

DEDICATED TO
TEACHERS & STUDENTS



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Classifying —————→ Buddhist Deities

The term "BUDDHA" comes from India, from a Sanskrit word meaning "awakened, enlightened, liberated." Buddhahood is the ultimate goal of Buddhist practitioners.

Buddhism as practiced today in Japan and much of East Asia teaches that anyone, including laity, can achieve enlightenment -- in this life !!!



Consequently, most schools of Buddhism believe that countless BUDDHA already exist. Shaka Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, is just one among many Buddha.

	Buddha Tathagata Nyorai (Jp.) 如来
	Bodhisattva Bosatsu (Jp.) 菩薩
	Vidyaraja Myō-ō (Jp.) 明王
	Deva Tenbu (Jp.) 天部
	Busshi / Monks The Sculptors Who Made the Buddha Statues 仏師

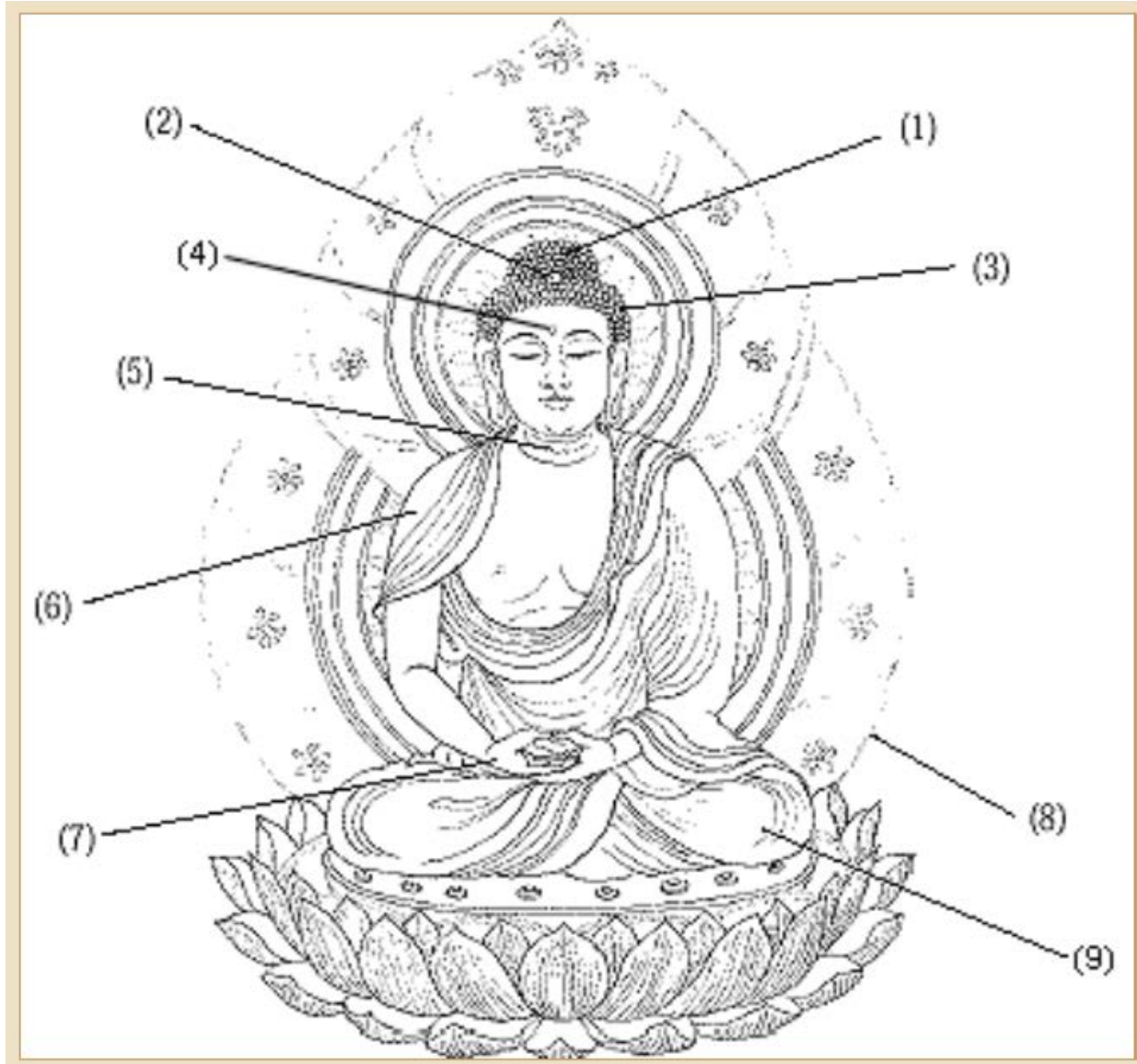


Footprint of Buddha (Gandhara / Swat Area, Pakistan)
2nd - 3rd centuries A.D., H-75.5 D-17 W-48.5 cm.

FOOTPRINTS OF THE BUDDHA IN EARLY BUDDHIST ART. For four centuries after [Gautama's](#) death (approx. 483 BC), legends and facts about the [Historical Buddha](#), his dialogues and his sayings, were preserved only in the memories of monks and followers. There were no written records or artistic representations. Like the [Hindu Brahmins](#), the early Buddhists believed that religious knowledge was too sacred to be written down, too sacred to be etched in stone or wood. In those early years, when overt representations of the Buddha image were taboo, the main artistic vehicle for symbolizing the Buddha's presence was to show the Buddha's "footprint." These footprints of early Buddhist artwork can be found throughout Asia, often in narrative reliefs depicting key episodes in the Buddha's life, and thereby indicating his personal presence.

These footprints are often engraved with various Buddhist symbols. One of the most frequently used symbols in early Buddhism was the Svastika (either left-facing  or right-facing ). Many centuries later, in the 20th century, it was unfortunately adopted by Nazi Germany, who used it (the swastika) on their flag and armbands.

LEARN MORE AT: <http://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/nyorai.shtml>



1. Nikkei 肉髻 in Japanese (Skt. = Ushinisha); the Bump of Knowledge; the uppermost bump of the head, which symbolizes spiritual wisdom; also said to represent accumulated wisdom, an elevated spiritual state. The Nikkei is often covered by spiral shaped curls of hair, like snail-shells, known as **Rahotsu** 螺髮. The Rahotsu symbolizes enlightenment, and first appeared in the 2nd century AD on Mathura Buddhas in North Central India <source JAANUS>. Another Japanese term for Nikkei jewel is **Chōsei Nikkei** 頂成肉髻.

2. Nikkeishū 肉髻珠. The Nikkei Jewel, which radiates the light of wisdom, is located at the front base of the Nikkei. In Buddhist statuary, a small circle is typically carved here, or a circular crystal placed here. The Nikkeishu is sometimes painted red. In the Lotus Treasury World (Rengezōsekai 蓮華藏世界), a pure land described in the Flower Garland Sutra and Brahma Net Sutra, an infinite number of **Kebutsu** 化仏 (lit. "transformed Buddha") emanate from the Nikkei jewel. The Kebutsu represent the infinite transformations (manifestations, forms, different bodies) in which the Buddhist deities appear to save sentient beings.

3. Rahotsu 螺髮 (Japanese). Hair on head in small spiral curls; supposedly represents the stubble left on [Prince Siddhartha](#)'s head after he cut off his hair; according to one legend, he pulled his hair together into a top knot and chopped it off; it apparently went into fine curls (spiraling to the right), and never needed cutting again. Statues of the [Amida Nyorai](#) are said to contain 656 curls, a specific characteristic of that deity.

4. Byakugo 白毫 in Japanese (Skt. = Urna). Lit. shining forehead hair, but more commonly translated as boss, or all-seeing third eye, in middle of forehead; symbolic third eye (spiritual eye), which appears on all statues of the Buddha (Nyorai); legend says the [Historical Buddha](#) had one strand of white hair (which curled to the right) in the center of his forehead, from which emitted rays of light to enlighten the world. In sculpture, the Byakugo is usually represented with a crystal or other valued gem. There are many stories. In one, the Historical Buddha has just entered into deep meditation after expounding the Muryōgi-kyō (Sutra of Infinite Meaning) to a gathering of followers. At exactly that moment, flowers fell from heaven and other auspicious signs occurred; those present, gazing upon him, saw a ray of light spring forth from his forehead, illuminating the 18,000 worlds to the east. The Urna is a traditional marking still worn by Indian women today (gem set in middle of forehead); some traditions call it the sixth chakra (center of energy, wheel of light).

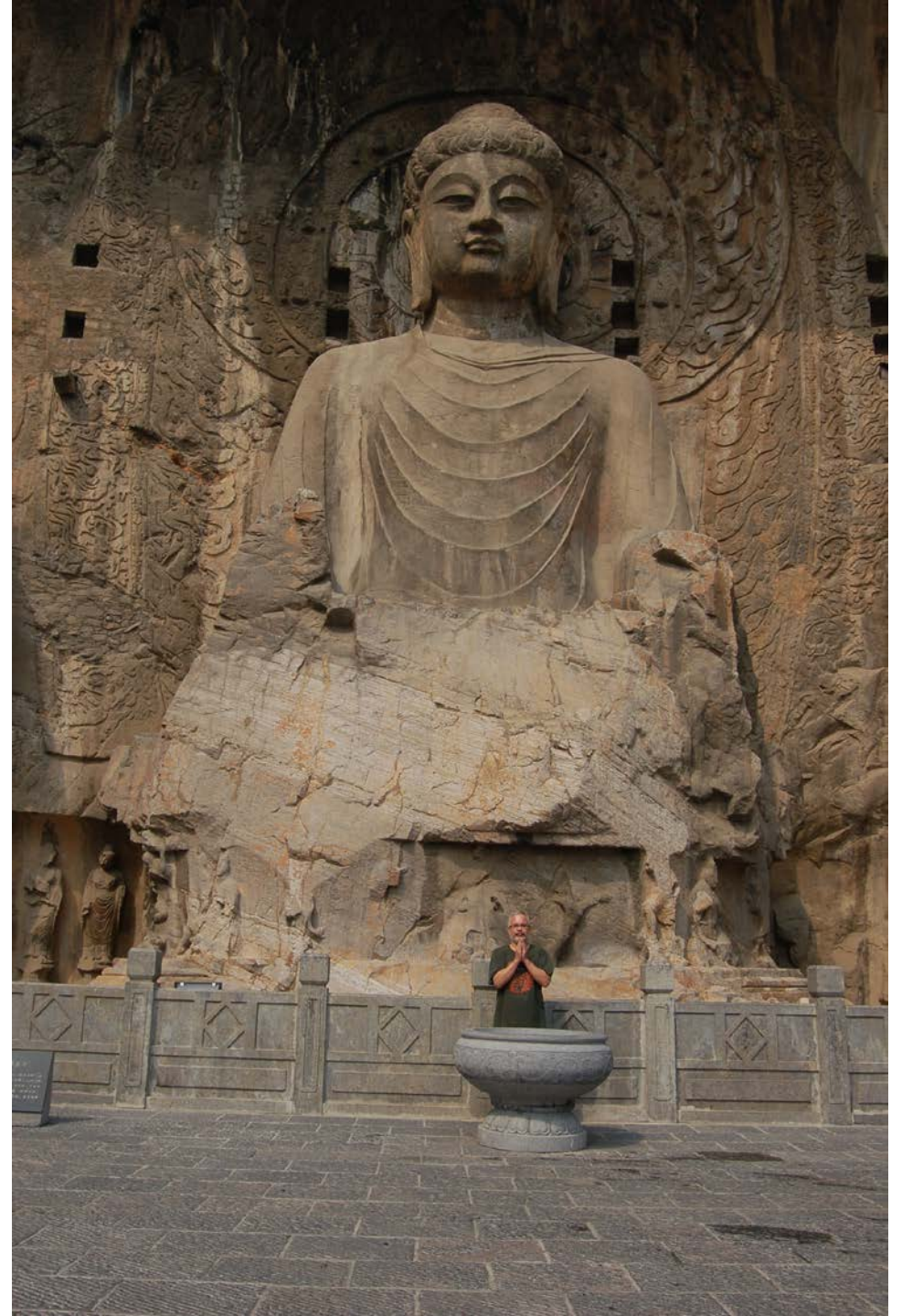
2nd Century CE

The Seated Buddha from Gandhara is an early statue of the Buddha discovered at the site of Jamal Garhi in ancient Gandhara in modern-day Pakistan, that dates to the 2nd or 3rd century AD. It is now in room 22 of the British Museum. Statues of the "enlightened one" were not made until the 1st century CE.

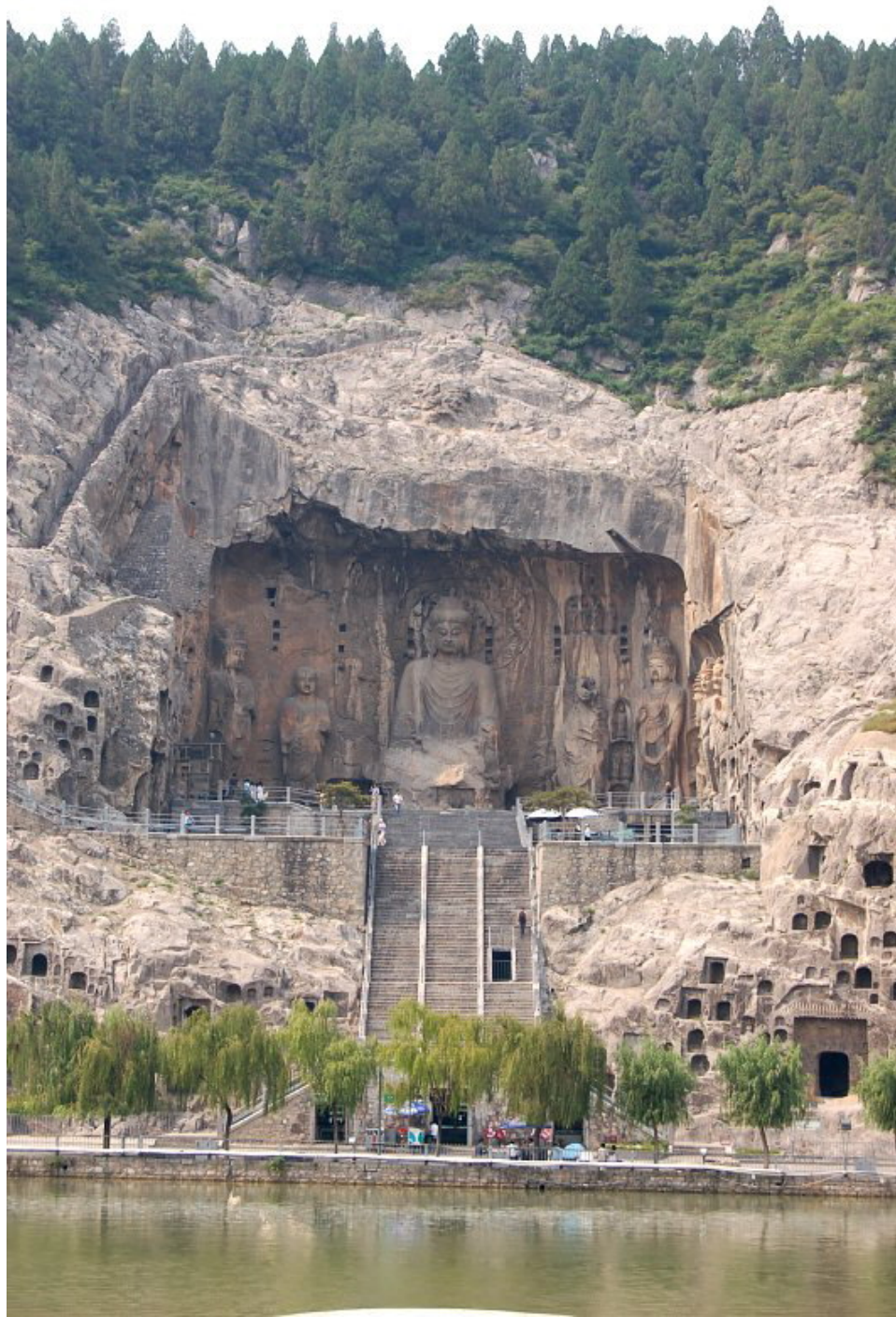


5th Century CE

The Longmen caves and cliff sculptures of Buddhist divinities are an outstanding example of China's artistic impulse to carve in stone (in this case, limestone). The grottoes and niches were created in phases over the centuries, with the oldest dating back to the late 5th century (Northern Wei Dynasty 386 - 534 AD), and the most recent completed in the 10th century (Tang Dynasty 618 - 907 AD). This long time span provides art historians and art lovers with a wondrous snapshot of China's changing artistic styles and the influence of India and Central Asia on China's Buddhist artwork.



5th Century CE
Longmen, China



632 CE

BRONZE IMAGE

Famous bronze Shaka Trinity

Height = 86.4 cm

Hōryūji Temple 法隆寺 in Nara

Surrounded by two attendants

(thought to be [Yaku-ō](#) & [Yakujō Bosatsu](#)).

Early Buddhist images have elongated faces & hands.



WOOD IMAGE

Seiryōji Shaka (Seiryōji Shaka), 987 AD

Wood, Height = 162.67 cm

Yosegi Zukuri Carving 寄木造

Treasure of Seiryōji Temple 清凉寺 (Kyoto)

About Seiryōjishiki Shaka 清凉寺式釈迦

Abbreviation of Seiryōjishiki Shaka Nyoraizō 清凉寺式釈迦如来像, also known as Zuizō Shaka 瑞像釈迦.

A sculpture of Shaka modeled after the Shaka image Shakazō 釈迦像 at Seiryōji Temple 清凉寺 (popularly known as Saga Shakadō 嵯峨釈迦堂) in Kyoto. The Seiryōji image itself was brought from Northern Song China to Japan by the Tōdaiji 東大寺 priest Chōnen 喬然 in 987 AD. Copies of this image were made for temples all over Japan. Seiryōjishiki Shaka is a generic term for all such images.



7th Century AD

Yakushi Nyorai
The Medicine Buddha
Late 7th Century AD
Wood, H = 110.6 cm
Hōrin-ji Temple 法輪寺
Nara, Japan



752 CE

NARA DAIBUTSU 奈良の大仏
15 meters in height, gilt bronze

The famous Big Buddha statue at
Tōdai-ji Temple 東大寺 is an effigy of Birushana.

Also known as the Rushana Daibutsu 盧舎那大仏
or Nara no Daibutsu 奈良の大仏 (Great Buddha of Nara).



1252 AD

Kamakura Daibutsu
Kamakura Big Buddha



ABOUT HŌZŌ BOSATSU

Hōzō (Houzou, Hozo) Bosatsu 法蔵菩薩

Hōzō Bosatsu (Skt. = Dharmakāra) appears in the Sutra of Infinite Life (Muryōjukyō 無量壽經; Skt. Sukhavatīyūha Sutra). As a human, Hōzō was a king who gave up his throne after hearing the teachings of Lokeshvararaja Buddha (Sejizaiō Butsu 自在王佛). He became a monk, and after eons of practice, he became Dharmakāra Bodhisattva ([Hōzō Bosatsu](#) 法蔵菩薩), who then made [48 vows](#), fulfilled them, and became [Amida Nyorai](#).

PHOTO: Gokō Shiyui Amida 五劫思惟阿彌陀 (aka Hōzō Bosatsu). Tōdaiji Temple (Nara), H = 106.6 cm, Muromachi Era. Hōzō practiced for an inconceivably long time (five kapla = 五劫 = Gokō), and is thus shown here with thick hair.



< 18 meters >

Slide Nineteen
Non-Standard Grouping
National Treasure of Japan
Late 12th Century

2.7 meters
↑

Zōchōten
增長天

Fudō Myō-ō
不動明王

Seishi
勢至菩薩

Monju
文殊菩薩

Amida
阿彌陀如來

Miroku
彌勒菩薩

Dainichi 大日如來

Shaka
釈迦如來

Yakushi
藥師如來

Fugen
普賢菩薩

Kannon
觀世音菩薩

Gozanze
Myō-ō
隆三世明王

Tamōten
多聞天

Thirteen Buddhist Deities at Usuki, Ōita. These thirteen are the core group at Usuki.
In April 1995, fifty-nine stone statues at Usuki were designated as National Treasures.



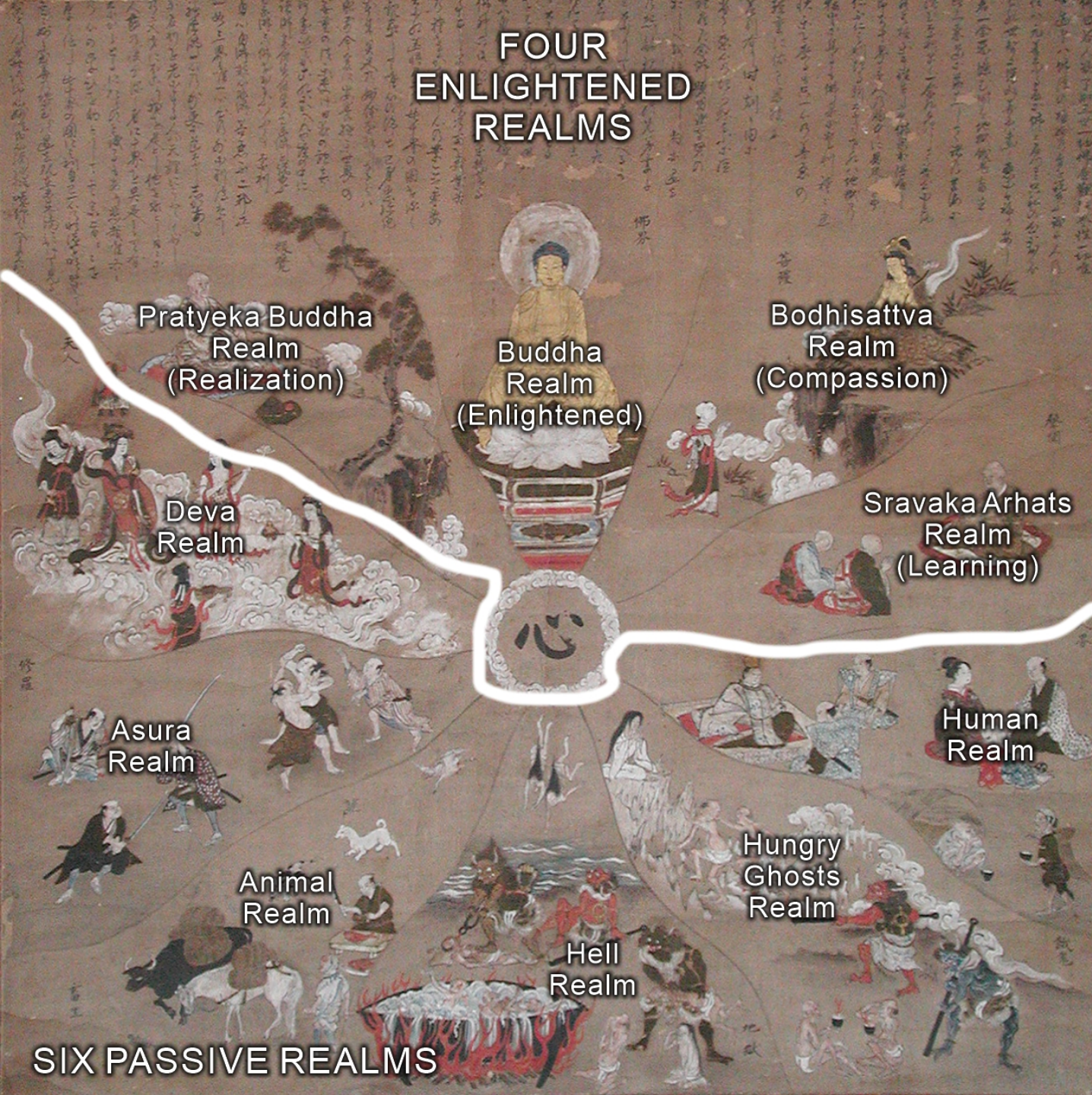
NIHON-JI DAIBUTSU

Image of Yakushi Rurikō 薬師瑠璃光
(aka [Yakushi Buddha](#))

The Big Buddha at Nihon-ji Temple in Chiba Prefecture is a representation of [Yakushi Nyorai](#) (the Medicine Buddha, the Buddha of Healing). This stone-cliff Buddha (magaibutsu) is 31.05 meters in height. It, plus 1,500 smaller statues in the area, were carved by master artisan Jingoro Eirei Ono and his 27 apprentices in the 1780s and 1790s.

This Daibutsu (大仏, lit. Big Buddha) of Yakushi Nyorai is twice the size of the Kamakura Daibutsu and Nara Daibutsu, making it the largest of pre-modern Japan's extant Big Buddha statues. The Nihon-ji Temple itself dates back to 725 AD.

FOUR ENLIGHTENED REALMS



SIX PASSIVE REALMS

TEN WORLDS OF EXISTENCE The "Ten Realms" (Jp: Jikkai 十界)

1. Hells (Skt: Naraka, Jp: Jigoku 地獄 -- the lowest level)
2. Hungry Ghosts (Skt: Preta, Jp: Gaki 餓鬼)
3. Animals (Skt: Tiryasyoni, Jp: Chikushō 畜生)
4. Bellicose Demons (Skt: **Asura**, Jp: Ashura 阿修羅)
5. Humans (Skt: Manusya, Jp: Ningen 人間)
6. Heavenly Beings (Skt: **Deva**, Jp: Ten 天)
7. Sravaka **Arhats** (Jp: Shōmon 声聞); listeners of Buddhist teachings
8. Pratyeka Buddhas (Jp: Engaku 縁覚); self-enlightened beings
9. Bodhisattvas (Jp: **Bosatsu** 菩薩); the compassionate ones
10. Buddhas (Jp: **Nyorai**, Tathagata, Hotoke 仏 -- highest level)

TEN WORLDS MAY ALSO BE WRITTEN AS:

1. Hell (Beings in Hell -- the lowest level)
2. Hunger (Hungry Ghosts)
3. Animality (Animals)
4. Anger (**Ashura**)
5. Tranquility (Humans)
6. Rapture (**Deva**)
7. Learning (**Theravada** Traditions, **Arhat**)
8. Realization (**Theravada** Traditions, **Arhat**)
9. Bodhisattva (**Mahayana** Traditions, **Bosatsu**)
10. Buddha (**Nyorai**, Tathagata, Hotoke -- highest level)

The "Ten Realms" are divided into two groups. The first group (1 to 6) comprises the **Six Paths of Suffering** (also called the **Wheel of Life** in Tibet). The second group (7 to 10) comprises the four realms of enlightened existence, the "Four Noble Worlds." For many more details, [click here](#).

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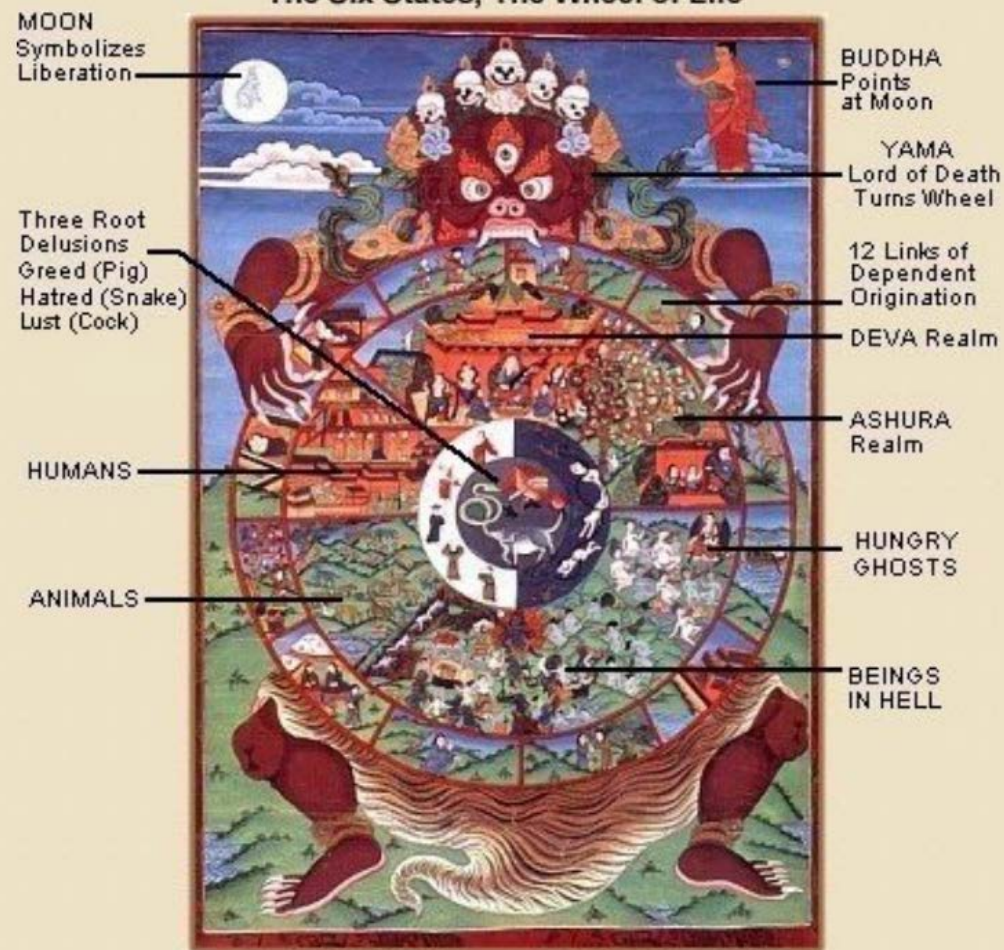
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TIBETAN TANKA **The Six States, The Wheel of Life**

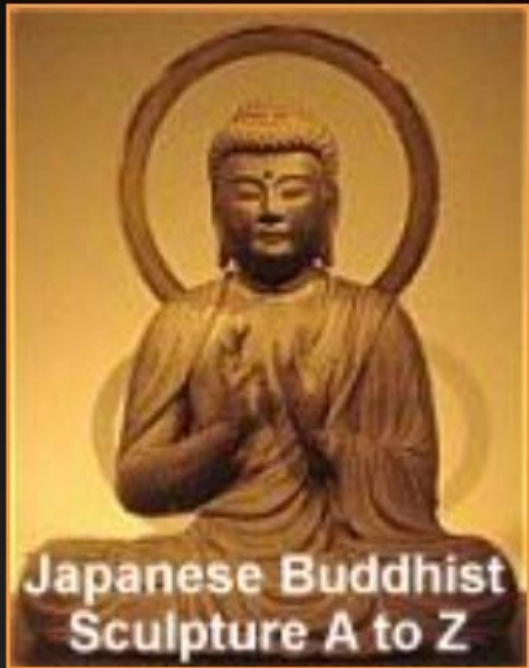




THREE ANIMALS

At the center of the wheel one finds three animals -- a pig, a snake and a rooster. The pig symbolizes greed (Skt. = *lobha*), the snake anger and hatred (Skt. = *dosa*) and the rooster (or cock) ignorance or delusion (Skt. = *moha*). The three animals are often shown biting each others tails, to show that these evils are inseparably connected. The emotions of the three stem from fundamental ignorance. Together, the triad represents the root causes of trouble on earth.

**A-to-Z
Deity Dictionary
4000+ Photos of
Japan's Buddha
Divinities**



**Japanese Buddhist
Sculpture A to Z**

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