

# Tour the Gozu Tenno (the Heavenly King with a Cow Head)

10/9/2017  
Sohun

## [ 1 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : 1 , Shinmei Town , Tsushima City , Aichi Prefecture

Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 3/25/2017

Remarks : The Oda clan revered this shrine as a family deity and devoted themselves to the construction of the shrine. The family crest of the Oda clan is the same as the crest of this shrine. Because it enshrines Gozu Tenno or Heavenly King with a cow head ; a god that wards off evil , it has attracted worshipers mainly in the Tokai resion and eastern Japan , and branch shrines have been built in various places. It is the head shrine of approximately 3,000 Tsushima Shrines (Tenno Shrines) in Japan. It was called "Tsushima Gozu Tennosha" (Tsushima Tennosha) throughout Middle Ages , early modern period. With the separation of Shintoism and Buddhism in the Meiji Period , all Buddhist elements in buildings and festivals were abolished. The enshrined deity was changed to "Takehayasusano no Mikoto" , and the name of Gozu Tenno was removed from the name of the shrine , making it Tsushima Shrine.



**【Worship Hall】**



**【Tower Gate】**

## [ 2 ] Yasaka Shrine

Location : Kitagawa 625 , Gion Town , Higashiyama Ward , Kyoto City , Kyoto Prefecture

Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 3/26/2017

Remarks : It was called "Gion Shrine" or "Gion Kanjin-in Temple" , because the original enshrined deity , Gozu Tenno , was the guardian deity of Gion Shrine. It was renamed "Yasaka Shrine" in 1868 , following the separation of Shintoism and Buddhism.



**【West Tower Gate】**



**【Torii Gate and South Tower Gate】**



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4/29/2017  
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## [ 3 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : Sugino 549 , Akechi Town , Ena City , Gifu Prefecture

Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 4/29/2017

Remarks : After leaving the Taisho Village parking lot and turning right at the Shinmachi intersection , there is Tsushima Shrine on the top of the mountain. The way up to the shrine is like an animal trail , and hard to find. I finally figured it out by asking someone at a nearby gas station. There was a stone washbasin in the middle of the stone steps.



【Long Stone Steps  
Leading to the Shrine】



【Tsushima Shrine Main Hall】

## [ 4 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : Ihama 2007 , Iwamura Town , Ena City , Gifu prefecture

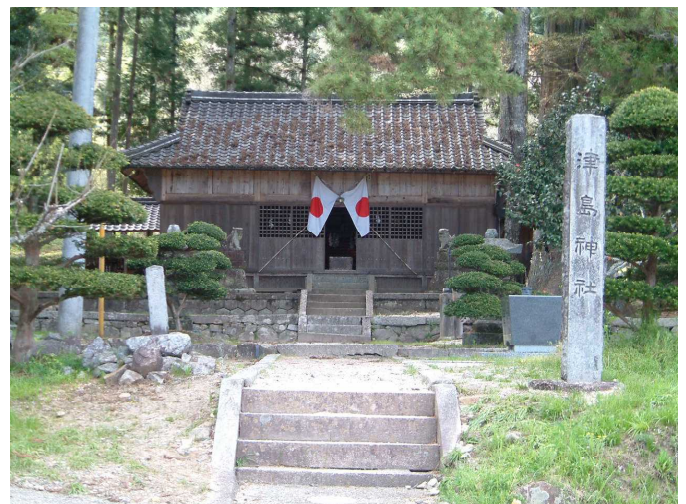
Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 5/4/2017

Remarks : There is a torii , or a gateway to a Shinto shrine of Tsushima Shrine along national highway 257. The approach extends straight from the torii to Tsushima Shrine. The approach is over 100m. The shrine is built in a place surrounded by mountains on three sides.



【Tsushima Shrine Torii】



【Tsushima Shrine】



# Tour the Gozu Tenno (the Heavenly King with a Cow Head)

5/15/2023  
Sohun

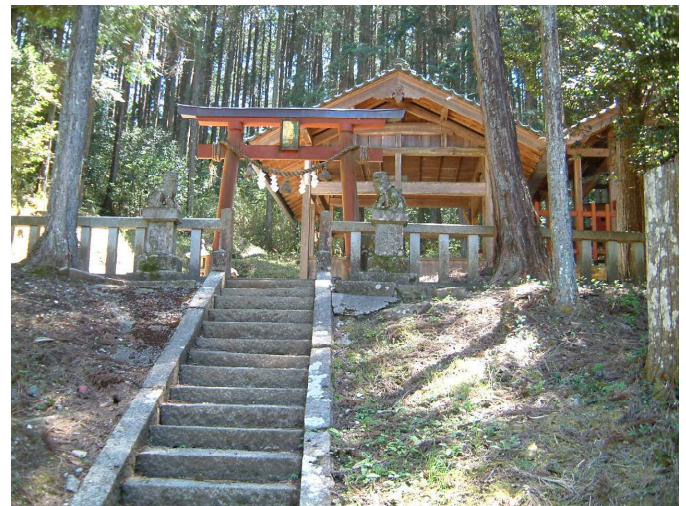
## [ 5 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : Kusumi 1038 , Osashima Town , Ena City , Gifu Prefecture  
Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)  
Date of visit : 5/5/2017

Remarks : The distance from the torii to the main shrine is over 100m. I crimed the stone steps of the main shrine and passed through the red torii gate with the words "Tsushima Shrine" written on it. The main shrine stands sideways against this red torii gate.



【Tsushima Shrine Torii】



【Tsushima Shrine Main Hall】

## [ 6 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : Ohi Town , Ena City , Gifu Prefecture  
Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)  
Date of visit : 5/12/2023

Remarks : If you go in the direction of Iwamura from JR Ena Station , you will see Valor on your left. Turn left just before Valor , go through the road in front of Hachiya Clinic , and there is Tsushima Shrine about 100m away. It is along the Agi River. When we think of shrines , we have the image of being surrounded by trees and forests. However , there are no trees at all , there are benches , and it is like a park. I looked for a signboard or a stone monument with the name of the shrine written on it , but I could not find it.



【Tsushima Shrine】



【Tsushima Shrine】



# Tour the Gozu Tenno (the Heavenly King with a Cow Head)

5/15/2023  
Sohun

## [ 7 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : Kamiyahagi Town , Ena City , Gifu Prefecture  
Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)  
Date of visit : 5/12/2023

Remarks : I headed for Kamiyahagi Elementary School along National Route 418 through Iwamura from downtown Ena by private car. When I came to Kamiyahagi Elementary School , I went further on National Route 418 and headed for Yokomichi Community Center. After a while , I entered a small town. When I asked the shopkeeper on the right side of the national highway , he told me that there is Tsushima Shrine on the top of the mountain on the left side of the national highway. I drove into a narrow road , drove as far as I could , and parked on the side of the road. I asked a local family member about the way to Tsushima Shrine , and after that , it was time to clime the mountain. After climbing the mountain for about 15 to 20 minutes , Tsushima Shrine appeared at the summit. The terrain was reminiscent of an impregnable mountain castle. There are 108 stone steps just before the summit. I wondered how they managed to carry these stair stones to the top of this mountain.



【Mountain Road to Tsushima Shrine】



【Stone Steps to Tsushima Shrine】



【Tsushima Shrine Main Hall】



【Tsushima Shrine Main Hall】



# Tour the Gozu Tenno (the Heavenly King with a Cow Head)

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## [ 8 ] Tsushima Shrine

Location : Komanba 746 , Nakatsugawa City , Gifu Prefecture

Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 5/11/2023

Remarks : Tsushima Shrine is near the Kato Factory. The following is written on a signboard at the bottom of the stone steps leading to the shrine. It is said that the shrine was founded before 1661 after receiving a request from Tsushima Shrine in Owari Province. It is revered as the god of the birthplace of the Komanba area. The enshrined deity is strong and brave. We enshrines a deity who exterminates plagues , pests , and rice bugs. In August , junior high school students in the Nakatsu district begin preparations to decorate the lanterns. At the festival on August 14th and 15th , you can hear the chants of "Wasshoi Wasshoi" and the sound of taiko drums. They then visit Tsushima Shrine and receive exorcism. It has been handed down as a traditional event of the shrine where children actively participate.

Nakatsu West Area "History and Culture" Tradition Committee



【Tsushima Shrine  
Torii Gate and Stone Steps】



【Tsushima Shrine Main Hall】

## [ 9 ] Hachibuse Shrine

Location : Fukuoka Hachibuse 2541 , Nakatsugawa City , Gifu Prefecture

Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 7/17/2023

Remarks : In 2023 , the evening festival was held on Sunday , July 15th , and the Tatakai Festival (the Beating Festival) was held on Sunday , July 16th. Every year , they are held one week before the evening festival and the Tatakai festival (the Beating Festival) at Sakakiyama Shrine. It is a branch spirit of Sakakiyama Shrine (Gion Gozu Tenno Shrine). Due to the separation of Shintoism and Buddhism in the early Meiji Period , the name was changed from 'Gozu Tenno Shrine' to 'Sakakiyama Shrine' , which is the same name as the head shrine. However , in the Showa era , the place name of this area was included and it became 'Hachibuse Shrine'.



【Torii and Stone Steps】



【Main Hall】



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## [ 1 0 ] Abiromi Shrine

Location : Hirugawa Nakagiri , Nakatsugawa City , Gifu Prefecture

Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)

Date of visit : 5/11/2023

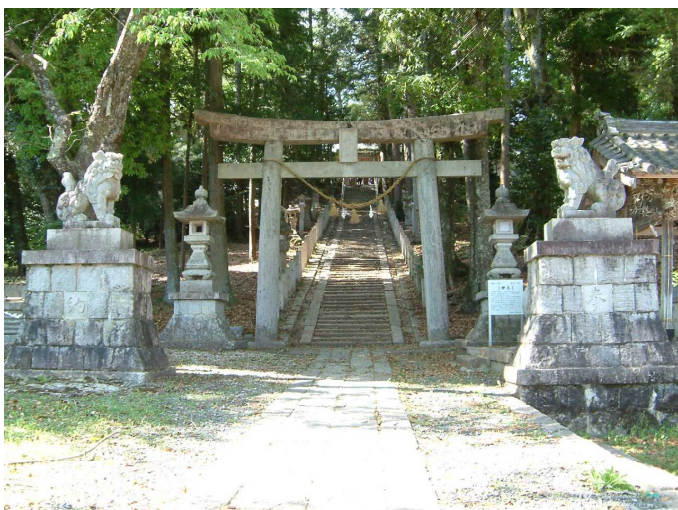
Remarks : I drove from Downtown Nakatsugawa to JA Higashi Mino Hirugawa branch and Hirugawa post office. From there , I aimed for Hitotsubatago Hirugawa store. After driving a little further , the torii gate came into view. The shrine is famous for the Kinefuri Festival. Before Haibutsu Kishaku , it was called Gozu Tenno Shrine. After the Meiji era change , it became Abiromi Shrine. The Kinefuri Odori is said to have been danced to pray for a bountiful harvest. It is also said to be a transformation of "Sword Dance". It originates from the Southern Court legend handed down in Hirugawa (Prince Munenaga , son of Emperor Godaigo , died in Hirugawa). I feel that there is a deep connection between the cow in the pestle in the Chinese character for "Kinefuri Odori" and the cow in the Chinese character for "Gozu Tenno".



**【Abiromi Shrine  
Torii Gate and Stone Steps】**



**【Abiromi Shrine  
Torii Gate and Stone Steps】**



**【Abiromi Shrine  
Torii Gate and Stone Steps】**



**【Abiromi Shrine Main Hall】**



# Tour the Gozu Tenno (the Heavenly King with a Cow Head)

5/16/2023  
Sohun

## [ 1 1 ] Sakakiyama Shrine

Location : Fukuoka , Nakatsugawa City , Gifu Prefecture  
Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)  
Date of visit : 5/16/2023

Remarks : Before Haibutsu Kishaku or abolition of Buddhism , it was called Gozu Tenno Shrine. After the Meiji era change , it became Sakakiyama Shrine. In the early 16th century , Koeji Castle was moved to Naegi Takamori. The enshrined deity of Tobitenno , that is the family deity , was about to be sent to Takamori on a portable shrine. However , the portable shrine has not moved at all at the current Sakakiyama Shrine. Thereupon , the attendants were beaten and tried to move the portable shrine forward , but it did not move. At that time , there was an oracle that said , "I am Gozu Tenno. There is no need to go to Takamori. This place is suitable for me.". And it is said that Sakakiyama Shrine was founded. The origin of Tataka Festival or Beating Festival is based on this story.



【Sakakiyama Shrine】



【Sakakiyama Shrine Main Hall】

## [ 1 2 ] Uenaegi Shrine

Location : Fukuoka Uenaegi , Nakatsugawa City , Gifu Prefecture  
Enshrined deity : (Gozu Tenno)  
Date of visit : 5/15/2023

Remarks : Before Haibutsu Kishaku or abolition of Buddhism , it was called Tobi Tenno. After the Meiji era change , it became Uenaegi Shrine. It has a long history as the former shrine of Sakakiyama Shrine. In the Nara Period , a child blurted out , "I am the sacred tree of Gozu Tenno". It is said that Tobi Tenno began when the cedar saplings were planted and the shrine was built. The place name "Uenaegi" comes from this historical event. For generations , it has been the family deity of the castle owner of Koeji. Emperor Godaigo's son Prince Munenaga also deeply revered Gozu Tenno. It is said that he wrote the eight letters of "総社祇園牛頭天王" in large letters and presented a plaque.



【Uenaegi Shrine (Gozu Tenno)】



【Cedar behind Uenaegi Shrine】