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Marriage, Adoption, and Honganji

The Honganji branch of True Pure Land Buddhism, unlike other Buddhist institutions in the Muromachi period, explicitly followed a hereditary, dynastic model for its leadership. Honganji's policies arranging marriage and adoption contributed to the expansion and definition of the sect in the fifteenth century, and to its acceptance as a legitimate branch of Buddhism. Secondly, when the sect experienced a civil war in Kaga in 1531, differences in marital and adoptive policies between the earlier temples and those led by Rennyo's children contributed to the defeat of the latter.

KEYWORDS: Honganji – Jōdo Shinshū – *daishō ikki* – Rennyo – Muromachi period – *ikkō ikki*

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TRUE PURE LAND Buddhism (Jōdo Shinshū) as represented by the East and West Honganji temples in Kyoto is one of the largest religious organizations in Japan today. About two decades before the East-West split occurred at the end of the sixteenth century, it was possibly the most economically and politically powerful sect of its time. The Honganji sect wielded significant military power as well. Its members notoriously took on military activities of several kinds, all known as *ikkō ikki* 一向一揆, though some appear to have been spontaneous and others ordered by the Honganji sectarian leader (*hossu* 法主). The best-known example of the latter was when the sectarians tried to halt Oda Nobunaga's drive to unify the country under his own rule in the 1570s.

Honganji temple, headquarters for the sect, began its institutional life as a memorial chapel dedicated to the priest Shinran (1173–1262) and tended by successive generations of his descendents. As Shinran's followers began to distinguish themselves from other Amidist sects, they also began to worship Shinran as the founder of a new sect, and the leaders obtained full temple status for the chapel in the fourteenth century. Although it was no longer a memorial chapel, the post of *hossu* continued to be passed on hereditarily.

During the fifteenth century, the Honganji sect underwent tremendous growth in numbers and power for a variety of reasons. One was the *hossu* who presided over the sect in the second half of the fifteenth century, Rennyo (1415–1499). He famously used letters, written in the vernacular and intended to be read aloud, which spread Honganji doctrine to more places than he or his priests could easily visit. Another was the number of other Amidist groups which had flourished before it, like the Takada 高田 and Bukkōji 仏光寺 branches of True Pure Land Buddhism. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, most of these groups identified themselves simply as teaching lineages rather than as members of a specific, clearly defined and exclusive sect.¹ During that century, the sects gradually became more formally defined, and many of the Amidists of the Hokuriku area eventually chose the Honganji sect over the alternatives.

In describing the process of Honganji's expansion and its institutionalization, however, historians have paid little attention to an important aspect of Hongan-

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1. It is now commonly accepted that the various sects of the "new Kamakura Buddhism" only spread widely and became institutionalized during the Muromachi period. See, for example, the account of the spread of Shinshū in Mikawa given by SHINGYŌ 1989.

ji's policies: the use of family politics, especially marriage and adoption. Shinran's descendents followed discernible patterns in the choices of marriage and adoption for their children and grandchildren during the period of its strongest growth in the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries. The results of those choices contributed substantially to the sect's spread, definition, and broad recognition as a legitimate form of Buddhism (as opposed to a collection of renegade priests and heretics, as the older sects frequently charged).

As a dynastic and patriarchal entity, Honganji differed little from the courtier and warrior houses of its time, and greatly from other religious institutions. Only the Honganji branch advocated marriage for priests and used an explicit system of hereditary succession to fill its highest post. Like the warrior and courtier institutions, it used family connections to solidify or make alliances, but as a patriarchal religious institution, Honganji also found other uses for family members, like maintaining orthodoxy. Furthermore, Rennyo's grandfather and great-uncles founded temples in the Hokuriku region, and worked to guarantee their survival, by marrying off children or finding jobs for them with local powers. The temples founded by those men formed the connections that would grow into a widespread network of affiliated congregations.

It is scarcely surprising that family politics should reflect gender differences. Several Pure Land sects, including the Honganji faction, claim to have opened the way for medieval women to attain Buddhahood, but this is not the same as saying that the sects accorded women equality. The Honganji faction lays particular claim to spiritual egalitarianism among classes and genders. The special needs of women, burdened as they were by extra impediments (so standard Buddhist teachings maintained), were addressed several times in Rennyo's pastoral letters, and these needs were not found to bar them from faith and an auspicious rebirth.² Occasionally, albeit rarely, women founded temples or were given credit for helping induce others to found them.³ Honganji did not, however, go against the prevailing social trends or practices in regard to the status or rights of women. Men headed temples, and women did not. Sometimes, a woman was called on to assist when a minor had been appointed to head a temple, but that head was still a male. In a few cases, Honganji sent wives to priests who strayed from the teachings, in order to bring them back into the orthodox line. These instances suggest that at times women played a more active role within the sect than is often supposed.

Only men were adopted outside the sect and marriages to spouses from

2. Several of Rennyo's pastoral letters (*ofumi* 御文) deal with this question. See ROGERS and ROGERS 1991, pp. 160, 244–45, 257.

3. For example, the nun Shōnyo-ni, who is credited with founding at least two temples in Kaga and Etchū after the death of her husband. See SSS 7: 537. The priest Hōjū, who founded Honpukujī, an influential temple in Ōmi Province, was reportedly induced to follow Jōdo Shinshū by his mother (CHIBA 1980, pp. 325–26).

courtier and warrior families were arranged mostly for men, though occasionally for women. Men frequently married within the sect, certainly; there would have been no one for the women to marry if they did not. Sometimes, since monogamy was not obligatory, a man might marry both a Honganji woman and the daughter of a courtier.⁴ But when outside sponsorship was sought—or offered?—it was overwhelmingly often the case that courtiers adopted Honganji sons rather than daughters, and that the daughters of the imperial aristocracy and the military elite married Honganji sons, rather than courtier or warrior sons marrying Honganji daughters.

Sources

This study relies heavily on one important document, a Honganji genealogy tracing Shinran's descendants, which was drawn up by Rennyo's tenth son, Jitsugo 実悟, born in 1492. His mother Rennō-ni 蓮能尼 (1465–1518) was his father's fifth wife; Rennyo, already in his late seventies, was to have three more sons. Like his father, Jitsugo lived to an advanced old age, dying in 1584, when he was in his nineties. His career thus spanned the most turbulent years of Honganji's history. As a child he was placed under the care of his older brother Rengo 蓮悟 (1468–1543) at one of the most powerful of the regional temples, Honsenji 本泉寺 in Kaga Province.

In 1531 a war between factions within the sect broke out in Kaga, pitting the most important *ikkeshū* 一家衆 (conciliar) temples against primarily smaller temples of the area, especially two that had been forced to move from Echizen into Kaga. Jitsugo joined what proved to be the losing side. After its defeat late in that year, he was expelled both from Kaga and from membership in the Honganji sect, so he spent the next several years wandering and presumably living off his connections.

Jitsugo was finally pardoned by the *hossu* and reinstated in the sect in 1550, but he seems always to have regarded himself as loyal to the faith and to his father Rennyo, whom he revered. He was a prolific writer who devoted much of his life to preserving his father's sayings as well as committing his own experiences and knowledge of the Honganji sect's history to paper. While no more reliable than any other set of reminiscences, Jitsugo's works have proven extremely valuable to historians of the sect. His memoirs naturally show bias—he had little respect for his older brother, ninth *hossu* of the sect—but it is not immediately apparent how that would have affected his genealogical work.

Jitsugo apparently compiled a version of the genealogy used as a principal source in this essay, *Hino ichiryū keizu* 日野一流系図 (Chart of the Hino Lineage),

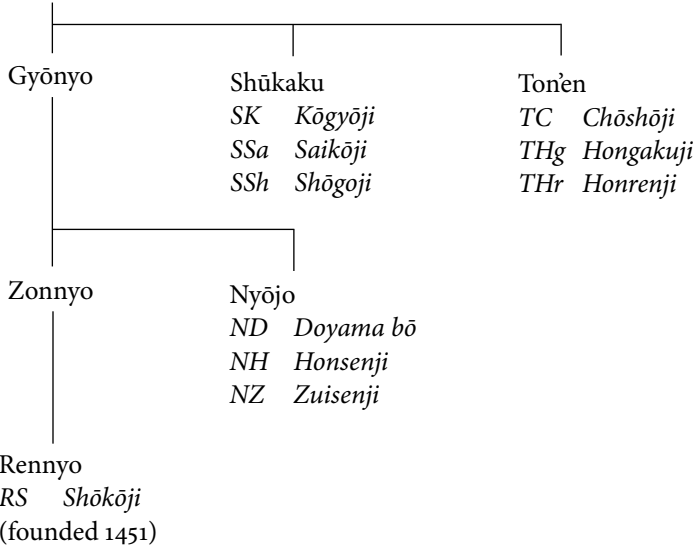
4. Rennyo's son Junnyo is one such example. He was married to his father's sister, with whom he had one daughter, and also to a daughter of the courtier Asukai Masachika 飛鳥井雅親, with whom he had two more daughters (SSS 7: 524).

FIGURE 1: Hokuriku temples founded or led by the sixth and seventh Patriarchs' families before 1470.



KEY

Shakunyo



sometime before the 1531 war, during which it was lost and probably destroyed. (His identification of Shinran's progeny with the aristocratic Hino family will be discussed presently.) According to his codicil, the surviving version was written in 1541, but he seems to have continued adding information to it into his old age (SSS 7: 36–37, 545). It is not known on what documents or other information he based his version of the Honganji priesthood's family history, especially for the earliest years of the sect. He attributes to Shinran a son by a daughter of Kujō Kanezane 九条兼実 (1149–1207), the sometime imperial regent (*kanpaku* 関白), although mother and son are both legendary, according to scholars today.⁵ In spite of such lapses, however, and as far as it can be checked against other sources, Jitsugo's "Chart" seems in general to be accurate. It is especially detailed and useful for the three generations immediately preceding Jitsugo's and, as might be expected, for his siblings and their children. Its information becomes sketchier for subsequent generations, but later genealogies fill in the gaps necessarily left by Jitsugo.

Wherever possible, personages from the court and shogunate who are mentioned in the "Chart" have been checked against *Sonpi bunmyaku* 尊卑文脈 (Branches of High and Low Families), an encyclopedic work that is considered to be the most reliable genealogical source for the medieval period.⁶ Two other works, *Honganji kakei* 本願寺家系 (Honganji Genealogy) and *Ōtani chakuryū jikki* 大谷嫡流実記 (True Account of the Ōtani Direct Line of Descent) have been used to fill in for the end of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth (SSS 7: 565–600, 601–76). Both these works were compiled much later than Jitsugo's. The last entry in *Honganji kakei* dates to 1781, though the copy used was apparently made in 1829. *Ōtani chakuryū jikki* was completed in the middle of the nineteenth century, making it much the most recent of the three Honganji sources (SSS 7: 36–37).

A few assumptions were made in interpreting the information found in these genealogies, and it may be best to state them outright. It is assumed that in most cases, the family head exercised a large degree of control over formal relationships, regulating the placement of children in temples, adoption, and marriage. In particular, it is posited that most if not all marriages were arranged and that personal inclination played little role in those arrangements. These assumptions reflect my own understanding of medieval family practices among the propertied elite, of which Honganji was a part.

Finally, the reader should be forewarned about a terminological problem. The use of the words "marriage" or "marital relationship" in this paper is not exact. In the case of men, these relationships generally become apparent when

5. SSS 7: 520. A fuller account of this legend and a detailed discussion of the question of Shinran's possible wives are found in KIKUMURA and NISHINA 1981, pp. 70–71, 74–82.

6. SZKT 1961–1962, volumes 58–60. Background information and assessment are from MARUYAMA 1979, pp. 102–103.

mothers of children are listed in entries for the latter, but offer no clue as to the precise nature of the parents' relationship. Where entries for the mothers themselves can be located, either in *Hino ichiryū keizu* or *Sonpi bunmyaku*, the women are often described with the words *shitsu* 室, *tsuma* 妻, or *shō* 妾 (also read *mekake* or *sobame*). Even though these terms may represent differences in status between kinds of "wives," all such unions, insofar as they describe a formal relationship between a man and a woman from which children may result and in which the children are recognized as the man's children, have been referred to for convenience as marriages or marital relationships. It is not clear what distinctions Jitsugo made among these terms, or how accurately he used them.

Honganji's Early Expansion in the Hokuriku

It is difficult to trace family politics or policies in the early centuries of Honganji's existence. Records are scarce, and not necessarily reliable. Nevertheless some basic information about the family can be inferred from these records.

As Jitsugo's work shows, Shinran's descendants reckoned themselves members of the Hino family, but not primarily because Shinran himself was born into that family of courtiers, as might be thought (DOBBINS 1989, p. 22). Rather, it is because Shinran's daughter, from whom the lineage of Honganji *hossu* is descended, married into it. To be sure, her husband Hirotsuna 広綱 came from a minor branch of the Hino family; their son Kakue 覚恵 (1239–1307), however, was adopted by the head of the main branch.⁷ The adoption of Honganji sons into a prominent branch of the Hino became a practice that continued through the next eight generations. Usually the sons were adopted by the head of the main family, but occasionally the head of another branch, such as the Hirohashi 広橋 or Uramatsu 裏松, became their adoptive father (SSS 7: 521–26). If anything, the tendency to make such arrangements was strongest in the early years; indeed, all of Kakunyo's 覚如 children, including his daughter, would be adopted by the main branch of the Hino. Kakunyo was the *hossu* who had arranged for the memorial chapel to be granted full temple status, and the Hino family had supported him in achieving this goal. In subsequent generations, the adoption was apparently limited to the eldest son or heir presumptive, though whether this was by Honganji's choice or the Hino family's is difficult to determine. Still, the Hino patronage relationship was confirmed with every generation for the next two hundred years.

Until the latter half of the fourteenth century, Honganji children did not necessarily remain in the sect, nor was there any apparent effort to employ all

7. Note that the line tracing the Honganji family from the Hino is drawn by Jitsugo from Hirotsuna and there is no graphic scheme for indicating Kakushin's relationship to her son, though it is stated in the text accompanying her entry (SSS 7: 521).

family members in its expansion. Kakunyo's older son Zonkaku 存覚 (1290–1373) founded a rival school, the Jōrakuji 常樂寺 branch of True Pure Land Buddhism, and was disowned for his efforts. The younger one became the father of Kakunyo's successor, Zennyō 善如 (1333–1389). Kakunyo's daughter was adopted into the Hino family and married a man with the court rank of acting middle counsellor (*gon no chūnagon* 權中納言), not a particularly high rank.⁸

Early families of the Honganji priests were small, if Jitsugo's record is complete. Given mortality rates at the time, it was through luck, then, that Honganji survived as a dynastic institution. It should be no surprise that the sect grew, or maintained itself, through the efforts of disciples rather than family members. Even if the size of Honganji and its following was small compared to the huge complexes of the older Buddhist sects, the temple clearly remained of interest to court aristocrats of lesser rank and attracted their patronage.

For more than a hundred years after the generation born at the end of the thirteenth century, that of Kakunyo's children, Jitsugo gives no information on women in the main Honganji branch at all, and not much on the men either. There are no listings for daughters, whose entries might have mentioned whom they married; conceivably there were none. Nor are wives (or, more precisely, mothers) named, making it impossible to make even the vaguest generalizations about marital politics during this time. At the end of the fourteenth century, however, matters change. Families increase in size—or, at least, more family members are listed—and the records become much more detailed.

With the sixth *hossu*, Gyōnyō 巧如 (1376–1440), and his brothers, the sect's institutionalization and expansion began to be reflected in the activities of the leader's family. In his short lifetime, Gyōnyō's father Shakunyo 緯如 (1350–1393) had directed his efforts toward recruiting members and establishing temples in the Hokuriku region. He was especially active in Etchū Province, where he founded Zuisenji 瑞泉寺, destined to become one of the Honganji organization's most powerful temples in that region. He had one daughter, about whom little is known, and three sons, all of whom were active in the Honganji sect. Gyōnyō was the first Honganji heir presumptive in several generations who does not figure in the genealogy of the main line of the Hino. Rather, he had been adopted by the first head of the Uramatsu branch, a family that became famous for the wives it supplied to the Ashikaga shoguns.

Gyōnyō's two brothers, Ton'en 頓円 (1387–1447) and Shūkaku 周覚 (1392–1455), also led active careers in the sect. Their efforts were concentrated on the province of Echizen. Ton'en not only founded one of the most influential Echizen temples, Chōshōji 超勝寺 in the town of Fujishima 藤島, but also two prominent

8. Kakunyo's two sons Zonkaku and Jūkaku 從覚 were adopted by Hino Toshimitsu; his daughter, apparently the youngest, was adopted by Toshimitsu's son, for reasons that are not clear (SSS 7: 521–22).

temples in neighboring Kaga Province, called Honrenji 本蓮寺 and Shōkōji 勝光寺, which are generally considered branches of Chōshōji.⁹ His younger brother Shūkaku founded Kōgyōji 興行寺, another Echizen temple. Both the Chōshōji and Kōgyōji lines continued to branch out in Echizen and Kaga through the efforts of the next few generations, as their priests succeeded in making fairly extensive connections with local powers. Ton'en, for example, married a woman from an Echizen warrior family, the Sugawara 菅原, as did his grandson; his granddaughter married into the same family. Shūkaku married within the sect, though little else is known of his wife. His descendants, however, pursued a variety of non-Honganji connections. In the meantime the head family was making similar connections with the court and the shogunate in Kyoto, as we shall see.

Gyōnyo's children, too, worked to improve the sect's fortunes, or at least the sons did. Only one of his four offspring was a daughter, and she did not marry but entered a Zen temple called Shōjuan 撰受庵 and located at Yoshida in Yamashiro Province. The eldest son, Zonnyo 存如 (1396–1457), became the seventh head of Honganji and traveled extensively to preach in the Hokuriku, Tōkai, and Kinai regions. It is known that he married a member of the Ebina 海老名 family, suggesting a close association with some members of the court or the shogunate, but no more than that is clear.¹⁰ It is impossible to say whether this alliance represented a step up or down for Honganji, or whether this kind of alliance was normal, since previous marriages are unrecorded.

The second son, Kūkaku 空覚 (vital dates unknown), became the head priest of Jōrakuji, located at the time east of Kyoto as Honganji was. This temple, founded generations previously by Kakunyo's disowned son Zonkaku, was not viewed as a part of the Honganji branch until Kūkaku's tenure. Its former incumbent apparently had no children, opening the opportunity for Kūkaku to take over. His appointment may be seen as bringing with it an addition to the sect as a whole, not just to the number of temples directly associated with Honganji's ruling family (sss 7: 695–96).

Gyōnyo's other son, Nyojō 如乘 (1412–1460), founded the Kaga temple Hon-senji. He was married within the sect to his cousin, a daughter of his uncle Shūkaku, Shōnyo-ni 勝如尼 (1428–1495), a woman unusually active in the sect. After Nyojō's death she continued to assist in the management of the temple, even though Nyojō had been succeeded by an adopted son, his great-nephew. Shōnyo-ni went on to found temples in Kaga and Etchū herself. The ninth *hossu*, Jitsunyo (1458–1525), credited her with reviving the Honganji branch in

9. KASAHARA 1962, p. 11; INOUE 1968, p. 210. There is also a possibility that Chōshōji itself was founded because of a succession dispute at another temple, Hongakuji 本覚寺 (ASAKA 1982, pp. 27–30).

10. NIWA 1974, p. 224, lists two Ebina families: a courtier family descended from the Murakami Genji; and a branch of the Yamana warrior family, traced to the Seiwa Genji.

the Hokuriku region (sss 7: 523, 537). She had the most visible career of any of the *hossu's* daughters at least through the sixteenth century.

Jitsunyo's encomium, however, is an exaggeration. As we have just seen, by the first half of the fifteenth century siblings of the Honganji *hossu* were active in founding temples and working to increase their sect's presence and influence, especially in the Hokuriku. Women in the main line still seem to have played a less active role, as indicated by the fact that Zonnyo's sister retired and took Zen orders. At the same time, Shūkaku's daughter Shōnyo-ni, who married his nephew, was as active as any of her uncles or cousins. With her and her generation there emerges a pattern of Honganji women marrying Honganji men, often their close relatives. There also begins another pattern, one of regional temples forming ties locally while the Honganji main branch does so with the imperial court and the shogunate, close to its home in Kyoto.

Rapid Expansion

The fifteenth century saw a rapid expansion of the Honganji branch. This growth has largely been attributed to the proselytizing and organizational skills of the eighth *hossu*, Rennyo. In addition, however, the two preceding generations, had produced several sons who helped materially in spreading Honganji's influence by founding and directing temples, especially in Echizen, Kaga, and Etchū. Presumably, their activity brought the Hokuriku region's Shinshū congregations into closer communion with the sect's main temple, the Kyoto Honganji. This contribution has been acknowledge, but little explored, especially the way in which the founders broadened their temples' reach. Rennyo's great-uncles had their own children and grandchildren who, for the most part, continued the work of expansion. When Rennyo went to Yoshizaki in Echizen, in the late 1460s and 1470s, the ground had been prepared for his proselytizing activities in that region, and a network existed for the dissemination of his most effective preaching device, the pastoral letters known as *ofumi*.

This expansion, however, bore the seeds of future conflict. In order to understand that conflict, it is worth reviewing the political context of Honganji's success. In the middle of the fifteenth century the Ashikaga shogunate broke down as an effective central government, dissipating its power in succession disputes fueled by factional politics. The growth in power of local warriors, a development that neither the Kyoto-based shogunate nor its provincial military governors (*shugo* 守護), many of whom also resided in Kyoto, could control, also contributed to the disorder. Similar tensions began to appear within the Honganji sect, exposing factions that would come into active confrontation in the sixteenth century. The *ikkeshū* temples and the main temple in Kyoto sought to maintain close ties through intermarriage, a policy that continued well into that century (though not all intra-sect marriages seem to have had this aim). On the

whole, however, the marriages strengthened factionalism rather than reducing it as the growing disorder of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries played itself out within the sect.

During much of the fourteenth century, the imperial family had been split into two factions, which maintained two separate courts. This schism may have partly influenced the Honganji leadership not to form too many close ties with the courtiers, lest they choose the wrong side. (According to Jitsugo, however, Honganji did continue to enjoy the status of a designated imperial prayer temple, *chokuganji* 勅願寺.) A new interest in alliances with the—reunited—court and the older Buddhist temples appeared under Zonnyo, the seventh *hossu*. As has been noted, Zonnyo himself married a daughter of the Ebina family, though his successor Rennyō was born of a less illustrious union. Rennyō's mother appears to have been a servant who was sent away (or left) when Zonnyo contracted the marriage with the Ebina family. Rennyō, the only child from the earlier relationship, was then six years old (for further details, see ROGERS and ROGERS 1991, p. 47).

According to Jitsugo, Rennyō received religious training at Shōren'in 青蓮院, the Tendai temple in Kyoto where Shinran had been ordained. Shōren'in was a sub-temple of Enryakuji 延暦寺, usually identified as an enemy of Honganji, but the men destined to become *hossu* routinely studied at Shōren'in. This circumstance shows that the relationship between Enryakuji and Honganji was complicated, and indeed Enryakuji had its own troubles with factions. The temples were rivals certainly, to the extent that forces from Enryakuji attacked and destroyed the Honganji main temple in 1465. That incident resulted, however, in an arrangement by which Honganji paid a large sum of money to Enryakuji, and then continued to pay dues, making Honganji nominally part of the Enryakuji complex. The issues at stake, then, appear not to have involved doctrine as much as they did hierarchy and economics.

Jitsugo also says that Rennyō studied with Keikaku 經覚 of Daijōin 大乘院, a priory of the great Nara monastery Kōfukuji 興福寺, before he began working closely with his father on Honganji business (SSS 7: 522). Although such a relationship is unattested by Jitsugo, Keikaku's mother is said to have been from the Honganji family (ASAKA 1982, 46). Rennyō's first wife was a member of the Ise 伊勢 family,¹¹ a military house that was prominent in the shogunal administration; so his marriage, like his father's, reflects Honganji's interest in securing alliances with or patronage from the Kyoto establishment, no less than

11. *Hino ichiryū keizu* (SSS 7: 523), refers to her only as "Shimōsa no Kami Taira Sadafusa no onna." Someone of this name, who lived during the appropriate years and had the correct rank, can be found in the genealogy of the Ise family delineated in *Sonpi bunmyaku* (SZKT 60.2: 29). *Ōtani chakuryū jikki* (SSS 7: 630) offers another identification but includes the Ise variant (explicitly as Ise) as an alternative. I have chosen to follow Jitsugo, as he was Rennyō's son (though by a different mother) and so more likely to have known the facts.

their interest in cultivating Honganji. This mutual interest continued with all but one of Rennyō's marriages (which, it should be noted, he contracted serially, remarrying when one wife died but not taking secondary wives or concubines). Rennyō's second wife was the younger sister of his first; the fourth was a member of the courtier family Anegakōji 姉小路; and the fifth was a daughter of the Hatakeyama 畠山, one of the three warrior families entitled to take the post of deputy shogun (*kanrei* 管領).

Of Rennyō's four half-sisters, only one was married outside the sect, to a man holding minor court rank but otherwise difficult to identify.¹² One never married but studied at Shōjuan with her aunt, though she eventually returned to the Honganji branch. The other two were married within the sect—one to her father's cousin Eizon 永存 (Shūkaku's son) (1420–1480) and the other to their half-nephew, Rennyō's eldest son Junnyō 順如 (1442–1483). It is noteworthy that the practice of marrying women back into the sect seems to have originated with Shūkaku. Attention has already been drawn to his daughter Shōnyo-ni, who married Rennyō's uncle Nyojō, the founder of Honsenji, and was so active in promoting the sect in Kaga and Etchū. The practice of marrying daughters to relatives within the sect was pursued by Honganji's leaders in later years with such enthusiasm that some historians have theorized that the leaders were trying to maintain some kind of concentration of Shinran's blood, to prevent its being diluted by intermarriage with those who had none. The fact that Shūkaku may have originated the practice, or at least followed it earlier than the Honganji main family did, indicates that other factors were also at work. We shall return to Shūkaku and his children later.

Zonnyō had two sons besides Rennyō, but neither followed nearly such illustrious careers as their older half-brother. The older of the two, Renshō 蓮照 (1433–1503), was first sent to Shōren'in as Rennyō had been, and studied with the same teacher. In previous generations, it seems that only the son who was to succeed to the headship was sent to Shōren'in (at least according to what is recorded in Jitsugo's "Chart"). Renshō's studies there may have helped set the stage for the succession dispute that followed Zonnyō's death, when his widow arranged for her own son to succeed his father, in spite of her dead husband's earlier and clearly stated intention that Rennyō be his successor.

It is said that only Nyojō, Zonnyō's youngest brother, supported Rennyō's claim, so his step-mother's position must have had a persuasive basis. Nevertheless, Nyojō campaigned strenuously in his nephew's behalf, canvassing for support in the Hokuriku region and eventually triumphing.¹³ Even allowing for the possibility that he was an extraordinarily persuasive man, it should be

12. This was Zonnyō's third daughter, whose husband is only identified by the name Kunisada and by his court rank (SSS 7: 523). He is not listed in *Sonpi bunmyaku*, and no other Honganji lineages offer even a tentative identification of his family.

13. This is an oft-repeated story. A brief version appears SSS 7: 523.

emphasized that his wife Shōnyo-ni belonged to a large and influential family of Honganji priests in the Hokuriku, and her assistance should by no means be discounted. In any event, it is highly significant that support from that region should have tipped the balance for Rennyō, as it is indicative of the power wielded by the Hokuriku temples within the sect as a whole.

Rennyō's remaining brother also pursued a career in the Honganji branch and founded Zenpukuji 善福寺 in Kaga. As he had no children (indeed, it is unknown whether he married), his temple was continued by a son of the Chōshōji line. Renshō, too, founded a temple, called Enkōji 円光寺, in Kaga.¹⁴ There is no information about his wife, either, but it is known that his daughter's husband, who came from the Honrenji line, succeeded him at Enkōji upon his death. Chōshōji and Honrenji, it will be recalled, were both founded by Ton'en, Shūkaku's brother and Zonnyō's uncle. Even while focusing on Honganji's main line, we can see on the periphery that these two provincial shoots of the family were branching out.

In the time of Zonnyō's children as in the preceding two generations, sons generally stayed within the sect to pursue their careers. Some daughters married priests of the Honganji branch of Shinshū, but there were also those who pursued a career in another Buddhist sect such as Zen, as Rennyō's sister and aunt did—and later in life also returned to the Honganji sect.¹⁵ This was not true, however, of all branches of Honganji temples. A quick look at the lineages of Zonnyō's uncles Ton'en and Shūkaku will illustrate some important differences.

In the case of Ton'en, that is, of the Chōshōji-Honrenji lineage, the spread of the sect's influence (perhaps it would be better to say, its search for alliances) becomes more obvious with his grandchildren than with his children. As noted above, Ton'en married a woman from a local warrior family. They had five children, three sons and two daughters. Unfortunately, Jitsugo gives very little information about the daughters, though another source indicates that one, who never married, remained active in the sect. Jitsugo's entry for one of the sons, too, yields no significant information. The other two sons took over the main temples in Echizen and Kaga; they did not, however, contract marriages that might have expanded the temples' influence. The elder, who succeeded to Chōshōji, had children by a woman identified only as a servant. The other, who

14. Although Renshō lost his bid for succession, he returned to the sect at the age of forty-two. His only son died at the age of eleven, but Renshō had two daughters, who married priests of the Honrenji and Chōshōji lines. The Honrenji husband's succession to Enkōji explains at least in part why that temple sided with Chōshōji against other local members of the Honganji organization when a dispute broke out in 1535. The dispute is discussed in NRCT 17: 261. On the relationships, see SSS 7: 523, 533, 535.

15. Zonnyō's third daughter, the wife of Kunisada, is also known as Shijō Zen-ni, but the title zen-ni, "Zen nun," is a difficult one to interpret and may not be a reference to sectarian affiliation at all.

took over Honrenji, married his own niece, that is, the daughter of the head of Chōshōji, thereby strengthening the tie between the two lines.¹⁶

The next generation was to cast its marital nets more widely. Ton'en had thirteen grandchildren—five in the Honrenji line, seven in the Chōshōji line, and one other. Detailing the marriages and the adoption separately would be tedious, but the results can be summed up compendiously. The three women (out of four) whose marriages are noted married not only within the sect but within Ton'en's line, although their husbands were men associated with different temples. For example, as has just been noted, a granddaughter of the Chōshōji line married the son who succeeded to Honrenji. The one adoption was also an internal arrangement: the eldest grandson (of the Chōshōji lineage) adopted the youngest (from Honrenji).

Other grandsons' marriages were less narrowly sectarian. Two married women of other local temples. (One of these temples, Shōgoji 照護寺 of Echizen, traditionally enjoyed the support of the powerful Kai 甲斐 warrior family.¹⁷) Another married a daughter of Rennyo's eldest son, affirming a close relationship with the main temple. Three took their brides from what appear to be local warrior families.¹⁸ Instead of marrying, one son joined Heisenji 平泉寺, a temple of the Tendai sect—in other words, an affiliate of Enryakuji, that citadel of the old Buddhism. Heisenji was closely associated with the shrine known as Hakusan Jinja 白山神社. Both these institutions were major powers in Echizen. The shrine not only was a great center of pilgrimages but had a military force at its disposal. Heisenji managed extensive holdings in Fujishima-no-shō, where Chōshōji was located, as well as elsewhere in the province and the area in Kaga where Honrenji was located.¹⁹ Even though this son did not live his life as a Shinshū priest, he served an important role in the sect by linking his family with one of the most important landholders in the region.

The numerous children and grandchildren of Zonnyo's other uncle, Shūkaku, show a similar pattern, though with even more extra-Honganji connections than the Honrenji-Chōshōji line. Daughters generally married or took orders within the Shinshū and Amidist traditions, occasionally departing the Honganji branch of Shinshū for others, such as the Izumoji branch 出雲路派, or for the popular Amidist denomination known as Jishū 時宗, the Timely Sect. One son,

16. See SSS 7: 532–535, and compare SSS 2: 755, on the unmarried daughter. On the married daughter, Jitsugo only notes that she was the mother of a man called Renton, a name suggesting that he, at least, was a priest in the Honganji sect, whether or not his father was. The “ton” is from Ton'en.

17. For a brief history of this temple, see KOIZUMI 1998, pp. 295–96.

18. One of these families was the Sugawara, maintaining an old relationship. The other two women came from families identified as Fujiwara, but their fathers both bore titles usually held by warriors, Wakasa no Kami and Uma no Suke.

19. NRCT 18: 101–2. In regard to Kaga and Tōjiin, the division of Honrenji where this son is said to have lived, see NRCT 17: 211–12.

like his cousin's son, at first went into the Tendai temple Heisenji, though this one later returned to the Honganji branch and his own son originally received training in Zen.

Not all sons went into religious careers, either. One became a vassal of Shiba Yoshikado 斯波義良 (vital dates unknown; the last member of his family to serve as deputy shogun), who held the title of *shugo* of Echizen, Owari, and Tōtōmi. This son died in 1475 in battle against Asakura Takakage 朝倉孝景 (also known as Toshikage 敏景; 1428–1481), who had usurped the position of *shugo* of Echizen. Former Shiba vassals living in exile in Kaga and Mino would periodically continue their unsuccessful attempts to unseat the Asakura, at times with the help of the Echizen priests and followers of Honganji. The Kai family was one of these groups, connected through their support of Shōgoji, whose family was related to Ton'en's by marriage. In 1506, for example, Honganji's adherents in Echizen joined a particularly widespread uprising against Takakage's grandson Sadakage 貞景 (1473–1512), only to be defeated once more. This time the temples were destroyed and the priests expelled from Echizen. The exiled priests then joined their relatives in Kaga and simply reestablished their temples there.

Among Shūkaku's six sons and five daughters, two—a son and a daughter—married children of the Honganji head priest; one was wed to the founder of a new Honganji branch temple in Echizen; and one took a daughter of a Chōshōji main priest for his wife. Two (again, a son and a daughter) married into the family that headed the main temple of the Izumoji branch of Jōdo Shinshū. The warrior son married a warrior daughter, and one son had children by a servant. Three—two daughters and one son—took religious orders and apparently did not marry. One daughter and one son first associated themselves with Jishū, but the son later changed back to the Honganji sect. It is interesting that Shūkaku troubled to marry both a son and a daughter to main temples of two different branches of the True Pure Land school. As a whole, the marriages and careers of Shūkaku's children indicate a desire to make sure the family was connected with a wide variety of local powers, including other religious traditions, albeit traditions close to their own. They also provide a contrast to the policies of the main temple, Honganji itself, which seemed reluctant or unable to marry its daughters to outsiders. Daughters and sons in Shūkaku's line seem to have married within or without the sect at roughly the same rate, allowing the family to participate in a broader range of alliances.

Familial connections spread even more broadly in the next two generations. Counting only his sons' children, Shūkaku had twenty-eight grandchildren. Rather than survey them all, it will suffice to note a few important trends illustrated by them. One is that older family connections remained relevant. The same temples, for example Honrenji and Chōshōji, repeatedly contracted marriages with sons and daughters of the various lines of Shūkaku's descendants. Shūkaku's progeny also found alliances farther from home. The descendants of

Eizon, who founded Saikōji 西光寺, formed a particularly close alliance with temples in Mikawa Province. This is especially notable because Honganji's adherents from Mikawa traveled over a hundred miles, much of that through the mountains, to Kaga, in order to help Chōshōji fight in the civil war of 1531.²⁰

At the same time, Shūkaku's descendants were contracting marriages with the Honganji main temple, taking in two of Rennyo's daughters. Still, except for Eizon's descendants who formed so many marriages with Mikawa temples, the overwhelming preponderance of marriages through the middle of the sixteenth century was among temples within the provinces of Echizen and Kaga.

While Honganji cultivated court ties in the capital city and began to expand not only into the Hokuriku but also other provincial areas under Zonnyo and then Rennyo, the Echizen temples were busily expanding their own network of connections among Honganji's branch temples and other local powers in the Hokuriku region. Under Rennyo, Honganji's influence would extend further throughout central Honshu, especially in the Kinai and Tōkai regions. One way Rennyo tried to maintain cohesion within the sect and orthodoxy in its teachings in the face of the dramatic expansion of the membership which he oversaw, was to establish a new kind of temple that would be Honganji's representative in its region. He placed his own sons in charge of these temples. Thirty years after Rennyo's death, however, the Echizen temples in exile in Kaga would come into conflict with these new temples. At that time, the web of alliances that Shūkaku's and Ton'en's descendants had spun in the Hokuriku, and that stretched as far as Mikawa, would serve them well.

Rennyo and His Children

When Rennyo came to power in 1457, he was over forty, had fathered seven children, and had already outlived one wife. By the time he died in 1499, he had outlived three more wives and seven of his twenty-seven children. As is well known, Rennyo's tenure saw explosive growth within the sect and the beginnings of major organizational changes within Honganji as an institution. A partial listing of the temples Rennyo founded includes five in Yamashiro Province, two in Kawachi, and one each in Osaka, Settsu, Sakai, Izumi, Ōmi, Mikawa, Harima, Kii, and Echizen (sss 7: 522). Through his thirteen sons, he pursued ties with court and shogunate, as well as building bridges that connected the main temple, Honganji, with its followers in the provinces. Many of his sons and daughters were married to close relatives within the sect, although most of these marriages were most likely arranged after Rennyo's death, during his son Jitsunyo's tenure.

Most of Rennyo's steps with regard to his children followed patterns long

20. See Shōnyo's letter, dated [1531]/10/5, thanking Mikawa priests and "others who went to Kaga" for their help in the campaign, KNK p. 520.

established in the sect, except that he made more extensive use of adoption. His eldest son Junnyo, who was expected to take over the sect's leadership (but died before he could do so), was adopted by Hino Katsumitsu 日野勝光 (1429–1476), head of the Uramatsu line of the Hino.²¹ The Uramatsu had become extremely influential by arranging for their daughters to marry into the Ashikaga shogunal family. Hino Tomiko 日野富子 (1440–1496), the primary wife of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政 (1436–1490; r. 1449–1474) and one of the most powerful women in medieval Japanese history, was Katsumitsu's sister. Rennyō's fifth son Jitsunyo, who was to become *hossu* after his father retired in 1489, was also adopted by Hino Katsumitsu, and Jitsugo says by Tomiko as well.²²

Rennyō's third son, Renkō 蓮綱 (1450–1531), was adopted by the imperial aristocrat Kajūji Norihide 勧修寺教秀 (1426–1496) and married one of his daughters. Norihide rose to one of the court's highest offices, minister of the right, and some of his other daughters contracted very high-status marriages. One married Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 三条西実隆 (1455–1537), famous in his own time for his poetry and to generations of grateful historians as a diarist. Still another bore an emperor, Go-Nara. The daughter who became Renkō's wife had previously been married to another high-ranking courtier, but they had separated (SZKT 59: 80). If not for her history, Renkō might not have been considered of high enough status to deserve such a match. Even so, this marriage indicates that Honganji was becoming successful at finding patronage in the highest circles.

All told, seven of Rennyō's thirteen sons married courtiers' daughters, from families as prominent as the Kajūji and Saionji. By contrast, only two of his daughters wed aristocrats. Their marriages, while rare, were important, especially as one married into the Niwada 庭田 line of courtiers, who continued marrying their descendants back into the Honganji sect. When the court ordered Honganji and Oda Nobunaga to make peace with each other, a Niwada was one of the courtier go-betweens entrusted with the mission. Of the remaining six sons, only one apparently did not marry, and the rest married closely within the family. The eldest son wed his aunt as well as a courtier's daughter, the second son his father's cousin. Four more married half-nieces (one of them was also a courtier's daughter), and one took his half-sister's granddaughter for his wife. (The age difference between the great-uncle and great-niece was not as large as one may think, since Rennyō fathered children over a span of fifty-four years.

21. SZKT 59: 244. Rennyō himself had been taken into the Hirohashi branch, which became the main family of the Hino in 1432. SZKT 59: 239, 260.

22. Jitsugo wrote this information above Jitsunyo's entry. Some later Honganji genealogies, for example, SSS 7: 633, say that the fourth daughter, Myōshū, was also adopted by Katsumitsu and became a secondary wife to Ashikaga Yoshimasa. Had she indeed been married to the shogun, it is highly unlikely that her brother Jitsugo would have overlooked that fact. Rather, it seems more probable that Jitsugo's note saying that Jitsunyo was adopted by Hino Tomiko—which goes on to explain that she was Yoshimasa's wife—was later garbled and the union with the shogun attributed to Myōshū.

The wife here was fourteen years younger than her husband. While fourteen years is a considerable age difference, it is not an astonishing one.)

Two of Rennyō's daughters died young. Three took religious orders and did not marry; one of these entered a temple of the Jōdo sect, and two became Zen nuns with their great-aunt at Shōjuan, though they both returned to Honganji later. Two married courtiers. Two others became the wives—not at the same time—of a prominent priest from Kinshokuji 錦織寺 who had changed his affiliation to the Honganji branch, bringing a multitude of Kinshokuji's adherents with him; one married her father's cousin; one her half-sister's grandson (who was five years older than she); and two married Shūkaku's grandsons, the priests of Kōgyōji and Zuisenji. One did not marry, but was active in the Honganji sect in other ways.

Judging by the birthdates of Rennyō's grandchildren, most of these marital alliances were formed after Rennyō returned from his sojourn at Yoshizaki in Echizen, where he had fled after the Ōtani Honganji was destroyed by forces from Enryakuji in 1465. His pursuit of aristocratic marriages for his sons may have been in part an attempt to neutralize the threat from Enryakuji by gaining support among that powerful temple's own supporters at court.

Perhaps the most frequently noted use Rennyō made of his sons was in creating the *ikkeshū* group of temples. With the rapid expansion of the sect membership, maintaining consistency (orthodoxy) in the teachings of its priests became a priority. Furthermore, convinced that they would face no punishment in the afterlife, Honganji believers were increasingly challenging authorities who had used religion to legitimate their authority, and Rennyō needed to stem his followers' disruptive behavior. To accomplish both these aims, he established a new kind of temple, staffed by his sons and directly responsible to Honganji. The temples were to serve as liaisons between the many provincial temples and the main Honganji temple, located on the eastern outskirts of Kyoto at that time. After Rennyō's death, the leaders of these temples also served as an advisory council to the *hossu*. In spite of their close ties to the main temple, the sons Rennyō sent to Kaga to lead new *ikkeshū* temples were at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the heads of the influential temples founded in Echizen and Kaga by Rennyō's grandfather Gyōnyō's generation.

Whereas Ton'en and Shūkaku had entered into marriage after they went to the provinces, most of Rennyō's sons who went to Kaga were already married. In the case of Honsenji, this lack of direct local ties was exacerbated by the fact that successors to the Honsenji priesthood were successively adopted in from Honganji. While their provenance may have lent them prestige, initially at least, it narrowed the field of their supporters and directly associated temples. By contrast, even after being exiled from their home province in 1506, the priests of Echizen temples were able to draw on a large network of relatives and allies in Kaga. They had several generations of politicking behind them and had formed

ties with local powers both within and without the Honganji sect. While Rennyo's policies here seemed well adapted to his time, in the long term they proved unfortunate for the *ikkeshū* temples, if not necessarily for Honganji.

Overall, then, the spread of the Honganji sect and of Honganji branch temples in Echizen and Etchū helped pave the way for the enormous success Rennyo enjoyed during the years he spent preaching in Yoshizaki, 1467 to 1475. Without the growing network of Honganji temples founded by earlier generations, word of his evangelical activities would scarcely have spread so quickly and so far. No doubt this network permitted the greater dissemination of his pastoral letters. Rennyo continued to build on this framework, founding his own temples in Kaga and installing his sons as priests there as well as in the Kinai and Tōkai regions. The way the sect spread in the Hokuriku, however—first through the efforts of Ton'en's and Shūkaku's families and their growing range of local alliances, and later through the *ikkeshū* temples established by Honganji—meant that it was easy for members of the sect to fall into factions. Rennyo's sons had to assert their authority, one relatively new to the region, against the temples that had the advantage of older connections, including ties to warriors. This turned out to be difficult.

The Kaga Civil War

The Kaga civil war was fought over a tangled combination of territorial and factional ambitions.²³ The factions and their balance of power changed with the death of the ninth *hossu* Jitsunyo in 1525, especially among the leaders of *ikkeshū* temples. In particular, the most influential of these priests under Jitsunyo had been Rengo, Jitsunyo's full brother and head of the *ikkeshū* temple Honsenji in Kaga near the border of Etchū, Kaga's neighbor to the east. After 1506, when the Echizen temples of Chōshōji and Hongakuji relocated in western Kaga, they occasionally came into conflict with Rengo's policies, sometimes creating or exacerbating tensions between the sect and warrior authorities. It must be noted that Rengo himself was not necessarily averse to armed resistance when he felt the sect was under threat; in one letter he calls members to arms to fight against the unfriendly military governor of Etchū.²⁴ Still, Rengo clearly preferred that such conflict with warrior authorities occur by his own orders, and not without them, at least in his region. During Jitsunyo's tenure, Rengo had the upper hand in relation to the Echizen temples. That changed under Jitsunyo's successor.

23. This conflict was also called the *daishō ikki* 大小一揆, or "large and small leagues," with "large" and "small" referring to the two Honganji factions that fought the war. Depending on the source, however, the side designated "large" or "small" changes, the large league in one being the small league in another, and so I have chosen to follow David L. Davis's lead, and to call the conflict by another name that is, in any case, more descriptive. (DAVIS 1978, especially pp. 106–11).

24. CHIBA and KITANISHI 1986, doc. 3. [Pages are unnumbered.] The letter is dated only 3/16, without a year notation.

The tenth *hossu* was Shōnyo 証如 (1516–1554), Jitsunyo's grandson, who was nine years old at the time of his accession. Shōnyo's maternal uncle was another of Jitsunyo's full brothers, Renjun 蓮淳 (1464–1550), head priest of an *ikkeshū* temple in the province of Ōmi. Before he died, Jitsunyo had named a group of five *ikkeshū* priests to handle temple affairs during his successor's minority. These five were Renjun, Jitsuen 実円 (1498–1555) head priest of Honshūji 本宗寺 in Mikawa province and Jitsunyo's own son, Rengo, Renkei 蓮慶 (1483–1531) and Kensei 顯誓 (1499–1570). The last three were priests from what were known as the Kaga Three Temples, Honsenji, Shōkōji, and Kōkyōji, respectively, of which Honsenji under Rengo was the most important. These Three Temples were to form the core of one side in the war six years later; the core of the other side would be the two Echizen temples, Chōshōji and Hongakuji. The Kaga temples, then, had a clear majority in the council, and thus Rengo should have had the decisive influence, but in fact he did not. Instead, that power went to Renjun because of his relationship to the *hossu*, or more properly to the *hossu's* mother. Rengo's influence in Kaga declined as well as his influence in the innermost circles of the Honganji sect, as another of Renjun's daughters had married into Chōshōji, one of Honsenji's chief rivals in Kaga. This was the factional backdrop against which the events of 1531 were to play.²⁵

External political developments in Kaga complicated these internal factional shifts and set the context in which the factions came to outright warfare. Ever since the assassination of the deputy shogun Hosokawa Masamoto 細川政元 in 1507, precipitated by a looming succession dispute, there had been fighting between rival Hosokawa factions sponsoring rival Ashikaga men vying for the position of shogun. In 1531, the principal shogunal dispute involved Hosokawa Harumoto 細川晴元 (1514–1563) and Hosokawa Takakuni 細川高国 (1484–1531), and Takakuni was losing. In the sixth month of that year, he was decisively defeated, and took his own life. The fighting in Kaga broke out before Takakuni's final defeat, but it was sparked by attempts to take over the administration of lands Takakuni had controlled in the Hokuriku. Specifically, two servants of Honganji, the brothers Shimotsuma Raishū 下間頼秀 (d. 1538) and Shimotsuma Raijō 下間頼盛 (d. 1539), sought to gain rights to administer estates in Etchū. (The history of the Shimotsuma family and its relationship with Honganji goes beyond the boundaries of this study. It will suffice to note that they were hereditary servants, they held positions of importance in the administration of the main temple, and also served as generals, that is, military leaders, for Honganji, when necessary.) Their attempts to take over the estates were backed by the Echizen temples, and opposed by the Kaga Three Temples. As a result, on the ninth day of the intercalary fifth month of 1531,²⁶ forces of the Three Temples

25. INOUE Toshio pointed out the significance of Renjun's position and his relationships with Chōshōji and Shōnyo (1968, pp. 443–45).

26. INOUE 1968, 452–54. Some secondary sources, including INOUE 1962, p 181, unaccountably

attacked Chōshōji and Hongakuji, and pushed their men back into an area in Kaga called Yamanouchi.

From Yamanouchi, however, Chōshōji and Hongakuji counterattacked, burning down Shōkōji and making prisoners of its priest Renkei and his aged father, Renkō (one of Rennyō's sons). In the seventh month, Chōshōji and Hongakuji were joined by forces from Hida and Mikawa, and from then on the Three Temples generally did poorly in the fighting. Honsenji was burned to the ground on the last day of the seventh month (INOUE 1968, p. 181).

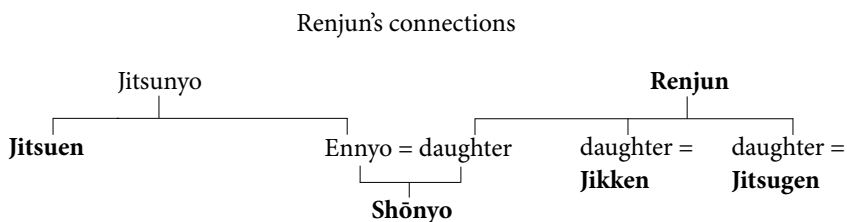
In the eighth month, the military governors of the neighboring provinces of Noto, Etchū, and Echizen intervened on behalf of the Three Temples. The Kaga temples, however, continued to lose, and on the second day of the eleventh month, the Echizen temples defeated the combined armies from Noto and Etchū. The reinforcements sent by the military governor of Echizen beat a hasty retreat and the remaining leaders of the Three Temples faction fled. Kensei of Kōkyōji escaped to Echizen and was expelled from the sect, though he was reinstated in 1550. Rengo and his son went to Noto, whose military governor was an old friend of Rengo's. The son died there two years later, allegedly poisoned (sss 2: 721). Rengo finally died at the age of seventy-six, in 1543, still excluded from the sect and therefore, presumably, without hope of rebirth in the Pure Land, at least for that cycle of life. Rengo's adopted son, our genealogist Jitsugo, was also forced into exile from Kaga, his own temple having been destroyed earlier than Honsenji. Like the others, Jitsugo was expelled from the sect, though he was pardoned in 1550 along with Kensei. The priests from Shōkōji who had been taken prisoner, Renkei and his father Renkō, died. Renkō died of illness on the eighteenth day of the tenth month. Exactly one month later, his son Renkei and grandson Jikkyō 実慶 died by their own hands. They were joined in death by two members of the Shimotsuma family, which had also split into factions supporting different sides in the brief war.

The division of the factions in the civil war of 1531 proves that, while alliances, especially those formed through marriages, could play an important role, they are unreliable as guarantees of the actions of an individual. Inoue Toshio has made much of the web of relationships encompassing Renjun, his daughters, and the Chōshōji-Hongakuji faction. One daughter was Shōnyō's mother, and Honganji clearly backed Chōshōji. Another daughter was the mother of Chōshōji's head priest, a man named Jikken 実顕 (1489–1542). Still another had married into the family of an Etchū temple that supported the Echizen group. Yet, Shōnyō's sister was married to Rengo's son, who remained faithful to his father and to Honsenji. When this son died in Noto two years after the war, his wife took the tonsure. Similarly, Kensei's sister was married to Jitsuen, who led

give this as the fifth month, dropping the intercalary notation. The character used for intercalary is non-standard, and there may be disagreement as to its meaning.

forces from Mikawa to assist Kensei's opponents from Chōshōji and Hongakuji (sss 7: 526). The two Shimotsuma brothers who committed suicide with the priests from Shōkōji were grandsons of the Hongakuji priest, whose daughter was their mother (sss 7: 685). Evidently, even close ties of blood would not predict with certainty which side an individual would take.

FIGURE 2: Marriage relationships among civil war opposing sides



BUT:

Jitsuen = *Kensei's* sister

Shōnyo's older sister = Rengo's son

Jitsugen was *Kensei's* brother

Bold: Echizen temples priests and allies

Italic: Kaga Three Temples priests = marriage

Kinship alone does not explain the alliances for the Kaga civil war

Although the tangle of relationships makes it difficult to build an argument about the factions solely on the basis of immediate and individual relationships, there is one to be made on the basis of the overall patterns of these alliances. A closer look at the most prominent participants in the 1531 war will illustrate this point.

Broadly speaking, that war was waged by Hongakuji and Chōshōji, two temples displaced from their roots in Echizen, against Honsenji, Shōkōji, and Kōkyōji, the so-called Three Kaga Temples which were strongholds of the *ikkeshū*. Hongakuji had been founded in Echizen, most likely by a local warrior family. By the fifteenth century, it had affiliated temples in Kaga as well as in its home province.

At the time of the civil war, the head of Chōshōji was a priest named Jikken, who is condemned in some Honganji chronicles as a man who “broke the rules of the sect laid down by Rennyo and Jitsunyo, and caused disorder throughout

the province” (sss 2: 720). He not only “disregarded the civil authorities” but was intent on “bringing about the destruction” of the Honganji line (sss 2: 749, 755). (One must note in fairness to Jikken that these aspersions were made by a man with an ax to grind—Kensei, head priest of Kōkyōji, one of the Kaga temples that had been destroyed by Jikken. Both of the works in which Kensei brings these charges were written after Kensei had been granted reinstatement in the sect, and well after Jikken was safely dead.)

Jikken was not the first of his family to become troublesome to Honganji. His grandfather, who was married to a woman of the Sugawara warrior family, had been removed from his pastoral duties by Rennyō, who felt he was theologically unsound. In his place, Rennyō installed Jikken’s father, who was then a child of nine; to help him oversee his temple, Rennyō called in a female relative, the dismissed grandfather’s aunt. Another presumably reliable woman from within the sect was installed in the temple when Jikken’s father was married to someone from the Honrenji lineage; later, he was to wed one of Rennyō’s daughters (sss 2: 755, 7: 533). Jikken himself married one of Rennyō’s granddaughters. It appears that Honganji and Honrenji both were trying to reassert their influence through these arrangements. In fact, the connections that were most strongly affirmed were those between Jikken and one particular faction of Honganji which would later oppose the Three Kaga Temples. Note that the Sugawara connection was not severed; Jikken’s aunt married into that family. Small wonder that Jikken became involved in warrior-like pursuits, which is what his breaking “the rules of the sect” amounted to. Most histories emphasize the complicated relationships within the Honganji sect itself, but the combination of internal and external relationships seems more important than either set does separately.

By contrast, the Three Kaga Temples (relatively new to the Hokuriku) chose not to pursue local ties. Honsenji was founded by Nyojō, the brother of the seventh *hossu*. Nyojō’s wife Shōnyō-ni was his cousin and came from Kōgyōji; they had a daughter, who was married to their adopted heir, another son of the Honganji main temple. This pattern repeated itself in the next generation, as the daughter of those two in turn married another Honganji son. They also adopted two Honganji daughters, who were married back into the Kōgyōji branch, Shōnyō-ni’s family. In other words, all adoptions came from the Honganji main line, and the only ties reaffirmed by marriage were to the same family, that of Kōgyōji. This was obviously not an outward-looking policy.

If Shōkōji followed a less claustral policy, it was nonetheless not one that sought local connections. Rather, it reaffirmed ties with the court, with Honganji, and with the other Kaga *ikkeshū* temples. The founder of Shōkōji was Rennyō’s son Renkō, adopted into the high-ranking Kajūji family and married to the daughter of his adoptive father. Their son was also adopted into the Kajūji family, but he married a daughter of the ninth Honganji *hossu*, Jitsunyo. Renkō’s daughter married into the third Kaga *ikkeshū* temple, Kōkyōji. To strengthen

the larger war of 1532–1536, fought against the once and future deputy shogun Hosokawa Harumoto in spite of what had previously been—and was to become again—a close relationship.

Initially at least, Jitsunyo elected not to pursue court alliances for his children. For the first time since the creation of Honganji, no son of the head priest was adopted by a member of the Hino family, perhaps reflecting its decline during and after the Ōnin War. No successor to that family was chosen, either. Jitsunyo's two eldest sons, both of whom predeceased him, were first placed in Shōren'in for training, following Honganji tradition, but no courtier adoptions—indeed, no adoptions of any kind—were arranged. It is, however, noteworthy that Jitsunyo's fourth son, born in 1498, should have been named Mitsutaka 光高 in childhood and as an adult renamed Kanazumi 兼澄, suggesting a close relationship with Shogun Ashikaga Yoshizumi 足利義澄 (1479–1511), who was called Yoshitaka 義高 until 1502.²⁷

The marriages of Jitsunyo's seven children—four sons and three daughters—also suggest a coherent policy, insofar as they are known. One daughter and two sons have no recorded marriages, perhaps because they died young. The remaining two sons and two daughters all married cousins, children of Jitsunyo's *ikkeshū* brothers. Ennyo 円如 (1491–1521), whose son Shōnyo was to succeed to the Honganji headship on Jitsunyo's death in 1525, married one of the daughters of Renjun 蓮淳 (1464–1550), whose temples were located in Ōmi, Kawachi, and, most importantly, in Ise. He had few connections in Kaga, but one of his other daughters married the priest of Chōshōji, setting up the relationship that would help align Shōnyo against his great-uncles in the 1531 war.

Other marriages in this generation did nothing to help the Kaga *ikkeshū* temples consolidate local power. With but one exception, their children's marriages reaffirmed ties with other *ikkeshū* temples and with Honganji itself. That one exception was when a daughter of Rensei, priest of Kōkyōji, married into the Etchū temple Zuisenji. Her six brothers and sisters all married into *ikkeshū* temples (sss 7: 523–529). While this practice must have bound the *ikkeshū* temples still more firmly together and may have enhanced their prestige by establishing such exclusive relationships, it did not help the Kaga temples when they had to fight for survival.

It was not only the Kaga *ikkeshū* temples that focused on marriage alliances within the sect, and primarily with other *ikkeshū* temples. There was a general retreat from outside unions, most drastically from those with the imperial aristocracy. Of twenty-eight marriages recorded by Jitsugo, only five were to court-

27. The powerful warlord Hosokawa Masamoto, who sponsored the sect under Rennyo and later Jitsunyo, installed Yoshitaka=Yoshizumi (義高=義澄) as shogun in 1495 after ousting Ashikaga Yoshitane 義種 (1466–1523) from that post. The character “sumi” in the name Kanazumi could also have come indirectly from Masamoto's successor Sumimoto 澄元 (1489–1520), who took charge after the former's assassination in 1507.

iers, and two of those involved court families that had previous Honganji ties.²⁸ It might be thought that this was a retreat on the part of the courtiers rather than on the part of the Honganji. After all, these marriages would have been arranged during the first half of the sixteenth century, when matters in the capital city were highly unsettled, to say the least. Furthermore, Honganji found itself at war either in Kyoto or in the provinces during much of this period, possibly making it a less attractive client to the imperial court.

An important exception to the above pattern can be seen in the person of Shōnyo, the tenth *hossu*. His father was the first prospective head of Honganji not to be adopted by the Hino family, and no other sponsor had been found (or perhaps sought). Shōnyo, however, was adopted by the imperial regent Kujō Hisatsune 九条尚経 (1468–1530). Hisatsune's brother had been adopted by Hosokawa Masamoto (1466–1507), the deputy shogun, as his heir presumptive, at least in part because he was Ashikaga Yoshizumi's cousin.²⁹ Thus Shōnyo found sponsorship in a court family of lofty rank, one that moreover enjoyed a close relationship both with the shogun and the deputy shogun, the real power in what was left of the shogunate. Shōnyo's wife came from the Niwada court family, whose members could rise to the upper second rank. As mentioned above, this family had contracted a number of marriages with Honganji; Shōnyo's wife was also his second cousin.³⁰ Shōnyo's sister, his only sibling, married into Honseiji, repeating the pattern of marrying from the main family into an *ikkeshū* temple. Although Shōnyo's marriage probably did not take place before the battles of the 1530s, his sister's almost certainly did, as her husband died in 1533.³¹

Honganji's closer relations with the shogunate had their disadvantages as well as advantages, sect leaders were to discover. Once the sect obtained Hosokawa Masamoto's patronage, Jitsunyo found it impossible to refuse his request for military aid against a rebellious vassal, Hatakeyama Yoshihide 畠山義英 (d. 1532), in 1506. Jitsunyo was given a glimpse of the limits of his own power when Honganji's adherents in Kawachi and Settsu provinces refused to obey his orders to go to Masamoto's aid. Their resistance to orders escalated to the point of mounting an attempt to replace Jitsunyo with his younger half-brother, whose mother Rennō, Rennyō's fifth wife, was a member of the family of the rebellious vassal the followers had refused to attack.³²

28. The five Honganji grandchildren involved were a son of Renjun; one of Rengei; one of Jikken; and Junnyo's adopted son, who was originally from Jōrakuji. The fifth was a daughter of Junnyo. Note that all but the last, again, were sons.

29. The two were related through their mothers, both daughters of Mushanokōji Sanemitsu 武者小路隆光. A third sister was one of Ashikaga Yoshimasa's wives (SZKT 59: 251).

30. This was a daughter of Niwada Shigechika 庭田重親, whose mother was Rennyō's daughter (SZKT 59: 224, and SSS 7: 528).

31. Shōnyo's first child was not born until 1540, when he was in his twenties. If the marriage had taken place much earlier, most likely there would have been a child before then.

32. TSANG 1995, pp. 103–8. See also Jitsugo's memoirs, SSS 2: 555–56. Note that Jitsugo and the Kawachi-Settsu candidate, Rennyō's ninth son Jikken 実賢 (d. 1523), were full brothers.

If Jitsunyo found it impossible to refuse Masamoto although their alliance had not been ratified through any adoption or marital connections, his grandson Shōnyo must have found it imperative to help Hosokawa Harumoto in 1532, given not only the history of cooperation between his family and Honganji but also the more concrete manifestations of obligation described above. In a situation similar to his predecessor Masamoto's, Harumoto asked Honganji for help in reducing a rebellious former vassal. Shōnyo responded positively and readily, but the limits of loyalty commanded by familial or moral ties were quickly exposed when Honganji forces independently attacked a target Harumoto had not designated. There followed a war between Honganji and a labile coalition centered on Harumoto. This conflict was at length settled by negotiations in 1535 (TSANG 1995, pp. 152–213). One of its results (on top of the experience of the Kaga civil war) was that it established Honganji as a military force to be reckoned with.

The hostility between Harumoto and Honganji was not further institutionalized. On the contrary, their truce was when Shōnyo's son Kennyō 顯如 (1543–1592) married Harumoto's daughter. It is not clear when the marriage was arranged or carried out, but it must have been when they were quite young; Kennyō's first child was born when he was only fifteen. For Honganji, this marriage was a departure from recent policies. Not since Rennyo married his fifth wife, the Hatakeyama daughter, had a head priest or prospective head priest married a woman from a warrior family. Never before had a Honganji son married the daughter of a warrior so powerful.³³ But this was only the beginning of such alignments with the mighty.

Following the emergence of Honganji as a military power in the 1530s, warriors as well as courtiers showed an increasing interest in allying with it, if only as protection against possible local uprisings. Because of Honganji members' involvement in episodes like the overthrow of the Kaga governor in 1488, and the rebellions in Echizen in 1506, the followers were feared by warrior authorities. A close alliance with the main temple, it was thought, might induce the *hossu* to make sure his followers helped, rather than resisted, their overlord. In 1541, the Echizen daimyo Asakura Takakage 孝景 (1493–1548) asked to be included as a member in the Honganji sect as part of a peace settlement between him and Kaga, which was largely under Honganji control after 1531. His request was refused—because it smacked too much of politics and too little of faith, it has been suggested (INOUE 1968, pp. 557–58). Full peace negotiations between the Asakura and Honganji were finally concluded in 1567 by Takakage's son Yoshikage 義景 (1533–1573) and Kennyō, who had become *hossu* in 1554. This

33. While one branch of the Hatakeyama family was without doubt extremely powerful in the fifteenth century, Rennō appears to have been from one of its lesser branches, though her precise family connections remain somewhat obscure. See INOUE 1968, pp. 386–87.

time, rather than discuss membership in the sect, it was agreed that Yoshikage's daughter would be married to Kenno's son and heir, Kyōnyo 教如 (1558–1614) (sss 7: 642).

Kenno had two other sons, Kenson 顯尊 (1564–1599) and Junno 准如 (1577–1630). (This Junno is not to be confused with Rennyō's son Junno 順如, who lived in the fifteenth century.) Kenson became the head of Kōshōji 興正寺, which had once been an important temple of the Bukkōji sect of Jōdo Shinshū but had later allied itself firmly with Honganji. While it became a part of the Honganji sect, this temple retained some of its identity as a separate branch, rather like a wholly-owned subsidiary of a major corporation. Kenson was married to a court aristocrat's daughter, and one of their daughters married his younger brother Junno (sss 7: 640–41). A succession dispute between Kyōnyo and Junno at the end of the sixteenth century would result in the final split of the sect into East and West, Higashi Honganji and Nishi Honganji. When their marriages were being arranged, however, that still lay in the future.

Kenno, married to the daughter of the warlord Hosokawa Harumoto, and Kyōnyo, married to the daughter of the warlord Asakura Yoshikage, were the Honganji leaders who fought against Oda Nobunaga in the 1570s in what many historians call the Ishiyama War. Certainly it would be an oversimplification to suggest that Honganji opposed Nobunaga because Kyōnyo's father-in-law did, but the very fact of the two marital alliances, one with a sometime deputy shogun and the other with a daimyo who opposed Nobunaga's domination, suggests the extent to which Honganji had a stake in the status quo Nobunaga threatened. The sect's leaders were, quite literally, married to it.

Conclusion

The analysis of family politics within the main and cadet branches of the Honganji *hossu's* family yields three significant findings. One is the extent to which Gyōnyo's generation settled in Echizen, Kaga, and Etchū, and how thoroughly his brothers integrated their families into the local elite. Their temples and connections contributed significantly to the sect's growth when the eighth *hossu* Rennyō settled briefly in the Hokuriku and spread his teachings through his *ofumi* and visitors to his base. Rennyō was a great leader, and his innovative use of letters to the sect's membership were critical to the sect's expansion in the fifteenth century, but the stable network of local temples founded by his great-uncles helped materially with the success of Rennyō's proselytizing.

Another important finding is the extent to which marriage politics contributed to the *hossu's* ability to maintain orthodoxy among its affiliated temples. Rennyō's and his son Jitsunyo's creation of the *ichimon-ikkeshū* temple system, and its responsibility to maintain the orthodoxy defined by Rennyō, is well-known to historians of Jōdo Shinshū. Less obvious was the way in which women

and their marriages within the sect also served to maintain or reassert the orthodoxy of Honganji-affiliated temples. Because women generally did not found or lead temples, their religious influence in a more private sphere has been largely overlooked, and the study of their marriages from a genealogical perspective helps to bring that role to light.

The family relationships the *hossu*'s house formed with outsiders also contributed to strengthening the sect's position within society. Over the generations analyzed, one can see the progress of Honganji's acceptance among courtiers, the shogun, and daimyo. In general, different kinds of temples sought different ties, and this at times contributed to instability within the sect even as it decreased the likelihood that Honganji would have trouble with the older temples devoted to esoteric Buddhism. In Kaga, the *ikkeshū* temples cultivated ties with daimyo, providing the sect with powerful allies, at least as long as those allies held onto their power. Many of the smaller local temples had bound themselves to lower-status warriors whose interests could diverge from those of the daimyo, as the temples' interests diverged from those of the *ikkeshū*. This situation hurt the *ikkeshū* temples when civil war broke out in 1531, resulting in the otherwise surprising upset and fall of the *ikkeshū* leaders.

Some aspects of Honganji's marital and adoptive policies are intriguing but remain difficult to explain. Foremost of these is that Honganji sons, not daughters, were more often involved in such arrangements with courtiers. Possibly this policy was intended to help preserve a concentration of Shinran's charismatic bloodline within the sect, but it is not clear to what extent mothers were considered able to transmit that bloodline. The entire line of *hossu* descended from Shinran's daughter, yet when Rennyo's eldest son Junnyo predeceased his father, Junnyo's adoptive son Kōjun 光淳 (1474–1497) was not accepted as a presumptive heir, ostensibly because he was not Junnyo's natural child (sss 7: 524). Yet he had as much of Shinran's blood in his veins as Junnyo, especially if the mother's line carried weight. Kōjun's real father was head priest of Jōrakuji, an affiliated temple founded by Shinran's descendants; his great-grandfather was Gyōnyo, sixth head of Honganji; and his mother was Rennyo's own daughter. If blood was at issue, it was Junnyo's blood, not Shinran's.

Among courtiers, however, a greater identification of children with the mother's house may have persisted since earlier times. The children of court women and Honganji men did not marry any differently from those of Honganji women and Honganji men; the children of Honganji daughters and men of the imperial aristocracy sometimes married back into the sect. The daughter of Rennyo's daughter Yūshin 祐心 (1463–1490) and courtier Niwada Nobuchika 庭田宣親 (1458–1517) married Rennyo's son Rengei 蓮芸 (1484–1523), and a granddaughter of Yūshin and Nobuchika married Shōnyo, the tenth head of the sect.

The patterns of Honganji marriages and adoptions clarify some issues, and lend support to some new perceptions about the history of the sect. The pat-

tern of marriages among the descendants of Shūkaku and Ton'en in Echizen, Kaga, and Etchū, especially the degree to which members of that family married outside the sect, bolsters recent scholarship that suggests Honganji did not function as a separate sect until the late fifteenth century, but rather only as one of many teaching lineages, which did not demand exclusive allegiance. Furthermore, we can see all the more clearly how the older temples in the Hokuriku contributed to the dramatic growth the sect experienced in that region during Rennyō's sojourn at Yoshizaki in Echizen. Finally, the study of Honganji marital alliances sheds light on some factional divisions within the sect. In the Kaga civil war, focusing on marriage relationships helps to clarify the factions, and explain how the *ikkeshū* temples came to be opposed to Honganji itself, as Inoue Toshio pointed out decades ago. Going beyond Inoue's findings to investigate external alliances helps to explain why the winning faction found backing among local warriors, while the losing faction ultimately obtained help from the highest-ranking warriors of the area, though to no avail. Finally, no matter what the rank-and-file members of the sect were fighting about when they responded to calls to resist Nobunaga, it seems clear that the main temple was defending the status quo, to which it was bound with many ties. Dynastic politics played a role in Honganji history that must not be ignored.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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