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Memories and Strategic Silence in *Jōdoji engi*

Jōdoji engi, begun in 1372, records the history of a small temple established in 1192 on the grounds of Ōbe estate in Harima province. This article will compare the *engi*'s account of the temple's founder Chōgen and his successor Kan'amidabutsu, and of the construction of the temple itself, with documentary records. We note the *engi*'s emphasis on the wondrous and miraculous rather than on the temple's role in land reclamation and estate supervision that the documents stress. We also examine the *engi*'s silences, particularly in regard to violent confrontations between Jōdoji monks and Ōbe estate's proprietor, Tōdaiji, and the estate's local managers beginning in the 1290s. The documentary record has little else to say about Jōdoji after the 1220s; and the *engi* does not fill us in. We will ask what picture of the temple the *engi*'s compilers were trying to project through what they chose to record and to omit.

keywords: Jōdoji—Chōgen—Kan'amidabutsu—Ōbe estate—Tōdaiji—*jishū*—cultural capital

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At the end of the twelfth century in Harima province (present-day Hyōgo prefecture), the monk Chōgen 重源 (1121–1206) founded the small temple Jōdoji 浄土寺 on the grounds of Ōbe estate 大部庄, a holding of the great Nara monastic complex Tōdaiji 東大寺. Although Chōgen was then working to reconstruct the Tōdaiji facilities that had been incinerated in battle fires in 1180, he established Jōdoji as a *bessho* 別所, to be independently funded and free of Tōdaiji control. A colossal Amida triad 阿弥陀三尊, installed in the temple's Jōdo Hall 浄土堂, is generally attributed to the famed Buddhist sculptor Kaikei 快慶 (active 1183–1236).[1] Both the original Jōdo Hall and the triad can be seen today.

Jōdoji was founded by a famous monk, graced by a famous sculptor's magnificent images, and heavily involved in the development of an important landholding, and so one would expect it to have a well-documented history. However, there is very little concerning Jōdoji in the extant documentary record between Chōgen's death and 1292, when it reappears in a very different role, as adversary of the Ōbe estate proprietor and on-site management in a violent quarrel that lasted at least until 1303. Thereafter, despite substantial documentation of the estate itself in the interval, we hear little more about the temple until it reappears near the end of the fifteenth century as the beneficiary of privileges conferred by provincial warlords.

The temple's history and its founding traditions, however, are recorded in an account now known as *Jōdoji engi*, the oldest extant copy of which is dated 1614. Like many *engi*, this text combines apparently factual material about the temple's structures, rituals, and history with legends and miracle tales. In this article, we will compare the *engi* with documents that include petitions to the court, instructions to provincial officials, and depositions in lawsuits, as well as other historical sources such as memoirs and collections of tales. We will ask how the *engi* fleshes out the history of the temple, and why and how certain elements made their way into the *engi*. We will explore the gaps in the historical record in both documents and *engi*—gaps that can be characterized as intentional silences—and suggest some reasons why the *engi* developed as it did. In particular, we will focus on the conflict at the end of the thirteenth century, asking how it shaped the way in which the *engi* was written and assembled.

1. For theories regarding the sculptor of these images, see Kainuma (2014, 98–99, 104).

Engi, Documents, and Cultural Capital

Engi are not documents (*monjo* 文書), but rather, they are attempts to tell the story of a particular shrine or temple, depicting it in a favorable light to attract support—perhaps in the form of donations or political backing. Yet medieval documents often do the very same thing, and like *engi*, need to be scrutinized skeptically. While *engi* are replete with miracle tales and accounts of the supernatural, such elements are hardly absent from documents. What both *engi* and documents tell us is largely what their compilers wanted their audience to hear; thus, by examining these materials, we can learn something about both compilation and reception.

Some insights into the aims of *engi* compilers can be derived from Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of various forms of capital—economic, social, and cultural—and the ways that one type may be transformed into another. Economic capital is wealth of various types, but as Bourdieu has pointed out, social capital, in the form of relationships with powerful groups and individuals, can advance one in income as well as in prestige and rank. Moreover, the possession of cultural capital in the form of books, statues, and buildings (objectified cultural capital) and the inculcation of such objects and the values they represent as part of one's very being (embodied cultural capital) can be used to increase one's prestige and wealth (Bourdieu 1986).

Although Bourdieu was primarily discussing individuals, the same may be said about institutions such as shrines and temples. While many medieval Japanese documents were intended to obtain economic capital directly, often in the form of land rights and exemption from governmental imposts, *engi* had a more indirect purpose. By presenting their founders, foundation processes, sacred buildings, texts, and images as unparalleled in their splendor and sanctity, *engi* compilers aimed to attract supporters and donations—in other words, the same results, in the form of land rights and tax exemptions, at which many documents aimed more directly. Since *engi* were produced by temples and shrines, moreover, the forms of cultural capital they exhibited included saintliness, favor of the buddhas and *kami* 神, and the ability to generate miracles. *Jōdoji engi* lists the temple's buildings and images, some of them very splendid, but the text derives the bulk of Jōdoji's cultural capital from the holiness and miracle-working attributed to Chōgen and his disciple Kan'amidabutsu 観阿弥陀仏 (Kan'a, d. 1242), who was also heavily involved in the temple's founding and its early years.

The Structure of Jōdoji engi

Two different manuscript copies of the *engi* are extant today. The first to come to the attention of scholars was copied in 1687 and is now kept by the temple itself. A manuscript of a second, more detailed, version was discovered in the

twentieth century in the archives of Kobe University, transferred there from archives at a high school in Himeji city. The university's manuscript is dated 1614, and can be viewed on the website of the Kobe University Library.[2] Tanaka (1973, 88) maintains that the entire *engi* text was recopied after 1614, since all annotations and markings (such as *kaeriten* 返り点) appear to be in the same hand—a conclusion that can be verified by consulting the website. The two versions of the *engi* have some significant factual disagreements, such as the dates when important buildings were constructed and the sculptor of the Amida triad. Mōri (1972, 480–81) notes that the concrete detail in the Kobe University version suggests that it is the more authoritative, and Tanaka (1973, 91) concludes that the 1687 version is based on the Kobe University version.[3] Unless stated otherwise, the arguments in this article are based on that version.

The 1614 copy is composed of four sections, beginning with a hagiography of Chōgen dated 1372. There follows a historical section separately entitled *Jōdoji engi*, which recounts Jōdoji's founding and the construction of important buildings through 1239. The third section relates the saintly career and rebirth in paradise (*ōjō* 往生) of Kan'amidabutsu, and the fourth section is an addendum dated 1614, briefly recording events between 1487 and 1591. The cover, which would have contained the title, is missing, so we do not know what the entire text was originally called, but both the Kobe University Library website and *The History of Ono City* (os 4: 716–19, #446) entitle the entire composite text *Jōdoji engi*, and in this article we will maintain that convention.

Meaningfully dating an *engi* is a precarious business. *Engi* are often running accounts kept by successive compilers, and they may quote older texts that are neither clearly identified nor dated. This is clearly the case for our current version of *Jōdoji engi*. The only definitive date is 1372, appended to Chōgen's hagiography; we do not know whether the sections on Jōdoji history and Kan'amidabutsu's life were incorporated directly or quoted with alterations. The date when these first three sections were assembled is also a matter of speculation. The Kobe University website favors the date 1372 but it is possible that the entire text was assembled later, even as late as 1614. Reading the *engi* against the available documents enables us to speculate about the reasons why the *engi* was

2. See http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/kichosyo/jyodoji/ (accessed 24 April 2014). The Kobe University *Jōdoji engi* has been reproduced in os 4: 716–19, #446. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from the *engi* are from this version.

3. Also see the chart on page 99 of Tanaka (1973), which shows the various sources for the two versions of the *engi*, as well as their post-composition histories. Portions of the Jōdoji version are included in an eighteenth-century text called *Harima kagami*, sections of which were printed in *Dai Nihon shiryō* (1905), 4: 167–69, and in *Katō-gun shi* (Katō-gun Kyōikukai 1973), 741–43. Since we have not been able to find a complete copy, we have relied on the articles by Mōri (1972) and Tanaka (1973) for our analysis.

compiled in its existing form, and suggests a plausible range of dates for its compilation. The silences in both the *engi* and the documentary record are important aides in this task, as we ask what these silences may have meant for those who compiled the *engi*.

One possible reason that we have so little evidence for Jōdoji activities throughout most of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is that many records from Ōbe estate may have been lost. Chōgen bequeathed his authority over the estate to the Tōdaiji cloister Tōnan'in 東南院, rather than to the corporate temple Tōdaiji; consequently, Tōnan'in took charge of related documents until around 1293, when Tōdaiji took over direct control. After that, management rights toggled back and forth between the two entities. While documents in the Tōdaiji archives have been well preserved, we are not so fortunate in the case of Tōnan'in (Endō, forthcoming). Thus Jōdoji's occlusion could possibly be explained as a fluke in document preservation.

Another possible explanation is that after Chōgen's time, the temple found it hard to maintain its control over the estate. In this regard, documents and the archaeological record present a somewhat different picture. There are two extant documents signed by Kan'a during his period of residence on the estate. One, dated 1217, acknowledges the donation of a new monks' residence and five *chō* (about 12.5 acres) of land, while the other (1221) requests permission, probably from Ōbe estate's current proprietor Tōnan'in, to develop land to support memorial services for Chōgen. The compilers of *The History of Ono City* argue that because the 1217 document indicates that monks had not been living at the temple for a while, Jōdoji had already lost its estate management function and that there was some conflict with Tōnan'in (OS 4: 546, #230; OS 1: 435). On the other hand, the donation of land and a building was a positive development that must have helped the temple prosper or at least survive.

The archaeological record poses a somewhat later and more gradual decline. Remains of a village immediately east of Jōdoji date from the thirteenth century: roads, land parceled out for dwellings, and evidence of daily life such as bowls, plates, and kettles indicate a flourishing settlement. The village was developed in connection with land reclamation efforts supervised by Jōdoji, and its fields supported the temple. Village structures seem to have flourished until the fourteenth century; see Ōsaka Furitsu Sayama Ike Hakubutsukan (2002, 35, 54–55); Kawabata (1999, 16). Their apparent disappearance around this time suggests a decline in Jōdoji's position on the estate, perhaps associated with the conflict at the end of the thirteenth century.

The *engi*, unfortunately, does not fill us in. While it supplies considerable detail about the founding of the temple, the biographies of Chōgen and Kan'a, and the construction of buildings through 1239, it has nothing to say about the temple's history between 1242, when Kan'a died, and the late fifteenth century.

The quarrel between the temple's monks and proprietary authorities is not mentioned, even though it seems likely that control reverted from Tōnan'in to Tōdaiji at this time because the cloister could not handle the trouble (Endō, forthcoming). *Jōdoji engi*, in other words, is even spottier than the documentary record. However, it is a rich source for the lives of Chōgen and Kan'a. Joining their biographies to Jōdoji's history, whenever and how that may have happened, must have enhanced the temple's cultural capital—enough, perhaps, to overshadow the troubling events at the end of the thirteenth century.

Portrait of the Temple's Founder

In terms of cultural capital, Chōgen was certainly one of Jōdoji's most important assets. By 1372, the earliest possible date for the *engi*'s compilation, his life story was already well known, circulated in tale collections such as *Kojidan* (1212–1215) and *Genkō shakusho* (c. 1322). In addition, he appears in numerous documents, as author, addressee, or topic of discussion. Around 1203, he also wrote his own autobiography, which—although it cannot entirely be trusted—provides his own view of his life and work.[4] The fact that he entitled it *Namuamidabutsu sazenshū* (The collected good deeds of Namuamidabutsu, one name he called himself)—might qualify it as an auto-hagiography.

The initial section of the *engi*, dated 1372, relates some details of Chōgen's life. Although some of the particulars in this section can be verified by Chōgen's own writings, the account is biased toward the miraculous and omits or glosses over many of Chōgen's practical works. It seems that this section of the *engi* was designed to promote the wonders of the exceptional figure who had founded the temple. Drawing on documents as well as *Sazenshū*, we will evaluate this section, and ask which of its elements may have been the stuff of later legend or the invention of compilers.

The label affixed to the reverse side of the *Jōdoji engi* scroll introduces Chōgen, who is also known as Shunjōbō 俊乗房: "The holy man (*shōnin* 上人) Shunjō was born during the reign of the 74th-generation monarch Toba 鳥羽." The text then identifies him, adding the appellation Namuamidabutsu, as the descendant of Ki no Haseo 紀長谷雄 (845–912) and the head of Tōdaiji's reconstruction agency. Thus Chōgen is associated with the early Heian poet-scholar Haseo and identified with his own most important official post. By contrast, Chōgen says nothing about his ancestry in *Sazenshū*, but jumps right into his accomplishments, beginning with the images that he claims responsibility for

4. *Namuamidabutsu sazenshū* is available in several collections. We have used the version in os 4: 537–43, #227. There is also a full English translation in Rosenfield (2011, 207–31).

restoring. Supporting knowledge of his descent comes from the Ki family lineage (Hisano 2011, 7–8).

The *engi* then informs us that Chōgen took the tonsure at age thirteen, undergoing practice at the Shingon temple Daigoji 醍醐寺 in Kyoto; and reports his first miraculous encounter: "[Once when] he endured more than one thousand days' confinement in the mountains, practicing all-day rituals of penance, a vision of the bodhisattva Fugen 普賢菩薩 riding a white elephant appeared before his eyes. Many buddhas appeared in the sky, touching the prelate's head [as a sign that he would attain buddhahood]." Despite the miraculous encounter recorded in the *engi*, however, *Sazenshū* does not mention Fugen; although Chōgen claims to have sponsored or restored many Buddhist images, none are of that bodhisattva. Thus it seems that he was not particularly devoted to Fugen.

A possible source for the *engi* account is an episode concerning Zhiyi 智顗, the founder of the Chinese Tiantai 天台 (Tendai) school, in *Sanbōe* 三宝絵 (Illustrations of the three jewels), a collection of Buddhist tales compiled in 984. According to this story, Zhiyi was practicing a meditation ritual focused on Fugen, when he suddenly attained enlightenment and, in a vision, he experienced Fugen touching him on the head (Kamens 1988, 255). In appropriating this story, probably well known at least to other monks, the *engi* associates Chōgen with a famous Chinese patriarch while at the same time pointing out his youthful attainment of enlightenment.

Then, according to the *engi*, Chōgen retreated to the Shingon complex at Mt. Kōya 高野山, staying for a time in the meditation cave where Kūkai (空海, 774–835, also known as Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師) was interred to wait for the coming of the next Buddha, Miroku 弥勒. Chōgen's own writings record that he practiced at Mt. Kōya for many years. He built a *bessho* there and enshrined a *vajra* supposedly owned by Kūkai in Kōya's Portrait Hall (*Sazenshū*, OS 4: 537–43, #227).

The *engi* then turns to Chōgen's most famous accomplishment: the restoration of Tōdaiji. While he was practicing at Kōya, he dreamed that Tōdaiji's image of Rushana Buddha 盧舎那仏, better known as the Great Buddha (Daibutsu 大仏), appeared to him and said: "The ability of those in this land to receive Buddhist teachings has already been exhausted, so I wish to use other methods to reach them. Come, and you may see me, and I shall see you." Rushana's claim that the dharma was exhausted foreshadowed the destruction of Tōdaiji and the Great Buddha later that year. The early thirteenth century tale collection *Kojidan* (1981, 1: 317) reports a similar dream, in which Kūkai appears to Chōgen and urges him to help restore Tōdaiji. The dream may be the one reported in *Tōdaiji zoku yōroku* (1907, 198). In 1181/3, according to that account, Chōgen approached Fujiwara no Yukitaka 藤原行隆 of the Royal Secretariat, who had been spearheading efforts to restore Tōdaiji, claiming that a dream oracle had directed him

to visit the demolished temple. Thus inspired, Chōgen volunteered to help in the reconstruction project.

The *engi* now turns to Chōgen's journey to the Grand Shrine at Ise, where he prayed for Tōdaiji's restoration, and experienced another miraculous dream in which a "woman beautiful as a jewel … placed relics of the Buddha in his palms." Subsequently, the *engi* says that Chōgen awoke to find a gem in each of his hands. Chōgen indeed traveled to Ise Shrine to search for suitable lumber in the hills behind the shrine for the reconstruction of the Great Buddha Hall (Daibutsuden 大仏殿). While there he dedicated sutra texts to the *kami* Amaterasu, putative ancestor of the sovereign's line (Goodwin 1994, 87; Ruppert 2000, 183–84); might she have been the woman who appeared to him in the dream that the *engi* described? *Sazenshū* elaborates further: he dedicated six parts of the *Dai Hannya-kyō* 大般若経 at Ise—three at the Inner Shrine (where Amaterasu was worshipped) and three at the Outer Shrine (OS 4: 537–43, #227). Unfortunately *Sazenshū* does not give us dates or context, but later sources indicate that the visit to Ise occurred in 1186 (Kobayashi 1971, 88–89).

Following this episode, the *engi* relates a visit of Chōgen to China, in which he was protected by deities and further proved his saintly character:

> Afterwards, he left Japan and proceeded to Great Tang 大唐, traveling to A-yu-wang Mountain 阿育王山 [King Ashoka Mountain; in Mingzhou 明州, present-day Ningbo 寧波, Zhejiang province] to build a Hall of Relics. When a dark wind broke its rudder, his boat was capsized by the white waves. Then a robust man wearing red robes appeared in the middle of the boat, along with eighty heavenly boys, and declared, "I am the protective deity of A-yu-wang Mountain." In the end Chōgen was protected by the good deities and as he intended, arrived at a port in Song 宋 China. There, he crossed the stone bridge of Mt. Tiantai 天台山 [Zhejiang province] and worshipped the earthly manifestation of an arhat.

Crossing the stone bridge, it was thought, was possible only for those who had not violated the Buddhist precepts and committed sinful acts.

Sazenshū does not mention any travels to China, but several contemporary sources make that claim—although these visits were dated before, not after, his involvement in the Tōdaiji rebuilding project. An inscription on a bell dedicated in 1176 at Mt. Kōya, funded by a campaign conducted by Chōgen, identifies him as the holy man who had visited China three times (Kobayashi 1971, 9). In his diary *Gyokuyō*, the powerful courtier Kujō Kanezane (1149–1207) relates that on a visit to his home on 1183/1/24, Chōgen told of his pilgrimages to the Tiantai and A-yu-wang mountain holy sites, and claimed to have crossed the stone bridge at Tiantai (*Gyokuyō* 1: 593; Kobayashi 1971, 9–11). His own vow, written in 1185 upon the dedication of two relic fragments to the Daibutsu, told of his worship of an

image of Monju bodhisattva 文殊菩薩 at Mt. Wutai 五台山 in Shanxi province (*Tōdaiji zoku yōroku*, 208). Accounts of Chōgen's travels to China also appear in Kamakura-period sources such as *Kojidan* (1: 316–17) and *Genkō shakusho* (101, 175). A number of scholars have questioned whether Chōgen ever traveled to China, basing their skepticism on the absence of any independent evidence; but his knowledge of Chinese texts, religious artifacts, temple construction techniques, and land reclamation technology suggest intense contact with continental learning in some form.[5] Of course these are not the important points in the *engi*, which uses the narrative of Chōgen's travels to China to enhance its portrait of his virtues.

Finally, *Jōdoji engi* turns to Chōgen's last hours. His friend Jōkei 貞慶 (1155–1213), a learned Hossō 法相 monk, came to visit him on his deathbed. On the point of dying, Chōgen suddenly revived for a moment, opened his eyes, and smiled—a sign, according to the *engi*, that he had reached nirvana. The *engi* finishes the section on Chōgen by likening his work to that of the Buddha and attesting to his appeal to all segments of society: "Country dwellers and mountain elders admired his virtue, and nobles who 'lived above the clouds' took refuge in his ways." That last remark, in fact, aptly characterizes the social benefits of his religious and secular good works—reconstructing important structures at Tōdaiji, establishing and restoring estates, and building and repairing other temples, roads, bridges, and anchorages—that were central to Chōgen's life as portrayed by the documents and his autobiography. The *engi*, however, says very little about these practical efforts to benefit both Chōgen's associates and the people at large.

The other missing element in the *engi*'s portrayal of Chōgen is his devotion to Pure Land beliefs and practices. (The next section, on the establishment and construction of Jōdoji, does not fill us in on this matter.) Chōgen called himself Namuamidabutsu, invoking Amida's name; he conferred the "Amidabutsu" suffix on his friends and disciples; he promoted rituals to recite the *nenbutsu* 念仏 continuously, or while bathing, at several of his temples, including Jōdoji; all Chōgen's *bessho* contain a Jōdodō (Pure Land Hall) graced by at least one image of Amida; ceremonies reenacting Amida's descent to welcome the dead were held at several *bessho*; and perhaps most important for this study, Harima Jōdoji was a center for Amida worship that embraced all these elements.

This section of the *engi*, however, emphasizes a different and equally important factor in Chōgen's devotional life: Shingon esotericism. His connection to the Daigoji lineage, for example, was probably one reason that he willed

5. Rosenfield argues that "circumstantial evidence makes it likely that he had firsthand knowledge" (2011, 39) of various sanctuaries in China. On the other hand, Ōtsuka (2013, 80–83) argues that Chōgen's knowledge might have been obtained through contacts with Chinese merchants in Hakata, where he stayed for a time.

control of the Tōdaiji properties he managed to the head monk of the Tōdaiji cloister Tōnan'in—a member of the same lineage. Tōnan'in, in fact, was a center for Shingon esotericism and mountain asceticism within Tōdaiji (Ōyama 1999, 9). And Shingon, as Ōyama argues, had a practical inclination and concern for people's welfare, manifested in the various public works projects in which Chōgen was so involved (Ōyama 2012, 79). As we shall see below, *Jōdoji engi* continues to stress Shingon esotericism in its account of Jōdoji's founding and early construction. The reason, we will argue, has to do with the conflict at the end of the thirteenth century, in particular the negative cultural capital generated by certain Pure Land adherents who had taken control of the temple by that time.

Jōdoji's Founding and Early History

The second section of the *engi* covers the history of Jōdoji from its founding in 1192 through the construction of buildings in its central core. This section both quotes and embellishes the documentary record, and describes buildings, images, and rituals: objective cultural capital that may have generated economic capital when the temple was in need. A lyrical description of the site and claims that the temple protected both local people and the entire realm enhance the sense of Jōdoji's importance.

Jōdoji was built on a rise overlooking an undeveloped area of Ōbe estate, and it seems that its monks and lay supporters played an important role in opening that land to cultivation and continuing to make it prosper for a time. The estate, a Tōdaiji holding established in 1147, was largely neglected for forty-five years until Chōgen restored it in 1192. The *engi* claims the latter as the estate's founding date. The *engi*'s account of the temple's founding begins with Kan'amidabutsu's appointment as an estate official. The story then proceeds to Chōgen's efforts to build a new temple on the premises:

> On the estate were nine temples that had been largely destroyed. Kan'a told the master [Chōgen] that he wished to repair them, but Chōgen replied, "Although you may repair the damage to these temples and they may flourish in the future, we ought to build a separate hall and put the old Buddha images from the nine temples at peace."

Additional details are supplied by a document dated 1192, an order issued by Chōgen to Ōbe estate officials, which demands that a portion of the undeveloped land on the estate be reclaimed to provide for a new temple. Chōgen notes the ruined temples, expresses his regret that he could not restore them all, and explains how he planned to use their materials and images to construct a temple at the northeastern corner of the estate, a place called Kanohara 鹿野原 (OS 4: 527–28, #219). As the *engi* tells us in a later passage, this chapel was a temporary hall that would be replaced in several years by one of Jōdoji's permanent build-

ings. In both accounts, then, Chōgen appropriates images—and their sacred power—from existing temples on the estate and installs them in a new temple under his control. The similarity of the two accounts suggests that the *engi*'s compilers had a copy of Chōgen's document in hand.

This part of the *engi* then sketches Chōgen's earlier life, including some of the same details as the section written in 1372. It tells how he practiced at Daigoji, belonged to the lineage of its founder Shōbō 聖宝, crossed the seas to China to find skilled artisans, and traveled throughout Japan seeking good materials and people of talent. The *engi* implies that he physically went to China to summon artisans for the reconstruction of Tōdaiji, but we know this was not the case; the casting master Chen Heqing 陳和卿, who worked on the Great Buddha, was already in Japan along with others in his retinue (Rosenfield 2011, 121). Chōgen certainly did travel throughout Japan seeking materials and assistance—most notably to Suō province 周防国 (present-day Yamaguchi prefecture) at the southwestern end of Honshu to find suitable logs to reconstruct the Great Buddha Hall. As the *engi*—along with many other sources—tells us, Chōgen headed a realm-wide *kanjin* 勧進 campaign to solicit donations for this very expensive project:

> He selected good materials and artisans, and with his own skills and the help of the *kami*, he had the [Great] Buddha cast. Consequently the court granted him the rank of *daiwajō* 大和尚 (great prelate), and various temples' holy men and monks, as grand as dragons or elephants, all yielded their seats to him. People all over the land firmed up their will to become lay believers, and noble and base people in the seven circuits sincerely joined in his efforts. Wise thoughts turned foolish ones around, making everyone work together toward the same ends.

Thus the *engi* informs us that Chōgen's efforts to restore the Tōdaiji image enhanced both his position in the monastic world and advanced faith, wisdom, and cooperation throughout the realm.

The *engi* then turns to the location where Jōdoji would be built, telling us how Chōgen himself surveyed the estate and the remains of the old temples. In the process, he discovered an elevated section in the estate's northeastern quadrant, where he decided to build a new temple. The *engi* waxes poetic:

> The calls of bears and swallows sound through the surrounding valleys, and a tiger's tail encircles the elevated sacral precincts of the temple. The full moon peeks over the mountains to the east, and high morning clouds glow like a crimson mirror adorned with the image of a phoenix. If one looks back to the west, one sees a wide pool of tranquil water in which [the reflection of] the moon at night floats like a genuine platter of gold.

Here the *engi* presents a lyrical picture of some very practical features of Jōdoji's location. The temple was constructed on a rise at the northeast corner

of Ōbe estate, overlooking Kanohara, the wilderness area that Chōgen sought to cultivate. As Chōgen's 1192 order stipulated, adjacent lands—"the wilderness of Kanohara"—were to be donated to support the new temple (OS 4: 527–28, #219).

The *engi*'s "wide pool of tranquil water" refers to a large irrigation reservoir, the North Pond, located immediately west of temple precincts. The reservoir, probably established through Chōgen's efforts, was a crucial component in the system that irrigated the newly opened land. The *engi* mentions the reflection of the moon in the pond, but even more dramatic was that of the sun: through an ingenious device to lift the back wall of the Jōdo Hall, it appears that the rays of the sun were beamed from the pond into the hall and then down to illuminate the heads of Kaikei's Amida triad (Kawabata 1999, 17). Thus the North Pond served both a practical and a ritual purpose.

Then the *engi* touts the protective function of Jōdoji, citing its location at the northeast corner of the estate whence demons were thought to come. In the process the text compares the temple to two famous and powerful religious institutions:

> As for the temple's location [vis-à-vis estate borders], it blocks the demons' gate [the northeastern boundary], and thus guards the gates of the people. Perhaps we should mention that Shikan'in 止観院[6] on Mt. Hiei 比叡山 is located to the northeast [of the capital] and is known as a center of Buddhist practice that protects the realm. Tōdaiji in the southern capital [Nara], also located to the northeast, is called the center of austerities that makes the Buddhist law survive forever.

The *engi* goes on to relate the construction of each temple building, beginning with the temporary structure at the site that later became that of the Yakushi Hall 薬師堂. The *engi* claims that Jōdoji protects not only Ōbe estate but also the entire realm:

> In the Kenkyū 建久 era,[7] on the twenty-third day of the fourth month—the first month of summer—[Chōgen] built a simple thatched hut, where he dedicated many old Buddha images. Since then we have chanted [the *nenbutsu*] for the sake of future tranquility in the realm, and have prayed for peace in the land. At the same time we have revived and expanded Buddhist services, which we hope [will endure] until the end of time.

Chōgen's order of 1192 verifies this account, noting specifically his intention to recruit thirty monks to chant the *nenbutsu* without ceasing (OS 4: 527–28, #219).

6. This is the original name of the first Buddhist hall on Mt. Hiei, constructed by Saichō 最澄 in 788.

7. The Kenkyū era was from 1190–1199. According to documentary sources the temple's first structure, the temporary hall, was built in 1192.

The *engi* continues with a list of the structures built at Jōdoji, the images and other items installed in them, and the artists responsible for the work—the only systematic record, to our knowledge, of the initial construction process. Details are compatible with those in the more fragmentary documentary record. In summary, by the time Chōgen died, the temple contained the Jōdo Hall, approximately eighteen meters square; the Yakushi Hall, of the same size; and a sutra repository and a bathhouse.

In 1194, according to the *engi*, construction began on both the Jōdo Hall and Kaikei's Amida triad, finishing in 1197 with a dedication ceremony at which the eminent scholar-monk Jōkei officiated. The general time frame of this process is verified by an inscription within the Jōdo Hall Amida image dated 1195 (OS 1996 [*bekkan* 別巻], 164), as well as by a copy of Chōgen's inscription on the shaft of a scroll, dated 1194, in which he reports the dedication of three relic fragments at the Jōdo Hall (OS 4: 529–30, #221).[8] The contents and dedication of the second building, the Yakushi Hall, are also described: the main image was taken from Kōdoji 広渡寺, a ruined seventh-century temple, and twelve new images of guardian deities associated with Yakushi were also installed there. These were among the numerous old images from the estate's ruined temples that Chōgen mentioned in 1192.[9] The dedication ceremony was conducted in 1200 by Jōhan 定範 of Tōnan'in, designated by Chōgen in his 1197 testament as his heir to authority over Ōbe estate and other Tōdaiji holdings (OS 4: 532–35, #224).

The *engi* also describes a *raigō* 来迎 ceremony that recreated the welcome of the dying by Amida and his attendants, the bodhisattvas Seishi 勢至 and Kannon 観音, and notes that Kaikei constructed another Amida image for this purpose—an image now kept at the Nara National Museum. According to *Sazenshū*, the ceremony was initiated in 1200 and the Amida image was made two years later (OS 4: 537–43, #227). The *engi* situates both events in 1201, and lists the *raigō* ceremony's accessories in detail: twenty-seven bodhisattva masks and twenty-seven robes for performers to wear, and also flowers, pennants and flags, and drums and cymbals. Several of the masks remain, including some attributed to Kaikei.

To summarize, the *engi* lists the following structures at Jōdoji: the Jōdo Hall containing Kaikei's Amida triad, completed in 1194; the Yakushi Hall, containing a colossal seated image of the eponymous Buddha, dedicated in 1200; a sutra repository containing six relic grains, a copper five-tiered stupa, and more than eight hundred volumes of sutras; a bell that had been cast at Tōdaiji; a bathhouse with a cauldron and a bath whose water was kept heated for one thousand

8. This text seems to be a copy of a *kishinjō* 寄進状 (letter of donation) for Buddhist relics, which were given to Jōdoji.

9. The version of the *engi* in the Jōdoji archives has somewhat different details and dates; see Mōri (1972, 482–83); Tanaka (1973, 88).

days; and the sanctuary (*shinden* 神殿) of a protective Hachiman shrine 八幡宮 dated 1235, and that shrine's worship hall (*haiden* 拝殿), dated 1239. Kainuma (2014, 101) thinks that the major structures were originally planned by Chōgen, even though he died before the shrine buildings were completed. Later notes list a dining hall, a *goma* 護摩 hall, a hall of images (Portrait Hall), a bell tower, and a rebirth-in-paradise hall, without dates of construction. *Sazenshū* differs in some details but verifies the construction of the Jōdo and Yakushi Halls and their main images, and the operation of a perpetually heated bath. Other documents also verify many items in the *engi* narrative, which fills in some significant gaps in our knowledge of Jōdoji's early history.

Return to the Pure Land: Kan'amidabutsu

The third section of the *engi*, as assembled in the 1614 version, relates the life and rebirth in paradise of Kan'amidabutsu. If Chōgen's biography emphasized esoteric elements at the expense of Pure Land elements, Kan'a's biography is considerably more balanced and attests to the superiority of Pure Land practices in attaining rebirth in paradise. As such, it contributes to an accurate picture of the religious composition of Jōdoji, and perhaps this is one reason it was incorporated into the *engi*.

A note following this section reports that it was recorded in the tenth month of 1243 by an unnamed disciple, presumably of Kan'amidabutsu. That would have been shortly after the master's death in the previous year. The material was then copied into the *engi*, possibly as early as 1372. There is only one reference to Kan'a in the section on Jōdoji's history, that regarding his assumption of Ōbe estate management duties in 1192. The absence of Kan'a, who was custodian (*azukaridokoro* 預所) of the estate, managed Jōdoji, apparently lived on site, and is honored by a five-tiered stupa that remains near the temple today, is a curious lacuna that the *engi* compilers may have decided to remedy by including this account.

The *engi* shows a different side of Kan'a than his two extant documents, one acknowledging a donation to Jōdoji and the other seeking permission to reclaim land. While these documents attest to his practical side and show that he directly managed the temple, the *engi* depicts him in another aspect: an esoteric master and Pure Land devotee. In his youth, according to the *engi*, Kan'a studied at the Byōdōin 平等院 in Uji, receiving both Tendai and Shingon esoteric teachings from a distinguished monk at the temple. After committing eight rolls of the *Lotus Sūtra* to memory, Kan'a "chanted the sutra for days without collapsing, and practiced austerities for hours without slacking."

The *engi* then turns to his relationship with Chōgen, identified here as his maternal uncle. Joining Chōgen in the *kanjin* campaign to rebuild Tōdaiji,

Kan'a helped solicit donations for the project. In 1192 he moved from the capital to Ōbe estate, where he lived for many years, and "restored ruined temples, repaired many images of buddhas and bodhisattvas, and most important of all, constructed two new temple buildings." As we are told in another context, he installed a number of old Buddhist images in the Yakushi Hall and a gilded Amida triad in the Jōdo Hall. While there is no independent evidence of Kan'a's involvement this early in the management of the estate and the construction of Jōdoji, there is no reason to doubt it either.

The *engi*'s final portion discusses Kan'a's Pure Land devotions, noting that he eventually discarded other practices and solely recited the *nenbutsu*, relying on Amida's vow to welcome to his Pure Land all who invoke his name. The *engi* records his final moments in the tradition of *ōjōden* 往生伝, or tales of rebirth in paradise (MŌRI 1972, 480):

> At the hour of the horse [11 AM–1 PM] he put on his monks' robes, sat upright facing west [toward Amida's paradise] and intoned the precious name of Amida Buddha. He seized five differently colored banners in his hands, and peacefully passed away. His countenance seemed to bloom, and his body and face were as if he were living. Tears flowed from the eyes of clergy and lay believers who visited him, and the hearts of the men and women who attended him were deeply moved. Glowing clouds soared above his residence, good omens appeared around his dwelling place, and swaths of white silk surrounded the temple—announcing to noble and base people from surrounding villages that Amida Buddha and bodhisattvas were coming to welcome him to paradise. For three days and three nights they did not dispose of his body. The omens of rebirth in paradise and the dream oracles were truly without parallel.

The story of Kan'a's life thus finishes with an account of his miraculous death and welcoming into paradise by Amida—a direct result of his Pure Land devotions in his latter years. Like other devotees before him, Kan'a died holding pennants of five colors, presumably attached to the fingers of a small image of Amida. The clouds emanating from his body were probably meant to be purple in color, another standard in the common story of people welcomed to paradise. This section of the *engi*, while hardly denigrating esoteric practice, attests to the superiority of reciting the *nenbutsu* in achieving the goal of buddhahood.

What do the three narrative sections of the *engi* tell us about the religious beliefs and practices at Jōdoji? Despite the emphasis on Shingon esotericism in the first two sections and the claims for *nenbutsu* superiority in the third, it seems likely that both were simultaneously practiced at the temple. The inclusion of an account of Kan'a's life and death, in fact, may have been a conscious attempt to correct the one-sided emphasis on esotericism that characterized the first two sections. Certainly it would have been inappropriate to neglect Pure Land Buddhism

in this account. The balance of practices manifested in the complete *Jōdoji engi* is compatible with the eclectic nature of much medieval Buddhism as a whole.

Violence on the Estate

The Pure Land component of Jōdoji can be seen in another light. This is the dominance of a group of monks referred to as *jishū* 時衆 in several documents. In a series of events that occurred between 1292 and 1303, the *jishū* vexed both local estate officials and the absentee proprietor, a situation that erupted into violence. This, it is thought, is one reason that Tōnan'in abandoned its authority over the estate and returned it to corporate Tōdaiji, the original proprietor (Endō, forthcoming). The 1614 copy of *Jōdoji engi* does not mention these incidents, but a reference in the 1687 version suggests that the violence may have included the burning of the Yakushi Hall. We will argue that the conflict helped to shape the *engi*, perhaps because it served as negative cultural capital that the compilers wished to forget.

Like other estates in medieval Japan, Ōbe was no stranger to conflict. The end of the thirteenth century was particularly troubling, for it was marked by conflicts between military stewards and the proprietor, invasions by warrior gangs from other estates, and cultivators' angry petitions. These conflicts were sometimes settled through litigation, but often they resulted in physical violence, as in the conflict detailed below.

The troubles began in or before 1292, when the first documentary evidence of them appears. This is an acknowledgment by two of the estate's highest local managers (reeves or *kumon* 公文) of an order from Tōnan'in, the proprietor at the time. We do not know the content of the original order, although the remark that the Jōdoji monks had "reacted with extreme ire" when presented with the order suggests that it was a command for them to cease some undesirable activity (OS 4: 565, #258). A document from the reeves, dated three days later, complains of a "night attack" at the end of the previous month in which the military steward's deputy (*jitōdai* 地頭代) was killed and the estate's administrative offices were burned down. According to the complaint, a few days later several other dwellings were torched, including the estate headquarters and the residence of the custodian (OS 4: 566, #259).[10] It is not clear how—or even whether—Jōdoji was involved in the latter two incidents, but it is difficult to imagine that the temple remained unaffected.

Ten years later, in 1302, Jōdoji again appears in the documentary record as an object of censure. This time the plaintiffs were monks from Tōdaiji, which had

10. The authors would like to thank Michelle Damian of the Ōbe Estate Project at the University of Southern California for her translations of OS #s 258 and 259.

resumed control of the estate around 1293. In a draft of a petition probably addressed to the retired sovereign Go-Uda 後宇多院, the monks bitterly complained that *jishū* at Jōdoji had seized rents due the Nara temple. The village of Kanohara, according to the complaint, had been designated to supply materials for ceremonies at several Tōdaiji locations: the Great Buddha Hall, the Hachiman shrine, the Central Gate 中門, and the Lotus Hall 法華堂. Attached to the petition was an order from a retired sovereign (perhaps not the current one) supporting Tōdaiji's claim; unfortunately the attachment is missing and we do not know its date. Despite this order from the highest of authorities, the document continues, the *jishū* "did not fear the majesty of the court," but instead attacked the estate office and impounded the rents—"unspeakably wicked actions." The petition ends by requesting an order from the retired sovereign supporting the Tōdaiji claim to revenues from "this entire area," probably referring to Kanohara (OS 4: 618–19, #313).[11]

The dispute was not settled immediately, and in the eighth month of the following year, the Tōdaiji monks issued another document, which seems to be a rebuttal to a complaint filed by the Jōdoji monks. This rebuttal, which we also have in draft form, begins with a summary of the Jōdoji monks' alleged misdeeds. First a gang led by one of them invaded the estate office, stabbing and wounding emissaries (*jinin* 神人) from Tōdaiji's Hachiman shrine. When Tōdaiji demanded punishment, the Jōdoji monks—falsely, according to the petition—accused the estate's custodian, one Hōren 法蓮, of setting Jōdoji buildings on fire and attacking its monks. The rebuttal goes on to argue that Jōdoji had violated its subordinate relationship to Tōdaiji by illegitimately attempting to make Kanohara into its own holding, thereby becoming the enemy of Tōdaiji. The document then elaborates on the violence committed by the Jōdoji monks and their illegitimate alliance with the proxy of the military governor (the *shugodai* 守護代), "who frequently raided the estate, polluting sacred items for the *kami* beginning with rice for offerings." Finally, Tōdaiji reiterates its claims that the Jōdoji monks' complaints were false, insisting among other points that the current custodian was not even named Hōren.[12] Tōdaiji demands that the Jōdoji monks be jailed and the military governor's proxy and his followers receive suit-

11. The document is a heavily edited version. Three individuals successively occupied the position of retired sovereign (*in* 院) between 1292 and 1302: Go-Fukakusa 後深草 (10/1287–7/1298), Fushimi 伏見 (7/1298–1/1301), and Go-Uda (1/1301–8/1308). It is possible that the one to whom the petition was addressed was not the one who had earlier supported Tōdaiji's claim.

12. A custodian named Hōren, identified as a *shami* 沙弥 (novice or lay monk), does appear some thirty years later as author of a message to a Tōdaiji official (OS 4: 672, #375). The date of this document lacks the year, but the *Ono-shi shi* compilers have placed it between documents dated 1331 and 1334. The document concerns losses in the Ōbe estate harvest. There is no way to know if this was the same Hōren mentioned in 1303.

able punishments—a suggestion that they be exiled to a distant island is perhaps prudently crossed out (OS 4: 619–20, #314).

The 1302 petition refers to the Jōdoji monks as *jishū*, and characterizes them contemptuously as those "who generally live in the boondocks in poverty" (OS 4: 618–19, #313). Clearly, the document implies, their claim cannot possibly rival that of Tōdaiji! Perhaps these *jishū* were followers of the *hijiri* 聖 Ippen 一遍 (1239–1289), whose itinerancy and outreach to ordinary folk were the antithesis of Tōdaiji establishment Buddhism.[13] More likely, however, they were the heirs of Chōgen, who granted his followers Amidabutsu-suffix names—like that of Kyōa (Kyōamidabutsu 卿阿弥陀仏), leader of the alleged attack on Tōdaiji representatives. Many such names, in fact, were inscribed inside the Jōdo Hall Amida in 1195 or so (OS 1996 [*bekkan* 別巻], 155–63). It is logical to suppose that an "Amidabutsu" lineage remained at Jōdoji throughout the thirteenth century. To our knowledge there are no extant documents relating Jōdoji's side of the conflict.

Jōdoji indeed had a strong claim to revenues from Kanohara, where fields had been opened to cultivation in tandem with the founding of the temple. As detailed above, Chōgen had designated revenues from these fields for the support of Jōdoji, and it seems likely that Jōdoji monks had assisted in the initial land reclamation process. Tōdaiji—and then Tōnan'in—must have agreed to this arrangement, which enabled the construction of several buildings and the installation of costly Buddhist images. It is not clear when or why proprietary authorities began to renege on this agreement. Tōdaiji's demand for revenues from Kanohara must have seemed like a serious violation of Jōdoji's rights.

The record is mixed, however, and two early fourteenth-century documents that refer to Jōdoji suggest that the temple still had a role to play on the estate. One, dated 1319, indicates that the temple was still supported by revenues from paddy on the estate, and that income was shared with corporate Tōdaiji (OS 4: 625, #325). It may be that Tōdaiji and Jōdoji had worked out a compromise that enabled the latter to continue receiving some of the support mandated by Chōgen so long ago. Another, almost offhand reference to Jōdoji in a 1323 document—totally unrelated to the temple—indicates that despite its economic decline, Jōdoji was still important to Ōbe estate residents and officials. A deposition in a long-running lawsuit over the inheritance of the reeve's position states (erroneously) that the original appointment to that position was made by Chōgen, "founder of Jōdoji" (OS 4: 645–49, #342). In fact, Karikome (2004, 174–75) argues that local landholders had supported Jōdoji in the conflict of 1302–1303, and thus it was impossible to dislodge the temple from its religious position. Be that as it may, Tōdaiji was armed with a directive from the retired

13. For the early history of Ippen's followers, see Thornton 1999, especially chapters 3 and 4.

sovereign, and plenty of influence with court and shogunate to boot. It seems likely that Jōdoji suffered serious damage from the fray.

The Engi: Strategic Silence?

The Kobe University version says absolutely nothing about this conflict. The Jōdoji archives version, however, mentions that in 1292 the Yakushi Hall and Portrait Hall were burned down, not to be rebuilt until 1407 (MŌRI 1972, 485).[14] If we may believe this account, it seems likely that the destruction was a result of the violent quarrel involving the temple, which was underway by 1292 and continued for at least a decade. Whether the "false accusation" noted in Tōdaiji's 1303 complaint that the estate custodian had set the temple on fire refers to an incident dated 1292 or something that occurred later, the chances seem very good that two temple buildings were burned down around that time, and that the fire resulted from Jōdoji's quarrel with Tōdaiji. In fact, if Jōdoji retained some management authority over the estate at this time, the administrative office that burned down in 1292 may have been one of these buildings.

Presuming that the account of the fire is reliable, there was an incredibly long delay in reconstructing two important temple buildings. This supports the general impression that Jōdoji declined in the fourteenth century. It is not clear why one version of the *engi* recorded the fire and the other did not. Perhaps the compiler of the Kobe University version—or even the seventeenth-century copyist—considered it impolitic to allude to the conflict with Tōdaiji. In any case, it appears that the violence at the turn of the fourteenth century was something that Jōdoji monks preferred to forget. Yet the *engi* never acquiesces in Tōdaiji's claim that Jōdoji was its branch temple. Tōdaiji is mentioned a number of times in the text, especially in regard to Chōgen's activities, but there is no suggestion that Jōdoji monks considered that their temple was subordinate to the Nara complex.

The *engi*, perhaps, represents an attempt to restore the temple's fortunes by attracting large donors or persuading cultivators to settle nearby once again. Several documents from the late fifteenth century indicate that Jōdoji had indeed recovered to a degree. These documents, dated between 1467 and 1487, verify Jōdoji's exemption from regular and special levies apparently owed to military authorities. Issued by powerful provincial warriors such as Uragami Norimune 浦上則宗 (1429–1502), the documents state that Jōdoji was tax-exempt because it had been declared an official vow temple (*gokiganjo* 御祈願所).[15] The temple's Jōdo Hall had, in fact, been designated as an official prayer

14. The timeline in NISHIKAWA (1987, 59–60) mentions these two events while indicating some doubts about them.

15. See OS 4: 1020–24, #s 572 (1467), 573 (1469), 578 (1483), 583 (undated).

chapel (*gokitōjo* 御祈祷所) by the retired monarch Go-Toba 後鳥羽院 (1180–1239; r. 1183–1198) in 1200 (OS 4: 535–36, #225)—a fact that, curiously, never made its way into the *engi*. According to an order sent down by Go-Toba, Jōdoji monks were to "heed the wishes of the Tōdaiji prelate Chōgen and make this chapel into an official prayer center." Go-Toba's order quotes Chōgen's petition in this regard, including a claim that the Jōdodō Amida had miraculous powers similar to those of the Tōdaiji Daibutsu. This designation, and the willingness of provincial warrior elites to respect it so many years after the fact, certainly must have contributed to Jōdoji's survival through some very hard times.

Thus, while Jōdoji probably did not prosper in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it did not disappear. The final portion of the *engi* is a running account of events—not all fortunate ones—dated 1487 to 1591.[16] The *engi* tells us that in 1496, monks returned to live at the temple after a thirteen-year absence. This might have been an error in arithmetic, since we know from other evidence that the monks' residences had been sacked in 1487, despite the protection of provincial warriors as noted above (OS 4: 1023, #581). In 1498 the temple's Yakushi Hall and Portrait Hall were burned to the ground—again, if the 1687 *engi*'s account can be trusted—and reconstruction was begun in 1505 and 1520, respectively. While this portion of the *engi* gives the impression that the temple's glory days were far in the past and almost forgotten, someone, using revenue from somewhere, had maintained the late twelfth-century Jōdo Hall and its splendid Amida triad over the bad years. The fact that the building did not crumble and the images were not carted off elsewhere indicates that Jōdoji maintained some of its old vitality, perhaps through local community support. Its position at the northeast corner of the estate—the *kimon* (鬼門) whence demons were said to come—no doubt enhanced its value to local residents.

One clue to the temple's survival may be found in the *engi* itself. We do not know exactly when the *engi* took the form reproduced in the 1614 copy, but it could not have been compiled earlier than 1372. In other words, the temple was already in deep trouble by the time the *engi* took shape, and the *engi* can be seen as an attempt to restore Jōdoji's fortunes. It is plausible, but not certain, that the first three sections were assembled by 1467, and provided one catalyst for warrior support in that year and later. And perhaps strategically, the *engi* emphasized esoteric elements and somewhat muted the strong Pure Land component upon which Jōdoji was based, although it could not eclipse that component altogether. Such a strategy may have allowed the monks, as well as potential patrons, to forget the *jishū* and the bloody conflict that had alienated Jōdoji from Tōdaiji. Perhaps, too, Tōdaiji and Jōdoji worked out some sort of enduring compromise.

16. The *engi* mentions that an event occurred in 1487 but does not specify what it was. Perhaps it was the sacking of temple buildings mentioned in a documentary source.

A document dated 1498 delineates a revenue-sharing arrangement (*wayo* 和与) between the two temples (OS 4: 1023, #582). So peace may have been made, after all. Yet the *engi*, which ignores any claims by Tōdaiji to be its "main temple," persists as a portrait of a small independent temple far from the capital or Nara, celebrating its founder Chōgen, his saintly heir Kan'a, and the magical landscape on which the temple stood.

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