

Mouth

The Great Buddha's mouth is gently closed in a manner that is meant to suggest Amida's boundless compassion. The shape of the upper lip is emphasized by a small moustache.

The writer Lafcadio Hearn (1850–1904), who was a naturalized Japanese citizen and adopted the name Koizumi Yakumo, introduced folk tales and many other aspects of Japanese culture to the West. He famously described the expression of the Great Buddha as a mysteriously beautiful “Japanese smile.”