

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Cali & Dougill/Shinto Shrines

is published by University of Hawai'i Press and copyrighted, © 2013, by University of Hawai'i Press. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher, except for reading and browsing via the World Wide Web. Users are not permitted to mount this file on any network servers.



Akasaka Hikawa Jinja

MAP 1

DATE FOUNDED: Founded in 951, according to shrine tradition. The current buildings date from 1730.

ADDRESS: 6-10-12 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0052

TEL/INFORMATION: 03-3583-1935

HOW TO GET THERE: Nanboku Subway Line to Roppongi-itcho Station, then about 10 minutes by foot. Or the Chiyoda Subway Line to Akasaka Station, and then about 10 minutes by foot.

ENSHRINED KAMI: Susano-o no mikoto, Kushinadahime no mikoto, and Onamuji no mikoto.

PRAYERS OFFERED: Protection against danger, find love and marriage, and the well-being of the family.

BEST TIMES TO GO: The grounds contain cherry trees that bloom near the end of April and ginkgo and maples which turn yellow and red in the fall. Also, the third weekend in September in odd-numbered years, for the Hikawa Matsuri.



Decorated ceiling of the *haiden* of Akasaka Hikawa Jinja

tion. The *bonden* is in *nagare-zukuri* style, and the *haiden* is *irimoya-zukuri*. The latter has a small step canopy in front with a *kara-bafu* supported on two pillars. The roof is covered in copper tiles called *dobuki-ita*, which imitate ceramic tiles and were a favorite of the Tokugawa; they are used extensively at shrines such as Nikko Toshogu. A veranda encircles the *haiden*, and all the exterior wood is painted in vermilion, except for the doors and infill panels above the tie rods of the *haiden*, both of which are in black lacquer. There is also a pent roof for rain protection, supported on decorative metal poles, that encircles the *haiden*. It was probably added in the early twentieth century. The interior of the *haiden* and *heiden* is decorated between the unpainted wooden pillars and above the tie beams with paintings on gold leaf. The floor is entirely covered in *tatami* matting and the floor of the *heiden* is level with that of the *haiden*. The ceiling is coffered and decorated with paintings of flora and fauna that were created in 1929. The steps to the *bonden*, visible in the interior, are painted in red lacquer. Among the many trees on the

Important physical features: The shrine was established in 951 during the reign of Emperor Murakami (r. 946–67). The present shrine was built at the behest of Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751), the eighth Tokugawa shogun, when he had it moved here from nearby Akasaka Mitsuke. It is a small, modestly appointed, *gongen-zukuri* structure (with the *haiden*, *heiden* and *bonden* connected under one roof), none of the usual carving, and a limited use of gold. This is said to be due to the attitude of frugality that was a hallmark of Yoshimune's administra-

TOKYO 61





grounds is a four-hundred-year-old ginkgo tree (*ginkgo biloba*).

Important spiritual features: The *kami* enshrined at Hikawa Jinja are a husband, wife, and child group that are central to one of the main Shinto myths, relating to the “age of the gods” and the creation of Japan. (The story of these *kami* can be read elsewhere in this book, such as the entry for Izumo Taisha and the introduction). Akasaka is the name of the area in Tokyo where the shrine is located. Hikawa means “cold” or “frozen river” and is thought to originate from the Hikawa River in the Izumo region on the Japan Sea coast. People from that area spread farther north along the Japan Sea as well as southward into the Kanto Plain, settling in the area known as Musashi (present-day Saitama, Tokyo, and parts of Kanagawa). During the reign of Emperor Kosho (r. 475–393 B.C.) the *kuni no miyatsuko* or governor of Musashi was appointed from a member of the Izumo clan. The *Kojiki* notes that his ancestor was the grandson of Susano-o, Takehira tori no mikoto. It is speculated that he brought the divided spirit of Susano-o from Kizuki Taisha (now called Izumo Taisha) on the Hikawa to Musashi, and enshrined it at Omiya Hikawa Jinja in Saitama. This is the first case of Susano-o being worshipped outside Izumo. Omiya Hikawa Jinja claims a foundation date of 473 B.C. and is the place from which the spirit of these *kami* was divided to 261 Hikawa shrines, 162 of them in Saitama. The remaining shrines are located mostly in the Kanto area, and a large number of them cluster along the Arakawa River, which forms much of the present-day border between Tokyo and Saitama. Akasaka Hikawa Jinja too is a *bunsha* (branch shrine) of Hikawa Jinja in Omiya and enshrines the same three *kami*.

Description: Like Hie Jinja, its famous neighbor slightly to the north, Akasaka Hikawa Jinja is nestled on a small wooded hill in the midst of the concrete and steel of Tokyo. It is close to the Roppongi district, which has seen a flood of urban redevelopment since the year 2000. Akasaka Hikawa is designated an Important Cultural Property and is one of the few shrines in Tokyo to have survived from the eighteenth century. This includes the main shrine buildings, a simple one-bay, unpainted entrance gate, and a *neribe* wall of earth and ceramic tiles that encircles the inner compound. It looks much as it did in a painting from the Edo period. While the shrine has stood on this location since the eighteenth century, its history is older. For example, shrine tradition relates that in 1066 a major drought occurred in the Kanto area and that the *kami* was successfully prayed to for rain. The shrine is also home to the Hikawa Matsuri, a popular event since the time the shrine was rebuilt in its present location.

Festivals: Hikawa Matsuri, third week in September in odd-numbered years. The Jinkosai is the main event, with a procession of fifteen *mikoshi* and two restored Edo-period floats called *dashi*. These floats are similar to those in other well-known festivals in the Kanto area such as the Kawagoe, Sawada, and Ome Matsuri. The floats are about twenty-six feet high in two or three stages. The bottom level holds a number of musicians inside, the second level is basically a box covered with tapestries, and the third level has a mannequin of a historical or mythological figure. The mannequin can be lowered inside the second level when the float moves through an overpass. The shrine once possessed thirteen such floats but most were destroyed or sold off when this Edo-type festival was discontinued in the modern



era. But parts of the old *dashi* were stored in warehouses around the neighborhood, and in 2005, the shrine set up an NPO to begin restoring them. Thus far two have been restored and displayed with a third one displayed for the first time in 2011. The shrine is aiming for the restoration of four floats and six mannequins, which can be interchanged. This type of *dashi* festival was very popular in Eastern Japan from the Edo period on and was widely imitated.



Asakusa Jinja

MAP 2

Asakusa Jinja *haiden* showing the *watari* and *haiden* behind

DATE FOUNDED: The foundation date is unclear but sometime in the fourteenth century. Current buildings were rebuilt at the behest of Tokugawa Iemitsu in 1649.

ADDRESS: 2-3-1 Asakusa, Taito-ku, Tokyo 111-0032

TEL/INFORMATION: 03-3844-1575. A small pamphlet in Japanese with some English explanation is available at the shrine for free.

HOW TO GET THERE: Ginza Subway Line to the terminal station, Asakusa. Then 3 minutes on foot to the Kaminarimon gate, which leads to both Asakusa Jinja and Sensoji Temple.

ENSHRINED KAMI: Hinokuma Takenari no mikoto, Hinokuma Hamanari no mikoto, and Hajino Matsuchi no mikoto.

PRAYERS OFFERED: The well-being of the family, prosperity in business.

BEST TIME TO GO: During the Sanja Matsuri on the third weekend in May or New Year's Eve.

Important physical features:

Asakusa Jinja is a rare case in Tokyo. It is a shrine built in 1649 that survived the Great Meireki Fire of 1657, the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, and the destruction of Tokyo during World War II. That is more than can be said for its larger neighbor, Sensoji, which, though less than fifty feet away, has been destroyed and rebuilt a number of times, most recently in 1958.

Asakusa Jinja is built in a variation on *gongen-zukuri*, as were most of the shrines built under the sponsorship of the Tokugawa. *Gongen-zukuri* is a Buddhist-influenced style that begins here with a three-bay *nagare-zukuri bonden* attached to a *haiden* that connects it to the seven-bay-wide *haiden*. The entire structure is normally covered in a continuous roof, creating an “I” shape when seen from above. However, at Asakusa Jinja, the *bonden* and *haiden* are attached by a continuous copper-covered roof. The *haiden* is then attached to this group by a short, open-sided space called the *watari*, also with a copper roof. The roof of the *haiden* is *irimoya-zukuri* style and covered in ceramic tiles, with an extended section on the front that forms a canopy over