

## The Tortoiseshell Photo Album Presented to Shoda Heigoro on His Retirement in 1906 by Nagasaki City Volunteers: Comparison with the Photo Album Presented During the Imperial Visit to Nagasaki in 1907

HIMENO Jun'ichi

This article compares two tortoiseshell photo albums and examines their value in the history of arts and crafts, and in the history of photography. One of the albums is a tortoiseshell photo album that was presented to Crown Prince Yoshihito of Japan when he visited Nagasaki in October 1907, as described by Kinoshita Chika (currently Kiya Chika) in the Annual Report of Sannomaru Shozokan Vol. 20. The other album, made by the same creators, was presented by volunteers in Nagasaki City to Shoda Heigoro in December 1906, when he retired as director of Mitsubishi Nagasaki Shipyard. The Shoda album is housed at the Nagasaki University of Foreign Studies.

Both albums were crafted at the Futaeda Tortoiseshell Shop and the Takeshita Photo Studio in Nagasaki. The first half of this article delves into the life of the tortoiseshell shop's founder, Futaeda Sadajiro, exploring his skilled craftsmen, the shop itself, the products offered, their pricing, and the clientele. Regarding Takeshita Photo Studio, the article examines the relationship between the photographer Takeshita Yoshiharu and his son Yoshiyuki, their family lineage, and the influence of Yoshiharu's mentor, as well as the photographic techniques employed. The article also portrays the endeavors of Shoda Heigoro, the recipient of the tortoiseshell photo album, highlighting his various undertakings in Nagasaki, such as founding a hospital and an industrial preparatory school associated with Mitsubishi Nagasaki Shipyard and enhancing labor management, employee welfare, and shipbuilding technology.

The second half of the article elucidates the processes used to produce the albums through a comparative analysis of the shapes of the albums and photos as well as the subjects in the photos. The comparison encompasses the colors and types of photo mounts, the shapes and types of the photos, rubber stamps, film imprints, and categories of photo subjects, and the photographic subjects themselves.

The comparative study illustrates the divergent intentions for production held by creators who were acutely aware of their clients—an Imperial Family member and a businessman—during the albums' production. Each album is collaborative work between a Nagasaki-based tortoiseshell craftsman and a photographer shop which inherited the photographic expertise of its mentor, Ueno Hikoma. Together, these two albums are found to have significant documentary value in the realm of arts and crafts history, as well as in the history of photography.

## Examination of a Letter Written by Taira no Shigemori: Its Writing Paper, Letter-writing Etiquette, and Provenance

TAKANASHI Masayuki

Taira no Shigemori, a son of Taira no Kiyomori, was a central figure in the government and symbolized the power of that time, but his portrayal in literary works diverges significantly from accounts found in historical documents. This discrepancy stems from the dispersion and loss of historical records, after the demise of the Taira clan in the Genpei War, prepared by those in power within the government, hindering the elucidation of the principles that governed his conduct. This article examines a letter written in Shigemori's own hand housed in the Museum of the Imperial Collections in order to shed light on his true nature. I analyzed the paper used to write the letter, checked the letter's provenance, and considered the letter's content from the perspective of Shigemori's political stance and behavioral principles. The aims were to view the letter in its historical context and to establish its value as an original historical document.

An issue with earlier studies was that the addressee of the letter, "New Sanmi" (where *sanmi* denotes "the third court rank"), was considered to be either Fujiwara no Narichika, Shigemori's brother-in-law, or Taira no Nobunori. Further, my examination of the writing paper reveals it to be large, high-quality *danshi* mulberry paper, which was favored by upper-class aristocrats at the time. This finding suggests that the letter was written while Shigemori held a relatively elevated position, rather than before he ascended to the role of top court official, as set forth by the conventional theory. I also analyzed faint ink traces found on the paper's surface and subtle ink remnants on its reverse side in comparison with three other letters handwritten by Shigemori (including another state-owned letter). This comparative study led me to conclude that the reverse side of this letter was later repurposed for Hyohanki, a handwritten diary of Taira no Nobunori, a household superintendent of the Konoe family, one of the five regent clans of Japan's ancient capital. I also concluded that all four letters were addressed to Taira no Nobunori and were subsequently handed down in the Konoe family.

In examining the letter's phrasing, I paid particular attention to Shigemori's relatively polite expressions, which he used despite his elevated position. Given that the letter served as a recommendation for his close ally, the warrior Saeki no Kunikata, I infer that its intended recipient was not Taira no Nobunori himself, but rather his master, Konoe Motomichi. The context is linked to Shigemori's use of his personal connections during his control over the national military command, as well as Kiyomori's support and protection of his son-in-law, Konoe Motomichi. I therefore conclude that the letter was written within the context of the prevailing political climate of that era.

## Artistic Textiles in the Early Meiji Era: Production of *Roses and Peafowls in Yuzen Dyeing and Embroidery on Shioze Silk*

KOBAYASHI Ayako

The textile collection of the Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shozokan includes what are called artistic textiles, characterized by their large, painting-like works and created from the Meiji era to the Taisho era (from the late 19th century to the early 20th century). These artistic textiles include many works crafted at the direction of Nishimura Sozaemon XII, the Meiji-era head of Chiso (currently known as Chiso Co., Ltd.), a well-established *yuzen* dyeing company in Kyoto. Sozaemon broke away from the traditional, formalized *yuzen* patterns of the Edo period and revolutionized the art form by incorporating draft sketches by Japanese-style painters. *Roses and Peafowls in Yuzen Dyeing and Embroidery on Shioze Silk* (Shioze Yuzen ni Shishu Bara ni Kujaku Zu Kakefuku, 1882) is one of his earliest artistic textile works to be based on such painting-like rough sketches.

Having had the opportunity to examine the three rough sketches in Chiso's possession that were used for the scroll, I analyzed the production of the sketches, with a particular focus on the motifs. A comparative study of the sketches led me to conclude that the roses and peafowls were illustrated by combining motifs mainly from two of the sketches. The analysis also revealed that the rough sketches were likely drawn to fit the scroll and were slightly modified during production, although subtle differences in the shapes of individual plants and birds, as well as the presence of undrawn sections, suggest the existence of additional rough sketches beyond these three. The three sketches are attributed to Kishi Chikudo; however, whether they were drawn by Kishi himself or were based on his rough sketches remains a topic for future research.

## Examination of the Creation and Passing on of Yamamoto Kinkoku's *Kanminzu* (Paintings Depicting the Trials and Tribulations of the People)

TANAKA Jun'ichiro

*Kanminzu* consists of two picture scrolls painted by Yamamoto Kinkoku, an official painter of the Tsuwano Domain in the Edo period, and a volume of collected poems written by Ono Kozan, a composer of Chinese poems who was a friend of Kinkoku. The picture scrolls were presented to Emperor Meiji in 1870 by Kamei Koremi, the governor of the Tsuwano Domain, and the poem collection was presented to Emperor Meiji in 1883 by Fukuba Yoshishizu, a scholar of Japanese classical literature. Fukuba, also from the Tsuwano Domain, was deeply involved in the creation of *Kanminzu* through his personal contacts in politics.

As its title suggests, *Kanminzu* depicts a world of hardship and suffering faced by the people. It graphically describes how natural disasters upend their daily lives and rob them of their human dignity. Why were picture rolls depicting such cruelty presented to Emperor Meiji, a paragon of nobility? Kamei and Fukuba, the presenters, played a central role in a group called the Tsuwano School, which advocated Shinto policies in the early Meiji era. The Tsuwano School presented the scrolls to advise the Emperor to lead his subjects as an ideal monarch. Such pictures are known as admonitory paintings using exemplary figures. The collected poems presented to the Emperor 13 years later describe Ono Kozan's excitement upon seeing the picture rolls and thus provide an explanation of their contents.

*Kanminzu* was created through truly complicated processes, with the timing of presentation to the Emperor differing between the scrolls and the poems. *Kanminzu*, which became Kinkoku's signature work after its presentation to the Emperor, was replicated several times, with the replicas dedicated to the Taikodani Inari Shrine and other locations. This article examines the significance of *Kanminzu* through an analysis of its creation and passing on, as well as its image sources.

## Introduction to Artworks

### *Photo Album of the Principal Sights of the Saikyo Region: Photos of Kyoto in the Mid-Meiji Era*

KIYA Chika

This museum's collection includes the *Photo Album of the Principal Sights of the Saikyo Region*, with a cover featuring peonies and birds each holding a twig in its beak, made with gold powder sprinkled on a black lacquer background. The album contains 50 photos: 41 from Kyoto, five from Nara, and four from Shiga. While both the creator and the motivation behind the album's production are unknown, the inclusion of photos from the fourth National Industrial Exposition and the 11th Centenary of the Transfer of Japan's Capital to Heian-kyo (Kyoto), both of which took place in Kyoto in 1895, suggests that the album was presented to the Imperial Household following those events.

Since Emperor Meiji was worried about the devastation of Kyoto after the transfer of the national capital to Tokyo in 1869, this album may have been intended not only to inform the Imperial Household about ongoing reconstruction efforts, but also to assure the Emperor of Kyoto's steady recovery.

The second purpose of the album is apparent in the photos, the majority of which showcase the tradition of Yokohama Photography, which was catching on in Kyoto in the mid-Meiji era, while promoting tourism in Kyoto, which would boom after the mid-Meiji era. Photos of famous places and customs were initially taken for foreigners, but those featuring unchanged temples and scenic sights, as well as those documenting the vibrant lives of local residents, likely provided Emperor Meiji with a vivid portrayal of the city. Meanwhile, the inclusion of photos of the above-mentioned notable events along with bridges and hotels that were renovated in the mid-1890s was probably intended to demonstrate Kyoto's transition from decline to modernization.

The photos in this album hold significance as documents that chronicle the history of Kyoto and its environs during the mid-Meiji era. Consequently, it remains essential to pursue further research into the identity of the creator and the motivation behind the album's production.

### *A Ring with Three Bells among Excavated Artifacts Contained in a Nest of Maki-e Gold-lacquered Boxes*

HOSOKAWA Shintaro

The Museum of the Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shozokan) houses *Excavated Artifacts Contained in a Nest of Maki-e Gold-lacquered Boxes*. This article examines one of the artifacts: a ring with three bells, known to be a funerary object dating from the Kofun period, which ran from the mid-3rd century to the late-6th century. Rings with three bells are thought to have served as harness parts for bits or *hitte* metal fittings through which reins would have passed.

Through my meticulous study of the ring and a close analysis of previously understudied crafting techniques, I was able to reconstruct the processes involved in crafting the ring using two casting techniques: lost-wax casting and split-mold casting. Considering the current condition of the ring, it appears to have been made using lost-wax casting.

The ring housed in the museum is of a type that is rare for rings identified to date. Its form and size indicate that it belongs to an ancient type of ring with three bells found in the Japanese archipelago. This ring is smaller than any other excavated in continental China, the Korean Peninsula, or the Japanese archipelago, providing a fascinating perspective when considering the typological evolution of these rings. From a typological viewpoint, the ring in the museum's possession was probably crafted in the early 5th century, the same period as tumuli where similar small triple-belled rings were unearthed, or slightly earlier.

This diminutive metal fitting plays a significant role in elucidating the dissemination and distribution of harnesses in East Asia, as well as their introduction to the Japanese archipelago.

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