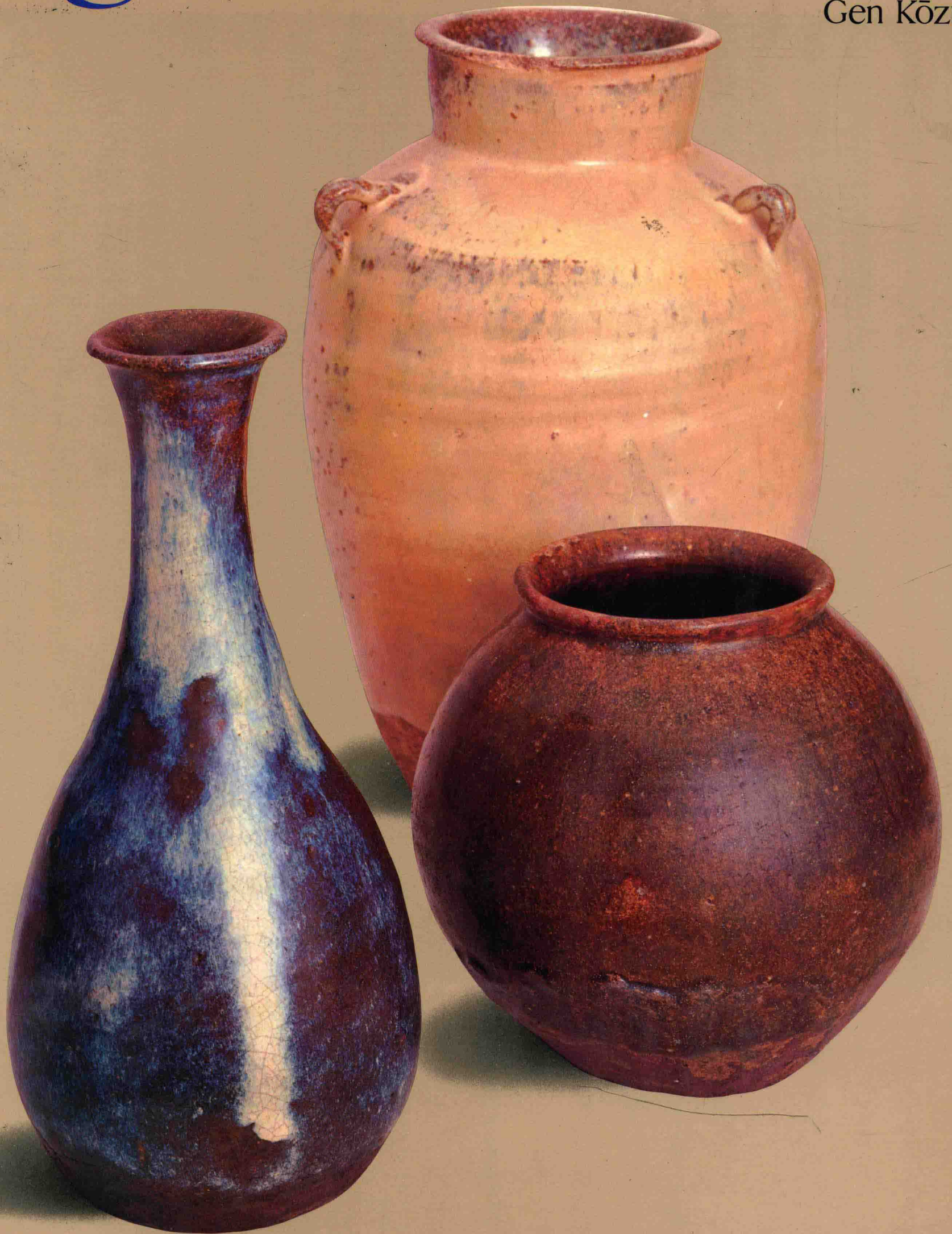


# Agano & Takatori

Gen Kōzuru



FAMOUS CERAMICS OF JAPAN 2

# Agano & Takatori

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KODANSHA INTERNATIONAL LTD.  
Tokyo, New York, San Francisco



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## Agano and Takatori Wares

### AGANO WARE

The Hosokawa clan was an aristocratic family of distinguished standing after the Muromachi period (1392–1573); a Hosokawa successively served the warlords Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu and held influential positions under them. One of these, Hosokawa Tadaoki, was thirty-seven years old when he was promoted from the position of Lord of Tango (a fief in present-day Hyōgo Prefecture) to that of Lord of Buzen, in Kyushu, in recognition of his meritorious services in the Battle of Sekigahara (1600).

Tadaoki's wife, Otama, was a daughter of Nobunaga's general and assassin Akechi Mitsuhide. She was a Christian and is more generally known in Japanese history by her Christian name, Gracia. She died before the Battle of Sekigahara, a victim of intrigue and the involved politics of the times. Tadaoki, however, never remarried, and it may be that he expressed his devotion to her in his passion for ceramic art.

Tadaoki's father, Hosokawa Yūsai, was an outstanding man of culture during the period of the Japanese Civil Wars (1482–1558), and Tadaoki himself was well versed in *waka* poetry, painting, and the Nō theater. He also studied under the great tea master Sen no Rikyū and is said to have been one of Rikyū's most illustrious pupils. However, unlike many other warlords who became aficionados of the tea ceremony at that time, Tadaoki never forgot that he was first and foremost a samurai warrior. Consequently, he used to wear his sword even during the tea ceremony ritual, despite the rule against weapons being taken into the tea room. In his opinion, a warrior should always be prepared to do his duty and fight. Called the perfect counterpart of Nobunaga, he was a remarkable man, appreciator of the fine arts, who was master of the sword and pen alike. It was under the leadership of this same

Tadaoki that the production of Agano ware began.

Agano ware was first fired by a Korean potter known as Sonkai (Chonhai in Korean), who came over to Japan following Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea between 1592 and 1598. According to the *Honchō tōki kōshō* ("Historical Study of Japanese Ceramics"), Sonkai first came to Karatsu, in Hizen Province, in 1592, but then went back to Korea before returning to Japan, this time in the company of Hosokawa Sansai from Buzen Province. There he became a retainer of the Hosokawa clan and was engaged to make pottery at Agano Village, Tagawa County, in the same province. It was from this village that he took his Japanese name, Agano Kizō Takakuni. As a result of the clan's policy of encouraging industry, Sonkai was provided with seventy retainers to help with production, and a decree was issued forbidding the use of any pottery other than Agano wares within the clan's domain.

The *Agano-yaki yurai-sho* ("Origin and History of Agano Ware") states that Sonkai's ancestors were a celebrated family during the Ming dynasty, and that he was thus a descendant of a high-standing family in China. This is not substantiated by material proof, but the Agano kiln sites have yielded dishes with iron oxide brush designs that are believed to be Xsi-cun ware from Guangdong Province. Further evidence of Chinese influences has been found in shards, dishes, hanging flower vases, and teabowls with a bluish-green glaze poured over an opaque white straw-ash glaze—all of these from Shi-wan Yao, Fo-Shan City, in Guangdong Province.

### *Agano Ware: Early Period*

Hosokawa Tadaoki came from Nakatsu to Kokura upon completion of Kokura Castle in November 1602, and it is there that he had the Saienba kiln built for what is known as "courtyard ware" (*oniwa-yaki*) production. The kiln was built by Sonkai upon Tadaoki's orders, and was fired under the guidance



of Tadaoki as tea master, and of his father Yūsai, also a distinguished tea master who was living in Kyoto at the time. It was a kind of “dilettante kiln” (*otanoshimi-gama*) for the Hosokawa lords, its wares being produced within the grounds of the castle and limited to use at tea ceremony occasions or presented as gifts to the shogun by the Hosokawa clan. There are no detailed records of this *oniwa-yaki*, and very few specimens from the kiln survive to this day, because it was only fired for two or three years following Tadaoki’s arrival in Kokura. Indeed, the kiln site itself has not yet been identified, for Saienba has now been swallowed up by the burgeoning city of Kita-Kyushu. It is thought to be located near the north side of the Itōzu Hachiman Shrine, which abuts the business center of Kokura, but the area is too crowded for excavations of the site to be made.

One of the rare pots that has come down intact to this day is the teabowl known as “Kokura-yaki” (Plate 7). Both in its coarse wood-ash glaze and in its serving bowl style, it is a typical piece of old Agano pottery.

The obvious question is why should the Saienba kiln, which was so conveniently located in the town of Kokura, have fallen into disuse after only two or three years and have been transferred to Agano Village in Tagawa County? Various reasons may be considered in answer to this question, but the most likely one would appear to be that rich resources of good quality clay, wood fuel supplies, and feldspar for glazes were discovered in and around Agano. It was probably seen to be more convenient to have the clan kiln close to such raw materials.

#### *Agano Village*

Agano Village is situated in what used to be known as Buzen Province, now Akaike Town, Tagawa County, Fukuoka Prefecture. From very earliest times the area has been imbued with a sense of spirituality, for here is the holy mountain of Fukuchi-yama, and the Fukuchi-yama Gongen Shrine is in Agano. It is from this shrine that the ascent of Mt. Fukuchi is made, on the Tagawa side of the mountain. Less than one kilometer east of Kōzuru, near the entrance of Sarayama pottery village, is the Temmokuzan Kōkoku-ji, a temple of the Sōtō sect of Zen Buddhism.

Mt. Fukuchi rises to a height of about 900 meters

above sea level and spans what used to be the border between the two provinces of Buzen, run by the Hosokawa clan, and Chikuzen, under the control of the Kuroda clan. To the west of Mt. Fukuchi’s ridge lies Mt. Takatori (alt. 630 meters), and nearby may be found the Takatori ware Takuma kiln.

When one looks at the overlapping mountain folds of Fukuchi and Takatori with Fukuchi at the front and the river Hikosan flowing this side, one can see stretching from right to left the three kiln sites of Iwaya Kōrai, Kamanokuchi, and Sarayama Hongama, one in each valley. These three old workshops are collectively called the Agano Koyō (Agano Old Workshops). Farther west, in the province of Chikuzen at the foot of Mt. Takatori are two other kiln sites—Takuma and Uchigaiso. Thus all five kilns are located in an approximately straight line—probably because the clay stratum from which each takes its ball clay runs in a straight line along the mountain.

This area is more generally known as the Chikuhō (Chikuzen-Buzen) coalfield, but parallel with the coal existed a clay stratum suitable for making pottery. The nature of the clay was not, however, uniform. This meant that different areas yielded different qualities of clay. One type, known as Ikata clay, was used for making medium-sized and small bowls for powdered tea. Another type, Natsuyoshi clay, was used for making *sencha* leaf teabowls and small, single-spray flower vases. A third type, Ichiba clay, was used for making large bowls and water jars, while a fourth type, known as Sasao clay, was used for making tea ceremony water containers, *mizu-koboshi* water jars, and flower vases (see *Manman hikae* record of the late Edo period).

These rich varieties of pottery clay were not, however, discovered during the thirty years that the Hosokawa clan ruled the province of Buzen, but after the Hosokawas had taken up their new position as feudal lords of Higo Province. The Agano area was then placed under the jurisdiction of its new ruler, Ogasawara Tadamasa, and the Ogasawaras ruled over the province for 240 years, until the abolition of the feudal fiefs and the new administrative system of prefectures was established in 1871. It was during this period that the various techniques were developed in accordance with these varying types of clay.



### *The Kamanokuchi Kiln*

There are reasons to believe that the first ceramic workshop of Agano ware that went into full-scale production was the Kamanokuchi kiln. This kiln site exists less than one kilometer uphill from the Kōkoku-ji temple on the slopes of Mt. Fukuchi, and its remains may still be seen in the dark shade of a bamboo grove there. It is a pretty large climbing kiln, with fifteen stepped chambers three meters in width and forty-one meters in length overall. Not a single fire brick was used in the building of this kiln. Instead, as was customary in those days, the kiln was constructed with clay and silica sand only.

Shards unearthed from the kiln site, and pieces that have survived to this day, show that pots were made with low foot rims and thin-walled bellies rising from the foot rims. These Kamanokuchi kiln fired pots clearly reveal the influence of Tadaoki's tea ceremony taste. They include some of the finest pieces made during the 370-year history of Agano pottery. Wares include not just brush painted, incised, or calligraphic designs on cylindrical tea-bowls (*e-Agano*, *ji-Agano*, *hori-Agano*, *kakewake*, etc.), but a large number of wood-ash glazed tea-bowls. Shards that have been unearthed show a range of almost every conceivable type of tea caddy: e.g., iron glazed *katatsuki* (with angular shoulders), *mimi-tsuki* (with ears), *bunrin* (apple shaped), *taikai* (large and wide mouthed), *minakuchi* (wide mouthed and round bottomed), etc. Water containers include a square-handled type with white rice-straw-ash glaze suffused with a green glaze (Plate 11); another type with handles was covered with an ash glaze (Plate 9); yet another with combed decoration was covered with a wood-ash glaze, and so on. These unearthed shards show that most pots had a straight-sided mouth, without a flared, everted, or inward-closing lip. In view of the fact that most pieces were made for tea ceremony use, it is perhaps surprising to find that they reveal little experimentation on the part of the potters. The foot rims are rarely given a "crescent moon" shape (*mikazuki kōdai*), but are predominantly in a regular, round form, clearly defined and dignified.

For some time I thought that this odd fact probably resulted from the character of those who gave advice to the potters about their work. However, I recently excavated a rather strangely shaped pottery object

that turned out to be the ring for supporting the pivot (*shimbō-uke*) of a potter's wheel. This pivot ring was set at the joint of the wheel head and the spindle, and helped keep the wheel rotation smooth and stable, thereby resulting in a regular, circular foot rim when the potter trimmed his pot. It is probably for this technical, rather than purely aesthetic, reason that pots were made with round foot rims at the Kamanokuchi workshop.

Apart from tea ceremony wares, functional pots for everyday use were also made in the pottery. These included pouring bowls, kneading bowls, and water jars with handles. The better-made pots are glazed all over, without the clay body being exposed anywhere. Coarser wares are made of a rough, gritty clay, and are crude in workmanship. Only the upper part of the pot is glazed, so that the clay texture is revealed at the foot rim.

Those teabowls with the "crescent moon" foot rim that are very rarely found, together with paddled, lidded jars and white and amber glazed saké bottles, are hard to distinguish from those made at Karatsu. Straw ash, amber, and iron glazes are used; however, the coarse wood-ash glaze with a faint celadon tinge is not seen on other wares of that period.

The foot rims show traces of shell fragments in their composition. It is interesting to note here that the *shijimi* (*Corbicula*), a freshwater mussel obtainable from mountain streams, was used at Kamanokuchi, which is located deep in the mountains, while the *akagai* (a cockle) seashell was used after the potters moved to Yatsushiro in Higo Province.

In its record of "the ceramic manufacture mountain of Agano village," the census register of Tagawa County, Buzen, mentions the existence in 1622 of peddlers and pack horses in addition to that of twenty-two households of potters. This would appear to suggest that the official clan kiln at Kamanokuchi also made wares for sale to local people. The reason for such thriving activity probably stems from the fact that many of the potters at the Takatori kiln of Uchigaiso uprooted and came to Kamanokuchi after their own workshop incurred the displeasure of their feudal lord. The vitality of Kamanokuchi at this time may be seen in the fact that the climbing kiln had further chambers added to it two or three times (as an examination of the kiln site will show). This influx of potters led to the birth of a new kiln, the



Agano Sarayama Hongama, *hongama* meaning “main kiln.”

But potters coming from Takatori also brought with them various Takatori techniques, such as stamped floral designs, overglaze techniques, incised ornamentation such as sgraffito, and iron brush painting. To some extent, these new techniques threatened the Agano traditional style, but under an able leader, the Kamanokuchi kiln produced especially fine Agano pieces (see Plate 6) during its last ten years.

#### *The Iwaya Kōrai Kiln*

The Iwaya Kōrai kiln is located between Agano and Benjō Iwaya in the town of Hōjō, Tagawa County. It appears that the kiln here was first fired around 1605, at almost the same time as the Kamanokuchi kiln was being operated, but it was probably closed down around 1632 when the Hosokawa lord, Tadatōshi, took up his new position as ruler of Higo Province. Certainly, no mention is made of the kiln in the 1694 publication the *Buzen kikō* (“Accounts of a Journey through Buzen”), where the writer, Kaibara Ekiken, is concerned only to describe a large man-made cave in the neighborhood.

It used to be thought that both the Iwaya Kōrai kiln and the Kamanokuchi kiln were run by the Korean potter Sonkai. However, the study of shards unearthed there shows that both techniques and styles of pottery differed essentially from one kiln to the other. In particular, there is little evidence of the existence of techniques that one would have expected if Sonkai had been responsible for the wares produced at the Iwaya Kōrai kiln. One finds, instead, north Korean techniques such as thick walls in forming, a matt white straw-ash glaze, and so on, and these show close resemblance to wares made in Hoeryōng and Myōngch’ōn. This would suggest that Korean potters did not come to Agano all at once, but that different groups came from different parts of the country at various stages during Hideyoshi’s invasions of Korea. While Sonkai set up one kiln at Kamanokuchi, another group of potters built a different kiln at Iwaya Kōrai. The former was fortunate in being officially patronized by the Hosokawas. The latter, however, did not attain such status and remained a privately run workshop.

In fact, however, the Iwaya kiln contributed much

to the clan’s coffers. Because of the closing down of the Takatori ware Uchigaiso kiln in 1624, a considerable number of potters went to work at Iwaya. They, too, were of north Korean origin, and this served to strengthen the already north Korean character of the kiln. Being a private enterprise, the workshop was not run under strict supervision, and it could make use of and freely experiment with various techniques. There were potters of both excellent and somewhat inferior technical ability, so that the quality of the kiln’s products is diverse and rather crude in comparison with that of the official Kamanokuchi workshop ware. But precisely because of this, the Iwaya wares are all the more appealing, for they reflect the characters of the potters working at the kiln at this time.

Recent excavations have brought to light the fact that various tea ceremony wares were also made at Iwaya. One rarity is the discovery of a small piece of pottery that was used as a kind of Seger cone to measure the temperature of a kiln chamber during firing.

It is not clear what happened to the Iwaya potters, but it is likely that they followed their feudal lord after the Hosokawas were appointed to the administration of the province of Higo. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that old Shōdai pottery from Higo is known to have been started up immediately after the arrival of the Hosokawas in that part of Kyushu. It bears close resemblance to the Iwaya kiln wares in many respects, particularly in the way it is covered with an amber or white straw-ash glaze. However, because the ball clay used at Shōdai contains a high percentage of iron and is not very refractory, the pottery made there had to be thick walled in order to prevent wares from collapsing during firing. This makes the overall effect of Shōdai pottery somewhat on the dull side.

#### NEW AGANO PERIOD

##### *Agano Sarayama Hongama*

When the Takatori Uchigaiso kiln was closed down in 1624, its potters moved to the Kamanokuchi and Iwaya Kōrai workshops located across the mountain ridge in Agano. It seems that there were too many to be accepted at the two kilns already there, so a new kiln and workshop, known as the “main kiln” (*hongama*), were started in the following year.



The Hongama kiln is situated in what is now Agano Sarayama, Akaike Town, Tagawa County. The kiln site is located along the approach to the Middle Shrine of the Fukuchi Gongen Shinto complex. Shards unearthed around old ruined houses nearby show that pots were made with techniques closely resembling those of south Korean potters who had worked at the Kamanokuchi kiln in its early period. This suggests that the Sarayama Hongama kiln was established by potters from Kamanokuchi who handed over the running of their old kiln to the many immigrants from Uchigaiso and moved to a new site.

Seven years after the establishment of Sarayama Hongama, the Hosokawa lord, Tadatoshi, was reassigned to Higo. Sonkai accompanied him with his two oldest sons, Chūbei and Tōshirō, and set up a kiln at Yatsushiro in Higo Province. There he began producing Kōda wares (see "The History of Yatsushiro County"). He left behind his wife, his third son, Totoki Magozaemon, and his son-in-law Watari Kyūzaemon in Agano. Although Sonkai did not want to break up his family in this way, he had no alternative but to do so if both old and new masters were to be served. During the period of Ogasawara rule that followed in Agano, workmanship at the Hongama tended to lay stress on technical elaboration. The potters managed to gain better living and working conditions, and this seems to have adversely affected the vigorous style of early Agano wares.

The Ogasawara clan continued its administration of Agano ware production for fourteen generations, from the Sarayama Hongama period to the Meiji Restoration (1868). During this long period of peace and stability, society gradually settled down, a fact that is reflected in the quiet nature of Agano wares.

The production of teabowls, in particular, shows the way in which taste changed in Japanese society during the course of the Edo period (1603–1868). The tea ceremony had originally been practiced by warrior lords such as Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. At this time, certain styles of tea wares were particularly favored—for instance, Sen no Rikyū's unassuming simplicity (*wabi*), Furuta Oribe's "lordly" style (*daimyō-cha*), and Kōbori Enshū's elegance (*kirei wabi-cha*). After the death of Kōbori Enshū, Kanamori Sōwa initiated an elegant court style (*kuge*) of tea ceremony instead of the earlier

samurai oriented style. His ideas found favor with the court nobles who lived in Kyoto. One very famous potter was Ninsei, who originated the Omuro pottery near the Ninna-ji temple. He was one of Kanamori Sōwa's favorites and was patronized by many noble families, in particular the Kyōgokus, for whom he made special efforts and turned out one masterpiece after another.

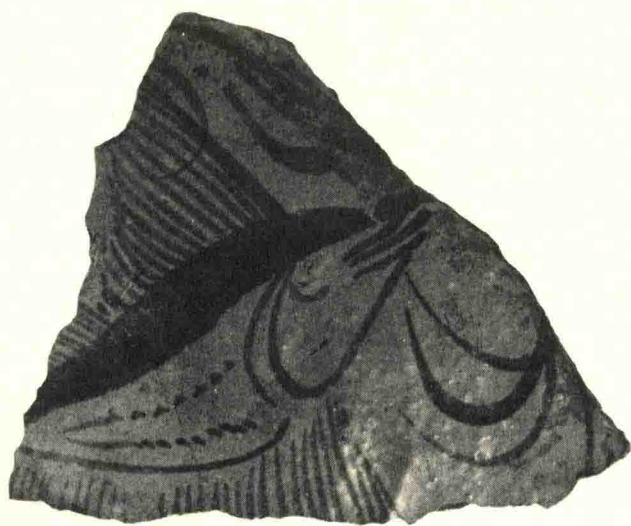
Although Agano ware started out with a Korean continental style, in due course it, too, aimed to achieve the *kirei sabi* effect advocated by Kanamori and indulged in superficial decorative effects. This may have been an inevitable result of social influences, but the tenth Ogasawara lord, Katsumasa, encouraged the Hongama potter Totoki Magozaemon Hoshō to study both in Edo (modern Tokyo) and in Kyoto, the old capital. Hoshō absorbed the new ceramic style prevalent in Edo at that time before going on to study Raku ceramic techniques under the Kyoto potter Chūbei from 1804. The uniquely Japanese Raku ware, characterized by its low-fired, soft effects, had been developed in Kyoto from the end of the sixteenth century, and Hoshō was able to emulate these elegant wares once he got back to Agano. His prowess was rewarded by his clan lord, who gave him permission to ride on horseback through the streets and to be attended by servants—both privileges generally reserved for those of samurai class.

Raku influences on Agano ware can be seen in the use of a reddish purple glaze known as *shiso-de*, a "three-color" Agano glaze, an egg-yolk yellow glaze (*tamago-de*), and a "wood-grain" patterned effect known as *mokuzuri*, all of which began to be used from about this period. According to the *Manmandai hikae*, a bluish green copper glaze also was adopted in 1790. Various kinds of decorative techniques were developed, including inlay, bluish green suffusion, sprigging, incised and brushwork decoration. No other period during the history of Agano ware boasted such a variety of techniques, but the disadvantage of such plurality was that the techniques came to be seen as the be-all and end-all of production. Thus, eventually, towards the end of the Edo period, Agano ware lost all its original verve and vitality.

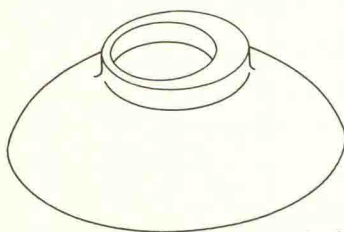




Fukuchi and Takatori mountains, around which Agano and Takatori wares originated.



This shard unearthed at the Kamano-kuchi kiln site was probably brought from Guangdong Province of China.



Crescent moon foot rim (*mikazuki kōdai*)

## TAKATORI WARE

### *The Jōbata Kiln*

There are two accounts of the origin of Takatori ware. One, in "The Sequel to the History of Chikuzen Province," refers to Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea and tells how one of his generals, Katō Kiyomasa, brought back a Korean potter and set up a kiln in which he could fire porcelain in Higo Province. This potter he called by the Japanese name of Ido Shinkurō, and the pottery made by this Korean is known as Ido ware. Later on, he was invited to Chikuzen by the lord of that province, Kuroda Nagamasa, and had a kiln built for him in Takatori. It is from the name of this place that the ware takes its name. In a briefer account of this story, the "Record of the Takatori Household" mentions that Nagamasa told the potter to assume Takatori as his family name and Hachizō as his personal name.

It seems clear from these references that, like Agano wares, Takatori pottery owes its origins to the Korean Wars of 1592–98. Most kilns of this time were first built near the coast, and this is true of what is seen as the oldest Takatori kiln, *Jōbata-gama*. This Jōbata kiln is thought to have been established by Kuroda Nagamasa around 1601, soon after his transfer from Nakatsu in Buzen Province (Ōita Prefecture) to Fukuoka in the province of Chikuzen.

The majority of shards unearthed are parts of dishes; relatively few pieces of teabowls (see Plate 30), wine cups, bowls, and bottles have been found. The clay is rich in iron and is not very refractory. Foot rims are trimmed low. Only a few types of glaze are used—iron oxide and wood ash being predominant. Pots are glazed all over and are frequently blistered or bloated because they were not bisqued prior to glazing. This method of glazing the green pot is known as *namagake*.

For some unknown reason, the Jōbata kiln was suddenly closed down—probably, to judge from a document of 1607, five or six years after its construction. In this document, Nagamasa ordered the officer in charge of the clan's navy to prepare to ship some Korean potters back to their country. However, another theory is that the experimental kiln at Jōbata was closed down and the potters released from their duties because their products were all too similar to those of the Takuma kiln (see below).

It is of interest to note here with regard to the way



in which foreign potters were treated, that the authorities either made those in charge of the clans' outpost castles keep watch over the potters or insisted that the influential Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples register the potters' names in the parish records. Thus the feudal lords were not just their supervisors, but also, in a manner of speaking, their protectors.

#### *The Takuma Kiln*

Jōbata is apparently the earliest Takatori kiln, but the Takuma kiln produced the first official Kuroda clan ware. Situated at the foot of Mt. Takatori, in the eastern part of present-day Nōgata City, the Eiman-ji Takuma kiln is in fact only one kilometer south of Sarayama Hongama, the official kiln of Agano ware, produced for the Hosokowa clan in Buzen Province.

The kiln was probably established in 1606 and was active for about eight years until its closure in 1614. Literary sources attribute its origin either to Hachizō or to Shinkurō. In all probability, Shinkurō, who was Hachizō's father-in-law, was the leading potter at the Takuma kiln, for it is known that Hachizō really only began to assert his own style following his move to Uchigaiso some eight years later. Although the reasons for this move are far from clear, it may be that the workshop was transferred from Takuma because of the impending demolition of Takatori Castle in 1615 at the command of the central government in Edo.

Korean influences can be seen in the glazes used on the wares fired in the Takuma kiln. The rice-straw-ash and *namako* blue glazes are to be found on wares originating in the famous Korean ceramic centers of Nūchen and Hoeryōng, and it is known from historical sources that the daimyo Katō Kiyomasa marched through these areas in the north of Korea during his campaigns in that country. These and a wood-ash glaze were also used on Takuma wares, and the glazes are in fact so similar to those found on Jōbata kiln pots that it seems most probable that potters went to work in Takuma once they left the Jōbata kiln.

Pieces made at the Takuma kiln were mostly large or small dishes, bowls with or without pouring spouts, and saké cups. Also, though seldom, found are tea jars, amber-glazed lidded jars, saké bottles, steamers, and such tea ceremony objects as tea caddies and teabowls (Plate 31).

Pots appear to have been thrown singly rather than off the hump, and the foot rims are only roughly trimmed. The section of the pot just above the foot rim tends to be thick, and in the case of jars, the walls frequently have been trimmed down (Plate 28). Foot rims are generally very low and this, together with the thickness of the clay body, gives these pots a rather coarse, sturdy effect. However this effect is offset somewhat by the elegance of the opaque straw ash and *namako* glazes (Plate 29).

#### *The Uchigaiso Kiln*

Potters making Takatori ware appeared destined never to settle down, for time and time again they were forced to move to new kiln sites. The kiln that follows the Jōbata and Takuma ware period is known as *Uchigaiso-gama*. It was at Kamano-o in the valley of Uchigaiso that the potter Hachizō is said to have set up a workshop and begun to produce porcelain wares at the command of Kuroda Nagamasa in about 1614 (see "The Sequel to the History of Chikuzen Province"). However, according to the "Brief History of the Administration of Fukuoka Fief" (*Fukuoka-han minsei shiryaku*), Hachizō was joined by another potter called Igarashi Jizaemon. The latter had been in the service of the Terasawa family in Karatsu but had lost his job there. Nagamasa's son, Kuroda Takayuki, decided to employ him because he was skilled at making porcelain, and so Jizaemon was sent to live at Takatori and work at the Uchigaiso kiln. The two potters are said to have moved around quite a bit thereafter, seeking suitable clay materials.

Hachizō was favorably treated and paid a stipend equivalent to the rations of seventy men as well as being given a tax-free estate of over two *chō* (about 20,000 square meters) of fields in the neighborhood. Upon the death of Nagamasa, who was his most understanding patron, Hachizō applied to Tadayuki for permission to return to his home country, but his request was considered to be nothing short of insolence, and Hachizō was kept at a secluded workshop at Tōjin-dani ("Chinese Valley") at Yamada for some time.

The Uchigaiso kiln is thought to have been closed after ten years' production in 1624, the year following the death of Nagamasa. The potters there dispersed, some of them apparently migrating to Agano ware workshops, while Hachizō moved to Yamada.



Hachizō's part in the Uchigaiso kiln's production appears to have been quite important. That he was the leading potter may be seen from a recently unearthed cylindrical flower vase on the bottom of which is stamped his name with the Chinese character for king. This same character appears on the bottom of a low-standing water container (Plate 32), which is in the Oribe style and is very rare among old Takatori wares.

The influence of Oribe, who succeeded Sen no Rikyū as the leading tea master in the country, continued long after his death, and many of the Uchigaiso wares reveal Oribe's taste. This may be seen in the "shoe" form teabowls, "folded" serving dishes, combed flower vases, wood-ash-glazed water containers with handles, candlesticks in the shape of European figurines, and so on.

Among Takatori wares in general, pots fired at the Uchigaiso kiln show a particularly rich variety of techniques. Shards of angular-shouldered, straw-ash-glazed jars with the clay body unglazed at the bottom have been unearthed only at this Takatori kiln site, and are generally classified as "mottled Karatsu" (*madara Karatsu*) wares. All in all, the wares produced at Uchigaiso are full of the dynamic spirit one would expect of the Momoyama period.

#### *The Yamada Kiln*

About thirty kilometers south of Uchigaiso, abutting the present city of Iizuka, is Tōjin-dani ("Chinese Valley") at Kijiro in what is now Yamada City. The area around the kiln site is now a coal-waste dumping ground. No vestige of the past remains except a stone monument reading "Site of the Yamada Kiln of Old Takatori." Hachizō and his son had their factory here for six years after 1624.

Because the kiln site is in such a sad state of preservation, it has not been possible to excavate shards at all, and so there are extremely few specimens from the kiln intact. The two teabowls shown in Plates 48 and 50 were reportedly discovered in the tomb of a man called Ōba. Published for the first time here, they are valuable examples of Yamada kiln wares. They show an uninhibited style by potters, who, though free from restriction, worked in some adversity. Like other early Takatori wares, they are relatively thickly thrown, but their straw-ash glaze is pleasant, soft, and recalls that of the

Takuma kiln, giving the elegant, warm effect peculiar to stoneware pottery.

Documentary evidence reveals that Igarashi Jizaemon worked for the Kuroda clan during the period in which Hachizō and his family led a secluded life at Yamada.

#### *The Sengoku Kiln*

After the Uchigaiso kiln was disbanded, most of the hundred or more potters who are thought to have worked there went to the Agano ware kilns of Kamanokuchi and Iwaya Kōrai. The few remaining potters adhering to the Takatori tradition appear to have built a new kiln at Sengoku Tōjin-machi, Miyata Town, in Kurate County.

Trailing glaze with a bamboo tube on a bisque-fired body was almost the only glazing technique used at the Sengoku kiln. Compared with the trailing found on works of other kilns, the Sengoku designs are outstandingly novel and fresh.

#### ENSHŪ TAKATORI PERIOD

##### *The Shirahatayama Kiln*

Having obtained the permission of Takayuki, Hachizō, after his period of seclusion at Yamada, built an official factory at the foot of Shirahatayama at Aiya Village in Honami County (present-day Kōbukuro-machi in Iizuka City), where he began to make porcelain again from about 1630. He was provided with a stipend of eight *roku* (one *roku* being approximately five bushels of rice) plus rations sufficient for eight men and an estate of something more than two *chō* of rice fields.

Hachizō and his son, now once again potters in official service, worked with rekindled hope and made various experiments. Tadamasa sent them to study how to make tea ceremony objects under Kobori Enshū, who praised them highly for the quality of their work. The period of thirty-five years following this, until the workshop moved to Tsutsumi in Koishiwara Village, is called the Enshū Takatori period. It was around this time that Takatori ware began to exhibit the tea ceremony ceramic art style and move away from its Korean antecedents.

Igarashi Jizaemon, mentioned above in connection with porcelain production at Uchigaiso, was also well versed in the ceramic techniques of Seto. His



collaboration with Hachizō led to the adoption of the Seto technique of overglazing (Plates 45, 47) and to the development of burnished thin-walled pieces instead of the rustic wares that characterized the earlier kilns. The major products were now tea ceremony objects such as tea caddies, teabowls, and water containers. Tea caddies, especially, had lids made for them and covered a wide range of forms: *minakuchi* (wide mouthed), *taikai* (large, short, and wide mouthed), *katatsuki* (with angular shoulders), *bunrin* (apple shaped), *mimitsuki* (eared), *nasu* (eggplant shaped), and so on. This period gave birth to tea caddy masterpieces, which have been unsurpassed in the history of Takatori ware: for instance, the caddies named "Somekawa," "Yokodake," and "Aki-no-yo."

Many teabowls, water containers, and wall vases also exist with fine horizontal sgraffito combing around the sides. It was from this period, too, that the Takamiya transparent glaze, which was to become the hallmark of Takatori ware in later times, was first experimented with frequently on these thin-walled pieces.

The kiln site at Shirahatayama has yielded kiln stilts with porcelain fragments adhering to them, along with whetstone masses and a porcelain test piece inscribed Hita (presumably the town of that name). Whetstone is a material used in porcelain clay. This suggests that porcelain was experimented with here in earnest, a fact that is hardly surprising in view of the yearning most feudal lords had for this ceramic during the Edo period.

A large number of porcelain pieces were discovered in the tombs of Hachizō I and his close relatives when their remains had to be exhumed and reburied recently. Hachizō's tomb, in particular, yielded blue-and-white porcelain, teabowls, tea cups, and saké cups. It is thought that the Shirohatayama workshop may have been moved to Nakano in Koishiwara Village because the latter was near Hita, where porcelain stone was available. This occurred some ten years after both Tadayuki and Hachizō died in the same year of 1654.

#### KOISHIWARA TAKATORI PERIOD

##### *The Tsutsumi Kiln*

Hachirō Shigefusa, grandson of Hachizō, moved

from Shirahatayama to Tsutsumi in 1665, when Mitsuyuki was lord of the Kuroda clan. It is said that his younger brother Hachinojō remained at Shirahatayama and occasionally assisted the elder sibling at the latter's "tea caddy kiln" (*chaire-gama*), so called because almost the entire production until the end of the Edo period consisted of tea caddies. Word has it that a globular tea caddy made here was named "Yōhen" ("Kiln Change") by Kobori Enshū himself, who wrote this term on the box housing the caddy. The pot was treasured by Kuroda Mitsuyuki.

##### *The Nakano Kiln*

Hachinojō, grandson of Hachizō I, moved to Nakano in Koishiwara Village (present Koishiwara Sarayama), where he opened his factory in 1669. Later on, in 1682, Mitsuyuki invited other potters from Hizen to work there and make porcelain, chiefly copies of Chinese Ming dynasty pots. Not long after, however, the manufacture of porcelain was abandoned due to a shortage of materials. One can still find many porcelain shards at the kiln site, and this proves Mitsuyuki's unusual interest in porcelain, no doubt influenced by his father, Tadayuki.

According to the *Tsutsumi kamadoko*, the Kuroda clan had an official kiln at Nakano Sarayama. Here the Takatori and Igarashi families made ceramic wares for official use, but the officer in charge of ceramic production also arranged for everyday ware to be made for use by the local people, thereby contributing to the finances of the clan. This is probably the origin of the "folk" pottery that is now known as Koishiwara ware, currently produced at the village of Sarayama.

#### FUKUOKA SARAYAMA PERIOD

##### *Higashi Sarayama*

In 1708, the fourth Kuroda clan lord, Tsunamasa, invited potters from Koishiwara to Uenoyama, Sohara Village, Nishijin-machi, in the capital of his fief, Fukuoka. This kiln is called Higashiyama or Higashi Sarayama and was active until the Meiji Restoration, making pots for the Kuroda family. Its products were mainly tea caddies, teabowls, and alcove ornaments in the taste of Enshū, and they were reserved exclusively for use as gifts to the central government in Edo and to other feudal lords.



### *Nishi Sarayama*

In 1718, the fifth Kuroda clan lord, Norimasa, ordered his retainer Yanase Sanemon to build a pottery kiln at Tontsurayama in Sohara Village. Sanemon invited a few potters from Koishiwara to come and cooperate with the craftsmen at the new kiln. This kiln was established as a means of increasing the clan's income and mainly made everyday wares. These were marketed by the clan's official distributor until the end of the feudal age.

### *Sue Ware*

Takatori ware may be said to have begun with the Takuma kiln and to have lasted through many vicissitudes until the end of the feudal age in 1868. During this period, wares changed from a heavy, rustic Takuma style to a lighter, more elegant and delicate style in the taste of Enshū and also more Japanese in character than the original wares. While such change may in one sense be seen as progress, in another it resulted in the loss of some of those traits that pottery should have—for example, warmth in texture and workmanship, a power, and vitality. In short, the ware lost its very “heart.”

I would have liked to discuss how porcelain fits into the history of Takatori ware, and the role of the Kuroda clan lords in its production, for it was they who were interested in white porcelain rather than in the more ordinary pottery. The seventh clan lord, Haruyuki, tried to revive porcelain at the Nakano kiln, where Mitsuyuki had earlier experimented, but gave up due to a shortage of materials and the inconvenient location of the kiln. He then looked for a more suitable place and eventually hit upon Sarayama, Sue Town, Kasuya County, where he invited Hizen and Takatori potters to come and work. This was the origin of Sue ware.

The site of the Uchigaiso kiln under the first lord,

Nagamasa, has yielded shards of porcelain with copper-red underglaze. The Shirahatayama kiln under the second lord, Tadayuki, saw some success in the production of blue-and-white porcelain, but he died in the same year as Hachizō, and the factory did not succeed in full-time manufacture of porcelain. Later on, the third lord, Mitsuyuki, moved the workshop to Nakano, which was conveniently situated so far as access to porcelain stone was concerned. Here he got porcelain craftsmen, whom he had invited from Hizen, to repeat experiments, but these failed, and the kiln reverted to firing thin-walled stoneware.

The Nakano kiln was active thereafter as the clan's official kiln for about ten years, during the An'ei era (1772–81), until the death of Haruyuki. Later it was closed down and then transferred to a private manufacturer, who tried but failed to revive it at his own expense.

The eleventh clan lord, Nagahiro, established an office supervising ceramic manufacture at Sue in 1860, and under this office the clan's official kiln was reopened and pots mass-produced. During the Man'en era (1860–61), potters and painters were invited there from Kyoto, Seto, and Hizen; the workshop was provided with forty-four clay crushers, and Sarayama even had its own currency issued to enhance its financial resources. This pottery manufacture thrived.

The quality of the material used, together with the technical ability of the potters and decorators working there, led to the production of excellent work at this Sue kiln. Unfortunately, the kiln had to be closed down in 1870 after the Meiji Restoration, less than ten years after its revival. Thus, porcelain manufacture was finally perfected during the time of the eleventh clan lord, Nagahiro, who fulfilled the dreams of his ancestor, the first lord, Nagamasa.