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# JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

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This lacquer inkstone box decorated in the *makie* method, with nacre inlay, and lead embedding was made by Kōrin Ogata and is well known for its design of the Yatsushashi Bridge (ref. page 142). Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.

# JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

BY

YUZURU OKADA

11533



745.50952

Okada



JAPAN TRAVEL BUREAU

TŌKYŌ

# JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

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The author of the present volume is Mr. Yuzuru Okada who is a distinguished member of the staff at the Tōkyō National Museum and lecturer at Nihon University, Tōkyō. He has written many books on Japanese handicraft arts, including *NETSUKE—A Miniature Art of Japan*, Volume 14 of the Tourist Library Series.

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## THE EDITOR

*Tōkyō, March, 1959*

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## NOTE

1. The - sign used over *o* and *u* in Japanese words means that the vowel sound is lengthened.
2. All the photos appearing in this book, excepting those credited to other sources, are reproduced here through the courtesy of the Tōkyō National Museum.

## CHAPTER I

# CHARACTERISTICS OF JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

One of the ornamental designs found most frequently on Japanese handicraft work is the "autumn grasses," such as the *susuki* (*Miscanthus sinensis* Anders), *hagi* (Japanese bush clover), *ominaeshi* (*Patrinia scabiosae-folia* Fisch.) and other plants which bloom in autumn. They are simple wild flowers that bloom modestly in the nooks and crannies of nature, but the Japanese handicraft artist has always looked upon them with warm affection, and used them as the motifs of his designs. They appear on his works in properly conventionalized forms, but they are seldom presented in such an abstract or complicated form as to make their natural shape unrecognizable. The artist endeavors to reproduce, as much as he can, the natural effect of the humble grasses blooming in the autumn fields. His interest lies more in conveying the atmosphere of autumn as he feels it in the grasses, rather than in building up decorative patterns by disintegrating or transfiguring his motifs. It may be said that the Japanese artist is influenced more by his sentiment than by his intellect.

This love of nature is manifest not only in the designs used in handicrafts, but it is one of the important factors that characterize Japanese art in general.





Wild autumnal flowers done by the *makie* method form the design which decorates this book cabinet made in the seventeenth century and now owned by the Kōdaiji Temple (ref. page 139) in Kyōto.

The Japanese do not look upon nature as an antagonist, but as an ally, and are ready to become a part of it. They live in nature, breathe with nature, and feel as friendly with it as they do with their fellow creatures. Their attitude toward nature is evidenced more clearly in literature, for example, the thirty-one-syllable poem called *waka* and the seventeen-syllable verse known as *haiku*. In these distinctly Japanese forms of poetry, they reveal explicitly their sensitiveness to the subtle seasonal changes in nature. This characteristic artistic sentiment of the Japanese is obviously derived from the climatic and geographic traits of the country. The Japanese Archipelago, extending from the twenty-ninth to the forty-fifth degree north latitude, belongs for the most part in the temperate zone. Surrounded by seas yet located close to the Asiatic Continent, it possesses varied geographic features and its climate is rich in the ever-changing aspects of alternating seasons. For that matter, the changes are not only of the seasons alone. They are so delicately gradated that the Japanese have set up subdivisions within each season. For example, the autumn can be distinctly divided into early, middle and late autumn. Such minute gradations in the seasons cannot be distinguished in countries located on the continents. From the incessant evolution of the seasons the Japanese feel that nature shares the same inevitable influence of time as does their mortal life. The flowers in spring, the bright moon in autumn, the snow in winter, and all other objects and phenomena of nature, including the celestial ones, appeal to the sentiment,

each with its own respective seasonal atmosphere, and these supply the Japanese with the poetic subjects of their art and literature.

In China, part of the same Orient, the huge rugged mountains, the enormous rivers and the vast expanses of wilderness are frightening, and life there is often threatened by terrible natural calamities. In Japan such threats of nature are relatively few, although the land sometimes suffers from earthquakes and typhoons. Consequently, grotesque, fantastic, or philosophic ideas seldom find their way into Japanese art; a tender love for nature is the source of most of its artistic designs. Therefore, Japanese art lacks the rational, the austere and the powerful, but the graceful delicacy of its designs, many of which are adapted from nature, is one of its main characteristics, and one of the important factors which make Japanese art what it is. Love of nature and the tender sentiment with which it is expressed manifest themselves most evidently in handicrafts which, among all the art objects, are in closest connection with human life.

The Japanese concept of uniting man and nature is revealed also in the relation between Japanese life and art. Western peoples regard the existence of pure art as separated from human living; that is, they are cognizant of the world of abstract beauty. Japan until about the middle of the nineteenth century was not aware of the possibility of making a distinct separation between life and art. Paintings, for example, were not independent works of art for art's sake. The *Yamato-e*

school, which in the tenth century established the elegant style which was to be followed through many later centuries, frequently found its canvases during the eleventh and twelfth centuries on *fusuma* (sliding doors) and *byōbu* (folding screens), which were indispensable parts of the indoor fittings of the dwelling houses of the nobility that had only a few permanent partitions. This fact—that paintings were primarily decorations for utility rather than works for artistic appreciation—means that *fusuma* and *byōbu* paintings were closely associated with man's life, or, in other words, that they have much of the character of decorative art. In the West, people tend to discriminate distinctly between the decorative arts which aim at harmony between beauty and utility, and the pure arts which are devoted purely to aesthetic beauty. In Japan the two types of arts have frequently been mixed, for they are both arts of life and religion.

The blending of life and art, and the subsequent beautifying of life through art, appear most distinctly in *chanoyu*, the profound Japanese accomplishment known as the tea ceremony or the tea cult. All the elements of the tea ceremony—the utensils used in preparing and serving the tea, the *chashitsu* (tearoom) in which the ceremony is held, the flowers and the hanging scroll in the *tokonoma* (alcove), with its painting or calligraphy, the manners observed by the participants, and what not—must be in perfect harmony from the aesthetic point of view. In the tea ceremony life itself is an activity of art. And the tea-bowl, tea-caddy and many other objects of handicraft play a most important



part in beautifying life, turning it into art. The tea ceremony can be defined, in a sense, as the art of creating the setting for a life that will make the most artistic and effective use of a fine tea-bowl.

In the paragraphs above, we have discussed the peculiar position which Japanese handicraft arts hold in the plane where meet nature and art, as well as life and art. Now let us consider their visual characteristics.

The ornamental designs found on examples of Japanese decorative arts contain a good deal of graphic representation. As was mentioned before, Japanese decorative designs are far more frequently graphic, or at least blessed with patterns rich in graphic factors, than geometrical or abstract. This phenomenon can be understood in the light of the above-mentioned tendency of Japanese art in general—that is, the close combination of painting with the decorative arts. Painters of the *Yamato-e* school, which perhaps represented the main current of Japanese painting, were not interested in reproducing their subjects realistically, but tried to infuse them with their impressionism, with a decorative, symbolic result which matched the native Japanese sentimentalism. This tendency of the *Yamato-e* to be decorative and stylized had much in common with the handicraft designs.

As the decorative designs contained much of the elements of painting, and as paintings could be easily adapted to decorative designs, it very often happened that noted painters in Japan offered to cooperate with handicraft artists. For example, Takayoshi Fujiwara

(circ. mid-twelfth century), said to be the artist who did the famous *Genji Monogatari Emaki* (Picture-scroll depicting scenes from the Tale of Genji), drew designs for inkstone boxes of *makie*\* lacquer. In the fifteenth century, Michinaga Kōami (1410–1479), the *makie* artist in the service of the eighth Ashikaga *Shōgun* Yoshimasa, used drawings by the distinguished painter Mitsunobu Tosa (1434–1525) as drafts for his *makie* designs. Kōetsu Hon-ami\*\* (1558–1637) supplied many *makie* workers with his ideas, and the great painter Kōrin Ogata (1658–1716), who derived his art from Kōetsu, made an excellent inkstone box of *makie* for himself. Kōrin also painted brushwork designs on ladies' *kimono*. To cite other instances: Sesshū (1420–1506), the pre-eminent artist in *sumie* (black-and-white painting), drew drafts of designs for kettles used in the tea ceremony, Motonobu Kanō (1476–1559), who brought the style of the Kanō school of painting to perfection, made designs for contemporary artists of the Gotō family, the family which maintained its predominance over Japanese metalwork circles from the fifteenth to the mid-nineteenth century; and Morikage Kusumi (circ. middle of the seventeenth century), who was a pupil of

---

\* A process of lacquer art; first, the design is drawn with lacquer; over this gold dust is sprinkled (*makie* means "sprinkled picture") while the lacquer is moist; the surface is later coated again with lacquer, and then polished with powder or rubbed with charcoal to bring the design to the surface.

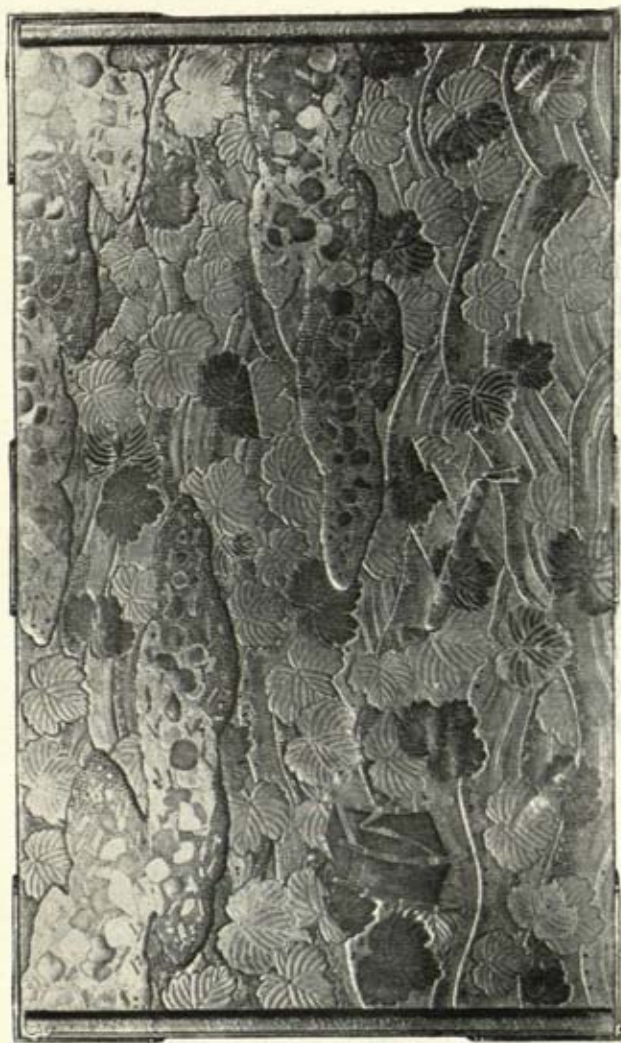
\*\* A sword appraiser and polisher by profession, Kōetsu was also distinguished for his painting, calligraphy, lacquer art and pottery. It seems that many outstanding craftsmen of his time were guided by him in matters of design.

the renowned academic painter Tan-yū Kanō serving the Tokugawa shogunate government, is said to have painted designs for Ko-Kutani porcelains. Such cases would be rare in other parts of the world where the fine arts and decorative arts are so distinctly separated.

As Japanese painting is rich in literary associations, ornamental designs, having much in common with painting, are naturally imbued with literary elements. The designs on handicraft objects, of course, are primarily for decoration; usually it is sufficient if they fulfill the purpose of embellishing the objects, their literary meaning, if any, being of no special significance. In Japan, however, the literary element plays an important part in designs. This fact again can be accounted for by the close interrelation of painting and designs.

Paintings of the *Yamato-e* school were sometimes put on sliding doors and folding screens, and sometimes used as illustrations of stories in scroll-paintings and books. Works of this kind must, of necessity, be descriptive or narrative. The same tendency is in evidence in decorative designs, which frequently derive their motifs from literary sources. A typical example of this is found in the design called *tsuta-no-hosomichi* (ivy-bound lane). The subject comes from a romance in the *Ise Monogatari* (Tales of Ise), a famous Japanese novel written in the ninth century. The hero of the story, Ariwara-no-Narihira, on his trip from Kyōto to the eastern regions, happened to meet a pilgrim of the Shugendō order of Buddhism on Mt. Utsu in Suruga



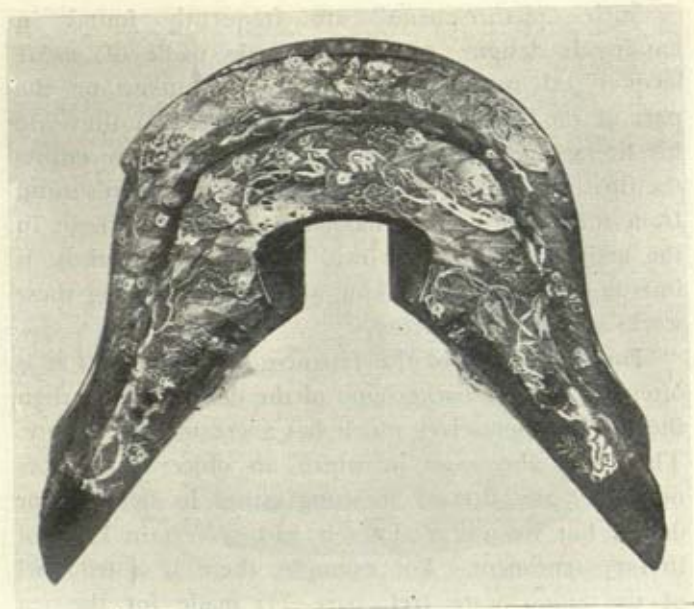


The top of a writing table with a *makie* design called *tsuta-no-hosonichi*. In the left foreground note the portable shrine and in the center the letter folded and tied at both ends. From the Imperial Collection.

Province (the present Shizuoka Prefecture), whereupon he trusted the pilgrim with a letter to his love whom he had left in the capital, Kyōto. The story is symbolically illustrated in the design which consists of a mountain lane rank with ivy, a portable shrine carried by a Shugendō pilgrim, and a folded letter tied at both ends. A closer connection with literature is typified by the practice of illustrating a *waka* (thirty-one-syllable Japanese poem) with a picture in which a few Chinese characters from the text of the poem are scattered about. These characters appeal to the observer because of their literary atmosphere, and at the same time add to the decorative effect of the picture with their beautiful flowing cursive script. For example, there is a fourteenth century lacquered saddle decorated with nacre inlay and ornamented with a design called *shigure* (autumn rain). The design shows a pine tree and ivy fronds waving in the wind, twined with Chinese characters in a script form reading *koi* (love), *shigure*, *some* (dye) and *hara* (field). It is an illustration of a *waka* poem:

*Waga koi wa  
Matsu o shigure ni  
Some-kanete  
Makuzu-ga-hara ni  
Kaze sawagu nari.*

(Though autumn showers turn the  
green leaves into red and yellow, they  
can never change the color of the pine  
needles.



A thirteenth century saddle decorated with a design called *shigure*. Owned by the Eisei Bunko Library.

Neither can my ardent love turn her toward me. Her stubborn heart, like the pine needles, remains unmoved by the showering of my love.

And so, like the ivy leaves, which the wind stirs with ceaseless fingers, my heart is never at rest.)

Such "picture-poems" are frequently found in handicraft designs, notably in works made of *makie* lacquer (ref. page 137). In these, the interest on the part of the artist lies in how wittily he can illustrate his literary motif, while the owner or observer enjoys the thrill of guessing what poem was in the artist's mind from the few scattered characters, and finds delight in the artist's wit and his own. Literary taste, thus, is instrumental both in making and in appreciating these works of handicraft art.

For this reason in the Japanese decorative arts it is often the literary background of the designs rather than the designs themselves which has a greater importance. There are also cases in which an object itself does not carry any literary meaning either in its form or design but its user endows it with a certain kind of literary sentiment. For example, there is a tea-bowl of the Shino ware (ref. page 74) made for the tea ceremony, which is named *Unohana-gaki* (Japanese-snowflower fence). This bowl has a design of a bamboo fence painted in iron oxide black against a milk-white background. The originator of the above-mentioned name conceived it from the appearance of the design and the background which, he declared, reminded him of the *waka*:

*Yamasato no*  
*Unohana-gaki no*  
*Naka no michi*  
*Yuki fumiwakeshi*  
*Kokochi koso sure.*





A tea-bowl named *Unohana-gaki*.

(The path that leads along the snow-flower fence in a village at the foot of a mountain! When I walk along it, I feel as if I were treading amidst snow.)

Most of the well-known tea ceremony utensils are called by similar names with a literary flavor, and the names serve to inspire a poetic interest in the objects as well as the artistic pleasure derived from their use. Let us recollect here that tea ceremony utensils, among



various works of Japanese handicraft, are characterized by the absence of superficial ornament, for their essentials are simplicity and harmony with beauty and utility. That even these utensils are looked upon with deep literary interest is a significant fact evidencing the original Japanese attitude toward the use and appreciation of handicraft works.

Now let us study the forms of decorative art objects. Generally speaking, Japanese examples of these art objects are characterized by their distinct two-dimensional effect. The forms of objects, of course, depend upon the purposes to which they are put; unlike works of sculpture, the forms of handicraft pieces are limited by certain restrictions. Within these restrictions, however, the decorative artists in other countries attempt to produce various free forms permissible in the realm of beauty. Such attempts are rare in Japan. It is only natural that works of lacquer art peculiar to Japan, which mostly have flat sides composed of wooden boards, should present a two-dimensional effect. However, even in ceramics, for instance, in which unrestrained modeling is possible, free, fanciful shapes like those in Chinese pieces are seldom found in Japan. The absence or insufficiency of three-dimensionality can be seen also in Japanese sculpture, for it is rooted in the intrinsic Japanese tendency to look upon things with a two-dimensional concept—which acknowledges only that the surfaces of cubic objects are planes. It is perhaps due to this concept that graphic designs are so frequently applied to handicraft objects. We should not fail to

note that flat or flattish forms sometimes produce the superb beauty of simplicity. In the case of a box, for example, the beautiful proportions of length, width, and height, and the lovely curves on the convexity of the cover, suggest a delicate charm that reveals the native subtle refinement of Japanese art.

Important in decorative arts, and side by side with their designs, is the technique of using the respective materials to execute the designs and finish the objects. Japanese handicraft arts command admiration for their technical perfection. The success of the Japanese craftsman is not entirely due to his cleverness with his hands and his neat and intricate skill; it is derived also from his artistic sense which enables him to have command over and master the various materials. Wood, bamboo, lacquer, silk, hemp, pottery clay, gold, copper, and all other handicraft materials have their respective properties and each has its own kind of beauty. The Japanese craftsman has an acute sense which helps him to penetrate below the surface into the innate characteristics of the substance, and the skill with which to bring out these characteristics with the most beautiful effect. To give a few examples: in lacquer art, refined lacquer of fine quality is applied over and over again on the object, and the surface is then polished carefully to produce a rich, warm effect. A flower vase of the Iga ware (ref. page 17) is made of clay blended with feldspathic grains, and covered with a transparent vitreous glaze; the effect of these materials is enhanced by the powerful, yet naïve shape of the vase. The

surface of an iron tea ceremony kettle (ref. page 18) is roughened intentionally to create a "subdued" beauty. All these attest to the perfect command and effective use of the materials.

Another characteristic of Japanese decorative arts is the wide variety of techniques used in making them. Some of the techniques are native, while many others were imported from other countries, mostly from China. The Japanese have been always ready to import and make use of foreign techniques. However, they have not been simply imitative. They never fail to assimilate the imported crafts and to make the most effective use of them in working out designs of a purely Japanese flavor. A good example of this is found in the *raden* (nacre inlay), lacquer ware in which the beautiful iridescent lining of *Yaku* shells or ear-shells is embedded in the lacquer ground. This method was brought in from China in the eighth century, but the Japanese made it so much their own by the eleventh and twelfth centuries that China began to prefer the Japanese works of this art.

The techniques of Japanese handicrafts, during the centuries of their existence and improvement, achieved the elaborateness and refinement of the time-honored arts. The progress of these techniques, however, sometimes caused the craftsmen to indulge in a boastful display of their skill. The handicraft works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in particular, frequently show over-elaborateness at the cost of artistic value. This tendency is one of the faults which Japa-

An Iga  
ware flower  
vase describ-  
ed on page 15.







An iron tea ceremony kettle described on page 16.

nese craftsmen, clever with their hands, are apt to show, forgetting that a good balance between the design and the technique is of vital importance in the decorative arts.

Besides the above-mentioned general characteristics, Japanese handicrafts manifested the characteristics of their respective periods in history. The decorative arts, being arts for daily living, display distinctly the atmosphere of each period, locality, and class. In the following chapter let us survey the characteristics of the various periods and their social backgrounds.

## CHAPTER II

# OUTLINE HISTORY OF JAPAN (WITH REFERENCE TO ART)

The division of the history of Japanese art into periods, observed by the majority of art historians, is as follows:

Pre-Buddhistic period (—the mid-sixth century)

Asuka period (from the mid-sixth to the mid-seventh century)

Nara period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century)

Heian period (from the end of the eighth to the end of the twelfth century)

Kamakura period (from the end of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century)

Muromachi period (from the end of the fourteenth to the late sixteenth century)

Momoyama period (from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century)

Edo period (from the early seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century)

Tōkyō period (from the mid-nineteenth century to the present time)

A remarkable development in Japanese handicraft began with the introduction of Buddhism. The specimens of handicrafts existing today, with the exception

of archaeological pieces, also date from the Buddhistic periods. The periods prior to the introduction of Buddhism are the Pre-historic and Proto-historic ages of Japan, and are subjects for the archaeologists. The primitive artifacts from the Pre-Buddhistic period, however, reveal considerably advanced techniques and high artistic sense, as can be seen in objects excavated from ruins. Through studies of archaeological finds we can trace the origin of the Japanese handicraft art back to the Neolithic age, the period in which a type of earthenware known as the *jōmon* type earthenware was produced.

#### 1. Pre-Buddhistic Period ( —the mid-sixth century)

The *jōmon* (rope-pattern or mat-marking) type earthenware derives its name from its impressed surface decoration which was produced by pressing rope, mat or some other things on the clay before baking. It is still unknown when the *jōmon* type of earthenware originated. Hunting and fishing were the sources of living for the people of the period in which this *jōmon* type of earthenware was made. This period lasted for several thousand years until a new type of civilization came in from the Asiatic Continent around the second or first century B.C., and with it a knowledge of farming. An entirely different type of earthenware was produced in this period. This is known as the *Yayoi* type earthenware, as the first specimen of this kind was excavated in 1884 at Yayoi-chō in Tōkyō. The period of the *Yayoi* type earthenware, otherwise termed

An example  
of the *jōmon*  
type of earth-  
enware. Loaned  
to the Naga-  
oka Science  
Museum by  
Mr. A. Kondō.



the Aëneolithic age or Litho-metallic age, is chiefly characterized by the knowledge of rice cultivation and the importation of the bronze and subsequently the iron civilization from the continent. The tribes which learned the use of metal implements greatly improved their manufacturing ability, and overpowered other tribes with their military strength, which they reinforced with metal weapons, until they formed small "tribal nations" of a primitive kind in various localities throughout the land of Japan. These powerful tribes built numerous large, tall tumuli for their masters, and this practice continued till about the seventh century. The period represented by the tumuli is called the Ancient Burial



Mound period or the Proto-historic age. Taken altogether, the Pre-Buddhistic period comprises these three epochs: the *Jōmon* (Neolithic) period, the *Yayoi* (Aëneolithic) period, and the Ancient Burial Mound (Proto-historic) period.

The most powerful of the above-mentioned primitive nations in the early part of the Ancient Burial Mound period were located in the northern part of Kyūshū and in Kinki, the district centering around the present Kyōto, Ōsaka and Nara areas. One of these nations, occupying a part around the present Nara City on the Yamato Plain which was the most densely populated in the Kinki district, established the Yamato court. The Yamato court subdued its neighboring clans one after another, until its rule finally covered the whole of Japan. The effect of this national unification by the Yamato court extended even to the Korean Peninsula. A Japanese resident office was established in Mimana State south of Silla, and through it cultural contacts with the Asiatic Continent became even more frequent. The coming of numerous immigrants to Japan, and the readiness on the part of the Japanese to welcome a culture higher than their own, resulted in the influx of continental learning including the art of writing as well as the technique of making handicrafts. The striking progress achieved in the Japanese handicrafts of this period is evidenced by the examples of metal-work, jade and stone implements and earthenware pieces unearthed from the tumuli. The fine handicraft work of that time was used chiefly as presents for the

The Yayoi  
type of  
earthenware.  
Owned by  
the Tōkyō  
National Mu-  
seum.



court, and was made by the clans, each of which specialized in its respective crafts through the generations.

**2. Asuka Period** (from the mid-sixth to the mid-seventh century)

Buddhism was officially introduced to Japan when, in the middle of the sixth century, messengers sent by King Syongmyong of Paikche in Korea, known in Japan as Seimei-ō, presented the Japanese imperial court with Buddhist images, sutras and commentaries on them. The newly-introduced foreign religion found favor with the court as well as with the Japanese public. Prince

Shōtoku (573-621), regent to Empress Suiko, especially, became its devoted patron. He built many Buddhist temples including the famous Hōryūji Temple in Nara. The construction of temples caused the development of various arts: architecture for building them, sculpture for making the icons therein, handicrafts for making the ritual utensils and objects for the interior decoration of the temples.

Prince Shōtoku endeavored to bring about the perfect unity of the nation, with the Imperial House as the center. After the prince passed away, the Soga family, which had long enjoyed a power and privilege in the court at times even greater than that of the emperor, was overthrown by Prince Naka-no-Ōe (later, Emperor Tenji) and his supporters. The Imperial House was now unrivaled in power, and a centralized government was established. This occurrence, which took place in 645, is known as the Reform of Taika, so called from the name of the era. The Asuka period in the history of Japanese art denotes the epoch from the introduction of Buddhism to the Reform of Taika. (The period was so called because Asuka, about fifteen miles due south of Nara, was sometimes the political center of the country in those days.)

### 3. Nara Period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century)

The period from the Reform of Taika to the transfer of the capital from Nara to Kyōto is termed the Nara period, as the capital of the country during this period



was located in the Nara district. The Nara period marks the time when the centralization of power at the imperial court was established and maintained most successfully. The reign of the Emperor Shōmu, dating from 724 to 749, was its golden age. An attempt at national indoctrination through the instrumentality of the Buddhist faith, which had started already during the time of Prince Shōtoku, was carried out with the greatest zeal by the Emperor Shōmu. Conspicuous manifestations of his efforts in this field were his plan, which he actually carried out to a considerable extent, of building *kokubunji* (province temples) or national temples, one each in all the provinces throughout the country, and the making of the largest bronze statue in history, the *Daibutsu* (great image of Vairocana) at the Tōdaiji Temple. The encouragement of Buddhism by the imperial court brought about a striking progress in the architecture, fine arts and handicrafts which had a relation to Buddhism.

The progress of those handicrafts which satisfied the demands of Buddhism as well as of the imperial court and the court nobles owed much to the importation of highly advanced techniques from the continent. The T'ang dynasty in China represented an extensive cultural sphere on the continent at that time, and into it were introduced the cultures of various western countries, notably that of the Sassanian dynasty in Persia. Japan was eager to learn the culture of the great Chinese people.

Japanese handicrafts of the Nara period are typified

by the numerous specimens preserved in the famous Shōsōin Repository located in the precincts of the Tōdaiji Temple. This repository originally belonged to the Tōdaiji Temple. The nucleus of the Shōsōin collection is a group of objects used by the Emperor Shōmu, the founder of the temple, to which were added the pieces used at the consecration ceremony of the *Daibutsu* at the Tōdaiji Temple and objects dedicated by members of the nobility to the Buddha on the same occasion. These treasures cover a wide variety: furniture pieces, stationery, implements for games and sports, ritual utensils, utensils for Buddhist services, musical instruments, armor, weapons, clothing and so on. Nearly all of these are made in the T'ang style. There are many which were imported from China under the T'ang dynasty, but the majority of the treasures are Japanese products.

#### 4. Heian Period (from the end of the eighth to the end of the twelfth century)

The centralized power of administration, held securely by the imperial court during the Nara period, began to falter toward its close. The administration of the local governments also fell into disorder. The weakened power of the central government gave rise to the political might of the nobles and temples owning enormous estates in the local provinces. The right of national rule practically passed over to the nobles of the Fujiwara family, which enjoyed the height of prosperity for about a century after the middle part





The Shōsōin Repository in Nara.

of the tenth century. The despotism of the Fujiwaras was then replaced by the system termed *insei*, or rule by cloistered emperors, in which a retired emperor was given a voice in matters of government in order to eradicate the abuses born of the system of regency and advisorship. The *insei* system, however, ultimately caused civil wars, from which the Taira clan (also known as Heike), holding great military power, rose supreme. The Heike temporarily held the reins of power, but this later fell into the hands of another military family, the Minamoto clan (also known as Genji). This period of approximately four centuries, from the transfer of the capital from Nara to Heian (the present Kyōto) in 794 to the fall of the Heike, is called the Heian period.

From the viewpoint of art, the Heian period was a

time in which the foreign elements, which had been imported during the previous periods, were thoroughly digested, and made the foundation for arts with a truly Japanese flavor. The hotbed of the new culture was the life of the nobility centering around the Fujiwaras. The houses of the nobility were built in the style called *shinden-zukuri* (*shinden* style), a genuine Japanese style of residential architecture in which the beauty of landscape gardens played an important part. Utensils for foods and drinks, lanterns, furniture pieces and other handicraft objects to be used in such houses also began to display a pure Japanese style.

During this period, the Jōdo sect of Buddhism, which advocated the belief that devotees of the Buddha Amida (Amitabha) would go to the Buddhist paradise, began to gain favor with the nobility. Many Amidadō (Amida halls) sacred to the Buddha, typified by the Hō-ōdō (Phoenix Hall) still existing in the Byōdōin Temple at Uji in Kyōto, were built all over the country. These halls, intended by their builders to show the glory of the Buddhist paradise, had their interiors, in which were statues of Amida, ornamented exquisitely with the best of various decorative arts. The ritual and service utensils and implements placed in front of the statues of Buddha were also made as ornate as possible. The art displayed in these religious as well as secular handicraft objects had lost the powerful effect so characteristic of the work of the previous period, and instead showed a delicate, refined grace, reflecting the aesthetic taste of the nobility.

## 5. Kamakura Period (from the end of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century)

The period of nearly two centuries following the establishment of the military government at Kamakura by Yoritomo Minamoto in 1192 is called the Kamakura period. The center of administration moved to Kamakura, but the cultural center remained with the nobility in Kyôto. In matters of culture, the warrior class entertained respect for the Kyôto nobility, whom they endeavored to follow. The arts of the Kamakura period, therefore, were by and large a continuation of the preceding period, but they inevitably tended to show a powerful and grandiose feeling, manifesting the spirit of the warriors' age. The handicrafts were no exception. Although the traditional modes remained alive, they were seasoned with a powerful force. For example, the forms of the handicraft objects became either impressive or massive, and their designs universally showed a more realistic representation, instead of the poetic mood characterizing those of the Heian products.

It should be noted here that the Zen or Meditative sect of Buddhism, introduced from China under the Sung dynasty at the beginning of this period, influenced Japanese culture greatly thereafter. The Zen sect was fervently supported by the military government. Many Chinese priests came over to Japan, while numbers of Japanese priests studied in China. Consequently, the Sung culture flowed powerfully into Japan. The Chinese influence gradually began to be evident in



handicrafts as well. At Seto in the present Aichi Prefecture, for instance, ceramic factories produced pottery pieces in the Sung style. This Seto ware done in the Sung style was manufactured in considerable quantities, presumably to fill the large demand of the men of the warrior class.

6. **Muromachi Period** (from the end of the fourteenth to the late sixteenth century)

The Muromachi period covers the hundred and eighty years or so during which the Ashikaga family kept its military government at Muromachi in Kyōto. The establishment of the Muromachi government brought the seat of national rule back to Kyōto, where the Ashikaga *shōgun* and the warriors under their regime, admiring the elegant tradition of the Heian nobility, delighted in an aristocratic, dilettante life. The culture of the "aristocratic warriors" also contained much of the Chinese element. As the national control of the Muromachi government was not so powerful as that of the Kamakura government, the second half of this period was disturbed seriously by nation-wide strife among the local powers, which finally culminated in the downfall of the Ashikaga government. During the period of incessant civil wars, however, the sprouts of "modern" civilization were germinating and these burst into full bloom in the late sixteenth century and thereafter.

One of the conspicuous features of the arts and crafts in this period is the clearness with which they testify to





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An excellent piece of Oribe ware made in the seventeenth century (ref. page 74). Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.



the influence of Zen Buddhism. In the field of handicrafts, Chinese pieces which were prized among the Zen priests were favored by the warriors as well, who liked to use them as ornaments and as gifts for exchange among themselves. Numerous Chinese handicraft objects were brought to Japan through trade as well as by the Japanese and Chinese priests, and these fine works of decorative arts from abroad served to improve the tastes of their users and to motivate efforts on the part of the craftsmen to break through tradition and create new arts. As a result, specimens were produced revealing the direct influence of Chinese designs and techniques from the Sung, Yuan and Ming dynasties, and also some in which the traditional Japanese style was seasoned with Chinese modes.

Another important factor was the spread of the tea ceremony, which was associated with Zen Buddhism. The origin of the tea ceremony was the formal manner of tea-sipping observed in Zen temples. This ritual began to spread among the nobles and warriors toward the end of the Kamakura period. As practised by the secular people, it became a party for the tasting of tea from various places of production. There the participants competed in telling by the flavor the homes of the different kinds of tea served, and prizes as well as luxurious food and drink were offered. In the Muromachi period it developed into a ceremonial course of hospitality. Later on, during the middle of the fifteenth century, Jukō Murata, a distinguished aesthete in Nara, founded the tea cult in which the spirit of *wabi*

(quietude, soberness, absence of ornament, etc.) was regarded as of primary importance. His *wabi* norm was inherited by Jō-ō Takeno, a tea-master in Sakai, and was subsequently brought to its present perfection by the great master, Sen-no-Rikyū, in the Momoyama period.

## 7. Momoyama Period (from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century)

A military general named Nobunaga Oda (1534-1582) overthrew the Ashikaga government in 1573, and subsequently brought nearly all of the local powers throughout the country under his control. After the death of Nobunaga, his right-hand man, Hideyoshi Toyotomi (1536-1598), succeeded to the seat of dictatorship, but the Toyotomi government was overcome by the Tokugawa forces in 1615. The period between the fall of the Ashikaga government and the collapse of the Toyotomi family is known as the Momoyama period, as Hideyoshi's castle, that is, the seat of central administration, was located at Momoyama in the southern part of the present Kyōto City.

Although short in duration, the Momoyama period was a very significant one which gave birth to the brilliant "early modern"\* civilization. The newly-risen *dai-*

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\* Japanese history from the introduction of Buddhism to the Meiji Restoration is divided into three epochs: "early historic period" to the Early Heian period; "medieval period," from the Late Heian to the Muromachi period; and "early modern period," the Momoyama and the Edo periods. The "early modern period" was an age of firmly established feudalism.



*myō* or governors of the local fiefs, and *chōnin* (townspeople, or merchants and craftsmen) representing the commoners' class in the cities, replaced the nobility, warriors, and ecclesiastics of the "medieval period" as the protectors of culture. Art freed itself from the sway of religion, and became a means of dignifying and enriching the lives of the *daimyō* and *chōnin*. Nobunaga, Hideyoshi and other military lords having rich financial resources constructed grand castles and residences, which were decorated lavishly and equipped with gorgeous pieces of furniture. It is no wonder that this period instituted a remarkable progress in handicrafts. Furthermore, the tea ceremony and the *nō* dance, which had become popular since the previous period, spread widely among the *daimyō* and rich merchants in the cities, thus contributing to the development of handicrafts along the lines of tea utensils, *nō* costumes and other art objects.

The main characteristics of the handicrafts of the Momoyama period were freshness and gorgeousness. The ambitious, resurging spirit of the age imbued the arts with a fresh vigor to break through conventions, and the tendency was distinctly in evidence in the handicrafts.

There was another important factor which characterized this period: the contact with European culture. In 1543, a Portuguese boat going adrift on Tanegashima Island south of Kyūshū, brought matchlock guns which were the first to be seen in Japan and these were soon imitated. Six years later, in 1549, the Jesuit father

Francis Xavier introduced Christianity into the country. Following these events, the waves of Western civilization beat on Japan's shores, one after another. Under this influence Japanese handicrafts developed new techniques and designs. It is interesting to know that lacquer ware pieces, made under the guidance of or to the order of foreigners, were exported even as far as Europe through tradesmen visiting Japan.

8. Edo Period (from the early seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century)

The Edo period covers over two and a half centuries from the establishment of the shogunate government in Edo (Tōkyō) in 1603 by Ieyasu Tokugawa (1542-1616) to its downfall. In this period culture spread more extensively than before throughout the country and into all strata of society, and the respective districts and classes formed their individual aspects of culture. The culture of the early days of the Edo period was a continuation and refinement of the Momoyama influence, and is illustrated, in handicrafts, by the intelligent, rationalistic treatment of the designs on lacquer work, ceramics and textiles. It was also in the early Edo period or approximately the middle of the seventeenth century that fine Japanese porcelains such as the Kakiemon and Imari wares were first exported to Europe and they gained a good reputation there. They were so welcome that pieces imitating their designs were produced at Delft, the largest center of ceramic manufacture in the Netherlands, and various other places in

An eighteenth century copy of the famous Kakiemon ware made at the Sèvres kiln in France.



Europe.

After the Edo government succeeded, during the period of its nascency, in achieving secure rule over the entire country, and especially after the third decade of the seventeenth century when it enforced its national isolation policy (trade being permitted only with the Netherlands and China at the port of Nagasaki) with a view to keeping out Christianity, feudalistic control over the whole nation under the Tokugawa regime was firmly established. This strict feudal system gave birth to a rigid formalism, and everything was conducted with adherence to the minutest regulations and customs. This tendency spread to the arts, handicrafts included. The designs became stylized. Craftsmen, influenced by



the feudalistic concept of the age, tended to be self-satisfied with their privileged lineage and remained quiescent within prescribed types of art. Consequently, the handicrafts in and after the middle of the Edo period did not make any outstanding progress in quality, although in quantity they increased tremendously. An important reason for this phenomenon was the growth of a new consumer class, the *chōnin* (townspeople) world. The *chōnin* class began to have their voice in cultural matters toward the close of the seventeenth century. The decorative arts supplied them with ideal sources of cultural satisfaction. The luxurious taste of the rich *chōnin* was greatly in evidence when handicraft objects, made with elaborate technique and the lavish use of expensive materials, were produced in abundance after the mid-Edo period.

Although handicrafts thus tended to be stylized and devoted to showmanship by the display of over-elaborate designs and forms, their nation-wide development gave opportunities also to numbers of distinguished artists of talent who developed their respective original styles, while various districts produced good examples of industrial art, each with its own local characteristics. The crafts in districts other than Kyōto and Edo, the two main cultural centers of the time, made particularly remarkable progress because of the encouragement of the local feudal governments toward industry. It is amazing to note how well these handicrafts accomplished their own peculiar development both in technique and in designs which were rich in local color.



9. **Tōkyō Period** (from the mid-nineteenth century to the present time)

The Tokugawa shogunate government collapsed in 1867, and the right of national rule was resumed by the emperor. The imperial court moved from Kyōto to Edo, which was renamed Tōkyō (Eastern Capital). From this time on, Japan rapidly took on a modernized aspect. The general tendency in decorative arts toward mass-production and industrialization, though still small in scale, was one of the results of modernization. The Jacquard machine and other Western machinery, the chemical dyes used in the fabric art, the technique of using cobalt oxide in ceramics,—all these Western machinery, materials and technique were imported freely. The new constitutional government encouraged industry, holding industrial fairs, organizing schools for the educating of technicians, and sending students abroad in order to master new foreign techniques. Scientific studies of the materials used in the decorative arts also advanced rapidly.

Unlike the decorative arts with their new tendency toward industrialization seen in the Meiji era (1868–1912), the so-called “handicraft arts,” in which objects were made by hand, piece by piece, for artistic appreciation, did not venture far from the traditional techniques and designs. True, the changes in manners of living in Japan which came about as a result of the gradual adoption of modern Western civilization gave birth to certain kinds of Western-style decorative arts. It cannot

be denied, however, that the majority of the handicraft products during this era were conventionalized works depending upon mere elaborateness in technique. The drastic renovation movement inspired by the West, which characterized the painting and sculpture of the time, had hardly as yet any effect on handicrafts.

The Taishō era (1912-1926), which ushered in brisk business conditions after World War I, experienced a flourishing activity of the industrial arts, notably in the manufacture of goods for export. The handicraft arts and industry now had a closer interrelation. In ceramics, textiles and glass, especially, mass-production of the less expensive kinds proved very successful, although inevitably the designs could not always be kept on a consistently high level. But there were also many artists who produced works of high artistic value with novel original designs. These artists, it should be noted, received inspiration from such new art movements in Europe as *l'art nouveau* in France and the Secession in Austria.

The handicraft arts have evolved greatly since the beginning of the Shōwa era (1926- ), some following the highly advanced traditional techniques, others giving a new life to the historical techniques by means of the novel designs used and their treatment, and still others introducing the modes of Western decorative arts. The various aspects of these arts after World War II will be discussed in detail in Chapter V: Contemporary Japanese Handicrafts.

## CHAPTER III

# MATERIALS AND METHODS USED IN JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

Chapter I states that one of the characteristics of the Japanese handicrafts is the wide variety of methods required in preparing the various materials. The present chapter gives a brief survey of Japanese handicraft techniques.

The chief Japanese handicrafts, classified by materials, are ceramics, glassware, cloisonné, metalware, wood and bamboo ware, lacquer ware and fabrics. Each of these includes several crafts.

### 1. Ceramics

Ceramics is the art of making objects by firing a mixture of clay, quartz and feldspar or mineral which is rich in feldspathic ingredients, a mixture containing about 60 to 75 per cent of silica and 20 to 25 per cent of aluminium oxide. Ceramic objects are classified, according to the quality of their body, the varying temperatures of the firing, and whether or not glaze is used, into earthenware, pottery, stoneware and porcelain. Earthenware is made of absorbent clay, not glazed, and is fired at a low temperature. Pottery is made of absorbent clay and is glazed. Kyōto ware (ref. page 86), Satsuma ware (ref. page 178) and Raku ware (ref. page 74) are examples of this kind. Stoneware is



made of unabsorbent clay, and unglazed, like the Bizen ware (ref. page 75) and Iga ware (ref. page 73). Porcelain is glazed ware made of unabsorbent clay, such as the Arita ware (ref. page 78), for example. Glaze is the thin, hard coating on the surface of ceramic objects, consisting mainly of silicate, and is classified by its ingredients into lead glaze, alkaline glaze, and alkaline lime glaze. Lead glaze melts at a low temperature, and is used chiefly on pottery. Alkaline glaze, requiring a high temperature, is highly vitreous and transparent, and is used for porcelain.

The names of the different methods of modeling ceramic ware are *tebineri-zukuri*, *kago-zukuri*, *himo-zukuri*, all done by hand; *rokuro-zukuri*, done by a mechanical system; and *kata-zukuri*, by using moulds. *Tebineri-zukuri* (molding by fingers) means the fashioning of shapes with the fingers as in the present-day method of alabaster sculpture. *Kago-zukuri* (basket fashioning) uses a basketwork object made of bamboo or other material for the core, on the outside of which pottery clay is applied. Objects made by this method usually have traces of the basketwork on the inside. *Himo-zukuri* (rope fashioning) means the rolling of clay into a thin rope and coiling it around into the required shape. The interior and exterior surfaces of the object thus fashioned are tapped firmly in order to make the layers of clay adhere firmly to one another. Sometimes a potter's wheel is used to make the exterior surface smooth. The *himo-zukuri* method was used most frequently for pottery pieces during the Kamakura





# How Ceramic Ware is Made

1. *Rokuro-zukuri*  
—a method of  
modeling ce-  
ramic ware  
(above).
2. The *shita-  
etsuke* (under-  
glaze decora-  
tion) is paint-  
ed on the  
object when it  
is dry (right).





3. The object is next dipped in glaze (above).
4. It is then fired in the kiln in a clay container. The picture on the left shows the fired ware being removed.

- 5 The *uwa-etsuke* (overglaze decoration) is now painted on (right).
6. Finally, it is fired in an electric kiln (below).



The photos on pages 43-45 were taken specially for this book by Mr. Takeshi Nagatake at the Kakiemon, Imaizumi-Imaemon, and Kōransha factories and at the Technological High School, Arita.

period (from the end of the twelfth to the fourteenth century). In the *rokuro-zukuri* (wheel fashioning), a mass of clay is placed on the center of a disk about 60 cm. in diameter which is rotated horizontally around a fixed vertical axis, and the clay is fashioned into the desired shape from the bottom up as the disk is being turned. *Kata-zukuri* (mould fashioning) is done by mass-production, shaping the objects by pressing paste into moulds made of earth, wood or plaster.

The methods of decoration are also varied, the chief being *shita-etsuke* (underglaze decoration), *uwa-etsuke* (overglaze decoration) and *seiji* (celadon glazing). *Shita-etsuke* denotes the painting of a design on the clay, which is then covered with a transparent glaze. Under this class there are several types: *tetsue* (iron design) decoration, meaning the painting of the design in iron oxide brown; *yūrikō* (underglaze red), the producing of a red or pink color by a copper ingredient; *sometsuke* (blue-and-white), using cobalt dark blue, and others. Of these *sometsuke* is most common.

*Uwa-etsuke* means the method in which a design is painted over the glaze in red, green, yellow and other colors, and the object is afterwards placed again in the kiln and fired at a lower temperature. This method of decoration was originally introduced from China, and was first used in the early half of the seventeenth century by craftsmen in Kyōto and at Arita in Kyūshū. Of this class of overglaze decorating there are different types known as *nishiki-de*, *some-nishiki-de* and *kinran-de*. The *nishiki-de* (brocade style) is decorated with trans-



parent green, yellow, purple indigo and other glazes. The *some-nishiki-de* (blue-and-white plus *nishiki-de* style) is a combination of the *nishiki-de* and the *some-tsuke*, but indigo is rarely used. The *kinran-de* (gold brocade style) is a variety of the *nishiki-de* or *some-nishiki-de*, in which gold is the main material used in the overglaze decoration, the other colors being rather subsidiary. The term comes from the color effect which resembles that of gold brocade. When silver instead of gold is the prevailing color, it is called *ginran-de* (silver brocade style).

It was during the period beginning with the latter part of the sixteenth century and extending to the early nineteenth century that the foundations for *seiji* (celadon) manufacturing, which had earlier shown a remarkable development in China, were laid. *Seiji* is a type of porcelain with a bluish-green cast. This tinge appears in the porcelains when the clay and the glaze have an iron ingredient and the vessels are fired at a high temperature in what is technically called a "reducing flame."

## 2. Glassware and Cloisonné

The glass art is closely associated with ceramics. Glazes and glass are approximately the same in composition, and the invention of glass is said to be credited to the glaze on pottery found in ancient Egypt.

The commonest way of fashioning glass objects is to attach a mass of molten glass on the end of an iron pipe and blow into it from the other end. There are two

methods of making this blown glass; to blow in the air (*chū-buki* or "blowing in the air") and to blow into a mould (*kata-buki* or "mould blowing"). Production of blown glassware began in Japan in the seventeenth century.

Cutting, graving, sandblast, and *pâte de verre* are the main methods used in decorating or burnishing glass vessels. Cutting is done by incising a design and polishing it by holding the vessel against a rapidly rotating metal disk, a stone disk and a wooden disk in turn. Glassware made by this process is known in Japan as *kiriko* (cut glass). Graving is done by holding the glass against a small steel disk rapidly rotating on a treadle. Emery powder is fed in a stream at the point of contact to help in the process. In the sandblast, the glass is coated with a film of gummy substance, on which a design is incised with a knife, and emery powder blown against it by means of compressed air. The design is left engraved on the glass when the film is removed. *Pâte de verre* is a French term meaning paste of glass. By this method which is used when bulky objects, such as alcove ornaments, are to be cast, glass powder is melted in a mould made of a special kind of plaster. This method makes it possible to produce the desired colors on definite portions of the glass. Cutting and graving are the methods most effective on crystal glass. Ordinary glass is made by melting silica, soda and lime, while crystal glass (or flint glass, as it is also called) is made of fine silica, potassium and lead, and is characterized by perfect transparency. The above-



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Many years of experience and hard practice lie behind this feat by an expert glass blower of the Kagami Crystal Glass Works in Tōkyō, who demonstrated for this volume how a glass vessel is blown up by the *chū-buki* method.



"Cutting is done by incising a design and polishing it by holding the vessel against a rapidly rotating disk."

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"Graving is done by holding the glass against a small steel disk rapidly rotating on a treadle. Emery powder is fed in a stream at the point of contact to help in the process."





mentioned methods of glass finishing were first used in Japan in the nineteenth century.

Cloisonné also is closely connected with glass. It is made by filling the partitions made on a metal ground with colored glassy substance, and then heating the whole until the enamels melt and stick to the metal. Cloisonné was brought into Japan around the fifth or sixth century.

### 3. Metalware

The materials used for metalwork in Japan are manifold: gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, etc., and frequently these are used as alloys, each of which displays different qualities of hardness and color. The alloys used commonly in Japan are *aokin* (blue gold), *shakudō*, *rōgin*, bronze, *hakudō* (cupro-nickel), *kyōdō*, *niguromedō* and brass.

"Blue gold" is bluish alloy made of gold combined with twenty to thirty per cent of silver. *Shakudō* is a shiny black alloy distinctly peculiar to Japan. It is made of gold and *niguromedō* fused in the proportion of one part gold to ten parts of copper. *Rōgin* also is peculiar to Japan. It contains three quarters of copper and one of silver, and is also called *shibuichi* (one in four) because of the ratio. Its color is grayish white. Bronze is the commonest alloy. It consists of about ninety per cent copper and about ten per cent of tin, with a small amount of zinc and lead. Cupro-nickel is an alloy of copper with up to twenty-five or thirty per cent of tin. Because of its whitish color it is a favorite

for expensive kinds of mirrors and such like. *Kyōdō*, otherwise known as *sawari*, gives a pleasant sound when beaten (*kyō* means sound and *dō*, copper). It is an alloy of ninety per cent copper, nine per cent tin; one per cent silver and other metals. This also is an original Japanese alloy. *Niguromedō* is another alloy used exclusively in Japan. It consists of copper with a bit of pewter (alloy of lead and tin).

The shaping of metalwork objects is done by casting or beating. Casting is done by pouring molten metal into a mould. In making a hollow vessel a *me-gata* (matrix) and a *nakago* (core) are required. The kinds of *kata* (moulds or models, that is, the negative or positive forms used in casting) used chiefly are the *sō-gata*, *rō-gata* and *sunagata*. The *sō-gata* (full matrix) is a mould made of a mixture of clay and sand, inside which a "core" is placed, leaving a hollow space between for the molten metal to be poured in. The patterns on the object to be cast are engraved on the inside surface of the mould. The *rō-gata* (wax model) method requires a model made of beeswax, which is covered both inside and out with a paste of clay and fine earth, the whole thing being then heated with charcoal fire so as to solidify the paste and remove the wax, thus leaving the space for the metal between the outer shell (the matrix) and the interior mass (the core). The yielding quality of the wax model allows for elaborate carving. The *sunagata* (sand mould) method is that used for the mass-producing of such simple objects as coins and mirrors. The model is wrapped in a mass of sand paste,

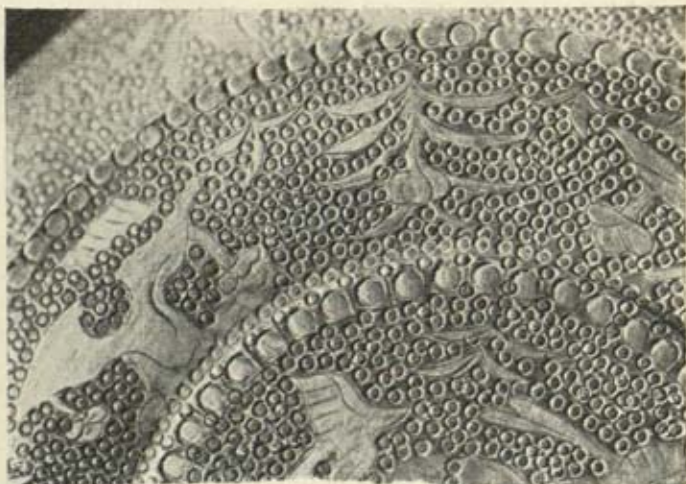
which is then hardened by heat and broken in halves to permit the removal of the model. The outer shell is then restored leaving a canal through which the molten metal is poured.

The beating method means the hammering of metal into a sheet and then beating it into a cubic form from which the desired shape is fashioned.

The principal methods of ornamenting metalwork objects are carving, inlaying and gilding. The first, which involves the carving of a design on metal with a burin, can be classified into such subdivisions as: *ke-bori* (hairline engraving), in which the design is brought out by incising fine lines; *keri-bori* (kicking incision), in which the lines consist of a series of wedge-shaped dots; relief carving, done by engraving the ground and leaving the design in relief; *shishiai-bori* (quasi-relief carving), in which the ground is untouched but parts of the design are engraved; and *katagiri-bori* (one-way-cut engraving), that is, the outlining of the design with line-engraving, using the burin obliquely, making the section of the cut vertical on one side (on the side of the design) and slanting on the other. *Sukashi-bori* (openwork), to perforate a design through an object of cast or beaten metal, and *nanako* (fish-roe), a method of surface ornamentation in which dense series of minute dots are made by hammering with a round burin, also belong under the category of metal carving.

Inlaying is a method of engraving in which the surface of the metal is cut and a sheet or mass of another metal is embedded in it. The main kinds of



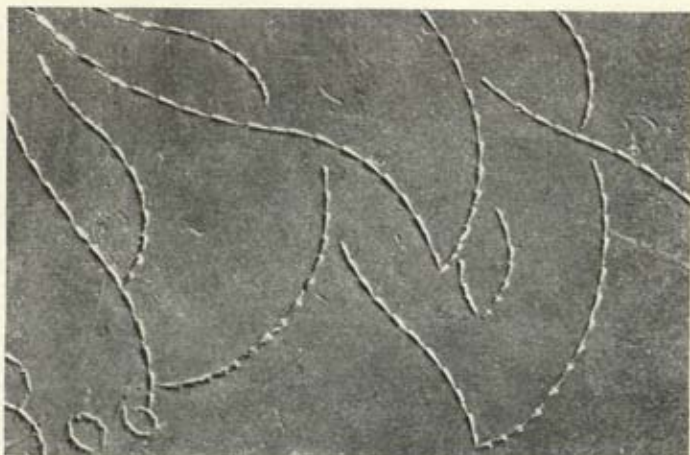


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Above: Detail on  
a silver lid of the  
Nara period showing  
*nanako* and *ke-bori*.  
Left: An example  
of *shishiai-bori*.



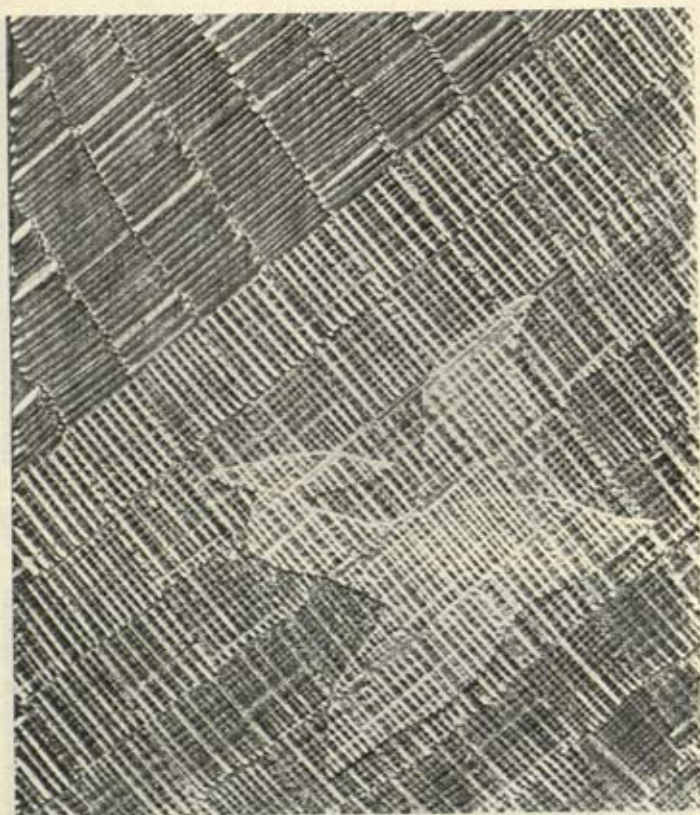


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Enlarged pictures showing designs executed in *keri-bori*  
(above) and *katagiri-bori* (below).



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A greatly magnified picture showing how *nunome-zōgan* is made. First tiny parallel lines are etched in rows in the metal surface as in the upper part of the picture; then rows of similar lines are engraved at right angles over these, making crisscross lines resembling the mesh of a fabric. Then the design cut out of a thin sheet of metal is beaten into this surface.

inlaid work are: the *hira-zōgan* (flat inlay), in which the inlaid metal is inserted on an even surface with the base; *suemon-zōgan* (applied pattern inlay), where the inlaid metal is carved in relief and raised; and *nunome-zōgan* (fabric-mark inlay), which is made by placing a thin sheet of metal over crisscross lines cut on the base metal to resemble those in fabrics and hammering it so that the upper metal is beaten into the engraved lines.

Of various methods of gilding, amalgam gilding is most commonly used in Japan. In this method an article of silver, bronze or other metal is coated with a paste made of a mixture of gold filings and mercury, and then heated. The medium, mercury, evaporates and the gold remains on the surface.

#### 4. Wood and Bamboo Ware

Wood and bamboo have since early times been the most popular materials used in Japanese handicrafts. From a technical point of view, wood and bamboo objects can be divided into three kinds: *hiki-mono*, *ita-mono* and *mage-mono*. *Hiki-mono* (lathe work) means the manufacturing of bowls and other vessels by working the wood on a lathe. Materials popularly used for *hiki-mono* are hardwood such as the *tochi-no-ki* (Japanese horse chestnut) and *keyaki* (keaki). *Ita-mono* (board work) means making a box, cabinet, etc., with boards of wood, usually *hinoki* (Japanese cypress). *Mage-mono* (bent work) is making the side of a container by bending a thin sheet of *hinoki* or *sugi* (Japanese cedar) wood into a circle. This method is



employed chiefly in the making of covered vessels.

The methods used in putting decorations on objects made of wood and bamboo work are called *mokuga*, *raden*, *bekkō-bari*, *kingin-e* and *saie*. *Mokuga* (wood picture), a sort of mosaic work, was used most frequently during the eighth century. There are two kinds of *mokuga*. One is made by assembling in the form of a design, on the wood surface, small bits of wood and bamboo or ivory, horn and the like, stained in red, green and other colors. The designs usually made by this method are either graphic ones such as flowers and birds, or geometrical patterns like checks and arrow-feather bands. The other is made by covering the entire surface of a box with diagonally arranged sheets of sandalwood, mulberry wood and other such hardwood prepared in rhomboid or other shapes. In *raden* (nacre inlay), the beautiful, iridescent lining of certain shells (*Yaku* shells found on Yaku Island off the coast of Kagoshima in Kyūshū, and ear-shells) are cut out in units of a design and inlaid on the base of red sandalwood or other wood, or on a lacquered ground. *Bekkō-bari* (tortoise-shell overlay) is made by placing tortoise shell over a gold-leaf covering or over a colored decoration, the gold or colors showing their subdued beauty through the transparent parts of the tortoise shell. *Kingin-e* (gold and silver painting) denotes the painting of a design on wood or a lacquered surface with gold and silver ink, which is prepared by solidifying gold and silver leaf with glue, grinding it into powder, and blending the powder in a solution of glue. Both *bekkō-*



*bari* and *kingin-e* were fashionable in the eighth century. *Saie* (color painting) means painting a wooden object with pigments blended with *gofun*, a white paint made of calcium carbonate which is obtained by burning clam shell.

The majority of bamboo articles are made by knitting finely split bamboo stems, a method discovered in very early times. Solid stems are often used, too, of course.

## 5. Lacquer Ware

The lacquer art has developed to a high degree in Oriental countries producing the lacquer tree (*urushi*, *Rhus vermicifera* Dc.), namely, China, Korea, Japan and Thailand. The bases used for lacquer ware are mostly wooden objects, made by the above-mentioned methods, i.e., *hiki-mono* (lathe work), *ita-mono* (board work) and *mage-mono* (bent work), or knitted bamboo, *kanshitsu* (dry-lacquer, a few layers of hemp cloth cemented with lacquer), *shippi* (lacquered hide, cowhide softened by soaking in water and then fashioned into a mould), *ikken-bari* (papier-mâché, a moulded vessel made of soft, strong Japanese paper cemented with lacquer or starch), metal, and pottery or porcelain.

There are two main steps in the process of lacquering these bases: first the *shitaji* (priming, or preliminary coating) and then the *uwa-nuri* (finish coating). There are several ways of doing the *shitaji*. *Urushi-shitaji* (lacquer priming) is done by covering the base with cloth, using lacquer to cement it, and then coating it

with a mixture of *ji-no-ko* ("base powder," tile ground into powder), water and raw lacquer. *Nikawa-shitaji* (glue priming) is coating the base with *ji-no-ko*, or a mixture of *ji-no-ko* and *to-no-ko* (a kind of fine clay), blended with a solution of glue. *Shibu-shitaji* (persimmon-juice priming) requires *shibu* (astringent, adhesive juice of unripe persimmon fruit). A mixture of *shibu* and charcoal powder or soot is applied on the base, which is later coated again with *shibu*. The first method, *urushi-shitaji*, or lacquer priming, is the most durable of them all.

The "finish coating" is divided into two main types: *hana-nuri* (ornate coating) and *rōiro-nuri* (wax-color coating). In *hana-nuri* a glossy, oily lacquer is used, and in *rōiro-nuri* ordinary lacquer is used, and the lacquer-coated surface is polished until it becomes glossy. There is also a method termed *Shunkei-nuri*, *Shunkei* being the name of the inventor. In this type no priming is used but a transparent lacquer is coated over the wood base which is stained yellow or red.

The methods of decorating lacquer ware are called *makie*, which made great progress in Japan, *raden*, *hyōmon*, *urushi-e*, *mitsuda-e*, *tsuishu*, *Kamakura-bori* and *chinkin*. The *makie* (sprinkled picture) method is to draw a design in lacquer and sprinkle gold and silver dust over it. *Raden*, as has been mentioned before, when used in wood work means that lacquer is applied on a base of red sandalwood and other hardwood; in lacquer ware, it uses shell cut out in designs and placed on the base, the whole then being coated over with

lacquer, and later polished with a piece of charcoal; or the lacquer film on the design may be removed with a knife to bring the design to the surface. This method is also called *ao-gai* (blue shell). When sheet gold or silver cut in designs is used instead of shell and finished by a similar process, it is called *hyōmon* (sheet metal inlay) or *kana-gai* (metal shell). *Makie*, *raden* and *hyōmon* have all been in use since the eighth century. *Urushi-e* (lacquer painting) is the painting of a design in colored lacquer; cinnabar lacquer is prepared by blending transparent lacquer with cinnabar, yellow lacquer with orpiment, and green lacquer by mixing cobalt in yellow lacquer. *Mitsuda-e* (oil painting with litharge) means painting with a mixture of perilla oil (obtained from the seeds of the *Perilla ocymoides* L.), using litharge (lead oxide) as a dryer, and pigments. The *tsuishu* (solid cinnabar) method is to apply many coats of cinnabar lacquer on a wood or metal base and then carving a design in the thick layer of lacquer thus prepared. When black lacquer is used instead of cinnabar, it is termed *tsuikoku* (solid black). If cinnabar and green lacquer are applied in alternate layers and a floral design is carved on the surface, bringing out the red layer for the flowers and green for the leaves, it is called by a special name, *kōka-ryokuyō* (red flower and green leaf). All these types of lacquer ware with carved designs are collectively called *chōshitsu* (carved lacquer). The *tsuishu* and *kōka-ryokuyō* methods originally made great progress in China, but *Kamakura-bori* (Kamakura-carving, so called as it is especially popular in and around



Kamakura near Tōkyō) was a Japanese invention. In *Kamakura-bori* a design is engraved on wood and this is colored with cinnabar and green lacquer to imitate the effect of *kōka-ryokuyō*. In the *chinkin* (sunken gold) method, a hairline design is engraved on a lacquered surface with a pin; lacquer is applied in the engraving, and gold leaf is placed on the surface and pressed into the engraving with a mass of cotton, so when the surface is wiped off the gold remains only in the engraved design.

## 6. Fabrics

Crafts stemming from the fabric art include dyeing, weaving and embroidery. Under dye work there are *rō-zome*, *shibori-zome*, *itajime-zome*, *nori-zome*, and *katagami-zome*. The former three were fashionable as early as the eighth century. *Rō-zome* (wax-dyeing) uses beeswax as the resistant. The cloth on which a design has been drawn with wax is steeped in the dye, and the wax is removed after the cloth is dry, leaving the design. This method was called *rōkechi* (wax-resisting dyeing, or batik) during the Nara period. *Shibori-zome* (tying-and-dyeing) termed *kōkechi* (tied dyeing) in the Nara period, is done by tying the cloth in knots and placing it in the dye, to produce big patterns of large circles or series of minute ones. The technique of dyeing sequences of minute circles was called *kanoko-shibori* in the Edo period. The method of making large circles developed in the Muromachi and to the Edo period, from the late fifteenth to the early seventeenth century,





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An excellent specimen of *Yūzen-zome*—part of a *kosode* (a kind of garment) made in the eighteenth century. Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.



into *tsujigahana-zome*, a method by which black lines and colors were added inside the circles by brush. *Itajime-zome* (board-jamming dyeing) was known in the Nara period as *kyōkechi* (jammed dyeing). According to this method, the cloth is folded in two and clamped between two wooden boards with perforations arranged in a design, the design on one being the exact reproduction of that on the other, and then the dye is poured on the perforations. The design produced is a symmetrical one. The resistant used in *nori-zome* (starch dyeing) is made by kneading the starch of a glutinous species of rice with warm water. *Nori-zome*, developed in the Edo period, is subdivided into different types, the most famous of which are *Chaya-zome*, dyeing in the indigo color alone, and *Yūzen-zome*, the dyeing of elaborate graphic designs in many colors. Both of these types derived their names from their inventors. *Katagami-zome* (stencil dyeing) is done by applying the dye with a brush over thick paper perforated with a design. Within the *katagami-zome* group, the most complicated type was *komon-zome* (small-pattern dyeing) which was done by dyeing a sequence of minute floral patterns by the repeated use of the same stencil. *Komon-zome* was the type done in Edo while *Yūzen-zome* represented that done in Kyōto.

The old weaving methods were called *nishiki*, *aya*, *shusu* and *ra*. *Nishiki* (brocaded weave), the most gorgeous type of weaving, is made by weaving colorful designs using threads dyed in many colors. A brocaded weave using *kinshi* (fine strips of gilded paper) instead

of colored threads is called *kinran* (gold brocade). A variety of *nishiki* termed *tsuzure-nishiki* (tapestry weave), similar to the Gobelin weave, is considered to be the oldest of the *nishiki* group. *Aya* (twill weave) is a method of weaving in which the weft-threads pass alternately over one warp-thread and under two, thus producing raised diagonal lines. In the Nara period, especially in the eighth century, fine *nishiki* and *aya* were produced. *Shusu* (satin weave) is an extremely smooth glossy fabric, the surface of which shows a preponderance of either the warp or weft threads, thus entirely obscuring the other. This method is said to have been used first in Japan during the late sixteenth century when the art was copied from China. *Ra* (silk gauze weave) is a thin transparent fabric with visible network apertures woven by intricate combinations of four twisted weft-threads. This method was in vogue during the Nara period but later gradually went out of fashion.

Since the Asuka period (seventh century), the art of embroidery has developed side by side with dyeing and weaving.

Other materials used in Japanese handicrafts include ivory, horn, bone and stone, all stained or not stained, and carved. Ivory and horn carving developed remarkably, especially during the Edo period, in the making of exquisite *netsuke* (ref. "Netsuke," volume 14 of the Tourist Library).



## CHAPTER IV

# HISTORICAL SURVEY OF JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

### 1. Ceramics

It was after the latter part of the sixteenth century that Japanese ceramic art made its most striking progress. The origin of the ceramic art, however, was in the remote past, the earliest type of earthenware dating back to a period thousands of years ago. This earthenware is termed the *jōmon* type of earthenware. This period lasted for many centuries until another type of earthenware, called the *Yayoi* type earthenware, began to be produced around the second century B.C. till about the second century A.D. (ref. page 20). The *jōmon* type was hand-modeled and was generally decorated with grotesque primitive ornaments, while the *Yayoi* type mostly appears to have been made on a simple kind of potter's wheel, the form being uniform and the designs quite simple. Japanese ceramic art made renewed progress when the craft of the Sue ware was introduced around the fifth century from Silla in Korea. This was a novel, high-fired type of earthenware made by the deft use of the potter's wheel, and is characterized by a grayish body of a hard, fine quality.

The Sue ware continued to be manufactured fashionably through the Asuka and Nara periods (from

An urn, a fine example of Sue ware, owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.



the mid-sixth to the end of the eighth century). In the Nara period a notable event took place: the appearance of pottery with colored glazes, a copy of the T'ang three-color glazed pottery of China. There exist fifty-seven specimens of color-glazed pottery among the treasures preserved in the Shōsōin Repository in Nara. Some of them are a single green color, others are green and



A three-color glazed bowl preserved in the Shōsōin Repository.

white, and still others green, yellow and white. The making of color-glazed pottery continued till the ninth century, after which it went out of vogue. It was probably because the materials for the glazes, which had depended upon imports, were hard to obtain.

Manufacturing of the Sue ware also declined after the ninth century. The eleventh and twelfth centuries saw a remarkable progress in the metal and lacquer art; important objects of the handicraft arts, such as religious utensils and furniture pieces, were first made almost exclusively with metal or lacquer, while the implements and utensils used daily by the common

people were mostly wood and lacquered objects. Under such circumstances ceramics did not see much development.

In the Kamakura period (from the end of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century) the Seto district in the present Aichi Prefecture began to produce beautiful pottery ware with a high-fired glaze, decorated with carved, engraved or applied ornaments. This Seto ware is said to have originated with Shirōzaemon Katō, commonly known as Tōshirō Katō, who studied the ceramic technique in China. The chief centers of ceramic production in Japan during the period from the late fourteenth to the late sixteenth century were Seto and Tokoname (in the present Aichi Prefecture), Shigaraki (in the present Shiga Prefecture), Tamba (in the present Hyōgo Prefecture), Bizen (in the present Okayama Prefecture) and Echizen (in the present Fukui Prefecture). The factories at these places are now known as the Six Old Ceramic Kilns of Japan. Seto was the only place among them which produced a pottery covered with a light green (or light yellow) or dark brown glaze and ornamented with stamped, carved or applied designs. The products of the other kilns were crude wares for everyday use made for the neighboring farming populace, such as water jars, seed pots and kneading bowls, while the Seto kilns also manufactured such ceremonial utensils as wine vessels, incense burners and flower vases to be used in the Shintō and Buddhist rites.

Late in the Muromachi period (from the end of the





A jar of Seto ware with a design of peonies made in the fourteenth century. Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.



A plate of Ki-Zeto ware made in the seventeenth century.

fourteenth to the late sixteenth century) the tea cult, advocating simplicity, quietude and profundity, was born, and a code was established for it by distinguished aesthetes during the Momoyama period (from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century). With the change in tastes of the tea ceremony men, the types of tea-bowls used by them changed also. Tea-bowls of elaborate Chinese celadon and *temmoku*\* ware, favored in the aristocratic type of tea ceremony practised in the previous period, gave place to the sober, plain kind known as the Ido type of Korean pottery. The popularity of the tea ceremony in the Momoyama period encouraged the making of tea ceremony utensils which would reflect the original concept of beauty as laid down in the tea cult. The tea-caddies made at Seto in Owari Province (the present Aichi Prefecture); the Ki-Zeto (also called Ki-Seto, "Yellow Seto"), the Shino, and Oribe wares produced in Mino Province (the present Gifu Prefecture); the products of the kilns at Bizen, Tamba, Shigaraki and Tokoname which were counted among the "Six Old Ceramic Kilns;" the Iga ware produced in Iga Province (the present Mie Prefecture); the Raku ware produced in Kyōto; and the Korean-style wares of Kyūshū such as the Karatsu ware;—all these developed with the evolution of the tea ceremony.

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\* In Chinese: *t'ien-mu*. A type of stoneware characterized by its coarse, grayish-black, porous body and its thick, black or brownish-black glaze usually stopping in a thick welt short of the base. So named after T'ien-mu-shan (Mt. Temmoku), in Chekiang, China, on which were Zen temples where, in the Sung times, tea-bowls of the Chien ware were used exclusively.

The "Yellow Seto," Shino and Oribe wares were particularly rich in native Japanese flavor. The "Yellow Seto" developed from the afore-mentioned light yellow-glazed pottery of Seto. It was decorated with simple line-engraved designs and sometimes with spots of green or brown glaze scattered over the yellow glaze. The Shino ware was characterized by its thick translucent glaze, including such varieties as the E-Shino (Painted Shino ware), with simple graphic designs painted in iron oxide brown under a white glaze, and the Nezumi-Shino (Gray Shino ware), gray-glazed and with designs painted in white glaze giving the effect of inlaid ornaments. The Oribe ware is said to have originated under the guidance of Shigenari Oribe-no-shō (1543-1615), a military lord and an outstanding tea-master of the time. The chief varieties of this ware are E-Oribe (Painted Oribe), with simple graphic designs painted in iron glaze, the rest of the surface being covered with a green copper glaze; Kuro-Oribe (Black Oribe) covered with a black glaze, and Ao-Oribe (Green Oribe) covered with a green glaze. These were all unconventional types of pottery showing the highly inventive spirit of the age.

The Raku ware of Kyōto was a hand-modeled, low-fired type of pottery, originated by Chōjirō Raku (1516-1592), son of Ameya, a Korean who later became a naturalized Japanese. Chōjirō made tea-bowls under the guidance of the tea-master Sen-no-Rikyū (1521-1591). The Raku potter of the second generation was Jōkei, the third was Dōnyū (popularly known as Nonkō), and since that time the Raku family has maintained its





A black Raku tea-bowl made by Chōjirō Raku.

tradition down through the generations. Kōetsu Honami (1558-1637), the renowned artist of outstanding talent active in the first half of the seventeenth century, also made majestic, elegant tea-bowls in the Raku style which he learned from Dōnyū.

The Bizen, Tamba, Tokoname and Shigaraki kilns had produced, ever since the fifteenth century, a simple, rustic ware for use by the common people. From the latter half of the sixteenth century this ware was favored for use in the tea ceremony for its "subdued" beauty, and with the passage of time such an effect was sought after on purpose. The Bizen ware

was made of a special clay containing an iron ingredient and was fired at such a high temperature that the surface of the body itself formed a sort of glaze; consequently, the ware was distinguished for its hardness and the rich variety of its texture and the colors of the body. The Tamba and Tokoname wares were so much like the Bizen ware that it was sometimes difficult to tell the three wares from each other. Shigaraki and Iga, being adjacent villages, produced much the same kind of pottery. However, the former was distinguished by its color effect caused by an accidental chemical combination of the silicate ingredient in its body and the ashes of the wood used as fuel falling on it during the firing, while the beauty of the latter lay in the black spots which used to appear accidentally in its transparent, vitreous glaze.

The ceramic art of the Kyūshū district made great progress after the Korean potters began to work there. Japanese military generals, taking part in the war with Korea from 1592 to 1598, brought Korean potters back with them, and many more craftsmen came over voluntarily after them. These Korean workers settled down in Kyūshū, the island nearest the Korean Peninsula, and resumed their manufacture of ceramics at the factories which they built there. The factories at Karatsu, especially, were so famous that the term "Karatsu ware" was used for a certain period as a substitute for the word "pottery." There were several varieties of the Karatsu ware manufactured in Hizen Province (the present Saga Prefecture) centering around Karatsu, the majority of



An E-Karatsu jar made in the seventeenth century.

them being a coarse, ferruginous ware covered with a "mouse-gray" or "loquat yellow" glaze. The most interesting of these was the E-Karatsu (Painted Karatsu), which had simple ornaments painted with a black iron glaze. The Karatsu products at first were mostly dishes, bowls and other cheap vessels made for everyday use. These simple pieces, because of their interesting rustic effect, were so favored by the tea cultists that finally the Karatsu kilns began to make water jars, tea-bowls and other tea ceremony utensils, too.

The beginning of the seventeenth century saw the development of pottery used in the tea ceremony and



A Kakiemon-style bowl made in the seventeenth century.

also marked an epoch-making event in the history of Japanese ceramics. This was the beginning of the making of porcelain in Japan, and the subsequent appearance of *iroe* (colored picture), porcelain decorated with brilliant overglaze colors. The origination of Japanese porcelain is ascribed to Li San-p'ing (Japanese pronunciation: Ri Sampei), a Korean potter who later became a naturalized Japanese. He discovered a mine of fine porcelain stone at Izumiyama, Arita, in Saga Prefecture, and succeeded in making porcelain with it in 1616. Most of the ceramic kilns in Hizen Province (the present Saga Prefecture) thereafter turned from



pottery to porcelain. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Kakiemon Sakaida, after many years of earnest experiment, successfully produced the first Japanese porcelain with an overglaze decoration. Soon the traders began exporting the enamelled porcelain produced at Arita abroad and a section of Arita, inhabited solely by craftsmen specializing in overglaze decoration, became a town named Akae-machi (Akae Town)\*. Arita developed rapidly and became a center of ceramic manufacture in Japan. As the Arita ware—that is, the porcelain produced at Arita and in its vicinity—used to be shipped from Imari Port some six miles north of Arita, it is now popularly known as Imari ware.

The descendants of Kakiemon, through many generations up to the present day, have been engaged in porcelain manufacture. As they all produced a similar style, it became known as the Kakiemon style, and it is hard to tell which of the early Kakiemon pieces were made by Kakiemon the First and which by the Second or Third. It has therefore become the custom to use the generic term *Kakiemon-de* (Kakiemon style or Kakiemon type) to denote any enamelled porcelain decorated with the phoenix, the auspicious trio of the pine, bamboo and Japanese apricot tree, the dragon and other similar Chinese designs done in bright colors on a milk-white ground. There is an exception, however. When Kaki-

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\* *Akae* (red picture) means porcelain decorated with a few overglaze colors, the basic color being red, and characterized by the simple, bold effect of its designs. The term is frequently used also, however, for ordinary polychrome enamelled wares.

mon the Sixth inherited the family trade at a very young age, his uncle Shibuemon (in the early eighteenth century) took charge of his education. All of Shibuemon's works, some of which bear inscriptions reading "The year Genroku 12 (1699), Kaki" and the like, have ornaments which show an influence from fabric designs, and are somewhat different in effect from the common Kakiemon style.

The technique of overglaze decoration established by Kakiemon spread rapidly as far as the present Ishikawa Prefecture, where it developed a style of its own, and became known as the Ko-Kutani (Old Kutani) ware. The Kutani kiln is said to have been built originally by the lord of the Daishōji Fief in Ishikawa, who was motivated by the discovery of a porcelain stone mine at Kutani Village. The lord thereupon dispatched one of his vassals to Arita to learn the secrets of enamelled porcelain making, and when he returned, had him build an official plant for the manufacture of porcelain using the Kutani stone. The period in which what is now called "Old Kutani" was produced was a short one, lasting from the middle to the end of the seventeenth century, for the factory was abandoned about that time, only resuming activity after an interval of approximately a century. Old Kutani, made in the first Kutani plant during this first period, is famed for its distinctive designs executed in bold style, with gorgeous coloring and powerful brushwork, and is now regarded abroad as representative of Japanese enamelled porcelain.

Produced almost concurrently with the Ko-Kutani,



A Ko-Kutani dish with a design of a peony made in the seventeenth century.

was the enamelled pottery made in the middle of the seventeenth century by Ninsei Nonomura in Kyōto. Ninsei is called the founder of *Kyō-yaki* (Kyōto ware),

and is reputed as the pre-eminent artist of Japanese pottery. As has been stated already, Kyōto during the Momoyama period had been distinguished for its Raku ware, but it was Ninsei who developed the graceful enamelled ware native to Kyōto, so prized for its florid yet elegant designs in the pure Japanese style. After Ninsei, and under his influence, numerous ceramic kilns were established at Kiyomizu, Awataguchi, Mizoro and other places in Kyōto as well as in various localities throughout the country. Kyōto thus became one of the largest centers of pottery making.

Japanese ceramics in general during the middle part of the Edo period, or around the eighteenth century, were refined, and yet had a smart effect. The famous Kenzan Ogata (1663-1743) was especially distinguished for instituting such a mode in the Kyōto ware. Kenzan was the younger brother of Kōrin Ogata (1658-1716), the versatile artistic genius who followed in the wake of Kōetsu Hon-ami. The fresh, refined style of Kenzan's pottery, with its witty graphic designs painted on a soft, low-fired body, was imitated by other contemporary potters in Kyōto, until it became one of the distinctive characteristics of Kyōto ware in general. The influence of this Kyōto ware was instrumental in the birth of the Banko ware at Kuwana in Ise Province (the present Mie Prefecture) and the Antō ware at Tsu in the same province. Of these the former was featured by its exotic designs, many of which were patterned after the designs of chintz fabrics.

The Kyūshū district in the eighteenth century saw





Japan Travel Bureau

This water jar, in the possession of the Tōkyō National Museum, is a masterpiece by Ninsei Nonomura.



A dish made by Kenzan Ogata. The picture of Jurōjin, a deity symbolizing longevity, was painted by Kōrin Ogata.



an increasing prosperity in its production of enamelled porcelain wares, among which the Iro-Nabeshima (Enamelled Nabeshima), made at the Ōkōchi kiln, excelled others by far in elaborateness. The Ōkōchi factory was the official plant of the Nabeshima Fief in Saga, and its products were reserved for the official use of the lord there for gifts to the *shōgun* and other feudal lords. The ware was naturally outstanding for its elegant, ornate beauty which contrasted greatly with the neat grace of the Kakiemon ware or the strength and gorgeousness of the Old Kutani ware. Mention should be made here of the Imari kiln which in and after the mid-eighteenth century produced large dishes, bowls and jars decorated with colorful designs of Dutch

figures and boats in *sometsuke* (underglaze blue), and overglaze red, green, purple, gold and other colors.

In the nineteenth century, the last part of the Edo period, the ceramic art attained a greater development than ever before. Kilns throughout the country increased their activity remarkably, while new factories were built one after another. Most of the more than two thousand ceramic plants now active in Japan were actually established in this epoch. The demand for ceramic ware also increased greatly since the use of lacquer ware gradually lessened.

The production of Kyōto ware in this period gave rise to numerous master potters such as Dōhachi Takahashi, Rokubei Kiyomizu, Chōzō Makuzu, Eisen Okuda, Mokubei Aoki, Dōhachi Nin-ami (Dōhachi the Second), Hozen Eiraku and his son Rizen Eiraku. Of these Eisen (1752–1811) was particularly successful in making porcelain, and on the strength of his success he created his school of Kyōto porcelain which paralleled that of Kyōto pottery. Mokubei (1767–1833) and Nin-ami (1783–1855) were his pupils, the former specializing in tea ceremony utensils, which copied the effect of Chinese ceramics, and the latter devoted to pottery in the native Japanese style. Hozen excelled especially in the *kinrande* (overglaze enamels and gold). Mokubei, Nin-ami and Hozen were equally famed as the "Three Master Potters" of the time. These able potters influenced the local kilns as well. For example, Mokubei taught the potters to make the Kasugayama ware at Kanazawa in Kaga Province (the present Ishikawa Prefecture); Nin-





A bowl made by Dōhachi Takahashi (above) and an Imari ware bowl made in the eighteenth century, with a design of Dutch boats.





An example of Iro-Nabeshima ware (ref. page 85)  
made in the eighteenth century.

ami taught his potters to make the Takamatsu ware in Sanuki (Kagawa Prefecture) and the Mushiake ware in Bizen (Okayama Prefecture); while Hozen taught the potters of Kii (Wakayama Prefecture) to make the Kairakuen ware.

The manufacture of Kutani ware, which had been suspended for about a century, was resumed toward the end of the Edo period. Several new kilns were built in the Kutani district. The ware from the Iidaya kiln, called the Iidaya style ware, stood out among the others because of its elaborate golden decoration on a bright red ground. Furthermore, the kilns at Seto, where activity had been on a decline during the middle of the Edo period, started up anew when the making of white porcelain began in the nineteenth century. It was actually in this period that the Seto district laid the foundation of its now pre-eminent position in the Japanese ceramic industry.

The internal warfare waging in the country in the last part of the Edo period caused a temporary decline in the ceramic industry throughout Japan. In 1868, however, the German expert Gottfried Wagner (1831-1892) was invited to Arita where he taught several Western ceramic techniques: for example, the addition of cobalt oxide as coloring matter and the use of coal as fuel. These modern techniques were transmitted gradually to the main manufacturing areas, and the traditional family-scale style of production tended to give place to large factory-system methods. The results of this mass-production satisfied the demand within



A vase with a realistic crab crawling on its side by  
Kōzan Miyagawa.

Japan, and further led to the increase of overseas exports.

The activity of individual potters in the Meiji era (1868–1912) also should not be ignored. Noteworthy among these were: Hayata Takemoto (1848–1892) and Ryōsai Inoue (b. 1828) in Tōkyō and Kōzan Miyagawa (1842–1916) of Yokohama, whose works reflected the Western influence; Sozan Suwa (1852–1922), a native of Kutani who worked in Tōkyō and Kyōto and was skilled in making replicas of famous ancient pieces; and Tōzan Itō (1846–1920) and Zōroku Mashimizu (1822–1877) in Kyōto, and Ken-ya Miura (1821–1889) in Tōkyō, who specialized in the traditional Japanese styles.



## 2. Glassware and Cloisonné

Although the glass industry is now considerably active in Japan, the art of making decorative glass did not make any notable progress prior to the Edo period. The history of glass in Japan, however, dates back to very early times. Glass was first brought into the country from China at about the beginning of the Christian era, and in either the fourth or fifth century it was first produced in this country. The first glass objects made in those ancient days were for the most part beads for necklaces and the like, particularly the pretty comma-shaped ones called *magatama* (curving beads) of various sizes, the largest ones measuring two inches in length. A very valuable example of this early type of glass is the glass bracelet excavated from a tumulus in Kyōto Prefecture. Also, a tumulus in Fukuoka Prefecture in Kyūshū yielded fragments of thick sheet glass. Presumably sheet glass of this kind was imported from the Asiatic Continent as material for beads.

Glass beads continued to be in frequent use after the introduction of Buddhism into Japan in the mid-sixth century, and were used not only for necklaces but as ornaments for Buddhist statues, and ritual accessories, such as rosaries, as well as secular objects. The production of glass flourished especially in the Nara period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century). A specially interesting specimen from this period is a cinerary urn containing the ashes of Fumi-no-Nemaro, a military general who died in 707. The green urn, dis-

covered in his tomb in Nara Prefecture, is about six inches in height, and was found enclosed in a globular bronze case. There is a remarkable group of glass objects in the Shōsōin Repository in Nara. It includes a ewer, a bowl and a stem-cup of transparent glass, a cup and a spittoon of cobalt-blue glass, a shallow, oval cup of green glass, etc., all displaying excellent workmanship. The bowl and the shallow oval cup are ornamented with elaborate cutting (ref. page 48). These were not made in Japan but are pieces imported from China and Persia, where the art of glass making had progressed considerably. The ewer, for example, is apparently of Persian origin. It is surprising that such precious specimens, now hardly found in China, should have been preserved intact in Japan. The above-mentioned pieces, together with the majority of the other objects in the Shōsōin collection, were used for dedication at the consecration ceremony of the Great Buddha in the Tōdaiji Temple in Nara as rare treasures from other parts of the world. Besides these examples of foreign art, the Shōsōin Repository houses specimens of Japanese glass in the shape of figures of fish made of green glass and a scaled measure rule of yellow glass. They were both used as pendent ornaments to be worn at the waist.

The art of glass making stagnated in the eleventh to the twelfth century, that is, the Late Heian period. This was probably due partly to the change in the manner of clothing which caused a decrease in the demand for glass beads used as head ornaments or other decoration,



One of the glass bowls preserved in the Shōsōin Repository.

and partly to the discontinuance of technical assistance from China, where progress in the art of porcelain making had driven glassware out of vogue.

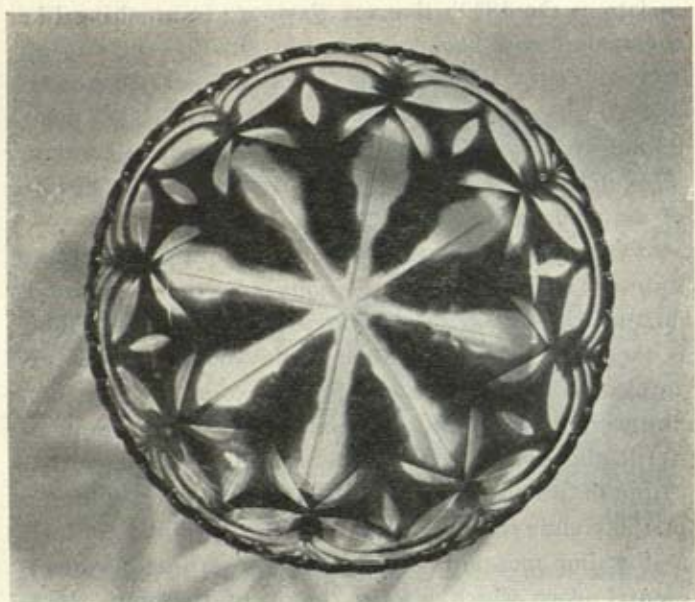
The art of making decorative glass in Japan in the Momoyama and Edo periods received new impetus from Europe. The introduction of modern European glass into Japan first took place when Francis Xavier, Portuguese Jesuit missionary who visited the country in 1549, presented a glass mirror and a field glass to a certain *daimyō*. In 1582, four young messengers sent to the

Pope in Rome by three *daimyō* in Kyūshū inspected a glass laboratory in Milan and they were given mirrors and other glass objects.

After Japan isolated herself from the rest of the world in the first half of the seventeenth century, she maintained only the merest contact with European civilization at the port of Nagasaki through the Dutch tradesmen who were the only ones authorized to trade there. It is interesting to note that the kind of glassware brought to Japan before the enforcement of the national isolation policy differed from that which came in after. The glassware brought by the Portuguese before the isolation was Venetian, while the Dutch brought Dutch and English glass.

It is said that the making of glassware in Japan was revived, reportedly at Nagasaki, in the early years of the seventeenth century, shortly after the introduction of the European variety. No specimens from that period now exist, however. In the early eighteenth century glass was made also in Ōsaka, and in the first half of the nineteenth century Edo (Tōkyō) began to produce fine glass vessels comparable with those from Europe. The most famous cut glass ware at the time was the kind called *Satsuma kiriko*, made at a laboratory established personally by Nariakira Shimazu (1809-1858), lord of Satsuma Province (the present Kagoshima Prefecture). This was of very fine quality and the cutting was often sharper than that on English cut glass. The glass art industry in Satsuma lost ground after the death of the lord, but in Edo around that time an elaborate





A fine specimen of *Edo kiriko* made in the nineteenth century.

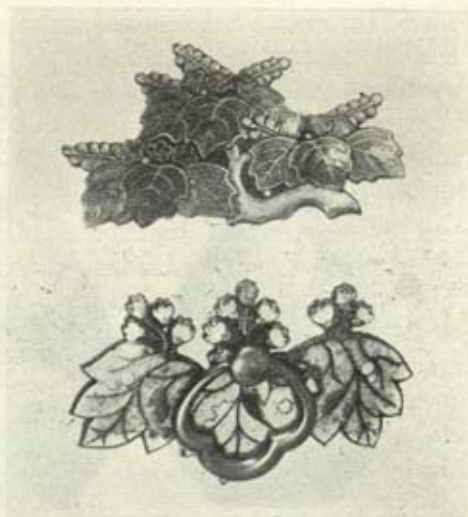
type of cut glass called *Edo kiriko* was already being produced.

The glass industry was launched briskly in the Meiji era, beginning with the opening of a partially mechanized factory in 1873 at Shinagawa in Tōkyō where windowpane glass was produced under the guidance of an English expert. Decorative art glass manufacturing, however, was slower in developing. It was

as late as the 1930's that art glassware in anything like the modern style began to be made. In 1934 the Kagami Crystal Glass Works, Ltd., in Tōkyō started manufacturing cut glass on an industrialized scale, using crystal with over thirty per cent lead ingredient content. This indeed was a brilliant achievement in the history of the modern glass art in Japan.

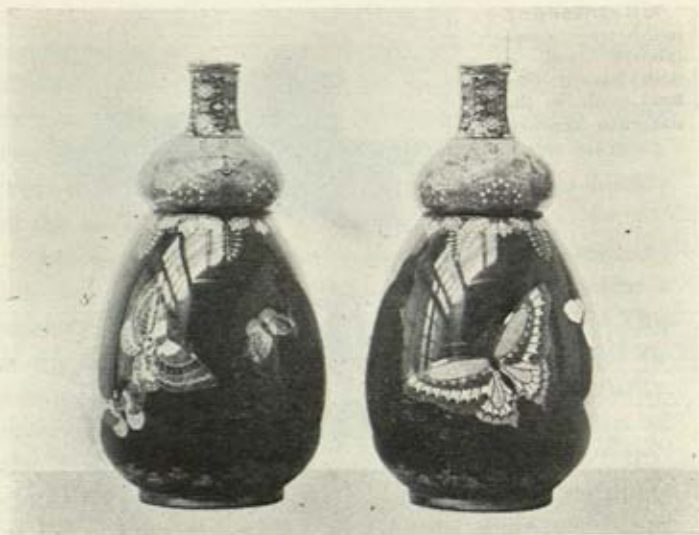
Let us now outline the development of the cloisonné industry in Japan. The Shōsōin collection contains a mirror with the back decorated with cloisonné. This is the oldest, and surely one of the most beautiful examples of cloisonné existing in this country. Actually, however, it was imported from China in the days of the T'ang dynasty. It is now a well-known fact that cloisonné was made in Japan as early as the beginning of the eighth century, for an imperial ordinance issued at the time mentions a regulation concerning a governmental office which was in charge of cloisonné work. However, the cloisonné art of that time had just a short existence. It remained a lost art long after that until, at the end of the sixteenth century, it was revived with the introduction of the Chinese and Korean techniques. Representing the best cloisonné artists of this new age was Dōjin Hirata (1591-1646). He studied the art in Korea in the early seventeenth century, and after his return was commissioned by the Tokugawa shogunate government to produce cloisonné work, which was used chiefly for decorating sword guards. Cloisonné was used at the time also on the metalwork of architectural ornaments such as door handles and nail-head covers.

A cloisonné  
nail-head cover  
(above) and a  
door handle (be-  
low) made in the  
sixteenth century.



There still remain some examples of the door handles of the time in the Katsura Detached Palace in Kyōto.

Cloisonné manufacturing received an impetus at the end of the Edo period. This sudden increase in activity was first brought about by Tsunekichi Kaji (1803-1883) in Nagoya. After making a study of Dutch cloisonné he invented an original method of "wired cloisonné" (bordering color sections with metal bands), which was handed down through Kaisuke Tsukamoto (1828-1897) in Nagoya to Yasuyuki Namikawa (1848-1927) in Kyōto. The last-mentioned artist, who also studied under Wagner, created transparent cloisonné. Sōsuke Namikawa (1847-1910), after establishing a cloisonné laboratory in Tōkyō, invited Yasuyuki Namikawa to become



Cloisonné flower vases made in the nineteenth century.  
Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.

the technical expert, and the two succeeded in making "wireless cloisonné" (sectioning off colors without the metallic bands) and in producing colors of darker and lighter shades. Jūbei Andō, who started cloisonné making in Nagoya, engaged the grandson of Tsunekichi Kaji to be his consultant, and experimented with various methods, mainly on *moriage shippō* (relief cloisonné). The three cities of Edo, Kyōto and Nagoya competed actively in the production of different types of cloisonné, and each city produced work with its own distinct characteristics. Specimens of these different types of cloisonné work were exhibited at the World Fair in



Paris in 1870, where they attracted the attention of the Europeans because of their elaborate designs. Thereafter they were exported abroad in increasing quantities.

### 3. Metalware

The oldest existing specimens of metalware in Japan are the *dōtaku* (bronze bell). They were the first Japanese articles to be made of bronze after the introduction of Chinese mining and metallurgy methods around the beginning of the Christian era. The form of these bells is distinctly Japanese, and various theories have been suggested as to their use. It appears most reasonable to think that the *dōtaku* at first were made as objects to give out sounds, probably in place of musical instruments, but that later they were merely valued as treasures of religious significance. Most of the existing specimens have patterns of water-streams or crossing bands cast in relief, but some are ornamented with interesting graphic designs showing humans, animals and houses.



A *dōtaku* decorated with a design representing running water. Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.

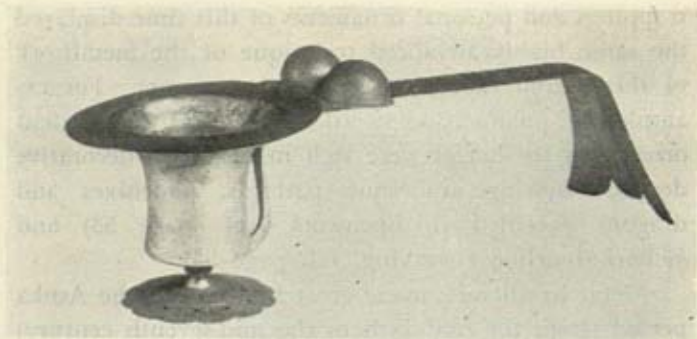
A bronze mirror  
of the Ancient  
Burial Mound  
period, with a  
geometric design.  
From the Im-  
perial Collection.



From the third to the sixth or seventh century the most interesting phase of development in metalwork was manifested in mirrors. Bronze mirrors with cast relief designs on the reverse sides had been made in China since the remote past, and many of them were brought to Japan in the Ancient Burial Mound period. These imported mirrors were imitated by Japanese craftsmen. At first the Japanese products were sheer imitations, but later on they began to show original Japanese designs. The mirrors of this period show pictures of hunting scenes or houses, or geometric patterns composed of arcs and straight lines. It was an original Japanese idea, too, to attach round bells along the rims of the mirrors. The sword mountings, horse

trappings and personal ornaments of this time displayed the same highly advanced technique of the metalwork of this period that was seen in the mirrors. For example, the pommels on sword handles and the pendent ornaments for horses were rich in beautiful decorative designs showing arabesque patterns, phoenixes and dragons executed in openwork (ref. page 53) and *ke-bori* (hairline engraving, ref. page 53).

Metal handicrafts made great headway in the Asuka period (from the mid-sixth to the mid-seventh century) following the introduction of Buddhism. Intricate metalwork was used in the making of ritual implements, vessels for containing offerings to the Buddha, and ornaments used in temples. Typical of the large-sized specimens of this period is a pendent ornament used in Buddhist ceremonies, called a *ban* (banner), which originally belonged to the Hōryūji Temple in Nara and is now kept by the Tōkyō National Museum. This *ban*, 16.4 feet in length, consists of sheets of gilt bronze hanging from the four sides of a canopy, with designs of Buddhist deities and *apsara* (heavenly maidens in flight) done in elaborate perforated work and line-engraving. The honeysuckle motif along the rims of the pendent sheets, found frequently on other handicraft works of the period, was very popular throughout the world at the time. Similar designs can be found on contemporary Korean and Chinese art objects, and their origin can be traced back through Central Asia westward to Sassanian Persia, the East Roman Empire and as far back as Greece. This interesting fact shows that



A brass censer of the Asuka period with a long handle ending in the shape of a magpie's tail. Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.

Japanese culture in this bygone age had contact with the Western world through China. Another important specimen of this period is an incense burner with a long handle, made by the *tankin* (beating method, ref. page 53), originally preserved with the *ban* in the Hōryūji Temple. It has a simple yet very beautiful form.

*Chōkin* (metal carving, ref. page 53), which had advanced remarkably during the Asuka period, was used on a wider variety of objects in the Nara period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century). The various specimens existing in the Shōsōin Repository give proof to the fact. A small silver jar with a cover is outstanding among these for the flowing brush-like lines of the engraving in its design of hunting scenes.

The *chūkin* (metal casting, ref. page 52) of the Nara period also has specimens of various kinds, mostly





Part of a *ban* in the Hōryūji Temple.



Left: A section of the door-grille in the octagonal bronze lantern of the Tōdaiji Temple.

Below: Part of the cover of a silver jar in the Shōsōin Repository decorated with a hairline engraving depicting a hunting scene (ref. page 102).



mirrors. For instance, the fifty-eight mirrors in the Shōsōin Repository include a very wide variety. The sizes range from little ones to some that are two feet in diameter. In shape they are square, rectangular, six-lobed, eight-lobed, eight-cusped and twelve-cusped, and the materials used are bronze, "white bronze" (cupronickel, ref. page 51), silver and iron. The designs include motifs of birds and animals, flowers and birds, landscapes with figures, vine patterns, etc. A wide range of decorative techniques is made use of: lacquer and inlay with *raden* (nacre inlay, ref. page 60) or *hyōmon* (sheet metal inlay, ref. page 61), overlay of thin sheet silver; ornamentation with cloisonné. These mirrors contain some Chinese pieces, but it is hard to tell the Chinese from the Japanese. A magnificent example of casting from the Nara period is seen in the huge octagonal bronze lantern standing in front of the Hall of the Great Buddha at the Tōdaiji Temple in Nara. The diagonally latticed door-grilles of its fire chamber have figures in half-relief of heavenly beings playing musical instruments and lions rampant among the clouds. The effect of these cast ornaments is one of powerful massiveness.

The T'ang style which was popular during the Nara period was superseded later by a native Japanese atmosphere in the eleventh century. Note, for example, the brilliant design of flowers and vines engraved in fine lines on the sutra box in the Enryakuji Temple in Kyōto. Designs of this kind, used frequently from the Nara to the Heian times, are known as *hōsōge* (precious-





A section of the *hōsōge* design engraved on the sutra box in the Enryakuji Temple.

appearance-flower, that is, beautiful flower). The *hōsōge* is not a motif taken from a real flower; it is a conventionalized floral pattern of an Indian origin, supplemented by various imaginary elements during the course of its transmission through Central Asia to China. When it was introduced to Japan from China in the Nara period, it appeared in a rather intricate form after the T'ang mode, but the example on the sutra box mentioned above is simplified in the Japanese style. Incidentally, this sutra box was excavated in the precincts of the Enryakuji Temple, where it is said to have been buried underground since 1031 with some sutra scrolls in it.

The box is an example of cast metal decorated with hairline engraving. Openwork on cast metal is seen on the *keman* owned by the Chūsonji Temple at Hiraizumi in Iwate Prefecture. A *keman* (wreath of flowers) is an ornament hung in a Buddhist building, usually from a *nageshi* (ornamental horizontal beam near the



ceiling). Originally a *keman* was made of fresh flowers and bound with a string, but later the wreath was made of wood, cowhide or metal. The *keman* in the Chūsonji Temple are the finest metal ones existing. They are made of gilt bronze, each decorated with a pair of *karyōbinga* (man-bird or bird with a human head which is said to be living in the Buddhist paradise, and praised in the scriptures for its melodious song) in repoussé on a background of openwork *hōsōge* designs. Their elegant symbolism accords well with the atmosphere in a Buddhist sanctuary.

One of the *keman* in the Chūsonji Temple, made in the twelfth century.



The mirrors of this period typify the evolution of the cast metal art from the Chinese to the Japanese style. The mirrors of the Nara period slavishly followed the Chinese designs, but the Late Heian pieces were designed in the true Japanese manner. The shapes tended to turn from floriate eight-lobed or eight-cusped ones to simple round ones. The frames became thin and delicate-looking, and the designs centered around flowering grasses with birds or butterflies flying around.

As in the other branches of the handicraft arts, the metalwork of the Kamakura period (from the end of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century) lost the delicate grace of the previous period and instead gained in strength. Lovely daintiness gave way to vigorous splendor. This tendency is best exemplified in the *sharitō* (pagoda-shaped reliquaries) in the Saidaiji Temple in Nara, made about the middle of the thirteenth century. These are small containers, in the form of a pagoda, with minute crystal beads and other things which symbolize the sacred ashes of Gautama Buddha. These *sharitō* are very elaborate pieces embellished with intricate designs in openwork, high and low relief and *nanako* (ref. page 53).

One of the characteristics of the Kamakura period was the striking development made in the metalwork used for armor and weapons. This was a result of the rise of the military class. The making of armor and swords progressed greatly, both from a practical and decorative point of view. Those made for dedication to shrines, especially, were designed in an extremely



A thirteenth century *sharitō* in the Saidaiji Temple.

ornate fashion. The *akaito-odoshi* (red-laced)\* armor owned by the Kasuga Shrine in Nara is typical of this kind.

The following Muromachi period (from the end of the fourteenth to the late sixteenth century) was also famous for its Buddhist utensils, some of which were interesting pieces showing the influence of the Chinese bronzes of the Ming dynasty. Generally speaking, however, the designs were usually stylized and the technique used in making them was poor. In contrast with these were the new types of sword-mountings (scabbards and hilts) and the tea ceremony kettles. The manner of wearing swords changed in this period. Previously, swords used to be worn on cords or chains hanging from the girdle with the cutting edges downward, while in the Muromachi period they were worn thrust through the girdle with the cutting edges upward. The new way, in which the handle of the sword was placed prominently near the breast, gave birth to a new manner of decorating swords. The hilt was ornamented with "sword accessory" pieces such as the *menuki* (rivet covers), *kozuka* (knife in sheath worn in the scabbard through a hole in the guard) and *kôgai* (a sort of bodkin similarly worn in the scabbard). These pieces supplied the metal workers with a new field of activity, and Yûjō Gotō, active in the second half of the fifteenth century, was outstanding among them. His descendants down until the seventeenth generation of his family specialized

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\* This kind of armor is so named because its sheet-iron scales are laced with braid or strips of hide dyed red.



This *akaito-odoshi* armor owned by the Kasuga Shrine, Nara, was made in the thirteenth century.

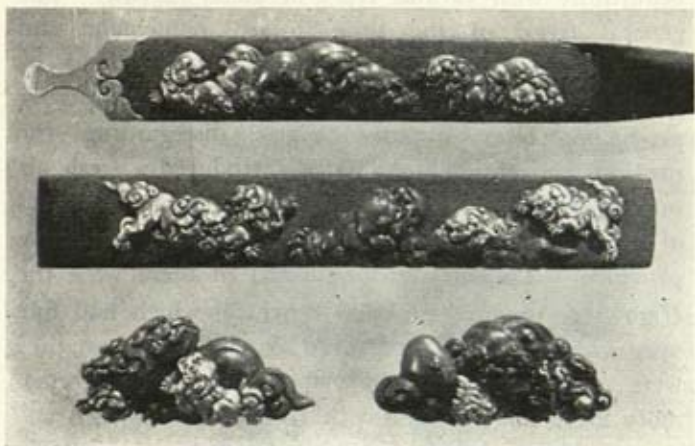


in making "sword accessory" pieces, until a law prohibiting the wearing of weapons, passed by the government at the beginning of the Meiji era, put such pieces out of use. Sword guards also became more and more ornate. The older guards were mostly simple ones with slight perforations, but those in and after this period were usually ornamented with deftly made openwork, inlay or low relief, or sometimes with two or all of these.

The famous masters in this line of work toward the close of the Muromachi period were Kaneie and Nobuie.

Kettles for use in the tea ceremony made their appearance in the later Muromachi period. Iron kettles for boiling water or cooking had existed since olden times, but the rise in popularity of the tea cult in this epoch gave to the tea ceremony kettles a special significance; they were now considered objects for artistic appreciation. Ashiya in the present Fukuoka Prefecture and Temmyō (also called Temmei) in Tochigi Prefecture became famous as places for the production of tea ceremony kettles. The Ashiya type was characterized by a smooth surface texture, graceful ornamentation and refined form, while the Temmyō type was prized for its rough, coarse-looking surface and simple, rustic effect. The majority of this latter type is quite plain. A typical example of the cast bronze of the Muromachi period is the hanging lantern dated 1550, now in the Tōkyō National Museum. It is remarkable for its exquisite openwork design of Japanese apricot trees and bamboos, its smart shape and the fine skill shown in the casting.

The construction of grand castles and mansions in the Momoyama period (from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century) encouraged the making of elaborate metal door-handles and ornamental studs. The increasing vogue for the tea ceremony in Kyōto was responsible for the designing of a new type of kettle for it, to supplement the Ashiya and Temmyō types. The most famous of the tea ceremony kettle makers in Kyōto were Zensei Nagoshi, Dōjin Nishimura, and



A set of sword accessories made by Sōmin Yokoya—  
a *kōgai* (above), the braid of a *kozuka* (middle) and a  
*menuki* (below).

Yojirō Tsuji, Dōjin's pupil. The best metalwork in the Momoyama period, however, is seen in the "sword accessory" pieces and sword guards. The "sword accessory" art was best represented by the men of the Gotō family, the famous family of metal carvers of the preceding period, and sword guards by the skilled makers of the Umetada group, notably Myōju Umetada (1558–1631), who created brilliant yet dignified designs in openwork and inlay.

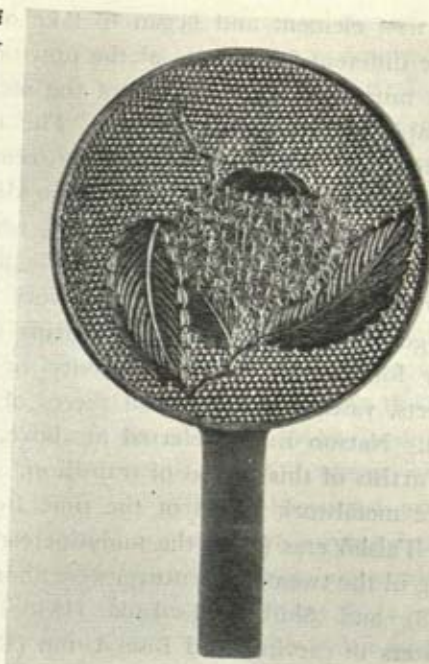
Peace and order were established firmly in the Edo period (from the early seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century). At about the beginning of the eighteenth century, swords became more ornamental than utilitarian, and "sword accessory" pieces were decorated

beautifully with various types of metal carving. The general trend of the time toward refinement and decorativeness was best manifested in this field by Sōmin Yokoya (1670-1733). His novel attempts at producing free, graphic designs, disregarding the previous conventionalized styles, introduced a fresh air into the "sword accessory" world. The sword guards of this period showed local traits of the respective provinces. The most distinguished of these were the *Higo tsuba* (guards of Higo Province) which had fine openwork designs. These were so named because they were produced in Higo Province (the present Kumamoto Prefecture). Matashichi Hayashi (1613-1699) was outstanding in the Higo group. The last master of the art of making sword guards was Natsuo Kanō (1828-1898) who was active toward the end of the Edo period.

Of the different kinds of mirrors, the type with long handles called *e-kagami* (mirror with handle), which appeared in the second half of the sixteenth century, enjoyed a great vogue in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The *e-kagami* had no knob in the center of the back for the cord with which to hold the mirror. The designs on the earlier mirrors were planned to center around the knobs, but those on the mirrors with handles had no such limitation, and so were made freely as in a painting. Fresh designs made specially for use on these mirrors made their appearance in the early Edo period. However, the increasing demand for mirrors and their consequent production in masses resulted in a deterioration in their quality, and the



An *e-kagami*  
made in the seven-  
teenth century.



designs gradually became more and more conventionalized. The increasing use of glass mirrors in the Meiji era (1868-1912) finally ended the making of metal mirrors which had long been an important branch of the metal industry in Japan.

The important social reformation known as the Meiji Restoration which took place in 1868, and the subsequent influx of European civilization caused a marked change in the nation's manner of living. The decorative arts of the Meiji era, too, were influenced by

this new element and began to take on characteristics quite different from those of the previous periods. The glass mirror taking the place of the metal ones was an example of this new tendency. The traditional techniques used in handicrafts, however, remained the same, although they were now applied on different kinds of objects. For example, metal carvers, who had displayed their fine skill in "sword accessory" pieces during the Edo period, were thrown out of work because in 1876 the government put a ban on wearing swords, but soon they found new fields of activity in the making of tablets, vases and other such pieces of interior decoration. Natsuo Kanō, referred to above, was the best of the artists of this period of transition. Other representative metalwork artists of the time from the Meiji to the Taishō eras (from the mid-nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century) were Shōmin Unno (1844-1915) and Shūkyō Tsukada (1848-1918) who were masters in carving, and Bisei Unno (1864-1917), an expert in casting.

#### 4. Wood and Bamboo Ware

In Japan where vegetation is so luxuriant, plant life in some form or other is used very extensively as a source of food, clothing and habitation for the people. The importance of plant life must have been far greater to the Japanese in ancient times when vegetation was even more dense. However, owing to its perishable nature few specimens from the remote past made of such material remain in their original state. The wooden

stem-cups, bowls, spoons, dippers, sword-shaped tools, mortars, pestles, fire-making implements, bamboo baskets and other things excavated together with pieces of the *Yayoi* type of earthenware from the sites at Karako in Nara Prefecture and Toro in Shizuoka Prefecture, are fine examples of the only ancient wood and bamboo works remaining in fairly large groups.

The introduction of Buddhism into Japan in the middle of the sixth century by priests and workers who brought with them their tools and implements for wood and bamboo work, motivated a notable progress in the arts. One concrete example of this is seen in the miniature temple known as the *Tamamushi-zushi* which is discussed in the next section. This, however, should rightfully come under the title of lacquered art. If wood and bamboo works only, and not lacquered pieces, are to be included in the present section, we would not find any specimen worth noting until the Nara period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century), and even in and after the Nara period there are few worth mention excepting a group of objects in the collection of the Shōsōin Repository in Nara. Though lacquered and unlacquered objects both fall under the same category of wood work, the former have more durability. The owners of lacquered articles also tend to take greater care when handling them. These reasons account for the greater loss suffered by objects of virtu in plain wood.

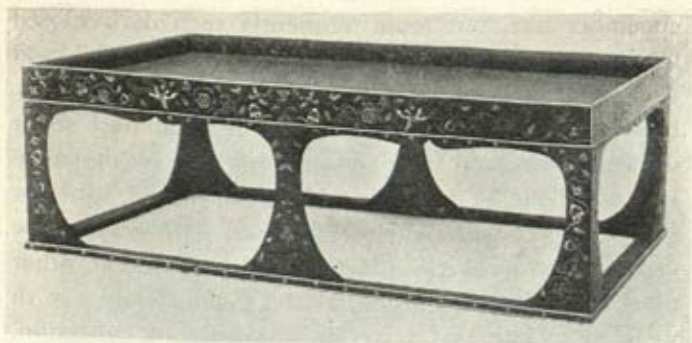
The Shōsōin Repository houses numbers of wood and bamboo relics of the period around the eighth



century. These include a wide variety of objects made of various materials. The materials used in making the wooden articles are *hinoki* (Japanese cypress), *kiri* (empress tree), *sugi* (Japanese cedar), *kusu* (camphor tree), *hō* (Japanese cucumber tree), *kaede* (maple), *natsume* (jujube), *kaya* (*Torreya nucifera* Sieb. et Zucc.), *tsubaki* (Chinese camellia), *kuwa* (Japanese mulberry), *toga* (*Tsuga Sieboldii* Carr.), *muku* (*Aphananthe aspera* Planch), *karin* (Chinese quince), *kaki* (persimmon), *tsuki* (a variety of the *keyaki* tree), *tsuge* (box tree), *shitan* (red sandalwood), *jinkō* (eagle-wood), and *binrōju* (betel-nut palm). Of these the variety most frequently used and with the most existing specimens is the red sandalwood. There are in the Shōsōin Repository as many as five examples of the musical instrument known as the *biwa* made of this wood, which indicates the popularity of this material at the time. There are also some examples of other kinds of wood stained in the color of red sandalwood. Sandalwood and eagle-wood, too, were valued because they were precious imported material. Black persimmon wood was also used frequently, probably for its beautiful grain. Objects made of black persimmon wood rank next in number in the Shōsōin collection after those made of red sandalwood.

The types of ornamentation used on these wood bases were *mokuga*, *raden*, *bekkō-bari*, *kingin-e* and *saie* (mosaic, nacre inlay, tortoise-shell overlay, gold and silver painting, and color painting, ref. page 58). Ornate specimens of *mokuga*, which are mosaic pieces





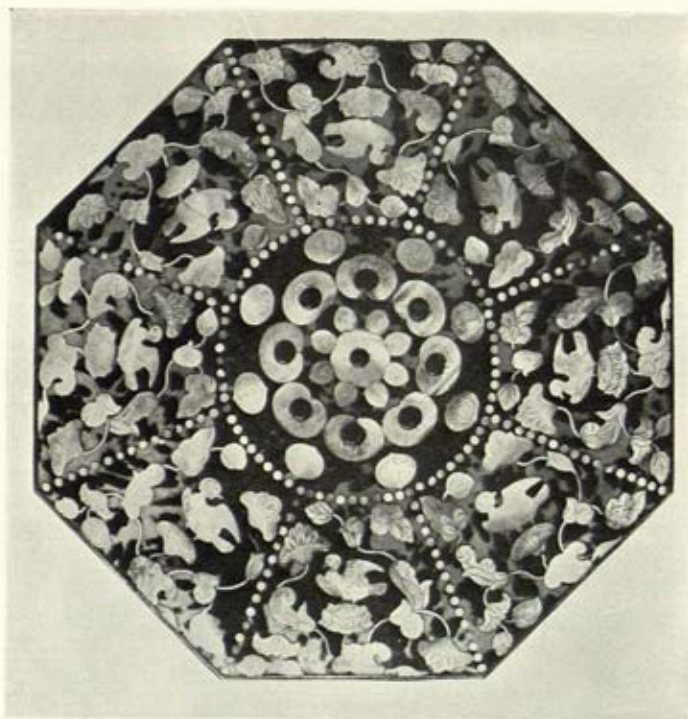
An example of ornate *mokuga*—a backgammon board preserved in the Shōsōin Repository.

combining ivory, horn, wood and bamboo of different colors, may be seen in boards for the game of *go*, backgammon boards and on the musical instruments called *biwa*. *Raden* (nacre inlay) was applied on wooden objects as well as on lacquered pieces, mostly on red sandalwood. The shells embedded in the dark-colored wood show an exquisite iridescence, and their effect is enhanced when they are used together with amber and tortoise shell. *Bekkō-bari* means covering the gold-foiled or painted wood surface with tortoise shell. A typical specimen of this technique used in combination with nacre inlay is the octagonal box with a design of mandarin ducks and flowers in the Shōsōin collection. *Kin-gin-e* (gold and silver painting) was applied on wood work objects as well as on lacquered wares. The bases on which this technique is applied were sometimes of white wood such as the Japanese cypress and Japanese

cucumber tree, but more frequently such dark-colored woods as the black persimmon and the red sandalwood were preferred. Actually it was on the black or dark brownish-black backgrounds that the gold and silver drawings stood out with good effect. *Saie* (color painting) was done by painting a design on a box, table or similar object with pigments blended with glue. The designs done by this method are less durable than other types of surface decoration, as the pigments are apt to wear off. The *saie* boxes in the Shōsōin collection, however, are not utility pieces, the majority of them having been made for temporary use at the consecration ceremony of the Great Buddha statue in 752 and at other ceremonial occasions in the Tōdaiji Temple.

We should not overlook the existence of some other pieces which were left plain, instead of being ornamented with such decorations as those mentioned above, so as to display the beautiful grains of wood. For instance, the elegant color and grain of the plain wood are emphasized in the simply constructed bookcase made of *kurogaki* (black persimmon) housed in the Shōsōin Repository, and known as the *Kurogaki-no-zushi* (Black Persimmon Bookcase).

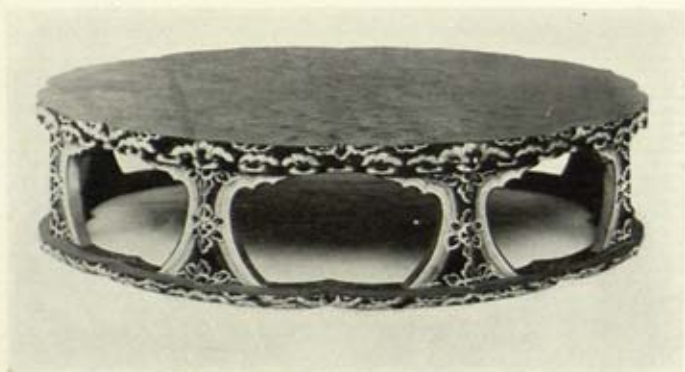
Bamboo work articles are made of raw bamboo stem or knitted with split bamboo, and in most cases both display the natural beauty of the material. *Jōtō* (swords in bamboo scabbards), *shakuhachi* and *shō* (vertically blown pipes) are good examples of the former, while the latter is represented by *kego* or *keko* (flower baskets or flower containers), about a foot in diameter,



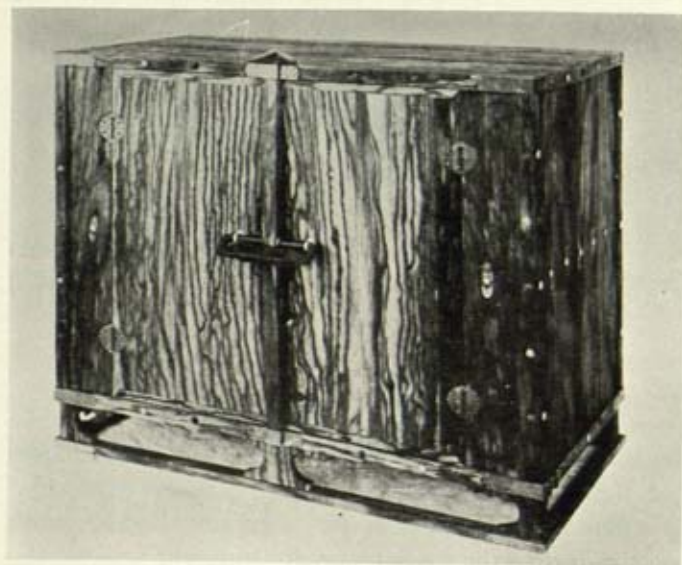
The top of an octagonal box covered with tortoise-shell and inlaid with nacre, preserved in the Shōsōin Repository.

used in the flower-sprinkling course of a Buddhist ceremony. The Shōsōin Repository has 565 examples of these flower baskets.

Few examples exist of the wood and bamboo work made during the Heian period (from the end of the



A stand showing *saie* work (above), and the *Kurogaki-no-zushi* (below) both in the Shōsōin Repository.





eighth to the end of the twelfth century) and thereafter, but in the Momoyama and Edo periods (from the end of the sixteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century) bamboo work made new progress in connection with the tea ceremony. It is said that the great tea-master, Sen-no-Rikyū (1521-1591), invented a simple type of bamboo tea-caddy which was nothing more than a section cut out from a bamboo stem. Shōgen Kuroda, a fine bamboo work artist, was discovered by the tea-master, Enshū Kobori (1579-1647), and his descendants also worked with this material for the Sen family. The Komazawa family, specializing in *ita-mono* (ref. page 57) created an original style in furniture pieces for use in the tea ceremony, such as standing shelves, tea-set boxes and folding screens. Jodei Kobayashi, a protégé of the feudal lord and famous tea cultist, Fumai Matsudaira (1751-1818), is known particularly for his *sode-shōji* (low standing screens) with graceful trellis patterns in bamboo, which he planned for use in the tea ceremony.

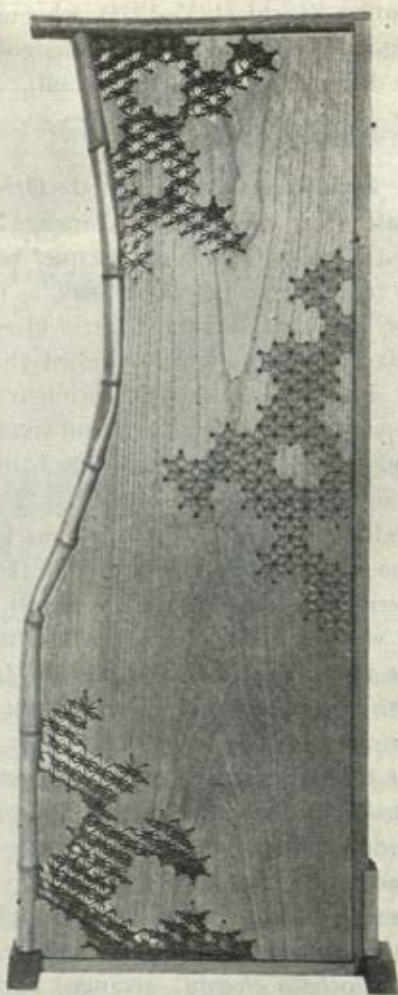
Artists in wood and bamboo work in the Edo period (from the early seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century) found a new field for expression in the *netsuke*. A *netsuke* was a catch, usually a small piece of sculpture, fastened on the end of a string which passed between the girdle and the garment, to secure from falling any small personal belonging, such as the *inrō* (medicine case), *kinchaku* (money pouch) or tobacco pouch, which was fastened at the other end. The materials used in making *netsuke* were wood, bamboo, ivory, horn, metal,

pottery and lacquer ware, and of these ivory and box-tree wood were used most commonly. *Netsuke* were used commonly both by *samurai* (warriors) and men of the *chōnin* (townspeople) class, and the designs decorating these artistic miniatures were naturally rich in variety. Among the most distinguished of the *netsuke* carvers in wood were Shūzan Yoshimura (d. 1776) in Ōsaka; Toen Morikawa (1820-1894) in Nara; Uman Deme (in the mid-eighteenth century), Hiromori Miwa (in the late eighteenth century) and Hōjitsu Meikeisai (d. 1872) in Edo; Tametake Kita (in the mid-eighteenth century) in Nagoya; and Masanao Suzuki (1815-1890) in Ise in the present Mie Prefecture.

While the *samurai* and the common citizens were delighting in their *netsuke*, the farming populace in the rural areas were producing interesting examples of folk-craft like trays and baskets which were full of a simple, rustic kind of beauty. These, of course, were articles whose primary importance lay in strength and durability, but they have an appeal because of their loveliness which conveys the feeling of their makers.

Owing to the gradual adoption of Western ways of living by many people the wood work of the Meiji era (1868-1912) found a new field of expansion in Western-style furniture. As a matter of necessity, it took a certain period of time before the original Japanese ideas could be set at work in this field to supplement or replace the borrowed Western designs. The wood work artists who distinguished themselves in this period were Kihachi Kiuchi (1826-1906) and his son

The *sode-shōji*  
made by Jodei Ko-  
bayashi, for use in  
the tea ceremony.



Hanko Kiuchi (1855-1933), who were skilled in *moku-zōgan* (inlaid wood, inlay of designs on wood with wood of different kinds, stone or shell).

## 5. Lacquer Ware

Lacquer art is a distinctly Oriental kind of handicraft which developed in Japan, China, Annam, Korea and Thailand. Japanese lacquer ware especially is held in high esteem the world over, as can be deduced from the fact that lacquer ware is often called japan ware just as ceramics ware is called china ware.

The oldest existing specimens of lacquer ware in Japan are the bows, bowls and combs of lacquered wood and vessels of lacquered knit bamboo excavated from a site of the *Jōmon* period in Hachinohe in Aomori Prefecture. Finds of the Ancient Burial Mound period also contain some examples of lacquer ware. These pieces, however, were made mostly for utility purposes. It was after the Asuka period (from the mid-sixth to the mid-seventh century) that the lacquer art made real artistic development. The earliest specimen of artistic lacquer work in existence is the miniature shrine in the Hōryūji Temple known as *Tamamushi-zushi* (*Tamamushi* Miniature Shrine). This is the shrine for a Buddhist icon and is in the form of a palace building placed on a box-shaped pedestal. It received its name because it is decorated with the iridescent wing-sheaths of a kind of beautiful beetle called *tamamushi* (*chrysochroa elegans*), arranged under openwork fittings of gilt bronze on the edges of its pedestal. It is



The *Tama-  
mushi-zushi* in  
the Hōryūji  
Temple. Height:  
7 feet 9 inches.



lacquered black all over, and has paintings on its panels done with vermilion, yellow and green lacquer. Especially interesting among these paintings are the scenes from *jataka* (lives of Gautama Buddha in his previous worlds of metempsychosis) on the side panels of the pedestal. The pictures are highly imaginative and descriptive of motion, and their coloring is simple yet rich in decorative effect because of the successful color scheme. The honeysuckle motif discussed in the chapter on metalwork (ref. page 105) is also found here and there on this miniature shrine.

The lacquer art in the Nara period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century), like in other types of handicrafts, was influenced by the highly advanced techniques and designs of the lacquer ware of the T'ang dynasty in China. Previously, the bodies of all lacquer ware had been made either of wood or of bamboo, and the technique of using both *kanshitsu* (dry-lacquer) and *shippi* (lacquered hide) was brought into the country anew in the Nara period. New techniques of ornamentation were also used in this period: *hyōmon* (sheet metal inlay), *raden* (nacre inlay), *mitsuda-e* (oil painting with litharge) and *makie* (the so-called "gold lacquer"). There are still many examples of all of these techniques in the Shōsōin Repository excepting for *makie*, which has only one specimen left, the scabbard of a sword. The art of *makie*, which made such marvelous progress after the Heian period as a representative type of Japanese handicraft, was still in its embryonic stage in the Nara period. Moreover, it is hard to tell whether the *makie* design on the said scabbard was done by a Japanese craftsman or not, just as it is to discriminate between Japanese and Chinese examples of *hyōmon* or *raden*.

*Makie* art developed by leaps and bounds during the late Heian period and rose to the top of all the decorative techniques in lacquer. Unlike the *hyōmon* and *raden* styles, *makie* consisted of the simple process of sprinkling gold and silver dust on a design drawn in lacquer. It allowed a freer presentation of graphic designs, and its delicate, graceful touch suited the taste



The "box for thirty volumes of Buddhist manuscripts" owned by the Ninnaji Temple.



The cosmetic box with a design of wheels half submerged in a stream, belonging to the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties.



of the Heian nobility. As the art of *makie* thus progressed and the demand for *makie* works increased, it was gradually used on a wider variety of objects: food and drinking vessels, cosmetic holders, lanterns, stationery pieces, furniture, and even on the wooden surfaces of buildings. The oldest specimen of *makie* in the Late Heian period is the "box for thirty volumes of Buddhist manuscripts" with a *hōsōge* design (ref. page 105) now owned by the Ninnaji Temple in Kyōto. This box was made in 919 to contain the writings on Esoteric Buddhism which had been brought back from China by the priest Kūkai (774-835), exponent of the Shingon doctrines of Buddhism in Japan. The foundation of this box is *kanshitsu* (dry-lacquer), a material generally used in the previous period, and the design on it retains a lingering touch of the T'ang style. In the eleventh to the twelfth centuries, the influence of the T'ang style disappeared. A genuine Japanese style became manifest both in form and in design. Designs, in particular, tended to become more elegant, based upon sketches drawn by the painters of the *Yamato-e* school. Typical of this sort are the box of the *karabitsu* type (box with legs and cover) with a design of a marsh and plovers, owned by the Kongōbuji Temple on Mt. Kōya in Wakayama Prefecture, and the cosmetic box with a design of wheels half submerged in a stream, belonging to the collection of the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties. Both are fine examples of *makie* art, enriched with *raden*, which gives variety to the designs and serves to enliven the

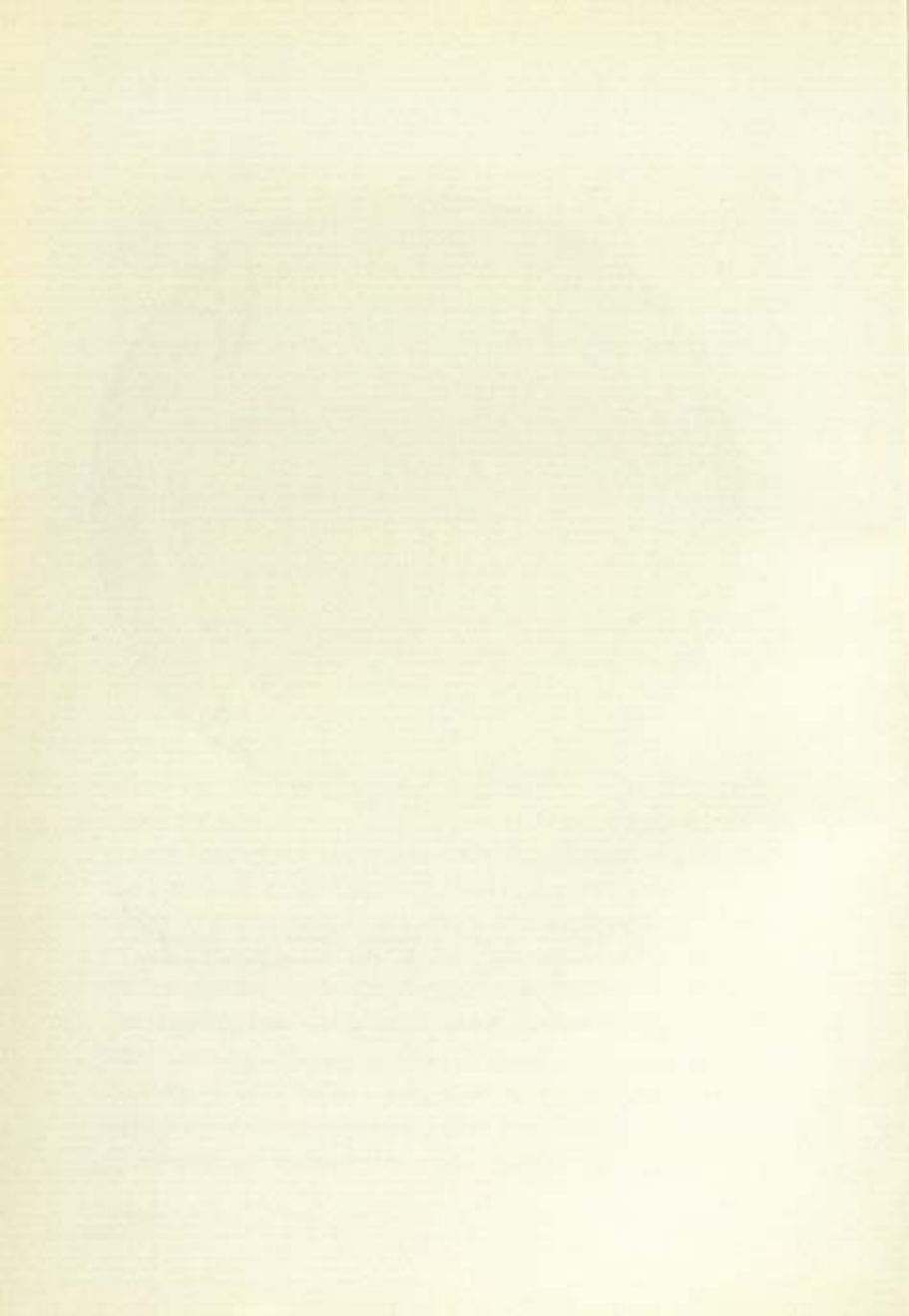
whole effect. Incidentally, *raden* also was fully assimilated during the Late Heian period, and was used lavishly on *makie* works. It was also frequently used independently as architectural ornamentation on pillars, lintels and other building parts. The Hō-ōdō (Phoenix Hall) of the Byōdōin Temple in Kyōto, and the Konjiki-dō (Golden Hall) of the Chūsonji Temple at Hiraizumi in Iwate Prefecture, for instance, still retain vestiges of their original splendor in the Late Heian times.

*Makie* in the Kamakura period (from the end of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century) was characterized by its designs, in which a more realistic representation gained over the graceful, sentimental treatment of the preceding period. This tendency was common in all fields of art, but in *makie* it was enhanced by technical changes. *Makie* designs during the Heian period were executed in two kinds of metal powder: gold dust and silver dust, or gold dust and *aokin* dust (a bluish mixture of gold and silver dust), which created a moderate color contrast. In the Kamakura period silver dust was seldom used. Designs were done almost exclusively in gold alone, and therefore stood out with strong effect on black-lacquered grounds. The creation of *taka-makie*, with the designs raised in low relief by the application of lacquer over and over again, also was instrumental in adding to such an effect. The writing-set box, with a design of chrysanthemums growing along a fence, owned by the Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gū Shrine at Kamakura near Tōkyō, and the *tebako*



Japan Travel Bureau

A tray with a lacquer painting showing a dragonfly and a water-plantain, made in the seventeenth century.





(cosmetic box) with a design of Japanese apricot trees owned by the Mishima Shrine in Shizuoka Prefecture, are masterpieces illustrating the characteristics of the *makie* of the Kamakura period with their powerful forms and realistic graphic designs. The former is the oldest existing example of *makie* art. The latter is another antique specimen and the original contents consisting of a complete set of combs, mirrors, powder boxes and other items remain intact to the present day.

The technique used in making *raden* progressed remarkably in the Kamakura period side by side with the *makie* art. *Raden* in this period is represented excellently by a saddle known as the "Shigure Saddle" (ref. page 10) from the collection of the Eisei Bunko Library in Tōkyō. It is amazing to note how skilfully the brittle shell was cut into intricate shapes and inlaid on the curving surface of the saddle to produce the graphic design.

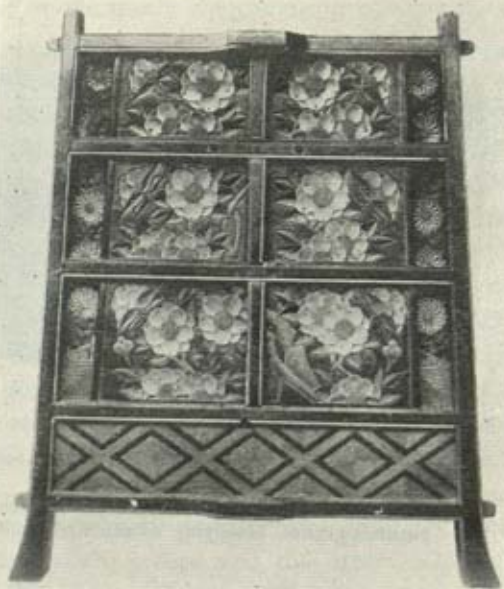
Lacquer art was influenced greatly by the Chinese style in the Muromachi period (from the end of the fourteenth to the late sixteenth century). The shapes of the lacquer objects, following the manner of the Chinese art under the Ming dynasty, became freer, and manifested a sort of rustic vigor instead of the stylized simplicity which had characterized the work of the Kamakura period. *Makie* designs in the style of the traditional *Yamato-e* painting were seasoned with the type of brushwork used in Chinese-style painting. The *Kanga* (also known as *Karae*, "Chinese painting") school



This inkstone box with a design entitled "Shio-no-yama" was made in the fifteenth century and is owned by the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties.

of painting, which sprang up in Japan during the Muromachi period under the influence of the black-and-white paintings of the Sung and Yuan dynasties, was characterized by the powerful effect of its brush strokes in the depicting of rocks, trunks of trees, running water, etc. Utilized on such details of the *makie* designs as rocks, tree trunks and water streams, the Chinese-style lines gave them an atmosphere of strength which was far removed from the traditional elegance. The composition of the designs became more complex, and the technique used in their execution became more elaborate. The development of the *taka-makie* technique was especially notable. Characteristics of the *makie* art of

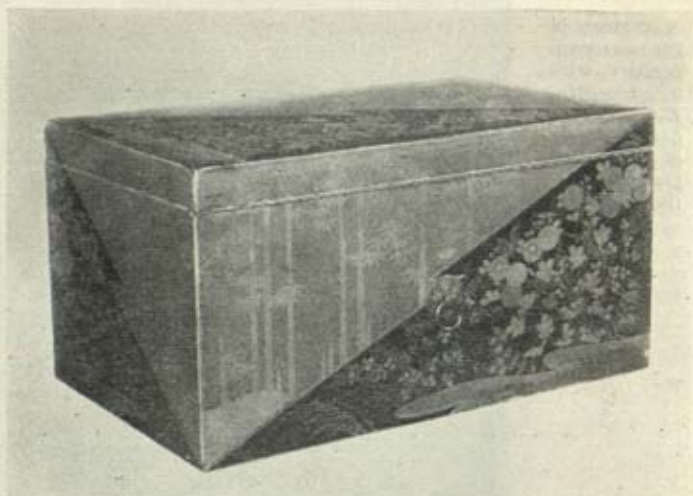
A cabinet of the sixteenth century with a beautiful *Kamakura-bori* design of camellias. Owned by the Jigenji Temple.



this period are shown in the inkstone box with a design entitled "Shio-no-yama," from the collection of the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties. The design is a symbolic illustration of a poem which sings about the scenery of Shio-no-yama, with a few characters from the text of the poem scattered about in the picture (ref. page 136).

Of the various types of lacquer art besides *makie*, those known as *Kamakura-bori* and *chinkin* (ref. page 62) flourished in the Muromachi period. *Kamakura-bori* was originally an imitation in wood carving





A box decorated with *makie* designs of bomboos and autumn grasses, belonging to the Kōdaiji Temple.

of the Chinese *tsuishu*. Chinese *tsuishu* articles were imported in great quantities at the time, and *Kamakura-bori* shared their popularity. The former was prized for its elaborate carving, while the latter was loved for its simple, rough type of beauty. *Chinkin*, too, was a handicraft imported from China, but the style it developed in Japan differed from that of its Chinese prototype. The Japanese specimens fell short in the fluidity of their engraved lines, but were richer in refined grace.

The lacquer art took on a new aspect in the Momoyama period (from the late sixteenth to the early



seventeenth century). Because of its lavish ornateness it was favored by the newly risen *samurai* class, and the articles done in this style showed the decided change from the delicate, subdued beauty of the Muromachi period to the bold, bright floridity of the new age. The shapes of the lacquer work of this period were rich in variety, and included the traditional Japanese-style forms popular since the Heian period, and some transmitted in previous periods from China under the Ming dynasty and from Korea and even some introduced from Europe. One universal feature common to all these was power within the realm of smart freshness. The designs were simplified, and the simplicity was of such a kind as to add to the decorative effect. There is, for example, a box with its top and side surfaces each sectioned by a diagonal line into two triangles. One of the triangles is coated with *nashiji*,\* and decorated with bamboos with straight stems; and the other section is lacquered black and has a design of autumn grasses with curving stems and leaves. The contrast of the two entirely different pictures in this case is a successful device to attract the interest of the observer.

Representative of the *makie* in the Momoyama period is the type known as *Kōdaiji-makie*, deriving its name from the Kōdaiji Temple at Higashiyama in Kyōto. The Kōdaiji is a Buddhist temple founded in

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\* "Pear-skin ground" is a base covered with lacquer, over which gold or silver dust is sprinkled, and then covered again with lacquer, the surface being subsequently polished to present an appearance like aventurine lacquer.

1605 by Kōdaiin, widow of Hideyoshi Toyotomi. It is said that the lady, after her husband's death, transferred a part of Fushimi Castle, which had been Hideyoshi's dwelling, to Higashiyama, and made it into the temple. The temple houses a shrine containing wooden images of Hideyoshi and his wife; the door panels of this shrine are decorated with gorgeous *makie* designs of pine-trees and bamboos and of chrysanthemums and maples. The temple also owns a number of furniture pieces and utensils such as standing shelves, *zen* (meal trays with legs), rice and soup bowls, chairs and cabinets, all ornamented with *makie*. The *makie* designs on these pieces are all done in the same style, which is called by its generic term, *Kōdaiji-makie*.

The Momoyama period has left a group of interesting specimens of *makie* reflecting the contact which Japan had with European culture. These are inkstone boxes, standing shelves, drum bodies and other objects showing designs of matchlock guns, playing cards, smoking pipes and other things which were brought to Japan by Europeans at that time. There were also religious ceremonial utensils for use within Japan and decorative pieces for export, such as, for example, host boxes used in the Catholic service and backgammon boards, which were made under the guidance of, or to the order of, English or Dutch peoples.

The fresh designs and the bold style of their execution, which characterized the work of the Momoyama period, continued to be popular and were improved in the Edo period. Gradually improved with the passage

A host box for the Catholic service, made in the sixteenth century of wood, lacquered, and decorated with *makie* and nacre inlay. Owned by the Tōkeiji Temple, Kamakura.



of time, the *makie* was brought to a peak of refinement during the early days of the period, and the perfection of the *makie* ware was manifested especially in the intelligent ideas and composition of the designs. The refinement of the early Edo lacquer art is typified by the *makie* articles by Kōetsu. Kōetsu Hon-ami, as was mentioned before, was a man of many talents. Besides being a good painter, calligrapher and potter, he distinguished himself as a superb *makie* artist. The inkstone box with the design of a bridge on pontoons, belonging to the collection of the Tōkyō National Museum, is a pre-eminent masterpiece showing his very unconventional ideas of designing.

In contrast with the group of *makie* works which derive their bold, simplified designs from the Momoyama style, another group following the elaborate,



delicate style of the Muromachi period also appeared at the beginning of the early Edo period. These were extremely ornate, luxurious pieces with designs raised in relief and decorated with *makie*, and further enriched with inlays of carved metal and shell. Many fine specimens of this kind were made by the men of the Kōami family, who served the Tokugawa *shōgun* in successive generations as *makie* experts. The magnificent set of standing shelves and their contents, preserved in the Tokugawa Art Museum in Nagoya, is widely known as a masterpiece by Nagashige Kōami (1599-1651).

The middle part of the Edo period saw the rise of the *chōnin* (townspeople) class. The taste of this newly-rich class was for luxurious decorativeness, and the *makie* of that period reflected their liking in elaborate designs executed with a lavish use of gold. Generally speaking, it tended to appeal to the vulgar taste. There were, however, some artists who were proud of their individual original styles. Kōrin Ogata (1658-1716) and Seisei Shiomi (1646-1719) in Kyōto, and Haritsu Ogawa (1663-1747) in Edo, were outstanding among these. Kōrin, especially, left for posterity the famous inkstone box with a design depicting the scene of the Yatsubashi Bridge (in Aichi Prefecture) over a pond where irises are in full bloom, now owned by the Tōkyō National Museum. Among the *makie* artists prominent toward the end of the Edo period, mention must be made of Tōyō Iizuka (in the late eighteenth century), Yōyūsai Hara (1772-1845) in Edo, and Zōkoku Tama-





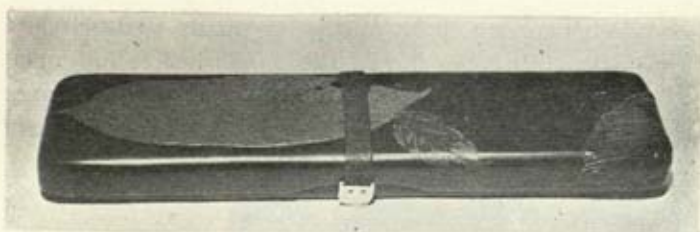
An inkstone box with a design of a bridge on pontoons, made by Kōetsu Hon-ami (above), and a beautiful lacquered cosmetic box by Nagashige Kōami (below).



kaji (1805-1869) who lived in Takamatsu in Shikoku.

The above is a brief outline of the *makie* art in the Momoyama and Edo periods. Other types of lacquer art fashionable in those periods were *urushi-e*, *mitsuda-e*, *chinkin* and *raden*. It is interesting to note that while *makie* prospered chiefly in the two main cities of Japan, namely Kyōto and Edo, the latter types developed mainly in the local areas. *Urushi-e* had been produced in Kyōto since the Momoyama period; *Jōhōji-nuri* (*nuri* meaning lacquering or lacquered object) originating at about the same time in Mutsu Province (the present Iwate Prefecture) was more famous in the local districts. Of the *mitsuda-e* (oil painting with litharge), the *Jōga-hana-nuri* in Etchū Province (the present Toyama Prefecture), reportedly first produced in the early Edo period, was most famous. Among the *chinkin* wares the best known was the kind produced at Wajima in Noto Province (the present Ishikawa Prefecture), which was first made in the middle part of the Edo period. Nagasaki had its peculiar type of *raden*, which like the Chinese style, used very thin strips of shell. Another kind of lacquer art in the Chinese style was a lacquered wood carving which copied the effect of *tsuishu*, beginning in the mid-Edo period at Murakami in Echigo Province (the present Niigata Prefecture).

Besides these, there were local products using plain lacquering, that is to say, without inlaid, carved or painted ornaments. The *Aizu-nuri* at Aizu-Wakamatsu in Iwashiro Province (the present Fukushima Prefecture), which originated in the Momoyama period; the *Wakasa-*



Japan Travel Bureau

A box for writing brushes decorated with a *makie* design by Zeshin Shibata.

*nuri*\* at Obama in Wakasa Province (the present Fukui Prefecture), said to have been first produced in the early Edo period; the *Tsugaru-nuri* (almost similar to the *Wakasa-nuri*) in Tsugaru Province (the present Aomori Prefecture); the *Kuroe-nuri* in Kii Province (the present Wakayama Prefecture), and the *Shunkei-nuri* in Hida Province (the present Gifu Prefecture) and Noshiro Province (the present Akita Prefecture), originating in or after the mid-Edo period;—all these types of lacquer were developed in the local districts during the 300 years beginning in the late sixteenth century and ending in the mid-nineteenth century.

The above-mentioned local crafts continued in existence during the Meiji era (1868–1912), and some of them made great progress in new industrialized forms. *Makie* in the Meiji era did not make any notable

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\* This type of lacquer ware is coated with layers of different colored lacquer, covered with gold leaf and polished, then coated with thin transparent lacquer, and polished again to bring out beautiful mottled patterns.

development, but it gave rise to many artists who developed full command of the established techniques. The most distinguished of these were Zeshin Shibata (1807-1891), Itchō Kawanobe (1830-1910) and Shōsai Shirayama (1853-1923), all of Tōkyō.

## 6. Fabrics

The art of weaving in Japan is believed to have originated around the beginning of the Christian era. The Japanese in this period were said to have learned how to cultivate fields and plant them with hemp, to spin threads with the fiber of hemp as well as of *kōzo* (Japanese paper mulberry) and *kuwa* (mulberry), and to weave cloth on a very simple kind of loom.

From about the fourth to the fifth century many people began to come over to Japan from Korea and in time they became naturalized. Many of them were Chinese who had been living in Korea. These new citizens brought with them other persons from tribes who were skilled in weaving, and these gave impetus to the Japanese weaving art. The only source of information regarding the types of clothing used in those times is the *haniwa*, the terra-cotta figures of humans, animals, houses and other objects excavated from the tumuli of the Ancient Burial Mound period. *Haniwa* figures of men of the upper classes were made wearing coats with short sleeves, folded to the left, and loose, baggy trousers tied with strings at the knees. Figures of the noblewomen wear coats with similar cylindrical sleeves, also folded to the left, and skirts over them.



Part of the  
*Tenjukoku*  
*Mandara* of  
the Chūgūji  
Temple.

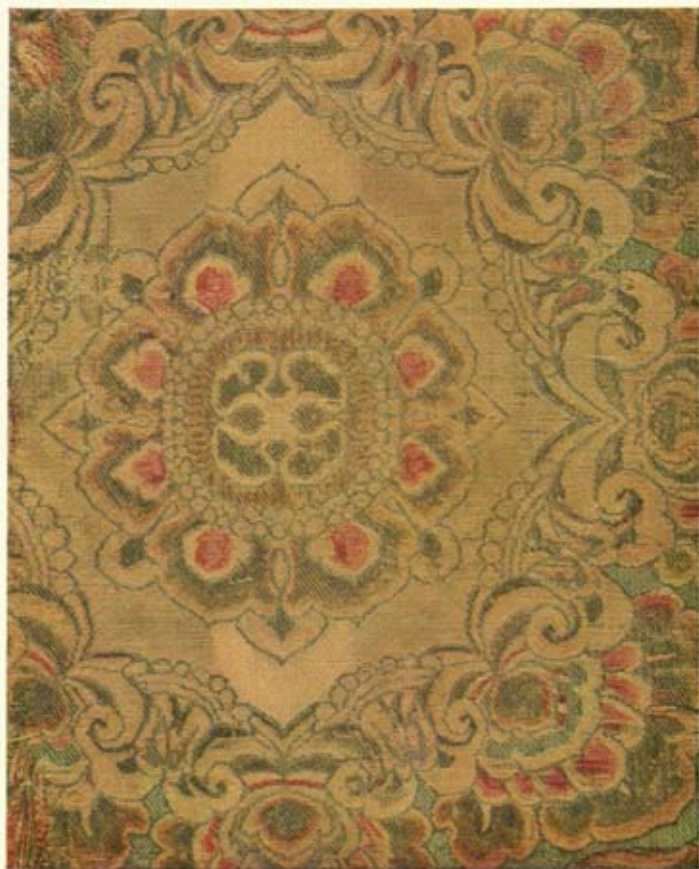


Handicrafts in general made remarkable progress in the Asuka period (from the mid-sixth to the mid-seventh century). The fabric art was especially noteworthy. The most famous specimen of this art existing from this period is an embroidered picture in the Chūgūji Temple in Nara, known as the *Tenjukoku Mandara*, which illustrates the Buddhist paradise called Tenjukoku (Land of Heavenly Longevity). This wall hanging was embroidered by several court ladies at the order of Tachibana-no-Ōiratsume, consort of Prince Shōtoku (ref. page 24) with a prayer for the spirit

of the prince after his death. The *mandara* is said to represent Tenjūkoku where the prince was believed later to have been reborn. The picture was discovered in fragments, which were assembled and mounted in a frame about three feet square. History tells us, however, that the picture originally consisted of two wall hangings of a considerably large size. The remaining fragments have designs of people, a phoenix, the moon and the legendary hare living in the moon, temple buildings, etc., embroidered with threads of various colors.

The fabric art had its golden age in the Nara period (from the mid-seventh to the end of the eighth century). The progress of the weaving and dyeing techniques in this period was due, on one hand, largely to the introduction of the T'ang crafts from China, and, on the other, to the establishment of a powerful centralized government by the Reform of Taika which carried on among many other industrial enterprises these two textile industries.

The techniques used in the fabric art in this period were of various types, for instance, weaving, dyeing and embroidery. The most gorgeous type of weaving was the *nishiki* (brocade). The Shōsōin Repository in Nara contains many brocaded pieces, including such exquisite examples as the cover of an arm rest with a design of phoenixes. *Nishiki* weaving included a variety called *tsuzure-nishiki* (tapestry weave), which was the same as the tapestry made in later periods. The gorgeousness of the *nishiki* was contrasted with the elegance of *aya*



Japan Travel Bureau

A piece of brocade woven in the Nara period.  
Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.





(twill weave), and the elaborateness of *ra* (silk gauze) which appeared as fine as if it were knitted work.

Dye work in the Nara period made great strides forward in different branches, such as *rōkechi* (wax-resisting dyeing or batik), *kyōkechi* (jammed dyeing), and *kōkechi* (tied dyeing). The collection in the Shōsōin Repository includes folding screens on which are mounted cloths with designs showing the characteristics of these different techniques of dye work.

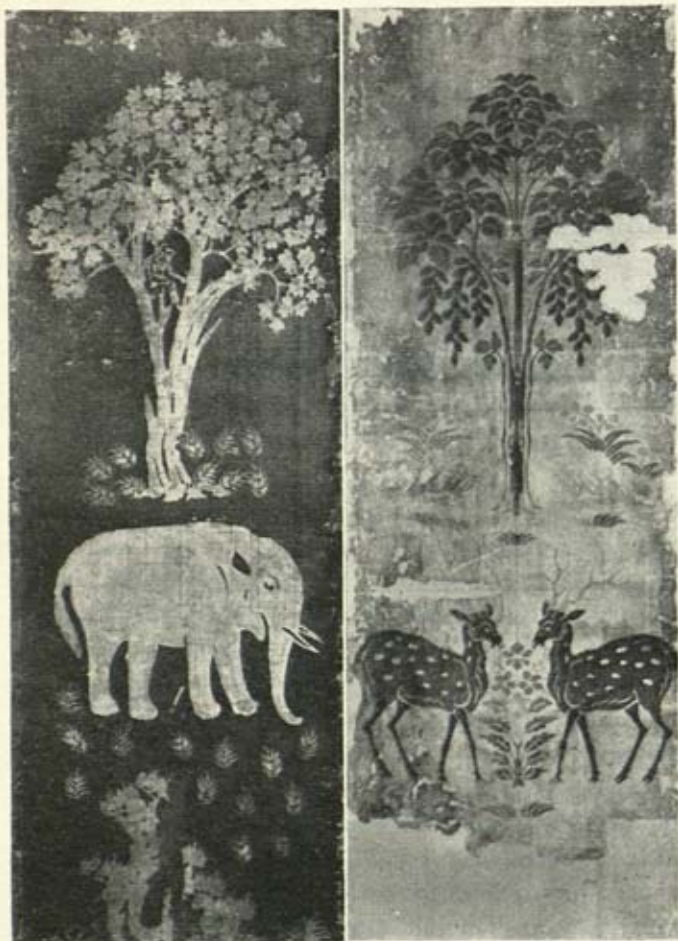
Embroidery also was an important factor in the fabric art of this period. A fine example is the *ban* (banner-like pendent ornament used in Buddhist buildings) embroidered on both sides with threads of five colors.

While existing specimens of fabric art in the Nara period are quite numerous, those from the Heian period (from the end of the eighth to the end of the twelfth century) have almost all been lost. Records gleaned from literature and painting, however, show that the textile art of the Late Heian period, like other types of handicrafts, was imbued with the native Japanese flavor. It appears that the adapting of the art to native tastes was due greatly to the change that occurred in the form of the clothing worn by the people. The ceremonial dress for courtiers made in the T'ang style, which had been in use during the Nara period, was transformed into the Japanese style of dress called *sokutai*. In contrast with this ceremonial dress, there appeared the types of clothing known as *nōshi* and *kariginu* worn by the courtiers in private life. The *nōshi* especially was

the most widely used of men's costumes in the Late Heian period, and was frequently described and depicted in the literary works and scroll-paintings of the time. It was a very graceful form well suited to the nobility.

The full dress worn by the ladies, corresponding to the men's *sokutai*, was called *jūnihitoe* (twelve-fold dress). It consisted of numerous garments of different colors worn one over another, with a long pleated skirt called *mo* worn over these and spread trailing behind. The outermost garment was made of fabric with beautiful patterns, and the skirt was decorated with brushwork painting, embroidery or tied dyeing, sometimes with the addition of applied gold- or silver-leaf ornaments and even *raden* (nacre inlay) or bronze mirrors. Illustrations of the *jūnihitoe* disclose that the beauty of clothing in the concept of the people of the Late Heian period did not lie in the designs on them but in the contrast of colors shown in the manifold plain undergarments revealed at the sleeves and neck and in the train. The colors used differed according to the different seasons.

The beauty of the fabric art of this period is also seen in an unusual specimen: the seven *kake-mamori*, or talismans in cloth cases which were worn hanging from the neck, now owned by the Shitennōji Temple in Ōsaka. These are small wooden tablets contained in cases of brocade, which have metal studs decorated with designs in low relief. Although small in size, the cases are beautiful pieces manifesting the delicate taste of the Late Heian period.



The screen panel on the left shows *rôkechi* (batik) dyeing, the one on the right, *kyôkechi* (jammed dye work), of the Nara period. Both are kept in the Shôsôin Repository.



One of the seven *kake-mamori* made in the twelfth century, and owned by the Shiten-nōji Temple.

Existing examples of the fabric art of the following Kamakura and Muromachi periods (from the end of the twelfth to the late sixteenth century) are scarce. An important characteristic of the clothing of these periods was the simplified form of the costumes. It is important also to note that the types of dresses which had previously been worn only by the lower classes of people began to be used by the upper classes as well. Among the men's costumes, the *kariginu*, an informal dress for the nobility in the preceding period, was adopted as the official costume for the warrior class, while the *hitatare*, which had been in use by the lower classes, became one of the costumes used by the warriors for everyday wear. In the Tōkyō National Museum there is preserved one of the oldest specimens of the type of *hitatare* that was worn under armor.

Of all the women's clothes the *jūnihitoe* was most



elaborate. But gradually the practice of wearing this and other manifold-layered outfits went out of fashion. The outer garments tended to be omitted, until finally the *kosode*, originally an undergarment to be worn under the formal costume, appeared on top. A skirt resembling trousers in form was worn over the *kosode* dress, but this skirt, too, was later omitted, so that the *kosode* became the real complete garment. Originally the *kosode*, as part of the underwear, had been plain, but as it became the outer garment, it naturally began to be ornamented with colorful designs. Around the middle of the Muromachi period the *kosode* began to appear in large attractive patterns made by *tsujigahana-zome* dyeing (ref. page 65).

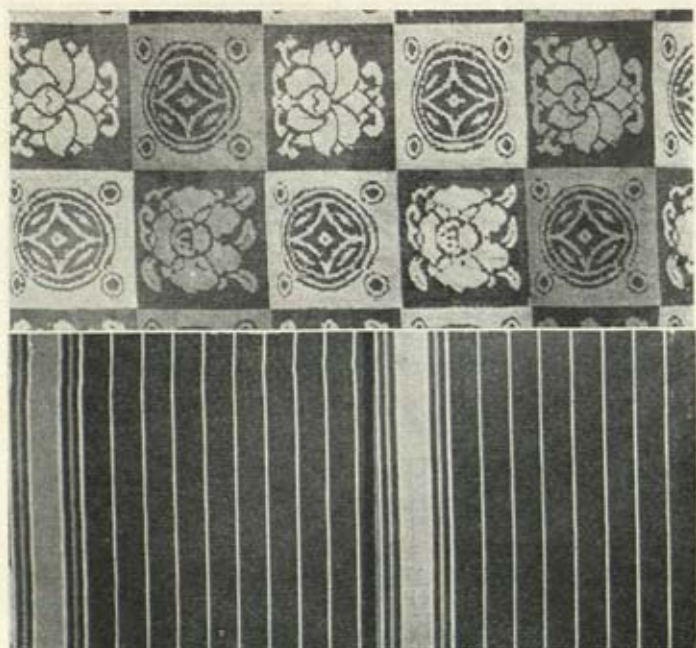
Although the forms of both men's and women's clothing thus changed, the *sokutai* and the *jūnihitoe*, the full costumes for courtiers and ladies in the Heian period, remained in use at the imperial court to be worn on rare ceremonial occasions. Examples of these elaborate gowns are still preserved in the Tsurugaoka Hachimangū Shrine in Kamakura, the Kumano Hayatama Shrine in Wakayama, and the Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya, supplying us with valuable reference on the brocade, twill and other weaving techniques of the time from the Kamakura to the Muromachi period. Specimens of the embroidery of these periods exist on several Buddhist images. The picture of the Amida Triad (Buddha Amitabha and Two Attendants), owned by the Sainenji Temple in Ishikawa Prefecture, is an elaborate piece of work, all embroidered with threads

of various colors.

It should be noted that during the Muromachi period, with the spread of the tea cult, it became the vogue to appreciate the Chinese cloths of the Sung, Yuan and Ming dynasties. These were prized as material from which to make cases for the tea ceremony utensils and to mount the hanging scrolls of painting or calligraphy used as ornamental hangings in the alcove of the tearoom. Collectively classified as *meibutsu-gire* (cloths for famous things),\* these cloths included such varieties as *kinran* (gold brocade), *donsu* (a kind of satin), *kantō* (striped weave from China and the southern Pacific areas), and *inkin* (cloth with patterns in gold leaf applied by means of lacquer or glue). Various types under each variety were named distinctively in reference to their patterns or after their owners, as *Enshū-donsu* (*donsu* favored by Enshū Kobori, ref. page 123), for example. The imported

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\* Among the utensils (tea-bowls, tea-caddies, etc.) for the tea ceremony, there are objects classified as *meibutsu* (famous things) and *ō-meibutsu* (things of great fame). The former denotes a group of objects selected by Sen-no-Rikyū, the pre-eminent tea-master of the Momoyama period, and his contemporaries at the order of Nobunaga Oda and his successor, Hideyoshi Toyotomi. The latter includes the pieces earlier classified as such by Nōami, Sōami and other art critics in the Muromachi period at the request of the Shōgun Yoshimasa Ashikaga. Besides these, there is another group called *chūkō-meibutsu* (later famous things), which were listed in addition by Enshū Kobori in the Edo period, but this group is commonly included within the *meibutsu* group. These objects being invaluable treasures for the tea ceremony masters, cases were specially made for the individual pieces from the precious imported cloth. The cloths used for making these objects were called *meibutsu-gire*.



Pieces of *meibutsu-gire*. The one below is called *kantô*.

fabrics encouraged the making of copies at Sakai in Ōsaka and Nishijin in Kyōto.

One of the main reasons for the remarkable progress of the fabric art in the Momoyama period (from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century) was the popularity of the *kosode*. As was stated before, the *kosode* was originally an undergarment for use with the full dress of the nobility and later became an outer garment; among the commoners, however, it had from



the beginning been a complete suit worn independently without anything under or over it. As the *kosode* in the Momoyama period gradually became the costume of both men and women in all classes, its designs were naturally rich in variety. Furthermore, unlike the many-layered dresses such as the *jūnihitoe*, the *kosode* revealed the contours of the wearer's body. Its colors and designs, therefore, had to be devised so as to stand out effectively when worn.

During the period from the late sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth century, however, the advanced ideas in designing were not accompanied by a parallel advance in technical skill. Until the invention of excellent dye work techniques in the mid-Edo period, graphic designs were worked out in embroidery as a temporary substitute for dyeing. With embroidery a designer could work out any desired design, and its beauty was enhanced when used side by side with *surihaku* (appliqué of gold or sometimes silver leaf). *Surihaku*, said to have been inspired by the Chinese *inkin* method (ref. page 156) developed in China under the Ming dynasty, was a type of fabric decoration done by drawing a design in starch or glue and pressing gold or silver leaf on it. *Surihaku* was used to produce the fine design of grapes and *shikishi* (square pieces of paper on which poems are written or pictures painted) on a *nō* robe in the Tōkyō National Museum. However, it was the *nuihaku*, a combination of *nui* (embroidery) and *haku* (gold leaf) imprint, that truly represented the fabric art of the Momoyama period.





Part of a sixteenth-century silk robe with appliques of gold and silver, called *surihaku*. Owned by the Tōkyō National Museum.

Several excellent specimens of the technique perfected during this period exist today. A notable example of *muihaku* is seen on a *nō* robe in the collection of the Tōkyō National Museum reproduced on page 161. Half of this robe, that is, the vertical half of the body and one of the two hanging sleeves, is covered with a design of clematis blossoms, while the remaining half

has a design of fans. These combinations of designs, or costumes bearing such designs, are termed *katami-gawari* (varying in halves).

Embroidery was also used in combination with tied dyeing. A *kosode* in the Tōkyō National Museum, with a design of deer and maples done in embroidery, alternating with triangular bands of minute circles done in tied dyeing, is a superb specimen of this type of work, which shows the adventurous spirit of the craftsmen of the Momoyama period.

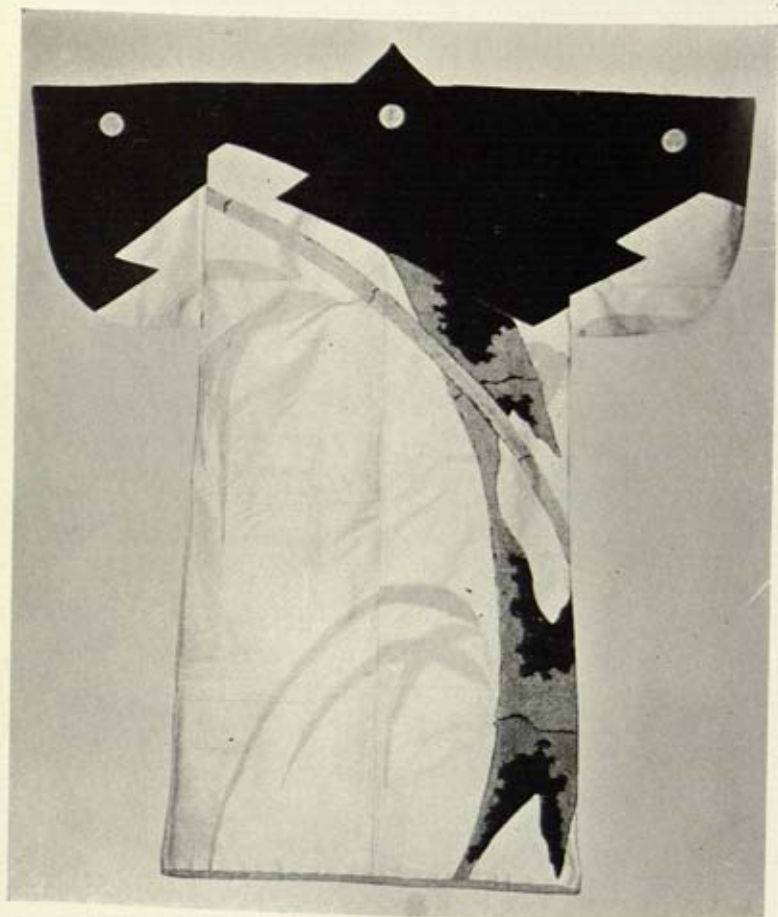
There are also fine examples of *kimono* dyed in the afore-mentioned *tsujigahana-zome* style sometime during the Momoyama and early Edo periods. Typical of this group is the *kosode* with a bamboo design owned by the Daihiko Institute of Artistic Dyeing and Embroidery in Tōkyō. It is characterized by a highly refined effect.

An interesting fact to be noted about the Momoyama and early Edo periods was the influence of the European costumes worn by the Portuguese and Spanish visitors on the native dress. There appeared the *hakama* (skirt-like trousers gathered at the knees like knickerbockers), and coats with pleated neck bands. The *jimbaori* (battlefield coat), a short coat worn over armor, was derived from the Western mantle, also brought into the country at that time. One of the *jimbaori* in the Tōkyō National Museum has a unique design of sickles in black crossed on a background of dark red wool.

The fabric art of the mid-Edo period was greatly enlivened by the rise and spread in popularity of a type of dye work called *Yūzen-zome* (*Yūzen* dyeing). With

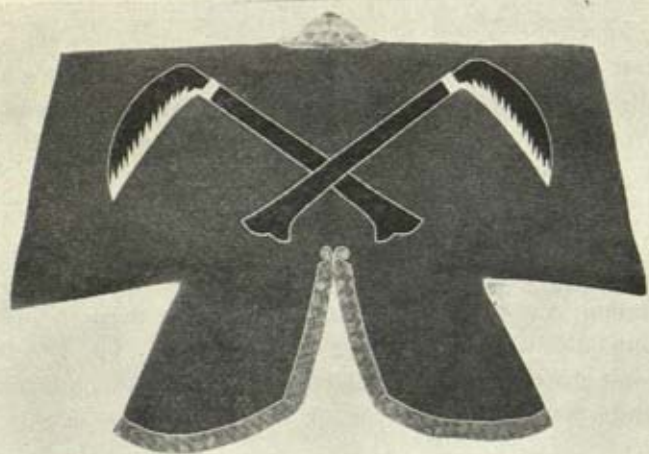


A sixteenth-century *nō* robe made of silk and decorated with embroidery and gold-leaf imprints.



A fine example of the *tsujigahana-zome* style—a *kosode* with a bamboo design made in the sixteenth century (ref. page 160).





A *jimbaori* with a crossed-sickle design, said to have been used by a lord in the sixteenth century.

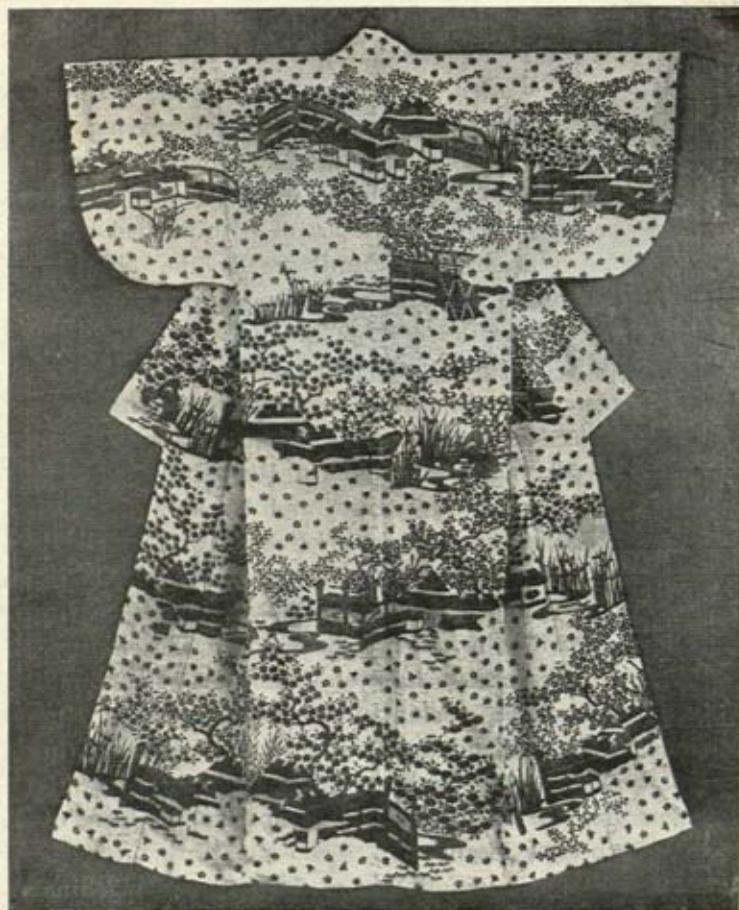
this colorful new method of dyeing the artists could decorate the *kosode* with free, polychrome graphic designs, which had not been possible by embroidery. The *Yūzen-zome* method is said to have been invented by Yūzensai Miyazaki, a painter in Kyōto living in the last part of the seventeenth century. The success of this excellent style of dyeing was not attributable to Yūzensai alone, however; it is more reasonable to say that he improved and popularized the technique of *nori-zome* (starch dyeing, ref. page 65) which had developed suddenly in and about his time. The bright colorful designs of the *kosode* done by this method

were greatly welcomed by the people of the time. *Yūzen-zome* became a fashion not only with the nobility but also among the commoners, and it made great progress in Kyōto as well as in Kanazawa in Kaga Province (the present Ishikawa Prefecture). In the latter area it is known as *Kaga Yūzen*.

Almost concurrently with the *Yūzen-zome*, there appeared another type of dye work termed the *Chaya-zome* (ref. page 65). In this method various fine designs, more commonly landscapes, were dyed in blue only, all over *kimono* made of hemp cloth. The *Chaya-zome* material, made by elaborate processes, was the best and most expensive type of textile used for summer dresses.

Weaving, as well as embroidery and dyeing, progressed remarkably in the mid-Edo period. Surprisingly elaborate techniques were used in the weaving of that time, especially in the *Kara-ori* (Chinese weave). The *Kara-ori* was a type of fabric made with a diagonal weave and woven with threads of various colors as well as gold and silver, and the technique, imported from China during the late sixteenth century, flourished in Kyōto, centering around Nishijin. Robes made of *Kara-ori* were used chiefly for female roles in the *nō* dance.

The above-mentioned types of fabric art gradually became over-elaborate toward the end of the Edo period. The general tendency was to put too much importance on intricate techniques, at the cost of sufficient interest in designs. The fresh designs of this



A summer hemp *kimono* of the eighteenth century with designs of landscapes in the four seasons dyed in the *Chaya-zome* style. Owned by the Nagao Museum, Kamakura.



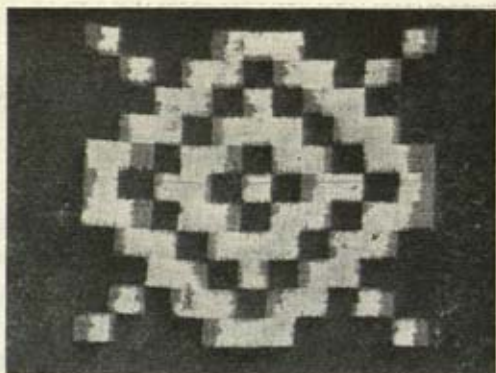
period are more often found on the inexpensive, plain kinds of clothing for everyday use.

Throughout the Momoyama and Edo periods, remarkable progress was seen in the local weaving industry. The center of Japanese weaving had been Nishijin in Kyōto. Ever since its beginning in the Momoyama period, the fabric art of Nishijin had been developing year by year, until finally the Nishijin weavers began to monopolize almost entirely the production of all textiles of high quality. The Nishijin fabrics thus had great influence on the local weavers. The *Hakata-ori* (*ori* meaning weaving or woven fabric) produced at Hakata (a part of Fukuoka City in Kyūshū); the silk fabrics at Yūki (in Ibaraki Prefecture), Isezaki (in Gumma Prefecture) and Hachiōji (in Tōkyō Metropolis); and the *kasuri* (fabrics with splashed patterns woven with threads previously dyed in mottles), such as the *Satsuma-gasuri* at Kagoshima (in Satsuma Province, or the present Kagoshima Prefecture, Kyūshū. "*Gasuri*" is a form of "*kasuri*," the first-sound being changed by voicing), the *Kurume-gasuri* at Kurume in Kyūshū and the *Iyo-gasuri* at Matsuyama (in Iyo Province, or the present Ehime Prefecture) in Shikoku, are still enjoying fame as specific products of their respective localities.

Owing to the importation of the Jacquard machine and chemical dye stuffs, the Japanese fabric art in the Meiji era (1868–1912) developed in a different manner from the way it had in the previous periods. It should be noted here also that Jimbei Kawashima (1853–1910),



A fine specimen of *Kurumegasuri*, owned by Mr. J. Langewis.



a weaver at Nishijin in Kyōto who studied the technique of tapestry weaving at the Gobelin factory in Paris, introduced Western methods into the traditional Japanese industry, creating a novel kind of weaving.

So far we have surveyed Japanese handicrafts in ceramics, glass, metal, wood and bamboo, lacquer, and fabrics. Besides these, there are pieces of decorative art in ivory, horn and stone carvings. There are, however, practically no specimens left that are worth detailed discussion. Suffice it here to mention that ivory carving in the Edo period brought out such distinguished *netsuke* carvers as Rantei Nagai (in the late eighteenth century) in Kyōto, Mitsuhiro Ōhara (1810-1875) and Kaigyokusai-Masatsugu (1820-1865) in Ōsaka, and that the Meiji era produced Kōmei Ishikawa (1852-1913), Gyokuzan Asahi (1841-1923) and other skillful carvers who made fine human figurines and ornaments for interior decoration.

## CHAPTER V

# CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

What is the present status of the traditional Japanese handicrafts? How are they progressing in the new current of art in the present-day world? The last chapter of this volume is devoted to a discourse on Japanese handicrafts after World War II.

### 1. Principal Products of Each District

In early times, handicraft works were made for and under the patronage of the limited circles of the nobility, the warrior class and the religious establishments. It was in the Momoyama and Edo periods (from the late sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century) that they began to be produced for the benefit of the *chōnin* (townspeople) and the rural populace. The modern age (after the mid-nineteenth century) with its higher level of living has seen a nation-wide expansion and growth of handicrafts. The demand for handicraft objects has increased enormously at home, while abroad they have found wide markets, too. The production of decorative art objects has increased greatly in quantity. Numerous localities throughout the country are now active in the manufacturing of various kinds of handicrafts, each with its distinctive characteristics. Below are listed the chief of these producing centers

beginning with the northern regions and proceeding southward.

#### (A) HOKKAIDŌ DISTRICT

Hokkaidō has attained its present development only during the sixty years since the government started in 1868 its exploitation of the formerly barren region. Its history being so short, it has no traditional handicrafts. However, wood carvings of bears and other things, originally done as leisure work by the Ainus, are now being produced on an industrialized scale in Kushiro and other places. Obihiro produces buckles and necklaces from a kind of stone called *Tokachi-ishi* (Tokachi stone) collected in the neighborhood. (Tokachi is the name of the province in which Obihiro is situated).

#### (B) TŌHOKU DISTRICT\*

The *Tsugaru-nuri* (ref. page 145) type of lacquer ware is still being produced in Hirosaki in Aomori Prefecture. *Akebi-zaiku* (*akebi* work), that is, baskets and other things woven from the vines of the *akebi* (*Akebi cuinata* Decne.), is an attractive type of handicraft produced in the vicinity. Morioka in Iwate Prefecture is noted for its iron pots known as *Nambu-tetsubin*, introduced by the Nambu family, which ruled this area during the Edo period, as a means to encourage industry. The manufacturing of lacquered bowls

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\* The Tōhoku (Northeast) District, covering the northeastern part of Honshū, includes in its area the six prefectures of Fukushima, Miyagi, Iwate, Aomori, Yamagata and Akita.



called *Hidehira-nuri*, which have designs drawn in vermilion lacquer on a black-lacquered base and are decorated with appliqués of large pieces of gold leaf, has maintained its traditions since the Momoyama period in Ichinoseki also of Iwate Prefecture. Akita in Akita Prefecture specializes in producing an elaborate kind of silver work, making boxes and other things with knit silver wire. Noshiro in the same prefecture is famous for a beautiful lacquer ware called *Shunkei-nuri* (ref. page 145), but the production of this ware is very limited. Kawazure also has a type of lacquer ware that has been traditional since the Edo period. The weaving of *Yonezawa-ori* (a silk weave) in Yonezawa, Yamagata Prefecture, has flourished since the late eighteenth century when weavers from Kyōto taught their trade to the local people there. *Sendai-hira*, a silk weave which has brought fame to Sendai in Miyagi Prefecture, also was introduced by weavers from Nishijin in Kyōto during the early Edo period. Sendai also produces an unusual kind of lacquer ware called *tamamushi-nuri*, in which the powder of a blue shell is blended in with lac. Aizu-Wakamatsu in Fukushima Prefecture is one of the largest centers of lacquer ware manufacture. The *Aizu-nuri* made in this area is widely used all over the country, and is exported in sizable quantities to the British pound regions.



### (C) KANTŌ DISTRICT\*

The Tōkyō Metropolis produces various kinds of decorative arts in metal, glass, plastics, fabrics and wood, and the manufacturing processes are mostly carried on by the modern mechanical system. Some of the factories producing articles of high quality in Tōkyō are listed below:—

Ceramics Ōkura Tōen (Ōkura China, Inc.).  
Address: 4 Nishi Rokugō 1-chōme, Ōtaku, Tōkyō.

Glass Kagami Kurisutaru Seisakujo (Kagami Crystal Glass Works, Ltd.).  
Address: 7 Nishi Rokugō 1-chōme, Ōtaku. Speciality: cut glass; graved glass.

Iwata Garasu Seizōjo (Iwata Art Glass Studio). Address: 589 Kosugechō, Katsushikaku. Speciality: blown glass.

Fabrics Daihiko Senshū Bijutsu Kenkyūjo (Daihiko Institute of Artistic Dyeing and Embroidery). Address: 607 Kami-Uma-chō 1-chōme, Setagayaku. Speciality: *Yūzen-zome*.

Hachijōji and Ōme in Tōkyō Metropolis are active in the silk industry. Kiryū and Isezaki in Gumma

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\* The Kantō District includes in its area Tōkyō Metropolis, and Kanagawa, Chiba, Saitama, Gumma, Tochigi and Ibaraki Prefectures.

Prefecture, and Chichibu in Saitama Prefecture have also been famous for their silk fabrics since the Edo period. Mashiko in Tochigi Prefecture is known the world over among ceramic lovers for its pottery which is redolent of a fresh beauty in its folkcraft style. *Kamakura-bori* (ref. page 61) is a unique type of lacquer art peculiar to Kamakura in Kanagawa Prefecture.

#### (D) CHŪBU DISTRICT\*

Notable in this district are the bamboo articles (flower vessels, etc., knit with the twisted skin of bamboo shoots) of Niigata City in Niigata Prefecture; the metal-work tableware of Sanjō, also in Niigata Prefecture; and the lacquer and bronze wares after the Chinese style from Takaoka in Toyama Prefecture. Kanazawa in Ishikawa Prefecture was formerly the seat of the castle of the Maeda family, a rich *daimyō* of the Edo period. Decorative arts of a high quality developed there in that period, and production is still maintained, though on a much smaller scale, of the *Kaga-makie* lacquer and *Kaga-Yūzen* dyeing. Kutani porcelain (ref. page 80) of world-wide fame is a product of Kanazawa and Komatsu, and the historical lacquer ware called *Wajima-nuri* is still made in Wajima (ref. page 144), all in Ishikawa Prefecture. Fukui Prefecture ranks among the largest of the centers for the manu-

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\* The Chūbu (Central) District covers the central part of Honshū, and is divided into Shizuoka, Aichi, Gifu, Yamanashi, Nagano, Fukui, Ishikawa, Toyama and Niigata Prefectures.



Above: A scene in the modern factory of the Nippon Tōki Company in Nagoya, famous for its Noritake China, where production is carried on the assembly-line.

Right: A specimen of "bone china," a special product of the company.



facture of *habutae* silk in Japan, its hub being Fukui City, where the rayon industry also flourishes. *Wakasanuri* lacquer (ref. page 144), produced at Obama in Fukui Prefecture, also deserves special mention.

Kōfu in Yamanashi Prefecture has its famous crystals as well as a kind of leather work known as *inden*. Fuji-Yoshida in the same prefecture produces silk. The wood work produced in Matsumoto in Nagano Prefecture, and the lacquer ware of Shizuoka City in Shizuoka Prefecture, are both unique. Shizuoka



lacquer ware, especially, has been one of the important export goods from that region since the Meiji era, though the business is suffering a slack just now. Aichi Prefecture has Seto, which has been the largest ceramic center in Japan ever since the Kamakura period (ref. page 70). Here the chimneys of the many ceramic plants stand like a forest of trees. Nagoya in the same prefecture has the Nippon Tōki (Japan Pottery) Company, the largest porcelain factory in Japan. The city also produces excellent cloisonné ware. The area around Tajimi in Gifu Prefecture is noted for its enormous output of porcelain, produced at the lowest cost in Japan. Incidentally, the total amount of pottery and porcelain produced in Aichi Prefecture in the year 1953 was 161,198 short tons, while that in Gifu Prefecture was 86,232 short tons. Gifu Prefecture also produces *Shunkei-nuri* lacquer (ref. page 145) in Takayama, and metal tableware in Seki.

#### (E) KINKI DISTRICT\*

In Ōsaka Prefecture the metal, glass, leather and woolen fabric industries flourish in and around Ōsaka City; the cellulosic industries in Fuse; rug manufacturing which began in 1830 in Sakai, and expensive rugs by the Suminoe Orimono (Textile) Company in Izumi-Ōtsu. Kyōto City in Kyōto Prefecture, which was long the administrative as well as cultural center of this country, is noted for various kinds of handicraft arts,

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\* The Kinki District includes in its area the seven prefectures of Ōsaka, Kyōto, Shiga, Mie, Nara, Wakayama and Hyōgo.



each embodying many ancient traditions. Of these the *makie* lacquer ware (ref. page 60), *Kiyomizu-yaki* (a type of pottery first made by Ninsei, ref. page 81), *Nishijin-ori* (ref. page 166), and *Kyō-Yūzen* (*Yūzen* dyeing in Kyōto, ref. page 163) deserve special mention. Some of the representative makers of the best of these goods are:

Lacquer ware    Zōhiko.    Address: Okazaki, Sakyōku, Kyōto.

Fabrics            Kawashima Orimono (Weaving)  
Co. Address: Higashi Horikawa-dōri, Kamigyōku, Kyōto.  
Speciality: tapestry weave, etc.  
Tatsumura Orimono Co. Address:  
Nanzenji, Ukyōku. Speciality:  
antique brocade, etc.

Nara City in Nara Prefecture, like Kyōto, with its numerous old temples and shrines, has since early times been a famous sightseeing place attracting numbers of visitors from all parts of the world. The majority of the handicraft products of this area, therefore, are souvenir pieces. The lacquer ware with *raden* (nacre inlay, ref. page 60) imitating the ancient works of the Nara period, and a kind of colored wooden doll known as *ittō-bori*, are the most artistic of these. Vessels made of a kind of pottery called *akahada-yaki*, produced since the Edo period in Kōriyama near Nara City, are also on sale in Nara City. The Banko ware (ref. page 82) of Yokkaichi and the Iga ware (ref. page 76) of Ueno, both in Mie Prefecture, also are unique

historical types of ceramics. Wakayama City in Wakayama Prefecture yields a great amount of cotton fabric dyed with a stencilled design; Kainan in the same prefecture has a simple kind of lacquer ware, called *Kuroe-nuri*. Hyōgo Prefecture manufactures enormous quantities of fabrics and also the Tamba ware (ref. page 76), a simple, folkcraft style of pottery made at the Tategui kiln, secluded deep in the mountainside of the northeastern part of the prefecture. (Tamba is the name of the province in which Tategui is located.)

#### (F) CHŪGOKU DISTRICT\*

Mats and curtains plaited of rush are important products of Kurashiki in Okayama Prefecture. The mats with beautiful patterns, known as *hana-mushiro* (flower-like, meaning beautiful, mats), are being exported in quantities recently to America and the southern Pacific areas. The Bizen ware (ref. page 75) from Imbe in Bizen Town of this prefecture, is an attractive type of pottery which originated in early times. A kind of *kasuri* (cloth with splashed patterns, ref. page 167) called *Bingo-gasuri* ("*Gasuri*" is a form of "*kasuri*," the first sound being changed by voicing) which has an interesting rustic effect, is made in Fukuyama of Hiroshima Prefecture. The Hagi pottery of Hagi, Yamaguchi Prefecture, was first produced in the late sixteenth century by Korean potters who were brought here by Terumoto Mōri, lord of this

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\* The Chūgoku District is divided into Okayama, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Tottori and Shimane Prefectures.

district. The chief products of Shimane Prefecture are the Yoshina pottery made near Matsue, and the agate carvings, Yakumo pottery, and the fine Izumo paper of Matsue. Tottori City in Tottori Prefecture is noted for its Inaba paper.

#### (G) SHIKOKU DISTRICT

The *Zōkoku-nuri*, a unique type of lacquer ware in the Chinese and Siamese styles, is produced in Takamatsu in Kagawa Prefecture, the chief makers being the Bunshin-dō Company. Matsuyama in Ehime Prefecture produces baskets and other bamboo articles; a porcelain called Tobe ware is made in the vicinity; and Kōchi City in Kōchi Prefecture yields Japanese paper of fine quality.

#### (H) KYŪSHŪ DISTRICT

Fabrics called *Hakata-ori* (ref. page 166), and the *Hakata-ningyō* (dolls of Hakata), made of painted clay, are famous in Fukuoka City, Fukuoka Prefecture. In this city there are ceramic kilns where pottery after the style of the Takatori ware is made. The origin of this ware dates back to the late sixteenth century when Korean potters, brought back by Kuroda, the *daimyō* of this province who took part in Hideyoshi Toyotomi's military expedition to Korea, built their factories here. The Agano ware of the same prefecture was also introduced by Korean potters who followed the *daimyō* Hosokawa to Japan on his return from the same Korean expedition. Kurume in Fukuoka Prefecture has two



famous products: the *Kurume-gasuri* weave which has been popular since the eighteenth century, and the *rantai shikki* (lacquer ware with a basket base), consisting of a bamboo basket covered with a lacquer shell, which has been produced here since the late nineteenth century. Saga Prefecture is second only to the Aichi and Gifu Prefectures in ceramic production, its total output in 1953 being 12,762 short tons. The main manufacturing center in this prefecture is, of course, the Arita area, where the famous Kakiemon Sakaida (ref. page 79) made the first enamelled porcelain in Japan. The largest of the numerous ceramic makers in Arita is the Kōransha Company. A direct contrast to the Arita porcelain, the Karatsu pottery in Karatsu has an attraction of its own. This ware, too, has a long history, but at present the output is small. Nagasaki City in Nagasaki Prefecture produces tortoise-shell work. Kagoshima City and the neighboring Naeshirogawa in Kagoshima Prefecture are the home of the Satsuma pottery and porcelain. Tin tableware and *Ōshima-tsumugi*, a fabric woven of threads spun by hand from floss silk, and admired for the coarse but interesting quality of its thick, knotted threads, also are special products of Kagoshima City. Lovely pieces of bamboo work are made in Beppu in Ōita Prefecture.

This, in brief, is an outline of the art objects produced in various localities of Japan. It should be mentioned here that there are some other kinds of industrial art objects, in addition to the few cases already referred to, which are exported abroad. Some of these



things are mass-produced as in the case of the textiles and ceramics of certain districts but many others are maintained on the family scale of production. Fine lacquer, ceramic and cloisonné ware, for example, which are representative of Japanese handicrafts had found a wide overseas market in and after the Meiji era.

## 2. Institutions for the Study of Handicrafts

With a view to the encouragement of the industrial arts including those for export, the central as well as the local governments have organized institutes for guidance and research in this field, and also industrial art schools of various kinds have been established for the educating and training of technicians. The chief position among the public establishments set up for the guidance of the producers in the industrial arts is held by the Sangyō Kōgei Shiken-jo (Industrial Arts Institute), located at Shimo-Maruko-machi, Ōtaku, Tōkyō. The institute was established in 1928 for the improvement and development of the industrial arts, and is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry. It consists of the Design Division, in charge of supplying, examining and studying designs for industrial art objects; the Technical Division, for the testing and studying of the techniques of joining, varnishing, casting and other branches of the industrial arts; the Packaging Division, to test and study materials and methods of packing and to examine the finished work; and the Guidance Division, which offers guidance and collects reports regarding designs,

techniques and packing. It has branches at Sendai in the Tōhoku District (Tōhoku Branch of the Industrial Arts Institute) and at Kurume in Kyūshū (Kyūshū Branch of the Industrial Arts Institute).

Below are listed the names of educational establishments of college standing in Japan, many of whose graduates specialize in the handicraft arts.

Tōkyō Geijutsu Daigaku (Tōkyō University of Arts).

Located at Ueno Park, Taitōku, Tōkyō.

Decorative Arts Course in the Arts and Crafts Faculty: consisting of Design, Metal Carving, Metal Casting, Metal Beating, Lacquer Art, and other Courses.

Kyōto Kōgei Sen-i Daigaku (Kyōto University of Industrial Arts and Textile). Located at Matsugasaki, Sakyōku, Kyōto.

Industrial Arts Faculty: consisting of Textiles, Architectural Decoration, Dye Work, and Ceramics Courses.

Kyōto-shiritsu Bijutsu Daigaku (Kyōto City College of Fine Arts). Located at Imakumano, Higashiyamaku, Kyōto.

Design Section in the Art Department: consisting of Design, Ceramics, Paint, and Textiles Courses.

Joshi Bijutsu Daigaku (Women's College of Fine Arts). Located at Wadahon-machi, Suginamiku, Tōkyō.

Department of Fine Arts: containing Design and Handicraft Courses.

Tama Bijutsu Daigaku (Tama University of Fine Arts). Located at Tamagawa Kaminoke-machi, Setagayaku, Tōkyō.

The university has a Department of Commercial Arts.

Morioka Tanki Daigaku (Morioka College). Located at Uchimarū, Morioka, Iwate Prefecture.

Department of Arts and Crafts: consisting of Design, Wood Work, Lacquer Work, and Metal Work Courses.

Kanazawa Bijutsu Kōgei Daigaku (Kanazawa Municipal College of Fine and Industrial Arts). Located at Samban-chō, Shimo-Honda-machi, Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture.

Department of Industrial Arts: consisting of Ceramics, Lacquer Art, and Metal Art Courses.

It is worthy of special mention that industrial designing is becoming increasingly important in Japan.

This new field of activity in the arts has encouraged the emergence of many industrial designers like Isamu Kemmochi, Sōri Yanagi, Jirō Kosugi and Tokujirō Kaneko. With these men as charter members, the Japan Industrial Designers Association was organized in 1952 with headquarters located in the Ōsaka Shōsen Building, Kyōbashi, Chūōku, Tōkyō, in care of the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai (Society for International Cultural Relations). The Sangyō Kōgei Shiken-jo (Industrial Arts Institute), referred to before, also is making studies in this field. The Mainichi Newspapers since 1952 have held a "Contest of New Japan's



Industrial Designs" annually.

### 3. Some Prominent Artists of Today

The handicrafts of present-day Japan show many varied aspects: some adhere strictly to the classical designs, others give the effect of "up-to-date" Japanese arts although using the traditional techniques, and still others, inspired by European and American decorative arts, attempt to use expressions of modern art, especially the abstract. These various tendencies are seen distinctly in the exhibitions.

The most extensive of these exhibitions is that of the Handicrafts Department of the Nihon Bijutsu Tenrankai (Japan Art Exhibition) held annually in autumn at the Tōkyō-to Bijutsukan (Tōkyō Metropolitan Art Gallery) at Ueno Park in Tōkyō. This exhibition is itself one of the largest in Japan and shows selected works from among numerous pieces submitted by artists throughout the country. The exhibits are examined very carefully by the members of a jury, consisting of about ninety prominent artists chosen before each exhibition. This is a very important exhibition for artists, handicraft artists included, for it is the opening to all honors for them. The exhibits shown at this display are generally conservative, done in the established techniques, but of late the number of those showing a tendency toward modern art has increased considerably.

A little earlier in the fall every year, the Shin



Seisaku Kyōkai, a private group of artists, holds an exhibition at the same gallery. The Architectural Department of this exhibition displays examples of modern furniture, many of which are made in the abstract mode. The Handicrafts Department of the exhibition organized by another art group called the Kokuga-kai, which holds its exhibition annually in spring at the same gallery, is filled with exhibits in the folkcraft style. Works of the famous potters, Shōji Hamada, Kanjirō Kawai and others can be seen to the best advantage at this exhibition. The Sōsaku Kōgei Kyōkai, organized by younger handicrafts artists, displays the works of its members in the Wakō Gallery located at Ginza 4-chōme, Chūōku, Tōkyō. Its exhibits represent the most modernistic specimens of Japanese handicrafts.

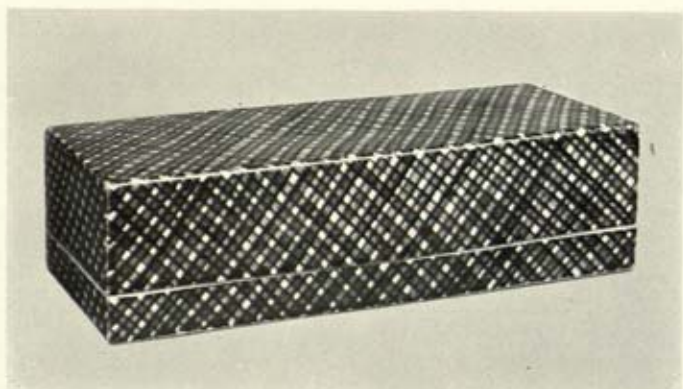
Listed above are a few of the exhibitions held in Tōkyō which give an indication of the present status of the handicraft industry in Japan. Below are given some of the names of the best known artists whose works appear in these exhibitions, classified according to their specialities.

#### (A) CERAMICS

Hazan Itaya (1872- ), member of the Nihon Geijutsu-in, ranks highest among the contemporary ceramic artists for his elegant, dignified work, all executed with sound technique. He is distinguished, among other things, for his celadon pieces decorated with relief ornaments. He lives in Tōkyō, and is the

president of the Tôtô-kai (meaning Eastern Ceramic Group), which has such eminent members as Kimei Yasuhara (1906- ) who is famous for his bold, impressive style, Ken Miyanohara (1898- ) and Ryôsai Inoue (1888- ), whose works show the characteristic Oriental colors in deep tones. Also in the Kantô District, there are Seizan Kawamura (1890- ), specializing in *sometsuke* (blue-and-white) at his kiln in Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture; and Hajime Katô (1900- ), with his kiln at Hiyoshi in Yokohama, who is versed in all the ceramic techniques. The last-mentioned potter won the grand prize for his works at the World Fair in Paris in 1938.

Kyôto has Kenkichi Tomimoto (1885- ), a prominent figure in western Japan who rivals Hazan Itaya of Tôkyô in fame. A graduate of the Design Course of the Tôkyô Academy of Fine Arts (now Tôkyô University of Arts), he is noted for his beautiful designs for porcelain in *sometsuke* (blue-and-white) and in *iroe* (overglaze colors). He presides over the Shinshô-kai (New Craftsmen's Group) consisting of artists in ceramics, fabrics and lacquer. Other members of this group include Tetsu Yamada (1898- ) who works in a profound, "reserved" style; Yûzô Kondô (1902- ) who makes blue-and-white porcelain having a patrician air; Rikisaburô Fukuda (1908- ) who displays a wide command of techniques; and Magosaburô Tokuriki (1908- ) and Junkichi Kumakura (1919- ) who are distinguished for their modern tendencies. Speaking in broad terms, it may be said



Above: A box made of *iroe* (porcelain decorated with brilliant overglaze colors) by Kenkichi Tomimoto.

Right: A flower vase made by Hazan Itaya.





Mr. Shōji Hamada, famous ceramic artist, at work.

that the artists belonging to the Tōtō-kai follow the traditional style, while those of the Shinshō-kai have a fresh, modernistic style. Other reputable artists in Kyōto are: Rokuwa Kiyomizu (1875- ), son of Rokubei Kiyomizu the Fourth, of the historical Kiyomizu family, famous among Kyōto potters; Rokubei Kiyomizu the Sixth (1901- ), son of Rokuwa; Yaichi Kusube (1897- ), reputed for his versatility; and Unosuke



Kawakura (1889- ), whose works show a beautiful refinement.

Among the artists outside of Tōkyō and Kyōto who deserve special attention are Tōjirō Kitade (1898- ) in Ishikawa Prefecture and Tōkurō Katō (1898- ) in Aichi Prefecture. The former is a maker of Kutani ware and is especially skilled in overglaze decoration. The latter makes Seto ware, and is a master of the traditional techniques of making the Ki-Zeto (Yellow Seto) and Oribe types.

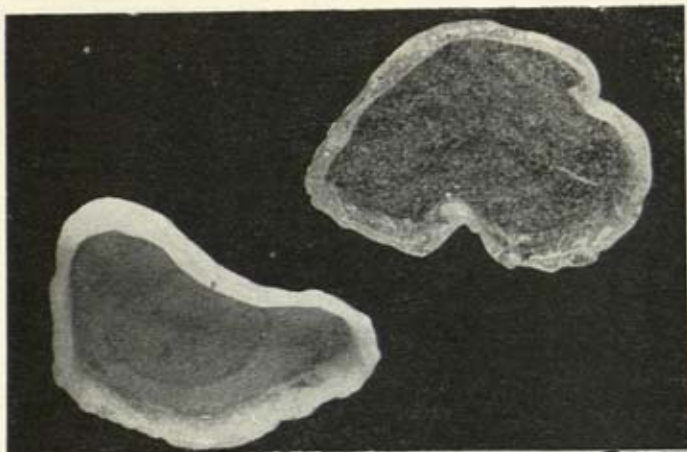
Special mention, too, must be made of Shōji Hamada (1894- ) and Kanjirō Kawai (1890- ), each with a unique style of his own. Following the new folkcraft movement promoted by Sōetsu Yanagi (1889- ) and his colleagues, these two artists have long devoted themselves to the making of pottery pieces which are imbued with the charm of the peasant people. Hamada accompanied Bernard Leach (1888- ), an English painter who studied pottery making in Japan, to England as his assistant, on the latter's return there in 1922, and helped him to build his kiln there. Hamada has his own factory at Mashiko in Tochigi Prefecture, and Kawai works in Kyōto. The last but not least important of the best artists in ceramics is Rosanjin Kitaōji (1883- ). He is noted for his fresh, invigorating style which he creates by throwing the force of his free and unrestricted ideas with great impact upon those distinctly Japanese potteries, such as the Bizen, Shino and Oribe types.

## (B) GLASSWARE

Glass art in its modern form has only a short history in Japan. Therefore, there are few handicraft artists working with glass. These artists who brought the touch of modernism into the Japanese glass industry are Tōshichi Iwata (1893- ), member of the Nihon Geijutsu-in (Japan Art Academy), and Kōzō Kagami (1896- ). Iwata's art is characterized by a sensual warmth which makes the best use of the plasticity of blown glass, while Kagami's works reveal his intellectual coolness in the cut and graved ornamental lines he uses on crystal. Junshirō Satō (1907- ), who assists Kagami in the latter's studio, is unsurpassed in the original decorative designs he creates. He and Masakichi Awashima (1911- ) are two gifted glass designers whose work is the focus of much attention.

## (C) METALWARE

The metalwork artists are classified into three groups, those working in *chōkin* (metal carving), *chūkin* (metal casting), and *tankin* (beating method). In the carving class, mention should be made first of Yoshio Mitsui (1899- ) and Takeo Unno (1905- ), who, like their predecessor, Kiyoshi Unno (1884-1956), are masters of the classical technique. Kiyoshi Unno, son of Shōmin Unno (1844-1915), was a member of the Japan Art Academy and professor of the Tōkyō University of Arts. Senroku Kitahara (1887- ) also has a good command of the classical techniques. Takashi Ōsuga (1901- ), Kiyoaki



Courtesy of Mr. Tōshichi  
Iwata

Above: Glass  
dishes made by  
Tōshichi Iwata.

Right: A flower  
vase made by  
Junshirō Satō.



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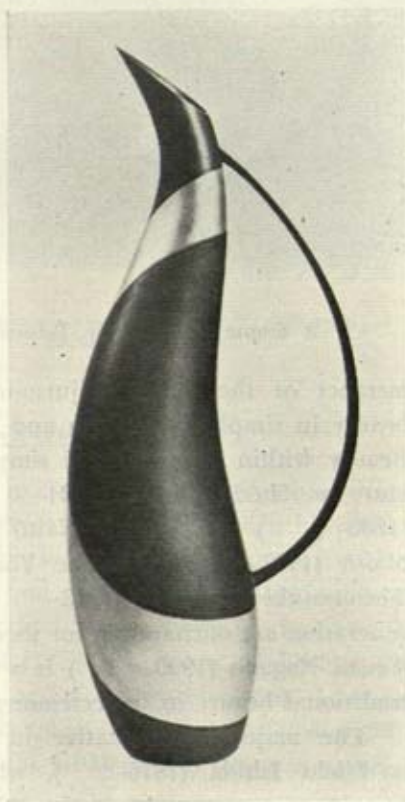
Japan Travel Bureau

A flower vase by Toyochika Takamura.



Iida (1902- ) and Yôji Yamawaki (1907- ) are clever artists who display works showing fresh new styles at the annual showings of the Nihon Bijutsu Tenrankai (Japan Art Exhibition). Yamawaki, in particular, attracts the attention of the public by his bold, free work.

In casting, Toyochika Takamura (1890- ),



A jug, made in the likeness of a penguin, by Yôji Yamawaki.

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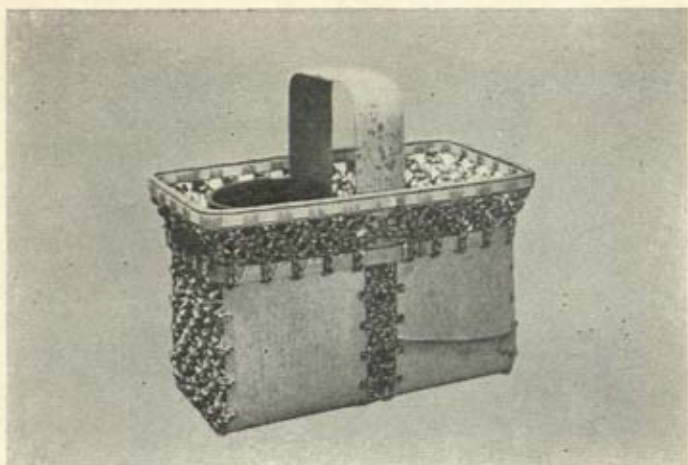


Japan Travel Bureau

A bronze ash tray, by Tetsunosuke Somekawa.

member of the Nihon Bijutsu-in, looks for modern beauty in simplicity of form and absence of ornament. Beauty within the realm of simplicity is the keynote also for Shōdō Sasaki (1884- ), Kokudō Sugita (1886- ) and Haruji Naitō (1895- ). Shirō Naitō (1907- ), Mosuke Yoshitake (1909- ), Tetsunosuke Somekawa (1912- ) and artists of their generation are outstanding for their ambitious attempts. Tesshi Nagano (1900- ) is a champion of the old traditional beauty in tea ceremony kettles and the like.

The major representative in the field of *tankin* is Eiichi Ishida (1876- ), who will undoubtedly remain as a memorable artist in this field.

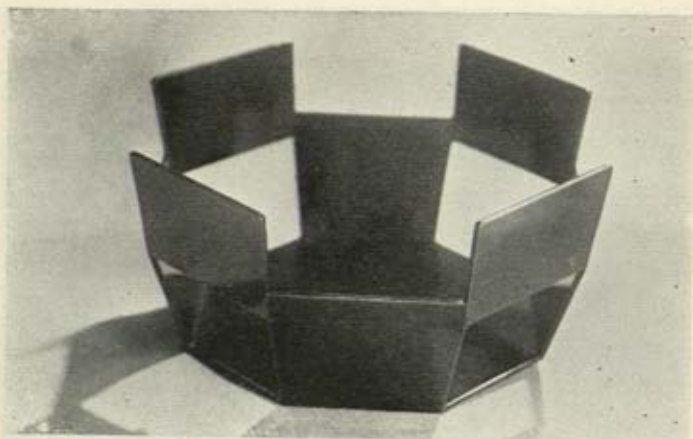


Courtesy of Mr. Rōkansai Iizuka

A flower basket, made of woven bamboo, by Rōkansai Iizuka.

#### (D) WOOD AND BAMBOO WORK

Only a few artists in the production of artistic wood and bamboo work are famous. Shōko Kiuchi (1882- ) has mastered the historical techniques of *moku-zōgan* (wood mosaic), and is skilled in making accurate reproductions of the wood work objects in the Shōsōin collection. Seisai Ōgi (1879- ) has established his own novel style of *moku-zōgan*. Elaborate bamboo work was the speciality of Rōkansai Iizuka (1890-1958), and Shōgetsusai Hayashi (1911- ) shows a modern sense of beauty in his bamboo work.



Japan Travel Bureau

A cake bowl, of lacquered metal, by Tadashi Saji.

## (E) LACQUER WARE

The top expert in *makie* is Gonroku Matsuda (1896- ), member of the Nihon Geijutsu-in, who devotes himself to work of a classical nature. Shōzan Takano (1889- ) also shows fine skill in the historical type of *makie*. Genjūrō Yoshida (1896- ), Kakutarō Yamazaki (1899- ), member of the Japan Art Academy, and others produce *makie* works with modernistic designs done in colored lacquer. Several younger artists such as Tadashi Saji (1914- ), Setsurō Takahashi (1914- ) and Mitsusuke Tsuji (1915- ) are seeking ways to bring out the artistic characteristics of lacquer with the best effect.





*Courtesy of Mr. Gonroku Matsuda*

A lacquered cabinet with a crane design by Gonroku Matsuda.

Besides the above-mentioned artists who are active in Tōkyō, there are others working in various localities, all showing their respective local characteristics: Taihō Mae (1890- ) at Wajima in Ishikawa Prefecture, is unsurpassed in *chinkin*; Joshin Isoi (1883- ) in Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture, specializes in *kimma*;\* and Sōseki Kagawa, also in Takamatsu, excels in the technique of *zonsei*\*\*.

#### (F) FABRICS

There are fewer famous artists in the field of fabrics than there are in the lacquer art. Seika Yamaga (1885- ) makes elaborate brocade by the process of hand-weaving. Etsutaka Yanagi (1911- ) works out novel patterns in the popular weave called *kasuri* (ref. page 166). In dye work, Komatarō Yamagata (1886- ) creates the effect of Western painting by dyeing; Renchō Yabe (1893- ) and Kenji Yamagishi (1900- ) work out modern designs in batik; and Keisuke Serizawa (1895- ), like Etsutaka Yanagi, specializes in dye work after the folkcraft style.

#### (G) "INTANGIBLE CULTURAL PROPERTIES"

The artists mentioned above, experts in the handicraft arts and representatives of their respective fields,

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\* *Kimma* is a lacquer ware technique of Siamese origin, which involves the engraving of the contours of a design, filling the engraving with colored lacquer, and then polishing the whole to make an even surface.

\*\* *Zonsei* is a Chinese-style method of ornamenting lacquer ware, in which the design is outlined in colored lacquer and the contours are brought out by line-engraving.

are mostly masters of the historical techniques that have been traditional since early times. It is heartening to know that the Japanese Government, since 1954, has instituted the system of putting under governmental protection those techniques which are of particularly high artistic or historical value. The designation, preservation and encouragement of these "Intangible Cultural Properties," as they are termed, is undertaken by the Bunkazai Hogo Iin-kai (National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties) under the Ministry of Education. This commission is responsible for the registration of the possessors of these techniques, making records of their life and work, and taking measures to help them educate their successors in the art. Below are listed a few of the arts that have been designated by the commission up to the present time, with the artists representing them.

Iron glaze pottery:	Munemaro Ishiguro (in Kyōto)
Shino pottery:	Toyozō Arakawa (in Gifu Prefecture)
Folkcraft pottery:	Shōji Hamada (in Tochigi Prefecture)
Porcelain with over-glaze decoration:	Kenkichi Tomimoto (in Kyōto)
Bizen stoneware:	Tōyō Kanashige (in Okayama Prefecture)
<i>Edo komon</i> dyeing:	Kōsuke Komiya (in Tōkyō)
<i>Yūzen</i> dyeing:	Tameji Ueno (in Kyōto)
	Uzan Kimura (in Ishikawa)

	Prefecture)
	Kihachi Tabata (in Kyōto)
	Katsuma Nakamura (in Tōkyō)
Indigo dyeing:	Ayano Chiba (in Miyagi Prefecture)
<i>Katagami-zome</i> (stencil) dyeing:	Keisuke Serizawa (in Tōkyō)
<i>Sendai-hira</i> weaving:	Eiyū Kōda (in Miyagi Prefecture)
<i>Ra</i> weaving:	Heirō Kitagawa (in Kyōto)
<i>Karakumi</i> braiding:	Jūsuke Fukami (in Kyōto)
Kimma lacquer:	Joshin Isoi (in Kagawa Prefecture)
<i>Makie</i> lacquer:	Gonroku Matsuda (in Tōkyō)
	Shōzan Takano (in Tōkyō)
<i>Chōshitsu</i> lacquer:	Kōdō Otomaru (in Tōkyō)
<i>Chinkin</i> lacquer:	Taihō Mae (in Ishikawa Prefecture)
<i>Dora</i> (bronze bell):	Iraku Uozumi (in Ishikawa Prefecture)
<i>Ishō ningyō</i> (dolls):	Gōyō Hirata (in Tōkyō)
	Ryūjo Horii (in Tōkyō)



## APPENDIX

# GUIDE TO COLLECTIONS OF JAPANESE HANDICRAFTS

### In Kantō District

#### In Tōkyō

Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan (Tōkyō National Museum)

Location: Ueno Park, Taitōku, Tōkyō.

Open 9.00 a.m.—4.30 p.m. from January 3 through December 25, excepting Mondays.

The Main Gallery has rooms for ceramics, metal-work, lacquer art and fabrics, each showing specimens of the respective periods from the Pre-Buddhistic age to the Edo period. The Hyōkeikan Gallery in the same compound displays post-Meiji works. The exhibits in both galleries are changed periodically. Especially famous in this collection are: (fabrics) a *kosode* with a design of deer and maples, Momoyama period; (ceramics) a jar with a design of a Japanese apricot tree and the moon, by Ninsei Nonomura, Edo period; (lacquer) an inkstone box with a *makie* design of a bridge on pontoons, by Kōetsu Hon-ami, and an inkstone box with a *makie* design of Yatsushashi (irises blooming by a bridge), by Kōrin Ogata, Edo period. Many of the exhibits have been loaned by temples and shrines

of various localities.

Geijutsu Daigaku Fuzoku Chinretsukan (Exhibition Hall of the Tōkyō University of Arts)

Location: Ueno Park, Tōkyō.

Open temporarily from time to time.

The exhibits in this hall are examples of ceramics, metalwork, lacquer art, etc. in the collection of the university.

Ōkura Shūkōkan (Ōkura Shūkōkan Museum)

Location: Akasaka Aoi-chō, Minatoku, Tōkyō.

Open 9.00 a.m.—4.00 p.m. from April 1 through September 30; 10.00 a.m.—4.00 p.m. from October 1 through March 31. Closed Mondays, April 29, May 3, November 23, and December 29 through January 5.

Objects of Oriental fine arts and the decorative arts collected by the late Kihachirō Ōkura are on display. Famous among the handicraft works is a *tebako* (cosmetic box) with a design entitled *Chō-seiden*.

Nezu Bijutsukan (Nezu Art Museum)

Location: Aoyama 6-chōme, Akasaka, Minatoku, Tōkyō.

Open temporarily from time to time.

This museum exhibits the Oriental art objects collected by the late Kaichirō Nezu, which include excellent specimens of ceramics, lacquer, metalwork and tea ceremony utensils. Some of the handicraft pieces are: the inkstone box with a *makie* design entitled *Hana-no-Shirakawa* (showing a nobleman

composing a poem at the sight of the cherry-blossoms), Muromachi period; an inkstone box with a *makie* design of Kasuga-yama Hill in Nara with the deer walking around, Muromachi period; and a pottery jar with a design of mountain temples, by Ninsei, Edo period.

**Nihon Mingeikan (Folkcraft Museum)**

Location: Komaba-machi, Meguro-ku, Tōkyō.

Open 10.00 a.m.—4.00 p.m.; closed Mondays, December 28 through the end of February, and all through August.

Around 18,000 specimens of folkcraft (ceramics, metalwork, lacquer ware, fabrics, etc.) in the museum collection are displayed in turn.

**Sangyō Kōgei Shiken-jo (Industrial Arts Institute)**

Location: Shimo-Maruko-machi, Ōtaku, Tōkyō.

This institute has no regular exhibition gallery, but samples, designs, research materials, etc., are open to inspection upon request.

**In Kamakura**

**Kamakura Kokuhōkan (Kamakura Museum)**

Location: Yukinoshita, Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture.

Open throughout the year excepting for six days from December 26 and a few days when the exhibits are being changed.

This museum exhibits works of fine arts and handicrafts loaned by the temples, shrines and private collectors in Kamakura and its neighborhood.

Hōmotsuden (Treasure Hall) of Tsurugaoka Hachiman-

### gû Shrine

Location: Yukinoshita, Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture.

Open daily.

Pieces of armor, handicrafts and other ancient objects preserved in the shrine are on show, including the famous inkstone box with a *makie* design of chrysanthemums along a fence, Edo period.

### Nagao Bijutsukan (Nagao Museum)

Location: Kamakurayama, Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture.

Closed except when the annual spring and autumn exhibitions are held.

This museum exhibits specimens of the fine arts and handicrafts collected by Mr. Kin-ya Nagao, the majority being ceramics and fabrics. Outstanding among the ceramic pieces is a pottery jar with a design of wistaria, by Ninsei, Edo period.

### Other Places

#### Hakone Bijutsukan (Hakone Art Museum)

Location: Gōra, Miyagino, Kanagawa Prefecture.

Open daily 9.00 a.m.—5.00 p.m. from April 1 through November 30.

Established by the late Mokichi Okada, this museum has a large collection of art objects. Ceramics and lacquer ware pieces make up the greater part of its handicrafts collection.

#### Nikkō Hōmotsukan (Nikkō Treasure Museum)

Location: Nikkō, Tochigi Prefecture.

Open daily.



Exhibited in this gallery are the treasures of the Tōshōgū Shrine, Futaarasan Shrine and Rinnōji Temple at Nikkō. Handicraft objects from the Edo period are especially numerous here.

### In Tōhoku District

Kaisendō Bijutsukan (Museum Kaisendō)

Location: Kaminoyama, Yamagata Prefecture.

Open daily from January 4 through December 24 excepting on regular "electricity economy" days.

The exhibits in this museum are chiefly specimens of Chinese lacquer art, such as *tsuishu* and *raden*.

Kikusui Kōgeikan

Location: Komatsu, Yamagata Prefecture.

Open 10.00 a.m.—3.00 p.m. from April 1 through October 31, excepting the three days at the end of each month.

About 500 specimens of Chinese, Korean and Japanese ceramics are placed on show.

### In Chūbu District

Seto-shi Tōjiki Chinretsukan (Seto Pottery Museum)

Location: Kaminokiri-chō, Seto, Aichi Prefecture.

Open daily from January 6 through December 28.

Takaoka-shi Bijutsukan (Takaoka Art Museum)

Location: Kojō Park, Takaoka, Toyama Prefecture.

Open daily from January 4 through December 28.

This museum displays examples of the fine arts and handicrafts made chiefly by the local artists of

Toyama Prefecture.

Tokugawa Bijutsukan (Tokugawa Art Museum)

Location: Tokugawa-chō, Higashiku, Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture.

Open daily 9.00 a.m.—4.00 p.m. from January 4 through December 28.

The collection in this museum includes art objects, mainly handicraft articles, handed down in the branch of the Tokugawa *shōgun* living in this area. The set of shelves with a *makie* design of *hatsune*, by Nagashige Kōami, Edo period, is famous among the handicraft pieces in this collection.

### In Kinki District

#### In Kyōto

Kyōto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan (Kyōto National Museum)

Location: Yamato-ōji-dōri, Higashiyamaku, Kyōto.

Open daily from January 5 through December 25, excepting Mondays, and the days when the exhibits are changed.

This museum exhibits specimens of ceramics, metalwork, lacquer, fabrics, etc., covering the ages from Pre-Buddhistic days to the Edo period.

Reihōkan (Treasure Hall) of the Ninnaji Temple

Location: Ninnaji, Omuro, Ukyōku, Kyōto.

Open daily.

The exhibits in this hall include the famous "box for thirty volumes of Buddhist manuscripts" with a *makie* design of *hōsōge* flowers (ref. page 105)

and the *hōshubako* (box for sacred gems) with a *makie* design of *hōsōge*, both of the Heian period.

#### In Nara

Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan (Nara National Museum)

Location: Kasugano-machi, Nara.

Open daily from January 4 through December 27, excepting the first and third Mondays, and a few days before and after each special exhibition.

The handicraft works exhibited in this museum are mainly ceramics and metalwork pieces.

Shōsōin Hōko (Shōsōin Repository)

Location: Zōshi-machi, Nara.

This famous repository houses numerous examples of various kinds of handicrafts from the Nara period. The museum is not open to the public, but persons granted special permission by the Imperial Household Agency can see it during the two days when it is opened for airing in October every year.

Hōmotsuden (Treasure Hall) of the Kasuga Shrine

Location: Kasugano-machi, Nara.

Open daily.

Armor, weapons, furniture pieces, objects for interior decoration, mirrors, etc. are among the handicraft works shown in this hall. Most famous of these are a *koto* (musical instrument), decorated with a *makie* design, which dates from the Heian period, and a red-laced armor of the Kamakura period.

#### In Ōsaka

Ōsaka Shiritsu Bijutsukan (Ōsaka Municipal Art

Museum)

Location: Chausuyama-chō, Tennōjiku, Ōsaka.

Open daily from January 6 through December 28, excepting a few indeterminate days when the exhibits are being changed.

This museum has a permanent display of ceramic, metalwork and lacquer art pieces.

Nihon Kōgeikan (Museum of Japanese Handicrafts)

Location: Dōjima, Kitaku, Ōsaka.

Open daily from January 8 through December 25, excepting Sundays and national holidays.

Shown here are examples of contemporary handicrafts, the nucleus of the collection being pieces of contemporary folkcraft art.

Fujita Bijutsukan (Fujita Museum of Art)

Location: Aijima-chō, Miyakojimaku, Ōsaka.

Annual spring and autumn exhibitions are held for indefinite periods from April to May and from October to November.

The handicraft exhibits in this museum are fine pieces, chiefly tea ceremony utensils, collected by the late Denzaburō Fujita and the late Heitarō Fujita. A *makie* sutra box from the Heian period is especially famous in this collection.

#### In Kōbe

Shiritsu Kōbe Bijutsukan (Kōbe Municipal Art Museum)

Location: Kumochi-chō, Fukiaiku, Kōbe.

Open from the 1st through the 25th every month, excepting Mondays. Also closed from December 21 through January 4.



The handicraft works exhibited in this museum include interesting specimens of the Momoyama and Edo periods which show a Western influence.

Hakutsuru Bijutsukan (Hakutsuru Art Museum)

Location: Sumiyoshi-chō, Higashi-Nadaku, Kōbe.

Closed December through March. Special spring and autumn exhibitions in April and October.

Specimens of Chinese and Japanese handicrafts collected by the late Jihei Kanō are on show in this museum.

In Shingū

Hōmotsukan (Treasure Hall) of the Kumano Hayatama Shrine

Location: Shingū, Wakayama Prefecture.

Open daily.

The exhibits here are chiefly handicraft articles from the Kamakura to the Muromachi period (from the late twelfth to the late sixteenth century), among which there are several fine *tebako* (cosmetics boxes) with *makie* work typical of the Muromachi period.

### In Chūgoku District

Kurashiki Mingeikan (Kurashiki Museum of Folkcraft)

Location: Maegami-chō, Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture.

Open daily 9.00 a.m.—4.00 p.m. from January 4 through December 29, excepting Mondays, the Emperor's Birthday (April 29), and the vernal and autumnal equinoxes.

This museum contains about 1,600 specimens of

Japanese folkcraft, as well as handicraft pieces from various parts of the world.

Hōmotsukan (Treasure Hall) of the Itsukushima Shrine

Location: Miyajima, Hiroshima Prefecture.

Open daily.

The exhibits in this museum are handicraft specimens from the second half of the Heian period (794-1185) and thereafter, and include excellent examples of armor and weapons.

Hōmotsukan (Treasure Hall) of the Ōyamazumi Shrine

Location: Miyaura, Ehime Prefecture.

Open daily.

This hall has an enormous collection of over a thousand handicraft articles, mostly suits of armor, from the last part of the Heian period (794-1185) to the Kamakura (1185-1333) period.

### In Shikoku District

Ehime Bunkakan (Museum Ehime Bunkakan)

Location: Yamasato-dōri, Imahari-shi, Ehime Prefecture.

Open daily 10.00 a.m.—4.00 p.m., excepting Sundays and national holidays.

About 300 items, including specimens of Chinese ceramics from the Han dynasty and on through the Ch'ing dynasty, are on show in this museum.

### In Kyūshū District

Arita Tōji Bijutsukan (Arita Ceramic Museum)

Location: Arita, Saga Prefecture.

Open daily 9.00 a.m.—5.00 p.m. from January 5 through December 24, excepting Mondays.

The exhibits in this museum include fine specimens of Ko-Imari, Kakiemon ware and Iro-Nabeshima, and reference items concerning the history of ceramic production in this region.

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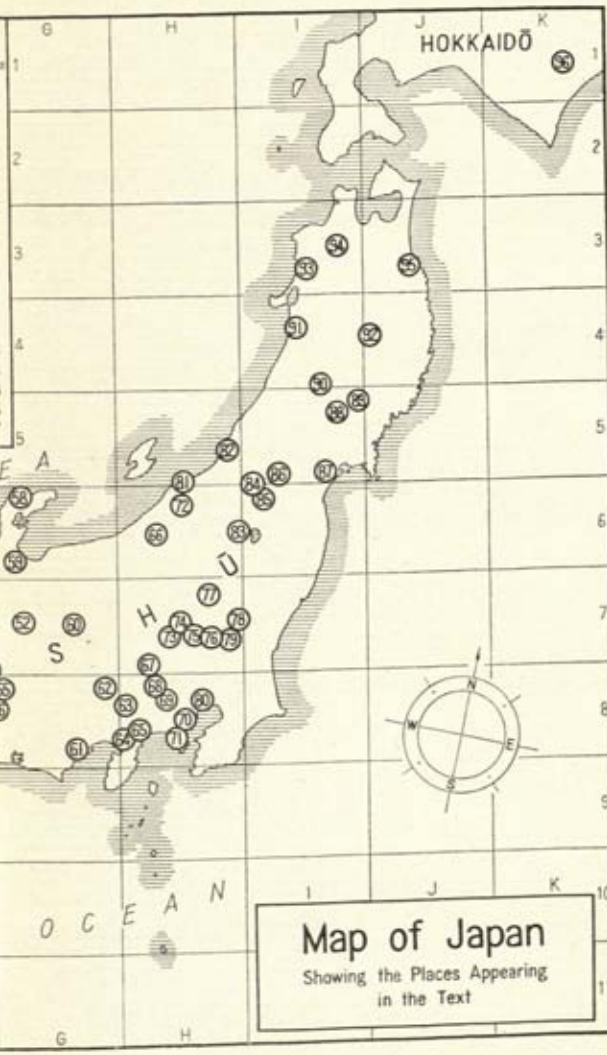
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