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An Amenable Arrangement

The Unification of the Nichiren Sect in Sixteenth-Century Kyoto

In this article, I argue that the Nichiren sect in Kyoto was able to recover from its near destruction in 1536 and maintain its position in the capital through the violent sixteenth century by unifying its disparate and contentious lineages under a new governing body, the Council of Head Temples. Unknown until the discovery of its documents in 1982, the council allowed the sect, as a unit, to negotiate with warrior power. The council was the culmination of pro-unity forces in the sect, especially those who succeeded in convincing the two sides to stop fighting each other over the sect's greatest doctrinal dispute. Previous scholarship has treated the Nichiren sect in the late sixteenth century as being at the mercy of powerful warriors. This article shows that the monks of the Nichiren sect were able to muster considerable resources and not only negotiate better treatment from the warriors but even drive warrior policy.

keywords: Nichiren—Kyoto—Council of Head Temples—Enroku Treaty—sixteenth century

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The Nichiren sect made its position in Kyoto permanent in 1565. In that year, the sect unified itself by signing a sect-wide peace agreement among its rival lineages that presaged the creation of a permanent governing body. This body, the Council of Head Temples (Honzan Kaigō 本山会合), allowed the temples to negotiate as a unit with warrior power and to maintain their position through the unstable and dangerous time of the late sixteenth century. Also, despite—or possibly because of—the sect's experience of military power in the 1530s, and in opposition to the example set by Honganji 本願寺 and many other groups in sixteenth-century Japan, the temples rejected force as a tactic, turning instead to a strategy that depended only on their economic and political resources.[1]

This council had implications beyond the confines of its temples and their parishioners. As the governing body of Kyoto Nichiren temples they were now one of, if not the, most important governing body in the whole of the sect. This is because Kyoto in the sixteenth century was not only the major economic, political, and cultural center of Japan; it was also its religious center. The Zen establishment was effectively headquartered in the city, centered at the *gozan* 五山 temples. The Tendai sect had its two major headquarters in nearby Omi 近江, with Mt. Hiei 比叡 looming over the city's northeastern corner. Mt. Hiei also controlled the Gion 祇園 Shrine (today called the Yasaka 八坂 Shrine), giving it a physical presence in the capital. While the Shingon sect's headquarters was fairly far afield on Mt. Kōya 高野, its Kyoto temples of Tōji 東寺 and Daigoji 醍醐寺 were among the venerable temples with strong links to the imperial

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1. I use "Nichiren sect" to describe all the Buddhist traditions that derive from the ideas of Nichiren and his disciples. In the medieval period, the Nichiren sect was called by many names, but the preferred name within the sect was "Lotus sect" (Hokkeshū 法華宗). Today, the various lineages call themselves by several names, including Hokkeshū and Nichirenshū 日蓮宗. I use the term "Nichirenist" as shorthand to describe those who joined the Nichiren sect in either a lay or a monastic capacity. When possible I try to make clear to whom exactly I am referring, but at times the sources refer to part of a "Nichirenist party" (Nichirentō 日蓮党) and it is impossible to differentiate monastic from lay, wealthy from poor, or even lineage from lineage. In those cases, "Nichirenist" is the best possible term to use. I should also note that I am not connecting these people to the Meiji-era *Nichiren shugi* 日蓮主義 movement, which is sometimes rendered as "Nichirenism" in English.

and shogunal court. The Pure Land sect was effectively headquartered at the Chion'in 知恩院. Honganji, the True Pure Land powerhouse, was based in the Yamashina 山科 neighborhood until 1532. And this is to say nothing of the Kamo 賀茂 Shrine, the Iwashimizu Hachiman 石清水八幡 Shrine, and numerous other shrines. The list of elite religious institutions in Kyoto was staggering.

And it was not merely the monks and the elite who were participants in this religious scene. The Jesuit missionary Luis Frois (1532–1597) reported in 1566 that not only were the inhabitants of Kyoto and the surrounding countryside knowledgeable about their own religion, but that they actively would argue against his own arguments for Christianity, at least for a while (Kanda 2010, 27). Frois also commented with amazement on the lay followers of the Ikkō 一向 school, who he said would go to the temple three times a day and pray with a fervor that would easily surpass that of the priests at the Friday mass at the Jesuit's Asian headquarters in Goa (Kanda 2010, 26). Allowing for exaggeration on Frois's behalf, it is clear that religious centers, and especially Buddhist temples, were important parts of the lives of the laypeople of Kyoto.

Even in this center of religious activity, the Nichiren sect was exceptional in its presence in the capital. In defiance of taboos against building temples in the city itself the Nichiren sect spent the late fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century building temples.[2] It so thoroughly intimated itself with the burgeoning townsfolk that Nichiren sect temples became centers of the city's artistic and cultural scene, even attracting visits from those with no interest in (or even outright hostility to) the sect (Itohisa 1990, 58–84). A Nichiren sect chronicle records that when under threat of attack from the forces of Enryakuji 延暦寺 in 1465, one monk sent the Muromachi Shogunate a missive that threatened:

> If this [attack] should happen, as more than half of Kyoto is of the Lotus sect, the faithful patrons will toss their lives lightly aside and fight to defend [the temples]. This will certainly result in disorder both within the capital and without. Have such details been reported by the mountain [Enryakuji]?
>
> (*Myōhō jise shū narabini dō shimatsu kiroku*, 231)

This bravado was to some extent misplaced. While the Nichiren sect was indeed a major force in the capital by the fifteenth century and had been in the capital since the late thirteenth century, its position was often tenuous. In the 1530s the Nichiren temples reached what could be considered the peak of their power, as they commanded large armies ("The Lotus Leagues") that frequently did battle with the Ikkō Ikki 一向一揆 forces of Honganji and served as the representatives of the weakened and absent shogunate to the city. However, in 1536

2. This taboo was being actively subverted long before the sixteenth century, but the Nichiren sect was noted by several contemporary observers as outpacing all other sects in building temples in the city itself (Stavros 2014, 145).

the forces of the Rokkaku 六角 warrior family of Ōmi and Enryakuji on Mt. Hiei destroyed the sect's temples and burned half the city to the ground. The shogunate and the emperor then officially banned the sect in perpetuity, and the survivors relocated to branch temples in nearby Sakai 堺 City.

When they were not being crushed by their numerous enemies, the Nichiren temples had a tempestuous relationship with each other. A dispute about the nature of the sect's foundational text, the *Lotus Sūtra*, was the basis of (or at the least the doctrinal justification for) numerous schisms and breaks within the Nichiren sect, schisms which manifested violently from early on. This meant that even if the sect's enemies offered it respite, internal conflict would continue to hound it.

In many ways, then, this would suggest that the end of the sixteenth century should be a period of decline for the Nichiren sect in the home provinces.[3] Certainly, the traditional historical view does seem to understand the sect in that way. Even the return of the sect to the capital in the 1540s is not seen as triumphant but as craven. After the return, when most of the temples had resumed their place in the capital, the remainder of the sixteenth century was marked by passivity and victimization, culminating in the suppression in the early Edo period of the Fuju Fuse 不受不施 faction who were so concerned with exclusivism that they would not even accept alms from non-believers (KZS 418; Tsumori 2006, 49).

This view requires revision. Recent scholarship using previously unknown and underutilized sources shows that while the 1536 attack was a major wound to the Nichiren sect, the post-raid sect did not merely passively acquiesce to the will of powerful warriors, even in the face of serious and sometimes deadly challenges in the late sixteenth century. Instead, the sect mustered its considerable resources towards increasing the power of both the clergy and the laity of the sect. To be sure, the events of the 1530s had demonstrated to the sect's leadership that military options were dangerous and could backfire catastrophically, so they eschewed violence, instead wielding political and economic clout to persuade powerful warriors. And despite centuries of bitter infighting among the various lineages in the sect, they unified, first stopping conflict within the sect over its major doctrinal disagreement and then forming a governing body that would endure until the nineteenth century. This article will show the circumstances and actions that led to the creation of this body, the Council of Head Temples.

As I will show, the Council of Head Temples was born from a movement within the sect towards unification in the 1550s and 1560s that was spurred into action during a conflict over the control of a temple in eastern Japan. While they

3. The home provinces are the area around the capital, especially the five provinces of the Kinai 畿内 (Yamashiro 山城, Yamato 大和, Kawachi 河内, Izumi 和泉, and Settsu 摂津).

could not resolve the specific issue over the temple, the Kyoto head temples did sign a pact in 1564 which effectively ended the conflict over the largest schism in the sect. The negotiations for this treaty, along with a general unease in the aftermath of the assassination of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru 足利義輝 (1536–1565), served as the springboard for a formalized and financially distinct council that begin in earnest in 1565.

These developments must be understood in the context of the late sixteenth century. Often the major historical development of the sixteenth century is seen as a conflict between the rise of daimyo power and non-warrior groups, including neighborhoods in the Kyoto capital, religious groups, and corporate villages in the countryside. These have been viewed by historians as "self-rule" groups and have traditionally been considered more egalitarian than the daimyo organization, as well as hostile to the daimyo. However, recent scholarship has noted that this dichotomy ignores that the daimyo and the self-rule groups often depended upon each other. This article will show an example of how a self-rule organization (the Council of Head Temples) arose with the support of daimyo power but without being subservient to it.

This article is part of a larger project, the goal of which is to explain how the Nichiren sect, as a relative newcomer to the capital in the sixteenth century, survived and flourished there, despite entrenched and powerful enemies outside the sect and deep divisions within. I argue that more than anything else, it was the development and maturation of the Council of Head Temples that allowed the Nichiren sect to persist and flourish in sixteenth-century Kyoto, and it may well be the most important development in the Nichiren sect's history. The council oversaw the sect's interactions with the sometimes-hostile governments of Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534–1582) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537–1598), managed the sect's response to the disastrous Azuchi Religious Debate (*Azuchi shūron* 安土宗論) of 1579, and were pivotal in handling the crises of the Fuju Fuse debates of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (Lamers 2000, 179–187; McMullin 1984, 204–209; Stone 1994). The last conflict dealt the sect and the council a major blow, and while the council would endure with the rise of the more powerful Edo government with its more intrusive religious policies and the attendant shifts of political center away from Kyoto, the council lost much of its power and independence after 1600. Still, without the council to fund and direct these interactions, the Nichiren sect's fortunes in the seventeenth century and beyond could have been very different indeed, as the various temples individually would not have been able either to drive warrior policy or to respond to threats as a unit. Understanding the council also helps us answer broader questions. By looking more closely at the organizational changes in the Nichiren sect, we can learn more about how religious structures operated during the Warring States period, and, by understanding this, we can also know more

about the rationales of the other actors in the period as well. I also argue that by looking at these new sources and unknown structures we can see that counter to the traditional image of the sect as largely reactive and cowed by powerful warriors after 1536, the temples of the Nichiren sect often took the initiative and were able to cause those same powerful warriors to act in the sect's interests at the sect's request.

The Great Divide: Unitary and Hierarchy Factions

Before we turn to Kyoto, we must first address the two major factions in the Nichiren sect itself. Schisms in the Nichiren sect began almost immediately after the death of Nichiren 日蓮 (1222–1282), with his leading disciples heading competing lineages (*monryū* 門流). These lineages (and future lineages) are identified by either the lineage founder or the location of the lineage's head temple (*honzan* 本山).[4] These lineages were led by the head temple's abbot (*kanju* 貫主), who had control over matters financial, managerial, and academic within the lineage. The resident clergy of the head temple (*honji daishu* 本寺大衆), however, had great power as well, as the abbot needed their approval to choose a successor. The resident clergy members were also the avenue through which the temple communicated with other lineages (Itohisa 1990). While these lineages split from each other for various reasons, the main debate within the Nichiren sect had to do with the organization of the *Lotus Sūtra*, the scripture that Nichiren himself most valued.

In the Tendai tradition that underpinned Nichiren Buddhism, the *Lotus Sūtra* was divided into two sections. In the first section (comprising the first fourteen chapters, from the introduction to the "Peaceful Practices" chapter), the Buddha Śākyamuni does not reveal his true nature, and instead appears to be bound by the laws of time and space. This section is called the "trace teaching" (*shakumon* 迹門).[5] The second half of the work (the last fourteen chapters, from the "Emerging from the Earth" chapter to the "Encouragements of the Bodhisattva Universal Worthy" chapter), in which Śākyamuni reveals his true and eternal nature, is called the "origin teaching" (*honmon* 本門) (Stone 1999, 24). The question that troubled several of Nichiren's students was whether the trace teaching was inferior to the origin teaching. In the Nichiren sect itself, the divide over this was almost immediate; it occurred in the first generation after Nichiren's death, and it became increasingly important in the Muromachi period. Those who held

4. The original five lineages and their founders are: Nisshō's 日昭 Nisshō/Hama 浜 and Nichirō's 日朗 Nichirō/Hikigayatsu 比企谷 lineages based in Kamakura, Nikkō's 日興 Nikkō/Fuji 富士 lineage based in Suruga 駿河, Nikō's 日向 Minobu 身延/Mobara 藻原 lineage based at Mobara, and Nichijō's 日常 Nakayama 中山 lineage based in Shimōsa 下総.

5. Chapter titles are consistent with Burton Watson's translation in *The Lotus Sutra*.

that the whole of the *Lotus Sūtra* was equivalent became known as the "Unitary faction" (Itchiha 一致派) and those who believed that the origin teaching was superior were called the "Hierarchy faction" (Shōretsuha 勝劣派).

Even within the two factions there was, of course, variation. Among those of the Hierarchy faction there was disagreement about which of the origin teaching chapters were superior. The Nichiryū 日隆 lineage, for example, became known as the "Eight Chapters faction" (Happonha 八品派) because they believed that the first eight chapters of the origin teaching chapters were the most important. Others put forth all fourteen, or just one, or even one-and-one-half chapters as superior (STONE 1999, 305). Likewise, those of the Unitary faction took numerous positions. Some argued that the difference between the two parts had to do not with the Buddha's intent, but with the capacity of the audience. Others argued that while there were differences, both parts were one within the *Daimoku* 題目, the chanted title of the *Lotus Sūtra*, which is the Nichiren sect's most distinctive practice (STONE 1999, 305). The disagreement did not break cleanly across faction lines, as most Unitary faction scholars acknowledged the superiority of the origin teaching on some level, and most Hierarchy faction scholars acknowledged that the trace teaching still had merit as part of the *Lotus Sūtra*. Adding to this confusion was the fact that lineages of the Hierarchy faction tended to schism off from Unitary faction lineages (see TABLE 1).

This disagreement was no mere question of religious minutiae. The Nichiren sect was known for its aggressive proselytizing tactics, including religious debates (*shūron* 宗論) that often escalated into riots. In at least one case in 1497, a debate led to pitched battles between the Unitary and Hierarchy faction adherents in the capital (KAWAUCHI 2000, 146). The conflict was both long-running and dangerous.

The Kyoto Nichiren Sect Before Its Exile

While the monk Nichiren had success proselytizing in the Kanto region, his sect did not have a presence in Kyoto at the time of his death. This is partly explained by the fact that Nichiren, unique among the founders of the so-called Kamakura schools, was an easterner by birth.[6] The others, such as Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212) and Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262), were from western Japan. Nichiren himself studied extensively in the west, but he began his preaching in earnest after returning to Kanto, and the centers of his movement were in Kai 甲斐 and Kamakura, with another center on the island of Sado 佐渡 in the Japan Sea.

6. The use of the term "Kamakura Buddhism" is the subject of some debate. See for example the discussion in TAIRA (1996). For a more specific discussion on the nature of Nichiren Buddhism, see YUASA (2009) and KAWAUCHI (2015).

TABLE 1. The twenty-one Nichirenist head temples in Kyoto (*Nichirenshū jiten*).

TEMPLE	LINEAGE	HIERARCHY/ UNITARY	DESCENDED FROM NICHIRŌ LINEAGE?	FOUNDED	RETURNED TO CAPITAL (AFTER 1536)
Myōkenji 妙顕寺	Shijō 四条	Unitary	Yes (through Nichizō)	1321	1542
Myōkakuji 妙覚寺	Shijō	Unitary	Yes (through Nichizō)	1378	1548
Honkakuji 本覚寺	Shijō	Unitary	Yes (through Nichizō)	1444	Unknown, merged with Myōkakuji by 1560
Honnōji 本能寺	Nichiryū	Hierarchy	Yes (through Shijō lineage)	1429 (alternately 1415)	1543
Ryūhonji 立本寺	Shijō	Unitary	Yes (through Nichizō)	1321	1544
Myōrenji 妙蓮寺	Nichiryū	Hierarchy	Yes (through Shijō lineage)	Late in the Ōei 応永 era (1394–1427)	1542
Honryūji 本隆寺	Honryūjiha, Nisshin 日真	Hierarchy	Yes (through Shijō lineage)	1488	1542
Daimyōji 大妙寺	Nichirō	Unitary	Yes (part of Nichirō lineage)	1340	Did not return
Gugyōji 弘経寺	Shijō	Unitary	Yes	1375	Did not return
Honkokuji 本圀寺	Rokujō 六条	Unitary	Yes (through Nichi'in 日印)	1345 (Founded in Kamakura before, moved to Kyoto in this year)	1542
Hōkokuji 宝国寺	Rokujō	Unitary	Yes	~1401	Did not return
Honzenji 本禅寺	Nichijin 日陣	Hierarchy	Yes (through Rokujō lineage)	1406	1540
Honmanji 本満寺	Rokujō	Unitary	Yes (through Nichiden)	1410	1539
Jōgyōin 上行院	Nichizon 日尊	Hierarchy	No (Fuji/Nikkō lineage derived)	1339	Merged with Jūhonji in 1549. Combined temple officially named Yōbōji 要法寺 in 1555
Jūhonji 住本寺	Nichizon	Hierarchy	No (Fuji/Nikkō lineage derived)	Sometime after 1339	Merged with Jōgyōin in 1549. Combined temple officially named Yōbōji in 1555
Myōmanji 妙満寺	Nichijū 日什	Hierarchy	No (Nakayama/ Nichijō lineage derived)	1385	1542
Myōsenji 妙泉寺	Nichijū	Hierarchy	No (Nakayama/ Nichijō lineage derived)	1431	1573
Honpōji 本法寺	Nisshin 日親	Unitary	No (Nakayama/ Nichijō lineage derived)	1436	1542
Chōmyōji 頂妙寺	Nakayama/ Nichijō	Unitary	No (part of Nakayama/Nichijō lineage)	1495	1542
Gakuyōji 学養寺	Minobu	Unitary	No (Nikō lineage)	1427 or 1450s (sources differ)	Did not return
Myōdenji 妙伝寺	Minobu	Unitary	No (Nikō lineage)	1477	1541

The first Nichirenist preacher to make an impact in Kyoto was Nichizō 日像 (1269–1342), who had trained under Nichiren's disciple Nichirō (1245–1320). Nichizō arrived in the capital in 1294. He managed to raise a following, despite being exiled three times. In 1322 he founded Myōkenji, Kyoto's first Nichiren temple.

Nichizō's monastic lineage, called the Shijō lineage after the location of Myōkenji, would produce the vast majority of the powerful Nichirenist temples in Kyoto. Of the eventual twenty-one head temples that would dominate the sect in the early sixteenth century, five were affiliated with the Shijō lineage, and three more were affiliated with lineages that had broken off from the Shijō lineage (the Nichiryū and Nisshin lineages). Another four were from other lineages derived from the Nichirō lineage (the Rokujō lineage and the Nichijin lineage), and one was from the Nichirō lineage itself (see TABLE 1).

The other lineages lagged conspicuously behind that of Nichizō in establishing temples in Kyoto. The earliest appearance of another major Nichiren faction in the capital was in 1327, when a representative of Nikkō, Nichijun 日順 (1294–1356), arrived to try to convert the emperor.[7] By the time the next major Nichirenist temple, Honkokuji, was built around 1345, Myōkenji had been officially commissioned by the royal families of both the southern and northern courts as well as by the Muromachi Shogunate as a sanctioned prayer center (a *chokuganji* 勅願寺 in the royal case and a *kiganji* 祈願寺 in the shogunal case).[8] Meanwhile, Honkokuji would become the center of the Rokujō lineage and one of the most powerful Nichirenist temples.

The first head temple that was established by a monk unassociated with the Nichirō lineage was the Jōgyōin, which was established by Nichizon (1265–1345), a disciple of Nikkō, in 1339. Others would soon follow, and by 1500 the "twenty-one head temples" made up the core of the sect in Kyoto and western Japan. While the Nichiren sect and others had an impressive following in the capital in 1500, no temple had an influence on the capital equal to that of Enryakuji, the powerful Tendai-sect temple northeast of the capital on Mt. Hiei. While long past the height of its power in the Heian period, the temple still maintained a strong influence in the capital spiritually, politically, and economically.

Enryakuji often endeavored to suppress new religious groups. This was true of the Pure Land and True Pure Land sects, but the Nichiren sect was particularly galling to Enryakuji. Nichiren had called out the monks of Mt. Hiei in particular for failing to uphold the legacy of the Tendai sect, and specifically he blamed the defeat of Retired Emperor Go Toba 後鳥羽 (1180–1239) and the death of the infant Emperor Antoku 安徳 (1178–1185) on Mt. Hiei's decision to use esoteric rituals

7. There is a minor error in KZS, which states that this occurred in 1337 instead of 1327. The Japanese date is given as the second year of the Karyaku 嘉暦 era (1326–1329).

8. Honkokuji was actually built much earlier in Kamakura but was moved to Kyoto around 1345.

(which Nichiren derided as Shingon rituals rather than proper Tendai ones) in their prayers to protect the sovereign (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishōnin* 2: 824). Perhaps more irritatingly, the Nichiren sect often used the name "Lotus sect," which was one of the Tendai sect's traditional appellations. Finally, unlike the Amidist sects that generally remained respectful of Mt. Hiei, the Nichiren sect often maintained a hostile posture towards other sects. Enryakuji would try on several occasions to remove the Nichiren sect from the capital.[9]

Enryakuji's first major move against the Nichirenists occurred in 1352, when the monks of Enryakuji's western pagoda ordered the dog workers (*inu ji'nin* 犬神人) of Gion Shrine to destroy Myōkenji.[10] For reasons not recorded, those orders were abandoned, but in 1387, they did destroy Myōkenji.[11] It was rebuilt shortly thereafter, but when its abbot received the ecclesiastical rank of first prelate (*sōjō* 僧正) in 1413, the dog workers and other menials attacked Myōkenji and destroyed it, confiscating the land for the Gion Shrine (Kawauchi 2000, 149–150).

Still another incident took place in 1465, when the abbot of Honkakuji attempted to admonish[12] Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政 (1436–1490) while he was visiting the famed Temple of the Golden Pavilion (Kinkakuji 金閣寺) in the capital. In response, a group of Enryakuji monks barricaded themselves within one of their halls and held a meeting there. The result of this meeting was a demand that the Nichiren sect be destroyed, and the dog workers and other temple affiliates were asked to undertake the task. While such barricaded assemblies were usually held by small groups of monks protesting the policy of the temple as a whole (in this case, the temple's inaction against the Nichiren sect), the Nichiren sect temples were sufficiently concerned that they went to the shogunal Mt. Hiei administrator and asked him to intervene on their behalf. Shortly after, the monks of Enryakuji attacked the Amidist Honganji, leading those of the Nichiren sect to think that they would be next. In response, the Nichiren sect banded together, signing the first sect-wide agreement, the Kanshō Agreement (Kanshō meiyaku 寛正盟約) of 1466, which declared the various lineages'

9. Honganji, for example, eventually declared itself a branch of the western pagoda of Enryakuji.

10. The dog workers were outcasts who were responsible for menial and defiling jobs such as clearing corpses from the city. The Gion dog workers also had a monopoly on bowstring manufacture, and sometimes they also served in law enforcement roles in and around the shrine. For Enryakuji, the dog workers often served as muscle, attacking those whom Enryakuji disliked (Gay 2001, 70; Kawauchi 2013, 41).

11. Myōkenji would be forced to change its name at this time to Myōhonji 妙本寺, and would not revert to its original name until the 1520s.

12. The act of admonishing the ruler (*kokka kangyō* 国家諫暁) in order to convince him to stop supporting bad Buddhist practices was an important act in the Nichiren sect, and one that other schools often found particularly galling.

commitment to their faith, an aggressive proselytizing posture, and the principle of exclusivism (KAWAUCHI 2000, 151).[13] Barricaded assemblies demanding the destruction of the Nichiren sect continued to appear for the next few decades, but the only substantive action undertaken by Enryakuji against the Nichiren sect before the 1530s was securing a 1524 promise from the imperial court that it would cease giving ecclesiastical ranks to Nichirenists (KAWAUCHI 2000, 151). That promise would be broken quickly and frequently.[14]

The most successful of Enryakuji's attacks on the Nichiren sect would take place in 1536. A long-running civil war within both the shogunate and the Hosokawa 細川 family had left the city without military forces in 1532, just when the Honganji-led forces known as the Ikkō Ikki threatened the capital.[15] In response, and with the support of shogunal deputy Hosokawa Harumoto 細川晴元 (1514–1563), the Nichiren sect temples organized military forces, which did battle primarily with the forces of Honganji. These forces, which modern historians refer to as "the Lotus Leagues" (*hokke ikki* 法華一揆), were the primary defenders of Kyoto for almost half a decade, during which they destroyed Honganji's Yamashina headquarters and played a role in the siege of Osaka Honganji. Within a few years they had a working if not yet routinized system in place for governing the city. However, in doing so they drew the ire of Enryakuji and the Rokkaku family of Ōmi, and in 1536 an army marched west from Ōmi and burned the Nichiren sect's temples out of the city. In doing so, they reduced half of the capital to ash (BERRY 1994, 134–168; IMATANI 1989; FUJII 2003, 227–274).

Hosokawa Harumoto, who had been instrumental in the rise of the Lotus Leagues, made no attempt to aid his nominal allies, and instead issued a document that banned the Nichiren sect from the capital in perpetuity and promised stiff punishments even to laymen who displayed Nichirenist amulets on their houses (KAWAUCHI 1992; *Honnōji shiryō chūsei hen* no. 95).[16]

Return and Resurgence

Shogunate proclamations notwithstanding, the Nichiren sect was not forever banned from the capital. For one thing, the sect's patrons in the city were

13. This newfound camaraderie would not last long, as by 1497 there were reports of pitched battles between Hierarchy and Unitary faction adherents. For more on exclusivism, see STONE (1994).

14. For example, Abbot Nisshō of Honnōji was given the rank of *gon sōzu* 権僧都 in 1549, and Nichikō of Myōkakuji was made a *gon sōjō* 権僧正 in 1557 (KAWAUCHI 2000, 160).

15. The background to this conflict is far too drawn out to recount here, but a summary can be found in BERRY (1994, 24–54) and an in-depth study by IMATANI (1989).

16. This document is translated in BERRY (1994, 166–167), though Berry slightly exaggerates the punishment meted out to those who display the amulet. All citations of the *Honnōji shiryō chūsei hen* and SIM include text numbers. Page numbers are included for citations of the references (*sankō* 参考, abbreviated as "s") in SIM.

still there, and those in court positions began lobbying for a reversal of the ban fairly quickly. Furthermore, the large networks of branch temples spread throughout Japan allowed the evacuated monks of most of the head temples a place to stay while they were looking for a way back. For the most part, these temporary headquarters were at the trade hub of Sakai, east of modern Osaka. Some temples showed signs of ceding the capital permanently: the Myōmanji branch temple in Sakai, Shōkōji 照光寺, was renamed Myōmanji, and the Honkokuji branch temple in Sakai, Jōjuji 成就寺, began to call itself "Rokujō," after Honkokuji's location in Kyoto (KZS 364). This was early in the exile, however, before patrons and courtiers could begin to mount a campaign for the sect's reinstatement. This effort was aided by a series of natural disasters in 1539–1540, which the Nichirenists argued was a sign of divine retribution. Eventually the imperial and shogunal courts were convinced that exiling the Nichirenists had been unwise (KZS 365–366).

According to its own records, Honmanji was the first to return in 1539. Honzenji claims to have returned in 1540. Myōdenji returned in 1541 and circumvented the rules against returning by using bribery to declare itself a branch temple of Enryakuji. The abbot of Honnōji, Nichiryo 日侶 (1479–1543), received permission from the shogunate to rebuild Honnōji in the intercalary third month of 1542, and he was back in the capital during that year, preparing to rebuild. The abbot of Honkokuji likewise returned in that same year and built a small hermitage near Daitokuji 大徳寺 (KZS 382).

In the eleventh month of 1542, a royal edict was delivered to "the twenty-one head temples." It requested that the temples return immediately to the capital and reoccupy their old land (KZS 382). Within a year, Honnōji was rebuilt with shogunal blessing. The fifteen temples that would return were all rebuilt and back in operation by 1546, though only five were at their original sites (TABLE 1). Enryakuji was opposed, of course, and its monks petitioned the shogunate to force the Nichiren sect to submit to their leadership. Negotiations between the Nichiren sect and Enryakuji would follow in which the Rokkaku warrior family of Ōmi served as interlocutors, but these petered out without results (KAWAUCHI 2006, 195–200).

While the temples did indeed return to the capital and again amass political power, wealth, and prestige, the sect was permanently changed by exile. For example, before the exile, there were twenty-one head temples. Afterward, while there are still letters addressed to the "twenty-one head temples," in fact six temples (Daimyōji 大妙寺, Gugyōji 弘経寺, Hōkokuji 宝国寺, Gakuyōji 学養寺, Jōgyōin, and Jūhonji 住本寺) simply ceased to exist (KZS 382). Of these, the first four were Unitary faction temples and the latter two were Hierarchy faction temples. Jōgyōin and Jūhonji did not actually disappear but rather merged into a new temple called Yōbōji.

In addition, looking at the negotiations between Enryakuji, the Rokkaku, and the sect, three temples served to represent the sect: Honkokuji, Myōkakuji, and Honnōji. And still later, according to documents relating to the negotiations of the Eiroku Treaty (Eiroku no kiyaku 永禄の規約) of 1564, we see that five of the head temples are clearly superior in status to the other ten: Honkokuji, Myōkenji, Ryūhonji, Myōkakuji, and Honnōji (AMANO 2010, 44). This is similar to the power of the temples before the 1536 attack: Honnōji was the dominant Hierarchy faction head temple both before and after the exile, and Honkokuji (the likely center of the Lotus Leagues) (FUJII 2003, 242) was still the powerhouse in the Unitary faction. Myōkakuji remained a major player, though perhaps somewhat diminished; during the time of the Lotus Leagues, the temple had served as the main conduit between the city's upper echelon and Hosokawa Harumoto, but it was not the representative in later negotiations (IMATANI 1989, 69). In addition, Honmanji, which was a dominant military power in the battles with Honganji, seems to have lost some of its prestige in exile. The historian AMANO Tadayuki (2010, 44) suggests that the "five temples" cited in the documents from the time of the Lotus Leagues are the same five dominant temples in the Eiroku era (1558–1570). I would instead suggest that the waning Honmanji was probably among the earlier five, as it seems likely that the temple's military dominance in the 1530s reflected political dominance as well. More importantly, it is likely that the Hierarchy faction's relative power in the sect increased after the exile. For one, it had lost fewer major temples, and the language of the Eiroku Treaty, as seen below, exhibits a remarkably diplomatic avoidance of the issue of which faction is correct—indeed, concepts valued by both sides are present in the opening item—while the earlier Kanshō Agreement of 1466 had opened with an effective declaration of Unitary faction principles.

In sum, the temples had returned to the capital still bearing scars from their nearly decade-long exile. The Hierarchy faction had seen an increase in power within the sect, and both factions were now committed to avoiding violence. The politics of the capital changed as well, as the shogunal deputy Hosokawa Harumoto fell before the might of his former vassal, the Awa 阿波 warlord Miyoshi Nagayoshi 三好長慶 (1522–1564).

The Miyoshi and the Shogun

The Miyoshi of Awa (modern Tokushima Prefecture) had a profound effect on the home provinces: for the period between 1549 and 1568, the Miyoshi dominated the capital, presaging the authority of the "three unifiers" by nearly two decades. Even after Miyoshi governance disintegrated after 1568, Miyoshi vassals and family members continued to be important figures in the region. The Miyoshi also had close links to the Nichiren sect and made a concerted attempt to act

as the sect's guardians. It is beyond the scope of this article to describe how and why Miyoshi Nagayoshi took hold of the capital, and the aftermath of his death, but a few important points should be kept in mind.

The first is that the Miyoshi's hold on the capital was tenuous. While the Miyoshi were effectively in command of the capital for the period from 1549 to 1568, they were surrounded by enemies and had to temporarily cede the capital on occasion, the last time coming in 1561. Further, the period from 1561 to 1568 was particularly unstable at the leadership level for the Miyoshi. Miyoshi Yoshioki 三好義興 (1542–1563), Nagayoshi's son and heir, died in 1563. While Nagayoshi did designate another heir in his adopted son (formerly nephew) Miyoshi Yoshitsugu 三好義継 (1549–1573), Nagayoshi himself died shortly afterwards. This led to the Miyoshi splitting into two factions, one led by Matsunaga Hisahide 松永久秀 (1508–1577) and one led by the so-called Miyoshi Triumvirs (*Miyoshi san'nin shu* 三好三人衆):[17] Miyoshi Masayasu 三好政康 (1529–1615), Miyoshi Nagayasu 三好長逸 (d.u.), and Iwanari Tomomichi 石成友通 (d. 1573). These factions found themselves in opposition fairly quickly, but before they would come to blows both factions seem to have agreed that the reigning shogun, Yoshiteru, was a threat. The Triumvirs and Hisahide's son Hisamichi 久通 (d. 1577) assassinated Yoshiteru in 1565, and this seems to have finally split the major factions, with the Triumvirs and Hisahide doing battle in that same year. This conflict would continue for several years and include the 1567 battle of Tōdaiji 東大寺 in which the great Buddha at Nara was burned down. Oda Nobunaga's entry into the capital in 1568 would effectively end the conflict, though the Triumvirs would oppose Nobunaga and Hisahide would submit to him.[18] Thus, while there was a clear dominant political and military power in the capital during the negotiation of the Eiroku Treaty and the creation of the Council of Head Temples (which we will discuss below), even a casual observer of the political scene in the 1560s could see that it was unstable.

Second, the Miyoshi had a particular connection to the Nichiren sect. While Miyoshi Nagayoshi did not exclusively patronize the sect (he was closely tied to Zen powerhouse Daitokuji 大徳寺 as well), his main temple was Kenponji 顕本寺, Honnōji's branch temple (and temporary headquarters in exile) in Sakai. Kenponji was important to Nagayoshi as the site of his father's last stand against the Harumoto-backed Ikkō Ikki in 1531. His brother, Miyoshi Jikkyū 三好実休 (1527–1562), was a patron of the monk Nichikō 日珖 (1533–1598) of Chōmyōji. Later sources suggest that after Nagayoshi's death and the withdrawal of the Miyoshi from the capital, Jikkyū's son Nagaharu 長治 (1553–1577) would make

17. Translation as per Lamers (2000, 54).

18. Hisahide's loyalty to Nobunaga was short lived, as he would oppose him in 1572, rejoin Nobunaga in 1574, and then rebel for a final time in 1577.

Awa an exclusively Nichirenist province and would employ Nichikō in this project (Kawauchi 1998, 7). Meanwhile, Matsunaga Hisahide was a patron of Honkokuji (Kawauchi 2017). The Miyoshi were thus particularly interested in the affairs of the Nichiren sect and this explains why they were so front and center in the Eiroku Treaty negotiations.

The Eiroku Treaty

> These are the terms of the peace between the Hierarchy faction and the Unitary faction:
>
> Item: All shall, as one, pray for the wide transmission and spread of "*Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō*," which is the essence of the one volume, eight fascicles, and twenty-eight chapters of the *Lotus Sūtra* as transmitted by the bodhisattva Jōgyō 上行.[19]
>
> Item: The principles of the Dharma are already unified, and therefore among our factions, praising oneself and disparaging others and selfish slander are forbidden.
>
> Item: Because our lineages are now at peace, let there be no poaching of believers or patrons [from either the head or the branch temples].
>
> As to the above, we will stringently follow these rules. If there is someone in violation of these rules, then his temple must take action. If there is to be mercy, it must be agreed to by all the temples.
>
> Thus, let our signatures stand immutable for all time.
>
> Eiroku 7 (1564)…. Eighth Month, Twentieth Day.
> Signed in accordance with drawn lots
> (Names omitted)
>
> The Eiroku Treaty (*Honnōji shiryō chūsei hen* no. 145; KZS 415–417)

The first of the Nichiren sect's major steps towards unification was the signing of the Eiroku Treaty in 1564. The treaty was nothing less than a peace treaty between the Hierarchy and Unitary factions. The temples agreed that other Nichirenists were no longer to be "slandered" (in other words, Nichirenist preachers would not use their pulpits to criticize other Nichirenists), and that the temples would no longer attempt to poach patrons or monks from one another. The treaty laid the responsibility for punishing offenders on their home temples and only allowed leniency when all the signatories agreed. In order to ensure no

19. Jōgyō is the Japanese rendering of Viśiṣṭacāritra, a bodhisattva who makes an appearance in chapter 15 of the *Lotus Sūtra*. He is said to have promised to return to the world in a time of evil. Nichiren believed himself to be Jogyō's reincarnation, and in this case it is Nichiren specifically to whom the term refers (www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=上行菩薩).

ill feelings were aroused by having one temple sign the treaty before another, the order of signatures was chosen by drawing lots.[20]

Traditional scholarship has viewed this event with a jaundiced eye. Rissho University's compendious sect history, the *Nichiren kyōdan zenshi* (KZS), recounts the standard account, using primarily early Edo sources in the collection of Honnōji and Honkokuji.[21] They suggest that the Miyoshi warrior family or the shogunate were the main actors in the peace, declaring the actions of the Nichirenist temples as "completely devoid of independence" in the matter, and speculating that perhaps they could not arrange the peace on their own (KZS, 418). The Nichiren sect had to be dragged, kicking and screaming, into the peace treaty.

Recent scholarship has looked at previously unknown and underutilized sources to present a starkly different image of the creation of the peace. Historian Tsumori Kiichi has brought attention to a collection of documents formerly held by Myōkenji and now held by Hōsenji 法泉寺 in Okayama Prefecture. Entitled *Eiroku no kyūki shōretsu itchi waboku no shidai anmon* (hereafter the *Anmon*), it consists of twenty-two documents that trace the treaty not to Honkokuji but to a conflict far away from the capital, over a temple in Tōgane 東金 in Kazusa 上総 (modern-day Chiba Prefecture).[22] While the *Anmon* has its limitations as a source, its narrative helps us understand the peace negotiations. According to the *Anmon*, at some point before 1563, followers of a branch of Kyoto Hierarchy faction head temple Myōmanji took over a branch of Hiraga Hondoji 平賀本土寺 in Tōgane (*Shoshū matsuji chō* 2: 109).[23] Hiraga Hondoji was a powerful Unitary faction temple in Shimōsa 下総 (Chiba Prefecture) founded by Nichiren's disciple Nichirō. It is also revered as the birthplace of Kyoto sect pioneer Nichizō, and as such was a popular pilgrimage destination even for Kansai Nichirenists (Tsumori 2006, 54). The abbot of Hondoji, Nichiryū 日隆, went to the local proprietor, one Sakai Tanetoshi 酒井胤敏 (d. 1577) (then in the service of the Odawara Hōjō 小田原北条), and asked him to force the Myōmanji followers to return the temple to Hondoji. Sakai himself was a Myōmanji follower, however, and refused

20. The actual debate was never fully resolved, and to this day the various lineages identify themselves as part of one or the other faction. The relationship between the factions, however, was much more cordial.

21. The most important source for this account is *A Record of the Origins of the Eiroku Seven* (*1564*) *Peace* (*Eiroku nana nen waboku no kiroku ranshō* 永禄七年和睦之記録濫觴) in *Honnōji shiryō chūsei hen* no. 146. Honkokuji records such as the *Honkokuji nenpu* are also used heavily.

22. The *Anmon* is held by Hōsenji in Okayama. A microfilm copy can be found at the Okayama Prefectural Library. Several of the documents are also available in SIM nos. 892, 895, 897, 898, 899, 901, 902, s87 (2: 59), 949, 952, 953, 959, 961, 962, 1137. Several are also reproduced in Tsumori (2006).

23. The name of the branch temple is not given in any of the documents and is thus unknown. There are a number of temples listed as Myōmanji branch temples in Tōgane as of 1634 in Myōmanji's list sent to the shogunate and none seem more likely than any other.

(indeed, his later correspondence on the matter seems to suggest he was part of the armed takeover).[24]

Thwarted, Nichiryū took another tack. In 1563 he sent a letter to the Kyoto Unitary faction powerhouse Honkokuji and asked if they could intervene. Honkokuji approached their patron Matsunaga Hisahide, who was the effective second-in-command of the Miyoshi family, especially in the capital. Hisahide in turn sent a letter to Myōmanji, accusing Sakai of wrongdoing and asking Myōmanji to tell Sakai to return the branch temple to its rightful owners (SIM no. 892). Myōmanji sent a letter to Hisahide, agreeing to do as he said but asking that he provide his own messengers to help the monks that Myōmanji would send.

Sakai Tanetoshi was not pleased that Myōmanji had asked him to return the temple. In his response to Myōmanji he refused outright to return the branch temple. He declared that, as the temple was on his land, he could do with it as he pleased, and, as his family had long patronized Myōmanji, it was only right that this temple become a branch of Myōmanji. He also suggested that Myōmanji should itself take a more aggressive stance and warned them that Hisahide was not to be trusted. Despite his refusal, the closing to his letter was markedly meek: "If I am deemed to be in disagreement with the temple, then please toss me aside" (TSUMORI 2006, 57; SIM, s87 [2: 59]).

Myōmanji and Hondoji did not stop trying to resolve the issue. At one point they brought in the head of the main line of the Sakai warrior family, Sakai Taneharu 酒井胤治 (1536–1577), to negotiate with Sakai Tanetoshi.[25] It is unclear exactly how this went, but according to letters sent by Nichiryū to Honkokuji in the ninth month of 1563 and a letter sent by Nichiryū's subordinate Yakusoin Nichisen 薬草院日扇 (d.u.) to Matsunaga vassal Matsuda Ichibei 松田市兵衛 (d.u.) in the twelfth month, Taneharu was in favor of returning the temple to Hondoji. Tanetoshi, however, dug in his heels. As a result, Myōmanji cut ties with Tanetoshi. Furthermore, the Nichisen letter also explained that representatives of a local Hierarchy faction temple had also sat in on the negotiations and agreed that the temple should be returned.

Late in the ninth month of 1563, Nichiryū sent Nichisen to the capital to look after the peace negotiations. Before heading west, Nichisen went to various Kanto temples to ensure their support for the cause. He obtained a letter cosigned by

24. The founder of Honnōji in Kyoto was also named Nichiryū (with the same kanji), but he had died a century earlier in Kyoto. Sakai is listed in the *Anmon* as Tanetaka 胤敬, but Hōjō documents use Tanetoshi 胤敏. Likely the scribe of the *Anmon* confused two similar characters, in script.

25. The two lines of the Sakai family clearly showed some connection (both were dedicated Nichirenists, for example), but while the mainline Sakai were allied with the Odawara Hōjō family, the Tōgane Sakai had fought against the Hōjō when the Uesugi 上杉 attacked in 1561.

TABLE 2. Major Nichirenist temples in the Eiroku era and their locations. Underlined temples are signatories to the Eiroku Treaty (TSUMORI 2006, 69–70).

UNITARY FACTION	HIERARCHY FACTION
Hama lineage	**Nikkō lineage**
Hokkeji 法華寺 (Kamakura)	Taisekiji 大石寺 (Fuji, Suruga)
	Honmonji (Fuji, Suruga)
Nichirō lineage	Myōhonji (Awa Province)
Myōhonji (Kamakura)	Yōbōji (Kyoto)
Honmonji 本門寺 (Musashi Province)	
Hondoji (Shimōsa Province)	**Nichijū lineage**
	Myōmanji (Kyoto)
Nichizō lineage	Myōsenji (Kyoto)
Myōkenji (Kyoto)	
Myōkakuji (Kyoto)	**Nichijin lineage**
Ryūhonji (Kyoto)	Honjōji 本成寺 (Echigo Province)
	Honzenji (Kyoto)
Rokujō lineage	
Honkokuji (Kyoto)	**Nichiryū lineage**
Honmanji (Kyoto)	Honkōji 本興寺 (Settsu Province)
	Honnōji (Kyoto)
Minobu lineage	Myōrenji (Kyōto)
Minobu Kuonji 久遠寺 (Kai Province)	
Sōgenji 藻原寺 (Kazusa Province)	**Nisshin Lineage**
Myōdenji (Kyoto)	Honryūji (Kyoto)
Nakayama Lineage	
Hokekyōji 法華経寺 (Shimōsa Province)	
Chōmyōji (Kyoto)	
Honpōji (Kyoto)	
Gubōji 弘法寺 (Shimōsa Province)	

the abbots of the other two great temples founded by Nichirō in the area, which he would eventually deliver to Honkokuji (Tsumori 2006, 61).[26]

Nichisen arrived in the capital on the tenth day of the twelfth month. He met with Hisahide on the twenty-fourth and wrote the abovementioned letter to Matsuda Ichibei the next day. On the eighth day of the intercalary twelfth month of 1563, Nichisen and representatives of the eight Unitary faction temples met at Myōkakuji to discuss the peace between the two factions, which had now become the larger goal. Nichisen then went to Sakai, presumably to gather support from the large Nichirenist community there. In the first month of 1564, he visited Nara.[27]

At this point, Nichisen disappears from the documentary record for six months. Tsumori suggests that he was going from temple to temple in the capital and had nothing to report. There are also no *Anmon* documents until the eighth month of the new year. There are other sources that can help fill the gap, however. Honkokuji received a letter from Matsunaga Hisahide in the third month of 1564, which reported that he was continuing to work towards the peace (SIM no. 992).

By this time, negotiations had already begun. A letter dated the eighth day of the fourth month of 1564 was sent from Honkōji, the Nichiryū lineage academic head temple in Amagasaki, to the political head temple Honnōji on the subject of how the first clause of the peace would be worded (*Hōnnōji shiryō chūsei hen* no. 143; Tsumori 2006, 63–64).[28] The abbot of Honnōji, Nichishō 日承 (1501–1579), was a motivating force behind the negotiations. He was a son of the Fushimi no Miya 伏見宮 princely lineage, which gave him a political and cultural gravitas both within the sect and outside it (Tsumori 2006, 64).[29]

On the eighteenth day of the seventh month of 1564, the *Anmon* notes a meeting at Myōkakuji, presumably of the head temples. On the fifth day of the eighth month, former Chōmyōji abbot Nichikō left his current lodgings at Myōkokuji in Sakai, and he arrived the next day in Kyoto where he immediately went about from temple to temple discussing the peace (Yanai 2007, 62). A letter of the seventh

26. The original is held by Honkokuji. No copy of this is in the *Anmon*.

27. His purpose in Nara is not listed, but presumably he was there to visit Hisahide at his castle on Mt. Tamon 多聞, Hisahide's main castle in Yamato. Hisahide remained there until 1572 when he yielded it to Oda Nobunaga as part of the terms of his surrender after an unsuccessful revolt.

28. This letter also had within it a section relating to Honnōji and Myōkenji establishing friendly relations, which is significant not only in that it shows a Hierarchy and Unitary temple working to improve relations but also in that Honnōji was founded by a group of dissenting monks from within Myōkenji who believed that the sitting abbot was too lenient towards non-believers. This, in other words, represented not only negotiations around the broad schism within the sect but also around the specific conflicts that comprised it.

29. The Nichiryū lineages had two head temples, Honnōji and Honkōji. This was facilitated by an effective division of labor: Honnōji was primarily an administrative and fundraising center, while Honkōji was an academic center.

day of the eighth month from Miyoshi Nagayoshi in the temple chronicle *Honkokuji zatsuyōroku* suggests that there was still some contention, as he seems to be suggesting that the Hierarchy faction should surrender altogether (SIM no. 916). TSUMORI (2006, 63) suggests, however, that the copy of this letter may well be a later forgery containing wishful thinking from the Unitary faction.

It was finally on the twentieth day of the eighth month when the accord was finalized and signed. Takeuchi Sueharu 竹内季治 (1518–1571), the ranking Nichirenist at the imperial court, was listed as the "executor" (*shikkō* 執行).[30] According to the *Anmon*, the monks sat in order of age. Like the Honnōji records, the *Anmon* lists the number of representatives as thirty-five, with five temples having sent three representatives (Honkokuji, Myōkenji, Ryūhonji, Myōkakuji, and Honnōji) and ten sending two.

Based on this, it appears that the trigger for the Eiroku Treaty was not the meddling of the Miyoshi and the shogunate but rather the result of a desire for a peace between the two factions born of the negotiations over Hondoji's branch temple. While these negotiations ultimately fell apart, the desire to solve the underlying problem of the Unitary/Hierarchy conflict spurred Nichiryū and Nichisen to do something about the problem. They turned to Honkokuji, who turned to the Miyoshi. Not only was the Eiroku Treaty not imposed on the sect by outside forces, but it was born of its Kanto, rather than its capital, congregation.

This narrative is not without its problems. One is with the *Anmon* itself. While the *Anmon* serves to present the role of the Kanto in the negotiations, it reflects very little of the intent of the Kyoto temples, and yields no explanation of the decisions of the Kyoto temples. Why should Myōmanji cut off ties with Sakai? Why would Honkokuji, on the basis of a request from a temple outside of its lineage (Hondoji), spend its own resources and risk a relationship with a vital patron (Matsunaga Hisahide)? Also, why would Hondoji turn to another lineage? Even if the temples were active participants, what does the intervention of the Miyoshi mean? Further complicating the question is a scholarly dispute regarding the Miyoshi Nagayoshi letter that has traditionally been dated to the seventh day of the eighth month of 1564 (thirteen days before the treaty was signed). AMANO (2010, 35–38) argues that it was not written in 1564, as Tsumori, following older scholarship, had assumed.[31] Amano instead notes that Miyoshi Nagayoshi had died in the seventh month of that year, so it is unlikely that this was when the letter was written. He argues instead that it should be dated to 1563. This theory vastly changes the timeline, since it means that Miyoshi Nagayoshi was involved before Sakai Tanetoshi sent his missive on the ninth day of the ninth month of 1563. This raises several questions about how important the

30. For a discussion of Takeuchi Sueharu's religious life, see SUGIYAMA (1959, 110–120).

31. TSUMORI (2006, 63) also notes the possibility that the letter is a later forgery.

Kanto temples actually were in the process, and also raises the specter of the older theories of the temples as puppets of the Miyoshi.

Of course, the problems in the *Anmon* do not mean that it can be dismissed. It is abundantly clear that the Kanto temples were active in the negotiations before the Eiroku peace. However, the ultimate decisions seem to have been made by the Kyoto temples with Miyoshi encouragement. The most likely explanation, first suggested by AMANO (2010), is that there was already a strong faction in the Kyoto Nichiren sect that favored the peace beforehand. This faction included the abbots of Honnōji and Honkokuji. These two temples were not only the dominant temples of the Hierarchy and Unitary factions respectively, they also counted among their most powerful patrons high-ranking members of the Miyoshi house, with Miyoshi Nagayoshi patronizing one of Honnōji's branch temples and Matsunaga Hisahide patronizing Honkokuji itself. The pro-peace monks petitioned the Miyoshi to solve this particular problem. They did this in the hope that asking the Miyoshi to solve the specific case of Tōgane would encourage them to support the pro-peace faction. And indeed, it did; the Miyoshi not only attempted to resolve the Tōgane issue, albeit without success, they became active players in the negotiations behind the peace, with six of the sixteen letters in the *Anmon* being from either Matsunaga Hisahide or one of his underlings (TSUMORI 2006, 53–54). Furthermore, the signing of the peace took place at the residence of a high-ranking Miyoshi vassal (Imamura), and was presided over by a courtier with close ties to the Miyoshi (Takeuchi).

But why should the Miyoshi do such a thing? AMANO (2010, 48) argues that Miyoshi Nagayoshi was attempting to raise his standing from merely a patron of one Nichirenist lineage to the protector of the whole Nichiren sect throughout Japan. In doing so, Nagayoshi was staking a claim to authority that spread beyond his own holdings, though Amano focuses on the importance of the Osaka Bay trade centers, which had large Nichirenist contingents.

While the Miyoshi were an important part of the process, I do not believe that they were vital. The pro-peace movement was in full swing in the 1560s and would probably have won out in any case, as outside threats to the sect were abundant and obvious. While one could expect some intransigence from some temples, Honkokuji could almost certainly move the intransigents in the Unitary faction, and Honnōji could probably mobilize the Hierarchy faction.[32] That

32. It is, of course, difficult to gauge the relative power of the temples within the factions or the sect. However, we can get an idea by looking at how much each temple would contribute to the council later. If we look at the relative amount spent by each temple, we can see that Honkokuji by itself paid 20 percent of the budget of the council, and almost a third of the money given by the Unitary faction. Likewise, Honnōji paid about 10 percent of the budget overall and this was nearly a third of the money given by the Hierarchy faction temples. This budgetary clout likely was a reflection of power within the sect (FURUKAWA 1998, 177–180).

the Miyoshi and the shogun were involved certainly helped the process along, but I would argue that the Miyoshi were willing to become involved because of the pro-peace faction's own clout inside the sect in addition to their personal relationships with the abbots of those temples.

The Council of Head Temples

But the peace was only the first step in unification. The next and most important step was the establishment of a formal governing body for the Nichiren sect in the capital. This body, which I call the Council of Head Temples, would last some three hundred years.[33] In this section, I will briefly discuss the sources we have to understand this group and how it worked. I will then show that though the council had continuities with the councils that lead to the Eiroku peace, the Council of Head Temples came together formally in 1565 in the immediate aftermath of the peace.

This group was unknown until recently, which is amazing for a group with such longevity and involving some of the best-known institutions in Kyoto. In 1982, a group of scholars taking inventory of the documents in the treasure house at Chōmyōji in Kyoto discovered a large wooden box. Within it was a lacquered paulownia box with gold fittings marked "Documents for the Use of the Council of Sixteen Head Temples" (*Jūroku honzan kaigōyō shorui* 十六本山会合用書類). The box contained several hundred documents in various formats that had been used by or concerned with a council of the Nichiren head temples. Indeed, the documents, numbering around five hundred fifty-five, revealed a self-sufficient governing council of the Nichiren head temples in the capital. The documents also show that this council continued to operate until the Meiji period. The release of the first studies of the council documents led by Nakao Takashi (2002) changed how scholars viewed the Nichiren sect's development.

To be sure, it was clear even before the discovery of the Chōmyōji documents that some sort of council was in place. First, inter-temple agreements (such as the one above) required at least occasional meetings of the head temples. Second, documents sent to all the Nichiren head temples often referred to "all the [Nichiren] temples" (*shoji* 諸寺) and "the representative of all the [Nichiren] temples" (*shojidai* 諸寺代), suggesting a group with representatives. Most concretely, the Honnōji/Honkōji chronicle *Ryōsan rekifu* 両山歴譜 says that after the signing of the Eiroku Treaty, the temples began meeting every three years (*Honnōji shiryō kokiroku hen*, 450; 568). The nature of those meetings, however, was unknown until the 1982 discovery.

33. If the council had a dedicated name it was probably "All the Temples" (*shoji* 諸寺), as this seems to be the term most commonly used in documents. "The Council of Head Temples" is based on the label on the box of documents.

NAKAO (2002, 227–250) has provided the best analysis of the "Documents for the Use" and of the workings of the council. The most important role in the council was played by the temple at which the meetings were held. This temple was usually called the "venue temple" (*kaimoto* 会本 or *kaiseki* 会跡), and sometimes the "[temple] on duty" (*tōban* 当番). Usually, the venue temple would hold this position for a year, during which it held the "money box" (*zeni bako* 銭箱), containing the money that the member temples donated for the expenses of the council. When the council would agree on a proposal, the venue temple would arrange to have the proposal written out as an official document and signed by the agents of each temple. The original document would go into the money box, and copies were distributed to the member temples. At the next meeting of the council, agents of the previous venue temple would pass the money box to the new venue temple. In some documents, the previous venue temple was noted as well (for example, *Chōmyōji monjo* 2: 225). It is not clear if the role of venue temple was the same as the role of the representative that was often seen in letters to the sect, but it likely was. Another role of the venue temple was to keep financial records, which appear both as memos and as parts of bound account books in the collection.

The venue temple rotation was probably set early, though the earliest extant document with a clear list of the order was written in 1591 (*Chōmyōji monjo* 2: 30). The order, listing the fourteen temples in the council at the time, seems to be random, suggesting that, as with the order of signatures on the Eiroku Treaty, it was decided by lot. Over time, the money box was replaced by the document box, that is, the gilded paulownia box that survives to this day. Documents therein describe the budgeting for both the original money box and the document box (NAKAO 2002, 243; *Chōmyōji monjo* 2: 20).

The main function of the council was to ingratiate the temples to warrior authority in a violent world. In the sixteenth century, military intrusions into the city were commonplace. With these intrusions came the attendant depredations of pillage and extortion, along with a somewhat less dangerous but still problematic tendency of warriors to lodge their troops at temples. Temples tried to find ways to deal with these warriors, such as the "prohibition" (*kinzei* 禁制). The prohibition was a document that a warrior sent to temples, shrines, and sometimes villages and city neighborhoods, promising that his soldiers would not cause harm in an upcoming military action. While most of the extant copies are written on paper, they were often sent along with a wooden sign that could be posted so that soldiers could see it. The documents were simple, laying out that (usually) pillage, violence, the taking of wood or bamboo, and the quartering of troops were forbidden in this place, and that soldiers violating these rules would be punished. Warriors did not send these out purely out of a sense of altruism. Those desiring a prohibition (in this case, a temple or group of temples) would

negotiate a price for them with the issuer. This worked out well for warriors as it allowed them a new revenue stream to pay for their battles, while it provided some peace of mind for the temples. In some cases, one could simply barter for an exemption from quartering alone, as the Nichiren head temples did in 1565 (Amano 2010, 47). By negotiating for such exemptions, and periodically giving gifts to powerful warriors, the council was able to more efficiently assure the safety of the sect.

The natural question at this point is how and when did this structure develop? Nakao (2002, 240) argues that the council began operating in 1565. He bases his argument on the oldest dated document in the collection, a note recording gifts for warriors dated 1565, eighth month, thirteenth day:

Given as gifts:	
300 *mon* 文	Take[uchi] San[mi] [Sueharu], in lieu of saké
1 *kanmon* 貫文	Lord Miyoshi Hyūga [Nagayasu]
100 *mon*	Intermediary for same
472 *mon*	Road costs for the messenger monks (Myōmanji agents)
1 *kanmon*	[Rokkaku] Shōtei
300 *mon*	(Migumo) Shinzaemon no jō [Katamochi]
200 *mon*	Same family, Tsushima
1 *kanmon*	Lord [Migumo] Shirō
300 *mon*	Gamō Shimozuke [Sadahide]
200 *mon*	Same family, Saemon no suke
100 *mon*	Gamō Sanji
	(*Chōmyōji monjo* 2: 19)

Nakao points out five letters in the council collection written by warriors on this list, namely Miyoshi Nagayasu, Rokkaku Shōtei 六角承禎 (1521–1598), Rokkaku Yoshisuke 六角義弼 (later Rokkaku Yoshiharu 六角義治; 1545–1612), Migumo Katamochi 三雲賢持 (d. 1566), and Gamō Sadahide 蒲生定秀 (1508–1579) (*Chōmyōji monjo* 1: 100; 105; 107; 106; 108, respectively). As is usual for such letters, none note the year in which they were written, but the amounts in the letters do match up with the above list when we can compare them. For instance, Miyoshi Nagayasu's letter among the five thanks Myōmanji for one hundred *hiki* 疋 of coins and promises not to quarter troops in any Nichirenist temples.[34] Meanwhile, the document above records one *kanmon* of coins given to Nagayasu, which is equivalent to one hundred *hiki*. There seems little question

34. A *mon* was the basic monetary unit in Japan, representing a single copper coin. A *kanmon* was a "string" of cash, which is to say one thousand coins strung together (East Asian coins usually have a hole in the middle for this purpose). It is thus equivalent to one thousand *mon*. A *hiki* is ten *mon*. It is often used in documents describing gifts.

that the expenditure listed in 1565 is the money Nagayasu is thanking Myōmanji for, and therefore that the letter likely dates from 1565.

The other four letters, all written by members of the Rokkaku house, thank the "representative of the temples" for gifts of money and paper. While the letters from the council do not remain, the letters from the Rokkaku do not suggest the usual quid pro quo of money for prohibitions or exemptions from quartering. They merely note that the gifts were in celebration of an "expedition" (*shutchō* 出張). NAKAO (2002, 240–243) believes that the letters were written in 1565 and that the "expedition" was an upcoming battle between the Miyoshi and the Rokkaku in response to the assassination of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru.[35] Thus, Nakao argued that the council was born as the temples attempted to deal with the sudden instability in the wake of the shogun's death by sending bribes to all potential parties involved in the upcoming conflict. A previous irregular meeting structure was quickly made regular and used to fund whatever the temples needed to arrange for their own defense.

However, a close reading of the evidence suggests a number of issues with Nakao's thesis. While Miyoshi Nagayasu's letter is certainly from 1565, the letters from the Rokkaku and their vassals cannot be from that year. This is clear because the Rokkaku letters are explicit that an "expedition" did happen, and, as AMANO (2010, 43–44) has noted, the Rokkaku never attacked the capital in 1565. The expedition must have taken place at some other time, and the letters written then.

So, when were the Rokkaku letters written? One other clue in the letters is that one missive is signed Rokkaku Yoshisuke. Yoshisuke changed his name to Yoshiharu 義治 in 1566, so the letters must have been written before then. Looking back at records of the Rokkaku, the most likely date for the letters was 1561, when, in the seventh and eighth month, the Rokkaku advanced on the capital, camping at Ōyamazaki 大山崎. Murai Yūki, the compiler of the *Sengoku ibun* volume containing Rokkaku documents, dates all four of the letters to 1561 as well (SIR nos. 843, 844, 845, 846).

If this is so, however, then these five documents in the council collection predate not only the earliest of the documents produced by the council in that collection, but also the Eiroku Treaty (1564) by three years. Why were they in the box of council documents? AMANO (2010, 44) argues that the major force behind the creation of a regular temple council was the pressure of the 1561 Rokkaku campaign, not the aftermath of Yoshiteru's assassination. This threat led to increasingly regular council meetings among the head temples, as the temples met to cover the costs of bribing warriors. This timeline turns Nakao's and

35. Miyoshi warriors led by Matsunaga Hisamichi, Miyoshi Yoshitsugu, and Miyoshi Nagayasu assassinated Yoshiteru in 1565 as relations between the Miyoshi and the shogunate broke down.

to some extent Tsumori's theses on their heads by making the Eiroku Treaty a result of the formation of the council: increased familiarity helped to create a group with a desire for peace inside the sect. When this group, which included the abbot of Honkokuji and likely of Honnōji, received the reports of the Tōgane crisis, they pressed for a formal peace and went to the Miyoshi for aid in the process. This led not only to the Eiroku Treaty but also to more meetings of the head temples, eventually resulting in the venue temple arrangement.

My view is that the Council of Head Temples did not develop into a regular institution until 1565. The Rokkaku documents in the box show that there was continuity between the pre-1565 ad hoc councils and the post-1565 formal councils. The Rokkaku attacks of 1561 triggered an additional flurry of meetings in council, including those to pay off the Rokkaku in 1561 as a hedge in case they made it into the capital. Like the Council of Head Temples, the ad hoc councils pooled resources to pay warriors for security. The time around the signing of the Eiroku Treaty was probably the most intense period of ad hoc councils and bred a familiarity among the lineages that made the formalization of the councils that much easier. The first official and formal meeting of the council was in 1565, and produced the document above noting expenditures for the first meeting of the council, along with another document (*Chōmyōji monjo* 2: 20) dated the next day. I believe that these were the first two documents because they are the oldest extant documents produced by the council in the collection and because the second of the 1565 documents lists out costs for the council's "money box" and its fittings. The purchase of the box suggests that the temples saw a distinction between the assets each of them held and the assets that the council held. This separate budget is an important part of the council's development, as it allowed it to operate without constantly going cap-in-hand to the various temples and also allowed the poorer temples to serve in leadership roles without bankrupting themselves.

Conclusion: From Many, One

As the year of 1568 began, the home provinces were in chaos. Matsunaga Hisahide and the Miyoshi Triumvirs had just fought battles that left the Great Buddha of Nara in ashes. Miyoshi Nagayoshi's heir, Yoshitsugu, had fought for both sides. The late shogun's younger brother was gallivanting about in the east, trying to assemble a new army that would likely just burn the capital down again. The Rokkaku warrior family, formerly one of the powerful players in Kyoto politics, had just suffered a vassal revolt that included the head of the family being briefly banished from his own castle. In nearby Mino 美濃, the Saitō 斎藤 family that had wrested power from the Rokkaku-allied Toki 土岐 family had, after

another internal revolt, fallen to Oda Nobunaga, a new powerhouse. To an astute observer of Kyoto politics, there were numerous reasons to be pessimistic.[36]

And yet, members of the Nichiren sect could say that their own future looked relatively bright. Their brief banishment had ended, and neither Hosokawa Harumoto, Enryakuji, nor the shogun could successfully prevent their return to the capital. While unresolved doctrinally, the single most important institutional and doctrinal divide in the sect was no longer a danger to the unity of the sect without bloodshed or either side looking like a loser. At the same time, the Nichirenists had succeeded in creating a robust governing structure for the sect as a whole.

As we have seen, these developments were not the result of Miyoshi or shogunal pressure of the sect but were the result of a growing faction within the sect which saw intra-sect conflict as more problematic than the differences between the various lineages. These monks took advantage of increasingly regular contact in the early 1560s to build up a rapport between the temples, and when the Tōgane crisis was reported to them, they took advantage of the situation, beginning a series of negotiations between the Hierarchy and Unitary factions. In turn, this led to a stable system of councils, which first ironed out the Eiroku Treaty and then solidified the structure into the Council of Head Temples, an organization that would endure until the nineteenth century.

However, the fall of the Miyoshi would not mean that Kyoto and the sect would face a new era of calm and peace. Oda Nobunaga's arrival would bring new conflict, and Nobunaga's armies would raze half of the city in 1572. Despite the destruction and loss of several temples, the council would not diminish; it would expand, probably reaching its peak in the mid-1570s.[37] For now, it should suffice to say that in the late 1560s, the Council of Head Temples, comprised of formerly hostile and belligerent factions, was not merely unified and stable: it was growing stronger.

36. A copy of a letter from the former head of the family, Rokkaku Yoshikata 六角義賢 (1521–1598), to his vassals to try to smooth over the conflict is a fascinating document for several reasons, not least of which is that it is the most detailed history of the Saitō family of Mino by a contemporary (SIR no. 801).

37. In 1576, the council would, in the name of better engagement with Nobunaga's regime, undertake a city-wide fundraising campaign on a massive scale. This fundraiser was the first in the history of the sect, and in future I plan to explore the implications of this act. However, I believe that in terms of economic and political power, the campaign represents the peak of the council's power, as well as a very useful dress rehearsal for the emergency fundraiser to pay off fines imposed after the Azuchi Religious Debate in 1579.

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SIM *Sengoku ibun Miyoshishi hen* 戦国遺文三好氏編. 3 vols. Ed. Amano Tadayuki 天野忠幸. Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 2013–2015.

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