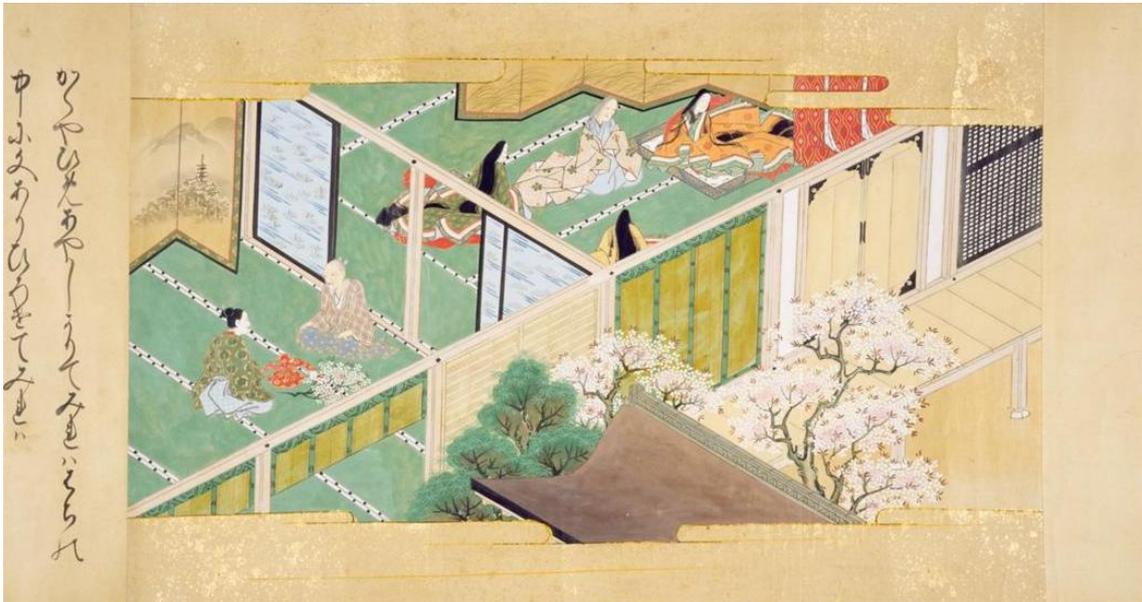


Taketori Monogatari



Taketori Monogatari  
Author and illustrator unknown  
Manuscript of the 17th century  
3 scrolls  
32.4 cm in height  
Owned by the National Diet Library

*Kaguyahime* (shining princess), a beauty discovered as a baby in a stem of bamboo, returns home to the moon, after rejecting the suit of five noblemen and the Emperor. The story, well known to the Japanese people even today, dates back to around the 10th century. The “*Taketori Monogatari* (The tale of the bamboo cutter)” is composed of three picture scrolls based on this tale of *Kaguyahime*.

These picture scrolls were created in the 17th century. The text is written on paper specially decorated with gold-painted motifs of plants and flowers. The addition of gold dust and foil shapes also gives this work a gorgeous appearance.

*Kaguyahime* pushed the five noblemen to impossible quests in order to make excuses for rejecting

their courtship. This scene represents *Ishitsukuri no Miko*, one of the suitors, asked to obtain “the stone begging bowl owned by Buddha.” He brought a fake bowl in a brocade pouch. In the front room there are *Ishitsukuri no Miko* and her adoptive father *Taketori no Okina* with the bowl in front of them, while *Kaguyahime* with her face turned away is seated in the back room accompanied by her adoptive mother and female servants. The text describes an exchange of a love poem from the suitor addressed to the princess, and her heartless reply.

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