



Sacred Koyasan: A Pilgrimage to the Mountain Temple of Saint Kobo Daishi and the Great Sun Buddha

Philip L. Nicoloff

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Takes the reader on a pilgrimage to Mount Kōya, the holy Buddhist mountain in Japan.

For more than one thousand years, the vast Buddhist monastery and temple complex on remote Mount Kōya has been one of Japan's most important religious centers. Saint Kōbō Daishi (also known as Kōkai), founder of the esoteric Shingon school and one of the great figures of world Buddhism, consecrated the mountain for holy purposes in the early 800s. Buried on Kōyasan, Kōbō Daishi is said to be still alive, selflessly advocating for the salvation of all sentient beings.

Located south of Osaka, Kōyasan has attracted visitors from every station of Japanese life, and in recent years, more than a million tourists and pilgrims visit annually. In *Sacred Kōyasan*, the first book-length study in English of this holy Buddhist mountain, Philip L. Nicoloff invites readers to accompany him on a pilgrimage. Together with the author, the pilgrim-reader ascends the mountain, stays at a temple monastery, and explores Kōyasan's main buildings, sacred statues, and famous forest cemetery. Author and reader participate in the full annual cycle of rituals and ceremonies, and explore the life and legend of Kōbō Daishi and the history of the mountain.

Written for both the scholarly and general reader, *Sacred Kōyasan* will appeal to potential travelers, dedicated armchair travelers, and all readers interested in Buddhism and Japanese culture.

Philip L. Nicoloff is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of New Hampshire.

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