



We deliver

大和魂

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—The Philosophy of Daimyou Ltd.—

Under our slogan of 'We deliver the YAMATO DAMASHII', the Daimyou Ltd offers information about the Japanese history and antique goods and aims at guiding our customers to the old Japanese world by fulfilling our customers demands to antique gears.

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I went to Ooyamadumi Shrine

The part of Ooyamadumi Shrine



Ochi no Mikoto Otenoue Kusunoki



This shrine was constructed by the Empress Suiko in 594—the Asuka period. From ancient times, emperors, empress and military commanders have visited here. Even **Hirobumi ITO, the first Prime Minister**, prayed here as well.

When I went inside, I felt a quiet and calm atmosphere

The Ochinomikoto Otenoue Kusunoki* in front of a gate is like sitting down composedly. The holy camphorwood is 2600 years old and designated as a natural treasure.

HANAMOTO: 'Please give my company your power in order to be able to continue to run it forever! Ha!'

We prayed with the feeling of gratitude that our company had been sustained for 11 years without any accidents.

*This sacred tree was planted by Ochi no Michiko's hands as a memory of religious ceremony.



(NAKABORI)



◆The main gate



◆Before visiting the shrine



◆Praying

The part of Ooyamadumi Shrine Homotsukan.

This museum keeps and shows about 80% of arms designated as the National Treasures/Important Cultural Properties in Japan. The large armors of Minamoto no Yoshitsune whose young name was Ushiwakamaru and his elder brother, Minamoto no Yoshitomo—the first shogun of the Kamakura bakufu are also displayed.

When entering the museum, only wonderful swords and arms were exhibited in a row. First of all, what excited me was Musashibou Benkei's famous Onaginata(long-handled sword). The exhibited Onaginata is 101cm in flute length. This seemed to be made with a gentle-curved figure in order to make it easy to unsheathe a sword in combat. There is a famous episode about Benkei. He intended to rob 1000 swords, attacked passers-by and reached to 999. For getting the 1000th sword, he finally rushed on Ushiwakamaru(Yoshitsune) but was avoided easily and lost to Ushikawamaru. He finally became Ushiwakamaru's retainer for himself.

The majority of displayed swords were Japanese katana. The longest sword was 180cm in length.

NAKABORI: 'How did they use such a big sword?'

SHIMATANI: 'Did they defeat the distant enemy at the first attempt?'

HANAMOTO: 'This sword had another name as 'Seoidachi' carried on soldier's back, which was used for killing not only soldiers but also horses they were riding on together.'

NAKABORI&SHIMATANI: 'We got it!'

Here, president's boastful talk about Japanese history did not stop for a while.



◆In front of the Ooyamadumi Shrine Homotsukan.

The female military commander—Jeanne d'Arc of the Setouchi

The only existent body of woman's armor for the female military commander, Tsuruhime whose nickname was 'Tsuruhime'(1526?-1543?, the end of Muromachi period) is displayed here.

This body armor can be seen only in this museum.

NAKABORI: 'The part of waist is much narrowed' SHIMATANI: 'The part of breast is also plump'

NAKABORI: 'It is very feminine' SHIMATANI: 'Sure'

Tsuruhime was born as a daughter of Yasumochi Oohori, a chief Shinto priest of the Ooyamagi Shrine at the Oomishima Island. She had studied tactics with her two elder brothers and was familiar with strategy. Yoshitaka Ouchi in Suono Kuni(Yamaguchi prefecture) attacked the Oomishima Island again and again. At first, Yasuoku, the first son, departed for battles as Jindai—the leader of soldiers and repelled the enemy. Since Yasuoku succeeded his father and became a chief Shinto priest, Yasufusa, the second son, went to battles as the commander. But he was killed in battle. So, Tsuruhime who was 16 year's old at that time took part in battles as the head of army. She got good results like killing the enemy military commanders. But, Yasu-ari Ochi, who was said to be her lover and right-hand man had been killed. This made the war situation much worse. Finally, she committed suicide when she was 18 years old. A young marriage-able girl who was 16 years old went to a battlefield with her life endangered. I thought what she shouldered at that time were completely different from what I had in the same age. And her boyfriend's death. For her, he may have been something essential to live. She has been named as Jeanne d'Arc of the Setouchi. She, however, was a woman who told the sadness of losing families and friends and how war was stupid. We are going to be strong like Tsuruhime!



◆Women armor to be the only extant



Yaaaa!

Strong like Tsuruhime!

◆The part of lunch

At a restaurant in the site of Ooyamadumi Homotsukan, we ate lunch we were looking forward to. The CEO ordered 'Tai Ramen Noodles' whose ingredients were breams caught in the Seto Inland Sea.

And NAKABORI had an expensive Tsuruhime meal because she insisted on being like Tsuruhime.

Dooooooooon!

The taste is very simple. Soup stock is so tasty. I want to eat this noodle after drinking.



The taste is very simple and delicious.

Next, SHIMATANI ordered Sea food BBQ.

What will I eat?



BBQ! It's so enjoyable! I need beer.



◆The Tsuruhime meal



It is too good to eat

It is pretty gorgeous! It is so luxurious that I can't decide what to eat.

The appearance of meal was so huge. It was too much in quantity for one person to eat. So, we shared this tasty meal. This trip enabled us to look at a lot of swords and armor and to study the Japanese history. We recognized that the Japanese manufacturing and craftsmanship were very courteous and delicate. We were going to make efforts to deliver information of better antique art. Thanks!

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I am going to tell you about

大和魂 Yamatodamashii

I am Takako SHIMATANI—the writer of this column. I will tell you about horse gear which is used for a festival called 'Umaoi Festival', etc.

Oh, over 1000 years ago or more!

Do you know this history? In the tumulus period (about 4th Century,) from now about 1714 year before, horses were imported from Mongolia to Japan. Tradition has it that old people treated a horse as the god to ride. It was said to an offering to god to please the god as well. This custom still remains 'Ema', a votive picture of horse. What do you usually write on your Ema? As the origin of it is an offering to god, how about adding your appreciative words to god at least once?



What is horse gear?

6000 years ago, it is said that the people who lived in the steppe area of Central Eurasia designed horse gear to control a horse. This horse culture was introduced in Japan after 5th Century. In spite of the culture having spread all over the world, the way to riding a horse in Japan seemed to be very unique. What made the Japanese horse culture unique was that only Japanese people allegedly held their reins with their left hands. It may make their right hands free and enable them to draw swords anytime. It might not so difficult, which might cause no difficulty to come and go with people when riding on horse. The reason why cars in Japan keep the left may originate from these reasons.

A saddle—officially called as a saddle tree—consists of a saddle fork, cantle and bars of a saddle tree.

In order to ease a shock of saddle a horse gets, a saddle blanket is set between a saddle and horse. A saddle cloth is put on bars of a saddle tree.

A saddle flap (for mudguard) is worn and a leather stirrup to hang a stirrup is added.



◆ saddle fork



◆ bars of a saddle



◆ saddle blanket



◆ saddle cloth



◆ saddle flap



◆ leather stirrup

A variety of saddles

Gunjin kura—a thick saddle for military use

*This saddle has a thick and high saddle fork and cantle in order to keep a stable ride of heavily-armed samura
*For the purpose of controlling a horse nimbly, this saddle has no leather stirrup.



Suikan Kura—a thin saddle for ordinary use

*This saddle was made for a court-noble to ride with Suikan Shozoku, a simple garment—no special clothe was needed. This saddle has a thin and low saddle fork and cantle.

*It was so light that it was used for travelling long



A still existent horse festival (Shinto ritual)

The well-known Soma Umaoi (horse festival), which has designated as an Important intangible folk cultural asset, is held in Soma-Shi, Fukushima prefecture. The origin of this festival is said to be as blow: before the Kamakura bakufu was established, Masakado Taira set wild horses free and made military drill, assuming them the enemy, in his territory—Koganebara, Souma County, Shimozusa Province (current Matsudo in Chiba prefecture). The current existent Shinto ritual is made at the end of July every year. This year's schedule will be on 24/-27, July. We have got an invitation to 'take a look!' from a customer in Fukushima prefecture. So, we want to join in this event once by all means. Undoubtedly, our company's items are likely to take part in this event with our customers as well.



Hanaemon's

Make you Back in time

the part of Shingen



As SHIMATANI wrote about horse gear in the story about 'YAMA-TODAMASHII', I will describe Shingen TAKEDA who led the strongest cavalry in the Sengoku period. You have a clear image of cavalymen when talking about the TAKEDA's Army.

The Kai Province (now Yamanashi) where Shingen TAKEDA had ruled is said to be famous as a horse-breeding center at that time. In addition, this area was not so developed as Kyoto, the capital of Japan. Thus, its infrastructure was poor. The horses in the Kai Province often ran on mountains and hills. And they were very tough and had enough stamina. So, they were very suitable for military use. With using such horses, he founded the strongest cavalry.

But a recent study shows some doubts about the existence of cavalry

1. Numerous foods were needed in order to use a lot of war horses in a battle field. Moreover, more money, horses and human resource were required.....
2. Economic strength was asked to keep war horses.
3. It is said that solders did not charged at the enemy with riding on horses, but rode them off and charged. It was impossible to attack with Japanese horses at that time which did not have fine physiques like modern race horses. Luis Fróis allegedly wrote a letter to his home, 'Japanese solders had battles after getting off their horses'.

Ummmm, to be sure, it is true. But I feel sad.....

Apart from the question about the existence of cavalry, the TAKEDA's Army led by Shingen TAKEDA was the strongest in the Sengoku period as well as the UESUGI's Army led by Kenshin UESUGI—the description at that time is still remained in an old history.

Shingen TAKEDA had some battles against Shingen UESUGI about controlling Kita Shinano (current Nagano-Shi). They were famous Battles of Kawanakajima. They had made five battles. But the only fourth battle was very fierce actually.



◆ Kenshin UESUGI



◆ 24 commanders of the TAKEDA's Army

While the victory or defeat of these two men was not clear, TAKEDA's management to expand his territory gradually was superior to UESUGI's one. Afterwards, Shingen began the military operation to go west as encirclement around Nobunaga. But a lot of snow made it impossible for UESUGI's Army to attack the territory of TAKEDA since this operation started in fall.

The influence of TAKEDA's Army was very terrific. One month would be generally needed when an ordinary army began to attack and took a small subsidiary castle. But his army was said to occupy it one after another within three days. It is just like as fast as the wind. The serious expedition by TAKEDA's Army famed as the strongest in the Sengoku period appeared to frighten the ODA and TOKUGAWA families. While it might be the irony of fate, Shingen who was 52 year's old at that time became sick with a chronic illness and passed away suddenly. His army returned its territory. Shingen TAKEDA who was named as the strongest in the Sengoku period had finished his life without arriving at Kyoto.

疾如風 徐如林 掠如火 不動如山 侵

If Shingen had not died suddenly



Could the allied forces of ODA and TOKUGAWA have stopped the TAKEDA's Army with stupendous force? As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, the ODA's army had a special army only for wars. The TAKEDA's Army would have to retreat during farmer's busy season. On the other hand, the ODA's army could battle all year around. Except farmer's busy season, the TAKEDA's Army could resist against the ODA's Army. During farmer's busy season, they could regain their territory. Nobunaga would have attack without pausing if he had assumed his win. If not, he may have fight carefully with taking time. He would have had a long-range strategy against the TAKEDA's Army which might have be attacked by the UESUGI's Army after snow melting. Furthermore, if TAKEDA's Army had been in keen competition with the allied forces of ODA and TOKUGAWA, I could not predict how the HOZYO family which was the TAKEDA's allies and neighbours of TAKAEDA and TOKUGAWA may have moved. I guess the allied forces of ODA and TOKUGAWA could have won finally. And I wish it!