

For “Sakura Science Plan さくらサイエンスプラン”
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In *Ise Kogakkan*-Univ.
(Tuesday, November. 21th, 14:00~16:00, at Momo-fune-room)

Lecture

Secrets of the Craftsmanship and Soul of Japan

日本の職人技と日本の心の真髄

— Lacquerware and *Maki-e* (japan = Gold Lacquerware) —

— 漆器と蒔絵 —

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Summary 梗概

Why has excellent craftsmanship and traditional culture been transmitted
from one generation on the next in Japan?

なぜ日本には高度な職人技と伝統文化が伝承されたのか

By introducing handcrafts,

代表的な日本の伝統文化の紹介し、

particular lacquerware and *maki-e*,

特に工芸を、さらに漆器に焦点を当てて、

I will explore the essences of the spirit of Japanese culture.

そこに、日本の文化の精神の真髄を探る。

Introduction 序

1) Greeting ご挨拶

Hello, everyone. Good afternoon.

My name is Masaya Iwasaki, and I am an associate professor at *Kogakkan* University 皇學館大学. I belong to the Faculty of Contemporary Japanese Society 現代日本社会学部, where I teach in the traditional Japanese culture course 伝統文化分野. It is nice to meet you. Welcome to Japan, *Ise* City, and *Kogakkan* University. I am honored to be able to talk to you.

Today, I will introduce Japanese traditional culture to you, especially handcrafts, focusing on lacquerware. And I will show you some pictures, some videos, and some samples. Through them, I would like to think with you, about the reasons why this advanced craftsmanship and traditional culture has been transmitted from one generation on the next in Japan.

I think that the essence of the spirit of Japanese culture can be seen here. And I think that there are a lot of hints to be found here connecting science technology and traditional culture.

I heard that you are studying the latest and advanced science and technology of modern times. So, I would like to make my lecture an effective story for your future success.

Thank you for your listening.

2) My Profile 私の略歴

First of all, please allow me to introduce myself briefly.

I was born in 1959 in Tokyo. So, I am 58 years old this year.

After graduating from the Department of Architecture at *Waseda* University's Faculty of Science and Engineering 早稲田大学理工学部建築学科, and its graduate school 同・大学院, I worked at *Uchii Shozo* 内井昭蔵 (1933~2002) Architecture design studio for twelve years, as one of the staff

members. So, I had been a science-track person, a planner and designer of architecture. and I am still qualified as a “first-class architect 一級建築士” authorized by the Japanese government.

I have worked on planning, designing and supervising for constructions of some museums. Twenty-six years ago, I worked on the planning, designing and supervising for construction of the residence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress 天皇皇后両陛下 (*Go-sho* 御所) in the forest of the middle of Tokyo for three years.

In addition, I participated in the planning of the Kyoto State Guest House (*Kyoto-Geihin-Kan* 京都迎賓館) in Kyoto *Gyoen* National Garden's Forest (*Kyoto Gyoen* 京都御苑) in the middle of Kyoto for three years. I had the task of defining and presenting to the architect selection competition about what kind of accommodation and facilities would be appropriate to introduce Japanese traditional culture and spirit to state guests from around the world to Japan, in Kyoto.

Since then, my mission has been to introduce Japanese traditional culture, and to design it to be better for the future. It means I now do planning, designing and supervising for Japanese culture, and I am an architect of culture.

Seven-and-a-half years ago, I moved from Kyoto here to *Ise* 伊勢, in order to teach Japanese traditional culture at this university. I believe that the goddess of *Ise Shrine*, *Amaterasu-omikami* 天照大神, invited me here.

3) A list of Japanese traditional culture. 日本 of 伝統文化一覽表

When I was invited to *Ise*, the goddess *Amaterasu-omikami* 天照大神, she gave me one more gift. It was an opportunity to express all of Japanese traditional culture in a design drawing that would be put in a new textbook for junior high school students across Japan. (Edited by *Ikuhoshi* “*Atarashii Komin* = *New Society*” 育鵬社編「新しい公民」)

This is a list that was praised as very easy to understand. Now, 5.7% students of junior high schools in Japan are using this textbook now.

The top part says “Faith and the Annual Events in the Four Seasons 信仰と四季折々の年中行事”.

On the far left of the drawing, I showed Shintoism 神道, with a picture of the Ise-Grand-Shrine 伊勢神宮 during the first visit to the shrine in the new year, “hatsu-mode 初詣”. And at the far right, I placed Buddhism 仏教, with a picture of the ringing of a night bell at *Todai-ji* Temple 東大寺 in Nara 奈良 on *oh-misoka* 大晦日 or new Year’s Eve, “joya-no-kane 除夜の鐘”.

I listed *nenju-gyoji* 年中行事 or annual events that originated with the court, from the left to the right, proceeding from spring to autumn,

Next, I put the next stage as “*geido* 芸道 or accomplishments or ways of arts”. *cha-do* or *sa-do* 茶道 or the way of tea (for *macha* 抹茶 or powdered tea), *sencha-do*, the way of tea (for *sencha* 煎茶 or green tea), *ka-do* 華道 or the way of flower arrangement, *ko-do* 香道 or the way of incense, *sho-do* 書道 or the art of calligraphy, *ka-do* 歌道 or the way of *waka* 和歌 or Japanese poetry, and so on.

I put the next stage as “*bu-do* 武道 or martial arts”. *kyuba-jutsu-reiho* 弓馬術礼法 or bow-riding-manner of samurai, *ken-do* 剣道 or Japanese swordsmanship, *ju-do* 柔道, *sumo-do* 相撲道 or sumo-wrestling, *naginta* 薙刀 or Japanese halberd, *karate-do* 空手道 or karate, and so on.

I put the next stage as “*bijutsu* 美術 or arts”, “*kenshiku* 建築 or architecture”, “*kogei* 工芸 or handcrafts”

“*Bijutsu* 美術 or arts” consists of *Nihon-ga* 日本画 or Japanese-style Pictures, *chokoku* 彫刻 or sculpture, *butsu-zo* 仏像 or statues of the Buddha, and so on.

“*Kenshiku* 建築 or architecture” consists of *sha-ji* 社寺 or shrines and temples, *sukiya* 数寄屋 or house in the style of a tea-ceremony, *cha-shitsu* 茶室 or tea room, *machi-ya* 町家 or traditional town house, *ko-minaka* 古民家 or traditional folk house, and so on.

“*Kogei* 工芸 or handcrafts” will be introduced in detail in the later chapter.

I put the bottom stage as “*geinou* 芸能 or performing arts”. *Gagaku* 雅楽 or ancient Japanese court music, *noh* 能 or noh play and dance, *kyogen* 狂言 or *noh* comedy, *kabuki* 歌舞伎 or a type of Japanese drama, *bunraku* 文楽 or puppet theater, *mai* 舞 or formal traditional Japanese dance, and so on.

I put other various traditional cultures in the remarks outside the frame.

And, I have three fields of lectures at this University, about “architecture”, “handcrafts” and “performing arts”, in this list.

Today, I will tell you about “*kogei* 工芸 or handcrafts” within the three. And as an example, I will tell you about “*Shikki* or lacquerware”.

I would like you to imagine the whole of Japanese traditional culture and its spirit from the lecture focusing on handcrafts and lacquerware, with reference to this list.

So far, this has been an introduction and overview. Well then, I'd like to proceed to the main subject.

I . Traditional Japanese Handcrafts 日本伝統工芸

1) Traditional Japanese Handcrafts 日本伝統工芸

Understanding the handcrafts of a country leads to an understanding of the culture of that country. Because the national spirit of the country appears in its handcrafts.

As I mentioned earlier, there are various things in the field of “*kogei* 工芸 or handcrafts” in Japan. Some of these include *Sen-syoku* 染織 or dyeing and weaving, *toji* 陶磁 or pottery and porcelain, *shikki* 漆器 or lacquer ware, *maki-e* 蒔絵 or gold lacquer ware, *to-ken* 刀剣 or Japanese sword, *kazari-kanamono* 鍔金物 or metallic ornament work, *wagashi* 和菓子 or Japanese sweets, *Nihon ryori* 日本料理 or Japanese cuisine, and so on.

2) **Precise, Aesthetic, Technique and Heart** 精緻・美意識・技と心

What are the characteristics of Japanese handcrafts? Because there are many kinds, it is very difficult for me to explain in depth, so I will mention three of them.

First of all, Japanese handcrafts are made with very detailed and precise techniques by skilled high craftsmen-ships.

In addition, we must pay attention to their functions, not only for ornamental purposes but also for many ritual tools and routine daily practical tools, Japanese handcrafts have much of simple and excellent beauty. In other words, Japanese handcrafts reflect the unique aesthetic sense of the Japanese people.

And these are the attitudes put into the training of each craftsmen of Japan who are making these works. We call it “*dento no waza to kokoro* 伝統の技と心” means the traditional training of *waza* 技 skill and *kokoro* 心 heart. And, we know that both are indispensable.

II. **Shikki** 漆器 or Lacquerware

1) **What is Lacquerware ?** 漆器とは

Then, today, from many kinds of handy crafts, I would like to focus on *shikki* 漆器 or lacquerware.

Lacquerware is a universal handcraft that was widely deployed in East Asia, but it developed in a unique manner in Japan.

Lacquerware is a craft that raised the durability of a container by recoating of sap of lacquer-tree on the surface of the wooden container.

The relations between the Japanese and the lacquerware is very old, and lacquerware of 9,000 years ago was discovered in the remains of *Okinoshima* 沖ノ島遺跡 in *Hokkaido* Prefecture 北海道. In addition, the lacquer tree wood pieces discovered in the *Torihama* shell mound 鳥浜貝塚 in *Fukui* Prefecture 福井県 was 12,600 years old. Both are the oldest examples in the world. The

lacquer trees cultivated in each place of East Asia are said to have originated in Japan.

In order to prevent change in the wooden part due to fluctuating humidity, it is necessary to create a multi-layer surface, by repeating the tasks of coating and polishing. In addition, in order to curing *urushiol* ウルシオール which is the main ingredient of sap's resin of lacquer-tree, moderate wet air is necessary.

Therefore, lacquerware is a craft suitable for East Asia where lacquer trees grow, in a region with high humidity, and diligent peoples have been living.

2) Lacquerware is a Craft of East Asia 漆器は東アジアの工芸

Eventually, the basic technique of the lacquerware was conveyed from Japan to China, and from China it was taught to Japan, Korea, Ryukyu, Vietnam, Thailand, and Siberia, as an advanced craft technique, with other cultural techniques.

Eventually various decorations were added to the final surface of lacquerwares. The level of decorat the level of the culture of the country. Lacquerware became an international and basic handcraft and a basic industry mainly in East Asia, similar to the current automobile industry.

The mainstream technique for that decoration was *raden* 螺鈿 or (= mother-of-pearl inlay) which is a technique of fitting shells, gold, silver, ivory, different-colored-woods and others on the wooden surface to express elegant patterns.

In the *Shosoin* 正倉院 at *Todai-ji* Temple 東大寺 in Nara 奈良, in Japan, ritual utensils for the ceremony to consecrate the great statue of Buddha of *Todai-ji* 東大寺大仏開眼供養 in 752 (1,265 years ago), and Emperor *Shomu's* 聖武天皇 belongings have been preserved. Among them, there are seven *biwa* 琵琶 or lutes of red sandalwood decorated by *raden* 螺鈿 brought from Tang China 唐 by Japanese missions to Tang China 遣唐使, in the 8th century.

(Image-1) Five-Stringed Biwa Lute of Shitan (Red Sandalwoods) with *Raden* 螺鈿 (mother-of-pearl inlay) (Shosoin 正倉院 of Todai-ji Temple 東大寺, Nara) (8th century) 108.1 × 30.9cm 螺鈿紫檀五絃琵琶
<http://shosoin.kunaicho.go.jp/en-US/Treasure?id=0000010076>

The biwa 琵琶 or lute is a musical instrument originating from *Tenjiku* 天竺 (= ancient India). The appearance that the palm trees 椰子の樹 and a musician riding on the back of camel 駱駝, playing *biwa* 琵琶 or lute represents the design of the scenery of Persia. It is said that these *biwa* 琵琶 or lutes were made by craftsmen of the Chang'an 長安 during the Tang Dynasty 唐代. These *biwa* 琵琶 or lutes shows that how the capital city of Tang 唐, Chang'an 長安 of the time, was a mature city with international and sophisticated culture. In this way, lacquerware and its *raden* 螺鈿 technique spread widely throughout Asia from Chang'an 長安 Tang Dynasty 唐代.

Since them, lacquerware using the *raden* technique has developed differently in China, Korea, Japan, Ryukyu (the old name of Okinawa prefecture) and so on.

3) Ryukyu (Okinawa) Lacquerware 琉球漆器

By the way, when I was working in the design studio, I was in charge of the planning design and supervising of the construction of the *Urasoe* City Art Museum 浦添市美術館 in Okinawa Prefecture for two years. At that time, I was 28 to 30 years old (1988~1990).

And, actually, that museum was designed and constructed to display the masterpieces of Ryukyu lacquerware 琉球漆器. At that time, I learned the history and beauty of the Ryukyu lacquerware that used the *raden* 螺鈿 technique. The Ryukyu dynasty government sent them as gifts, to the emperors of Ming 明 and Qing 清 of China, and to the Emperor of Japan and the *Tokugawa* shogunate.

One unique characteristic of *raden* technique of Ryukyu lacquer is the rainbow coloring light by spectroscopic phenomena, from the blue shells 青貝 that are polished to the extremely thin within the extremely smooth surface. They were masterpieces which were produced using the top techniques of the Ryukyu dynasty, in order to impress other country's governments

So, in East Asia, it may be said that the work of the lacquerware with *raden* 螺鈿 technique was a cultural, political, and strategic weapon of that time.

(Image-2) Box of Black Lacquerware with *Raden* of Crest of Hollyhock (18th to 19th centuries) (Urasoe Art Museum, Okinawa) 12.6×10.3×11.3cm
黒漆葵紋菊螺鈿箱 <http://museum.city.urasoe.lg.jp/>

Ⅲ. *Maki-e* 蒔絵 or Gold Lacquerware

1) *Maki-e* or Gold Lacquerware of Japan 日本蒔絵

In Japan, after mastering the *raden* 螺鈿 technique, a unique, new technique called “*maki-e* 蒔絵”, was developed.

The word for “*Maki-e* 蒔絵” is literary “*ma ku* 蒔く (planting (seeds), sowing (powder)) + *e* 絵 (= picture (drawing))”. This is a method to draw a pattern on the surface by “sowing” gold or silver powder on the surface of wet lacquer.

It began in the *Nara* period 奈良時代 (710~794), and *Heian* period 平安時代 (794~1192), with sacred books for sutras that were decorated using the *maki-e* 蒔絵 technique to illustrate birds, clouds, *hoso-ge* 宝相華 or arabesque flower patterns, etc.

(Image-3) *Maki-e* Lacquered Box for Sutras with *Hosoge* Flowers and *Karyobinga* Designs (*Ninna-ji* Temple Kyoto National Museum)

(10th century) 37.0×24.4×8.3cm 宝相華迦陵頻伽蒔絵冊子箱

<http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/jp/syuzou/meihin/urusi/item05.html>

(Image-4) Cosmetic box: Design of Wheels Half-submerged in Stream in *Maki-e* Lacquer and *Raden*" (Tokyo National Museum) (12th century)

30.5×22.0×13.0cm 片輪車蒔絵螺鈿手箱

http://www.tnm.jp/modules/r_collection/index.php?controller=dtl&colid=H4282&lang=ja

Various types of techniques have been developed for *maki-e* 蒔絵,

First of all, "*togidashi-maki-e* 研出蒔絵 (= polished lacquerware)" was developed. This is a technique of "drawing a pattern with lacquer, sowing powder and fix it, applying the lacquer to the whole, and after it dries, its surface is polished to produce a pattern".

Next, "*hira-maki-e* 平蒔絵 (= flat lacquerware)" was developed. This is a technique of "drawing a pattern with a brush with lacquer and sowing gold powder and fixing it there."

Furthermore, "*taka-maki-e* 高蒔絵 (= raised lacquerware))" was devised. This is a technique of "molding by pasting shell powder and applying *maki-e* 蒔絵 on it".

These techniques are used in combination. For example, the rock before the landscape is "*taka-maki-e* 高蒔絵 (= raised lacquerware)", the middle is "*hira-maki-e* 平蒔絵 (= flat lacquerware)", in the distant is the "*togidashi-maki-e* 研出蒔絵 (= polish lacquerware)" and so on.

Furthermore, there are *nashiji* 梨地, *shishiiai-togidashi* 肉合研出, *chokin-umekomi* 彫金埋込, *kirigane* 切金, *noge* 野毛, and so on. By advancing these techniques at the same time, it became possible to express nuances in taste and design variations.

2) *Uta'e maki-e* or Poetry Depicted in Gold Lacquerware 歌絵蒔絵

With these highly advanced decoration techniques, from the end of the *Heian* period 平安時代 (794~1192), a new elegant and established design style for gold lacquerware called “*Uta-e-maki-e* 歌絵蒔絵” (= poem-picture-*maki-e*) (= depicted (Japanese or Chinese) poems on gold lacquer ware) was developed for aristocracy. It was called “*Ashi-de-maki-e* 葦手蒔絵” (= reed-landscape-style gold lacquer ware).

For example, as follows.

(Image-5) Ink-stone Case with *Shio-no-yama* Motif (Kyoto National Museum)

(15th century) <http://bunka.nii.ac.jp/heritages/detail/195796>

25.6×23.7×5.2cm 塩山蒔絵硯箱

This is decorated with a pictures derived from a famous *waka* 和歌 poetry (= Japanese poem) in the anthology “*Kokin-waka-shu*” 古今和歌集 (= Collection of Ancient and Modern poetris), as follows.

しほの山 さしでのいそに すむ千鳥 きみがみよをば やちよとぞなく
Shio no yama Sashide no iso ni Sumu chidori Kimi ga miyo wo ba Yachiyo to zo naku
(読み人知らず *Yomi hito shira zu*)

= “*The plovers that dwell on Sashide Strand by Mount Shio cry*

= “May His Majesty’s Reign endure eight thousand ages!”

(author unknown)

Those who owned stationary utensils, such as an ink-stone case, immediately recognized the motifs expressed on these objects, even without the aid of characters.

Another sample, I would like to show you is as follows.

(Image-6) *Box, Cho-sei-den motif (Design of the pavilion in a Chinese palace)*

(Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya) (13th to 14th century) 37.9×23.5×17.9cm

長生殿蒔絵手箱 <http://bunka.nii.ac.jp/heritages/detail/155111>

This is a small box for holding cosmetic utensils designed with chinese-style-poetry 漢詩 sung by *Yoshishige-no-Yashutane* 慶滋保胤 (933~1002 Japanese scholars) in *Wakan-roeishu* 和漢朗詠集 (= the Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Singing) by *maki-e* 蒔絵 technique.

長生殿裏春秋富 (*Cho-sei-den no uchi wa, shun-ju ni tomi*)

不老門前日月遲 (*Fu-rou-mon no mae wa, nichu-getsu oso-shi*)

The inside of Cho-sei-den (= the long-life-palace) is rich in spring and autumn. In front of Furo-mon (= the immortal gate), the sun and the moon move slowly.

On the surface of this box are palaces, cranes, flowing water, spring flowers and autumn flowers are drawn. And, on the topside of the lid, there are characters for “spring, autumn, wealth 春・秋・富” “undying 不・老” “gate and front 門・前”, on the sides of the lid, there are characters for “*Cho-sei-den* 長生殿”, “Sun moon 日・月” “autumn 秋”, arranged in silver. For those who were well-educated the words and images evoked the poem of *Cho-sei-den*.

Cho-sei-den 長生殿 was the name of the building of Hua Qingyu 華清宮 in Chang'an 長安 during the Tang Dynasty 唐代. And it has been famous for the phrase, on “*Cho-kon-ka* = “The Song of Everlasting Regret 長恨歌” by Bai Juyi 白居易 (772~846) (*Haku kyoi*).

七月七日 長生殿, 夜半 人無く 私語の時

Shichi-gatsu shichi-nichi Cho-sei-den, Yahan hito naku Shigo no toki

“It was words when we talked familiarly at the midnight when there was none of us in the *Cho-sei-den* 長生殿 palace on the seventh of the seventh month.”

This poetry of *Cho-sei-den* 長生殿 celebrated the happiness continuing for a long time of the emperor, and this poetry of *Cho-sei-den* 長生殿 has been used as a subject of pictures, handcrafts, and Noh theatre 能楽 as a lucky sign in Japan.

Now, I would like to show you the beginning part and the last part of a Noh theater titled “*Tsuru-kame* 鶴亀 (= *Cho-sei-den* 長生殿)” by my *Utai* 謡 or singing and *Shimai* 仕舞 or dancing it.

(the beginning part)

♪それ青陽の 春になれば 四季の節会の事始め

不老門より日月の 光を天子の観覧にて♪

Sore seiyou no Haru ni nareba shiki no sechie no koto hajime,

Fu-ro-mon yori nichi-getsu no hikari wo tenshi no eiran ni te,

When it is spring of a new year, it will be the starting of four seasons' ceremonies, By the lights of the sun and the moon from the *Fu-rou-mon* 不老門 (= Immortal Gate), the Emperor appears in the court.

(the end part)

♪君の齢(よわい)も長生殿(ちょうせいであん)に 君の齢も長生殿に

還御(かんぎょ)なるこそ めでたけれ♪

Kimi no yowai mo Cho-sei-den ni kimi no yowai mo Cho-sei-den ni

Kangyo naru koso medeta kere.

Your Majesty's eternity is eternal, Your Majesty's eternity is eternal, and we are very happy that my majesty came back to *Cho-sei-den* 長生殿 (= long-life-palace)

(applause)

In this way, *Uta'e maki-e* 歌絵蒔絵 (depicts poetry gold lacquer ware) was a highly elegant and sophisticated crafts-art which was backed on Japanese and Chinese literary works.

The sophistication of the Japanese lacquer technique and design reached its maturity of perfection during the *Azuchi-Momoyama* period 安土桃山時代 (1568~1603), and the *Edo* period 江戸時代 (1603~1868).

And it is said that the greatest *maki-e* masterpiece is “*Hatsune-no-Choudo*”= “the *Hatsune* marriage trousseau of *Chiyo-hime*” (Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya, 17th century) created in the early days of the Edo period (1603~1868).

(Image-7) *Hatsune-no-Choudo* “the *hatsune* marriage trousseau of *Chiyo-hime* (Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya, 17C)

<http://bunka.nii.ac.jp/heritages/detail/192763> 初音の調度

This is the furniture and tool arrangement for the wedding trousseau 婚礼調度 of *Chiyo-hime* 千代姫 who was the eldest daughter of the third Shogun *Tokugawa Iemitsu* 徳川家光. She brought it in when she got married to the *Owari Tokugawa* family 尾張徳川家. She married the second generation head of the family, *Mitsutomo* 光友. in 1639, with a wedding procession from *Edo* castle 江戸城 to Nagoya castle 名古屋城. It is a luxurious furniture and tool group consisting of dozens of items, including a Buddhist altar shelf 厨子棚, a black-lacquered shelf 黒棚, a bookshelf 書棚, a shellfish play game pail container 貝桶, a hand box for cosmetics 手箱, a mirror stand 鏡台, a comb box 櫛箱, a writing table 文台, an ink-stone box 硯箱. etc.

All of the surfaces of these tools are drawn with the *maki-e* 蒔絵 technique incorporating the theme of *waka* 和歌 poetry in *Hatsune's* book 初音の帖 of “*Genji Monogatari* 源氏物語 = The Tale of *Genji*”. The title “*Hatsune* 初音 means the first song sung by *uguisu* 鶯 or a bush warbler in the spring, and it was named after the *waka* 和歌 poetry that Lady *Akashi-no-on-kata* 明石の御方 sent to a young lady (her daughter) *Akashi-no-hime-gimi* 明石の姫君,

年月を 松にひかれて ふる人に 今日 鶯の 初音をきかせよ

Toshi-tsuki wo Matsu ni hikare te Furu hito ni Kyo uguisu no Hatsume kika se yo
“I’m longing to hear the song of the first warbler after waiting for her growing for
a long time”.

It has been called “the Japan’s best wedding arrangement of furniture and tool”.

3) Black and Gold “*Kodai-ji-maki-e* -style 黒と金の”高台寺蒔絵”

Most of *maki-e* 蒔絵 express a noble and elegant world, but in the Azuchi-Momoyama period 安土桃山時代 (1573~1615) through the age of civil wars period, a new style of *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware appeared. That is what we call “*Kodai-ji maki-e* style lacquerware 高台寺蒔絵”.

Kodai-ji 高台寺 is a temple that was established by the top warrior *Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s* 豊臣秀吉 regular wife, *Kita-no-mandokoro* 北政所 (*Nene* ねね = *Kodai-in* 高台院) to mourn her husband at the foot of Higashiyama 東山 mountain in Kyoto. In the interior of Otamaya 霊屋 or the mausoleum was drawn a powerful *maki-e* pattern of black and gold. That is the origin of “*Kodai-ji-maki-e*-style 高台寺蒔絵”

The main characteristic of the “*Kodai-ji-maki-e* -style 高台寺蒔絵” is, the beauty of contrast between black and gold. With black lacquer as the background-color, autumn flowers such as *kiku* 菊 or a chrysanthemums, *hagi* 萩 or a bush clover, *kikyo* 桔梗 or the bellflower were drawn with simple, bold, and powerful vivid golden patterns are beautiful and distinctive. It can be said that it reflects the aesthetic sense of the warriors of civil wars while inheriting the elegant aristocratic culture.

(Image-8) Sake Ewer with Chrysanthemum Sprays and Paulownia Crests
(Kodaiji, Kyoto, 16 to 17th centuries) H12.9×φ18.5×L25.0cm 菊枝桐紋
蒔絵提子

4) **Black Lacquerware Loved by Sen no-Rikyu** 千 利休の黒い漆器の茶道具

At the same time, a tea master called *Sen no Rikyu* 千 利休 (1522-1591), who created the “*wabi cha* 侘び茶, or the rustling tea style”, preferred black lacquerware before giving decoration of *maki-e* 蒔絵.

He liked the small black lacquerware container for green tea power without any *maki-e* decoration at all. He thought it was more suitable for a dark and narrow *cha-shitsu* 茶室 or a tea room. The people who loved the beauty of the tea after he died applied *maki-e* 蒔絵 on a background of black lacquerware.

The Japanese novelist *Junichiro Tanizaki* 谷崎潤一郎 (1886~1965) mentioned in his essay “*In’ei Raisan* 陰翳礼讃 *In Praise of Shadows*” (1933), about the beauty of Japanese black and gold lacquerware, as follows.

<http://dcrit.sva.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/In-Praise-of-Shadows-Junichiro-Tanizaki.pdf>

“And I realized then that only in dim half-light is the true beauty of Japanese lacquerware revealed” (omission) “Lacquerware decorated in gold is not something to be seen in a brilliant light, to be taken in at a single glance; it should be left in the dark, a part here and a part there picked up by a faint light. Its florid patterns recede into the darkness, conjuring in their stead an inexpressible aura of depth and mystery, of overtones but partly suggested.”

In this way, the harmonic integration of black and gold, lights in darkness is the basic secret of the beauty of Japanese lacquerware.

5) **Maki-e Lacquerware was called “Japan”** 蒔絵 (= japan) は欧州へ

In the days of the *Azuchi-Momoyama* period 安土桃山時代 (1573~1615), Portuguese people and Spaniards who came to Japan.

Christian missionaries ordered the local lacquerware craftworkers to produce the rituals tools they brought from their home country, at ports in India, the Philippines, and Japan. There were items such as folding lecterns for bibles (折り畳み式の聖書用の書見台) and a tableacle containing the holy trinitities (三位一体図を納める聖龕). They also tried to measure the level of culture in each country from the level of production in each lacquerware item.

They were surprised at the high level of technique used in Japanese lacquerware *raden* 螺鈿 technique, and especially *maki-e* 蒔絵 techniques. Eventually, merchants ordered Japanese lacquerware crafts such as cabinets (書箆筥) and chests (洋櫃) of for use in ships.

As these had a good reputation, these were reordered a lot, and were exported a lot to Europe. Now, these are called “*Nanban* lacquerware 南蛮漆器”.

In the world of the Tokugawa shogunate government, trade with Spain and Portugal was forbidden, but many kinds of Japanese lacquerware started to be exported to Europe by Dutch and Chinese merchants. Their customers, European royalty and aristocrats, began to know the more luxurious and elegant lacquerware of Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware, with black and gold.

Eventually, the European court and salon became full of *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware furniture and dishes made by artisans in Kyoto. And *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware began to be called “japan” ware, bearing the name of the country where it was produced. It was the same as porcelain, which came to be called “china”. Japanese lacquerware, especially Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵, earned a good reputation.

On sample, I will show you is the “Commode with Pavilions in Landscape”.

(Image-9) Commode with Pavilions in Landscape (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK) (latter 17th century) http://dramatic-history.com/art/2009/culture/makie/exh-makie_japan08.htm 87.5×144.0×62.0cm

楼閣山水蒔絵コモド

It seems that a craftsman in Paris remade a chest of drawers with the *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware technique using the craftsman of Kyoto to the furniture of the rococo style. The owner of this furniture would have wanted to enjoy the *maki-e* 蒔絵 black and gold in his salon forever, even though the interior fashion changed. Because it was impossible for anyone other than Japanese craftsmen to make the part of *maki-e* 蒔絵, the parts of *makie's* 蒔絵 technique were taken off and were used once again.

6) *Maki-e* (japan) Beloved by Queens 王妃たちに愛された蒔絵

Among the European royalty aristocrats who loved Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware, there was Austrian Habsburg dominions Empress Maria Theresia (1717~1780), and her daughter princess Marie Antoinette (1755~1793).

Maria Theresia once said that “I love lacquerware more than diamonds.” She made “a room of Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware” in the Schönbrunn Palace, and collected a lot of *maki-e* lacquerware.

Her daughter Marie Antoinette inherited her *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware collection. The small incense utensils with gold *maki-e* 蒔絵 brought from the Far East reminded her of her mother. She also loved Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware, and added more to the collection. Now, most of them are in the Palace Museum of Versailles.

(Image-10) Fan-shaped Incense Container (Musee national des arts asiatiques Guimet, France) (latter 17th century) <http://cefiro.main.jp/Makie.html>
1.4×6.6×10.4cm 楼閣山水蒔絵扇形香合

There is also been a noble residence called “Barrie house” in Stanford, 160 km north of London, with a special decorative shelf in the library that holds nearly one hundred of Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware items from the middle of Japan’s Edo period 江戸時代 (1603~1868).

(Image-11) Decorative Shelf for Japanese *Maki-e* Lacquer in the Library at “Barrie House” (“Barrie house” in Stanford, 160km north of London, U.K.) (latter 17th century) バーリーハウスの図書室の飾り棚
<http://www.burghley.co.uk/collections/category/exhibitions/japanese-lacquer/>

In addition, there are many Japanese *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware collections in the royal palace museums of Denmark and Sweden.

7) **Kyo-maki-e “Zohiko” for Global Executives** 京蒔絵 “象彦” 世界へ

I will introduce you to *Zohiko* 象彦, a Kyoto lacquerware shop that was founded in 1661, over 356 years ago,

During the Edo period 江戸時代 (1603~1868), this shop received special orders from the Imperial court in *Kyoto*, aristocracy, shrines and temples, the *Tokugawa* shogunate in *Edo* (modern-day *Tokyo*), and feudal lords across Japan. The products were high-class furnishings and tools for various ceremonies including weddings, with sophisticated elegant designs.

After the Meiji Restoration, new business executives became new patrons in place of those noble customers. They continued to order *Zohiko* 象彦 luxurious *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerwares as ceremonial gifts dedicated to the Meiji Emperor and the royal family, gifts to the overseas royal families, or items for world expositions.

Many splendid *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerwares works which the Mitsui family ordered are exhibited at the *Mitsui* Memorial Museum 三井記念美術館, at

Nihon-bashi 日本橋 in Tokyo.

(Image-12) Shelf for headdress worn by nobles with bridge and willow design in *maki-e* (Mitsui Memorial Museum) (20th century)
38.0×66.0×(H)29.5cm 柳橋蒔絵冠卓 <http://www.mitsui-museum.jp/collection/collection.html#page-top>

After the end of the Great East Asia War, many financial conglomerates, called *zaibatsu* 財閥 were dismantled by GHQ. Therefore, *Zohiko* 象彦 came to make souvenir for the officers of GHQ and implements for Japanese ordinary people.

In the present age, the *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerwares of *Zohiko* is for executives who can understand its beauty and its value.

For example, in cooperation with Vacheron Constantin ヴァシュロン・コンスタンタン, one of the world's three largest luxury watchmakers, *Zohiko* 象彦 has created a luxury wristwatch in the MÉTIERS D'ART La Symbolique des Laques series ラ・サンボリック・デ・ラックシリーズ, by *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware decorations.

(Image-13) *Zohiko* 象彦 + Vacheron Constantin ヴァシュロン・コンスタンタン
<http://www.gressive.jp/special/impression/20120529-vacheron-constantin/>

This watch took “the three beauties of nature: snow, the moon, and flowers = *Setsu Getsu Ka* 雪月花 motif” as the motif on both the clock face side and back side. For an expert lacquer work craftsman, it took more than nine months to complete. (Limited sales of 20 sets each year (for three years from 2010 to 2012) with a set having three models. The price was 24,000,000 yen (excluding tax). There are only 60 sets of these treasures in the world

At its exhibition in Milan, orders for all three years sold out in a day. It may be said that the Japanese *maki-e* lacquerwares continues to attract the attention of executives all over the world.

From now, I would like to show you three special videos.

First of all, I will show you the short video of the process of making the basic lacquerware surface on *natume* 棗 = *Usu-cha-ki* 薄茶器 or a tea container for tea ceremony.

Next, there is one about the process of making *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware decoration on its surface by a *maki-e* 蒔絵 artisan.

Finally, there is one showing the process of making *maki-e* 蒔絵 lacquerware decoration of “the three beauties of nature: snow, the moon, and flowers = *Setsu Getsu Ka* 雪月花 motif” on both sides of a watch

IV. Movies 映像

1) Kyo Lacquerware 京漆器 (07:08) :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qti46JWRpLw>

The Sharpened Simplicity

The elegant and tense shapes of Kyoto lacquerware 京漆器, are created by polishing and sharpening in its every corner.

Right angle, at right angles, and an edge,

It does not tolerate even a slight distortion in an elegant curve.

The craftsmen’s attention creates the eternal simplicity,
always attractive after years and years

2) Kyo Maki-e 京蒔絵 (07:52) :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbvU-8IPiEc>

Expressing a momentary impression of eternal beauty

At the root of the Japanese pattern, the scenery and the story

which moves our hearts are secretly hidden.

That encounter is a moment that should be called

a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity”.

Kyoto *Maki-e* 京蒔絵 artisans use the best techniques for each part without doing excessive decoration at all to reach the feeling of the person whom

the impression watches naturally;

to the ultimate is simple, and express it.

It becomes the origin of the eternal beauty.

3) **Zohiko** 象彦 + MÉTIERS D'ART La Symbolique des Laques series,

(03,41) :

using *maki-e* lacquerware decorations.

“the three beauties of nature: snow, the moon, and flowers = *Setsu*

Getsu Ka 雪月花”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmmOPa91xrg>

V. Presentation 作品紹介

Here I will show you some actual *maki-e* 蒔絵 works. These are tea tools which I borrowed from Mr. *Sohaku Asanuma* 浅沼宗博, our tea master at Kogakkan University.

- 1) *Kuro-oh-natume* with Black, Designed by *Sen no Rikyū*, Produced by Nakamura Sotetsu IV
黒大棗 千利休 好 四代中村宗哲 (1726~1791)作 (十五世 鵬雲斎家元 書付)
- 2) *Oh-natume* with *Jingu Maki-e*, Designed by *Asanuma Sohaku*, Produced by *Maehata Shyunsai*
大棗 神宮蒔絵 浅沼宗博 好 三代前瑞春齊 (1964~)作 (十五世 坐忘斎家元 書付)
- 3) Water Container of Carp-style, with *Seigaiha Maki-e*, Designed by *Sen Houn-sai*, with *tamenuri*, Produced by *Nakamura Soetsu*
鯉桶水指 鵬雲斎好 溜塗 青海波蒔絵 中村宗悦 作

- 4) Dry Sweets Container, with Auspicious Cloud *Maki-e*, Designed and Produced by Zohiko
干菓子器 瑞雲 象彦 作

VI. On the Way toward Mastering Craftsmanship 職人技への道

1) “Waza = Skill and Kokoro=Heart” 技と心

Now, I have finished introducing traditional Japanese handcrafts, as one part of the Japanese traditional culture, focusing on lacquerware especially on *maki-e* 蒔絵. What are your thought about it?

Finally, I would like to review Japanese traditional culture using two key words, “*Waza* 技 = skill and *Kokoro* 心 = heart”. “*Waza* 技” means skill and technique. “*Kokoro* 心” means mind and spirit.

Japanese traditional culture has required advanced technology and a lot of spirit.

2) The Way toward becoming a Person of Virtue. 徳をめざす「道」

And, it has required the person who has both high technology and high spirit. So, I think that Japanese traditional culture is an integrated one of “technology and spirit”.

Each person living in Japan, has been trained under a strict teacher, not only to acquire skills but also to study the spirit of a craft. This process has required patience, repetition, training, and polishing both technically and spiritually. In order to acquire the eternal truth, we Japanese have to aim to complete not only the technology but also the spirit.

The completion of the spirit has included enlightenment in the religious matters and literary realms, polite and sophisticated behavior in society, and educational and influential ability for teaching disciples. Through these processes, we Japanese have been aiming at becoming individuals with high virtues. We call these processes a “way,” or *michi* 道.

For example, in accomplishments, we have *sado* 茶道 = the way of tea, *ka-do* 華道 = the way of flower arrangement, *ko-do* 香道 = the way of incense. In *Bu-do* 武道 or the way of martial arts, *keno-do* 剣道 = the way of sword, *ju-do* 柔道, and *aiki-do* 合気道 = “the way of unifying with life energy”.

Even if there is not the word “*michi* = *do*道 = a way”, attached to something, most of Japanese works are “ways” for aiming to be persons of high virtue.

Also, we Japanese acknowledge the human completion of the person in his work.

3) Integrating various values 価値の統合

We are people who aim to integrate different values.

We are people who have been aimed to become virtuous by integrating various values.

We are people who have aimed to create a virtuous state that integrates virtuous people.

And we hope that the virtuous international society will be built on integrated various virtuous countries.

Epilogue 終章

1) *Shikinen-sengu* rituals 式年遷宮

The treasures 装束御神宝 of *Shikinen-sengu* 式年遷宮 rituals of Ise-great-Shrine 伊勢神宮 is the summit of the craftsmanship in Japan. These treasures are made by the best craftsman of each era, as a representation of the people’s faith, toward Goddess of the sun, *Amaterasu Omikami*, 天照大神 which is devoted to the *kami* or Gods. So, the system of *Shikinen-sengu* 式年遷宮 rituals of Ise-great-Shrine 伊勢神宮 that is repeatedly remade as an old design every 20 years is planned by *kami* or Gods to prosper forever of this country.

2) **Sakura=Cherry blossom** 桜

And, the soul of Japan has been symbolized by *Sakura* 桜 = cherry blossom
Norinaga Motori (1730~1801), a scholar, wrote a poetry as follows.

敷島の 大和心を 人問わば 朝日に匂う 山桜花

Shikishima no Yamato-gokoro wo Hito towa ba Asahi ni niou Yama-zakura-bana

If I am asked about the meaning of *yamato-gokoro* (= the soul of Japan),
I will answer it is the blossoms of *yama-zakura* (mountain cherry trees) shining
in the rising sun.

3) **Living within the eternal divine virtues** 永遠の御神徳と共に生きる

We Japanese have been living within the eternal divine virtues, like
blossoms of cherry trees shining in the rising sun. The joy of living with eternal
values (= Japanese traditional culture) is the happiness of living as a Japanese.
That is the secret of our extreme craftsmanship.

We wish you all your future work will be wonderfully successful, through the
integration of skill and heart, science and culture, creation and tradition, and
virtue.

Thank you very much.

(applause)

(Image-15) A commemorative photo of students and the lecturer, me
(center) at *Momofuneroom*, in *Kogakkan Univ.*

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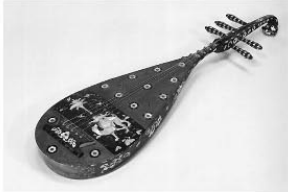
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Lecture
Secrets of the Craftsmanship and Soul of Japan

日本の職人技と日本の心の真髄



(Image-1) Five-Stringed *Biwa* Lute of Red Sandal Woods with *Raden* (*Shosoin* of *Todai-ji* Temple) (From Chang'an of Tang Dynasty) (8th century)



(Image-2) Box of Black Lacquerware with *Raden* of Crest of Hollyhock (*Urasae* City Art Museum, Okinawa) (17th century)



(Image-3) *Maki-e* Lacquered Box for Sutras with *Hosoge* Flowers and *Karyobinga* Designs (*Ninna-ji* Temple Kyoto National Museum) (10th century)



(Image-4) Cosmetic Box Design of Wheels Half-Submerged in Stream in *Maki-e* lacquer and *Raden** (Tokyo National Museum) (12th century)



(Image-5) Ink-Stone Case with *Shio-no-yama* Motif (Kyoto National Museum) (15th century)



(Image-6) Box, *Cho-sei-den* Motif* (Design of the Pavilion in Chinese palace) (*Tokugawa* Art Museum, Nagoya) (13th to 14th century)



(Image-7) *Hatsune* Marriage Trousseau of *Chiyo-hime* (Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya) (17th century)



(Image-8) Sake Ewer with Chrysanthemum Sprays and Paulownia Crests (*Kodaiji* Temple, Kyoto) (16th to 17th century)



(Image-9) Commode with Pavilions in Landscape (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK.) (Latter of 17th century)



(Image-10) Fan-Shaped Incense Container (Musée National des Arts Guimet, France) (Latter of 17th century)



(Image-11) Decorative Shelf for Japanese Lacquer in the Library at "Barrie House" (in Stanford 160km north of London, U.K.) (Latter of 17th century)



(Image-12) Shelf for Headress Worn by Nobles with Bridge and Willow Design in *Maki-e* (Mitsui Memorial Museum) (20th century)



(Image-13) *Zohiko* 象彦 + Vacheron Constantin (21C)

(Image-14) *Natume* Designed by *Sen no Rikyū*, Produced by *Sototsu Nakamura* 4th (1726~1791) (Asanuma's Collection) (18th century)



(Image-15) A Commemorative Photo of Students and the Lecturer, me (center) at *Momofun* room, in Kogakkan Univ.