

Room 6: Calligraphy

Transcription of the *Lotus Sutra*

N-12 *Hokke-kyo* (Lotus Sutra)

This scroll is from a complete eight-volume transcription of the *Lotus Sutra* on ramie paper that has been dyed yellow. The transcription was made with the aid of faintly ruled lines of ink between the vertical columns of text. Each vertical column contains exactly seventeen characters written in strong, bold brushstrokes, though in a less meticulous hand than the methodical, precise calligraphy that typified the Nara period (710–794). This discrepancy suggests that this transcription might actually be from the Heian period (794–1192).

第6室（书法）

—法隆寺传承的《法华经》—

N-12 法华经

此《法华经》八卷书写在以淡墨画出乌丝界栏的黄麻纸上，遵循一般的写经通例，每行写有17字。字体笔画较粗，运笔有力，八卷全由同一笔者书写完成。与字形端正齐整的奈良时代写经相比，此八卷笔致较为柔和，推测其书写时期有可能已进入平安时代。

제6실 | 서예 | 호류지에 전래된 법화경

N-12 법화경

황마지에 열은 먹으로 패선을 그은 용지에 『법화경』 8권을 필사한 작품으로, 한 행에 17자가 들어갑니다. 글씨가 약간 굵고, 힘있는 필치로 쓰였으며, 8권 모두 한 사람의 필적으로 되어 있습니다. 나라시대의 정돈되고 단정한 사경 작품과 비교했을 때 흘려쓴 글자 등이 보여서 헤이안시대에 걸쳐 필사되었을 가능성도 있습니다.

Room 6: Textiles

A Banner “Head” Made of Interlaced Cords and Colorful Banner “Legs”

Buddhist ritual banners, called *ban*, were used to decorate Buddhist temples. The banners are divided into three sections and named after their resemblance to the shape of a person. The top, middle, and bottom sections are called the “head,” “body,” and “legs,” respectively. This gallery is currently exhibiting a banner head’s pendent decorations made of interlaced cords along with colorful examples of banner legs. In a painting owned by the Imperial Family, called *Prince Shotoku with Two Attendants*, the prince is wearing a sash made of interlaced cords similar to the ones on display, making these cords valuable extant material in the study of ancient clothing. Banner “legs” in different colors are also on display to highlight the colorful world of ancient textiles.

N-28-1 : *Ban-tō* (“Head” or Top Part of a Buddhist Ritual Banner), Design of clouds, vines, and lions

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This is the upper section of a silk ritual banner. The patterns include vine-like clouds and imposing Chinese lions facing each other, each with a front leg extended forward.

N-50-2: *Ban-tō* (“Head” or Top Part of a Buddhist Ritual Banner); With arrowhead pattern

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This section of a banner “head” was made by combining thin, traditional cords of different colors into a chevron pattern. These kinds of cords were often used to make sashes, such as the one depicted in a portrait of Prince Shotoku owned by the Imperial Family.



Prince Shotoku with Two Attendants (Detail of sash)

N-311: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist ritual banner), With scrolling grape vines design

Nara period, 8th century

These fragments were originally part of the bottom section of a ritual banner. A twill-weave pattern of scrolling vines and grapes is woven into a vibrant red ground.

N-319-74-2 : Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”, With pattern of nested diamonds

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This twill-weave textile has a pattern of nested diamonds. Many early textiles are twill-weave fabrics featuring geometric patterns like this one.

N-319-39-1: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This banner fragment was dyed using indigo.

N-319-39-2: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This plain-weave silk cloth is unusual because, rather than single threads, the weaver wove together silk threads that had been firmly twisted together, like very fine twine. Among the textiles passed down at Hōryū-ji Temple, very few similar examples have survived to present day.

N-319-39-3: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

Green dyes did not exist when this textile was made. Instead, the cloth was first dyed yellow with pigment extracted from the bark of the Amur cork tree or a type of grass, and then dyed blue with indigo.

N-319-39-4: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

The gentle coloring of this fragment is quite rare as most ancient textiles were dyed in vibrant primary colors.

N-319-39-5: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This textile is worn with age but still retains its vibrant color.

N-319-39-6: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

This fragment retains its original shape to a remarkable degree. The left and right sides have double-fold hems.

N-319-42-1: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

Please refer to the description for work N-319-39-2.

N-319-71-2: Fragment of *Ban* (Buddhist Ritual Banner) “Banner leg”

Asuka–Nara period, 7th–8th century

Yellow banners were most likely displayed for forty-nine days to pray for the repose of deceased individuals.