

金重陶陽に対する桃山備前影響  
—その制作の技術と過程に関して—

Momoyama Bizen Ware Influence on Kaneshige Tōyō,  
with Consideration of His Technique and Process

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## Momoyama Bizen Ware Influence on Kaneshige Tōyō, with Consideration of His Technique and Process

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### 1. Introduction

Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 (1896-1967) is known as one of the great Japanese potters of his time, and was designated Living National Treasure in 1956. Interestingly, controversy exists around the influence of Momoyama Bizen Ware on Tōyō's work and whether or not he simply 'copied' Momoyama Bizen style. Although Tōyō was greatly influenced by a vast number of superb Momoyama era Bizen ware examples that exist, this simplistic assessment fails to consider Tōyō's innovative contributions in technique, tools, process, and ideals which led to the creation of modern Momoyama style Bizen ware.

Tōyō was greatly influenced by the vast number of superb Momoyama era Bizen ware examples that exist. Upon examination of the complete array of elements or components that make up a piece of Momoyama era Bizen ware, i.e., not only form, but clay, atmosphere, firing, kiln, feel, the elements of chance and spontaneity, etc., it becomes clear that Tōyō did not simply copy (the form) of the wares. Some of his processes and techniques were necessarily different from those used 400 years prior, as Tōyō was a singlehanded (with apprentice) artist potter living in post WWII Japan, as opposed to the Momoyama era potters, who fired giant 50-meter-long communal kilns for 30 to 50 days. He had to devise a rational approach with which to interpret and create modern Bizen tea wares. This paper will begin with the form, the outward appearance, and delve deeper into the above-mentioned elements, techniques and processes, in an attempt to further understand the influence of Momoyama Bizen and Tōyō's coping with the creation of Momoyama style Bizen in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and also consider factors such as copying and the element of chance.

Information based on the authors experience of being Tōyō's eldest son, Kaneshige Michiaki's 金重道明 apprentice for three years and extensive association with the Kaneshiges since that time, will be presented. Tōyō created a space in his process that would allow concepts that influenced Momoyama tea wares such as imperfection and *wabi sabi* (the taste for the simple rustic and quiet) to be manifest in his works. A clear understanding of Tōyō's process even permits us to identify when viewing Tōyō's finished wares, which pieces of a kiln load, at the point of preparing to load the kiln, Tōyō considered to be his most successful attempts at creating his ideal target Bizen Momoyama style tea wares.

### 2. Side by Side Comparisons of Momoyama Bizen and Tōyō Bizen with Consideration of Technique and Process

In this section side by side comparisons between Momoyama Bizen and Kaneshige Tōyō Bizen wares with consideration of technique and process are made in order to consider the elements of Momoyama Bizen in Tōyō's work, differences between Tōyō's recreations and the originals and elements of chance and copying. Some of Tōyō's techniques for selecting pieces, loading and firing the kiln so as to obtain Momoyama Bizen ware like qualities will also be considered, as they are interrelated with one another and are enlightening as to the role of chance and copying in Tōyō's work.

Hayashiya Seizō 林屋清三 defines the most important works of Kaneshige Tōyō:

It can be said that the most important works of Tōyō are *hanaire* 花入 (flower vase), *mizusashi* 水指 (fresh water container), and *tokkuri* 德利 (sake flask), *guinomi* 酒呑 (sake cup). (omitted) It was in his *hanaire*, *mizusashi*, and *tokkuri* that Tōyō was able to fully manifest his power.

It can be said that *hanaire*, *mizusashi*, *kensui* 建水 (waste water container), were the main accomplishments from the late Muromachi through the Momoyama and into the early Edo periods, what is called *ko-Bizen* 古備前 (old Bizen [approx. from end of Heian to end of Momoyama]). Accordingly, it can be inferred that, from the time when Tōyō first aspired to reproduce *ko-Bizen* he paid special attention to *hanaire* and *mizusashi*, as he was striving, making every effort, to approach Momoyama Bizen.<sup>1</sup>

When compared side by side it becomes readily apparent, how carefully Tōyō emulated both overall shapes and various individual elements of Momoyama Bizen. Space does not permit Momoyama-Tōyō comparison and discussion of all forms, firings and techniques, but the following will be addressed in this paper:

#### Side by side comparisons of wares:

As stipulated in the above excerpt from an article by Hayashiya Seizō:

-*Hanaire* and *mizusashi*, flower vases and fresh water containers which show spontaneity and improvisation.

-*Tokkuri*, flasks for drinking sake of which there are many well-known Momoyama era examples.

Along with those stipulated as being important by Hayashiya Seizō, an example of a more utilitarian form that was less improvised in the Momoyama period:

- *ōzara* 大皿 (large plate), referred to as *ōhirabachi* 大平鉢 by Tōyō, and the *hidasuki* 緋襷 (red marks create by wrapping wares in rice straw before loading) firing used for many *ōzara*.

#### Because Momoyama Bizen consist not only of form but of various elements such as the clay, firing, tactile sensation, etc., some individual elements will be considered:

-Similarity of Momoyama era Bizen and Tōyō's clay.

-Tōyō's *yōhen* 窯変 (rare black/blue ash coating) and *kasegoma* かせごま (rare moss green ash coating) firings.

-*Teire* 手入れ the post firing process Tōyō implemented to impart the “proper” tactile sensation to the wares.

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<sup>1</sup> Hayashiya. 1981. p. 94.

2.1. Momoyama Era and Tōyō's *hanaire* and *mizusashi*

Figure 1.

- a. *Bizen sankaku hanaire* 備前三角花入 (Bizen triangular flower vase), Momoyama 16/17 c., H. 25.9 cm.  
 b. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *sankaku ruiza hanaire* 三角播座花入 (triangular flower vase with small attachments), 1955, Bizen ware, H. 24.1 cm.  
 c. *Mimitsuki tabimakura hanaike* 耳付旅枕花生 (travler's pillow flower vase with ears), Momoyama 16/17 c., Bizen ware, H. 22.2 cm.  
 d. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *bizen mimitsuki mizusashi* 耳付水指 (Bizen eared fresh water container) , 1957, H. 21.7 cm.  
 e. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *Sankaku ruiza hanaire* 三角播座花入 (triangular flower vase with small attachments), 1955-56, Bizen ware, H. 26 cm.

Two Momoyama Bizen *hanaire* examples, two Tōyō *hanaire* examples and one Tōyō *mizusashi* example are shown in figure 1. All five forms include some improvisation such as deformation during or after throwing, freely carved *hera* 篋 (bamboo, wood, metal, tool for carving or making lines, trimming, etc.) lines, interesting, nonsymmetrical attachment of ears, etc. The similarity between the two triangular forms (Figs. 1a, 1b) and similarity between the two eared forms (Figs. 1c, 1d) is readily visible. The form of Tōyō's vase on the far right (fig. 1e) appears to have been quite freely thrown, without attempting to concisely imitate any one existing example of Momoyama Bizen. These examples demonstrate both how diligently Tōyō studied Momoyama Bizen in an attempt to reproduce it, and also how Tōyō was creative and improvised resulting in uniquely Tōyō renditions. In one glance the Momoyama examples appear magnanimous; they have a great sense of presence, and appear solid, massive and majestic, somewhat imposing, while Tōyō's have what is often termed in Japanese as a noble quality 品の良い (refined, dignified, with a sense of finesse) and excellent Tōyō-Momoyama style firing results.

In the example of the original Momoyama triangular vase shown here (Fig. 1a), the Momoyama original seems to have been made effortlessly and spontaneously. The form is majestic, the foot portion is firm and stable, the depressed triangular torso seems soft but the triangular corners have a powerful looking firmness, the head is not round but angled and freely formed. All of this is accented by fluid *hera* marks. Tōyō has attempted to stay close to the original Momoyama triangular vase dimensions from the point where he was throwing the cylinder and creating the head and torso, etc. The final outcome at the leather-hard state, however, must not have been balanced correctly or be interesting enough, forcing him to improvise by shaving the surface at the very end (Fig. 1b).

When a form nearing the finished state is satisfactory very little needs to be added, for example, a few *hera* marks to add balance and interest, and some manipulation of form in the half dry state. But Tōyō has improvised radically by shaving all surfaces of the final form in the leather hard stage and adding small attachments to accent the corners. The *kasegoma* firing, while not an attempt at mimicking the original exactly, presents a somewhat similar air. Hayashiya Seizō critiques the vase as follows:

Tōyō was trained as a figurine maker but among the tea wares he made the *sankaku ruiza hanaire* 三角播座花入 (triangular flower vase with small attachments), has been made freely to his heart's content (in contrast to the sharp precision of figurines). After initially being formed on the wheel, it was formed into a triangle and shaved with a *hera* to adjust the form. It is a representative work from 1953-54. It is overflowing with power but, is it that the Bizen clay is unsuited for such shaving or is it that it makes one feel it is somewhat (overly) thin. Appraising this sort of Tōyō's wares, Imaizumi Atsuo 今泉篤男 once said "Tōyō goes too far." (Omitted) At the time it was made, however, it got a high evaluation as one of Tōyō's new works.<sup>2</sup>

Tōyō's form, while being a masterpiece among post WWII Bizen examples, falls short of the relaxed, magnanimous atmosphere of the Momoyama original, however, it is a post war Tōyō classic with a refined and dignified without stiffness or pretentiousness quality inherent to Tōyō's works. While Tōyō's triangular *hanaire* in figure 1b attempts to adhere closely to the original Momoyama form, the triangular *hanaire* on the far right (Fig. 1e), while utilizing the same basic form elements as the Momoyama triangular *hanaire*, i.e. it has a head, neck, torso, line defining the foot, basic triangular shape, etc., is freely improvised from the start of throwing, without attempting to precisely copy the Momoyama Bizen form. The head is angular as the original, but is larger and freely undulating and seems as though it were inflated from the inside. It is markedly distorted and off center, one side noticeably projecting in the photo. The neck appears strong and fluid. The body is loosely formed into a triangle with "*ruiza*" attachments and a wavy line added to strengthen the shoulder. The line defining the foot is strongly and freely executed, slight imperfections in the foot add some animation. One gets the impression that there has been no attempt to fully control the piece at any point during the creation, rather, Tōyō has improvised according to the opportunities presented by an imperfect cylinder, loosely thrown from the beginning, perhaps approaching more, the atmosphere of the originals.

Various elements can be understood to have been studied and reproduced in the comparison of Tōyō's *mizusashi* and the eared vessels next to it (Figs. 1c, 1d). In particular the ears have a very similar shape and apparent softness, the vertical *hera* lines have a similar slight "S" curve, length and depth. The horizontal line near the broken lip of the Momoyama vessel bears great resemblance to Tōyō's horizontal line. Judging from the slip markings on the pieces, the wheel seems to have been turning at a similar rate. The firings appear at first to be quite different, however, both have been placed in the kiln at a position where embers would flow diagonally across the torso of the piece. Tōyō's firing has been controlled so that it was not overfired resulting in the retention of the non-reflective mat surface of the clay, with deep orange red and moss green to set off the black-blue ember ash *yōhen* coating. The Momoyama piece has been fired to a point where the surface has become shiny and begun to vitrify (on

<sup>2</sup> Hayashiya. 1996. p. 14-15.

the verge of being slightly overfired). In such a giant kiln precise localized control of the temperature, etc, would have been very difficult.

Uenishi Setsuo 上西節雄 critiques Toyo's *mizusashi* as follows:

It can be said that Tōyō completely devoted himself, was confident, and attained excellent results in the field of *mizusashi* and *hanaire*, which have been regarded as representative varieties of Bizen ware since the era of ko-Bizen. Among Tōyō's *yahazuguchi mizusashi* 矢筈口水指 (*mizusashi* with “arrow nock” style of neck/mouth region) on display the ears are all superbly skillfully executed, hermae also superb, and they approach the atmosphere of ko-Bizen. (omitted) We can be confident that they will remain (as important masterpieces) in “Tōyō Bizen history.”<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting that Tōyō was able to create such masterpieces 400 years after the Momoyama era. Tōyō's *hanaire* and *mizusashi* do embody much of the atmosphere that the Momoyama originals behold, but with a crispness, a stoutness, that is not infringing on a basic loose improvised quality. This special Tōyō atmosphere is probably in part, a result of his long years of being a master figurine maker before changing to the wheel in his late 30s, and also his perceptiveness of qualities such as imperfection, *wabi sabi* embodied in Momoyama Bizen ware and other Momoyama wares.

## 2.2 Momoyama Era and Tōyō's *tokkuri* with Consideration of Another Shōwa Era Bizen Potter

There are a great many variations in form and size among of the Momoyama era *tokkuri*. The Momoyama *tokkuri* in figure 2a is a somewhat typical example of a smaller *tokkuri* that has been formed in a relaxed fashion. The trunk has obviously deformed during the throwing of the piece with no attempt made to correct it, shoulders gently rounded, and neck-lip section also nonchalantly formed and slightly off center. Such savor of imperfectness in throwing or clay is fairly common among Momoyama tea wares. Such examples of *hidasuki* were given high esteem so it is probable that this *tokkuri* was a preferred piece before being wrapped with rice straw (for the *hidasuki* markings), and loaded into the kiln.

Tōyō made a great number of *tokkuri* and improvised on the forms during both the throwing and trimming stages, allowing imperfections to remain and become part of the piece's aesthetic statement. Tōyō's *bizen henko tokkuri* 備前扁壺德利 (Bizen *henko* sake flask [shape altered by hand]) in figure 2b is a good example of Tōyō's allowing imperfections such as the uneven lip, wet slip (liquified clay with the consistency of cream) marks from altering the shape with palms and fingers just after forming, and other imperfections to remain (Tōyō did not attempt to even the lip by cutting the uneven part or wipe the slip palm or finger marks off) and become part of the composition, dictating how the piece would be trimmed a day or two later to create a finished composition. The form would have been thrown in an overall roundish shape, and immediately after being thrown coaxed into a loose diamond shape (from top view) with the palms of Tōyō's hands. The shape would be further coaxed into form with hands after about a day and then trimmed after one or two days when sufficiently stiff in a leather hard state.

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<sup>3</sup> Uenishi. 1996. p. 113.

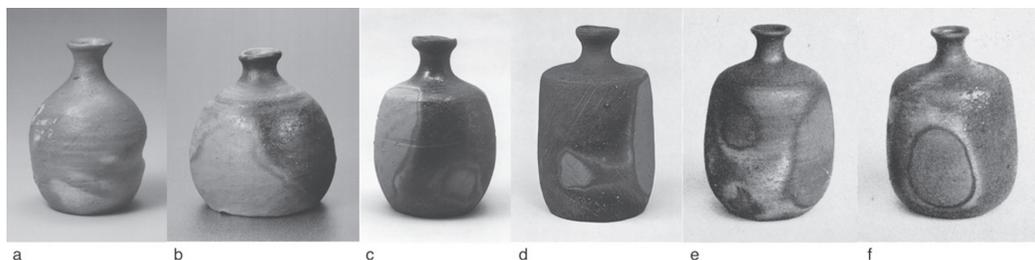


Figure 2.

- a. *Hidasuki tokkuri* 緋襷德利 (sake flask with *hidasuki* markings). Momoyama 16/17 c., Bizen ware, H. 11.9 cm.
- b. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *bizen henko tokkuri* 備前扁壺德利 (Bizen *henko* sake flask [shape altered by hand, looking from the top somewhat diamond shaped]). 1964-65, H. 10.6 cm.
- c. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *tokkuri* 德利 (sake flask). 1964, Bizen ware, H. 12.6 cm.
- d. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *tokkuri* 德利 (sake flask). 1963-64, Bizen ware, H. 12.8 cm.
- e. Yamamoto Tōshū 山本陶秀, *tokkuri* 德利 (Bizen sake flask). 1968. Bizen ware.
- f. Yamamoto Tōshū 山本陶秀, *tokkuri* 德利 (Bizen sake flask). 1969. Bizen ware.

Such altering of forms into squarish, diamond, triangular or other forms and the incorporation of unintended imperfections and or the creation of imperfections is seen in many Momoyama Bizen wares. Tōyō has improvised on a standard form, letting unintended imperfections such as the lip becoming bumpy and uneven upon being collared (narrowing of neck section) and formed remain as is, and also created imperfection such as leaving the wet slip palm marks and slight unevenness at the very bottom when he trimmed the *tokkuri*.

When three *tokkuri* that Tōyō made between 1963-65 are viewed side by side (Figs. 2b-d), Tōyō's skill at and conviction of not forcing, to be "compliant to clay, compliant to fire,"<sup>4</sup> is evident. In all three *tokkuri* Tōyō has left some imperfection in the original thrown form, particularly the uneven lip or not quite balanced or sharp enough shoulder section and trimmed the form spontaneously when the piece had dried to a leather hard state to set off the imperfection, to utilize the imperfection to good aesthetic effect. Michiaki Kaneshige told the author when he was apprentice not to overly touch the clay when throwing or trimming, not to overdo it or force it. This philosophy and atmosphere can be seen and felt in Tōyō's *tokkuri*. Every piece is varied and improvised, and also loaded into the kiln with thought to further accentuate the peculiarities of each form.

For comparison purposes two of Tōyō's contemporary, Yamamoto Tōshū's 山本陶秀 (1906-1994) *tokkuri* are shown in figures 4e-f. Yamamoto Tōshū began making ceramics in 1921, and worked as a *shokunin* 職人 (here the meaning is a craftsman employed by the owner of a small ceramics producing workplace) at first, so he was trained to be an extremely accurate, skillful thrower who could reproduce the same form over and over again. The similarity between Tōshū's *tokkuri* made in 1968 and the one made in 1969 demonstrates this. Tōyō, on the other hand, started throwing pots later in his life, without making all the repetitions of one shape as a *shokunin* would have had to do. Tōyō began the wheel late however

<sup>4</sup> Matsuoka, (ed.). 1968. p. 102.

he had developed a sharp eye for balance, accent, composition through his long years of making figurines. This is visible in the *tokkuri* Tōyō created.

A dimension of Tōyō's wheel throwing was that he did not intend to, and/or could not make the exact same form every time resulting in improvisation during the trimming process. Many Momoyama Bizen wares were also improvised creations. Elements such as imperfect throwing wheels may have also played a role in the imperfection in throwing and need to compensate during the trimming. It is probable that the pottery wheels that Momoyama potters used were not all perfectly centered, or were slightly off center from continued use, requiring maintenance periodically. Such allowance for imperfection during the initial forming and Tōyō's sense of composition developed through years of figurine making contributed greatly to his success with Momoyama style wares.

### 2.3 Momoyama Era and Tōyō's *ōzara*, and *hidasuki*

The style of *hanaire* shown in figures 1a-e, which were created from the beginning to be used for the tea ceremony are greatly improvised with various *hera* lines, ear location and shape, spontaneous improvisation in throwing and trimming etc., and Tōyō's renditions are also improvised. The Momoyama example shown here (Fig. 3a), an *ōzara* 大皿 (large plate), is a more utilitarian piece and less improvised. Tōyō's renditions are also, true to the Momoyama originals, less improvised.

There are numerous examples of Momoyama *ōzara* similar to the one pictured in figure 3a. It beholds a grand but somber air of solidness. The colors reserved and unflashy. It is fired in the *hidasuki* style in which, rice straw is placed between stacked wares or wrapped around wares put inside other larger wares during the kiln loading process, resulting in a chemical reaction between the rice straw and clay which leaves red marks roughly mirroring the form of the rice straw. The example of Tōyō's *ōzara* (Tōyō has labeled his version of the *ōzara* as *ōhirabachi* 大平鉢 [different name "large wide bowl" for the same shape] in pamphlets, etc., but the author will use the term *ōzara* in the text to avoid confusion) pictured here (Fig. 3b) has a similar air to the Momoyama example, simple in design, displaying to best effect, the character of the clay and the red *hidasuki* effect. Tōyō's clay is probably slightly different, perhaps a little more fine grained than the Momoyama example.



Figure 3.

- a. Bizen ware *bizen hidasuki ōzara* 備前緋襷大皿 (Bizen large dish with *hidasuki* markings). Momoyama 16/17 c., W. 47 cm.
- b. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *Bizen hidasuki ōhirabachi* 備前緋襷大平鉢 (Bizen large dish with *hidasuki* markings). 1957, W. 45.5 cm.
- c. Tōyō positioning of rice straw on *ōzara*. Frame grab.
- d. After placement Tōyō further tucking some of the rice straw under the rim of the *ōzara*. Frame grab.
- e. *tsutsu mizusashi* such as this one would have been wrapped in rice straw and placed inside containers such as the large *hibachi* shown. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *bizen hidasuki tsutsu mizusashi* 備前緋襷筒水指 (Bizen cylindrical fresh water container with *hidasuki* markings, 1959. H. 16.9 cm.
- f. *Chawan* placed upside down on *hanaire* with another small piece placed on the *chawan*. Rice straw can be seen between the pieces, which will result in the red *hidasuki* markings. Frame grab.

g. A *chawan* which had been fired as shown in image 3 f. The resulting red *hidasuki* marks on the inside of the *chawan* (mirroring the rice straw which had been placed between the top of the *hanaire* and inside of the *chawan*), well melted ash on the outside. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *bizen kutsu chawan* 備前沓茶碗 (Bizen tea bowl in the shape of a shoe), 1967, W. 13.0 cm.

The *ōzara*'s large simple surface area provides a perfect canvas with which to express the combination of the character of Tōyō's clay and the dynamic nature of his *hidasuki* firing, which he obtained in the *udo*. Tōyō can be seen inverting an *ōzara* and placing it on a large *hibachi* 火鉢 (brazier) in figures 3c-d.<sup>5</sup> The inverted technique can result in a vibrant *hidasuki* markings.

Scars can be seen on the Momoyama example in figure 3a, resulting from the stacking. Close examination of Tōyō's *ōzara* also reveals slight scars in similar locations to that of the Momoyama *ōzara* pictured. Tōyō's stacking technique was probably very similar to that used in the Momoyama kilns even though Tōyō's kiln was comparatively small. The stacking preparation by Tōyō to create *hidasuki* (a *hidasuki* enclosure) is illustrated in figures 3c-d and briefly explained as follows: Positioning of rice straw on *ōzara* (Fig. 3c). Placement and positioning of *ōzara* on a large *hibachi* (Fig. 3d). This creates a somewhat sealed fairly large container for smaller *hidasuki* wares (wares wrapped in rice straw can be seen already in place inside of the large *hibachi*). Smaller wares, such as the *tsutsu mizusashi* 筒水指 (cylindrical *mizusashi*) shown in figure 3e, would have been wrapped in rice straw and placed inside containers such as the large *hibachi* shown. In the frame grab images, several large *hibachi* with various wares loaded inside ready for placement of a large plate type of piece as a lid on top can be seen. With the lid on top the wares are ready to be loaded in the kiln.

Tōyō used the standard Momoyama Edo era (before use of kiln shelves) stacking technique placing rice straw between the wares (creating partial *hidasuki*, Fig. 3f<sup>6</sup>) in new inventive ways such as using *hidasuki* to make the inside of his tea bowls smoother so as not to damage the *chasen* 茶筌 (tea whisk) when tea was whisked. Tōyō explains the deficits in the Bizen *chawan* and how he devised a solution utilizing the *hidasuki* effect (Figs. 3f-g, Fig. 7. front top of *udo*):

The *chakin* 茶巾 (a small piece of cloth used to wipe the *chawan*) does not glide well (when wiping the *chawan*'s lip and also inside bottom of *chawan*), and when the tea is whisked, the *chasen* 茶筌 breaks because the bottom of the *chawan* is so rough. (omitted) First I thought of putting *chawan* upside down on a *hanaire* so that *goma* 胡麻 (brownish ash sometimes resembling sesame seeds deposited by the draft of the firing) would be deposited on the lip of the *chawan*. I fired the *mikomi* 見こみ (inside of a *chawan*) in red, by which I accented the *keshiki* 景色 (variations in surface color, texture, etc.). The red part of the inside was well fired by direct flames so that the surface was comparatively smooth and slick. The *goma* would help the *chakin* glide smoothly and make the touch to the lips pleasant. The red surface (on the inside) would permit the *chasen* to work smoothly. Furthermore, (the technique of) firing the

<sup>5</sup> Frame grabs from the Television broadcast, Jūyōmukeibunkazai, Bizenyaki, Kaneshige Tōyō. 1959. NHK.

<sup>6</sup> Frame grabs from the Television broadcast, Bizenyaki 備前焼, c 1965. Sanyō Eiga Kabushikigaisha

*chawan* upside down (on a *hanaire*) the *hidasuki* would add to the attractiveness.<sup>7</sup>

Tōyō adopted and improvised on the traditional Bizen ware *hidasuki* technique, and gradually refined application to the requirements of a modern-day artist holding exhibitions.

Edward S. Morse notes in his description of *hidasuki*, “a Japanese authority in 1700 says that the best forms of among the old Bizen, and those most esteemed, are *hidasuke* (*hidasuki*).”<sup>8</sup> It is notable that the *hidasuki* rice straw pattern often excels on plainer simpler forms such as the *ōzara* and also the *tsutsu mizusashi* pictured in figure 3e. It would be the simpler forms that Tōyō would seek as a new direction for his Bizen ware late in his career.

### 3. Momoyama Era and Tōyō's Clay

Tōyō used a special paddy clay called *hiyose* ひよせ. The difference between or similarity of the clay Tōyō used to that used in the Momoyama Bizen era and what clay was used in the Momoyama era are interesting topics, even though, since clays were mixed to obtain the desired qualities, and varied according to size and type of form, individual workshop and preferences, there may be no cut and dried answer. The clay used in the Kamakura period (kilns located in the hills around Inbe) tended to be coarser mountain clay. In the Muromachi period kilns moved down to the foot of the mountain nearer the rice paddies, and from the end of the Muromachi period through the Momoyama period, and into the Edo period giant *ōgama* 大窯 kilns were fired, also located at the foot of the mountains.

As for the clay that was used in the Momoyama period in Bizen, there are various viewpoints. Historian Uenishi Setsuo has commented that he feels that rice was too valuable at that time for a sudden change to paddy clay to take place nearing the end of the Muromachi period<sup>9</sup>, Kaneshige Makoto 金重愨 has noted that Tōyō's clay and Momoyama clays were different<sup>10</sup>, and Kaneshige Kōsuke 金重晃介 has reflected on how a certain Momoyama *chaire* is in fact paddy clay but slightly different from Tōyō's<sup>11</sup>.

In a 1942 group interview, Tōyō reveals that there are some local opinions that Mountain clay was used “long ago” and explains about his clay research and reveals that he discovered a mountain clay that was, when fired, extremely similar to Momoyama Bizen:

I was carrying out research about clay that would further capture the essence of ko-Bizen, when an old timer told me that pottery clay had been dug at the back of a lake to the north-east of Inbe in old times. I immediately (went there and) dug that area. I discovered a layer of fine quality clay that was from one shaku to four or five sun thick. I used that clay “as is” without putting it through a sieve and fired it. The pots made with that clay turned out to have the same qualities and really look like ko-Bizen.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Matsuoka, (ed.). 1968. p. 116-117.

<sup>8</sup> Morse. 1979 (original 1901). p. 54.

<sup>9</sup> Uenishi. 2012. Interview.

<sup>10</sup> Kaneshige Kōsuke, Kaneshige Makoto. 2017. p. 86.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.* p. 86. Image of *chaire* on same page, *hidasuki chaire* 緋襷茶入 name Raijin 銘雷神, Hayashibara Museum collection.

<sup>12</sup> Kaneshige. 1942. p. 31-32. Kaneshige Tōyō in a group interview. P. 30.

Reviewing the following excerpt from an interview with Morioka Michiko 森岡三知子 suggests that there were some opinions (some people must have told Morioka) that mountain clay had been used in the Momoyama period (at least in part), but was completely used up, for that reason, Tōyō sought to find an extraordinary paddy clay that would excel at reproducing Momoyama Bizen like qualities:

Tōyō used *suihi tsuchi* (clay processed by floatation [removes all rocks]) for his figurines but that would not be appropriate for Momoyama style wares. He thought that he needed clay similar to that used for the Momoyama wares. The Momoyama wares were mountain clay but that clay had been mined and used up. So, he used clay from the rice paddy.<sup>13</sup>

J. B. Blunk, Kaneshige Tōyō's first American apprentice, told the author that Tōyō had told him that he searched the rice paddies for what would be for him the perfect clay to make Momoyama style wares and found it.<sup>14</sup>

The photos in figures 4a-b compare side by side, the appearance of the surface of two pieces of Bizen ware which have a similar firing result and the surface is clearly visible (without a heavy ash coating). The *chaire* (tea caddy) in figure 4a is a Momoyama period piece, and the *hisago tokkuri* 瓢德利 (gourd shaped sake flask) in figure 4b was made by Kaneshige Tōyō.

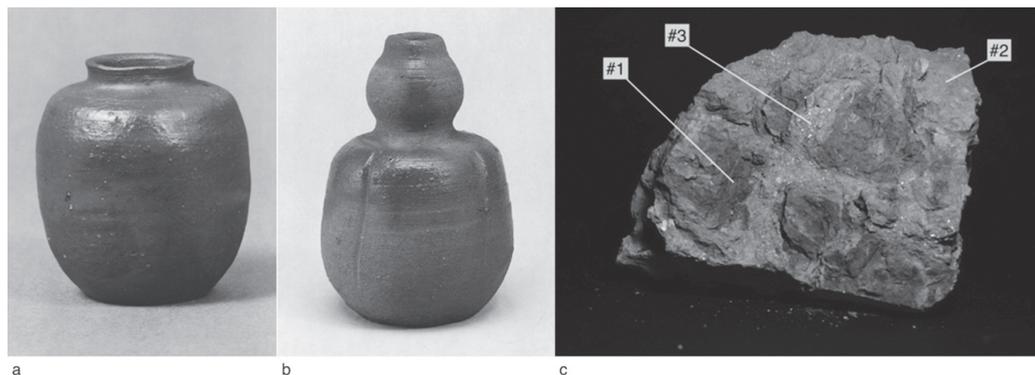


Figure 4.

- a. *hidasuki katatsuki chaire* 緋襷肩衝茶入 (hidasuki shouldered tea caddy). Momoyama 16/17 c., Bizen ware, H. 8 cm.
- b. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *hidasuki hisago tokkuri* 緋襷瓢德利 (*hidasuki* gourd shaped sake flask). 1952, Bizen ware, H. 13.0 cm.
- c. A section of *hiyose* clay from Inbe which is similar to the clay that Tōyō used. Tōyō separated his *hiyose* clay into three grades called *ichiban* (number 1) very fine, *niban* (number 2) containing a little fine sand or soft rocks, and *sanban* (number 3) coarser clay containing more sand and rocks, as shown in the image. The labels in the image are only meant to give the reader an idea of how Tōyō separated his

<sup>13</sup> Morioka. 2016. interview.

<sup>14</sup> The author spent three days with J. B. Blunk when author was apprentice to Kaneshige Michiaki during the last year of apprenticeship. Blunk returned to Inbe and spent three days with the Kaneshiges during which time Blunk was often in the workshop chatting with the author about Tōyō and Blunk's apprenticeship experience.

clay. The clay must be further dissected before one can be sure of the fineness (sometimes a very fine-grained looking section turns out to contain sand or rocks). Samples of clay vary and some contain little *ichiban* but much *niban*, while others may contain mostly *sanban*, etc. Clay processing can be adjusted according to the variations in the samples and requirements for the type of wares to be made).

The reddish (by the *hidasuki* reaction with rice straw) central area of these two pieces (4a-b) looks similar. The size and distribution of minute sand and small rocks is similar, and some slip can be seen on the surface. This example of a Momoyama piece appears very slightly of finer clay than this example of Tōyō's, however, the author has seen and held many examples of Tōyō's wares that are made of equally fine or finer clay.

Similarly, both clays give some impression of having depth. The surface does not appear one dimensional; the sand and rocks under the immediate surface of the piece creating a bumpiness, rocks and sand protruding slightly, existence of slip on the surface, with part of the surface turned a vermilion red by the chemical reaction with rice straw, create movement and depth over the surface of the piece. The neck and lip portion of the Momoyama *chaire* can be seen to have buckled slightly upon narrowing of the neck lip, resisting constriction and resulting in an interesting lip section. Unevenness in the lip of Tōyō's *hisago tokkuri* is also evident.

As Morioka reflected, it was thought that at least in part, mountain clay was used for Momoyama Bizen, but there was no more, so Tōyō searched for a rice paddy clay that would excel. Tōyō's experiments with a certain Mountain clay that was rumored to have been used long ago did give results similar to Momoyama Bizen, but Tōyō did not particularly continue searching for various mountain clays. Blunk's overall description of Tōyō's search for clay (told the author when he met Blunk), based on what Tōyō had told him suggests that Tōyō pretty much knew what he was looking for, searched the rice paddies, and found it; a clay that Tōyō could be very attracted to, closely bond with, and would exhibit superb Momoyama Bizen like qualities. Tōyō used it and obtained superior results.

### 3.1 Tōyō's Clay Processing Technique

Of great importance is that Tōyō separated his *hiyose* clay into three grades called *ichiban* (number 1), *niban* (number 2), and *sanban* (number 3), (Fig. 4c) as follows : The *hiyose* clay that Tōyō used exhibits marbling: Some parts are black or purplish colored very fine clay, which somewhat resembles the appearance of chocolate. These very fine parts are surrounded by more greyish or tannish colored somewhat sandy/soft sand containing sections.<sup>15</sup> There are some extremely sandy/rocky sections usually on the outskirts of the layer of clay (generally about a 30 cm thick layer) that had been dug. The clay was placed on a brick and separated with a *tonkachi* (hammer with one flat end for pounding and one pointed end for picking etc.) hammer tool into the three grades: number one, fine chocolate clay; number two, clay with some sand and soft rocks; and number three, rougher clay with much sand and rocks.<sup>16</sup> The three grades of clay are processed separately. *Ichiban* is said to have been Tōyō's preferred grade.

## 4. Tōyō Obtained Momoyama Like Firing Results with a Small *noborigama* 登り窯 (Chambered Kiln)

50-meter Long *ōgama* 大窯 (Giant Tunnel Kiln) Were Used in the Momoyama Era

<sup>15</sup> Based on Michiaki Kaneshige's method.

<sup>16</sup> Based on Kaneshige Michiaki's method.

That Tōyō had great admiration for the Momoyama Bizen firing results and sought to emulate them can be deduced from his own firing results, which greatly resemble Momoyama Bizen. Tōyō obtained specialized natural ash coatings and *hidasuki*, that occurred in certain parts of his kiln by experimenting and developing opportunities that presented themselves when he would load the kiln and fire it. Tōyō was able to obtain consistent results in a small compact *noborigama* (Fig. 5b) that resembled Momoyama Bizen ware examples that had been fired in a giant 50-meter-long *ōgama* (giant tunnel kiln) (Fig. 5a) some 400 years prior.



Figure 5.

- a. *Inbe minami ōgama no higashi kama ato* 伊部南大窯の東窯跡 (east kiln ruin of the south giant kiln archeological site in Inbe). Late Muromachi 16 c. - late Edo 19 c.. Width approx. 5 meters x length approx. 54 meters. Fired for 30-50 days using approx. 200 tons of firewood.<sup>1</sup> Note the three people standing near the front and along the sides further towards the back of the kiln to give an idea of its hugeness (note, ceiling has collapsed long ago).
- b. Kaneshige Tōyō's smaller *noborigama* 登り窯 (chambered kiln) constructed in about 1961<sup>1</sup>, inside diameter approx. 1.5 meters x overall length approx. 5-6 meters. Fired for approx. 6 days, approx. 600 bundles of firewood (1 bundle length 60 cm x diameter approx. 20 cm)<sup>1</sup>, fired approx. 3 times a year (Tōyō's previous larger kiln had been fire approx. once every 1- 1.5 years). Frame grab.

Tōyō stated his admiration for the huge Momoyama kilns and stated that he would like to have one in a 1942 group interview he participated in. He very simply and elegantly explains the advantages of a bigger kiln in terms of firing results:

(omitted) ...to fire an *ōgama* once a year, there could be nothing better than that for us (Bizen potters), but if we did that, suddenly our livelihoods would be in peril. Recently the *kamamoto(s)* 窯元 (kilns with one owner and many workers) have also started firing small kilns in more rapid succession. (omitted) When you fire a big kiln slowly the result is wares with a soft, deep atmosphere, and on the contrary, when you fire a small kiln quickly the result

is wares with a rougher, severe, harsh atmosphere. I have been thinking that, if it is possible in the future, I would like to make an *ōgama* similar to those used long ago fired with 20,000 to 30,000 bundles of wood slowly for one or two months. (Kaneshige Michiaki used about 600 bundles to fire his small *noborigama* kiln for about 6 days).<sup>17</sup>

Tōyō's affection for and admiration of those giant Momoyama kilns is clearly evident, as is his realization that if the potters went in the direction of increasing the kiln size their "livelihoods would be in peril." Rather, Tōyō went in the opposite direction, recognizing the need for an artist potter, who was holding exhibitions frequently, to fire a smaller kiln more often in order to advance, steadily creating fresh new works.

#### 4.1 Tōyō's *yōhen* and *kasegoma* Firing



Figure 6.

- a. *Kasegoma* かせごま (like) firing. *Bizen tokkuri* 備前徳利 銘年わすれ (Bizen sake flask, name "Toshiwasure"), Momoyama 16/17 c., H. 15.7. cm.
- b. *Kasegoma* かせごま firing. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *bizen tsurukubi tokkuri* 備前鶴首徳利 (Bizen crane necked sake flask), 1951, H. 16.9. cm.
- c. *Yōhen* 窯変 firing. *bizen mimitsuki hanaire* 備前耳付花入 銘福耳 (Bizen flower vase with ears, name "Fukumimi"), Momoyama 16/17 c., H. 26.0 cm.
- d. *Yōhen* 窯変 firing. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *bizen mimitsuki hanaire* 備前耳付花入 (Bizen flower vase with ears), 1942-43, H. 23.1 cm.

Tōyō would select the most superior *hanaire*, *mizusashi*, *chaire*, *tokkuri*, and *guinomi*, *tatakizara* タタキ皿 (plate made by pounding method), *hachi*, and sometimes other forms he made and carefully place them in the limited space in the part of the kiln where the rarer *kasegoma* and *yōhen* can be created. Thus, if any given piece of Tōyō's has a rare ash coating that can be obtainable only in those special limited spaces, that piece can be accurately judged to have been judged by Tōyō to be an outstanding

<sup>17</sup> Kaneshige. 1942. p. 31-32. Kaneshige Tōyō In a group interview.

example from the production span preceding the firing.<sup>18</sup>

While the previously described *hidasuki* is a case of Tōyō using a technique used in the Momoyama era basically without altering it much but using it in creative new ways, the following explanation of Tōyō's technique for creating *yōhen*, a rare black ash coating firing (Fig. 6d) and *kasegoma* a rare moss green ash coating (Fig. 6b), which look similar to some Momoyama examples of *yōhen* (Fig. 6c) and *kasegoma* (Fig. 6a), demonstrates that, quite to the opposite, Tōyō experimented and obtained *kasegoma* and combination *kasegoma-yohen* firings utilizing the *suana* and *suana-ichiban* exit (narrow flue between the *udo* and *ichiban* [*ichiban* is the chamber next to *udo*] chambers); a part of the *noborigama* that does not exist on an *ōgama* or *anagama*. Different technique was created by Tōyō to obtain results similar to Momoyama era wares in a compact *noborigama*.

The following is a description of Tōyō's process for obtaining those specialized ash coatings called *kasegoma* and *yōhen* in the *ichiban-suana himichi* (*himichi* explained below) section of his kiln.<sup>19</sup> Tōyō did not attempt to recreate the giant Momoyama *ōgama* kilns or attempt a precise copy of that process, rather, through experimentation and experience he created new techniques that allowed him to obtain similar results with great consistency in his comparatively small *noborigama*, developing a work cycle allowing the elements of chance and imperfection to be incorporated in a controlled fashion to great advantage. The author will demonstrate this by describing elements of loading and firing of the *suana*, *ichiban himichi* section of Tōyō's kiln.

During the wheel throwing process, because every piece (or most pieces) involved some spontaneity some would turn out more to Tōyō's liking than others. Morioka Michiko describes Toyo's wheel throwing:

Tōyō wouldn't throw precisely or accurately, he would throw the form loosely...*bokko bokko bokko* (a lumpy or bumpy sound suggesting an off-centered or wavering somewhat bumpy form). Then he would get a concept for the form and depress one part or expand another section.<sup>20</sup>

Tōyō would make a series of each shape, for example, 10 *sankaku hanaire* (triangular vases), 10 *mimitsuki hanaire* (eared flower vases), 10 *tsutsu hanaire* (cylindrical flower vases), 10 *hisago hanaire* (gourd shaped flower vases), etc. Because the wheel throwing process involved some spontaneity some would turn out more to Tōyō's liking than others. Before the kiln loading Tōyō would select the best one or two pieces out of each category and load them into the best area in the kiln, namely, where *yōhen* (Fig. 6d), that Tōyō obtained by placing a pot in the *himichi* in the second chamber called *ichiban* (number one), or *kasegoma* (Fig. 6b), that Tōyō obtained by placing pieces in the *suana*, or a combination *yōhen-kasegoma* firing.

Tōyō would obtain the *yōhen* ash covering in the *ichiban himichi* (a narrow, approx. 20-centimeter-

<sup>18</sup> In Tōyō's age *hidasuki* was also rare, so some of his best pieces may also have been fired *hidasuki*. *Chawan* were selected and usually placed at the front of the kiln. Extremely large wares would not fit in the *ichiban suana ichiban himichi* section.

<sup>19</sup> The explanation of the process is according to the author's 3-year apprenticeship to Toyo's eldest son Kaneshige Michiaki, in what had been Tōyō's workshop.

<sup>20</sup> Morioka. 2016. Interview.

wide space between the front of the *ichiban* chamber and the kiln shelves (spanning from one side of the kiln to the other) that is left open so that the wood inserted through the fire holes located on either side of the front of the chamber has a place to burn). The *yōhen* wares are placed on the floor of the approx. 20-centimeter-wide *himichi* that spans from side to side of the *ichiban* chamber directly under the stoke holes and are buried in embers.

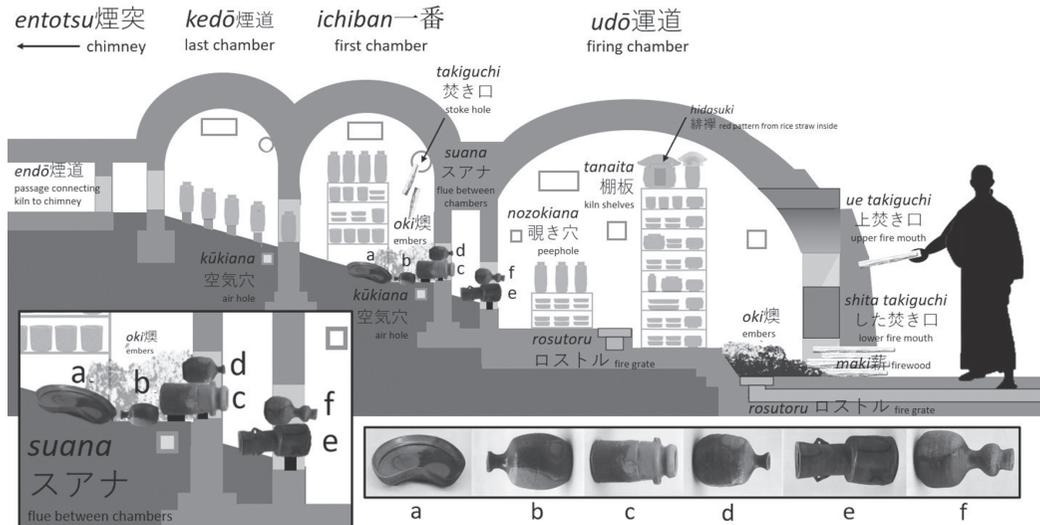


Figure 7.

Kiln diagram: Images left to right

- a. *Hantsukibachi* placed under *ichiban* chamber kiln shelves on top of sieved clay floor where embers can cover part of it. *Yōhen* firing, two *senbei* placed during kiln loading resulting in round red marks. (image in sketch slightly flattened to appear loaded under kiln shelves). Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *hantsukibachi* 半月鉢 (shallow bowl in the shape of a half-moon), 1966, Bizen ware, W. 34 cm.
- b. *Tokkuri* partially buried in sieved mountain clay floor of *ichiban* chamber where it is completely covered with embers during parts of firing. *Yōhen* firing. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *tokkuri* 德利 (sake flask). 1964, Bizen ware, H. 12.6 cm.
- c. *Mimitsuki hanaire* resting on two small bricks half in *suana* and half protruding into *ichiban himichi* where it will be covered by embers. *Yōhen* with top section of vase *kasegoma* firing. (In an actual case the ears of the *hanaire* would be slightly more horizontal). Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *mimitsuki hanaire* 耳付花入 (flower vase with ears), 1964, Bizen ware, H. 24.8 cm.
- d. *Tokkuri* that was placed on top of two side by side *hanaire* half in *suana* and half protruding into *ichiban himichi* (such as that in fig. 9 c). Places wares contacted one another resulted in orange markings. Combination *yōhen-kasegoma* firing. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *tokkuri* 德利 (sake flask). 1964, Bizen ware, H. 12.8 cm.
- e. *Mimitsuki hanaire* placed inside *suana*. *Kasegoma* firing. Marks result of contact with small bricks (*senbei* placed on top) and current of kiln (rounder portion towards front of kiln). Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *mimitsuki hanaire* 耳付花入 (flower vase with ears), 1960-61, Bizen ware, H. 24.3 cm

f. *hisago tokkuri* placed in *suana*. *Kasegoma* firing. Marks result of contact and blocking of current. Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, *hisago tokkuri* 瓢德利 (gourd shaped sake flask). 1953, Bizen ware, H. 13.2 cm.

For this reason, there is only a very small section of the kiln that can yield such wares. Tōyō also obtained *kasegoma* in the narrow tunnel passage connecting the *udo* and *ichiban*, which is referred to as the *suana*. Wares were not loaded in the *suana* before Tōyō experimented and developed a technique to carefully arrange wares in it resulting in the *kasegoma* ash effect. The *suana* passage is just in front of the *ichiban himichi*, so Tōyō would load some of his carefully selected (out of each series he made for the kiln) best *hanaire*, *mizusashi*, *tokkuri*, *guinomi*, *chaire*, etc., sideways half in the *suana* and half projecting into the *himichi*, resulting in a combination firing. As mentioned above, wares fired in this area (*suana*, *ichiban himichi*, or a combination) can be judged to have been what Tōyō judged to be superior examples from that production span for that firing (however, *chawan* were usually selected (Fig. 8d) and placed at the front of the kiln to obtain a well melted *goma* ash coating and some other specially selected *chawan*, that would be suitable, were wrapped with rice straw and placed in large wares in order to obtain the also rather rare in that era, *hidasuki* firing also at the front of the kiln).

A brief explanation about how the *himichi-suana* area of the kiln is loaded, so that *yōhen* and *kasegoma* can be created, is given below with consideration about the firing and result. The following explanation with sketches and images, renders the wares easily understandable and identifiable.

The main parts of the *suana*, *ichiban himichi* section of the kiln are visible in the diagram in figure 7, and examples of the type of ash coating obtained from the section are given in figures 7a-f (images are horizontal as the wares are loaded in this section of the kiln horizontally). 7e and 7f are placed at the entrance of the *suana* from the *udo* and inside the *suana*, where *kasegoma* is obtained (fig. 8c shows the loaded *suana* as viewed from the *udo*). 7b is placed in the *himichi* between the kiln shelves and the front of the *ichiban* chamber where *yōhen* is obtained. 7c and 7d are placed in the exit of the *suana*, where a combination of *kasegoma* and *yōhen* is obtained, and 7a is placed below the kiln shelves on the floor of the kiln, where flatter *hachi* or *sara* type wares can be loaded and be partly buried in embers.

The *tsurukubi tokkuri* in figure 6b and *sankaku ruiza hanaire* in figure 1b are *kasegoma*, and would have been placed in a similar location to the wares in figure 7e-f. The *mimitsuki hanaire* in figure 6d, three *tokkuri* pictured in figures 2b-d (the large lighter area on those three *tokkuri* where the clay is exposed would have been the part of the *tokkuri* buried in the sifted mountain clay floor of the *ichiban himichi*), and *Sankaku ruiza hanaire* in figure 1e, are *yōhen*, and would have been placed in a similar location to the *tokkuri* in figure 7b, (numbers 8, 7, 12 in Fig. 8). The *mimitsuki mizusashi* in figure 1d is half *kasegoma* half *yōhen*, and would have been placed standing right side up in a location similar to figures 7c-d. (number 5 in Fig. 8). The part of the wares pictured in figures 7a-f. that are inside of the *suana* fire to a matt moss green *kasegoma* color and texture. The part of the wares covered by the embers in the *ichiban himichi* area fire to a blackish *yōhen* color and rough texture on the upper side, sometimes smooth black/blue texture on the side facing downward. Comparison of the *suana*, *ichiban himichi* section of figure 7 and figure 8 will yield a more complete understanding.

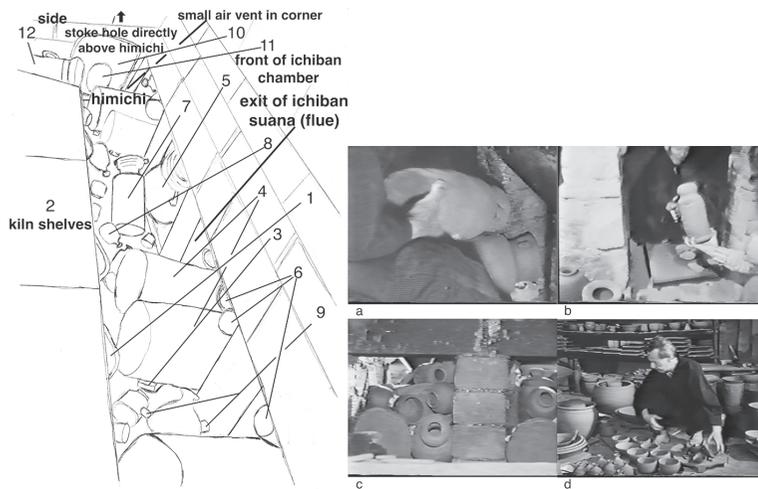


Figure 8.

Sketch by author of Tōyō style loading of wares in ichiban chamber *himichi* and *suana* based on author's apprenticeship experience.

- a. Tōyō loading a *hanaire* into the ichiban side of the *suana*. It will be placed parallel next to the *hanaire* already set with its upper portion in the *suana*. Frame grab.
- b. Assistant handing one of the pre-selected *hanaire* to Tōyō, who is in the *ichiban* chamber sitting on the kiln shelves loading the *ichiban suana* and *himichi*. Frame grab.
- c. Loaded *suana* as it appears from inside the *udo*. Left wall of the kiln visible on the left. Frame grab.
- d. Sorting *chawan* (selecting the best ones), and breaking the ones that Tōyō feels are inferior. Some *chawan* may be placed inside the large wares to obtain *hidasuki*. Frame grab.

A drawing by the author of how the *ichiban himichi* would have looked to Tōyō as he loaded is provided to help the reader visualize the process and the way the wares are actually loaded in the kiln (Fig. 8). Frame grabs from the video *Bizenyaki 備前焼* c. 1965 (Figs. 8a, 8b)<sup>21</sup> show Tōyō loading the *ichiban suana*. 8a shows Tōyō sitting on the kiln shelves (shelves not visible in 8a) loading a *hanaire* into the ichiban side of the *suana*. It will be placed parallel, next to the *hanaire* already set with its upper portion inside the *suana*. 8b shows an assistant handing one of the pre-selected *hanaire* to Tōyō, who is in the *ichiban* chamber sitting on the kiln shelves loading the *ichiban suana* and *himichi*. Some *senbei* (small clay disks) and small pieces of bricks are beside him. He would have also had a small container of *ginsha* (silica sand) with him.

The drawing approximates what Tōyō would have seen from a position close to that of Tōyō's in the frame grabs. After the *ichiban himichi* area is loaded the kiln shelves are further set and generally loaded with *shokki* 食器 (table ware) type wares to near the top of the *ichiban* chamber. The aim of firing the *ichiban* chamber is to obtain superior *himichi yōhen* results and the *himichi* section is fired with great technique and care so as to obtain successful results. The wares completely inside of the *suana* are affected by the *udo* firing, and care is taken not to overfire the *suana* when determining the timing of the finish of the *udo* firing (followed by the beginning of the next *ichiban* chamber firing).

<sup>21</sup> Frame grab: *Bizenyaki 備前焼*, c. 1965, Sanyō Eiga Kabushikigaisha 山陽映画株式会社.

The *himichi-suana* area of the kiln is loaded as follows (see Fig. 8):

First, in the *ichiban* chamber, posts that support the kiln shelves are set in a floor of dry sifted unfired mountain soil, and the *sara* type pieces such as *hachi* are loaded directly on the floor of the kiln (position 1 in diagram). Part of the *hachi* or *sara* can be seen protruding from under the kiln shelves in the diagram. *Senbei* are generally placed on top of these wares in order to create color and texture variation by hiding the surface of the pot from embers in a small area of the piece so that when the piece comes out of the kiln and the *senbei* is removed the clay in a small area of the finished product is exposed, as opposed to the surrounding area which would be covered with some amount of ash from being exposed to flame, smoke and embers, creating contrast and interest. After the *hachi*, *sara*, etc., are loaded on the bottom of the kiln in the position under the kiln shelves, the first level of kiln shelves (2 in the diagram) are placed on the posts that support them. This creates the *himichi* (labeled in the diagram), an approx. 20-centimeter-wide space between the front of the *ichiban* chamber and the front of the kiln shelves running from one side of the kiln to the other. Entering the kiln and sitting on this first level of kiln shelves, the *ichiban suana* and *himichi* are loaded with precision. The *udo suana* (entrance of the *udo* to *ichiban* connecting *suana*), and inside of the *suana* are loaded from inside of the *udo*. An apprentice or assistant would have handed the pre-selected pieces to Tōyō because of the limited space inside of the *ichiban* chamber (Fig. 8b).<sup>22</sup>

Tōyō can be seen loading *hanaire* in a horizontal position in the *ichiban suana* in the frame grab (Fig. 8a). Generally, *hanaire* are placed on a small piece of brick with a *senbei* and *ginsha* placed on the brick (3 in diagram). Tōyō can be seen placing the *hanaire* in the *ichiban suana* beside a *hanaire* resting on a brick with a *senbei* on it (Fig. 8a). Two *hanaire* (4 in diagram) or one *mizusashi* (5 in diagram) can be loaded in each of the four *ichiban suana* exit holes. After the *hanaire* and/or *mizusashi* are in place, smaller pieces such as *guinomi*, *tokkuri*, *chaire*, are carefully positioned on top of the *hanaire* (6 in diagram, *mizusashi* are generally too tall to place anything on top). Next, *hanaire*, *tokkuri*, *chaire*, *guinomi*, etc., are placed on the floor of the kiln some partially buried in the sieved mountain clay floor... creating dynamic contrast (7,8 in diagram). Many of the wares are secured in place using soft *senbei* clay covered with *shirahai* (white rice straw ash) (9 in diagram). Small balls of *senbei* clay covered with *shirahai* are inserted between two close pots resulting in a small marking (a small round area without ash on it). Sometimes a *tatakizara* is positioned leaning on the side of the kiln with a *senbei* propped up against it (10, 11 in diagram). A *hanaire* is sometimes placed on the side in the position shown (12 in diagram).

In *Kaneshige toyo hito to sakuhin*, Tōyō tells of how he created a new type of kiln when he was very young, but the first second and third attempts at firing it all failed, leaving him penniless.<sup>23</sup> Tōyō had to learn through diligence experimentation, and experience how to utilize such parts of the kiln as the *himichi-suana* section in order to obtain consistent results that were similar to Momoyama wares. Tōyō also had to invent some techniques, such as placing wares in the *suana* and creating combination *suana-himichi* types of firings.

*Kaneshige tōyō hito to sakuhin* further explains Tōyō's success with modifying the kiln in 1941:

<sup>22</sup> Frame grab: Bizenyaki 備前焼, c 1965, Sanyō Eiga Kabushikigaisha 山陽映画株式会社.

<sup>23</sup> Matsuoka (ed.). 1968. p. 103-104.

According to him (Tōyō), for nearly 40 days he meditated, sitting still, thinking on how to reform the kiln. The results were greatly successful: a kiln even better than he had imagined was completed. The potters in Bizen admired how wonderful that kiln was and even called it the "*himitsu shitsu* 秘密室 (secret room)." "I produced fine things in that 'secret room.' I have told them that they would not be able to understand that secret room, even though they were reborn two or three times; all the theories came from experience," said Tōyō, adding, "The kiln is the same as a human body; the reform of a single part will influence the total. The kiln cannot be changed carelessly."<sup>24</sup>

Tōyō does not specify the exact part of the kiln that he reformed but it is possible that the above quote is referring to the *suana ichiban himichi* area of the kiln, as Kuroda Kusaomi 黒田草臣 gives his interpretation in the following passage:

The Kaneshiges get a lot of excellent *kasegoma*. (omitted) One can feel to the utmost, *wabi, sabi* in these wares. The reason is in the *himitsu shitsu* (secret room). Kaneshige Tōyō reformed the kiln with the aim of obtaining *yōhen*, and in a way that wares could also be placed in the *suana*. Wares with wonderful (*kasegoma*) ash firing were obtained. It was rumored among the potters that "Tōyō's kiln seems to have a secret place" and before long it (*suana* created with a small room) came to be called "*himitsu shitsu*" (among the Bizen potters).<sup>25</sup>

The author has heard opinions to the effect, though, that Tōyō first placed a piece/pieces in the *suana* as a test and the results were good, so started to place wares in the *suana* and gradually refine his firing to obtain the desired *kasegoma* qualities, rather than create a specially structured *suana* in order to place wares in it. This is slightly different from Kuroda's explanation. Could it be possible that Tōyō could have altered the *suana/ichiban* area of the kiln with the aim of obtaining more or better black/blue *yōhen* firing in the *ichiban* chamber? More research on the subject is required before a clear answer is derived.

The subtleties of the loading and firing, and their effect on the result is further evidence that Tōyō's Bizen ware creation process was very controlled with some elements of chance in the throwing process intentionally created and then nurtured. With the separate chambers of the *noborigama*, small size of Tōyō's kiln, creation of a special loading process for sections such as the *himichi* and creative use of the *suana*, Tōyō would have had much more control than the Momoyama potters using a gigantic, one-huge-chamber, 50-meter-long tunnel kiln fired for 30-50 days (Tōyō's smaller *noborigama* was fired for about 6 days).

The results that Tōyō obtained are the outcome of a very deliberate and precise process. Later in life (around 1961) Tōyō reduced the size of the kiln so that he could fire more often, obtain results, and progress and evolve as an artist. The process Tōyō created in the making of series of somewhat freely formed shapes, selection of superior examples, and precise kiln loading and firing permitted the element of chance to exist and be capitalized on. Tōyō created the wares, selected the best wares out of those he

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.* p. 105.

<sup>25</sup> Kuroda. 2000. p. 206.

had made, loaded the kiln, and fired the kiln basically by himself with the help of apprentices or assistants. This total control of the process was a great advantage.

### 5. Consideration of Tactile Sensation (Feel) of Momoyama Bizen vs Tōyō Bizen

Kaneshige Tōyō occasionally mentions the feel (to the touch when being held or drunk from) of Bizen ware in literature however, neither he, nor other critics of Momoyama Bizen ware describe the feeling to the touch in any detail of various individual Momoyama Bizen ware pieces. The post firing process of *teire*, which was performed on all of Michiaki's wares, and most probably all of Tōyō's wares, in order to bestow them the proper feel is not mentioned much in comparison with other processes such as the making of forms or firing. The following is an example of Tōyō's conviction of the importance of the feel of Bizen ware:

When I take up a *guinomi* in my hand, first I enjoy the tactile sensation to the fingers, next the same to my lips, and then I leisurely savor the taste of the sake. (omitted) The criteria standard for good sake utensils may be that there are no drawbacks when one takes them into their hands. For instance, in the case of the *guinomi*, it is good when the contents flow into your mouth without any difficulty or displeasing sensation; it cannot be said to be very good if it troubles one's mind even a little in the manner of holding or the touch to one's lips when drinking.<sup>26</sup>

When Momoyama Bizen tea wares are touched or held, they generally impart a pleasant tactile sensation. It is not known, however, to what degree some sort of *teire* was performed on the wares, or if the pleasant tactile sensation of many of the wares is a result of solely 400 years of use and/or aging, or the combination of *teire* and aging. After the *teire* process, many of Kaneshige Michiaki's *chawan* would be used for about a month at tea time in the workshop to further improve the tactile sensation and look of the pieces, and they would noticeably improve with use. Because the tactile sensations of various Momoyama wares are not written about in detail, and cannot be judged from an image, the author cannot estimate the percentage of Momoyama tea wares that impart a pleasant sensation.

Tōyō's *yōhen* and *kasegoma* firings are rough and are covered with much ash, but at the beginning of the Shōwa era, when figurines were the central product and were made of very smooth clay processed by floatation, the wares were quite smooth and not covered with much ash. Tōyō may have had to have been more thorough in his employment of process than other Bizen potters. *teire* was a vital technique for Tōyō in his creating Momoyama style Bizen ware because, in any event, he could not wait for the 400-year aging process to take effect to sell his Bizen wares. The aspect of Tōyō's meticulousness is evident in Tōyō's stance that a *guinomi* "cannot be thought to be said very good if it troubles one's mind even a little in the manner of holding or the touch to one's lips."<sup>27</sup> This meticulous "sense of feel/touch to the lips (for drinking wares), stance, Tōyō applied to all of his tea wares.

### 6. Conclusion

In Kaneshige Tōyō's quest to create Momoyama style tea wares, Tōyō was meticulous with every facet

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<sup>26</sup> Matsuoka (ed.). 1968. p. 123-124.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.* p. 123-124.

of Momoyama Bizen, from clay, form, atmosphere and spontaneity firing to the weight and feel of the finished wares. Tōyō studied Momoyama Bizen, adsorbed and internalized the various elements, and created what would come to be considered as classic Kaneshige Tōyō modern day renditions of Momoyama Bizen.

Tōyō was influenced not only by the above-mentioned forms, materials and firings, but also by the imperfect, nonsymmetrical improvised chance related appearance of many Momoyama Bizen wares, and accordingly, greatly controlled the allowance for imperfections and non-symmetrical-warped elements to remain in his final forms as part of the aesthetic statement. The elements of chance have been created, controlled, and utilized by Tōyō to best advantage, as stated, using soft clay with imperfections that would have a tendency to deform on its own during throwing, imparting imperfection by throwing “bokko bokko” unevenly, throwing each attempt in a series of a given form very freely allowing improvisation, and then selecting the most successful attempts and carefully placing them in the *suana* and *ichiban himichi* in a way that would “encourage” the kiln to fire correctly (create paths for the current so that the kiln would fire more evenly) and result in markings created in the aesthetically correct places to further heighten the artistic statement of each piece. The sometimes, deformed non-symmetrical imperfect forms, the loading and firing process and result that may be fanaticized by users to be accidental, upon investigation reveals itself, in Tōyō’s case, to be very controlled along the many steps of the creation process.

Wares fired in the *suana*, *ichiban himichi*, or a combination can be judged to have been Tōyō’s specially chosen preferred examples from that production span for that firing (of the types of wares Tōyō loaded there [not *chawan*]). It can also be thought that, since there was limited area (inside sealed larger wares at the front of the kiln) where *hidasuki* could be obtained and the result is dynamic with the red *hidasuki* pattern and completely exposed (without ash) white clay surface highlighting Tōyō’s superb *tsuchiaji* (character of clay), that the *hidasuki* examples were also carefully selected before the kiln loading. These can also be thought of as to have been specially chosen preferred pieces. Tōyō’s process was so controlled that by viewing the finished examples, one can identify the very special pieces that Tōyō considered to be outstandingly superb (nearest the epoch of what he was aiming for) even before he loaded them into the kiln.

Tōyō improvised freely and made new works of art based on classic Momoyama Bizen originals which often have excellent clay character to the sight and touch and embody qualities of imperfection, *wabi*, *sabi*, the appearance of the elements of chance and improvisation, and are generally without stiffness or pretentiousness. While Tōyō’s having been a figurine maker until his late 30s before changing to the wheel and focusing on Momoyama tea wares may account for his wares veering in the direction of having a refined and dignified atmosphere rather than the bold magnanimous quality many Momoyama wares behold, the late start on the wheel may have also in part, led to throwing imperfections during the initial forming. Tōyō’s sense of composition developed through years of figurine making may have allowed him to incorporate those imperfections as part of the final artistic statement, contributing greatly to his success with Momoyama style wares.

Tōyō’s journey to create a rational approach for an artist potter to create Momoyama Bizen style wares in the 20th century required combining elements that he had captured from 16/17th century Momoyama Bizen ware, inventing new techniques and processes, and creating a methodology whereby chance and imperfection were controlled as part of the aesthetic statement to achieve his artistic vision,

and ultimately, the creation of 'classic,' modern Momoyama Bizen in the 20th century.

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- Fig. 1. a. (6) p. 7, pl. 3, b. (2) pl. 3, without pagination, c. (5) p. 85, pl. 60, d. (2) pl. 11, without pagination, e. (2) pl. 62, without pagination.
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- Fig. 4. a. (5) p. 151, pl. 113, b. (2) pl. 34, without pagination, c. author.

Fig. 5. a. (7) p. 97, b. (9) frame grab.

Fig. 6. a. (6) p. 29, pl. 28, b. (1) p. 48, pl. 52, c. (6) p. 5, pl. 1, d. (2) pl. 2, without pagination.

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Fig. 8. diagram (12), a. (9) frame grab, b. (9) frame grab, c. (9) frame grab, d. (10) frame grab.