

## Nuns and Convents in the Eison Order and the Provenance of the Sedgwick Shōtoku Taishi Sculpture at the Harvard Art Museums

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THE HARVARD Art Museums owns a wooden statue of Shōtoku Taishi 聖徳太子 (574–622), or Prince Shōtoku (hereafter, Sedgwick Shōtoku; see plate 1). It depicts the prince at age two, standing with his hands placed in prayer. A number of statues of the prince in this style remain and are called *Namu taishi* 南無太子 (Praying Taishi). Based on the votive texts that were found inside (see below), the Sedgwick Shōtoku is believed to have been created in 1292, making it the oldest remaining example of a *Namu taishi* image that can be dated with some certainty.<sup>1</sup>

The Sedgwick Shōtoku, said to have originally been in the possession of a temple in the Kansai region in Japan, was purchased by Ellery Sedgwick in 1936 from Yamanaka Shōkai 山中商会, an antique dealer in Kyoto. It was brought to the United States in 1936 and came to the museum in 1979.<sup>2</sup> The provenance of this statue was previously unknown but, through a close analysis of the documents discovered within the statue, I have come to the conclusion that it was created by nuns belonging to the monastic order of Eison 叡尊 (1201–1290), a Kamakura 鎌倉 period (1185–1333) revival of the Ritsushū 律宗 (Precepts School) emphasizing the strict observance of the precepts.<sup>3</sup>

RACHEL SAUNDERS, Angela Chang, Eric Swanson, Seya Takayuki, and I presented papers in a panel focused on the sculpture of Prince Shōtoku Taishi at Age Two and its dedicatory objects at the Harvard Art Museums in the international online Premodern Japanese Religion (Zen kindai no Nihon no shūkyō 前近代の日本の宗教) workshop on January 29, 2021. This essay is based on that paper. I would like to thank Frank Clements and Robert F. Rhodes for their help in preparing this article.

<sup>1</sup> *Nihon chōkokushi kiso shiryō shūsei: Kamakura jidai; zōzō meiki hen* (hereafter, *Zōzō meiki hen*), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Rosenfield 1968/69, Saunders 2019, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Studies on Eison and his order in English include Groner 2001 and 2017, Meeks 2010, and Quinter 2015.

The clues for determining the provenance of the Sedgwick Shōtoku are found among the seventy dedicatory objects that had been placed within it. (See the frontispiece for a photograph of the statue and some of these contents.) They include an image of Aizen Myōō 愛染明王 as well as forty-five documents (including a copy of the *Niehen* 二衣篇 [On the Two Robes] and many votive texts [*ganmon* 願文]), all of which have been catalogued and studied in recent years.<sup>4</sup> The fact that two of these documents are dated the fifth month, ninth day of Shōō 正応 5 (1292) shows that the statue was completed and dedicated on (or soon after) this date.<sup>5</sup> Of particular interest is the fact that the *Niehen*, a text concerning the precepts, cites the words of the “old elder of Saidaiji” (Saidaiji ko chōrō 西大寺古長老), that is, Eison.<sup>6</sup> This is important because it suggests that the statue is connected with Eison’s order. Moreover, many of the votive documents were written by nuns. This also hints at a strong connection with Eison’s organization, since nuns played a prominent role in his order. It is well known that Eison and his followers ordained many nuns and built many convents (or reestablished the convents that had fallen into ruin), including the famous Hokkeji 法華寺 in Nara.<sup>7</sup>

In this paper, I will reexamine the dedicatory documents placed in the Sedgwick Shōtoku based on the hypothesis that the nuns appearing on the votive texts and other documents were affiliated with the Eison order and consider the connection of this statue with medieval nuns and convents. The dedicatory documents have already been transcribed in the *Nihon chōkokushi kiso shiryō shūsei: Kamakura jidai; zōzō meiki hen* 日本彫刻史基礎資料集成：鎌倉時代；造像銘記篇 (Collection of Basic Documents Concerning the History of Japanese Sculpture: Kamakura Period; Inscriptions on the Creation of Sculptures; cited hereafter as *Zōzō meiki hen*), volume 15.<sup>8</sup> However, since the *kuzushiji* 崩し字 cursive style of the documents is difficult to decipher, the transcriptions published in this work are marred by a number of mistakes. Therefore, in the following pages, I will provide reproductions of the original documents and correct the readings that I believe are incorrect. In this way, I hope to show that the nuns appearing on the votive texts and other documents were affiliated with Eison’s order,

<sup>4</sup> Photographs of all the Sedgwick image dedicatory documents, except for that of the *Lotus Sutra* now held by the Library of Congress, are available online at the Harvard Art Museums website (accession number 2019.122): <https://harvardartmuseums.org/exhibitions/5756/prince-shotoku-the-secrets-within>.

<sup>5</sup> The statue also contained a document on which were written two texts, one on *shinnyo* 眞如 (the title of the text is missing) and another entitled *Kūkan ryaku sabō* 空觀略作法 (Abbreviated Procedure for Contemplating Emptiness). The date of the twenty-seventh day, tenth month of Kōan 弘安 5 (1282) is written on the reverse side of this document. See *Zōzō meiki hen*, p. 9. This date, however, is probably not related to the date that the statue was created.

<sup>6</sup> Chikamoto 2020, pp. 76–78.

<sup>7</sup> The most comprehensive study of the nuns in Eison’s order is Meeks 2010. In Japanese, see Hosokawa 1987, 1989; Matsuo 1994, 1995; and Ushiyama 1986, 1989.

<sup>8</sup> *Zōzō meiki hen*, pp. 3–11.

making it highly plausible that the Sedgwick Shōtoku was created by these nuns for their convent.

## NUNS MENTIONED IN THE SEDGWICK SHŌTOKU DEDICATORY DOCUMENTS

### *The Votive Text of the Nuns Seigan, Shunchi, and Kangyō (Plate 2)*

I will begin by drawing attention to three nuns that appear in one of the Sedgwick Shōtoku's dedicatory documents. The votive text found in plate 2 is comprised of the four bodhisattva vows (*shiguseigan* 四弘誓願) followed by a passage setting forth the aspiration to follow Jōgū Taishi 上宮太子 (i.e., Shōtoku Taishi) faithfully "for eternity" (*shōshō zeze* 生々世々). It was written by the *bikuni* 比丘尼, or full-fledged nun, Seigan 正眼, the *bikuni* Shunchi 俊智, and the *ama* 尼, or fledgling nun, Kangyō 觀鏡.<sup>9</sup> What deserves our attention here is that the names of these three women appear in the *Ju bosatsukai deshi kyōmyō* 授菩薩戒弟子交名 (Name Register of Disciples upon Whom [Eison] Conferred the Bodhisattva Precepts; hereafter, *Kyōmyō*), a dedicatory document compiled for, and inserted within, the famous image of Eison that was produced in Kōan 弘安 3 (1280) to commemorate the eightieth year of his birth. This text, consisting of two fascicles, was composed by Zuikakubō Kyōe 隨覺房鏡慧 and lists the names of people who received the precepts from Eison. The *Kyōmyō* has been transcribed and analyzed in *Saidaiji Eison denki shūsei* 西大寺叡尊伝記集成 (Collections of Biographies of Eison of Saidaiji, cited hereafter as SEDS) published by the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (Nara Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo 奈良国立文化財研究所), but because the transcription has several mistakes, I have published a corrected transcription of the text in my *Nihon chūsei no Zen to Ritsu* 日本中世の禪と律 (Zen and Precepts in Medieval Japan).<sup>10</sup> I will use the latter transcription in the analysis that follows.

In the *Kyōmyō*, Seigan's name appears in a list of *bikunis* enumerated in the text. Here, her name is given as Seigan Myōshūbō 正眼明周房 and is the one-hundred-nineteenth name found on the list.<sup>11</sup> (Seigan is her first name and Myōshūbō is her *bōmyō* 房名, or cloister name.) The list is arranged according to the number of years that have passed since receiving the precepts, with the more senior *bikuni* listed first. Although the *Zōzō meiki hen* renders her name with the characters Seigan 正願,<sup>12</sup> this is most probably a mistaken rendition of the homophonous name Seigan 正眼. Since the *Kyōmyō* is a list of people that received the precepts personally from Eison, this shows that she was a direct disciple of Eison. Shunchi, the second of

<sup>9</sup> *Zōzō meiki hen*, pp. 4–5.

<sup>10</sup> Matsuo 2003, pp. 68–106.

<sup>11</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 86.

<sup>12</sup> *Zōzō meiki hen*, p. 4.

the aforementioned women, also appears in the *Kyōmyō* right by that of Seigan as Shunchi Zen'enbō 春智禪圓房 and is placed one hundred and seventeenth on the list of *bikunis*.<sup>13</sup> Even though the *Zōzō meiki hen* gives her name as Shunchi 俊智, the characters *shun* 俊 and *shun* 春 are homophonous, and it is likely that these two readings refer to the same person.

It is clear from the preceding analysis that these two nuns who appear in the Sedgwick Shōtoku's vow are most likely the same as those in the *Kyōmyō*. As for Kangyō, since she is called an *ama*, she was probably not a full-fledged *bikuni* nun. In the *Kyōmyō*, there is an entry for "Shōi Kangyōbō 性意觀鏡房, age thirty-nine, born in Mino 美濃 Province"<sup>14</sup> among the *gyōdō shamini* 形同沙彌尼 then residing and studying at Hokkeji. The phrase *gyōdō shamini* refers to a novice nun who had received the ten major bodhisattva precepts from among the bodhisattva precepts found in the *Brahmajāla Sutra* (Ch. *Fanwang jing* 梵網經; Brahma's Net Sutra) but had not received the ten precepts for becoming a full-fledged *shamini* 沙彌尼 (novice nun) as stipulated in the *Four-Part Vinaya* (Ch. *Sifenlu* 四分律). Hence, from this entry, we can surmise that in 1280 she was living at Hokkeji, her name was Shōi, her cloister name was Kangyōbō, she was thirty-nine years old, and she was from Mino Province. Furthermore, because Kangyō also appears in another votive text, it can be surmised that she may have been one of the core members of the group that produced the Sedgwick Shōtoku image.

#### *The Votive Text of the Nun Kenshō (Plate 3)*

In a similar vein, the name of the *bikuni* Kenshō 賢勝 is found on a votive text (plate 3) that states, "I take refuge in the venerable Śākyamuni. I vow that I shall never forget my aspiration for enlightenment (*bodhicitta*; Jp. *bodaishin* 菩提心) in future times, not even if I am born in an evil place." In the *Zōzō meiki hen*, her name is transcribed as Kenkai 賢海.<sup>15</sup> However, the character rendered here as *kai* 海 may be a mistake for *shō* 勝, since the name Kenshō Jōyōbō 賢勝淨譽坊 is found listed forty-seventh among the list of forty-nine *shikishani shū* 式叉尼衆 (probationary nuns at the stage prior to becoming a *bikuni*) found in the *Kyōmyō*.<sup>16</sup> This suggests that her name was actually Kenshō and not Kenkai. Moreover, as of 1280, she was not a *bikuni*, but a *shikishamana* 式叉摩那 (another name for *shikishani*). However, 1292, when the Sedgwick Shōtoku was created, was still thirteen years in the future, and by this date, it can be assumed that she had become a *bikuni*.

<sup>13</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 86.

<sup>14</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 103.

<sup>15</sup> *Zōzō meiki hen*, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 89.

Based on the preceding analysis, it has become clear that the four nuns that we have discussed so far are also mentioned in the *Kyōmyō*, meaning that they were all direct disciples of Eison. From this fact, one can speculate that the nuns found in the other documents in the Sedgwick Shōtoku were also Eison's direct disciples.

*The Votive Text of the Nun Busshi Shinjō (Plate 4)*

Let us now turn to the votive text found in plate 4. This votive text is written on a sheet of paper 12.2 cm in length and 10.5 cm in width, which is slightly larger than the sheets of paper used for the other votive texts in the statue. In the lower-right corner of this text, the words “Busshi Shinjō 佛子眞淨, fifth month, ninth day of Shōō 5 [1292]” are visible. As this shows, this is the first of the two documents, mentioned above, in which the date of the fifth month, ninth day of Shōō is found.

What kind of person, then, was this Busshi Shinjō? In the *Zōzō meiki hen*,<sup>17</sup> her name is transcribed as Kanjō 寛淨, but from my reading of the document, I believe the correct transcription of this nun's name should be Shinjō 眞淨. In the *Kyōmyō*, Shinjō appears as the twenty-second person on the list of *bikunis* as Shinjō Rizenbō 眞淨理善房, indicating that she ranked twenty-second in seniority among the nuns of Eison's order.<sup>18</sup> Unlike Shunchi and Seigan who entered the Ritsu 律 order relatively late, Shinjō had been one of Eison's direct disciples from early on. Moreover, she was not an ordinary nun; the fact that she bore the title of “*busshi*” (child of the Buddha) must mean that she had received the esoteric *abhiṣeka*.

In 1292, Shinjō was serving as the elder (*chōrō* 長老) of Kōdaiji 光臺寺 in the Saga 嵯峨 area of Kyoto. In Eison's Ritsu order, the term “elder” was used to indicate the senior monk or nun of a temple. The entry for Kōan 1 (1278) in the *Saidaiji chokushi Kōshō Bosatsu gyōjitsu nenpu* 西大寺勅謚興正菩薩行実年譜 (Chronology of the Activities of the Posthumously Titled Bodhisattva Kōshō of Saidaiji), a biography of Eison, states that “the Kōdaiji *bikuni* Shinjō donated 11,600 *mon* 文, [and] the Dōmyōji 道明寺 *bikuni* Ryōshō 了詳 donated 7,300 *mon*” to defray the cost of publishing the *Bonmōkyō kojakuki bugyō bunshū* 梵網經古迹記輔行文集 (Collection of Passages Assisting the Record of Ancient Traces of the *Brahmajāla Sutra*).<sup>19</sup> This shows that, as the elder of Kōdaiji during the Kōan era, she had the means to collect a large amount of donations for projects undertaken by Eison's order.

Shinjō also appears in the *Hokkeji engi* 法華寺縁起 (The Origins of Hokkeji), a record of the history of the Eison order of nuns focusing on Hokkeji. This text relates the following:

<sup>17</sup> *Zōzō meiki hen*, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 83.

<sup>19</sup> Hosokawa 1989, pp. 132–33.

Shinjō *bikuni* Rizenbō, the founding elder of Kōdaiji<sup>20</sup> in Saga. On the fifth day of the twelfth month of Shōan 正安 1 (1299) [the forty-ninth summer since becoming a *bikuni*, through the practice of the A-syllable contemplation (*ajikan* 阿字觀)] attained *nenbutsu* 念仏 birth in the Pure Land. A Ritsu leader.<sup>21</sup>

According to this passage, Shinjō was called Rizenbō, was the founding elder of Kōdaiji in the Saga area of Kyoto, and passed away in 1299, forty-nine years after she became a *bikuni*. This indicates she became a *bikuni* in 1251. Moreover, if she took the precepts at the age of twenty (the usual age for doing so, although married women can take them at the age of thirteen), this would mean that she was born in 1231. Hence, when the Sedgwick Shōtoku was created in 1292, she was more than sixty-two years old. In addition, it is stated that she achieved a *nenbutsu* birth in the Pure Land while undertaking the A-syllable contemplation practice of esoteric Buddhism and was considered to be an important figure in Eison's precept revival movement. In this connection, it may be noted that the words “*namu Amida butsu*” 南無阿彌陀佛 are written on the votive text reproduced in plate 4. This shows that Shinjō placed great value on both the *nenbutsu* and *mikkyō* 密教 practices while simultaneously strictly keeping the precepts.

I believe that Shinjō was the key person responsible for the creation of the Sedgwick Shōtoku. As noted above, Rizenbō Shinjō was the elder of Kōdaiji in Shōō 5 (1292). From this fact, it can be hypothesized that the Sedgwick Shōtoku image did indeed belong to the Kōdaiji in Saga, Kyoto. In order to examine the accuracy of this hypothesis, it is fruitful to consider the example of the previously mentioned Dōmyōji, a convent in Kawachi 河内 Province belonging to the same Eison order. At Dōmyōji, there is a statue of Prince Shōtoku carved in the style of a sixteen-year-old Filial Taishi (*Taishi kyōyō zō* 太子孝養像) depicting the prince praying for the recovery of his father, Emperor Yōmei 用明 (540–587), from illness. A large quantity of dedicatory documents has been discovered within it. Among them, there is no document indicating to which temple the image was dedicated. However, there are four votive texts by Busshi Ryōshō, who was the elder of Dōmyōji at the time.<sup>22</sup> Ryōshō is the twenty-fourth *bikuni* listed in the *Kyōmyō* and her name is found right by that of Shinjō.<sup>23</sup> This suggests that the presence of a vow by the current elder of a temple within an image of Shōtoku Taishi can serve as an indicator of where the image was enshrined. For this

<sup>20</sup> In the *Hokkeji engi*, the name of the temple is transcribed as Kōkōji 光篁寺, but according to the photograph of the original document, this is a mistake for Kōdaiji. The text of the *Hokkeji engi* found in the fifth volume of *Yamato koji taikan* 大和古寺大観 correctly transcribes it as Kōdaiji 光臺寺. See Iwanami Shoten 1976–78, p. 143.

<sup>21</sup> Iwanami Shoten 1976–78, vol. 5, p. 143.

<sup>22</sup> Sugiyama 1991, pp. 231, 235.

<sup>23</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 83.



reason, the existence of a vow by Shinjō, the elder of Kōdaiji, may mean that the Sedgewick image was located at Kōdaiji.

*The Votive Text of Busshi Shikai and Other Nuns (Plate 5)*

Furthermore, the names of three individuals, Busshi Shikai 佛子思戒, Shōdō 性道, and Busshi Rishō 佛子理證, appear on the vow in plate 5. This is the second of the two documents bearing the date of the fifth month, ninth day of Shōō 5 (1292). Among the three people, Busshi Shikai probably refers to Shikai Tōkaibō 思戒登戒房, who appears as the one hundred and forty-first among the *bikuni* listed in the *Kyōmyō*, and Rishō is probably Rishō Zenpōbō 理證禪法房 listed sixty-fourth in the same text.<sup>24</sup>

*The Votive Text of the Shamini Shōzen and Others (Plate 6)*

Plate 6 shows a vow expressing the desire to be born in the Land of Peace and Bliss (Anrakukoku 安樂國), the Pure Land of Amida Buddha, that was written by the *shamini* Shōzen 性禪. The vow is followed by the names of the *shami* (novice monk) Gyōhen 沙彌行遍, Ama Hōamidabutsu 尼法阿彌陀佛, Genamidabutsu 見阿彌陀佛, Kan...bō 觀口房,<sup>25</sup> Rikanbō 理觀房, and Rikanbō's mother (whose name is not given). Ama Hōamidabutsu and Genamidabutsu may perhaps be the Hōamidabutsu and Genamidabutsu who appear in the *Kyōmyō* as deceased lay members who lived near Hokkeji.<sup>26</sup> If this inference is correct, there is a possibility that the *shamini* Shōzen was expressing her desire to attain birth in the Pure Land along with the *shami* Gyōhen, Ama Hōamidabutsu, Genamidabutsu, Kan...bō, Rikanbō, and Rikanbō's mother, all of whom had already passed away. I may add here that Rikanbō may refer to the Yuinyo Rikanbō 唯如理觀房 found in the list of *bikunis* in the *Kyōmyō*, and that she too had probably died by 1292.<sup>27</sup>

In the pages above, I set forth the possibility that the nuns who appear in the vows in the Sedgewick Shōtoku were direct disciples of Eison. More importantly, I have suggested on the basis of Shinjō's vow that the statue belonged to Kōdaiji in Saga in Kyoto, and that it was probably created for Kōdaiji in 1292. Furthermore, with the exception of the deceased *shami* Gyōhen above and Bingo-dono 備後殿, who I will comment on later, all the figures that appear in the vows are nuns. This means that the Sedgewick Shōtoku was most likely created with donations gathered through the efforts of the nuns around Shinjō, the elder of Kōdaiji. This is similar to the way in which the Filial Taishi image at Dōmyōji in Kawachi was created.

<sup>24</sup> Matsuo 2003, pp. 87, 84.

<sup>25</sup> The middle character of this person's name is illegible.

<sup>26</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 112.

<sup>27</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 84.

## KAMEGAYA-DONO AND BINGO-DONO FOUND IN THE VOTIVE DOCUMENTS

Besides the names of nuns, those of lay believers also appear in the Sedgwick Shōtoku's dedicatory documents. The document reproduced in plate 7 was written to pray that four people—Kamegaya-dono かもがや殿, Ebira Gozen えびら御前, Kunai Kyō 宮内かやう (卿), and Bingo-dono—will attain buddhahood together (*tomo ni jōbutsu seshime tamae* 共に成仏セシメ給へ). I will now discuss two of these people, Kamegaya-dono and Bingo-dono.

Concerning Kamegaya-dono, the first question to ask is whether this figure was male or female. For the time being, I will consider her to have been female. This is because we know that there existed a person called Kamegaya-zenni 亀谷禪尼, a woman who was known as a devoted lay follower and supporter of Eison. Hosokawa Ryōichi and Karikome Hitoshi have discussed this figure in detail, and my account below is based on their studies.<sup>28</sup>

Kamegaya-zenni first became acquainted with Eison when the latter monk lodged at her residence when he traveled to Kamakura in Kōchō 弘長 2 (1262). Her relationship with Eison is described in the entry for the second day of the ninth month of Kōan 2 (1279) found in Eison's autobiography *Kongō Busshi Eison kanjin gakushōki* 金剛佛子叡尊感身學正記 (Record of Things that Eison, an Adamantine Disciple, Personally Experienced in Studying the True [Dharma]; hereafter, *Gakushōki*).<sup>29</sup> According to this entry, on this day, Eison held a service to dedicate a newly copied set of the Buddhist canon at Saidaiji. This was because Kamegaya-zenni, whose monastic name is Jōamidabutsu 淨阿彌陀佛, along with sixty servants, had suddenly come to Kyoto from Kamakura and donated it to Eison, who was then staying at Jōjuji 淨住寺 in the capital. The entry also states that Kamegaya-zenni was originally a servant of the fourth shogun, Fujiwara Yoritsune 藤原頼經 (1218–1256, r. 1226–1244), and the widow of Nakahara Morokazu 中原師員 (1184–1251), the former governor (*tsukasa* 司) of Settsu 攝津 Province, who had taken the tonsure with the monastic name of Gyōgen 行嚴. On the occasion of Eison's 1262 trip to Kamakura, Kamegaya-zenni had offered him lodging in her residence located at Shinseiryōji 新清涼寺 in Kamegayatsu 亀谷. It was through the good offices of Hōjō Sanetoki 北條實時 (1224–1278), a major figure in the Kamakura *bakufu* 幕府, that Eison was able to lease her house during his stay in Kamakura. Subsequently, Kamegaya-zenni became devoted to Buddhism. She banned the taking of life on her own estates, kept the precepts, and stayed in touch with Eison. She wanted to hold a dedicatory service for the set of the Buddhist canon that she had had newly copied and politely asked Eison to serve as the officiating priest. Eison

<sup>28</sup> Hosokawa 2020, pp. 91–96 and Karikome 2004.

<sup>29</sup> SEDS, pp. 45–46.





Plate 1. The “Sedgwick Shōtoku” Statue.

*Prince Shōtoku at Age Two (Shōtoku Taishi Nisaizō), Harvard Art Museums/ Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.*

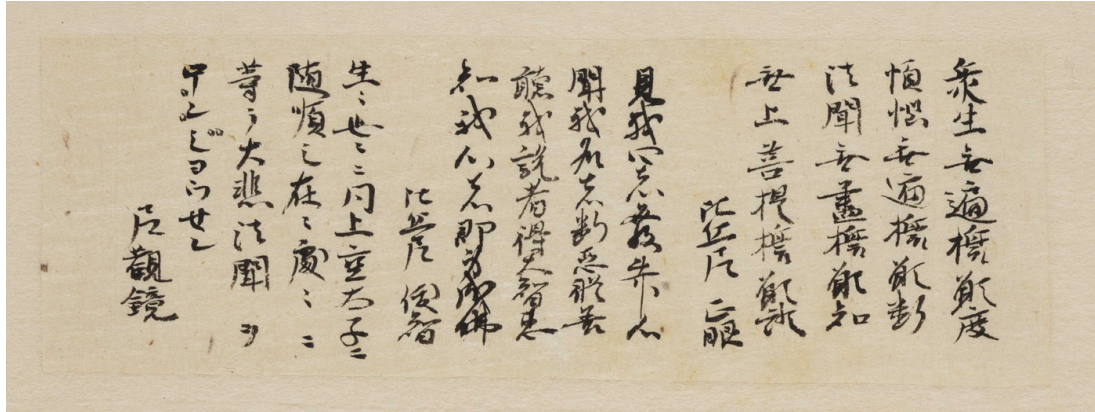


Plate 2. The Votive Text of the Nuns Seigan, Shunchi, and Kangyō.

*One of Four Sheets of Paper inscribed with Religious Texts, Poems, Charms [mounted on a board], Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.11.2.*

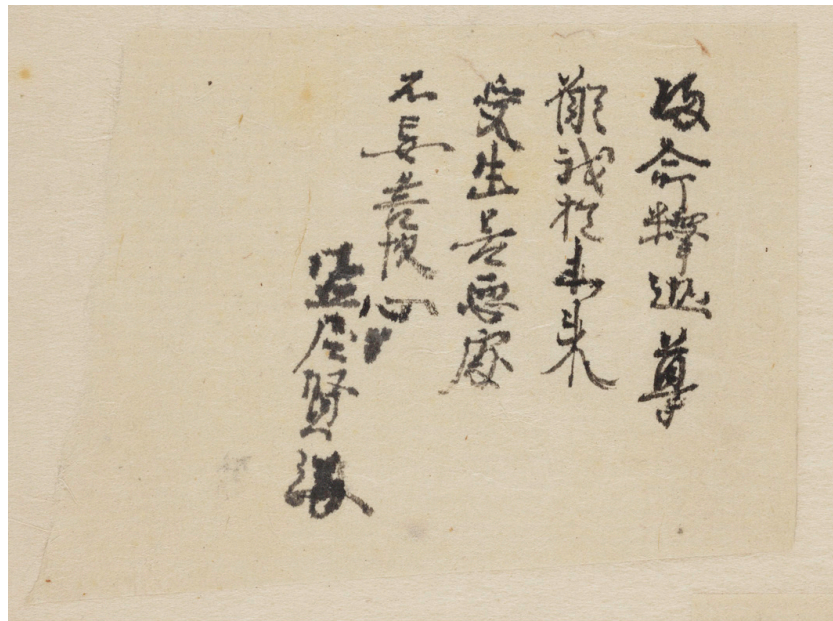


Plate 3. The Votive Text of the Nun Kenshō.

*One of Four Sheets of Paper inscribed with Religious Texts, Poems, Charms [mounted on a board], Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.11.1.*

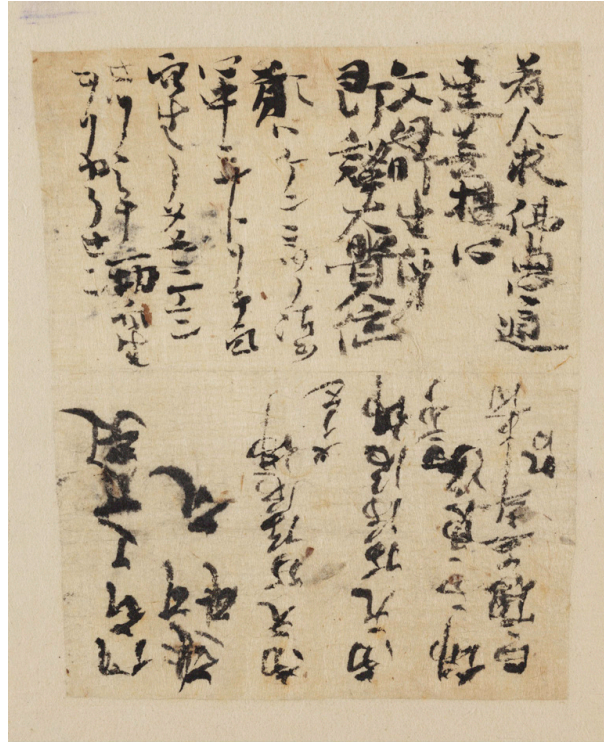


Plate 4. The Votive Text of the Nun Busshi Shinjō.

*One of Seven Sheets of Paper inscribed with Religious Texts, Poems, Charms [mounted on a board], Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.12.4.*

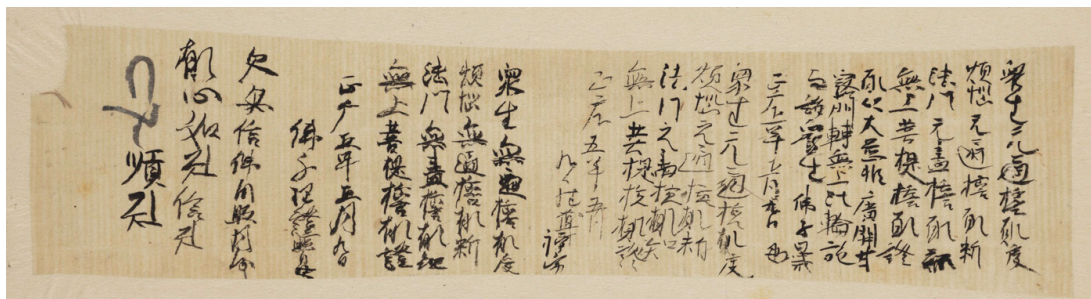


Plate 5. The Votive Text of Busshi Shikai and Other Nuns.

*One of Four Sheets of Paper inscribed with Religious Texts, Poems, Charms [mounted on a board], Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.11.4.*



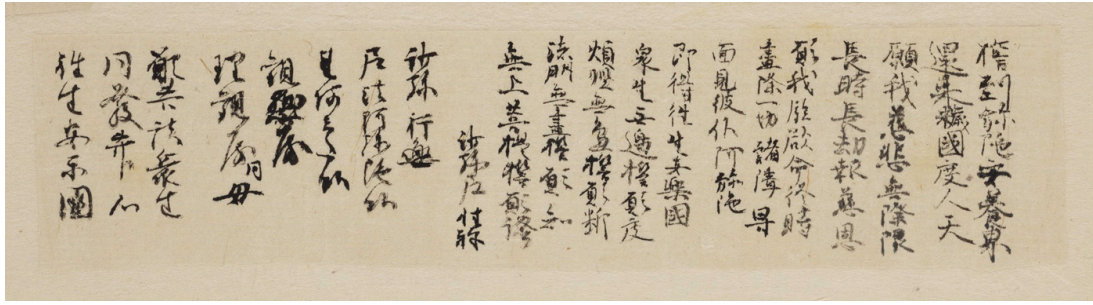


Plate 6. The Votive Text of the Shamini Shōzen and Others.

*One of Four Sheets of Paper inscribed with Religious Texts, Poems, Charms [mounted on a board], Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.11.3.*

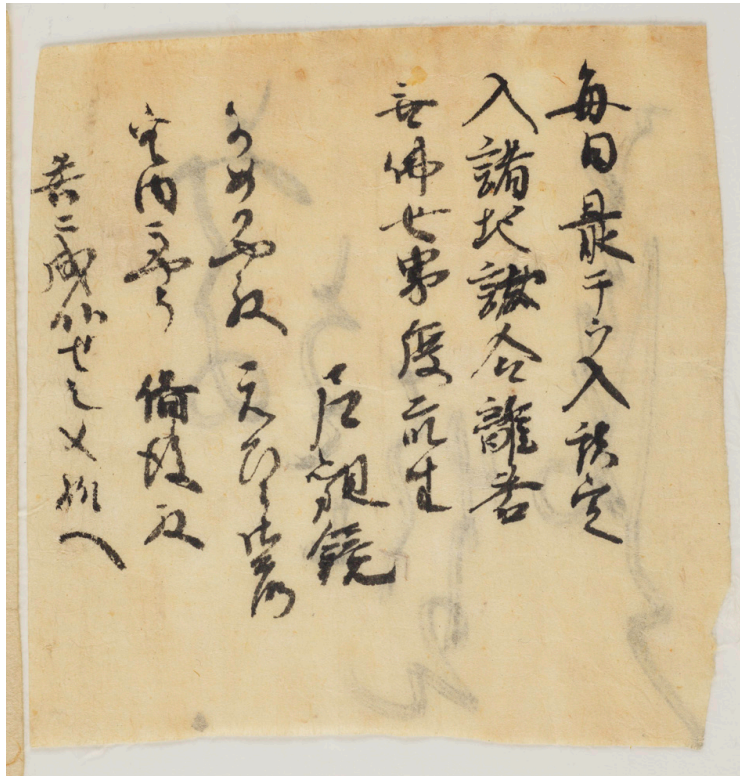


Plate 7. Votive Text Mentioning Kamegaya-dono and Bingo-dono.

*One of Six Sheets of Paper (some double-sided) inscribed with Religious Texts, Poems, Charms, Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Partial and promised gift of Walter C. Sedgwick in memory of Ellery Sedgwick Sr. and Ellery Sedgwick Jr., Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2019.122.17.5.*

found her request difficult to refuse, accepted it, and held the service together with one hundred monks. Although this is not mentioned in this entry, it may be added that, according to the *Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡, a history of the Kamakura *bakufu*, Nakahara Morokazu died on the twenty-second day of the sixth month of Kenchō 建長 3 (1251) at the age of sixty-seven.<sup>30</sup>

For our present purposes, this entry is important for the information it provides about Kamegaya-zenni. To recapitulate, she was a person who was closely associated with Eison, presenting this monk with lodgings, cooperating with his activities by, for example, enacting a hunting ban on her land (Yokooka 横岡 Village in Nasu 那須),<sup>31</sup> and supporting him to the extent of donating a complete set of the Buddhist canon to him. For this reason, there is a strong possibility that the figure referred to as Kamegaya-dono in the dedicatory document above refers to Kamegaya-zenni. But if the Kamegaya-dono mentioned in the document is male, it would refer to Nakahara Morokazu, Kamegaya-zenni's husband. However, in this case, it would be more natural to refer to this person as Gyōgen, his monastic name, or as "the former governor." Hence, I believe that the reference must be to Kamegaya-zenni herself.

There are additional references to Kamegaya-zenni in the *Gakushōki*. For example, this work states that, when she met Eison after the memorial service to dedicate the Buddhist canon, Kamegaya-zenni expressed her wish to donate the Buddha relics held by her husband to Saidaiji 西大寺 (or perhaps Jōjūji) and enshrine them there. On his deathbed, Morokazu passed away with the relics hung around his neck, refusing to give them to others. Eison, it continues, approved their donation and enshrinement. As a result, Kamegaya-zenni brought them to Saidaiji on the thirtieth day of the ninth month of Kōan 2 (1279).<sup>32</sup> The *Gakushōki* also mentions that Eison visited the hall of Jōamidabutsu (i.e., Kamegaya-zenni) on the twenty-sixth day of the first month of Kōan 7 (1284) and performed a memorial service there.<sup>33</sup> Kamegaya-zenni had moved from Kamakura to Kyoto during the first month of Kōan 7, and this entry shows that Eison performed a service at the hall she had built.

Moreover, according to the *Saidaiji Nishisōbō zōei dōshin gōriki hōgachō* 西大寺西僧坊造営同心合力奉加帳 (Registry of [People Who] Assisted, by Bringing Together Their Power with Identical Aspiration, the Construction of the Western Monks' Quarters at Saidaiji), the Kamegaya nun (i.e., Kamegaya-zenni), donated five *kanmon* 貫文 to the construction of Nishisōbō (Western Monks' Quarters) at Saidaiji.<sup>34</sup> The *Gakushōki* also states that a great mandala service (*dai mandara gu* 大曼荼羅供) was conducted at

<sup>30</sup> *Azuma kagami*, vol. 33, p. 479.

<sup>31</sup> Karikome 2004, p. 62.

<sup>32</sup> SEDS, p. 46.

<sup>33</sup> SEDS, p. 55.

<sup>34</sup> SEDS, p. 389.



Sokujōjuin 速成就院 in Kyoto at the request of Jōamidabutsu during the first month of Kōan 7.<sup>35</sup> All of these references show that Kamegaya-zenni was a devoted follower and supporter of Eison and his order.

I will next focus on the Bingo-dono that appears in the document reproduced in plate 7. This person is mentioned in the entry for Bun'ei 文永 6 (1269) in the *Gakushōki*. According to this entry, in the early part of the tenth month of that year, Eison visited Kongōhōji 金剛寶寺, also known as Kimiidera 紀三井寺, in Kii 紀伊 Province (now Wakayama Prefecture), at the request of the Bingo *nyūdō* 備後入道 (householder monk of Bingo Province) Myōren 妙蓮. According to such sources as the *Wakayama-ken no chimei* 和歌山県の地名 (Place Names of Wakayama Prefecture),<sup>36</sup> the Bingo *nyūdō* was the fifty-fourth priest (*kannushi* 神主) of the Hinokuma Jingū 日前神宮 and a *kokuzō* 国造 (provincial religious official) of Kii Province with the secular name Nobuchika 宣親. At the temple, Eison delivered a lecture on the ten major precepts of the *Brahmajāla Sutra*. On the seventh day of the tenth month, the Bingo *nyūdō* vowed to ban the taking of life within the nineteen villages that constituted the estate of Jingūji 神宮寺 in Nagusa 名草 County, and forbade disorderly dancing as well as the sale and consumption of alcohol at Midokyōsho 御讀經所, Jingūji, and over thirty other halls in the area.

On the nineteenth day, Eison conferred the bodhisattva precepts on eight hundred and ninety-four people. Finally, on the tenth day, Eison conferred the bodhisattva precepts on Ki no Toshifumi 紀俊文, the son of the Bingo *nyūdō*, who served as a *kokuzō* of Kii Province. The fact that Eison was invited by the Bingo *nyūdō* Myōren to lecture on the ten great precepts of the *Brahmajāla Sutra* at Kimiidera in Kii Province indicates that the Bingo *nyūdō* was one of Eison's followers. This person is the Bingo-dono who appears in the votive document in plate 7.

Based on what I have argued above, it is probable that the Sedgwick Shōtoku was commissioned by members of the Eison order. Furthermore, it can be surmised that it was installed at Kōdaiji in Saga, which had Shinjō as its founding elder. Therefore, in the following section, I will turn to a consideration of Kōdaiji.

## KŌDAIJI

Kōdaiji no longer exists, but it is clear that it was once located in the Saga area of Kyoto since it is called the “Saga Kōdaiji” in the abovementioned *Hokkeji engi*.<sup>37</sup> According to the *Yamashiro meisshōshi* 山域名勝志 (Scenic Spots of Yamashiro), it was

<sup>35</sup> SEDS, p. 184.

<sup>36</sup> Heibonsha Chihō Shiryō Sentā 1983, p. 382.

<sup>37</sup> Information on Kōdaiji can be found in Yunoue 2021; Ushiyama 1989, p. 248; and Hosokawa 1989, pp. 131–38.

located at the foot of Kameyama 龜山 to the south of Seiryōji 清凉寺 and to the north of Kōon'in 洪恩院.<sup>38</sup> It was burned down during the Ōnin 応仁 War (1467–1477) and fell into ruin.<sup>39</sup> In one of his letters, Eison wrote that “the temple at Saga is a convent that is well known to everyone.”<sup>40</sup> It was in fact such a famous nunnery that an imperial princess (*himemiya* 姫宮), which may perhaps refer to the daughter of Mune-taka Shinnō 宗尊親王 (1242–1272), entered it.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, according to the *Tōka zuiyō* 桃華藥葉 (Duckweed from the Peach Blossom) by Ichijō Kaneyoshi 一條兼良 (1402–1481), this was the convent that the daughters of the Ichijō clan, including “the daughter of my [i.e., Kaneyoshi’s] son,” entered.<sup>42</sup>

In the previously mentioned *Kyōmyō*, the following sixteen individuals are listed as novice *shamini* residing at Kōdaiji:

Kairen Myōkakubō 戒蓮明覺房, age thirty-seven, born in Mino Province  
 Ryōzen Sennenbō 了善專念房, age thirty-four, born in Yamato 大和 Province  
 Senshin Zenkakubō 專真善覺房, age thirty-three, born in Yamashiro 山城 Province  
 Nin'e Kakushinbō 忍慧覺真房, age twenty-nine, born in Yamashiro Province  
 Jakushin Shōkanbō 寂信性觀房, age twenty-seven, born in Yamashiro Province  
 Enchi Dōjitsubō 圓智道實房, born in Yamashiro Province  
 Myōken Kakunyobō 明顯覺如房, age twenty-four, born in Yamashiro Province  
 Shōyo Rikyōbō 性譽理教房, age twenty-three, born in Ise 伊勢 Province  
 Kakunyū Renninbō 覺入蓮忍房, age twenty-two, born in Hōki 伯耆 Province  
 Zenkaku Renganbō 禪覺蓮願房, age twenty-three, born in Izumi 和泉 Province  
 Shōkū Myōshinbō 照空妙真房, age twenty-two, born in Sanuki 讚岐 Province  
 Jōen Zenshōbō 淨圓善性房, age twenty-one, born in Yamashiro Province  
 Shōki Kakunyobō 性基覺如房, age eighteen, born in Kawachi Province  
 Chishin Kyōgakubō 智真教覺房, age seventeen, born in Yamato Province  
 Kaizen Kyōjōbō 戒禪教靜房, age seventeen, born in Izumi Province  
 Zennin Honkyōbō 善忍本教房, age seventeen, born in Iyo 伊予 Province<sup>43</sup>

As this list shows, in Kōan 3 (1280), there were sixteen fledging nuns affiliated with Kōdaiji. This far surpasses the seven nuns then affiliated with Dōmyōji, and is second in number only to Hokkeji, which had fifty-seven nuns. Moreover, although many of them were from Yamashiro Province, the nuns at the convent had gathered

<sup>38</sup> *Yamashiro meishōshi*, p. 981.

<sup>39</sup> Ushiyama 1989, p. 248.

<sup>40</sup> Hosokawa 1989, p. 134.

<sup>41</sup> Hosokawa 2020, pp. 227–28.

<sup>42</sup> Ushiyama 1989, p. 248.

<sup>43</sup> Matsuo 2003, p. 106.

from the entire Kinai region, including Mino, Yamato, Ise, Kawachi, Izumi, and Iyo provinces.

According to the *Gakushōki*, on the twenty-seventh day of the ninth month of Kōan 7 (1284), when Sanjō Bōmon Naifu Zenmon Kitanokata 三条坊門内府禪門北方, the wife of Nakanoin Michishige 内院通成,<sup>44</sup> took the tonsure at Saionji 西園寺, Eison served as her master (*shishi* 師資) and Sokunin Kanpōbō 則忍觀法房, a *bikuni* from Kōdaiji, was entrusted with the task of shaving her hair.<sup>45</sup>

As I have pointed out in my *Kamakura shin bukkyōron to Eison kyōdan* 鎌倉新仏教論と叡尊教団 (The Theory of Kamakura New Buddhism and Eison's Order), in the fourth month of Einin 永仁 6 (1298), thirty-four temples of the Eison order were appointed as Kantō prayer temples (*kitōji* 祈祷寺), or temples charged with praying for the Kamakura shogun's domain, as a result of a petition by Ninshō 忍性 (1217–1303) of Gokurakuji 極樂寺 in Kamakura, the leader of the Eison order after its founder's death.<sup>46</sup> Among them, seven of the temples—Hokkeji, Dōmyōji, Sankain 三ヶ院, Toyouradera 豊浦寺, Kōdaiji, Shanain 舎那院, and Myōrakuji 妙樂寺—were convents, and it is significant that Kōdaiji was included among them. Kōdaiji was thus a highly ranked temple within the Eison order, officially recognized and protected by the Kamakura *bakufu*.

In the above, I have examined Kōdaiji, focusing in particular on the latter half of the thirteenth century, that is to say, around 1292 in which the Sedgwick Shōtoku was produced. The important place that this convent held in Eison's order is shown by the fact that it was designated as one of the temples to pray for the welfare of the people of the Kamakura shogun's territory in the fourth month of Einin 6 (1298). It was for this prestigious convent that the Sedgwick Shōtoku was produced.

## CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have discussed the nuns whose names appear in the dedicatory documents placed within the Sedgwick Shōtoku sculpture of the Harvard University Art Museums. I will summarize my conclusions below.

1. The majority of people whose names are found on the vows included in this statue were nuns who were the direct disciples of Eison.
2. The name of the *bikuni* Busshi Shinjō, the founding elder of Kōdaiji in Saga in Kyoto, appears in one of the dedicatory documents, making it highly likely that the image was enshrined in Kōdaiji.

<sup>44</sup> *Sonpi bunmyaku*, vol. 60/1, p. 513.

<sup>45</sup> SEDS, p. 58.

<sup>46</sup> Matsuo 2019, pp. 58–63.

3. The Sedgwick Shōtoku, like the statue of the Filial Taishi at Dōmyōji, is distinctive in that it was produced almost entirely through the efforts of nuns.
4. Kōdaiji was one of the convents in the Eison order important enough to be designated as a prayer temple for the Kamakura shogun's domain in 1298.

Before closing, I would like to add that the Sedgwick Shōtoku was dedicated after the date found on the votive documents, the ninth day of the fifth month of Shōō 5 (1292). Besides these documents, the image contains other marvelous dedicatory items including relics and a statue of Aizen Myōō. Interestingly, there was no paint applied to four of Aizen Myōō's six arms, suggesting that the production of this image was rushed. On the twenty-fifth day of the eighth month of that year, Ninshō traveled to the capital and performed a memorial service on the occasion of the second anniversary of Eison's death.<sup>47</sup> During his trip to the capital, Ninshō also served as the officiating monk at a service to venerate a statue of Maitreya (Miroku 弥勒) held at Tōshōdaiji 唐招提寺 in Nara.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps Shinjō of Kōdaiji and her associates rushed to complete the production on the Sedgwick Shōtoku so that Ninshō would be able to serve as the officiating monk in a service commemorating the completion of this statue while he was still in the capital.

#### ABBREVIATION

SEDS            *Saidaiji Eison denki shūsei* 西大寺叡尊伝記集成. Ed. Nara Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo 奈良国立文化財研究所. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1977.

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<sup>47</sup> Matsuo 2004, p. 158.

<sup>48</sup> Matsuo 2004, p. 158.

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