

Tengu sōshi

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Overview

I.

The pictures in this section are from the *Tengu sōshi* (Picture Scroll of Tengu) in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum. Originally, the *Tengu sōshi* consisted of seven scrolls attributed to the same painter. The seven scrolls were the Kōfukuji (replica), Tōdaiji (replica), Enryakuji, Onjōji, Tōji Temples, and two Miidera Temple scrolls.

These scrolls were initially kept together in one place as one set, but today they are housed in four different places. The two replica scrolls, as well as the Enryakuji and Tōji scrolls can be found in the Tokyo National Museum, while the rest are private property.

The beginning of the Kōfukuji scroll mentions “early winter, the tenth month of the forth year of Einin (1297)”, so the scrolls were probably completed around that time. However, neither the painter, nor the author of the text is known. The style of the text is elegant and direct, and conveys the content of the pictures in a clear manner.

II.

Originally, the scroll of Kōfukuji corresponded to the first part of the seven-scroll set. In the text, priests from different temples take pride in the unrivaled tradition of their own temple, and in their arrogance stray away from the path of faith. This attitude is depicted in the scroll through the images of seven types of *tengu* representing seven types of pride.

The writer holds these types of pride to be characteristics of the priests from the Kōfukuji, Tōdaiji, Enryakuji, Onjōji, Tōji Temples, as well as of *yamabushi* and hermits.

This scroll is neither religious nor biographic. Because it satirizes life in the great Buddhist temples of the time, it has the wit characteristic of pictures dealing with social conditions. Also, it is relatively realistic, as it does not make use of conventional methods of depiction.

Here we will only concentrate on the Tōji scroll. The correct name, as written at the beginning of the scroll, is *Tōji Daigo Kōya*, as the scroll depicts these three temples. The text section comes before the pictures. At the time, the Tōji Temple was given the name Kyōōgokokuji “The Temple for the Defense of the Nation by Means of the King of Doctrines” by Emperor Saga. The temple was the training hall for Kōbō Daishi (Kūkai), supporter of the *chingokokka*, a policy to organize and protect the country by means of the Buddhist religion. Through different types of prayer (*shuhō*) Daishi protected the country and brought about wealth and peace. During the times of Priests Yakushin and Shōbō, the Ninnaji and Daigoji became the two temples which contributed to the growth of Shingon Buddhism. The Ninnaji Temple was built by the order of Emperor Kōkō and became the residence of former Emperor Uda. The Daigoji Temple was a *chokuganji*, a temple with special privileges, during the reigns of Emperors Daigo, Suzaku and Murakami. Retired

Emperor Uda had the priests provide for the needs of high-ranking priests, and he also had a *chōja* responsible for granting the priests’ requests. Consequently, the priests were extremely privileged.

The pictures first present the Kondō Hall and the two Niōmon gates, with one side of the interior gate turned into a hall for placing *ema*. Under the exterior gate there are three men listening to a woman playing a small shoulder drum. In front of the gate, there is a young boy driving a horse packed with straw bags. A man is carrying his luggage on a stick. A rice paddy is also depicted.

The next temple appears to be the Daigoji. It has an eight-pillared gate, the precinct is surrounded by an earth-packed wall, and there are buildings with stairs inside the precinct. It continues with a scene of *bugaku*, court dance and music, on the occasion of the *sakurae* gathering, cherry blossom viewing preceded by *hōe*, a religious ceremony.

Next, looking like the shrine for a local god, is Mount Kōya. One can see Daitō, Mieidō Hall, Sanko no matsu pine, Mount Tenjiku and the Okunoin Temple. On the way to the Okunoin there are *sotoba* on both sides, a feature also found in the *Ippen hijirie*, which indicates that *sotoba* were already made at that time.

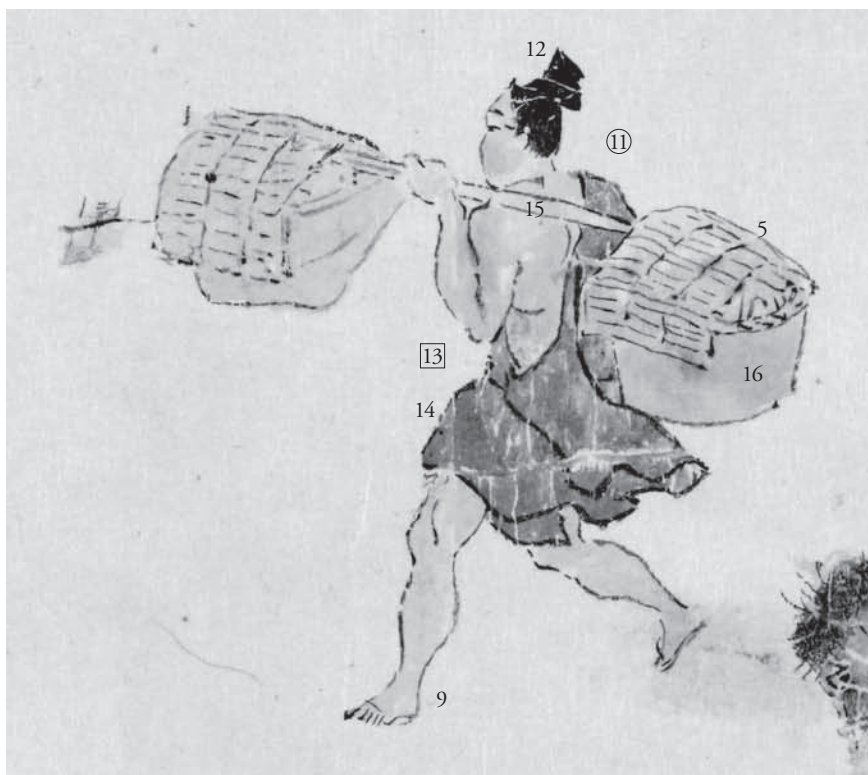
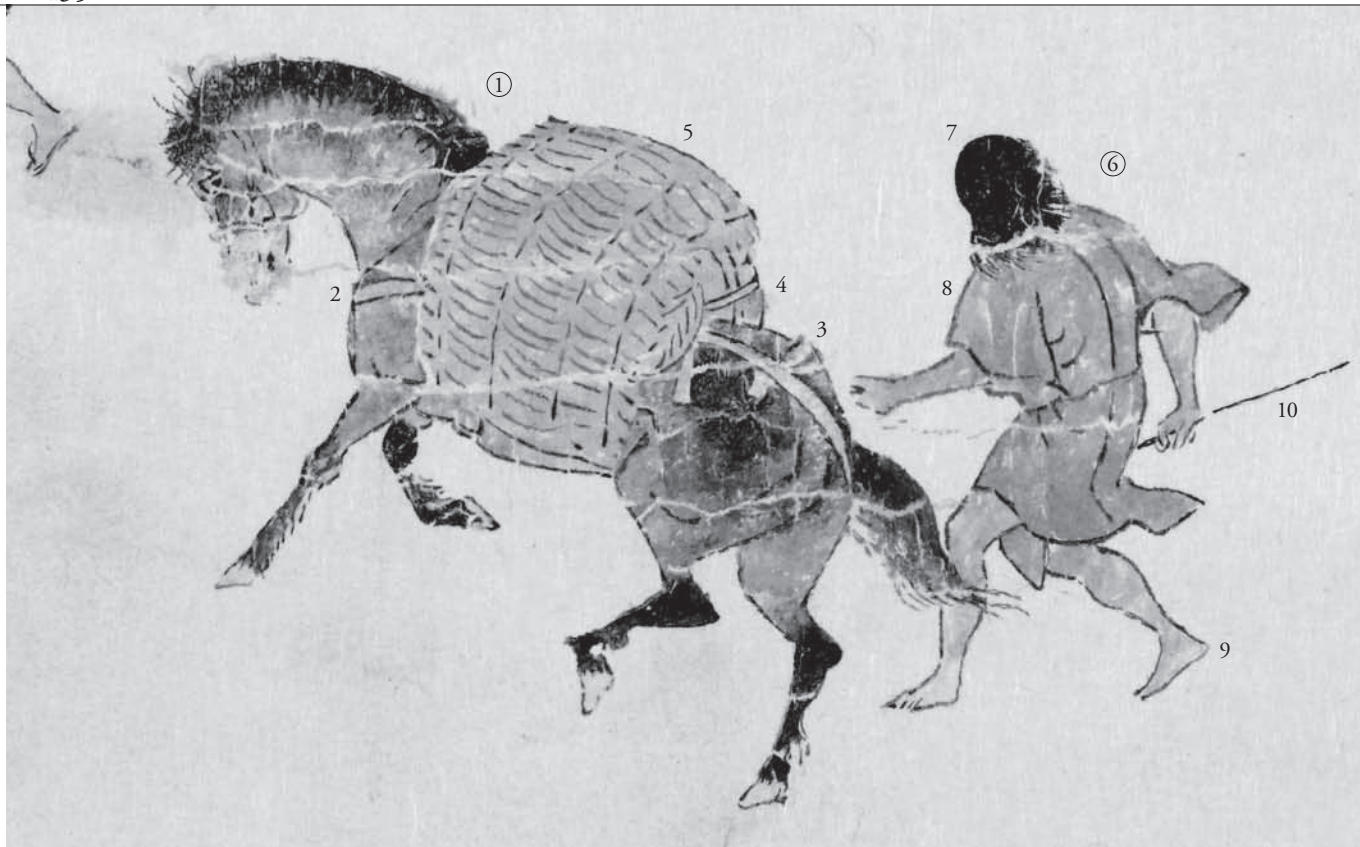
As shown above, there is neither a story line, nor *tengu* in this scroll. There is one section that suggests the *tengu* part of the scroll was lost. The scroll is a description of each temple, and the reality of each temple is represented relatively faithfully. Therefore the scroll offers valuable information about life in front of the gate of the Tōji Temple, the *sakurae* at the Daigoji Temple, and Mount Kōya. Here we added explanations to four out of the seven pictures in the scroll.



- ① woman dressed as a soldier priest
- 2 face covering
- 3 uchigi
- 4 straw sandals (*zōri*)
- 5 shaved head
- 6 bundle wrapped with a piece of square cloth
- 7 hitatare for armor
- 8 encircling armor
- 9 sword
- 10 sashinuki
- 11 leggings (*habaki*)
- 12 straw sandals (*ashinaka*)
- 13 halberd

434 Straw Sandals (*Zōri*)

The soldier priests with their faces covered on the right, and another with a shaved head on the left are at a Buddhist memorial service accompanied by cherry blossom viewing at the Daigoji Temple. While an armed priest wears a priestly robe, the one on the left, although wearing an *uchigi* fastened with a cord in order to make it look like a priestly robe, is a woman. A picture scroll of a woman with her face covered also appears in the *Hōnenshōnin eden*; it is presumed that the armed priests incorporated women amongst themselves in this manner, and as a result, this picture scroll depicts one aspect of the life of men and women at the time. The soldier priest on the right is wearing straw footwear (*zōri*) that resemble sandals. It is unclear whether the painter simply omitted the sandal straps, yet it is noteworthy that a similar type of footwear is found in the *Hōnenshōnin eden*, and that there are scholars who claim that such footwear existed in Japan. The soldier priest with the shaved head is wearing straw sandals without heels (*ashinaka*), which shows that they were one type of footwear amongst others for the warriors of the lower ranks.

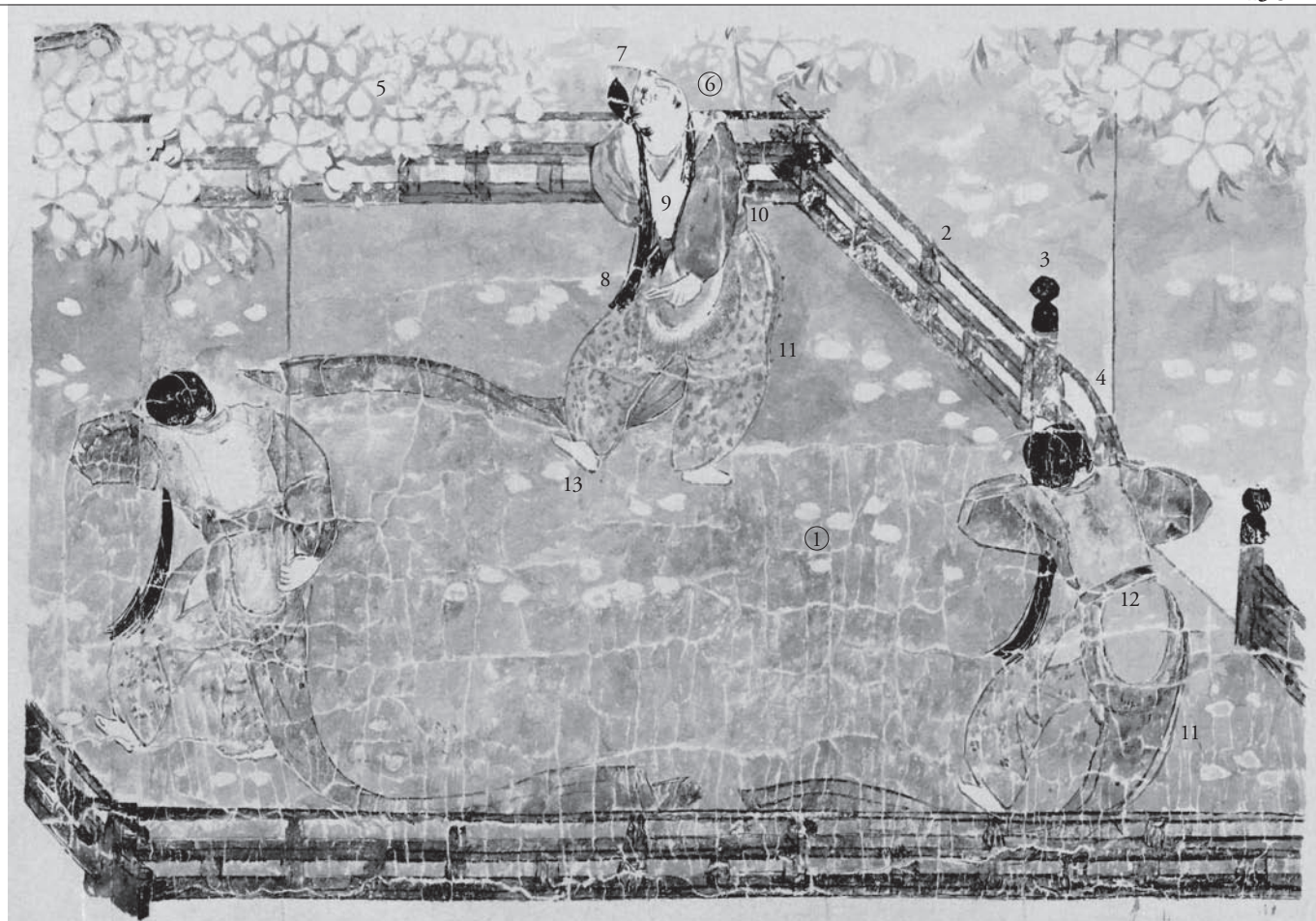


- ① packhorse
- 2 breastplate
- 3 crupper
- 4 bale of rice
- 5 straw-mat covering
- ⑥ man leading a packhorse
- 7 untied hair
- 8 kimono (short)
- 9 barefoot
- 10 rod
- ⑪ bearer
- 12 *samurai-eboshi*
- ⑬ carrying things on a balancing pole
- 14 *kosode*
- 15 balancing pole
- 16 wooden container

435 Transportation of Goods

These are scenes in front of the gate of the Tōji Temple. The one on top depicts a man transporting a straw bag that is tied onto the horse, which is covered by straw matting. In the image on the bottom, a man is carrying wooden containers connected by a balancing pole, once again covered by straw

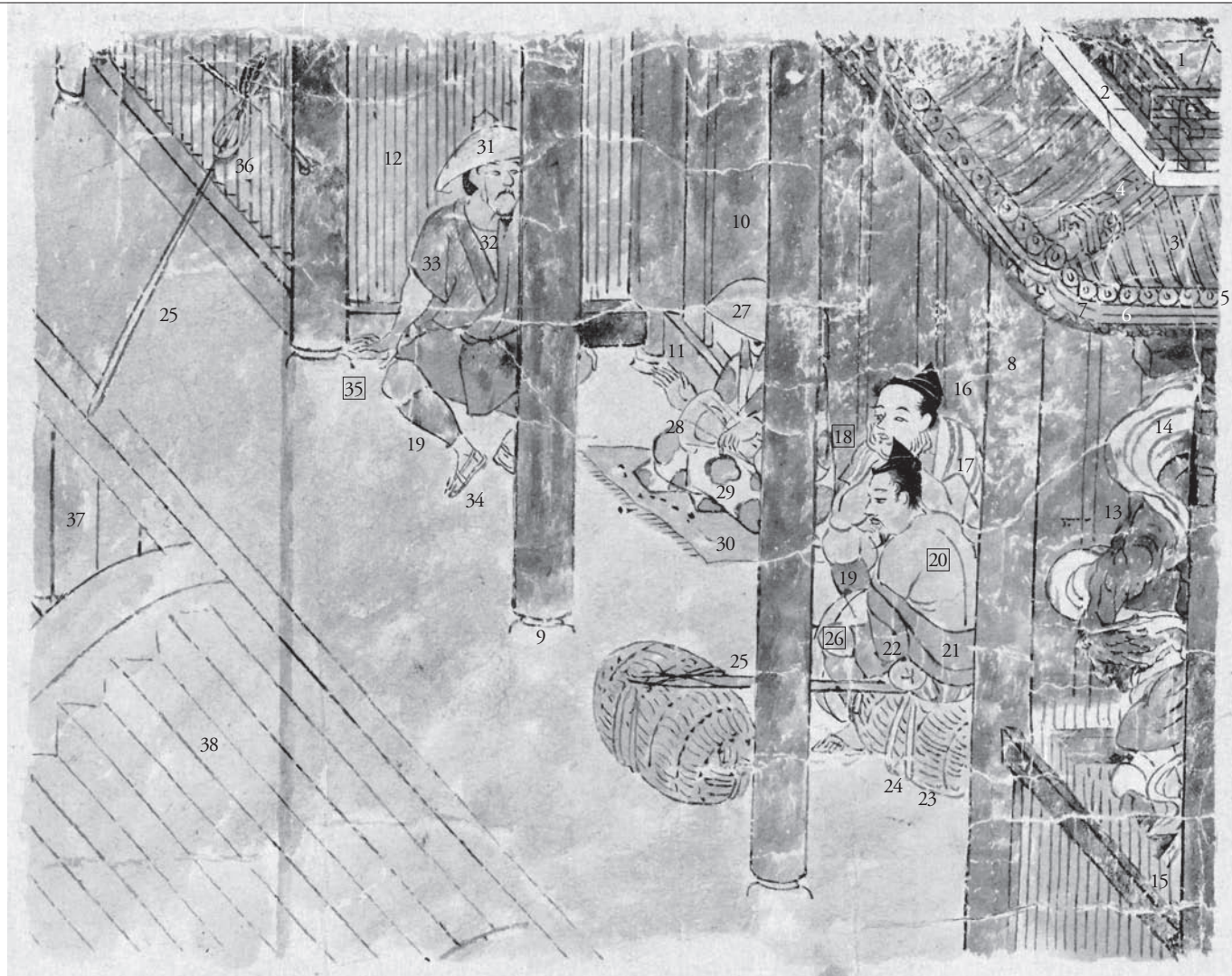
matting. Partly removing his clothing, the man rests the balancing pole on his bare shoulder. Both of them are clothed in *hitoe* and do not wear hakama; they are also barefoot. These details suggest that the common people of the lower classes were poorly clothed. The use of straw matting to cover goods is rarely seen in other picture scrolls of the period; perhaps it is the rainy season.



- ① dance hall
- 2 balustrade
- 3 ornamented pillar top
- 4 staircase balustrade
- 5 cherry blossom
- ⑥ Buddhist novice
- 7 *hitai-eboshi*
- 8 wearing one's hair down
- 9 *chihaya*
- 10 *karaginu*
- 11 *hakama*
- 12 *obi*
- 13 socks

436 Court Dance with Music

The above picture portrays a court dance with music that was performed during the Buddhist memorial service accompanied by cherry blossom viewing at the Daigoji Temple. The *hitai-eboshi* and the *kirisage* hairstyle suggest that it is a children's dance, frequently referred to as *toubu* or *warawamai* in the old days. From the list of performances, it could be inferred that pieces that were simple enough to be performed by children were chosen for this event. Thus the audience enjoyed the purity and innocence of the children who danced in place of the adults. The entry on the ninth day of the third month of the fourth year of Kōwa (1102) from the *Chūyūki* indicates that "in the eastern inside corridor the three child dancers were costumed. Their dance, performed without a single mistake, struck everyone with admiration." It is evident that the audience was greatly impressed by the way in which the children danced perfectly. The picture depicts one such performance, and judging from the fact that the dancers are wearing neither masks nor headgears, but are wearing *chihaya*, the dance piece is most likely *Manzairaku* or *Shunteiraku*, both of which were performed on stage. The image of these young boys dancing innocently beneath the full-blooming cherry blossoms may evoke a sense of peace, but the majority of the audience in this picture scroll are soldier priests.

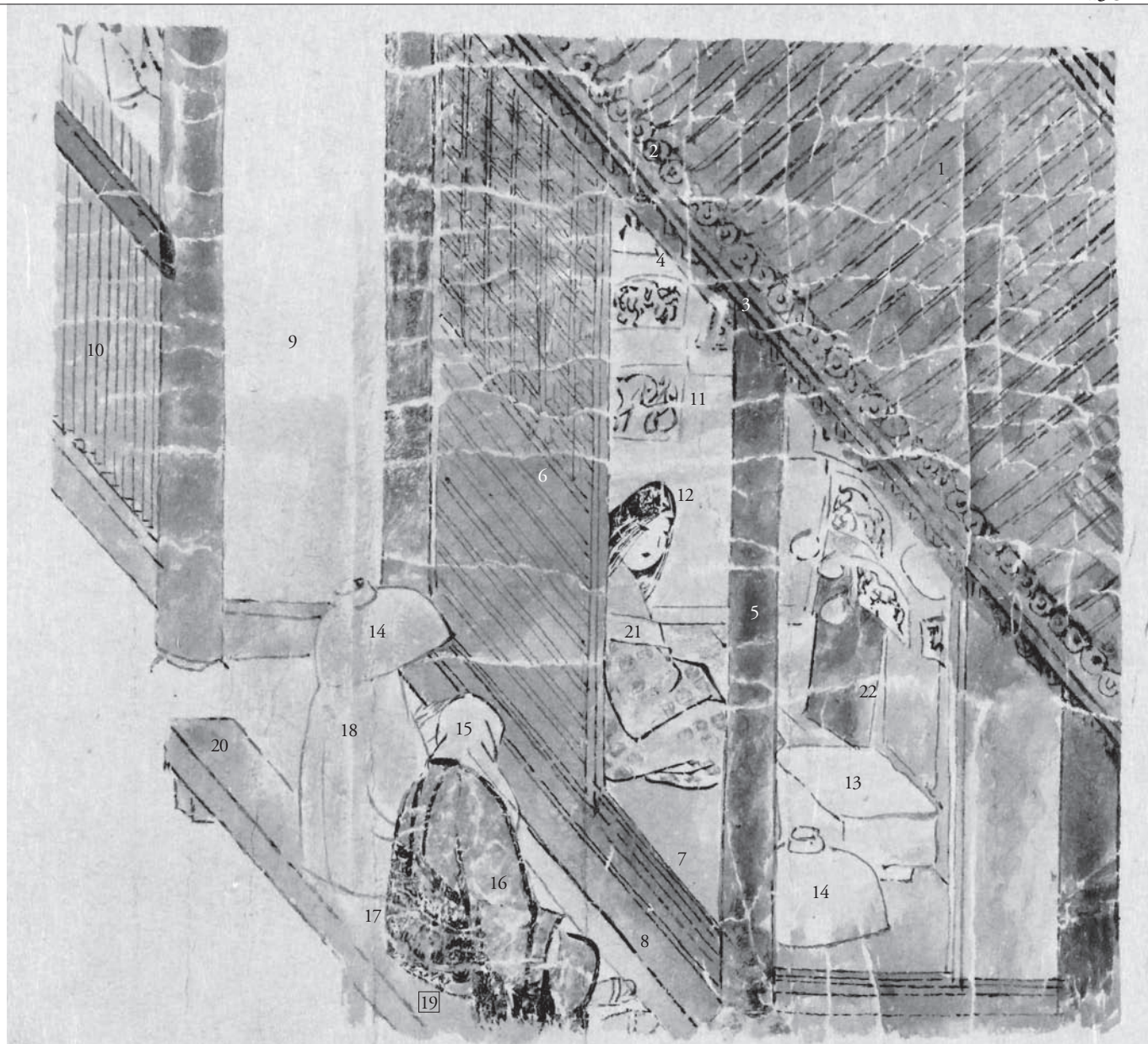


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|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 balustrade | 14 skirt | 27 <i>ichimegasa</i> |
| 2 porch plank? | 15 horizontal support | 28 hand drum |
| 3 tiled roof | 16 <i>samurai-eboshi</i> | 29 <i>uchigui?</i> |
| 4 descending corner ridge | 17 <i>kosode</i> | 30 straw matting |
| 5 eave-end ornament tile | 18 resting chin on hands | 31 sedge hat |
| 6 thickly shingled roof edge | 19 leggings (<i>habaki</i>) | 32 undergarment |
| 7 rafter | 20 stripping to waist | 33 kimono (short) |
| 8 round pillar | 21 <i>kosode</i> | 34 straw sandals (<i>waraji</i>) |
| 9 footing between pillar and foundation stone | 22 flint sack | 35 supporting oneself on the hands in back |
| 10 plank door with wooden clamp | 23 bale of rice | 36 luggage cord |
| 11 foundation | 24 rope tied around a rice bag | 37 stone structure |
| 12 <i>kongō</i> fence | 25 balancing pole | 38 stone steps |
| 13 <i>Niō</i> [Two Devas] | 26 holding one's knee | |

437 Woman Playing Hand Drum

In the picture above, three men are listening to a woman playing the hand drum in front of the gate of the Tōji Temple. Although the woman's features are concealed, as she is wearing an *ichimegasa* with her face cast down, she is presumably a shrine maiden or a sort of courtesan who is telling a story while playing the hand drum. The three men listening are those who happened to walk by the gate: the one on the left

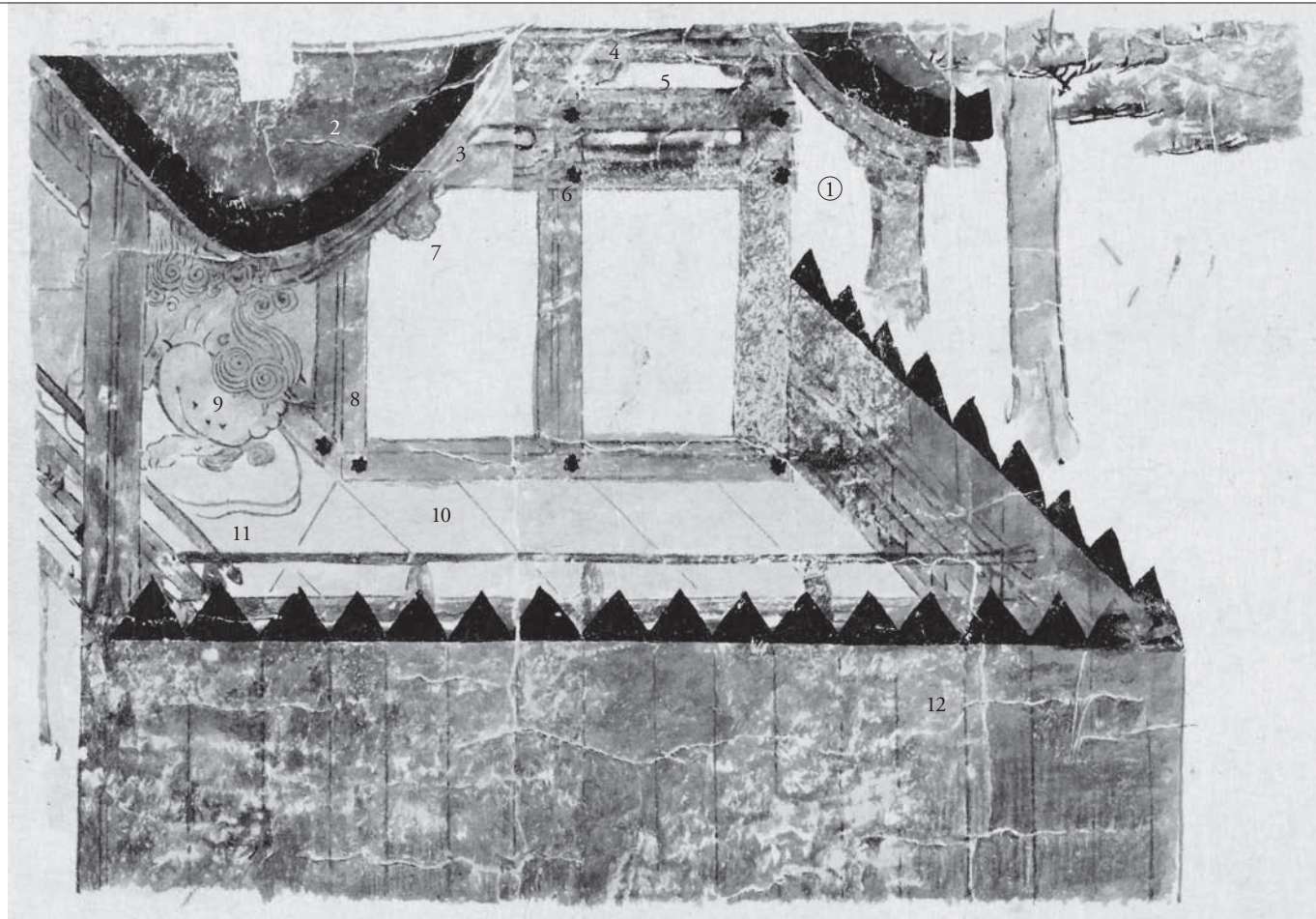
has set his balancing pole with the luggage cord wrapped around it against the wall; the one in the middle is resting his chin on his hands; the man on the right is sitting on one of the bales of rice tied to his balancing pole holding his knees to his chest. One thing in common amongst the three men is that they are all wearing leggings (*habaki*). Two of them are wearing short kimono with short sleeves while the third has stripped to his waist. It is probably the way bearers were dressed at the time.



438 Hall for *Ema*

This is another scene in front of the gate of the Tōji Temple. However, this is the inner gate, and inside the fence on the top left corner of the illustration are the two Deva Kings. A part of the wall leading to the Deva gate is structured into a small building, and inside there are many *ema*, votive pictures, hanging. A woman is sitting inside this worship hall, and in front of her hang what appear to be some drapery, which indicates that something is enshrined here, and that the *ema* are offerings to it. The square-shaped object below the drapery may be an offertory box. Outside the worship hall is a long bench on which two women sit. The woman on the left wears traveling attire, while the one on the right, most likely a nun, is wearing a *zokin* and a priestly robe as well as a *kesa*. There is a threshold between the women outside and the one inside, and a door latticed from the waist up is set on it. The fact that it is a sliding door provides an important insight concerning the development of the threshold in Japan.

- 1 tiled roof
- 2 eave-end ornament tile
- 3 thickly shingled roof edge
- 4 rafter
- 5 round pillar
- 6 lattice door
- 7 threshold
- 8 foundation
- 9 plaster wall
- 10 fence
- 11 *ema*
- 12 wearing one's hair down
- 13 offertory box?
- 14 *ichimegasa*
- 15 *zokin*
- 16 priestly robes
- 17 *kesa*
- 18 *uchigi*
- 19 seated
- 20 bench
- 21 sash used by women
- 22 curtain



- ① shrine for local guardian god
- 2 cypress bark roof
- 3 gable board
- 4 bracket complex
- 5 *nageshi* just below ceiling lintel
- 6 ornament for hiding nails
- 7 gable ornament
- 8 pillar (chamfered)
- 9 stone guardians
- 10 porch
- 11 balustrade
- 12 shrine fence

439 Shrine and Its Stone Guardians

On the roof of the shrine in this illustration is inscribed the word *kiyotaki* which probably symbolizes *Omuro*, the Ninnaji Temple, and portrays a guardian deity. Consisting of a cypress bark roof supported by a bracket complex, with decorative ceiling board and gable ornaments, the shrine is a respectable one, and its plastered walls are white. The structure of the shrine is what is commonly called *nagarezukuri*, and the stone guardians sit in the front part of it. Today shrine dogs and even lions are placed in front of the shrine, but according to the *Kinpigoshō* and *Kin ekishō*, originally both of them were not only set in front of the shrine, but even in inside the Imperial Court. There, the shrine dogs and lions were placed in front of the curtain, on both sides beneath it.

In the *Utsuho monogatari*, there is a passage which mentions "silver shrine dogs," thus indicating that there were shrine dogs made of silver as well. It is most likely that, originally placed outside the curtain for decoration as well as to ward off evil spirits, such a custom was eventually adopted by the shrine also. As far as the illustration is concerned, the shrine dogs here are one of the older forms which still remain in some shrines even today. The shrine fences that surround the shrine are composed of boards placed closely together, whose end is cut in a triangular shape which is painted in black while the rest is colored red. In such a fashion divine precincts were formed and defined. The Kiyotaki Shrine has a worship hall in front of the main shrine, whose wooden floor is surrounded by a plank porch. It is omitted in this illustration.