

MCCALLUM, DONALD F. *Zenkōji and Its Icon: A Study in Medieval Japanese Religious Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995. xviii + 268 pages. Maps, plates, glossary, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$39.50; ISBN 0-691-03203-3.

At first glance, a study of a single Japanese Buddhist temple—in actuality a study of medieval sculpture—might not seem to be of deep interest to folklorists, but this text covers a wide range of fascinating topics. Opening with the dramatic tale of the destruction of Zenkōji in the Genpei wars at the end of the twelfth century, and proceeding through analyses of provincial history, religious practice, and stylistic variation among images made between the thirteenth through the fifteenth centuries, Donald McCallum weaves a fabric that speaks clearly and profoundly, not only to the art historian or Japanologist, but to anyone interested in the development of religious belief and practice. Recent scholarship on medieval Japan has produced a number of studies of religious institutions and the artifacts associated with them, such as Bill Tyler's work with the Kasuga Shrine and Tanabe's analysis of the *Lotus Sutra*; McCallum's book successfully integrates many aspects of the Zenkōji cult—legend, belief, practice, site, imagery, and style—into an effective contribution to this genre.

The large Buddhist temple called Zenkōji, located in the city of Nagano in the central mountain range on the main island of Japan, is said to have been founded in 644 CE, and has been an important center of religious activity since at least the eleventh century. The primary icon of Zenkōji is an image of Amida (Amitabha), buddha of the Western Paradise, with two attendant bodhisattvas, Kannon bosatsu (Avalokiteśvara) and Seishi bosatsu (Mahasthāprapta). Oddly enough, the “actual” Zenkōji icon is not illustrated in McCallum's book, as it is a *hibutsu* hidden image, its spiritual power enhanced through secrecy, physically revealed to the world only on the rarest of occasions; it has apparently never been photographed. The icon is believed to be a “Living Buddha,” created miraculously during the lifetime of the historical Buddha over two millennia ago. After traveling supernaturally to the Korean kingdom of Paekche, the icon arrived in Japan in the sixth century and was enshrined at Zenkōji in or about 602, according to the *Zenkōji engi* and other texts cited by McCallum. There it spawned a cult of believers, a range of practices, and a number of copies, particularly in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which are the central objects of McCallum's study.

The structure of the text is straightforward and mostly chronological. After an introduction outlining his work with this material over a period of more than twenty-five years, McCallum describes the Shinano region and its history, the legendary accounts of the Zenkōji icon, and the early history of the Zenkōji cult. He then introduces over twenty copies of the Zenkōji icon; by grouping the images both temporally and geographically, he brings order to a body of subtly diverse and potentially confusing material. After further discussion of the cult and its history from the fourteenth century to the present, he draws conclusions about the icon itself as well as the structure of religious practice surrounding it. The book has extensive footnotes and bibliography, a glossary providing Japanese equivalents for terms used in the text, and a thorough index. It concludes with pictorial illustrations including maps, iconographic drawings, and monochrome photographs of the sculptural works analyzed in the text.

McCallum's work is in general careful and complete, clear evidence of his extensive research and consideration of this material. The illustrations are perhaps the least attractive feature of the volume—with the exception of the dust jacket, they are monochromes, and many are fuzzy and unclear. There are occasional problems with consistency within the text. For example, in discussing the drapery of various bodhisattva images, he describes the “*koshi-*

nuno (cloth wrapped around the hips)" (108). On page 113 this same element is referred to as the "under-robe," and the line drawing of the configuration (Illustration 15c, "Diagram of Bosatsu's Drapery") is annotated with the term "Loin Cloth" for a drape located between the "apron" and the "skirt." The discrepancy is probably the result of repeated drafts describing the configuration while trying to avoid repetition of identical phraseology. Such minor errors do not, however, prevent understanding of this text in any way.

To the folklorist, the material in chapter three, "The Origin of the Zenkōji Amida Triad," is probably the most immediately accessible. However, the conclusions drawn in chapter eight, discussing the relationship between icon, myth, believers, and priesthood, are of equal interest and importance. Moreover, it would be a shame to skip McCallum's masterful analysis of visual aspects and clear historical structure in the central chapters of this finely honed text. We can look forward to his treatment of another important lineage of icons, the Sciryōi Shaka images of the historical Buddha, in the near future.

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KOREA

HABOUSH, JAHYUN KIM, translation, introduction and annotations. *The Memoirs of Lady Hyegyōng: The Autobiographical Writings of a Crown Princess of Eighteenth-Century Korea*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. xii + 372 pages. Map, illustrations, appendices, glossary, index. Cloth US\$50.00; ISBN 0-520-20054-3. Paper US\$17.95; ISBN 0-520-20055-1.

By any measure, *The Memoirs of Lady Hyegyōng* is a remarkable and astonishing work. Subtitled *The Autobiographical Writings of a Crown Princess*, this work, brilliantly translated and annotated by Jahyun Kim Haboush, tells the dark and tragic story of the execution of Crown Prince Sado at the age of twenty-seven by his father, King Yōngjo (r. 1724-1776). The method of execution was particularly cruel: Prince Sado was sealed in a rice chest and left to die by asphyxiation.

But the *Memoirs* are much more than a political and historical murder mystery. They chronicle the observations, thoughts, feelings, and experiences of a highly intelligent and perceptive Korean woman whose life was changed forever when she was selected at the age of nine to be a bride for Prince Sado, son of King Yōngjo during the Chosŏn dynasty. From an idyllic childhood Lady Hyegyōng was plunged into the maelstrom of political intrigue, rivalries, and power struggles that characterized the court of her father-in-law. During her lifetime at the court, Lady Hyegyōng had to endure the execution not only of her husband but also of her brother and her uncle as well as the disgrace and ruination of her father, Hong Ponghan, a distinguished minister to the king. She wrote the *Memoirs* to defend the honor and integrity of her father, uncle, and brother, to tell the truth about her husband and the circumstances surrounding his death, to justify her own behavior during her years as a member of the royal family, and to cry out at the perceived injustice and incomprehensibility of the many blows that she and her family had suffered.

In Korea these *Memoirs* are known as *Hanjungnok* (Records written in silence) and are considered "a great literary masterpiece and an invaluable historical document" (3). There