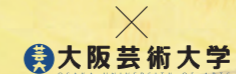




THE IMPERIAL PRINCE OF IKARUGA



the Ikaruga Project Team
of the Japan Cultural Heritage
Regional Cooperative Association

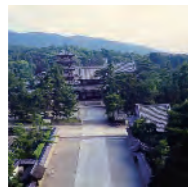


Ikaruga Village

The Ikaruga Village is in the north-west basin of Nara, and from long ago it was an important position for transportation connecting Osaka and Nara. It forms a nature-rich area with the Yata-kyūryō Hills to the north, the Yamatogawa River to the south, the Tatsutagawa River to the west, and the Tomiogawa River to the east. 1,400 years ago Prince Shōtoku set out to build a utopia in this region.

01 Hōryūji Temple

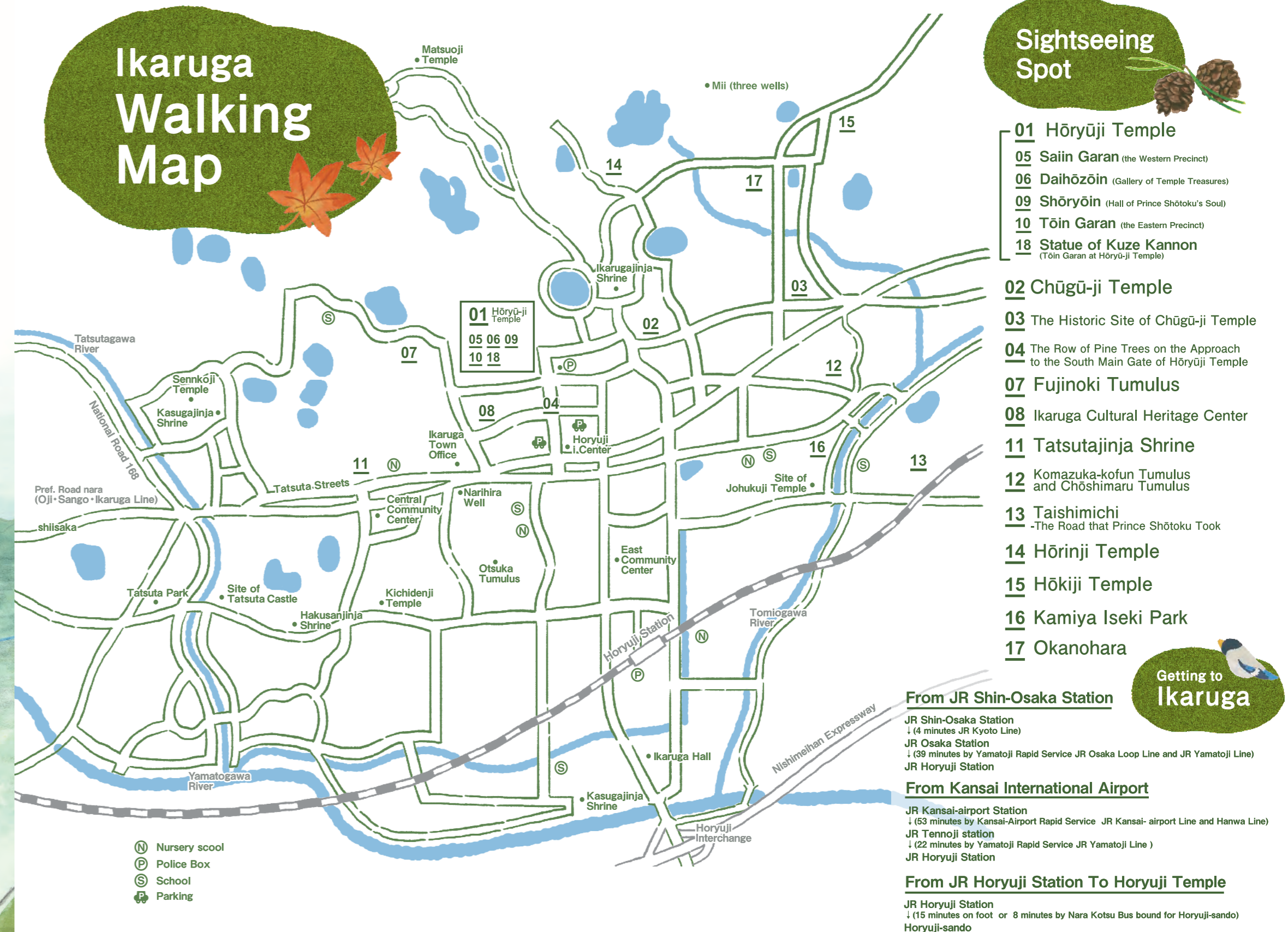
This is a temple built next to the west side of Ikaruganomiya Palace, which was constructed 1,400 years ago by Prince Shōtoku. Horyuji Temple (Ikarugadera Temple) was established by Prince Shōtoku, but in 670 it burned down, and later, the Horyuji Temple that can be seen today was rebuilt and completed in around 711.



Horyuji Temple is the world's oldest wooden structure, and in 1993, as the Buddhist Monuments in the Horyuji Area, together with Hokiji Temple, it was the first location in Japan to be listed as a World Cultural Heritage. It has been recognized for its universal value as a structure related to Buddhism, and that has been preserved since the days of Prince Shōtoku.

This illustrated book has been prepared based on folklore relating to Prince Shōtoku. It includes information which isn't historically factual. To avoid any complications about his name, he is referred to as just Prince Shōtoku in this book.

Ikaruga Walking Map



This is the Ikaruga Village.
1,400 years ago it was where Prince Shōtoku spent his time.
It is brimming with greenery, and there was a village fragranced
with the culture of the Asuka Period...
You can almost hear the chirps of the Ikaru finches.



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The Imperial Prince of Ikaruga - An Illustrated Book of Prince Shōtoku

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1,450 years ago, Prince Shōtoku was born in the capital, Asuka, his father was Tachibana no Toyohinomiko (later Emperor Yōmei) and his mother was Anahobe no Hashihito no Himemiko.

His mother was taking a stroll through the imperial court and then, when she was in front of a stable, suddenly her labor started. As he was born there and then, he was named Umayado no Miko (Prince of the Stable).



02

Chuguji Temple

Today, next to the east side of Horyuji Temple is a Bodhisattva in the half-lotus position (a seated statue of Bodhisattva legs half crossed in meditation) with a small, tender smile playing about its lips, right leg on left knee and finger lightly touching its cheek as it thinks - making for a graceful sight. Also, you can enjoy the view of fragments of the Tenjukoku Shūchō Mandala (replica) which was made in memory of Prince Shōtoku.



03

The Historic Site of Chuguji Temple

The original Chugu-ji Temple began life as Nakanomiya Palace, and was built for Prince Shōtoku's mother, on an area around 400 meters from the east of present day Chugu-ji Temple, mid-way between Ikaruganomiya Palace, Okamoto-nomiya Palace and Ashigakinomiya Palace. Today, they have completed a reconstruction of a foundation stone for the Kondō (Main Hall) and pagoda, and it is used as a historic park.

Prince Shōtoku was a cheerful and generous child and very smart from a very young age.

On the day he turned two years old, he turned to the east, put his hands together and intoned “Namubutsu”, and precious ashes of the Buddha fell from his hands.

Later, on a spring day when he was three years old, while spending time with his parents in their garden, his father asked “Prince Shōtoku, do you like peach trees or pine trees?”, and after thinking about it, the young boy answered “I like pine trees”.

“Why is that?”

“The flowers of a peach tree are beautiful, but they quickly fall and die. But a pine tree is always thick with green needles, and dignified even in the cold winter.”

he forthrightly answered.



04

The Row of Pine Trees on the Approach to the South Main Gate of Hōryūji Temple

It is said that the row of pine trees on the approach to Hōryūji Temple was planted when the Retired Emperor Gosaga made an imperial visit in 1261. In addition, you can see many pine trees in the grounds of Hōryūji Temple, adding color among the Buddhist structures with their green needles throughout the year.

The main gate of Hōryūji Temple is at the south main gate, just before the row of pine trees. It is a National Treasure that was constructed in the Muromachi Period. From the gate you can see inside the grounds, which look like a beautiful framed painting.



When Prince Shōtoku was around 12 years old, his father ascended the throne and became Emperor Yōmei. At that time in the capital, Asuka, there was a power struggle as the Soga clan, who had endorsed Buddhism which had arrived from the continent, was in conflict with the Mononobe clan, who revered Japan's ancient religion of Shintō.

In the midst of this, his father, Emperor Yōmei, became ill and was confined to a sickbed, just two years after ascending the throne. Prince Shōtoku nursed his father with great zeal, but despite this he unfortunately died.

05

Saiin Garan (the Western Precinct)
at Hōryūji Temple



This is the heart of Hōryūji Temple. Today, a chūmon (central gate) has been built before it, and there is a corridor going around the Kondō (Main Hall), Gojū no To (the five-storied pagoda) and the Daikōdō (Great Lecture Hall), while to the left and right of the chūmon are the standing statues of Kongō Rikishi. In the Kondō, the images of the Statue of Shaka Triad, the Statue of Yakushi Nyorai Seated and the Statue of Amitabha Tathagata Seated, have been enshrined.

The chūmon, Gojū no To and Kondō were constructed in the Asuka style.

06

Daihōzōin
(Gallery of Temple Treasures)
at Hōryūji Temple

The Daihōzōin (Gallery of Temple Treasures) at Hōryūji Temple was built in 1998, and is centered on the Kudara Kannon Hall where many temple treasures of Horyuji Temple are stored. Distinctive items here include the Yumechigai Kannon, the Tamamushi Tabernacle, the Lady Tachibana Tabernacle and the Hyakuman Miniature Pagodas.





After his father, Emperor Yōmei, died, the conflict between the Soga and the Mononobe intensified until they clashed, and finally the Soga wiped out the Mononobe. Prince Shōtoku also participated in this war.

Afterwards, the Emperor Sushun (Prince Shōtoku's uncle), who was backed by the Soga, came to govern. However, soon afterwards Soga no Umako was trying to control the emperor, who despised this, and they came into conflict with each other until, finally, the emperor was assassinated by Umako.

07

Fujinoki Tumulus



Fujinoki Tumulus was constructed in the latter half of the 6th century, and from the stunning grave goods that have been excavated, it is thought that a high ranking person was buried here. The two buried people are thought to be any one of a number of people, and while it is believed to be anyone close to Prince Shōtoku because of when it was made, it may be the imperial family members Emperor Sushun and his older brother Prince Anahobe.

08 Ikaruga Cultural Heritage Center

This is an institution with exhibitions, examinations of cultural assets, and guides for the national historic site of Fujinoki Tumulus.

In the exhibition room, there is a display of replicas of objects buried in the Fujinoki Tumulus, and in the screening hall you can watch a video which explains about the history and culture of Ikaruga, and Fujinoki Tumulus. In addition, they have an exhibition showing the inside of the tomb from when it was examined. Outside of the building there is an actual-size display of an *legata Sekkan* (house-shaped stone coffin) from the Fujinoki Tumulus.

After the emperor's assassination, the Soga clan backed a woman as empress so that he could govern, and so Empress Suiko ascended the throne.

Prince Shōtoku, as regent, became a political advisor. Prince Shōtoku, who was unhappy about the daily strife up until then, adopted the political system of the continent, and spread the teachings of Buddhism. He wanted to make a peaceful society.

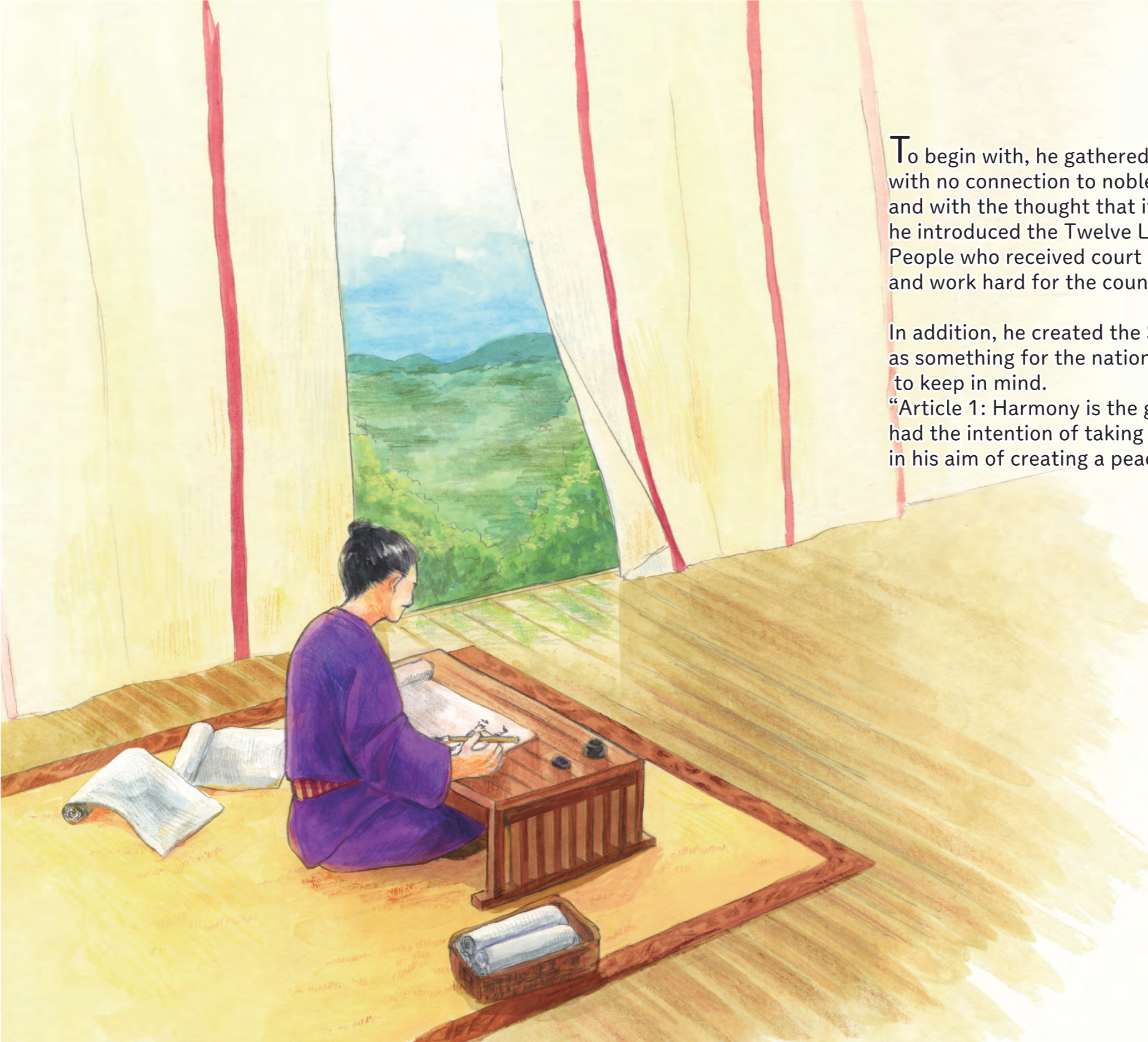


09

Shōryōin (Hall of Prince Shōtoku's Soul)
at Hōryūji Temple



Shōryōin is a building that enshrines Prince Shōtoku, it reposes the soul of Prince Shōtoku, and Oeshiki (a memorial service on the anniversary of Prince Shōtoku's death) is held here every year between March 22nd and 24th. This is one of the most important events at Horyuji Temple. The 21st is the day for Otaiya (a Buddhist service held the day before the anniversary of someone's death), and it is possible to worship up close to the Statue of Prince Shōtoku Seated, which isn't normally presented to the public.



To begin with, he gathered together a wide range of talented men with no connection to noble blood or politics, and with the thought that it would be good to appoint people of ability; he introduced the Twelve Level Cap and Rank System. People who received court rank from the empress would feel proud, and work hard for the country.

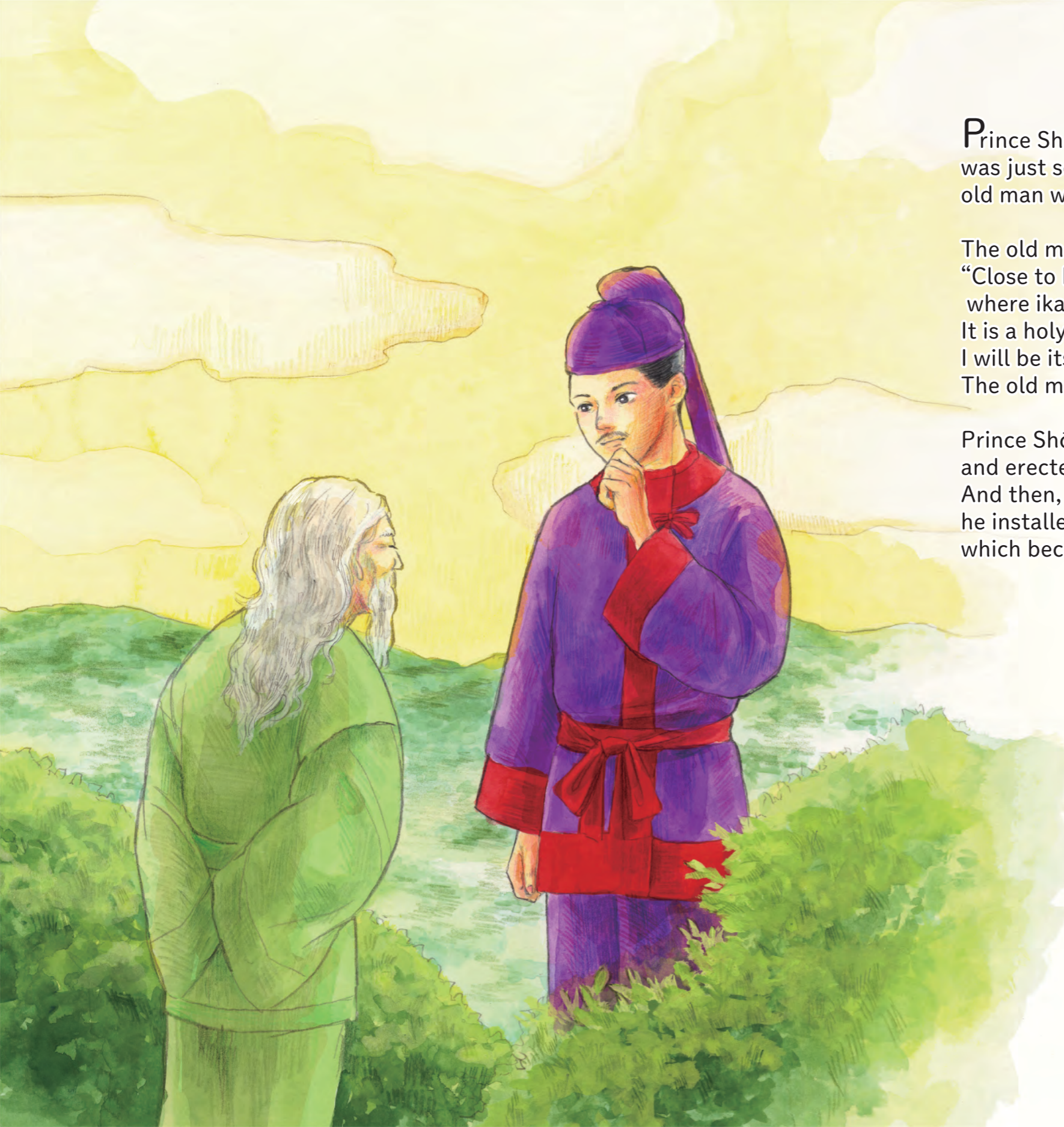
In addition, he created the Seventeen-article constitution as something for the nation's people, and the prominent clans, to keep in mind.

“Article 1: Harmony is the greatest of virtues” had the intention of taking a step forward in his aim of creating a peaceful society.

Tōin Garan
(the Eastern Precinct) at Hōryūji Temple



It is said that Ikaruganomiya Palace, which was built by Prince Shōtoku, was near Tōin Garan at Hōryūji Temple. After the Jōgū royal family was wiped out by Soga no Iruka in 643, Ikaruganomiya Palace became a ruin, but 100 years later the Tōin (then known as the Jōgū Ōin), centered around the Yumedono (Hall of Visions), was built by Princess Abe (later Empress Kōken) and the monk Gyōshin Sōzu to revere Prince Shōtoku.



Prince Shōtoku, who was thinking to construct a temple, was just searching for a good location when he met an old man with white hair at Shīsaka.

The old man reported to him,
“Close to here, towards the east, you will find Ikaruga Village where ikaru finches gather. It is a holy place where Buddhism thrives. I will be its guardian spirit.”
The old man was the incarnation of Tatsuta Myōjin.

Prince Shōtoku built Ikaruganomiya Palace in that location, and erected Ikarugadera Temple (Hōryūji Temple). And then, in order to repay Tatsuta Myōjin, he installed him in Tatsutajinja Shrine, which became the guardian shrine of Hōryūji Temple.

11

Tatsutajinja Shrine



This is a newly constructed shrine on the site of Tatsutataisha Shrine in Sangō-cho, which enshrines the god of wind. The road that passes by in front of the shrine was called the Nara-Kaidō Road, and it ran from Nara to Osaka. Tatsuta Ichi (a post town) was opened here and was bustling with people. Also, it was the base of the Sakato sarugaku theater group, the origin of Kongō style noh-gaku theater performance.



Prince Shōtoku wanted to know how all the lands were doing, and so, he was searching for a strong horse. Kurokoma, a black horse, was presented to him by Kai Province, it was a sacred horse that could fly in the sky and due to the help of a valet, Chōshimaru, it more than demonstrated its strength. It is said that Prince Shōtoku rode the horse up Mount Fuji.

Every day, in order to govern the country, he came and went between Ikaruga and Asuka riding his black horse.

12

Komazuka Tumulus and Chōshimaru Tumulus



The name comes from the belief that Prince Shōtoku's beloved black horse, Kurokoma is buried here, but it was built before Prince Shōtoku's time, in the early Kofun period (4th century), and 100 meters away another ancient tomb has been named after the valet who looked after Kurokoma, Chōshimaru. By naming these ancient tombs after Prince Shōtoku's horse and valet, you can feel the regard that the people had towards him.

13

Taishimichi

-The Road that Prince Shōtoku Took

This road which runs obliquely through the Yamato Basin, and which connected Ikaruga with Asuka which was the center of the government, is also called the Sujikaimichi Road. It is said that the Prince Shōtoku passed through on this road, coming and going between Asuka and Ikaruga on official business. Still today, here and there on the route there are artifacts of local folklore, like the Taishiko-shikakeishi - the stone that Prince Shōtoku sat on.



Prince Shōtoku moved to Ikaruganomiya Palace where he had children, such as Prince Yamashiro, together with one of his consorts, Lady Tojiko (Soga no Umako's daughter). It has been passed down that because Prince Shōtoku had three wells dug for his children's first baths, that the name of that location was thusly called Mii (three wells).

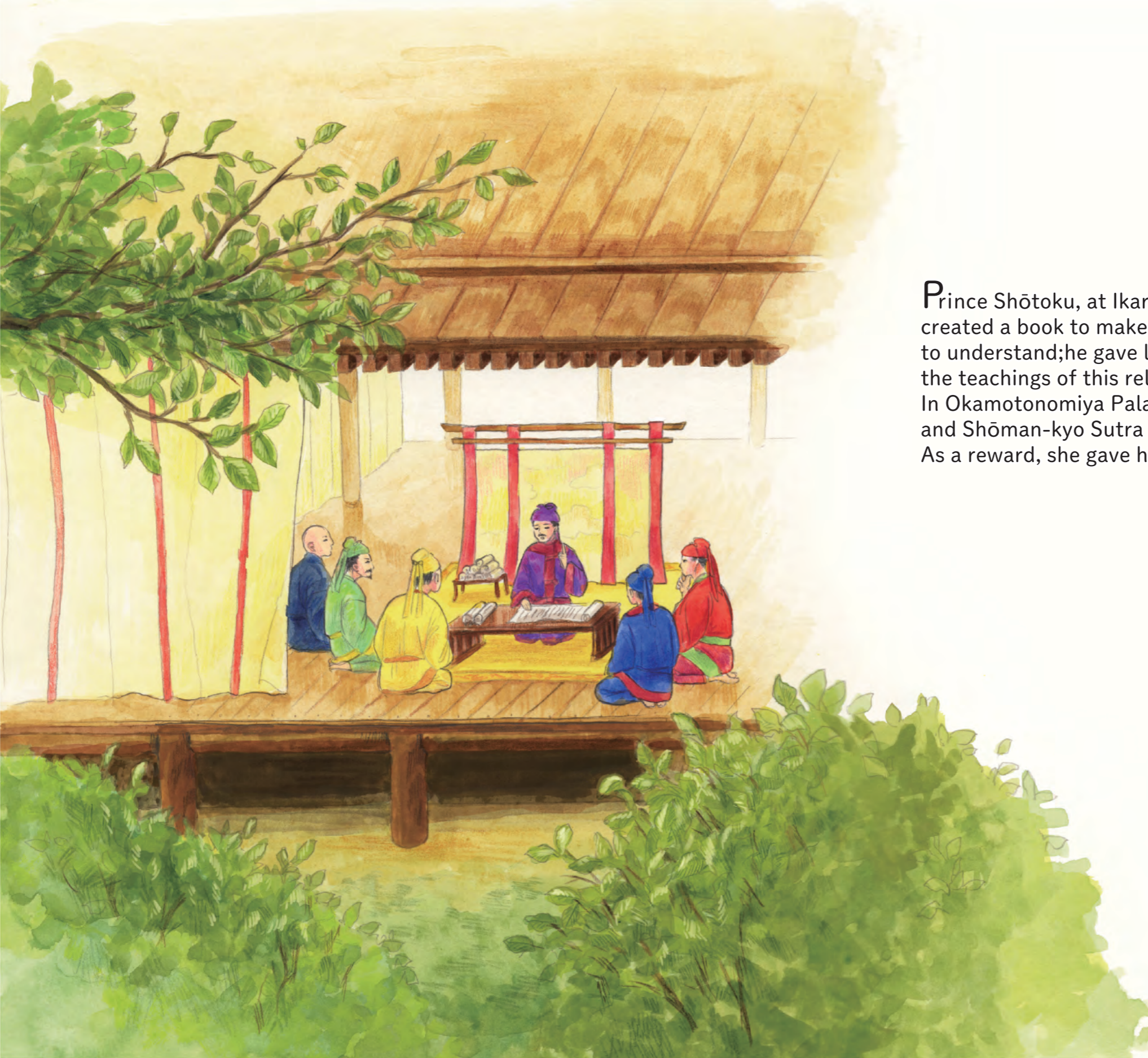
Besides Ikaruganomiya Palace, he also built three other palaces, Nakanomiya Palace, Okamotonomiya Palace and Ashigakinomiya Palace, where he passed every day in happiness.

14

Horinji Temple



Mii, literally "three wells," takes its name from the three wells said to have been dug here by Prince Shōtoku, and is where his son, Prince Yamashiro, constructed a temple so as to pray for Prince Shōtoku's recovery from an illness. A three-storied pagoda had been built here at that time, but in 1944 it was struck by lightning and burned down. The three-storied pagoda that is there today was reconstructed in 1975 by Tsunekazu Nishioka, the last master carpenter among Horyuji Temple's miyadaiku (temple and shrine carpenters).



Prince Shōtoku, at Ikaruga Village, created a book to make the scriptures of Buddhism easier to understand; he gave lectures and did his best to spread the teachings of this religion. In Okamotonomiya Palace, he explained the Lotus Sutra and Shōman-kyo Sutra to Empress Suiko, and she was very pleased. As a reward, she gave him paddy fields.

15

Hokiji Temple



It is said that the Okamotonomiya Palace was where Prince Shōtoku gave a lecture on the Lotus Sutra, and it was turned into a temple. As a three-storied pagoda it is the oldest in Japan and it is mostly the same size as the first, third and fifth levels of the five-storied pagoda in Horyuji Temple. In 1993 it was listed as a World Cultural Heritage along with Horyuji Temple.

In the new year of 622, Prince Shōtoku became ill and was lying on his sickbed at Ashigakinomiya Palace.

One of his consorts, Lady Hokikimi (daughter of the Kashiwade clan, said to be a prominent clan of Ikaruga) earnestly nursed him, but she became exhausted and collapsed.

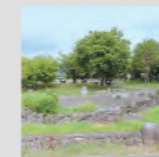
Finally, she died on February 21st, and afterwards, as if he was chasing after her, Prince Shōtoku died on February 22nd. The two of them were buried together in the grounds of Shinaga in Kawachi Province (present day Taishi-cho in Osaka).

Another consort, Princess Tachibana (the granddaughter of Empress Suiko) was so sad at the death of Prince Shōtoku that she commissioned the stitching of the Tenjukoku Shūchō Mandala, an embroidery of the world of the heavenly realm that the Prince Shōtoku had departed to.



16

Kamiya Iseki Park



This is the location said to be where Ashigakinomiya Palace was, and where Prince Shōtoku died. The results of excavations yielded earthenware from the Asuka Period, and they also discovered large dug-standing pillar buildings from the Nara Period. It is conjectured that these may be the Akunami-nomiya Palace visited by Emperor Shōtoku in 767.

After Prince Shōtoku had passed away, his children protected his teachings so that they lived on. Empress Suiko passed away, and about 20 years later, and in the capital, Asuka, the Soga clan came to play a central part in governing the country.

Soga no Iruka was not comfortable with the descendants of Prince Shōtoku, such as Prince Yamashiro, who were loved by the people and lived in Ikaruga Village just a small distance from the capital, and so he gathered his army and attacked Ikaruga. This led to the whole clan of the Jōgū royal family, descended from Prince Shōtoku, perishing.

Despite this, a religious faith towards Prince Shōtoku continued to spread widely around, and Ikaruga Village, as a holy place of Prince Shōtoku, has seen many people come to visit Hōryūji Temple.

17 Okanohara

A round burial mound on the eastern peak of a small hill, roughly halfway between Horinji Temple and Hokiji Temple, is said to be the grave of Prince Shōtoku's child, Prince Yamashiro, and the Imperial Household Agency manages it as 'Tomisato Ryōbo Sankōchi' (Tomisato referable mausoleum).

18



Statue of Kuse Kannon (Tōin Garan at Hōryūji Temple)

It is said that a life-sized statue of Prince Shōtoku became a Hibutsu (hidden Buddhist statue rarely shown to the public) of Horyuji Temple. It is not known when it became a Hibutsu, but it is considered to have already become one by the time of the Medieval Period. In 1884 it was visited by Ernest Fenollosa and Tenshin Okakura, and it was opened to the public, today in spring (April 11th to May 18th) and in the fall (October 22nd to November 22nd) you can do a special viewing.



Since then, after 1,400 years passed by, in 1993, at Ikaruga Village, the Buddhist Monuments in the Hōryūji Area, which includes the world's oldest wooden structure, was listed as Japan's first World Cultural Heritage.

These structures of the Asuka Period, has since that time been repaired repeatedly, and has gone through major repairs, but even today it is still there in Ikaruga Village. The traces of repairwork can be seen everywhere, in the decorations, and in the braces and posts of the building.

Also, you will find artifacts, Buddhist images and buildings from every era of Japan, from 1,400 years ago to the present day. The reason that we can see all these things is because, from era to era, people have worshipped and protected them.

“Harmony is the greatest of virtues”.
Ikaruga, the village
where Prince Shōtoku's spirit still remains.
Please go and see the traces left behind by Prince Shōtoku.

