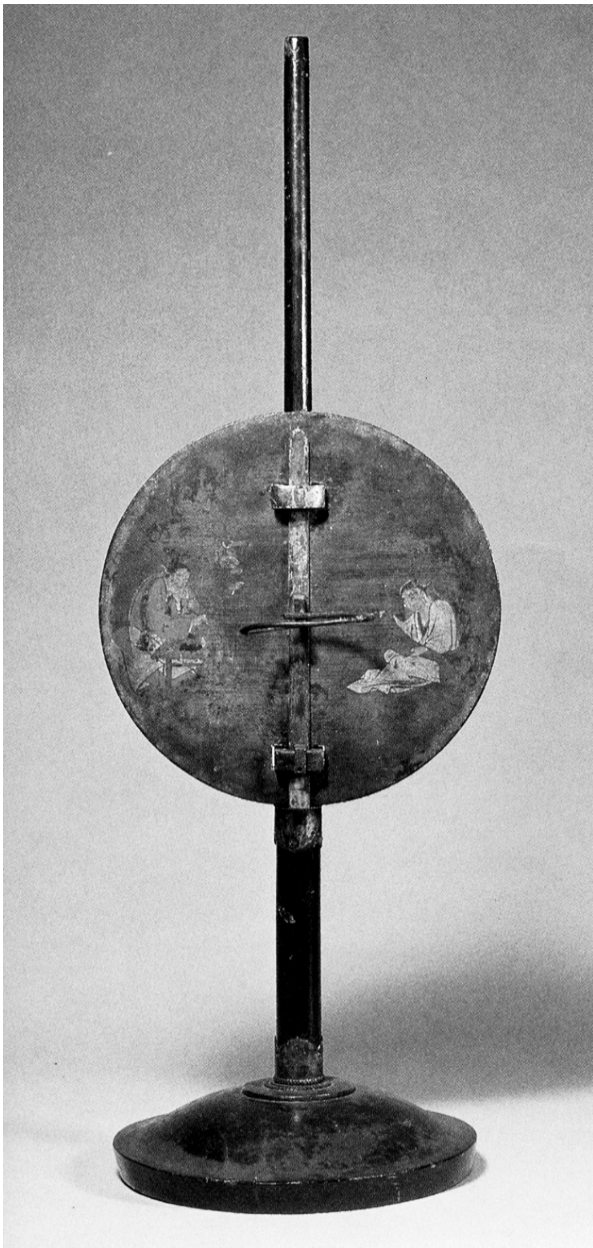


## Drifting Object : Between Treasure and Art

—The Whereabouts of the *nemuri-todai* (one of the treasures originating in Horyuji temple)—

YAMAZAKI Tsuyoshi



*nemuri-todai* (眠り燈台)  
Tokyo National Museum  
Floor lamp / Lacquer on wood / Decorated in color  
painting with design of figures / h.78.0cm

The present essay was prepared for the oral presentation for the symposium: “Toward Updating the Concept of “Bijutsu (Art)” in Japan” held at University of Chicago, in September 6th-7th, 2014. The symposium was held as one of the researches entitled “Toward Updating the Concept of “Bijutsu (Art)” in Japan (日本における美術概念の再構築)” (representative organisation : Kanazawa College of Art, representative researcher : Tsuyoshi Yamazaki, November, 2013 –March, 2016) supported by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Kakenhi-Kibankenkyu (A) (Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (A)) The symposium itself was coordinated by Dr. Chelsea Foxwell, University of Chicago.

This research focuses on System of “Bijutsu (Art)” in Japan and its terms and theories, and offering the open discussion for updating the concept of “Bijutsu” (Art) in Japan. Through the reconsideration of process of exporting the concept of “Art” from western to non-western countries, it was examined how today’s research, display and collecting of Japanese art are shaped by late nineteenth-century western terms. We organized several symposiums and investigations in Asian countries, to deepen discussions on the universally understood genres and their systems.

As to the outlines and achievements of the symposium at University of Chicago, refer to the report by Dr. Foxwell on the following website (URL = <http://kanabi-kaken.info/research01/>).

【slide 1-2】

Let me begin this presentation by showing you a picture I like. It is an oil painting by Kiyoo Kawamura (1852-1934) entitled *Katami-no-Hitatare* (*Court Dress of Late Count Katsu*).

Kawamura was born in Edo at the very end of the Edo period, in 1852 (Kaei 5), as the son of a retainer of the Tokugawa shogunate. Following the Meiji Restoration, in 1871 (Meiji 4), he went to study in America on a scholarship given by the Tokugawa family. He also studied oil painting techniques in France and Italy and returned to Japan in 1881 (Meiji 14). Kawamura painted this picture in January 1899, when Kaishu Katsu's funeral took place, or later to express his thanks to Katsu. Kaishu Katsu was a former retainer of the Tokugawa shogunate, who negotiated the turnover of Edo Castle to the new Meiji government on behalf of the shogunate and worked hard on the continuation of the Tokugawa family after the Restoration. Kawamura was deeply indebted to Katsu as the statesman supported Kawamura's work by mediating the commission of portraits of the successive members of the Tokugawa family.

A neighboring young girl is likened to a goddess and wears the white dress that Kawamura himself wore to attend Katsu's funeral. Kaishu Katsu is portrayed in the form of a bust, which is placed on top of a small stone coffin. A ceremonial dress, a noh costume, and a large oblong chest are placed casually behind the stone coffin. In front of the girl, there is a carpet and behind her, at the far back of the room, is an oil-lamp stand with a circular reflective plate attached to it. Syunkichi Kimura, who wrote *Kiyoo Kawamura—His Works and Life* in 1926 (Taisho 5), explains that this lamp stand is “a sleep floor lamp dating from Prince Shotoku's time.” As Kawamura was well-versed in the practices and usages in ancient court and *samurai*

families, his portrayal of costumes and furnishings were accurate. Regarding this lamp stand in particular, it has been ascertained that this was painted referring to a certain lamp stand which is now in the collection of Tokyo National Museum. Based on the unique picture painted on the circular reflective plate, this lamp stand is referred to as “*nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp).” If we were to translate the name of this lamp stand into English, it would be something like “sleep floor lamp.” It is composed of a pedestal, a prop, and a reflective plate. A metal fixture is attached to hold the chafing dish in front of the reflective plate and the height and direction of the reflective plate can be adjusted. In addition to covering the entire device in black lacquer, whitewash is applied over the surface of the reflective plate and three figures are depicted in paints composed of glue and pigments. There is a person looking at a scroll, a person kneeling at a desk with a brush in hand, and though difficult to see as it is peeled off, a person leaning asleep on a table.

This *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) is one of the “treasures” originating in Horyuji, the temple that was established in Ikaruga, Nara in 607 (Suiko 15). On February 18, 1878 (Meiji 11), many treasures were presented from Horyuji to the Imperial Household and this lamp stand, too, became Imperial property. Since the state museum built in Ueno, Tokyo came under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Imperial Household in 1886 (Meiji 19), the lamp stand has been on loan to the museum. Kawamura may have seen the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) on display at the museum. Alternatively, as I shall discuss further below, he may have come across an image of some sort that was in circulation. This lamp stand characterized by its unique shape and painting was known as a lamp stand that used to belong to Prince Shotoku, who is said to have

been born in 574 (Bidatsu 3) and died in 622 (Suiko 30), and was depicted in illustrations for printed books in the Edo period. There are also lamp stands that were produced with this example as the model.

In order to find out about the historical background of the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) being portrayed in *Katami-no-Hitatare*, let us trace the “biography” of this lamp stand.



【slide 3-5】

The Horyuji “treasures” were shown to the public for the first time outside the Horyuji temple at a ceremonial exposition held in the Ekoin temple in Edo in 1694 (Genroku 7). This exceptional exhibition, in which the treasures were transported from Nara to Edo to show to the public, was planned in order to propagate faith in Prince Shotoku and raise the funds required for the major repairs of Horyuji. A similar project also took place at Ekoin, Edo in 1842 (Tempo 13). During the Edo period, in order to promote the popularization of belief in Prince Shotoku, one after another biography of Prince Shotoku was published and the treasures were frequently employed as illustrations. The first half of *Shotoku taishi den zue (Pictures of the Life of Prince Shotoku)*, published in 1804 (Bunka 1), narrates the introduction of Buddhism in Japan and the history of the Yamato court and the latter half is a biography of Prince Shotoku. *Nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) appears on the cover of this book with a caption “a lamp stand belonging to Prince Shotoku.” On the occasion of the exhibition held in 1842, a catalogue of the treasures entitled *Horyuji homotsu zue* and a pioneering study of the treasures entitled *Horyuji homotsu kosho* were published. Through these exhibitions, this *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) appeared before the eyes of the public and

through the books published to popularize belief in Prince Shotoku, it could be said that this *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) put on the legend of “a lamp stand that belonged to Prince Shotoku.”

The late Edo period during which printed books concerning belief in Prince Shotoku were published was a time when the social trend of thought based on Japanese classics and reactionary thoughts supported the attitude to study classics in various fields. The surge of interest in the Horyuji “treasures” was one such trait and Totsugen Tanaka, who is known as a painter who attempted the re-creation of *yamato-e* by seeking standards in the classics, made copies of the treasures and donated three volumes of *Horyuji homotsu zu (Pictures of the Treasures at Horyuji)* to the temple in 1795 (Kansei 7). Ikkei Ukita (1795–1859), a painter in the last days of the Tokugawa regime, who was a loyalist accomplished in prose, poetry, and *waka* (Japanese poems), well-versed in the practices and usages in ancient court and *samurai* families, and keen on incorporating aristocratic court taste into life, created his own version of the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp). While modeled on the above-mentioned lamp stand, in the Ukita version, the artist added characteristic decoration of his own. Although there are three figures portrayed quite faithfully on the reflective plate, instead of covering the stand in lacquer, he sprinkled gold leaf over it and scattered chrysanthemum crests and tinged autumnal foliage over the pedestal and prop. *Nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) must have been regarded a furnishing fit for his living space as a loyalist. That is why he added the chrysanthemum crest, which is the symbol of the Imperial Family.

As described above, the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) was depicted in illustrations for printed books in the Edo period and lamp stands modeled on it were produced. There is also an example to be

found in the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. It is a Japanese lamp stand with three figures depicted on the round reflective plate and chrysanthemum crests scattered over the pedestal and prop. Dr. Charles Goddard Weld donated it to the museum in 1908 (Meiji 41).

【slide 6-8】

The first people to see the Horyuji “treasures” in person after the Meiji Restoration were the members who carried out a national survey of the treasures in shrines and temples in 1872 (Meiji 5). One of them, Noritane Ninagawa (1852-1934), kept a diary on the survey entitled *Nara-no-sujimichi*, onto which many photographs of the investigation scenes are pasted. The *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) is included in the photographs. At the Nara Exposition held in 1875 (Meiji 8), the Shosoin treasures from Todaiji and other treasures from shrines and temples in Nara were shown to the public. The *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) is listed as “Tall Lamp Stand, Used by Prince Shotoku” in the catalogue of the exposition published the following year. At the Nara Exposition, as part of the survey, the treasures from the shrines and temples were copied and, later on, products modeled on the treasures from the shrines and temples were produced enthusiastically.

Under straitened circumstances caused by a movement to abolish Buddhism, in order to receive Imperial support, the Horyuji “treasures” were presented to the Imperial Household in 1878 and became Imperial Properties. Even after they were loaned to the museum from 1886, the oral tradition that the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) was “a lamp stand that belonged to Prince Shotoku” was retained for a long time. This was backed by the facts that Kiyoo Kawamura portrayed a lamp stand in *Katami-no-Hitatare* and that Syunkichi Kimura

explained that the lamp stand in the painting was “a sleep floor lamp dating from Prince Shotoku’s time” in 1926. Not only that, the image of the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) spread to a surprising extent. Let’s take a look at a photograph of the section at a department store where dolls for the Boys’ Festival were sold, which appeared in *Mistukoshi Times* published in 1909 (Meiji 42). Next to the dolls representing Emperor Jimmu or Empress Jingu, there are lamp stands with round reflective plates. The Boys’ Festival was an important function in the Court and the custom of displaying dolls for the Boys’ Festival was established in the Edo period. The victorious mood resulting from the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 (Meiji 28) and the subsequent upsurge of nationalism brought dolls representing Emperor Jimmu or Prince Yamatotakeru, which conformed to emperor-centered historiography, into fashion and the image of the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) was added as a furnishing that conveyed the atmosphere of the Court. *Yoroi-kazari* dating from the Taisho period (1912-1926) is one such example. On the round reflective plate, instead of the three figures, three chrysanthemum crests are placed as a symbol of the Imperial family.

Meanwhile, at Horyuji, a new *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) was produced in December 1941 (Showa 16). The shape and pictures were modeled after the original *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), but a significant difference was that the new version was not a single lamp but a pair. On the right-hand side round reflective plate, there are three figures depicted in the same way as the old *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), but the left-hand side plate shows a woman playing a stringed instrument called a *kugo* and a child listening to the music with his head drooping. This picture was painted by Kanpo Arai, a *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) artist who worked on making copies of the wall

paintings of the Golden Hall at Horyuji. He is considered to have referred to a lamp stand dating from the late Heian period and preserved at Chusonji in applying the *hosoge* patterned mother-of-pearl inlay decoration to the pedestal and prop.

【slide 9-10】

The *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) remained Imperial property even after it was loaned to the national museum from 1886. In other words, it continued to be “property of the Imperial Family.” It was after the end of the Second World War, in 1945 (Showa 20), that it became “property of the people.” Once the Cultural Properties Protection Law was established in 1950 (Showa 25), it was generally called Cultural Property. Having become cultural property as “property of the people,” on June 27, 1959 (Showa 34), the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), was designated by the then Committee for the Protection of Cultural Assets, now the Agency for Cultural Affairs, as Important Cultural Property of the nation. On that occasion, the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) was designated as “important cultural property” subject to protection by the state as “it is a cultural product of Japan having historical or artistic value” and was given the official name (!) *Saie-todai*, which means, very simply, “a lamp stand depicted with colored pictures.”

The new name is not as unique as *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), is it? Moreover, the date of production was decided on as “the Kamakura period (1185-1333).” The Japanese art historians who carried out the survey for this designation considered that the style of the painting was not that of the Asuka period when Prince Shotoku was alive but appropriate to be dated to the Kamakura period as an example of a *yamato-e* style work. Furthermore, as a lacquered lamp stand, they considered it reasonable to regard it a Kamakura

period work following the late Heian period lamp stand that was preserved at Chusonji. Surely, you have realized how important an incident this was. This *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), which had long retained the oral tradition of a Horyuji “treasure” as “a lamp stand belonging to Prince Shotoku (574-622),” had this legend sealed in its biography and by doing so, was reborn as *Lamp Stand Depicted with Colored Pictures* designated as Important Cultural Property.

This *Saie Todai* (Lamp Stand Depicted with Colored Pictures) designated as Important Cultural Property, in other words, the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), was exhibited at an exhibition entitled *Toyo no urushi-kogei* held at Tokyo National Museum in 1977 (Showa 52). The English title printed in the catalogue reads *Oriental Lacquer Arts*. The English translation of “*urushi-kogei*” is “lacquer” for *shikko* (*urushi*) and “art” for *gei* = *bijutsu*, implying “lacquer as art.” This would mean that the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) joined the museum pieces as “*bijutsu = art*” constituting “the history of lacquer art.”

It was in the latter half of the nineteenth century that Japan first came into direct contact with the Western world. Trade was conducted during the period of “national seclusion,” but it was after the Meiji Restoration that Japan came into contact with the West in a political sense. Being in a hurry to modernize the country, along with increasing national wealth and military strength, in order to be recognized as a modern civilized nation, it was necessary for Japan to represent its “own culture” and appeal to the West. An indispensable keyword in representing Japan’s “own culture” was “*bijutsu = art*,” which had been introduced from the West. The term “*bijutsu*” was coined when the regulations to take part in the World Exposition held in Vienna in 1873 were translated. The survey of treasures at

the shrines and temples carried out in 1872 was the first attempt to search for “*bijutsu*=art” to represent “authentic Japanese culture” from among the “treasures” like the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp). From “treasures” to “art”—in other words, a transfer from a traditional system to a modern system and the grant of a new sense of values. By tracing the “biography” of the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp), you will notice that its “modernity” indicates a prototype of the formation of Western values. However, as Kiyoo Kawamura depicted the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) in *Katami-no-hitatare*, the value as a “treasure” nurtured by the oral tradition of “a lamp stand belonging to Prince Shotoku” did not disappear even though its location moved from Horyuji to the museum. The image of the *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) was accepted in the custom of displaying dolls for the Boys’ Festival as popular culture, reproduced at its original location, Horyuji, and continues to live quietly outside the museum even today. I consider this “alternative modernity,” which might be forgotten, very important.



【slide 11-12】

The presentation I am making this time is a partial revision of an essay published in *The Formation and Development of the Study of Art History in Japan* edited by the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo and published in 2001. It is based on the awareness with which I took part as a panelist in the symposium organized by that Institute in 2002 entitled *Moving Objects—Time, Space, Context*. Hiroyuki Suzuki, who gave the keynote speech on that occasion, explained the purport of the symposium by quoting the following passage from the Introduction in *The Social Life of Things*, which was edited and published by the

anthropologist Arjun Appadurai in 1986. “Economic exchange creates value. Value is embodied in commodities that are exchanged. Focusing on the things that are exchanged, rather than simply on the forms or functions of exchange, makes it possible to argue that what creates the link between exchange and value is *politics*, constructed broadly. This argument, [...], justifies the conceit that the commodities, like persons, have social lives.” As for myself, I traced the “biography” of the *Van Diemen Box* currently in the Victoria and Albert Museum under the title “Memories of Travels—The Whereabouts of Export Lacquer.”

This lacquer box was made in Japan between the 1630s to the mid-1640s. It was presented to the wife of the governor-general of the Dutch East Indies and, via the Netherlands, in eighteenth century France, came into the possession of Madame de Pompadour, the favorite mistress of Louis XV. After the French Revolution, in the 1790s, it came into the possession of William Beckford, the famous Englishman known as the author of the novel *Vathek*. In 1882, Trevor Lawrence purchased it at an auction and it was shown at an exhibition organized by the Burlington Fine Arts Club. After his death, in 1916, it was donated to the Victoria and Albert Museum and Clifford Smith, a curator at the museum, introduced the box in an article published in *The Burlington Magazine*. This box was produced as “export lacquerware” intended for the European market and had no place in Japan to begin with. Its “hybrid decoration” is based on genre scenes of the Japanese court with Chinese and Korean patterns incorporated. More than three centuries later, it returned home to Japan to be included in the special exhibition entitled *Oriental Lacquer Arts* held at Tokyo National Museum in 1977 (Showa 52). This is the exhibition in which that *nemuri todai* (sleep floor lamp) joined the museum pieces as “*bijutsu*=

art” constituting the “history of lacquer art.”

The late 1970s and the 1980s, when that exhibition took place, was a time when there was a rush for building museums amidst a wave of prosperity. Japan was eager to buy back the “great overseas treasures,” i.e. the Japanese treasures kept abroad, or to return them to Japan for inclusion in an exhibition. It was also a period during which museum pieces as “*bijutsu* = art” constituting the “history of lacquer art” increased dramatically. As often pointed out, “art” is not a universal category. It is no more than a cultural category given rise to in the West and one that constantly changes. “*Bijutsu*” in Japan, to which it was transplanted, is the same. From the Meiji Restoration to the present day, Japan has redefined multifarious “artifacts” as “*bijutsu* = art.” Non-Japanese artifacts from East Asian countries are also included there. In my mind, tracing the “biographies” of such objects individually is an effective means to verify such redefinitions both historically and critically.

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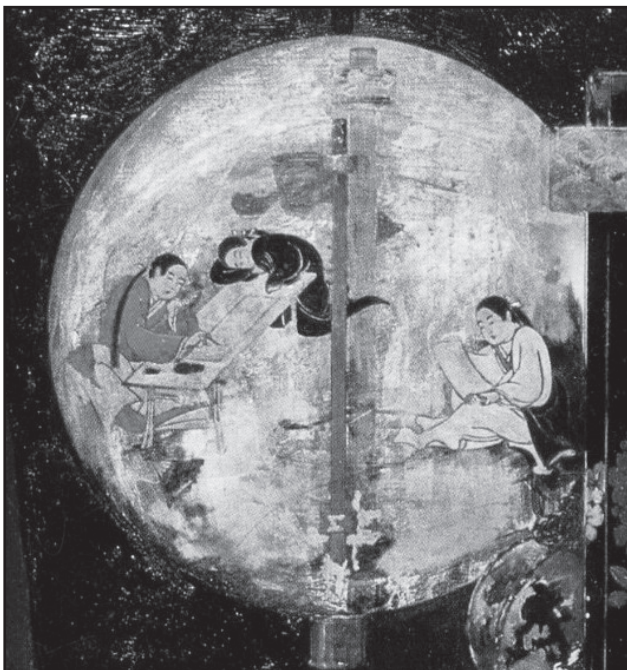
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(やまざき・つよし 芸術学/日本工芸史)  
(2016年10月31日 受理)

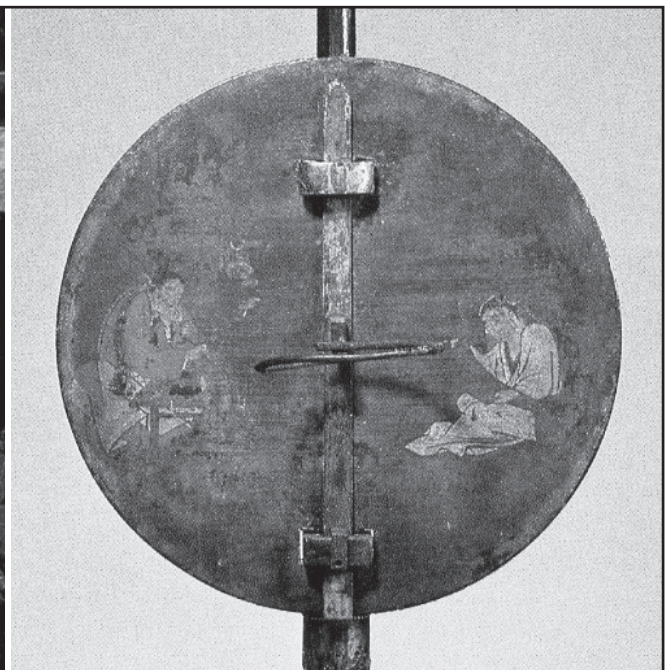


川村清雄 Kiyoo Kawamura 《かたみの直垂 Katamino-Hitatare》 1899

【slide 1】



川村清雄 Kiyoo Kawamura 《かたみの直垂 Katamino-Hitatare》



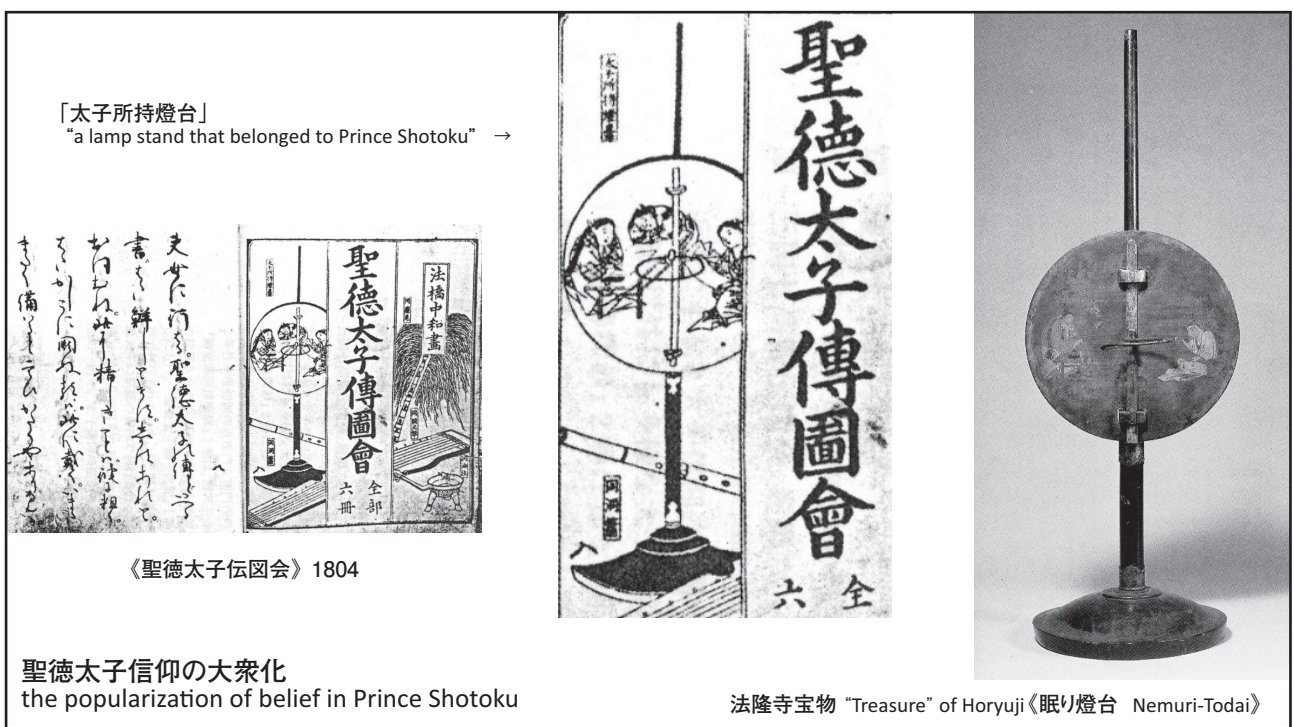
法隆寺宝物 “Treasure” of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》

【slide 2】

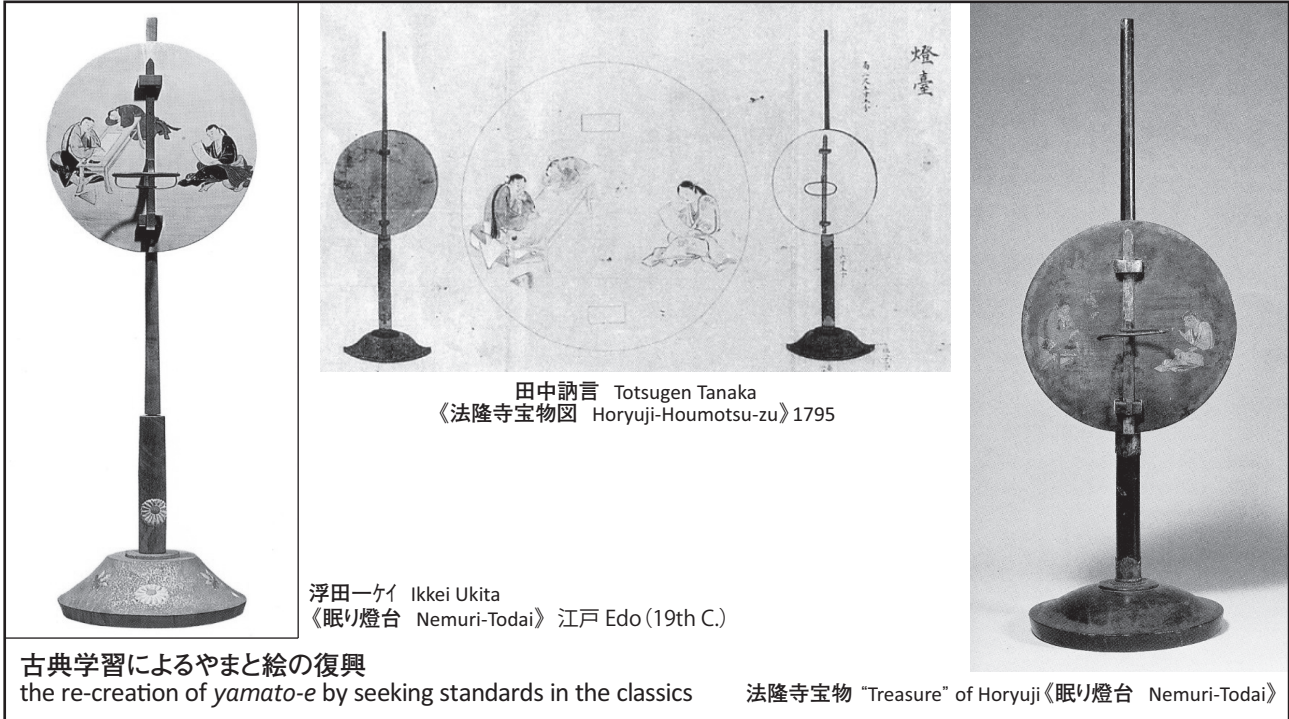




【slide 3】



【slide 4】



田中訥言 Totsugen Tanaka  
《法隆寺宝物図 Horyuji-Houmotsu-zu》1795

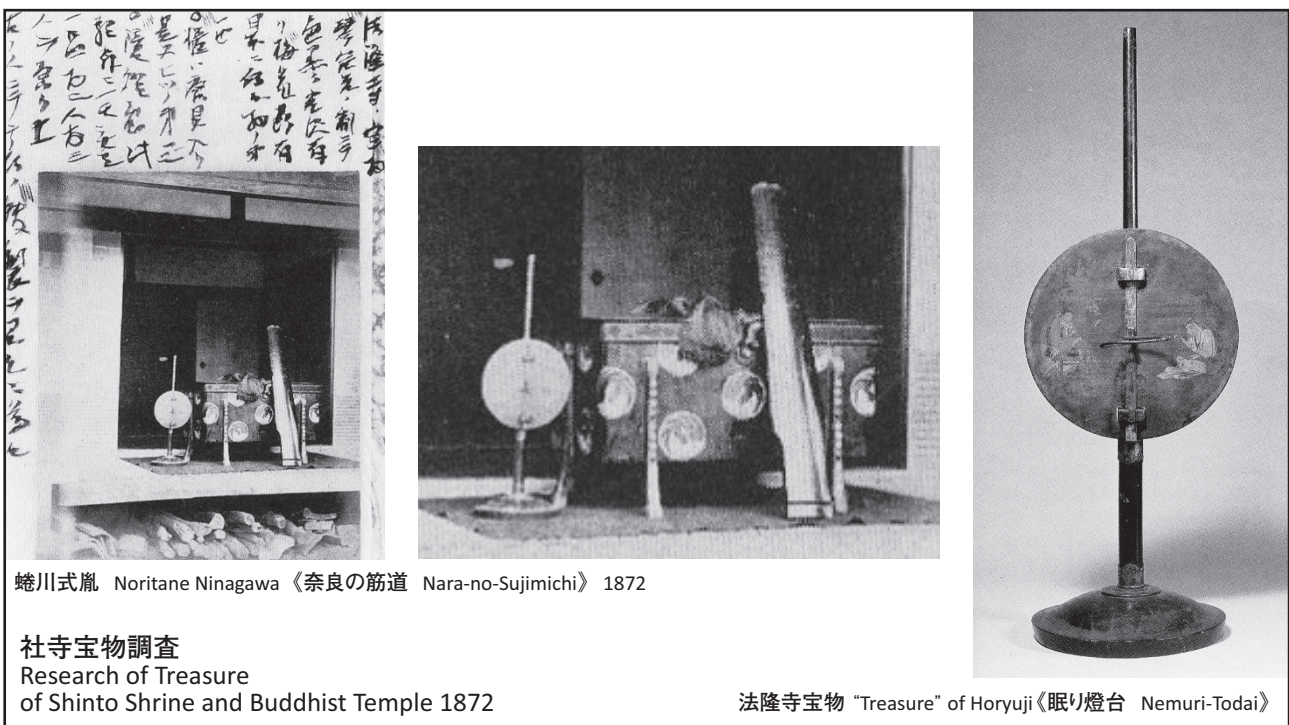
浮田一ケイ Ikkei Ukita  
《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》江戸 Edo (19th C.)

法隆寺宝物 "Treasure" of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》

古典学習によるやまと絵の復興

the re-creation of *yamato-e* by seeking standards in the classics

【slide 5】



蛭川式胤 Noritane Ninagawa 《奈良の筋道 Nara-no-Sujimichi》1872

社寺宝物調査  
Research of Treasure  
of Shinto Shrine and Buddhist Temple 1872

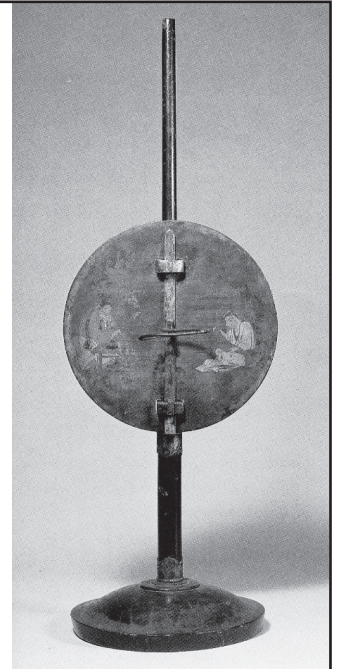
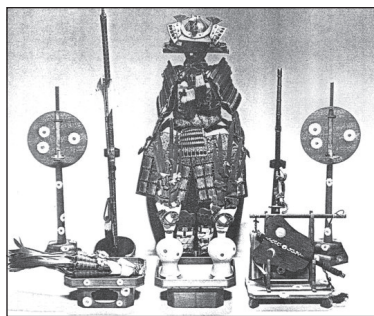
法隆寺宝物 "Treasure" of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》

【slide 6】



《みつこしタイムズ》 Mitsukoshi Times, 1909

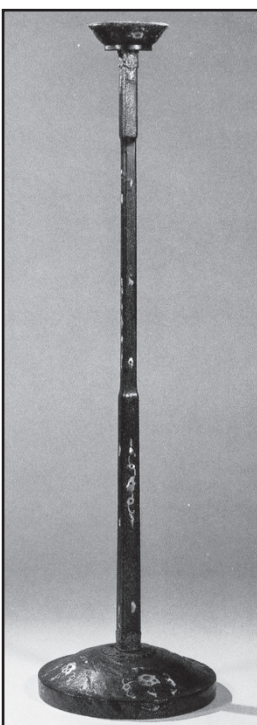
吉徳人形店 Yoshitoku Doll Shop  
《鎧飾り Yoroi-Kazari》大正 Taisho (20th C.)



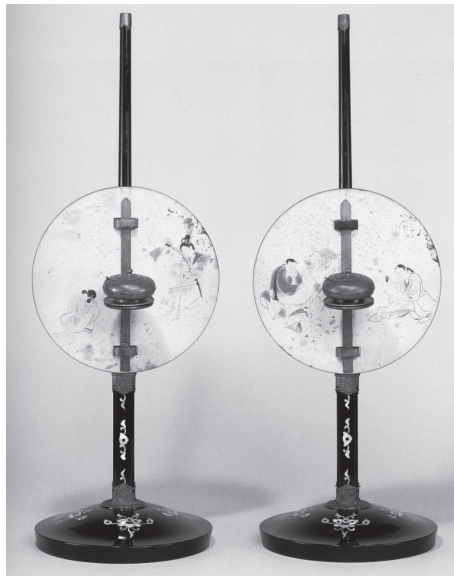
法隆寺宝物 "Treasure" of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》

五月人形飾りの風習  
the custom of displaying dolls for the Boys' Festival

【slide 7】



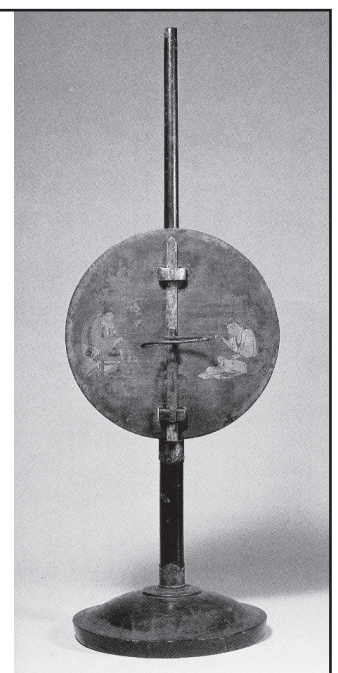
法隆寺の新しい《眠り燈台》 New 《Nemuri-Todai》 of Horyuji



《新 眠り燈台 New Nemuri-Todai》 1941

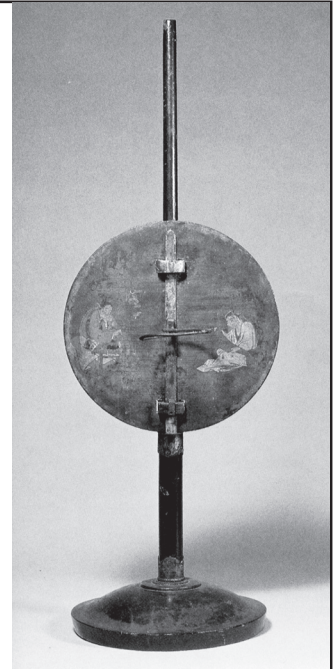
中尊寺宝物 "Treasure" of Chusionji  
《螺鈿燈台 Raden-Todai》平安 Heian (12th C.)

法隆寺宝物 "Treasure" of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》



【slide 8】

【法隆寺宝物 “Treasure” of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》】



【重要文化財 “Important Cultural Property” of japan 《彩繪燈台 Saie-Todai》】

法隆寺宝物 “Treasure” of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》 → 重要文化財 “Important Cultural Property” of japan 《彩繪燈台 Saie-Todai》

【slide 9】

特別展

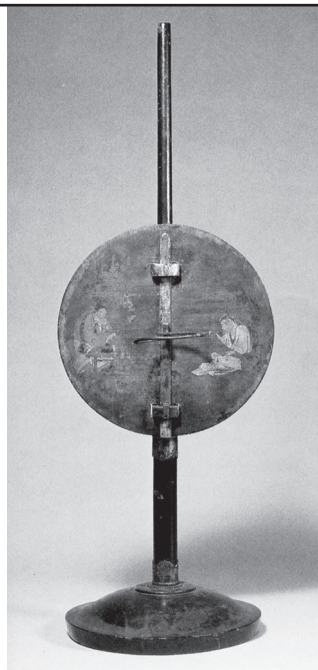
東洋の漆工芸

漆工芸とは  
 漆工芸=漆工shikko (=Lacquer) + 芸gei = (美術bijutsu = Art)  
 「美術としての漆工Lacquer as Art」という意味が込められている  
 この展覧会で《眠り燈台》は  
 漆工芸の歴史History of Lacquer Artを構成する  
 “美術bijutsu (= Art)”としてミュージアムピースの仲間入りをした

The English title printed in the catalogue reads *Oriental Lacquer Arts*.

The English translation of  
 “urushi-kogei” is “lacquer” for *shikko (urushi)*  
 And  
 “art” for *gei=bijutsu*, implying “lacquer as art”

This would mean that the *nemuri todai* joined the museum pieces as “*bijutsu=art*” constituting “the history of lacquer art.”



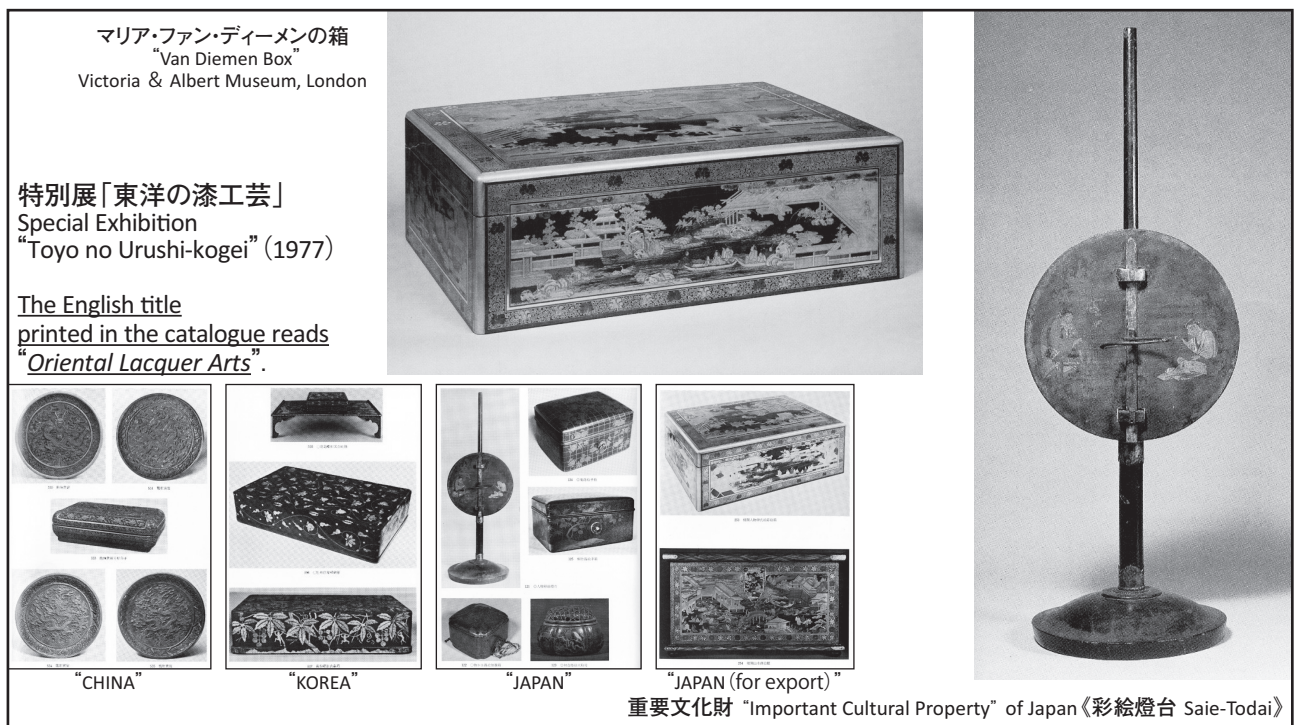
特別展「東洋の漆工芸」 Special Exhibition “Toyo no Urushikogei” 1977

法隆寺宝物 “Treasure” of Horyuji 《眠り燈台 Nemuri-Todai》

【slide 10】



【slide 11】



【slide 12】

