Non-walled Palanquin Built for Retired Emperor Kōkaku's Visit to the Shūgakuin Villa: The History of the "Oyōyō" Used by the Saiō-dai in the Aoi Festival

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Most of the traces and rubbings included in 'Reitokaku-Shukocho' are depictions of objects that were already considered "antique" in the late Edo period. However, the non-walled palanquins that comprise a large proportion of the first volume on "palanquins" are clearly contemporary.

Aided by the annotations and the catalog of documents pasted within 'Shukocho', an examination of entries from 'Shūgakuin Gokōroku' (a record of an imperial visit to the Shūgakuin villa) allows us to ascertain that the images relate to the design of the non-walled palanquin "Kiku-Hachiyō" (eight chrysanthemum petals), which was completed in Bunsei 12 (1829) for use in Retired Emperor Kōkaku's seventh visit to the Shūgakuin villa.

"Kiku-Hachiyō" was newly built as a yama-koshi (mountain palanquin) to replace the ajiro-koshi (wicker body palanquin) that had been used up until then, and was designed with an attitude of "revival" based on historical research by Takeya Mitsutoshi, Hara Zaimei, and others. At that time, in addition to old drawings such as emaki scrolls, actual measurements taken of the old palanquins by Yamato-e painters were used as reference materials. This "Kiku-Hachiyō" palanquin still exists and is kept by the Kyoto Imperial Palace as an "Oyōyō" and is also used for the palanquin ridden by women serving as Saiō-dai in the Aoi (Kamo) Festival.

Prior to the construction of "Kiku-Hachiyō", an Ajiro palanquin was constructed for Retired Emperor Kōkaku's first visit to Shūgakuin in Bunsei 7 (1824). This is the Ajiro palanquin still held by the Kyoto Imperial Palace, and features a "Kara-Hachiyō" (eight Chinese-flower petals) design. This grand procession was depicted in paintings, with the palanquin as the central motif.

An ajiro palanquin very similar to the "Kara-Hachiyō" palanquin is also held by Shōgoin Monzeki. This palanquin has a "Kiku-Futae" (double chrysanthemum) design, and was given by Retired Emperor Kōkaku to his younger brother, Cloistered Imperial Prince Einin. It was likely used by Retired Emperor Kōkaku in his first imperial visit after his abdication.

It is well known that the reconstruction of the Imperial Palace in the Kan'ei era was guided by historical advice rooted in the principle of "revival", but the non-walled palanquins subsequently constructed in the Bunsei era were similarly designed with an attitude towards "revival". This case reveals the true nature of historical investigation and restoration at that time, and also shows that tastes for antiquities were tied to specific projects and were closely tied to politics.

Key words: 'Reitokaku-Shukocho', Palanquin, Retired Emperor Kōkaku, "revival" style,