

Mausoleums of Emperor Sukō and Emperor Kōmyō

Fushimi's connection to the emperors of Japan is often overlooked by both domestic and international visitors, yet its historical significance is considerable, given the many imperial mausoleums and related sites within its boundaries.

In the fourteenth century, two separate family lines in the court vied for the title of emperor. It all began when Emperor Go-Daigo (1288–1339) began to consolidate political power away from the samurai. Samurai leader Ashikaga Takauji (1305–1358) fought back and conquered Kyoto in 1336. Takauji replaced Go-Daigo with Emperor Kōmyō (1322–1380) on the Chrysanthemum Throne. Emperor Kōmyō was a samurai-friendly member of the imperial line, and his installation as emperor caused the imperial court to split into the Ashikaga-backed Northern Court and Go-Daigo's Southern Court. Takauji was made shogun in 1338 by Northern Emperor Kōmyō while Southern Emperor Go-Daigo fled to the safety of Enryakuji temple atop Mount Hiei. The schism lasted for 56 years until the Southern Court gave up its demand for reinstitution during the rule of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408).

Emperor Kōmyō, the second son of Emperor Go-Fushimi (1288–1336), was the second of the Northern Court emperors and the first to receive the support of the Ashikaga clan, the rulers of the Muromachi Bakufu. His reign lasted from 1336 to 1348. Emperor Sukō (1334–1398) was the third of the emperors of the Northern Court, and he ruled Japan from 1348 to 1351.

The mausoleums of Emperor Kōmyō and Emperor Sukō sit amid a grove of pines in a quiet suburb of Fushimi between JR Momoyama Station and the Ujigawa River in an area once famed for growing flowers that were prized by Kyoto's ikebana schools.