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The Ritual Narration of Mortuary Art

The *Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku* and Its *Etoki* at Amidaji

This article recovers the memorial and placatory function of the *Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku* and its *etoki* (picture-explaining) at Amidaji, the non-extant mortuary temple for the tragically killed Antoku and the Taira. After discussing the content, date, and authorship of the *Illustrated Story*, this article reconstructs the ritual context and structure of the *etoki*, and the meaning of each component of this ritual—location, facility, narration, and the paintings. By embedding these meanings into the entire structure of the ritual, the article reveals that Amidaji's *etoki* was expected to commemorate, pacify, and help the spirits of Antoku and the Taira to attain rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. This study calls for a shift in our view of *etoki*, from a practical tool to a ritual practice also guided by spiritual purposes, thereby emphasizing the significance of mortuary art as a central medium in spirit pacification.

KEYWORDS: Amidaji—Antoku—the Taira—the *Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku*—*etoki*—spirit pacification—mortuary art

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AT THE END of the final battle of the Genpei War (1180–1185), the eight-year-old emperor Antoku 安徳 (1178–1185; r.1180–1185) and hundreds of defeated Taira 平 clansmen jumped to their deaths into the sea of Dannoura in Nagato province (now part of Yamaguchi prefecture). In commemoration of this event, Amidaji 阿弥陀寺, a temple that overlooked this sea, was revived as a mortuary temple for the drowned emperor and Taira clansmen. Because the tragic deaths of the child emperor and the Taira were followed by various calamities, it was believed that their spirits, unable to access the next world, became malicious ghosts who threatened the living and the nation. In order to appease these ghosts and to assist them in attaining rebirth in the Western Paradise of Amida Buddha, the imperial court ordered Nagato province to construct a Buddhist hall at Amidaji in 1191.

In this special hall dedicated to the pacification of the spirits of Antoku and the Taira, a set of eight paintings known as *Antoku tennō engi-e* 安徳天皇縁起絵, or the *Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku* (see FIGURE 1) (hereafter, the *Illustrated Story*), was installed. The paintings depict the short life of Antoku as well as scenes from the *Tale of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari* 平家物語), and they were vocally narrated in the practice of *etoki* 絵解き (picture-explaining). During the Meiji-period persecution of Buddhism, Amidaji was abolished and then replaced by a Shinto shrine (today called Akama Jingū 赤間神宮; see GUNJI 2011). The temple buildings were demolished and the majority of Buddhist icons and implements were destroyed, and subsequently all rituals, except for a few, were abolished and replaced by so-called Shinto-style rituals. Nevertheless, a handful of key pieces of artwork, including the *Illustrated Story* and portraits of Antoku and select Taira members, survived the persecution and have survived to this day. They were removed from their original place of enshrinement, however, and their original functions have been forgotten.

The subject of this article is those lost functions of the *Illustrated Story* and its *etoki*. In particular, this article seeks to recover, and to show the importance of, functions that probably subjected the *etoki* to the Meiji persecution of Buddhism—namely, the function of the *etoki* as an essentially Buddhist ritual and the function of the *Illustrated Story* as a central object in that ritual—as opposed to the practical or institutional functions that could have profited the new Shinto shrine as well as they did Amidaji.

This study will introduce a new perspective in the research on the *Illustrated Story* and its *etoki* and to the study of *etoki* in general. In previous studies art

historians have focused primarily on identifying the date and authorship on iconographic and stylistic grounds, as well as on identifying what goes on in the scenes using not only the inscriptions on the paintings but also the *Tale of the Heike* (KYŌTO KOKURITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN 1971, 48; MIYA 1966; KAWAMOTO 1979; IDO 1993; SATŌ 2010). Some recent studies have investigated functions of the *Illustrated Story* but they are institutional (convincing people of the temple's legitimacy or sanctity, enhancing its prestige, perhaps raising funds, and so on), and the methodologies of these studies are mostly iconographic or stylistic.¹ Art historians have tended to treat the *Illustrated Story* in isolation, in particular from its *etoki*.² Literature scholars have advanced the identification of the scenes by using not only the inscriptions and the *Tale of the Heike* but also the texts for the *etoki* performance (TOMIKURA 1964; ISHIDA 1979; HAYASHI and TOKUDA 1983; AKAI 1989). Yet this performance has often been regarded merely as an act of explicating the biography of Antoku and the battle scenes from the Genpei War, and not much analysis has been given to its functions.³ In fact, in previous studies of not just Amidaji's but any *etoki*, scholars have tended to stress that it was conducted for didactic and proselytizing purposes because, through *etoki*, lay people could easily understand the story, which may have been difficult to comprehend just through listening and reading about it.⁴ Apart from such purposes and the related aspect of fund-raising, functions of *etoki* have rarely been given a detailed analysis. In the earlier scholarship, to be sure, a placatory function of *etoki* has been pointed out;⁵ nevertheless, little analysis has been given on how it was supposed to serve this placatory function. In the case of Amidaji in particular, while the role of its paintings as visual aids in storytelling has been fully acknowledged, given Amidaji's primary role as an imperially designated mortuary site, the memorial and placatory implications of *etoki* as a rite performed in the most important hall of this mortuary temple need more analysis and emphasis.

This article provides such analysis and emphasis through a detailed investigation and reconstruction of the *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story* as a ritual. Instead

1. See CHINO 1993; MIZUNO 2001, 2003; SATŌ 2010.

2. Exceptions include architectural historians Abiru Hiroshi and Nishi Kazuo, who reconstructed how the paintings used to be placed at the time of Amidaji through investigations of plans of the temple complex, the current topography of Amidaji's location, and the current sizes of the panels of the *Illustrated Story*; see ABIRU 1994; NISHI 1999.

3. It seems rather obvious that any social function the *Illustrated Story* had was shared by its *etoki*, which was clearly able to enhance the expected effects of the *Illustrated Story*. Curiously, however, no studies of the social functions of the *Illustrated Story* have mentioned this point, except possibly CHINO 1993, who briefly mentions the *etoki* (179).

4. For an extensive study of *etoki* in English, see KAMINISHI 2006.

5. AKAI (1989, 363) spends a couple of sentences on commemorative and placatory functions that *etoki* of war-story paintings in general tended to have.



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FIGURE 1 (this page and to the right). The *Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku* (*Antoku tennō engi-e*; sixteenth century), hanging scroll, color on paper (panels 1, 2, 7, and 8: 158.0 x 124.7 cm; panels 3, 4, 5, and 6: 160.0 x 88.0 cm), Akama Jingū.



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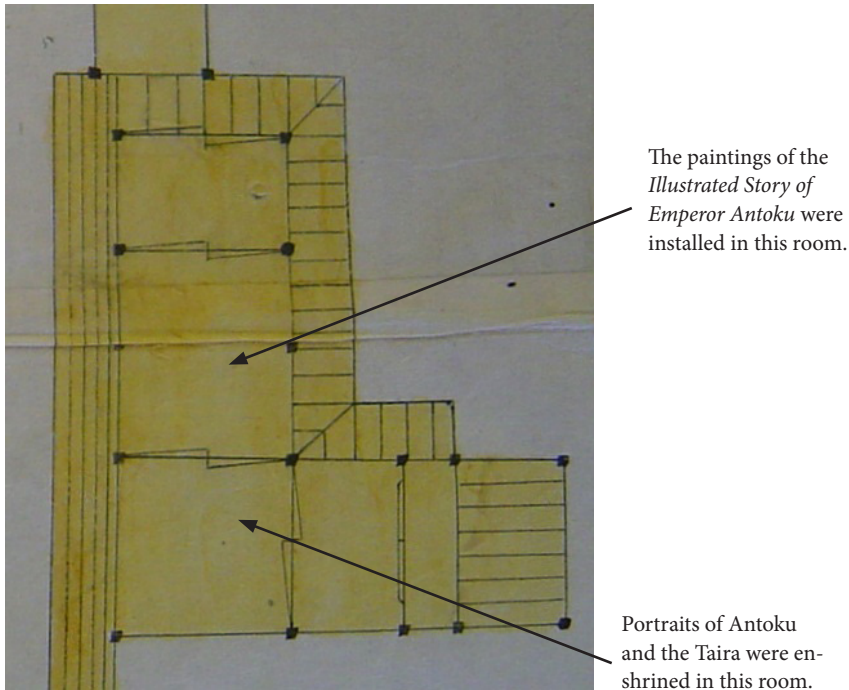


FIGURE 2. Plan of the Spirit Hall from *Amidaji ruishō izen no ezu* (1732), Yamaguchiken Monjokan.

of examining the *Illustrated Story* in isolation from other elements (historical, architectural, and ritual contexts), it will show that the *Illustrated Story* and its *etoki* were essential parts to Amidaji, a mortuary temple where the spirits of Antoku and the Taira were memorialized and pacified, and will consider how such major responsibilities of the temple were fulfilled through the *etoki*. Because of Amidaji's special location—the spirits of Antoku and the Taira were believed to wander there, trapped in a liminal realm between this world and the other world—the *etoki*, which consisted of the veneration of the portraits of Antoku and the Taira and the recitation of the *Illustrated Story*, was seen as a crucial ritual practice that was designed to evoke, propitiate, and assist their spirits to achieve rebirth in Amida's Western Paradise.

The first section of this article explains the major scenes of the paintings with reference to the *Tale of the Heike* as well as to the inscriptions on the paintings; it also reviews the date and authorship of the *Illustrated Story*. The second to sixth sections are devoted to analyzing the ritual functions of both the components and the structure of the *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story*. The second section reviews the texts of the *etoki* and other primary sources, along with the architectural

background of the *etoki*, to show the outline of the actual process of the *etoki*; I will show that Amidaji's *etoki* ritual included portrait veneration as its first and integral part. Each of the next three sections analyzes the ritual significance of a component of the *etoki* through comparison to other cases—the third section studies the ritual significance of the portraits of Antoku and the Taira and the veneration thereof; the fourth section clarifies the ritual meaning of Amidaji's location; and the fifth section investigates the power expected of the paintings of the *Illustrated Story* and their narration. The sixth section pieces these components together to reconstruct the entire structure of Amidaji's *etoki* ritual and its placatory function. Before concluding the article, the seventh section argues that this placatory function of Amidaji's *etoki* ritual was preserved, at least as one of the functions of the *etoki*, till the end of the history of the temple and its *etoki*.

The Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku: Description, date, and authorship

The scenes of the *Illustrated Story* visualize several events derived from the *Tale of the Heike* that were central to Antoku's short life and the Genpei War.⁶ The paintings of the *Illustrated Story* highlight the scenes of the Birth of Antoku, Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa's 後白河 (1127–1192; r.1155–1158) flight to Mt. Hiei and return to the capital, and the Battles of Ichinotani, Yashima, and Dannoura. The paintings are observed from right to left, and this continuous movement can be understood as corresponding to Antoku's travels from the east to the west: he was born in Kyoto, fled westward, and died in the western corner of Honshu.⁷ Eight panels of the *Illustrated Story* decorated three sides of a room in an L-shaped building, the Spirit Hall (FIGURES 2 and 3).

On the surface of the upper center of each of the eight panels, two small boxes are drawn in the shape of rectangular sheets of paper (*shikishi* 色紙), one in gold (except in panel 8, in which red is used instead) and the other in silver, containing brief descriptions of the scenes. Originally, real rectangular sheets had been

6. For the text of the *Tale of the Heike*, I use ICHIKO 1975 and MCCULLOUGH 1988.

7. Most scenes depicted on Amidaji's paintings are commonly seen in other Heike paintings. Nonetheless, the scenes featuring Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa as a protagonist (his flight to and return from the temporary palace in Enryakuji) are unusual in large-scale Heike paintings such as folding screens and sliding-door panels. It is plausible that these rare depictions of Go-Shirakawa were inserted in Amidaji's paintings because he was himself involved in the commission of the Spirit Hall, where the paintings were to be enshrined. As I will explain later, the fear of the vengeful ghosts of Antoku and the Taira drove Go-Shirakawa into this commission. IDO (1993, 12) conjectures that the depictions of Go-Shirakawa were meant to point to "the political power that guaranteed the existence of the Spirit Hall." SATŌ (2010, 499) supports a similar hypothesis with an analysis of the composition of the *Illustrated Story*, in which Go-Shirakawa's residence and Antoku's temporary and last residences are arranged contiguously in a straight line.



The Spirit Hall

FIGURE 3. *Akamagaseki Shōjuzan Amidaji keidai sentei byōdō shinkei no zu* (1841), Yamaguchiken Monjokan.

pasted, as documented in an old directory of the temple, although they were later lost.⁸ The sixteen boxes were probably painted copying the original sheets, but the comparison of the inscriptions in the current boxes and the scenes (which is relatively easy since the scenes generally follow iconographic norms of the *Tale of the Heike*) shows that two pairs of sheets had been switched when copied, a mix-up that may have been caused by a series of restorations.

The earliest surviving documentation mentioning the *Illustrated Story* is found in a travel journal by the monk Sakugen Shūryō 策彦周良 (1501–1579) in 1541:

After eating, I visited Amidaji with Chōun [釣雲].... Amidaji's monk welcomed us. He served saké, and then withdrew. The monk escorted us to the Spirit Hall and worshiped the former emperor's portrait. Next I saw [a] painting[s] on the wall that depict[s] the former emperor's life (from his birth till his death). There was a pine tree called *Usuzumi no matsu*.⁹

8. *Chōshū Akamagaseki Amidaji jūmotsuchō* (Inventory of Amidaji in Akamagaseki in Chōshū province); BJY 7: 387–88.

9. *Sakugen oshō nyūminki shotoshū*, in BZ 116 (Tenmon 10: 1541.7.13), 317–18. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

The wall paintings Sakugen witnessed were the *Illustrated Story*. It is very likely that his visit was made when Amidaji was under reconstruction after the fire of 1518, which destroyed almost all of the buildings, including the Spirit Hall. The year after this disastrous fire, Amidaji's head priest Shūeki 秀益 (b.d. unknown) sent a letter appealing for financial support from Sue Hiroaki 陶弘詮 (d.1523), a senior retainer of the provincial daimyō, Ōuchi Yoshioki 大内義興 (1477–1528).¹⁰ In the letter, Shūeki laments that the temple lost many buildings and artifacts, but he reports that most artifacts, for instance Buddhist sculptures and portraits of Antoku and the Taira, were rescued by fleeing monks. Shūeki's letter does not mention the *Illustrated Story*; hence it is uncertain whether the paintings existed prior to the fire of 1518. Amidaji's reconstruction project seems to have been set to begin shortly after Shūeki's request, but lasted decades. The slow process of reconstruction was partly due to the extensive damage to many buildings, as suggested in several documents. For example, in an official document in 1556, Mōri Motonari 毛利元就 (1497–1571), who became the provincial daimyō after the Ōuchi, says that Antoku told his stepmother in an oracular dream to rebuild the Spirit Hall soon.¹¹ The imperial edict issued by Emperor Ōgimachi 正親町 (r.1557–1586) in 1562 ordered Amidaji to complete its restoration immediately.¹² The entire temple's reconstruction was probably finished in 1577 because in the same year the head priest Yōsen 養專 (b.d. unknown) expressed profound appreciation to the wealthy local landlord Itō Moriyoshi 伊藤盛良 (b.d. unknown), who played a crucial role in restoring Amidaji financially.¹³ These references indicate how extensively the 1518 fire damaged Amidaji and how difficult it was for the temple to reconstruct the many buildings lost in the fire.

If a hall housing an icon or ritual implements is destroyed, the icon and implements are temporarily housed in a different place (usually another hall in the same temple complex or a different temple nearby) until the reconstruction of the original hall is complete. When Sakugen saw the sliding-door paintings of the *Illustrated Story* inside the Spirit Hall, it is possible that the refurbishment of the hall was yet to be complete. If so, this unusual situation may be accounted for by the circumstances of the 1518 fire. As Shūeki's letter laments, the fire destroyed almost all the buildings in the temple complex, leaving no place for storing temple treasures including portraits of Antoku and the Taira. Also, since the fire broke out in the neighborhood of Amidaji and spread to the temple, there was probably no suitable place to be found nearby in which to store treasures.

10. *Amidaji bettō Shūeki mōshijōan*, AJM 132–35.

11. *Mōri Motonari ando jō*, AJM 62–63.

12. *Ōgimachi tennō rinji*, AJM 128–129.

13. *Amidaji Yōsen shōjō*, in *Akamagaseki honjin Itōke*, 53–54.

The extant complete set (indeed, the only extant complete set, according to the current head priest of Akama Jingū) of the *Illustrated Story*, datable to the sixteenth century, was likely a copy of an earlier (and lost) set. Akama Jingū, the shrine that replaced Amidaji, owns three versions of the *Illustrated Story* including the complete set of eight paintings. A second version consists of two paintings (panels 3, 4, 5, and 6), and a third has only one painting (panel 8).¹⁴ The second and third versions look more recent than the first and complete set.

Through stylistic and iconographic studies, art historians Kawamoto Keiko, Ido Makoto, and Satō Naoko date the complete set of eight paintings to the mid-to-late sixteenth century.¹⁵ Supporting this date, two nearly identical records say that sometime between 1564 and 1567 the then head monk of Amidaji reported progress in the temple's reconstruction to the local warlord Mōri Motonari.¹⁶ Motonari was particularly delighted by the report that sliding-door paintings of the emperor (*Tennō e shōji* 天皇絵障子), identified as the *Illustrated Story*, were “newly made” (*aratani kaki totonoe raru* 新被書調) based upon an earlier version. The possibility that the paintings were copies of the older ones is also supported by two more documents.¹⁷ First, the inventory of 1739 indicates that Amidaji then had two complete sets of the *Illustrated Story*: one enshrined in the Spirit Hall, and one that was preserved in storage as it was older and suffered deterioration.¹⁸ The second document is a travel journal by Osaka merchant Takagi Zensuke 高木善助 (d.1854). He visited Amidaji in 1829 and recorded that the set of the *Illustrated Story* displayed in the Spirit Hall was a copy of an older set, which was in the custody of the daimyō of the Chōfū domain.¹⁹ It is possible that the daimyō borrowed the older set merely for appreciation, but probably the set was brought to the domain's painting bureau for repair due to its deterioration. It is likely that it was never returned and eventually lost, whereas the newer set, kept in the Spirit Hall in 1829, survives in Amidaji.²⁰ These four documents from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries together show that (assuming they refer to the same pair of sets) the extant complete set of the *Illustrated Story* was newly made in the

14. The third version was purchased from Shibunkaku, an antiquarian art dealer in Kyoto, by the current head priest Mizuno Naofusa in the 1970s.

15. For a thorough discussion of the authorship and date of the paintings, see KAWAMOTO 1979; IDO 1993; SATŌ 2010, 499–503.

16. *Mōrike bugyōnin Kunishi Mototake shōjō*, AJM 89–90, and *Mōrike bugyōnin Kodama Motoyoshi shōjō*, AJM 91–92.

17. IDO 1993 and SATŌ 2010 mention the aforementioned records on Motonari, but not the following two documents.

18. *Chōshū Akamagaseki Amidaji jūmotsuchō*, BJY 7: 387–93.

19. *Satsuyō ōhen kiji*, NSS 2 (Bunsei 12:1829.6.9), 627.

20. *Kankoku heisha komonjo hōmotsu mokuroku* (Inventory of the imperial shrine), dated to 1902, lists only one set of the *Illustrated Story*.

mid-to-late sixteenth century, confirming the stylistic and iconographic analyses, and based on an older set as reported to Motonari.

Of the other two versions kept in Akama Jingū, the version with panels 3 through 6 is in the format of two folding screens. It is unknown when and why this version was made; whether it was originally made in a set of eight panels (in which case the other four were lost); or whether it was made as folding screens originally or later (and if later, when and why). The other version with just panel 8 is in the format of a hanging scroll and does not have gold color applied on the clouds and ground. It seems to have been made after the early Meiji dismantlement of Amidaji's Spirit Hall, since there is no trace of a door knob, indicating that the painting was never intended to be displayed in an architectural setting.

It was fairly common that paintings used for *etoki* practice were often repaired and replaced by new ones due to deterioration. For example, the *Illustrated Biography of Prince Shōtoku* (*Shōtoku taishi eden* 聖徳太子絵伝), which had been exhibited on the walls of the Picture Hall in Hōryūji 法隆寺 since its production in 1069, was repaired several times. It was then removed from the walls and replaced by Yoshimura Shūkei's 吉村周圭 (b.d. unknown) copy in 1788.²¹ Amidaji's original paintings of the *Illustrated Story* were also substituted by later copies probably as a result of the damage caused by extensive use. The production date of the original prototype is obscure, but we can assume that it was displayed in the Spirit Hall for a long time and used repeatedly for *etoki*.

Regarding the authorship of the *Illustrated Story*, the paintings bear no signatures or seals by the artist. Nonetheless, various accounts of the Edo period attribute it to Tosa Mitsunobu 土佐光信 (c.1434–c.1525). For instance, a 1788 entry from Shiba Kōkan's 司馬江漢 (1747–1818) travel journal that will be quoted later states that people at Amidaji said the paintings had been made by Mitsunobu. The true authorship of the *Illustrated Story* is beyond the scope of this article on Amidaji's *etoki* (it seems less relevant to the *etoki* who was, as opposed to who was believed to be, the author), but the ascription to Mitsunobu is hard to accept since he was no longer active when the extant set of the *Illustrated Story* was completed.²² So let us briefly mention the scholarship over the true authorship.

There are other paintings of the *Tale of the Heike* that were said to have been produced by Mitsunobu, such as the six-fold screen depicting the Battle of

21. Several repairs of the *Illustrated Biography of Prince Shōtoku* are reported in AKIYAMA 1964, 169.

22. Whereas Mitsunobu's name was often cited as the author of any pre-Edo *yamato-e* style paintings whose authorship was previously listed as unknown, it is now argued that only nine paintings, among one hundred works traditionally attributed to him, are likely to have been brushed by Mitsunobu; see YOSHIDA 1979, 144–46; TAKEUCHI 2004, 90.

Ichinotani preserved at Chishakuin 智積院 in Kyoto. Through stylistic analysis, Kawamoto Keiko discounts the attribution of Chishakuin's screen to Mitsunobu; she dates it to the late sixteenth century and regards it as the earliest surviving piece illustrating the *Tale of the Heike* in a folding screen format (KAWAMOTO 1979, 140). Since screens of the Battles of Ichinotani and Yashima were often made as a pair, Chishakuin's folding screen may originally have had a counterpart depicting the Battle of Yashima (which has not survived). Kawamoto finds that iconographic motifs and compositional elements in Chishakuin's screen are nearly identical to those in two pairs of folding screens depicting the Battles of Ichinotani and Yashima—one pair is owned by Tenshinji 天真寺 in Tokyo and the other is preserved at the British Museum—that were produced in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. Judging from the formal and compositional affinities in the screens, Kawamoto suggests that the screens at Tenshinji and the British Museum are derivations from Chishakuin's screen or from a copy book (*funpon* 粉本) that a painter of Chishakuin's screen utilized. While Amidaji's set shares some similarities in motifs and compositions with the works at Chishakuin, Tenshinji, and the British Museum, it also embodies differences from them. For example, Amidaji's complex is not depicted in the three works or indeed any other Heike paintings. Some scenes, in which Go-Shirakawa is a protagonist, as mentioned earlier in footnote 7, are absent in other visualizations of the *Tale of the Heike*. As such, Amidaji's painter derived some motifs from multiple sources (that is, copy books or other works), but he made many modifications of his own and then created motifs and compositions not found in any of the extant visualizations of the *Tale of the Heike*.

Recent research by Satō Naoko has shown similar stylistic representations in the *Illustrated Story* and the *Illustrated Scrolls of Saigyō's Life* (*Saigyō monogatari emaki* 西行物語絵巻) that were produced by Kaida Sukeyasu 海田佑保 (b.d. unknown) in 1500. Although the original scrolls by Sukeyasu no longer exist, copies of them (made in the early Edo period) have survived. As Satō has noted, several motifs such as horses, attendants, and courtiers are indeed similarly depicted in the *Illustrated Story* and the copies of the *Illustrated Scrolls of Saigyō's Life*. *Tansei jakubokushū* 丹青若木集 (an Edo period source compiling biographies of Japanese painters), categorizing Sukeyasu within the artists of the Tosa family and school, states that Sukeyasu influenced the Tosa school artists in the early Edo period.²³ Similar to Mitsunobu, Sukeyasu was known to specialize in

23. See SATŌ 2010, 500–3; YASUDA 1988, 27. *Tansei jakubokushū* says that Sukenobu was active in the years of Ōei (1394–1428), which is inaccurate since he produced the *Illustrated Scrolls of Saigyō's Life* in 1500 (this year of production is inscribed at the end of the scrolls that was copied after Sukenobu's original scrolls). As Yasuda has pointed out, there are several cases showing discrepancy between an artist's active dates listed in *Tansei jakubokushū* and his actual active dates. It is interesting to note that people in the early Edo period considered Sukenobu as a painter active about one hundred years earlier than his actual active years (YASUDA 1988, 27–28).

the traditional and courtly style of *yamato-e*, and his art has been characterized as classical (*kotenteki* 古典的) and orthodox (*seitōteki* 正統的), which are also characteristics of Amidaji's *Illustrated Story* (SATŌ 2010, 503). Although we cannot identify the artist of the *Illustrated Story* due to the lack of conclusive written evidence, it is possible that an artist of the Tosa and other *yamato-e* ateliers who presently remain anonymous produced the paintings.

Etoki of the Illustrated Story of Emperor Antoku: An outline

One of the most important rituals in the Spirit Hall of Amidaji was the *etoki* (picture-explaining) of the *Illustrated Story*. It is unclear when Amidaji started to perform the *etoki*, but actual *etoki* performances of the *Illustrated Story* were well documented in many visitors' records, through which the ritual context of the *etoki* can be reconstructed. Three texts or scripts (*daihon* 台本) of Amidaji's *etoki* have survived to this date. Judging from the writing style, scholars assume that *Akamagaseki Amidaji Antoku tennō etoki*, the oldest of the three texts, was produced in the late sixteenth century.²⁴ *Chōshū Akamagaseki Amidaji oetokisho* is a copy of another text (*shahon* 写本) and is dated 1867.²⁵ The third text, *Sentei oetoki narabini miyako meguri*, was also made in the late Edo period.²⁶ These texts are almost identical; the newer two must have been copied from the first or its related texts. The only major divergence is seen in *Sentei oetoki narabini miyako meguri*: as its title indicates, the volume consists of two parts, *Sentei oetoki* (lit. *etoki* of a former emperor) and *Miyako meguri* (lit. Kyoto tour), written by the same person, Sakota.²⁷ Whereas the former part is almost identical to the other two *etoki* texts, the contents of the latter part, which explain various famous places in Kyoto, bear no relation to them or to the scenes of the *Illustrated Story*. Despite its unrelated contents, ISHIDA (1979, 185) suspects that the *Miyako meguri* part was narrated by a monk as part of the *etoki* at Amidaji. If so, it was perhaps used when the story came to the scene of the Taira's flight from the capital (HAYASHI and TOKUDA 1983, 241). Nonetheless, Hayashi and

24. The three texts of Amidaji's *etoki* are preserved in the Shimonoseki Shiritsu Chōfu Toshokan. *Akamagaseki Amidaji Antoku tennō etoki* (Doc. #. Mōri 1.2.65); reproduced in TOMIKURA 1964, 500–6, and in ISHIDA 1979, 181–90.

25. See *Chōshū Akamagaseki Amidaji oetokisho* (Doc. #. 1.1.124); reproduced in HAYASHI and TOKUDA 1983, 249–53.

26. See *Sentei oetoki narabini miyako meguri* (Doc. #. kyō 2.1.31); reproduced in ISHIDA 1979, 190–91.

27. The title page suggests that the main text was written by a person named Sakota, though it is not known who he or she was. Ishida Takuya points out that in *Shimodake monjo* 下田家文書 (Shimodas served as village headmen in Shimonoseki), a person named Sakota Isenosuke 迫田伊勢之助 appears occasionally from 1854 till 1867 as Shimoda's superior official (ISHIDA 1979, 185).

Tokuda also maintain that the two parts of *Sentei oetoki narabini miyako meguri* were copied from two different texts and compiled together. The joint title written on the current cover of the volume is by a hand different from Sakota's, and therefore, Hayashi and Tokuda argue, does not show a connected origin of the two parts. I would agree that *Sentei oetoki* and *Miyako meguri* were copied from separate texts; moreover, it seems more reasonable to me to surmise that *Miyako meguri* was not used for Amidaji's *etoki*, since it does not refer to any of the sites the *Illustrated Story* depicts (except possibly Jakkōin).²⁸

The common part of the three extant texts of Amidaji's *etoki* has the following structure. Its first tenth introduces Emperor Antoku and (most of) the Taira members in the portraits. The explanation is often given by pointing—for instance, the introduction of the select Taira members goes as follows:

This is Dainagon [-no-suke]; she is the primary wife of [Kiyomori's] prince Shigehira [重平; 重衡]. He is called Kurōdo Nobumori; he is a caretaker of the emperor [Antoku]. This is Jibukyō-no-tsubone; she is a wet nurse of the emperor [Antoku]. These are Shin-Chūnagon [New Middle Counselor] Tomomori [友盛; 知盛] and Taira no Chūnagon [Middle Counselor] Norimori [則盛; 教盛]; they are brothers. Taira no Chūnagon is Noto-dono [Noritsune's] father. This is Shuri-daibu [Master of the Palace Repairs Office] Tsunemori; he is Norimori 教盛 [Atsumori 敦盛's] father. These people so far are all members of the Taira family.

This sequence of pointing makes it obvious that the first part of Amidaji's *etoki* was performed in front of the portraits of Antoku and the Taira. The rest of the text also indicates a lot of pointing to the panels of the *Illustrated Story*; it explains the scenes depicted in each panel by citing the corresponding scenes from the *Tale of the Heike*.

Although Amidaji's *etoki* had presumably originated much earlier, its oldest extant record is found in a diary by Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716), a German physician of the Dutch East India Company. When he visited Amidaji in 1691, he first paid homage to the statue of Emperor Antoku and then listened to *etoki*. Kaempfer wrote:

A young priest let us into the entrance hall of the temple, which was covered with black gauze like a theater, except for the center, where a piece of silver fabric had been spread. Here, on an altar, stood the imperial prince who drowned, plump and stout with long, black hair. The Japanese worshiped him by bowing down to the floor. On each side, two life-sized persons of imperial descent were depicted. They were dressed in black garments like those worn at

28. Satō believes that a building depicted in the mountain in the upper left in panel 2 could be Jakkōin (SATŌ 2010, 498).

the imperial court. The priest lit candles, and began to narrate the tragic story by pointing at the pictures depicted on the sliding doors in the next room.²⁹

Shiba Kōkan also attended the *etoki* at Amidaji in 1788:

I went to Amidaji and unveiled artifacts. It is the sea where Emperor Antoku drowned himself and there is a mausoleum, too. A wooden portrait of the emperor was flanked with sliding-door pictures in bright colors that they say were drawn by Old-Dharma-Eye [*kohōgen* 古法眼]. They depict portraits of Nii-no-ama, Lady Naishi, and Taira members. The next sliding-door paintings illustrated the Taira clan's rise and fall and all its battles. They are by Tosa Mitsunobu. Also, on the rear hill are mound tombs of those who drowned themselves in Dannoura. [Amidaji's] treasures are five imperial edicts issued by Emperors Tsuchimikado, Go-Nara, and Ōgimachi; twenty-three documents issued by the Kamakura [bakufu]; two signed documents by [Ashikaga] Takauji; a paper strip [with a *waka* poem] by Retired Regent Hideyoshi; a prayer made by the Yoshida Urabe family; ten-odd letters by successive heads of the distinguished family [Ōuchi?] and several from the Mōri, Kikkawa, and Kobayakawa families; and twelve volumes of the *Tale of the Heike* written by several ancient calligraphy masters [*kohitsu* 古筆]—they are the rare, Nagato variant. A monk pointed to the paintings and narrated the history of the downfall of the Taira. I was reminded of the old time [of the Genpei War] with tears in my eyes....³⁰

All these accounts, as well as other travelers' records, agree that the visitors first worshiped the statue of Antoku and then participated in *etoki*.³¹ Indeed, the Spirit Hall was designed to show visitors first into the lower room (*gedan no ma* 下段の間) or the worship space, where they venerated the souls of Antoku and the Taira by worshiping their portraits enshrined in the upper room (*jōdan no ma* 上段の間) or the main space, and then into the room where the panels of the *Illustrated Story* were displayed.³² This order agrees with the structure of the three

29. See BODART-BAILEY 1999, 301–2. I have changed the translation slightly. Also see *Edo sanpu ryokō nikki*, 95–97.

30. See *Kōkan Saiyū nikki*, NSS 2 (Tenmei 8:1788.5.19), 318; an almost identical account of a visit at Amidaji is found in *Nagasaki gyōeki nikki*, NKS 1 (Meiwa 4:1767.10.27), 248–49.

31. For more travelers' accounts, see, for example, *Edo sanpu kikō*, 93–94.

32. Whereas Nishi Kazuo and Chino Kaori maintain, rightly I think, that the paintings of the *Illustrated Story* were displayed in the middle room of the L-shaped building (which I claim was the Spirit Hall), they believe that the portraits of Antoku and the Taira were enshrined not in the L-shaped building but in a square-shaped building between the L-shaped one and the Main Hall. I find the latter hypothesis problematic for the following reasons. First, no primary sources describe the square structure as a Spirit Hall. In fact, there is evidence, *Chōfuryō Amidaji zu*, that explicitly shows the name of this square building to be a Goma Hall; *Akamagaseki Shōjuzan Amidaji keidaizu* also inscribes “Eleven-headed Kannon” (*Jūichimen Kannon* 十一面観音) next to the square building, while several temple documents show that the Eleven-headed Kannon was

extant texts of *etoki*, all of which first introduce the portraits and then explain the *Illustrated Story*. Thus, the texts of *etoki*, visitors' accounts, and the architectural setting all confirm the order of rituals: first worshipping the portraits of Antoku and the Taira and then reciting the *etoki*.³³ This shows that not only the recitation but also the worship of Antoku and the Taira were an integral part of Amidaji's *etoki* ritual, and therefore that a proper account of the function expected of the *etoki* needs to integrate the significance of the worship and moreover the meaning of the order of ritual—that is, of first worshipping the portraits before the recitation.

Portraits in Amidaji and Their Backgrounds

Amidaji's *etoki* recitation was always preceded by the veneration of the portraits of Antoku and the Taira as an integral part of the entire *etoki* ritual. This is why, to investigate the proceedings of the ritual, it is important to clarify the functions of those portraits.

Placed in the hall called *mieidō* 御影堂, the portraits of Antoku and the Taira were not simply there to indicate what the deceased had looked like. A Heian-period dictionary, *Iroha jiruishō* 色葉字類抄, says that the term *ei* 影—which literally means “shadow” and, in the East Asian tradition, is often used for portraits—refers not only to a shadow but also to *katashiro* 形代,³⁴ a medium in which a spirit resides.³⁵ As such, a portrait serves not only as a representation of a person's physical form but also as a receptacle for a spirit of the person,

the main icon of the Goma Hall. Second, several visitors recorded that they saw the *Illustrated Story* in the room on the right side of (and therefore in the same building as) the room in which they worshiped the portraits. Lastly, as diagramed in *Dannoura shiseki*, the portraits were installed in a room that comprised the upper and lower parts, which the Goma Hall did not.

33. This set of rituals—combining the veneration of a wooden statue of the deceased and the *etoki* recitation of the biography of the deceased—was also seen in many other cases. For example, see Fujiwara no Yorinaga's participation in the *etoki* at Shitennōji in *Taiki* 台記 1 (Kōji 2:1143.10.22), 102; (Kyūan 2:1146.9.13), 184–86; (Kyūan 3:1147.9.12), 228–30; (Kyūan 4:1148.4.12), 252; (Kyūan 4:1148.9.19), 263–64; *Taiki* 2 (Kyūan 6:1150.9.9), 38–39.

34. See *Nihon kokugo daijiten* 2, 2000–2002, 564, 713 (SHŌGAKKAN KOKUGO JITEN HENSHŪBU). Also, see SUITŌ 1991, 22–23. Indeed, in a fourteenth-century diary, the portrait of the deceased is referred to as a *katashiro*; *Moromoriki* 4 (Jōwa 3:1347.3.23), 63.

35. It does not follow that people necessarily associated *ei* as portraits with the original meaning of the term *ei*. In fact, as Yonekura Michio says, “involved interest in the metaphorical relation between the principal meanings of these terms [*ei* and *shin* 真] and portraits is rarely shown in scenes of the history of portraits [in Japan]; therefore it is nearly impossible to derive the Japanese view of portraits from these borrowed terms [borrowed from China]” (YONEKURA 1995, 12). What I try to show in the following is not that a portrait was a medium *because* it was called *ei*, but that in some special cases where more significance was given to the spirits of the portrayed, portraits played a function that is in “the metaphorical relation” with the primary meaning of *ei*, that is, the function of a medium.

dead or alive, who took that form.³⁶ An eye-opening (*kaigen* 開眼) ceremony is performed for a portrait of a human being, just the same way as for Buddhist images, so that the portrait is infused with the spirit of the person, marking its birth as a consecrated and animate object.³⁷ This was also the case in Amidaji, where Antoku's portrait was viewed as an animate, living icon. As recorded in temple documents, daily offerings were made to Antoku's portrait. It received meal services each day that were attended by twenty-five monks (a ritual head practitioner, a cook, two food servers, a tea server, and twenty monks who prepared a setting for the service).³⁸ The portrait embodied the living aura of the dead Antoku and served as the focus of offerings and ceremonies.³⁹

One of the most appropriate places to enshrine such a "living" portrait would be a space that the deceased used while alive—for Antoku, perhaps the inner quarters (*dairi* 内裏) of the imperial palace. Indeed, at Amidaji, the wooden statue of Antoku took the uppermost and central position in the upper room of the Spirit Hall, on the altar called *gyokuza* 玉座 (seat of the emperor). On the sliding doors lining the walls of the room, portraits of ten important Taira members were painted.⁴⁰ On the wall behind Antoku's statue, the portraits of Lady Rō-no-onkata 廊御方 (b.d. unknown) and Lady Sochi-no-suke 帥典侍 (b.d. unknown) were to the left and right of Antoku. On the wall to Antoku's left were the portraits of Lady Dainagon-no-suke 大納言典侍 (b.d. unknown), Taira no Sukemori 平資盛 (1158?–1185), Taira no Nobumoto 平信基 (b.d. unknown), and Taira no Noritsune 平教経 (1160–1185). On the wall to Antoku's right were the portraits of Lady Jibukyō-no-tsubone 治部卿局 (b.d. unknown), Taira no Norimori 平教盛 (1128–1185), Taira no Tomomori 平知盛 (1152–1185), and Taira no Tsunemori 平経盛 (1124–1185).

This setting seems to replicate the inner quarters of the imperial palace, where ladies-in-waiting looked after the child emperor. The arrangement of the Taira ladies-in-waiting next to Antoku reflected their service to Antoku during his lifetime. The hypothesis that Amidaji's architectural setting surrounding Antoku's portrait duplicated the inner quarters of his palace is also bolstered by the arrangement of other items. A pair of gilded wooden sculptures of Korean lion-dogs (*komainu* 狛犬), curtains decorated with jewels, a gauze sliding door,

36. This aspect of portraits has been already pointed out by scholars of religious studies. For example, see FOULK and SHARF 1993, 164, 192; GRONER 2002, 150.

37. See *Entairyaku*, ZGR 3 (Kanō 1:1350.9.11), 310.

38. See *Toyorahan kyūki*, in *Shimonoseki shishi: Shiryōhen I*, 1426–1427.

39. This is why, although the name *mieidō* could be translated as "Portrait Hall," I regard "Spirit Hall" as a more appropriate translation fully reflecting the function of the hall. The hall was also known as *ichidō*, *tennō gobyō den*, *tennō den*, *tennō dō*, and so forth.

40. The reconstruction of the placement of the portraits of Antoku and the Taira is based upon a document I found in the Yamaguchi Prefectural Archives; see *Dannoura shiseki*.

and a hanging bamboo curtain were installed in front of the wooden statue of Antoku at Amidaji.⁴¹ They were essential furnishing items placed before the seat of an emperor in the inner quarters of the imperial palace in the Heian period. Therefore, the room where the portraits of Antoku and the Taira were displayed was designed to be similar to the inner quarters of the imperial palace, where the Taira members had accompanied Antoku while alive. The portraits of the Taira had to be enshrined together with the portrait of the child emperor so that even in the afterlife the Taira could continue to serve Antoku.

The idea of replicating a space for a portrait of the deceased, as in Amidaji's case, may have developed from the tradition that a building where an eminent person lived was converted, after his death, into his memorial chapel where a portrait of him served as an object of veneration and commemoration. For example, the living quarters of Kūkai 空海 (774–835) in Tōji and Mt. Kōya were transformed after his death into the Portrait Halls, where monks of these temples performed daily services and offerings to wooden statues of Kūkai. Emperor Sutoku's 崇徳 (1117–1164; r.1123–1141) residence (Kinomarudono 木丸殿) in Sanuki province (the place of his exile and death) was relocated beside his tomb after his cremation and burial, and converted into his Spirit Hall, in which a portrait of him was installed. Moreover, when the monk Myōe 明恵 (1173–1232) died, his study was altered into a memorial chapel and a painted portrait of him was hung on the sliding doors in front of which the monk had sat during his lifetime. Facing the portrait, a table was set up, on which were placed a sutra box, incense burner, bell, footrest, inkstone box, fan, conch shell, brazier, and water jar—the items Myōe had used regularly. His portrait also received daily meals, decoction, and lighted candles from his followers (MŌRI 1967, 21–22). The conversion of Myōe's study into his chapel, the placement of his portrait with his daily-use items, and the performance of everyday services to him suggest that his portrait was treated as a substitute for him, as if he were alive. Thus, it was not at all rare that a person's residence was converted into a mortuary space.⁴² It was crucial to retain his living space and to recreate it into a space of worship in the center of which a portrait of him “lived on” as the object of veneration. To be sure, Antoku's mortuary site was not a former residence of his but just a replication—none of his residences was transformed or transferred, probably due to the circumstances of his tragic death (which I will explain later), the confusion in the aftermath of the Genpei War, and some practical reasons (his residences, such as the inner quarters of the imperial palace, residential complexes in Rokuhara and Fukuhara, and temporary residences during the war, either were too far away from Amidaji or had been demolished). Nonetheless, the upper room of

41. See *Chōshū Akamagaseki Amidaji jūmotsuchō*, BJY 7: 387.

42. For several other cases, see MŌRI 1967, 18–23.

the Spirit Hall was, as a substitute for Antoku's actual residences, designed to replicate a living space where he had spent his life.

We then need to discuss what this replication was meant to achieve. As we saw, it was probably meant to substitute for Antoku's residences from his lifetime and to house a portrait of him—but what purpose was it meant to fulfill, to convert a living space into a worship space, or else to build a similar space as a substitute, and to treat a portrait therein as if it were alive? Generally speaking, a portrait of the departed functioned, in the same way Buddhist images did, as a medium through which the animating spirit of the portrayed descended from the other world. A portrait was made in the portrayed person's likeness partly so that the soul could recognize it as a place into which to descend, and also so that it indicated to those who saw in it the presence of the spirit. Then, particularly in the case of Antoku, what was the purpose of having his soul present in his portrait? To answer this question, we have to look into the circumstances of the court's decision to build the Spirit Hall for Antoku, which was to house his portrait.

Kujō Kanezane's 九条兼実 (1149–1207) diary *Gyokuyō* 玉葉 makes it clear that the most important goal of the construction of Amidaji's Spirit Hall in 1191 was to appease a vengeful spirit of Antoku. As Kanezane records, the Court Council unanimously approved an agenda for memorializing the death of Antoku, and Go-Shirakawa ordered a Buddhist hall (*ichidō* 一堂) be constructed in the complex of Amidaji in Nagato province.⁴³ At that time Go-Shirakawa was threatened by the restless souls of Antoku and the Taira, which were believed to have caused the Great Earthquake of Genryaku in 1186 and Go-Shirakawa's grave illness in 1187 and in 1191. When the hall was commissioned in 1191, Go-Shirakawa was critically sick, and *Gyokuyō* repeatedly records Go-Shirakawa's and the court's serious concerns over the spirits of Antoku as well as others who died prematurely—most notably, the victims of the Hōgen War (especially Emperor Sutoku and Fujiwara no Yorinaga) and the Genpei War, whose deaths resulted from Go-Shirakawa's orders. Amidaji's Spirit Hall, where the portraits of Antoku and the Taira were to be installed, was commissioned for the sake of placatory rituals for their vengeful spirits.

Thus it is plausible that the placation of the vengeful ghosts of Antoku and the Taira was the primary function expected of placing their portraits in Amidaji's Spirit Hall. To support this claim, it is particularly noteworthy that, as *Gyokuyō*

43. See GY 3 (Kenkyū 2:1191.1.12.22), 769–774. The imperially commissioned Spirit Hall in 1191 was intended to perform placatory and memorial rites in perpetuity for the salvation of Antoku and the Taira. *Amidaji keidaizu shikigo*, dated to 1294, provides both textual and pictorial references to Amidaji's main buildings, including the Spirit Hall. The document depicts an L-shaped structure identified with the Spirit Hall. For a plan of the Amidaji complex, see *Amidaji keidaizu shikigo* in AJM, 140–41.

records, the commemoration of Antoku was modeled after those for Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845–903) and Emperor Sutoku (Sutoku's case was modeled after Michizane's).⁴⁴ To appease the souls of Michizane and Sutoku, both of whom died in exile after political intrigues and were believed to have become vengeful ghosts, several mortuary buildings were dedicated to them, and some of them came to be referred to as *byō* 廟—a term designating the kind of shrine where a human being is enshrined as a *kami*.⁴⁵ That is, as a means of pacifying their vengeful spirits, Michizane and Sutoku were venerated as *kami* in these shrines. Similarly, Antoku's Spirit Hall was also called *Antoku tennō gobyōden* 安徳天皇御廟殿 (*byō* shrine of Emperor Antoku), which suggests that the imperial court sought to pacify Antoku's vengeful spirit by transforming it into a *kami* with the aid of rituals.⁴⁶

In the pacification of Michizane and Sutoku, portraits of them played a central role. Indeed, in his account of various functions of portraits, Yonekura Michio counts painted portraits of Michizane and Sutoku among the most typical examples of portraits used for pacification rituals.⁴⁷ One notable example is rituals the monk Jōzō 淨藏 (891–964) performed for Michizane. After failing to protect Fujiwara no Tokihira 藤原時平 (871–909) from Michizane's vengeful spirit, Jōzō was haunted by countless spooky events; so frightened, he then drew a portrait of Michizane and performed rituals accompanied with musical offerings to appease his angry spirit.⁴⁸ Also, Jien's *Gukanshō* mentions that a painted portrait of Sutoku became a focus of pacification rituals at the residence of one

44. For example, see GY 2 (Angen 3:1177.7.29), 90; GY 3 (Kenkyū 2:1191.1.12.22), 773.

45. By contrast, *sha* 社 designates the kind of shrine which enshrines a *kami* of divine as opposed to human origin. For Michizane and Sutoku, for instance, *byō* were constructed in Dazaifu and Sanuki (the places of exile and death of Michizane and Sutoku, respectively) and in Kyoto (Kitano for Michizane and Kasuga riverbank for Sutoku); see YAMADA 2001, 7.

46. See *Amidaji keidaizu shikigo*, AJM 140–41.

47. See YONEKURA 1995, 28–29. Yonekura finds it interesting to note that the portraits of Michizane and Sutoku depict them as having wrathful expressions, with upward-slanting eyes and square shoulders. In general, however, it is less easy to determine through visual analysis whether some portraits were made specifically for the purpose of pacification; portraits are required to have a certain formal stillness and those portrayed wear stern expressions and formal attire even if they did not die tragically. In the case of Antoku's portrait at Amidaji, we cannot apply visual analysis to it, since it became a *kami*-body in the Meiji period and has been concealed from public view.

48. Tokihira was one of those who conspired to exile Michizane. After Michizane's death, the conspirators experienced various misfortunes; Tokihira fell gravely ill and died at the age of thirty-nine. People suspected that these misfortunes were due to Michizane's vengeful spirit. According to *Fusō ryakki* and *Daihōshi Jōzō den* (Michizane's portrait is only mentioned in the latter), Jōzō was commissioned to recite incantations for Tokihira's recovery, but then Michizane appeared in the form of two blue serpents or dragons from Tokihira's ears, and told Jōzō's father to stop Jōzō's interference with his revenge. Jōzō obeyed, letting Tokihira die and angering the

of Sutoku's favorite consorts.⁴⁹ Even though there is no textual evidence directly documenting that Antoku's portrait at Amidaji was used to appease his vengeful spirit, taking into account that the placatory rituals for Antoku were modeled upon those for Michizane and Sutoku, we can assume that the rituals in Amidaji's Spirit Hall were directed to Antoku's portrait as an object embodying his spirit.

Amidaji as a Liminal Place

Amidaji's significance as an imperial-vow mortuary temple stemmed from its location—from the fact that Antoku and the Taira perished in Dannoura, the sea just in front of or close to it (and that, allegedly, Antoku's body was buried at the site of Amidaji). This location also adds to the significance of Amidaji's *etoki* performances in several ways.

As we saw above, the tragedy narrated in the *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story* had an emotional impact on its audience; this impact was further reinforced by the location of Amidaji and the placement of the panels of the *Illustrated Story*. As explained in the first section, the final pair of panels depicts the Battle of Dannoura, the final battle of the Genpei War, taking place in the narrow strait in front of the site of Amidaji. The narrating monk probably created a tense atmosphere, leading the audience to a peak of terror and grief, when he was reciting the battle scenes, the tragic ends of the Taira, and in particular the jump of Nii-no-ama into the sea with Antoku in her arms; the present condition of the paintings, in which pigments have heavily flaked off the images of Antoku and Nii-no-ama, shows the great excitement and dramatic performance with which the monk pointed with a stick at Antoku and Nii-no-ama. Indeed, as Chino Kaori has pointed out, the two panels depicting Dannoura were aligned parallel to the actual Dannoura, so that, if there were nothing in between the audience and the sea, the audience could see Dannoura just the way the paintings depicted it; in other words, the paintings superimposed the past Battle of Dannoura on the

court, and was forced to shut himself up in Shuryōgon'in, but Michizane's spirit kept haunting him; see *Fusō ryakki* 扶桑略記 in KT 6, 661–62; *Daihōshi Jōzō den* 大法師淨藏伝 in ZZGR 3, 469.

49. See *Gukanshō*, 141–42; YONEKURA 1995, 28. It is interesting to note the following: in 1183, Go-Shirakawa decided to build a shrine (*byō*) on the river bank of the Kasuga, the place where Sutoku's residence had been located and the Hōgen War had taken place. *Gyokuyō* records this as follows: “[Go-Shirakawa's] decision was made to build a shrine [*shinshi* 神祠] and to wait for [Sutoku's] *ei* 影 to descend, in order to appease his spirit”; GY 2 (Juei 2:1183.8.15), 617; YAMADA 2001, 136–37. Here the term *ei* refers to a spirit. When the shrine was built in 1184, it enshrined as a *kami* body a bronze mirror that Sutoku would use while alive, rather than a portrait of him. Yet it seems more natural to assume that the *ei* spirit-summoning function was also expected of Sutoku's *ei* portraits in his *mieidō* in his consort's residence (rather than that the imperial court had one goal for the shrine with the mirror and a different one for the *mieidō*). It may also be interesting to note the similarity between a mirror reflecting a person's shape and a portrait taking the shape.

present Dannoura (CHINO 1993, 178). Chino claims that this was by design; it certainly facilitated the audience to relive that historical moment as if the tragic events were taking place in front of them. It is in this way that not only the paintings but also the site itself enabled the monk performing *etoki* to recreate dramatic scenes.

The emotional impact on the audience was one aspect of the *etoki* that was enhanced by the location of Amidaji. Another aspect, and one that is more important here, is the significance of the *etoki* for appeasing the vengeful ghosts of Antoku and the Taira. There are other cases of *etoki* that were inextricably bound to specific sites where the main characters of the narrated stories died prematurely and where mortuary rites were dedicated to their souls. For example, the *etoki* of the *Illustration of the Final Days of the Life of Minamoto no Yoshitomo* (*Minamoto no Yoshitomo kō gosaigo no ezu* 源義朝公御最期之絵図) was performed in the temple Ōmidōji 大御堂寺, better known as Noma daibō 野間大坊 (HAYASHI 1985; AKAI 1989, 362–66). Another *etoki* practice was performed with the *Illustration of the Battle of Miki* (*Miki kassenzu* 三木合戦図) at Hōkaiji 法界寺 (ABE 1982, 140–42; AKAI 1989, 374–78). These *etoki* were performed most likely for the purpose of pacification; indeed, their texts explicitly mention the fact that the sites were dedicated to prayers for the enlightenment of the deceased. Performed at the place of death and of mortuary rites for the main character, Amidaji's *etoki* was certainly a case of placatory *etoki*. From hereon, I will make more explicit the religious significance of Amidaji—with respect in particular to the pacification of Antoku and the Taira—that arises from the fact that it is the place of their deaths. For this purpose, it is crucial to first understand people's beliefs regarding where Antoku and the Taira died and where their souls went.

According to various accounts of the Genpei War, including the *Tale of the Heike*, Antoku's grandmother Nii-no-ama, embracing the child emperor, jumped into the sea of Dannoura.⁵⁰ When they were about to throw themselves into the sea, Antoku asked his grandmother where she was going to take him. She answered that she would take him to a place called paradise and that the place was also a capital beneath the waves. Then Nii-no-ama encouraged him to intone the name of Amida Buddha so that he would be escorted by Amida and his attendants to the Pure Land (McCULLOUGH 1988, 378). As Max Moerman has shown, this action constituted a type of religious suicide known as *jusui* 入水 (entering water), which was believed to offer the promise of salvation in

50. Although *Azuma kagami* reports Lady Azechi-no-tsubone 按察局 held the child emperor in her arms and jumped into the sea, other sources say that Nii-no-ama leaped overboard with Antoku. See *Azuma kagami* (Bunji 1:1185.3.24) in KT 32, 143; McCULLOUGH 1988, 378; *Hyakurenshō* in KT 11 (Bunji 1:1185.3.24), 115.

paradise by self-drowning.⁵¹ For example, many devotees, striving for salvation, committed ritual suicides by jumping into the sea through Shitennōji's western gate, which was identified as the eastern entrance to Amida's paradise.⁵² Based on this belief, Antoku and the Taira members could reach Amida's Pure Land through self-willed deaths.

The capital under the waves that Nii-no-ama identified with Amida's paradise refers to the underwater palace of the dragon king (*ryūgūjō* 龍宮城). This was often described as identical to a pavilion in paradise because the land under or across the sea was identified with the other world, but not always so: the Dragon Palace was considered ambivalently, sometimes in closer connection with a hell (ASANO 1989). After the Genpei War, Antoku's mother Tokushi had a vision in a dream:

In a dream I saw the Former Emperor [Antoku] and the Taira senior nobles and courtiers, all in formal array, at a palace far grander than the old imperial palace. I asked where we were, because I had seen nothing like it since the departure from the capital. Someone who seemed to be the Nun of Second Rank [Nii-no-ama] answered, "This is the Naga Palace [dragon king's palace]." "What a splendid place! Is there no suffering here?" I asked. "The suffering is described in the *Ryūchiku Sūtra*. Pray hard for us," she said. I awakened as she spoke. Since then, I have been more zealous than ever in reciting the sutras and invoking Amida's name so that they may attain enlightenment.

(McCULLOUGH 1988, 436)

According to Tokushi's vision, Antoku and the Taira members were present in the underwater palace of the dragon king. The palace here is, however, not envisioned as paradise but as the realm of animals, one of the Six Realms of transmigration, which means that the child emperor and the Taira did not reach Buddhist salvation. It is uncertain what the *Ryūchiku Sūtra* 龍畜經 (lit. dragon and animal sutra) is, but the Nagato variant of the *Tale of the Heike* tells that there is suffering in the palace of the dragon king and that it is the same as suffering in the realm of animals.⁵³ Genshin's *Ōjōyōshū* 往生要集, one of the most influential works of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan, similarly mentions the dragon king's suffering and explains that the realm of animals exists in the sea.⁵⁴ Due to this vision, Tokushi became more ardent than ever in reciting the sutras and

51. See MOERMAN 2005, 101; several examples of religious suicides are discussed in detail in MOERMAN 2005, 92–128.

52. See *Shūi ōjōden*, NST 7, 596–97, 615; *Honchō shinshū ōjōden*, NST 7, 685.

53. See *Heike monogatari* in NKBZ 30, 527. In addition, the Kōya variant of the *Tale of the Heike* says the dragon king suffers from heat three times a day; *Nihon kokudo daijiten* 7, 909.

54. See *Ōjōyōshū*, 97–100. See KIMBROUGH 2006, 182, for a review of Genshin's account of the animal realm. Kimbrough also mentions an account of the rebirth of a human being in the animal realm as a dragon; KIMBROUGH 2006, 192.

chanting Amida's name in the hope that Antoku and the Taira would achieve postmortem enlightenment.

Despite Tokushi's fervent prayers, people's uncertainty about the postmortem destination of the spirits of Antoku and the Taira seems to have remained in later periods. For instance, it is mentioned in the temple document *Amidaji bettō shidai* that the head priest Chokui 直意 (d. 1461) had a dream-vision in which Emperor Antoku and the Taira, unable to release themselves from suffering, sank to the bottom of the sea.⁵⁵ The oracle dream inspired Chokui to perform the fire ritual (*kōmyō shingon goma* 光明真言護摩) and the consecration ritual of sand (*dosha kaji* 土砂加持) during the two equinoxes. These rituals were said to release the deceased from the realm of torment, to eliminate the sins of the deceased, and then to assist their salvation. Furthermore, Amidaji's list of annual observances indicates that a flowing water ritual (*nagare kanjō* 流灌頂) was performed on the anniversary of Antoku's death.⁵⁶ Releasing those *gorintō*-shaped wooden slats to the sea on which esoteric magical spells or the name of Amida were inscribed was considered effective in transmitting spiritual merit to the souls of those who died in drowning; therefore this ritual was essential to salvaging the souls of Antoku and the Taira from the underworld and to help them to be reborn in the Western Paradise.

All of these dreams and subsequent rituals suggest that the souls of Antoku and the Taira were believed to be suffering at the bottom of the sea, unable to attain rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. Indeed, against the idea of religious suicide that normally promises a salvific rebirth, there are many cases reported in which the spirits of those who died by drowning or through suicide were threats to the living because the unusual and tragic circumstances surrounding their deaths were believed to hinder their souls from being reborn in the next world, trapping them at the places of their deaths.⁵⁷ The spirits of Antoku and the Taira were also trapped at the bottom of the sea in front of Amidaji. They entered the other world, down to the Dragon Palace; but, unable to move on to Amida's paradise, they wandered the border between the earthly and underground realms. Amidaji was then a liminal place marking the entrance to this border.⁵⁸

55. See *Amidaji bettō shidai*, AJM 136–39.

56. See *Akamagaseki Amidaji raiyu oboe*, BJY 7: 386.

57. For example, see NAMIHIRA 1988; KATSUDA 2006.

58. Mizuno Ryōko has claimed that the *Illustrated Story* depicts Amidaji as a sacred place on the iconographical grounds that Amidaji and other places are surrounded by water (whereas, in reality, Amidaji never was), that the seashore around those places is filled with gold paint, that one of the islands is connected to the mainland with a bridge, and so on, which are all typical portrayals of sacred places; MIZUNO 2001, 431–33; 2003. As she says, "Amidaji was

Due to their tragic deaths, the spirits of Antoku and the Taira were believed to be trapped in the border between this world and the other, and hence to have brought a series of calamities to this world. This is why the imperial court commissioned Amidaji to appease the vengeful spirits. At the same time, Amidaji was a liminal place located on this side of the liminal border; the spirits wandered in the border, and therefore in Amidaji, too. This meant, as we will see in the next section, that Amidaji was among the most suitable places for the purpose of contacting the spirits and appeasing them, which made Amidaji an ideal venue for pacification rituals for Antoku and the Taira, and in particular for performing *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story*.

The Power of Etoki as a Requiem

Japan has a long tradition in *chinkonka* 鎮魂歌 (poems to appease the spirit of the dead). For instance, *Man'yōshū* 万葉集, an eighth century anthology of poems, compiled numerous *banka* 挽歌 (laments for the dead) that were composed and recited to appease the souls of the departed. As Gary Ebersole explains, many *banka* were read during the liminal period of the temporary enshrinement of the corpse prior to transferring it to the permanent burial site (EBERSOLE 1989, 54–78; esp. 61); this suggests that the recitation of poems was directed to the spirit of the departed in an intermediary stage before the spirit goes to its final destination, the realm of the dead. Japanese *chinkonka* seem to have a lot in common with requiems in the Western tradition, that is, a mass for the deceased and a hymn of mourning composed and performed at memorial services as prayers for the soul of the dead to enter Heaven. Not surprisingly, scholars have pointed out the requiem aspect in Amidaji's *etoki*, but they have rarely examined the process of rituals that functioned as such. This section explores one of the aspects of

a temple dedicated to Antoku, and unmistakably a *reijō* 霊場, that is, a *seichi* 聖地 [sacred place] at which to purify and pacify the grudges of the Taira" (MIZUNO 2001, 432). I would add that there is ambiguity regarding whether *reijō*, such as mortuary temples and Amidaji in particular, were considered sacred or polluted. The term *reijō* is neutral with respect to sacrality or death pollution, as Ian Reader and Paul Swanson explain: "*Reijō* literally refers to a place (*jō*) that attracts spirits or at which spirits (*rei*) congregate.... *Reijō* also indicates not just a place connected with the souls of the dead but a place of spiritual power, i.e., a location where miraculous events occur" (READER and SWANSON 1997, 235). Assuming that the *Illustrated Story* was meant to depict Amidaji as a sacred place, I would say it does not indicate so much that Amidaji was actually regarded as a sacred place as that the depiction was part of a project of purifying and sanctifying the liminal place, where the spirits of the dead roamed—the project that I have argued was behind the production and narration of the *Illustrated Story* as well as the establishment of Amidaji itself. The aspect of *reijō* as a place of spiritual power and miraculous events is relevant to a claim I will make later, namely, that Amidaji was where the vengeful spirits of Antoku and the Taira were transformed and led to buddhahood.

Amidaji's *etoki* as a requiem by considering the meanings of the narration of the *Tale of the Heike* by *biwa hōshi* 琵琶法師 (story-telling blind monks who played the lute). An intimate relationship between the *Illustrated Story* and the *Tale of the Heike* exists not only because of its visualization of several scenes from the tale but also because of the location where the *etoki* was recited.

The *Tale of the Heike*, which recounts the rise to glory and then the fall of the Taira clan (also called Heike), has been extensively studied, and its function has received considerable attention from scholars.⁵⁹ For example, Tsukudo Reikan argues that the *Tale* was recited for placatory purposes.⁶⁰ Yamamoto Kichizō notes that, while the narration of the *Tale of the Heike* could take place in various venues, when it took place in a residential complex, it was performed in a private Buddha hall (*jibutsudō* 持仏堂) or a Buddhist practice hall (*dōjō* 道場), where a deity was worshiped and religious practice was conducted (YAMAMOTO 1986, 154–55). These kinds of buildings were designed so that the living could contact the deity or the deceased and practice merit-transferal dedications and offerings aimed at the peaceful repose of the souls of the deceased in paradise. By the same token, the recitation of the *Tale of the Heike* in such buildings was probably meant to evoke the souls of the Taira, so as to help them to attain enlightenment and to reach paradise.

Moreover, as Ogasawara Kyōko and others have argued, in the medieval period a *biwa hōshi*'s narration of the *Tale of the Heike* was often carried out in liminal zones that were considered to be border areas between the earthly realm and the netherworld. For example, *Moromoriki*, the diary of Nakahara no Moromori 中原師守 (b.d. unknown), records that the author saw performances of *biwa hōshi* at Yatajizōdō 矢田地蔵堂, Kitanosha 北野社, and Rokkakudō 六角堂 in Kyoto in 1340.⁶¹ All of these sites were associated, both historically and literarily, with borders between our world and the netherworld, and spirits of the dead were believed to linger on there (YAMAMOTO 1986; OGASAWARA 1992, 39–135). This may explain why the performance of *biwa hōshi*, who were thought to have the ability to see and hear into the realms beyond our physical world, was required there. Interestingly, when Moromori viewed the performance of *biwa hōshi* reciting the *Tale of the Heike* in front of Rokkakudō, he covered and hid his face, perhaps with cloth or a decorative fan.⁶² People of medieval Japan

59. See YAMAMOTO 1986; OGASAWARA 1992, 39–135; HYŌDŌ 2000, 174–88; BIALOCK 2003, 234–35.

60. See TSUKUDO 1966, 35–57. AMINO Yoshihiko (1990, 172) also states that the battle scenes, especially those of the Genpei War, were narrated to appease the souls of those who were lost in battles.

61. For example, see *Moromoriki* in *Shiryō sanshū* 1 (Ryakuō 3:1340.2.14), 93; also see YAMAMOTO 1986, 154.

62. See *Moromoriki* in *Shiryō sanshū* 1 (Ryakuō 3: 1340.2.14), 93.

made this disguise of covering their faces, called *igyō* 異形, when they thought they might encounter something dangerous and harmful (AMINO 1993, 86–87). YAMASHITA Hiroaki (1994, 76) has convincingly argued that Moromori covered his face probably because he was afraid of encountering the Taira ghosts at Rokkakudō. Moromori's disguise shows his worry that the spirits of the Taira might be present at Rokkakudō, and it is plausible that not just Moromori on that occasion but people in general feared that the malicious ghosts of the Taira might be attending the recitation of their *Tale*.⁶³

Another venue chosen for the recitation of the *Tale of the Heike* was dry riverbanks, which were regarded as places where wandering spirits and ghosts gathered (OGASAWARA 1992, 79–83). In Kyoto, people believed that wronged ghosts from other places tried to enter the capital through riverbanks. Such ghosts included those of the Taira, because they had been forced to flee the capital and had died far away. Given these associations between the riverbanks and the Taira ghosts, preventing them from entering the capital, as well as appeasing them, was probably among the purposes of a *biwa hōshi*'s narration of the *Tale of the Heike* at the riverbanks. That *biwa hōshi* chose the banks of the Kamo River as a place for appeasing the Taira ghosts is confirmed by the fact that the guild of *biwa hōshi* would perform a flowing water ritual (*nagare kanjō*) there on the anniversary of the deaths of Antoku and the Taira, calling it a memorial service for Antoku.⁶⁴

The cases of these liminal places suggest some special significance of reciting the *Tale of the Heike* there, or at liminal places in general. In the case of Buddha halls and Buddhist practice halls, the recitation of the *Tale of the Heike* was expected to have the power to evoke the souls of the Taira in order to pacify them; the same power was also probably expected of the recitation at liminal places, when the souls were absent and needed evoking. On the other hand, when the souls happened to be wandering in such liminal places in a volatile and disoriented way, it is plausible to assume that the recitation was expected to have the power to call the souls' attention to the recitation of their *Tale*, a ritual that was meant to placate them.

As we saw above, Amidaji was also a liminal place on the border between the earth and the netherworld, and therefore was a venue of special significance for the narration of the *Illustrated Story*, for the same reason that other liminal places were special venues for *biwa hōshi*'s recitation of the *Tale of the Heike*. Although there is no documentary evidence of *biwa hōshi* performing at Amidaji, there is ample evidence that they were indeed active in Nagato province, where Amidaji stood.⁶⁵ It is also worth noting that volumes of the text of the *Tale of the*

63. For a thorough explanation of the term *igyō*, see BIALOCK 2003, 235–36.

64. See *Bōchō mōsō biwa shiryō*, NSS 17, 116.

65. For *biwa hōshi*'s activities in Nagato, see *Bōchō mōsō biwa shiryō*, 224–28.

Heike were dedicated to the soul of Antoku and preserved as a secret treasure in Amidaji's Spirit Hall. Since the volumes were kept (or also perhaps produced) at Amidaji in Nagato province, they were called the Nagato variant, one of the main streams among numerous variant manuscripts of the *Tale of the Heike*. The inscription written on the box containing the volumes states that they were made during the tenure of the head monk Hōshin 宝津 (d.1798) in 1784; therefore the volumes were likely dedicated to commemorate the six-hundredth anniversary of the death of Antoku. These links between the *Tale of the Heike* and Antoku's mortuary temple would demonstrate that the monks of Amidaji were aware of the placatory functions of narrating the *Tale of the Heike* and they most likely incorporated *biwa hōshi's* recitation at the temple precinct.⁶⁶ A temple dedicated by an imperial vow specifically for the purpose of placating the souls of Antoku and the Taira, Amidaji had the need as well as the means to fulfil the purpose through the recitation of their lives accompanied by not only a monk's narration but another medium in a permanent setting—namely, in the format of *etoki* using the pictorial facility in the special hall in order to enhance the placatory effectiveness.

It has to be emphasized that the goal of Amidaji's *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story* was not only to appease the souls of Antoku and the Taira but also to help them to be welcomed into the Western Paradise. As Kuroda Toshio has pointed out, the ultimate goal of mortuary rites is to help the deceased to reach buddhahood: “[I]t was expected that the spirits of the dead would become buddhas; it was not considered desirable that they remain pacified in the form of mere [earthly spirits]” (KURODA 1990, 140–42; 1996, 335). This is why it was crucial to send the souls to the other world, and in particular to Amida's Western Paradise, at the end of the *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story*. This part of the goal was reflected in the use of the color gold in the paintings of the *Illustrated Story*, in which events in Emperor Antoku's life are depicted against a gold-leaf background and with gold-leaf clouds. Although the use of gold for clouds and backgrounds was later common in Muromachi paintings, gold often had religious meanings in older times, and probably in the case of the *Illustrated Story* as well. An expensive substance, gold can express the wealth of the commissioner; but it is also a holy substance whose color is that of the Buddha, and is normally used to create *shōgon* 莊嚴, or “adornment of the sanctuary” in Buddhism.⁶⁷ Sanctuaries are

66. The novel *Kwaidan* 怪談, written by Lafcadio Hearn (a.k.a. Koizumi Yakumo 小泉八雲, 1850–1904), recounts how the Taira ghosts, who are still wandering at the site of Amidaji, ask the blind monk Hōichi 芳一 to narrate the *Tale of the Heike*, especially the battle scene of Dannoura. His novel was based on *Gayū kidan* (1782) and other legends passed on in the area where the temple stood; see *Gayū kidan in Kyoto daigaku zō daisōbon kisho shūsei* 8, 312–15.

67. For references to the significance of gold in Buddhism, see YIENGRUKSAWAN 1993, 50; TŌKYŌ KOKURITSU HAKUBUTSUKAN 1999, 6–24.

adorned to recreate the appearance of the paradises, in which deities are believed to illuminate and purify every inhabitant with their golden radiance. One such paradise is Amida's Pure Land, or the Western Paradise, the desired destination for devotees. For example, a schematic representation of the Western Paradise with the abundant use of gold paint is seen in the *Taima mandara* 当麻曼荼羅, in which the souls of the blessed are reborn on lotus petals in the pond before Amida Buddha. Funerals and spirit halls for the elite were often decorated with gold in order to create the imagery of the Western Paradise.⁶⁸ As Mimi Yiengpruksawan has pointed out, a memorial service can be thought of as a moment of rebirth in which the soul of the deceased is suffused with Amida's golden radiance in his Pure Land (YIENGPRAKSAWAN 1993, 50). This strongly suggests that the golden clouds and background in the *Illustrated Story* indicate the wish that Antoku and the Taira be reborn in Amida's Pure Land.

Gold was not only used to represent paradises, but also expected to be a countermeasure against the impurity of death. Chūsonji's Golden Hall (*konjikidō* 金色堂), which was less than a century before Antoku's time, and in which the mummies of Fujiwara no Kiyohira 藤原清衡 (1056–1128) and his successors now lie within the caskets inside the altar, was covered with gold; indeed, everything inside the Golden Hall, including the caskets, which were made successively until Antoku's time, was adorned with gold. Sudō Hirotoši has argued that these were to counteract the contamination due to the mummies (SUDŌ 1989, 67–77). As SUDŌ (1989, 74) has moreover maintained, the Golden Hall was primarily a grave hall “both interior and exterior of [which] were covered with gold to purify all the space, so that Kiyohira's [...] wish for rebirth in Amida's Pure Land would be realized, as well as so that his corpse, which was intrinsically contaminated, would be transformed into a sanctified object.” As YIENGPRAKSAWAN (1993, 51) has also observed, because gold, the color of Amida Buddha, purifies whatever it touches, “gold itself could be used to neutralize the violation of taboo.” Taking into account this religious power expected of gold around Antoku's time, we should assume that it is one of the purposes of the abundant use of gold in the *Illustrated Story* to purify the death pollution intrinsically related with the mortuary temple and to assist the rebirth of Antoku and the Taira in Amida's Pure Land.

Although death and the remains of the dead were in general considered to be sources of defilement, the circumstances under which Antoku's body was handled may have added to a greater threat of pollution, which renders the abundant use

68. For example, a golden folding screen was placed behind the wooden casket or altar of Hino Shigeko 日野重子 (1411–1463), the mother of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政 (1436–1490), at her funeral in 1463; see AKAZAWA 1962; KLEIN and WHEELWRIGHT 1984, 15–17; *Inryōken nichiroku*, ZST 21 (Kanshō 4:1463.8.11), 415–17.

of gold—a purifying substance—in the *Illustrated Story* all the more necessary. First, although a temple legend says Antoku's body was recovered from the ocean and buried at the site of Amidaji, primary sources fail to confirm this account, and indeed other legends contradict it.⁶⁹ This incoherence among accounts suggests the possibility that Antoku's remains were either not buried at Amidaji or, if they were, not properly buried. Buddhist teachings consider the first forty-nine days after a person's death to be a liminal period between death and rebirth and to be the most important period in which various rituals are needed to help the soul of the deceased to be reborn into the Pure Land. No record says, however, that Antoku received such rituals during this period. Moreover, tragic deaths such as Antoku's were considered to cause more pollution than usual deaths. Therefore, even if Antoku's body received a proper burial at Amidaji, it was nonetheless in need of special rituals of purification. In all probability, gold was used abundantly in the pictures depicting Antoku's life because of its power to counteract the polluting effect of his death.

In summary there were two crucial functions of Amidaji's *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story*. One was shared by *biwa hōshi*'s recitation of the *Tale of the Heike*. The *etoki* was performed in a liminal place, namely Amidaji, to contact the spirits of Antoku and the Taira, to let them listen to the narration of their *Tale*, and thereby to appease them. The other function was to purify, with the power of golden radiance, the defilement due to the tragic circumstances of the deaths of Antoku and the Taira and perhaps due to the lack of proper burial, and thereby to help them attain buddhahood, leaving this world for Amida's Pure Land.

The Structure of Amidaji's Etoki as a Pacification Ritual

As I argued above, the portraits of Antoku and the Taira, as well as their surroundings that replicated Antoku's actual living quarters, functioned as an emblem of the presence of the spirits of Antoku and the Taira. Rituals such as daily offerings were performed in front of the portraits for the purpose of appeasing the spirits they embodied. In effect, the portraits functioned as a window through which the souls of Antoku and the Taira were evoked, by way of rituals, from the other world into ours; this function was further enhanced by the fact that Amidaji was believed to be a liminal place where the spirits of Antoku and the Taira could linger. The portraits must have fulfilled the same function in the ritual of *etoki* as well. That is, they served as a medium for the spirits of Antoku and the Taira, whose story was to

69. For the temple account, see MIZUNO 1985, 48. Primary sources such as *Gyokuyō* and *Azuma kagami* do not specify whether Antoku's body was recovered; GY 3 (Genryaku 2:1185.4.4), 72; *Azuma kagami*, KT 32 (Bunji 1:1185.3.24), 143. See also MANAKA 1984 for a legend that contradicts the temple account. In 1889, the Meiji government designated Amidaji as the burial place of Antoku along with five other places as possible burial sites of Antoku.

be narrated. Through the window of this medium, the audience could contact the spirits, evoke them, have them descend to the Spirit Hall, and then have them join the audience for the *etoki* performance in the next room.

It is in this context—when the spirits of Antoku and Taira were summoned to the Spirit Hall through a proper worship to attend the performance of *etoki*—that our previous insights should be considered. I argued that, just like a *biwa hōshi*'s recitation of the *Tale of the Heike*, the *Illustrated Story* was narrated in order to appease the spirits of Antoku and the Taira. The worship before this narration was probably meant to optimize the placatory effect of the narration: the spirits could be present at the occasion of the *etoki* since Amidaji was a liminal place; yet, to facilitate the goal of appeasing them, the spirits should be not only present but also attentive to the narration, and their evocation through the proper worship before the performance seems to be the best way to call their attention. This is why we should conclude that the order of first worshipping the portraits and then narrating the story was an essential element of the design of the entire *etoki* ritual.

Moreover, as I also argued, gold pigment was applied to the paintings of the *Illustrated Story* because of the wish that Antoku and the Taira be reborn in Amida's Pure Land, for the radiance of gold was believed to have the power to transform the impurity of death into the purity of rebirth. This power also needs to be considered in the context of the presence of the souls of Antoku and the Taira. Summoned through worship, the souls listened attentively to the narration in the room surrounded by the panels of the *Illustrated Story*; so attentive to their own story, the spirits would relive the events depicted in the pictures. Perhaps the paintings worked as a medium in the same way the portraits did, thereby bringing the spirits into the scenes filled with the radiance of gold. Even if not as a medium, the panels surrounding the room filled the room, and therefore illuminated the spirits present there, with the radiance of gold. This must have been another essence of the design of the *etoki* ritual, so that the spirits of Antoku and the Taira would be not only appeased by the worship and the narration of their story, but also by the radiance of gold, purified and therefore reborn in Amida's Pure Land.

This is how the entire ritual of Amidaji's *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story* was designed to work. Its process consisted of three steps: the spirits of Antoku and the Taira were evoked and summoned from the realm of the dead through the worship of their portraits; they were placated through the narration of their story, when they, along with the audience, relived their life of glory and fall with the help of the dramatic narration as well as the elaborate paintings of the *Illustrated Story*; and they were illuminated and purified by the radiance of gold that fills the paintings as well as the room of *etoki*, and finally attain buddhahood, departing this world for Amida's Western Paradise.

Functions of Amidaji's Etoki in Later Periods

I showed in the foregoing sections that Amidaji's *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story* was designed to be a placatory ritual for the souls of Antoku and the Taira. Nonetheless, this was just the function expected of the *etoki* when it was designed and originated. One might suspect that the fear of the vengeful ghosts of Antoku and the Taira, no matter how strongly it motivated the establishment of the Spirit Hall in the twelfth century, must have waned after a long time had passed since their deaths. So one might doubt that, throughout the seven-century history of Amidaji as a mortuary site, the propitiation of Antoku and the Taira remained the primary function, or even a function, of Amidaji's *etoki*.

Certainly, the placation of Antoku and the Taira ceased to be the *only* function, as the use of the *Illustrated Story* acquired more functions in later periods. For instance, the *Illustrated Story* and its *etoki* had become one of the temple's sources of income by the late Edo period, when visitors at Amidaji were required to pay a fee for viewing them.⁷⁰ So, to attract a larger audience and more contributions, Amidaji may have placed more emphasis on the entertaining aspect of *etoki*. It has also been pointed out by Chino Kaori and others that, being *engi-e* 縁起絵, or origin-tale paintings, the *Illustrated Story* was expected to convey Amidaji's distinguished origin to the audience and thereby to convince it of the importance of the temple.⁷¹ This must have enhanced the prestige of the temple, probably leading to a larger audience, and it is beyond doubt that the *Illustrated Story* fulfilled this function at the occasion of its *etoki*. Thus, the practical goal to strengthen the virtuous circle of social prestige and economic benefits was an important role

70. Edo travelers recorded Amidaji's use of the *Illustrated Story* in fund-raising. For example, Hishiya Heishichi 菱屋平七 (b.d. unknown) visited Amidaji in 1802 and paid 100 *mon* for seeing and worshiping the portraits of Antoku and the Taira members; although it is not explicitly mentioned, the order in which the tour is described suggests that this fee also covered the viewing of the *Illustrated Story*. He also viewed other treasures and paid another hundred *mon*. It is, however, not clear whether his tour included the *etoki*. *Tsukushi kikō*, NKS 1 (Kyōhō 2:1802.4.18), 628. Philipp Franz von Siebold visited Amidaji in 1826, and recorded that Amidaji earned a much higher income through contributions from pilgrims and travelers than through the regular annual revenue (70 *koku*, worth 800 guilders) from its manor. Von Siebold and his companions observed Buddhist sculptures in the Main Hall, visited the Hachiman Shrine, saw the portraits of Antoku and the Taira, experienced *etoki* in the Spirit Hall, and viewed other treasures; in the end, the ambassador of von Siebold's envoy donated a large amount of money (one *bu*, worth three guilders, about 1500 *mon*); *Edo sanpu kikō*, 91–94. The *etoki* was probably a major reason for this contribution, since the envoy thought of the *etoki* as the highlight of a visit to Amidaji, as recorded by another member of the envoy, Fischer (Fisscher) (1800–1848): “For Japanese, a visit to this temple is more important than anything, which is because they can see the whole story of this [Genpei] war in paintings accompanied by inscriptions and explanations”; *Nihon fūzoku bikō* 2, 205.

71. See, for instance, CHINO 1993, 178–79; MIZUNO 2001, 432–33.

played by Amidaji's *etoki*.⁷² Nevertheless, until it was finally abolished along with Amidaji, the *etoki* performance in this mortuary temple seems to have retained its memorial and placatory significance, as I argue in the following.

It seems uncontroversial to me that the *etoki* performance at Amidaji played some commemorative role even in the Edo period. The *etoki* texts show how vividly the performance explicated the scenes of the *Illustrated Story*; visitors documented that the *etoki* performance induced an emotionally charged occasion—Shiba Kōkan, for instance, wrote that he was moved to tears—in which they relived events from more than six centuries before. There can be little doubt that such an atmosphere in a religious institution would incite the audience to sympathize with the fallen and to pray for their salvation.

It is surely more controversial whether, throughout its history, the *etoki* performance at Amidaji retained the placatory (as opposed to just commemorative) meaning it originally had—of summoning the souls of Antoku and the Taira, placating them through the purifying light of gold, and helping them attain salvation. Yet I believe that it did because even in the Edo period, the fear of the vengeful spirits of Antoku and the Taira had by no means waned but indeed was active, at least locally in the area of Akamagaseki. This fear is documented, for instance, in *Gayū kidan* 馱遊奇談 (1782) and *Kasshi yawa* 甲子夜話. In an 1821 entry of the latter, Matsura Seizan 松浦静山 (1760–1841) reports as follows:

Also, a monk named Taidō lived next to my retirement house. This monk was from Akizuki in Chikuzen, and used to originally be a samurai for the [Akizuki] branch of the Kuroda clan. For this reason he once traveled to Kyoto, and on his way, when calling at the port of Akamagaseki in Nagato, he witnessed the following, so he told me, on the eighteenth day of the third month. Boatmen said “never say anything today,” banning him from speaking; so he asked why, and they replied that, because that day was the day when the Taira perished,⁷³ if one spoke it must result in peril. From there he could see the entire surface of the sea covered with mist, and there appeared in that hazy scene many things in the shape of people. These were, people said, vengeful spirits of the perished Taira. Tradition had it that these spirits capsized boats as soon as they heard human voices, which was why speaking was banned. It was said that since antiquity this ban had always been put on the nights of the seventeenth and eighteenth days. Also, from around the fourteenth day or the fifteenth, the sea got rough with water swirling, making the situation around there horrifying. He told me that not

72. My thanks to Keller Kimbrough for his comments, which stressed the significance of this point and led me to expand my discussion of it.

73. This is at variance with the actual date of the Battle of Dannoura, which took place on 1185.3.24.

only he but also many from the same clan had witnessed this when they called at the place. (Kasshi yawa, 157–58)

Even though there is no surviving document that explicitly mentions the concern of Amidaji's monks over the vengeful spirits, it is highly unlikely that they were not aware of this local fear.⁷⁴

This fear of the vengeful spirits of Antoku and the Taira was still active in the early Meiji period. Indeed, the fear was brought from the local to the national level. Around when Amidaji was abolished along with its buildings as well as the *etoki* ritual, intellectuals and politicians in the Meiji government (some of whom were from the Chōshū domain, to which Amidaji belonged) debated whether the spirit of Antoku should be repatriated from the site of Amidaji to Kyoto. The government was concerned over the potential negative influence of the souls of those who, due to their fall in political struggles, were believed to have turned into vengeful ghosts; it sought, in particular, to turn the spirits of the emperors who had died in exile, including Antoku, into benevolent spirits who would protect the nation.⁷⁵ This concern of the central government was probably behind the special treatment given to the artwork at Amidaji that had been involved in the *etoki* ritual. Of all the numerous treasures that Amidaji had possessed, only the paintings of the *Illustrated Story* along with the portraits of Taira members were repaired (and mounted into the format of hanging scrolls) at the Ministry of the Imperial Household (*kunaishō* 宮内省) in 1885.⁷⁶ Moreover, Antoku's wooden statue portrait, which had been venerated before starting an *etoki* ritual, became a kami-body (*goshintai* 御神体) of the new shrine that replaced Amidaji. These facts seem to demonstrate not only how central the *etoki* ritual was in Amidaji as a mortuary site, but also that the Meiji government was well aware of the centrality.

Conclusion

The *Illustrated Story* was an integral part of Amidaji, a temple revived for the specific goal of commemorating and placating the souls of Antoku and the Taira. Located in front of the sea where Antoku and the Taira had died, and therefore on the liminal border between the earthly realm and the other, Amidaji was chosen as the most efficacious place at which to make peace with the volatile spirits of Antoku and the Taira that lingered there. It was the central responsibility that

74. Amidaji's monks in earlier periods were concerned about the restless spirits of Antoku and the Taira. For example, see Chokui's dream on page 226 of this article.

75. The government eventually decided that Antoku's spirit should stay in Amidaji's site since the circumstances of his death were different from those of the other emperors who died in exile; see GUNJI 2011, 63–68. His spirit was transferred from Amidaji's Spirit Hall, which was destroyed in the Meiji persecution of Buddhism, to a newly built Sacred Hall of the substituted shrine, Akamagū.

76. See *Kankoku heisha komonjo hōmotsu mokuroku*.

Antoku's temple assumed to perform rituals for pacifying the spirits and helping them reach Amida's Pure Land. Among these rituals was a procedure composed of the veneration of the portraits of Antoku and the Taira and the performance of *etoki*; the paintings of the *Illustrated Story* were produced and narrated not only for memorializing their deaths but also for pacifying their spirits. In just the same way *biwa hōshi's* narration of the *Tale of the Heike* was a requiem designed to pacify the Taira war dead who were in the liminal state between the earthly and underground realms, the narration of the *Illustrated Story* was designed to facilitate Amidaji's central goal of appeasing the spirits of Antoku and the Taira and to assist their rebirth into the golden paradise of Amida. The significance and function of the *Illustrated Story* and its *etoki* have to be considered against the background of this goal.

By treating the paintings not as an isolated artwork but as a principal component of the mortuary rites, we can conclude that the *Illustrated Story* was an indispensable piece in the mission of the mortuary temple. James Watson states one of the definitions of ritual as follows:

Ritual is about transformation—in particular it relates to the transformation of one being or state into another, changed being or state.... Rituals are repeated because they are expected to have transformative powers. Ritual changes people and things; the ritual process is active, not merely passive.

(WATSON 1990, 4)

Watson's statement, applied to the case of Amidaji's *etoki* ritual, means that it was transformative power that Amidaji sought in the narration of the *Illustrated Story*. The *etoki* of the *Illustrated Story* was not a performance of a single direction in which the monk merely explained the scenes. The prayer for the rebirth of Antoku and the Taira in the Pure Land was embedded in every component of the *etoki* ritual—its texts, procedures, architectural and geographical settings, and paintings. The narration of the tragic story of Antoku accompanied by the pictures in Amidaji's special hall created an emotionally engaged atmosphere that infused the participants with intense religious sentiments, uniting the spirits of the performer, the audience, and even Antoku and the Taira. Through such a ritual, the performer and audience re-experienced the past events, sympathized with Antoku and the Taira, commemorated their tragic deaths, and, above all, prayed for the transformation of their angry spirits into peaceful and enlightened ones.

During the Meiji persecution of Buddhism, Amidaji was abolished along with all of its rituals. The only exception was the death anniversary of Emperor Antoku, called *sentei-e* 先帝会, which the newly established Shinto shrine decided to preserve with a minor modification of rituals from a Buddhist to Shinto fashion. This decision was largely driven by the economical, political, and institutional merits of the death anniversary (GUNJI 2011, 74–75). On the other

hand, notwithstanding its comparable practical merits, Amidaji's *etoki* ritual was abolished, and the *Illustrated Story* was turned into an art piece of no ritual significance. Why the new shrine decided not to preserve the *etoki* is a question that requires further investigation; yet any adequate answer to this question would have to take into account the commemorative and placatory functions that were deeply embedded in the *etoki* as an essentially Buddhist ritual—the functions of appeasing vengeful spirits and assisting them to attain Amida's Pure Land. This was an element that the new shrine, under the governmental guidance that any imperial spirit ritual must be performed in a Shinto fashion, had no choice but to eradicate. The Meiji persecution was among the most striking cases in which many pieces of artwork were deprived of their significance as religious objects, or simply destroyed, and in which many traditions of religious rituals were discontinued, often with little or no documentation left of their contexts and meanings. To recover these religious significance and meanings with indirect evidence is a discouragingly difficult challenge for scholars of religious art, but of utmost importance nonetheless. My hope is that this article offers a case study for this challenge by reconstructing the commemorative and placatory functions of the *Illustrated Story* and its *etoki* as mortuary art and ritual at Amidaji.

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- BJY *Bōchō jisha yurai* 防長寺社由来, ed. Yamaguchiken Monjokan 山口県文書館. 7 vols. Yamaguchi: Yamaguchiken Monjokan, 1986.
- BZ *Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho* 大日本仏教全書, ed. Bussho Kankōkai 仏書刊行会. 151 vols. Tokyo: Meicho Fukyūkai, 1978–1983.
- GY *Gyokuyō* 玉葉, by Kujō Kanezane 九条兼実. 3 vols. Tokyo: Meicho Kankōkai, 1993.
- KT *Kokushi taikei* 国史大系, ed. Kuroita Katsumi 黑板勝美. 60 vols. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1897–2000.
- NKBZ *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 日本古典文学全集. 51 vols. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1970–1975.

- NKS *Nihon kikōbun shūsei* 日本紀行文集成, ed. Takano Yoshio 高野義夫. 4 vols. Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentā, 1979.
- NSS *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei* 日本庶民生活史料集成, ed. Miyamoto Tsuneichi 宮本常一. 30 vols. Tokyo: San'ichi Shobō, 1968–1984.
- NST *Nihon shisō taikei* 日本思想大系. 67 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970–1982.
- ZGR *Zoku gunsho ruijū* 続群書類従, ed. Hanawa Hokiichi 塙保己一. 33 vols. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1902–1930.
- ZST *Zōho shiryō taisei* 増補史料大成, ed. Zōho Shiryō Taisei Kankōkai 増補史料大成刊行会. 43 vols. Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1934–1944.
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- Amidaji bettō Shūeki mōshijōan* 阿弥陀寺別当秀益申状案 (1519). AJM, 132–35.
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- Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡. KT 32.
- Bōchō mōsō biwa shiryō* 防長盲僧琵琶史料. NSS 17, 224–54.
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