

# **An Outline of the Teachings of the Major Schools of Japanese Buddhism**

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Gyōnen (1240–1321), a scholar-monk of the Kamakura period, wrote an outline of the teachings of the eight major schools of Japanese Buddhism at his time, which has long served as a textbook for the study of the basic doctrines of each of those schools. Taking a hint from his work, this course aims to introduce the basic doctrines of five influential schools of Japanese Buddhism: the Tendai School, the Shingon School, the Pure Land School, the True Pure Land School, and the Nichiren School. We will ask how each of these schools views the essential problem human beings, finds a solution to that problem in the Buddhist scriptures, and lays out a practical path to its solution, as well as considering the nature of the solution that each school posits.