

Earth Store Bodhisattva (or Jizo Bosatsu in Japanese)

Introduction

Jizo is the only Bodhisattva (Bosatsu) portrayed as a monk -- shaven head, no adornments, no royal attire, nearly always dressed in the simple robe (kesa) of a monk. A halo often surrounds his head. Jizo's customary symbols are the shakujo (six-ring staff) and the hoshunotama (wish-fulfilling jewel). When he shakes the staff, he awakens us from our delusions, to help us break free of the six states of rebirth and achieve enlightenment. The jewel (Skt: cintamani) signifies his bestowal of blessings on all who suffer, for the cintamani is a gem that grants wishes, pacifies desires, and brings clear understanding of the Dharma (Buddhist law).

JIZO BODHISATTVA

Jp. = Jizo Bosatsu, Jizou, Jizoo

Skt. = Ksitigarbha / Ksitegarbha

Origin = India

Guardian of Souls in Hell

Savior from the Torments of Hell

Master of Six States of Reincarnation.

Protector of Children, Expectant Mothers, Firemen, Travelers, and Pilgrims.

Protector of Aborted / Miscarried Babies.

Guardian of Children in Limbo

One of the most beloved of all Japanese divinities, Jizo works to ease the suffering and shorten the sentence of those serving time in hell. Jizo can appear in many different forms to alleviate suffering. In modern Japan, Jizo is popularly known as the guardian of unborn, aborted, miscarried, and stillborn babies (Mizuko Jizo). These roles were not assigned to Jizo in earlier Buddhist traditions from mainland Asia; they are instead modern adaptations unique to Japan. At the same time, Jizo serves his customary and traditional roles as patron saint of expectant mothers, children, firemen, travelers, pilgrims, and the protector of all beings caught in the six realms of reincarnation. Other modern manifestations of Jizo in Japan, such as the Asekaki Jizo (Sweating Jizo), are unique to Japan and not found elsewhere in mainland Asia.

ABOVE: Sanskrit Seed Syllable for Jizo, Pronounced KA

In Shingon Buddhism, when young children die, the Sanskrit letter Ka, which stands for Ksitigarbha, is written on the memorial tablet. This signifies that the powerless child is saved and enabled to attain enlightenment.

Jizo Mantra in Japanese Language

On kakaka bisanmaei sowaka (Japanese)
Om ha-ha-ha vismaye svaha (Sanskrit)

Guardian of Souls in Hell
Savior from the Torments of Hell
Savior from Suffering
Master of Six States of Reincarnation
Protector of Children, Expectant Mothers,
Firemen, Travelers, and Pilgrims
Protector of Aborted or Miscarried Babies
Guardian of Children Who Die Prematurely
Described in the Earth Womb Sutra
Garland Sutra, and Sutra of the Ten Cakras

SOME FORMS OF JIZO IN JAPAN

Anzan Jizo
Expectant mothers

Asekaki Jizo
Sweating Jizo. Excretes white sweat if good things are about to happen, and black sweat when bad things are foreseen.

Hadaka Jizo
Nude Jizo; carved nude but dressed in clothing

Hitaki (Kuro) Jizo
Fire Kindling Jizo
Patron of Firemen

Kosodate Jizo
子育て地藏
Child-Raising Jizo

Koyasu Jizo
子安地藏
Child-Giving Jizo

Migawari Jizo
Jizo who "substitutes" himself for one who is suffering

Miso Jizo

Bean-Paste Jizo.

Mizuko Jizo

Water-Child Jizo

Guardian of Unborn Children (or children who die prematurely)

Omokaru Jizo

おもかる地藏尊

Heavy / Light Jizo

Onegai Jizo

Wish-Giving Jizo

Shibarare Jizo

String-Bound Jizo

Sentai Jizo

1,000 bodies of Jizo; groupings of hundreds of Jizo statues

Shogun Jizo

Battle field protector

Six Realms Jizo

One for each of the six realms of rebirth.

Togenuki Jizo

Splinter-Removing Jizo とげぬき地藏

Wheel Jizo

Present life & afterlife

JIZO'S ORIGINS. Along with Kannon Bodhisttva (Goddess of Mercy), Jizo is perhaps the most popular deity of the common people, a friend to all, never frightening even to children, and his/her many manifestations -- often cute and cartoon like in modern Japan -- incorporate attributes from both Buddhist traditions and from earlier Shinto beliefs and Shinto kami (deities). Jizo statues can be found everywhere in Japan, especially in graveyards. Jizo is often translated as "Womb of the Earth," for JI means earth, while ZO means womb. But "ZO" can also be translated with equal correctness as "store house" or "repository of treasure" -- thus Jizo is also translated as "earth store" or "earth treasury."

Although of India origin, Kshitigarbha (Jizo) is revered more widely in Japan, Korea, and China than in either India or Tibet. In Japan, Jizo first appears in records of Nara Period (710 to 794 AD), and then spreads throughout Japan via the Tendai and Shingon sects. In China, Jizo worship can be traced back to at least the fifth century AD (to the Chinese translation of the Sutra of the Ten Cakras 大方広十輪經), and in later centuries Chinese

artwork often shows Jizo surrounded by the ten kings of hell to signify Jizo's role in delivering people from the torments of hell. But Jizo is mentioned even earlier in the Mahavaipulya Sutra (Garland Sutra) of India, in which he appears to the historical Buddha at the time of the Buddha's death. Jizo is a Bodhisattva (Bosatsu), one who achieves enlightenment but postpones Buddhahood until all can be saved. He promised to remain among us doing good works, to help all those spinning endlessly in the six realms, until the advent of Miroku Nyorai (Maitreya; the Buddha of the Future). Miroku is scheduled to arrive, according to the Shingon Sect, about 5.6 billion years from now.

In Japan, Jizo first appears in the Ten Cakras Sutra in the Nara period (now a treasure held by the Nara National Museum), but the height of his early popularity was during the late Heian era (794 to 1192 AD) when the rise of the Jodo Sect (Pure Land Sect devoted to Amida Nyorai) intensified fears about hell in the afterlife. Since then, Jizo worship has attained a tremendous following in Japan, and even today Jizo is one of Japan's most common and widely revered deities. Due to his association with the realm of death and suffering souls, he is also closely associated with Amida Nyorai and with Amida's heavenly western paradise, where true believers may seek enlightenment and avoid the torments of hell. However, Amida is not revered by the Nichiren sect, who hold Amida worship in low esteem.

MALE OR FEMALE OR BOTH?

In Japan today, Jizo Bosatsu and Kannon Bosatsu are two of the most popular Buddhist saviors among the common folk. Like Jizo, Kannon is intimately associated with Amida Nyorai (Buddha), for Kannon is one of Amida's principal attendants. Statues of Kannon, moreover, often include a tiny image (Jp. = Kebutsu 化仏) of Amida in the headdress. Curiously, both Jizo and Kannon underwent a change in identity after arriving in Japan. Kannon is male in the Buddhist traditions of India, Tibet, and Southeast Asia. But in China (less so in Japan), the Kannon is typically portrayed as a female divinity. In Japan, the male form was adopted, and it remains the predominant form in Japanese sculpture and art. But female manifestations of Kannon are nonetheless plentiful in Japan. Indeed, a persistent femininity clings to Kannon imagery in both pre-modern and modern Japan. This holds true in Western nations as well, where Kannon is most commonly known as the "Goddess of Mercy." Conversely, Jizo was initially female, but is now portrayed almost always as male, except, perhaps, when appearing as the Koyasu (Child-Giving Jizo). <Editor's Note: the reasons for this sex change are confusing and hard to understand; I hope to expand on this in the future>

JIZO IN FEMALE FORM

Says The Flammarion Iconographic Guide by Louis Frederic: "The Chinese Ksitigarbha Sutra relates that, before becoming a Bodhisattva, Jizo was a young Indian girl of the Brahmin caste so horrified by the torment her late impious mother was suffering in hell that she vowed to save all beings from such torments." <end Flammarion quote>

Says Wikipedia: "In the Ksitigarbha Sutra, the Historical Buddha revealed that in past aeons, Ksitigarbha (Jizo) was a Brahman maiden named Sacred Girl. She was deeply troubled when her mother died, because her mother had often been slanderous toward the Triple Jewels (Skt. = Triratna), which refers to the Buddha himself, the Dharma

(Buddhist teachings or law), and the Samgha (the Buddhist community of followers). To save her from the great tortures of hell, the young girl sold whatever she had and used the money to buy offerings which she offered daily to the Buddha of her time, known as the Buddha of Flowering Meditation and Enlightenment. She made fervent prayers that her mother be spared the pains of hell and requested the Buddha for help. One day at the temple, while she was pleading for help, she heard the voice of the Buddha advising her to go home immediately and there to sit down and recite his name if she wanted to know where her mother was. She did as she was told and while doing so, her consciousness was transported to one of the Hell Realms where she met a guardian who informed her that, through Sacred Girl's fervent prayers and pious offerings, her mother had accumulated much merit and had therefore already been released from hell and had ascended to heaven. Sacred Girl was greatly relieved and should have been extremely happy, but the sight of the great sufferings of those in the hell she had witnessed so touched her heart that she made a vow to do her best to relieve beings of their sufferings in all her future incarnations (Skt. = kalpas)." <end quote from Wikipedia>

(1) JIZO LEGEND IN JAPAN

a) Below Excerpt Courtesy of:
THE MIZUKO JIZO AND
THE MIZUKO CEREMONY IN JAPAN
From book Jizo Bodhisattva
by Chozen Roshi

The most common form of Jizo made in Japan today is the Mizuko Jizo. The Mizuko Jizo often is portrayed as a monk with an infant in his arms and another child or two at his feet, clutching the skirt of his robe. The Mizuko Jizo is the central figure in a popular but somewhat controversial ceremony called the mizuko kuyo.

The word ku-yo is composed of two Chinese characters with the literal meaning "to offer" and "to nourish". The underlying meaning is to offer what is needed to nourish life energy after it is no longer perceptible in the form of a human or occupying a body we can touch. In actual use kuyo refers to a memorial service and mizuko kuyo to a memorial service for infants who have died either before birth or within the first few years of life. An image of the Mizuko Jizo usually is the central figure on the altar at such a ceremony. Grieving parents may buy a small statue of Mizuko Jizo to place on the family altar or in a cemetery as a memorial for their child.

The two Chinese characters in the word mizu-ko are literally translated "water" and "baby". It is a description of the unborn, beings who float in a watery world awaiting birth. The Japanese perceived that all life is originated from the sea long before evolutionary theory proposed this. Their island home and all its inhabitants float in the ocean, which is the source of much of their nutrition. In actual use, the term "mizuko" includes not only fetuses and the newly born, but also infants up to one or two years of age whose hold on life in the human realm is still tenuous.

In Japan young children are regarded as "other worldly" and not fully anchored in human life. Fetuses are still referred to as *kami no ko* or "child of the gods" and also as "Buddha". Before the twentieth century, the probability that a child would survive to age five or seven was often less than 50 percent. Only after that age were they "counted" in a census and could they be "counted upon" to participate in the adult world. Children were thought of as mysterious beings in a liminal world between the realm of humans and gods. Because of this the gods could speak through them. For centuries prepubescent children in Japan have been chosen as *chigo*, or "divine children", who do divination and function as oracles. Even today children below school age still are allowed a somewhat heavenly existence, indulged and protected without many expectations or pressures. They often sleep in bed with their parents and younger siblings until age seven. School entry and displacement from the parental bed can come as a rude shock.

Also people in America and Europe have only recently become acquainted with Jizo Bodhisattva, mistaken beliefs among Westerners about Jizo already exist. The Mizuko Jizo, although currently popular, revered, and omnipresent in Japan, is not an ancient Jizo. Nor is it the only form of Jizo, as the list of types of Jizos at the end of last chapter demonstrates. The term "mizuko" does not appear in Buddhist or Shinto scriptures. The *mizuko kuyo* is not an ancient rite nor was it originally a Buddhist ceremony. Both the Mizuko Jizo and the *mizuko* ceremony arose in Japan in the 1960s in response to a human need, to relieve the suffering emerging from the experience of a large number of women who had undergone abortions after World War II. <end excerpt from Chozen Roshi's Book, Jizo Bodhisattva>

NEW BOOK ON JIZO BODHISATTVA

Entitled "Jizo Bodhisattva. Modern Healing & Traditional Buddhist Practice. By Jan Chozen Bays, a Zen master in the lineage of Maezumi Roshi and a member of the White Plum Sangha. She is also the spiritual head of the Great Vow Zen Monastery in Clatskanie, Oregon. Published 2002 by Tuttle Publishing.
ISBN 0-8048-3189-0

b) At Hase Dera Temple in Kamakura, where most of the photos on this page were taken, Jizo plays the role of guardian for stillborn, miscarried, or aborted children. Hundreds of little Jizo statues can be found at this temple.

According to legend attributed to the Jodo Sect around the 14th or 15th century, children who die prematurely are sent to the underworld as punishment for causing great sorrow to their parents. They are sent to *Sai no Kawara*, the river of souls in purgatory, where they pray for Buddha's compassion by building small stone towers, piling stone upon stone. But underworld demons, answering to the command of the old hag *Shozuka no Baba*, soon arrive and scatter their stones and beat them with iron clubs. But, no need to worry, for Jizo comes to the rescue. In one version of the story, Jizo hides the children in the sleeves of his robe. This traditional Japanese story has been adapted to modern needs, and today, children who die prematurely in Japan are called "mizuko," or water children, and the saddened parents pray to "Mizuko Jizo." This form of Jizo is unique to Japan, and did not appear until after the end of World War II. See Mizuko Jizo below for more.

From comic book by Daido Publications, Tokyo

(2) Stones and Jizo

Even today, you will invariably find little heaps of stones and pebbles on or around Jizo statues, as many believe that a stone offered in faith will shorten the time their child suffers in the underworld. You will also notice that Jizo statues are often wearing tiny garments. Since Jizo is the guardian of dead children, sorrowing parents bring the little garments of their lost ones and dress the Jizo statue in hopes Jizo will specially protect their child. A little hat or bib or toy is often seen as well, the gift of a rejoicing parent whose child has been cured of dangerous sickness thanks to Jizo's intervention, or a gift to help the deceased child in the afterlife.

(3) Hitaki (Kuro) Jizo

The Fire Kindling Jizo

Jizo also has many devotees among firemen. The story is that Jizo descends into the infernal regions to witness the punishments and tortures of condemned souls. He was so affected by their agony that he, for a time, took the place of their relentless custodian, and greatly reduced the intense heat of the purgatorial fires to ease their pain. Hence his following among firemen. This Jizo is known as the Black Jizo (the "Kuro" or "Hitaki" Jizo). <above paragraph adapted from "Kamakura: Fact and Legend" by Iso Mutsu>

Six States of Existence

Jizo vowed to assist beings in each of the Six Realms of Existence, in particular those in hell, and is thus often shown in groupings of six. Within the six realms (or states), the lowest three are called the three evil paths. They are the states of (1) people in hell, (2) hungry ghosts, and (3) animals. Above these three realms are the states of (4) Asuras, (5) Humans, and (6) Devas. For details on the six states (also called the Six Paths of Transmigration or Reincarnation, the Wheel of Life, or the Cycle of Suffering), click [here](#).

(4) Roku Jizo (Groupings of Six Jizo)

In Japan, groupings of six Jizo statues (one for each of the Six Realms) are quite common and often placed at busy intersections or oft-used roads to protect travelers and those in "transitional" states. Jizo also often carries a staff with six rings, which he shakes to awaken us from our delusions -- the rings likewise symbolize the six states of existence. The six Jizo come in various versions. One common grouping is:

Enmei (long life; prolonger of life; Beings in Hell)
Hoshu (Ratnapani; treasure hand or possession; Hungry Ghosts)
Hoin (Ratnamudrapani; treasure seal; possession of earth; Animals)
Hosho (Ratnakara; treasure place; place of treasures; Asura)
Jichi (Dharanidhara; land possession; earth; Humans)
Kenko-i or Nikko (strong determination; Deva)

(5) Hats for Jizo

a) Type of Work: Folk tale for Grade level K-2

Story retold by Miyoko Matsutani

Illustrated by Fumio Matsuyama

Translated by Donna Tamaki

16 picture sheets

ISBN-10: 4947613173 or ISBN-13: 978-4947613172

Summary: Hats for the Jizo (Kasa Jizo). On New Year's Eve, a poor old man goes to the village, hoping to sell a piece of cloth his wife wove to make some money for the New Year's holiday. He meets a man who is trying to sell straw hats, and he exchanges the cloth with the man's five hats. On the way back home in the snow, the old man spots six stone statues of Jizo (a Buddhist deity of compassion), looking cold. The kind old man covers their heads with five straw hats and his own scarf. He returns home with empty hands but his wife is happy for what he has done. During the night of New Year's Eve, the six Jizo reward the couple for their unselfish generosity.

Below Text Courtesy of

Buddhism: Flammarion

Iconographic Guides

ISBN: 2-08013-558-9

b) On New Year's Eve, a poor, old man goes to the village hoping to sell some cloth that his wife has woven so he can buy some special food to celebrate the New Year. No one is interested in buying the cloth, however, and just to have something different to take home he exchanges his cloth for the straw hats another man has been trying to sell. On the way home, the old man sees six statues of the deity Jizo, looking cold because they are covered with snow. The old man decides to cover their bare heads using the five straw hats and his own scarf. When he arrives home, he tells his wife what happened. The old woman approves of what her husband had done. The couple celebrate the New Year with the simple food they usually eat and go to bed early. During the night they are rewarded by the statues of Jizo.

c) Note: *The story of Kasa Jizo is about a grandfather and grandmother. It is New Year's Eve. A weaver, the grandfather goes to town to sell his hats to earn money to buy food for the holiday. But as he sits by the roadside, no one buys his hats. Finally he gives up and heads for home. It is snowing. Seeing six stone jizo, hatless and cold, he gives each a hat. When he returns home and explains, the grandmother says, You have done a good thing. We'll just have ochazuke (rice soup) tonight. At dawn they hear sounds. The jizo have come to return the favor. New Year's gifts are piled up by their door.*

d) BAMBOO HATS AND A RICE CAKE

Long ago in Japan there was an old couple with no children. They were very poor. One year the snow came earlier and caught them unprepared so things were worse than usual. They didn't have enough money to buy rice cakes for the new year. The wife suggested that they sell her wedding kimono and buy rice cakes with the money they received from it. The old man reluctantly agreed and he set off into the snow to sell the kimono. He

crossed the six sacred Jizo statues and apologized for not having anything to leave for an offering, but promised them rice cakes on his way back. Then he came across a woman with a basket of fans. She had been hoping to sell the fans and buy a new kimono. The old man felt sorry for her and traded the kimono for the fans. The man tried to sell the fans in the village. Nobody glanced at him. The man became very hungry. He saw a noodle peddler nearby. The old man went up to the peddler and offered to trade a fan for some noodles. The noodle peddler scoffed at him and said, "What would I want a fan for in the winter?" Discouraged, the old man walked away. He bumped into a chubby man with a golden bell. The chubby fellow thought the fans were beautiful and offered to trade them for the golden bell. The old man thought that someone might want the bell to ring in the new year so he agreed. But by this time the crowd had thinned out and nobody paid any attention to the little old man with the golden bell. The man stopped to talk to a young man selling bamboo hats. The young man hadn't had much luck but he wasn't going to give up yet. The old man was so inspired by the young man's enthusiastic attitude that he traded the golden bell for five bamboo hats. Then the man headed home. HE hadn't bought any rice cakes but he had helped the spirited young man. The old man reached the Jizo statues again. He had forgotten all about his promise to them. Then he remembered the bamboo hats. He went along the row placing a hat on the head of each statue. Then he realized that he had only bought five hats and there were six statues. So the old man removed his own hat and placed it on the head of the sixth statue. And he continued home. By the time he got there he was completely snow covered. His wife hurried him inside and he told her what had happened. The old man hung his head, ashamed. But when he dared to look up he saw that his wife was smiling. "You're not mad?" he asked. "No. I'm proud." "I didn't bring any rice cakes." He pointed out. "I know, but you showed respect to the Jizo statues which was better." The old couple went to sleep then, but were soon awakened by a loud thud outside. They opened the door and found a gigantic rice cake on their doorstep. Then they saw the Jizo statues coming up the hill. The statues bowed to the old couple and then left. The rice cake kept the couple fed for weeks and they had good fortune for the rest of their lives.

(from <http://www.islandnet.com/~kpotter/mrk/myths.htm>) ???

The name of this Bodhisattva means "He who encompasses the earth." According to the monk Eshin (Genshin, 942-1017), he is also the master of the six worlds of desire and of the six destinies of rebirth. When considered in particular as a Bodhisattva who consoles the beings in hell, he is identical to Yamaraja (Japanese Enma-o), the king of the Buddhist hells (Naraka, Japanese Jigoku). In India, Ksitigarbha, although known very early to the Mahayana sects (since the fourth century), does not appear to have enjoyed popular favour, and none of his representations can be found, either there or in South-East Asia. In China, on the contrary, he was fairly popular since the fifth century, after the translation of the Sutra of the Ten Cakras which lists his qualities.

Ksitigarbha, moved by compassion, is said - like all Bodhisattvas - to have made the wish to renounce the status of Buddha until the advent of Maitreya (Jp: Miroku), in order to help the beings of the destinies of rebirth. In hell, his mission is to lighten the burdens caused by previous evil actions, to secure from the judges of hell an alleviation of the fate of the condemned, and to console them. Thus, in the popular mind, Ksitigarbha has become the Bodhisattva of hells par excellence.

His cult remains immensely popular in Japan, where it spread from the ninth century in the Tendai and Shingon sects. A popular custom made him the confessor to whom faults committed during the year were revealed, in the so-called "confession of Jizo ceremony."

(6)

BELOW TEXT COURTESY:

David G. Lanoue, PHD

Xavier University, Louisiana, USA

www.worldhaikureview.org/3-2/shadesofink.shtml

Excerpt

In Chinese Buddhist myth Jizo became associated with Yama, the overlord of Hell, most likely because of his (formerly her) ancient association with earth's womb. Nevertheless, in folklore he appears as a savior, not punisher. For example, in one old Chinese tale a son's filial piety moves Jizo to deliver that son's sinful, dead mother out of hell. Similarly, in a Japanese story, he appears in the form of a beautiful young boy and rescues a righteous man from hell by offering to suffer in the man's place (Dykstra 180; 194-95). In Pure Land Buddhism, that branch of Buddhism that relies on Amida Buddha to enable one to be reborn in his Western Paradise, Jizo gained a reputation as one who could assist sinful mortals in their last moments of life, effecting their rebirth in the Pure Land. This is why, in many Japanese temples, statues of Jizo stand on one side of Amida, while Kannon, the bodhisattva of mercy, stands on the other.

Jizo's role in Pure Land Buddhism made him widely popular in medieval Japan, where this movement spread far and wide among the masses. Somewhere along the way, he picked up other duties in addition to helping souls reach Amida's Pure Land, such as providing protection for travelers. Even today, stone and wood Jizos can be found all over Japan along remote roads, where they watch over those who journey there. (See Dosojin for more on this topic.) Jizo's kind, generous, and selfless nature led Japanese people to revere him additionally as a guardian of children. Yet, as we have seen, he is much more than this thumbnail sketch found in dictionaries.

(7)

Below text courtesy of JAANUS

Jizou is usually represented either standing or seated in the guise of a monk, with a shaven head and wearing monk's robes. In early examples he holds a wish-fulfilling gem (houju 宝珠) in his left hand while his right hand displays the wish-granting mudra (yogan-in 与願印). Later examples, from about the mid-Heian period (10c) onwards show him holding a gem in his left hand and a staff (shakujou 錫杖) in his right, and this has since become the standard form. Some other variant forms are as follows: Yata Jizou 矢田地蔵 (the prototype for which is found at Kongousenji 金剛山寺, also known as Yatadera 矢田寺, Nara prefecture), holds a gem in his left hand and displays the 'mudra

for bestwoing fearlessness' (semui-in 施無畏印) with his right hand; Enmei (Longevity) Jizou 延命地蔵, seated with the left leg pendent; Hadaka (Naked) Jizou 裸地蔵, with the image clothed in real robes and not carved as part of the image; Hibou (Hatted) Jizou 被帽地蔵 with his head covered. Karate (Empty-handed) Jizou 空手地蔵, holding nothing in his hands; Shougun (Victorious) Jizou 勝軍地蔵, shown clad in armour. Reflecting the great popularity of his cult among the general populace, stone images of Jizou are very common in Japan, and will often be seen even along the roadside.

Because of his mission to save all sentient beings, there evolved the idea of Six Jizou (Roku Jizou 六地蔵), one responsible for each of the six realms of transmigratory existence (rokudou-e 六道絵). The six realms constitute the life cycle of unenlightened mortals: they are Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity and Heaven. Representations of these six Jizou are common. The denizens of hell were considered to be especially deserving of his help, and thus Jizou has come to be revered in particular as the saviour of those suffering therein. Both in China and Japan he is sometimes depicted in hell surrounded by the Ten Kings (or Judges) of Hell (Juuou 十王); such a depiction is called a "picture of Jizou and the Ten Kings" (Jizou juuou-zu 地蔵十王図). As a result of this compassionate association he was also assimilated into the Pure Land faith (joudokyou 浄土教), and there evolved a version of the Amida triad (Amida sanzou 阿弥陀三尊) with Amida 阿弥陀 flanked by Jizou and Kannon, and an "Amida Pentad" (Amida gobutsu 阿弥陀五仏) consisting of Amida, Kannon, Seishi 勢至, Jizou and Ryuuju 龍樹 (Sk:Nagarjuna).

Jizou is also regarded as the protector of children, in which role he is known as Kosodate (child-raising) Jizou 子育地蔵 and may be represented cradling a child, and he figures among the so-called Thirteen Buddhas (juusanbutsu 十三仏), presiding over the memorial service held on the 35th day after a person's death. In Esoteric Buddhism (mikkyou 密教), Jizou appears in the matrix mandala (Taizoukai mandara 胎蔵界曼荼羅) as the central figure in the Jizouin 地蔵院 where he takes the form of a bodhisattva holding a solar disc in his right hand and a lotus surmounted with a banner in his left hand. In the Diamond World Mandala, (Kongoukai mandara 金剛界曼荼羅) he is identified in Japan with Kongoudou 金剛幢 (Sk: Vajraketu) among the 16 Great Bodhisattvas (juuroku daibosatsu 十六大菩薩). <end quote JAANUS>

(8) Below text and photo
courtesy of Yomiuri Shimbun
Sept. 9, 2003, edition

The gentle, round face of Jizo, the guardian deity of children, can barely be seen amidst the layers of cord tied around the stone statue of the god at Rinsenji Temple in Bunkyo Ward, Tokyo, which was erected in 1602. The stone statue called "Shibarare (string-bound) Jizo" is said to have been donated to the temple by its founder, Ito Hanbei, in memory of his late parents.

There are other Shibarare Jizo statues in other locations around Tokyo. However, the statue at Rinsenji appeared in "Zenigata Heiji," a detective story set in the Edo Era (1603-1868), written by novelist Kodo Nomura (1882-1963). Local residents originally started tying strings around the statue when offering prayers for the recovery of stolen or missing items. When their prayers were answered, people were supposed to remove the string.

These day, however, many people visit the temple to offer prayers for various other reasons. "At the end of every year, we hold a ceremony to remove all the strings and burn them. But the statue was already covered with new strings in January," said the chief priest at the temple, Shin-jin Eda, 40. <end story by Shinobu Miwa for the Yomiuri Shimbun>

(9) Miso (Bean Paste) Jizo

みそ地蔵 (広島県広島市東山)

At Saizouji Temple (in Higashiyama, Hiroshima), people bring a flat pack of miso (bean paste), put it on the head of a seated Jizo statue, say a prayer, and then put the miso pack on their own head in the hopes their prayers will be answered (e.g., prayers to cure illness, to pass the school exams, to gain intelligence). In this area of Hiroshima, the Miso Jizo is even more popular than Michizane Sugawara, a courtier in the Heian period who was deified after death -- he is considered a Shinto deity and venerated as the patron of scholarship, learning, and calligraphy at Tenjin shrines throughout Japan. Miso means bean paste. It is also short for "noumiso," the latter term meaning "brain." Thus, Miso Jizo is a play on sounds.

(10) Onegai Jizo お願い地蔵. Another similar form of Jizo. Literally the "wish-giving" or "ask-a-favor" Jizo. At many temples, visitors can buy tiny images of Jizo, which they deposit around the main Jizo statue when praying for Jizo's help.

(11) Miso Licking Jizo みそなめ地蔵.

a) In other locations, people worship the so-called "Miso Licking Jizo." According to folklore, people who are granted their wishes are supposed to visit "Miso Licking" temples and smear miso around the mouth of the Jizo statue. In other areas, people spread miso on Jizo statues to cure sickness, tooth aches, and eye diseases. The basic belief is to put miso on the statue in the same location as your ailment -- on Jizo's teeth if you have a tooth ache, on Jizo's eye if you have an eye disease, etc. This symbolism is similar to another manifestation of Jizo called the Migawari Jizo (Substitution Jizo). This latter Jizo "substitutes" himself for the suffering of the people, curing them by taking on their pain. For much more on Miso Jizo, the Miso Licking Jizo, and other unique Japanese manifestations of this beloved deity, please see Gabi Greve's Miso Jizo page.

b) There is a temple in **Hiroshima, Higashiyama**, where people bring a flat pack of miso (bean paste), put it on the head of a seated Jizo statue, say a prayer and then put it on their own head, to cure illness or pray for intelligence, to pass the school and university exams. In the area here in Hiroshima, this Jizo is more popular than Sugawara Michizane, another deity venerated for passing school exams and promotion of learning.

The statue is in the temple Saizoo-Ji, in honor of Fukushima Masanori and his deeds during the war at the beginning of the Edo period.

miso can be short for **noomiso**, the brain, and **miso jizo** is a play of sounds.

c) A stone relief of about the size of one tatami.

A farmer's wife had problems with the taste of her home-made miso paste. At night she had a dream, where this Jizo appeared and said: If you past your bad miso on my mouth for me to taste, I will change the taste of it!

As she did so the next morning, the taste of her home-made miso improved greatly. Now many women come here to smear a bit of miso around the mouth of this Jizo, when they make a new batch of the bean paste every year.

<http://www.yatadera.or.jp/cont3-5.html>

d) Miso Licking Jizo of Yonago

Way in the past, there lived an old priest and his young disciple in Yonago, in the temple Baioo-Ji. They decided to prepare some miso and boiled a large pot of soy beans. When the beans were boiled, the old greedy priest wanted to eat some right away, filled a big bowl with them and retreated to the temple toilet, a smelly place, to eat them in peace, because he thought nobody would detect him there.

The little disciple had the same idea, filled his bowl with beans and headed for the toilet, only to find it occupied by his head priest. The young one's face turned all red, since he felt discovered by his boss, and in a clever movement, stretched his arms with the bowl toward the priest and said: "Here, Master, I brought you another bowl to taste."

To that day, it is custom when you have a wish granted, to go to the Jizo statue at this temple and smear some miso around his mouth. During the annual Bon festival, miso is also spread for this Jizo. On the 24th of August, the day of the "**Jizo Bon (Jizoo Bon 地藏盆)**", there is a large festival in honor of this Miso Jizo.

e) Temple Tenkei-Ji at Numada Town

You spread miso on the part of a stone Jizo, which corresponds to the part of your body which hurts. This Jizo is especially well known for healing tooth aches.

<http://www1.kcn.ne.jp/~ku-tsu/hagamisan/gunma.html>

f) There is even a brand of real miso, called "Jizo Miso 地藏味噌".

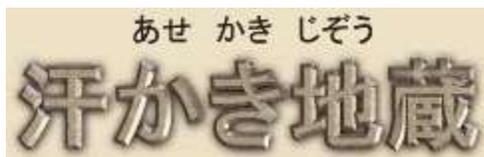


from <http://www.jizo-miso.co.jp/>

RUBBING TRADITIONS. In related matters, the rubbing of miso to alleviate ailments may be an extension of Japan's earlier "rubbing" traditions. At many temples, statues of certain deities appear worn near the head, shoulders, and body joints, as passersby believe that rubbing their hands on these deities will somehow bring benefits. Statues of Binzuru (Pindola), the most widely revered of the Arhat in Japan, and Yakushi Nyorai, the Buddha of Medicine and Healing, are usually well worn, as the faithful rub part of the statue (knees, back, head), then rub the same part of their body, praying for the deity to heal their sickness (e.g., cancer, arthritis, headaches, other ailments). Both are reputed to have the gift of healing. This "rubbing" tradition is also associated with Daikoku (the god of wealth and farmers, and one of Japan's Seven Lucky Gods). People rub Daikoku statues in the hope of gaining good luck and fortune (i.e., they believe good luck will rub off on them).

(12) Asekaki Jizo 汗かき地蔵

Sweating Jizo. Excretes white sweat if good things are about to happen, and black sweat when bad things are foreseen.



ASEKAKI JIZO (JIZOU)

The Sweating Jizo Bosatsu (Bodhisattva).

One of many manifestations of Jizo.

Below Research [Courtesy of GABI GREVE](#)

Sweating Jizo

at Daio-Cho Town

Ise-Shima Area, Mie Prefecture

a) The local Jizo Hall in Daio-cho Town holds one of the three great festivals in the Ise-Shima area, the Festival of the Sweating Jizo. According to local legend, a statue of Jizo was long ago caught in a fishing net off Daio Island. It took three attempts to finally retrieve the statue, as though the statue was resisting capture. The fisherman and villagers decided to build a hall and



enshrine the statue there to act as a protective village deity. Since then, local residents say this Jizo statue excretes white sweat if good things are about to happen, and black sweat when bad things are foreseen. The body of this seated stone statue of Jizo is about three feet in height. According to locals, a beautiful pearl is hidden inside the statue. When people pray to this manifestation of Jizo, some may wipe away Jizo's sweat with a purified paper. This, say believers, will bring answers to their prayers. For more on the legend of the Sweating Jizo, please see the "Izo Engibun," written in 1682 AD by the Buddhist priest Fukuju of Senyuji Temple. The festival of the sweating Jizo is held on February 24th each year. To learn more about the Daio-Cho Sweating Jizo, please see below links:

- www.ha-ru-ka.com/ase.htm (Japanese)
- www.ekakinomachi.com/maturi/asekakijizou_maturi/ (Japanese)
- www.nhk-chubu-brains.co.jp/DDT-E/mie/daio/ (English)

b) Substitute Jizo. Dream-Giving Jizo

Other legends about this particular Jizo statue include a story that Jizo once saved a Japanese princess, who was attacked by a villain, by putting himself in front of the attacker's sword. For a time, it is said, the statue had a scar across its face where the villain's sword had fallen. This type of Jizo is known as the **Substitute Jizo** (Migawari Jizo 身代り地蔵), one who substitutes himself for our suffering. Yet another legend says that, in 1670 AD, Tadamasu Naito, the Lord of Toba, suffered from lung disease. Unable to cure himself with the medicines of that day, he prayed to this Jizo and was cured of his illness. Since then, this Jizo was also known as the "Dream Giver," or one who can make your dreams come true.

c) Sweating Jizo

Kaida-son Village, Nagano Prefecture

www.kaidakogen.jp/guide/guide14/guide1404.html

In front of the local Genryuu-ji Temple are six statues of Jizo Bosatsu, a grouping found commonly in Japan. The largest statue, the one in the middle, is known locally as the Sweating Jizo. It will sweat black to warn local farmers of a late frost or an upcoming dry spell. Forewarned about impending frost, for example, the villagers will make bonfires in the fields to protect the crops from the cold.

d) Sweating Jizo

at Funo Town, Chiba Prefecture

www.town.omigawa.chiba.jp/mukasi/sinkou/asekaki.htm

Located in a special Hall for the Life-Prolonging Jizo (Enmei Jizo). On a woodblock print found here, one can see the people assembling around this Jizo as the center of their worship. Local folk say this Jizo also helps to ensure easy birth and to protect the elderly. In old times, according to the legend, when someone in the village died, the neighbors gathered here to pray, only to witness sweat coming from Jizo's body -- indicating, it is said, Jizo's willingness to assume the pain and sorrow of the people.



e) Sweating Jizo at Mt. Koya

**Sacred Mountain of
Shingon (Esoteric Buddhism)**

www.asahi-net.or.jp/~pf8k-mtmt/choishi/chokoya2.htm

Many people are buried in this sacred area, and gravestones of all types can be found here. Jizo, popularly known as the protector of those serving time in the Netherworld, is represented in many forms, including the Sweating Jizo.

**f) Sweating Jizo
Chookoo-Ji Temple
Inazawa Village, Aichi Prefecture**

www.city.inazawa.aichi.jp/mukashi/html/0201010142.html

This Jizo sweats to warn people that something bad is about to happen. Sometimes the villagers come with towels to dry him down, but he just keeps pouring sweat from his head down.

**Sweating Jizo
Nakajima-mura Village, Fukushima Prefecture**

www.jalan.net/kanko/SPT_167219.html

Famous since the Edo Period as the "Sweating Jizo of the Northern Province" (Ooshuu Asekaki Jizoo 奥州汗かき地藏). The Jizo Hall, where the statue is enshrined, dates from the year 1335.

**g) Sweating Jizo
Hashima, Gifu Prefecture**

This Jizo does not sweat to warn against bad things, but he sweats in the morning, when the monks go begging (takuhatsu) for food and contributions.

www.hashima-gifu.ed.jp/~kuwabarae/chiiki/hanasi/asekaki/asekaki.htm



LEARN MORE ABOUT ASEKAKI JIZO

- www.kms.ac.jp/~hsc/henro/f_k_j/jizo.htm
Lots of Jizo Photos from the 88 Temples of Shikoku; photos by the Health Center Faculty of Medicine, Kagawa University; quite excellent
- List of the Many Manifestations of Jizo Bosatsu in Japan
<http://murodumi-j.hikari-net.ed.jp/linksyu/jizoulink.htm>
- www.silkway.co.jp/mainmenu/tizusyuu/syoukai/jizou/1.jpg
- <http://townweb.litcity.ne.jp/hirai-rengou/rekisi/rekisi1.htm>
- www.city.kobe.jp/cityoffice/84/hana/shinwa002.html
- www.mie-shokokai.or.jp/daio/gyouji.html
- www.enasan-net.ne.jp/rekishi/area/nakasen2/19-2.html
- www.jodo.jp/03-002/ (Tokuzoo-Ji Temple)

(13) Kan'on-ji has a friendly atmosphere that blends in well with the town around it. The temple is familiar to many neighbors as a place to relax, especially to senior citizens, who visit here early in the morning. On the grounds of the temple is a stone Buddhist image called "Yonaki Jizo" that wears many flower-patterned bibs. This Jizo is believed to keep babies from crying at night. (from <http://www.shikoku.gr.jp/iyashi/english/tera88/16.htm>) ???

(14) HYAKUDO MAIRI (Mostly a Shinto Tradition)

There is a Japanese Buddhist variant of the Hyakudo Mairi Shinto tradition that involves the beloved Jizo Bosatsu. It is called the 地蔵車. This translates as the Jizo Wheel (which includes the afterlife wheel, 後生車, ごしょうぐるま) and the Bosatsu wheel (菩提車, ぼだいぐるま). Found in front of many temples. When you say your wish while turning the wheel downward, a wish for the afterlife will be granted. When you turn the wheel upward, a wish for your present life will be granted. For details, please see: www.fmkagawa.co.jp/yomu/88/88-56.htm.

(15) Omokaru Jizo

おもかる地蔵尊

Below text courtesy of Gabi Greve.

Omokaru-ishi literally means "heavy or light stones." There are numerous variations for these types of stones and statues. Essentially, you make a wish and try to lift the stone (or statue). If you can carry it (karui = light), your wish will be granted. If you cannot carry it (omoi = heavy), then you have to come back another day and try again. Sometimes a statue of Jizo Bosatsu is used instead of a stone. For more details and a list of sites where these stones are located, please see this web page by Gabi Greve.

(16) Ajimi Jizo 嘗試地蔵 (味見地蔵, 毒味地蔵)

Jizo Bosatsu tasting the food for Kobo Daishi

(あじみ・どくみじぞうそん) 奥之院 嘗試地蔵尊

嘗試 kokoromi is another reading.

Kobo Daishi, Kukai (774-835)

Kukai died on Mount Koya on April 23, 835, and it is believed that even now he remains in eternal samadhi in his bodily form within the inner shrine on the mountain. He has his cloths changed twice a year for summer and winter. He gets food every day. Details about his life are in the LINK below.

Kobo Daishi, Kukai 弘法大師 空海
(Kooboo Daishi, Kuukai) (774-835)
Founder of Shingon Japanese Esoteric Buddhism

For kigo about Kuukai see below.



Edited from an article by Koyu Sonoda:

There are few figures in Japanese history about whom such abundant biographies have been written as Kukai, popularly known by his posthumous title, Kobo Daishi.

Kukai was born in 774 in Sanuki Province on Shikoku. His birth name was Saeki no Mao. At seventeen he succeeded in entering the university. He trained his memory by using the **Mantra of Akashagarbha**.

In the autumn of 804, the first of the official diplomatic ships, in which Kukai was traveling, arrived in northeastern Fukien province in **China**. In the autumn of 806, Kukai returned to Japan.

Kukai's dazzling genius is graphically apparent in the **calligraphy** of a letter to Saicho (最澄), which is considered his greatest masterpiece.

He founded a temple on **Mount Koya (高野山)** in 816. Early in 823, Kukai was granted **Toji (Too-ji 東寺)**, a temple situated at the entrance to Kyoto.

Kukai died on Mount Koya on April 23, 835, and it is believed that even now he remains in eternal samadhi in his bodily form within the inner shrine on the mountain.

Most ubiquitous are the **tales about wells and springs** associated with Kukai. A typical story is that in a certain village there was not sufficient water for irrigation, so the villagers had to be sparing in use of the water they drew from a far-off well. One day, there came passing through the village a traveling priest, who asked for a drink. The villagers willingly brought him one, whereupon the traveler, in thanks, struck the ground with his staff and a spring of water came gushing up. The traveler was in fact Kukai.

The best known of such activities is his direction of the reconstruction of the reservoir called **Mannoike** in Sanuki Province on Shikoku.

Read the complete story of his life here, please:

http://www.asunam.com/kukai_page.htm

Safekeep Copy is here:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DarumaArchives-002/message/61>

.....

Kobo Daishi for a modern need:

To bring children and good luck (like Daruma san).

子授招福大師 Kosazuke Daishi

An Offering from a Daishi Group in Osaka.

At the Temple Gokuraku-Ji, Nr. 2 in Shikoku.

修行大師像 平成十五年 (2003年造像)

大阪極楽講同行による勧請、子授け招福をかなえて下さる修行大師様、

他の修行大師と違い子供を抱いておられるのが特徴 .



This small Jizo statue stands in a small hall in front of the inner sanctuary, Oku no In 奥の院, the hall where Kobo Daishi resides to this day. Every morning at six and at an early lunchtime around 10 he gets food, prepared by monks in a special kitchen, mostly from food offerings of the believers.

(Before the adaption to our modern times, food was brought at four and six in the morning!)

The food is carried in a special procession on a tray along this little hall and a bit of each item placed for Jizo to taste it, making sure he gets no poison.

Before Jizo was installed in this place, a deity called "Mikurya Myoojin" 御厨明神 stayed there, as an incarnatin of Aizen Myo-O. This deity transformed again into Byoodoo Oo 平等王, who is another deification of Jizo.

(This is the confusing theory of the recruitment of Shinto deities to the side of Buddhism.)

When Kobo Daishi was still alive and spend his days at Koya San, there was a couple of his disciples that cared for his daily needs and food, called Aiman 愛慢 and Aigo 愛語. These two have later been transformed to Mikurya Myoojin. Since they came from the land of Tosa with Kukai, they are also called "Tosa no Kuni Mikurya Myoojin 「土佐の国御厨明神」 (とさのくにのみくりやのみようじん).

KURIYA 厨 is another old name for a dirt floor kitchen, where food was prepared for the monks. So they are a kind of kitchen deities.

The custom of carrying food has been obeserved since olden times, it was first written about in 1023, when Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道長 visited Koya san.

Here is a photo of the small hall.



Detail of the Jizo face



© PHOTOS : [2004 高野山真言宗 総本山金剛峯寺](#)

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Monks carrying the food for Kobo Daishi 空海の膳



© PHOTO [佐藤弘弥撮影](#)

Look at this LINK for more super photos of Koya San.

(from <http://darumamuseumgallery.blogspot.com/2007/05/ajimi-jizo.html>)

(17)

Jizo from Temple Shinpei-Ji 心平寺 地藏 Shinpei Ji Jizo



© PHOTO NHK ([Japan Broadcasting Corporation](#))

Many years ago, when I still lived in Kamakura, a priest from temple Kencho-Ji took me around a tour, showing this statue with great pride. I saw it again last night on TV, click on the photo above for more details (in Japanese).

The valley where Temple Kencho-Ji (Kenchoo-Ji 建長寺) is located in Kamakura used to be called "Hell Valley" (jigokudani 地獄谷). It was a place where the death penalty was enforced and a small temple had been erected to pacify the souls of slain people. This temple was called **Shinpei-Ji** and its main deity of worship was a statue of Jizo Bosatsu.

Later the temple declined and only the Jizo Hall remained. The valley was newly structured by order of Hojo Tokiyori, now with a temple called Kencho-Ji. In 1910 (明治43, the Shinpei-Ji temple was relocated to Sankei-En Park in Yokohama, but the Jizo Statue was kept.

Temple Kencho-Ji also has a statue of Jizo Bosatsu as its main deity, but this is much bigger. For a temple of the Zen sect, to have Jizo as its main deity is rather seldom, usually it is Shaka, the Buddha himself. But here the old tradition was kept alive.

The old statue of Jizo, which had survived, was placed to the right of the big Jizo statue in a small alcove, together with almost 300 small statues of Jizo, some as old as the Muromachi period. Now more small statues surround it, altogether called "one thousand Jizo statues".

This statue is sometimes called

Shinpei Jizo San, 心平地蔵さん.

The legend of Zaita is also told here. The samurai **Zaita Gozaemon** 濟田佐衛門金吾 should have been executed here, but was not guilty. Zaita had always kept a small statue of Jizo as his personal protector deity. The sword of the executioner hit him

many times, but could not cut him. His Jizo statue later showed small scratches in the back or the neck (legend differs). He later offered this statue to the temple Shinpei-Ji, where it was enshrined in the head of the main Jizo statue.

Later this small statue was incorporated as a "inside Buddha statue" (tainai butsu) when carving the Big Jizo Statue for Kencho-Ji. (Now this precious Zaita statue is kept in a secure place elsewhere.)

His small statue was later called "Zaita Jizo" 齊田地蔵.



Statue of the Big Jizo Bosatsu

© PHOTO [ktmchi 北海道倶楽部](#) (from

<http://darumamuseumgallery.blogspot.com/2007/08/shinpeiji-jizo.html>)

(18)

Some statues of [Ksitigarbha \(Jizo Bosatsu\)](#) are worshipped in the same way in Japan. They differ in no way from the normal images representing this deity, except that this form is named Koyasu Jizo, due to the powers attributed to her.

(from

<http://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/kariteimo.html#merging>)



(19) JIZO BON (JIZO FESTIVAL)

Below Text from This Outside Site

During Jizo-Bon, Jizo statues are washed and decorated with red bibs and red hats. We serve meals to thank them for protecting children. Jizo-bon is traditionally held for two days (August 23- 24). Everyone gathers in a community hall to prepare for it. I would get to wear my yukata (summer kimono). Kids receive a lantern with their name on and also halloween-style snack packs. There are games and entertainment and "bon-odori" dancing. Bon-odori is a group dance. Everyone does the same dance, moving in a circle

around a float where taiko (japanese drum) is played. We don't take any formal lessons but everybody knows the dance. You learn by watching the person in front of you. I like this type of group dancing. Everybody moves the same way and goes around and around and around. <end quote from Yuki Yamaguchi>

(20) In 2005, scholar Duncan Williams published *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Soto Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan*. Chapter Five of this book, entitled "**Medicine and Faith Healing in the Soto Zen Tradition**" investigates the close links between miraculous medicine and healing practices at Soto temples. Williams lists a wide range of illnesses that were cured through faith in Jizo Bodhisattva, and translates various miracle stories of healing that center on the time span between 1713 and 1812. Sources such as the *Enmei Jizouson Inkou Riyakuki* 延命地藏尊印行利益記 (Records of the Benefits Gained from Printing Talismans of the Prolonging-Life Jizou), written in 1822, allow readers to get a precise idea of how their authors understood the efficiency of specific rituals to cure specific problems. It is fascinating to note that these problems were far from being limited to physical ailments, and also included issues such as "loss of money" or being "about to commit suicide." < Above review from the Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 33/1 (2006, pages 176 and 177, written by Michel Mohr, Doshisha University. >

Book published by Princeton University Press, 2005
ISBN 0-691-11928-7.

(21)Meyami Jizo, Kyoto

Dec 31st, 2006 by Ad Blankestijn

The small temples of Kyoto are great when you happen to stumble upon them, but usually they are not places to seek out on purpose. Meyami Jizo is different to me - I have often visited this small temple on Shijo-dori in Kyoto close to Gion with family and friends, and today I wanted to see it again. I now came in the afternoon, while in the past most visits had been made in the evening and that is the better time. When all lamps are lit the whole has a sort of romantic radiance which it lacked in the cool light of the afternoon.



[Meyami Jizo Temple, Kyoto. Photo Ad Blankestijn]

Officially, the temple is called Chugenji and there is a legend behind its founding. In 1228, the Kamo River was overflowing because of incessant heavy rains. Seta Takamine, the official charged with controlling the river, was able to prevent a larger flood thanks to a divine message from the Bodhisattva Jizo. To express his gratitude, he therefore enshrined a seated statue of Jizo here at a spot close to the river and named it Ameyami Jizo or Rain Stopping Jizo - that was the origin of Chugenji.

There is also a theory that the temple was called Ameyami Jizo because people used to take shelter from the rain here - the temple after all stands on the eastern bank of the Kamo River, outside the city proper, and travelers may have been caught by showers in what then was open land.

Anyway, in later times, when the city had grown and it was not necessary anymore to stop the rains or take shelter in the fields, the temple managed to remain in the hearts of the people by a simple but ingenious linguistic shift. Ameyami became Meyami, which has nothing to do with rains anymore but everything with eye disease (*me* is eye *en yami* is an illness). So our rain stopping Jizo became the Bodhisattva Who Heals Eye Complaints, a not insignificant task in a premodern society and even of importance today. And of course it was not only a matter of linguistics, people really believed prayers addressed to the Jizo were effective in healing their eye complaints and undoubtedly many stories of miraculous recoveries were passed on from mouth to mouth.

The main hall is occupied by a large, seated Jizo statue, dating from the Muromachi period, so it is younger than the original presumably installed here by Seta Takamine. Note the bald monk's head and the staff he carries as all Jizo statues. The temple also owns a great Thousand-armed Kannon statue in a room on your right when you stand in front of the Jizo hall. Further at the back, also to the right, you will find a jolly fat Daikoku.



[Small Jizo statue in Meyami Jizo Temple, Kyoto. Photo Ad Blankestijn]

(22) The following episode appears in the *Uji Shui Monogatari (USM)*, a collection of stories compiled at the beginning of the thirteenth century:

Life and Death

The land of death is easily entered in the dreams of medieval Japan. The following is a typical example:

There was a Buddhist priest named Chiin Kano who failed to keep the precepts and was only interested in worldly affairs. On the side of the road leading up to his temple there was a tower enshrined with an old neglected statue of the bodhisattva Jizo. Occasionally the priest would remove his hood and bow to the statue as he passed by.

After he died, his master said, "That priest was always breaking the precepts. He was so bad he's surely gone to hell," but the master still felt sorry for him.

Shortly thereafter, some people from the temple noticed that the statue of Jizo had disappeared from the tower and thought that the statue might have been taken out for repair.

One night the master had a dream: A priest appeared and said, "Jizo has gone to hell with priest Chiin Kano in order to help him." The master then asked why Bodhisattva Jizo had gone to accompany such a bad priest. The priest in the dream replied, "Because Chiin Kano bowed to Jizo sometimes when he passed by the tower." Upon awakening, the master went to the tower to check for himself and saw that the statue of Jizo was actually gone.

After a while he had another dream in which he went to the tower and found Jizo standing there. He asked why Jizo had reappeared, and a voice said, "Jizo has returned from hell, where he had gone to help Chiin Kano. The fire has burned his feet." Upon

awakening, the master hurried to the tower and saw that Jizo's feet had actually been charred. He was deeply moved, and tears flowed down his face. After hearing this story, many went to worship the statue of Jizo in the tower.

Jizo went to hell and returned to this world with actual evidence of his journey. The circumstances surrounding his disappearance were all related in dreams. The *USM* contains numerous stories in which not only bodhisattvas but ordinary humans also go to and return from the land of death, and a large number of these involve dreams. Whether such stories are "real" is not our concern. What is important is that through them we can learn about the kind of cosmos the people of that period lived in.

(from *Dreams, Myths, and Fairy Tales in Japan* by Hayao Kawai)

(23) Hasedera Temple

Some historians cast a doubt if the Temple was really erected in 1250, because founding priest Soden (?-1309) passed away nearly 60 years after the Temple's foundation. The Temple believes it was. Originally located near the Zaimokuza beach, it was destroyed by the earthquake coupled with *tsunami* wave in 1703, and forced to move to the present site. Inside the main hall are magnificent twelve statues enthroned on the alter in the shape of letter U.

The Temple is famous for preserving statues of *Juo* {jew-o}, or Ten Kings in Hades. Before worshipping and watching the statues, visitors may need to know a little about the *Juo* concept. It was based on Chinese Taoism and introduced into Japanese Buddhism during the Heian Period (794-1185). In Kamakura, it flourished in the 14th century, and seems to be a Buddhist version of the Roman



Catholic's Purgatory or Dante's *Inferno*. According to the teaching, a wicked man goes to hell after death while a good man to paradise. Those who are not certain will be subject to trial once a week after death on their deeds while they were alive. They are judged by the Ten Kings over the courts of justice in the netherworld. The trial will be staged by each king on the specific day in the following order:

1. First 7th day after the funeral-----*Shinko-o*
2. Second 7th (14th) day after the funeral-----*Shoko-o*
3. Third 7th (21st) day after the funeral-----*Sotai-o* {soh-tie-o}
4. Fourth 7th (28th) day after the funeral-----*Gokan-o*
5. Fifth 7th (35th) day after the funeral-----*Enma Daio* {en-mah dye-o}, or Yama in Sanskrit
6. Sixth 7th (42nd) day after the funeral-----*Henjo-o*
7. Seventh 7th (49th) day after the funeral----*Taizan-o* {tie-zan-o}
8. 100th day after the funeral-----*Byodo-o*
9. First Anniversary-----*Toshi-o* {toh-she-o}
10. Second Anniversary-----*Godo-tenrin-o*

Enma Daio, or Yama, as the ruling judge, brings in a verdict five weeks after one's death hearing the check-ups made by the first four kings. Thereby, the defendants are ordered

to go to one of the Six Stages of the World: **Hell, World of Preta** (hungry ghost), **Realm of Beasts, World of Asura** (fury), **Human Being** and **Heaven**. (In Sanskrit, it reads Sadgati and some Japanese translate it "Six Stages of Existence". All are suffering stages even in the Heaven.) *Henjo-o* decides specifically which one of the Six Worlds the defendants will be sentenced to go. The world of Human Being, for example, has various types; wealthy or poor, peaceful or violent. *Taizan-o* gives personal conditions such as span of life and sex, etc. During the first 49 days after death, their souls are believed to be wandering where their body used to live and on the 50th day, they go to the stage where they were ordered to. However, those who go to the World of Hell, Preta, Beasts and Asura may be relieved and can go to Heaven later if they stay religious and hold a mass on the 100th day, first and second anniversary of death.

Datsueba {dats-a-bah}

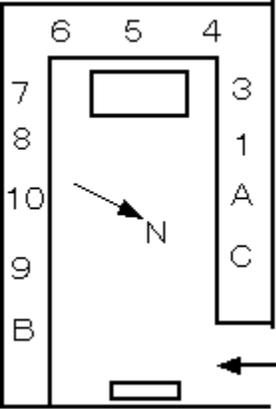
After the first trial by *Shinko-o*, the dead who were found innocent can cross the River *Sanzu* {san-zoo} or the River of Three Crossings walking on a bridge guided by *Jizo Bosatsu*, or Ksitigarbha-bodhisattva in Skt., while the guilty must swim across a deep water and the less guilty have to ford a rapid stream. At the other side of the River, a *Datsueba* is waiting for the guilty to come up and rob them of their clothes. *Datsueba* literally means 'an old woman who robs clothes'.

Jizo Bosatsu is believed to save those souls that are suffering in each world. A group of six stone-statues of *Jizo* can often be found in Kamakura. They are called 'Six *Jizo*' and each *Jizo* is assigned to one of the Six Stages to save those wandering souls. *Jizo Bosatsu* is also referred to as the guardian deity of children. Babies including stillborns and fetuses are also destined to go to the netherworld and have to face the trial. When they try to wade the River *Sanzu* which lies between *Shinko-o* and *Shoko-o*, they are too small to cross the River. They pile up stones by themselves with their little hands but to no avail as devils come out of nowhere and destroy piled-up stones not to let them get over. If their parents have faith in *Jizo Bosatsu*, however, *Jizo* will appear before the babies and help them wade the River safely guarding against the devils. *Jizo* statues usually carry a staff called *shakujo* in their right hands and it is used, says the folklore, for fathoming the river. Hearing this horrible story, parents who lost their babies would be unable to remain indifferent. Imagining their little babies wandering at the riverbed unable to wade, those parents feel they have to do something for their dead children. Statuettes found in some temples, [Hasedera](#) for example, are the ones dedicated by those parents in sorrow.

(Note: Some temples, though a handful of them, take advantage of this folkloric belief, and send messages to the traumatized parents saying that their lost children will continue to be agonized and never be saved unless they soothe children's souls by building statuettes and offer religious services. As a result, those parents are forced to buy expensive statuettes and pay an exorbitant fee for the services.)



That's the outline of the *Jizo* and *Jizo* concept. Through this teaching, priests tried to persuade people, the young in particular, to do right things while they are alive. Background of this concept is punishing the bad and rewarding the right. Poetic



justice. In today's technology-oriented society, however, few people believe the world after death. In early 1999, *The Times* of London reported on an England football coach who was quoted as having said "Disabled people were paying for sins committed in previous lives", and he was fired because of this comment. If such thoughts exists in the Christian society even today, then, why not the life after death?

Statues:

With their faces possessing dreadful and scowling expressions, those statues intimidate worshipers. On the U-shape altar of the hall 12 wooden statues, mostly sedentary, are placed. Unless otherwise specified, all statues were made during the Edo Period (1603-1868). The number of right-hand diagram denotes each statue noted above. Number 5 is, for example, the statue of Enma-Daio installed right in the center. Its headgears and costumes somehow look like Chinese, reflecting Taoism influence.

On the far left of the left altar is a sedentary statue of *Jizo Bosatsu* (B). With shaved head and having a stick in his right hand and a treasure ball called *Hoju* in his left, this is a typical statue of *Jizo*. The gentle and amiable aspect makes a sharp contrast with the Ten Kings. With its gracefulness, he makes excuse for the defendants at the time of trials before the Ten Kings and help mitigate the punishment. Hence the name of "Excuse *Jizo*". It is the Eighth of the Twenty-Four Kamakura Jizo Pilgrimage. (A) denotes the statue of *Datsueba* and (C) the founding priest.

The Temple gives us a rare chance to look into the statues real close like displays in a museum. Though the statues are not the objects of art but the object of worship, visitors may be allowed to take a close look at and appreciate them after worshiping in proper manner.

Other than those statues, the Temple owns statues of a pair of *Gushojin* {goo-show-gin} and *shoko-o*, which are carved during the Kamakura Period (1185-1333) and are kept at the Kamakura Museum as ICAs. With respect to *Gushojin*, once a baby was born, the deity is believed to immediately stay with the baby and keeps all the records on his or her performances until their death. One *Gushojin* writes down only good behaviors while the others note sinful ones. In the first trial by *Shinko-o* on the first seventh day after death, the *Gushojin* reports to *Shinko-o* on all of the performance of the dead. The 100 centimeters tall statue of *Shoko-o* is an excellent one fashioned in 1251 by Koyu {koh-yoo}, a local sculptor.

(from www.asahi-net.or.jp) ???

(24)

Some information about Jizo in Japanese culture

Did you know? Jizo Stone statues of *Jizo (Ksitigarbha)* are seen all over the country. some are housed in beautiful temples, some in little huts, and others are found standing by the country roadsides. They are one of the most popular kinds of statues that has become so characteristic of country life.

Jizo was originally *Bosatsu (Bodhisattva)* of Buddhism who stood between the world of reality and the world of the dead and saved those who were on their way to the netherworld. *Jizo* was entrusted with the task of saving the people after the death of Buddha until such a time when the second Buddha would appear. so in Buddhism he had an important position, and coming to Japan he has been popularized, and has become the protector of the people.

Jizo is thought to be a mild, gentle and kind Bosatsu - *Jizo-gao (Jizo-face)* means a gentle, smiling face.

A *Jizo-bosatsu* helps relieve people who are suffering from distress.

Dosojin is a roadside icon usually placed at a street corner or at the foot of a bridge to protect pedestrians.

Fortune-telling *Jizo*:

When one loses some valuables, wishes to know the meaning of a dream he had the night before, desires to locate a missing person, or wants to find a remedy for his illness, it is customary in some districts to consult *Jizo*. *Jizo* is believed to be able to give answers to all such questions.

Hikeshi-*Jizo*:

Probably because fires are quite frequent in the county, there are many *Jizo* which are believed to have power to extinguish fire. These *Jizo* are worshipped in various districts by those rural people who believe that this god will save them at the time of fire.

Migawari-*Jizo*:

In many different places throughout the country, there are *Jizo* statues called *Migawari-Jizo* or *Jizo* who take the place of people. It is commonly believed if a man worships *Jizo*, *Jizo* will take his place when he is in some great difficulty, or in danger of losing his life. There are numerous stories telling how *Jizo* statues were killed or attacked in place of their worshippers. *Jizo* statues having such traditional tales have many worshippers because the people believe that such *Jizo* would save them in emergencies.

Tauye-Jizo:

Throughout Japan there are quite a number of *Jizo* statues which are called *Tauye-Jizo* or rice planting *Jizo*, which are worshipped by farmers in the hope it will aid their rice-planting. There are many traditional tales telling of *Jizo* giving aid to farmers in the rice-planting season.

The names of Buddhist temples (*tera* or *o-tera*) usually end in the suffixes "-ji" or "-in" (To-ji, Jako-in), but occasionally "-dera" (Oka-dera). Shinto shrines (*jinja*) end in "-jinja" (Yasaka Jinja), or for larger shrines "-jingu" or just "-gu" (Meiji Jingu, Kitano Tenman-gu), and occasionally "-taisha" (Sumiyoshi Taisha). The word *miya* is the same character as -*gu* (large shrine) and is commonly used in place names, but is pronounced *gu* in the names of actual shrines.

I have mentioned *Jizo shrines*, which are in fact not buildings, nor are they Shinto. They are little stone monuments, usually about the size and shape of a rounded stone mile-post, with the face of the Buddhist deity Jizo (jee-zo) carved into them. If you don't see lots of them, you're not getting away from it all.

Many of the stone Jizos are very old and look it, with all detail worn away from the rounded stone. People on religious pilgrimages -- or just on their way to a shrine -- will stop to say a prayer and leave a little offering (a coin, candle, fruit, or flower) at every little Jizo they pass. Jizos are often clothed in red bibs, often dozens and dozens of them, which are also commonly left as offerings. In Japanese Buddhism, Jizo is regarded as a savior of children and protector of travelers. Roadside statues of Jizo are found throughout Japan.

A story I found about of a particular Jizo is given below:

"When I got back from our three-day school trip, I re-read "Angry Jizo." It is a story about the atomic bomb in Hiroshima.

A brilliant flash painted the town white. It was as if the sun had fallen before his very eyes. People wearing scorched and tattered shirts fled past the fallen Jizo, dragging their feet on the ground. When the fires finally died down, the city of Hiroshima had become a vast field of burnt-out ruins, without houses or schools or office buildings or trees or flowers. A badly burned little girl collapsed face down in front of the stone Jizo. Her entire back was bright red,

as if draped with a blanket of red peonies. "Mo-m-my, water. I want some water," the girl said, looking at the stone Jizo. "Some water, please, water."

Before this, the stone Jizo had been known as "Smiling Jizo," but at this point, tears fell from his angry eyes. Mr. Uchida and all the other survivors shed tears just like this stone Jizo. For the sake of all those who died, they have joined the movement to ban the bomb and they call for the abolition of all nuclear weapons. It's something they feel they just have to do."

(from <http://artbyoju.com/jizotext.html>)

(25) Kogan-ji



The Kogan-ji main gate is slightly recessed from a row of shops on a street thronging with temple visitors.

Thronging of women are always coming and going at the front gate of the Soto Zen temple Kogan-ji, famous for its main image, a statue of the Barb-extracting Kshitigarbha (Togé-nuki Jizo). Because the crowds are like the flocks of young people who enliven the Tokyo Harajuku district, the temple neighborhood is known as Old-Ladies' Harajuku. As this indicates, a constant stream of elderly people visits the temple, which was founded in 1596. Relocated after two disastrous fires in the Edo period (1603—1868), in 1891, it was rebuilt in its present location in the Sugamo district, Tokyo.



People pour water over the statue of the Sacred Kannon then towel the appropriate parts of the statue to cure ailments in corresponding parts of their own bodies.

Several stories of miraculous cures are associated with the temple and its popularly revered main image. For instance, in the early 18th century, a certain husband who prayed before the Jizo image dreamed that his mortally ill wife would recover if he made talismans and dedicated them to 10,000 Jizo statues. In another story, a woman who had ingested a broken needle was saved from death when she swallowed a Jizo talisman. The name Barb-extracting Jizo arose from such stories.

(from http://www.sotozen-net.or.jp/kokusai/friends/zf15_3/tour.htm)

(26) THE HEADLESS STONE STATUE OF JIZO IN FUCHU

The headless stone statue of Jizo, or *Kubinashi-Jizo*, is enshrined on a hill with an elevation of 65m., located at the south foot of Mt. Yatsuo, Deguchi Cho, Fuchu City in Hiroshima Pref. It is about 20 Km_ northwest of Fukuyama of Station on the Sanyo Line, JR, or about 1,500m north of Fuchu Station on the Fukuen Line, JR.

It is neither known when this stone statue, which measures 35 X 20 X 11(cm), was first enshrined, nor whom it represents. Nevertheless, it is considered to be fairly old.

According to an old man of the town, it was seen standing beside a farm road 80 m. south of the present position at the beginning of Showa Era (1926-1989), and it was already without head at the time.

It is likely that during the construction work to Widen the city roads in the 45th Year Of Showa(1970), this statue was pushed up with other stones onto the 30 m. high hill, and deeply buried.

On the dawn of May 18, in the 52nd year of Showa(1977), the Jizo appeared in the dream of a religious man of Shin-machi, Fuchu City. The man received an oracle saying, "I am buried in the plowed field on the hill. If you unearth me and enshrine, I will answer the prayers." This dream came true. The Jizo was found and enshrined, and many prayers were answered. Later a new site for precinct was procured and the Jizo was transferred here on May 16 in the 54th year of Showa (1979).

The visions of the Jizo that appeared in the dreams of the religious man, as well as others later, describe the figure as handsome and strong, yet possessing a delicate face.

Many instances of worshipers who were cured of head aches, pains in the waists, legs and other parts of the body have been reported. The tale of the Jizo's favor has spread widely by word of mouth, and devotees are coming from all parts of the country in great numbers now.

Not only did the Jizo cure all manner of diseases, but offered counsel on matters of children, business, study, and human relations.

HOW TO PRAY

1. Burn a candle or incense sticks provided in the shrine.
2. Chant the following Jizo sutra, two or three times;
"On-ka-ka-ka-bi-san-ma-ei-sowa-ka"
3. Express wishes which you want to be heard, to the Jizo.

Among those who pray, there are but a few people who chant sutra of religious sect of his own instead of the Jizo sutra, Also some pray touching the Jizo personally while others do not. Any of the above methods will be acceptable. The sincerity of a person performing prayers is the most important quality.

Two kinds of experiences are reported by worshipers whose prayers are heard. One is that worshipers feel relieved of the pain on the spots and the other is that they temporarily fell in worse condition suddenly but soon recover, In case devotees can not personally visit the shine and pray, a member of family may come and pray in their behalf.

The Jizo Festival is held at 9 AM on the 18th of every month with a large attendance.

KUBINASHI JIZO BOSATSU

250, Deguchi Cho, Fuchu City,
Hiroshima Prefecture

(from http://www.fuchu.or.jp/~jizo/txt/r_401.htm#jizo)

(27) Guardian of the Sea: Jizo in Hawaii

by John R. K. Clark

A Latitude 20 Book

"John Clark has written a remarkable book about shoreline statues of Jizo, a Buddhist figure dedicated to our protection and enlightenment. Erected by *issei*, first-generation Japanese Americans, Jizo statues served as guardians of *ulu*a fishermen casting in remote and dangerous coastal areas. John draws on interviews with more than three hundred individuals to document the location of these statues and in the process offers us a glimpse of the daily lives and spirituality of early Japanese Americans. We are indebted to him for making us aware of these Jizo monuments and their role in shaping Hawai'i's multicultural heritage." — Dennis Ogawa, chair, American Studies Department, University of Hawai'i

"Here are stories meticulously unearthed and added to the rich cultural experience and legacy of Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i. Initially, one would think that this is just an interesting sotry about statues of Jizo and where they can be found. But Clark's book covers considerably more. We find, as Clark says, 'the stories of these statues of Jizo are part of a much larger story.' What a brilliant and fascinating way to see another side of early Japanese culture." —Juliet S. Kono, author of *Tsunami Years* and *Hoolu'u Park and the Pepsodent Smile*

“Here in the Aloha State of Hawai‘i, where we have a bonding of various ethnic and religious backgrounds, we are protected by many different deities, including Jizo. We are grateful as we journey together on the waves of life that we can find solace and shelter in Jizo. *Guardian of the Sea* is an inspirational book for all.” —Bishop Dean Zenei Okimura, Koboji Shingon Mission of Hawai‘i

Jizo, one of the most beloved Buddhist deities in Japan, is known primarily as the guardian of children and travelers. In coastal areas, fishermen and swimmers also look to him for protection. Soon after their arrival in the late 1800s, *issei* (first-generation Japanese) shoreline fishermen began casting for *ulu*a on Hawai‘i’s treacherous sea cliffs, where they risked being swept off the rocky ledges. In response to numerous drownings, Jizo statues were erected near dangerous fishing and swimming sites, including popular Bamboo Ridge, near the Blowhole in Hawai‘i Kai; Kawaihâpai Bay in Mokuç‘ia; and Kawaihoa Beach in Hale‘iwa. *Guardian of the Sea* tells the story of a compassionate group of men who raised these statues as a service to their communities.

Written by an authority on Hawai‘i’s beaches and water safety, *Guardian of the Sea* shines a light on a little-known facet of Hawai‘i’s past. It incorporates valuable firsthand accounts taken from interviews with *nisei* (second-generation) fishermen and residents and articles from Japanese language newspapers dating as far back as the early 1900s. In addition to background information on Jizo as a guardian deity and historical details on Jizo statues in Hawai‘i, the author discusses shorecasting techniques and organizations, which once played a key role in the lives of local Japanese. Although shorecasting today is done more for sport than subsistence, it remains an important ocean activity in the Islands.

In examining Jizo and the lives of *issei*, *Guardian of the Sea* makes a significant contribution to our understanding of recent Hawai‘i history.

John R. K. Clark, a former lifeguard and retired deputy fire chief of the Honolulu Fire Department, is the author of six books on Hawai‘i’s beaches published by University of Hawai‘i Press.

(from

http://www.uhpress.hawaii.edu/cart/shopcore/?db_name=uhpress&page=shop/flypage&product_id=5118&category_id=b3e6237d1b1b3b8594488ed1c40d0dfb&PHPSESSID=46379f6e99952dd6976adfb36075a030) ?

(28) The Ta Ue Jizo

There are many stories of the great god, Jizo. Here is one of them. They all show the carefree heart of the Japanese, and their association with religion and nature. I will tell one more for you.

In the old days, it was the custom to share labor, and to perform labor as a form of tax. This was not voluntary, but compulsory. The story is: Once upon a time, near the Grand

Shrine of Taisha, an old couple lived who worshipped a wooden statue of Jizo. Sadly, the wife died. Thereafter, the old man lived alone and he also became ill.

At that same time, the village chief told everyone to come and help plant rice in his fields. The old man, too sick to go, worried about his punishment, and prayed to his family Jizo for mercy. On the day for planting the rice, the village chief called the name of each householder. When the old man's name was called, a 17-year-old youth stepped forward.

He was accepted in place of the old man and worked so hard and well that the chief gave him a sake cup as a reward when the work was done. The boy put the cup on his head and went home. The next day, the chief came to tell the old man of the boy's good work. The old man was quite surprised at this, because he knew nothing about such a boy. He felt that the boy had come because of the Jizo, and he went to him to pray. When he confronted his statue and started to pray, he noticed with amazement that there was a cup on the Jizo's head, and that its feet were covered with mud!

Then he realized that his little god had done the work himself. All over Japan, there are many stories of the Ta Ue Jizo. The two that I have told you concern our own Izumo no Kuni, and I thought you might be interested in them. It is such customs and stories that have continued to hold my interest in the Izumo no Kuni of legend.

(from <http://www.aa01.com/jculture/jcl-e/4000/4053.html>) ???

(29) Jizo in Folk Tales

In Japan, there are many carvings to be seen. Most of these carvings have to do with daily life and the things we see around us. The origin of these carvings was due to the coming of Buddhism to Japan in the sixth century, along with its magnificent art and religious statues. Wood is often used, and a great many stone statues were also made. Of course, there were castings of Buddhist images and other religious objects, usually of bronze.

Among these arts, was the carving of the Jizo, a very powerful god with many characters. Among them have been found sake drinkers, fire fighters, rice planters, thorn and splinter removers, finders of lost persons, bringers of justice, substitutes for people in danger, wanderers who leave their pedestals causing distress to their worshippers, and many others.

Our own area of Izumo no Kuni has a couple of stories in the old books, that I will tell you. First, there is a little town called Yaye, in the Izumo Province. (I have searched for this town and can't find it. Therefore, I suppose it has had a name change.) In this town, there was a water shortage and one farmer was trying to draw water into his rice fields. His neighbors beat him for this. The next day a Buddhist priest came and drew water for the farmer. The neighbors became angry and shot him with an arrow. The priest disappeared!

The farmer, who regularly worshipped his Jizo, went to pay his respects that evening. He found the feet of the Jizo covered with mud, and an arrow sticking in its back! After this, the farmer worshipped his statue more sincerely than ever. These kinds of stories make

all legends fascinating for me! (from <http://www.aa01.com/jculture/jcl-e/4000/4052.html>)
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(30) The temple of the Bodhisattva Rokuhara Jizo at Otagi, in the province of Yamashiro was built by Crown Prince Shotoku. In the reign of Emperor Murakami (946-967) there lived at Gojo in Kyoto a man who had once been in the service of a noble at Court but had now fallen on hard times. The man became a monk and, at their wit's end, his wife and children prayed to Rokuhara Jizo. The wife died but, with the aid of an old monk, her daughter was able to give her a proper funeral at Toribeno. In fact the old monk was an incarnation of Rokuhara Jizo. In gratitude the girl offered her hair, her most precious possession, and Rokuhara Jizo wrapped it around his hand which is why he was known as 'Jizo holding the hair'. (from <http://dbs.humi.keio.ac.jp/naraehon/ehon/index2-e.asp?frame=False&id=KL029>) ???

(31) Fire Protecting Jizo of Konomo

From olden times Arima has been called "Yu-no-yama (Bath Mountain)" with many people coming to have their pain and illness cured. To get to the Yu-no-yama or Arima from Osaka or Kyoto, people must pass through Namaze. Thinking it would be a shame not to stop on their way, many visitors to Arima visit the temple where the statue of Konomoto "Jizo (guardian deity of children)" is housed. The nearby villagers place great importance on the kind Jizo since it is this patron saint that protects the children and women of the village.

In the vicinity of the Jizo lived a farmer named Otoji of Kawabe, who from an early age believed deeply in Buddha and often prayed to Konomoto Jizo. Otoji was married and the couple had a lovely baby.

One day when the couple went to gather firewood on the backside of the mountain, they left their baby sleeping the basket since it was fast asleep. They worked hard to gather wood and started preparing to return. "Let's call it a day. Let's go home." At that time, they looked toward the foot of the mountain and saw black smoke billowing from the proximity of their house.

"Fire!" they screamed, casting down the heavy pack that they had been carrying. The couple descended the mountain as fast as their legs could carry them. Deep in their thoughts was the sleeping baby inside the house engulfed in a sea of fire. Overcome with fear for his baby's safety, Otoji jumped through the flames into the house.

Inside the wall of fire, he saw the standing form of Konomoto Jizo. The baby was cradled in the bosom of Jizo and was sound asleep. The always kind-looking face of Jizo had a stern expression as he fended off the fire with the strenuous rustling of his sleeve to make sure that the smoke and spit of the fire would not come down on the baby. Otoji quickly took hold of the baby and dashed outside. He handed the baby to his wife and tried to rush back into the house, but in the deep flaming fire he could not see Jizo anywhere. After their home fell from the flames, Otoji realized that Konomoto Jizo had returned to the temple. Otoji hurried to the temple to see Jizo.

At the temple, Otoji could see, as always, the kind eyes of Jizo, but the face and robe had been blackened.

"It was you, Jizo, who saved our baby from the fire, wasn't it! Thank you. It is because of you that our lovely baby is alive. I'll never forget this blessing for as long as I live!" With the mother holding their baby, the three of them prayed before Jizo for a long time and could not bring themselves to leave.

Even now, the damage to Jizo's cheek and robe at left side is clearly visible, and the reason for the damage has been handed down expressing the "Fire Protecting Jizo"

(from <http://www.ryuusenkaku.jp/english/folklores15.html>) ???