



Under the roof of Zuihoden ©Miyagi Prefectural Government

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Anton Schweizer, Germany

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



*Bronze statue of Date Masamune on a horse, Remains of Sendai Castle
©Miyagi Prefectural Government*

Motivation Ever since Japan was *discovered* by the West in the second half of the nineteenth century foreigners have fallen in love with the understated elegance of its traditional wooden architecture. Writers such as the American zoologist Edward S. Morse, the Irish-Greek essayist Lafcadio Hearn, or the German urban planner Bruno Taut have praised its exquisite simplicity and high esteem for natural materials. It is often overlooked, however, that there also is a distinct lineage of lavishly decorated buildings that should be understood as equally representative of Japan's architectural heritage. Somewhat inadequately dubbed *Japanese Baroque*, this style emerged during the Momoyama Period (1568-1615) and is closely connected with other arts and crafts. The exuberant style is best known from the vast mausoleum complex of the first Tokugawa shogun, Ieyasu, in Nikko. Another excellent place to experience this magnificent style in architecture is the city of Sendai and the nearby bay of Matsushima.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



3|22

Oshu Sendairyo Kuniezu (utsushi), *Detail of a domain map (copy), Sendai Clan, 1697, Courtesy of Sendai City Museum*

Objective Sendai is often bypassed by international travelers or merely used as a base camp for visiting the Tohoku region in the north of Japan's main island. However, the city and its surroundings are well worth being explored in their own right. Sendai was founded by Date (pronounced *Dah-tay*) Masamune, a warlord, political entrepreneur, and tireless patron of the arts. Masamune spared no effort to furnish his domain with grand buildings and enliven these with festivities of the most elegant kind. His building activities shape the city and region until today. It is the aim of this essay to introduce Masamune through the city's monuments and collections from the vantage point of a historian of art and architecture.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



Date Masamune gazo, portrait of Date Masamune, Kano Yasunobu, 17th century, Courtesy of Sendai City Museum

Context Sendai's inception took place in 1601, in the aftermath of the battle of Sekigahara. Date Masamune had sided with the victorious Tokugawa Ieyasu and was in return rewarded with land holdings of such enormous size that he instantly became one of the wealthiest daimyo of the country. He established Sendai as the new domain capital for these large territories. As was usual at this time, Masamune and his staff of advisers went to great lengths in order to imbue their regime with attributes of divine protection and metropolitan grandeur. These efforts began with the very name *Sendai*. In fact an older place name, it had been written with characters carrying the auspicious meaning *one thousand generations* – 千代, or, alternatively, *one thousand Buddha icons* – 千体, alluding to a nearby sanctuary. For the ground breaking ceremony for the castle, however, Masamune had poems circulated that used different characters meaning *terrace of the immortals* – 仙台. This new diction, still used today, refers to the ancient Chinese belief in Daoist immortals. These spirit-beings were imagined to transmit positive energies and thereby let people and places prosper and reach a high age. The Daoist immortals were especially coveted by Chinese emperors. Many Japanese rulers and those who wanted to become emulated this custom.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



Remains of Sendai Castle, ©Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association



Located at the top of a steep hill, the site provides a splendid view of the city ©Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association

Masamune had spent years in the vicinity of Japan's de-facto ruler, the late Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The sumptuous palaces of Kyoto, Osaka, Fushimi, and Hizen-Nagoya set the standard that Masamune strove to meet, even surpass. He commissioned master-craftsmen of all specializations from the region around Kyoto and even had timber brought from the Kii peninsula, over a distance of more than a thousand kilometers. Sendai must have been quite impressive in the early seventeenth century, so much so that a European visitor, the Spanish naval commander Sebastián Vizcaíno, commented that the city was *as big as Edo and much better constructed*.

Sendai Castle

Although no buildings from Masamune's times survive at Sendai Castle – virtually all wooden structures were either dismantled or lost to fire during the Meiji Period (1868-1912) and the bombings of World War II – its Inner Enceinte is still a good place to start our tour. The castle's dramatic location on top of a steep cliff affords a splendid view of the city below and the Pacific coast on the horizon. The castle museum, small but definitely worth a visit, illustrates the history with the help of plans, architectural models, and excavated artifacts. The Inner Enceinte contained palatial mansions complete with audience hall, Noh stage, and auxiliary buildings. A multi-storied donjon, otherwise a main characteristic of Japanese fortifications, was planned but never erected for unknown reasons. A special attraction was a pavilion with viewing platform that was *suspended* right on the edge of the rocky plateau. Period sources report that Masamune used this pavilion for extravagant events such as a nighttime illumination of the whole city with colorful lanterns in 1606 which the daimyo and his family enjoyed from this elevated perch.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



Sendai City Museum
©Sendai City Museum



*Gin-iyozane shiroito-odoshi domarugusoku, suit of armor given by Toyotomi Hideyoshi to Date Masamune as a gift, 16th century
Courtesy of Sendai City Museum*



Hasekura Rokuemon zo, portrait of Hasekura Rokuemon, Artist N/A, 17th century, Courtesy of Sendai City Museum

Sendai City Museum

Just below the castle plateau and in walking distance lies the Sendai City Museum. Its collection preserves an exceptional cache of belongings of the Date family. Outstanding exhibits include suits of armor (one was gifted to Masamune by Hideyoshi), portraits of the subsequent generations of Date lords, glittering lacquer boxes, luxurious clothes, and subdued ceramics for the tea ceremony.

Of particular notice are artifacts collected by Hasekura Rokuemon. Rokuemon was sent by Masamune on a diplomatic and mercantile mission to Mexico and catholic Europe in 1613. The mission was the only such venture initiated by a Japanese potentate before the late nineteenth century. Masamune's envoy was received in audiences by king Philipp III of Spain and pope Paul V. An oil painting made during his sojourn in Europe shows Rokuemon in western dress in adoration of a crucifix – he received baptism under the name Filippo Francisco what apparently got him in trouble after his return to Sendai in 1620. Ultimately, Masamune's hope for privileged access to the trans-pacific trade was frustrated. His mission, however, highlights Japan's interest in worldwide business connections during the so-called *first globalization* (formerly labeled the *age of discoveries*).

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



7|22

Osaki Hachimangu Shrine

©Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association

Osaki Hachimangu Shrine

This shrine precinct is embedded to lush forest on a hilltop to the north-west of Sendai Castle. It is devoted to the worship of Hachiman, a fused Shinto-Buddhist deity that had special significance for the samurai as protector from danger. Hachiman was, in addition, often identified with a legendary emperor, Ojin, whose mother Jingu allegedly led an army to conquer Korea in the early third century. These military and imperial associations made Hachiman an ideal figure for Masamune's project of claiming divine support for his dynasty.

The shrine's main hall is an example for the opulent style of Momoyama Period architecture. It unifies three distinct building parts – a worship hall, a connecting chamber, and a main hall – under a joint roof. The building's wooden frame is almost entirely encrusted with wood carvings, gilded metal fittings, and an overall finish with vibrant colors and black lacquer. The lacquering of entire buildings – an immensely laborious and expensive undertaking – was especially popular at the time since it could highlight newness and grandeur.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



Zenoden and Kansenden, the mausoleums for Masamune's successors
©Zuihoden



Masamune's mausoleum, the Zuihoden ©Miyagi Prefectural Government

Date Mausolea

On a hill to the southeast of Sendai Castle lies a cluster of small mausolea. Lost to bomb raids in 1945, the structures were faithfully reconstructed and can thus give an idea of their original preciousness. Masamune's mausoleum, the Zuihoden, is neighbored by similar buildings for his two next successors and other family members. The mausolea all have an appearance similar to the Osaki Hachimangu Shrine, solemn black walls filled with colored and gilded ornamentation.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



9|22

*Around 260 small islands are dotted around in the bay of Matsushima
©Miyagi Prefectural Government*

Zuiganji Temple, Matsushima

The Zuiganji is maybe the most impressive of all of Masamune's building projects. It unites architectural splendor with profound scenic beauty. It is located in Matsushima, a bay peppered with dozens of tiny, often bizarrely shaped rocky islets. Matsushima had – and still has, note the cart loads of tourists that regularly flood the place – a nation-wide reputation as one of Japan's *Three Grand Landscapes*. The bay was also long-cherished as a sacred site. Buddhist monks and hermits lived in caves along the shore and on some of the islets. Masamune made a huge investment and rebuilt several religious institutions in the area including a small hall devoted to the cult of Five Buddhist Wisdom Kings – the Godaido, usually closed – and the huge Shiogama Shrine some kilometers to the south.

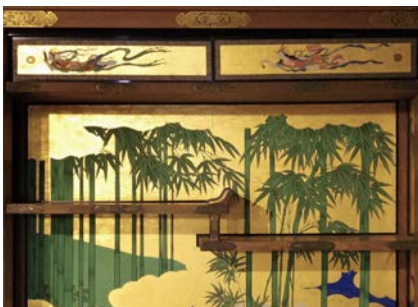
Zuiganji has a long history. It was, according to local tradition, founded in the early ninth century as a temple of the esoteric Tendai school. Later, it was transformed into a Zen temple and given its present name Zuiganji, or *temple of the auspicious cliffs*. When Masamune arrived to the region he found the temple in ruins and decided to make it his family's *bodaiji* – the Buddhist institution in charge of funerary rites.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



Exterior of Zuiganji Main Hall
©Zuiganji Temple



Lavishly decorated Jodan No Ma, a room reserved for the ruler, Masamune
©Zuiganji Temple



In contrast to the exterior, the interior of the main hall unleashes the full force of Momoyama Period artistry ©Zuiganji Temple

The temple is approached via a paved road lined by majestic cedar trees. The main gate leads into the heart of the precinct. The dominating structure is a massive main hall. The hall's exterior appears almost subdued and is ornamented in just a few places. The interior, however, unleashes the full force of Momoyama Period artistry. Virtuoso openwork carvings fill the transoms and door panels. The walls and sliding doors are overlaid with gold leaf and painted with radiant mineral pigments. The resulting effect is more that of a palace than an ordinary temple hall. Date Masamune was justifiably proud of this jewel of his domain. An inscription on the temple bell boasts that Zuiganji's precinct *is without a match in all of Japan*.

Intriguingly, also the aforementioned Spanish commander Sebastián Vizcaíno was quite taken with the temple and compared it with the Escorial, a famous monastery-palace near Madrid: *It could be said that as the Escorial is to stone, this is to wood: in the world there is no other like it*.

The bay of Matsushima can be explored by boat or on foot – a long bridge leads to one of the larger islands and offers fascinating vistas of lonely beaches and oddly shaped rocks in the water. After visiting Matsushima the adventurous traveler might continue further north along the coastline until the small harbor town of Ishinomaki. There, a life-size reconstruction of Hasekura Rokuemon's ship can be seen. The original was built by Japanese carpenters but in the state-of-the-art type of a European galleon.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



11|22

Since its opening in 2001 the Sendai Mediatheque has attracted international attention as a distinctive work of architecture ©Sendai Mediatheque

Closing Date Masamune was only one of many daimyo of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries who were driven by the prospect of gaining national hegemony and fantastic riches in the transcontinental trade. Whereas his dreams are long dreamt to an end his legacy of buildings can be still visited after four hundred years.

The genius of Sendai's early modern material culture finds a strange counterpart in another sort of gem, an example of contemporary architecture. The Sendai Mediatheque was designed by architect Ito Toyo as a multi-media information center with built-in public library and exhibition space. The daring construction is readily visible behind its glass front. The seven floors are suspended from asymmetrically positioned, irregularly sized and obliquely tilted steel tubes. The futuristic design extends to stylish reception desks in bright orange and a sophisticated lighting concept – visit after dark for best effect.

Despite the apparent differences there seems to be a common attitude behind Ito's and Masamune's buildings. It is up to the visitor to discover these commonalities one by one.

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art



Anton Schweizer received his doctor's degree in art history from the University of Heidelberg. He is an art historian and specializes in the transition from the Medieval to Early modern periods (ca. 1500-1800). His research centers on the employment of artifacts in space, thus spanning site planning, architectural design, and ornamentation as well as *temporary* types of furnishing and interior decoration. Anton Schweizer works also on depictions of architecture in painting, and on object cultures in the widest sense – including the movements of objects around the globe, gift exchanges, and practices of intentional fragmentation, repurposing, and repair.

12|22

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Places **Aoba Castle and Honmaru Museum**

13|22

The site of Date Masamune's stronghold is today a popular destination for tourists and young locals. Besides a museum that is well worth seeing the platform grants a panoramic view of Sendai and its surroundings. A modern bronze sculpture, erected during the militarist era of the 1930s, portrays Masamune on horseback and in full armor.

980-0862, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Aoba ku, Tenshudai, Aobajo shi

[web-site](#)

Miyagi San Juan Bautista Museum

Museum complex which is home to Sant Juan Bautista. This replica ship was created in 1993 and survived the 2011 Tsunami disaster. The vessel gives a good impression of the constraint that seafarers had to endure – period sources record that more than 200 crew and passengers crossed over the Pacific in 1613.

Miyagi, Ishinomaki shi, Watanoha, Aza Omori 30-2

[web-site](#)

Mutsukokubunji Temple

Only one hall is left of an originally much larger temple precinct. First erected by the imperial government during the eighth century as part of a network of state-sponsored temples in the provinces, the precinct was ruinous when Date Masamune became the new lord of the region in the early seventeenth century. He rebuilt the temple's main hall in the course of his comprehensive program to create a domain capital.

984-0047, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Wakabayashi ku, Kinoshita 2-8-28

[web-site](#) (Japanese)

Osaki Hachimangu Shrine

Erected 1604-1607 by master carpenters from Kyoto and the Kii peninsula. One of the masterpieces of architecture from the Momoyama Period, ranked as a National Treasure. Major shrine events are the Bonfire festival (Donto matsuri) on January 14, the offering of sacred dances on August 12 (Gochinza kinensai), and a lively procession on September 15 (Shinkosai). Since dates may be subject to change prior inquiry is recommended.

980-0871, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Aoba ku, Hachiman 4-6-1

[web-site](#)

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Places **Sendai Castle**

Also known as Aoba Castle. Interesting for its monumental walls, the castle museum, and the stunning view of the city. The equestrian monument of Masamune—erected during the fascist romanticization of Japan's military past during the 1930s—has been reinterpreted by Sendai's young generation as a symbol of their city's history.

980-0862, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Aoba ku, Kawauchi 1

[web-site](#)

Sendai City Museum

The museum collection is famous for the large collection of the Date family of the daimyo. Notable exhibits include numerous items from Masamune's personal belongings such as armor, swords, clothes, and paintings. Of notice are also objects brought back by Hasekura Rokuemon from his embassy to Mexico and Southern Europe.

980-0862, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Aoba ku, Kawauchi 26

[web-site](#)

Sendai Mediatheque

This futuristic building in downtown Sendai is home to a public information center. It was designed by architect Ito Toyo. The Mediatheque is an ideal place for information gathering, observing contemporary Japan, or simply chilling out in stylish surroundings.

980-0821, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Aoba ku, Kasuga machi 2-1

[web-site](#)

Shiogama Shrine

Extensive Shinto shrine complex on a hill to the north of Sendai. The shrine provides a grand view of the Shiogama coast—the southern continuation of Matsushima Bay that is likewise characterized by fjord-like inlets and tiny islands.

985-8510, Miyagi, Shiogama shi, Ichimori yama 1-1

[web-site](#) (Japanese)

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Places **Taga Castle Remains**

15|22

In the eighth century northern Japan was a remote and *wild* region. It was inhabited by tribal communities who upheld their own cultural and political identity. Emperor Shomu (701-756; r. 724-749) strove to break their resistance against the emerging imperial state. A key measure was to erect a network of provincial temples (see Mutsu Kokubunji) and military bases. Fort Taga was one of those military footholds.

985-0873, Miyagi, Tagajo shi, Chuo 2-7-1

[web-site](#)

Zuiganji Temple

First founded as an esoteric temple of the Tendai school, according to the temple tradition in 828. Re-erected as a Rinzai Zen temple during the thirteenth century and, once more, by Date Masamune from 1604 onwards. The buildings of the main precinct have been elevated to the rank of National Treasures. The temple grounds also include a number of hermit's caves chiseled out of a rocky cliff.

981-0213, Miyagi, Miyagi gun, Matsushima cho, Matsushima aza chonai 91

[web-site](#)

Zuihoden, Date Masamune Mausoleum

This cluster of mausolea, all replicated after loss during World War II, includes the Zuihoden – Hall of the Auspicious Phoenix, for Date Masamune; the Kansenden – Hall of Sensing the Immortals, for his son and heir Tadamune; and the Zenoden – Hall of the Blissful Responses, for the third Date lord, Tsunamune.

980-0814, Miyagi, Sendai shi, Aoba ku, Otamayashita 23-2

[web-site](#)

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Publications

Chikubushima: Deploying the Sacred Arts in Momoyama Japan

Watsky, Andrew M.; 2004; Seattle: University of Washington Press

An outstanding study of architecture and politics in Japan during the late sixteenth century. This book was one of the main reasons for me beginning my own research.

16|22

Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan

Hearn, Lafcadio; 2016; Tokyo and New York: Tuttle Publishing

The Greek-Irish writer Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) was a fascinating figure and widely influential transmitter of Japan to the West. After stations in the United States and the Caribbean (he lived among others in New Orleans and authored a recipe book on Creole cuisine that is still in use) he came to Japan as a journalist. He fell in love with the country and its people, he married a Japanese woman and collected folk tales. Every Japanese school kid knows him as Koizumi Yakumo, the name that he adopted in 1896.

This edition combines two volumes of a work that first appeared in 1894 and includes a new foreword by noted writer and examiner of Japanese culture Donald Richie.

In Praise of Shadows

Tanizaki, Junichiro; Transl. by Harper, Thomas J. and Seidensticker, Edward G.; 2001; New York: Vintage Books

This long essay was written in 1933 by eccentric writer Tanizaki Junichiro (1886-1965). The sometimes benign and sometimes grumpy but always pointed monologue muses about the apparent preference of dim lighting and muted colors in Japanese culture. Nothing but hilarious is a section about the delights of sitting in a traditional wooden loo.

What is Japanese Architecture? A Survey of Traditional Japanese Architecture

Nishi, Kazuo and Hozumi, Kazuo; 2012; Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International

Amplly illustrated introduction to the history of Japanese architecture

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Glossary

Bodaiji

Temple that takes care of a family's dead – generation after generation

[web-site](#)

Daimyo

The upper level of samurai lords who owned substantial land holdings. During the Edo Period, lord of a domain.

- ▶ Date Masmune (1567-1636)
- ▶ Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)
- ▶ Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

Date Masmune (1567-1636)

A warlord of the late sixteenth century who turned domain founder and vassal of the Tokugawa shogunate after the Battle of Sekigahara. Founder of Sendai and a prominent patron of the arts.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Sendai
- ▶ The battle of Sekigahara
- ▶ Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)
- ▶ Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

Donjon (tenshu)

The highest tower of a Japanese castle, typically designed with multiple stories and decorative gables

[web-site](#)

Empress Jingu

Mother of Ojin. Imperial consort who allegedly led a Japanese invasion of Korea in the third century. This war against Korea is in all likelihood pure legend.

- ▶ Hachiman
- ▶ Ojin

Faxicura , Francisco Felipe (1571–1622)

Christian baptismal name of Hasekura Rokuemon

- ▶ Hasekura Rokuemon (1571–1622)

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Glossary

Godaido

Small cult hall for the Five Wisdom Kings at the shore of Matsushima bay. The Five Wisdom Kings are fierce protectors of esoteric Buddhism.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Matsushima
- ▶ Sendai
- ▶ Tohoku

Hachiman

Syncretic (fused) deity that is simultaneously worshipped as a bodhisattva in Buddhism and as god in Shinto. Hachiman is commonly identified with the legendary emperor Ojin, son of empress Jingu. Hachiman was widely worshipped by samurai as a guardian in battle and also as a protector of the imperial family and the Japanese state. A famous shrine for Hachiman is the Osaki Hachimangu in Sendai which was erected by warlord Date Masamune.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Empress Jingu
- ▶ Ojin

Hasekura Rokuemon (1571–1622)

Also known as Hasekura Tsunenaga. A samurai retainer of Date Masamune who was sent by his lord on a diplomatic mission to Mexico, Spain, and the pope in Rome

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Faxicura , Francisco Felipe (1571–1622)

Ito Toyo (1941-)

Japanese architect who is known for his skillful use of light and lighting in his buildings. Ito designed among others the Tower of Winds in Yokohama and the Mediatheque in Sendai.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Sendai

Lafcadio Hearn, Patrick (1850-1904)

Irish journalist and prolific writer, important transmitter of Japanese culture to the West. Also known under his assumed Japanese name Koizumi Yakumo. Arguably best-known among his numerous writings is *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* (1894).

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Glossary

Matsushima

Bay in Miyagi Prefecture north of Sendai that is famous for its dozens of tiny islands. One of Japan's *Three Grand Landscapes* that are celebrated for their sublime beauty. Site of Zuiganji temple and the Godaido cult hall, both erected by warlord Date Masamune.

[web-site](#)

►Sendai, Tohoku

Momoyama Period (1568-1600)

Japan's era of reunification after more than a century of civil war. In the arts characterized by contrasting preferences for opulence and austerity.

[web-site](#)

►Date Masmune (1567-1636)

►Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

Morse, Edward Sylvester (1838-1925)

American zoologist and writer. Became interested in Japan's prehistory, ceramics, and architecture while in Japan. An influential transmitter of Japanese culture to the West, author of *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (1886).

[web-site](#)

Nikko

A small town in Tochigi Prefecture to the north of Tokyo. Famous for its temples and shrines, of which the Toshogu – a mausoleum and site of worship for the deified Tokugawa Ieyasu – is most famous.

►Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)

Ojin

Legendary emperor of the third century who was later conflated with the syncretic (fused) Shinto and Buddhist, deity Hachiman. A son of Empress Jingu.

[web-site](#)

►Empress Jingu

►Hachiman

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Glossary

San Juan Bautista

A full-scale and functional reconstruction of the European-style galleon that Date Masamune built for his intercontinental diplomatic mission. Since there was no expertise in building such a ship the shogunate sent support in the form of shipwrights and advice from the English navigator William Adams.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Hasekura Rokuemon (1571–1622)
- ▶ Vizcaíno, Sebastián (1548–1624)
- ▶ Tohoku

Sendai

City in northern Japan, capital of Miyagi Prefecture

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Matsushima
- ▶ Tohoku

Taut, Bruno (1880-1938)

German architect, urban planner, and theorist who famously declared the Imperial villa of Katsura near Kyoto the quintessence of *Japan's artistic genius* while condemning the Nikko Toshogu mausoleum as *brutish* and *un-Japanese* lapse.

Tendai School

Powerful denomination of esoteric (secret) Buddhism. Brought to Japan by the monk Saicho in the early ninth century.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Godaido

The Battle of Sekigahara

Decisive battle in the year 1600 in which an army led by Tokugawa Ieyasu defeated a coalition of warlords under the command of Ishida Mitsunari

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Glossary

Tohoku

The northern tip of Japan's main island, Honshu. Renowned for its rustic culture and beautiful landscape

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Matsushima
- ▶ Sendai

Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)

Powerful warlord, shogun, and third of the *Three Unifiers* who reestablished a centralized regime after the century-long period of the Warring Provinces. Founder of the long-lasting Tokugawa regime which ruled Japan from 1603 to 1867.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Daimyo
- ▶ Date Masmune (1567-1636)
- ▶ The battle of Sekigahara
- ▶ Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598)

General, then warlord, finally ruler of Japan in the late sixteenth century. The second of the *Three Unifiers* who reestablished a central regime after the century-long period of the Warring Provinces. Famous for his patronage of the arts and notorious for his unprovoked invasion of Korea.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Daimyo
- ▶ Date Masmune (1567-1636)
- ▶ Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)

Vizcaíno, Sebastián (1548–1624)

Spanish naval commander who visited Japan in the early seventeenth century. Vizcaíno, who had made himself a name when surveying the coast of California, was sent by the Spanish crown to negotiate trade privileges with Tokugawa Ieyasu but ultimately failed. Vizcaíno left an account of his voyage during which he visited Edo (Tokyo), Sendai, and Matsushima.

[web-site](#)

- ▶ Hasekura Rokuemon (1571–1622)
- ▶ Matsushima
- ▶ San Juan Bautista
- ▶ Sendai
- ▶ Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)

Spectacular Buildings

Sendai's Legacy of Architecture and Art

Imprint

Publisher Japan-Insights, *Exploring Expert Experiences*, is one of the many activities pursued by the Toshiba International Foundation, TIFO. 22|22
Japan-Insights promotes a deeper understanding of the country – its people, places, and culture.

Leading experts, scholars, and professors in Japanese studies present a broad range of historical and contemporary topics, encouraging visitors to engage with the real Japan through immersive experiences. Essays that share their excitement and depth of insight are complemented by relevant information for travelers on the site.

Looking towards the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics and beyond, we hope to contribute to a Japan that offers people from around the world many opportunities for discoveries and memorable encounters.

Japan-Insights
Toshiba International Foundation
©2020

info@japan-insights.jp
japan-insights.jp

Unless stated otherwise, copyrights for content of this document – text, images, etc – belong to Toshiba International Foundation (TIFO). Content of this document may not be reproduced for purposes other than personal use.

*Japanese names are given in the order of surname/given name while all other names follow the given name/surname pattern