

# Zen Buddhist Landscapes and the Idea of Temple: Muso Kokushi and Zuisen-Ji, Kamakura, Japan

*Norris Brock Johnson  
Department of Anthropology  
University of North Carolina  
CB 3115, Alumni Building  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3115  
U.S.A.*

## Summary

Temples are conventionally conceptualized as buildings. The conceptualization of temple-as-building negates the synthetic quality of the concept of the sacred. The temple is better served by being conceived as an affecting interrelationship synthesizing buildings, land, and landscapes.

Study of the 13th century Zen Buddhist temple of Zuisen (flowing spring) temple (ji) Kamakura, Japan, suggests that the designer conceived the temple as the interrelationship of buildings, land and landscape, and the ritual participation of people. In particular, pilgrimage to and up a mountain is incorporated as a structural design feature of Zuisen-ji rather than Zuisen-ji being the conventional end-point of a pilgrimage route. At Zuisen-ji, architecture is ecological and behavioural as well as material.

## Résumé

On considère en général les temples comme des bâtiments, ce qui en fait va à l'encontre de la qualité synthétique impliquée par le concept de sacré. Leur nature est mieux définie si on les conçoit comme une interrelation entre bâtiments, environnement et paysage.

Une étude du temple (ji) zen-bouddhique de Zuisen (courant du printemps), construit au 13e siècle au Japon, montre que son architecte l'a conçu comme une interrelation entre bâtiments, environnement et paysage et avec une participation ritualisée des visiteurs. Plus particulièrement, un pèlerinage vers et sur la montagne est intégré en tant qu'élément structurel du Zuisen-ji au lieu que ce dernier soit simplement l'étape finale de l'itinéraire du pèlerinage. L'architecture de Zuisen-ji est autant écologique et 'comportementale' que matérielle.

## 1. Japanese Gardens, and the Idea of Temple

The architecture of Japan is renowned for its nearly organic interplay of residential and religious buildings, land, and landscapes both natural and human-created. In Japan, gardens mediate the interrelationship of building, land, and landscape synthesizing each into an affecting architected whole.

From this vantage architecture in Japan traditionally has been neither buildings, land, nor landscapes exclusively but the emotionally affecting design interplay of each to the other.

I have been exploring the manner in which Japanese gardens architecturally mediate the design interrelationship of buildings, land, and landscape and the implications of said mediation on the concept of the sacred, in general, and on the concept of temple as sacred building, in particular (Johnson 1992, 1991a, 1988; Lau 1981). A garden is *niwa*, a space or arena in which Shinto deities termed *Kami* participate. Inherently, a Japanese garden is a religious phenomenon. The concept of temple is of course customarily ascribed to religious buildings exclusively. By definition a temple (Latin, *templum*) is a building(s) set apart, by connotation literally cut off from an implied whole, to house a deity. My concern is the set-apartness aspect of this concept of temple. Focusing on buildings exclusively, the conventional conception of temple not only does not include land and landscape as aspects of temple but also does not accommodate the socioculturally-symbolic architected interrelationship of each to the other. For instance, the notion of the sacred in a great many cultures is synthetic (Eliade 1959; Otto 1950), and the conventional particularist conception of temple neither mirrors nor does justice to indigenous conceptions of temple as embodiment of the sacred.

My ethnographic and ethnohistorical research in Japan on 12th-13th century Zen Buddhist temples interprets temple as the architected interrelationship of land and landscape, buildings, and the ritual participation of Believers.<sup>1</sup>

The architecture of Zuisen-ji declares that temple is not buildings exclusively, but is a spatial and temporal phenomena of which buildings are but a component design feature.

## 2. Muso Kokushi and Zuisen-ji: The Flowing Spring

Zuisen-ji is in present-day Kanagawa Prefecture. Zuisen-ji has been studied scantily. There is brief mention of Zuisen-ji in Colclutt (1981, 114), Dumoulin (1990, 160), Schaarschmidt-Richter (1979, 185-186), and Shigemori (1936-1939, 2-1). An account of my research on Zuisen-ji is in Johnson (1991b). Zuisen-ji was constructed from 1327-1332 as the *bodaisho* (family temple) of the Kamakura *bakufu* (shogunate). Beginning with Ashikaga Motouji (1340-1367), Zuisen-ji prospered with the support of the Kamakura *bakufu* and became the most influential Zen Buddhist temple in the Kanto region of medieval Japan.

Zuisen-ji contains the first garden designed by the legendary Zen Buddhist priest Muso Soseki (1275-1351), and is the only temple garden in Kamakura constructed during the Kamakura Period (1185-1333). Muso Soseki designed gardens, and altered the design of existing gardens, as an aspect of his practice of Zen (cf. Itoh 1984, 103-110). Muso Soseki was the first abbot of Zuisen-ji, and he was three times honoured as a Kokushi (National Master) by Emperors Godaigo (1318-1339), Kogen (1313-1364), and Komyo (1321-1380). Muso Kokushi established the Tenryu line of Rinzaï Zen Buddhism, founding fourteen temples, and he is credited with teaching 13,145

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<sup>1</sup> While on a Fulbright, I lived and studied in Japan for 13 months during 1985 and 1986. Several articles of mine (Johnson 1993, 1989a, 1989b) are concerned with the manner in which Japanese temples, Zen Buddhist temples in particular, inform our consideration of the concept of the temple.

students. Fifty-two students received his approval as successors and priests such as Mukyoku, Shun'oku, Myoha, Gido Shushin, and Zekkai Chushin made notable contributions to the development of Rinzai Zen Buddhism. On Muso Kokushi, see Hayakawa (1984, 58-73, Kraft (1981, 76), Merwin and Shigematsu (1989), Shibata and Shibata (1974), Tamamura (1958), and Tsunoda et. al (1958, 226-234, 250-255).

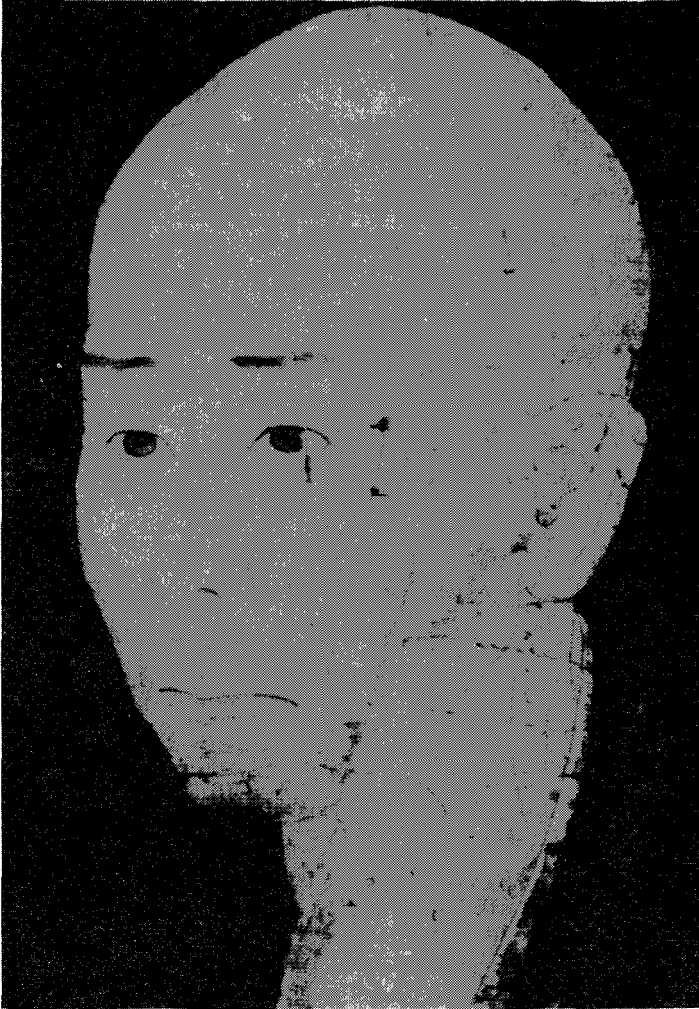


Fig. 1 Portrait of Muso Kokushi, painted about 1350 by Muto Shui. The painting is housed in Myochi-in, a subtemple of Tenryu-ji, in Kyoto.

Portrait de Muso Kokushi, peint vers 1350 par Muto Shui. Ce tableau se trouve à Myochi-in, un sous-temple de Tenryu-ji, Kyoto.

Zuisen-ji was an influential *dojo* (arena; training place) for acolyte priests petitioning to study with Muso Kokushi. After his death, his disciples continued Zuisen-ji as a *dojo* for the study of the *mo-ju* school of Rinzai Zen Buddhism.

The *Dai-Hojo* (superior's quarters) is the traditional residence of the abbots of Zuisen-ji. A small pond is sited to the rear of the building.



Fig. 2 The *Dai Hojo* is nestled into groves of trees at the piedmont of the mountain. The cone of sand to the upper right of the pond is a miniature depiction of Mount Fuji. View from the first turn of the ascent up the juhakkyoku passageway (Source: Author's photograph).

Le *Dai-Hojo* est caché dans des groupes d'arbres au pied de la montagne. Le cône de sable au coin supérieur droit de l'étang est une miniature du Mont Fuji. Vu du premier tournant de la montée, le passage juhakkyoku (Photographie prise par l'auteur).

Zuisen-ji was intentionally sited to include the piedmont of the Kamakura mountains as a component of the temple. The *Dai Hojo* is sited at the base of the Kamakura mountain range, near the Kamakura *Nikaido Momiji Gaya* (maple tree-lined pass through the Kamakura Mountains, near Nikaido). The design feature with which I am concerned, here, begins as the piedmont of the chain of mountains into which the *Dai Hojo* is nestled as the chain becomes concave in turning to the West.

### 3. The *Juhakkyoku* Passageway

A passageway up the piedmont of the mountain is terraced into this concave bend (see Figures 3 and 4). The terraced passageway is an elongated spiral woven back and forth across the face of the piedmont.

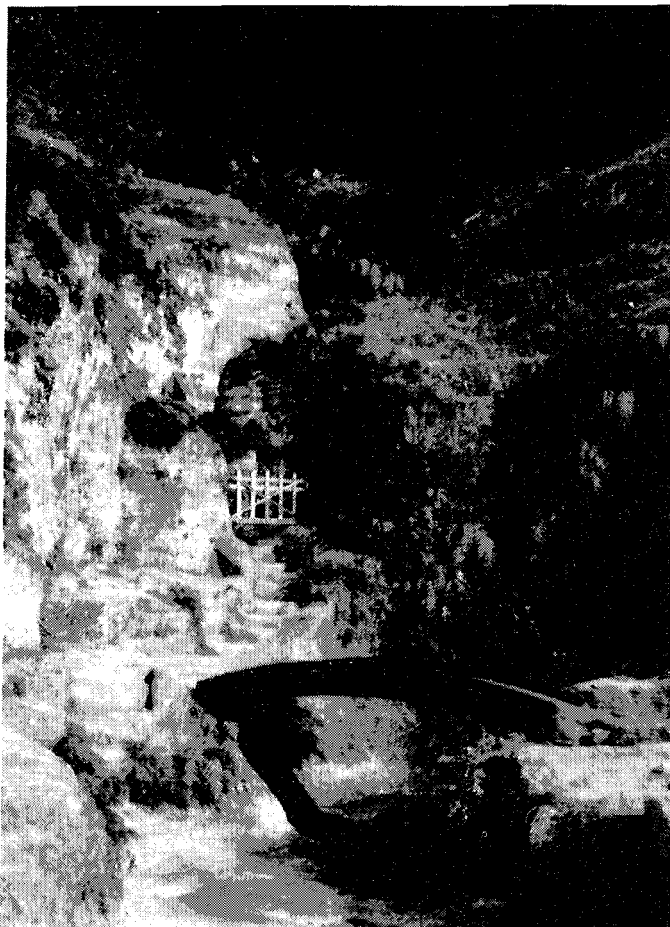


Fig. 3 View of the *juhakkyoku* passageway cut into a concave channel in the hillock of the piedmont of the Kamakura mountain range. The passageway at points is over six feet deep into the earth. The gate acknowledges that visitors are presently not permitted ascent to the *Ichiran-Tei*. In the foreground is one of two wooden bridges spanning channels of the pond crossed to reach the initial steps cut into the earth clearly seen beneath the wooden gate (Source: Author's photograph).

Vue du passage *juhakkyoku* formant un canal concave au travers du pied de la montagne de Kamakura. Par endroits ce passage a plus de six pieds de profondeur. La barrière indique que les visiteurs ne sont actuellement pas autorisés à gravir l'*Ichiran Tei*. On voit en avant-plan l'un des deux ponts de bois sur les bras de l'étang permettant d'atteindre les premières marches, juste au dessous de la barrière de bois (Photographie de l'auteur).

Both the *Dai Hojo* and passageway cut into the piedmont are oriented toward the west toward Mount Fuji, one of the most sacred mountains in Japan. Stepping stones mark the path of the terraced passageway as it turns eighteen times (*juhakkyoku*) toward the top of the piedmont. The design of the Zuisen-ji *juhakkyoku* parallels the symbolism and rituals associated with mountains in India as well as in China (cf. Dumoulin 1988). In India, mountains laced with rock-cut spiral pathways are a traditional Hindu architected motif (cf. Michell 1977; Volwahren 1969; Wu 1963). The sacred mountain of Meru is often depicted as a swirling spiral. Mount Meru comprises nine levels, the ascension of which is symbolic of Buddhist renunciation of desire and embrace of compassion. Passing over bridges to ascend a spiraling path (*ch'uan-hua*) is a metaphor for spiritual pilgrimage.

The Chinese priest Tao-sheng (360-434 BC) argued that the process of enlightenment cannot be separated from the experience of enlightenment. Enlightenment is climbing a mountain and, "when the mountain is climbed, the landscape of the goal appears all at once" (Dumoulin 1963, 64). Ascent up the mountain abutting the garden at Zuisen-ji, then, would I think be recognized by Tao-sheng as a material metaphor for the process and experience of enlightenment itself. Temple priests tell me that Muso Kokushi and successive generations of priests used the passageway to climb to an arbor to meditate on top of the hillock, a belief confirmed by my archival research. We customarily think of gardens as two-dimensional (horizontal) spaces we observe rather than, as at Zuisen-ji, three dimensional (defined by a horizontal and a vertical) spaces in which we participate. The passageway cut into the piedmont intentionally includes movement by priests up and down the hillock, to and from an arbor, as a component of the temple.

Several later temples attributed to Muso Kokushi, mirror the lower/upper *juhakkyoku* design structure of Zuisen-ji, but the design structure of Zuisen-ji is pronounced (Eiho-ji, Kencho-ji, Saiho-ji, Tenryu-ji, and Zuisen-ji) .

Saiho-ji (Temple of the Western Fragrance, often called Koke Dera [Moss Garden]), for example is sited in the mountains west of Kyoto. From 1339-1341, Kokushi converted the 4.5 acre site into a Zen Buddhist temple. Like Zuisen-ji, Saiho-ji is laid out at the base of mountains, and incorporates the piedmont of a mountain in the structure of its design (cf. Bring and Wayembergh 1981, 13-23). The site is comprised of lower and upper areas. The lower area adjacent to the entrance prominently features a pond whereas the upper area prominently features a complex of stones, highly symbolic in the shape of a turtle and a waterfall. The dual division of the site is linked by a winding path of ascent through still-dense stands of maple and pine trees. The "wet," lower area is contrasted with the "dry," upper area, stone is contrasted with water, and the "higher" is contrasted with the "lower." Muso Kokushi intentionally structured these contrasts in a complementary opposed fashion. The architected environment embodies the Rinzai Zen Buddhist emphasis on the negation of apparent dualisms, perceived as real, to emphasize the seamless core of reality as experience itself. For a similar consideration of Tenryu-ji, see Johnson (1992, 1989a) and Kuck (1984, 113-124). In any case, the *juhakkyoku* design structure of Zuisen-ji is unique in the history of Japanese gardens.

### 3.1 *Yugen, and Experience*

After several visits to Zuisen-ji and after several sessions of study with temple priests during each visit, I am invited to experience the climb up the *juhakkyoku* passageway. The passageway is a channel bounded by trees and by the earth itself. At lower points in the passageway, steps are hewn from the earth. The passageway is narrow at the beginning of the ascent, narrow enough for outstretched arms to palm the sides of the earthen walls for leverage. At points, one is in the earth as the surface of the ground rises above one's head. Further up, stones are embedded in the earth and the climb is close to the surface of the ground, along a path winding through pine and maple trees.

At midpassage, the *Dai-Hojo* disappears into surrounding foliage... while the summit of the mountain is yet to be seen. There is only the passage itself. Here, an atmosphere of *yugen* is apparent. Dark, shaded and translucent, *yugen* is a feeling of

profundity and mystery, hidden significance, and primalness (Covello and Yoshimura 1984, 26-32; Dumoulin 1979, 142; Ueda 1967, 55-71). *Yugen* "does not let one see where it leads; it gives subtly to the scenery, increases its ramifications, creates a sense of seclusion and depth, and prevents the visitor from taking in everything at one glance" (Yang 1982, 75). *Yugen* is deemed an attribute of temple landscapes ascribed to Muso Kokushi (cf. Trieb 1989). Like a Chinese scroll painting being unrolled, Muso Kokushi stimulated a mood of *yugen* in those who passed this way by creating a landscape revealing itself gradually as one makes an on-going effort to participate in it. Muso Kokushi designed temples as pedagogy, and as embodiment of principles of Zen Buddhism. Zuisen-ji is didactic, and the lesson for successive generations of priests and acolytes is the nature of experience itself. As it undoubtedly was in the 13th century when Muso climbed here, at this point in the *juhakkyoku* passageway neither the beginning nor the ending are readily apparent. The experience, the lesson, is the journey.

### 3.2 Pilgrimage, and Temple

The climb to the top of the hillock is difficult, and at times nearly vertical. Ascent is of course an archetypal architected feature of temples (Eliade 1959, 37-41; Marc 1977, 85-120), and ascent is a component of the architecture of Zuisen-ji. Pilgrimage may or may not involve ascent, but ascent as an aspect of sacred space and architecture invariably involves a pilgrimage.

Before he designed Zuisen-ji, as an acolyte Muso Kokushi made pilgrimages on foot to meditate and study with priests in the Tendai mountain monastery of Engaku-ji and the Shingon monastery on Mount Hiei (Dumoulin 1990, 151-159; Collcutt 1981, 92-93). His first temple design at Zuisen-ji embodies the importance to Muso of pilgrimage to an up mountains.

Zuisen-ji, though, structures pilgrimage as a ritual experience within the temple rather than as a ritual approach to the temple. Conventional conceptions of temple pilgrimages in Japan assume intact buildings to which one comes and goes on a defined route (Grappard 1982; Kitagawa 1987, 127-136). The pilgrimage and the buildings at the endpoint of a pilgrimage are distinct phenomena. At Zuisen-ji though, the *juhakkyoku* defines space traversed across a small mountain by pilgrims as movement between buildings, buildings spread over a distance structured as a feature of the temple itself. The effort to climb the *juhakkyoku* to the meditation arbor is a microcosmic pilgrimage Muso Kokushi often made up macrocosmic sacred mountains.

Muso Kokushi made mountain pilgrimages, especially, to study with visiting Zen Buddhism priests from China. Intense interchanges of people, ideas, and artifacts occurred during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) in China and the Kamakura Period (1186-1333) in Japan. Ch'an (Zen) priests from China visited Muso Kokushi at Zuisen-ji, and Kamakura priests studied in the Ch'an temples of China. Mountains were the Taoist realm of human beings who discovered the alchemical secret of immortality. Reviewing the pan-Asiatic belief that the bodies of deities "grow out of the mountain," H.B. Quaritch Wales (1953:24) emphasizes symbolic associations made between body and mountain. Taoist adepts lived on mountains as enriched environments for bodily participation (yan hsin) in ch'i (Breath of the Tao).

Taoist temples were invariably mountain temples. Myriad temples nestled in the southern flank of Mount Taishan, and "taoist priests urged people to make pilgrimages

to the high places, to the caves of hermits and to the shrines in the far hills" (Graham 1950, 14). If we conclude that "ritual action and architectural form express one and the same meaning," (Kramrisch 1976, 165) then the psychological and spiritual effort required to reach the summit of Taishan, and Zuisen-ji, is metaphysical as well as physical. Muso Kokushi was exposed to and influenced by the design forms and ideology of traditional environments for the practice of Buddhism in China, and there are features of the design structure of Zuisen-ji congruent with temple architecture in Sung Dynasty China.

#### 4. The *Ichiran-Tei*

I reach the top of the mountain, where Muso Kokushi built/had built an arbor for shelter and for meditation (see Figures 4 & 5). Mountain arbors (*tei*) are a design feature of temples associated with Muso Kokushi. He named arbors after people he knew or who had influenced his religious practice. He named the arbor at Zuisen-ji *Ichiran-Tei* after the Chinese priest Henkei Ichiran. Muso's *Ichiran-Tei* was consumed by a fire in 1439, rebuilt in 1442, but burned again during the Onin Wars (1468-1477). The arbor was rebuilt in the early Tokugawa period (1603-1868) by Tokugawa Mitsukuni. Mitsukuni's arbor was destroyed during an earthquake in 1703, then rebuilt by Yoshida Torajiro. The present *Ichiran-Tei* was built on the original site by Nikura Shidoshi, an abbot at Zuisen-ji.

The present *Ichiran-Tei* is weathered and, for me, a welcome place to rest after a difficult and disorienting climb up the *juhakkyoku* passageway. Planks, forming benches, jut from the walls to form the lower half of the arbor. The upper half of the arbor is open, and the landscape is framed by corner posts and the eaves of the roof. I sit in the *Ichiran-Tei* and look into the milky-blue haze fluffing up from Sagami Bay to the south. I hear the grass dancing, and the shifting weight of heat sitting in the air. My gaze from the *Ichiran-Tei* is interrupted only by anticipatory movements of darkness slipping as shadow from the roof of the arbor. I am reminded of a poem Muso is said to have written while meditating in the original *Ichiran-Tei*:

At the hut of the mountain  
 Where the pine is piled  
 White snow in the garden  
 Peaking at the treetop (Tatsui 1942, 139)





Fig. 4 The roofline of the present *Ichiran-Tei*, as seen from the final turn of the *juhakkyoku* passageway. The bronze final atop the *tei* is in the shape of a lotus leaf (Buddha) supporting a globe (enlightenment; *satori*, conventional Buddhist architectural symbols) (Source: Author's photograph). The lotus is a metaphor for the transformation of the illusions of ordinary consciousness to reveal the reality of Buddha consciousness. The lotus is a water plant, and the roots of the lotus are often obscured by mud and silt. Metaphorically, one must make an effort to get beneath surface appearance to apprehend the roots of the lotus, just as one must make an effort to get beneath surface appearance to apprehend the "Original Face" of Buddha consciousness. Nichiren (1222-1282), a follower of the Lotus Sutra, poetically termed this prevalent Buddha image the "Lotus of Truth."

A square enclosure (*harmika*) traditionally tops the domes of Indian *stupas*. The *harmika* as abode of Buddha is found in association with *vinrah* buildings on top of mountains themselves believed to be embodiments of Buddha (cf. Fergusson and Burgess 1969; Volwahn 1969; Wu 1963). The mound of the *stupa* is termed *Anda*, meaning a body or egg. Pilgrims climb to the *harmika* on top of the *stupa* by way of inclined steps (*Pradakshina*) circumambulating the *Anda*. The *stupa* at Sanchi is an example of the circumambulation of a mountain form similar to the intent of the *juhakkyoku* passageway at Zuisen-ji.

Le toit de l'actuel *Ichiran-Tei*, vu du dernier tournant du passage *juhakkyoku*. Le *tei* est surmonté d'une sculpture de bronze représentant une feuille de lotus (Bouddha) portant un globe (lumière spirituelle; *satori*, symboles architecturaux bouddhistes conventionnels) (Photographie de l'auteur). Le lotus est une métaphore pour la transformation des illusions de la conscience ordinaire, révélant la réalité d'une conscience en Bouddha. Le lotus est une plante aquatique dont les racines sont souvent couvertes de boue et de sédiments. Interprété en tant que métaphore, il signifie qu'il faut faire un effort pour dépasser les apparences superficielles et saisir ses racines, comme il faut dépasser les apparences superficielles pour saisir le "visage original" de la conscience en Bouddha. Nichiren (1222-1282), un disciple du Sutra Lotus, a utilisé l'expression poétique de "Lotus de la Vérité" pour désigner cette image de Bouddha.

Traditionnellement, un espace carré (*harmika*) se trouve au sommet des *stupas* indiens. L'*harmika*, résidence de Bouddha, se trouve en association avec les bâtiments *vinrah* situés au sommet de certaines montagnes et dont on pense qu'ils incorporent Bouddha (cf. Fergusson et Burgess 1969; Volwahn 1969; Wu 1963). La butte du *stupa* est appelée *Anda*, ce qui veut dire corps ou oeuf. Les pèlerins empruntent des marches inclinées (*Pradakshina*) encerclant l'*Anda* pour monter jusqu'à l'*harmika* au sommet du *stupa*. Le *stupa* de Sanchi fournit un exemple de circumambulation d'une montagne et sa fonction est similaire à celle du passage *juhakkyoku* de Zuisen-ji.

#### 4.1 *Nature as an Aspect of Temple*

Muso spent more than twenty years living on mountains and in forests. Small huts in the forest and arbors on top of mountains were an aspect of his practice of Zen, and sheltered his desire to live intimately with nature.

Muso Kokushi believed that Buddha was nature (*shizen*) as well as people (*hijo*). He would have been familiar with Kobo Daishi (774-835) (Kukai) and the argument for *mokuseki bussho* (the Buddha-nature of trees and rocks). The belief was that both people and nature embody and expound Buddha consciousness, manifest dharma, and that both "nature and self originated from the same common ground" (Tellenbach & Kimura 1989, 153).

In 1311 Muso Kokushi built a mountain hut, which he named Ryuzan, after a Chinese priest by the same name, by the upper stream of the Fuefuki river in present-day Yamanashi-ken. In 1312 he wandered into the mountains of present-day Gifu-ken and built a hut he called Kokei (presently the Kokeizan building in the temple of Eiho-ji). He built the huts of Hakusen-an in present-day Yokosuka, Miura in present-day Kanagawa-ken, and Taiko-an in present-day Chiba-ken (Minakami & Bokuo 1976, 81-88). In 1325 he became abbot of Nanzen-ji in Kyoto at the request of Emperor Go-Daigo (1288-1339), and he returned to Kamakura for a year in 1326. It was after leaving Kyoto, to escape acolytes petitioning to study with him and to escape the demands of Emperors and shoguns, that he went into the mountains of Kamakura in 1327 to found Zuisen-ji.

Muso's Kokushi's Zen is congruent with the lifestyle of the monks of China who roamed mountains and forests while living in caves and huts. In Sung Dynasty China, the summit of Taishan was reached only after traversing seven thousand steps terraced into the mountain. Remnants of meditation arbors and subtemples dot the summit of Taishan, congruent with the design form spatial placement of the Zuisen-ji Ichiran-Tei. "The wind isolates Taishan's summit from the land below like an island of abandoned solitude. A large Taoist temple, its rusted brown roof tiles made of cast iron to withstand the wind, sits in a sheltered depression just below the summit... A more humble building occupies the very summit itself" (Porter & Porter 1983, 98). The view from the summit of Taishan was considered the embodiment of the San T'Sai (the interrelationship of Heaven, Earth, and Man).

#### 4.2 *Landscape, Meditation, and Temple*

A priest tells me that during the spring equinox (*shunbun*) and the autumnal equinox (*shubun*), Zuisen-ji is aligned with the rising and setting east/west movement of the sun and with Mount Fuji 3.9 kilometers to the west. Muso Kokushi also intended the site of the Ichiran-Tei to enhance contemplation of the four seasons (*shunkashuto*).

From the Ichiran-Tei site one can still view Sagami Bay open to the south, the Tsurugaoka, Nagatani, and Tendai mountain ranges to the north, and the mountain ranges at Hakone and Izu to the east (see Figures 4 & 5).

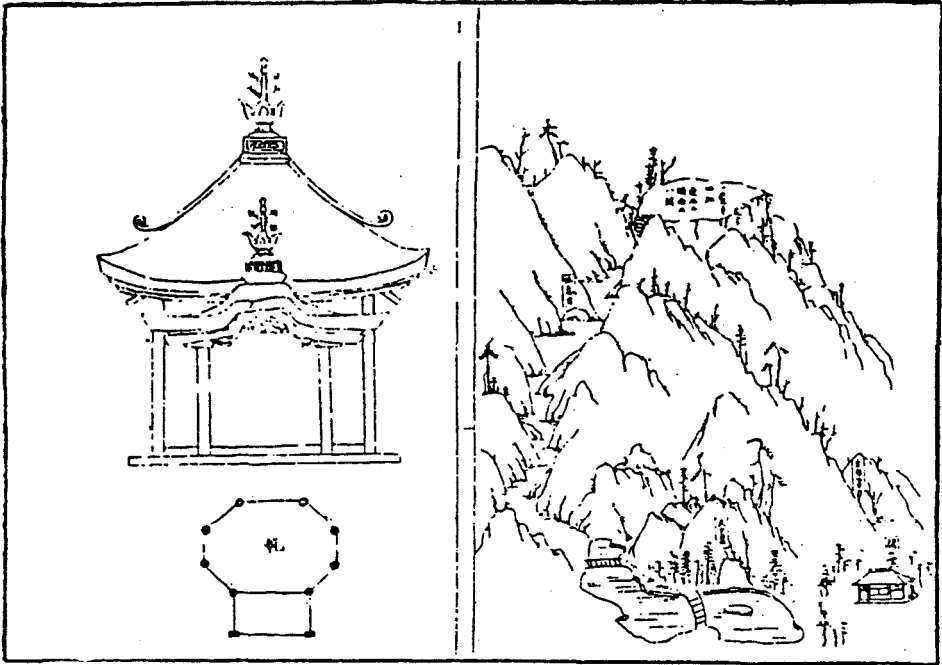


Fig. 5 An interpretative drawing of the original *Ichiran-Tei* (*Juken Henkei Ichirantei*). The arbor is open to the four quarters, and is situated on a plateau atop the hillock. Note the manner in which the passageway is cut into the natural architecture of the hillside. The pond and pond bridges are to the lower center of the illustration; the *Dai Hojo* is in the lower right corner (Source: [Mirei Shigemori (1936-1939), *Nihon Teien Shi Zukan* (Illustrated History of Japanese Gardens), Volume 2-1, 68].

Un dessin interprétant l'*Ichiran-Tei* original (*Juken Henkei Ichirantei*). Le pavillon est ouvert vers les quatre côtés et il est situé sur un plateau au sommet d'une colline. On remarque la manière dont le passage est coupé au travers de l'architecture naturelle de la colline. L'étang et ses ponts sont au centre, en bas de l'illustration; le *Dai Hojo* se trouve au coin en bas à droite [Mirei Shigemori (1936-1939), *Nihon Teien Shi Zukan* (Illustrated History of Japanese Gardens), Volume 2-1, 68].

In front there is water (Sagami Bay) which moistens the heavens.  
 To the left, there is a long valley (*cho-koku*).  
 To the right, there are magnificent rocks leading to Mount Fuji,  
 many ri distant. These rocks stand in the sky  
 and have accumulated the snow from ancient times.  
 It is like the Spirit Mountain of  
 Tsuragaoka. Mountains and rivers come together,  
 the high and the low, the far and the near.  
 There is a gathering of beauty,  
 transcending the beauty of each element. <sup>2</sup>

The design technique structuring this affective experience, this "gathering of beauty," is termed *shakkei*. *Shakkei* is the incorporation of distant views, traditionally of mountains, as a component of gardens (Itoh 1973, 15-17, 29-32; Slawson 1987, 106-110). Zuisen-ji is designed to incorporate vistas outside its physical perimeters as an aspect of the temple. The visual/emotional participation of people is also a design feature of the temple. The concept of *haruka* (to see at a distance) underlays the

<sup>2</sup> The description of the view from the *Ichiran-Tei* at Zuisen-ji is quoted from translation of a passage from a temple archival document.

visual/emotion response of people who climbed this way to the distant mountain ranges surrounding the *Ichiran-Tei*. The phrase *henkai ichiranten tei no niwa* (viewing-all-at-once (*keshiki*) arbor in the garden) expresses the design intent and experiential reality of this component of the temple (cf. Schaarschmidt Richter 1979, 185). These terms and concepts illustrate that the design structure of the temple is the interrelationship of land and landscape, buildings, and the pilgrimage participation of people.

## 5. Muso Kokushi, Zuisen-ji, and the Idea of Temple

The essence of Japanese Zen Buddhism is consciousness, Buddha consciousness, that reality is not dualistic but a seamless existential state of being. Priests such as Muso Kokushi designed and lived in landscapes structured to both embody and reinforce Buddha consciousness. Priests tell me that Zuisen-ji is kokoro, the heart/mind satori consciousness of Muso Kokushi. Zuisen-ji, I am told, is the Buddhist compassion of Muso Kokushi. From the vantage of Rinzai Zen Buddhism, the *juhakkyoku* is both literally and figuratively a Path aiding the experience of Buddha consciousness in acolyte priests. Muso Kokushi revered the Chinese Ch'an priest Liang Tsuo-shu (910-990), and the *juhakkyoku* pathway can be interpreted as "a reminiscence of the steep mountain path up to Liang Tsuo-shu's temple... a stepped rocky pathway expressing the difficulties of Zen teaching and its study" (Schaarschmidt-Richter 1979, 180). Buddha consciousness designed Zuisen-ji, and Zuisen-ji embodies Buddha consciousness through animistically being touched by one who experienced Buddha consciousness. The nondualistic, integrated structure of the temple concretizes Rinzai Zen Buddhism philosophy as practice.

Customary oppositions of building (culture) and land and landscape (nature) in the conception of temple from this vantage are dualistic. At Zuisen-ji, the Zen Buddhist idea of temple is that religious buildings, land and landscapes, and Believers participate in each other to structure an interrelated whole revealing Buddha consciousness as the only "Absolute Ground of Being."

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