

# THE STATUE OF FUGEN BOSATSU

## OKURA MUSEUM, TOKYO<sup>1</sup>

By Sherwood F. Moran

Fugen, a Bodhisattva (Japanese, *Bosatsu*) of wisdom and compassion, is sometimes represented as a member of a trinity, being on the right hand of Shaka (*Śākya*) with Monju (*Mañjuśrī*) at Shaka's left<sup>2</sup>. But more often he is depicted alone. He is ordinarily shown as riding upon a white elephant with six tusks. Sometimes the elephant has three heads; in this case, also, each head has six tusks. Each foot of the elephant usually rests upon a lotus flower<sup>3</sup>.

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1. This museum, founded by Baron Ōkura in 1917, was totally destroyed by the great earthquake of 1923, and most of the objects in it were lost. Of those that remain, this Fugen Bosatsu is by all odds the most important. One of the valuable works of art lost to the museum at the time of the earthquake was a piece of sculpture of the Tempyō period, of the series known as *Jūdaideshi* (Ten Great Disciples). The six of the ten that now remain all belong to Kōfukuji Temple, Nara. The museum passed safely through all the air attacks upon Tōkyō in the Second World War. This statue of Fugen Bosatsu, though not removed from the museum, remained unharmed.

2. There is such a *kakemono* triptych at Tōfukuji, Kyōto, for example. Incidentally, Monju is usually represented as riding upon a lion.

3. There are some interesting irregularities in art in the depiction of Fugen Bosatsu. Fugen is not invariably seated on an elephant, and even when there is an elephant, his feet are not always on lotus flowers. And in at least one case the elephant is lying down. (Cf. Tōfukuji *kakemono* referred to in footnote 2.) There are also other interesting differences.

In the painting of Fugen owned by Matsuodera, Kyōto (illus. *Sekai Bijutsu Zenshū*, old series, vol. 12, pl. 92), for example, Fugen is on an elephant in this case having three heads. Each of the three heads has six tusks. But the elephant does not have his feet on lotus flowers. Instead he is standing

Fugen (Sanskrit, *Samantabhadra*; Chinese, *P'u-hsien*), though never as popular in Japanese Buddhist art as Amida and Yakushi, or such Bodhisattva forms as Fudō, Jizō, and especially the various Kannon types, was fairly common in Japanese painting, but was not so often represented in sculpture. Of the examples of this deity in sculpture, certainly this one of the Ōkura Museum (Ōkura Shūkōkan) is in a class by

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on a large Buddhist "Wheel of the Law" (Sanskrit: *dharma-cakra*), laid out flat. This wheel, in turn, is supported on the backs of numerous small elephants, arranged in a circle at the outer rim of the wheel, all facing outwards. Incidentally, in the trunk of each elephant, including the three main heads, and all of the many small elephants supporting the wheel, is held a *dokko*, a short decorated metal rod often held by Buddhist priests while chanting prayers. The *dokko* has but one point at either end. The more common form has three points or prongs at each end, in which case it is known as *sanko*. In some instances it has five prongs and is then called *goko*.

In a Fugen painting by Reizei Tamechika (late Tokugawa), owned by Myōōin, Shiga Prefecture, the elephant upon which Fugen sits has a lotus flower as a pedestal for each foot, according to convention, but the elephant has stepped off his flowery footrests, leaving them vacant. Incidentally, this painting is of the so-called *Jūrasetsunyo* type. This is an especially interesting form of Fugen painting. There are a considerable number of such paintings in Japan today but none earlier than the Kamakura period. In this kind of picture, in addition to a few other figures that may be grouped around Fugen, there are ten female figures. At first the ten women in these paintings were Chinese in style, both as to costume and coiffure, but later they were depicted as Japanese women with costumes of the Fujiwara period, and straight flowing hair. (Cf. the *Jūrasetsunyo* painting owned by Jōninji, Tottori, illus. *Sekai Bijutsu Zenshū*, old series, vol. 14, pl. 105.) In the *Hokekyō* it is written that Ten *Rākshasī* (*Jūrasetsunyo* in Japanese) have taken an oath to guard those who have received the *Hokekyō* and read it many times, but there is no statement there or in the tenets of the sect that these ten guardians should be arranged around Fugen as they are in the type of picture we have been considering. This seems to be entirely a Japanese idea, and quite possibly originated from seeing paintings representing Amida and a large group of Bosatsu descending to welcome upon death the soul of the devout believer, a familiar subject in Fujiwara and Kamakura art, known as *Amida Nijūgo Bosatsu Raigōzu* or *Amida Shōshū Raigōzu*.

itself.

Fugen is especially associated with the *Hokekyō*, or *Myō-hōrengekyō*, known in English as the Lotus Sutra (Sanskrit, *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*). In fact, he is considered the guardian deity of the *Hokekyō* and of its followers. This sūtra is the main sacred text of the Tendai (Chinese, *T'ien-t'ai*) sect.

The *Hokekyō* cult became especially popular in the Fujiwara period, particularly among women, and as a result, statues or paintings of Fugen are given a soft and tender effect. Though originally male, and often having a mustache, or neuter in sex, this deity, like Kannon, came to have a feminine appearance; in fact, its representation became an ideal of feminine beauty. The Ōkura Museum Fugen is a typical product of the Fujiwara period at its best.

There is no documentary evidence whatsoever that gives a clue as to the date of this statue; neither is there any signature or date written in its interior<sup>4</sup>. But its style and technique point unmistakably to its being late Fujiwara.

The gentle and refined beauty of Fujiwara art at its height was not weakness but had a strength of its own. It was, however, in marked contrast to the dominant note of the following era, the Kamakura period, with its dash and vigor and practical, everyday outlook on life. But on the other hand, when the artists of this later, more red-blooded period, forsaking the distinctive characteristics of their own age, sought to recapture the peculiar beauty and charm of the preceding era, using the same motifs and subjects of that period, the results

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4. This statement is based on an examination of the interior of the statue by the author.

were seldom successful. More often than not a hard and sterile art resulted. This is seen particularly when they are trying to do exactly the same thing as the Fujiwara artists and in the same way. Naturally they seldom succeeded. Innumerable illustrations of this failure might be given. Each period had its own distinctive features and outstanding masterpieces.

This Fujiwara Fugen Bosatsu is distinctly Japanese in spirit and execution, in contrast to much in Japanese art that is rooted firmly in Chinese tradition and technique. In this respect it is a counterpart in sculpture of that exquisite example of Fujiwara painting, the Fugen Bosatsu of the Tōkyō National Museum<sup>5</sup>.

Our present Fugen example is a statue in which curved lines are supreme. The outer curve of each arm and shoulder is something especially worthy of mention. The expression of the beautiful face and its general softness and roundness are in keeping with all the flowing lines of the figure. A statue elaborate and highly decorative, all this is achieved without losing a real devotional quality of simple sweetness. In a word, this is Fujiwara religious art at its best.

The elephant upon which Fugen sits is, from the standpoint of strict naturalism, about as near like a real elephant as are many ancient paintings of tigers in Japan like real tigers. One will note his absurdly short legs, more like those of a hippopotamus. Then, too, his feet have claws! There is also a claw halfway up each front leg on the inner side. The fatty, lower part of the neck is more like that of a cow than of an elephant. All in all, one is reminded of Dürer's famous wood-

5. Illus. *Pageant of Japanese Art*, vol. I, p.71; detail in color, pl. 14.

cut of a rhinoceros, the drawing being based upon merely a description of the animal.

Yet the queerness of this elephant cannot be attributed entirely to the fact that elephants were not known firsthand to the Japanese, any more than the strange appearance in art of many of their tigers was due entirely to the fact that few Japanese had ever seen a tiger. There were certain conventions adopted.

One especially interesting convention in the case of this elephant is the shape of the edge of his ears, a design we see repeatedly in Japanese art when representing the folds of garments, especially in Asuka sculpture.

The statue was given certain minor repairs in 1954 that are noted in different places in this article. But all in all there has been no fundamental repair to the statue from the beginning, and almost no retouching.

#### SOME MEASUREMENTS<sup>6</sup>

Total height of statue, including platform . . . 4 ft. 7-3/4 in.  
Height of Fugen figure only . . . . . 1 ft. 10 in.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF THE STATUE

The figure of Fugen and its lotus pedestal and supporting members are made of *hinoki* (Japanese cypress). The body and head of the elephant are made of *sugi* (cryptomeria) and his legs are *hinoki*.

This late Fujiwara statue is of course of *yosegi* construction, that is, it is made up of a considerable number of separate pieces of wood fitted together and carved. But being such a

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6. All measurements given in this article are by the author.



FIG. 1. — The Ōkura Museum Fugen, Fujiwara period



FIG. 7. — Detail of the Fugen Bosatsu

small statue compared, for example, with the Amida of Hōōdō, also of the Fujiwara period, it does not have the difficult technical problems that are evident in the *yosegi* construction of the Amida figure<sup>7</sup>. The construction of this Fugen and its elephant is relatively simple.

Of how many separate pieces of wood is this statue made? In order to answer this question, let us consider separately the various main sections into which the statue as a whole may be divided.

1) First of all there is the figure of Fugen itself. Excluding for the present the drapery going over the forearms, and that part of the skirt that is represented as falling over the petals of the pedestal below the right knee, it is made up of eleven separate pieces, as is shown in figs. 2, 3 and 4. These parts are numbered 1 to 11.

The head is separate from the body, and is in two pieces, front and back (marked 1 and 2 on fig. 3). Today this can be noted even by a casual inspection from the outside, owing to the deterioration of the surface.

The head is of course hollowed out, and as will be noted by consulting fig. 5, the neck fits into the body of the statue. Ordinarily, in a case like this, the neck would be secured to the trunk simply with glue or lacquer. But with this Fugen figure the method employed is quite unusual.

Before the repairs of 1954 the head could be very easily lifted up off the statue and the interior of the body examined. But at the time of those repairs, the head and body were firmly

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7. See the author's detailed article on the Amida of Hōōdō, in *Oriental Art*, vol. VI, no 2 (1960).





FIG. 2

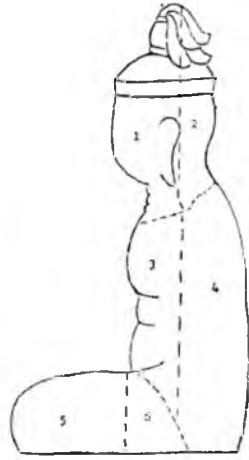


FIG. 3

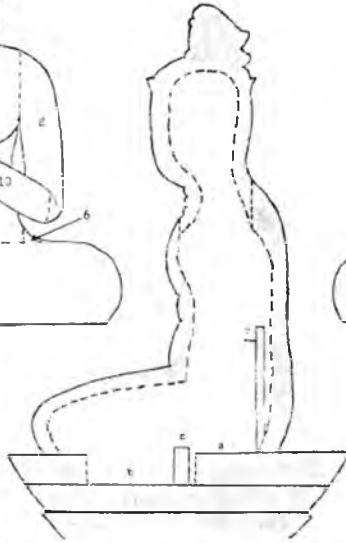
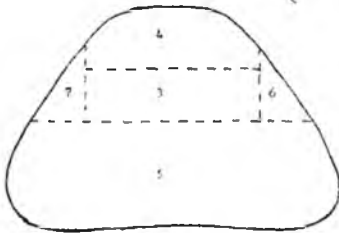


FIG. 5



Front

FIG. 4



FIG. 6

glued together, and the cracks in the finish around the neck, where the head and body meet, were filled in, making any investigation of the interior from then on impossible. However, on two different occasions before 1954 the writer was granted permission to lift off the head and study carefully the interior

both of the head and of the body. The details noted are set down herewith.

Fig. 6-B shows the opening of the top of the neck to fit into, drawn as seen from above. The head has been eliminated in order to simplify the explanation. It will be noted that inside the trunk, around the edge of this opening at the top, are four protruding pegs, like tenons. They are not part of the wood of the trunk itself but are pieces of wood inserted into the trunk. (Thus, in Japanese, they are not *hozo* but *dabo*.) In fig. 6-A it will be noted that at the bottom edge of the neck there are two indentations marked x. There are also two such indentations on the other side. The four pegs exactly fit into these indentations when the head is placed down on the body. This of course prevents the head from slipping down too far. In addition, originally the neck was also glued to the body, as it is at the present time. Remnants of the glue, inside at the neck, could be seen at the time the interior was studied by the writer. With the passage of time this glue evidently became ineffective.

The trunk is hollowed out right down to the lotus pedestal. That is to say, the Fugen figure is completely open at the bottom. If the head is removed, one can look down through the body and see the pedestal. Fig. 8 shows what one would see. *a* is the surface of the lotus pedestal. This is left white in the sketch. *b* is a section of the lotus pedestal that has been dug out and is considerably lower than *a*. (Why this part of the top surface of the lotus pedestal was dug out at all is not clear. It is a rather exceptional procedure. It does not seem to serve any special purpose.) *c* represents the end of a long

wooden bar that comes up into the Fugen figure all the way from the elephant, to hold the lotus pedestal in place. We shall hear more of this bar later. Inside the figure at the back there is inserted a long upright board. It is marked  $\approx$  in fig. 8. It is difficult to say what this is for. It seems to have no structural purpose. It has a nail extending from it at the top. It was quite possibly meant to hold some sacred or precious object that was subsequently lost or stolen.

All of the preceding description having to do with the interior of the trunk of Fugen is also shown in cross section in fig. 5.

The trunk and the legs consist of five separate pieces, numbered 3 to 7 (figs. 2, 3 and 4). That part of the skirt that flows down so beautifully on to the top of the lotus pedestal is not part of the wood of the Fugen but is separate from it, being carved out of the wood of the pedestal.

The two arms are of course separate pieces of wood from the trunk. Each arm consists of two separate parts, upper arm and forearm. These are numbered 9 and 11 for right arm, and 8 and 10 for left arm. Each hand is one piece of wood with its forearm (fig. 2).

The upper arm, in each case, is fitted on to the body of the statue with the two joining surfaces each cut into a step, as shown in fig. 9-A. The shoulder is shown as viewed from above. This method is known in Japanese as *hankaki*. Another frequently used method, known as *arizashi*, is shown in fig. 9-B, also drawn as viewed from above. The latter is, of course, a dovetail joint.

Each upper arm and shoulder are secured with glue (*nikawa*). The modern method would be to use laquer (*urushi*) rather

### The Statue of Fugen Bosatsu

than glue, for lacquer lasts longer. Glue is affected by dampness. The disadvantage of lacquer is that it takes much longer to dry. In the case of this Fugen figure, in addition to glue, nails are used. The heads of three nails in each arm may be noted.

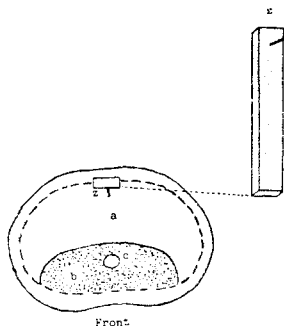


FIG. 8

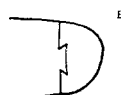
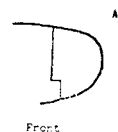


FIG. 9

The upper arm and the forearm, in each case, are secured with glue. In all probability the mortise and tenon method is not used as the statue is small. In larger statues, such as the large wooden sculpture of the Jōgan period, for example, the mortise and tenon method would be necessary.

That part of the drapery (*ten-e*) that is on the lap is one piece with the legs of the figure. But the drapery going over each forearm and falling down on the thighs at the outside, consists at present of seven separate pieces of wood, five making up the part going over the right arm and two over the left arm. The five pieces going over the right arm are not the original wood. (Whether the original *ten-e* consisted of five pieces or less is of course impossible now to say.) The ends of both the right drapery and the left drapery are now missing. (Whether these

ends consisted of one piece or more each is not known.)

The section of the skirt at the figure's right, hanging over the lotus petals below the knee, is a separate piece of wood, now rather crudely nailed on to the body of the lotus pedestal with three nails. The points of four of the lotus petals are represented as pressing up under this overhanging part of the skirt. The bulges may be noted even in a photograph. That one of the bulges furthest to the rear is a restoration. Originally, on the left side also, there was a section of the skirt represented as hanging down over the lotus petals below the knee, but that section has been lost. This is evident from a study of the lotus pedestal, to be taken up later in this article.

Part of the hair is missing. That is to say, at the present time the hair of the head and the strands of hair on the shoulders have no connection, one with the other. But back of each ear may be noted a mark where the hair falling down from the head to the shoulder was originally attached. Each of these connecting sections, now lost, was a separate piece of wood. We see exactly the same construction in a statue of the Asuka period, the Yumedono Kannon of Hōryūji<sup>8</sup>.

At the present time the figure of Fugen is glued firmly to its lotus pedestal with lacquer. It was originally glued to the pedestal, but with glue, because that is what they would have used for such a purpose in those days, a difference in technique that has been already noted.

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8. See article by the author on the Yumedono Kannon, in *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, vol. XI (1957), pp. 60 and 62.

*Summary of number of parts of the figure of Fugen*

The actual number of parts going to make up the present Fugen figure and its costume is 20, if the skirt spreading out on top of the lotus pedestal is included. But since, structurally, this is a part of the pedestal, it is included in that count. So the number of parts for Fugen and its costume is put at 19. If to these 19 parts are added the missing parts, the count for the Fugen figure would be 24, as follows :

Present total .....	19
Ends of two narrow draperies missing (assuming they consisted of but one piece each) .....	2
That part of skirt that hung over lotus petals below left knee .....	1
Strand of hair that went from head to each shoulder ...	<u>2</u> <u>5</u>
	24

2) The lotus pedestal.

The main body of the lotus pedestal, that is, the central part exclusive of the petals (known as *renniku* 蓮肉 in Japanese), consists of three separate layers of wood, as shown in figs. 5 and 10. It is the upper layer that is partly hollowed out, as shown in these two figures.

Each lotus petal (*remben* 蓮瓣) is a separate piece of wood. There were originally forty-eight of them. But one from the lowest row, in the rear, is now missing. Most of these petals are of one piece of wood each, but some of them are made of two pieces.

The tips of two of the petals of the upper row, below the

figure's left side, are cut off sharply. (This can be noted even in a photograph.) This was done to make way for that part of the skirt that originally hung over at this side but has become lost, as has already been noted. If the corresponding drapery on the right side is lifted up it will be seen that these upper lotus petals, too, are cut off at the ends in the same way.

It will thus be seen that the lotus pedestal is at present made up of fifty separate pieces of wood, not taking into account the one missing petal, nor that some of the petals are made of two pieces of wood rather than one.

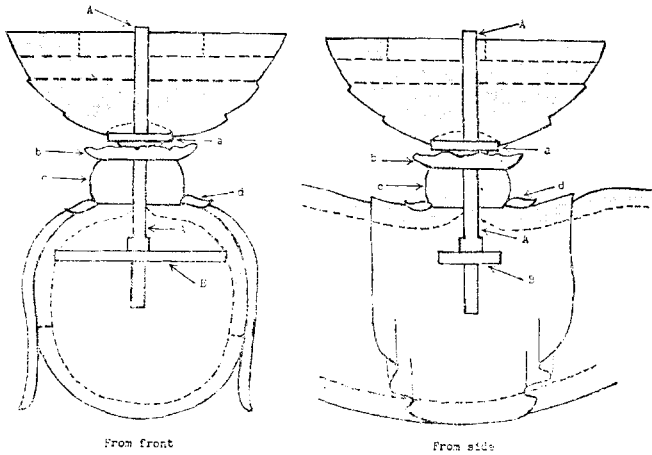


FIG. 10

There is a small hole at the outer end of each lotus petal, except of course in those cases where the pointed end has been cut off. This is unquestionably where pendent decorations were attached. This was a fairly common practice, particularly later

on in the Kamakura period<sup>9</sup>. However, in many cases such decorations, consisting of loops and pendent strings of beads and small metal ornaments, detracted rather than added to the beauty of the figure. From the purely aesthetic standpoint, it is probably fortunate that such decorations on this Fugen figure have been lost.

Each individual petal is nailed to the lotus center. This is shown in fig. 11. In order for the petals to fit in evenly it will be noted that the sides of the body of the pedestal are indented so that the surface is in three different levels or steps. The locations of these steps are brought out in fig. 11 by darkening the area of the main body of the pedestal.

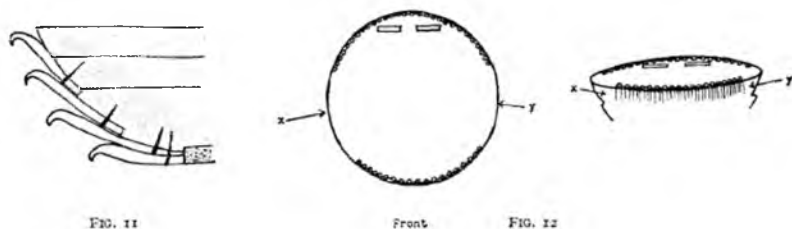
This method of permanently attaching the lotus petals to the pedestal by nails is quite different from the method ordinarily practiced in earlier periods, whereby each petal had an iron projection at its inner end which was inserted into its special hole in the body of the pedestal. This latter is the method used in the case of the Jūichimen Kannon of Shōrinji (Tempyō

9. Such decoration in the Fujiwara period, both in the case of sculpture and painting, was in the main inoffensive and simple. For sculpture, cf. Senju Kannon, Bujōji, Kyōto (Illus. *Sekai Bijutsu Zenshū*, XII, 123 rt.). For painting, cf. Jūichimen Kannon, Masuda Coll., Tōkyō (Illus. *ibid.*, XI, 113); Batō Kannon, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Illus. Paine and Soper, *The Art and Architecture of Japan*, pl. 43); Kokūzō Bosatsu, Tōkyō Natl. Museum (Illus. *Pageant of Japanese Art*, I, pl. 16). In the early Kamakura period, too, such decoration was kept within bounds. Cf. the painting, Fukūkenjaku Kannon, Kanchiin, Kyōto (Illus. *Sekai Bijutsu Zenshū*, XIII, 89). But later, like so much of Kamakura decoration, it was overdone and evokes somewhat the same feeling one has in looking at an overdecorated Christmas tree. Cf. the sculpture, Jūichimen Kannon, Hōkongōin, Kyōto (Illus. Minamoto, *Illustrated Hist. of Japanese Art*, pl. 93). It is quite possible, indeed probable, that such overdecoration was in many cases added later by devout and well-meaning worshippers.



period) and the Amida of Hōōdō (middle Fujiwara period), to cite just two examples.

It will be noticed, in looking at the illustrations accompanying this article, that the petals are arranged in regular vertical rows of four each rather than in alternate (staggered) rows of three petals and two petals each. All photographs of this statue taken before the repairs of 1954 show the petals as alternating. The change to vertical rows was made at the time of those repairs because that order was considered to have been the original arrangement. This is the one fundamental change made during the repairs of 1954. Incidentally, the same change, and for the same reason, was made in the arrangement of the petals of the pedestal of the large Amida of Hōōdō at the time of the repairs of that statue in 1954-1955<sup>10</sup>.



Around a considerable portion of the top edge of the pedestal there is a conventional representation of stamens of the lotus flower. This is indicated by a series of small bumps, or beading, and just below the beading short, vertical incised lines on the side of the pedestal (fig. 12). This is a very common convention in Buddhist sculpture from the Hakuho period (646-10. In the case of this Amida, also, only photographs of it and its pedestal taken after the repairs of 1954-1955 show the pedestal as it actually is at present.

710) on, both in wood and in bronze<sup>11</sup>. It will be noted that those parts of the edge of the pedestal at the left and right (marked *x* and *y* in fig. 12) do not have the beading or the incised lines. These blank spaces are where the drapery originally fell over the pedestal and would hide them in any event. As has already been mentioned, the drapery on the figure's right is still in place but that at the left is missing.

At the back of the pedestal are two rectangular holes cut into its upper surface. Into these, of course, fitted the tenons of a halo, long since missing (fig. 12).

3) The highly decorative section between the lotus pedestal and the elephant. This consists of three separate units. (On one occasion the writer was allowed to lift the figure of Fugen and its lotus pedestal up off the decorative section, and completely disassemble the latter, removing all the parts from the elephant. The details of this inspection are noted below.)

a) A plain uncarved piece of wood upon which the lotus pedestal rests. (See *a* of fig. 10.) This is an important and usual feature of pedestals of Buddhist figures.

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11. There are variations of this beading. Sometimes it is not on the top surface but on the side just below the edge. *E. g.*, Tachibana Fujin Amida Trinity (Hakuhō) (this is true in regard to all three figures and also the five main figures on the background screen); Jūichimen Kannon, Shōrinji (Tempyō); Amida, Hōōdō (Fujiwara). At times there are two rows of beading rather than one, *e. g.*, Shōrinji figure cited above; and sometimes there are three rows, *e. g.*, Gakkō and Nikkō Bosatsu, Kondō, Yakushiji (early Tempyō). Sometimes the beading is neither exclusively on the top surface or on the side but forms the edge of the *renmiku*, *e. g.*, Jūichimen Kannon, Doganji, and Jūichimen Kannon, Hokkeji (both Jōgan 794—897); Kichijōten, Jōruriji (Fujiwara or Kamakura); Jizō Bosatsu, Tōdaiji (Kamakura). In at least one example instead of the usual raised bumps or beading there are little incised circles, *i. e.*, the Tachibana Fujin Amida Trinity.

b) The small decorative feature directly below the wood marked *a* (*b* of fig. 10). This represents the calyx of the lotus flower above it. It is made of two pieces of wood. Such a section of the pedestal of a Buddhist figure is known as *keban* 華盤 in Japanese. Previous to the repairs of 1954, this section, at the time of some earlier repairs to the statue, was mistakenly put into its place upside down, as will be noted in all photographs taken before the repairs of 1954<sup>12</sup>.

c) The base under the *keban*, somewhat globular in shape, and highly decorative in a rococo-like manner (*c* of fig. 10). This is known as *shikinasu* 敷茄子 in Japanese. This particular *shikinasu* consists, first, of a frame that is made up of two halves, right and left. This frame is the elaborately carved part of the object. Into this ornate frame are fitted from the inside eight panels, each a separate piece of wood. This means that the *shikinasu* alone is made of ten separate pieces of wood. In addition, inside this outer shell of ten pieces is a solid round block of wood, completely filling up the space inside, to give the *shikinasu* strength to support the weight above. On this block of wood is incised the character 補, meaning it is a replacement.

The total number of separate parts of this section 3) is thus fourteen, as follows:

a) .....	1
b) .....	2
c) .....	<u>11</u>
	14

4) The elephant and its saddle.

12. E. g., *Pageant of Japanese Art*, III, pl. 37.



FIG. 13. - The Ōkura Museum Fugen Bosatsu, left profile



FIG. 16. — The Ōkura Museum Fugen Bosatsu, back view

The Statue of Fugen Bosatsu

a) The saddle. This unit is separate from the elephant and may be readily lifted off just like a real saddle.

It should be pointed out that the circle of inverted lotus petals (*d* in fig. 10) on which the *shikinasu* (*c*) rests, is structurally a part of the saddle, being carved out of the same wood. (Such a technique is known as *horidashi* 彫出.) A ring of inverted lotus petals such as this is known in Japanese as *kaeri-bana* 反花.

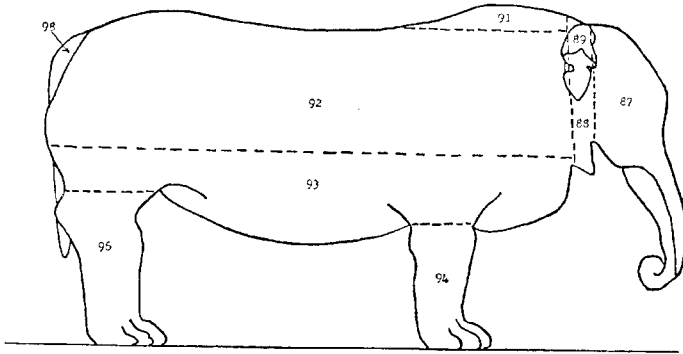


FIG. 14

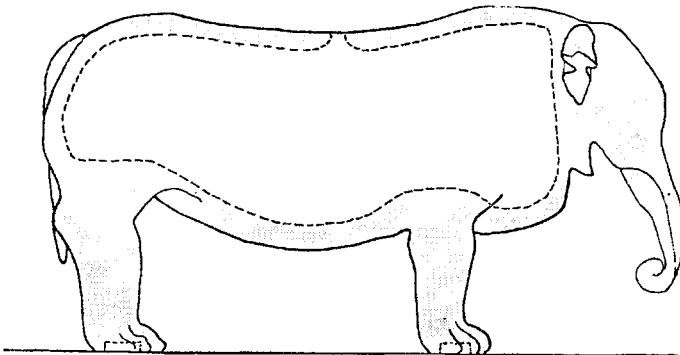


FIG. 15

All this saddle unit is made of four separate pieces of wood, strengthened with hemp cloth (*asanuno*) on the inner side at the places where the different pieces of wood come together. This cloth is new, applied at the time of the repairs in 1954. Whether there was cloth in these places from the beginning is not possible to say. The present cloth is applied with *mugi-urushi* (wheat flour paste and lacquer). The four separate pieces of wood are also unquestionably joined together with glue.

b) The elephant. It is made of twelve separate pieces of wood, numbered 87 to 98 (fig. 14). (Of course the numbers for the two left legs and the left ear do not show in the figure.) In addition there were originally six tusks. A six-tusked elephant was considered a symbol of good luck. The rough places in the wood where the tusks were attached can be made out.

On the top of the elephant's neck, a little back from the ears, there is a large jagged hole where evidently some form of decoration was once secured. A decoration here was quite common in the case of an elephant supporting Fugen.

At the present time the elephant is standing on a plain wooden base. But in a number of examples of an elephant supporting a Fugen figure, each foot of the animal rests on a lotus flower. Originally this was evidently the case with this elephant, too, for in the bottom of each foot there is a large hole. This is indicated in fig. 15. There are no corresponding wooden projections on the platform on which the elephant stands to match them. These holes were evidently part of a mortise and tenon joining for a lotus flower for each foot.

The legs are attached to the body by mortise and tenon

joinings.

The elephant, like the figure of Fugen, is of course completely hollow. This is shown in fig. 15, the dark sections representing the wood, which in general is about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches thick. This may be judged by looking at the edge of a large hole in the middle of the back of the elephant. Incidentally, a stick may be inserted straight down through this hole for 2 feet  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

Through this hole passes the end of a round wooden bar,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter and 1 foot 3 inches long. (A in fig. 10.) (This particular bar, however, is not the original one.) Inside the elephant there is a board going from one side of the body to the other. It has a hole in it into which the bar fits, holding it firm. The board is marked B in fig. 10.

This bar goes up from the elephant through the center of the various members that support the Fugen figure, keeping them all firmly in place, and eventually projects into the Fugen. All this is shown in fig. 10. The top end of this bar is shown also in figs. 5 and 8 (being marked c).

The plain platform supporting the elephant is evidently the original one. Its dimensions are 3 feet  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches by 1 foot 6 inches. Its height is  $1\frac{7}{8}$  inches. The number of parts of which this stand is made is not included in the total number for the entire statue, as such an inclusion would be of no special significance.

*Summary of the number of parts of the elephant*

If to the present twelve parts of the elephant there are added those that have disappeared, that is, six tusks, four lotuses for



the feet, and a decoration inserted on the head, we should have a total of twenty-three separate pieces of wood that went to make up the complete elephant (assuming that each of these additions was made of but one piece of wood each).

*Summary of total number of separate parts of the entire statue*

Figure of Fugen .....	19
Lotus pedestal .....	50
Supporting section between lotus pedestal and elephant .....	14
Saddle of elephant .....	4
Elephant .....	12
	99

The complete statue consisting of Fugen, the elephant, and the supporting parts in between, is so constructed that it may all be disassembled into five units :

- 1) The Fugen figure and its lotus pedestal ;
- 2) The *keban* directly under the lotus pedestal ;
- 3) The *shikinasu* below the *keban* ;
- 4) The saddle of the elephant ;
- 5) The elephant.

The first four units may be lifted up one by one in order off the elephant, leaving the bar A (fig. 10) sticking up from the back of the elephant. Even this bar may be lifted out, however, leaving nothing but the elephant, as shown in fig. 15, with a hole in his back.

*Certain details of Fugen*

*Crown.*—The crown is wood and is not separate but is a part of the wood of the head. The fact that it is wood and

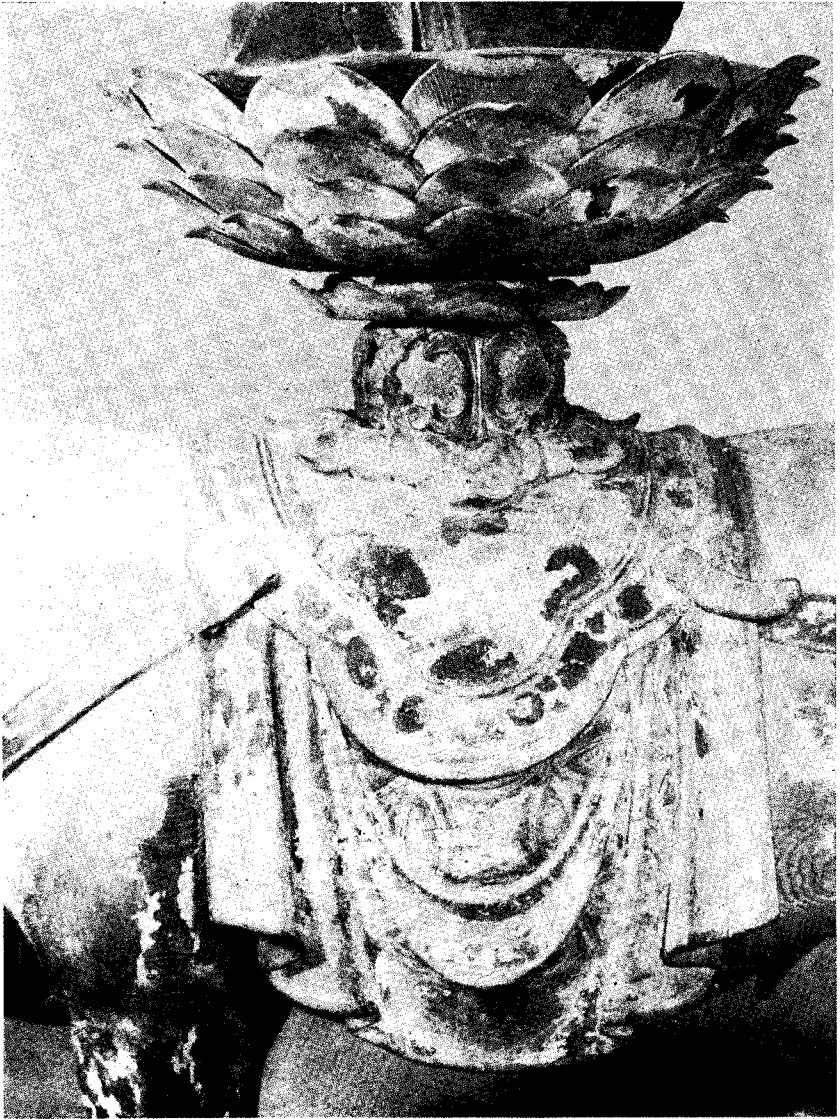


FIG. 18. — The Ōkura Museum Fugen Bosatsu, the saddle and the pedestal

not metal helps to carry out the generally soft and tender effect of the statue as a whole.

There are six small holes in the crown at the places marked in fig. 17-A (showing the crown as seen from above). The x indicates the location of the remnant of a nail at the back. It seems probable that these are marks where decorations pending from the head were once attached. Other holes in the figure will be noted as we go along.

The crown is bright gold, the gold being gold leaf (*kimpaku*) except where it has been repaired, in which cases it is gilt (*kindei*).

The crown is in really excellent condition.

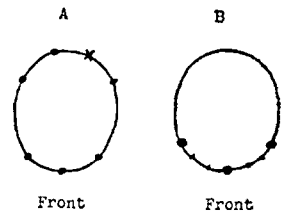


FIG. 17

*Hair.*— The hair was once a bright bluish green, the usual color in the case of a Bodhisattva, but there are few traces of this color now, it being almost entirely black.

Below the crown, in front, the hair is in scallops; in the back, below the crown, it is parted. It will be noted that it is piled up into a tower-like affair at the top. There is a little short loop that goes toward the back over the top of this tower, and from the top, at the back, pend two rows of loops. The upper row has four loops and the lower row five loops. In front, both at the base of this tower and at the top, there is a two-strand band, carved out of the body of the wood. These were originally bright, light red. The lower one has very little color left; the upper one has just one dot of red left. We find the same delightful decorative feature on the coiffure of the

Kichijōten statue, Kondō, Hōryūji<sup>13</sup>.

From the early days of Buddhist sculpture in Japan the topknot was an important form of decoration, usually being a thing of real beauty and charm. Numerous examples can of course be cited. In the Kamakura period the topknot, in some cases, became a high tower, piled straight up, often surprisingly ingenious but at the same time fussy and over-elaborate, losing the charm and elegance of earlier periods<sup>14</sup>.

An interesting feature to note in regard to this Fugen figure is the hair hanging down in front of the ears, just as it does in the case of a Japanese woman.

There are a number of holes around the edge of the hair just above the crown. Three of them are quite large and are indicated in fig. 17-B by heavy dots; four others are shown by light dots. In addition, just below the crown, there is a hole on either side of the head, in the hair, and also the stub of a nail beside each of these two holes. Here again it seems probable some form of decorations were attached, quite possibly years after the statue was originally created. One cannot help but feel thankful that they no longer exist.

The cracked area in the hair above the crown, on the figure's right side, that shows up plainly in photographs taken before the repairs of 1954, has been mended.

On each shoulder there are five slightly curly strands of hair in low relief. They are now black in color. Such wavy strands

13. In the case of the Kichijōten coiffure, there are two little bands at the top with one broader band at the bottom, tied in a bow at the front. On account of the metal crown-like decoration on the head at the front, these bands cannot be seen except upon careful inspection.

14. *E. g.*, illus. Minamoto, *op. cit.*, pl. 88.

on the shoulders are a common and delightful feature of Japanese Buddhist art, which feature of course was inherited from Chinese art. These strands on the Fugen figure were originally dry lacquer (*kanshitsu*), a process by no means common in the Fujiwara period. Even at the present time a considerable amount of the dry lacquer remains. The construction is as follows: On the shoulders in very low relief the hair is indicated by carving. Whether the hair was carved out of the shoulder (*horidashi*) or was applied to the shoulder as thin strips of wood, it is impossible to say. Over this carved wood the dry lacquer was applied. Where the dry lacquer has come off the carved core underneath may be seen, covered with a very shiny black lacquer finish.

*Face.*— The whites of the eyes seem to have been originally pure white. The pupil and iris are together black. There is no other color. Both upper and lower eyelids are edged with a black line.

The eyebrows are each indicated by a thin black band. The black is slightly nicked off, showing the white *gofun* underneath.

The nose is very realistic. However, it has a mere suggestion of holes for nostrils.

The mouth is small. The lips are a rich, bright red with a considerable amount of the red peeled off. The edges of the lips are not sharp as they are in certain other masterpieces of the Fujiwara period<sup>15</sup>, but are gently rounded, for the whole effect here in this late Fujiwara statue is of softness and tenderness. The mouth is very realistic. There is a slight tendency

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15. *E. g.*, Kichijōten, Kondō, Hōryūji; Amida, Hōdō, Byōdōin; Shōtoku Taishi, by Enkai, Hōryūji.

towards voluptuousness, but there is nothing reminiscent of the Jōgan period about this.

On the upper lip is a long, narrow, curly mustache. Below the lower lip is a small ?-shaped growth of hair. On the forehead, just below the hair is a feature not uncommon in Buddhist art. This is what may be termed a forehead mustache. It, too, is very narrow and curly. It is interesting to note that in many instances in Japanese Buddhist art, in spite of the tendency to feminization of certain deities, or at least the making of them soft and tender, the mustache is retained.

The chin is small and pointed, with an indentation underneath giving slightly the effect of a double chin. This adds to the effect of roundness of the face.

The face as a whole is quite wide and the cheeks are fat, bulging out considerably. It has a slightly glum look. But such an expression seems to be in the tradition of Eastern art. We see it in the case of the Kichijōten, Kondō, Hōryūji, and the large Amida, Hōdō, Byōdōin, for example. But it is not glumness to the Eastern mind but a sweet thoughtfulness. In any event the face is a beautiful one, round in the Fujiwara tradition<sup>16</sup>.

*Ears.*— The ears are realistic except that, in accordance with tradition, they are longer than normal and have a large opening in each lobe. The edges of the ears are well-rounded as are the edges of the holes in the lobes. There is practically no representation of an earhole going into the head. This is quite in contrast to Kamakura realism where, in many cases, the

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16. As further examples of the rounded face in the Fujiwara style, cf. the three statues cited in preceding footnote.

holes of the ears and nose go far into the head, and in at least one case, the Muchaku of Kōfukuji, actually penetrate into the cavity of the head<sup>17</sup>.

*Arms and hands.*— The arms are realistically and most beautifully modeled. Each wrist has a simple little narrow metal bracelet (*udewa*) with a green bead.

The hands, too, are beautifully formed though the backs of the hands are rather fat<sup>18</sup>. The fingers are also beautifully shaped. The finger nails are only slightly indicated, but it seems as though they are really minutely carved but the finish has to some extent covered up the carving.

*Trunk.*— Unlike so many Buddhist figures, particularly those seated, the pose, as seen from the side, is beautiful.

There is a nail stub on the upper part of the chest, and a rather deep hole in the stomach just above the navel. Here again, as in the case of the head, there were possibly some decorative features that are now missing.

*Feet.*— It will be noted that both feet show. There are of course many similar examples in Japanese art where figures seated in this position show both feet. But from the Asuka period on there are also many cases in which only one foot shows; sometimes this is the right foot, sometimes the left. In some cases the feet do not show at all, being under the garment. There seems to be no special reason for these differences. In those cases such as this Fugen, where both feet show, the soles face upward with the result that with the ex-

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17. See Moran, "The Statue of Muchaku", *Arts asiatiques*, t. V, fasc. 1, 1958, p. 50.

18. This is typical of Heian art.

ception of part of the great toe of each foot, the toenails do not show. In this Fugen example the toes are beautifully modeled.

*Color of skin of the figure of Fugen*

The skin was originally white but is now badly stained over practically its entire surface. All the face is very dark, as is a great deal of the rest of the skin. The chin and nose are especially black; the hands, arms and feet are very dirty and black. The chest and stomach are very much mottled. In addition to the preceding, in some places the skin is now a rather rich, reddish brown; for example, the right side of the face, the surface under the chin, the edges of the ears, the back of the neck, the right upper arm and the back of the figure at the waist.

*Condition of the figure of Fugen*

(other than as already noted)

The left shoulder at the back is considerably battered, with jagged bare wood showing. Previous to the repairs of 1954, the places where separate pieces of wood come together were badly cracked. (All these show in old photographs.) The cracks that were repaired and more or less filled in 1954 are as follows:

The large crack going all around the neck, where the wood of the neck is separate from the body. (Attention has already been called to the fact that it is the repair of this crack that makes removal of the head from trunk now impossible.

Another crack at the lower part of the neck, lower down than the crack in the neck already mentioned.



Right and left shoulders, front and back, where the arms join the trunk as separate pieces of wood.

Cracks in the lap region where separate pieces of wood are joined together.

Drapery (*ten-e*) over the right arm.

The hair on the right side of the head in front, near the crown. (Already noted under "Hair.")

### *Costume of Fugen*

There are four articles to the costume :

1) The underskirt (*shitamo* 下裳). It is visible only up to a little distance above the knees. This is the garment that flows over the top of the pedestal, both front and back, and over the lotus petals below the right knee.

2) The short outer skirt. This extends from the waist down nearly to the knees. It has a rather elaborate border in bas-relief. This skirt at the waistline is folded over, falling back on itself. This can be seen especially at the rear ; at the front it gives the effect of a small apron. We see this same folded over effect in the skirts of many Buddhist statues. In all such cases the edge of the folded over section forms a minor but an interesting decorative feature of the statue<sup>19</sup>.

3) The band going diagonally across the body from the left shoulder. It drops down in a point at the back, at the figure's left.

4) The drapery (*ten-e*). In this example it is practically a

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19. E. g., Ashura, Kōfukuji (Tempyō) (Illus. *Pageant of Japanese Art*, III, p. 72, fig. 22 (left) ; Jūichimen Kannon, Shōrinji (Tempyō) (Illus. *ibid.*, pl. 24) ; Jūichimen Kannon, Doganji (*Jōgan*) (Illus. *ibid.*, p. 35, fig. 42).

shawl at the back and over the shoulders and arms, extending down nearly to the elbows. (In many examples, particularly of the earlier periods, the *ten-e* maintains its ribbon-like form even at the back, dropping far down in a U-shape.) In the front it narrows to the usual ribbon-like draperies, going under each arm, disappearing under the feet, reappearing again, swinging down on to the top of the lotus pedestal, then going up under and out over the opposite arm.

The folds of the costume have a grace and refinement in keeping with the whole tone of the statue. In this typical Fujiwara production, just as in other sculpture of the period at its best<sup>20</sup>, the treatment of these folds is far different than that of the deeply cut folds of typical Jōgan sculpture. They are flattened out and are more flowing and lyrical.

#### *Finish of the statue*

1) Over the bare wood is applied cloth (*nuno*) with glue (*nikawa*) and lacquer (*urushi*) mixed. Why were both glue and lacquer used? Lacquer takes too long to dry; on the other hand, glue dissolves in water. But when they are both used together water will not injure the mixture. Such a mixture is known in Japanese as *nikawa-urushi*. Sometimes instead of this mixture, the cloth is applied to the wood with *mugi-urushi* (wheat flour and lacquer), but we can assume the latter was not used in the case of this statue for there is no evidence of the material having been eaten by insects, which usually happens

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20. E. g., Kichijōten, Kondō, Hōryūji, and Amida, Hōōdō, Byōdōin are two other outstanding examples.

when *mugi-urushi* is used<sup>21</sup>.

Such cloth applied to the surface of a statue is almost invariably hemp (*asa*) but it seems that in the case of this Fugen it might possibly be silk. For one thing, it is of very fine weave, much of which can be seen exposed here and there. In addition it has rotted in many places and no longer remains on the statue. On the other hand, in the case of a statue such as Ashura, of Kōfukuji, to cite just one example, which is far older than this Fugen, in exposed places the cloth is still very much in evidence and is very well preserved, notably at the shoulders. This cloth is coarse hemp. Silk rots much more readily than hemp<sup>22</sup>.

Some places on the statue never had any cloth at all. Of course there is none on the hair of the head. There is no cloth on the lotus petals, and none on the sides of the main body of the lotus pedestal except in the area of the small incisions around the edge where there is gold leaf.

An interesting feature of the finish of the elephant is that before the cloth was applied, the wood was scraped with shark's skin (*samekawa*) to make it rough so that the cloth would adhere better. Today the scratches may be plainly seen where the finish has worn off. This is a very exceptional technique.

2) Over the cloth is spread lacquer. But there are large surfaces where lacquer was not spread: all that part of the

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21. We see such effects, for example, in the Amida figure, Hōōdō, Byōdōin. See reference in footnote 7.

22. There is exactly the same problem connected with the cloth used in the finish of the statue of Uesugi Shigefusa, Meigetsuin, Kamakura. Here, too, a cloth of very fine weave was used. See Moran, "the Portrait Statue of Uesugi Shigefusa", *Arts asiatiques* t. VI, fasc. 4, pp. 293—294.

surface of the Fugen that represents skin has no lacquer ; there is also no lacquer on the hair on the head. In a number of places the exposed lacquer may be seen. It is black. After the lacquer had dried it was polished in a most painstaking way.

3) *Gofun*. This is on those surfaces of the figure of Fugen that represent bare skin.

4) Color (*saishiki*), or gold leaf, or cut gold.

#### *Coloring of the statue*

The whole statue once had elaborate coloring but much of its former glory has departed though not so much so that the taste and color scheme of the Fujiwara period may not still be discerned to some extent.

#### *Colors of the costume of Fugen*

The most important feature in the decoration of the costume is the extensive use of cut gold (*kirikane*). There is no finer or more beautiful example of *kirikane* decoration in Japanese art than that on the costume of this Fugen figure. Here there are all together twelve different designs in this technique. However, a description of this *kirikane* feature is not included in this present study as it has already been presented in detail by the writer in another published article dealing exclusively with this particular matter<sup>23</sup>.

(In the following descriptions, where there is no notation of color, the surface is now a nondescript black due to the grime of age.)

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23. See Moran, "The *Kirikane* Decoration of the Statue of Fugen Bosatsu, Ōkura Museum, Tōkyō," in *Oriental Art*, to appear in the near future.

The underskirt. Its general effect now is black but its main area can be seen to be a chocolate brown, particularly that part that flows out flat on to the lotus pedestal in back. However, it seems that this present chocolate brown is not the original color but is probably due to the effect of the disintegration of the cut gold leaf in the decoration.

The broad border of the underskirt, which may be noted especially on that part of the skirt that hangs over the lotus petals below the right knee, has a background color of light green. The narrow band along the edge of this border is in two shades, the outer part being red, shading into pink away from the edge. This is a form of color scheme known in Japanese as *ungensaishiki*, usually translated into English as "intermingling color scheme" or "stratified zones of color". Ordinarily the term in Japanese is used only if there are three or more bands of color, or shades of the same color. Here in this Fugen example, there being but two bands or shades of color, the term *nidan no aka ungen*, that is, two steps (or bands) of intermingling red, may be used.

The short outer skirt. The color of the main body of this skirt is now black, as is its lining in front, where it falls over from the waist like an apron. But at the back and sides, the color of this lining is now a chocolate brown. It evidently was originally light green as traces of green may still be seen. Here, too, as we have noted in the case of the underskirt, the present brown was probably due to the effect of the disintegration of the gold leaf in the decoration. This lining, where it shows at the back and sides, has a double band at its edge, the outer band being a dark, rich red, and the inner band being

pink. This is the same type of color decoration, *nidan no aka ungen*, noted on the underskirt.

The drapery (*ten-e*). This was originally light green (*sei-roku*), there still being much of this color left on the cape-like part of the drapery. The border of this cape-like part, showing at the back and sides, is now a rose color. The lining of the *ten-e* is now a dirty brown. This lining shows where the garment folds over at the neck in back; also a small surface on either side in front at the shoulders.

#### *Colors of the lotus pedestal*

The petals are light green on the outside, each one decorated with fine vertical lines of cut gold (*kirikane*). In addition, each petal at its base on the outside is decorated brilliantly with colors. Such decoration is quite common in Japanese Buddhist art.

As for the body of the lotus pedestal, the *renniku*, it is covered with gold leaf (*kimpaku*) on the area below the edge where there is the incising of fine vertical lines.

#### *Color of section between lotus pedestal and elephant*

There is considerable *kimpaku* on *b* (fig. 10), and the rococo-like frame of *c* is all *kimpaku*. The panels of this frame are decorated with many small squares of *kirikane*, scattered thickly with no particular design. *d* (structurally a part of the saddle, as has already been noted) has considerable *kimpaku* on it.

#### *Colors of elephant and saddle*

The general color of the elephant was of course originally

### The Statue of Fugen Bosatsu

white, but the top part is now a dirty grayish white, and the part below the harness, especially the legs, is a dull dirty-rose color, due to the grime and dust of ages. The eyes were originally gold (*kimpaku*), some gold being still left in each eye.

This elephant is in much worse shape than the Fugen figure. The undercloth shows through in a number of fairly large places, notably on the back just above each hip. Also the bare wood, with its grain, shows up in a fairly large number of places, notably the head and trunk, and on the sides at both front and back.

The saddle is very gaily colored, especially with gold, pinkish red and some green. It, too, is very much battered up. The border of the upper part of the saddle, that is, the section into which the harness straps are fastened, is *kimpaku* on both its outer and inner edges. All the straps of the harness (that is, at the head, neck and rear) are decorated with an overall design of fine crisscross lines of *kirikane* on a red background. There are little remnants of metal decorations on the harness here and there.

Before the repairs of 1954 the elephant had many cracks, but these have been repaired in many cases.

It should be pointed out that this elephant is not merely a strange and bizarre pedestal for the figure of Fugen. The color and pattern on the harness, including the cut gold, display an elegance and technical skill of the very highest order.