



**CHANOYU** Quarterly  
TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

No. 30





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Chanoyu Quarterly

*Hōun Kinran*

The embossing on the cover is adapted from a gold embroidered fabric favored by Sen Sōshitsu XV, fifteenth-generation grand master of the Urasenke school of tea. The motif is composed of a *bō*, phoenix, amid *un*, clouds, and is the graphic representation of his Buddhist name, Hōunsai.

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# CHANOYU Quarterly

TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

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The names of Japanese persons throughout the text of this magazine are written in accordance with the Japanese practice, with surname first.

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*Chanoyu*, the tea ceremony, is a synthesis of arts and expresses in principle the many aspects of Japanese culture. From its beginnings in Japan during the fifteenth century until the present, it has been both catalyst and medium in the development of distinctive art forms. Under the guidance of Sen Sōshitsu XV, the Urasenke Foundation and the Urasenke Foundation of Hawaii hope to encourage the development of these arts and promote a worldwide understanding of the culture of *chanoyu*.

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## The Pure Heart

Sen Sōshitsu XV

During my many trips abroad and when I speak before groups in Japan I am often asked the question, "What is the most important thing in chanoyu?" While this is a matter that each of us must consider personally, for me chanoyu is using my mind and other resources to discover my own attitude toward life. Many people confuse the form of chanoyu with its aim. Thinking that the aim of chanoyu is to perfect one's manner of tea preparation, many people struggle to remember the order of steps in all the different tea procedures. Others compete with each other to collect licenses for studying the more esoteric and "high-ranking" procedures of chanoyu. These kinds of activities could not be further from the original intent of chanoyu. Of primary importance when we are studying tea is to remember when we are hosts to make and serve tea with our whole self and when we are guests to receive with sincere gratitude the bowl of tea that is prepared for us. In this way we will be able to gain a wide variety of experiences and slowly improve our own attitude toward life. For me, this is most important; this is why I follow the way of tea.

The "Ten Points of Attention for the Man of Tea" found in the tea records of Yamanoue Sōji (1544-1590) include much pertinent advice for the aspiring student. One qualification for a tea practitioner that is included in it is: "Love of neatness and purity from the heart's core." For the student of chanoyu this has deep meaning. It teaches that the desire for cleanliness and purity that arises in our heart, our innermost self, promotes and encourages the development of a clear and pure mind. This mind reveals itself in the company of others in the tearoom and even in the seemingly insignificant details of our relations with people in everyday life.

Among the hundreds of thousands of people who have studied chanoyu for ten, fifteen, or twenty years there are many who have not achieved a clear and pure state of mind. Many diligent students do not understand how necessary this "love of neatness and purity" is for their eager pursuit of the discipline. Meeting such teachers and students of tea I cannot help reflecting on the importance of a clear and pure mind. I feel sorry for these people, and for their sake strive ever harder in my own tea practice.

Following the way of tea should not be confused with making a living or improving one's lot in life. That would make a sham, a charade of the discipline. If you make tea with an impure mind your tea will be "impure." Foremost in your mind must be the purity of your tea; otherwise you and your host or guest can never attain the state of oneness. Even the most splendid and distinguished tea utensils cannot compensate for an impure heart; utensils alone cannot make delicious tea.

Many fine, rare teabowls with long, richly documented histories often come to my attention. Certain of these bowls strike me with their ugliness and I am dismayed with the way they have become so musty and old. Over the centuries tea grime has

accumulated on the teabowl and like a heavy shroud conceals the teabowl's beauty. Fame is of little consequence in this case. On the other hand, there are clean, well-cared-for utensils that are permeated with tea and grow more precious each time they are used. These utensils, filled with the spirit of tea, are truly beyond compare in their magnificence. The same can be said of tea practitioners.

Essentially chanoyu is service to oneself from the heart. It is this heart that can grow greater than itself when in the service of others. The special relationship that host and guest share in the tearoom is extremely fragile—the slightest hint of insincerity or impurity can have devastating consequences. It is only after you have used your mind and heart to discover your own attitude toward life that this fragile thing can live and acquire meaning; the bowl of tea can then become a wonder that you share in the tearoom.

Your tea practice can be great or remain insignificant depending upon your purity of heart and state of mind. With all your might, cultivate a clear mind and pure heart and so achieve “pure tea.” Make this your goal. 

## Nukada no Ōkimi: A Profile with Poems

Aoki Takako

Nukada no Ōkimi, the most brilliant poetess of the *Manyōshū*, lived in an age of violence. She was witness to both the Taika Reform (645) and Jinshin Revolt (672) as the ancient Japanese state shaped itself during the seventh century.

The only reliable reference to her personal life is a single line in the *Nihon shoki* entered under the section on Emperor Temmu:

The Emperor at first took Nukada no Ōkimi, the daughter of  
Kagami no Ōkimi, in marriage and a baby girl, Tōchi no  
Himemiko, was born to him.

This single mention of her does not even fill the page on which it is recorded.

Later, Nukada was summoned by Temmu's older brother, the Emperor Tenji (626-671), who is known to history as the leader of the Taika Reform and founder of the new government. She was thus intimately related to two historically very prominent figures.

The entry on the reign of Emperor Temmu (d. 686), lists an empress, three ranking consorts, three wives and then, only after these, does the single reference to Nukada appear. One assumes she would be included among the main consorts, but this is not so. On the other hand, her name does not appear under Emperor Tenji's entry. It is conceivable that her role at court may have been to compose poetry in the name of the emperors or to perform divine services for the imperial court as a shrine maiden or as a "bride" of the gods. In any case, the only other sources of information about her life are about a dozen poems collected in the *Manyōshū*.

### The Eve of the Taika Reform

The political structure of Yamato was composed of the principal ministers of the highest class and a council made up of clan members of a lower class who were answerable to the principal ministers. The influential clans struggled among themselves, and at the same time, those with hereditary claim to the throne gained the support of the powerful clans and violent disputes developed. Among the clans, the Soga family was the established power. Their high-handed and coercive tactics, however, provoked hatred in other quarters, and a group under Nakatomi no Kamatari concentrated its efforts on resisting the spread of Soga influence.

On the twelfth day of the sixth month in the fourth year of the reign of the Empress Kōgyoku (645), Korean envoys were ceremonially presenting their tributes to the Japanese ruler in the Daigokuden. Brandishing a long spear, Prince Naka no Ōe

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"Nukada no Ōkimi" is an abridgement, translation and adaptation of the author's "Nukada no Ōkimi" appearing in *Kareinaru Kyūtei Saijo*, 1977. Reprinted in *Jinbutsu Nihon no Joseishi* Vol. 1 [Portraits of Women in Japanese History Vol. 1] published in 1980 by Shūei-sha, Tokyo.

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leaped up and assassinated Soga no Iruka on the spot. The prince was then twenty years old. His brother Ōama was fifteen. It is said that a half-brother of the two, Prince Furuhiito, upon seeing Iruka's corpse, fled to his home. Everything had come about as Prince Naka no Ōe and Kamatari had meticulously planned. On the following day Iruka's father, Emishi, committed suicide at his home, completely extinguishing the Soga rivalry with the reigning family. Thus began the Taika Reform.

Under the new government, it would have been natural for Prince Naka no Ōe to succeed to the throne directly after his mother. In consultation with Kamatari, however, he declined the position out of consideration for his half-brother, Furuhiito, and his uncle, Prince Karu. Though the late Emperor Jomei (593-641) was father to Naka no Ōe, Ōama and Furuhiito, Furuhiito's mother was Hote no Iratsume, a daughter of Soga no Umako, which made him the assassinated Iruka's cousin. It was believed that their maternal difference would become the source of a distinct political feud which would pit Naka no Ōe and Ōama against Furuhiito.

Having completely lost Soga support, however, Furuhiito ultimately declined the throne and left for Yoshino in Nara, where he entered the priesthood. Next in line, Empress Kōgyoku's brother, Prince Karu, ascended the throne as the Emperor Kōtoku. The name Taika (Great Changes) was given to the era. In the fall of the same year, Furuhiito was accused of attempting a rebellion and was killed by Naka no Ōe. The Soga family's prince of the blood was eliminated with comparative ease.

During the following years of Kōtoku's reign, various laws were promulgated that had originated in the minds of Naka no Ōe and Kamatari who had the actual control of power, and the course of the reform proceeded steadily as they planned. The powerless Kōtoku ended his life in despair in 654. His only son, Prince Arima, was then fifteen years old.

Naka no Ōe still made no attempt to gain the throne but again reinstated his mother Kōgyoku who became the new Empress Saimei. In her second reign, without taking into consideration the economic situation of the time, she paid so much attention to construction projects that public sentiment began to turn against her. It was in this political disorder that the Arima Incident occurred.

It was not strange that the boy who saw his father die in despair would, as he approached manhood, harbor the deepest enmity against the misgovernment of the day and a secret determination to seek retribution. For Naka no Ōe, who had overcome one reactionary opposition after another, the mere existence of this young man probably weighed heavily on his mind.

The incident occurred in the tenth month of the fourth year of Saimei's reign (658) while the empress and Naka no Ōe were away at the Muro hot springs in Kishū (present-day Yunosaki Springs in Shirahama, Wakayama Prefecture). Arima was suddenly apprehended for attempting a rebellion and sent off to the country palace in Kishū. There, he was personally questioned by Naka no Ōe. The prince answered, "The gods and Akae know the truth. I know absolutely nothing"; for in fact it was Soga no Akae, the person in charge while the empress and Naka no Ōe were away, who had stirred up the rebellion. Arima must have now realized that it was none other than Naka no Ōe himself who had brought about the entire incident.

Only a few days following the incident Arima was hanged at Fujishiro-zaka in Kishū. He was nineteen years old at the time. Two poems, which he wrote on the way to Kishū, can be found in the *Manyōshū*.

*Iwashiro no  
hamamatsu ga e o  
bikimusubi  
masakiku araba  
mata kaerimin*

On the shore of Iwashiro  
I draw and interweave  
The branches of a pine as talisman.  
If fortune wills, I shall  
Return to see it once more.

II:141

*ie ni areba  
ke ni moru ii o  
kusamakura  
tabi ni shi areba  
shii no ha ni moru*

Were I at home,  
My wife would serve me rice  
In a bowl.  
Journeying now,  
I have my rice in a leaf of pasania.

II:142

Such was the frightening incident that occurred during the empress' sojourn in Kishū. In her party at the time was Nukada no Ōkimi.

*shizumarishi  
yutsuzu shiroshi  
waga seko ga  
itataseriken  
itsu kashi ga moto*

Quiet evening,  
A star shining white.  
My lover  
Might have been standing  
Under that godly oak.

I:9

This poem by Nukada is considered one of the most problematic in the *Manyōshū*, because the use of Chinese characters to render Japanese words here allows for a variety of possible readings. One interpretation is that there is an ill-boding premonition related to the Arima incident hidden in the first half of the poem. If Ōama were present on this journey, then it is conceivable that it is to him, her "lover" at the Kishū palace near the godly oak, that she addressed herself. Perhaps through her song she is warning him to be on guard lest he be the next to suffer his brother's hostility and murderous intent. It may also be that she called Arima *waga seko* or "my lover" out of her deep compassion and sympathy for his misfortunes. It is undeniable, however, that her feelings for Ōama were very much like those expressed in the poem, and it will be remembered that Ōama was as much a candidate and rival to the throne as Arima and the others.

After the incident, as though nothing out of the ordinary had occurred, Saimei, accompanied by Naka no Ōe and her entourage, returned to the capital on the third day of the new year, 659, in the fifth year of her reign. In March she departed from the capital again to Yoshino and then to Ōmi (present-day Shiga prefecture). The following poem is thought to have been composed by Nukada on this occasion.

*aki no no no  
mikusa kari fuki  
yadorerishi  
Uji no miyako no  
kariho shi omohoyu*

I yearn for our  
Temporary shelter in Uji—  
That hut thatched  
With pampas grass  
Cut in autumn fields.

I:7

Though it was now spring, she fondly recalls another journey in autumn when the roof of their Uji lodging was thatched with grasses gathered from the fields. In a certain book referred to in the *Manyōshū*, the poem is attributed to Saimei at the time of her first reign as Kōgyoku when she traveled to the Hira Palace, west of Lake Biwa in 648.

In such a case, Nukada would have been quite young when she accompanied the empress on her journey. For that reason now, on their second visit together to Ōmi, a song of remembrance of the past might naturally have been conceived. One reason the poem is attributable to Saimei is that Nukada may have read her empress' heart and composed the song in her name. Saimei might have also commanded that a poem of recollection be composed for their official journey. This poem which purifies and idealizes every aspect of the reminiscence itself marks the beginning of the true lyrical style of poetry in Japan. Even if we exclude the problematic poem written following Arima's death, Nukada's rare poetic sentiment is already showing signs of awakening.

#### Nikitatsu

The seventh year of Saimei's reign, 661, began with a flurry of activity. Conditions on the Korean peninsula had lately grown tense. Paekche, long the base for Japan's activities in Korea, sought Japanese aid in resisting an attack by Silla who was supported by T'ang. By the sixth day of the new year, the naval fleet of the Yamato court which served the aging empress left the bay at Naniwa (Osaka) and sailed westward through the Inland Sea. Aboard this reinforcement fleet bound for Paekche were all the powerful members of the Imperial family including the de facto sovereign, Prince Naka no Ōe, his brother Ōama and their consorts. Instead of sailing directly to Kyushu, the fleet anchored first at Nikitatsu in the province of Iyo, near Matsuyama, on the island of Shikoku. Here they would be moored for a few days, watching and waiting for the right time to sail.

*Nikitatsu ni  
funa norisen to  
tsuki mateba  
shio mo kanainu  
ima wa kogiide na*

Just as we await the moon's light  
To board ship and embark  
From Nikitatsu,  
The tide too favors us—  
Now let us pull the oars!

I:8

The poem is by Nukada who was on board in the court entourage. Overflowing with vigorous energy, the song must have surely stirred the hearts of all present, awaiting the fleet's advancement. The atmosphere is tense as the ships compete with one another in preparation for departure; the fleet floating in the moonlight seems a vivid, richly impressive scene in this outstanding piece of poetry.

It is unfortunate that the writer of the poem, so well-known even in Japanese textbooks, is thought by junior high school students to be a man. And yet, where does the undeniably masculine quality of the poem originate?

The poem was composed by imperial edict and was to express the heart of the commander-in-chief of the expedition. On the occasion of a departure of such national significance, there were sure to be prayers dedicated to the gods. Nukada's poem then may even have been a kind of blessing at the time of departure.

The *Manyō shūka* (Tokyo: Iwanamishinsho, 1938) by the poet Saitō Mokichi states that though the strong tone of its last line makes it appear to be a command, even if the author were female, the imperial will as well as the hearts of everyone aboard are collectively expressed in it. He believes that the essence of the orders and the men's response to it are spontaneously captured in it. This interpretation has been introduced here because it describes the circumstances in which the poem was conceived. In the end, the poem may be considered not merely a benediction for the safety of the ships but a spontaneously inspired song in which the poetess became one with the vision before her eyes. It can only be an attribution to Nukada's gift of poetic insight.

During Saimei's reign it appears that Nukada's poetic genius allowed her to serve as the court poetess at official functions. On this westward journey she may have been authorized to compose for Saimei or may have served the actual commander, Naka no Ōe, perhaps even as a new wife.

#### Utsusemi

At twenty, Naka no Ōe had completed the great task of overthrowing the Sogas and, from his position as heir apparent, had resolutely guided political policies under both Kōtoku and Saimei. Beside him those many years, Ōama lived a humble life. Though five years younger, he was not inferior in character but, in fact, possessed a genius which surpassed even his elder brother's. Lost were the precious years of his youth, enduring the same hardships but always moving at his brother's pace, ultimately confronting, but being unable to break through, the wall which was Naka no Ōe.

Having to support his brother's conspiracies throughout this period, perhaps deep in his heart he could not help harboring some misgivings, criticisms, and dissatisfactions. Putting aside the difference in their personalities, although they had the same mother, there was the permanent disparity of their relationship as older and younger brother.

It was in these troubled years of his youth that Ōama chanced to meet Nukada, a fresh young lady not yet twenty, but already skilled in literary accomplishments. It is not impossible to draw some implication about their future from that difficult poem that was introduced earlier.



There is a well-known poem about three mountains by the elder of the two brothers.

*Kaguyama wa  
Unebi o oshi to  
Miminashi to  
aiarasoiki  
kamiyo yori  
kaku ni arurashi  
inishie mo  
shika ni are koso  
utsusemi mo  
tsuma o arasourashiki*

The god, Mount Kagu,  
Because of his love for Mount Unebi,  
Quarreled  
With Mount Miminashi.  
Such has it been  
From the age of the gods.  
Since in ancient times  
It has been so,  
Now, in this world too,  
Men will quarrel  
Over a lover.

I:13

Envoy

*Kaguyama to  
Miminashiyama to  
aishi toki  
tachite mi ni kosbi  
Inami-kunihara*

When Mount Kagu  
And Mount Miminashi  
Quarreled with each other,  
Out of concern a god of Izumo  
Came to look—  
As far as this moor of Inami.

I:14

Thought to have been sung on the beach at Inami in Harima (present-day Hyogo prefecture), it was probably composed on that westward journey in the seventh year of Saimei's reign (661). Sailing from Naniwa (present-day Osaka) bay, the fleet passed its second night in the bay at Akashi. Before them, just as in the poem, spread the spacious lands of Inami. Here, before Prince Naka's eyes, was the peacemaker of the Harima fudōki legend of the rivalry of the three mountains. It recalled to him those three mountains of his homeland Yamato, and he was filled with renewed and deep emotion. Mount Kagu competed with Mount Miminashi for the love of Mount Unebi. Thus it was in the age of the gods; thus was it now in the age of men that they struggle over a lover.

In the ensuing envoy, he retells the Inami portion of the legend itself saying that when Mount Kagu and Mount Miminashi fought over a lover, the one who came forth as peacemaker was this Inami-kunihara.

The ancient custom of putting legends into poems was related to the praise of the land as well as a kind of promise that they would be allowed to pass through those lands and continue to journey safely. Although there is little doubt that this was Naka no Ōe's motive in composing the three mountains poem, it cannot be overlooked that this legend, unlike any other, provoked deep emotion within him. How vividly the ancient legend sympathized with his existence at the time (*utsusemi*).



"The god, Mount Kagu, / Because of his love for Mount Unebi, / Quarreled / With Mount Miminashi." I:13. From left to right: Mount Kagu, Mount Unebi and Mount Miminashi. Photo courtesy of Kuzunishi Sōsei, Kyoto.

There is a third poem supposedly by Naka no Ōe.

*watatsumi no  
toyohatagumo ni  
iribi sashi  
koyoi no tsukiyo  
sayakeku ari koso*

The setting sun gleams  
Through the yielding clouds  
Spread over the sea:  
May the moon tonight  
Glow in serenity.

I:15

This poem depicts an evening in early spring, the setting sun gleaming through the clouds spread over the calm Inland Sea. The scene in the opening line is not simply a description of a natural spectacle but captures a glorious and auspicious sign bestowed by the gods. This poem was composed as a song of blessing for a safe sea voyage.

Might this poem also be, in fact, yet another of Nukada's compositions? Some compilers of the *Manyōshū* have commented that they doubt it belongs to Naka no Ōe's series of envoys. I also feel intuitively that it was written in the same vein as "Nikitatsu." When comparing the occasion, the substance, the creative impulse, and, moreover, the marvelous poetic intuition in both poems, it is hard not to believe that the poet is one and the same. Knowing the heart of the mission's de facto commander Naka no Ōe perfectly, even from a public position, Nukada was probably able to brilliantly harmonize her words to his. Whether the poem is Nukada's or his, their relationship is somehow discernible in the three poems.

#### Clouds Over Mount Miwa

The sixty-eight-year-old Empress Saimei died at Asakura Palace in Tsukushi (the location of the wartime residence of the nation's ruler, present-day Fukuoka prefecture) in the seventh month of 661 just prior to another dispatch of forces, this time to Silla. This was an unforeseen jolt to the fleet as it sailed toward Tsukushi. For the third time Naka no Ōe was faced with the opportunity of succeeding to the throne. Again he chose not to and set up a provisional government instead. Burdened with heavy responsibilities and still clothed in mourning for his mother, he had to prepare the nation for its overseas conflict.

Two years later in the eighth month of 663, a large army and supply of weapons were sent to Paekche as originally planned. Following a fierce battle at Hakusuki-no-e (near the Kinko river estuary) Japanese forces suffered great losses at the hands of the combined strength of T'ang and Silla. Four hundred ships were lost in the raging flames that filled the sky, and the sea was said to have turned a deep red. Paekche was destroyed, and Japan completely lost its foothold on the peninsula.

Riding on the momentum of their conquest of the Korean kingdom, it became merely a matter of time before T'ang forces would surge onto Japanese soil. National defense had to be fortified and strengthened immediately. Strategically garrisoned soldiers were placed on the islands of Iki and Tsushima, and facilities for sending distress smoke signals were prepared on the mountain tops. At Dazaifu (present-day

Fukuoka prefecture), a kilometer-long wall was built on the side that faced the sea as preparation against enemy attack.

For six years following Saimei's death, Naka no Ōe's provisional government was preoccupied day and night with foreign policy, recovery from defeat, and national defense. During this time Ōama probably worked with his brother on the problems facing the nation. Internal conditions had become so unstable that the most urgent business by far was the straightening up of domestic affairs.

The course of the reform government had reached an important turning point. Judging that a break in the political situation was absolutely necessary, in the third month of the sixth year of his temporary government (667), Naka no Ōe decided to move the capital from Yamato (present-day Nara prefecture) to Ōtsu near Lake Biwa in the province of Ōmi (present-day Shiga prefecture). From ancient times settled by immigrant cultures, it commanded an impregnable position with Lake Biwa and the mountains surrounding it on all sides. Though this decision to move the capital outside the Five Home Provinces\* to Ōmi broke an old tradition, it was a necessary result of foreign policy and national defense.

Nukada composed this poem on the occasion of their departure to Ōmi:

|                         |                                |      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------|
| <i>umasake</i>          | I thought to gaze—             |      |
| <i>Miwa no yama</i>     | Looking long as I went         |      |
| <i>aoniyoshi</i>        | Through many bends in the road |      |
| <i>Nara no yama no</i>  | Until finally it was lost      |      |
| <i>yama no ma ni</i>    | Behind the slopes              |      |
| <i>ikakuru made</i>     | Of the mountains of Nara—      |      |
| <i>michi no kuma</i>    | At Mount Miwa,                 |      |
| <i>itsumoru made ni</i> | Of the sweetness of wine.      |      |
| <i>tsubara ni mo</i>    | Is it right, then,             |      |
| <i>mitsutsu yukan o</i> | That unfeeling clouds          |      |
| <i>shibashiba mo</i>    | Hide the mountain              |      |
| <i>misaken yama o</i>   | That should be,                |      |
| <i>kokoronaku</i>       | Again and again,               |      |
| <i>kumo no</i>          | Visible in the distance?       |      |
| <i>kakuso beshi ya</i>  |                                | I:17 |

#### Envoy

|                           |                                  |      |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------|
| <i>Miwayama o</i>         | Will Mount Miwa                  |      |
| <i>shika mo kakusu ka</i> | Be hidden thus?                  |      |
| <i>kumo dani mo</i>       | Would that at least these clouds |      |
| <i>kokoro aranamu</i>     | Had feelings:                    |      |
| <i>kakuso beshi ya</i>    | Should it be hidden so?          | I:18 |

\* Yamato, (present-day Nara prefecture); Yamashiro, (present-day Kyoto prefecture); Kawachi, (present-day Osaka prefecture); Izumi, (present-day Osaka prefecture); Settsu, (present-day Osaka prefecture).



There were great risks in moving the capital and leaving the ancient lands of Yamato, and the people's agitation and dissatisfaction were great.

To leave Yamato it was necessary, too, to offer careful words of parting and regrets to the gods of Mount Miwa, they who were the very spirit of the land. Many old and important oral traditions were related to the mountain and its deities were reverently worshipped by the Yamato court. Some kind of ceremony was sure to have taken place before their departure, perhaps at the pass in the Nara mountains on the boundary of Yamato from where they would leave their homeland behind. Nukada was commanded by Naka no Ōe to dedicate the parting song on this occasion, an event as nationally and religiously significant as that of the Nikitatsu poem.

Once they left, there would be little hope of seeing Mount Miwa again. On the day of the ceremony an ill-tempered cloud concealed the mountain from view. The thought that the gods were angry made their desire to see the mountain stronger. By expressing this desire in fervent prayer, they hoped to appease the deities so that the act of moving the capital could be carried out peacefully. At the same time the song voiced the sorrow in the hearts of all gathered in parting with their beloved mountain and their land of Yamato. Nukada's moving words inspired another poet to write:

*hesogata no  
bayashi no saki no  
sanohari no  
kinu ni tsukunasu  
me ni tsuku waga se*

My husband—  
Drawing the eye  
Like the dye of black alder  
From the edge of the forest  
Of Hesogata—  
Deep in the cloth!

I:19

"Hesogata," an archaic term representing a spool of spun flax, appears in legends relating to Mount Miwa and is used, in such texts as the *Kojiki*, as a pseudonym for the mountain. This poem, most likely a familiar folk song of the region, expressed even more the poet's deep affection for the mountain.

As described in the folk song, the mountain of the deities was spindle-shaped, thickly wooded yet remarkably graceful and beautiful. The pain of leaving it was not unlike a secretly treasured memory of a parting in one's youth. The time had come. It would not be strange that as she sang, the memory from the past should merge with the growing poignancy in her heart. No one would truly understand her sorrow; there was nothing to do but sigh and complain bitterly to the clouds. The euphemistic and resentful tone in the poem and liberal revelation of her personality bring forth a strong sense of her femininity.

Nevertheless, Nukada's private and personal feelings are not revealed here. Ceremony demanded that her poem exceed the individual and express the hearts of all. By comparing their sorrow with that of a young girl in love, Nukada sought to soothe the gods of Mount Miwa.



“Will Mount Miwa / Be hidden thus?” I:18. Mount Miwa. Photo courtesy of Kuzunishi Sōsei, Kyoto.

## As Fragrant as the Flowers

Summer came quickly to the new capital and the great project of erecting the city proceeded through the autumn and winter. Unlike the old Asuka capital in Yamato, Ōtsu with its view of Lake Biwa was a new, spacious city.

On the third day of the first month of 668, seven years after Saimei's death, Naka no Ōe at last ascended the throne at the age of forty-three as Emperor Tenji. It was an opportunity to arrange for an empress as well, and the Yamato no Hime Ōkimi was enthroned. The new princess was the daughter of Tenji's half-brother Furuhi, who had been assassinated for inciting an uprising following the Taika Reform. Below the empress and the wives who followed her in rank were the many imperial consorts who were each respectively situated. Nukada was among the latter group, and yet her name was not placed in the formal records.

The foundations for the Ōmi palace were finally laid and peaceful days at last came to the ruling class. It was in this year that T'ang armies conquered Korea and the threat of their crossing the seas to Japan gradually diminished. Although the defeat at Hakusuki-no-e was a great blow, the arrival of a large number of refugees from the defeated kingdom of Paekche influenced and led to the development of the culture of the period. Due to the transplantation of Chinese culture from the continent, the culture of the Ōmi court itself flourished.

On the fifth day of the fifth month, a festival day in the first year of Tenji's reign (668), a great hunting party was held for the court on the Gamōno estate on the eastern shore of Lake Biwa. The hunt was actually no more than courtiers on horseback pursuing deer for their new horns. The women gathered medicinal grasses. It was a refined outdoor recreation, an imitation of a T'ang event. The spirit of the day is captured in two *Manyōshū* poems.

*akane sasu  
murasaki no yuki  
shimeno yuki  
nomori wa mizu ya  
kimi ga sode furu*

As you come and go  
Through this shining Imperial field  
Of murasaki grass,  
Will not the watchman see you—  
Waving your sleeves longingly to me?  
I:20

*murasaki no  
nioeru imo o  
nikuku araba  
bito zuma yue ni  
ware koime ya mo*

If I found you hateful  
Who are so graceful and lofty  
Like the murasaki grass,  
Would I long for you thus—  
Even though you are another's wife?  
I:21



"Through this shining Imperial field / Of murasaki grass." I:20. Gamōno, present-day Shiga prefecture. Photo courtesy of Kusunishi Sōsei, Kyoto.

The first poem is by Nukada. As well-known as it is, there are various interpretations of its meaning. One explanation is that the poem was composed at a banquet such as those commonly held following an excursion or upon arriving at a journey's destination. As it was the custom to compose love songs at these feasts, the tone of the poem is not altogether serious and private.

By recalling images of the day's events and, moreover, by suggesting before all that a romantic encounter had occurred that very day, Nukada's poem added to the merriment of the men and women of Tenji's court who were gathered at the banquet table. From the epigraph, we can see that the poem was sent to no one in particular. Her attentive audience, however, could not but wonder whose sleeves it was that had waved among the purple grasses. The beauty of the poem lies in this. The image of hailing another in such fashion is captivating as well. The poem seems to invite a reply and urge someone to reveal himself.

At such a point an answer returned from Ōama. In her poem, Nukada dropped a hint that "me" (another's wife) was in fact Nukada herself. Ōama reveals his deepest affection for her, thus dismissing her hesitancy and uncertainty. By the very fact that everyone knew that Nukada had been Ōama's wife, he could intentionally call her another's (Tenji's) and confess that, in spite of it all, he could not but love such a beautiful woman as his own wife. All of this is clearly related, Ōama suggests, to his praise and envy of Tenji, who now possessed Nukada.

Ultimately, what had raised the effect of Ōama's answer beyond expectation was Nukada's original poem, a work which marked the birth of refinement in women's poetry.

### **It Is the Autumn Hill That I Take!**

Other splendid and elegant parties besides the one at Gamōno were often held by the Ōmi court. It is recorded in an ancient work, the *Kamatari-den*, that the cultural atmosphere of Tenji's reign (662-671) is best represented by the many festivities and outings. It was in this age that Nukada graced the court, adding to it an even greater radiance with her poetry.

On the occasion of a great banquet held at a stately mansion in the new capital, Tenji commanded Prime Minister Kamatari to order a poetry contest held to determine which was more beautiful and charming: the spring mountains with their myriad blossoms or the autumn hills of variously colored leaves.

The question of the seasons was without doubt influenced by an ancient Chinese idea of refinement. It is probable that this sort of pastime was transmitted by the recent Paekche immigrants. The occasion may well have been an actual poetry gathering rather than a banquet. In the preface of the *Kaifūsō*, the nation's first anthology of poems in Chinese, it is written that poetry in Chinese was widely composed and very fashionable at the Ōmi court. Tenji's son, Prince Ōtomo, whose poetry appears in the *Kaifūsō*, was a poet accomplished in this style. He, too, was probably in attendance at this gathering.

In any event, the party ordered by Tenji, who was anxious to acquire Chinese culture, was an event of great scale attended by court officials. Both poems in Chinese



and Japanese *waka* (poems of thirty-one syllables) were offered by the noblemen and ladies. Unfortunately nothing was recorded, even in the *Kaifūsō*, of the men's contribution of Chinese poems.

Nukada also joined in the dispute of the beauty of the seasons, bringing with her a book not of Chinese but of Japanese poems. This was a common practice among poets, though it is possible that it was the first time she became so strongly aware of Japanese poetry in contrast to Chinese poetry. She attacked the subject using the poem and herself as her weapons.

The tastes and opinions were naturally diverse, divided between those who praised spring and those who favored fall. It came down at last to Nukada to decide the match. She serenely sang (I:16):

|                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>fuyu-gomori</i>       | With the arrival of spring      |
| <i>haru sari kureba</i>  | That overwhelms winter,         |
| <i>nakazarishi</i>       | The birds that have been silent |
| <i>tori mo ki nakinu</i> | Come and sing,                  |
| <i>sakazarishi</i>       | Flowers till now in hiding      |
| <i>hama mo . . .</i>     | Blossom forth.                  |

The supporters of spring were quick to rejoice. Nukada would surely continue to sing of the beauties of the blossoming flowers. Midway through the line, however, she made a reversal.

|                             |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>sakeredo</i>             | But the hills are too overgrown   |
| <i>yama o shigemi</i>       | For us to climb and pick flowers; |
| <i>irite mo torazu</i>      | Grasses grow too thick to be      |
| <i>kusa fukami</i>          | Taken in hand.                    |
| <i>torite mo mizu . . .</i> |                                   |

Though spring flowers bloom abundantly, they are covered by mountain greenery and grasses, "Grasses grow too thick to be taken in hand." The tide had turned and the spirits of those who favored spring fell. Hope soared in the hearts of those who praised fall. As she continued, a new strength unconsciously crept into her voice.

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>akiyama no</i>              | But for the autumn hills—        |
| <i>ko no ba o mite wa</i>      | When we see leaves on the trees, |
| <i>momiji oba</i>              | We admire the crimson leaves     |
| <i>torite zo shinobu . . .</i> | That fall to our hands.          |

Of course! We can gather the beautifully tinted leaves of the autumn hills. Thinking they had won, they sighed in relief. Nukada, however, pressed further.

|                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>aoki oba</i>               | We sigh at those yet green, |
| <i>okite zo nageku</i>        | Leaving them on branches;   |
| <i>sokoshi urameshi . . .</i> | They are my only regret—    |

Here, she took a deep breath and the assembly waited tensely. They pondered over her words again and again. We sigh over the green leaves still on the branches, and that, she said, was the unfortunate thing about fall. Does this fault then eliminate autumn as well or is it really her complete devotion to the colored leaves that makes her sigh and reproach those late-turning green ones? Just which season she would finally favor was a puzzle not only to her audience. She was not without indecision, but, making up her mind she concluded,

|                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>akiyama zo ware wa</i> | It is the autumn hill that I take! |
|                           | I:16                               |

The audience stirred spontaneously and broke into applause. She had favored both sides, held everyone in suspense and, fully capturing their attention, in an instant decided in favor of autumn. Her finesse was incomparable.

This magnificent composition based on Chinese tastes and influenced by the well-ordered sense of expression and intellectual content of Chinese literature, was a creation in a new literary genre. Upon close examination, however, we find that the poem does not at all conclude logically. While it begins with a logical consideration of personal likes and dislikes, logic is abandoned in the end, leaving only pure sentiment. Emotional sentiment, hidden away behind a cloak of intellect, is only gradually brought to the surface before it is finally fully exposed. Moreover, her perplexity, fluctuation and hesitation are apparent in the liberal usage of affirmations, negations, following and opposing conjunctions while her partiality appears in such words as “admire” (*shinobu*), “sigh” (*nageku*) and “regret” (*urameshi*). And whereas “enter” (*iru*) and “take” (*toru*) are purely active and emotionless words, the flowers and leaves are not being objectively regarded but actually communicated to the reader through the poet’s feelings and character. We may venture to say that a fragrance of the poet’s femininity unmistakably lingers in the poem’s style.

In other words, composed on the occasion of a formal public banquet, the poem, in contrast to the Chinese style, immediately seized the audience’s attention and controlled their feelings. It was a coquettish, tantalizing expression conceived by a brilliant mind. It can be said that the song of the field of murasaki grass belongs in this category as well. In retrospect, we can see that the early form of this style is concealed in her bitter address to the clouds over Mount Miwa.

The woman who appeared and disappeared behind the veil of rituals in the Mount Miwa poem, now with the awareness of her womanhood clearly in her possession, blossomed into the mature poetess of the Ōmi court. Until now her talents had been disguised and bound by imperial orders which demanded that her words speak the ideas of her rulers. In the new age of Tenji's reign, at his many festivities and banquets, the stage to demonstrate her own poetic genius was finally open to her. The donor was, of course, the Emperor Tenji himself. Her genius was the pride of the imperial court.

#### The Autumn Wind Blows—

*kimi matsu to  
waga koi oreba  
waga yado no  
sudare ugokashi  
aki no kaze fuku*

While awaiting you,  
Full of longing thoughts,  
The bamboo blinds at the veranda  
Sway—  
The autumn wind.

IV:488

She awaits him in the cool of an early fall evening. Has he come, has he come? She listens so carefully that not even the slightest sound escapes her attention. Her heart, so delicately composed, is ruffled by a slight movement, but it is not him, only the breath of the autumn breeze gently stirring the bamboo blinds.

A sensitive, lyrical poem that so perfectly harmonizes purity and naiveté with the autumn wind is rare even among the countless Chinese and Japanese poems collected by the Japanese.

If the field of murasaki grass poem is a charming, alluring song perfectly suited for court banquets, then this poem of purity is best read alone in the quietness of one's room. Both, however, express equally the poetess' spiritual essence.

An interesting point appears in the epigraph to this poem where Nukada wrote, "thinking of the Ōmi sovereign, Tenji." On an earlier occasion, her heart was stirred by Ōama as he waved his sleeve to her. Yet now, carried away by an autumn breeze, she is devotedly thinking of her present husband Tenji. Both become acceptable when viewed as short-lived and individual realities. As we have already seen, however, the field of murasaki grass poem was a kind of refined performance. What then are the circumstances of the latter poem?

Another poetess, Kagami no Ōkimi, upon hearing of Nukada's longing, composed this song:

*kaze o dani  
kouru wa tomoshi  
kaze o dani  
kon toshi mataba  
nani ka nagekan*

I envy you,  
Who have at least a breeze you long for.  
If only I awaited its coming,  
Little would I grieve.

IV:489

"If even the sound of the wind makes your heart ache with love, I am only full of envy for you. If but the stirring of a breeze causes your heart to beat faster thinking your loved one has come, then what is there to grieve of? For me, there is no one who will call," she laments.

According to some sources, Kagami no Ōkimi was the daughter of Jomei (Tenji's half-sister by a different mother). The more usual accounting is that she was, as can be seen from her name, the daughter of the other Kagami no Ōkimi, and thus Nukada's older sister. She exchanged love poems with the young Tenji and seems to have been married to him briefly. Later, however, she became Fujiwara (Nakatomi) Kamatari's legal wife. She was most likely given to him by Tenji for his long years of meritorious service. Even as Kamatari's wife, however, she probably continued as a consort to Tenji. Thus, though their circumstances were similar, Nukada's wind summons the possibility of Tenji's appearance while to Kagami who awaited the same man, it was an unreliable, fickle breeze.

We should not, however, put too much faith in the epigraph. It is quite possible when considering the context of Ōmi court culture that the situation was not an unnatural one. If the poem of the autumn wind, the most beautiful of the "waiting for love" poems expressing a woman's heart, is considered to belong to a certain category of poems, then its contradiction with the "field of murasaki grass" is understandable. In the world of the Ōmi imperial consort, it was a common practice to preface a poem with, "thinking of the Ōmi sovereign, Tenji." Another explanation is that, in a later period, the simple epigraph may have been added on to the poems. When Nukada read her incomparably beautiful poem, Kagami no Ōkimi, another lady of refinement, took up the subject of "love borne on the wind" from another point of view. Both ladies were part of the cultured society of the court as well as being women of literary achievement. We imagine that court life must have been the setting for frequent exchanges and sophisticated gatherings of this kind.

As a result of the eager reception of Chinese culture as exemplified by the herb-gathering excursion and the banquet which disputed the seasons, the era of the Ōmi court was one of remarkable refinement. It is obvious that the man who took the leadership in acquiring these attributes of civilization was the Emperor Tenji.

In this setting, using her poems and her womanhood as her tools, Nukada took a prominent role in establishing and refining court culture. The murasaki grass poem, whether for play or performance, is imbued with a refined sense for love while the spring-fall poem is tinged with the intellectualism of a foreign culture. In these, the initial grasp of a newer and more sophisticated culture can be seen. Viewed in this way, it is not unusual that a sensitive, elegant and lyrical work like the autumn wind poem was the first of a new era.

Thus the Ōmi reign, adorned by the magnificent poems of Nukada, attained a high degree of cultural development.

### Lakeshore Grief

The age, however, was not solely of peaceful, resplendent banquets. One day, Tenji called his entire body of officials to the shore of Lake Biwa for a wine-drinking gather-

ing. At the party's height, in a sudden violent outburst, Ōama grabbed a nearby spear and pierced a plank. Enraged, Tenji was ready to kill him for his impertinence, but, through Kamatari's intervention, the incident was settled. The exact cause is uncertain, but we can presume that his long years of dissatisfaction, a constant weight upon his mind, prompted this unexpected explosion. Though nearly forty years old, he was still being led around in his brother's shadow without opportunity to openly display his own talents. Moreover, even if the poems at Gamōno were composed as entertainment, he had been obliged to call the one who had borne him a child "another's wife."

It is an error to think that the two brothers were not on good terms from the beginning. In a cooperative spirit they had overcome the difficulties of their new government. Three of Tenji's daughters, the princesses Ōta, Uno and Ōe were married to Ōama and more significantly, the emperor's beloved son Prince Ōtomo took as his bride Princess Tōchi, the daughter of Ōama and Nukada. Through these arrangements, Tenji tried to make their relationship all the more intimate. It is conceivable, however, that for this very reason, a deep feeling of resentment had gradually welled up within Ōama. In his suppressed position it is not strange that the antagonism he felt as a result of being victimized grew stronger. There is indication that the opposition gradually became acute.

Kamatari, who had acted as a safety valve in these tense situations, died of illness in 669, at the age of fifty-six. He had stood at Tenji's side through the course of the reform over a quarter of a century, managing affairs from his established position.

His death to Tenji was like the loss of an arm. The emperor's despair and discouragement were immense and around him signs of decay immediately began to appear. Although the Ōmi Laws were completed in 671, and domestic order was steadily being effected, after the death of the great leader, Tenji's power, too, began to wane. Two years after Kamatari's passing, Tenji himself grew sickly and visibly weakened as the days passed.

When he knew he would not recover, he called Ōama to his bedside with the intention of entrusting affairs after his death to him. Ōama was, as everyone well knew, the proper successor to the throne, so Tenji was obliged to go through the formalities. However, Ōama realized, of course, that Tenji's true desire was to have his son Ōtomo as his successor. Thus, he declined at once and nominated Ōtomo in his place. Claiming that he would enter the priesthood, he cut his hair on the spot, left the capital behind, and entered the mountains of Yoshino. This act eerily recalled the assassinated Furuhi's move and gave birth to the rumor that it was akin to "setting a winged tiger free." Because of his power and popularity, his action brought fear to the Ōmi court.

Tenji's illness was serious and he died on the third day of the twelfth month, 671 at the age of forty-six. Though he had tread a long, winding course following the Taika Reform the period of the actual realization of his dreams as emperor of the Ōmi capital was a mere four or five years. His end seems unexpectedly lonely. Ōama had departed for Yoshino with his wife Uno (Tenji's daughter) and was no longer at his bedside, leaving Tenji in fear and anxiety for the future of his son, Ōtomo.



Following his death, elegies were dedicated one after another beginning with the Empress Yamatohime and followed by five others. There were nine long and short poems altogether, composed exclusively by women, an unprecedented case never to be repeated. Excluding the empress, the women were court ladies whose names do not appear in formal records as official consorts.

The empress dedicated the following poems:

|                           |                                           |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <i>aobata no</i>          | Over the Kohata hills                     |
| <i>Kohata no ue o</i>     | Full of green trees                       |
| <i>kayou to wa</i>        | Comes and goes your spirit.               |
| <i>me ni wa miredomo</i>  | I see it with my eyes,                    |
| <i>tada ni awanu kamo</i> | Though I cannot meet you directly. II:148 |

|                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>bito wa yoshi</i>     | Though others may cease remembering,  |
| <i>omoiyamu tomo</i>     | Your visage is for me                 |
| <i>tamakazura</i>        | Like a beautiful ornament in my hair— |
| <i>kage ni mietsutsu</i> | Impossible to forget. II:149          |
| <i>wasuraenu kamo</i>    |                                       |

Nukada's voice, of course, mingled here among the others.

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>kakaran to</i>        | If your passing                     |
| <i>kanete shiriseba</i>  | Had been foreknown,                 |
| <i>ōmifune</i>           | We would have tied a rope           |
| <i>hateshi tomari ni</i> | Across the mooring                  |
| <i>shime yuwamashi o</i> | Of your great imperial ship. II:151 |

If she were truly lamenting her personal loss, however, she could have composed an elegy of far greater lyricism and depth. Probably, though, she was conscious of the public nature of the funeral and suppressed her own private emotions. Nukada's poem and another by a lady named Kine are said to have been composed while the emperor's body lay in state. During the period before the formal funeral, the corpse was temporarily installed and prayers for its revival offered in festival style. We can determine that the next poem is a poem of official character from the line, "Our Emperor who reigned over the country," and from her use of the poetic device which personifies Cape Karasaki with her feelings of grief and loneliness.

|                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>yasumishishi</i>      | Our Emperor,                   |
| <i>waga okimi no</i>     | Who reigned over the country:  |
| <i>omifune</i>           | Is not his great imperial ship |
| <i>machi ka kouran</i>   | Now awaited and longed for     |
| <i>Shiga no Karasaki</i> | At Karasaki in Shiga? II:152   |

The service, performed at the Yamashina mausoleum in the mountains to the east of Kyoto was almost over. Once it ended, the people would disperse. In this final scene, Nukada composed this poem:

*yasumishishi  
waga okimi no  
kashikoki ya  
mihaka tsukauru  
Yamashina no  
Kagami no yama ni  
yoru wa mo  
yo no kotogoto  
biru wa mo  
hi no kotogoto  
ne nomi o  
nakitsutsu arite ya  
momoshiki no  
omiyabito wa  
yuki wakarenan*

Our Emperor  
Who reigned over all the country:  
It is awe-inspiring  
For Kagami hill  
Of Yamashina  
To serve as his tomb.  
There all through  
The night  
And all through  
The day  
We of the court  
Weep bitterly—  
And now must we depart?

II:155

Her song represented the sorrow of everyone attending the services, and, even more remarkably than the previously noted short elegy, spoke for all. In fact, the song served the purpose of concluding the group of elegies dedicated to the deceased sovereign. Before the Ōmi years, Nukada had displayed her poetic genius by expressing the feelings of sovereigns and princes at shrine services. At the Ōmi court she gave free rein to her feminine sense of refinement and raised the standards of the elegy by representing the courtiers on public occasions. It was here at her height that she ended her life as an imperial court poetess.

### The Bird Who Longs for the Past

*mi Yoshino no  
Mimiga no mine ni  
toki naku zo  
yuki wa furikeru  
ma naku zo  
ame wa furikeru  
sono yuki no  
toki naki ga goto  
sono ame no  
ma naki ga goto  
kuma mo ochizu  
omoitsutsu zo koshi  
sono yamamichi o*

It is said that on Mimiga Peak  
Of lovely Yoshino  
Snow is falling  
Without break,  
Rain is falling  
Without cease.  
As ceaseless as the falling snow,  
As constant as the falling rain,  
At every turn in the road  
I have thought and thought—  
Along this mountain path.

I:25

Having taken leave of the bedridden Tenji, Ōama set out for Yoshino on the twentieth day of the tenth month, just six weeks prior to his brother's death. Most of his consorts remained in Ōmi, the Princess Uno being the only one to accompany him and a few footmen. At the end of the month they crossed over the mountains to Yoshino in rain that was mixed with a little snow.

Recalling their arrival at Yoshino, Ōama composed the above poem (I:25) at a time when he was brooding over the difficulties that lay before him.

Shortly after Tenji died a new era, Jinshin, began in 672. In the fifth month, news was carried to Yoshino of an army being raised in Ōmi to work on the building of Tenji's mausoleum. Realizing the time had come, Ōama decisively called up his troops and rushed into battle against the Ōmi forces on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month opening the Jinshin Revolt. After a month of fierce fighting, the large scale attack ended with the total victory of the Yoshino troops. Ōtomo took his own life at Yamazaki in Ōmi on the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month, at the age of twenty-five. His head was brought to Ōama at his Fuwa headquarters. The capital in Ōmi had been destroyed within a year of Tenji's death.

In triumph, Ōama returned to the homeland of his ancestors and reestablished the capital there in Asuka. He succeeded to the throne in the second month of 673, at the age of forty-three, as Emperor Temmu. Peaceful days came to the land with centralization of power for the first time since the Taika Reform.

One figure in the Jinshin Revolt, however, was burdened with the most tragic of all fates. She was Princess Tōchi, the wife of Ōtomo who had been defeated and forced to commit suicide by her own father. There was nothing for Nukada to do but endure the pain of her daughter's misfortune. As Ōtomo's consort, if everything had gone favorably, Tōchi would have become the empress. Now, without being able to hold proper services for her dead husband, she returned to her father's side with her child, Prince Kadono, and her mother, Nukada.

Six years passed. In the fourth month of the seventh year of Temmu's reign (678), the emperor and his party were setting off for the festival grounds near the Kurahashi River (present-day Tera River) to worship the Tenjin deities. Tōchi suddenly fell ill and died in the palace. She was about thirty years old. The suddenness of her death suggests the possibility of suicide.

*kawa no e no  
yutsu iwamura ni  
kusa musazu  
tsune ni mogamona  
toko otome nite*

There grows no moss  
On the divine rocks  
Along the stream:  
May you, likewise,  
Remain young forever.

I:22

Tōchi died, leaving the image of herself as a very youthful maiden as in this poem by the Lady Fufuki.

Her daughter's sudden death was probably more difficult for Nukada to bear than the events following the Jinshin Revolt. She passed the brilliant age of the Temmu reign in silence. Among Temmu's consorts, the Empress Uno wielded great power, and there was no occasion for Nukada to make an appearance. She had lost the will to write; moreover, there seemed no longer any need for it.

Before long, Temmu died in 686. Only the empress composed the elegies. Shortly after Temmu's death, his son Prince Ōtsu who was born soon after that westward expedition to Korea, was put to death on charges of plotting a rebellion. The execution of the twenty-four-year-old Prince Ōtsu, the rival of Empress Uno's son Kusakabe, must have been a painful reminder to Nukada of the Arima affair long before.

Ironically Kusakabe, too, died soon after and Uno herself ascended the throne in 690 as the Empress Jitō. During this period a certain poet suddenly became active at ceremonial functions at court; he was Kakinomoto no Hitomaro. As the personal poet of the empress, he recited the elegies at Kusakabe's funeral, presented poems of praise on the imperial progress to Yoshino, and sang sadly of the destroyed capital of Ōmi. Nukada must have deeply felt the passing of time as she recognized in his activities her own former performances.

At the time of one of the Yoshino visits, Prince Yuge, Temmu's sixth son though not a child of Jitō's, sympathetically inquired after Nukada's present frame of mind. He must have felt ill-fated himself at a time when blood ties with the throne were very important. In a poem he sent his sympathies to her, because she seemed as lonely and as misplaced as he.

|                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>inishie ni</i>       | Is that the bird          |
| <i>kouru tori kamo</i>  | Who longs for the past?   |
| <i>yuzuruha no</i>      | That cries and flies away |
| <i>mi no ue yori</i>    | Over the sacred well      |
| <i>naki watari yuku</i> | Of the yuzuruha trees.    |

II:111

Nukada gratefully responded to the young prince's kindness.

|                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>inishie ni</i>          | The bird you said            |
| <i>kouran tori wa</i>      | Longs for the past           |
| <i>bototogisu</i>          | Might be a hototogisu—       |
| <i>kedashi ya naki shi</i> | Crying, like myself,         |
| <i>waga kouru goto</i>     | Out of longing for the past. |

II:112

From her choice of the *bototogisu* (cuckoo) bird, we presume that the imperial Yoshino visitations took place in the summer. There were six such journeys between the fourth and eleventh years of Jitō's reign. At any of these times, Nukada would already have been around sixty years old.

Nukada's heart, full of deep recollections, must have been beyond the understanding of the young Yuge. Was the object of her deep yearning for the past so intimately related to the surroundings of Yoshino, the time she shared with the dead Temmu, or the even more distant days of her first love with Ōama? Still, she could not readily open her heart before others. Through such ancient, traditional Chinese "shokkon" devices as naming the bird that cried for the past, and in such technical expressions as "[the cuckoo] crying, like myself (kedashi ya naki shi)", her poetic brilliance of years past was now even more evident in this poetic gift to Yuge.

Probably around the same time Yuge again sent a letter from Yoshino tied to an aged, moss-covered pine branch. Nukada answered,

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>mi Yoshino no</i>     | Truly lovely            |
| <i>tamamatsu ga e wa</i> | Is the pine branch      |
| <i>bashiki kamo</i>      | Of beautiful Yoshino,   |
| <i>kimi ga mikoto o</i>  | Full of love            |
| <i>mochite kayowaku</i>  | Bringing me your words. |

II:113

Her courtly refinement was not lost in this poem in which she personified the branch, thanking it for bringing Prince Yuge's warm words and letter.

Leaving only these two poems from her later life, Nukada's figure completely disappears from the *Manyōshū*.

In all her poems, there is not a single one about her private life. The poems express the public life of a woman of the court first in an office related to divine services and later newly matured as a poetess of refinement.

The flow of women's literature enlightened by contact with the court culture passed through Ōtomo no Sakanoue no Iratsume and poured forth into the Heian period. Behind the brilliance of Sei Shōnagon and Murasaki Shikibu, who brought the culture of the Heian period into high relief, appears the distant figure of Nukada no Ōkimi. 

Text translated by Lisa Nakata  
Poems translated by Hirota Kimiko



## Gen'ya's Devil Bucket

Louise Allison Cort

Reading through the tea diaries of the latter half of the sixteenth century combines the fascination of cinema magazines and the challenge of mystery novels. The diaries are documents of the meetings and partings of “stars”—in this case, influential tea men and famous tea utensils, particularly the *meibutsu* with their pedigrees as Higashiyama *gomotsu* or discoveries of Shuko or Jōō. Browsing through the diary entries, a certain “rendezvous” strikes one’s attention. Then detective instincts take over as one begins to puzzle over the particular circumstances of that meeting, wondering who the guests were, why those utensils were chosen, and what it meant that they were all together for that moment.

The Sakai merchant Tsuda Sōkyū could not conceal his excitement when he made the following entry in the *Tennōjiya kaiki*: “[In Kyoto] second day, third month, 1571. At [Yōka] Kyokuan’s saw the Shigaraki devil bucket (*onioke*). Gen’ya was ill, so it was shown to me at Kyokuan’s. I bought it. The price was 100 *kan* [in copper coins], and I left a deposit of 15 gold *ryō*.”\* Shortly thereafter, Sōkyū described his own tea gathering: “Tenth day, third month, 1571, morning [On the] *furo*, the *futon* [kettle] the *onioke* Shigaraki, Tsuji Gen’ya’s. I brought this *mizusashi* [water jar] back from Kyoto, and this is its debut. The guests could not have known that I had done so, for I returned home on the eighth day of the third month, having received the Shigaraki on the fourth day of the third month through the agency of Kyokuan.”

The triumphant tone of Sōkyū’s entries raises a multitude of questions. What was the Shigaraki devil bucket? Why was Sōkyū willing to pay such a price for it, on the spot? Who was Tsuji Gen’ya, the previous owner? Who were Sōkyū’s guests, and why was he so exultant at being able to spring the new *mizusashi* on them unawares? Fortunately, among the few surviving early tea diaries, the *Tennōjiya kaiki* kept by three generations of the firm of that name in Sakai—Tsuda Sōtatsu (1504-66), Sōkyū (?-1591), and Sōbon (dates unknown)—is unique in recording both ceremonies hosted and ceremonies attended. Reading back and forth between the two volumes, one can

Author’s Note: This article is an expanded version of material originally published in my book, *Shigaraki, Potters’ Valley* (Tokyo and New York: Kōdansha International, 1979). I am grateful to the publisher for permission to use it here. For an informative discussion of Tsuji Gen’ya, to which I am indebted, see Kageyama Sumio, “Tsuji Gen’ya shiron” [Personal views on Tsuji Gen’ya], parts 1 and 2, *Chadō zasshi* 40, no. 12 (December, 1976): 79-86, and 41, no. 2 (February, 1977): 82-87. For further elaboration of the importance of *renga* to chanoyu, see my article, “Medieval Japanese Ceramics and the Tea Ceremony,” *Keramos* 85 (July, 1979): 49-58. Regarding Shukō’s criteria for tea men, see Tanihata Akio, “Men of Tea: An Evaluation by Yamanoue Sōji, Part 1,” *Chanoyu Quarterly* 26 (1981): 50-60.

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\* One hundred *kan* of copper coins would have bought 200 *koku* of rice; fifteen gold *ryō* would have brought 36.9 *koku*. One *koku* (180 liters) of rice was considered sufficient to feed one person for one year.

develop an almost day-to-day understanding of a prominent tea man's activities, of his patterns of socializing, and of his involvement with his own and others' utensils. Pieced together this way, the story of the famous Shigaraki mizusashi known as Gen'ya's devil bucket, which Sōkyū coveted and acquired—only to part with it later, setting it on the path to a catastrophic demise—is a paradigm of the strange double status of tea utensils in that era, when they served not only as proof of connoisseurship but also as political trophies. Sōkyū's ownership of the devil bucket coincides with his own process of burrowing into the center of political power using his twofold credentials as an influential Sakai businessman and an arbiter of tea taste, but he paid the price of the loss of the devil bucket.

The former, and probably the original, owner of the devil bucket, Tsuji Gen'ya (also Gensai, d. 1576?), enjoyed the reputation of having been Takeno Jōō's favored student. Gen'ya, whose shop's name was Sumiya, was a prosperous draper with connections to nobility and the imperial household, and he lived in the Shinzaike quarter of Kamikyō, the area of Kyoto populated by many of the merchants who were most ardently involved in chanoyu. Gen'ya studied with Jōō (1502-1555) for some twenty years, probably during the last decades of the master's life when he resided and practiced at his Daikoku-an on Muromachi-dōri. To Gen'ya alone did Jōō confide his special rules for handling the *chaire* (powdered-tea container) (as related in the *Yamanoue Sōji ki*) and the tradition of using the *daisu* stand that had originated with Nōami (according to the *Sawa shigetsu shū*). It was through Gen'ya, rather than directly from Jōō, that Rikyū seems to have learned these practices. Among his utensils, Gen'ya owned two meibutsu, or famed utensils, a *nasubi* (eggplant) *chaire* and the Shigaraki devil bucket mizusashi.

To the tea men of Tsuda Sōkyū's generation, Gen'ya was an invaluable source of lore from Jōō, the man whose taste continued to be the dominant influence in the 1570s. It is puzzling, therefore, that the *Yamanoue Sōji ki*, compiled by one of Sōkyū's contemporaries in Sakai in the late 1580s—the same document that attests to Gen'ya's role in transmitting both Jōō's practice and his principles—should recall him unflatteringly as being deficient in both connoisseurship and tea procedure, stating that “however senior the student may become, a person lacking inventiveness (*sakui*) is clumsy.” Sōji was evaluating the merits of past and present tea men according to criteria established by Shukō and transmitted through Jōō and Gen'ya. Foremost were the requirements of connoisseurship and adept practice. Rather ungraciously Sōji turned the knife against the very person to whom he owed the preservation of Shukō's criteria. Possibly it was Gen'ya's very self-effacing devotion to his master Jōō that prevented him from expressing the desired originality in his practice, yet as a faithful medium he conveyed his knowledge to Rikyū and others who, possessed of the necessary distance, absorbed and transmuted it into new forms.

If Gen'ya was not known as a connoisseur of utensils, then it is quite likely that those objects he owned had been chosen with Jōō's advice and therefore reflected more Jōō's taste than Gen'ya's. The *Yamanoue Sōji ki*, discussing meibutsu mizusashi, says that “both Jōō's Shigaraki and Rikyū's Shigaraki are good pieces.” Japanese grammar makes it impossible to know whether one or more Shigaraki mizusashi had

belonged to Jōō, but in any case it is clear that he was influential in popularizing Shigaraki ware for use as mizusashi. In Jōō's day, the Shigaraki kilns had not yet begun making pots specifically for use as mizusashi; instead, urban tea men selected pieces from among the unadorned, bucket-shaped vessels made as multipurpose containers. Ironically, the star of this story, Gen'ya's Shigaraki mizusashi, has not survived, for reasons to be related later. Were it still in existence, a great deal could be told about Jōō's taste and about the dating of similar extant pieces. That Gen'ya's devil bucket represented Jōō's taste is strongly hinted by Sōkyū's keen interest in a Shigaraki mizusashi that he saw, about a year after he had purchased Gen'ya's piece, at a tea gathering convened on the ninth day of the first month, 1572, by the Sakai merchant Mitsuda Sōshun. Sōshun used a Shigaraki mizusashi that had belonged to Jōō. Sōkyū scrutinized it carefully and recorded his impressions in exceptional detail. "The Shigaraki [mizusashi] looks tall. The twist in the base [presumably throwing marks] is unpleasant. The clay is white and seems finely crackled all over. This was Jōō's Shigaraki." It may well be that Sōkyū was measuring this "Jōō Shigaraki" against his own.

But what is a devil bucket? The *Yamanoue Soji ki* mentions "Gen'ya's devil bucket" apart from "Jōō's Shigaraki" and "Rikyū's Shigaraki," and that is because, I believe, Gen'ya was the originator of the odd name. Since the early seventeenth century, "devil bucket" (*onioke*) has been used as a generic term for a plain, cylindrical or bucket-shaped mizusashi, usually dating to the sixteenth century, a "found" ware rather than an intentionally fashioned tea utensil. The name is applied to wares other than Shigaraki, such as Bizen. In extant sixteenth century tea diaries, however, the name occurs only with specific reference to Gen'ya's piece. The term *onioke* is apparently the tea man's witty transformation of the name used for the vessel shape in the Ōmi region, surrounding Shigaraki: *ogoke*, or flax bucket. Flax fibers (both *o* and *asa*) were an ancient and major product of Ōmi, and a sheer, crisp fabric known as Ōmi *jōfu* was in demand for formal clothing worn by the nobility. The raw material for Ōmi *jōfu* was *o*. After the outer bark of the plant stalks was removed, the inner skin had to be peeled off, split into thin strands, and knotted into long, weavable threads. The fibers thus split and tied were coiled neatly into a cylindrical bucket, sometimes bent wood, sometimes ceramic: the *ogoke*. As a draper supplying the upper classes in Kyoto, Gen'ya would have handled Ōmi *jōfu*, and would have been familiar with the tools used in its production.

But the term *onioke* has another dimension that links it to *renga*, or linked verse, the major poetic genre of the period and an important source of both form and aesthetic vocabulary for the developing tea ceremony. Until the age of thirty, Jōō had devoted himself to studying *renga* with the master Sanjonishi Sanetaka (1455-1537). It is said that Jōō attained insight into tea through hearing Sanetaka's preface to Fujiwara Teika's treatise on poetic form, *Eikataigai*. Jōō arranged for Gen'ya to study *renga* for the sake of his development in *chanoyu*. Gen'ya, according to the *Yamanoue Sōji ki*, related that Jōō repeatedly expressed his conviction that, just as the *renga* master Shinkei (1406-1475) had stated that *renga* is "withered and chilled," so *chanoyu* in its ultimate development will have those same qualities. As a student of *renga*,

Gen'ya would have been familiar with one of the forms of classical verse as described by Teika, the so-called devil (*oni*) form, and the particular interest evinced in it by Shinkei. A contemporary treatise on aesthetics, the *Mōzui shichin shō* by Komparu Zempō (1454-1532), described the quality of oni: "The true meaning of oni is to be unmoving, showing a fierce mien, yet in practice possessing the quality of a flower." In naming his devil bucket, Gen'ya united local dialect and poetic diction. It was indeed an invention worthy of praise.

Both the association with Jōō and the allusion, in the name devil bucket, to renga made the piece desirable to Sōkyū. Sōkyū's father had studied with Jōō, but it appears that Sōkyū learned Jōō's style only indirectly, through his father. Perhaps, just as Rikyū had turned to Gen'ya for instruction in Jōō's secret techniques, so Sōkyū found in Gen'ya's Shigaraki a means to associate himself more intimately with Jōō. In his chanoyu activities, moreover, Sōkyū had been somewhat under the shadow of his illustrious forebears. His record of his own ceremonies does not begin until a few months after his father's death in 1566, when Sōkyū was already in his mid-forties. The Tennōjiya house was famous for its collection of tea utensils, a number of which had been acquired from Shukō by Sōkyū's grandfather. The family's set of four *daisu* [stand] utensils included Shukō's bucket-shaped metal mizusashi, his lidded-box *kensui* [waste water receptacle], his ladle stand, and a *hiragama* [flat kettle]. Sōkyū's father had had a reputation for cleverness in uncovering interesting tea bowls among the imported goods entering the market. Sōkyū's own records show that for some years he had depended on family heirlooms as tea utensils. Gen'ya's devil bucket was his first major purchase and statement of his own taste.

Strangely, there is little evidence in the tea records that Sōkyū and Gen'ya associated with one another at tea gatherings. Gen'ya's illness forced cancellation of the meeting at which he would have offered Sōkyū the onioke; his Shinzaike neighbor Kyokuan acted in his stead. Only once did Sōkyū take tea with Gen'ya, on the twenty-ninth day of the second month, 1575, several years after the transfer of the onioke. (At that meeting Sōkyū saw Gen'ya's *nasubi* [eggplant shape] *chaire* for the first time.) There is no record that Sōkyū ever invited Gen'ya to tea. Instead, renga seems to have been the medium of their association. Sōkyū's father Sōtatsu had summoned Gen'ya three times (the twenty-third day of the eighth month, 1555; the first day of the third month, 1558; and the third day of the third month, 1558), twice in the company of the renga teacher Satomura Jōha (?-1602). (Coincidentally, it was Jōha who later instructed Sōkyū regarding Teika's *Eikataigai*, on the twenty-eighth day of the second month, 1571, just a few days before purchase of the onioke.) Sōtatsu hung his prized Teika *irogami* scroll in honor of his fellow poets, and circumstances suggest that tea was followed by renga. Sōkyū was trained in renga, and renga meeting records show that Gen'ya and Sōkyū appeared together. On the twenty-third day of the seventh month, 1563, they joined Jōha to compose one hundred verses on the theme, "What boat?"

Political considerations, rather than personal aversion, may have prevented Sōkyū from associating with Gen'ya in chanoyu. For the major political event of this era was Nobunaga's steady movement toward control of the nation. In 1568 he





Shigaraki devil bucket water jar. Height 14.5 cm.; diameter of mouth at widest point 16.2 cm. Momoyama period.



entered Kyoto victoriously. Initially Sōkyū, as a member of the Sakai merchants' council, had found himself in opposition to Nobunaga over the war tax that the general wanted to impose on the wealthy city, but eventually, together with fellow tea devotee and arms merchant Imai Sōkyū, he helped to arrange for payment of the tax, and with that he began to establish his importance to Nobunaga. The basis was his influence as a merchant controlling materials that Nobunaga needed, but the idiom of communication was chanoyu, at a time when Nobunaga was growing deeply involved in the politico-cultural dimensions of tea and rapidly forming a collection par excellence of prestigious pieces "hunted" from established collections, mostly in Sakai. The 1570s were an era, as never before, when tea utensils became political trophies with which to flatter, plead, and bargain. Possibly from the very outset Sōkyū understood the potential of his onioke for this use. At the same time, knowing Nobunaga's marked preference for Sakai rather than Kyoto tea men, Sōkyū could not afford to be associated with Gen'ya, who represented the old guard now out of favor.

Sōkyū's diary indicates that the visit to Kyoto which took place in 1571 between the sixteenth day of the second month and the eighth day of the third month was his first major entry into the capital. He was invited to sixteen tea gatherings, some with old acquaintances, but others with high-ranking Kyoto cultural figures such as the physician Manase Dōzan and the courtier Karasumaru Mitsuyasu. If the main reason for the visit was to attend Imai Sōkyū's chanoyu at Tōfuku-ji temple on the fourth day of the third month, for the merchants of Kyoto—almost certainly marking Imai Sōkyū's appointment as Nobunaga's sadō (tea master)—then it might well be that Sōkyū also received his appointment at that time. The position entailed a fief of three thousand koku, which would help to explain Sōkyū's ability on the spot to buy the mizusashi with gold coins. Sōkyū was also considering other purchases: Kyokuan had offered him a shelf from Ashikaga Yoshimasa's collection (price gold 1 *ryō*) and a gold screen with pine-and-crane design (silver 150 *momme*\*).

Sōkyū went again to Kyoto, at Nobunaga's summons, to attend a chanoyu at Myōkaku-ji temple on the twenty-third day of the eleventh month, 1573, for Sōkyū and two other Sakai merchants. Sōkyū went that same evening to give thanks for the lavish display of Nobunaga's "hunted" tea treasures and was given a horse, a wild goose, and a codfish. In the new year of 1574, Sōkyū left Sakai for Gifu Castle, where Nobunaga asked him to prepare a list of his utensils that the general had not yet seen, and rewarded him with a tea gathering at which Sōkyū was asked to prepare the tea; Nobunaga personally served the rice for the meal that followed. On the eighth day of the third month, 1574, Nobunaga convened the leading Sakai merchants at Shōkoku-ji temple, but afterward he took aside Sōkyū, Imai Sōkyū, and Rikyū—established by then as his three principal sadō—to allow them to see his prized *Chidori* incense burner. On the third day of the fourth month, 1574, at another Shōkoku-ji tea, Sōkyū was allowed his first glimpse of the equally famous tea caddy *hatsubana* and was one of only two guests, along with Rikyū, to be given a sliver of the Shōsōin sandalwood incense that Nobunaga had divided.

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\* In 1571, 150 *momme* would purchase 9 *koku* of rice.

In 1575, Sōkyū fulfilled his official obligations by acting as middleman in purchasing for Nobunaga the *Matsumoto* tea bowl from the Sakai merchant Sumiyoshi Sōmu. The *Yamanoue Sōji ki* listed the celadon bowl, which had belonged to Shukō's chief student Matsumoto Shuhō, at the enormous value of 5000 *kan*. Sōkyū was forced to put up as security his treasured set of daisu utensils. Eventually he gave two pieces from the set, the hiragama (worth 1000 *kan*) and the ladle stand, to Nobunaga. Both, along with the Matsumoto tea bowl, were lost in the Honnō-ji temple fire of 1582.

This was the background against which Sōkyū acquired and used Gen'ya's devil bucket. Sōkyū had taken tea with Kyokuan on the twenty-fourth day of the second month, 1571, when Kyokuan must have communicated Gen'ya's willingness to sell the onioka. He made the purchase on the second day of the third month. After attending Sōkyū's Tōfuku-ji chanoyu on the fourth day of the third month, he collected the jar from Kyokuan and hurried back to Sakai, where he lost no time in arranging for the unveiling of this prize. His guests were his intimate and long-standing tea associates: his father's younger brother Dōshitsu; Rikyū; Yamanoue Sōji; and Kusabeya Dosetsu, with whom Sōkyū had attended the recent gatherings in Kyoto. Sōkyū chose to pair the Shigaraki mizusashi with his futon kettle on the hearth; he did not even bother to record the other utensils.

Following that dramatic introduction, Sōkyū kept his new mizusashi in regular use. His records for the rest of 1571 show that he used it in twenty-nine out of thirty-six gatherings, to each of which Sōkyū invited different guests, including fellow merchants, military men, and temple officials. He tried the Shigaraki mizusashi in varying combinations and arrangements with his other utensils, playing with position, proportion, and timing. In spring and summer, he placed it on a long board next to the brazier that frequently held his futon kettle; in winter it stood beside the sunken hearth over which the kettle hung. Sometimes it was in place from the beginning, alone or with the kensui; other times he brought it out during the interval. A meeting on the seventeenth day of the first month, 1572, seems to have pleased him especially:

In the tokonoma, the cylindrical celadon vase, containing one sprig each of red and white plum blossoms, standing on a thin lacquered board. The flat kettle hanging above the hearth, and the Shigaraki mizusashi. During the interval I removed the flowers from the vase, plucked them from their branches, and scattered the petals. I placed the metal kensui beside the Shigaraki. Using the plain Temmoku bowl on its mother-of-pearl inlay stand, I served two rounds of tea. Afterward I moved the Shigaraki and the kensui into the center of the room.

Presumably that last move was at the request of his guests, who wished a closer look at the illustrious jar.

The cylindrical celadon vase was a second prized piece that Sōkyū had acquired in late summer, 1571, and frequently thereafter paired with the onioke. One can imagine the effective contrast of the sleek, sky-blue Chinese vase in the alcove and the massive, craggy reddish-orange cylindrical mizusashi next to the black iron kettle.

In ceremonies where the Shigaraki did not appear, Sōkyū used either the Shukō mizusashi or a "handled bucket," probably of wood in the style popularized by Jōō. Both were heirlooms. Gradually, however, he began to add new pieces. On the second day of the eleventh month, 1572, he introduced a "lacquered [wooden] basin (*tarai*)."

On the twenty-ninth day of the tenth month, 1573, he used a Namban mizusashi of the shape called "bait basket" (*efugo*) and on the eighteenth day of the sixth month, 1574, a *shimekiri* ("bound off," with overall horizontal throwing marks) Namban jar. On the twenty-second day of the eleventh month, 1575, he mentioned a "Shigaraki bail-handled bucket," indicating purchase of a new piece expressly made as tea ware at the updated Shigaraki kilns. The Shigaraki onioke is mentioned for the last time on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, 1576. Fashions were changing quickly in trendsetting Sakai.

But it was not mere fashion that phased out Gen'ya's devil bucket. Over the years, from 1571, the number of military men attending Sōkyū's tea gatherings became conspicuously greater. Among them, he seems to have cultivated a particular friendship with the most senior of Nobunaga's three advisors, Sakuma Emon Nobumori (?-1582), and his son, Sakuma Jinkurō Masakatsu (1556-1631). Sōkyū first met Emon on the eleventh day of the second month, 1569, when the general was part of a delegation, sent by Nobunaga, that Sōkyū entertained at his home. But their contacts became frequent in 1576. On the twentieth day of the eleventh month, Emon invited Sōkyū to tea, together with his uncle Dōshitsu (who had important connections with Hakata merchants). On the first day of the twelfth month, Jinkurō invited Sōkyū alone to tea. On the seventeenth day of the twelfth month, Sōkyū introduced Jinkurō to prominent Sakai merchant Zeniya Sōtotsu (?-1590). The father and son seem to have sought entry into the circle of Sōkyū and his fellow merchants. In the new year, 1577, Jinkurō presented quail; in early autumn, he sent the first wild goose of the season. On the twenty-ninth day of the ninth month, 1577, Sōkyū went alone to Jinkurō's. That evening he presented to Jinkurō the Temmoku teabowl *Shinji Okina* that had been in the family since his father's time. This was an emphatic response to Jinkurō's cultivation; equally, it was an appeal for patronage, comparable to wooing Nobunaga with gifts of tea utensils.

On the fourth day of the first month, 1578, "on the occasion of Lord Jinkurō's first visit to Sakai," Sōkyū served him at home alone, then escorted him to meetings with Zeniya Sōtotsu and Kusabeya Dōsetsu. Jinkurō had brought a wild goose as a gift, and at his departure, in the gateway, he presented a horse to Sōkyū, a short sword to his son, and garments to the household servants. On the third day of the second month, Emon sent a gift of whale meat. Three more meetings with Jinkurō followed in that same month.

By the twenty-sixth day of the third month, Sōkyū was in Kyoto, and his diary for the twentieth day of the fourth month, 1578, gives the answer to the question

about what had happened to his once-prized Shigaraki onioke. He attended a chanoyu at Myōkaku-ji hosted by a resident of the temple, the eldest son of Nobunaga, Nobutada (1557-1582), whose career had been capped the preceeding year by a victory over a rival general that effected the pacification of the Yamato region. This chanoyu may have been a form of victory celebration. Nobutada used a hailstone-pattern kettle that was a gift from Sakuma Jinkurō. On a long board beside the hearth was "the Shigaraki onioke, presented by Sakuma Emon. For both these pieces, the first use," Sōkyū himself prepared tea.

As Sōkyū's diary makes clear, he had transferred his once-favorite Shigaraki mizusashi to Sakuma Emon during the interval between its last recorded use in late 1576 and this ceremony, when Emon in turn passed it on. The transfer is verified in the 1593 *Sencha shū*, which lists an onioke as the famous possession of Tsuda Sōkyū and then adds, "Went to Lord Sakuma." On the fourth day of the fifth month, 1578, Sōkyū and Zeniya Sōtotsu, possibly an agent in obtaining the hailstone-pattern kettle, were entertained by Jinkurō "from evening into the night," presumably in thanks.

Emon and Jinkurō continued to meet regularly with Sōkyū. During those years, Nobunaga was waging his protracted struggle against Ishiyama Hongan-ji temple, seat of the Ikkō rebels in the home provinces. From 1576 onward Emon had been put in charge of the seige, and clearly he wanted the support of Sakai merchants in supplying material, but he seems to have proven himself inadequate to the task. According to some sources, Jinkurō absorbed himself in tea activities even at the battlefield. Finally, in the spring of 1580, Hongan-ji surrendered, but Emon and Jinkurō were banished to Kōya-san. Emon died there in 1582. Jinkurō eventually returned, after Nobunaga's death, and joined the services of Nobunaga's second son, Nobuo, and then the services of Hideyoshi. As late as the sixteenth day of the eighth month, 1579, Sōkyū had attended Emon's chanoyu at Sumiyoshi, followed by a stroll on the beach and through the pine groves to enjoy the full moon. In late spring, 1580, the names of the father and son disappear from Sōkyū's records. On the eleventh day of the eleventh month, at Yamanoue Sōji's, Sōkyū saw a large kettle "returned from Jinkurō." On the twenty-fifth day of the second month, 1581, taking tea with a monk at Honnō-ji temple, Sōkyū saw the man's newly acquired tea-leaf storage jar that Rikyū had previously purchased from Emon for 3 pieces of gold. Years later, on the eleventh day of the first month, 1584, Sōkyū invited the returned Jinkurō for tea and asked him to arrange the flowers, as had been their old custom. But that was their final recorded meeting.

The Shigaraki devil bucket dispatched from Emon to Nobutada as a political envoy shared the fate of its new owner. Four years later, on the second day of the sixth month, 1582, Nobutada died in the aftermath of the treacherous assassination of his father at Honnō-ji, and his own residence at Myōkaku-ji temple was burned to the ground, the onioke within it. The *Yamanoue Sōji ki*'s list of famous mizusashi included:

Gen'ya's Shigaraki onioke, destroyed with Shironosuke  
[Nobutada]. But it may yet reappear.

If Gen'ya's devil bucket was indeed recovered from the ashes that buried so many other tea treasures, then it merged anonymously with other simple, early Shigaraki mizusashi, giving up its name as the price of survival. ♪



## Paper Clothing: A Brief History and Appreciation

Sukey Hughes

About a thousand years ago Japanese began wearing a substance profound in its homeliness—paper. *Kamiko*, the name given to this paper clothing, is made by saturating sheets of handmade Japanese paper with a vegetable tannin for durability, wrinkling the sheets repeatedly for softness, and pasting them end-to-end into long bolts. Sometimes an object of humiliation, other times an object of reverence, kamiko has gradually taken its natural place in the Japanese aesthetic as a substance so simple and unpretentious it is refinement itself. Its origins are impeccable—it is the child of impoverishment. Paper robes were once pieced together out of dire necessity; for a long period in Japanese history nothing was cheaper and more available to common folk than paper. In time paper clothing took on the grace of “holy poverty.” From the medieval monks to the nobility and the wandering poet, from the military commander to the practitioner of tea today, kamiko has come to symbolize a life of detached simplicity, humility, and vulnerability.

Japanese paper is made of the strong, inner bark of certain trees and shrubs. Prehistoric, aboriginal natives wove crude clothing out of such bark. In ancient times, the Japanese took the bark of mulberry and hemp, later used to make paper, steamed it from its woody core, and cleaned it of its dark, outer skin. The bark of mulberry was soaked in water and stripped into long, thin filaments called *yu*. Yu were used in ceremonial wands and sacred ropes in Shinto ritual, and today these items still retain close associations with pure white handmade paper. Yu threads were also woven to make a rough fabric which was sewn into garments.

But it was not until the early seventh century that the Chinese papermaking techniques took root in Japan. At that time most textiles were scarce; cotton was difficult to grow, especially in the northern provinces, and after Buddhism took a strong foothold, leather as well was hard to come by. Silk was too expensive for the commoner to wear. Paper, however, was cheap and readily available, especially to the farmers who made it in the winter months to supplement their income. These papermakers knew well the excellent heat-retaining qualities of paper. They probably used paper as they do now, oiled or tanned to cover plants in the field to protect them from freezing. One can easily imagine how a poor farmer, caught in his field one day by a sudden rain or snow flurry, wrapped himself, like his vegetables, in a thick paper sheet, and so invented paper clothing.

Legend has it, however, that it was not a farmer but a Buddhist saint who was the first to wear paper clothing. Imagine the scene: It is winter, 988; a monk named Shōku, expecting guests one day, puts the kettle on for tea and wonders, what will he do for a clean robe? Suddenly he is inspired. Quickly tearing the pages out of an old

book of sutras, Shōku pastes together the edges and cuts himself a crisp, new white kimono. He names his innovative fashion *shi-i*,<sup>1</sup> paper garment, probably punning another *shii*, rich vestments worn by high priests.

It is the strength and fine quality of Japanese handmade paper that makes kamiko possible. Surprisingly, paper was exceptionally strong even in the Heian period (794-1192) when papermaking was but a fledgling cottage industry. Eventually papermakers made paper specifically for kamiko, aiming for a sheet that was soft, thick, of pure long fiber, and strong along both grains. To achieve such strength the papermakers scooped sheets by the *jūmonji-suki* method, that is, stroking the pulp on the screen-mold in both directions equally, so that the fibers linked in tight crosses and was difficult to tear from any direction. At least three varieties of mulberry bark were used, and the paper made from each differed noticeably in character. On rare occasions kamiko was also made from *gampi*, a shrub related to the daphne. The finest papers for kamiko were made in northeastern Japan, especially in what is today called Shiroishi in Miyagi prefecture. In the northeast the need for inexpensive fabric was greatest, and the paper made there was some of the finest in the country.

To make paper into kamiko, the worker rubs, wrinkles, and mashes the sheets one by one in his hands; then he spreads the sheets out flat and saturates them with a vegetable starch or tannin. *Shibu*, the astringent juice of unripe persimmons, was the first tannin used in Japan. It dyes the paper a rusty brown. A substance that does not affect the color of a sheet is made from the root of the *konnyaku* plant, a starch tuber known as arum root or devil's tongue that is eaten as food in Japan.

The kamiko maker wrinkles the sheets, flattens them and saturates them with either konnyaku or shibu, wrinkles them again, coats them again, over and over, until the paper will absorb no more liquid. This repeated coating and rubbing strengthens and softens the paper by giving the fibers a certain elasticity. Gradually the paper becomes nearly as supple as cloth. Sometimes the worker rubs the sheets across the back of one hand to tenderize the fibers; since the paper does not rub against itself, the fibers are less apt to pile and fray. Additionally a worker may also roll and crumple wrinkled sheets over a vertical bamboo stick, as do the monks at Tōdai-ji temple.

It once was custom for a family to take their sheets of treated kamiko and place them under the mattresses next to the floor, where the paper absorbed more moisture during the night and received a further rubbing. At this stage the paper is also known as *momi-gami*, "massaged" paper, and has a variety of uses besides clothing. Sheets of "tanned" kamiko are air dried and sold in sheets; or the shorter edges are pasted together, sometimes with more konnyaku paste, and sold as a roll. Like a bolt of kimono fabric, jackets, robes, and vests can be cut and sewn from it.

For the most part it was impoverished farmers who made and wore their own shibu-dyed kamiko. Especially in the cotton-poor northern provinces, beautiful, high-quality paper and kamiko were made in increasing quantities from the eleventh century on; but, in general, wherever paper was made, kamiko was produced as well. The biggest producers eventually came to be Shiroishi, as well as Abegawa in Shizuoka;



Child's vest with embroidered lion and silk lining. Meiji period. Photo courtesy of Kami no Hakubutsukan, Tokyo.



Mino in Gifu; Echizen (Fukui); Kyoto; Hitachi (Ibaragi) and many other famous paper towns.

Papermaking farmers, for whom this paper cloth was cheaper than textiles, fashioned their own underclothing, capes, long vests, *haori* jackets, and bedding from kamiko. The first paper bedding consisted of thick kamiko sheets for blankets; eventually farmers were making large cases of such toughened paper and stuffing them with bean husks for pillows and straw for comforters. At first seams were pasted together, but eventually they were sewn. *Zabuton* floor cushions, too, were manufactured, as well as raincoats, hoods, bags for storing swords, fancy obis, and even tobacco pouches. Kamiko paper strips were twisted into string and used to cinch obi, to string prayer beads, and to secure toes in sandals.

Kamiko, in time, came to be a symbol for the bleak, cold winters of existence. Paper clothing had an undeniable pathos. Wearing it suggested one was too poor to own cloth. An anonymous papermaker wrote: I wear it to bed at night, giving it no thought; / But in the daylight, how pathetic it looks— / This robe of Katsuragi paper!<sup>2</sup>

The poor wore nightgowns of paper. These first robes, soft and comfortable against the skin, were also for wearing “in the inner apartments” as a kind of underkimono or informal houserobe. Early kamiko clothing is somehow associated with a type of coat called a *dōfuku* that evolved into the short haori and later into a traveling coat. Kamiko too eventually became well known as a traveling coat such as haiku poet Matsuo Bashō loved and wore on his pilgrimages. People chose paper clothing for winter, because kamiko retains heat well, and resists wind, moisture, and rain. It has the comfort of fabrics woven from natural fibers for, like the paper from which it is made, kamiko “breathes.”

But plain, humble paper coats and paper quilts were doomed to chafe and tear and fall to pieces before long. Kamiko cannot be washed, or it will disintegrate. A Japanese cliché that means to court palpable danger is the phrase “walking into a river wearing a paper garment.” Kamiko, like a simply constructed hut, was but temporary housing for the body. The paper finally wore thin and fell to shreds; once discarded, it became part of the soil again.

Early in its history kamiko acquired connotations of insufficiency and of the old and withered—of life reduced to absolute essentials. In poetry it was a metaphor for the cold, winter, the solitary, and the dying. Monks of most religions have emulated the near-wretched existence of peasants, the poverty of poverties—“life near the bone, where it is sweetest” as Thoreau put it. Perhaps it is only natural then that kamiko has strong associations in Japan not only with peasant life but also monasticism. The word kamiko itself is derived from *kami-koromo*, a combination of *kami* or paper, and *koromo*, a type of robe worn particularly by the priesthood.

It was the plain, white kamiko, or *shirokamiko*, which was the garment that signified purity in religious life. Benkei, the giant hero-priest who served Yoshitsune in historical legends, is said to have worn white kamiko. Traditionally so have priests in certain Buddhist sects when involved in activities aimed at insuring rebirth in the Pure Land. Kamiko is frequently worn on the Noh stage.



Kami koyori dōgi, paper garment worn under armor. Bunka period (1804-1818). Photo courtesy of Kami no Hakubutsukan, Tokyo.



In the spirit and keeping of a 1200-year-old tradition, monks today at Tōdai-ji manufacture their own white kamiko in preparation for the winter Water Drawing Ceremony, called Omizutori. In the coldest part of winter, young monks are required to make their own paper robes with their own hands, as monks here have for centuries, freeing them from dependency on others; especially from women. By an old technique they wrap a paper sheet around a vertical bamboo post and crush it downward, forming a wrinkled cylinder of paper. Flattening these sheets out, they coat them with konnyaku starch, thereby preserving the white color. The monks then sew the kamiko sheets into robes, lining them with white cotton fabric for strength. Wearing only these robes the monks go into seclusion, enduring austerities in the cold and snow. Smoke from burning incense gradually blackens the kamiko garments; holes are worn into them where the monks' knees have rubbed through in prayer and meditation. The austerities completed, the monks return and burn their paper robes in a great blazing fire.

Surely kamiko must have inspired poets. Zen monks and, later, men of tea who came to love this paper clothing were in their hearts lovers of poverty. Kenkō, the fourteenth century Buddhist priest, wrote in his *Tsurezuregusa*:

Despite everything, once a man has entered the Way of the Buddha and turned his back on the world, even supposing he has desires, they cannot possibly resemble the deep-seated cravings of men in power. How much expense to society are his paper bedclothes, his hempen robe, a bowl of food, and some millet broth? His wants are easily met, his heart quickly satisfied. Since, moreover, he is in some sense ashamed of his appearance, he obviously will most often stay away from evil and keep close to good.<sup>3</sup>

How could one be arrogant in a tattered robe of soiled paper? How could one be vain and pretentious in a vest that creased into bulky folds as one bent over? Kamiko does not flatter the body's angles; it tends to envelop them, even encase them like a box. Paper clothing was often stiff and dry, its drapery awkward. What is more, it was noisy! Paper was a strange substance in which to enclose the body. One somehow feels that Shōku, greeting his guests in a robe of sutra pages, would not be apt to take himself too seriously.

Sometimes it has even been useful for a monk to wear paper. There is a story in the Sung-dynasty *Hekiganroku*, in which the Zen master Unmon Bun'en (?-949) prohibits his students from writing down his words. He only wanted to bring out "this, not that." How could one break through the veil of enlightenment riding on the back of someone's utterances? One monk, however, was determined to get down the teachings; surreptitiously, he scribbled Unmon's words onto his own paper robe.

The feudal era in Japan was marked by a theme of plain living, and the supreme ordinariness of kamiko lent to it a new mystique. With the establishment of the Kamakura shogunate in 1192, the display of wealth by the middle class in public was



Chabaori, paper with silk trim. Bunka period (1804-1818). Photo courtesy of Kami no Hakubutsukan, Tokyo.

prohibited. Kamiko suited the new ascetic spirit of feudal Japan that revered the warrior and imitated the monk. The spartan life-style of the members of the samurai class was the model, a model furthered by the increasing presence of the samurai in the newly founded Zen monasteries. Military commanders began wearing kamiko jackets, and paper traveling coats became more common.

Lords, high priests, literati, artists, and samurai appeared more and more frequently in elegant white kamiko. Soon kamiko was dyed with various patterns such as *komon*, *sarasa*, and an imitation of the woven *kasuri*. Small patterns decorated kamiko undergarments while larger designs, especially of flowers and plants, embellished the *juttoku*, a kind of outer vest favored by women and the old. A particularly elegant style of white kimono was decorated with a pattern of gold leaf. A coating of konnyaku mucilage worked over the patterns and colors preserved and waterproofed them. If a tear occurred it would be patched with a small triangular piece of paper. Edges of seams in the garment were often beautifully crocheted together with hemp thread.

Even for all this new fashion, kamiko still remained the standard dress of the impoverished. Kamiko appears frequently in the writings of Saikaku, who wrote of the urban life of his day. In the late 1600s he coined the phrase *kamiko rōnin*, which ever after designated a proud, masterless samurai so poor that he had but one kimono—of paper. On the Kabuki stage kamiko took on symbolic meaning. In many plays a poor person appears dressed in paper. In one well-known scene, a destitute runaway, Isaemon, obtains some discarded paper from a prostitute, perhaps old love letters from a lover, and makes himself a robe.

Sixteenth-century samurai chose kamiko jackets because they were simple, warm, and excellent windbreakers. A kamiko garment worn by the famous general Uesugi Kenshin (1530-1578) is extant today. It was especially fashionable in his time to wear paper at night over armor while in the battlefield. Often this type of jacket featured a cloth yoke and sleeves and was rich and luxurious in pattern, a far cry from peasant clothes. Some of the more elegant jackets were lined with fine silk and the paper was colored with vegetable dyes. Many displayed gorgeous embroidery, often with gilt threads on the collar and edgings.

The great military commander Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598) wore just such elegant kamiko jackets as these into battle. Obviously these silk-sleeved and gilt-edged paper coats were not the shabby garments of impoverished monks or farmers. But they were still paper, and as such attempted to retain some spirit of simplicity if not poverty. Hideyoshi's tea master, Sen Rikyū, also wore kamiko. Although it is unknown what his garments looked like, doubtless they were more subdued in pattern and taste than Hideyoshi's.

It was probably through the common meeting ground of the tea gathering that a more widespread taste for paper dress awakened. Zen monks were probably the first to wear kamiko in the tearoom. Struck by the profound modesty and quiet this ordinary dress suggested, haiku poets, artists, the nobility and tea devotees began emulating the clothing of monks. Hosts of tea gatherings wore short *chabaori* jackets in the tearoom. Paper clothing was the height of understatement, and suited wabi tea to an extraordinary degree.

In Sen Rikyū's time there was no particular discussion of what should be worn for chanoyu. Yet a more contemporary treatise, *Observations on the Clothing of Tea Practitioners*<sup>4</sup> states that wearing kamiko "as an affectation" is documented in a grand tea gathering held in Osaka Castle in 1587. There tea connoisseurs wore paper "to give an extremely *shibui* effect." Yamanoue Sōji (1544-1590) wrote:

Proper attire for a tea gathering is as follows: the upper garment would be of wadded cotton of Uji *sarashi*; its inner lining would have been bleached and have a fittingly refined color, multiple collars and sleeves made of kamiko. The lower garment should be dyed solid black . . . If a person is *wabi* inside and out, he should wear one of three things: wadded cotton clothing, a padded cotton jacket, or shibui kamiko.<sup>5</sup>

It was kamiko's self-effacing beauty that commended it to connoisseurs of chanoyu. Quiet, uncomplicated, reserved, it possessed natural grace; its spare quality placed it ever in the strictures of good taste, "Profoundly modest, never negligent," Rikyū's teacher Takeno Jōō had advised. The perceptive eyes of the tea masters found beauty in kamiko's very ordinariness. Like the best accoutrements of tea, paper clothing had a wholesome and ingenuous roughness about it that made it a natural apparel for wabi tea. Simple paper garments were like a portion of nature itself, their fibers pinched from the bark of trees. Wearing kamiko was like wearing the rendered skin of mulberry bushes. In it one could feel kindred to nature, as seasoned as an old tree.

Even plain paper ages quickly with continual touching; and so much more does kamiko. Wrinkled in the hands during manufacture, kamiko possesses the mellowness of a fabric familiar and well used. From the day it is made, it appears old and seasoned. "It is with the old that we touch the timeless, the dimension that is neither old nor new," writes Zen master Robert Aitken.<sup>6</sup> This sense of age in kamiko seems to resonate with that part of ourselves which is ancient and eternal, the part that reaches out for a sense of primordial continuity and connection with all things.

It was by battling the wind and rain in kamiko that the seventeenth century haiku poet Bashō sought to discover his own timeless nature. Many poets in Bashō's time emulated monastic life, and often they wore the robes of Buddhist monks. Straddling the line between clerical and lay, some were but romantics in love with their concept of the spiritual life. A few, such as Bashō, abandoned themselves completely and courageously to the uncertainties of the road.

Bashō loved kamiko, and often wore it while traveling. He refers to this paper garment in several poems and diaries, including *Oino kobumi* (The Records of a Travel-worn Satchel.) In the first pages of his *Oku no hosomichi* (Narrow Road to the Deep North), Bashō wrote: "When I reached the village of Soka in the evening, my bony shoulders were sore because of the load I had carried, which consisted of a paper coat to keep me warm at night, a light cotton gown to wear after the bath, scanty protection against the rain, writing equipment, and gifts from certain friends of mine. I wanted to travel light, of course, but there were always certain things I could not throw away for either practical or sentimental reasons."<sup>7</sup>



For the most part, Bashō wore a paper *bōkan ifuku*, or over-kimono. Light in weight, resistant to rain, snow, cold and wind, Bashō's paper traveling coat was his main protection from the elements. Protection for a time, anyway. In *Fuyu no hi* (A Winter's Day), Bashō relates: "The endless rains have unraveled my bamboo hat, and repeated storms have left my paper garment crumpled. Saturated now by solitary quiet, my very self is marked by melancholy."<sup>8</sup>

Kamiko does not endure forever. In their last days Bashō's paper coats must have been frail and pathetic, their life on his long travels as evanescent as the summer leaves he slept upon. But this was the garment that endeared itself to Bashō—a homely paper coat, stiff in its awkward drapery, with a soft, dirt-absorbing surface.

And this was the path Bashō chose. His outward poverty, his disintegrating paper robe and rain hat were living metaphors for a deeper internal state. Cold, hunger, discomfort, suffering, humiliation—everything normally unacceptable to the human condition became the things he drew close to experience life "at the bone," life in its whole. Aitken Roshi writes in *A Zen Wave*:

Bashō did not use the pilgrimage simply as a means. It was his best form of life. Out of that life emerged his experience of the wisteria flowers. Out of that life emerges expression of the peaks of life, the nips, the pain, the horse pissing. These are the seminal particles that give reason and scope, that give jewels of imperishable haiku.<sup>9</sup>

On one of his journeys Bashō, who had been wearing his warm paper coat all day, suddenly noticed it was spring:

|                                      |                                         |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <i>Fuyu no kamiko imada kikaezu.</i> | From my shoulders,                      |
| <i>Kagerō no wage kata ni</i>        | Still draped in winter's kamiko,        |
| <i>Tatsu kamiko kana.</i>            | Heat visibly shimmers up. <sup>10</sup> |

In Bashō's time, poets wrote characters on their hats and umbrellas to commemorate a particular place or event. No doubt they wrote on their kamiko coats too. How handy for a poet to have such a paper garment, which might be tearing at the knees, sagging at the buttocks and ready to split in two down the back—yet be able to take the brush and jot off a short letter or haiku on it just before it cracks down the spine! A fitting wardrobe indeed for a Buddhist observing that all of life is change.

Awakening one autumn morning on his travels upon a grassy, open-air bed, astonished at the cold that had settled frozen on his paper coat, Bashō wrote:

|                              |                                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <i>Kamiko ni mo shimo ya</i> | Upon this very robe of paper—           |
| <i>Okukato nazetemishi.</i>  | Oh! I touched some frost. <sup>11</sup> |

The jewels that are indeed Bashō's haiku came out of the empty pockets of his weather-worn satchel. Perhaps he knew what Thomas Merton knew when Merton wrote that "the whole meaning of our life is a poverty and emptiness which, far from being a defeat, are really the pledge of all the great supernatural gifts of which they are a potency."<sup>12</sup> Could Bashō have produced such poetry had he never experienced the



luxury of insecurity, of hats and paper coats that fell apart in the rain, of having to make his bed in the grass? A pilgrimage may be a journey within. In giving birth to himself on the road, Bashō knew the passageway was narrow, with no room for extra baggage. This poet and many others in kamiko had to cut through the dead wood of possessions, titles, and comforts to taste the absolute value in life. Heat shimmering on a winter robe, frost on a paper coat in the morning—such were moments born out of willingness to be vulnerable and empty.

There is also a compassionate humor that surrounds kamiko. Kamiko is clumsy and noisy. It tends to fall apart. Wearing it we are offered a glimpse of the absurd side of our lives. In paper we can laugh at the very serious attitudes we hold dear and “rituals” we construct—whether it be such worthy activities as writing a poem, preparing a bowl of tea for a guest, or embarking on a pilgrimage.

Perhaps Bashō sensed that even his poverty was just such a position, effective when lived with integrity, but no more right than any other. And perhaps he knew it was foolish to take it too seriously—destitution would have dried the life out of any flower-viewing. After all, Bashō had many sentimental things tucked away in his satchel that he could never give up. Even Thoreau, I have read, for all his talk of solitude and simplicity, went to his mother’s house every night for a meat pie.

It was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when papermaking had reached its zenith, that kamiko was fashionable with the populace. The widespread availability of good paper at low prices permitted paper garments to flood the market. Then, sometime in the nineteenth century kamiko went out of vogue; again it became exclusively the clothing of the poor. With the arrival of factory machine production in the Meiji era, kamiko production nearly died out. In this century the art of making kamiko was revived and it is now done on a limited scale in Kurodani near Kyoto, in Yatsuo in Toyama, Shiroishi, and Kaga-asahimachi in Kanazawa. Its use as clothing today is generally restricted to the *obi*, the *chabaori*, and *sodenashi-haori*, a sleeveless garment, which are worn almost exclusively by tea practitioners and kamiko aficionados.

Whether kamiko was born out of the worn prayer book of an enlightened monk or from tarps borrowed from a farmer’s field, this simple paper garment has been ever-present in Japan’s deeper understanding of impoverishment. Natsume Sōseki must have understood this when he wrote:

|                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Waga shinaba</i>     | As I lie dying,          |
| <i>Kamiko o dare ni</i> | To whom shall I bequeath |
| <i>Yuzuru beki.</i>     | My kamiko? <sup>13</sup> |

Old, used kamiko—just about worthless. But to whom can one bequeath such exquisite poverty? 

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1. *Shi* as well as *kami* mean paper in Japanese.

2. Hanada Tokutarō and Narita Kiyofusa, *Kami-suki uta*. (Tokyo: Seishi Kinenkan, 1951) (group translation), p. 72.

3. Yoshida Kenkō, *Essay in Idleness: The Tsurezuregusa of Kenkō*, translated by Donald Keene (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 53.

4. Iguchi Kaisen, *Chajin Fukusō ko* [Observations on the Clothing of Tea Practitioners] quoted in *Chadō Zenshu*, No. 14 (Kyoto: Sogensha, 1936), p. 321.
5. Yamanoue Sōji, quoted in *Sadō Koten Zenshū* vol. 6, chief editor Sen Sōshitsu XV, (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1977), p. 104.
6. Robert Aitken, *A Zen Wave* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1978), p. 161.
7. Bashō, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, translated by Nobuyuki Yuasa (New York: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 99.
8. Bashō, *Fuyu no hi*, translated by Neal Donner, quoted in *Senshoku to Seikatsu*, No. 24, (Spring), (Kyoto: Senshoku to Seikatsusha, 1979), p. 21.
9. *A Zen Wave*, p. 161.
10. *Fuyu no hi*, p. 21.
11. Bashō, source unknown to author, translated by Yasuo Sasaki.
12. Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Direction, 1972), p. 264.
13. Natsume Sōseki, translated by Neal Donner, quoted in *Dainihon Hyakkajiten*, 2d ed., s. v. "Natsume, Sōseki," (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1972), pp. 694-695.

## Zen Sword: Comments on the *Fudōchi-shimmyōroku* of Zen Master Takuan

Ōmori Sōgen

The Zen priest Takuan seems to have mastered everything that came his way. Not only was he a painter and calligrapher, he also fashioned implements for chanoyu and was accomplished in the art of flower arrangement. And, in keeping with a man of his stature, he was skilled at both Chinese and Japanese poetry. Truly he displayed many talents and abilities. Absent from his calligraphy is the rough-hewn boldness characteristic of the brushwork of Zen monks; rather, one can sense in his calligraphy the wisdom, purity, and depth of a cultured man. Perhaps he was such a man. The decisions Takuan made during his life seem to bear out this interpretation of his character.

Born in 1573 at Izushi in Tajima (present-day Hyōgo prefecture), Takuan was placed in the Pure Land sect temple of Shōnenji and became an acolyte. At the age of fourteen, of his own volition he turned to the teachings of Zen and went to Shōfukuji, a subtemple of Sukyōji in Tajima, to study under the Zen priest Kisen. After Kisen died, Tōho Jōchu, a disciple of the renowned priest Shun'oku Sōen (1529-1611) of Daitokuji temple, came to Shōfukuji and Takuan became his disciple. In 1594 Tōho received the name Shūhō from Shun'oku and left to reside at Nanshūji temple in Sakai near Osaka. There he began studies under Master Ittō Jōteki (1533-1606), from whom he received the name Takuan in 1604. After the death of Ittō he remained at Nanshūji until 1609 when an imperial decree made Takuan the fifty-fourth abbot of Daitokuji. However, hardly had three days passed before he struck off a poem with the line "From the beginning, I have always been one who wanders like clouds and water" (clouds and water, *unsui* in Japanese, is also the name for Zen novices) and withdrew to Nanshūji. In 1620 he went back to Sukyōji near his home, rather than, in his own words, "flatter people for the love of wealth, sell Buddhism for a living, and drag the teaching of the patriarchs down into the mud" (*Nyusa iko*).

While there, Takuan received word of a serious confrontation of the Bakufu with the imperial court that came about this way. After the summer siege of Osaka castle in 1615, the Tokugawa clan had been gradually consolidating its control over the nation. Three sets of laws promulgated by the shogunate severely limited the responsibilities of the imperial family with respect to the monastic orders and bishops. The conferring of rank upon monks of famous temples and the bestowal of a purple robe had long been one of the prerogatives of the emperor and, moreover, a principal source of revenue for the court. For the Tokugawa clan, it was essential that the relationship of the court and the Bakufu be fixed, and the voice of the court be restrained in religio-political affairs. Thus, in 1627 the Bakufu, disclosing violations of the laws

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going back as far as 1615, canceled the imperial order that had promoted fifteen monks to high office and stripped these monks of their purple robes. Takuan, in his hometown temple, Sukyōji, promptly drafted a protest and, with the joint signatures of the Daitokuji priests Gyokushitsu and Kōgetsu, presented it to the authorities. These three priests were subsequently called to Edo to undergo investigation for having shown "lack of respect for the government and revolt against the law." In 1629, Takuan and Gyokushitsu were exiled; Kōgetsu apologized and was pardoned. This incident became known as "The Purple Robe Affair."

For four years, Takuan lived in exile in Kaminoyama (present-day Yamagata prefecture) and received lenient treatment from his warden. Upon the death of shogun Hidetada in 1632, Takuan was pardoned and he returned to his old village in Tajima. Soon afterward, the eminent swordsman Yagyū Munenori (1571-1646) arranged for Takuan to meet the shogun Iemitsu during one of the shogun's visits to Kyoto. Iemitsu received Takuan warmly. With swift dispatch, an auspicious site in Shinagawa was chosen, the Tōkaiji temple was built, and in 1637 Takuan was welcomed to Edo as its founding priest. Thus the relentless critic of the Bakufu became the recipient of its favor. The man who had in 1620 likened himself to "clouds and water" and retired to Sukyōji rather than "flatter people for the love of wealth and sell Buddhism for a living," had, seemingly without shame, placed himself in the midst of the secular world. What had happened?

From the start, "The Purple Robe Affair" had been a political problem based on the struggle between the court and the Bakufu. At the same time, for Takuan it was undoubtedly a struggle to protect Zen Buddhism from political pressure. Perhaps Takuan's rapprochement with the Bakufu after his exile was part of a plan to bring this greater problem to solution. Even with his new responsibilities, Takuan still busily involved himself preaching Zen to many daimyo and samurai of Edo.

At Tōkaiji, in the eleventh month of 1645, he fell ill. Though apparently it was only a trifling illness, his condition quickly worsened. On the eleventh day of the twelfth month, at the entreaty of the temple monks, he wrote one word, "*yume*" (dream). He then threw down his brush and died. He was seventy three. His last request is said to have been: "Do not recite sutras. Do not arrange formal dinners. Do not make portraits of me. Just bury my body in the back mountains. It is enough that you cover me with earth."

### The Fudochi-shimmyōroku

There is a volume titled the *Fudōchi-shimmyōroku* [The Marvelous Record of the Immovable Wisdom], sometimes shortened to *Fudōchi*, that Takuan is said to have presented to the great swordsman Yagyū Munenori (1571-1646) who headed the Yagyū family of Edo.

The *Fudōchi* explains the principles of swordsmanship from the standpoint of Zen and clarifies the connection between the mental state of Zen and the skill of the swordsman. Those men who later argued for the connection between Zen and swordsmanship, saying "Zen and swordsmanship are one," prized this book as a



The character "Dream" (*Yume*). Central area: height 28.8 cm.; width 60.6 cm. Photo courtesy of Tōkaiji temple, Tokyo. It is recorded that as Takuan lay on his death bed on the eleventh day of the twelfth month, 1645, at the hour of the tiger (4-6 a.m.), his disciples requested him to write his death poem. Takuan waved his hand in refusal, but when his disciples persisted, he rose to write the single character "dream" and then, throwing down the brush, returned to his bedding (*Tōkai oshō ki nenroku*). The scroll shown here also includes several lines of *bōgo*—words of the Dharma—but has been handed down in Tōkaiji temple as this final writing of Takuan. The text reads:

One hundred years, three hundred sixty  
thousand days: Miroku, Kannon,  
how many [times have even they discriminated] right and wrong? Right is dream,  
wrong is dream. Miroku is dream. Kan-  
non is dream. The Buddha said, "Thus let  
it be seen!"  
The old man Takuan abruptly took up the brush.



resource for debate. As I cite several passages from the *Fudōchi* I would like to reflect on some of the contents of this work.

### Stopping the Mind

There are fifty-two stages in the practice of the Buddhist teaching. Among those fifty-two, one is the concept of the stopping of the mind in things. Stopping means that whatever the mind notices, it gets stopped at that thing.

As expressed in the saying, “In one crossing, to directly enter the realm of the Tathagata,” Zen preaches that in one leap, we can attain enlightenment in this life. However, Buddhist practice is usually divided provisionally into fifty-two stages: the ten beliefs, the ten dwellings, the ten actions, the ten turnings, the ten realms, and two additional stages, the perception of equality and the marvelous perception. The first forty stages are considered to be those of an ordinary person, the final twelve are the practice stages of a saint. For an understanding of the meaning of the concept of the stopping of the mind we must consult another passage:

“ignorant” means unenlightened or deluded. “Dwelling place” means a place where the mind has gotten stopped.

When we are ignorant we have no understanding of fundamental principles. Therefore when we meet events we become confused and are led astray. Ignorance is the point of departure of Buddhism; in simple terms, the goal of Buddhism is to acquire an understanding of the fundamental principles. This is done by means of chanting Buddha’s name, intoning scriptures, and meditation. In Zen, the purpose of meditation is to cut through the roots of ignorance that are hidden deep in the mind. Ignorance allows the mind to stop, to “dwell” in a place, in an object, or in an act.

When we dwell in things we stop or are caught by distinctions that rise in our mind. For example, in things neither good nor evil exists. The green of a willow is its fundamental nature, and it is neither good nor evil. Things are made evil or good by man because we “dwell” in them. Writing of swordsmanship, Takuan notes:

To speak in terms of your military art, if you see in a glance your opponent’s striking sword and think “I’ll block him there,” your mind will get stuck on your opponent’s sword, the motion will go out of your swordplay, and you will be cut down. This is what may be called “stopping.” Even though you see your opponent’s striking sword, do not stop your mind and become tainted by any schemes such as “I’ll match the timing of my opponent’s striking sword and strike here”; if, whether or not you see the brandished sword, you do not stop the mind even for a moment and lay into your opponent, you will be able to take the sword cutting toward yourself and make it the sword that cuts down your opponent.



Portrait of Takuan, artist unknown, with calligraphy by Takuan. Important Cultural Property. Colors on silk, dated 1639. Central area: height 119 cm., width 52.2 cm. Photo courtesy of Shōunji temple, Sakai.

In the morning when we get up and wash, we face the water. When we eat, we face food and drink. While working, it might be people and machines; when writing, we face paper. We continually confront something—we cross swords with every object and event in our path. The same occurs when we confront people; in swordsman's terms, the attitude described in the preceding passage is called *ainuke*, or "acting as though one's opponent were not there."

To be able to respond to our opponents' blows and yet ride on their strikes to victory is a skill essential to combat but not limited to combat—it must be the basis for action in all our affairs. If we make this skill part of our bodies and grasp its subtlety, then it is certain we will be able to take toward ourselves the sword that wants to cut us and make it the sword that cuts down our opponent.

### No Dwelling Place

"One should give birth to the mind that has no dwelling place." In the doing of all acts, if the mind does not will to do something, the hands do not move. Yet if the mind does will something, it gets stopped on what it intends to do. One must cultivate the mind that does not get stopped on things. If volition arises, the mind gets stopped on that volition. Yet if volition does not arise, the hands do not move. Then again, if they move, the mind gets stopped. To be able to act without the mind getting stopped is the mark of the renowned masters of the various Ways.

This well-known expression, "One should give birth to the mind that has no dwelling place," is from the "Ornamentation of the Pure Land" section of the Diamond Sutra. Many people think that Nothing is meant when they hear phrases such as "without self" or "without thought." However, if we have eyes it is only natural to see; is it not also natural to hear if we have ears?

Some people say, "When we suddenly hear thunder, we are startled." We should be alert that we are not taken unaware. The mid-seventeenth century Zen master Bankei's reply to this observation was, "It's not wrong to be startled. If you try to keep alert, you double the problem." When we are confronted by form, sound, taste, fragrance, texture, and so on, it does not hurt to sense them just so long as we do not allow distinctions to arise vis-à-vis these things. Take for example a mirror reflecting an object. The mirror does not think "I'm going to reflect something," and the object does not think "I will be reflected," yet the reflection happens. When the object disappears, the reflection disappears without hesitation. In this way the working of the mind that has no dwelling place is similar to a mirror.

From long ago, there have been complicated oral and written Zen teachings about reflections. One often hears mention of the moon reflected in the water or the water reflecting the moon. Because the moon and the water are "without mind," the moon and its reflection exist at the same time and the water does not attach itself to the reflection.

The mind is often likened to a mirror; however, the mind and a mirror are different in that a mirror, like water, does not attach itself to the things it reflects, whereas a mind can get caught by things. When our minds are caught by things, we lose ourselves. Or, in reverse, because we have lost ourselves, our minds are manipulated by things. The mind should be free. But when it gets itself caught, or stopped by things, the mind loses its freedom. It is for this reason that Takuan says that ignorance is the stopped mind.

There was once an old woman known far and wide for her power to heal. It seems that all this old woman had to do was place her hand on the affected part of the sick or injured person's body and chant "*O-o mugi shōzu nishō goshō* (barley, red beans, two *shō*, five *shō*)" to heal. One day a monk, wanting to be kind, told her "You know, '*O-o mugi shōzu nishō goshō*' is incorrect. The correct words come from the Diamond Sutra. They are '*Oo mu shōju jisho kisho*' (One should give birth to the mind that has no dwelling place)." Hearing this the woman immediately lost her power. Being taught the "correct" phrase, her mind was caught by the distinction of correct and incorrect—her mind dwelled in, or got stopped by, this distinction.

### Fixing One's Eye on the Far Mountains

In the expression, "the Buddha's immovable wisdom," "immovable" means not to move. "Wisdom" is the wisdom of *chi-e* (prajna). Immovable does not mean the immobility of a stone or tree. The essence of immovable wisdom is that while moving ahead, to the left, to the right, in ten and eight directions—wherever one wishes—one does not stop one's mind even for a moment. . . . It is not activating the selfish mind. Not activating it means the mind does not dwell on anything. When the mind dwells on every little thing, it is called "moving." "Not moving" is when one sees something at a glance and, even though the eye may dwell on it, the mind does not get stopped. Why is that? When the mind gets stopped on something, many distinctions arise in the mind; the mind moves hither and thither. Getting stopped means being moved. The mind that does not get stopped is "not moving."

It is from this passage that the *Fudōchi* takes its name. It also contains the essential point of the entire work.

At first glance, this passage appears to present a paradoxical way of thinking. For Zen, however, it is quite straightforward. A long time ago, a monk asked Yün-men Wen-yen (Unmon Bun'en, ?-949), "What is it like, 'the immovable venerableness'?" He replied, "Running to the east, running to the west." Even though one may run to the east and west, allowing no time for rest, if one's mind does not get caught on things, that is precisely what is called "not moving." In contrast, when one is drawn to, and caught by, things and events, at that moment all manner of thoughts and distinctions

arise—the mind quavers, stability is lost. That is “moving.” In the words of Takuan, “If it stops, it moves. The mind that does not stop is unmoved.”

There is a story about the Zen Priest Ikkyū Sōjun (1394-1481) and a novice passing in front of an eel shop. Smelling the broiling eels, Ikkyū muttered to himself, “Oh, they smell delicious.” After he had gone a little distance, the young monk accompanying Ikkyū protested, “Right in front of the eel shop you said ‘Oh, they smell delicious!’ Is that a proper thing to say for someone who has taken the tonsure?” Ikkyū, unshaken by the monk’s words, replied, “Are you still carrying the broiled eels? I dropped them right there in front of the shop.”

Although Ikkyū had smelled the broiling eels, his mind did not “dwell” on them; in other words, he was in the realm of the immovable wisdom. The young monk’s mind had gotten caught by the broiling eels. I would guess Ikkyū smelled broiling eels outside an eel shop, savored pickles outside a pickle shop, and drank in the delicious fragrance of apples outside a fruit stand. His mind was always at one with things, now here, now there, moving continuously, flowing like a stream over all in its path without stopping for a moment.

The young monk’s mind had stuck fast to Ikkyū’s words about the broiled eels. He wondered if it was good or bad that Ikkyū had said they smelled delicious. All sorts of distinctions welled up in his mind. Encumbered with the smell of eels, he had passed by a pickle shop and a fruit stand.

Takuan further draws the discussion along by bringing up an example from *kendō*, the way of swordsmanship:

For example, even if ten men with swords come at you all at once, if you can deal with but one man and not dwell on what happens afterwards you won’t miss a move. The mind moves in response to the ten men, ten times, and if the mind does not dwell on any one of them you will move and confront them one after another and there will be no trace of inadequacy. However, if you stop the mind and face only one man, you may be able to deal with him but you will surely fail with the next man.

This attitude is valuable whether our opponents are numerous or limited to one. In either case, if you are caught thinking something like “Aren’t you going to come at my face?” and stop your mind there, you will not be able to follow your opponents’ movements and respond freely.

There is a teaching in *kendō* of “fixing one’s eye on the far mountains.” Takuan’s words resemble this teaching. “Fixing one’s eye on the far mountains” means to gaze far and wide. One exercise practiced by samurai is to look at all far-away things as if they were close and all close things as if they were far away. In this way the entire field of any situation is surveyed as though one were looking at mountains in the distance. At the same time this way of looking allows one to distinguish separate features. When looking at a tree, if you stop your mind on only one branch that has red leaves, you will not see all the green leaves. If we focus on the parts, we



cannot see the whole. If we are caught up in the whole we miss the parts. To see both the whole and the parts, or in the words of Takuan, to “directly face a tree with nothing in particular in mind and see every leaf,” I believe is the same as what is called “fixing one’s eye on the far mountains.” If we have determination and practice it is relatively easy to grasp. Yet, even though we should understand this way of looking, to actually respond to the movements of our opponents in real life is quite another matter.

Takuan says, “The person who truly understands this is the same as the thousand-eyed, thousand-armed bodhisattva (Avalokitesvara).” He continues:

When one uncovers the immovable wisdom, one feels like one has a thousand hands and that all of them are useful; that is why statues of the thousand-armed bodhisattva are made that way, to represent that state to people.

The day-to-day practice of this principle is the practice of Zen, and so it must be with swordsmanship. Even though we may sometimes see things through a thousand eyes, to act as though we have a thousand hands takes much more practice. As in the expression “to practice swimming in a dry field,” principle alone amounts to nothing.

#### **Uniting Principle and Action.**

Speaking of the practice of principle and the practice of deeds. Principle is what I have described above. When you arrive at it, there is nothing; you only have to learn how to throw away your mind. Gradually one approaches what I have described above. However, if one does not exert oneself in the practice of deeds and has only principle in one’s mind, one’s body and hands cannot move. Speaking about the practice of deeds, in your military art there are the three and nine types of exercises. Even if you know the principle, if you are unable to move freely in action, it is no good. And even if you are skillful with your body and the wielding of sword, it will not do if you are ignorant of the essence of principle. Principle and action are like the two wheels of a cart.

Principle without practice is empty theory, and wielding the sword without principle is nothing but violence. The ancients despised swordsmanship based on principle alone—in which the hand and body did not move—and rejected swordsmanship that was without principle.

However proud one might be of mastery of a technique, technique by itself is no more than simple skill. Nakabayashi Gochiku (1827-1913) on the subject of calligraphy said:

Fingers. In the moving of the brush, one’s skill goes no farther than one’s fingers. Arm. One’s movement of the brush improved by skill is still only that movement of the arm.

Mind. When the movement of the brush is thus, we can begin to speak of the "art of the mind."

Any skill that did not attain the level of an "art of the mind" was considered by the ancients to be nothing more than actions performed with a consciousness trapped in distinctions and ignorant of fundamental principles.

When people come to study Zen with me, I have them study swordsmanship and calligraphy. This is because these two disciplines share the same goal as Zen meditation but are somehow more easily grasped because they are the manifestation in bodily action of a mental discipline.

The Ming dynasty Confucian scholar Wang Yang-Ming eloquently stated, "To eat when one is hungry and sleep when one is tired, this alone is the mystery of mysteries. Even though you explain this to people, they do not believe it and continue to look for sagehood as something beyond themselves." To realize the Way in the everyday acts of eating when hungry, sleeping when tired, requires a discipline that unites action and principle.

### The Spatial and Temporal Nature of *Ma*

Your military art can be likened to the expression "a *ma* which allows not even a hair to enter." *Ma* is that which is between. This means that there is no room for a single hair in the space between two things that are laid one over another. Speaking of things that have no *ma*, take for example a handclap. The sound simply issues forth; there is not enough *ma* for the entry of a single hair. You clap your hands and there is no time to think about the sound before it issues forth . . . . It is the same with the striking of a flint. The spark flashes at the moment of striking—you strike, the spark appears, there is no space between . . . . This means there is no *ma* for one to stop one's mind. Further, to think of measuring the speed of something is wrong. The thing to do is not to stop the mind on anything . . . . For example, when someone is called, if he answers promptly "Yes," that kind of consciousness is the immovable wisdom. But if he answers only after reflecting upon why he might have been called in the first place and questions the caller with things like "What do you want with me?" and so on, that is being trapped in the realm of "dwelling on things."

It may be said that the idea of *ma* is at the marrow of the arts of the Orient. In singing, dance, in Noh drama, in military arts, *ma* is regarded as something of singular importance. A discussion of *ma* can be divided into two parts, the first touching on physical *ma*, and the second on temporal *ma*.

The *ma* that Takuan speaks of that "allows not even a hair to enter" is a physical entity. The examples of the striking of a flint and the response of someone



*"Night Rain at the Confluence of the Hsiao and the Hsiang":* painting and verse by Takuan. Central area: height 25.6 cm.; width 71.5 cm. Photo courtesy of Eisei Bunko, Tokyo. This painting is a japanified version of one of the famous "Eight Views of the Confluence of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers"—a favorite theme in Chinese painting. Examples of the genre by such well-known painters as Mu-ch'i and Yü-chien were among the most highly-prized pieces in the possession of the Ashikaga shogunate and were treasured by connoisseurs of Chinese art and by later tea men. The verse is read vertically from left to right:

The feeling of one night at the Hsiao and Hsiang rivers,  
Known in the dark to a passenger on board boat.  
On thatched roofs, the rain is without sound—  
Heard with the heart, silent to the ear.

hearing his name called can be cited as examples of *ma* as a temporal entity.

However we may divide our discussion, physical *ma* and temporal *ma* cannot be spoken of as separate, distinct, and unrelated. Referring to the example of someone being called, it is easy to see the temporal aspect of *ma*, but not so easy to grasp its physical aspect—the space between the one who calls and the one who answers. In the same way, physical *ma* can take on the characteristics of temporal *ma*. It is easy to conceive of the two aspects of *ma* as two distinct types of *ma*, but in practice *ma* is indivisible. Something very similar to this appears in the *Kakyō*, a work by the fourteenth-century Noh theoretician and actor Zeami:

In Noh and other forms of theater, there are times when the actor stands still on the stage. That is the *ma* between one action and another. If during that time the actor allows his mind to wander, the *ma* is lost. But if the actor does not slacken in the least and maintains his intensity, that *ma* is a fulfilled thing that can provide a link to the next movement. This is the secret of a good performance that must always be kept in mind.

The intensity, the fulfilled feeling, actually overflows the *ma* between movements in a performance or, if we speak in terms of composition in painting, the negative spaces.

#### The Respect that Does Not Give Rise to Delusion

I would stress above all the word “respect.” To concentrate the mind in one place and not allow it to scatter, not to allow the mind to be distracted by an opponent even if he strikes from behind, that is the meaning of respect. It is essential. When one is carrying out the wishes of one’s lord, it is especially important that the feeling of respect be kept in mind. In Buddhism too, there is respect. It is spoken of as a single, unscattered mind. That is the real feeling of respect.

When the old woman placed her hands on a sick person and chanted “*O-o mugi shōzu nishō gosho*,” she was probably in the state of mind expressed by “to concentrate the mind in one place and not allow it to scatter” or the “single, unscattered mind.” Takuan continues,

At the ringing of the respectful address (*keibaku*) bell, one rings the bell three times, joins one’s hands together, and respectfully addresses the Buddha. This is how one chants to the Buddha. That is the feeling of “respectful address,” and it has the same meaning as “to concentrate without diversion” and “the single, unscattered mind.”

It was also because the old woman had the spirit of “respectful address” that she was able to heal.

Takuan said, "In Buddhism, the feeling of 'respect' is not the ultimate goal." But, even so, when we pursue any of the traditional arts, "concentration without diversion," and "the single, unscattered mind"—in short, the spirit of "respectful address,"—are essential. Takuan said that the level of respect is

where one takes the mind in hand so that it does not wander, and throws oneself into the practice of a discipline. After years and months of practice one will reach the level where, when the mind is let loose, it is completely free.

For example, it is like putting a leash on a cat and leading it around when one does not want it to catch baby sparrows. If the selfish mind is tied up and restricted, then our actions will not follow the whims of the mind. However, if the cat has been well trained, it will not run after a sparrow when you unleash it: That is the state of mind expressed in the words "One should give birth to the mind that has no dwelling place."

That is to say, the ultimate goal is a world where the sparrow and the cat can coexist. But of utmost importance is to train the cat well. We must make the "respect that does not give rise to delusion" our own.

#### **The Mind Must Be Released**

"Seek the release of the mind" were the words of Mencius. It is the same as seeking the mind when it has gone off and returning it to one's own self. For example, when a dog, cat, or bird wanders off, one will go looking for it. As the mind is the master of the body, when the body has gone astray and gotten stopped somewhere one will do whatever one can to seek it out. However, [the Sung scholar-philosopher] Shao K'ang Chieh said, "the mind must be released." This is altogether different. In this case the mind is locked up like a cat tied up, unable to move. The mind should be trained so it does not get caught or influenced by things, and then one should release it and let it free to go wherever it will without once bringing it back.

Mencius said "Seek the release of the mind" because nothing can be done unless the mind is focused. In the words of Chiba Shūsaku (1793-1855), founder of the Hokushin Ittō school of kendō, "That (the release of the mind) is when the sword, in the blinking of an eye, unites mind, spirit, and strength." In calligraphy, it is mind, brush, and body. Once these things are united in the blinking of an eye, then and only then is it possible to freely practice an art. The training to bring about this state is the first step to the release of the mind. However, when the mind is wholly tied up with this training, it becomes "like a cat tied up and unable to move." In contrast to this, for Shao K'ang Chieh the mind that moves freely is the true mind.





*Tai chū gen*—"Profound Mystery Manifest by the Body."  
This expression is based on a statement in the *Record of Rinzai*: "Each phrase must possess the three kinds of profound mystery. Each kind of profound mystery must possess the three essentials." Profound mystery (*gen*), originally a Taoist term for ultimate truth, refers here to enlightenment, the awakening to reality or things as they truly are. The three kinds of profound mystery are: 1) Profound mystery within profound mystery (*gen chū gen*)—absolute reality beyond conception or expression. 2) Profound mystery in words (*ku chū gen*)—awakening as expressed verbally. 3) Profound mystery in the body (*tai chū gen*)—awakening manifested through one's physical body. Central area: height 122 cm.; width 26.8 cm.

It is as natural for the mind to be released as for the sparrow and the cat. To *seek the release* of the mind is the first step; to *release* it is much more difficult. Something of this nature is what Takuan was expounding. As a practical matter though, is it possible for the mind to be released if one is not truly fulfilled within? With the immovable wisdom one can be self-sufficient. It works according to the same principle that applies to a rubber ball; filled with air it bounces better.

Takuan said,

When someone begins to know, even a little bit, it can be seen in his face; however, when one eventually reaches a high level of knowledge, one's knowledge is not readily apparent; one rather resembles someone who knows nothing at all and displays nothing on the outside.

A long time ago, the T'ang dynasty priest Chao Chou Ts'ung-shen (Jōshū Jūshin, 778-897) expressed his feelings about this. He said, "If someone wants to discipline himself to benefit mankind, he should become a fool, unknown by anyone." This is true not only for Zen, but also for calligraphy and for swordsmanship. In short, the goal of the many Ways is to become artless, like someone who has never studied at all.

At the very end of the *Fudōchi*, Takuan said,

When acquiring a skill, the mind must first be tamed. The mind being tamed means the mind, as usual, runs from thing to thing but remains at attention in the center of one's being.



Translated by Sonja Arntzen



## *Temae — Tea Procedure : Hana Shomō*

One of the most delightful of all the features of a tea gathering is the arrangement of flowers in the room. Whether the gathering is an informal serving of thin tea and sweets or a formal tea gathering that includes a light meal and the service of thick and thin tea, the flowers that brighten the room are always a welcome sight to the guest. For most tea gatherings the host gathers and arranges the flowers. However, the flowers may sometimes be brought or arranged by the guests, in which case the procedure that host and guests follow is called *hana shomō* (literally, “flower request”).

In particular there are several occasions when the guests might be able to arrange the flowers for the host. If the *hanaire* (flower container) has a long and distinguished history—perhaps it dates from the Muromachi period (1392-1573) or was owned by many eminent teamasters—it is common for the host to refrain from arranging flowers in it, even if the *hanaire* is part of the host’s personal collection of tea utensils. If the *hanaire* was a gift from one of the guests, the host defers to the guests when the time comes to arrange the flowers. And, should the host be the recipient of flowers from the guests the host may ask them to arrange the flowers for him.

An interesting departure from the standard sequence of events of a formal tea gathering involves the *hana shomō* procedure. If rain should fall unexpectedly just before the middle recess, when the guests would normally leave the tearoom for a brief respite, a resourceful host might suggest that the guests remain in the room and place the flowers in the *hanaire*. In this way the guests are able to flex their leg muscles and the host is saved the awkward situation of leaving the guests with nothing to do while he prepares for the latter half of the tea gathering.

In all of these circumstances flowers are brought into the room on the left side of a short-legged, unfinished cedar tray called a *kadai*. In the upper righthand corner of the *kadai* is a small, flat, handleless spouted water pourer called a *mizutsugi* with a damp, folded *chakin* placed on its lid. Next to the flowers, in the six o’clock position, is a short knife, the blade of which faces to the left toward the flowers. Before the flowers are brought into the room the host places the *hanaire*, seventy percent filled with water, in the *tokonoma*.



(1)

The host has placed the *hanaire* in the tokonoma. In this particular case, the hanaire is made of bamboo and hung on the back wall of the tokonoma (1).



(2)

The host enters the room carrying the *kadai* with flowers, knife, *mizutsugi*, and *chakin*. He walks to the tatami in front of the tokonoma, sits, and places the *kadai* to his side away from the guests (2).



(3)

The host stands, turns, and leaves the room. In the host's entrance he turns, sits, bows, and invites the guests to select and arrange the flowers in the hanaire (3). The host remains seated with his hands on his thighs.



(4)

The guests confer and the guest who agrees to arrange the flowers, in this case the main guest, stands, walks to the tatami in front of the tokonoma and sits in the same place the host sat. The guest places his fingertips on the tatami and views the hanaire (4).



(5)

The guest selects flowers from among the many the host has placed on the kadai (5). The guest uses the knife the host has provided to cut any stem or branch that is too long.



(6)

The guest stands and, right foot first, steps into the tokonoma, and places flowers in the hanaire (6). When the hanaire has been placed on the floor of the tokonoma the guest remains seated while he places the flowers in it; if it is hung on a pillar, the guest stands. Just as the guest finishes arranging the flowers the host asks the guest to add water to the hanaire. The guest bows in acknowledgment but refrains from adding water.



(7)

The guest, left foot first, steps down from the tokonoma, sits, and, with his fingertips on the tatami, views the arrangement he has created (7).



(8)

The guest straightens the flowers remaining on the kadai (8) and returns to his place.





(9)

The host bows and thanks the guest who arranged the flowers (9).



(10)

The host enters the room, sits on the tatami in front of the tokonoma, and views the flowers (10).



(11)

The guest bows and tells the host to rearrange the flowers if they are not to his liking and add water to the hanaire. The host bows in acknowledgment (11).



(12)

The host picks up the mizutsugi. As one hand grasps the mizutsugi with thumb on top and fingers on the bottom, the other picks up the chakin and holds it under the spout of the mizutsugi to steady it. The host, right foot first, steps into the tokonoma and pours water into the hanaire (12).



(13)

The host, left foot first, steps down from the tokonoma and sits. The host places the mizutsugi in the upper righthand corner of the kadai and replaces the chakin on its lid. The host turns the knife so that the sharp edge faces away from the flowers (13).



(14)

The host grasps the tray in both hands and raises it. He stands, turns, and leaves the room (14). Returning to the preparation area, he readies the utensils for the service of thick tea.



(15)

The main guest, or the second guest if the main guest arranged the flowers, excuses himself to the next guest for going before him. He stands and proceeds to the tatami in front of the tokonoma where he sits to view the newly created flower arrangement (15). In turn, each guest, except for the guest who arranged the flowers, views the flowers in the same manner.



(16)

At the end of the tea gathering when the host and guests are sharing parting words, the host may ask that since the flowers have been so beautifully arranged they be left as they are in the hanaire. Otherwise, the guest who has arranged the flowers removes them from the hanaire, wraps them in *kaishi* paper he keeps in the front fold of his kimono, and places them on the floor of the tokonoma, their cut ends pointing towards the host's mat (16).



The host has placed the *hanaike* in the tokonoma and set out the *kadai* with flowers, knife, *mizutsugi* and *chakin*.

### Variations of Hana Shomō When Presented with the Ro

Hana Shomō is presented in exactly the same way for furo and ro. The only difference would be in the selection of *hanaike* and flowers to match the season.

## Book Reviews

**Architecture in the Shoin Style: Japanese Feudal Residences.** By *Fumio Hashimoto*. Translated and adapted by *H. Mack Horton*. Tokyo: Kōdansha International Ltd. and Shibundō, 1981. 246pp. US\$17.75, ¥3,480.

This book has long been needed for the English reader interested in traditional Japanese architecture, and in spite of its faults this volume in the Japanese Arts Library series is welcome indeed. Quite simply, “*shoin style*” is a feature of virtually every building scheme executed in Japan between about 1550 and 1850, so to back off, analyze it and thus bring some historical perspective to the subject is clearly a worthwhile exercise.

Modern Western architects (including Bruno Taut, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Norman Carver) have been deeply impressed and influenced by what they often refer to as the “articulation of space” in traditional (that is, *shoin style*) Japanese architecture. Clearly, the modern world outside of Japan has adopted so many *shoin* features (such as sliding doors, low ceilings, and flowing indoor-outdoor relationships) that much of what is presented in this book will seem merely to confirm what has already been established as beautiful and desirable in modern architecture. However, it is not the esthetics of the *shoin style* but its specifics that are at issue here.

Professor Hashimoto, author of *Architecture in the Shoin Style*, and his translator/adaptor, H. Mack Horton, are concerned with the subtlety and endlessly variable interior surfaces of the great monuments of *shoin* architecture. To Alexander Soper’s rude but accurate charge (quoted on p. 16) that *shoin style* buildings have the “proportions . . . of a basement,” Horton replies that the classical *shoin* audience hall (at Nijō Castle) represents “one of the sublime moments in world architecture” not because of the dimensions (and, one presumes, the articulation) of the space, but because of “the way its surfaces are treated . . .” (p. 17).

Hashimoto’s text is nothing less than a full description of the major monuments of existing *shoin style* buildings, presented in historical sequence and with excellent photographs and diagrams. His discussion of the “origin of the *shoin style*” in the opening chapter is the least satisfying, because many loose ends are left dangling. Nevertheless, Hashimoto cannot be faulted as a reporter of data and probably should not be criticized for not dealing with questions that might bother the non-Japanese reader. (As I will argue later, I believe the translator should assume that duty.)

Early *shoin style* is discussed in Chapter 2 with some very famous buildings included as examples. Tōfuku-ji’s fifteenth-century Ryōgin-in is cited as the oldest building of its type (the *bōjō/hondō*), followed by the early sixteenth-century subtemples of Ryōgen-in and Daisen-in at Daitoku-ji. The two well-known temples of the Golden and Silver pavilions, built as shogunal palaces in the late fourteenth and late fifteenth centuries respectively, are discussed here, with special attention given to Yoshimasa’s private Tōgū-dō. Students of tea will be disappointed that more attention is not given to this important early structure within the Silver Pavilion compound. Such related contemporary tea-and-art documents as the *Kundaikan Sōchōki* are mentioned obliquely but not presented in any meaningful way, and the relationship of the Tōgū-dō to the now missing *kaishō* as early tea houses is not explored. Hashimoto seems equally uninterested in paintings, gardens, and Zen, and restricts himself to the subject immediately at hand: the existing *shoin* buildings and their particular configurations.

In the third chapter, on Momoyama *shoin* construction, readers can begin to appreciate the subtle differences about which the author is talking when he discusses at length the “surface treatment” of the following temples, all dating to circa 1600: Sambō-in at Daigo-ji, Kōjō-in and

Kangaku-in at Onjō-ji (Otsu), Kanchi-in at Tōji, Saikyō-ji on Mount Hiei, and the great Zuigan-ji in Matsushima. Generally speaking, Hashimoto makes a convincing case for a chronological movement from "the functional to the decorative" (p. 88), with later "mature" buildings employing the four features of *tokonoma*, *chigaidana*, *tsukeshoin*, and *chōdaigamae* in a symbolic way to indicate the importance of a room (or the people in it). The implication is that in the beginning these four features actually functioned as: (1) a place to view scrolls, (2) shelves for books, (3) a built-in desk with window, and (4) bedroom doors. The "mature shoin style" is illustrated in Chapter 4 by the Nijō Castle Palace (1626) and the Nishi Hongan-ji shoin complexes (1632), followed by four other less-famous monuments of the seventeenth century.

Chapter 5 deals with the *sukiya shoin*, which is defined only as "a room or house in which to drink tea" (p. 147). Rikyū's "grass huts" (*sōan*) are included within the discussion of *sukiya*, but no examples (such as Tai-an of Myōki-an) are illustrated. The Sen family estates (Omote, Ura, and Mushanokōji), with their famous teahouses, are also omitted. Instead, the emphasis is on buildings associated with Kobori Enshū, and the "daimyo tea" of *kirei sabi* esthetics (pp. 149-150). Ryūkō-in (Ryokō-in) and Kohō-an at Daitoku-ji are included, along with other famous seventeenth-century structures built in the shadow of Emperor Gomizuno-o's patronage: the elaborate Manshu-in with its peculiar two-mat room (where tea may have been "prepared by a retainer . . . and then brought to the master in the main room"); the Hiunkaku and Kuroshoin at Nishi Hongan-ji, included, quite appropriately, with the detached palaces of Katsura and Shūgaku-in; the shoin and tearoom of Jikō-in is there along with the Shōgo-in shoin. Hashimoto has chosen to show the Maeda family's Seisonkaku (1863) as an example of late *sukiya shoin* style, putting color photos of it on the dust jacket of the book as well as inside (pls. 169-170).

In some ways the last chapter, on *minka shoin*, is the most interesting, if only because most books on shoin style ignore examples of its use by the "lower classes." I only wish the author had expanded our horizons even more to take in not only the sumptuous, *mingei*-like mansions of wealthy merchants and farmers but the tiny townhouses of quite ordinary families as well. Readers, nevertheless, should be grateful for this peek at the Kuriyama, Imanishi, Yoshimura, Furui, Naka, Watanabe, and Sasagawa residences, and the "Former Yakake Inn" in Okayama, all of which are today protected by the government.

I have one serious criticism of this book, and that concerns the delicate art of translating Japanese. Editors and translators should realize by now that most Japanese texts must be rethought before they are rendered into English or other languages. Unfortunately, sufficient rethinking has not been done in this case. I will cite only a few examples of what I mean, that is of unedited Japanese logic that goes down well in Japanese, but leaves the English reader in fits.

On page 39 we are told that the shoin style was preceded in the Heian period by the shinden style, which is here equated with other "*native modes of expression* [*italics mine*] in calligraphy, poetry, and painting" that developed at that time; however, on p. 42 the shinden style is described as a style that is closer to Chinese prototypes than the shoin style. We are then introduced to the shuden and buke styles as "intermediary residential styles" between shinden and shoin styles. But it seems that the buke style is "variously classed as the precursor of the shuden [*style*] or a synonym for it . . ."; and if that is not confusing enough, we learn further that "it is now considered more accurate to deal with these two styles . . . as variations on the shinden type or as early forms of the shoin." The latter is defined here as "the residential style of the warrior class" which was "perfected in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries . . ." and "quickly adopted by the clergy for temple residences." But almost in the next breath (p. 43) we hear that the shoin style has its "*genesis*" [*italics mine*] in "the abbots' quarters and the kitchens of Zen temples" and that it influenced "the plan and interior configurations of warrior homes." We are told that the "mature shoin style" always has the four features of *tokonoma*, *chigaidana*, *tsukeshoin*, and *chōdaigamae*, and yet the absence of the



tsukeshoin in the Front Shoin at Sambō-in is an "advance toward the mature shoin style," while in the case of the Ryūkō-in shoin (p. 149) the same missing ingredient (the tsukeshoin) clearly shows that the building is of the sukiya type. Also, the ogee-arched window (*katomado*) is "advanced" in the Momoyama Sambō-in, because such windows are "frequently seen in later shoin architecture," even though the same type of window was earlier noted (p. 50) as one of the Chinese Sung-style (*karayō*) elements brought to Japan with Zen in the thirteenth century.

This sort of thing goes on and on throughout the book and there is simply no excuse for it. Major inconsistencies in a Japanese text may have to be resolved by interviews with the author, and if that does not work (since most Japanese authors tend to live in peace with such inconsistencies) it is still the translator's job to resolve them somehow. To leave them dangling in a direct translation is just as bad as leaving traces of Japanese sentence structure in the foreign-language version of a major work of Japanese literature.

As it stands, *Architecture in the Shoin Style* can be used as required reading for a course on the history of Japanese architecture, but the students must be warned that they will have to make sense of the information themselves. Certainly passages of this text should not be memorized like a manifesto, because the author seems to say one thing here and another there. But by carefully balancing the various statements, weighing one against the other, a clear-enough view of the subject can emerge. It will take extra work, but by putting two and two together (over and over again) the resulting sum may be worth it, even though calculation of that sort is tricky and should be done by someone who is in a position to do it properly, namely, the translator. I think I know as well as anyone what an enormously difficult (and painfully thankless) job it can be to translate Japanese art history texts into English. My remarks, therefore, are not directed solely at Mr. Horton (whose achievements I admire), but are aimed at anyone, myself especially, who undertakes the awesome task of making a Japanese writer sound at least as sensible in English as he does in his native tongue.

In this case, even if all the inconsistencies of Hashimoto's text were resolved, I think the translator would still have one more job to do: the reason for such an exhaustive, descriptive list of buildings must be explained. Somehow the translator should convey to the reader some of the joy the author has experienced in each of the buildings about which he has "learned." Perhaps only somebody who has practiced a traditional Japanese art can appreciate what I am trying to say. Surely a serious student of tea is in a position to know how Hashimoto (and maybe Horton, too) might feel toward these buildings, for they are readily comparable to the many tea utensils (including *daisu* and *tana*) whose physical characteristics and historical associations must be memorized along with the many *temae* in which they function. When those magical, remarkably intense, stylized affairs known as *chaji* are held, all of that information has to have been learned not with the head but with the entire body. The grand audience halls of shoin construction are no longer in use today because the social system that produced them is dead. But since every tearoom requires its users to behave in a way that, to some degree, reflects that system the student of tea can feel what the use of a shoin would be like just from looking at pictures of it.

*Architecture in the Shoin Style* thus has a ready-made audience in tea students. I am afraid other people may find it very difficult to comprehend why anyone would be interested in so much detailed information that seems to go nowhere.

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**From the Country of Eight Islands: An Anthology of Japanese Poetry.** Edited and translated by Hiroaki Sato and Burton Watson. Doubleday, Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1981. 652pp. US\$9.95, ¥3,080 (paperback). Hardcover edition available from University of Washington Press.

Given the choice of sampling a few poems of a great many writers or selecting many poems from fewer writers, Sato and Watson have opted, wisely it turns out, for the second. And what they have produced—Sato planning and Watson editing—is an anthology that shows with grace and authority the astonishing sweep of Japanese poetic expression through fifteen centuries down to our own time.

With such a great range of poetry, from the compilation of the *Kojiki* in 712 to works of poets born just before World War II, the richness of Japanese poetic tradition is awesomely apparent. The sheer number of poems collected here impresses. One of the joys of the reader is in encountering them one by one, in chronological order, and beginning to recognize familiar turns of phrase or allusions encountered pages—that is, centuries—before.

One does feel some irritation at not having the original poems to refer to, but the translators themselves seem to grieve over this lack, explaining that because the selections have been drawn from such a wide variety of works, many of which have no standard texts, it has not been feasible in this anthology to identify the sources. They hope it may be possible soon to publish a companion volume containing the original texts. This is welcome news indeed.

Thomas Rimer's introduction to the history of Japanese poetry is a very fine, succinct overview (yet with very helpful examples) that shows how past impulses still inform the Japanese esthetic expression of today. One characteristic is the incorporation of references or allusions to earlier poems by masters one respects. Further, there is the desire, apparent from the time of the *Manyōshū*, to use images and ideas from other cultures to expand the native Japanese tradition. China was long the primary source, but attention shifted to Europe during the modern period.

Sato and Watson intended to translate faithfully and idiomatically, and so well have they succeeded that there is an uncanny feeling at times that it is Japanese that one is reading. In the repetition of sounds or the weight of the number of syllables to a line, the reader can somehow sense what the original Japanese must have been like. In this ambitious project the differing styles of Sato and Watson add to the pleasure of reading. Sato translates 5-7-5 syllable lines into one line of English; Watson tends to keep the lines distinct. It is interesting to compare them when a later poet quotes an earlier, as in the case of Fujiwara no Teika using Saigyō's lines:

Would the moon ever tell us to grieve, make us brood on things?  
Tears come to my reproving eyes (Sato)

Does the moon say "Grieve!"  
does it force  
these thoughts on me?  
And yet the tears come  
to my reproving eyes (Watson)

Though Japanese poems are often thought of as short, that limited view is corrected in this anthology, as many different poetic types are presented, including a *Nō* play and linked verse, elegies and rice-planting songs, and selections from more famous anthologies such as the *Kojiki* and the *Manyōshū*. The works of eighty-two major poets have been presented. And, because the poems are arranged chronologically, the changing esthetics of expression can be appreciated. At the same time, recurring phrases such as "madder-red" and "dew-wet sleeves" "black as leopard-flower seeds" recall Homer's "wine-dark sea" or "rosy-fingered dawn."

Since it is obvious that Japanese poetry cannot depend on meter and rhyme for its beauty, it is a mark of the translators' genius that such poignance as in this poem by Michizane, written a few months before his death in exile, can be rendered into English thus:

It was not the wind—the oil is gone;  
I hate the lamp that will not see me through the night.  
How hard—to make ashes of the mind, to still the body!  
I rise and move into the moonlight by the cold window.

Or humor caught deftly in what must be just as few words in English as in Japanese:

|               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| The wife won— | He goes up the staircase, |
| and she never | stomping on               |
| said a word   | his anger                 |

Nature is, of course, one of the basic elements in Japanese expression—its moods, colors, seasons, its effect on the human heart. Most of the poems included here were written before Emperor Meiji's government changed the calendar to a Western, solar one in 1872. Now, the Japanese lunar year usually began between our January 21 and February 19, so that the first month of the year was considered the first month of spring. Knowing this, the mention of plum flowers and young herbs at New Year's becomes less mystifying (Perhaps the winters were warmer then?) to the western reader. Those who study tea, for example, would do well not to translate "tenth month" into our October, for indeed it would already be winter weather by the old lunar calendar.

After the Meiji Restoration, poets began to describe (more than allude to) family life, the quirks of their private selves, and to make poetry of their physical ailments or of routine activities. They mention Gauguin, Christmas, Aesop, Mozart. And still they allude to poetic phrases of long ago, still talk of nature, but in new ways:

A gentle wind after the rain stirred,  
the grass thickets still wet with dewdrops, the cobweb shining  
like a rosary . . . . Tachihara Michizō

And still they talk of people, but with a more clinical sensibility:

Ah. Me. Corpse of a corpse. Only, child's soul turning in rebel's  
will. Body . . . . Kaneko Mitsuharu

If esthetic pleasure were not reason enough to prize this book, consider the education to be had in the footnotes, which give details about historical personages, religious concepts, or cultural/social mores that are crucial for understanding the poets' choice of words. At the end of the volume are further resources: a glossary of terms; major poetry collections used in the anthology; brief biographical sketches of all the eighty-two major poets represented; a select bibliography including not only general works but also those that deal with each type of poetry represented, as well as translations of poetry from particular periods and individual poets. And at the very end, there is an alphabetical index of poets.

Despite its thickness, this is all in all an intimate book. By the end of its more than six hundred pages, one has made many new friends, in addition to meeting some familiar ones in new clothes.

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**Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan.** By Martin Collcutt. Cambridge and London: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1981. 399pp. US\$20.00, ¥6,200.

Hitherto, the Western reader has had access to a host of material on Japanese history, culture, and philosophy. Many of these have focused attention on Japan's fascinating medieval era, approximately between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries, for the social setting of the times provides an intriguing stage; the times were witness to the refinement, to the peak, of many of the country's traditional art forms.

Whatever one might choose to study about Japan, the pervasive presence of Buddhism and the Buddhist institution is readily realized. It is a basic element from which can be analyzed the "how come" and "where from." Zen, we know, is just one branch of Buddhism; and Zen Buddhism in terms of Zen enlightenment and Zen-related aesthetics has long been a popular topic of study. In this regard, Martin Collcutt, instructor in the Department of East Asian Studies at Princeton University, leaves the question hanging "... whether the cultural activities . . . , which marked one of the vital peaks of Japanese cultural history, did not also imply the death of Zen as a religion." Whichever the case, as powerful an influence as the Buddhist institution exerted on society, giving it color and direction comparable in force to the Christian church in Europe, it stands to reason that to gain a true insight, the sincere enthusiast of Japan must have an understanding of the Zen temple structure itself.

It is from this general stance that Collcutt, in his nearly four-hundred page book, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan*, further narrows the focus of his studies to the Gozan, or "Five Mountain" branch of Zen Buddhism, for we are told that the gozan institution was the most powerful sector of medieval Zen Buddhism. He mentions that of the more than 21,000 active Zen temples today, "15,000 belong to the seven branches of the Sōtō school, some 6,000 to the fifteen lineages, and a small number to the Ōbaku school." From such statements as "... combined religious interest in Zen with cultural and political opportunism," or, "The gozan system was another means of according prestige to selected monasteries while bringing them under secular control," we realize the significance and the delicate balance of every facet of the organization. At this point it is appropriate to say, then, that the Zen enthusiast would do well to understand the importance that disciplined organization and careful management of resources has in the life of the Zen monk and his attainment of enlightenment, as is revealed in this book.

The academic nature of the work, with its appreciable mention of dates, figures, and Japanese words and names may hinder the novice's enthusiasm after just reading through the foreword by Edwin O. Reischauer. As a reference book, however, Collcutt's research and insight—backed by an expansive bibliography—are invaluable. There is a twenty-two page glossary of words, in alphabetical order accompanied by kanji. The work is a pioneer effort, in either Japanese or English, to scrutinize one particular branch of Buddhism from a structural point of view.

The goals of the author, in his own terms, are "to describe the monastic environment within which gozan Zen culture emerged; to relate the medieval gozan monasteries to the political and economic life of the age, to present the gozan as a working Buddhist monastic system in a warrior-dominated society." To these ends we are neatly taken, in Part I, through a well thought-out breakdown of the development of the (Gozan Zen) institution so as to understand, in almost storylike fashion, the history. We are shown how "Zen monasteries were quickly seen as providing an acceptable career channel for *bushi* (warrior) children," and why "the lure of Chinese learning and culture made available by Zen monks and monasteries . . . was a particularly important factor in the patronage . . . by powerful warrior leaders who had military power but were uncertain of their cultural legitimacy." We come across such notable Rinzai temples as Engakuji, Daitokuji, Nanzenji, and Tōfukuji, as well as Eihei-ji in Fukui prefecture, Sōji-ji in Yokohama, and Manpukuji at Uji. Part II presents a factual

explanation of the structure of the institution, including quite a comprehensive description of the actual monastery building, with charts and sketches to clarify the points of discussion; and the social system within the monasteries. In so doing, Collcutt leads the reader on to a factual, meticulously put-together side trip along one important thread of the intricate webbing that shaped and influenced medieval Japan, both socially and economically.

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