

“The Drawn Palanquins” and “the Made Palanquins” : Trough Comparison the Drawings in ‘Reitokaku-Shukocho’ “Joyo” and the Existing Palanquins and the Creation of a Model of the Ajiro-koshi

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The ‘Reitokaku-Shukocho,’ “Joyo I,” and “Joyo II” collections, compiled in the late Edo period, include drawings of Koshi (palanquins) and Gissha (ox-drawn carriage) that had been handed down in shrines and temples in Kyoto and Nara. Some of the drawings are drawn three-dimensionally using perspective and using measurements, it is assumed that they were intended to depict the outline of the Koshi (palanquin) that was to be made. Findings revealed that one Shiho-koshi and two Ajiro-koshi drawn in “Joyo I” exist in Kyoto in the same style as that shown in the drawing. Based on the results of the investigation of these three original Koshi (palanquins), this study aimed to discuss their design, structure, specifications, and creation processes from a manufacturing perspective.

The Koshi with the same style as the one shown in the “Kikuhachiyo-okoshizu” in “Joyo I” is the Shiho-koshi in the Kyoto-gosho collection. Its wooden structure is painted in black lacquer. It is considered as the original of the “Kikuhachiyo-okoshizu” because its design, form, and specifications are similar to those shown in the drawing. The same style of Ajiro-koshi as depicted in “Toji Okurumana-gaezu,” the title of which is included in “Joyo I,” separately exists in Shogoin and Kyoto-gosho. The wooden structure is painted in black lacquer, and the exterior is covered in yellow Ajiro. The Ajiro-koshi in the Shogoin collection has a Niju-kiku design while the Ajiro-koshi in the Kyoto-gosho collection has a Karahachiyo one. The two Ajiro-koshi are believed to have been made for Joko's visit to Shugakuin, and it is certain that they are related. The main structure can be roughly divided into three parts: the lower part “Yukashita” (under the floor), the central part “Yakata” (the cabin), and the upper part “Yane” (the roof). It can be seen that these made by following Japanese shrine and temple architecture. The Ajiro-koshi is characterized by its gentle curves and curved surface design, and its beautifully finished form reveals a high level of woodworking skill.

Based on the findings of the Ajiro-koshi in the Shogoin collection, the author designed a one-fifth scale model of the wooden structure, which was displayed in a special exhibition at the National Museum of Japanese History. The model was made of cherry wood, using both hand tools and woodworking machines. The Yukashita is the foundation of the Yakata and Yane; therefore, it must be made without distortion. It is challenging to design the Yakata owing to its curvature, but accurate handling and joints ensure a sturdy structure. The cubic curvature of the Yane can be achieved by

designing it with a large number of rafters and crosspieces and by handling them precisely. By actually creating the model of the wooden structure using wood, the shape of the parts and method of joining them were found to be lean and sensible.

Key words: 'Reitokaku-Shukocho', palanquin, Shogoin, Edo period, model of the wooden structure