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Authority and Competition

Shingon Buddhist Monastic Communities in Medieval Japanese Regional Society

In medieval Japan, the development of Shingon Buddhist monastic communities in regional society greatly depended on communication and religious support from centrally located Shingon monasteries such as Daigoji. However, little is known about associations or competitions among regional Shingon temples. This article focuses on Shingon Buddhist temples in Echizen Province, an important area in which Daigoji monks, such as Ryūgen and Genga, were active in transmitting the minutia of ritual practices. By analyzing documents and sacred teachings related to Takidanji, a Shingon Buddhist temple located in Mikuni Port, its disciple temples, and other Shingon Buddhist temples in the region, this article clarifies the interplay of these institutions in the late medieval period. The article argues that the features of Shingon Buddhist monastic communities in medieval Echizen were multipolar, consisting of Takidanji, Shōkaiji, and Sōjiji. The connection with Daigoji monks, in fact, brought about rivalry among these regional temples.

KEYWORDS: medieval Buddhism—Shingon—regional society—Daigoji—*fuho*—Echizen Province—*shōgyō*

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CENTRAL Buddhist institutions have always been sources of religious and political authority for their disciples. However, for disciples affiliated with regional temples, such connections sometimes brought about conflict and competition. In medieval Japan, the development of Shingon Buddhist power in regional societies depended on communication and support from centrally located monasteries, such as Daigoji 醍醐寺. As Fujii Masako has pointed out, beginning in the fifteenth century monks affiliated with monasteries in Kyoto and its surrounding area began to disseminate *fuhō* 付法 (the formal transmission of Buddhist scriptures, procedures of dharmic consecration, manuals, and ritual practices) to regional monks.¹ On some occasions, the Daigoji monks traveled to the regional Shingon temples specifically for this purpose (FUJII 2008, 225). Daigoji monks sought a means of income through this practice. They were in dire need of financial support due to the damage the temple sustained during the Ōnin War (Ōnin no ran 応仁の乱, 1467–1477), and providing *fuhō* to far-flung regions was one method to receive donations. For their part, regional monks, who were subordinate to the central temples, gladly received their *fuhō*.

This mutually beneficial situation forms one pattern of the head-branch (*honmatsu* 本末) temple relationship in the medieval period. The head-branch relationship generally worked as follows: the head temple protected the branch temples from third parties as well as appointed their abbots and sponsored rituals. The branch temples paid taxes to the head temple and acknowledged its superior position.

There were various models of the head-branch relationship.² As for Shingon Buddhist communities, Fujii claims that this relationship was determined by the personal connections between individual monks (FUJII 2008, 227). However, if we rely too heavily upon the head-branch framework, we may lose sight of the historical significance of other temple networks, such as the relationship between central and regional temples and among the regional temples themselves. It is necessary to explore temple networks that existed outside of the

1. For a definition of *fuhō*, see TATSUMI (2018, 32) or NAGAMURA (2020, 38–73).

2. For a discussion of previous research on the head-branch temple system, see HASEGAWA (2013). Taira Masayuki notes that the head-branch relationship between temples at Echizen and Kyoto was established during the *insei* 院政 period. From the viewpoint of the head temple, branch temples were no different from landholdings in that they paid taxes and provided labor. However, in the late medieval period, this arrangement gradually came to an end. Instead, the head-branch relationship was based on lineage, connections with the imperial court, and the governance of daimyo (FUKUIKEN 1994, 932–937).

hierarchical head-branch relationship and to consider the internal dynamics of regional temples.

There is no doubt that regional Shingon temples benefited from their subservient position to central monasteries such as Daigoji. Prior research on temple networks in medieval Japan has tended to focus on the perspective of the head temples of these central sites. Powerful regional temples, such as Takidanji 滝谷寺 in Echizen 越前 Province, are described as mediators between Daigoji and other Shingon temples in the region, which made it possible for Daigoji to solicit donations on a larger scale. Thus, the centralization of power through regional temples, and harmonious communication between them, was crucial to the transmission of *fuhō*. However, it is problematic to assume that the Shingon temples in Daigoji's regional network always existed in harmony. The perspectives of regional temples are vital to clarify the nature of Shingon institutions in the medieval period and offer a wider angle from which to consider the head-branch framework and its evolution.

Socioeconomic and Religious Environment of Shingon Monastic Communities in Echizen Province

Although previous scholarship on the transmission of *fuhō* has focused on the Kanto region (KUSHIDA 1979, 377–414; SAKAMOTO 1985; FUJII 2008, 225–297), Echizen (now Fukui Prefecture) was also a major site for such activities in the Shingon school. Most Shingon temples in Echizen are located in the north. The estates of Tsuboe 坪江 and Kawaguchi 河口, which are properties of the Kōfukuji 興福寺 cloister Daijōin 大乘院 collectively called the *hokkoku shōen* 北国莊園 (estates in the north country), were located here. Takidanji was in the Tsuboe estate, which came under control of Daijōin in 1288 as a donation from Emperor Go Fukakusa 後深草 (1243–1304) to Kōfukuji.

In the fifteenth century, the Asakura 朝倉, who became the daimyo of Echizen during the fifteenth century, made a contract with Daijōin to collect income from the land (FUKUIKEN 1994, 421–425). After the Ōnin War, the Asakura and their vassals assumed full control of Daijōin's estates, but the Asakura continued to support the temple and its properties until the clan was defeated by Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534–1582) in 1573.

An important socioeconomic factor of these Shingon temples was that they were located near a port called Mikuni 三國, which was situated at the juncture of several major rivers flowing into the Sea of Japan. The port was a major thoroughfare between marine transportation and inland waterways. Daijōin claimed Mikuni Port as a territorial unit within their Tsuboe estate. In the Kamakura period, Daijōin placed a harbor master (*zassho* 雜掌) at the port, and after the Muromachi period two local governors were installed to oversee the port and

handle legal issues (FUKUIKEN 1994, 423). Therefore, the region would have been economically vibrant with a well-established political infrastructure prior to the founding of Takidanji.

Takidanji was founded in 1377 by Eiken 睿憲 (d. 1420) of the Hōon'in 報恩院 lineage, a powerful cloister (*inge* 院家) of Daigoji. Takidanji's well-preserved records from this period have provided scholars with valuable sources on the networks of temples in Echizen. Yet, little is known about the history of Takidanji or other Shingon temples in the region. To better understand Daigoji's connections with regional Shingon communities, it is necessary to identify temples within the Takidanji network.

Prior research regarding temple networks in general has centered on the socioeconomic and/or religious discourses between temples. Ebara Masaharu, for example, points out that the networks of amalgamated shrines (*shōen sōja* 莊園総社) in the province was closely connected to local beliefs and commercial activities (EBARA 2000, 300–301). More recent studies of extant texts of sacred teaching (*shōgyō* 聖教) provide abundant insights into religious issues, such as those surrounding scriptures and rituals, preaching (*shōdō* 唱導), and the monks who wrote or copied these manuscripts (INABA 2017; RUPPERT 2014).³ Fujii mentions that the Hōon'in monks Ryūgen 隆源 (1342–1426) and Genga 源雅 (1491–1562) provided *fuhō* to Takidanji, for which Takidanji gifted money to Hōon'in for structural repairs, highlighting economic support that elite monks from Daigoji secured from Takidanji and its associated temples in Echizen (FUJII 2008, 319).⁴

In contrast to prior research, this study highlights the often overlooked relationship between regional temples in the form of the disciple temple (*monto jūin* 門徒寺院). Of course, the term “disciple” has previously been used by Buddhist historians; Fujii, for instance, suggests that a monk residing in a branch temple could be considered its disciple (FUJII 2008, 228). However, her study focuses specifically on the relationship between central and regional temples, thus neglecting the interactions of the regional temples themselves. Sakamoto Masahito explores Shingon communities in Hitachi and northern Shimofusa 下総 during the medieval period, pointing out that at the end of the medieval period these regions witnessed the emergence of powerful temples due to the transmission of *fuhō* (SAKAMOTO 1985). Yet, Sakamoto does not clarify the difference

3. The term “sacred teaching” is a material category encompassing an extremely diverse array of texts, including doctrinal commentaries on Buddhist texts, ritual manuals, records of oral transmission, and initiation certificates (RAPPO 2018, 115).

4. Actually, such economic support was typical of Shingon communities from the mid-fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. See the records preserved at Takidanji published in HSKKCH (2012), especially the introductions to *komonjo* 古文書 and *shōgyō* collections by Matsuura Yoshinori and Tonooka Shin'ichiro, for more examples.

between a branch temple and a temple where a disciple resided. As for Echizen, Matsuura Yoshinori discusses the disciple temples associated with Takidanji as branch temples (HSKKCH 2012).

The disciple temples of Takidanji were not simply branch temples. Rather, these temples belonging to Takidanji's network exhibited parallel relations with each other. Therefore, the temples maintained a degree of independence that was denied to branch temples.

This independence was due, in part, to the previous religious landscape in Mikuni Port before Takidanji was founded. Senjuji 千手寺, a Tendai temple, probably prospered here in the early medieval period. The *Taiheiki* (37) records that it was used as a castle in the civil wars of the fourteenth century. Senjuji's influence in the region seems to have waned during the war, and in 1381, one of its monks invited Shōkaiji 性海寺, primarily a Ritsu temple, to move into the land where a sub-temple of the Senjuji had once stood in order to reestablish religious and economic power. As KANEMAKI (1997, 124) pointed out, Shokaiji agreed to the move because it was attracted by the prosperity of Mikuni Port. Takidanji was founded around the same time, which suggests that Shingon succeeded at establishing a foothold in the region by the end of the fourteenth century.

Production of Sacred Teachings and the Foundation of Takidanji in the Fourteenth Century

In 1382, Takidanji's founder Eiken set down rules for the temple, titled *Regulations for All Future Generations at Manihōji* (Takidanji).⁵ The following items explain Takidanji's religious functions:

(Item no. 15) Concerning ritual implements (*dōgu* 道具) belonging to this temple used in Dharma consecrations (*kanjō* 灌頂): even disciples who have been learning in the same closed room (*misshitsu* 密室) must come to Takidanji, the head temple, when they need to borrow such objects to fulfill their functions. Even Takidanji monks must not remove instruments from the temple, much less monks from other temples and lineages.

(Item no. 16) Not a single page of the sacred teachings kept in this temple must be taken elsewhere. However, those residing at Takidanji for the purpose of spreading the merit of the Buddhist teachings have the right to decide how best to use the sacred teachings. Never, at any time, let anyone remove a sacred teaching under the pretense that it is his own property.

(Item no. 17) As for the plant life of this temple, each monk (*bōzu* 坊主) has discretion over the branches and plants along the walls of his accommodation (*bō* 坊) and also of its roof thatch. But monks must not fell pine and cedar trees

5. Manihōji was the original name of Takidanji.

TABLE 1. A brief timeline of Eiken's copying of sacred teachings and other activities. The table is based on data regarding Takidanji's sacred teachings in TM and Hi-CAT Plus of the Historical Institute, The University of Tokyo (no. BD2014-019300).

DATE	TEXTS	INFORMATION FROM COLOPHONS
1365	<i>Gokyō mondōshō</i> 五教問答鈔	Copied at Tōzenji 東禪寺 (Chida Estate of Shimofusa Province)
1366	<i>Gokyō mondōshō</i>	Copied at Tōzenji
1368	<i>Sanbōinryū denpō kanjō gegi hōsoku</i> 三寶院流伝法灌頂外儀法則	Copied at Shōkōin (Ōsu Estate of Owari Province), based on Shinkei's copy
1374	<i>Gokyō mondōshō</i>	Requested to be copied at Negoroji
1374	<i>Hyakuhō mondō</i> 百法問答	Requested the monk Genkū from Higo Province to copy at Negoroji Daidenbōin 根來寺大伝法院
1374	<i>Hyakuhō mondō</i>	Requested monks from Kyushu to copy at a sub-temple in Negoroji Daidenbōin
1374	<i>Hyakuhō mondō</i>	Requested the monk Enzōbō from Shinano Province to copy at Negoroji Daidenbōin
1375.4.27	<i>Daisho watakushi kikigaki</i> 大疏私聞書	Made a copy based on the manuscript copied at Negoroji
Eiken built a hermitage in Echizen		
1375.12.23	<i>Nikyōron watakushi kikigaki</i> 二教論私聞書	Made a clean copy at Shōkaiji seminary based on a draft written in 1372
1376.2.24	<i>Shōjigi watakushi kikigaki</i> 声字義私聞書	Made a clean copy at Shōkaiji seminary based on a draft copied at Negoroji Kongōdaiin 金剛台院 in 1364
1381		Founded Manihōji 摩尼宝寺
1382		Composed regulations for Takidanji
1385.6.2		Received transmission certification from Ryūgen at Shakain in Daigoji
1386	<i>Shukke jukaihō</i> 出家受戒法	Copied at Rishūbo based on Ryūgen's manuscript
1386	<i>Bosatsukai ryakusahō</i> 菩薩戒略作法	Requested copy based on Raiyu's manuscript
1398.7.10		Received Dharma consecration from Ryūgen at Shakain in Daigoji and became an <i>ajari</i>

at the root. Plants may only be used for construction and repairs when this is to the benefit of the temple's seminary (*dangisho* 談義所). (TM, 276–277)

Item number fifteen concerns implements for the consecration rites, by which monks transmitted the minutia of rituals. It states that those who need to borrow them must come to the temple to do so. Meanwhile, according to item number sixteen, taking sacred teachings out of Takidanji is forbidden in principle, but Takidanji's resident monks who seek to disseminate Shingon teachings may be allowed to do so. Both of these items focus on materials—ritual implements and sacred teachings used for *fuhō*—that serve as pillars of any Shingon temple. Moreover, item number seventeen governs usage of plant life, emphasizes priority of the temple's seminary, and stipulates that trees and plants can be managed and used only for repairing this building. Based on item number seventeen, we can see that the seminary was an important part of Takidanji. On the whole, these regulations show that from the time of its foundation, Takidanji valued *fuhō* activities, especially Dharma consecration, as well as sacred teachings, both of which gave authority to the construction and maintenance of the seminary at Takidanji.

Eiken's scholastic training may have informed his reasoning for composing such rules. Born in Mimasaka 美作 Province (modern-day Okayama), he traveled to a number of Shingon monasteries near Kyoto for study (TSUCHIYA 1984, 14). In 1365, he copied the *Gokyō mondōshō* in Shimofusa, and in 1368 he stayed in Owari 尾張 to copy the *Sanbōinryū denpō kanjō gegihōsoku*. In the fifth month of 1374, while staying in the guest house of Negoroji, he copied many sacred teachings, which he compiled in the *Daisho watakushi kikigaki*.⁶ Since the late fourteenth century, Negoroji had become a center for scholastic training, which provided an ideal environment for Eiken to acquire teachings from various lineages (MIYOSHI 2018, 3). He later went to Echizen, where he constructed a hermitage, and continued his copying activities at Shōkaiji, where he made clean copies (*seisho* 清書) of the sacred teachings that he had roughly copied while at Negoroji. Not long after, he founded Manihōji and composed the above temple regulations. In 1385, Eiken received succession (*inka* 印可) from the Daigoji monk Ryūgen.

A large number of sacred teachings, including the seal of succession Eiken received from Daigoji and the texts he personally copied, were preserved at

6. Previous studies suggest that Negoroji was formed when Raiyu 頼瑜 (1226–1304) relocated Daidenbōin from Mt. Kōya 高野 in the late thirteenth century. However, there are records indicating that Daidenbōin existed on Mt. Kōya until the late fifteenth century. Also, in the same year as the founding of Daidenbōin on Mt. Kōya, Kakuban 覚鑿 (1095–1143) founded Bufukuji 豊福寺 as a branch temple of Daidenbōin with the support of the Retired Emperor Go Toba 後鳥羽 (1103–1156). This branch temple, Bufukuji, later became Negoroji (NAKAGAWA 2017).

Takidanji. Continuing the process of copying and housing sacred teachings was one reason for founding the temple around 1377. The regulations for borrowing the texts, penned in 1382, reflects similar procedures that Eiken would have learned at Negoroji and Daigoji.

Another reason for founding Takidanji in Echizen was the economic prosperity of Mikuni Port. Temples such as Senjuji and Shōkaiji had already been established in the area along with a market town outside the temple gates (KANE-MAKI 1997, 124–125). According to colophons in the sacred teachings stored at Takidanji, Eiken copied the *Nikyōron watakushi kikigaki* at Shōkaiji in 1375, and a year later revised a copy of the *Shōjigi watakushi kikigaki*, which he had roughly copied at Negoroji in 1364. These colophons suggest Shōkaiji had been a well-established center for the copying of Shingon texts, which would have drawn Eiken to conduct his copying activities and to build his own temple, Takidanji, nearby.⁷

Ryūgen, the Daigoji Hōon'in monk who was Eiken's master, must have had reasons for supporting Eiken's efforts in preparing sacred teachings for his intended temple, and especially for the regulated usage of these works. Thus, the mutually beneficial relationship between head and branch temples can therefore be said to have existed as early as the fourteenth century. For Ryūgen, helping a disciple expand the influence of his lineage into an economically prosperous area increased the possibility of support for his home institution.

Takidanji's Disciple Temples in the Fifteenth Century

Records of donations (*chūshinjō* 注進状) originally preserved at Tōji 東寺, a powerful Shingon temple complex in Kyoto, document the early stages of Takidanji's success at gaining several branch temples as well as the independent relationships between Takidanji and its disciple temples. In the mid-fifteenth century, Tōji secured permission from the court and the shogunate to carry out repairs.⁸ Under the leadership of a chief alms collector (*daikanjin* 大勧進) named Hoei 宝栄, fundraising was implemented in various provinces, including Echizen and Wakasa. As Itō Toshikazu points out, this exercise was to collect donations from the disciples of Kūkai 空海 (774–835), who were scattered across the country. Alms were collected as an obligation that temples owed to the Shingon sectarian authorities (Itō 2010, 396). Tōji secured support not only from Shingon temples but from religious houses of other Buddhist schools as well.

7. For more discussion on seminaries in medieval Japan, see WATANABE (2010) and JOBO-DAIIN SHIRYŌ KENKYŪKAI (2018).

8. In the early medieval period, religious fundraising conducted by central temples was supported by the imperial court or the shogunate. But in the late medieval period, as the Muromachi shogunate lost its hegemony and thus no longer functioned as a guarantor, Buddhist institutions in Kyoto began to search for new methods to collect funds for their repairs.

TABLE 2. Disciple temples of Takidanji according to the *Takidanji monto no shidai* (TM, 278).

1	Reizan'in 靈山院	12	An'yōji 安養寺
2	Jihōin 持宝院	13	Hōjuin 宝樹院
3	Itozakiji 糸崎寺	14	Sekisenji 関泉寺
4	Manitaiji 摩尼鉢寺	15	Kongōin 金剛院
5	Kannonji 観音寺	16	Kishimizuji 岸水寺
6	Dengokuji 田谷寺	17	Fukuchiin 福智院
7	Ichiōji 一王寺	18	Anrakuin 安楽院
8	Hōjuin 宝珠院	19	Nan'yōin 南陽院
9	Jikōin 慈光院	20	Yaemakiji 八重巻寺
10	Tenchiji 天池寺	21	Amidasan 阿弥陀山
11	Zengyōin 善行院	22	Shōrakuji 正楽寺

Ōei 応永 21 (1414), first month

The list of temples and monks who donated funds to Tōji includes Takidanji, which is recorded as “Mikuni Port, Takidanji Temple, with branch temples.” This account indicates that donations from branch temples were calculated alongside those of Takidanji itself. However, some of Takidanji’s disciple temples were recorded separately, such as “Dengokuji 田谷寺, 21 people, 2 *kan* 貫, 300 *mon* 文,” and “Kishimizuji 岸水寺, 10 people, 1 *kan* 貫” (KFSSM, 155). We can also see from this record how many monks from disciple temples donated and how much they donated. This method for recording donations proves that the relationship between Takidanji and its disciple temples was not of the head-branch type. Although little is known about Takidanji’s branch temples in the fifteenth century, it is reasonable to assume that disciple temples remained independent, as a branch temple usually has economic obligations to the head temple.

So how did disciple temples interact with Takidanji? First, the fourth abbot of Takidanji, Rai'nin 頼任 (d.u.), previously resided at Hōjuin (TM, 284). Given that the appointment of the abbot relied heavily on interpersonal relationships among monks, Rai'nin’s promotion strongly suggests that there was an active line of communication among Shingon monks in the regions and that the disciple temples provided resources to Takidanji in the form of candidates for abbots. Second, a copy of the *Regulations for all Future Generations at Takidanji* was found among sacred teachings collected by Takidanji’s disciple temple Zengyōin; a copy was brought back to Takidanji and recopied by the Takidanji monk Raisei

頼晴 (d.u.) after 1509 (TM, 277). From Raisei's note to the copy of the regulations, we know that the original manuscript was probably burnt in conflicts between the Asakura and the Ikkō Ikki 一向一揆 uprisings.⁹ Therefore, this evidence suggests that copying activities were one way of disseminating temple regulations between Takidanji and its disciple temples.

These communications and exchanges were not limited to Takidanji and its disciple temples. Anrakuin 安楽院 is an intersecting case. In a list of the monks at Gendatsuji 賢達寺 who also donated to Tōji's fundraising, the name Eiju 睿重 (d.u.) appears at the very beginning of the record. A marginal note on the back of the document reads, "Gentatsuji, disciple of Anrakuin, Yoshida District" (KFSSM, 155). Anrakuin was a disciple temple of Takidanji, which means its monks received *fuhō* from the central temple. Thus, we can identify a disciple network connecting Takidanji, its disciple temple Anrakuin, and disciples of Anrakuin. This relationship illustrates how disciple temple networks functioned. These relationships clearly included human resources and the copying of sacred teachings, both of which were based on the master-disciple connections (*shishi sōjō* 師資相承).

Changes at Takidanji and its Disciple Temples in the Sixteenth Century

Takidanji's network and its relationship with its disciple temples underwent further development in the sixteenth century. As the extract in TABLE 3 demonstrates, Takidanji became a center for consecration rites in the region. This role within the Shingon school as a seat of regional power was based on a connection with Daigoji.

Some of the attendants (*shikishu* 職衆) listed in the table were from Yaemakiji, Ichioji, and Hōjuin, which are recorded in the *Takidanji monto no shidai*. The fact that monks from these temples regularly attended consecration rites held at Takidanji indicates that the relationships between Takidanji and disciple temples were maintained through the sixteenth century, more than a century after the *Takidanji monto no shidai* was recorded.

From 1542 to 1565, such consecration rites were frequently held at Takidanji and at its disciple temples in Kitagata Bay, close to the boundary of Echizen and Kaga. From records of such rites, we can infer two points. First, the fact that

9. Echizen is where the largest religious uprisings took place. Prior scholarship relating to the religious landscape of Echizen has focused on relationships between Tendai, Shingon, and Jōdo Shin (INOUE 1968), the common narrative being that Tendai and Shingon were highly influential before Ikko Ikki began while Jōdo Shin groups assumed dominance afterwards. This is partly true, given that the powerful Tendai temple Heisenji 平泉寺 was defeated by the uprisings. However, as Asaka Toshiki has noted, Shingon temples were founded in northern Echizen from the fourteenth century. Takidanji and Shōkaiji are the best examples (ASAKA 1988).



MAP. The map was drawn by the author using *Fukuiken zenzu* 福井県全図 (HEIBONSHA, 1981) as the original map. Cartographical data for the locations were drawn from TM (278).

TABLE 3. Monks attending consecration rites at Takidanji and its disciple temples according to the *Denpō kanjō shikishu no koto* 伝法灌頂職衆事 (TSUCHIYA 1984, 75).

Raishiki <i>daisōzu</i> 頼職大僧都 <bai 唄, shugan 咒願>	Eisho <i>hōin</i> 栄照法印
Yaemakiji <i>daisōzu</i> 八重巻寺大僧都	Yozei <i>daisōzu</i> 用世大僧都
Ichioji <i>daisōzu</i> 一王寺大僧都	Eisen'in <i>daisōzu</i> 栄泉院大僧都
Tamonin <i>daisōzu</i> 多聞院大僧都	Jin'uji <i>hōin</i> 神羽寺法印
Genkū <i>daisōzu</i> 源空大僧都 <sange 散花>	An'yōin <i>hōin</i> 安養院法印 <jukyō 誦經>
The above are wielders of the vajra (<i>jikongō shū</i> 持金剛衆).	
Zengyōin <i>shōsōzu</i> 善行院少僧都	Jikōin <i>daisōzu</i> 慈光院大僧都
Hōjuin <i>shōsōzu</i> 宝珠院少僧都	Amida'in <i>daisōzu</i> 阿弥陀院大僧都 <san 讚>
The above are all attendants taking part in the consecration rites at Takidanji on the fifth of next month. Thus, it is decided.	
Kōji 弘治 3 (1557) third month, twenty-seventh day, clerk in charge of event (<i>gyōji</i> 行事), <i>Daijari gon daisōzu hōin Jitsuryū</i> 大阿闍梨權大僧都法印実隆.	

monks from Takidanji and its disciple temples were holding such ceremonies jointly suggests that the relationship between Takidanji and its disciple temples in the Kitagata Bay area had strengthened over time.¹⁰ From 1506 to 1570, the Ikkō Ikki uprisings in Echizen and Kaga continuously fought with the Asakura clan. Records of Takidanji's land holdings and many of its sacred teachings were lost at this time. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the strengthening of the relationships between Takidanji and Kitagata Bay was a necessity in the face of chaos.

Second, the Hōon'in monk Genga visited Takidanji in 1554 and conducted *fuho* there for three Takidanji monks (FUJII 2008, 269). This arguably raised the religious status of Takidanji in the region. Furthermore, Genga's visit to the temple granted its monks the authority to conduct consecration rites on their own, which would in turn increase the number of disciples.

FUJII Masako (2008, 319) has documented the financial support that Hōon'in received from Takidanji. For instance, in order to collect provisions for reroofing the halls of Hōon'in, in 1560 Genga asked Takidanji to collect money from its disciples and patrons (TM, 302–303). Some disciple temples of Takidanji (Ichioji, Zengyoin, Yaemakiji, and Dengokuji [TM, 303–305]) also donated to Hōon'in fundraising campaigns. Although Takidanji was demonstrably important in economic terms, it also had other significant functions. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Genga was appointed *Tōji chōja* 東寺長者, Tōji's highest-ranking Buddhist official (TM, 287). He was required to perform a ritual known as *haido* 拜堂, that is, visiting the Buddhist halls to worship. The performance of this ritual necessitated several servants (*genin* 下人), and Genga requested that Takidanji summon servants from its disciple temples. The following document, probably written by Genga after 1550, describes his request:

I understand that Echizen is at peace. As I am looking for servants, I sent a few letters to [Takidanji's] disciples. I should write individually, but I hope you, as the *nōge* 能化, will see whether they agree to cooperate or not. I send you here-with some ink as a token of thanks. Gyōjuin 行樹院 will tell you the details [of requirements for servants], so I will not write any further. With gratitude.

Sixth month, twenty-first day
Former *daisōjo* 大僧正 Genga¹¹
To Takidanji (TM, 306–307)

10. These disciple temples were Zengyōin (in the ninth month of 1561) and Jōjuin 成就院 (in the fourth month of 1553 and fourth month of 1563). I surveyed the *Denpō kanjō shikishu no koto*, most of which are not published, via Hi-CAT Plus of the Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo. Only two containing the full text are open to the public in printed form (TSUCHIYA 1984).

11. According to the *Genga juyōki* 源雅授与記, Genga was known as “the former (*saki* 前) *daisōjo*” after 1550 (SAKAMOTO 2004).

Genga was relying on the role of Takidanji monks as *nōge* (“the one who transforms”), which refers to the head instructor in matters of doctrine at a Buddhist temple.¹² *Nōge* gave lectures and held seminars for monks affiliated with the *nōge*’s institution, as well those who came from other places. Through such scholastic activities, *nōge* were highly respected, and their words were influential on monks in their communities. Genga could rely on the fact that Takidanji was a leading temple in Shingon Buddhism and, therefore, would be able to gather the people he needed.

Friction between Takidanji and Other Shingon Temples

So far, this article has demonstrated how Takidanji functioned as the center of a disciple temple network. This section focuses on how Takidanji interacted with other Shingon temples in the region. In order to understand regional communities in their entirety, it is essential to include accounts of conflict and competition between these temples. Two examples of such temples with whom Takidanji clashed were Shōkaiji and Sōjiji 惣持寺.

Shōkaiji, located in Mikuni Port, was where Eiken copied sacred teachings, and it was established prior to Takidanji. Takidanji monks had to cooperate with such Shingon institutions if they aimed to spread the teachings of their lineage. Shōkaiji amassed many devotees during the Warring States period. The powerful local warrior clan, the Sakai 堺, donated land to the abbot of Shōkaiji in 1478. The certificate of this donation (*kishinjō* 寄進状) indicates that the abbot, referred to as *nōge*, was to receive income from the land (SM, 223). As we have seen, Takidanji monks played an influential role as *nōge* for temples in the region. However, there were also *nōge* in Shōkaiji who practiced memorial rituals for local lords. A certificate of donation dated to 1504 from a member of the Horie 堀江 family called Kagejitsu 景実 (d.u.) requests the abbot of Shōkaiji to continue to annually recite the *Lotus Sūtra* as the former abbot had previously done (SM, 225). Another donation certificate from 1517 suggests a close connection between the Horie and Shōkaiji. According to this certificate, Kagejitsu and his son offered income from land to a sub-temple of Shōkaiji called Seihain 清葩院 in return for a memorial tablet for a member of their family, Seiha Daishi 清葩大姉 (d.u.) (SM, 226). The name of this sub-temple suggests it was built as a memorial to this member of the Horie family whose Buddhist name was Seiha.

Shōkaiji was highly valued by the Horie family, who, we should add, were the most powerful retainers of the Asakura. Therefore, the regional religious

12. At the head temple, instructor monks were called *gakuto* 学頭. Among visiting monks (*kyakusō* 客僧) at a head temple, the most senior instructor was called *nōge*. The *nōge* also traveled to seminaries in the countryside, and monks who received their instruction were called *shoge* 所化 (SAKAMOTO 2005).

status of Shōkaiji—at least within Mikuni Port—was guaranteed. What is more, Shōkaiji monks received direct transmission from Daigoji monks. As we can see in the document below, dated to 1560, a Shokaiji monk named Son'yo 尊誉 (d.u.) received certification of transmission from Genga:

You came to the capital longing for elevation in position (*jūi* 重位). I promised to do this for you. I gave you a certificate stating that as long as you live [Shōkaiji monks] should remain unreservedly loyal to us as a branch temple. You should devote yourselves to the prosperity of our Hōon'in lineage. Humbly I state this.

Eiroku 3 (1560)

Ninth month, ninth day, Hōon'in Genga
Shōkaiji *hōin* (TM, 303; SAKAMOTO 2004)

As prior research has posited, Shōkaiji monks hereby vowed to remain a branch temple to Daigoji rather than become estranged from it (FUKUIKEN 1994, 933). We must note that Son'yo traveled the long distance from Echizen to the capital (modern Kyoto) to receive the transmissions. Shōkaiji must have taken the initiative and directly approached the head temple Daigoji.

Takidanji had a different relationship with another temple in the region, Sōjiji. Located in Kanatsu 金津 on the border between the Kawaguchi and Tsuboe estates, Sōjiji developed into a powerful Shingon temple in part due to the economic prosperity of the area. A Sōjiji monk named Yūchin 宥鎮 (d.u.) was a disciple of Genga's successor, the Daigoji monk Shin'ō 深応 (1489–1573) (FUJII 2008, 246). Thus, some Sōjiji monks received direct transmission from Daigoji monks. In fact, Sōjiji also created its own disciple temples. This direct line to Daigoji proved to be problematic for the temple's relationship with Takidanji. In the mid-sixteenth century, Kishimizuji 岸水寺, whose monks belonged to the Sōjiji lineage, accused Takidanji of threatening behavior:

We beg to report this. We have read the petition [submitted to you] from Takidanji, and first of all we appreciate you sending it to us. Our temple (Kishimizuji) follows precedent and continues the lineage of Sōjiji, which we have passed on from generation to generation (*kechimyaku* 血脈). However, now, Takidanji states that they require us (Kishimizuji monks) to embrace a new lineage. We are unprepared for this and consider the matter with much annoyance. We ask you to convey our sentiments to the Asakura and obtain their confirmation that we may follow the Sōjiji lineage as heretofore. We would greatly appreciate this. We humbly state the above.

Twelfth month, thirteenth day, Shinkei

[Other monks' signatures]

[To a retainer of the Asakura] (TM, 299–300)

We can assume two points from this information. First, Sōjiji was an influential Shingon temple in competition with Takidanji. Second, Takidanji monks

sought to interfere with Kishimizuji's lineage, and the monks at Kishimizuji resisted. The second point is notable as evidence that Kishimizuji intentionally broke away from the Takidanji network. Kishimizuji is in fact listed in the *Takidanji monto no shidai* of 1414 as a disciple temple. However, it is not listed under Takidanji in Toji's records of donations; hence, it was not a typical branch temple but a more independent disciple temple. That is what put Kishimizuji's lineage into a state of flux: its monks were claiming to follow a Sōjiji lineage that descended directly from Daigoji via Genga's successor Shinō.

Based on the actions of Shōkaiji and Kishimizuji, we can assume that there was competition among Shingon temples in Echizen during this period. How did Takidanji respond to this? In 1564, five new items were added to the *Regulations for all Future Generations at Takidanji* by its abbot, Jitsuryū 実隆 (1512–1570). There is a commentary on back of the page (*uragaki* 裏書) added by the head of the Asakura family, Asakura Yoshikage 朝倉義景 (1533–1573), affirming the rules originally made by the Takidanji founder Eiken and asserting that these five additions must be followed as well. The first two new regulations state:

Supplementary Rules

For temples following the lineage of Takidanji: since the time of Takidanji's founder Eiken, disciples have not been allowed to transfer to other lineages. Additionally, disciples can receive consecration rites only from Takidanji monks and only at Takidanji. It is forbidden to receive them from other Shingon temples or outside Echizen.

If a disciple monk wants to conduct consecration rites for the purpose of spreading the merit of the Buddhist teachings, Takidanji will judge his ability and determine whether to permit it. A monk from a branch temple does not have the right to decide this independently. Consecration rites may not be conducted without permission of Takidanji. (TM, 316–317)

Prior research points out that with the backing of the Asakura, Takidanji hoped to prohibit the movement of disciples into other lineages or schools; one means was to strengthen control over branch temples by seizing the right to conduct consecration rites (FUKUIKEN 1994, 936–937). However, it is clear that this control was aimed not only at branch temples but also at disciple temples, whose relationships with Takidanji were, in theory, fluid. Competition with other Shingon temples made it necessary for Takidanji to control disciple temples and their monks in this way.

In the sixteenth century, Daigoji Hōon'in demanded not only economic support from Takidanji but also labor, such as providing servants. To do so, Daigoji relied on Takidanji's *nōge*, who enjoyed a good reputation and was able to mobilize resources in the region. From the 1530s to the 1550s, consecration rites prevailed at Takidanji and disciple temples in the Kitagata Bay area, resulting

in a broadening of disciple temple networks. This was probably done out of necessity to survive during warfare between the Asakura and Ikkō Ikki uprisings. It is important to note that this was a process in which other temples, such as Shōkaiji and Sōjiji, competed with Takidanji. These temples and their own disciple temples might even rebel against Takidanji and even sever themselves from its network. Takidanji resorted to issuing new rules as a countermeasure.

SUPPORT AND PROTECTION FROM THE ASAKURA AND DAIGOJI

It was common for Buddhist institutions to rely on daimyo to thrive in the sixteenth century. Takidanji was no exception. It needed support from both secular (Asakura) and religious (Daigoji) authorities, but what were the differences in protection offered by the Asakura and Daigoji? One significant case was Asakura's endorsement of Takidanji's control of its branch temples.

Like other daimyo during the Warring States period, the Asakura established prayer temples to conduct rituals for family members. Takidanji was given this role by Asakura Sadakage 貞景 (1473–1512) and Takakage 孝景 (1493–1548), the third and fourth heads of the Asakura clan. In the latter case, this exempted the Takidanji from taxation and military service (TM, 281). Asakura power increased from Sadakage's time, and Takidanji gained further support and protection by providing various rituals in return.

The nature of Takidanji's control over its branch temple is exemplified by the temple's relationship with the Asakura. In 1564, Asakura Yoshikage issued an order declaring Gashimaji 賀嶋寺 in Kaga Province, a branch temple of Takidanji, to be a prayer temple of the Asakura. He also clarified that Takidanji had the right to appoint the abbot of Gashimaji and its sub-temples as well as manage its landholdings (TM, 315–316). This order was the outcome of a prior conflict at Gashimaji regarding the succession of the abbotship for a sub-temple called Shōkenbō 勝賢坊. A letter from Genga reveals that he informed Gashimaji that the monk Ōkurakyo 大藏卿 (d.u.) would become the abbot and, hence, control its property and landholdings (TM, 306). The dispute arose because while Ōkurakyo was the disciple of the former abbot and his apparent heir, another monk named Sanmi 三位 (d.u.) seized the position (TM, 309). This was inexcusable to the temple authorities at Daigoji. This incident resulted in stark economic consequences for Gashimaji's sub-temple and allowed Takidanji to step in and take over administration of Gashimaji.

Genga died in 1562. We can assume that Takidanji asked Shin'ō (who had inherited Genga's position at Hōon'in), to validate Ōkurakyo's abbotship just as Genga had previously done, because Shin'ō penned a similar letter. Yoshikage's order was probably issued after Shin'ō's letter, which was not a coincidence. There is no doubt that Takidanji considered support from Hōon'in alone to be

insufficient when dealing with the struggles at Gashimaji and that they also needed assurance from the Asakura to protect their claim to administrative control of Gashimaji and its sub-temples.

Nevertheless, reliance on Asakura power did not necessarily mean the waning of Daigoji's authority. Takidanji continued to ask the monastic complex for help in receiving *fuhō*, controlling its branch temples, and so on. In a letter to Takidanji, Genga states that if any Takidanji monk wished to be promoted within the official monastic bureaucracy (*sōgō* 僧綱) he would try to help (TM, 308). In 1569, one of his disciples, Gagon 雅巖 (1548–1595), wrote to the abbot of Takidanji expressing gratitude for financial support, and reporting Shin'ō's appointment as *sōjō*, the highest monastic rank. What is significant here is that Takidanji monks were also being appointed to high-ranking Buddhist offices and that Gagon expressed his congratulations for this, noting that since Takidanji occupied the top position in Echizen it is reasonable for followers of that lineage to be appointed (TM, 320). It can be confirmed from Gagon's letter that Takidanji monks were appointed to positions based on Hōon'in's recommendation. This letter reveals that regional Shingon monks strove to become members of the monastic bureaucracy and that this status could only be achieved with Daigoji's support, a function that Asakura power could not replace.

Daigoji's evaluation of Takidanji emphasizing its position in the Hōon'in lineage of Echizen, as written in Shin'ō's letter, was obviously not as high as it had once been. As discussed in the preceding section, Takidanji faced competition from Shōkaiji and Sōjiji, regional temples characterized by parallel relationships to the main temple in the central metropolitan region. A letter from Genga of 1543 mentions Takidanji along with Sōjiji, asking both to request that their branch temples donate to Genga's *haido* ceremony (TM, 287). A couple of years later, Shin'ō claimed in a letter to Takidanji that Takidanji was the direct descent (*chakke* 嫡家) of Hōon'in's branch temples in Echizen (TM, 309). The rise of Takidanji's status could be attributed to its numerous financial contributions to the head temple at Daigoji.

In this way, Takidanji mobilized the power of the Asakura as well as the religious authority of Daigoji. On the one hand, control over branch temples could not be realized without Asakura protection. On the other, Daigoji Hōon'in's authority was effective in getting Takidanji monks obtaining promotions, which were highly valued at a regional level.

Conclusion

The relationship between Takidanji and its disciple temples developed over the course of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. It retained disciple temples through transmission of the minutia of rituals, and through activities as a

seminary. This was done based on Eiken's experiences at Daigoji, Negoroji, and Shōkaiji. As a result, twenty-two temples (as listed in the *Takidanji monto no shidai*) became its disciples. The relationship between Takidanji and its disciple temples was based on *fuhō*. Disciple temples also formed their own disciple temples through transmissions. In the sixteenth century two changes occurred. First, Takidanji solidified itself at the core of a network of disciple temples, such as Ichiōji and Yaemakiji. This is confirmed by Genga's request to Takidanji and from the monks who attended the Dharma consecration rites. The second change was a strengthening of the relationship between Takidanji and its disciple temples on the border between Kaga and Echizen. This move aimed at insulating itself from war between the Asakura and Ikkō Ikki uprisings.

In this article, I have highlighted the difference between disciple and branch temples in Echizen Province. Takidanji strengthened control over its branch temples through the appointment of abbots and management of landholdings with the support of the Asakura. However, Takidanji's relationship with temples in its network diverged from the normative head branch system. Shingon temples in Hitachi and northern Shimofusa, for example, were linked to an influential temple by receiving transmissions (SAKAMOTO 1985). The continuity through which these temples received transmissions from a single temple made them subservient to this temple in a manner more typical of a branch temple.

Furthermore, in contrast to previous studies of the head-temple system and temple networks, the findings presented in this article suggest that there was considerable competition within local Shingon communities. Connections to the Daigoji monk Genga, who possessed religious authority, contributed to the rise of Takidanji's status. Influential regional temples such as Takidanji functioned as economic mediators between Daigoji and disciple temples in the regional society, making it possible for Daigoji to solicit donations on a larger scale. Thus, due to the centralization of powerful regional temples, the harmonious communications between temples in their networks might seem natural. However, we cannot ignore that other regional Shingon temples were in competition with Takidanji, and some even sought to destabilize its authority in the region. That is to say, the Shingon community in Echizen was multipolar, consisting at least of Takidanji, Shōkaiji, and Sōjiji.

Connections with Daigoji contributed to an increase in the religious status of Shingon temples in the area. However, as in the case of Echizen, authority was not always monopolized by a certain regional temple. Takidanji, Shōkaiji, and Sōjiji all actively sought direct links to Daigoji. Thus, Takidanji's superiority was neither stable nor guaranteed. It was only realized because of protection offered by the Asakura clan. The dispersal of *fuhō* by central temples, whether at the initiative of the head temple or at the request of local monks, influenced the regional religious landscape. Competition among temples in the region for such

transmissions—and the elevation in position that accompanied them—was as much a dynamic of the Shingon temple network in Echizen as the harmonious relations between the temples under Asakura patronage.

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