



## Symbolic Concordances at Muroji, Japan

This paper is a response or complement to the recent book by Sherry Fowler, *Muroji: Rearranging Art and History at a Japanese Buddhist Temple*. It examines the manner in which the various symbolic and mythic themes she deals with - the Wish-fulfilling Jewel, Buddha relics, the single-prong vajra, Mt. Muro and the surrounding landscape, the Matrix and Diamond World Mandalas, the five *kami* of Kasuga (the Kasuga Daimyojin), Amaterasu and the opening of the Rock Door, the Light-emitting Bodhisattvas (*koho-bosatsu*), the Dragon King, Kukai's transmission of the doctrine, etc. - come together, interact and inter-reflect in the architecture, images and rituals of Muroji. Whereas Prof. Fowler has dealt with these themes in terms of art history, this paper will look at them as forming part of what might be called a sacred history, which goes together with sacred geography.