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COVER: Fan-Shaped Paintings Inscribed with Sutras
FACING PAGE: Portrait of Shotoku Taishi with His Son
& Younger Brother



Prince Shōtoku has been revered by Japanese for generation after generation from ages past as the spiritual head of *Wakoku* (Japan). He has been respected and adored as the father of their country. As a spiritual leader he extended the teachings of Buddhism to their land. For although Buddhism originated in India with the appearance of Gautama Buddha, since Prince Shōtoku was the first person to spread its teachings in Japan. Thus he is often called the Gautama Buddha of Japan. And, as will be related in the following pages, in light of the fact that he carried on the matters of Japanese government under the regency of the Empress Suiko (592-628 A.D.) for a period of twenty-nine years, handing down many pieces of legislation, it can be said that he brought the culture of the Chinese mainland to Japan, and cleared the way for a new Japanese culture. Thus this man, who never actually ascended the throne, nevertheless wielded Imperial authority as regent, and indeed was one of the most distinguished figures in the annals of his country. In history he is known as Shōtoku Taishi, Prince Shōtoku.

The Japanese of the modern age are well acquainted with the Prince, for it is his portrait that graces all five and ten thousand yen bank notes. For the Japanese it would be a welcome thing if such an extraordinary person were to be better known in foreign lands, and if his spirit were to find a place in them as well. Thus we have included in this little booklet a few words concerning the Prince, and have also thought it beneficial to add the text of his Constitution. We feel privileged to be able to present it to our visitors.

In order to understand the thought and spirit of Prince Shōtoku, one must know in concrete terms what he thought and what he did. What follows is a necessarily brief outline of these elements.

The Life of Prince Shōtoku

Prince Shōtoku was born the son of the Emperor Yōmei (reigned 585-587 A.D.), the thirty-first emperor of Japan, in the year 574. In 593, when he was twenty years old, he assumed the role of Prince Regent. When he died in 622 at the age of forty-nine, he had actively shouldered the responsibilities of ruling the Japanese state. If we compare his times with the histories of other lands, we find that in the West the Roman Empire had been greatly weakened and reduced over a century earlier, and was in the throes of a long

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decline. The states of Europe, such as England, France, Germany, and Italy, were not yet in existence. In the Middle East a contemporaneous event was the birth of the founder of Islam, Mohammed. The Arabs, united by the teaching of Mohammed, began their conquests in Syria, Egypt, and Africa soon afterwards. In continental Asia, China was still in the period of the northern and southern dynasties (386-589). The following period saw the unification of the great Sui Empire (581-618), and later the glories of the T'ang Dynasty.

When Prince Shōtoku was sixteen years old, in five hundred and eighty-nine, although internally the power struggles between the clans of Soga and Mononobe continued, the final destruction of the Mononobe by the Soga soon

occurred, with the result of a temporary lull in the national unrest.

In 593 Suiko was established on the throne, the first Empress in Japanese history, and Prince Shōtoku was appointed Prince Regent. Not only did the Prince prove himself to be talented and intelligent, but from the time he was a young boy he received the good influences of his father, the Emperor Yōmei, especially the latter's devotion to Buddhism. Such was the auspicious setting in which his upbringing took place.

According to tradition, when he was exactly two years old, on February the fifteenth—the death anniversary of Gautama Buddha—he faced the east, pressed his palms together in prayer and recited the words *Namu Butsu*, "I put my faith in Buddha." At that time Buddhism was still new to Japan and had not yet penetrated deeply.



The statue of the Prince Shōtoku at the age of two (see page 27)

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Most people knew little of this new faith. However, since the newly established Empress Suiko and the Prince Regent Shōtoku both were deep believers in Buddhism, when the Empress in 594 decreed that Buddhism should prosper, it was clear that she intended to encourage the spread of Buddhism in a positive manner.

Prince Shōtoku invited two learned Korean priests, Eji and Esō, in order to have them expound the teachings of Buddhism to his subjects, as well as to enable himself to study its teachings in earnest. But his learning was not of a Buddhist nature alone. He was also well versed in Confucianism and the thought of the Confucian legalists, as well as in astronomy and calendar making. He took to himself wide learning and knowledge of every sort. And with such a man at its center, a new culture flourished in Japan. Buddhism grew and developed, and the flower of art blossomed, so that today historians call this period the Asuka Period, which might be rendered in English as "the bird in flight".

Now we would like to consider briefly the work carried out by Prince Shōtoku during the nineteen years of his regency.

(1) He deepened and broadened relations with the Chinese Sui Dynasty; in order to receive the culture of the Sui, from the year six hundred he sent envoys three different times to the continent.

(2) The Japanese government was in control of the land called Mimana, located at the southern tip of the Korean peninsula. At the beginning of the sixth century this enclave was threatened by the rulers of the adjacent Korean kingdoms, Silla and Paikche, and by the powerful northern state of Koguryo. In the year 600 troops were sent to help the situation.

(3) In 603 he instituted a system whereby the order of court rank was assigned to the nobility by means of colors and patterns on the hats they worn. This was done to show that offices were held not as a right but at the will of the sovereign. It marked the beginning of a kind of merit system.

(4) In 604, when he was thirty-one years of age, he promulgated his famous Seventeen-Article Constitution, establishing the national policy of the Japanese state, and clarifying the basic principles under which politicians were to deport themselves.

(5) In an endeavor to make Buddhism flourish, he constructed the Buddhist temples of Hōryū-ji, Shitennō-ji, and others. He applied himself to the

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study of the Buddhist scriptures. He lectured on the Lotus and Shōman Sutras in 606 and wrote commentaries on the Lotus, Shōman, and Yuima Sutras. His commentary written on the Lotus Sutra, in his own hand, is preserved even today, and in reading it and the others we are able to see the depth of this Buddhist studies, and are made to understand how objective his manner of study was.

(6) In order to encourage agricultural development, he constructed an irrigation system with irrigation reservoirs and canals in what are now Nara, Osaka, and Kyōto Prefectures. In order to be prepared against possible famines or other natural calamities, he built food warehouses in different areas of the country.

(7) In the realm of social welfare his actions were especially significant and far-reaching. He established the Four Welfare Centers of the Kyōden-in, the Hiden-in, the Seyaku-in and the Ryōbyō-in. These will be discussed more fully below. These centers for the welfare of the sick, the elderly, orphans, etc., derived from Prince Shōtoku's profound love and compassion for his subjects. There is a well-known anecdote which tells of the Prince encountering a poor and hungry man in the area of Kataoka Hill and giving him clothes and food.

Prince Shōtoku began a systematic search for medicinal herbs and plants. He opened a road leading from the port at Naniwa (Osaka) to the capital at Asuka. Foreign visitors took this route when travelling between the two centers, and the road became an important element involved in the influx of continental culture.

(8) In 620, with his compatriot Soga no Umako, he strived to write the records of the Japanese nation, but these were unfortunately destroyed soon afterwards in the fire which razed the Soga mansion.

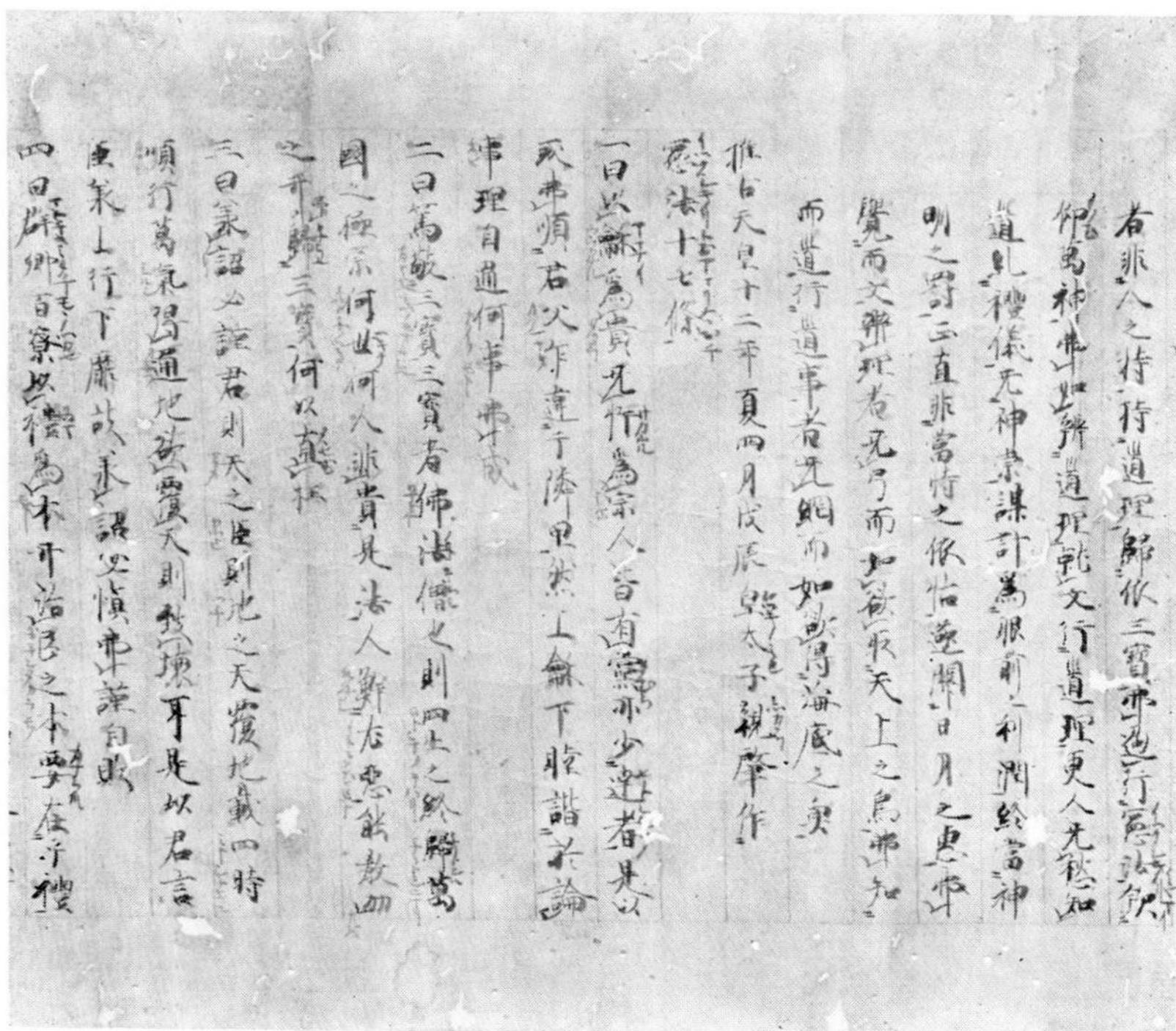
The twenty-nine years during which he was the regent, Prince Shōtoku accomplished all this and more, not only laying the base for all subsequent Japanese culture, but transmitting the greatness of his character to the entire Japanese people, who have cherished it as one of their most treasured legacies for more than a thousand years. When he died suddenly in 622, the *Chronicles* tell us the nobles and commoners alike, "the old, as if they had lost a dear child, the young as if they had lost a beloved parent, filled the ways with the sound of their lamenting." The Korean priest Eji, who had been the Prince's teacher, hearing the news of the Prince's death after his return to his native land, is reported to have said, "I have lost an incomparable friend. He was truly a great

Japanese saint. Now without him I too have lost all desire to live." So grieved and saddened was he that, as recorded in the *Chronicles*, Eji died exactly one year to the day later, on the anniversary of the death of Prince Shōtoku. After his death, people came to believe that Prince Shōtoku had been during his life an incarnation of *Guze Kanzeon Bosatsu*, the compassionate Bodhisattva who strives to gain salvation for all living beings. From Nara times until the present, for a period of about thirteen hundred years, the Japanese people have continued to hold precious the so-called *Taishi Shinko*, "the belief or cult of the Prince."

III

The Seventeen-Article Constitution

Having given a brief outline of Prince Shōtoku's life, we would next like to relate, using the Seventeen Article Constitution as a center, something about his thought. If we read the Constitution we can see the breadth and depth of his learning and culture. But that which constitutes the heart of the document is the "spirit of harmony" (See the First Article) and its Buddhistic background.



Hand-written copy of the Seventeen-Article Constitution (see page 28)

The main point of the First Article, which statesthat, " harmony is to be valued," displays the national policy of Japan in time of the Prince; this spirit applies not only to this article alone, but it runs throughout the entire Constitution. Thus we may say that this is the "Constitution based upon Harmony."

The Second Article, "Sincerely revere the Three Treasures" (of Buddha, the Dharma, and the priesthood, may be thought of as indicating the fundamental principle of harmony. This is because the Three Treasures themselves are the one thing alone which men must embrace. It is said that this is a universal truth, which all nations should follow, so they may become as one nation. Accordingly, this universal truth would bring peace between man and man as well as between nation and nation. Thus the meaning of the Second Article is that Buddhism is to be the foundation upon which the above harmony is to be actualized.

It is the Tenth Article which perhaps best manifests the spirit of harmony. Since the basis of disharmony is anger, this article teaches that one should never allow oneself to become angry. Anger towards others comes from thinking that we are absolutely right ourself, and that all others are mistaken. But since men are all but ordinary mortals, both good and bad, and wise and foolish, this article teaches that we should not distinguish between self and others or make further distinctions based upon these. The Buddha alone is absolutely right and good. So if we examine our own imperfections before the Buddha, we will find that our anger will naturally cease to kindle. This means that the heart which honors the Three Treasures earnestly, as was expounded in the Second Article, and the stress upon reflecting on our own foolishness and ignorance of the Tenth Article, are not in the least different. Moreover, seen overall, the Constitution may be said to emphasize the politics or government of patriotism, the idea that authority or power is not the basis of government. Thus the concept of authority or power is not even once referred to. This is an important feature of the Constitution, which finally may be said to be the manifestation of Prince Shōtoku's compassionate spirit. For example, as the Fifteenth Article states, "Those high and those low should be harmonious," that is, those high and those low should become one.

For the sake of the nation, the Japanese people were told, good government must be carried out with one heart. The Seventeenth Article, "Decision on important matters should not be made in general by one person alone. They should be discussed with many others," emphasizes a closely democratic-type spirit of consultation, with authoritarianism forever denied. In other words, the meaning of the Fourth Article, "The affairs of the state will be managed without effort," is to be aimed at. Not by relying upon control by authority of might or power, but through the self-awakening of individuals, the nation

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will be managed naturally—and that is precisely what must be termed the actualization of harmony.

One thousand, three hundred and sixty some years ago Prince Shōtoku wrote this Constitution and described the ideal of harmony as the greatest good. His words of course are not for his time alone, for there is much that speaks to us today. It is not only for the Japanese people alone that his words are true, they hold important lessons, perhaps inescapable lessons, for all men of all the nations of the world.

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SHITENNŌ-JI TEMPLE

Shitennō-ji (the Temple of the Four Devaraja or Heavenly Kings) was first constructed by Prince Shōtoku during the period of his regency in the first year of the reign of the Empress Suiko (593 A.D.). Following the death of his father, Emperor Yōmei (585–587), there was a struggle for succession to the throne between the factions of Soga no Umako and Mononobe no Moriya. Although he was but a youth at the time, Prince Shōtoku allied himself on the side of Soga no Umako in the struggle against Mononobe, and prayed for victory in this cause to the four protecting gods of the country, the Shitennō.

When the struggle ended in victory for the Soga clan, Prince Shōtoku was moved to build a temple pagoda in gratitude at a place called Tamatsukuri in Naniwa (present-day Osaka). Then when he was twenty years of age, upon becoming the Prince Regent, he had the temple pagoda moved to the location where it stands at present. It was the first imperial temple erected in Japan, and it was built on a grand scale.



The temple-complex of Shitennō-ji in Tokugawa period

The Significance of Shitennō-ji

Shitennō-ji's present location, at Uemachi-heights in the southern part of Osaka,

is now a bustling area near the railway terminal of southern Osaka, but in ancient times, before much of the bay-front land was filled in for commercial use, Shitenno-ji faced Osaka Bay, atop a small hill overlooking the sea. There are many reasons why this particular site was chosen for the erection of the *Garan*, the complete Buddhist temple-monastery, which was a monumental structure of bright blue and red. For one thing, this land was an extremely important place in the sea traffic of the time, situated as it was on the eastern edge of the Inland Sea. It was through this waterway that continental culture flowed into Japan from ships plying their way between continental Asia and the Yamato area. It was a center for both embarkation and disembarkation. Thus, not only was it important militarily and politically, it had been opened up long before as an essential economic center. The selection of this site for the relocation of the temple had, therefore, a high significance. Shitenno-ji was the temple of the Four Heavenly Gods or Kings, and as such played an important role in the protection of the nation; besides this, the architecture no doubt was designed for exhibition to foreign envoys and travellers, in order that its magnificence should reveal to them the might of the island nation. It is quite possible that it also served a function as an elegant reception and ceremonial hall for foreign arrivals. Even today the *Bugaku* performances of the temple, transmitted from ancient times, are a source of pride, and have been designated by the government as an Intangible Cultural Asset. Yet they were probably enjoyed by foreign visitors as early as Prince Shōtoku's time. From the temple of Shitenno-ji, visitors would probably have travelled to the capital of the time, which was at Asuka in Yamato, ported along the great byroad of the time, the Takenouchi Kaidō.

The *Shika-in*, or Four Divisions of the Temple

For Shitenno-ji the concept behind the four sub-temples is one of special significance. It can be seen expressed in what is written in the *Goshuin Engi*, the records of Shitenno-ji. These four sub-temples are; the *Kyōden-in*, the *Hiden-in*, the *Seyaku-in*, and the *Ryōbyō-in*. The *Kyōden-in* is the present-day temple-complex of Shitenno-ji. It was the center of worship, the great central hall or religious sanctuary proper, used for training in Buddhist discipline and for learning. The *Hiden-in* was the hall where the poor could obtain relief, and for the care of the elderly and orphans. The *Seyaku-in* and the *Ryōbyō-in* together would correspond to modern hospitals; at the *Seyaku-in* medicinal herbs were collected, refined, and distributed free of charge; the *Ryōbyō-in* was a hospital or clinic where the sick could receive treatment without charge. From its very beginnings Buddhism possessed the spirit of helping others, of aiding man in the relief of his suffering. Prince Shōtoku no doubt followed in the mainstream of this tradition in establishing these centers for the public welfare.

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Style of Architecture

The style in which the buildings are arranged is one of the oldest in Japan, popularly called the Shitennō-ji style. As you enter the main gate (the Niōmon) of the temple, the Five-storied Pagoda is seen in the central position, with the Kondō and Kōdō in a line with it. There is a corridor encircling the entire layout to the right and left of this central axis, tying the Chūmon and the Kōdō at either end.

Pagodas were originally built for the purpose of housing relics of the Buddha, and in this role they in fact manifested the Buddha. The Kondō represents the Dharma, or Buddhist Teaching, and the Kōdō manifests the Priesthood or Sangha. Thus at temples such as Shitennō-ji the buildings themselves symbolized the Three Treasures of Buddhism; the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Priesthood.

During the reconstruction of the present structure, tiles dating from as far back as the Asuka Period (that is, from the time of Prince Shōtoku) were unearthed, telling in themselves the story of the long history of Shitennō-ji Temple.

The Faith of Shitennō-ji Temple

Shitennō-ji Temple is not of interest solely because it is one of the oldest Buddhist temples in Japanese history. Today, as well, it is a sacred site, connected in a way equalled by no other institution to the founder, Prince Shōtoku. In this role, it brings together the faith of the common people of the city of Osaka and surrounding areas. Each year, in spring and again in autumn, at the time of the *Higan* services—a Buddhist rite held for a week, the fourth day of which is the equinox, vernal or autumnal—people throng to the temple by the hundreds of thousands. And the twenty-first day of every month there are also services, at which time tens of thousands of worshippers are to be seen.

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The Stone Torii and Saidaimon (see page 23-4)

Shitenno-ji Temple draws believers to its altars in a manner which transcends all sectarian considerations. But the most famous of all the beliefs connected with Shitenno-ji Temple is that centered around the Saidaimon or West Gate. Long ago, as was mentioned before, the West Gate of the Temple faced the waters of Osaka Bay, at the easternmost reaches of the Inland Sea. At the midpoint of the week of the *Higan* ceremonies, at the time of the equinox, if you stand just before this Gate facing towards the sea, the setting sun will disappear into the sea falling in a line which exactly bisects the West Gate. It is expounded in the *Sutra of Eternal Life*, one of the principal scriptures of the Pure Land belief, according to what is called the Contemplation of the Setting Sun, that it is only in spring and autumn that the sun is seen to rise exactly in the East and to set exactly in the West, and that Amida's Paradise lies where the sun sets, exactly to the West, beyond an innumerable thousand of worlds. It is thus that from ages past believers have assembled in spring and autumn at the West Gate of Shitenno-ji Temple to worship the setting sun, praying for rebirth in Amida's Paradise.

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But the faith of Shitenno-ji Temple is not that of the Pure Land alone. Dengyō Daishi (767–822), also known as Saichō, the founder of the Japanese Tendai Sect and the first Buddhist leader in Japanese history to be honored with the title *Daishi*, great teacher, deeply cherished the memory of Prince Shōtoku. He tried to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor and once made a retreat at the shrine of the Prince. He even composed a selection of Buddhist verses which had the Prince as their subject. Nor was he alone in this, for in later times other eminent Buddhist priests also showed their veneration for Prince Shōtoku in their own ways; some of them, following the lead of Dengyō Daishi, composed poems in his honor. Shinran Shōnin, (1173–1262) the founder of the Jōdo Shin Sect in Japan, followed the lead of Dengyō Daishi, and composed numerous *Wasan*, Buddhist hymns, in honor of the Prince. Shinran regarded Prince Shōtoku with especial reverence. And thus it has been, down to the present day the same ample evidence that since his own lifetime he has always been regarded as the Father of Japanese Buddhism by members of all the sects and branches. In this same regard, Shitenno-ji Temple became, and has remained, one of the foremost centers of Buddhist faith in Japan, Regardless of distinctions based upon sects or schools.

The Reconstruction of The Garan

Because of Shitenno-ji Temple’s location in Naniwa (present-day Osaka), an important economic, military and political center, it was frequently victim to fire and other natural calamities. Yet each time it was destroyed or damaged, it rose once again, phoenix-like, from the ashes and debris. If we look at just

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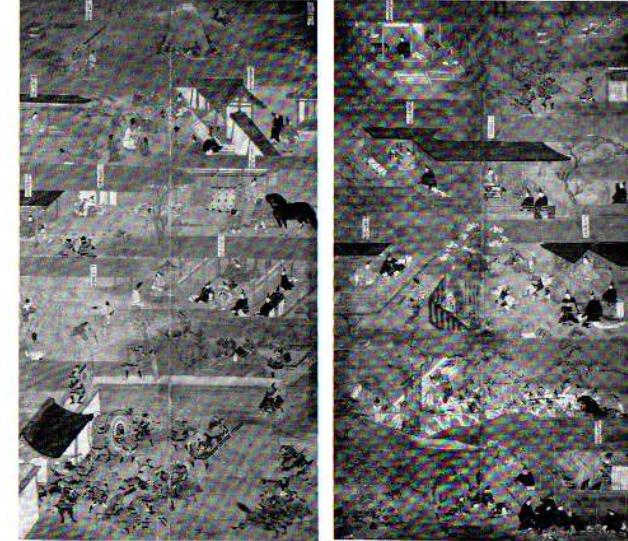
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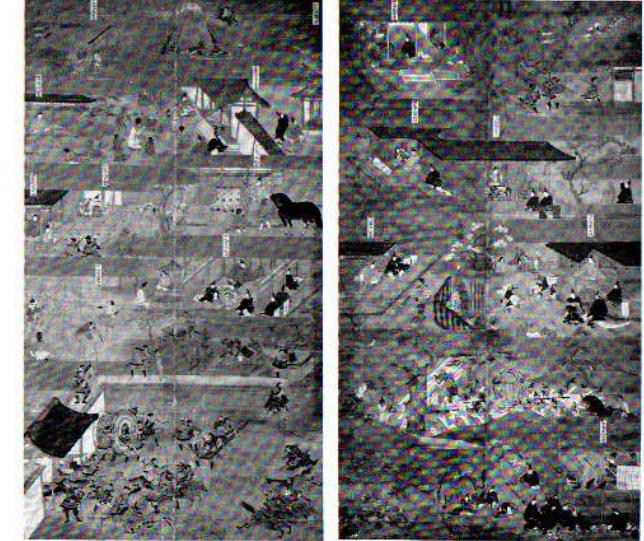
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Illustrated life of Prince Shōtoku

The Present Situation

Although Shitenno-ji Temple was built during the reign of the Empress Suiko over thirteen hundred and seventy years ago, and has during those years seen its share of ups and downs, Prince Shōtoku's spirit and achievements have continued to live on, flowing in a ceaseless stream throughout the entire temple system. Thus it is often said "Shitenno-ji Temple is the oldest of temples—it is also the newest."

As was mentioned previously, the temple was laid out in four main divisions, one of which was the Kyōden-in, the great central hall or religious sanctuary used for training in Buddhist discipline and in aesthetic and scholarly pursuits. Let us now dwell for a moment on the functions of this religious sanctuary. Prince Shōtoku himself is said to have called it a place where Bodhisattvahood is instantaneously realized; a site of faith and learning. The Bodhisattva, which may be called the ideal of Mahayana teaching, is a being destined for enlightenment, a future Buddha. He is one who seeks enlightenment not only for himself but for others as well; he is one who practises the teaching of Buddhism in both other-worldly and secular ways of life. Instead of becoming a Buddha immediately, he vows to save all beings and works with compassion for suffering beings. It is to these concepts that Prince Shōtoku's words point.

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with in a progressive spirit, and are based upon the fundamental principles as set forth by Prince Shōtoku. This guidance helps people to bring forth the best in themselves, and aims at the furtherance of the social welfare. In this same realm, and again following the lead of Prince Shōtoku, there is a group meeting held weekly during which meditation is practiced, with more than two hundred participants attending throughout the year. This practice of meditation, somewhat similar to the practice of *Zazen* as performed in the Zen Sect, is said to have its origins in the Yumedono of Hōryū-ji Temple, where Prince Shōtoku used to retire to meditate in solitude.

Shitennō-ji Gakuen, or School

As a transmitter of the true meaning of the four welfare centers or divisions of the temple, the development of the Shitennō-ji Gakuen, an institution for women's learning, has become known far and wide. It consists of a Middle School, a High School, a Junior College, and a Four-year College. It endeavors to follow the saintly principles as found in Prince Shōtoku's well-known commentary on the Shōman Sutra.

In this sutra, Queen Shōman vows to devote her life to the cause of perfecting all living beings, basing her allegiance upon Buddhist articles of faith which are moral and altruistic in character. She was a good and virtuous queen who led a noble life and suffered much for the Buddhist faith to gain the assurance of ultimate salvation. Tradition has it that Prince Shōtoku lectured to the Empress Suiko on this text, no doubt hoping to inspire her to take Queen Shōman as her model. Against such a background, Shitennō-ji Temple Gakuen can be seen to be a place where young women are educated in an environment



Shitennō-ji Gakuen : Middle and High Schools

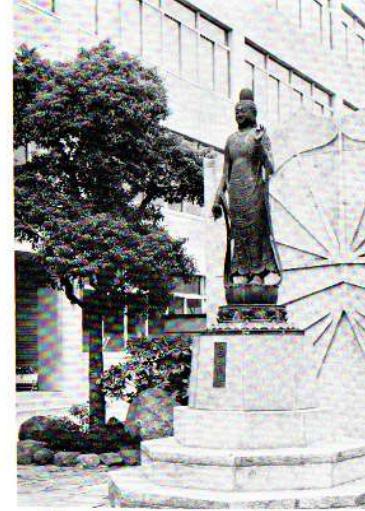
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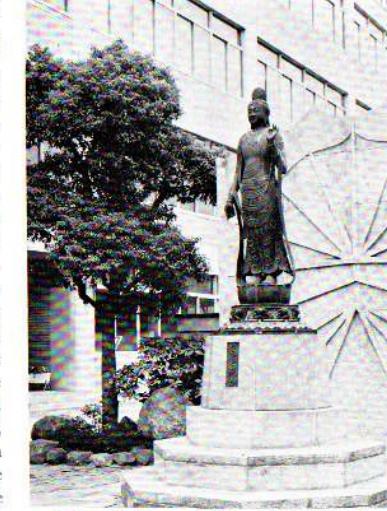
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conducive to their spiritual and intellectual betterment, where they are molded in the idealistic image of Queen Shōman. Here every effort is put forward to instill in each student an abundant religious and spiritual sentiment together with a full measure of profound intelligence. The educational atmosphere is one of the very best in all of Japan. The Middle School and the High School are very conveniently situated in the heart of the city of Osaka; in fact, they are to be found right within the compound of Shitennō-ji Temple. Morning and evening students gather together for the recitation of sutras and other religious texts, their voices blending beautifully with the nearby tolling of the great temple bell. One can feel the spirit of Buddhism manifested at these times. It is in just this type of Buddhist environment that the educative processes proceed forth.



Shitennō-ji Gakuen : Women's 2 and 4 year colleges

The Junior College and the Four-year College are both located on the outskirts of the city of Osaka, at a place called Habikino, which is rich in historical associations, for it was near here that the Japanese nation and Japanese culture were born. The schools occupy land with an area of 190,000 square meters, and are equipped with the most up-to-date facilities available. Here the institution is ready to give its students the utmost in educational opportunities.

It is our hope that these schools will be able to cross the Pacific Ocean barrier and promote understanding in a unique way between East and West, and to bring new life to Prince Shōtoku's anciently conceived principle of 'harmony.' The schools were first established in commemoration of the thirteenth memorial anniversary of Prince Shōtoku. Its fifty-year history has seen it produce young women of deep religious faith and outstanding intelligence.

The Hiden-in, the Ryōbyō-in, and the Seyaku-in

Next, we would like to add a few words about the Hiden-in, the hall where

in Prince Shōtoku's time and after the poor could obtain help; the Ryōbyō-in, a hospital or clinic where the sick could receive treatment without charge; the Seyaku-in, a dispensary where medicinal herbs were collected, refined and distributed free of charge. It is to be emphasized that the essential functions of these three centers continue even to this day.

The four divisions of the welfare institutions discharge with all the compassion at their disposal their respective roles as envisaged by their founder, and attempt to emulate his profound Buddhist spirit. Not only are they institutions of social welfare, administering to the various aspects of mind and body, but they have indissoluble roots in a spirit of compassion which would open the way of salvation for all men, making mind and body, spirit and flesh into one.

In this way the temple complex through the years has been an extraordinary place, where great and indeed unique contributions have been made again and again, in terms of social welfare and in other ways as well. Its role as a center for social welfare in itself is something which stands preeminent, even when it is compared with any country, anyplace, at any time in the cultural history of the world. When we add to this that it began and flourished over thirteen hundred years ago, it is cause of even greater amazement.

The Tennō-ji Temple Hospital

The present hospital continues the work of Prince Shōtoku's Seyaku-in and Ryōbyō-in. In nineteen thirty-one, on July tenth, the present hospital opened its doors. Following the general guidelines laid down in the Japanese laws regarding the protection of livelihood and child welfare, qualified individuals may here receive medical examinations and treatment, either free of charge, or with only token payment, for their complete medical care. These services are not limited solely to parishioners of the temple, but are open to the general public as well. Recently, a new wing has been added to the hospital, so that hospital rooms have



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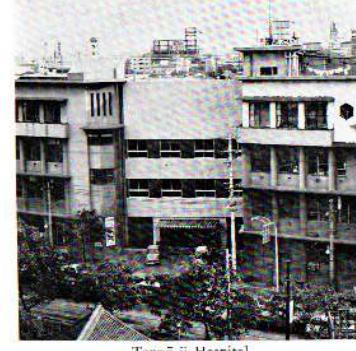
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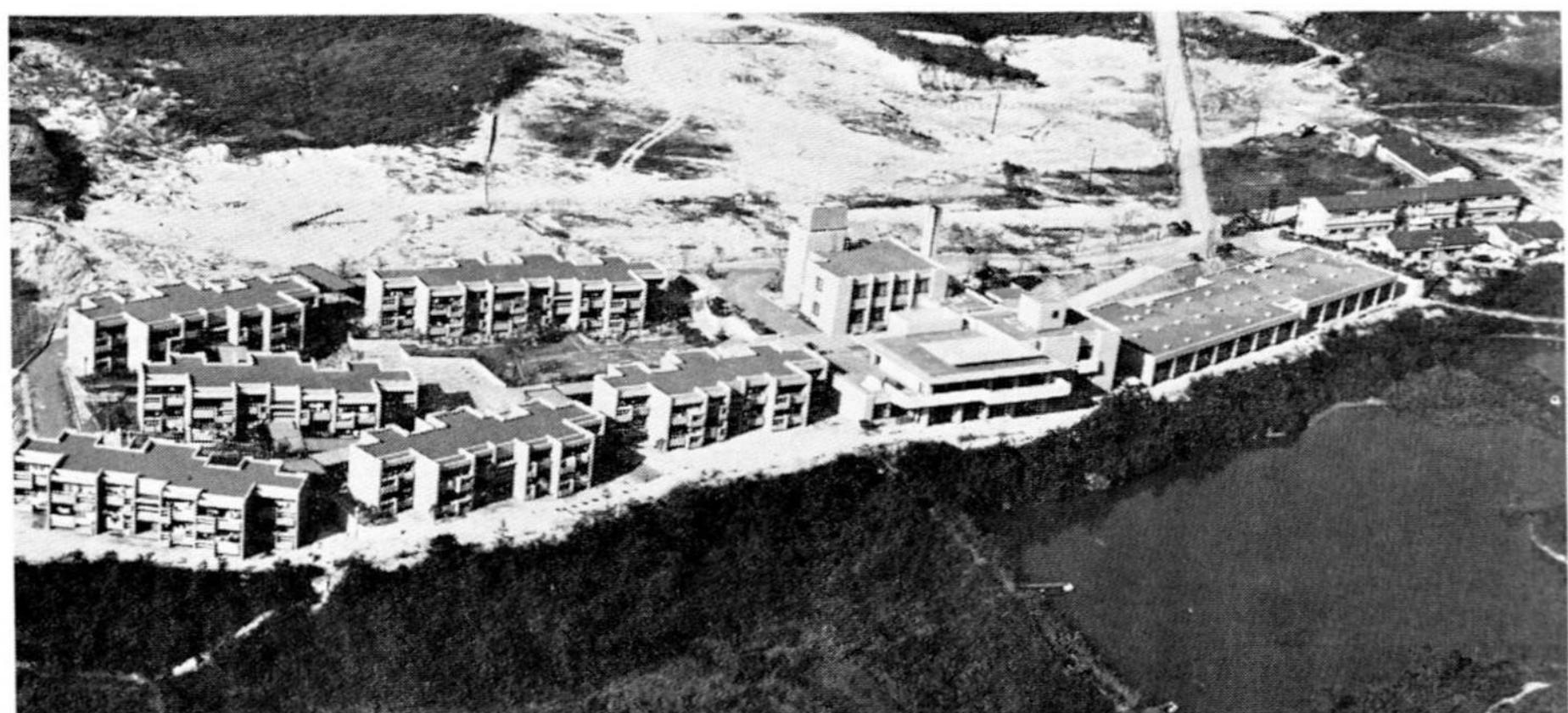
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been increased, dispensary and other facilities have been improved, and the latest in modern equipment has been installed, giving the patient a sense of assurance that he will obtain the best that medical science can give. In addition to the usual hospital services, there are included such secondary facilities as counselling services relating to pre-natal and infant care.

Hiden-in

This was the division where the poor could obtain relief. At present, this original function has been revived and kept alive. A modern successor was first opened on the first of October nineteen thirty-seven, in the city of Fujiidera. As time went by, this location was felt by temple authorities to be unsuitable, so it and its facilities were transferred to the present location, and in nineteen sixty-four the doors were opened. The building was a new one, built entirely of ferro-concrete, covering an area exceeding five thousand square meters. Its staff, which numbers over three hundred and fifty trained people, attends to the many needs of the elderly in a welfare home for the aged.



Shitennō-ji Hiden-in

The Hiden-in also includes among its works two dormitory-type establishments; one is named Takawashi-ryō, the other Shōfu-sō.

Takawashi-ryō was begun in 1948 as a home for the aged under the auspices of the Osaka prefectural government. Administration was turned over ^{to} the Shitennō-ji Temple. The regular staff consists of one hundred and fifty men and women. Here elderly citizens may lead lives amid amiable surroundings in a most peaceful environment.

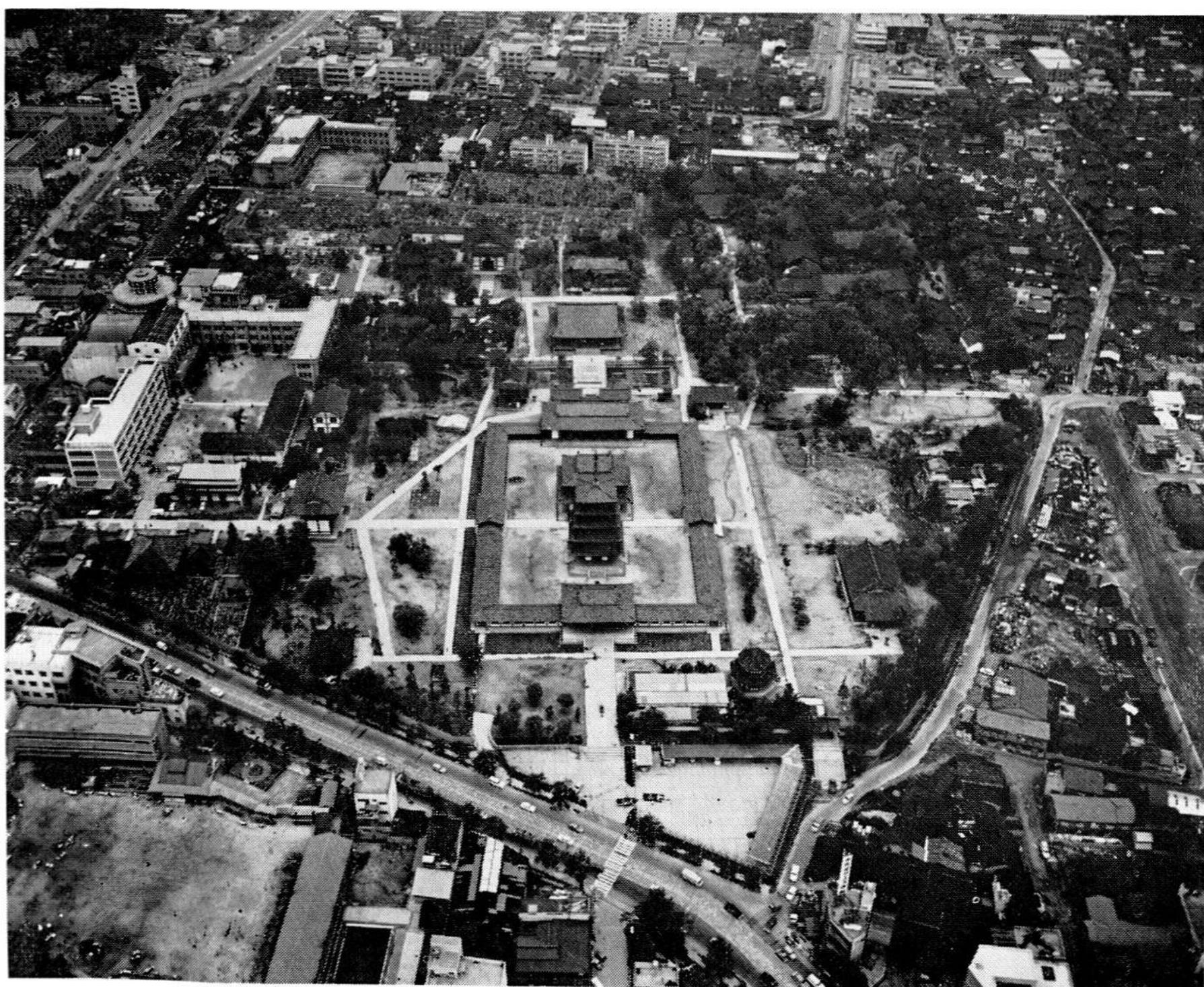
Shōfu-so, which is located in Hyōgo Prefecture, to the west of Osaka Prefecture, was also built by the Prefectural government of Osaka, and like its counter part was completed in 1948. Its two hundred member staff provides

care for the elderly. The scenery here is especially beautiful, with the Mukō River flowing nearby and the sound of the wind through the pine trees helping to make this setting one in which senior citizens may enjoy a quiet and tranquil existence.

Besides these, there is also the Yūhigaoka, a home for mothers and their children, including a nursery school, a children's dormitory and children's playground.

An Explanation of the Buildings

The present-day *Garan* or temple complex is arranged in the so-called Shitennō-ji style, and was established by Prince Shōtoku. The original *Garan* was made up of magnificent buildings standing on masonry terraces and crowned by tiled roofs. Its group design was based on the courtyard, entered through a formal gateway, and dominated by the main hall. These elements were fitted together in a symmetrical manner, following a standard mainland plan. The architectural style of the temple was regarded by all with great esteem. But in the following thirteen hundred years natural calamities have taken their toll, and several times it has been completely levelled by conflagration, so that nearly



Present complex of Shitennō-ji Temple

all of the present buildings date from modern times. But the temple complex and the arrangement of the *Garan* follow the same pattern as the original Asuka Period temple. The present *garan*, consisting of the central part of the temple, was completed in October of 1963, with its outstanding characteristic being its reproduction of the Asuka Period building style.

The Five-Tiered Pagoda

The pagoda is a relic-shrine, originally erected over sacred relics of the Buddha, built to house such relics, or constructed on spots consecrated as the scenes of his acts. The three- or five-storyed or tiered pagoda, which is one of the most imposing structures of a temple in China and Japan, developed from the Indian *stupa* or *tope*.

Prince Shōtoku erected this pagoda with the hope of saving living beings from the six ways of transmigration from one world to another. This, in brief, may be described as the six worlds in which the souls of living beings transmigrate from one to another: hell, the worlds of hungry spirits, animals, *asuras*, and men, and heaven. Into the center pillar of the pagoda ^{was} placed six Buddha-relics and six strands of Prince Shōtoku's hair. In accordance with the above facts, the pagoda is often called the Pagoda of Salvation from the Six Migrations.

The present structure was erected in 1959, and the Buddha-relics were enshrined in the fifth floor portion of the center-pillar. Its height is about forty meters, and it is made of ferro-concrete materials capped with a tiled roof made from specially made tiles in the traditional style. All the reconstructed buildings within the courtyard complex are topped by this same kind of tile. The manner in which the pagoda was constructed was, at the time, a first for Japan.

The inside walls of the bottom tier of the pagoda are covered by wall-paintings by a master Japanese artist, Maki Yamashita; they were donated by the Asahi Newspaper Company. The frescos have been called by critics a masterpiece of the Shōwa Period (the present period which began in 1926).

Kondō

This is the main, "golden hall" of a Buddhist monastery. Its construction and general style are the same as those of the pagoda. It was completed in its present form in March of 1960. The main image of the hall is a statue of Guze Kanzōn Bosatsu, which was fashioned by a well-known sculptor, Hajime Murakami. It is made of bronze. The wall-paintings which adorn the *Kondō* are the work of Gakuryō Nakamura, and were presented to the temple by the Mainichi Newspaper Company. The structure covers an area of two hundred and thirty square meters, and attains a height of over eighteen meters.

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Kōdō

The Lecture and Assembly Hall of the temple. This structure covers almost three hundred and twenty square meters in area, and is over seven and a half meters in height. Here, since the founding of the temple, the classic scriptures of Mahayana Buddhism have been read, lectured upon, and intoned; sutras such as the Lotus and Shōnan Sutras, for example. From this function in the temple scheme the *Kōdō* also is called the *Kōhōdō*, the Hall where the Dharma is Preached. It is divided into two sections, the Summer Hall and the Winter Hall, in which images of an Eleven-headed Kanzōn and an Amida Nyorai respectively, are enshrined. It was completed in its present form in 1963, following the same style and manner as the Pagoda and *Kondō*. The wall-paintings which grace its walls were done by Senjin Gōkura and are the donation of the Yomiuri Newspaper Company.

Shōryō-in

This is the hall of the holy spirit of Prince Shōtoku. In its precincts are enshrined images of the Prince. The present building was reconstructed in 1954. The original structure consisted of a Front Hall and an Inner Hall, of which at present the Front Hall alone stands. The Inner Hall is to be built in the future. The Front Hall houses a statue of Prince Shōtoku as a youth of sixteen, and when the Inner Hall is built it will contain its traditional statue of the Prince as he appeared as the Prince Regent at the age of forty-eight. It is a hip-gable wooden roof construction with tile roofing after the original style. It covers an area of three hundred and twenty-seven square meters.



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21

Rokuji-dō

The present structure, according to tradition, is said to have been rebuilt in 1623 as the Yakushi-in of Shiidera Temple, after which, in 1811, it was moved to the present location. It covers an area of three hundred and twenty-seven square meters and is made of wood, with hip-gable roofing covered by a traditional tile roof. It has been listed by the Japanese government as an Important Cultural Property. The main image here enshrined is that of Yakushi Nyorai, the Buddha of Healing, the Lord of the World of Pure Emerald in the East, who vowed to cure diseases. He is also worshipped to achieve longevity.

The well-known *bugaku* performances of Shitennō-ji Temple take place with this hall as their focal point. *Bugaku* are court songs and dances originating in ancient China.



Bugaku performance seen from the Rokuji-dō

Gochikō-in

The name means literally "the hall of the light of the five wisdoms", the five wisdoms being faculties possessed by the perfectly enlightened man.

The present building dates from 1617, when it was rebuilt. It too is a hip-gable wooden roof construction with a tiled roof. The large main building covers an area of six hundred and six square meters, and is designated an Important Cultural Property. It is in this large building that one of the main ceremonies of Shitennō-ji Temple is usually held; that is, the ceremony of the giving of the precepts, in which water is sprinkled over the heads of the devotees. Besides the main structure, there are other subsidiary buildings, some of which are designated as Important Cultural Properties. However, we will not at this time give descriptions of them.

The Stone Torii

A *Torii* is an H-shaped gate erected at the entrance to a temple or shrine, separating the sacred precincts from the ordinary ground surrounding it.

The *Torii* of Shitennō-ji Temple has been called by some the "Gate of Religious Awakening." It is built in the so-called *Miyōjin* style. Although it was originally made of wood, in the year 1294 it was changed according to Imperial decree to a stone construction. The work was supervised by Ninshō Rishū (1217-1303), a priest of the Ritsu Sect. Ninshō was administrator of Shitennō-ji Temple and is well-known as a priest who strove for public welfare. He was a true follower of the spirit of Prince Shōtoku.

The *Torii* is nine meters tall, the stone pillars have diameters of over one meter and are spaced seven meters apart. Above, on the lintel, is a bronze plaque which reads, in letters in relief, "The Place of Shākyamuni Tathāgata's turning of the Wheel of the Law; This is the Center of the Eastern Gate of Paradise." These words express the most profound meaning of the Buddha's teaching, manifesting the Pure Land thought of Mahayana Buddhism. At the spring and autumn equinoxes, at the mid-point of the week known as *Higan*, the setting sun sinks in a perfect line with the middle of this *Torii* and of the West Gate which stands to the inside of it. Because of the belief of the "Contemplation of the Setting Sun," people gather to watch the sun set.

From long in the past this ritual of the setting sun has been an important ceremony. In the Kamakura Period (1192-1219), evangelist priests such as Hōnen Shōnin (1133-1212), the founder of the Jōdo Sect, visited this spot to take part in the event with the common people who were the objects of their teaching. It may be fitting to call this spot the original and ancestral home of Pure Land thought in Japan.

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Saidaimon

Saidaimon, the Great West Gate, or simply West Gate, is just to the east of the stone *Torii*, and is called the *Gokuraku-mon*, or the Gate of Paradise. This name comes from the meaning of the bronze inscription. It was completed in 1962, and is a ferro-concrete structure topped by a two-tiered roof covered with tile. It has an area of ninety-six square meters and is over fifteen meters high. The paintings on its inner walls are by Shōgo Banura.

The Temple Garden

At the northeastern side of the temple grounds is a garden of about ten thousand square meters in area, bordered by a large moat on its eastern side. Further to the southeast the garden raises to a hillock which connects with the priests' quarters. In 1932 this whole garden underwent complete renovation under the direction of the foremost expert of the time, Sōsen Kizu. Within the precincts of the garden proper can be found two teahouses, named *Futsujin-tei* and *Rinchi-tei*, respectively. In addition, some important archeological sites have been uncovered.



The Temple Garden

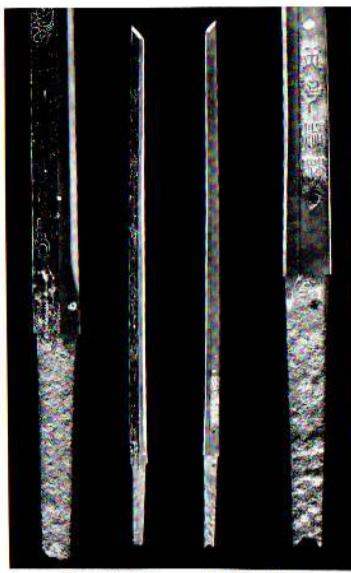
Important Cultural Properties & National Treasures

The cultural treasures of the temple may be broken down into the general categories of buildings, paintings, sculpture, crafts, writings (including the archives of Tennōji Temple and Akinobō Temple), antiquities (including archeological collections of ancient tiles). There are objects ranging from printed charms of the Buddha to the costumes and paraphernalia used in the *bugaku* performances. National Treasures, Important Cultural Properties, and other important works of art, are so numerous we could not possibly cover them all here. The vastness of the collection is no doubt due in great measure to Prince Shōtoku and to his greatness, and because of his uniquely close association with Shitenno-ji Temple. Thus, for the past thirteen hundred years and more, this temple has been the temple of emperors and empresses, for the nobility, and indeed for all Japanese, right down to the common people and their faith. If we say that Prince Shōtoku is the father of Japanese culture, then we are obliged to call Shitenno-ji Temple the matrix of this culture.

Now we would like to give some brief explanations of some of the most exemplary of these treasures.

The Heishishōrin-ken and Shichisei-ken

These are both National Treasures. They are swords. They are swords which tradition says were worn by Prince Shōtoku. They are exceedingly valuable examples of the old, straight-style sword. According to old records, the swords had by Kamakura times become tarnished and rusted. Recently they have been brought as nearly as possible to their original condition through repairs and polishing.



Heishishōrin-Ken and Shichisei-Ken

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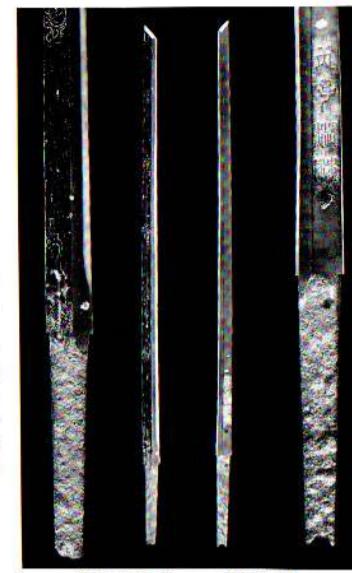
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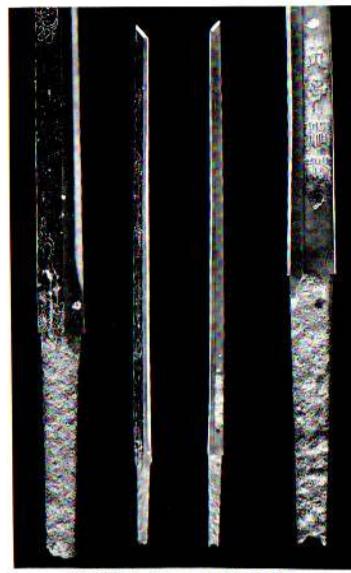
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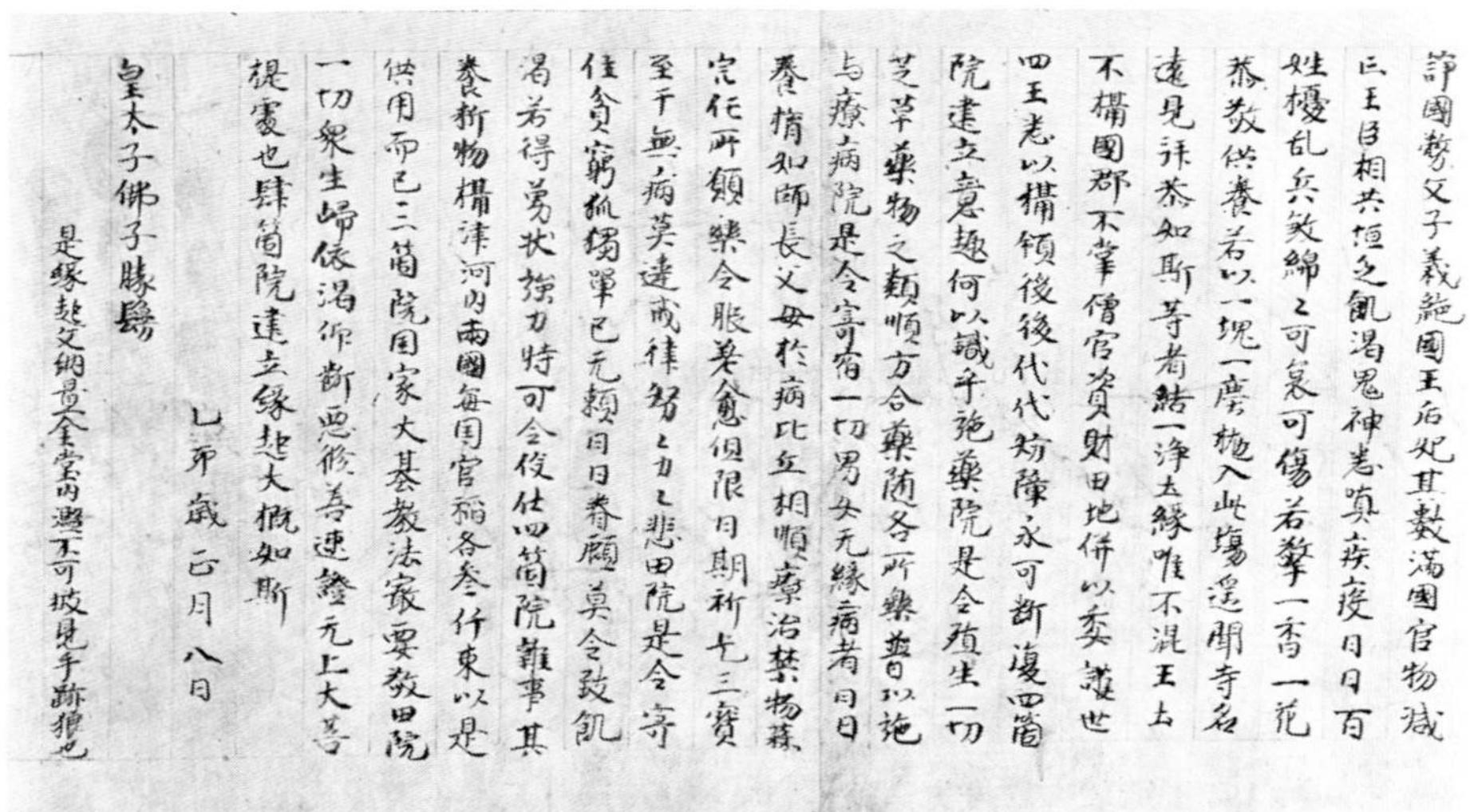
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The Shitennō-ji Engi

An *Engi* is a written history or record, in this case the records and history of the Shitennō-ji Temple, compiled in two scroll-type rolls. It is designated a National Treasure. The first roll is named the *Kompon* (Original) *Engi*, so called to distinguish it from others which were produced in later times. The second roll is hand-written by the Emperor Godaigo, who reigned in the fourteenth century.

The *Kompon Engi* is traditionally attributed to Prince Shotoku's hand. It is said to have been discovered by accident in a small Six-tiered pagoda in the Kondō in the year 1007. It has played a very important role in the development of the faith that centers around the Prince, and in the development of Pure Land thought as well.



Shitennō-ji Engi

Fan-Shaped Paintings Inscribed with Sutras

National Treasure. These are a series of fan-shaped paintings on paper, inscribed with the texts of the Lotus, Kanfugen, and Muryōgi Sutras. They are genre paintings, which tell the story of the common people's lives and manners during the Heian Period, including charming depictions of birds, flowers, and animals. With the exquisite calligraphy used for the sutras, the paintings, and the rest, these works make up a wonderfully pleasing artistic whole. It was presented to the Temple by a nobleman at the tail-end of the Heian Period (794–1185), a time when Shitennō-ji Temple enjoyed a particular success.

Kakemamori

This is a charm or amulet to be worn over the shoulders. It is a National Treasure, and is said to have belonged to Prince Shōtoku. It is beautifully made, with a light inner-frame of *kiri* wood, and an outer surface of metal-worked designs, including openwork silver. The colors and metal-work combine to make this an object of great beauty.



Kakemamori

Statue of Guze Kanzeon Bosatsu

Kanzeon Bosatsu or, in its Sanscrit rendering, *Avalokitesvara*, the bodhisattva of great compassion. The term *Guze* refers to Kanzenon's vow and ability to save suffering beings. The pose has the right knee drawn up erect, and the right hand supporting the cheek. A tradition of Shitennō-ji Temple holds that this is the prototype of images of this type.

Portrait of Shōtoku Taishi with His Son & Younger Brother

This well-known painting is now in the Imperial Household Collection. It probably dates from the Nara Period (646-794), and it is thought to be a copy of an earlier version; it is in a secular style, the only such painting now known. It is done in the Chinese manner of Imperial portraits.

Statue of The Prince Shōtoku at The Age of Two

There are various styles of sculpture depicting the Prince; they are more or less stylized in a manner that shows him as he is traditionally thought to have looked at a certain period of his life. The present statue was made during the Kamakura Period, when the Prince was very popular as the spiritual father of Japan. Many statues then appeared, of which this is one of the most famous. Its height is seventy centimeters. It depicts the legend that the Prince, when

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The Seventeen-Article Constitution

This hand-written copy of the Constitution is an Important Cultural Property, and dates from the year twelve hundred and thirty-six. It was written by the priest Ryōjō of Kōfuku-ji Temple in Nara.

The Buddhist Ceremonies: Bugaku and Shōryō-e

The Buddhist ceremonies of Shitemmō-ji Temple always include performances of *bugaku*, court dances and music of a ritual nature. Principle among these may be mentioned the *Nehan-e* (*Nehan*—Buddhist Nirvana), which takes place on February the fifteenth; the *Shōryō-e* (the ceremony in honor of Prince Shōtoku) of February twenty-second; and the *Nembutsu-e* which is held September the

fifteenth. They all are performed amid magnificent display on a raised stone platform or stage. This platform, which is outdoors, is designated an Important Cultural Property. Perhaps the most impressive of all the ceremonies, however, is the one accompanying the *Shōryō-e* *bugaku* performance. It is a grand religious observance in which religious music and dances form one harmonious whole.



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Ever since the Heian Period it has been the foremost among all the ritual dances; that is, the *kagura*, the *gigaku*, and the *bugaku*. Kenkō Hossō, the celebrated author of the *Tsurezuregusa*, wrote in surprised admiration that, "It is the *bugaku* of Shitenno-ji Temple alone which need feel in no way inferior to the ceremonies of the capital." This was high praise indeed at a time when literally all the culture of the entire country was focussed in the capital of Kyoto.

Hundreds of articles involved in the *bugaku* performances, such as the costumes, the masks, and assorted paraphernalia, were and still are used. They are all of extraordinary beauty.

Bugaku began as an importation from the continent in about the seventh century; due, it is said, to the invitation of Prince Shōtoku, who soon established a school where it could be studied.

In *Bugaku* there are divisions into four groups; the *Bunnomai*, the *Bunomai*, the *Hashirmono*, and the *Warabemai*. And the costumes worn at these different performances are extremely varied. But, just as the Pagoda and other buildings have perished time and again in conflagrations, so the costumes have met similar fates. Today most of those used date from the early seventeenth century, at which time they were presented to the temple by Toyotomi Hideyori (1568-1615), son of illustrious Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The brocade *uchi-kake* (=long outer dress) and the rest of the costumes are wonderful examples of their kind, and have been named Important Cultural Properties.

The masks used in the *bugaku* performances were, unfortunately, destroyed by fire in the fighting which took place in the sixteenth century "Age of Wars"; in this case, between the General Oda Nobunaga and the warrior-priests of Ishiyama Hongan-ji Temple. But even today some still remain. Among them the most famous are those named *Ryō-o* and *Nasori*. They are Important Cultural Properties and were made at the middle or the end of the Kamakura Period.



Gigaku mask named Ryō-o

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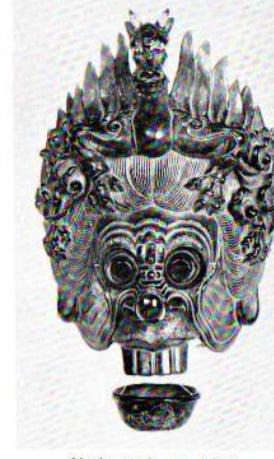
Ever since the Heian Period it has been the foremost among all the ritual dances; that is, the *kagura*, the *gigaku*, and the *bugaku*. Kenkō Hossō, the celebrated author of the *Tsurezuregusa*, wrote in surprised admiration that, "It is the *bugaku* of Shitenno-ji Temple alone which need feel in no way inferior to the ceremonies of the capital." This was high praise indeed at a time when literally all the culture of the entire country was focussed in the capital of Kyoto.

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THE SEVENTEEN-ARTICLE CONSTITUTION

by Prince Shōtoku

Translated into English

by Hajime Nakamura

Preface

It is said that Buddhism was introduced into Japan from Korea in 552 A.D. It was not till the reign of the Empress Suiko (r. 592–628), however, that Buddhism came to the fore in Japan. The outstanding figure during that period was Prince Shōtoku, one of the best and most benevolent of all the rulers of Japan and the real founder of Buddhism in Japan. Prince Shōtoku suppressed feuding local warlords, and unified the whole country successfully.

In 604 he issued what is usually referred to as the “Seventeen-Article Constitution.” This was Japan’s first piece of legislation, and it is expressive of the original and creative development of Japanese thought in those days, being based chiefly on the spirit of Buddhism and making adaptive use of ideas from China and India. It was, so to speak, the Magna Carta of the nation.

1. Harmony is to be valued, and an avoidance of wanton opposition to be honoured. All men are influenced by class-feelings; few are intelligent. Hence there are some who disobey their lords and fathers, or maintain feuds with the neighboring villages. But when those high and those low are harmonious and friendly, and there is concord in the discussion of business, things proceed spontaneously of themselves to their truths. Then what is there which cannot be accomplished?

2. Sincerely revere the Three Treasures—Buddha, the Law and the Priesthood, the final refuge of all kinds of generated beings, the supreme objects of faith in all countries. What man in what age can fail to revere this Law? Few men are utterly bad. They may be taught to follow it. But if they do not take to the Three Treasures, how shall their crookedness be made straight?

3. When you receive the orders of the Sovereign, you should listen to them reverentially. The lord is like the heaven and the subjects are like the earth.

With the heaven above and the earth below united in performing their functions loyally in their respective positions, we shall see the world ruled in perfect good order as in the harmonious rotation of the four seasons.... If the earth should attempt to supplant the heaven, all would simply fall in ruin. Therefore when the lord speaks, let his subjects listen and obey; when the superiors act, the inferiors comply. Consequently when you receive the orders of the Sovereign, you should be attentive in carrying them out faithfully. If you fail in this, ruin is the natural consequence.

4. All ministers and officials should make respectful propriety the basis of their behavior. The fundamental principle of ruling the people consists in respectful propriety. When superiors lack respectful propriety, people in general become disorderly. When people in general lack respectful propriety, they will certainly commit misdeeds. Therefore, when officials observe respectful propriety, social order is not disturbed; when people in general observe respectful propriety, the affairs of the state will be managed without effort.

5. In hearing judicial cases of common people judges should banish avaricious desires and give up their own interests. Deal impartially with the suits brought by the people. Of the cases to be tried there are a thousand each day. If so many in one day, there will be immense numbers of disputes to be settled in the passage of years. Nowadays it is alleged that some judges seek their own profit, and attend to the cases after having taken bribes, which has given rise to the saying: 'The suits of the rich men are like a stone cast into the pond, whereas the suits of the poor men are like water thrown upon a rock.' Hence the poor people do not know where to turn. Such a state of affairs, if brought about, would mean a deficiency in the duty of officials.

6. Punish the vicious and reward the virtuous. This is the excellent rule of antiquity. Do not, therefore, let the good deeds of any person go concealed, nor the bad deeds of any go uncorrected when you see them. Flatterers and deceivers are like a fatal missile which will overthrow the state, or a sharp sword which will destroy the people. Likewise, sycophants are fond of dilating to their superiors on the errors of the inferiors; to their inferiors, they censure the faults of the superiors. Such men are never loyal to their lord, nor benevolent toward the people. All this is the source whence breed grave civil disturbances.

7. Each person has a duty to perform; let not the sphere of duty be confused. When wise and capable persons are entrusted with high offices, there will arise

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a unanimous voice of pleased approval; but when wicked persons hold high offices, disasters and disturbances are multiplied. In this world there are few who are endowed with inborn wisdom; sainthood is a goal attained after long self-discipline. All matters of State, whether great or small, will surely be well ordered when right persons are in the positions; in any period, whether critical or peaceful, all affairs will be peacefully settled when wise men hold sway. In this way will the state be lasting, and the realm be free from dangers. Therefore the wise sovereigns of the ancient times sought good men for high offices, and not good offices for favored men.

8. All officials should go to their offices in the Court early in the morning and retire late. Many affairs of the state are incumbent; even if officials should stay in their offices all day long, they would not be able to finish all their business. Therefore, if they come to their offices late, they cannot meet emergencies; if they retire early, they cannot complete their work.

9. Sincerity is the basis of righteousness. All things should be done with sincerity. Good and bad, success and failure depend on whether there is sincerity or not. When officials maintain sincerity, what is there that cannot be accomplished? When officials do not maintain sincerity, everything will fail without exception.

10. Let us cease from wrath, and refrain from angry looks. Let us not be resentful just because others oppose us. Every person has a mind of his own; each heart has its own learning. They may regard as wrong what we hold as right. We are not unquestionably sages, nor are they assuredly fools. Both of us are simply ordinary men. Who is wise enough to judge which of us good or bad? For we are all wise and foolish alternately, like a ring which has no end. Therefore, although others may give way to anger, let us on the contrary dread our own faults, and though we may be sure that we are in the right, let us act in harmony with all others.

11. Reward and punishment should be dealt out properly, considering merit and demerit of persons clearly. Recently award has not always been dealt out according to merit, and punishment not necessarily dealt out according to demerit. Those officials who are in charge of this matter should deal out reward and punishment properly without failure.

12. District officials should not levy taxes arbitrarily. There are not two monarchs for a country; there are not two lords for people. The people of the

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13. All officials in office should know their own tasks. When they are ill or when they are sent on missions they may not be able to fulfil their tasks. But when they are entrusted with tasks, they should behave themselves harmoniously in collaboration with others, as if they had been in charge of their task for many years. Do not make trouble for official administration with the reason that you were not entrusted with the task.

14. All officials, high and low, should beware of jealousy. If you are jealous of others, others in turn will be jealous of you and so is perpetuated a vicious circle. So if we find others excel us in intelligence, we are not pleased; if we find they surpass us in ability, we become envious. Really wise persons seldom appear in this world.....possibly one wise man in five centuries, hardly one sage in ten centuries. Without securing wise men and sages, how shall the country be governed in good order?

15. To disregard private benefit and to aim at public benefit is the duty of officials. If one is motivated by private benefit, resentment must arise. And if there is a feeling of resentment, it will be very difficult to work with others harmoniously. If one fails to work with others harmoniously, he impairs the public benefit with private motives. If resentful feeling occurs, it subverts the laws. That is why in the first article it is said that "those high and those low should be harmonious and friendly." Its purport is similar to this.

16. People should be employed in forced labor in suitable seasons. This is a good rule of antiquity. People should be employed in winter months when they are free, and they should not be employed from spring till autumn when they engage in agriculture and sericulture. Without agriculture, what would we eat? Without sericulture, what clothes would we wear?

17. Decisions on important matters should not be made in general by one person alone. They should be discussed among many people. But for small matters of less importance, it is unnecessary to consult many persons. In the case of discussing weighty matters you must be fearful lest there be faults. You should arrange matters in consultation with many persons so as to arrive at the right conclusion.

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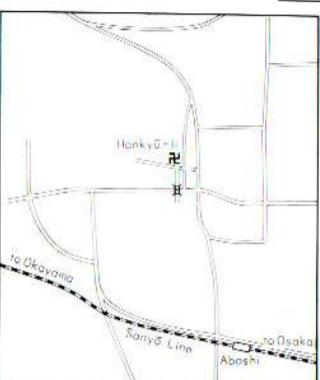
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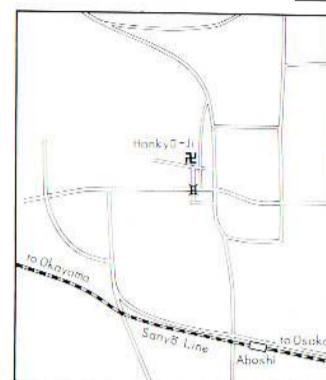
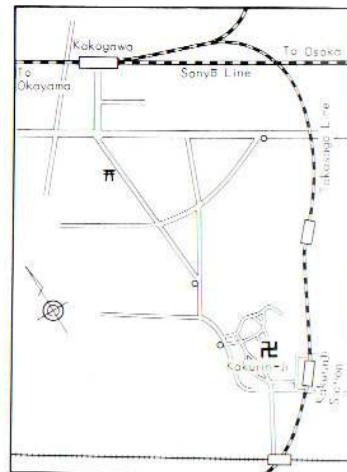
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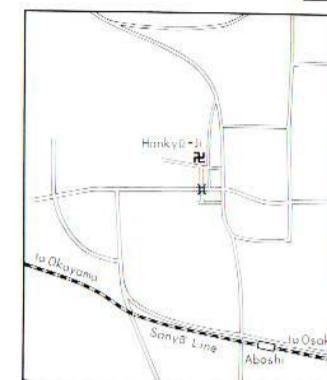
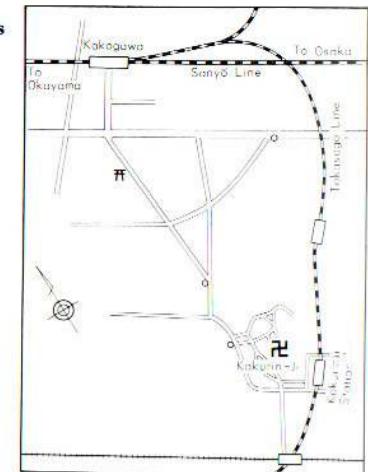
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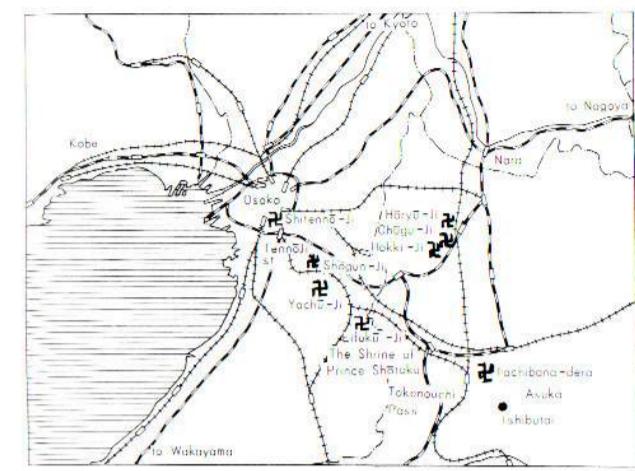
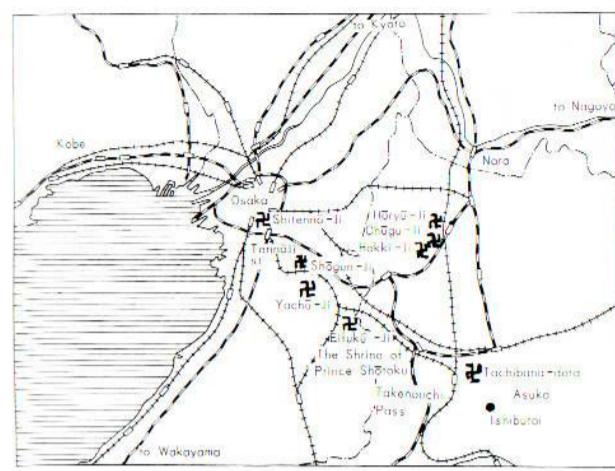
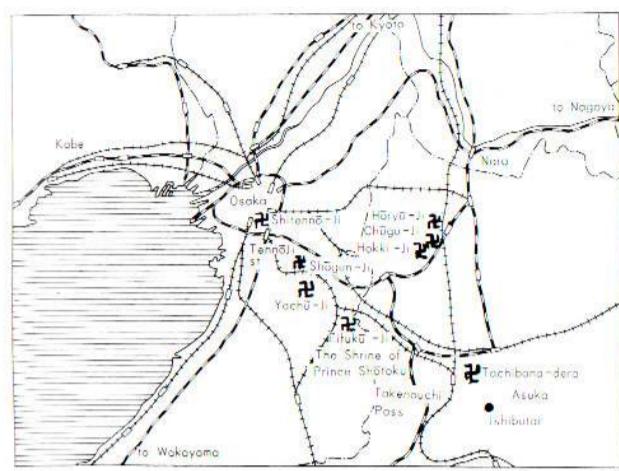
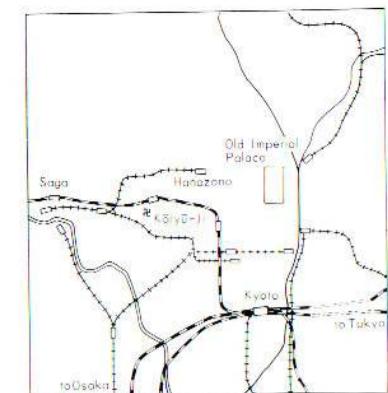
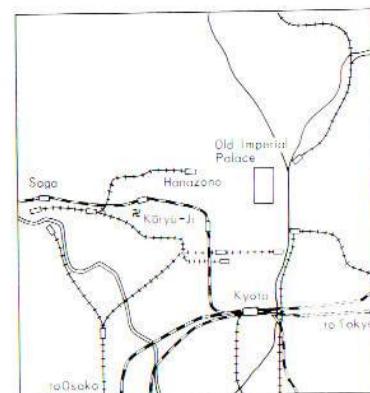
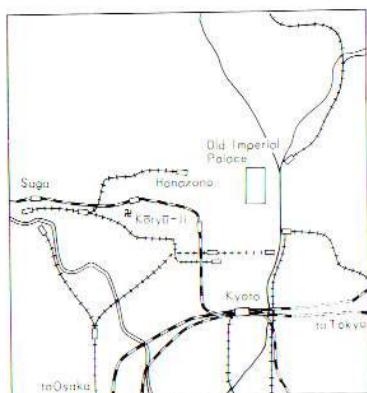


Places and Landmarks
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A hand-painted fan featuring a landscape scene with a bridge, a river, and a distant mountain. The scene is framed by a dark, leafy branch in the foreground. Overlaid on the scene is a block of calligraphy in Chinese characters, written in a cursive or semi-cursive style. The text is arranged in several lines, with some characters appearing to be part of larger, integrated phrases. The overall aesthetic is artistic and traditional.