezing cold and so forth under the strict vigilance of some sturdy jailers. The sufferings in the Hell are too horrible to be described with a mortal pen. Nevertheless, these frightful punishments are not caused by the command of the King Yemma in the least degree but by bad spirits themselves. And this outcome is perfectly natural since "Cause and Effect" are the eternal Great Law of Buddhism. *Be careful! Be careful!*

Yemma is a son of Vivasvat, a sun-deity, and his consort Saranyu. Madam Yemma is known as Vijaya, a Brahmanian lady of enviable beauty. He has a sister named Yami, whose look is by no means tempting; in



YEMMA DAI-Ô

Colored Wood: 3 ft. 11 1/2 high.

Kamakura Period (1186-1334)

Owned by Byakugôji Temple near Nara.



fact, they are twin. Yami reigns the Hell of the female sex, acting in behalf of her twin-brother. Yemma is the owner of a fearful countenance and his body is green or blue, while he is dressed up in a strange but somewhat dignified costume of orange or red color. He holds in his hand a Danda, a kind of scepter, which is surmounted with a pair of ghastly human heads of a man and a woman. He is rarely seen riding on a white or blue buffalo.

## FUDÔ MYÔ-Ô

(Acala)

Fudô Myô-ô is the first and head of the Godai Myô-ô or Godaison (Five Vidyarâjas) and is seated in the center of the group. These five Vidyarâjas are gathered together in accordance to the doctrine of the Esoteric Buddhism and are held in a particularly high position by the Shingon sect. Fudô Myô-ô is attributed to an incarnation of Dainichi Nyorai and is worshipped with an unsurpassable popularity throughout the country. Not only is he endowed with supreme calmness and strength but his movement is amazingly free and swift, thereby enabling him to do anything he likes in whatever way advantageous to all beings. His principal function is to punish wicked people.

Fudô Myô-ô is usually represented as a being with an angry face, the left eye squinted, crooked eyebrows, a cue hanging over the left shoulder and clad in a red or brown garment. In his right hand he grasps a sword while in the left a rope. The rope is intended to tie up wicked people and the sword to punish them with. Being surrounded by an immense flame burning on his back, he sits on a pedestal of precious stones or lotus-flowers. The flame indicates his huge power and wisdom in subduing all demons and in driving off all bad passions. He is supposed to be waited upon day and night by eight pages; among others, Seitaka-Dôji (Cetaka) and Kongara-Dôji (Kinkara) are most well-known.

## KÔSANZE MYÔ-Ô

(Triloka-Vajra)

Kôsanze Myô-ô, the second member of the Godai Myô-ô or Godaison (Five Vidyarâjas), is said to be an incarnation of Ashiku Nyorai. He is chiefly engaged in guarding the eastern quarter of Heaven and is believed to be able to subdue all devils and evils of the three worlds, hence the name of "Kôsanze" or "Subduer of Three Worlds." In the Esoteric Buddhism he is largely worshipped by those who are suffering with



FUDÔ MYÔ-Ô

Colored Wood: 5 ft. in height.

Kônin Period (794-888)

Owned by Tôji Temple, Kyoto.







KÔSANZE MYÔ-Ô

Colored Wood: 4 ft. 10 3/4 high.

Ashikaga Period (1334-1573).

Owned by Futaiji Temple near Nara.





GUNDARI MYŌ-Ō

Colored Wood: 4 ft. 11 1/8 high.

Ashikaga Period (1334-1573)

Owned by Futaiji Temple near Nara



demoniac trouble. He is generally mentioned as having three or four fearful faces, each with three eyes. In his eight arms are held a halberd, a bow, an arrow, a bell and a sword, etc., while his two hands are distorted in front in a posture of Mûdra. Quite frequently, he is represented with flames burning around his body and as treading on Jizaiten (Mahesvara) under his left foot and on his wife Umago (Uma) under the right, presenting a scene of the punishment for evil passions and ignorance.

## **GUNDARI MYÔ-Ô**

(Kundali)

Gundari Myô-ô, the third member of the Godai Myô-ô or Godaison (Five Vidyarâjas) is attributed to an incarnation of Hôshô Nyorai. His main duty is to watch the southern quarter of Heaven against danger. He is believed to benefit all beings with a peculiar liquid called "Gundari." As a rule, he is shown as a being having eight arms and an angry face, holding in his hands a Cakra-wheel, an ax and an arrow, etc. He is occasionally seen wrapped in a huge volume of furious flames and seated on a stand of lotus-flowers.

## **DAI-ITOKU MYÔ-Ô**

(Yamantaka)

Dai-Itoku Myô-ô, the fourth member of the Godai Myô-ô or Godaison (Five Vidyarâjas), is taken for an incarnation of Muryôju Butsu (Amida) and is busily occupied with the work of protecting the western quarter of Heaven. He is ordinarily known to us as a being with six angry faces, six arms and six feet. In his hands are held a sword, a cakra-wheel and a Vajra, etc., and he is riding on a white bull, often his body wrapped in a blazing flame. His virtue is said to surpass those of all saints, while his terrific look inspires with awe and horror even poisonous snakes and wild beasts.

## **KONGÔ YASHA MYÔ-Ô**

(Vajra Yaksa)

Kongô Yasha Myô-ô, the fifth member of the Godai Myô-ô or Godaison (Five Vidyarâjas) and a would-be incarnation of Fukûjôju (Sâkyamuni), is a guardian of the northern quarter of Heaven. He is guarding Buddhism with his five hundred vassals or



DAI-ITOKU MYŌ-Ō

Colored Wood: 4 ft. 10 1/8 high.

Ashikaga Period (1334-1573)

Owned by Futaiji Temple near Nara.







KONGÔ YASHA MYÔ-Ô

Colored Wood: 4 ft. 10  $\frac{3}{8}$  high.

Ashikaga Period (1334-1573)

Owned by Futaiji Temple near Nara.





AIZEN MYŌ-Ō

Colored Painting on Silk: 2 ft. 1/2 by 4 ft.

Attributed to Kose Aimi (fl. 901-923)

Owned by Gokokuin Temple, Tokyo.



minor Yaksas. His figure is commonly described as having three frightful faces and six arms, sometimes standing amidst kindling flames with his feet stretched out. In his six hands are held a bow, an arrow, a sword, a Cakra-wheel and a bell, etc.

## **AIZEN MYÔ-Ô**

(Raga Vidyarâja)

Aizen Myô-ô is a Vidyarâja extensively worshipped in the Esoteric Buddhism. Prayers are offered to him from a belief that he is capable to destroy devils or demons and to remove all wicked minds. In the Shingon sect he is thought to be an incarnation of Dainichi Nyorai and is enshrined in its every temple as the protector against evil spirits and the poisons of beasts and so forth. He has a reddish body, three eyes and six arms and wears a diadem shaped like a lion which is sometimes two-headed. His face assumes an angry expression for frightening demons. According to the Esoteric doctrine of Tantra, he is supposed to be living in the sun, so that his body is as bright as the sunshine. He sits on a pedestal of red lotus-flowers and is guarded by thirty-seven attendants. In his hands are held a lotus-flower, a diamond, a bow, an arrow, a holy bell and a stake. He possesses, moreover,

a miracle to let numberless treasures flow out of a sacred jar lying under his seat.

## **KUJAKU MYÔ-Ô**

(Mahâ-Mayura)

Kujaku Myô-ô is a Vidyarâja believed to protect us against the dangers of fire and sickness and to give us the rain in case of drought. He has two or four and sometimes six arms and is always riding on a peacock from which his name "Peacock Vidyarâja" is probably derived. In the Esoteric Buddhism, he is worshipped with high reverence. He is said to be an incarnation of Sâkyamuni, but is hardly accepted by the majority of Buddhists. The worship of Kujaku Myô-ô was introduced to Japan from China in the 8th century, and later in the 12th century it became considerably fashionable among nobility as well as commoners, while prayers were often offered even in the Imperial Court.

## **BONTEN**

(Brahman)

Bonten is popularly worshipped as a patron of Buddhism in company with Taishakuten (Indra). He



KUJAKU MYÔ-Ô

Colored Painting on Silk: 3 ft. 3 by 2 ft.

Late Fujiwara Period (1068-1185)

Owned by Anrakujuin Temple, Kyoto.







BONTEN

Colored Wood: 6 ft. 7 1/2 high.

With the date corresponding to 1289

Owned by Akishinodera Temple near Nara.



is considered to be working jointly with Indra for the welfare of Buddhism and its believers. Consequently, the images of Bonten and Taishakuten are always installed at the right and left sides of the chief object of worship in a Buddhist temple. In India, Bonten is most highly revered as the supreme god, because he is regarded as the creator of the Universe. According to Indian mythology, he was the foremost being ever appeared in this world and had been the unique soul for an immeasurable period, while later he created all other beings. He is believed to be the Creator, Siva the Destroyer, and Visnu the Preserver, constituting the Triad of the Universe. Although his figure is seen in divers kinds, he is usually represented as a being with four faces, three eyes and four arms, holding a lotus, a halberd and a jar in his hands and sitting on a stand of lotus-flowers. However, the illustration in this book does not at all conform with his usual form.

## TAISHAKUTEN

(Indra)

Taishakuten, a powerful patron of Buddhism, is held in paramount esteem in Japan, especially in India, with his companion Bonten. His function is to fight against Asuras who are supposed to be laying hinder-

ances to the propagation of the Great Law. Taishakuten's Castle in Tôriten (Trâyastrimsa) up Shumisen (Mt. Sumeru) is surrounded with beautiful parks and his colossal residence contains 70,500 chambers, each of which occupied by seven consorts who are respectively waited upon by seven waitresses. The castle is fortified on all sides by Four Maharâjas, ministers and countless soldiers. Strange to say, all these expenses are defrayed from his Treasure Jar which emits out anything Indra needs. In spite of his warlike profession, he has a mild mien and wears a diadem on the head and numerous garlands on the body, though his figures are variously produced.

## KICHIJÔTEN

(Sri Devi)

Kichijôten, a goddess of fortune, is believed to be always prepared to confer happiness upon anyone who prays to her with sincere faith and devotion. She is a daughter of Tokushaka (Yamadaska) and his wife Kishimojin (Hârîti). According to the Konkomyôkyô (Suvarna-prabhasa Sûtra), she is a sister of Bishamonten or Tamonten (Vaisravana), but is stated as his wife in other books. She lives in the Celestial Palace in Animanda, the region ruled by Bishamonten,



TAISHAKUTEN

Colored Wood: 5 ft. 9 high.

Kamakura Period (1186-1334)

Owned by Kōfukuji Temple, Nara.



guardian of the northern quarter of Heaven.

Kichijôten is as a rule represented in a form of flawless beauty but with white and red arms. With a jewelled diadem on her head, she is richly attired in heavenly robes, wearing beautiful ear-rings, necklaces, bracelets and garlands, etc. Her right hand assumes a sign of Mûdra "Abhayanda" while the left holds a Cintamani (wishing-gem). Having been superseded by the superior popularity of Benten or Benzaiten (Sarasvati) who appeared at a later period, she is not so much revered as she used to.

## BENZAITEN

(Sarasvati)

Benzaiten or Benten is at the present day the unrivaled goddess of happiness, music, wisdom and good memory, for which she is fervently worshipped by a large number of devotees. She is said to be the most favorite consort of Bonten (Brahman), a notorious polygamist.

There are seen different figures of hers : some with eight arms, each equipped with a weapon, while others with two arms holding a Cintamani (wishing-gem) and a sword, etc. Her form commonly met with is, however, an angel with a white skin, wearing a diadem on the

head and playing on a guitar. According to a vulgar version, she is an incarnation of a snake, so that she is described to have a human head and a snake's body and sometimes she appears as a being having a snake on the head and a Torii (Shintô gateway) on the forehead. In most cases, a temple dedicated to her is located near a pond, or a river, or the sea.

## MARISHITEN

(Marci)

Marishiten is a faithful vassal of Taishakuten (Indra), a supreme patron of Buddhism. He is widely worshipped from a belief that he protects the country and people from dangers and to look after the harvest of all kinds. Acting as a vanguard of Nitten (Sûrya), a sun-god, he goes round the four quarters of Heaven without cessation. Marci, a Sanskrit word, means "gossamer," the name presumably given him from his swift movement invisible to human eyes. Therefore, the exact image of Marishiten is not known to us, but he is always depicted as riding on a wild boar.





ZÔCHÔTEN

Clay Image: 5 ft. 4 high.

Tenpyô Period (710-794)

Installed in Kaidan-in, Nara.





TAMONTEN

Clay Image: 5 ft. 4 high.  
Tenpyō Period (710-794)  
Installed in Kaidan-in, Nara.



## SHITENNO

(Four Maharâjas of Heaven)

Shitennô are four celestial beings guarding the four quarters of Heaven against the obstacles of Buddhism and protecting those who are engaged in propagating the Great Law. They are believed to be living half-way up Shumisen (Mt. Sumeru). Their images trampling devils or demons under their feet are very frequently installed in quite a lot of Buddhist temples, and the finest examples are seen in Nara.

(1) Jikokuten (Dhritarâshtra), guardian of East Purva-vidaha, lives on the white gold rocks. He is the lord of Gandharvas or heavenly musicians. He has a green skin, purple hair, his mouth wide open for anger, and wears a red garment on which an armor is worn. His right hand holds a Cintamani (wishing-gem) and a sword in the left hand.

(2) Kômokuten (Virûpâksha), guardian of West Aparâ-godana, is the lord of Nagas or dragons. He resides on the silver rocks. He has a white skin and large eyes. His right arm is lifted upward and the left presses the waist.

(3) Zôchôten (Virûdhaka, guardian of South

Jambudvipa, is the lord of Kumbhandas or demons. His home is located on the crystal rocks. He has a reddish skin, his mouth closed for anger, and he wears a red garment with an armor on it. His left hand holds a sword and the right a halberd.

(4) Tamonten (Vaisravana), guardian of North Uttara-guru, is the lord of Yaksas or demigods. He dwells on the gold rocks. He has a dark-blue skin and an angry face, while his mouth is shut for anger. In his right hand is held a halberd and in the left a stûpa. He wears a red garment under an armor. Among the four Maharâjas, he is the most popular being and his name is much more familiarly known as "Bishamonten" whose temples are found in many numbers and visited by devout worshippers throughout the country.

## **KONGÔ RIKISHI or NI-Ô**

(Nârâyana and Vajrapâni)

Kongô Rikishi, popularly called "Ni-ô" or Two Deva Kings, are the two fierce-looking giants standing in the right and left niches of the main gateway of a Buddhist temple. They are guardians of Buddhism and its believers and keep large vigilant eyes upon visitors to the holy premises. One is named Narayen



KONGÔ RIKISHI (Narayan)

Wood: 26 ft. 3 high.

Executed by Unkei in 1202.

Owned by Tōdaiji Temple, Nara.





Kongô Rikishi (Nârâyana) and is painted red. He has his mouth open, indicating the beginning of all things. He is said to be an incarnation of Bonten or Brahman. The other is called Misshaku Kongô Rikishi (Vajrapâni) and is of green color. He has his mouth shut, signifying the end of all things. He is a would-be incarnation of Taishakuten or Indra. According to legend: once there lived an Indian king who had two wives. He had by his first wife as many as one thousand boys and by the second only two. These one thousand boys grew up to be Buddhist priests, while their two half-brothers became their guardians, calling themselves "Nârâyana" and "Vajrapâni."

Some Buddhists seem to entertain an opinion that a pair of stone or wooden dogs, sometimes lions, placed in front of a Shintô shrine and two images of warriors often seated in the niches of a Shintô gate-house (not Torii) are all derived from these two figures of Ni-ô.

## RAKAN

(Arhan)

Rakan, or Arakan in full, means a direct disciple of Buddha Sâkyamuni. He is respected as absolutely free from all passions and no longer subject to transmigration into the three worlds of desire (Kâma), form

(Rûpa) and formlessness (Arûpa-dhâtu). Having reached at the grade of sanctification, he is believed to re-appear in the future world as a Buddha, assuming at that time the title of "Samata-prabhasha."

In some temples, the images of Rakan, generally sixteen in number, are installed near that of Buddha Sâkyamuni on account of the most pious devotion to their Great Teacher. None of them looks attractive, yet they represent the pre-eminent patrons of Buddhism. There are many Rakan; the most well-known are two groups of Sixteen Rakan and Five Hundred Rakan. The special reason why Sixteen Rakan enjoy an unbroken popularity for ages is said to have originated from the following tradition :—"Eight hundred years ago after the death of Buddha Sâkyamuni, a learned Indian priest called Nandimitra made a farewell declaration on his dying eve that Sâkyamuni's doctrine had been bequeathed to Sixteen Rakan who were to serve as the objects of faith in the future world."

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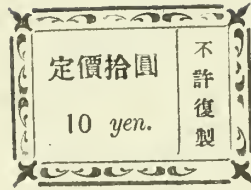








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