

Raising the Question of Jewish Influence on Ancient Japanese Culture

E Dane Rogers | Chafer Conference 2025 | West Houston Bible Church





“Remember the days of old,
Consider the years of all generations.
Ask your father, and he will inform you,
Your elders, and they will tell you.

“When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance,
When He separated the sons of man,
He set the boundaries of the peoples
According to the number of the sons of Israel.

Deuteronomy 32:7–8

A decorative illustration of a pink flower with a yellow center and green leaves, positioned on the left side of the slide. Another similar illustration is on the right side, showing a cluster of buds and leaves.

Part I

Bible Framework and the Question of Japan

Simplified Bible Timeline

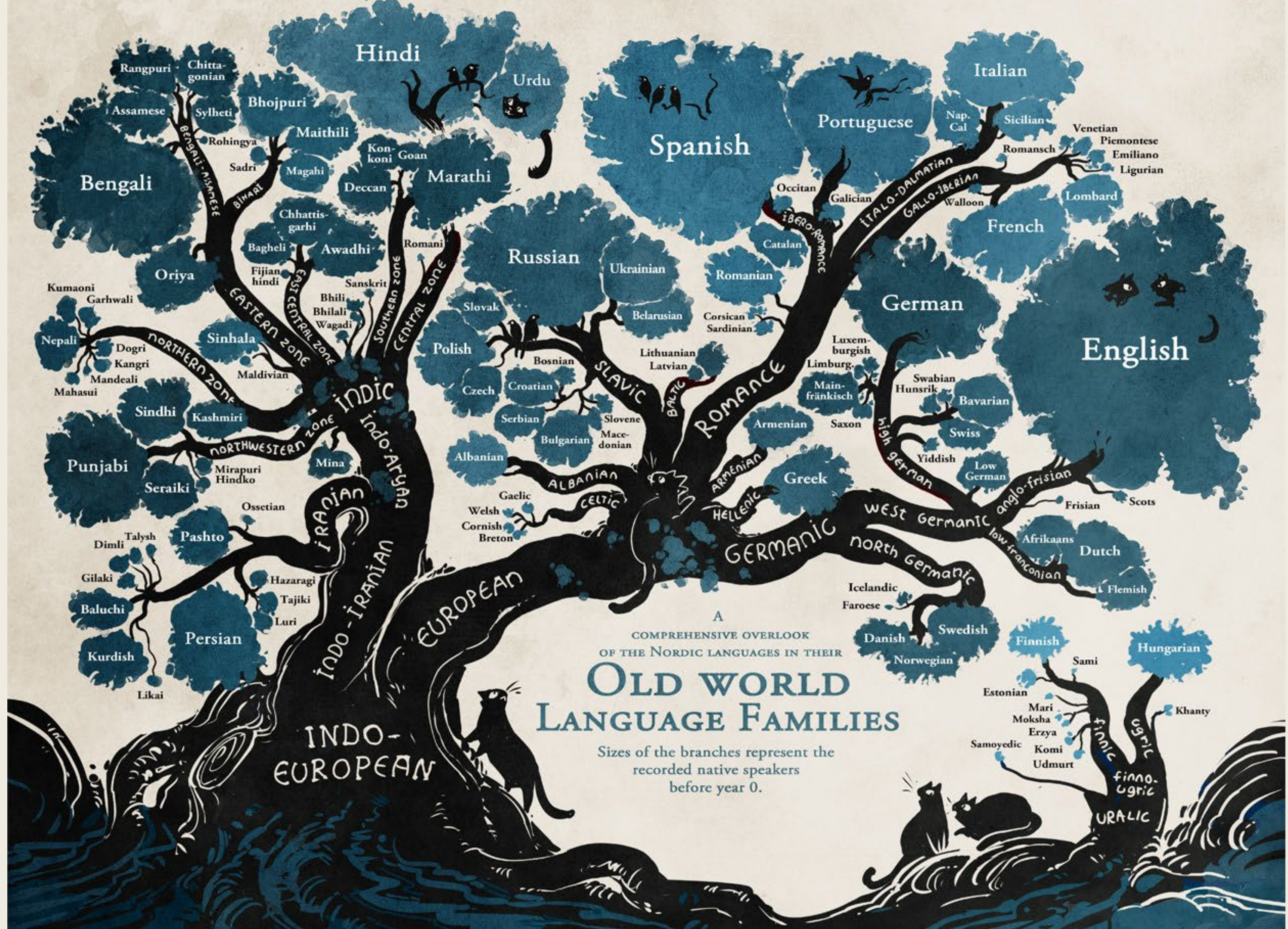
Flood	—	2348	BC
<u>Babel</u>	—	<u>2242</u>	<u>BC</u>
Abraham	—	1921	BC
Exodus	—	1446	BC
Kings	—	1095	BC
N. Exile	—	722	BC
S. Exile	—	538	BC
Diaspora	—	AD 70	



Simplified Bible Timeline

Flood	—2348 BC	Izanagi Amaterasu ??
Babel	—2242 BC	
Abraham	—1921 BC	
Exodus	—1446 BC	
Kings	—1095 BC	Niningi ??? Solomon Isaiah Jomon Era
N. Exile	—722 BC	Jeremiah Emperor Jimmu
S. Exile	—538 BC	Ezekiel Daniel
Diaspora	—AD 70	Yayoi Era







Ural - Altaic Language Group???

- Turkic languages
- Mongolic languages
- Tungusic languages
- Koreanic languages
(sometimes included)
- Japonic languages
(sometimes included)
- Ainu languages
(rarely included)

Complicated Linguistic Diversity of Japan

Ainu
Ryukyuan
Hachijo



Religious Influences on Japan

Shinto : unknown origin, “native”

Jomon Period: c. 9300 ~ 6600–3000 BC

Yayoi Period: c. 300 BC—AD 250

Buddhism : Baekje AD 538

Kofun Period: AD 250—646 Kanji, 5th c.

Nara Period: AD 646—794 Kana, 8th c.
Kojiki 712

Heian Period: AD 794—1185 Nihongi 720



Religious Influence on Japan

Zen Buddhism : China, 12th c.

Kakamura Period: AD 1185–1392

Nanbokucho Period: AD 1336–1392

Muromachi Period: AD 1392–1603

Christianity : Jesuit, 16th c.

Confucianism : China, 17th c.

Edo Period: (Tokugawa Shogunate): 1603 —1868



Religious Influence on Japan

Imperial Shinto , 1868–1945

Meiji Period: AD 1868–1912

Taisho Period: AD 1912–1926



Modern Secularism , 1945–

Showa Period: AD 1926–1989 (Hirohito)

Heisei Period: AD 1989–2019

Reiwa Period: AD 2019–



Teal leaves and pink flowers are illustrated on the left side of the slide. The leaves are large and have a prominent vein pattern. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing a yellow center.Teal leaves and pink flowers are illustrated on the right side of the slide. The leaves are large and have a prominent vein pattern. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing a yellow center.

Part II

Theories of Jewish Contact with Ancient Japan



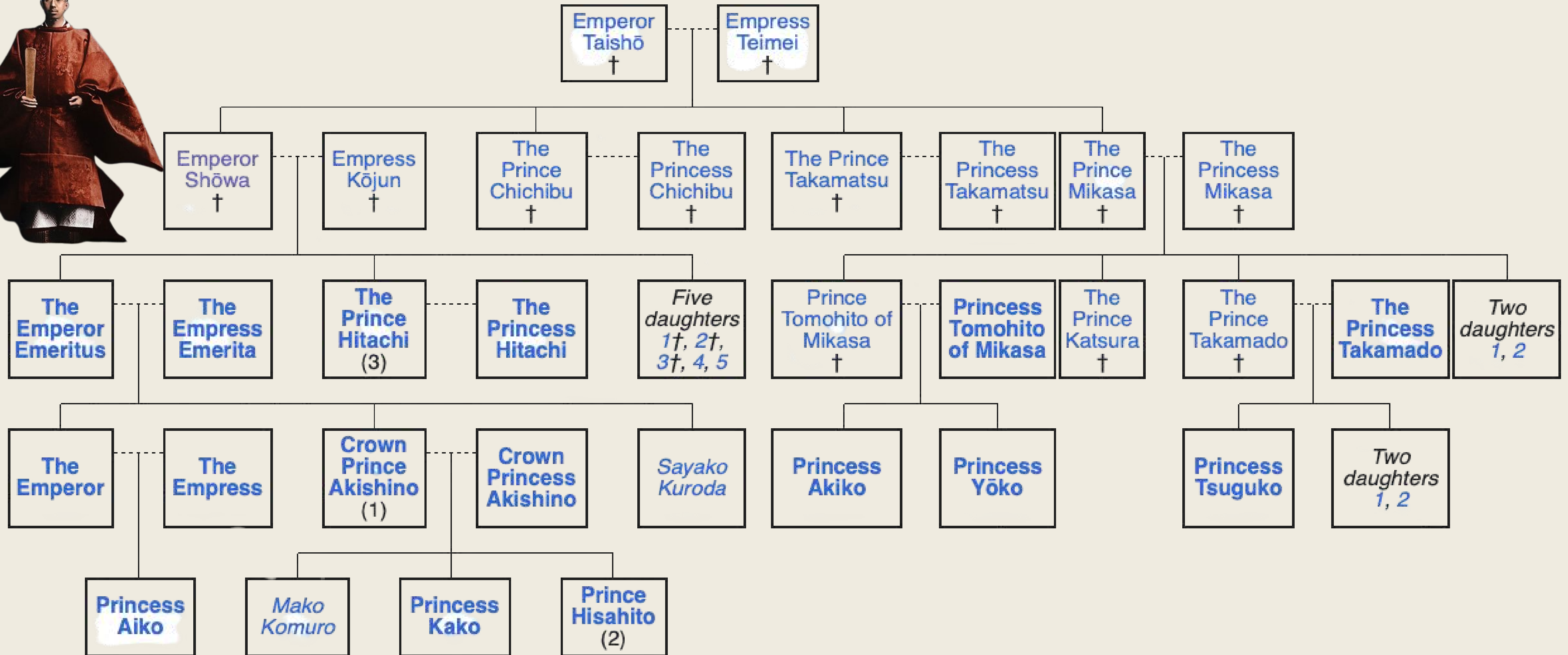
“The Japanese must be of a
tribe who emigrated directly
from the area of Babylon.”

Engelbart Kaempfer, 1699

“The appearance of the Japanese is so different according to regions in Japan that we can clearly distinguish. This proves that the Japanese are formed through the process that several tribes were added to a basic nation.”

Engelbart Kaempfer, 1699

Imperial Family



Imperial Family

126 Emperors in 2,500 Years



Yamato

Imperial Family

126 Emperors in 2,500 Years

Yamato

- No known meaning in Japanese



Imperial Family

126 Emperors in 2,500 Years

Yamato

- No known meaning in Japanese
- Adopted character for “peace”



Imperial Family

126 Emperors in 2,500 Years



Yamato

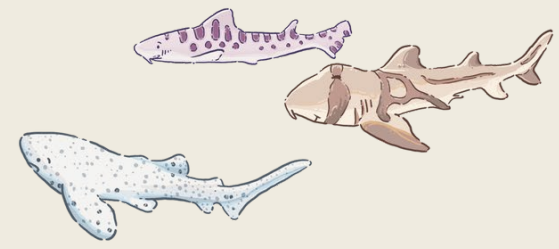
660 BC

hi ra ga na
ひ ら が な

8th c. AD

ka ta ka na
か た か な

kan ji
漢 字



5th c. AD; more than 1,000 years



Imperial Family

126 Emperors in 2,500 Years

Yamato

- No known meaning in Japanese
- Adopted character for “peace”
- Yamato = Ya + (u)mato
 - lit: **People of Ya**
 - (Chinese called them “Wa” people)



These two nations—the Jews and the Japanese—are geographically thousands of miles apart. In fact, they exist at the two extremities of the Asian continent, the one at the eastern end and the other at its western end. Yet, not only do they share a common fate and destiny, but—and this is the most amazing and surprising thing of all—in my view they are in reality one single nation, which, due to historical events over which it had no control, was split 2,700 years ago into two segments.

[1] Avigdor Schachan, *Towards the Sambatyon River: A Journey in the Footsteps of the Ten Tribes*, Translated into English by Shula Berman and Shmuel Himerstein (Tel Aviv, Israel: Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House, 2003), 282.

Yet, in spite of this division, throughout these 2,700 years they have, with equal zeal, preserved their original and unique identity among the nations of the world. Thus it is not mere coincidence that one realizes how much they have in common and how similar the two peoples are.

[1] Avigdor Schachan, *Towards the Sambatyon River: A Journey in the Footsteps of the Ten Tribes*, Translated into English by Shula Berman and Shmuel Himerstein (Tel Aviv, Israel: Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House, 2003), 282.

Jewish Relationship (if any) to Japan :

1. Continuity
2. Coincidence
3. Contact

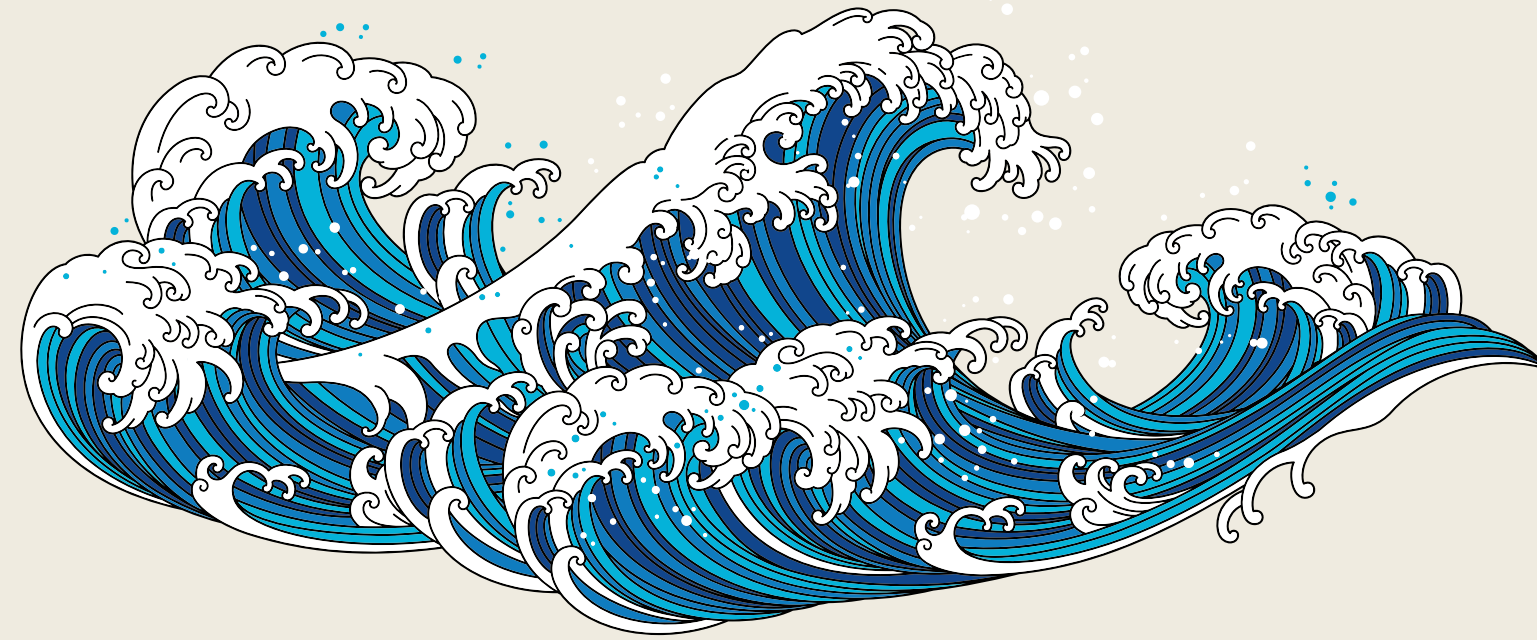


A decorative border on the left side of the page featuring teal-colored leaves and a large, detailed pink flower with a yellow center. The leaves have prominent veins and are arranged in a natural, overlapping pattern.

Part III

Exploring the Evidence of Jewish Influence in Ancient Japan

A decorative border on the right side of the page featuring teal-colored leaves and several pink flower buds. The buds are in various stages of opening, with some showing red and white petals. The leaves are similar to those on the left, with detailed vein patterns.



Prehistoric Era

Noahic Bible

Izanagi & Izanami

Amaterasu, Tsukiyomi, Susano-o

Noahic Bible : Universal Knowledge

1. Creation

2. Fall

3. Flood

4. Babel



In remote times the deities Izanagi and Izanami were commanded by the God of Heaven to form a country out of the islets floating in space. They forthwith descended to the island Onokoro, and there, becoming husband and wife, created the Eight Great Islands of Japan. Thereafter were created deities to rule the sea, the mountains, the winds, fire, herbs, and trees.

[1] Ed. Henry Cabot Lodge, et al., Japan, The History of Nations: Volume 7 (New York, P. F. Collier & Sons, 1928), 3.



Subsequently the divine pair gave birth to the goddess Amaterasu-Omikami and the gods Tsukiyomi and Susano-o. These newly born divine beings proving themselves greatly superior to other deities, found high favor with Izanagi.

He commissioned Amaterasu to govern Takama-no-hara, or the Heavenly Region; Tsukiyomi to govern Yo-no-osukuni, or the Land of Night; and Susano-o to govern Unabara, or the Seas.



Susano-o may be Japan's link to a flood narrative, since he is said to have been found a failure (in his duties to keep the land from flooding and to hold back the power of the storms on the seas), and his sister, Amaterasu, the sun kami fled and hid in a cave for a long time until she could be coaxed out because she did not trust Susano-o. Later, he killed a seven-headed dragon and presented it to Amaterasu in restoration of the relationship between heaven and earth.



Mother & Son

Queen of
Heaven

Amaterasu



Susano-o's son, Okuni-nushi, ruled the earth. Nevertheless, Amaterasu chose to send her own son from heaven to rule over Midzuo -no-kuni (fruitful country) in the land of Toyo-ashihara (land of reeds). This is sometimes called Toyo-ashihara-no-chaki-no-nagaihoaki-no-mizuho-no-kuni which means "the land of luxuriant reed plains with fair rice ears through fifteen hundred autumns." It is the Japanese equivalent to a promise land. While the son of the one who failed to stop the flood rules the earth, a special son from heaven will rule the promise land, Japan.

[1] <https://d-museum.kokugakuin.ac.jp/eos/detail/id=8738#:~:text=Text%2C%20An%20alternative%20name%20for%20the%20country,fair%20rice%20ears%20through%20fifteen%20hundred%20autumns.>

Mother & Son

Queen of Heaven

Amaterasu



Mother -
Child Cult
Semiramis
& Tammuz





Patriarchal Era

Amaterasu's Seed Line

Deification of Ancestors

Ontohsai (Oniye) Bashira

Three Siblings

Queen of
Heaven

Amaterasu



Earth & Sea



Susano-o



Moon Kami

Tsukiyomi



Queen of
Heaven

Amaterasu

Seed Line of Amaterasu Japan's Imperial Family

1. Amaterasu & Susano -o

- a. Amaterasu marries her brother, Tsukiyomi
- b. She is tricked into bearing Susano-o's children instead



Queen of
Heaven

Amaterasu



Seed Line of Amaterasu Japan's Imperial Family

1. Amaterasu & Susano-o (brother & sister)
2. Ame-no-Oshihomimi (one among five)
3. Ninigi
 - a. Was sent down to earth to rule after chaos
 - b. Was born while his older brother was preparing to go; usurped his rule
 - c. Falls in love with Konohana-sakuya-hime, but is tricked into marrying her older sister, Iwanaga-hime, first.

Queen of
Heaven

Amaterasu



Seed Line of Amaterasu Japan's Imperial Family

1. Amaterasu & Susano-o (brother & sister)
2. Ame-no-Oshihomimi
3. Ninigi (usurps older brother, marries two sisters)
4. Yamasachihiko
 - a. Younger brother bullied by older
 - b. Runs away to country of the sea god
 - c. Obtains great magical powers and uses them to inflict his brother's land with famine
 - d. Later relents and feeds brother

Queen of
Heaven

Amaterasu



Seed Line of Amaterasu Japan's Imperial Family

1. Amaterasu & Susano-o (brother & sister)
2. Ame-no-Oshihomimi
3. Ninigi (usurps older brother, marries two sisters)
4. Yamasachihiko (famine & feeding)
- 5. Ugayafukia -ezu**
 - a. Born to daughter of sea god
 - b. Had four sons, middle two died

Queen of
Heaven

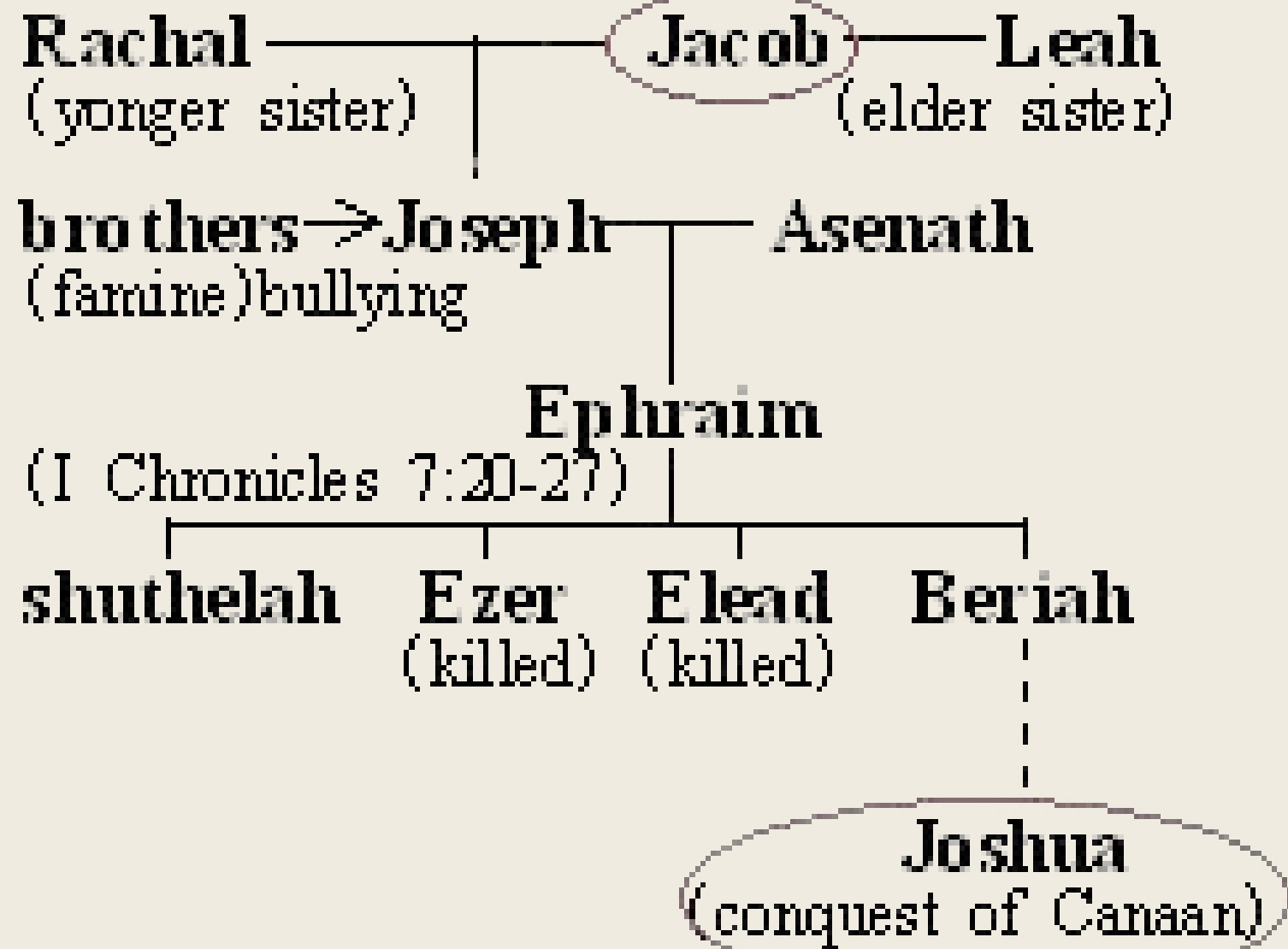
Amaterasu



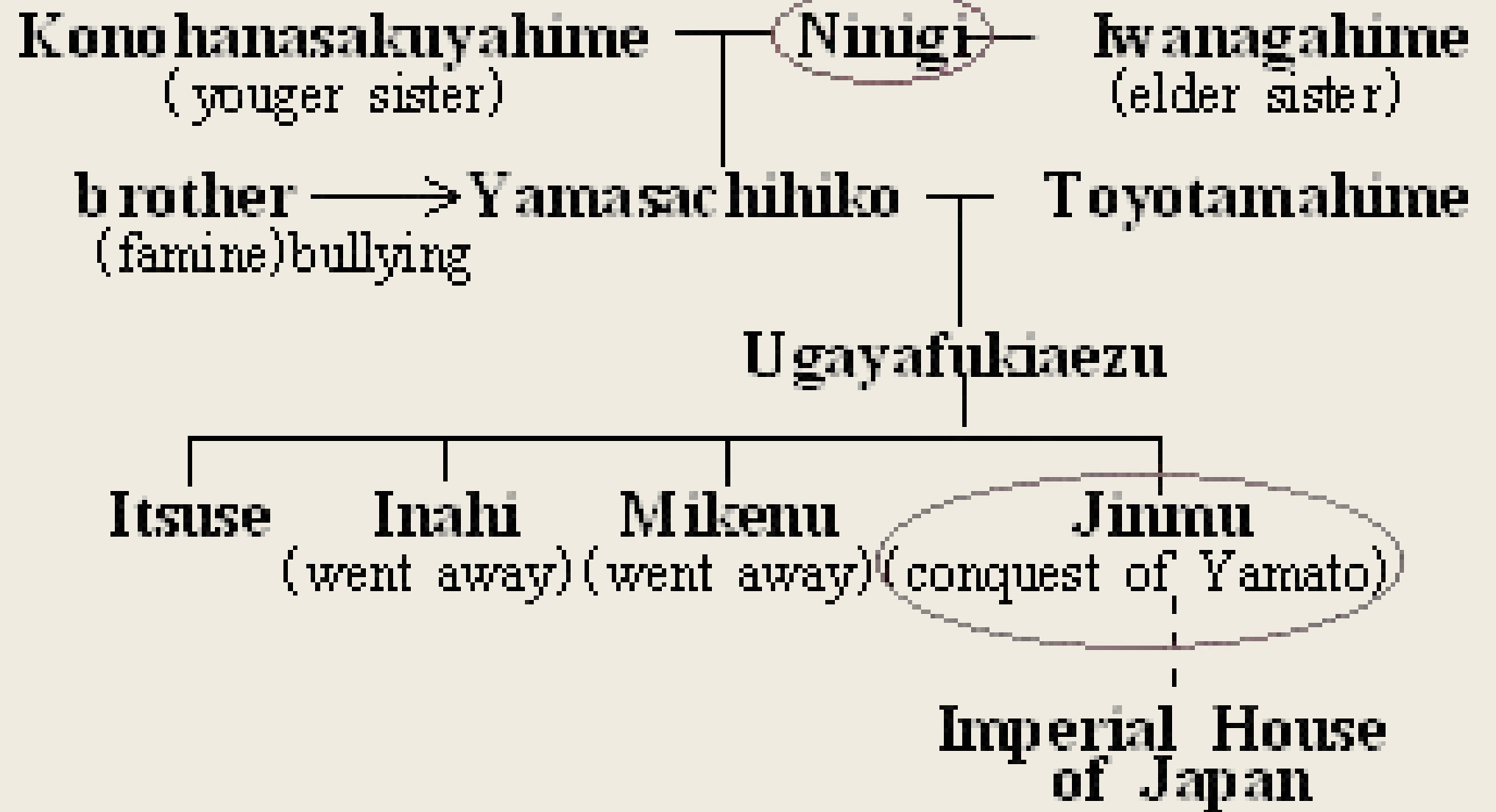
Seed Line of Amaterasu Japan's Imperial Family

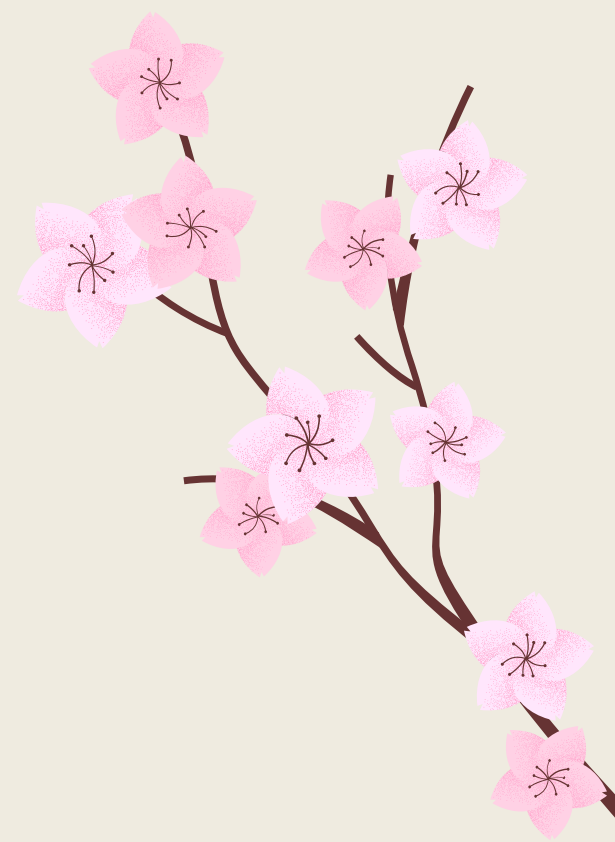
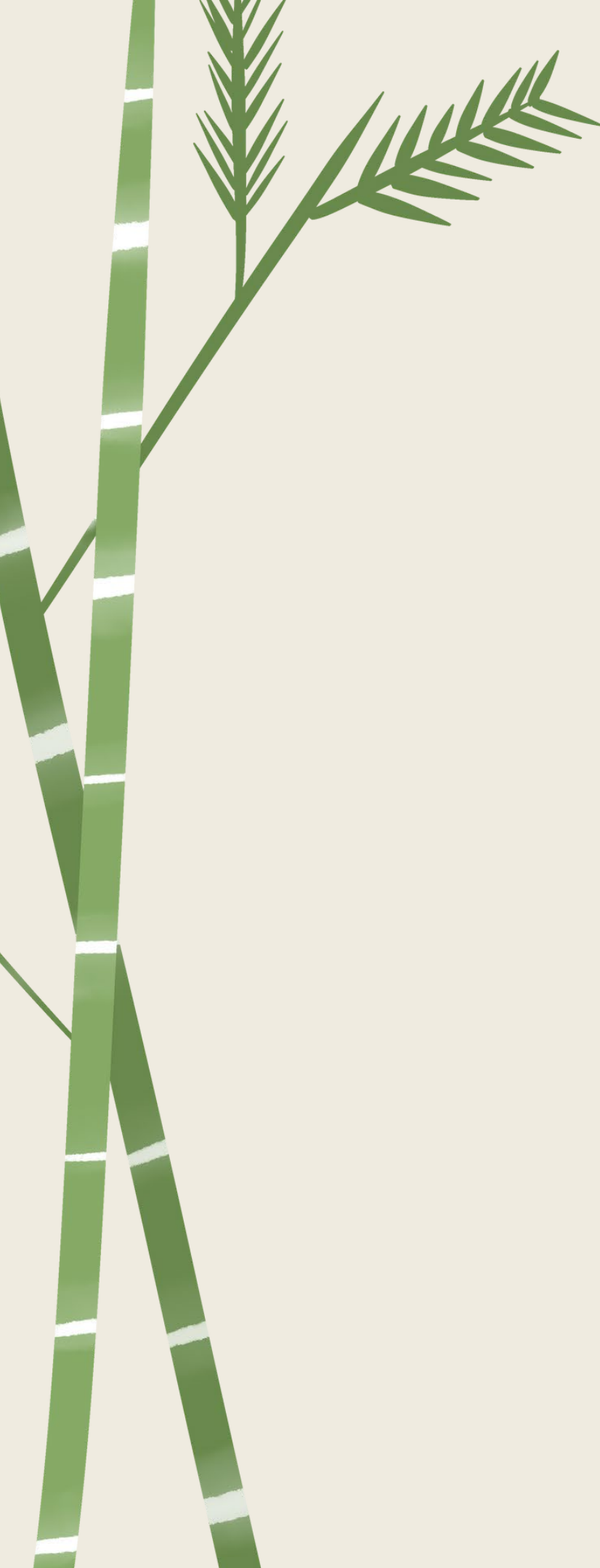
1. Amaterasu & Susano-o (brother & sister)
2. Ame-no-Oshihomimi
3. Ninigi (usurps older brother, marries two sisters)
4. Yamasachihiko (famine & feeding)
5. Ugayafukia-ezu (foreign mother, four sons)
6. Jimmu
 - a. youngest of four
 - b. first emperor of Japan

Bible



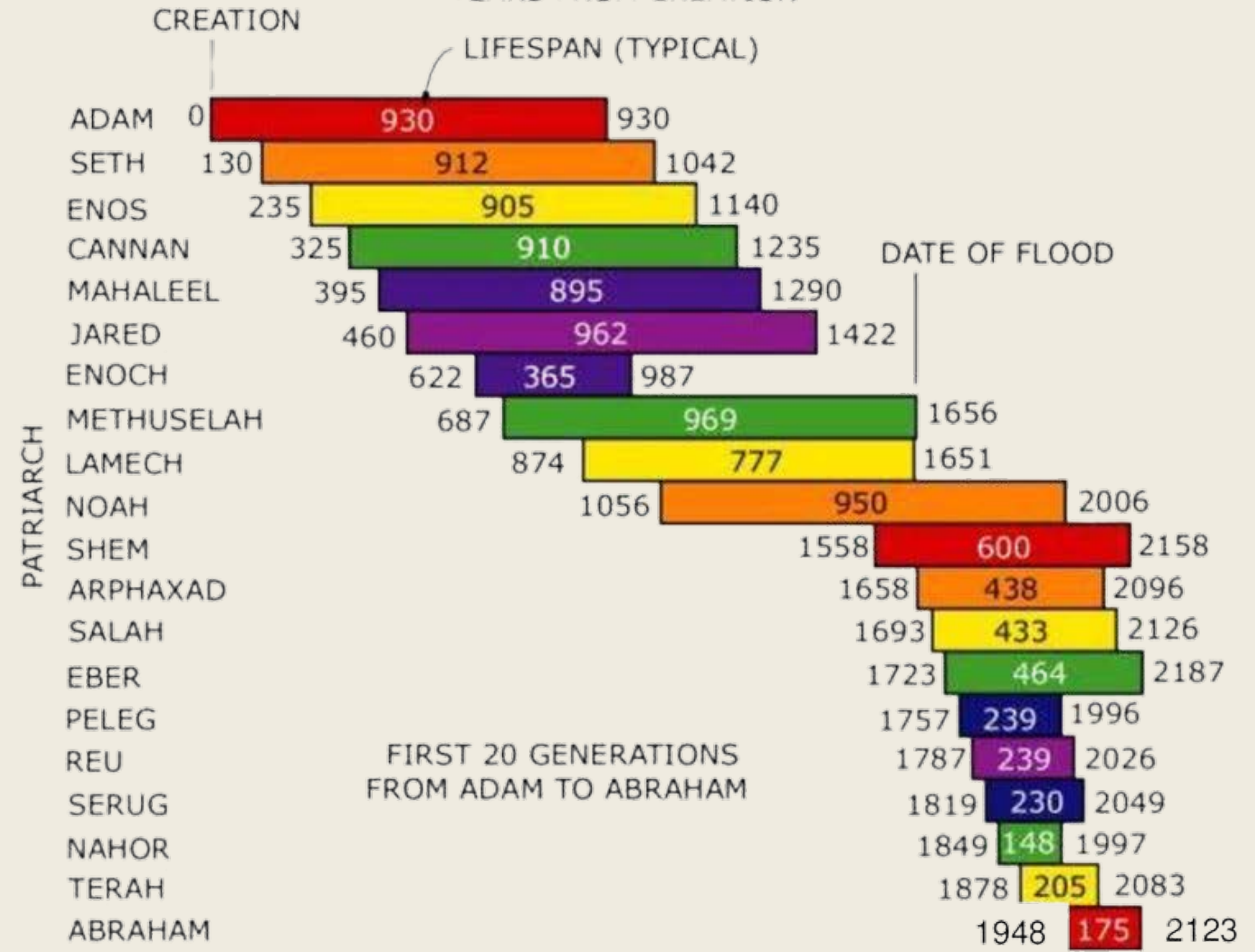
Japanese Mythology





LIFESPANS OF THE BIBLICAL PATRIARCHS

YEARS FROM CREATION



Suwa Taisha, Nagano

One of the oldest in Japan, chief Suwa Shrine



Suwa Taisha, Nagano

Secondary Shrine further up the mountain



Suwa Taisha, Nagano

Natural Rock Altar behind the Shrine



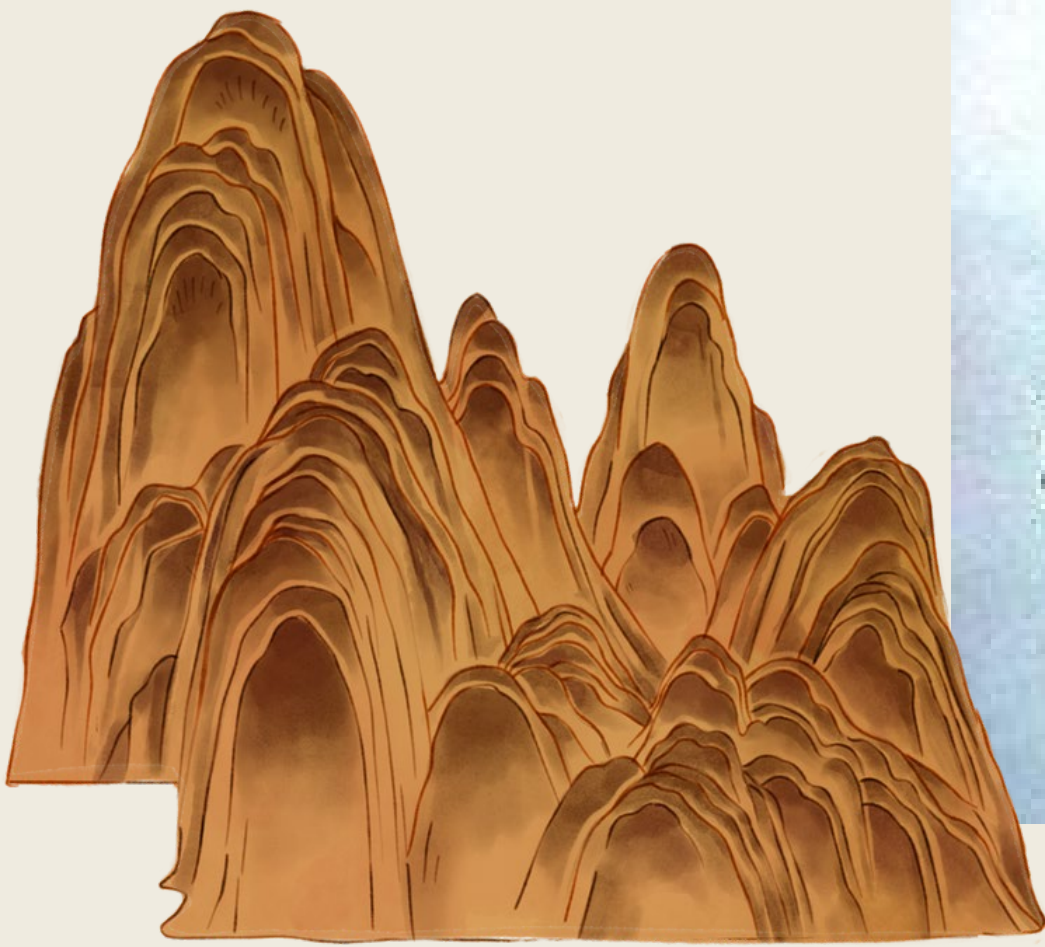
Ritual for Misakuchi - ka mi

Priest, young boy, messenger (second priest), deer



Ritual for Misakuchi - kami

Priest, young boy, messenger (second priest), deer



Religious Influence on Japan

Imperial Shinto , 1868–1945

Meiji Period: AD 1868–1912

Taisho Period: AD 1912–1926

Modern Secularism , 1945–

Showa Period: AD 1926–1989 (Hirohito)

Heisei Period: AD 1989–2019

Reiwa Period: AD 2019 –



Ritual for Misakuchi - kami

Today, still carry the wood and deer for sacrifice



Misakuchi - kami

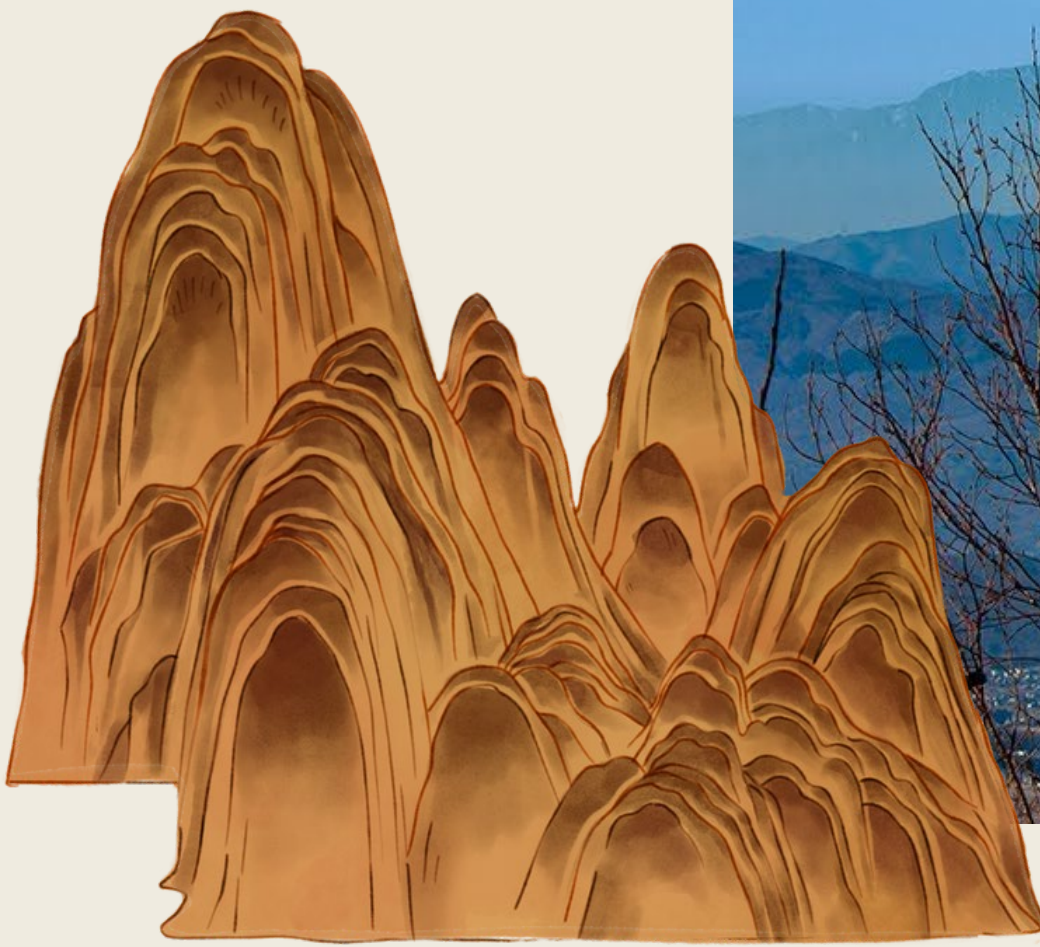
M (from)

isak-uchi (house of Isak)

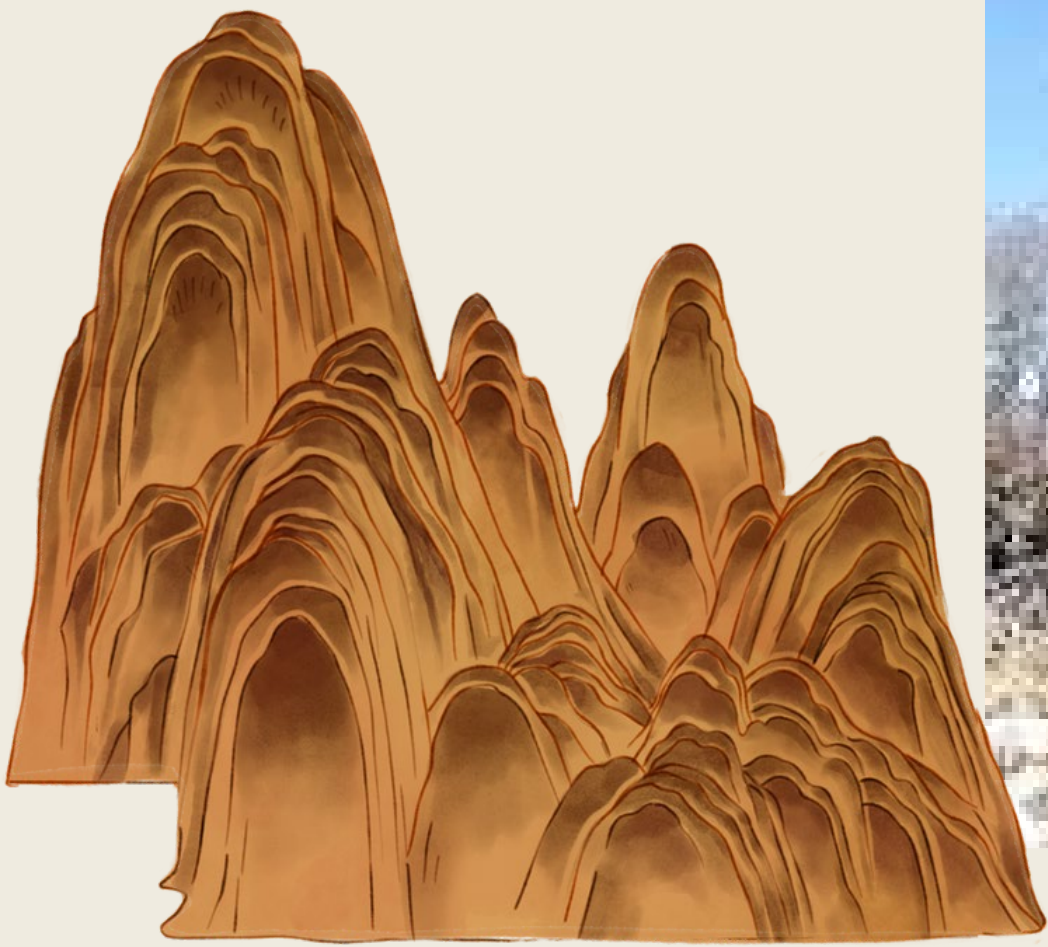
kami (god)

Moriya -san, Nagano

Mount Moriya in Nagano Prefecture



Deity = Moriya -no-kami God of Mount Moriya





Exodus Era

Torii Gates

Holy Ground

Priesthood

Omikoshi

“Torii (or Torii gates) are ubiquitous open gateway structures at Shinto shrines in Japan demarking the transition from secular to the sacred space as one enters these shrines. In their most iconic form, they're painted crimson, but more commonly just natural wood color, or even concrete in some cases. They're one of the easiest ways to distinguish a Shinto shrine from a Buddhist temple at a quick glance.”

Johnathan Clough, Jan 5, 2019, correspondence with Charlie Clough





Kiyomizu - dera in Nara



Hakone Shrine Near Fuji

Takachiho & Dazaifu in Fukuoka



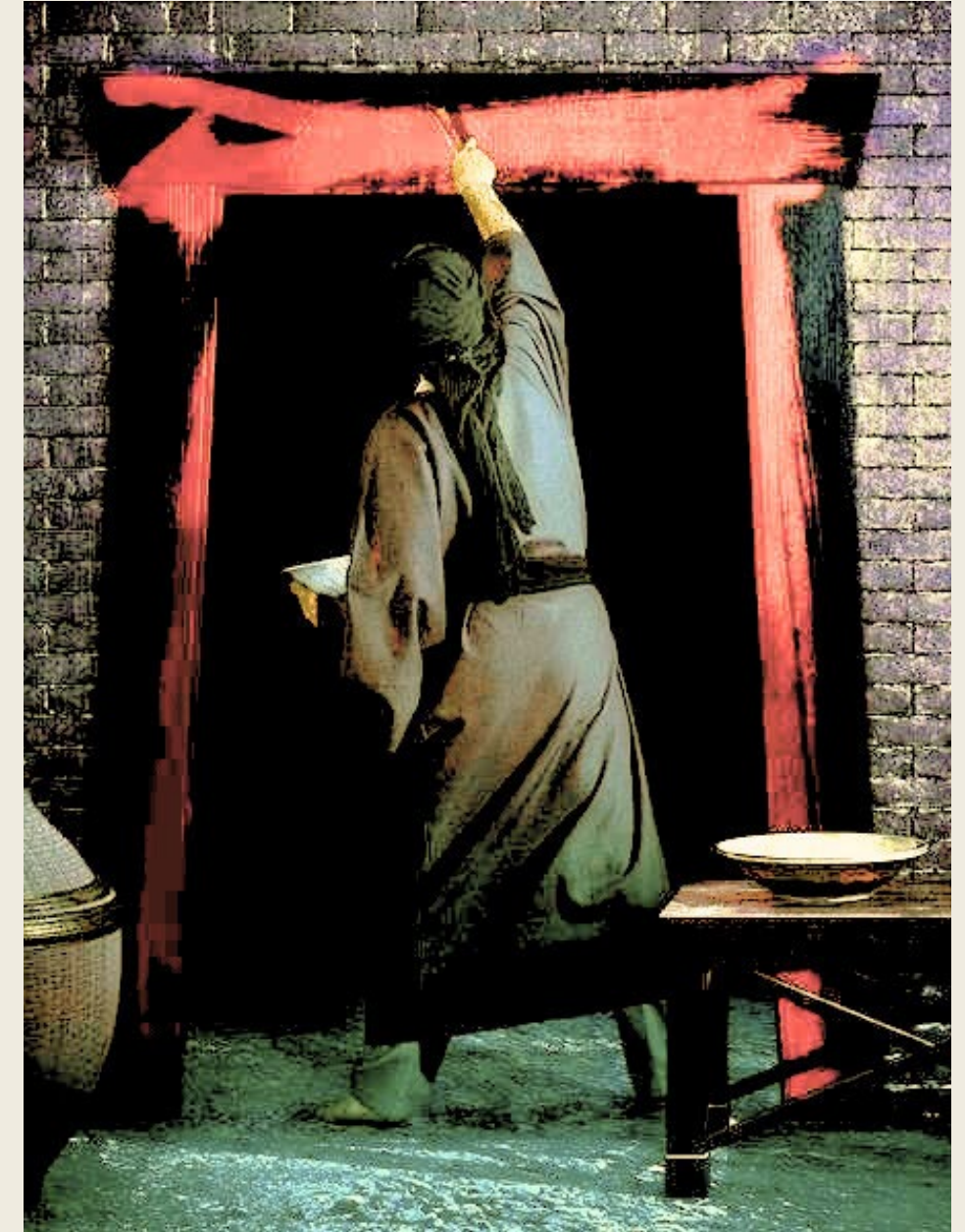
Torii Gates

Shinto Shrine Markers



Secular vs Sacred Demarkation

1. Torii marks the boundary of the shrine
kami's protection
2. While inside the torii, the worshipper is
protected from spirits that would wish harm
3. Sacred space, holy ground.

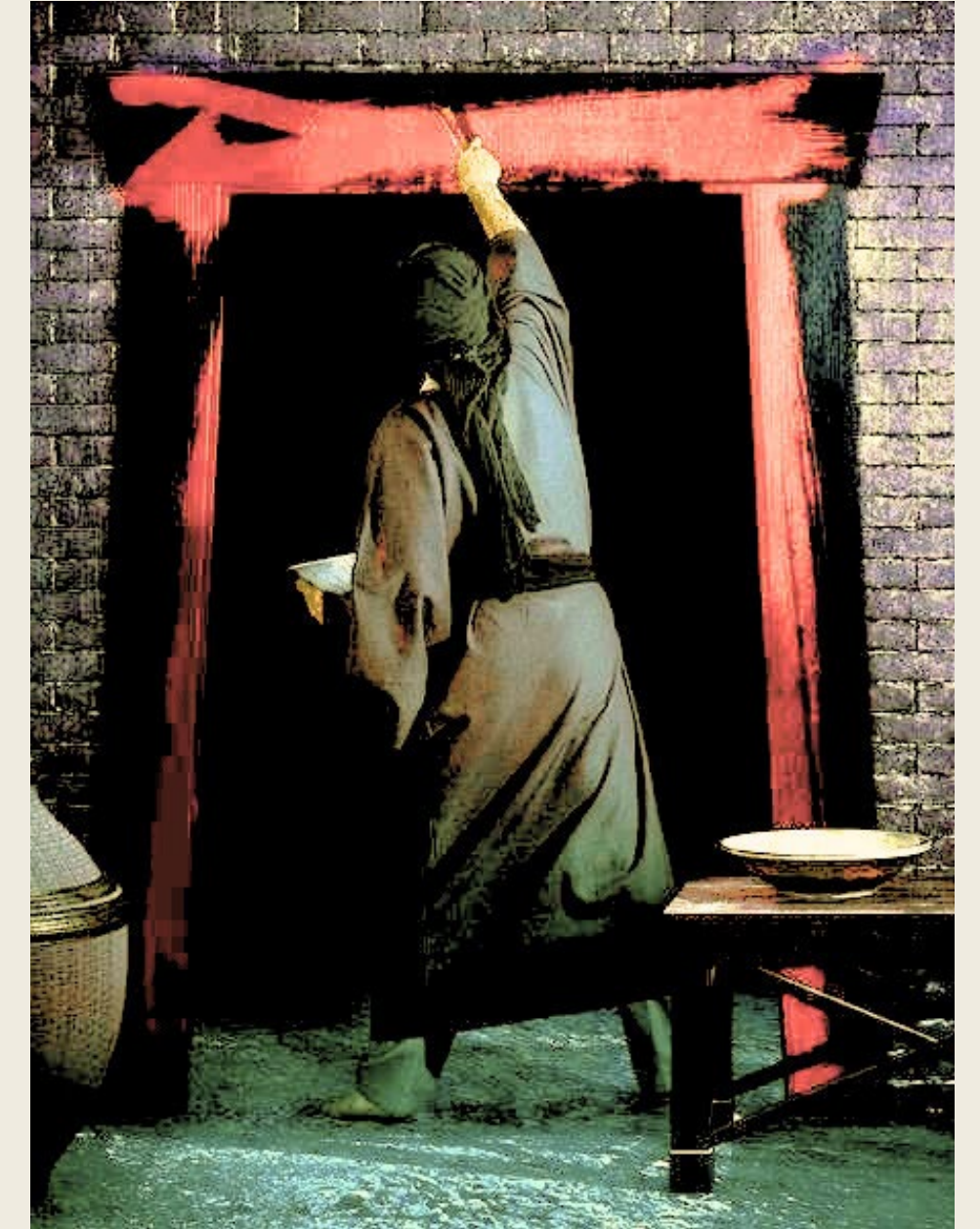
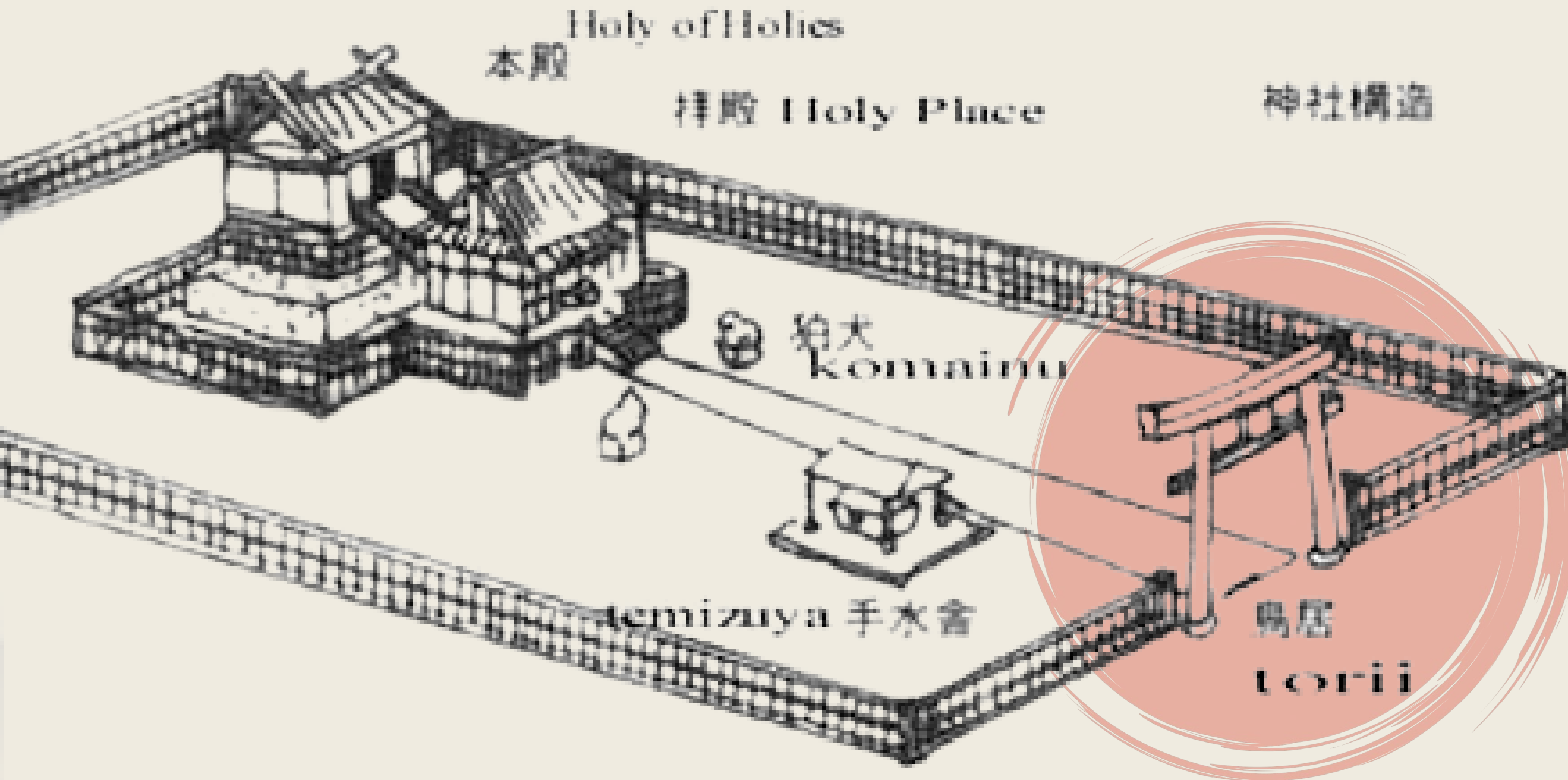


Torii Gates

Shinto Shrine Markers



The one way to enter a Shinto shrine



Shinto Priests

Yamabushi Shugendo





Shinto Priests

Yamabushi Shugendo



Vestments and tools of a priest

1. Horagai —conch shell

- Blown in the mountains to remind the kami of their presence and to celebrate sacred area
- Blown at festivals





Shinto Priests

Yamabushi Shugendo



Vestments and tools of a priest

1. Horagai —conch shell

- Blown in the mountains to remind the kami of their presence and to celebrate sacred area
- Blown at festivals
- Sheep are not native to Japan*



Shinto Priests

Yamabushi Shugendo



Vestments and tools of a priest

1. Horagai —conch shell (shofar)
2. Kariginu —tasseled robe
3. Joe —less formal white robe



Shinto Priests

Yamabushi Shugendo



Vestments and tools of a priest

1. Horagai —conch shell (shofar)
2. Kariginu —tasseled robe
3. Joe —less formal white robe
4. Tokin —holy head dress of shinto priests



Sanja Matsuri

Omikoshi Asakusa Sensoji



Sanja Matsuri
Festival

Omikoshi Asakusa Sensoji



Omikoshi Sacred Ark



1. Omikoshi — Sacred Ark



Omikoshi Sacred Ark

1. Omikoshi — Sacred Ark

- a. Box made of wood
- b. Often plated in gold
- c. Carried by two rods
- d. Crested with 1, 2, or 4 “ho-ho”



Omikoshi Sacred Ark

1. Omikoshi — Sacred Ark

2. HoHo — Sacred Heavenly Birds



Omikoshi Sacred Ark



1. Omikoshi —Sacred Ark

2. HoHo —Sacred Heavenly Birds

3. Believed to contain the physical presence of a kami





Dynastic Era

Hadaka Mitzura

Temple Shrines

Tengu

Hadaka Mitzuri Naked Festival



Shiofumi, the Omikoshi crossing

1. Omikoshi removed from shrine and paraded to river / shore



Hadaka Mitzuri Naked Festival



Shiofumi, the Omikoshi crossing

1. Omikoshi removed from shrine and paraded to shore
2. Cross the water carrying the omikoshi



Hadaka Mitzuri Naked Festival



Shiofumi, the Omikoshi crossing

1. Omikoshi removed from shrine and paraded to shore

2. Cross the water carrying the omikoshi

3. “Naked” festival

a. as little clothing worn as comfortable

b. sing, dance, make noise, praise

4. Possible connections?

a. Crossing the Jordan

b. Rescuing the ark from the Philistines



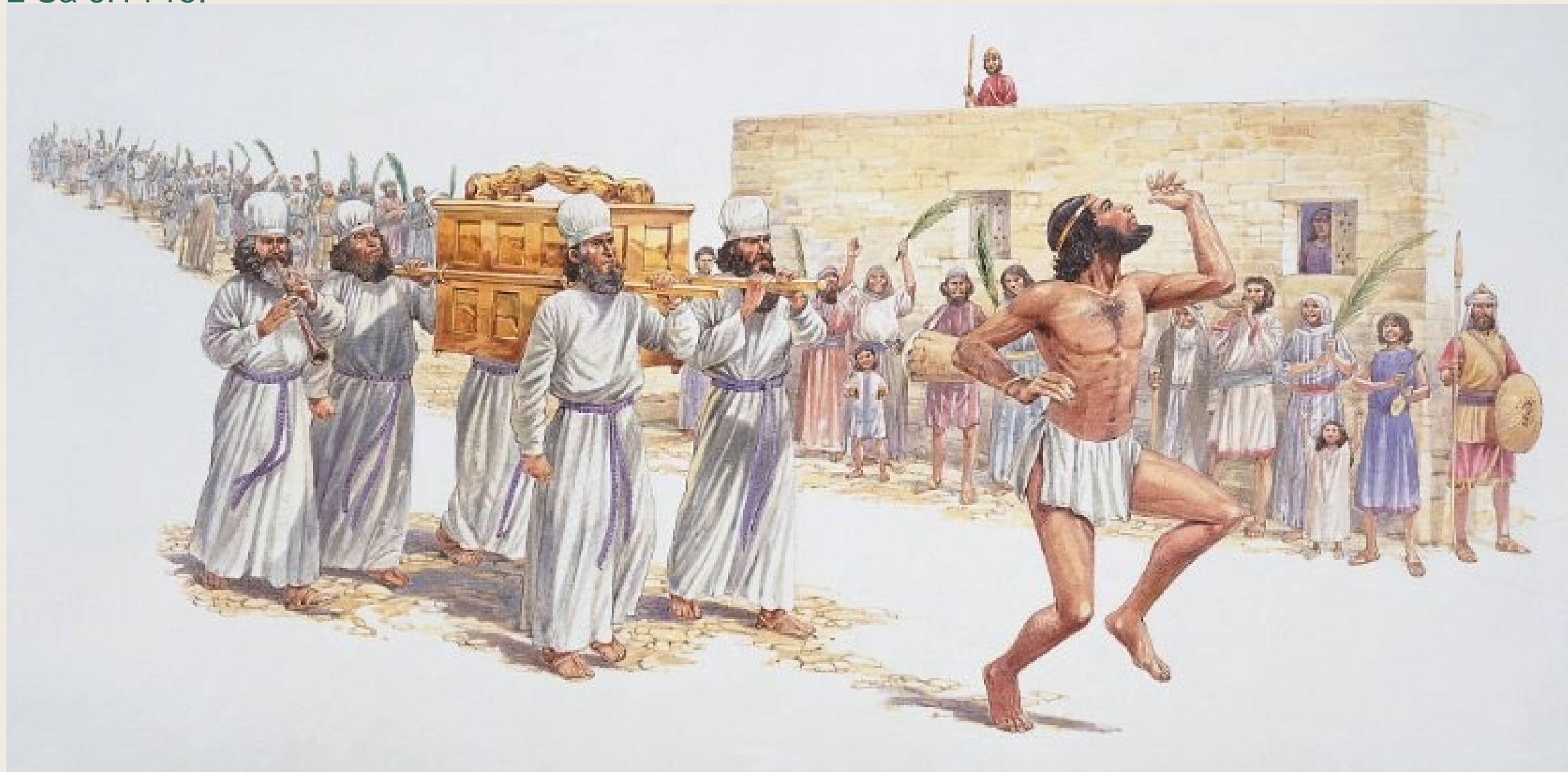
Hadaka Mitzuri Naked Festival



And David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, and David was wearing a linen ephod.

So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.

2 Sa 6:14-15.



Three Kings of Orient Chiuai — Sujin — Suinin

1. Chiuai

- a. Exceedingly tall and handsome emperor
- b. His reign began good and ended very poorly



Three Kings of Orient

Chiuai — Sujin — Suinin



1. Chiuai

- a. Exceedingly tall and handsome emperor
- b. His reign began good and ended very poorly

2. Sujin

- a. A young and revered king
- b. Began practice of taking census of citizens
- c. Ruled during 3-year famine
- d. Army fought and subjugated **Yama - shiro no Idomi**
 - Yama = mountain; (Mount Shir of Idom)

Three Kings of Orient Chiuai —Sujin —Suinin

1. Chiuai

2. Sujin

3. Suinin

a. Son of Emperor Suinin

b. First emperor to build a shrine (Ise, near Nara)

c. Built 800 ponds to store water for irrigation

“The great god of Yamato delivered an oracle to Emperor Suinin telling him that if he were watchful in regard to ceremonies of worship, his life would be long” (Nihon Shoki).



Three Kings of Orient Ise Shrine

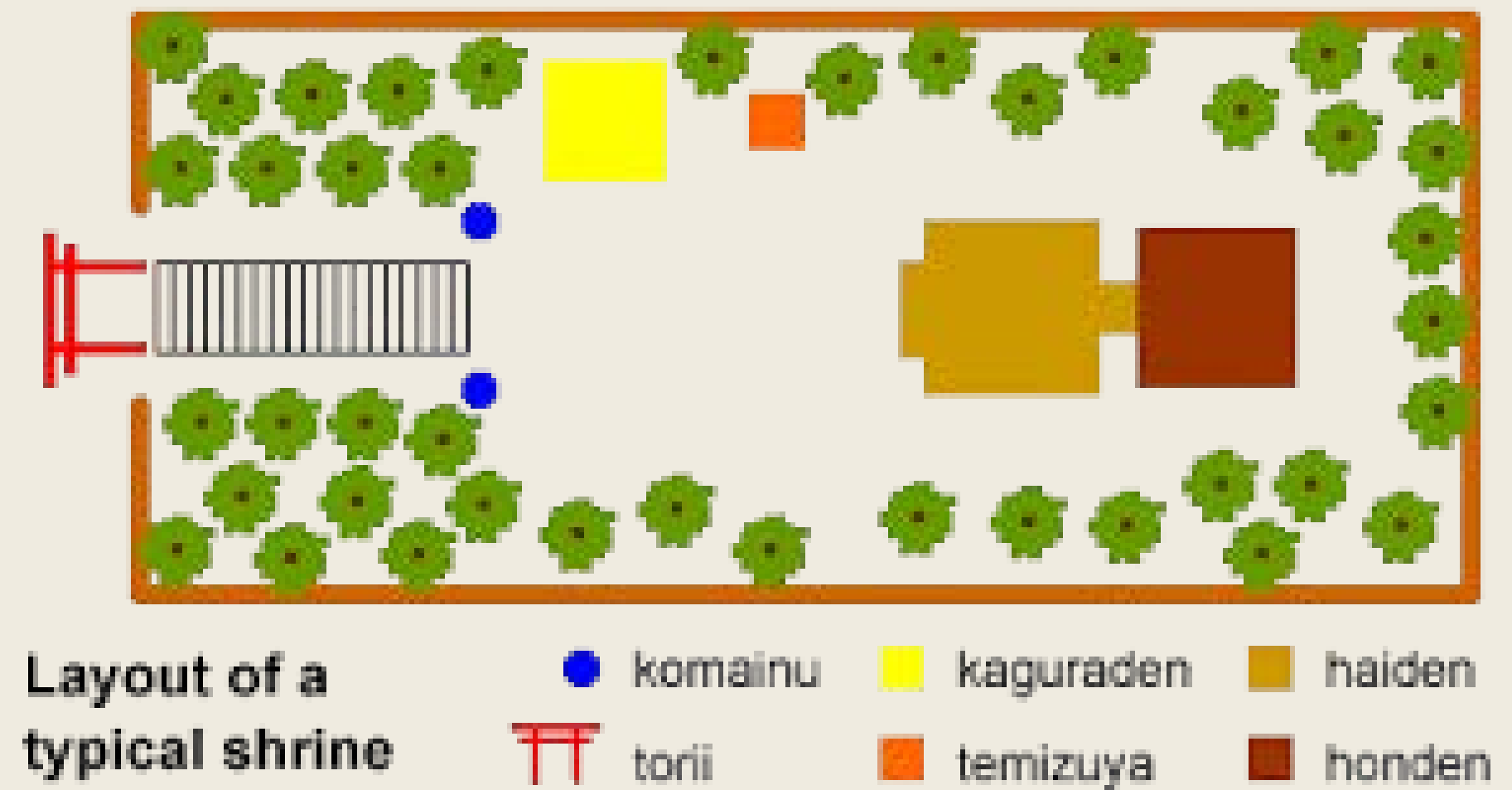


Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines



a. Torii gate entrance

- i. Entrance into a sacred space
- ii. The one doorway, painted red



Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines

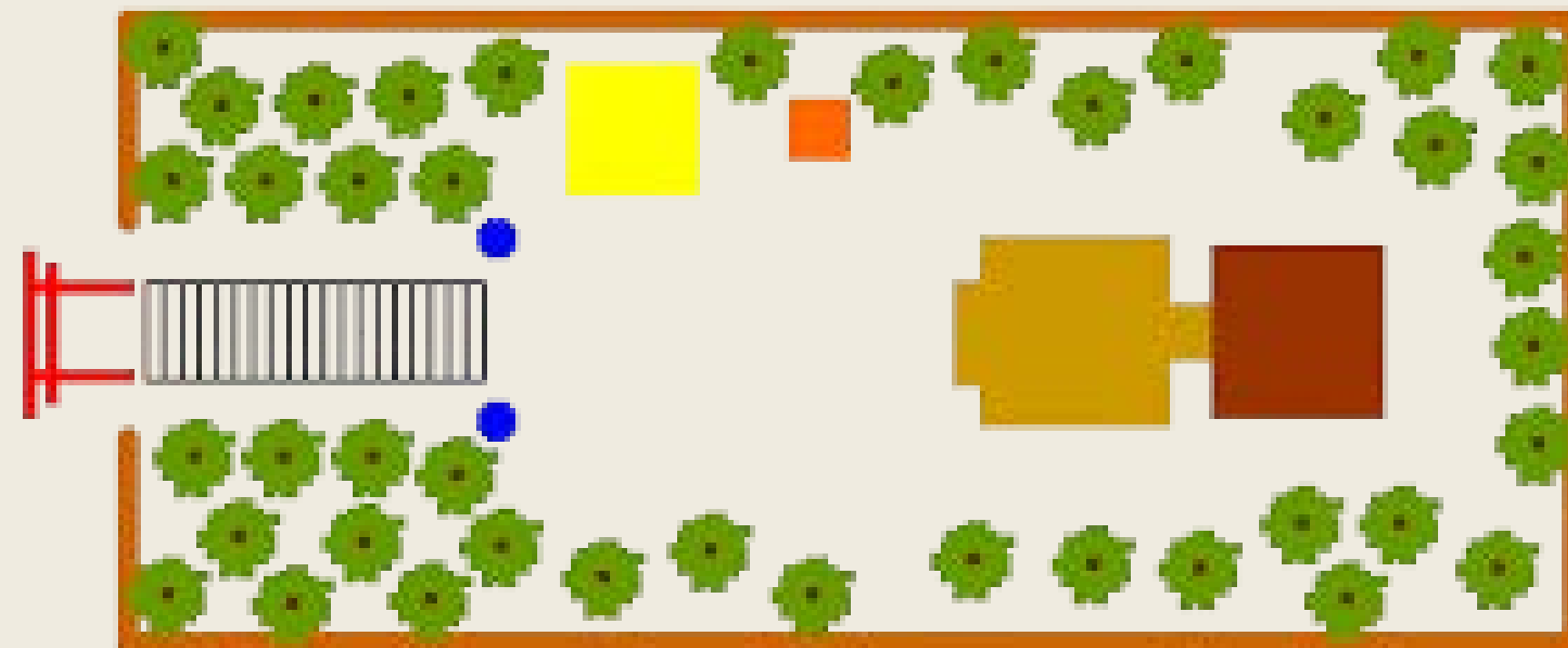
- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
 - i. There are none, and never have been any lions in Japan...



Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines



- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
- c. Temizuya wash basin



Layout of a
typical shrine

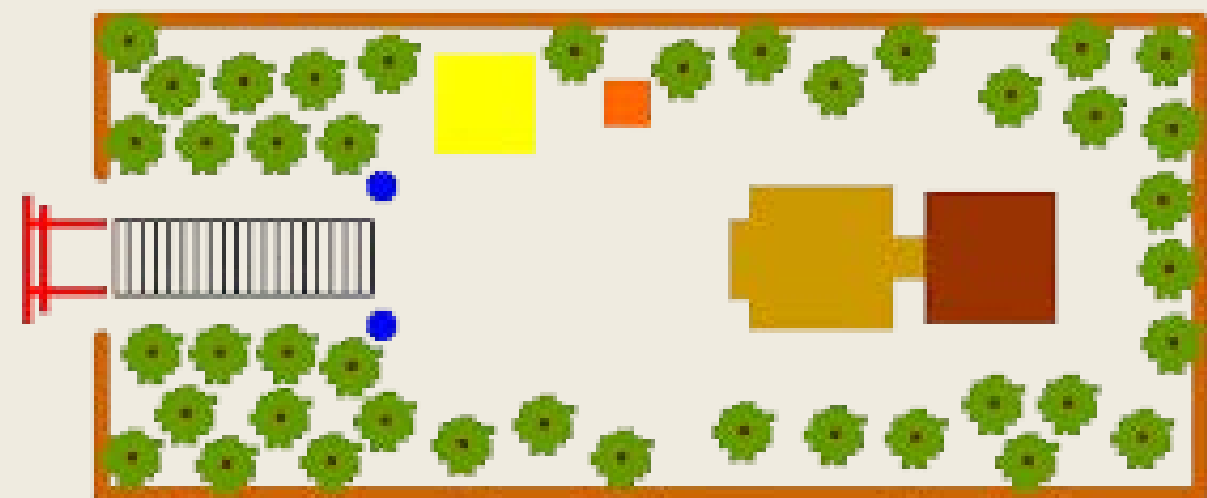
- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  komainu |  kaguraden |  haiden |
|  torii |  temizuya |  honden |



Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines



- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
- c. Temizuya wash basin
- d. Haiden worship hall
 - Open to public



Layout of a
typical shrine

- komainu
- kaguraden
- haiden
- ⚡ torii
- temizuya
- honden



Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines



- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
- c. Temizuya wash basin
- d. Haiden worship hall
- e. Honden main sanctuary
 - i. Not open to public
 - ii. Only entered by Shinto priest annually
 - iii. Dwelling place of shrine kami



Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines



- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
- c. Temizuya wash basin
- d. Haiden worship hall
- e. Honden main sanctuary
- f. No idols, Overlaid cypress



Shinto no Jinja Idols around the World

No idols in a Shinto temple, no
image of a kami in the sanctuary



Shinto no Jinja

Temples around the world



THE HUMAN ODYSSEY
PYRAMID STRUCTURES OF THE WORLD v2.0
 DESIGNED BY SIMON E. DAVIES

 ZIGGURAT OF TEPE SIALK Kashan, Iran: 3000 BCE	 PYRAMID OF DJOSER Memphis, Egypt: 2610 BCE	 PYRAMID OF KHUFU El Giza, Egypt: 2560 BCE	 ZIGGURAT OF UR City of Ur, Iraq: 2100 BCE
 CHOGHA ZANBIL (Ziggurat) Khuzestan, Iran: 1250 BCE	 TOMB OF KING KASHTA Shendi, Sudan: 500 BCE	 JEBEL BARKAL PYRAMID Karima town, Sudan: 300 BCE	 QIN SHI MAUSOLEUM Xi'an, China: 210 BCE
 PYRAMID OF CESTIUS Rome, Italy: 12 BCE	 PYRAMID OF THE SUN Teotihuacan, Mexico: 100 CE	 TOMB OF THE GENERAL City of Ji'an, China: 300 CE	 BOROBUDUR TEMPLE Java, Indonesia: 800 CE
 PRANG TEMPLE Kol Ker, Cambodia: 940 CE	 EL CASTILLO Chichen Itza, Mexico: 1000 CE	 XIA TOMBS Ningxia Hui, China: 1048 CE	 MORONGO UTA PYRAMID Rapa Iti, Polynesia: 1450 CE

Egyptians Vs **Mesoamerican**

 Khufu	 Chichen Itza
 Khafre	 Uxmal
 Snefru	 Pyramid of the Moon
 Menkaure	 Tikal



Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines

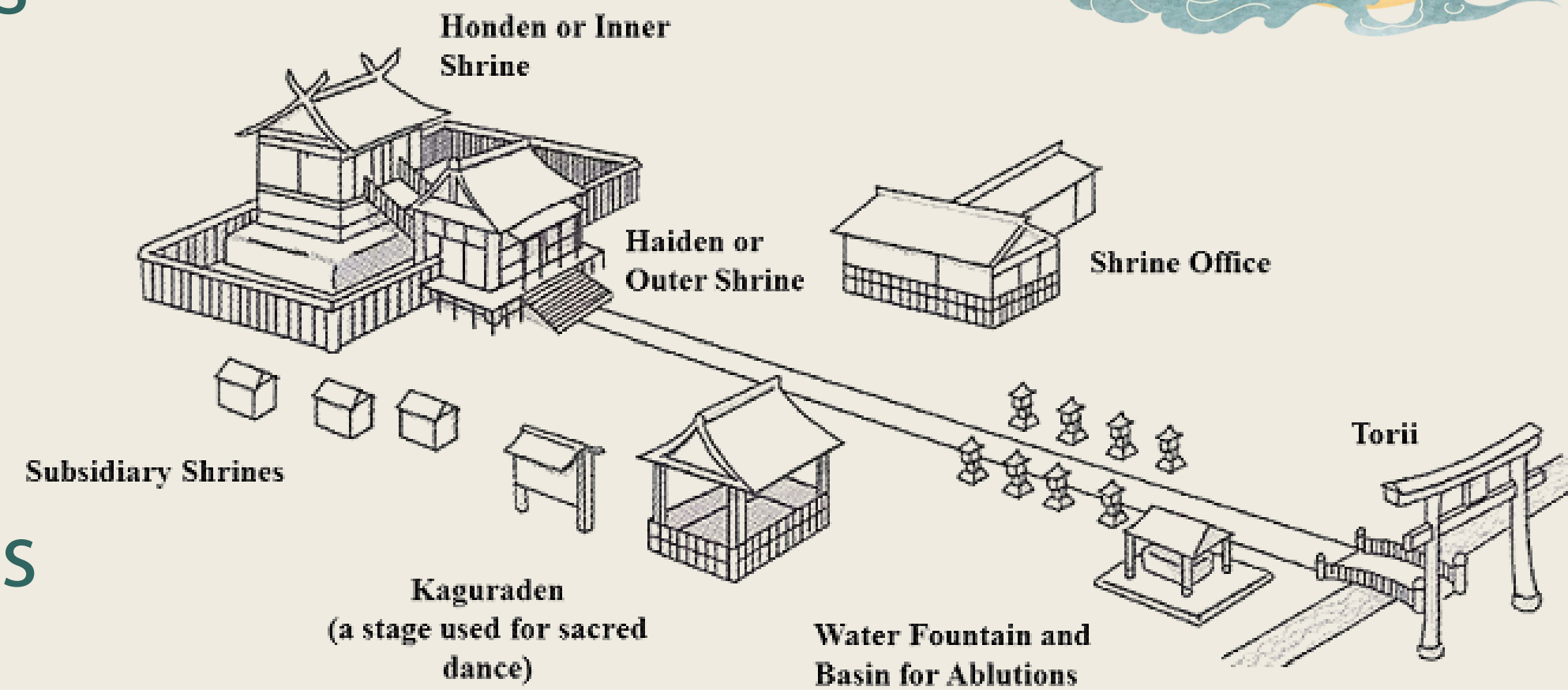
- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
- c. Temizuya wash basin
- d. Haiden worship hall
- e. Honden main sanctuary
- f. No idols, Overlaid cypress
- g. **Three sacred treasures**
 - i. Kept in shrine
 - ii. Imperial regalia

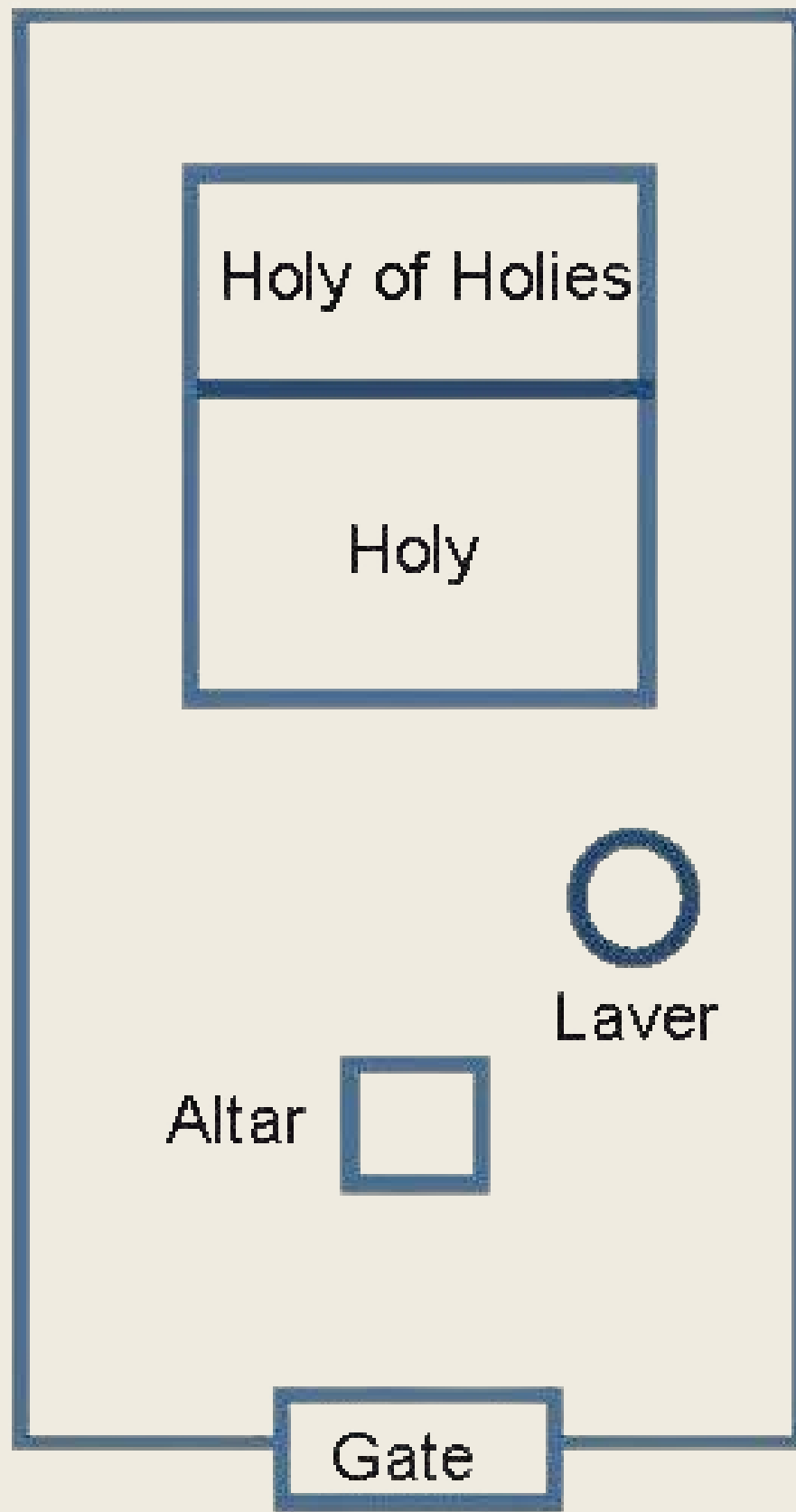


Shinto no Jinja Temple Shrines

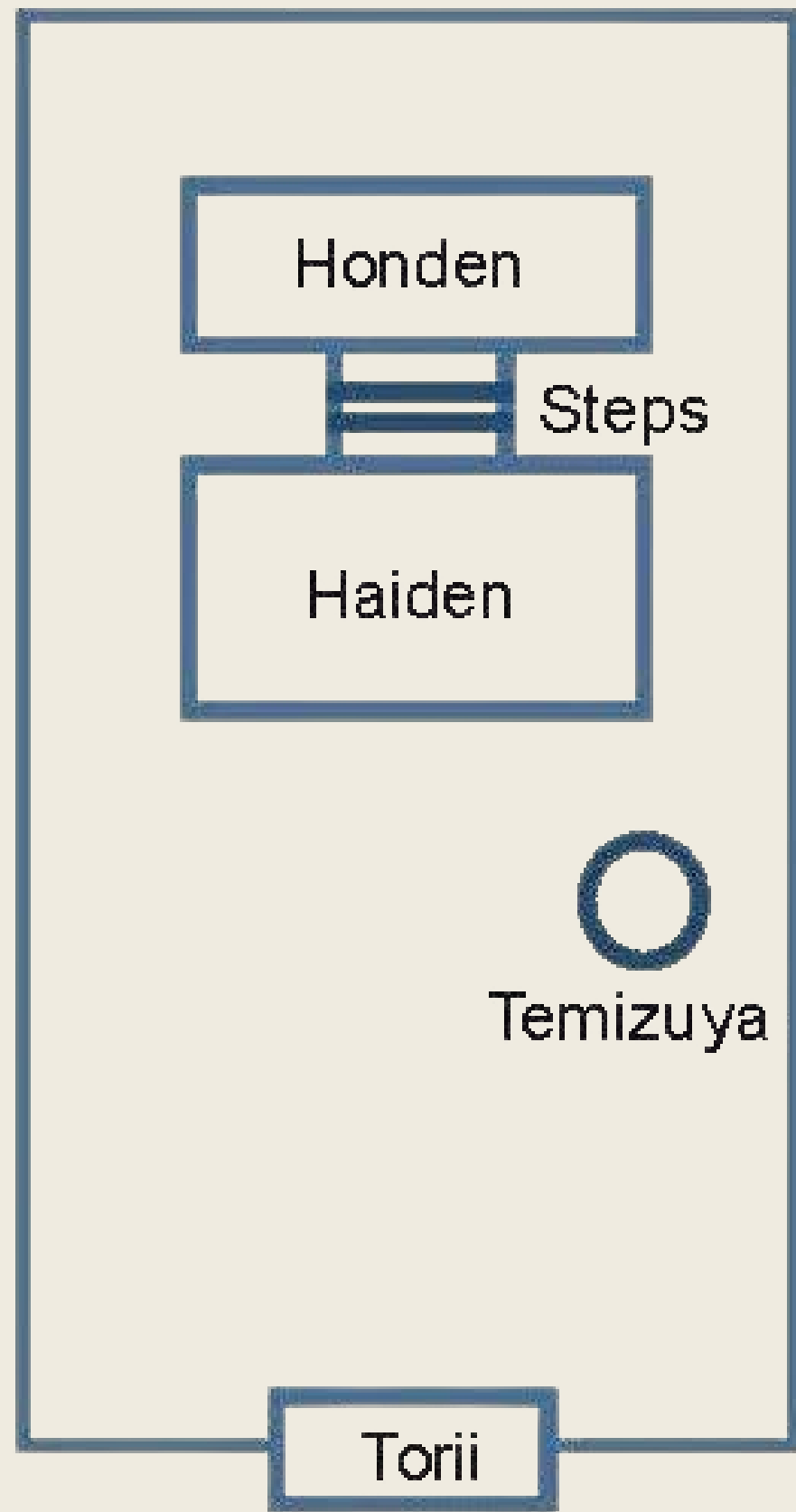


- a. Torii gate entrance
- b. Komainu, Guardian Lions
- c. Temizuya wash basin
- d. Haiden worship hall
- e. Honden main sanctuary
- f. No idols, Overlaid cypress
- g. Three sacred treasures
- h. No sacrificial altar (kaguraden)





Tabernacle



Shinto Shrine



Tengu Guardian of the Mountain



Tengu Guardian of the Mountain

a. Teacher of the Yamabushi Shugendo priests



Tengu Guardian of the Mountain

- a. Teacher of the Yamabushi Shugendo priests
- b. Artwork depicts him as
 - i. Distinctly non-asiatic



Tengu

Guardian of the Mountain

- a. Teacher of the Yamabushi Shugendo priests
- b. Artwork depicts him as
 - i. Distinctly non-asiatic
 - ii. Often with ruddy skin



Tengu

Guardian of the Mountain

a. Teacher of the Yamabushi Shugendo priests

b. Artwork depicts him as

- Distinctly non-asiatic
- Often with ruddy skin
- Caricatured with a big nose



Tengu Guardian of the Mountain

a. Teacher of the Yamabushi Shugendo priests

b. Artwork depicts him as

- i. Distinctly non-asiatic
- ii. Often with ruddy skin
- iii. Caricatured with a big nose
- iv. Wears the Tokin



Tengu

Guardian of the Mountain

- a. Teacher of the Yamabushi
- b. Artwork depiction
- c. **The source of formal wisdom of priests**
 - i. Presents wisdom to priests in a scroll



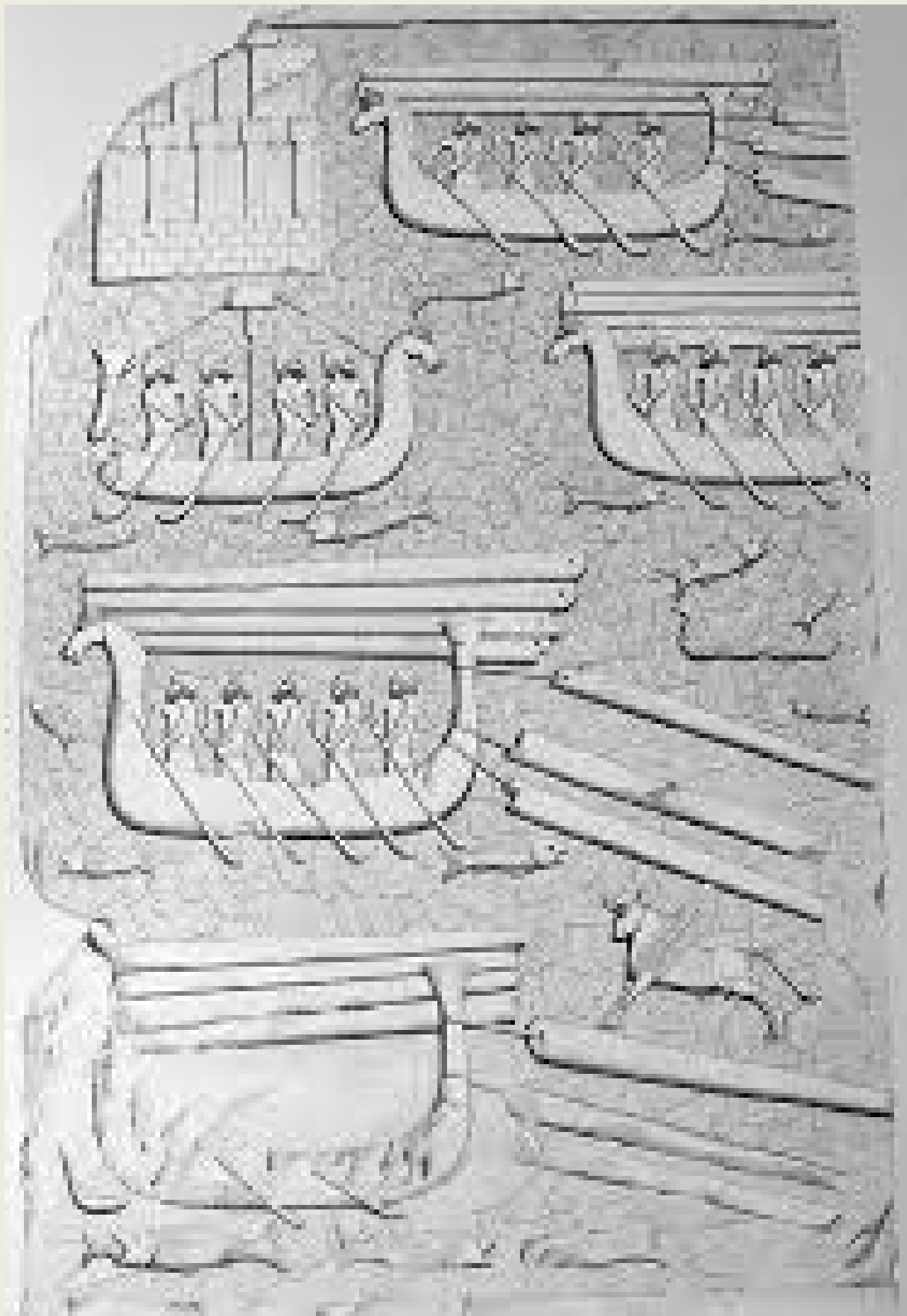
Tengu

Guardian of the Mountain

- a. Teacher of the Yamabushi
- b. Artwork depiction
- c. The source of formal wisdom of priests
 - i. Presents wisdom to priests in a scroll
 - ii. Called the Tora-no-maki, or Tora-scroll







Now three times in a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar which he built to the Lord, burning incense with them on the altar which was before the Lord. So he finished the house.

King Solomon also built a fleet of ships in Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

And Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who knew the sea, along with the servants of Solomon.

They went to Ophir and took four hundred and twenty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King Solomon.

(1Kings 9:25–28)



Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with difficult questions.

So she came to Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her.

(1Ki 10:1-3)



When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her.

Then she said to the king, “It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.

(1Ki 10:4–6)



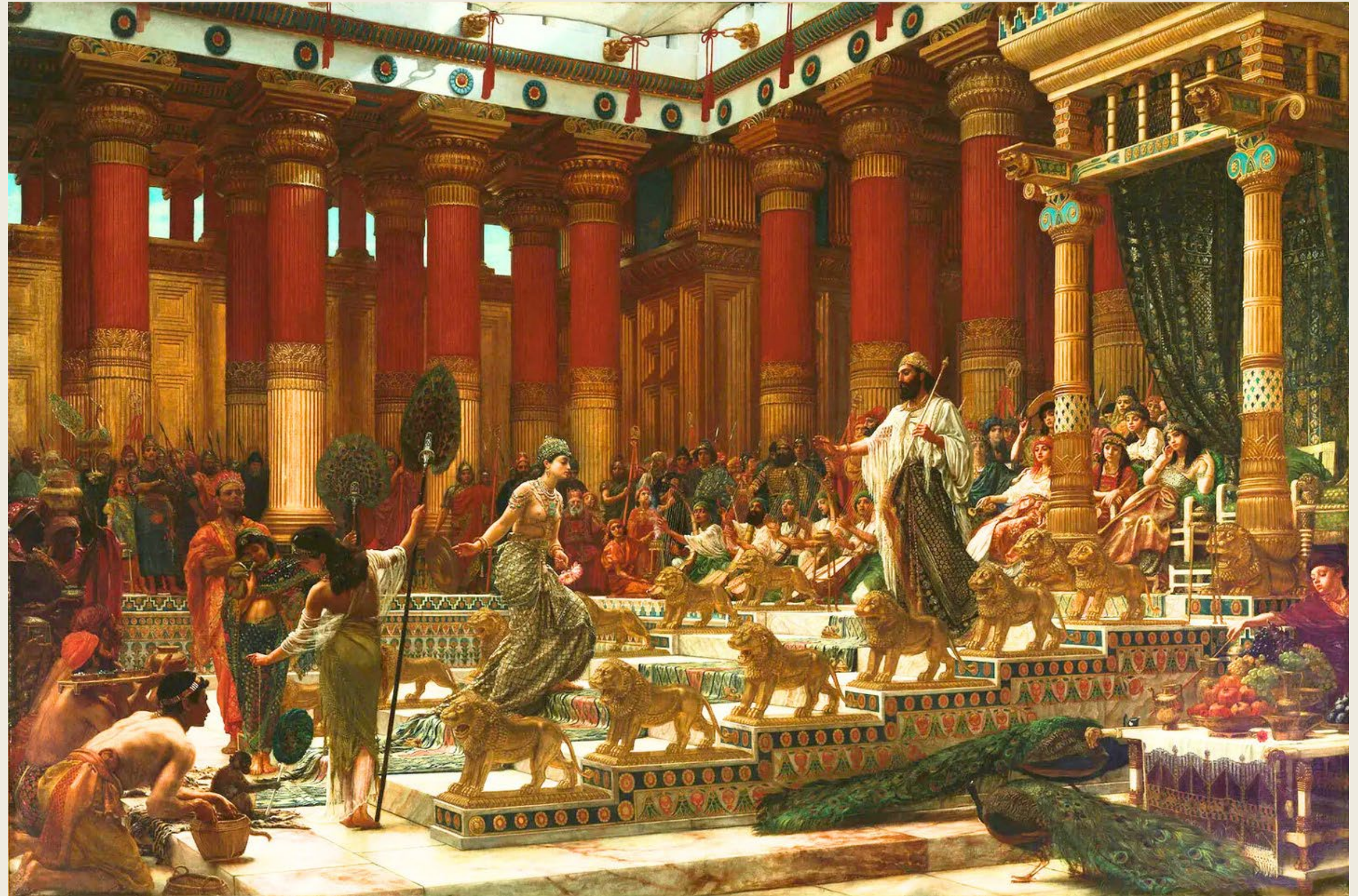
“Nevertheless I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed in wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard.

“How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom.

(1Ki 10:7–8)

“Blessed be the Lord your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.”

(1Ki 10:9)



Japan is a closed culture...
but it hasn't always been!

Today, fewer than 1% of Japanese
are believers.

Perhaps if their ancestors recognized
the wisdom of Scripture, they can too.

Yamamoto

Pray for their salvation!





Let us pray.