

into Japanese history in Nishifuji Elementary School

Let's Make a Time Slip

in Nishifuji Elementary School Part2

Hello! This is Hanamoto Takashi, better known as Hanayemon. The other day, I gave a history lesson to sixth-form children at Nishifuji Primary School in Onomichi City, Hiroshima Prefecture. This was my second visit to the school.



As before, in the first hour we introduced our company and talked about armour and Japanese swords. After explaining about the armour and Japanese swords, the students were immediately invited to actually touch the armour, helmets, Japanese swords and firearms.



When the children were allowed to hold the swords in their hands, they said, 'It's so heavy! Do you have to swing this?' They were very excited! Then, when they held the flintlock gun in their hands, they said,



'This one is really heavy too!', 'It's really cool!'

Seeing them touch the guns with shining eyes made us very happy. The replica helmets were a hit with the students, who queued up to try them on. The teachers also put on the helmets, too. Some of the pupils said, 'I want to wear all the armour!' They were so excited as well. In the exciting history quiz, the students were able to answer the questions they had been given in class,



I was very impressed by the fact that the students were able to understand what I had told them in class. The students who stayed until the end were very happy when we presented them with a hand towel with their family crests on it. Many pupils raised their hands to share their opinions and impressions, which made the class very enjoyable and fulfilling.



Dear Daimyo



Thank you!

All of students in the 6th grade in Nishifuji Primary school

We received heartfelt letters and photos from the students and teachers of Nishifuji Primary School.

Dear Daimyo
Thank you very much for giving a delivery lesson the other day. I had a lot of fun with the helmets, armour, rope guns and swords, and I also enjoyed the quiz.
Arima Hiyori, The 6 grade

'What is the purpose of this job?' - I thought about that about 10 years ago. I thought that one day I would be happy if I could give a history lesson that would 'trigger' children's interest in Japanese history and make them fall in love with it. I hope to continue giving classes at various primary schools in the future, where they can come into contact with the wonderful culture of Japan.



How about this Yamatodamashii? We need your opinions and feedbacks more. We are waiting for them!

Please write as 'Sub: reply to the newsletter' and send it to us



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Daimyo Company Co., Ltd.



We deliver

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The Philosophy of Daimyou Ltd.

The Philosophy of Daimyo Company Limited. Under our slogan of 'We deliver the YAMATODAMASHII', the Daimyo 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.

St. Valentine's Day 2.14

Hello, This is Takako Shimatani.

In the Shimatani family, the biggest event in February is Valentine's Day! Each of the three sisters makes a unique Valentine's Day chocolate for the recipient.

Valentine's Day is the day women give men women love. Why in Japan?

Eldest

'That's true. I'd like to receive one, wouldn't you?'

Second sister

'It makes sense'

Third daughter



In other countries, Valentine's Day is a day for men to express their love to women by giving roses, bouquets or letters, but in Japan, the custom is 'for women to give chocolate to men', which is a unique Japanese culture.

Mother

'It's a very confusing culture.'

But they immediately started preparing for Valentine's Day. My girls, what on earth will you make this year?

In fact, chocolate is the most common Valentine's Day gift, but it seems that other sweets also have special meanings and messages. It has many meanings, but perhaps it is an important day to express feelings of gratitude that cannot be conveyed on a day to day basis. How about expressing gratitude to women not only from women to men, but also from men to women?



Completed

Thank you for all your hard work. Eat some sweets with love and cheer yourself up. Go for it! With my love!

Mother secretly tasting the cookies, the three of them

'Hey! What are you doing?'

- Chocolate** Means I feel the same as you and want to continue the same relationship as before.
- Macarons** Means you are someone special
- Candy** Means I like you and hope we can have a long-lasting relationship
- Tiramisu** Means cheer me up
- Doughnut** Means I love you so much
- Caramel** Means I feel safe and healed when you stay with me
- Madeleine** Means I want to make close relationship with you
- Cookie** Means I want to be your friend
- Marshmallow** Means I want to forget you as soon as possible
- Gummy** Means I have no interest in you

And there seem to be some unfortunate meanings



Hello, this is Takako Shimatani. In this issue,
I would like to talk about family crests.

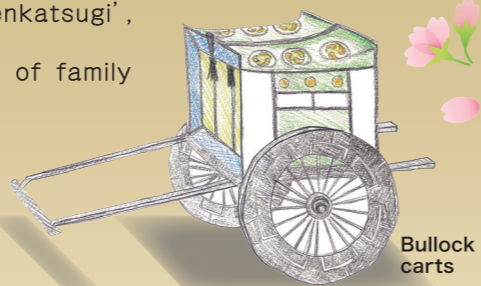


I am going to talk about
Yamatodamashii
大和魂

It all started in...



In the Jomon period, people used to write designs on their utensils, hunting tools and sometimes their own bodies as 'Genkatsugi', wishing for a good catch and a healthy life. The culture of decorative patterns led to the spread of family crests later on. It is said that the present-day family crests began when court nobles (aristocrats) started decorating furniture with their favourite 'flowers', 'animals', etc. on their clothes and even on bullock carts, etc., where they could be seen by the public.



Bullock carts

Heian period



In the late Heian period, when the conflict between the Genji and Heike Clans began to intensify, family crests were introduced to the warrior class. Warriors needed to distinguish between friend and foe, and in the absence of family crests, they were identified by the colours of their flags. However, it is said that as it was not possible to tell which warlord was where from the colours of the flag alone, family crests spread as a marker on flags and camp curtains.

Incidentally... it is also said that the red and white teams competing in Japanese sports meets originated from the Genpei War (the Genji Clan was divided into white and the Heike Clan into red).



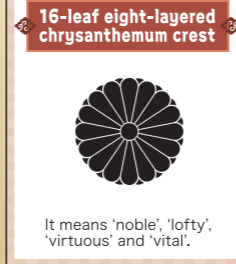
Sasa Rindou-mon (bamboo grass and dragonfly crest)
The language of flowers is 'victory' and 'sense of justice'.



butterfly pattern with a butterfly's wings fluttering in the air
Signifies never dying and never fading.

Muromachi PO - Sengoku PO

Hakama -Japanese male formal attire- began to be decorated with family crests. In the Sengoku Period, warfare intensified and even clans fought each other, leading to a rapid increase in the number of types of family crests. The family crest became so authoritative that Toyotomi Hideyoshi issued regulations forbidding the use of the 'chrysanthemum and paulownia' crest, which had been a symbol of the imperial family, to be used only by the imperial family and those in power.



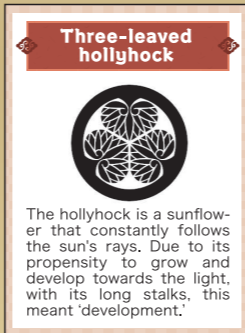
16-leaf eight-layered chrysanthemum crest
It means 'noble', 'lofty', 'virtuous' and 'vital'.



Goshichikiri crest
It means nobility, purity, good fortune and happy long life.

Edo period

As warfare ceased in Edo Period, family crests changed from being a practical means of distinguishing friend and foe to an expression of a family's prestige. Ordinary people such as craftsmen, peasants, townspeople, actors, entertainers and prostitutes were able to freely use family crests. It is said that the family crest was the only way to identify a person's status. Tokugawa Ieyasu declined to receive the prestigious 'chrysanthemum and paulownia crest' from the Emperor Goyozei, who was the emperor at the time. Instead, he started to attempt to increase the relative authority of the hollyhock by monopolising the hollyhock crest. From this time onwards, the families that had originally used the hollyhock crest also stopped using it, in consideration of the Tokugawa shoguns. However, because some townspeople started to sell goods using the hollyhock crest without permission and some Ronin (masterless samurai) started to misbehave by wearing the hollyhock crest, a strict ban on the use of the hollyhock crest was imposed in the Kyoho Period (1716-1735), more than 100 years after the establishment of the Edo Shogunate. The hollyhock crest came to have far greater authority than the imperial chrysanthemum and paulownia crests.



Three-leaved hollyhock
The hollyhock is a sunflower that constantly follows the sun's rays. Due to its propensity to grow and develop towards the light, with its long stalks, this meant 'development'.

Meiji period - Present day

With the return of power to the Emperor by Tokugawa Yoshinobu, the New Meiji Government issued a number of Dajokan (Grand Council of State) proclamations forbidding the use of the imperial symbol, 'the chrysanthemum crest'. This led to a gradual revival of the authority of the chrysanthemum crest. The popular song 'Chrysanthemums flourish, hollyhocks wither' also indicated that the authority of the Tokugawa hollyhock crest fell at that time and the imperial chrysanthemum crest experienced a revival. Later, with the spread of customs and interest in Western culture, the wearing of crested garments gradually decreased. However, the custom of wearing Happi coats and ceremonial clothes with family crests on traditional festive events, weddings and funerals still remains with care in the current Japanese society.

The family crest may have been a will given to the family by its ancestors. It may have been a symbol of the family's wish that the family would grow and develop by being inspired by plants, animals, the sun, the moon and other auspicious symbols.



I am going to make you
back in times!



This issue continues the focus on the No.2 military commanders from the previous issue. In this issue, I will take you a time-slip to of Ashikaga Takauji's No. 2, this man!

Kouno 高師直
Moronao

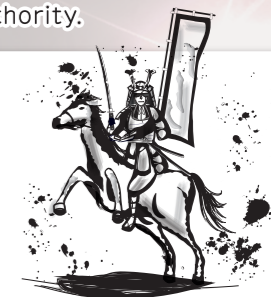
(Year of birth unknown~1351)



He was born as the son of Kono Moroshige. When Moronao succeeded to the leadership of the Kono Clan, he, like his father and ancestors, became a steward of the Ashikaga Clan -a role to take charge of household affairs on behalf of the head of the family and served close to Ashikaga Takauji. Following Takauji, he took part in the forces to overthrow the Kamakura Shogunate and contributed to Takauji's victory in the overthrow of the Shogunate exceedingly. After the overthrow of the Shogunate, he participated in the struggle with Emperor Godaigo and contributed to the founding of the Muromachi Shogunate. As steward of the Shogun's household, he held the position of governor of several areas in the Kono Clan and wielded authority.

Rational leading military commander

Having achieved military success in numerous battles, Moronao was committed to more efficient warfare. In those days, the head of an enemy general was taken in battle and the reward was decided at a post-war inspection of the head. Moronao omitted the time of cutting the head of enemy commander and changed the system to one in which a bounty was awarded to anyone who confirmed that the enemy had been defeated. This allowed him to be more mobile than other armies.



Innovative Shogunate stewards

Territories were given as a bounty at the time. In the Kamakura Shogunate, they were also given to generals with bounties. However, in order to actually own the granted land completely, it was necessary to subjugate local military groups by force. Military commanders who were unable to subdue them could not gain effective control of the land and failed to earn income. Moronao made it possible for the commanders with weak military strength and power to gain effective control of the land by forcing them to send troops from the Muromachi Shogunate. He also simplified the cumbersome procedures and made efforts to enable immediate effective control, thereby consolidating the Muromachi Shogunate's ground and increasing its authority.

Struggle between the two great powers

The Muromachi Shogunate developed into a conflict of interest between the conservative faction of Takauji's younger brother, Tadayoshi, and the innovative faction of Moronao. At one point, Moronao cornered Tadayoshi, forced him to become a Buddhist priest and made peace with him. However, Tadayoshi regained power and Moronao was defeated. Moronao made peace with Tadayoshi on the condition of his being a Buddhist priest, but during the convoy he and his family were massacred by the men of Tadayoshi's faction. Despite their contribution to the overthrow of the Kamakura Shogunate and the founding of the Muromachi Shogunate, Moronao and the other members of the Kono Clan had lost their names in the early years of the Muromachi Shogunate.



This portrait of Ashikaga Takauji on the top of this page was considered to be the portrait of Ashikaga Takauji in Japanese history textbooks in the past. Recent research has suggested that it should be either Kono Moronao or one of the Kono Clans, based on his armour and harness. However, the family crest on the portrait has been identified as having been drawn in later years, and the portrait has become a mystery again. Ashikaga Takauji → unknown. The mystery only deepens. Who are you?