

Early Historical Contexts (Protohistory to 645)

Buddhism's Transmission to Yamato: The *Nihon shoki* Narrative

The *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan) is the primary textual source for narrative details about the transmission of Buddhist texts, images, and ritual objects to the Japanese islands, and for Buddhism's early development. Compiled by imperial command and completed in 720 CE, it narrates the history of Japan from its mythic origins to 697 CE. According to the *Nihon shoki*, Buddha's Dharma (i.e., teaching) was introduced to Japan in 552 CE:

552 CE. Winter, 10th Month: King Sōngmyōng of the Korean kingdom of Paekche [J. Kudara]—also known as King Sōng—dispatched Norisach'igye [J. Nurishichikei] and other retainers to Japan. They offered as tribute a gold and copper statue of Śākyamuni Buddha, ritual banners and canopies, and several volumes of sūtras and commentaries. In a separate declaration, King Sōng praised the merit of propagating and worshipping the Dharma, stating, "This Dharma is superior to all the others. It is difficult to understand and difficult to attain. Neither the Duke of Chou nor Confucius was able to comprehend it. This Dharma can produce immeasurable, limitless meritorious karmic consequence, leading to the attainment of supreme wisdom. It is like a person who has a wish-fulfilling gem whose every desire is granted. The jewel of this wonderful Dharma is also like this. Every prayer is answered and not a need goes unfulfilled. Moreover, from distant India (Tenjiku) all the way to the three Korean kingdoms this teaching has been followed and upheld. There is no one who does not revere it. Accordingly, I, King Sōngmyōng, your vassal, have humbly dispatched my retainer Norisach'igye to the Imperial Country [that is, Yamato] to transmit and propagate this teaching throughout the land, thereby effecting what the Buddha foretold, "my Dharma will spread to the east." (adapted from Inoue 1987: 2.474–5 and Deal 1995: 218)

The Buddha may have foretold the eastward transmission of the Dharma, but this did not mean that its acceptance in Japan did not merit discussion among the

Heavenly Sovereign's (*tennō*) most powerful advisors. The same *Nihon shoki* entry continues by recounting the manner in which Buddhism was received as a result of the Paekche king's urging.

This very day the Heavenly Sovereign [that is, Kinmei] heard this declaration and leapt with joy. He declared to the envoys, "From ancient times to the present we have not heard of such a fine Dharma as this. Nevertheless, we cannot ourselves decide whether to accept this teaching." Thereupon he inquired of his assembled officials, "The Buddha presented to us from the country to our west has a face of extreme solemnity. We have never known such a thing before. Should we worship it or not?"

Soga no Iname humbly responded: "The many countries to the west all worship this Buddha. Is it only Japan [Nihon] that will reject this teaching?"

Mononobe no Okoshi and Nakatomi no Kamako together humbly responded: "The rulers of our country have always worshipped throughout the four seasons the 180 deities of heaven and earth. If they now change this and worship the deity of a foreign country [*ada-shikuni no kami*], we fear that the deities of our country [*kuni tsu kami*] will become angry."

The Heavenly Sovereign declared, "I grant to Soga no Iname the worship of this Buddha image in order to test its efficacy."

Soga no Iname knelt down and received the statue. With great joy, he enshrined it in his home at Owarida and devotedly performed the rituals of a world renouncer [that is, a practicing Buddhist]. He also purified his home at Mukuhara and made it into a temple. (adapted from Inoue 1987: 2.475 and Deal 1995: 219)

The *Nihon shoki* account of Buddhism's introduction to Japan raises a number of historical and conceptual issues. Historically, there is a wider East Asian context for Buddhism's transmission: Buddhism was received in China from Central Asia by way of India, and from China to the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago. Once transmitted to the Japanese islands, there are issues regarding Buddhism's reception and its cultural impact. Conceptually, what did the Heavenly Sovereign and his courtiers understand Buddhism to be? Or, put another way, what did they assume they were adopting or rejecting? Though there may be no definitive answer to this question, we can explore Japanese responses to Buddhism in this formative period following its transmission to the Japanese islands. We will consider these issues from both the larger East Asian perspective and from the specific context of Japan.

Buddhism in the China Sea interaction sphere

Joan Piggott's (1997) notion of the China Sea interaction sphere (or China Sea sphere)¹ offers one way to frame East Asian relations in the era of Buddhist transmission. This term refers to the shared material and intellectual culture that flowed



Figure 1.1 China Sea Interaction Sphere. Map by Matthew Stavros.

between parts of the Chinese mainland, the Korean peninsula, and the Japanese archipelago by way of the China Sea during the third through eighth centuries (see Figure 1.1). Exchange in the China Sea sphere impacted emerging notions about Japanese kingship and, ultimately, the formation of the state known as “Nihon,” a term in use by the late 670s. Piggott stresses that China Sea sphere cultural transmission was multidirectional, and not simply Chinese culture radiating unidirectionally out to other parts of East Asia, as has sometimes been assumed. Ko, Haboush, and Piggott (2003: 9–10) argue that the China Sea sphere shared, to some extent, “compatibility in written language, institutions, law, religions, and aesthetics. Confucian texts, along with Buddhist sutras, gave elites a common vocabulary that transcended ethnic and national boundaries.” They go on to note that despite these shared elements, each East Asian region maintained its own distinctive cultural and intellectual perspectives.

The transmission of Buddhism to Japan, then, constitutes one aspect of a larger process of the selective adaptation and use of East Asian mainland culture. Examples of material and intellectual culture exchanged included – in addition to Buddhism, Confucian, and Daoist ideas – the Chinese language and writing system, artistic techniques, medical knowledge, political structures, and social configurations. These cultural influences flowed into the Japanese archipelago at the same time as powerful extended families or clans (*uji*)² were competing for political ascendancy over Yamato. The transmission of Buddhism to the Japanese islands was thus intimately connected with struggles over the consolidation of political power.

Traditional scholarship on the role of China in ancient East Asia has typically viewed China as a cultural juggernaut that transmitted culture and civilization to the East Asian hinterlands. From this perspective, a one-way cultural transmission from China to Korea to Japan brought political, religious, literary, and artistic traditions to otherwise culturally deprived regions. As Piggott (1997) suggests, however, there is clear evidence that the cultural transmission was multidirectional. Cultural flows back and forth throughout East Asia included such things as trade goods, art and architectural techniques and styles, texts, medicines, and human resources (Buddhist monks and nuns, Confucian scholars, merchants, government emissaries, artisans, and craftspeople, among others) as well as intangible human resources such as language, religion, political structures, medical knowledge, and promises of political and military support.

One important aspect of this multidirectional cultural exchange was its usefulness in establishing trade and strategic relationships with other East Asian political entities in the early centuries of the Common Era. The *Nihon shoki* depicts relations between the Japanese archipelago and the Korean peninsula. It is clear that there was much maneuvering on the part of the kings of Yamato and the Korean Three Kingdoms (Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla) to secure support, threaten retaliation, and otherwise jockey for position. In Japan's case, its relations with the Korean peninsula and the Chinese mainland reinforced the growing power of the Yamato Great Kings.³ Importantly, this relationship was also one of tribute. Besides the establishment of trade relations and military alliances, "Buddhism" was one of the many things that were exchanged as tribute. In the *Nihon shoki* example, Paekche's King Sōngmyōng sent his envoys to the Japanese archipelago seeking Yamato military support for its war against Silla and China, offering Buddhism in exchange. In this way, Buddhist material culture, because it was a part of the tribute-paying process, was implicated in the creation of alliances across East Asia.

An additional historical fact is important to understanding the dissemination of Buddhism across East Asia. In the fourth to sixth centuries, the East Asia we now think of as comprising the national entities called "China," "Korea," and "Japan" did not yet exist – these were later appellations. Rather, our use of the terms "China," "Korea," and "Japan" in reference to this time period refers to descriptions of geographical locations corresponding to the Chinese mainland, the Korean peninsula, and the Japanese archipelago.

In this time period, the Chinese mainland was undergoing a period of disunion, with multiple political regimes struggling against each other for supremacy. Similarly, the Korean peninsula was divided into three kingdoms, with an additional weaker federation. Political power in the Japanese archipelago was concentrated in a relatively small area of central Honshū known as the kingdom of Yamato⁴ and was contested by extended clan (*uji*) lineages vying for hegemony.⁵ It was within such unsettled political spheres that Buddhism was introduced and transmitted within East Asia.

Although Buddhism was officially introduced to China in the first century CE – and likely earlier – it was not until the late fourth century that Buddhist ideas and practices became significant and were, in turn, transmitted to the kingdoms of the Korean peninsula and to the islands of Japan. Further, it was, in part, because of political intrigue and the need for alliances that the Korean kingdom of Paekche sent envoys, accompanied by gifts of Buddhist imagery and texts, to Japan in the sixth century. Buddhism, then, played a significant role in the transformation of the political and religious landscapes of China, Korea, and Japan. Thus, the transmission of Buddhism to Japan needs to be understood within the context of relations between the Japanese archipelago, the Korean peninsula, and the Chinese mainland.

Buddhist transmission routes: imperial narratives and private receptions

While the *Nihon shoki* is by no means the only official document to narrate the transmission of Buddhism to the Japanese archipelago, it is the one most often cited in such discussions. This account has become – historically and often in scholarly discussions – canonical shorthand for Buddhism’s transmission to Japan. In isolation from similar Buddhism transmission narratives in other parts of East Asia, it is easy to assume that the *Nihon shoki* account is somehow peculiarly Japanese, or represents a reception story unlike those in other East Asian cultural contexts. However, similar narratives attended the transmission of Buddhism to China and Korea as well as variant records of its movement into Japan. Thus, we need to understand that the transmission of continental Buddhist traditions to Japan by the sixth century CE occurred within the broader religious and political landscapes of contemporaneous East Asia.

Although official imperial narratives – like the one expressed in the *Nihon shoki* – have often been cited as defining the moment when Buddhism made the leap from one cultural context to the next, there were in fact official and unofficial versions of Buddhism’s transmission in each country. The official story marks Buddhism as an entity embraced or accepted by the formal imperial bureaucracy. The unofficial story concerns the Buddhist faith of immigrants, merchants, and others who enacted their religion in new regions. The latter is often a difficult story to tell because the evidence is mostly diffused in archaeological remains.

There are, then, two models for the transmission of Buddhism to East Asian cultural contexts in general and to the Japanese islands in particular. The first model is of Buddhism as transmitted from the ruler of one country to another. Buddhism then comes to be officially supported and patronized by the ruling classes and only later spreads to the larger population. In the second model, and the one often

ignored, Buddhism is seen as transmitted from person to person within the general population. Buddhism in this instance usually meets with at least some initial antipathy from the ruling classes.

Japanese scholars, like Tamura Enchō, describe two primary routes of transmission that Buddhism followed through the China Sea interaction sphere: an imperial/royal route and a route of individual travelers (Tamura 1996: 6–8). Tamura refers to the imperial/royal route by the term “temple Buddhism” (*garan bukkyō*) in recognition of the fact that the acceptance of Buddhism in a particular kingdom was typically followed quickly by imperial patronage of temple-building projects and the creation of a rudimentary monastic system to run the temple and conduct rituals – rituals often directed toward the well-being of the kingdom and its ruling class. Buddhist transmission stories – like the *Nihon shoki* narrative – describe this route. The imperial route is also conspicuous for financial resources needed to finance temple construction projects and human resources, especially skilled craftspeople, necessary to build these temples. Imperial transmission routes and the narratives compiled to describe them were especially implicated in displays of ruling power and expressions of legitimate authority.

In contrast to “temple Buddhism,” Tamura describes the other mode of transmission as “household Buddhism” (*shitaku bukkyō*). This form of Buddhism was centered on private Buddhist practices that often revolved around Buddhist images, such as sculpture or paintings, which depicted particular Buddhas and bodhisattvas. This form of Buddhism was transmitted in an informal way, but was often the result of interactions between immigrants, merchants, and others who traversed the China Sea interaction sphere and were also Buddhists. Evidence for this form of Buddhist dissemination typically predates official transmission stories and their ideological need to control the story of Buddhism’s spread lest this powerful religious tradition be placed in the hands of those outside the ruling class. There had been significant contact between the Japanese islands and the Asian mainland prior to the middle of the sixth century, and Buddhist ideas and material culture would have been exchanged as a result of those contacts.⁶

This story of Buddhism’s transmission recounted in texts like the *Nihon shoki* is the official one. But Buddhism – as a private or household practice – was introduced to Japan prior to this time through Chinese and Korean immigrants who were Buddhists and who settled in Japan. Immigrants from the Korean peninsula, for instance, brought Buddhist practices to Japan earlier than the official date. From around 400 CE, immigrants from the Asian mainland – especially from the Korean peninsula – came to Yamato and settled within fixed kinship groups. They brought with them the worship of Buddhism as a private faith practiced within the kinship group. As a result, it is more than likely that Buddhist texts and images were brought to Japan, prior to the official sixth-century introduction of Buddhism to Japan, by such notable figures as Shiba Totto (grandfather of Tori Busshi), thought to have

arrived in Japan in 522 CE. According to the late eleventh century *Fusō ryakki* (Abridged Annals of Japan), Buddhist images were enshrined in the Yamato region and worshipped as the *kami* of the Great Tang.

Conflicting dates for the transmission of Buddhism to the Japanese archipelago

The transmission of Buddhism to Japan is a notion that is both factually and conceptually problematic. Factually, there are two competing dates given in early texts for the moment Buddhism “arrived” in Japan. While the *Nihon shoki* provides the date of transmission as 552 CE, another text, a temple legend called the *Gangōji garan engi narabi ni ruki shizai chō* (Circumstances Leading to the Founding of the Monastery Complex of Gangōji and a List of Its Accumulated Treasures),⁷ gives the date 538 CE, as does the *Jōgū shōtoku hōō teisetsu* (The Imperial Record of Shōtoku, Dharma King of the Upper Palace). The reason for this discrepancy is unclear and various theories have been asserted to account for it. Because all three texts have compilation dates well after the events they describe, it is impossible to use any of them to provide a reliably exact date for when King Sōng sent his envoys to Japan. The *Nihon shoki* was compiled by order of the Yamato Court in 720 CE, while *Gangōji garan engi* was compiled, according to its own postscript, in 747 CE, but the text we have today was probably a Heian-period (794–1185 CE) compilation, itself based on an earlier eighth-century – and no longer extant – text called *Gangōji engi*. The main section of the Imperial Record dates to the eighth or ninth century.

There are additional, and more specific, problems that make these dates factually suspect. For instance, with regard to the *Nihon shoki* transmission, it has long been pointed out that the statement uttered by King Sōng in praise of the Dharma he is offering in tribute to King Kinmei – and quoted in the transmission passage for 552 – is partly a quotation from the *Konkōmyō-saishō-ō-kyō* (*Sovereign Kings of the Golden Light Sūtra*; Skt. *Suvarṇa-prabhāsattama-rāja Sūtra*). This particular translation of the *Sovereign Kings Sūtra* was not produced until 703 by the Chinese priest Yijing (J. Gijō; 635–713), who was working at the time in the Tang capital of Chang’an. Given this fact, at least parts of the 552 account were written post-703 by the compilers of the *Nihon shoki* and do not reflect older records. One widely held speculation is that the famous Nara-period monk Dōji was responsible for this addition. Dōji studied Buddhism in China from 701 to 718 so he may have been the one to import this translation into Japan. It may also have been Dōji who located the transmission of Buddhism to Japan to the year 552 because he would have been knowledgeable of the fact that the so-called Period of the End of the Dharma (*mappō*) was said to begin in that year.⁸

Buddhism as an object and Buddhism as its objects

Conceptually, the idea that Buddhism arrived in Japan in a certain year on a particular day assumes an overly simplistic model of cultural transmission. Further, when we speak of the transmission of Buddhism to Japan what are we saying was transmitted? Buddhism is not a singular “thing” that can be carried to a new place in a single instant. Even conceding that material objects significant to Buddhist practice and thought – such as Buddha images and sūtras – were brought to Japan in a certain year, the broader conceptual and performative meanings of Buddhist doctrines and ritual prescriptions were learned and transformed over a much longer period of time.

Regardless of which date, if either, is correct, it is sufficient to note that Buddhism was likely “officially” transmitted to the Japanese islands during the first half of the sixth century, and was present prior to this transmission in the guise of individuals who had taken up some minimal form of Buddhist practice. Dating aside, there is another issue that is arguably more important for understanding early Japanese Buddhism. This is the dual notion of Buddhism as an object and Buddhism as its objects. Put another way, the *Nihon shoki* account, like other East Asian Buddhism transmission narratives, treats Buddhism in two basic ways: (1) Buddhism as an object that can be contained, transmitted, and handed over from one king to another; and (2) Buddhism as its objects: sutras, images, and other ritual paraphernalia and aspects of Buddhist material culture. The *Nihon shoki* effectively treats Buddhism as a commodity, tangible tribute to purchase the support of the Yamato Great King. As a concrete object, the commodity Buddhism can be accepted or rejected as occurs in the *Nihon shoki* narrative.

The ideology of official transmission narratives

Embedded in Buddhist transmission narratives in general, and in the *Nihon shoki* story in particular, is the significant issue of who controls Buddhism. The control of Buddhist knowledge and ritual power has important ideological and social implications. The *Nihon shoki* narrative presents a story about the transmission of Buddhism that is part of a larger construct that the imperial family and its supporters were trying to craft in order to legitimate their power. Historians have long discussed ways in which texts like the *Nihon shoki* sought the ideological high ground over other competing claims to power and authority. Just as the *Nihon shoki* was, in general, attempting to legitimate the power and authority of the ruling and aristocratic families, so it was also claiming Buddhism as an imperial prerogative. Much of the language justifying these positions – whether political or religious – was retrodictive. Politically, terms like *Nihon* (“Japan”) or *tennō* (“Heavenly Sovereign” or, sometimes, “Emperor/Empress”) would not likely have been used in the middle of the sixth century.

Religiously, it would make no sense for the Heavenly Sovereign to have understood what was meant by terms like Buddha or Dharma without some explanation. Such explanation is not forthcoming in the *Nihon shoki*.

Similarly, as we have already suggested, the idea that Buddhism “entered” Japan on a particular day and year is more ideologically plausible than factual. Scholars like Tsuda Sōkichi (1950) long ago pointed out that texts like the *Nihon shoki* include fabrications introduced by its compilers for ideological reasons. The *Nihon shoki* narrates a history of the newly emergent country of Japan from the perspective of the imperial family. Starting with the origins of Japan in the age of the gods, the narrative concludes in 697 CE with the abdication of Heavenly Sovereign Jitō. The text was compiled at imperial command and narrates events from a court-friendly perspective.

As we have noted, despite the dates given in the official narratives, it is evident from other data, such as archaeological remains, that Buddhist objects and practices already existed in Japan by the middle of the sixth century, brought to various locations in the Japanese archipelago by traders and envoys. The narratives are best seen as a story for control over what must have been perceived to be a powerful, ideologically significant force: the path of the Buddha (*butsudō*) and its world of ritually powerful objects. In the *Nihon shoki*, Buddhism stands outside of competing clans – Buddhism is portrayed as the possession of the imperial family and the central government.

Foreign gods vs. indigenous gods

We have already noted the role of immigrants in bringing Buddhism to the Japanese islands and of promoting its practice, whether privately or publicly. The importance of immigrant kinship groups to the spread and development of Japanese Buddhism was apparent early in the transmission process. The *Fusō ryakki* (Abridged Annals of Japan), a history of Japan to 1094 that focuses on the history of Japanese Buddhism and that cites much older sources,⁹ reports that in the early sixth century southern Chinese immigrants – apparently practicing Buddhists – made their new home in the Yamato region and established a temple. This is the same region occupied by the Soga family and may be one of the sources for Soga interest in Buddhism. This account also suggests that Buddhism arrived in Japan prior to its official transmission.

According to the *Nihon shoki*, the official transmission of Buddhism to Japan precipitated a crisis within the Yamato court over whether it was good or bad to accept and worship foreign deities. As we saw in the passage above, King Kinmei is confronted with a decision to accept or reject the gift of Buddhism. The transmission of Buddhism to Yamato becomes an ideological conflict between competing court

ministers and their factions. The *Nihon shoki* describes a conflict between indigenous *kami* as opposed to foreign *kami* as a way to frame the issue of whether Buddhism should be accepted or not. Concern is expressed over the “feelings” that the indigenous gods have toward a foreign *kami* – in this instance, the Buddha.

The Soga kinship group – led by court minister Soga no Iname (?–570) – represented the faction that embraced what the *Nihon shoki* terms “foreign gods” (*adashikuni no kami*), that is, the Buddha. The Soga family, likely immigrants themselves, was deeply connected with immigrant kinship groups active in the Yamato plain. The Soga, through a number of political machinations, such as marriage into the ruling line, became one of the most powerful families at the Yamato court. In part because of their immigrant connections, the Soga became strong proponents of continental culture, especially Buddhism, and urged the acceptance of Buddhism by the court. They, along with powerful immigrant kinship groups such as the Hata, built temples, sponsored the education of Buddhist clerics, and engaged in other pro-Buddhist activities.¹⁰

The Mononobe kinship group – led by court minister Mononobe no Okoshi (dates unknown) – and the Nakatomi kinship group – led by court minister Nakatomi no Kamako (dates unknown) – represented the faction that rejected the foreign deity, Buddha, in favor of the Yamato gods (*kuni tsu kami*). The Mononobe were professional soldiers, while the Nakatomi family were associated with *kami* worship and other ritual matters.

As we saw above, Kinmei, in the end, grants Soga no Iname custody of the Buddha image for the purpose of ascertaining whether its worship is efficacious. But the matter does not end there. The same 552 entry continues:

Later, an epidemic afflicted the country and cut short the lives of many people. With the passing of time, more and more people died of this incurable disease. Mononobe no Okoshi and Nakatomi no Kamako together humbly addressed the Heavenly Sovereign: “Previously, the counsel we offered went unheeded. As a result, this epidemic has occurred. Now, before it is too late, this situation must be rectified. Throw away the statue of the Buddha at once and diligently seek future blessings.”

The Heavenly Sovereign responded: “We will do as you have counseled.”

Officials took the Buddha statue and threw it into the waters of the Naniwa canal. They then set fire to the temple in which it was enshrined and burned it to the ground. At this time, although the winds were calm and the sky cloudless, suddenly a fire broke out in the Great Hall [of the Heavenly Sovereign’s palace]. (adapted from Inoue 1987: 2.475 and Deal 1995: 219)

Despite the attempt to locate the cause of the epidemic in the worship of the Buddha image, the resulting fire in the Great Hall suggests otherwise. But the discussion of Buddhism in this entry ends here, leaving the matter unresolved. In 553, however,

there is an entry that recounts the discovery of a camphor wood log emitting a bright light as it floated on the sea. The log is recovered and given to Heavenly Sovereign Kinmei, who has two Buddha images made from it. Although nothing else about these images is conveyed, it seems that Buddhist practice has been given another chance.

The next sustained entries concerning Buddhism in the *Nihon shoki* do not occur until the reign of King Bidatsu (r. 572–585). It is at this point in the text – starting in the year 577 – that Buddhist-related entries become prominent, and the conflict over the reception of Buddhism is finally decided in favor of the Soga family. In a story reminiscent of the events that occurred some 30 years earlier, Soga no Umako (Iname's son) is given possession, in 584, of two stone Buddha statues that had been brought to Yamato by Japanese envoys returning from Paekche. Seeking to further promote the Dharma, Umako builds a family temple (*ujidera*) called Hōkōji (known originally as Asukadera; it is located in modern Nara Prefecture); oversees the renunciation and patronage of Yamato's first monastics, three young women; and puts a Buddha relic through a number of tests meant to destroy it. When the relic remains unscathed, his faith in the Buddha's Dharma is secured. That same year, Umako becomes sick and, at King Bidatsu's urging, he prays to the Buddha image to be cured. Shortly after, an epidemic breaks out and many people die.

As a result of the epidemic, Mononobe no Moriya and Nakatomi no Katsumi convince King Bidatsu that the cause of the disease was the fact that Soga no Umako was worshipping the Buddha. King Bidatsu issues an order that worship of the Buddha cease immediately. Umako's nuns are flogged and returned to secular life, his temple is burned down, and the Buddha statue enshrined there is destroyed. However, another epidemic occurs and the supposition this time is that this is retribution for destroying the Buddha image. Umako himself remains ill, and at his request, King Bidatsu allows Umako alone to continue the private practice of Buddhist rituals in order to cure his disease. The three nuns are returned to him, and he rebuilds his temple.

In 587 the Soga family gained control over the court. Soga no Umako, then, eventually wins the religious conflict. Besides the ideological Buddhist victory, Umako also effects a political resolution: he seizes power in 592 by arranging for the assassination of his political rivals and placing in power a ruler amenable to his ideas. There is another political consideration. The Soga extended family realized a need for a new system of government to unify clans around the central authority of the imperial line; Buddhism was one of the tools used to accomplish significant aspects of this process.

We conclude this discussion with two historical notes. First, the *Nihon shoki* represents the bad things that happen to those who would oppose the acceptance of Buddhism as a punishment meted out by the result of karmic consequence, suggesting that Buddhist supporters wrote this *Nihon shoki* narrative. In this case, King

Bidatsu dies of the epidemic, apparently the price he played for denigrating Buddhism. Yoshida Kazuhiko argues that certain *Nihon shoki* entries are patterned on Chinese antecedents that discuss the recompense meted out to rulers who denigrate Buddhism. For this reason, Yoshida believes that a Buddhist priest wrote such sections of the *Nihon shoki*. He conjectures that this was the monk Dōji. These narratives also follow a pattern whereby the idea of the End of the Dharma (*mappō*) is invoked to explain the suppression of Buddhism. This, in turn, gives way to a struggle against this oppression, and the result is that Buddhism is restored. For these reasons, Yoshida questions whether there really was opposition to Buddhism in the Asuka period (Yoshida 2006: 15–16).

Second, the struggle between the Soga and Mononobe has often been described as a struggle between Buddhism and Shintō, but this is a problematic perspective because Shintō as a systematic, organized religion did not exist in this time period (Kuroda 1981; Yoshida 2003: 2). It appears that the early Japanese conception of Buddhism was to see the Buddha as a foreign *kami* rather than as something completely different from indigenous cults and cultic practices. Seen in this light, we can understand this struggle as one over who would control the rituals and cultic centers that were seen as so important to holding and maintaining power and prosperity. This was played out in terms of the comparative efficaciousness of indigenous *kami* over foreign *kami*, and of continental symbols of power versus indigenous ones. Changes in cultic practices and centers meant changes in who held the symbolic reigns of power. In the end, this struggle did establish Buddhism as central to the task of nation-building as its patronage by the royal family in subsequent decades attests. However, Buddhism did not replace the various indigenous *kami* cults, but rather took on a ritually important role alongside them.

Queen Suiko and Senior Prince Shōtoku

By the late sixth century, Buddhism – already strongly supported by the Soga aristocratic family – was becoming a significant ideological presence in the development of a nascent centralized court bureaucracy. According to the *Nihon shoki*, it was during the reign of Queen Suiko and her chief minister, Senior Prince Shōtoku, that Buddhism became a formal aspect of royal rule, inscribed, for instance, in the Seventeen Article Constitution.

Queen Suiko was of direct royal lineage: she was the daughter of King Kinmei, her brother was King Yōmei, and she was the widow of King Bidatsu. However, her connections to the Soga family were also strong. Her mother was from the Soga family and she was Soga no Umako's niece. Given her Soga connections, it is not surprising that Buddhist rituals and other practices were depicted as central to her reign. It is also likely that at least some of the interest in Buddhism that texts like the

Nihon shoki attribute to Suiko and other members of the royal family was a way to write into the official record royal support for Buddhism, especially in a period in which Buddhism was mostly promoted by the Soga and related immigrant extended families.

Some scholars, therefore, have questioned the commitment that Suiko had to Buddhism. While the Soga extended family and others were deeply concerned with promoting Buddhist practice, it is less certain how the Great Kings thought about this potentially disruptive new ideology. Some have claimed that Queen Suiko was anti-Buddhist because of the rebuke she apparently makes to Soga no Umako regarding Buddhist worship. In 607, Suiko issued this edict:

We hear that Our Imperial ancestors, in their government of the world, bending lowly under the sky and treading delicately on the ground, paid deep reverence to the Gods of Heaven and Earth. They everywhere dedicated temples to the mountains and rivers, and held mysterious communion with the powers of Nature. Hence the male and female elements became harmoniously developed, and civilizing influences blended together. And now in Our reign, shall there be any remissness in the worship of the Gods of Heaven and Earth? Therefore let Our Ministers with their whole hearts do reverence to the Gods of Heaven and Earth. (Aston 1972: 2.135)

In this passage, she appears to be saying that worship of *kami* is central to the successful administration of government and for a peaceful land. Scholars such as Sonoda Kōyū have argued that this royal edict was a rebuke to Soga no Umako and his support of Buddhism (Sonoda 1993: 378–9). The *Nihon shoki* goes on to report that six days after the edict was issued, Soga no Umako and Senior Prince Shōtoku worshipped the “Gods of Heaven and Earth” (Aston 1972: 2.136). Beyond this one statement of compliance with the edict – an edict that does not forbid the worship of Buddhism – there is no other specific evidence that Suiko was anti-Buddhist. If the *Nihon shoki* accounts are to be trusted, however, there is evidence that Suiko was a Buddhist supporter. She did, after all, request that Senior Prince Shōtoku lecture on Buddhist sutras. Suiko, despite Sonoda’s objection, seems to have been pro-Buddhist even as she also had responsibility for the worship of *kami*. She was Great Queen when there was increasing Buddhist activity, and if she had truly tried to abolish Buddhist practices, it seems odd that there would not have been more written to suggest this. One other bit of information further belies Sonoda’s interpretation: in 623, the *Nihon shoki* records that Yamato was home to 46 temples, 816 monks, and 569 nuns (Aston 1972: 2.154).

If Queen Suiko was only a tentative Buddhist, her nephew and chief minister, Senior Prince Shōtoku was apparently an ardent Buddhist. The *Nihon shoki* depicts him as a strong advocate for Chinese modes of government and religion in general, and as a devout Buddhist in particular. The history of early Japanese Buddhism used

to revolve around the figure of Senior Prince Shōtoku (Shōtoku Taishi; also known, more correctly, as Umayado no miko). The long held view of the prince was of a brilliant statesman and erudite Buddhist, the first Japanese Buddhist to fully understand the profundity of the Buddha's Dharma. In the case of Shōtoku, old views linger on, but they are changing.

The advent of both new historical data and persuasive alternative textual interpretations provide good reasons to be suspicious of the traditional accounts of the role that Shōtoku Taishi played in the development of early Japanese Buddhism. Senior Prince Shōtoku has become a flashpoint for radical reinterpretations of early Japanese Buddhism. Much of what had long been assumed to be true about Asuka Buddhism has turned out to be highly problematic and Shōtoku is at the center of these interpretive debates. As a result, our discussion is divided into two parts: the first outlines the traditional view of Shōtoku; the second discusses recent scholarship that questions much of the veracity of the received view.

The traditional view of Shōtoku derives from texts dating to the early eighth century and later, such as the *Nihon shoki* (or *Nihongi*; Chronicles of Japan, 720 CE) and the *Jōgū Shōtoku hō teisetsu* (The Imperial Record of Shōtoku, Dharma King of the Upper Palace).¹¹ These and similar narratives tell us that Shōtoku Taishi (Prince Shōtoku; 574–622) was the son of Emperor Yōmei. He became crown prince during the reign of his aunt, Queen Suiko (r. 592–628), overseeing the affairs of state from 593 until his death in 622. These texts represent Shōtoku as a devout Buddhist, a sagacious ruler, and, increasingly over time, as having Buddha- and bodhisattva-like spiritual acumen and superhuman abilities. The cult of Shōtoku Taishi that developed after the Prince's death was primarily focused on the hagiographical features of his biography. The notion that Shōtoku is the founder of Japanese Buddhism and father of the Japanese nation is one that started in these early texts and continues to the present day. Most recently, some Japanese scholars have begun to question whether Shōtoku was even an historical person. Rather, it is argued, he was a social construction that served the political purposes of those who inscribed these legends in texts like the *Nihon shoki* and the *Jōgū Shōtoku hō teisetsu*. In short, myth and history collide head on in the personage of Senior Prince Shōtoku.

According to these early texts, Shōtoku was a highly capable statesman who exhibited extraordinary political acumen. Shōtoku served as regent (*sesshō*) to his aunt, Queen Suiko. In this capacity, Shōtoku was noted for his ability in dealing with both domestic affairs and foreign diplomacy. He is said to have written the Seventeen Article Constitution (*Jūshichijū kenpō*), established a hierarchical 12-rank court system (*kan'i jūnikai*), dispatched envoys to Sui dynasty (581–619) China (*kenzuishi*) starting in 607, and utilized Confucian values of loyalty and harmony as the foundation for the administration of government. In sum, Shōtoku is represented as having mastered the complexities of Chinese political thought and selectively applied it to the emerging Japanese state.

These same early texts valorize Shōtoku as a devout Buddhist with a profound comprehension of the Dharma; it is this kind of representation of Shōtoku that was the foundation for his status as the father of Japanese Buddhism. It is recorded that Senior Prince Shōtoku studied Buddhism – especially sutras – with a Koguryō priest named Hyeja (J. Eji; resident in Japan from 595 to 615). It is also recorded that he wrote commentaries on three Buddhist sutras (known collectively as the Three Commentaries, or *Sangyō gisho*). These three sutras developed key Mahayana Buddhist ideas: the *Queen Shrimala Sūtra* (J. *Shōman-gyō*) recounts the story of Shrimala, an Indian queen, whose Buddhist practice leads to enlightenment; the *Lotus Sūtra* (J. *Hoke-kyō*) teaches, among other things, that all sentient beings will one day attain enlightenment; and the *Vimalakirti Sūtra* (J. *Yuima-gyō*), narrates the story of a lay Buddhist named Vimalakirti whose understanding of the Dharma exceeded that of Manjushri (J. Monju), the bodhisattva of wisdom. While others in his day were chanting sutras for their salvific efficacy, we are told that Shōtoku was reading sutras for their Buddhist meaning and writing commentaries on them. The *Nihon shoki* also states that Shōtoku lectured to Empress Suiko on the *Queen Shrimala Sutra*; such an entry is presumably meant to directly associate Suiko with Queen Shrimala.

Despite the importance of the image of Shōtoku in Japanese Buddhist history, our understanding of him is almost entirely hagiographical. Some Japanese scholars have questioned the factuality of the Shōtoku accounts found in the *Nihon shoki* and other texts. Others have argued that Shōtoku did not actually exist, but is rather the invention of the earliest texts about him that constructed his existence for religious-political purposes.¹²

Traditional interpretations of Shōtoku's Buddhist erudition rested largely on the acceptance of the assertion in early texts that he wrote the *Sangyō gisho*. It has long been speculated that, given the very short time between the introduction of Buddhism to the Japanese islands and the time that Shōtoku supposedly wrote the three commentaries, it would not have been possible for him to have mastered the language and complex understanding to write sophisticated Buddhist commentaries by himself. For this reason, more cautious scholars have contended that Shōtoku wrote the commentaries, but with the assistance of monastics from the Korean peninsula, such as the Koguryō monk Hyeja mentioned above. More recently, however, evidence has emerged revealing that the *Sangyō gisho* was brought back to Japan by envoys sent to Sui dynasty China and, thus, was not the work of Shōtoku. Further evidence is found in the Dunhuang caves. In the Mogao Caves (J. Bokkō-kutsu), Cave 17, a large number of scrolls were discovered. Among these was a text titled the *Shōmangyō Commentary* (*Shōmangyō gisho*) that is the source for the *Shōmangyō* commentary attributed to Shōtoku.¹³ It is likely that his two other sutra commentaries also have Chinese origins. It appears that the three commentaries were only later attributed to Shōtoku.

Others have also expressed doubt about Shōtoku's historicity or about the factualness of the early stories about him. For instance, Tsuda Sōkichi (1950) argued that Shōtoku could not have been the author of the Seventeen Article Constitution on the grounds that the *Nihon shoki* was the product of a later time, produced by a group of editors with a particular ideological agenda to promote. More recently, Ōyama Seiichi has argued that the political and religious erudition of Senior Prince Shōtoku is largely a fiction constructed by the editors of the *Nihon shoki*. He claims that there is little about Shōtoku that we can be confident is historically accurate. Ōyama does acknowledge the existence of a figure named Prince Umayado (Umayado no miko) – presumably the historical figure behind the Shōtoku story – but that what we know of him is extremely limited historically, such as that he was King Yōmei's son, that his actual name was Umayado, that he was born in 574, that he lived in the Ikaruga Palace, and that he built the temple known as Ikarugadera, later renamed Hōryūji.¹⁴ If we accept Ōyama's claims, there is little choice but to accept that the Senior Prince Shōtoku who has come down to us through history was in fact an historical fiction meant, in part, to associate the ruling family with the powerful ideology of Buddhism at a time when it was largely in the hands of the Soga and other likeminded extended families. Even making the case for downsizing Shōtoku's historical reputation, it still stands that he has powerfully represented many different things to different Japanese Buddhists.

Asuka Buddhism (552–645)

The forms of Buddhist practice and thought that developed after 552 are usually referred to collectively as Asuka-period Buddhism (*Asuka bukkyō*). The Asuka period (552–645) is named for an area in the southeastern Nara Basin and surrounded by the Yoshino mountains. This region was particularly associated with the Soga extended family. One of the most important characteristics of this period is the fact that there were powerful extended families active in court government and politics – most notably the Soga extended family – that were also major promoters of Buddhist practice. Notable, too, were those powerful extended families that represented indigenous *kami* cultic practices that were opposed to Buddhist practice.

Another important characteristic of this period is that the promotion of Buddhism was not just the effort of the Soga family, but also the result of immigrants to the Japanese archipelago who brought the Buddhist faith with them. Extended families, such as the Hata, were actively Buddhist and, like the Soga, were responsible for some of the earliest Buddhist temples constructed in the Japanese islands.

In discussing Asuka Buddhism, there are four aspects that particularly frame the contours of Buddhism in this era: (1) the importance of immigrants to the

development of Asuka Buddhism, (2) aristocratic family patronage of Buddhism (*ujizoku bukkyō*), (3) the centrality of Buddhist material culture, and (4) the decided emphasis on ritual over doctrine. We will explicate each one of these aspects in turn, utilizing the example of the Soga family and their patronage of temples and a fledgling monastic community as a way to further illuminate the significance of these four aspects of Asuka Buddhism.

Immigrants and the development of Asuka-period Buddhism

Immigrants and immigrant kinship groups were crucial to the development of Asuka culture in general and Asuka Buddhism in particular. We have already touched on the fact that Buddhism arrived in Japan prior to its official introduction, as recounted in texts like the *Nihon shoki*, by means of immigrants – some of whom were Buddhists – to the Japanese islands from the Asian mainland. The *Nihon shoki* refers to immigrants and their immediate descendants by the term *kikajin*, “people who have come from other regions.” This discussion, however, adopts Michael Como’s (2003) terminology replacing the term “immigrants” with “immigrant kinship group” as a way to more clearly “refer to any kinship group that claimed as a founding ancestor a figure that arrived in the Japanese islands from across the sea.”¹⁵ Immigrant kinship groups were important to the development of ancient Japan because they were the bearers of Chinese culture – including Buddhism – and its material artifacts such as texts, art, and technologies. These groups were responsible for the introduction to Japan of such things as pottery techniques, silkworm cultivation, horse breeding, and other technologies. They also brought to Japan expertise in government administration and economic systems, as well as Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist, and other Chinese intellectual ideas. Over time, the distinction between immigrant kinship groups and native Japanese evaporated because of intermarriage and their importance to crafting Yamato culture.

King Sōngmyōng’s gift in 552 was by no means a unique interaction between the Asian mainland and the Japanese islands. The following year, the *Nihon shoki* recorded that Paekche sent scholars of medicine, divination, and calendars to Yamato in exchange for Yamato arms and troops. In subsequent years, Yamato was the recipient of additional human resources, notably Buddhist sculptors, architects, and artisans. In this way, immigrants from China and the Korean peninsula – whether extended kinship groups or individual experts in a particular area of knowledge – played a central role in the transmission of Buddhism, political and social ideas, and other cultural forms that were crucial to early Japanese nation-building.

Textual and other evidence strongly suggests that early Japanese Buddhists relied on and were guided by Buddhists who arrived in the Japanese islands from the Chinese continent. The *Nihon shoki* depicts Senior Prince Shōtoku as an ardent

Buddhist believer and patron, and states that he studied with monks from the Korean peninsula. Reading between the lines of early texts that recount Shōtoku's Buddhist erudition, the fact that Shōtoku studied with Korean Buddhist monks suggests that those Japanese who wanted to study Buddhism required the tutelage of Korean monks in order to understand Buddhist sutras and images, and to learn proper ritual procedures. As we have seen, the earliest Buddhist objects to arrive in Japan came mostly from the Korean peninsula. Additionally, Korean monks, artisans of Buddhist ritual objects, and ritual specialists also accompanied envoys to Japan. In these ways, Korean Buddhists were central to the early development of Japanese Buddhism.

Besides expertise in Buddhist thought, ritual, art, and architecture, Korean Buddhists were sometimes appointed to administer monastic institutions and to assist with writing ecclesial regulations. In 625 CE, for instance, the *Nihon shoki* records the appointment of Ekan (his Japanese name; dates unknown) a Koguryō Buddhist priest, to the highest monastic rank of primary prelate (*sōjō*). Apparently, there were not yet Japanese monks sufficiently qualified to fill such a position. Regardless, Ekan was very accomplished. He studied Sanron (Three-Treatise) Buddhist thought (see Chapter 2) in Sui dynasty China with the famous monk Jizang (J. Kichizō; 549–623). The *Nihon shoki* tells us that in 625 he was sent to Yamato as tribute by the Koguryō king and appointed primary prelate by Queen Suiko.

There are numerous other mentions of Korean peninsula monks and nuns traveling to the Japanese archipelago bringing both Buddhist material culture and knowledge of Buddhist thought and practice. For instance, in 577, the *Nihon shoki* recounts that a Japanese envoy in Paekche was given both human and material Buddhist resources to take back with him to Yamato. Among these resources were sutras and sutra commentaries, and six experts in things Buddhist: “a precept master (*risshi*), a meditation master (*zenji*), a nun, a *dhāraṇī* (J. *darani*; ritual incantations) master (*jugonshi*), a Buddhist statue-maker, and a temple architect” (adapted from Inoue 1987: 2.475 and Deal 1995: 219). Without question, then, Asuka-period Buddhism was largely shaped by continental influences and especially by Korean monastics.

Aristocratic family Buddhist patronage

From *Nihon shoki* accounts and other evidence, both textual and archaeological, it is evident that early Japanese Buddhism was largely the purview of aristocratic extended kinship groups, especially the Soga, and that their Buddhism focused largely on the creation and use of Buddhist material culture and the rituals performed in conjunction with these objects, and not on something primarily doctrinal. This early form of Soga family Buddhism is sometimes referred to as *ujizoku bukkyō* – Buddhism of the great families. Emblematic of the Soga family patronage of

Buddhism was their family temple (*ujidera*) called Asukadera, and later referred to as Hōkōji or Gangōji.

The transmission of Buddhism across East Asia in the early centuries of the Common Era was marked, in part, by the construction of temples, symbolic of the power and prestige afforded by the religion. Patronage of temples and having them constructed may have been an expression of the power of Buddhist ritual practices, but it was also a way to align one's ruling authority with this powerful ideology. In short, temples were conspicuous symbols of the power associated with Buddhism. Once a ruler decided to adopt Buddhism, temples were typically constructed. East Asian imperial capitals, which became centers of interest in Buddhism, also included the construction of Buddhist temples. These sites included Luoyang and Chang'an in China, Hwando (J. Ganto) and Pyongyang (J. Heijō) in Koguryō, Ungjin (J. Yūshin) and Sabi (J. Shihi) in Paekche, and Gyeongju (J. Keishū) in Silla. Moreover, with the exception of Yamato, the first Buddhist temples were built in the capitals of these various countries by order of the particular ruler. For instance, King Pōp (r. 599–600) of Paekche ordered the construction of Wanghūngsa temple in the capital city of Sabi. The temple was built as a result of court patronage of Buddhism, and was part of the practice of building temples for the protection of the kingdom. At the same time, and perhaps as importantly, such temples also represented the power of the king and asserted the legitimacy of the ruling elite (Tamura 1996: 6).¹⁶

The absence of royal patronage by the Yamato Great Kings in the late sixth and early seventh centuries is perhaps explained by the ambivalence with which the court received the Buddhist gifts from Paekche and the fact that it was Soga and related aristocratic families that were the early champions of Buddhist ritual practices. Although royal patronage of Buddhism, and the building of Buddhist temples, became fully developed in the Nara period, temples were nevertheless important to the development of Asuka Buddhism. The patronage, though, came from the Soga and not the royal family. Asukadera and similar Asuka-period temples were powerful symbols of the political and cultural influence wielded by the Soga extended family in this era.¹⁷

The Soga's major temple-building project, overseen by Soga no Umako, was the Asukadera.¹⁸ The *Gangōji garan engi*, introduced above, recounts the early history of this temple.¹⁹ Unlike the official temples found in other parts of East Asia, this temple was an *ujidera*, or clan temple, utilizing a Chinese continental style typical of all Asuka-period temples. A *Nihon shoki* entry for 624 reports that there were 46 temples in Yamato, home to the Soga and similar immigrant extended families. There is little evidence that any of these were specifically built through the patronage of the royal family. Temples associated with Senior Prince Shōtoku and the royal family – such as Hōryūji (originally, Ikarugadera) – have unclear origins and hence unclear connections with royal patronage.²⁰ While there were temples other than Asukadera built, its provenance, for such an early temple, is relatively well known, and archaeological findings have revealed that Asukadera was a large and imposing temple.²¹

Asukadera was constructed by Umako as fulfillment of a vow made in 587 that he would construct a temple if he were victorious in battle against his anti-Buddhist foes, the Mononobe and Nakatomi. This particular struggle over the foreign deities of Buddhism is the result of a plague that strikes Yamato. The Mononobe and Nakatomi declare that the plague is the result of the Soga family's worship of and support for Buddhism. After much struggle, the Soga are victorious, Buddhist worship is vindicated, and, in return, Umako starts construction on Asukadera, completed in 596.

Soga no Umako had other temples built, constituting the earliest known patronage of a nascent Buddhist monastic system. According to the *Nihon shoki*, Yamato's first Buddhist monastic renunciants were women. In 584, Soga no Umako appointed the former Koguryō monk Hyep'yon (J. Eben or Ebin; dates unknown) as his Dharma teacher.²² Umako then built a temple to house the first three renunciants, where they were instructed by Hyep'yon: Shima (574–?) the 11-year-old daughter of Shiba Tatto (or, Shiba Tachito; dates unknown), whose Buddhist name was Zenshin-ni; Toyome, the daughter of Ayahito no Yabo, whose Buddhist name was Zenzō-ni (dates unknown); and Ishime, the daughter of Nishigori no Tsubu, whose Buddhist name was Ezen-ni (dates unknown). The latter two nuns were Shima's servants. The renunciation of these three nuns facilitated by a powerful aristocrat became the model for the later system of "official nuns" (*kan'ni*) appointed and recognized by the royal ruler. Of significance is that all three women were descended from immigrant kinship groups, again underscoring the importance of such groups to the promotion of Asuka-period Buddhism.

Soga no Umako was a staunch supporter of these women renunciates. It is reported that he built temples for them and otherwise provided them with the means to live a monastic life. He also charged them with carrying out Buddhist rituals. The nuns traveled to Paekche in 588 to study Buddhism. They returned in 590, having received formal Buddhist ordination while there. It should be noted that they were permitted to travel to the Korean peninsula by Umako, not by the Yamato government. These three nuns had the dubious distinction of being the first Yamato Buddhists to suffer persecution during one of the skirmishes between the Soga and Nakatomi over the fate of Yamato Buddhist practice.

Asuka-period Buddhist material culture and ritual practices

In the decades immediately following the sixth-century Paekche gift of Buddhist objects to Yamato, the development of Asuka-period Buddhist ritual practice was largely centered on material culture – especially images and temples – and the artisans capable of producing it. These two aspects of Asuka Buddhism – material culture and ritual – were really two sides of the same phenomenon. Buddhist material

culture was not created as works of art; nor was it meant to go unused. For this reason, we eschew the term “art” in favor of the notion of “material culture” for the primary reason that Buddhist objects, aesthetically pleasing as they may have been, were prized as ritual objects and not as art in any contemporary sense. The emphasis was on ritual practice rather than abstract doctrine. Buddhist doctrines were slowly disseminated, but formal, systematic doctrine, as would develop by the eighth century, was in little, if any, evidence during the Asuka period, although Senior Prince Shōtoku was retroactively, and no doubt erroneously, described as having prodigious doctrinal erudition.

Not surprisingly, then, the Soga and other pro-Buddhist families were primarily concerned with Buddhist practice rather than Buddhist thought, and with magico-religious efficacy rather than the abstraction of enlightenment. Asuka-period rituals were typically concerned with immediate problems and personal concerns. We find in this earliest Japanese Buddhist context a penchant for what has come to be referred to as “this-worldly benefits,” or *genze riyaku*. This notion, still current today in contemporary Japanese religions, refers to real, tangible benefits that are the result of proper ritual actions.²³ In the Asuka period, rituals were performed for a number of situations, such as to cure an illness, or, failing that, to speed the spirit of the deceased to a better rebirth, particularly in a Buddhist paradise. Similarly, rituals were directed at relief from drought and famine, protection of one’s family, and victory over one’s enemies. Such practices as chanting sutras and commissioning the construction of Buddhist images and temples were believed to be particularly efficacious for achieving these ends. Rites were part of a ritual economy in which the chanted sutra or crafted image served as the currency with which the believer purchased the efficacy of the enacted ritual.

Asuka-period Buddhist images: The Shaka Triad

Yamato Buddhists regarded Buddhas and bodhisattvas as protectors and benefactors, if approached in a ritually prescribed way. The Asuka period marks the beginnings of a long tradition of Buddhist image-making, especially sculptures executed in bronze or wood. As a result, Buddhist sculpture, and the temples in which such images were enshrined, became the focal point for the rituals practiced by Asuka-period aristocrats.

Asuka-period Buddhist sculpture exemplifies, among other things, stylistic qualities shared with images from the Chinese mainland and Korean peninsula. Some of these images were made in Yamato, but others were produced on the Korean peninsula. It is not always easy to determine which is which, underscoring the pan-East Asian nature of Asuka Buddhism. Aside from extant images, the other source for the images produced in the Asuka period – or brought to the Japanese islands at this

time – derive from textual sources that we have already cited for their importance to our understanding of Asuka Buddhism in general. Such texts as the *Nihon shoki*, *Jōgū shōtoku hōō teisetsu*, and *Gangōji garan engi narabi ni ruki shizai chō* describe the crafting and use of Buddhist images. The other significant textual source is images that include an inscription, typically on the mandorla, stating the name of the patron or patrons, the artisan, and the reason for creating the image.

One way to consider the early production of Buddhist images in Yamato is to think in terms of a network of interconnected nodes consisting, especially, of patrons, artisans, images, ritual requests, and temples. In brief, patrons – such as the Soga, Hata, and other aristocratic families, and later, the royal rulers – would engage an artisan to craft a Buddhist image with the express purpose of seeking some specific ritual benefit such as to cure an illness, to ensure birth in a Buddhist paradise for the deceased, or for victory over one’s enemies. Thus, temples where these images were enshrined became a focal point for Buddhist ritual praxis.

In the late sixth and early seventh centuries, Yamato Buddhist image-making was dominated by an artisan, Tori Busshi, or the school of sculptural style he oversaw, referred to as Tori style. Tori, whose family name was Kuratsukuri no Tori, was active in the early seventh century. He was descended from an immigrant family lineage, most likely from the Korean peninsula, who were saddle-makers (*kurat-sukuri*). Tori’s grandfather was Shiba Tatto, a supporter of Buddhism, and his father, Shiba’s son, was Kuratsukuri no Tasuna, also a maker of Buddhist images. Tori was later given the honorific title *bussshi* (Buddhist master sculptor). What little detail is known about Tori Busshi’s life and activities derives from some *Nihon shoki* passages about his image-making, and from an inscription on one of his most famous images, the Shaka Triad, which we discuss in detail below.

There are a number of extant Buddhist images dating from the seventh century that bear significantly similar stylistic characteristics to the so-called Tori-style, which are considered the work of the same artisan or school. Donald McCallum (2004: 19) lists nine such images, including such well-known images as the Asukadera Daibutsu, Shaka Triad, and Yumedono Kannon. The attribution of this style to Tori derives mostly from the Shaka Triad mandorla that includes an incised inscription that states that Tori Busshi was its crafter. On this basis, all stylistically similar images from this time period (early seventh century) are assigned to Tori or his stylistic school. This style, in turn, borrows the Buddhist sculptural style of Northern Wei dynasty (386–534) China that was imported to Yamato from the Korean peninsula.

Asuka-period Buddhist images are taken from the pantheon of Mahayana Buddhas and bodhisattvas such as Shaka (the historical Buddha; Skt. Śākyamuni), Yakushi Nyorai (Healing Buddha; Skt. Bhaiṣajyaguru), Kannon (bodhisattva of compassion; Skt. Avalokiteśvara), and Miroku (bodhisattva and future Buddha; Skt. Maitreya). In canonical fashion, these figures are represented in specific poses and hand gestures (mudras) that are used across Buddhist traditions. Stylistic issues aside, Asuka-period

Buddhist images were made for ritual purposes. A famous example is the Yakushi Nyorai sculpture located in the Hōryūji *kondō*. The original idea for this image came at the request of King Yōmei in 586. According to the *Jōgū Shōtoku hōō teisetsu*, which cites the mandorla inscription on the back of a Yakushi image, King Yōmei became ill and requested that Prince Shōtoku and Queen Suiko construct an image of Yakushi and a temple to enshrine it, in order that he might be cured. Yōmei died before work on the temple and image began. In 607, Shōtoku and Suiko sought to fulfill the king's command so they commissioned the construction of the temple and image, presumably, too, as a ritual to ensure Yōmei's happy rebirth (Deal 1999: 331–332; Mizuno 1974: 32–33).

Of all the Tori-style images, analysis of the Shaka Triad (Shaka *sanzonzō*) presents a number of interpretive problems that attend any discussion of Asuka-period Buddhism. The Shaka Triad is a gilt bronze image enshrined in the main hall (*kondō*) of Hōryūji. It consists of an image of a seated Shaka attended by two standing bodhisattvas: Yakuō and Yakujō (see Figure 1.2). The Shaka image is 86.5 centimeters



Figure 1.2 Shaka Triad, Hōryūji Kondō, Nara Prefecture. Asuka period (623), gilt bronze, height of Shaka image: 86.5 cm. Courtesy of Hōryūji temple, Nara. Photograph by Asuka-en.

high; the bodhisattvas are 91 centimeters high, and the entire image, including pedestal and mandorla (*kōhai*), is 382 centimeters high. The Shaka image is depicted with some of the classic symbols used to materially represent a Buddha (Mizuno 1974: 34–38): he is seated in meditation with legs crossed, he has elongated ears – a sign that Shaka was a wealthy prince prior to enlightenment, who would have worn heavy jewelry that would have stretched his earlobes – and his hands are depicted in the gestures known as *mudras* (J. *in*). His right hand is in the gesture of reassurances (*semui-in*; Skt. *abhaya mudrā*) and his left hand is in the gesture of wish-granting (*yogan-in*; Skt. *vara mudrā*). Further, he is represented with some of the 32 physical marks of a Buddha (*sanjūni sō*), including gilding (though little remains) symbolizing the golden glow of the Buddha’s skin (*konjikisō*); snail-shell-curl hair (*rahotsu*); the tuft of hair between the eyebrows (*byakugo*; Skt. *ūrṇā*; missing on the Shaka image though the spike which it was attached to remains); and the protuberance on the top of the Buddha’s head (*nikkei*; Skt. *uṣṇīṣa*).

The bodhisattva on Shaka’s left is Yakuō (Bodhisattva Medicine King; Skt. *Bhaiṣajya-rāja*); to his right is Yakujō (Bodhisattva Superior Medicine; Skt. *Bhaiṣajya-samudgata*). This was a standard grouping – Shaka attended by Yakuō and Yakujō – in this era (Washizuka *et al.* 1997: 15). Both of these standing images are holding jewels in their hands, which symbolize the ability to heal those who are sick. They are depicted wearing jewelry, representing the royal status of a bodhisattva prior to attaining enlightenment and becoming a Buddha.

The provenance of this image is made clear – or apparently so – by the inscription incised on the back of its mandorla. The 196-character inscription indicates that the image is the work of Tori Busshi and that it was commissioned in 622 and dedicated in 623. The 622 commission was an attempt to cure an ailing Senior Prince Shōtoku; when he died, the commission was rededicated to securing his rebirth – and the rebirth of his mother and consort who had also recently died – in a Buddhist Pure Land (McCallum 2004: 24–25; Mizuno 1974: 32; Tamura 2000: 31).

McCallum (2004) studied this image and argues that the mandorla inscription was incised considerably later than the image itself. Historical analysis, he says, “indicates that the text was written after 670, as one component of the campaign to enhance the reputation of the prince” (McCallum 2004: 25). He also notes that the inscription was inscribed on the surface of the mandorla and is not a part of the original casting of the images. Thus, the inscription could have been easily incised at a later date (2004: 23) There is one other piece of evidence that strongly suggests that the mandorla inscription is a later addition to the Shaka Triad. This involves the honorific term *busshi* – master of Buddhist sculpture – that is ascribed to Tori. As McCallum notes, the “term *busshi* is not found elsewhere with reference to Tori, nor does it seem to have been employed as early as the Asuka period. Consequently, the occurrence here of *busshi* appears to be one more piece of evidence suggesting that the inscription was written later” (McCallum 2004: 25).

For McCallum, the significance of these facts is another retrodictive moment. The inscription, probably inscribed after 670, attempts to rewrite the historical record in order to “shift credit for the patronage of Buddhism from the Soga clan to the ‘imperial’ line” (McCallum 2004: 33–34). In so doing, the Soga have been pre-empted and credit for the promotion and patronage of Buddhism is now made to reside with the ruling family and its exemplar, Senior Prince Shōtoku. The result of this analysis is further evidence that the hagiographical treatment of Senior Prince Shōtoku is a revisionist construction meant to legitimate the ruling family’s political power and authority by means of Buddhist symbols. This is significant because if we can no longer take the historical data at face value – whether the *Nihon shoki* or the Shaka Triad mandorla inscription – then traditional interpretations of early Japanese Buddhism, such as the depth of Shōtoku’s Buddhist knowledge and the rapidity with which at least some Japanese grasped the profundity of the Buddha’s Dharma, must be re-evaluated.

Notes

- 1 See also Barnes 1993, who refers to this as the Yellow Sea interaction sphere.
- 2 The meaning of the concept *uji*, and how this term should be translated into English – if at all – has been much debated. Translating *uji* as “clan” has been common, but some argue that this suggests an extended family, when *uji* as a social entity included members from outside the bloodline and was, politically, a status given for royal service. Piggott (1997: 328) translates *uji* as “a royally recognized lineage,” explaining *uji* as “an extended kinship solidarity the structure of which is thought to have resembled a conical clan. Reception of a *kabane* [noble] title in return for services rendered to the Yamato Great King established the *uji*, which continued thereafter through the generations. The unity and status of the *uji* continued to be based on service to the Yamato king, along with devotion to the ancestor who established the lineage.”
- 3 The term “Great King” (or Queen) is the translation for the term *ōkimi* (or, its alternative pronunciation, *daijō*). This was a term typically used to describe the Yamato rulers prior to the adoption of the term *tennō* (Heavenly Sovereign, or Emperor). For simplicity’s sake, we use the terms King or Queen in reference to specific monarchs.
- 4 The term “Yamato” refers to the region and the rulers residing in central Honshū (present-day region of Nara) in the larger region known in the Chinese mainland and the Korean peninsula as Wa. “Wa” – or “Wo” in Chinese – is the Japanese reading for the Chinese character that appears in Chinese texts, including the *Wei zhi* (Chronicles of the Wei Kingdom), compiled in the late third century CE, to refer to the land and people of the Japanese archipelago. By the late seventh or early eighth century, Yamato rulers replaced this term with the indigenously coined term “Nihon” (or, “Nippon”) to refer to the Japanese islands.

- 5 Contemporary historians of early Japan are in general agreement that the long-held notion of a single geographical point of origin for the emergence of a unified, ethnically homogeneous, Japanese nation is no longer a tenable thesis. Our focus here is on the central Honshū region known as Yamato because this was the main location for the transmission and development of early Japanese Buddhism. There is evidence, however, that Buddhist objects and practices also made their way to other parts of ancient Japan, such as Kyūshū. According to Piggott (1997: 95), in addition to late sixth- and early seventh-century temple remains found in central Honshū, “temple remains from the turn of the seventh century have also been uncovered in Kyūshū and eastern Japan, especially at places where trade or immigrant settlement fostered Buddhist development.” See also Suda 1991.
- 6 Queen Himiko, sovereign of Yamatai, sent envoys to Wei dynasty China on two occasions: 239 CE and 243 CE. These envoys were dispatched to the capital at Luoyang. This was a place and time where Buddhism was taking hold, sutras were being translated from Sanskrit and other languages into Chinese, and temples built. The territorial boundaries of the Wei dynasty included sections of the Silk Road and, notably, the Dunhuang Caves. It is likely that Himiko’s envoys would have encountered Buddhist activities and reported on these upon their return to Yamatai. However, there are no reports of Buddhism being practiced in Japan in texts like the *Wei-zhi wo-ren-chuan* (History of the Kingdom of Wei: The People of Wa; J. *Gishi-wajin-den*).
- 7 For an introduction to and translation of this text, see Stevenson 1999.
- 8 On Dōji, see Chapter 2 of this volume. For a brief discussion and comparison of the *Nihon shoki* and *Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra* passages, see Sakamoto *et al.* 1965: 100–101 and headnote 19 on p. 101. For a concise overview of these dating issues, see Yoshida 2006: 8–10.
- 9 The compilation of this text has usually been attributed to a Tendai Buddhist monk, Kōen, who died in 1169 (Imaizumi 1999: 882), but new research suggests that the text was compiled earlier, sometime between 1094 and 1107. For a brief analysis of this story, see Piggott 1997: 93.
- 10 For a brief overview on the Hata, see Como 2008: 171–2.
- 11 The main section of the *Jōgū Shōtoku hōō teisetsu* was composed in the eighth century by an unknown author. A subsequent section, probably dating to the tenth century, concerns the five generations after Emperor Kinmei.
- 12 For a brief review of Japanese scholarly critiques of the historicity of Senior Prince Shōtoku, see Yoshida 2003: 12–13; and Yoshida 2006: 70–96.
- 13 On this issue, see Fujieda 1975: 484–544. Fujieda compares the *Sangyō gisho* with texts from Dunhuang to prove that these were Chinese texts and not the work of Senior Prince Shōtoku.
- 14 Among Ōyama’s several books, see especially Ōyama 2003.
- 15 Como 2003: 64, n. 4. Herman Ooms eschews the term “immigrant” as a translation of *kikajin*, preferring the term “allochthon” – “people generated in a different soil” – because terms like immigrant “strongly imply a modern nation and state apparatus.” See Ooms 2009: xviii and 43.
- 16 On Northern Wei/Luoyang temples see Tsukamoto 1985: I.133–136; and Thorp and Vinograd 2001: 160–169. On Sui and Tang temples see Thorp and Vinograd 2001: 195–201.

- On Three Kingdom temples see Washizuka *et al.* 2003. On Paekche and Koguryō temples see Best 2006: 134–137, 161–162, 179–180. On Silla temples in the Three Kingdoms period, see: Park 2003.
- 17 For a list of temples constructed between 590 and 670, see Hayami 1986: 52. Yoshida 2003: 3–4 comments on the archaeological evidence for these temples: “There are about fifty temple ruins from this period known to us today; these centered around Asuka in Yamato, mostly in the Kinai (Kansai) area. It is believed that most were family temples of the *ujizoku*. For the most part, Asuka Buddhism could be described as the Buddhism of the *ujizoku*. Another characteristic of this period is that many nuns were active during the early days of Buddhism in Wa, and many temples (*amadera*) were built for nuns.”
 - 18 For a review of recent scholarship on Asukadera, see McCallum 2009: 23–82.
 - 19 There are two temples named Gangōji. The current Gangōji temple – associated with the Nara-period Sanron school of Buddhism – is located in Nara. Construction began in 716. The Gangōji temple referred to in the *Gangōji garan engi* is in fact Umako’s Hōkōji, built in the late sixth century. See Stevenson 1999 and McCallum 2009: 23–82 for additional details. Of the Gangōji, Piggott remarks: “According to the Gangōji Chronicle, Soga Umako built the Soga family temple, Hōkōji (also known as Asukadera), on the shores of the Asuka River between 588 and 596. Umako is said to have employed immigrant craftsmen from Paekche, and archaeologists have indeed demonstrated that the architectural layout – comprising three chapels around a central pagoda, with each chapel dedicated to the worship of a different Buddha – was like that used in Koguryo and Paekche temples of the time. Not surprisingly, when the Hōkōji pagoda was excavated in modern times, its foundation was found to have been stuffed with jewels, horse trappings, and gold and silver baubles similar to goods previously buried in mounded tombs. The fashioning of Hōkōji’s central Buddha image represented another epochal moment in Yamato kingship. Completed in 608, the Hōkōji Buddha was a sixteen-foot-tall image of Shakyamuni into which a fortune in copper and gold was poured. It visibly represented the unstinting patronage of Great King Suiko and her senior minister for the Buddhist cult. After its completion Hōkōji was home to both nuns and monks, including immigrants and visitors from the three Korean kingdoms” (Piggott 1997: 93–5).
 - 20 On the issue of temple patronage in early Asuka Buddhism, see McCallum 2009: 24–5.
 - 21 On Asukadera archaeological findings see McCallum 2009: 23–82.
 - 22 Hyep’yon was a former Buddhist priest who had returned to secular life. Such secularized monks were known as *genzokusō*.
 - 23 For a discussion of *genze riyaku* in Japanese religions generally, see Reader and Tanabe 1998.

References

- Aston, W. G., trans. 1972. *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan From the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*. Rutland, VT and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc.
- Barnes, Gina L. 1993. *China, Korea and Japan: The Rise of Civilization in East Asia*. New York: Thames and Hudson.

- Best, Jonathan W. 2006. *A History of the Early Korean Kingdom of Paekche, Together with an Annotated Translation of the Paekche Annals of the Samguk Sagi*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press.
- Como, Michael. 2003. "Ethnicity, Sagehood, and the Politics of Literacy in Asuka Japan." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 30 (1–2): 61–84.
- Como, Michael. 2008. *Shōtoku: Ethnicity, Ritual, and Violence in the Japanese Buddhist Tradition*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Deal, William E. 1995. "Buddhism and the State in Early Japan." In Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (ed.), *Buddhism in Practice*, 216–227. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Deal, William E. 1999. "Hagiography and History: The Image of Prince Shōtoku." In George J. Tanabe, Jr. (ed.), *Religions of Japan in Practice*, 316–333. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Fujieda Akira. 1975. *Kaisetsu: Shōmangyō gisho*. In Ienaga Saburō, et al. (eds.), *Shōtoku Taishi shū (Nihon shisō taikai 2)*, 484–544. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Hayami Tasuku. 1986. *Nihon bukkyōshi: Kōdai*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Imaizumi Yoshio, ed. 1999. *Nihon bukkyōshi*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Inoue Mitsusada, ed. 1987. *Nihon shoki*. 2 vols. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha.
- Ko, Dorothy, JaHyun Kim Haboush, and Joan Piggott, eds. 2003. *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea, and Japan*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kuroda, Toshio. 1981. "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 7 (1): 1–21.
- McCallum, Donald F. 2004. "Tori-busshi and the Production of Buddhist Icons in Asuka-Period Japan." In Melinda Takeuchi (ed.), *The Artist as Professional in Japan*, 17–37. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- McCallum, Donald F. 2009. *The Four Great Temples: Buddhist Archaeology, Architecture, and Icons of Seventh-Century Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Mizuno, Seiichi. 1974. *Asuka Buddhist Art: Horyu-ji*. Trans. Richard L. Gage. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill/Heibonsha.
- Ooms, Herman. 2009. *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan: The Tenmu Dynasty, 650–800*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Ōyama Seiichi, ed. 2003. *Shōtoku Taishi no shinjitsu*. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Park, Youngbok. 2003. "The Monastery Hwangnyongsa and Buddhism in the Early Silla Period." In Washizuka Hiromitsu, Youngbok Park, and Woo-bang Kang (eds.), *Transmitting the Forms of Divinity: Early Buddhist Art From Korea and Japan*, 140–153. New York: Japan Society.
- Piggott, Joan R. 1997. *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Reader, Ian, and George J. Tanabe, Jr. 1998. *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sakamoto Taro, Ienaga Saburo, Inoue Mitsusada, and Ono Susumu, eds. 1965. *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2 (Nihon koten bungaku taikai 68). Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Sonoda Kōyū, with Delmer M. Brown. 1994. "Early Buddha Worship." In John Whitney Hall, et al. (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1: *Ancient Japan*, 359–414. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stevenson, Miwa, trans. 1999. "The Founding of the Monastery Gangōji and a List of Its Treasures." In George J. Tanabe, Jr. (ed.), *Religions of Japan in Practice*, 299–315. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Suda Tsutomu. 1991. "Zōji no hirogari." *Kikan kōkōgaku* 34: 26–30.
- Tamura Enchō. 1996. *Zusetsu Nihon bukkyō no rekishi: Asuka, Nara jidai*. Tokyo: Kōsei Shuppansha.
- Tamura, Yoshirō. 2000. *Japanese Buddhism: A Cultural History*. Tokyo: Kōsei Shuppansha.
- Thorp, Robert L., and Richard Ellis Vinograd. 2001. *Chinese Art and Culture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers.
- Tsuda Sōkichi. 1950. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Tsukamoto, Zenryū. 1974. "Buddhism in the Asuka-Nara Period." *Eastern Buddhist* 7 (1): 19–36.
- Washizuka, Hiromitsu et al. 1997. *Enlightenment Embodied: The Art of the Japanese Buddhist Sculptor (7th–14th Centuries)*. New York: Japan Society.
- Washizuka Hiromitsu, Youngbok Park, and Woo-bang Kang, eds. 2003. *Transmitting the Forms of Divinity: Early Buddhist Art From Korea and Japan*. New York: Japan Society.
- Yoshida, Kazuhiko. 2003. "Revisioining Religion in Ancient Japan." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 30 (1–2): 1–26.
- Yoshida Kazuhiko. 2006. *Kodai bukkyō o yominaosu*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.

Further Reading

- Allen, Chizuko T. 2003. "Prince Misahun: Silla's Hostage to Wa from the Late Fourth Century." *Korean Studies* 27: 1–15.
- Augustine, Jonathan Morris. 2004. *Buddhist Hagiographies in Early Japan: Images of Compassion in the Gyōki Tradition*. RoutledgeCurzon.
- Barnes, Gina L. 1999. "Buddhist Landscapes of East Asia." In Wendy Ashmore and A. Bernard Knapp (eds.), *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*, 101–123. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Barnes, Gina L. 2007. *State Formation in Japan: Emergence of a 4th-Century Ruling Elite*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Best, Jonathan W. 1990. "Early Korea's Role in the Stylistic Formation of the Yumedono Kannon, a Major Monument of Seventh-Century Japanese Buddhist Sculpture." *Korea Journal* 30 (10): 13–26.
- Best, Jonathan W. 2003a. "Buddhism and Polity in Early Sixth-Century Paekche." *Korean Studies* 26 (2): 165–215.
- Best, Jonathan W. 2003b. "The Transmission and Transformation of Early Buddhist Culture in Korea and Japan." In Washizuka Hiromitsu, Youngbok Park, and Woo-bang Kang (eds.), *Transmitting the Forms of Divinity: Early Buddhist Art From Korea and Japan*, 18–43. New York: Japan Society.
- Best, Jonathan W. 2005. "Paekche and the Incipency of Buddhism in Japan." In Robert E. Buswell Jr. (ed.), *Currents and Countercurrents: Korean Influences on the East Asian Buddhist Traditions*, 15–42. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Bowring, Richard. 2005. *The Religious Traditions of Japan, 500–1600*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, Delmer M., ed., 1993. *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1: *Ancient Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Como, Michael. 2007. "Horses, Dragons, and Disease in Nara Japan." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34 (2): 393–415.
- Ebersole, Gary L. 1989. *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Farris, William Wayne. 1998. *Sacred Texts and Buried Treasures: Issues in the Historical Archaeology of Ancient Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Grayson, James Huntley. 2002. *Korea: A Religious History*. Rev. edn. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Hong, Wontack. 1994. *Paekche of Korea and the Origin of Yamato Japan*. Seoul: Kudara International.
- Hong, Wontack. 2010. *Ancient Korea–Japan Relations: Paekche and the Origin of the Yamato Dynasty*. Seoul: Kudara International.
- Holcombe, Charles. 1999. "Trade-Buddhism: Maritime Trade, Immigration, and the Buddhist Landfall in Early Japan." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119 (2): 280–292.
- Hori, Ichirō. 1958. "On the Concept of Hijiri (Holy-Man)." *Numen* 5 (2) and 5 (3).
- Hori, Ichirō. 1968. *Folk Religion in Japan: Continuity and Change*. Edited by Joseph M. Kitagawa and Alan A. Miller. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Ienaga Saburō, ed. 1967. *Nihon bukkyōshi, 1: Kodai-hen*. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.
- Inoue Mitsusada. 1971. *Nihon kodai no kokka to bukkyō*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Itō, Kimio. 1998. "The Invention of Wa and the Transformation of the Image of Prince Shōtoku in Modern Japan." In Stephen Vlastos (ed.), *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, 37–47. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kakao, Takashi. 1984. "The Lotus Sūtra in Japan." *Eastern Buddhist* 17 (1): 132–137.
- Kasahara, Kazuo, ed. 2001. *A History of Japanese Religion*. Trans. Paul McCarthy and Gaynor Sekimori. Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co.
- Kashiwahara, Yusen, and Kōyū Sonoda, eds. 1994. *Shapers of Japanese Buddhism*. Trans. Gaynor Sekimori. Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co.
- Katada Osamu. 1967. "Shoki no bukkyō." In Ienaga Saburō (ed.), *Nihon bukkyōshi, 1: Kodai-hen*, 46–105. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.
- Katsuura Noriko. 2000. *Nihon kodai no sōni to shakai*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Kidder, J. Edward. 1972. *Early Buddhist Japan*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers.
- Kitagawa, Joseph M. 1966. *Religion in Japanese History*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kuroda, Toshio. 1981. "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 7 (1): 1–21.
- Lancaster, Lewis R. Chai-shin Yu, and Kikun Suh, eds. 1996. *Buddhism in Koryō: A Royal Religion*. University of California, Berkeley: Institute for East Asian Studies.
- Matsunaga, Daigan, and Alicia Matsunaga. 1974. *Foundation of Japanese Buddhism*, vol. 1: *The Aristocratic Age*. Los Angeles and Tokyo: Buddhist Books International.
- McCallum, Donald F. 1995. "The Buddhist Triad in Three Kingdoms Sculpture." *Korean Culture* 16 (4): 18–25.
- McCallum, Donald F. 2001. "The Earliest Buddhist Statues in Japan." *Artibus Asiae* 61 (2): 149–188.
- Morse, Samuel C. 1987. "Japanese Sculpture in Transition: An Eighth-Century Example From the Tōdai-ji Buddhist Sculpture Workshop." *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 13 (1): 52–69.
- Ōyama Seiichi. 1999. *Shōtoku Taishi no tanjō*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Ōyama Seiichi. 2001. *Shōtoku Taishi to Nihonjin*. Nagoya: Fūbaisha.

- Piggott, Joan R. 1990. "Mokkan: Wooden Documents From the Nara Period." *Monumenta Nipponica* 45 (4): 449–470.
- Piggott, Joan R., ed. 2005. *Capital and Countryside in Japan, 300–1180: Japanese Historians Interpreted in English*. Ithaca, NY: East Asia Program, Cornell University.
- Ruch, Barbara, ed. 2002. *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan.
- Sone Masato. 2000. *Kodai Bukkyōkai to ōchō shakai*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Sone Masato. 2007. *Shōtoku Taishi to Asuka bukkyō*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Sonoda, Kōyū. 1994. "Saichō (767–822)." In Yūsen Kashiwahara and Kōyū Sonoda (eds.), *Shapers of Japanese Buddhism*, 26–38. Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co.
- Sueki Fumihiko et al., eds. 2010. *Nihon Bukkyō no kiso (Shin Ajia bukkyōshi 11, Nihon 1)*. Tokyo: Kōsei Shuppansha.
- Swanson, Paul L., and Clark Chilson, eds. 2006. *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Tamura, Kōyū. 1984. "The Doctrinal Dispute Between the Tendai and the Hossō Sects." *Acta Asiatica* 47: 48–81.
- Tanabe, George J., Jr., ed. 1999. *Religions of Japan in Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Tanabe, George J., Jr., and Willa Jane Tanabe, eds. 1989. *The Lotus Sūtra in Japanese Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Totman, Conrad. 2005. *A History of Japan*. 2nd ed., Oxford: Blackwell.
- Tsutsui, William M., ed. 2007. *A Companion to Japanese History*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ushiyama Yoshiyuki. 1990. *Kodai chūsei jūin soshiki no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Visser, Marinus Willem de. W. 1935. *Ancient Buddhism in Japan: Sutras and Ceremonies in Use in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries A.D. and Their History in Later Times*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill.
- Weinstein, Lucie R. 1989. "The Yumedono Kannon: Problems in Seventh-Century Sculpture." *Archives of Asian Art* 42: 25–48.
- Whitfield, Roderick. 2000. *Cave Temples of Mogao*. Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute and the J. Getty Museum.
- Yoshida Kazuhiko. 1995. *Nihon kodai shakai to bukkyō*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.
- Yoshida Kazuhiko, Katsuura Noriko, and Nishiguchi Junko. 1999. *Nihonshi no naka no josei to bukkyō*. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.

