

Statue of Kichijoten

Vibrant color likely would have given this statue of Kichijoten an almost lifelike appearance when it was first completed, in the late Heian period (794–1185). As was typical for the Heian period, the statue appears relatively androgynous, but Kichijoten is considered a female deity. Worshippers have long prayed to her as a goddess of fertility and beauty, as well as asked her for more commonplace favors such as wealth and good fortune.

The wish-granting jewel in the left hand attests to Kichijoten's power to grant material gain. While this ability might seem favorable to devotees, Buddhism focuses on transcending the desires of the material world. Since the ability to grant material gain is one of her central attributes, the wish-granting jewel is standard to the appearance of Kichijoten across both imagery and time.