

of Confucius to Chinese life. His catechism of moral discipline points out, further, that the duties of universal obligation are five, and the moral qualities by which they are carried out are three. The duties are those between ruler and subject, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those in the intercourse between friends. Intelligence, moral character, and courage, these are the three universally recognized moral qualities of man. The performance of these duties is the *sine qua non* of "good manners." In the Confucian system the tenet of reciprocity leads thus to the cult of "propriety." In the Shakyian discipline also we have the same propriety in the doctrine of *secla* ("conduct"). The path leading to cessation of misery is described in the *Digha Nikaya* as consisting in right belief, right resolve, right speech, right behavior, right occupation, right effort, right contemplation, and right concentration. It is obvious that some of the conditions stated here, especially those in regard to speech, behavior, and occupation, are "other-regarding," i. e., have a social significance in the system of self-culture.

Lest the social energism of Shakyian morals be ignored, it is necessary to point out that *appamada*, or vigilance, strenuousness, and activity, is the first article in the Buddhist monk's creed of life. "By rousing himself, by earnestness, by restraint and control," says Shakyia in the *Dhammapada*, "the wise man may make for himself an island that no flood can overwhelm. . . . Earnest among the thoughtless, awake among the sleepers, the wise man advances like a racer leaving behind the hack. . . . The mendicant who delights in earnestness and looks with fear on thoughtlessness moves about like fire, burning all his fetters small and large." It is moral and intellectual gymnasts such as these, "moving about like fire," that built the first hospitals of the world for men and animals, established rest-houses and planted trees for wayfarers, popularized the trial by jury and the methods of election, voting, quorum, etc., in democratic assemblies, and founded universities, academies, and other seats of learning in India, China, and Japan.

THE FRESCOES OF THE HORYUJI.

BY HARADA JIRO.

LOVERS of old art of Japan are much concerned in the rare frescoes of the Horyuji near Nara, the oldest Buddhistic temple in Japan. Our government has taken an active interest in them and the Department of Education has recently made an appropriation

and appointed a committee of eight to investigate the ways and means for their preservation.

Hekiga, or wall-paintings,¹ are extremely rare in Japan, and those of the Horyuji are considered to be most important from



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both an historic and an art standpoint. The frescoes in question are on twelve walls: four large and eight smaller ones, the largest walls measuring ten feet in height and over eight feet in width,

¹*Heki-ga* is the Japanese name for fresco, *heki* meaning "wall" and *ga* meaning "painting."

*For titles and explanatory notes see end of article.

while the others are the same in height and about five feet in width. The four large frescoes, apparently representing domains in four directions of the universe, are not located on the four sides of the hall as might naturally be expected. There are, to be exact, one on the east wall south of the eastern entrance (the building has entrances on four sides), another on the west wall south of the western entrance, and one on each side of the north entrance to the building. The eight smaller walls at the four corners of the build-



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ing are also covered with paintings, there being only one small fresco on either extreme of the south side of the building, at the middle of which is the front entrance. Besides these, there are between the ceiling and the horizontal beams, a number of narrow parts of walls, upon which are painted flying angels and *rakan* in the mountains.²

² *Rakan* (Skt. *arhant*, Pali *arahat*) is translated "a true man," who through discipline has reached the last stage of human development and needs only one more existence to attain Buddhahood. A *rakan*, at the end of the transmigration of soul, shall not be born again to die; he has destroyed all evil thoughts in his mind, has nothing more to learn, is able to make others happy, and conforms to the truth.

These walls are on the inside of one of the main buildings of the Horyuji named Kondo, the chief sanctuary, erected for the worship of Shaka-muni.³ The Kondo stands opposite the Five-storied Pagoda. These two structures, together with the San-mon, the gate,⁴ are the oldest wooden buildings in Japan, being the remnants of the original edifices of the Horyuji, which was founded by Shotoku-Taishi, the Constantine of Japanese Buddhism, and com-



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pleted in 607 of the Christian era. The Kondo now contains a wonderful collection of art treasures, the acme of ancient Buddhist art in Japan. Among them are the Tamamushi-no-zushi,⁵ of

³ Shaka-muni (Skt.) is called Shaka-muni in Japanese.

⁴ A *san-mon* is a big gateway, or a gatehouse, for it is generally in two stories with a roof, and in the shape of a house with big portals, which are often guarded by immense figures of *ni-o* (two deva kings), Indra and Brahma, who keep guard at the outer gate of temples to scare away demons.

⁵ A portable shrine magnificently decorated with carvings and paintings. Wings of the *tamamushi* (an insect) are held under carved metal work for decoration—hence the name. Hardly any wings now remain. *Zushi* is the Japanese name for a framework in which sacred images are kept.



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wonderful workmanship, some hammered figures and other unrivaled works in metal, Shaka-muni, Yakushi,⁶ and several other images in bronze, and Shitenno,⁷ Kwannon, and other wooden sculptures. They all occupy a very important position among our "national treasures."⁸ Whenever I meditate among these venerable objects, I cannot help being deeply moved by the very spirit of these wondrous figures—by that precious something which seems to etherealize the hard substances of which the images are made, to a vision of truth conceived by the great spiritual teacher of the East. Here the spiritual atmosphere, with its mysterious vibration, is overpowering. Some of the figures stand as living witnesses of the universality of truth, the oneness of the light toward which all souls turn.

The fresco paintings present to us an interesting phase of foreign influence upon our art. It is apparent that Hindu and Persian influences are discernible in them, in general form and features of the images, in the quality of lines, in feeling, and in technique. Whether these influences have come direct from their sources, or through Chinese or Korean channels, is still a matter of dispute among our scholars. Not only that, but we have been unable to agree upon the period of the paintings on these walls, much less upon the artist who painted them. According to the tradition handed down at the temple, the wall-paintings were executed by a Korean priest, Doncho. So far, investigations seem to indicate that the walls and paintings are as old as the building, with traces of restoration at a later period. Only one wall is an exception, the large wall on the east, which seems to have been reconstructed and newly painted in the Kamakura period.⁹ However, this is by no means conclusive.

To add to our troubles, we are not quite clear even upon the subjects of these paintings on the walls—at least, not upon most of them. The four large walls have group subjects, while the eight others treat single figures. According to an old catalog which has

⁶ Yakushi is the Healing Buddha. He heals all kinds of diseases and is also called upon to heal in the next life the miserable condition of man's present existence.

⁷ Shi-tenno, meaning "four heavenly kings"—who guard the world against the attacks of demons, each defending one quarter of the horizon.

⁸ By a committee appointed by the government art objects in possession of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines are examined from time to time and worthy objects are classed as "national treasure" to be taken care of by the government.

⁹ The Kamakura period begins with the year 1180 (according to the Christian era) when Yoritomo established his capital at Kamakura, and lasted about one hundred and fifty years. It was in the latter half of this period that the minute and realistic style of Buddhistic paintings was first highly developed.



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long been considered authentic, the central figures in the groups of the four big walls are: Amida (Amitayus)¹⁰ south of the west entrance, Hosho (Ratnasambhava) south of the east entrance, Yakushi (Bhaisajyaguruvaidduryaprabhasa-Tathagata) east of the north entrance, and Shaka-muni west of the north entrance, there being no mention of the minor wall-paintings. However, the description does not seem to suit some of them. The names for the single figures on the eight smaller walls have not been agreed upon either. The difficulty lies chiefly in our inability to determine the sutra in which the artist must have sought for inspiration, though it is now conceded by many—and not without reason—that the subject must have been drawn from the *Konkomyo Sutra*.¹¹ The dispute can only be settled by further study and investigation. As shown in the reproductions, the frescoes are badly cracked and partly obliterated by time, but they stand unique in our art.

An appeal is being made by certain scholars to take a radical step for a permanent protection of these irreplaceable art treasures of the East. It has been suggested that the best way would be to construct a suitable museum building on the temple grounds, to which the walls should be moved bodily and kept in a horizontal position under glass. However, the difficulty is that the paintings are not only an object of art but of worship, inseparable from the sanctuary erected some thirteen centuries ago for the worship of Shaka-muni. So it is needless to say that the temple authorities are adverse to the proposition. It has been decided for the time being that the paintings will be kept in their present position under cover.

For us it is extremely interesting to consider, in this connection, the intimate relation of art to religion, of the sense of beauty to the spirit of worship, and to ponder upon the wonderful works of art produced in ancient times when Buddhism was strong in Japan, the best examples of which are yet to be found in the temples at Nara, the ancient capital of the empire, and in those of its vicinity, such as the Horyuji, Yakushiji, and Toshodaiji.

¹⁰ Amida is the Japanese name for Skt. Amitayus or Amitabha. By combining the two names Amita was obtained, and the Japanese Amida is derived from it. Amida was originally an abstraction—the ideal of “boundless light.” In some sects Amida is a powerful deity dwelling in a lovely paradise to the west.

¹¹ The *Konkomyo Sutra* is composed of four volumes with eighteen chapters. It was preached widely since the Nara period (from 709 to 784 in the Christian era, when Buddhism flourished in Japan). It contains teachings now upheld by the Tendai sect. The following are the six principal denominations of Buddhism existing to-day in Japan, classed in the order of their numerical importance: Zen, Shin or Monto, Shingon, Jodo, Nichiren or Hokke, Tendai.



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NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Horyuji consists of a group of buildings. *Ji* at the end of the word is the Chinese pronunciation of a character which stands for "temple" in English. It is *tera* in Japanese and refers only to Buddhist temples. The term is also used for "monastery." A *tera* may be a single building, but strictly speaking it should contain the following seven structures:

San-mon—a gateway.

Butsu-den—a large building containing images of the Buddha and saints, *Butsu* meaning Buddha, and *den* a hall or building.

Ho-do—*ho* meaning the Law and *do* meaning temple or hall.

The hall in which Buddhism is expounded and preached.

So-do—*so* meaning priests. A building for the priests to live in.

Yoku-do—a bath-house.

Kuriya—kitchen.

Kawaya—water-closet, a separate building which hundreds of worshippers may use.

Some temples have additional buildings. The Horyuji has many, such as the Go-ju-no-to ("Five-storied Pagoda"), the Yumedono (literally "Dream Hall," which was used for meditation), etc.

The Kondo ("Golden Hall," *kon* meaning gold, and *do* a hall) is the main building, the chief sanctuary, corresponding to the Butsu-den in the list of buildings given above. The name *kondo* is used only in large and important temples.

No. 1. The Kondo and the Five-storied Pagoda of the Horyuji.

No. 2. The painting—Amida and a group of Sonja (high-souled venerable disciples of the Buddha)—on the large west wall of the Kondo.

No. 3. The painting—possibly Hosho-butsu and a group of Sonja—on the large wall east of the north entrance of the Kondo.

Hosho-butsu is one of the Buddhas and controls the life of all things with a power to bestow the enjoyment of life.

No. 4. A part of the painting—possibly Ashiku-butsu and a group of Sonja—on a large space between pillars on the east wall of the Kondo.

Ashiku signifies non-movement, immovability, and non-anger. Butsu is honorific. According to a sutra, countless ages ago, Ashiku, through the influence of Dai-nichi Nyorai, turned to religion, dis-



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ciplined himself and attained Buddhahood and built a land of purity (an imaginary region) where he still preaches.

Dai-nichi Nyorai is the personification of wisdom and of absolute purity.

No. 5. The painting—possibly a Bosatsu—on the partition on the east wall of the Kondo at the southeast corner.

A Bosatsu is a Buddhistic saint of high attainment, struggling to obtain perfect enlightenment and seeking to save the world: submitting himself to discipline with great craving for wisdom from above and for mercy to bestow upon those below him in the world.

No. 6. The painting—possibly of Sho-Kwannon—on the partition on the south wall at the southeast corner (facing the aforementioned Bosatsu) of the Kondo.

Sho-Kwannon is one of the six forms of Kwannon, goddess of mercy. Sho-Kwannon stands for wisdom and generally has a lotus bud in her left hand, and is showing the form of an opened lotus flower in her right hand. This form signifies her power to open to full blossom the hidden possibilities in men.

No. 7. The painting of Fugen Bosatsu on the partition of the north wall at the northeast corner of the Kondo.

Fugen Bosatsu is the highest among the Bosatsu and is always associated with Monju Bosatsu. Fugen stands for compassion, Monju for wisdom. Fugen rides on a white elephant, while Monju rides on a lion. The attributes of Fugen are symbolized by the elephant, which stands for the latent power that endures and accomplishes things, while Monju symbolizes the power of wisdom to destroy sham and find the truth with the keenness and force of a lion in attack. Fugen and Monju are seen attendant on either side of Shaka-muni (the Perfect One, the founder of Buddhism). Fugen also has power to prolong one's life.

No. 8. The painting—possibly Juichimen Kwannon (eleven-faced Kwannon)—on the partition of the east wall at the northeast corner (facing Fugen Bosatsu) of the Kondo.

Juichimen Kwannon is one of the six forms of Kwannon, goddess of mercy. It has ten small heads on the head of the main figure, the three front heads bearing a countenance of compassion, the three to the left one of anger, and the three to the right showing teeth. They represent the attributes of Juichimen Kwannon as rejoicing at the good and sneering and laughing at the bad. The main face is neither laughing nor sad, showing the bigness of the soul to swallow both good and bad, the pure and impure. The small head on the top shows the face of a Buddha of true enlightenment.



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No. 9. The painting—possibly Miroku Bosatsu—on the partition of the north wall at the northwest corner of the Kondo.

Miroku Bosatsu stands preeminent for his compassion and wis-

dom. According to one version, Miroku began striving for perfection many years before Shaka-muni and is to appear in this world as a perfect Buddha at a time in the future to take the place of Shaka-muni in leading men to salvation.



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No. 10. The San-mon, the gateway, and the Five-storied Pagoda of the Horyuji.