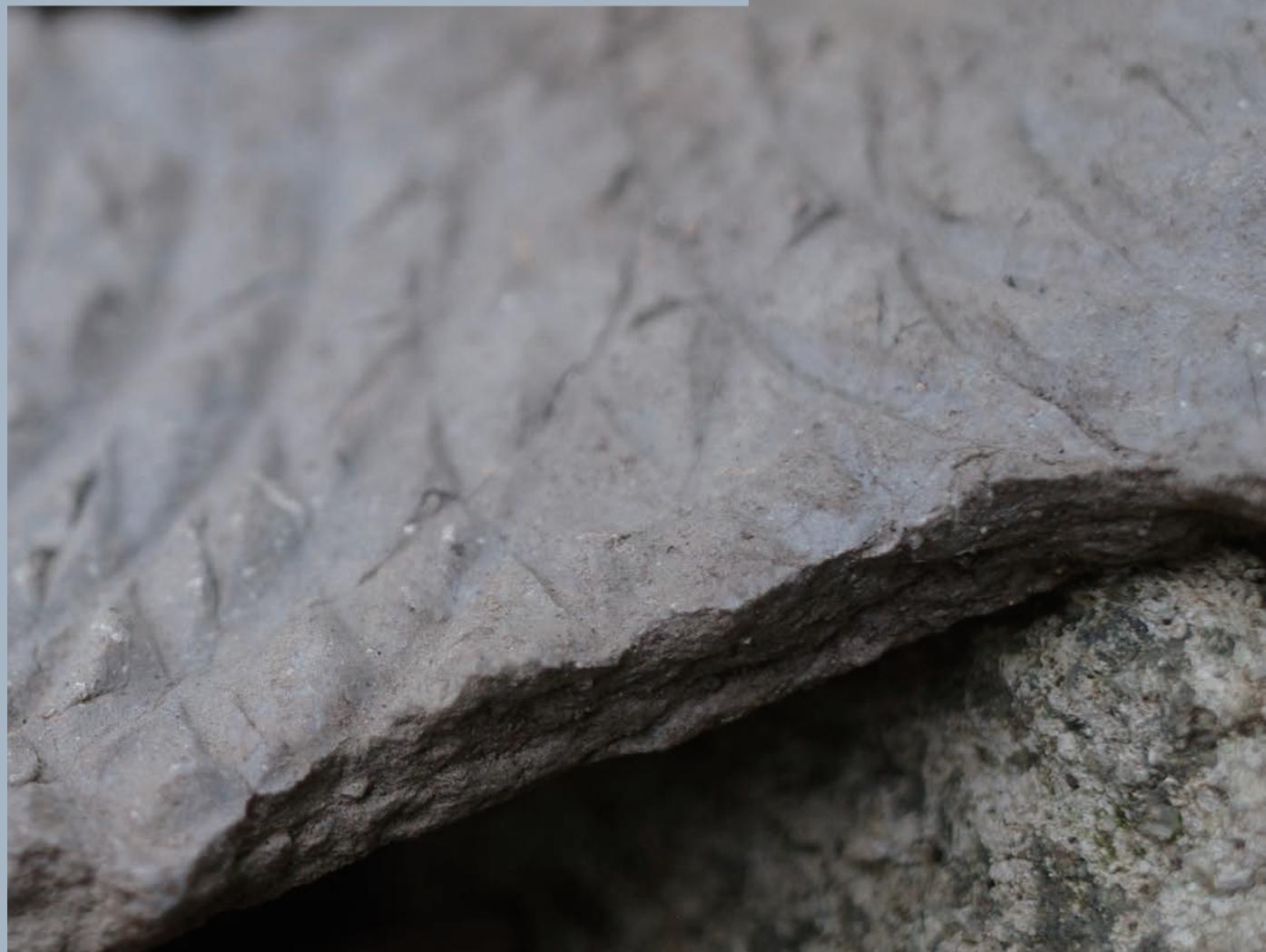


Relation between Sabukaze kilns and the **capitals**



SABUKAZE



Issued by
Setouchi City



Introduction

In Setouchi city and Bizen city located in the Okayama prefecture, western part of Japan, the previous excavations uncovered archaeological sites of 130 Sue pottery production kilns. The kilns were used from 6th Century AD to 12th Century AD. They are collectively called the Remains of the Old Kilns of Oku. Sabukaze kilns is situated at the southernmost point. It is said that the Sue ware (unglazed stone ware) of Oku kilns, including Sabukaze kilns, was the root of Bizen ware that is a popular local production even today. This booklet introduces how Sabukaze kilns, the historic site designated by the government, was found and preserved, as well as the recent joint project of potters and archaeologists from Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties to replicate pottery technique and reproduce Sue pottery. The booklet will deepen your knowledge about the relation between Sabukaze kilns and the capitals of that time in Japan.



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1 . Kibi Region's Famous Large Scale Remains of the Old Kiln

The Seto Inland Sea and the coast was developed as a commercial area where people have come and gone since ancient times.

Archaeological research discovered that there was a steady flow of goods, information, and travelers.

They came from both domestic regions and foreign countries far from Japan such as the Chinese mainland and the Korean peninsula.

Not like traditional ware from the Jomon period (14,000-300 BC), Sue ware is unglazed stoneware. It was baked in a kiln. Based on this new production technique and its characteristics of early age products, it is considered that the makers and techniques of Sue ware had been brought to Japan from the Korean peninsula.

The production of Sue pottery started in the Kofun period (end of fourth to early fifth century) and mainly developed at Suemura kilns (Osaka prefecture).

In the eastern area of Kibi (current Okayama prefecture), Sue ware started its production in the end of fourth century to the beginning of fifth century; however, it was considered to be small scale.

In the Oku area, Kinabeyama No.1 kiln started production in the mid-sixth century. Since then, the production volume gradually increased, and the region became a large-scale Sue ware production area, called Oku kilns, in the seventh century. A representative kiln group in Oku is Sabukaze kilns.

During the period when production at Sabukaze kilns became more active, in

addition to the Sue ware of traditional Kofun period (fifth century) types, the production of new types of pottery that imitated the shape of the bronze ware and ironware which had been brought from China and Korea in seventh century began.

The significant change of ware form is related to the change of table manners. Other interesting objects are tokan, suzuri, and shibi.

The tokan is coffins made of clay which were used to place in ancient tombs.

The suzuri is ink stone mortars for the grinding and containment of ink. This tells us the existence of educated people who could write letters such as government officers.

The shibi was used for roof decorations of temples.

This age was a major turning point: previously clans displayed their wealth and power by building tombs, but in this age, they shifted to build temples instead.

It was during this time that ware representing both new and old culture was produced at this Sabukaze kilns.

One of the production sites is Sabukaze kilns, which used to support the daily life of ancient people by producing a variety of ware from dailyware to special items used for tombs and temples during the period when the center of Japan isles was influenced by Chinese mainland. During this time the king (later the emperor) based in Yamato (current Nara prefecture, central part of Japan) moved on to establish a country ruled and managed by laws.

2 . Distribution of Pottery

In the 24th volume regarding tax of a register of imperial laws and regulations called the Engishiki regulated in the 10th century (Heian period), the detail of tax owed by each region is described.

Cho is the tax posed on males, and the specialties of each region were specified in there.

Bizen-no-kuni, where Sabukaze kilns was located, was directed to pay Cho by Sue ware together with other seven regions: Settsu, Izumi, Ohmi, Minoh, Harima, Sanuki, and Chikuzen.

All were large scale ware production sites.

The analyses of excavated Sue pottery showed that ware produced at the Remains of the Old Kilns of Oku were used in Bizen region as well as the Asuka region where the capital was located, Naniwa palace site, Fujiwara palace site, and Heijo palace site even



before the Heian period.

It is becoming clear that ware from here have been distributed widely since the seventh century when Sabukaze kilns were actively operated.

Characteristically, the ware made here was beautiful and sturdy, turning a blue-grey when fired and finished with a natural green glaze.

Widely distributed Sue ware reveals a part of daily life of people in ancient times, and the subtle difference of forms enable us to know which type was used in which period.

The fact found by the researches also supports to uncover the age of abandoned objects.

As described above, the researches of Sue ware from Sabukaze kilns provide us with a hint to know the history of Oku and Bizen and extremely profitable information to examine the history of Japan as well as the world.



3 . History of Bizen Ware Development

Most of the production sites of Sue ware where goods were actively produced from the Kofun period to the early Heian period (mid third century to twelfth century) fell into a decline after the middle of Heian period. Among those, only production sites having favorable conditions survived and continued production when they adapted in accordance with the times.

Sue ware production in Sabukaze kilns area was already discontinued; however, the tradition of pottery is still alive.

The craftsperson of Oku transferred their working center from Ushimado area where Sabukaze kilns is located to Sayama (Bizen

city), a little northeasterly area from there. The production of tableware declined and different items such as jars and mortars began to be produced more.

After the 12th century (the Heian Period), kilns eventually concentrated around Inbe area (Bizen city) and the major color of pale or blue gray Sue ware changed to dark brown.

This is how the Bizen pottery was accomplished. The revival of Bizen pottery as a high-quality item spread around Japan and is to this day popular and widely used and is one of Japan's representative potteries.

3



4 . Mokusui's Big Achievements

It must be noted that steady efforts have been made by local researchers when we describe the research and preservation of Sabukaze Koyo Sekigun.

Particularly Waichi Tokizane (1896-1993)'s effort is worthy of special mention.

Tokizane was born and grown in the village of Nagahama (currently known as part of Ushimado area in Setouchi City).

From the time he was very young, he was interested in pieces of Sue ware in Sabukaze and started gathering them. He also visited Sabukaze and other ruins of kilns in Oku to gather more pottery.

In several tens of thousands of Tokizane's data and objects collection, he has diligently written date of discovery, the lot number, depth from the ground surface, and so forth of each object he has unearthed, thus enhancing the academic nature of his documents.

He posted his research papers in the academic magazine "Kibi Koko" and published a document collection "Okunokamaato" to build the foundation of Sue pottery research in Bizen region.

Tokizane's artist name was Mokusui, and he was called "Mokusui-san" with respect. A statue of him made in Bizen ware was erected in the garden of the Sabukaze Art Gallery to honor his achievements and in gratitude for his life-long efforts.



Artist: Hikaru Shimamura

(Preserver of Important Intangible Cultural Properties Okayama Prefecture)

5 . Designated as National Historic Site

Tokizane excavated dump fields of so-called No.1 remain of kilns, where junk such as failed objects, kiln walls, and ash was abandoned in 1929. Furthermore, he researched the stone chamber in Sabukaze tomb in 1935 and found that Sue ware fragments paved the floor, and a pottery coffin and long neck jars were placed there.

After the World War II, one of leading researchers on the archeology of Okayama prefecture, Hiroshi Nishikawa, analyzed data. He organized the chronology that determines actual temporal sequence of Sue ware in Okayama by using data and materials from Sabukaze kilns, and each period when individual kiln was used.

As it was uncovered that Sabukaze kilns were an important Sue ware production site in Bizen area, a plan to maintain the area as an old pottery town was raised.

The purpose of this plan was to preserve the remain of kilns while providing ware artists with a place for creative activities and promoting the understanding of the world of potteries through a museum tour and ware making experiences.

In 1978, a committee and research team was organized and performed field investigations and magnetometry prospecting in order to grasp the character and detail of archaeological sites and to apply National Historic Site.

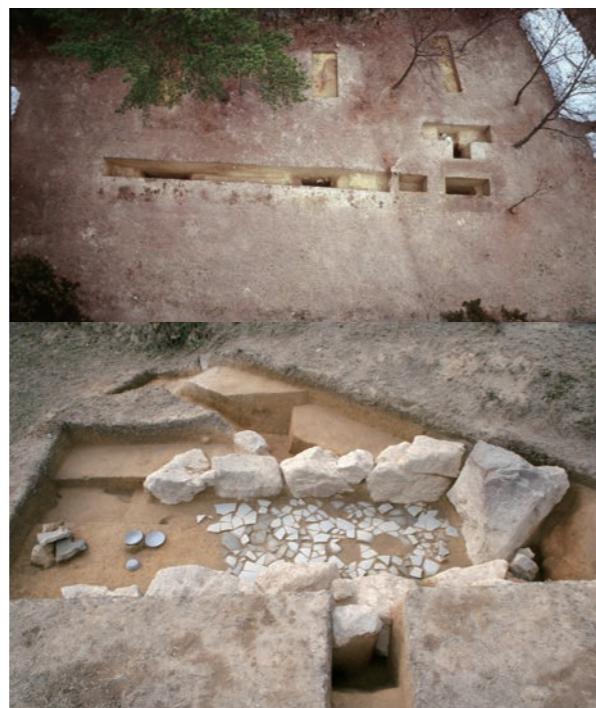
The magnetometry prospecting is a method of non-destructive investigation to find underground kilns, which measures

magnetic abnormality due to soil magnetized by high temperature.

This investigation pointed out the possibility of four kilns underground. Partial excavation proved that they actually exist.

In addition, a pit-house of the same period was found near the site. The discovery of a lump of clay suggested that the house might have been a workshop.

In 1986, Agency for Cultural Affairs said, "the production technique of many of excavated objects are excellent. Besides, Sue ware made in this area were found at the Heijo ancient capital. Sue ware is the milestone of Sue ware chronology in Kibi area, which is highly valuable in academic history". An area of 19,015 m² was designated as National Historic Site and its importance was further recognized.



Thanks to accumulated research results over a long period, Sabukaze started gathering attention as an important Sue ware supply area and comparative research of potteries with one found in old capitals were also started actively.

As the first project, in 1989, excavated goods from Sabukaze kilns were reviewed to study about the production sites in various parts of Japan of Sue ware excavated from Heijo palace site.

After the mutual comparison research of Sue ware production sites in Japan, it was found that Sue ware produced in Bizen area is similar to the one produced in Mino area. Now recognizing whether a ware was produced in Bizen or Mino became a new challenge.

Research uncovering the production site delivers good results by the use of X-ray

6 . Development of Research

fluorescence spectrometers which analyze minor elements of clay.

In 2002, an explanatory booklet about Sabukaze kilns were published.

From 2004, fact-check research was performed in accordance with the maintenance of the remain.

First, the site was explored for the purpose of locating the position and form of kilns.

In addition to conventional magnetometry prospecting, ground-penetrating radar as well as electrical prospecting enabled the excavation of deeper parts which had been difficult with the magnetometry method, and the result suggested that there might be a remain of a kiln at the south part of 1-I and 1-II kiln remains.

The second excavation performed the next year based on the results of exploration discovered 1-III kiln which is the oldest in Sabukaze kilns suggested by ground-penetrating radar. In addition, the age when five kilns were used and what were made in there, the detail of Kazaana tomb, and a pit-house which might be a workshop were discovered.

Since 2016, Sabukaze Tougeinosato started Sue ware kiln, Sue ware production and baking project and joint research with archaeologists of Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties for the trial to connect present time and ancient time and study it.



The Ancient Capitals and the Sue Ware Production in Bizen District

ONO Yoshihiro
Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

When we excavate the relics of the capitals in the Asuka era (592-710), such as the Asuka region, Fujiwara palace site, and Fujiwara palace site (hereinafter collectively called the Asuka and Fujiwara area), understandably, many Haji ware and Sue ware used in those days are unearthed. As we carefully observe an overwhelmingly large number of these potteries, we notice that the shapes of the potteries (dishes) considerably changed after the second half of the seventh century, even in the same Asuka era. An obvious change is seen at the bottoms of the dishes. The round-bottom style shifted to the flat-bottom or compote style, which is considered to be associated with a change in eating style. In eating, people used to hold the dishes, but they started to eat putting the dishes on a tray or board at that time. This phenomenon, however, was pointed out by some researchers much earlier. It is well-known in archeological society and not a very new finding to highlight.

Instead, we are now paying more attention to a phenomenon. Almost at the same time when the shapes of the potteries went through a significant change, the pottery consumption skyrocketed in the Asuka and Fujiwara area, and Sue ware began to be produced in many other regions. Until the middle of the seventh century, most Sue ware had presumably been made of blackish clay in the Suemura kilns in Izumi (Osaka prefecture). Almost after the emperor Tenmu era (672-686), the production of pottery baked at remote kilns and brought to the capitals remarkably increased, such as in Bizen (Okayama prefecture) and Harima (Hyogo prefecture) in the west Japan and Toutoumi (Shizuoka prefecture), Owari, and Mikawa (Aichi prefecture) in the east Japan. This was the era when the emperor Tenmu was just establishing the laws to administrate the nation. We presume that because of the dramatic rise in the pottery demand, there would have been a sharp increase in urbanization because the officials moved into

the capital. The salient point in the relations with the local societies, especially, is that a massive increase in the demand for the dishes at the capital is likely to have significantly promoted the Sue ware productions in local places.

In fact, the studies found that in Sanage kilns and Bihoku kilns in the Owari district, and in Kosai kilns located between the Mikawa and the Toutoumi regions, numbers of kilns had exponentially increased, in parallel with supplying a huge number of Sue ware to the capitals in the Asuka and Fujiwara area.

We also assumed that the same phenomenon could also be found in the Bizen and Harima districts from which the Sue ware was sent. From the studies on those districts, from the middle of the seventh century, as the number of kilns in Bizen (Oku kilns) started to grow, the kiln distribution moved from inland to the coast of Seto Inland Sea. The kiln distribution supposedly shifted to the coast area, for convenient transportation by water. However, we slightly question the relevance of the era because the changes in Bizen seem to have been a little earlier than the vitalization of the Sue ware production in the Tokai area like Owari or Mikawa.

In Bizen, at the same time as the opening of Sabukaze kilns, the number of kilns started to rise, and the locations of the kilns started to move seawards. On the other hand, the number of Sue ware made in Bizen clearly started to increase in the Asuka and Fujiwara area from the times of the Remains of the Old Kilns of Shinbayashi (Myandao) or Tsuchibashi, which is a little later than the time of the Sabukaze kilns opening.

Where were the potteries baked in the early days in Sabukaze kilns transported? Thinking about it, what we came up with was the existence of Naniwa palace site. Right after political in 645, enthroned emperor Kotoku (596-654) made Naniwa palace as capital. Although the successor, empress Saimei (594-

661), brought the capital back to Asuka, Naniwa palace still seems to have been a base facility during the times of empress Saimei and emperor Tenchi (626-672). According to a record, when Kudara collapsed in the Korean Peninsula in 660, empress Saimei went to Naniwa palace to command troops to prepare for its restoration support. In fact, not a few Sue ware presumably made during the times of emperor Kotoku and emperor Tenchi were excavated from Naniwa palace site. By taking a closer look at them, many of them seem to be made of whiter clay in Bizen or Harima, compared with the ones made around the same age in the Asuka and Fujiwara area.

The country ruled and managed by laws had already started to be established since the times of emperor Koutoku and emperor Tenmu, by the movements such as creating Hyo as a local administrative unit, establishing The Nineteen Level Cap and Rank System and revising it to The Twenty-six Level Cap and Rank System, and introducing Kougo Nenkyaku as the first national family registration system.

As mentioned earlier, we presume the reason why the pottery demand in the capital massively surged was urbanization of the capital due to organizing these codes. While the Asuka and Fujiwara area urbanized during the emperor Tenmu era, Naniwa palace may have already begun to urbanize during the era between emperor Kotoku and Tenchi. If so, it can become a reasonable interpretation that the Setouchi region surrounding Osaka bay was also required to produce Sue potteries to fulfill the demand in Naniwa palace, as well as Suemura kilns, the previous major production area.

Though this view is still just a conjecture so far, we believe that it is important to make a clear explanation on the movements of the Sue ware productions in the ancient Bizen, including Sabukaze kilns. It is not only an issue of the local history in Bizen or Okayama but also a vital issue that connects to the Japanese archeological history studies surrounding the ancient capitals. From the Kofun period (the third to the seventh century) throughout the Asuka, Nara (710-794), and Heian period (794-1192), Sue ware

productions had spread across Japan except for present-day Hokkaido and Okinawa prefectures. There used to be plenty of Sue pottery production areas in those days, while most of them have already stopped operating. Only in Owari (Aichi prefecture) and Bizen (Okayama prefecture), the tradition of producing "pottery" has been surely passed down from generation to generation until today. Therefore, to clarify the history of the Sue ware production, including Sabukaze kilns, is an essential task in tracing the developing process of the diachronic Japanese ceramic industry. In this aspect, it also has a great significance beyond the field of local history research.

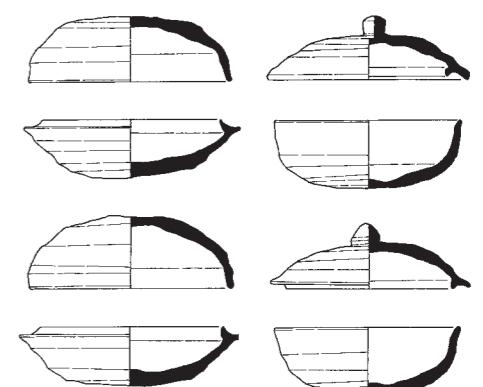


Fig. 1 Sue ware dishes in Asuka approximately in the middle of the seventh century (unearthed from Amakashi no Oka Toroku site) scale 1/4

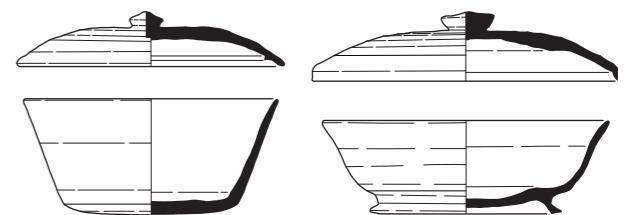


Fig. 2 Sue ware dishes in Asuka approximately in the emperor Tenmu era (672-686) (unearthed from Ishigami site) scale 1/4

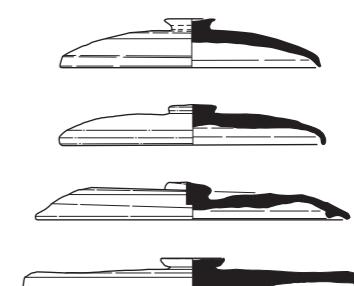


Fig. 3 Sue ware dishes made in Bizen unearthed from Asuka Ishigami site scale 1/4

JINNO Megumi

Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

Suzuri is an instrument to rub an ink stick with water to make ink. It is estimated that Suzuri comes from Sumisuri, the phonetic symbols which means to rub an ink stick, that was written in the dictionary of the Heian period (A.D.794-1185). Usually Suzuri means an ink stone, but in ancient Japan, they used inkslabs made by Sue ware

In the Asuka period (A.D.592-710), Japan began to form a nation based on the Ritsuryo Code (a formal body of penal and administrative laws), and started to use written characters. This required many inkslabs to be produced in various regions in Japan. Suzuri was used to write the documents in the governmental offices and to transcribe a sutra in the temples. The expansion of Suzuri manufacturing gives an archaeological clue to determine how widely written characters were used.

Enmenken is the most popular type of Suzuri from the Asuka period to the Nara period (A.D.710-794). It has round-shaped land part for rubbing an ink stick, surrounded by the sea part as a moat to keep ink. A big Enmenken with a diameter of more than 50 cm was discovered at Nara Palace site, where the central government offices were located in Nara Capital city (Image 1). There are many kinds of Suzuri discovered in Nara Capital city: for example Bird-shaped Suzuri, Turtle-shaped Suzuri, the shape of a sacred gem of Buddhism, and also the shape of the Chinese character "風" for wind (Image 2).

Enmenken in Sabukaze kiln

Most of Suzuri discovered in Sabukaze kiln are openwork Enmenken with decorative profile at the base part. This feature is common in Suzuri from the Asuka period to

the beginning of Nara period, and the same type of Suzuri was found in Horyuji Temple (Nara pref.) and Nara Capital city (Image 2). Rare Enmenkens with brush holders were discovered in Sabukaze kiln. About 15 Enmenken with brush holders discovered all over Japan have a hole of about 1 cm. Though more than 5000 Suzuri have been found in the domestic excavations, it is quite rare to find ancient brushes. Though some brushes in the Nara period made with rabbit or deer fur in bamboo stems are preserved in Shosoin Treasures, the material of a brush stem is not fully identified because bamboo is easily decomposed when buried in the ground. Therefore, Suzuri with a brush holder is very important evidence that the ancients used the same type of brush all over the country.

Mystery about the Chuku Enmenken

Chuku Enmenken, or a round shaped Suzuri with a cavity are also found in Sabukaze kiln. Chuku Enmenkens are often discovered in the ruins from the Asuka period to the beginning of the Nara period. About 50 cases were reported in Japan. Some Chuku Enmenkens have a handle in the shape of cylinder, a bird, or a turtle.

Actually, we do not fully understand how the ancients used this type of Suzuri. Though the sea part is too shallow to keep ink, it is assumed to be Suzuri according to the traces of rubbing ink. The archaeologists estimate that some kind of liquid was kept in the cavity part. What did the ancients put in the cavity? There are various hypotheses, and here I would like to introduce some interesting ones.

Hypothesis 1. Ink container. It might be the first idea that comes in your mind, but some Chuku Enmenken do not have a hole to the cavity. Without a hole it seems difficult to

move ink from the top part to the cavity, and no ink was detected in the cavity.

Hypothesis 2. Water container. Some experts think it functioned as both Suzuri and a water container. However, it seems difficult to pour the water while using Suzuri. One researcher developed the hypothesis that the ancients put a cord through the handle and put water in the cavity to carry with. It seems very reasonable, but it remains a question: how did the ancients use the handleless Chuku Enmenken?

Hypothesis 3. Hot water container. It is inspired by the word Danken (暖硯), Dan(暖) means warm, Ken(硯) means Suzuri, so Danken means a warm Suzuri. This word was written in Shosoin treasure house documents in the Nara period. At that time Suzuri was heated with charcoal fire at the sutra transcription room. The ancient ink stick was made from mixture of the soot of pine and collagen. Researchers guess that Suzuri should be warm in cold weather conditions to make it easier to dissolve the collagen. To do that, they assume that the cavity was filled with hot water to warm up Suzuri. This hypothesis is interesting, but some researchers disagree with it because some Chuku Enmenken have a handle located too low to keep hot water in horizontal position.

Now, what do you think? If we make a replica Chuku Enmenken and use it, maybe we can get a new idea or vision.

Is it difficult to make a Suzuri?

In June 2018, Sabukaze ceramic artists working on the ancient Sue ware restoration project visited our Institute to

observe Suzuri discovered in Nara Palace site. I thought that Suzuri is the most difficult to produce of the ancient Sue ware. But Sabukaze ceramic artists have enough passion and technique! The Enmenken replicas they made are just like the real ones except that it has a slightly red color. Archaeologist, Mr. Shoichi Baba who excavated the Sabukaze kilns, has presented for me one of the replicas. See Image 2, in this picture, most of Suzuri are excavated archaeological artifacts, but one of them is the replica. Can you find it? One day I hope Sabukaze ceramic artists make Chuku Enmenken again. I want to try rubbing an ink stick, put water in it and hang, and even warm with hot water.



Image. 1

Enmenken
this type of Enmenken often
discovered in Nara Palace site or
Capital cities, but rare in
the countryside.

A new Enmenken created in Sabukaze Tougei
Kaikan is shown in the picture. Can you find it?

Kensoku Enmenken with a ridge at the base part,
particular feature of Enmenken in Sabukaze kiln.
It was discovered in Horyuji Temple.

Animal shaped Suzuri
Bird shape is the most popular, turtle shape comes
the second.

Chuku Enmenken with bird-shaped handle discovered
in Prince Nagaya (684-729)'s home site. It is a mystery
how the ancients used it.

The answer is this!

Image. 2

How are Sue Ware Mortars Used?

-A View from an Experiment Using Ancient Cooking Tools

MORIKAWA Minoru

Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

“Sue ware Grinding Bowl” Another Report

At the ruins of the Kofun period, the Asuka period and Nara period (around 1000 to 1450 years ago), curious shaped Sue ware which are called “grinding bowls” or “kneading bowls” by archaeologists are sometimes excavated. (Fig. 1) While they call them grinding bowl, they don't have any thread for grinding which the grinding bowl of Bizen ware have. Also, their body seems too high, the angle of cone is a little bit too sharp to grind, and more than anything, the bottom part looks really tough and thick. We cannot find any grinding bowl like this shape in modern Japanese kitchen. Then how did the ancient people use these potteries?

A Sue ware which was probably called “Toukyu” or “Sueusu” is revealed in “Engishiki”, and I assume that the Sue ware grinding bowl I mentioned above is this, Toukyu. The Kanji of Toukyu expresses “clay Mortar”, but when we say “Mortar”, Japanese people tend to remember a large wooden mortar with which we make rice

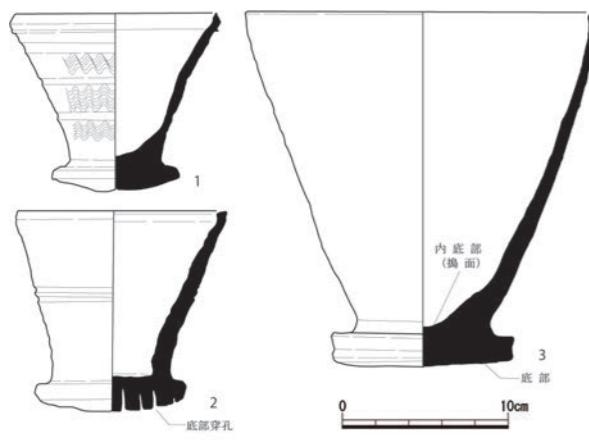


Fig. 1 Typical Example of Toukyu

cake in New year, but mortars include not only wooden ones but also millstones. Millstones are pounding mortars used for peeling or polishing rice grains, and much larger than Toukyu. If a ware was used like this, it would get cracked and broken immediately. Then, how was it used? I believe the Sue pottery grinding bowl, Toukyu, is a cooking mortar used in a kitchen. It is for neither grinding nor kneading, but for pounding food in the kitchen. It can be thought of as a cooking mortar.

Cooking Mortar in Asia

Interestingly, in East Asia (China, South Korea) and Southeast Asian countries (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, etc.), people still use a cooking mortar as a cooking tool today. The shape is much alike; many have thick bottom parts with cone-shaped bodies, and the shape and size are very similar with the ones of the ancient Toukyu. Furthermore, the materials are wooden, stone, ceramic, and also plastic. In China, their cooking mortar is used for crushing garlic, and the one called “dogu” is sold anywhere in South Korea (Image 1). Also, in Southeast Asia, people use a mortar to prepare herbs and spices at the first step of cooking, and for them, it is impossible to cook without it. I think we can say that a cooking mortar fulfilled an important role to make a base of food and taste in each country and region.

When seen all over Asia like this, we can imagine in some vague way what kind of cooking tool the Toukyu is in the ancient Japan. There is a poem says “I would like to eat raw fish seasoned in soy sauce and vinegar with pounded garlic” in “Manyoshu”.

The way to eat raw fish is similar to that of in ancient China. It is quite possible that the tool to pound the garlic was Toukyu.

As our research for Toukyu (Sue ware mortar) proceeds, we learned that it appeared in the fifth to sixth century. It means the culture to use it for cooking should have come down from mainland China in the Kofun period. However, Toukyu itself was moving into decline during the Heian period (794-1185) and had disappeared by tenth century, and now, it has become so unknown that the way of using it is a research theme. I would like to tell that it is very difficult to recover an extinct culture.

Encounter with Sabukaze Tougei Kaikan

When we make an assumption about the usage of Toukyu more or less like the description above, the next issue is how can we make sure of the fact? One of the ways is to conduct an experiment using the object. However, since the actual Toukyu which has been excavated from sites is a cultural property, we cannot use it for our trial. A replica that looks exactly like the real thing is needed. Therefore, when I was considering purchasing some clay mortars baked in Southeast Asia even now and use them for the experiment alternatively, I met the ware artists of Sabukaze Tougei Kyogikai unexpectedly. I asked them to make a Sue ware like Toukyu despite it being our first time to meet. They agreed to make it as part of “Sue ware production and baking project” held at Sabukaze Tougei Kaikan in Sabukaze Tougeinosato, then we started communicating each other. I still remember that I was so impressed when I found Toukyu among Sue ware which just had been taken out from a kiln and cooled under bright sunshine. After that, these Toukyus were sent to me and I used them (Image 2) as a cooking tool, I discovered that they are strong and durable enough to crush and grind garlic and ginger. To make

a clove of garlic puree, only a few minutes is needed. Incidentally, I have prepared some wooden grinding sticks I made from branches of camellia by myself, since I assume that grinding sticks were not ceramic but wooden.

Toukyus excavated from Heijo-kyo the ancient capital in Nara were made in the production area of Sue ware, which is the current southern part of Okayama prefecture, and carried all the way from there. The ancient production areas of Sue ware were Owari, Mino, Izumi, Harima Province etc., and of course at Bizen Province. Many Sue ware were made there. Actually, in an exhibition room of this Sabukaze Tougei Kaikan, there are Toukyus excavated from the place adjacent to Sabukaze kilns.

They look unremarkable and featureless Sue ware, but they might tell us an ancient cooking technique lost now. I hope Sue ware production and baking project last in the future and bring a full of results.



Image 1. Korean Kitchen Mortar (Dogu)



Image 2. Restored Toukyu

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