**The Statue of Amida Buddha**

Shinran (1173–1263) is one of the most respected figures in Japanese religious history. Before he established the popular sect of Jōdo Shinshū, or True Pure Land Buddhism, he trained as a novice monk at the Tendai headquarters on Mt. Hiei, northeast of Kyoto. Shinran became a master of the sutras as well as an accomplished sculptor. The statue of the standing Amida, Buddha of Infinite Light, at the temple of Hōjūji is a prime example of his talent. Reportedly carved using a billhook, the statue is covered in black lacquer, and its provenance is confirmed by an inscription on the base by Shinran himself.