

Traces of Nichiren in Early Modern Kamakura

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Abstract

Nichiren spent his main period of activity in Kamakura. As Nichiren was active in Kamakura for more than ten years, there are a great many historical landmarks there associated with him. These have been designated as sacred places by subsequent successors of Nichiren and deemed as places that commemorate his life and allow visitors to relive his experiences. In the early modern age, it has become commonplace for the public to visit a variety of temples and shrines. People of all social classes travel great distances to visit sacred mountains, famous temples, and shrines, or even local temples and shrines. These and other scenic sites of historical interest have become places visited for pleasure and recreation rather than only out of religious belief. In light of these social developments, what role is played by the sacred sites associated with Nichiren? In this paper, I will first examine the perception of Sacred Sites Associated with Nichiren in Regional Chronicles and Records of Famous Places held by the intelligentsia, the common people, and others as described in early modern regional chronicles and records of famous places. Following this, I will examine how temples themselves described the sacred sites associated with Nichiren based on the construction of stone monuments and documents describing their origin and history.

Introduction

Nichiren (1222–1282), one of the noted founders of Japanese Buddhism, spent his main period of activity in Kamakura. Following the so-called *kai-shu-sengen* (the Proclamation of the Beginning of the Ministry) in April

1253 (the year *Kenchō* 5) at Seichō-ji Temple in what was then known as Awa Province (present-day Chiba Prefecture), Nichiren went to Kamakura in August 1256 (*Kenchō* 8).¹ Thereafter, until Nichiren's arrest during the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution (*tatsu-no-kuchi honan*) in September 1271 (*Bun'ei* 8)—and except for the period from May 1261 (*Kōchō* 1) to February 1263 (*Kōchō* 3), during which Nichiren was exiled in Izu—his main base of activities was believed to be Kamakura. The major earthquake of 1257 (*Shōka*1) and the presentation in 1260 (*Bun'ō* 1) of the “*Treatise on Spreading Peace Throughout the Country by Establishing True Dharma*” (*Risshō Ankoku-ron*) to Hōjō Tokiyori, the supreme leader of the Kamakura Shogunate, both occurred in Kamakura. In February 1274 (*Bun'ei* 11) the Sado Exile was ended and Nichiren returned to Kamakura, but in May he left for Minobu and would never again return to Kamakura.

As Nichiren was active in Kamakura for more than ten years, there are a great many historical landmarks there associated with him. These have been designated as sacred places by subsequent successors of Nichiren and deemed places that commemorate the life of Nichiren and allow visitors to relive his experiences.

In the early modern age, it has become commonplace for the public to visit a variety of temples and shrines. People of all social classes travel great distances to visit sacred mountains, famous temples and shrines, or local temples and shrines. These temples and shrines and other scenic sites of historic interest have become places visited for pleasure and recreation rather than only out of religious belief.²

In light of these social developments, what role is played by the sacred sites associated with Nichiren? In this paper, I will first examine the perception of Sacred Sites Associated with Nichiren in Reginal Chronicles and Records of Famous Places held by the intelligentsia, the common people, and others as described in early modern regional chronicles and records of famous places. Next, I will examine how temples themselves described the sacred sites associated with Nichiren based on the construction of stone monuments and documents describing the origin and history of the sites.

1. Sacred Sites Associated with Nichiren

In the early modern age, a wide variety of locations have been recorded in

regional chronicles. Among these are works produced by regional clans and the Shogunate (central government), such as the *Aizu Fudoki*, the *Chikuzen-no-kuni Zoku-fudoki*, and the *Shinpen Musashi-no-kuni Fudoki-ko*. In Sagami Province, which includes Kamakura, the Shogunate compiled the *Shinpen Sagami-no-kuni Fudoki-ko*. However, this document was formally published only after the advent of the Meiji Period. The regional chronicles of Kamakura, known as the *Kamakura Monogatari* and the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, which included topographic, geographic, and demographic data about the region, were published early and thus have been used frequently as reference works. As it became increasingly popular for people to visit temples and shrines throughout Japan, regional chronicles describing other regions were soon being published and read. In this section of the paper, I will focus on the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* as the regional chronicle of reference and the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* and the *Tōkaidō Meisho Zue* as references for famous and scenic places to establish how the sacred sites associated with Nichiren were depicted.

The *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*³ is a regional chronicle of Kamakura that was compiled as a result of an order issued by a powerful *daimyō* (feudal lord), Tokugawa Mitsukuni, to Kawai Tsunehisa and other subjects during the *Enpō* era (1673–1681) and published in 1685 (*Jōkyō* 2).⁴ This work lists eleven Nichiren-shū temples and four historical sites associated with Nichiren himself. Table 1 shows a list of these fifteen sites. As some of their locations are not mentioned in the work; only those that are known are indicated.

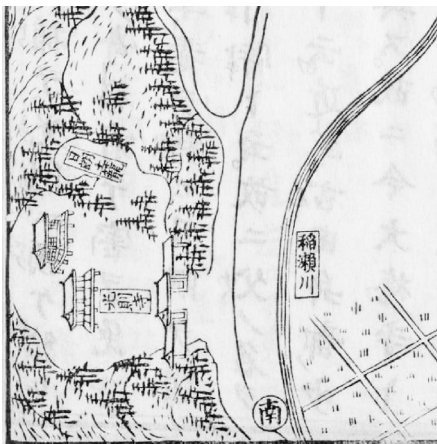


Fig. 1 *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, Precincts map of Kōsoku-ji; National Diet Library Digital Collections, Japan

Table 1—*Nichiren-Shū Temples and Historical Sites Associated with Nichiren*

Location	Site	Associated with Nichiren's biography
Nishi Mikado	Kōshō-ji (associated with Taihei-ji site)	
Hase	Kōsoku-ji (associated with the Yadoya Mitsunori site)	yes
	Ryōzen-ga-saki	yes ⁵
	Nichiren Kesakake-no-Matsu	yes
	Yukiai-gawa	yes
	Ryūkō-ji	yes
Komachi	Myōryū-ji	no
Komachi	Daigyō-ji	no
Komachi	Hongaku-ji	no
Ōmachi	Myōhon-ji (associated with Hikigayatsu, the Hiki Yoshikazu site, and the Take-no-Gosho site)	yes
Nagoe	Ankoku-ji (associated with Matsubagayatsu)	yes
Nagoe	Chōshō-ji (associated with Ishii)	yes
Nagoe	Nichiren-no-Koimizu (associated with Kamakura Gosui)	yes
Kunoya	Osarubatake-yama (associated with the Sannō-dō site and Hosshō-ji)	yes
Mutsu'ura	Jōgyō-ji	no

Of the fifteen temples and historical sites listed, a total of ten (six temples and four historical sites) are related to the biography of Nichiren. Here, I will provide simple descriptions of the sites related to the biography of Nichiren in the order they appear in the text.

- Kōsoku-ji: This is the site of Yadoya Nyūdō's residence. When Nichiren was subjected to the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution, believers and disciples who were arrested were held by Yadoya Nyūdō and placed in a dungeon-like prison. Nyūdō later became a believer of Nichiren's teachings.
- Ryōzen-ga-saki: When Ninshō of Gokuraku-ji prayed for rain, Nichiren also prayed for rain in the same location.
- Nichiren Kesakake-no-Matsu: This marks a *matsu* (pine tree) on which Nichiren hung his stole during the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution.
- Yukiai-gawa: During the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution, the messenger whose mission was to inform Kamakura that a miracle had occurred at

Tatsu-no-Kuchi met another messenger here—the one whose mission was to inform those holding Nichiren of the stay of execution ordered by Hōjō Tokiyori.

- Ryūkō-ji: This temple was built by the Rokurōsō (the Six Senior Disciples) after Nichiren’s death (this is also the site where Nichiren was made to sit for his execution during the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution).⁶
- Myōhon-ji: This temple is on the site where Nichiren started preaching. It was built by Hiki Daigaku-Saburō, one of Nichiren’s followers.
- Ankoku-ji: This cave, written the *Risshō Ankoku-ron* where Nichiren came from Bōshū-Kominato, is where Nichiren began preaching the sutra (it is currently known as Ankokuron-ji).⁷
- Chōshō-ji: This is the location where Nichiren built a hut to live in.
- Nichiren-no-Koimizu: This is the spring from which water suddenly gushed forth when Nichiren wanted a drink while on his way from Awa to Kamakura.
- Osarubatake-yama (Go-Enpaku-Zan): When Nichiren first came to Kamakura, he lived in a cave on this mountain. Monkeys gather in a field where they offer food to Nichiren.

The Nichiren Kesakake-no-Matsu, Yukiai-gawa, Ryūkō-ji, Osarubatake-yama (Hosshō-ji), and Jōgyō-ji are located outside Kamakura. According to the *Genroku-Gōchō* (Translator’s note:book of maps of every region of Japan created in the *Genroku* era [1688–1704]), the following fourteen villages were within the borders of Kamakura: Gokurakuji-mura, Ōgigayatsu-mura, Ōmachi-mura, Nishimikado-mura, Jōmyōji-mura, Midarebashi-mura, Zaimokuza-mura, Yamanouchi-mura, Yukinoshita-mura, Komachi-mura, Nikaidō-mura, Jūniso-mura, and Sakanoshita-mura.⁸

The *Kamakura Meisho-ki*, which may be thought of as a kind of tourist information book, was published in multiple editions during the Edo period. Of all the editions still known to be extant today, the one dated 1713 (*Shōtoku* 3) is the oldest, followed by 23 subsequent editions up to the one produced in the *Ansei* era (1854–1860: three editions). One of the characteristics of these books is that in just a limited number of pages (6–9 pages) they provided concise descriptions of the famous sites they listed. As detailed study of the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* has been conducted by others, that work may be referred to for further details.⁹

The famous sites listed in the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* are slightly different depending upon the edition. However, the Nichiren-shū temples number 12

and the historical sites associated with Nichiren total six. Table 2 shows a brief listing of these sites.

Table 2—*Nichiren-shū Temples and Historical Sites Listed in the Kamakura Meisho-ki*

Site	Associated with Nichiren's biography
Meuriu-ji (Myōryū-ji)	No
Daigyō-ji	No
Honkaku-ji (Hongaku-ji)	no
Nichiren Koshikake-ishi	yes
Myōhon-ji (site associated with Hiki-no-Hangan)	yes*
Jiyauyeiji (Jōei-ji)	yes
Myōhō-ji	yes
Daihō-ji	no
Ankoku-ji	yes*
Chōshō-ji	yes*
Koimizu	yes*
Osaruhatake	yes*
Hoshiyou-ji (Hosshō-ji)	no
Kausokuji · Nichirau Shōnin tsuchi-no-rau (Kōsoku-ji · Nichirō Shōnin tsuchi-no-rō)	yes*
Nichiren Shōnin Kesakake-no-Matsu (and mound)	yes*
Reusen-ga-saki · Nichiren Amakohi (Ryōzen-ga-saki · Nichiren Amagoi)	yes*
Yukiai-gawa	yes*
Ryūkō-ji · Myōjin	yes*

Thirteen of the eighteen temples and historical sites listed are associated with the biography of Nichiren. Of those listed above, the ones that were not listed in the 1713 (*Shōtoku* 3) edition were Nichiren-Koshikake-Ishi, Jōei-ji, Myōhō-ji, Daihō-ji, Hosshō-ji, and the Nichiren Kesakake-no-Matsu mound. Of the sites not listed in the 1713 edition, Hosshō-ji was once again listed in the 1784 (*Tenmei* 4) edition, and Jōei-ji, Myōhō-ji, Daihō-ji, and the Nichiren Kesakake-no-Matsu mound were listed as of the *Kansei* era (1789–1801) edition. Only Nichiren-Koshikake-ishi was first listed in the *Ansei* era edition.

It has been pointed out that the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* referred to regional chronicles such as the *Kamakura Monogatari* and the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, which preceded it. Thus, the locations of sites associated with Nichiren included in the *Shōtoku* 3 edition of the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* are identical

to those in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* in terms of both temples and historical sites (See*). As each edition was updated to the *Kansei* edition and the *Ansei* edition, the sites that followed the *Shōtoku* 3 edition of the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* gradually increased in number. However, Hosshō-ji was listed as being affiliated with Osarubatake-yama in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, but was listed independently in the *Kamakura Meisho-ki*.

Next, I will take up the issue of the *Tōkaidō Meisho Zue* (Collection of Pictures of Famous Sites along the Tōkaidō Route).¹⁰ This work is a guide of the famous sites and ancient ruins that were considered the standard sites along the post road from Kyoto to Edo (modern-day Tokyo). As is indicated from the term *zue* (“collection of pictures”) in the name of the work, *Tōkaidō Meisho Zue* includes illustrations of major sites and ruins along with the text. It was written by Akisato Ritō and published in 1797 (*Kansei* 9).¹¹ Although Kamakura was not one of the post towns along the Tōkaidō route, it was included as a famous site with historical ruins. *Tōkaidō Meisho Zue* includes nine Nichiren-shū temples that are historical sites associated and Nichiren (Table 3). The sites written about in the text are listed and the name of the temple is, when necessary, shown beside it within parentheses.

Table 3—*Historical Site Nichiren-shū Temples Associated with Nichiren*

Site	Associated with Nichren's biography
Ryūkō-ji	Yes
Yukiai-gawa	Yes
Kōsoku-ji	Yes
Ubume-tō (Daigyō-ji)	No
Myōhon-ji	Yes
Osarubatake-yama (Go-Enpaku-Zan, Hosshō-ji)	Yes
Nichiren-sui	Yes
Ishii (Chōshō-ji)	No
Ankoku-ji	Yes

The number of sites listed in *Tōkaidō Meisho Zue* is about two-thirds the number listed in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* and the *Kamakura Meisho-ki*. However, since the objective of the work was to describe the famous sites and historical ruins in the post towns along the Tōkaidō route, it seems reasonable that the number that could be listed would be somewhat limited. Of the nine temples and historical sites listed, seven are associated with the biography

of Nichiren, and all nine are also listed in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* and the *Kamakura Meisho-ki*. No mention of Nichiren’s life is made, however, in the entry for “Ishii (Chōshō-ji).”

The above overview suggests that the entries in the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* and the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* that refer to historical sites related to Nichiren were made either in direct reference to the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* or in the tradition of that work. Thus, we will examine the specific listings in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* and the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* relating to historical sites associated with Nichiren. The *Kamakura Meisho-ki* lists the names of the sites but in general does not provide explanations of them. Even when it does, these explanations are limited to a single line of text.¹²

The sites the two works have in common are Kōsoku-ji, Myōhon-ji, Ankoku-ji, and Nichiren Koimizu. The accompanying texts are contrasted in Table 4 and described in the following sections. All are temples or historical ruins located within Kamakura. The text in the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* was not simply copied from the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*; the descriptions are somewhat simplified versions that nonetheless follow the order of the *Shinpen*

Kamakura-shi. This is particularly evident in the entries for Myōhon-ji and Ankoku-ji. Text unique to the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* and not seen in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* appears only in the description of Myōhō-zakura in the third entry, Ankoku-ji.



Fig. 2 *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, Precincts map of Myōhon-ji; National Diet Library Digital Collections, Japan

Table 4

Shinpen Kamakura-shi	Tōkaidō Meisho-zue
①Kōsoku-ji, the Site of Yadoya Mitsunori's Residence (pp. 101–102)	①Kōsoku-ji (pp. 850–851)
<p>Kōsoku-ji, also known as Gyōji-san, lies on the left of the road en route to the Great Buddha. The site is also known as the “Yadoya” as it was inhabited by a vassal of Taira Tokiyori known as Yadoya Saemon Mitsunori who, as a nyūdō [lay priest], went by the moniker Saishin.</p>	<p>Kōsoku-ji is situated on the left side of the road that leads to the Great Buddha. It is the site of the residence of Yadoya Saemon Mitsunori, a nyūdō [lay priest] and a retainer of Hōjō Tokiyori; hence, the area is called Yadoya-machi [“Yadoya’s town”].</p>
<p>When Nichiren was on the verge of being beheaded at Tatsu-no-Kuchi, Yadoya Mitsunori was entrusted with the custody of Nichiren’s disciples, Nichirō and Nisshin, along with the follower Shijō Kingo and his three sons, following their capture at Ankoku-ji. Mitsunori held these individuals in earthen cages.</p>	<p>Nichiren Shōnin met with tribulation at Tatsu-no-Kuchi and was handed over to be imprisoned, along with his disciples Nichirō and Nisshin, and the follower Shijō Kingo and his three sons. They were placed in the custody of Mitsunori, and held captive in earthen cages.</p>
<p>It was only after Nichiren was spared his fate by a miraculous occurrence that Mitsunori started to believe in him. He built a thatched dwelling on his estate, where he asked Nichirō to be a founding priest. Apparently, the temple’s sangō [the name of a metaphorical mountain associated with a temple] was named after Mitsunori’s late father [Gyōji being the onyomi reading of Yukitoki], while the jigō [the main name of a temple] was named after Mitsunori [Kōsoku being the onyomi reading of Mitsunori]. More recently, the dowager of Furuta Shigetsume, the hyōbu shōyū [junior minister of war], re-established Daibai-in. Hence, Kōsoku-ji is now also known as Taibai-ji.</p>	<p>Nichiren Shōnin was delivered from harm by a miraculous occurrence. Following the miracle, Mitsunori himself started to believe in Nichiren. He donated his estate to Nichirō and allowed him to found a sect. Hence, the temple’s sangō [the name of a metaphorical mountain associated with a temple] was named after Mitsunori’s late father, while the jigō [the main name of a temple] was named after Mitsunori.</p>

<p>The temple is main hall enshrines wooden images of Nichiren and Nichirō, Mitsunori, and Shijō Kingo and his three sons.</p>	<p>Enshrined in the temple's main hall are Nichiren Shōnin, Nichirō, Mitsunori, Shijō Kingo, and others.</p>
<p>The temple is a branch temple of Myōhon-ji.</p>	
<p>North of the temple, on the hillside, lies the earthen cage in which Nichirō was held captive.¹</p>	<p>Nichirō Shōnin's earthen prison lies on the hillside north of the temple.</p>
<p>②Myōhon-ji Hikigayatsu, historic site associated with Hiki Yoshikazu, Take-no-Gosho site (p.123)</p>	<p>②Myōhon-Ji (pp. 855–866)</p>
<p>Myōhon-ji was named Chōkōzan. It was the temple in which Nichiren began to preach. It is said that one of Nichiren's lay devotees called Hiki Daigaku-Saburō had built it. While Nichiren was still alive, he had passed it down to Nichirō, who is considered to be the founder.</p>	<p>Situated in Hikigayatsu, Myōhon-ji shares the same abbot as the Nichiren-affiliated temple, Ikegami Honmon-ji. Nichirō Shōnin founded this temple here, as this was the place from which Nichiren Shōnin preached his sermons.</p>
<p>The commemoration of its founding takes place on January 21st. The abbot of this temple is also the abbot of Ikegami Honmon-ji. [...]</p>	
<p>The main temple: The hall used to enshrine a statue of the Amitabha [Buddha]. That statue was a private statue of Daigaku-Saburō. [...] The statue of Shakyamuni [Buddha] was said to be made by Chin Nakei. When Nichiren was exiled to Izu, he took the statue of Buddha with him. Later, the statue came into the custody of Nichirō. This statue is now in Honkoku-ji. Therefore, another statue of Shakyamuni is said to be enshrined here [...]</p>	<p>The object of devotion was a statue of the Buddha: Following his demotion, Nichiren Shōnin took that statue of Buddha with him. Subsequently, the statue came into the custody of Nichirō and now stands in Honkoku-ji, in the old capital [Kyoto]. However, the temple's object of devotion is a replica of the said statue.</p>

<p>③Ankoku-ji, situated in Matsubagayatsu (p. 135)</p> <p>The temple Ankoku-ji, known honorifically as Myōhō-zan, is situated east of Nagoe-mura, and is subordinate to Myōhon-ji. An inscription at the mon-gate states the following: “Ankoku-ron Cave, October 13, Year 1 of <i>Taiei</i>, Year of the Snake [1521], [signed] Yūken.”</p> <p>Those who enter the gate will find a cave to their right. It was in this cave that Nichiren wrote <i>Ankoku-ron</i> [“Peace for the Country”] after coming from Kominato in Bōshū. It is clear from <i>Chūgasan (Nichiren Shōnin Chūgasan)</i> that Nichiren started the project in <i>Shōka</i> Year 1 [1257] and finished writing it in <i>Bunnō</i> Year 1 [1260]. It was here that Nichiren began to advocate the main teachings of the Lotus Sutra. Apparently, things started to propagate from Hosshō-ji. “Matsubagayatsu” refers to this location.</p>	<p>③Ankoku-ji (p. 862)</p> <p>Situated in Matsubagayatsu, Ankoku-ji is a temple of the Nichiren denomination.</p> <p>A cave lies within the precincts. After arriving from Bōsō, Nichiren Shōnin confined himself in this cave and wrote <i>Risshō Ankoku-ron</i> (“Treatise on Spreading Peace throughout the Country by Establishing True Dharma”).</p> <p>In front of the temple stands a noted tree named Myōhō-zakura.</p>
<p>④Nichiren-no-Koimizu (pp. 135–136)</p> <p>Nichiren-no-Koimizu is a small well on the southern side of the road, about one and a half ri from Nagoe-zaka toward Kamakura.</p> <p>Folklore states that when Nichiren travelled from Awa province to Kamakura, he sought water from this hillside, and the water suddenly gushed forth. Though small, this spring never dried—even in times of drought—and the water remained ever cool.</p> <p>Locals say that there are five significant wells of Kamakura, namely, Kinryū-sui, Furō-sui, Zeni Arai-mizu, Nichiren no Koi-mizu, and Kajiwara Tachi-arai-mizu.</p>	<p>④Nichiren-sui (p. 862)</p> <p>Nichiren-sui is situated in a town to the south of Nagoe-zaka.</p> <p>Nichiren Shōnin would seek water here when he passed by during hot weather. Water sprung forth here, like a waterfall, from the hillside road. The volume of water remained consistent, whether hot or cold; it is a clear and holy spring.</p> <p>Nichiren no Koi-Mizu is one of the five noted wells of Kamakura, including Kinryū-sui, Furō-sui, Zeni Arai-mizu, and Kajiwara Tachi-arai-mizu.</p>

They are all listed in both the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* and the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue*, but, as mentioned above, the mentions of them listed in the biography of Nichiren differ in the entries for Chōshō-ji (Ishii). The text of the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* and the first half of the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* contain the entries in question. Simplified summaries are listed with their order of appearance slightly altered. Among these entries are those that are abbreviated excerpts from the biography of Nichiren, such as “This was formerly where the hut in which Nichiren lived was located.” The *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* includes the main parts of the entries related to Nichiren’s life that have to do with the items listed in Table 4. However, the entries for Chōshō-ji (Ishii) differ. This is likely why the entries in the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* that relate to the life of Nichiren are also abbreviated. In addition, *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* entries that should use the name “Nichijō” instead mistakenly used “Nichirō.”

Table 5

Shinpen Kamakura-shi	Tōkaidō Meisho-zue
Chōshō-ji, an Annex to Ishii (p. 135)	Ishii (p. 862)
Known honorifically as Shakusei-zan, Chōshō-ji lies in a valley to the south of the road passing through Nagoe-zaka.	Ishii is situated in a valley south of the Nagoe-zaka road. The temple is named Chōshō-ji.
Within the precincts, a spring gushes forth from a cleft in the rock, forming one of the ten wells of Kamakura. This is why the temple became commonly known as Ishii Chōshō-ji [translator’s note: ishii literally means “stone well”]. Chōshō-ji is of the Hokke-shū [Lotus school].	
The temple grounds formerly housed Rakuyō-Honkoku-ji and the present temple is the branch temple of the same.	It is the site of the former Nichiren school of the old Kyoto temple, Honkoku-ji.
According to the temple’s priest, Nichiren once had his dwelling here. It subsequently became the home of Nichirō, Nichi’in, and Nichijō. Because Nichijō was the uncle of Minamoto-no-Takauji [Ashikaga Takauji], the temple was relocated to Kyoto and named Honkoku-ji.	Because Nichirō was the uncle of Takauji [Ashikaga Takauji], the temple was relocated to the old capital [Kyoto]. Within the precincts, a spring gushes forth from a cleft in the rock. A noted spring, this is one of the ten wells of Kamakura.

Chōshō-ji was passed on to Nichiei the disciple, whereupon it was renamed Myōhō-ji. This is because Nichiei was known as Myōhōbō. The temple was subsequently relocated to Ōkura Tō-notsuji, and then to Tsuji-machi. According to the temple's priest, in its present Tsuji-machi location, the temple is now known as Keiun-ji, having previously been known as Myōhō-ji. Conversely, in the Nagoe-zaka location, the temple now has the honorific name of Myōhō-ji having previously been known as Keiun-ji. The reasons for these circumstances are unknown. The present Chōshō-ji lay in disrepair earlier, when a priest named Chūhi Nichiryū Hosshi cherished the temple ruins, and so built a temple here and named it, Chōshō-ji. Hence, Nichiryū became known as Chūkō Kaizan [translator's note: it means "revitalizing priest"]. He was a man of the Kominato of Bōshū. It is uncertain when the temple was restored and when Nichiryū passed. [...]

As can be seen, the sacred sites associated with Nichiren that are listed in regional chronicles and records of famous places are based on the entries found in *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, which were then later utilized in the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* and the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue*. In addition, new entries were added to the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* each time it was revised.

2. Stone Tower Signposts and Their Origins

The next issue is how the sacred sites associated with Nichiren were marked so that they could be identified. Here, I would will focus on the construction of stone towers at these sites. In the early modern age, one of the methods used to inform the masses on ordinances involved the use of street-side bulletin boards (*kōsatsu-ba*).¹³ While these bulletin boards were also raised in front of the gates of temples and shrines when announcing events during the year or when sacred objects from other temples or other locations came to be

placed on display, it could be said that the stone towers that were erected in front of the gates, as well as those within the grounds, served more as permanent signs and landmarks.

The types of stone towers used to mark the holy sites associated with Nichiren and erected at the Nichire-shū temples in Kamakura are shown in Table 6. Among the temples where the stone towers are located, those listed in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* as being associated with the sacred sites of Nichiren were Ankokuron-ji (Ankoku-ji), Myōhō-ji, and Chōshō-ji. A temple listed in the same text that as not being associated with Nichiren was Hongaku-ji. Finally, temples that did not appear at all in that work were Myōhō-ji, Jōei-ji, and Myōchō-ji. Those that were later added to subsequent editions of the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* were Myōhō-ji and Jōei-ji.

The shapes of the stone towers can be categorized as follows: (1) Daimoku towers, which have the mantra “*daimoku* (namu-myōhō-rence-kyō)” inscribed in the center front portion of the tower; and (2) towers that have the name of the sacred site inscribed on their front.¹⁴ The types of towers are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6—Stone Towers Used to Mark Sacred Sites Associated with Nichiren

Year (Western Calendar)	Name	Type	Location No. ¹⁵
Jōkyō 3 (1686)	Nichiren Daibosatsu tower	2	Ankokuron-ji 1
Genbun 4 (1739)	Nichiren Go-shōan (hut) tower	2	Myōhō-ji 2
Kan'en 2 (1749)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Hongaku-ji 1
Kan'en 3 (1750)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Ankokuron-ji 2
An'ei 9 (1780)	Tower commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Passing of Nichiren	1	Myōhō-ji 1
Tenmei 5 (1785)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Myōhon-ji 2
Kansei 4 or later (1792)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Chōshō-ji 1
Kansei 12 (1800)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Jōei-ji 3
Bunsei 3 (1820)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Myōhō-ji 3
Bunsei 11 (1828)	Temple name Tower	2	Jōei-ji 6
Tenpō 9 (1838)	Daimoku (mantra) tower	1	Myōchō-ji (lost) ¹⁶
Tenpō 11 (1840)	Tower marking the Sacred site of Matsubagayatsu	2	Ankokuron-ji 3
Tenpō 14 (1843)	Tower erected in gratitude to Nichiren	1	Jōei-ji 2
no details known; Edo period	Matsubagayatsu Honkoku-ji Honorary Monument	1	Chōshō-ji 3

The earliest known stone tower that indicated a sacred site associated with Nichiren is the Founder Nichiren Daibosatsu tower at Ankokuron-ji (Ankokuron-ji 1; see Fig. 3). This monument was erected in 1686 (*Jōkyō* 3), but the front of the tower says,

This is Nagoe Cave, where *Risshō Ankoku-ron* was written. The hermitage was originally located here in the location of Matsubagayatsu Ankokuron-ji Temple.

Thus, it refers to the cave where Nichiren wrote the *Risshō Ankoku-ron*, in which he referred to his hut at Matsubagayatsu. The Daimoku (mantra) tower (Ankokuron-ji 2) erected at this temple in 1750 (*Kan'en* 3) has the following inscription on its right side:

This is a sacred site of the Great Founder, who resided in this temple's Matsubagayatsu hermitage, and preached the Dharma day and night over the course of many years. It was also the place where, according to legend, Nichiren was beaten with wooden sticks and pelted with pieces of roof tiles and stones. It was here that the six senior disciples as well as all the other disciples entered the monastic life and received the Dharma.

Thus, the tower indicates that this was a place where Nichiren spread Buddhist teachings and was persecuted after presenting the *Risshō Ankoku-ron*. The tower Marking the Original Sacred Site at Matsubagayatsu erected in 1840 (*Tenpō* 11) (Ankokuron-ji 3; see Fig. 4) says "Original Sacred Site of Matsubagayatsu" on its front and has the following inscriptions on its rear and right sides:

The Sacred Cave at this temple is the place where our great founder, the great Bodhisattva spread the four famous phrases and propagated at the risk of his life from the middle of Kenchō era / received. Natural disasters continued one after another from the first year of *Shōka* (1257) and as a result the *Risshō Ankoku-ron* was written and presented on July 16 of the first year of *Bun'ō* (1260). / Hōjō Tokiyori in order to warn him but late at night on August 27, some thousands attacked and burned Nichiren's hut in an attempt to kill him, but he escaped and from this place on May 12 the following year. / He was then exiled to Izu-no-kuni and subsequently came to live here. He tried to correct others' wrong teachings frequently / and on

September 12 of the 8th year of *Bun'ei* (1271), Yoritsuna approached with a hundred men to capture Nichiren, tried to behead him at Tatsunokuchi, but he escaped. / Nichiren was exiled to Sado-no-kuni, where he spent four years in misery, after which in the spring of the 10th year of *Bun'ei* (1273), he was released. / Afterward he preached at this cave with his disciples at his side, during which time he taught the words of the Lotus Sutra / so that it would spread throughout the world for the happiness of all. This place here at this temple / is known as the original Go-shōan or Go-sōan (the holy grass hut), the town nearby is called Nagoe, and the cave is called Matsubagayatsu. Here, he lived for twenty something years until his death, until which time he taught the sutra and wrote the *Ankokuron*, and for this reason it is a sacred site. At Nichiren's direction, Nichirō founded the Myō-Hokke-zan-Ankokuronkutsu-ji temple here. Thus, it is a sacred site / for the priests of the religions of Japan and laypeople alike, and therefore we should visit and express our great appreciation to the Great Bodhisattva here.

As you see, it shows detailed history with 13 lines about this temple. According to the text, Nichiren spent more than twenty years to propagate there, and asked Nichirō to found a temple there after Nichiren's death. Examination of historical texts on Ankokuron-ji shows that the 1689 (*Genroku 2*) edition of the *Kamakura Matsubagayatsu Ankokuron-ji Brief History*¹⁷ contains an entry describing the same information with more details.



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

At Myōhō-ji, where a signpost marks Nichiren’s hut at Matsubagayatsu (as in Ankokuron-ji), the monument marking Nichiren’s hut (Myōhō-ji 2) was erected in 1739 (*Genbun* 4; see Fig. 5). The front side of the tower has the following inscription:

This is the first sacred site at the Nichiren Shū temples in Japan—the location of the Founder’s hermitage—and the former site of the Honkoku-ji, the one of the three major temples. Honkoku-ji was eventually moved from Kamakura to Kyoto.

Thus, it identifies Nichiren’s hut as the first temple of Nichiren Buddhism. The reverse side of the tower has the following inscription:

Hokke-dō of Ryōgon-san Myōhō-ji which is located in Matsubagayatsu, Nagoe, Kamakura of Sagami Province, is a sacred location where the Great Founder (Nichiren Shōnin) first began to propagate and spread the teachings of the Nichiren sect. In the fifth year of the *Kenchō* era (1253), when Nichiren Shōnin founded the sect on Mt. Kiyosumi, he chanted the Daimoku for the first time at Dōzen-bo, and tried to convert the lord of the

country to follow the true Law of Buddhism. For this purpose, he moved from Awa Province and came to reside in Kamakura, where he spent his time spreading the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and subdued heretical sects. This is the very spot where Daikōzan Honkoku-ji Temple in Rokujō of the capital used to stand, the place where he bestowed the teachings and spread the message of the Lotus Sutra.

Thus, the inscription indicates that this was the place in Kamakura where Nichiren stayed after beginning his ministry in 1253 (*Kenchō* 5). Examination of the tower commemorating five hundred years since Nichiren's passing that was erected in 1780 (*An'ei* 9) (Myōhō-ji 1) reveals the following inscription on its side:

Former site / Matsubagayatsu Go-sōan, Honkoku-ji in Kyoto.

This indicates that the Matsubagayatsu hut stood at that location. The history of Myōhō-ji included in the 1795 (*Kansei* 7) revised edition by Nichiō an entry entitled “*Kamakura Kosaka-no-gō Nagoe-san-chū Matsubagayatsu Myōhō-ji Ryaku-engi*” summarized history. The text of this entry is more detailed than the history inscribed on the stone tower.¹⁸

Asat Ankokuron-ji and Myōhō-ji, Chōshō-ji also has a marker indicating that it was the location of the Matsubagayatsu hut. The Daimoku (mantra) tower, erected sometime after 1792 (*Kansei* 4) (Chōshō-ji 1), is inscribed with the words “Matsubagayatsu” on its base and both sides of the tower itself are inscribed with the following text:

The Founder—who spent his life chanting the Sūtra—was enshrined. His statue was carved by Nichiryū Shōnin, Nagakatsu, in the first year of *Kōchō* (1261), here, at the former site of the original Hokke-dō of Honkoku-ji Temple, Shakusei-zan, Chōshō-ji Temple.

Thus, the inscription indicates that the site is the former location of the Kyoto Honkoku-ji, where Ishii Nagakatsu gave alms to Nichiren Shōnin. However, it does not identify the site as the location of Nichiren's Matsubagayatsu hut (see Fig. 6). The results of a lawsuit in which it was argued that Myōhō-ji is the rightful location of Nichiren's hut made it impossible for Chōshō-ji to claim that it is the location of the hut. Prior to 1781 (*An'ei* 10), there was a stone

monument at the gate identifying it as the location of the Matsubagayatsu hut, but that same year people from Myōhō-ji destroyed the monument.¹⁹ There is also a monument known as the Matsubagayatsu Honkoku-ji Commemorating Monument (Chōshō-ji 3) that was erected in the Edo period, but it does not identify the location as the former site of the Matsubagayatsu hut.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

Jōei-ji is not mentioned in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*. But the Daimoku (mantra) tower there, erected in 1800 (*Kansei* 12), indicates that offerings of *mochi* (rice cakes) were made to Nichiren at that location at the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution. The old woman who made the rice cake offerings was later worshipped as Sajiki-Daimyōjin, and the item worshipped there is the *bota-mochi* (a kind of rice cake) offering of the Sajiki-no-Ama (the Sajiki nun). There is an inscription describing the history of this patron goddess that reads as follows:

The old woman who, at the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution on September 12 of the 8th year of *Bun'ei* (1271), / came to? with an offering to the Founder of mochi rice cakes with sesame seed powder, / so says a letter. Afterward, she was worshipped at a small shrine as Saijiki-Daimyōjin. / She is the

patron of this temple, There is a detailed historical record.

The monument erected in 1828 (*Bunsei* 11) (Jōei-ji 6) was also inscribed with the temple name, which does not indicate Jōei-ji as the formal temple name. Rather, it calls the temple “Bota-mochi Temple,” and that it is a sacred site associated with Nichiren. The Nichiren Commemorative tower, erected in 1843 (*Tenpō* 14) (Jōei-ji 2) calls it the “Former site of Sajiki-Daimyōjin.”

The story about the offering of the *bota-mochi* is also included in the entry dated September 12 of the Myōhon-ji Annual Events document compiled by Nichiga of Hoda-Myōhon-ji in 1545 (*Tenbun* 14). It reads as follows:

Kakimochi was brought from the temple into the presence of the statue of Buddha. The maidservant offered rice, sake, and kakimochi. The question was asked, “Why the kakimochi?” The response was that it was a present from a noble woman called Mrs. Sajiki live in Kamakura, and was received when the great sage went to Tatsunokuchi that evening. The maidservant thus brought the kakimochi herself and presented it as an offering.²⁰

This appears to be the earliest record of this event. This text identifies the offering not as *bota-mochi* but as *kaki-mochi*.²¹ Investigation of all the works containing biographical information on Nichiren reveals that the “bota-mochi offering story” does not appear in the *Ganso Kedō-ki*, the *Nichiren Shōnin Chūga-san*, the *Ganso Renkō Satta Ryaku-den*, the *Hokke Reijō-ki*, the *Nichiren Dai-Shōnin Godenki*, or the *Honge Betsuzu Kōso-den*, which suggests that the story was not circulated until at least the end of the first half of the Edo period, when it appeared in the *Honge Betsuzu Busso Tō-ki* written by Nitchō. This work was completed in 1730 (*Kyōhō* 15), but it was not published until 1797 (*Kansei* 9).²² Thereafter, it appeared in some form in the *Kōso Nenpu Kōi* by Nittai and Nichigi, the *Nichiren Shōnin Ichidai Zue* by Nakamura Keinen, and the *Kōso Ruisai Roku* by Fukami Yōgon, among others. The fact that Jōei-ji is referred to as “Bota-mochi Temple” and the story about the offering of *bota-mochi* are contained in the Myōhon-ji temple history at the head temple of Jōei-ji, known as *Chōkō-zan Myōhon-ji Shi*.²³ Although the date of publication of this work is unclear, it is thought to have been completed no later than 1832 (*Tenpō* 3).²⁴

Hongaku-ji is not listed in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, the *Kamakura*

Meisho-ki, or the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue* as being a sacred site associated with Nichiren. The Daimoku (mantra) tower that was erected at this temple in 1749 (*Kan'en* 2) (*Hongaku-ji* 1) has a detailed history spanning 12 lines of text on three sides of the tower (see Fig. 7):

Regarding the beginning of Tōzan, in autumn of the eighth year of *Bun'ei* (1271), the Great Founder Bodhisattva avoided the Tatsu no kuchi persecution and was exiled to Sado Province. During the thousand-day period, he suffered from harassment but was not harmed. Finally, in the spring of 1274, he unexpectedly received a pardon from Hōjō on the twenty-sixth day of the third month and once again returned to Kamakura. He then resided at this hermitage in Ebisu-dō until midsummer. He widely spread the teachings of the Sūtra to overcome the material and the immaterial, with the desire of repaying the four favors—there were no further events after this. On the eighth day of the fourth month, he came into contact with Taira no Yoritsuna. Our Founder spoke eloquently of the profound truths of the teachings and moved those in attendance. The security of a nation is dependent on the correctness of the Dharma therein. That is, through the text and logic of the Sūtra, the immediate realization of enlightenment was exhibited. He repeatedly admonished the lord of the province, and Vice-General Hōjō Tokimune subsequently heard the wonderful Dharma and suddenly believed it. Out of joy, on the second day of the fifth month, permission of propagation was issued, and he praised Nichiren highly. In the all over the world there is none like him, and he can indeed be called a great monk. These words are true. Their meaning is profound. Bodhisattva marked the spread of the teachings across the land. After the death of the Buddha, mankind entered declining latter age of the Dharma, and then appeared the teacher who spread the Law. Thus, there appeared the great benefit of the Lotus Sūtra, and there was great merit realized by the Honge Sect. On the twelfth day, he finally left the hermitage to visit the true Ryōzen, wonderful land with tranquil light, where he lived as a hermit in the mountains of Kai Province, Koma District, Hakiri Town, which is now this sacred site. From ancient times, Hiruko-no-mikoto (i.e., Ebisu) was worshipped, and a shrine was erected in his honor. At that time, the shrine was colloquially called Ebisu-dō. Furthermore, the bridge over the river in front of the shrine was also called Ebisu-dō; the name has a connection with our temple.

Nichiren, who was pardoned from his exile in Sado, returned to Kamakura on March 26, 1274 (*Bun'ei* 11). Subsequently, on May 12 he headed for Minobu, where he stayed for a month and a half in the hut at Ebisu-dō. This Ebisu-dō is said to have been the Ebisu-dō at Hongaku-ji.

The history related to Ebisu-dō is also seen in the postscript of the *Komachimura Nichiren-shū Hongaku-ji Engi-utsusi*, which was written by the 11th abbot of Hongaku-ji, known as Nichie, during the *Keichō* era (1596–1615). Specifically, the postscript states the following:

When the Great Founder, Nichiren, Great Bodhisattva desired to enter Minobu-san and create the first sacred site, it was designated the land of the third admonition. The reason is that on the twenty-sixth day of the third month of the eleventh year of *Bun'ei* (1274), when he returned to Kamakura from Sado, six senior disciples and followers—one being Shijō Kingo—built a hermitage and presented him with it. On the eighth day of the fourth month of the same year, he Yoritsuna about the country; this was the third such time. The lord of the country was not willing to agree, but on the twelfth day of the fifth month of the same year, he left that place, entering Kai Province, Hakiri Town. On the seventeenth day of the sixth month, he first created a hermitage on Minobu-san, and after, he left the hermitage in Ebisu-dō, where Nisshin Shōnin resided. After Hōjō Takatoki died, the hermitage completely decayed. In the past, this temple had Ebisu-dō (where it enshrined the statue of Ebisu carved by Unkei). For this reason, the bridge in front of the gate was named Ebisu-dō Bridge.²⁵

To this text, at the beginning of the Edo period the history of the place as a sacred site associated with Nichiren was already known. However, regarding the naming of Hongaku-ji as Higashi-Minobu-san, there is another text saying the following:

Nitchō Shōnin later moved to Minobusan, made this temple as a propagation point in Kamakura, spreading the teachings to a place called East Minobu-san. Subsequently, Myōden-ji Temple in Kyoto was established and called West Minobusan by Nichii Shōnin.

However, further investigation regarding the year this text was completed

is required.

Regarding the link between Ebisu-dō and Nichiren's hut, no mention is made in any of the texts dealing with the biography of Nichiren such as the *Ganso Kedō-ki* or the *Nichiren Shōnin Chūga-san*, and not even in the *Honge Betsuzu Busso Tōki*, which was written in the mid-Edo period. In the *Nichiren Shōnin Ichidai Zue* of 1858 (*Ansei* 5), the following is included:

On March 26 the Founder was reunited in Kamakura with Nisshō and other priests and laymen, which made him so happy that everyone cried. In order to teach his disciples, he moved to the place where Ebisu-dō was located which he made his residence for a time so that he could fulfill his role as teacher. This place was located at the current location of Myōgonzan Hongaku-ji.²⁶

Myōhon-ji, which is located on the far side of the Nameri-kawa river across from Hongaku-ji and Ebisu-dō bridge, is identified as the first temple founded by Nichiren. The Daimoku (mantra) tower erected in 1785 (*Tenmei* 5) (Myōhon-ji 2) has inscriptions on both sides:

Left side: "Former site of Hikigayatsu Daigaku Saburō Yoshimoto Hongyō-in Nichigaku Shōnin"

Right side: "The original location of the Honge Jōgyō Saitan Nichiren Daishi Dōjō"

Thus, it is identified as the site of the residence of the follower Daigaku Saburō and as the original location of the Nichiren's Dōjō. In other words, it is the first temple (see Fig. 8). The Daimoku (mantra) tower erected in 1820 (*Bunsei* 3) (Myōhon-ji 3) has the following inscription on its right side:

At this temple, the Great Founder, Great Bodhisattva continually chanted the daimoku. At the age of 53, on the twenty-sixth day of the third month of the eleventh year of *Bun'ei* (1274), he returned from Sado Province to Kamakura and Myōhon-ji Temple, the sacred site where he resided, and propagated the teachings. While there, he propagated the five characters constituting the mystic Law for several years through constant chanting of the daimoku and developed voiceless male and female believers who believed in it. They practiced the daimoku to realize the tower.

Here, in the description of the history of the mantra, it is indicated that Myōhon-ji is the place where Nichiren—who had returned to Kamakura after being released from his exile in Sado—taught the “*Namu-Myōhō-Renge-Kyō*”. This same text is inscribed on the tower commemorating the 550th anniversary of Daigaku Saburō’s memorial that was erected in 1835 (*Tenpō 6*).²⁷



Fig. 8

This history is included in the *Kamakura Matsubagayatsu Ankokuron-ji Ryaku Engi* of Ankokuron-ji, the subordinate temple of Myōhon-ji that was mentioned above:

After the pardon of *Bun’ei* 11 (1274), Nichiren returned to Kamakura on March 26 and went to the residence at Hiki Daigaku [...]. Then, on April 12 of the same year, he went to the former location of Matsubagayatsu [...] and then went to original Hokke-dō at Hikigayatsu. At this time, Daigaku Saburō made a plea to him and he gave Nichiren a place to reside at Hikigayatsu and became Nichiren’s disciple. Nichiren founded a temple at this location called Chōkō-san Myōhon-ji. This was the first temple to

be founded in Nichiren Shū.²⁸

In addition, the *Hikigayatsu Yuisho Kudasigaki*, written by Nichigi, the 25th abbot of both Ikegami Honmon-ji and Myōhon-ji in 1730 (*Kyōhō* 15), stated the following:

Daigaku Saburō [...] founded Hokke-dō at his residence [...], which he offered to the Founder, and in the first year of *Bun'ō*, he Nichiren officiated an Opening Ceremony to celebrate the completion of construction [...]. The Founder returned to Kamakura from Sado in March of the 11th year of *Bun'ei* (1274) and afterward he began teaching with a formal permit by Tokimune, so Daigaku Saburō gave him Hokke-dō since Nichiren had nowhere to teach. Thus, Nichiren spent 50 days in Kamakura here.²⁹

Thus, texts state that both Hongaku-ji and Myōhon-ji were places where Nichiren spent time in Kamakura after his release from exile in Sado.

Myōchō-ji is not mentioned in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, the *Kamakura Meisho-ki*, or the *Tōkaidō Meisho-zue*. The Daimoku (mantra) tower that was erected in 1838 (*Tenpō* 9; now lost) has the following inscription on its side:

This is the area where the Great Founder left by boat when he was exiled to Izu. For this Sūtra, he did not care about his own body or life but cared only for the supreme way.

This identifies the location where Nichiren boarded a boat when he was exiled to Izu in 1261 (*Kōchō* 1). This history is also listed in the postscript to the *Yuigahama Soshi-dō Ryakuengi*³⁰ of 1656 (*Meireki* 2) as follows:

At the arrangement of Hōjō Shigetoki/Hōjō Nagatoki, the Great Founder was finally exiled to Ito in Izu; the time was the twelfth day of the fifth month of the first year of the *Kōchō* era (1261). The Great Founder departed alone by boat from Yuigahama to Ito in Izu. After that, on the twenty-second day of the second month of the third year of *Kōchō* (1263), he received a pardon and was allowed to return to Kamakura. He safely returned to the coast of Yuigahama. In fact, it was upon the return of the Shōnin of the Hōge Sect to the area when he met great persecution. Thereafter, the Nichijitsu Shōnin built a hermitage there with the desire

of showing gratitude to his master. After this hermitage was built, it was named Kaichōzan-Myōchō-ji Temple.

This indicates that Nichijitsu founded Myōchō-ji at this location. The sacred sites associated with Nichiren's exile to Izu were naturally located in Izu, but Myōchō-ji has also been named as a sacred site related to his exile in Izu. This same work of history also stated the following:

On the day that the Great Founder Nichiren was to get on the boat, the admirable Nichirō, unhappy at the departure of our master fell flat on the beach, lamenting his exile. The Great Founder said, “[Look] at the sun rising from the east and think that Nichirō is on this beach.” Afterward, stopped him crying and headed to the boat.

This shows that there was a connection to Nichirō, one of the six senior disciples. This location is not only the site where Nichiren embarked on his exile, but that shows the deep connection between Nichiren and Nichirō. Also, Myōchō-ji was moved to its present location as a result of the tsunami that occurred in the *Tenna* era (1681-1684). At the former location, only Soshi-dō still stands.³¹

The preceding sections have described the stone towers located at sacred sites associated with Nichiren and erected at temples. Many of these stone towers contain histories of the locations ranging from just a few lines to dozens of lines of text in addition to the name of the sacred site. Examples are Myōhō-ji 2, Jōei-ji 3, Myōhon-ji 3, Hongaku-ji 1, and Ankokuron-ji 3. The histories inscribed on Hongaku-ji 1 and Ankokuron-ji 3 are particularly lengthy texts of over ten lines.

These stone towers were likely attempts by the temples to record ever more detailed stories of their origins as sacred sites associated with Nichiren. The histories inscribed on the stone towers can therefore be thought of as links between historical records of the temples themselves and the biography of Nichiren.

3. Conclusion

This paper has presented an examination of the early modern sacred sites associated with Nichiren that are in Kamakura. Text in the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, which was published in 1685 (*Jōkyō* 2) greatly influenced texts subsequently published in later regional chronicles and records of famous places. Thus, this text can be used by scholars and laypeople alike as a reference for the major sacred sites associated with Nichiren.

The *Kamakura-ki*, which was written in 1680 (*Enpō* 8), shortly before the publication of the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, says the following about the sacred sites associated with Nichiren in Kamakura:

In Kamakura, there are three sites where Nichiren stayed: Matsubagayatsu, Daibai-ji Temple, and this location (Tatsu no kuchi). Moreover, there are many historical sites related to Nichiren in Kamakura that even his disciples would not know the names of if they saw them. During his life, Nichiren subdued various sects and created enemies across the country, having few supporters left. The supporters that he did retain followed him after hearing his teaching on the Dharma. For this reason, although he realized such feats, they are found only in books. It has already been written that his historical sites are greater in number in Kamakura than in other provinces.³²

Thus, there are also sites that are not listed in any written works. The *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* was published under these circumstances.

This paper also describe temples with stone signs identifying them as sites associated with Nichiren, stone towers inscribed with histories to self-identify as sacred sites. These public displays of their origins make it clear that they are meant to be considered sacred sites. This is an effort by the temples to further their own development and one undertaken at the request of the public.

Notes

- 1 Eichi Terao, 2002, 2016.
- 2 Tsunezō Shinjō, 1982; Takashi Nakao, 1999; Shōsei Suzuki, 2001; Shinchō Mochizuki, 2002; Jun'ichirō Hara, 2007; Jun'ichirō Hara & Kazuhisa Nakayama & Yū Tsutsui & Kenji Nishigai, 2009; Shinchō Mochizuki, 2011; Jun'ichirō Hara, 2013; Keiko Oshida, 2013 et. al.
- 3 Koreto Ashida, 1929. The page number used in reference to the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* refer to a version published by him.
- 4 Koreto Ashida, 1929. (Preface). The entry of *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* (Written by Katsuo Miura) published by the Kokushi Daijiten Editorial Board (1979-1997). The core of *Shinpen Kamakura-shi* was the *Kamakura-nikki* published in 1674 (*Enpō* 2) by Tokugawa Mitsukuni.
- 5 Ryōzen-ga-saki has been established as a historical site associated with Gokuraku-ji Ninshō. However, because it also mentions Nichiren, the pages related to the life of Nichiren have been indicated.
- 6 In the *Shinpen Kamakura-shi*, the explanation of this building contained in the passage on the Tatsu-no-Kuchi Persecution quotes from the *Nichiren Shōnin Chūga-san* only, and the statements are not particularly forceful.
- 7 The temple name of Ankokuron-ji is listed in some modern historical works as Ankoku-ji. Early examples of the use of the name Ankokuron-ji include the *Eitai Monpaku Chakuyō Menkyōjō*, dated August 1838 (*Tenpō* 9; collection of Ankokuron-ji), and the *Matsubagayatsu Konpon Reijō Tō* of 1840. However, most historical works up to the Meiji period use the name Ankoku-ji.
- 8 The entry for “Kamakura” in the Kadokawa Nihon Chimei Daijiten, editorial board (1984).
- 9 See Tsutomu Shiraishi (1977, p. 312) and Shiori Katō (2002). The existence of the famous sites was confirmed by Katō. Although the name of the Shōtoku 3 edition of the work was the *Revised/Kamakura Meisho-ki* (publisher unknown), it is thought that other “revised editions” were published prior to this date.
- 10 Kan Harada, 1967. The page number used in reference to the *Tōkaidō Meisho Zue* refer to a version published by him.
- 11 Kan Harada, 1967; (bibliographical note by Haruhiko Asakura).
- 12 The four types of the *Kamakura Meisho-ki* in their entirety are reprinted by Tsutomu Shiraishi (1977).
- 13 Gyōon Kitamura, 1989, pp. 67–68.
- 14 For research on the erection of Daimoku towers in the early modern age, see Zeshū Endō (1978).
- 15 The location numbers refer to Eichi Terao, Naofumi Annaka, and Shumbun Homma’s “4. Stone Tower Monograph” (2019). The quotes from the famous texts shown below also come from this text.
- 16 Kamakura-shi Bunka-zai Sōgō Mokuroku editorial board (1987, p. 101). This

- tower was lost due to modern construction, so its inscription cannot be confirmed. The same is true for Myōchō-ji 1, Myōchō-ji 3, and Myōchō-ji 6 (stone column part) in the same text. A photo of what Myōchō-ji 1 and 6 looked like in the past is included in the text of Jūkichi Suzuki (1970, p. 56).
- 17 Takeshi Nakano, 2000.
 - 18 Kokuchūkai Shishiō Bunko collection, it can be viewed in the Risshō University Nichiren Kyōgaku Kenkyū-jo collection photograph file. This text is the same as the history in Gyōon Kitamura (1989, p. 183, 210).
 - 19 Gyōon Kitamura, 1989, p. 221.
 - 20 Chibaken Shiryō Kenkyū Zaidan, 2001, p. 648.
 - 21 Kakimochi is mochi that has been split by hand using a hammer, then dried and cut thinly (Nihon Kokugo Daijiten Editorial Board, 2nd edition, 2000–2002).
 - 22 See Kenitsu Kanmuri (2017) for information on the completion and publication of this text.
 - 23 Yoshiyuki Niikura, 1983, pp. 515, 518.
 - 24 This text indicates that the Hongyō-in of Myōhon-ji In is in the 51st head priest (Yoshiyuki Niikura, 1983), p. 516). The 51st Nisshō died on May 5, 1832 (*Tenpō3*) (Hongyō-in Kako-chō, p. 464). Based on this, this text was completed prior to this date.
 - 25 Kamakurashi Shishi Hensan Iinkai, 1987, p. 5.
 - 26 Kanga Kikuta, 1996, vol. 4, no. 32.
 - 27 The inscription on the left side of this monument is the introduction to the “Hikigayatsu Hakkei Shi” read by Nitchō in 1732). See Myōhon-ji Monjo Kankō-kai (2002, p. 103ff) and Kenitsu Kanmuri (2005, p. 75ff).
 - 28 Takeshi Nakano, 2000, vol. 5, p. 124.
 - 29 Yoshiyuki Niikura, 1983, p. 297.
 - 30 Kamakurashi Shishi Hensan Iinkai, 1987, pp. 6-7. This history is also included in Yoshiyuki Niikura (Ed.), *Myōchō-ji Yurai*, (1983, p. 555).
 - 31 Such progress is noted in the untitled temple history book. Yoshiyuki Niikura, 1983, p. 555.
 - 32 Kamakurashi Shishi Hensan Iinkai, 1987, p. 126.

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