

① Tangible Cultural Properties of Eihoji Temple



Eihoji Temple, also called Kokeizan, is an ancient temple of the Nanzenji branch of the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism, established in the late Kamakura period by the originator Muso Kokushi (Muso Soseki), and the founder Buttoku Zenji (Genno Hongen). In 1313, Muso Kokushi, Buttoku Zenji and some others arrived in the Kokeizan area during their travels and were attracted by its tranquility and beautiful scenery that was described by the expression, “Shirin Suri Hitonaki Yukyo” (a secluded place without people within a several kilometer-radius). They built a hermitage to live in seclusion, which is said was the foundation of Eihoji Temple. For more than 700 years since then, through various transitions, it remains a famous temple in Japan. The national treasures of Kannondo and Kaisando halls as well as a garden of scenic beauty still maintain the appearance of the past. In addition, Eihoji Temple possesses numerous treasured objects.

A

National Important Cultural Property

Kenpon Chakushoku Senju Kannonzo

(a painting of a thousand-armed Kannon sculpture rendered on silk fabric)

Length 188.7 cm

Width 104.5 cm

A work of the Chinese Southern Sung dynasty (13th century)

B

Gifu Prefectural Important Cultural Properties

Sho-Kanzeon Bosatsu Zazo

(a statue of Kanzeon Bodhisattva)

Height 62.5 cm

A work of the early Muromachi period (1336–1573)

C

Nehanzo

(a painting of Nirvana rendered on silk fabric)

Length 187 cm

Width 150 cm

A work painted in 1364

D

Den-Muso Kokushi Zazo

(an earthen sculpture of a seated figure, the Buddhist monk Muso Kokushi)

Height 85.5 cm

A work of the early Muromachi period (1336–1573)

E

Buttoku Zenji Hitsu Inka Bukkan

(certification of spiritual achievement written by Buttoku Zenji)

Length 28.0 cm

Width 47.5 cm

A work of the late Kamakura period (1185–1333)

F

Buttoku Zenji Hitsu Yuige

(a poetic passage written by Buttoku Zenji before his death)

Length 22.7 cm

Width 32.0 cm

A work of the late Kamakura period (1185–1333)

G

Calligraphy written by Muso Kokushi titled “Shunkika”

Length 25.5 cm

Width 45.3 cm

A work of the early Muromachi period (1336–1573)

H

Calligraphy written by Buttoku Zenji titled “Suimo Katsutedozezu”

Length 76.7 cm

Width 19.0 cm

A work of the late Kamakura period (1185–1333)

Eihoji Temple also possesses tangible cultural properties designated by Tajimi City, including ceramic garden lanterns, a thousand Jizo statues, a collection of ancient memorial tablets, a painting of sixteen Zenjin (good Buddhist deities), and Eihoji Temple documents. Those treasures have been maintained with great care to convey history.

② Eihoji Temple, Kaisando and Kannondo

国宝 永保寺開山堂・観音堂

国宝 永保寺開山堂 附 宝篋印塔

入母屋造・神瓦葺・重葺材
室町時代前期 昭和27年3月29日指定

開山堂は寺の創始者・開山を祀る建物で、奥の祠堂と手前の昭堂の二つの建物を相の間つないだ構造をしています。祠堂には開山弘徳禪師の墓とされる宝篋印塔があり、この前に夢窓国師と弘徳禪師の像が安置されています。昭堂は祀りをする場で、柱上の諸組の二手先組物、鋭く反った軒先、花袋間格子を入れた戸や窓、床の瓦四半敷などに禅宗様（唐様）建築の特徴がよく表れています。夢窓国師の死後一年の文和元年（1352）に建立されたといわれています。

▲永保寺開山堂 内部

▲永保寺観音堂 内部

観音堂は水月場と呼ばれ、永保寺の御霊の中では最も重要な仏殿にあたります。開山堂は純正な禅宗様建築であるのに対し、観音堂は禅宗様建築の手法に平安時代から引き続いた和様建築の手法を折衷させた特殊な建物です。床は土間ではなく板張り、檜皮葺の屋根は伸々として大きな軒反りを見せています。夢窓国師が虎溪山にきて一年目の正和3年（1314）に建立したといわれていますが、建築様式的には新しい要素もみられ、また、建築用材の科学的年代測定結果から15世紀後半頃に再建された可能性があります。

内部の須弥壇には自然木を大きな石箱のように組み合わせた岩窟式厨子の中に聖観世音菩薩坐像（室町時代初期）が重要文化財が安置されています。

令和4年3月 多治見市教育委員会

National Treasure - Hokyointo Pagoda of Eihoji Temple, Kaisando Hall

Irimoya-zukuri (combined hip-and-gable roof structure), Hiwadabuki (cypress bark roof), Shido Ichijyu Mokoshi-tsuki (ancestral hall with a single decorative pent roof surrounding the building)

This pagoda was built in the early Muromachi period(1336-1573) and designated as a national treasure on March 29, 1952.

Kaisando Hall is an edifice that enshrines Kaisan, the founder of Eihoji Temple, and is regarded as the oldest among temples remaining in existence. At the rear of the hall, there is a shrine called Shido, where the grave of the founder Buttoku Zenji (Hokyointo pagoda) is located. In front of the gravesite, enshrined are statues of Muso Kokushi and Buttoku Zenji. The Shodo Hall in the foreground is a place for worshipping, one that well represents features of Zenshu-yo (the Zen-sect architectural style, also called Kara-yo as the Chinese style), exemplified by its three-tiered bracket complex on pillars, sharply curved eaves, and doors and windows with Hanahazama Koshi (latticework panels with a flower pattern). It is said that the hall was constructed in 1352, one year after Muso Kokushi passed away.

National Treasure -Eihoji Temple, Kannondo Hall

Irimoya-zukuri (combined hip-and-gable roof structure), Hiwadabuki (cypress bark roof), Ichijyu Mokoshi-tsuki (ancestral hall with a single decorative pent roof surrounding the building)

This hall was built in the Muromachi period(1336-1573) and designated as a national treasure on March 29, 1952.

Kannondo Hall (also called Suigetsujo) is the most important Butsuden, the main hall among the monasteries of Eihoji Temple. Its architecture is unique, an eclectic blending of techniques from the Zen style (Zenshu-yo) and Japanese style (Wa-yo) inherited from the Heian period (794-1185). The hall is furnished with a wooden floor rather than an earthen one, and has an extending cypress bark roof with greatly curved eaves. It is said that Muso Kokushi built this hall in 1314, his first year in Kokeizan.

On the Shumidan altar in the hall, enshrined is a seated statue of Sho-Kanzeon Bosatsu (a work of the early Muromachi period (1336-1573), an important cultural property designated by Gifu Prefecture).

③ Shoro Bell Tower

The Shoro Bell Tower houses Bonsho (a temple bell) cast in 1948. Each day around sunset, Unsui (an ascetic monk) tolls the bell. The annual event of Joya-no-Kane (tolling out the old year) is open to the public.

④ Ginkgo Tree in Eihoji Temple

A natural monument designated by Tajimi City on July 15, 1966

This male ginkgo tree is 25.5 meters (84 feet) in height, and 4.4 meters (14.5 feet) in trunk circumference at eye level, with 21.2 meters (70 feet) of branch spread. The ginkgo tree is believed to have been planted by Buttoku Zenji, the founder of Eihoji

Temple who died in 1332, and has been preserved with great care. According to legend, the tree is presumably aged approximately 700 years.

⑤ Sodo Zazendo (Kaishudo)

Kaishudo Hall is a place where ascetic monks practice Zen meditation, including both large and small Zendo meditation halls, and a dormitory for attendants. In the Rinzai sect, the Zendo is referred to as Sanmokudo (three halls remaining in silence) in addition to the dining and bathing halls where unnecessary chatting is not permitted.

In front of this hall, Monju Bosatsu is enshrined.

⑥ National Treasure Kannondo (Suigetsujo)

The Kannondo Hall (Suigetsujo) is believed to have been constructed in 1314, the year following the arrival of Muso Kokushi in Kokei. It is the most important Butsuden main hall among the monasteries of Zen Buddhism.

In a cave-like enclosure on the Shumidan altar, Sho-Kanzeon Bosatsu Zazo (a statue of Kanzeon Bodhisattva), an important cultural property designated by Gifu Prefecture, is enshrined as the principal image.

⑦ Rokkakudo (Reiyoden) on the Bonnongan Rock

Sentai Jizo (one thousand figures of Jizo Bosatsu) are enshrined in Rokkakudo (a hexagonal hall) built on the huge Honnongan Rock. People bring a Jizo home with them when offering a prayer and return it with a new one after their entreaty has been fulfilled.

The waterfall flow derives from springs situated around groves of Shidekobushi (star magnolia) located northwest of Kokeizan.

⑧ National Treasure Kaisando (Senkodo)

The Kaisando Hall is considered to have been constructed by Ashikaga Takauji circa 1352. It is architecture representative of the early Muromachi period, characterized by Junsei Kara-yo (authentic Chinese style).

In the ancestral hall behind Kaisando Hall, seated statues of the originator Muso Kokushi and the founder Buttoku Zenji are enshrined.