

The Sanron School in Japan: A Study of a Chapter of
Gyōnen's *Sangoku Buppō Denzū Engi*

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In comparison with Heian and Kamakura Buddhism, which are famous and have been well studied, the schools of Nara Buddhism are not so popular. However, they developed their theories in the ancient and medieval ages. One of the most fundamental works on the history of Nara Buddhism is Gyōnen's *Sangoku Buppō Denzū Engi* [*SBDE*] 三國佛法傳通緣起, or a history of the development of Buddhism in India, China and Japan. Gyōnen 擬念 (1240—1321) is a learned monk at Tōdaiji, and this work written in 1311 is a historical survey of Buddhist schools and sects.

This article consists of two parts: 1) an introduction and 2) a commentary on the section about Japanese Sanron school of the *SBDE*. The Sanron school studies the three treatises of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva with Ji-zang (Kichi-zō)'s commentary and advocates the doctrine of śūnyatā (emptiness). In the introduction I discussed bibliographical problems of the *SBDE* and problems about the mutual relations of masters of Japanese Sanron School. In the commentary I compared the description of the *SBDE* with other historical materials and tried to make clear the peculiarity of the description of the *SBDE*.