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# Buddhist Sculptors in Kyoto and Local Sculptors in the Edo and Meiji Periods

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Most wooden Buddhist sculptures made for worship were decorated with gold leaves and/or colorful paints. Such surface decorations on sculptures from the Early Modern period have mostly survived. However, there are small areas where paint has peeled off or has been lost over time. The use of animal glue as an adhesive or Japan's humid climate could have influenced the degradation. Naturally, some of these degradations require conservation treatment. It is necessary for conservators to know the materials, causes of degradation, history of Buddhist sculptures, and the intention behind their creation. However, modern Buddhist sculptures have not been properly evaluated from the perspective of art history; there is not enough research on the history of modern Buddhist sculptures, their materials, or the technology used.

This study focuses on the history of modern sculptures made by two groups of sculptors. The first, Kyoto-Shichijo Bussho, is an authentic Buddhist sculpture studio, and the second is a local studio in Yamagata Prefecture. Throughout the Edo period, the Kyoto-Shichijo studio was a major Buddhist sculpture studio. There were also many private sculptors in Kyoto, whose numbers increased in the middle of the Edo period. However, both sculptor groups of Kyoto gradually declined over time. In contrast, local sculptors came up and became active in their respective areas in the middle of the Edo period. The Yamagata region, which flourished after the Genroku era (1688–1704) because of domestic trade, was selected as a representative local area for fieldwork since the region had economic ties with Kyoto. In this region, we can find Buddhist sculptures made by both Kyoto and local sculptors. In the Kyoho and Kansei eras (1716–1801), an economic crisis severely influenced the Buddhist sculpture's manufacturing society. First, the historical stream of Kyoto sculptors is overviewed. Then, the study describes the activities of local sculptors in the Yamagata region through their works. Development of technologies and their relation to Kyoto sculptors were investigated along with the historical background of manufacturing.

Key words: *Shichijo Sakyo*, Buddhist sculptors in Kyoto, End of Buddhist sculptures of early modern times, Local Buddhist sculptors, HATA Jirouemon, Yamagata prefecture