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## 塚田秀鏡略傳

Short Biography of Tsukada Shukyo

塚田秀暎

by Tsukada Shuei

塚田秀鏡幼名は鍊三郎、嘉永元年江戸神田に生る。

Tsukada Shukyo's childhood name was Renzaburo (鍊三郎), and he was born in Kanda (神田), Edo (江戸) in the first year of Kaei (嘉永).

父を土肥義周と稱し館林藩秋元但馬守の家臣、故ありて塚田家に入り秀鏡と改む。

His father was called Yoshichika Dohi (土肥義周), and he was a vassal of Tajima-no-kami Akimoto (秋元但馬守の家臣) of the Tatebayashi domain (館林藩). For some reason, he was adopted by the Tsukada family (塚田家) and changed his name to Shukyo (秀鏡).

十五歳にして彫金術を奈良派の勝見完齋先生に學び、肅を柴田是真先生の教を受く、養父直鏡は刀劍鋳師なりし爲直接間接に指導せらる、後加納夏雄先生を師とし各師の一字を頂き眞雄齋と號す。

At the age of fifteen, he learned metal engraving from Kansai Katsumi (勝見完齋) of the Nara school (奈良派). Then he was taught by Shibata Zeshin (柴田是真). Then he was taught the sword mountings craft by his adoptive father. Shukyo took the last kanji from the names of his teachers, Zeshin (是真) and Natsuo (夏雄), and combined them to his *gō* "Shin'yūsai" (眞雄齋).

廿六歳の時加納夏雄師の 陛下御佩用の御大刀を謹刻せらるる際助手として裝飾彫刻を、又御寶物水品玉豪に全身龍の丸彫を彫刻、明治十九年栞地本願寺に（美術協會の前身）龍池會の新古美術展覽會を開催せる時、五月廿一日 明治天皇御幸の際天顔に咫尺して銀盃に忠孝の圖を彫刻、越へて廿二日 皇太后並に 皇后陛下御啓の時銀栞貳枚へ鯉と瀧の圖を刻み献上するの光榮に浴す。

In 1874, at the age of 26, Shukyo assisted Natsuo Kano in carving of a full-body dragon in a stormy water on a sword for His Majesty the Emperor Meiji. The carving was done in a *marubori* (丸彫) technique (A/N: “carving in the round”, a style of very realistic carving that creates a representation of a real-life scene in three dimensions and can be viewed from any angle). On May 21, 1886, when the Shinko Biei Exhibition (新古美術展覽會, “old and modern arts exhibition”) of Ryuchikai (龍池會, the predecessor of the Japan Art Association, 美術協會) was held at the Tsukiji Hongan-ji (栞地本願寺, A/N: a Buddhist temple in Tokyo), on the occasion of the Emperor Meiji's visit, Shukyo carved a picture of Emperor on a silver cup as a sign of his piety and loyalty to him. On May 22, he carved a picture of a carp and a waterfall on a silver bookmark of Her Majesty the Empress and present it to her.

廿二年伊勢大神宮御寶劍玉纏御大刀外三十振譚刻三ヶ年にして上納す。

In 1889 Shukyo received an order from the Ise Grand Shrine (伊勢神宮) for carving the *Tamamaki no Ontachi* (玉纏御大刀, A/N: a sacred sword, which together with *Sugari no Ontachi*, 須賀利御太刀, are the most important sacred swords in Japan). The work was completed three years later.

内外博覽會出品の二三を擧ぐれば、明治十四年第二回内國博覽會へ鐵地板へ蟹の闇肉彫を出品受賞獨國バイエル府金工萬國博に落雷の圖彫刻、米國セントルイス博覽會出品には鐵地堅六尺巾三尺の板へ龍肉彫刻を出し金賞を受く。此作品は彫金界として最初の大作なるべし。

Shukyo participated in many domestic and foreign exhibitions. In 1881 he presented his work of a crab carved on iron at the 2nd National Industrial Exhibition held in Tokyo, winning an award. At St. Louis Exposition, held in the United States, Shukyo received a gold prize for his work of a dragon, carved on a 6 by 3 shaku (尺, A/N: a unit of measure, approx. 30.3 centimeters) board. This work became a world-known masterpiece.

美術協會へ鶏丸彫亦大作を以て知らる。共に大震災の爲焼失せり。

He is also known for his *marubori* (丸彫) carvings of large-scale items for the Japan art association (美術協會), which were destroyed by fire caused by the Great Earthquake (A/N: 大震災 means “great earthquake” without specifying which one – possibly the Great Kanto Earthquake, 1923).

大正二年帝室技藝員を拜命し、同七年十二月歿す時年七十一。

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Taisho (大正, 1913), Shukyo became an Imperial Household Artist (帝室技藝員). He died in December of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Taisho (1918), at the age of 71.

秀鏡生來體身健ならず、七十一の長壽は夢にだに保てざる程なりしが、よく攝生を守りし爲なり。養父母に孝謹直なり。斯道の研究の爲には費を吝まず。

Shukyo was born in good health and did his best to take care of himself. He was dedicated and respectful to his adoptive parents. Shukyo spared no expenses in his study of religion.

龍池會に於て御前彫刻の光英に浴せること等は當時同會は有數識者の美術研究團體にして會費も其頃五十錢なるが故、昔時としては非常な高い會費なりしとか、爲に入會者も彫金家として少く、秀鏡贅費を心して此龍池會に入り居たる爲なり。

At the time, the Ryuchikai (龍池會, the predecessor of the Japan Art Association, 美術協會) membership fee was very high and there were only few members who specialized in metal engravings. However, Ryuchikai members had a privilege to present their works in front of the Emperor, and it was for this reason that he joined Ryuchikai, despite the high expenses.

又刀劍金具の彫刻により一家を支へたりし頃の明治初年廢刀令の施行さるるに及び、忽に職を失ひ明日のことにも差支へ如何ともなす能はず、今迄の彫金師は明日は大道にて鎚銅の燈籠へ文字なりと刻みて漸く糊口を凌ぐ頃、養父母と妻を迎へたる計りの折柄、その苦心は一方ならざりしこと等を朝夕食卓を圍んで常に子等を戒めたり。

Shukyo was engraving metal fittings for swords when the Sword Abolishment Edict (廢刀令) was issued in 1876. He lost his job, but didn't despond. The next day he was engraving letters on the brass lanterns on the main road of the city, and continued supporting his wife and adoptive parents. He was working hard and admonished his children to do the same.

今日の世想亦是等のことども幾分の参考となるべきなり。

Even today he provides a role model to young metalworkers.

一二の追憶を記す。

Written down from memories. [N/A: the author, Tsukada Shuei (塚田秀暎) was Shukyo's son.]